

UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY

**The Return of Blackfoot
Sacred Material by Museums
of Southern Alberta**

by

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A THESIS

SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES
IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE
DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARTS

DEPARTMENT OF ANTHROPOLOGY

CALGARY, ALBERTA

APRIL 1999

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0-612-38525-6

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Abstract

Over the past ten years, museums of Southern Alberta have been negotiating the return of sacred materials to their original communities. Some have granted long-term loans in an attempt to address the demand from First Nations to regain authority over their own sacred materials and spirituality. While much has been written about the social and political aspects of these returns, there has been little research on the social relevance of these materials being returned to the Native communities.

The aim of this thesis is to follow several returned objects, specifically, sacred bundles, and to document the social relations that have been created or reinforced, in context with the ceremonies in which these bundles are the focus. This is achieved through first hand interviews of Blackfoot and museum representatives, and through personal observation and participation in ceremonies involving the bundle. Further, the career of sacred objects to their contemporary stage is explored, with a focus on the development of social networking and relationship building that occurs due to the care and reverence of sacred materials. It is concluded that these returns have contributed to a strengthening of community identity and morality by serving as objects of reciprocity. This argument is developed through a discussion of social exchange theory.

I will endeavour to show that based on the varying contemporary experiences and perceptions of the Blackfoot themselves surrounding the return of sacred materials within their own social context, sacred material as contemporary spiritual objects of social exchange continue to be crucial to these communities.

Acknowledgements

I am especially grateful to the Blood and Peigan individuals who generously gave their time and support to this thesis. Without their cooperation and blessings this study would not have been possible: Frank Weasel Head, Florence Scout, Pat Provost, Jenny Bruised Head, Reg Crow Shoe the late Daniel Weasel Moccasin, Rosaline Weasel Moccasin, Peter Weasel Moccasin Jr., Alan Pard, Jerry Potts Jr., Star Hungry Wolf, Beverly Hungry Wolf, Edward Little Bear, the late Ruth Little Bear, Pat Little Bear, Roseanne Provost, Willard Yellow Face, Narcisse Blood, Francis First Charger, Leroy Little Bear and all those who made me feel so welcome at their camps, and sat through hours of ritual and ceremony with me. I particularly indebted to Frank Weasel Head, Pat Provost, Jenny Bruised Head and Margaret Crop Eared Wolf for their thoughtful comments and careful editing of this work.

I would especially like to thank Dr. Doyle Hatt for his steadfast encouragement of this thesis. His intelligence, guidance, understanding and patience, in large part, provided the inspiration and motivation for its completion. Thanks also to Myrna Hagland, Administrative Assistant with the Department of Anthropology for her constant encouragement.

I especially appreciate the support of Glenbow for granting a sixteen month sabbatical in which I was able to complete my course work, field research and begin my writing. Thanks also to Gerald Conaty of Glenbow for sharing his knowledge, and for my initial introduction to the Blackfoot people and environment.

I am also grateful for the time and input of the staff of Glenbow and the Provincial Museum of Alberta.

I am thankful for the generosity of Joy Harvie Maclaren, daughter of the founder of the Glenbow, in whose name I was granted two scholarships. Museums Alberta also generously supported this work through a grant. Thanks also to the Department of Anthropology for offering me grants and teacher assistantships during such trying financial times.

Thanks also to Alison Brown of Cambridge University for her friendship and editorial skills, and to Robyn Douglas, Roberta Partridge, and Natalie Garnett Fadreau whose friendship has meant a great deal to me.

I deeply thank my parents Chhagan and Hansa Bharadia, who have given so much through the years to ensure my education and happiness. I am greatly indebted to my brother Vinay Bharadia whose inexhaustible confidence, enthusiasm and support have accompanied me every step of this path. To my life partner, Daniel Hollenberg, I am wholly indebted. His unfailing love, encouragement, generosity and support have formed the cornerstone that has given me the strength to complete this work. These individuals' unconditional support of my life choices has in large measure made my achievements possible.

To the memory of Daniel Weasel Moccasin Jr.
May the spirit with which he renewed the strength
of his people's traditions continue in the generations to come

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Introduction

For over a century, First Nations of Canada have experienced extreme struggle in maintaining their own identity and social and cultural cohesiveness. As a result of colonialism, forced cultural assimilation, and de-spiritualization, First Nations have weathered social, political and economic isolation and endured a significant loss of their traditional lifestyle. As a result, for a large majority of First Nations, a "design for living" meaningful lives has collapsed (Boldt 1993: 168).

Traditionally, Indian societies had emphasized the precepts of equality, accountability of leaders to the people, a participatory-consensual form of decision making, and the integration of spiritual and governing elements (Boldt 1993: 169).

The pre-contact Blackfoot of the Northern Plains applied this egalitarian and participatory form of traditional government for their survival. Their organization was based on the spring and autumn movement of the buffalo on whom they relied for their subsistence (Ewers 1958: 9). Group organization was based on the most effective way of procuring buffalo during these seasons (ibid). Throughout the year, the communal efforts of both men and women would provide for greater success in the hunt, and for providing food, tools, lodge covers and clothing (ibid 9-10, 14-15). These groups would number as many as one to two hundred men, women and children, comprising up to twenty or thirty families (ibid: 9).

The Blackfoot include the North Peigan, the South Peigan (also known as the Blackfeet of Montana), the Blood, and the Siksika Nations (Conaty 1995: 408; Ewers

1958: 5). Loss of Blackfoot traditional design for living heightened in the late 1800s, and First Nations' need for day to day survival was placed in the hands of the European colonialist government. This government's main scheme for assistance was that of welfare, rather than a scheme for economic self-sufficiency (Boldt 1993: 172). As a result, Native peoples were propelled into a situation of dependency on the dominant society (ibid).

In consequence, their identity and self-concept have been significantly formed within a framework of structural, social, and psychological dependence ... and that the cultural transmission that occurs in Indian communities today is, significantly, that of a 'culture of dependence' (Boldt 1993: 173).

The Indians' 'culture of dependence' manifests their experience with colonial oppression, paternalism, ethnocentrism, ethnocidal residential schools, injustice, imprisonment, and so on ... [this] constitutes the principle source of Indian identity (ibid: 173-174).

The traditional concepts of equality and sharing, however, continue to manifest themselves in new situations where Native people find a sense of commonality and community in the shared experience of forced dependence upon the dominant society (Boldt 1993: 174). This shift created a major move away from the traditional emphasis on communal survival, where each individual contributed to the survival of his/her community. Instead, there was a move towards an emphasis on individual survival, where reliance upon welfare aid created a culture in which a person became primarily concerned for him/herself and his/her immediate family (ibid). Lastly, the breakdown of social order is the result of this sense of loss of traditional identity, leading to helplessness, victimization, and alienation, and manifesting in such actions as domestic

violence, suicide, alcoholism, child neglect, sexual abuse and theft (ibid: 175).

The imposed 'culture of dependence' into which the majority of First Nations in Canada have been forced, is today being challenged by First Nations leaders and Government Commissioners, the most recent attempt being The Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples released on November 21 1996. The mandate of this report is to achieve political and economic self-sufficiency for First Nations through the management of their own resources, and to develop the skills of Aboriginal peoples in order to gain autonomy in such domains as education, health, culture, employment and governance (Meekison 1997:1)

The fact is that in crucial dimensions, Aboriginal cultures, values and world-views were - and remain - fundamentally different from the organizing principles of mainstream North American society. Yet Aboriginal peoples have been denied the right to fashion their societies and institutions in ways that are consistent with these values. Although some positive change has occurred, too many still see Aboriginal peoples as an unfortunate minority who only need better education and better tools to take their place alongside the majority. At the same time, they are expected to adopt the majority's values ...

The task, in fact, is no less than to rectify the errors of 1867 and, for the first time, to make Aboriginal peoples true partners in Confederation. With the relationship then set on the right footing, Aboriginal peoples will have the authority to structure and be responsible for their own solutions and institutions. And, with new treaties to accord them sufficient land and resources to be able to realize self reliance, the cycle of blame and guilt, grievance and denial, frustration and fear can finally be broken.

(Meekison 1997: 2-3)

Historically, Canadian governments have tried to smother the right of Aboriginal people to exist as distinct peoples, with their own governments, laws, languages and cultures. Policies such as residential schooling and banning of sacred ceremonies were designed to erase people's identities, to assimilate individuals into undifferentiated Canadians.

(Hawkes 1997: 3)

In the case of the Blackfoot of Southern Alberta, spiritual traditions which have struggled to persist over the years of cultural decline are strengthening. There is a significant movement to repatriate, or legally establish full ownership, of the sacred materials still housed in museum and private collections, that were traditionally used for maintaining social order (Weasel Head 1996: personal communication). In 1996, Chief and Council, and members of religious Societies of the Blood community organized the Mookaakin Cultural and Heritage Society. The purpose of the Society is:

- (a) To promote and preserve the spiritual doctrines and observances of the Blood/Kainai people ... by providing and organizing instruction ... by Blood/Kainai spiritual practitioners;
- (b) To promote and preserve the unique language and history of the Blood/Kainai people by organizing and providing language and history instruction to the Blood/Kainai people;
- (c) To encourage an appreciation by the general public of the spiritual doctrines and observances, languages and history of the Blood/Kainai people by providing the public with general information regarding those ways, and by encouraging the participation of the public in those related events that are not considered to be spiritually sensitive in nature;
- (d) To encourage and actively pursue the repatriation of the objects and articles that facilitate the spiritual doctrines and observances of the Blood/Kainai people by establishing and maintaining facilities for Blood/Kainai spiritual observances;
- (e) To foster the preservation, protection and enhancement of Blood/Kainai customs, traditions and beliefs by establishing and maintaining a facility to preserve the data, objects and articles of the Blood/Kainai peoples;
- (f) To do all such things as are incidental to or conducive to the attainment of the objects of the Mookaakin Society.

(Memorandum of Understanding:
The Mookaakin Cultural and Heritage
Society and The Glenbow-Alberta Institute,
March 6 1998: pp 1-2.)

The majority of the members that constitute the Mookaakin Cultural and Heritage Society are actively involved in continuing the spiritual ways of their ancestors through their membership in sacred societies and continuing their traditional spiritual way of life. As time goes by, more and more Blackfoot people are becoming interested in pursuing their traditional spirituality (Scout 1996: personal communication; Weasel Head 1996: personal communication). This can be evidenced by the increase in traditional, ritual transfers of ownership of major sacred objects, known as bundles, within Blackfoot communities (Scout 1996: personal communication). As a result of this need, there is an increased demand for the return of those bundles related to active ceremonials still housed in museum collections. The bundle as a sacred object is further defined in Chapter 2.

As will be discussed in the body of this work, the ownership of sacred bundles among the Blackfoot has significantly transformed the lives of their owners.

To me I'll speak for myself, I see there's life in those bundles. I don't think anybody would have an idea how it is, but if a person had faith, trust in these things, and if they really believe in these bundles they'll realize what I'm talking about ... A person will not know the true meaning of it unless you're initiated into any kind of a Society. Then you'll fully understand the meaning, the good life that has led the Native people by owning these bundles (Scout 1996).

A return to their spiritual traditions has evidenced a significant move towards a revitalization of cohesiveness and identity for the Blackfoot. These communities in particular exemplify the move towards achieving a complete "design for living", as they work to intertwine their spirituality with their modern practical culture (Boldt 1993: 176). As in the past, today, particularly among the Blood and Peigan people, governance

is increasingly based on "communalism, sharing, mutual aid, equality, and decision by consensus" *integrated* with spiritual life, which is the means for survival and independence from the culture of dependence (ibid: 177; Pard 1996: personal communication). The "ongoing consultations between the 'cultural maximizers' [cultural officials] and the 'grass roots' people [spiritualists or traditionalists]" can be evidenced among the Blood and Peigan as there is a growing trend for Native spiritualists to hold official political, cultural, educational, and health related positions within their own communities (ibid: 184). These include such positions as members of the Band Council, directors of the penitentiaries, advisors to both Native and non-Native prisoners in the penitentiaries, principles of Native-run schools, teachers, and social workers.

Contemporary Blackfoot spirituality related to bundle ownership is a continuation of ancestral traditional beliefs and customs as a "design for living": a means of cultural adaption that allows for the renewal of independence, cohesiveness, social order, and a stronger, more positive Native identity and spirituality.

This study explores the career of bundles since colonization, focusing on the social relations and reciprocations that have been created or reinforced since the movement to return sacred bundles to Blackfoot communities by museums of Southern Alberta. It is proposed that one of the principal mechanisms employed to rebuild a meaningful "design for living" by the Blackfoot, is that of social exchange through which meaningful, life-long relational networks are developed between participating individuals, thereby strengthening community ties and community identity.

Background

Alberta Museums of today are actively engaged in negotiations to return particular materials considered to be sacred by First Nations, to their original communities. Dialogue between museum and First Nations representatives continues in order to find ways of bridging museum policies with requests by First Nations for long-term loans. Issues currently under discussion include what form the return of sacred material might take. For example, exploring methods by which the museum can maintain ownership, while the object itself resides with the community as in the situation of long-term loans; and exploring methods of granting outright repatriation, whereby the community takes over full ownership of the object. In the meantime, long-term loans have been successfully made by the Glenbow Museum of Calgary, while repatriation is still under consideration. At the time of field research, the ethnologists at the Provincial Museum of Alberta (PMA) were involved in negotiations regarding requests for sacred material and the potential for long-term loans. In 1998, the PMA began to execute long-term loans to the Blackfoot.

Objects considered to be sacred by Blackfoot nations, such as ceremonial bundles, headdresses, pipes, and rattles, have been loaned by the Glenbow Museum to particular members of the Blood, Peigan and Siksika communities of Southern Alberta. In a number of cases since the time of their return, the responsibility for caring for particular bundles has been transferred by traditional means to other community members. All the returned bundles are being traditionally cared for, and all but one of these returns have been reincorporated into major ceremonial practices (Conaty 1999: personal

communication; Janes 1997: 128).

The Glenbow Museum recently made it possible to have two sacred Bundles cared for on the Peigan Reserve. We received a Holy Medicine Pipe Bundle and a Beaver Bundle. The significance of this transaction can hardly be expressed in mere words. On each of these occasions, the Native people were given their lives, their purpose for existing, through these holy entities had connect [sic] us with all of creation (Bastien and Bastien 1992:2).

Purpose of the Study

In *Cannibal Tours and Glass Boxes: The Anthropology of Museums*, Michael Ames discusses the First Nation movement to reassert their authority over their culture and cultural material (1992: 148). He questions the future of anthropologists, curators and researchers in light of their potential replacement by indigenous voices. He summarizes Peter Welsh's opinion that

Museums and anthropologists can continue to speak about others, though of course no longer *for* them ... They can speak jointly with those whose materials they keep or study. They can continue to speak about cultural encounters, the careers of objects and institutions ... (Ames 1992: 148).

Michael Ames articulates the key orienting philosophy of my research in which, through contemporary narrative from key Blackfoot and museum players in this area, I explore the episteme or social life surrounding the contemporary Blackfoot bundle (Appadurai 1986). Originally an integral part of Blackfoot ritual, social status and economy, the bundle became an article available as a commodity on the collectors' market, ultimately being completely extracted as a part of the economic process by being housed for posterity within museum walls. This particular development led to the bundle being a marked item of discussion and debate among institutional authorities and

Blackfoot representatives regarding issues of repatriation, which eventually gave way to the granting of long-term loans by which bundles were reincorporated into Blackfoot ritual, social status and economy. This latter stage of the career of Blackfoot bundles is the principal focus of this thesis, in that this stage is the most contemporary and least understood, where bundles have returned to their original communities, and are strengthening community identity and cohesiveness. Moreover, this is the part of the museum loan process of which the least is documented.

The impetus for the current study began with my professional affiliation with the Glenbow Museum of Calgary, Alberta, where I have observed and experienced activities, negotiations, cultural encounters and changes that have occurred in the relationship between Glenbow and the Blackfoot. Due to the controversial Glenbow exhibit *The Spirit Sings* (Harrison 1993; MUSE Fall 1988) which brought national and international attention to the discontentment of First Nations of Canada (discussed in Chapter 1), Canadian museums have become markedly self-conscious in the way and degree to which First Nations are physically and intellectually involved in all museum processes. As a result, the Glenbow Museum in particular, has taken significant strides in supporting Blackfoot initiatives both within and beyond its walls. Glenbow's intent to return sacred bundles to members of the Blood and Peigan communities has set a precedent in the Canadian museum community.

It is timely to research and document experiences as seen through the varying viewpoints of the Blackfoot. We know through current literature that ceremonial bundles, headdresses and rattles incorporated in ritual are used to assist in the

perpetuation of myths, rituals and oral histories, which in turn assist in the cohesiveness and group identity of communities such as the Blood, North Peigan and Siksika of Southern Alberta (Hungry Wolf 1977; Bastien and Bastien 1992; Conaty 1995). Additionally, as sacred symbols of status, bundles once assisted in defining past and present roles of owners within the community (Crow Shoe 1996a: personal communication). To complete the circle, this study focuses on the varying contemporary experiences and perceptions of the Blackfoot themselves, surrounding the return of sacred materials within their own social context, in order to document how bundles as contemporary spiritual objects of social exchange continue to be crucial to these communities.

Research and Methodology

Since the close of the field research for this study, Glenbow in particular, had made a significant number of long term loans of sacred bundles to the Siksika Nations in addition to the Blood and Piegan Nations. The majority of the loans made to First Nations by Glenbow at the time of research (1996) were among the Blood and Peigan of Southern Alberta. Therefore, this thesis situates itself in the study of the social dynamics created by the strengthening of Blackfoot spirituality and bundle transfers among these two groups.

Further, as Glenbow has been the most active museum in Alberta to attempt a means of returning sacred materials to original communities, regarding institutional developments, this thesis will primarily focus on the experiences of Glenbow.

The term "bundle complex" will be used in this work to refer to the network of relations within and between the sacred societies, ceremonies, bundles, nature and Blackfoot society. Within the Blackfoot emic perspective there is no corresponding term to relate to this spiritual aspect of life as separate from everyday life as a whole. The term "bundle complex" is used anthropologically in this work in order to encompass variables and concepts as related to the returned bundle.

Due to my professional affiliation with Glenbow, I was already familiar with key members of the Blood and Peigan communities to whom bundles had been loaned. With the assistance of these individuals, and of Gerald Conaty, Senior Ethnologist at the Glenbow, I was able to come in contact with those who have had an integral role in the negotiations of long-term loans of bundles, in the perpetuation of the ceremonies, and those to whom a bundle had been formally loaned.

Overall approval for conducting research was informally granted by Elder Frank Weasel Head as a former member of the Horn Society, by agreeing to participate in interviews himself. According to Gerald Conaty, this was to be considered as permission to continue with the field study. After discussing the premise of my study, permission to conduct interviews was sought with each individual informant.

Data collection first began by conducting field interviews among loan recipients. Data was collected by incorporating informal interview techniques, casual discussions and personal observation in the context of ceremonials and family homes, and casual interaction with individuals and groups on the Blood and Peigan reserves and in Fort Macleod and Stand Off, Alberta. Semi-formal interviews were conducted and tape

recorded. Casual conversations and observation assisted in data collection within the everyday context of homes and ceremonies. On these occasions, particularly at ceremonies, tape recording and photography is strictly prohibited, therefore I intentionally did not record conversations and interactions. All the descriptive accounts of the activities at ceremonies in Chapter 3 are based on recollections and are intended to simply set the social context in which bundles are situated, the commitment towards bundles and bundle ownership, and the veneration with which bundles are held.

Interviews held with Native and non-Native museum staff were mostly in the form of recorded casual conversations with only a few semi-structured interviews. A comparative methodology has been incorporated to exemplify the differing views within the Alberta museum community resulting from the polarities created by differing perceptions of institutional fiduciary responsibilities.

The casual and semi-formal interviewing style of inquiry allowed for both museum and Blackfoot informants to determine the main issues concerning the social life and meanings behind the return of sacred objects, from which I structured more detailed enquiries. This approach was intentional in order to ground this work in the informants' view point, particularly that of the Blackfoot. At public ceremonies, there were several individuals who generously informed me of what I was witnessing, but to whom I was not formally introduced. In these cases I refer to them in more generic terms such as "an Elder" or "an attendant".

While there are differing and shared viewpoints between and within the museum and Blackfoot communities, there is a shared motivation by the Blackfoot and some

museum staff of re-establishing the strength of community, identity and spiritual life which occurs through the incorporation of networking among spiritualists. This led naturally towards the theory of social exchange, which will be discussed in more detail in Chapters 4 and 5.

Due to restricted knowledge regarding the spiritual content and concepts of bundles, this work will not and cannot delve into the sacred nature of the bundle. I do define my notion of sacred in Chapter 2, but I do not hold this to be the definitive concept held by the Blackfoot. The social interaction and personal commitment demonstrated by the Blood and Peigan, and articulated in Chapters 2, 3 and 5, clearly imply the inherent strength, spirituality and sacredness within the Blackfoot bundle.

In hearing associated oral histories by both Blood, Peigan, and past and present museum staff, I was able to shed some light on the varying episteme of the career of Blackfoot bundles seen in Chapters 1 and 2, which aided in the understanding of the transformation of the contemporary meanings and perceptions of Blackfoot bundles and the Blackfoot bundle complex.

Because the majority of public Blackfoot ceremonies occur from May to August, my field research took place within this time span in the summer of 1996. At this time I attended the four day O'kan (Sun Dance) put up by a Peigan Holy Woman, six Thunder Medicine Pipe openings (both Blood and Peigan), one Thunder Medicine Pipe Transfer Ceremony from the Peigan to the Bloods, the four day Mo'tokiks (Buffalo Woman) Society Ceremonials, and the four day Horn Society Ceremonials at the Holy Encampment on the Blood reserve. This particular summer there was no Blood O'kan, as

a request for a vow by a Holy Woman had not been made. Additionally, Glenbow has returned Beaver Bundles to the Blood and Peigan. While the Beaver Bundle is equally important within the bundle complex, due to the private nature of the Beaver Bundle ceremonials, I did not attend these ceremonies and therefore have not specifically described them in the body of this work. For the relevance of the Beaver Bundle in the O'kan and Blackfoot origin myths, refer to the description of the O'kan and Appendix A.

Lastly, prior to defense, a copy of this thesis was given to Elder Frank Weasel Head of the Blood community, Pat Provost of the Peigan community, and Jenny Bruised Head and Margaret Crop Eared Wolf of the Blood community. Their editorial comments and insight are greatly appreciated in order to ensure the appropriate representation of the Blackfoot people. Upon completion, a final copy of this thesis was given to all the key participants in the study within the Blackfoot and museum communities.

CHAPTER ONE

Alberta Museums and the Blackfoot Bundle Complex

... what is cultural anthropology? In its traditional form, it is the story of conquered peoples, as told by the conquerors. And what is history? Traditionally, it is the story of conquering peoples - again, told by themselves. These assumptions ... are what must change, if the museum is to fulfil its promising new role in helping contemporary societies to understand themselves and move forward together (Appelbaum 1995: 248).

Traditionally, museum collections were thought of as "cabinets of curiosities" and as "trophies taken from a defeated people" (Talbot 1995:1; Janes and Conaty 1992: 4). Anthropologists and collectors were intent on accumulating a vast array of indigenous objects from what seemed, at the time, to be cultures in decline (Dempsey 1996: personal communication; Ames 1992: 79). As such, museum collecting in early 20th century North America was viewed largely as "salvage" collecting, resulting in artifacts being housed in museums and interpreted within non-Native perspectives (Appelbaum 1995: 248; Talbot 1995: 2; Clifford 1991: 214) .

Obeisance by one's visitors to the majority view (at least publicly) meant that minority views were not expressed. Exhibits in display halls had largely a western, white, male scholastic bias (Talbot 1995: 2).

Despite adversity, the majority of aboriginal people of North America have survived, and, in the case of the Blackfoot speaking nations, are in the process of regaining authority of their cultural property. In consequence, ethnographic and historical museums have been challenged to redefine their role (Janes 1997; Talbot 1995: 2; Janes and Conaty 1992: 12).

With native peoples throughout Canada striving for self-determination and social well-being, what responsibilities do museums have when they own materials which are crucial to this renaissance? We, at Glenbow, have decided that we have a major responsibility to support ceremonial activities with objects from our collections ... We have always said that we are holding our collections for posterity. Perhaps, for native peoples, posterity has arrived (Janes and Conaty 1992: 12).

Historical Background

During the first half of this century, Plains indigenous culture was at its maximal state of disintegration, under the pressure of the reserve, mission-run school systems and the governmental systems of dominant society. Many Blackfoot bundle owners sold some or all of their bundles to museum collections as a result of cultural devastation, impoverishment and/or Christian conversion (Pard 1996: personal communication; Potts Jr. 1996: personal communication; Dempsey 1996: personal communication; Conaty 1995: personal communication). Because of an imposed culture of dependency which had been fostered on the reserves, many First Nations no longer had control of their own resources, and were financially unable to take on the responsibilities of bundle ownership (Pard 1996: personal communication).

In the early experiences of Glenbow, for example, Hugh Dempsey, an Archivist and collector at the Glenbow in the late 50s and 60s, followed a policy of not acquiring any sacred objects that were in active use (Dempsey 1996: personal communication). He discovered, however, that if his museum refused to purchase them, the objects were often fated to be sold elsewhere, and therefore were no longer able to be tracked (ibid). In his experience, a Mo'tokiks woman had approached Dempsey to sell her bundle days after

receiving it through a traditional transfer ceremony. He responded with hours of conversation in an attempt to convince her to transfer it among the other Mo'tokiks women (ibid). He initially thought he had been successful, but later discovered that it had been sold to a pawn shop and already in the hands of an American tourist. In remembering this situation he still asks himself:

You know, did I do right or did I do wrong by talking her out of selling it to the Glenbow? I felt really badly about that. Even today I don't know if exactly the same situation came up, I don't know what I'd do because I would have been loath to have to purchase it. I mean I suppose with the wisdom that comes with age I might have ... said "OK I'll buy it from you personally" ... and ... gone back to the Mo'tokiks and ... get somebody to take over the membership ... but you know it was one of those ethical situations (Dempsey 1996).

Shortly after he experienced this situation, the Siksika Horns and Mo'tokiks Societies collapsed, at which time Dempsey decided from then onwards to take the sacred objects into the collections (Dempsey 1996: personal communication).

Today, owing to an increase in their cultural strength, and a renewed interest in their spiritual traditions, the Blackfoot are actively asserting their authority over the interpretation and exhibition of their people, their spirituality, and their ways of life, in an attempt to generate cultural revival (Weasel Head 1996: personal communication; Pard 1996: personal communication; Crow Shoe 1996a: personal communication; Janes and Conaty 1992: 3-4; Gulliford 1992: 24). Within the Alberta context, First Nations individuals, families and/or groups have been patiently but persistently requesting museums to return objects which they consider to be sacred. The importance placed by the Blackfoot on these objects has prompted museums to make significant strides to

bridge the gap between Alberta museums and Blackfoot Nations, resulting in significant institutional changes for museums and Blackfoot alike.

A major shift in museum and First Nations relations occurred in the aftermath of a traveling exhibit curated by the Glenbow in conjunction with the 1988 Olympics entitled *The Spirit Sings: Artistic Traditions of Canada's First Peoples*. The Lubicon Cree boycott of this exhibit, and the Mohawk Nations' legal action for the return of cultural property, in particular a False Face mask, loaned to the Glenbow, were the catalysts that brought home the necessity for all Canadian museums to consider seriously the religious needs and roles of First Nations presented in museum exhibits, and represented in their collections (Carter 1999: personal communication; Harrison 1993; MUSE Fall 1988: Bell 1992: 1; Task Force Report on Museums and First Peoples 1992: 1). The boycott by the Lubicon was at one level a demonstration in opposition to the involvement of Shell Canada as one of the exhibit's sponsors, as Shell was also drilling on land claimed to belong to Lubicon Lake Cree (Harrison 1993: 338). On another level, although First Nations representatives had been employed by the Glenbow to assist in the execution of the exhibit, some First Nations groups felt compelled to focus on the discomforting issues of museum and First Nations relations regarding collections and exhibition of sacred objects (ibid: 339).

In turn, this led Canada-wide museum and First Nations representatives to form a task force to discuss these issues on a national level. A significant result of these consultations, affecting all leading museums, was the publication of *Turning the Page: Forging New Partnerships Between Museums and First Peoples* (1992). The three main

issues of concern were:

1. increased involvement of Aboriginal peoples in the interpretation of their culture and history by cultural institutions;
2. improved access to museum collections by Aboriginal peoples; and,
3. the repatriation of artifacts and human remains.

(Task Force Report on Museums
and First Peoples 1992: 1)

Both the Provincial Museum of Alberta and the Glenbow have attempted to address some of the Task Force's main concerns. This has been demonstrated, however, in very different ways and levels of commitment. The following section explores some of the efforts made by both these museums.

Alberta Museums and Their Response to the Task Force Report on Museums and First Nations

The two leading museums in Southern Alberta are the Glenbow in Calgary, and the Provincial Museum of Alberta (PMA) in Edmonton. Both hold the largest collections of Blackfoot sacred materials in southern Alberta. The PMA is an extension of the Alberta Provincial Government. Therefore it is under government jurisdiction regarding the negotiations and execution of long-term loans and returns of sacred material to the Blackfoot. The Glenbow in contrast, is one of the most independent museums in Canada in that it is essentially self-sufficient and run by a Board of Governors. Therefore, the Glenbow is able to execute decisions regarding long-term loans and returns of sacred materials more independently. However, as both institutions are holding collections in

public trust, the collections are understood to be owned by the Province (Conaty 1998: personal communication). Therefore, regarding outright repatriation, both must adhere to negotiations with the Province.

Provincial Museum of Alberta:

At the time of my fieldwork, the Provincial Museum of Alberta (PMA) had no formal advisory body for First Nations related issues, but was in the practice of consulting with First Nations representatives in an advisory capacity on a case-by-case basis regarding exhibits and loans (Stepney 1996: personal communication). For example, a First Nations advisory committee was developed to assist with the development of the *Synchrude Gallery of Aboriginal People* which opened in 1997 (ibid). Furthermore, the PMA has been in frequent contact with the Crow Shoe family of the Peigan Nation regarding issues concerning sacred objects (ibid). The Crow Shoes have completed the process of originating or creating a new Natoas Bundle by using various bundle components from the PMA which were unattributed to specific bundles, and augmenting them with new materials in order to make a usable Natoas for the Blackfoot ceremonial known as O'kan (Crow Shoe 1996c: personal communication). The origination of bundles has become a contentious issue and will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 2: The Blackfoot Bundle Complex. It is the view of Phil Stepney, the Director of the PMA, that this kind of assistance with First Nations communities is more appropriate than long-term loans of original material:

We've loaned material for short durations. We don't put them on long term loan. We've loaned a Medicine Pipe for a ceremony and we participated in that ceremony. It was a two day ceremony, we took it down and we brought it back. We're going to do the same with a Beaver Bundles, 'cause then in the process people will start to get Beaver Bundle rights, and then start to create Beaver Bundles. No we don't put things on long term loan ... its not our preferred approach to put things on long term loan. (Stepney 1996)

Stepney feels that long-term loans would be counter to the mandate of museums.

Long-term loans are considered to be appropriate for those who have the

same framework of operation, the same standards, the same environmental conditions, ascribe to the same code of ethics, [then] you're still living up to what you are as an institution. If [objects] go back into active use, no - that's not what museums are all about. Again it gets down to the question of philosophy, what you believe is the appropriate thing to do ... we feel we're going to be held responsible for its [object's] preservation, for the community at large. Its hard to believe, and for some people its hard to accept that its being preserved for aboriginal people too (Stepney 1996).

In this latter statement, Stepney is referring to preserving sacred materials in museums in order for aboriginal peoples, such as Blackfoot individuals with the appropriate religious rights, to access and potentially replicate the pieces in order to originate new bundles (Stepney 1996: personal communication). In so doing, collections of sacred materials would remain in the museum custody and would be assisting towards

working with communities to reestablish their traditional lines of authority, their traditional rules, so the community has the mechanism, the structures, to create materials the way they use to do it. That has survivability ... because the communities themselves hold the power to take it forward.

Repatriation is much larger ... because its not just the physical bundles, the physical material in museums. You can look at it in terms of repatriation of the knowledge, the rights ... Repatriation ... can equate with Creation.

[By] giving stuff back [repatriation], you haven't done anything except probably as a museum you've just got yourself out of a lot of management, a lot of difficult work, relationships, relationship building - you've absolved yourself which is perhaps not the best way to do it ... you don't turn and walk away from a philosophical perspective.

I believe very strongly in museums ... We are one of the oldest surviving institutions in the history of man - that's no accident. Museums have an enormous obligation to the society that supports them. You have to continue to make all of your judgements in that context (Stepney 1996).

Stepney brings forward issues that museums have been working to negotiate and resolve. The issues of defining which collections are considered "sacred", who should be permitted to access them, the effect of returns on museum collections, fiduciary responsibilities of museums, and whether museums do in fact have a role in defining the future of Blackfoot collections and culture, are ongoing concerns in Canadian museums. Regarding the latter issue, this indeed is the case with the PMA. While replicating the Natoas bundle used in O'kan ceremonies, and transferring to it the authority of the original bundle, has been a relatively successful endeavour for both the PMA and the Crow Shoe family and Elders, there is a strong movement among the Peigan and the Blood not to allow this to set a precedent within their communities. For them, bundles can not be replaced by replicas (See Chapter 2).

More recently, owing to the Provincial Museum of Alberta being government-supported, Premier Ralph Klein has directed the PMA to enter negotiations with the Blood, Peigan and Siksika Nations in order to develop policies for the potential long-term loan of sacred materials (Weasel Head 1998: personal communication; Conaty 1998: personal communication). Further, the PMA was represented by Curator Jack Ives at the

1998 Repatriation Workshop hosted by the Glenbow museum.

As will be evidenced in the case of Glenbow's views on long-term loans and repatriation, the time seems to have arrived where talking and negotiations between and among museum and Blackfoot communities has to translate into practical, tangible solutions to enhance the Blackfoot spiritual revival.

Glenbow:

The first of the three issues presented by the Task Force Report: "increased involvement of Aboriginal peoples in the interpretation of their culture and history by cultural institutions", has since been addressed by the Glenbow. They have formed a First Nations Advisory Council, consisting of representatives from neighbouring First Nations groups who provide advice on all levels of museum practice which represent First Nations. Glenbow has also created the permanent full time position of Treaty 7 Liaison whose role is that of in-house advisor and interpreter. This position has proved to be essential in assisting with negotiations and bridging the gap with Blackfoot speaking nations (Conaty 1996: personal communication; Janes 1996: personal communication). Glenbow has also worked with the students from the Plains Indian Cultural Survival School to develop and curate their own exhibit on issues relevant to their own experiences, such as their personal heroes and their perspectives on participating in the pow-wow culture. In 1997, Glenbow contracted Pablo Russell of the Blood Nation, to give interpretive programmes in the First Nation Gallery to the general public and as part of the Museum School Program. Further, a committee of Blackfoot community curators

has been formed to assist with the conceptualization and development of a new Blackfoot gallery to open in 2001.

With respect to the second issue of concern presented by the Task Force - that of increasing aboriginal access to the collections - for the past six years, the Glenbow has presented the programme *Through Elders' Eyes* in conjunction with the Calgary Aboriginal Awareness Society for Native Awareness Week. This programme invites Elders from neighbouring communities to select objects from the collections, and recount stories and memories inspired by them in a public setting. Additionally, Glenbow has granted long-term loans of sacred materials to the Blackfoot, Cree and Kwak'waka'wakw of Vancouver Island to aid in their respective spiritual practices.

Glenbow and the Issues of Long-Term Loans of Sacred Material

Since the introduction of the Task Force Report, Glenbow has worked to restrict general public access to Blackfoot sacred materials in the collections, and related archival documents. In so doing, there is an acknowledgment that these artifacts and documents are reserved for those Blackfoot individuals who have the traditional rights to view and handle them (Conaty 1997: personal communication). Ethnologists have been ritually painted and blessed, thereby giving them the right to handle these objects when necessary. As a result, this restriction has led to these objects having little museological use such as incorporation in exhibits, programmes, education and research (Conaty 1996:personal communication).

There's a certain power that lies in the old pieces and the history they have. Those were the pieces that originated with the people. What's the museum going to do with a bundle? We aren't going to exhibit it or let people poke around with it. Its taking up space. It's difficult to care for [traditionally], so why would we want them? (Conaty 1996).

In 1990, the late Dan Weasel Moccasin, a strong traditionalist, Elder of the Horn Society, and Grandfather of Thunder Medicine Pipes, approached Glenbow for the return of the bundle *Siksika-o'koyniman*, a Thunder Medicine Pipe (Dempsey 1996; personal communication; Janes 1996: personal communication; Conaty 1996: personal communication). His intention was to teach the songs, oral history and practices of the bundle to his son Daniel. This was the beginning of a series of loans of sacred materials that occurred over the next decade.

Through a period of three to four years, and through the experience and negotiations of the loan of *Siksika-o'koyniman*, Glenbow worked through a number of issues, and today continues to develop its policy for loans of sacred materials covering:

- 1) Length and Terms of the Loans.
- 2) Definition of "Sacred" and the Effect of Returns of Museum Collections.
- 3) Determining the Legitimacy of the Recipient of a Loan
- 4) The Issue of Access

The following section explores the experience of the Glenbow concerning these four aspects of long-term loans of sacred objects.

Length and Terms of the Loans

Initially the loan was to be for four months, then return to the museum of four months (Conaty 1996: personal communication). As time went on, Glenbow realized that institutional practices and traditional Native practices were essentially incompatible. Conservation required the bundle to be fumigated and examined for pest control (ibid; Dumka 1996: personal communication). Registration and conservation required that a condition report be produced to document that the piece had returned to the museum in the same condition that it had been released (ibid; Betenia 1996: personal communication). The bundle, however, having been used in the ceremonies, is considered by the Blackfoot to be living being, and is treated very much as one's own child. Further, through ceremony it had in fact been physically changed as a result of smudging and blessings of red ochre which had been spread over the pieces in the bundle. Smudging is the Blackfoot practice of burning sweetgrass, sage or sweet pine and directing the smoke arising from the plant to spread over one's body from the head down or over a bundle, thereby resulting in a state of purification. Due to its involvement in ceremonies, the bundle became empowered and therefore activated once more for spiritual purposes. Therefore, in keeping with the traditional requirements of the Blackfoot, it could not be handled by those without traditional rights, and it could not be fumigated, which in turn meant that it could not be returned among other collections in the museum (Conaty 1995: personal communication; Dumka 1996: personal communication).

These considerations then led to the Glenbow granting long-term loans that are

indefinite in nature. These loans are renewed annually with whomever most recently transferred the bundle. Some important issues arise out of this kind of agreement. The question of fiduciary responsibility is of particular interest. This is the legal point that these objects were collected for posterity and is entrusted to remain in the museum for future generations to access. As mentioned above, access is being denied by the request of the Blackfoot. The Blackfoot, however, are considered by Glenbow to be a very relevant Alberta community that museums of Southern Alberta are obliged to respect as equally as any other community of Alberta, particularly in light of their cultural and spiritual revival (Janes 1996: personal communication). Glenbow's President, Robert Janes, has often stated "posterity for the Blackfoot has arrived" (ibid).

[I was able to] convince our Board of Governors as part of a strategic planning exercise, that First Nations are really important to Glenbow. So First Nations are really singled out in our corporate strategic plan as being an area of priority. Once that happens it becomes our focus, it becomes institutionally important ... I think it is a combination of institutional commitment at the highest policy level and then translating that into hiring the right people ... (Janes 1996).

By working closely with the community, the Glenbow has been able to develop policies for returns - which in the interim of actually being able to grant repatriation - works to also satisfy the Blackfoot.

It's [bundle] not in our possession ... we have them sign a piece of paper once a year, once very two years ... we are retaining possession legally on paper, partly because of our position with the province, until that's been clarified, and also until First Nations get a really clear stand on how they want to handle this, and what they want to do with this. I think that the Bloods are getting pretty close to that. Then they can come and say we'd like these to turn into this [repatriation], and this is who you can give it back to - give it back to this authority ... We have to make sure the Board really wants to do this - they have to be comfortable with what we're doing now and then we can ease into change of ownership (Janes 1996).

Definition of "Sacred" and the Effect of Returns of Museum Collections

Another significant issue arising from the request to return sacred objects to the Blackfoot, is that of defining an operational notion of "sacred" that both Blackfoot and museums staff can agree upon. Additionally there is the consideration of whether the return of objects might eventually lead to the end of the museum First Nations collections, should the notion of "sacred" keep expanding. While almost every object is considered to be animate by the Blackfoot, they themselves have boundaries regarding which objects from the museum are within the realm of possible repatriation (Scout 1996: personal communication; Bruised Head 1996: personal communication; Conaty and Janes 1996: 12). According to a Blood Elder, Florence Scout, objects that are a) used directly within a ceremony, and are b) valued by the community at large - as opposed to objects that are personal objects - are the kinds of objects that interest the Blackfoot (Scout 1996: personal communication). Objects of a personal value such as moccasins or a dress worn by an attendant at a ceremony are not considered to be part of the definition of a "sacred object" considered for repatriation, but may be considered under the definition of "cultural patrimony", which are secular objects of cultural value to the Blackfoot. Negotiations and decisions regarding cultural patrimony, however, have yet to be solidified.

Jenny Bruised Head, who is also Blood indicated that in her mind only sacred objects for which there are teachings in the community, and which can be incorporated into active use are of consideration (Bruised Head 1997: personal communication;

Bruised Head 1999: personal communication). Her relative's Horse bundle is in the Glenbow. When her family feels prepared, she will do the appropriate research to find someone who has the appropriate knowledge, songs and rights to that bundle before she would take on the responsibility of requesting the return of this particular bundle (ibid).

Within the Mookaakin Foundation's mandate to repatriate, objects considered for repatriation are defined as "the objects and articles that facilitate the spiritual doctrines and observances of the Blood/Kainai people" while working to establish "a facility to preserve the date, objects and articles of the Blood/Kainai peoples" (Mookaakin Foundation and Glenbow-Alberta Institute 1998: 2). This latter commitment may in the future lead to long-term loans of secular objects, which would be similar in nature to any other loan that a museum may make to another museum-quality facility. As Conaty and Janes of the Glenbow state:

We are not proposing that changing definitions of sacredness are not problematic. At Glenbow, we have frequently become involved in discussions about what is and what is not holy. Disagreements can occur in many configurations - between communities; within communities; across generations; within generations; etc. Each request for repatriation brings its own proponents with their own understanding of sacredness. We are resigned to the reality that the definition may always be problematic and difficult for our organization to understand. However, by remaining open to the debate, we are improving our understanding of sacredness (Conaty and Janes 1996: 20).

Determining the Legitimacy of the Loan Recipient

Another issue arising from the requests of long-term loans and repatriation is that of establishing the validity of a claim and the potential recipient. According to Gerald Conaty (1996: personal communication), an individual requesting a loan of sacred

material must be accompanied by a respected spiritual Elder from that community. From ongoing interaction with the Blood, Peigan and Siksika communities, such as networking and seeking the advice of community traditionalists, Glenbow staff are able to be ascertain whether the Elder is active within the bundle complex. If the potential recipient is considered reputable through community traditionalists, the loan would have an enhanced likelihood of being approved (ibid). For example, in the case of Star Hungry Wolf who asked for a Natoas headdress in order to "put up" or sponsor an O'kan, Pat Provost and Leonard Bastien represented her request to the Glenbow (Hungry Wolf 1996b: personal communication; Provost 1999: personal communication). As both these individuals are bundle holders, are active members within the bundle complex, had previously been loaned Glenbow bundles, and had complied with the understanding of the loan agreement and maintained an ongoing relationship with Glenbow, the request was granted (Conaty 1996: personal communication; Hungry Wolf 1996b: personal communication).

It is in this case-by-case manner that Glenbow wishes to proceed (Conaty 1996: personal communication). According to Conaty it is up to the community itself to determine who is the best candidate to receive sacred material on loan. As mentioned above in regard to the definition of "sacred", there is a recognition that there are differing opinions within and between communities. By allowing the active spiritualists to determine the validity of a recipient, the museum avoids being at the centre of differences of opinion and can respond in a more constructive manner to requests (ibid).

The Issue of Access

Once returned to the community, the bundle is required by both the museum and community members to be accessible to the public (Conaty 1996: personal communication; Scout 1996: personal communication)

... just having one bundle on the reserve doesn't mean that it is accessible. You have to feel you can go to that person [owner], then its accessible. If you have one ceremony it is good. If you have two its even better. If you have three its three time better. So it is better for the public ... So if one [accessible bundle] works, then more and more are going to work better. If ... there's only one ceremony going on, then their culture can't be all that accessible. But if there's half a dozen bundles available and they all belong to different families and you look at the calender there are openings both days of the weekend from mid April to June, you're going to think "this culture is strong - I'm OK, I'm a Blood/Blackfoot, I'm really OK, this stuff is really happening, and its out there for me if I need it, and I might even get into it, I might even hang around and see what's going on" ... Six years ago there'd be stuff happening - may be one thing a weekend, maybe middle of May 'til middle of June. Now there's something happening Saturday and Sunday and sometimes two or three things happening each day (Conaty 1996).

The current increase in the number and several kinds of bundle ceremonies is a direct indicator of the number and variety of bundles available to the Blood, Peigan and Siksika Nations today, as one cannot host a ceremonial without the presence of the bundle.

In addition to the frequency of the ceremonials, is the question of the social interaction. As Conaty indicates, one has to feel comfortable to attend these events. Most ceremonies such as bundle openings are considered to be open to the public. One's rapport with the bundle owner and his/her family however, is always an influencing factor in whether one would feel comfortable to attend. Therefore, access is not simply an issue of physical access, but one of emotional and social access. In Glenbow's

experience, all but one of the bundles loaned to the Blackfoot are in active use and accessible to numerous members of the community (Conaty 1996: personal communication; Janes 1997: 128).

Glenbow is presently working to find ways to formalize the repatriation process in order that the long-term loans currently active among the Blackfoot can be finally returned (Conaty 1998: personal communication). In November of 1998, Glenbow hosted a workshop on repatriation which included delegates from leading Canadian museums housing Blackfoot and Cree materials, in an attempt to ascertain the degree of institutional commitment to the notion of repatriation, and to attempt to take the first step towards establishing a formal commitment to repatriate to the Blackfoot. This workshop resulted in the commitment towards further meetings regarding these issues, with the notion of "co-management" between museums and those First Nations requesting repatriation of sacred materials as the foundation of these talks, and the potential for developing a co-management working committee to include both Alberta museum and archival institutions and Treaty 7 representatives (Bharadia 1998: personal notes).

Phil Stepney (1996: personal communication), Director of the Provincial Museum of Alberta, stated that repatriation would be a means of museums absolving themselves from the difficult issues of returns, thereby weakening the role of museums among First Nations. The Glenbow would consider outright repatriation as confirmation of their strong partnership with the Blackfoot - a means of respecting the will and confidence of the Blackfoot to reclaim authority over their own cultural property, which in turn would

only improve and continue strong relations with the museum and Blackfoot. Further, this relationship would serve to improve future partnerships with other First Nations groups.

CHAPTER TWO

The Blackfoot Bundle Complex

Western Versus Blackfoot World Views

The Western world view can be described as the antithetical image of Blackfoot world view. Where the Blackfoot see the world as cyclical, the Western world sees the world as a linear temporal sequence with a beginning and an end, in which time as an abstract entity dictates process and progress (Duran and Duran 1995: 14). Within the domain of healing, for example, the two perspectives are markedly different. Western health tends towards the belief that "time heals all wounds". Blackfoot health tends towards spiritual intensity of the moment rather than passage of time. A person may gain health not by dancing several times at ceremonies over several years, but by dancing with great intensity of faith and spirit, which carries through on a daily basis (ibid: 16).

In general terms, where the Blackfoot see the world as an inter-relational structure in which humans are one part of a larger whole, the majority of Western thinking has considered the world as a gift from God, made for the benefit of humans (Little Bear 1996b; Little Bear 1996c; Duran and Duran 1995: 14). Therefore, humans are comfortable controlling the world around them (Duran and Duran 1995: 15). This concept can be seen in such aspects of development as agriculture where humans dictate what will be grown on a piece of land; in the neat square grid patterns of fields; and in the construction of the gridded blocks of large cities.

Western, Judeo-Christian thought compartmentalizes the world around them, often resulting in dichotomies such as good and bad, saint or sinner, right or wrong, god

and the devil, heaven and hell (Little Bear 1996b; Little Bear 1996c; Duran and Duran 1995: 15). This compartmentalization is extended to their concept of the spiritual self. Where the Blackfoot consider their minds, bodies and spirits as part of the "relational network" in which all things are spiritually related, Western world view tends to separate the mind from the body and from the spirit (ibid).

Blackfoot World View

There are four dimensions within the Blackfoot bundle complex, those of land, space, place and time (Little Bear 1996b; Little Bear 1996c; Epes Brown 1976). Songs and stories are told at ceremonies which allow Blackfoot people to gain the knowledge of their ancestors in these four dimensions. This knowledge allows the Blackfoot to reach an understanding of the importance of the land on which they live, the necessity of renewing their relationship with nature, and the cycle of life. Blackfoot identity, as it relates to the world around them, legitimizes the place of Blackfoot people on Earth. Their identity is reaffirmed in the songs and stories recounted during ceremonies, transferring the knowledge of their ancestry and answering questions such as: Who they are? Where they come from? And why they exist?

According to the Blackfoot, *Issapaitapi* or Creator has brought three groups of beings, apart from human beings, in to their world (Conaty 1995: 405). *Sspomitapiiksi* are the group of Above People which refers to the "birds of the upper sky" such as eagles and cranes. *Sspomitapiiksi* also includes other beings of the sky such as the Sun, Moon, Morning Star, planets and other stars (ibid). *Ksaahkommitapiiksi* are the Earth People

which refers to land dwelling birds, animals and plants (ibid). *Sooyitapiiksi* are the Underwater People such as fish and water dwelling animals including beavers and marten (ibid). Blackfoot refer to themselves as *Niitsitapi* or Real People (ibid).

Blackfoot ideology is rooted in what Leroy Little Bear from the Blood community terms the "relational network" between these three groups of beings and all animate things (Little Bear 1996b; Little Bear 1996c). By this, he is referring to how all things within the Blackfoot world are interrelated by spirit. They are all made of the same universal energy or spirit which makes all things animate, including humans, animals, birds, fish, trees, rocks and stones (ibid). As these are made of the same energy, the Blackfoot refer to all forms of nature as "all my relations", and call on this energy at times of ritual and ceremony (ibid).

Beings from each of the three groups *Sspomitapiiksi*, *Ksaahkommitapiiksi* and *Sooyitapiiksi* give themselves to *Niitsitapi* in order that the Blackfoot will have a means by which to communicate with the spiritual world (Crow Shoe 1996b: personal communication; Conaty 1995: 405). Birds and animals such as owls, loons and beavers give their bodies to sacred bundles as physical manifestations of their spiritual power (ibid). They also serve as symbols of ancestral stories related to the origination of particular bundles, which will be recounted when the sacred bundles are ritually opened.

Ceremonies related to the opening of sacred bundles, including the Natoas, Thunder Medicine Pipe, Mo'tokiks bundles and Horn Society Bundles, are grounded in concepts of time and space. For the Blackfoot, the only constant is change (Little Bear 1996b; Little Bear 1996c). Little Bear refers to this as "constant flux" in which there is

constant movement of such things as seasons or migration of birds and animals (ibid). These form a predictable pattern, a cycle of naturally occurring events such as blooming flowers, falling leaves, thunder storms and snow storms, which serve as reference points of time. The Blackfoot pray and prepare for each coming season by holding bundle opening ceremonies that honour the gifts of nature throughout the year and uphold their mythology (Weasel Moccasin Jr. 1996b: personal communication). Praying and ceremonials constitute a continuous seasonal and daily cycle of ritual which is the mechanism by which the Blackfoot anchor themselves in time, and by which they maintain a balance between nature and *Niitsitapi*.

If we want to continue to exist we need to continue the renewal process ... We have to do our part to maintain this condition otherwise our continual existence will disappear ... So we can say well tomorrow the sun is going to rise, but even at that ... you [can] take part in bringing about your reality. So the Indian standing at the top of the hill while the sun rises is his way of helping the sun to come up - that's our part. The rest of Creation will play their part. We can't take for granted that the sun will come up (Little Bear: 1996c).

The place in which ceremonies take place ties the Blackfoot to the land on which their ancestors lived, and on which they now live, as they return each year for ceremonies. The fact that the same ceremonies occur in the same place creates the concept of sacred space (Little Bear 1996b; Little Bear 1996c). Owing to the concept of constant flux, the day on which seasonal or annual ceremonies occur will not always be the same each year (ibid). What is essential however, is that the ceremonies occur at the same place to respect the concept of sacred space (ibid). Little Bear explains that this allows the Blackfoot to have a main reference point in order to gauge time and sacred

space (ibid). He terms these reference points as "observational points",

Points where regular renewal aspects of our culture take place arising from the inter-relational network. For example Sun Dances at the Belly Butts [Blood Reserve], they will not occur ten miles away, they always occur in the same place (Little Bear 1996c).

... in White society ... I am pushed that come December 25th I celebrate Christmas. It doesn't matter if I'm in Africa, India, but December 25th is Christmas. But with the Sun Dance you can't say that it will start July 26 1996. The people who have been coming to the Sun Dance for the past 4-5 years will determine when it will happen, but it doesn't have to be at the same time, but it has to happen in the same place. So if I'm in Africa, I have to come home to have the Sun Dance occur (Little Bear 1996c).

Important to the meaning of sacred space is the concept of the centres of sacred space (Epes Brown 1976:31). For European and Blackfoot alike, the centre of a place of prayer requires a defined centre. For Christians the altar at the heart of a church or cathedral forms the sacred centre or axis that connects heaven to earth (ibid). For the Blackfoot, the central fire in a ceremonial tipi, or the cottonwood tree in the Elk tipi at the Holy Woman's O'kan, may be said to be the central axes that connects *Niitsitapi* to the energy of "all my relations", and send prayers to the Creator *Issapaitapi* (ibid).

The Bundle and its Authority

A bundle, such as a Medicine Pipe Bundle or Beaver bundle, is most commonly a particular group of sacred objects made from natural animal or plant matter, related to Blackfoot mythology, which are required for specific rituals and ceremonies. The specific contents of a bundle are within the boundaries of restricted knowledge and can only be detailed by those who have transferred rights. It can be said, however, that these objects are believed to be animate, and house within them the sacred spirit of the animals they

represent (Scout 1996: personal communication; Conaty and Janes 1996: 12). Further, an object holding a sacred meaning, such as a headdress, tipi design, or rattle, may also be referred to as a bundle (Conaty 1994: personal communication). As there are a great variety of objects used in different rituals, there are a number of different bundles used in Blackfoot ceremonies. The bundle concept is known to several indigenous Plains communities such as the Fox and Sauk, Pawnee and Plains Cree.

The word "sacred" can have many connotations, the varying definitions of which have been debated over time. Owing to the restricted knowledge surrounding Blackfoot bundles, it was not possible for this author to attain a definitive understanding of the Blackfoot perspective behind the use and meaning of the word "sacred". It is safe to say however, that as the bundle relates to the environment, and as it relates to the individuals who recognise its authority, a bundle in itself defines the meaning of sacred. According to the Durkheimian concept of the sacred, the bundle is indeed of this nature (Durkheim 1954). As he suggests, the Blackfoot themselves bestow bundles with sacredness, separate them from the profane, and raise them to the level of sacredness due to their being connected with all creation, living things or "all our relations" (Pickering 1984: 151-153).

... there are no gods, but only sacred beings, without their sacred character being related to any external entity as their source [animals, plants ... are the objects of worship] (Pickering 1984: 153).

"For Durkheim ... the sacred is to be located in collective beliefs and ideals" (Pickering 1984: 154). When a bundle is shared within the community, various individuals are included in its ownership by being given the right to wear and care for a part of the

bundle, such as a bracelet or a necklace. In so doing, each individual is able to share in its sacredness. As Durkheim indicates:

When a sacred being subdivides itself, it remains whole and equal to itself in each of its parts ... the part is equal to the whole; it has the same powers, it is equally effective (Pickering 1984: 155).

As such the bundle's sacredness extends to everything that it comes in contact with (Pickering 1984: 156). The bundle contents, the ground on which the bundle ceremony is conducted, the wrappings with which it is cared for, the songs with which it is teaches society, the experience of dancing with a headdress or Pipe, the tipi or lodge in which it is opened, these all take on the sacred meaning of the bundle. As Durkheim suggests, the restricted knowledge and access to bundles may be accounted for by the need to ritually protect the "extraordinary contagiousness of a sacred character" (ibid). Access is only permitted when a serious commitment has been ritually demonstrated through bundle transfer and ownership, such as the Thunder Medicine Pipe or the Natoas bundle, or membership in a sacred society such as the Mo'tokiks or Horn Societies (also see Chapters 3 and 5).

At the centre of each of the major ceremonials within the Blackfoot bundle complex is the bundle. Within each bundle is the physical, symbolic and spiritual representation of "all our relations" and that which is sacred.

When a bundle is put together all these running creatures and animals, and flying birds they all took part in some ceremonies. They gave us their songs, [that's] how come you see a lot of different birds and animals in a bundle. Lot of people question why those skins and birds are in there. There's visions and dreams where all those bundles are put together and they're all from Nature and the Creator provide that for us, and we believe in it (Scout 1996).

When we own a bundle it's just like a child to us. We have to take care of it - although there's a meaning behind it. It gives us a good life. Each nationality ... are given a certain way of praying. For us Native people we call it the Creator. Whatever we pray it's all Nature. We pray for the Sun, the Mother Earth. The Mother Earth, everything we live on ... grows those things with the help of the Sun. We pray to the Moon because night is a time for rest. Even as humans, the people, we rest at night so we will have a good bright day the next day. We pray to the Morning Star because Morning Star is there to mark a new day for us. All this that we pray for, the running creatures, the flying birds, they're all took part in our bundles, and that's why we prayed to all living creatures. We ask the Creator for a new good year, and for a brand new year (Scout 1996).

Reg Crow Shoe of the Old Man River Cultural Centre in Brocket, Alberta, also likens bundle ownership to having a child, in the sense that one can only know the related experiences and responsibilities by actually having a child or by having a bundle (Crow Shoe 1996b: personal communication).

Before that you can act freely and not many people will judge you. But once you have a child people do judge you. So by having a child comes a whole bundle of authority and responsibility that you have to have to [raise] that child (Crow Shoe 1996b).

It's the woman that takes care of the bundle ... that carries the bundle out for ceremonies ... that smudges them in the morning and then in the evening. It's just like when you have a new born baby that's how you take care of it. Your house has to be quiet. You can't have kids screaming and running around in your house ... And our boys have learned to adjust to that you know. They've learned to stay out of our room [where the bundle is kept], not to be so noisy and .. they've learned to have that sort of respect towards us now, and at the same time they're being taught too about our culture ... [The bundles] are teaching us about life, about our way of life, about the respect of the animals, the birds, our Elders, everything ... to respect it (Bruised Head 1996).

Well I see it as ... a baby ... Like you're living with someone spiritually. That its there to hear you when you pray ... to protect you not only for yourself, but for a lot of people. But I never look at it as an object ... I don't look at it as ... I'm going to gain something out of it. Its just there to really be with us spiritually (Weasel Moccasin 1996c).

As bundle ownership dictates moral behaviour, and offers knowledge of Blackfoot culture, health, and spirituality, the bundle brings about morality and respect, advice and healing (Pard 1996: personal communication). Several cases were cited during interviews with Blackfoot individuals, of how bundles have helped individuals in crisis or with chronic illness.

- Case 1: One of the women who took a vow with my bundle had done it because she had a difficult time birthing, where her child and her were in serious loss of life - hemorrhaging. But they made it through and her mother made a vow that if she and her baby made it they would dance with the bundle (Weasel Moccasin Jr. 1996b).
- Case 2: I've got a grandson that had real bad asthma right from the time he was born and he was catching colds every week and his colds would last two weeks and when he starts coughing he's wheezing and ... turning red and ... he's born in September and this went on till about February. One day he was really sick and he just seemed ... like he was grasping for air. So I prayed along with him and I told him that "you're going to dance with the Medicine Pipe Bundle this spring so your asthma won't act up anymore" ... Well he was going to dance with the Medicine Pipe Bundle [but] he started to get sick again and then that was over must have been about a week or two weeks after his flu went away and then since then ... he catches colds now but it's not as bad as before. And ... he hasn't wheezed that bad and he has never coughed constantly, but he won't catch colds (Weasel Moccasin 1996c).

In these situations, the individuals took a personal vow prior to formally discussing it with a bundle holder. Each individual made it at the time of crisis and then worked to confirm her vow.

Case 3: Like my daughter is going to get the Natoas and she'll be ... [putting up] ... the Sun Dance ... because we're looking for help in a lot of ways, her and I, and for everybody that's involved in the family 'cause of her son Austin. He's crawling around now, he's got muscular dystrophy. When he was young he was able to run and walk and now he's at the point where he's not walking anymore. That's her main pledge of putting of the Sun Dance is to help her son. He might never walk again. What we're looking at is the strength for him and for us to deal with it, so that other things could happen. For us he might never walk but he might, may be through education, develop some kind of career where he doesn't have to be walking that he can get by his life to be a productive person and not to have somebody looking after him (Provost 1996).

The individual is not so much looking for a cure as much as wanting to find some faith and direction on how his family can cope with the illness of this grandson, and lead him towards a better life.

Case 4: When we first opened ... the Medicine Pipe Bundle there was a lady. I don't know if she was from B.C. or Saskatchewan. She came and she said she had cancer, and she went to see the doctor and they told her that they can't do anything more for her ... She was quite desperate and she came and asked me if she can have her face painted and if she can dance with the bundle and how much she had to pay. I told her well whatever you can offer, we can't set prices you know to this stuff. Whatever you can offer if you're gonna dance with it, or if you don't have anything you can just go ahead and dance with it. So she did and about two months after she sent a message out to the old folks, Florence and Dan. She told them that her cancer didn't show any more ... when she went back to get more tests and that didn't show (Weasel Moccasin 1996c).

Case 5: A year ago ... a professor came to Reggie's [Crow Shoe's] cultural camp. Reggie asked to have a sweat. This guy attended and wanted us to pray for his friend who was dying of cancer ... We prayed. Two days later his friend had recovered. Went to the doctor and there was no sign of

cancer. That was an outside person who had no understanding or knowledge of our race (Pard 1996).

When asked what is the mechanism behind the bundle that it can heal, Rosaline Weasel

Moccasin answered:

It's the belief. It's the belief that you have within yourself. Like if I say well my husband is going to dance with this bundle I have to have that belief that it's going to do something for my husband or for my children or for my parents or for my relatives. I have to have that faith. Well we have to say it out loud. We can't just say just mumble it, but we have to say it out loud. And then we have to notify the people "OK this is what we have pledged ...". It's not really dependent on the other person, but whoever does the pledging has to have that faith that something is gonna [happen] (Weasel Moccasin 1996c).

The bundle is considered to hold the spiritual, cultural and social teachings of the ancestors which are relayed through songs (Crow Shoe 1996c: personal communication).

As such, the knowledge of these songs has vested in it significant authority that allows an individual to assist the community at large in terms of spiritual and cultural advice, health, and peace of mind.

... the power [is] within that bundle ... Belief, the protocol, the language put [it] together. The ceremony is the venue that brings together say the songs, the language, the action together to a power point that brings healing ... But its [the] one point when all this comes together, the song, the people, the bundle, the ceremony ... all coming together at the right time. But the bundle is the powerful creator not me, I'm only the conduit (Crow Shoe 1996c).

The "power" that is being discussed here is not that of control, but of authority (Crow Shoe 1996c: personal communication). Here, Crow Shoe is referring to the authority of stories that are passed down through bundle ownership (ibid). He defines bundle authority as the knowledge of the stories associated with individual bundles,

which are based in oral history and provide the Blackfoot with the norms and standards by which to conduct their lives (ibid). Through reciting the songs and stories in combination with communal prayer, the Blackfoot believe that the bundle has the authority or power to assist individuals or families to bring about better lives or health (ibid; Weasel Head 1996: personal communication; Scout 1996: personal communication; Provost 1996: personal communication; Crow Shoe 1996a: personal communication; Bruised Head 1996: personal communication; Weasel Moccasin 1996c: personal communication).

Responsibility, Protocol and Community Solidarity

As participants in the Blackfoot bundle complex, individuals are considered to be the caretakers of bundles, which are their lifelines to the Creator and the universe around them. However minor one's role, taking on such a responsibility is done so with serious consideration and commitment through the ritual transfer of rights (Weasel Head 1996: personal communication).

... the moral and daily living aspects of our culture and religion go hand in hand. That's why by having the way its done [transfer of rights] we earn [responsibility]... The responsibility to fulfil this was given to me, the right to this ... Everything is transferred so we live in a responsible way - we take it seriously. We don't go and do things just for the sake of doing things (Weasel Head 1996).

The late Dan Weasel Moccasin had a goal to ensure that the spiritual ways of his people were continued by his children (Weasel Moccasin 1996a: personal communication). His son Daniel, at this time, was an experienced drummer for Blackfoot

ceremonies, but had never been involved in singing the songs related to bundles as he had not previously owned a bundle (ibid). His father worked closely with Glenbow to return the Blackfoot Thunder Medicine Bundle, known as *Siksika-o'koyniman*, under the condition of a long-term loan. Daniel and his wife Rosaline took on the responsibility of bundle ownership when it first returned to the Bloods in 1990. Today, they hold the important role of opening the majority of Thunder Medicine Pipe Bundles on the Blood Reserve, and a few on the Peigan reserve, and conduct significant ceremonies related to the Horn Society. Here Rosaline Weasel Moccasin describes how she became involved in bundle ownership.

I'd just drop [Daniel] off [at ceremonies] and then I'd leave ... Well as time went on and I noticed like these other people were around and I figured well maybe I'll stay around and you know see what's going on 'cause I'd never really taken part or even to listen or to observe. So I told Daniel "Well what do I need?" and he said "Well you just need a bowl you know", he was telling me what I needed. ... The first one was over at Martin Eagle Child's, that's when I first went in there and ... not in to the main but I'm sitting outside where the others were sitting. But I wasn't really paying attention ... I was more just like visiting other people you know talking and ... they started dancing and that really caught me and I figured "yeah I remember seeing this before you know". I watched them dance ... [and] ... I kind of questioned myself you know and I figured "well maybe some day I will be sitting in there but maybe not". Now ... it's probably the thought that connected me into higher powers ... the way I was thinking. And not too long after Daniel said "well the old man [Dan Weasel Moccasin] ... they're trying to get a Medicine Pipe Bundle". But I never thought it would be us to take it. The old man asked Daniel you know. Two years after I kind of thought you know there must have been a real strong connection while I was sitting in there. That's how I got involved (Weasel Moccasin 1996c).

Following the experience of caring for *Siksika-o'koyniman* for a year, Daniel and Rosaline decided to transfer the bundle to Pat Provost and Jenny Bruised Head on the

Peigan reserve. Although they had not had the bundle for long, they knew that Pat and Jenny had been in dire need and looking to care for a bundle (Weasel Moccasin 1996a: personal communication; Provost 1996: personal communication). This did not mean the end of their involvement with the Blackfoot bundle complex. On the contrary, according to the Blackfoot protocol, the Weasel Moccasins, having owned and cared for a bundle and transferred it, went on to the next experience of conducting songs and ceremonies for bundle holders, and acting as advisors (Weasel Head 1996: personal communication).

Once you become a member, even after you transfer to another person, you still have to live by those protocols. In these Societies we're all brothers and sisters. There's more responsibilities once you transfer as you now have the right to go out and be ... a teacher (Weasel Head 1996).

... once you take that step to be leader then you better be very ... strict. You gotta ... really watch yourself, you gotta really practise what you're preaching. So just by living it, it teaches people, not by talking but by living (Provost 1996).

Daniel describes his experience in taking on the responsibilities of this role within the Blackfoot spiritual ways:

Well, the week before the Old Man [Dan Weasel Moccasin] died, Pat [Provost] had a feast for his bundle. And the four main guys that the old man depended on were all there. And he gave us a little speech let's put it that way, words of encouragement. He told us the four, he named us, the four. He told us "In the future I want you to carry on" you know what he's doing, the religion, "carry it on to the next generation, you know be strong about [it] and don't lose faith and keep going". And then, a week after he passed away. I never thought, you know, I never thought that I'd step into his footsteps with these Medicine Pipe Bundles. And then I think it was around January or February, Pat came to see me to open the bundle. I told him "I'm not ready for it, it's too hard for me, the Old Man just passing away" and I told him "well let me think about it, but I'm not ready, I don't know the songs". Then I dreamt about the Old Man. He wasn't saying anything, just standing there. And Pat came back and he told me that he really wanted me to open the bundle. So I was kind of thinking about [it]

... and I thought back, dreaming of the Old Man, and the encouragement he gave us to keep it going. So I told him "I'm ready, I'll do it". But you know ... it's kind of like I was lost. I told myself "I don't even know anything about these Medicine Pipe Bundles" ... "I've been going to them and I wasn't even observing the old man what he was doing". And I told myself I'm not, I'm not, I'm not ready for it yet. It's kind of a scary feeling, you know the mistakes, what kind of a mistake am I going to have ... like I didn't have faith in myself. I didn't have that faith in me. So I started practicing those songs and it seems like I wasn't learning them, I wasn't learning those songs. But then I was getting closer, then I thought "I'm not going to know anything. I'm not going to know those songs or nothing". And that's the way you know I thought about myself. "Can't do it", that's what I kept saying to myself. Finally I told myself "oh I'm going to do it. I can do it". The old man wanted me to carry on, so I'm going to do what he does. Soon, I asked for the prayers, overnight I knew the songs. There's a lot, you know. The faith I had, everything came back, what I was supposed to do and stuff like that. It was scary at first. There's some that can open bundles but it's the songs, they're hard, but you have to face it. These bundles are really powerful. They tell me to open the bundle, the night before I will dream about it. A good dream will come. Now, this is what, the third year I going to do the bundle opening, but I still get the jitters (Weasel Moccasin 1996a).

This experience is representative of anyone taking on this kind of responsibility within the bundle complex. Several of the bundle holders and previous holders involved in this study spoke of the leap of faith they took in the Creator and in themselves in order to situate themselves at the centre of the responsibility of bundle ownership and/or conducting ceremonies. They also spoke, however, of the comfort and clarity of understanding they have achieved through this commitment, and the enhancement of their daily lives.

With the authority of bundle ownership comes a strict protocol in regard to lifestyle, commitment and personal conduct. A bundle owner is a model of conduct for others.

You have to remember you have to live up to that status ... your moral behaviour, your protocols and the way you live your life - it has to change ... moral conduct and the responsibilities [started] to shift onto me ... That's not being outspoken and sitting at the head of a table at a meeting and being the guy standing up there preaching. No ... you almost take a step backwards when you own them and live a quiet life, almost a secluded life. In some cases [protocols] are pretty strict, some are pretty minor but they're pretty hard to keep (Weasel Head 1996).

Further, bundle ownership brings about community solidarity as owners of like bundles come together for ceremonies to ritually renew and open their bundles (Pard 1996: personal communication). Durkheim, in *The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life* (1954) states:

... individuals ... feel themselves united to each other by the simple fact that they have a common faith. A society['s] ... members are united by the fact that they think in the same way in regard to the sacred world and its relations with the profane world, and by the fact that they translate these common ideas into common practices ... (Lessa and Vogt 1979: 29)

According to Florence Scout, a Mo'tokiks Society member:

We have our ceremonies in the Spring time when we hear the Thunder, [we know] it's time for the Medicine Pipe Bundle to be opened. The first one that comes on are the Beaver Bundles. I was told that Beaver Bundles are opened twice a year, the early part of Spring before the flood is on [and Fall]. Then ... after we hear the Thunder, all the Medicine Pipe Bundle owners have to have their ceremonies ... to greet the Thunder. The other Societies, we have a certain month ... that we get together in a camp and we have our Buffalo and Horn Society doings. And there's Brave Dogs there, they take part in our Sun Dance. The Medicine Lodge Woman has her doings there too. Once a year all these things come on. Then late in the Fall to close off everything, the Beaver Bundles are opened again. These are the time that our spiritual doings are on (Scout 1996).

Each season we are praying and preparing for the next season. Therefore the praying and ceremonies never ends and is a daily ritual. All night [All Smoke] ceremonies occur because that is the majority of the day in the winter. All day in the summer (Weasel Moccasin Jr. 1996b).

These year round gatherings of the ceremonial practices of the Blackfoot work to reaffirm their identity and way of life (Pard 1996: personal communication).

[Native spirituality] is like a child. If you are brought up in this world without love, how can you have self-esteem? How can you have confidence? How can you do anything without love, confidence, self-esteem? That's what our spirituality is [doing]. We foster, we feed, we thrive on this love, we thrive on this expression of unity, of togetherness, expressing our freedom, expressing our religion, our prayers to the Creator ... in order for the Native person to be ... a whole person. The key to function as a whole person is our spirituality, accepting ourselves as we are, our culture and our traditions through these bundles. They [bundles] help people that are in need with ceremonies, but also our social services, [and] our children grow up with their language (Pard 1996: Potts Jr. 1996).

... the key to our bundles, the key to our spirituality focuses on total Native lifestyle. This whole life is centred around our spirituality. So when it comes to addressing social and community development ... that we require so badly on this reserve and for our Native people, again our spirituality plays a key role. We're finding out that when we're teaching our children the Native language, their self esteem rises. So in order for us Natives best helping ourselves, we have to be Native. A lot of our programming now, for example this institution I'm working for [Stand-Off Correctional Centre], we're utilizing our culture and if we don't have our bundles and spirituality what are we? Just brown-skins and what not, but no heart (Pard 1996).

In addition to a strong sense of community, this significant move back to the original Blackfoot belief and social system has brought about a stronger sense of faith in oneself.

It teaches morals, values. We see the spin off of what has happened since Bible times. Younger people [are] getting more into it [Blackfoot spirituality] and getting involved and it's helping out in their lives. Addiction programmes utilize it quite a bit, it's probably their main focus is Native spirituality. Child care services and education too they're using it in a vast range (Pard 1996).

As a Catholic I did pray, but I didn't really pray from the heart and from the mind. I prayed through a book, reading it word for word and never had my [own] word of prayer. With this [Blackfoot spirituality] it is from the heart and from the mind that you pray. And that really helps me quite a bit because I'm praying myself, not something I'm reading. I find it a lot stronger for me (Weasel Moccasin 1996c).

... through Indian beliefs you're a part of everything around, and it teaches you where you fit in the world ... in your environment (Potts Jr. 1996).

Bundles and Their Return to the Blackfoot

... these bundles, the ones in the museums ... there's life in them. We sense it. We go in there [museum storage rooms], we sense that feeling there is life in them. When we leave we feel sad for them. We feel "I wish I could do something". They want to get out of there. Sometimes [it's] as if we're being pulled back [and they're saying] "Stay for a while" (Weasel Moccasin 1996a).

The growth of interest in the bundle complex is evident in the increasing number of transfers occurring on the reserves over more recent years, partially owing to such movement as Glenbow long-term loan programme (Scout 1996: personal communication; Weasel Head 1996: personal communication). Since missionary presence among the Blackfoot, because of the lack of bundles on the reserve, the few individuals who owned bundles would hesitate to transfer them (Weasel Head 1996: personal communication; Provost 1996: personal communication). Therefore, over the course of the 20th century, bundle ownership has become increasingly individualized in contrast to the traditional concept of communal ownership. The latter required the bundle to be cared by one household, however, others usually within in the kin group were also encouraged to participate in its care (ibid). The day-to-day care of the bundle was considered to be essential in order for the keepers of the bundle to learn as much about its teachings as

possible (ibid). The transfer of the bundle was also condoned in order to ensure that its knowledge was communal in nature (ibid). As we shall see, today there is a cultural and spiritual renaissance in which the communal aspect of bundle ownership is strengthening. With an adequate number of bundles now in circulation, the traditional reciprocities are now once again emerging.

[Today] they're learning to just give it up when it was asked for. That tradition [is] coming back. Because everybody all of a sudden hung on [to bundles], there were so few of them that nobody wanted to let go of what they had. But years ago ... if we had a dream and we approached somebody and say well we had a dream about a pipe, they'll give it up because they know when they're asked to do something like that, that they're teaching everybody respect of generosity and helping out. [If] they refuse you, well that's completely going against what their teachings are ... I think with more of the bundles being released and more people owning them, that part of being generous and passing it on will slowly come back. And the more people on our reserves will be involved and ... then we'll maintain our culture (Provost 1996).

The Blood and Peigan have been working consistently for almost 30 years to regain ownership of their bundles (Weasel Head 1996: personal communication; Pard 1996: personal communication). Alan Pard of the Peigan remembers working with the Old Man River Cultural Centre in 1977, at the beginning of the Blackfoot cultural revival (Pard 1996: personal communication). He applied for a grant from the Treaty 7 Commemoration committee to allow him to travel and meet with the Provincial Museum of Alberta to discuss the potential return of Joe Crow Shoe's Natoas or Sun Dance Bundle (ibid). Additionally, Frank Weasel Head of the Blood community recalls how in 1971 he became more involved in working with the Provincial Museum of Alberta to loan Horn Society Bundles to the Bloods (Weasel Head 1996: personal communication). That

summer the PMA did loan the bundles to the Bloods but under the condition that they be returned by the Fall of the same year (ibid).

To date, both Blood and Peigan individuals and Horn members such as Dan Weasel Moccasin, Frank Weasel Head, Pete Standing Alone, Alan Pard, Martin Heavy Head, Francis First Charger and Narcisse and Alvine Blood have been active in arranging the long-term loan or repatriation of several bundles from North American institutions such as the Glenbow, Canadian Museum of Civilization, Gonzaga University in Spokane, the Heye Foundation of the Museum of the American Indian in New York, and the Peabody Museum in Boston (Weasel Head 1996: personal communication).

Frank Weasel Head's involvement in this process usually begins when individuals from his community locate bundles that once belonged to the Blackfoot (ibid). They approach Frank in his role as a previous bundle holder and present ceremonialist, to go to these institutions to identify the bundles as being authentically Blackfoot and ensure that they are not replicas (ibid). After negotiating the return of the bundles he then either represents the holder of the bundle and transfers it to the new recipient, or conducts the transfer ceremony (ibid).

With these religious pipes and other things, when we repatriate them it just takes a matter of days before they are transferred to an individual. They are put back into use. They are not put back on display. They are handled according to the way they were looked after all their lives (Weasel Head 1996).

I'm working on repatriation from the U.S. with one of those bundles. I've had a person after me for three years. It's a little different with the repatriation of those we bring back. Once the initial transfer has taken place, the second one is a lot different and easier. Right now with repatriation, who owns it and who sold it has been long gone, so it makes

it a little difficult. So first come first serve, then hopefully it will revert back to the old ways of transferring. Any member has a right to ask. Every member is legitimate in asking. There's no real protocol, you don't have to have been religious in the past (Weasel Head 1996).

Continuity and Change

Abstract Repatriation vs. Physical Repatriation

Within the Blood and Peigan communities there are two predominant patterns of religious experiences. First, there are those who have grown up with bundles and have been exposed to their meanings throughout their lives, and are now continuing the traditions of their parents and grandparents; and second, there are those that were brought up within the Christian faith, but having been aware of Blackfoot spirituality, in adulthood have chosen to take on the original Blackfoot traditions through the guidance of existing practitioners and Elders.

Perhaps because of divergent experiences, there is a difference in opinion regarding the return of sacred bundles to the community which occur among both groups. Reg Crow Shoe of the Old Man River Cultural Centre was brought up with his father's Short Thunder Medicine Pipe Bundle:

I was born into the Short Medicine Pipe Bundle. [It] was one of the last strongholds of the Peigan ceremonies 'cause after the bundles went to the museum that was the only one that held the 80 years strength. And I was fortunate to be one of the kids growing up along side it. My father was the owner for 40 years and is still the owner. So my grandparents that I've seen and talk to me about ceremonies and gave me my beliefs mean a lot to me ... (Crow Shoe 1996a).

According to Crow Shoe, before any kind of "physical" repatriation occurs from museums, the Blackfoot have to develop an "abstract" repatriation (Crow Shoe 1996a:

personal communication). By this he is referring to the Red Book Project which is an initiative he began which develops and explores the specifics of cultural authority and responsibility (ibid).

My belief is cultural survival ... we have to look at the repatriation of cultural authority first ... We got to really develop the policies of cultural authority before we look at the repatriation of cultural material ... Cultural authority would be like a job description in which one is responsible for certain activities that no one can do except you. You're a cog in the wheel, not the wheel itself. And when you are done you pass it on to somebody else and you advise that person after to keep that wheel going (Crow Shoe 1996a).

[Through] decision making process we make norms, standards and laws. And before you can understand norms, standards and laws you've got to understand the decision making process ... establish or define that traditional concept [then] you know rules of order, rules of conduct, rules of decision making [and these] have to find parallels in the Western concept ... That's what we're working on right now (Crow Shoe 1996a).

Right now we are looking at an alternative system of justice. We want to implement our traditional concepts of decision making to run our own alternative justice system. We've been doing sentencing circles. But the justice system is asking us to define the practice and that's what we're doing. I just want to define practice and leave out the sacred traditional theory right now, but define the practice and find parallels in Western theory and practice that will define this practice. 'Cause if we can define that translation then our kids can read about our traditional processes and therefore spark an interest in cultural preservation. This is the Red Book Project which has been running for 5-6 years now ... we feel like we gained a lot, but from the general scope of things we've moved a little bit. Again convincing is not with only non-Native communities but within Native communities themselves (Crow Shoe 1996a).

In contrast, Jerry Potts Jr., who is also Peigan, has also grown up with traditional Blackfoot spirituality, and is a member of the Horn Society, states:

We don't have 5-10-15 years to act. Its now. We have to act now, the time is right. We have people that are committed and want to do it. We require a community, and the community is there. Our people are walking

into a really confusing era, trying times. And these are the things we need to give us strength to make the steps for personal development and social development. Its really required (Potts Jr. 1996).

To find yourself you can't wait for somebody to do it. *You've* got to make it happen. Even now we are down to so few people that can give real teachings on that stuff (Potts Jr. 1996).

Alan Pard, also a Peigan and active spiritualist, currently holds a Medicine Pipe Bundle, a Beaver Bundle, is a Horn Society member and works at the Stand-Off (Blood) Correctional Centre. He states:

All our ways were given from above. They weren't man made. The bundles we pray with, everything comes from up, our ceremonies. It wasn't some guy sitting there like Einstein, some kind of wise man who said I'll do this 'cause it really makes sense. No (Pard 1996).

The contemporary bundle complex is already activated by individuals from both types of religious experiences participating in the process of strengthening Blackfoot spirituality. According to the majority of previous and present bundle holders involved in this study, the norms, standards and rules are already in place and developing their strength through the practice of the faith (Pard 1996: personal communication; Potts Jr. 1996: personal communication; Provost 1996: personal communication). There is an acknowledgment that significant teachings have been lost; however, there is a strong commitment to ensure that what remains will become as strong as the original Blackfoot belief system once was.

It will never be the same, but its similar. Its like everything else, it changes. Any other religion, like the Catholic religion, you know how strict it was to where it is now. Well it's the same with this one. It's still strict but we lost a lot ... 'cause you take that generation that never practices this, it was totally taken away from them. My grandfather, some of those people is just when it started to get taken away, they didn't practice. When we started getting into it we were learning from people that were already 70-80 years old that only gave us 5-6 years of teaching

and then they passed on [Dan Weasel Moccasin] ... Some other Elders that were able to maintain their family and their teaching, some of that group carried it on to us also, but there's a real large gap in there. So what happened was some of the things were lost along the way. The basic rules are still there but there's certain changes that have taken place. But basically it's still the same, the major rules are still there (Provost 1996).

It can never be exactly the same way as our [ancestors] ... but as closely as we can get because we also got to change with the times. I also use the Catholics as an example. I remember when I went to Boarding School I couldn't understand what the priest was saying, it was all in Latin and see how it's changed ... And no-one could touch the Host but the priest [and now] Deacons or whatever, laymen, they're getting communion and they touching the Hosts and when I first went to school that was big No No No No. So I sometimes think we also have to change to fit our way of life. There's gotta be some slight changes as long as the main things are still there (Weasel Head 1996).

We don't live it everyday, even though we smudge everyday, morning, evening, we're not like the old people where when they sat down and smudged they probably prayed for two, three, four hours, and did other things for the whole day, or sitting with other Elders, like visiting ... so there were certain things that were done to pass the time, visiting and telling stories, there was a lot. There was no tv's or entertainment all that ... there was a lot of story telling, lot of knowledge was being exchanged. Whereas now you'll smudge and you'll get in your vehicle and take off and you're caught up in the other world until you come back in the evening again. So it just can't be like the way it was. But it's basically ... the general rules that are still there and practiced. It's a hard thing, it's frustrating (Provost 1996).

The Origination of New Bundles vs. Returning Existing Bundles

Ten years ago, when long-term loans of sacred bundles from museums were out of the question, Reg Crow Shoe of the Peigan community was requested by his Elders to create a new Natoas Bundle in order to continue the tradition of O'kan or Sun Dance (Crow Shoe 1996c: personal communication).

You have to do what your community asks of you. You're public property. You get transferred rights because you're responsible. I don't know how many times in Sun Dance I've been told "the community is your children now". They're not saying "you own power". No. They're saying "the community is your children. Listen to them." (Crow Shoe 1996c).

My belief is in the Natoas, The fact that my grandmother the Old Lady Buffalo was 104 or so, and she said "look you gotta do this if we want to keep the Sun Dance going, here are my instructions". When Old Lady Opskots (?) said "Look you've gotta maintain the Sun Dance" and she was a Sun Dance Woman. When my house was filled with Sun Dance people ... everyone talked about having to get this done. There were about 32 people in my basement that dealt with Sun Dance ... the majority ... said "get it done". They made smudge and sang Sun Dance songs and gave me direction. Now what am I supposed to do? (Crow Shoe 1996c).

I'll never say that it was *me* that went and did that because I would never take on personal power. I will always represent responsibility, that's my belief ... because I feel I've got responsibility to my people and my cultural preservation (Crow Shoe 1996c).

Reg Crow Shoe has come under considerable criticism from some individuals from both Peigan and Blood communities over the origination of this bundle. In pre-contact days, bundles that were lost in fires or stolen during battle were often replaced by the holder (Dempsey 1996: personal communication). Knowledge that a bundle holder retained despite the absence of the bundle was considered as sacred as the bundle itself, and therefore could be used to create a new bundle. (ibid). The particular bundle that Reg Crow Shoe and his supporting Elders originated was not one that replaced another (Crow Shoe 1996: personal communication). He created a new bundle, and this process required that he combine various bundle components from the Provincial Museum of Alberta into a new Natoas Bundle (ibid). When it was activated through ceremony it required the presence of a Natoas Bundle from the Provincial Museum in order to ritually

transfer the authority of this bundle to the new one (ibid). The museum-owned bundle did not lose its authority through this transfer, and the new one was not considered to be it's representation or replica (ibid).

It is this reason that some other Blackfoot spiritualists take issue with the origination concept, as according to Blackfoot mythology only the Creator can make whole bundles (Scout 1996: personal communication). Their origination is not done by human hands, however the replacement of small parts of bundles due to wear and tear is permitted to individuals who have the rights to carry out the replacement (ibid; Weasel Head 1996: personal communication). There is the feeling that today people are not yet ready to take on something quite as serious and sacred and creating a new bundle, as there is still a lot more learning to do (Pard 1996: personal communication).

... all rights have to be transferred [as in the] case ... to replace those items. I was given that rite with my Medicine Pipe just through one very small object, the whistle wasn't right. An old man transferred a new whistle to me then I was told "now you have the right and can fix anything in a Medicine Pipe". So I earned that right ... In the Horn Society I was given that right by another elderly man, a portion of my uncle's. So not all bundles. I can only look after Horn Society Bundles, I've got the right to do it (Weasel Head 1996).

Some understand that a decade ago it was extremely difficult to have bundles returned to their communities, and that Reg Crow Shoe was put in a very difficult situation. There is a very strong consensus, however, among the majority of the Blackfoot spiritualists involved in this study to ensure that the original bundles be returned to their communities (Weasel Head 1996: personal communication; Scout 1996: personal communication; Pard 1996: personal communication; Potts Jr. 1996: personal

communication; Weasel Moccasin 1996a: personal communication; Weasel Moccasin 1996c: personal communication; Provost 1996: personal communication; Bruised Head 1996: personal communication).

We require those sacred artifacts, 'cause we are not those people who build or made those artifacts. We are not those people anymore. So we need the strength through those old sacred bundles to help us. May be it'll be take another 50-100 years before our people will have the strength to start building or recreating those bundles. From our perspective, spiritually we require the original bundles. We are a beaten defeated people that went through a lot. Our generation really required a lot of strength. And gone are our Elders who probably would have been re-originating these bundles. But all of those Elders are gone. In order for us to have some respect and some recognition for what we're doing we require the original bundles. That's just a sign of the times. We want the original bundles [as a] continuation of our lifestyle, our lifeline. In order for us to have something of significance we have to have something that's been continued ... Its like putting us in a zoo with those remade bundles and sitting in the mockery of that environment ... (Pard 1996).

Those bundles have everything. To us they go back to the dog days, even before there were horses or anything (Potts Jr. 1996).

And there are some things we just can't do. We can't just go out and get a scalplock. Well we could do it these days, but there'd be repercussions you know [laughs]. Different kind of repercussions. So there's limitations in recreating a bundle. Again my feelings are, and I think I speak for many of the traditionalists, we're in no position to be recreating those bundles (Pard 1996).

If you have an original bundle that has been used for ceremonies, I don't like for us to make replicas for a simple reason. For example ... I was brought up in Catholic boarding school and I use that as an example. You have your host to say communion ... and before they're blessed anybody can come and eat them, just like candy 'cause they're not blessed. But once they're blessed, nobody else can touch them except the priests. Those things are blessed. Why should we make a replica when that original one is still in existence? It has to come back here. If you [museum] have Medicine Pipe Bundles I don't mind you making a replica, but the original one has to come back. That replica can be there because it has never been blessed (Weasel Head 1996).

These debates over questions of origination and repatriation notwithstanding, there is a consensus among the Blackfoot to preserve their cultural heritage. When asked about his opinion regarding the return of sacred materials on long-term loan from museums, Reg Crow Shoe states:

I see ... repatriation or loaning these things back as positive. I see it as looking in the right direction ... I see it as a positive move in the right direction, but I think there could be more work in understanding (Crow Shoe 1996).

Regardless of personal views, there appears to be little variation in carrying out ceremonials. Where there are variations, these are accounted for by the teachings being learned, secured and carried out through oral tradition.

... Oral traditions, the way they think of oral tradition - in the Blackfoot, oral tradition it's like a poem, it's memorized word for word, verse for verse. So it doesn't change. 'cause we are astute to the variations that can happen due to oral tradition. So when we're handing down ceremonies or legends or what have you, we do our homework. [There's no] loosy-goosy things happening (Pard 1996).

Each ceremony carries out the appropriate step by step procedure of ritually opening the bundle, feasting, communal prayer, protective painting of faces for those that have taken vows, and painting others attending the ceremonial, dancing, and gift giving. While there are differences in sequence of events, the essential concepts persist, such as respect for the bundle, and acknowledging its authority to assist the Blackfoot life way. There is acknowledgment that Blackfoot spirituality and bundle ownership are life-long processes and commitments, during which there is an enormous amount to learn, the effects of which are seen over several years (Weasel Head 1996: personal communication).

We're not asking for our objects just to be returned for our own economic gain to put them in a museum and charge money. No. They're going to be put back into families. Some of the moral benefits will not be seen for maybe 10, 15, 20 years. I'm not afraid to use myself as an example. [I] first owned a Medicine Pipe Bundle in 1962, so [I've been] involved as an owner and past owner for 34 years. But its only in the last 5-6 years that all that teaching, all that moral behaviour is finally starting to show (Weasel Head 1996).

It's changed lives. It's educated a lot of people by letting these bundles go. A lot of knowledge goes along with it. A lot of ceremonies that weren't practiced for many years are being practiced now, and all these ceremonies are being transferred to our children, to our grandchildren, whoever else wants to get involved. Its not so much of a restriction now, its open to everybody (Bruised Head 1996).

CHAPTER THREE

The Ceremonial Use of the Returned Bundle in Contemporary Blood and Peigan Communities

Sacred materials, such as the Natoas Headdress or Medicine Pipe, through mythology are regarded as having been given to the Blackfoot people by the Creator and by the creatures of their natural environment (Scout 1996; personal communication). The way in which they are made, handled, and cared for follow strict canons of protocol. It is the knowledge of songs and ceremonies related to each particular bundle, that provides the means by which the people gain access to the spiritual strength housed in that bundle. In turn, this allows an individual participant in the ceremony to feel a part of the bundle whether they own a small part of it, or simply attend the ceremonial.

Six of the major ceremonials I attended during my field experience were: the Peigan O'kan, the Mo'tokiks Society doings (variety of ceremonies), the Horn Society doings, two variations of the Thunder Medicine Pipe openings, and the transfer ceremony of a Thunder Medicine Pipe. Of the six ceremonies discussed, the Thunder Medicine Pipe ceremonies seem to be most openly discussed in relation to the others. I attribute this to the fact that the Medicine Pipe ceremonies are almost entirely open to public view, although the general public is not permitted to enter the ceremonial tipi without invitation. The remaining ceremonies are only partially open to public view and participation, and information about them is more private. While inquiring into the structure, procedure, meanings or sequence of rituals associated with the ritualistic use of bundles, I experienced reactions ranging from mere silence or change of topic, to a short

retort indicating the informants inability to speak on the subject. This is due to the fact that only initiation into the particular Society concerned, or ownership of a bundle, would entitle an individual knowledge and understanding of their respective rituals and their meanings.

The purpose of the descriptions to follow is to allow the reader to achieve an understanding of the complexity of the Blackfoot ceremonial context of the loaned bundles, the role that these bundles hold in these ceremonies and communities, the way in which they are revered, and importantly, the commitment and dedication with which the Blood and Peigan hold their role as bundle keepers. I make no pretense of having exhausted the symbolic or sacred meaning of these sacred materials, or to have achieved anything approaching a comprehensive spiritual or ritual analysis. To do so would be to assume sacred knowledge that is privy to only those with initiated rights, and would embark on the inappropriate pursuit of restricted knowledge. These descriptions of the ceremonies are based primarily on personal observation and experience of at least one example of each of the six ceremonials. While all the ceremonies I witnessed are open to public view, some aspects of their activities are considered inappropriate to describe in detail. As I was aware of these restrictions, I requested the aid of Frank Weasel Head, Jenny Bruised Head, Pat Provost and Margaret Crop Eared Wolf to guide me in this area. Based on their requests, I have respectfully and readily included detailed accounts of only those public aspects of ceremonies they felt were acceptable. I have indicated, with the use of three asterisks (***), the areas where further ceremonial activities occurred, but were not included as part of this work.

Due to the tradition of oral history, and the variety in personal accounts of ceremonials, no two ceremonies are carried out in exactly the same way. Therefore no singular account is to be considered as definitive examples of these ceremonies. Where I was not able to comprehend some aspects of the ceremonies, I have supplemented the descriptions with informants' comments during the ceremonies or during interviews. The reader is encouraged to read these stories in order to further understand the events at the ceremonials. These can be found in Appendix A.

It was explained to me by Frank Weasel Head of the Blood community, that the Blackfoot religion is focused upon the enhancement and interdependency of four human states: the mental, the spiritual, the physical and the emotional (Weasel Head 1996: personal communication). These four states manifest themselves in all six ceremonies and in the everyday lives of the Blood or Peigan individuals who follow their traditional lifestyle. Included in each of the six ceremonials described below is the concept of commitment to learn the Blackfoot spiritual ways (mental and spiritual), and to changing one's daily conduct in light of these (mental, spiritual, emotional) obligations. Ceremonial face and body painting (mental, spiritual, physical) of the attendants and feasting (spiritual, physical) is also common to all six ceremonials. Each ceremony includes the use of percussion instruments, usually drums and rattles, and often whistles, accompanied with dancing and singing (mental, spiritual, emotional, physical).

Ruth Little Bear is a Blood Elder who has lived a syncretic lifestyle by observing both Roman Catholicism and traditional Blackfoot beliefs. Her daughter Beverly and

grandchildren are active in continuing their traditional Blackfoot lifestyle. Ruth explained and emphasized the significance of the number four (Little Bear 1996d: personal communication). She talked about how nature does everything by fours: all humans have four fingers and toes on each hand and four "thumbs" in all; a torso has four limbs, two legs and two arms; there are four cardinal points; there are four seasons; and there are four naturally occurring concepts in the atmosphere Sun, Moon, Earth and the Stars (ibid). This number reoccurs throughout the ceremonies, whether in the number of songs that are sung and danced, the number of times an object is smudged over the fire, or the number of stories recounted when counting coup. Traditionally, "counting coup" was a time during public gatherings that warriors would recount four stories of their war exploits (Little Bear 1996a: personal communication). Today, these seem to be contemporary stories of ways in which individuals have cleverly overcome a challenging situation.

The communal setting of these ceremonies becomes immediately apparent. Several individuals gather for ceremonies that last anywhere from half a day, four days to ten days. These individuals range from those who have been, or are being initiated into a particular Society or bundle, those who have made a pledge in the recent past to dance with a Pipe or headdress, in addition to anyone else within the community who may wish to attend.

Common to each of the ceremonials is the way in which men and women are dressed. Those who are immediately involved in the ceremonials or are traditionally oriented wrap themselves with blankets as a means of humbling themselves before the

Creator and before the power of the bundle. The remainder of the people attending ceremonies will have an assortment of blankets and shawls. Some wear them around their waists for the majority of the ceremonial period, while others will only wear them during the times of their direct participation. The blankets range from ones that are made of acrylic, to those made in Mexico with striped designs of bright colours, to brightly coloured Pendleton wool blankets. The latter are usually worn by the traditionalists who play a significant religious role such as membership in one of the sacred societies. The former style of blanket is seen among the remainder of the attendants. The men wear their blankets snugly under their arms, with the left shoulder covered. Most men wear jeans or black trousers with a colourful "good" shirt, sometimes with a Western pattern. Both men and women within the ceremonial tipi or lodge are required to wear moccasins which are beaded with either geometrical or floral designs.

The women wear their blankets or shawls around their shoulders extending down to the knees, and will often wear scarves to keep their heads covered during the ceremony. Women seated within the tipi are required to wear a modest attire which is usually a long-sleeved floral cotton dress that has a high neckline, with the skirt extending to the ankles. Dresses are also accompanied with elaborately beaded belts. Longer hair is braided usually in two braids, sometimes one long braid down the back. These are warm and stifling outfits for both the men and women, requiring considerable endurance especially while the fire burns within the ceremonial tipi or lodge during six, nine or twelve hour ceremonies.

The men who are seated outside of the ceremonial tipi or lodge are dressed

similarly to those in the inner tipi, however they are not required to wear moccasins and will often wear western boots. The younger women in the outer tipi are often seen in shoes, jeans, and more fashion-conscious wear, but always carry a shawl or blanket, while the older women tend to dress more traditionally.

There is only one Horn Society to which individuals from both Blood and Peigan communities belong. Ceremonies are predominantly conducted on the Blood reserve. This is a result of the Bloods having been the only Blackfoot community to have maintained the annual Holy Encampment through time, except one year in the late 1800s (Weasel Head 1996: personal communication). The Peigan since the mid 20th century have consistently participated in Societies such as the Horns and Mo'tokiks Societies, but these are considered to be Blood based and ceremonies are held on the Blood reserve. The Siksika Nation have more recently revived their involvement in the Societies with the assistance of the Bloods (ibid)

Of the ceremonies described below, four - the Mo'tokiks Society doings, one Thunder Medicine Pipe opening, one Thunder Medicine Pipe Transfer and the Horn Society doings - occurred in this sequence during the ten to twelve day annual 1996 Holy Encampment on the Blood reserve, also known as the Sun Dance. At this particular Encampment that I attended, a request for a vow by a Holy Woman had not been made, therefore an O'kan was not put up this year. A Peigan woman, however, put up an O'kan at a smaller Holy Encampment on her own reserve in late June. Horn Society members are only able to conduct their doings after the Mo'tokiks Society have completed their doings (Scout 1996: personal communication; Weasel Head 1996: personal

communication). According to Ben Calf Robe's account of his childhood days in which there had been a Holy Woman at the Blood Encampment, the Mo'tokiks completed their doings, followed by the 100 willow sweat for the Holy Woman's husband, followed by the Horn Society doings, followed by Medicine Pipe openings and transfer ceremonies and ending with the Holy Woman's O'kan (Calf Robe in *Hungry Wolf and Hungry Wolf* 1989: 29-30).

The Blood Holy Encampment of 1996 began in late July and ended in early August. The Horn Society had their large double tipi raised at the centre facing east. The Mo'tokiks Society raised their Lodge to the east of the Horn Society Lodge. The tipis that were camped at the site formed a large circle around the central Horn tipi. Medicine Pipe owners, Mo'tokiks members, Horn members and ceremonialists raised their tipis closer to the centre of the Encampment, while others camped in the outer sphere of the circle. There were many tents pitched in between the tipis in which the youth camped. Many of the tipis had tarp-covered areas called arbours to provide shade from the sun and a place to gather for meals and conversation. Three of these were converted into small confectionary stops where people could buy chips, chocolate, candy, drinks and Indian tacos.

During the day the camp was very quiet as people went into the town or to their day jobs. Members met for private gatherings with their respective Societies in the early afternoon. By late afternoon and evening there was usually a ceremony open to public view at which large numbers of people would be present. These community members may not have been camped at the Encampment, and some would arrive after they had

completed their day shifts at work. Those who had already put up their tipis and began their camp remain camped until the last of the ceremonials. Many of the ceremonies ended in the late evening after which people visited with those camped at the Encampment. Most people would settle down for the night around one or two in the morning when the Horn Society members could be heard singing their songs in the quiet of the night.

O'kan 1996

The O'kan or Sun Dance is one of the most holy of all the ceremonies conducted by the Blackfoot (Little Bear 1996a: personal communication). The vow to hold an O'kan is to be made by a woman who is virtuous and true to one man. During a spiritually intense moment in her life, or a situation of anxiety or trouble, this woman will vow to put up an O'kan if the Creator will help in overcoming the situation.

As previously mentioned, there was no Blood O'kan in 1996 as there was no request by a Holy Woman to sponsor an O'kan. However a Peigan woman, Roseanne Provost Smith, hosted one on her Reserve. Her vow was taken to give her and her family and relatives guidance and advice from the Creator regarding her son who has muscular dystrophy. According to the boy's grandfather Pat Provost, who is a Horn Member, Medicine Pipe Owner and sponsor of his daughter's O'kan:

...we're looking for help in a lot of ways her and I for everybody that's involved in the family 'cause of her son...he's crawling around now, he's got muscular dystrophy. When he was young he was able to run and walk and now he's at the point where he's not walking anymore. That's her main pledge of putting up the Sun Dance is to help her son. He might

never walk again. What we're looking at is the strength for him and for us to deal with it, yeah, so that other thing so could happen. For us he might never walk but he might may be through education develop some kind of career where he doesn't have to be walking that he can get by his life to be a productive person and not to have somebody looking after him (Provost 1996).

Pat Provost, the father of the Holy Woman, had approached the Glenbow for the loan of a Natoas headdress in order that his daughter might fulfil her vow. Glenbow loaned the headdress and digging stick, but a new cylindrical parfleche (container) was made by members of the community to contain the headdress, and fasten the digging stick to the outside.

The O'kan took place on the Peigan Reserve and consisted of five tipis raised in a circle, and two or three trailers. The tipis that were present were a Horn tipi, the Beaver Man's tipi, the Ceremonial Mother and her family's tipi, the Elk tipi and the Brave Dog's Black Buffalo tipi. The Beaver Man, Leonard Bastien and the Ceremonial Mother, Star Hungry Wolf were the so-called Ceremonial Father and Mother to the Holy Couple "putting up" or sponsoring the O'kan who in turn are themselves referred to as son and daughter. It is the role of the Ceremonial Father and Mother to act as advisors to the Holy Couple during the four days of rituals and fasting, as they have previously been fully initiated into these roles themselves. At this particular O'kan, both the Beaver Man and the Ceremonial Mother previously had loans made to them by the Glenbow. These loans assisted in allowing both individuals the opportunity to care for a Beaver Bundle and Natoas Bundle respectively, thereby allowing them to conduct these highly regarded roles at this O'kan.

The presence of the Horn tipi at this Encampment was due to the Holy Woman's father and step-mother Jenny Bruised Head being Horn members with the Bloods. They were holding their own private ceremonies at this site. According to Ruth Little Bear, grandmother of the Ceremonial Mother, this was a good time for the Holy Woman's father to have held Horn Society ceremonials as this O'kan was also being sponsored by him for his daughter and grandson (Little Bear 1996d: personal communication). By hosting these ceremonials simultaneously, he was sacrificing a great deal to the Creator which would hopefully invoke more generosity in return from the Creator to him and his family (ibid) (***)

This was a particularly small encampment compared to the Blood Holy Encampment of the same year. Nevertheless, it was attended by major and minor players in the ceremonies, close family members, well-wishers and hundreds of members of the community at large during public ceremonials. Both the Blood and the Peigan O'kan are conducted in a similar manner, however the Societies that have the rights to carry out certain roles during the O'kan are different (Scout 1996: personal communication). The Horn Society and Crazy Dog Society among the Blood predominantly hold the corresponding roles to those of the Brave Dog Society among the Peigan, as outlined above (ibid). According to Frank Weasel Head, the term "Crazy Dog Society" was coined by Europeans, the proper term being Brave Dog Society (1999: personal communication). (See Appendix A for a 1977 account of an O'kan seen by Ben Calf Robe during his boyhood in which he defines the roles of Blood Society members).

Continuing with the Peigan O'kan, the Sun Dance Woman or Holy Woman's tipi

was easily identifiable, as it was painted with the Elk design representing the origination story of the Natoas or Sun Dance Headdress. It had cottonwood branches thickly surrounding the bottom edges of the tipi, clearly marking it as the Holy Woman's private tipi, of which only those with the approved rights and certain family members of the Holy Woman could approach or enter. Additionally, the Buffalo skull used throughout the O'kan was placed on the west side of the Elk tipi on a mound of earth from the Holy Woman's altar. Directly above it was placed the Natoas Bundle's wooden tripod of three sticks leaning against each other.

Among the Peigan, members of the Brave Dog Society are the only people with the rights to negotiate the date of the O'kan, to sing the respective songs when collecting the willow branches for the Sweat Lodge, and when collecting the Centre Pole and trees for constructing the Sun Dance Lodge. These roles including the actual construction of the Sun Dance Lodge tend to be associated with the male members of the Brave Dog Society. The role of the women Brave Dogs is to cook and prepare the final meal that is distributed at the Sun Dance Lodge. They are responsible for butchering the cow, preparing and cooking it, and making food packages for distribution. Among the Blood, the Horn Society and Crazy Dog Society are responsible for assisting the O'kan (Calf Robe 1989: 29; Taylor 1989: 20; Scout 1996: personal communication).

The first of the ceremonials was the 100 Willow Sweat, which took place on the second day of the Holy Woman's fast. The primary purpose of the sweat is a purification ceremony for the husband of the Holy Woman, other men involved in the ceremonies.

and for the Natoas Bundle (Calf Robe 1989: 29). Women are not permitted to sweat as they are considered to have a purified state due to their monthly menstruation cycle. However, their prayers and presence is required. Therefore, women are seated outside the sweat lodge and pray along with the men.

According to one of the spectating Elders, the 100 willow sweat is a very traditional sweat as it is particularly related to the O'kan and its origin myth. He said that the Brave Dogs must not wash, but must fast for the morning and afternoon in order to conduct their role for the day. Their main task was to gather 100 willow sticks and 100 rocks for the sweat (Calf Robe 1989: 29). Willard Yellow Face, an Elder of the Brave Dogs, did not sweat with them as he had not worked and prepared himself for it (Yellow Face 1996: personal communication). He explained that he had not worked to go collect the willows, he hadn't fasted, and he had not helped put the sweat lodge together (ibid). He indicated that these were efforts he would have had to make in order to give him the right and respect to participate in this sweat (ibid).

The Holy Woman remained in her tipi for the duration of her fasting, only coming out once to pray with her community at the sweat lodge ceremony (***). This sweat began with a feast which was distributed by the Brave Dogs. This broke their fast, but the Holy Woman did not partake of this feast as she was still fasting. The feast consisted of a beef stew, baked bannock, fruit, brownies, pop, rice pudding with raisins. After this food was distributed, the Brave Dogs came around with a large cooked cow tongue and broke pieces off for all those present to eat. These tongues are blessed and considered to be holy. They then commenced the sweat which was the only public ceremonial of the

day (***).

The following day the Brave Dogs rode off to fetch the Centre Pole and worked the full day to construct the Sun Dance Lodge (**) (For further details on the role and ritual tasks of the Brave Dog Society see Paul M. Raczka's and Leonard Bastien's *Cultural Impact Survey of the Peigan Indian Reserve* 1986: 29-32). A group had gone to capture and prepare the cow for the feast for the next day when the Holy Woman would come out and break her fast. The cow was prepared by the women in the morning and the hide was cleaned and prepared to be painted. (***)

By the late afternoon people began to gather around the entrance of the Elk Tipi for the public part of the Holy Woman's rituals. This part of her rituals is a transfer ceremony whereby the Ceremonial Father, who is also a Beaver Man, and the Ceremonial Mother, who is a previous Holy Woman herself, transfer the rights of the Natoas Bundle to the Holy Couple (Hungry Wolf 1996b: personal communication; Wissler 1912: 215). (***)

While these proceedings were taking place, the Brave Dogs could be seen and their war cries could be heard as they returned from their ritual of collecting the Centre Pole.

A half hoisted tipi was erected where the public would be invited to be painted. (***). Many people from the neighbouring communities had gathered to make offerings to the Sun and have the offerings and themselves smudged by the Beaver Man, Ceremonial Mother and by others who had once put up an O'kan. Only those with initiated rights, however, are able to make these offerings (Crop Eared Wolf 1999:

personal communication). The offerings were made with crossed sticks tied together into a cross. According to a Willard Yellow Face, a Grandfather of the Brave Dogs, this is the symbol of Morning Star who gave the first Holy Woman the Sun Dance ceremony (Yellow Face 1996: personal communication). Tobacco, sage and newly bought cloth was fastened to the cross, while some individuals fastened a personal article of clothing such as a shirt. (***) Each person took their offering with them and lined up to be painted. The offering was smudged and the person was painted. Each individual then went to the Sun Dance Lodge and placed their offering in a pile near the Centre Pole which was waiting to be hoisted. A member of the Brave Dogs was circulating the crowd distributing pieces of cow tongue which had been blessed by the Holy Woman. (***) Once everyone had been painted, the ceremony for the hoisting of the Centre Pole began. (***)

The following day was the last day of the Peigan O'kan. The Sun Dance Lodge was completely constructed. The tipi poles used to hoist the Centre Pole were balanced from the Pole to the circular wood structure below. (***) Later in the day poplar trees were ritually collected by the Brave Dogs, and by turning them upside down, the men leaned them on the circular wood structure of the Lodge, creating the wall. This created a very breezy and cool atmosphere when inside the Lodge.

According to Ruth Little Bear, in the old days the women would dress elaborately for this occasion with ribbons in their hair (1996d: personal communication). They would go out with their brother-in-laws and ride to collect the poplars making much noise

when they came back. At this O'kan, many of the trees were collected with the Centre Pole which the Brave Dogs collected, using 10 horses and a truck to bring them in.

The people in the surrounding tipis and trailer were dressed in their best clothing for the Sun Dance Lodge Ceremonial. The women dressed in floral cotton full length dresses and brushed their freshly washed hair, tying braids with ribbons or hide for each other. Those camped and those just visiting the camp for the ceremonial gathered into the Sun Dance Lodge and put up their collapsible chairs around the south side of the Lodge. Meanwhile, the Brave Dogs were having their ceremonies in the Black Buffalo tipi.

(***)

The Brave Dogs moved into the Lodge and many of the attendants followed and took their appropriate places. By this time, the ceremonial group were seated on the west side of lodge. This group consisted of the Ceremonial Mother, assistants, Holy Woman, her husband, the Holy Man, the Beaver Man and the two other men who had participated in previous O'kan ceremonies, the son of the Holy Woman in whose name she had held the O'kan, and finally the Holy Woman's mother and daughter. The Brave Dogs took their places in a circle facing the Centre Pole, and the altar keeper was at the fire place. There was much humour in the ceremony that followed. (***)

After the ceremony, everyone ate soup while much more food was generously distributed. The food consisted of food which would keep over time in styrofoam boxes, such as bannock, hard boiled eggs and beef strips from the cow the women had prepared the day before. Additionally, fruit, pop and pre-packaged pastry was also distributed.

Once most of the attendants had finished eating, one of the drummers asked the

Holy Woman's husband to come forward and say a few words. The Holy Woman's husband spoke in English and thanked all those who had come to attend the ceremony, thanking them for their support. He said he was pleased that everything had gone well. Daniel Weasel Moccasin, a respected ceremonialist among the Bloods, was asked to say a prayer. (***). Everyone then dispersed while some of the women remained to clean up.

After the ceremony had ended, the Holy Woman made the decision to break camp the same evening, which was indicated by her Elk tipi being taken down. This also gave the signal that all those who were camped were now also free to break camp. Before the Holy Woman left the camp, her husband and her male relations prepared for another final sweat.

A month after the four day ceremony, the Holy Woman told me that the condition of her son had improved and that he showed signs of having a lot more energy than before. She also said that she herself feels that she has benefitted from her sacrifice at the O'kan and feels more hopeful about her son's condition.

Mo'tokiks Society Ceremony 1996

The Mo'tokiks Society, also known as the Buffalo Woman's Society, is a women's society among the Blood. This society is regarded with almost the same awe as the Horns. According to one of the Society's members it consists of four sub-societies: the Snake Society, the Bird Society, the Scabby Bull Society and the Bull Society. The Society's doings are conducted by the Mo'tokiks Leader. Therefore, larger amounts of gifts and money are transferred for the knowledge of this role in the Society, than for

other memberships. In addition to the sub-societies, there are six men who serve a role connected with the Mo'tokiks. Four of these men sing during the Mo'tokiks dancing, while the remaining two provide assistance by running errands for the women.

Members of the community are able to vow during the year to dance with the Mo'tokiks during the Holy Encampment. If an O'kan is not taking place at the Encampment, community members bring cloth offerings to be blessed by the Mo'tokiks, who later secure them to the Centre Pole. In the following account of the Mo'tokiks doings during the Blood Holy Encampment of 1996, there was no request for a vow by a Holy Woman to put up an O'kan. Therefore, the Mo'tokiks were the first to begin the ceremonials at this Encampment.

In the late afternoon, after three days of conducting their own private prayers and customs, the Mo'tokiks sat themselves in a circle on the grass on the east side of the central Horn tipi. They faced each other as ex-Mo'tokiks members and some community members began to raise their Lodge around them. No-one was permitted to step inside this circle of women. The assistant male members built the Mo'tokiks lodge, which like the Holy Woman's Lodge has a Centre Pole. (***) Once the Lodge had been constructed the Mo'tokiks were left to move their bedding and belongings into the Lodge where they privately conducted their prayers, rituals and fasting for the next four days. (***)

The day after the construction of the Lodge, the Mo'tokiks members quietly walked around the Encampment. They stopped and sat facing east. At this time the members of the community approached the Mo'tokiks member of their choice and gave offerings to be blessed. As with the O'kan, the offering is usually a piece of fabric, shirt

or blouse previously worn by the individual. It was tied to a wooden cross representing the Morning Star, with bunches of sage and tobacco tied to the fabric. The Mo'tokiks blessed these offerings and once complete, they returned to the Lodge. (***)

Later in the afternoon of the next day, the entrances were opened for public view and entry to the Lodge for painting and blessings. A woman at the entrance invited those who have pledged to dance with the Mo'tokiks women to enter the Lodge. Each of these individuals were assisted by a relative or friend who help them take in gifts of blanket, quilts and money for the Mo'tokiks woman who they later danced with.

After this group has been painted, the community members were invited to be painted and blessed by the Mo'tokiks. (***) The Mo'tokiks women and those who have vowed then danced to the rhythm of the singing and rattling conducted by men. (***)

The third day, the same dance ceremony was conducted by the Mo'tokiks women. New community members who had vowed to dance with the headdresses were invited to fulfil their vow, and the public also have the opportunity be blessed and protected by being painted by the women.

On the fourth and final day of the Mo'tokiks's doings, the public watched as the members walk around the outskirts of the Holy Encampment. (***) A young boy, who owns a small bundle giving him the right to conduct this role for the Mo'tokiks Society, rode towards them bringing them back to their Lodge. (***)

At this time a large feast was given to all those in attendance. The Mo'tokiks Lodge was taken down leaving the Centre Pole with cloth offerings attached for the Sun. The Mo'tokiks women gathered to sing in a circle around the Pole, marking the end of the Mo'tokiks doings for another year.

Horn Society Ceremony 1996

According to informants, there are currently 25 Horn Society Bundles among the Blood and Peigan. At least two of the bundles have been returned to the community by Alberta museums. One is from the Glenbow and is on long-term loan under the care of the Blood Tribal Council. The other is from the Provincial Museum of Alberta and was temporarily borrowed from the museum and has been continually used in the ceremonies after the loan expiry date (Taylor 1989).

The ceremonial of the Horn Society took place on the site of the annual Holy Encampment. It lasted four days and only occurred after the Mo'tokiks Society had completed their doings. The following description of the ceremonial dance was spectated by the general public and repeated on all four days. Each day attracted up to 400 people from Stand Off and the surrounding areas.

Prior to the first day of the Horns dancing, their ceremonial tipi was raised at the centre of the circular Holy Encampment. It is usually raised in the first few days of the start of the Holy Encampment. Comprised of two large tipis hoisted together, it creates a large oval shaped enclosure. The entrance faces east as do all the tipis raised in the Encampment, however the opening reaches the ground and is not easily visible. Male and female members of the Horn Society can be seen entering and exiting their tipi throughout the week while the Mo'tokiks Society have their doings. The Horns were always wrapped in their blankets when near or in the tipi. During the day their bundles were hanging in parfleches from tripods at the west side of their tipi. At night, shortly after midnight, they could be heard singing for about an hour or two.

One who is a Horn will only discuss the Society's doings when speaking with another member or Grandfather of the Horns. Those who have never been members will immediately declare the inability to speak about the Horns as they do not know about the teachings.

Those camped at the Holy Encampment anxiously waited for the Horn Society procession and dancing. During early to mid-afternoon on the second and last Sunday of the Holy Encampment, the public began to arrive and seat themselves in collapsible chairs in a large circle surrounding the east side of the Horn ceremonial tipi. At the beginning, there is a steady influx of people gathering to be painted and gain blessings from the Horn members. Those who had vowed to dance with a Horn Society Bundle were called up by members of the Horns to enter the tipi to be painted and blessed. After this group, the public were invited to be painted. Unlike the Medicine Pipe ceremony there was no crier to announce different stages and procedures to the gathering. Instead the Horn members quietly approached or signaled the attendants to enter the tipi. (***)

Once the painting was complete, everyone settled outside again. Then began the public ceremony (***) which consisted of a large procession of all the horns around the Encampment, a feast of berry soup and bannock, followed by dancing with the headdresses and staffs from the Horn bundles. (***) At this time, those who had vowed to participate in this ceremony, danced with the bundle holders with whom they had pledged. (***) The last dance ended the ceremony for the day, when the leader of the Horns shot a rifle into the air. Some community members and Horn members formed small conversation circles, while others made their way to their tipis or began their journey home.

Thunder Medicine Pipe Opening 1996

Medicine Pipes are to be opened annually by the owners after the first sound of Thunder. As soon as this sound was heard, the bundle owner and his wife begin preparations for the opening and announce the day of ceremony. Surrounding clan members attend and support family and friends' bundle opening to share in the prayers of the opening and receive tobacco blessed at this time. Currently, there is much discussion over which particular weekend would be appropriate for the opening of a bundle, due to the weekly work and school obligations of the owners and their children. This being the case, there is also consideration given to which day other Pipe holders have chosen to conduct their Pipe openings to avoid overlap, especially in the case where the same ceremonialist is needed. Invitations are extended to family and friends and in particular to past and present Pipe holders. As news of the opening date circulates, other individuals outside of those invited may choose to attend. As one bundle owner and Horn Society member stated: "We can't turn away those who want to be near the Creator".

Preparations for the ceremony consist of: food preparation and the purchase of eating utensils, which is usually organized by the bundle owner's wife and her female relatives; the purchase of blankets and comforters for payment to the ceremonialist and his wife; the purchase of tobacco for the give-away at the end of the ceremony; and raising the ceremonial tipi and outer tipi. Relatives, close friends, bundle holders or previous bundle holders will contribute to the food and tobacco supply, which is predominantly the larger expenditure for the bundle owner and his wife. To do so is

considered to be a sign of generosity that will be rewarded with good spiritual and material benefits by the Creator. It is left to the decision of the individual whether to make a material contribution to the expenditures or to assist with the preparations.

Prior to the day of the Pipe opening, male participants in the upcoming ceremony are required to purify themselves with a sweat lodge ceremony. According to several informants, female participants are not involved in this ceremony due to what is considered to be their inherent purified state renewed each month through menstruation. All the sweat lodge participants are expected to be free from the influence of alcohol and drugs.

On the day of the Pipe opening, a double tipi structure was raised by male members of the bundle owner's family in a clear grass area by the home of the bundle owner or of a close relative, or on the grounds of the annual Blood Holy Encampment. The bundle owner himself was not to help in the raising of the tipi. The double tipi was constructed using two tipis joined at the doorways. These were pulled back to allow for a larger opening in order for individuals to walk back and forth, as was the back of the outer tipi to allow for an entrance.

There are two main ceremonialists who conduct the Medicine Pipe openings on the Peigan and Blood reserve. One is Mike Swims Under, an Elder from the South Peigan community of Browning, Montana who usually conducts ceremonies for the North Peigan. The other is Daniel Weasel Moccasin, a middle aged ceremonialist who is considered to be relatively young for this role in society, but has legitimately learned the teachings from his late father who was a well respected Elder among the Blood, and well

versed in the ceremonial conduct of the Medicine Pipe. I had the opportunity to attend five Medicine Pipe ceremonies during the summer of field research. Of these five, one was conducted by the ceremonialist Mike Swim Under from South Peigan community, while the remainder were conducted by Daniel Weasel Moccasin from the Blood community. As I am most familiar with the ceremony conducted by the Blood ceremonialist, and as he conducts the ceremony for the opening of the Medicine Pipe returned to the Bloods by the Glenbow, I shall first describe his procedures for opening a Pipe, and later describe those of the Peigan ceremonialist.

Medicine Pipe Opening by Daniel Weasel Moccasin - Blood Ceremonialist

The Glenbow museum of Calgary returned *Siksika-o'koyniman*, the Blackfoot Medicine Pipe Bundle to the Blood people in the Fall of 1990 (Conaty 1995: personal communication). As discussed in Chapter 1, the negotiations for this return are based on a long-term renewable loan. Thunder Medicine Pipe Bundles are owned by four individuals at one time, however this group consists of a primary couple and a secondary couple (Weasel Head 1999: personal communication; Provost 1996: personal communication; Bruised Head 1996: personal communication). Since its return *Siksika-o'koyniman* has had three sets of keepers. The first group to take on the care of this bundle was from the Blood community. The primary couple of this initial group now has the role of ceremonialists, as they transferred *Siksika-o'koyniman* after a year of ownership to a Peigan group for a four year period. In the summer of 1996, the bundle was transferred back to a group of four in the Blood community. They are the daughter

and nephew of the Blood ceremonialist and his wife, who were the first recipients. I have attended each of the annual spring time openings of this bundle since its initial transfer in 1990, and was able to attend the last transfer ceremony (described below) in which it was returned to the Bloods.

The following is a general description of the Pipe opening ceremony used to open *Assinai ohkoyinnimaan* (Cree Medicine Pipe), the Horse Medicine Pipe, the Sits With Its Back to the Fire Medicine Pipe and *Siksika-o'koyinman* (Blackfoot Medicine Pipe) in the spring and summer of 1996. It should be noted that although each Pipe is opened with the rituals originally given by Thunder, individual Pipes since the inception of the first Medicine Pipe have their own origin dream or vision in which additional rights and rituals were given to the originator, making each Pipe ceremony subtly unique (Weasel Moccasin 1996a: personal communication; Weasel Moccasin Jr. 1996b; Provost 1996: personal communication; Bruised Head 1996: personal communication).

The Pipe opening ceremony usually began at noon. The attendants, who represent previous and present Pipe holders, close and extended family, and friends, arrived between 11 and 11:30 a.m. They arrived in 4-wheel drive pick-up trucks, jeeps or larger cars which were parked in rows close to the Pipe owner's house. As they entered the inner tipi, those men and women who know each other greeted with a hand shake and often a gentle kiss on the lips, which has been the traditional greeting among the Blackfoot since before European contact (Weasel Head 1999: personal communication). Those who had chosen to contribute to the feast placed their contribution on the inner side of the entrance to the inner tipi, while those who were contributing to the tobacco

give-away passed food up towards the head of the tipi. Entrance into the inner tipi was only restricted once the bundle has been brought in, or once people began to take their places. (***) The ceremony began with extended prayer, after which the bundle was ritually opened, followed by the berry soup being spooned into the bowls of all those present. (***) There were usually two or three younger women who were designated the task of food distribution which has protocol in itself. There was more prayer during which time attendants prayed individually on one berry from the soup. (***) According to attendants, these prayers can be of one's own choosing such as personal fulfillment, thanks for the food about to be eaten, thanks for success in life, assistance and strength for the individual's life challenges and those of their families, and protection on the way home from the ceremony. Once the prayers were complete, people chatted with their neighbour as large styrofoam boxes were handed out containing some beef and/or ham, boiled potatoes, baked and/or fried bannock, hard boiled eggs and sausages. Also in each box is a knife, fork and a package of salt and pepper wrapped in a napkin. Other food included items that will keep for a longer period of time such as apples, bananas, strawberries, more bannock, boxes of Kraft dinner, packages of ichiban noodles, canned meat, canned vegetables, cookies, jelly rolls, chocolate bars and soft drinks. If there was more food than people, then the extra was handed out usually beginning with the inner tipi. The children were often given "goody" bags of their own which contained two hot dogs with buns, chocolates, chips, cookies, juice boxes and/or pop. At one Pipe opening the children were given dinner boxes of fried chicken. All eat very well and often have to bring bags or large pillow cases in order to take home what they could not eat.

Those in the outer tipi waited for a queue from the inner tipi to know when they were able to leave for a short break before the Pipe is opened. Those in the inner tipi stood and filed out of the double tipi structure with large bags of food in tow. This was a short break during which time people met and chat with those who were at the ceremony, visited the washroom (there are usually two portable set up at each ceremony), ate more food or just rested in one's vehicle.

The crier called to the people to announce the commencing of the Pipe opening. All those from the inner tipi were required to go back in. Although most people from the outer tipi will take their places, some continued to chat and came in later. The ceremony was opened with a prayer, followed by singing. (***) Those within the tipi were painted, followed by those who had vowed to dance with the bundle. (***) Attendants were then invited to be painted. (***) This was a time for a break and more visiting among the attendants. The crowd tended to disperse and form small conversation groups. The crier finally called when it was time to return to the ceremony so the dancing could begin. (***) Once the dancing was complete there were more songs and prayers conducted by the ceremonialist. (***) The Pipe owner and his wife or secondary male owner stood and distributed loose tobacco to all the attendants, on which they prayed simultaneously, but individually. (***) After the prayers, the Pipe owner and the secondary male distributed gifts of three or four packages of cigarettes to each attendant. This was the indication that the Pipe opening was complete and all may go home.

By this time the evening had turned into night and most people started their journey home. Those in the inner tipi may stay a little longer while the fire burns.

Medicine Pipe Opening by Mike Swims Under - South Peigan Ceremonialist

The ceremony conducted by Mike Swims Under, the South Peigan ceremonialist, is not outwardly different in content. The sequence, however, by which he conducts the rituals is unlike that of the Blood ceremonialist. This may be due to the way in which the procedures for this particular Pipe was passed down through dreams, or due to the individual teachings of the ceremonialist. It should be noted that I have only witnessed one Medicine Pipe opening by this ceremonialist. Therefore, unlike Daniel Weasel Moccasin's bundle openings, who I have seen open bundles more than ten times, this account may not be as representative of the standard Pipe openings by this ceremonialist.

Upon arriving at the site of the ceremony the Pipe was already opened and all those in the inner tipi had taken their places. The attendants were seated and all were praying. (***) After more prayers the feasting began, followed by the painting, then the dancing by the previous and present bundle holders, and those that had vowed on this Pipe, and then the final tobacco give-away. These sessions were conducted in a similar way as in the above account. Similar rituals were incorporated, and the sacred components of the bundle were revered just as those in the Blood ceremonialist's opening.

Thunder Medicine Pipe Transfer 1996

The transfer of a Medicine Pipe usually occurs after the owner has agreed to the request of the next owner. The request usually results from a vow taken by an individual during a trying period of life. He would vow to take on the responsibility of caring for a bundle, should the Creator help him to overcome his unfortunate situation. He would then approach the present owner at his home and offer him partial payment for the Pipe. He will also offer his Pipe to share with the owner if the request is agreeable. Should the owner remain quiet and not take up the Pipe then the request is rejected. If the owner takes up the Pipe, the transfer is accepted and the two men smoke the Pipe together (Conaty 1996: personal communication; Weasel Head 1996: personal communication). A date will be set for the transfer ceremony and the two individuals and their respective female partners are not permitted to see each other until they meet on the day of the transfer. According to a women attending the transfer ceremony described below, this custom is similar in meaning as the Christian belief of the bride and groom not being able to see each other before their wedding ceremony.

In the case of *Siksika-o'koyniman*, a Peigan husband and wife approached the Blood couple to whom the bundle was returned from the Glenbow Museum. After only a year of ownership the Blood couple agreed to transfer the Pipe to the Peigan couple. The wife of the Blood couple, however, asked that it only be transferred to the Peigan couple for a period of four years, as she had dreamt that it should eventually be returned to them. The following description of the transfer ceremony of *Siksika-o'koyniman* was the ceremony in which the Peigan couple transferred the Pipe back to the first family. The

new owners, however are the daughter and nephew of the original couple rather than the original couple itself. They approached the Peigan couple earlier in the year of 1996, and set an approximate date for early August for the transfer. Since that time, as is the custom, they did not see each other and met again only on the day of the transfer ceremony.

In the following account, the Pipe was reopened again after the transfer had taken place. According to Gerald Conaty, Senior Curator of the Glenbow, not all people will open the Pipe the same day. Sometimes they may smudge the bundle and feast, but wait to open the next day, or wait till the next Spring to open it for the first time (Conaty 1996: personal communication).

The initial part of the transfer was the opening of the bundle which occurred in the late evening before the day of the transfer ceremony. The new owners were not present, and those in attendance were mostly family members. People took positions similar to that of a Pipe opening ceremony. As the ceremonialist sang and began the ceremony, the Pipe owner's wife began to cry. The ceremonialist's wife and another woman tried to comfort her. It was explained to me later that transferring a bundle is equivalent to giving one's own child away.

At this time an Elder and Grandfather of a Medicine Pipe and of the Horns, took some time to explain to the Pipe owners in Blackfoot why it was a good thing for them to transfer the bundle. According to one of the women in attendance, he let them know that he understood that they were sad and it was warranted, but it was also a happy occasion.

Nevertheless, the owner's wife continued to weep as more prayers and songs were sung.

Once the final singing and praying was complete, everyone was given berry soup on which to pray, followed by bannock and hard boiled eggs.

(***) According to the ceremonialist the next day was going to be very emotional. This may be why a smaller intimate night time ceremony is more appropriate for the expression of emotions among immediate family members.

The new primary couple are cousins to one another, and the secondary couple are the children of the female partner, aged 3 and 5. They all fasted the day of the transfer ceremony, and patiently waited in their tipi at the Holy Encampment for the proceedings to begin.

At the present owner's tipi, a double tipi was set up early in the morning, and the *Ninamskats* (Medicine Pipe Holders), their wives and the drummers seated themselves inside. (***) During the transfer ceremony a series of four sets of payments in blankets and quilts were brought in by relatives of the new owner. Each set was brought in and the family members in support of the new owner stood and danced to the drumming in honour of each of the four owners who were now transferring. In addition to the blankets, quilts and money, a horse was given to the new owner as part payment for the bundle. More blankets were presented through the ceremony. (***) Those who would be interacting with the bundle and involved in caring for it, such as the parents of the new owners were invited to be painted for it. After this time, others who wish to be painted were to go up. The Pipe was returned to the bundle which was then ritually closed. The

new owners left the tipi with the bundle, while the wife of the now previous owner began to loudly weep, and her family stayed in the tipi to comfort her and grieve with her.

The new owners were visibly very happy to have the bundle back in their care. They walked to their own tipi and took their places in their tipi as in the Pipe Opening. Another tipi was raised to form a double tipi structure. After some prayers (***) a large feast was given. The Pipe was then opened by the Blood ceremonialist whose opening was described above. (***) This opening however, was much shorter as there are no pledgers to dance with the Pipe at this ceremony. The same procedure was used to open the Pipe as that of any other Medicine Pipe Ceremony. (***) The completion of the dancing ended the ceremonial.

CHAPTER FOUR

Social-Symbolic Exchange Theory

The return of sacred bundles by Alberta museums to Blackfoot communities of Southern Alberta, and the ongoing transfers of these bundles within the Blood and Peigan communities exemplify anthropological and sociological concepts integral to social-symbolic exchange. Each transfer, whether made by the museum to the Blackfoot, or made from one member of the Blood or Peigan communities to another, has within it significant aspects of exchange which point towards the building of social relationships and social solidarity.

In order to understand the development of the contemporary elements of social and symbolic exchange theory, it is important to understand its evolution over time.

Exchange theory has roots deeply embedded in Western social thought, extending as far as the ancient Greeks. Democritus (c. 460-370 B.C.E), for example, proposed that social interaction developed due to the need for humans to protect themselves against animals and the environment (Honigmann 1976: 21). In turn, this gave rise to the language and the notion of communication, leading to the grouping of people with like language (ibid). As such, Democritus proposed that through the ability to reason, communicate and exchange knowledge, human beings became highly integrated and interdependent in order to survive, thereby regulating social relations and networking between communities (ibid; Hatt 1998: personal communication; Hatt 1996).

Similarly, Plato (c. 428-347 B.C.E.) introduced an organismic model of economic

society in which he maintained that the exchange of objects functions to cement individuals together into an organic whole (Honigmann 1976: 18; Hatt 1998: personal communication; Hatt 1996). Hence, the exchanged objects become symbolic of the relationships as a whole. Plato's student, Aristotle (382-322 B.C.E.), took the concept of exchange further by his notion of *oikos* or the human family (Polanyi: 1957: 81; Hatt 1996). In the *oikos*, division of labour among the family along sexual and generational lines builds close blood relations (Hatt 1996). In so doing, a pattern of organized cohesion and interdependency arises developing more complex social units such as clans, tribes, villages and nations (ibid).

Greek and Roman thinkers noted the significance of diversity in social life, society as a system, social relations founded on practical reciprocities as contrasted with those based on nonutilitarian sentiments ... (Honigmann 1976: 35).

Aristotle's model exercised its influence over many Roman social theorists and passed into Medieval and Renaissance thought through the social theories of St. Augustine (354-430 A.C.E.) and other Church Fathers (Honigmann 1976: 42; Polanyi: 1957: 65). According to Honigmann, in the book *City of God*, Augustine points to the Roman Empire as an ideal time in which "God's plan for the world" played itself out, using concepts familiar to 20th century functionalist thinking such as showing "social roles [as] harmoniously satisfying personality needs while meeting important social needs" (ibid: 43). In the Middle Ages, St. Thomas Aquinas (1224-1274) studied in Paris and Naples (Honigmann 1976: 46). His naturalistic concepts of society are reminiscent of Greek thinkers such as Democritus and Aristotle (ibid).

Renaissance thinking in Europe was tinged with concepts of the New World (Honigmann 1976: 52). Jean Bodin (1530-1596), a French jurist, introduced the notion that "human beings are by nature endowed with opposing tendencies, one making for social cooperation and other for conflict" (ibid: 55). Bodin takes the theory of the gradual growth and diversification of society leading to increased division of labour, and adds the concept of "multiplication of each individual's social relationships", otherwise known as networking (ibid: 56). Bodin begins to differentiate between particularized social interaction familiar within large-scale society, and generalized interaction as the pattern of small-scale groups in which social interaction occurs with the same individuals for several purposes (ibid). This concept of particularized social interaction and generalized interaction is further explored and solidified in the 20th century by Claude Lévi-Strauss.

The 17th century sees an intensified interest in the New World (Honigmann 1976: 62). John Locke (1632-1704) presented a concept of individual freedom in which early people

... lived as the American Indians still do, in a state where nobody has greater power than another and nobody is subordinated to anyone else, except on account of age or special quality. In those days everyone being equal and holding things in common led people to take on a warm reciprocal interest in each other's welfare and to extend aid when it was required ... political organization ... appeared not to restrain conduct but to preserve human freedom and to enlarge opportunities for man's social nature to display itself (Honigmann 1976: 63-64).

With the concept of Aristotle's social interdependency combined with the development of social exchange theory during the Renaissance and Enlightenment, there also emerged classical economics, which emphasized the material side of exchange in

social life (Honigmann 1976: 80; Polanyi 1957: 65; Hatt 1998: personal communication). Exchange theory through time culminated in the works of Adam Smith (1723-1790) and development of political economy (ibid). He modeled his theory within the concept of interdependence on both a micro and macro level (Honigmann 1976: 80).

The country provides the town with food and raw materials for manufacturing, and the town reciprocates with goods it produces ... the individual who invests in industry for his own gain is "led by an invisible hand" to contribute to society's good ... (Honigmann 1976: 80-81).

It would not be until the late 19th and 20th centuries that, through ethnographic evidence, anthropologists were able to explicitly explore theories of exchange. There has been an ongoing debate among anthropologists and sociologists alike, regarding whether the most significant reason for humans to engage in social interaction and social exchange is for economic advantage (Ekeh 1974: 200). While theorists such as Frazer, Blau and Homans considered the economic value of the object as the primary instigator of social behaviour, others such as Malinowski, Lévi-Strauss, Mauss and Durkheim considered the symbolic value of the object, rather than the object itself, as the key element in engaging in social exchange behaviour (ibid: 200-202). The resulting interaction would eventually lead to the construction of a solidarity network between individual and group participants (ibid: 200-201).

Peter P. Ekeh, in his *Social Exchange Theory: The Two Traditions* (1974), defines the major attributes of a collectivistic theory of social exchange which he accredits almost entirely to Lévi-Strauss' model (Ekeh 1974: 37). By exploring the theories of Lévi-Strauss and other major 19th and 20th century theorists of social exchange, Ekeh

develops an in depth framework of five elements that he considers central to social exchange (ibid: 199). This framework effectively operationalizes social exchange among the Blood and Peigan, and therefore is outlined below and used as the major structure with which to explore social-symbolic exchange among these two communities.

Initially, it is important to refer to three major proponents of social-symbolic exchange theory. Malinowski introduced the concept of there being a social-symbolic exchange as opposed to only economic exchange. Mauss discussed the variety of social exchange in the form of gifts and prestations. Lévi-Strauss through various studies was able to develop significant terminology regarding social-symbolic exchange that is central to this present study.

Malinowski and Social Exchange

Bronislaw Malinowski in the *Argonauts of the Western Pacific* (1922), was the first theorist to draw a particularly clear distinction between economic exchange and social symbolic exchange. In his analysis of the Kula exchange among the Trobriand Islanders, Malinowski sought to explain that the exchange of two particular categories of objects was primarily for social motives (Malinowski 1984: 83-86). The exchange of arm bands and necklaces created an intricate social system that covered several islands and tribal groups, and worked towards creating de facto alliances, and therefore solidarity among Trobriand Islanders (Malinowski 1984: 83, 92).

The Kula's roots were in the mythology and traditional law, and continued to be confirmed through public ceremony (Malinowski 1984: 85-86). The partnerships created

lasted a lifetime, linking hundreds, sometimes thousands, of individuals in dyadic relations of mutual trust, dependency, and honour (ibid). The Kula, as Malinowski emphasized, was not conducted out of any economic need, as the objects exchanged were not of practical use, and economic needs were satisfied through a barter system that existed as a subsidiary activity of the Kula Ring (ibid). The Kula was conducted out of a need for social networking to extend the bounds of solidarity and trust.

... side by side with the ritual exchange of arm-shells and necklaces, the natives carry on ordinary trade, bartering from one island to another a great number of utilities ... (Malinowski 1984: 83).

The natives sharply distinguish it [the Kula] from barter, which they practice extensively, of which they have a clear idea, and for which they have a settled term - in Kiriwinian : *gimwali* (Malinowski 1984: 96).

Furthermore, social status and power were not motivations for involvement in the Kula, as these were not achieved through the ownership of arm shells and necklaces. On the contrary, the number of times an individual had ownership of these items was an indication of his already prevailing status in society, rather than a vehicle by which to gain status (Malinowski 1984: 91).

... exchange is not done freely, right and left, as opportunity offers, and where the whim leads. It is subject indeed to strict limitations and regulations. One of these refers to the sociology of the exchange, and entails that Kula transactions can be done only between partners... This partnership is entered upon in a definite manner, under fulfilment of certain formalities, and it constitutes a life-long relationship. The number of partners a man has varies with his rank and importance. A commoner in the Trobriands would have a few partners only, whereas a chief would number hundreds of them ... a man would naturally know to what number of partners he was entitled by his rank and position ... In other tribes, where the distinction of rank is not so pronounced, an old man of standing, or a headman of a hamlet or village would also have hundreds of Kula associates, whereas a man of minor importance would have but few (Malinowski 1984: 91).

Further to his differentiation between social and economic exchange, Malinowski coupled social exchange with the psychological needs of individuals, thereby factoring in the need for individuals to be generous in order to build social networks (Malinowski 1984: 175; Ekeh 1974: 27).

The view that the native can live in a state of individual search for food, or catering for his own household only, in isolation from any interchange of goods, implies a calculating, cold egotism, the possibility of enjoyment by man of utilities for their sake. This view, and all the previously criticised assumptions, ignore the fundamental human impulse to display, to share, to bestow. They ignore the deep tendency to create social ties through exchange of gifts. Apart from any consideration as to whether the gifts are necessary or even useful, giving for the sake of giving is one of the most important features of Trobriand sociology, and, from its very general and fundamental nature, I submit that it is a universal feature of all primitive societies (Malinowski 1984: 175).

Although like every human being, the Kula native loves to possess and therefore desires to acquire and dreads to lose, the social code of rules, with regard to give and take by far overrides his natural acquisitive tendency.

This social code ... lays down that to possess is to be great, and that with wealth is the indispensable appanage of social rank and attribute of personal virtue. But the important point is that with them to possess is to give - and here the natives differ from us notably. A man who owns a thing is naturally expected to share it, to distribute it, to be its trustee and dispenser. And the higher the rank, the greater the obligation ... Thus the main symptom of being powerful is to be wealthy, and of wealth is to be generous. Meanness, indeed, is the most despised vice, and the only thing about which the natives have strong moral views, while generosity is the essence of goodness (Malinowski 1984: 97).

Malinowski looked to bringing the human element to his mentor, Frazer's "Economic Man" (Ekeh 1974: 28). While purely economic transactions occurred among the Trobriand Islanders through the *gimwali*, the Kula exchange exemplified a society's need to establish social relations beyond those of barter. Malinowski proposed that the

individual did not simply exchange objects for economic self interest. Individuals must work towards building social networks for the sake of their psychological needs to be accepted as part of a group, and to feel safety and security through expanding those with whom they partner. In so doing, Kula communities built a wider community among themselves, in which kula partners found comfort and comradeship with one another when far from home.

Marcel Mauss and *The Gift*

Marcel Mauss' most significant contribution to the understanding of society was his book *The Gift: Forms and Functions of Exchange in Archaic Societies* (1967). This work, like that of Malinowski, offers a social-symbolic theory of exchange. For Mauss

... in these 'early' societies, social phenomena are not discrete; each phenomenon contains all the threads of which the social fabric is composed. In these total social phenomena, as we propose to call them, all kinds of institutions find simultaneous expression: religious, legal, moral, and economic (Mauss 1967: 1).

For Mauss, exchanges are an expression of "total social movements or activities" (Evans-Prichard 1967: vii). Mauss defines the giving of a gift as *prestation* which:

"... in theory [are] voluntary, disinterested, and spontaneous; but are in fact obligatory and interested" (Mauss 1967: 1).

... For it is groups, and not individuals that carry on exchange, make contracts, and are bound by obligations; the persons represented in the contacts are moral persons - clans, tribes, and families; the groups, or the chiefs as intermediaries for the groups, confront and oppose each other. Further, what they exchange is not exclusively goods and wealth, real and personal property, and things of economic value. They exchange rather courtesies, entertainments, ritual, military assistance, women, children, dances, and feasts ... (Mauss 1967: 3).

Counter-prestations are types of exchange which Mauss terms as *total prestations*, whereby gifts are given or returned voluntarily, yet are obligatory, and carry with them ramifications for religious, moral, legal, and economic institutions (Mauss 1967: 3, 27). Therefore, the returned gift is not simply a dictate of materialism and commercialism, but of morality and social interaction.

Our morality is not solely commercial. We still have people and classes who uphold past customs and we bow to them on special occasions and at certain periods of the year.

The gift not yet repaid debases the man who accepted it, particularly if he did so without the thought of return (Mauss 1967: 63).

The morality of exchange extends to one's own identity and self-hood within the clan, and further extends to the clan's identity within larger society. Further, the exchange of gifts establish alliances, relationships and solidarity among individuals, clans and societies:

... the obligation is expressed in myth and imagery, symbolically and collectively; it takes the form of interest in the objects exchanged; the objects are never completely separated from the men who exchange them; the communion and alliance they establish are well-nigh insoluble. The lasting influence of the objects exchanged is a direct expression of the manner in which sub-groups within segmentary societies of an archaic type are constantly embroiled with and feel themselves in debt to each other (Mauss 1967: 31).

Claude Lévi-Strauss and Social Exchange

Mauss' work had a significant influence in the theories of exchange expounded by Claude Lévi-Strauss. Lévi-Strauss' theory of social exchange takes form through his in-depth study of kinship, particularly marriage and family relationships in communities of China, Africa, New Guinea, Asia and California (Lévi-Strauss 1949). Lévi-Strauss

developed much of his theory of social exchange when writing *The Elementary Structures of Kinship* (1949). Through this work, he was able to define the variety of types of individual and generalized exchanges, and forms of reciprocity. His development of significant terminology related to social-symbolic exchange is useful in exploring social-symbolic exchange within the Blackfoot bundle complex, and are outlined below and used throughout the remainder of this work.

For Lévi-Strauss, it is the social nature of human beings that enables them to embark on such symbolic practices as social exchange (Lévi-Strauss 1969: 3). Relationships between individuals are developed before, and independent of, the objects exchanged (Lévi-Strauss 1969: 8, 138). The *principle of reciprocity* (Lévi-Strauss 1969: 52-68), sometimes termed the norm of reciprocity, indicates that there are rules of behaviour and patterns of reciprocation within social exchange (Ekeh 1974: 47).

The small nomadic bands of the Nambikwara Indians of western Brazil are in constant fear of each other and avoid each other. But at the same time they desire contact, because it is the only way in which they are able to exchange, and thus to obtain products or articles that they lack. Exchanges are peacefully resolved wars, and wars are the result of unsuccessful transactions.

... And from being arrayed against each other they pass immediately to gifts; gifts are received, gifts are given, but silently, without bargaining, without any expression of satisfaction or complaint, and without any apparent connexion between what is offered and what is obtained. Thus it is a question of reciprocal gifts, and not of commercial transactions (Lévi Strauss 1969: 67).

Ekeh explains Lévi-Strauss' definition of reciprocity:

... reciprocity refers to the mutual reinforcement by two parties of each other's actions. The norms governing these two-party reciprocations do indeed represent one meaning of the social exchange situation. But it has

a wider meaning for Lévi-Strauss' [1949] theory. The principle of reciprocity is also a social usage whereby an individual feels obligated to reciprocate another's actions, not by directly rewarding his benefactor, but by benefitting another actor implicated in the social exchange situation ... (Ekeh 1974: 47-48).

Within the Murngin of Arnhem Land, north Australia, Lévi-Strauss was able to identify two forms of reciprocity: *mutual reciprocity* and *univocal reciprocity* (Lévi-Strauss 1969: 178-179; Ekeh 1974: 48; 205). Mutual reciprocity occurs only between two exchange actors, while univocal reciprocity occurs between three or more exchange actors who do not all necessarily benefit directly from each other (ibid). These types of reciprocity lead to specific types of social exchange (ibid). Mutual reciprocity leads to what Lévi-Strauss termed *restricted exchange*, while univocal reciprocity leads to *generalized exchange* (Lévi-Strauss 1969: 178-181; Ekeh 1974: 50). In restricted exchange, two exchange actors will benefit each other directly within in one exchange action - a give and receive situation. In generalized exchange one exchange actor will give to another who will give to yet another rather than benefit the individual who s/he personally received from. In time, the original exchange actors would receive from another exchange actor who s/he had not in fact directly exchanged with (ibid).

A < > B C < > D D < > E
 Restricted Exchange - Mutual
 Reciprocity
 A > B > C > D > E > A
 Univocal Exchange -Generalized
 Reciprocity

Malinowski, Mauss, and Lévi-Strauss reject the economic motive as the sole basis of social exchange (Ekeh 1974: 200). For them, the symbolic value, or the social meanings behind the items exchanged are of predominant importance (ibid). "They are sought for, not for what they are worth in themselves, but rather for what they represent between the giver and the receiver of the exchange items" (ibid: 200-201). While Malinowski considered both the social and the psychological motivations for entering exchange relations, Mauss and Lévi-Strauss generally only considered the social (ibid: 202). Malinowski understood social exchange to begin with the psychological need of the individual to be part of society, that leads to the building of social relations and networks (ibid). Mauss and Lévi-Strauss understood social exchange to be motivated only by the need to build relationships and networks (ibid). All three theorists, however, accepted that the object's symbolic value, not its economic value, is a means by which those individuals participating in social exchange build social solidarity between themselves and between groups (ibid: 201).

Social Exchange Theory

Attempting to clarify some of the major characteristics of social exchange theory presented by a variety of theorists, Peter Ekeh (1976) developed five elements that are integral to social exchange:

1. The relationship between economic exchange and social exchange
2. The structure of reciprocity
3. Restricted exchange and generalized exchange
4. Exploitation and power
5. The contributions of social exchange processes to social solidarity (Ekeh 1974: 199)

Each of these are summarized below and applied to the Blackfoot bundle complex in Chapter 5.

The Relationship Between Economic Exchange and Social Exchange

As mentioned previously, within social exchange theory, there is the concept of economic exchange versus social exchange. The latter is considered to be inherently symbolic in that giving and receiving is a form of generosity, in which relational networks are developed and solidarity achieved (Ekeh 1974: 201-202). Within the concept of social exchange there are mechanisms present other than economy, such as Mauss' and Lévi-Strauss' social symbology and Malinowski's psychology, that work to steer the exchange process (ibid: 201; Lévi-Strauss 1969: 32-35).

Economic exchange on the other hand, is the notion that social action is conducted in order to procure an object for the sole purpose of owning that object "entirely for its own sake and independently of any prospects of external success" (Weber 1947: 115; Ekeh 1974: 203). In this kind of model, social interaction is temporary and usually unlikely to be with the same individual twice.

The Structure of Reciprocity and Restricted and Generalized Exchange

Ekeh elaborates on Lévi-Strauss' classification of social exchange by further breaking down Lévi-Strauss' restricted and generalized exchange (Ekeh 1974: 209). Ekeh adds two sub-types of exchange to both restricted and generalized exchange. Under

restricted exchange, Ekeh adds *exclusive restricted exchange* ($A < > B$) which refers to an isolated reciprocal exchange between A and B (ibid). The second sub-type of restricted exchange is *inclusive restricted exchange* which refers to more than one reciprocal exchange occurring at one time (ibid). For example, the exchange of gifts at Christmas time where $A < > B$, $C < > D$, $E < > F$. Under generalized exchange, Ekeh adds *chain generalized exchange*, where each unit of exchange is equal where $A > B > C > D > Z > A$ (ibid). The second sub-type of generalized exchange is termed *net generalized exchange*, in which each unit of exchange relates to the group as whole (ibid). There are two types of net generalized exchange: *group-focused generalized exchange*, where $A > BCDE$, $B > ACDE$, $C > ABDE$, and *individual-focused generalized exchange* where $ABCD > E$, $ABCE > D$, $ABDE > C$ (ibid).

Further to Lévi-Strauss' and Ekeh's classifications of social exchange, I would add two more types of exchange: *group exclusive restricted exchange* where there occurs a group to group exchange ($ABCD < > EFGH$), and *group inclusive restricted exchange* where there occurs several simultaneous group to group exchanges ($ABCD < > EFGH$, while $IJKL < > MNOP$, while $RSTU < > VWXY \dots$). Within the bundle complex one's commitment to bundle ownership is individual and personal, however, for bundles such as the Thunder Medicine Pipe and Horn Headdresses or Staffs, ownership and responsibility are group-based (Provost 1996: personal communication; Bruised Head 1996: personal communication; Weasel Moccasin 1996c: personal communication; Weasel Head 1999: personal communication; Provost 1999: personal communication; Bruised Head 1999: personal communication). These types of exchanges will be discussed in Chapter 5.

Exploitation and Power

For Malinowski, exploitation cannot factor into the social exchange relationship. However, Lévi-Strauss purports that while exploitation of social exchange situations may occur, exploitation eventually leads to the decline of these relationships until they cease to exist (Ekeh 1974: 56-57). Furthermore, exploitation often shifts a social exchange situation from a symbolic process to one of strictly economic gain (ibid).

Structurally, the exploitation of social exchange institutions and relationships result in the transvaluation of the items of social exchange: where before they were weighted entirely in terms of symbolic values, they now come to acquire a utilitarian economic value (Ekeh 1974: 58).

Peter Ekeh briefly outlines Marcel Mauss' theory of the morality of social exchange in which social behaviour and interpersonal relationships independent of the social exchange situation are determined through a "moral code of behaviour" (Ekeh 1974: 58). This leads to what Ekeh terms "the morality of generalized exchange", in which society has the inherent understanding of a mutual trust in which all members work to benefit society at large rather than for one's own self-interest (ibid: 59). Within this is the concept of "credit mentality" in which individuals trust each other due to their credibility. Characteristic of morality of generalized exchange is the understanding that

... contributions to causes that do not yield immediate and direct benefits to the contributor, with only the hope that they will ultimately and indirectly come to benefit him or his family after a lapse of time ... (Ekeh 1974: 59).

By benefit, Ekeh is referring to a socially symbolic benefit rather than a monetary or material benefit, such as support, respect, credibility, and/or social standing.

The Contribution of Social Exchange Processes to Social Solidarity

Durkheim (1933), discussed two forms of social solidarity, mechanical and organic solidarity. Mechanical solidarity has been defined as typical of non-industrialized societies, in which the structural integration and differentiation of individuals leads to their non-effectual involvement in society (Durkheim 1933: 70-110; Lévi-Strauss 1969: 484; Ekeh 1974: 76). In other words, an individual's social participation within a group brings about little unity within the larger community. Lévi-Strauss provides a usable example of mechanical solidarity when he describes the bond between two brothers, while inherently strong due to shared experiences of upbringing, "adds nothing and unites nothing [in larger society]; it is based upon a cultural limit. satisfied by the reproduction of a type of connexion the model for which is provided by nature." (Lévi-Strauss 1969: 484). Typically, restricted exchange characterizes this form of solidarity, as it exists within one-to-one relationships, the existence of which do not necessarily effect society at large (Ekeh 1974: 62). Characteristically, this type of exchange is emotionally charged and therefore can be considered quite fragile (ibid).

Regarding organic solidarity, on the other hand, integration of, and differentiation between, individuals and groups in society works to provide group cohesion, and organic solidarity is characteristically evidenced in generalized exchange (Durkheim 1933: 111-132; Lévi-Strauss 1969: 484; Ekeh 1974: 77).

Specialization of tasks is matched by pluralistic criss-crossing integration of society. Social relationships are infused with a high degree of the morality of generalized exchange, accompanied with a high degree of trust of other actors in society.

CHAPTER FIVE

Social-Symbolic Exchange and the Blackfoot Bundle Complex

The Relationship Between Economic Exchange and Social Exchange

In considering the bundle complex among the Blood and Peigan communities, as in the case of the Kula Ring, non-Natives might initially be inclined to align the exchange of horses, blankets and money for a bundle as having the primary motive of economic exchange. The bundle complex and commerce on the reserves are undoubtedly related, but, as with the Kula and *gimwali* of the Trobriand Islands, they exist independently of each other. The transfer of usable goods for a bundle can be considered to be a form of economic exchange, although as discussed below, it is a social-symbolic economy. Rather than an object of material exchange, the primary motive for the transfer of a bundle relates to its value as a living, spiritual, symbolic, and social object, and as a vehicle of communication with Creator. Apart from their social and symbolic use, bundles have do not equate to an intrinsic economic value in the Blackfoot context.

When you ask what is the benefit of these bundles being returned to our community, the White community is always looking for money benefits. The bundles coming back to our community has spirituality and social meaning (Weasel Head 1996).

The socio-economic value of a bundle, as represented by horses, vehicles, blankets and money offered for a bundle, underlies symbolic value, and is of secondary but important significance. As objects of socio-economic value, the goods offered for exchange to the present bundle holder are considered for their appropriate reflection of the character, sincerity, and honourability of the individuals proposing the transfer. The

material goods exchanged are not part of a profit and gain economy, but are representative of respect for the knowledge of the bundle and previous owner. Upon transfer, one would essentially receive the equivalent of the sacrifices of goods and monies expended while in his/her care.

In the old days, people would buy these bundles for what 20 horses, blankets ... Yes that still goes on. The Long-Time Medicine Pipe Bundle ... that guy gave 60 head of horses ... He didn't just sell it to him ... [he] had to go through the ceremonies and transfer. Before [him] this guy got it from another tribal member he paid 60 head of horses. That's [Long Time Medicine Pipe Bundle's] the most expensive one. I heard one person in the past paid 93 horses for it. So that one didn't make as many rounds because it was so expensive (Weasel Head 1996).

But now the emphasis ... has shifted away from horses to many blankets, money. 'Cause you gotta remember that in the old days a Native's wealth was measured in horses because we used horses for everything, means for work, transportation, everything. [That] was our way so that was what was needed at that time. Nowadays you have vehicles, you have tractors you have all that modern stuff. Even now cattle is starting to be used instead of horses, and horses aren't as important today as they were 30-40 years ago, so it has to change along with that. It's what's used today (Weasel Head 1996).

Like if I still owned a pipe today and I was going to transfer today I would be more happy with getting things that are of necessity to me today than horses. I have horses at home and I have enough for what I need them ... I don't need horses. To get cows or money stuff like that, that would satisfy me more than if I got horses. But if I did get horses I won't say anything. I'm not gonna say "I don't want them!" (Weasel Head 1996).

Therefore, a bundle holder may seriously consider what he will be receiving in return for exchanging his bundle. As the last portion of this narrative indicates, however, the offer would not be refused on the grounds of the owner not receiving exactly what he chooses. The goods offered are evaluated on whether they are equivalent to, and reflective of the knowledge that the bundle and owner carries. Should the gifts be respectful of this

knowledge, but not necessarily to the taste of the bundle holder, s/he would not ordinarily refuse them. The symbolic value of the bundle always takes precedence over its material value, and thereby determines its value. The material value that might be placed on the bundle is therefore not one of profit, but one of expressing the spiritual value of the bundle.

Commerce, production and industry among the Blood and Peigan occur independently of the bundle complex. One's prosperity does not come from bundle ownership. It does, however, enhance a person's ability to take on the financial responsibilities of ownership of larger bundles such as the Medicine Pipe or Beaver Bundles. Individuals who are able to take on the financial challenges of a bundle are predominantly those who have control over their own means of resources, or have job security on the Reserve. These include individuals such as school principals, the director of the correctional centre, and successful ranchers. Those who have less income, however, are still able to participate in the care of larger bundles, such as the Medicine Pipe or O'kan bundles, by earning initiated rights to certain components of the bundle through the joint support of their families, or by contributing to the costs of feeding guests at the annual openings.

The bundle itself is a living, symbolic object that is sacred because it houses within it components that recall the songs, stories and teachings of the ancestors. The bundle without this knowledge is an empty shell, and does not have the same spiritual integrity (Bruised Head 1997: personal communication; Crow Shoe 1996c: personal communication; Pard 1996: personal communication). Therefore, when one proposes to

exchange goods for the rights to a bundle or its components, this is actually for the knowledge that the bundle will eventually convey to the new recipient through the previous bundle owner known as the "Grandfather" or "Grandmother". What one offers for a bundle is a symbol of reverence for the knowledge that the bundle and its present and previous owners carry, and the sacrifices they have incurred while it was in their care.

This social aspect surrounding the bundle complex is paramount in assuring its continuity. One must exhibit sincerity to be considered an acceptable candidate to transfer the bundle to, and to assure continued support after securing the bundle. Furthermore, once the transfer is made, one takes on the commitment to a life-long relationship with the Grandfather(s) or Grandmother(s) which may be based on fictive kinship (Weasel Head 1996: personal communication). Therefore, as Lévi-Strauss contends (1969: 139), the relationship between two people comes before that which is exchanged, in that one's reputation precedes them being considered for the ownership of a bundle. Further, this points to Mauss' form of *total prestation* where the exchange of the bundle effects society as a whole, creating lasting alliances and influences among society members.

As an individual takes on the status and lifestyle of a bundle holder, there are important protocols to follow.

You have to remember you have to live up to that status. I don't mean that you're a big shot, but your moral behaviour, your protocols and the way you live your life it has to change. 30 years ago and even for a while, while I owned them, I'm not afraid to say it, I was an alcoholic, I drank a lot. I lost my first wife that joined with me in the Medicine Pipe Bundle, stayed with another woman, joined the Horn Society. Her and I got separated again, and then afterwards I started to get pushed into being a

teacher, advice. All of a sudden my life changed. I've been with my wife for 21 years. It has changed. So this is what I mean about moral conduct and the responsibilities starting to shift onto me. So the protocol, you gotta live up to a certain standard of protocol and that's not being outspoken and sitting at the head of a table at a meeting and being the guy standing up there preaching. No. I don't mean that sort of thing. You almost take a step backwards when you own them [bundles] and live a quiet life almost a secluded life. I can't be seen at the slot machines all day. You've got a group that you're in with that [you have to consider]. So that's the protocol, in some cases are pretty strict, some are pretty minor but they're pretty hard to keep (Weasel Head 1996).

Star Hungry Wolf, who at the age of 15 had a Natoas or Sun Dance Bundle transferred to her, feels that her youth was affected due to her owning a bundle (Hungry Wolf 1996c: personal communication). At the age of 17, while she considers herself very fortunate to have had the opportunity to take on the role of the Holy Woman, she reflects on how the responsibilities of bundle ownership have affected her young life (ibid). She must be careful not to be reckless in public, or treat her responsibility as a Holy Woman carelessly (ibid). If she were to be careless with her behaviour, she would easily be judged as unworthy by her community who knows her to be a Holy Woman, which would also effect the reputation of her family (ibid). She has taken on the responsibility, so she always has to maintain her composure and her dignity (ibid).

The above narrative by Frank Weasel Head and experiences of Star Hungry Wolf, are only two examples of the many who have taken on the role of bundle holder. They evidence the great accountability and care required to care for a bundle. Clearly, bundle ownership imposes sanction on those who assume public leadership roles. The status achieved and the goods offered for acquiring a bundle are secondary but respective of the knowledge that one earns from caring for a bundle, and of the lifestyle one must uphold.

While the goods offered do have economic and comfort value to the Grandfather or Grandmother of the bundle, there is still a continued obligation on his/her part once s/he has transferred the bundle, to adhere to their status and position as advisors. Thus, it is clear that once one embarks on the responsibility of bundle ownership, one is in effect committing their entire lifetime to this status. It is the social and symbolic aspect, rather than the economic, that is the primary motivation behind the exchange of the bundle. One works to earn the knowledge of Blackfoot spirituality, which in turn assists towards conducting a lifestyle respected by oneself and one's community.

Young people are crying, grasping for something and slowly they're turning back to our ways ... It's slow and it will take time, but they're realizing that this other way where everything is based on money, money, money, now they're slowly starting to feel that money isn't the most important thing in life. It's nice to have money, I like to have money, but it's not the most important thing for me. A lot of the things is family, loving, sharing, caring, understanding of other people, not only the Native people but the outside community, respecting, those sorts of things are important than material possession. Once you're six feet underground they're not going to talk about material possessions, may be a little, but it will soon be forgotten. But if you do a lot of [these] other things, that's what you're going to be remembered for (Weasel Head 1996).

The Structure of Reciprocity and Restricted and Generalized Exchange

These Societies they go in certain ages. The Horn Society they'll be a group of young people, they'll want to take part in the Horn Society and they'll get together and prepare for it and they'll ask an Elder to ask permission if they can have certain bundles. If the rightful owners agree, they transfer their bundle at our [Sun Dance or O'kan] camp. Same with the Buffalo Societies [Mo'tokiks Society - however this is an example of inclusive restricted exchange] too. But there's few that jump in and out [to transfer] every year. But it's supposed to be that when the Leader gives up her bundle everybody gives up their bundles. But there's reasons certain ones transfer their bundle in between times, but that's to help people that are desperate - either through visions or dreams they want that bundle, and

if they want to fulfil that vow they have to ask and if a person says yes, and they transfer their bundles. Not just anybody can have them. A person that owns a bundle have to be very careful about these (Scout 1996).

Within the Blackfoot bundle complex, both restricted and general exchange occur.

The initial transfer of a bundle to a new owner is based on a restricted exchange:

For example if you owned a bundle and I wanted that bundle, I will go to an Elder and I'll pay him something and send him as a messenger to you to ask you for that bundle, and my reasons for wanting that bundle and for you to transfer it. You would give your answer to that person. He would be an "agent" in your language. You and I would never meet directly and make a deal. It's always through an Elder or person that I have chosen to send word to you ... Any member has a right to ask. Every member is legitimate in asking. There's no real protocol, you don't have to have been religious in the past (Weasel Head 1996).

Two actions of restricted exchange occur in this initial interaction. The first is with the Elder who benefits monetarily in respect of his role and standing in the exchange process. The amount offered, as with the gifts offered for a bundle, is always a reflection of one's respect for the Elder and one's financial situation. The Elder's direct exchange for the amount offered, however, is his/her honourable reputation, his/her personal backing for the potential bundle owner, and his/her negotiation skills, which will eventually directly effect the decision of the bundle owner to transfer. The concept of one giving what one can for the transfer of rights, was repeated to me several times by many individuals regarding giving a gift for any type of exchange, such as being painted at a ceremony for protection, or offering what you can for a bundle. What is more important is one's sincerity in taking on the responsibilities of bundle ownership (Weasel Moccasin 1996c: personal communication). Due to the reverence given to bundles and the knowledge of Elders and bundle holders, families will come together to ensure that the items offered are

almost always reflective of this symbolic value (Weasel Head 1996: personal communication).

If the offer to transfer is accepted, the present bundle owner and the new bundle owner are not permitted to visit one another until the transfer occurs (Scout 1996: personal communication; Weasel Head 1996: personal communication; Weasel Moccasin 1996: personal communication). In the case of the Medicine Pipe transfer ceremony, which is the only transfer I have witnessed and am therefore able to describe, the new bundle holders, acting as one entity, host the ceremony. During the transfer, a ceremonialist who has the rights to conduct a Medicine Pipe transfer will invite the present bundle holder into the ceremonial tipi (see Chapter 3 for description of transfer ceremony for a Medicine Pipe Bundle). At this time the family of the new bundle owners will bring in gifts of blankets on which money will be pinned, and outside the tipi will stand the horses, vehicles or larger gifts offered for the transfer. According to an Elder and ceremonialist, Florence Scout (1996: personal communication), the blankets and money, in addition to being symbols of comfort and warmth, are means by which to exhibit publically what is being offered for the bundle, as money in a small package is hard for the public to witness. At this time, the present bundle holder can either reject or accept the gifts offered. With regards to the Medicine Pipe transfer, these gifts are an example of a group exclusive restricted exchange, or group to group exchange over one bundle.

Group-focused generalized exchange and individual-focused exchange is evidenced when the social interaction extends further out into the community. An

example of group-focused generalized exchange ($E > ABCD$, $F > ABCD$), where individuals give to a group without immediate reciprocation, is seen when individuals attend such events as Medicine Pipe Bundle openings, or public Horn Society ceremonies. At this time it is customary for individuals attending to contribute to the feast. This usually takes the form of a large box of fruit, or packaged dry goods. This gift is offered to the host bundle holders, not only as a form of respect to them for the privilege of attending the ceremony, but also as a means by which to show support for the opening of the bundle in honour of Creator.

To reciprocate, the host bundle holders will redistribute the Holy food to each individual in attendance, in an example of individual-focused generalized exchange ($ABCD > E$, $ABCD > F$). Later in the ceremony, this form of exchange occurs again when the host bundle holders distribute blankets and tobacco, in the symbolic return of each individual's support and prayers (Weasel Moccasin Jr. 1996: personal communication).

Further to the structure of reciprocity, “equality of partnership in social exchange is needed for continuity of social interaction; when this expectation is frustrated the social exchange situation is threatened” (Ekeh 1974: 48). The equality of exchange partnerships can be evidenced in the community support that is expressed to ensure that the gifts offered to transfer a bundle are equal to the symbolic value of the bundle. As stated above, the gifts given are a reflection of respect for the bundle being a gift from Creator, the knowledge the bundle holds, and respect for the integrity of the present and previous owners. As stated, although the custodianship of bundles is a costly endeavour, it is not

strictly limited to wealthy individuals (Weasel Head 1996: personal communication). If an individual had a vision or dream to own a bundle, his/her family and relatives would contribute to obtaining a bundle (ibid). In return, they too would be initiated into the care of the bundle or its component parts, and/or receive blessings from Creator (ibid; Provost/Bruised Head 1996: personal communication). In so doing, the group comes together in order to harmonize the exchange situation, establishing an equal partnership between both parties, thereby ensuring comfortable future interaction.

According to Star Hungry Wolf, family, friends and relations assisted both spiritually and financially in order for her to take on the responsibilities of the Sun Dance Bundle or Natoas (Hungry Wolf 1996c: personal communication). It is with their support that she feels she had the strength to take on the bundle (ibid). When the Natoas came to her, her family and friends contributed to hosting and feeding the community during the four days of ceremony (ibid). Her father shared in tending for the bundle, as she was so young and needed assistance (ibid).

After Frank Weasel Head took on the responsibility to hold a bundle, he found it financially challenging to uphold the cost of gifts for the ceremonialists and feeding the community in order to open the bundle each year (Weasel Head 1996: personal communication). His family and friends helped to carry out his responsibilities, which in turn maintained the equality and integrity of his standing with fellow bundle holders and the community.

Well somehow, I always believe in our way that the Creator provides if you're sincere. I never thought ... one summer for example when my opening was going to be on that Sunday ... by that Wednesday my uncle

and aunt had a Pipe they were going to open, and I hadn't had anything to feed out to the people, and you've seen how they feed and I didn't have a job, no work but I had a big feed that Sunday. In those days, my uncle gave me a hundred dollars, I didn't ask him for it, he just stuck it in, "here for your opening". A hundred dollar bill, the first hundred dollar bill I ever seen. And that was in '64. 1964 so a hundred dollars worth of grub is worth about thousand dollars today, and all the help that people brought, they come, I don't ask for help, it just comes. That's why I really believe in it if you're sincere, the Creator provides ... for you. (Weasel Head 1996)

As mentioned in Chapter 4, within the Medicine Pipe transfer and the Horn Society transfer there occurs two additional types of exchange: *group exclusive generalized exchange* and *group inclusive generalized exchange*. The former reflects the exclusive type of restricted exchange in which only one unit of exchange is in question for which gifts are offered. However, with the Medicine Pipe Bundle for example, although the male partner of the primary couple is the main spokesperson and negotiator of the bundle, there are two male/female couples, one primary and one secondary, who are considered to be the joint holders of the bundle (Weasel Moccasin 1996a: personal communication; Provost 1996: personal communication). The primary couple are the individuals who are obligated to provide payment in exchange for the bundle. The secondary couple are members of the primary couple's kin group, and the male partner is given the rights for the top-knot (headpiece within the bundle) while the female bundle is given the rights to carry the bundle's tripod (Weasel Moccasin Jr. 1996b: personal communication; Conaty 1998: personal communication). These two individuals are very much in the role of apprenticeship under the guidance of the primary couple and previous owners of the bundle. When the bundle is transferred, it is transferred from one quadratic group (group of four individuals) to another quadratic group, where $ABCD < > EFGH$

(ibid). In the case of the Horn Society Bundles, the ownership of the headdress or staff bundles are based on triad (three individuals) ownership, where a male/female couple are primary owners, and the third partner is male and referred to as the "holy younger brother" of the primary couple (Conaty 1998: personal communication). Therefore, this type of exchange, which I shall term *group exclusive restricted exchange*, occurs between two groups of people, over one object.

The second type of exchange that occurs within the Blackfoot bundle complex I term *group inclusive restricted exchange*. This type of exchange, as above is one where one unit of exchange occurs between quadratic groups, but within a network of exchange relationships, where $ABCD < > EFGH$, $IJKL < > MNOP$, $QRST < > UVWX$. An example of this type of exchange occurring within the Blackfoot bundle complex is with the Horn Society, usually every four years (Bruised Head 1998: personal communication; Scout 1996: personal communication). During this type of transfer, several, or in the case of the 1998 transfer, all of the triadic groups of Horn members will transfer ownership of Horn Society Bundles simultaneously (ibid).

Exploitation and Power

Today, in a commoditized and commerce-oriented society, Blackfoot Society members are particularly conscious to ensure that bundles are not exploited for economic value. As economic gain implies economic self interest, the sale of a bundle is clearly separate from the socio-economic aspects associated with the bundle transfer. The economic value of the latter situation is legitimated and drawn from the symbolic value

of the bundle, which in turn is socially and spiritually ascribed. The commercial sale of a bundle would conceptually shift the bundle from being a symbolic object to one of economic value. Therefore this would lead to the decline of social solidarity between the vendor and the bundle community. This point is clearly articulated by today's Society members.

An example within the Blackfoot bundle complex where an item of symbolic value became one of economic value was evidenced in the early to mid 20th century, during the period of spiritual decline among the Blood and Peigan. At this time, with the introduction of Christianity, residential schools and legalization of alcohol on reserves, there was a systematic decline of Native spirituality and traditions among the Blood and Peigan (Provost/Bruised 1996: personal communication; Duran and Duran 1995: 139)

... I was wondering why we weren't doing the Sun Dance. And I found out that a lot of the people that could sponsor ... just couldn't bear the financial burden of having ceremonies. At the time too with all the loss of our culture, the lack of interest, the Christianization that had occurred, a lot of the bundles had been sold to museums (Pard 1996).

... about the boarding schools, we always looked at the White person as ... the person that gave you direction and advice that you were brought up to listen to ... no matter what they said to us we had to, had no choice but to listen. It was instilled in us, or beaten into us. So when we came out [of school] the authority of the White person ... you know we still lived by it. So if a White person said that's the way it's gotta be done well that's the way we did it. 'Cause we were raised with their authority. We weren't raised with our parent's authority anymore, we weren't raised with our Elder's authority anymore. It was taken away. An Elder was just some old person waiting to die you know (laughs). Once we started getting into the ceremonies we learned how valuable these people are and how much information [they have] ... because what they spoke to us about, their teachings, and what the White people taught us were two different things. It was always instilled in us in school that our parents were so wrong, that we were destined to perish from disease and starvation and that the White people came and saved us which wasn't the fact (Provost 1996).

... we [Glenbow Museum] were collecting a lot of religious material. The reason for this, was that by the 1950s and 1960s - and the young people today can't believe this but its true - old people had resigned themselves to the fact that the religion had died or was dying out with them. And that was much the attitude. It wasn't a feeling of "oh I'm giving up a very important part of my religious heritage" or "I'm giving up something that's very significant to the tribe". That wasn't the attitude they had at all. Their attitude was "these are relics of the past" something that was dead and gone. They had no way of predicting that any kind of revival was going to take place and of course it did take place (Dempsey 1996).

Owing to the enormous cultural changes occurring at this time, Native individuals did not have the benefit of their parents' or Elders' knowledge to understand the symbolic value of the bundle. As museums were in the process of carrying out "salvage ethnography", they were trying to collect as much of the material culture that reflected this "dying culture" (Dempsey 1996: personal communication). Therefore, during this period, the meaning of the bundle shifted from symbolic to economic or monetary value. Bundles began to be sold to museums or pawn shops for amounts that were a mere fraction of their symbolic value (Dempsey 1996: personal communication). Thus, the social exchange network that existed within the Blackfoot bundle complex collapsed and was followed by the disintegration of community solidarity.

Exploitation of social exchange situations in contemporary Blood and Peigan society is virtually non-existent. The strength of the spiritual revival has been so marked, that those involved in its perpetuation closely monitor the whereabouts of existing bundles, whether they be in museums or in individual homes. In the case of museum ownership of bundles, members of the Blood's Mookaakin Cultural and Heritage Society, and bundle holders from the Peigan Nation, such as Alan Pard and Jerry Potts Jr., have for decades been involved in visiting Canadian and American museums in order to locate

Blackfoot bundles (Weasel Head 1996: personal communication; Pard 1996: personal communication; Potts Jr. 1996: personal communication). They have been instrumental in the development of policies regarding the potential return of bundles to Blackfoot communities. In some cases, these individuals have worked with museums to ensure that, once returned, the bundles are in the care of initiated community members (ibid).

Within the active bundle complex, bundle holders, whether they be Medicine Pipe holders, Mo'tokiks Society members, Horn Members, Beaver Bundle holders, or Holy Women, look towards the "morality of social exchange" (Ekeh 1974: 58) to ensure that each respects his or her responsibilities as a bundle holder (Weasel Head 1996: personal communication; Scout 1996: personal communication).

The above experiences involving Frank Weasel Head and Star Hungry Wolf, are exemplary of Mauss' total prestation where the responsibility incurred through the transfer of bundle ownership has ramifications through all major aspects of society. The bundle holders' behaviour in their communities weighs heavily not only on their personal reputation, but also on the credibility of the members at large within the bundle complex. In order for them to continue on in any aspect of life, be it social, economic or political, their moral obligation to being past or present bundle holders determines their appropriate conduct in society.

... When you become a member [of a Society], while you're a member you can slip. The way I put it ... [its like] ... you have not been to school, you've gone back to school to earn that [teaching]. You don't preach to other people, you don't start preaching stuff [yourself], you're going to school. If you make a mistake you've got your advisors out there or the general public will then tell the advisors "look what they're doing" ... and that advisor, his responsibility is to go and correct you. You can slip. But

once you transfer, now you're starting to be used [as an advisor], and you become more of a role model. Like remember I told you about the roles we play almost like we live by it, we've gone into another world. Like for me I have to be a real role model in my behaviour in my way of life, how I conduct myself, not only in our ceremonies but in everyday life, how I talk to people, how I greet them, I have to be careful because nobody is there to correct me. I am now as ... the professor as you would say, and if your professor says this is this, even if you argue, if that's the way he learned [then] that's the way it is, you have to go by that. I am now almost in that ... especially in our spiritual matters I'm in that position, although I don't, again I told you before, I don't go around telling people I'm an Elder, spiritual leader, I'm a professor or like this. You earn it and its bestowed upon you. You see the people who are now Medicine Pipe holders. They look at this and they bestowed it upon us. It's not a self bestowment ... others bestow it upon us. They come to you because of the role model you play, that you're responsible. They know our history, what I've been through, and they'll say "oh he's a good role model we'll use him" they bestow it upon me. I don't go tell them "hey, I'm an Elder, I'm a spiritual leader, use me". No. If they don't use me I could be a lot more happier 'cause there'll be a lot less responsibility on me (laughs). I'd like to still go have few beers, two-three beers in the bars and B.S.. But no ... (Weasel Head 1996).

As Ekeh states:

Trust of others, trust that others will discharge their obligations to the enrichment of society rather than for their exclusive narrow self-interests: the willingness to give to others the benefit of the doubt ... Societies with a morality of generalized exchange enjoy a *credit mentality*: the belief that individuals are credit worthy and can be trusted ... (Ekeh: 1974:59).

In the case of bundle ownership as with the Kula Ring, "credit mentality" extends to build one's commitment to the proper custodianship of a symbolic object, and one's generosity in offering spiritual support to the community. In turn, this leads to the betterment of one's reputation, brings good to one's family, and affirms one's spiritual and community status within society.

Due to the network of relationships developed through joint ownership of

bundles, through members of the community being initiated to parts of bundles, and through constant support of fellow bundle owners, there is a mutual moral obligation among these individuals that ensures that they adhere to their responsibilities as custodians of the bundle.

In addition to the moral obligation of an individual bundle holder to larger society, there is also an important emphasis given to one's obligation to Creator, from whom it is understood that the bundles were first received. If one was to be negligent in upholding protocol and responsibilities as a bundle holder, s/he would be disrespecting the symbolic and sacred exchange made by Blackfoot ancestors who accepted the bundles from Creator, which in turn would inevitably bring misfortune to themselves or their families.

Within the Blackfoot bundle complex, morality of social exchange works to minimize engaging in the exploitation of social exchange relationships through bundle ownership, and the manipulation of power. Ultimately, morality of social exchange, through credit mentality strengthens community solidarity.

The Contribution of Social Exchange Processes to Social Solidarity

While the exchanges of Medicine Pipe, Mo'tokiks, Natoas, Beaver or Horn Society Bundles occur within the restricted exchange paradigm, as do the exchanges of arm shells and necklaces within the Kula Ring, exchanges as described above have a tangible overall impact on larger society. The ownership of a Natoas Bundle, for example, although transferred within an exclusive restricted exchange, affects larger

society as this exchange must result in the Holy Woman putting up an O'kan or Sun Dance in accordance with her vow to her community (Hungry Wolf 1996c: personal communication). By engaging in four days of ceremony, and hosting the O'kan, the Holy Woman acts as a primary connection to the Creator for the community at large.

The assistance of many men and women from the community is required to ensure the success of the O'kan (Hungry Wolf 1996c: personal communication). Associated with the four days of ritual and ceremony, is a complex specialization of tasks to which individuals other than the Holy Woman must have initiated rights (Bastien 1996: personal communication; Crow Shoe 1996: personal communication; Hungry Wolf 1996: personal communication; Provost 1996: personal communication; Raczka 1996: personal communication; Raczka and Bastien 1986: 29-32). In *The Division of Labour in Society* (1933), Durkheim states:

From the time that the number of individuals among whom social relations are established begins to increase, they can maintain themselves only by greater specialization, harder work, and intensification of their faculties. From this general stimulation, there inevitably results a much higher degree of culture (Bellah 1973: 121)

The Ceremonial Father and Mother carry out many of the ceremonial duties. The Brave Dog Society and the Horn Society provide further assistance to the Ceremonial Father and Mother, and are instrumental in the orchestration and execution of the practicalities surrounding the O'kan (ibid; Calf Robe 1989: 29; Standing Alone 1989: 20). The men select the camp site, build the sweat lodges, ritually select the centre pole, build the Sun Dance Lodge, and carry out much of the other laborious tasks surrounding the O'kan. The women are central in assisting the Ceremonial Mother, and prepare the O'kan

feast which also entail preparing meat (See Raczka and Bastien for details of Brave Dog Society tasks). The ritualization of these specialized tasks works to endorse community membership and identity, thereby ensuring the solidarity of the group. The responsibility of the care of the bundle thus radiates out and involves a significant proportion of the community.

As another example, the joint ownership of Medicine Pipe or Horn Society Bundles, while occurring as a result of group inclusive or group exclusive restricted exchange, results in elements of the morality of social exchange that Ekeh identifies as only prevalent in situations of generalized exchange. While Ekeh characterizes restrictive exchange to be inherently fragile, the *kin-based* joint ownership of Blackfoot bundles in *group inclusive* and *group exclusive* restricted exchange makes for a strong bond between partners. In the cases I have witnessed, the joint ownership of bundles have occurred or currently occur between (1) a man and his wife as the primary couple, and their son and his grandmother as a secondary couple (Provost 1996: personal communication), (2) a man and his female cousin as the primary couple, and the female partner's son and daughter and the secondary couple (Weasel Moccasin 1996c: personal communication), and (3) a man and his wife as the primary couple, and their son and daughter as the secondary couple (Weasel Moccasin Jr. 1996b: personal communication). I suggest that this leads to a more organic form of solidarity in which there is a high degree of trust, and moral and spiritual obligation between father, mother and child, sister and brother, or cousin to cousin, which in turn leads to ensuring the responsibilities of the bundle ownership are met. Where custodianship of a bundle usually stays within the family,

transfers can occur both within kin groups and across kin groups, which further enforces the obligation of bundle holders to larger society (Weasel Head 1996: personal communication; Provost/Bruised Head 1996: personal communication; Weasel Moccasin 1996: personal communication).

Particularistic social values ... [or] ... The distinctive values they share unite the members of a collectivity in common social solidarity and extend the scope of integrative bonds far beyond the limits of personal feeling of attraction. These cultural and subcultural beliefs become symbols of group identity and define the boundary between the ingroup and the outgroup. The particular shared values that distinguish a collectivity from others constitute the medium through which its members are bound together into a cohesive community ... Particularistic values are characteristic attributes that distinguish collectivities, and simultaneously with uniting the members of each in social solidarity they create segregating boundaries between collectivities (Blau 1964: 267-268).

The revival of the bundle complex among the Blood and Peigan constitutes a return to their ancestral traditions in the midst of their multi-cultural reality, a development which reaffirms values that are distinct from dominant society. Through this revival, the Blood and Peigan are able to strengthen their cultural and spiritual identity, develop and establish a contemporary set of moral obligations and conduct, and work towards the continued integration and respect of new members. The inclusion of varied age-groups within the joint ownership of one bundle or Societal ownership of several bundles, confirms the continuation of the Blackfoot bundle complex through time. Today, children as young as aged 5 to 8 are becoming secondary couples to Medicine Pipes, while one boy of 15 recently took on the responsibilities of the primary male holder with his female older cousin (Weasel Moccasin 1996: personal communication). Star Hungry Wolf took on a leading spiritual role among her community and age group

when she became a Holy Woman at the age of 15. Once an individual, however young, is initiated into a bundle, s/he must conduct oneself as a bundle holder or ex-bundle holder throughout life and be a role model to others in their community. This role extends not only to self-respect and self-identity, but also extends to uphold one's respect of the Creator, and of the in-group identity of the community. Group restricted exchange combined with generalized exchange forms an even tighter form of solidarity than generalized exchange alone, as one is in constant partnership of ownership or exchange. Together they foster a network of strength among the Blackfoot as each individual's identity and group membership is gradually confirmed through initiation into Societies and bundle ownership, giving one meaning and purpose within their community.

Conclusion

The importance of sacred material within the Blackfoot context is hardly a question. The way in which these bundles are venerated, incorporated into healing practices, and used to build and maintain norms and social order is clearly evident.

The return of sacred material to the Blackfoot by Glenbow and Provincial Museum of Alberta has been, and continues to be, a challenge for all parties concerned. While issuing long-term loans has provided a solution to the Blackfoot's need to physically return bundles to their communities in order to continue their spiritual traditions, legally these objects continue to be owned by the province. In order for the Blackfoot to identify completely with their humanity and universe they require full legal ownership of their bundles.

Issues regarding the definition of “sacred”, and the political and fiduciary obligations of museums are ongoing. It is important, however, that while there still live Blackfoot individuals whose knowledge and teachings can assist with the revival and strengthening of Blackfoot spirituality and culture, discussions continue with the final goal of ensuring practical and tangible solutions for both museums and the Blackfoot.

Last Words

This study has looked towards the personal stories and narratives of those involved in the Blackfoot bundle complex as the impetus for understanding the return of sacred materials to Blackfoot communities. In this spirit, I conclude this work with the words of Blackfoot individuals.

... it's really done a lot for both reserves. A lot of families, like within our family, within the Weasel Moccasin family, it's really opened up a lot of doors for our families to say that there's still a lot of things that we can still do together as families, and how everybody gets along ... the majority of the families pretty well everybody gets along now (Bruised Head 1996).

... When we got our bundle then our family started getting involved, and their friends and their families. So it's brought a whole ... ripple effect of a new group of people getting involved. Whereas before, a certain clan owned this [a bundle] and just their extended families ... were a part of it (Provost 1996).

It's really taken us a long way from what our lifestyle used to be before. And all the friends we've met, all the other bundle owners, it's like you're more close to them then you are to your own family. It's just all extended family all these other bundle owners. You go to their houses, it's just like you're at home the way they treat you. Just the same as here, when people come here we try to make our home open to everybody (Bruised Head 1996).

... it's a lot of sharing. Something you really hang on to, how would you say? That you want to share it with your family with your friends so you pass it on. That's how it is in our culture (Bruised Head 1996).

You go to the Horn ceremony and get painted. Hundreds and hundreds of people. At a Medicine Pipe ceremony you're painting for 2-3 hours. With 3-4 people inside painting, there'll be four lines. Look at down in Browning, with George Kicking Woman: blocks, two blocks of lineups went around. Painted for six hours. That's where the people are recognizing and respecting [our spirituality]. You've got to have the real thing to make it happen (Potts Jr. 1996).

[Long-term loans] really made me look at Glenbow and non-Natives in a different way, a different perspective, it wasn't so negative anymore ... my feelings have changed now (Bruised Head 1996).

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APPENDIX A: Origination Stories

O'kan

There are two origination stories associated with the O'kan ceremony. The first is related to the ceremony itself which was given to the first Holy Woman by her husband Morning Star (Hungry Wolf 1980: 46). The second story is related to the headdress itself which was given by the associated animals originally as part of the Beaver Bundle but was later transferred and adopted by the Holy Woman of the O'kan as a significant component of her bundle and rituals (ibid: 42; Wissler 1912: 211,214)). Prior to this the Holy Women would adorn her head with a wreath of creeping juniper branches (Hungry Wolf 1980: 46).

Origination Story: O'kan Ceremony

One night two young sisters were lying down outside their lodge, looking up at the sky. One of them pointed to Morning Star (the North Star or Jupiter), and said: "I wish I could have that beautiful bright star for a husband."

A few days later these same two sisters were out gathering wood. Once sister had trouble with her pack strap breaking, when she tried to carry her load of wood back home. The other sister finally [sic] said: "I will go ahead with my load and you can follow me." The one who stayed behind was the one who had wanted to marry the star. As soon as her sister was gone, a handsome young man came out of the brush toward her. She got up to run away, but he stepped in her way and told her: "The other night you wished to marry a bright star in the sky. I am that star, my name is Morning Star." He had an eagle plume tied to his hair, and he held another one which he tied in the girl's hair. She fainted, and when she revived she found herself in a strange place, far from home.

Morning Star introduced his new wife to his parents, who were Sun and Moon. They welcomed her, and the old woman, Moon, gave her a digging stick and said: "You can go out for walks and dig turnips at the same time. There will be no one to bother you, so you can do what you wish, except for one thing: Do not dig up that great big turnip growing far out from here. That is a special, sacred turnip that must not be pulled up."

The girl did as she was told, everyone treated her very kindly, and she was happy in her new home. She had forgotten all about her people and the place where she came from. She even had a child with her husband, Morning Star. Sometime later she was sitting outside, and she began to think about the large sacred turnip. Since no one ever went near it, she thought they would never know if she just dug it up to look at, then put it back in its place. She had never seen a turnip anywhere near that size. So, while her baby was crawling around and playing, she went over and worked on the turnip with her digging stick, until she was finally able to pry it loose. However, she didn't have enough strength to lift the turnip out of its hole, and her digging stick was wedged in so hard that she couldn't pull it out, either. She sat down, worried, and wondered what to do.

While she was sitting, two large white cranes flew down to her. They were sacred

cranes, and they had come to help her. The one crane said: "I have spend all my life with my husband and have never been with another. For that reason I have the power to help you." This crane then made incense and taught the young woman some songs and a ceremony, during which she removed the root digger as well as the large turnip. The young woman looked down the hole where the turnip had been, and she could see the camp of her people, far below. Suddenly she became lonesome for her relatives and she longed to go back down to them. The crane told her: "Your husband will allow you to go back home. Take along this digging stick and use it during the Sun Dance, which you will be allowed to sponsor when you get back among your people."

When she got back to her husband he knew right away what had taken place. He said: "I do not want to give you up, but I will let you return to your family because I know that from now on you will be lonesome. Take our son with you, and he may become a leader among your people. But you must not allow him to touch the ground for seven days after you have returned, or he will turn into a puffball and come back up here to live as a star." Then he tied the eagle plume back on his wife's head, and she was mysteriously brought back to earth with her baby.

Beverly Hungry Wolf
Blood Community
"The Ways of My Grandmothers"
1980: 46-48

[Her husband] told her: "All right, you have dug it up; so I will have to let you back home. But you will take some things back with you to help your people, to bring them together."

That is when she was first shown about the Sun Dance, the O'kan. Because she was a virtuous girl, she was given these things to bring to the people. She was taught about the forked Centre Pole - its meaning as the center of the Universe - also about the posts that go around it and the rawhide that ties them together. She was taught the songs for it, and what it all means. She was shown the different incense altars, and the use of Earth paints that go with the O'kan. This was a miracle! A big mystery, how she learned it all, because it is very long and complicated. Finally she was ready to be lowered back down to Earth, at the end of a magic rawhide.

Ben Calf Robe, 1977
Indian Tribes of the Northern
Rockies
by Adolf and Beverly Hungry Wolf
1989: 27

The young woman's parents were happy to have her back alive, since they had assumed she was either dead or captured by some enemy. They were amazed when they heard her story, and they marveled [sic] at their new grandchild. The girl told them that the baby was not to touch the ground for seven days. She told her father to paint a sign on his tipi, as Morning Star had instructed, to remind them all of this taboo. The father painted a large cross at the top of his lodge, in back, and ever since then the painted

lodges of our people have had a sign there for the Morning Star.

Six days went by without mishap, but on the seventh day the young mother left her baby behind, while she went out to get wood. The grandmother forgot about the taboo and let the baby crawl on the tipi floor. When the mother came back she didn't see him, so her mother said: "The last time I saw him he was playing under that buffalo robe." His mother quickly pulled back the robe, but all she found was an ordinary puffball, like those that grow all over the prairie. That night she looked up and saw a bright star in the sky.

After some time passed, the same woman made a vow to put up a Sun Dance. Along with the other articles used by the holy woman, she carried her sacred digging stick and a fresh tall leaf of the wild turnip. She taught the others the ceremony that went with them, and these things have been carried on to this day. In addition she painted round circles all the way around the bottom of her father's lodge, in memory of her little child. Most painted lodges now have these circles, and that is why they are called puffballs, or fallen stars from the sky.

Beverly Hungry Wolf
Blood Community
"The Ways of My Grandmothers"
1980: 48-49

Origination Story: Natoas Headdress

There were once a cow elk who left her husband and ran away with another bull. Her husband wanted to have her back, so he went around to different birds and animals and asked them to help. The moose and the raven were the only ones who were willing. Since they were in the thick forest by the mountains, the raven offered to go look first. He flew away and stayed gone for four days before he returned with the news. He said he had found the runaway couple and, with his own power, he had caused them to stay in the area where they were.

The husband became afraid to challenge his rival, so he asked the moose and raven how they would help. The moose said: "With my heavy horns I have the power to strike very hard." The husband was encouraged, so he said: "With my big horns I have the power to hook very hard." The raven just said: "Don't worry, the three of us can overpower him." So they started for the place where the couple had been found.

When they got close, the husband again became afraid of his rival. He said to the moose: "How is that raven going to help me if I get in trouble? He has only the wings that he flies with." At that the moose began to worry also. Soon the raven flew down and told them: "The ones we are after are just ahead, by a large cottonwood tree."

The elk walked toward his wife and rival, the moose followed close behind, and the raven flew overhead. All three were singing their power songs. With each step that the moose took, his feet went farther into the hard ground. This was proof of his strength. When the elk got up by his wife he hooked at the large cottonwood tree and knocked chips from it each time. Then the moose came up and rammed the tree with his

horns and gouged it deeply. At that point the rival elk hooked the big tree and sent it crashing to the ground. Now the husband and his friend the moose were greatly frightened, and decided to make friends with the other elk. Only the raven wanted to continue with the challenge. But the moose told the husband: "This elk has too much power for us, so we had better go ahead and make friends with in. What can this raven do to help us, sing he only has wings to fly with?" The husband replied: "Yes, you are right. I will present him with my robe and headdress." To this the moose said: "I will give him my hooves." The raven shrugged with disappointment and added: "All right, then I will give him my tail feathers. If you had agreed with me to continue the challenge, I was going to land on this head and use my large beak to peck his eyes out. You two could have easily won after I made him blind."

When the other two heard this they changed their minds and said: "Let us go ahead and challenge him, then," but the raven said it was too late, since they had already given in to their own cowardice. Meanwhile, the other elk was listening to their conversation, and he became scared of the raven. He decided to accept the gifts while he was ahead. So they gave him their gifts, the husband took back his wife, and the other elk went on his way.

It is a mystery how this first elk happened to have that headdress, but it was a Natoas like the holy women wear for the Sun Dance. It had a rawhide band which held large plumes and feathers to represent the elk's power of hooking with his horns. But since bulls already have horns, the headdress was made for a cow elk to wear, along with the robe that was also presented.

The elk that received the presents had no wife who could wear these things, so he decided to give them to the people who were camped nearby. He changed himself into a man and he brought the articles to the people. He taught them the ceremony for their use, and he told them that they must always put up a small cottonwood tree where they could imitate the challenge that he had gone through to get the presents. To this day that challenge is reenacted during each medicine lodge ceremony [O'kan ceremony].

The man to whom this first Natoas was given was a great holy man who also had the first beaver bundle. He put the sacred headdress in with this bundle and let his wife wear it whenever the bundle's ceremony was held. He was also the leader of the medicine lodge ceremony, since he was such a wise man. His wife wore the Natoas for that ceremony as well. When the holy women who vowed the Sun Dance learned about the power of the beaver bundle man's wife's headdress, they asked to borrow it for each Sun Dance ceremony to wear on their own heads. So it came to be that this ceremony was transferred to the Sun Dance women of long age, who replaced their simple juniper wreaths with this powerful and sacred headdress.

Beverly Hungry Wolf
Blood Community
"The Ways of My Grandmothers"
1980: 42-45

Horn Society and Mo'tokiks Society

Origination Story: Mo'tokiks and Horn Societies

Once a young man went out and came to a buffalo-cow fast in the mire. He took advantage of her situation. After a time she gave birth to a boy. When he could run about, this boy would go into the Indian camps and join in the games of the children, but would always mysteriously disappear in the evening. Once day this boy told his mother that he intended to search among the camps for his father. Not long after this he was playing with the children in the camps as usual, and went into the lodge of a head man in company with a boy of the family. He told this head man that his father lived somewhere in the camp, and that he was anxious to find him. The head man took pity on the boy, and send out a messenger to call in to this lodge all the old men in the camp. When these were all assembled and standing around the lodge, the head man requested the boy to pick out his father. The boy looked them over, and then told the head man that his father was not among them. Then the head man sent out a messenger to call in all the men next in age; but , when these were assembled, the boy said that his father was not among them. Again the head man sent out the messenger to call in all the men of the next rank in age. When they were assembled, the boy looked them over as before, and announced that his father was not among them. So once again the head man sent out his messenger to call in all the young unmarried men of the camp. As they were coming into the head man's lodge, the boy ran to one of them, and, embracing him, said, "Here is my father." After a time the boy told his father that he wished to take him to see his mother. The boy said, "When we come near her, she will run at you and hook four times, but you are to stand perfectly still." The next day the boy and his father started out on their journey. As they were going along they saw a buffalo-cow, which immediately ran at them as the boy had predicted. the man stood perfectly still, and at the fourth time, as the cow was running forward to hook at him, she became a woman. Then she went home with her husband and child. One day shortly after their return, she warned her husband that whatever he might do he must never strike at her with fire. They lived together happily for many years. She was a remarkably good woman. One evening when the husband had invited some guests, and the woman expressed a dislike to prepare food for them, he became very angry, and, catching up a stick from the fire, struck at her. As he did so, the woman and her child vanished, and the people saw a buffalo cow and calf running from the camp.

Now the husband was very sorry and mourned for his wife and child. After a time he went out to search for them. In order that he might approach the buffalo without being discovered, he rubbed himself with filth from a buffalo-wallow. In the course of time he came to a place where some buffalo were dancing. He could hear them from a distance. As he was approaching, he met his son, who was now, as before, a buffalo-calf. The father explained to the boy that he was mourning for him and his mother and that he had come to take them home. The calf-boy explained that this would be very difficult, for his father would be required to pass through an ordeal. The calf-boy explained to him that, when he arrived among the buffalo and inquired for his wife and son, the chief of

the buffalo would order that he select his child from among all the buffalo-calves in the herd. Now the calf-boy wished to assist his father, and told him that he would know his child by a sign, because, when the calves appeared before him, his won child would hold up his tail. Then the man proceeded until he came to the place where the buffalo were dancing. Immediately he was taken before the chief of the buffalo-herd. The chief required that he first prove his relationship to the child by picking him out from among all the other calves of the heard. The man agreed to this and the calves were brought up. He readily picked out his own child by the sign.

The chief of the buffalo, however, was not satisfied with this proof, and said that the father could not have the child until he identified him four times. While the preparations were being made fro another test, the calf-boy came to his father and explained that he would be known this time by closing one eye. When the time arrived, the calves were brought as before, and the chief of the buffalo directed the father to identify his child, which he did by the sign. Before the next trial the calf-boy explained to his father that the sign would be one ear hanging down. Accordingly, when the calves were brought up for the father to choose, he again identified his child. Now, before the last trial, the boy came again to his father and notified him that the sign by which he was to be known was dancing and holding up one leg. Now the calf-boy had a chum among the buffalo-caves, and when the calves were called up before the chief so that the father might select his child, the chum saw the calf-boy beginning to dance holding up one leg, and he thought to himself, "He is doing some fancy dancing." So he, also, danced in the same way. Now the father observed that there were two calves giving the sign, and realized that he must make a guess. He did so, but the guess was wrong. Immediately the herd rushed upon the man and trampled him into the dust. Then they all ran away except the calf-boy, his mother, and an old bull.

These three mourned together for the fate of the unfortunate man. After a time the old bull requested that they examine the ground to see if they could find a piece of bone. After a long and careful search they succeeded in finding one small piece that had not ben trampled by the buffalo. The bull took this piece, made a sweat-house, and finally restored the man to life. When the man was restored, the bull explained to him that he and his family would receive some power, some head-dresses, some songs, and some crooked sticks, such as he had seen the buffalo carry in the dance at the time when he attempted to pick out his son.

The calf-boy and his mother then became human beings, and returned with the man. It was this man who stared the Bull and the Horn Societies, and it was his wife who started the Matoki.

Clark Wissler and D. C. Duvall
 Mythology of the Blackfoot Indians
 1908: 117-119

A Blood Horn member and Medicine-Pipe owner told the following origin story of the Horn Society in the summer of 1996:

The Horn Society originates from the Buffalo. The mother was a buffalo, mother of a small boy. The Father was a medicine man. The boy went in search of his father when he discovered that he was different from the other buffalo as he wasn't accepted in to the herd as he looked different. He asked his father how he was conceived. The father replied that he had been in the buffalo herd and had prodded the buffalo cow with a wooden stick and she had become impregnated and that his how the son was born.

The father wanted to have his family back so he had four tries in guessing which out of the buffalo was his son. He guessed right the first three times but the fourth he got wrong so the buffalo all turned back to buffalo where they had been turning into humans.

Thunder Medicine Pipe

Origination: Thunder Medicine Pipe

There is one Pipe among...[the Blood]...that is so old that no one has any recollection of having heard of its being made by any one. So this Pipe must be the real one handed down by the Thunder, for all medicine-Pipes came from the Thunder [according to Pete Standing Along this is the Long-Time Pipe (Taylor 1989: 148)].

Once there was a girl who never could marry, because her parents could not find any one good enough for her. One day she heard the Thunder roll. "Well," she said, "I will marry him." Not long after this she went out with her mother to gather wood. When they were ready to go home, the girl's packstrap broke. She tied it together and started, but it broke again. Her mother became impatient; and when the strap broke the third time, she said, "I will not wait for you!" The girl started after her mother, but the strap broke again. while she was tying it together, a handsome young man in fine dress stepped out of the brush and said, "I want you to go away with me." The girl said, "Why do you talk to me that way? I never had anything to do with you." "You said you would marry me," he answered; " and now I have come for you." The girl began to cry, and said, "Then you must be the Thunder."

Then he told the girl to shut her eyes and not look, and she did so. After a while he told her to look, and she found herself upon a high mountain. There was a lodge there. She went in. There were many seats around the side, but only two people, - an old man and woman. When the girl was seated, the old man said, "That person smells bad." The old woman scolded him, saying that he should not speak thus of his daughter-in-law. Then the old man said, "I will look at her". When he looked up, the lightning flashed about the girl, but did not hurt her. Because of this, the old man knew she belonged to the family. At night all the family came in one by one. The Thunder then made a smudge with sweet-pine needles, one at the door of the lodge, and one just back of the fire. Then he taught his daughter-in-law how to bring in the bundle that hung outside. This was the

medicine-Pipe. After a time the daughter-in-law gave birth to a boy, later to another boy.

One evening the Thunder asked her if she ever thought of her father and mother. She said that she did. Then he asked would she like to see them. She said, "Yes." So he said, "To-night we will go. You may tell them that I shall send them my Pipe, that they may live long." When the time came, he told the woman to close her eyes, and once more she was standing near the lodge of her people. It was dark. She went in and sat down by her mother. After a while she said to her mother, "Do you know me?" "No," was the answer. "I am your daughter. I married the Thunder." The mother at once called in all of their relations. They came and sat around the lodge. The woman told them that she could not stay long as she must go back to her lodge and her children, but that the Thunder would give them his Pipe. In four days she would come back with it. Then she went out of the lodge and disappeared.

In four days the Thunder came with the woman, her two boys, and the Pipe. Then the ceremony of transferring the Pipe took place. When it was finished, the Thunder said that he was going away, but that he would return in the spring, and that tobacco and berries should be saved for him and prayed over. Then he took the youngest boy and went out. A cloud rolled away, and as it went the people heard one loud thunder and one faint one [the boy]. Now, when the Thunder threatens, the people often say, "For the sake of your youngest child," and he heeds their prayers.

When the Thunder left the woman and elder child behind, he said that if dogs ever attempted to bite them, they would disappear. One day a dog rushed into the lodge and snapped at the boy, after which nothing was seen of him or his mother, and to this day the owner of the medicine is afraid of dogs.

Clark Wissler and D. C. Duvall
Mythology of the Blackfoot
Indians
American Museum of Natural
History. Vol. II, Part 1. 1908: 89

This version of the Thunder Medicine-Pipe origin story is similar to that written by Adolf Hungry Wolf in 1977. Oral tradition causes stories to vary concerning details but not usually in the main theme or teachings. Hungry Wolf's version differs in the following way:

... [His wife] was lonely for her parents back on Earth. Thunder noticed this and told her, I know you are longing to be with you parents and I wish to see you happy. Soon I must go away from here to my winter home. At that time I will send you back to stay with your parents. But I wish to send a present of gratitude to them, and I must first teach you the songs and ceremony to go with it. I will be sending them the most sacred thing I own, my Pipe. It is such a Powerful Pipe that it must be taken outside every day

so that all the Spirits in the Universe can see it. Its ownership must be shared by your parents, for it is my present to both of them."

Thunder then spent the next seven days instructing his wife in the Powers of his Pipe. Each day he taught her one of the songs he sang whenever he took the Pipe from its coverings. Finally he told her, "Each spring I will return for you. My arrival will mean the end of the winter's hardships for your People and the beginning of the seasons plenty. When I announce my arrival, your People must prepare themselves by holding the ceremony that I have taught you with my Pipe."

Adolf Hungry Wolf
The Blood People: A Division of the
blackfoot Confederacy: An
Illustrated Interpretation of the Old
Ways
1977: 123-124

APPENDIX B: Ceremonial Accounts

How they Made the Sun Dance Camp in my Youth by Told by Ben Calf Robe

As soon as the camps get set up the husband of the one that is putting up the Sun Dance has to take a sweat bath. They call one of the middle-aged societies - the Pigeons or the Crazy Dogs - to go and get the willows and rocks to prepare the sweat house (Calf Robe in Hungry Wolf and Hungry Wolf 1989: 29).

The Motokiks ride out with members of the one of the younger societies to get branches that are tied in a big bunch into the fork of the Centre Pole. The Horns are the ones that cut the Centre Pole and bring it in. An old warrior tells coups for the cutting (Calf Robe in Hungry Wolf and Hungry Wolf 1989: 30).

[The day of the feast] the Weather Dancers take over. That is the only important thing that I was never initiated to, so I cannot say too much about it. They dress up in their special ways and they have certain ceremonies to help the People and to keep the weather good. People come to them to be painted and blessed, and incense is made by them. They sit in a special booth at the back of the Medicine Lodge [Sun Dance Lodge]. The Holy People sit on one side of them and the Sun Dance Drummers [ex-Brave Dogs for the Peigan] sit on the other side ...

... Members of all the societies got dressed up in their best ... Their women made Berry Soups and other food, and they start singing. They come to the Medicine Lodge in groups, singing. The Motokiks sit on one side, inside the Medicine Lodge, and the Horns sit on the other, and everyone sings. It is a very spiritual thing to watch. Every once in a while they get up to dance. They dance in two lines, one on each side, back and forth. They bring their rifles and they do a lot of shooting and shouting (Calf Robe in Hungry Wolf and Hungry Wolf 1989: 31, 33).