
BOOK PROPOSAL

Publisher: UBC Press

Date:

Author:

Title: Culturally Modified Capitalism. How Indigenous culture is shaping a manufacturing industry on Canada's Northwest Coast.
(Dissertation title: Culturally Modified Industry: the Native Northwest Coast Industry.)

Summary: This book is centered on the growing number of Vancouver-based companies that reproduce Northwest Coast designs on everyday objects, and their relationships with Indigenous artists and communities. It discusses the issues of cultural appropriation, intercultural collaboration, and social responsibility that this industry raises. The book develops the concept of Culturally Modified Capitalism or how, under the pressure to better contribute to the well-being of Indigenous peoples, an essentially capitalist market is increasingly being shaped by Northwest Coast models of property, relationships, and economics.

I. ABOUT THE AUTHOR

One paragraph.

II. BOOK DESCRIPTION

Global context. Fragments of culture have long been transformed into commodities, local practices and identities placed at the center of tourism ventures, and heritage work managed as a business. In the current era of what Jean and John Comaroff call "Ethnicity, Inc.," culture is even more regarded as a "resource" and discussed using the language of "property". However, there is a tendency in anthropology to treat cultural commodification as primarily an issue of outside appropriation, with Indigenous peoples positioning themselves firmly against commercial uses of their heritage. Furthermore, much of the anthropological literature on benefit-sharing agreements and other contracts between corporations and Indigenous groups has dealt with *natural* resource extraction. Yet, as my book shows, the relationships and exchanges that come out of "cultural prospecting" for commercial applications of traditional knowledge and artistic

expressions are just as varied and complex as those tied to bioprospecting and the exploitation of natural resources. This book provides a detailed ethnographic examination of one such example of relationships and exchanges: the interactions and negotiations that take place between the Indigenous and non-Indigenous stakeholders of the Native Northwest Coast artware industry.

Main argument. This book argues that, as a result of the business relationships that do (or do not) form between them, this market is being infused with practices that reflect models of property, relationships, and economics that directly reflect the histories and cultures of the Northwest Coast's Indigenous peoples. In broad strokes, capitalism in the 21st century is characterized by competitive markets, globalization, wage labour, private property, and capital accumulation. All of these elements also describe today's Native Northwest Coast artware industry. However, as its levels of Indigenous involvement rise, the market's configuration is also increasingly being shaped by their push-backs against each of these characteristics. This is visible through protectionist measures against outside appropriation and competition (chapter 2), mechanisms of local control to limit the market's globalization (chapter 3), negotiated collaborations rather than wage labour (chapter 4), pressures to recognize their culturally-specific regimes of property (chapter 5), and incentives to redistribute rather than merely accumulate capital (chapter 6). Each chapter examines a tension between capitalistic processes and local histories and cultures, demonstrating that these encounters are gradually shaping the Native Northwest Coast artware industry into a form of *Culturally Modified Capitalism*.

Central concept. This concept is a reference to the designation of "Culturally Modified Tree", a tree altered by Indigenous harvesting methods that purposely keep the tree alive so that it can continue its growth. A CMT demonstrates that treating something as a resource does not necessarily involve disregarding its preservation. *Culturally Modified Capitalism* is not an alternative to capitalism per se, nor does it truly challenge the extraction of local resources for a global market. However, it does stem from the growing belief that, in cases where participation in capitalism seems unavoidable, it can at least be better

harnessed to sustain Indigenous ways of life – but only on the crucially important condition that Indigenous stakeholders are able to bring their worldviews, values, and interests to bear on the market’s configuration. In the Native Northwest Coast artware industry, this translates into companies being expected to ensure that their business model includes provisions to protect and perpetuate the Indigenous cultural resources on which they draw, such as following Northwest Coast cultural property regimes and taking part in the local potlatch economy.

III. ANNOTATED TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction. (Pp 1-15)

The introduction will include the following elements:

- A description of the ubiquitous use of Northwest Coast designs on objects of everyday life (mugs, tea-towels, t-shirts...), and of the industry that produces these artware items.
- A discussion of the worldwide phenomenon of the commodification of Indigenous cultural heritage, its expression in Native Northwest Coast artware, and what sets this particular example apart.
- A brief overview of key reference points and concepts (e.g. “The Northwest Coast”, “artware”, “Culturally Modified Capitalism”).
- A brief presentation of the fieldwork on which the book is based.

Chapter 1. *A controversial industry* (Pp 16-51)

The Native Northwest Coast artware industry tends to be controversial to outsiders and conflicting for insiders. Given the damages of colonialism, the commodification of Indigenous heritage immediately raises questions of cultural appropriation and exploitation (see Chapter 2), even when it involves willing Indigenous participants. This chapter sets the stage of the tense socio-political context in which Vancouver’s artware companies operate and attempt to build trust with both artists and consumers.

Chapter 2. *Expansion vs Protection* (Pp 52-87)

The last century of the industry’s development has been defined by the tension between two objectives: on the one hand, promoting worldwide interest in Canadian Indigenous art to expand the market and, on the

other, protecting this art against non-Indigenous appropriation and international competition (see Chapter 3). This historical chapter discusses how, due to Indigenous participants' concerns for finding the right balance so as to realize the potential for economic development *and* cultural perpetuation, priorities have been progressively shifting from expansion to protection.

Chapter 3. *Globalisation vs Localisation* (Pp 88-123)

The artware industry brands its products as “local” using Northwest Coast designs, but largely relies on outsourced production and the global market of plain wares (e.g., mugs and t-shirts). However, there are concerns about the authenticity of these products, as well as a desire on the part of local players to keep control and maintain the Pacific Northwest as the market's central hub. This has placed limitations on the globalization of this market. In consequence, much of Vancouver companies' artware, often produced at least partially elsewhere, bear the mark of a collaboration with a local Indigenous artist (see Chapter 4) and comes through a centralized distribution system located in the Indigenous territories it references.

Chapter 4. *Labour Relations vs Collaboration* (Pp 124-159)

Although this industry is often considered an opportunity for economic development in Indigenous communities, most companies are not Indigenous-owned, and few of them hire Indigenous individuals for wages. In many cases, the involvement of Indigenous peoples is limited to artists who receive one-time payments or royalties for their design work (see Chapter 5). While this reflects a power imbalance in companies' favour, there is also reluctance on these artists' part to become employees and lose their independence. Instead, they prefer to remain in a position to negotiate each new interaction, building collaborative relationships over time in ways that wage labour typically doesn't allow.

Chapter 5. *Private vs Indigenous Property Regimes* (Pp 160-195)

Most of the arrangements between non-Indigenous companies and the Indigenous artists with whom they work are written up as flat fee or royalty agreements that follow Intellectual Property laws and are within overall industry standards. However, they are seldom assessed by Indigenous stakeholders as actually

representing “fair” and “appropriate” compensation for the cultural commodification they represent. This is due to the fact that they scrutinize the ethics of these business transactions in relation to Northwest Coast peoples’ ongoing experiences of colonial dispossession and inequity, as well as their culturally-specific notions of property (see Chapter 6).

Chapter 6. *Accumulation vs Redistribution* (Pp 196-231)

In Northwest Coast societies, designs are seldom individually owned, but rather are the property of families, clans, and other collective entities. Furthermore, the art market is considered an opportunity not only for individual livelihoods, but also for prosperity at the scale of communities. Therefore, beyond paying individual artists, Indigenous stakeholders have been urging artware companies to recognize the collective stakes of their business by “giving back” to Indigenous communities and organizations, monetarily or otherwise. This chapter describes how such practices are helping companies “make their name good”, much like in Northwest Coast potlatch economies where reputation and status is tied to wealth redistribution rather than accumulation.

Conclusion. (Pp 232-247)

The worldwide advance of capitalism used to be seen as inevitably leading to the destruction of pre-existing local cultural, social, and economic systems. Anthropologists now argue against this view, using ethnographic examples to demonstrate the ability of local cultures to bring their worldviews to bear on the capitalist system. This book concludes by using the example of the Native Northwest artware industry to critically examine the implications of *Culturally Modified Capitalism*, and assess its potential to simultaneously reinforce and threaten Indigenous ways of life.

IV. ACADEMIC CONTRIBUTIONS

Northwest Coast studies. This book represents an addition to existing scholarship on the histories and cultures of Northwest Coast peoples. While Northwest Coast art in particular is the subject of a very impressive body of literature, the specific topic of Northwest Coast artware (i.e. the reproduction of Northwest Coast designs on everyday objects on an industrial scale) has been largely unaddressed, apart from cursory mentions in select articles. However the reproduction of Indigenous designs for commercial purposes is pervasive and the market is growing continuously, especially in Vancouver where these types of objects are part of the very fabric of everyday life. The artware industry also has important implications for the study of economic development and cultural sustainability in Pacific Northwest Indigenous communities – issues that interest a wide variety of Northwest Coast scholars, beyond anthropologists.

Global and multidisciplinary scholarship. In addition to this regional dimension, my book aims to make a broader contribution to scholarship in the fields of Anthropology, Art History, and Indigenous Studies, all the while raising issues relevant to the disciplines of Sociology, Cultural Studies, Economics, History, Law, Business, and related fields. The aim is to see the Northwest Coast artware industry and the concept of *Culturally Modified Capitalism* become part of wider discussions about 1) Indigenous art markets around the world, 2) cultural appropriation and Intellectual Property regimes, and 3) Indigenous relationships to capitalism and entrepreneurship.

The two tables below present books by other publishers that resonate with the proposed book (figure 1), and UBC Press books that the proposed book would complement (figure 2).

Book	In common with proposed book	In contrast with proposed book
<i>Treasured Possessions: Indigenous Interventions Into Cultural and Intellectual Property</i> by Haidy Geismar (2013, Duke University Press)	Indigenous heritage interfacing with non-Indigenous notions of cultural property.	Geismar discusses examples in the Pacific (Vanuatu and New Zealand), whereas this book focuses on the Northwest Coast. Also, the emphasis for Geismar is on the legal dimension, whereas mine is primarily on economics.
<i>The Totem Pole: An Intercultural History</i> , by Aldona Jonaitis and Aaron Glass (2010, University of Washington Press)	Focus on a specifically Northwest Coast form and its widespread reproduction and commoditization.	Jonaitis and Glass trace the transformation of a local art form into a worldwide icon. My book discusses the widespread use of Northwest Coast graphics in what remains a largely regional market.
<i>Ethnicity Inc</i> by Jean and John Comaroff (2009, The University of Chicago Press).	Relationship between culture and the market – from the co-optation of local practices by corporations to self-commodification through the development of “ethno-businesses” by communities themselves.	<i>Ethnicity Inc</i> offers an innovative theoretical approach that is partly based on ethnographic research conducted by the authors in Africa, and partly based on secondary sources related to other parts of the world (the latter occasionally leading to empirical approximations). My book’s central concept is grounded in region-specific ethnographic data but is designed to be applied and adapted to other contexts.
<i>Coca-globalization: following soft drinks from New York to New Guinea</i> by Robert J. Foster (2008, Palgrave Macmillan)	The interaction between local contexts and global capitalism.	Whereas Foster offers an analysis of local re-appropriations of a global commodity (Coca Cola), my book looks at global commodities “branded” as local through their association with Indigenous graphics.
<i>Who Owns Native Culture?</i> by Michael F. Brown (2003, Harvard University Press)	Examination of the issues raised by cultural appropriation in relation to Indigenous peoples.	While the notion of property is central to Brown’s book, my book touches on it (Chapter 5) but is primarily preoccupied by intercultural relationships and socio-economic exchanges.
<i>Painting Culture</i> by Fred Myers (2002, Duke University Press)	An anthropological analysis of the development of a contemporary Indigenous non-western art market.	<i>Painting Culture</i> examines the development of the Australian Aboriginal Fine Art market, which is focused primarily on one-of-a-kind acrylic paintings. My book takes a similar approach and concerns similar issues even though it focuses on a very different type of

		cultural expression: reproductions of Northwest Coast designs on mass-produced wares.
<i>African Art in Transit</i> by Christopher B. Steiner (1994, Cambridge University Press)	Post-colonial relationships and cultural authenticity as mediated through the art market.	Steiner's focus is on hand-made items made to resemble historical pieces. My book examines similar issues (e.g. authenticity, trust, the effects of colonial history on cultural expression) but through industrially-made objects that are graphically and thematically branded as Indigenous.

Figure 1: List of similar books by other publishers

UBC Press Book	Complementary topic with proposed book
<i>Indigenous Encounters with Neoliberalism. Place, Women, and the Environment in Canada and Mexico</i> by Isabel Altamirano-Jimenez (2014).	How local contexts shape the reception of global capitalism.
<i>Floral Journey. Native North American Beadwork</i> by Lois S. Dubin (2014).	Intercultural exchange mediated through art made for outside consumption.
<i>Native Art of the Northwest Coast. A History of Changing Ideas</i> edited by Charlotte Townsend-Gault, Jennifer Kramer, and Ki-ke-in (2013).	The history of the construction of "Northwest Coast art" as a category through academic research and the art market.
<i>This Is Our Life. Haida Material Heritage and Changing Museum Practice</i> by Cara Krmpotich and Laura Peers (2013).	Collaborative relationships in Indigenous cultural heritage management.
<i>Aboriginal Peoples and Forest Lands in Canada</i> Edited by D.B. Tindall, Ronald L. Trosper, and Pamela Perreault (2013).	Models for partnerships between private companies/First Nation communities, benefit-sharing agreements, and Indigenous entrepreneurship.
<i>Canoe Nation. Nature, Race, and the Making of a Canadian Icon</i> by Bruce Erickson (2013).	The use of Indigenous material culture and imagery to represent Canadian identity.
<i>Switchbacks. Art, Ownership, and Nuxalk National Identity</i> by Jennifer Kramer (2006)	The Native art market in British Columbia and the challenges of protecting cultural property.

Figure 2: List of complementary UBC Press books

V. AUDIENCE

Academic audience. This book will primarily be of interest to academics in the fields of Anthropology, Art History, and Indigenous studies, and in particular to those whose work touch upon economics, law, art, cultural heritage, property, consumption, and globalization. The dissertation manuscript will be revised into a book that appeals to instructors and university students primarily in those fields, but could also be of use in specific courses in Sociology, Cultural Studies, Museum Studies, Economics, History, Law, Business, and other related fields.

Mainstream interest. Although this book’s audience will likely be primarily academic (researchers and university students), it touches on issues that interest mainstream society and tend to become “hot topics” in the media, as illustrated by the sample of coverage on the artware industry and related issues provided below. Although this book is not primarily designed to reach a broad readership outside of university, this coverage shows that its topic is timely and relevant.

Topic	Sample of media coverage
Northwest Coast artware	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Globe and Mail, When is a table not just a table? Balancing high design and history in Native-inspired designs, 2014. • Radio Canada, Une exposition sur les objets autochtones non-traditionnels, 2014.
Commercialisation of Indigenous culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Peak Newspaper Peakcast, Aboriginal Commodification, 2013 • The Peak Newspaper, Symposium Discussed Commodification of Native Culture, 2013
The Aboriginal Tourism Association of British Columbia authenticity label (discussed in Chapter 2 of proposed book)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vancouver Sun, Authentic Indigenous label promotes B.C. native artists, 2014 • Alive Society, Authentic Indigenous Arts Resurgence Campaign, 2014 • The Georgia Strait, Authentic Indigenous label aims to support artists, 2014 • The Tyee, Through Certification, Indigenous Artists Take Back Their Work, 2014
Cultural appropriation (discussed in Chapters 1 and 5 of proposed book)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CBC.ca, Dsquared2 under fire for #Dsquaw women’s fashion collection, 2015 • Global News, Canadian DSquared2 duo faces backlash over #Dsquaw fashion line, 2015

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• CTV News, BC First Nation takes on Ralph Lauren over knockoff sweaters, 2015• CBC.ca, Nordstrom removes Cowichan name from sweaters, 2015• Apihtawikosisan blog, An Analysis of the Inukt Boutique, 2013• Racialicious, Urban Outfitters is Obsessed with Navajos, 2011• The Guardian, Navajo Nation Sues Urban Outfitters for Trademark Infringement, 2012
Company-artist collaborations (discussed in Chapter 4 of proposed book)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Indian Country Today, Louie Gong's 'Inspired Natives' project takes on its second artist-entrepreneur, 2014• Native Appropriations blog, The Paul Frank x Native Designers Collaboration is Here!, 2013• Beyond Buckskin blog, Paul Frank x Native Designers, 2013• Yahoo News, Paul Frank teams up with Native American artists, 2013

Figure 4: Sample of media coverage of issues treated in, or related to, the proposed book.

VI. DISSERTATION-TO-BOOK MANUSCRIPT PLAN

I defended this dissertation in December of 2012 and submitted the final manuscript to the Faculty of Graduate Studies in January of 2013. The committee consisted of the following professors:

Doctoral committee.

Name (Department, University)

Name (Department, University)

Name (Department, University)

Examining committee.

Name (Department, University)

Name (Department, University)

Name (Department, University)

The following list outlines the revisions I will be undertaking in order to turn my dissertation (170,000 words) into a book manuscript (82,000 words).

Dissertation section	Dissertation-to-book revisions
Overall text (Pp 1-247)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Give the text a clearer narrative line that ties all secondary arguments to the central concept of "Culturally Modified Capitalism" (currently primarily discussed in the introduction, final chapter, and conclusion); • Polish transitions between chapters; • Significantly reduce any discussion of existing literature to focus on what is needed to present this book's central argument; • Edit/reorganize/rewrite the content remaining in each chapter (see details below).
Introduction (Pp 1-15)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Edit to reflect new content and structure; • Add a brief discussion of methods (currently a separate section) to the introduction; • Reduce the combined text by half (to 5,000 words), primarily by distilling the methodology section to the essentials.
Methods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cut from manuscript; • Integrate presentation of fieldwork into the introduction.
Chapter 1 <i>A controversial industry</i> (Pp 16-51)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce by a third (to 12,000 words); • Rewrite to briefly present common assumptions about the industry and focus on the fresh perspective provided in the book.
Chapter 2. <i>Expansion vs Protection</i> (Pp 52-87)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce by half (to 12,000 words); • Shorten/cut the lengthy direct quotes from primary archival material so as to focus on the argument rather than on the empirical data; • Omit sections that don't pertain specifically to the themes of promotion/protection.
Chapter 3. <i>Globalisation vs Localisation</i> (Pp 88-123)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trim by a quarter (to 12,000 words) • Omit the points that are peripheral to the globalisation/localisation argument of this chapter (particularly those in sections 3.1 and 3.2);
Chapter 4. <i>Labour Relations vs Collaboration</i> (Pp 124-159)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce by a third (to 12,000 words); • Shorten long primary source excerpts; • Reduce number of illustrative examples.
Chapter 5. <i>Private vs Indigenous Property Regimes</i> (Pp 160-195)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce by a third (to 12,000 words); • Cut section 5.1; • Reduce number of illustrative examples.
Chapter 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cut from the manuscript; • Extract its central argument that serialization does not in and of itself lead to standardization (1,000 words) for integration into Chapter 1.
Chapter 7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cut from the manuscript; • Extract its central argument and use the example of payments made to the Haida by producers of argillite

	reproductions (600 words) as a case in point for the argument of Chapter 8;
Chapter 8 Chapter 6. <i>Accumulation vs Redistribution</i> (Pp 196-231)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trim by a quarter (to 12,000 words); • Substantially edit/revise the section 8.2;
Conclusion (Pp 232-247)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flesh out (to 5,000 words); • Rewrite existing summary to better tie all chapters together around the concept of <i>Culturally Modified Capitalism</i>; • Develop argument that this concept is relevant and adaptable to other markets and regions.

Figure 5: General revision plan to turn dissertation into book manuscript.

VII. PREVIOUSLY PUBLISHED MATERIAL

- The main points of Chapters 6 of my dissertation will have been published as part of conference proceedings (Cumulus conference in Milan, June 2015, published by McGraw Hill with ISBN). This chapter will not be part of the book, but I will extract its central argument (1,000 words) for integration into Chapter 1.
- Chapter 7 of my dissertation will have been published by the *Journal of Material Culture*. This chapter will not be part of the book, but I will extract its central argument (600 words) for inclusion in Chapter 6 (formerly Chapter 8).

VIII. WORD COUNT AND IMAGES

Manuscript. Approximately 82,000 words

Images. As the book pertains to art and material culture, it is necessary to include some images of the artware items in question. However, my focus is not on the aesthetic qualities of these objects, but rather on the context in which they are produced. Also, since all of the items discussed are available for sale, I wish to keep images to a minimum so as not to make the book resemble a product catalogue. With this in mind, I expect needing to include approximately 6-8 images, in addition to the cover.

IX. TIMELINE

If accepted for publication, the manuscript will be edited on a schedule of one section per month (on average). In other words, if accepted within March 2015, the full manuscript will be submitted to the Press by November 1st, 2015.

Figure 6: A *Culturally Modified Tree*: the hand-width bark strips ensure that the tree will easily recover from the harvest. (Photo by the author, August 22, 2007)

