

**INDIAN ART AS DIALOGUE:
THE TRICKY TRANSGRESSIONS OF BOB HAOZOUS**

by

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DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my husband, Ron W. Carlsten Jr. and my grandparents, Mae Orilla Martin Culbertson and Claude Clarence Culbertson, with great affection, respect, and love.

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ABSTRACT

One of the most compelling contemporary Native artists whose work challenges assumptions about Native art is Bob Haozous, who has been creating socially conscious art since 1971. He is known for his monumental steel structures; simplified visual language, controversial subject matter, and ironic humor that engages and sometimes enrages the viewer. Haozous faults contemporary American Indian art as a commodity for the dominant consumer culture, stating, “Indian artists are just glorified interior decorators.”¹ This statement reflects the market norm that Native art must embody meaningless stereotypes of Indian culture and must function in the art and culture system in order to be commercially viable.

Haozous’s work challenges these assumptions about Native art and, for the most part, operates outside of this system. Most of Haozous’s work offers the viewer a cultural critique, one that some might consider ideologically dangerous: dangerous because it questions the status quo, dangerous because it exposes the dominant culture from the point of view of the margin, and dangerous because it is in a permanent state of ambiguity, perpetually liminal. Often his work demonstrates borders, borderlands, or liminal places, both ideological borders and physical borders. The emotional affects of Haozous’s art on the viewer range from discomfort to anger, from indifference to infuriated. Given the fact that

¹ Bob said this to me on our first informal meeting, I think he was hoping to shock me, but we both laughed. He insists this is in print somewhere, but neither of us has been able to find the reference.

much of his work is public art, it is broadly seen and many viewers can not ignore the dialogue that takes place in his art.

I examine how Bob Haozous's art depicts and critiques issues such as cultural assimilation, Indian identity, genocide, loss of language, and destruction of the earth, using humor and irony or trickster discourse, as a part of his visual language. What I propose in this dissertation is that Haozous's concept of "indigenous cultural dialogue," as expressed in his art, using visual and written language with trickster traces, provides a critical language with which to discuss Native art, cross culturally. Furthermore, that the recognizable element that can be use in the critical discussion or examination, is trickster—not trickster in corporeal form, but in subtle or obvious uses of humor or irony or in trickster's reversal of ideas.

PREFACE

“Indian artists are just glorified interior decorators.” Encoded in this statement by artist, Bob Haozous, is the essence of this dissertation which speaks of the lack of critical scholarship regarding Native art and culture system; the standards that are now self-imposed, but that were once entirely mediated by white intervention, dictated by the market and popular culture. Encoded in Haozous’s statement is an act of resistance, the signature of trickster pushing the buttons, mucking things up—creating chaos. Haozous’s remarks also reflect the dominant culture’s perception of Indian art as something with which you decorate your house, not a serious art form. The most deeply embedded meaning in this statement is the issue of Indian identity and its regulation in terms of art.

America decorates its homes (and autos) with generic and stereotypical images of its historic past—with the imagined Indian. Even worse, Indians often perpetuate this, so colonized that they accept the images as their own then reproduce them in their art, which goes back into the market. These Indians are not the “postindian survivors” about whom Gerald Vizenor so eloquently talks; these Indians suffer from “victimry.” Bob Haozous is a “postindian survivor.” He tells “tales of survivance” through his art with the trickster lighting the path.

The first time I heard of Bob Haozous was in 1997. One of my undergraduate professors, Dr. Peter Jacobs of Colorado State University, contacted me and asked me to present a paper on monumental art and Native Americans at the Native American Art

Studies Association's Bi-Annual meeting that was being held in Berkeley that year. In my research, I found articles and images by both Allan Houser and Bob Haozous. I referenced both artists in the paper I presented that year, but I had far more interest in Haozous than I knew at the time.

In 2001, I needed to write a paper for one of my last courses in my PhD program, "Clowning as Cultural Critique," and I was having a difficult time with a topic, when I remembered Bob Haozous's art. By then, I had been to yet another NAASA meeting in 1999, where I had not only attended a paper presented on Haozous and the censorship he was facing with the University of New Mexico, but actually had dinner with him, rather serendipitously, on the last night of the conference. We had talked at some length about censorship in the arts. I had also been following this story in various newspapers, including *News from Indian Country*. Therefore, by the time I wrote this paper, all of these memories came flooding back. I could see how Haozous used humor as a cultural critique in his monumental art. I proceeded to write what my advisor Barbara Babcock said was the best paper I had written and what would become the inspiration for my dissertation.

A number of people tried to warn me about working with Haozous. They said he was "different," "difficult," or "intimidating." However, I knew from my research that the way he approached his art and his fearless nature in exploring and critiquing what so many Native Artists avoided—the art/culture system—that he would be someone with whom I would get along. Indeed, I was right. I have greatly enjoyed working with Bob.

In fact, within minutes of our first meeting, we were laughing and I felt like I had known him forever. I hope that he will respect this work as much as I respect his.

With this dissertation and its eventual publication, I hope to do justice to the career of a fearless and personally inspiring artist, to this modern day “postindian warrior.” In an age of political correctness in academia, with Native students who avoid critique and theory, Haozous pushes the boundaries for all, Native, and non-native alike. His work forces you to think! After all, it is very difficult to ignore a monument work of rusted steel, wrapped in barbed wire depicting the commodification of cultures along the border.

Since we live in this politically correct environment and this is an academic work, I am compelled to clarify my usage of certain terms. I use the terms Indian, Native, and Native American interchangeably. I realize that some will have issue with that choice, but I find in Native communities there is not so much emphasis on which term is the “correct” term. In fact, “Indian” is often the preferred term, with specific tribal designation is always preferable to any of these terms. It is important to remember the word Indian is a misnomer applied to Natives generically by Columbus. “Indian” is an invented image, as Robert Berkhofer says, and “the White man’s Indian,” has nothing intrinsically to do with tribal reality. Even further, Gerald Vizenor tells us that the term “Indian” is a simulation, not reality. I adhere to Vizenor’s definitions in this text and use another term of Vizenor’s, the term “postindian” or “postindian warrior,” which he uses to describe Natives who are resisting the simulation Indian. Another note about

Vizenor's usage of terms, he uses the term *indian* and *postindian* lower case and in italics and when I am paraphrasing him I will do so as well.

Finally, the terms American Indian art and Native American Art require clarification as they form the framework of this dissertation. I use the term American Indian art to refer to historic Indian art, while the term Native American refers to contemporary Native American art.

STRUCTURE OF WORK

I have written this dissertation from the insider perspective. Since I am Native, a member of the Chickasaw Nation of Oklahoma, I acknowledge that my heritage has allowed me an insider status especially with regard to interviews and research. I do not believe that I can remove my experience from my research and interpretation. Further, my experience in the professional field of Native American art is what brought me to this subject. I spent numerous years working in various capacities in the field, including gallery work, gallery management, and museum work; I count that as part of my fieldwork. During the course of researching this dissertation, instead of artificially inserting myself into a situation as a researcher, I was accepted into situations as both a Native person and a gallery or museum professional. I established many of my contacts and credentials during my professional experience and, while I have academic information to support my positions in this work, many of those positions were initially observations I made while working in the field of Native art.

In addition to significant original research, I did archival research at various institutions in the Southwest. Local research was done at the Arizona State Museum and the University of Arizona Special Collections, both on the University of Arizona campus in Tucson, Arizona. I did regional research at the Museum of Indian Arts and Culture and the Institute of American Indian Art, both in Santa Fe, New Mexico. In addition, I did research at the Center for Southwest Studies at the University of New Mexico and the

New Mexico library system, both on the UNM Campus in Albuquerque, New Mexico; and the City of Albuquerque Art in Public Places archives.

I have done ongoing secondary research for a number of years and I am continually amazed at how limited the selection of academic writing is in the field of Native American art. There are many publications on American Indian art, most are written for the consumer and published by popular presses. The number of books by academics and published by academic presses pale in comparison to those published by popular presses. Moreover, publications on Native art by Native authors are limited, if not impossible to find. Therefore in this work, I draw heavily on cultural studies methods in an interdisciplinary approach to the subject of Native art.

I did interviews with various persons, such as other Native artists, gallery owners, and the artist, Bob Haozous, who is the subject of this dissertation. Initially, I contacted Haozous via email and explained my project in detail; I needed his agreement and approval to work on this project. As an ethical researcher, based on both personal convictions and American Indian Studies training, I knew that I could not write a dissertation on a living subject with out his input and approval. Fortunately, Haozous was interested in working with me and after initial contact, he asked me to send him more information, which included my dissertation proposal, vitae, and a list of references. Ethical research in Indian Country and with Native subjects requires Human Subjects approval, which I obtained next. Further, this sort of research entails more than an interview or two; research with Native subjects requires developing a relationship or friendship with the subject and I knew that going into the project.

After sending Haozous the project specifications, he agreed to work with me. I did four interviews with Haozous in person in Santa Fe. The Institute of American Indian Arts was very generous and allowed me to do formal recorded interviews in one of their library conference room. I did two formal interviews there in April and November of 2004, which were structured to compliment or further elaborate on subjects that he had discussed in numerous published interviews. The questions were open-ended and non-leading. After I transcribed these interviews, I sent him copies to approve. He amended each of the transcriptions, which provided further information. I sorted the information in the formal interview transcriptions into subjects via color-coding. As I wrote the dissertation, I was able to insert quotes based on subject matter. It is important to note, that I allowed his interviews to provide the structure for my dissertation. Essentially, the entire third section of my dissertation is structured by what Haozous discussed supported with theoretical discourse.

In addition to formal interviews, Haozous and I met informally on two other occasions, in March and October of 2004. In March, we met for coffee at a Starbucks in Santa Fe. We talked informally and I took notes later. In October, we had lunch in Santa Fe and then returned to his studio for a tour. I took a guest with me who was a metalworker, as I wanted to observe Haozous engaged in talking about his art with a person who was familiar with the medium. This proved to be a very insightful method and I took extensive notes upon the completion of this meeting.

Finally, I engaged Haozous in extensive email conversations, upwards of thirty-two conversations between March of 2004 and January of 2004, and he was very

forthcoming in this medium. In addition, he also sent me articles he was working on, photographs of new works, copies of email dialogue he was participating in, and general comments all via email. Last, as a sign of respect, I sent every major draft of my dissertation to Haozous for approval and gave him full editing power. In fact, he edited little and finally told me I did not need his approval and that I had the right to write what I wanted. I believe he said this because I allowed him so much access to my project.

I divided this dissertation into three parts. Part One is the background and context for the dissertation. This section sets up the work that follows and includes a brief introduction to the subject of this dissertation—Bob Haozous with an explanation as to why I chose him as my subject. Part One also contains the a brief overview of the history of American Indian art since 1900. In addition there is a discussion of how American Indian art and Contemporary Native art are marketed and the controlling factor in marketing—the federal government legislation of Indian identity. I wrote a limited overview because this history is widely published and available elsewhere. In addition, I did not want to distract the reader from the focus of my work, Bob Haozous.

Part Two of my dissertation focuses on Apache Artist Bob Haozous, including a brief personal and professional history, a limited discussion of his family history, and an overview of his career. Haozous's career began in 1971 and since it is so lengthy and prolific, I found it necessary to limit the number of works analyzed to two. The two works I chose, *Cultural Crossroads of the Americas* and *Defining the Great Mystery*, are definitive works and perfectly exemplify Haozous's larger agenda—creating dialogue. Moreover, they use the language of trickster—humor and irony, to create that dialogue.

The first piece I chose is *Cultural Crossroads of the Americas*, because it is his best-known work. This work is extraordinarily controversial and no discussion of Haozous's work is complete without an examination of it. I have limited the discourse on the controversy choosing instead to focus on the aesthetics and visual language of the piece. I also chose a second work of Haozous's to contrast with the *Cultural Crossroads* piece. While I was initially inclined to select another of his monumental sculptures, of which there are many amazing works, I finally settled on a pen and ink original, *Defining the Great Mystery*. This decision came about after my initial interview with him where he first proposed his concept of "indigenous cultural dialogue," which will be a major segment in the theory section of my dissertation. In addition, I realized that so many of his works incorporated not only visual language and visual symbols, but also used language and words, with the most striking being the work *Defining the Great Mystery*. As I said, this work is a pen and ink with watercolor, but the entire background of the image is hand-written text. The work contains a lengthy, free form treatise on his concept of "indigenous cultural dialogue" on top of which is a painted image. I found this work exciting because of the blatantly honest dialogue it creates and the fact that it transgresses the boundary between text and image. While *Cultural Crossroads* creates a visual and symbolic language in monumental steel that essentially examines the same issue, the two-dimensional work *Defining the Great Mystery* uses words and images to present the concept. These two works succinctly exemplify Haozous's larger agenda of creating dialogue.

Part Three of this dissertation contains a lengthy discussion of theory. I start with a discussion of traditional art historical methods and their inadequacies in assessing Native American Art and move on to a discussion of a newly emerging theoretical approach, visual culture theory. I then move into a discussion of Native American critical theory. Despite the fact that some scholars believe that there is a lack of or resistance to critical theory in American Indian Studies altogether, a recent book by Elvira Pulitano, *Toward A Native American Critical Theory*, suggests that there is such a thing as Native American critical theory already existing within Native literature as a hybrid of contemporary theory modified by Native knowledge. I examine her findings, which are based in literary theory and broaden her approach to encompass Native art that contains trickster traces, whether subtle or obvious, as subversive points of resistance to dominant culture, and apply this theoretical approach to Haozous's work. I then examine and explain Haozous's concept of "indigenous cultural dialogue" in relation to Pulitano's and my approaches, and apply it to the aforementioned Haozous works.

What I propose with this dissertation is that Haozous's "indigenous cultural dialogue," as provoked by art using visual and written language with trickster traces, provides a critical language with which to discuss Native art, cross culturally. Furthermore, the common method that can be used in this critical discussion or examination is trickster, not trickster in corporeal form, but in subtle or obvious uses of humor or irony or in trickster's act of "turning around" or reversals of ideas.

INTRODUCTION

Contemporary Native American art is actually a conceptual category originating in the early twentieth century, created by well-meaning white patrons and Indians trying to assimilate into the American way of life. Given that the social and political context of the time considered American Indians a dying race, Euro-American connoisseurs, collectors, and intellectuals began encouraging American Indians to create art to salvage and protect the material culture of various tribes. These literati quickly codified and valued stylistic components, audience, and various other attributes of American Indian art they understood to be authentic, traditional, and worthy of salvage, collection, and preservation. Simultaneously, the federal government enacted legislation to regulate the economic system developed in support of American Indian art. Today, Native identity as determined by federal policy is the basis of this economic system. The laws created to regulate American Indian art indirectly advocate and regulate Natives selling the authenticity of their respective tribal heritages.

American Indian art and the various systems of instruction, patronage, and economics that perpetuated and propelled it into the industry we see today, continues to be determined primarily by outsiders—by white patronage. As Berkhofer demonstrated in his classic 1979 book, *The White Man's Indian*, images of Indians are a white construction. So, too, is American Indian art, especially what the public perceives to be Indian art. Contemporary American Indian art is a category of art that has its own system and structure. Saleable American Indian art is expected to be free from political or social

comments, ideally demonstrates a cultural heritage directly descended from or connected to a pre-contact past, and is based on stereotypical perceptions and museum misconceptions. Marketability is a major component that drives contemporary Indian art, which is a descendant of styles taught by white patrons to Native Americans in the early twentieth century. Although not all agree, this derivative style continues to be perpetuated, taught by Natives to Natives mainly by the Institute of American Indian Art or by a family member who attended IAIA or its predecessor the Santa Fe Indian School, and is supported by museums such as the National Museum of the American Indian. This desire for an ideologically free art form, the white assumption that art and politics are not connected in any way, and the systems that support it, have resulted in an absence of art historical methodologies and training for academics. Further, contemporary American Indian art is not and historically was not perceived as art, but as craft. In addition, although often unspoken, some feel that art historical critique might affect the livelihood of artists, dealers, museums, armchair academics or the values of collections. Finally, this type of thinking has led to the repression of stylistic forms and has stifled development of new forms as American Indian artists continue to make what is predetermined by the marketplace to sell. Contemporary American Indian art, free from any meaningful art historical critique, displayed in museums and collections, which do little interrogation of the social and political environment that characterizes the lives of Native Americans, perpetuates stereotypical perceptions of Native Americans as objects who create objects for white amusement and entertainment.²

² Bob Haozous, email discussion on NMAI, August 6, 2004.

Native art and artists' relationship to a pre-contact, static, stereotyped and romanticized, ethnographic present determines the authenticity and market value of contemporary American Indian Art. Further validating the authenticity of American Indian Art, white patrons intervened and not only determined the stylistic elements of Native art, but also encouraged artists to wear traditional clothing while selling their art. Historically, a cycle of authentication developed. White patrons determined subject matter, style and materials, then purchased the piece for their museum or personal collection, and wrote articles about their purchases, thus creating and further enhancing value. They commissioned more art and sold to collectors as demand rose; they eventually donated these works to museums, creating even more value for Native art. This process or system of authentication continues today and ensures a source of economic support for many Indian artists who fear that deviation from Euro-American consumer expectations will hurt their economic livelihood and thus devalue their art.

This system for authentication of American Indian art is not unique and is exemplified in the history of museums and collecting. In the Western world, this history necessitated a system of valuation for material culture. Over time, as both public and private collections grew, so did the need to authenticate and place value on collected art and artifacts. Valuation of cultural objects, whether art or artifact, is determined by the object, the collection, the aesthetic value, as established by the collector and the museum in a continual cycle that re-affirms value. Cultural objects range on a continuum from artifact to art with curios or tourist art, rarely included. The value of the object depended

on the extent of the relationship of the art or artifact to a mythic past, the closer the relationship to an unacculturated past, the more valuable and authentic the object was/is.

In *The Predicament of Culture*, James Clifford delineates the process for assigning value to American Indian art. He postulates that what he calls the Art/Culture system is a “machine for creating authenticity.”³ This system classifies and assigns value to appropriated cultural objects, by determining the contexts in which objects belong and circulate. The objects range from art to artifact and their value is determined by their level of cultural authenticity, based on an invented past where western connoisseurship established the parameters of what was or is considered art or aesthetic. As the object moves between various contexts in the cycle of collecting, the final value is determined and assured by the vanishing status of a tribe.⁴ Indeed, historic artifacts and contemporary Native art alike establish their authenticity through associations with an unassimilated and unacculturated past. In *Primitive Art in Civilized Places*, Sally Price states that this sort of twentieth-century cultural imperialism continues to validate western interpretations of Native art and perpetuates the art and culture system of valuation, economically and culturally.⁵ In the case of Indian art, its value and authenticity was and still is largely perpetuated by white patrons’ intervention in determining the style and subject matter by opening their wallet. Money speaks louder than words.

³ James Clifford, *The Predicament of Culture: Twentieth-Century Ethnography, Literature, and Art* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1988), 224.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 222.

⁵ Sally Price, *Primitive Art in Civilized Places* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989), 5.

I understand this system well having spent ten years working in a Native Art gallery. As I completed my education, I watched this art/culture system in action and I began to question my own cynicism, in that the only art that seemed to sell was art that reinforced the system. As my fascination grew, this question quickly became a part of my academic studies and I became a trained social critic, instead of an armchair cynic. I began to seek out artists whose work challenged or criticized the art/ culture system, but examples of this are less visible in the United States than in Canada where there is active support for critical Native art along with the scholarship to support it. After a great deal of searching, I found that there are Native artists from the United States that create art that operates outside the art and culture system. Some are creating abstract art, while others create art that could be classified as marginal or liminal, referencing, and criticizing the art and culture system. Some artists question the social function of art, while others create art that references and critiques the social, political, cultural, and economic contexts in which the art developed.

One of the most compelling contemporary artists whose work challenges assumptions about Native art is Bob Haozous, who has been creating socially conscious art since 1971. In this dissertation, I will examine how Bob Haozous's art depicts and critiques issues such as cultural assimilation, Indian identity, genocide, loss of language, and destruction of the earth, drawing attention to the way these issues interact, how they diverge and what these divergences say about the dominant society. Monumental structures with simplified visual language, controversial subject matter, and ironic humor that engages and sometimes enrages the viewer typify his work. Through his art,

Haozous seeks to create a dialogue about issues facing not only Indian Country, but the entire world. This dissertation will attempt to engage in and add to that dialogue.

Bob Haozous, who identifies himself as Warm Springs Chiricahua Apache, is the son of renowned Native American artist Allan Houser. The name Houser is the anglicized version of the Haozous name. They are descendants of Geronimo's people, the legendary Apache resistance fighter of the late nineteenth century. Allan Houser received his art training at the Santa Fe Indian School with instructor Dorothy Dunn. In her short tenure as an art instructor at the school, she trained an entire generation of Indian artists—the first generation of art-school trained Native American artists. Dunn taught at SFIS a mere four years, but her successor Geronima Cruz taught the techniques pioneered by Dunn for another twenty-five years. This school is famous because of the artists who trained there and the style of art that developed there, now known as the Studio Style. In his early work, Art Historian J. J. Brody called this style of Indian art “white mediated.” Indeed, many believe that Dorothy Dunn quite literally invented this style, although Cruz, Dunn's successor at the Santa Fe Indian School, as well as independent scholars, contest this.

Allan Houser went on to be one of Dunn's most successful students. While he worked in a number of mediums, sculpture was arguably his greatest talent. He worked in wood, stone, and bronze creating figurative sculpture and painting. In the field of American Indian Arts, Houser is widely considered the best Native sculptor. Yet, according to his family, he is scarcely known among Indian communities. In *Shared Visions*, Margaret Archuletta and Rennard Strickland state that, “Houser has been

referred to as the ‘Grandfather of Contemporary Native American Sculpture’,”⁶ Allan Houser’s sculpture is the standard by which all Native American sculpture is now measured.

Houser and Haozous have much in common. Although proficient in numerous other media, both are primarily known as sculptors of life-size and/or monumental art for public places. Monumental public art is a part of our cultural landscape as Americans. Often this type of public art serves to remind us of historic events, outstanding members of the community, or victories and/or losses in war. Monuments teach upcoming generations who and what was important, according to the prevailing assumptions of the dominant society at the time the works of art were commissioned. Indeed, monuments are in public spaces because they are transmitters of cultural knowledge. Images of Indians are a staple in monumental public art as Native Americans are part of the mythology of America’s beginnings. Monuments usually depict American Indians using stereotypical representations, and until Houser’s work, American Indians themselves rarely created monuments. In fact, Allan Houser was the first Native Artist to create monumental sculpture. His unique style combined Euro-American and Native American features. Houser influenced a number of Native artists through his twenty-five year affiliation with the Institute of American Indian Art (IAIA) in Santa Fe, New Mexico. There is now an entire generation of Native sculptors, including Bob Haozous, who have created or been commissioned to create monumental public art, and this is directly because of Allan Houser’s success and influence.

⁶ Margaret Archuleta and Rennard Strickland, ed., *Shared Visions: Native American Painters and Sculptors in the Twentieth Century* (New York: The New Press, 1991), 97.

Haozous, like his father, is a sculptor, although his subject matter is quite different. In fact, Rennard Strickland credits Bob Haozous as one of the “few sculptors who have broken away from the Houser-esque style of Indian sculpture.”⁷ Houser’s work is elegant and graceful, benign, in comparison to Haozous’s culturally complicated monuments, which incorporate humor, irony, and controversy. His work informs the viewer, drawing them into the art and into the social critique and construction of new cultural meanings. Haozous’s monumental public art forces the viewer to engage the work, as they must choose either to ignore or to examine the issues and themes explored in the work.

Haozous’s work is often monumental in size. His work is controversial because it is usually politically and ideologically charged and because of this has been censored. Consumer and mass culture, stereotypes, environmental issues, genocide, and border issues are the raw material for social critique. In an interview with Larry Abbot, Haozous explains:

Look at Indian artists and look at Indian people. You have a people who have some of the most serious problems in the world, alcoholism, suicide, drugs, violence, poverty, lack of education, you name it and then look at their art and you see very little honest self-reflection. It’s mostly an art form directed to a naïve, ignorant, ill-educated public. That’s the white people. Very little Indian art is made for Indian people or for Indian consumption. But one hundred years ago or so all Indian art was made for Indian consumption, except for a few people in the Southwest. At one time, all Indian art was a cultural reflection for themselves. Today, it’s not. It’s a pseudo-cultural reflection for a naïve, buying public. But if Indian people were healthy people, I would suspect that the majority of

⁷ Ibid., 98.

artists would put a political bent in their statement because it's so honest and so realistic to look at your life and see the positive and the negative.⁸

Haozous's remark shows a stark reality, one that faces all Native artists, whether or not they choose to acknowledge it, and faults much contemporary American Indian art as a commodity for the dominant consumer culture. Haozous and others have argued that Native art must be steeped in meaningless stereotypes of Indian culture and must function in the art and culture system in order to be commercially viable. Haozous challenges these assumptions about Native art and chooses to operate outside of this system. Most of Haozous's work offers the viewer a cultural critique, one that some might consider ideologically dangerous: dangerous because it questions the status quo; dangerous because it exposes the dominant culture from the point of view of the margin; and dangerous because it is in a permanent state of ambiguity, "perpetually liminal."⁹ Haozous continues:

There are enough Indian artists dealing with the beauty of Indian people and enough non-Indian artists dealing with the concept of beauty. But I consider that just a form of interior decoration. I have always considered the artist's role to be the primary tool for self-reflection of a people. And in doing that, he would have to put everything that he sees in front of people, from the most beautiful to the most ugly. And if people are behaving irresponsibly, an artist should portray it, especially if he's a part of it. And we all, as Americans, are certainly a part of the system. For example we will fight to maintain our level of convenience and yet we'll still feel bad about poor people across the border in Mexico. I was taught to observe, I don't know who taught me, but it's critical, it's good. That's the role of an artist. Maybe that's an idealistic way to live your life, to be

⁸ Larry Abbot, *A Time of Visions: Bob Haozous Interview* [website] (Larry Abbot, [cited 9/1/03 2003]); available from http://www.britesites.com/native_artist_interviews/bhaozous.htm.

⁹ The use of the term "perpetually liminal" is attributed to Barbara A. Babcock and is from a lecture in 2003 and is in the following: Barbara A. Babcock-Abrahams, "'a Tolerated Margin of Mess': The Trickster and His Tales Reconsidered," *Journal of the Folklore Institute* xi, no. 3 (1975).

able to criticize, but I think the responsibility of an artist is to see and portray who he really is.¹⁰

Bob Haozous creates art as a conscious social practice. Most contemporary Indian art is produced for a white consumer market and most art produced for that market is “historical and pretty,” as Haozous states. In contrast, Haozous deliberately addresses social issues facing Indian country and the world. Most of his work is public art, and public art is meant to engage the viewer. Haozous seeks to provoke a reaction that creates a dialogue, any kind of dialogue, using images that sometimes literally include words that are “gibberish” as Haozous calls them. His work often demonstrates borders, borderlands, or liminal places— both ideological borders and physical borders. The emotional affects of Haozous’s art on the viewer range from discomfort to anger, from indifference to protest. Public art that operates in “liminal”¹¹ or in-between spaces is disconcerting, but society needs these mirrors to force change.

Most cultures have ways of dealing with the margins. These in-between ideological places make no sense; rules do not apply here and reality is distorted and dangerous because it is out of our control. In tribal societies there are ways of dealing with these spaces, with taboo; there are tricksters or clowns and one of their functions is to draw attention to what happens in the margins. LaVonne Ruoff explains, “Unrestrained by tribal taboos, myths about the mischievous acts of the culture hero-trickster-transformer provide outlets for socially unacceptable

¹⁰ Abbot, *A Time of Visions: Bob Haozous Interview* ([cited]).

¹¹ Victor Witter Turner, *The Ritual Process: Structure and Anti-Structure, The Lewis Henry Morgan Lectures, 1966* (London: Routledge & K. Paul, 1969). Despite being in common use, the term liminal is often misused. I use the term liminal in accordance with Victor Turner’s usage.

feelings and impulses and teach the consequences of unrestrained or taboo behavior.”¹² The use of humor and irony in art is the way that Haozous has chosen to draw attention to these spaces. This is how Haozous creates a dialogue, one that he hopes will continue long into the future.

¹² A. LaVone Brown Ruoff, *American Indian Literatures: An Introduction, Bibliographic Review, and Selected Bibliography* (New York: The Modern Language Association of America, 1990), 47.

PART 1

HISTORICAL CONSTRUCTIONS OF NATIVE ART

American Indian art, as a Euro-American conceptual category and as an art and culture system, developed during the late nineteenth century, almost as soon as the Indian wars were over. Serious artifact collecting by museums began nearly simultaneously as did the beginnings of American anthropology. The public did not start collections until somewhat later. After the turn of the twentieth century, tourism developed, especially in the Southwest, and as academics began writing articles about Native American art in popular magazines, the public began collecting Indian artifacts and it quickly became a broadly accepted hobby. The development of a Euro-American mediated American Indian art form was a natural progression beyond the collecting of artifacts. This coupled with the fact that by the 1930s, art was also considered a viable economic stimulus idea. This is evidenced by the Indian Arts and Crafts Act and The Indian Reorganization Act, which advocated the incorporation of art into the curriculum in some of the Indian boarding schools and virtually assured the development of American Indian art into the broad field that it is today.

The most successful and most well documented school that taught American Indians art techniques was the Santa Fe Indian School. The so-called Studio Style art taught there was intentionally meant to look primitive to appeal to collector's notions of the vanishing Indian. To cater to the collector's market, correct subject matter, and methods for painting were determined for American Indian painters by instructors, Indian

traders, anthropologists, and museum personnel while the market and the standardization of stylistic components of Native art developed simultaneously. This cycle is now so standardized that it is accepted and not questioned. The Indian art market was conceived of and created by Euro-American patrons, is still going strong and is now self-perpetuated. Many of the so-called traditional stylistic components which Native art adheres to and by which it is judged, were created and determined by Euro-American connoisseurs and patrons for the larger collectors art market. Some stylistic designs in two-dimensional paintings borrow elements from traditional art forms, such as pottery designs or the use of isolated geometric elements used in the creation of a Navajo sand painting. Both historically and now, designs are used in a way that is non-traditional or may have no relationship with traditional Native art. However, American Indian art and Native American art was, or is marketed as traditional, regardless of how designs are used or the relationship of the object to traditional art.

One of the most successful first generation Indian artists trained in the Studio Style was Apache artist Allan Houser. This chapter will include an overview of: the history of Euro-American mediated forms Indian art; and who developed them; the creation of the market that supported and continues to support this art; and a discussion of some of the first artists trained in this style, with special emphasis on Allan Houser. This history is well documented by such authors as J. J. Brody of the University of New Mexico and W. Jackson Rushing of University of Texas, among others.

INDIAN ART HISTORY

In examining the development of Native art as an art historical conceptual category, Brody and Garmhausen postulate that the earliest white mediated forms occur in the Southwest between 1900 and 1917.¹³ This period in Southwest history includes the beginnings of Southwest anthropology, archaeology, and tourism. There was sporadic art production prior to this time when early Southwest Indian traders such as C. J. Wallace commissioned Zuni Indians to create paintings. Anthropologists like Jesse Walter Fewkes who commissioned drawings of Katsinas at Hopi and Edgar Hewett and Kenneth Chapman, both from of the School of American Research (SAR), commissioned Santa Domingo Pueblo artists to create works on paper. Chapman provided materials to tribal members whom he asked to depict tribal images as early as 1901 and then purchased these images for study.¹⁴ Hewett encouraged workers from San Ildefonso, at the Frijoles Canyon Ruins dig from 1904-1914, to draw designs they saw and to produce pictures of tribal ceremonies.¹⁵ Hewett was also responsible for creating the process for authentication and legitimization of Native art forms. He commissioned, collected, and wrote articles about the art he commissioned and collected. Hewett published articles in such magazines as *Ladies Home Journal*, *The Dial*, *El Palacio*, and *Art and Archaeology*. During the summer of 1918, Hewett and SAR employed Native artists Crescencio Martinez, Julian Martinez, Fred Kabotie, Otis Polelonema, Velino Sheje and Alfonso

¹³ J. J. Brody, *Indian Painters & White Patrons* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1971), 73, J.J. Brody, *Pueblo Indian Painting: Tradition and Modernism in New Mexico, 1900-1930*, ed. J Ann Baldinger (Santa Fe, New Mexico: School of American Research Press, 1997), 29.

¹⁴ Winona Garmhausen, *History of Indian Arts Education in Santa Fe: The Institute of American Indian Arts with Historical Background 1890-1962* (Santa Fe: Sunstone Press, 1988), 33.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

Roybal, also known as Awa Tsireh.¹⁶ In addition to Hewett, there was also a grade school teacher at San Ildefonso day school who, as early as 1910, had urged her students to draw.¹⁷

Indeed, by the 1920s there were over a dozen Pueblo painters, with no formal art training who produced two-dimensional easel paintings in and around Santa Fe and Taos, New Mexico. Sometimes referred to as the Santa Fe School of Art, they were largely self-taught and had developed their own small market of white patrons, including local museums, tourists, and white intellectuals and artists such as Mabel Dodge Luhan, John Sloan, and Robert Henri who were living in the area at the time. These artists, authors, and anthropologists contributed much to the early development and dissemination of Native art. In fact, they and others in their social group were intimately involved in the creation of a number of events that were instrumental in creating a market for American Indian Art and events that continue to draw artists and customers today. These events included Gallup Intertribal Indian Ceremonial and Santa Fe Indian Market. Local traders and other Anglos started this “festival and art exhibition” in 1921.¹⁸ In addition to Gallup Intertribal Ceremonial, the Santa Fe Indian Market, or at least an incarnation of it, began in 1922.¹⁹ Indian Market and Gallup Ceremonial both continue to be the largest

¹⁶ Brody, *Indian Painters & White Patrons*, 85, Brody, *Pueblo Indian Painting: Tradition and Modernism in New Mexico, 1900-1930*, W. Jackson Rushing, *Native American Art and the New York Avant-Garde: A History of Cultural Primitivism* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1995).

¹⁷ Garmhausen, *History of Indian Arts Education in Santa Fe: The Institute of American Indian Arts with Historical Background 1890-1962*, 33.

¹⁸ Molly H. Mullin, *Culture in the Marketplace: Gender, Art, and Value in the American Southwest* (Durham [N.C.]; London: Duke University Press, 2001), 65.

¹⁹ Mullin cites Bruce Bernstein’s 1993 UNM Dissertation in saying that Indian Market as it is presently known started in 1971. Despite the Southwest Indian Association for Indian Art’s (SWAIA) marketing the event as contiguous since 1922, prior to the 1950s it was not an annual event. In fact, from 1942-1971 the

venues for Native American art and are the two biggest events of the year in the Native art world.

In addition to creating local and regional markets for Indian art designed for tourists, some of the literati living in and around Santa Fe and Taos organized larger national events, which included the first showings of American Indian Art in New York City. In 1931, the Exposition of Indian Tribal Arts opened in New York City and was the first National Indian Art show of its kind. The show reinforced that Indians were a part of American history, and this show fell right in line with the prevailing view that Indians were vanishing and their culture needed preserving. Because of their prolific collecting and encouragement of quality and authenticity, wealthy collectors actually created a market for Indian art that was self-validating.²⁰ Ten years later, in 1941, The Museum of Modern Art, in New York City hosted Indian Art of the United States. This show introduced the world to American Indian art at a time of renewed nationalism and was hugely influential on many contemporary artists of the time.

These new markets created consumer demand for Indian art and by the late twenties, met this demand by training artists at several Indian schools, including the Bureau of Indian Affairs schools such as Haskell Institute, Carlisle, and the Albuquerque Indian School. In partial response to the recommendations of the Merriam Report of 1931 and artistic environment that had developed in and around Santa Fe, the Santa Fe Indian School implemented an arts program. The school hired Dorothy Dunn to begin

market was held at the annual Santa Fe Fiesta and was not a separate event, in 1971 the event was reorganized under SWAIA who separated it from the Fiesta and located it in the Plaza in Santa Fe.

²⁰ Rushing, *Native American Art and the New York Avant-Garde: A History of Cultural Primitivism*. See especially Chapter Two for an extensive discussion of white patronage and the effects on the market.

teaching in this program in 1932. Dunn was familiar with Indian painting, as she had previously taught at several other BIA schools in the area. She was the instructor at the Santa Fe Indian School from 1932 to 1937. And despite the mythology that she literally created the style that is now considered traditional style or studio style Native American art, it is clear that these styles were already in existence.²¹ However, she did standardize the methods for teaching these styles and, further, she taught students how to produce saleable work specifically for the white collectors' market. Students were required to produce suitable subject matter in their art or leave school, and Dunn determined the subject matter. One of her students, Allan Houser, later recalled,

When I got to the studio, it was the old traditional style they wanted from you or not at all. Dorothy Dunn told me that if I was going to do things that are realistic, then you better go on out and take the first bus home. Everyone was encouraged to search their background for traditional things. That's all she permitted us to do. My only objection was this: She trained us all the same way. You either paint like this, Mr. Houser, or it's not Indian art.²²

It was unacceptable for students to paint any other subject matter or for any other purpose than the Indian market, as she was committed to encouraging and facilitating pictures of an unassimilated group heritage, despite the fact that many students wanted quick training in modern non-Indian American art in hopes of competing for commercial success with non-native artists. As a result, many students left before they were twenty years old, having already done their best work.²³ In effect, Dunn was fulfilling the role that anthropologists, traders, and other educators had filled in the past, only in an

²¹ Mythology reference to Dunn, generally referred to as creating the studio style when in fact she did not, she only taught what was already being taught in the region.

²² Charles Dailey, "Major Influences in the Development of 20th Century Native American Art" (paper presented at the Sharing A Heritage: American Indian Art, Los Angeles, CA, 1984 1982), 43.

²³ Brody, *Indian Painters & White Patrons*, 130.

officially sanctioned setting.²⁴ Some of the characteristics of what is called the Studio Style include representations of tribal images in a flat style, with little figure to ground relationship. Also depicted were geometric elements isolated from pottery designs, and figures of birds and animals. The Studio Style is often criticized in academia as white mediated, although similar images were created by Pueblo Indians in kiva mural designs as noted by Hibben.²⁵ However, what was white mediated was cultural borrowing of design elements. Borrowing designs or crossing tribal motifs would get a student reprimanded as Dunn deemed this “unauthentic,” despite the fact that diffusion was and still is prevalent. Indeed, perhaps there was always market mediation. The dynamics changed, however, with the emerging American market dominance: the market was no longer the mediator, but the primary factor. According to Dunn,

The Santa Fe Indian School, through its art classes, is attempting to recover and develop America’s only indigenous art. Much of it has been irretrievably lost, of course, but Indian art students are delving into forgotten places, searching through ethnological papers, studying museum collections, inquiring of their elders, making observations of themselves of what remains of the old cultures, and reconstructing their racial heritage as a basis for building new things which will contribute to America’s cultural progress.²⁶

The field of Indian Art grew substantially during the years Dunn was instructor. There was already considerable demand for Indian art, but the advent of the Indian Arts and Crafts Board in 1935 and federal policies of creating economic stimulus through the

²⁴ Garmhausen, *History of Indian Arts Education in Santa Fe: The Institute of American Indian Arts with Historical Background 1890-1962*, 50.

²⁵ Frank C. Hibben, *Kiva Art of the Anasazi: At Pottery Mound*, ed. Gwen DenDooven, First Edition ed. (Las Vegas: KC Publications, 1975).

²⁶ Jeanne Shutes and Jill Mellick, *The Worlds of P’otsúnú: Geronima Cruz Montoya of San Juan Pueblo*, 1st ed. (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1996), 68-9. It is interesting to note the difference between this statement and what Kiva New says in 1962 about tradition being “outmoded.”

arts, added to the demand. In fact, there were so many requests for showings of SFIS art student's work, that at one point, engagements exceeded 30 shows per year.²⁷ By 1938, the most successful Native artists were graduates of the Santa Fe Indian School. Dorothy Dunn left her teaching position at the school after only five years. However, the Santa Fe Indian School continued teaching art to Native students according to the principals and styles she created under the direction of former student Santa Clara artist and educator, Geronima Montoya Cruz. Despite continued institutional difficulties and problems with administration, under Cruz, the school continued to teach Dunn's methods through the forties and fifties until the end of the school in 1962.

There were many changes that affected the school during the forties; many students were lost in World War II and tourism dropped dramatically. Also, many graduates returned to their reservations following training and only produced art to supplement their income. Other problems involved the curriculum; while other schools modified their curricula to meet changing times, the Santa Fe Indian School did not. By the late fifties, the school was considered a dumping ground for problem students, a legacy that would follow the institution until its demise.²⁸ The same styles of painting that Dorothy Dunn had taught in the 1930's were now institutionalized and being taught on a broader level; if a Native artist's work did not include the stylistic components that were recognized as traditional, their work was not regarded as marketable or authentic. Indeed, this often holds true today.

²⁷ Garmhausen, *History of Indian Arts Education in Santa Fe: The Institute of American Indian Arts with Historical Background 1890-1962*, 54.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 59.

In 1959, the University of Arizona organized a conference on Indian art, sponsored by the Rockefeller Foundation, held at the University of Arizona March 20-21, 1959, the purpose of the Directions in Indian Art conference was,

To bring into an organized work conference a group of persons qualified through experience and training to explore and set forth the current status of Southwest Indian art. To resolve possible ways and means of preservation and development of Southwestern Indian arts and crafts through: 1) Education of the public in the appreciation of this art, 2) The betterment of the economic conditions of the Indian craftsman and artist, and 3) Opportunities for education of the Indian artist in a period of transition.²⁹

The participant list reads like a who's who of Indian art at the time. According to the conference proposal the University sent to the Rockefeller Foundation, potential participants included,

Indian Craftsmen and artist and other Indians closely connected with these interests; traders who have been and are in direct contact with the Indian; members of the staffs of museums, art galleries, university departments of art and anthropology, Indian arts and crafts guilds, Indian school and other institutions and organizations which have a direct connection with or interest in Indian art.³⁰

Some of the actual presenters included Dr. Frederick Dockstader, who at the time was the Assistant Director of the Museum of the American Indian, Heye Foundation; Dorothy Dunn, the former Santa Fe Indian School teacher largely responsible for training an entire generation of Native artists in the Studio Style; Dr. John Adair; Bertha Dutton; Joe Herrera, an Indian artist from Cochiti; Tom Bahti, Indian Trader from Tucson; Pablita Velarde, Santa Clara artist; Fred Kabotie, Hopi artist and educator; Allan Houser, Apache

²⁹ "A Proposal for an Exploratory Workshop in Art for Talented Younger Indians," in *The Arizona State Museum-University of Arizona Southwest Indian Art Project files* (Tucson: Arizona State Museum, 1959).

³⁰ Ibid.

artist and educator at Inter-Mountain Indian School; Charles Loloma, Hopi artist; Clara Lee Tanner, Professor of Anthropology at the University of Arizona and wife of Indian trader John Tanner; and Lloyd Kiva New, Cherokee artist and educator, who would go on to run the Institute of American Indian Art just a few years later.³¹

Dunn is credited with facilitating the larger acceptance of the Studio Style.

However, she clung tenaciously to her beliefs that this style was the direct result of an unacculturated past, as is evidenced by her statement at the Directions conference:

Indian painting is, first of all, art, but in the greater implications of human relationships and history it is something more—something perhaps of a genetic aspect in the riddle of mankind. Unless the legends, songs, ceremonies, and other native customs are recorded by the people themselves, painting must continue to be the principal contributor of Indian thought to the world art and history.”³²

Today, her writing reads at best, as one who romanticizes Indians and at her worst, maternalizing and matronizing.

In contrast to the goals of the conference and to Dunn’s remarks, Lloyd New noted,

Let’s admit, sadly if you must, that the hey-dey of Indian life is past, or passing. Let’s also admit that art with all peoples has been a manifestation of the lives of those people, reflecting the truth of the times. And if Indian culture is in a state of flux then we must expect a corresponding art. An art whose main concern is recording the past is called history and an art whose main concern is narration of the present is news reporting, and is better done with the pen, not the brush. Effective stylization may be ever so successful as decoration but may not be art.³³

³¹ "Directions in Indian Art: The Report of a Conference Held at the University of Arizona on March 20-21, 1959" (Tucson, 1959). Note: the participants are listed here as they were listed in the program.

³² Dorothy Dunn, "Training and Evaluation of the Indian Artist" (paper presented at the Directions in Southwest Art, Tucson, Arizona, Fall 1957 1959).

³³ Lloyd H. New, "Projections in Indian Art Education," in *Directions in Indian Art* (Tucson, AZ: The Arizona State Museum-University of Arizona Southwest Indian Art Project Files, 1959).

Dunn's maternalistic attitudes contrast greatly with Kiva New's assimilationist viewpoints, which are well documented. In fact, Dunn and New seemed to be at odds most of their professional lives, as evidenced by numerous papers in the Dunn archives at the Museum of Indian Arts and culture. Perhaps these differences were due to generational differences. Or, maybe cultural differences as Dunn was white, on the outside looking in, while New was Indian and trying to get out. Either way, they did not agree on much.

Of the other Indians invited to speak—Pablita Velarde, Fred Kabotie, Charles Loloma, Mrs. Joe Herrera—Allan Houser was the only one to speak of problems with the then current art training of Indians. He suggested more practical art training such as commercial art, stating "...commercial art, which pays well, is a competitor to creative art which offers nothing but starvation."³⁴ Either the other Indian artists/participants said little or other participants did not record their remarks. However, what is recorded demonstrates the mixed feelings of Indian participants, some with feelings of gratitude for white patronage, while others were concerned with the general state of Indian education.³⁵

The project planners and organizers at the University of Arizona had lofty goals and in October of 1959, just seven months after the Directions in Indian Art Conference, the University of Arizona proposed, sought, and obtained funding from the Rockefeller Foundation for a series of art workshops for young Indian artists. Citing changing

³⁴ "Directions in Indian Art: The Report of a Conference Held at the University of Arizona on March 20-21, 1959".

³⁵ Nathalie F.S. Woodbury, "Comments of Discussants, Notes on Status of Southwest Indian Arts and Crafts," (Arizona State Museum-University of Arizona Southwest Indian Art Project files, 1959).

economic times and the conflict between traditional and contemporary viewpoints in terms of its effects on younger artists, the proposed workshops sought to bring selected Indian artists between the ages of 17 and 25, to the University for a series of intensive six-week summer workshops, over the course of three years, 1960-1962.

The workshops were designed to expose the young artists to a variety of media, instructors, and hands-on experiences. The students had access to both Indian anthropological resources and historic and contemporary Western art sources. They learned everything from design to marketing principles from both Indian and Anglo instructors. The workshop culminated each year with an exhibit and critique of their work.³⁶

The first Southwest Indian Art Project workshop took place on June 6-16th, 1960 with 24 participants.³⁷ The second workshop was held Jun 12-22nd, 1961 with 23 students including Fritz Scholder, who went on to become one of the most recognizable and famous Indian artists or artist who happened to be Indian.³⁸ The Southwest Indian Art Project changed significantly during its final year of 1962 due to unforeseen circumstances. This was the year that the BIA opened the Institute of American Indian Arts (IAIA) in Santa Fe on the old Santa Fe Indian School site. They hired all three Indian instructors away from the Southwest Indian Art Project, including Lloyd Kiva New, and they built on what had been done at the University of Arizona. Further, IAIA

³⁶ "A Proposal for an Exploratory Workshop in Art for Talented Younger Indians."

³⁷ "Press Release: Ua Exploratory Summer Workshop Set for Young Indian Artists of the Southwest," in *The Arizona State Museum-University of Arizona Southwest Indian Art Project files* (Tucson: 1960).

³⁸ "Southwest Indian Art Workshop Catalogue," in *The Arizona State Museum -University of Arizona Southwest Indian Art Project files* (Tucson: 1961). It is interesting to note, that Scholder until his death in February 2005, insisted that he was not Indian, just of Indian descent. In addition, he ceased creating subject matter that referenced Indians in the early 1970s.

accepted 16 students from the Southwest Indian Art Project. In response, the coordinators of the Project changed the summer workshop program, scaling it back to the acceptance and support of “selected students from those returning students”³⁹ for regular academic study. The University of Arizona eliminated the studio aspect altogether and allowed the remaining eight students to concentrate on whatever area of study they chose. Of this group, Fritz Scholder was awarded a fellowship as a Graduate Assistant plus full scholarship, room and board, travel and materials.⁴⁰

Most people are unaware of the University of Arizona Rockefeller conference or its influence on Native art and artists and, IAIA, while influenced by the Rockefeller funded Southwest Indian Art Project summer institutes, was not an outgrowth of them. The BIA and the Indian Arts and Crafts Board created IAIA through a joint effort. George Boyce was the founding director, although at the time the position was superintendent. Lloyd New was hired as the Head of the Art Department and a number of key staff, mostly Indian, were hired, many from the Intermountain Indian School in Utah, including Allan Houser and his wife. In fact, Boyce believed that the success of IAIA was because he hired Native staff and instructors. He deliberately hired Indian artists he considered successful; they were either instructors or they had a national reputation. Those he did hire, Allan Houser, Charles Loloma, and Otellie Loloma significantly influenced the course of the school and the direction of Native art, as they had the most contact with students. The teachers influenced the students and the students

³⁹ "Correspondence between University of Arizona and the Rockefeller Foundation," in *The Arizona State Museum-University of Arizona Southwest Indian Art Project files* (Tucson: 1963).

⁴⁰ Ibid.

then influenced the teachers. IAIA broadened the field of Native arts to include all of the arts, not just painting as the SFIS had embraced.⁴¹

Boyce was the director/superintendent of IAIA from 1962-1967 and some refer to these years as the “golden period:” a period when much national and international attention was focused on the school and for good reason. During this time a number of students graduated who went on to national acclaim, including T. C. Cannon, Doug Hyde, Kevin Red Star, and Earl Biss.⁴² These artists are often referred to as the first generation of the post-studio style as they were the first artists to transcend the Studio Style that Dunn and Cruz taught for so many years at the Santa Fe Indian School.

In 1968, Lloyd New, former Arts Director took over as director of IAIA and he ran the school until 1978. This era was a time of considerable change in IAIA, reflective of the changes in Indian Country and the changing social climate of the United States. While the nation wrestled with Viet Nam, civil rights issues, and political changes, Indian Country was struggling with Indian self-determination, various federal policies, the American Indian Movement. These social and political changes affected the school and the students attending. New instituted changes: he hired former students, developed a cultural center, and worked to transition IAIA from a high school to a college. In 1968, Russell Means, then an AIM leader, spoke on campus, greatly affecting the student body. During New’s tenure, many problems manifested. Inbreeding in staff, due to Indian hiring preferences and hiring of former students, had led to stagnation in style. The

⁴¹ Garmhausen, *History of Indian Arts Education in Santa Fe: The Institute of American Indian Arts with Historical Background 1890-1962*.

⁴² *Ibid.*, 83.

school's work had become complacent and the reputation of IAIA declined. The year New retired, 1978, the last high school class graduated. Former graduates of the seventies include Dan Namingha, Roxanne Swentzell, and Grey Cohoe. IAIA had effectively propelled Indian arts to a new height. However, times had changed, and so had policies. The era of the BIA school was over. By this time, in addition to art school and art programs at universities, there were tribal colleges and American Indian Studies programs in universities. Indian artists had numerous choices as to where to get their education.⁴³

During the 1980s, as transition and change affected IAIA and as they struggled to compete with other educational institutions in recruitment of students, a new generation of Native artists not affiliated with IAIA garnered national attention. Little is published about IAIA after the 1980s and records have yet to be archived and are currently inaccessible for research.⁴⁴ The 1980s and 1990s generations of non-IAIA trained artists reads like a Who's Who of current Native art. Bob Haozous's work gained wider prominence during the eighties, although he had been working and exhibiting his art since 1971 in institutions like the Heard Museum in Phoenix and the Wheelwright in Santa Fe. Despite the fact that Haozous's father, Allan Houser taught at IAIA for twenty years, Bob did not attend school there. He received his Bachelor of Fine Arts from the California College of Arts and Crafts, now called the California College of Arts. Other university art school trained artists such as Truman Lowe, Jaune Quick-to-See Smith,

⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴ The inaccessibility of IAIA records is a real shortcoming in American Indian Art history. Not only are they not catalogued, they are stored in boxes and completely unavailable, in any form, to researchers. There is a fairly complete history in Garmhausen's book, but it only goes up to the inception of IAIA. Little is written or published on the subsequent decades.

Kay Walking Stick, Emmi Whitehorse, Edgar Heap-of-Birds, Diego Romero, Dan Lomahaftewa, Tony Abeyta, Anita Fields, Marcus Amerman, Shelly Nero, James Luna, Nora Naranjo-Morse, and Mateo Romero all became prominent artists. However, these artists have transcended the boundaries and limitations of the term Indian artist and some even critique what it means to be Indian in their work. Perhaps they are reacting to the art that came before them or perhaps the market itself. In any case, there is a divergence between artists who are Indian, producing art for a larger audience and Indian artists, producing art for the Native art buying public and this is where you can situate Bob Haozous—in-between these two camps, trying to create a dialogue.

THE MARKET

The Indian art market historically was and still is dependent on the notion of authenticity. To reiterate, the process of creating authenticity—images, techniques, and stylistic components—was designed and dictated to Indian students by white patrons and instructors in this art and culture system, and was reinforced by the market. The earliest market for Indian art included anthropologists and traders. In order to create value and legitimacy for the art, authenticity needed to be established, and this through articles written for magazines and journals by various patrons. In addition, New York intellectuals and artists living in Taos and Santa Fe actively collected, promoted, and exhibited Native art, further perpetuating the cycle creating authenticity.

The value and authenticity of Native art was further perpetuated by white patrons' intervention in determining subject matter and stylistic elements—patrons who believed that Natives existed in a stereotyped and romantic ethnographic present which was

perpetuated by encouraging the artist to look Indian by wearing so-called traditional clothing while making and selling art. Through the patronage of white consumers and museums, a cycle of authentication developed. White patrons instructed the Native artist on subject matter, style, and materials, and then they purchased the piece for their museum or personal collection. They then wrote articles about it and this made the art more valuable. Finally, they and others commissioned more art, which was sold to collectors who eventually donated the works to museums, creating even more value for Native art. As I imply, part of the marketing scheme for Native art included selling Indian identity as a means of authenticating the work of art.

The Art/Culture system, while historically situated, continues to evolve and to determine authenticity even today. The value of authenticity is monetary and can be observed in Santa Fe on any given summer day as Indian artists sit on the sidewalk under the portal selling art and wearing traditional clothing. Any artist wearing traditional clothing while selling art that conforms to the aforementioned stylistic elements will sell more than a Native artist dressed in average street clothes selling modern Indian art that is not recognizable as such. The latter artist is not displaying the appropriate signs of being Indian, nor is he/she creating art that has recognizable signs of an authentic Indian past. The issue of authenticity as it pertains to Native American art is like a spider web that weaves through everything: issues of Indian identity, stylistic components of art, marketability of the art, the Indian market, the magazines that perpetuate the market, and the academics who study Indian art. Authenticity determines perceptions and representations of Indians and is perpetuated through the Art/Culture system. Legally,

tribal enrollment determines authenticity. This disregards cultural definitions of who is Indian and gives the federal government one more layer of power over the sovereignty of Indian tribes.

INDIAN IDENTITY

Indian identity is a concept that has been legislated for many years, but only recently has it been used to determine authenticity with regard to Native art. In fact, the first Indian Arts and Crafts act was established as part of the Indian New Deal in the 1930s. The current incarnation of this law, is a modification of the former law, updated for the times, having less focus on promoting the arts and more focus on protecting the consumer. According to the Indian Arts and Crafts Board Publication,

The Indian Arts and Crafts Act of 1990 or Public Law 101-644 prohibits misrepresentation in marketing of Indian arts and crafts products of the United States. The Indian Arts and Crafts Act of 1990 is a truth-in-advertising law. It is illegal to offer or display for sale, or sell any art or craft product in a manner that falsely suggest it is Indian produced, an Indian product, or the product of a particular Indian tribe.⁴⁵

With the passage of the Indian Arts and Crafts Act of 1990, Indian art is no longer legally definable as Indian art if the Native artist does not have the proper identity. If the artist is not a recognized member of a tribe, the work is not considered Indian art under the definition of the law and cannot be sold as such; this work is therefore not authentic. The law states that an “Indian is defined as a member of a state or federally-recognized tribe,

⁴⁵ *Indian Arts and Crafts Act: Know the Law* (Indian Arts and Crafts Board, 2001 [cited 12 2004]); available from www.iacb.doi.gov.

or a certified Indian artisan; Certified Indian artisan means an individual who is certified by the governing body of an Indian tribe as a non-member Indian artisan.”⁴⁶

The Indian Arts and Crafts Act of 1990 is intended to protect the buying public and assure that they are buying authentic Indian art, not imported imitations, and to protect Indian artists from the economic impact of an influx of inexpensive imitation art. The legislation of identity from an outside body excludes those who have Indian blood but are not enrolled with any tribe and while this is acknowledged and challenged in the 2003 Final Regulations of the act, no ruling has yet been made. The categories created by this law are designed to protect the consumer and attempt to protect the Indian craftsman, but actually extend federal control over Indian identity. Further, the legislation of identity causes peoples to question ‘who is more Indian?’ creating even more factionalism, both inter-tribally and intra-tribally. In effect, the law perpetuates internal racism among tribes and tribal members. In one study of the law, author Gayle Sheffield argues that this law’s method for determining ‘Indianness’ is arbitrary and quite varied, potentially excluding full-bloods with strong connections to traditional life, while including those with little blood and no connection to tribal communities.⁴⁷ This law protects notions of authenticity based on established Indian market perceptions, yet the law excludes many that it seeks to protect, by enforcing the notion that Natives must express authentic identity based on a pristine cultural tradition. Some scholars have suggested that legal treatments of identity fail to acknowledge that the cultural, gender,

⁴⁶ Ibid.([cited]).

⁴⁷ Gail K. Sheffield, *The Arbitrary Indian: The Indian Arts and Crafts Act of 1990* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1997).

racial, and ethnic identities of a person are not simply intrinsic, but emerge from relationships and interactions with other people.⁴⁸ This statement holds true, but is an oversimplification of the complexities of the issue. Native identity can be defined on many levels: by community, by family, by the tribe, by friends, by the larger American culture, by the law, by stereotypes, and personally. Although the federal government defines Indian identity one way, each individual tribe determines its own criteria for recognizing identity.

The Indian Arts and Crafts Act of 1990 is based on existing legal definitions of identity, namely the Blood Quantum method established by the Federal Government; it does not address cultural concepts of identity. Furthermore, if the Blood Quantum method of identification is still in place in fifty years, there will be *no* Indians with the legal right to sell Indian art because these rigid legal definitions of identity produce statistical genocide and legally diminish tribal enrollments, which was the government's original intention! This law enforces existing notions of authenticity, in an effort to protect the uniformed white market from purchasing inauthentic Native art by using arbitrary legal classifications to define Indians, thus supporting the Native art market, as it currently exists.

Legal categories and the law now support and perpetuate the Art/Culture system that Clifford outlined, as discussed earlier. The Indian art market of today is dependent on the notions of authenticity and traditionalism as negotiated and determined by white patrons and the U.S. Government, in the early part of the twentieth century. Discussions

⁴⁸ Rosemary J. Coombe, "The Properties of Culture and the Politics of Possessing Identity: Native Claims in the Cultural Appropriation Controversy," *Canadian Journal of Law and Jurisprudence* I, no. 2 (1993).

of identity and authenticity make their way into all facets of Native life and popular culture as seen in this passage from Sherman Alexie's recent book, *Ten Little Indians*: "She knew Indians were obsessed with authenticity. Colonized, genocided, exiled, Indians formed their identities by questioning the identities of other Indians. Self-hating, self-doubting, Indian tribes turned their tribes into Nationalistic sects."⁴⁹

In a recent discussion on the issue of Indian Identity and blood quantum, Bob Haozous had this to say:

I can only tell you what I've been taught and that's that Indigenous man lives by nature's laws and modern man lives by man's laws. And Indigenous man, in this progress or their change, I won't say evolution, are becoming more focused on the Euro-American way of living. One of the off-shoots of that is the polarization of good and bad, positive and negative, instead of being in balance.

Indigenous as a state of mind, based on ones connection to the earth; it is more basic than tribal designations; in fact, it is based on our commonality as human beings on this earth. Indigenous is earth based common sense. It has no relationship to skin color or race. On the other hand, a White state of mind (or western) is individualistic and ego driven, disconnected from the earth, denying responsibility to future generation or to the earth and seeks perverted beauty in art as opposed to art that simulates dialogue.

I say white man and I'm not just talking about white skin. I'm talking about attitude. Because a lot of full-blooded Indians are as white as they come, a lot of jet black people, a lot of pure white people all over this world are probably more indigenous, especially farmers, are more indigenous than all the Native Americans.

The Indigenous perspective seeks the questions in this dialogue and how do deal with them as opposed the western state of mind, which only seeks answers and proclaims it has them. "We've taken the issue of identity and polarized it and it's not that easy. I can go back to what I was talking about, that earth based relationship to man's laws and mother nature's laws and eventually you have to define what it is that makes Indian people different than white people, from black people, from other brown people, and then what makes Indian people the same as Indigenous people. Those are the questions we should be talking about. I've come up with my answers which may be self serving or very naive,

⁴⁹ Sherman Alexie, *Ten Little Indians: Stories*, 1st ed. (New York: Grove Press, 2003), 40.

but I think that Indigenous man or the indigenusness of a place. This is the place. This is where we are from. This is the place we take care of.⁵⁰

⁵⁰ Bob Haozous, recorded, April 16, 2004.

PART 2

BOB HAOZOUS

Bob Haozous is from one of Indian Art's First Families; paternally he descends from the Warm Springs band of Chiricahua Apache that were prisoners of war, housed at Fort Sill Military reserve in Oklahoma, which was created out of the Kiowa, Comanche, and Apache Reservation in 1871.⁵¹ Haozous's legally designated tribal affiliation is Warm Springs/ Chiricahua Apache and federally designated Chiricahua Apache/ Warm Springs Fort Sill Apache Tribe. His great-great-grandfather was Mangas Coloradas and his grandfather Sam Haozous was an interpreter for Geronimo as well as his nephew.⁵² After relocation from their tribal homelands in western New Mexico and incarceration at Fort Sill, eventually the U.S. Government freed this band of Apaches and allotted land on the Fort Sill Reservation. Allan Houser was the first free baby born at Fort Sill to Sam and Blossom Haozous in 1914.⁵³

Allan (Haozous) Houser was raised at Fort Sill, on lands allotted to his family after internment and relocation. Raised with both dominant cultural values and Apache cultural heritage, he went to both public schools and Bureau of Indian Affairs schools. While good at sports and not academics, he excelled in the arts and in 1935, when he was twenty, he decided to attend the Santa Fe Indian School. Under the tutelage of Dorothy

⁵¹ *Fort Sill Chiricahua Warm Springs Apache Tribal History* [Web Site] (Fort Sill Apache Nation, [cited September 2004]); available from <http://fortsillapachenation.com/history.html>.

⁵² W. Jackson Rushing and Allan Houser, *Allan Houser, an American Master: (Chiricahua Apache, 1914-1994)* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 2004), 34.

⁵³ Susanne G. Kenagy, "Bob Haozous," *American Indian Art Magazine* 15, no. 3 (1990): 67, Rushing and Houser, *Allan Houser, an American Master: (Chiricahua Apache, 1914-1994)*, 34.

Dunn, the students were instructed to paint from their heritage and were discouraged from incorporating Euro-American themes or styles. Houser excelled in the Studio Style as it is now known. He went on to be arguably one of, if not *the* most prolific and most influential Native American artists. He progressed from paintings, to murals, to teaching, to sculpture. Indeed, Houser's work is the standard by which all Native sculpture is now measured.⁵⁴ In addition, Houser also influenced generations of Native artists through teaching at Intermountain Indian School in Utah as well as the Institute of American Indian Arts in Santa Fe.

Bob Haozous is one of five children born in Los Angeles, California to Allan Houser and his wife, Anna Marie Gallegos, of Navajo and Spanish descent, from Abiquiu, New Mexico. Born in 1943, he spent his early years in Apache, Oklahoma with his grandparents Sam and Blossom Haozous. However, he primarily grew up in Brigham City in Northern Utah where his father, Allan Houser taught at Inter-Mountain Indian School.

Haozous began painting under his father's instruction by painting grocery store signs. In 1961, he entered Utah State University where he majored in commercial art, but never finished. Around this time, his father returned to Santa Fe where he took a teaching position at IAIA. After leaving Utah State University, Haozous went home to Santa Fe where he and his brother spent a summer working at IAIA on the building crew. Like so many young Indian men of the time, he entered the service as a way to get away

⁵⁴ Rushing and Houser, *Allan Houser, an American Master: (Chiricahua Apache, 1914-1994)*.

— “to break some kind of cycle.”⁵⁵ He enlisted in the Navy in 1963 and served as a machinists mate for four years on the U.S.S. Frank Knox. Upon his discharge from the Navy, he entered the California College of Arts and Crafts in Oakland, California. Of his decision to go to California for school he says,

After four years [in the Navy] I saved enough money to go to college. I knew I wanted to go to college and become an artist. I asked my parents about IAIA and they said don't go there. I went to the school counselor and he said there's a good school in San Francisco that our people go to, California School of Arts and Crafts. I sent the application and signed up for a summer course. I jumped on the bus, and that was a good decision, because there I learned technique, philosophy, and ideas and also I was a neutral. I wasn't a Native American. That was important to me at the time because I didn't know what I was supposed to be doing.⁵⁶

In college, he majored in painting, drawing, and sculpture, although he studied various other media including photography, ceramics, and jewelry; all would later influence and punctuate his work. In 1971, he graduated with a Bachelor of Fine Arts in sculpture and moved to Santa Fe, New Mexico. “When I got out of college, I knew I wanted to come back here [Santa Fe]. I don't know why, we had family, we always had strong family ties. So, I brought my family here and I realize that I came here for a reason. I really believe that things happened because they are supposed to happen and I came here for that reason.”⁵⁷

In his early sculptures, Haozous preferred to work in various types of wood, including black walnut, mahogany, oak, and pine. He also worked with stone, including alabaster, soapstone, and African wonder stone. The themes prevalent in his work in the

⁵⁵Bob Haozous, recorded, November 19, 2004.

⁵⁶Ibid.

⁵⁷Ibid.

1970s are often the same themes he addresses today and include issues such as the disrupted balance of nature, loss of traditional male/female roles and balance between the sexes, and the discord in Native American culture. During the 1970s, Haozous participated extensively in various shows and juried competitions, taking top prizes at the Southwest Association for Indian Arts Indian Market in 1971, 1973, 1974, 1975, 1976, and 1977. In fact, the year he graduated, 1971 he won first prize at Indian Market. He also took top prizes at the Heard Museum in 1973, 1974, and 1975.

This period was a career building time for Haozous and his first major publication was in Guy and Doris Monthan's *Art and Indian Individualists: The Art of Seventeen Contemporary Southwestern Artists and Craftsmen*, 1975. Haozous had only been out of school for four years and he was included in this book with the likes of such established artists as his father, Allan Houser. In discussing Haozous, the Monthans stated, "...the span between the time his work was first introduced to the public and the present has been so short that he seems to have erupted on the art scene as a mature sculptor."⁵⁸ In the mid-1970s, he moved from small sculpture to monumental and large-scale works and the theme of mother earth appeared in his repertoire, symbolized by his use of the nude female form. This theme would punctuate his work throughout his career. By the late 1970s, Haozous had begun to work primarily in marble and alabaster, although he sporadically produced smaller pieces from different media. As his media became harder so did the themes he addressed in his work. His work from this time used imagery that ranged from stylized animal forms, like the buffalo and the bear, to abstract pieces, like

⁵⁸Guy and Doris Monthan, *Art and Indian Individualists: The Art of Seventeen Contemporary Southwestern Artists and Craftsmen* (Flagstaff: Northland Press, 1975), 58.

the Zen Form series. Some of these works included bullet holes, which seemed to contradict the pleasant yet romanticized images he created, which was exactly his point.

In the 1980s, Haozous began creating larger pieces using stone; by the end of the decade, he was using steel almost exclusively. Throughout the 1980s, his pieces continued to grow larger and taller and he stopped painting the pieces and accelerated the natural process of rust.⁵⁹ In this decade, his production and notoriety increased. He won again at SWAIA's Indian Market in 1982, interestingly enough, for a piece of jewelry, as opposed to a monumental work, and took best of show for a collaborative work with Santa Clara potter Jody Folwell. In 1983, the Heard Museum did a sculptural retrospective of his work along with his father, Allan Houser's work. Haozous's works in *The Houser and Haozous: A Sculptural Retrospective* exhibition book range from conceptual figures to works that exhibit the social commentary that Haozous is now known for. Themes and images still included the use of animal forms and female nudes representing mother earth, but he also introduced utilitarian forms such as chairs, beds, and tables. His forms exaggerated the familiar, making objects larger than life and using non-traditional material such as steel to create commentary on the world around him. In 1989, Haozous served as Artist-in-Residence at Dartmouth College. All of the works in this exhibition were made of steel and the social commentary of the works was just as hard edged. As the 1980s ended, Haozous successfully created his own recognizable style that separated his work from the type of Native sculpture that was by this time standardized.

⁵⁹ Kenagy, "Bob Haozous," 73.

By the 1990s, Haozous was well known in Santa Fe and in the world of sculpture, as is evidenced by scores of magazine articles, exhibition publications, and show reviews. He had successfully set himself apart from his father, Allan Houser's work, and made a name for himself. Haozous participated in international shows and exhibitions during this decade including the 1990 exhibition *Muerte/Amor*, at the Galeria Universitaria Aristos on the Universidad Nacional Autonoma de México in Mexico City and the 1992 exhibition *Apfelbaum-Sacred Images* at the Peiper-Riegraf Gallery in Frankfurt Germany, where he was the Artist-in-Residence. He rounded out the decade with the Venice Biennial Exhibition in 1999 in Venice Italy. Between 1990 and 1995, he averaged two to three solo exhibitions per year and participated in three to four group exhibitions during the same years.

While his work in the 1990s is primarily steel, he continued to challenge himself with different media including photography, videos, monotypes, pen and ink, chrome, gold and combinations of these materials; doing both larger commissions and smaller pieces including jewelry. During this time, he refined his subject matter and style, which became even harder-edged, physically and ideologically. He did this by using humor and irony. In addition, his work became highly political and critical. In 1995, the University of New Mexico, the City of Albuquerque, and the State of New Mexico commissioned Haozous to create a monumental steel work for the UNM campus. The fall 1996 installation of the *Cultural Crossroads of the Americas* changed Haozous's career as controversy marked this work. After 1995, his participation in various shows and exhibitions declined dramatically. Overall, Haozous participated in SWAIA's Indian

Market juried competitions during the years 1971-1991. Following that, he ceased to compete, but continues to this day to support SWAIA and IAIA as a donor.

Haozous uses repetitive common images as a visual and symbolic language in his work: clouds symbolizing the environment; words that say nothing or gibberish as he calls it; and popular culture symbols, such as the M for McDonalds, the dollar sign, and the Christian cross. He also uses simplified forms of airplanes, hands, and figures of humans and animals, such as the buffalo or bear. In Haozous's gibberish, words become symbols, subverting language. A repeated use of razor wire creates a biting social commentary in his work. In one interview, Haozous said, "I think common images say it best. I also find that if I get too esoteric, people often miss the point."⁶⁰ Another repeated image in Haozous's work is the female nude. Haozous briefly explains, she represents mother earth—the sacred feminine. However, it is interesting to note the use of gender in his work with the female nude, monumental in size and then the masculine represented negatively by technology, commodity, buildings, use of steel, and barbed wire. Haozous's work shows the world out of balance, yet so many of his works have a sense of balance in form; two sided or bisected images or diamond shape in two-dimensional work. His work is full of contradictions and transgressions.

ART COMPARISON/ART ANALYSIS

I have chosen two representative pieces of Haozous's work for analysis of the issues addressed in his work. The first is perhaps his best-known work, the extremely controversial *Cultural Crossroads of the Americas* that is located on the University of

⁶⁰ Joy Waldron, "Bob Haozous," *Southwest Art* 1992, 64.

New Mexico Campus in Albuquerque. The City of Albuquerque, the State of New Mexico, and the University of New Mexico jointly commissioned the work in 1995 and Haozous installed the work on the UNM campus in 1996. The controversy over the work of public art began the day after installation. No discussion of Haozous's work can take place without discussing this work and the issues surrounding it. However, this work does not define Haozous and in comparison, I also look at a more recent work, *Defining the Great Mystery*, which is a pen, ink, and watercolor piece that was in the 2003 traveling exhibit, *Changing Hands*. In analyzing these two works, I look at his uses of irony and humor. I am greatly interested in exploring how these works transgress the boundaries between art and commodity while drawing attention to those boundaries, and how Haozous uses his own visual language in an attempt to stimulate dialogue on the issues he brings up in his art.

ARTWORK: CULTURAL CROSSROADS

Cultural Crossroads of the Americas, arguably Haozous's most famous and infamous work, is a commissioned work of public art that stands 29 feet tall and 25 feet wide. While it resembles a billboard, this was not the intention of the artist. Rather, it was a result of structural modifications and aesthetic changes due to censorship. The large, flat piece is made of untreated steel with images cut through the surface with an acetylene torch. Untreated steel oxidizes naturally over time, giving it an orange-brown color and a rough texture. Haozous states, "I don't and have never used anything other

than mild steel. I've used mild steel for the simple statement of self degradation or to comment on the preciousness of Native art."⁶¹

The segmented design has a split panel arrangement of figures and objects depicting what appears to be contemporary images on one side and prehistoric images on the other, divided by a smokestack/ Aztec pyramid in the center of the panel. The arrangement is generally symmetrical and is framed by a row of cars along the bottom and clouds and pollution along the top. Originally, razor wire curled along the upper exterior of the work; meant to lead the eye out of the encased design. However, due to legal action, the razor wire is no longer on the piece.

Cultural Crossroads includes two panels or frames that without the razor wire now resemble cartoon frames, bisected by a smokestack. The artist is vehemently opposed to the description of the panels as cartoon frame and he sought purposefully to escape that notion via the addition of the razor wire. On one side, late twentieth-century America is depicted in such recognizable signs as skyscrapers, McDonald's arches, a dollar sign, a cross, and the initials US atop a high-rise. The buildings are obvious referents to corporate America, greed, and technology. The dollar sign, cross, and Macdonald's symbols are obvious referents of consumer culture, indicating a society that is culturally, spiritually, ecologically, and morally bankrupt. Between the buildings, Haozous places a replica of the famous James Earl Fraser figure of the noble savage from the late nineteenth-century titled *The End of the Trail*. However, in an ironic twist, the figure is not an Indian, but that of a cowboy. Haozous does not refer to these elements in

⁶¹ Bob Haozous, Written comments, November 19, 2004.

his interpretations and is resistant to interpreting the meanings in his art when asked. However, he does state that the smokestack bisecting the panel represents not only a broader industry reference, but also the Aztec pyramids; “I place it on the border and turn it into a factory that belches smoke into the atmosphere.”⁶² On the opposite side of the corporate landscape, Haozous depicts figures of three Aztec people, two of them standing on the plumed serpent of the Aztec. In fact, according to Haozous, the footprints on the snake are “of the motherless child walking the road to the North.”⁶³ Haozous used the Aztec Codices as a reference. One figure, at the outer edge, is significantly larger than the other two figures and is that of an Aztec woman. Haozous explains that the woman is “a weaver who died in childbirth.” “This is a metaphor for the indigenous losing their mother [mother earth] and coming to the technological ‘North’ without their earth guidance.”⁶⁴ In my experience, the figure appears to be female nobility, as she has a thorned bush coming out of her nose; the nobility ran a thorned bush through their nose to obtain blood, as they believed that their blood was sacred. The two smaller female figures stand on top of the plumed serpent and are pouring water upon the serpent; “The two women pouring a liquid are acknowledging and blessing the path of the future child.”⁶⁵ To the viewer, the figurative images imply the ancient, but also depict the present day cultures that live in the greater Southwest.

The entire image is framed at the top with airplanes circling high-rise building in smog. The use of planes, while common in much of Haozous’s early work, made me

⁶² Bob Haozous, email discussion on *Cultural Crossroads*, April 19, 2004.

⁶³ Ibid.

⁶⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁵ Ibid.

wonder how in this post-9/11 world, a piece depicting planes flying so near the buildings that it looks as though they are flying into the buildings, could be made. When asked about this, Haozous had no comment, except to say that he had not noticed it until I pointed out. Underneath the images is a row of cars; “The cars on the South are all facing to the North, while the cars in the North are going all ways, with no clear direction.”⁶⁶ Originally, razor wire was wrapped at the top upper edge of the physical piece; now due to what the artist terms “cultural censorship,” the piece is rendered neutral and has no razor wire. The piece is strikingly different without the razor wire.

Two of the reasons that I placed the wire on top were: it looked just like another rectangular billboard and I wanted to break the shape, plus the development, after the contract was signed, of the crossing of sidewalks beneath the artwork. This symbolized the transcendence of the barrier, thereby transforming what could be perceived as a negative statement in the positive.⁶⁷

The images depicted in *Cultural Crossroads* resemble a silhouette or still image in cut steel on a monumental scale that forces the public to engage in social issues that are often ignored and even unrecognized in everyday life.

⁶⁶ Ibid.

⁶⁷ Ibid.



Figure 1: Cultural Crossroads intact. Courtesy of Bob Haozous



Figure 2: Cultural Crossroads after court ruling. Author's collection

The iconography in *Cultural Crossroads* operates on many levels of meaning as suggested by the images depicted. As previously stated, the form of the work was a flat steel panel with razor wire along the top. And to anyone who has seen the border between Mexico and the United States would agree, this work physically resembles the US/Mexico border with its large wall topped with razor wire. This reference is intentional, as it is a site-specific work located in New Mexico, a state that borders Mexico. There are other borders metaphorically referred to, including 1) cultural borders, e.g., Native Americans, Hispanics, Anglos; 2) ideological borders, such as corporate greed, consumerism, and popular culture; 3) political borders, as enforced by US international policy and taking on even more meaning in this post-9/11 world; and 4) environmental borders like pollution and global warming. The razor wire has many inferences including borders, death, isolation, crime, and animals. The bottom section of the work depicts cars driving along with clouds of pollution above them indicating the uniformity of consumer culture; we are all sheep being led around by corporate America.

CULTURAL CROSSROADS: CONTROVERSY AND CENSORSHIP

Cultural Crossroads of the Americas was selected by a juried competition and via a planning committee that included University of New Mexico representatives, Albuquerque Arts Board members, City of Albuquerque Public Art Program staff, the State of New Mexico's Art in Public Places Program staff, and local neighborhood and merchant representatives. The organizations had complimentary goals for an art installation and renovation in Yale Park, between the entrance to the University of New Mexico Campus and the bookstore. This high visibility location is situated on Central

Avenue, one of Albuquerque's main streets and part of the historic Route 66. The project evolved into the "Corridor of the Americas," referencing directional movement of North, South, East, and West. The project announcement was advertised nationally and in Canada and Mexico. The committee selected five finalists who created maquettes of their proposed work. These were displayed for public viewing and comments, with few being received. The planning committee then selected two works, one being Haozous's *Cultural Crossroads*.⁶⁸

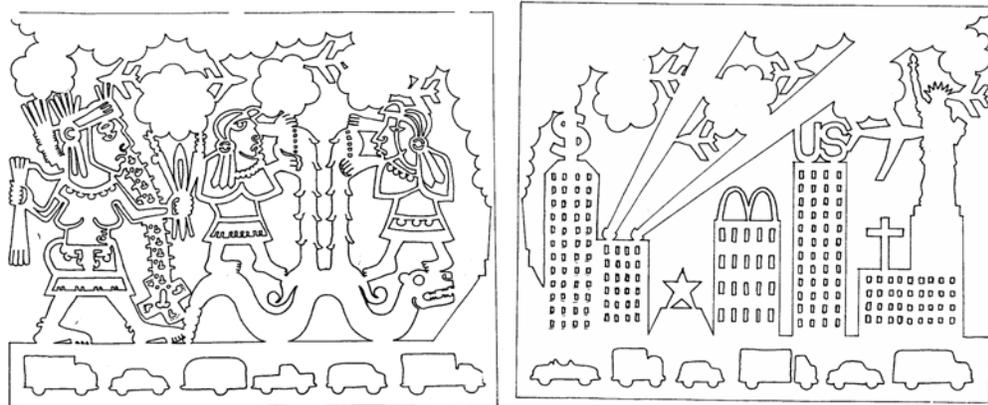


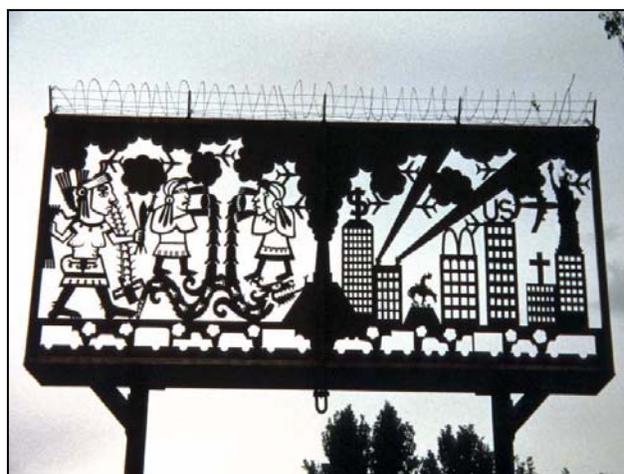
Figure 3: Cultural Crossroads, from the artist's submitted proposal

⁶⁸ New Mexico City of Albuquerque, "Background Information for the Unm Sculpture "Cultural Crossroads" by New Mexico Artist, Bob Haozous," ed. Public Art Program Art in Public Places (1997).

Haozous's proposed work, as seen in figure 3 from the original artist's proposal, was selected in December of 1995 and the completed piece, as seen below, was installed at UNM on September 18, 1995. There are noticeable differences between the drawings in the proposal and the actual piece, with the most noticeable being that the work was intended to be open ended in order to draw they eye out. Many of the changes are due to structural needs. There was concern over the weight of the work, so Haozous changed the steel plate thickness from 3/4 to 3/8 inch steel. This necessitated additional bracing. The most significant change was visual, as the bracing enclosed the image in a frame, instead of leaving the work open-ended. The addition of the razor wire along the top was an aesthetic choice, since the piece was now enclosed; the razor wire was intended to lead the eye out so that the viewer's gaze was

not trapped in the frame. However, it was the addition of the razor wire, despite numerous other changes, that sparked controversy. The reaction was immediate. Interestingly enough, it was not the public who took issue with the work, as is usually the case with controversial public art. In fact, the

Figure 4: Cultural Crossroads



piece was not in place long enough for the public to react negatively as is evidenced by a significant and complete paper trail collected by the City of Albuquerque.

Yet, one day after installation, Peter Walsh, chairperson of the art selection committee sent a formal letter to Haozous saying that the addition of the razor wire to the piece “significantly transforms the piece from that which we had selected and contracted with you to produce.”⁶⁹ Within seven days of installation, on September 25, 1996 the University of New Mexico’s Art in Public Places Program, under the direction of Walsh voted 8-0 to reject the artwork and refuse payment because of the razor wire on top of it with member, Ted Jojolla absent and in disagreement. The City Arts Board, under the direction of Gordon Church, then the Public Art Program Manger for the City of Albuquerque, on the other hand, formally accepted the work, while the State Arts Division supported the Planning Committee’s decision to reject the work. Less than one month after installation, on October 15, 1996, the University of New Mexico refused to pay the remaining balance due to Haozous until he removed the razor wire. Just a week after that, five weeks after installation of the work, the City of Albuquerque voted to accept the piece as it was, citing that the addition of the wire was not a substantial deviation from the commissioned work. According to Haozous, “The *Cultural Crossroads of the Americas* or *Cultural Crossroads* sculpture received complete support from the City of Albuquerque.”⁷⁰ Haozous explains,

Gordon Church, is the one who ‘framed’ the contract for the state. In deposition, he stated that he recognized the importance of letting an artwork mature after signing the contract; therefore he placed the ambiguous clause allowing change. This change would have to be overseen by the owners, those owners being the State of New Mexico, the City of Albuquerque and the University of New Mexico as the primary owner and accepting final placement of the artwork. It was not the Board of Regents that opposed the artwork, but instead it was the Museum

⁶⁹ Peter Walsh, "September Letter to Bob Haozous," (1996).

⁷⁰ Haozous. In fact, the City of Albuquerque’s Arts Board supports Haozous’s claim.

Director Peter Walsh. He used his considerable in-house prestige to influence city and university arts committee meetings, and he was the primary champion of the censorship that convinced the Regents to oppose the Wire.⁷¹

In fact, when I interviewed Gordon Church in 2004, he reiterated, for the record, his support for Haozous, saying that he felt Haozous was censored and that if Haozous had appealed to a higher court they would have overturned the ruling by the lower court forcing the removal of the razor wire.⁷² However, razor wire is a design element that Haozous frequently uses, as seen in works such as *Border Crossing* from 1991 and *Otay Mesa Crossing* from 1995.

By January of 1997, a scant four months after installation of *Cultural Crossroads*, nothing had been resolved and the Albuquerque Arts Board sponsored a public art forum to discuss the issue. The *Albuquerque Journal* reported that there were well over 150 people in attendance and public support for Haozous was overwhelming.⁷³ Further, the City of Albuquerque records state that there was well over 200 people in attendance where an “overwhelming show of support for the sculpture was displayed.”⁷⁴ The forum participants included, Peter Walsh, Dr. Edwin Wade, who spoke on behalf of Haozous, Katherine Minette, representing the State of New Mexico, and Jose Rodriguez from the Albuquerque Arts Board. The public was invited to speak and was limited to five minutes; one of the more notable supporters and speakers was Director Emeritus of IAIA, Lloyd Kiva New.

⁷¹ Ibid.

⁷² Gordon Church, recorded interview, October 2004.

⁷³ David Steinberg, "Wire Atop Sculpture Defended: Arts Forum Speakers Laud 'Crossroads'," *Albuquerque Journal*, January 23 1997.

⁷⁴ City of Albuquerque, "Background Information for the Unm Sculpture "Cultural Crossroads" by New Mexico Artist, Bob Haozous."

Despite public support for Haozous and artistic integrity at the forum, they reached no resolution. Haozous filed suit against UNM Board of Regents, Peter Walsh, and the State of New Mexico Arts Division in April of 1998, for breach of contract, violations of constitutional rights, and for a permanent injunction to prevent removal of the wire.⁷⁵ In 2000, the case was dismissed by the court. Shortly thereafter, in June of 2000, Haozous removed the wire from the top of *Cultural Crossroads* himself. And as he removed the razor wire from the work—censoring his own work at the order of the courts—the University of New Mexico seemed to remove all traces of him from their public records. With the removal of the razor wire, it was as though he and any reference to his artwork were erased from the history of UNM. Through the course of my research, I was unable to find any reference to the controversy in the UNM records. I searched their library, their museum records, and the Center for Southwest Research for any records pertaining to Haozous or the controversy and found only a few irrelevant newspaper articles.

Despite the detrimental consequences to his career, Haozous states that his two main regrets about the controversy over his work *Cultural Crossroads* are the loss of a clause in state contracts that allowed for and protected creative change after contract signing and that Native people supported the University of New Mexico: essentially supporting the status quo. Of this he says: “It is this reactive position that allows us [Indian People] to continue in the substandard level that we place ourselves in by not

⁷⁵ *Bob Haozous Vs. University of New Mexico Board of Regents, Peter Walsh, and State of New Mexico Arts Division: Complaint for Breach of Contract, Violations of Constitutional Rights, and for a Prohibitory Permanent Injunction*, (1998).

believing in our own or supporting them. When we became the ‘interior decorators of the world’ we placed less value on the honest self presentation that can be achieved from the arts and became ethnic craftspeople.”⁷⁶

Why all the controversy? Why did the University of New Mexico seek to and gain, through legal action, control over this artwork, this artist and these images? The University of New Mexico interceded and acted on behalf of the perceived perceptions of the public, preempting any public debate and demanding that Haozous reduce the ambiguity in *Cultural Crossroads*. Uncertain as to how the public would react UNM sought to control that reaction. Theoretically, the state of ambiguity that this work presented created fear. As noted theorist, Mary Douglas stated in *Purity and Danger*, “the inarticulate, unstructured areas emanate unconscious powers, which provoke others to demand that ambiguity be reduced.”⁷⁷ But there is power in ambiguity; “so many ideas about power are based on an idea of society as a series of forms contrasted with surrounding non-form. There is a power in the forms and other power is in the inarticulate area, margins, confused lines, and beyond the external boundaries.”⁷⁸ *Cultural Crossroads* visually and theoretically operates in this context, in the margins and it has power. Douglas calls this the marginal state, the ambiguous, the betwixt and between, the liminal, the place where danger exists. Edmund Leach uses a Venn diagram

⁷⁶ Haozous.

⁷⁷ Mary Douglas, *Purity and Danger: An Analysis of Concepts of Pollution and Taboo* (New York: Routledge, 1966), 103.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 99.

as a visual representation of the ambiguous in-between state, defined by Leach as taboo.⁷⁹

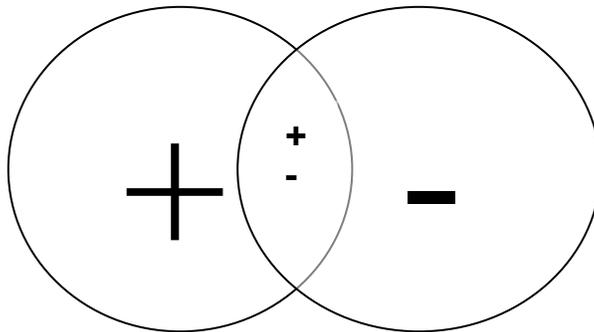


Figure 5: Venn Diagram / Cultural Crossroads

Both literally and metaphorically, the Venn diagram can be used to map *Cultural Crossroads*. Not only do the images in the work create a feeling of danger, functioning as cultural signs of the interstitial; the work can be physically mapped, having two distinct sides that overlap in the center with the smokestack operating in the in-between space.

Cultural Crossroads is a work of art that was commissioned as a public artwork and this has specific connotations of power. Public art makes careful use of public space;

“Art possesses a functional ensemble. They all surmount specific histories, geographies, values and relations to subjects and social groups, to be reconstituted as abstract categories. Individually and as a whole, they are severed from social relations, fetishized as external objects. This is the real social function of the new

⁷⁹ Edmund Leach, "Anthropological Aspects of Language: Animal Categories and Verbal Abuse," *New Directions in the Study of Language* (1964): 36.

public art: to reify as natural the conditions of the late capitalist city into which it hopes to integrate us.”⁸⁰

This exemplifies why the University and the city sought to take control over work.

Cultural Crossroads was designed to stimulate dialogue and that it did, just not the kind of dialogue the artist was expecting. Usually public works are meant to depoliticize; they are meant to represent environmentally sensitive art, when they really represent gentrification. Public art seeks to represent the dominant ideology about the city as being “well-managed and beautiful,” while to the economically underprivileged of the city, public art is an affirmation of their exclusion from power and privilege.⁸¹ Haozous’s art does exactly the opposite; it acknowledges the histories of those oppressed and it exposes the hypocrisy of power, showing the geographic and ideological region in a truthful light—built on the backs of the oppressed and now run by corporations with little regard for the environment. Controversy was bound to arise when an artist from a community outside the dominant culture—a Native American—is commissioned to make a public piece of art specifically addressing the issue of borders. Haozous, as an Apache artist is a liminal artist—marginal, in-between, as Native American cultures are outside the mainstream or dominant culture. Yet, Indians, like all cultural outsiders, must operate in the world of the dominant culture. *Cultural Crossroads* is a cultural critique, one that is dangerous: dangerous because it questions status quo, dangerous because it exposes the dominant culture from the point of view of the margin, and dangerous because it is in a permanent state of ambiguity never transgressing its margins.

⁸⁰ Harriet Senie and Sally Webster, eds., *Critical Issues in Public Art: Content, Context, and Controversy*, 1st ed. (New York: IconEditions, 1998), 164.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 167.

ARTWORK TWO: DEFINING THE GREAT MYSTERY

No less dangerous, but in contrast to the monumental steel work *Cultural Crossroads* is Haozous's two-dimensional work *Defining the Great Mystery*. Despite the fact that Haozous is primarily known as an artist who creates monumental works of steel, he does work in many other mediums. I chose the piece *Defining the Great Mystery* specifically because it seeks to stimulate dialogue in the same way as *Cultural Crossroads*. Indeed, the entire work is dialogue, the text of which is printed in the appendix.

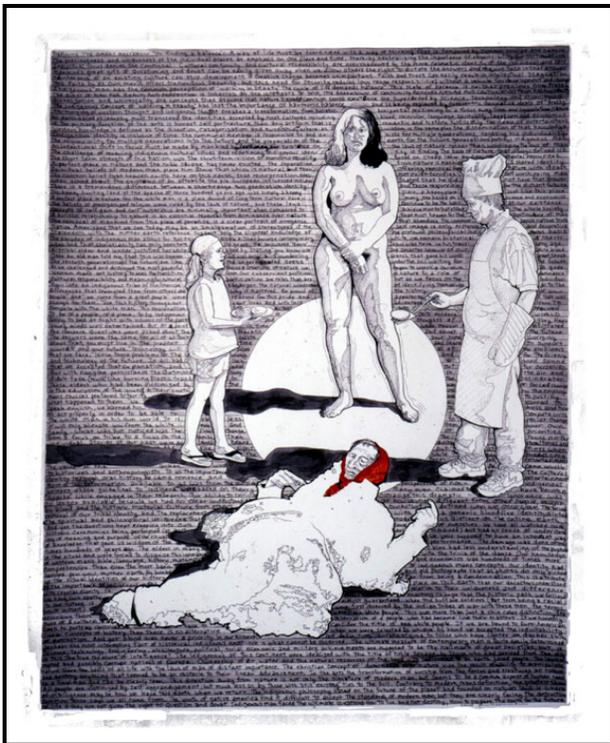


Figure 6: *Defining the Great Mystery*. Courtesy of Bob Haozous

Defining the Great Mystery was most recently displayed in the Changing Hands traveling exhibition, sponsored by the American Craft Museum in New York, and is a two-dimensional work done in pen, ink, and watercolor on paper. This work measures 28 ½ by 22 ½ and resides in the artist's permanent collection. In *Defining the Great Mystery*, Haozous uses language in a different way than he does in *Cultural Crossroads*. Instead of the strong visual and symbolic language that is used in *Cultural Crossroads*, he uses language in the form of words, as the background for the images in the work: row after row of neatly underlined, hand-written text, scrawls across the paper. The words were written so fast that there are no corrections of spelling or grammar. The text forms the background of the image and outlines the four figures depicted in a highly symmetrical diamond shaped arrangement.

At the top of the image stands a nude woman, alone and on her own ground level, separate from the rest. She looks directly at the viewer and is surrounded by a perfectly round circle of white, blank space, as though she is in the spotlight. There is no doubt that the nude female represents mother earth. Directly beneath the female figure lies the image of a frozen corpse in a red scarf, the only swatch of color in the entire image. Depicted on a separate ground level and at the forefront of the image, the figure is infamous in that it is a highly detailed and precise rendering of a well-known photo of Chief Bigroot lying in the snow at the Wounded Knee massacre site. On a separate plane, in between the female figure and the corpse of Bigfoot, are two obviously Anglo figures who face each other. These two figures are engaged with each other and not with

the other figures in the work, as delineated by their relationship to the ground; they are on the same level as each other. On the viewer's right, is an adult male figure with a chef's hat, apron, and an oven mitt on one hand and a spatula with a hamburger in the other hand. The figure on the viewer's left is that of a white female child, as denoted by her smaller height and her hair—nearly white and in pigtails—holding out a plate, ready to receive the hamburger the male figure is offering. Each of the figures casts a very long shadow that goes directly to the image's left, which would indicate that the sun was setting.

This provocative and engaging work draws the viewer in via the gaze of the female figure. Centered, she looks down and directly at the viewer with an expressionless gaze, and her hands crossed. The female figure is the only figure of the four figures in the image that is nude. Further, she stands on a plane above the other figures, and in the spotlight, as if to emphasize her importance. Her gaze is neutral, depicting no emotion. Her ethnicity is difficult to determine; her hair is dark, her skin is darker than the two Anglo figures, and her features reveal nothing recognizable as Indian,



Figure 7: Bigfoot's corpse. Credit: Western History/Genealogy Dept., Denver Public Library.

if there is such a thing. This is the point. Mother Earth can be seen as visually representing the questions issues surrounding Indian identity.

The figure of the frozen corpse, Bigfoot, lying frozen in the snow is an image that Americans do not want to remember: the Massacre at Wounded Knee.

In December of 1890, Bigfoot led his people to Pine Ridge thinking they would be safe there. While they camped at Wounded Knee creek, soldiers searched them for weapons and in a scuffle over a weapon that killed a U.S. soldier, the other soldiers opened fire on the entire camp of men, women and children. Many were shot in the back as they ran and all of them were killed. The soldiers left the bodies and returned four days later to bury the dead in a mass grave. The photograph of Bigfoot's corpse is the source of the figure in this image.

In *Defining the Great Mystery*, the two Anglo figures seem obviously out of place. They stand motionless and stiff: are they just going through the motions? They are engaged in the mundane act of exchanging meat. Haozous does not interpret this work, preferring instead to leave the interpretation up to the viewer. The visual dialogue between these images includes the separation of humankind from nature as symbolized by the beef; the separation from other humankind as evidenced by their separate plane in the image. These two figures represent the American way of life; hot dogs or in this case hamburgers, and apple pie; a barbecue on Sunday, the great American pastime; the homogenization of culture. What is most telling about *Defining the Great Mystery* is the general atmosphere. With the background of the text, the image seems cold and grey. This is emphasized by the image of the frozen corpse of Bigfoot. However, the long shadows that all the figures cast and the barbecue scene, suggest summer with the sun setting. Perhaps this is meant to signify the sun setting on humankind: the end if we do not reconnect with mother earth. The seasons seemingly at odds in this image may refer

to the temporal differences: the lack of connection between the generations; the non-linear nature of time.

Defining the Great Mystery, is a controversial, politically charged, non-decorative portrait of America—Native America and the dominant culture of America. The work functions on several levels: first, as a cultural criticism, and second, as a piece to stimulate dialogue—dialogue about the work itself and dialogue about what the work critiques. The underlying ideological consideration of the image is the assimilation of Indians in terms of language, culture, religion, and identity resulting in what Haozous refers to in the text of the image as “Red White People,” “bound to Euro-American linear concepts of history.” This work, like *Cultural Crossroads*, is a liminal work. The referents in the image are marginalized peoples, marginalized histories, and disconnections from the earth and each other.

PART 3

THEORETICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Art history is a traditional academic discipline dedicated to studying the aesthetic merits of works of art, according to western conceptions of beauty, using a canonized theory based on the linear historical progression of works of art along a continuum, from classical Greek to contemporary artistic movements. By its very nature, this type of art historical methodology simplifies, decontextualizes, stereotypes, and marginalizes Native American art. Mainstream or traditional art historical methodologies are primarily concerned with the aesthetic dimensions of art, ignoring the social, political, and cultural aspects of art, isolating the object and judging it aesthetically according to an imagined universal standard or aesthetic. According to Phillips and Steiner, “The nineteenth-century critical historians of art also grounded their work in a Hegelian notion of progress in which the increased freedom of the artist and greater incidence of fine art become signs of advanced civilization.”⁸²

A number of critical scholars have explored the need for new art historical methodologies challenging traditional or mainstream art history. The field that has come under great debate in the last twenty years or so as notion of a universal aesthetic is widely criticized as based on a western essentializing metaphor with foundations in colonialism. Based on the linear progression of art historical periods, traditional art

⁸² Ruth B. Phillips and Christopher Burghard Steiner, *Unpacking Culture: Art and Commodity in Colonial and Postcolonial Worlds* (Berkeley; London: University of California Press, 1999), 9.

history subjectifies all of us in the progressive colonialism of social darwinism.⁸³ The continued marginalization of Native art perpetuates colonialist discourse and prevents the field of art history from growing into a broader field with a critical methodology.

Critical theory is challenging many disciplines and art history has not been immune. Art history is in a state of flux, having its grand narratives challenged and traditional art historical methodology, because of its Western bias, linear progression of movements, hierarchal organization of media, focus on the visual, and decontextualization of the object. Traditionally, this field has reduced Native art to craft, delegitimizing it because this methodology is preoccupied with notions of fine art. Historically, this relegated the academic study of American Indian art to the field of anthropology. Significant critical examinations of the art/artifact dichotomy have taken place in the scholarly literature and with the so-called post-modern turn redefining academic disciplines in the last twenty-five years, the art/anthropology lines have blurred.⁸⁴

This dichotomy runs deeper still if one considers the marked/unmarked status of the object. Marked and unmarked describes a system of oppositional relations that takes place in classificatory systems. The marked, or the narrower concept, is always listed first in relation to the unmarked category, or the wider concept. American Indian art, tourist art, tribal art, or folk art is always the marked category in opposition to western art, which is unmarked. In this case, although academic literature specifically refers to

⁸³Gerald R. McMaster, "Towards an Aboriginal Art History," in *Native American Art in the Twentieth Century*, ed. W. Jackson Rushing (New York: Routledge, 1999).

⁸⁴ See for example: George E. Marcus and Fred R. Myers, *The Traffic in Culture: Refiguring Art and Anthropology* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995).; Price, *Primitive Art in Civilized Places.*; Phillips and Steiner, *Unpacking Culture: Art and Commodity in Colonial and Postcolonial Worlds.*

the art/artifact dichotomy, the marked category is artifact while the unmarked category is art: American Indian art or any kind of craft art was historically demoted to anthropology as opposed to art history.⁸⁵

In reality, despite the marked status, American Indian art incorporates qualities that are somewhere in between art history and anthropology. Native art has associations with a recent ethnographic past making it appropriate for anthropological study, yet has aesthetic qualities that transcend anthropological associations and surpass the universalizing aesthetic of art history, thus making it appropriate for art historical study. Further complicating the matter is Native art produced for tourists or souvenir art. American Indian tourist or souvenir art blurs the lines as objects transgress the disciplinary boundaries.

Until recently, both anthropology and art history have dismissed stylistic hybrids between traditional Native arts and Native art made for the market, which were deemed inauthentic. This perception is still in place today. In fact, many collectors still reject this type of Native art based on the romantic notion that art made for Native use is somehow more authentic than art as a commodity. The art/artifact dialectic that came with the trappings of colonialism remains and according to Phillips and Steiner, “Despite contemporary deconstructions of these terms, they remain operational concepts that outsider-producers have to negotiate together with the contradictions embedded in essentialist and evolutionist approaches to style and authenticity.”⁸⁶ After a hundred

⁸⁵Linda R. Waugh, "Marked and Unmarked: A Choice between Unequals in Semiotic Structure," *Semiotica* 3, no. 4 (1982).

⁸⁶ Phillips and Steiner, *Unpacking Culture: Art and Commodity in Colonial and Postcolonial Worlds*, 13.

years of American Indian art history, authenticity is still the key factor driving not only consumption, but influencing production. Academic scholarship and programming now includes some Native art as the asides of art history. Moreover, Native Art is almost never addressed in American Indian studies programs.

However, an influx of new theoretical models has recently challenged mainstream art history. In fact, some scholars claim that mainstream art history is at an end and as the discipline struggles to redefine itself in the wake of this revolution, and as American Indian Studies seeks to find its academic and theoretical voice, theories abound for the analysis of art and Native art. Many of the theorists posing this challenge feel that the state of the world and the academy is postmodern. Art Historians have used the term post-modern widely since the 1980s, and in a distinctive way. While some think postmodernism is an extension of modernity, in art history, post-modernism usually refers to a linear state of being that exists after modernism, which is distinctive in that the boundaries between low and high, elite and popular art have eroded. Postmodernism implies a fascination with the domination of visual media as theorists question ideas about meaning, communication, and representation. Postmodern art forms have no single style and play with multiple meanings and cross boundaries. Art is often defined by its appeal to a wider audience, its ability to interrogate high/low boundaries, its focus on social interpretation, and its questioning representation, while including the insider position of the artist.⁸⁷

⁸⁷ Glenn Ward, *Teach Yourself Postmodernism* (Lincolnwood, IL: NTC Publishing Group, 1998). See also: Nigel Wheale, *The Postmodern Arts: An Introductory Reader, Critical Readers in Theory and Practice* (London; New York: Routledge, 1995).; Joseph P. Natoli and Linda Hutcheon, *A Postmodern Reader* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1993).; Steven Best and Douglas Kellner, *Postmodern*

Some have called Haozous's work postmodern, so I asked Haozous what he thought about postmodernism and he had this to say, "There's no such thing as fine art, that's a European term. I would call it—postmodernism, abstraction, and all that stuff means nothing to me. Even though I know what it means and I use the techniques in my work."⁸⁸

Here I look at the marginal status of Native art or art of the Other, especially in relation to Haozous's work. Theoretically, there are several models, which I feel are most applicable to this artist's work. I am interested in looking at Haozous's work in terms of the 'bigger' picture, using the theoretical construct of cultural studies and its offshoot Visual Culture Studies, to define the dialogue his work creates. I further refine this from the perspective of Native literary art, in particular the concept of trickster and how trickster functions in Haozous's art.

ON NATIVE ART, DIALOGUE, AND VISUAL CULTURE:

Art is a visual language and Haozous says it is a tool for creating dialogue. However, this is not how traditional art history assesses art. In reality, current methodologies are too limited for the study of Native American art. There is a great need for a model of critical evaluation of Native American expressive culture. Theoretically, this should encompass all types of Native expression including storytelling, dance, objects, political art, writing and literature, music, craft, tourist art and kitsch, and

Theory: Critical Interrogations, Communications and Culture (Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire: Macmillan, 1991).; Jonathan Harris, *The New Art History: A Critical Introduction* (London; New York: Routledge, 2001).; and Fredric Jameson, *The Cultural Turn: Selected Writings on the Postmodern, 1983-1998* (London; New York: Verso, 1998).

⁸⁸ Haozous.

contemporary art. This new model needs to be interdisciplinary in order to encompass the historical, the political, the social, and the cultural aspects that influence Native Art.

The Visual Culture model challenges traditional art historical methodology and is a more viable and theoretically encompassing methodology with which to address the field of Native American art. Visual Culture studies is considered to be a valid art historical methodology as discussed in texts such as *Art History's History*, although few have applied this theory to Native American art.⁸⁹

Visual Culture is a theoretical approach that is a derivative of Cultural Studies and ethnic studies, seeking to reach beyond the borders of the university to interact with society.⁹⁰ Visual Culture studies interpret images via the social field of the gaze and the construction of subjectivity: the study of the social and cultural construction of the visual experience in everyday life, the media, representations, and visual arts.⁹¹ While contested because of its revisionist stance on the grand narratives that underlie western art history and history, the practice of visual culture demands that its critics have an understanding of culture and society. Visual Culture studies' strength is that it is theoretically informed by its interdisciplinary approach, incorporating broader positions

⁸⁹ Vernon Hyde Minor, *Art History's History*, Second ed. (Upper Saddle River: Prentice Hall, 2001).

⁹⁰ Nicholas Mirzoeff, "What Is Visual Culture?" in *An Introduction to Visual Culture* (London; New York: Routledge, 1999)., See also: Angela Miller, "Breaking Down the Barriers of Visual Production," *American Art* 11, no. 2 (1997).; W.J.T. Mitchell, "Showing Seeing: A Critique of Visual Culture," *Journal of Visual Culture* 1, no. 2 (2002).; William Innes Homer, "Visual Culture: A New Paradigm," *American Art* 12, no. 1 (1998).; Marita Sturken and Lisa Cartwright, *Practices of Looking: An Introduction to Visual Culture* (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2001).; Miller, "Breaking Down the Barriers of Visual Production."; John A. Walker, "Visual Culture and Visual Culture Studies," *The Art Book* 5, no. 1 (1998).; Norman Bryson, Michael Ann Holly, and Keith P. F. Moxey, *Visual Culture: Images and Interpretations* (Hanover, NH: Published by University Press of New England [for] Wesleyan University Press, 1994), W. J. T. Mitchell, "Interdisciplinarity and Visual Culture," *Art Bulletin* LXXVII, no. 4 (1995).; and John Davis, "The End of the American Century: Current Scholarship on the Art of the United States," *Art Bulletin* LXXXV, no. 3 (2003).

⁹¹ Mitchell, "Showing Seeing: A Critique of Visual Culture," 166, 75.

including history, anthropology, art history, literary studies, and cultural studies. This theoretical approach can be applied cross-culturally since the visual is the defining category as opposed to the linear. This is especially useful in analyzing objects where the expressive forms of ritual, storytelling, music, or dance are of equal or greater importance than the western art and culture system.

Visual Culture theory seems to broaden definitions of art, allowing for cultural context, encompassing formal and informal art, and dissolving the divisions between high and low art. Since the visual or vision is socially or culturally constructed, Visual Culture, by necessity, interrogates the social field of the gaze, identity, interpretation and representation, subjectivity, by drawing on theoretical perspectives that inform cultural studies.

This approach would treat visual culture and visual images as go-betweens in social transactions, as a repertoire of screen images or templates that structure our encounters with human beings. Visual Culture would find its primal scene...in the face of the Other. Stereotypes, caricatures, classificatory figures, search images, mappings of visible body, of the social spaces in which it appears would constitute the fundamental elaborations of visual culture on which the domain of the images—and the Other—is constructed. As go-betweens or subaltern entities, these images are filters through which we recognize and of course misrecognize other people. And this means that the social construction of the visual field has to be continuously replayed as the visual construction of the social field...⁹²

One scholar who has applied the model in Native American Art is Ruth Phillips. In her article “Art History and the Native-made Object: New Discourses, Old Differences?” Phillips uses the Visual Culture model to analyze three Native artists and their art. She feels that the visual culture model incorporates a full range of visual representations

⁹² Ibid.: 175.

including photography, film, video, television, journalism, electronic media, traditional fine art media, and folk art and popular crafts.⁹³ The analysis of visual representations breaks down walls between high and low Native art, craft, and professional Native artists, and links earlier generations of Native artists with contemporary artists without privileging one form over another.

Traditional and interdisciplinary academic programs have largely overlooked Native American art as a field of study. While there may be an occasional class on Native art taught in anthropology, American Indian studies, or art history programs, they usually address pre-historic and historic art taught as a part of a course on the arts of primitive peoples. Currently, there is only one journal published on Native Art, *American Indian Art* with a primary focus on the historic, only one academic program in the country that offers a Master's Degree in Art history at UCLA, and no critics who analyze Native art exhibits for publication.

The visual culture model is very important to the study of American Indian art as it is impossible to study Native art adequately utilizing the linear models of western mainstream art history. The visual culture model incorporates interdisciplinary theoretical approaches as integral part of its analysis, but this methodology still privileges the visual over all else, but it does provide a starting place for new theories. The application of Visual Culture Theory is still being mapped in Art History, however theoretically the theory is broad enough to be of great use in the analysis of Native American art. First, the visual culture approach can act as a filter of social transactions.

⁹³ Ruth B. Phillips, "Art History and the Native-Made Object: New Discourses, Old Differences?" in *Native American Art in the Twentieth Century*, ed. W. Jackson Rushing (New York: Routledge, 1999).

Second, by challenging definitions of the “other” and allowing for cultural content, Visual culture theory is more useful and relevant than traditional art historical methodologies. Finally, the critical stance of interrogating the field of the gaze is an aspect that is lacking in Native Art history and visual culture theory provides a starting place for new critical theory.

TOWARDS A NEW CONSTRUCTION OF NATIVE ART: INDIGENOUS CULTURAL DIALOGUE

When asked to comment on the state of Native art Haozous had this to say:

I think native art is only the tip of a philosophical iceberg that has to do with returning the earth to balance. That’s all. The arts are only a tool for communication. Its like saying you get your language back, you become Indian again. If you lose your language, your essence of being Indian, well, language is only a tool for communication. That’s all. The important point is, it’s the dialogue, it’s the questions, it’s the communication that comes from language that are much more important than the language itself. The dialogue that comes from being Indian is universal.

Indian art as it participates in a dialogue on returning the earth to balance. Part of this earth-based dialogue is acknowledging that the earth is diseased, our place in that destruction, our relationship with the earth and finally our responsibility to the earth and to future generations. It is not the answers that that dialogue seeks; it is the questions that are most important.

Do you know what he [Lloyd New] told me once, when we were talking about creating a dialogue? He said, “Bob, what are you trying to do, change the world?” and I said, “Isn’t that all our responsibility?”

In regards to this there are a number of tools or stimuli to provoke that dialogue; catalysts for change. These tools are part of an Indigenous Cultural Language. The tools of this Indigenous Cultural Language include words; language and images. Words can be literal or gibberish, when they lack common sense. Language can be symbolic, cultural, or visual and in any combination, used in order to stimulate the dialogue. This Cultural language makes great use of humor, ridicule and criticism but all are tempered by wisdom. Art, religion, and spirituality make great tools as well, and all make use of the Cultural Language as catalysts for change.⁹⁴

⁹⁴Haozous.

Haozous's words, "indigenous cultural dialogue;" what does he mean? He states that words, language and images, are tools of an "indigenous cultural dialogue." However, there are many facets to Haozous's language, including symbolic or artistic and linguistic, both real words and gibberish. Further, Haozous states that this language makes great use of humor, irony, and ridicule—these are the tools of trickster. These attributes are found in all facets of Native life, from urban to contemporary, from visual to auditory, from literary to artistic. The medium that links them all together is storytelling, which is perhaps the only way to escape the colonial confines that plague Native Americans and American Indian Studies as an academic discipline. Indians exist in a perpetual state of colonialism, with no chance of changing that status as other formerly colonized peoples have. However, one method of resistance and original voice has continued to exist from pre-contact—storytelling. Presently, many forms of storytelling exist that go beyond traditional forms, including literature, art, music, photography, filmmaking, and performance, all of which happen to be forms of Native American Visual Culture.

Many in the younger generations of Native America are using mediums such as music and filmmaking and the storytelling opportunity they provide as a form of resistance. It is often possible to identify "trickster signatures" in many of these works. Older generations have used words and literature in this form, paving the way for today's youth. Writers such as Lewis Owens or Gerald Vizenor, make deliberate use of "trickster signatures" (a term invented by Vizenor) in their literature—or modern day storytelling.

In her recent book, *Toward A Native American Critical Theory*, Elvira Pulitano posits that storytelling holds promise as a critical theoretical approach to Native literature. Using Haozous's term "indigenous cultural dialogue," I take Pulitano's theory further and propose that storytelling holds promise as a critical theoretical approach that can escape colonial confines and that trickster is the recognizable element or the common element in this theoretical approach. In applying the suggested methodology, I examine Pulitano's critical framework, broaden it to examine Native American Visual Culture and specifically Haozous's work, and finally summarize and present what I call—following Haozous's suggestion, "indigenous cultural dialogue." I believe that Haozous's concept of "indigenous cultural dialogue" includes the beginnings of a Native American critical methodology.

Elvira Pulitano argues that through their body of work, a number of Native American writers have actually created the beginnings of what she calls a Native American critical theory. She states that the authors she addresses in her study combine Western literary criticism and Native American worldviews, creating a hybrid. Pulitano acknowledges the resistance to theory in the field of American Indian Studies and in her assessment includes writers that subscribe to that position. She then presents her argument: despite that school of thought, those writers are still creating syncretic works—hybrids born of Western theoretical notions and Native epistemologies, noting that no one can operate outside the Western system and that there is no "authentic" Native voice. She states, "By appropriating the language of postcolonialism and translating it into a Native epistemology, Native American theorists move beyond the

often Eurocentric grid of postcolonial discourse, revealing a radical ability to shuttle between frontiers while subverting European hegemonic systems.”⁹⁵ Pulitano argues that the current anti-theory climate that prevails in American Indian Studies is rigid and opposed to change and actually threatens to relegate Indian identity into what she calls a “museum culture.”⁹⁶

Pulitano is not suggesting an overarching theory, only a place to start mapping theory. In response to those who would criticize her work for that, she argues that despite cultural differences, there are tangible cultural commonalities and feels that an overemphasis on differences runs the risk of exoticizing cultures.⁹⁷ She takes into account the fact that Native Americans are forever in a colonial state and that all literature produced by Natives is literature of the colonized. However, she argues that postcolonial theory, when reinterpreted through a Native viewpoint is where theory and practice meet and this intersection becomes the site of resistance that will force the boundaries of theory to expand.⁹⁸

In addition to examining the work of such Native writers as Paula Gunn Allen, Craig Womack, Robert Warrior, Greg Sarris, and Lewis Owens, Pulitano does a particularly close reading of several works by Gerald Vizenor. She states that among Native writers today, his work is the most provocative and subversive in its challenge to Western thinking. I believe that Gerald Vizenor’s writing and trickster hermeneutics

⁹⁵ Elvira Pulitano, *Toward a Native American Critical Theory* (Lincoln; London: University of Nebraska Press, 2003), 16.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, 9.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, 11.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, 16.

provides a theoretical foundation that can be applied to Native American visual culture and is particularly suited for analyzing Bob Haozous's work.

Many consider Anishinaabe writer Gerald Vizenor a postmodern trickster. Most, if not all, of his writing is not only written about trickster, but from the perspective of trickster. In *Manifest Manners*, he states "Trickster Stories are the postindian simulations of tribal survivance."⁹⁹ Vizenor created the word "postindian" for use in this book and says this word "...absolves by irony the nominal simulations of the *indian*,¹⁰⁰ waives centuries of translation and dominance, and resumes the ontic significance of native modernity."¹⁰¹ The use of the invented word "survivance" is in reference to the "continuance of native stories...which are the renunciations of dominance, tragedy, and victimry."¹⁰²

Vizenor uses invented language to state something bold—that Indians are invented simulations. Indians reference invented images and stereotypes that are embedded in systems of colonial dominance. However, he is not cynical and his invented language introduces the reader to Postindians or postindian warriors who actively resist perpetual colonial notions and do not adhere to the tragic victim mentality. According to

⁹⁹ Gerald Robert Vizenor, *Manifest Manners: Narratives on Postindian Survivance* (Lincoln, Neb.: University of Nebraska Press, 1999), 15.

¹⁰⁰ Vizenor uses the term *indian* lower case and in italics purposefully to draw attention to the fact that this word is a misnomer that references what he calls "the obvious simulation and ruse of colonial dominance." Further he states that "The simulation *indian* is the absence of real natives...and *indians* are the actual absence—the simulations of the tragic primitive," see the first page of the preface of *Manifest Manners* for a more in-depth discussion of the terms *indian*, *postindian*, and *survivance*. He also states that the word Indian has no referent in Indian languages, echoing Berkhofer's image of the White Man's Indian as a figure that has nothing intrinsically to do with Native Americans.

¹⁰¹ Vizenor, *Manifest Manners: Narratives on Postindian Survivance*, viii.

¹⁰² Ibid. See page 1 of the preface.

Vizenor, postindian resistance is in the form of survivance or the continuance of Native stories. Vizenor believes that trickster stories are the stories of “survivance,” stating,

Many natives were the past masters of trickster stories and in that aesthetic sense, always prepared to outwit missionaries, social scientists, and manifest manners;¹⁰³ trickster stories tease creation, nature, conversions, simulations, and sacred ceremonies. Trickster stories are suspensive, the natural reach or reason and survivance; the traces of stories, in this sense, are cultural conversions and native modernity.¹⁰⁴

Trickster stories are the acts, the stories, and the sites of resistance in language, literature, and art.

Trickster Characteristics

Usually, Trickster studies are relegated to literature, religion, anthropology, and folklore; rarely have they been applied to art. Here I want to outline the nature of trickster as defined by theorists and writers. Most academic study of trickster begins with Paul Radin’s *The Trickster: a Study in American Indian Mythology*, first published in 1956. While considered one of the most influential works regarding trickster, many criticize Radin’s work as universalizing and essentializing in that he purports that trickster represents a primitive developmental level in the history of humanity. Further, Radin addresses trickster as a fictitious personage of mythology. This is an extremely limiting interpretation of trickster that is oversimplified and demonstrates an obvious Western bias. Scholar Anne Doueihi contends that “In their approaches to the trickster,

¹⁰³ The act of dominance, racism, cultural determinism as outlined in Ibid.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid., ix.

Western scholars, both in anthropology and in the history of religions, have tended to impose their own terms on the trickster narratives instead of attending to the terms set by the narratives themselves.”¹⁰⁵ In fact, Doueïhi further insists that this type of biased scholarship is representative of a “discourse of domination...a discourse that analyses the conquered civilization in terms of the conquerors, and ...a discourse of conquest, a discourse that continues to express and accept an ideology sanctioning the domination of one culture over another.”¹⁰⁶ This type of discourse is representative of many early scholarly works on trickster. In addition to Doueïhi, other critical scholars have attempted to expand the meaning of trickster beyond that of an archetypal figure—they interpret trickster as a linguistic sign, one that has multiple recognizable attributes.

One of the most noted scholars in trickster studies is Barbara A. Babcock. Extensively published, her work demonstrates the trickiness of trickster and exposes trickster’s transgressions across time, space, form, text, and context. Her work is able to speak of trickster without speaking as trickster and without compromising or essentializing trickster’s ambiguous nature. She posits that tricksters are, by their very nature, ambiguous. They and their “signatures” are very recognizable. The expression of trickster is perpetually betwixt and between—liminal.¹⁰⁷ She notes that there are key concepts associated with trickster and trickster’s stories, including, 1) no conclusion; 2)

¹⁰⁵ Anne Doueïhi, "Inhabiting the Space between Discourse and Story in Trickster Narratives," in *Mythical Trickster Figures: Contours, Contexts, and Criticisms*, ed. William J. Hynes and William G. Doty (Tuscaloosa and London: University of Alabama Press, 1993), 195.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁷ For further discussion of liminality see Turner, *The Ritual Process: Structure and Anti-Structure*. Additionally, for discussion of trickster and liminality see Barbara A. Babcock, "Arrange Me into Disorder: Fragments and Reflections on Ritual Clowning," in *Rite, Drama, Festival, Spectacle: Rehearsals toward a Theory of Cultural Performance*, ed. John J. MacAloon (Philadelphia: Institute for the Study of Human Issues, 1984).

ambivalence; 3) ambiguousness; 4) the picaresque; 5) betwixt and between; 6) creativity; 7) marginal; 8) crossroads; 9) hybridity; 10) shape-shifter; 11) coyote; and 12) pollution/dirt.¹⁰⁸ The first characteristic of trickster Babcock terms “to be continued.” She states that there is no end, no conclusion, and no resolution and therefore trickster is not tragic or comic, trickster is both so cannot have either of those endings. She also states that crossroads and rivers are associated with this aspect of trickster. The second attribute of trickster is ambivalence, marked by uncertainty and contradictory actions or references. Babcock insists that ambiguity is essential to trickster and that ambiguity is sacred, alluding to trickster’s sacred attributes. Thirdly, trickster is ambiguous meaning he could go either way because trickster inhabits the liminal space in-between. Fourth, in print form trickster has a relationship with the picaresque narrative or roguish behavior. Fifth, trickster is betwixt and between, in that liminal space expounded on by Victor Turner. Liminal is a term for the boundary, edge, or margin; not one or the other and is “dangerously ambiguous.”¹⁰⁹ The sixth attribute Babcock associates with trickster is creativity, stating that art is a creative act and therefore the state of trickster. Seventh, trickster is marginal in that trickster is and isn’t part of society. Often this word is used in place of the word liminal but marginal is different from liminal. Eighth, trickster is associated with the crossroads, borderlands, and with doorways and thresholds. The ninth attribute of trickster, according to Babcock, is hybridity, obviously a post-colonial reference and has to do with mixed blood and identity. Gerald Vizenor uses the term

¹⁰⁸This passage is taken from lecture notes in class on trickster with Barbara Babcock in 2004. Babcock is referencing Mary Douglas’s work. For further discussion, see Douglas, *Purity and Danger: An Analysis of Concepts of Pollution and Taboo*.

¹⁰⁹ These attributes of trickster are from a lecture by Barbara Babcock on trickster in 2004.

mixed blood simultaneously with the word trickster in his work. The tenth attribute of trickster Babcock identifies is a transformative one, having the ability to transform themselves: not only from animal to human, but also from male to female, being gender ambiguous. The eleventh characteristic of trickster is the mediating figure of coyote. This is one of the visually and textually recognizable physical manifestations of trickster. Finally, trickster is associated with pollution and dirt, or “matter out of place” as Mary Douglas would say. This directly references classifications, categorizations, and boundaries and transgressions of those categories. Babcock explains that trickster is a necessity in society, because trickster plays with categories thus making humanity aware of categories; trickster disorders the world, making humanity aware of the order of things. The attribute of play is essential as play provides flexibility and possibilities. Besides, play is not limited to humans, all animals play; it is a part of growth. Trickster plays with boundaries, transgresses the lines and borders, using humor and irony and clowning. These attributes of trickster are non-linear and non-historical and non-corporeal, they are conceptual attributes that are recognizable characteristics or that leave residue or traces.¹¹⁰

Trickster transgresses boundaries and blurs the lines. Trickster signs includes irony, humor, multiple meanings, subversion of meaning, transgression of cultural boundaries, hybrid or syncretic acts, controversial images, ambiguous meanings; absurd or grotesque meanings; acts of play, teasing or satire; double images that mean two things at once or double acts like Indian artists who use broken English to sell the image,

¹¹⁰ After Babcock lecture on trickster 2004.

when speaking with a possible customer. In short, trickster sign is everywhere in the language, literature, oral traditions, and art of peoples who survive colonialism with a sense of humor.

Trickster: A Site of Resistance in Art

In *Trickster Shift: Humor and Irony in Contemporary Indian Art*, (1999) Allan Ryan presents a rather exhaustive survey of Canadian Native artists whose works have trickster signatures. Using images, academic writing, and the words of the artists themselves in a deliberately chaotic manner on the page, in dialogue with each other, trickster fashion, he effectively demonstrates the precedent of artists who actively use humor and irony in a socially critical manner. Ryan believes that there is a “crucial link between subversive practice, aesthetic production, spiritual truth, and cultural wisdom” and that the trickster is the active agent in this practice.¹¹¹ Ryan named this book for the term “trickster shift,” defined by Canadian Native artist Carl Beam as a “radical shift in viewer perspective and even political positioning.”¹¹² This publication is not the first to directly link trickster to art, but it is the most accessible and expansive. The link between trickster and art is elusive but has been discussed in publications such as Lucy Lippard’s 1990 book, *Mixed Blessings* and the 1986 exhibition book *Ni’ Go Tlunh A Doh Ka: We Are Always Turning Around On Purpose*. In 2000, the arts organization Atlatl released the book *Who Stole the Tipi?* This publication, owes a lot to Ryan’s book, even

¹¹¹ Allan J. Ryan, *The Trickster Shift: Humor and Irony in Contemporary Native Art* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1999), 3.

¹¹² *Ibid.*, 5.

duplicating the dialogue structure, some artists and some artwork. However, none of these publications actually applies trickster as a theoretical discourse, as I hope to do.

Defining trickster signatures in art, in a concrete way, is very difficult, because trickster resides in sites of resistance, in the margins, everywhere you look he isn't there, but he is. Trickster signatures, expressions of the trickster in art, trickster as a social critic—how exactly does one recognize trickster sign? Often, especially in art, the images are so recognizable that the signs are overlooked. The viewer can literally trip over the tracks of trickster and not see those tracks! Trickster signatures in art and aesthetic forms include depictions using humor and irony. Examples in Native art include pottery depicting koshares playing volley ball, an assemblage with a fax machine spitting out a buckskin with a Native design, a pair of canvas Chuck Taylor basketball shoes with beadwork, and a monumental steel work with images of the ancient and the contemporary juxtaposed on a polluted skyline. All of these works depict recognizable signs of trickster. Humor and irony in Native art may be obvious or subtle but it is often there—whether or not the viewer sees it or recognizes it however, is a different story.

Theorists such as Barbara Babcock call these actions “symbolic inversion,” which she defines as “any act of expressive behavior which inverts, contradicts, abrogates, or in some fashion presents an alternative to community held cultural codes, values, and norms be they linguistic, literary or artistic, religious or social and political,” further, “Symbolic inversion is central to the literary notions of irony, parody, and paradox.”¹¹³

Contemporary Native artists like Jimmie Durham call this phenomenon “turning around”

¹¹³ Barbara A. Babcock, *The Reversible World: Symbolic Inversion in Art and Society* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1977), 14, 16.

where “irony, humor, and subversion are the most common guises and disguises of those artists leaping out of the melting pot and into the fire. They hold mirrors up to the dominant culture, slyly infiltrating the mainstream art with alternative experiences— inverse, reverse, perverse. These strategies are forms of tricksterism, or “Ni Go Thlunh A Doh Ka”—Cherokee for “We are always turning around...on purpose.”¹¹⁴

Haozous’s work and the images contained within can certainly be deemed as “turning around on purpose” or as conscious acts of “symbolic inversion.” His art is critical of Native art categorization and he uses humorous and ironic images to draw attention to the boundaries that his work transgresses. While some Native artists may create art that on the surface fits neatly in to societally constructed categories for Native art, Haozous’s art definitely does not. The imagery artists use is where the traces of trickster reside. Native American scholar Rayna Green suggests, “Haozous uses a strategy common in contemporary Native humor, reversing non-Indian stereotyping of Indian behavior.”¹¹⁵

My first example of trickster sign in Haozous’s work is an isolated element in the *Cultural Crossroads* piece. The image in Haozous’s work references the historic *End of the Trail* sculpture. The work is based on the original 1894 James Earl Fraser sculpture which depicts an anonymous Indian slumping on a horse (see figure 8). Fraser made the sculpture for the 1915 San Francisco Panama-Pacific International Exhibition. The title and image

¹¹⁴ Lucy R. Lippard, *Mixed Blessings: New Art in a Multicultural America* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1990), 199-200.

¹¹⁵ Rayna Green, "Native Artistic Resistance to Western Curio-Sity," *Journal of the West* 40, no. 4 (2001): 40.



Figure 8 (left): End of the Trail; James Earle Fraser, Fraser Studio Collection, National Cowboy and Western Heritage Museum.

Figure 9 (right): Cultural Crossroads, Close-up on End of the Trail segment.

infer that the time of the American Indian was over. However, in Haozous's piece, he reverses the image and depicts the cowboy in the subjective position in a striking inversion. This reversal of imagery is a distinct trickster sign. In this work, the sign is obvious to those who consider the image carefully, but the average viewer might not notice the reversal or might interpret a multitude of various meanings. There is a humor and an irony to this isolated image in the work. This is the signature of trickster in art. In regard, Laura Turney writes,

Native people need the trickster/ironist to destabilize disempowering and politically damaging images/notions of the 'Indian', however, they also need structures and forms that protect their sense of self and provide a notion of 'Native-ness' and 'Indian-ness' in the face of a society where the poer differentials and societal inequalities are (obviously) enormous.¹¹⁶

¹¹⁶ Laura Turney, "Ceci N'est Pas Jimmie Durham," *Critique of Anthropology* 19, no. 4 (1999): 436.

Another example of trickster signature is the image of the father and daughter barbecuing over the historic corpse of Bigfoot in *Defining the Great Mystery* (see figure 9). This image, like the *End of the Trail* image, has a direct referent in history, the photograph of Chief Bigfoot at the Wounded Knee Massacre. The work's caustic irony is not subtle, drawing attention to the tragic nature of history with the corpse representing Indian history as depicted by the infamous photo from the Wounded Knee massacre in 1890, and the destruction of mother earth, the indigenous people of the earth, and the animals often considered by Native peoples to be relations or relatives. Jean Fisher has observed that this sort of "...tragicomic nature or the carnivalesque conceals the most serious issues of life and death. Absurd or familiar juxtaposition of images, reversals of prohibitions, and parodies of given hierarchies are motivated by the necessity for social renewal or change."¹¹⁷

We cannot forget that Haozous's work *Defining the Great Mystery*, is also literally a work of dialogue and I would like to examine how this dialogue is a tricky act. As seen in figure 6, the entire background of the pen, ink, and watercolor is handwritten text. While using text as the background of a two-dimensional work may not be new, filling the entire background space with text, subversive text is an obvious transgression of the boundaries of art and literature. While all artists use a visual language that is specific to their repertoire, few use actual text in the form of a dialogue on a subject. This type of transgression and boundary crossing is the act of trickster. Even more

¹¹⁷ Jimmie Durham and Amelie A. Wallace Gallery., eds., *Ni' Go Tlunh a Doh Ka: We Are Always Turning around on Purpose* (Old Westbury, N.Y.: Amelie A. Wallace Gallery State Univ. of N.Y. at Old Westbury, 1986), v.

intriguing is the type of critical discourse this text engages in. For example, one passage of the dialogue states,

The paradox of indigenous man allows for two choices: either become contemporary white or remain historical and pretty.¹¹⁸

In a later section, the text reads,

To us the importance of the cultural identity through oral history became romance and entertainment. Most of the information available to us was from the outside perspective of non-indigenous writers whose guidelines to ‘indigene’ were based on theory,” or “The forced removal of our tribal identities...The elders in many cases had less understanding of the purpose of the ritual (than we) and were forced to disguise this ignorance with the ritual of the dance. Our knowledge of western man’s bible, language, history, mathematics and economics was hundreds of times more comprehensive than even the most basic of indigenous man’s concepts. Our identity had become powwow, mother earth, fry bread and old photographs that as photos do, only picked up the visual identities of our history.¹¹⁹

Finally,

If we seek to portray ourselves we would have to consider the title of ‘Red White People.’¹²⁰

These comments bear the mark of trickster, they epitomize the act of resistance, and they transgress the boundaries of what is considered politically correct to say about Indians.

Many people will be offended by these comments, especially since they are decontextualized here. However, reading the entire text in context of reading the work, creates an even more destabilizing act of resistance, especially when this work is exhibited in a fine art museum next to all the “beautiful” Native art that adheres to the

¹¹⁸ Bob Haozous, "Defining the Great Mystery," (Santa Fe: 2001).

¹¹⁹ Ibid.

¹²⁰ Ibid.

romantic notions of the White Man's Indian, as it was in the Changing Hands exhibition. The text in, *Defining the Great Mystery*, coupled with the images of white suburban America, barbecuing over the corpse of Big Foot who was part of the massacre at Wounded Knee, is, I think, a particularly vivid example of a trickster signature in art. This work transgresses the boundaries of text and image, of art and politics, of romanticized Native art and reality and provokes the viewer into a dialogue with the work. Haozous's work interrogates the power of accepted knowledge and perceived/received socially constructed reality in an "indigenous cultural dialogue."

Indigenous Cultural Dialogue: Trickster as a Theoretical Construct

The concept of an "indigenous cultural dialogue" is a term that Haozous uses in describing an earth-based dialogue. This dialogue is, in fact, the major point of the visual and textual elements, in the work *Defining the Great Mystery*. Further, "indigenous cultural dialogue" and stimulating it is the major focus of *all* of his work:

As an artist I'm trying to stimulate a larger awareness of indigenous values. I believe that there is a line between contemporary man, primarily western man, and indigenous man. The difference is that Western man uses mankind as the basis of his identity. We never talk of the atrocities and crudeness of our ancestors, but instead hear primarily of our warrior status and deep earth based philosophical cultural viewpoints. We can discuss the depth of western man until our tongues fall off, but usually start and end our own dialogue with mother earth and father sky stuff. I believe that we were well on our way to becoming white people because we have begun the ego based glorified mankind viewpoint of ourselves. The strong and meaningful remnants of an earth and nature based identities still existing throughout indigenous man is what makes us so special on this earth. I don't believe our purpose is to master the crafts, but to be intellectuals and philosophers that guide the world of the future back to nature's law. The question I pose is "How do we create and Indigenous Dialogue?" Perhaps it is time to swallow our individual tribal pride and search other indigenous peoples

for a common language that is earth based dialogue that is based on the laws of nature instead of the laws of man.¹²¹

This larger concept of a common “indigenous cultural dialogue” encompasses the search for a common language with which to talk about, restore balance, and heal the earth.

Haozous believes that this is the responsibility of indigenous or Native peoples, but that a common language is needed. Haozous proposes that “indigenous cultural dialogue” is larger than its application as a theoretical position, and is the facilitator of returning the earth to balance and our responsibility to future generations, he states:

I’m pursuing the indigenous dialogue to get past specific indigenous preciousness and form a dialogue that unites us as “of the Earth.” One of my artist statements is that we have made ourselves precious and it is supported by an idealized romantic and historical self-portrait. This portrait didn’t exist in reality. The bloodline/history identity is a surface shield to allow us to dig deeper into our indigenous responsibilities and identity. Or we can accept the identity as is and continue to be Red White People. I want my children to think like Apaches. It’s easy to be a white man.¹²²

The larger concept of “indigenous cultural language” has many possible applications, one of those being a way to talk cross-culturally about art. Artists are often the cultural barometers speaking of change before it happens. Haozous and other Natives who speak about these issues in art and other culturally expressive acts are creating the dialogue with their art; therefore, this is the place to start looking for traces of a common cultural language. I believe that the common language is storytelling with trickster signatures being the recognizable element. What I propose, that others have overlooked, is the commonality in most Native art—the use of humor or irony in imagery. The

¹²¹ Bob Haozous, email discussion *The Original Indigenous Cultural Dialogue*, December 12, 2004.

¹²² Ibid.

common element, a cross-cultural tool for analyzing Native art is trickster—not in the portrayal of trickster, but rather, in trickster traces in art using the use of elements of humor and irony, from subtle to obvious critical social discourse.

Trickster and critical theory intersect in a fascinating way. Babcock posits, “Both clowning [a form of trickster] and criticism are ‘sanctioned disrespect,’ ways by which society paradoxically institutionalizes doubt and questioning.”¹²³ Trickster as a theoretical construct is imminently appropriate in Native American Studies and Native American art. Further, I applied this approach earlier in the chapter when I examined the trickster element in Haozous’s work and I feel this theory is applicable in other areas of Native visual culture and studies that engage in critical practices, whether obvious or subversive. Looking at arts and culture from a critical perspective allows for dialogue that participates in the earth-based dialogue and is part of the practice of returning the earth to balance, as Haozous describes.

The concept of “indigenous cultural language,” looking for traces of trickster in acts of creative resistance is essentially a broadening of Pulitano’s theoretical approach, which looks at the hybrid of Native epistemologies modifying contemporary theoretical constructs and applying it as part of an “indigenous cultural dialogue.” Again, the key component is active storytelling with definite trickster signatures. By active storytelling, I mean any kind of work that stimulates dialogue that engages the audience, viewer, or reader. Active storytelling would include, 1) traditionally recognized dialogue, such as,

¹²³ Babcock, "Arrange Me into Disorder: Fragments and Reflections on Ritual Clowning."@ 107

oral tradition, poetry, novels, and storytelling; and 2) visual arts, including, all types of movies, visual performance, and art, such as Haozous's.

Haozous's "indigenous cultural dialogue" is an earth-based dialogue which expects participation not observation, functioning in the margins, "indigenous cultural dialogue" is "*postindian* survivance" not *indian* or a simulation.¹²⁴ "Indigenous cultural dialogue" is controversial, and recognizes cultural commonalities as more important than cultural differences. Active storytelling combines theory and "indigenous cultural language" and is a site of resistance. "Indigenous cultural dialogue" is recognizable via trickster signatures. Humor is the catalyst—the site of resistance. Haozous states, "I tap into it [humor], I use it. It's my catalyst, but that's not my role in society [to be a trickster], or may be it is. I don't know, maybe when I'm dead and gone some anthropologist will come along and say, "He's a coyote. CB—Coyote Bob!"¹²⁵ I am not suggesting that Haozous is a trickster, but I am suggesting that trickster humor is an integral and primary component in his art. He uses it as a tool in his art to stimulate dialogue.¹²⁶

As part of a Native American critical theory, "indigenous cultural dialogue" provides a starting place for analysis that is rooted in the commonalities of Native American culture not the differences, but goes beyond colonial structures of Western theoretical approaches. In reference to the term "indigenous cultural dialogue," which Haozous created and I propose has other applications that he may not see, he stated:

¹²⁴ I am using the lower case and italicized usage of *postindian* and *indian* in the same manner as Gerald Vizenor does in Vizenor, *Manifest Manners: Narratives on Postindian Survivance*.

¹²⁵ Haozous.

¹²⁶ While some suggest that all artists are tricksters, in this case I am not calling Haozous a trickster. I have met artists who were without a doubt tricksters. However, Haozous is more ambiguous.

I put everything into it [Indigenous Cultural Dialogue]. But its not in terms of our response. Its in terms of getting people to start thinking. Of all the things I think that makes mankind so important it's the ability to analyze who they are and the responsibilities involved with your relationship with a more Whole existence. That's it. It's the questions not the answer. How do we deal with the questions? It's the dialogue, it's the questions. It's the communication that comes from language that are so much more important than language itself, but the dialogue that comes from being Indian is universal¹²⁷

While trickster may facilitate the dialogue, there are specific tools used in an “indigenous cultural dialogue”—a dialogue that is based on the “commonality in humans.”¹²⁸ Some of these tools are words, language, images, gibberish,¹²⁹ common sense, they may be symbolic, visual or cultural and derived from art, religion, spirituality, the sacred, education, or wisdom and are presented via humor, ridicule, and criticism. Haozous says, eagle feather, tobacco, and sage are all catalysts for change, “we should view spiritual and medicinal specific substances as catalysts for thought.”¹³⁰ Art stimulates the dialogue via symbolic language. Art is a dialogue; the dialogue is the questions—“it's the questions, not the answers.”¹³¹

¹²⁷ Haozous.

¹²⁸ Haozous.

¹²⁹ Haozous often uses what he calls gibberish words or words that mean nothing “more basic than language.”

¹³⁰ Haozous.

¹³¹ Haozous.

CONCLUSION

In this dissertation, I have done a critical reading of one of the most controversial Native American artists working today, if not the most controversial. To create a context for this reading, I have presented a broad general background of American Indian Art, in particular Southwest Indian art in order to clarify the fact that most Indian art is a product of white invention as is the concept of the Indian. Forged in perpetual colonialism, Gerald Vizenor would say, *indians* are a product of victimry—simulations of the real with no referent in tribal languages, as Haozous would say, Indians are in danger of becoming red white men.

In researching this dissertation there were so many avenues I could have taken. The arts are scarcely addressed in current academic literature. Indeed, American Indian Studies is a new field. Delving into original sources is addictive and overwhelming with so much to write about. I addressed issues such as authenticity, traditional arts, American Indian Art, Native American art, the art and culture system, colonialism, postcolonialism, and Indian identity, in relatively simplistic terms—as background information. I actively sought to keep my work focused on Haozous, keeping other information contextual. My work in the first third of this dissertation provides background information. My subject is Bob Haozous's art but what he references in his art are the systems of valuation, the history, and the context that I put chapter one. Haozous talks about himself and his work and puts it out in his work, he says:

I really believe that I'm here today. I'm not looking through my grandfather's or my father's eyes or my mother's eyes or my cultural eyes. I' here today. But all

that stuff was given to me—interprets what I see. So, I don't own myself. So, I have a hard time making something that's romantic and historical and decorative, because that's not who I am and if Indian art or my father or my grandfather a thousand years back were all gifted at making objects, I would still think, "Well, that's not my job. My job is to tell them who I am today, because there's no honesty in Indian art. We're all using outside references from European art history to philosophy to religion, to the military, to social rules. I should have the right to interpret who we are today."¹³²

I seek here to illuminate Bob Haozous's work and why his work is important; I ask and try to answer why his work is so easily dismissed. It is interesting to note that Haozous is such an outsider in the Native art world. In many texts he is not mentioned or if he is mentioned, an early less controversial work is pictured or he is discussed in reference to his father, Allan Houser. Even in Ryan's book, *Trickster Shift*, Haozous is only mentioned, despite the fact that the author is a friend of Haozous's. Yet Harry Fonseca's coyote figures are repeatedly touted as examples of humor in art—is it just because they are so obvious? Fonseca's work is funny and acceptable, as is Marcus Amerman's, who seems to be stepping into the shoes of Fonseca using humor in his art. And what of artists like Jaune Quick-to-See Smith? Her work is almost never presented in the context of contemporary Indian art in Santa Fe, nor is she published in "popular" coffee table Native Art books. However, her work is also "messy."

Back to Haozous and his erasure from the Native art world—and he is being erased, despite the size of so much of his work, the material, the subject matter, and the volumes of people who know him and respect his work. As I mentioned earlier, when I did research at the University of New Mexico, I was unable to locate more than a handful

¹³² Haozous.

of articles on him and only one with reference to the controversy over the *Cultural Crossroads* piece. In Santa Fe, there are several of his works located in public places. One location is the San Busco Plaza. There is another located near the entrance to historic old town Santa Fe. Yet, many of his most famous works, in that they are highly photographed or documented, sit in disrepair on his large, remote property outside Santa Fe.

The highly public controversy and censorship by UNM damaged his career. Yet when asked if he would do it again, he replied, “Well, my biggest regret was the loss of the creative aspect of the contract, but you ask if I would do it again? Of course, it’s my responsibility. Censorship is wrong, cultural censorship is wrong.”¹³³ People are afraid of him, they do not know what he will do or say. Trickster rules his actions, bringing chaos and the unknown, by saying what he thinks.

Despite the controversy, the waning career, and erasure from Native history, Haozous has tremendous hope for the future. He actively supports the Southwest Association for Indian Arts (SWAIA) Annual Indian Market and the Institute of American Indian Arts, of this he says: “I support IAIA because it has potential. I love the students here; I love to hear them talk, I love their ignorance, it’s so refreshing—it reminds me of myself. IAIA is a trade school that has a chance to become a school of deeper philosophical and intellectual dialogue.”¹³⁴

When I first met Haozous, I expected to meet a cynic and after building a friendship with him, I finally had the nerve to ask him why he stayed in Santa Fe where

¹³³ Haozous.

¹³⁴ Haozous.

Native art succumbs to commodity. He said Santa Fe was home, that it had always been. Further, he said feels that Santa Fe is the spiritual center of Native America, in that any cultural rebirth or resurgence will happen in and around Santa Fe, stating, “I still think that Santa Fe is in its infancy when it comes to what it could do for Native people. It’s really on the surface of economics, decoration, and the philosophy of Indian people is right under the surface, its just a matter of bringing it out.”¹³⁵ Indeed, maybe he is right, with so many Indian people from so many places all in one geographic location—maybe all will come full circle. After all, nearly one hundred years ago Native art history began, at least what Western history recorded of it and that is where this whole discussion began. I think that Haozous is right in his earlier statement; it is the questions, not the answers. I hope that the discourse presented here not only participates in the dialogue but also stimulates others. In addition, I realize that my work not only talks about margins and sites of resistance, it creates one. I guess that I too am using trickster signatures to create chaos or stir the pot. I hope this work will engender change, dialogue, and provoke people. I know there will be those who contest my work and I am glad, because then, like Haozous, I will have done my job.

¹³⁵ Ibid.

APPENDIX A

TEXT FROM: *DEFINING THE GREAT MYSTERY*

On finding a balance": A way of life must be coordinated with a way of thinking that is tempered by common sense and nature. The preciousness and uniqueness of the individual places an emphasis on one place and time, thereby neutralizing the importance of responsibility for continuation. Individual focus denies the communal. Cultural continuity and cultural responsibility are overshadowed by the more cosmetic identity of the individual and self. Mankind's great gift of questioning and doubt can be easily given away when we allow others the right to dictate the answers and require faith in that answer. Maintenance of an existing culture can stop development if creative change becomes unimportant. Faith and trust can easily result in intellectual stagnation. This faith by it's own merit offers tremendous security, but this need for security reduces long-range responsibilities without a vehicle for development and change. Indigenous man has the common perception of "walking in beauty". The cycle of life demands balance. This state of balance is neither precious nor pretty. The quest of man for beauty and perfection is directed by the interests of self, the breakdown of community removes nature and continuation from responsibility. Globalization and universality are concepts that assume that nature based and common sense existence are superceded by science, technology and economics. The indigenous concept of "walking in beauty" has lost the importance of harmonic balance and is being replaced by euro-centric decorative ideals of "pretty". The merging of western thought and indigenous thought creates a transformation from holistic horizontal positioning to a focus away from and separate from nature. An earth-based philosophy must transcend the identities accepted by most cultures including blood, skin-color, language, spirituality, location and economics. If the primary function of the arts is honest self-portraiture than any art form that is romantic and historic fulfill only the need for entertainment. Western 'knowledge' is defined as the dissection, categorization and ownership of, whereas wisdom is the same plus the dissemination of that knowledge. Indigenous identity is inclusive of time: the communal member is responsible to and exists for multiple generations, negating his individuality. The responsibility for multiple generations into the future and the preparation of the earth for future generations portrays indigenous man. An intentional shift in focus must be made by mankind by his reaffirming our existence on the laws of nature rather than worshiping the laws of man. The challenge of renewing indigenous cultural values and redefining indigenous identity is finding the base of nature that always defined us. The short-term strength of this nation was the short-term vision of economic equality based on cheap labor and environmental resources. A perfect place in nature and the noble savage has never existed, separation from nature is mankind's shared

identity. Spiritual beliefs of modern man place him above that which is natural, and then, offering removal from nature with death. The common belief that heaven exists here on this earth, that reincarnation does not exist, terrifies self-worshipping man. When asked about the existence of an afterlife the pre-European influenced Indian stated that he did not have that answer. There is a tremendous difference between a short-range two-generation identity and those responsible for the distant future. The happy hunting land of the Apache of three hundred years ago was simply a happy place, a happy place just like this place. A perfect place in nature for the white man is a place devoid of long-term cultural ceremony, one based on science and economics. The beliefs of pre-organized religion were ruled by the laws of nature, and these laws continue to be the basis of our existence. Concepts of self-gain and self ownership are minimally important when compared to achievements that affect the whole society. A holistic relationship to nature is an essential reversal from dominance over nature that must happen for the continuance of man. The removal of mankind from this place of paradise is a clear portrait of arrogance that abandons the common sense nature truth. Native Americans that we see today may be an amalgamation of stereotypes if the self-image is only historical and decorative. Statements with the mother earth reference suggest only the slightest knowledge of the profound philosophical indigenous basis. The paradox of indigenous man allows for two choices: either become contemporary white or remain historical and pretty. When told that Christianity has only been here 116 years he answered "quote-Jesus was here in his travels long ago." A tribal elder and leader justified her white blood by stating "you know we are smarter because of our white blood." Once an old man told me that this was heaven. It was only a floundering search that gave his words great meaning. The seventh generations (of the future) are like the un-germinated seeds under the soil waiting for the future. As we challenged and destroyed the most powerful forces and creatures of nature we began to worship ourselves as gods. Western man's art history traces the transition from our subservient position in nature to a role of dominance. Cultural responsibility and meaningful cultural participation are roles that are lost as we focus on the individual.

Born into an indigenous tribe of the Americas, they began the natural wonderment of identifying themselves as to the differences that separated them from others, and why it mattered. "Be proud of the history of your people" and "we come from a great people" were reasons for this pride, and apparently that was enough for them. "Use this history throughout your lives and with this advantage learn to compete with the white man." This explanation was all that was required to be of a people, of a place, to be indigenous in this modern world. Going to bed at night with visions of the past and thoughts of glory kept young minds well entertained. But, at a point in time, when reason infiltrated the romance, questions were asked about the present and about the future. The answers were the same for all of us. "Don't waste your time worrying about that, you must live in the present time and learn to support yourself and your future. "Technology will solve all of the problems that we face, leave those problems for the young and for science and

technology of the future. It all had such a good sound that we accepted that explanation, and looked out for ourselves. But with nagging persistence the questions hung in the air and didn't fade (much like burning plastic trash in the incinerator). Those elders who had been victimized by the way of forced change in the education of the young in their youth and by the employment choices preferred to glorify and to justify what happened to them.

We all learned to speak English, we learned how to dress and how to act properly in order to be able to compete with the white man in his own world. It is useless to resist change, it will only alienate you from the white man and from your own family. What was not noticed was the slow change of priorities from a focus on tribe to a focus on the family, then the focus on the individual. Stories of our past were no longer heard during mealtimes and in the firelight, but (instead) when the white man needed some form of entertainment. The value of the spoken word (now) became valuable to historians and anthropologists. To us the importance of the cultural identity through oral history became romance and entertainment. Most of the information available to us was from the outside perspective of non-indigenous writers whose guidelines to 'indigene' were based on theory. Many even claimed to have become "Apache" while engaged in their research. Our ability to criticize and ostracize this dramatic ignorance was no longer available because we had no clear understanding of how we were different from other people,

except by blood and the historic material culture from other's books that defined who we once were. The forced removal of our tribal identity and the replacement with a generic bloodline identity, diluted of the spiritual and philosophical uniqueness that made us distinct (peoples) on the entire earth. And yet the questions kept creeping into our sense of ourselves. We have all watched our historic ceremonies being performed (at least what remained) and had no sense of understanding the meaning and purpose of the ritual. We were supposed to have an inherent way of knowledge that gave us (the) wisdom of the performance. The damage was done oftentimes hundreds of years ago. The elders in many cases had less understanding of the purpose of the ritual (than we) and were forced to disguise this ignorance with the trivia of the dance. Our knowledge of western man's bible, language, history, mathematics and economics was hundreds of times more comprehensive than even the most basic of indigenous man's concepts. Our identity had become powwow, mother earth, fry bread and old photographs that as photos do, only picked up the visual identities of our history. Far from being a condemnation, this is a tribute to the importance of indigenous man's place on this earth that our ancestors understood with crystal clarity in relation to their uniqueness and difference. We have such apathy about enacting change that the historic path we follow to our future is almost guaranteed. When the buffalo soldiers (that term being a racial insult in itself) were first observed by the Indian tribes at war with these men, the terms describing were 'Black-White-People.' This was more than just a skin color distinction. It's more of a cultural observation of a people who had become 'like their masters'. If we honestly seek to portray

ourselves we would have to consider the title of 'Red White People'. If we are bound to Euro-American linear concepts of history, then there is no alternative. When we were selected as unique by blood we accepted the inevitability of extinction. And yet blood was never a priority in our historical self-definition, with no stigma to those who have lighter and darker skin. Perhaps the most interesting fact of historical indigenous existence is what cannot be observed. The ultimate measure of contemporary man is quite easily determined. Science, technology, engineering, architecture, political, social, economic and military achievements are supposed to be the hallmark of great societies, but is this the true measure of intelligence? The indigenous of this continent were idealized with the title of 'noble savage', by those who had arrived from the disrupted and possibly (undoubtedly) corrupt nations of Europe. Ownership of air, water and the natural resources of the land was (a) ludicrous (concept) to an earth based people. The laws of nature were the basis of all life with the laws of man of distant importance. The Christian concept of dominance over nature was the result of an ability to manipulate and destroy anything that seemed to be an obstacle to their 'linear' advancement. In the arts the transformation of worship from the forces and creatures of nature to a final man god can be clearly seen. This direction away from nature is not only the signature of modern man, but seems to be a common aspect of human need. All people are victimized by self-aggrandizement, but much less so by those with still existing ties to the soil. Contrary to modern man's definition, the greatest show (measure) of intelligence may be how we leave this earth when we return (death). The indigenous philosophy based on the future of the planet and founded on nature's laws is where common sense says we all come from. The youth of Native America find it difficult to accept the standards of modern man, but they are clearly facing the destruction of life if they are not given the right to question and doubt. Indigenous man faced the ultimate questions "How to live and not destroy", and "How to prepare the earth for the future."¹³⁶

¹³⁶ Haozous, "Defining the Great Mystery."

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