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Fluid Functionality: an Examination of Shifting Identities Using North American Indian German Silver Brooches at the Milwaukee Public Museum as a Case Study

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FLUID FUNCTIONALITY: AN EXAMINATION OF SHIFTING IDENTITIES USING
NORTH AMERICAN INDIAN GERMAN SILVER BROOCHES AT THE MILWAUKEE
PUBLIC MUSEUM AS A CASE STUDY

by

Victoria Catherine Pagel

A Thesis Submitted in
Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree of

Master of Science
in Anthropology
at
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May 2018
ABSTRACT

FLUID FUNCTIONALITY: AN EXAMINATION OF SHIFTING IDENTITIES USING NORTH AMERICAN INDIAN GERMAN SILVER BROOCHES AT THE MILWAUKEE PUBLIC MUSEUM AS A CASE STUDY

by

Victoria Catherine Pagel

The University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, 2018
Under the Supervision of Professor William Warner Wood

This thesis explores the social lives of Woodland silver and German silver brooches beginning in the late 18th century up to the present day using examples from the collections at the Milwaukee Public Museum. As a popular trade item introduced by Europeans, silver brooches provided a new medium for personal adornment in North American indigenous communities throughout the Woodland region. Brooches were fastened on clothing as singular items and occasionally worn in the hundreds to display wealth, status, and other aspects of identity. The majority of brooches used for this project originate from Canada, New York, and Wisconsin. Also included are brooches collected from Mexico and contemporary examples from Rhode Island.

A biographical approach is adopted in order to consider the social lives of Woodland German silver brooches. This project relies on Alfred Gell’s (1998) concept of the secondary agency of material culture in order to investigate how brooches functioned as social actors throughout the course of their life trajectories. The social function of brooches, from active trading partners in the Fur Trade to their transition into hybrid identities intended to mediate social landscapes, is elaborated and explored. Additionally, how brooches functioned from the mid-19th century through the museum age of collecting and the re-emergence of indigenous
silversmithing is discussed. Evidence is provided to argue that when worn, brooches were used by primary human actors as vehicles to assert aspects of individual and collective identities in order to influence the social contexts in which they operated in.
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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

The impact of silver and trade silver on material culture within indigenous communities in North America was profound. As a functional item, a brooch is used “to hold two pieces of a person’s clothing together” (Ivleva (2017, 112). As a trade item, Europeans introduced silver brooches to indigenous people who fastened them on clothing, sometimes as a single brooch and/or sometimes in the hundreds (Alberts 1953; Beauchamp 1903; Harrington 1908; Morgan 1901). While objects of adornment had been present in the indigenous communities of North America for thousands of years, the brooch form was not present prior to European introduction (Parker 1910). Thus, the European introduction of silver brooches provided an entirely new medium for personal adornment in North American indigenous communities throughout the Woodland region.

Initially, this project began as a way to compare Menominee and Iroquois manufactured brooches at the Milwaukee Public Museum (MPM). By comparing brooches from these two major silverworking indigenous communities, I intended to contribute to the body of literature concerned with stylistic variations and the spread of silversmithing. However, after examining each brooch it became apparent that the physical objects held little to no evidence regarding their manufacture. There are also less Menominee brooches that I could use for comparison in MPM’s collection versus those present from the Iroquois. Furthermore, after reviewing documentation associated with the collections, there was little additional information available regarding manufacture of these pieces. In addition, while these brooches may have been collected from these Nations, there was little information written to confirm cultural affiliation for these pieces as well as others in the collection. Since I was not able to compare Woodland brooches in a stylistic manner, I redirected this project to focus on how brooches functioned as “indexes” with
“secondary agency” (Gell 1998) over the course of their social lives (Appadurai 1986; Kopytoff 1986).

Specifically, this thesis considers the “transits” and “transitions” (Svavek 2007) of brooches from diplomatic gifts to trade objects, to their transformation into a hybridized form of material culture, and how they ultimately became “ethnographic objects”. This project relies on the idea that the European “intended function” of a brooch was primarily as a decorative “functional” object used to hold two pieces of clothing together. As brooches were introduced into Woodland indigenous communities they became more than objects of adornment. Great demand for them led Europeans to eventually commodify trade silver brooches specifically for the purposes of trading with North American indigenous communities. Over time, indigenous silver workers emerged to continue manufacturing these items which became synonymous with Woodland Native identity.

**Material culture and secondary agency**

By employing the concept of object agency (Gell 1998), I have not focused on what brooches meant throughout time but rather what they did at certain points in history. Similar to Ivleva’s investigation of brooches from the first to third century in Rome, I explore what brooches do as active objects in which to “provide a repertoire of actions for individuals to articulate their everyday realities, and create their selfhood and socially influenced identities” (2017, 121).

Since I am investigating what brooches do and what they have done throughout their social lives, it seems fitting to categorize brooches as social agents. I rely on Alfred Gell’s approach to the anthropology of art and his classification of material objects as indexes with secondary agency. Specifically, Gell (1998) employs the terminology ‘secondary agency’ in
order to emphasize that material objects do not have their own agency per se. Rather, material objects acquire agency through primary human social actors who interact with said material culture. Secondary agents, therefore, are channels or vehicles (indexes) for expressing primary agency (Gell 1998).

In order to analyze these objects as social agents, I categorize brooches into a system of action “intended to change the world rather than encode symbolic propositions about it” (Gell 1998, 6). I am not designating brooches as signs or postulating that they are a separate visual language, but instead I am focusing on these items as social agents not quite equivalent to persons. I do not deny that brooches function in a semiotic way and transmit information when worn, however, I am arguing this is not all they do. By emphasizing brooches as art objects within a system of action, I “assess the practical mediatory role” of these objects in social processes throughout their life trajectories (Gell 1998).

The Project

The focus of this thesis is on the inherent and ascribed meaning of the Woodland German silver brooches at the Milwaukee Public Museum (MPM hereafter). The definition of “brooch” used for the purpose of this project is ornaments which have tongue-like pins that lay over a central opening (Becker 1990; Parker 1910). Figure 1 shows a buckle on the left and a brooch on the right for comparison. This criterion was used to separate brooches that were bagged with other circular ornaments such as buckles and buttons. In the case of buckles, the tongue-like pin lays behind the frame (Becker 1990).

Lastly, the use of brooches as objects of adornment within Woodland communities will be used as a means of exploring the social role of these objects and their ability to assert collective and individual identities. This project does not aim to uncover the precise meaning
behind the use of brooches as adornment and conceptions of identity. Rather, this paper explores the identity work brooches achieved for the wearers and others throughout their life trajectories.

Three overarching questions guided this research:

1. What stylistic differences are seen in the MPM’s collection of Woodland German silver brooches and how might that relate to asserting a primary actor’s agency?

2. As social agents, what do brooches do throughout the course of their lives and what is their role in mediating social agency for the primary actors who wear them?

3. How does the secondary agency imbued in brooches relate to asserting particular identities even up to the present?

Figure 1: Example of a buckle (left: E4863/6873) and a brooch (right: no catalog/no accession #)

The Collections

The German silver brooch collections at MPM include objects that originated from the Eastern Woodlands of North America. This area, usually subdivided into the northeast and southeast, is a geographic designation formed by 20th century anthropologists based on Native American cultural and linguistic similarities (Wesson 2016). The Eastern Woodlands are defined as a large geographic area that covers the Atlantic Ocean to the Mississippi River (Wesson 2016;
Ritzenthaler and Ritzenthaler 1983). Longitudinally, the Eastern Woodlands stretch from modern-day Tennessee into the majority of eastern Canada (Ritzenthaler and Ritzenthaler 1983). Brooches used as examples in this project originate from the northeastern portion of the Woodland cultural area, from present day Wisconsin, Oklahoma, Louisiana, Kansas, Rhode Island, New York, and Canada. Also included in this project are brooches collected from Coahuila, Mexico.

The brooches from Mexico were created by the Kickapoo who originally occupied territory in modern-day Indiana, and briefly occupied land in Wisconsin in the 17th century (Goggin 1951; Latorre and Latorre 1976; Loew 2013). Ritzenthaler and Peterson (1956) argue that the Kickapoo learned silversmithing while residing in Wisconsin before separating into several bands and moving to Oklahoma, Texas, and Mexico. As a consequence of this migration history, the connection to the Eastern Woodlands culture area, and the stylistic Woodland similarities of the brooches, Mexican Kickapoo examples were included in this project.

The MPM Woodland German silver brooches are culturally affiliated with the Menominee, Iroquois, Mexican Kickapoo, Ojibwe, Potawatomi, Delaware, Pawnee, Sac, Fox, and Winnebago. For purposes of clarity when discussing the various collections in this project, I have created Figure 2 to help track which accessions I am referring to when using cultural affiliation and expedition designations throughout this thesis.

Within the MPM’s Anthropology Department, objects are classified as ethnological or archaeological. The majority of brooches in MPM’s collection are cataloged as ethnological and were collected during expeditions in the early 20th century by anthropologists Alanson B. Skinner and Samuel Barrett. Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett (1991, 387) reminds us that objects become ethnographic by “virtue of being defined, segmented, detached, and carried away by
ethnographers”. These objects were detached from living groups of people by anthropologists and therefore are categorized as ethnological within MPM’s anthropology collections.

Brooches collected from Coahuila, Mexico, also categorized as ethnological, and were purchased in 1974 from Felipe and Dolores Latorre. The Latorre brooches from Coahuila are part of one of the largest collections of Mexican Kickapoo material in the United States. These brooches and the methods of acquisition will be discussed further in chapter 4 (Results).

Figure 2: MPM designated accession number (s), cultural affiliation, and method of acquisition

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Accession Number (s)</th>
<th>Cultural Affiliation</th>
<th>Method of Acquisition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6873, 2207</td>
<td>Menominee</td>
<td>Samuel A. Barrett and Alanson B. Skinner MPM Expeditions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2207</td>
<td>Wisconsin Oneida</td>
<td>Samuel A. Barrett MPM Expedition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6084</td>
<td>Western New York State (Allegheny, Onondaga, Tonawanda, &amp; Cattaraugus)</td>
<td>Samuel A. Barrett MPM Expedition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8247</td>
<td>Iroquois, Six Nations of The Grand River Reservation</td>
<td>Samuel A. Barrett MPM Expedition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6911</td>
<td>Oneida in Thames, Ontario</td>
<td>Mark R. Harrington Purchase</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22143</td>
<td>Mayetta, Kansas and Tama, Iowa</td>
<td>Stephen Polyak Donation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23800</td>
<td>Mexican Kickapoo</td>
<td>Latorre and Latorre Purchase</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27301</td>
<td>Various, including: Delaware, Seneca, and Pawnee</td>
<td>James H. Howard Donation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6595, 6266, 4394, 12653 Includes catalog numbers: A10458a, A10458b, A10459a, A10459b, A10459c, E110</td>
<td>Unknown (found in Wisconsin)</td>
<td>Donations</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Research Design and Expectations**

Some hypotheses were drawn from preliminary observations of each brooch collection as well as prior studies conducted on the MPM’s German silver collections (e.g. Alberts 1951,
1953). Based on previous research on Menominee, Oneida, and other Iroquois brooches, I expected that maker’s marks, or touch marks, from European or Euroamerican silversmiths would be absent from the physical objects (Alberts 1953). I anticipated that because these collections lacked visible maker’s marks, there might be additional notes regarding their manufacture in original documentation, including field notes, or in catalog book descriptions, and accession records. From the latter documents, I hoped to construct the original contexts of these collections and contribute to the life history and biography of brooches manufactured by the Menominee and various Iroquois groups, but this route did not come to fruition.

The Biographical approach

Igor Kopytoff’s (1986) biographical approach was adopted and used as a framework to investigate what brooches do throughout time and in each of their “life phases.” This particular approach can be beneficial to understanding material culture exchanged during cultural contact situations (Kopytoff 1986, 67). Specifically, Kopytoff (1986) refers to the adoption of foreign objects and to investigating how they are culturally redefined. Processes of colonialism where multiple cultures come into contact over a long period of time shapes the material culture people interact with on a daily basis rather than the other way around (Gosden 2004). Brooches, as a form and silver as a raw material, were initially foreign to indigenous populations in North America. As a result, brooches provide an interesting case study for tracing ascribed social and cultural meaning through time as these objects moved between individuals and institutions and what Svasek (2007) calls from one “transit” to the next.

Arjun Appadurai (1986) and Igor Kopytoff (1986) are regarded as particularly influential for anthropologists interested in studying prehistoric and historic material culture consumption (Cipolla 2017). Crucial to their related arguments, Appadurai and Kopytoff reconsider the fluid
nature of objects and the ability for objects to move in and out of various social roles (Miller 2005). The idea that objects have the ability to change meaning based on the social context in which they operate in was partly influenced by conversations in anthropology regarding the sharp dichotomy between Marx’s “commodity” and Mauss’ “gift” (Appadurai 1986). By introducing the element of fluidity, Appadurai (1986) and Kopytoff (1986) aimed to mute the hard-and-fast distinction between these two classifications. This project has been shaped by this literature and contributes to our understanding of how the application of this particular theoretical orientation can be utilized to analyze diverse museum collections. Particularly beneficial to this interpretation is the museum documentation and archival resources available and how that encourages or inhibits the development of a material culture “life trajectory” approach. A more comprehensive treatment of concepts introduced by Appadurai (1986) and Kopytoff (1986) detailed in The Social Life of Things: Commodities in a Cultural Perspective and how it relates to this research will be provided in chapter 2.

**Brooches: Identity and Personal adornment**

This thesis also briefly considers the negotiation of identity within Woodland indigenous populations and the impact of colonialism on material culture in North America. In order to understand the secondary agency objects assert, I must also consider the agency of the consumers (Cipolla 2015, 2017; Douglas and Isherwood 1996) In reviewing literature primarily from post-colonial scholars and theorists regarding indigenous consumption during the Fur Trade, the emergence of hybrid material culture, and identity negotiation and maintenance as conveyed through dress and adornment emerges (e.g. Bhabha 1994; Cipolla 2015; Deagan 2002; Fisher and Loren 2003; Loren 2008; White 1991; White 2009; White and Beaudry 2009). I also considered more recent indigenous consumption literature (e.g. Cipolla 2015, 2017; Howley
2017) as a way to extend the broader contexts in which the MPM’s Woodland brooches have socially operated throughout their life phases.

It was not until very recently that brooches were thought of as more than just functional objects. Within Roman archaeology, Hill and Jundi (1998) recognized that brooches functioned as communicative tools for different types of identity expression or creation. Tatiana Ivleva’s more recent work (2017, 112) mirrors this line of reasoning while adding that brooches acted as “active participants in constructing, manipulating or renegotiating the identities of their wearers, owners and makers.” Ivleva (2017) also argues brooches “act as metaphorical storage of memory, associations, feelings, and past activities”. Similarly, to the lack of focus on the social work of brooches in Roman archaeology, past literature on brooch trade and use in North America was primarily concerned with manufacturing techniques and the spread of indigenous silversmithing rather than their broader social implications/uses (e.g. Alberts 1951, 1953; Baerreis 1950; Converse 1902; Harrington 1908; Skinner 1921).

Identity is one of the most complex concepts that is “paradoxical and culturally situated in time, place, and society” (White and Beaudry 2009, 210). Identity can refer to a person’s conception of themselves and their relation to larger social phenomena that helped shape their reality (Knudson and Stojanowski 2009). Identity can also can manifest at individual levels and be self-imposed while simultaneously being imposed by others and influenced by social experiences (Fisher and Loren 2003; White and Beaudry 2009; White 2009) For this project, I rely on Knudson and Stojanowski’s definition of identity, which refers to a person’s conception of themselves and their relation to the “larger social phenomena that characterizes their existence” (2009, 1). I chose to use Knudson and Stojanowski’s definition since brooches were
introduced at the beginning of the Fur Trade when a new global market made a profound impact on the goods people chose to consume in order to convey aspects of their identity.

**Significance and contribution**

Since the 1950s, research focused on North American German silver brooches has been largely stagnant. The communicative agency of brooches, too, has been largely neglected not only in North America, but has only been a recent focus within Roman material culture studies (e.g. Adams 2017; Jundi and Hill 1998; Ivleva 2017).

This project seeks to contribute to the current scholarship and the larger field of historical and anthropological research concerning brooches beyond their initial role as functional objects. For decades, North American Woodland brooches have been largely viewed as aesthetic objects and their manufacture was the primary focus. However, Alfred Gell (1998) argues that a purely aesthetic approach to the anthropology of art is a dead end. This may partially explain why these brooches have been largely ignored for years; they were simply perceived as an item having no further analytical value thus limiting the potential for diverse research approaches.

A comprehensive analysis of the eastern Woodland German silver brooches in the MPM collection contributes to the body of research specifically concerning Iroquois and Menominee silverwork, as well as other Algonquian-speaking communities (specifically the Kickapoo, Sac, and Fox). By defining brooches as hybrid material culture, this project also adds to the broader conversations regarding the emergence of hybrid objects out of colonial interactions in North America (e.g. Ehrhardt 2005, 2013; Walder 2015).

Brooches are frequently categorized solely according to their shape and cultural affiliation and are often described as being worn “in the hundreds” (e.g. Beauchamp 1903; Converse 1902; Morgan 1901). This oversimplification concerning the use of brooches is
problematic because it neglects the broader social significance of the use of this specific type of material culture. It also fails to take into account context exemplified by the more recent scholarship of Roman brooches cited above. I seek to remedy this oversimplification by investigating what brooches did in addition by communicating wealth and social status.

Previous research regarding brooches focused heavily on manufacturing methods employed by different indigenous silversmiths as compared to European and/or Euroamerican techniques (e.g. Harrington 1908; Skinner 1921; Baerreis 1950). However, understanding how these objects were made is only a fragment of their overall biographies and social significance. Focusing solely on the technological aspects of material culture neglects their social and cultural roles more broadly. Also, it is generally the case that the physical objects themselves hold little to no clues regarding their manufacture, unless hammered from a European coin (Frederickson 1980).

I also seek to evaluate the productivity of applying Kopytoff’s biographical approach to these museum collections. This methodology is generally used to construct a single biography using one object (Appadurai 1986), however I chose to construct a single biography of these objects. Evaluating the method adopted for this project will be beneficial for future research inspired by Kopytoff’s approach (1986).

Constructing a single biography of these objects draws attention to how intertwined they have become throughout the course of their life trajectories. Subsequent approaches influenced by the biographical approach, such as the networked biographical approach (Foster 2015), were developed to consider the biography of an object in terms of providing an all-encompassing biography of an entire collection. This project considers Foster’s (2015) networked-biographical approach in addition to the “traditional” single object approach. In essence, contributing to the
multiplicity of ways the biographical approach can be used and applied to the study of museum ethnographic and archaeological collections will be a core outcome for this project.

More broadly, this thesis contributes to the growing body of research focused on indigenous consumption in North America during the 18th and 19th centuries (e.g. Cipolla 2017; Howley 2017). By embracing a postcolonial lens, I too, attempt to bring a fresh perspective to previous Eurocentric frameworks that influenced past scholarship about brooch production, use, and trade.

**Thesis Organization**

Following this introductory chapter, this thesis is organized into five additional chapters. Chapter 2 begins by reviewing key concepts in Appadurai (1986) and Kopytoff’s (1986) “social lives” approach to objects and constructing object “biographies”. Subsequent research motivated by the biographical approach relevant to conceptualizing the lives of MPM’s Woodland brooch collections is also summarized in chapter 2.

Chapter 3 provides necessary historical background relevant to the introduction of silver and the brooch form in North America. Information regarding trade relationships and varying social milieus between Algonquian-speaking people in the Great Lakes region and the French during the Fur Trade is provided in addition to describing Iroquois relationships with the Dutch and British. Chapter 3 ends by reviewing the rise of indigenous silversmithing, the use of the silver alloy “German Silver” in the mid-19th century, and regional variations in brooch shapes observed in the Great Lakes versus the northeastern United States.

Results from inventorying and describing collections are described in chapter 4. This chapter summarizes the qualitative data obtained from inventorying and physically examining
each brooch. Documentation, accession records, correspondences, field notes, etc. and the supplemental information they provided is also be summarized.

Chapter 5 considers how the meaning of this type of material culture, and specifically MPM’s Woodland brooches, has changed since the introduction of silver brooches in North America. More specifically, I consider how social and economic circumstances have impacted the meanings of these objects since the introduction of brooches in the late 18th century. I also lay out how brooches fit into the process of “commoditization” as developed by Kopytoff (1986) and how these objects fluctuate in and out of this process. Finally, I elaborate on the narratives that emerged while researching MPM’s Woodland brooch collections as a result of adopting the biographical approach.

Methods

Since this project initially began as a way to compare manufacture techniques, individual brooches from the MPM’s Woodland brooch collections were selected, inventoried, and analyzed. Inventories from MPM’s KE Emu collections database were used to “pull” brooches from storage and exhibit. To insure the Canadian Iroquois brooches were included in these inventories, an additional regional specific search on KE Emu was conducted.

Microsoft Excel was used to create an inventory of brooches located during the course of this project. Additionally, the Excel document was used to record all physical characteristics about the objects and additional information gathered from associated documentation and records. Associated documentation and records include: MPM catalog and accession numbers, method of acquisition, name associated with acquisition, catalog date, reported provenience, and any general comments. From these inventories, examples were selected for the discussion section.
Terminology used to describe brooch shapes was adopted from previous publications on Iroquois and Menominee brooches (e.g. Alberts 1953; Beauchamp 1903; Baerreis 1950; Quimby 1966). Standardization and use of previously developed typologies will allow for future comparisons of collections. Figure 3 is a full list of Woodland brooch types, synonyms seen in other publications, and an illustrated example.

**Documentation**

Various MPM documentary sources were reviewed in order to holistically understand the motivations for collecting these brooches, the information gathered on expeditions, as well as to record information about previous research, use in exhibition, and interpretation of these objects since their arrival at the museum. Documents include catalog books, accession records, documentation files, annual reports, monthly reports, Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA) inventory sheets, and any available field notes and/or manuscripts from expeditions. The Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA) is a law passed in 1990 that applies to all Federal agencies and institutions that receive Federal funding. Under NAGPRA, museums were required to inventory and report any and all human remains and cultural items made by or associated with specific tribal groups (U.S. Department of the Interior 2012).
### Figure 3: Brooch styles and synonyms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Synonyms</th>
<th>Example (adapted from Van Horn 1971)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Disk</strong>: refers to large diameters; plain or having geometric cutouts</td>
<td>Large circular brooch; “sunshine” to refer to the large ornate ones (Harrington 1908)</td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Disk Brooch" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Square</strong></td>
<td>Council square and/or octagonal; “double brooch” (Harrington 1908)</td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Square Brooch" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Single heart</strong>: seen with or without a crown</td>
<td>With crowns occasionally referred to as an “owl” (Parker 1910) and/or ornamental head-dress or crown (Harrington 1908)</td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Single Heart Brooch" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Double heart</strong>: only seen surmounted by a crown</td>
<td>Lyre; Tuscarora brooch (Beauchamp 1903); referenced as similar and/or Lukenbooth. Only seen surmounted by a crown; “ornamental head-dress” (Harrington 1908)</td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Double Heart Brooch" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Masonic-style</strong></td>
<td>Council fire (Converse 1902); “sky and pillars” (Parker 1910)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Circular:</strong> refers to small to medium diameters with “convex” reverse sides and with surface decorations (see ring and disk for comparison)</td>
<td>Plain circular/ring: “eye” (Harrington 1908)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ring:</strong> refers to small circular brooches that are relatively flat</td>
<td>Used interchangeably with circular, to refer to brooches with plain surfaces; “eye” (Harrington 1908)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Star:</strong> typically with 12 points; can be “scalloped, plain, angular, or knobbed around the edge” (Van Horn 1971, 11)</td>
<td>Sunshine (Harrington 1908)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Daisy</strong> (listed as such in inventory from Felipe and Dolores Latorre)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER 2: THEORETICAL ORIENTATION

This chapter provides an orientation to the theoretical framework adopted for this project. First, I review Arjun Appadurai (1986) and Igor Kopytoff’s (1986) ideas considering processes of commoditization, decommoditization, and the social lives of material culture. Subsequent literature influenced by the biographical approach and how it influenced this project is also summarized.

The Social Lives of Objects

Arjun Appadurai (ed. 1986) and Igor Kopytoff (1986) are regarded as particularly influential for the study of material culture and/or value and exchange within capitalist economies (Cipolla 2017). On the topics of consumption and exchange, Appadurai and Kopytoff shifted the narrative within Anthropology away from the sharp dichotomy that emerged among scholars using Karl Marx’s (1990) approach to studying “commodities” and those studying “gifts” and ceremonial exchange following Marcel Mauss’ approach (1990). In brief, the dichotomy that emerged between commodities and gifts operated under the assumption that commodities are intimately linked to capitalistic modes of production, with an emphasis on goods produced in modern-day capitalism (Appadurai 1986). Appadurai argues that this sharp dichotomy between commodities and gifts tends to ignore that Marx’s concept of a ‘commodity’ does not operate outside of cultural design. In other words, commodities do not exist outside of a culturally designed system (i.e. capitalism). It is possible to distance the definition of a commodity from stricter ties with modern capitalism, not only acknowledging that commodities are part of various modes of exchange (Appadurai 1986) but also allowing more appreciation for the cultural expectations and value systems in exchange systems. In other words, participating in
capitalist modes of exchange did not necessarily mean that cultural expectations and values were shared cross-culturally (Douglas and Isherwood 1992).

Appadurai argues that even within Marx’s own ideas about commodities and capitalist societies, “there is a basis for a much broader, more cross-culturally and historically useful approach to commodities” (1986, 6). That “basis” is, according to Appadurai, the room for interpretation Marx supposedly leaves open for pre-capitalist societies, and Appadurai further suggests defining commodities as any object intended for exchange. Considering objects intended for exchange as commodities is key to considering trade goods exchanged between Native Americans and Europeans during the Fur Trade, where “the degree of value coherence may be highly variable from situation to situation, and from commodity to commodity” (Appadurai 1986, 15). It is important to note that Native Americans did not necessarily equate the same economic value that Europeans ascribed to certain items during the Fur Trade.

By disassociating the “commodity-like” status of all “things” from “production” it is easier to imagine commodities outside of modern capitalist society and that allows an analysis of commodities in several forms of exchange. Commodities can be broken down into three main forms according to Appadurai (1986). These forms are: a phase, candidacy, and context. The commodity “context” refers to any social “arena” that internally or externally links goods, which allows them to be officially nominated as a commodity (Appadurai 1986, 13). This social arena allows goods to be officially recognized as commodities beginning the “commodity phase” of the thing(s) life. The fluidity of moving in and out of a commodity state, or phase, is mainly influenced in the social arenas in which a thing has (or has not) participated at one time or another (Appadurai 1986).
One of the central tenants to the things/objects having social lives approach, is Kopytoff’s (1986) idea that objects are perpetually engaged in a process of becoming commodified, a process he calls “commoditization”. Comoditization is the process in which objects move in and out of a status of being commodified “rather than an all-or-nothing state of being” (Kopytoff 1986, 73). This process of becoming commodified (or process of becoming decommodified) is not a unidirectional process. Movements in and out of a commodified state can be “slow, fast, reversible or terminal, normative or deviant” (Appadurai 1986, 13). It should also be noted that some processes of commoditization may be more obvious or more directly observable at a particular time and/or place. However, even when the process is not very transparent, the fluidity of commoditization is always relevant (Appadurai 1986).

Kopytoff (1986, 68) proposes using the biographical approach in order to glean details about an object in the same manner one would try to glean details about a person’s life—and the society in which that person’s life plays out. This involves considering the “psychological, professional, political, familial, and economic” classifications and/or uses of the material culture in question (1986, 86). The process of commoditization and decommoditization is also socially informed. The singularization of objects, what Kopytoff calls “decommoditization” is the process of singling out particular objects as non-exchangeable because of ascribed cultural importance (Kopytoff 1986). For example, objects deemed sacred are commodities that have been singularized and are culturally prohibited from being exchangeable (Kopytoff 1986, 73). It should be noted that a hierarchy of moral (or aesthetic) values within a society generally corresponds to a spectrum of possible singularities and that singularity does not necessarily equate to “sacralization” (Kopytoff 1986, 74). Uncovering the biographies of objects involves making “an explicit effort to understand the details of an artefact in relation to the wider
conditions in which it moves” (Thompson and Doonan 2017, 10). The processes of commodifying or decommodifying are important factors to consider as a part of this project because of its focus on trading behavior and trade networks.

Commodities can also be diverted from their intended paths. Appadurai (1986, 26) uses the examples of tourist art that is transformed from a small-scale use in communities to something produced for the “ideologies of larger economies” that have been consecrated as having sufficient economic and social relevancy to drive external cultural consumption (i.e. the tourist’s “souvenir”). Diversion of commodities can have negative effects on people associated with the original context. For example, misuse of Navajo sandpainting figures that became disassociated from their original contexts could have detrimental effects on living Navajo, such as sickness and drought (Wood 2017). For Appadurai, external cultural consumption is not limited to economic “transactions” but includes other forms of “exchange” such as the practice of archaeological or ethnographic collecting. Specifically, Appadurai claims archaeology “represents extremely complex blends of plunder, sale, and inheritance, combined with Western taste for things of the past and of the other” (1986, 26-27).

Object Biographies

The biographical approach in material culture studies was adopted for this project because of its emphasis on fluidity and the ways that the meanings of objects fluctuate based on the social contexts in which they operate. More importantly, in situations where objects play a role in culture contact, Kopytoff notes of such objects that the biographical approach is especially useful in considering that it is “…not the fact that they are adopted, but the way they are culturally redefined and put to use” that is important (1986, 67). In the case of German silver brooches, the emphasis on fluidity and cultural redefinition is crucial to the understanding how
these objects were manufactured, worn, and re-emerged as important material culture in the 20th century.

Constructing object biographies and life histories became essential to understanding the movement of objects in and out of a commodified state, diversion of commodities due to external or internal forces, and how objects have different meanings ascribed to them throughout time (e.g. Foster 2012; Ivesta 2017; Thompson and Doonan 2017). The biographical approach has been especially useful for studies of specific (singular) objects (Appadurai 1986; Marsh 2016). For a single object, the creation of a biography involves accumulating a particular story of how specific contexts change depending on the larger social environment--especially in regard to exchange networks and use (Appadurai 1986).

Appadurai makes the additional point that it can be at times instructive to separate the concept of an object biography and a life history of an object (1986). Life histories constructed around material culture are crafted on a broader scale, over large periods of time and at broader social levels. This project, however, does not adhere to such a sharp distinction between the two scales of analysis described by Appadurai. In specific cases, it may be necessary to consider a spectrum between singular object biographies and the broader life histories of classes of objects in order to understand an object’s place with in a class of objects (for example a museum collection) more holistically. Considering the life history of a single brooch was not tenable without relevant object-level and historical documentation and information, thus the approach taken here lies on the life history end of the continuum.

By moving beyond technological designations ascribed to these objects in earlier studies, this project also aims at contributing to the life history and biography of the MPM’s Woodland brooches. The biographical approach is well suited to these items because, as Thompson and
Doonan (2017) argue, it provides more sufficient contextual information that extends beyond a typical descriptive or typological classification of objects. Object biographies can combine typological and technical analyses, what Thompson and Doonan (2017) refer to as the essential characteristics, but they also simultaneously consider the relational components of the location of objects in a particular space and time. The relational components refer to the different social meanings ascribed to and perceived by those who come into contact with the material culture under consideration (Thompson and Doonan 2017). Social meanings ascribed to these brooches, via the primary (human) actor, can then be used to make hypotheses about the object’s secondary agency.

It is also important to note that objects (and the collections they are a part of) cannot have a singular biography. An object can accumulate multiple biographies, through its life phases especially as scholarship and theory develops (Kopytoff 1986). For example, an economic biography is considered separate from a social, or cultural biography that’s nested under an all-encompassing biography. This distinction is important to Kopytoff, who explains how culturally informed biographies look at objects as being a “culturally constructed entity, endowed with culturally specific meanings, and classified and reclassified into culturally constituted categories” (1986, 68).

Kopytoff and Appadurai’s approaches to the study of materiality is a part of a larger shift to a more processual approach in anthropology and material culture studies (Wood 2017, 172). Since Kopytoff’s essay introducing the concept of object biographies was published, there has been a considerable amount of work done to expand these ideas and apply them to collections within various institutions. His approach also holds much in common with other techniques such as the chaîne opératoire (Martión-Torres 2002) and object itineraries (Joyce 2015). These
approaches to studying material culture can help to untangle complicated histories of collecting, cataloguing, documenting, and exhibiting collections—the focus of this project.

When we, as scholars, apply these approaches to material culture we can begin to pull apart the different phases or periods in an object’s life, from procurement of the raw material, the creation of the artifact, the movement of the piece over time to its current life phase as an object resting in collections storage or on exhibit in a museum. Furthermore, the literature itself has continued to be develop over the last 30 years through the reinterpretation of the characteristics of a collection or an object on an institutional level. If we are to view material culture and museum collections as entities accompanied by their own unique biographies and life histories, then no two objects nor two collections will be identical.

To construct a biography, all avenues of investigation should be considered including the physical body of an artifact, oral histories, ethnographic accounts, and archaeological records (Thompson and Doonan 2017) as well as any documentary and pictorial evidence. Subsequent approaches to creating a biography or contributing to a biographical account of an object have emerged and built upon the previous literature. For example, the networked biographical approach was developed by Robert Foster (2012) to trace the assemblage of the P.G.T Black Collection of Oceanic Objects and the two institutions in which this collection has resided. These two institutions and periods in the life of the collection were chosen by Foster in order to look at the differently constructed categories and implied social meanings surrounding the collection in different institutional contexts (Foster 2012, 151). Foster argues that by using the networked biographical approach he is better equipped to trace the social relationships that “things” have in any given moment and the relationships they are continuously caught up in. We can see the influence of Kopytoff’s biographical approach in Foster’s focus on disentangling the larger
historical and political forces at work when the collection was moving through the periods or stages of its life. So, instead of focusing on the object’s life at one museum specifically, Foster extends the object’s biography back in time to when it was acquired including the social, political, and historical processes that were influencing its social meaning during those biographical stages.

Foster’s case study illustrates how meanings are in no way fixed, and when collections move from one institution to the next, their meanings and categorizations can be influenced by external factors. Foster’s insights are important to this project because I, too, have traced the biographical narrative of these collections back to their acquisitions and examined what motivated the MPM’s Anthropology staff to acquire brooches for the museum.

Another influential source for constructing object biographies is Diana Marsh’s (2016) approach to analyzing and critiquing documentation and associated archival materials. The “trace ethnographic” approach (as developed by Geiger and Ribes 2011) that Marsh employs allows scholars, such as herself, to use ethnographic tools on a smaller, institutional scale to develop narratives about individual decisions made about particular objects (or collections). In applying this method to museum collections, she is able to untangle the different strands of social influence, from individual and institutional positions, surrounding the documentation and cataloguing of a plaster cast of a medicine man.

Marsh (2016) adds a crucial element to holistically creating the biography of an object and/or collection: the associated documentation and archival materials. These documents and categorizations, ascribed to a particular piece of material culture, are a product of larger social and political processes at work. By taking a critical approach to understanding the context in which they were created, an institutional biography can be fashioned based on documentary
evidence (Marsh 2016). This is pertinent to any museum collection or object because there will always be some documentation created for objects (even if just to note that it was “found in the collection”) and that this documentation is not neutral, but is a product of the its context including its relation to the museum itself and the wider social context of professional curatorial practice in which the documentation was created.

**Object biographies for archaeological collections**

In addition to ethnographic collections, these approaches have also been applied to understand archaeological collections (e.g. Gosden and Marshall 1999; Ehrhardt 2013; Walder 2015). This tangential use of the biographical approach deserves to be discussed separately because it extends into research that diverges from ethnographic methods such as interviewing or first-person accounts. Because this project involves archaeological material, it is worth noting how, with more provenience, this approach can be successfully applied to examine stages of an artifact’s life before being intentionally or unintentionally deposited.

For example, Gosden and Marshall (1999) sought to incorporate biographical literature as a way to conceptualize social meaning of archaeological artifacts. They postulated that object meanings were not solely determined by physical modifications of an object, but rather the social actions that accumulate into a biography. The physical modification of an object did not necessarily give objects meaning, but rather meaning accumulated over the course of an object’s life through the social contexts in which it operated in (Gosden and Marshall 1999). Gosden and Marshall combine Kopytoff’s biographical approach and Tringham’s (1995) life history approach. Again, Appadurai (1986) refers to the life history approach as complimentary to a biographical approach, but on a much broader scale. Gosden and Marshall’s research is an
example of how the lines between creating a biography and contributing to a life history of material culture can be much more nuanced.

When archaeological evidence of manufacture is present, such as a flintknapping evidence, or observable physical modification on the objects themselves (e.g. Walder 2015), the chaîne opératoire or technological systems framework (Kingery 1993) can be utilized to expand the biographical narrative. The chaîne opératoire (Martión-Torres 2002) essentially involves breaking down the stages of an object from procuring raw-materials, to decoration, use, and eventually discard and potential reuse.

Constructing the biography of an object involves laying out the life stages or periods which that object experienced in life up to and including the point of its most recent phase. This can begin with the raw material procurement and follow through to design, production, use, reuse, disposition, and so on. The biographical approach can be fruitfully combined with various techniques alongside it including the chaîne opératoire (Martión-Torres 2002). The chaîne opératoire technique, for example, is most commonly used in connection with objects or collections in which there is evidence of production in the form of archaeological data or historical documentation (see Walder 2015).

To summarize, Kopytoff and Appadurai’s biographical approach (1986) has provided the foundation for a fundamental shift of the study of materiality including museum collections. Robert Foster’s networked biographical approach (2012) and Diana Marsh’s trace ethnographic approach (2016) to museum collections considers the broader political environments that surrounds a museum which relies on the collection and recording of associated museum documentation. It is also relevant to this project to note that the chaîne opératoire method has been most commonly utilized when archaeological material is accompanied with some
knowledge of production, in the form of debitage or reworked artifacts (e.g. Martión-Torres 2002; Walder 2015). I found the categories outlined by Martión-Torres useful as a way to conceptualize each phase of a brooch’s biography across different time periods. These categories include raw material procurement, the physical artifact itself, the process/sequence of production, use, discard, but also subsequent excavation, lab processing, and “deposition” in museum collections storage or exhibition.
CHAPTER 3: LITERATURE REVIEW AND BACKGROUND

Re-conceptualizing indigenous consumption

As mentioned in the introductory chapter of this thesis, I seek to contribute to the growing body of literature focused on re-conceptualizing indigenous consumption of European goods in the 18th and 19th century. Brooches provide a valuable case study in which to challenge prior Eurocentric biases. In this brief section, I will provide an introduction to recent indigenous consumption literature within anthropology.

Since the 1980s, postcolonial narratives have been challenging Eurocentric frameworks that tended to frame colonialism as a unidirectional process in which there was the “colonized” and “colonizer” (Beaudoin 2013; Patterson 2008; Silliman 2005). This dichotomy tainted the way in which European material culture was interpreted when found in Native American contexts. Specifically, European material culture was interpreted as “straightforward indicators of cultural loss” (Cipolla 2015, 19). To interpret the use of European goods as less-authentic or signs of cultural loss is to misunderstand the blending of local and global forces that influence material culture (Cipolla 2015). Cipolla (2015; 2017) argues for a more holistic lens that considers local and non-local forces that influence material culture because no such place exists that is “dominate enough to be global and self-contained enough to be local” (Latour 2005, 204).

By incorporating postcolonial theory into studies of indigenous consumption and examining the material culture that emerges out of colonial interactions, such objects can be understood in a broader framework. Colonial interactions always involve material culture (Gosden and Knowles 2001) and the reality of these processes is that “things shape people, rather than the reverse” (Gosden 2004, 153). For instance, postcolonial theorist Homi Bhabha’s (1994) concept of hybridity and mimicry provide alternative frameworks in which to consider material
culture that emerges out of these often fluid and varied colonial interactions. Scholarship can be decolonized when concepts of hybridity and mimicry acknowledge the emergence of new cultural and material cultural realities (Bhabha 1994). The frequent fluid nature of colonial interactions “often produce social and material outcomes that blend technology, preferred style, and social meaning” (Walder 2015, 16).

For the purposes of this project, I borrow Stephen Silliman’s definition of colonialism, which he refers to as the process of:

attempted domination by a colonial/settler population based on perceptions and actions of inequality, racism, oppression, labor control, economic marginalization, and dispossession…[and the] resistance, acquiescence, and living through these by indigenous people who never permit these processes to become final and complete who frequently retain or remake identities and traditions in the face of brutal conditions (2005, 59)

Beaudoin (2013) argues that Silliman’s definition acknowledges that both the colonizer and the colonized are active participants in colonial processes rather than perpetuating the idea of passivity and domination. I find that his definition of the colonial process and his emphasis on fluidity to be appropriate when describing relations in the Great Lakes Region and the initial relationships between Native Americans and Europeans in the eastern United States.

Prompted by the fluid nature of colonial interactions during the Fur Trade, indigenous consumers used European goods in novel ways. Paying close attention to consumption practices and applying them to social processes involves considering the choice and agency of consumers (Cipolla 2015; Douglas and Isherwood 1976; Hamilton and Nicholson 2007). Daniel Miller (2005) additionally argues that consumption modifies and creates aspects of culture and that it is a productive social process. It deserves emphasis that the objects people chose to consume became a part of the “signifying practice” of culture, as defined by Roland Barthes (1972), and
played an important role in creating new material culture realities to assert aspects of individual and group identity.

**The silver trade**

As the demand for fur in Europe intensified between the mid-16th and 17th centuries, traders made their way to North America for what they hoped was an endless supply of furs. Prior to the establishment of fur trade companies, such as the American Fur Trade Company (1808-1842) or the Hudson’s Bay Company (est. 1670), various unofficial and isolated economic transactions were already taking place between voyageurs (independent traders) and indigenous communities (Hoxie 2016; Loren 2008). While peltry was the primary force driving trade and the establishment of trade companies, designating this period, as the “Fur Trade” can be somewhat misleading, notes historian Peter Cook (1995). Given the extremely varied economic exchanges taking place in the 17th through 19th century, it could easily be interpreted as “the kettle trade”, “glass bead trade”, or, for the purposes of this research, the silver or even brooch trade (Cook 1995, 75).

For thousands of years prior to European arrival to North America indigenous communities participated in extensive trade networks (Stewart 1989; Swagerty 1987). Raw material and objects made of marine shell, obsidian, and turquoise are examples of commodities that traveled thousands of miles from their initial points of origin to various indigenous communities (Swagerty 1987). A recognition of the existence prehistoric exchange networks supports the notion that when European trade goods were introduced they had a less than revolutionary impact (Stewart 1989; Miller and Hamell 1986). Fur Trade exchange networks were also built over some of these preexisting trade routes (Swagerty 1987).
Near the end of the 17th century, silver was first introduced to northeastern tribes in the form of European medals (Alberts 1953; Baerreis 1950; Converse 1902; Frederickson 1980; Quimby 1966). Presentation of silver medals was quickly followed by gifts of various types of jewelry, including brooches, bracelets, earrings, finger-rings, gorgets, armbands, and headbands (Alberts 1953; Baerreis 1950; Brown 1918; Quimby 1966). Assorted styles of Jesuit rings were among the important metal trade goods exchanged (Mason and Ehrhardt 2009; Mercier 2011). Early on Jesuit rings had religious connotations, but later may have signified political affiliations, marital ties, or the commemoration of events (Mason and Ehrhardt 2009).

Silver gifts and medals, often stamped with the insignias of European powers, held political significance and were exchanged for alliance and friendship (Alberts 1953; Baerreis 1950; Frederickson 1980). At first, exchanges of silver ornaments were confined to primarily military transactions (Alberts 1951; Frederickson 1980; LaBar-Kidd 2000). The political significance these objects held was well known among European and indigenous communities alike, and both understood the act of returning silver gifts implied surrender of an alliance and friendship (Frederickson 1980). For example, for the most part gorgets were exchanged between high-ranking European military officials and gifted to war chiefs or other high-ranking indigenous individuals (Woodward 1946). Brooches were among the smaller diplomatic gifts exchanged between military officials but were not regarded as being as politically important as gorgets (or medals) (Frederickson 1980). Peace medals were also issued by the Spanish, French and English (and eventually the American government) in order to commemorate a victory or at a treaty signing (Jester 1961). Unlike gorgets and peace medals, brooches were more commonly available at trading posts and circulated between individual traders (Brown 1918; Frederickson 1980; Quimby 1966).
The most common forms of silver traded in eastern North America, and eventually the Great Lakes region, include brooches, crosses and crucifixes, armbands, wristbands, bracelets, and earrings (Converse 1902; Beauchamp 1906; Alberts 1953; Quimby 1966; Frederickson 1980). Brooches eventually functioned similarly to wampum for solidifying treaties or friendships, and was also a form of currency used at trading posts (Mainfort 1987).

Once brooches began circulating in economic spheres outside of military exchanges, silver jewelry quickly made its way into various indigenous communities. As a consequence, adornment on clothing intensified (Frederickson 1980). Within the larger category of silver ornaments, brooches were by far the most commonly traded item among Woodland indigenous groups (Alberts 1953; Beauchamp 1903; Converse 1902; Parker 1910). While both Men and women wore brooches, women wore them more frequently and in higher quantities (Alberts 1953). Small round brooches were occasionally worn “in the hundreds” and attached close together, such that some overlapped, giving an appearance similar to the look of chain mail armor (Quimby 1966). Wearing a large number of brooches, too became, an indication of status and a sign of wealth (Alberts 1953).

By the early 1700s, as a direct response to the demand for silver ornaments, European silversmiths established themselves in New France, or what today is Canada. Quebec quickly emerged as a central point for European production of silver ornaments, specifically for trade with Native Americans (Frederickson 1980). In the mid-1750s Philadelphia also emerged as the second important center of European silversmithing; again, based primarily on the demand among indigenous groups in the northeast such as the Iroquois (Alberts 1953; Baerreis 1950; Frederickson 1980). For these newly established European silversmiths, silver coins were the primary source of silver for the production of brooches (Beauchamp 1903; Converse 1902;
Silver coins were melted down, hammered, and cut into desired shapes; occasionally copper was added to improve durability (Alberts 1953; Frederickson 1980).

Despite the establishment of silversmiths in New France and Philadelphia, large fur trade companies continued to import silver ornaments from London and other European cities (Frederickson 1980). Market prices for metal, including silver, began rising in the 19th century, which partly led to the rising popularity of using nickel silver or “German silver” (Demeter 1980).

**German silver**

Pure silver ornaments were actively traded between 1760-1821, appearing in the Great Lakes region after 1766 (Quimby 1966). Prior to the 19th century, nickel silver was of only marginal importance in Europe but due to the rising market prices of pure silver it became an inexpensive alternative supporting the mass-production of ornaments (Demeter 1980). German silver, which is also referred to as nickel silver or white copper, is an alloy that consists mainly of zinc, copper, and nickel (Demeter 1980; Holland 1936). When exactly nickel silver became referred to as “German silver” remains uncertain. Some authors (e.g. Alberts 1953) claim that the term “German silver” became popular after its use in Hildburghausen, Germany in the early 19th century. However, variations of the alloy have been used since the 8th century A.D. in China and were introduced into Europe through trade (Holland 1936; Demeter 1980).

The production of German silver and the small percentage of pure silver needed to produce it allowed for more affordable and manageable large-scale production of ornaments for trade (Frederickson 1980; Quimby 1966). Additionally, technological innovations allowed for the German silver alloy to be produced in sheet form, contributing to its effectiveness as an alternative raw material (Demeter 1980).
It remains somewhat unclear as to when German silver began circulating in North America. According to Alberts, German silver began being used in North America around 1825 (1953, 77), while Douglas and Marriot (1942) specify 1832 as the year it was initially introduced. At first, German silver was brought to North America in both sheet form and as finished products (Alberts 1951). Robert Wallace is recorded to be the first person to produce German silver in North America. Wallace supposedly purchased the formula in 1836 and began production shortly afterward in Waterbury, Connecticut (Demeter 1980; Lathrop 1926). German silver became widely available in sheet form by the 1850s at trading posts throughout the region (Woodward 1946).

After the mid-19th century, brooches were primarily made of or plated with German silver (Alberts 1953). Not only was it much more affordable for producing high quantities of ornaments, but it also was known to have a high sheen which mimicked the appearance of pure silver (Alberts 1953; Demeter 1980). Being an inexpensive durable alternative, German silver allowed for the “customization” of brooches for the consumers. Specifically, according to one Quebec silversmith, products had to be “thin and well-polished yet able to stand engraving” (Frederickson 1980, 38, quoting Langdon 1966, 18).

**Defining trade silver**

‘Trade silver’ refers to any compositional combination of zinc, copper, nickel, and occasionally lead or iron (Demeter 1980). Trade silver contains little to no percentage of pure silver. The term “trade silver” is also used to refer to finished products (i.e. brooches, bracelets) and sheets of German silver. However, the term trade silver is somewhat misleading (LaBarr-Kidd 2000). Trade silver is used to refer to European manufactured objects in addition to ornaments manufactured by indigenous silversmiths (Alberts 1953; LaBarr-Kidd 2000). Others
refer to objects as “trade silver” when produced by European or Euroamerican smiths and use “Indian silver” to refer to those manufactured by Iroquois silversmiths (LaBar-Kidd quoting a personal communication with George Hamell 2000, 25). The rise of indigenous silversmithing will be discussed later in this chapter, however it is important to understand the history behind the use of the term “trade silver” and how it will be used in the remainder of this thesis. Based on the nature of the term “trade silver” and for the sake of clarity, I find it appropriate to refer to the brooches that are the focus of this project as “German silver.”

The problem with using the terminology “Indian silver” or “trade silver” manifests when referring to finished products. Brooches made by European, Euroamerican, or indigenous silversmiths can be identical in form and decoration (LaBar-Kidd 2000). This makes distinguishing between “Indian silver” and “trade silver” almost impossible (Alberts 1953; Baerreis 1950; LaBar-Kidd 2000; Quimby 1966). For example, Luckenbooth double-heart brooches tend to be almost identical whether they are produced by European or indigenous silversmiths. Hence, Luckenbooth brooches can be indistinguishable without the presence of a maker’s mark (or touch mark) making it nearly impossible to determine who manufactured these forms (Alberts 1953; LaBar-Kidd 2000).

Maker’s marks, or touch marks, refer to the stamp of the silversmith who manufactured the silver ornaments. European smiths in Europe and North America often stamped their initials onto the finished products as their maker’s or touch marks (Alberts 1953; Converse 1902; Frederickson 1980; Quimby 1966). During what Quimby (1966) designates as the Late Historic Period (ca. 1760-1820), trade silver stamped with either the silversmith’s initials or a branded insignia is the single best criterion for dating archaeological sites. Presence of a maker’s mark can narrow down the time period in which the object was manufactured (Quimby 1966). For
example, a touch mark frequently seen in the Great Lakes region is “RC” which stands for Robert Cruickshank. Robert Cruickshank was a Montreal silversmith whose German silver jewelry (including brooches) were popular trade items between the years of about 1779 to 1806 (Quimby 1966). Consequently, Cruickshank’s active years can then be used as a date range to estimate when an archaeological site was occupied (Quimby 1966). In MPM’s collection there is a single heart surmounted with a crown that has the “RC” touch mark of Robert Cruickshank. However, this brooch was “found in collections” without provenience information associated with it. The designation “found in collections” refers to the recovery of objects in the museum that lack a physical catalog or accession number written on them that therefore cannot be tied to a specific accession.

The majority of MPM Woodland brooches have no touch marks and ornaments bearing no touch marks are often interpreted as manufactured by indigenous silversmiths (e.g. Converse 1902; Alberts 1953; Baerreis 1950). While this may be the case in some instances, occasionally Euroamerican or European silversmiths would also neglect to stamp an insignia or their initials on brooches because of how small the ornaments were (Quimby 1966). In short, it simply may not be possible to determine which individual pieces Native silversmiths manufactured, but that does not lessen their cultural importance.

To summarize, trade silver is an all-encompassing term that refers to the raw material and finished products made of German silver, or a similar alloy, that was manufactured by Europeans for the purposes of trade with Native Americans. Trade silver is also used to refer to products produced such as jewelry and catlinite pipes inlaid with trade silver, by indigenous silversmiths for internal consumption within indigenous communities and also for exchange with European traders.
The brooches upon which this project is focused, according to the MPM catalog and accession records, are made of German silver (Alberts 1951, 1953). To compositionally confirm this is outside the scope of this project and it is a destructive technique insofar as it involves immersing the object in a diluted solution of nitric acid (see Demeter 1980). Despite the fact they lack touch marks, their associated documentation states that the Kickapoo brooches were manufactured by silversmiths in Coahuila, Mexico and some brooches in the James Howard collection were made by Seneca and Pawnee silversmiths. Of those MPM brooches collected in Canada, New York, and Wisconsin, the majority of them lack maker’s marks. This led previous researchers to believe the Menominee, Oneida, and other Iroquois brooches may be products of indigenous manufacture (e.g. Alberts 1953).

**Trade relations in the northeast**

The Six Nations of the Iroquois, or Haudenosaunee, occupied the region bordering Lake Huron, Erie, and Ontario in the eastern United States and southeastern Canada (Fenton 1971). The Iroquois Confederacy, established prior to European arrival, was an alliance of five Iroquois-speaking nations including the Mohawk, Oneida, Onondaga, Cayuga, and Seneca. Between 1722-1723 the Tuscarora joined the Confederacy officially making it the Six Nations of the Iroquois.

In the 16th century, due to geographic proximity to the eastern seaboard, the Iroquois were among the first groups to encounter Europeans traders. Soon thereafter, the Iroquois joined a growing global market producing furs, food, and other various goods to participate in economic exchanges with Europeans (DuVal 2016). Gifts of silver quickly took on an important role in establishing political alliances (Alberts 1953; Baerreis 1950; Frederickson 1980; Quimby 1966).
The “Covenant Chain”, one of the most well-known political alliances, was established between the Iroquois and Dutch (Frederickson 1980; Haan 2003). The origins of the Covenant Chain are difficult to determine based on available historical documentation. More specifically, available historical sources are European in origin and saturated with biased perspectives and obscured by individual motivations (Haan 2003). Frederickson (1980, 11) place 1618 as the origin of the alliance between the Dutch and Mohawk. We do know, however, that the Covenant Chain began as a practical trading alliance motivated by the economic interests of the Dutch and Mohawk (Haan 2003). This trading relationship also allowed for the Dutch to establish themselves in North America and provided the Iroquois with a source for European trade goods.

Symbolically, the Covenant Chain was a pledge of friendship and is described as a “Dutch ship tied to a tree, first with a rope and later with an iron chain. The rope represented an alliance of equals; iron underscored its strength” (Frederickson 1980, 11). With the arrival of the British between 1677 and 1690, Dutch settlers were displaced, and the iron chain of friendship between the Dutch and Mohawk dissolved. The British, attempting to mirror Dutch efforts, took over the Covenant Chain, but it became known as a silver rather than an iron chain (Haan 2003). The change from iron to silver reflected the growing prevalence and importance of silver in the 17th century. Metaphorically, the switch from iron to silver:

…not only reflected the English sense of a new arrangement of longer duration, but also an alliance that systematized Iroquois-English relations into a multicultural entity in which the two sides agreed to share power of the Northeast, and to do so with a decidedly anti-French bias (Haan 2003, 43).

The silver Covenant Chain represented shared power between the British and Iroquois in the Northeast. The British were competing with French economic and social interests in the Fur
Trade, so this alliance served as a reminder and a social contract for the Iroquois that encouraged them not to engage in trade relations with the French (Haan 2003).

During the early stages of the British-Iroquois “Silver Covenant”, language used in treaties represented European interest in maintaining mutually beneficial relationships with members of the Iroquois (Haan 2003). Colonial officials documented English metaphors and Iroquois metaphors for the chain, which Haan (2003) argues reinforced notions of a mutually beneficial relationship for both sides. The Covenant Chain dissolved when colonial governments began establishing rule over Iroquois territory. As a result, trade relations began to dissolve since “there could be no covenant where there was no equality” (Frederickson 1980, 11).

Aside from formally establishing the Covenant Chain, British officials used silver for the purposes of recruitment and reward (Frederickson 1980). Sir William Johnson, British commissioner and Superintendent of Indian Affairs North of the Ohio River in 1755, frequently documented gifts of silver exchanged between officials and individuals (Frederickson 1980; LaBar-Kidd 2000). Eventually, the French and American governments also participated in distribution of silver to gain and maintain alliances with indigenous communities as well (Alberts 1953; Beauchamp 1903; LaBar-Kidd 2000). Gorgets and armbands engraved with the official American seal were frequently presented to various tribal leaders (Beauchamp 1903; Baerreis 1950; Alberts 1953; Frederickson 1980; LaBar-Kidd 2000). Large silver brooches were among those gifts presented to various high-ranking individuals and they subsequently made their way into more domestic contexts (Frederickson 1980). The prevalence of brooches circulating in North America during the mid-17th century gained the attention of additional indigenous consumers who were now participating in a growing global market economy (DuVal 2016).
Trade relations in the Great Lakes region

By the mid-17th century, the Winnebago and central Algonquian groups including the Menominee, Sac, Fox, Kickapoo, and Potawatomi encountered French explorers and fur traders as they made their way from New France into present day Wisconsin (Beck 2005; Keesing 1987; Latorre and Latorre 1976). Algonquian groups referred to the first Frenchmen arriving in their areas as manidowek or manitous, which were spiritual beings (White 1991). The French grouped all indigenous peoples they came in contact with as Algonquians, despite the fact that “Algonquian” is a linguistic designation rather than an ethnic one (see Fahlander 2007). By the time the French arrived, mass migration of tribes from the east was being driven by the Iroquois Wars. Therefore, Algonquians desired and expected protection and aid from French traders (White 1991). At this time, the majority of central Algonquian tribes allied in some capacity with Europeans in the region for access to trade goods and/or protection.

The Upper Great Lakes region in the 17th and into the 18th century was referred to by the French as the pays d’en haut, or “French Upper Country” (White 1991). Neither the French nor Algonquian groups socially dominated the region; rather historian Richard White designates the French Upper Country as “the Middle Ground” (1991). According to White (1991), the Middle Ground was built on mutual accommodation and cooperation that was maintained through mutually beneficial exchanges. These exchanges created a paternalistic fictive kinship relationship between the French “Fathers” and their Algonquian “children” (White 1991, 95). Gift-giving of trade goods such as glass beads or silver helped to foster and maintain relationships in the Middle Ground (Walder 2015; White 1991). Agreements were only official if goods were exchanged, therefore the French had to accommodate not only obligations to
materially live up to Algonquian expectations, but they also had to adapt to how Algonquian people conceived of fair exchange (White 1991).

French conceptions of trade were for the most part still largely based on European ideas regarding the fair price for commodities (White 1991). However, in order for the French to acquire necessary goods and solidify legal agreements, it was critical to understand Algonquian conceptions of exchange and what they wanted to get out of these partnerships (White 1982; White 1991). Algonquian peoples in the Great Lakes region considered exchanges to be gifts rather than trade commodities and aimed at establishing reciprocal exchanges (White 1982; White 1991). When one frames exchanges through the lens of gift-exchange, trade becomes a way to prove trustworthiness and establish “reciprocal confidence that would minimize risks on both sides” (White 1982, 60). Reciprocity was critical and trade could not exist if no prior relationship was established and a form of social accountability was not created (White 1991, 100).

The Middle Ground was an ongoing process as much as it was a geographic place, requiring a considerable amount of effort on all sides in order to make exchanges mutually beneficial (White 1991). This is not to say that both sides had similar ideas regarding equitable exchange, but rather trade was successful because there were different values ascribed to trade goods by both sides. Europeans placed a high value on furs, which were not similarly valued among indigenous communities (Witgen 2012). Initially, for indigenous communities, raw materials were the primary motivation for acquiring European trade goods (Ehrhardt 2013). Objects, such as kettles made of iron-based copper or iron were often melted down and used to create beads, bracelets, pendants and other types of objects for adornment (Cipolla 2017; Ehrhardt 2013; Howley 2017).
After the Seven Years War (1756-1763) with the British, the French lost control of trade in the Great Lakes. The British relationship that developed with Algonquian people diverged from the French model of mutually beneficial gift-giving (White 1991). The British pursued a much more economic, market-driven, exchange with the Algonquians and failed to comprehend the fictive kinship relationship the French had created (Walder 2015). The market-driven relationship was simply what the British were more accustomed to (White 1991). Some French traders were permitted to remain active in the pays d-en haut, but were required to report to the British crown (Beck 2005).

**Oneida, Stockbridge, and Brothertown Migration**

Eventually, Iroquois groups faced the increased encroachment of European settlers. Because of dwindling fur resources and the lust for land, the Iroquois felt increasing pressure from the U.S. government to abandon or sell their lands (Hauptman and McLester 1999). The Six Nations homeland eventually split into two confederacies: Onondaga in central New York and Oshweken in Ontario (Hauptman 2008, 11). While most of the Iroquois Nations remained near their original territory, some members of the Oneida nation decided to move westward in order to settle in the Green Bay area of Wisconsin (Beck 2002).

In 1821, the Menominee and Ho-Chunk signed a treaty ceding land near Lake Winnebago and the Fox River in order to help the Oneida, Stockbridge, and Brothertown tribes from New York (Beck 2005). Between the years of 1818-1838, the Oneida along with the Stockbridge and Brothertown communities migrated to Wisconsin, while other Oneida members migrated to Ontario, Canada (Hauptman and McLester 1999). After a series of treaty negotiations, the Oneida occupied land on the eastern shore of Lake Winnebago (Beck 2002).
Figure 4 shows the original reservation boundaries from 1783-1889; over time, the reservation became smaller.

Figure 4: This map shows original reservation boundaries between 1783-1889. Adapted from Tanner (1987, 163). Abbreviation Key: Ojibwe (OJ), Stockbridge Munsee (ST MU), Brothertown (BR), Iroquois (IQ), Menominee (ME), Dakota (DA), Winnebago (WI)
Kickapoo Migration

The Kickapoo are a Central Algonquian-speaking tribe originating from what Gibson (1963,3) calls the “Algonquian heartland” referring to the territory bordered by the Great Lakes to the north, Mississippi River to the west, and Ohio River to the south. In 1634 French explorers recorded the Kickapoo occupying territory in southeastern Wisconsin, having been pushed out of Lower Michigan by the Iroquois who were moving westward in search of beaver and to flee encroaching European settlers (Gibson 1963; Goggin 1951, Latorre and Latorre 1976; Ritzenthaler and Peterson 1956).

The majority of Algonquian groups allied in some capacity with Europeans for trade in this region, however the Kickapoo were initially hesitant (Gibson 1963; White 1991). The Kickapoo were also known to be particularly hostile toward Jesuit priests (Gibson 1963; Latorre and Latorre 1976). Ultimately, economic and social pressures prompted the Kickapoo to ally with the French, with whom they remained trade partners well into the 18th century (Latorre and Latorre 1976). A silver Louis XV medal was even presented to the Kickapoo as a gift for their loyalty to the French (Frederickson and Peterson 1956; Latorre and Latorre 1976). The Latorre’s note that the Kickapoo in Coahuila still possessed this medal in the 1960s (Latorre and Latorre 1976, 5).

From Wisconsin, the Kickapoo moved into northern Illinois territory in the 18th century, settling near the present city of Peoria (Goggin 1951). In 1819, the Kickapoo signed a treaty ceding their Illinois territory for land in southwestern Missouri near St. Louis (Goggin 1951; Latorre and Latorre 1976). Again, under pressure from encroaching settlers, the Kickapoo migrated further south and were granted land in Kansas by treaty in 1832 (Goggin 1951). In 1832, the 3,000 remaining Kickapoo dispersed into several bands and spread out geographically.
from the Great Lakes to Mexico (Latorre and Latorre 1976). Shortly thereafter, the Kickapoo obtained 200,000 acres (reduced to 22,529 in 1895) in Oklahoma and negotiated territory in Coahuila, Mexico (Goggin 1951). See Latorre and Latorre 1976 for a more detailed history of Kickapoo migrations.

**Indigenous silversmithing**

Archaeological evidence suggests that prehistorically, objects of adornment were fashioned out of materials such as bone, shell, stone, and copper in the northeast and Great Lakes region of North America (Alberts 1953; Beauchamp 1901, 1903; Converse 1902; Parker 1910). The existence of a brooch precursor, however, is contested. Parker (1910) argues there is no precursor to brooches in North America prior to its introduction by Europeans; however, Harrington (1908) argues objects “similar enough” to brooches existed and were used as adornment. Still, Harrington (1908) failed to provide any photographs or renderings of the objects he claimed were precursors to the brooch, so it is generally accepted that European-introduced brooch forms lack a prehistoric precursor (Alberts 1953; Beauchamp 1903; Converse 1902; Parker 1910) and therefore represented a novel form of material culture. Additionally, I will argue that even if there were objects “similar enough” to brooches, the way in which European-origin brooches were re-conceptualized as objects with layered identities still represent a new hybrid form of material culture.

Dwindling fur resources in the eastern region eventually caused indigenous trading partners and Europeans to move their economic interests westward. Western movement also included gifts of silver ornaments (Alberts 1953). With less access to traders and the inability of Euroamerican silversmiths to keep up with the demand, various indigenous communities learned how to silversmith (Alberts 1953). The Iroquoian people were among the first to learn
silversmithing from Europeans (Traquair 1938) and were the first observed wearing brooches in large numbers (Beauchamp 1903; Converse 1902). Eventually other Woodland groups including the Alibamu, Cherokee, Choctaw, Cree, Delaware, Fox, Huron, Illinois, Iowa, Kickapoo, Koasati, Miami, Micmac, Ojibwa, Ottawa, Penobscot, Potawatomi, Sac, Seminole, Shawnee, Wea, and Yuci in eastern North American learned silversmithing (Woodward 1946, 5).

Between 1790-1800, the first indigenous groups to learn silversmithing included the Iroquois, Delaware, Cherokee, Alibamu, and possibly the Shawnee (Woodward 1946). By 1809, there were 49 Cherokee silversmiths manufacturing ornaments for individual use and for trade (Woodward 1946). By 1852 there was a silversmith in almost every Iroquois village (Baerreis 1950; Tooker 1994).

European trade goods had already infiltrated the Great Lakes region by the time Europeans physically arrived (Beck 2005; Keesing 1987). The Menominee and other Wisconsin tribes had already come into contact with trade goods, including silver brooches post-1766 (Quimby 1966). The knowledge of silversmithing, however, was brought with the Oneida, Stockbridge, and Brothertown nations as they began migrating to Wisconsin (ca. 1818-1838) (Alberts 1953; Baerreis 1950; Quimby 1966). The Menominee were the first to learn silversmithing in Wisconsin (Baerreis 1950; Skinner 1921). The Oneida may have brought the knowledge of silversmithing with them to Wisconsin, however, it remains unknown whether or not the Oneida brought the actual practice. In other words, it is unknown whether or not an Oneida silversmith was among the people who migrated to Wisconsin in the mid-19th century and taught the Menominee how to silversmith. This becomes crucial as to whether or not the Menominee learned from an Oneida silversmith or if they learned how to manufacture silver jewelry from Europeans or other indigenous silversmiths.
The presence of Woodland silversmithing production is currently confined to present-day Wisconsin and New York State. Baerreis (1950, 82) notes that indigenous silversmithing did not appear to reach across the entire region from the northeast to the Great Lakes. For example, Michigan lacks evidence to support silversmith production to the extent it occurred in the New York and Wisconsin regions, despite the frequent occurrence of silver ornaments in burials (Quimby 1966). Part of Baerreis’ (1950) argument is also based on available documentation of indigenous silversmithing, of which, in case of the Iroquois, there is significantly more. Absence of evidence of silversmithing production stretching across the region led Baerreis (1950) to argue New York and Wisconsin appear to represent the two major centers of indigenous silversmithing in the 19th century.

To date, literature regarding indigenous brooch manufacture is seldom, due primarily to the absence of first-hand accounts from indigenous silversmiths as well as Europeans who came in contact with them. Based on the little evidence available on indigenous silversmithing, techniques among the Iroquois and Menominee appear to have been quite similar, if not the same (Alberts 1951, 1953; Baerreis 1950; Harrington 1908; Parker 1910). At first, brooches were made by hammering down European silver coins to produce an even thickness (Harrington 1980; Skinner 1921). The hammered down coin was then filed down to smooth the surface and prepare it for additional decoration (Harrington 1908).

By the time anthropologists and historians became interested in documenting indigenous techniques, it had become challenging to find silversmiths who still practiced or had knowledge of the craft. Silversmithing lost popularity among Iroquois nations around 1865 (Frederickson 1980; Lyford 1982) possibly due to cultural changes and the lack of raw material. In 1921, MPM curator Alanson Skinner recorded the last known Menominee silversmith, Teko Whitefish.
In 1907, Mark R. Harrington was given the opportunity to speak with a member of the Onondaga on the Six Nations reservation in Ontario who was an ex-silversmith. Chief Levi Joe learned silversmithing from his grandfather and explained to Harrington how ornaments were made as well as the taxonomies of local brooches (Harrington 1908, 355).

Chief Joe explained to Harrington that after a coil was hammered, brooch shapes were cut out of a cheaper material, such as tin, and laid over the silver before cutting (Harrington 1908). Secondary decorations engraved onto the surface would be done in more of a stamping technique rather than cutting, though Harrington (1908, 364) notes “no regular form of stamp was used”, denoting engravings were hand stamped by each individual silversmith. Chisels were used to make curved lines and ovals, while graver-strikers and gravers were used to make the zig-zag tracery (Harrington 1908), or what LaBarr-Kidd (2000) calls “wriggle-work.”

Aside from hammering European coins and using sheets for manufacturing brooches, molds are documented as having been used for making silver ornaments (Carroll 2005; Harrington 1908). Archaeologically molds have also been recovered and are identified as such as a result of their typical brooch shaped cavities (Carroll 2005). Harrington, while speaking with Chief Levi Joe, was told of there was a history of using wooden molds. Quimby (1966) additionally mentions stone molds found in eastern North America, specifically noting one found at Fort Joseph in Michigan.

Stone molds were generally used by American settlers and indigenous people to cast bullets and shot (Carroll 2005). Less commonly recovered are stone molds used to cast crosses, circular brooches and animal shaped brooches (Carroll 2005). Beauchamp (1903) mentions a stone mold with circular depressions, which Carroll (2005) argues was most likely a mold for casting brooches. Recovery of stone molds with circular depressions that are thought to have
been used to cast brooches are typically found in the eastern United States, and seldom found outside the region, with the Ohio River Valley as an exception (Carroll 2005). Steatite, or soapstone, is most commonly used for stone molds due to its ability to withstand high temperatures. The longest stretch of steatite deposits run parallel to the Appalachian Mountains, which may explain its popularity in eastern North America (Ericson and Purdy 1984).

Carroll (2005) additionally provides a photograph of a recent example of a steatite mold found in Ohio (Figure 5). This mold had a double bar cross, circular cavities, a turtle, and a beaver shape (Carroll 2005, 30). The back of the mold has “McKee” carved into it which may indicate that it was used by a Euroamerican silversmith or a trader who needed a more portable way to create adornment pieces. McKee was the name of a well-known trader in the area, which leads the author to believe that it belonged to a European or Euroamerican individual rather than belonging to an indigenous silversmith (Carroll 2005).

![Figure 5: Steatite stone mold from Ohio (Carroll 2005, 34)](image)

Pipestone (catlinite) a similar material to soapstone, was quarried in Minnesota. It is also easily carved and has been used since prehistory. A mold made of catlinite was found in St. Paul, Minnesota in 1857. It had “shallow molds, nine in total, including a small turtle, a simple double-barred cross, a small ornate single barred cross, one small and one large perfectly circular,
partitioned hair plate-like forms, and one double heart brooch form and three single-heart types” (Alberts 1953, 75). However, Alberts (1953) suggests that catlinite would not have been able to withstand the heat needed to melt silver, German silver, or iron. Rather, this mold would have been more suitable for use with lead, pewter, or some other kind of tin alloy with a lower required melting temperature (Alberts 1953).

**Regional brooch variations**

Brooches are typically divided into seven or eight basic shapes (e.g. Beauchamp 1903; Quimby 1966). These varieties include “circle ornate or pierced brooches [that] were concave-convex disks with central, circular openings”, plain circular (ring shaped), stars, quadrilateral or square, single hearts, crowned single hearts, double hearts, crowned double-hearts, and masonic-style brooches (Quimby 1966, 93). The latter stylistic categories are based solely on the shape of the brooch and do not encompass the varied secondary decorations cut out and traced onto surfaces. Less common shapes are animal effigies (Quimby 1966) or totem brooches (Converse 1902). Some shapes appear to have a more direct connection to European precursors, such as the Luckenbooth and heart forms (Quimby 1966).

Past research about North American Woodland German silver brooches has primarily focused on regional form differences between Iroquois and Menominee manufactured brooches. Circular shapes, rings, disks, and single hearts are common to both the eastern and Great Lakes regions (Alberts 1953; Beauchamp 1903; Converse 1902). Previous authors fail to note whether the “typical” shapes they designated as Iroquoian or Algonquian are referring to brooches worn by these groups or manufactured by them. In Alberts (1953), Baerreis (1950), and Beauchamp’s (1903) discussions, it appears that they are referencing brooches manufactured by Menominee and Iroquois silversmiths; not necessarily the range of varieties/shapes worn.
The use of single hearts (with or without crowns) and masonic-styles has also been observed in both regions (Baerreis 1950). What remains somewhat ambiguous is the production of specific varieties. Some brooch shapes are regarded as more popular in particular regions, however, evidence regarding the spread of certain styles or finished products is absent from previous research (see Baerreis 1950).

Double-hearts (with or without crowns), square, and masonic-styles occur most frequently among the Iroquois in New York and Canada (Beauchamp 1903; Harrington 1908; Alberts 1953; Quimby 1966). The double-heart Luckenbooth shaped brooch is referred to as the National Badge of the Iroquois Confederacy based on its popularity and how seldom they are found outside of the region (Alberts 1953; Beauchamp 1903; Harrington 1908; Frederickson 1980).

In 17th century Scotland, the Luckenbooth brooch was a popular love token (Beauchamp 1903; Parker 1910). There are many ideas surrounding the meaning of these shapes for the Iroquois. For example, the two hearts intertwined were thought to represent the various Iroquois Nations joined in friendship which is why it was an appropriate symbol for a National Badge (Harrington 1908; Alberts 1953). Other references for the double-heart brooch include an “owl’s head[s]” on top of them (Harrington 1908, 354) or “two jaws interlocked” Paterek (1996, 58).

It remains unclear if the form of the Luckenbooth was directly introduced or if Iroquois silversmiths mimicked the shape (LaBar-Kidd 2000). We do not know if Luckenbooth shapes were exchanged and gifted had the same meaning associated with them as they did for Europeans, or if these meanings were communicated to the Iroquois in trade (Alberts 1953). The Iroquois were known to add secondary decorations after acquiring brooches; adding dots, dashes, and other designs on the surface (Parker 1910). According to Converse (1902, r254), two divided
lines represented “winding paths and journeys” and the ‘o-o-o-o’ pattern made with dashes and circles represented “day and night journeys”. All of the double-heart, council squares, and masonic-style brooches in MPM’s collection have these additional traced secondary decorations in the form of dashes, dots, and lines.

Council squares, or square shaped brooches, are a common form found among the Iroquois and are less frequently found outside of the New York area (LaBar-Kidd 2000; Alberts 1953). Alberts (1953) claims the square Iroquois brooches in the MPM collection are likely of indigenous manufacture, based on the lack of European or Euroamerican maker’s marks or insignia. In his Master’s thesis Alberts compared brooches from the Oshkosh Public Museum (OPM) and the MPM and noted that there were forms in the OPM’s collection with European maker’s marks that were identical to forms in the MPM’s collection. The lack of maker’s marks is the primary evidence he used to argue that the MPM’s brooches were of indigenous manufacture (Alberts 1951, 1953).

Of particular interest to past scholars is the “masonic” brooch. LaBar-Kidd (2000) argues that, because some brooches were generally referred to as “the masonic variety” (Alberts 1953; Quimby 1966), this implies that among the Iroquois, there was an understanding of Freemasonry associations. Since this is uncertain, LaBar-Kidd (2000) therefore proposes reclassifying these shapes as “masonic-style”, in an attempt to deemphasize any association with Freemasons by directly referring to them as Masonic.

When or how the masonic-style brooch was adopted still remains unclear. There is evidence that the masonic-style, however introduced, was made of silver and German silver (Alberts 1953). Some scholars argue that, as a result, the masonic-style was manufactured during the years silver was actively traded (1760-1821) and after German silver was used in the 1830s
(Alberts 1953; Demeter 1980; Quimby 1966). Beauchamp (1903) fails to distinguish if the masonic-styles he refers to are made of silver or German silver and the failure to do so may have been because Beauchamp was unaware of the differences between pure silver and the popular alloy (Alberts 1953).

The typological classification of “Masonic” first appears in Converse’s 1902 and Beauchamp’s 1903 investigation of silver ornaments among the Iroquois in New York State. The masonic-style brooch has been noted in collections across the country and even as early as 1903, Beauchamp noted that there are more of these objects known than individual Native Americans belonging to the Freemasons. Joseph Brant, a Mohawk leader in the 18th century, is cited as the best known of the Native Freemasons (Beauchamp 1903; Alberts 1953; LaBarr-Kidd 2000).

What appears most likely is that Freemasons who were traders and settlers came into contact with eastern tribes and left an aesthetic impression with their symbolism (Alberts 1953). The Iroquois were known to wear the masonic-style upside down, referring to it as a “council fire” which supports the notion that these brooch varieties left more of an aesthetic impression than a political one (Alberts 1953, 57; Converse 1902). In short, their connection with Freemasonry appears purely coincidental (LaBar-Kidd 2000; Alberts 1953; Traquair 1938; Beauchamp 1903). Alberts (1953, 57) notes that none of the masonic-style brooches have been reported bearing touch-marks or seem to be mentioned specifically in any trade record. Additionally, masonic-styles, more than any other variety, lack the evidence of hammering marks (Alberts 1953), meaning they may not have been made from European coins. Masonic-styles also have “additional workings” in the form of traced designs on the surface.

In comparison to Iroquois and Menominee silverwork literature, less has been published regarding brooches manufactured and worn by the Kickapoo. Based on findings of previous
researchers, it appears that popular brooches were similar to that of the Menominee and Iroquois and took the form of circular, ring, and disk shapes (Goggin 1951; Ritzenthaler and Peterson 1956). Stars, hearts, double-hearts, square, and masonic-styles are absent from Kickapoo brooch repertoires (Goggins 1951; Latorre and Latorre 1976). Latorre and Latorre (1976) briefly discuss Mexican Kickapoo silversmithing and list similar tools used by Iroquois and Menominee silversmiths, although this comparison is not directly stated.
CHAPTER 4: RESULTS

As I mentioned in the introductory chapter, this project started out as a quantitative comparison between Iroquois and Menominee brooches. The information presented in chapter is the result of inventorying, recording physical data/secondary decorations, and investigating the associated documentation for each accession. Quantitative data are summarized in addition to the supplemental information and research gathered from associated documentation. Because the biographical approach was chosen for the methodology to further analyze this collection, I also include the lines of evidence that emerged as unproductive. Archaeological brooches will be discussed first and as a whole because the majority of these accessions include a single brooch. The brooches collected on expedition and/or purchased from New York, Ontario, Canada, and Coahuila, Mexico are discussed in separate sections within this chapter.

Several of the brooches in the MPM collections database (KE EMu) are recorded as having “no location on catalog card” and were not located for this project. Most of the brooches that are designated as having “no location” are associated with Wisconsin archaeology accessions (n=5), Barrett’s expedition to the Oneida and Menominee reservations (n=16), Barrett’s expedition to New York (n=31), Skinner’s expedition to the Menominee reservation (n=4), brooches purchased from Mark Harrington (n=18), and Barrett’s expedition to Canada (n=11). Other brooches that were not located are designated as “found in collections” and therefore cannot be associated with specific accessions. All of the brooches listed on the inventory purchased from the Latorre’s in 1975 were located for this project (accession 23800). A total of 367 brooches from the MPM collection were included in this project.

Many of the silver brooches were targets of a theft in the early 1970s (personal communication, Dawn Scher Thomae, Curator of Anthropology Collections/Senior Collections
Manager at MPM) which could explain why many of the brooches have unknown locations. It is unclear how many brooches were stolen during this theft versus those that are present but have no catalog numbers physically written on them in which to associate with an accession and subsequent documentation. The person responsible for the theft was caught and some, but not all, of the brooches and other jewelry were returned to the museum.

**Archaeological brooches**

A total of 39 brooches in the MPM collection were recovered archaeologically in Wisconsin. These brooches are classified as archaeological in the MPM’s collection based on their reported mode of acquisition—most were not acquired from Native Americans but found with burials and removed. Catalog books, accession records, and NAGPRA inventory sheets were used to gather all relevant contextual information.

The majority of brooches cataloged as archaeological were donated or purchased by the MPM. Two brooches were recovered from archaeological excavations including the DuBay homestead and The Big Eddy site on the Menominee Reservation. MPM’s archaeological brooches originate from eight counties: Calumet (n=17), Winnebago (n=1), Menominee (n=1), Outagamie (n=1), Green Lake (n=5), Vilas (n=1), Portage (n=1), and Sheboygan (n=9). Three brooches have no additional information regarding the county in Wisconsin from which they were collected from.

The MPM acquired all of the archaeological brooches between 1887 and 1937 (Figure 6). The catalog books indicate that 32 out of the 39 brooches were found in burial contexts. Recovering brooches from historical burial contexts is fairly common in Wisconsin and in other Midwestern states (Overton 1930; Baerreis 1950; Alberts 1953; Mainfort 1985).
Several of the archaeological brooches have no additional information associated with them beyond who gave them to the museum and the county in which they were found. Brooches donated by Mrs. Kendrick Shedd (accession 6266) are accompanied by no information aside from listing the original provenience as “Wisconsin” and the catalog book description notes “cemetery up north Wisconsin”. Similarly, one brooch donated by Wm (William) and Ed. (perhaps Edward or Edwin) in 1919 was reported as “found with remains of Indian woman”.

Figure 6: MPM Woodland archaeology brooches

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Catalog Number(s)</th>
<th>Accession Number</th>
<th>Method of Acquisition and when they came to the MPM</th>
<th>Provenience</th>
<th>Number and type of brooches</th>
<th>Additional information from catalog book regarding provenience</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A58313</td>
<td>28022</td>
<td>Excavation</td>
<td>Portage County (47-Pt-122)</td>
<td>1 disk (10 cm diameter)</td>
<td>DuBay Site</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A2452</td>
<td>No accession number</td>
<td>Purchase, Henry Hayssen 1897</td>
<td>Rantoul township, Calumet County, WI</td>
<td>15 circular, 1 star (8 points), 3-6 cm diameter</td>
<td>“Material collected from grave”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A10458a A10458b A10459a A10459b A10459c</td>
<td>No accession number</td>
<td>Gift, J.N. Stewart, 1901</td>
<td>Green Lake County, WI</td>
<td>5 circular/disk (5.3-10.0 cm diameter)</td>
<td>“Dress adornments”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A24361</td>
<td>6595</td>
<td>Donated by Wm. And Ed. Quarles 1919</td>
<td>Calumet County, WI</td>
<td>1 circular (2 cm in diameter)</td>
<td>“Found with remains of Indian woman”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A25606 A25607 A25608</td>
<td>6266</td>
<td>Gift, Mrs. Kendrick Shedd 1919</td>
<td>Wisconsin</td>
<td>3 circular (2-3 cm diameter)</td>
<td>“Cemetery up north Wisconsin”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A27971</td>
<td>4394</td>
<td>Purchase, F. M. Benedict 1921</td>
<td>Winnebago County, WI</td>
<td>1 circular (4 cm diameter)</td>
<td>“From Indian grave”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A30084</td>
<td>7027</td>
<td>Excavation, Alanson Skinner 1921</td>
<td>Menominee County, WI</td>
<td>1 ring (2 cm in diameter)</td>
<td>Big Eddy Site</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A48008</td>
<td>12653</td>
<td>Gift, Judge Spengler 1937</td>
<td>Outagamie County, WI</td>
<td>1 disk (10 cm diameter)</td>
<td>“Found with Indian burial”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E110</td>
<td>No accession number</td>
<td>Gift, Robert and Fred Vater, 1900</td>
<td>Sheboygan County, WI</td>
<td>3 circular (6 cm diameter) and 6 ring (2 cm diameter)</td>
<td>“Dress ornaments and rings taken from graves”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E2798</td>
<td>No accession number</td>
<td>Gift, Wisconsin Natural History Society, 1911</td>
<td>Vilas County</td>
<td>1 disk (10 cm diameter)</td>
<td>“Infant burial”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A brooch was gifted to the museum in 1937 reportedly from Outagamie County and was originally “found with Indian burial”. A purchase from F.M. Benedict in 1921 includes a brooch from an “Indian grave” in Winnebago County. A large disk brooch was donated from the Wisconsin Natural History Society and was reportedly found in an “infant burial”.

Finally, the last accession with scarce information associated with it was a gift from J. N. Stewart in 1901 of five brooches from Green Lake County. These four accessions (6595, 6266, 4394, 12653) and objects from Stewart with only catalog numbers represent the ten brooches in the archaeological collection with associated documentation describing simply “Wisconsin” as their location and having paltry information regarding the original context of their collection. Accessions with more information about their acquisition and provenience are discussed later in this chapter.

**Sheboygan County**

Nine brooches were assigned catalog number “E110”. The catalog book description states, “dress ornaments and rings, taken from graves.” These brooches were gifted to the museum in 1900 from Fred Vater, son of Robert Vater.

The only documentation that exists from this acquisition is the accession card and paperwork completed for compliance with NAGPRA in 1997. Under NAGRPA these objects are classified as UFO: unassociated funerary objects. In the Fall of 2015, a museum studies research paper was completed by Amanda Roller compiling all known documentation. She notes the 1997 NAGPRA paperwork indicates there may have been fourteen total brooches but only nine could be recovered during that inventory. These brooches were originally collected by Robert Vater who found them on his farm located 3.5 miles southwest of Plymouth Wisconsin in Sheboygan.
County. The catalog card indicates that this brooch is made of silver, while NAGPRA paperwork indicates it made from German Silver.

**Menominee and Portage County**

The “DuBay brooch” (Figure 7) was excavated from the DuBay site (47-Pt-122) in Portage County and was reportedly found in a domestic context (Wackman 1991, 125). The DuBay artifacts at the MPM represent the most comprehensive historical archaeology collection curated by the museum (Hagerman 2011). In 1941, under the direction of Anthropologist Dr. Phillip Nash, the homestead of John. B. DuBay was excavated with J.N. Emerson and graduate students from the University of Wisconsin-Madison (Wackman 1991). The project was undertaken in order to salvage what they thought was the DuBay trading post before the Consolidated Water Power Company’s construction of a dam took place (Wackman 1991, 153). Dr. Nash was unable to analyze the artifacts recovered from the homestead due to the beginning of World War I and they remained “unprocessed” in the MPM’s collection until 1986 when volunteers from Archaeological Rescue Inc. took on the project of inventorying and analyzing all of the materials (Wackman 1991).

The DuBay brooch is the only archaeological object that can be traced to a specific family, or person, during the Fur Trade era. John (Jean) Baptiste DuBay was born on July 10, 1810 to French fur trader John Louis DuBay who first arrived in what became the Wisconsin territory in 1790. John Baptiste DuBay’s mother was Menominee and reportedly the daughter of chief Pewatenot (Wackman 1991, 5). At the age of fifteen, John B. DuBay was hired by the American Fur Company and operated Fort Winnebago (now the city of Portage) from 1839-1851. DuBay was one of the most active traders in Wisconsin and the surrounding region (Wackman 1991, 5-7).
When the DuBay site was excavated in 1941, provenience information was lost or never collected. Since it was a salvage project, excavations were most likely rushed in order to save as much material culture as possible. Only one brooch was reportedly found at the DuBay site (Wackman 1991, 125). The specific location at the site, apart from being recorded as associated with the home, was not recorded.

![DuBay brooch obverse side](A58313/28022)

**Figure 7: DuBay brooch obverse side (A58313/28022)**

**Rantoul Township in Calumet County**

Sarah Smith’s (2014) Master’s thesis contributes to the biography of brooches from Rantoul Township in particular. Specifically, Smith compared NAGPRA documentation and information about the original location of Rantoul woman’s burial that was at first attributed to Riedel Cemetery (47-Ct-38). The Riedel Cemetery is a well-known Potawatomi cemetery located near Rantoul, WI, but was determined to be geographically inconsistent with the information Hayssen provided (Smith 2014). Rantoul woman’s probable burial date was based on the previous association with the Riedel Cemetery, and was listed in MPM documentation as 1850-1866. Based on the analysis of the material culture associated with Rantoul Woman’s and
re-analyzing documentation, Smith (2014) suggested the more specific probable burial date to be between 1853-1856.

According to Smith’s (2014) analysis, the human remains known as “Rantoul Woman” was possibly a member of the Menominee or Stockbridge tribes. Smith reached this conclusion based on the original location of John Berg’s farm in Rantoul, WI. Berg’s farm was located on former Menominee territory near the Stockbridge reservation (Smith 2014).

A total of 16 German silver brooches are a part of Rantoul Woman’s burial goods, 15 of which are still attached to clothing. The brooches are all circular shaped with geometric cutouts, with the exception of one which has eight points and resembles more of a star shape (Figure 8). Also, notable in Figure 8 in the photo on the right appears to be earrings fastened on the clothing in addition to brooches. Along with German silver brooches, Rantoul women’s burial goods in the MPM’s collection include “thimbles, coins, thousands of seed and octagonal beads, a picture frame, pocket mirror, pieces of a petticoat, a kaolin pipe, matches, beaded charm bags, a toy china teapot and saucers, and other personal items” (Smith 2014, 33).

![Figure 8: Rantoul Woman’s brooches (A2452/3059)](image-url)
1910 Wisconsin Expedition

In 1910 during his first few years as Anthropology curator at the MPM, Samuel A. Barrett collected material culture among the Oneida, Menominee, and Ojibwe in northern Wisconsin. Catalog book information for this accession lists the provenience as “Courte-Oreilles, Flambeau, Keshena, Wisconsin” indicating that Barrett visited the Lac Courte-Oreilles Reservation, the Lac du Flambeau Reservation, and the Menominee Reservation in Keshena, Wisconsin. According to the catalog book and accession records, the brooches collected during this trip came from the Menominee reservation and Oneida reservation. Reports and notes indicate Barrett also visited the Ojibwe in northern Wisconsin, however none of the brooches were recorded as having been acquired there.

According to the catalog book and accession record, 26 brooches were originally collected during this trip. A total of 16 brooches have “no location on catalog card”. Additional comments in the catalog book note “Oneida reservation” or “Menominee reservation” providing some indication as to where those particular objects were acquired by Barrett. The Lac du Flambeau and Lac Courte Oreilles affiliation for each brooch was recorded in the comment section in the catalog book. Based on the catalog book comments, a total of 5 brooches were collected from the Menominee reservation and 5 were obtained on the Oneida reservation (Figure 9).
Prior to this expedition, Barrett and Director Henry Ward visited various institutions in order to compare collections and exhibition content. This included a meeting with Arthur B. Parker of the New York State Museum (NYSM) in 1916. Arthur B. Parker was an archaeologist who worked at the NYSM from 1906-1925. As a member of the Seneca, Parker is regarded as one of the most important scholars of Iroquois history and material culture (Barbeau 1952). At the NYSM, Barrett’s had the ability to see the Iroquois life-group exhibit and assured Ward that the comparison with Milwaukee was “quite satisfying and showed us we rank well up in these matters” (1916, 4).

Copies of Barrett’s original 1910 field notes are housed in the Anthropology department at the MPM along with his 1918 and 1925 Canada and New York state field notes. The original field notes are housed at the Bancroft Library at the University of California, Berkley. In December of 1994, copies of Barrett’s 1910 field notes were compiled and annotated by Ann
McMullen, a former Anthropology Curator at MPM. She observed that the original 1910 field notes were found with the 1918 Canada/New York state field notes, suggesting that the former expedition notes were used to inform what to expect or look for during the latter. McMullen notes that due to the scant description of objects collected during the 1910 expeditions, not all of the items on the field list can be linked to existing catalog numbers.

Before attempting to match Barrett’s original field list with the brooches from storage or exhibit, I read through McMullen’s annotations. For the 1910 expedition, McMullen noted:

Due to skimpy descriptions, etc., not all items on the field list can be linked to existing catalog numbers. Also, Barrett probably also bought material during this trip from agents and thus did not make any notes regarding them. This is basically true for a number of basic commercial products, including split basketry, woodenware, silver jewelry.

At the top of the 1910 field list it reads “Oneida” and a total of three brooches are listed on the original 1910 field list (catalog numbers E6322, E6323, E6043). However, only one (E6323) was located for this project. It appears that field notes from Barrett’s visit with the Menominee and Ojibwe are missing or were never recorded. It is also possible that Barrett purchased material from Indian agents, as McMullen noted. No mention of the use of Indian agents or buying partners was mentioned in any of the associated documentation found in the research library at the MPM.

According to catalog book records and Alberts (1951, 1953) research, brooches were purchased from two Menominee individuals on the reservation: George Nikanis and Mary Kapickawit. Three brooches are listed as being purchased from Nikanis. All four brooches have secondary decorations in the form of geometric cutouts; two have diamond and Y-shaped cutouts and one has triangle cutouts (Figure 10). George Nikanis and Mary Kapickawit are not the only people Barrett purchased from according to the catalog book, however these are the only two
names associated with brooches or silversmithing tools. Brooches purchased on the Oneida reservation have no associated names listed in the comment section of the catalog book. Brooches collected by Barrett in 1910 are noted in Figure 10.

Figure 10: Brooches collected by Barrett in 1910

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Accession/catalog number</th>
<th>Provenience</th>
<th>Shape</th>
<th>Secondary Decorations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>E4370/2207</td>
<td>Menominee Reservation</td>
<td>Circular</td>
<td>Triangle cutouts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E4371/2207</td>
<td>Menominee Reservation</td>
<td>Circular</td>
<td>Diamond and y-shaped cutouts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E4376/2207</td>
<td>Menominee Reservation</td>
<td>Circular</td>
<td>Diamond and triangle cutouts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E4379/2207</td>
<td>Menominee Reservation</td>
<td>Circular</td>
<td>Diamond and y-shaped cutouts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E6037/2207</td>
<td>Oneida Reservation</td>
<td>Ring</td>
<td>Plain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E6038/2207</td>
<td>Oneida Reservation</td>
<td>Ring</td>
<td>Plain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E6040/2207</td>
<td>Oneida Reservation</td>
<td>Ring</td>
<td>Plain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E6322/2207</td>
<td>Oneida Reservation</td>
<td>Circular</td>
<td>Scalloped edge with oval cutouts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E6041/2207</td>
<td>Oneida Reservation</td>
<td>Star</td>
<td>Zig-zag tracery around central opening</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E6323/2207</td>
<td>Oneida Reservation</td>
<td>Square</td>
<td>Six circles traced in each corner</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Onondaga Reservation in New York

In 1918, Barrett made a trip to western New York state with the goal of visiting multiple Iroquois reservations. Prior to the expedition, Barrett compiled a list of artifacts he was interested
in acquiring and what to expect based on prior knowledge of Iroquois material culture. In
addition to these lists, Barrett also kept his 1910 notes amongst his 1918 notes, meaning he may
have been interested in acquiring material culture that could be objectively compared to what
was collected in 1910. This list was compiled before he met with Arthur C. Parker in New York
and may have served to help him decide where to go and who to see.

In the back of his field notebook, Barrett created a list of names. Among those names
were “E.R. Burmaster” and “Charles A. Cooke”. E.R. Burmaster previously worked with Parker
in the New York region. Ann McMullen suggests in the annotations of Barrett’s field notes that
E.R. Burmaster and Charles A. Cooke may have been names provided to Barrett from those at
the New York State Museum (possibly from Arthur Parker) as people to get in contact with
while in New York state and/or Canada.

During her time at the MPM, Ann McMullen compared Barrett’s original field notes to
the MPM catalog books in order to make sense of from which reservations he may have
collected specific material culture. For quite a few specimens, based on notes made by Barrett
and his assistant Mr. Peters, McMullen was able to narrow down from which reservations
material was collected over the course of their field work. Unfortunately, none of the locations
from which brooches were collected was resolved by McMullen’s effort. By comparing the field
lists and original numbers to the MPM’s catalog and accession numbers, McMullen noted there
are discrepancies between what is listed as being collected in the field and objects the MPM has
in the collection attributed to Barrett’s 1918 collecting efforts. Her annotations therefore note,
“Barrett may have used an Indian agent to purchase the material”. Contrary to the catalog book
entries for brooches collected during the 1910 Wisconsin expedition, the entries for these
accessions fail to mention the name(s) of the people from whom these brooches were collected
or from which reservation they were collected. This could be due to the higher volume of objects collected during this expedition compared to the previous trips, but could possibly support the suggestion that Barrett used Indian agents or other intermediaries to purchase some of these materials.

McMullen noted that for objects collected on this expedition, it can be assumed all brooches originated from the Six Nations reservation. Field lists of material collected from Coldspring, Tonawanda, and Cattaraugus reservations include no brooches. Brooches listed on the Onondaga field list and their corresponding field numbers could not be reconciled with catalog numbers assigned once they were accessioned. Therefore, I was unable distinguish which of the brooches were collected from the Onondaga.

The MPM Monthly report from December 1918 mentions a detailed report written by Barrett regarding this trip and specifically notes that there is more detail about the material culture. It is unclear whether the December 1918 report is referring to Barrett’s field notes or a more comprehensive additional report. However, in 1994, McMullen was unable to locate such a report. The name of the report is not mentioned, which makes locating it more difficult. It is possible that this report, along with Barrett’s original field notes, are also housed at the University of California archives at Berkley.

Traditional Iroquois shapes are represented in the brooches Barrett collected in New York. These shapes include stars, plain circular brooches, circular shapes with geometric cutouts, ring, square, double hearts with crowns, single hearts, single hearts with crowns, and the masonic-style (Figure 11). Figure 12 lists the 70 brooches that were located associated with this accession. It is important to keep in mind that brooch shapes designated as “traditionally Iroquoian” described in this chapter were designated by the first historians and anthropologists
who collected and analyzed these materials (e.g. Converse 1902; Beauchamp 1903; Harrington 1908; Parker 1910). The designation of “traditionally Iroquoian” are derived from the observation that these brooch styles were found and collected in high volumes in the early 20th century (e.g. Beauchamp 1903; Converse 1902; Morgan 1901).

Figure 11: Sample of brooches collected in New York. Left to right: (top) E24343/6084, E24432/6084, E24439/6084; (bottom) E24391/6084, E24383/6084, E24421/6084, E24335/6084.
In December 1920, MPM Assistant Curator Alanson Skinner visited the Menominee reservation in Keshena, Wisconsin. No additional information was found regarding this accession in the catalog books, accession files, or the MPM monthly and yearly reports. On this expedition, Skinner collected seven individual brooches, and three were found during the course of this project (Figure 13). In addition to individual brooches, Skinner also acquired a Menominee woman’s blouse with brooches fastened around the collar.

Figure 14 includes two photographs: one taken for Albert’s 1953 thesis and the second color photograph taken for this project on January 4, 2018. As seen in the photographs in Figure

---

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Shape</th>
<th>Number of brooches</th>
<th>Accession/catalog numbers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Star</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>E24335-E24337/6084; E24339/6084</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Square</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>E24346-23493/6084; E24345-23499/6084; E24400/6084; E24402/6084; E24404/6084; E24405/6084; E24407-E24409/6084; E24412/6084; E24413/6084</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Circular with secondary decorations</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>E24332/6084; E24340/6084; E24342-24348/6084; E24352/6084; E24354/6084; E24356/6084; E24359/6084; E24362/6084; E24364/6084; E24365/6084; E24369/6084; E24384a/6084; E24384b/6084; E24384c/6084;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Circular, plain</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>E24378-24380/6084</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single heart</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>E24338/6084; E24426-24427/6084</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single heart with crown</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>E24430/6084; E24432/6084; E24438/6084</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Double heart with crown</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>E24415-24416/6084; E24420-24421/6084; E24425-24426/6084</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ring</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>E24371/6084; E24374-24377/6084; E24382/6084; E24383/6084</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Masonic-style</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>E24439/6084</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
14, a large number of brooches are missing from the blouse Skinner collected in 1920. The brooches may have been removed for exhibit or were a part of the theft in the 1970s. Brooches attached to the blouse were not given separate catalog numbers but instead included with the blouse’s catalog number.

Figure 13: Brooches collected by Skinner in 1920 (left to right: E28186f/6873; E28186a/6973; E28186b/6873)

Figure 14: Menominee Blouse in 1920 (left) and in 2018 (right) (E28173/6873)
Mark R. Harrington Purchase

In February 1921, the MPM purchased 35 brooches from Mark Raymond Harrington. Out of the 35 brooches listed on the inventory, 17 were found for this project. The accession card notes that Harrington acquired them from Thames, Ontario, Canada. Fourteen of these brooches were located for the purposes of this project. Figure 15 reflects the shapes and secondary decorations for each of the brooches. Brooches collected on this expedition were primarily square or ring (concave) shapes. One double heart surmounted by a crown and one star are additionally included in this accession.

In their correspondence, Skinner informs Harrington of his interest in two lots of Iroquois brooches. Skinner additionally notes that the brooches selected by him and Dr. Barrett were collected with historic indigenous groups in mind and to avoid duplication of brooches already in the collection. The accession file and catalog book records note that these brooches are affiliated with the Oneida. However, in the correspondence between Skinner and Harrington, Skinner mentions purchasing Sac and Fox brooches in addition to the Oneida brooches. It is unclear which brooches represent the Oneida and which are Sac and Fox based on museum documentation. Based on purely stylistic qualities, all of the brooches in this accession are typical of Iroquois style-brooches (Alberts 1953; Baerreis 1950; Beauchamp 1903; Converse 1902). Brooches purchased from Harrington included mostly council squares (n=7), rings (concave) (n=6), double-heart surmounted by crown (n=1), one star, and circular with scalloped edge and half-circle cutouts (n=2) (Figure 16).
### Figure 15: Brooches Purchased from Mark R. Harrington

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Accession/catalog number</th>
<th>Shape</th>
<th>Secondary Decorations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>E28344/6911</td>
<td>Star</td>
<td>Twelve points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E28346/6911</td>
<td>Circular</td>
<td>Scalloped edge; half circle cutouts surrounding central opening</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E28347/6911</td>
<td>Circular</td>
<td>Undulated edge, oval and triangle cutouts; zig-zag tracery surrounds cutouts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E28348/6911</td>
<td>Double heart with crown</td>
<td>Four circular and 1 half-circle cutout; circular and linear tracery on hearts, dashes above half circle cutouts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E28352/6911</td>
<td>Square</td>
<td>Four circles and linear tracery in each corner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E28353/6911</td>
<td>Square</td>
<td>Four circles, triangles, and linear tracery in each corner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E28358/6911</td>
<td>Square</td>
<td>Four circles and linear tracery in each corner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E28359/6911</td>
<td>Square</td>
<td>Triangles and linear tracery in each corner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E28361/6911</td>
<td>Square</td>
<td>Triangles and linear tracery in each corner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E28366/6911</td>
<td>Square</td>
<td>Four circles, triangles, and linear tracery in each corner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E28367/6911</td>
<td>Square</td>
<td>Four circles and linear tracery in each corner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E28368/6911</td>
<td>Ring (concave)</td>
<td>Plain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E28369/6911</td>
<td>Ring (concave)</td>
<td>Plain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E28370/6911</td>
<td>Ring (concave)</td>
<td>Plain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E28371/6911</td>
<td>Ring (concave)</td>
<td>Plain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E28372/6911</td>
<td>Ring (concave)</td>
<td>Plain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E28374/6911</td>
<td>Ring (concave)</td>
<td>Plain</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Ontario Expedition

In 1925, Samuel A. Barrett visited Ontario to collect material culture from the Oneida on the Six Nations Reservation. The Six Nations is the only reservation where there are members of all six Iroquois Nations (i.e. Mohawk, Seneca, Onondaga, Oneida, Tuscarora, and Cayuga).

On annotated copies of the original field notes, however, it is unclear which reservation Barrett collected which brooches from. McMullen also notes that when the items were originally cataloged, there seems to have been confusion as to what constituted the Iroquois material collected in Canada as opposed to the objects collected in New York.

A total of 4 brooches (out of 15 recorded in KE EMu) were located for this project associated with this accession and include council squares (n=2), one plain heart, and one plain ring (concave). Figure 17 is a photograph of the 4 brooches located for this project from the Ontario expedition.
The Mexican Kickapoo Collection

Ritzenthaler and Peterson Expedition

The Kickapoo German silver brooches included in this project were collected during two separate expeditions to Coahuila, Mexico. Dr. Robert Ritzenthaler and Frederick Peterson undertook an expedition to Mexico in 1954. During this time, Dr. Ritzenthaler was head of the Anthropology Department at the MPM and Frederick Peterson was a Professor of Archaeology and Anthropology at Wesleyan College. MPM monthly reports and a publication by Ritzenthaler and Peterson (1956) note that this expedition was unexpectedly cut short and, as a result, the collection of material fell below expectations.

The 1954 expedition was intended to be the first, and more in-depth, research excursion since the Kickapoo migrated to Mexico (Cermak 2010). Ritzenthaler and Peterson, however, were asked to leave after only two weeks of living in the Kickapoo village. The village was preparing for a large religious event that Ritzenthaler and Peterson were prohibited from attending and the Kickapoo political powers in charge did not want foreigners staying in the

Figure 17: Brooches collected by Barrett in Ontario (left to right: E34044/8247; E24045/8247; E34048/8247; E34051/8247)
village. Additionally, no formal permission was obtained from the Kickapoo chief to conduct fieldwork (Ritzenthaler and Peterson 1956).

Ritzenthaler and Peterson maintained that the Mexican Kickapoo “comprise without a doubt the best preserved island of Woodland culture extant” (1956, 11). Comparing them to the Oklahoma Kickapoo and Fox Nations, the anthropologists argued the cultural preservation persisted to a larger degree among the Mexican Kickapoo compared to Kickapoo bands in other areas. A part of their argument revolved around how the Mexican Kickapoo still constructed wigwam-type homes in their village and practiced traditional crafts, including silversmithing. Their preservation was attributed to three main factors: their own will and effort to avoid internalizing foreign influences, the Mexican government’s relatively “hands-off” involvement, and their geographical isolation in Mexico (Ritzenthaler and Peterson 1956). Only one brooch out of six collected during the 1954 expedition could be located for this project and likely survived because it was on exhibit. It is likely that the other five were stolen during the theft in the 1970s.

Another assortment of Kickapoo silver ornaments that may have been targeted by this theft are specimens collected between 1922-1923 by Alanson Skinner. Alberts (1953, 99) notes that Skinner acquired quite a few silver ornaments in the collection on the Kickapoo reservation in McCloud, Oklahoma. Alberts (1953) does not mention brooches specifically, but mentions buckles and bracelets. None of the accession numbers I found for this project aligned with this expedition by Skinner to Oklahoma as discussed by Alberts (1953).

Felipe and Dolores Latorre Purchase
The MPM's Mexican Kickapoo collection also represents one of the most broadly representative assemblages outside of Mexico (Lurie and Sidoff 1975, 28). In 1974, a total of 218 brooches were purchased by the MPM from Felipe and Dolores Latorre. All 218 brooches were found for this project. Figure 18 is a sample of brooches purchased from the Latorres. The Latorres lived in Muzquiz, Coahuila near the Kickapoo reservation before moving to Austin, Texas in the early 1970s. In 1975, MPM curators Dr. Nancy Lurie and Phillip Sidoff published an article about the newly acquired Kickapoo collection for the 1975 Lore Winter issue (the MPM membership magazine). In this issue, Dr. Lurie and Sidoff explain how the Latorre purchase was meant to augment the Ritzenthaler and Peterson collection from the 1950s. The MPM was also interested in the Kickapoo collection because of its ability to speak to cultural change and acculturation in relation to Wisconsin silverwork and other material culture (McKern 1954).

Figure 18: Sample of Kickapoo brooches purchased in 1975 (left to right: E24348/23800; daisy brooches: E28372/23800; circular brooches: E28359/23800)
Brooches in the Latorre collection include three main shapes: circular, disk, and “daisy” shaped. In the accession file, there is a copy of an inventory that appears to have been created by the Latorres so that the MPM could have a record of what objects were purchased as well as to provide any additional information on the individual pieces. Annotations on this list include descriptions such as “old brooch” and “new brooch”, suggesting that some of these may have been made specifically for the Latorres during their fieldwork in Coahuila. Figure 18 lists all brooches purchased from the Latorres. I was able to locate all of the brooches listed on the KE EMu inventory from this accession (23800).

Figure 19: Brooches purchased from the Latorres in 1975

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Shape</th>
<th>Secondary Decorations</th>
<th>Number of brooches</th>
<th>Accession/catalog number (s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Disk</td>
<td>Flower-shape traced around central opening; five rows of linear tracery</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>E62538/23800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disk</td>
<td>Linear tracery</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>E62545/23800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Circular</td>
<td>Plain</td>
<td>191</td>
<td>E62513-62530; 62533; 62535; 62570; 62576/23800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Circular</td>
<td>Triangular cutouts</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>E62568/23800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daisy</td>
<td>Amorphous cutouts and bossing around central opening</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>E62567/23800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daisy</td>
<td>Amorphous shapes &amp; u-shaped tracery around central opening</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>E62567/23800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daisy</td>
<td>Triangle cutouts</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>E62567/23800; E62568/23800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daisy</td>
<td>Amorphous cutouts</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>E62567/23800</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION

The main objective of this project was to interpret the MPM’s Woodland German silver brooches through the adoption of the biographical approach. Additionally, by considering the agentitive capacity of objects (Gell 1998), I questioned what brooches do and what they did for the people who wore them. By framing my analysis in this way, I investigated how brooches “provide a repertoire of actions for individuals to articulate their everyday realities, and create their selfhood and socially influenced identities” throughout time and space (Ivleva 2017,121).

Three overarching questions guided this research:

1. What stylistic differences are seen in the MPM’s collection of Woodland German silver brooches and how might that relate to asserting a primary actor’s agency?

2. As social agents, what do brooches do throughout the course of their lives and what is their role in mediating social agency for the primary actors who wear them?

3. How does the secondary agency imbued in brooches relate to asserting particular identities even up to the present?

Question 1: Stylistic similarities and differences

What stylistic differences are seen in the MPM’s collection of Woodland German silver brooches and how might that relate to asserting a primary actor’s agency?

Previous literature focused heavily on typologically classifying Menominee and Iroquois manufactured brooches in order to regionally compare, contrast, and postulate about the spread of indigenous silversmithing (e.g. Alberts 1953; Baerreis 1950; Beauchamp 1903). The spread of manufacturing techniques is beyond the scope of this project, mainly because the physical objects themselves lack direct evidence regarding their manufacture. However, future research may be able to contribute to this specific portion of brooch research in North America, and so including a summary of regional stylistic similarities and differences of the MPM’s collection of brooches will be relevant to such future scholarship.

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I also considered how technological styles relate to identity stemming from culturally learned behaviors. As did Ehrhardt (2013) in her study of the origins of “style” within prehistoric copper-based metalwork in Illinois, I borrow Heather Lechtman’s (1977) definition of style for the purpose of this discussion. Lechtman’s (1977) definition of style is related to the idea that technological activities are “culturally patterned systems of ideas and behaviors” (Ehrhardt 2013, 375).

Circular brooches were the most popular variety of brooches and are heavily represented in the MPM’s collection (Alberts 1953; Converse 1902; Beauchamp 1903). The MPM’s collection includes circular brooches affiliated with the Menominee, Wisconsin Oneida, Iroquois (New York and Canada), Kickapoo, and Sac.

As was discussed in the previous chapter, for his Master’s thesis, Robert C. Alberts (1951, 1953) his analysis included the German silver ornaments at the MPM and OPM in order to contribute to the growing body of knowledge regarding the spread of indigenous silversmithing. Alberts (1953), like Baerreis (1950) before him, concluded that a combination of trade goods moving south from Canada and the movement of the Oneida, Stockbridge, and Brothertown nations contributed to the Menominee learning how to silversmith. There is no discussion in Albert’s thesis (or in the literature more broadly) of when and how other indigenous groups in the Great Lakes region learned silversmithing. Furthermore, it remains unclear when other indigenous communities began silversmithing or even if they did. It is unclear if brooches collected from Great Lakes tribes were manufactured by that tribe in some instances. In the case of the Kickapoo, Ritsenthaler and Peterson (1956) claim they learned silversmithing prior to leaving the Great Lakes area. Latorre and Latorre (1976) mention
Kickapoo silversmithing briefly, and discuss similar methods and tools used by the Menominee and Iroquois silversmiths, although that comparison was never directly discussed.

Neither Alberts, Baerreis, nor Skinner explain what they mean by “unique” in regard to Menominee manufactured brooches aside from lacking edge modification (such as scalloping). Brooches collected by Skinner in 1920 that are deemed “unique” compared to typical Iroquois shapes include two brooches that have raised center portions and circular shapes with diamond and y-shaped cutouts (Figure 20). What Skinner (1921) may have been referring to, and Baerreis (1950) and Alberts (1953) as well, is the lack of typical Iroquoian shapes, such as double hearts, council squares, and masonic-types.

Alberts (1953) and Baerreis (1950) both noted similarities between the Iroquois brooches collected in the east and the Oneida and Menominee brooches recovered in Wisconsin. Parallels between Menominee, Oneida, and Iroquois silverwork is attributed to a common manufacturing influence (Alberts 1953; Baerreis 1950). Menominee silverwork, however, has been repeatedly

Figure 20: Two examples of Menominee brooches (left: 4371/2207 and right: 28186/6873)
described as “unique” and distinct from Iroquois silverwork, including the Wisconsin Oneida (Alberts 1953; Skinner 1921). Alberts (1953), however, notes the Wisconsin Oneida brooches show greater similarity to the Oneida brooches collected from Canada than to the Menominee brooches.

Within the MPM’s collection, the Potawatomi brooches and Fox brooch donated by Stephen Polyak from Mayetta, Kansas, also show similarities to the Menominee brooches compared to the Iroquois and Kickapoo brooches. The two Potawatomi brooches can be seen side-by-side with a Menominee brooch on the right in Figure 21. These three brooches lack edge modification and show similarity to the geometric cutouts in the form of triangles, diamonds and ovals.

![Figure 21: (left to right) Potawatomi brooches E61250/22143 and E61251/22143 and (right) Menominee brooch E4376/2207](image)

Rantoul Woman’s brooches are more similar to the Menominee brooches than those of the Iroquois and Kickapoo. As with the Menominee brooches, Rantoul Woman’s are circular with geometric cutouts and no edge scalloping or undulation. Edge modifications in the form of scalloping are most commonly seen on Iroquois brooches, including examples in the MPM’s collection (Alberts 1951).
Some of Rantoul Woman’s brooches (on the left in Figure 22) appear most similar to the Potawatomi brooch seen on the right in Figure 22 (E61249/22143). As was mentioned in the results chapter, Rantoul Woman’s brooches also include a star shaped brooch and is the only example of this style in the MPM’s collection. In Harriet Converse’s publication on Iroquois brooches, she has an illustration of a similar brooch made of brass and associates this style with the Sac and Fox (1902).

Figure 22: (left) Sample of Rantoul Woman's brooches; (top, right): Star brooch from Converse (1902); right (bottom) MPM Potawatomi brooch (E61249/22143)
Another style that is commonly found in Wisconsin, and also represented in the MPM’s collection, is the large “disk” brooch. These disks have geometric cutouts in the forms of diamonds, circles, and ovals along with tracery weaving along the borders of the cutouts on the surface. These large disk shaped brooches represent early forms. They were typically worn in the center of a person’s chest in a fashion similar to the placement of a gorget or peace medal (Beauchamp 1903).

There are a total of 4 large disk shaped brooches in the MPM’s collection and were all recovered archaeologically. In Figure 23, the brooch on the left was donated to the MPM from Judge Spengler in 1937 and originated from a burial context (A48008/12653). The brooch on the right (E2798/no accession number) was donated to the museum by the Wisconsin Natural History Society in 1902 and was recovered from an infant burial.

![Figure 23: Disk shaped brooches in MPM collection (left) A48008/12653 and (right) E2768/no accession number](image)

A large disk brooch in the MPM’s collection was recovered from the DuBay site (47-PT-122), the homestead of fur trader John DuBay. These disk styles may be more directly linked to
European traders than indigenous manufacture. That this style of brooch was not collected from the Wisconsin Oneida or Menominee by Alanson Skinner or Samuel Barrett supports this contention.

There is also a large disk brooch in the Kickapoo collection that is similar in size to those from Wisconsin. The only commonality appears to be the overall size as the Kickapoo brooch lacks geometric cutouts and instead has a flower traced in the center and circles traced around it (Figure 24).

Due to the condition of documentation and accession records, cultural affiliation for many of the brooches in this project is difficult to determine (especially for the archaeological brooches). It appears that in such cases attributed cultural affiliations in the MPM’s records of lumping them into one category: specifically, “Iroquois” (rather than expanding on which Iroquois Nations manufactured or contributed which styles) is the most accurate attribution given the paucity of information available. Making any contribution to what is known regarding styles that are typically Menominee or Iroquois using this collection is therefore problematic and why I
chose to focus the majority of this project on the agentitive capacity of brooches on a broader level.

In terms of contributing to discussion of the relation between identity and brooch form, technological style may reflect particular aspects of one’s social identity such as culturally learned behaviors (Ehrhardt 2013; Lechtman 1977; Walder 2015). Culturally learned behaviors can include the process of manufacturing silverwork or refer to particular styles of brooches someone chose to purchase. The uniqueness and variety of secondary decorations additionally “implies a desire to maintain individuality be it indicative of the individual metalworker, or the individual who was adorned with the brooch” (Adams 2017, 63). Therefore, choices in secondary decoration, in the form of tracery or geometric cutouts follows Gell’s (1998) idea that primary agency from the person who made these objects (or the person who wore them) is present in the secondary agency the object exerts over others. I am not suggesting that each unique brooch represents an individual silversmith, however the variety in secondary decorative additions may represent different culturally learned behaviors, or styles, within a community.

If the Oneida continued to manufacture typical Iroquois brooch styles in Wisconsin, it may have been a way to maintain their social affiliation with the Six Nations. For example, both the Wisconsin and Canadian Oneida brooches in the MPM’s collection include council squares (Figure 25). The MPM’s Oneida brooches from Wisconsin do not include any double hearts surmounted with crowns (the National Badge of the Iroquois). Presence of double heart shapes manufactured by Wisconsin Oneida silversmiths would help support the argument that producing typical Iroquoian shapes continued to associate and assert social affiliation with the Six Nations. No previous literature discusses whether or not the Oneida practiced silversmithing once they
arrived in Wisconsin (i.e. Alberts 1951, 1953; Baerreis 1950). Therefore, it remains ambiguous whether or not the Oneida brought these brooches with them or continued to manufacture these styles once in Wisconsin. It should be noted, that wearing or manufacturing brooch styles that are particular to a region or specific “ethnic” style does not necessarily mean the owner of that brooch ascribed to the associated “ethnic” identity (Ivleva 2017).

![Figure 25](image)

Figure 25: (left) Oneida brooch from Ontario (E24402/6084) and (right) Oneida brooch from Wisconsin (E6323/2207)

As I have already mentioned, less research has focused on Kickapoo silverwork, in comparison to the Menominee and Iroquois. Unique to the Mexican Kickapoo brooch collection at the MPM are the daisy shaped brooches and circular brooches that measure less than 20 mm in diameter (Figure 26). Ivleva (2017) interprets small brooches that are too small to be functional, as evidence for intentionally fashioning brooches for adornment purposes. Based on their small size, the Kickapoo brooches measuring less than 20 mm in diameter suggest a similar “non-functional” purpose. This non-functional purpose emphasizes these small brooches were used as adornment versus larger brooches that could serve a dual purpose (such as holding clothing together in addition to adorning).
The absence of brooch varieties among the Kickapoo as seen in the Menominee may suggest differences in learned behaviors and allude to the possibility of the Kickapoo learning silversmithing outside of the Great Lakes region. Since Alberts (1953) and Baerreis (1950) argue that common influence of trade goods and silversmiths may explain the similarities between Menominee and Iroquois silverwork, the lack of stylistic parallels with Kickapoo brooches may indicate the opposite. Although circular shapes with geometric cutouts are common among Menominee brooches, the geometric cutouts on Kickapoo brooches do not appear as frequently or in as many shapes (Figure 27). Unique to the Kickapoo collection at the MPM are “daisy” shaped brooches, also seen at the left in Figure 27.

Within the original manuscript notes associated with Ritzenthaler and Peterson’s expedition in the 1950s, the three silversmiths in Coahuila mentioned they learned from “a very old man” in Oklahoma. The Latorre’s mention that only one silversmith was left in the village in the 1960s (1976, 70). Kickapoo men and women were reportedly wearing less German silver jewelry than in previous generations, creating a “hardship on the craftsman” (Latorre and Latorre 1976, 70).
Regardless of whether the Kickapoo silversmiths did or did not learn silversmithing in the Great Lakes region, this statement does support questioning such a scenario; future research on Kickapoo silverwork collections (including perhaps comparisons with Kickapoo brooch collections in/from Oklahoma) will help to resolve such questions.

While the majority of brooches in the MPM’s collection were collected over a 40-year period through the 1920s, silversmithing eventually reemerged among the Iroquois and Menominee in the 1980s and among Plains groups in the 1970s (Frederickson 1980; Gilmore and March 1993; Hardin 2018). Using traditional and contemporary techniques, brooches and other silver ornaments are still manufactured today.

The James H. Howard Collection

Donated in 1985 to the MPM, the James H. Howard collection includes many textiles and dress adornments. Two examples of brooches within this collection are seen in Figures 28 & 29. A red hunting jacket with three brooches attached on the back is included in the Howard accession. A young silversmith, Arnold Langley, of the Louisiana Choctaw made these brooches and sold them in 1973 to James Howard. Langley’s brooches bare a similar shape to the Kickapoo daisy brooches without geometric cutouts (Figure 28). These flower shapes are absent from the Menominee, Oneida, and other Iroquois style brooches in the collection at the MPM.
The brooch in Figure 29 was made by a Delaware silversmith from Providence, Rhode Island. This brooch is one of many in the Howard collection manufactured by indigenous silversmiths. Notable silversmiths in the collection include Julius Caesar, a well-known Pawnee jeweler and “metalsmith” (Coulter 1995).

There is scant information regarding the person who manufactured the brooch from Providence mentioned above, however, many indigenous silversmiths manufactured silverwork in traditional and contemporary styles. The brooch in Figure 29 has similar qualities to Iroquois brooches with scalloped edging and geometric cutouts. The second example from the Howard collection is another large disk brooch (Figure 30). This brooch is recorded as a woman’s brooch made by Jack Deignan, a non-Native silversmith in Providence, Rhode Island.

In the Howard collection documentation, James Howard notes, “It is a copy of an old Delaware brooch in the Reading, Pennsylvania, museum”. This brooch is therefore an example of how even non-Native silversmiths were mimicking trade or other styles created by indigenous silversmiths in the 19th century. The scalloped edge, geometric cutouts, and tracery on the surface of this brooch is similar to Iroquois brooches in the MPM’s collection.
In Wisconsin, many distinct traditions and languages were greatly impacted by relocation and assimilation. The creation of silver woodland jewelry was little practiced or almost completely non-existent in most tribes after the Civil War. It was not until the early 1970s that a handful of people in Woodland groups began making silver jewelry again, including brooches (Hardin 2018).

In 1984-1985, The Wisconsin Art’s Board Apprenticeship Program was created with the aim at reviving Woodland practices of traditional art forms. Even tribes who traditionally did not have a history of silversmithing, such as the Stockbridge-Munsee, began learning traditional techniques because of a long history of admiring the silverwork of other tribes (Gilmore and March 1993). Even though silversmithing was traditionally a men’s craft, the revival of silversmithing has inspired the emergence of women silversmiths (Gilmore and March 1993).

Among the Southern Plains tribes, traditional German silverwork fell out of popularity in the 1890s (Hardin 2018). The rising popularity of tribal and intertribal powwows in the 20th
century led to the re-incorporation of German silver objects on Woodland dance regalia and as a result, the number of indigenous silversmiths increased (Hardin 2018). Today, companies such as Crazy Cow Trading Post still manufacture Plains-style silverwork that incorporate aspects of traditional designs.

**Questions 2 & 3: Brooches as secondary agents**

*As social agents, what do brooches do throughout the course of their lives and what is their role in mediating social agency for the primary actors who wear them?*

*How does the secondary agency imbued in brooches relate to asserting particular identities even up to the present?*

In order to answer these questions, I have divided this section of this chapter into four sub-sections. These sub-sections represent transits, or phases, in the life of this type of material culture. Some of the phases identified and illuminated are not represented by brooches used for this project, but are necessary to understanding the history of use and how these objects functioned through time. By considering the agentitive capacity of brooches, like Ivleva (2017), I seek to answer the question: What do brooches typically *do* and what *have they done* during and after the Fur Trade. I will also briefly consider what brooches did in the mid-20\(^{th}\) century up to today with the reemergence of indigenous silversmithing.

I place emphasis on the words “do” and “done” as an attempt to connect with the social work (creating alliances, supporting assertions of identity, and so on) that this item of material culture does to other social actors, what Alfred Gell (1998) has called its ability to “abduct” others. As aesthetic objects, brooches are sometimes intended to evoke visual appreciation and can function semiotically; however, this is not always the case. I place the emphasis on brooches within a system of action “intended to change the world rather than encode symbolic propositions about it” (Gell 1998, 6). By emphasizing brooches as objects within a system of
action, I am better able to conceptualize brooches as ‘social agents’ almost the equivalent of persons (those who have primary agency) and question their role in mediating social agency.

To review, Kopytoff’s (1986) biographical approach to the study of material culture is part of a larger paradigm shift in anthropology away from cultural relativism to a more “processual relativist” framework (Svasek 2007). In adopting Kopytoff’s approach as one component of what she terms processual relativism, Maruska Svasek, emphasizes the social capacity of objects and how their meanings change throughout space and time. Crucial to her argument are the concepts of “transit” and “transition.” Transit refers to the movement of objects throughout time, the ways they cross social and geographic boundaries, while transition “analyses how the meaning, value and status of those objects, as well as how people experience them, is changed by that process” (Svasek 2007, 4). Combining Kopytoff’s approach and Svasek’s terminology, a transit can be interpreted as a “phase” in an object’s biography. Context according to Svasek, like phases, should not be interpreted as static but rather as fluid moments that were individually experienced.

Phase 1 is the time period in which silver was actively traded in eastern North America (1760-1821) and in the Great Lakes region (1766-1821). Based on catalog and accession records none of the Woodland brooches are made or pure silver, therefore no example from MPM’s collection will be used when discussing phase 1. However, since this thesis considers the meaning of brooches since their introduction in the 18th century, I will briefly discuss the period when pure silver brooches were actively traded and worn.

Phase 2 begins with the introduction of German silver in 1825 (Demeter 1980). I have entitled phase 2 ‘hybrid material culture’ because this is the time period in which, I argue, brooches became hybrid material culture as defined by Ehrhardt (2013). Ehrhardt maintains that
re-conceptualized and appropriated European goods, whether physically altered or not, are examples of hybrid material culture (2013). Brooches were occasionally physically altered in the form of engraving or tracing designs on the surface (Frederickson 1980) but were otherwise unaltered examples of hybrid material culture.

Phase 3 considers the social life of brooches in the period following the Fur Trade. Beginning roughly in the 1850s, in this phase focuses on how the social lives of brooches were a part of societal and cultural shifts in the last half of the 19\textsuperscript{th} century. This phase also considers the impact of museum collecting and the notion of the disappearing “Other” using examples from the MPM’s Woodland brooch collection.

Finally, Phase 4 begins in the mid-20\textsuperscript{th} century with the rise of contemporary manufacture of German silver brooches. I will briefly discuss the re-emergence of indigenous silversmithing and the emergence of non-native silversmiths who manufacture brooches influenced by trade silver originals.

It should also be noted that primary sources regarding brooch use and production are uncommon. The sources I discuss in the following sections are predominantly secondary and are probably not entirely representative of the way in which brooches were worn, for what occasions, or used overall.

**Phase 1: Diplomatic gifts and trade goods**

Following the arrival of Dutch and British influences in eastern North America, brooches manufactured in Europe were initially introduced in the form of diplomatic gifts. Once in circulation, brooches were in high demand especially among Iroquois and Algonquian communities and actively traded between 1760-1821 (Quimby 1966). Gifts of brooches and other trade goods were meant to solidify social relationships and ongoing economic partnerships.
If material objects are “social agents” nearly equivalent to persons (or acting on the behalf of people), during this phase of their life brooches can be thought of as trading partners with European and indigenous people.

A social agent, by will or intention, “initiate[s] casual sequences of a particular type” (Gell 1998, 16); however, this is not to say that material culture has intention. Rather, the agency of secondary agents (“indexes”) manifests from the primary (human) actor and acts as a vehicle to express and exert the primary agency of a person (Gell 1998). As the primary social actors wore brooches as they exerted agency in forming political and/or trading alliances, silver brooches, were thusly, during this phase of their life, social agents that, together with the people who wore them, were responsible for forming and mediating alliances between Europeans and indigenous communities within northeastern and Great Lakes trade networks; brooches were active trade partners or, at the very least, trade facilitators working at the behest of their primary agents.

Europeans responded to the heightened demand for silver brooches by strategically commodifying the production of these objects. Similar to the phenomenon described by Meghan Howley (2017) regarding copper kettles, the decision by Europeans to strategically produce silver brooches was an acknowledgement of the value they held in indigenous societies. Such silver brooches were never intended for European use, but rather specifically mass-produced for the trade economy comprised of North American indigenous consumers.

Employing Appadurai’s (1986) language, economic transactions at the beginning of the Fur Trade composed a ‘social arena’ that officially nominated silver brooches as commodities. Thus began the first commodity phase of a brooch’s life. Initial relationships between Europeans and Native Americans in the east and in the Great Lakes region encouraged the nomination of
silver brooches as commodities. Through such communal social accountability reinforced by mutually beneficial trading relationships, the Algonquian and Iroquois people asserted and maintained the agentitive capacity to trade for European goods that would appropriately satisfy existing cultural needs.

For example, in the Great Lakes region, Richard White (1991) reminds us that initial relationships between Algonquian-speaking groups and the French were based on mutual accommodation and reciprocal relationships. Economic relationships that were meant to be mutually accommodating allowed for consumer agency, meaning brooches traded during this time period represent and are materially involved in conscious decisions on the part of individuals to trade. In the Great Lakes, French traders were not able to acquire the necessary goods or solidify their legal agreements without understanding Algonquian approaches to exchange (White 1982; White 1991). The French would not be able to maintain, nor initially create, trading relationships with Algonquian communities if they did not frame exchanges in a reciprocal fashion. Material culture that was at the center of, and an actor in, negotiations were a part of necessary social relationships that were critical for establishing these mutually beneficial economic partnerships. Gifts of silver brooches were extensions of the primary actors presenting them to high-ranking indigenous people, therefore they were a part of the larger intention of maintaining the economic partnerships at the time (Gell 1998; Mauss 1990).

In these ways, brooches were not simply passively present in the Fur Trade economy as simply objects to be traded and worn but can also be reconceptualized as trading partners themselves. In other words, brooches had the power to “shape and transform social life” in trading contexts as social actors involved in trade (Svasek 2007, 67). As social agents, brooches began filling multiple roles as vehicles to express the primary agency involved in such
exchanges. Aesthetically, brooches “abducted” their “recipients” who evoked appreciation while they also functioned semiotically in some capacity, thus as secondary agents they always functioned in more than one capacity at any one time.

On the spectrum between highly commodified objects at one end, and the singularized objects at the other end as discussed by Appadurai (1986), brooches fell somewhere in the middle. Prior to the rise of indigenous silversmithing and the acquisition of the ability to craft these objects within indigenous communities, access to brooches was relatively restricted. As mentioned above, European officials largely gave silver brooches as gifts to high-ranking chiefs and individuals. However, brooches were not as restricted as gorgets and medals. Gorgets were presented to high-ranking individuals and operated solely in the male sphere. European medals and eventually peace medals presented by the American government were also restricted to the male domain. Some silver brooches trickled into the main trade routes, but initially were worn as singularized objects by high-ranking men.

**Phase 2: Hybrid material culture**

In the mid-19th century, German silver became a less expensive alternative for mass production of silver ornaments (Demeter 1980) and created the ability for indigenous communities to manufacture their own brooches. Aesthetically, German silver looked almost identical to pure silver, meaning fashioning brooches out of the cheaper alloy would not have impacted their aesthetic appeal in terms of color, luster, or shine. Based on archaeological evidence and historic accounts, brooches became adornment commodities shortly after their introduction in the 18th century (Beauchamp 1903). However, following the introduction of German silver, it became possible to manufacture brooches more quickly and in larger quantities. One result was that access to these commodities was not as restricted as when brooches were
made of pure silver. It is post-1821 that I argue is when brooches became hybrid material culture according to Ehrhardt’s (2013) definition but these phases were not strict divisions.

A large part of Gell’s (1998) argument has to do with the intention or will of the human (primary) agents behind the use of objects. Indigenous individuals could reject or accept European goods and intentionally chose which objects to express particular identities influenced by colonial interactions (Deagan 2002; Loren 2008; White and Beaudry 2009). Fastening hundreds of brooches, or even one for that matter, onto one’s clothing was deliberate and intentional.

Consider the following example of double-heart brooches, also known as the National Badge of the Iroquois, as vital (visible) social actors. These double heart brooches acquired their agency from their primary agents, individuals attributed to membership of the Iroquois Confederacy. Including double heart brooches on one’s clothing, as a part of one’s “social skin” (Fisher and Loren 2003; Turner 2012), asserted the primary actor’s affiliation with a larger social group. Thus, double heart brooches were members of the Iroquois Confederacy themselves and active participants in asserting the separate, distinct, political alliance with the other Iroquois Nations.

**The Role of Women**

The role of indigenous women during the Fur Trade impacted the agentitive capacity of brooches within phase 2. Indigenous women’s roles as mediators during the Fur Trade created social accountability for economic transactions (Murphy 1995; Sleeper-Smith 2001). Women increasingly sought roles to help their communities establish alliances with French traders and to participate in trade (Murphy 1995; Sleeper-Smith 2001). Women assumed such important roles by creating kinship ties through marriage and as a consequence created more socially
accountable economic transactions (Murphy 1995). As a result of intermarriage between indigenous women and Frenchmen, Métis societies emerged in places such as Green Bay, Prairie du Chien, Mackinac Island, and Milwaukee (Jung 2003; McBride 2005). The French word ‘Métis’, meaning mixed, refers to people of both French and Native American decent (Jung 2003).

In the Great Lakes, Métis women played crucial roles in the Fur Trade and in the establishment of cities and the state of Wisconsin (McBride 2005). Métis communities existed throughout North America and emerged in areas where the Fur Trade was a main economic endeavor (Jung 2003). In places such as Mackinac Island, between 1765-1795 Métis populations grew considerably. Some Métis societies had more than one thousand people while other “jack-knife posts”, such as Milwaukee, consisted of less than one hundred (Jung 2003, 39).

As a part of their mixed identities, some Métis women continued to speak their native dialects and wear their native dress (McBride 2005). The ability for Métis women to function in both ‘worlds’ was important, especially when situations demanded social mediation. McBride (2005) describes how the “founding mother” of Milwaukee, a Métis woman named Josette Vieau Juneau, played a critical role in negotiating a truce when conflict arose between settlers and the Potawatomi in Milwaukee. Josette was respected for her “Menominee heritage, manner, and linguistic ability, as she wore native dress and knew many native dialects” and often helped translate for her husband (McBride 2005, 7).

The liminal capacity of Métis women to assert aspects of their Native and/or European heritage was accomplish, in part, with the help of the brooches they wore. Dress and adornment were vehicles to assert multifaceted components of identity, including gender, ethnicity, political affiliation, and social class (White and Beaudry 2009). Métis women could select a “social skin”
to put on by attaching brooches to their clothing and using them to help assert their social standing or occupation in the Fur Trade. It is in this sense that I argue that brooches are indexes of their primary agents and that they had secondary agency to assert social standing or occupation in the Fur Trade.

The side by side photographs (Figure 31) of Rachel Lawe Grignon (1808-1876) provide an example of how brooches were worn in order to assert certain facets of identity. Rachel Grignon was the Métis daughter of Therese Lawe, a Chippewa woman, and Judge John Lawe. Rachel later married the French fur trader Pierre Grignon. In the left photograph below, Rachel is wearing traditional European dress of the period, however, in the right photograph she is wearing her mother’s blanket and jewelry (Jung 2003). Note the large circular brooch fastened near the bottom of the right photograph.

Figure 31: Rachel Lawe Grignon (Jung 2003, 43)
In Métis society, social status was achieved through one’s role, or occupation, in the Fur Trade. By fastening a brooch to her clothing, Rachel was using this object as a way to assert her status and identity in relation to the Fur Trade. Those who saw her wearing the brooch (or this photograph) would have been (or are) abducted by the brooch’s capacity to help assert Rachel’s identity. As social agents, brooches did the important social work of helping their primary agents to achieve status and demonstrate wealth within Métis communities.

**Use in burials**

During this time period, brooches also began appearing as grave goods. Placement of large quantities of brooches in burial contexts signifies a change in their value and their social role. These objects were not only for consumption among the living, but they were suitable grave offerings (a kind of consumption among the deceased) to assert aspects of one’s individual and collective identities that were held in life.

Brooches are most commonly found in burials of women but are also found in burials of men and children (Alberts 1953; Mainfort 1987; Overton 1930; Smith 2014). The majority of the MPM’s archaeological brooches collected in Wisconsin are reported as found with a women’s burial. However, there is one example from Vilas County that was associated with an infant burial (E2768/no accession).

Placement in burials speaks to the individual and collective agency of those who buried the individual (Binford 1971). Therefore, use in burials demonstrates the agentitive capacity of these objects to point to social roles a person’s brooches may have assumed in their primary actor’s lifetime or the collective social roles of those around them. In other words, in addition to the primary agency of the wearer, the brooch worn by a deceased woman also does the social work of those who dressed her for burial and thusly act as indexes of the primary agency of those
who prepared the body for burial. Relatedly, Adams (2017) argues that the use of archaeological brooches during the Iron Age in Europe is crucial to understanding the social conventions surrounding dress and adornment because they can provide information for the time periods for which historical documentation is seldom available. Brooches recovered archaeologically in North America become critical supplementary evidence to the historical understanding of brooch use and form.

**Post-Fur Trade**

Fur resources began depleting and the Fur Trade economy began waning and eventually “ended” in the mid-19th century. By 1854, Americans sought to own the Western landscape and several pieces of legislation passed in the second half of the 19th century demonstrated these new priorities of American citizens/settlers and of the federal government (Bowes 2016; Rosier 2016). As states were founded in the west and legislation was passed, many of these changes conflicted with treaties between the American government and indigenous communities (Bowes 2016). Legislation was also passed with the intention of dissolving tribal ties and removing Native American communities completely (Bowes 2016; Rosier 2016). As an example, The Dawes Act or General Allotment Act passed in 1887 divided most reservations and had lasting impacts on indigenous communities (Rosier 2016).

During the second half of the 19th century, the social role of brooches changed from their earlier social functions. Brooches began as trading partners and diplomatic negotiators between Europeans and indigenous people during Fur Trade economic transactions. The use of brooches among Métis women in the early 19th century had a similar diplomatic function, but for different social mediation purposes. Transitioning into the second half of the 19th century, brooches helped to assert resistance to the “vanishing Indian” idea embraced by many Euroamerican people and
federal government in the late 1890s and early 1900s (Rosier 2016). While brooches still possessed the ability to assert identities in liminal spaces, such as in previous phases, they also pointed toward more aggressive political and social connotations. Brooches transitioned into objects that helped to assert indigenous identities and become part of a system of action that was meant to resist efforts of assimilation.

In the MPM’s collection, the majority of the Woodland brooches date between 1830 (when German silver began circulating) and when they were collected between 1897-1920. However, for most of them, based on limited documentation, it is difficult to determine when they were made or used. Rantoul Woman’s brooches are the only clear examples that have a relatively specific date of the second half of the 19th century attributed to them. These brooches, based on the burial date between 1853-1856 suggested by Smith (2014, 34), performed very different social work than brooches used during the fur trade. In life, Rantoul Woman could have worn these objects as vehicles to help her express her identity and affiliation to a community whose livelihood and territory was increasingly being threatened by American settlers and the federal government.

In the late 19th and early 20th century brooches began performing the social work of combating the belief in the “vanishing Indian” and conveyed important anti-assimilationist aspects of Native identity. In a photograph from the MPM taken in 1906, the back of Menominee woman Louise Armour’s blouse is seen covered with plain circular brooches (Figure 32). In this photograph, Armour’s brooches assert her identity not only as a Menominee woman, but also contributed to asserting her elevated status as a Medicine woman.
Phase 3: Ethnographic objects

Secondary agents (objects, commodities) can be diverted from the paths intended by their primary actors (Appadurai 1986). Appadurai (1986) uses tourist’s souvenirs and archaeology as examples of diverted paths; however, one could argue that museum collecting, as a whole, diverts commodities from their intended paths thus influencing an object’s secondary agency.

The “museum age” between 1880-1920, when the majority of the collections in this project were amassed, was the peak period of museum collecting (Sturtevant 1969). This time period was influenced by larger American political and social ideological agendas (Kopytoff 1986; Clifford 1988). Specifically, the concept of the disappearing “Other” and what Clifford (1989) called the “salvage paradigm” motivated curators and anthropologists to collect material
culture and information about indigenous people before they were destroyed by contact and interaction with Western civilization (Parezo 1987). Especially in North America, as a result of colonial contact, anthropologists feared that objects manufactured by indigenous people would cease to exist as a result of lost cultural knowledge and or traditions (Parezo 1987). The apparent disappearance of silversmithing and manufacture of brooches among the Iroquois ca. 1865 (Lyford 1982) and among the Menominee sometime in the 1920s fits within the broader idea in anthropology that cultural knowledge or traditions were being “lost.”

The role of museums, quite simply, was to preserve the authenticity of culture (Clifford 1988). Museum collections represented what “deserved” to be saved and what could contribute to the linear narrative of human progress (Clifford 1988, 1989). Time was thought of as not only linear but also irreversible and material culture had to be collected in a quick manner in order to avoid “inevitable historical decay or loss” (Clifford 1988, 231). We see these sentiments mirrored in the 1909-1910 MPM 28th Annual Report. Director Henry L. Ward notes:

Really desirable anthropological material is very rapidly becoming scarcer and if the institution is to take the place it should hold among the American museums which have taken up anthropological work, it must lose no time and no opportunity in securing the best material to be had from various parts of the world in which it wishes its collections to cover (1909-1910, 40).

The MPM staff gave priority to collecting the physical objects so that they would be able to be objectively compared at a later time. One unfortunate consequence of prioritizing the objects themselves was cultural information was not necessarily recorded, such as the cultural affiliation for the brooches acquired by Barrett in 1910 when he was collecting in Wisconsin from the Ojibwe, Menominee, and Oneida. Alanson Skinner also focused on acquiring material
culture but he made efforts to record information provided by the last surviving Menominee silversmith (Skinner 1921).

Anthropologists and curators prioritized the collecting of certain objects as a part of a broader pattern to “metonymically” represent entire regions or populations of people (Clifford 1988, see also Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 1991 on the role of metaphor and metonymy in museum representation). The cultural commoditization, and literal commoditization by Indian agents of these brooches was a part of the larger trend of objects being collected not for their intrinsic value, but as metonyms representing the people who made them (Clifford 1988). The primary actors who made and wore brooches were exactly why curators and anthropologists sought to collect and preserve these objects. However, as a consequence of past museum collecting practices, brooches during this phase became imbued with the primary agency of the curators and anthropologists who removed them from their original contexts. The brooches transitioned into ethnographic objects by “virtue of being defined, segmented, detached, and carried away by ethnographers” (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 1991, 387).

The search for authenticity and salvaging the material culture of the disappearing “Other” fueled museum expeditions and this practice was not unique to the MPM. These brooches became objects that not only represented whole regions or groups of people, but they became objects deemed to be culturally authentic. As culturally authentic objects, it was thought that the cultural significance of this material culture could only be speculated about through comparing the physical objects themselves (Loren 2008). We see some of these lasting effects of the idea of authenticity and expectations of cultural stasis in the MPM’s acquiring the Kickapoo silverwork in the 1950s and 1970s. Ritzenthaler and Peterson were motivated by the fact the Kickapoo once lived in Wisconsin and sought to objectively observe cultural continuity (Ritzenthaler and
Peterson 1956). In this instance, it was the people who produced these brooches who were the objects of examination and not the objects themselves.

Equally important for museum collecting was the willingness of people to part with objects (Svasek 2007). When considering Kopytoff’s (1986) concept of singularization, or objects deemed too important to part with, brooches usually did not fall under this category. However, sometimes even singularized commodities had to be parted with and sold. Many indigenous people and tribes stood to make money from their everyday items when curators and anthropologists were collecting during the “museum age” (Lurie 1976). As Keesing (1987) points out, for the Menominee, sometimes objects that had a history of importance were parted with and sold to outsiders, because of financial considerations. The willingness to sell brooches to museums signaled a change in value and was a vehicle created to help financially support the communities they came from. Under financial stress, there were still singularized, sacred, objects that the Menominee refused to sell to museums; these objects did not include brooches or other silverwork (Keesing 1987). Brooches have the capacity to facilitate memories (Ivleva 2017) but during the “museum age” of collecting, many crafts became obsolete and prior conceptions of the importance of some material culture was lost to the march of history, literally passing away with older generations (Keesing 1987).

In summation, during the museum collecting phase of their life trajectories, the secondary agency of these brooches shifted yet again as they became indexes of the primary agency of the anthropologist curators who used them to tell the story of indigenous disappearance and assimilation. Secondary agency can be imbued in material objects through primary actors who made them and wore them but, as this discussion demonstrates, the same holds true of those who excavate and display them. Furthermore, it should be a priority of museums to maintain such
primary actor’s social influences in future museum interpretations. Preserving the secondary agency of brooches means ensuring the social roles these objects assumed through all their primary actors are a part of the narrative told through museum interpretation. It is only fitting that the brooch form that museum curators exploited in the late 19th and early 20th century for its capacity to assert disappearance/assimilation would emerge as an index of contemporary indigenous identities and cultural vitality in the late 20th century through the social work they do in the context of the present-day.
CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSION

European brooches transformed the way Woodland indigenous groups adorned their clothing. In conceptualizing brooches as indexes with secondary agency, I have demonstrated how brooches provided and participated in a “repertoire of actions” for the various social actors who wore them (Ivelea 2017, 121). Brooches were inserted into various systems of action which emphasized their mediatory role as material culture. During the Fur Trade, brooches were active trade partners and diplomatic negotiators. Transitioning into Phase 2, as hybrid material culture, brooches became social actors that assert particular aspects of Métis identity and cultural status when circumstances called for social mediation. Following the Fur Trade, the reservation and assimilation era transformed brooches into objects that actively resisted the popular idea of a group of “vanishing” people. As ethnographic objects, brooches were collected with the aim of preserving “authentic” material culture made or used by the disappearing “Other”. Contemporary brooches, as social actors, represent re-emerging indigenous silversmith identities and cultural persistence.

Evaluating the biographical approach

By adopting the biographical approach as proposed by Kopytoff (1986), the social lives of these objects and how they functioned as secondary agents was revealed. Though some have argued the biographical approach is unsuited for research on collections because it implies the death of objects (e.g. Joyce 2015), the life of these brooches as museum collections endure. More specifically, the lives of these collections will continue to be expanded on as more and more collections research is undertaken, the potential for deeper interpretation of brooches emerges, and unforeseen future opportunities for them to work with contemporary indigenous communities develop.
Mapping out the commodification process of brooches from their introduction to their contemporary manifestations additionally allowed for understanding their capacity to actively shape social perceptions. Constructing the biography of a collection involves considering the social, political, and economic factors surrounding their nomination as commodities as well as their transformation into non-commodity status (Kopytoff 1986). Thus, this approach is well suited to holistically investigate museum collections.

Using the biographical approach as scaffolding for this project also allowed me to evaluate the conversations brooches have been a part of or excluded from in previous literature. I was able to glean the insight that research on Woodland Native American brooches has the important capacity to illuminate previously unconsidered issues regarding the consumption of European trade goods and how colonial relationships affected dress and adornment as well as the performance of identity and tribal/community affiliation.

Future research to expand the biography of these collections should extend to the institutions that may house original documentation, including The Bancroft Library at The University of California-Berkley, The University of Texas at Austin, The New York State Museum, and the American Museum of Natural History. Consulting online inventories, I was only able to find the Latorre’s original field notes online at the Texas Archival Resources Online which lists the inventory in the Benson Latin American collection at The University of Texas at Austin. However, these files were not digitally accessible and required a fee to view them. Given limitations of time, mobility, and finances, I was not able to consult these field notes.

Sifting through the documents held in the MPM research library, I only was able to find evidence of the letter written to Mark R. Harrington from Alanson Skinner. There was no correspondence written to the MPM from Harrington. This does not necessarily mean such
correspondence does not exist, but currently this tangential part of the biography of these objects cannot be extended further than what is available at the MPM. Since Harrington did considerable work among the Iroquois in Canada and collected many brooches for the American Museum of Natural History, future research should focus on these objects and any associated correspondences or documentation held at the American Museum of Natural History. A networked biographical approach, as developed by Foster (2012), would suit these future research endeavors quite nicely.

**Comparison of regional silverwork**

I also encourage future research focused on the comparison of silver or German silver brooches originating from eastern North America and the Great Lakes. In order to contribute to our understanding of how brooches were used as the vehicles of primary agents throughout space and time, more research has to be done on Kickapoo silverwork. Baerreis (1950) believed that physical analysis of brooches would aid in understanding the spread of silversmithing from the east to the Great Lakes region. However, physical evidence, aside from maker’s marks, makes it increasingly difficult to determine how brooches were manufactured or the cultural affiliation of the metalworker. Museum archives, original field notes, and unpublished reports from expeditions that focused on aspects of silversmithing is where I believe clues to answering these questions can be found in the future.

Additionally, as I mentioned in the theoretical orientation (Chapter 2), the chaîne opératoire or a technological systems framework is useful to expanding biographical narratives for material culture. In the future, continued analysis of archaeological evidence may be able to contribute to the understanding of how brooches were physically modified or manufactured by indigenous communities.
It is important to keep in mind that the MPM Woodland German silver brooches were also influenced by the curatorial authorities who were responsible for their acquisition. In the correspondence between Alanson Skinner and Mark R. Harrington, Skinner noted that he and Dr. Barrett hand-picked the Oneida brooches they wished to acquire for the collection. Therefore, these Oneida brooches may be considered typical, but are not necessarily totally representative of possible brooch varieties among the Oneida and other Iroquois Nations.

Furthermore, there is a tendency to focus specifically on the Menominee and Iroquois silverwork since they were among the first tribes to participate in silversmithing. However, in the correspondence between Skinner and Harrington, Skinner mentions acquiring Sac and Fox brooches as well as Oneida brooches. I encourage future research to build off of what is currently known regarding tribes that learned silversmithing and focus on how other groups, such as the Sac and Fox, Huron, Delaware, and Ottawa began silversmithing as well as how they and others may now be returning to it.

The presence of European trade goods historically documented or recovered archaeologically that have been associated with indigenous communities has been previously considered direct evidence of cultural loss (Cipolla 2015). However, the idea of cultural loss is problematic when one considers the many ways in which European goods were repurposed and culturally used to insert into a system of action in their role as indexes with secondary agency. The reemergence of brooches as important components of contemporary indigenous powwow dance regalia only further underpins this insight.

In summation, the social arena that was the Fur Trade was comprised of many social actors. These actors included individuals associated with Iroquoian and Algonquian-speaking communities and the newly arriving French, Dutch, Spanish, and British. As was made evident
by Richard White (1991) and well as other scholars, our understanding of relationships during
the Fur Trade are constantly being reimagined and interpreted through new perspectives.

A focus on understanding the primary actor’s social agency during the Fur Trade, as well
as the decades that followed, makes it possible to continue re-interpreting how people utilized
material culture in order to manipulate and mediate their social environments. Brooches provide
an interesting and unique case study to engage in such interpretations. As active traders during
the Fur Trade, indexes asserting hybrid identities resisting European acculturation, and now
dancers (or perhaps more accurately the “costumed social skin” of dancers) in the contemporary
powwow context, brooches were and continue to be reconceptualized and used as vehicles to
assert individual and collective identities. Following their transit to ethnographic objects,
brooches were a part of the larger social and political undertaking meant to preserve the primary
agency of their makers and users. As these objects remain a part of the MPM’s collection, future
interpretation can seek to incorporate all primary actors’ voices conveyed through these objects
and how they relate to and complicate the broader narrative of brooch manufacture, use, and
interpretation.
References


