

was not the case. In a word, most Spanish officers acted with high motives in mind and had no intentions, as Donald intimates, of becoming slave owners.

Despite its controversial aspects and flaws, Donald's book is bound to be of interest to specialists in Northwest Coast history. They can decide for themselves the importance and place of Aboriginal slavery; the existence or non-existence of cannibalism; and whether or not, as a statement on the dust jacket proclaims, the book

will be a classic. Everyone will agree that there were slaves in pre- and post-contact Native Northwest Coast communities. Few will discount the possibility of at least some ritual cannibalism connected with warfare or other ceremonies. Throughout his book, Donald employs a methodology and approach to studying slavery that will serve as the basis for future discussion and debate among historians and anthropologists. Aboriginal writers and researchers in many fields will have more to say on this subject.

*The Pleasure of the Crown:
Anthropology, Law and First Nations*

Dara Culhane

Burnaby: Talon, 1998. 406 pp. \$24.95 paper.

BY JOANNE DRAKE-TERRY, *Lillooet, BC*

The *Pleasure of the Crown* invites readers to feast on an array of unorganized information about the role of anthropologists as expert witnesses, their testimony in *Delgamuukw v. The Supreme Court of British Columbia*, and First Nations legal battles to have their Aboriginal title and rights recognized. Unfortunately, Talon decided to call Dara Culhane's musings a "history of the Aboriginal title issue in British Columbia," which it is not.

The author's manuscript was in press on 11 December 1997 when the Supreme Court of Canada rendered judgment in *Delgamuukw v. The Queen*. The court decided seven major issues and ordered a new trial. Talon's

failure to halt publication of *The Pleasure of the Crown* until Culhane's opinions could be weighed against the ruling of the Supreme Court is unfathomable. For example, the Supreme Court of Canada recognized the strength of the oral history evidence of the Gitksan and Wet'suwet'en chiefs and elders. Yet their testimony was largely ignored in *The Pleasure of the Crown*. Culhane chose instead to elevate the importance of "expert witnesses" in page after page of her book. As one instance, the testimony and credentials of Crown anthropologist Sheila Robinson are referenced on at least seventy-five pages.

Culhane's commitment to a particular position prevents her from

seeing the whole picture. It is revealed in the oral evidence of Yagalahl – Dora Wilson – and cited in *The Pleasure of the Crown*. To what purpose, one might ask?

We are a poor people with rich resources. That is why the province and the federal government are running scared. And that is why they wouldn't deal with us ... They had huge mounds of money to pay their lawyers and they had a lot of lawyers ... It was unbelievable, the amount of people that they had working with them. (150)

My 370th day and there has been no document produced or given that the Province or the federal government own this land. (263)

Indeed, elders are not the only ones who question why the Crown is still holding First Nations hostage, demanding ransom/proof of Aboriginal title and its surrender before First Nations are allowed to benefit from lands and resources the Crown itself cannot prove entitlement to. Is it even logical for First Nations to seek justice through litigation if the following bizarre rule of law applies?

The law creates reality that is real because it has been created by the law. Hence, regardless of what might actually exist "on the ground," under the doctrine of legal positivism, the Crown creates and extinguishes Aboriginal title and rights "at its pleasure." (66)

The Supreme Court of Canada ruled that Aboriginal title is an Aboriginal right recognized and affirmed in Section 35(1) of the Constitution Act,

1982. The importance of First Nations struggles in the political arena are revealed in the court ruling. If "some British Columbia Indians" had not mounted an international campaign to halt repatriation of the Constitution, then there would have been no Section 35(1) written into the Constitution Act, 1982. Calling it a "limited victory won by Aboriginal peoples in the Constitution debates," Culhane relegates this and decades of political struggle to a few pages of text in her book.

Culhane also displays an extreme bias in favour of certain First Nations and leaders. Those who choose to litigate are referred to as a "well-schooled, "indigenous elite," and they are usually identified by name (i.e., Nishga), whereas First Nations political leaders and their constituents are commonly cited as "some Indians, "delegations," "various groups," "the Aboriginal movement," and so on. Referencing the published accounts of "expert" historian Paul Tennant and disregarding the accounts of First Nations leaders such as the late Grand Chief George Manuel, Chief David Ahenikew, and many others may have tilted the author's worldview.

What does the future hold for BC First Nations? In Culhane's opinion, the appeal decision in the Supreme Court of Canada case of *Delgamuukw v. The Queen* strengthens the position of First Nations in the BC Treaty Process. She seems blithely unaware that the majority of BC First Nations (formerly called Indian Bands) stayed away from the treaty table, refusing to comply with the demand for extinguishment of Aboriginal title. The Supreme Court ruling validated this position. It found that the province has no jurisdiction to extinguish Aboriginal title.

Either the federal government will begin to negotiate in good faith with the Gitksan and Wet'suwet'en and other First Nations or it will be forced

into litigation once again. For First Nations peoples who are struggling to survive "on the ground" the future is, it seems, still quite shaky!

*Paldi Remembered:
50 Years in the Life of a
Vancouver Island Logging Town*

Joan Mayo

Duncan: Paldi History Committee, 1997.

129 pp. Illus., maps. \$25 paper.

(Paldi History Committee,

6001 Paldi Road, RR 2, Duncan, BC, V9L 1N9)

BY SARJEET SINGH JAGPAL, *Vancouver*

At the beginning of this century about 5,000 East Indian men arrived in Canada from the Punjab province in northern India. Virtually all of them were Sikhs who came to British Columbia to do labouring jobs on railway construction, in lumber mills, and in forestry. Being uneducated but physically and spiritually strong they were prepared to work hard in this cold and hostile land and return to India with their savings. Only a few of these men had an education, and they soon recognized the economic opportunities open to them in the forest industry. These men were visionaries and were vital to the economic success of the entire group. *Paldi Remembered* is the story of Mayo Singh, a legend among Canadian Sikhs who became a successful businessman and community leader.

The author, Joan Mayo, Mayo Singh's daughter-in-law, describes him as "a small man, no more than 5'3" in height and, more importantly, not

cut out for hard labour." So he became the "wheeler-dealer" for his people. They supplied the physical labour and he the business acumen, as both these qualities would be needed to succeed in the lumber business.

Mayo Singh gets his start in business in 1912 by operating a potato farm, with thirty-five employees. It failed due to a poor market. Undaunted, he went on to buy a failing lumbermill, and his thirty-five employees became shareholders in Cheam Lumber Company, near Chilliwack. They then went on to buy the Marcum Lumber Company, near New Westminster, mainly for its timber holdings. This search for timber led Mayo Singh to Vancouver Island and brought onto the scene two other educated countrymen: Kapoor Singh, who was summoned from Ontario to become the lumber company's bookkeeper and shareholder, and Rahim, a lawyer, to be their business advisor.