

Book Reviews

Tahltan Ethnoarchaeology, by Sylvia L. Albright. Burnaby: Simon Fraser University, Department of Archaeology Publication No. 15.

This is the second volume from the Department of Archaeology at Simon Fraser University that is concerned with the extreme northwest corner of British Columbia. While Fladmark's report on the Edziza and Spectrum Ranges is almost completely prehistoric in nature, this monograph is devoted to contemporary Northern Athapaskan ethnography, with an archaeological *raison d'être*. This region of British Columbia is not well known by virtue of its remoteness, and thus the volume is a welcome contribution. Albright's research brings to light many unpublished observations by early ethnographers and meshes these quite well with data obtained during her five years among the people of Telegraph Creek and Iskut. Overall this is a good piece of research which provides many concise descriptions and occasional theoretical and methodological insights.

The treatment of Tahltan technology is clear and to the point. Anyone who still thinks that archaeologists cannot learn from living people should read the chapter dealing with Tahltan resource exploitation. This section is the most substantive contribution, through discussion of the various components of exploitative strategies, and also with the attention that is focused on the role of women in the society. Readers may be surprised to learn that women in the region are actively making stone tools and using them to dress large mammal hides (as are others in the Chilko Lake region much further south), and here Albright does a good job of illustrating the methods and products of manufacture. Likewise, salmon processing, hunting, trapping, fishing, and cooking methods are well described without being overly dry or redundant.

The sections devoted to the region's history and to Tahltan means of maintaining economic stability are also enjoyable and informative, but the same cannot be said of the presentation of the study's theoretical

framework. This could have been omitted in favour of a comparative discussion of the Kaska and other adjacent and distant Athapaskan groups, or perhaps such could have been added. While there is something to be said for maintaining the integrity of graduate theses, the concluding chapter on archaeological correlates of seasonal subsistence strategies does not extend much beyond common sense and does little to integrate the preceding research findings. For example, the data cited on person-hours of labour for various activities are probably amenable to modelling of different conditions, at the level of individuals and families.

I have no serious criticisms. The text may be uneven in quality and difficult to read, but the illustrations and photographs are quite clear, even though the large-scale maps lack elevation reference points, an important consideration in this region.

Anthropologists and archaeologists alike should find this a useful volume. There is no doubt that many archaeological sites exist in the Stikine River watershed that can now be realistically interpreted in social, subsistence and settlement terms. Furthermore, anthropologists can obtain a good idea of the kinds of data that are of interest to archaeologists. Albright states explicitly that the lives of the Tahltan may be subject to considerable change. In fact, more work of this kind is urgently required in many areas of British Columbia.

Alberta Culture

MARTIN MAGNE

The Magic Leaves: A History of Haida Argillite Carving, by Peter L. Macnair and Alan L. Hoover. Victoria: British Columbia Provincial Museum, 1984.

The Magic Leaves is the most recent contribution to a growing scholarly interest in Haida argillite. Beginning with the 1950s publication of Marius Barbeau (1953, 1957), this interest has been accelerated, and major studies on the genre have been published by art historians (Kaufmann 1969, 1976; Wright 1979, 1980, 1982), museum ethnologists (Sheehan 1981), and those whom the authors would term argillite "enthusiasts" (Drew and Wilson 1980).

The opportunity for this re-examination of Haida argillite chronology was the fulfilment of an obligation by the British Columbia Provincial