

Socialist Party of Canada of the beginning of this century. If only the trade union leadership had been more revolutionary and class conscious, if only the social democrats had not pooh-pooed any and all militancy, if only the Communist Party and others in the "broad left" had not played up to the B.C. Fed leadership, how different things might have been. Perhaps. But in the short run, Solidarity did provide a lesson in extraparliamentary opposition to neo-conservative policies without parallel in the English-speaking world. B.C. labour, too, has continued to weather on-going attacks from Social Credit, and not without considerable dignity and backbone, as witness the one-day general strike organized by the B.C. Federation of Labour on 1 June 1987 against Bill 19. And the example of coalition-building that the Solidarity movement pointed to remains a more lasting legacy for the Canadian left in the late 1980s and into the 1990s than the echoes of proletarian revolutions-past that underlie Palmer's essay.

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*British Columbia Prehistory*, by Knut R. Fladmark. Ottawa: Canadian Museum of Civilization, 1986.

Once again, Knut R. Fladmark succeeds at a new undertaking — contributing a public-oriented book entitled *British Columbia Prehistory*. In his own words, "This book is an attempt to make some of the richness and fascination of British Columbia's ancient past more accessible, although I hope that it will also be of interest to professional archaeologists and their students . . ." (ix). He succeeds by combining the abundant "shadow literature" of the numerous obscure archaeological reports and theses from British Columbia into a brilliantly prepared book of broad/general and professional quality. He states his strategy best by introduction: "On our tour we will glimpse a mosaic of dynamic landscapes filled with shifting glaciers, rising and falling oceans and changeable forests. In these settings, a kaleidoscope of human life — men, women and children, artists, warriors and mystics — will appear, flicker and vanish with the march of years" (2).

The tour involves at least 12,000 years, contributing well developed descriptions and illustrations from ninety years of B.C. archaeological results. A highlight is the small fictitious vignettes that place us on location at different time periods of British Columbia's rich human past. My main regret is that the vignettes are not longer! They are very well written and

teasingly intriguing. These stories reveal the actual setting like no descriptive text of scientific writing can.

As with his previous works, Knut Fladmark carefully considers the role of environmental dynamics in establishing the human context through time on both the Northwest Coast and the Interior. Some minor alternatives can be suggested as to how this might have been explained differently. One can argue that the emphasis on cultural changes may be too closely linked to specific environmental factors, in conjunction with “stabilized” sea levels (57) or “cultural adaptations to the maturing resources of ocean, river and forest” (142). Some alternative explanations could stress the importance of (a) changing population dynamics (as he notes, with a historic population density among the highest in North America); (b) increasing territorial circumscription; and/or (c) pressures placed on resources through time. However, as Fladmark correctly states, “our window on the past can sometimes be so clouded that perception of a ‘true’ picture may depend more on opinion,” and “archaeology is full of competing theories and dogma . . .,” “often the best that archaeologists can do is to suggest a number of alternative ideas, any one of which could be ‘right’” (4).

Contrary to his interpretation, I would place less emphasis on salmon as a factor in explaining the long-term, overall Northwest Coast cultural evolution. My reasons for this can be explained in relation to the “alternative” view it gives of hafted microlithics “mounted in cedar-splint handles as fish-knives” (68) at a site I direct, the Hoko River archaeological wet site. In discussing the Middle Period, Fladmark notes how “intriguing” it is that quartz crystals were apparently used for utilitarian tasks in the Middle Developmental Stage, since in historic times they were associated with potent spirit powers. This leads to the suggestion that “perhaps prehistoric quartz-crystal fish knives actually had an implicit sacred significance in honouring the soul of salmon” (68). However, hafted microlith knives mostly had vein quartz cutting edges, though the quartz-crystal microblades did have evidence of fish blood residue on their edges. But, *most important*, the main fishery at Hoko involved processing halibut/flatfish, and only in a minor way was salmon caught from the camp. The main point is that salmon, as a resource, is too commonly given great importance on the Northwest Coast, when this emphasis may actually be a relatively recent phenomenon on the overall prehistoric Northwest Coast, and based on our own bias toward the good taste of salmon!

Fladmark clearly points out the three coastal variants of Northern, Central, and Southern lithic assemblages found as early as 10,000 to 8,000

years ago on the Northwest Coast. He recognizes intriguing Northern and Southern similarities in the Middle Developmental Period of Northwest Coast prehistory. To some degree, perishable artifacts from Southern wet sites also demonstrate this trend of similarity to the north. The general continuity of the three regional variants seem very deep rooted, long lived, and well represented.

Coming to the end of his tour, Fladmark documents well the resulting Northwest Interior and Coast cultural complexity, having developed a "maximum utilization of their environment" (29). He then follows with the important consideration of "colliding cultures" (141) of the Euro-american contact period. He questions which culture "will be seen to have shown greater wisdom" (141). The reader is shown that the history of hundreds of generations of past Northwesters, as revealed by archaeology, "teaches us" (144) the invaluable wisdom developed during the past 12,000 + years and how we "must come to appreciate and protect the ancient past . . . as part of our collective heritage and a source of pride for the future" (145). Through his latest book, Knut Fladmark begins revealing the collective wisdom of hundreds of generations of past Northwest Elders for the present-day peoples.

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*Lights of the Inside Passage*, by Donald Graham. Madeira Park, B.C.: Harbour Publishing, 1986. Pp. 269; illus.

*Lights of the Inside Passage* is a passionately written, popular history of the lighthouses of British Columbia's Inside Passage — a stretch of water which extends some 900 kilometres from the Gulf Islands and Georgia Strait in the south to the Queen Charlotte Islands and Dixon Entrance in the north. This is Graham's second volume. His first, *Keepers of the Light*, dealt with lighthouses of the south coast of British Columbia and the west coast of Vancouver Island.

The author, himself a lightkeeper, has spent a decade on various west coast lights. He left his position as Saskatchewan's Cultural Conservation Co-ordinator in 1976, drawn in part, he admits, by the romance of lighthouses. While the realities of the lights have since tempered his youthful enthusiasm, Graham's writing abounds with emotion and sentimentality. He speaks of keepers "out on the lights, watching the Aurora run wild across another winter sky" or facing a winter gale hunkered down inside