

Style, Society, And Person: Archaeological And Ethnological Perspectives

Moving On: Expanding Perspectives on Athapaskan Migration

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ABSTRACT. Our recent book, *Athapaskan Migrations: The Archaeology of Eagle Lake, British Columbia* (Matson and Magne 2007) is mainly a synthesis of the fieldwork conducted on the Interior Plateau of British Columbia between 1979 and 1985 and analyses carried out at that time and more recently. It is also an attempt to place this B.C. material within the context of our knowledge of the large scale Athapaskan migrations across most of western North America. Here we provide clarifications about our research, report recent analytical results, and discuss conceptual advances that we believe can yield increased understanding of migrations.

RÉSUMÉ. Notre récent ouvrage, *Athapaskan Migrations: The Archaeology of Eagle Lake, British Columbia* (Matson et Magne 2007) traite principalement d'une synthèse des études sur le terrain effectuées entre 1979 et 1985 sur le plateau intérieur de la Colombie-Britannique ainsi que des analyses réalisées à cette époque et plus récemment. L'ouvrage cherche aussi à situer le matériel de la Colombie-Britannique à la lumière de notre connaissance des migrations des Athapascans, effectuées à grande échelle dans presque tout l'Ouest de l'Amérique du Nord. Ici nous apportons des clarifications au sujet de notre recherche, communiquons des résultats d'analyse récents et discutons des avancées conceptuelles qui, à notre avis, contribuent à une meilleure compréhension des migrations.

Where We Came From

Athapaskan Migrations (Matson and Magne 2007) continues a North American archaeological tradition of trying to

identify the movements of Athapaskan speakers. We perceive two separate issues, the identification of Athapaskan archaeological material and more disparate (linguistic and ethnohistoric) information needed to evaluate the likelihood of alternative migration routes. At Eagle Lake, we have built on Roscoe Wilmet's (1978) work at Anahim Lake (Figure 1). In this area the arrival of Athapascans is found in the archaeology of the past 1,000 years. For many aboriginal people in this part of Canada, the direct contact period is quite late, about A.D. 1850, although trade goods and knowledge of Europeans date to about 100 years earlier. Ethnohistoric knowledge of Athapascans in central and northern British Columbia is quite good in large part because of the resilience of the people and of the fine early observations of Athapascans by Boas (1895), Morice (1890, 1895, 1906), Farrand (1898, 1900), Fraser (Lamb 1960), and Lane (1953). Teit (1900, 1906, 1909a, 1909b, 1956, 1979) also reported on Athapaskan and other Plateau groups. The prehistory of Athapascans in British Columbia is itself a long-standing topic in the perceptive writings of Father Morice (1895, 1906), Wilmet (1969, 1971, 1975, 1978, 1979),

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CANADIAN JOURNAL OF ARCHAEOLOGY / JOURNAL CANADIEN D'ARCHÉOLOGIE 34: 212-239 (2010)

RESEARCH REPORT

loveinamasonjar.com: Style, Society, and Person: Archaeological and Ethnological Perspectives (Interdisciplinary Contributions to Archaeology) (): .Style, society, and person: archaeological and ethnological perspectives of Artifact Design: Historical Perspectives and Tactics / Christopher Carr; Ch. 7.'Style, Society and Person: Archaeological and ethnological perspectives' edited by Christopher Carr and Jill E. Neitzel, , New York.Style, Society and Person: Archaeological and Ethnological Perspectives. Front Cover. Christopher Carr, Dr, Christopher Carr, Jill E. Neitzel. Springer Science.Style, Society, and Person: Archaeological and Ethnological Perspectives. Front Cover. Christopher Carr, Jill E. Neitzel. Springer Science.Style, Society, and Person Archaeological and Ethnological Perspectives Engaged Anthropology: Research Essays on North American Archaeology.Style, Society, and Person: Archaeological and Ethnological Perspectives. Christopher Carr and Jill E. Neitzel. James R. Sackett. University of California, Los.Style, Society, and Person: Archaeological and Ethnological Perspectives. Christopher Carr and Jill E. Neitzel, editors. Plenum Press, New.View all 28 copies of Style, Society, and Person: Archaeological and Ethnological Perspectives (Interdisciplinary Contributions to Archaeology) from US\$ The Hardcover of the Style, Society, and Person: Archaeological and Ethnological Perspectives by Christopher Carr at Barnes & Noble.Style, society, and person: archaeological and ethnological perspectives. Responsibility: edited by Christopher Carr and Jill E. Neitzel. Imprint: New York.Style, Society, and Person: Archaeological and Ethnological Perspectives. Christopher Carr and Jill E. Neitzel.

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