"THE INDIANS STATIONARY HERE": CONTINUITY AND CHANGE IN THE ORIGINS OF THE FORT SIMPSON TSIMSHIAN

E Palmer Patterson
University of Waterloo

Abstract: In 1834, the Hudson's Bay Company moved its post, Fort Simpson, to a new site on the Tsimshian peninsula. This essay explores the origins, founding and first decade of the Coast Tsimshian village which formed at the new Fort Simpson. Working primarily from fort records, complemented by oral traditions, a close view is available of a variety of elements, persons and events in the village's first years. These include trading relationships involving different Tsimshian groups, Nisga'a, Tongass, Americans, Russians and others, as well as political rivalries and ceremonials. There is a record of the devastation caused by smallpox. Although the journal inevitably reflects the prejudices of the European traders, it nonetheless provides a valuable picture of the cultures of the Northwest Coast, incidentally revealing the ways in which the Tsimshian utilized the European presence.

Résumé: En 1834, la compagnie Hudson's Bay a transferé son poste, Fort Simpson, à un nouvel emplacement sur la péninsule de Tsimshian. Cet article explore les origines, c'est-à-dire la fondation et les dix premières années du village de la côte Tsimshian qui est devenu le nouveau Fort Simpson. Grâce aux archives du Fort et à la tradition orale, nous pouvons établir une image assez précise de divers éléments, les personnes et les événements qui ont marqué les premières années du village. Ces images expliquent entre autres les relations commerciales entre les différents groupes les Tsimshian, les Nisga'a, les Tongass, les Américains, les Russes et d'autres encore, ainsi que les rivalités politiques et les cérémonies. Il est même fait mention d'une épidémie de variole qui a dévasté le poste. Bien que le journal reflète forcément les préjugés des commerçants européens, il nous donne néanmoins une précieuse image de la culture de la côte du nord-ouest, révélant par la même occasion les différentes façons dont les Tsimshian ont exploité la présence européenne.

***Anthropologica* XXXVI (1994) 181-203**

Introduction

In the summer of 1834, the Hudson's Bay Company removed its post, Fort Simpson, from a location on the north shore of the Nass River estuary to a new and permanent site on the Tsimshian peninsula at McLoughlin Bay, now Port Simpson, British Columbia. Native peoples promptly redirected their voyages to the new fort. This article explores the origins, founding and first decade of the Coast Tsimshian village which formed at the fort's new site. Working primarily from fort records, complemented by oral traditions, a close view is available of a variety of elements, persons and events in the village's first years. The Fort Simpson (later Port Simpson) Coast Tsimshian have been the most studied of the various Tsimshian-speakers—Coast Tsimshian, Southern Tsimshian, Nisga'a and Gitksan. From Franz Boas, Marius Barbeau and Viola Garfield to Clarence Bolt, the villagers have provided information about Tsimshian culture. They were also the parent community from which Metlakatla sprang, and it too has been much written about, from the late 19th century to recent times.

In pre-contact years, the nine tribes of the Tsimshian-speakers later called the Coast Tsimshian or "Tsimshian proper" had lived on the Skeena River. By the early 19th century these tribes had moved to the present site of Metlakatla, evidently responding to the new ship-borne trade opportunities. From there they moved to the second Fort Simpson, where each tribe had previously held "camping sites" in the area where the fort was erected; "each tribe claimed a stretch of beach line." When the Tsimshian moved to Fort Simpson they set up their new village on the tracts of land claimed by the individual tribes. The houses of the chiefs and subchiefs were located in the centre of the row of tribal houses (Garfield 1939:175ff.). Ultimately, elements of all nine tribes settled at Fort Simpson.

The first three years (1834-37) of the new fort saw various patterns of adaptation among the Coast Tsimshian and other people who traded there. These replicated patterns established at the Nass site, based on traditional Native patterns of seasonal movement, trade and intertribal contact. By mid-1837 Coast Tsimshian had begun to settle at the fort, building houses for themselves outside its walls. During the fort's first decade at its new site, 1834-43, Coast Tsimshian people were the main suppliers of furs there, with both Tongass and Tsimshian acting as the fort's provisioners. Certain chiefs, especially Legaic I—who is credited with inviting the Hudson's Bay Company to locate at the site—established trading links with the fort based in part, at least, on family ties. A daughter or niece of this Legaic was married to Dr. John Frederick Kennedy, an officer of the fort. Legaic, the first holder of his title to be recorded by Europeans, rose to be the senior chief of the Coast Tsimshian through his role as intermediary in the fur trade to the upper Skeena peoples—Gitksans and Athapascans.

The second part of the decade, 1837-43, saw intensified economic links between the Tsimshian and the fort. More chiefs were mentioned in the fort's journal. Certain Tsimshian became known as "locals," "home Indians" and "our Indians" to personnel at the fort, and these people formed an important part of the fort's labour force. They contributed to the fort's gardening, the maintenance of its buildings and grounds and the replenishing of its fuel supply (wood). This Tsimshian labour force constituted a third and significant contribution to the fort's existence beyond those of suppliers of furs and provisioners.

The fort journal reflects the founding of the Tsimshian village and gives a picture of the variety of ways in which the new Tsimshian settlers interacted with the fort and fitted it into their own purposes. Told from the perspective of the fort, the account shows how the settlers fitted into the fort's purposes too. The journal thus provides a major source for an understanding of the origins of the Fort Simpson Tsimshian village; a careful reading shows its continuity with traditional culture and the customs of its people.

Although more detailed information is available about the founding some 30 years later of the Christian settlement of Metlakatla (1862) and the Nisga'a village of Kincolith (1867), both of these villages owed their founding in part to the role of European missionaries;[1] Tsimshian initiative was paramount in the creation of the village at Fort Simpson. The land itself was already held and used by tribes of the Coastal Tsimshian (Garfield 1939:177). The fort journal's portrayal of the Native settlers as marginal, beggars and hangers-on reminds one of Thomas King's remark, "This idea of community and family ["as intricate webs of kinship that radiate from a native sense of family"] is not an idea that is often perceived by non-native writers who prefer to imagine their Indians as solitary figures poised on the brink of extinction" (King 1990:xiv). Despite the negative characterizations sprinkled through the journal, the Tsimshian settlers emerge as purposive members of an active and structured society.

The Tsimshian created at the fort an adaptive, dynamic, richly textured community which may be assumed to have replicated the tradition of village creation. At the new fort village, Tsimshian life manifested itself in ceremonies, intertribal trading and feuding, slave trading, alliance and marriage. Despite the company's notion that the primary purpose of the Natives was the satisfaction of the needs of the fort, the evidence indicates that this was not the Tsimshian perspective. The latter, both those residing at the fort and the visitors, engaged with the fort as it fitted Tsimshian purposes and customs.

Many other peoples also came. A variety of Haida visited—Cumshewa, Chatsina, Skidegate, Massett, North Islanders and Kaigani. Tlingit, including Stikine, Tongass, Honega, Cape Fox and Port Stewarts, were regularly at the fort. Nisga'a, Southern Tsimshian (Sebassas) and other Tsimshian (Kitselas,

Kitsumkalem) were traders and sometimes provisioners. Some northern Kwakiutl also came from Kitimat and elsewhere. The fort provided a source of European goods and a new mart for intertribal and intratribal trading. It also supplemented the seaborne trade, including that of whalers, that continued to be strong in the area and irritated the company as the "opposition." Using their trading skills, the various Aboriginal peoples took advantage of the competitive market to the annoyance and disadvantage of the company. Many of these Native traders also traded at other company forts, e.g., Fort McLoughlin at Bella Bella and at Russian forts. The cosmopolitan fort atmosphere, in short, continued traditional Aboriginal interaction. Allaire observes that, "multiethnic situations were a daily experience for the Coast Tsimshian villages, especially since the territory occupied a natural crossroads and was a thoroughfare between all these peoples" (Allaire 1984:87).[2]

The fort provided an additional element of cosmopolitanism by the presence of the personnel introduced by the company. As well as a variety of Europeans—including Scots, Americans, Irish—there were also Iroquois, Hawaiians, Asians and Maoris at one time or another between 1834 and 1843-44.

The fort became incorporated into the Native round of activities. On occasion it was threatened, sometimes its personnel were attacked, and from time to time claims were made to the land on which it was located. Several groups had asserted their prior ownership rights to the vicinity, based on traditional fishing and hunting usage. Despite the firepower of the fort and the repeated threats to shoot people who acted in ways perceived as hostile, the Natives were not cowed and intimidated but acted with discretion and expediency. They were seen as alternatively essential to the fort and an inconvenience to it, dismissively called "scamps," "thieves" and "insolent" when they contravened the fort's interests and etiquette.

From the perspective of the fort, the Natives fulfilled the purpose of its existence (furs) and enhanced the quality of life in a variety of ways, e.g., by providing food and an additional labour supply. To the fort this labour implied marginality, inferiority and dependence on the fort. The Natives were not, however, living off the crumbs that fell from the fort's table, although the journal record is ambivalent on this. Despite repeated pejorative comments in the journals, the Natives are also shown as using the fort as part of a network of forts, ships and Native sources at their disposal, whether as regular or intermittent visitors to the fort or as local residents.

All in all, the "local Tsimshian" used the fort, and the new village they had created there by mid-1837, to continue their traditional trade while expanding it to include the Europeans. Events occurring among themselves were such as might occur at any Native village and trade mart. They saw the fort as a service to themselves, though there were elements about it which might be harmful, such as its role in the spreading of epidemic disease or its receiving of an-

tagonistic tribes. The fort's trade also undoubtedly accelerated the exploitation and depletion of certain natural resources, especially land animals, water animals and timber. This impact extended to Alaska, the Queen Charlotte Islands and the mainland hinterland of the fort. Even so, in the end the village survived the fort and the Native community there survives into the present.

The Early Years: 1834-37

The fort journal provides a window on a variety of aspects of aboriginal culture and records the journal keeper's knowledge of some of the individuals who were engaged in the fur trade at Fort Simpson in the mid-1830s. The Tsimshian appear at first as travellers to the fort, mostly from their homes at Pearl Harbor and the lower Skeena River area, including Port Essington. They also travelled to the Nass River fishery each spring, stopping off at the fort, sometimes for days or weeks, before continuing to the Nass. They travelled as well to Alaska, to Fort McLoughlin, to the Queen Charlotte Islands and elsewhere. At all these places the Tsimshian traded, hunted, fished and feuded. Their linkages with their neighbours, through fort visits and visits away from the fort, are frequently noted.

Marriage with other tribes facilitated close alliances and embodied these intertribal relations. For example, Nislaganoose (Niselhanass), senior chief of the Gitlan tribe of the Tsimshian, one of the early settlers, had a Tongass wife. Fort personnel also had Tsimshian, Nisga'a and Haida family links. Captain William Henry McNeill's Kaigani in-laws (Haida) traded at the fort as did fathers-in-law, brothers-in-law and other members of families formed by marriage between Natives and Hudson Bay Company employees. Employees and their wives and children lived within the fort stockade, while for the most part collateral relatives like McNeill's Kaigani kin camped outside.

We learn more about Native customs and traditions, alliances and feuds, employment and relations with the fort and get more glimpses of marriage and family matters than we would if Tsimshian had not begun to settle at the fort. Something of the activities of individuals emerges from the references to individual chiefs and their families. The chiefs, as heads of the main economic unit, the lineage, were the main traders. Some aspects of the pattern of trade—items traded, seasonal variations and factors aiding and hindering trade—are revealed. Cultural variety was not new to the Tsimshian and they adapted to new influences in continuity with their past, absorbing into their traditions ramifications of the European and Native contacts available at the fort.

The term "fur trade" implied a wide range of involvement by the Natives in the life and work of the fort. The Tongass (the Tlingit group closest to the location of the Nisga'a) immediately assumed the role of the main provisioners. Young Tongass men, regularly hired to provide venison for the tables of the fort personnel, acted as the fort's best hunters in its early months (HBC: No-

vember 14, 1834). Venison and salmon (fresh and dried) formed the chief items of the trade in food. Nearby Tsimshian also traded food, including venison, salmon, halibut, flounder, eulachon, herring and codfish. Tsimshian especially, but others also, traded other foods: eggs, herring roe and oil and fat of whales, fish and deer. Venison and salmon, however, remained the main food provisions traded. Deer, hunted year around; fresh salmon, available in summer and early autumn; geese and eggs traded in the spring; along with eulachon and halibut, traded in early summer, comprised the Native contributions to fort provisions.

These indigenous foods were supplemented by potatoes. The earliest potato traders were Haida; Skidegates brought potatoes in early May 1835, as well as furs. This occurred less than a year after the fort's relocation in the summer of 1834, and was likely a continuation of trade previously established at the Nass fort (HBC: May 4, 1835).[3] The Cumshewas and Massetts followed the Skidegate as potato suppliers. In addition to supplying the fort, potatoes were also traded to Natives including Nisga'a, Tsimshian and others who gathered at the Nass mouth (HBC: May 15, June 4, 1835). The Skidegates and Cumshewas became known at the fort as the "potatoes people" (HBC: November 14, 1835).

In the first decade of the Fort Simpson village, we see in germ the factors leading to the later dominant role of the chiefs who bore the title, Legaic, probably the most-written-about figures of all the Coast Tsimshian. By family ties of marriage, Legaic I, the senior chief of the Gispaxloats, and the first holder of this title known to Europeans, had incorporated a senior fort officer, Dr. Kennedy, into his family and brought Dr. Kennedy's trading obligations into the lineage's economic system.

The premature deaths of two other Tsimshian chiefs, Neshot and Cackas, in the smallpox epidemic of 1836-37 undoubtedly assisted Legaic's rise. However, it is significant that the Gispaxloats' special trading link was with Tsimshian-speakers on the middle Skeena, a rich source of furs accessible to the fort through Legaic, though traders of the Kitselas and Kitsumkalem tribes did sometimes come in person to trade at the fort. Cackas' tribe, the Ginaxangik, and Neshot's tribe, the Gitzaxlahl, had their special ties to the Tlingit in Aboriginal trade; here too, the Tlingit could and did trade directly with the fort. In addition, they traded with the Russians and the visiting "opposition" ships. Aboriginal trading patterns did not assist Cackas and Neshot in their trading position with the fort as the Aboriginal trade relations of the Gispaxloats assisted Legaic.

As has been noted, Legaic alone of the three principal chiefs of the nearby Tsimshian survived the destructive smallpox epidemic of 1836-37. These three had been courted by the company (HBC: March 2, 1836),[4] but Legaic had the closest ties with the fort. His son-in-law (perhaps nephew-in-law),

Dr. Kennedy, was an officer at the fort, and this marriage/alliance had influenced the relocation of the fort from the Nass River to the Tsimshian peninsula. The other two chiefs, Cackas and Neshot, were much less important to the fort's economy, though also regarded as principal chiefs. All three of these men would have been known to the company prior to the fort's relocation, as were other chiefs who traded at Fort Simpson on the Nass River.

In the eyes of the company, all three chiefs were of approximately equal rank and much trade was expected of them. Their comings and goings were regularly reported as were the movements and activities of members of their families; the activities of the sons of all three are reported in the journal. Most of these reports have to do with trade at the fort and travels related to fort business. The chiefs acted as couriers of company mail from Fort Simpson to other forts, e.g., Fort McLoughlin and posts at Stikine and Taku. Even before their settlement (by the mid-1830s) at Fort Simpson, the Tsimshian and Tlingit had become a part of the fort's communication and information network. Tsimshian and Tlingit chiefs regularly acted as couriers for company mail between various forts. By the late 1830s these included Fort McLoughlin (1833-43) at Millbank Sound and Fort Durham (Taku) and Fort Stikine (Wrangel), the latter two among the Tlingits of Alaska.

All three of the chiefs had the distinction of being honoured by the company with special suits (uniforms), indicating their collective status above others and their equality with each other. However, as already indicated, the three did not deliver the same amount of trade. Whether this was due primarily to differences in energy, in skill or in trading ties and alliances is not clear from the fort journal. However, it is clear that only Legaic had family ties with the fort. His family link to the fort, through Kennedy, is likely a key to why he traded more with the company than did Cackas and Neshot. The latter two were also active traders, but their activities continued to move in more traditional channels. Each of these three noblemen bore distinguished titles. The head chief of the Ginaxangik tribe of the Coastal Tsimshian in the early 19th century held the title of Cackas (Txaqaxs) (Garfield 1939:188, 190).[5] Neshot, the senior chief of the Raven crest (Ganhade clan) of the Gitzaxlahl (Gitzarhaehl) tribe of the Coast Tsimshian, had family links to Legaic (Barbeau 1950:765). Legaic, who held the title of the senior chief of the Gispaxloats tribe, was of the Eagle clan and crest.

In the Tsimshian social system, the lineage (*wilp*, *waab*) formed the main economic unit. Kennedy through his marriage would have been associated, if not formally incorporated in the same way, with the lineage. Thus Legaic became, by Tsimshian tradition, integrated into the fort's trade by family links. In a similar way, the fort's journals record other links created by marriage; McNeill's family ties to the Kaigani are regularly noted. Other members of the fort personnel also had family ties to the Nisga'a. These ties undoubtedly en-

hanced the trading links of the Tsimshian, Nisga'a and others. Like the Tsimshian, the Nisga'a too had the lineage as their main economic unit.

Though Cackas and Neshot lacked these links to the fort, this did not adversely affect their ranking in the eyes of the company, though both proved a disappointment from the company point of view. They failed to bring to the fort the quantity of trade expected from friendly chiefs who had been singled out for special consideration by the company (HBC: June 29, 1836).[6] Relations between the two and the fort thus soured and antagonisms sometimes flared. They were seen as contentious, unco-operative and sometimes hostile in their speech and actions. The journal keeper, while aware of the Native family ties of fort personnel, presumably never considered the way such ties or the lack of them might be seen by members of the Native nobility.

By the autumn of 1836, after two years of trading and visiting at Fort Simpson, the reputation of Cackas and Neshot as traders had worsened. Cackas had several quarrels with fort personnel. In one instance he told the company to leave the area because the land occupied by the fort was his (HBC: June 29, 1836). This represents a different view than that often given that the land fell under the jurisdiction of Legaic. Cackas also threatened on an earlier occasion to burn down the fort. He had been forbidden entrance while drunk (HBC: February 3, 1835). For his opposition he was called a "good for nothing villain" who never brought anything for trade, and the journal keeper coolly saw "no cause for regret at his death" of smallpox (HBC: November 2, 1836).

The journal keeper also seemed to take some pleasure in the discomfiture of the successor Cackas, when a major feast given to name the new Cackas, apparently not as "grand" an affair as was intended by the new title holder, ran out of food and drinks while the guests were still there (HBC: June 2, 1838). The new Cackas did not emerge as a challenger to Legaic in the fur trade at Fort Simpson in the late 1830s, but he continued to have a bad reputation. In late June 1840, rumour had it, apparently without subsequent result, that he planned to join hostile Haida in an attack on the fort (HBC: June 29, 1840).

Cackas and Neshot repeatedly appear as trading with the "opposition," that is, the American ships. Apparently the American traders offered them as much goods as they wanted, at prices they wanted. They would have used the fort as a supplement to whatever trading they did with other Tsimshian, Nisga'a, Tlingit and others. The fort for its part sometimes punished those who sold furs to the Americans by denying them other trade (HBC: November 9, 1836). Natives had their own agendas at the fort. They might come with furs but not trade them to the fort itself (HBC: February 24, 1836). The fort location served Natives as a mart for intertribal trade as well as for company trade.

Legaic too sometimes had friction with fort personnel. On one occasion he was warned that his people would be fired on if they persisted in throwing stones at fort employees (HBC: February 7, 1835). On the other hand, his spe-

cial relationship with the fort and his awareness of its uses to him may be indicated by his accepting smallpox inoculation in November 1836, after both of his fellow principal chiefs, Cackas and Neshot, died of smallpox (HBC: November 9, 1836).

The deaths of these two Tsimshian chiefs were followed by the murder of a prominent Tongass (Tlingit) trader, Conguele (Coaguele), who had also traded at the first Fort Simpson on the Nass and had helped to transport fort property to the new location. His murder may have formed another factor, probably of less significance, in the priority achieved by the Legaic lineage. As an old friend of the fort since its Nass days, his murder would have contributed to an alienation of the implicated tribal members, the family and supporters of Neshot, who blamed Conguele and his people for transmitting smallpox to their chief. In revenge for this perceived act, Neshot's son and confederates helped Conguele become intoxicated, and, when he had been rendered unconscious, shot him in the head with a pistol (HBC: October 2, 1836). Neshot's son was expelled from the fort for his part in the murder, but this did not prevent him from returning later to the scene of the crime, in December 1836 (HBC: December 4, 5, 1836). By late January 1837, the same man was alleged to have threatened the life of John Work, fort commander (HBC: January 22, 1837).

In the early years of the new Fort Simpson, from mid-1834 to late 1836, the three chiefs were mentioned about an equal number of times, most frequently as traders and without negative remarks. Legaic had a slight edge over the other two. Unlike the others, he was not seen as lazy or useless. As a family "member" of the fort's leadership his friendship and co-operation were readily noticeable. By contrast with the other two his contribution was underscored. Only he had lived up to expectations. Legaic's inoculation for smallpox indicates his trust in the power and knowledge of his physician son-in-law and of the white man's medicine. The disease had not missed Kennedy's family; Mrs. Kennedy caught it but recovered. One of Legaic's wives died of it as did his son, Looking Glass (HBC: November 14, 1836).

The journal, however, does not see Legaic as paramount or as a ruler or "priest chief" (Robinson 1978:64ff.).[7] To them he was, like all Tsimshian chiefs, "lacking in authority" (HBC: July 1, 1837). His word was not law. He does not appear as the hegemonic Legaic of monopolistic trading power, wealth and political ascendancy described by Robinson, although his prominence in the Skeena River trade is clear. His rise to pre-eminence seems to have followed the relocation of the fort by some years. It may also have been linked to the deaths of Cackas and Neshot in 1836; evidently the creation of a new Cackas in May 1838 did not prevent this rise in the subsequent years (HBC: May 20, 1838).

Does the presence at the fort of Kitselas (June 18, 1838; August 23, 1840; June 6, 1841; March 28, 1842) and Kitsumkalem (August 9, 1840) say anything about Legaic's monopoly and control of the trade on the Skeena River and his role as intermediary to the upper Skeena Tsimshian and Gitksan? Perhaps his control of this trade included some role for other Tsimshian tribes on the Skeena under his hegemony. Perhaps his power and the nature of his control was not so clearly defined as words like "monopoly" and "hegemony" would seem to imply (Meilleur 1980:238-239).

While his peers, Cackas and Neshot, continued to conduct their trade along more customary lines, taking advantage of the company's "opposition," Legaic allowed his family links to the fort to act as a conduit for his trade. The three chiefs were all exploiting aspects of the possibilities for trade offered by the coming of the Europeans, by land or by sea. They did not recognize themselves as "company chiefs," though they accepted the company's suits as badges of their rank and status. Presumably the suit was not more significant for Legaic than for the other two. Family ties (lineage ties?) put Legaic in a unique and advantageous position. His family and his Gispaxloats tribe became well known to the fort's journal keeper (mostly John Work in this period) prior to his emergence as the most important trader of the three chiefs. The number of "his people" was known; see for example the reference to Legaic (Illgaguech) and the "greater part" of "his people" arriving in seven canoes (HBC: December 1, 1835; Allaire 1984:97).[8] Family connections gave all the family a high profile; the doings of Looking Glass and other sons are noted (HBC: November 19, 1834; March 28 and November 14, 1836; October 11, 1839), and the illness and death of Legaic's "old wife" is recorded (HBC: January 21, 1835).

We do not know exactly when Legaic I died. He was reported to be deathly ill on April 27, 1839, but he apparently recovered (HBC: April 27, 1839). It may be that Legaic is the person referred to (but why not named?) in connection with loud wailing heard from the Tsimshian settlement at the fort, in mid-August of 1842. News had reached the village of the death of a "principal man," killed on the interior Skeena River while trading there (HBC: August 14, 1842). Another possibility is that Legaic died in late April or early May 1839 when he was reported to be ill of an unnamed but nearly always fatal disease (HBC: April 27, 1839). Why no further mention would have been made of his illness and death is not clear, but he no longer figures in the journal through to mid-1842. It is more likely that he survived this illness. Work refers to Legaic as an old man and as a principal chief of "weight and standing among the natives" (Dee 1945:71). Although Legaic figures prominently in Work's journal of January to October 1835, he is totally absent from the journal of 1841-44 unless he is the chief referred to in 1844 who was killed on the Skeena "for encroachment" (ibid.). Those killed were some of the best hunt-

ers and their loss would be a drawback to the trade, Work wrote (Public Archives of British Columbia, 1841-44).

The only other chief referred to as a principal chief up to this time was Wass (September 14, 1838), and the above-mentioned murder victim was not he. Wass was of Wolf clan and Gitlan tribe, related to Nislaganoose (HBC: September 26, 1842). Two other prominent Tsimshian chiefs, local residents by this time, were Neaselkameak (Neeskameks, Nishlkumik, The Big Face Man) of the Killer-Whale crest (Gispawuwade clan) of the Gilodzar (Gilutsau) tribe of the Coast Tsimshian, and Nislaganoose (Nishlaranus, Neeashlakahnoos) of the Wolf clan and crest, of the Gitlan tribe of the Coast Tsimshian. He is also referred to as the "Gitlan chief," "the Lame Man" and "the Cripple Man." Persons of this title had close family ties to the Nisga'a chief Klaydach (Hladech, Hlidux, Claytha, Kledak, etc.), a Wolf chief of Ankida village on the lower Nass River. Neither of these men was the murder victim mentioned. In later years another holder of the title Legaic was referred to not as "a principal chief" but more forcefully as "principal chief" of the Coast Tsimshian (HBC: August 11, 1852). In the 1830s and the 1840s the fort journal usage suggests that the Legaic of that time was not yet so dominant a figure.

Tsimshian tradition recalls that a Chief Legaic was killed on the Skeena River while trying to establish his hegemony over the river trade to the Gitksan (Robinson 1978:64). This may be the man known as Legaic I, Kennedy's father-in-law. Another tradition remembers the death of Legaic's (Legaic I?) brother Guhlrax. He was killed by members of the Kitselas tribe (Tsimshian) who attacked Legaic's party while defending their own trade on the Skeena (McDonald and Cove 1987:81-85 [Narrative 22]).

All three of the chiefs, especially honoured (or vilified) by the fort—Cackas, Legaic and Neshot—had occasional friction with the company, but Legaic's close ties and trading advantage gave him a position which could be built upon for his future supremacy among the Coast Tsimshian, as revealed in fort records by the mid-1850s and as embodied in the oral tradition of the Coast Tsimshian. It is interesting to note in this regard that some oral tradition challenges the view of Legaic's supremacy. Two Nisga'a chiefs challenged him. Klaydach invaded the upper Skeena to challenge the trade monopoly Legaic held there, and Kinsadah outdid Legaic in a contest of destroying "coppers." These accounts give a different perspective on the power and wealth of Legaic by the mid-19th century.

The smallpox epidemic of 1836-37 had been very hard on the people who traded at the fort. Deaths and illnesses carried off perhaps a third of the surrounding population, and people were afraid to travel to the fort for fear of catching the disease (HBC: November 19, 1836; May 16, 1837). This is reflected in the journal entries between June 1836 and May 1837. The references to the fur trade use words such as "dull," "very poor," "indifferent" and "no

trader." The epidemic had interrupted travel and trade. Ross's Friend, a major Nisga'a trader since the Nass fort days, was hindered in his role as intermediary in the trade with interior tribes, as smallpox spread through the winter of 1836-37 (HBC: May 15, 1837).[9]

The Tsimshian understood the epidemic to be caused or allowed by the supernatural, because the Sun wanted people sick or dead. This was apparent from the failure of offerings and sacrifices to end the epidemic (HBC: November 15, 1836). The Sun was not a remote or disinterested deity but was involved in the lives of the people and controlled their condition, though sometimes responsive to propitiations from humans. Why the Sun was behaving as it was in this particular case is not explained. Nor is it clear what the sacrifices and offerings were. The Tsimshian were not known to have killed slaves in years recent to 1838 (HBC: June 21, 1838), though slaves were sometimes killed to mark accession to a title or to resolve a dispute (HBC: September 21, 1838).

Tsimshian beliefs and ceremonies in general became more noticeable to the fort as the Tsimshian settlement began to grow. In early February 1839, the death and resurrection of a great local chieftainess and medicine woman was reported to the Europeans at Fort Simpson, though the journal keeper dismissed this event as an example of the superstition of the people (HBC: February 13, 1839). A matching example of Tsimshian response to European custom was their refusal to participate in a census taking; they asserted that they had done so previously and their participation had resulted in a population decline (HBC: February 21, 1842).

The Period of Settlement: 1837-43

The late 1830s begins a new era at the fort for the Coast Tsimshian. By about mid-1837 the nearby Tsimshian from Pearl Harbor had begun to establish a permanent village at the fort. People at first came for a few days to trade and then for a longer period (two months and more) in the spring prior to continuing on to the Nass River eulachon fishery (HBC: January 7, 1837). Sometimes they came and camped for part of the winter. Over a period of several years, short-term camping at the fort extended into permanent settlement. Legaic had a house at the fort in early June, 1837 (HBC: June 12, 1837). Gitlan were living at the fort when Cackas (II) came there to court Nislaganoose's daughter (HBC: June 8, 1838). In April and May, 1837, the Tsimshian were referred to as "encamped here" or "here" repeatedly. By the spring of 1840 houses are referred to as "here" for "some time back" and the journal keeper spoke of the "Indians stationary here" (HBC: April 8, 9 and October 9, 11, 1840). In the meantime the Cannibal's people are reported to have five houses at Fort Simpson (HBC: September 11, 1840). Thus the village of Fort Simpson Tsimshians came into existence.

The relations between the Tsimshians and the fort had entered into a new and more intricate symbiosis which went beyond fur trading as such. Tsimshian settlement at the fort meant that activities previously only reported to the fort now could be witnessed at the fort. In these years of the late 1830s and early 1840s new names appeared in the records describing traders at the fort. Knowledge of their culture and customs was increasingly demonstrated in the journal, and greater awareness of social linkages became evident. Among those named were Wass, Neaselkameak, Nislaganoose, Big Face Man and Pipes; a new Cackas also appeared. Whatever the reason, the new Cackas had poor relations with the fort, as had his predecessor of that title. His personality as seen by the fort was abrasive and trouble-making. He was not a resident at the fort village, but his people clashed with those at the fort, including Big Face Man's people (HBC: September 22, 1841). Big Face Man (Neaselkameak, of the Killer Whale clan of the Gilodzar tribe of the Coast Tsimshian), also clashed with Mr. Hanson's people, another group of settlers (HBC: June 11, 1840). Mr. Hanson was Nesyaranat, of the Gitsis tribe, also of the Coast Tsimshian. From these names it is possible to know some of the tribes or segments of tribes (lineages and clans) of the Coast Tsimshian who were the earliest settlers at the fort, as already noted.

The fort journal by the end of 1842 knew at least the Gispaxloats, Giludsau (Gilodzar), Gitlans, Kitkatla (Sebassas), Ginaxangik, Ginadoiks and Gitzaxlahl tribes of the Coast and Southern Tsimshian. Excepting the Kitkatla, the others were among the nine tribes who were resident at Port Simpson by the 1930s (Garfield 1939:175-176). Halcombe (1874) relates that he was told there were eight tribes at Fort Tsimshian: Kitlahn (Gitlan), Keetseesh (Gitsis), Keetsahelahs (Kitselas), Keetandol (Gitando), Keetwahtawik (Ginadoiks?), Keenakangeak (Ginaxangik), Killotsah (Gilodzar) and Keetwillgeeant (Gitwilgoats). Perhaps the Gispaxloats were omitted because they were at Metlakatla; some Gitlans were there also. The mid-century Nislaganoose had converted and become Simeon Gitlan. He died in 1864 (Halcombe 1874:85-86).

Tsimshians resident at the fort became known as the "Fort Simpsons," "our" Indians, "locals" and "home" Indians as well as "those stationary here." Within a few years of the fort's founding the Tsimshian were a significant part of its labour force. Their role went well beyond that of trading furs and provisions: their work was an integral part of the fort's maintenance and survival. It included a variety of labour performed for the maintenance of the fort, as will be seen below.

This settlement occurred at a time when the smallpox epidemic was beginning to abate. The epidemic had spread southward from the Tlingit, ravaging the Tsimshian and Nisga'a populations for several months. Fur trading was interrupted by fear of contagion. Nisga'a wives of fort personnel returned to their homes only to report the ravages on the Nass. Fear of the disease had led

to the murder of Conguele. Many of the leading traders and their families were visited by this epidemic.

The closer contact with the fort occasioned by permanent settlement intensified and elaborated the impact of European culture on the Tsimshian. Cultural change had extended to the degree that labrets were going out of style. Nevertheless the fort journal reveals that Tsimshian culture remained intact, vigorous and adaptive. Sometimes these adaptations were frustrating and annoying to the purposes of the fort. The intertribal and intratribal relations of the various peoples resident at, and visiting at, the fort were often hostile and many small disputes arose which threatened the fur trade (HBC: January 31, 1838).

Sir George Simpson, governor of the Hudson's Bay Company, visited the fort in 1841. He arrived at Fort Simpson on September 17, and while there he toured the Tsimshian village, visited in the homes of the Tsimshian and concluded that they were "superior" to other native housing he had seen on the coast. He also noted the frequent fights, many resulting from gambling disputes (Simpson 1847[1]:206-208). He estimated that about 14 000 people, of various tribes in the general vicinity, visited Fort Simpson. He also placed the population loss from the smallpox epidemic at about one-third. This would put the population figure at over 20 000 for those using the fort in the mid-1830s. Simpson observed that the village residents showed the effects of the smallpox, including loss of eyesight. The disease had also caused the decline of the wolf population, according to Simpson's Tsimshian informants. Wolves ate corpses of smallpox victims and thus caused their own decline, the local residents told him.

By 1842, the Tsimshian village at the fort had grown to about 800 residents "as home guards under the protection of our guns." Paul Kane visited Vancouver Island in May and early June of 1847. He placed in his book, *Wanderings of an Artist*, published in 1859, a census of the "Indian Tribes inhabiting the Northwest coast of America for the year 1840." The Tsimshian were reported as numbering about 2400, plus 68 slaves. While the figures are given for Coast Tsimshian tribes, it is not indicated that these apply to those resident at Fort Simpson only (Kane 1859:Appendix).

Wood was one of the main products used by the fort besides food, and the settlers, by the late 1830s, were the main hewers of wood. "Bringing home logs" (HBC: August 11, 1840) and "rafting home" timbers (HBC: June 15, 17, 1840), cutting and hauling firewood, carrying and piling pickets, digging up stumps from the proposed garden area, collecting stumps and burning them and clearing the fort grounds, all employed primarily Native labourers, under the direction of one or more of the fort personnel; "Men" and "Indians" were the customary forms of reference for these work parties.

Tsimshian also gathered driftwood and made shingles. They supplied bark, cut the grass and worked the fort's garden. They cleared, planted, weeded and

harvested. Sometimes they stole the garden crops, especially the potatoes. They fed the fort's goat, ground its wheat and dusted and baled its furs. They also made cord for binding the furs. They helped supply the fort with salt and salted fish (HBC: May 16, 1842). They collected straw for the fort kiln and seaweed for garden manure (HBC: January 25, February 3, 22, 1840). They acted as stevedores for company ships (HBC: May 17, July 7, 1842). They carried gravel for the fort grounds. Both men and women were employed, paid mostly in liquor, tobacco and cloth.

Sometimes events elsewhere had their impact on life at the fort's Tsimshian village. The village community functioned in continuity with the affairs of its people at the Nass or in the Queen Charlotte Islands or elsewhere. In addition, conflicts and feuding occurred between the resident Tsimshian and the many visitors. Kidnappings, shootings and stabbings took place under the walls of the fort. Disputes occurring elsewhere were revenged or otherwise ramified at the fort village. These events were consistent with traditional intertribal and intratribal relations of trade and warfare (McDonald and Cove 1987). Indigenous means were available to deal with them and these too were implemented at the new village. The fur trade could be reduced or interrupted as a result of their conflicts; rivalries between Native residents and visitors at the fort village frequently produced tension which affected village-fort relations. Fear of attack by resident Tsimshian might cause other Natives to avoid the fort. In April 1838, Tongass and Port Stewart Tlingit were fighting elsewhere, but the warlike conditions made others reluctant to venture out into a possible battle zone. This antagonism continued for two years (HBC: April 10, 1838). Again, in the spring of 1843, local Tsimshian, i.e., Fort Simpson's, refused to hunt away from their village for fear of being captured by Haida who were believed to be "prowling about" (HBC: April 1, 1843).

People would not come to the fort if danger lurked in its vicinity. Some Haida, at odds with the Tsimshian, were cautious about going to the fort because of lingering grievances between them. The population of the fort village is not clear, but they were enough to overawe a party of 90 to 100 Skidegate in May 1837 (HBC: May 27, 1837). A week later Kaigani (Kygarnie) were timid about travelling to the fort because so many Tsimshian now resided there (HBC: June 3, 1837). Another situation arose in early August 1837; when resident Tsimshians' own numbers were inadequate to dominate a large party (30 canoes) of visiting Massetts, they relied on the fort to protect them. They took advantage of their ties to the fort, including family and economic ties. They expected the fort to act accordingly (HBC: August 2, 1837).

Intertribal tensions arose at the fort when one group learned that another was getting higher prices for furs. The fort paid better prices to Stikines and Haida who had easy access to Russian traders, either at Sitka or from visiting ships. This form of discrimination was not understood or accepted by those

who were paid less (HBC: May 20, 1837). Various peoples, including the fort villagers, took advantage of the competitive sellers' market to get the best price. Massetts could and did sell potatoes for good prices at Sitka (HBC: March 21, 1843). Loyalty to the fort, much to the fort's distress, had its limitations.

The Fort Simpson Tsimshian also resorted to the competition for better bargains. Visiting American ships came right into the waters of the locals. This created tension and bad feelings, on the fort's part, toward their local residents. The fort varied its prices to suit the presence or absence of competition. When the Americans left, the prices paid for furs were reduced. The land-based trade did not end the important part played by the ship-borne trade in the late 1830s. American whalers and other traders seriously challenged the Hudson's Bay Company in the months from spring through early autumn. They were the annoying and disruptive "opposition," syphoning off substantial amounts of furs during their periodic visits to the area, including the Nass fishery during the eulachon season (HBC: April 24, 1838). The company had to meet their prices or lose the furs. The Indians also traded among themselves for better prices or acted as trading agents for each other (HBC: April 17, 1835; February 24, 1836).

Slave trading was a regular element of the village life and provided another reason for coming to the fort, which served as a trade mart for slaves as well as furs. The waters around the fort and the routes to the fort were viewed as possible scenes of slave raiding. Fear of slave raiding sometimes became a cause for the interruption of regular visitations to the fort. Slave trading, as well as other forms of trading and warfare were part of the tradition of intratribal and intertribal relations in pre-contact times. The fort witnessed the continuation of these practices, as the Native cultures functioned in continuity with their past as regards slaving too. The custom created feuds and led to violence—injuries and killings—as rescue and revenge were sought, and ransoms played a role. Much bad feeling was generated.

The fort sometimes became involved. Slaves were worked like dogs, Sir George Simpson had observed. A female slave, the wife of a chief, appealed to Captain W.H. McNeill to assist her to freedom. She was a Newettee (Kwakiutl) captured by Sebassas (HBC: August 11, 1837). Kidnappings, especially of women and children, formed a part of the slaving industry; the victims might be held for ransom or sold to others. Furs were exchanged for slaves (HBC: September 22, 1838).[10] The Coast Tsimshian carried on a share of this trade in humans. Tsimshian sold slaves especially to the Tongass and Stikines (HBC: January 9, 15, 1837). Sebassas (Kitkatlas), who were Southern Tsimshian and closely linked to the Tsimshian at Fort Simpson, were slavers who raided others to make captives (HBC: August 11, 1837). Slaves were generally sold northward through the Tongass and Stikines into Alaska (HBC: June 11, 1837;

September 22, 1838). The local Tsimshian sometimes acted as intermediaries. These activities once again reveal the complexity of linkages, alliances, obligations and diplomacy among the various peoples engaged in the slave trade and kidnapping. The slave trade was part of the larger system of trading, war and rivalry relations that pertained. Ties of family and intertribal alliances might restrain slavery and kidnapping between groups and might facilitate recovery of captives.

When Neeseleanook's (Nislaganoose, The Cripple Man, The Gitlan Chief) two wives were captured, one was released immediately by her Cumshewa captors because she was a Tongass (HBC: August 13, 16, 1842). The other was recaptured later from the Cumshewa by Sebassas. The Sebassas, acting as friends of Neeseleanooks, and undoubtedly in their own interests as well, formed a raiding party and crossed to the Queen Charlotte Islands where they attacked the captor village. They seized the kidnapped wife and pillaged the village's potato crop (HBC: September 6, 8, 15, 1842). They then returned the wife to her husband and sold the looted potatoes at Fort Simpson (HBC: September 19, 1842). In the summer of 1842, one of Big Face Man's "people" (lineage?) was kidnapped by Haida (HBC: July 28, 1842). Later in the summer, Kygarnie (Klaigani) were reported to be "prowling about" to kidnap local Tsimshian (HBC: August 26, 1842).

By 1837 the fort was not only a slave mart but also a refuge for escaped slaves. The fort dealt with the issue of aiding slaves on a case-by-case basis, but for the most part, while they observed the activities of the trade, they did not attempt to stop it in a systematic way (HBC: May 2, 1837, March 22, 1840). In early December 1839, they traded a Skidegate woman from the Tsimshian to prevent her being sold to Stikines (HBC: December 2, 1839). Intertribal peace and the promotion of trade at the fort were likely to be considerations where interventions occurred. Sometimes more personal factors might be operative when the slaves were from families or groups close to fort personnel or to Tsimshian traders important to the fort.

Despite the fact that the settlement was close by and though the Europeans at the fort had some knowledge of the Tsimshian ritual and ceremonial life, the information provided by the journal is often vague in these early years. The custom, common among Northwest Coast peoples, of sprinkling eagle or goose down on each other as a symbol of peace and friendship was noted (HBC: May 28, 1837). Again, several kinds of feasts and celebrations were reported. One of these is described as a celebration of the death of an old chieftainess (HBC: June 4, 1840). Another was a big feast at which Cackas was to "set himself up as a man of great consequence" (HBC: May 31, 1838). He was the successor to the Cackas who died in the 1836 epidemic. The death of the earlier Cackas had been commemorated (June 1837?) by a "grand booze" (HBC: June 9, 1837). A "grand feast" which commemorated the deceased

Cackas accompanied the installation of the new holder of that title. Much preparation went into this event including the purchase of "finery" and liquor by trading furs. As it turned out the event was less grand than anticipated and refreshments ran out before the entire ceremony was completed. This apparently somewhat detracted from the prestige of the new Cackas. This was followed by an unsuccessful attempt by Cackas to woo the daughter of Nislaganoose (HBC: June 2, 8, 1838).

Local Tsimshian travelled to other Tsimshian communities to attend their events as well as inviting others to the Fort Simpson village. These travels indicate close ties with those of the home villages, as well as the Southern Tsimshian ("Sebassas"), Nisga'a, Tongass and others (HBC: December 14, 1837; January 18, 1838; December 13, 1841). Some awareness of the different kinds of feasts and ceremonies is apparent here and some sense of the seasonal nature of certain ceremonies is indicated. Early October was said to be the "feasting" time of the Tsimshian and this was the explanation for a temporary decline in their trading (HBC: October 5, 1834). It was also understood that feasts might be prepared for over a period of months (HBC: December 14, 1837). The Europeans also held their main seasonal feasts in the fall and winter. All Saints Day (November 1), Christmas Eve and Christmas Day, and New Year's Eve and New Year's Day were also marked by consumption of extra and luxury foods and liquor and they too frequently were accompanied by violence among those celebrating (HBC: December 25, 1837; January 2, 1838; October 31, 1840). All Saints Day was both religious and ethnic since it was seen by the fort officers as a Roman Catholic holiday for the "men," many of whom were French-Canadians (HBC: November 1, 1837). Harvest Home (or Harvest Thanksgiving), the English fall harvest holiday, was also celebrated in October (HBC: October 26, 1838). This was a folk festival which survived into the mid-19th century after which efforts were made to give it a more formal religious meaning through incorporation in the Church of England's religious calendar (Metford 1991:122). Native wives, Tsimshian, Nisga'a and others in the fort would have participated in some or all of these celebrations to some degree.

Conclusion

By the late 1830s certain patterns emerged in the contact among Native traders coming to the fort. The Tsimshian, both those settled at the fort and others, became the largest single source for furs and provisions. In addition they assumed a variety of other kinds of employment for the maintenance of the fort. They also provided information about the activities of other Natives and Europeans in the surrounding area. Through intensified contact with the fort, some information about their culture was transmitted to the fort personnel, and some information about that culture has been preserved. The resident Tsimshian,

and others, integrated the fort and its business into their own affairs. The fort became a new trade centre supplementing traditional centres such as the Nass River fishery, even to the point of including slave trading. As such it also became a new place for intertribal relations both peaceful and violent. The fort journal provides a window on this little world of trade and conflict and their ramifications.

The Nisga'a also played a part in the fort life. They were traders, especially of beaver and marten and to a lesser extent of provisions. They made short visits and their links to the fort were reinforced by the marriage ties that had already been created when the fort was at the Nass River. These were later further strengthened when Captain William Henry McNeill married a leading Nisga'a chief and trader, Neshaki, in the early 1860s (Patterson 1990:13-24). The Nisga'a also acted as intermediaries for peoples of the Upper Nass and the Nass hinterland.

The Tongass had, immediately on the founding of the fort at McLoughlin Harbour (Summer 1834), become the major Native provisioners. Their work as hunters for the fort was the major source of fresh and dried venison. They also supplied fish, especially salmon, fresh and dried. In addition, they traded furs and sometimes slaves.

The Stikine supplied furs from Alaska, acting as intermediaries for more remote peoples. Stikines were regular couriers of mail between the company's Alaskan forts at Taku and Wrangel, and Fort Simpson. They also visited the fort to trade slaves. Their fur trade was important enough to cause the company to give them higher prices for their furs to keep them from going to the Russians.

The Haida were important suppliers of sea otter and other skins; they were also regular provisioners with their trade in potatoes. Though some friction and violence occurred between them and some of the Tsimshian, nevertheless they regularly resorted to the fort from within a few months of its founding. The Kaigani (Kygarnie) Haida were, like the Stikines, given special prices to prevent them from trading to the Russians, who came to them. Kaigani also engaged in kidnapping and slaving. Haida from time to time disrupted trade when they threatened, or were believed to have threatened, the Tsimshian. Haida furs were lost to whalers who visited the Queen Charlotte Islands in 1843 and 1844. The presence of the fort contributed to conditions that caused or contributed to intertribal and sometimes intratribal conflict.

The fort also provided expanded opportunities for all its customers, but in the first decade of its new location it cannot be said to have dominated the life and culture of its visitors or residents. The various peoples visiting the fort were clearly not dependent on its goods for survival, nor desperately in need of them. The trade goods were not so essential to them that considerations of tradition and custom were overruled or set aside. The fort's goods—cloth,

tools, weapons, ammunition, liquor, molasses, tobacco, rice—were incorporated into the traditional life.

The fort journal saw the Native tribes as centred on the fort, especially the local Tsimshian. Tsimshian activity, the journal keeper implied, was or should be geared to the service of the fort and dominated by the interests and concerns of the fort. The journal keeper repeatedly asked why the Natives, particularly those "stationary here" were not doing more for the fort—fur trading, provisioning and various kinds of labour. Condescending and pejorative language was often used to describe them, e.g., "scamps," "thieves," "villains," "insolent."

The evidence suggests that the fort was an addition to Native life, but not an indispensable element. What happened at the fort and in connection with the fort was a continuation of what might happen at other sites traditionally visited—trade, marriage, fights, ceremonies, slaving and so forth. The Natives continued to carry out the ceremonies and rituals which created and symbolized the order and system of their societies. Additionally, they were not at the fort as beggars and mendicants or as marginal people living off the crumbs that fell from the fort's table, though the fort journal sometimes portrayed them in this way. The journal, curiously, vacillates between the view of Natives as nuisances and marginal and that of them as necessary to the fort's survival. There is no indication that these visitors and residents were in a disintegrating or declining condition. Their traditional culture is portrayed as vigorous and active.

In general the fort evidently was not seen as a threat by Native people, though it might at times be regarded as an intruder and usurper of Tsimshian land holdings. The fort might even be seen as their goose of the golden egg. It was a service to them, a refuge, a new marketplace, a place to acquire goods not readily available otherwise. For the Tsimshian to trade elsewhere would have meant travelling at least to Fort McLoughlin, at Millbank Sound among the Bella Bella, and some did so sometimes.

The fort expanded the Natives' economic and material culture, but did not dictate their customs. Through the fort greater knowledge of the European's ways and artifacts could be gained and applied to Tsimshian purposes. The Tsimshian were a cosmopolitan people, not closed to cultural borrowing, as they showed by borrowings from Kwakiutl culture and by population additions from the Tlingit. The creation of a local Tsimshian village at the fort was consistent with their adaptation for advantage. They had previously migrated from the Skeena River area.

Friction at the fort could be settled through traditional mechanisms, though sometimes the company's intervention was helpful. The company weighed its own interests when it stepped into disputes. The fort record does not answer the question of whether population decline and relocation at the fort led to in-

creased competition and rivalry for status, rank and titles. Chiefs were installed and successions occurred. There is enough reference to these events and to rivalries among chiefs to suggest that some of this was going on, that some fights and deaths might constitute an acceleration of conflicts. Two chiefs were killed on the Skeena. Friction occurred at the fort and elsewhere between Tsimshian leaders.

Names of chiefs prominent in the trade did change over time. Through the early 1840s new chiefs became prominent. This may reflect rising trade and wealth and also the gradual settlement at the fort of additional tribes of Coastal Tsimshian. The relationship of fort personnel and Tsimshian traders included incorporation into the obligations and opportunities of the kinship links which had been established between the Native and European sides. These ties facilitated the trade. The resident Tsimshian, and other Native visitors, used Fort Simpson as part of a network of forts and ships to augment the traditional trade sources to which they regularly resorted. Each side of the fort nexus responded to the other in its own cultural terms.

Notes

1. See Usher 1974 and Patterson 1982. For a view of the fort life and the Indians in relation to the fort see also Meilleur 1980.
2. This essay has been influenced by the work of a number of scholars. The writer has noted the continuity of culture and the retention of native initiative, in large measure during the early years of the land-based fur trade at Fort Simpson, British Columbia. See Francis and Morantz 1983 and Thistle 1986.
3. See also oral tradition of Nass River trading site for surrounding tribes both before and after the building of the fort there (McDonald and Cove 1987:194 [Narrative 54]).
4. See Garfield 1939:177. Garfield points out that most of the Tsimshian tribes held land at Port Simpson prior to the creation of the fort (1834), and that when they settled at the fort they did so on land they held there. This may be the basis for Cackas' assertion that the fort occupied land he claimed, though his was the Ginaxangiks tribe and Garfield says the land on which the fort was built was purchased from the Gilodzar tribe. Cackas may have spoken broadly of the land taken for use as well as the actual building area. He may also have referred to some clan privilege through the Gispawudwade (Killer Whale crest).
5. Oral tradition recalls at least one incident in which Txaqaxs (Cackas) outdid Legaic at a feast which included gift-giving (McDonald and Cove 1987:97-98 [Narrative 27]).
6. Traditionally the Ginaxangik main trade links were with the northern Tlingit, e.g., the Stikines. These ties would have facilitated the slave trade (see page 16). The Ginaxangik also had the reputation of being seal and sea otter hunters, more so than any other tribe. The Gitzaklahl also had special trade links with the Tlingit. The Gispaxloats' special links were with the upper Skeena (McDonald and Cove 1987:185).
7. See also Grumet 1975:294-318. Grumet, in this highly speculative article, presumes considerable cultural change in the early 19th-century Coast Tsimshian response to white contact. See also Mitchell 1983:57-64. Mitchell offers a view of Legaic's chieftancy contrary to, and more convincing than, Grumet's.
8. Allaire (1984) finds that by the late 1830s only the Kitselas and Kitsumkalem still resided permanently at their Skeena villages.
9. See also HBC: April 14, 30 1837.

10. See Mitchell 1984. Mitchell's article portrays a situation in the 19th century on the North Pacific coast, from the Tlingit to the Coast Salish, in which slave raiding and slave trading formed a significant element of the wealth of coastal peoples. The sources cited suggest many persons were enslaved in what was an active and widespread slave trade. However, a census of 1840 shows the Tsimshian and Nisga'a for example as holding few slaves. Only two Tsimshian tribes, the Gispaxloats and the Gitlan, with populations totalling 850 persons, held 21 slaves (10 males, 11 females) or a little more than 2 percent of their population. Eight other Tsimshian tribes (1546 persons) held no slaves. Among the Nisga'a one of four tribes held slaves (four males and eight females). The four tribes totalled 1665 persons, including the 12 slaves.

    Slaves would seem to have been of small value in generating wealth, either as a labour source or as trade items, unless it could be shown that all or most of them were persons with substantial ransom value. See Kane 1857:Appendix.

References Cited

Allaire, Louis
1984 A Mental Map of Coast Tsimshian Villages. *In* The Tsimshian, edited by Margaret Seguin, pp. 82-98. Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press.

Barbeau, C.M.
1950 Totem Poles. Vol. 2. Ottawa: National Museum of Canada.

British Columbia, Public Archives of
1841-44 A/B/20/S12. Fort Simpson. Outward correspondence, Work to Dodd, August 2, 1844.

Dee, Henry D.
1945 The Journal of John Work, January-October 1835. Victoria, British Columbia: King's Printer.

Francis, Daniel, and Toby Elaine Morantz
1983 Partners in Furs: A History of the Fur Trade in Eastern James Bay, 1600-1870. Kingston, ON: McGill-Queen's University Press.

Garfield, Viola E.
1939 Tsimshian Clan and Society. Seattle: University of Washington Press.

Grumet, Robert Steven
1975 Changes in Coast Tsimshian Redistributive Activities in the Fort Simpson Region of British Columbia, 1788-1862. Ethnohistory 22(4):294-318.

Halcombe, J.J.
1874 Stranger than Fiction. London: S.P.C.K.

Hudson Bay Company Fort Journal (cited as HBC in text)
1834-52 Issues dated October 5, November 14, 19, 1834; January 21, February 3, 7, April 17, May 4, 15, June 4, November 14, December 1, 1835; February 24, March 2, 28, June 29, October 2, November 2, 9, 14, 15, 19, December 4, 5 1836; January 7, 9, 15, 22, April 14, 30, May 2, 15, 16, 20, 27, 28, June 3, 9, 11, 12, July 1, August 2, 11, November 1, December 14, 25, 1837; January 2, 18, 31, April 10, 24, May 20, 31, June 2, 8, 21, September 21, 22, October 26, 1838; February 13, April 27, October 11, December 2, 1839; January 25, February 3, 22, March 22, April 8, 9,

June 4, 11, 15, 17, 29, August 11, September 11, October 9, 11, 31, 1840; September 22, December 13, 1841; February 21, May 16, 17, July 7, 28, August 13, 14, 16, 26, September 6, 8, 15, 19, 26, 1842; March 21, April 1, 1843; August 11, 1852.

Kane, Paul
1859 Wanderings of an Artist. London: Longman Brown Green.

King, Thomas, ed.
1990 All My Relations. Toronto: McClelland and Stewart.

McDonald, George, and John Cove, eds.
1987 Tsimshian Narratives. Vol. 2: Trade and Warfare. Ottawa: Canadian Museum of Civilization.

Metford, J.C.J.
1991 The Christian Year. London: Thames & Hudson.

Meilleur, Helen
1980 A Pour of Rain. Victoria: Sono Nis Press.

Mitchell, Donald.
1983 Tribes and Chiefdoms of the Northwest Coast: The Tsimshian Case. *In* The Evolution of Maritime Cultures in the Northeast and the Northwest Coasts of America, edited by Ronald J. Nash, pp. 57-64. Burnaby, British Columbia: Simon Fraser University Press.
1984 Predatory Warfare, Social Status, and the North Pacific Slave Trade. Ethnology 23:39-48.

Patterson, E P.
1982 Kincolith, British Columbia: Leadership Continuity in a Native Christian Village, 1867-1887. Canadian Journal of Anthropology 3(1):45-55.
1990 Neshaki: Kinfolk and Trade. Culture 10(2):13-24.

Robinson, Michael
1978 The Sea Otter Chiefs. N.p.: Friendly Cove Press.

Simpson, Sir George
1847 Narrative of a Journey Round the World during the Years 1841-1842. Vol. 1. London: H. Colburn.

Thistle, Paul C.
1986 Indian-European Trade Relations in the Lower Saskatchewan River Region to 1840. Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press.

Usher, Jean
1974 William Duncan of Metlakatla. Ottawa: National Museum of Man.