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The following is the manuscript that I submitted to *UnderCurrents* for its Politics of Natural Space issue. There were some editorial changes and improvements in the version that went to press.



near Burnaby Narrows, Gwaii Haanas, Haida Gwaii, September, 1988

Reclaiming territory through conservation areas: *Gwaii Haanas, Haida Gwaii, 1851-1993*

In 1994, after 135 years of overtures from the Haida Nation, of the north coast of Pacific Canada, the Government of British Columbia finally began negotiations with the Council of Haida Nation for a comprehensive treaty. In this chronicle, I frame the last two centuries of the Haida in terms of local / marginalized versus centralized / metropolitan terms, both in culture and government, than in some of the older dichotomies of Indian versus European, 'primitive' versus 'civilized,' and even traditional versus modern. Much of the discussions in the negotiations about the treaty, in the coming months and years, will focus on the remaining temperate rainforests, often referred to as "old-growth," on Haida Gwaii, formerly called the Queen Charlotte Islands. The conceptual framework and expertise to carry one such site-specific yet, paradoxically, comprehensive negotiations derives from the successful 1974-1988 struggle to protect the southerly part of the archipelago, Gwaii Haanas,¹ from clearcut logging through contentious, and yet to be resolved, notions of "parks." This essay looks at the crucial theoretical and short-term

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political use, with their overlaps and contradictions, in the linking of sovereignty with conservation and contrast this with national park ideal, that was first articulated in the colonialism of the nineteenth century but which still very much dominates conservation in this era of environmental crisis. In this discussion, I highlight both the colonial nature of the contradictions in the notion of "National Parks" in areas with indigenous communities and, paradoxically, the new opportunities for decolonisation. I argue that the related notion of 'biological diversity,' with all of its own contradictions, provides something of vehicle for decolonising national parks and similar frameworks of protected areas for the articulation of local development priorities.²

The experience of the Haida provides an opportunity to examine the evolution of conservation frameworks based on joint and comanagement of natural areas and resources. The Gwaii Haanas example is distinct, particularly compared with the United States, because of the use of sovereignist strategies to stop unsustainable exploitation of the ancient temperate rainforests. Unresolved questions of control of territory and resources has provided the backdrop for unique alliances between non-native "environmentalists" and Native activists some of whom are "sovereignists." The latter term can be differentiated from the terms "nationalist" or even "separatist" by a more subtle analysis of the (postmodern) state. Thus, sovereignist positions are more concerned with local control and management than with necessarily building the apparatuses of more nation states with linkages and governments, under the rubric of broader confederations, considered inevitable but indefinitely provisional.

The remaining islands with relatively intact mosaics of primary forests are a tremendous resource in the Pacific Rim.³ The timber from ancient rainforests, temperate and tropical, is extremely valuable. The values for recreation and cultural tourism are also very high. But extractive development and large tourist facilities can threaten many of those amenities and threaten some elements of local diversity not to mention the food resources of traditional communities. Today, most of these remaining islands are in the eyes of storms from conflicting pressures for expansion of resource extraction versus tourist and service-based economies. Into this volatile formula is now being added linkages between sovereignty, land management, conservation, and the reassertion of priorities of traditional communities. Conservation has often been stymied by colonial land use frameworks that were more concerned with expediencies for short-term profit and state control than with the protection of vulnerable resources often only of significance to specific traditional communities. Identification of such institutional obstacles becomes central to understanding the emerging linkages between "indigenous" environmentalism and new assertions of sovereignty. One 'decolonisation' process, of particular importance for the Haida, was the exposing of the underlying frameworks of the notion of the National and its neocolonial biases towards central government.

Neocolonial Land Use Frameworks as Obstacles to Conservation

Obstacles to habitat protection on Haida Gwaii began in 1851 when the Crown Colony of British Columbia began to annex the islands. Despite repeated Haida assertions of sovereignty and traditional tenure, since that time, the colonial and subsequent British Columbia provincial and Canadian federal governments have denied these rights and managed the land and its wealth based on other priorities. Until recent years, respective

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governments did not support a framework for establishing viable protected areas--especially for the conservation of local biological diversity. Nonrenewable extractive operations, particularly clearcut logging of old growth forest and mining, have been contentious throughout the region because of subsequent loss of traditional resources. But Parks Canada, a federal agency, only became involved in land management in Gwaii Haanas after British Columbia ceded its responsibility for management to the Canadian government in 1988, had not emphasized the management of natural habitat and protection of biological resources. Historically, this agency has been more concerned with providing public services for tourism.

In the 1974-87 "South Moresby conflict," the Canadian government reacted slowly to the dispute between interests supporting rapid, large-scale clearcut logging versus those advocating conservation of temperate rainforest, until the provincial government finally agreed to cede jurisdiction in order to create a national park reserve as a compromise. This 1988 agreement⁴ involved one of the most expensive compensation packages for wilderness preservation in Canadian history and probably for the world. But the Haida Nation and the Canadian federal government were only able to forge a basis for joint management of Gwaii Haanas in 1993⁵ and vestiges of colonial land management patterns still hinder the stewardship of forests, wildlands, biological resources, and traditional cultural sites on Gwaii Haanas, as in much of the Pacific Rim.

The following are some of the most important colonial and neocolonial transactions under the rubric of National Parks. Certain resources, including elements of local biological diversity, are conserved for some social groups more than are other resources for other social groups. Certain elements of the landscape, as well as particular sites, are celebrated more than others. National Park status and, more importantly, the subsequent management involve a set of socially or politically acceptable risks. Leisure and tourism, by certain classes and social groups, is nearly always favoured over other uses. In recent years, there have been a few efforts to decolonise the notions and administrations of National Parks notably Walter Lusigi's reworking of some priorities for conservation in east Africa.⁶ There have longer-term projects to identify the full set of potential components to comprehensive conservation programmes.

Over the last century and a half, National Parks have become arenas for social conflict and exist as long as they "successfully" mediate between groups. But for Gwaii Haanas, the designation of "National Park Reserve" as a solution to a set of dynamic and overlapping conflicts was to function for less than five years. For the Haida Nation, the designation was essentially deconstructed and successfully used to confront the neocolonial biases implicit in the name and the presence of the Federal Government of Canada.

The Haida and Gwaii Haanas

Until three decades ago, much of Haida Gwaii had relatively undisturbed island ecosystems with large tracts of primary temperate rain forest.⁷ The present administrative boundary of Gwaii Haanas includes 138 islands with 1,470 square kilometres of land along with 3,400 square kilometres of marine zones.⁸ Humans have occupied the Queen Charlotte Islands continuously for over ten thousand years. The Haida people were the sole inhabitants of the Queen Charlotte Islands until the Crown Colony of British Columbia annexed the archipelago. Traditional Haida society had a fishing-collecting economy, a

ranking system based on hereditary status, and sedentary villages. Haida settlements were on beaches near halibut banks and salmon streams.⁹ Haida society had developed a sophisticated culture based on surplus, considerable knowledge of the natural world, and sophisticated artistic expression.¹⁰ By the beginning of the nineteenth century, the Haida were the most mobile and often the most aggressive of the northwest coast's "First Nations." Haida society was and is based on a matrilineal kinship system with two clans, their lineages, and villages forming the basis for economic relations, while matrilineal title regulated the patterns of land and marine tenure. Clans and lineages had some exclusive rights particularly for first choice as part of communal distribution of food and other resources.

Over the last century, Haida cultural change has embodied a series of losses, transformations, adaptations, and affirmations arising from epidemics, government attacks on traditional culture, removal of legal control over lands, the intrusion of the extractive economy¹¹ and the spread of globalized information and ideas. Contact with Europeans, whom Haida called the "iron people," began when Spanish ships arrived in 1774. A number of communicable diseases immediately ravaged Haida communities in that period. The first major smallpox epidemic was in 1862 with several outbreaks over the next thirty years reducing the total Haida population to 20 percent of its original levels. By the 1890s, most Haida were consumers in an expanding mail-order economy. After nearly a century of sporadic but disastrous contact, the southern Haida sought medical assistance from Methodist missionaries. Nurses arrived on Haida Gwaii in the 1870s, began vaccinating against smallpox, and established a permanent mission at Skidegate in 1883.¹² These relatively liberal missionaries did not attack traditional culture, directly, but instead focused on providing services. But at roughly the same time, there began government assaults on traditional culture such as when the Canadian federal government outlawed potlatch ceremonies in 1884.¹³

Colonial Intrusions

In 1852, the Colonial Office in London formerly gave the Governor of the Crown Colony of Vancouver's Island, which was soon to be amalgamated into the Crown Colony of British Columbia, the approval to annex what was referred to at the time as Queen Charlotte's Island. Originally, this was solely to limit territory intrusions by the United States of America and the permission from London was not actually to colonise Haida Gwaii.¹⁴ The Government of British Columbia elected to join Canadian Confederation in 1981 but the Haida were in no way consulted. Even when British Columbia government officials began to draw colonial property lines, by Reserve Commissioner O'Reilly in 1987, the Haida considered it more an irritation than an immediate threat. The Haida remained emphatic about their ownership of Haida Gwaii and never formally surrendered any aspects of the archipelago. Gradual restrictions on traditional resource exploitation, however, were more threatening. By the 1880s, government policy limited Haida fishing to subsistence and by the turn of the century additional restrictions extended to salmon, timber, minerals, and use of off-reserve sites. But the British Columbia government neglected Gwaii Haanas during the Indian Reserve allotment process because of the area's remoteness, lack of population, and the uncooperativeness of its chiefs, and almost the entire area came under public ownership through "the Crown." This was the case for much of the British Columbia

coast but the disparities between the lands available for logging and settlement and the tiny Indian Reserves were to become most stark on Gwaii Haanas. Over the last century, various enterprises established logging, mining, whaling, fishing, canning, and mill camps on Gwaii Haanas, though few 'communities' lasted for more than two decades. Only a very small portion of camp workers have been Haida. After World War II, export of unfinished logs and fish products dominated the local economy.

By the late 1960s, three large forest products companies had obtained Tree-Farm Licenses (TFLs) for over 41 percent of the Haida Gwaii land area, and timber cutting had shifted from "hand logging" in small areas near waterways, where considerable vegetation remained, to increasingly massive blocks of "clearcuts." The rapid rates of cutting brought increased pressure on the remaining areas of relatively accessible and marketable forests on the Queen Charlotte Islands particularly along the east coast of Moresby Island. At the same period, the "take" in the harvesting of the salmon, herring, and abalone fisheries increasingly ran at or above "carrying capacity" and that which could support "sustainability." The cumulative impacts of destruction of stream habitat, sedimentation, and over-fishing, from logging and road building, became a central public concern.

The origins of the provincial, pre-1988 framework for habitat conservation on Gwaii Haanas are rooted in colonial land controls established in Victoria and Ottawa. At several times over the past century, the Haida Nation argued in provincial and federal courts that it retained ownership rights over the area. But the legal and sovereignty issues have yet to be formally resolved.¹⁵ King George III's October 7, 1763 Proclamation, which required the colonists to recognize some Indian lands, did not mention the coast of modern British Columbia.¹⁶ Early colonial governments of the region pointedly denied aboriginal title and governmental controls ignored questions of Haida sovereignty. Resistance to formal recognition of First Nations, on the coast of British Columbia, contrasted with treaty-making precedents in other parts of Canada and Washington state though has had some similarities with adjacent parts of Alaska. By failing to negotiate treaties for these huge and relatively rich parts of Canada, the colonists of British Columbia, many of whom moved on within one generation, failed to establish a viable legal basis for extinguishing First Nations' sovereignty, ownership, and rights to resources.

During the initial 1851-71 colonial period, British authorities could not agree on how to resolve land disputes with indigenous groups in North America.¹⁷ A liberal position, held by most in the London Colonial Office, advocated recognition of native sovereignty and land rights, as contrasted with the attitude of contempt for Indians that settler governments, like that in British Columbia, often exhibited. The contradiction was that while London demanded some form of resolution of land claims, the local colonial governments were required to find the funds to buy the rights. But even in British Columbia, one of the wealthiest of the nineteenth century colonies, there was little money allocated and only limited Native interest in being bought off. By 1865, the Crown colony of British Columbia contracted to transfer lands to private settler control without Haida consent.¹⁸ From 1870, a year before joining Canadian Confederation, until 1991, it was de facto policy in the government of British Columbia to formally deny land title to Indians, aside from tiny Indian Reserves and tracts purchased or leased.¹⁹ From the beginning of colonial authority in Haida Gwaii, governments viewed assertions of sovereignty as competitive threats, particularly in regard to the control of wealth from extraction of natural resources. One

response to persistent ownership declarations by the Haida Nation was government eagerness to grant monopoly control over forest lands to interests with the means to remove valuable resources quickly. This asserted control, indirectly, over large territories by the provincial government which, in turn, received royalties native communities were often kept from harvesting, for commercial purposes, the natural resources on traditional lands.²⁰

In 1974, two hundred years after first contact with Europeans, the Haida again declared sovereignty from British Columbia and Canada. Skidegate and Masset, the two Haida communities on Haida Gwaii, also began to shift political allegiances. But by the late-1970s, the Haida began forming a new, less partisan coalition that transcended party lines and better included Native and environmental interests.

Goals for habitat conservation, maintenance of biological diversity, and sustainability were first articulated publicly on Haida Gwaii, in the 1974-76 period, after clearcut logging of ancient forests expanded and a proposal was made by a logging company to log Burnaby Island in the center of Gwaii Haanas.²¹ Later in 1974, the Haida began to articulate more public concerns for protection of subsistence resources, within the framework of hereditary title, while some settlers and government employees were preoccupied with broader ecosystem health. These goals, for more comprehensive conservation, became central to subsequent discussions about land use designations. The Haida have tended to be highly site-specific in their concerns for the cause-effect linkages between timber harvesting operations and declining availability of traditional resources, threats to the viability of traditional First Nations economies, and regional environmental degradation. National and global concern for Haida Gwaii ecosystems began to focus on old growth forest and the long-term impact of clearcut timber harvesting. But until the establishment of the National Park Reserve in 1988, the "wilderness" quality of Gwaii Haanas was actually the result of the smallpox epidemics and the impermanence of the camps. "The South Moresby" became a rallying point for ecologically and locally based approaches to land management, in the northward expansion of the modern Canadian frontier, and the struggle for conservation on Gwaii Haanas became popularly viewed as a prototype for coalitions between Native Peoples and non-native "environmentalists." Given subsequent conflicts over logging and conservation in the region, with less successful alliances between Native and non-Native environmental advocates largely because of the lack of practical understanding on the part of non-Native activists, this view was perhaps overly optimistic.²²

A new era in forest landscape planning emerge around concerns non-timber values such as for "biodiversity," with imperatives for more comprehensive requirements for habitat protection. New frameworks emerged with conceptual links between more global visions of stewardship and concerns of traditional communities for subsistence resources and cultural sites, notions that were central to the alliances to conserve Gwaii Haanas. For insular traditional economies, the conservation of biological resources often has been intrinsic to harvesting and utilization patterns. Priorities for using, managing, and preserving living resources have varied between locally based "ecosystem peoples" and globally based "biosphere peoples."²³ But the Haida became active in heavily mechanized commercial fishing enterprises as soon as it was legal for them to do so and their priorities for the conservation of biological diversity became framed against the backdrop of dwindling primary forest and fisheries. Conditions challenged them to expand their site-specificity and relate it to processes of regional environmental degradation.

Lingering Obstacles to Conservation From Colonial Land Use Planning Frameworks

An underlying question emerges of why, with such "developed" conservation apparatuses, was it not possible to use provincial frameworks for conservation and without expensive federal intervention and an international campaign? The argument in this essay is that the land use planning frameworks, that evolved for Haida Gwaii, were ineffective and eventually paralysed because they were so heavily structured to obscure "land claims" and the activities of local native communities. The Canadian federal government's reluctance to recognize Haida sovereignty can be traced to the contradictions in British colonialism, its particular western Canadian adaptations, and institutional inability to appreciate the conservation priorities of aboriginal communities. The separation of powers between the provinces and the federal government is an aspect of the broader legislative and administrative impediments. The provinces depend on revenues from resource extraction for their general budgets. Funding for Native affairs has been primarily the responsibility of the federal government, which has rarely funded local environmental management much of which is and has been a provincial matter. Until the 1991-1994 policy shift in Victoria and Ottawa, neither federal nor provincial governments directly addressed issues of sovereignty and land tenure. Almost all British Columbia forest lands have remained under provincial ownership and administration which were part of the terms that the province negotiated before it would join Confederation.

The provincial government of British Columbia layers various administration and controls of its public lands throughout various ministries and branches particularly through offices charged with primary allocation of extractive resources. For the hinterlands of British Columbia, protected area categories often have been the only exceptions to large-scale commercial timber harvesting and mining. Prospects for conservation improved in 1971 when the government of W. A. C. Bennett Social Credit Party, known for its massive resource leasing and dam building programmes, was finally not re-elected after nearly 30 years. But the Barrett government of 1972-75 instituted only modest reforms and the years from 1975 to 1990 saw stagnation in Government of British Columbia policy on Native Peoples and the environment.

As concerns over dwindling habitat and old growth forest increased on the west coast of North America in the mid-1980s, it became clear that none of the provincial legislation reflected a comprehensive mandate for both conserving biodiversity and sustainable development. The environment and parks portfolios of the provincial government did not even always have clear legal bases for restricting extractive activities even where sensitive habitats were involved. One response of the British Columbia government, of the Social Credit Party government of Bill Bennett, was to establish a Wilderness Advisory Committee to resolve competing land proposals, with somewhat less direct intervention of the extractive resource ministries, particularly those related to logging and mining. In 1986, the Committee recommended maintaining all of Gwaii Haanas as wilderness.

Until the 1988 memorandum between the governments of British Columbia and Canada, much of Gwaii Haanas was part of Tree Farm License (TFL) 24. Such licenses involve extensive and direct control by private logging interests over large areas public forests. The original Timber Management License (TML) for much of Gwaii Haanas was first granted in 1958 and renewed in 1979 while owned by Western Forest Products, Ltd. At

the time of the granting of the original license, the Government of British Columbia was in the throes of one of the most infamous corruption trials in its history and which centred on the forests and lands portfolios. A former Minister of Forests and Lands, Robert Sommers, was convicted of corruption though there was not evidence presented at the time that this extended to TML 24.²⁴ In 1979, the British Columbia Supreme Court heard a challenge to renewal of the TFL from the Chief of Tanoo, Nathan Young, on the basis of his hereditary title.²⁵ Later in 1979, the Environment and Land Uses Committee of the British Columbia Government held hearings and released an "Overview Study" on conservation prospects for Haida Gwaii.²⁶ But both the Supreme Courts of British Columbia and Canada dismissed the legal challenge even with growing speculation of corruption in the circumstances of the original license. But the Minister of Forests, Tom Waterland, went ahead and renewed TFL 24. In part because of the brewing "South Moresby" controversy, the provincial legislature amended the British Columbia Forests Act, in 1979, to allow for almost automatic renewal of TFLs, with hearings only at the discretion of the Minister of Forests. In response to public outrage about this policy and because of pressures for broader participation in land use decisions, the Minister of Forests assembled the South Moresby Resource Planning Team involving representatives from a range of sectors, agencies, and institutions. Unfortunately, the Haida Nation was not invited to participate as a government.

After meeting for four years, the South Moresby Resource Planning Team produced a report identifying four options for resource development and conservation in the area. The report's summary included concern for "the occurrence of endemic or otherwise distinctive species of flora and fauna."²⁷ The report employed "natural zones" and "resource development zones" as alternative designations. Each option also contained suggestions for some kind of wilderness preservation. The planning team refused to endorse any option, and at least one member contended that the provincial government had "down-played" the final recommendations and that for public members of the planning team "it was the crowning lesson in cynicism" where "'public involvement' degenerated in concept from a meaningful democratic exercise to a clever diversion by government of conservation energies and a measure of avoiding embarrassing legal confrontation." One of the options, that emphasized short-term extractive output, was favoured and, while the government deliberated, logging continued on Lyell Island at the northeast corner of what later became the legal boundary of Gwaii Haanas. For the Haida, this lack of authentic conservation supported the notion that planning, in this remote corner of the far-flung province that was built on quick wealth was biased against First Nations communities, against setting sustainable levels of harvesting raw resources, and against protection of sensitive habitats such as temperate old growth rainforest.

Having never been consulted about Confederation and with painful memories of the suppression of the potlatch, the Haida quickly internationalized the conflict. In 1980, the Province of British Columbia asked the Government of Canada to nominate, on the basis of the abandoned villages and remaining totem poles, Ninstints and the island of Sgan Gwaii as a World Heritage Site under the World Heritage Convention. The United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) approved the proposal. This status gave impetus to federal involvement in the area and the international recognition nurtured the new wave of native sovereignty with conservation of the areas of Gwaii Haanas to the north being the most obvious territorial symbol for new advocacy. Yet,

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despite broadly based public concern for conservation in the region, it was still not possible to develop a provincial government-based solution because land management frameworks in British Columbia still had few effective mechanisms for considering concerns for conservation, traditional resources, and Native lands. Compounding this lack of ability to act to conserve were new revelations of corruption in the Government of British Columbia which culminated in the resignation of the Minister of Forests in 1986.²⁸

At first, the Canadian federal government's role in the growing conflict was inconsistent because the provincial government had jurisdiction. Federal government involvement in natural resource decisions is usually limited to off-shore areas and marine resources unless the province cedes land to the Government of Canada. While most of the advocacy for habitat conservation and against continued clearcut logging on Gwaii Haanas focused on the provincial government until the mid-1980s when Parks Canada, a federal agency, began to become involved. At roughly the same time, Parks Canada's emphasis shifted from tourism to more balanced management of representative natural ecosystems of national significance. With this change in mission, Gwaii Haanas qualified under the criteria of Parks Canada as a landscape worthy of protection as a national park.

Sovereignty and International Alliances

One of the most daunting and unpredictable aspects of the social conflict around Gwaii Haanas has been the efforts to expand dialogues between the Haida Nation and local, national, and international "environmentalists." In other parts of the region and at other times, such dialogue has barely occurred. First Nations groups have articulated needs and priorities for conservation and resource use that have often diverged with those of non-Native groups primarily concerned with wilderness, public control of resources, and global perspectives on environmental degradation. Yet the fluid alliance between the Haida and environmentalists was crucial to the successful creation of an imperfect framework for preserving Gwaii Haanas's old growth forests and in creating a framework for long-term negotiation between the Haida Nation and the Canadian government.

Islands Protection Society acted as the primary local environmental organization. The Society, originally a "Committee," was formed in response to the 1974 proposal to move logging operations to Burnaby Island. The Skidegate Band Council was the first organization to oppose the proposed operations and the Islands Protection Society initially proposed some kind of wilderness status for Haida Gwaii south of the Tangil Peninsula in November of 1974. The subsequent years saw various moratoriums and deferrals on the proposed logging for Burnaby Island and instead operations were established to the north on Lyell Island. The environmental organizations sought total preclusion of logging and mining in this area. As the debate expanded, the Western Canada Wilderness Committee, based in Vancouver, and the Canadian Nature Federation, based in Ottawa, intervened to support protection of wilderness values by the state. These two groups encouraged the idea of creating a national park as a way to preserve Gwaii Haanas, but this occurred years after Haida and non-Haida residents had envisioned a community-based conservation framework.²⁹

As early as 1982, the CHN issued conservation regulations and announced fees for commercial tours in Gwaii Haanas. In response to the lack of progress toward conservation, the CHN declared tribal parks and heritage sites in areas that were scheduled to be logged or

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where additional management was needed to help control the impact of tourism. Opposition to logging was the first successful Haida response to resource extraction that jeopardized their traditional harvesting patterns. Their tactics coalesced after a century of painful destruction of sites owned by well-identified lineages, families, and individuals. These concerns formed the narrative of the resistance to the style of development experienced on Haida Gwaii beginning in the mid-nineteenth century. A vague sort of environmentalism allowed for this decolonisation effort to be better understood by non-Haida through adaptations of the notions of wilderness preservation and the need for well-stewarded cultural landscapes. These ideals have come to represent and paradoxically be transformed by the cultural movements and political strategies associated with the revitalization of First Nations communities.

Several trends and events intersected in the mid-1980s to transform the local political economy and to link concerns for biological conservation with those for traditional Haida resources and sovereignty. The Haida grew more unified, organized, and sophisticated in asserting their case for sovereignty and land rights as they watched the experience of Native corporations in Alaska. Logging output and cutting area increased while automation limited growth in the local forestry work force. Nature and cultural tourism increased substantially in the 1980s. Canada finally adopted its own constitution in 1982, precluding further possibilities of government embarrassment from Native groups in British Columbia demanding redress from Britain. But neither the provincial nor federal government was prepared fully to decolonise, especially since doing so might have meant they would be held financially liable to corporations whose leases might be extinguished if Haida sovereignty and ownership were finally recognized.

The Council of the Haida Nation (CHN) organized several politically effective logging blockades in the 1980s.³⁰ In the autumn of 1985, seventy-two people, nearly all of whom were Haida, blockaded Sedgwick Bay, on Lyell Island, in a well-publicized attempt to disrupt logging.³¹ In the subsequent David and Goliath media "spectacle,"³² the Haida finally had the upper hand. These blockades challenged the provincial government's ability to mediate competing social pressures on natural resources eventually forcing the government to take a position that grudgingly accepted the need for more conservation of old growth forest ecosystems.

After political demonstrations and media events spread to places as distant as Vancouver, Ottawa, New York, and London, federal-provincial discussions became earnest in 1987. Popular pressure to stop clearcut logging, within the proposed boundaries of Gwaii Haanas as clearcutting was taking place on Lyell Island, intensified in 1987 and the Government of British Columbia finally was forced into allowing federal government intervention. The content of the federal-provincial memorandum was approved a year later in 1988. But the CHN was still not formally involved in the decisions on these territories and the financial package emphasized government funds to compensate logging interests and to construct tourist facilities under the rubric of "western diversification"³³ rather than Haida-initiated conservation or tourism.

A vision of establishment of a national park for the area gradually emerged, often more from default, as the solution that could minimize the negative impacts of large cut blocks with declining old-growth habitat and poorly engineered roads.³⁴ These activities are still occurring in the larger part of the Queen Charlotte Islands north of Gwaii Haanas.

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Clearcut logging stopped on Gwaii Haanas after a July 1988 agreement between the federal government and the provincial government.

The 1988-93 National Park Reserve as a Neocolonial Solution

The 1988 memorandum, shifting control from the provincial government to the federal government, represented one of several potential strategies to conserve the biological and cultural resources of Gwaii Haanas. It was the option that minimized embarrassment for the provincial government and optimized the political options of the federal government. The about-face of the provincial government was after it had resisted creating a wilderness park for over a decade. While the CHN neither participated in the negotiations nor formally supported them, it ultimately supported the 1988 memorandum as a short-term tactic to stop clearcut logging in this part of Haida Gwaii. The shift to federal administration, in 1988, resulted from the inability of the provincial government to resolve the nagging contradictions of the earlier colonial period. The Government of British Columbia was losing its credibility in making balanced decisions between extraction of timber, mineral, and marine resources and conservation and recreation; between expansion of logging and expansion of fishing; and between laissez-faire expansion of tourist facilities and more planned approaches. The South Moresby National Park Reserve was created in large part to appease the Haida and the general public after disillusionment with the ineffectiveness of provincial land use planning frameworks and corruption of politicians. The 1988 Memorandum was a milestone with its commitment to principles of sustainable development." One tenet of the 1980 World Conservation Strategy, that the Memorandum highlighted, was conservation of genetic diversity though the implications to Haida subsistence resources were oddly down-played. And the framework for joint stewardship and conservation of biological diversity remained unresolved. The federal government's inability to sufficiently move on decolonisation held back the development of effective frameworks for biodiversity conservation in the 1988-93 period.

Comanagement, 'Joint Management,' and Decolonisation

Neither status as a national park nor as a "National Park Reserve" could guarantee conservation of biological diversity. Without an agreement between the Council of the Haida Nation and Parks Canada, the huge gaps in the management necessary for conservation of biological diversity, with ongoing coordination and funding, persisted. In the 1988 to 1993 period, sites that had traditional importance remained vulnerable. Parks Canada moved slowly into Gwaii Haanas wary of unresolved ownership and protocol issues. But the CHN had already developed a protection and conservation service on its own with its young people, called the Haida Watchmen, which had already gained formal recognition from the Government of British Columbia. This programme was part of the Haida Nation's effort to regain its position as principal sovereign on Gwaii Haanas. While curtailing logging operations removed one threat, others emerged such as excessive harvesting of marine resources and tourism³⁵ and more intrinsic ecosystem degradation from introduced deer, rats, and raccoons. But with no accord, the federal government funded little biodiversity inventorying, conservation, and monitoring during 1988-93.

The 1993 "Gwaii Haanas / South Moresby Agreement" between the CHN and the federal government resulted after five years of discussions between the CHN, Parks Canada,

and the Department of Justice of Canada. Avoidance of de facto recognition of Haida sovereignty, with the implications for subsequent relations, presented a major obstacle to federal government participation in an accord. But without a comprehensive agreement, continued confrontations with the Canadian state over its weak conservation policies continued, along with the Government of British Columbia north of Gwaii Haanas, while global links with other traditional communities simultaneously deepened.³⁶ The CHN, through their growing involvement in conservation planning and management, established themselves as the major force challenging the legitimacy and value of provincial land stewardship. The 1993 Haida-Canada joint management agreement, intended as a partnership, became a milestone in First Nations history in Canada. The Agreement contrasts with several other "comanagement" agreements between the Native government and that of Canada in the equality between parities.³⁷ The Haida have provided an anticolonial and sovereignist model for conservation in a large country with a federal system in the Pacific Rim. The recent strategies of the CHN worked in part because of little government repression with low levels of police and military coercion and the Haida solid commitment to nonviolence. Other Native groups, with fewer numbers and resources, might not as easily pursue such an idealistic course. Gwaii Haanas may well remain the exception to new agreements for co-management on the British Columbia coast.

The determination of the Haida exposed both the Province of British Columbia's land management system and the priorities of Parks Canada as neocolonial. The years between 1988 and 1993 were a transitional period with attempts to subsume Haida concerns under the rubric of economic diversification and conservation. The CHN insisted on a joint stewardship accord structured around Haida sovereignty and the 1993 Agreement represented the fruits of more than a century of discussion about Gwaii Haanas. But it still only provided a partially effective basis for conserving local biological diversity. While the Agreement finally removed the major obstacles to building viable local conservation institutions, the little funding that is available is still controlled by Parks Canada and there are still few new mechanisms for generating money for Haida-initiated conservation.

Conclusion

The Haida have been actively engaging in their marginality since European contact but what is unclear is the extent of the actual colonisation that actually has occurred with the Haida. They have essentially lost their language and much of their religion, have the typical North American social problems, and live in hauntingly beautiful but spectacularly ravaged landscapes. If there is truly a difference in the colonisation as cultural dissection and fragmentation from that of chronic assault, perhaps the Haida have been fortunate with the former. And there are always limits on how a small society can remake itself through political conflicts over land. In recent decades, conflict between proponents of extractive development and proponents of conservation of primary temperate rain forest has increasingly dominated and transformed the political economy of Pacific Canada. The movements for Native land and resource reappropriation intersected briefly with global concerns over conservation of primary forest and biological resources around Gwaii Haanas. For the Haida Nation, a notion of the locally managed protected area as a development alternative both to the negative aspects of resource extraction and the biases in government park programs emerged from a century of strategizing for some kind of recognition from

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Canadian federal and provincial governments.

The Haida renewed their own conservation institutions because federal and provincial government institutions reflected values, little changed since colonial times, that favoured unsustainable extraction and discouraged local Native resource management. A public perception that provincial government institutions threatened the region's biological resources in combination with more political unity on the part of the Haida allowed them to direct a coalition with non-natives to finally reassert control over their traditional lands.

Resolution of the Gwaii Haanas logging / conservation conflict was distinctive in comparison to similar logging / old-growth conservation disputes in adjacent parts of Canada and the U.S.A. because of the following elements. The nature of the questions of First Nations sovereignty, the fragile but effective Native-preservationist alliance, and the willingness of the Canadian Cabinet, under the Conservative Party government of Brian Mulroney, to pay a very steep price for compensating mining and logging companies suggests that the solution for Gwaii Haanas may already be anachronistic. These strategies are only partially applicable to other Pacific Northwest areas, because a larger and more populous set of communities with more complex land use patterns may involve different and more complex obstacles to finding acceptable levels of conservation and economic expansion.

Effective and sustainable conservation, particularly for biological diversity and island ecosystems, requires extensive allocation of human resources. Sustainable conservation also requires effective, informed, inclusive, and neutral institutions. Until very recently, conservation institutions in British Columbia have been managed to be the opposite. Efforts to increase the effectiveness of conservation efforts, through joint management of protected areas, will continue to transform the regional political economy and local institutions while remaining provisional and indefinite. The moral of this chronicle is that, in the context of wilderness and resource frontiers, the longer the wait for decolonisation the more expensive it becomes - at least for the taxpayer. While the extraction of the natural resources of Gwaii Haanas, before 1988, generated millions of dollars in wealth to private enterprises and the British Columbian and Canadian government coffers, the Government of Canada is now committed to paying out over CDN\$100,000,000 at the time when it become one of the most indebted of the developed countries.

The institutions that have now emerged have attained some dominance because they better resolve these historically derived contradictions - but only for a time. When not genocidal, new treaties with indigenous people have often functioned as pacts of new forms of colonisation and the status of effective control over biological and genetic resources, with the necessary information for procurement and protection, may prove to be a better indicator of the level of Haida political and economic development than the ownership of the territory itself. And the notion of the conservation area will continue to be transformed as quickly as the underlying and highly site-specific social alliances.

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Notes

1. For the current status of the usage of "Haida Gwaii" versus the "Queen Charlotte Islands," see anonymous, "Haida Gwaii more appropriate name says CHN," *Queen Charlotte Islands Observer* 11 March 1993, 1-2. The names for the southern part of the archipelago have changed over time. The term "South Moresby" only referred to the southern areas of Moresby Island and adjacent islands. By the late-1980s, most people in the region accepted the Haida name, *Gwaii Haanas*, as the geographic label..
2. Gordon Brent Ingram, "Rainforest Conservation Initiated by Traditional Island Communities: Implications for Development Planning," *Canadian Journal of Development Studies* 15, no. 2 (1994): 193-218.
3. Gordon Brent Ingram, 1992. The remaining islands with primary rainforest: A global resource. *Environmental Management* 16(5): 585 - 595.
4. Tom M. McMillan, W. McKnight, and T. Huberts, "Memorandum of Agreement between the Government of Canada and the Government of the Province of British Columbia for the Establishment of South Moresby National Park and National Marine Park, Queen Charlotte Islands, British Columbia, 12 July 1988," on file with Parks Canada, Hull, Quebec, and British Columbia Ministry of Parks, Victoria, British Columbia.
5. "Gwaii Haanas / South Moresby Agreement" "Between: THE GOVERNMENT OF CANADA, represented by the Minister of the Environment AND: THE COUNCIL OF THE HAIDA NATION, for an on behalf of the Haida Nation and represented by the Vice President of the Council"the "Reasons for Agreement" 30 January 1993. The Agreement is on file in the office of the CHN, P. O. Box 98, Skidegate V0T 1S0 Canada.
6. Walter J. Lusigi, *Planning Human Activities on Protected Natural Ecosystems*, (Lehre, Germany, J. Cramer, 1978).
7. J. Bristol Foster, "The Canadian Galapagos," *Islands at the Edge: Preserving the Queen Charlotte Islands Wilderness*, ed. Islands Protection Society (Vancouver, British Columbia: Douglas & McIntyre, 1984), pp. 35-47; Jim Pojar and John Broadhead, "The Green Mantle," *Islands at the Edge*, 49-72; Gordon Brent Ingram, "Planning District Networks of Protected Habitat for Conservation of Biological Diversity: A Manual with Applications for Marine Islands with Primary Rainforest" (Ph.D. diss., University of California at Berkeley, 1989).
8. Council of the Haida Nation, "Purpose and Objectives Statement," *Gwaii Haanas Newsletter* 1 (September 1993): 3.
9. Despite the fact that at the turn of the century, there were remnants of at least 10 villages on Gwaii Haanas, only those at the extreme southern end, at Ninstints, were large enough to attract much documentation. See George F. MacDonald, *Haida Monumental Art--Villages of the Queen Charlotte Islands* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1983), pp. 101-13.
10. J. R. Swanton, "Contributions to the Ethnology of the Haida," *American Museum of Natural History Memoirs*, (1893-1930) 5 (1905): 1-300, and *Haida Myths and Texts: Skidegate Dialect* (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Bureau of American Ethnology Bulletin 29, 1905).
11. As early as 1851, the Haida were claiming natural resources such as gold ore and obstructing its export. See "Extract of a Despatch from Governor Douglas to Earl Grey dated Victoria, Vancouver's Island, 29 January, 1852." on file Archives of the Royal British Columbia Museum, Victoria (call no. NW971.35Q).
12. The various approaches of the missionaries were described by J. R. Henderson, "Missionary Influences on the Haida

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Settlement and Subsistence Patterns 1876-1920," *Ethnohistory* 21, no. 4 (1974): 303-16. On page 308, Henderson notes "the southern villages suffered from no fire and brimstone evangelists. The missionaries appraisals were reflected in the goals they pursued, which were practical solutions to the problem of survival in a changing and alien world. To the missionary, survival meant drastic changes in the cultural patterns of the Haida."

13. For a description of Haida potlatch ceremonies, see pages 119 to 121 of George M. Dawson's report recently re-edited as *To The Charlottes: George Dawson's 1978 Survey of the Queen Charlotte Islands*. Douglas Cole and Bradley Lockner (editors), (Vancouver, University of British Columbia Press, 1993). For a discussion of the links between the suppression of traditional culture and loss of Haida control over lands, see Chapter 8, pages 90 to 113, of Norman Newton's *Fire in the Raven's Nest* (Toronto, Ontario. New Press, 1973).

14. "Extract of a Despatch from Sir John S. Pakington, Bart. M.P. To Governor Douglas; dated Downing-Street 27 September 1852." on file Archives of the Royal British Columbia Museum Call N. NW971.35 G786.

15. Haida leaders protested the British seizure of the islands to the first governor of British Columbia. See (Victoria) *British Colonist*, 23 April 1859, page 1 (no author or title) which records a meeting where one thousand Haida, at least one-tenth of the total Haida population, arrived in eighty canoes, traded for gold, and insisted on political recognition. Refusal to deal with the Haida as a sovereign group shaped the formation of a number of provincial institutions, particularly the land registry, the land management branch, and ministries responsible for forests and minerals.

16. Norman Newton, *Fire in the Raven's Nest*, page 90. The text of the 1763 Proclamation was reprinted in the January 1963 issue of *The Native Voice* XVII n. 1: 2.

17. Thomas R. Berger, *A Long and Terrible Shadow: White Values, Native Rights in the Americas* (Vancouver, British Columbia: Douglas and McIntyre, 1991), pp. 142-56. Berger notes, "The colony's [the Crown colony of Vancouver Island's] House of Assembly had at first acknowledged aboriginal title, but when the House realized that the money for the extinguishment of aboriginal title would have to be provided locally, it began to insist there was no such thing as aboriginal title and no obligation to compensate Indians for their lands" (p. 143).

18. Kathleen E. Dalzell, *The Queen Charlotte Islands, 1774-1966* (Prince Rupert, British Columbia: Cove Press, 1968), pp. 59-145.

19. The Government of British Columbia policy of refusing to negotiate over sovereignty, land, and resource ownership was not reversed until 1991, after the election of the New Democratic Party government of Michael Harcourt. On June 28, 1991 a framework for negotiating between the provincial government and First Nations was proposed in the following report: Chief Joe Mathias, Miles G. Richardson, Audrey Stewart, Murray Collican, Chief Edward John, Tony Sheridan and L. Allan Williams. BC Claims Task Force Final Report. on file Victoria, British Columbia Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs, 908 Pandora Avenue, Victoria V8V 1X4. This report was not accepted by the Social Credit Party government of the time and was only made government policy after a provincial election by the new administration. See December 10, 1991 Government of British Columbia News Release, "Province accepts claims task force recommendations," on file, British Columbia Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs, Victoria.

20. Province of British Columbia, *Report of the Royal Commission on Indian Affairs for the Province of British Columbia*, 3 vols. (Victoria: Acme Press, 1916), esp. vols. 1 and 3. This work was popularly known as the "McKenna-McBride Report." For the nineteenth and first half of the twentieth centuries, First Nations communities in British Columbia were subjected to laws restricting voting, land ownership, cultural expression, and legal action to assert

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sovereignty and to counter settler incursions on traditional lands. The first formal protest of the Haida resources was sometimes between 1859 and 1861 by Chief Edenshaw (Norman Newton, *Fire in the Raven's Nest*, page 102).

21. Chief of Tanoo, "Testimony, Chief of Tanoo," *All Alone Stone* (Spring 1980)4: 40-41.

22. For an example of an area on the British Columbia coast, where alliances between First Nations communities and non-natives have been more difficult to form and sustain, see Gordon Brent Ingram's chronicle for Clayoquot Sound on Vancouver Island, "The ecology of a conflict," In *Clayoquot & Dissent*. (ed.) Ron Hatch (Vancouver, Ronsdale Press, 1994), pp. 9 - 71 and, in particular pages 15 and 16 and 57 to 59.

23. Raymond F. Dasmann, "Difficult Marginal Environments and the Traditional Societies Which Exploit Them," *Survival International Review* 2 (1975): 11-15.

24. "Sommers was sentenced to five years in jail in 1958 on conspiracy and bribery charges involving how a forest company got timber licenses. It was the culmination of a four year-long scandal that dominated several legislature sessions and eventually a 79-day trial spread over six months to resolve." Les Lyne, "Sommer file off limits to inquiring historian," (Victoria) *Times Colonist* June 17, 1994: B8. Also see, (no author) "Sommer found guilty of bribery conspiracy - B.C. Forest Ltd. Acquitted; Mixed fate for others," *Victoria Daily Colonist*, November 2, 1958: A1 and A2. While Sommers had resigned in February 1956, over two years before TML 24 was created, it appears that the original proposal was reviewed by his administration in 1955 and 1956. For an overview on the historical links between the Sommers years and the government biases towards large logging operations, see Craig Piprell, "Unhappy anniversary," (Part One of three), (Victoria, British Columbia) *Monday Magazine* August 8 - 14, 1991 17 n. 33: 6 - 10.

25. Three individuals had standing to bring the challenge: the hereditary Chief of part of the southern Haida - the hereditary Chief of the village of Tanoo, Gary Edenshaw / Guujaaw; and the non-Haida trapper of Burnaby Island. See "Testimony, Chief of Tanoo," 40-41 and John Broadhead, "Islands at the edge," *Islands At The Edge: Preserving the Queen Charlotte Islands Wilderness* (Vancouver, Douglas & McIntyre, 1984), pp. 121 - 142, esp. pages 134 and 135.

26. Environment and Land Use Committee Secretariat, *South Moresby Wilderness Proposals: An Overview Study* (Victoria: Province of British Columbia, 1979).

27. South Moresby Resource Planning Team, *South Moresby Land Use Alternatives* (Victoria: Province of British Columbia, 1984) page 4.

28. In 1986, Tom Waterland was forced to resign as Minister of Forests after a conflict of interest was exposed in his 1979 renewal of TFL 24. At the time of the renewal of the TFL, Waterland owned shares in a pulp mill company with supply contracts with WFPL. See Les Leyne, "Waterland Quits in 'Clear Conflict,' Rogers Tarred Too, Critics Charge," (Victoria) *Times Colonist*, 18 October 1986, A1 and A2.

29. Islands Protection Society, "The South Moresby Wilderness Area (A preliminary proposal)," *Queen Charlotte Observer* (Thursday, July 29, 1976): 3 - 4.

30. M. Johnston and D. Jones, "Canada's Queen Charlotte Islands: Homeland of the Haida," *National Geographic* 172 (July 1987): 102-27; Elizabeth May, *Paradise Won: The Struggle for South Moresby* (Toronto, Ontario: McClelland and Stewart, 1990), pp. 113-24.

31. Terry Glavin, "Indians Halt Lyell Logging," (Vancouver) *Sun* (30 October 1985): A1, A2.

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32. Guy Debord (translated by Donald Nicholson-Smith) *The Society of the Spectacle* (New York, Zone Books, 1994) originally published in 1967. See pp. 12 - 19.

33. The accompanying "diversification package" may total more than one hundred million Canadian dollars by the mid-1990s. Almost all of the "western diversification" funds associated with the 1988 federal-provincial agreement went to subsidize non-Haida enterprises including compensation to logging companies on Gwaii Haanas. See Robert Matas, "In the beginning there was Moresby," *The (Toronto) Globe and Mail*, 13 November 1993, D1, D3. Ottawa's commitment for establishing a national park is now \$160 million dollars (Canadian), but Matas quotes Park Superintendent Roger Hamilton who stated that, so far, "Ottawa has spent only \$52 million."

34. Residents of Haida Gwaii, including many Haida, discussed conservation in "the South Moresby" at a 1976 meeting. They explicitly rejected federal government control of the area, particularly in the form of a national park. See "The South Moresby Wilderness Area: A Preliminary Proposal," *Queen Charlotte Islands Observer*, 29 July 1976, 3-4.

35. For some contemporary Haida perspectives on mismanagement of marine resources by the Government of British Columbia, see Robert Davidson, "Why We Are Where We're At," *Queen Charlotte Islands Observer*, 30 January 1992, 14-22; and Gary P. Russ, "Overseeing the Rock," *Queen Charlotte Islands Observer*, 9 April 1992, 5-6. In recent years, there have been Haida demonstrations against excessive sportsfishing and an agreement to shift much of the provincial government management control to the Haida was signed between the Haida Nation and the Province of British Columbia in 1992. See Jeff King, "Haida, Province Agree/Joint Stewardship on Sportsfishing," *Queen Charlotte Islands Observer*, 6 August 1992, 1-2.

36. For an overview of conflict with the state in the context of comanagement, see Evelyn Pinkerton, "Intercepting the State: Dramatic Processes in the Assertion of Local Comanagement Rights," *The Question of the Commons: The Culture and Ecology of Communal Resources*, ed. B. J. McCay and J. M. Acheson (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1987), pp. 344-69. For examples of the work of the Queen Charlotte Islands / Haida Gwaii Global Links organization, see Alex Rinfret, "Chinese Share Perspectives on Logging and Tourism," *Queen Charlotte Islands Observer*, 15 October 1992, p. 12, and "Visitor from India Surprised," *Queen Charlotte Islands Observer*, 22 October 1993, p. 19.

37. See Alex Rinfret, "Gwaii Haanas Deal Signed," *Queen Charlotte Islands Observer*, 4 February 1993, 1-2. Rinfret noted "the Agreement calls for all planning, operating and management decisions about Gwaii Haanas to be made by a four-member management board representing both Canada and the Haida Nation....The two governments agree to disagree on the issue of who actually owns the archipelago."