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Ricks: *A Survey and Analysis of Prehistoric Rock Art of the Warner Valley Region, Lake County, Oregon*

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the two [areas] would strengthen the case for cultural linkage." CA-FRE-61 is at the right place with the right assemblage to strengthen that linkage.

Mark Q. Sutton, editor of the Occasional Papers in Anthropology for the Museum of Anthropology at California State University, Bakersfield, deserves commendation for his commitment to making sure that at least a portion of anthropological efforts in California and the Great Basin becomes available through publication. Karen Nissen also deserves commendation for her efforts as sheepherder for the field project at CA-FRE-61 and, as I understand it, as sheepdog with a major role in herding this report into the publication corral.

A final note. CA-FRE-61 recently was selected as a major contribution for a public exhibit under Caltrans auspices at a roadside rest stop on Highway 99 near Pixley, south of Fresno.

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A Survey and Analysis of Prehistoric Rock Art of the Warner Valley Region, Lake County, Oregon. Mary Frances Ricks. University of Nevada, Reno, Department of Anthropology Technical Report 96-1, 1996, 179 pp., 53 figs., 22 tables, 1 map, 4 appendices, bibliography, index. No price given (paper).

Reviewed by:

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One purpose of rock art research is to document sites so that—whatever happens in the future—a record is available of what was present at that site at a particular point in time. A study of the rock art of Warner Valley that began in 1987 is now published in this University of Nevada Technical Report. The material covers a large body of rock art, places it into its archaeological context, and examines it in conjunction with environmental factors. I am pleased to see comprehensive studies such as these; few individuals devote so much time and energy in the documentation and study of petroglyphs and pictographs.

Chapter 1 describes the purpose of the Warner Valley rock art study that contains 117 archaeological sites and includes 20,216 units of rock art. In placing the rock art into prehistoric

subsistence and settlement patterns, Ricks has found positive correlation with the loci of rock art and native plant communities. Her findings refute the "hunting magic" and vision quest theories as rationales for the rock art. Ricks' study uses information-theoretic techniques to examine patterns of spatial distribution of rock art.

Chapter 2 describes prior research in Warner Valley and offers an alternate model for subsistence and settlement: Ricks proposes that upland sites were used for substantial periods of time in spring and early summer, when large numbers of people gathered, harvested plants, and processed and prepared them for storage. Her model suggests that the range of art should be greater at these aggregation sites and more limited at sites with a limited range of activities.

It is in Chapter 2 that the research takes a left turn. Ricks has taken the flawed rock art typology of Heizer and Baumhoff (1962) and added to it. Hedges (1982) has already pointed out the problems inherent in the style categories presented by Heizer and Baumhoff. One of his salient points was that, "Heizer and Baumhoff subjectively used media (painted, scratched) as defining characteristics of styles irrespective of design element occurrences . . . medium should be considered but as a secondary factor" (Hedges 1982:206).

Another problem concerns the "pit and groove" type of petroglyphs in the Great Basin as pointed out by Lee (1981:118). Heizer and Baumhoff (1962:208-209) stated:

> This style [pit and groove] was named by us in an earlier report . . . largely on the basis of evidence from a single site. More thorough investigation . . . indicates that most occurrences of this style consist only of pits . . . The pits vary in size. Most of them are only an inch or two in diameter, but some are as much as 12 inches across. Grooves, when present, are from a half-inch to an inch in width. Pits are usually a half-inch to an inch in depth, whereas the grooves are much shallower—seldom more than a quarter-inch in depth. Both pits and grooves were evidently pecked or battered into boulder surfaces and were not further smoothed. The pits seem to be randomly placed on a rock surface . . . When grooves are present they do not lend composition but merely connect some of the pits . . .

What we are dealing with are cupule boulders but the term "cupule" appears only twice in the book, and the difference between a cupule and a "dot" is not stated. There also is confusion over "dots" versus "pits," and when a dot is a dot or (if deeper), when it becomes a pit. In various other studies, cupules are known as "pitted boulders," "rain rocks," or "baby rocks." Ricks states that "Pit and groove petroglyphs are distinguished by a seemingly random placement of pecked pits on the surface of rock faces." However, without grooves, the use of the term "pit and groove" (p. 54) is inappropriate as a style designation. Instead of adopting Heizer and Baumhoff's rock art styles, which already are fraught with problems, and then expanding upon them, Ricks would have been better off to rethink the styles and earlier terminology for Great Basin rock art.

Chapter 3 covers the geology, climate, and plant resources of Warner Valley. Chapter 4 lists four hypotheses to be tested: (1) that rock art sites are not randomly distributed in space; (2) that rock art sites are located near resources; (3) that designs are not randomly distributed among rock art sites but tend to cluster; and (4) that rock art will be most "rich" and varied at aggregation sites.

Chapter 5 covers the field methods and site form for documentation, and the statistical analyses program. Chapter 6 describes the rock art, site size, and associated cultural material, and includes tables listing artifacts and associated features found at the sites. Under "Rock Art Styles," Ricks describes the separation of pictographs from petroglyphs, historical from prehistorical motifs, and describes the styles used for this study: (1) *Great Basin Carved Abstract* appears to be separated out by depth of carving and complexity of design. It is the oldest style,

with a minimum age of 6,850 years (based on a layer of volcanic ash laid down by the eruption of Mount Mazama); (2) *Pit and Groove* (addressed above); (3) *Great Basin Rectilinear Abstract*, consisting of straight lines and rectangular or polygonal figures, grids, and zigzags. However, to illustrate this style, Figure 8 shows a bug-like figure; (4) *Great Basin Curvilinear Abstract*, consisting of circles, dots, and meanders; (5) *Great Basin Representational*, consisting of humans, animals, plants, and hand prints; (6) *Abraded* areas are listed as a style: "these areas might have been rock art which, over time, has become undecipherable" (p. 58). (I doubt that abraded areas can be termed a "style"); (7) *Great Basin Scratched*, described as "scratching out" earlier designs; and (8) *Historic* petroglyphs.

Rock paintings are put into separate categories, despite the fact that they are the same forms as seen in the petroglyphs: (1) *Great Basin Rectilinear Abstract* includes lines, zigzags, hatchmarks, rakes, squares, chevrons, and "complex rectilinear design elements"; (2) *Great Basin Curvilinear Abstract* includes circles, meanders, dots, arcs, and "complex curvilinear figures"; and (3) *Great Basin Representational* includes lizards, anthropomorphs, birds, snakes, sheep, hands, bear paws, and "fantastic creatures."

Then the rock art design types are listed: (1) *Petroglyphic dots* are so listed if they are shallow; if deep, they become part of the Carved Abstract Style (if I am following this correctly); (2) *Petroglyphic straight lines*; (3) *Petroglyphic hashmarks* [sic]; and (4) *Petroglyphic circles*.

Other petroglyph design types include meanders, arcs, parallel lines, tailed circles, anthropomorphs, connected circles, abraded areas, lizards, sinusoidal lines, sheep, and pits. This is followed by tables listing petroglyph designs, along with their numbers and percentages; and then tables showing pictograph designs in the same manner.

There are, in rock art studies as well as elsewhere, "splitters" and "joiners." Ricks separates out the anthropomorphs by "ungendered," "horned," "male," "archer," "paper doll," "female," "shield," and "snowman." Likewise, lizards can be "stick," "fat filled-body," "thin filled-body," "horned," "bisected," "thin outlined," "fat outlined," "unidentified," or with "circles inside body." I think the data would be more useful if the categories (say, for humans and lizards) were organized by the generic and then broken down by specific features. The way it is organized in Ricks' book, it is the specific and not the general attribute that divides the categories into myriad forms. A subset of attributes would have helped with overall organization.

Chapter 7, *Testing the Hypotheses*, gives the results. Ricks has divided the study area into units and tabulated site distribution, with reference to elevation and landforms. Nearly two-thirds of the sites are found in three units at the south end of the valley. However, the text does not state whether rock surfaces are equally available throughout the study area, a question that would arise to one unfamiliar with the terrain of Warner Valley. If not, are there particular landforms, such as an ancient lakebed, that might have caused an uneven distribution?

The second hypothesis, that sites are located near plant and animal resources, reveals no relationship between site location and game animals, although some correlation between sites and the presence of certain plant communities. This, according to Ricks, indicates that the hunting magic theory of Heizer and Baumhoff (1962) is incorrect. There likely will not be any controversy in this regard. The old hunting magic theory has been pretty thoroughly discredited elsewhere.

Hypothesis No. 3 deals with clustering of rock art; the data show that "different kinds of design elements cluster in different regions of the valley" (p. 127). Hypothesis No. 4 shows

that aggregation sites have greater diversity of design styles than is found at nonaggregation sites. This is very interesting, and is a part of the research that can be tested elsewhere.

Chapter 8, *Summary and Conclusions*, restates the results of the four hypotheses and makes suggestions for future research. The appendices include recording sheet samples, a list of edible plants in the area, and a Dictionary of Design Types, with the number of occurrences. The latter points up a problem with terminology. I prefer nonjudgmental descriptions; for example, the term "beads" is used for a line with circles on it; a circle with interior divisions is called a "gunsight." "Navicular" is used to describe a boat-shaped sheep; "blob-shaped" and "ant-shaped" are other adjectives for sheep bodies. It is probably incorrect to use "Sinusoidal Line" or "Sine Wave" (a mathetical construct unknown to Amerindians) to describe a simple wavy line.

The book could have used a bit of tightening up: there are repetitions, some annoying typographical errors, and none of the drawings have scale indicated. I would have liked a detailed map, a photograph of the landscape, and a note on where the primary data are stored. In a publication concerning rock art, illustrations are particularly important. The line drawings included in the book are woefully few, considering that the material deals with more than 20,000 examples of rock art.

There is a lot of interesting material in this study of the rock art of Warner Valley. The use of systems theory to study the relationships between sites and landscapes can add an important sidelight to predictive studies. Obviously, a great deal of field work is represented here. However, I think the author would have been better served if she had rethought and reworked the Heizer and Baumhoff (1962) typology. It is like starting off on the wrong foot, and then getting tangled up in strings of verbiage.

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This volume is the first in a series intended to "provide, at a reasonable cost, published peer-reviewed anthropological works that ordinarily might be . . . [lost in] the 'grey literature' " (p. iv). As such, it continues the tradition of reporting current anthropological research in Idaho