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Horizon and Tradition on the Southern California Coast: A Rejoinder

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Warren's classic paper describing prehistory on the southern California coast (1968) was in part a reaction to archaeologists viewing Wallace's (1955) chronological units as if they were cultural units (Warren, this issue). It was via the implementation of two concepts, cultural tradition and cultural ecology, that Warren (1968) sought to clarify issues surrounding synthesis of coastal prehistory. We too sought to clarify issues of synthesis building, but we started with a conceptual foundation which treated the basic objectives of archaeology as four in number (Koerper and Drover 1983: 1-2) rather than the usual three (e.g., Fagan 1978), and which linked levels of abstraction of the "archaeological culture" concept with the first three objectives.

Warren's response (this issue) to our 1983 article "Chronology Building for Coastal Orange County: The Case from CA-ORA-119-A" is based on the grounds that we improperly understood his use of the concept of tradition and have generally misrepresented his earlier work (Warren 1968). Our commentary in which we favor Wallace's synthesis over Warren's was an abridged one (1983: 25-26), and thus we welcome the opportunity to more fully explain both the nature of our previous ideas as well as our criticisms of Warren (1968).

TRADITION AND CULTURAL ECOLOGY: A DISCUSSION

In his Comment, Warren argues that "it should be clear" from his definitions of cultural tradition and cultural ecology that a cultural tradition is atemporal. The fact that his scheme (1968) is generally regarded as a chronology (e.g., Rice and Cottrell 1976: 40; Moratto 1984: 160) suggests otherwise, and we will explain why we think it has been so regarded.

First, it is not clear in the introduction to his 1968 paper that Warren was directing any part of his opening critique at archaeologists who employed Wallace's scheme as something more than a chronology. Rather, Warren's introductory remarks (1968: 1) leave the impression that an alternative for Wallace's (1955) chronology is being offered, and thus a reader is led to anticipate a replacement chronological scheme.

Second, Warren (this issue) claims to have chosen "tradition" to denote an "atemporal cultural unit" when the same term is generally held to designate "a (primarily) temporal continuity represented by persistent configurations in single technologies or other systems of related forms" (Willey and Phillips 1958: 37).

Third, Warren's "Schematic representation of temporal and areal relationships among cultural traditions on the southern California coast," (1968: 4, Fig. 1) appears to be the functional equivalent of a chronological scheme.

Fourth, Warren's cultural tradition is "a generic unit comprising historically related phases," but if historical phases are segments of a tradition, the tradition must itself be historical (viz., temporal).

Fifth, Warren's treatment of "tradition" is not consistent. In his Comment, he reiterates the tradition definition along with the idea that this concept is "defined in an environ-

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mental vacuum with ecology playing no part in the definition." He subsequently reiterates the definition of cultural ecology as "the interrelationship between a cultural tradition and its environment(s) . . ." We are informed that from the two definitions "it should be clear" a cultural tradition is atemporal. Following Warren's argument, the definition of cultural ecology should be irrelevant to the question of the temporal or atemporal nature of the tradition concept, particularly if ecology is supposed to play no part in the definition of tradition (Warren 1968: 1).

In his Comment, Warren neglects to mention that a functional definition of tradition appeared in his 1968 paper: "A cultural tradition is the mechanism by which prehistoric populations adapted to their environments [1968:1]." If a tradition is to be this closely linked to the concept of adaptation, then it would follow that ecological factors ought to be incorporated into the definition of Warren's tradition concept.

Later (Warren 1968: 11) we read that between particular traditions there may be convergence resulting from similar adaptations to similar environments and within a tradition there may be differences reflecting different adaptations to several ecological zones. Ecological factors, then, may hold little or no significance for distinguishing traditions from one another. Warren asserted that past life-way information is not essential to formulation of particular traditions. For instance, the San Dieguito may be distinguished as a tradition, although its "ecological adaptation is not known" (Warren 1968: 2). Warren further stated that the Shoshonean ecological adaptations were unknown (in 1968) and that assumptions about Yuman subsistence stem only from ethnographic accounts, not from archaeological analysis of middens (1968: 9-10). Warren's functional definition of tradition is extraneous and promotes confusion.

It would appear that the tradition concept of Warren distills simply to kinds and proportions of artifacts. Because changing artifact inventories of cultures exist in time, we can assume no less than that clusterings of particular kinds and proportions of artifacts, however conceived, delineate temporal units. By placing Chumash, Shoshonean and Yuman traditions within Wallace's Late Horizon, Warren (1968: 1) has rather explicitly provided each with temporal boundaries. Also, the Yuman tradition is said to be "nearly synonymous with True's (1966) Cuyamaca phase [a temporal unit]." Stylistic differences set off Shoshonean from Yuman (Warren 1968: 1, after True 1966). There is no "prima facie" justification for taking Warren's "tradition" as atemporal.

CHRONOLOGY AND CULTURE HISTORY: A DISCUSSION

The conceptual foundation of our chronology paper was presented in terms of four basic objectives of archaeological effort (see Koerper and Drover 1983). The first objective, chronology building, endeavors to impose temporal order on a region's or sub-region's archaeological cultures. At this level, archaeological cultures (often termed "chronological units") are defined largely on the basis of consistent associations of particular kinds and proportions of artifacts.

Past life-way study, the second objective, begins as a synchronic study and aims to elucidate such concerns as the nature of ancient settlement-subsistence systems, prehistoric social organizations and past magico-religious practices.

The third objective, cultural historical reconstruction, involves a combination of chronology building, diachronic past life-way reconstruction, and historical explanation of past events. It addresses "the larger picture" and involves significantly the data of the first two objectives of archaeological research.

Thus archaeological cultures at this level are described on the basis of their kinds and proportions of artifacts, and are "fleshed out" in varying degrees with especially such past life-way information as economic, social, political, and religious practices as interpreted from the archaeological record. Culture history schemes generally apply to regions and subregions. Their cultural periods may be characterized by the same category labels familiar to culture chronologies—e.g., phase, horizon, and tradition.

A special case of cultural historical reconstruction involves abstracting from the culture histories of different locales of a large geographic area, levels of cultural development. For continental proportions, such archaeological cultures are termed "ages" or "stages" and are defined especially on the basis of techno-economic and socio-political complexity. Willey and Phillips (1958) term these larger syntheses "historical developmental" sequences. It is at this level that an archaeological culture (e.g., Archaic Stage culture) may be thought of as atemporal, not at the level that Warren defined tradition. Although the sequences are not chronologies per se, a stage label coupled with locality information (e.g., Formative Stage of the American Southwest) implies a temporal dimension.

The first three basic objectives of archaeological research are descriptive. The nomothetic approach to cultural evolution involves explanation at the scientific level. The search for laws of cultural evolution is built on the foundation of accurate descriptive information provided by the first three research objectives.

To summarize the foregoing, the notion of an archaeological culture involves successive levels of abstraction which develop out of the first three objectives of archaeological research. One kind of culture is the chronological unit. A second and more complex archaeological culture, the culture history

unit, is possible, especially with the generation of past life-way information. Ultimately, the data make possible stage/age units. The only level of the archaeological culture concept that might legitimately ignore ecology is the chronological unit, and the stage/age level is the only one that might be thought of as atemporal.

The atemporality of Warren's tradition concept is not appropriate. Warren's cultures, despite his tradition concept, vacillate with respect to temporality. Basically, Warren has offered a chronology, with the addition of limited past life-way information. Unfortunately, his inferences about subsistence were derived from an impoverished data base. Adequate comparative analyses of the floral and faunal assemblages from different sites simply were not widely available in 1968.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUDING REMARKS

If a horizon is taken to be "a primarily spatial continuity represented by cultural traits and assemblages whose nature and mode of occurrence permit the assumption of a broad and rapid spread" (Willey and Phillips 1958: 33), then Wallace's archaeological cultures are not, strictly speaking, horizons. While Warren's 1968 article failed to resolve the problems of horizons, Warren (this issue) does make the useful observation that Wallace's (1955: 228) brief discussion of southern California coast cultural development was one in which horizons became very much like stages of cultural development.

We propose that Wallace's contribution could be taken as a kind of regional stage scheme. It would be understood that the term horizon is not exactly that of Willey and Phillips (1958) and that for the southern coastal region Wallace's "horizon" has stage-like implications.

We further propose that the spatio-temporal division of the southern California coast into archaeological cultures be desig-

nated partly with the familiar terms first suggested by Wallace. For instance, one might refer to the Orange County Intermediate Cultures tradition (following Willey and Phillips 1958: 37). The tradition label would apply whether one was operating on the cultural chronological or cultural historical level. Commonalities between subregional traditions of the same coastal southern California stage (horizon) would derive from a particular stage's definition, and differences might depend on chronometrics, additional artifacts (kinds and proportions), and interpretations of past life-ways. In some cases, it would be appropriate to further divide subregional traditions into phases. Nomenclature for phases (e.g., San Luis Rey I and II [Meighan 1954]) would not reflect Wallace's terminology.

We believe that the traditions of Warren's scheme should be abandoned in favor of modification of Wallace (1955). Warren's commentary has not changed our view that his traditions overburden the literature and so defeat the simplifying purpose of synthesis.

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