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# Anthropology and the Making of Chumash Tradition<sup>1</sup>

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by Brian D. Haley and  
Larry R. Wilcoxon

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Anthropologists employ concepts of cultural persistence, indigenous resistance, and primitivist imagery which mystify their own roles in the construction of Chumash identity and tradition. We attempt to demystify the scholars' remembering, forgetting, and imagining of the Chumash past that has helped to construct an influential Chumash Traditionalism since the 1960s, and we discuss how scholarly advances in understanding the fluidity of cultural identities now contest Chumash Traditionalism. We examine the variety of roles played by anthropologists in this process of identity negotiation, especially in traditional-cultural-property evaluation and contract archaeology. The origin of the current sacredness of Point Conception, California, provides an issue to frame this examination. We find that anthropological practice and Chumash identity and tradition are so deeply entangled that there is little hope that anthropologists can avoid participating in the self-determination of Chumash people. We conclude that this creates a great need to historicize anthropology's role in shaping and constraining identity and tradition until further progress can be made in resolving the ethical dilemmas of the anthropological study of cultural creativity.

BRIAN D. HALEY is Senior Anthropologist with Wilcoxon and Associates, Goleta, Calif. (his mailing address: 7396 Freeman Place #B, Goleta, Calif. 93117, U.S.A. [6500hale@aucsbuxa.ucsb.edu]). Born in 1957, he received his education at the University of California, Santa Barbara (B.A., 1979; M.A., 1987; Ph.D., 1997), where he was a researcher with the Center for Chicano Studies. He has published *Aspects and Social Impacts of Size and Organization in the Recently Developed Wine Industry of Santa Barbara County, California* (Center for Chicano Studies Working Papers 2, 1989) and "We Want Our Town Back!" *Housing Discrimination as Exclusion* (Center for Chicano Studies Papers on the Working Poor, in press).

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LARRY W. WILCOXON is Senior Archaeologist with Wilcoxon and Associates, Goleta, Calif. He was born in 1951 and educated at the University of California, Santa Barbara (B.A., 1974; M.A., 1976; C.Phil., 1979). He has published (with M. A. Glassow) "Coastal Adaptations near Point Conception, California, with Particular Regard to Shellfish Exploitation" (*American Antiquity* 53:36-51) and "Subsistence and Site Structure: An Approach for Deriving Cultural Information from Coastal Shell Middens," in *Archaeology on the Northern Channel Islands of California*, edited by M. Glassow (Coyote Press Archives of California Prehistory 34, 1993).

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Anthropologists have played an important role, sometimes inadvertently and sometimes seemingly willfully, in promoting Chumash Traditionalism. By "traditionalism" we mean a movement which seeks to transform contemporary traditions by instituting beliefs and practices that the group's members believe are both taken from their own past (Geertz 1994:5-6) and more natural, appropriate, and authentic than the beliefs and practices to be replaced (Handler and Linnekin 1984:278; Handler 1988:32-39). Contrary to the manner in which it is popularly represented and understood, traditionalism represents a break in cultural continuity and is itself an important force for change. Traditionalists are therefore not necessarily any more traditional than nontraditionalists (Geertz 1994).

We examine this traditionalism to reveal and acknowledge anthropologists' position of influence and to illustrate some of the problematic implications of a contemporary anthropological understanding of the relationship between tradition and cultural identity. There has been considerable revisionism in the social sciences over the past two decades regarding the use of history and traditional culture in contemporary contexts. At the heart of this revisionism is recognition of the creative representation of the past and its political use as a weapon of or for power. Studies of the "invention of tradition" (Hobsbawm and Ranger 1983, Handler and Linnekin 1984, Anderson 1991) have encountered a serious and unresolved ethical problem; research which unmask recent cultural or social constructions is threatening to the social position or goals of the group that claims them as its heritage or tradition. The notion that identities and histories are social constructions negotiated between parties necessarily raises questions about the boundedness of self-determination, who speaks for whom, or what Chatterjee labels efforts "to claim for us, the once-colonized, our freedom of imagination" (1993:13; see also Castile 1996).

All peoples employ myth/history as a charter of their collective identity (Malinowski 1960 [1944]), and all engage in selective remembering, forgetting, and imagining of that myth/history (Renan 1990 [1882]; Anderson 1991:187-206). Social science generally (Handler 1988), folklore studies in particular (Orso 1974; Dundes 1989:

1–39, 40–56), and even archaeology (Dietler 1994) are drawn upon to identify the cultural content used to distinguish ethnic and national identities. Sociology is not, as Giddens (1990:15) appears to suggest, unique among the social sciences in being reflexive. Anthropological knowledge generated by research is incorporated by our subjects and changes their own understanding of their cultural identity and heritage. Anthropologist participants in cultural identity construction may be anticipated sometimes to have their own selective-memory problems, too.

The actions taken by some anthropologists to liberate traditional belief and practice among the Chumash of California's central coast should be understood in the context of this academic debate. Employing oppositions of traditional versus modern and indigenous versus Western, guided by notions of persistence and continuity, and lacking a contrasting concept of identity differentiation or creation, local anthropologists have promoted the creation of a new religious philosophy and its classification on the traditional side of the dichotomy. They have facilitated the creation and empowerment of Chumash Traditionalists at the expense of other Chumash, who come to be viewed as nontraditional through the logic of oppositional classification alone. This case illustrates not only what Roseberry and O'Brien (1991:11) call the "modern tracks toward the traditional" but also what may be characterized as the postcolonial tracks toward the indigenous. The Chumash are roughly 3,000 persons residing on California's central coast who claim descent from aboriginal inhabitants of the same region who spoke a half-dozen or more related Chumashan languages (Bureau of the Census 1994:7, 218; cf. Stoll 1994). Only since the 1960s has there been a category of people who both identify themselves and are identified by others as Chumash. The switch to "Chumash" from "Mission Indian" reflects anthropology's influence as well as Indians' desire to be seen in purely indigenous terms.

We address what has become a central symbol of Chumash Traditionalist identity and belief: a sacred place known as the Western Gate which is associated with Point Conception, on the Pacific coast 40 miles west of Santa Barbara (fig. 1). Point Conception also holds special value for many nontraditionalist Chumash, who believe it was sacred to their ancestors. Other Native Americans and even non-Indian New Age followers value Point Conception as the sacred Western Gate, and still others value it as a symbol of Native American political activism dating to 1978. We have conducted private-sector research on Point Conception's cultural significance off and on since 1988. In 1994 we performed a study to determine its eligibility for inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places as a "traditional cultural property," and much of what we report here stems from that work. We draw upon cultural resource management's "gray literature," the standard scholarly literature, and the extensive media coverage of Indian activism at Point Conception and

generally within the region.<sup>2</sup> We have made a detailed examination of John Peabody Harrington's (1986) microfilmed field notes on the Chumash from the 1910s and 1920s, and we have conducted our own interviews with Chumash Traditionalists and nontraditionalists, as well as relevant non-Indians. We also draw upon our cumulative 45 years of work with Chumash and anthropologists in the region, treating it as long-term participant-observation or insider ethnography on anthropologists' roles in Chumash identity transformations over the past two decades.

## Identity, Tradition, and Oppositional Convention

Recognition of a process of cultural differentiation in addition to the long-noted processes of assimilation and persistence is one of the important developments in the field of ethnicity and nationalism in recent decades. We see this described as the "invention" of tradition or history (Hobsbawm and Ranger 1983, Handler and Linnekin 1984), the "creation" of ethnic groups or traditions (Sollors 1989), "imagined community" (Anderson 1991), the "reconstitution" of ethnicity (O'Brien 1991), the "construction" and "negotiation" of identities (Keefe 1989), and "ethnogenesis" (Roosens 1989). As this list of terms implies, the creation of identities and the creation of traditions go hand in hand, and therefore ethnic and nationalist movements characteristically exhibit discontinuity as well as continuity with the past (Handler and Linnekin 1984, Handler 1988).

Groups employ claims of traditional culture or cultural uniqueness as weapons of domination, resistance, or exclusion or for commercial purposes (Roosens 1989, Fox 1990, Sider 1993, Darian-Smith 1993). This has been cause for growing concern among anthropologists (Stolcke 1995, Barth 1995, Fox 1995). Wagner (1981) argues that we must reveal the processes of invention, for we will never eliminate it and this is the only way to be liberated from its manipulators. Yet anthropologists often object when accusations of inauthenticity or spuriousness or an "uncharitable" stance toward research subjects appear in such works (Eriksen 1993:71; Strong 1994; Friedman 1994).

Colin Scott has dismissed the "currently fashionable accounts of tradition as 'invented'" (1993:328). But the inclusion of a notion of cultural differentiation in recent overviews of ethnicity and nationalism (Eriksen 1993, DeVos and Romanucci-Ross 1995) derives logically and empirically from studies built upon—to name a few not mentioned previously—Leach's (1965 [1954]) "myth as justification for faction and social change," Mitchell's (1956) "retribalization," Hallowell's (1963) "transculturalization," the permeable "ethnic bound-

2. Given that the news media also offer an arena for establishing one's authenticity, we cite news media sources here only when we have verified their accuracy by other means, usually ethnographic.

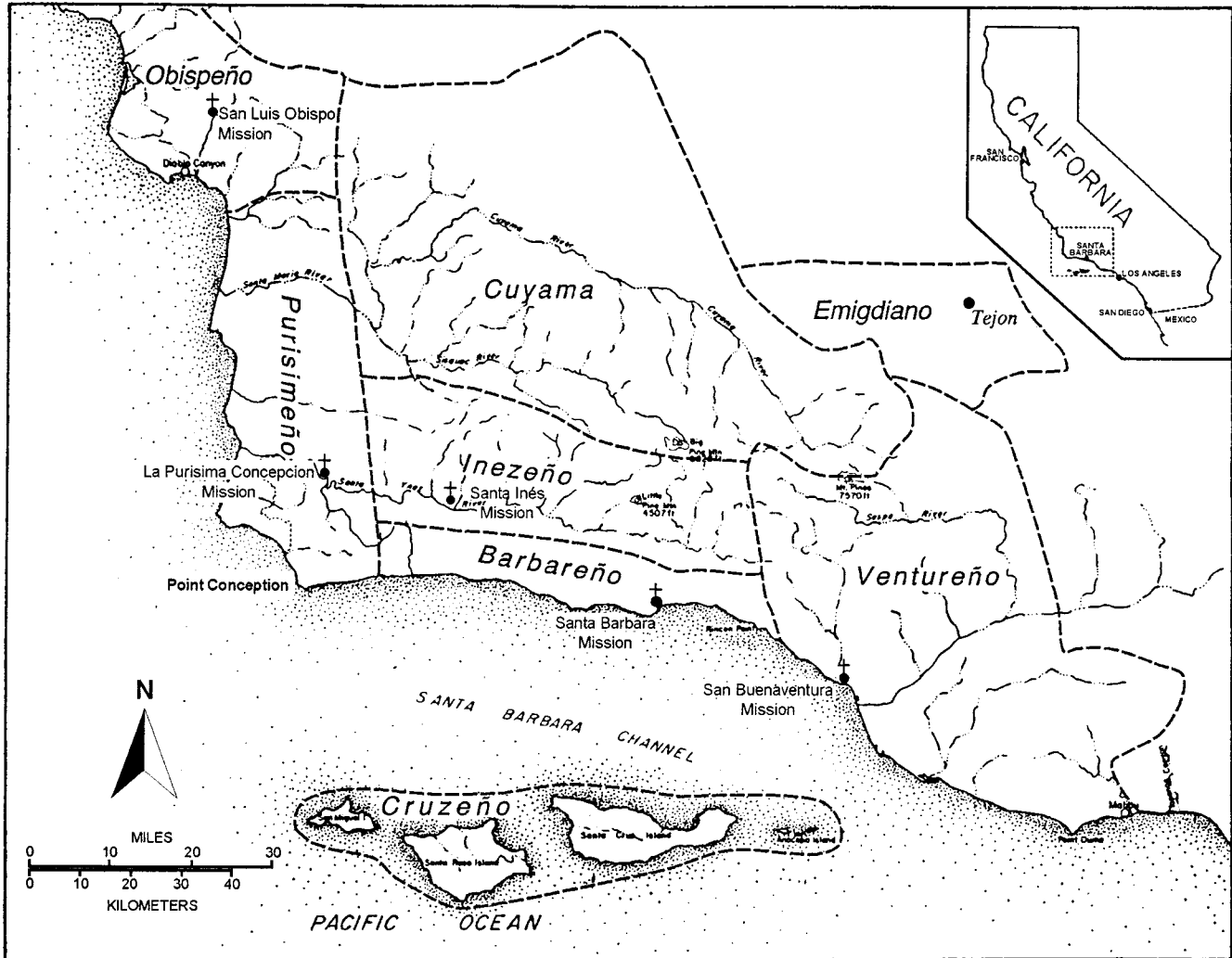


FIG. 1. Chumash territory, linguistic divisions, and mission locations.

aries" found in Barth (1969), the "instrumental" ethnicity of Cohen (1974*a, b*), Charsley's (1974) "formation of ethnic groups," immigrant "ethnicization" or "ethnogenesis" (Greeley 1974:291–317), and "Islamisation" in India (Mines 1975). Ethnicity is a moving category of us/them identification in which identities, boundaries, and cultural content are always to some degree in flux and renegotiation. Ethnic origins and identities are frequently a matter of fabrication (Brown 1973), conscious choice, or situational switching within particular historical constraints (Leonard 1992). And authenticity is less a fixed characteristic of cultural phenomena than a contextualized judgment of contemporary value to the exercise or pursuit of power or social position (Handler 1988; Eriksen 1993:131).

The growing literature on the dynamic nature of both cultural identities and traditions is problematic because the flexibility of cultural groupings that scholars are documenting after decades of portraying them as

bounded, unique, and enduring contrasts sharply with the perception of them by the general public and bureaucracies.<sup>3</sup> The social construction of cultural identities and traditions is a process that scholars have not explained well beyond the university (or even very convincingly within it). Some anthropologists are more comfortable emphasizing persistence and continuity among the people they work with (see, e.g., Scott 1993; Friedman 1994:136–41), perhaps because their subjects have a vested interest in being represented in more static terms. There has been little progress in resolving the problems that arise from the study of the use and creation of culture.<sup>4</sup> The growing tendency is to juxtapose

3. Commentaries on this problem include Leach (1965 [1954]:290–92), Fried (1975), Wagner (1981), Wolf (1988), Handler (1985), Clifford and Marcus (1986), Clifford (1988), and Barth (1995).

4. Attempts to address these problems include Handler (1985), D. Scott (1991), C. Scott (1993), Jackson (1989, 1995), Linnekin (1991), Hanson (1991), and Briggs (1996).

pose hegemonic invention with inventions of indigenous resistance and implicitly or explicitly disparage the former while applauding the latter (Roseberry and O'Brien 1991, Sider 1993, Briggs 1996).

This dichotomizing approach often appears in tandem with the criticism that cultural innovation studies maintain Western or modernist hegemony by denying a right of self-representation, self-determination, or self-invention to indigenous or subaltern peoples and ignore the persistence of indigenous control over particular cultural domains (Scott 1993; Friedman 1994:136–41; Briggs 1996). Chatterjee (1993), for example, argues that the spiritual domain of indigenous culture remains under indigenous control despite the transformations wrought by colonialism. When Gill (1987) provides powerful evidence that Mother Earth is a product of Euro-American and Native American interaction rather than the purely indigenous concept it is popularly perceived to be, Churchill's (1988) subaltern critique is that Gill has "expropriated" an indigenous concept (cf. Gill 1988, 1990). In effect, Chatterjee and Churchill seek to maintain a rigid boundary between indigenous and Western spiritual domains, whereas Gill finds a fluid and permeable one.<sup>5</sup>

Subaltern orthodoxy is entirely dependent upon the assumption that the boundaries of cultural distinctiveness correspond to highly conventionalized oppositions of former-colonizer versus once-colonized, Western (or industrial) versus indigenous, civilized versus savage (or primitive), Occidental versus Oriental, hegemonist versus subaltern, or modern (or progressive) versus traditional (Dirks 1990, Roseberry and O'Brien 1991).<sup>6</sup> This essentializing dichotomy has become a popular idiom for the effective use of notions of indigenous tradition and heritage in negotiating social positions and acquiring and exercising power. Indigenous rights movements more often obtain influence when they employ the kind of widely held primitivist images described by Pearce (1988 [1953]), Berkhofer (1978), and Said (1978), treating the indigene as a timeless part of the natural world, victimized but uncorrupted by Western civilization. As antithetical as it seems, adoption of this strategy contributes to the further transformation of indigenous groups (Darian-Smith 1993, Jackson 1995, Conklin and Graham 1995). It appears, to paraphrase Eriksen (1993:129), that indigenous peoples must first lose their culture in order to save their identity and heritage;

5. Gill (1987) fails to consider the importance of Mother Earth to contemporary peoples and assumes misguidedly that his discovery of Mother Earth's Euro-American roots will be liberating for Native Americans (see Briggs 1996). In fairness to Gill, it is clear that by 1990 he had recognized these flaws in his original work.

6. After describing the weaknesses of a similar set of "naturalized oppositions" for a slightly different reason, Roseberry and O'Brien (1991), utilize a similar one, referring to historical studies, hegemonic versus subaltern. As long as hegemony and subalterity are treated as properties of group relationships at certain points in time, we have no quibble. However, in much usage hegemony and subalterity come to be treated more as fixed properties of groups, with little practical distinction from the other oppositions that we have listed.

hence, the indigenous advocate, wannabe, or subaltern scholar must struggle to keep indigenous and Western separated at some level. We should not be surprised, then, when this indigenous/Western dichotomy inaccurately portrays the contemporary social world (Dirks 1990, Roseberry and O'Brien 1991). In reality, there are frequently more than two players or positions in our global society, and, as competing claims to "colonized" status in Quebec illustrate (Roosens 1989:79–83), one man's subaltern is another man's hegemonist. Indigenous and Western (and all the others), too, are fluid categories, subject to negotiation, manipulation, and appropriation.

As Dirks (1990) observes, the public expects anthropologists to be expert in traditional and indigenous matters, and anthropologists historically have championed the underdog indigene and subaltern. But Richard Fox (1995) has asked us to recognize that sometimes this support has been naive; there are "no good guys for the anthropologist to patronize" in a global society. Whenever culture is objectified into the political weapon of heritage, Fox argues, it acquires a capacity to harm someone (see also Roosens 1989:149–61). Fox, like Handler (1988) before him, acknowledges anthropologists' participation in this objectification but urges us to historicize and distinguish our concepts of culture and heritage so as to weaken the force that heritage has. We would add that in historicizing battles over identity and tradition it is equally important to account for the role of anthropologists in the creation of contemporary social distinctions.

Anthropology's role in making peoples and traditions is especially significant in relation to Native American groups. Mead (1975:176) observed that ethnographers' defense of Indians has often represented them in artificially positive terms, attributing any negative traits to outside influence. These idealized images have influenced the self-image of subsequent generations of Indians and the general public's understanding of Indian culture(s) and identity. The adoption of the Indian by environmental, pan-Indian, and other countercultural movements in the 1960s and 1970s as a symbol of human coexistence with nature exemplifies the involvement of diverse interests in remaking Indian culture (see Friedlander 1986, Gill 1987, Kehoe 1990, Albanese 1990, Castile 1996). Primitivist writings by scholars and nonscholars alike continue to create and re-create Indian identity and what is perceived as "authentic" Indian culture.

Native America is divided by the competing images of Indian culture and heritage. In addition to excoriating non-Indian scholars who unmask particular "inventions" (Churchill 1988, Deloria 1992), prominent Indian writers have condemned primitivist representation and its bearers as "inauthentic." Rayna Green (1988:45) argues that "the seemingly fathomless hunger for Indian guruism" creates "Wannabees" who may be neither genetically nor culturally Indian yet are the most marketable bearers of Indian culture. Through such "substitute impersonation," she argues, "Indians . . . are loved to

death" (1988:50). Vine Deloria Jr. and Clifford Lytle (1984:253) contend that because of the misrepresentations of "white impostors, . . . the wandering scholar, the excited groupie, and the curious filmmaker and writer," and the self-serving agendas of "ethnic Indians," the "cultural landscape is now so littered with erroneous information that it is extremely difficult for the serious Indian youngster to learn the truth about his past." They conclude that "the tradition of many tribes has become what the most aggressive people say it is."

Native American ethnography since the mid-1970s is replete with examples of Indians' using the expertise of supposed native "elders," popular primitivist imagery, and fragments of ethnography to create traditions that are very different in form and content from past beliefs and practices.<sup>7</sup> Non-Indian counterculturalists have pursued Indian tradition in the same way, either to appropriate beliefs and practices for a New Age (Albanese 1990, Kehoe 1990, Geertz 1994) or to become Indian Traditionalists themselves (O'Meara 1981, O'Connor 1989). Although the New Age has negative connotations for many Native Americans (Churchill 1988), Indian Traditionalists and the eclectic New Agers share a conviction of the centrality of nature which is expressly primitivist and countercultural, and there is much syncretic "mixing and matching" between them (Albanese 1990:153–98). Leading originators of Chumash Traditionalism have been prominent among those Indian "Traditionalists (or those presenting themselves so)" who have catered to non-Indian counterculture audiences and the commercial possibilities of the "medicine man circuit" (Brand 1988:571; Wolf 1991; Lame Deer and Erdoes 1992). A number of these same originators are linked to a loose national pan-Indian network of activists and traditionalists (Matthiessen 1983). Chumash Traditionalism borrows heavily from these networks and especially from the Hopi Traditionalist movement through non-Indian New Age allies (O'Meara 1981:26). Geertz (1994:288–319) argues that the Hopi Traditionalist movement itself draws upon premises formed in "dialogue" with the New Age.

## Anthropologist Authenticators and Traditional Cultural Properties

The particular roles assigned in the region to anthropologists and bodies of anthropological work place researchers in a position to influence Chumash identity and tradition. One of the roles we have played in defining Chumash tradition is as arbiters of "authenticity" within a framework established in the U.S. Department of the Interior's guidelines for evaluating "properties of traditional cultural significance" to determine their eli-

gibility for the National Register of Historic Places.<sup>8</sup> This is not a role which we embrace uncritically, for we find that the guidelines are a theoretical throwback to earlier decades when traditions were thought to be simply either genuine or spurious and cultural groups were presumed either to persist or to assimilate. For reasons we hope will ultimately become clear, we believe that nonparticipation in this evaluation process is equally problematic.

The guidelines for evaluating traditional cultural properties were written in 1990 by two anthropologists with considerable expertise in cultural resource management and historic preservation (Parker and King 1990). One of the principal applications promoted for the traditional-cultural-property criterion is as a legal tool to protect Native American sacred places, since the American Indian Religious Freedom Act has proved ineffective (Parker and King 1990, Parker 1993). The guidelines empower anthropologists as judges of the genuineness and authenticity of tradition and thereby position them as gatekeeping identifiers and objectifiers of heritage and delineators of identity.<sup>9</sup>

"Tradition" is defined by the guidelines as the "beliefs, customs, and practices of a living community of people that have been passed down through the generations, usually orally or through practice" (Parker and King 1990:1). The community may be "an Indian tribe, a local ethnic group, or the people of the nation as a whole" (p. 1). Thus traditional cultural properties are places associated with "cultural practices or beliefs . . . rooted in that community's history" that are "important in maintaining the continuing cultural identity of the community" (p. 1). Tradition is also given a fixed age requirement: "A significance ascribed to a property only in the last 50 years cannot be considered traditional" (p. 15). However, if a property's traditional use has been revived or revitalized within 50 years of its evaluation after a prolonged period of disuse, it may still qualify as a traditional cultural property (pp. 15–16).

The age requirement is, in a way, a judgment against the validity and authenticity of the identities claimed by groups with histories of less than 50 years. Indeed, consultants performing traditional-cultural-property evaluations are advised to beware of properties whose significance is "spurious" (p. 2) and to demonstrate

7. Important examples of this ethnographic literature include Parades (1974), Blu (1980), Landsman (1988), Clifford (1988), O'Connor (1989), Roosens (1989), Clifton (1990), Sider (1993), and Geertz (1994).

8. Protection of historic properties in general, including those of traditional cultural significance, is encoded in federal law in the National Historic Preservation Act. Criteria for defining traditional cultural properties have not been encoded in law. The guidelines provided by Parker and King (1990) provide direction to investigators, and they were treated as binding by the regulatory agencies involved in reviewing our study. We should note that the Herger bill (H.R. 563) introduced in the House of Representatives January 18, 1995, and reintroduced in 1996 would make any property lacking physical evidence of human activity ineligible for inclusion on the National Register. This is a direct challenge to the traditional-cultural-property category.

9. The guidelines specify that specialists with ethnographic research training should "normally" assist in identifying, evaluating, and managing traditional cultural properties (Parker and King 1990: 22), but in practice much of the ethnographic identification and evaluation is performed by archaeologists (Parker 1993).

great care and thoroughness in considering cases in which traditional cultural significance may be “invented to obstruct or otherwise influence those planning the change” (p. 9). Sebastian (1993) has argued that if a place has no history of use, practices associated with it, or beliefs concerning it and is not a part of the oral history of a living community, it simply may not be a traditional cultural property (see King 1993:62–63).

The guidelines assume that traditional cultural values related to particular places “are often vital to maintaining the group’s sense of identity and self-respect” (Parker and King 1990:2). Anthropologists engaging in traditional-cultural-property evaluation are thereby encouraged to treat ethnicity and other forms of cultural identity as ancient and intrinsic properties of groups, derived from the persistence over time of unique cultural content whose maintenance may be all that prevents assimilation. The guidelines also encourage falling back upon the distinction between modern and traditional communities. For example, Sebastian (1993:24) identifies “traditional communities as those that depend heavily on oral transmission of their history and traditions, those whose unique historical practices depend on continued access to and use of places whose history cannot be discovered in written records.” Levine and Merlan (1993:56) speak of the “maintenance of traditional cultures” through “conventional conformity” among communities defined by “political boundaries . . . and by distinctive cultural practices, or ethnic criteria.” They argue that the traditional-cultural-property investigator must “demonstrate the persistence of a community tradition.”

Our impression is that the traditional-cultural-property guidelines conform well to what the general populace perceives ethnicity and tradition to be but conflict dramatically with the fluidity researchers now recognize in cultural identities and traditions. The influence of contemporary circumstances on the construction and objectification of traditions becomes spuriousness under these guidelines. The guidelines lack an appreciation of the constant creation and re-creation of ethnic groups and presume an overly bounded concordance of culture and group identity over time. There is a failure to comprehend tradition and ethnic identity as modern products, and, indeed, a judgment of authenticity is dependent upon neither’s being too modern. Emphasis on Native American sacred places instead operationalizes the conventional primitivist imagery of static tradition among indigenous people. Indeed, it is a way of assigning greater value to static tradition than to change, unless change takes the form of traditionalism and the investigator mistakes this for—or chooses to interpret it as—persistent tradition.

Under these guidelines, we evaluated Point Conception’s qualifications as a traditional cultural property for a development that would have been placed 12 miles away on Vandenberg Air Force Base. Our study was initiated by the argument that Point Conception was the focal point of a larger sacred area traditionally designated the Western Gate that some Chumash and other

Indians “still believed” in. This sacred area was initially defined as all of the mainland coast within view from Point Conception, which encompassed the section of coast slated for development. The archaeologist and two nontraditionalist Chumash who made this argument in 1994 had other goals in mind as well, including preservation of coast for a possible future park and a museum for display of local archaeological objects. Since for unrelated reasons the proposed development was relocated out of view from Point Conception, our report has not been released, although we have presented some of our findings elsewhere (Haley and Wilcoxon 1996). We concluded that the immediate locality of Point Conception qualified as a traditional cultural property but the larger area within view from Point Conception did not. We concluded this while recognizing that many Chumash viewed the larger area either as sacred or as an important heritage site and as significant to their identity.

We reached this conclusion because we found that the manner in which Point Conception had become the sacred Western Gate for contemporary people differed substantially from what most of them believed or cared to portray as the truth. The notion of the Western Gate lacks the qualities of age and persistence deemed crucial by the guidelines, and Chumash is far from being a continuous and bounded category of identity. Chumash Traditionalists do not form a “traditional community” as the federal guidelines define it. Ultimately, the entire category of Chumash is modern, and neither its membership nor its cultural content is unambiguously indigenous. We say this not to denigrate those who hold a Chumash identity but to highlight the political ramifications of traditional-cultural-property evaluation.

## Contested Chumash Identities

Previous researchers have reported creative ethnic differentiation, imagined community, and discontinuity with the past among the Chumash (O’Meara 1981; King et al. 1985; Wilcoxon et al. 1986; O’Connor 1989; Johnson 1994a; Flynn and Laderman 1994). Chumash Traditionalists lack the kinds of biological and cultural linkages with the region’s aboriginal past that they claim—few are descendants of the aboriginal inhabitants they consider their ancestors—but they are active and successful in defining traditional Chumash culture for themselves, other Chumash, and the general public. Many individuals have adopted a Chumash identity since the 1960s, including persons with and without local aboriginal ancestry. Indeed, Chumash population growth reportedly exceeds the birthrate of Chumash women (Bureau of the Census 1994, Stoll 1994).

Individuals have shed former ethnic identities to become Chumash following transformative life crises and experiences, including divorce, battles with substance dependency, participation in a museum project to construct and sail a Chumash canoe or *tomol* (Nabokov 1980:69; O’Meara 1981:32, 37), genealogical research for

land settlements or archaeological mitigation (O'Meara 1981:25, 35; O'Connor 1989; Flynn and Laderman 1994), and discovery by a Traditionalist's "genetic memory" time-traveling method (O'Meara 1981:26; Wolf 1991:218–20). Several years ago, two Traditionalists described their transformation to us as "the call of the blood," casting a return to tradition(alism) as something which came naturally and appropriately to anyone with Chumash ancestry, however it might be determined.

The core of the region's Traditionalist movement is a group of extended kin from Santa Barbara whose ancestors came to the region as Spanish colonial soldiers and servants (Wilcoxon et al. 1986; Flynn and Laderman 1994). O'Connor (1989) refers to this group as Family A. Its members and allies normally portray their traditionalism as having been transmitted to them "orally" from "elders" who had long maintained traditional beliefs and practices in secret from non-Indians, scholars, and Christianized Chumash behind a "Buckskin Curtain." It is, they claim, one of the last aspects of their culture which has not been "taken away" or "spoiled" by "Western civilization" (Hardy 1979). Their acceptance as authentically traditional by others is largely dependent on this manner of representation.

Yet some members of Family A have indicated that in fact they "learned that we were really Indian" when someone told them so in the 1960s, that they did not really have traditional knowledge about places (O'Meara 1981:25, 29, 35), and that they had only recently endeavored "to develop a lifestyle" (Nabokov 1980:69). A participant in the early activities of the Traditionalist movement has argued that the logic underlying their beliefs is consistently Catholic (Flynn and Laderman 1994), as were Family A's members until the late 1960s. Indeed, Traditionalists' actual sources of "traditional" knowledge include creative assumption, borrowings from non-Chumash spiritualists, popular stereotypes, and anthropological publications (O'Meara 1981). Traditionalists frequently employ their version of tradition to privilege their demands for federal tribal recognition and control of the region's archaeological monitoring, heritage sites, and federally mandated graves repatriation over the claims of nontraditionalist Chumash (see, e.g., Lacy 1995; Wilson 1996:6).<sup>10</sup>

From 1978 until the 1990s, Traditionalists received the vast majority of the millions of dollars paid in monitoring wages, controlled the repatriation and reburial of human remains, received land in the name of all Chumash but excluded nontraditionalists from its use, marketed their services as traditional healers and cultural authorities, and set the public standards for "authentic" Chumash appearance, belief, and behavior (O'Connor 1989, Flynn and Laderman 1994). This greatly angered nontraditionalists, who objected to their exclusion from these arenas and the portrayal of their heritage. Nontra-

ditionalists were held at bay for years by threats of violence by Traditionalists, bureaucratic support for the Traditionalists, and local anthropological responses that included indifference to and open promotion of the Traditionalists.

Following news media stories of the genealogical data that contradicted Family A's claims to local aboriginal ancestry (Corwin 1987), particular details of Traditionalists' stories of descent changed, revealing that their identity was based initially only on family stories of local aboriginal ancestry (KCET 1987) and later shaped by personal experiences. Some of them have since claimed that their ancestors were Chumash who had ventured to Mexico only to return later with the Spanish. Family A's members understandably continue to object to the conclusions drawn from these genealogical data and portray them as malicious white distortions. A decade after Family A's genealogy came to light, Ventura, Santa Barbara, Santa Ynez, and Tejon Indian descendants used it to persuade the California Native American Heritage Commission and the City of Malibu to remove members of Family A from their lists of "most likely descendants," which identifies persons to be contacted when human remains are encountered in archaeological sites. Thus, in the mid-1990s there was some shift in influence in favor of the nontraditionalists. However, Santa Barbara County retains Family A on its list of approved Native American archaeological monitors.

## Chumash Origins

Anthropologists' participation in making Chumash identity and tradition begins with the first naming and bounding of what is now viewed as Chumash. In the 1880s, John Wesley Powell of the Bureau of American Ethnology arbitrarily chose the name "Chumashan" to designate an aboriginal linguistic stock from California's central coast and the populations that spoke its related languages. As Powell indicates, "there appears to have been no appellation in use among them to designate themselves as a whole people" (Powell 1891:67). We assume that Powell's action reflects the popularity of the "ethnographic principle" of defining nations by linguistic or racial criteria (Renan 1990 [1882]). These were the criteria used by European and American intellectuals from 1880 to 1914 to distinguish "nations" (Hobsbawm 1992:95–102). From the start, then, the boundaries of a Chumash identity bear the stamp of an arbitrary and historically contingent outside ideology.

The term "Chumash" was originally used by mainland Barbareño-speakers to identify residents of the Channel Islands, who spoke another Chumashan language (Henshaw and Kroeber 1907). The six major Chumashan languages—Ventureño, Barbareño, Cruzeño, Ineseño, Purisimeño, and Obispeño—were as distinct from one another as English, Dutch, and German. The people who spoke them—from Morro Bay to Malibu and inland at least to Tejon Pass—were never unified into a single or even a few overarching polities prior to

10. The only federally recognized Chumash are the members of the Santa Ynez Reservation, who with but a few exceptions are nontraditionalists.

their complete incorporation into the Spanish mission system by 1804. There were, in fact, a number of named group identities among Chumashan-speakers corresponding to village, language, or region (Heizer 1952, 1955), and significant regional cultural differences and episodic warfare between villages existed in premission times (Kroeber 1910, 1953 [1925]; Blackburn 1975:8–15; Glassow and Wilcoxon 1988; Johnson 1988; personal communication, 1995).

In his *Handbook of the Indians of California* (1953 [1925]), Kroeber wrote of “the Chumash,” defining them in terms of a contact-era climax culture and bounding them spatially by assigning them to a “Chumash territory” (see fig. 1). This effectively institutionalized the use of “Chumash” to designate a population and a culture. Olson (1930) declared all of the aboriginal human past within this territory to be “Chumash prehistory,” subordinating previously defined archaeological cultures such as Oak Grove, Hunting People, and Canaliño (Rogers 1929) to a Chumash identity.

As Chumash research picked up steam in the 1960s, some scholars appear to have forgotten the arbitrary origins of Chumash identity. Chester King (1976) describes the “boundaries of the Chumash interaction system” as having a “close congruence” with the Chumash language territory, which he assumes has not changed over time. He reaches this conclusion despite—or thanks to—the absence of northwestern Chumash groups from his analysis. He further assumes that material remains on the northeastern boundary were associated with Chumash-speakers (Kroeber had felt that they might have been Salinan), and he treats the southern Channel Islands occupants as non-Chumash (Kroeber had lumped them with Chumash materially but with Shoshoneans linguistically) (cf. Hudson and Blackburn 1982:17–38). King adopts the position that Chumash society has developed in place for more than 7,000 years (King 1990:200; cf. Arnold and O’Shea 1993), and Gibson (1991:14) places the beginnings of Chumash culture “about 10,000 years ago.”

Descendants of the region’s aboriginal inhabitants in their 50s and older who throughout their lifetimes have been strongly rooted in the region’s Indian communities tell us that they did not call themselves Chumash or envision a bounded Chumash identity corresponding to anthropologists’ use of the term prior to compilation of the California Judgment Roll in 1968–72, when federal tribal rolls were reopened to identify appropriate recipients of a cash settlement of California Indian land claims (Stewart 1978). Anthropological names such as Chumash were used to compile the judgment roll in place of the names by which people had identified themselves up to that time, such as the more general designation “Mission Indian” or the specific regional terms “Santa Ynez,” “Santa Barbara,” “Tejon,” or “Ventura” Indians.

Anthropologists have created a Chumash cultural identity bounded in space but continuous in time from the original peopling of the region to the present. This idea is shared by some anthropologists and Chumash

Traditionalists because of their shared mission of preserving the area’s archaeological record (see, e.g., King et al. 1986:104). Traditionalists merely render this vision of boundedness and continuity in more personal terms. As one Traditionalist told us, “My ancestors have lived here since the earth was molten.” It is not unusual to encounter scholarly references to the Chumash as a “tribe” (Grant 1978, Gibson 1991), a “nation” (Nabokov 1980, Gibson 1991), or an “indigenous nation” (Wilson 1993). One of our colleagues told us that she values studying the Chumash past to help restore cultural elements to the contemporary people who “have lost their culture.” With Handler (1988), we feel that the notions of “having a culture” and “losing a culture” are rooted in a nationalistic “naturalization of culture” in which the continuity of traditions becomes a moral imperative: people who have lost their traditions *ought* to get them back, because no other condition is normal or natural. We feel that these regional scholars have helped construct an identity in which all Chumash Indians are “hemmed in by concepts of continuous tradition and the unified self” (Clifford 1988:10).

The widened meaning of the term “Chumash” provides ideological fodder for Chumash Traditionalism. King et al. (1985:97–105) participate in this by employing Edward Spicer’s (1971) idea of persistence to authenticate Traditionalist claims of a continuous link between the Chumash past and present. The persistence argument rests upon an unsupported assumption that what is tradition and who is indigenous are fairly continuous and bounded from past to present, maintained through “organized *resistance* to change, and persistence of traditional values, custom, and cosmologies beneath a veneer of assimilation” (King et al. 1985:97). However, their own research documents a “new religion . . . [derived from] spiritual leaders from other tribal groups . . . [and] academic works” (pp. 102–3). The new religion is “conceptually *distinct* from the aboriginal pattern . . . [and] heavily infused with pan-Indian elements” (pp. 103–4). King et al. report that a person becomes a Traditionalist through “an awakening of his or her Indian identity” and that the movement’s “ethnic boundaries and group solidarity are enhanced by self-imposed isolation from the non-Indian community and by the performance of rituals . . . [in] communities . . . [and] ceremonial encampments . . . [where] revivalistic doctrines developed and were elaborated” (pp. 103–4). They overlook these findings when they appeal to an imagined persistence with unsubstantiated rhetoric: “Cultural traditions, as such, span the generations, and therefore transcend the lives and experience of individual group members” (p. 102).

Similarly, Diana Wilson (1994), exploring “indigenous” reactions to the portrayal of American Indian cultures in Los Angeles museums, argues that her consultants, some of them Chumash, are “authentically indigenous” (p. 37)—that they possess an “American Indian way of knowing” wielded strategically against a “Western academic knowing,” a relationship which is

“grounded in the historical facts of colonization” (p. 42). Despite their sometimes coming from families whose previous identities were “Mexican,” her consultants’ “subjective awareness of being indigenous . . . apparently survived” (p. 365). But Wilson never investigates the sources of her consultants’ identity and ways of knowing. “I presume that Marcus’s indigenous knowing comes at least in part from his father,” she declares (p. 24). Her consultants, she claims, are credible because they have “indigenous DNA” (p. 400) and “indigenous epistemologies which they presumably inherited from their families” (p. 365). Lacking an appreciation of modern creations of ethnic identity and tradition, Wilson stakes her research on the word of anyone who portrays him- or herself to her as indigenous. Not surprisingly, then, Chumash consultants described as “traditional,” “elder,” “medicine man,” and “spiritual leader” (pp. 24, 98) include members of O’Connor’s Family A and descendants of similar post-1960s Traditionalists who established their often-contested credentials in the actions of 1978–80 at Point Conception described below. The indigenesness of Wilson’s Chumash consultants is a modern creation. More important for our purposes, however, is that Wilson herself actively participates in the authentication of her consultants’ indigenesness through both what she says about them and what she does not ask.

Errors that we have encountered in the portrayal of the ethnohistoric record on Point Conception reflect some anthropologists’ promotion of a contemporary Chumash identity and also many environmentalists’ and landowners’ efforts to gain allies in the fight to preserve property, environmental resources, and archaeological sites. The concerns raised by Chumash Traditionalists—religion, heritage, the dead—transform environmental controversies into more dramatic human rights issues. The promotion of Chumash Traditionalism has succeeded because the images of static traditionalism, spirituality, and closeness to nature presented to the public play effectively on popular American stereotypes of Indianness and are effective tools in environmental controversies and because anthropologists have “authenticated” the images of traditional Chumash culture that are employed. For example, Gibson (1991:93) concludes his popular book on the Chumash with a statement which exemplifies the primitivist imagery that Pearce and others have long credited to non-Indian observers:

The Chumash of today are prominent spokespeople for many environmental issues facing the people of California and the rest of the world. They have lived in balance with their surroundings for thousands of years, and they realize that this balance must be maintained if cultures are to survive and prosper. In this way, they continue their spiritual and cultural relationship with their ancient homeland while embracing the issues that affect their life as 20th-century Americans.

Many Chumash are active and committed environmentalists, and they envision their past in precisely the terms Gibson employs. Yet their history tells a more varied story, one which Gibson and other regional scholars consciously or inadvertently ignore.

## Point Conception and the Western Gate

Our reconstruction of how Point Conception attained importance as the Western Gate for many Chumash differs substantially from what many people believe. Chumash Traditionalists usually portray matters far differently, as they have when speaking with us, but there are also substantial contradictions in what they have said over the years. It is by seeking and incorporating evidence accounting for those contradictions that we have produced the summary that follows.

First, although classified in local thought as purely Chumash, belief in the Western Gate is not so neatly bounded. We frequently encountered lines of cultural transmission corresponding to the following testimony of one Chumash: “I learned about the Western Gate from Indians and non-Indians. If you read the culture, you know what is there. There are a lot of non-Indians who believe in the Western Gate. Many people snub it, but people who are into psychic things, crystals . . . know all about the Western Gate.” Thus, non-Indian New Agers are sometimes important sources of knowledge about the Western Gate for Chumash people. This statement also points to the influence of published depictions of Chumash culture, and it is here that anthropological writing enters into the transmission and interpretation of culture from past to present. Point Conception first came to the attention of contemporary Chumash from the field notes of John P. Harrington in Thomas Blackburn’s landmark collection and analysis of Chumash narratives from Harrington’s papers, *December’s Child* (1975).<sup>11</sup> Young adults seeking to restore Chumash traditions and establish a new lifestyle were especially influenced by this book (Nabokov 1980, O’Meara 1981).

Harrington held the post of ethnologist with the Smithsonian Institution from 1914 to 1954. He conducted salvage ethnography with Chumash consultants in 1912–17 and off and on from 1918 to 1928 (Blackburn 1975:5–6) and periodically worked with the last Barbarño-speaker, Mary Yee, as late as the 1950s. He systematically identified and worked with the Chumash-

11. Although many Chumash frankly admit this, Traditionalists often do not. However, repeating a pattern first reported by O’Meara (1981), the sources of knowledge on the Western Gate that Traditionalists claimed in 1994 were not consistent with sources they cited on previous occasions. In one instance, two Traditionalists offered us the name of a recently deceased nontraditionalist elder from whom they said they had learned about the Western Gate. We had worked with this elder on this issue, and not only had she repeatedly denied that Point Conception had this historical function over the course of many years but also she had routinely disparaged the Traditionalists who in 1994 cited her as their source.

speakers who were the most knowledgeable of their generation about the past, though they were born after mission secularization in the 1830s and 1840s. He published extremely little and did not share his voluminous data with others. Harrington's field notes became accessible after his death in 1961 to a few scholars such as Blackburn, who then brought bits and pieces of his data to the attention of interested members of the public in their written work. Most of his extensive Chumash field notes became accessible on microfilm in 1986 (Harrington 1986).

*December's Child* contains two crucial items related to Point Conception. The first is a narrative by Harrington's consultant María Solares describing the journey of the soul to the land of the dead (Blackburn 1975:98–100). Point Conception, says Solares, is where it was said that the soul of the dead person went before embarking on this journey. In "ancient times," she also states, people went to Point Conception only to make "sacrifices" at a nearby shrine (p. 98).<sup>12</sup> Thus, Solares's testimony establishes that she believed her forebears held that the soul reached the land of the dead via Point Conception and that they avoided going there except for religious reasons. The second item is Blackburn's analysis of the narrative (1975:32–34). He presents Point Conception's role in the soul's journey as an uncontested element, leading the reader to assume that the belief's distribution was pan-Chumash—held by all aboriginal speakers of Chumash languages prior to missionization. But he must contend with a shortage of evidence for this interpretation. Blackburn includes in *December's Child* all three myths from Harrington's notes describing journeys to the land of the dead (pp. 104–12, 172–75, 249–51). None mentions Point Conception, and one told by Solares places the land of the dead in a far different location: north of Tejon down the San Joaquin Valley (pp. 249–51). That story is easily dismissed because it conforms to Yokuts beliefs and probably originated with Solares's Yokuts maternal kin at Tejon (p. 27).<sup>13</sup> A brief description of the soul's journey

12. There are some differences between Blackburn's (1975:98–100) version and Harrington's originals, because Blackburn edited them to enhance their readability. The pertinent section that follows is taken directly from Harrington's typed copies (1986:07/0250), and in the handwritten original (07/0142–0144) Solares is identified as the source. "It was said that the spirit of the dead before leaving for *shimilaqsha* went to Point Conception. That was a wild, stormy place, and there was no *rancheria* there. It was called *humqaq*. There, below the seacliff in a place which can be reached only by lowering a man by a rope down the seacliff from above, is a pool of water, like a basin—water, fresh water, keeps dripping down from above. And there on the surface of the stone beside the pool of water are footprints of women and children to be seen. There the spirit of the dead bathes and paints itself and then it sees a light to the westward and goes towards it and thus reaches the land of *shimilaqsha*, going through the air—not through the water. In ancient times no Indians ever went near *humqaq*—they only went to a place near there for the purpose of making sacrifice by depositing things at a great *sha'wil* [shrine]."

13. The standard location of the land of the dead for Yokuts and their inland neighbors was down the San Joaquin Valley (Kroeber 1907:216–18, 228; Gayton 1930:78). Inhabitants of the central and south coast consistently placed their land of the dead across a large

toward the setting sun from Santa Rosa Island by another Harrington consultant, Fernando Librado Kitsepawit, also fails to mention Point Conception (p. 98). Blackburn acknowledges that narrative variations may reflect "subcultural" or "personal" differences, but he fails to address the absence of Point Conception from all but María Solares's one narrative. The reader is likely to conclude that all aboriginal Chumash-speakers' beliefs conformed to Solares's Point Conception story.

In 1978, a liquefied natural gas (LNG) receiving terminal was proposed for a site several miles east of Point Conception, and the neighboring ranch owners opposed it, largely because it would conflict with development options of their own and would reduce property values and the pastoral beauty of their country estates. They retained a Los Angeles-based public relations firm to fight the LNG plan and recruited environmental groups in the Santa Barbara area to their cause (Sollen 1978a; Hardy 1978; Littlefield and Thorne 1990:152–56). They hoped to stop the project through public opinion and the environmental review process. Among those recruited were a group of kinsmen from Santa Barbara who had begun to assert a Traditionalist Chumash identity about the time the California Judgment Roll was being compiled. Few people knew it at the time, but almost all the Chumash participants in the LNG resistance, including the spokesmen and spiritual advisers, were not descendants of the region's aboriginal inhabitants and had only recently begun to assert a Chumash identity in place of a Chicano identity. They were members of O'Connor's (1989) Family A. Non-Chumash Indian activists from the Santa Barbara Indian Center also participated, hoping for a first test of the new American Indian Religious Freedom Act. Collectively, the Indians based their participation on the protection of archaeological sites in the area and the pan-Chumash interpretation of María Solares's narrative about Point Conception inferred from reading *December's Child* (Nabokov 1980:50). The alliance against LNG also included surfers who feared the loss of a famous surfing spot, archaeologists who opposed destruction of a historic village site, the Sierra Club, fishermen, and environmental groups concerned about catastrophic accidents, threats to wildlife, and destruction of scenic coastal environment. The rock musician Jackson Browne, a neighbor, performed a benefit concert for the alliance in Santa Barbara. Elements of the alliance's activities were financed primarily by the wealthy neighboring ranchers whose development plans were put at risk by the LNG plan (Hardy 1978).

The alliance adopted the position that Point Conception was the only place Chumash souls could leave this world for the land of the dead and claimed that construction of the LNG terminal would block their depart-

sea to the west. There is evidence of this from Salinan, Costanoan, Chumash, Kitanemuk, Fernandeano, and Gabrielino sources (Mason 1912:183, 195; Harrington 1942:41; Kroeber 1953 [1925]:549, 625; Heizer 1968:55–68; Hudson and Underhay 1978:122–23). See also Applegate (1977).

ture. Archaeologists drafting a portion of the environmental impact report for the LNG terminal stressed the importance of both the archaeological sites and the “sacred place” of Point Conception to the “traditional California religion” of “Native Californians” (King and Craig 1978). These conclusions were publicized in the third of more than 100 stories run in the *Santa Barbara News-Press* on the LNG resistance (Sollen 1978*b*) and were a recurring theme thereafter. To give it emphasis, the alliance also renamed Point Conception the Western Gate, and a popular rallying cry for the LNG resistance, Indian or not, was “Save the Western Gate!” According to one of the Indian spokesmen in the alliance, the name Western Gate was “coined by outsiders” rather than the Chumash themselves for its “sound bite” quality: “It made good copy” (Flynn 1995).

Indians occupied the proposed LNG terminal site three times to protect their interests. The second and largest occupation was an encampment of roughly 20 Indians—and as many as 60 to 100 Indians and supporters during brief periods—lasting from July 1, 1978, to March 7, 1979, when it was terminated by court order. The encampment was pan-Indian rather than strictly Chumash, but it lacked the militancy of previous occupations at Alcatraz, Wounded Knee (Deloria and Lytle 1984), and Ganienkeh (Landsman 1988). Its political and religious influences reflected the urbanized backgrounds of most of the participants. It was here that many Traditionalists learned and perfected many of the new traditions (O’Meara 1981:35; King et al. 1985:104; O’Connor 1989).

As Point Conception acquired significance for pan-Indian interests, the Chumash Traditionalists participating in the occupation began to describe themselves as the “Keepers of the Western Gate,” implying a particular role for the Chumash people throughout history in service to the other inhabitants of North America (Craig, King, and Staff of the Santa Barbara Indian Center 1978:39; Wolf 1991:122–23). This has been a cornerstone of Traditionalist identity. In 1994 two LNG-resistance participants told us that Shinnecock Bay, Long Island, was the “Eastern Gate,” where souls reentered this world; they had recently taken part in ceremonies there with Shinnecock Indians. Another LNG-resistance participant has called the Greenland Inuit the “Keepers of the North Gate” (Lame Deer and Erdoes 1992:274). In 1992, a Northern California family asserting an Esselen Indian identity opposed a reservoir project on the Carmel River with the claim that the area “is associated with the western gate, to which the dead must journey. The Esselen are responsible for the maintenance of the central part of this window, while the northern and southern ends are maintained by the Pomo and Chumash groups, respectively” (Breschini, Runnings, and Haversat 1992:29). This is but a minor modification of material originating in 1978 with the LNG resistance that was widely circulated in Matthiesen (1984). This system of “gates” with their respective “indigenous keepers” is gradually becoming a national—and international—phenomenon.

The first of many anthropological promotions of Point Conception as the Western Gate was written in 1978 in direct support of the LNG resistance. The report of Craig, King, and Staff (1978) reproduced Solares’s account, added a few materials from Harrington’s notes, and included verbatim testimony by Native American LNG-resistance participants who interpreted and embellished Point Conception’s traditional meaning. The report was widely circulated among regional scholars and state agencies and is still considered an authoritative statement on Point Conception’s role in traditional Chumash culture. But the report is seriously flawed, as subsequent ethnographic studies have helped to reveal (O’Meara 1981). Its flaws include a methodologically unsound ethnographic section in which LNG-resistance participant testimony obtained in a socially and politically charged atmosphere is taken at face value as key informant data without cross-checking or screening to identify appropriate key informants. The reporting of ethnohistoric data is inaccurate, incomplete, and misleading, and the interpretations and conclusions are unsupported by any valid data.

Two errors in the report have contributed to the belief that Harrington’s notes support the pan-Chumash distribution of Solares’s Point Conception story. The first of these is the insertion of an Ineseño etymology for Point Conception’s Cruzeño place-name (Craig, King, and Staff 1978:82). Ineseño was the aboriginal Chumash language of the mainland Santa Ynez Valley in what is now Santa Barbara County and was spoken by María Solares. Cruzeño Chumash was spoken by inhabitants of the northern Channel Islands and not by Solares. Since Harrington’s notes are Craig, King, and Staff’s cited source, the effect of their error is to suggest that inhabitants of the Channel Islands attached the same meaning to Point Conception as María Solares did. This agreement is not found in Harrington’s notes.<sup>14</sup> The second error is the interpretation that another story portrays María Solares visiting Point Conception in the early decades of this century and engaging in traditional rituals (p. 2). Although subsequent researchers have looked upon this as definitive proof of traditional persistence among Harrington’s consultants as late as the 1920s (see, e.g., King et al. 1985:96–97), the full text of the story in Harrington’s notes—from which Craig, King, and Staff only excerpt part—reveals that Solares was at

14. Librado’s Cruzeño place-name etymology is as follows: “*Palo carajo* [pole, post, tree, or ship’s mast + expletive expressing disgust or displeasure; probably sailor’s slang for a sailing ship’s upper observation post or crow’s nest (Dolores Elkin, personal communication, 1994)] is called *kunuq’aq’* in Cr. [Cruzeño]: Point Conception is also called by this same name in Cr.” (Harrington 1986:12/0153 and 74/0450). In Craig, King, and Staff (1978:82), elements from Solares’s Ineseño place-name are added to Librado’s Cruzeño version: “*qumqaq’a* = Point Conception. This is the o.k., clear carefully pronounced form of the word. It has two *q* in it and one *q’*. *Alli habia el qaq’—por eso decian qumqaq’a* [There was the raven—that is why they say *qumqaq’a*]. The *qaq’* that lived there was a *qaq’* of the other world. They pecked out the eyes of the soul as it passed—hence the placename” (Harrington 1986:12/0151–0152).

Point Conception as a midwife to the wife of a lighthouse caretaker. No ritual activity is depicted in the story.<sup>15</sup>

In the face of strong feelings about Point Conception among Chumash, anthropologists who had reservations about the embellishments they observed withheld them. Some repeated Solares's story or called Point Conception the Western Gate in professional articles and books, persuaded that it was a piece of "authentic" traditional pan-Chumash culture that had been restored to its people. Some may have done this to maintain and improve working relations with Chumash in archaeology, where archaeologists and Traditionalists struggled for authority in the late 1970s and early 1980s. The first ethnographic work to discuss the recent development of Chumash Traditionalism (O'Meara 1981) cannot be distributed for confidentiality reasons, but not even all archaeologists within the Los Padres National Forest headquarters where this manuscript is kept and intended for use have been informed of its existence and its implications for their work.

The LNG resistance of 1978–80 led directly to the formation of at least two Traditionalist Chumash groups. More significant, it inaugurated and institutionalized Native American monitoring of archaeological excavations and construction in Santa Barbara County. The Traditionalists who had insisted upon the right to monitor LNG activities near Point Conception dominated what quickly became a lucrative business that often supported the two new groups in subsequent years. Thus, as O'Connor (1989) has stressed, the LNG resistance was the crucial final step leading to the recognition of Family A Traditionalists as Chumash by both Santa Barbara County and the California Native American Heritage Commission.

Since the LNG controversy, Point Conception has remained the Western Gate for Chumash Traditionalists,

15. In a paragraph which discusses "how Point Conception is currently being used for religious purposes," Craig, King, and Staff (1978:2) state that "weekly bathing by Chumash people in pools of water near Point Conception, described in Chumash myth and history, continued into the 20th century." Their evidence is a story of a visit to Point Conception by María Solares in which she describes bathing on Sundays with other women in tidal pools and placing her feet in the "footprints" of the dead that appear on the rocks to see if they fit (1978:86). They do not include the following portion of the story: "Inf. was three months there tending a woman who was going to have a baby but *se equivocó* [she made a mistake] and inf. stayed there three months until the baby was born. Inf. lived in the house above the *farol* [lighthouse]. The lighthouse is part way down the cliff. Men at night took two hour shifts tending the lighthouse. Nobody slept at the lighthouse. The woman who bore the baby was named Marta (—). The baby was a girl. The woman's husband was lighthouse *cuidador* [caretaker]" (Harrington 1986:12/0151). From a story of a later trip to Point Conception to visit and to collect abalone, it appears that the women who bathed with her were the non-Indian wives of the lighthouse caretakers (Harrington 1986:09/0506–0514). Thus, María Solares did not avoid Point Conception herself as she believed Indians had prior to Christianization and never claims to have participated in or conducted traditional rituals there or describes any actions which unequivocally fit those terms.

who periodically visit it for spiritual and personal reasons. Acceptance of the idea of the Western Gate has spread to other Indians, in large part because of its inclusion in two books by the popular writer Peter Matthiessen (1983, 1984), whose association with one of the LNG resisters coupled with his own eco-primitivism (Gill 1987:148, 172 n) had earlier led him to become one of the LNG project's many vocal opponents (Matthiessen 1979). But popular acceptance of the Western Gate story is not due only to its frequent repetition by popular authors or the press (see, e.g., Hardy 1979; *Santa Barbara News-Press*, January 17, 1979; Nabokov 1980; Brantingham 1985; KCET 1987; Wolf 1991:122–23; Gilbar and Stewart 1994:4–7). It has been both reified and promoted by anthropologists, too, in a number of publications and reports (see, e.g., Hudson and Underhay 1978; Hudson 1979; California State Lands Commission 1982; WESTEC Services 1982; Craig 1983; Hudson and Conti 1984; Bracher 1984; O'Connor 1984, 1989; King et al. 1985:97, 104, 110–11, 116; Flynn 1991; and Gibson 1991:32–35). Belief is widespread among anthropologists, Indians, and other members of the public that Harrington's notes unequivocally support a pan-Chumash (or beyond) aboriginal distribution of María Solares's Point Conception story and that it is this source that designates it the Western Gate.

Sincere belief among Chumash that Point Conception is either a sacred place or a heritage site has not prevented it from being used instrumentally. A pattern has emerged in which Point Conception's status as the Western Gate is used as a negotiating tool in development projects as much as 12 miles away. In the planning and review stages of several projects, Chumash spokespersons—until recently always Traditionalists—defined the sacred area as being very large, but this impediment to development was overcome in exchange for monitoring contracts and even land from which other Chumash groups were excluded. One group reached such an agreement by this method when it decided that there was no way to stop construction of a pipeline a mile from Point Conception and therefore it might as well negotiate the best deal it could. When not threatened by development, even some of the same Traditionalists place the Western Gate "right at Point Conception," roughly equivalent to the U.S. Coast Guard property. In the eyes of many observers, such instrumental uses of the Western Gate contradict sincere belief in its sacredness. But instrumentality is not at odds with sincere belief for all Chumash, nor is it proof of cynical or manipulative motives.

### Harrington's Data

To complete our traditional-cultural-property evaluation of Point Conception, we returned to John P. Harrington's field notes.<sup>16</sup> Since most of them dated to the

16. Twenty-nine rolls of microfilm were examined wholly or in part. This effort focused on those labeled Field Notes, Slipfiles, and

1910s and 1920s and therefore met the 50-year age requirement as a source of traditional data and since they were the largest body of Chumash ethnographic data from any time period, we expected them to prove decisive in our evaluation.

Ten of Harrington's roughly 25 Chumash consultants had some knowledge of pre-mission eschatology, but they presented a picture quite at odds with contemporary beliefs.<sup>17</sup> First, the distribution of the belief that Point Conception played a role in pre-mission beliefs about the journey of the soul was restricted to three Barbareño and Ineseño individuals. Second, other locations for the departure of the soul from this world were identified in Ventureño and Ineseño territories and equated with previously identified shrine locations. Third, contrary to the interpretations of Craig, King, and Staff (1978), no Harrington source had witnessed or used a shrine at Point Conception, nor did anyone claim to know anyone else who had witnessed or used a shrine there.<sup>18</sup> However, shrines to the dead in other territories were observed and their ritual use described by Harrington's consultants.

Harrington's Chumash consultants told him what they thought their ancestors had believed regarding death, the afterlife, and the journey of the soul—that is, they did not claim to hold these beliefs. Each consultant routinely began statements with “It was said . . .” or “Old Indians used to say . . .” or “They used to think . . .” Concepts and terms such as penance, Heaven, Hell, purgatory, and resurrection were used repeatedly to interpret the beliefs they attributed to their ancestors, and there was a mix of syncretism and Christian skepticism in their ideas (see, e.g., Harrington 1986:07/0200–0202, 0250–0251). Neither of these characteristics is surprising, for the consultants were separated

from the pre-mission aboriginal culture by two or more generations (Johnson 1982; 1988:3; Flynn and Laderman 1994; cf. Sandos 1991).<sup>19</sup>

We have noted that María Solares's myth placing the land of the dead in the San Joaquin Valley is a Yokuts myth. However, it contains many of the same details she provided in her description of the soul's journey from Point Conception. Harrington suspected Yokuts influences in Solares's Point Conception narrative, as he indicated by a parenthetical remark in the midst of his notes of her tale: “Maria does not know where the gate referred to in the *La Quemada* legend is situated, but supposes that it lies beyond the *palo* [the pole which serves as a bridge to the land of the dead] (a mixing of Tulareño [Yokuts] and Costeño [Costanoan] mythology?)” (Harrington 1986:07/0201). Possible confusion of Yokuts and Chumash material in Solares's testimony is not a novel idea. Johnson (1988:236) has found that Solares conflated Yokuts and Chumash kinship data. Solares had probably learned Yokuts material from her mother and during visits to her Yokuts maternal relatives at Tejon (Blackburn 1975:11, 18–19, 27; Johnson 1988:3, 8, 236, 238, 239). If there were no preexisting similarities in Yokuts and Chumash beliefs (which is unclear), Solares may have confused them herself, or perhaps ideas were blending at Tejon. In the mid-19th century Tejon was a mixed Indian community of Kitaneuk, Yokuts, and Chumash (Johnson 1994b). Tejon residents participated in Ghost Dances held in California in 1871–75, and Solares's Yokuts myth has the same structure and composition as those associated with this Ghost Dance movement (Gayton 1930). Thus, the boundedness of particular beliefs within specific cultural groups likely varies between pre-mission and post-mission times as those groups themselves changed.

Three consultants provided reasonably consistent testimony that linked Point Conception to the journey of the soul: the Yokuts-Ineseño María Solares and the Barbareños Juan de Jesús Justo and Luisa Ygnacio. Solares, Justo, and Ygnacio were all acquainted, and Justo had heard Solares tell the story before she told it to Harrington in Justo's presence. We may never know whether Justo and Ygnacio learned the Point Conception legend from Solares or from other sources, but neither provided Harrington with anywhere near the detail of María Solares's narrative. However, Justo may have been the first to bring Point Conception to Harrington's attention. On March 26, 1913, he told Harrington that

Texts. Rolls designated as Slipfiles were systematically examined for the presence of headings for Astronomy, Placenames, and Religion, and then the contents of these categories were thoroughly examined in detail. In the case of the Ventureño data, these latter categories are entire rolls of film. The following roles and frames were examined: 01/0001–0837; 02/0001–0761; 06/0001–0613; 07/0001–1011; 08/0001–0900; 09/0001–1154; 10/0001–0596; 11/0001–0633; 12/0001–0684; 13/0001–0506; 19/0001–1006; 20/0001–1147; 21/0031–0045, 0064–0501; 50/0278–0469; 54/0224–0816; 55/0001–0143, 0193–0559; 59/0001–0708; 64/0001–1003; 68/0537–0712; 69/0001–1107; 72/0147–0167; 74/0001–0666; 75/0001–0163, 0508–0588; 76/0001–0871; 77/0001–0639; 78/0001–0596; 79/0001–0744; 80/0001–0737; 95/0001–0085.

17. In addition to the Yokuts/Ineseño María Solares (1842–1923), they include the Barbareño-speakers Juan de Jesús Justo (1858–1941) and Luisa Ygnacio (1835?–1922), her daughters Lucrecia García (1877–1937) and Juliana Ygnacio (1878–1925), and Lucrecia's daughter Mary Yee (1897–1965); the Ventureños Simplicio Pico (1839–1918) and José Juan Olivas (1858–ca. 1940); the Cruzeño/Ventureño Fernando Librado Kitsepawit (1839–1914); and the Obispoño Rosario Cooper (1841–ca. 1917) (Blackburn 1975: 17–20; Johnson 1982; 1988:8, 232, 235, 237, 238; personal communication, 1994; Ygnacio-DeSoto 1994).

18. The results should be viewed as inconclusive, but an archaeological survey of Point Conception found no evidence of a shrine, though there are a dozen prehistoric archaeological sites on the Coast Guard property (Glassow 1978).

19. María Solares remarked, probably in 1914, that “Indians anciently had more religion than people do now” (Harrington 1986: 07/0753). This included Solares, according to Librado, who told Harrington that Solares's Yokuts kinsmen had rejected the request of her maternal uncle that she be trained to succeed her deceased mother as their next medicine woman because she was “brought up among white people and could not be the same as Brigida.” Her uncle had accepted this and destroyed his own magical paraphernalia out of respect for his sister (69/0997–1000; Blackburn 1975: 267–69).

the name of the land of the dead was Shimilaqshan in Barbareño and he thought it was the same in Ventureño. Harrington (1986:19/0076, 75/0583) records, "They used to think it was at *humqaqa*, Point Conception." In 1914, Ygnacio also told Harrington that Point Conception was called Humqaq(a) and that the Conception Indians would see the souls of dying persons and try to make them return. The dead, she said, went west to Shimilaqsha (19/0608–0609).<sup>20</sup>

When Solares told Harrington the Point Conception story, she said that her grandfather's nephew Ygnacio Telenahuit "would not believe the myth of the pool at Point Conception, and he and a number of other Santa Inés Indians went down to the coast at the Point to investigate" the stories her grandfather had told him (Harrington 1986: 07/0250–0251).<sup>21</sup> Justo was present at this 1914 session with Solares, and later that evening outside of Solares's presence he told Harrington that in a previous narration Solares had said Telenahuit went to Point Conception primarily to gather abalone and not to investigate the sacred landscape (13/0037). Not only had Solares told the Point Conception story more than once but, if Justo is to be believed, she had also changed it. And the person who told her about Point Conception also did not avoid the place or go there to use a shrine, as she had said was past practice.

We found no mention of the journey of the soul, the location of the land of the dead, or Point Conception in Harrington's Purisimeño notes, though it was Purisimeño-speakers that occupied the Point Conception area prior to missionization. This reflects, in part, the shortage of good consultants for Harrington from this language group. Similarly, although there are no microfilm rolls for the small inland linguistic groups, the Emigdiano or the Cuyama, in Harrington (1986), elsewhere Harrington (1942:41) indicates that an Emigdiano source placed the land of the dead across the ocean. Material containing mythical elements of the journey to the land of the dead was obtained from Pacifico Gallego, a Migueliño Salinan rather than a Chumash (1942:5), and subsequently used to prompt María Solares (1986: 13/0019, 0021).<sup>22</sup> Harrington's Obispeño sources are

20. Several decades later, Mary Yee was able to paraphrase the same story in Barbareño for Harrington (Harrington 1986:59/0286). She also mentioned Shimilaqsha and Humokak in an incompletely translated Barbareño text describing the soul's travels (59/0137–0151). Yee's daughter had not recalled hearing her mother speak of Point Conception when we discussed the matter in 1994, but she had found it among her mother's papers the next year; oral transmission of the story appears to have ended with Yee in the Ygnacio family. Similarly, María Solares's descendants did not recall the story and learned of it through Blackburn's publication (see also Hardy 1979).

21. María Solares's primary source of information about Point Conception was her paternal grandfather's nephew, Ygnacio Telenahuit (1789–1865), an Ineseño from the village of Calahuasa, who apparently learned of these things from her grandfather, Estevan Colocutayuit (1775–1846), of the same village (Johnson 1988:3, 8, 236, 238, 239).

22. Gallego worked as a ranch hand with Fernando Librado near Point Conception and is the ancestor of contemporary individuals who identify themselves as Chumash (John Johnson, personal communication, 1996).

also silent on Point Conception. For example, his note on the Obispeño Rosario Cooper's response to his inquiry on these matters is "Rc. does not know of the land beyond the sea in the west, but she thinks it likely that they believed that" (1986:02/0446).<sup>23</sup>

Our most striking find in Harrington's notes is an explicit denial of the Point Conception story by the Cruzeño-Ventureño Fernando Librado Kitsepawit.<sup>24</sup> In objecting to the story, he identified several other locations near the San Buenaventura and Santa Inés missions which played this role. The San Buenaventura sites are supported by testimony from two Ventureños, José Juan Olivas and Simplicio Pico. Harrington (1986:69/0750–0751) records Librado's crucial testimony from 1913 as follows:

Said dead went to the west. Did not go to Pt. Conception. No ghosts or anything about Pt. Conception as far as he has ever heard. On the other side of the Yndart Ranch [near Mission Santa Inés] there is a *picacho* [peak or summit] and that is the real '*anapamu*. This word means "*al suvidero*". *napamu* = "*suvidero*". *makinapamu* = "*nuestro suvidero*"—place you go up. F. appears not to know the S.B. [Barbareño] word *sha'wil*. It was place of adoration for dead and alive. V. [Ventureños] call the place *chwashtiwil*—w. of mouth of V. river. Had only one here then. In 1869 F. saw that place—old shoes, caps, *zapato de verucha* [rawhide sandals].

Thus, Librado—who was quite familiar with Point Conception—not only denied it a sacred role but also equated painted and feathered-pole shrines on hilltop locations where offerings to the dead were placed with places where the souls of the dead departed from this world. He identified at least four such places. These included 'Anapamu near Santa Inés Mission and Chwashtiwil, Ko'onwac, and Iwayiki on the coast west of the mouth of the Ventura River near San Buenaventura Mission. Librado's descriptions of Ko'onwac and Iwayiki appear under the heading "Land of the Dead" in Harrington's notes (Harrington 1986:79/0562). Simplicio Pico and José Juan Olivas knew of the shrines at Iwayiki and Chwashtiwil, and, according to Pico, Chwashtiwil was the place of reckoning, "*onde echaban las cuentas*"

23. Cooper's knowledge of Obispeño religious beliefs came from her classificatory aunt, Juana Lucia (Johnson, personal communication, 1995).

24. Librado was born on Santa Cruz Island and raised at Ventura, and he was knowledgeable about both Ventureño and Cruzeño languages and beliefs (see Blackburn 1975:18, 27; Johnson 1982; 1988: 3, 8, 232; Wilcoxon et al. 1986). Librado appears to have derived his knowledge of the past from many sources of diverse origin. Among the important ones, Raymundo T'ümü from the Ventureño village of S'omis in the Ventura River valley, whom Johnson (1982; personal communication, 1994) has identified as the man Librado referred to as his grandfather, and his fellow ranch hand Silverio Qonoyo, whose parents were from Santa Rosa Island, both told him about reincarnation and the soul's westward or sunward route of travel. An unspecified old man, presumably at Ventura, who used to administer *Datura* had explained the shrines of the dead to him, and Carlos Teodoro (1764–1849; Johnson, personal communication, 1994) of San Buenaventura Mission may have, too.

(95/0093). A cursory examination of secondary sources on Harrington's notes finds six other shrine-hills or shrine-mountains, another hill at Santa Barbara also called 'Anapamu (Applegate 1975), and a number of other feathered-pole shrines (Hudson and Blackburn 1986:84–90, 93–98). Librado believed that the shrine Chwashtiwil that he had seen in 1869 was the last of its kind. A pole serves as a bridge that the soul must cross to reach the land of the dead in Solares's Yokuts myth and her Point Conception story. According to Solares, this mythical pole and poles used to mark graves were both called *sq'oq'om* (Harrington 1986:07/0201). Librado, who had told Harrington that the soul went west to the sun (69/0889–0890), called the feathered poles marking shrines *spon kaqunupmawa*, "sun pole" (79/0562). Thus, the imagery of a pole seems to link myth, grave marker, and shrine in Solares's and Librado's otherwise contrasting testimony.

The shrines that Librado, Pico, and Olivas described must have been associated with the brief revitalization movement among the elderly at the postsecularization Indian settlements in these localities (Johnson 1993: 145). Most of the elderly Chumash who conducted this revival were deceased by 1870 (p. 146). According to Craig (1979), María Solares knew the 'Anapamu near Santa Inés Mission as Napámu'u, translated as "ascending place" in Applegate (1975:37), and described it as the site of a type of shrine called an 'ush'akm'u, which remains untranslated.

Librado's testimony cannot be easily dismissed. He was Harrington's primary source on place-names and aboriginal village politics for the Point Conception region, where he had long served as a ranch hand (see Blackburn 1975:18; Johnson 1982; 1988:232). He provided the Cruzeño names Kunuq'aq' (Harrington 1986: 12/0153, 74/0450) for Point Conception and Nimalaqpok for the land of the dead (68/0499). He also provided detailed descriptions of how the shrines to the dead near San Buenaventura Mission were used and what they looked like (69/1024–1025, 79/0543).

The larger corpus of Harrington's data therefore suggests that there were various exit points from this world for the souls of the dead, consistent with the regional cultural differences and identities known to have existed among aboriginal and mission-era Chumash-speakers.<sup>25</sup> From the testimony of Harrington's consultants we also see that distinct identities associated with particular missions and other places were maintained into the 20th century. The assertion of anthropologists (Craig, King, and Staff 1978:1–2) during and following the LNG resistance of 1978–80 that Point Conception was the "only passageway" to the land of the dead is incorrect. If the Point Conception story had pre-mission roots, it appears to have been confined in distribution

to Ineseño- and Barbareño-speakers, but there is no way of knowing how widespread it may have been among them. At one extreme, it might conceivably have been confined to Solares's paternal grandfather—or perhaps to residents of his village. Or perhaps it is a merging of Ineseño Chumash and Yokuts beliefs. Judging from the dates of birth of Harrington's informants, the use of any shrine that might have existed at Point Conception was probably discontinued by the 1830s at the latest, whereas other shrines that are said to have served the same purpose were observed and in use as late as the 1860s.

## Discussion

For better or worse, people have filled in their gaps of knowledge about the aboriginal past with their own creativity and assumptions, shaped by popular and scholarly images of an enduring traditional Indian as well as the circumstances of the moment. The use of María Solares's story of Point Conception to provide tradition to contemporary Chumash identities illustrates one way in which knowledge of the past reaches and is used by the public. Given the publication of Harrington's notes in microfilm in 1986, it is likely that the volume of revelations from Fernando Librado, María Solares, Luisa Ygnacio, Juan de Jesús Justo, Lucrecia García, Simplicio Pico, José Juan Olivas, Rosario Cooper, and other Chumash with whom Harrington consulted in the 1910s and 1920s will increase for a time, producing more contradictions and opportunities for Chumash Traditionalists.

Anthropologists' remembering, forgetting, and imagining shapes the interpretations of the Chumash past that the public comes to use. Powell, Kroeber, Harrington, and Olson named the Chumash, defined their culture on the basis of a particular epoch, and set their boundaries in time and space. Subsequent anthropologists forgot the arbitrary origins of the category "Chumash" and constructed an image of a bounded, continuous, and persistent culture culminating in today's Chumash Traditionalism. These same scholars promote Chumash Traditionalism through an assumption of persistence, the use of primitivist imagery, and the practice of archaeological monitoring for the shared purpose of achieving a higher standard of archaeological heritage preservation. Harrington recorded Solares's Point Conception story and the evidence of its limited distribution and apparently never mentioned it again. Subsequent scholars brought Solares's story back to light in the 1970s, misinterpreted it, embellished it, and in the process helped to translate Point Conception into the Western Gate and the Chumash into its Keepers. For nearly two decades thereafter, anthropologists helped to reify and disseminate the Point-Conception-as-the-Western-Gate story through either silence regarding their doubts or repetition of the story in their writings. Other anthropologists, outside our area, produced the guidelines by which the age and authenticity

25. However, the testimony of Harrington's consultants regarding what happens after death is in conflict with other sources on Chumash eschatology. In 1884, H. W. Henshaw spoke with two Santa Cruz Island women about mortuary practices: "Two old women assured me that they knew nothing of a future. When they died that was the end of them" (quoted in Heizer 1995:157).

of Point Conception as the Western Gate would be evaluated, and with our work that evaluation has resurrected more of the “forgotten” elements of Chumash and anthropological co-histories. The result is a story of Point Conception and the Western Gate that conflicts sharply with Chumash Traditionalist beliefs and previous anthropological representations.

Anthropologists have helped to construct and authenticate Chumash Traditionalism for the purpose of preserving archaeological sites. The Point Conception story is employed in archaeological reports to demonstrate a “persistent traditionalism” that buttresses claims of an “indigenous” cultural logic of heritage preservation. Lobbying by individual archaeologists for certain groups as monitors because they “know more” archaeology or are more favorably inclined toward preservation similarly promotes particular Chumash groups as more authentic than others. Every hiring choice of a Native American archaeological monitor—usually made by the archaeologist—is a validation of that person’s identity as Chumash. The use of the term “Chumash” to designate people separated by thousands of years and vast cultural differences implies a sameness desired by and useful to a Traditionalist but sometimes harmful to Chumash who are not so inclined. It also verges on equating race with culture. Berkhofer’s (1978: 196) warning that the white man will continue to imagine the Indian as he wants to for his own purposes is borne out by this behavior, and even those who consciously sought to do otherwise are implicated. We suggest that there is no neutral ground on which anthropologists can take refuge. Every researcher in this region becomes to some degree a participant in the ongoing authentication of heritage, objectification of tradition, and negotiation of Chumash identities.

Yet we must not deny Chumash agency in this matter, either. What has sometimes been characterized as anthropologists’ appropriation of a collective product of their work with native consultants (Richer 1988) frequently seems the reverse in this case. Nearly all Chumash now selectively appropriate (or reappropriate) the products of anthropological inquiry, along with the transformations that anthropological remembering, forgetting, and imagining have begotten. They add or formulate their own interpretations of these materials and devise new meanings and uses for what they have claimed. Two decades of outside recognition despite numerous public challenges testify to their creative skills and the power of the symbols they employ.

If contemporary traditionalism and nostalgia for a premodern past are global-systemic products of the uncertainties of modernity, as Friedman (1994) argues, then surely the development of Chumash Traditionalism and local anthropology are interrelated. It is no accident that Chumash Traditionalism and local archaeology and ethnohistory accelerated at the same time in the late 1960s and 1970s, as environmental and heritage preservation laws and regulations came into effect and created a contract archaeology that has produced a wealth of new information about the past as well as

new roles for the Chumash. And it is not coincidental that some of the scholars who have taken Chumash area research in sometimes productive new directions within contract archaeology have worked closely with Chumash Traditionalists. Unfortunately, anthropology and Chumash Traditionalism are now so closely intertwined that it is impossible for us to correct the errors of our predecessors without also proposing a history which conflicts with Chumash Traditionalist beliefs and representations. Thus, our own work and that of others we have cited pose challenges for many of the beliefs some Chumash hold dear. Hence, there is a continuing motive for Chumash people to contest particular areas of research, sources of data such as Harrington’s notes, and researchers. This need is, at present, greatest for Traditionalists, for they most strongly assert a version of Chumash tradition which conflicts with ethnohistorical and ethnographic evidence, and their cultural identity and social position are most dependent upon being accepted as culturally similar to—and continuous with—the past.

We suspect that this problem applies to all research that attempts to depict the Chumash past, including archaeology, since that dominates local research and is the main point of articulation between researchers and Chumash. Relations between archaeologists and contemporary Chumash have varied over time, and a major reason for this, we suggest, is that the manner of the past’s portrayal is crucial to people’s identity and livelihood in the present. Every depiction of the past—of Chumash heritage—is potential ammunition which may need to be contested.

The traditional-cultural-property evaluation process potentially magnifies this challenge to Chumash Traditionalism: it grants greater authority to earlier sources on tradition such as Harrington’s field notes and fails to comprehend how living people claim and use the past. This makes it difficult for researchers to find a balance between their data and the political use of them and people’s desire to define themselves. Point Conception has gained its current sacredness more because of its instrumental value in 1978–80 as the Western Gate than because of any persistence of ancient traditions. Yet contemporary belief in the Western Gate cannot be reduced to simple spuriousness, even if one were to interpret its use during the LNG resistance exclusively in such terms. Not all Chumash are aware of these origins, and even for those who are, Point Conception’s importance as the Western Gate has grown beyond the point of being completely negotiable.

Still, merely documenting the differences between past belief and that of Chumash Traditionalism is to say that the latter is not what it is claimed to be. Yet even this does not mean that such beliefs must be cast as spurious, inauthentic, made-up, or otherwise invalid. Indeed, O’Meara (1981:10, 14, 53–54) insists that Traditionalist beliefs must be granted validity even though he distinguishes them from beliefs and practices of the past. We agree with O’Meara: newness is not falseness in our opinion, though it seems to be under the tradi-

tional-cultural-property guidelines. In this sense Chumash Traditionalists are not fakes. They constitute a distinct group, sincere in its beliefs, which, like others, has a selective memory of its past.

During a previous controversy, a Traditionalist spiritual leader stated, "We are the only people who have to prove or document our religion. . . . Whether that religion is 10 minutes old or 10,000 years is immaterial" (Sollen 1983). We accept this, yet we also recognize that competition over who is Chumash and what is traditional are the real points of conflict. The desire of many participants in the region's identity politics to make judgments of authenticity is promoted by the fact that descendants and nondescendants, nontraditionalists and Traditionalists alike compete for the same identity as the region's true indigenes and the same limited set of roles and opportunities it offers. Differing perspectives on the past and what is traditional are important elements disputed by contemporary Chumash groups, similar to the competing versions of the past that Gerald Sider (1993) found to be essential elements of Lumbee factionalism. Differing opinions on Point Conception and the Western Gate are a part of this dispute.

Tradition and genealogy are the principal weapons which Traditionalist and nontraditionalist Chumash groups employ against each other in their battle for authenticity. Each side is perceived as "having its anthropologists" to call upon for supportive testimony, and professional disagreements between scholars themselves are sometimes interpreted as mere extensions of the factions. Anthropologists help to construct and promote the Traditionalist/nontraditionalist conflict between Chumash groups while posturing over who among them is really defending the rights of the true indigenes.

The Chumash case speaks to the ultimate unreliability of the oppositions of indigenous versus Western, traditional versus modern, etc., and just as well of the construction and use of these social categories by self-interested or naive parties. Although no Chumash fits neatly on just one side of this opposition, Traditionalists represent themselves quite successfully as indigenous and traditional. Nontraditionalist Chumash have until recently had far less success or interest in promoting themselves as indigenous and far less help in doing so from anthropologists. But Chumash Traditionalists most decidedly are not the end product of a historical process of subaltern indigenous resistance to Western hegemony as they have now often been represented. They are created within and emerge from a population which lacked a significant indigenous presence—or at least one deemed worthy—yet found a number of needs for one, especially in environmental affairs. "Persistent indigenous" Chumash Traditionalists emerge with the approval, support, and assistance of many anthropologists, persons entrusted by the public with expertise in both the traditional and the indigenous (Dirks 1990).

Drawing an indigenous-versus-Western dichotomy in the Chumash case—whether to distinguish actors, cultural domains, or approaches to history—mystifies the

historical processes of identity formation and serves to conceal the participation of anthropologists, as well as other non-Indians, in these processes. Thus, indigenous resistance becomes part of the rhetorical weaponry employed in a bid for privilege and social position. As Fox (1995) might have anticipated, from the point of view of many nontraditionalist Chumash the Traditionalists and their anthropologist allies are the current hegemons. The concept of a strictly indigenous self-determination or "freedom of imagination" is also somewhat misleading in this case, given the origins of Chumash Traditionalism and Traditionalists and the participation of non-Indians in so many aspects of its creation and use. Likewise, Chatterjee's (1993) suggestion that the spiritual domain remains under indigenous control is in this case nothing more than a rhetorical device which plays upon popular primitivist expectations to facilitate the rise of Chumash Traditionalism and its claim to "authenticity."

Although we remain sympathetic to the ideal of self-determination and the protection of Native American sacred places and heritage sites, the degree to which Chumash identity and tradition are jointly constructed and negotiated with anthropological and other non-Indian participants suggests to us that neither self-determination nor traditional sacred places can exist in this setting in anything near the manner in which either is popularly conceived. Many anthropologists need to refresh their memories of the discipline's historical role in making bounded, persistent, and essentialized identities and traditions and recognize its continuation in contemporary efforts to shoehorn populations and cultures into an essentialized indigenous/Western or similar dichotomy. Anthropologists might wish to approach more obvious gatekeeping roles like traditional-cultural-property evaluation warily, considering that the cultural units of such analyses frequently began as what Leach (1965 [1954]:291) justifiably called "ethnographic fictions." These and perhaps other anthropological practices deserve wider recognition—and more accurate reporting—as important sources of constraint and opportunity operating on identities and traditions.

## Comments

MICHAEL F. BROWN

*Department of Anthropology and Sociology, Williams College, Williamstown, Mass. 01267, U.S.A. 2 VI 97*

The essay by Haley and Wilcoxon makes a valuable contribution to current debates about social identities, the status of the concept of culture, and the ethical ambiguities of applied anthropology. Parallel to their analysis of the Chumash case (an assessment of which I leave to colleagues who know the California situation better than I), Haley and Wilcoxon call attention to one of the great ironies of contemporary anthropology: that

having convinced the world at large that culture has a stable, ontological reality, many anthropologists are now abandoning the traditional culture concept in favor of processual and constructivist models (see, among many others, Abu-Lughod 1991, Gupta and Ferguson 1992, and Rosaldo 1989).

My sole quibble with Haley and Wilcoxon's analysis is that it pays insufficient attention to the legal context in which claims of Chumash identity take place. If the Chumash aspired to recognition as anything other than an American Indian tribe, few outsiders, anthropologists included, would object to how they chose to "reinvent" themselves. The Chumash could define their ethnic boundaries as they pleased, name sacred places by the score, and rewrite their official history every week. But Native Americans have a status unlike that of other ethnic groups. As formerly sovereign peoples incorporated into an expansionist state against their will, they occupy a place in the emerging Euro-American social order that has generated complex legal dilemmas since early colonial times. Their special status—first as subject foreign nations, later as what Chief Justice John Marshall defined as "dependent domestic nations"—is ratified by innumerable treaties and a vast body of legal precedent, all based on the assumption that Indian tribes partake of enduring qualities of nationhood, however partial or contested. While acknowledging that Indians can and must change if they are to survive, Charles F. Wilkinson (1987:121), an expert on American Indian law, observes that the Supreme Court "has refused to allow American Indian tribes to be engulfed by the passage of time." A certain timelessness has thus become a central feature of how Indians are understood in American law.

Unrecognized groups claiming to be Indian tribes thus find themselves in a difficult position. Because the links between Indian identity and race were largely severed by legal decisions such as *Morton v. Mancari* (1974), which identified tribes as political rather than racial entities (Wunder 1994:167), genealogical ties to Indian ancestors are insufficient to make a case for legal recognition. Denied an unbroken history of self-government by the vagaries of history, groups such as the Coastal Chumash are likely to assert an enduring cultural connection with the past—hence the attraction of defining one's group as "traditionalist"—even if that means "rediscovering" a culture once "lost." The stakes in this struggle over authenticity are high. The principal issue is one of collective pride and self-vindication, of course, but land claims, environmental monitoring contracts, and the huge potential profits associated with Indian gaming concessions have added new elements to the equation.

Complicating matters still further is the mirroring that takes place between Indians and American society as a whole. Religious seekers from the non-Native world see in American Indian peoples the spiritual values and deep connection to place that they apparently lack in their own lives (Brown 1997:161–67). For better or for worse, groups seeking recognition as Indian tribes

are likely to appropriate this romantic vision for their own purposes as they forge strategic alliances with sympathetic outsiders.

If the primordialism inherent in this vision of ethnicity is out of step with current theoretical fashion, why shouldn't practicing anthropologists reshape their public testimony to reflect today's thinking? Why not talk openly about the fluidity of culture and the continual process of invention that underwrites life in ethnic groups? The answer is that such visions of culture threaten the legal basis of indigenous claims. As the voters of California recently declared in their repeal of affirmative-action policies in state government, systems of special rights based solely on ethnic identity are extremely unpopular among the American majority. (Paradoxically, Americans continue to accept the legitimacy of special rights based on wealth, but that's a discussion for another day.) Without the primordialist framework that underlies the unique legal status of American Indian tribes, Indians become just another ethnic group whose claims for special treatment can be denied summarily on egalitarian grounds.

Therefore, while I applaud Haley and Wilcoxon's call for anthropology to historicize its relationship to processes of identity formation among Native Americans and, for that matter, among other ethnic groups, I would also insist that anthropologists are little more than bit players in a much larger political struggle. The history of this struggle and the legal codes that it has created severely limit the range of approaches deemed relevant to the adjudication of land claims or requests for federal recognition. Such realities do not, of course, excuse shoddy research or even professional naiveté, but they should be acknowledged as exerting a powerful constraint on how anthropologists talk about American Indian cultures in public arenas.

JONATHAN FRIEDMAN

*Department of Social Anthropology, University of Lund, Box 114, Lund, Sweden.*

*(jonathan.friedman@soc.lu.se). 12 VI 97*

This article represents a serious attempt to demonstrate the way in which the category "Chumash" was constructed by "Traditionalists" and by anthropologists who are designated in this article as experts on Chumash tradition. There are several "actors" involved: old anthropological texts containing interviews on traditional objects from the past, modern Traditionalists who seek to establish historical continuity in their construction of their identity, anthropological experts, and nontraditional Indians, about whom we know little from this discussion. It is to be appreciated that a great deal of work was put into this careful discussion, comparing texts from different quarters. Yet, if we step back from this situation and try to understand it as social process instead of as a question of "the truth" about Chumash culture, we see another issue. We are faced here with a social phenomenon, a social movement or

cultural movement in which an identity is being established that appears to be very successful in demographic terms. Now, if there were no anthropologists involved in this social field to challenge the credentials of those identifying, the situation might be somewhat different. Of course there might be lawyers and locals from the other side who opposed the effects of this identification process, but if there were no such “scholarly” identities involved the kind of issue raised here might not exist. The translation of what seems to be a reconfiguration of a social identity in a social movement into a question of “which Chumash is the real one” is a result of a conflation of the anthropologist’s own identity as guardian of authenticity and of his duty to understand social process from a distance. It is what seems to be the virtually total absorption of the authors in the cultural verification problem that makes it difficult to see the actual social processes involved. The formation of this traditionalism is not investigated, nor are the so-called non-traditionalists, nor for that matter the anthropologists themselves. This leads to a loss of understanding of the nature of the identity contest itself. It is one thing to say that anthropologists play an important role in the process of essentialization of tradition. It is another thing to account for how this occurs and why it works. This, as I see it, is the primary weakness of this otherwise serious investigation.

Apart from this I have a few comments on arguments that directly involve my own work. The argument against the charge of inauthenticity on the ground that it is politically incorrect may fit what Nick Thomas has said, but my own approach to this issue is quite explicitly different. It is based on the contradiction in terms involved in the inventionist discourse. If, as inventionists and creationists claim, there is no such thing as a baseline tradition, then the notion of inauthenticity is meaningless. If everything is inauthentic, then the word has no distinctive value. If invention goes on all the time, then no dichotomous position can be taken. Nor can one argue that some forms of invention are more authentic than others, not at least without a more complete theoretical basis. I have taken this up in relation to Hawaiians. The latter live in a social world that generates a certain kind of cultural creativity that is very different from that of precontact Hawaii. This implies that the invention process is similar in some ways to our own rather than to previous forms of cultural transformation. But the former is not more inauthentic than the latter. Otherwise there is no such thing as France. The question is not one of being “charitable” but one of understanding social process, something that seems to have been difficult for anthropologists, perhaps because we are so prone to substantivize culture, in spite of our ravings to the contrary.

The question of cultural continuity, to which the authors link my approach, is not, in my view, a question of cultural things, objects, reified traditions. This notion is related to the notion of culture as product, as a concrete social and cultural form. The continuity of which I speak is not merely of cultural form but of a

certain organization of experience and of general life strategies. There is a continuum of phenomena here, from potlatching with sewing machines to Trobriand cricket to the strategies of accumulation of power in Central Africa, in which the way people relate to the consumption of foreign goods and the way clientships are constructed reveal strong similarities with strategies that organized very different kinds of relations in kinship-based and prestige-good-dominated societies. The continuities in social life are closer to what some have called ontologies, as opposed to more variable and superficial cultural products such as particular objects, rituals, and texts. And, I would argue, it is such continuities that make movements for the establishment of cultural identities successful—the degree to which people can harness representations of the world, however contestable, to their ordinary experiences, their existential conflicts. And it is this that lies behind the formation of traditionalisms, even by those so-called entrepreneurs who exploit them in their own interests.

RICHARD HANDLER

*Department of Anthropology, University of Virginia,  
Charlottesville, Va. 22903, U.S.A.  
(rh3y@faraday.clas.virginia.edu). 2 VI 97*

Haley and Wilcoxon assert that in arguments over authenticity and identity “there is no neutral ground on which anthropologists can take refuge.” I agree, but I must add that I find their description and analysis of this particular case, if not “neutral,” certainly exemplary. They portray the interactions of a heterogeneous bunch of players—Chumash Traditionalists, nontraditionalist Chumash, wealthy local landowners, environmentalists, New Agers, journalists, archaeologists, and anthropologists—without pulling their punches concerning the inventedness of much Chumash tradition but, at the same time, without pretending to be able to tell the good guys from the bad, the authentic from the spurious.

Haley and Wilcoxon argue that Point Conception was never a religious site for a unified culture group that is continuous with people today who call themselves “Chumash” (though it may well have been sacred for some individuals at some times). They also show how some Chumash today use ideas about that site and about traditional religion to buttress their claims to cultural authority—and how those claims in turn have political and economic payoffs. And they show how other people who, though nontraditionalist, also claim Chumash identity are materially harmed or at least outmaneuvered by the Traditionalists, who have succeeded in garnering for themselves “the vast majority of the millions of dollars paid in monitoring wages.” In the end, then, Haley and Wilcoxon have given us an ethnographic description of the politics of identity construction in relation to various actors’ self-interests and beliefs. But while they have drawn our attention to the unsavory or at least problematic aspects of such pro-

cesses, they have refused to deny the validity of any of the actors' identity claims. Their evenhandedness ought not, moreover, to be confused with noninvolvement, for they have taken a public stand (with political consequences) on the status of the site with regard to federal cultural preservation laws.

There are several important lessons, or at least suggestions, to be taken from Haley and Wilcoxon's essay. First, the language of "authenticity" is bankrupt for anthropological analysis of identity politics. The politics of authenticity is always about who in a field of competing players is "real" (or more real than others). It seems to me that anthropologists have to take all individuals and their culture-making activities seriously—we cannot assume that any are less or more real than others. As a corollary, we must always be sensitive to (and potentially critical of) the terms in which authenticity is defined. At least as "outside" analysts or observers, it is more important for us to explore the ways in which authenticity is culturally constructed than to "buy into" the discourse by awarding authenticity merit badges to some, demerits to others.

But of course we are not always neutral observers; in some situations we will be required, as Haley and Wilcoxon were, to make judgments about authenticity. The discourse of authenticity is hegemonic: our critique of the concept has not made it any less powerful as a standard of value in political and legal arenas—for example, in Native American land claims cases. We need, therefore, to use our best judgment in deciding when it is wise to make such authenticity judgments. At times, presumably, there will be people we wish to help in supporting their claim to cultural authenticity; but in other situations we may find it more useful to challenge the discourse of authenticity—to refuse to play the game by its rules.

Situations in which we are called on to take sides suggest that anthropology is always or often cultural critique as much as disinterested science. Issues about when and how we become critics vex our discipline today. To be critical of "the natives" is not a stance we have been professionalized to assume comfortably. Haley and Wilcoxon's essay suggests at least one type of critical responsibility that we should assume without hesitation: that aimed at the manipulators of authenticity within our own discipline (in their essay, our colleagues who "have helped to . . . authenticate Chumash Traditionalism for the purpose of preserving archaeological sites"). But there is no easy way out, for often our colleagues are "natives," too—as, of course, are we.

JEAN E. JACKSON  
*Anthropology Program, M.I.T., Cambridge, Mass.*  
 02139, U.S.A. 6 VI 97

Haley and Wilcoxon provide an instructive case study which contains many of the thorny issues arising in scholarship and activism concerned with indigenous identity, in particular that of Native Americans in the

U.S.A. They have consulted an impressive amount of theoretical literature on ethnic identity and the concept of culture. Especially valuable is their analysis, accompanied by concise, detailed information, of anthropologists' roles in an ongoing struggle over who is to define and maintain Chumash identity.

The role of the state has been crucial in determining indigenous identity in the western hemisphere. It is the state that determines what collectivities are Indian and how these collectivities are to be differentiated (the history of the name "Chumash" is telling). And the state determines what counts as traditional cultural property—not without input from the interested parties, of course, and not without challenges that, over time, can effect significant change. But "the political ramifications of traditional-cultural-properties evaluation" are very real, and, given the discourse of authenticity within which the evaluations take place, these ramifications render any such evaluations suspect when such evaluations are contested.

The article nicely illustrates the difficulties of establishing criteria for ethnic identity useful for adjudicating conflicts and formulating legislation. Similar dilemmas can be found in many other countries, in particular, of course, those with Native American populations. Historical criteria seem to self-destruct upon close examination: the authors demonstrate how research by Harrington, Heizer, and Kroeber shoots holes in some Traditionalist claims but also point out that ethnohistorical sources will continue to be used to bolster claims and counterclaims because such sources are incomplete and selectively used. Cultural criteria are fine if one is looking at a single slice of time, but if one examines cultural processes over time, as one should, a paradox results: the more one pins down the features of the painting, the more the pentimento emerges. That linguistic criteria cannot be used as authoritative proof of ethnic differentiation is strikingly illustrated. Nor can we depend on assertions by "the natives," for such assertions, when challenged, depend on establishing that the natives are authentic natives, which brings us back to where we started. Indeed, the basic point of the piece has to do with challenge. Whenever "culture" is attached to an actual population, we are forced to remember that such populations have two genders, at least three generations, differing ideas about tradition and progress, etc. Seeing a culture and a group as isomorphic is fine until land claims or lucrative contracts become involved. Going beyond the orthodoxies outlined by the authors—the genuine/spurious, Western/Other, traditional/modern dichotomies—is essential, but there is a long way to go after that. It requires our acknowledging our own vested interests in seeing things a certain way as professional anthropologists (in particular if we participate in policy making) and as members of late-20th-century capitalist society: we "reify" or "essentialize" a culture or we build careers pointing out the folly of such perspectives.

Unfortunately, Haley and Wilcoxon will indeed be seen by some as denigrating those who hold a Chumash

identity; their endeavors, being highly politicized, take us into ethical and moral gray areas where the faint of heart should not presume to tread. What of their authority to speak? Will it continue? While they speak authoritatively, we must acknowledge that they employ the rhetoric and argumentation characteristic of classic Western scholarship—so perhaps this is just another example of modernist hegemony denying the right of self-representation. Given that the origin of a belief is not the same thing as what maintains it, contemporary belief in the Western Gate's location at Point Conception cannot be reduced to simple spuriousness. Yet when origins and authenticity (*who* is traditional here?) are the fundamental basis of the discourse, we have no recourse but to draw conclusions about inauthenticity and newness—and bemoan the participation of anthropological consultants in perpetuating such fakery, inadvertently or complicitly.

Who is entitled to represent indigenous peoples? When there are disputes, who adjudicates them? We have anthropologists in the past creating ("Chumash") and making unwarranted assumptions (that racial and linguistic criteria should determine ethnic distinctiveness) and anthropologists continuing to do so in the present. Because speakers present different kinds of credentials and present them in different kinds of fora, there are no easy answers. We have "insider" natives (some with "indigenous DNA"), "recent" natives (those who have moved from Chicano to Chumash identity), "outsider" anthropologists, and "insider" anthropologists (the authors draw upon 45 years of familiarity with the Chumash). Yet despite excellent credentials, their work, as they themselves point out, has not been, cannot have been, disinterested.

In sum, this candid, very worthwhile essay gives us much to ponder.

JOANN KEALIINOHOMOKU

518 Agassiz St., Flagstaff, Ariz. 86001, U.S.A. 6 VI 97

This important article draws together published critiques of revisionist history about inventing or imagining identities and traditions. Some of the examples shared by the writers about the breach of historicity are so outrageous that I laughed out loud, but ruefully. One cannot account for outside influences, but, as always, we must acknowledge the influences of anthropologists for better or for worse. Some obvious problems thus engendered are ethnographies that set cultures in stone and those created by contract archaeologists and applied anthropologists. The issues analyzed here are complicated and have serious consequences. Haley and Wilcoxon perform a fine service in demonstrating them clearly and framing them in a specific case study.

Doubtless all of us have been involved in situations in which there are factions—internecine, intercommunity, among special interest groups, and professionally. I have seen the young generation take a stand on issues without knowing the historical background. I know an-

thropologists who are reductionists and make inappropriate decisions that impact others. The authors' conclusion is poignant that it is "impossible for us to correct the errors of our predecessors without also proposing a history which conflicts with Chumash Traditionalist beliefs and representations. Thus our own work and that of others we have cited pose challenges for many of the beliefs some Chumash hold dear."

The motivations that determine attitudes and actions—genuine and spurious, political, a sincere search for identities and cultural roots, the pursuit of a passion, among others—are worrisome when they are devious, self-serving, unjustifiably exclusionary and manipulative. I find it especially upsetting when professional anthropologists ignore the canons of ethics or become so myopic that they abandon attempts to search for the truth no matter how elusive or how unaccommodating. We cannot anticipate or account for the variety of people and situations outside of the discipline. We can, however, try to polish the discipline. Many anthropologists have addressed these problems, and there is an important literature about them.

The further contribution of this article, beyond its evaluation of the Chumash situation, is the clear delineation of the dilemmas faced by anthropologists. The article spotlights old problems in a contemporary light, ideally inspiring its readers to reflect on how such problems can be avoided or addressed. It is a cautionary tale about the excesses of being politically correct, the need to expand our objectives to include good judgment along with our need to get the job done, the concern about being pawns in the games that other people play, and the challenge to be exemplars of the most idealistic goals of the discipline.

There is no panacea for the problems so clearly exemplified by the Chumash case study. At first one might become discouraged enough to give up on being an anthropologist, but that is not the answer, of course. If anthropologists didn't go into the field and record and evaluate ethnographic materials, the consequences could be even more disastrous. In my opinion the discipline of anthropology, at least in America, has an admirable track record for promoting the holistic understanding of peoples and nonjudgmental relativism. There are two specific requirements for the discipline of anthropology, as I see it—ethics and research tools that extend beyond the obvious professional skills.

As we know, it is easy to champion the principle of ethics in the abstract, but it is quite a different situation when faced with the real complications, competing demands, inadequate information, varying opinions, and more. Anthropology departments should be required to include a course on ethics. The topic has been given much attention in the discipline for decades, but I believe a course devoted to it is not universal. Second, some kind of mentoring system should be made available to anthropologists in the field. Perhaps a team approach with regular meetings for group and peer evaluations might be useful to head off problems before they arise or deal with them after they arise.

No one person can become the complete scholar, but somehow that should be the ideal, no matter how unattainable. Modern arguments aside, the tried-and-true approach still has relevance. It has long been impossible, however, for the discipline to produce Renaissance persons who have wide interests and are experts in several areas. As we have become more and more specialized we have eliminated some of the studies that are critical to the discipline. There is still need for a comfortable competence in all of the four fields. The humanities of anthropology must also interface with the science of anthropology.

I suggest that this article be required reading for all anthropology students and that the reading be followed by serious discussion.

KLARA B. KELLEY

*P.O. Box 2536, Window Rock, Ariz. 86515, U.S.A.*  
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Like the authors, I am an anthropologist working with an American Indian group (Navajo) on historic preservation issues. The hot historic-preservation question about Navajos today is whether Navajo forebears were in the Southwestern United States in pre-Columbian times. (At stake is whether federal land-managing agencies recognize Navajos as "stakeholders" in managing pre-Columbian cultural resources.) On both sides of this question can be found Navajos and non-Navajos, anthropologists, archaeologists, ethnic essentializers and their opponents. Reading this article against this background prompts the following comments:

If they essentialize ethnicity, anthropologists and Indians both incorporate the ideology of imperialism. The "time immemorial" and "exclusive occupancy" strictures of the Indian Claims Commission Act of 1946 are rooted in ethnic essentialism. These strictures have pitted Indian groups with overlapping land claims against each other and reinforced ethnic essentialism among both Indians and anthropologists. Where the Indian Claims Commission recognized joint use or occupancy, no claims were paid (Manners 1974:19). Admitting that not all modern ethnic groups have "persisted" from "time immemorial" opens the possibility that modern groups may have common ancestors who shared a land base.

Far from every Indian who represents his or her tradition to outsiders incorporates anthropological perspectives. Many older Navajos are monolingual and never went to school and are therefore largely innocent of anthropological discourse. However, many younger, schooled Navajos use anthropological studies to supplement their elders' teaching and national mass culture.

The anthropologists' apple can nourish or poison, depending on what one mixes it with. For example, cross-cultural knowledge stripped of ethnic essentialism and mystical notions of human psychic unity invites reappraising now-disdained cultural "diffusion." The debate

about Point Conception's significance in this article illustrates such a stripped look at processes of diffusion through synthesis. It also illustrates how ethnic essentialism ironically obscures the synthesizing process so as to validate its result.

Other examples from the Southwestern United States show how anthropologists who essentialize ethnicity either distort indigenous oral tradition/cultural history or ignore it altogether. Assuming a single origin and history for each modern ethnic group, they cannot accept variant versions of culture history among members of a group. If they do not dismiss oral tradition entirely as metaphor without geographical/temporal sense, they must first transform variant traditions into a single synthetic account (Ferguson and Hart 1985:21). They ignore clear statements in the stories that different constituents of the present group had different histories before they came together. Both anthropologists who essentialize ethnicity and those who do not may take these positions, encouraged by Indian communities and governments, which naturally choose anthropological consultants with sympathetic preexisting views.

No matter how sincere, ethnic essentialists cannot apply variant oral histories directly to material evidence of the past. Ethnic essentialists may object that the different accounts have many events, names of beings, and place-names in common. They believe that variants result from flaws in the transmission process. But admitting that diverse origins are possible encourages one to look more closely at lines of transmission to account for the differences. Different versions may correspond to different clans or ceremonial organizations, each of which may have started as a remnant of an earlier community and conserved some of its predecessor's oral tradition from synthesis with those of its current co-residents.

Names/events in common are a hemisphere-(even world-)wide phenomenon recognized as the wide distribution of mythic elements. Anthropologists explain these distributions by human psychic unity and diffusion. I think that some shared material may trace diffused supraethnic cosmological models. Societies reenact these models in ritual dramas. Eventually they attach the events and sacred names of the drama to the places where these dramas are performed. Shared prototype myths become attached to different terrestrial locations by different communities (ethnic and other) depending on where their forebears reenacted these prototype dramas. Not only may separate versions of a story coexist within a group but different versions may be synthesized. A story may disappear from one group only to reappear in variant forms as newcomers join or supplant the first group, as with Point Conception.

A subtext of this article seems to be that New Ager also distribute anthropological information, which they spin with mysticism that makes anthropologists uncomfortable. Yet New Ageism may be yet another chapter in the global recycling of already widespread mythic elements in new combinations and interpretations.

This article shows how we anthropologists act within cultural processes beyond our control. Awareness of these processes can help us control at least our own involvement in them.

ANDERS LINDE-LAURSEN

*Department of Ethnology, Lund University,  
Finngatan 10, 223 62 Lund, Sweden, 6 VI 97*

In retrospect 1983 turned out to be a banner year for the development of theories in the sociocultural sciences. That year three books—Benedict Anderson's *Imagined Communities* (1991), Ernest Gellner's *Nations and Nationalism* (1983), and the volume edited by Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger, *The Invention of Tradition* (1983)—appeared that, taken together, underscored the importance of linkages between modernity, invented traditions, and imagined objects for feelings of belonging. Since then many scholarly works have repeated that ethnic groups and nations are all modern, invented, and imagined. However, empirical studies that demonstrate exactly how processes of inventing and imagining are associated with and conducted within modern society are more difficult to find.

Haley and Wilcoxon nicely demonstrate how anthropological writings beginning in the 1880s invented the Chumash. They argue that the efforts of anthropologists since then have played an important role in the cultural processes that have resulted in the formation of an indigenous Chumash group and identity within modern society. From the 1960s and '70s this invention was adopted and promoted by a family of Chumash Traditionalists. Drawing from current discussion about the fluidity of identity, Haley and Wilcoxon challenge and contradict established assumptions and knowledge about the Chumash. They recognize that a group of people exists today that is identified as Chumash and at least partly identifies itself as such. Thus, the purpose of their study is not to deprive the Chumash of traditions and authenticity but to discuss how the new understanding of identities within anthropology challenges the indigenous Chumash identity invented on the basis of earlier scholarly work.

This article exemplifies some predicaments common to studies of identity formation processes. How can we write about these processes with regard to a specific group without reifying the group and its identity? When writing about a group identity we must examine the particular criteria by which the group is defined—as well as, perhaps, the interest of the people included in or excluded from the group. Therefore our work must treat the criteria chosen to demarcate the group as more important than alternative criteria. However, by choosing only one group-signifying criterion we lose sight of the fact that identities are fluid, established through processes in which now one, now another criterion (perhaps contradictory) compete for prominence. This is the case even when we recognize that an identification is

the result of an invention and a historical process. Thus it seems very probable that most or all persons who identify themselves as Chumash also sometimes identify themselves as Chicano or something else seemingly incompatible, depending on external circumstances. Consequently I find a more comprehensive understanding of the fluidity of identities useful. Not only are identities fluid historical products but the processes through they are represented and demanded contain competing elements, for instance, Chumash or Chicano. In addition, the processes through which these elements become important are affected by other signifiers of identity such as gender, age, generation, class, and race. Thus, an understanding of the complexity of Chumash identity formation might very well demand an extensive discussion of associations between Chumash indigenous identity and, for instance, generation and class issues.

This more comprehensive understanding of the fluidity of identities would ensure that no one is privileged as a representative of any group. Thus, more perceptions of being part of the group would necessarily be presented. Accepting a single group identification as the basis for our study makes it difficult if not impossible to understand and gather information about oppositions. A single group identification consequently excludes the nontraditionalist perspective on being Chumash. By focusing on the Traditionalists as “more” Chumash we preclude full understanding of the politics and economics of identity formation in the area.

Another general predicament for the study of identity formation processes is a lack of a comparative perspective (see Linde-Laursen 1995). The literature on the modern, invented, and imagined contains subdivisions. One important one is the genre “Peasant into Frenchmen . . . Swedes, Danes,” and so on (Weber 1976, Ehn, Frykman, and Löfgren 1993, Østergård 1984). Another, of which the article by Haley and Wilcoxon is a very good example, might be called “Indigenous into. . .” Comparisons among these subsections might be fruitful. For instance, Haley and Wilcoxon refer to Friedman's work (1994) on contemporary traditionalism and nostalgia for a premodern past as global-systemic products of the uncertainties of modernity. However, processes of similar kinds have been going on at least since the invention of the nation-state as a proper object for feelings of belonging. In Denmark, for instance, Bronze Age burial places, appearing as barrows in the landscape, were in the 19th century invented as signifiers for the continuity among the free peasants of the past and the free (after agricultural reforms from the 1780s) farmers of the present. Thus, farmers who did not clear barrows off their lands but maintained them nicely were from the early 19th century awarded certificates identifying them as the keepers of the nation's past. A comparative perspective, thus, might have indicated that nostalgia is not necessarily limited to and maybe not even typical of the present. With regard to the Chumash we might alternatively ask what is spe-

cific to modernity since the 1960s and '70s. Since that time many particularistic and separatist movements have emerged as the representatives of indigenous groups, micro-nations, or whatever else we label them when confirming their existence.

Haley and Wilcoxon provide us with a very good and illustrative study of some of the dilemmas involved in the anthropological study of traditions and collective identities. They show that it is not only peoples that need to remember, forget, and imagine in order to construct for themselves traditions, authenticity, and senses of belonging. As their work clearly demonstrates, anthropologists also forget and imagine while partaking in these processes as the inventors and defenders of groups and cultures. Our memory might improve if we recognized that no group has only a single identity. Chumash or any other invented and historically changing sociocultural formation must be regarded as possessing a complexity of compounded, contested, and contradictory identities.

J. TIM O'MEARA

*Anthropology, University of Melbourne, Parkville, Victoria 3052, Australia. 26 v 97*

Last year the developers of a small marina complex in South Australia were bankrupted when the federal minister halted construction of the Hindmarsh Island bridge largely on the basis of a consulting anthropologist's impact report, which concluded that Hindmarsh Island was a traditional Aboriginal site of sacred-secret women's business. A subsequent Royal Commission concluded, however, that the women's business was fabricated by activists for the purpose of halting bridge construction. The anthropologist who authenticated the story in her report is now being sued for negligence by the developer (*Adelaide Advertiser*, May 29, 1997).<sup>1</sup> Such affairs show that Haley and Wilcoxon's honest and insightful paper bends over backwards too far in arguing that adopting a 50-year standard for eligibility of traditional cultural properties shows a "failure to comprehend tradition and ethnic identity as modern products." It shows instead an acute appreciation that ideologies are continually revised as new opportunities and new opportunists arise.

Haley and Wilcoxon incorrectly cite my 1981 report as supporting their conclusion that because "traditions" are constantly under construction, they cannot be "thought of as simply either genuine or spurious," and even though "Chumash Traditionalism . . . is not what it is claimed to be . . . this does not mean that such beliefs must be cast as spurious, inauthentic, made-up, or otherwise invalid. . . . newness is not falseness." This ignores the distinction between the empirical and the nonempirical claims that together make up a "tradi-

tion." Distinguishing the acts of believing and the reasons people have for believing from what their beliefs assert, we see that while much of the Traditionalists' believing and many of their reasons for believing are (or have become) sincere or "genuine," many of those beliefs make claims concerning ancestral people and practices and the Traditionalists' own connections to those ancestral people and practices that are empirically false. The same distinction is central to the relevant U.S. laws, and closer attention to those laws will help clarify the differences between our arguments.

My 1981 report uses the terms "valid," "genuine," and "spurious" to indicate the *legal* status of claims that derive from sincerely held beliefs—not the gestalt status of a holistic tradition or a relativistic notion of falseness. I note (1981:3–4) that several recent laws require government agencies to take a more active role in protecting the minority rights of American Indians. Most significant is the American Indian Religious Freedom Act of 1978, which states that "henceforth it shall be the policy of the United States to protect and preserve for American Indians their right to believe, express, and exercise the traditional religions of American Indians." The National Environmental Policy Act of 1970 directs agencies preparing environmental documents to consult with "any affected Indian tribe." The National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 and its Amendments of 1980 direct federal agencies to identify sites that could be included on the National Register of Historic Places. The National Forest Management Act requires each national forest to complete an overview of cultural resources as part of its land management plan. Local Indians can make legally valid claims under any of these statutes, but not every claim is valid under every statute. Claims for protection of newly created religious sites would be legally *invalid* under the Historic Preservation Act, for example, but legally *valid* under the other three laws.

The primary goal of my work for the Forest Service "was to satisfy the American Indian Religious Freedom Act by determining if Forest Service policies or activities infringed upon the First Amendment rights of local Indians" (1981:5). Since there had been no court decision on the importance of the term "traditional" in the Act, I assumed that although it "refers only to 'traditional' religions, its purpose was to emphasize a particular problem rather than to elevate traditional Indian religions to a protected status above other religions. . . . In short, the Act merely intends to insure that Indians receive the same constitutional guarantee of freedom of religion as other citizens" (1981:10). I argued further that "our Constitution requires the government to protect all religions, but it also prohibits the government from supporting any religion through the enactment of laws which require one person to act in a way that is consistent with the beliefs of another," which means that "once the right of the people at [X] to believe, express, and exercise their religion has been guaranteed, their concerns which result from other people not abid-

1. Outside Australia, the most accessible references to the Hindmarsh Island affair are Weiner (1995) and Brunton (1996).

ing by those beliefs will be considered [only] in the assessment of social and cultural effects of a project" (1981:14). In other words, none of the relevant laws require beliefs to be true or reasons for believing to be good reasons, but the Constitution also prevents the government from applying the First Amendment to protect sites merely because someone considers them to be "sacred."

While Haley and Wilcoxon's analysis focuses on showing that "notions of indigenous tradition and heritage can be employed as effective means of negotiating relative social positions," it is also useful to ask why such notions are effective. One reason is the psychological tendency people have to conceive of social aggregates as holistic entities, to attach that collective identity to its individual members, and thus to hold members responsible for each other's behavior (past, present, and future).<sup>2</sup> This human psychological tendency provides an opportunity for Traditionalists to attempt carrying forward the massive injustices of the past for added moral leverage in their own more limited and mundane struggles today, just as it allows members of the wider public to attempt reaching across expanses of time and space to atone for the misdeeds of their own mythic ancestors.

ANDREW D. SPIEGEL

*Department of Social Anthropology, University of Cape Town, Cape Town, South Africa. 5 vi 97*

It is sometimes very useful to juxtapose hegemonic inventions of tradition and those constructed in processes of resistance by oppressed groups, but recognising the usefulness of that dichotomy does not allow anthropologists to relinquish a critical analytical perspective when dealing with the latter. Indeed, anthropological advocacy that fails to apply deconstructivist insights is not only intellectually dishonest—a point implicit in Haley and Wilcoxon's argument—but also disingenuous, as it may work against the interests of those it is intended to support by leaving them open to critical deconstruction without the means to defend the fictions of their position.

Haley and Wilcoxon provide a detailed description of the constructedness of Chumash traditionalism and identity. They show how legislation that is built upon outdated anthropological premises provides a framework for the particularities of its construction as bounded and almost timeless. They show too that various contemporary anthropologists have participated in creating the fictions that are Chumash tradition in the late 20th century and that those fictions "work" in the contemporary milieu. But they do not explain why they

have undertaken a deconstructionist exercise or why they choose to offer it to the academic readership of CURRENT ANTHROPOLOGY rather than to people who identify themselves as Chumash, whether as "Traditionalists" or not. If we anthropologists are to take seriously our commitment to protecting participants in our research activities (particularly if they are oppressed), surely our first obligation is to reinforce their own often quite astute understanding of the historically specific and strategic nature of the ways in which they represent themselves, their culture, and their traditions.

It is all very well, as Haley and Wilcoxon have done, to berate contemporary anthropologists who refuse to come to terms with the fluid and flexible nature of culture, tradition, and identity. It is also important to look for ways to convey understanding beyond the academy of the social constructedness of culture, tradition, and identity, particularly if that will help to break stereotypical imagery.

As a South African social anthropologist, I have found both very worthy objectives in a context in which apartheid ideology and legislation led to representations of cultures and peoples as neatly bounded and timeless, representations that were created and perpetuated by some anthropologists/ethnologists even as others (social anthropologists) were attempting to deconstruct them. But with the fall of the apartheid regime, we South African social anthropologists have also come to recognise the potential that such constructions may have, particularly in a global context in which legitimised claims to First Nation status can bring many material returns. Moreover, we have also had to recognise how astutely some such people read the contexts in which they find themselves and perform their culture and traditions in situations where doing so brings them appropriate recognition and returns. In such circumstances our role can hardly be to deconstruct the performances by pointing out to their audiences that they are contingent rather than continuous. If we anthropologists have a role to play here, it is merely to assist in maintaining, even sharpening, such people's ability to recognise which strategies work and in which circumstances, even if one of those strategies may be to represent a continuous culture from an immemorial constructed past.

That surely is where the intellectual honesty that Haley and Wilcoxon seek can be found, rather than in deconstruction for its own sake—as if by deconstructing we could occupy some authentically objective position. True, we cannot now abandon or ignore the critical insights of deconstructionism. But if we are to "resolve the problems that arise from study of the use and creation of culture" we will have to go beyond merely juxtaposing "hegemonic invention with inventions of indigenous resistance . . . implicitly or explicitly disparag[ing] the former while applaud[ing] the latter." We will also have to recognise ourselves as social actors with a particular kind of authority and locate ourselves by making our own strategic choices and applying our

2. For a clue as to why evolution by natural selection might result in people's having such a psychological tendency, see Axelrod's discussion of "discount parameters" in what he calls the "evolution" of cooperation (1984: esp. 15–16).

critical insights in ways that help reinforce the causes we have chosen to support.

DAVID S. TRIGGER

*Department of Anthropology, University of Western Australia, Nedlands, W.A. 6097, Australia*  
(dtrigger@cyllene.uwa.edu.au). 6 VI 97

Haley and Wilcoxon address an issue of importance in many settings across the world where people struggle with the legacy of a colonial history. Their paper deals with the politics of "indigenous" identity: Who claims such a status and on what basis? What are the stakes? And, most crucial in this paper, how is anthropology embroiled in the emergent politics of indigenism which during the past few decades has challenged the authority with which researchers analyse these matters?

The authors depict the now commonplace recognition within anthropology that culture and tradition are "constructed." Thus, Chumash identity is used "as a weapon of or for power." In the process of asserting their identity it would seem that some Chumash draw selectively on available anthropological and historical documentation. Haley and Wilcoxon make the case that some anthropologists and archaeologists promote a primitivist traditionalism among a particular group within the wider Chumash population.

My questions concern what might be articulated more clearly in this paper: In what ways do the Traditionalists obtain "power" through identity politics? I would have preferred a clearer discussion of just how this "power" is constituted. Certain payments, employment, and perhaps influence over land use are mentioned, but do the Chumash Traditionalists achieve power in the sense of a general dominance in relation to other Chumash? My sense of unease here is a response to the unproblematic fashion in which Haley and Wilcoxon present a dichotomy between Traditionalists and nontraditionalists, despite their apt cautions against essentialist oppositions of traditional versus modern or indigenous versus Western.

It would be helpful to know more about the relationship between these two apparently separate groups. While we learn that the core of the Traditionalist movement is a group of extended kin whose ancestors came as Spanish soldiers and servants, we are told little if anything about the ancestry of other Chumash. Do Haley and Wilcoxon regard the latter as more authentically connected with an identity linked to the once indigenous inhabitants of the area? And on what basis do the "nontraditionalist" Chumash reject the constructed culture of the Traditionalists? Similar settings in other parts of the world might prompt us to speculate that the basis of such a rejection might include factors such as Christianity, a moralistic opposition to features of the New Age social movement, or perhaps a more conservative position in the regional political economy.

An adequate depiction of those with whom the Traditionalists compete for Chumash identity would help

achieve what Haley and Wilcoxon set out to do, namely, demystify and reveal the historical process of identity formation among the people who are the subjects of their research. It might also allow them to clarify whether there is any sense at all of cultural continuity and persistence of identity that should be recognised in this case. Given the historical and ethnographic material discussed in the paper, it would seem less than adequate to suggest that Chumash identity is a completely new phenomenon since the 1960s. The origins of Chumash identity may well be quite "arbitrary" in the sense that it was historically labelled and carved out from amidst a complex sociogeographic field that could have produced a different type of bounded group; however, whether any people who now call themselves Chumash should appropriately be recognised as maintaining aspects of traditions once practiced by their earlier generations remains somewhat unclear to me.

A second set of questions flows from the discussion of the role of anthropology. If the constructionist perspective is so widespread in anthropology of the 1990s, how is it that some practicing professionals mystify their role in the negotiation of Chumash identity? Is this a case in which those working as applied anthropologists and archaeologists remain distant from current theoretical approaches? Do they lack theoretical sophistication and thus ignore the politics of culture out of naiveté? Or are Haley and Wilcoxon suggesting a systematic and deliberate complicity in fabrication?

Perhaps what would help here is a more frank and open discussion of the politics of obligation that often develops between anthropologists and communities asserting indigenous identities. Allegations that bias and self-censorship have been driven by the committed advocacy positions taken by anthropologists in both Canada and Australia have been discussed in recent years (Dyck and Waldram 1993, Tonkinson 1997). Haley and Wilcoxon lean towards a similar critique; however, I would prefer a more comprehensive recognition of the difficulties facing the applied anthropologist who must write against what his or her clients regard as their interests. This raises the question of the extent to which applied anthropological research increasingly resembles the practice of lawyers seeking "instructions" from clients rather than that of social science investigators searching for description and analysis that are best supported by all the available "data."

## Reply

BRIAN D. HALEY AND LARRY R. WILCOXON  
*Goleta, Calif., U.S.A. 25 VII 97*

Since this article was accepted for publication, the City of Santa Barbara has revised its list of approved Native American archaeological monitors to include only Chumash who have demonstrated descent from the region's

aboriginal population. Anthropologists were among those who lobbied for this change. Concurrently, some nondescendant Traditionalists have started an archaeological contract firm in which the professional credentials are supplied by their long-standing archaeologist allies. These events indicate that nontraditionalists (and their anthropologist allies) are reversing the Traditionalists' dominance of Chumash identity. Meanwhile, the Traditionalists have become archaeologists, revealing once again the importance of this link to the formation of their identity. To the best of our knowledge, our research on Point Conception has played no role in these matters so far.

We thank the commentators for their contributions. Handler, Jackson, and Kealiinohomoku especially are generous with their praise, but we appreciate Spiegel's criticism equally. We welcome Friedman's correction of our misunderstanding and misrepresentation of his position and O'Meara's clarification of his use of "valid," "genuine," and "spurious" in his 1981 report. Unfortunately, Friedman misconstrues our purpose, but turn-about is fair play. We accept the validity of Chumash Traditionalism for reasons similar to O'Meara's, but our statement was meant to equate Traditionalist beliefs with those of other religious faiths more on philosophical grounds than on legal ones. Of course, we do not care to judge the empirical validity of anyone's soul's passing to a land of the dead via Point Conception, nor would we know how to go about doing so.

Trigger and Friedman point out shortcomings in our presentation of who the nontraditionalists are and how they relate to the Traditionalists. Jackson, Linde-Laursen, and Trigger raise other possible factors in the construction of Chumash identity, including gender, generation, competing ideas of tradition and progress, political economy, class, Christianity, and moral abhorrence of the New Age, that reflect on the Traditionalist/nontraditionalist relationship. "Traditional" is an identity to and from which there is movement of individuals and cultural characteristics. Traditionalists identify themselves as such and their religious philosophy as "authentically" traditional. For our purposes, nontraditionalists are everyone else, including persons who remain Catholic but have publicly promoted Chumash identity and heritage through basketmaking, storytelling, and dancing. These people consider Traditionalists' portrayals of Chumash tradition "inauthentic." No one identifies as "nontraditional," but Chumash who distance themselves from Traditionalism are so designated by Traditionalists. There is a nontraditionalist core of families that, unlike most Traditionalists, have empirically strong social and genealogical links to the aboriginal occupants of the region. They are descendants of the Catholic Indian communities in San Luis Obispo, Santa Ynez, Santa Barbara, Ventura, and Tejon. Until the 1960s, successive generations of these families identified themselves as Mission Indians from these localities (e.g., Santa Barbara Indian or Barbareño). The nontraditionalist core tends to reject newcomers to Chumash identity who lack firm genealogical credentials. Conser-

vative nontraditionalists object to Traditionalists' "hippie" philosophy and demeaning depictions of Catholicism. They protest that Traditionalists are not part of their historical social networks and therefore have no right to represent their interests. Even so, over the past decade more and more nontraditionalists have adopted once distinctly Traditionalist markers such as the "Western Gate," "Mother Earth," and "elder," burning sage, and jewelry of abalone shell, beads, and feathers.

Most Chumash are working-class and urban or college-educated professionals. Formal groupings have been in flux since the 1970s. The federally recognized Santa Ynez Reservation was a poor, small, and factionalized population until federal housing spawned growth in the late 1970s and '80s and a casino brought prosperity in the 1990s. In two months last year this newfound prosperity brought roughly 75 applications for enrollment to the reservation of fewer than 200 enrolled members. Few people on the reservation are Traditionalists, and we detect a slight decline in interest in heritage matters as the casino has prospered, even though symbols of tradition are emerging in the casino's advertising. Federal recognition applications are pending for two other groups. One was submitted in the early 1980s by a Traditionalist organization. The other was submitted several years ago by a recently formed organization representing part of the nontraditionalist core.

Traditionalists never achieved a "general dominance" over nontraditionalists (Trigger) but did dominate the Indian niche in the political economy that emerged in the 1970s—environmental and heritage management. This niche quickly became definitive of Chumash identity itself and gave Traditionalists dominance over Chumash self-representation. There was no distinct Indian niche in the local political economy from the 1950s to the '70s. When Vandenberg Air Force Base officials decided in the mid-1980s that Chumash archaeology monitors hired for work on federal lands or contracts had to be federally recognized, the Santa Ynez Band was able to counter Traditionalist dominance at the base, but the Santa Barbara, Ventura, and Tejon communities have had more difficulty. One Traditionalist represented the Chumash in a recent nationally broadcast documentary series on Native Americans, lectures periodically on Chumash tradition at the University of California, Santa Barbara, and has been granted control over access to some of the region's most famous pictograph sites by a Bureau of Land Management administrator.

Most of the commentators recognize that our intent is to draw attention to problems and implications of anthropological practice, not to engage in "deconstruction for its own sake" (Spiegel) or to determine "which Chumash is the real one" (Friedman). Anthropologists are an appropriate audience for this presentation because they/we are native participants in the construction, negotiation, and contestation of indigenous identity and traditionalism who need to know "which strategies work and in which circumstances" (Spiegel). Lest there be any misunderstanding, we believe that our findings

and interpretations should also be discussed with Chumash people. We began sharing our work on Point Conception with Traditionalists and nontraditionalists in 1994, but we have much more to do on this. The two tasks overlap, thanks to the nature of ties between Chumash and anthropologists, but no one should expect individuals who zealously embrace Chumash Traditionalism to discontinue wielding it politically on the advice of an anthropologist that doing so has become a riskier strategy.

The commentators disagree about the ethics of our treatment of Chumash identity and tradition. Handler finds it "exemplary" and "evenhanded," and Kealiinohomoku claims that we "perform a fine service." It almost seems as if O'Meara wished we had passed more judgments on Chumash Traditionalism, whereas Friedman implies that we should have maintained greater "distance." The strongest challenge comes from Spiegel, who questions our motives and believes that we should be helping Chumash to maintain and sharpen useful representations rather than deconstructing them in front of an anthropological audience. Spiegel's argument projects South African qualities onto the Chumash, viewing them as "oppressed" and as receiving "appropriate" rewards from essentialized representations. Yet it also represents the perspective of some local scholars, for whom "indigenous" and "traditional" equals "oppressed," and therefore it is helpful that Spiegel raises this criticism.

We certainly do not oppose advocacy for the oppressed, and we share Kealiinohomoku's view that anthropology's record in this area is generally good. The question, as we see it, is how to apply the criterion "oppressed" to identify the "appropriate" recipients of rewards—those whose claims of cultural authenticity we wish to support. Are we to use the tools of anthropology to make realistic appraisals on a case-by-case basis (Handler)? Or do we assign the value "oppressed" to the statuses of indigenous and traditional and "appropriate" to the rewards for representing oneself in these terms or being allied with someone who does? We cannot in good conscience take the second path. Essences are irreducible, permanent, invariant, and essentializing has long-term consequences that are beyond anyone's control. Spiegel's justification of essentializing requires that members of these categories always are and always will be the oppressed good guys and that their gains are always appropriate. Such a position runs counter to what anthropologists know about the flexibility of group boundaries and identities and to anthropology's humanistic goal of understanding and appreciating humanity, warts and all. It certainly runs counter to fact in the Chumash case, where this image of the oppressed good guy attracts former non-Indians to Chumash identity and Traditionalism because it has rewards.

If we do find a claim to privilege framed in terms of indigenism or traditionalism lacking in some important respect, do we misrepresent the facts because we anticipate some benefit either to ourselves or to some "appropriate" party from doing so? Is it "appropriate" when

the rewards for having been oppressed accrue to a third party? Perhaps the answer is yes to both questions in some case, somewhere. But faced with a Chumash Traditionalism that is as hegemonic as it is oppressed and a mixed bag of Traditionalists and allied non-Indians for whom the appropriateness of rewards is ambiguous at best, we have opted not to misrepresent or withhold our findings. We do so with the explicit understanding that we very likely have played some role in influencing whatever happens next—that we are, as Spiegel puts it, "social actors with a particular kind of authority." Hoping to diminish some undesirable potential effects, we have challenged the language of the traditional-cultural-property guidelines where we believe it leads to pointless and unjustifiable categorization of Chumash Traditionalists' and New Agers' beliefs in Point Conception as spurious. We do so because we agree with Handler that "anthropologists have to take all individuals and their culture-making activities seriously."

We are very much concerned about the conspiracy of misinformation that Spiegel's position seems to call for. Even if one could get all anthropologists and indigenes in a region to join in and maintain such a conspiracy (a most unlikely prospect), a clever journalist could easily penetrate this, causing embarrassment to individual anthropologists and the discipline as a whole (see, e.g., Bordewich 1996:204–39). In the long run, this would do anthropological advocacy more harm than good, because effective advocacy—like anthropological authentication—rests on the public's trust in anthropology's truthfulness. That trust comes from many quarters and does not exclude the possibility of deconstructing some essentialized indigenous images in the service of indigenous advocacy. Though he is known as one of anthropology's sharpest critics, Vine Deloria Jr. (1991) argues that anthropology should be used to counter the damaging misinformation of Peter Matthiessen (a major promoter of the "authenticity" of the Western Gate) and Ruth Beebe Hill because its institutionalized self-correcting mechanisms promote truth in the long run. Kealiinohomoku endorses this path, and, while we acknowledge that what constitutes "truth" may be culturally constrained, so do we.

Friedman's conception of responsible "distance" is antithetical to applied anthropology and clearly impossible under policies and procedures that seek anthropological authentication of traditions based on empirical evidence. But we may critique his stand further by noting that indigenous and traditionalist identity movements are based on claims of continuity and are challenged by claims of recent invention. Researchers who disseminate findings of continuities or recent inventions of any sort—be they cultural objects, social ties, or "ontologies"—engage in verification, regardless of their intent or evidence. The alternatives are not much better. Choosing not to investigate social construction is abandoning the study of social process, and failure to disseminate one's findings is tacit acceptance of the status quo, acquiescence in the hegemony of the latest ef-

fective self-representation. From our perspective, Friedman is a participant in the authentication of Hawaiian identity and tradition, just as we are in the Chumash case. Pristine “distance” is simply illusory.

In contrast to the cases in Dyck and Waldram (1993), clientage is not a constraint on anthropological practice in the Chumash case (Trigger). Anthropologists’ advocacy of Chumash Traditionalism has almost always been against the interests of the client. Craig and King began their advocacy on Point Conception when their client was the developer (see King and Craig 1978). Trigger also asks if only applied anthropologists are naive about constructivist models. We should clarify that the “authenticity” of Chumash Traditionalism and Traditionalists has also been promoted in academic works (see, e.g., Wilson 1994) and that naiveté alone does not account for all we have described. Some anthropologists fought to preserve acknowledged misrepresentations during the LNG resistance for their political utility, even charging anthropologists who held different views with ethics violations (Executive Committee 1979, 1980). We find less awareness of the constructivist model in the applied sector, but the problem is worse among local archaeologists, both academic and applied. We hope that this is changing with growing attention in the literature (see, e.g., Dietler 1994) and given the relevance of constructivist models to archaeological practice in the United States since the passage of the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act. Even so, we agree with Kealiinohomoku that our experiences signal a renewed need for more well-rounded intersubdisciplinary and ethics training.

Brown, Kelley, Jackson, O’Meara, and Spiegel raise the important issue of essentializations in law that constrain indigenous identities and anthropologists’ advocacy. Brown points out that “a certain timelessness” is embedded in federal Indian law and concludes that anthropologists are mere “bit players in a much larger political struggle.” He receives support in Kelley’s reference to “time immemorial” and “exclusive occupancy” in the Indian Claims Commission Act of 1946. Lurie (1970 [1955]:206) observes, however, that the Act does not contain the phrase “since time immemorial” and “factors of time and title can be variously construed.” We see some of this variation in regard to Chumash federal recognition. The Santa Ynez Reservation Chumash need not become Traditionalists to preserve their federal status because they are a “political entity.” Not surprisingly, Traditionalism is weak there. The nontraditionalists seeking federal recognition express their “timelessness” in terms of genealogical and social relationships to the past, not in the cultural terms favored by the Traditionalists, who cannot demonstrate similar genealogical and social relationships. The nontraditionalist group appears to meet more federal criteria than the Traditionalist group, whatever other weaknesses its application may have. The cultural timelessness of Traditionalists and the social and genealogical timelessness of nontraditionalists both have limited utility under laws that apply only to federally recognized Indi-

ans, such as the American Indian Religious Freedom Act Amendments of 1994 and President Clinton’s 1996 Executive Order 13007 on Indian sacred sites. These facts suggest that discussing social construction and the fluidity of culture is not a uniform threat to Indian legal status but threatens only a select set. Indeed, some anthropologists use constructivist models to celebrate the ingenuity in indigenous resistance (see, e.g., Hill 1992, 1996; McGuire 1992).

Indigenous traditionalism cannot be attributed solely or even primarily to the constraints of law. Friedman (1994) inspires the kind of research that will be needed to resolve this issue (Linde-Laursen). In any event, we do not wish to depreciate the influence of law. Our intent, rather, is to ensure that the sometimes crucial roles played by anthropologists in constructing and negotiating indigenous traditionalism are not lost from view. Anthropologists often are important agents—or agent-interpreters—of the law as Craig, King, and we have been, but other anthropological roles vis-à-vis the law are possible. Some of the anthropological practices we have described are replicated well beyond the Chumash case. The Chumash were named as part of the Bureau of American Ethnology’s nationwide efforts, in Powell’s words, “to produce results that would be of practical value in the administration of Indian affairs” (Hicks and Handler 1987:402). The building blocks of future traditionalisms were preserved (though incomplete and out of context) when a generation of Boasian anthropologists like Harrington recorded Native American traditions while the Bureau of Indian Affairs worked to destroy them (p. 405). As the primary interpreters of what “traditional” means in the National Historic Preservation Act, Parker and King (1990) simultaneously empowered traditionalism and constrained its form throughout the United States and its possessions. But whereas environmental politics figures prominently in the role of anthropology in making Chumash tradition, in other cases it may be anthropologists’ contributions to primitivism, ethnic tourism, and the ethnic arts market that matter more (Dilworth 1996).

There are legal constraints other than “timelessness” with which anthropologists must contend. The judgments of authenticity that anthropologists must sometimes make are constrained by modernity’s empirical, fact-based approach to history. The lawsuit over Hindmarsh Island (O’Meara) illustrates one of the risks anthropologists face if they fail to adhere to this standard. The academic anthropologist who supports empirically unsound claims of indigenous traditionalism by misrepresenting data probably risks only his or her reputation. The applied anthropologist, however, also risks lawsuits for fraud or negligence and the possibility of financial ruin. Jackson correctly notes that though this empirical discursive format could be “another example of modernist hegemony denying the right of self-representation,” so too is Chumash Traditionalism constructed in modernist terms of “origins and authenticity.” The implication Jackson appears to draw may be

reassuring to anthropologists who evaluate traditional cultural properties: modernity's terms are an appropriate framework within which to critique Chumash Traditionalism and the behavior of anthropologists who have promoted it.

We believe that Brown overstates the matter when he says that American Indian "reinventions" uniquely attract outside objections. These are common aspects of identity negotiation and boundary maintenance that can be seen elsewhere in historical sanctions against "passing" by blacks, resistance to creating a "mixed race" category on the U.S. Census, and the neoconservative critique of multiculturalism. Linde-Laursen raises the issue of situational switching in Chumash identity, but we have found this to be rare. One descendant of the ethnically mixed Tejon community emphasizes his Chumash and Tataviam ancestry alternately, depending on which is more pertinent to the specific setting. A senior member of Family A contacted us during an evaluation of a historic Spanish rancho property to say that she wanted her descent from the rancho family documented to establish her as a stakeholder in the environmental review process.

A useful comparative perspective is introduced in Spiegel's South African experiences, Kelley's description of the Navajo-origins problem, and Linde-Laursen's distinct genres in the literature on social construction. From our own experience, we have considered the Navajo relatively free of the intense impact of anthropological practice on cultural identity that we see with the Chumash, despite the richer history of Navajo anthropology.<sup>1</sup> The contrast between the Navajo's large, rural reservation and the smaller, more urban Chumash population seemed to account for this. It is interesting to see similarities emerging in the past decade, especially in the prominence of cultural resource management archaeology and its ability to create stakeholder status in land management. Several commentators ask how or why traditionalism works. O'Meara suggests that the effectiveness of tradition is rooted in a "human psychological tendency." Kelley suggests that "diffusion" can be resurrected and applied to these social processes. Diffusion has been replaced by the morally tinged "appropriation" and "expropriation," in which culture is exclusive property whose movement usually reflects the exercise of power. From a constructivist perspective, there are times when cultural transmission may be better described as diffusion.

One of the indications that Friedman misunderstands our purpose is his statement that anthropologists "are designated in this article as experts on Chumash tradition." We make or imply no such simplistic or exclusive claim. Instead, we have explored the implications of the authority granted to anthropologists and anthropological data in order to assess how anthropologists have used it and how this figures in processes of iden-

tity construction, negotiation, and contestation. We explicitly state our concerns about the traditional-cultural-property guidelines, including the authority they grant to anthropologists. We acknowledge the expertise on various parts or versions of Chumash tradition of Maria Solares, Fernando Librado Kitsepawit, contemporary Traditionalists, nontraditionalists, and others. And we portray all Chumash as equally modern, equally constructed, if of stuff that carries different weight in particular contexts. Why, then, does Friedman perceive "what seems to be the virtually total absorption of the authors in the cultural verification problem?"

The answer is to be found in what he accepts as the "social processes" by which traditionalism is constructed. Friedman says he does not find "how" the essentialization of tradition occurs and "why it works" in our description of participants' various goals and rewards, exploitation of popular imagery of primitivism, or anthropological verification. He believes traditionalisms work because people are able to "harness representations of the world, however contestable, to their ordinary experiences, their existential conflicts." This suffices as a view of the internal or psychological processes behind the formation of social movements (though it is not unique to traditionalist ones). But from the relational perspective we have taken, in the tradition of Barth and Cohen, the level of contestation does affect how much influence and resources members can obtain, their ability to recruit members, how boundaries are drawn and maintained, the form, value, meaning, and sources of symbols, and the form tradition takes. In short, the extent to which tradition can be contested affects how the movement succeeds and why it works. In his narrow focus on internal processes, Friedman declines to recognize group relationships generally and anthropological verification in particular as equally relevant social processes. This article is all about social processes in the construction, negotiation, and contestation of indigenous traditional identity and addresses "the cultural verification problem" only as one of these.

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