LATE PREHISTORIC CULTURAL HORIZONS ON THE CANADIAN PLATEAU

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

In North American archaeological syntheses, the Canadian Plateau is often either ignored, characterized as identical to the Columbia Plateau, or included with the Columbia Plateau and Great Basin (e.g., "Basin/Plateau"). This situation exists primarily because there are no published archaeological syntheses of Canadian Plateau prehistory. It is hoped that the following culture–historical model for the last ca. 4000 years of Canadian Plateau prehistory will help to ameliorate this problem. We believe this synthetic summary will contribute to a better understanding of the late prehistoric period on the Canadian Plateau, and that it will be useful as a general guideline to structure future culture–historical sequences and provide some measure of chronological control for processual studies.

The approach taken in this synthesis has a somewhat "normative" bent (Binford 1965, 1968) with respect to the manner in which the material cultural data are presented, although many important aspects of cultural systems relating to subsistence and settlement are also discussed. This model is not intended to be a final statement on late Canadian Plateau prehistory, and perhaps future research and theoretical trends may partially, or even radically, change some or all aspects of the integrative framework presented here.

Several key concepts must be defined. First, Plateau refers to the ethno–geographic culture area defined as the *Plateau of Northwestern America* (Ray 1939; Kroeber 1939). It lies between the Rocky Mountains in the east, the great bend of the Fraser River in the north, the Cascade and Coast Mountains to the west, and the California border and Blue Mountains to the south. The Plateau includes all Sahaptin speaking people (except the Modoc), the Upper Chinook, Kutenai, Interior Salish, and the Athapaskan speaking Nicola and possibly the Chilcotin, Carrier, and Sekani (Ray 1939:1–2) (Figure 1). According to Ray, two major cultural sub–areas of the Plateau are the Canadian or northern Plateau, and the American or southern Plateau, divided approximately along the international boundary. A possible sub–area is an "Athapaskan area" of central interior British Columbia, consisting of the territory occupied by the Chilcotin, Carrier, and Sekani. However, Ray had strong doubts that the Carrier and Sekani belong in the Plateau at all, but did suggest that the Chilcotin should be considered part of the Canadian Plateau sub–area.

Figure 1. Historic ethno–linguistic divisions on the Canadian Plateau.

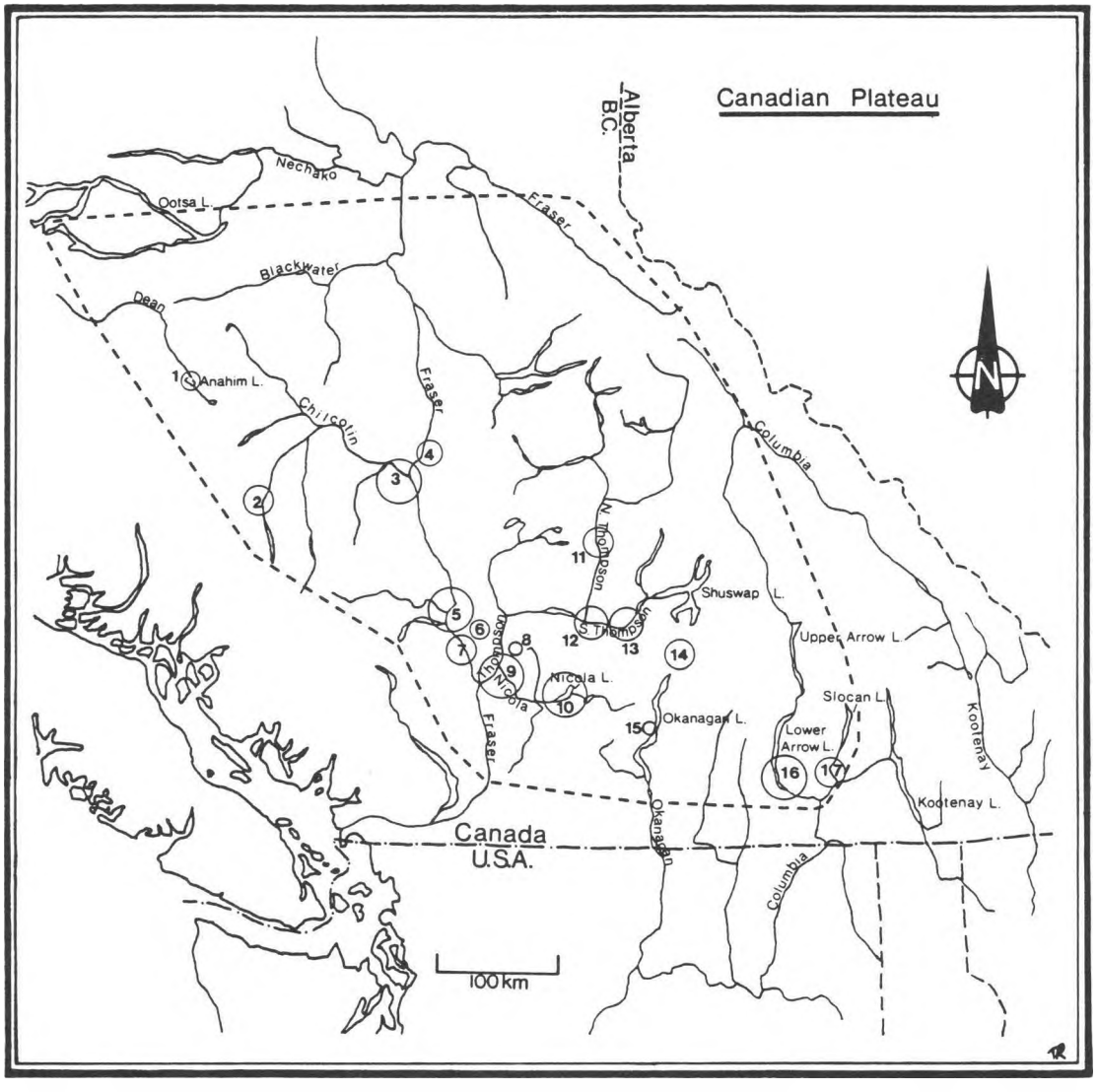

Figure 2. Present estimated extent of the Canadian Plateau cultural sub–area (dotted line), and location of investigated localities (circled). **(1)**: Anahim Lake locality; **(2)**: Eagle Lake locality; **(3)**: Mouth of the Chilcotin River locality; **(4)**: Williams Lake locality; **(5)**: Lillooet locality; **(6)**: Upper Hat Creek Valley; **(7)**: Lochnore–Nesikep locality; (8): Highland Valley locality; **(9)**: Lower Nicola–Spences Bridge locality; **(10)**: Nicola Lake locality; **(11)**: Barriere–Chuchua locality; **(12)**: Kamloops locality; **(13)**: Pritchard–Chase locality; **(14)**: Armstrong locality; **(15)**: Westside locality; **(16)**: Lower Arrow Lakes locality; and **(17)**: Vallican–Slocan Junction locality. References are listed in Tables 1 to 4.

The ethnographic Plateau culture area is widely accepted as an archaeological area (see Willey and Phillips 1958:20). Some of the above sub–divisions of the Plateau are also recognized by archaeologists, with the Columbia (or American) and Canadian (or Interior) Plateaus existing as archaeological *sub–areas* (see Willey and Phillips 1958:20–21). On the basis of available archaeological data, the *Canadian Plateau sub–area* is here considered to consist of the territory in southern British Columbia between the Coast Mountains on the west, approximately 50 km north of the international boundary to the south, and the Rocky Mountains to the east (Figure 2). The northern boundary of the Canadian Plateau is not clearly understood, but it is presently estimated to lie between the Rocky and Coast Mountains along 53° 30' North latitude. It extends approximately 600 km northwest–southeast and 400 km southwest–northeast with a total area in excess of 232,500 square km. We are not presently considering the East Kootenay region (east of the Kootenay River) as part of the Canadian Plateau. Ray's uncertainty about an ethnographic Sekani–Carrier–Chilcotin sub–area of the Plateau is considered to be well–founded, and territory occupied by the Sekani and Upper Carrier is not included in our present conception of the archaeological Plateau area. However, territory occupied by the ethnographic Chilcotin and Lower Carrier is included.

Culture–Historical Integrative Concepts

Archaeological studies in many parts of Canada are still at the stage of constructing culture–historical sequences. Such frameworks are necessary before specific research problems can be properly and adequately addressed within their respective temporal and cultural contexts. Archaeological research on the Canadian Plateau has long been hampered by the lack of a firm culture–historical framework. Sanger's (1969, 1970) sequence for the Lochnore–Nesikep locality was a useful and important initial contribution, however, subsequent research in other adjacent regions indicates that this framework cannot simply be extended to encompass the rest of the Canadian Plateau.

In the following pages we present a culture–historical sequence for the past 3500–4000 years of Canadian Plateau prehistory, and in the process use some terms and concepts which are not widely used—but are definitely not unknown—in North American archaeology. It is important that the reader fully understands the definitions and implications of the following culture–historical descriptive and integrative concepts. Important to the present study is the "tradition" concept, which was in use in North American archaeology long before Willey and Phillips' (1958) attempt at terminological standardization. *The cultural tradition* as proposed by Goggin (1949):

> . . . is a distinctive way of life, reflected in various aspects of the culture; perhaps extending through some period of time and exhibiting normal internal cultural changes, but nevertheless . . . showing a basic consistent unity. In the whole history of a tradition certain persistent themes dominate the life of the people.

Phillips and Willey (1953) accepted both technological and cultural traditions, but later decided the term should be limited to technological traditions only (Willey and Phillips 1958). However, the concept of cultural tradition was not to be laid to rest so easily, and it continued to be used extensively by North American archaeologists, and even eventually by Willey (1966, 1971) in his monumental study of the prehistory of the Americas. His concept of cultural tradition is consistent with previous usage: "Each major cultural tradition is characterized by a definite patterning of subsistence practices, technology, and ecological adaptation" (Willey 1966:4).

To summarize, the salient characteristics of a cultural tradition are as follows: (1) extended temporal persistence; (2) spatial continuity over a large, environmentally distinctive space; and (3) material cultural remains reflecting a unique culture pattern (i.e., subsistence practices, technology, ecological adaptation, social organization, ideology, etc.), although there is culture change within the basic pattern over time (see also Goggin 1949; Phillips and Willey 1953; Caldwell 1958; Lehmer and Caldwell 1966; Willey 1966:4; Bicchieri 1975; Zeier 1982).

Recognition and definition of a specific cultural tradition leads immediately to another problem: how does one make provision for expressing culture change—which can sometimes be substantial—within a cultural tradition (i.e., a distinctive segment of a cultural tradition)? Willey and Phillips (1958) did not define a culture-historical unit which fits the required characteristics of: (1) relatively restricted temporal duration; (2) extensive spatial continuity; and (3) material content reflecting a unique period of cultural stability within a larger cultural tradition. However, one of their concepts has the essentials of these requirements. A *horizon* is described by Willey and Phillips (1958:33) ". . . as a primarily spatial continuity represented by cultural traits and assemblages whose nature and mode of occurrence permit the assumption of a broad and rapid spread." The horizon has the characteristics of relatively short temporal duration and wide spatial extent, although their definition restricts it to single cultural traits or trait complexes. Expansion of the cultural dimension to encompass a temporally restricted segment of an entire archaeological culture (cultural tradition) leads to the *cultural horizon* concept (see Lehmer and Caldwell 1966; Caldwell 1966, 1967; Bicchieri 1975; Zeier 1982; MacNeish 1978; Richards and Rousseau 1983). Just as a *cultural tradition* represents an archaeological culture with considerable temporal duration, a *cultural horizon* represents a unique segment of such a culture. The

cultural horizon and cultural tradition are thus interrelated, with the latter comprised of two or more of the former, and the former having no meaning except in reference to the latter.

On a practical level, the cultural horizon is used to group contemporary phases from adjacent localities or regions within an area or "interaction sphere" (see Caldwell 1966; Lehmer and Caldwell 1966; Caldwell 1966; Caldwell and Mallory 1967; MacNeish 1978:65). This is best illustrated in Lehmer and Caldwell's (1966:515) original definition of the cultural horizon concept as:

> . . . a cultural stratum which includes two or more phases, or putative phases, which were approximately coeval and which are characterized by enough common traits, or variants of the same trait, to appear as manifestations of the same basic cultural complex.

They also ellucidate the relationship between cultural horizons, phases, and cultural traditions while discussing their specific case study in the Middle Missouri region:

> In each case the duration of the horizon through time is limited, and in most instances the horizon is found over a considerable geographic area. There is a high degree of correspondence in the cultural content between the phases which fall within each horizon. There is also enough similarity to earlier and/or later phases to demonstrate the persistence of the cultural tradition (Lehmer and Caldwell 1966:515).

The cultural horizon has also been discussed in some detail by Bicchieri (1975:250), although phrased in somewhat more modern terminology:

> To the extent that a horizon represents an extra-regional cultural continuum, it may be considered an "archaeological culture" . . . Being isolated in time to a stationary state, however, it can further be considered as one segment of a larger continuum involving a similar spatial limitation but an expanded temporal dimension. This larger continuum is . . . defined as a tradition in the sense of a "full cultural tradition".

In the following synthesis of late prehistoric Canadian Plateau prehistory, the cultural horizons are cultural-integrative units which document the widespread co-occurrence of several salient cultural traits and patterns that are represented in *components* throughout a contiguous geographical area encompassing several archaeological regions within specified, and relatively brief periods of time. Included in this conception is the relatively rapid spread of salient traits/patterns through the interaction of contemporaneous systems (MacNeish 1978) operating in broadly similar environmental contexts. Here, the contiguous geographic area containing contemporaneous interactive cultural systems is the Canadian Plateau sub-area.

We have defined our horizons on the basis of *components* rather than *phases* because the definition of local and regional phase sequences has not advanced to the point where horizons can be linked to phase definitions in all regions. It is important to understand that this is not due to a lack of available data, but rather, it is a result of what Canadian Plateau archaeologists have chosen to do with them. Logically, it makes no difference whether phases or components are used, since phases are comprised of components. This approach is not unprecedented on the Plateau, as Caldwell, who originated the cultural horizon concept, defined horizons within the *Southern Plateau Tradition* on the basis of coeval components rather than phases (Caldwell and Mallory 1967:77–81).

Cultural horizons on the Canadian Plateau are conceived as polythetic constructs. Clarke (1968:37) defines a polythetic cultural construct as:

> . . . a group of entities such that each entity possesses a large number of the attributes of the group, each attribute is shared by large numbers of entities and no single attribute is both sufficient and necessary to the group membership.

In the present case, "entities" refers to components. Criteria used to define cultural horizons include approximately contemporaneous inter–regional similarity expressed in: (1) settlement patterns; (2) subsistence modes; (3) winter pithouse size and construction; (4) lithic technology; (5) bone and antler technology; (6) formal artifact attributes; and (7) burial practices. Temporal periods (ca. 1000 to 1500 years) of relative cultural stability expressed by recurring constellations of major traits/patterns are recognized and defined as horizons. The alteration, appearance, or disappearance of several major cultural trait/pattern characteristics at approximately the same time (i.e., over a 100–200 year period) throughout the Canadian Plateau is considered to be indicative of short periods of significant and intensive cultural change. A horizon's appearance within any region may differ slightly in a temporal sense with that of other adjacent regions.

Projectile point types have long been regarded as "type fossils" in Plateau culture–historical research. Such an approach is incompatible with polythetic groups such as cultural horizons. It is clear from the presence of approximately contemporaneous, similar to identical projectile point styles on the Canadian and Columbia Plateaus, Northwest Coast, Rocky Mountain Trench, and Northern Plains, that projectile point types cannot be equated with "cultures" (see also Chance and Chance 1982:411–413). Nevertheless, projectile point styles are excellent temporal markers.

It is stressed that the horizon concept is not intended to replace the "phase" as a culture–historical unit in Canadian Plateau prehistory. Phases are archaeological units of study which are conceived and defined on the basis of

similarity in culture traits or patterns which are temporally limited to a relatively brief interval, and spatially confined to a *locality* or *region* (Willey and Phillips 1958:22).

We concur with Pokotylo and Froese (1983:127) that there is a need for systemic regional approaches aimed at examining the full range of aboriginal annual activities, but the first step must be the definition of regional phase sequences. It is recommended that unique sets of phase names be used to define individual regional sequences so that regional differences and research problems can be more readily identified and addressed. Admittedly, this approach will eventually result in a proliferation of regional phase names, however, this system has been used quite successfully on the Columbia Plateau without apparent confusion or major problems.

A Review and Assessment of Previous Canadian Plateau Sequences

The most widely known cultural sequence proposed for the south-central portion of the Canadian Plateau was developed by Sanger (1967, 1969, 1970) for the Lochnore-Nesikep locality in the Mid-Fraser River region (Figures 2 to 5). Considering the lack of detailed comparative information from adjacent regions, Sanger's pioneering work still stands as one of the most comprehensive studies undertaken on the Canadian Plateau. However, if his sequence were to be used as a framework for this synthesis, it would have to be extensively modified. Our approach is to leave the Lochnore-Nesikep sequence as a *local* sequence, as it was originally intended, and to propose a synthesis based on empirical data from throughout the Canadian Plateau.

The Lochnore-Nesikep locality sequence continues to be widely used on the Canadian Plateau in spite of many perceived problems (see Lawhead and Stryd 1985; Lawhead, Stryd, and Curtin 1986; Richards 1978; Fladmark 1982). Three major problems with the sequence are evident.

First, component mixing due to natural, aboriginal, and recent cultural disturbances was extensive at most of the important investigated stratified sites in the Lochnore-Nesikep locality, and resulted in an imperfect interpretation of the prehistoric sequence. Although it can be argued that mixing is a common problem at many sites on the Canadian Plateau, it appears to have been particularly severe at large habitation sites in the Mid-Fraser River region. Available data, and the authors' familiarity with this region indicate that there are relatively few localities suitable for winter pithouse villages that have shelter from the wind, exposure to the sun, access to fresh water, and sufficiently deep and penetratable deposits in which to excavate housepits. Due to the limited number of prime habitation areas, and the suspected high population density in this region during the last 2500

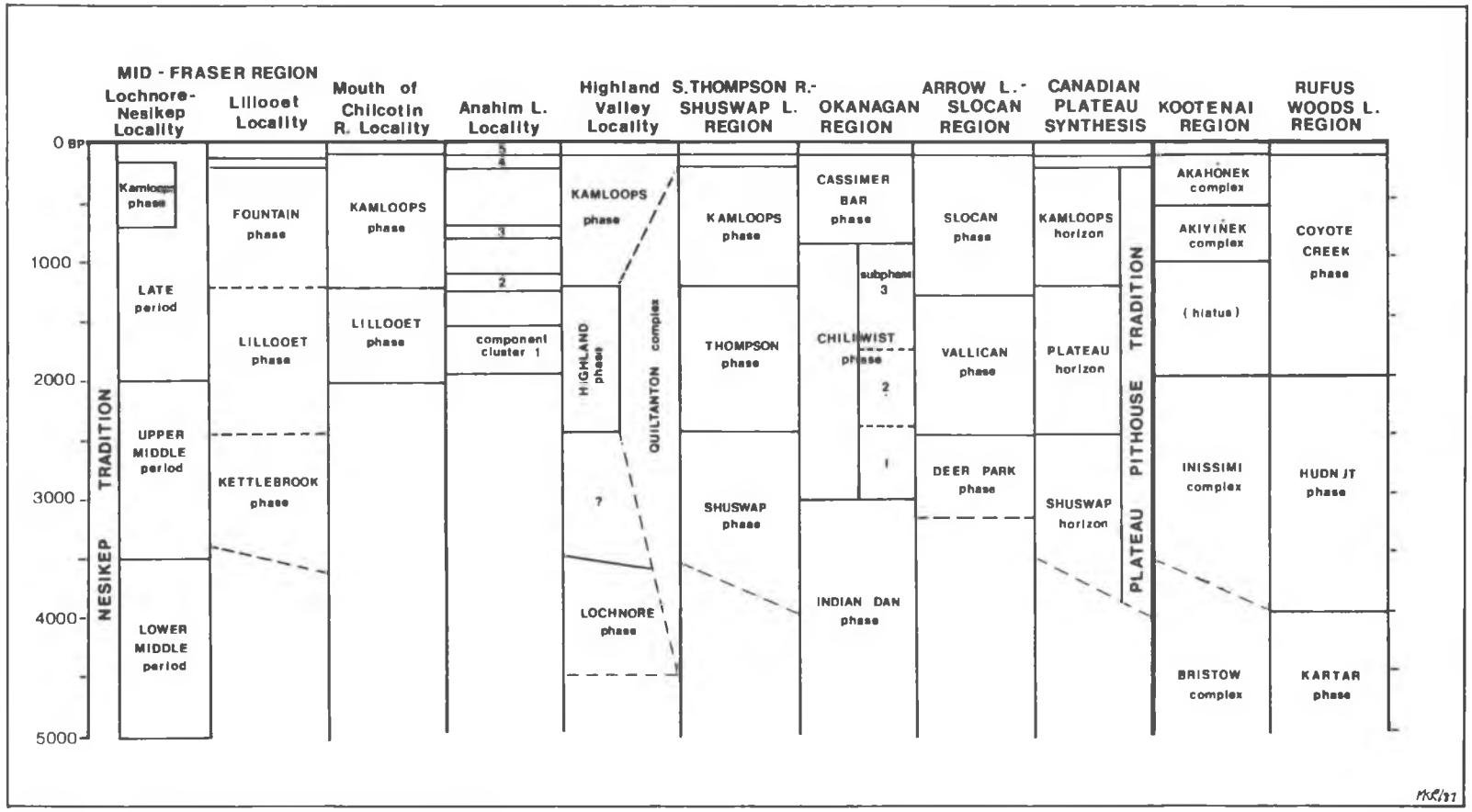

Figure 3. Culture–historical sequences defined for localities and regions on the Canadian Plateau. Recently proposed frameworks for the adjacent Kootenai and Rufus Woods Lake regions are also presented. References are listed in Tables 1 to 4.

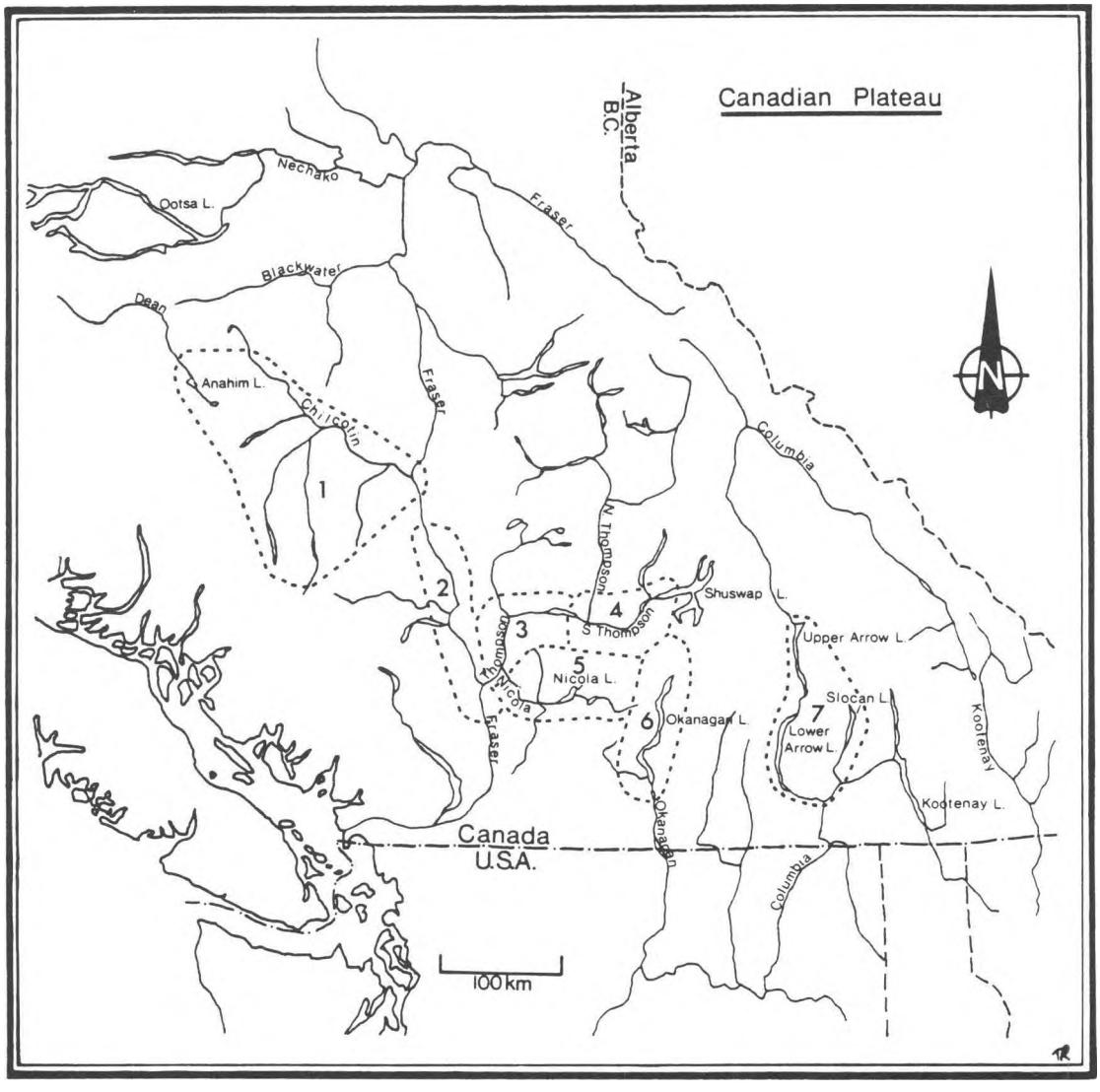

Figure 4. Investigated archaeological regions on the Canadian Plateau. Boundaries are provisionally defined, and may expand if future data allow. **(1)**: Chilcotin Region; **(2)**: Mid-Fraser River region; **(3)**: Thompson River region; **(4)**: South Thompson River-Western Shuswap Lakes region; **(5)**: Nicola region; **(6)**: North Okanagan region; **(7)**: Arrow Lakes region. References are listed in Tables 1 to 4.

years or so, suitable locations for winter pithouse villages were re-occupied many times (see also Blake 1974). Housepit mixing mechanisms recognized by researchers for Canadian Plateau housepits are summarized by Fladmark (1982:123).

A good example of apparent mixing is the Lochnore Creek site (EdRk 7), where a non-housepit component was badly disturbed by later construction of a pithouse on the same spot. The pithouse itself was repeatedly disturbed by re-use (see Sanger 1970:21-28). Another example is the deeply stratified Nesikep Creek site (EdRk 4) which was disturbed by aboriginal pit excavations, possibly including housepits, into earlier components. Inspection of the *Zone VI* floor plan of the main excavation block (see Sanger 1970:Figure 4) reveals the extent of the aboriginal disturbance. Pits excavated from the overlying *Zones III, IV,* and *V* are shown going through *Zones VI* and *VII* to underlying sterile gravel. Aboriginal excavation of a pit from *Zone III* through *Zones IV-VII* would have removed and redeposited cultural materials from the underlying zones on the *Zone III* occupation surface. Thus, cultural material from early components would be mixed with materials from later components on later occupation surfaces, leaving the earliest ones relatively unmixed but disturbed.

A second major problem is associated with the radiocarbon dates used to establish the Lochnore-Nesikep locality sequence. Several dates from the same components are widely divergent, and the validity of many were questioned by Sanger (1970:103-106), which left him with very few absolute dates to structure his sequence. A single sample of charcoal from *Zone I* of the Lochnore Creek site (EdRk 7) produced five dates: 2670±130 BP (GSC 407), 2605±140 BP (GSC 407-2), 3280±125 BP (GX 407), 3220±90 BP (GX 407-2), and 2680±100 BP (I 1866). Ages determined by the Geological Survey of Canada (GSC) and Isotopes Inc. (I) labs were fairly close, however, there is an approximate 500 year difference between these dates and those provided by the Geochron (GX) lab. Dr. H. Krueger of the Geochron lab related that, ". . . it was the most confusing and confounding situation that has arisen in 21 years and 11,000 ^{14}C analyses" (Krueger, pers. comm. 1985). Also, absolute dates were assigned to all excavated components on the basis of their relative stratigraphic position with respect to acceptable radiocarbon dated components (Sanger 1970:Table LV). Many of these dates are now considered to be of dubious accuracy in light of recent research (see Richards 1978; Fladmark 1982:127; Lawhead, Stryd, and Curtin 1986).

Thirdly, recent research indicates that the two cultural traditions outlined for the Lochnore-Nesikep locality (Sanger 1969) were defined prematurely. An over-emphasis on the significance of microblade technology led to the proposal of the *"Nesikep Tradition"*, a 7000 year-long cultural continuum. Convincing evidence for such cultural continuity has yet to be demonstrated, and the commencement date of 7000 BP has not been substantiated in any excavated and dated

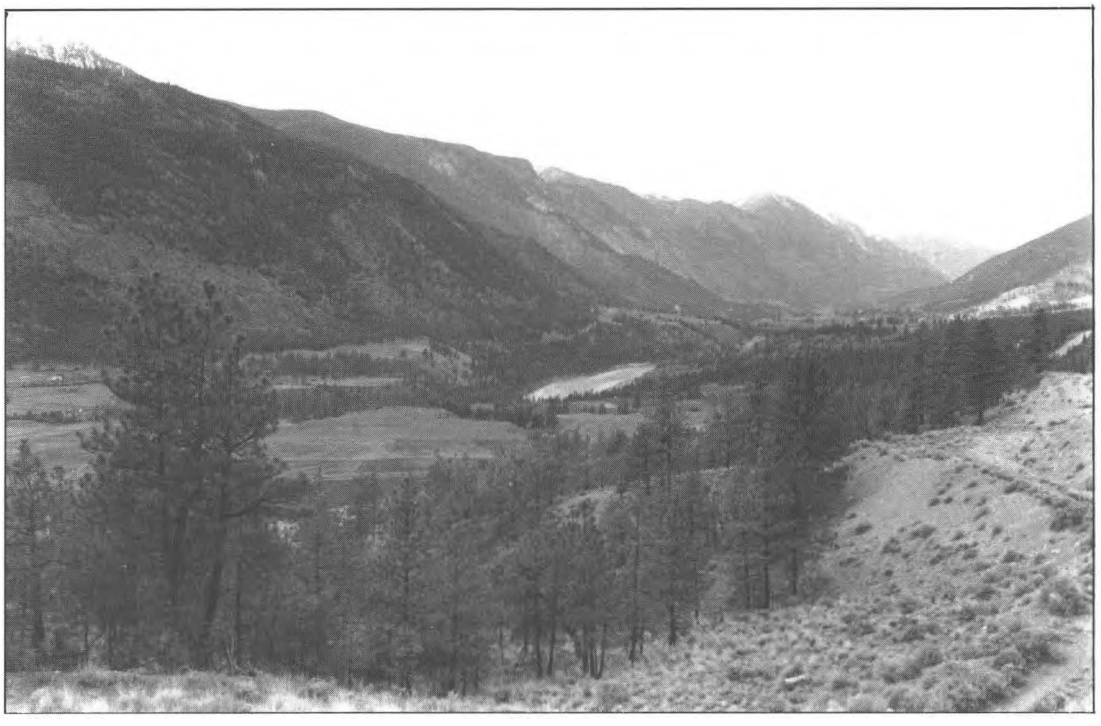

Figure 5. The Lochnore–Nesikep locality in the Mid–Fraser River Region, looking north.

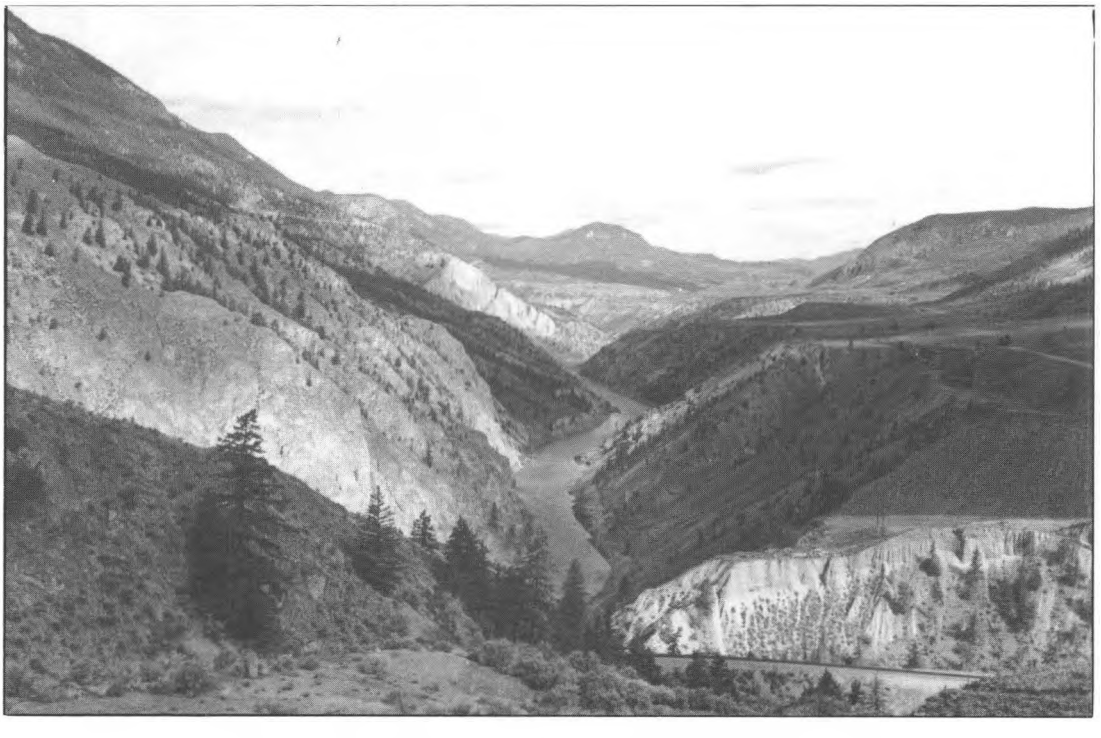

Figure 6. The area between Gibbs Creek (lower right) and Pavilion (distant) in the Mid–Fraser River region, looking north.

component on the Canadian Plateau. The reportedly earlier *"Lochnore Complex"* is disputed on the basis of present data that suggest it is not earlier than 7000 BP. The single component from the Lochnore–Nesikep locality attributed to this complex (EdRk 7, *Zone III)* was not radiocarbon dated, and the assemblage contains artifacts (Sanger 1970:Figure 31a,b,n,o) that are strikingly similar to those assigned to the recently proposed *Lehman phase* and *Lochnore phase* components of the Mid–Fraser and Thompson River regions dated between ca. 6000 and 4000 BP (see Lawhead and Stryd 1985; Lawhead, Stryd, and Curtin 1986:160–175).

Subsequent researchers have tended to assume this sequence is valid throughout the Canadian Plateau and have applied it rather uncautiously. The Lochnore–Nesikep sequence resulted from investigations at a single *locality*, and it is methodologically unsound to generalize the prehistory of the entire Canadian Plateau from a single locality. Further, the Lochnore–Nesikep locality is situated on the western periphery of the Canadian Plateau, adjacent to the Northwest Coast culture area, and there are clear indications that prehistoric populations occupying this locality closely interacted with coastal cultural groups, especially during the last 2000 years or so. The apparent degree of interaction is not characteristic of other parts of the Canadian Plateau, and it is hard to imagine a more inappropriate locus from which to generalize about Canadian Plateau prehistory, especially for the late prehistoric period.

In a recent descriptive overview of British Columbia prehistory, Fladmark (1982) is also critical of the Lochnore–Nesikep locality cultural sequence. In addition, he points out that many problems with the interpretation of Canadian Plateau prehistory are the result of most research having been conducted at mixed, multi–component housepit sites. Although Fladmark's overview is a useful introduction to the prehistory of the Canadian Plateau, it is not an integrative synthesis.

A considerable amount of research has been carried out in the Lillooet locality (Figures 2 and 6) of the Mid–Fraser River region in the last fifteen years (Stryd 1972, 1973a, 1974, 1980, 1981b, 1983a,b; Stryd and Lawhead 1978; Hayden *et al* 1986). Several of these projects also encountered problems with component mixing in housepit sites. On the basis of two seasons of fieldwork, Stryd (1973a,b) proposed two distinct cultural sequences which were essentially elaborations of Sanger's Lochnore–Nesikep sequence. While largely based on investigations near Lillooet, these sequences have been used in other parts of the Canadian Plateau. After three further field seasons, a sequence derived from the Plateau Pithouse tradition model (Richards and Rousseau 1982) was proposed for the Lillooet locality (Stryd 1983a, pers. comm. 1986) (Figure 3).

Figure 7. A housepit village near the confluence of the Chilko and Chilcotin Rivers in the Chilcotin region, looking northeast.

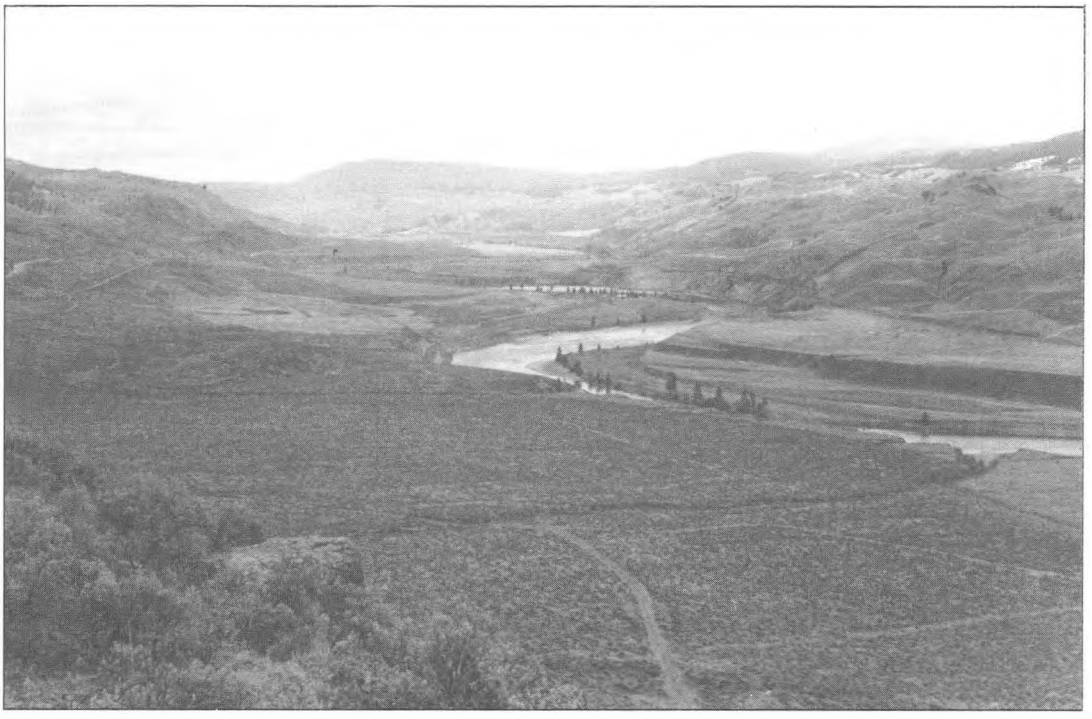

Figure 8. The Walhachin locality in the Thompson River region, looking east.

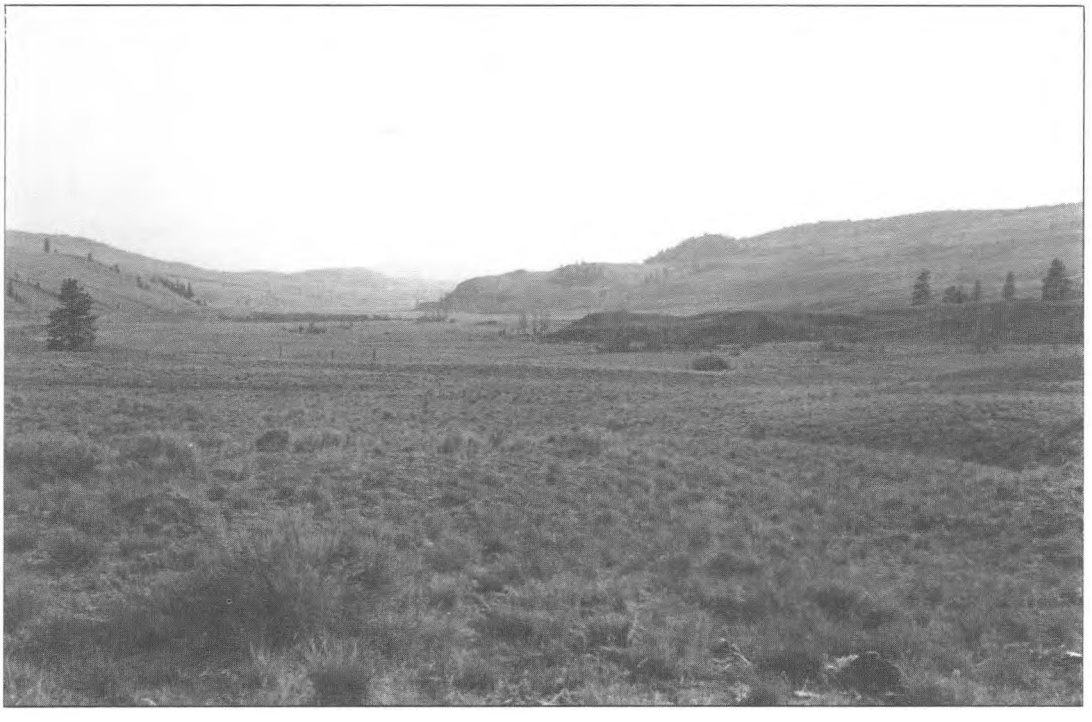

Figure 9. The area at the northern end of Nicola Lake in the Nicola Valley region, looking south.

The late Roscoe Wilmeth spent many seasons excavating in the Anahim Lake locality of the northwestern Canadian Plateau (Wilmeth 1978b, 1981) (Figure 2). Instead of phases, he proposed "component clusters" as a preliminary means of ordering his data (Figure 3). The contents of Wilmeth's component clusters generally agree with our sequence of cultural horizons, although slight differences are evident. These differences may be partially the result of suspected component mixing, but more likely they are related to a late prehistoric proto–Chilcotin migration into the area (Wilmeth 1978b), and adaptation to a relatively salmon–poor environment. More recently, work carried out at Eagle Lake (Matson *et al* 1980; Magne and Matson 1984) and at the mouth of the Chilcotin River (Matson, Ham, and Bunyan 1981) has addressed the problem of late Athapaskan southward migration. For the purposes of temporally ordering the archaeological data, Matson and Magne have adopted Stryd's (1973a) late prehistoric sequence (Figure 3), with the addition of the protohistoric/historic *Eagle Lake phase* (ca. AD 1700–1850), which is thought to represent Athapaskan occupation.

A formal cultural phase sequence for the Thompson River region (Figures 4 and 8) has yet to be defined. The few excavations that have been conducted are reported and discussed using Sanger's (1970) scheme for the Lochnore–Nesikep locality and/or Stryd's (1973a) sequence for the Lillooet locality (e.g., Von Krogh 1978; Whitlam 1980; Pokotylo, Binkley, and Curtin 1987). A regional framework is also lacking for the Nicola Valley.

Lawhead and Stryd have recently conducted investigations in the nearby mid–altitude Highland Valley, which lies southeast of Ashcroft between the Thompson River and Nicola regions (Lawhead, Stryd, and Curtin 1986) (Figure 2). Three late prehistoric culture–historical constructs are defined for this locality: the *Quiltanton complex* (ca. 5500/2100–1000/200 BP); *Highland phase* (ca. 2400–1200 BP); and *Kamloops phase* (ca. 1200–200 BP) (Lawhead, Stryd, and Curtin 1986:183–195) (Figure 3). Highland phase and Kamloops phase sites are interpreted as small hunting camps and stations seasonally occupied by Salishan populations from the lowland river valleys. Quiltanton complex components are approximately contemporaneous with the Highland and Kamloops phases, and are characterized by high frequencies of microblades and cores. Lawhead and Stryd provisionally interpret the Quiltanton complex components as possible evidence for seasonal utilization of this locality by Athapaskan–speaking Nicola–Similkameen people from the nearby Nicola Valley.

In the Kamloops locality (Figures 2 and 10) a late prehistoric cultural sequence attributed to the Nesikep tradition was proposed by Wilson (1980). It has recently been expanded temporally and spatially into a late prehistoric–historic sequence for the South Thompson River–Western Shuswap Lakes region, and is now considered to be affiliated with the Plateau Pithouse tradition (Richards and

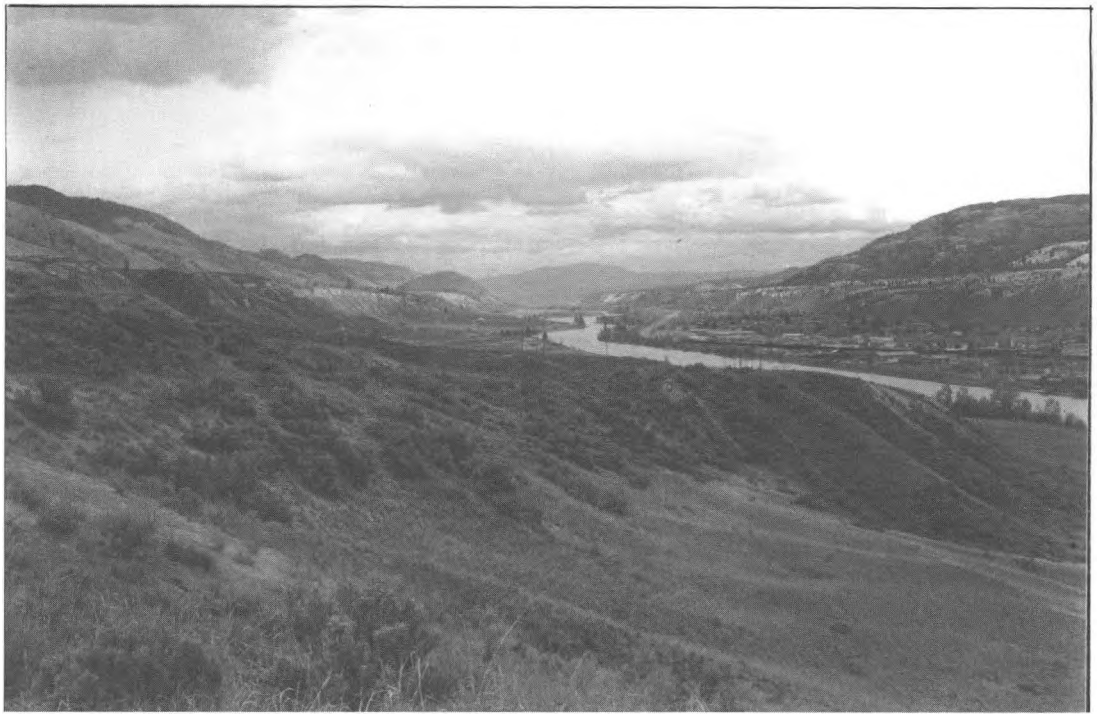

Figure 10. The area between Kamloops (foreground) and Monte Creek (distant) in the South Thompson River Valley, looking east.

Figure 11. The Scotch Creek locality (center) on Shuswap Lake, looking northeast.

Rousseau 1982; Rousseau and Richards 1985) (Figure 3). The South Thompson River–Western Shuswap Lakes regional sequence closely corresponds with the cultural horizon sequence proposed in the following pages, although it must be stressed that we have not simply generalized from this region to the entire Canadian Plateau.

For the Canadian Okanagan, Grabert (1974) proposed a sequence of phases originally defined for the Wells Reservoir, located at the confluence of the Okanagan and Columbia Rivers (Grabert 1968, 1970). Subsequent research in the southern Canadian Okanagan (e.g., Copp 1979; Roberts 1974; Rousseau and Howe 1979) confirms that the later prehistory of this area is quite similar to the Wells Reservoir sequence, but these later studies have been hindered by a paucity of radiocarbon dates. Recent excavations conducted by Rousseau (1984a, 1984b) at the Westside locality in the North Okanagan Valley (Figure 2) suggests that the late prehistory of this area has marked similarity with that of the South Thompson River–Western Shuswap Lakes region, and a general resemblance to the Southern Okanagan and Rufus Woods Lake region on the north–central Columbia River (Jermann 1985; Campbell 1985d). Grabert (1974:72) also recognized differences between the prehistory of the northern and southern Okanagan valley and remarked that:

> . . . it should be understood that the northern valley sub–region possesses some qualities distinct from the south; that although the north is not unique, neither is it a carbon duplicate of the Wells Reservoir archaeology. . . . In the final analysis the definition of culture phases in the Okanagan region may show that a mixture of technological traditions is present in the region. This is due in part to the valley's intermediate position between two geographically separate regions which converged culturally in recent prehistoric times. . . . Given that fish played so important a role in the storeable food resource of the Northwestern peoples, dwellers in the Okanagan would have had to look either to the Thompson River–Shuswap Lakes or to the Columbia River to the south for salmon. Thus, some part of their seasonal rounds brought them into socio–economic relationships with southern or northern peoples. Assuming that fishing was important for a substantial time span, it would have been an effective agent in structuring extra–community social relationships for prehistoric Okanagan peoples.

On the basis of Grabert's and Rousseau's research, it is suggested that the North Okanagan Valley should be considered as being aligned with the Canadian Plateau culture sub–area rather than with the Columbia Plateau. The boundary between the North and South Okanagan regions is provisionally recognized as existing at Okanagan Falls (see Teit 1930:199; Rousseau 1984a:157). For now, this locale is considered to be the approximate southern extent to which the Canadian

Figure 12. The Kalamalka Lake (left) and Woods Lake (distant) area in the North Okanagan region, looking south.

Figure 13. Upper Arrow Lake in the Arrow Lakes region, looking north.

Plateau cultural horizon scheme should be applied in the Okanagan Valley. This does not imply that a well-defined break in the continuity or content of the late prehistoric archaeological record exists at this location, rather, there is an observable subtle melding of North and South Okanagan cultural traits and patterns that conform to a cline between Penticton to the north, and Oliver to the south.

In the Arrow Lakes region of the West Kootenays (Figures 4 and 13) Turnbull (1977:107-111;Figures 2,3) defined a preliminary late prehistoric sequence which included the *Deer Park phase* (ca. 3300-2500/1600 BP) followed by the *Late Period* (ca. 1600-200 BP). This sequence has recently been expanded and modified by Eldridge (1984:42-46) in conjunction with investigations at the Vallican site (DjQj 1) in the Slocan Valley (see also Mohs 1982; Rousseau 1982). The revised sequence includes the *Deer Park phase* (ca. 3200-2400 BP), the *Vallican phase* (ca. 2400-1300 BP), and the *Slocan phase* (ca. 1300-200 BP) (Table 3).

Turnbull (1977:112-120), Eldridge (1984:43), and Choquette (1985) have noted that there are similarities between Arrow Lakes region materials with those from Kettle Falls on the Columbia River ca. 100 km to the south (Chance and Chance 1982). Historic and ethnographic accounts suggest that the southern territorial boundary of the Lakes Salish lay at Little Dalles on the Columbia River just north of Kettle Falls, but it is maintained that they visited this area, along with other groups, only during the salmon fishing season in the summer and early fall. When the fishing season ended, the Lakes returned to their homeland in the north (Arrow Lakes region) to spend the winter (Bouchard and Kennedy 1985:25-26). Teit (1930:251) indicates that Eagle Pass between Sicamous and Revelstoke, and "Fire Pass" (Cherry Pass) between Vernon and the upper end of Lower Arrow Lake were travelled by the Shuswap, probably to interact with the Lakes. Thus, the Arrow Lakes region occupies a unique position intermediate between the Canadian and Columbia Plateaus.

Chance and Chance (1982:421) have hypothesized that the Lakes separated from the linguistically-related and more southerly Colville and migrated north to occupy the Arrow Lakes region in relatively late prehistoric times, replacing an unknown group. Their model may have some validity, as Eldridge (1984:43) notes that the latter half of the Slocan phase component (ca. 700/500-200 BP) is quite similar to the *Shwayip period* at Kettle Falls, whereas the inital half of this phase (ca. 1300-700/500 BP) is characterized by slightly different material trait characteristics.

We have some reservation about considering the occupants of the Arrow Lakes region as full participants in the Plateau Pithouse tradition. Arrow Lakes region components express many notable similarities in the nature and temporal

distribution of material cutural traits with those elsewhere on the Canadian Plateau (particularly between ca. 3300 and 700 BP), and like the North Okanagan, this region is characterized by an admixture of Canadian Plateau and Columbia Plateau cultural traits and patterns.

Archaeological investigations conducted at late prehistoric sites in the Lower Fraser River canyon region between Boston Bar and the Hope area clearly indicate that this region is very strongly aligned with the Fraser Delta and Southern Northwest Coast regions, although some similarities with the Plateau do exist (e.g., use of winter semi-subterranean dwellings, a roughly similar projectile point sequence and chipped stone technology) (Borden 1961, 1968; Mitchell 1963; Hanson 1973; Von Krogh 1976, 1980; Archer 1980; Eldridge 1982). The occupants of the Lower Fraser in the 19th century were the Upper Stalo or Tait, who were linguistically and culturally affiliated with the Coast Salish groups to the west (Boas 1890:321; Duff 1952:11; Hill-Tout 1903:355). Because of these archaeological and linguistic differences, we do not regard the Lower Fraser River region as participating in the Plateau Pithouse tradition. We consider it as being transitional to, and more strongly aligned with, the distinctively different South Coast region (see also Von Krogh 1980:18).

LATE PREHISTORIC CANADIAN PLATEAU CULTURAL HORIZONS

Consideration of the currently available research data leads us to propose that three cultural horizons existed on the Canadian Plateau between ca. 4000/3500 and 200 BP. Together they comprise the *Plateau Pithouse tradition*, a cultural tradition characterized by semi-sedentary, pithouse dwelling, hunter-gatherer, logistically organized (Binford 1980), band-level societies that relied heavily on anadromous fish for subsistence. The Plateau Pithouse tradition and its constituent cultural horizons were conceived by adopting an empirical approach, utilizing data from virtually every excavated component on the Canadian Plateau. Our many years of excavation and survey experience throughout the Canadian Plateau were also heavily drawn upon. This approach allowed us to recognize broad cultural similarities shared between regions which have not been previously recognized. Caution was exercised when considering components which appeared to be badly mixed, and we occasionally drew conclusions on content and chronology that are somewhat divergent from those of the original investigators.

Our consideration of the currently available regional syntheses and personal experience suggest that several distinctive archaeological regions can be provisionally defined for the Canadian Plateau (Figure 4). They include: the Chilcotin region; Mid-Fraser River region; Thompson River region; South Thompson River-Western Shuswap Lakes region; Nicola region; North Okanagan region; and Arrow Lakes