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Gerow: *Co-traditions and Covergent Trends in Prehistoric California*

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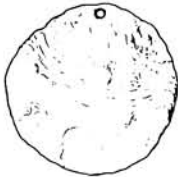
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Co-traditions and Convergent Trends in Prehistoric California. Bert A. Gerow. San Luis Obispo: *San Luis Obispo County Archaeological Society Occasional Papers* No. 8. 1974. v + 57 pp., 3 figs. \$3.00 (paper).

Reviewed by WILLIAM J. WALLACE
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The aim of this monograph (or perhaps two monographs, for the publication consists of two self-contained parts, each with its own bibliography) is to present an alternative interpretation to the generally accepted

schemes of California's past. To this end a detailed analysis is made of the physical and cultural attributes of the prehistoric populations of the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta and the Santa Barbara Coast. What emerges from the discussion is a hypothesis of initial heterogeneity in the two regions followed by a trend toward more homogeneity.

On the basis of a re-examination of the anthropometric data collected over the years, much of it uneven and/or of questionable validity, biological variability between the lower Sacramento Valley and Southern Coast peoples, as reflected in measurements and indices, is seen as being greater at an earlier date than in later times. From this it is concluded that a model of convergence involving interrelation between two somatically distinct populations rather than the prevailing theory of microevolutionary change better fits the evidence. The entry and expansion of Penutian speakers is suggested as a possible explanation for hybridization in the Delta.

A comparison of selected material items and burial practices leads to the parallel conclusion that in the two regions the cultural diversification was greater and more fundamental on an earlier time level. Two separate traditions are assumed to have existed, with subsequent converging trends. This leads to a questioning of the current interpretations, labeled as unilineal or neo-evolutionary by the author.

It is not difficult to find fault with this publication. For one thing, the title is misleading since the work does not treat the whole state. Often, too, the argument seems one-sided and the facts as presented susceptible to other interpretations. Nonetheless, the points raised are provocative and deserve a thorough examination.

