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COMMENT

Horizon and Tradition on the Southern California Coast: A Comment

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Koerper and Drover (1983) have compared Wallace's (1955) cultural horizons with my cultural traditions (Warren 1968) and concluded "that there is no need to burden the local literature with new designations for culture units when Wallace's terms . . . provide an adequate framework on which modifications may be imposed" (Koerper and Drover 1983: 25-26). In short, they assert that I have added confusion by introducing a set of terms that compete with those of Wallace. I do not think it either necessary or wise to defend all of the interpretation I made in that paper 15 years ago (Warren 1968). However, I do feel compelled to respond to the improper use of the concept of tradition and the misrepresentation of my paper in general.

Koerper and Drover (1983: 25) state:

In 1968, Claude Warren proposed a major synthesis of southern California prehistory to replace Wallace's, announcing that the "data accumulated since 1955 have split the seams of this [Wallace's] organizational device . . .," adding that ". . . the four horizons as defined [are] no longer feasible."

The complete quotation, however, reads:

The data accumulated since 1955 have split the seams of this organizational device, and to force the data into the four horizons as

defined is no longer feasible [Warren 1968:1].

I was objecting to the use of chronological units as if they were cultural units, an objection that is still valid. Wallace (1955: 215) defined "four broad temporal divisions or horizons" that "do not reflect detailed cultural historical changes with accuracy but . . . do provide a framework in which to discuss the data." Horizons, as used by Wallace, are identified by artifacts that are conceived of as having diffused relatively rapidly, so that all cultural units in which they are found can be said to fall within the same period of time. Wallace's horizons are, in fact, periods of time defined by the occurrence of time-sensitive artifacts. The period, so defined, is an important concept in developing chronologies, but cultural homogeneity is not a criterion for defining a period (Rowe 1962).

Wallace listed relatively few diagnostic artifacts for each horizon, and then discussed the general characteristics of the sites that fall within the horizon. For the assemblage of the Milling Stone horizon he said:

These are characterized by the extensive use of milling stones and mullers. There is also a general lack of well made projectile points. The few points that have been found are often leaf-shaped and of a size to suggest that they were used to tip darts propelled with the throwing stick [Wallace 1955: 219].

The Intermediate horizon is marked by the introduction of the mortar and pestle and an increase in chipped stone points, including stemmed and notched types (Wallace 1955:

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221-223). Small, stemless projectile points, together with a lengthy list of other items, characterize the Late horizon (Wallace 1955: 223). If the horizons are defined by these few attributes, they function well as chronological units. However, Wallace's discussion of characteristic sites and assemblages added descriptive data that led archaeologists to view the horizons as cultural units. Finally, Wallace (1955: 228) added a brief discussion of the cultural development, in which the horizons became very much like stages of cultural development throughout the southern California coast.

The internal cultural diversity of the horizons is obscured when they are viewed as cultural units rather than temporal units. The cultural sequences of the San Diego and Santa Barbara coasts exhibit such differences after about 3000 B.C. that forcing these data into a single cultural unit is not feasible, e.g., compare the cultural assemblage of the Aero-physics site (Harrison and Harrison 1966) with the later part of the occupation at SDI-603 (Crabtree, Warren, and True 1963). The cultural diversity within the horizon requires explanation, but the use of Wallace's horizons as both cultural and chronological units confuses the problem.

My attempt to resolve this problem was to introduce two concepts as vehicles for presentation of data: cultural tradition and cultural ecology. A cultural tradition was defined as comprising historically related phases and

... identified and distinguished from [another tradition] on the basis of differences in cultural patterns reflected in artifact types and assemblages and ... in cultural features within site units. Ideally a tradition is defined in an environmental vacuum with ecology playing no part in the definition [Warren 1968:1].

Cultural ecology was defined as "the interrelationship between a cultural tradition and its environment(s) ..." and it was as-

sumed that the major ecological factor was the

articulation between the technology and the environment in the production and processing of materials necessary for subsistence, especially foods. It is assumed that this ecological relationship is often a major influence if not the determining factor in other kinds of ecological relationships such as settlement patterning, and certain aspects of socio-political organizations" [Warren 1968:1].

It should be clear from these definitions that the cultural traditions I defined in 1968 were atemporal cultural units and not chronological units. It is apparent that Koerper and Drover did not recognize this difference between Wallace's "horizons," and my "traditions." They refer to both as "temporal units" and to "Warren's chronology" (1983: 25), and later state:

The description of Warren's *Campbell Tradition* reads somewhat like Wallace's description for *Intermediate Culture*. Warren does not recognize a Campbell tradition in Orange County, but rather sees the possibility of the Encinitas terminating there as late as A.D. 700 (1968: 2, 4) when a Shoshonean Tradition is said to begin. Warren's inability to recognize an *Intermediate Cultures period* in Orange County perhaps reflects the lack of conclusive data in 1968 [Koerper and Drover 1983: 26; emphasis added].

The point is that a horizon is a unit of time, marked by a diagnostic artifact, or artifacts, that cuts across cultural units. The tradition is a unit of cultural similarity that extends through units of time and space. Therefore, there is no doubt that components of the Intermediate Horizon occur in Orange County. The presence of the Campbell Tradition in Orange County, however, is still debatable.

The horizon concept is an integrative device by which archaeological data over a

wide area may be chronologically ordered into units of time. When constructing local chronological sequences on the southern California coast, as Koerper and Drover (1983) were attempting to do, the horizon concept is more appropriate than the tradition concept, as they claim. However, Wallace's horizons would be much more effective if they were defined on the basis of a few time-sensitive artifact types rather than entire cultural assemblages. Koerper and Drover's (1983) description of time-sensitive artifacts for Orange County is thus a positive contribution toward the solution of chronological problems of the region.

My paper, "Cultural Tradition and Ecological Adaptation on the Southern California Coast," (Warren 1968) was an attempt to: (1) underscore the cultural diversity within the Intermediate and Late Prehistoric Horizons and the long period of cultural continuity in San Diego and Orange counties that extends from the beginning of the Millingstone Horizon up to the Late Prehistoric Horizon; and (2) develop a means of explaining the cultural diversity on the one hand and cultural continuity on the other. The vehicle for doing so was a cultural ecological approach to the culture history of the southern California coast. It was not an attempt to define another chronology of coastal cultures.

Wallace's (1955) "A Suggested Chronology for Southern California Coastal Archaeology" is a pioneering paper that established a cultural chronology, and I do not wish to detract from its contributions. However, the horizon concept, which is the basic concept of Wallace's paper, does not by itself form "an adequate framework" (Koerper and Drover 1983: 26), nor is it "sufficient to our scholarly needs" (Koerper and Drover 1983: 1). The concepts of horizon and tradition are tools for archaeological analysis, just as the shovels and trowels are tools for excavation. The question should not be which tool is best,

but rather which tool is best used for the task at hand.

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