

# UC Merced

## Journal of California and Great Basin Anthropology

### Title

Sutton and Wilke, eds.: *Archaeological Investigations at CA-RIV-1179, CA-RIV-2823, and CA-RIV-2827, La Quinta, Riverside County, California*

### Permalink

<https://escholarship.org/uc/item/2vr6g048>

### Journal

Journal of California and Great Basin Anthropology, 11(2)

### ISSN

0191-3557

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### Publication Date

1989-07-01

Peer reviewed

min to look at these illustrations and give me his independent opinion on the issue. Ben, who I'd guess has seen as many *Olivella* beads as many California archaeologists, described the top two specimens on page 57 as "shirts, with big collars and a hole for your head to fit through," while he identified the specimen in the lower right of this figure as a "big banana." Interestingly, he identified the smaller specimens in Figure 1 (B) on page 79 as "beads." I felt vindicated.

But the artifact illustrations are a relatively minor issue. The papers in this volume are sound, well-written scholarly essays focused on time/space issues along California's southern coastline. With the exception of some tantalizing hints in the papers by Gibson and Erlandson about the variable past sociocultural contexts that beads may help elucidate, these studies are concerned principally with describing existing collections, in using beads as time-markers to establish components at each site/region, and in comparing shell artifacts found at these sites with others in the region. This appraisal should carry no negative connotations: chronology building and time/space distributions are indispensable elements in anybody's archaeology.

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*Archaeological Investigations at CA-RIV-1179, CA-RIV-2823, and CA-RIV-2827, La Quinta, Riverside County, California.* Mark Q. Sutton and Philip J. Wilke, eds. Salinas: Coyote Press *Archives of California Prehistory* No. 20, 1988, viii + 164 pp., 34 figs., 23 tables, \$12.45 (paper).

Reviewed by:

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The Coachella Valley of interior southern California may very well be one of the most poorly understood archaeological regions in the entire state. Prior to the mid 1980s, most archaeological investigations in the area were confined to surface surveys associated with cultural resource management projects. During this time, virtually no unifying, problem-oriented research was conducted in the Coachella Valley. The one major exception to this pattern was the work of Wilke (1978).

Due to the rapid rate of development in central Riverside County, archaeological research in the Coachella Valley grew considerably during the mid 1980s. Increasingly frequent field studies since then have reflected a growing variety of research questions and topics, as well as the emergence of cultural resource management as an applied process and as a means of funding basic research.

The monograph reviewed here represents an important contribution to the prehistory of the Coachella Valley and the Colorado

Desert, as it provides additional information concerning the aboriginal settlement and subsistence system that centered around ancient Lake Cahuilla. This volume is a revision of the original environmental document, and reports the results of various archaeological studies conducted at three prehistoric sites located in the City of La Quinta, Riverside County, California.

The text consists of twelve chapters that include a description of the natural and cultural environment, a description of a rock cairn complex (CA-RIV-2823), the results of test excavations at CA-RIV-2827, and a thorough description and discussion of the material culture, human remains, and ecological remains recovered from site CA-RIV-1179. Chapter 10 presents the analytic results of human coprolites recovered from CA-RIV-1179 and -2827. These data provide direct evidence regarding the ancient diet of the sites' occupants, as six plant and six animal species were identified in a sample of 33 coprolites. Chapter 11 entails the analysis of fish remains from sites CA-RIV-1179 and -2827, and identified four species of fishes native to the lower Colorado River (bonytail, Colorado River squawfish, razorback sucker, and striped mullet). The final chapter is devoted to summary and interpretation, and includes a discussion of the sites, the materials recovered from them, and the apparent role of each in the regional settlement-subsistence system.

Much of the monograph concerns site CA-RIV-1179, a seasonal camp located approximately 500 meters south of the former shoreline of Lake Cahuilla. The site occupied an area of approximately 1,500 square meters, and contained midden soils that extended to one meter below the surface. Based on data derived from radiocarbon, shell bead, and ceramic analyses, it is concluded that the use of CA-RIV-1179 occurred between A.D. 1250

and 1500. Abandonment of the site probably coincided with the disappearance of Lake Cahuilla.

Overall, the volume is a solid piece of scholarly work that contains few deficiencies. The only substantive problem this reviewer was able to identify concerned the sections on ceramic analysis. The identities of the recovered ceramic wares and their respective temporal affiliations were adapted from Waters (1982a, 1982b, 1985), who, for example, maintains that Colorado Buff vessels date to Patayan III (ca. A.D. 1500-1900) times. As noted by Cordell (1984:98-100) and Lyneis (1988), as well as by Waters (1982a) himself, there are a number of problems associated with devising an accurate chronology of the ceramic period in the lower Patayan area. These include a paucity of absolute dates, a minimal number of vertically stratified sites with which to document the stratigraphic associations of various ceramic wares and types, and considerable confusion regarding the definitions of various ceramic types. Given the co-occurrence of Colorado Buff and Salton Buff ceramics at CA-RIV-1179 and -2827, which in all likelihood were not occupied after A.D. 1500, it seems prudent to assign an earlier date for the introduction of Colorado Buff pottery to the Salton Basin. It is entirely possible that this ware was produced in the area as early as A.D. 1000.

Furthermore, there is no mention of the presence of ceramic slips on any of the Colorado Buff or Salton Buff sherds recovered from CA-RIV-1179 or -2827. This is somewhat surprising, given the relatively large size of this sub-assembly (Colorado Buff sherds numbered 105, and Salton Buff sherds numbered 484). Based on the experience of this author, aboriginal sites in the Coachella Valley commonly contain Lower Colorado Buff Ware sherds that exhibit slips ranging

from light orange, to orange-pink, to red in color. Additionally, these sherds oftentimes have been burnished.

These minor problems in no way detract from the high quality of archaeological research represented by the monograph. The editors and contributors are to be congratulated for their fine work. This volume stands as a major contribution to the archaeology of the Salton Basin, and no doubt will become a standard reference for future workers in the region.

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In *Gum Saan*, Gold Mountain, it's said, one can get rich picking up gold nuggets from the streets. This story describing California still is told in southern China. The authors picked up 7000+ artifacts from the streets of Walnut Grove, California. This is a rich and extraordinary report. Even seven iron money safes were found in the streets. And, what more would one ask for—nearly 4,000 sherds of emptied sake bottles. Literary folklorists well might consider this another version of the *Gum Saan* tale, but this report really is a landmark pictorial catalogue of the evidence.

Walnut Grove, in the rich delta farmland 30 miles south of Sacramento, was established in the late nineteenth century and became a small, rural center for agricultural workers. By 1915 the property assessments listed 101 Chinese, 46 Japanese, and 20 Caucasians present. The Asians lived in the "Chinatown" area, "sharing" (p. 3) a three-block section that was entirely leveled by a major fire that year. Following the fire, the local Japanese, Sze Yup Chinese, and Chungshan Chinese each relocated as separate ethnic communities in different locales.

In 1984 Public Research Archaeology was contracted to monitor the backhoe trench excavations required for new sewers, storm drains, and water lines throughout Walnut Grove. In the three blocks of the old China-