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Jones and Waugh: *Central California Coastal Prehistory: A View from Little Pico Creek*

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will be able to find subtler versions of barbs and stings in several of its chapters. Hence, it is not merely a reading and quoting circle. Secondly, it focuses on issues we *should* be able to resolve: the how, when, where, and why of the expansion of related language groups, over a large area, in relatively recent times. The book shows you why we cannot resolve the "Numic Problem" right now. It also will give you hope that resolution is coming. Resolution in increments, but resolution nonetheless.



Central California Coastal Prehistory: A View from Little Pico Creek. Terry L. Jones and Georgie Waugh. University of California, Los Angeles, Perspectives in California Archaeology, Vol. 3, 1995, 186 pp., 68 figs., 120 tables, 3 appendices, bibliography, index, \$22.00 (paper).

Reviewed by:

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This monograph reports on the excavation of two sites located on the north coast of San Luis Obispo County, California (CA-SLO-175 and CA-SLO-1259). The sites are situated on either side of Little Pico Creek, and were investigated on multiple occasions during the 1960s and 1980s. Site CA-SLO-175 was originally excavated in 1965 and 1966 by David Abrams during his undergraduate days at the University of California, Los Angeles; both sites were later inves-

tigated by a team of Caltrans archaeologists in 1989, under the direction of the authors. Based on an integrative analysis of materials from both the Abrams and Caltrans excavations, Jones and Waugh organize their findings into discrete time periods and use this information to address outstanding research issues of the region. It is an attractive volume with excellent graphics work by Tammara Ekness, Peter Mundwiller, Rusty van Rossman, Betsy Bertrando, and Scotty Thompson, and will be an important reference for future studies along the central coast of California.

The report is divided into 11 chapters. Chapter 1 provides a brief introduction to the study, followed by a review of the environmental, ethnographic, and prehistoric contexts of the region (Chapter 2, *Research Context*). This chapter is highlighted by a comprehensive review of previous archaeological studies in the region, focusing largely on explanatory models of population replacement, subsistence intensification, social intensification, and settlement organization. Chapter 3 provides a basic review of field and laboratory methods, while Chapters 4 and 5 deal with site structure and chronology. Chronological organization of the findings is based on eight radiocarbon dates, 62 source-specific obsidian hydration readings, and 855 temporally sensitive beads and ornaments. All marine shell dates are corrected for isotopic fractionation and marine reservoir effects. Beads and ornaments are carefully described and discussed with respect to their temporal placement within other sites in the region. Spatial analysis of these data revealed two major periods of occupation at the sites: Little Pico Creek I (Early Period, 3,500 to 600 B.C.) and Little Pico Creek II (Middle Period, 600 B.C. to A.D. 1250). After a possible hiatus in the use of the Little Pico Creek site complex between A.D. 1250 and 1500, Jones and Waugh also found evidence for a small ephemeral occupation dating from A.D. 1500 to contact.

Obsidian hydration data were obtained from 49 pieces of glass, 24 from Casa Diablo, 23 from the Coso Volcanic Field, and two from other sources. The vast majority of Casa Diablo and Coso hydration readings fall between 3.0 and 4.0 microns (μ), Casa Diablo averaging 3.5μ and Coso 3.7μ . Rather than converting these data to absolute age estimates based on rates developed by archaeological studies on the eastern side of the Sierra Nevada (see Hall and Jackson 1989; Basgall 1990; Gilreath and Hildebrandt 1997), Jones and Waugh suggest that the convergence of Casa Diablo and Coso readings at Little Pico Creek indicates that both glasses hydrate at about the same rate. This approach to dating runs counter to multiple lines of evidence generated from sites located nearer to the Casa Diablo and Coso source localities (see above references), where diagnostic projectile points and hydration-radiocarbon pairings show that Coso obsidian hydrates faster than Casa Diablo obsidian. Due to the widespread implications of the Jones and Waugh approach (including issues of chronology, interregional exchange, and others), the relationship between Coso and Casa Diablo obsidian hydration should be reevaluated during future projects along the central coast of California.

Chapter 6 was written with the assistance of Lara Weinheimer and provides a detailed analysis of 40 human burials recovered from CA-SLO-175 (no burials were encountered at CA-SLO-1259). It includes a review of burial practices, grave associations, and osteological patterns. The latter analyses focus on age and sex determinations, stature estimates, pathologies, dietary stress, and trauma. These data are then compared to other burial populations along the central and southern California coast, focusing on correlations between resource intensification and declining health conditions.

Chapters 7, 8, and 9 deal with flaked stone tools and debitage, ground and battered stone implements, and bone artifacts. The projectile

point discussions in Chapter 7 are quite good because they address problems with local projectile point sequences, reviewing how temporally discrete morphological types are difficult to identify in the region, and how artifact reworking may have contributed to this dilemma. Detailed analyses of other tool types are also included; however, the data are not presented by time period, but combined into a single, atemporal analytical unit. Although these analyses are interesting and clearly reflect the residential nature of both sites, the lack of a chronological dimension limits their interpretive value.

The study of faunal remains (Chapter 10) is particularly outstanding because it has a chronological dimension, and applies a practical approach to sampling and analysis that is becoming increasingly rare along the central coast of California. Recent advances in microsorting (e.g., Erlandson 1994) have made progress in the quantification of shellfish and fish, but due to the high costs associated with this approach, samples are quite small and usually underestimate the importance of larger vertebrates, such as pinnipeds and deer (see Peterson 1984). Because column samples rarely produce significant numbers of large mammal identifications, let alone species-specific butchering pattern data, comprehensive dietary reconstructions require a mixed strategy of sampling. Jones and Waugh solve this problem by analyzing vertebrate faunal remains from all excavated contexts, eliminating biases associated with off-site butchering through calculating the minimum number of individuals (MNI) and converting these values to usable meat weights. Invertebrates and smaller species of fish were quantified through microsorting of column samples, and then compared to the larger assemblage using simple correction factors to account for differences in sample size. This approach is a marked improvement over the use of only small microsamples, and produces data that may alter current models of subsistence/settlement pattern change.

Chapter 11 provides a summary and conclusion to the study. It summarizes the temporal components identified at the project sites, but does not provide a quantitative presentation of data by component area (this information can be constructed from the data appendices, however). These generalized assemblages are combined with other local materials and compared to those of the Santa Barbara and Monterey coasts, identifying a high degree of cultural continuity through both the Early and Middle periods, but significant differences thereafter. Subsistence-settlement pattern data are then combined with results of the osteological analyses, revealing correlations between resource intensification and decreasing quality of health similar to that identified on the Channel Islands (see Walker 1986; Lambert 1993). Discussions of exchange focus on obsidian, noting that the decline in hydration readings after 3.0μ may reflect a disruption of obsidian trade in the Late Period. Although this inference is reasonable for Casa Diablo obsidian, the readings produced by Coso glass are much more problematic due to the issue of variable hydration rates outlined above.

Appendix A presents 68 tables of raw data, facilitating additional analyses by researchers in the future. Appendix B lists important excavation projects along the coasts of Santa Cruz, Monterey, San Luis Obispo, and Santa Barbara counties, while Appendix C outlines methods used to estimate stature of the skeletal remains from CA-SLO-175.

In conclusion, Jones and Waugh have made an outstanding contribution to the prehistory of the central California coast. Not only do they describe their findings in a form that will be useful in the years to come (i.e., the detailed appendices), they interpret their results with reference to archaeological studies ranging from Monterey Bay to the Santa Barbara Channel, all within a theoretical framework grounded in evolutionary ecology. This truly integrative work is a credit to the authors and should be on the shelves of all

people interested in the prehistory of the central California coast.

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