

Membership Year 2010
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La Pintura

The Official Newsletter of the American Rock Art Research Association
Member of the International Federation of Rock Art Organizations

<http://www.arara.org>

ARARA 2011 Conference

The ARARA 2011 Conference will be held in Idaho Falls over Memorial Day weekend (May 27–30, 2011). The venue will be the Shilo Inn on the Snake River in Idaho Falls, southeastern Idaho. It is conveniently adjacent to I-15, which runs north from Salt Lake City, and is the western gateway to Jackson Hole, and the Grand Teton and Yellowstone National Parks via State Route 26. The Shilo Inn Conference Center is located east of I-15, Exit 119, along the Scenic Snake River Parkway. The municipal airport is serviced by Delta Airlines and others, and Idaho Falls is an easy three-hour drive from Salt Lake City.

The meeting and guest rooms are spacious and include refrigerators, microwaves, and internet, with an ARARA room rate of \$72 for one or two persons per room that includes a full hot breakfast. Room reservations may be made by phoning 208-523-0088. Be sure to ask for the ARARA rate.

Carolynne Merrell, local chair, has been busy planning some great fieldtrips, as outlined in this issue of *La Pintura*. Plans are also being made for a fun, unique reception. Be sure to check the web site for further details.

The registration and field-trip packet will be mailed the first week in January, and posted on the ARARA web page. The Call for Papers is available now. ☉

ARARA Field Trips 2011 General Information

Carolynne Merrell, Local Chair

The field trips planned for the ARARA 2011 Conference will be conducted in coordination with the BLM Idaho Falls Field Office, the Salmon Challis National Forest, the Idaho National Laboratories (INL), a private land owner, the city of Pocatello, and the Shoshone Bannock Tribes. In conference with the Culture Committee of the Shoshone Bannock Tribes, concerns were voiced for the protection

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The ARARA 2011 Logo

The 2011 ARARA Conference logo is based on a pictograph that is familiar to rock art enthusiasts from Idaho. It was featured on the Archaeology Month poster for Idaho in 1990, and was the frontispiece photo in the book *Back-tracking: Ancient Art of Idaho* by Max G. Pavesic and William Studebaker. The site is a favorite of Max's, who describes it beautifully in his book. He has given permission to use this quote.



The rock art occurs in a large overhang located in a narrow mountain canyon. The setting overlooks the Lemhi Mountains and the Birch Creek Valley floor, which appear frozen in the distance. One of the unique characteristics of the overhang is that during a full moon the canyon is literally set aglow. The moon fills the canyon from rim to rim, and the viewer becomes transfixed. The timing may have been considered sacred with the celestial source providing power and inspiration. Certainly, the large, horned being is a classic characterization of a shaman in North American iconography. This impressive figure in full headdress is one of the most powerful images in Idaho rock painting. Standing erect with spread arms and hands with splayed fingers and straight legs, the figure emanates power or importance. Its stark white coloring adds to the mystique [Pavesic and Studebaker 1993].

This site will be visited during one of the tours planned for the 2011 meeting in Idaho Falls. ☉



ARARA Field Trips... *continued from page 1*

of the sites visited and the need to keep the visitation and publication of these fragile sites to a minimum. For these reasons we are asking all field-trip participants to sign a statement that photographs and site locations not be placed on any electronic communication formats. This would include Facebook, emails, ipods, web sites, etc.

Rock art sites in southeastern Idaho are generally spread-out over considerable distances and frequently consist of small, sequestered, remote locations with only a few images that have not held-up well to the natural elements. In arranging for the 2011 tours, we have worked to find sites that are larger, within reasonable driving distance from Idaho Falls, and have an interesting array of figures. For these reasons we will not offer as many trips as in previous conferences. However, access to most of the sites is easy to moderate. Vehicles with high-clearance will work best on the dirt roads. Car pooling will be a necessity. Weather may be “iffy,” so plan on layers, rain gear, and good, sturdy shoes. Lunches and water for day-trips will be up to the individual. Box lunches can be purchased by ordering ahead from the Shilo Inn.

Registration for trips and placement into trips will be handled by Jennifer Huang. I greatly appreciate her assistance with this aspect of the tours. We will be working together to make sure the trips run smoothly. Leaders for each trip will be listed later in the Spring.

Interest in Extreme Group

There are a few very nice sites that will be open to those who are able to traverse steep slopes with the desire to see some choice images in unique locations. If you are one of those people who enjoy extreme climbing over rocky terrain, or bouldering, please email me so I can see how much interest there will be for this type of trip. You must have good boots, and be in good physical condition. Altitude may bother some (approximately 5,000+ feet). The goal is to have this “Extreme” group travel independently from the general tours to avoid keeping tour members waiting. If you are interested please contact Carolynne at gamerrell@att.net.

***Trip Option—Raft Trip June 1-6,
Middle Fork of the Salmon River***

This is an excellent opportunity to experience some of the wildest country in the lower United States and view the rock art of the Shoshone Indians as well. Please check out www.canyonsinc.com for details and information.

I would also like to encourage those interested in really experiencing the wild side of Idaho to consider taking a raft

trip on the Middle Fork of the Salmon River with Canyons, Inc., which will feature stops at rock art sites along the way. Rafting, kayaking, soaking in hot springs, fishing, wilderness experience, combined with rock art—WOW! Can it get any better than this? But be aware that weather on the river this time of year can be iffy, cold, and may be rainy. That makes the hot springs all the more desirable. I have floated the Middle Fork three times and can tell you it is a trip of a lifetime! Rock art is just one bonus to the entire adventure. I have had experience with this company and can tell you it is the best! ❖

**IFRAO Comes to
Albuquerque in 2013**

Peggy Whitehead

Preparations for the International Federation of Rock Art Organizations (IFRAO) are getting underway. ARARA will be hosting the IFRAO Congress in Albuquerque, New Mexico, in conjunction with the normal ARARA Conference over Memorial Day weekend, May 26, 2013. As the program fills, the actual dates will be expanded to accommodate all activities.

What does this mean for you as a member? We have the privilege of welcoming international researchers from around the world, and showing off some of the amazing petroglyphs and pictographs of the area. We will have a wide variety of papers with simultaneous sessions, as well as a Poster session with submittals that either support a talk or stand-alone. The Congress will be a week-long event with more opportunities to share ideas and meet old and new friends. The publication of presentations will be available at the Congress.

There will be some changes from prior years, and you are the first to learn about them. If you have been to an International Congress, you may be familiar with the previous process. Session Chairs, at least two persons, submit a proposal for a Session Topic. They may have already contacted presenters to join their session, or they may have identified a topic with a call for papers. Papers are presented in Sessions led by the Session Chairs. Once the Sessions and Session Chairs have been accepted, the topic and contact information is published on IFRAO's web site, with a call for papers.

Now for the new changes, instead of abstracts going to the Program Committee, presenters will contact the Session Chairs with their submission. This improved process eliminates the last-minute presenters, and forces everyone to be more organized.

Here is a review of the new and improved process in

Introduction to the Archaeology of Southeast Idaho

Carolynne Merrell

A portion of this article was excerpted from the Idaho Statesman, 22 June 2009.

Archaeologists believe humans have lived in southeastern Idaho for as long as 13,000 years. Those early inhabitants were probably of Asian descent, ancestors of the American Indian tribes that settled the West. They were a nomadic people, wintering in the lowlands near what is now Fort Hall, and migrating in the spring and summer to the Big Lost River Basin. They hunted camels, long-horned bison, and even mammoths, using spears with heads crafted from rock or obsidian.

Clayton Marler, archaeologist with the Idaho National Laboratories (INL), says that DNA evidence taken from spear points found on the INL reservation suggests the area's early inhabitants hunted some of the last mammoths left on Earth.

As Earth's climate shifted, mammoths went the way of, well, the mammoth, and smaller, faster game began to take their place on the Snake River Plain. Hunters adjusted their tactics accordingly. Instead of the larger, heavier Clovis point, spear tips evolved to the smaller Folsom point within 2,000 years or so. By about 3000 B.C. hunters were using the atlatl, and available game was very much like what is

found in eastern Idaho today—elk, deer, and antelope. The atlatl served as a primary hunting weapon for the West's inhabitants for thousands of years, eventually replaced by the bow and arrow about 1,500 to 2,000 years ago.

Overlaying this picture of prehistory, we place what we know of the early rock art. As far as we know, there are no pictographs surviving prior to about 3000 B.C. and realistically not even that far back. But, there are some pictographs in southeastern Idaho that appear to show an atlatl motif. Numerous pictograph sites show bows and arrows.

It is a very different matter for petroglyphs, where one element pattern was dated to earlier than 8500 years B.P. or approximately 7000 B.C. This suggests that the earliest peoples of southeastern Idaho were creating petroglyphs as a valued activity in their lives. Suggesting how the early belief systems of these early people influenced the creation of the rock art is speculation at this point; however, some theories have been proposed based on much later ethnographic information from their more recent descendants. ARARA 2011 Field Trips to the Davis Ranch and Pocatello petroglyph sites will show some of this very early rock art. ✪

IFRAO 2013... *continued from page 2*

seven steps. First, we will advertise and circulate a call for Session Chairs and Session Topics. Second, Session Chairs and Topics are accepted by the Program Committee. Third, presenters submit abstracts to the Session Chairs. Fourth, abstracts are accepted by the Session Chairs, who forward them to the Program Committee for review. Fifth, Session Chairs notify presenters of acceptance. Sixth, presenters submit their developed paper for publication to the Session Chairs six months prior to the Congress (by December 1, 2012). Seventh, Session Chairs review the papers, then forward them to the Editor of the *International Rock Art Congress Proceedings* three months prior to the Congress (by March 1, 2013).

Field trips will be an as important part of the Congress as they are at annual ARARA meetings. However, the format is somewhat different. Wednesdays are reserved for Congress field trips, and everyone at the Congress is in the field all day. Pre- and post-Congress trips are also offered, although these are often longer. They may last more than a day and involve special fees for costs such as food and accommodations. Look for announcements of these to come.

Stay tuned for more information about this exciting event in the next *La Pintura*. ✪

Common Pictograph Elements of Southeastern Idaho

Carolynne Merrell

The majority of pictographs found in southeastern Idaho were created by the Shoshone and Bannock Indians. Other tribes who intermittently visited or passed through the area were the Flathead Salish, the Pend d'Oreille, the Nez Perce, and the Blackfoot. These groups may have contributed new pictographs or adulterated existing pictographs.

Recent anthropological theory identifies some rock art sites as among the sacred time/places that are essential to Native American religious beliefs that identify fundamental symbols and patterns of these cultures. These sacred sites and the sacred geography are access points to the sacred that are often impossible to know before the dreams or visions that reveal them.

Sacred sites are places of communication with the spirits, portals where people enter the sacred. Thus, they are a link between the world of humans and the sacred, where spiritual power can be accessed and even attained. They give order to both geographic

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Rockshelters and Rock Paintings in the Yagul-Mitla Area

Marcus Winter, Cira Martínez López, and Robert Markens, Centro INAH Oaxaca

On August 2nd the UNESCO World Heritage Committee announced the addition of the site Prehistoric Caves of Yagul and Mitla in the Central Valley of Oaxaca (Mexico) to their World Heritage List. This declaration is of special interest to readers of *La Pintura* since the area includes a great number of rock paintings. The initiative was promoted by Dr. Nelly M. Robles García, Director of the Monte Albán Archaeological Zone, and currently the President of the Consejo de Arqueología of the National Institute of Anthropology and History (INAH). Press releases, in national and local newspapers (e.g., *noticiasnet.mx* of August 5th from the Oaxaca paper *Noticias Voz e Imagen*) drew immediate attention to this area, previously known to only few specialists as important for Mesoamerican archaeology, and frequented mainly by local goat herders and occasional dove hunters. As part of her continuing efforts to protect Oaxaca's prehispanic patrimony, Robles García plans to implement programs to train local people to care for the sites and lead supervised visits in the area.

The declared area, in the state of Oaxaca in southern Mexico, is on the north edge of the Valley of Oaxaca near Mitla, encompassing lands in the towns (*municipios*) of Diaz Ordaz, Mitla, and Tlacolula. It is an area of cliffs and mesas formed by extrusions of Miocene volcanic tuffs, yellow, gray, pink, and white in color, with interesting, though by no means pristine, xerophytic vegetation. The geological formation is similar to the greenish rock known as *cantera*, which crops out at Ixcotel near Oaxaca City, where it was quarried extensively in Colonial times, and used in many buildings in the historic center. Similar stone from Etla is used today for house foundations throughout the valley. Two features distinguish the Yagul-Mitla outcrops from similar material elsewhere in the Valley of Oaxaca—the dozens, if not hundreds, of natural hollows or rockshelters (“caves”), and the chert veins formed in cracks in the tuff.

This chert, used during the entire prehispanic sequence, was highly sought-after in pre-village, Archaic times, and may explain the high concentration of Archaic sites in the area. It is found as tabular chunks of varying thickness and texture, from matte and grainy, to translucent and almost glassy. The raw material did not have to be quarried because weathering of the soft, surrounding matrix of tuff left chunks on the surface and in arroyo beds. Some of it is extremely tough and, perhaps for that reason, was selected for making large projectile points.

Archaeological Remains

The Yagul-Mitla rockshelters (Figure 1) have been used over the millennia as camp sites and temporary shelters. Consequently, dozens of them contain lithic debris and other cultural materials. The archaeological sequence in the area begins with a Paleoamerican occupation manifested by two fluted point bases found on the surface west of Mitla.

In 1965, archaeologist Kent V. Flannery began his multidisciplinary project, *Prehistory and Human Ecology in the Valley of Oaxaca*. During the initial seasons he focused on the preceramic period, first with a survey of over 70 rockshelters in the Mitla area, followed by excavation in four shelters and at the open site of Gheo Shih. The Guilá Naquitz rockshelter was uniquely significant because it contained dry deposits. Here, Flannery found the earliest documented macrobotanical specimens of domesticated squash and bottle gourd in the New World, dating to approximately 8000 B.C.E. He also found fragments of two or three early corn cobs that were subsequently AMS dated to slightly before 4200 B.C.E. So far, these are Mesoamerica's oldest macrobotanical specimens of corn.

The wild ancestor of corn is teosinte, specifically the genus *Parviglumis*, which to this day grows wild on the Pacific slopes of Jalisco, Guerrero, and Oaxaca, usually at a slightly lower altitude (and in a more humid environment) than the



Figure 1. Overview of part of the new UNESCO World Heritage Site, prehistoric caves of Yagul and Mitla, central Valley of Oaxaca (photograph by Robert Markens).

Valley of Oaxaca. The Yagul-Mitla area seems to be out of the current range of *Parviglumis*, though climate and vegetation have changed over time. Nevertheless, the early corn from Guilá Naquitz may have been brought to the area from elsewhere and planted by Archaic groups who were there to exploit the chert sources.

During our recent salvage work along the new Oaxaca-Isthmus highway, our Salvamento Arqueológico Carretera Oaxaca-Istmo (SACOI) project, we worked during the 2006 season on several sites near or within the declared area. Our fieldwork included the area along the canyon of the Río Grande as it enters the Mitla sub-valley, where several sites were affected by highway construction. We surveyed a number of rockshelters, and we excavated the Archaic open site of Guhdz Bedkol and a shelter designated MRG-6. Analysis of materials, and preparation of reports are currently ongoing.

Rock Art

Rock paintings have been known from the Yagul-Mitla area for many years. Elsie Clews Parsons, in her classic ethnography, *Mitla: Town of Souls and other Zapoteco-speaking Pueblos of Oaxaca, Mexico* (1936), mentions the Cueva del Diablo, where she observed traces of red paint, and Biliyar Calaver or Skeleton Cave, that she was told bore traces of five handprints in red pigment. The best-known painting in the area is on the west-facing cliff about 30 meters or so east of the access road to Yagul, just after the turnoff to Yagul from the Oaxaca-Mitla highway. This painting is a stick-figure of a man standing slightly above a crenellated line with rays coming out of his head. As Breen Murray noted in conversation years ago, this is a common shaman

motif. On the flat mesa above the painting is the Nisa phase (early Monte Albán II, 200–100 B.C.E.) archaeological site of Caballito Blanco. Whether the painting and the site are related has not been determined.

In Mesoamerican archaeology, the term “pintura rupestre” usually invokes the idea of human presence in prehistoric, that is, preceramic, times. At least in Oaxaca, this is a misconception because most of the rock paintings we have seen probably date back no earlier than the Postclassic. This seems to be the case with the paintings in the Yagul-Mitla area. Of course this does not mean that earlier paintings may not exist.

During the SACOI project, two of us (CML and RM) had an opportunity to record paintings in several rockshelters in the Rio Grande canyon. Some are found on the natural rock walls around the outside of the shelters and caves, and others are on the walls inside them. A great variety of motifs are present: positive and negative imprints of human hands (Figure 2), spirals, shields (Figure 3), circles, animals such as deer, felines (possibly jaguars), serpents, and others. Some motifs are relatively simple (Figure 4), while others are combined in scenes: a man kneeling before an individual seated on a throne who wears a fancy headdress; two deer facing each other; a man with arms extended holding a spear; a man standing between two animals; several men carrying unrecognizable objects. Some paintings are superimposed, which implies several visits to, or events in, the rockshelter.

Painting was invariably done with red (presumably hematite) pigment, and sometimes with yellow ochre (Figure 5). Some paintings appear to be in black or white, but these may have been altered by smoke or mineral deposits. Postclassic pottery is common in the rockshelters. For example, fine grayware bowls with three effigy supports



Figure 2. Handprints in red pigment at entrance of site OC39. Site number is from Flannery’s 1960s survey, with OC corresponding to Oaxaca Cave (photograph by Robert Markens).



Figure 3. Disc and bird-like design in red pigment at site OC18 (photograph by Cira Martinez Lopez).

Yagul-Mitla Area... *continued from page 5*

Figure 4. Stick-figure man and geometric designs in red and yellow pigments at Cueva de la Letra (photograph by Robert Markens).



Figure 5. Curvilinear design in red and yellow pigments at Cueva de la Letra (photograph by Robert Markens).

(known as G3M in the Oaxaca Valley sequence) and brownware jars are common. Local informants told us about present-day use of the shelters during times of planting and harvest, by people from Mitla, which is about an hour away by foot. Farmers store their implements temporarily in the rockshelters, and occasionally use the shelters as animal pens. We know from surface survey that the Mitla area was heavily populated in the late Postclassic (1200–1521 C.E.). Many individual farmsteads dotted the landscape. The rockshelters may have served as temporary camp sites at this time also, used to escape the rains, to prepare a meal, or even to spend the night. This would explain the restricted inventory of Postclassic pottery, the occasional hearth, and even the Postclassic burial we found in one of the shelters. The latter was an adult in flexed position without grave offerings. Many of the rockshelters we examined have a terrace outside the entrance, created by building a retaining wall a few meters in front of the entrance, using irregular blocks of tuff, then backfilling with dirt on the rough, sloped terrain, thus forming a patio-like work and living area.

The river canyon may have been a route taken by people walking to the mountains. Water was available, and they may have stopped to spend the night. Thus, some paintings may have been made by travelers. Also, some of the motifs appear to be Colonial though no Colonial period artifacts were found in the sites we examined.

Prehispanic use of the Yagul-Mitla caves, not to mention the sites of Yagul and Mitla themselves, is complex, and we hope that the World Heritage Site designation will not only help protect the sites, but lead to their in-depth

documentation and study in the future.

To conclude, we would like to add that the area is also important as a reserve of Oaxaca's intangible patrimony. The Cueva del Diablo, east of Mitla, and also mentioned by Parsons, is visited frequently by shamans and their clients or patients from various parts of the state, to petition the powers for health, well-being and other needs. Rituals are performed, and elaborate offerings are made. Our excavations in the cave entrance uncovered a Pe phase (late Monte Albán, 1,300–100 B.C.E.) burial accompanied by ceramic vessels. The Pe phase, like the Postclassic, was a time of dispersed settlement in the Mitla area, and the burial was presumably left by a local family. Also in the cave entrance were hundreds of miniature vessels, greenstone bead and pendants, many obsidian prismatic blades, and hundreds of tiny turquoise plaques which once may have been used in mosaics that decorated wooden discs, shields, and masks, all typical of Postclassic offerings in the Valley of Oaxaca. These are similar to many of the Postclassic offerings we found years ago at Monte Albán, and form a link between the prehispanic and present day use of these sacred places. ☉

References

- Parsons, Elsie Clews
1936 *Mitla: Town of Souls and Other Zapoteco-speaking Pueblos of Oaxaca, Mexico*. University of Chicago Press.

Treasurer's Report

Respectfully Submitted, Garry Gillette, Treasurer
October 1, 2010

Balance Sheet June 30, 2010

Assets

Current Assets:	
Cash in Bank-Checking	55,830
Cash in Bank-CD's	87,590
<i>Total Current Assets</i>	<i>\$143,420</i>

Liabilities and Equity

Current Liabilities:	
Accounts Payable	\$0
Total Current Liabilities	<u>\$0</u>
<i>Total Liabilities</i>	<i>\$0</i>

Fund Equity

Beginning Fund Equity (Cash + CD's):	135,705
Current Year Increase	<u>7,715</u>
<i>Total Liabilities & Equity</i>	<i>\$ 143,420</i>

Income Statement July 1, 2009 – June 30, 2010

Revenues

Conference Revenues:	
Auction	2,931
Registration Sales	21,175
Vendor Room	<u>1,708</u>
<i>Total Conference Revenues</i>	<i>\$25,814</i>

General Revenues:	
Donations and Matching Funds	1,598
Membership Dues	20,176
INORA	880
Misc.	<u>86</u>
<i>Total General Revenues</i>	<i>\$22,740</i>

Publications Sales:	
General	1,324
SAA Booth	227
Conference	1,589
DVRAC	95
Donations	<u>40</u>
<i>Total Publications</i>	<i>\$3,275</i>

Total Revenues **\$51,828**

Expenses

Awards:	
Education	500
Oliver	750
Other	<u>980</u>
<i>Total Awards</i>	<i>\$2,230</i>

Committees **\$2,374**

INORA **\$755**

Conference Expenses:

Accommodations	1,936
Hotel	7,798
DoubleTree	1,340
Receptions and Hospitality	1,442
T-Shirts	1,015
Deposit for 2011	1,000
Badges and Pens	465
Misc.	<u>84</u>
<i>Total Conference Expenses</i>	<i>\$15,080</i>

Office & Administrative:

Board Meetings	5,328
Liability Insurance	1,794
SAA Booth	1,014
SAA Shipping	163
Conference Planning	655
DVRAC Rental	4,000
DVRAC Supplies	525
Member Statements	672
Tax Filing	15
Misc.	247
Bank of America	292
Office Supplies	<u>300</u>
<i>Total Office and Administrative</i>	<i>\$15,005</i>

Publications:

Shipping Costs	87
La Pintura	4,106
V36 Expenses	<u>6,479</u>
<i>Total Publications Expenses</i>	<i>\$10,672</i>

Total Expenses **\$46,116**

Net Operating Gain/(Loss) **\$5,712**

Interest Earned - CD's **\$2,003**

Current Year Gain/(Loss) **\$7,715**

Recording Rock Art in the Val Camonica

Carol Garner

In the course of a visit to Jim Keyser and his wife in Italy this summer, my husband and I had the delightful experience of seeing the rock art of the Val Camonica, and of meeting up with Dr. Angelo Fossati during his summer field school.

Jim first took us to a site in an orchard where some of Dr. Fossati's students were engaged in copying a panel of figures. Using huge sheets of plastic, they carefully spread these over the figures, then dotted gently over each figure with dark black felt pens (Figure 1) and other features in the rock were traced onto the plastic using light unbroken lines.

Because most of the petroglyphs here are flat on the rocks, some compromise has had to be made about walking over them. (The animals that walk over them regularly are fairly uncompromising!) The students scampered about the

rock in their socks, showing us various figures and features. Those hard at work on the flatter surface used a combination of a towel over the head and light reflected by a mirror to eliminate glare and bring out detail (Figure 2).

At this site there are two Bronze-age maps of the area. Jim showed us how a groove in the rock was incorporated into the design of one of the maps to create, during rain, a river and a reservoir. We remembered this feature the next day, when we accompanied Dr. Fossati and his students to Naquane, a huge national park that includes many rocks that are wave-like in shape and in some cases incorporate the same kind of groove-as-river feature.

In the groove below these standing figures there is an incised prone figure that, during the rain (you can see, we were lucky enough to be there when it was pouring!) appears to be swimming in the river created by runoff. You can see the legs of this figure about 1/3 of the way from the left edge of the photo (Figure 3). At the Invall site the next day, Jim showed



Figure 1



Figure 2

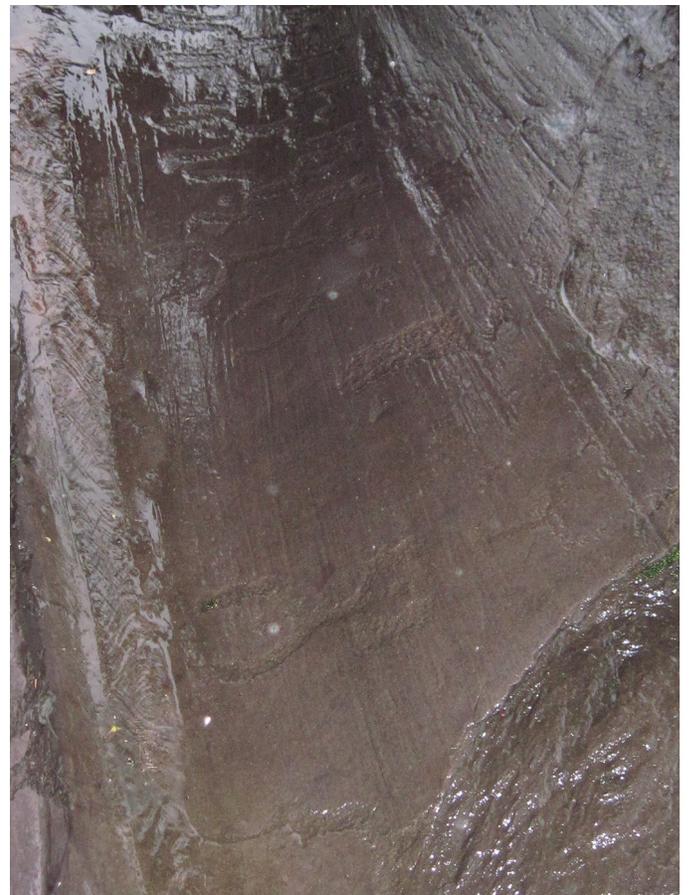


Figure 3

us a similarly positioned wavy line—perhaps a swimming snake, or simply an indication of moving water.

Dr. Fossati suspects that many of the sites at Naquane were women’s sites because of the looms and oven-clearing shovels depicted on them, tools known to have been used by women. Later petroglyphs show hunting activities, particularly dogs hunting deer, men with deer antler/sun headdresses reminiscent of Siberian rock art; or fighting, e.g., duels or armored warriors. There are several stelae with deer, weapons, and agricultural depictions. Dr. Fossati’s

students, who incidentally represented a wide range of ages, nationalities, and experience, treated us to discussions of their particular areas of interest.

The next day we visited the field school and watched the students reduce and combine their reproductions to create a detailed map of each location (Figure 4).

We then proceeded to the Invall site, where we were shown a device (an electronic theodolite) that rapidly solves trigonometric equations, in order to provide an accurate topographical map (Figure 5). All together, it was a very

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Figure 4



Figure 5

Common Pictographs... continued from page 3

and social space and by ordering space they order all that exists within it (Deward E. Walker, 1988, *American Indian Sacred Geography, Indian Affairs*, No. 116:vii).

Some of the pictograph sites offered for the ARARA 2011 Conference tours are found at locations on the landscape that reinforce Walker’s theory for sacred places.

Subjects and Motifs Common to Shoshone Bannock Pictographs

Hunt Scene—A group of stick-figure hunters with their helper dogs. The hunter holds a pulled bow pointed at the prey, most commonly a bear, with dogs holding the bear at bay. This composition is frequently seen on the Middle Fork of the Salmon River. Prior to the horse, dogs were a very important part of Shoshone culture.

Topknot on Head—This motif is usually found as a solitary figure. The topknot likely represents the hair style used by a Shaman or Medicine person to designate their status or identity. This ball sometimes looks like it is rising above the

head. This has been identified as possibly representing the *Mugua* or spirit essence rising out of the body as it would at death or upon entering a trance-like state. These figures tend to be found at more sequestered or private locations. This representation is unique to sites attributed to Shoshone, and has not been identified in rock art outside their ancestral territory.

Shields and Shield Bearers—The Shoshone were known among other Plains Indians for their superior large body shields. Occasionally, the rock art shows shield bearers in a proto-biographic context.

Spear Piercing—A single tall stick-figure with a spear piercing the side of the body is found at several sites in the Birch Creek and Black Canyon wilderness areas. Significance of this motif is unknown.

Commonly Seen Animals—bison, deer/elk, antelope, owl, and crane.

Other motifs that occur with some frequency include bears and bear paws, hand prints, dot or thumbprint formations, and “strikes” of pigment known as tally marks, usually done with the forefinger. ☼

San Diego Museum of Man Holds Rock Art 2010 Symposium

Jeffrey F. LaFave

Ken Hedges and the San Diego Museum of Man held their annual rock art symposium on November 6, 2010. Over 140 people attended Rock Art 2010. The newly formed San Diego Rock Art Association (SDRAA) also participated with an information table, multiple presenters, and many members who were in attendance. SDRAA is an informal organization dedicated to educating the public about rock art, providing an environment for scholarly research, and promoting the preservation and conservation of rock art. This year's symposium logo is also the logo of SDRAA, a beautiful maze design from the type site for the Rancho Bernardo style.

The Rock Art 2010 symposium included a number of excellent presentations, starting out with Steve Freers, who discussed dot patterns in rock art. Freers explained how "pointillism" is not just a concept of modern art, but existed in various rock art styles throughout the United States. The paper focused on the extensive use of painted dot patterns in the San Luis Rey style in southern California (dot patterns are present at a high percentage of San Luis Rey style sites). Per Freers, the fingertip appears to have been the primary method of dot application, but there is also evidence of brush application in a few cases.

Another interesting paper was presented by Don Christensen, entitled "A Preliminary Report on the Rock Art of the St. George Basin of Utah in Arizona." Christensen and other members of Western Rock Art Research are conducting a recording project on behalf of BLM in a transition area, between the Colorado Plateau, the Great Basin, and the Mojave Desert. Christensen went through an extensive chronology of types of rock art that exist in the project area, from the archaic, up through historic (mostly Paiute). Some of the more common types include Western Archaic, Ancestral Puebloan's Cave Valley, and pre-formative Snake Gulch.

Evelyn Billo presented a summary of the three extraordinary years of field work conducted by herself, Robert Mark, Donald Weaver, and numerous volunteers at Sears Point, Arizona. Billo gave an overview of the multiple investigation and recordation techniques that the group is using to document the 2,000 petroglyph panels, approximately 30 kilometers of trails, and numerous other archaeological features, such as rock alignments. For instance, Mark and Billo

participated in a balloon ride over the site area, which led to impressive aerial photographs of trails and rock alignment features. The team is finalizing a panel database in Filemaker Pro, a GIS database and maps in ArcView, as well as a 2,000+ page interactive map and panel-image Acrobat document. The extremely high-resolution gigapan photos being produced by Bob Mark and the team are simply amazing.

Mavis Greer presented an interesting paper by her and John Greer, entitled "Rock Art Scenes: Examples from Montana." The paper follows in a long line of outstanding presentations by the Greers regarding rock art on the Great Plains. It focused on the concept of "the scene," also referred to as composition, as a basic unit of rock art classification, description, and recording. The Greers argued that most rock art reports focus on scenes, and many historic-era sites on the Northern Plains are understood mainly because of interactive figures within a scene. They posit that while the importance of scenes is obvious, the fabricator's intention is often obscured, especially when abstract images are involved. The Greers concluded that specific scene details can contribute information on the distribution and movement of cultures when comparable sites are found within a region.

Another very interesting paper was presented by Jon Harman, entitled "Cueva San Borjitas: Birthplace of the Great Mural Tradition." This paper relates to Harman using his amazing Dstretch program to analyze the superimposition of anthropomorphs at Cueva San Borjitas in Baja, Mexico. Styles found at San Borjitas are quite varied compared to the Great Mural sites of the Sierra de San Francisco. Harman found anthropomorphs in Cueva San Borjitas similar in style to those at Sierra de San Francisco; but at the former, they superimpose other styles unlike anything in that Sierra. Harmon thus theorized that the superimposition at Cueva San Borjitas provides strong evidence that the Great Mural tradition started in the Sierra de Guadalupe, then diffused north and to the Sierra de San Francisco.

Ken Hedges gave a thought-provoking presentation on the Rancho Bernardo style in southern California. Hedges has been studying this and other rock art styles in southern California for decades and his understanding of them really showed. The Rancho Bernardo style is characterized by large-scale, red, painted designs, and is closely related to petroglyph panels that feature maze-like designs, fret patterns and a wide variety of rectilinear and, less frequently, curvilinear designs. The style extends from the largest concentration of sites in Rancho Bernardo itself, north to Moreno Valley in Riverside County, then east to Palm Springs, and south to Travertine Point on the edge of the Salton Sink. Hedges presented an overview of the style and its distribution, with highlights of some of the numerous sites.

Jon Rafter presented one of the more unique papers at the conference, entitled “The Tortoise Intaglio Mystery.” The paper focused on the “Tortoise Intaglio” northeast of Barstow, which many people have considered modern, and not proto- or prehistoric in origin. However, Rafter makes a compelling argument that the Tortoise Intaglio was not made by Patton’s soldiers during military training in the Mojave, but instead, by Native Americans. Rafter combined years of study of the site which indicated probable astronomical alignments, as well as ethnographic support for his conclusion.

Eve Ewing gave an intriguing paper on “Universal Landscapes.” She discussed the recognition of familiar shapes in rock formations, clouds, and other features of the world, and how this is a universal phenomenon. Ewing argued that natural (not human made) “rock art” includes many shapes transparently obvious—such as faces and yonis—that most humans recognize, while other rock art relates to a particular cultural context that is not transparent to those outside that society. She discussed how the perceived forms often served to inspire or validate rock art.

Among the other interesting papers were John Ruskamp, Jr.’s, “Hooper Ranch Pueblo Sun Dagger Shrine,” and Deborah Corbett and Stan Rohrer’s, “Suggestions for Alternative Analysis of Rock Art Motifs in a Possible Special-Use Rock Shelter.” The latter focused on a pictograph cave in Anza-Borrego State Park. Gregory Erickson of Poway presented on interpretations of a rockshelter in Northern Baja, entitled “El Murillo: A Possible Winter Solstice Site.” Francois Gohier presented “If There Was No Word for ‘Art,’ Were There Artists In Those Days?,” featuring his typically stunning photographs of rock art and landscapes. Jessica Joyce Christie presented on pictographs in a cave in Chiapas, Mexico, and their possible relation to Mayan social order. Steve Waller gave one of his typically compelling presentations about rock art and acoustics, this time focused on Niaux and other French prehistoric caves. Rick and Sandy Martynec presented on the dilemma of preserving an historic dam or a pictograph cave that is being harmed by moisture from the dam.

Overall, the symposium was outstanding, and Ken Hedges deserves recognition and thanks for his ongoing efforts, and another wonderful year. ☉

Val Camonica... *continued from page 9*

thorough look at the hard work that goes into making a complete survey of the figures, locations, and their spatial relationships, in these fascinating sites. There were many more sites that Jim pointed out as we drove past them, and I couldn’t help but wish we had much longer than our three-day visit to enjoy the petroglyphs of this particularly rich area. ☉

Rock Art Bookshelf

Shamanism: To Be or Not To Be

Review of Paul G. Bahn’s, *Prehistoric Rock Art: Polemics and Progress* (The 2006 Rhind Lectures for the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland) 2010, Cambridge University Press

Reviewed by William B. Murray

In many ways, the title of Paul Bahn’s latest book is an apt summary of its contents. It contains an ample dose of polemics—perhaps Bahn’s most definitive critique of shamanic interpretations of rock art—but it also goes beyond the polemical to explore some alternative approaches which he finds more credible and sees as progress in rock art research.

Although Bahn refers to this book as an update of his earlier work *Prehistoric Art* (1998) in the *Cambridge Illustrated History* series, it is really a bit more than that—and also a bit less. Whereas the earlier work is broadly focused on all forms of early artistic expression, Bahn focuses here more specifically and almost exclusively on various kinds of rock art. This sharpened focus allows better coverage of an increasingly complex body of evidence without divorcing it from the broader archaeological context. It also fits his polemical focus more closely.

In fact, the exposition seems to derive from three sources. The first part presents a broad overview of rock art studies in the new millennium and appears to correspond most closely to the 2006 lecture series on which the book is based. The third part looks in more detail at new research from many parts of the world and also takes up some critical issues of rock art conservation efforts.

But whereas shamanism occupied only a few pages in the 1998 version, in this work it becomes the centerpiece, and *leitmotif* of the whole book, filling several chapters in the middle, and spilling over into the others. There is clear bibliographical evidence that this part was further updated right up to the publication date. In this middle part, Bahn puts all his evidence on the table to demonstrate the weaknesses he perceives in the shamanic interpretation of rock art, and presents his rejoinder to earlier exchanges in the ongoing debate.

Like the earlier book, this one retains the same global framework. It also reflects Bahn’s thorough knowledge of the rock art literature—a product in part of his editorial work on the *Rock Art News of the World* series—as well as his own broadening experience of the world’s rock art. Although

...continued on next page

Book Review... *continued from page 11*

European Paleolithic cave art remains his primary framework, particularly in relation to the “shamanism debate,” his global view draws increasingly on examples from Africa, Australia, and the Americas. In particular, he includes sites in Siberia and Central Asia where he has accessed literature in Russian which has received little diffusion in other languages. In some ways his view of rock art reminded me of Sir James Fraser, whose worldwide stock of myths was the basis of his classic *The Golden Bough* (1890), but Bahn is no armchair traveler. He is one of rock art’s real world travelers, and he talks about many sites in personal terms as a first-hand experience.

Much of Bahn’s critique of the “shamanic” explanation of rock art has already appeared in earlier works in collaboration with psychologist Patricia Helvenston. In this exposition, however, he fills in all the blanks and sharpens his sword, particularly in relation to the question of entopic imagery and the “three-stage” model of trance, which he considers the key link in shamanic attributions of rock art. Many of his criticisms have been echoed by other scholars whom Bahn cites approvingly, but his own intention is clearly to demolish all traces of what he considers to be essentially a media hype which has deluded the general public and distracted the field from more productive lines of research.

Bahn is especially critical of the “single explanation” approach to rock art which some shamanism advocates have taken. He rightly insists that ethnographic evidence is required to identify the authors of any rock art corpus as well as their motives for producing it. He also follows Kehoe’s deconstruction of the whole concept of shamanism, especially when viewed as a primal religion of all early hunter-gatherer peoples. Its rather disparate components include trance (ASC) experiences, hallucinogenic plant use, symbolism and ritual in various cultures, comparative religion, the characteristics of cave environments, and a healthy dose of neurophysiologic and psychological research about which few people in rock art studies are well-informed enough to make any kind of definitive judgment. Bahn tackles each of these components separately in order to disarticulate the construct which emerged as shamanism via Mircea Eliade. By the end of his exposition, one is left to wonder whether the word shamanism can ever be used again in rock art literature without quotation marks.

Despite Bahn’s sharp comments, the shamanistic debate still remains open—sort of. Once the genie slipped out of the bottle, it continues to hover in the air. Ethnographic analogy continues to be used despite its limitations, and the activities once called “shamanic” are often real enough. In his calmer moments, Bahn even admits that “there may certainly be instances in which ‘shamanism,’ or something

like it, can provide a plausible and appropriate interpretation of rock art,” but he provides no examples of this sort, and he demolishes all the attempts made so far in this direction.

His barbed comments on shamanism refer especially to the Paleolithic rock art which is his specialty. It is also the farthest removed in time from ethnography and depends on a more generalized version of the shamanic model. Yet for many North American researchers, this concentrated fire on the Old World Paleolithic may miss the target. For example, Bahn points out that the “three-stage” model really applies only to the effects of mescaline-based plants, none of which are found in the Old World—end of argument—but in the Americas, they are indeed well-known and their use is well-documented. Castañeda’s Don Juan is an easy straw man to knock down, but the Huichol peyote trek is a real event within a rich cultural context. The sacramental use of peyote continues even today in various Native American traditions, so the question then becomes: just how important were these practices in prehistoric Native America? And what kind of archaeological traces (including rock art) might they have left?

In the Americas, a “shamanic” context for some rock art was suggested long before the entopic approach ever emerged. Bahn admits that classical Siberian shamanism did seep into America a little bit with the Inuit, but its broader potential relevance cannot be dismissed by sleight-of-hand. Just what is a vision quest after all? And why are mushrooms sometimes magical? The New World evidence is more varied and complex, and even taking Bahn’s criticisms into account, in many cases, perhaps the best we can say is that the jury is still out. Otherwise, as Hedges noted some time ago, we risk throwing the baby out with the bathwater.

In the end, what Bahn’s critique points out is that shamanic attributions of rock art all focus on iconography. By broadening the focus beyond iconography, other dimensions of rock art become visible and can be examined. It is here that Bahn moves into fresh territory and provides new insights. He is particularly attracted by three aspects which he discusses in greater detail.

First, he replaces the shamanic focus with a broader view of religious ritual and mythology as an evident inspiration for much rock art. Authorship of the images is taken from the hands of the shaman and placed instead as a collective expression within broader shared cultural traditions. Images of mythic ancestors and the spirits of places replace the therianthropes visualized in shamanic trance, and their mythic exploits become the framework for analyzing ethnographic analogies in relation to specific images.

Bahn also emphasizes locational analysis as a primary

attribute of all rock art and provides some striking examples of its contextual potential. The rock surface is no longer a veil of the spirit world, but rather a consciously chosen, permanent place in time with a unique view of the world. Bahn is particularly impressed by the worldwide association of rock art with natural water sources, whether they be underground rivers or grotto pools, river banks or ancient shore lines, waterfalls or bubbling hot springs. Sound and acoustics also identify special places, and rock art visibility defines a more public or private context. It also puts the dark-zone art of the Ice Age Paleolithic into an almost unique category in world rock art.

Rock art's place in the landscape is defined in both natural and sociocultural terms. Bahn notes in particular its relation to votive offerings left at significant places. They convert shamanic privacy into a repeated occurrence at a frequently visited place, be it a shrine, a trail junction, or simply a striking natural feature. These offerings have been recovered archaeologically and their cultural contexts are sometimes well-documented. They tie rock art more tightly into the archaeological and ethnological context.

Bahn's exposition also has some curious blind spots. For example, he makes no mention whatsoever of archaeoastronomy, one of the major locational hypotheses which have influenced New World rock art studies. Both the assumptions and the kind of evidence which archaeoastronomy seeks to explain are totally different from shamanism, yet in many cases they refer to the same rock art motifs. Bahn's view takes in the landscape, but not the skyscape which seems to have influenced the Mesoamerican vision of the world and that of other New World cultures very strongly. Perhaps this is due to the different contexts of Old World and New World archaeoastronomical evidence, but it is still a striking omission, and could also be attributed to the fact that the sky is not visible from inside an Ice Age cave!

Although some readers may be put off by Bahn's strong language and personalistic style, his latest work should be on the bookshelf of any rock art specialist—even the most offended. It is a clear and eloquent statement about the state of our research efforts by someone who knows the field well and views rock art as an integral field of study, not merely a collection of lovely places.

This book also moves the field clearly toward a scientific archaeological frame of reference—quite in keeping with Bahn's own training—but without abandoning ethnography. Many of his examples set me to thinking about sites I have visited, including Meyers Springs, Texas, where the water seeps out right under the magnificent panel we saw on our most recent ARARA field trip. The work of many ARARA

members is cited in the book and many places well known to ARARAnS are seen in a new light.

Finally, the book is dedicated to the memory of two of ARARA's honored members, Frank Bock and Alanah Woody, both of whom were Bahn's personal friends and professional colleagues. ❖

Call for Nominations for Our Board of Directors

The ARARA Nominating Committee announces its search for candidates to fill four positions on the Board of Directors for 2011–2013. A candidate must be a voting member in good standing, and must not have served two consecutive terms immediately prior to this nomination. This is a great opportunity to serve the organization, to represent the group at large, and to help shape the future of ARARA.

Elected members of the Board serve, along with the Officers, as the governing body of ARARA, providing oversight and management of the Association's activities, projects, and committees, and working with the membership to further the aims and goals of the organization.

We are seeking suggestions from members for Board candidates. You may suggest a fellow ARARA member, or you may suggest yourself to the Committee. Suggested candidates are not automatically nominated in this process, but the Nominating Committee will carefully consider all suggestions in preparing the slate of nominees. Please confirm that your suggested candidates are willing to serve. Suggestions for nominations are due by February 15.

In a separate process, under the ARARA By-laws, it shall be the privilege of any five members of ARARA to nominate in writing or email with RSVP, a willing, eligible candidate. Nominations made under this provision are included on the ballot, in addition to those made by the Nominating Committee, and must be submitted prior to March 1.

If you have any questions or wish to suggest or nominate a candidate, please contact any Nominating Committee member: AnneCarter@embarqmail.com 702-869-3219; BillWhitehead@att.net 303-426-7672; or Lloyd Anderson: ecoling@aol.com. Alternatively, contact President Ron Smith at RWSintheNW@comcast.net.

ERRATA: please note that Margaret Berrier (also known as Marglyph) is not a member of the Nominating Committee, as was erroneously stated in the September issue of *La Pintura*. ❖

Call for Papers for *La Pintura*

ARARA members would love to read about your new rock art discovery, recording project, or new idea for interpretation. *La Pintura* needs members to submit articles on current research or fieldwork. Doing so will make *La Pintura* a better journal. Editorial guidelines can be found on the inside back cover of every issue.

Editorial Deadlines for *La Pintura*

To insure timely publication of each issue of *La Pintura*, please follow the following schedule of deadlines for all editorial copy and other submissions:

Issue 1: February 1

Issue 2: May 1

Issue 3: August 1

Issue 4: November 1

Send all materials for inclusion in *La Pintura* to:

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International Newsletter on Rock Art

INORA — *The International Newsletter on Rock Art*, edited by Jean Clottes and published in French and English three times a year (February, June, November) — is available to ARARA members for \$25 a year. Subscribe through ARARA and save the \$10 French bank charge. The 32-page newsletter contains the latest international rock art news. To subscribe, send a check for \$25 **made out to ARARA** to:

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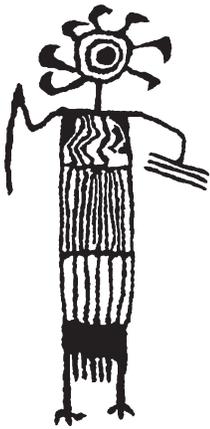
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The **American Rock Art Research Association** is a non-profit organization dedicated to encourage and to advance research in the field of rock art. Association members work for the protection and preservation of rock art sites through cooperative action with private landowners and appropriate state and federal agencies.

The **Association** strives to promote non-destructive utilization of rock art for scientific, educational, and artistic purposes. This is accomplished through a wide-ranging program to inform and educate the members as well as the general public regarding the rock art heritage of the United States as well as worldwide. These goals are communicated through the quarterly newsletter, *La Pintura*. Annual

three-day conferences give both members and others interested in rock art the opportunity to share professional papers, slide presentations, and informal discussions.

Membership in the **American Rock Art Research Association** is open to all with an active interest in research, non-destructive use, and preservation of rock art, regardless of their nationality or country of residence. Membership fees are:

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Family	\$50.00
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Membership runs from January 1 through December 31 of each year. The Association is concerned primarily with American rock art, but membership is international in scope. Benefits include *La Pintura*, one copy of *American Indian Rock Art* for the year, reduced conference fees, and current news in the field of rock art. More importantly, membership means a shared concern for the ongoing conservation and preservation of one of the most significant elements of our heritage. Send memberships to:

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1. All local, state, and national antiquities laws will be strictly adhered to by the membership of **ARARA**. Rock art research shall be subject to appropriate regulations and property access requirements.
 2. All rock art recording shall be non-destructive with regard to the rock art itself and the associated archaeological remains which may be present. No artifacts shall be collected unless the work is done as part of a legally constituted program of archaeological survey or excavation.
 3. No excavation shall be conducted unless the work is done as part of a legally constituted excavation project. Removal of soil shall not be undertaken for the sole purpose of exposing sub-surface rock art.
 4. Potentially destructive recording and research procedures shall be undertaken only after careful consideration of any potential damage to the rock art site.
 5. Using the name of the **American Rock Art Research Association**, the initials of **ARARA**, and/or the logos adopted by the **Association** and the identification of an individual as a member of **ARARA** are allowed only in conjunction with rock art projects undertaken in full accordance with accepted professional archeological standards. The name **ARARA** may not be used for commercial purposes. While members may use their affiliation with **ARARA** for identification purposes, research projects may not be represented as having the sponsorship of **ARARA** without express approval of the Executive Committee.
- The **ARARA** Code of Ethics, points 1 through 5, was adopted at the annual business meeting on May 24, 1987. The Code of Ethics was amended with the addition of the opening paragraph at the annual business meeting, May 28, 1988.

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