

INDIAN ROCK ART OF THE SOUTHWEST

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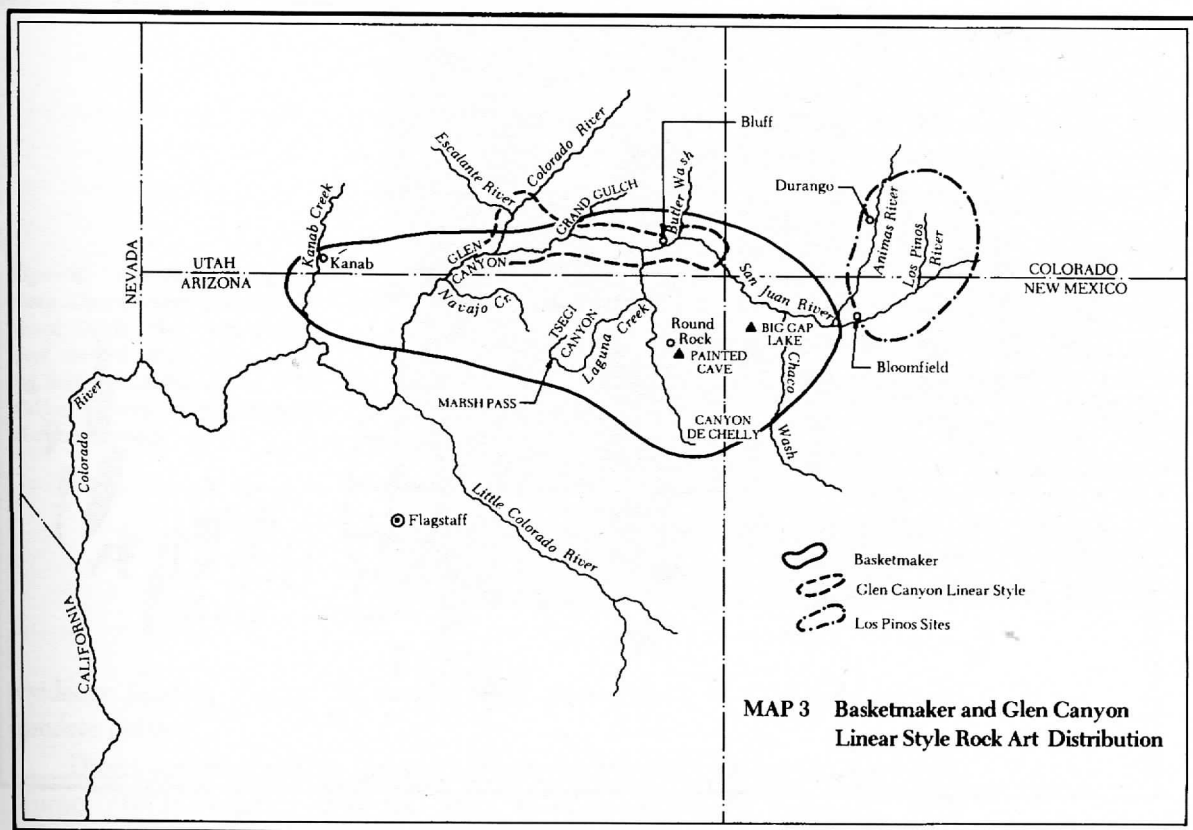
Further, according to Goldman (1963:262), among the Cubeo (a tribe of the Amazon Basin), "the *yavi* is the supreme shaman, the one who can take the form of a jaguar, who consorts with jaguars, who maintains the jaguar as a dog"—a comment that may have a certain amount of relevance here. Finally, the deathlike aspect of many of the anthropomorphs may well be significant. Skeletal motifs in rock art may in some cases relate to the shaman's initiatory journey to the Underworld.

The compositions in the Barrier Canyon Style paintings were carefully planned, and the fact that superimpositions are rare suggests that the image, not just the act of painting, was important. Further, the painting at each shelter appears to be the work of a single person, or, at the most, a limited number of people, indicating that these paintings were probably made only by a select few, probably artist-shamans. These factors, along with the powerful impact made by the paintings themselves in their impressive settings, imply that the sites where these paintings occur served as some kind of religious foci or retreats.

The Glen Canyon Linear Petroglyph Style

The Glen Canyon Linear Petroglyph Style is another early rock art style from the drainages of the Colorado and San Juan rivers. In origin, at least, it is believed to predate the Anasazi, and it is the oldest of the five styles described from the Glen Canyon by Turner (1963:12; 1971). This style was formerly referred to as Glen Canyon Style 5 by Turner, but this name has been dropped here in favor of a more descriptive terminology consistent with that used elsewhere in this volume. Although the style is best known from the Glen Canyon region, a wider distribution is suggested by its presence farther north in Utah (P. Schaafsma 1971:62-65) and to the south on the Little Colorado and its tributary drainages (Pilles 1974; Ferg 1974) (Map 3). At the present time, known distribution of the style is limited primarily to river canyons.

This petroglyph complex can be described as consisting almost exclusively of deeply dented, rectilinear outline forms occasionally filled with horizontal or vertical hatching or both (Turner 1963) (Figs. 49, 50). Solidly pecked areas are rare. Animal representations include both mountain sheep and deer, with the former predominating. These animals, with large rectangular or oval bodies, characteristically have very small heads and tails and short, insignificant legs. Sometimes a small animal is shown within the



body of a large one, a type of depiction that probably represents a pregnant female. Human figures are also portrayed with disproportionately large bodies and often tend to be very schematic (Fig. 49). Arms and legs are usually minor features, but various types of headdresses may be shown. Heads themselves may be abstracted into concentric circles, a feature symbolic of shamanic power (Vastokas and Vastokas 1973:55).

A distinctive anthropomorphic figure is a small creature with facial features and headgear consisting of tall feathers or something resembling them on either side of the head, producing a "rabbit-eared" effect (Fig. 49). The shape of the body varies from a rectangular to an irregular form with rounded contours, and the interior is filled with the typical interior stripes or hatching. In the southern part of this style's range, arms, if present, tend to be long and tentaclelike (Ferg 1974). These characters often occur in pairs.

Other representational designs are animal tracks, possibly snakes consisting of long wavy lines with knobs at the end to resemble heads, and a number of simple plant motifs. Associated abstract elements include long

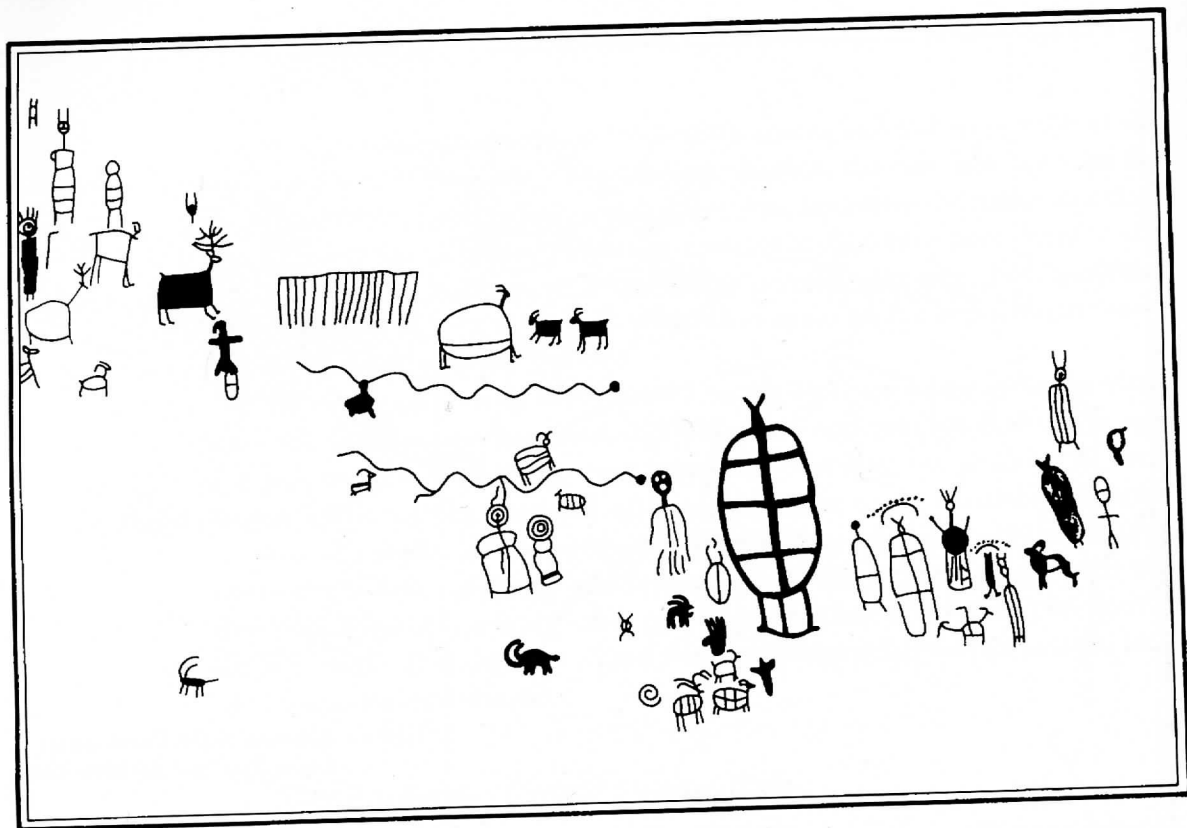
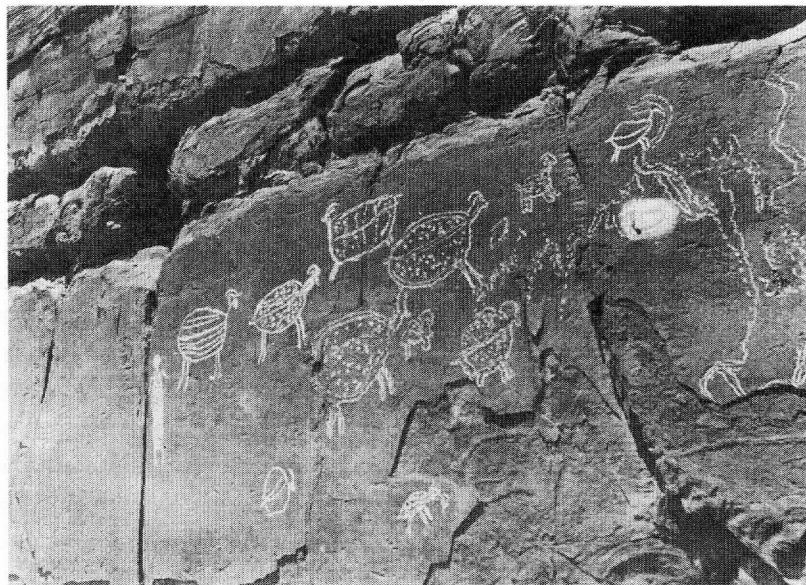


Figure 49. Glen Canyon Linear Style petroglyphs, NA 6457, West Creek Canyon, tributary of the Colorado River. (Drawing after Turner 1963, Fig. 77).

wavy lines, long lines of dots, ticked lines, rakes, zigzags, ladder motifs, connected circles, grids, and sunbursts (Turner 1963) (Figs. 49–52). The squiggle maze, “an interlocking network of lines, curvilinear and straight, that wander over a cliff wall, often for several square yards,” is particularly characteristic (Turner 1963:7). As a whole, the elements of this linear style are drawn in what might be described as an uncontained or loose fashion. Many of the representational forms appear to the modern viewer to be fanciful in their interpretation, rendered with a light, imaginative touch reminiscent of the work of Paul Klee.

Patination over Glen Canyon Linear Style designs is in some cases almost complete, the blue-black patina of the original rock surface having been acquired again over the deep dints of the petroglyphs. Other figures have been nearly obliterated by weathering. These conditions are among the

Figure 50. Petroglyphs of bighorn sheep, Glen Canyon Linear Style, Grand Gulch, Utah. The designs were chalked before photographing. Scott File photograph by A. V. Kidder, courtesy of the Peabody Museum, Harvard.



evidence leading Turner to suggest that petroglyphs of this style largely predate pottery.

Direct means of dating the style, however, are still lacking. On one hand, Turner (1971) suggests that the style is of considerable antiquity, with beginning dates going back to between 6000 and 2000 B.C. On the other, he notes that in Glen Canyon these sites have pottery associations as late as A.D. 1050, centering around A.D. 800–900. These associations, however, probably represent a later reoccupation of the same sites in this long-populated region. In any event, all evidence clearly indicates that the Glen Canyon Linear Petroglyphs predate all other Glen Canyon styles. In describing the style on the Little Colorado, Pilles (1974) assigns it to the Basketmaker II occupation of that region.

On the San Juan River at Butler Wash, Glen Canyon Linear Style designs occur with the San Juan Basketmaker Anthropomorphic Style (Figs. 77, 78). Both exhibit the same amount of patination, and they are technically similar in that they are pecked in small dints and fine lines. In some cases, however, Basketmaker figures clearly superimpose the Linear Style designs. Upriver, the Sand Island site is important in demonstrating a relative dating between the two styles in the San Juan region. Here Linear style figures are located high on the cliff above the scar of an ancient sand dune. Basketmaker figures are present below and within the scar. There is one example at Butler Wash of an anthropomorph with a Linear Style body and a Basketmaker headdress; such sharing between the styles is unusual. The evidence from these sites

indicates that the Glen Canyon Linear Style is the older of the two but that it was still being made just before or around A.D. 1. Prehorticultural origins are suggested for the Linear Style complex.

The distinct characters of Basketmaker rock art and Linear Style petroglyphs, along with their apparently different overall patterns of distribution (Map 3), indicate that these styles are manifestations of generally distinct ideographic and probably cultural systems. It is perhaps not amiss to point out tenuous stylistic similarities between Linear Style anthropomorphs and those from the Coso Range in the Great Basin of eastern California (Grant 1968). Depictions of bighorn sheep are also common to both, although for the most part these differ typologically. Thus the Linear Style may have historical connections outside the Colorado Plateau.

DISCUSSION

In the foregoing pages I have mentioned a number of functions that rock art sites may have served for hunter-gatherers in the Southwest. In summary, several investigators hypothesize that the Abstract Style petroglyphs in the Great Basin were made in connection with hunting magic and ritual (Heizer and Baumhoff 1962; Von Werlhof 1965; Grant 1968). In the Colorado Desert of eastern California and in the adjacent region of Arizona, petroglyphs occur near trails, campsites, and water sources, and they may have functioned in a hunting-magic context also. Likewise, they could just as well have been made in other connections associated with human activity at these spots (Hedges 1973). The large sites of abstract petroglyphs in the Chihuahuan Desert of New Mexico and West Texas also frequently occur at springs where evidence of campsites and human activity abounds. I hypothesize that the Barrier Canyon Style paintings in the shelters and alcoves of the sandstone canyons of eastern Utah served as shrines or ceremonial centers and that they reflect shamanistic activities. The shelters painted with abstract designs in southern New Mexico and in adjacent parts of Texas also may have functioned in this way.

A model from ethnology for the use of painted rock-shelters as shrines by hunting-and-gathering peoples is provided by the Australian Aborigines (Moore 1971). The Aboriginal cave paintings are divided into classes depending on specific function, of which there are several, and in connection with this, their degree of sacredness. Sites range from those in which highly

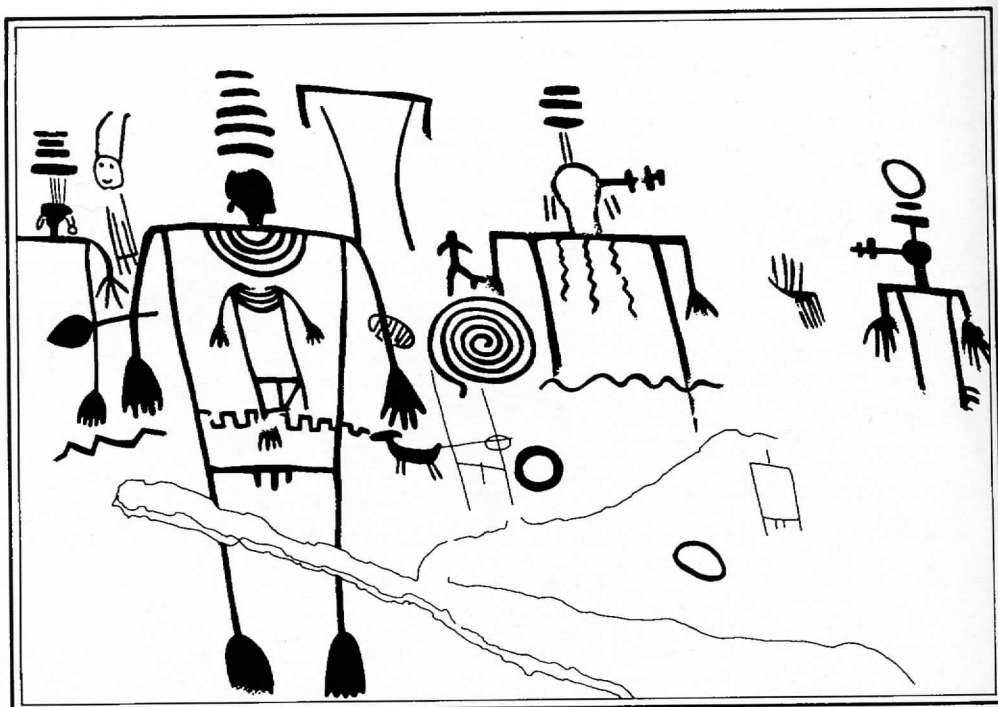


Figure 77. San Juan Anthropomorphic Style petroglyphs, Butler Wash on the San Juan River. Small Glen Canyon Linear Style anthropomorph with face and antennae appears at upper left.

Figure 78. San Juan Anthropomorphic Style with yucca plant and later Anasazi petroglyphs, San Juan River at Butler Wash. Basketmaker figures are between 3 and 4 feet tall. Glen Canyon Linear Style animal at upper right.

