

Jesse E. Warner

FIGURINES AND THEIR SIMILARITY TO ROCK ART FIGURES

Distinctive figurines have long been considered one of the diagnostic traits of the Fremont Culture. Many site reports describe simple, often crude figurines that have come from virtually every area with an extensive Fremont habitation. In recent years the finding of more figurines has provided evidence for wider areal consistency. Taylor (1957:45) comments that Morss was unduly cautious in hesitating to lump the Utah series with those from Colorado. He states that their similarities far outweigh their differences.

Discussion of the exact function of this type of artifact will always be debated. Evidence seems to suggest that there was more than just one purpose that these images fulfilled. The general consensus appears to be that they were held with differing degrees of reverence. Some were evidently considered as deities or hero-type figures.

Whatever the exact function may have been, it seems obvious that these concepts also existed within rock art counterparts. Morss (1931:35) noted that petroglyph anthropomorphs without arms and legs, "technically in this respect suggest ... that of figurines". In rock art, as well as in clay, when there is an unusually large degree of repetition of a standard form, a unique or significant representation can be assumed. The relative importance of such motifs can be derived from the area over which their conventionalization was spread, along with the amount and treatment of detail, and the type and consistency of specific relationships of relative elements and their placement.

In Fremont rock art there are many conventionalized body forms. With sufficient repetition each has become a motif. One of these is the figurine-type body form. Many people interested in rock art casually mention the similarities of the figurine body type, and note its presence in rock art, but they do not draw any worthwhile conclusions. Many of these only mention that the body decoration is reminiscent of the decorated bodies of Fremont rock art anthropomorphs from northeastern Utah. What they do not note is that this same basic form, and the way it is decorated, occurs all over Fremont territory.

Because of the repetitions in both media, this distinctive body form has become a hallmark and indicator of the Fremont culture. Because of the distinctive variations within regional locations, techniques and types of detail can in some cases be used to indicate regional styles.

Like the clay figurines, the rock art counterparts have heads and bodies without arms and legs. Their bodies also end in regionally different types of figurine-like body termini. Whether these are distinctively regional has not yet been determined. Different types do occur in the same areas, but the percentages differ. Many of the rock art forms, like the figurines, occur in differing contexts, and have different amounts of detail (Figure 1).

The figurine body form may also be related to anthropomorphs with arms but lacking legs, or with legs but lacking arms (Figure 2). The figurine form could be an extension

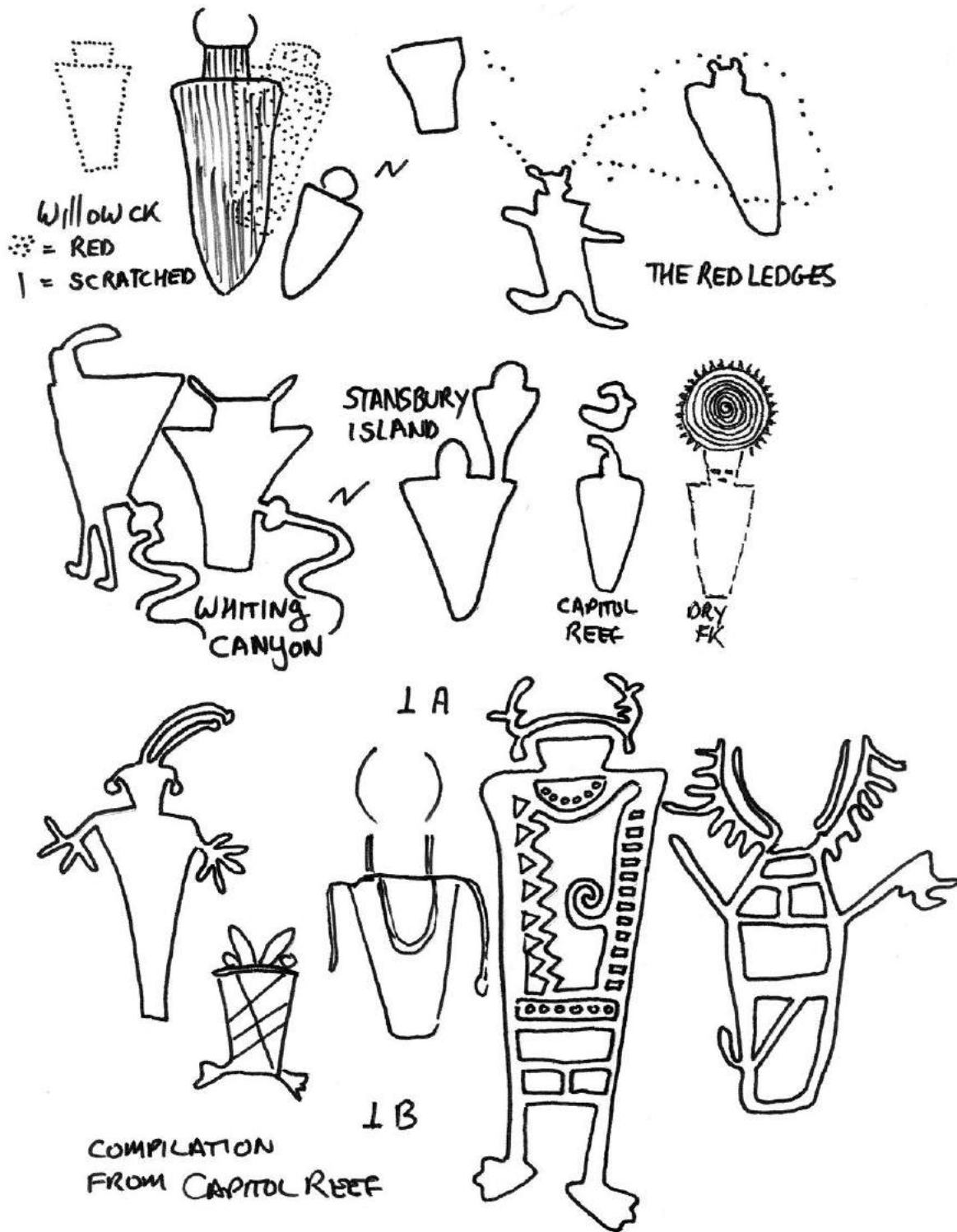


Figure 1

incorporating the basic concepts of the appendageless forms. Examples of all these types are being gathered for further study. Until then, the similarities will simply be noted.

There are several distinctive traits that reoccur in both figurines and their counterparts in rock art. These areas of detail include: (1) facial treatment, (2) hair

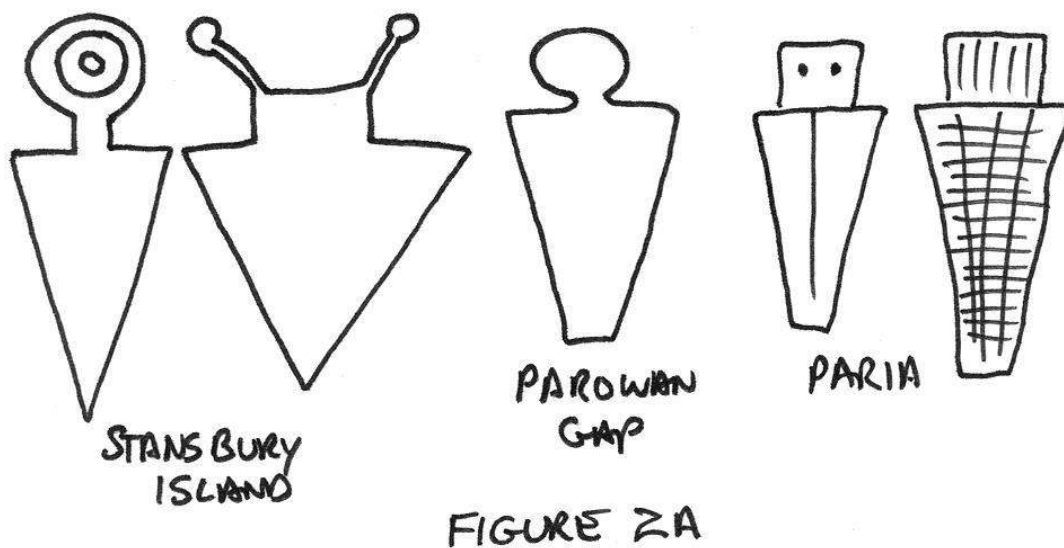


Figure 2

treatment, (3) jewelry, (4) body painting and (5) clothing. After observing the files, it becomes obvious that there are differing degrees of regional variation within most of

these categories. Differing types and amounts of detail are expressed within the major Fremont style divisions. West of the Wasatch Mountains little if any is repre-

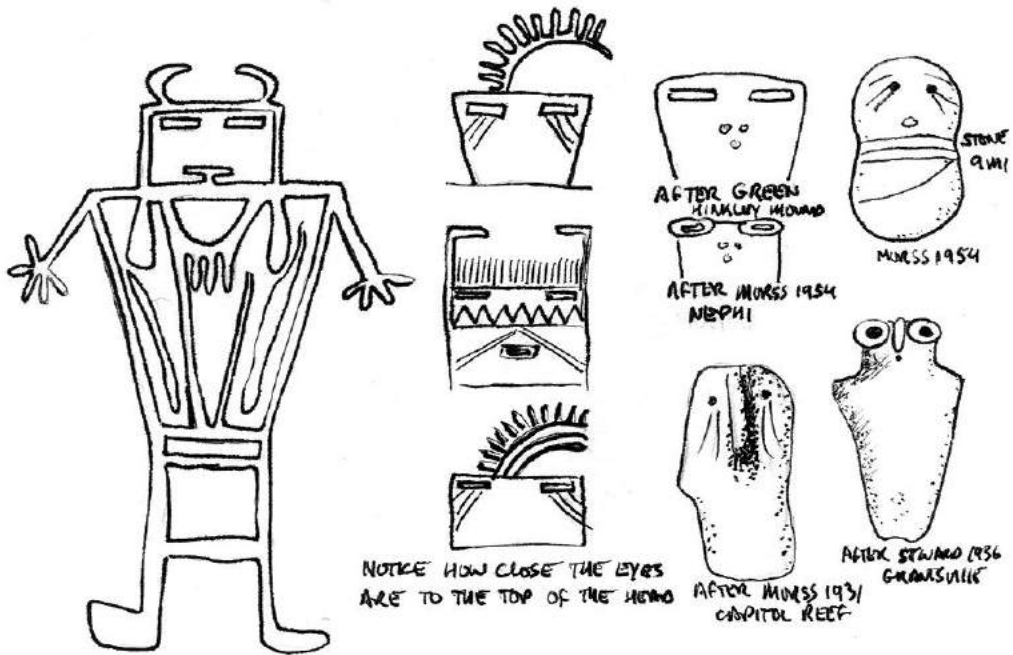


FIGURE 3A

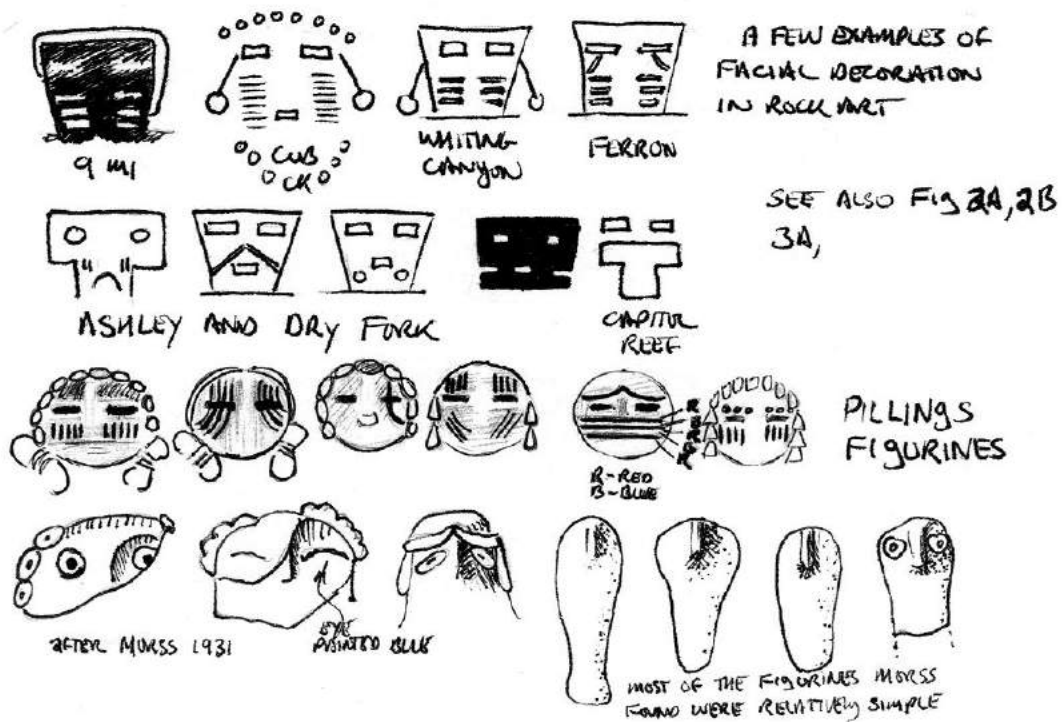


FIGURE 3B

Figure 3

sented (Figure 3). Corresponding examples from rock art show that few anthropomorphs have faces indicated, and like the figurines, statistically are some of the most

simple. Where figurines have picked up more detail, the rock art counterparts also have more detail. It is the eastern part of the state where the Fremont reached their

most artistic elaborance. Likewise here also, the rock art counterparts statistically have more elaboration (Figure 4).

The following consists of a discussion of the categories and a few examples to illustrate the ideas.

Facial Treatment: The eyes on the figurines that Morss (1931) found in the Fremont drainage varied in their technique. Twelve occurred without eyes, 20 had applied eyes, ten had punched eyes, while none had slits (of the Arizona type). Where present, the eyes are well toward the top of the head. It is interesting that nearly all the eyes on the pecked forms are the slit type. This holds true from the major Fremont territory. While not all eyes on petroglyphs are distinctively figurine-like, there are some that have those distinctive characteristics (Figure 5). In clay, the nose and mouth are often represented; while in rock art, except for the Classic Vernal Style, the mouth is absent and the nose is very rare. Eyes on the Western Utah figurines are often slits.

Facial decorating, whether painting, tattooing or scarification, is not common in either rock art or figurines. The most common types of marks that occur in rock art faces are the tear streaks or horizontal cheek lines (Figure 6). Of these, tear-like streaks occur most often on figurines. These, however, are more elaborate and differ greatly in form. Because of the unbalanced nature of the evidence, it is difficult to make a reliable comparison.

It is doubtful that these types of facial markings represent specific deities, as some believe. The Fremont did not seem to have developed a standardized deity classification system like the Hopi. There is no evidence the Fremont used this type of symbolism for specific figures. It may have

been that other indicators represented these types of characters.

I hope that there will occur distinctive cross references with face markings and other indicators to imply specifics, but at this stage I am still gathering evidence. In rock art it would seem natural to find more categories of facial markings, since not all are assumed to represent deities. Many may simply represent warriors or religious moieties. Many of the figures that evoke a feminine character are those which bear the stacked rows of horizontal cheek markings (Figure 6). The other side of the coin cannot be answered until it is determined if the majority of the figurines represent deities or not.

What needs to be done is to take all of the known examples and categorize them into morphological divisions and compare them by types, media and area. This will indicate if there are more similarities or differences, and where and what specific points line up.

Hair Treatment: In this category it seems most elaboration occurs in figurines. There is little variation from the hair bob that is not concealed with various decorations. In distinctive Fremont rock art there are few examples that represent hair bobs. These are not identical to the way they are depicted on figurines. If the hair bobs in rock art were to be drawn like the clay forms, one would assume they would occur like the hair depictions on the Salt Creek faces (Figure 7). There are several anthropomorphs from Capitol Reef that have, what is assumed to be, examples of hair bobs. This is a constant and consistent motif found elsewhere with little variation (Figure 8). Why the hair bob is represented so fully in clay and not on rock art can only be speculation. There are, however, a couple of anthropomorphs that have what could represent hair bobs. At Capitol Reef a figure occurs with what may be hair bobs drawn in the Salt Creek and figurine fashion (Figure

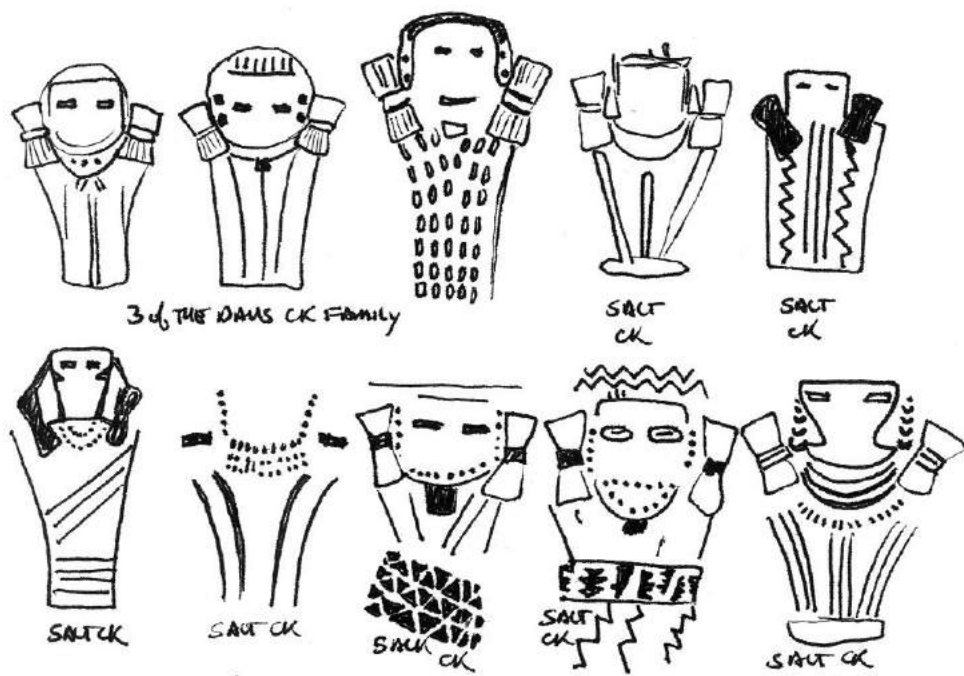


FIGURE 4 A

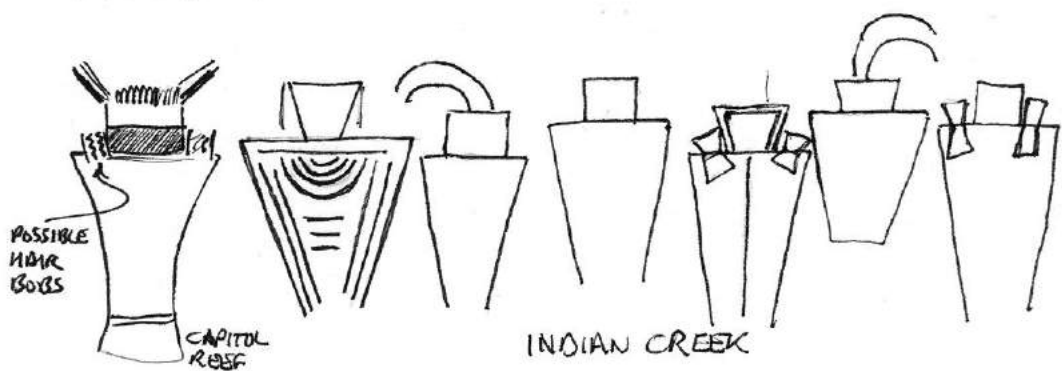


FIGURE 4 B

FIGURE 4 D

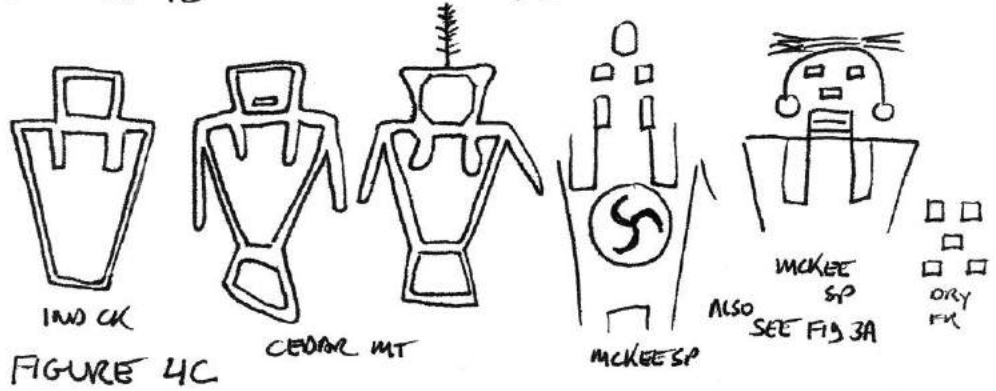


FIGURE 4 C

Figure 4

9). Other examples like Ferron Creek and McKee Springs have very faded examples, which may also provide additional evidence (Figure 9). At Indian Creek there are some

figures whose authorship is uncertain (Figure 10). Most of the indicators suggest a Fremont origin. Yet, they have other characteristics. Besides technique, they

have hair bobs, which would suggest that they are Salt Creek faces. The closest occurring Salt Creek face is at the base of South Six-shooter Peak. I personally feel that they are Fremont with a strong Anasazi influence—a sort of hybridization of styles. Other elements in this overlapping boundary area also provide strong evidence for further hybridization.

In looking at types of hair, or head depictions, or clues as to sex identification, there is little difference. Most of the evidence occurs at McConkie's Ranch, but not on figurine body types.

Another problem resulting in difference is the manipulation of the media (Warner 1981). It is relatively easy to peck the different necklace variations, while it may have been more difficult to apply differently shaped pellets of clay.

Just because a certain type of necklace occurs on figurines in a certain rock art style area, may not mean that it was produced by a member of that rock art style. Many of my peers in looking at Utah rock art style areas, and this holds true for other areas as well, do not discriminate different stylistic

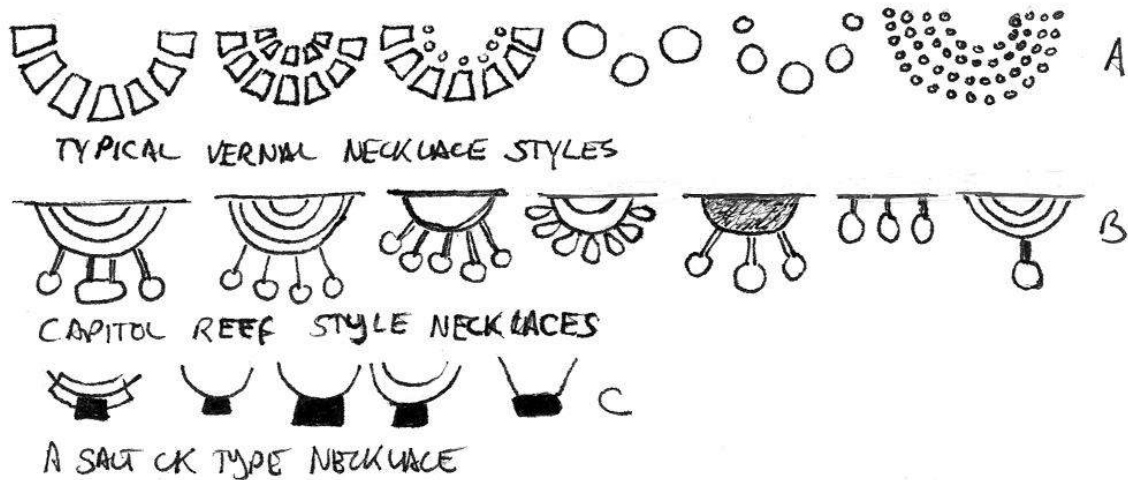


Figure 5

Necklace: In Fremont rock art there are several distinctive regional styles of necklaces (Figure 11A & B). It would again be assumed that the anthropomorphs from an area with a characteristic necklace type (Warner 1982) would also employ that style in clay. In reality, this may be the case, but to date so few figurines have been found with this type of detail that specific comparisons cannot be made. No distinctive Vernal or typical Capitol Reef necklace styles have yet been found on figurines, but a necklace style reminiscent of the Salt Creek face does occur in both Fremont rock art figurines (Figure 11C).

representations in accumulating the inventories for different areas. In most areas there is a dominant style and several intrusions that may have been contemporary as well as styles that were older and more recent. With more meticulous awareness to this, it will change the current view of some of the style profiles of several areas.

Body Painting: The manner in which the body has been divided during the decoration reminds one of the field divisions of heraldry. Major areas of division are vertical, horizontal, diagonal and combinations of the three. Variations in the widths and

spacing of lines or dots provide interesting variety (Figure 12).

On clay figurines there is no problem in determining whether body decoration

represented articles of clothing or body painting. In rock art it is not so easy. Horizontal lines across the chest could be painting, while across the waist they could be belts. Diagonal lines could be sashes or

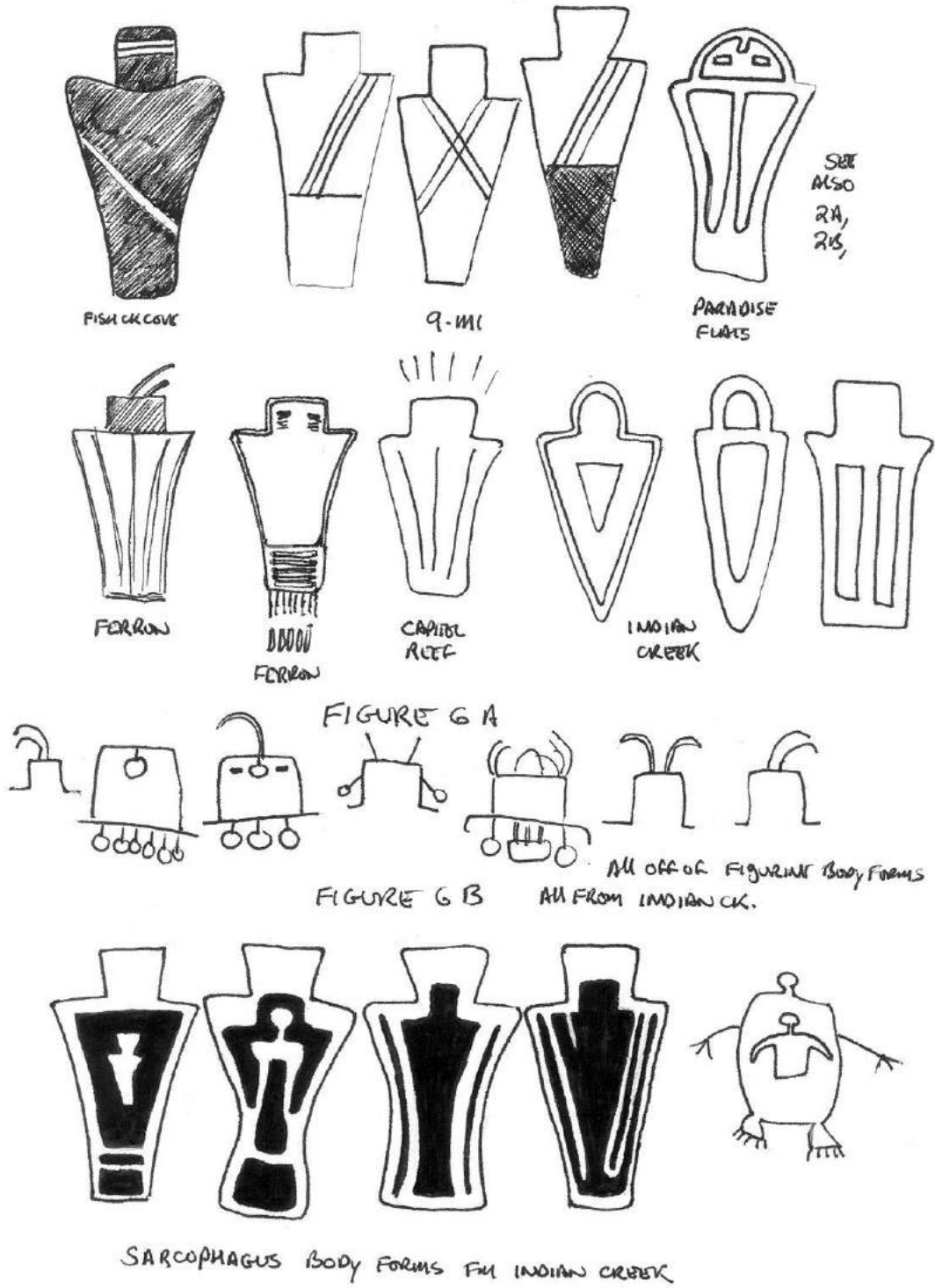


Figure 6

painting. Vertical lines could also be either painting, or represent designs within an article of clothing. Schaafsma (1971:41) suggests that the diagonal lines could be carrying straps.

Clothing: It seems that most of the detail in rock art representations of the figurine body form are decorative or symbolic divisions of the space, rather than intent to represent actual clothing. There are, however, many representations in rock art that depict clothing. Occasionally shirts and pants or leggings occur. Some of these have what actually appear to be rows of fringed leather.

The article of clothing most often represented in rock art is the headdress (Figure 13) and belt. Headdress types are obviously lacking in their clay counterparts. There is also an obvious absence of headdresses on the rock art examples of the figurine body type. The types of headdresses that do not occur on the rock art figurine type are the two-horned headdresses—whether antler rack or the bison form. The one-horn or feather version, so typical of the Capitol Reef style, also occurs.

Belts are often more elaborate on clay figurines than they are in rock art; yet, they are equally common to both. There is a unique form of decoration that occurs within the body outline of a form of the Fremont figurine. Because many of these contain miniature versions of the figurine body type, they have been called "sarcophagus" figures (Figure 14). There is a heavy concentration of these in Indian Creek, where they may have gotten the idea from similar Basketmaker examples.

Hopefully this brief introduction will point out some possibilities, and make rock art observers more aware of some of the intricacies of the detail and the unique occurrences of repetition. More information

is being gathered for wider in-depth comparisons. One thing that seems unquestionable is that even though there are vast differences in types of detail used to evoke their intent, the figurine body form was represented in both rock art and clay figurines. These expressions in both media may have represented the same types of characters or deities.

By color and type of clay, Morss noticed that the Pillings figurines were made at different times and paired by twos. This suggests that the pairs that were made together would bear more stylistic affinities with each other than other paired figurines - - unless they were all made by the same individual. There has been little work done so far in making these types of comparisons.

One conclusion that seems so obvious, is that the Anasazi in the Salt Creek area must have adopted the Fremont figurine expression in the form of the Salt Creek face motif. Since this is the only Anasazi area to contain this motif, this idea has been expressed by several observers. One thing I think that few realize, is that the Fremont must have been impressed with the Anasazi enhancement of this motif. There are several things occurring in the Fremont rock art of other areas that contain motifs that express a very close relationship. This relationship resulted in many unique cultural interchanges. Evidence for these conclusions is being gathered for presentation at a later date. Evidence of this type can be used to illuminate many types of activities that take years for the archaeologist to uncover by excavation. Sufficient examples from the total area of Fremont habitation need to be accumulated before any final conclusions can be reached. This data then needs to be compared with the archaeological record.

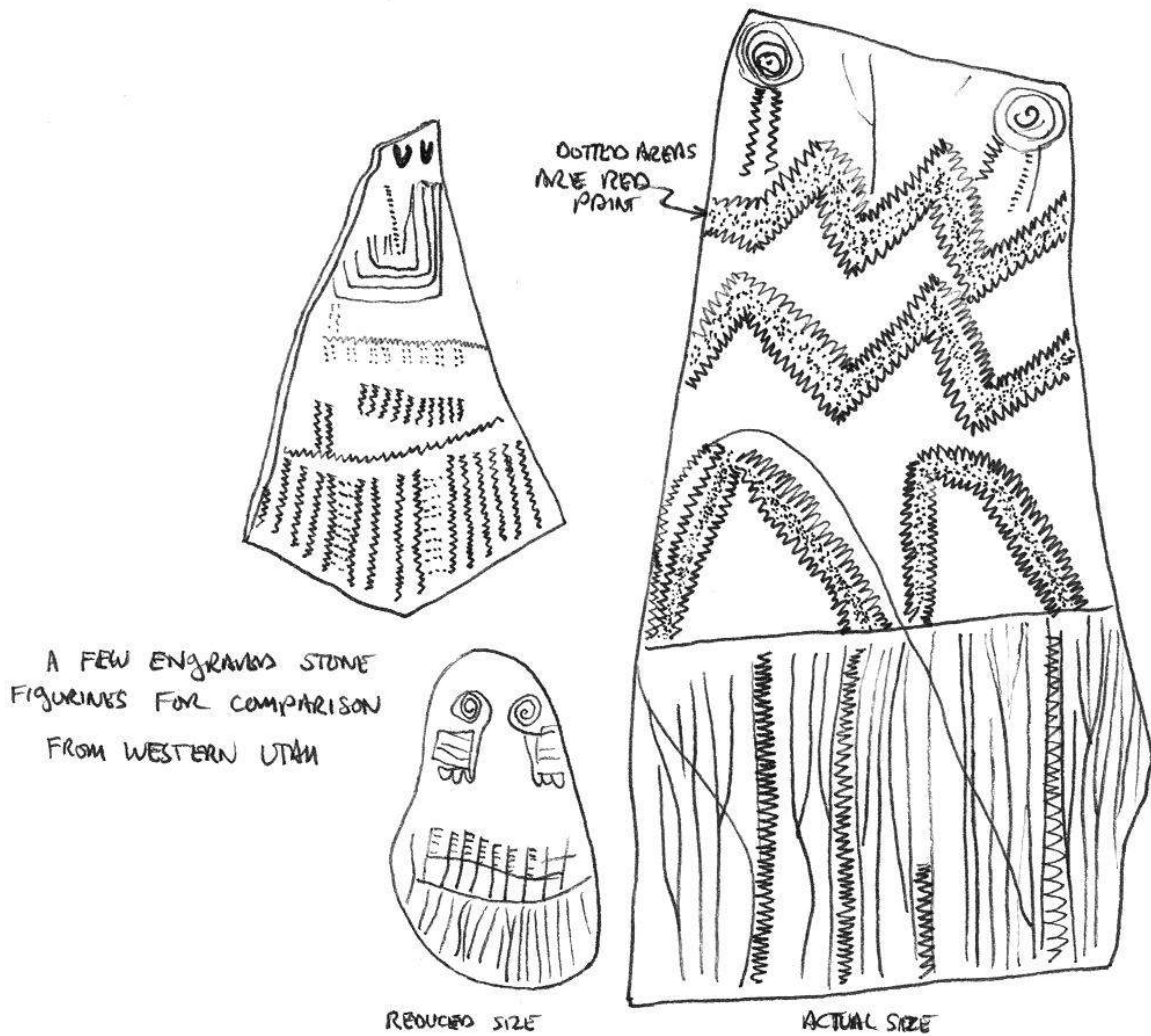


Figure 7

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