

A NEW LOOK AT HUNTING SHAMEN

BY

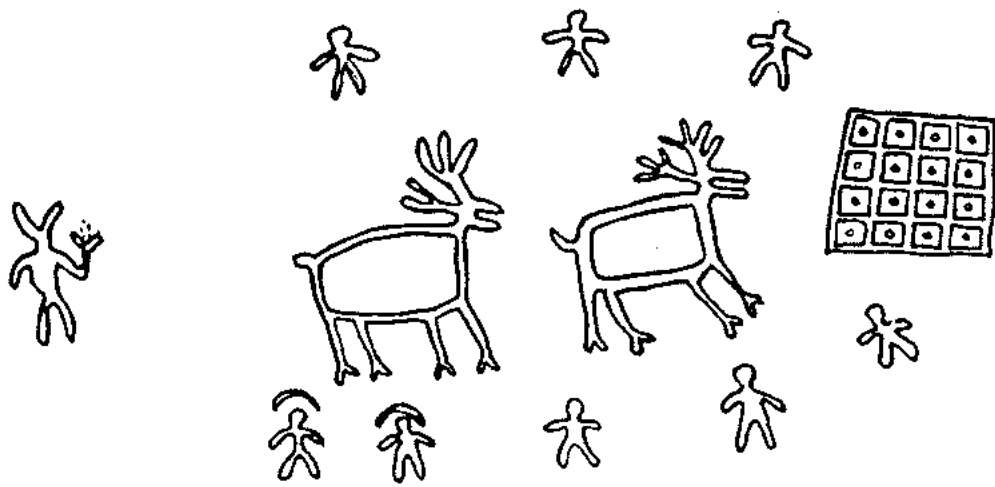
JESSE E. WARNER

In the past, with the trend to push too many situations through the door of hunting magic, no one has really identified the Hunting Shaman in rock art. Recently there has been a more conservative tendency to back away from Hunting Magic and consider other possibilities, because the Hunting Shaman has still not been identified. Today, with considerations of repeated contexts that relate to this subject, I believe we are gaining the appropriate insights to place symbolism related to "Hunting Magic", or at least Hunting Shamen into a proper perspective for symbolic analysis.

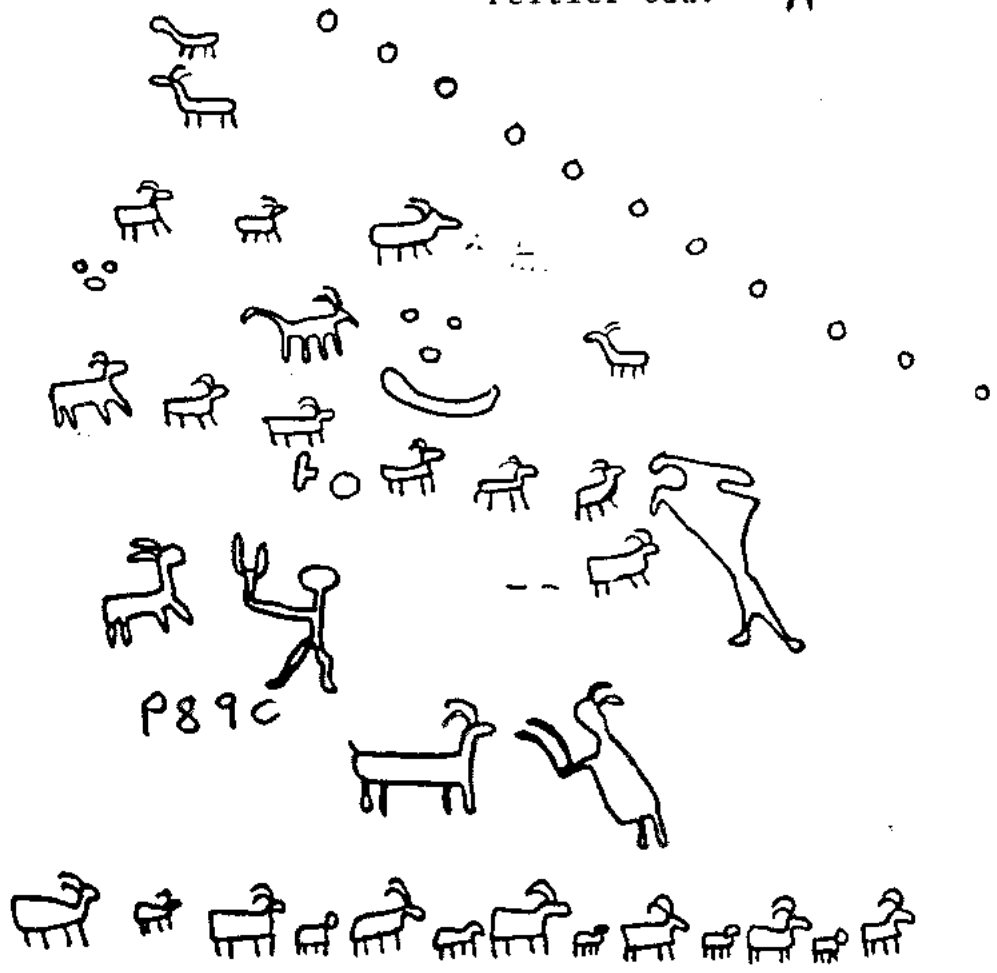
From my motif files I have some very interesting contexts that have not had any previous consideration. The first examples came from Dry Fork, north of Vernal, Utah. One of these was found on a Glen Canyon Style 5 panel, in Peltier Canyon. This is also the most graphically complete context in depicting the intent of the characters in question. In Figure 1A, eight men with outstretched arms funnel two ungulates into a checker board representing what is assumed to be a box-like corral, canyon, or enclosed area. The point of interest for us is the figure that stands behind the animals. His forked headdress sets him apart from the other eight men. These eight men all look the same except for the two who have arcs over their heads. In the hand of the two-horned figure is an object that basically looks like a forked stick, which echoes the shape of his headgear.

This complex composition creates a hunting scenario demonstrating a hunting technique based on a structured social organization with recognized authority and cooperation of participating subordinates. Because of the construction of the composition, the role of the leader seems to fit the possibilities of representing what may be a Hunting Shaman. Before jumping to conclusions, it is my policy to first look for and then examine other similar occurrences before making a judgment (Warner 1984). With only this panel I could suggest a possibility that he is a Hunting Shaman, but that would not be sufficient evidence to support the existence of an established concept. It takes a consistency in the repetition of an idea to verify its validity. With the examples in my files of the Shaman concept I do not have the vast repetition that I have seen with other motifs, yet there is enough to entertain the concept.

Across the canyon from the Peltier site are three other panels (Figs. 1B, 2A and B). On these are four figures which appear to be Hunting Shamen, in slightly different situations. Figure 1B, is a complex composition. There are two figures, each holding a forked object, but this time they are in front of sheep. There are numerous other sheep in the panel,



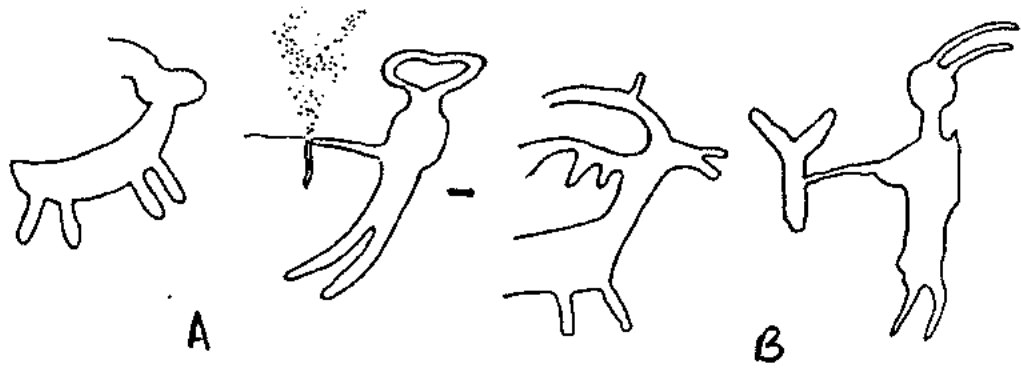
Peltier Can. A



P89c

Dry Fk. B

FIGURE 1.



Dry Fk.

FIGURE 2.

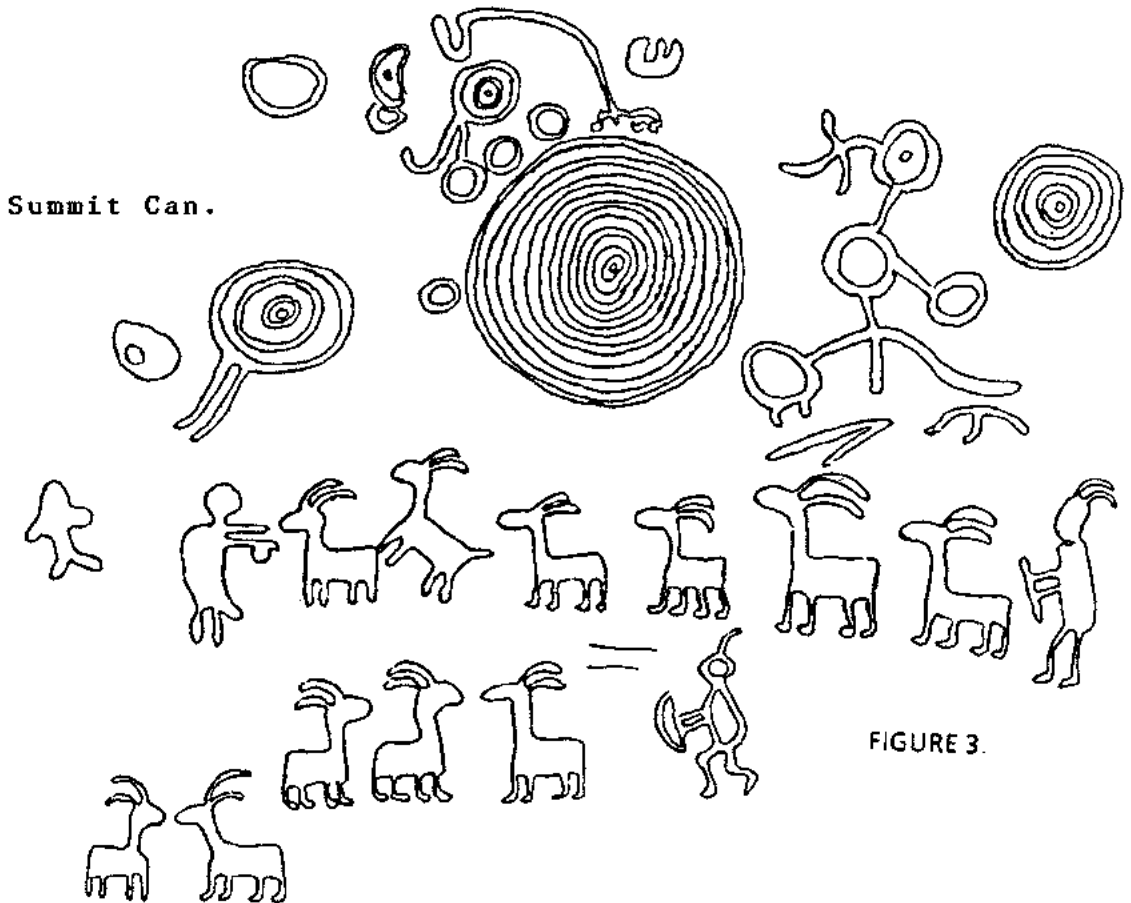


FIGURE 3.

but below the composition is a border formed by a row of what appears to be alternating adult and young sheep. This row is similar to a row in the "Hunting Panel" in Cottonwood Wash in Nine Mile Canyon. The row of sheep from Nine Mile have been suggested to represent the movement from lower valleys to high country in a possible spring migration associated with a Vernal Equinox observation panel below it (Norman 1985). That, or a similar concept, may be represented here. The two sheep above them seem to be in the act of being enticed by the two figures with the forked objects in front of them.

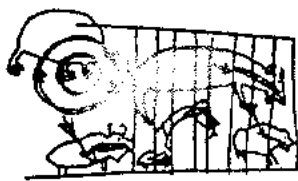
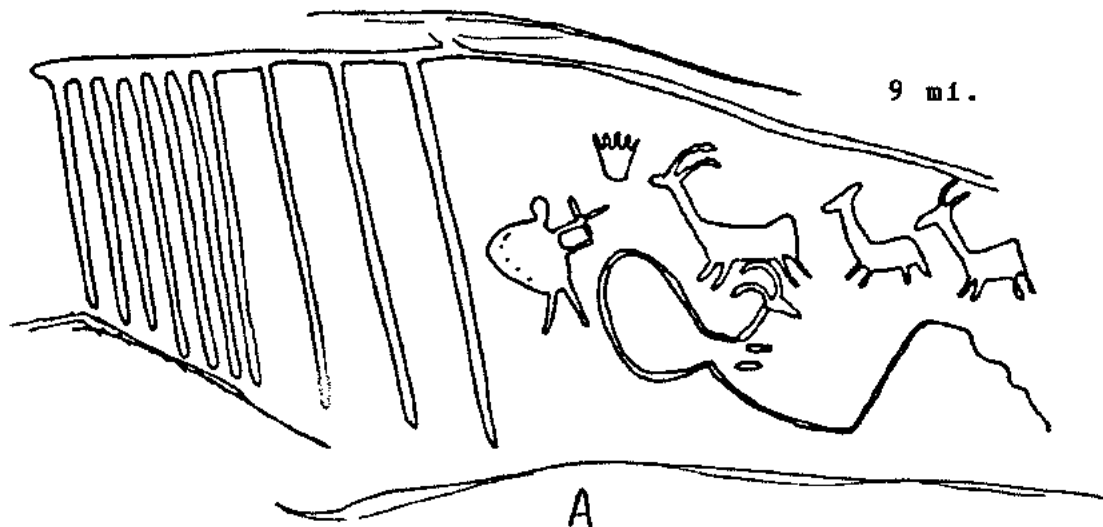
One of these has a two-horn headdress. The other is represented without headgear. Examples of these figures in the files show that the most common type of headdress consists of two horns. This, however, is also balanced by no headgear at all. Even with the predominance of two-horn headdresses, these alone can not be taken by themselves to distinguish what could possibly represent a Hunting Shaman, since so many other contexts and concept associations for that headdress exists.

In the vicinity of Figure 1B are two other figures (the 4th and 5th examples). These repeat the same context but only have one anthropomorph and one animal in each panel. In these situations, the concept of an offering as well as enticement seems to be a possibility, especially with Figure 2A. This individual holds an object that has vague possibilities of being a forked stick, but because of the massive random pecking its abstraction almost gives the impression of it representing a plant or Y shaped branch. These five examples from the same vicinity establish that this area must have been a prime hunting area used for the entrapment of migrating animals by organized groups of both Basketmaker and Fremont hunters.

In Santaquin Canyon a similar panel was recorded by Putnam (1876) possibly representing this shaman concept (Fig. 3). Because the original drawing does not have enough detail and the boulder is believed to have been used as road fill, it is difficult to tell. There are, however, two individuals with outstretched arms, one of which possibly holds a stick.

Figures 4 and 5 illustrate several other occurrences of similar characters. Figure 4A contains several symbols which seem to strengthen the hunting drive possibilities in contexts of individuals with forked objects. Besides the row of three sheep in front of an anthropomorph with outstretched arms and what could be a bow and arrow, but which looks as much or more like a forked stick, there are four other symbols present that probably intend to enhance or insure the hunt-drive interpretation. One is the conformation of the graphic elements to the form of a section of the cliff contour. The second is the linear grid-like lines forming a corral-like enclosure or entrapment symbol. Third, is the top and bottom border. The top of the panel consists of pecked lines all across the composition. The bottom boarder provides a funneling approach with the bottom of the outset block of stone. The left portion on the panel, the "corral" itself, consists of vertical diminishing bar-like lines.

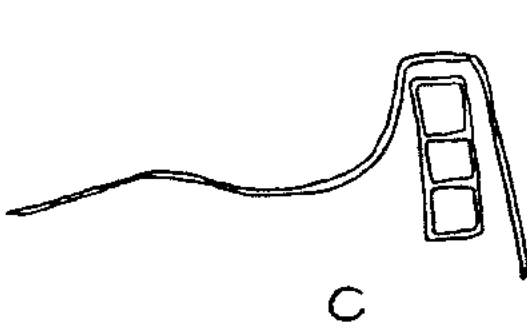
This Nine Mile panel is similar to a hunting scene near Ferron, Utah and two at Roosevelt Park, Washington in two respects; the bar-like lines, and their conformation to the cliff face (Fig. 4B) (Warner, Warner 1985). These,



Ferron



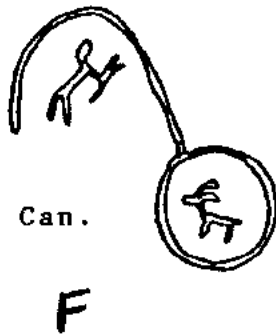
Roosevelt Park, Wash.



Bocks Can.



Hog Can.



Mckee Sp.

FIGURE 4.

however, were done by different styles. The combination of top lines, bottom edge and vertical grid creates a funneling approach to a pole-like enclosure with the three sheep being enticed into the approach by the possible Hunting Shaman. Tracks like the one above the anthropomorph and in front of the procession of sheep is like a footnote to possibly represent a migration or movement symbol. If that is the case, it fits the composition. Movement in the composition is toward the anthropomorph in front of the enclosure.

In a Bock's Canyon panel (Fig. 4C), two different elements were combined which may provide a key to help an observer understand the concept of an unfamiliar glyph. In that situation a grid was placed within an enclosure, a typical hunting-drive symbol. Figures 4D,E illustrate two animals in association with other grids from the same area. A similar situation occurs in Figure 4A. The fourth and last point is that here, instead of a barred grid enclosed within a bubular enclosure, a bubular enclosure is formed by a horned snake in front of a barred grid enclosure, and within a natural stone enclosure. A variation of this enclosure is also represented in Figure 4F from Hog Springs. Notice the anthropomorph with the forked object within the enclosure, and the enclosed sheep. It is interesting to note the association of the enclosure with barred grids at the drive site in Bock's Canyon (Fig. 4C) (Warner 1985). While these have minimal entrapment symbolism, the composition in Figure 4A has multiple symbolism indicating the drive situation. At McKee Springs an individual with a forked stick stands on a circle which may also represent the Hunting Shaman concept (Fig. 4G). Note the interesting types of repetitions in these compositions. Figure 5 contains an odd assortment of individuals, some of which may have similar forked objects that may relate to this idea.

The forgoing have been more or less regular types of representations. In addition to these we have identified several other very interesting contexts which add a great deal of insight. At Swelter Shelter in Dinosaur National Monument there is a figure holding a forked stick and emerging from the head, between the horns of the larger figure. There are similar glyphs to this in Dry Fork, Black Hills and Tusher Canyon (Fig. 6). Again if only one or two examples of this idea had been found this would probably not be as significant, but with all the examples, it stresses the importance of this unusual relationship and that it had some degree of convention. The attachment or emergence of the forked stick holder from a sheep's horn adds to the associations of the stick, shaman, and sheep.

In another study of similar motifs these were included as possibly representing a Double Entity or the emergence of a spirit-like figure (Warner 1987A and B). Since these hold the forked object and occur with implications of an altered state or the emergence of the Double Entity, they may also imply that this is a moment of power, a spiritual or out-of-body experience associated with the context of this character. Whether this implies the spiritual essence and power of the Hunting Shaman or an actual spiritual emergence during these periods of power isn't certain. The identity of these figures as possible Hunting Shamen is a very important step in gaining additional insight into what was visualized and represented as a Hunting Shaman. Figure 7A from Cub Creek, shows the simple combination of the forked stick in a possible emerging context which may imply an extension of the power

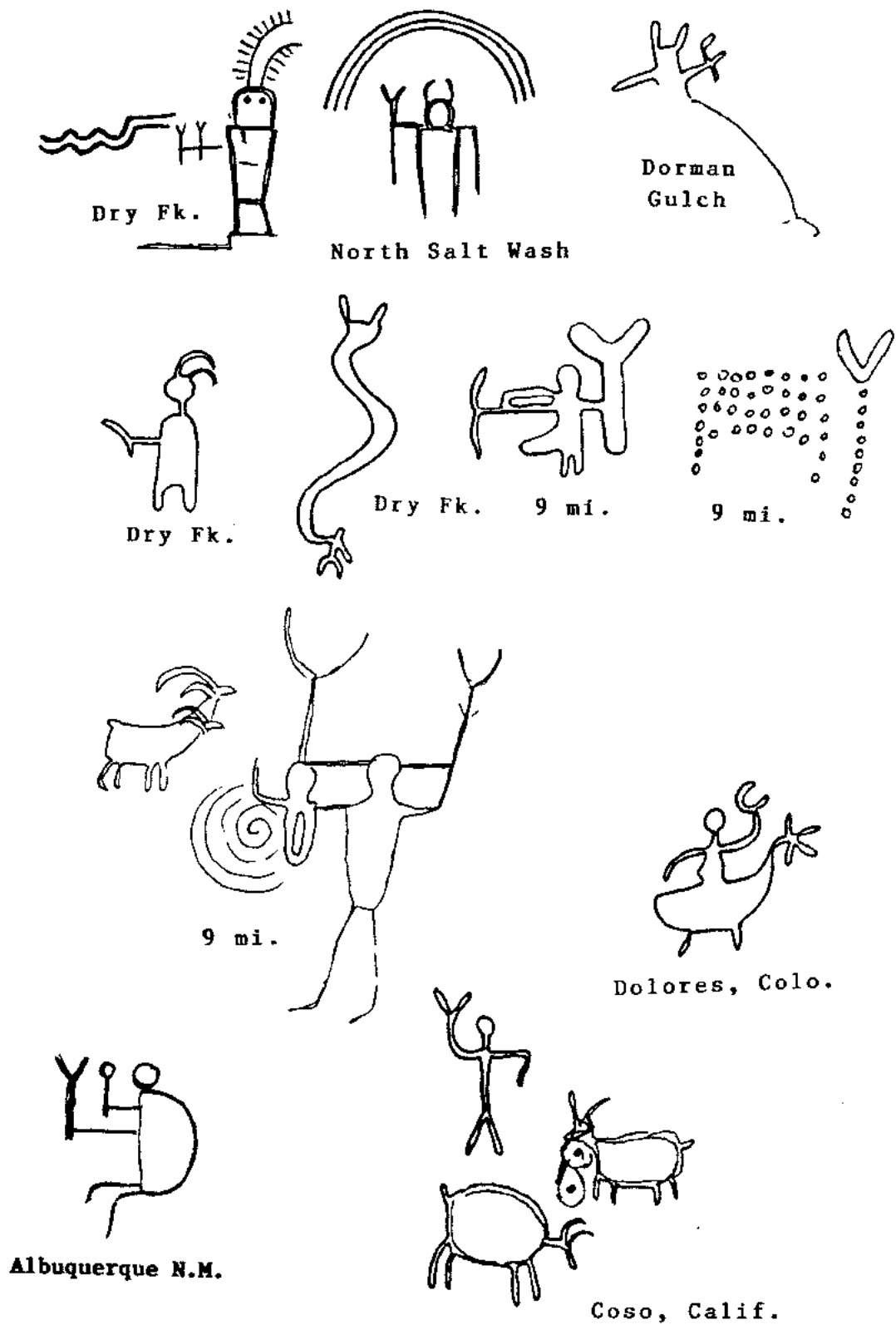


FIGURE 5.

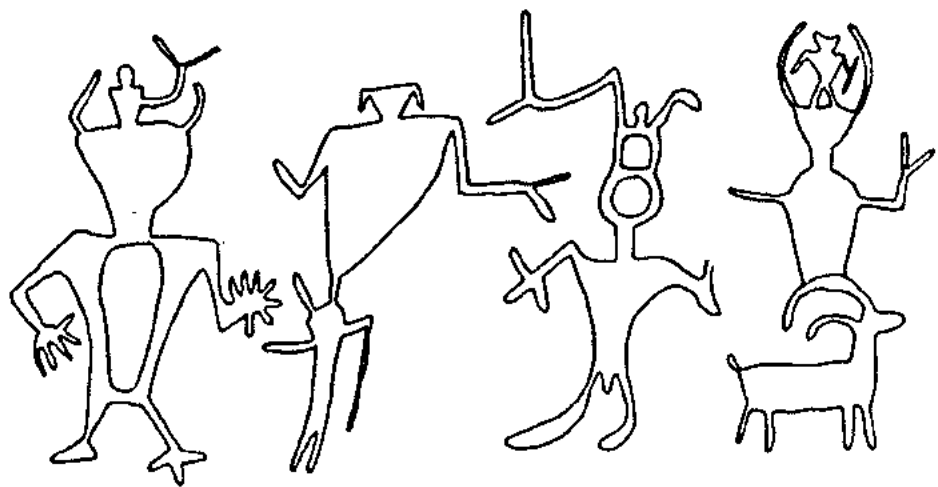
symbolized by the fork or it may simply be a means of identification.

In the Molen Reef there is a double-armed figure in a panel that relates to this situation. Even though he does not hold a forked stick, he may still represent the shaman concept. On this panel a sheep is surrounded by a corral-like form of dots which initially suggested game entrapment. On equinox a circle of light appears on the sheep and expands to fill the panel (Fig. 8A). That interaction seems to reinforce the entrapment concept by providing a "corral-like" form of light on a sheep previously "corralled" by dots. The four-armed figure, conforming to one variation of the definition of a Double Entity or possible emerging figure also seems to oversee or supervise the animated corralling of the sheep within an open-mouthed triangle of light on Winter Solstice. After corralling the first sheep this form of light moves across the cliff to close its mouth on another sheep (Fig. 8B). The double-armed emerging figure, possibly representing the Hunting Shaman continues to stand on the top edge of the light as it moves all the way across the cliff making it appear that he is in total control and literally on top of things. The aspects of this figure as a Double Entity also suggest, like the Double Entities with the forked holders emerging from their heads, that the Hunting Shaman is not just an ordinary man fulfilling that office as needed, but a "real" Shaman, one who has mystical abilities and power. This possibility has been used to demonstrate an element of power, domination and control; factors so very important in game entrapment for a successful drive, and an interaction with light that is not very common in rock art.

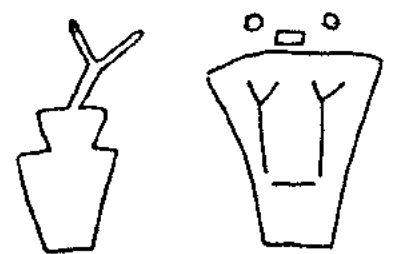
On the Port Neuf River, south of Pocatello, Idaho a double-armed figure stands next to several enclosures and a grid, possibly representing the shaman concept (Fig. 9A). In Indian Creek the figure we call the "Swallowed Up One" was also placed in a dominant position. It also occurs next to an animal that is caught in another triangular corral of light (Fig. 9B). As this form of light moves it also transforms into a zoomorphic creature the moment it swallows up the anthropomorph with a shadow. At the side of this figure, in a position to be held if he had been represented with arms is a Y. If this figure also represents an aspect of the Hunting Shaman concept then it adds a whole new set of insights to those previously considered for the interactions on this panel (Warner 1983:53-55). Since this is a figurine form without arms or legs and doesn't hold the Y, we anticipate that this would represent a more divergent or different narrative than the other examples.

These last examples of figures with forked sticks (now an established motif) emerging from the head of another figure (another established motif) and a double-armed entity that occurs with the enclosure or actively participates with light movement in a corralling context, add information that not only reinforces the concept of Hunting Shaman but also suggests that such an individual includes one with the abilities of Shamanistic emergence or transformation. This can also be illustrated by combinations of humans and animals (Fig. 10A). These examples put a whole new light on the idea of Hunting Shaman. The position that these types of characters fill involves no ordinary person, but one that has supernatural powers and abilities to do feats that must have put awe and inspiration in the minds of those who relied on his services.

FIGURE 6.



Swelter Shelter Black Hills Dry Fk. Tusher Can.



Cub Ck. McKee Sp.

FIGURE 7.

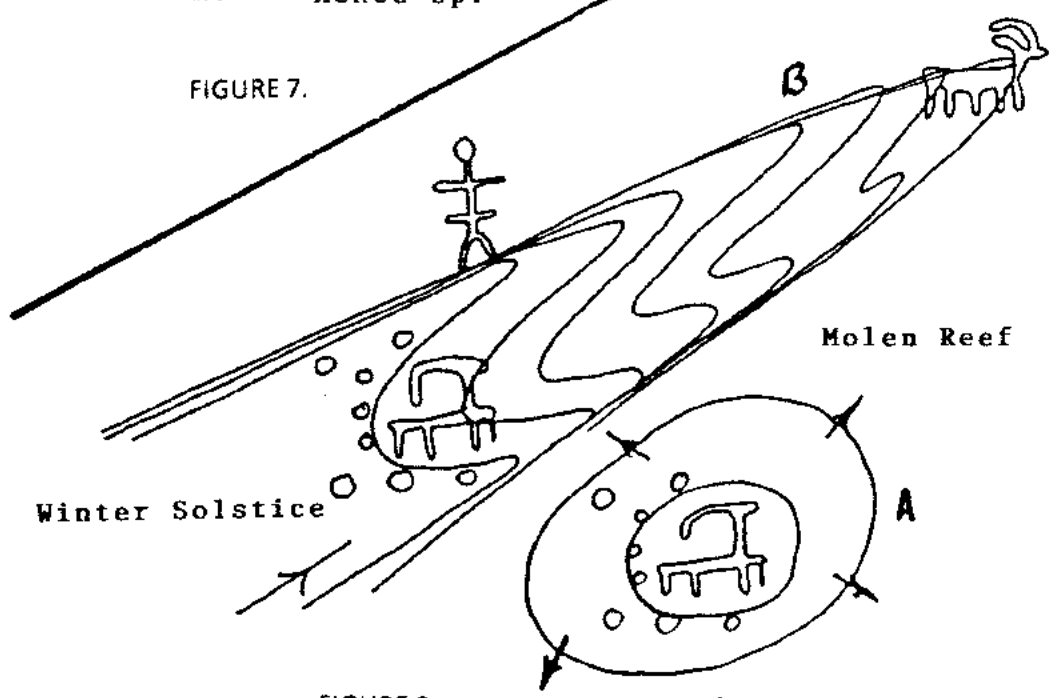


FIGURE 8.

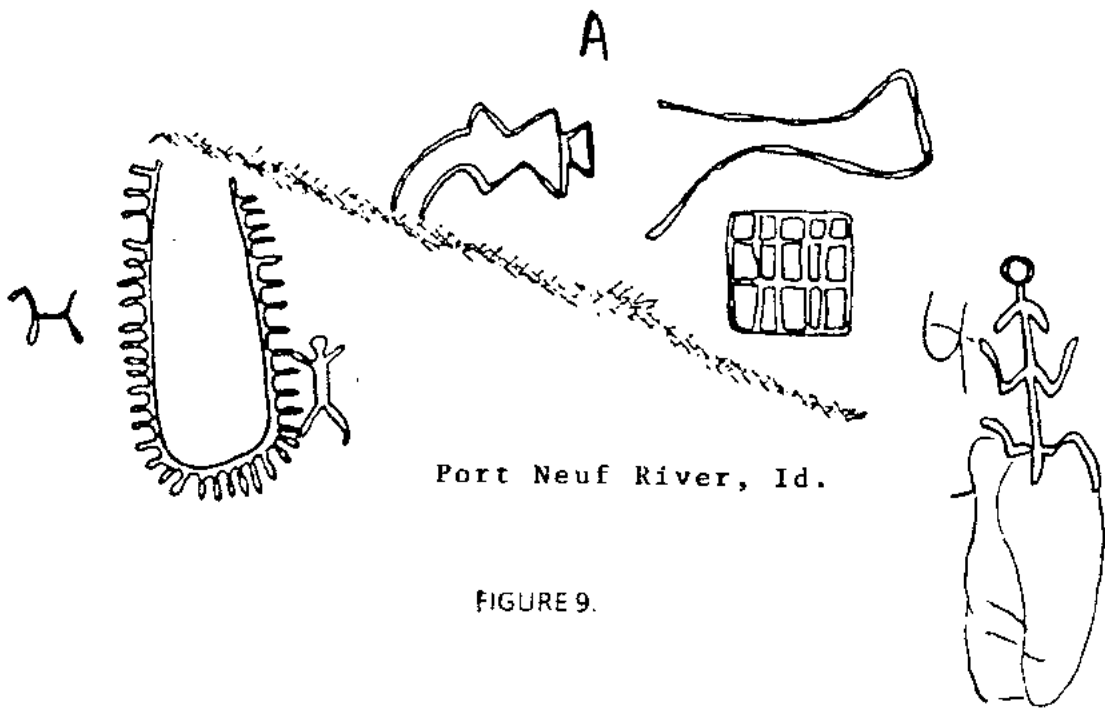
Equinox

There are many other examples more borderline that probably relate to these concepts (Fig. 10B,C). The evidence presented here has been based on the presence of the concept. As mentioned at the beginning, we do not have the quantity of occurrence that is desired yet, but the quality is very good. There is sufficient evidence to establish more than the mere fact that it is a motif. The Hunting Shaman concept has been interwoven with other motifs and in unusual situations with symbols other than anthropomorphs holding a forked object.

It is difficult to determine what the definition of Hunting Shaman could or should include. I feel that we may want to place too restrictive a limit on what it could encompass. I also feel the evidence confirms the existence of individuals who accepted this responsibility and officiated in behalf of others and that they possessed powers beyond the realm of the average individual.

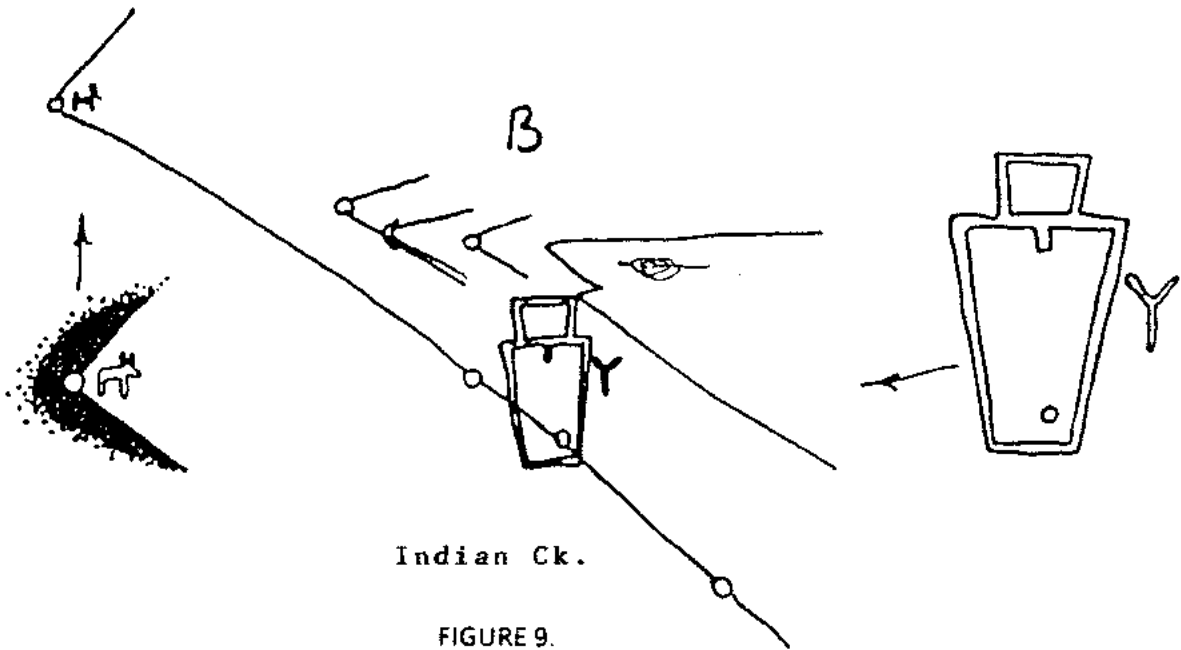
The other side of the coin that also contains information is its absence. Most of the names of sites where this concept have been found occur in eastern Utah, especially in the northeast. There is an obvious lack from western Utah, except Black Hills and Summit Canyon. In western Utah, however, there are many sites that represent the drive situation in a different manner that are generally lacking in eastern Utah. In those compositions human figures of any kind are noticeably lacking. After careful consideration, the lack of individuals with forked sticks does not particularly indicate the absence of the Hunting Shaman concept, only that the concept was represented differently. This could tell us something about the differences in style between these two areas when compared with the presence and absence and differences in the forms of other motifs.

The existence of the Hunting Shaman with the forked object and sheep from California, Colorado and New Mexico demonstrates that it was probably not just a local phenomenon. Before this concept can be more fully defined and explored we need more examples, especially from wider areas. If anyone knows of occurrences not included in this paper we would appreciate a note about those situations. These can be addressed to Rock Art Research of Utah, 960 West 7th South, Salt Lake City, Utah, 84104.



Port Neuf River, Id.

FIGURE 9.



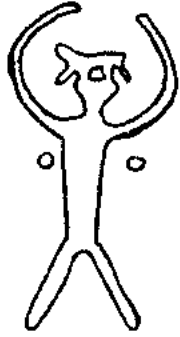
Indian Ck.

FIGURE 9.

A



Venice



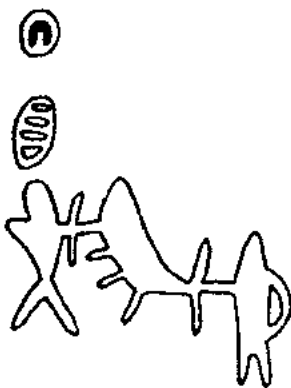
Quitchupah



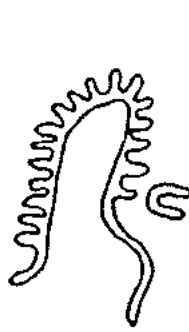
Sand Is.



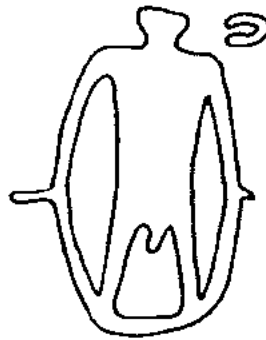
Clear Ck.



Stansbury Is.

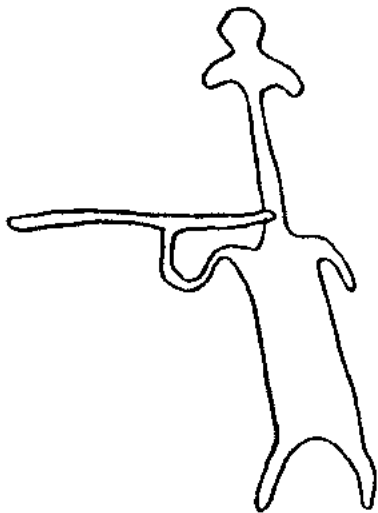


Richfield



Connors Sp.

B



Tusher Can.



FIGURE 10.

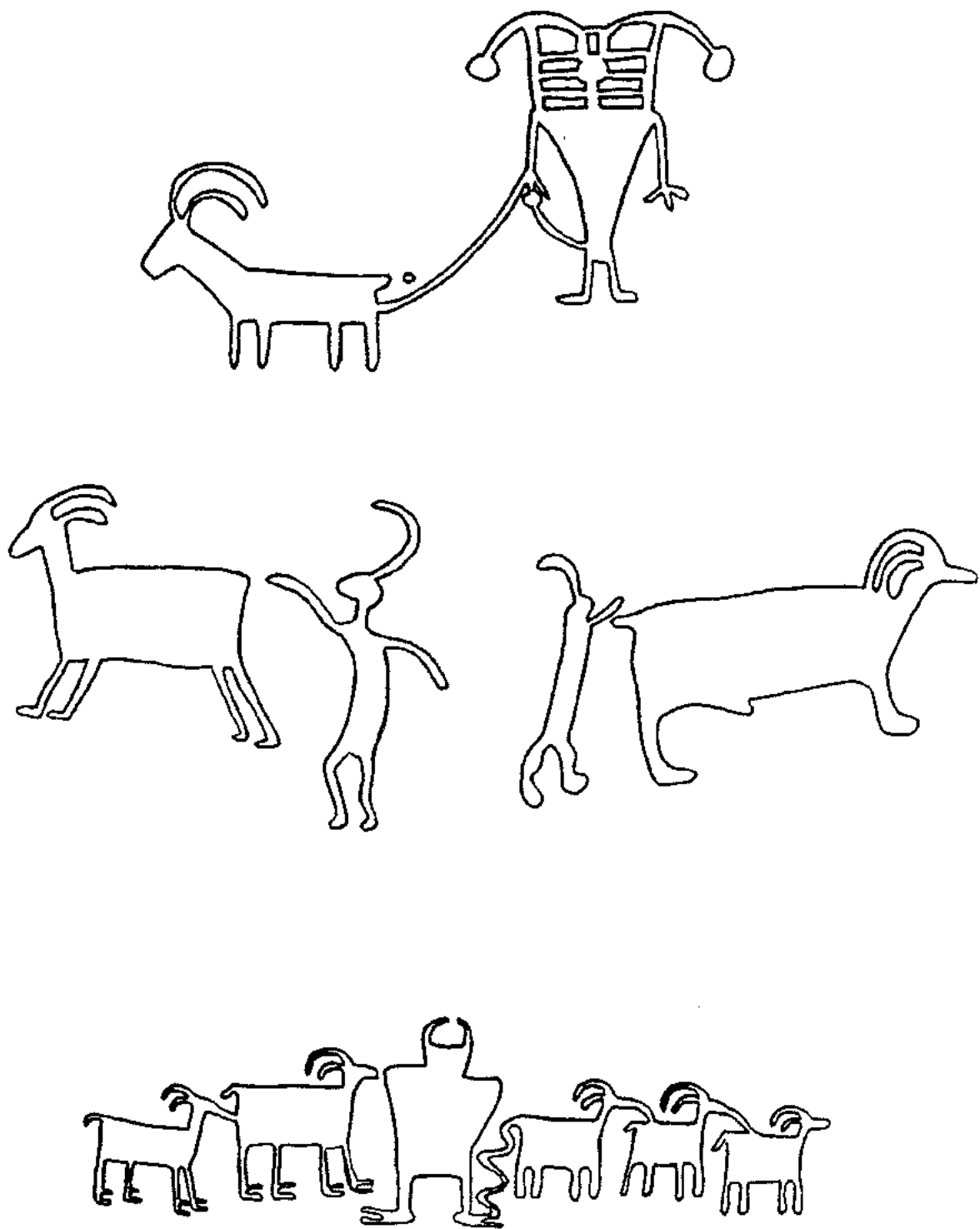


FIGURE 10 c

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