

The Two Headed Goat Lives

Nal Morris

This paper is going to be somewhat suppositional and I am going to try to do some new interpretation. An archaeologist told me once, "Twenty-five years in rock art and no progress". I'm going to try to make some progress. I'm actually going to say that there are symbols that have highly probable interpretations working forward from the progress in archaeoastronomy. It is like gathering clues from diverse places to converge on a single incidence of meaning. We are now able make some suppositions that are based on fairly solid ground.

Consider the panel at Rochester Creek, Figure 1. At this panel, we postulated a possible solar function by theoretically placing a gnomon, pole or rock structure that stood in

front of the panel. We then built a computer model to determine what this panel would do with such a gnomon. Using the computer model, we placed a post out in front of the panel as shown in Figure 2. Our objective was to locate a spot on the ground such that at the winter solstice the gnomon would cast a shadow right on a given marker and from the same gnomon at the same place at the summer solstice we compelled it to cast a shadow onto the long vertical line. We picked these two marks because they're not anthropomorphic or zoomorphic figures. They're just lines that must have indicated something. We then needed to find a test to see if this glyphic configuration could function as a solar observatory or calendar device.

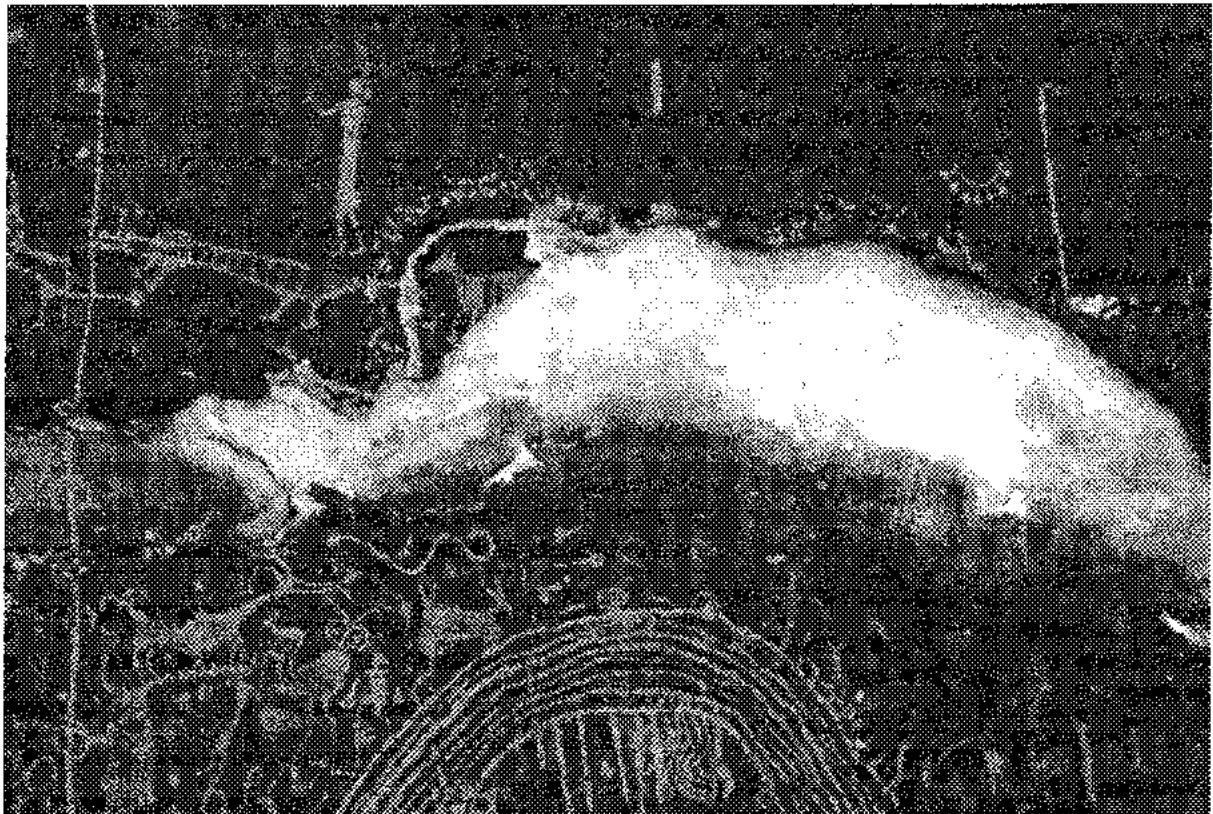
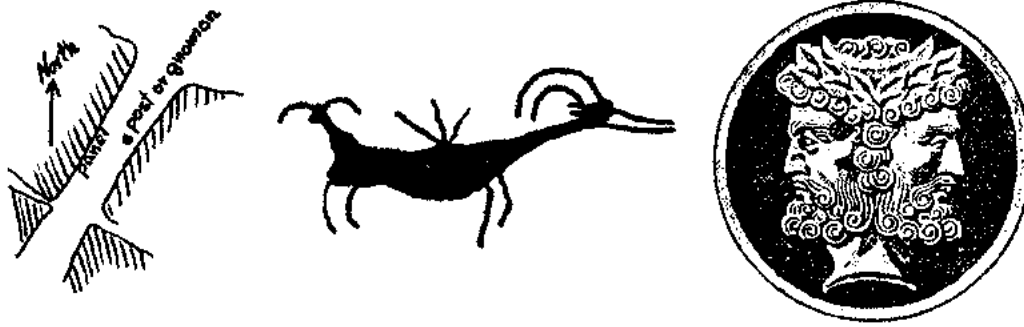


Figure 1. The Rochester Creek Petroglyph Panel.



Figures 2 through 4, left to right.

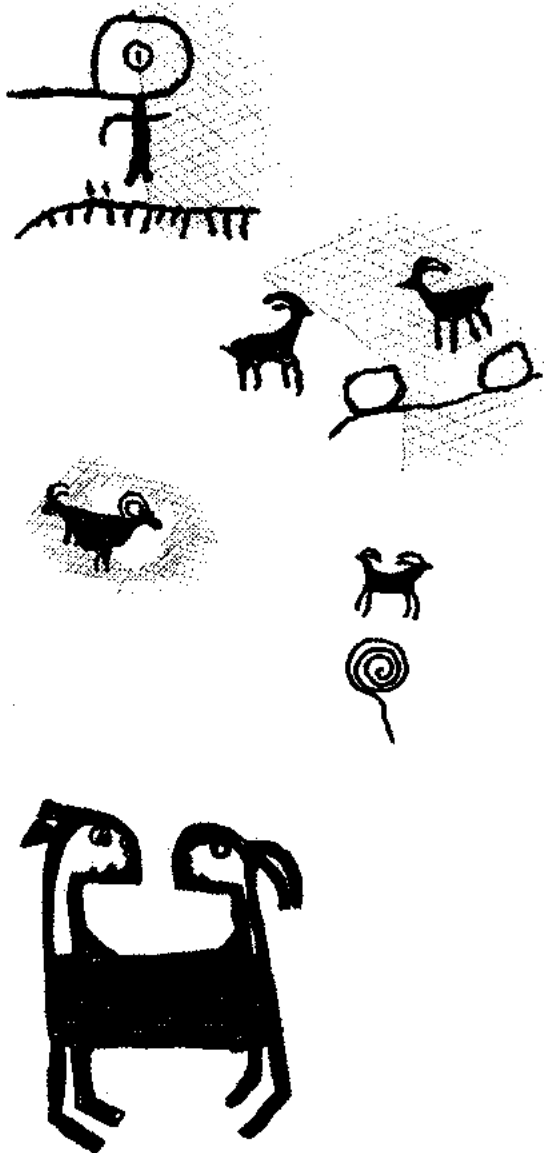
The proper test was that the shadow of the gnomon on the panel should indicate some additional significant dates other than the solstices, which we had necessitated to perform by our placement of the gnomon. The mark that was central to the two solstitial markers should therefore indicate the equinoxes. Data from our site survey and the computer model indicated a shadow overlay on the center marker. When the equinox came in September of 1984, the simulated gnomon laid a shadow right on top of what we now call the equinoctual marker. Thus, the panel revealed itself as being a very fine calendar device. The other markers, a male figure with up-raised arms and the string of beads, along that same horizon turned out to be cross quarter date indicators for February, May, August and November.

Now that we understood the function of the calendar, were there other related and meaningful interpretations for the rest of the panel? I became interested in what we call the Two Headed Goat that appears prominently on the panel (Figure 3). I wondered where the shadow would fall if it were extended down the panel. I drew a line at the winter solstice indicator down the panel and moved it south to the summer solstice. It then cut the two-headed goat

precisely where there are three little lines radiating from its back. I wondered at the meaning of this. Immediately the idea came to mind that our month called January is named after Janus, the Roman God of Portals and beginnings and endings. To signify his special function Janus had two faces, one looking back and one looking forward (Figure 4).

Could the people of the Rochester Creek Panel have utilized the same motif with the Two-Headed Goat? I wondered if there was the possibility of a universal symbol, not coming necessarily by actual interchange of concepts between these different sources, but because of a commonality of meaning. The two-headed goat then could be the same representation, indicating that this is where the shadow reverses direction at the birth of a new sun and a new year. Furthermore, I wondered if this was an indicator that goats represented the sun.

Nobody has ever bothered to count the number of goats or big horn sheep that appear in rock art in Utah, but it is safe to say that the goat may be the one of the most, if not the most, prevalent zoomorphic image in rock art. Why was the goat so universal?



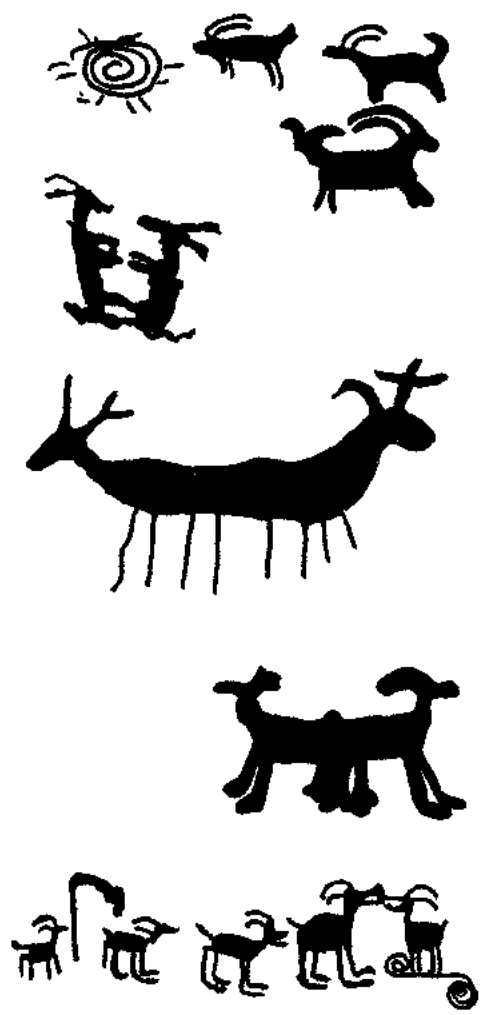
Figures 5 through 9, top to bottom.

I looked for other sites that related to Rochester Creek. There was such a site nearby quite close to Ferron, Utah. We have, at this point, two goats that face each other. Below them is a line that we will propose to represent a stylized horizon. There are three circular disks sitting on the horizon. If we take the simplest possible interpretation of that, it becomes clear that this is probably an indication of the sunrise. There is a large rock that sits off to the north and east of that panel and casts a shadow on the panel at the winter solstice.

At that time, there is a very interesting shadow on the panel (See Figure 5). The winter solstice shadow makes a bull's-eye right in a circular glyph with a dot in the middle. At the equinoxes, we have the shadow coming down between the two goats that face each other. The actual interpretation is that these goats represent the march of the sun up and down the horizon and coming from both directions (See Figure 6).

Figure 7 is another incidence. Here we find the two-headed goat at the time of the equinox. Notice how the sun spotlights the glyph. You can see that the sun goat motif is beginning to come alive. Thus, *the two headed goat lives*.

In Figure 8, we find the spiral, a proven sun symbol, associated with the two-headed goat. In Figure 9 is another two-headed goat. Look how they have turned it the other way to look at itself. In Figure 10, we find two goats facing a sun swirl. Sun spirals/swirls and goats are often found together. This is in Nine Mile Canyon. Sometimes they are standing up on their tails and facing each other (Figure 11). The two headed goat in Figure 12 gets two heads, but now his legs become tick marks, or indicators of some kind and the artist has possibly used the goat as a calendar in itself. In Figure 13, they're making the feet almost bulbous, to the point of being possible solar disks. In Figure 14, you have the march of the goats. The procession of goats proceeds to the last goat on the right as the last goat turns around and stands on two sun swirls. Figure 15 is another example of the two swirls, with the goat in the middle. Figure 16 is one of the most interesting pictures. Here we have a line of goats with solar disks over their heads from Nine Mile Canyon.

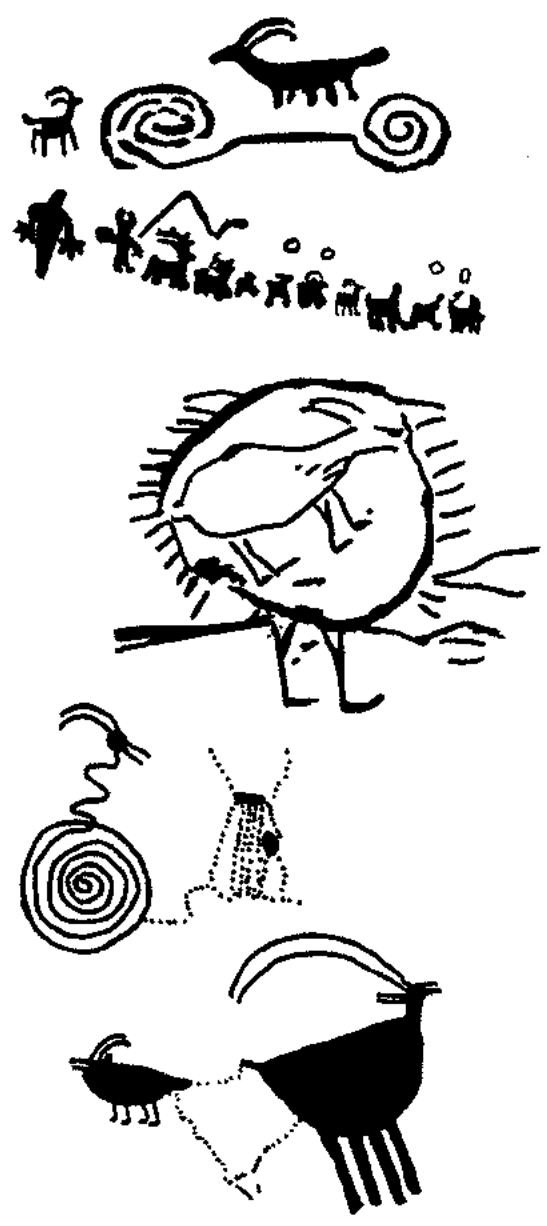


Figures 10-14, top to bottom.

Conceding now the goat to be a sun symbol (notwithstanding there are goats in rock art that are not sun symbols, i.e., a hunt scene), at Mussentuchit another motif becomes evident. At this location, we have a woman in a birthing position. Right beneath her, we find again the now familiar two-headed goat (See Figure 17). However, proceeding from her we now have a series of five goats, indicating the rebirth of the year by the goats coming out from her.

We now have come to an additional motif. At the new year the sun is reborn from the Great Mother of the Universe. And sure enough, we now start recognizing this motif in other sites. At the Junction of Desolation

and Flat Canyons on the Green River, there are at least two Great Mothers with goats beneath them (See Figure 18). She is on both sides of this panel with the goats facing in opposite directions toward the center of the panel. In the middle between the two Sky Mothers is strange "T" shaped glyph with a series of cross marks or pecked out circles running up and down the shaft of the "T". At the cross of the "T", there is an ex-



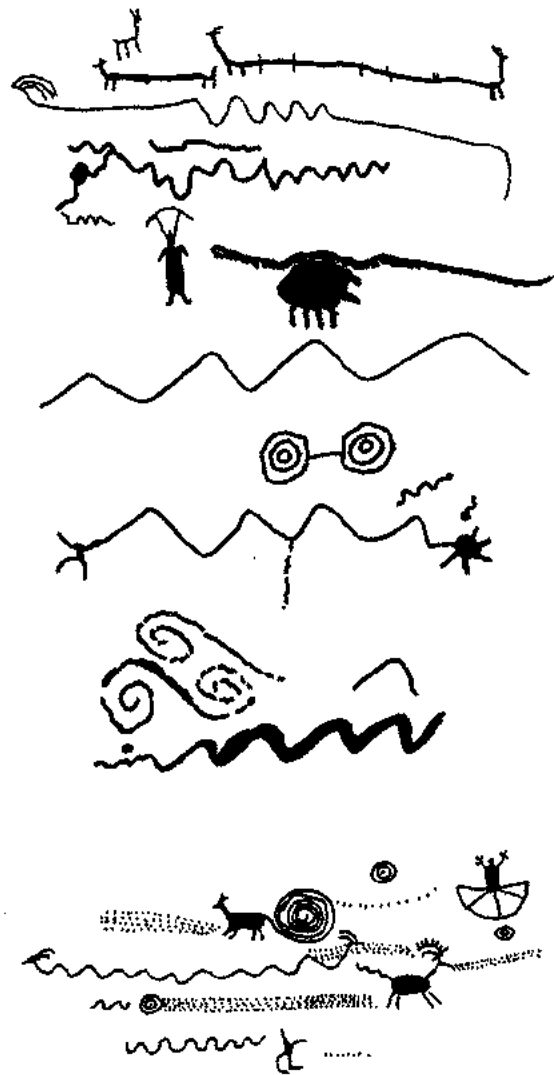
Figures 15-22, top to bottom.

tended dumbbell mush like the one at Rochester Creek. The many parallels from Rochester Creek lead us to believe that this is a calendrical site.

At Cedar Mountain (Figure 19), we find a glyph that pulls many of the elements of this paper together. There's the rainbow that links the site to Rochester Creek. There's the birthing woman with legs spread wide. Here is the very familiar solar disk with radial lines that are unmistakable. (The fact that a first grader draws a sun the same way only strengthens the argument a la C.G. Jung.) And there is the goat (possibly two headed) in the middle of the disk. Now that's got to make a link between the sun and the goat. In Figure 20, there's goat again in the middle of the sun disk. This glyph is in Wyoming.

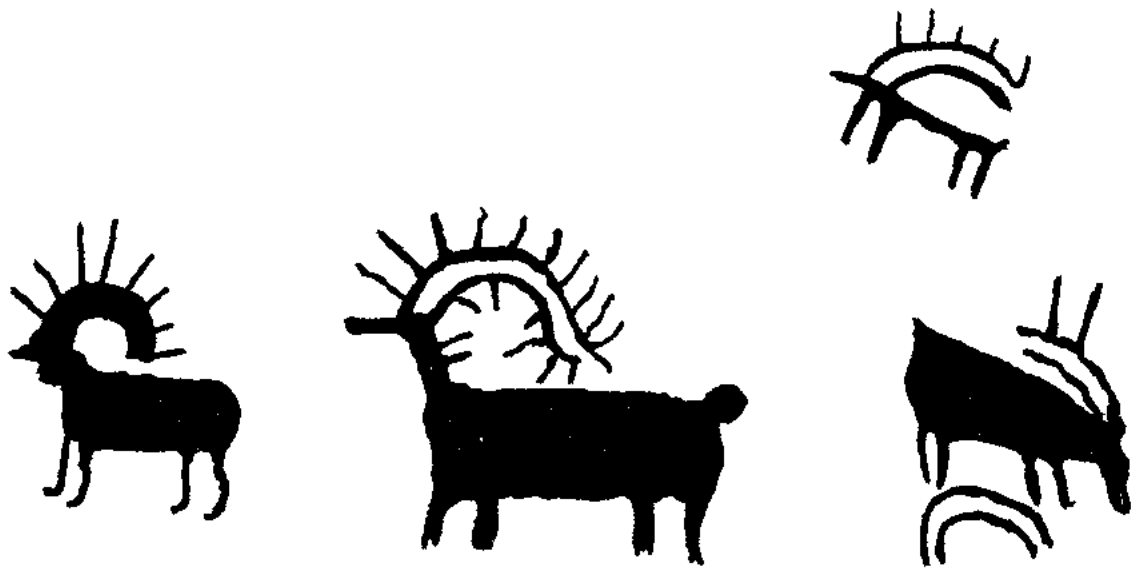
In Nine Mile, the Native Americans tried everything concerning the use of two headed goats as sun symbols and calendars. Here we find a sun spiral that unravels up to a goat's head with two horns (See Figure 21). The sun swirl then becomes the goat's body and clearly links the sun and the goat together again. This then introduces another motif. In Figure 22, they have made the goat's torso circular by rounding the belly. This can be seen very often, with the horns completing the arc up above. The legs became indicators of the seasons. Notice how they extend down much like poles or dividers. Again, in Nine Mile Canyon, you have an extended goat and they've used him as a full calendar (Figure 23). His body has been extended for about six feet along the panel. He has heads at both ends and small marks have been placed along his long body indicating special dates. This site needs a researcher to know it and love it; to go to that site and watch and study.

Figure 24 is the stylized horizon and the sunrise over that horizon. Another motif is now emerging. A horizontal zigzag line



Figures 23-27, top to bottom.

may represent a horizon and the solar disks or swirls are often found above such a horizontal zigzag; the simplest possible interpretation (Figures 25 and 26). Notice in Figure 24 the goat head at the left end of the zigzag. Figure 27 is a grand recapitulation panel where they incorporated everything that we have explored thus far and at the same time introduced us to one last sun-goat motif. In this panel, there is a goat with a sun swirl coming out of its tail. There is a two-headed goat whose body is an extended horizontal zigzag with the swirl over the horizon. And then there is one more where the horns have been made



Figures 28-30, left to right.

into a sunburst. This same sunburst on the goat horns can be seen in Figures 28, 29, and 30.

It is hoped that I have taken you with solid demonstrable evidence from archaeoastronomy through a step by step progressionary path to some equally solid conclusions about some meaning in rock art, in

this case the meaning of the two headed goat and possibly the goat in general as a representation of the sun. This conclusion may become more supportable and substantiated as time goes on and more attention is paid to the interpretation. Already many of us in URARA are disposed to regard this interpretation as a done deal.

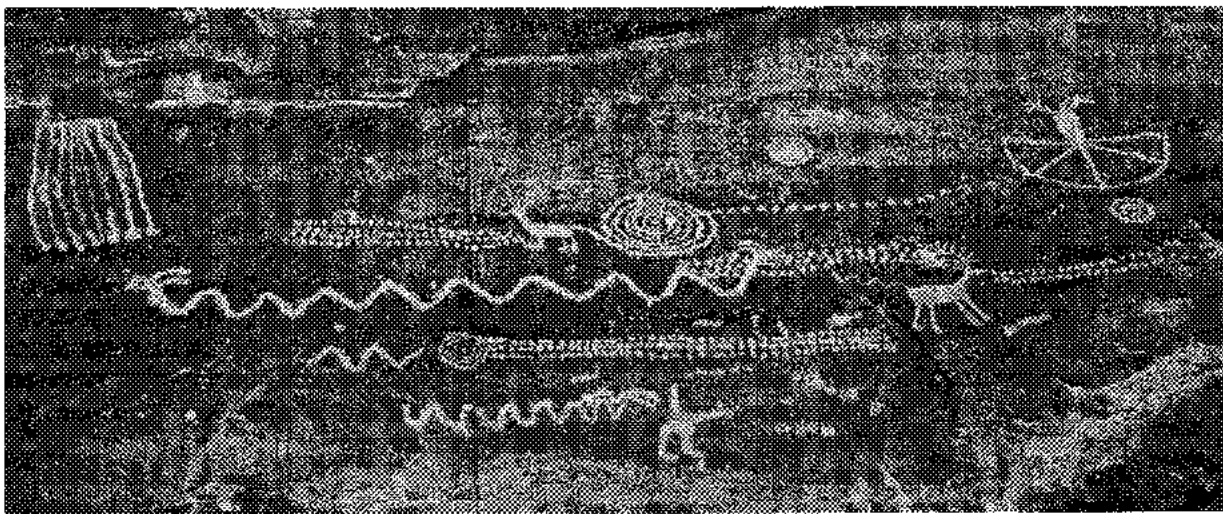


Figure 31.