

HAS PAHRANAGAT MAN PASSED YOUR WAY?

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INTRODUCTION

Human like shapes in rock art are both fascinating and not uncommon. This writer has studied these representational shapes referred to as anthropomorphs. Anthropomorphs are found throughout southern Nevada but are more frequent as one travels north and east toward Utah.

The Pahrnanagat Valley in southeastern Nevada is part of the White River Drainage system. There is a higher percentage of representational elements like sheep and anthropomorphs than in most other areas of southern Nevada.

In a previous study by this author (Stoney 1990b), human like element shapes were subdivided into 7 types based on body shape. One of these, the wide bodied shape, has a variant known as "Pahrnanagat Man". This element is found at several sites within 50 kilometers of each other around the well watered Pahrnanagat Valley.

Until recently the form was unknown from other localities but a recent field trip to southeastern Utah with URARA disclosed another site where this anthropomorphic form is found.

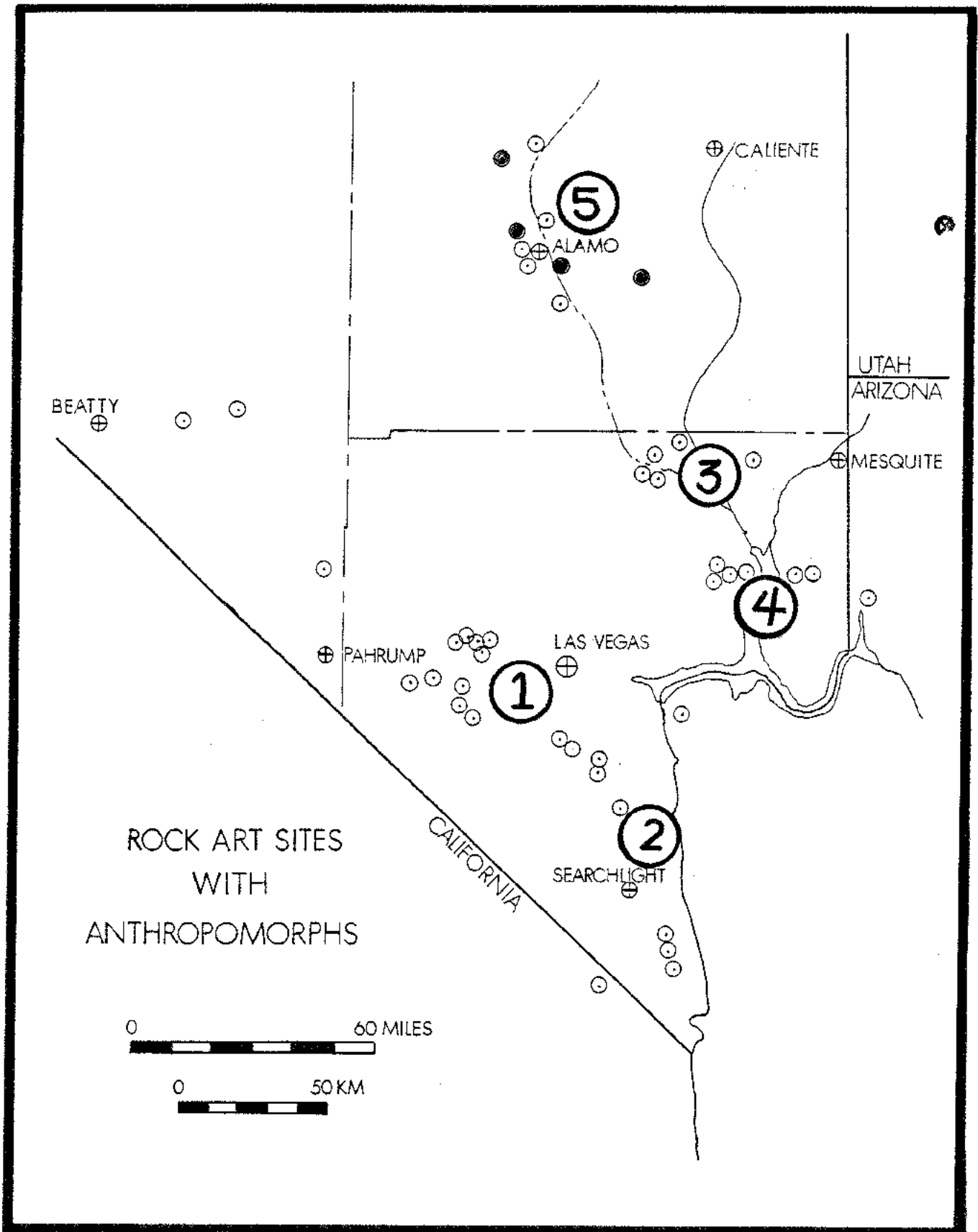
PREVIOUS STUDIES

Southern Nevada is defined as Clark, Lincoln and southern Nye counties (Figure 1).

This researcher presented data at the 1990 Tucson ARARA Conference and the 1990 San Diego Museum of Man "Rock Art 90" which disclose that the normal makeup of glyphs in southern Nevada is predominantly abstract but representational images are found (Stoney 1990a).

Representational images depicted in prehistoric rock art include a variety of life forms and almost always show some well recognized anthropomorphic, human-like figures. They occur throughout southern Nevada but there is considerable diversity of execution, density and association. They range from rather simple stick drawings to elaborately decorated, full bodied images.

Prehistoric Rock Art has perhaps no finer expression of form than the depiction of a human likeness. This form has the rather awkward name of anthropomorph. Van Tilburg defines an image as anthropomorphic when it has human form or attributes (1983:115). For this paper, the definition of Rice (1988:664) applies. "An



anthropomorph is defined as an image whose visible traits are specifically human, or at least partially human, and not totally animal."

Elaborately painted human images are absent in southern Nevada but the form and content of pecked elements reach a variety and diversity not normally found in such a small geographic area.

The general distribution of rock art sites with anthropomorphs shows on the map of southern Nevada in Figure 1. Forty one sites have anthropomorphs. Figure 1 also displays the 5 geographic areas included in the study.

The percentage of anthropomorphs compared with total element count ranges from 0.9% to 6.4% for the 5 geographic areas (Figure 2). The total representational element count ranges from 4.4% to 20.3%.

Figure 3 summarizes data from adjacent regions in Utah and California and compares them with southern Nevada. Schaafsma (1971:158,160) reports that 77 sites in western Utah with Great Basin Curvilinear Style have 5% anthropomorphs, 8.4% sheep and 17.4% total representational elements. At 29 Clear Creek sites, with Sevier Style A, there are 11% anthropomorphs, 16.9% sheep, and 48% total representational elements. Grant, Baird & Pringle (1968:120) report for all Coso range sites (Petroglyph, Renegade, Sheep, and Horse Canyons) 13.4% anthropomorphs, 51% sheep, and 73% total representational elements.

ANTHROPOMORPH CHARACTERISTICS

This author developed the shape classification explained in the previously cited paper (Stoney 1990b) See Figure 4. It is a system which describes the basic body shapes and appendages.

The focus of this paper is the Wide Body Type:
There are Pecked examples only, the body width is much greater giving a rectangular and sometimes square appearance.

The wide bodied type is present in each area of southern Nevada and normally is a solid rather square figure. It reaches its zenith in execution in Area 5, the Pahranaagat Valley. There large, 2 to 3 foot high, images with patterned bodies occur at three sites (Heizer & Hester 1974:14-15, Zancanella & Ferris 1990).

The patterned bodies are not like the Coso examples reported by Grant, Baird and Pringle (1968:38) but they are impressive. Frequently, these elements hold atlatl weapons.

ANTHROPOMORPHS SOUTHERN NEVADA

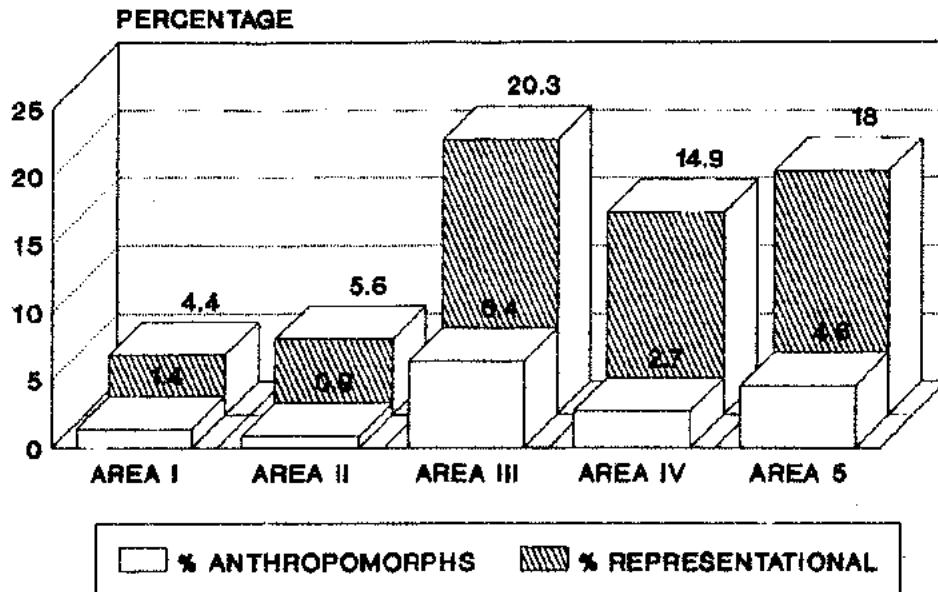


Figure 2

COMPARISON SOUTHERN NEVADA WITH OTHER AREAS

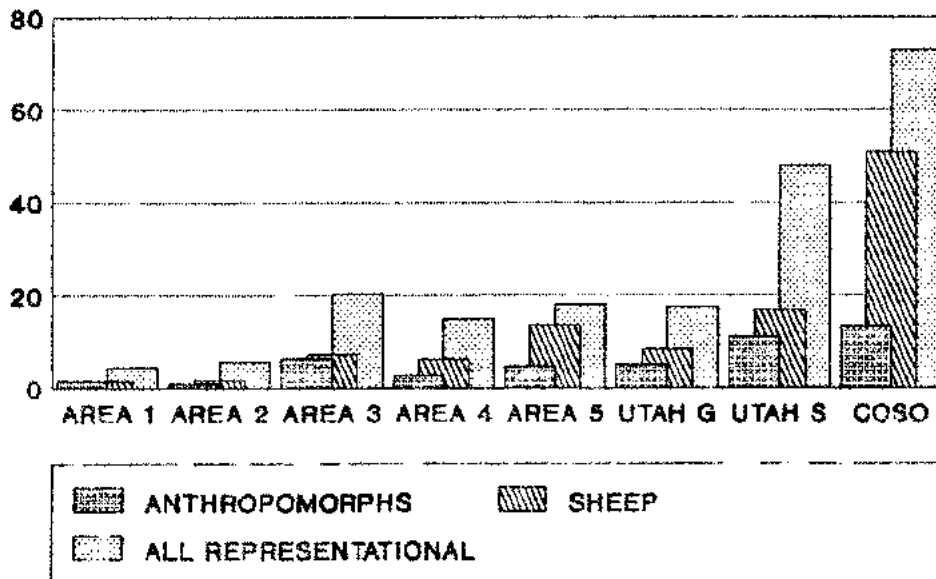


Figure 3

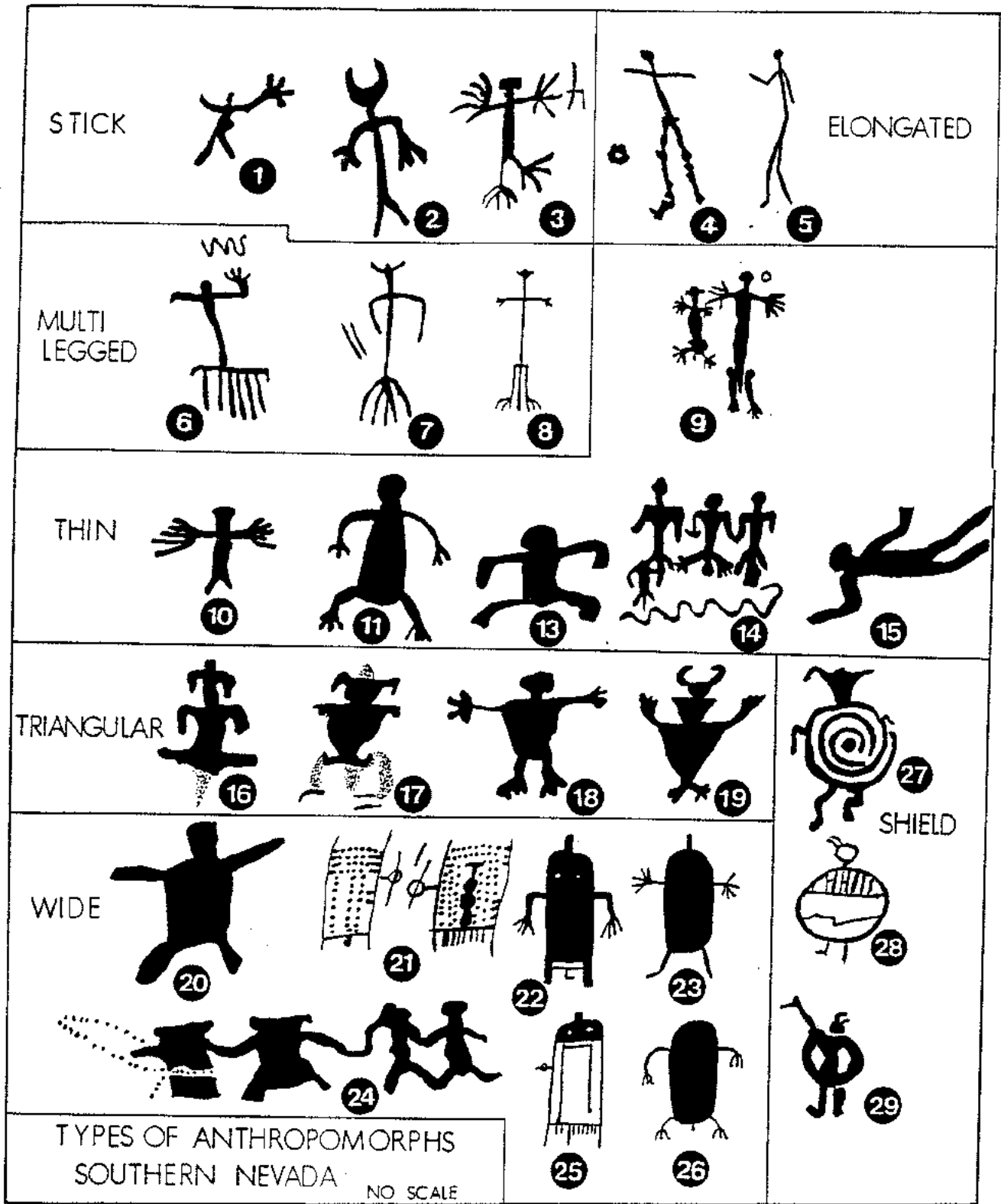


Figure 4: ANTHROPOMORPHIC ELEMENTS FROM SOUTHERN NEVADA ROCK ART
 Section 12 Page 5 Pahrnagat Man

SITES GROUPED INTO SIMILAR BODY TYPES. STEVE STONEY 10/27/90

The primary focus in my presentation is the Pahranaagat Man which occurs at four sites in and around the Pahranaagat Valley. It is also called "Peanut Man" (Stevens:1991) and is so distinctive this author presents it as a variant of the wide body type. It is distinguished by:

1. Size, many are 2 to 3 feet over all height, however there are also smaller examples.
2. Rounded tabular shaped body, peanut shaped.
3. Distinctive top of the head feature possibly a "feather" but is not always present.
4. Downward extending upper limbs; there are straight arm and curved arm examples; sometime the arm is bent at elbow
5. Straight or curved lower limbs.
6. Digits from the upper limbs.
7. Sometimes phallic
8. Eyes are sometimes represented.

McLane (1990:3-4) attributes the Pahranaagat Man name to the large patterned body anthropomorphs also found in this area but the two are distinctive types according to Zancanella and Ferris (1990). Jean Stevens (1991) reports that the figure is associated with assembly areas at one site. The large anthropomorph is the central figure in a horseshoe shaped area with other glyphs. The Pahranaagat Man generally faces a spectacular view although this is not always the case.

ANOTHER EXAMPLE

This author observed the same type body shape while on a URARA field trip in February of this year. The location is Lion's Mouth, a large shelter west of Cedar City. It has many polychrome pictographs. This shelter faces westward toward a large valley. The central figure appears to be a polychrome painted figure of Pahranaagat Man. Its distinguishing features are:

1. It is the largest glyph by a considerable amount. Overall it is approximately 24 inches from top to bottom.
2. It has the rounded tabular body
3. There is no top of the head "feather"
4. Downward extending straight arms.
5. Straight Lower limbs
6. No digits are present
7. Phallic
8. No eyes are apparent, although the figure has weathered

Castleton (1987:116) illustrates this figure, however the photograph is upside down. He is uncertain of the art style, but definitely discounts Fremont and indicates he has seen no Anasazi site like it.

This large central figure has smaller figures and glyphs stretching in each direction along the rear face of the shelter for nearly 30 feet. The scene gives one the impression of an assembly around this central figure.

I speculate that this Utah glyph may be attributed to the Pahranaagat cultural region of southern Nevada which is approximately 125 kilometers (90 miles) west of the Lion's Mouth site.

SUMMARY

It is not unusual for the same type of glyph to be found over a large region. Schaafsma (1980:7) indicates that a figure type can be used along with other modes of expression to identify a cultural style.

The Pahranaagat Man element is a unique anthropomorphic type which appears to be restricted to a rather limited area of southern Nevada except for the Lion's Mouth site. I am "On the Trail of Pahranaagat Man" and request that you be on the lookout for this element at other locations in southeastern Utah. Also be alert to the element found in an assembly type of setting. Please contact me if you find that Pahranaagat Man "has passed your way". Work is underway to better define the occurrence of the styles in southern Nevada and your input will be of significant help.

I believe that much of the influence we find in southern Nevada rock art styles comes from Utah and Arizona cultural influences. In this case we appear to have a glyph type which may demonstrate a reverse influence. The distribution of this element may help establish communication and/or cultural patterns as we continue the search.

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