

Ancient Micro Art Discovery

California Heliolithic Petroglyph Animation Revealed on Equinox -- Old World Origin Proposed

by Carl Lehrburger



An ancient artifact recently discovered in California demonstrates and preserves an ancient heliolithic art technique revealed when viewed on equinox.

A worn petroglyph on a 2-foot damaged rock forms the background for a sophisticated interplay of light and shadow resulting in a moving animation. The sunset animation is composed of an encroaching shadow on a collage of faces contained in a petroglyph. The intersection of light, shadow and complex petroglyph creates a solar light-show as the shadow dissects the etched profile. The carved stone artifact bears striking connections to

millenniums-old Indus Valley Shiva worship iconography, dateable from 3000 BCE to 1000 BCE.

One of the many unique aspects of the California USA location are multiple and sophisticated calendar markers that intentionally coincide with solstices, equinoxes and cross quarter days. A lunar alignment coinciding with the 19-year lunar standstill cycle has been observed, suggesting the rock art site was a lunar as well as a solar observatory. Therefore the newly discovered equinox artifact should not be viewed as a single phenomena but instead must be comprehended in the context of an archaeology site containing dozens of intentional astronomical alignments on

fading petroglyphic panels. While there are significant and intricate aspects of this under-studied archaeoastronomical complex, this article will focus on a single discovery.

The Site is unprotected and vulnerable to damage and is therefore not unidentified. Generally it is located in the Mojave Desert area of Eastern California (the "Site"). The Site contains outcropping of weathered limestone over an area approximately 1 acre. Over millions of years, erosion from water and wind created the smooth rock surfaces on which the petroglyphs were engraved.

For its small size the Site is prolific in rock art. Most of the hundreds of petroglyphs are quite aged, worn and difficult to see. The Site contains diverse rock art and in the author's opinion was visited by different peoples over an estimated period of at least 5,000 years beginning before 2,500 BCE.

In spite of significant weathering and severe damage caused by mining, blasting, and vandalism, many petroglyphs survive and preserve an abundance of extraordinary and unique records of pre-Colombian contact in North America.

Archaeoastronomy

An essential tool in deciphering the language of the ancients is observing the astronomy encoded in the rock art, a scientific field called archaeoastronomy. Archaeoastronomy investigates ancient civilizations through their astronomy as it relates to architecture, art, calendars, cosmology, and more.

Ancient archaeoastronomical sites including well-known examples of Stonehenge England, New Grange, Ireland, and Chichen Itza, Mexico,

were encoded with astronomy, relating to, among other things, calendar keeping. Smaller, petroglyphic archaeoastronomy is found throughout North America. In both the monumental and petroglyphic archaeoastronomy, we recognize that the ancients had a preoccupation with precisely recording cylindrical events in mythological and cosmological representation.

The Earth's seasonal movement changes the position of a shadow cast by the sun on a petroglyph measurably everyday of the year, except near the times of the solstices. The winter solstice is the shortest day of year/longest night and occurs around December 21st. The summer solstice is the longest day of the year and occurs around June 21st. The equinoxes take place day and night are equal, at 21st (Spring equinox) and September 21st (Fall equinox). The cross-quarter days are the 4 days that fall between the solstice and equinox. These eight days (2 solstices, 2 equinoxes and 4 cross-quarter days) were celebrated by ancient cultures and recorded in their rock art.

Equinox Alignments

While many archaeoastronomical phenomena at ancient sites involve counting, for example, counting the days before and after equinox, the greatest and most artistic expressions of archaeoastronomy are heliolithic (solar) animations, often involving a "light dagger".

Helioilithic animations, light shows on petroglyphs set in motion by the sun's movement, take advantage of the moving light/shadow interplay on fixed petroglyphs to create moving stories that unfold on specific days. These intentional alignments preserve

the astronomy, cosmology, science, religion and culture of their creators.

At the Site, there is a spectacular heliolithic animation that occurs at sunrise on the equinox. As the sun rises above the eastern horizon, a light ray in the shape of a serpent moves across a panel containing 5 etched circles (Photo 1 and 2 below). On the equinox, the open mouth of the light serpent is calibrated to precisely engulf the inner etched circle or target (Photo 3 below). While the light serpent is several feet in length, it is similar in principal to the monumental Ohio Serpent mound, where a 1,330 foot long earth work, averaging three feet in height in the shape of a serpent with open mouth, prepares to consume a circular mound or egg. The Site "light serpent" is a petroglyphic light animation, yet it conveys a similar motif to the Ohio serpent mound, a serpent consuming the inner "egg".

Later toward evening, on a nearby 3-foot pyramidal shaped rock, six prominent worked lines are divided into three lines in shadow, three lines in light. Here, the light marker in the shape of a triangle equally divides the six lines to record and deduce the equinox. The shadow line precisely follows the outside shape of the 3rd heavily etched lines. In addition to the 6-line equinox alignment, there are several other panels with 12-lines, suggesting additional counting-style calendrical alignments at the Site.

Other equinox rock art locations in North America emphasize the importance of the sunset equinox. On February 3, 2007, a two-foot boulder was observed to be a second prospective sunset equinox alignment at the Site. After several subsequent visits and observations, it is concluded that



during the waning hours of the day, at a location above the main Site, a small but animated solar alignment was created. This second setting sun alignment is a uniquely created equinox heliolithic animation.

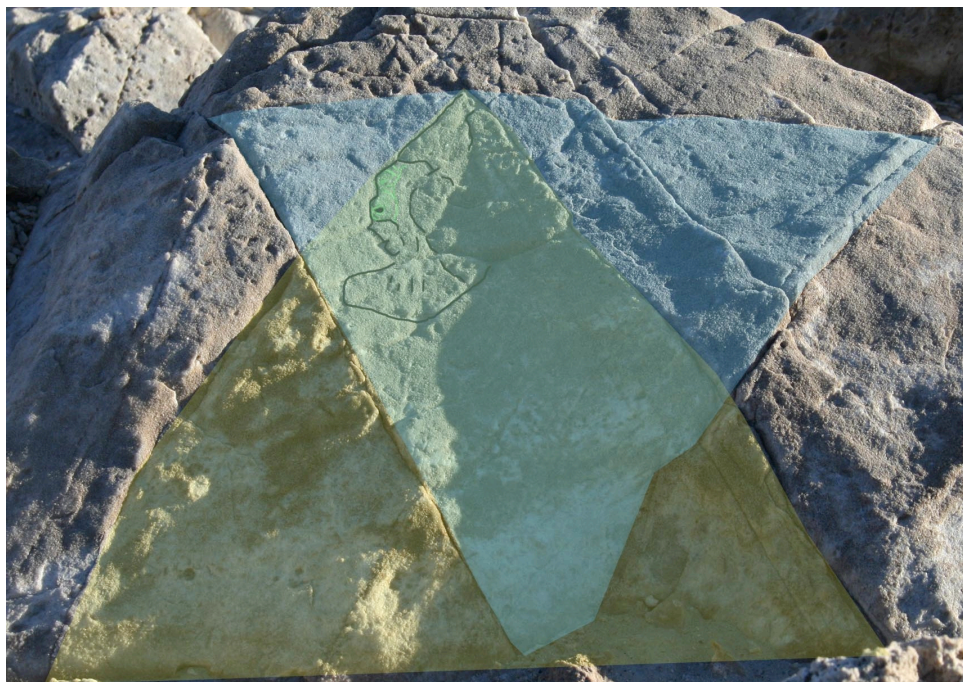
Sunset Equinox Animation

The rock formations at the Site are dolomite (marble) and many have natural fractures. The intersecting natural fractures create nexuses of parallel lines, and triangular and diamond shapes on the rock surfaces. The smooth quality of the worn stone and background natural fissures provided a perfect surface for the ancients leave their marks in stone.

Above the main Site is a small platform the highest point of the rock outcropping. When facing south, the platform is situated looking toward a large horizontal "plaza. Shadows form on the small rock in the morning and afternoon. The 2-foot boulder in the foreground is the subject of the equinox heliolithic animation under consideration.

The Sunset Equinox Animation Rock is an approximate 25-inch, 63-centimeter wide boulder with numerous natural grids and crevices. The lighter areas, especially toward the





bottom left, are destruction caused by blasting during the last 60 years. Apparently some of the rock fragments on top are missing.

This small rock overlooking the Site was observed to have a complex series of natural fissure lines that created a central form composed of two inverted triangles. The adjacent illustrated photo shows an upright triangle shape in yellow and an inverted triangle in blue. Upon closer examination of the natural-looking upright triangle, some of the lines toward the apex were observed to be etched, not natural.

The use of interwoven triangles is a well known symbol including intricate mandala designs specific to

Hindu and Buddhist iconography. For example the commonly known Sri Yantra. The inverted triangle symbol is also seen in the Star of David. The fundamental and ancient imagery can be seen as the union of Shiva/Shakti, masculine/feminine, and ying/yang.

An apparent etched profile, a human face, became recognizable among the mostly natural cracks. The profile's head appeared to be adorned with a pointy hat, that extended from a natural fissure to form the apex of the upright, mostly natural triangle shape. The human profile is small, about 1 x 2 inches, (picture shows an index finger pointing to the etched profile). Details of the worn facial features



are disguised among the many natural surrounding fissures and cracks. With exceptional light conditions, early morning and late afternoon, the small profile becomes apparent. Regrettably, the petroglyphs on the heavily damaged, worn rock are so lost that the visible petroglyph and etched details are hidden among natural features.

The Shadow

It seemed quite unbelievable at the time of discovery that the apex of the natural triangular shape was a petroglyphic face and not a natural crack. Beginning in mid afternoon, a shadow created by sunlight striking a ledge above the centrally located in-

Photo A



Photo B



Photo C



verted triangles moved toward the etched profile at the apex of the triangle. The top of the shadow resembles a profile with an open mouth. Over the next hour, the top of the shadow moved slowly toward the apex of the triangle.

Toward sunset the open-mouthed shadow profile intersected petroglyph, suggesting an intentional equinox alignment.

The entire shape of the shadow suggests a complete figure with an open mouth (See first photo). It was created by working and applying a grove to the small ledge casting the shadow, which is the western apex of the upper triangle shape, the etched profile occupying the eastern apex. Throughout most of the light show the shadow's mouth remains open and is therefore considered an important part of the animation.

An etched motif discussed later forms the western apex of the upper triangle behind the petroglyphic face, creates the impression of a cone-shaped hat or turban for the shadow figure. The shadow profile begins to take shape about two hours before sunset and moves easterly toward the etched profile as the sun sinks in the western horizon.

Observations of the phenomena suggest a unique equinox heliolithic animation. The actors of the story conveyed are the moving shadow profile with an open mouth and a uniquely created, etched face with a



pointy hat at the eastern apex of a triangle. The action of the equinox story animation unfolds as the shadow profile moves toward the etched profile as the sun sets. Near sunset the shadow profile, with apparent open mouth and distinct nose features, dissects the singular etched profile, revealing the petroglyph to be not a single profile but a montage of faces. As the sun sets on the horizon, the lower half of the etched profile becomes darken by the shadow and an upper, hidden face is illuminated and revealed. At sunset, the nose of the shadow shape and the etched profile are precisely aligned, as the last rays of light illuminates the upper or hidden profile. This animation is precisely calibrated to equinox.

The Triple Face Motif

The etched profile is remarkable for several reasons. It is situated at



the apex of a nearly naturally formed upright triangle. A significant issue for observers and investigators is the small size of the profile, about the size of a U.S. one-half dollar coin. While the small sized profile is not readily apparent to moderns and is easily dismissed, its size is consistent with ancient art and artifacts as revealed by old world coins, seals and temple engraving as well as petroglyphs across the Americas. The micro profile is difficult-to-discern due to millenium old weathering, damage from blasting, complex natural fissures, and glare. If these factors were not enough, the glyph is a *complex-glyph*, an ancient art form involving a collage of clustered images, in a single image.

As the shadow profile engulfs the lower half of the singular petroglyph a smaller, monkey-like face emerges in the radiant light of the setting sun. The emergence of the hidden profile is

Photo D



Photo E



Photo F



revealed as a result of the side-lighting of the rock surface, exposing details of the petroglyph not apparent in direct sunlight. The original singular profile, in shadow, is no longer discernible. The animation is complete when the shadow's nose and the nose of the singularly etched profile merge. In the heliolithic animation, the shadow engulfs and darkens the lower half of the single profile as the upper enlightened face emerges.

It is noteworthy that the lower half of the petroglyph goes into shadow, *except* for a little a diamond-shaped spec of light located behind the nose of profile. This light diamond (photos D and E) is one of the equinox alignments identified by the author inscribed to calibrate and determine the exact day of the equinox; that is to say before and after equinox the shadow will not occupy this exact position or have the same features.

Equinox Alignments

The petroglyph profile, with the aid of the advancing shadow, is revealed to be a unique micro image consisting of multiple faces. The complex glyph, composed of two faces in a single profile, is difficult to recognize perhaps because the eyes of moderns are not trained to discern them. A distant example of this phenomenon is the modern-day three-dimensional art known as autostereograms, or more commonly Magic Eye™. While observing a two-dimensional graphic (height and width) the viewer must learn to focus the eye and brain to see a “hidden” three-D graphic (depth), not recognized by the eye focusing on a two-dimensional picture.

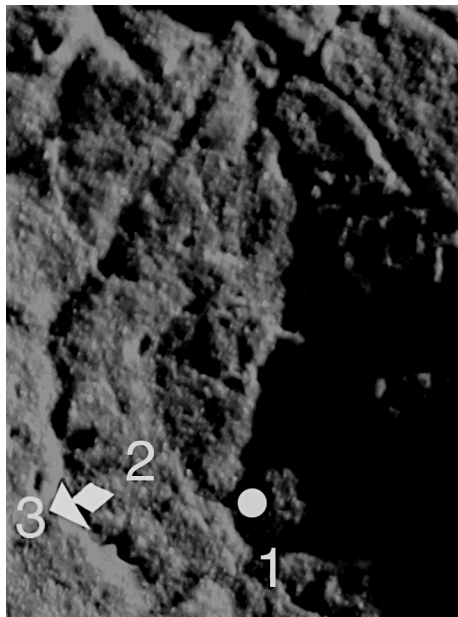
Also when observing a complex-glyph, the observer must have a reference to identify the component glyphs. Previous studies of a complex glyph at the Anubis Caves, Oklahoma, revealed an unfamiliar glyph to be four interwoven individual glyphs (Lehrburger, AA Vol. 11, Issue 69, pg 30).

When dissected in a photo edit program, the equinox sunset alignment montage consists of the (1) shadow profile, (2) a singular petroglyphic profile consisting of (3) a hid-

den upper profile illuminated by the setting sun.

On the equinox, the shadow performs at least three intersections with the etched profile, presumably intentionally, as shown in the photo enhance above and described below.

The white circle, labeled **1**, a deepened divot below the ear of the etched profile appears to be one of the equinox targets.



Like the morning serpent animation previously describe, where the “target” is the inner circle, the divot below the ear lobe of the profile becomes the target for the advancing open mouth of the shadow. See photos A and B.

Next as the sun sinks lower toward the horizon, the shadow merges with the lower face, except a diamond of light created by the shadow's open mouth, labeled **2**. This diamond of light is located behind the prominently etched nose of the singular profile. See photos D and F.

Finally at sunset, the nose of the shadow image fits precisely in a notch on the rock surface, which is the nose of the etched profile, shown as a white triangle and labeled **3**. This is a “nose pointer” target technique, see photo **F**, which is found in other examples of heliolithic animations in North America from old world, transatlantic cultures, and suggests the final “target”

for equinox alignment purposes (Lehrburger, AA Vol. 11, number 68).

In the last moments of sunlight, the shadow profile extends beyond the outline of the mouth of the etched profile to achieve a precise conjunction position with the notched nose. The shadow maintains the image of an open mouth. The upper face remains in sunlight until the sun set.

Intentionality

It must be stated that there is great skepticism among colleagues and reviewers as to the intentionality of this phenomena. While few have observed the equinox sunset event, there is no consensus that this is an intentionally created equinox alignment.

The small size, extremely worn and damaged petroglyph challenges the viewer to perceive what was or was not intentionally etched and calibrated to be seen on the equinox or seen at all. The intentionality of the alignment is suspect because of the small size of the phenomena. Could this be *simulacrum*, an unreal, vague semblance of apparent representations, especially likeness to faces? Or merely a coincidence of natural features, light and shadow phenomena on an auspiciously located rock? The possibility for multiple interpretations of the remaining worn images on the Sunset Equinox Animation Rock are also obstacles to a clear consensus of it's nature. Yet, even though the intentionality of this micro animation has yet to be conclusively proven, it serves as a unique micro art phenomena suggestive of a lost ancient art form.

A concluding and noteworthy observation of the discovery is the large and prominent column-shaped linga or phallus situated behind the head of the etched profile. The apparently worked erect phallus shape forms the western apex of the upright triangle, while the petroglyphic profile is the eastern apex of the triangle. The column-shaped phallus also serves as the “hat” or cap of the moving shadow profile.

This phallus motif on the Sunset Equinox Animation Rock is not singu-



lar to the Site and a very large, prolific stone phallus representation is located at the center of the Site. There is also a large, 18 inch petroglyph, an anthropomorphic figure with a large phallus. This distinctive and ancient



image located below at the main site, also wares a pointy hat and functions as an archaeoastronomical target for all four cross quarter day alignments.

Old World Origin Thesis

Based on the authors familiarity with old world archaeoastronomy sites in North America, it is concluded that the petroglyphs are not Native American but were created by different, mostly old world peoples over thousands of years who traveled to the Americas in boats in ancient times. This is controversial for both Native Americans and traditional archaeologists, who dispute the claim of the old world origins for different reasons. As a result of the controversy created by the diffusionist hypothesis, that it was sea faring old worlds cultures that created the rock art and archaeoastronomy, the Site has yet to receive a thorough investigation.

By examining the Sunset Equinox Animation Rock, at least five classic Shiva worship motifs can be identified: Pythagorean hat, triple face imagery, use of interlocking triangle form common to yantra mandalas, a monkey deity consistent with Hunaman, a Hindu divinity, and the prevalence of the linga (phallus). These motifs all point to an early, pre-Vedic Shiva origin, likely in the Indus Valley or Indo Turkish regions. The petroglyph form is consistent with phallus worship of non-Aryan settlers of the early Indus Valley cities dateable to 3000 B.C to 1000 B.C. These motifs and potential connections to the old world will be examined in Part II.

The greater context of similar archaeoastronomical phenomena at the California-located Site suggests and point to an intentional heliolithic animation and a seminal discovery. Now, it is incumbent upon other researchers to disprove, confirm or to expand the underlying views presented; that the triple face equinox sunset animation is a unique example of a sophisticated heliolithic artistry that elegantly conveys an ancient, cosmological story, perhaps in the context on an Indus Valley culture from the second millennium BCE.

The triple face equinox animation presents one of the most fascinating ancient heliolithic artifacts so far discovered in the New World. Site protection, restoration and education remain as critical steps toward preserving and advancing our understanding of this heliolithic artifact and the scores of other petroglyphic and archaeoastronomical creations found at this vulnerable and unrecognized treasure.

To view a time lapse video of the triple face animation and for more information on preservation, protection and educational efforts visit www.NewHistoryOfAmerica.com.

Carl Lehrburger is a rock art reader and visionary entrepreneur based in Ashland, Oregon.