Further Data and a Date from Cerro Mangote, Panama
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Source: *American Antiquity*, Vol. 23, No. 4 (Apr., 1958), pp. 434-435
Published by: Cambridge University Press
Stable URL: https://www.jstor.org/stable/276498
Accessed: 31-10-2018 16:14 UTC

GEOLOGICAL CONFIRMATION OF NATIVE TRADITIONS, YAKUTAT, ALASKA

An open file report of the U.S. Geological Survey, "Glacial Features and Surficial Deposits of the Malaspina District, Alaska," by George Plafker and Don J. Miller, 1957, not only indicates some of the periods when the Icy Bay-Yakutat Bay area was open to habitation, but seems to confirm native traditions of great antiquity. I am indebted to Don Miller for bringing this report to my attention. In it is discussed the evidence for the following glacial movements:

1. A recession of the glaciers is inferred after the Wisconsin, but we have no evidence whether human occupation of the region was possible. Following this period, there was an advance of the Malaspina Glacier and of lobes that filled Icy and Yakutat bays, so that there was a continuous front of ice along the sea from the west side of Icy Bay to the east side of Yakutat Bay, although the coastal plain east and west was apparently unglaciated. Radiocarbon dates of wood from the end moraines indicate that the culmination in Icy Bay was in A.D. 756 ± 160 (Meyer Rubin, U.S.G.S., W-374, 1200 ± 160 years as of April, 1956), and that in Yakutat Bay was in A.D. 1127 ± 160 (W-559, 830 ± 160 years as of June, 1957).

2. During the subsequent recession, the ice retreated to positions near to or even in the rear of those of the present glaciers. This retreat began about 1400, to judge from the age of living trees near Yakutat.

3. A second advance of the ice, culminating between 1700 and 1791, apparently filled Icy Bay, but affected only the head of Yakutat Bay.

4. Recession began before 1791 in Yakutat Bay, and about 1904 in Icy Bay.

This information accords with the native tradition, told me in 1952 and 1954, that Icy Bay and Yakutat Bay were once filled to the mouth with ice, but that people lived or hunted on the unglaciated coastal areas east and west. Atna Indians, migrating from the Copper River, encountered Eyak-speaking Indians on the shore west of Icy Bay and the combined party crossed Yakutat Bay on the ice, according to one version. The name "Yakutat" is said to be the Eyak phrase meaning "a lagoon (or bay) is already forming," referring to the open water which was being exposed as the ice retreated. This retreat occurred because the immigrants had thrown a dead dog into a crevasse. This tradition seems to fit the period of about 1400. The site of "Old Town" on Knight Island in Yakutat Bay, excavated in 1952 and 1953 by a field party under Francis A. Riddell, must have been founded somewhat later, but, according to the stories, before trees had yet established themselves on the islands in the bay.

Another native legend refers to a village on the west shore of Icy Bay which was presumably settled during the recession of 1400. It was overwhelmed by an advance of the ice, undoubtedly that which culminated in the middle of the 18th century. The ice came down because some young fellows jestingly invited it to a feast. The glacier eventually began to retreat because the entrails of a dead Tsimshian were buried nearby by companions who were trying to preserve the body for shipment home. This incident occurred beteween 1890 and 1903.

Other native statements about the stages in the retreat of the ice in Yakutat Bay during the late 18th and 19th centuries are in complete accord with geological evidence.

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FURTHER DATA AND A DATE FROM CERRO MANGOTE, PANAMA

In the October, 1956, issue of AMERICAN ANTIQUITY (Vol. 22, No. 2) a report was made on preliminary excavations made in 1955 at Cerro Mangote, a preceramic site in Panama. During the 1956 season 6 additional weeks were spent at this site with financial assistance from the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. Briefly, the results of this more extensive work were as follows:

Approximately 300 cu. m. of material were excavated, an estimated one-third of the total content of the site. A few sherds were recovered on or immediately below the surface in the same general area as those found the previous year. There appears to be no reason to change the initial interpretation that these sherds represent accidental intrusions. The stone, bone, and shell artifact inventory was vastly increased but not drastically altered. A total of some 50 skeletons was recovered in fair to poor condition, though 3 skulls were obtained intact. The skeletons showed considerable variation in burial technique. A few additional bundle burials were encountered, but most burials recovered in 1956 were extended or slightly flexed, and generally occurred in groups of three or more. A small quantity of carbon was recovered from all levels, but the only sample sufficiently large to provide a reliable date came from stratum C at a depth of 130 to 145 cm. below the surface. This material was submitted to E. S. Deevey of the Yale Geochronometric Laboratory and as Sample Y-458d yielded a date of 6810 ± 100 years ago (= 4853 B.C. ± 100).

Typologically the Cerro Mangote material appears to precede immediately the earliest known Panamanian pottery phase, that is, the Monagrillo phase. The Cerro Mangote date thus provides an interesting indication of the time pottery may have entered the area. However, in our present state of knowledge 2 factors must be kept in mind. Groups with pottery and otherwise identical groups without pottery could have existed side by side; thus the date cannot yet serve as an absolute bottom limit for the introduction of pottery. Conversely, and in the present instance probably more pertinent, a basic cultural pattern such as that manifested at Cerro Mangote

could, and doubtless did, endure for centuries; so neither can the date provide an upper limit to the pre-Formative. Nonetheless, the date does give us our first positive clue to the time of the tremendously important pre-Formative to Formative transition in the Central American region.

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"SURFACE PRINTING" AS A MEANS OF RECORDING PETROGLYPHS

In 1956, as part of a larger archaeological salvage project for The Dalles Reservoir sponsored by the National Park Service and under the general direction of Douglas Osborne of the University of Washington, a complete record by prints was made of some 400 petroglyphs along a 15 mile stretch of the Columbia River. The original idea for the method and its application to petroglyph recording belongs to Sari Dienes, who has used it in her own art. With the assistance of the writer, Mrs. Dienes did the actual printing of the designs. The project was successfully completed with the aid of a supplementary grant from the Seattle Art Museum. The marked success of the printing technique provokes this description in the hope that it may be applied elsewhere to a neglected aspect of prehistoric cultures.

Surface printing as a technique in the graphic arts departs from the usual procedure in printing. The method, in brief, entails placing the cloth or paper to be printed over the engraved image and then rolling ink directly on the surface of the material. The print obtained is a positive or direct image, as distinguished from the reverse or mirror image obtained by the usual impress printing procedure. A more refined method of historic use in China was recently applied with good results to Mayan glyphs in Mexico and Guatemala. This, however, requires special rice papers and involved procedures of dampening and molding the paper before the ink can be applied. The new method has a number of advantages, particularly under the field conditions likely to be encountered in recording petroglyphs. The cloth or paper, ink, printer's brayer, palette, and masking tape can be obtained or improvised on short notice. The material used needs no processing outside the cutting to size and placement on the rock. And, depending on the ink, a half hour's drying in the open will be enough to allow the print to be rolled without smudging.

Surface printing has several advantages over recording by photography or drawing alone. The print, as such,

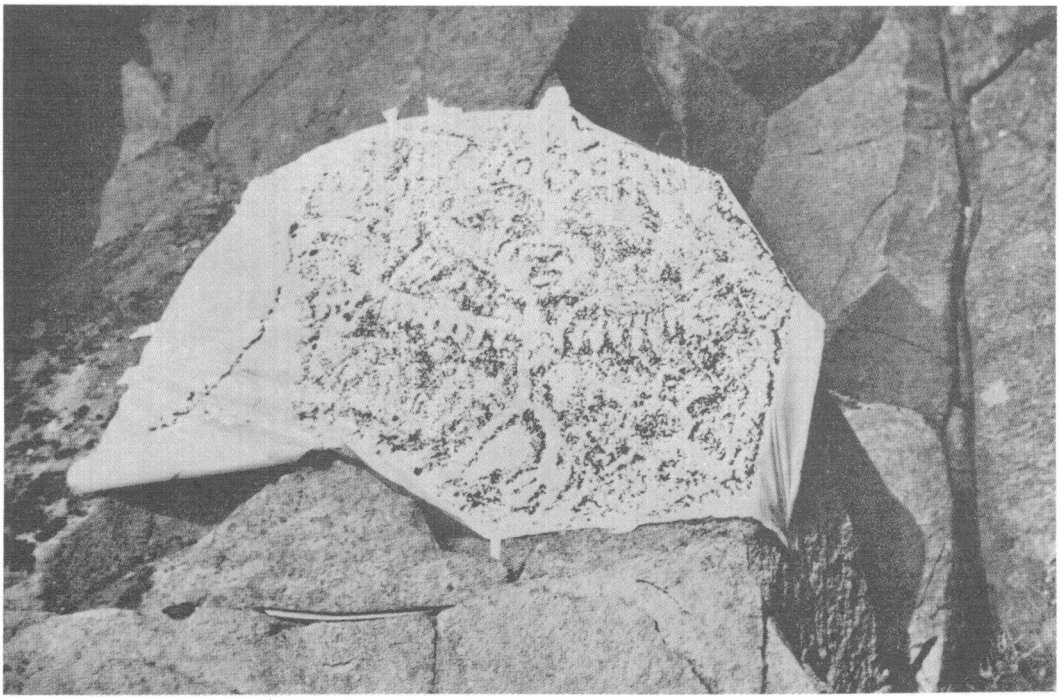

FIG. 1 [Hedden]. Print on Webril of a design from Petroglyph Island in The Dalles Reservoir, showing what may be a shaman or spirit dancer with fringed or feathered arms. Such figures are known along the upper Columbia and in the interior of British Columbia, as well as in Alaskan Eskimo graffiti, but the elaborate headdress of this figure suggests the spirit dancers of early accounts of lower Columbia River tribes.