

LOST AND FOUND

This edition of Lost and Found presents—for the first time in English—a compilation of several significant, pioneering contributions on the rock art of Baja California. I am greatly indebted to Don Laylander for resurrecting Engerrand’s interesting observations, for carefully translating and editing them, and for bringing them to my attention and allowing me to publish them here.

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G. ENGERRAND’S

“NEW PETROGLYPHS IN BAJA CALIFORNIA”

Translated, Edited, and Annotated by Don Laylander

Georges Charles Marius Engerrand was born in Libourne near Bordeaux, France, in 1877. He earned licentiates in geology and botany at the University of Bordeaux, where he also attended lectures by the sociologist Émile Durkheim. He was a Dreyfusard during the notorious controversy over Captain Alfred Dreyfus in the 1890s, and to avoid being required to serve in the French army he emigrated to Belgium in 1898 at the invitation of the geographer Élisée Reclus. In Belgium, he taught and did field research in geology and anthropology. In 1907, he moved to Mexico and became a Mexican citizen, holding several important posts, doing extensive fieldwork, and publishing studies on both geology and archaeology. He helped to pioneer stratigraphic archaeological investigations in the Valley of Mexico. By 1917, however, nationalist political conditions made it impossible for him to continue his work, and he emigrated again, this time to the United States. He was a member of the Anthropology Department at the University of Texas from 1920 until 1961, the year in which he died (Brogan et al. 1962; Campbell 1962; Graham 1962; Newcomb 1962; Rutsch 2010).

Engerrand’s geological investigations brought him to northern Baja California in 1911. This expedition resulted in two archaeological studies. One of them, which has previously been published in English translation (Engerrand 1913, 1981), addressed the problem of “eoliths,” or possible very early, very crude prehistoric lithic artifacts, which he had also studied in

Europe. He concluded that the specimens he examined between Ensenada and San Fernando Velicatá were naturally fractured “pseudo-eoliths” rather than genuine human artifacts. The other study, published in French and Spanish but first translated into English here, concerned three rock art sites in the region of San Fernando Velicatá and El Rosario, in north-central Baja California (Engerrand 1912a, 1912b, 1912c). (Engerrand used the term “petroglyph” to cover both painted and pecked rock art images.) These contributions make Engerrand one of the first modern investigators of Baja California’s prehistoric archaeology, following closely in the steps of Hermann F. C. ten Kate, Edward Palmer, Léon Diguët, and Arthur W. North.

The first section of the present translation is based on a French version (Engerrand 1912a), which for the most part differs only slightly in phrasing from the Spanish version (Engerrand 1912b). The second section is translated from a Spanish account (Engerrand 1912c). The drawings have been retouched from the available low-resolution scanned or xeroxed copies. Thanks are due to Eric W. Ritter, Elinora Topete, and Julia Bendímez Patterson for their assistance with access to some of the materials presented here, and to Zee Malas for his aid with upgrading Engerrand’s three photographs.

* * *

During the trip that the Mexican Geological Commission made in the northern part of Baja California in the last four months of 1911, I had occasion to observe new petroglyphs that I wish to make known. It is clear that many people have seen these figures before me, since they are well known to the local people, but I believe that they have never been published.

Clavigero¹ notes that there are remnants of paintings, crude but admirably preserved,² among them some figures of men and women, between 27 and 28 degrees of latitude. He declines to attribute them to the populations that existed at the time of the Spaniards’ arrival, and which are now completely extinct or represented only by a few individuals.³ Although he says he knows nothing about the race that would have made these

paintings, he comes close to attributing them to giants who, according to local traditions, came from the north and had once lived on the peninsula. He pointed out that Father Giuseppe Rotea, an honest and trustworthy man, according to him, had found in a cave near San Joaquín the remains of a skeleton that measured 11 feet.⁴ Belief in the existence of gigantic human races prior to our own is universal, and its source has always been the presence, in certain geologic strata, of the remains of large animals. Accordingly, we should not be surprised that it has been the same in Baja California.

According to the same author, the paintings of the ancient Californians had the objective of conveying to posterity the memory of their settlement in the region, but they are not comparable to those of Mexico, although they had the same objective. He adds that they are in four colors: yellow, green, black, and reddish. For my part, I have only seen red, yellow, and white ones.

Recently, Arthur Walbridge North, who has long explored Baja California, has made known three new groups of petroglyphs said to be prehistoric.⁵ These are the ones in Arroyo Grande, which has always been a route to the desert and the mouth of the Colorado; those in the Sierra de San Pedro Mártir; and those at the old mission of San Fernando, founded in 1769 by Junípero Serra.

I am not acquainted with the petroglyphs in Arroyo Grande, nor with those in the Sierra de San Pedro Mártir described by him, but I have carefully studied those at San Fernando and I have copied all that they present of interest. Consequently, what I publish today is much more complete and does not at all duplicate what has been reproduced by North. I am also not acquainted with the petroglyphs of Calmalli cited by him.⁶

There are also other groups of ancient figures that have not been studied and that I was not able to see because of the intemperance of my guide, for example those of the *Cuesta de los Mártires*, in the valley of arroyo of El Rosario that passes above the old mission of that name, today completely in ruins, nearly at 30° north latitude, and those of *Santa Catarina*, a little farther south.

Also, it is remarkable that these ancient drawings are present in nearly all locations or *aguajes* where there is water. Water is of fundamental importance in Baja California, which, after having had at the end of the Tertiary and during the Quaternary some huge

valleys where very large rivers must have flowed, was gradually transformed into an extremely dry and arid desert, except in some favored locations. For this reason, without denying that the petroglyphs commemorate some interesting facts relative to ancient migrations, I believe I can express the opinion that certain of them are maps or contain indications concerning locations where water can be found.

Of their antiquity I will say nothing, since all we know is that their authors are not the ancestors of the present Indians. What seems to me quite evident is that they are not prehistoric in the sense in which that adjective is used in Europe.⁷

Their preservation is sometimes perfect. In some other cases, parts of the designs are effaced, as is true at San Fernando. At this latter location, I have observed that there are paintings of different ages and that some have been drawn on top of others, which are partially effaced. There are some things that are unquestionably modern, that is to say, that come from the time of the mission's great prosperity, such as representations of men wearing great hats, and of a little house. This is especially the case for an inscription that attracted the attention of North.⁸ It is impossible to attribute them to the modern inhabitants of San Fernando, who are reduced to a few individuals and who occupy themselves solely with scant work at agriculture.

Some of the designs of San Fernando, and in particular the inscription reproduced by North, have been redone with a type of white painting by someone who wanted thus to assure them a longer survival.

It goes without saying that it is necessary to set aside completely, as being without any serious foundation, the comparisons that have been made between certain signs at San Fernando and some Chaldean and Phoenician signs, because nothing other than fortuitous coincidences can be observed.

SAN FERNANDO

This old mission is situated a little below the 30° parallel. It is entirely abandoned, to the extent that there are no more than two inhabited houses. However, the traveler immediately realizes the past importance of this site by the old works that had the objective of storing water and the remains of which are seen in the vicinity of

the village. At present, the inhabitants content themselves with the water from the arroyo, although it is noticeably salty.

It is on a cliff situated near the said arroyo that the group of paintings is seen. This natural cliff (Fig. 1), of a metamorphic rock of as yet undetermined age and of a color variously red-brown or white in places, also shows near its base the remains of a wall made of rocks simply stacked on top of each other.

The appearance of the majority of the paintings is evidently old: they are red in color, sometimes that of rust, sometimes that of dried blood; some are white. Their lack of distinctness prevented me from photographing them.

The first group of petroglyphs (Fig. 2) is about 3 m. high by 4 m. wide. One can see there several human figures and a mass of other designs that I admit I am incapable of interpreting.⁹ In the present case, the rock was scraped and the figures were painted in white, perhaps with a reed stalk.

Another group (Fig. 3) is of a very special technique. It is ornamental in design, and I have not seen anything comparable among the other American petroglyphs.¹⁰ The color is red, and these figures seem as old as the others.¹¹ At the bottom, a sort of circle with dots can be seen, comparable to another design at La Sierrita. Its color is also red. Dimensions of the group: about 1 m. high by 40 cm. wide.

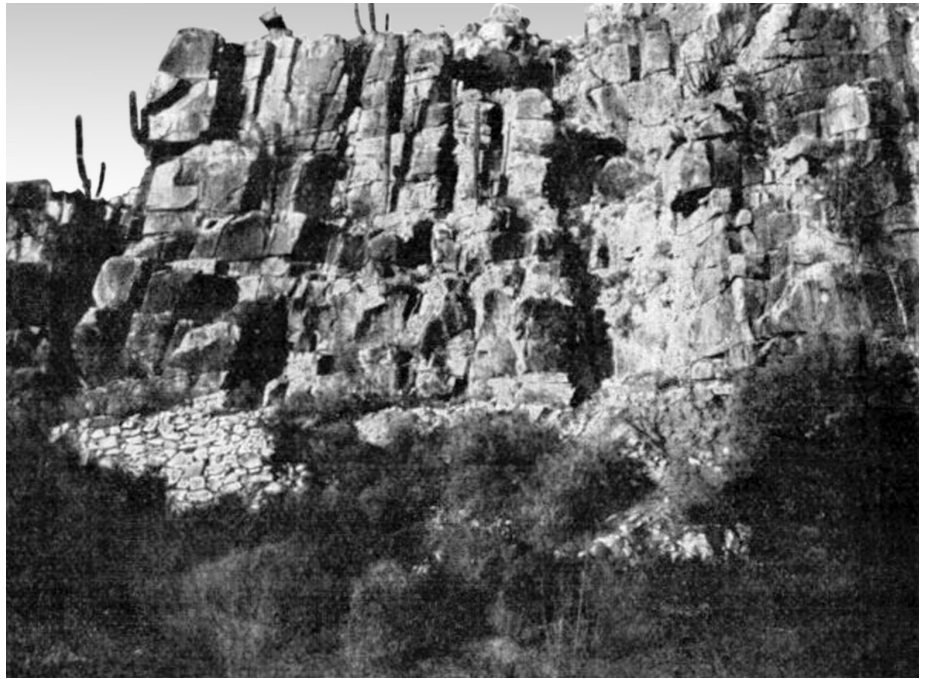


Figure 1. The cliff of San Fernando.

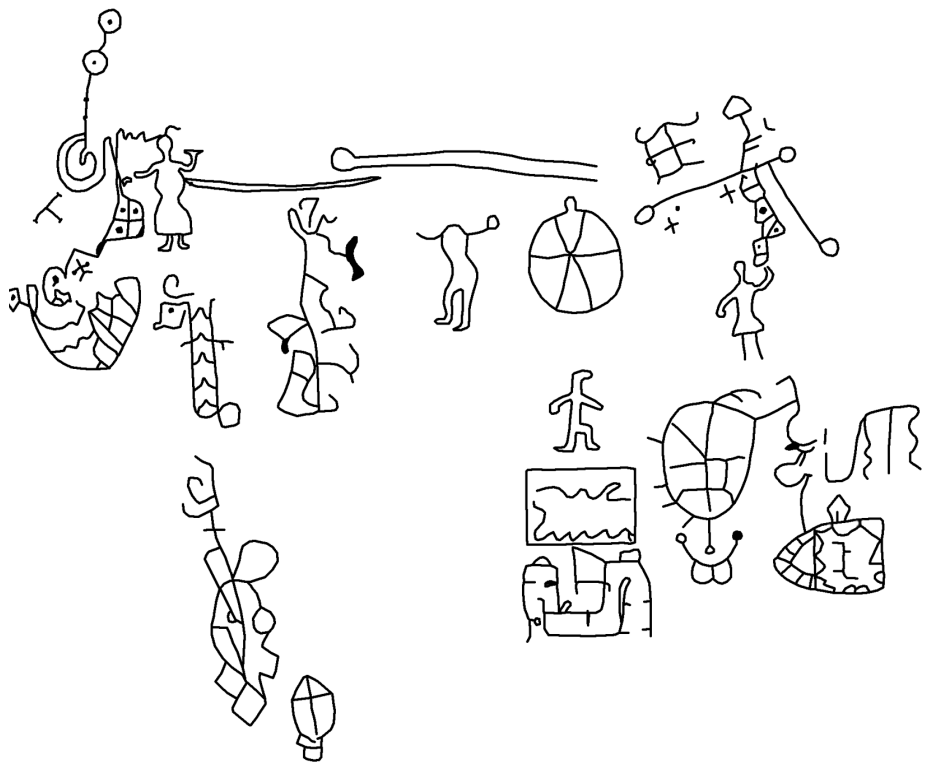


Figure 2. Petroglyphs of San Fernando. – 3 m. by 4 m. – White.

A final group (Fig. 4) consists of designs as curious as they are inexplicable, painted in white.¹² Their more

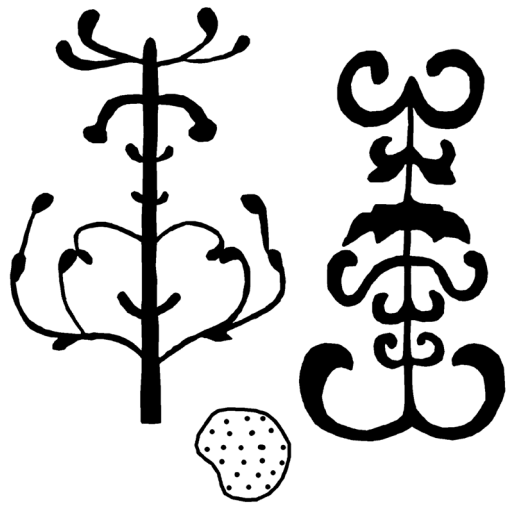


Figure 3. Petroglyphs of San Fernando.
– 1 m. by 40 cm. – Red.

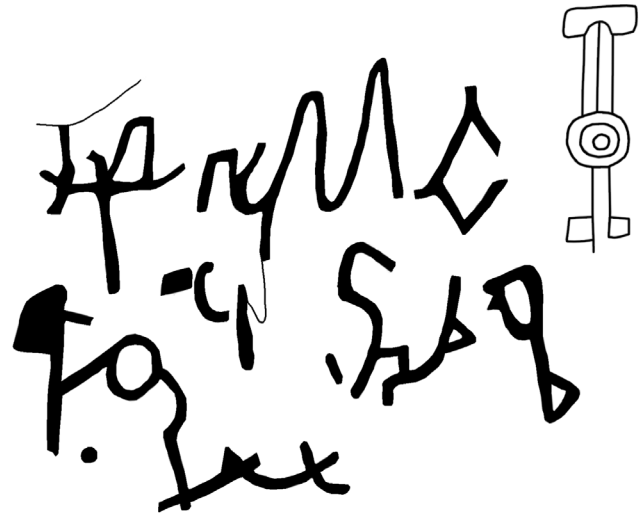


Figure 4. Petroglyphs of San Fernando.
– 1 m. 50 cm. by 1 m. 20 cm. – White.

or less oriental appearance partially explains the comparisons that have been made between certain California signs and Asiatic inscriptions. The dimensions are 1 m. 50 cm. high by 1 m. 20 cm. wide.

In more of these figures and in more modern ones of which I have already spoken, there are found at San Fernando numerous red and white crosses.¹³

SAN JULIO

The group of paintings of the arroyo of San Julio [Fig. 5] is very interesting for its homogeneity. This arroyo runs to the south of El Rosario and, at the point where the *aguaje* is found, it begins to run in a ravine. After several hundred meters, all the water has disappeared, soaked up by the sands. Additionally, this water is so salty that it is undrinkable, which is not a small disappointment to the novice traveler. However, at the exact point where the paintings are found, there is a small hole where, with some work, one can extract one or two cups of rainwater.

The paintings are found on the vertical face of the cliff of metamorphic rock that is on the right of the photograph and corresponds to the right bank of the arroyo. Here, the represented objects are in two colors,



Figure 5. The painted rocks of the arroyo of San Julio.

red and yellow. In Figures 6 and 7, the black corresponds to red and hachuring corresponds to yellow.

The panel of Figure 6 is about 3 m. high by 2 m. wide. It appears that certain designs correspond to a map or to game pieces. The four yellow figures and the four red ones in the lower right could be game pieces. Others are perhaps extremely stylized figures of animals. The one in the lower left could be a fish, and in that regard I think it is necessary to note that at present the arroyos of the northern district of Baja California do not contain fish, except that of San Antonio del Caballo.

Figure 7 is also in two colors and is also, to me, inexplicable. Dimensions: 1 m. by 60 cm.



Figure 6. Large group of paintings of San Julio. – 3 m. by 2 m. – Red and yellow.

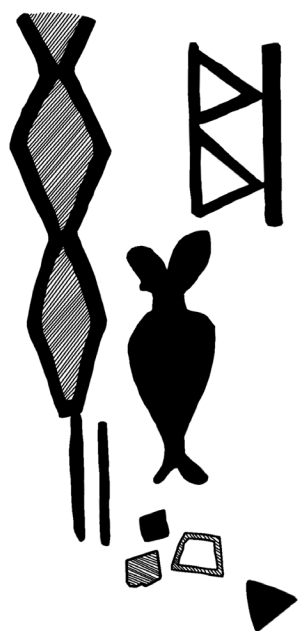


Figure 7. Petroglyphs of the arroyo of San Julio. – 1 m. by 60 cm. – Red and yellow.

LA SIERRITA

This group is also very important, because of the great abundance of petroglyphs, of which I have only been able to copy a part, many of them being effaced. Here there is only one color, red-brown. La Sierrita is in the



Figure 8. Aguaje of La Sierrita.

same region as the preceding groups. It is a frequently visited *aguaje* (Fig. 8). The paintings are more or less everywhere, on the two banks of the arroyo that, last November, contained scarcely a puddle of water.

Figure 9 represents two groups of paintings, the lower about 40 cm. by 20 cm., and the upper 30 cm. by

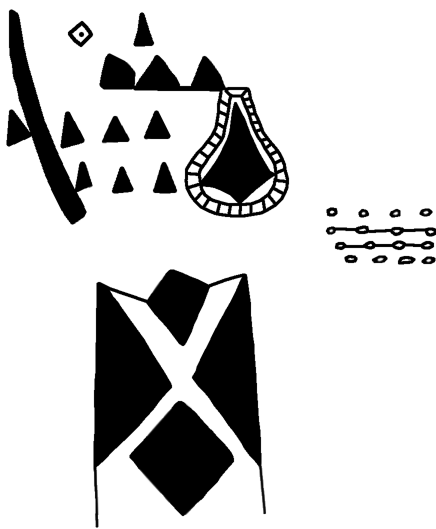


Figure 9. Petroglyphs of La Sierrita.
– Above, 30 cm. by 25 cm.; below,
40 cm. by 20 cm. – Red-brown.

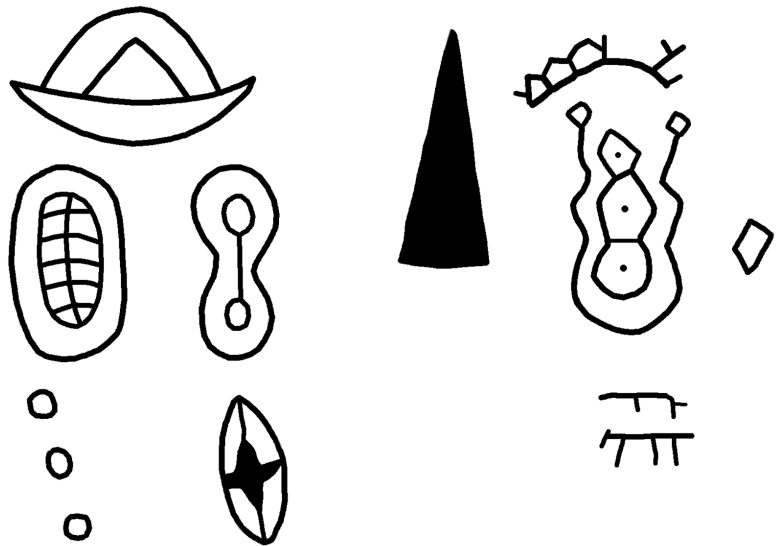
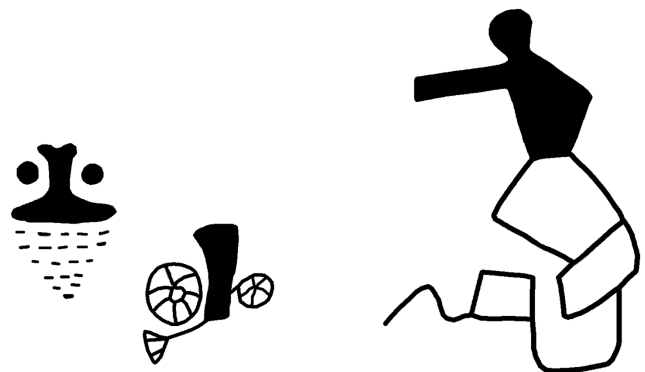


Figure 10. Petroglyphs of La Sierrita. – Element on the right, 25 cm.
by 20 cm.; element on the left, 25 cm. by 40 cm. – Red-brown.

25 cm. Figure 10 is composed of two series of figures; that on the right, in which two animals are seen, is 25 cm. high by 20 cm. wide, and that on the left, 25 cm. by 40 cm. The peculiar Figure 11 is very small; there almost seem to be wheels. Figure 12 is a human representation that terminates in a series of lines that are impossible to interpret; its dimensions are 30 cm. by 20 cm. Figure 13, also entirely inexplicable, is 60 cm. by 50 cm. Figure 14 is composed of two series, of which the one on the right is 20 cm. by 10 cm. and the one on the left a little smaller. The series on the right of Figure 15 is 50 cm. by 40 cm., and on the left, 60 cm. by 50 cm.; in the latter, designs can be seen that perhaps represent birds in flight. Finally, in Figure 16, one observes a cross, to which I give no specific significance in the present case.

What is the origin of the colors employed by those whom North calls the Petroglyph Makers? The red and yellow are evidently ocher, which ought to be found at certain locations on the peninsula. The white is probably lime. Unfortunately, I know nothing about the liquid into which these substances would have been mixed.

It is interesting to compare the petroglyphs of Baja California with those in other parts of America, and for that I have consulted the work that is so important, above all in regard to the United States, by Garrick Mallory.¹⁴ Only the paintings of La Sierrita have very



Figures 11 [left] and 12 [right]. Petroglyphs of La Sierrita. – Red-brown (Figure 12: 30 cm. by 20 cm.).

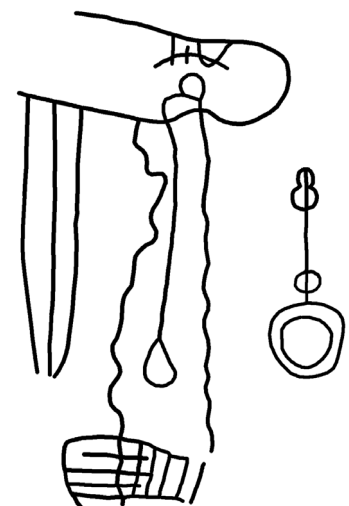


Figure 13. Petroglyphs of La Sierrita. – 60 cm. by 50 cm. –Red-brown. [Editor's note: The figure is oriented here as it was published in the French edition of the article; the Spanish edition shows this image rotated 180°.]

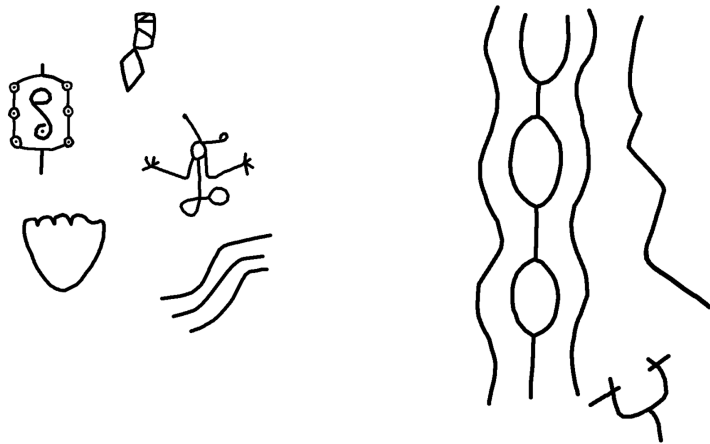


Figure 14. Petroglyphs of La Sierrita. – Series on the right, 20 cm. by 10 cm.; series on the left, a little smaller. – Red-brown.

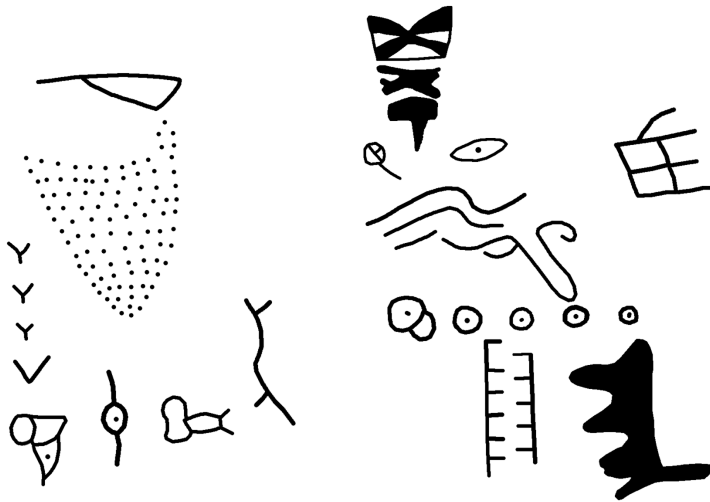


Figure 15. Petroglyphs of La Sierrita. – Series on the right, 50 cm. by 40 cm.; series on the left, 60 cm. by 50 cm. – Red-brown.

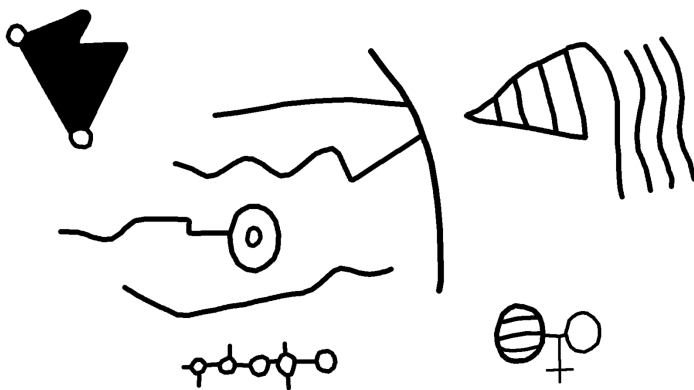


Figure 16. Petroglyphs of La Sierrita. – About 35 cm. by 20 cm. – Red-brown. [Editor's note: The figure is oriented here as it was published in the French edition of the article; the Spanish edition shows this image rotated 180°.]

real analogies with the petroglyphs of American California. To be convinced of that, it is sufficient to consider Figures 15, 21, 22, and 29, and Plates I, Figure d; II, Figure b; and X, Figure d, in the book of the American scholar.

ADDITIONAL NOTE ON THE PETROGLYPHS OF BAJA CALIFORNIA

When I edited my note on the petroglyphs of Baja California, I omitted to cite a work of León Diguet on the petroglyphs of the southern and central regions of the peninsula, because I was unable to consult it, not finding it in the libraries of Mexico.¹⁵ The New Archives of the Scientific Missions, in which Diguet's work was published, are very difficult to find in libraries, since the French Government distributes them among very few scientific institutions.

By mere chance, the aforementioned work arrived at the Geological Institute a few days ago, and I was able to consult it there in the Institute's library, which is every day richer and more valuable. I think it is advisable to give an idea of this relatively inaccessible account by the well-known French scholar who had such interest in the exploration of the national territory.¹⁶ If I am correctly informed, Diguet was never in the Northern District of Baja California,¹⁷ which is the only region that I know, and even that only partially; that makes the comparison more interesting between the results obtained by him and my own.

Diguet, after recalling the exploration of H. Ten Kate¹⁸ in 1883, made a highly interesting description of what he had seen. He says that the colors used by the California painters are red, yellow, white, and black. As I have already said, I have not observed the use of this last color in the north. According to him, the mineral colors were mixed with a type of varnish, which would perhaps explain the long survival of the paintings. The drawings are thin and like engravings on the hard rocks, and in wider lines on the soft rocks. In the south and center of the peninsula, there are numerous pictures of

animals, which does not seem to be the case in the north. The French author supposes that the belief in giants, the creators of these pictures, is owing to the great height at which the latter are found, and he explains that by erosion having greatly lowered the bed of the arroyos, at the margins on which the petroglyphs can be seen. That is very possible, but belief in giants is universal, and it seems to me that they are always explained in the same way, which is by the discovery of gigantic bones that are erroneously considered to be human. Also, the ancient Californians may very well have situated them in elevated locations to make them more visible and to hinder their destruction by the waters of the arroyos at times of flooding. Diguët supposes that the people who drew and painted in Baja California remained on the peninsula a very short time, and he ends his very interesting memoir by giving a list of 30 places in the south and center of the territory where there are petroglyphs.

I have thought it useful, given that discoveries made in Mexico are involved, to reproduce a part of Diguët's illustrations in this Bulletin, with its wide circulation in the Republic [Fig. 17].

Elements 1 to 7 are from the Cañada de Santa Matildita, in the large arroyo of San Adeo, on the Pacific slope. The great resemblance of these images to those in [Fig. 4] of my work will be noted.

Elements 8 to 20 are from the caves and rock shelters of San Borjita, El Palmarito, San Juan, Santa Gertrudis,

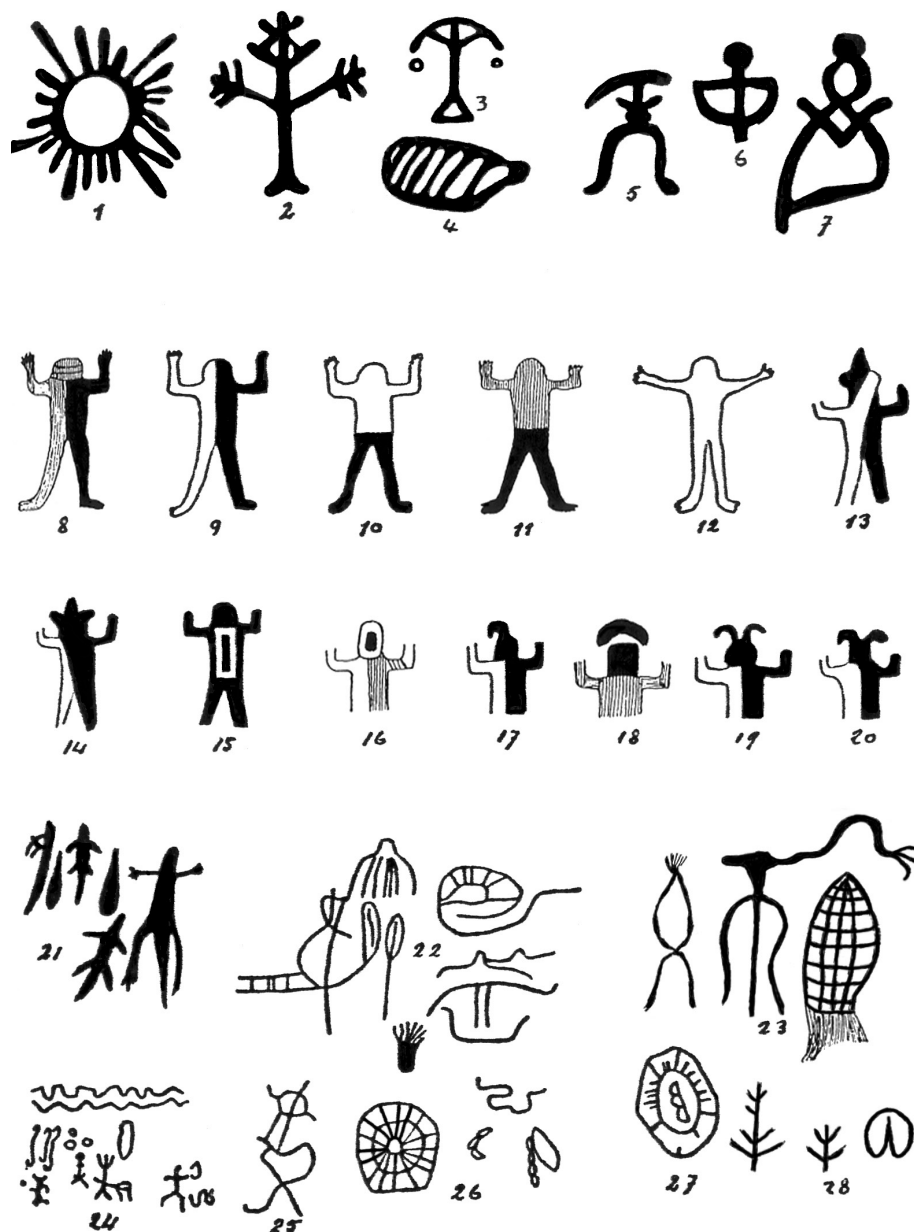


Figure 17. Baja California rock art recorded by Diguët (1899). Images 1–7 are on Diguët's p. 35, images 8–20 are on p. 34, and images 21–28 are on p. 29.

and El Ratón. They are human representations, some with plumes, in red and black,¹⁹ and generally each measuring 2 m.

Elements 23, 27, and 28 are from the Cañada del Muerto. Element 21 is from Laguna de San Pedro, near Cerro de la Giganta. Elements 22, 24, and 25 are from the Cañada de Pinamí, 8 km. from the old mission of Santa Gertrudis, and so evidently resemble those of

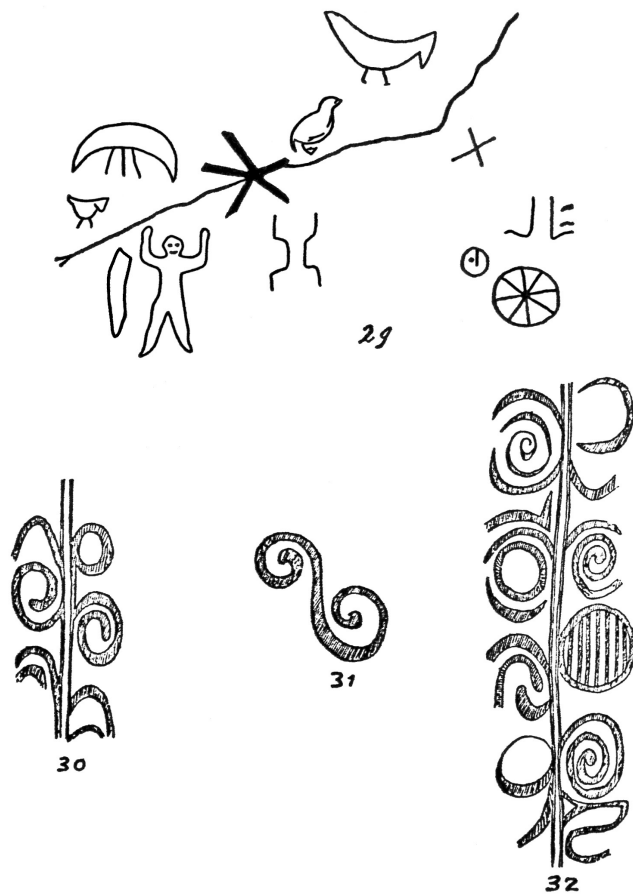


Figure 18. Image 29 is from Seurat 1904:369.
Images 30–32 are from Piette 1905:4–5.

San Fernando ([Fig. 2] in my work) that I think it is unnecessary to insist on the point. It is exactly the same work and the same manner of executing it.

Some persons who are not familiar with the character of American petroglyphs and unqualified in prehistory and primitive ethnography have made certain criticisms relative to the pictures that I have presented. Given the small number of those interested in American studies in Mexico, I think it well to show that these criticisms, to which I would give no importance if it were not for these special conditions, are entirely unfounded. Attention has been called to certain ornamental figures seen in [Fig. 3] of my work. In the present note (elements 30, 31, and 32), similar drawings can be seen that are from the Reindeer age, that is to say, that go back to an antiquity that can only be expressed in many thousands of years [Fig. 18].²⁰ They are engraved on bone and antler, coming from the caves of Espélungues d'Arudy and Lourdes in the French

Pyrenees, and there is not the least doubt concerning their authenticity. Concerning the appearance of the figures that I published, this says nothing against their antiquity, the more so since I have not considered them as prehistoric, but anterior to the conquest.

The circular images in [Fig. 9] have also drawn attention. However, Element 26, which can be seen in the present note and which is reproduced from Diguët, has evident analogies with them. Moreover, and I have chosen this example from among many others, an almost identical image can be seen at the point called The Rope on Pitcairn Island, which, as is well known, was uninhabited when it was discovered in 1767 and was repopulated by the *Bounty* mutineers [Fig. 18]. This image, which is found at a height considerably greater than that of a man, measures approximately 50 cm. in diameter (Element 29). Miss Rosalind Young drew it and acquainted L. G. Seurat with it.²¹

Finally, I will recall the sun representations of the Neolithic and Bronze ages, which often have the appearance of the criticized figures, and which are much more ancient than the petroglyphs of Baja California.

NOTES

¹Francesco Saverio Clavigero, *Storia della California*, Venezia, 1789, p. 107.

²Quello poi, que fece più maravigliare i Missionari, si fu la permanenza di que' colori nella pietra per tanti secoli senz'essere mai nè dall'aria, nè dall'acqua danneggiati. Clavigero, p. 107. [Editor's note: "What surprised the missionaries most was that those colors had remained on the rock for so many centuries without ever receiving any damage from either air or water" (Clavigero 1937:85).]

³Ora nè tali pitture, nè tali abiti convenivano a quelle Nazioni rozzissime e imbestialite, che abitavano nella California, allorchè vi entrarono gli Spagnuoli. Appartengono dunque ad un'altra Nazione antica; ma qual sia dessa nol sapremo dire. Id., p. 107. [Editor's note: "Now these pictures and clothing are not characteristic of those brutish and savage nations which inhabited California when the Spaniards reached it. They belong, without doubt, to another ancient nation, but we are unable to say what it was" (Clavigero 1937:85).]

⁴Id., p. 108. Castañeda, in his account of the travels of Coronado, speaks of naked giants. Arthur Walbridge North: *Camp and Camino in Lower California*. New York, 1910, p. 70. [Editor's note: José Mariano Rotea (1732–1799), a Mexican by birth, was the Jesuit missionary at San Ignacio between 1759 and 1768 (Crosby 1994:409).]

⁵See his already-cited book and the article: “The Native Tribes of Lower California,” *American Anthropologist*, new series, vol. X, 1908, pp. 236 [editor’s note: p. 246], 250. See also his other book, *The Mother of California*.

⁶*Camp*, etc., p. 70 and 71.

⁷[Editor’s note: Engerrand uses “prehistoric” to refer to periods before the invention of writing, not to periods before the appearance of written records in the region under discussion.]

⁸“Anyway, it is said, that these were added by the padres to destroy the spell of evil inherent in the jeroglyficos below.” *Camp*, etc., p. 70). I gladly concur with this opinion.

⁹[Editor’s note: The group of elements in the lower left were depicted by Grant (1974:80). This group, as well as the central elements, were also shown by Johnson (1978:69; see also pp. 67), who suggested that “combined elements possibly tell story or depict message; in lower corner is possible ‘birth scene,’ human figure with tabla-like box overhead and smaller, solid pecked figure above” (Johnson 1978:60). Other individual elements corresponding to Engerrand’s lower right images were documented by Johnson (1978:64–65). The representations of these pictographs by Grant and by Johnson differ in several respects from those of Engerrand, but they are clearly recognizable as based on the same images.]

¹⁰[Editor’s note: As Engerrand implies, the elaborate decorative symmetry of the two large elements in this figure seems to be inconsistent with patterns observed elsewhere in aboriginal Baja California rock art. Eric Ritter photographed a somewhat similar floral motif (now destroyed) that was painted on one of the walls of Mission San Borja. Although the paintings in Figure 3 seemed to Engerrand to be “as old as the others,” they may be attributable to European influences during the mission period.]

¹¹[Editor’s note: The Spanish version (Engerrand 1912b:199–200) says “older than the others.”]

¹²[Editor’s note: The larger portion of this image, on the left, is recognizable as the same panel recorded by North (1908a:246, 1908b:124, 1910:66), although the two observers’ recordings differ in details. North (1908b:124) reproduced a photograph of the panel which supports his reading, but the rock art elements in the photograph appear to have been enhanced. The element in the upper right was recorded by Johnson (1978:66), who described it as “possibly human form.”]

¹³[Editor’s note: The Spanish version (Engerrand 1912b:200) adds here, “that appear as old as the other objects represented, and to which I attribute no special significance in this case.”]

¹⁴*Picture-Writing of the American Indians*. Tenth Ann. Report of the Bureau of Ethnology, 1888–89; Washington, 1893.

¹⁵León Diguët. Rapport sur une mission scientifique dans la Basse Californie. *Nouvelles Archives des missions scientifique*. Volume IX, 53 pp., 3 figs. and X plates. The copy that I had

available is an offprint with special pagination. [Editor’s note: Diguët 1899.]

¹⁶There is a note by the same author in *L’Anthropologie*, Vol. VI, page 160, with the title, “Note sur la pictographie de la Basse Californie,” (18 figs.), but Vol. VI of this excellent journal is not present in the Biblioteca del Museo and I do not have it. [Editor’s note: This article by Diguët (1895) was published in an English translation by Grant (1974:25–52).]

¹⁷[Editor’s note: Diguët’s archaeological explorations extended as far north as Santa Gertrudis in the northern territory (now the state of Baja California), but well to the south of the area where Engerrand worked.]

¹⁸H. Ten Kate. Quelques observations ethnographique recueillies dans la presqu’île californienne et en Sonora. *Rev. d’Ethnographie*. Vol. II, 1883, p. 321. Cited by L. Diguët. [Editor’s note: ten Kate 1883. On the investigations in Baja California of the Dutch anthropologist Herman Frederik Carel ten Kate, see also Hovens (1991).]

¹⁹There must be a third color, but the French explorer does not indicate it.

²⁰E. Piette: Les Ecritures de l’Age Glyptique. *L’Anthropologie*, 1905, pp. 1–11. The pictures are from the Abbé Breuil. [Editor’s note: The Reindeer Age refers to the Upper Paleolithic period in Europe, represented by the Magdalenian culture.]

²¹L. G. Seurat. Sur les anciens habitants de l’Île Pitcairn. *Pacific Sud. L’Anthropologie*, 1904. Pp. 369–372.

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