

A Unique, Baculum-shaped Pestle from Southern Coastal Los Angeles County

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Abstract

A pestle discovered in a mourning feature at CA-LAN-63 projects phallic symbolism, its imagery inspired not by the human anatomy but apparently by a baculum or bacula. The artifact is described and placed in time, and information is provided bearing on interpretation of the specimen's basic referent. Some such information revolves on comparisons of the ceremonial artifact's morphology against the shapes of penis bones of several species of the order Carnivora. The artifact is a conventionalized representation, not an anatomically exact mimic, and consequently no definitive statement is possible regarding whether the *os penis* of a particular animal species had served as artist's model or whether the stone carver drew inspiration from two or more species' bacula.

[Sha Rocco (1874:62 *et seq.*)] endeavors to show that some of the large pestles found in California are emblems of phallic worship. He considers the pestle as a phallus, and a round shallow mortar, figured in [his] text, as representing the *yoni* or female organ....such deductions are simply ridiculous, and, even should we find pestles, or other articles, so carved as to represent the male organ, they might well be considered simply as examples of savage obscenity or fantasy. – Abbott (1879:92)

Some association of sex with death occurs in nearly every culture in the world. – Metcalf and Huntington (1991:25)

Introduction

The archaeological record of Native coastal southern California documents stone figurines crafted to communicate an animal referent. The great majority represent species associated with marine environments. These carvings include whole-body effigies/talismans (e.g., Hudson and Blackburn 1986:171-219; Koerper 2011) as well as body part specimens (e.g., Hudson and Blackburn 1985:263, 268, 1986:171-219; Koerper 2011), the former category greatly outnumbering the latter.

With regard to regional anthropomorphic effigies/talismans crafted in stone, the differential is reversed; that is, specimens with possible to near certain body part referent greatly outnumber those whose imageries had perhaps evoked the larger body. Of the artifacts reasonably alleged to have been human body part figurines, most offer sex-based communications—phallic and/or vulvar (e.g., Koerper and Labbé 1987, 1989; Koerper 2006a, 2007; Koerper and Desautels-Wiley 2010a, 2010b; Koerper and Mason 2010; Koerper et al. 2010).

Among those whole-body effigies/talismans that had clearly stood for some kind of animal, we are aware of only one example bearing an overt sexual motif; it is a steatite whale whose dorsal fin mimics the

human phallus (see Putnam 1879:220, Figure 102). Only recently has local archaeological science been introduced to what is likely an animal body part representation projecting sexual content. It is a ceremonial pestle recovered at CA-LAN-63 on bluffs above Santa Monica Bay (Figure 1) during excavations conducted by Statistical Research, Inc. (Hull et al. 2006; Douglas 2007:5).

The main purposes of this essay are to describe this unique object (Figure 2) and to offer a reasonable interpretation of its basic referent. The effort to accomplish such includes cursorily revisiting those human body part symbols most familiar to students of local prehistory, viz., pestles that project phallic imagery by reason of possession of some distinctive design factor at their proximal ends (see Figure 3) and the so-called “spikes” (see Figure 4) (e.g., Koerper 2001, 2006a, 2006b; Desautels et al. 2005; see also Abbott 1879:87-92). The greater interpretive effort involves comparisons of the ritual pestle’s morphology against

the bacula (penis bones) of several mammal species (Figures 5-20).

CA-LAN-63

LAN-63 was situated on the bluffs overlooking Ballona Lagoon in Playa del Rey (Figure 1). Before housing development was to occur at this location, archaeological investigations were carried out by Statistical Research, Inc., and it was possible for Altschul et al. (2005) to characterize LAN-63 as having been either a year-round village or a multi-seasonal central base camp with a population of perhaps 50 or 60 individuals. Much of the occupation of LAN-63 was probably restricted to a period of several decades occurring around twenty-one centuries ago.

Faunal and artifactual remains indicate the varied subsistence economy expected for people exploiting resources available from a southern California lagoonal system and surrounding environs. Five burials were

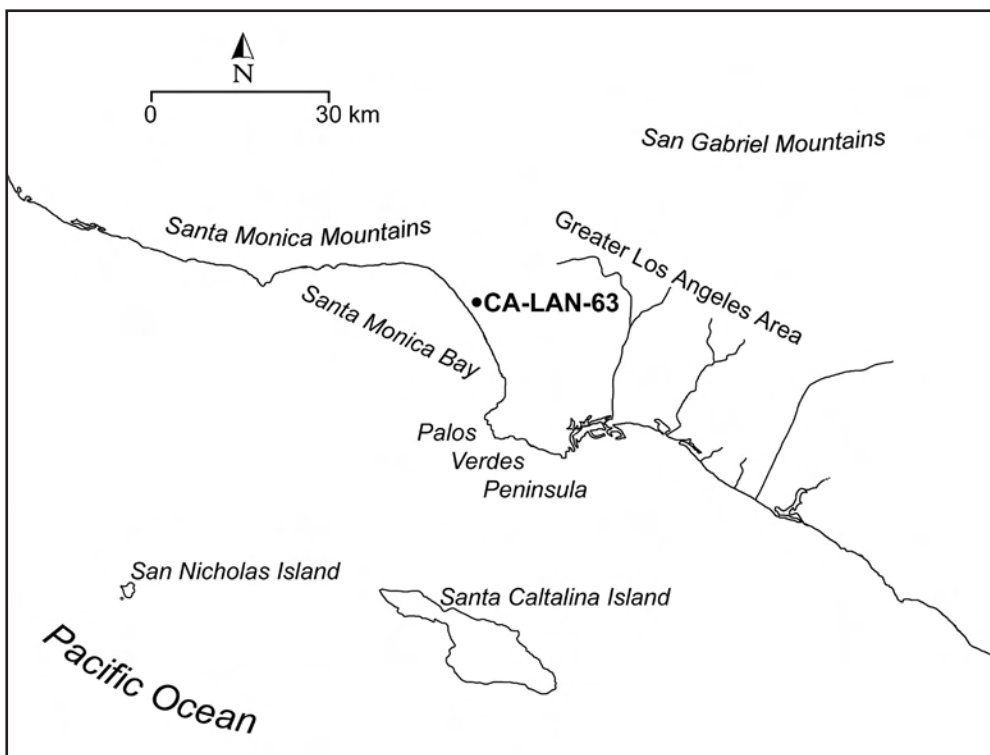


Figure 1. Location of CA-LAN-63.

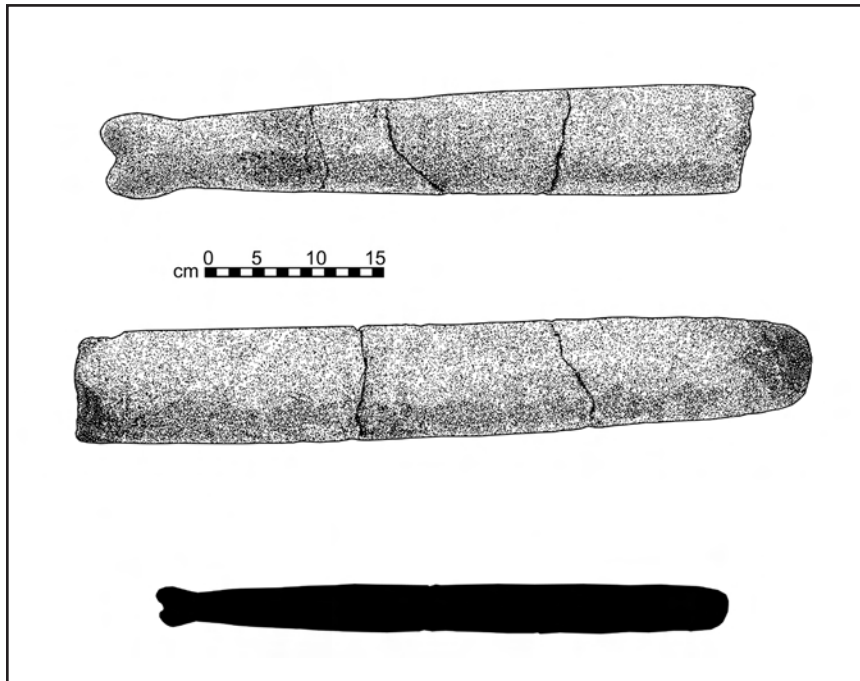


Figure 2. Ceremonial pestle recovered from Feature 11 at CA-LAN-63.

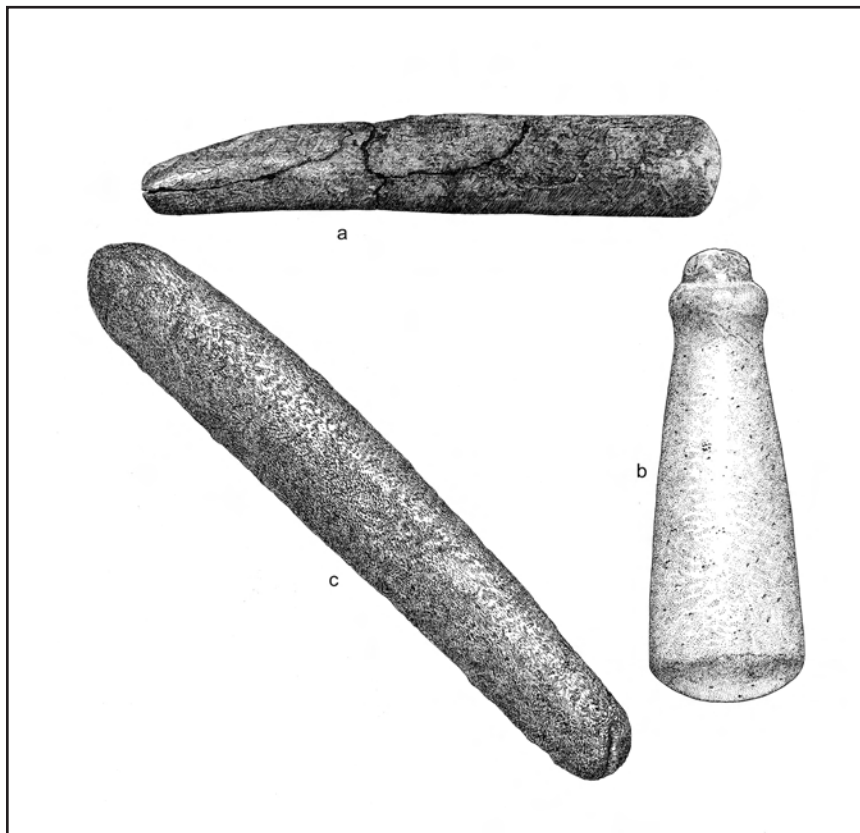


Figure 3. Phallic pestles from Orange County. a) Specimen from the Bonita Site, or CA-ORA-107. Housed with the Santa Ana College Depression era WPA archaeology collection. WPA#2022. Length is 26 cm (see Anonymous 1969; also Mead 1969); b) Specimen housed at the Mission San Juan Capistrano Museum. It is about 19.5 cm long and 6.8 cm wide; c) Specimen #12501 recovered from Feature 1 at CA-ORA-660. Shown end on; length between 33 and 35 cm. See Mason et al. (1992:78-79, 273-274).

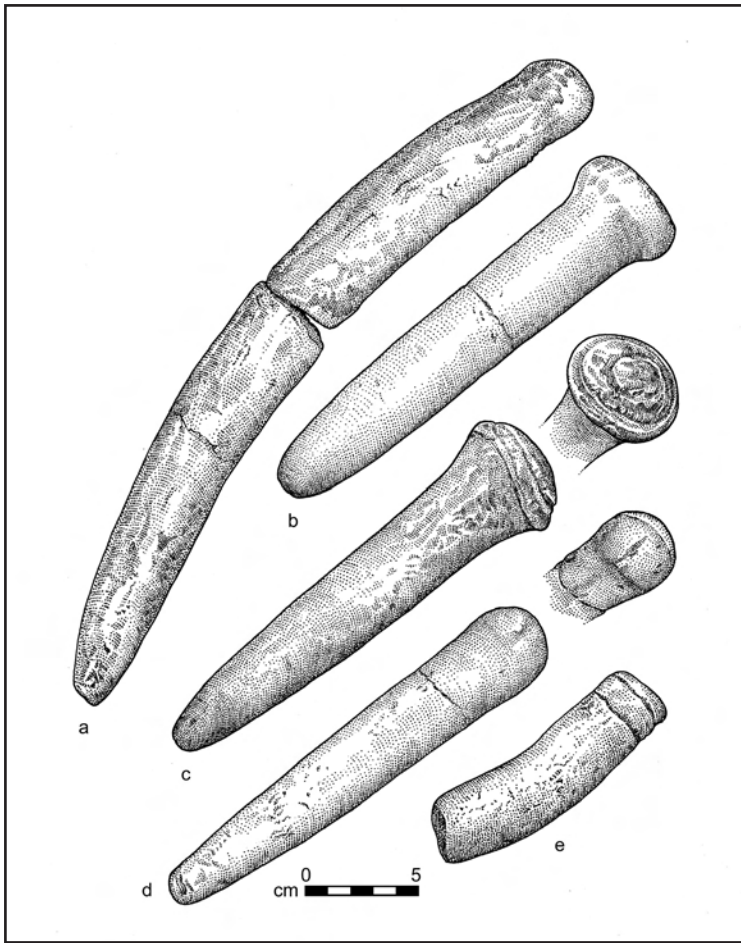


Figure 4. Examples of burial associated "spikes" and other phallic-shaped objects from the Palmer-Redondo site, CA-LAN-127. All specimens curated at the Los Angeles County Museum of Natural History. a) Cat. no. A.3121-32-11; b) Cat. no. A.3121-32-8; c) Cat. no. A.3121-32-15; d) Cat. no. A.3121-32-6; e) Cat. no. A.3121-32-42. a, b, and d were associated with Burial 1; c with Burial 2; and e with Burial 7.

discovered, but there was a paucity of grave goods. These deceased had been laid to rest at a peripheral area of the site.

Cremated human remains were discovered in a mourning feature (Feature 587) for which there is a calibrated radiocarbon date of 2140 ± 40 B.P. (Hull and Douglass 2005). Feature 587, which measured 5 m x 5 m x 50 cm deep, held a mix of shell, nonhuman bone, fire-affected stone, knapped artifacts, and ground stone tools. Hull et al. (2006:4) noted that the most dense artifact concentration in this mourning feature consisted primarily of broken milling implements and manuport cobbles.

There was a second mourning feature (Feature 11) which measured 40 cm x 60 m x 30 cm deep. Its faunal remains included whale bone, a material which has long been associated with the dead (see e.g., Harrington 1928:134, Plate 22; Orr 1956:10, 25; see also e.g., Anonymous 1964:16). Feature 11 also included steatite detritus, perforated steatite disks, steatite vessels, cores, a burin, edge-modified flakes, basalt and sandstone bowl fragments, and pestle fragments. It was possible to determine that the rims of the larger bowls were somewhere around 25 cm in diameter (Hull 2005). It was this feature that produced the unique, ceremonial pestle that is the focus of our essay. A radiocarbon determination run on shell and corrected for

reservoir effect yielded an assay of cal 2150 ± 70 B.P. (Hull and Douglass 2005, Douglass 2007:5).

The occupation of LAN-63 occurred near the middle of the Angeles II phase (2600-1600 B.P.) of the Del Rey Tradition. The Del Rey Tradition (3500-150 B.P.) (see Sutton 2011) began with replacement of the Encinitas Tradition at the coastal zone and was occasioned by an influx of Takic (proto-Gab-Cupan) speakers whose descendants would become known as the Gabrielino (Tongva).

Traits noted by Sutton (2011:14-15) for the Angeles II phase include mortuary and/or mourning features containing broken tools among other offerings. Sutton gave the phenomenon a name, the “Angeles Funerary Complex” (AFC), placing its inception around 2600 B.P. Sutton cited Walker (1951:113-114) as one of the scholars who believed that such features were precursor to the Southern California Mourning Ceremony.

A Unique Artifact—Description

The schist artifact shown in Figure 2 was recovered from communal ritual Feature 11, and it measures about 1.4 m when its several parts are refitted. Generally circular in cross-section, this intentionally fractured ceremonial pestle is distinctive not only for its comparatively great length and relative thinness but also for the design element appearing at the proximal end, that is, paired, elevated bulbous elements separated by a trough. These dual projections flare laterally from the shaft. The distal end of the pestle gives evidence of battering and some rounding wear, the result presumably of actions within a stone mortar/bowl (see Douglas 2007:5). The artifact was deliberately broken at midsection, and subsequently the proximal half was covered with red ochre. The two pieces of this pestle were each broken again into thirds and then deposited in the offertory pit (Feature 11) together with steatite vessels, sandstone and basalt bowl fragments, perforated steatite disks, steatite detritus, shells, large sea mammal bones, and other faunal bones.

Interpretation of Basic Referent

Introduction

Of the regionally produced stone carvings that have been interpreted as possessing human body part imagery, most are purported to have carried genital-based symbologies (e.g., Koerper and Labbé 1987, 1989; Koerper 2006a, 2007; Koerper and Desautels-Wiley 2010a, 2010b; Koerper and Mason 2010; Koerper et al. 2010), their most immediate communications alleged to have followed largely from graphic or graphic-enough morphology and/or from some calculus that combined artifact design and communications revolving on sexual double entendre. Some of these anthropomorphic specimens unequivocally project phallic, vulvar, or dimorphic sexual content; however, others are more abstract/conventionalized in artistic execution, the certain formula for interpretive challenge. In some cases potential difficulties in decipherments might be minimized with the availability of particular ethnographic data (e.g., see Koerper 2006a, 2007; Koerper and Cramer 2011).

Regional prehistorians might quickly suspect that an unusually long, intentionally fractured, and ochre smeared pestle had possibly communicated phallic symbolism, especially had that artifact been recovered from a communal mourning feature. Such suspicions might precipitate from awareness of the kinds of information noted just above, particularly observations of a range of design factors crafted onto certain pestles that were seemingly designed to project male imagery; such suspicions might also follow from a knowledge of local archaeological evidence of phallic pestles and pestle-like objects associated with ceremonial venues. The most easily recognized of the body part stone symbols possessed by coastal southern California Indians were phallic pestles (Figure 3) and pestle-like artifacts such as “spikes” (Figure 4) (e.g., see Abbott 1879:87-92; Koerper 2001, 2006a, 2006b; Desautels et al. 2005).

Some of the said design factors are shown in Figure 3. In Figure 3a the modeled shaft projects a certain curvature, albeit understated—enough said. Greater attention to curvature is observed on certain “spikes” (see Figures 4a and 4e), undoubtedly a reflection that this kind of artifact was not involved in those percussive employments typical for pestles. The rounded eminence together with its surrounding collar, seen in Figure 3b, seems to bespeak an absence of circumcision (see also the spike of Figure 4c). In Figure 3c a not so elegant incised line at one end of the artifact obviously stands for the external urethral orifice. Parenthetically, it is herein proposed that for a carved stone object to be classified as a spike, it must carry some design factor that represents a glans penis. A variety of such devices are seen in Figures 4a-e. Certain elongate artifacts short of a glans penis referent could possibly qualify as “spike-like” (see Desautels et al. 2005:113, Figures 4b-f).

The shape of the LAN-63 pestle’s proximal end is, however, altogether different from anything appearing on any regional object previously identified as phallic. Rather, it offers what appears to be a conventionalized mimic of the apex (head) of a baculum (*os penis* or penis bone), one having a salient urethral sulcus (groove). Bacula, incidentally, occur in several taxonomic orders—Carnivora, Chiroptera, Primates, and Rodentia. Carnivora, the order in which pinnipeds are now placed, counts all its members as possessing the penis bone, save for the hyena (Bonner 1994:159). Of the primates, only humans lack a baculum. Incidentally, no member of the order Cetacea (e.g., whales, dolphins, porpoises) possesses a penis bone (Miller 2002:55).

Given the environmental setting of LAN-63 and given certain of the site remains (e.g., whale bone in Feature 11), one would infer a salient maritime component for the inhabitants of this Angeles II site. Ethnohistoric and ethnographic data attest to late Del Rey (Angeles VI and Island IV) exploitations

of seals, sea lions, and sea otters. A recent *PCASQ* article (Koerper 2011) offers notes on procurement methods and capture weaponry, hide processing and manufactures, and commodity trade regarding the regional pinnipeds and mustelids.

Thus, it is reasonable to suspect that the animal referent of the LAN-63 ceremonial pestle could have been some kind of sea mammal or that the artifact’s crafting drew on more than one sea mammal species. Recurrent exploitations of seals and sea lions (Landberg 1965:62; Glassow and Wilcoxon 1988:43-44) bespeaks Native peoples’ ample familiarity with the animals’ bacula. Our attention will turn first to the pinnipeds and the sea otter, but certain terrestrial carnivores are covered in our considerations.

Comparisons

Carnivores of Interest

Species of greatest interest here are any regional member of Carnivora possessing a baculum whose distal configuration displays a distinct urethral sulcus, or groove. The baculum apex, or head, would then show in ventral and/or dorsal view paired roundish elevations separated by a gap. Primary interest in such species follows from our supposition that the LAN-63 ritual object possesses a mimic of a urethral sulcus.

There are other bacula whose apexes in lateral view also display paired elevations of a different nature, their separations having nothing to do with a urethral sulcus. Species with these kinds of penis bones are also within our purview. Obviously, with regard to the distal ends of bacula, this expanded range of species to be considered reflects the fact that the uniform shaping of the LAN-63 pestle shaft will allow no views of the artifact to be broken out on the basis of ventral vs. dorsal vs. lateral. Beyond the primary emphasis on comparisons of the LAN-63 specimen’s proximal end against the distal ends (apexes) of the

bacula of a variety of carnivore species, there are other considerations of shape/morphology that should not be ignored.

Attention should be paid to overall shape. In very general terms, the length-to-width ratio of the ceremonial pestle is consistent with the specimens seen in Figures 5-20. Many of the bacula illustrated herein exhibit rounded proximal ends (bases), similar to the distal ends of pestles. As food for thought, consider whether the exaggerated length of the LAN-63 object coupled with its relative thinness had been intended to communicate sex-based imagery; more to the point, one might wonder whether those who fashioned the artifact and/or dedicated it to ritual purpose had subscribed to a dictum that “size matters.”

In its near perfect straightness, the LAN-63 ceremonial pestle is an imperfect reflection of many of nature’s varied bacular designs. Its carefully crafted linear symmetry had most probably been intended to facilitate its use with a mortar. A shaft design to project curvature is obviously more vulnerable should it be subjected to kinetic forces attendant with some sort of work function or simulation of such.

On the other hand, divergence from anatomical correctness may merely have followed from aesthetic sensibilities embracing symmetry and balance. An equally prosaic thought is that the shaft and distal end of the LAN-63 specimen were modeled after the more typical phallic pestles having as referent the human anatomy.

This study’s comparisons of varied bacula against the LAN-63 ritual pestle were facilitated mostly using museum quality cast reproductions of *os penis* specimens manufactured by Valley Anatomical Preparations, Inc.¹ Figures 5-9 and 11-20 are photographs of those casts. Figure 10 illustrates an actual Guadalupe fur seal baculum housed within the collections of National Marine Laboratory, Seattle.

The species considered herein break out into groupings by taxonomic family. These are: two phocids, or earless seals (Phocidae); four otariids, or eared seals (Otariidae); three mustelids (Mustelidae); one procyonid (Procyonidae); two ursids (Ursidae); and four canids (Canidae).

The Phocids (earless seals, also called hair seals)

Figures 5-7 show cast reproductions of bacula of the only two species of the family Phocidae that are encountered along the California coast—the Pacific harbor seal (*Phoca vitulina*) and the Northern elephant seal (*Mirounga angustirostris*). At their bases, or proximal ends, each baculum is absent the kind of salient rugosity characteristic of the otariids’ bacula; rather, the bases witnessed for the Pacific harbor seal and the Northern elephant seal are fairly smooth and curvaceous (compare Figures 5 and 6 with Figures 8-11). These roundish, proximal ends of the two phocid bacula should remind one of the distal ends of pestles.

On the ventral surface of the harbor seal baculum (Figure 5), there is a generally flattened area against which the urethra runs. At the distal end, or apex, of the baculum, seen somewhat better in ventral view than in dorsal view, there are two projecting, rounded nubs of bone separated by a groove (Figure 7), and somewhat beyond is a smaller, rugose projection of osseous material.

Along the ventral surface of the elephant seal *os penis* (Figure 6), there is a long, slightly grooved area where the urethra runs. The most distal end of the apex is rugose, and there are not the nubs noted for the harbor seal; in other words there is no urethral sulcus, or groove, at the head.

The comparatively great size of the elephant seal baculum dwarfs those of all other regional pinnipeds. Also, the elephant seal penis bone offers



Figure 5. Pacific harbor seal baculum (cast reproduction). Base (proximal end) at left.



Figure 6. Northern elephant seal baculum (cast reproduction). Base at left.



Figure 7. Distal third of Pacific harbor seal baculum (cast reproduction). Head at top.

the straightest shaft of any regional pinniped *os penis*. One might reasonably wonder whether imag-eries selected from the two phocids' anatomies had inspired the crafting in schist of a conventionalized baculum.

The Otariids (eared seals)

Figures 8-11 illustrate the morphologies of penis bones of the only four species of the Otariidae encountered along the California coast. These two sea lions and two fur seals are the following: the California sea lion (*Zalophus californianus*); the Steller's sea lion (*Eumetopias jubata*); the Guadalupe fur seal (*Arctocepaluss townsendi*); and the Northern fur seal (*Cal-lorhinus ursinus*).

Among the distinctions drawn by Bonner (1994:59) between sea lions and fur seals is that sea lions do not have abundant underfur. Also, Bonner (1994:59) wrote that the bases of sea lion bacula (Figures 8 and 9) are broader than those of fur seals (Figures 10 and 11).

In addition to the notable rugosity at the proximal end of the otariid anatomy that helps set these animals off from phocids with their smoother, rounder bases, the eared seals' bacula have a "well-developed head" at their distal ends (Bonner 1994:158-159) (see Figures 8-11 and compare against Figures 5-7). Seen clearly in lateral view, the bacular apices of the California sea lion (Figure 8) (see Burt 1960:Plate 1; Ridgway and Harrison 1981:Figure 4) and the Northern fur seal (Figure 11) show bulbous nubs that flare away from the shaft. In the California sea lion there is a distinct separation in the fully mature baculum (Figure 8), but it is not a urethral groove. In both fur seals the separations between the elevations are obvious (Figures 10 and 11) (see also Scheffer 1950:387, Plate 3; Miller 2002:56), yet neither are these urethral grooves. Could such separated elevations have provided some inspiration for the double nubbed device occupying the proximal end of the LAN-63 ritual pestle?

The Mustelids (sea otter, river otter and badger)

A replica cast of a California sea otter (*Enhydra lutris nereis*) baculum is shown in oblique ventral view in Figure 12. In dorsal view the apex is seen as bulbous. The ventral surface exhibits a long, thin grooving, in places barely discernable if at all, until approaching the distal third of the shaft, where it deepens, descending into the head. This descent bifurcates the bulbous head on its ventral side, but only incompletely (see also Barabash-Nikiforov 1962:46; Miller 2002:56). That is, the channel does not exit the head at its most distal extension, and so the look is not quite comparable to the shape of the crafted device at the proximal end of the LAN-63 pestle. However, this does impart superficial resemblance to the underside of the human *glans penis*.

The most obvious difference between the bacula of the local sea otter and a closely related member of the Mustelidae, the Sonoran river otter (*Lutra canadensis*) (Figures 13 and 14) involves head configuration (see also Burt 1960:Plate 3). The distal end of the *os penis* of the Colorado River animal possesses a deep urethral channel that exits the most distal end of the penis bone, with the result that there are three elevations, or nubs, all clearly apparent in both ventral view (Figure 14) and in dorsal view. The elevations might recall the *os penis* head of the Pacific harbor seal (Figure 7).

Of the various anatomical specimens illustrated in this article, that of the Western badger (*Taxidea taxus*) (Figure 15) is the least likely candidate as model for the LAN-63 artifact. It exhibits marked bilateral asymmetry at the distal third of the shaft, twisting into the shape of a hooded cobra.

A Procyonid (raccoon)

The penis bone of a Northern raccoon (*Procyon lotor*; family Procyonidae) possesses a head with a shape



Figure 8. Two California sea lion bacula (cast reproductions). Apexes at right. The more mature baculum shown at top.



Figure 9. Steller's sea lion baculum (cast reproduction). Base at left.



Figure 10. Guadalupe fur seal baculum. Apex at right. Photograph courtesy National Marine Mammal Laboratory, National Marine Fisheries Service, Seattle; Jim Thomason, photographer.



Figure 11. Northern fur seal baculum (cast reproduction). Apex at right.



Figure 12. California sea otter (also Pacific otter) baculum (cast reproduction). Apex at right.



Figure 13. River otter (also Sonora otter) baculum (cast reproduction). Apex at right.

resembling the crafted device atop the LAN-63 ritual object (Figures 16 and 17) (see also Burt 1960:Plate 2). In the dorsal view of this distal end (Figure 17), the elevations project up and out from the shaft, separated by a symmetrical urethral groove. Seen in ventral view, the look is no less distinctive. The imperfectly bulbous base of the proximal end of the raccoon *os penis* offers a less than convincing match to the percussive ends of pestles; that is, the surfaces are somewhat angular to one another. The highly curvaceous shaft makes the raccoon baculum a worst fit to pestle shafts in comparison to all bacular shafts illustrated herein.

The Regional Ursids (American black bear and Grizzly bear)

Of the regional members of the family Ursidae, neither the American Black bear (*Ursus americanus*) nor the Grizzly bear (*Ursus arctos horribilis*) possesses an *os penis* that would have recommended either as model for the LAN-63 pestle. Figure 18 shows a cast of a Black bear specimen held by the Department of Ornithology and Mammalogy at the California Academy of Sciences, San Francisco. Its head has a barely discernable urethral groove, certainly not deep enough to characterize two tiny, rounded surface features as true elevations. Nearly two-thirds of the ventral surface has a very shallow, broad groove. The Grizzly baculum (not illustrated) is little different.

The Canids (Gray wolf, Gray fox, Coyote, and Domestic dog)

The penis bones of four members of the family Canidae are pictured. A cast made from a Gray wolf (*Canis lupus*) baculum is seen in Figure 19, and in Figure 20, from top to bottom, there are bacula of a Gray fox (*Urocyon cinereoargenteus*), a Coyote (*Canis latrans*), and a Domestic dog (*Canis familiaris*). Common to all is a long, broad, and deep urethral

channel. The canids' *os penis* bones probably offered little to no inspiration for the design of the LAN-63 ceremonial object. None of the cats possesses a baculum worthy of illustration.

Discussion

The paired elevations sitting atop the LAN-63 ceremonial pestle offer a comparatively good likeness to the apex of a raccoon baculum. Less persuasive, yet not unreasonable, is the thought that this symbolic device was crafted to mimic the head of the harbor seal baculum and/or that of the Northern fur seal. The sea otter's bacular head lacks distinctive elevations, but its configuration might remind one of the human anatomy.

Those animals whose bacular bases best recall the percussive surfaces of pestles are the harbor seal and the elephant seal. When considering at the same time shaft straightness and large size, the elephant seal baculum once again emerges as possibly contributing some amount of inspiration for the design of the sculpted schist object.

One can illustrate in quick compass the conundrum regarding whether it was the *os penis* of a particular species or more than one species that had possibly served as model for the LAN-63 pestle. Recall that the raccoon penis bone possesses an apex exceeding all others in stylistic resemblance to the ritual artifact's proximal end, yet its shaft's highly curvaceous morphology is the furthest removed from the straight symmetry of the LAN-63 artifact.

It is reasonable to speculate that multiple imageries drawn from several species, possibly across taxonomic families or even orders, had inspired an artist's vision of a phallic symbol. Beyond body part, had the intended referent been simply animal as opposed to human, or had any referent actually been a particular category of animal, say, Pinnipedia?



Figure 14. Distal third of River otter baculum (cast reproduction). Apex, or head, at top.



Figure 15. Western badger baculum (cast reproduction). Apex at right.



Figure 16. Raccoon (also Northern raccoon) baculum (cast reproduction). Apex at right.

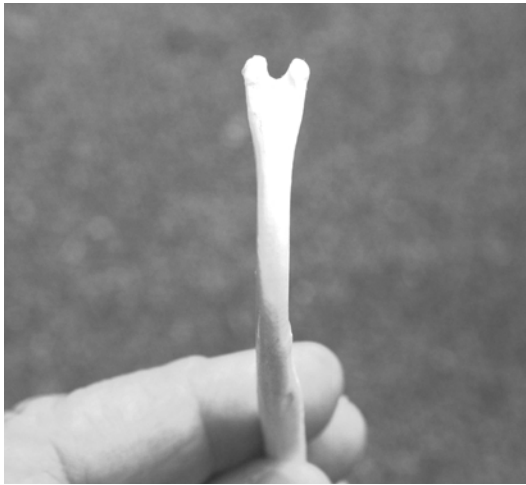


Figure 17. Dorsal view of distal end of Raccoon baculum (cast reproduction). Apex at top.



Figure 18. Black bear baculum (cast reproduction). Apex at right.



Figure 19. Gray wolf baculum (cast reproduction). Apex at right.



Figure 20. Top to bottom: Gray fox baculum; Coyote baculum; and Domestic dog baculum (all are cast reproductions). All bases to the left.

Summary and Concluding Remarks

This article proposes that a ritual pestle recovered from Feature 11, LAN-63, served to communicate phallic symbology. The primary vehicle for this communication was crafted at the artifact's proximal end, and this imagery had drawn upon the anatomy of one or more carnivore species.

The ceremonial object's last venue was a mourning ceremony at which it was intentionally fractured, dusted with ochre, and subsequently buried with other objects in a pit. Radiocarbon dating of shell taken from Feature 11 indicates that these behaviors played out around twenty-one centuries ago.

Interpretation of the LAN-63 pestle as a phallic symbol builds on additional observations, among them: (1) pestles are generally taken to project phallic imagery, a consequence partly of their actions "in congress" with mortars, thus playing to the obvious double entendre; (2) phallic pestles with palpable human referent are well documented for southern California and are generally easily identified by stylistic devices usually positioned at a pestle's proximal end; (3) phallic pestles and other phallic objects (e.g., "spikes") are sometimes found within death-related

contexts, indicating that they might carry at the same time life-force and death-force communications.

Our position is that the LAN-63 ceremonial pestle projected bacular imagery. We observed that certain surface features seen on the bacula of some regional carnivores offer resemblances to the artifact, at its proximal and/or distal ends. Sensing that such resemblances were not merely coincidental, we undertook careful comparisons between certain species' bacular apices and that distinctive device crafted upon the proximal end of the Feature 11 specimen. We further compared bacular bases against the percussive ends of pestles. Bacular shafts and their varied curvatures also received scrutiny. In this we sought also to determine whether any one species had possibly served as model for the schist pestle. No definitive resolution was possible for this question as the artifact design is too conventionalized, however, we remain firmly convinced that this ceremonial pestle was crafted to represent a penis bone. If we are correct, then this specimen is the only published phallic, animal body part effigy from southern California.

A recent *PCASQ* article (Koerper 2011) illustrated, described, and discussed five carved stone effigies, all representing animals associated with the marine environment. Two of these artifacts are whole-body repre-

sentations, and three stand for flippers. While whole-body animal specimens are well celebrated in the literature, animal body part specimens have received far less recognition, owing, we believe, to their comparative rarity but perhaps also to factors revolving on aesthetic appeal. Ironically, much of the fawning over certain “cute” or “beautiful” cetacean stone carvings is misguided, as many such objects are fantasy pieces; the subject of such fakery is included in a manuscript (Koerper and Desautels-Wiley 2011) soon to be submitted for publication. Said manuscript, recent studies (i.e., Koerper 2006c, 2011), and the present article, all seek to rectify regional archaeology’s relative inattention to animal body part effigies.

Endnote

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