

Glans Penis Effigies from the Cogged Stone Site, Orange County

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Abstract

In describing eight artifacts from the Cogged Stone site (CA-ORA-83) that mimic the human glans penis, this article expands knowledge of the range of kinds of effigies assignable to the phallic symbol category of the regional portable cosmos. This study further emphasizes that themes of fertility, fecundity, increase and the like were salient components of regional Native world-view. Five of the objects appear to be minimally reworked broken ends of elongate plummet-like charmstones, thus suggesting that these charmstones had themselves communicated sex-based symbolism. If contemporaneous with the manufacture of such charmstones, then these five specimens are of Middle Holocene age. Two other effigies are concretions of identical type whose natural configurations project phallic imagery, undoubtedly the reason they had been collected. The eighth object is perhaps a concretion, its natural look being that of an acorn but with phallic suggestion. These latter three specimens can not at present be attributed to any time period.

Introduction

Within the portable cosmos of coastal southern California, varied crafted and natural talismans/effigies are known or reasonably inferred to have carried sex-based imagery/symbology (e.g., Koerper 2001, 2006a, 2006b, 2007; Desautels et al. 2005; Koerper et al. 2006; Koerper et al. 2008). The iconography of such would have communicated fertility/fecundity and related life-force themes (e.g., see Meighan 1997:1), frequently in the service of maturity, increase, and/or death related ritual/ceremonial venues.

The most recognizable of these manifestations of magico-religious ideology in local prehistory are phallic pestles and certain other elongate objects, functional and/or ceremonial, possessing design elements that convey a glans penis and/or other priapic enhancement. While some of these style elements can be subtle, others might be just the opposite, reflecting, for instance, the regional, ethnographically documented absence of the practice of circumcision. In addition to design factors that suggest *prepuce* and/or *corona glandis*, other tell-tale craftings might include a linear incision, or less commonly a hole, to indicate a urethral orifice, or a slit/groove to indicate a *frenulum*, or certain asymmetries of the penile body to indicate curvature concomitant with engorgement.

Less familiar to students of local prehistory are certain phallic devices that mimic the glans penis with or without representation of the adjacent *prepuce*, but that more or less lack an adequate accounting for the body of the penis. The first purpose of this study is to describe eight such specimens (Figure 1), seven of worked stone, but one an unmodified concretion, all from CA-ORA-83, the Cogged Stone site (Figure 2). Discussions will include the implications of at least some ORA-83 glans penis effigies for the interpretation of plummet-shaped charmstones and temporal

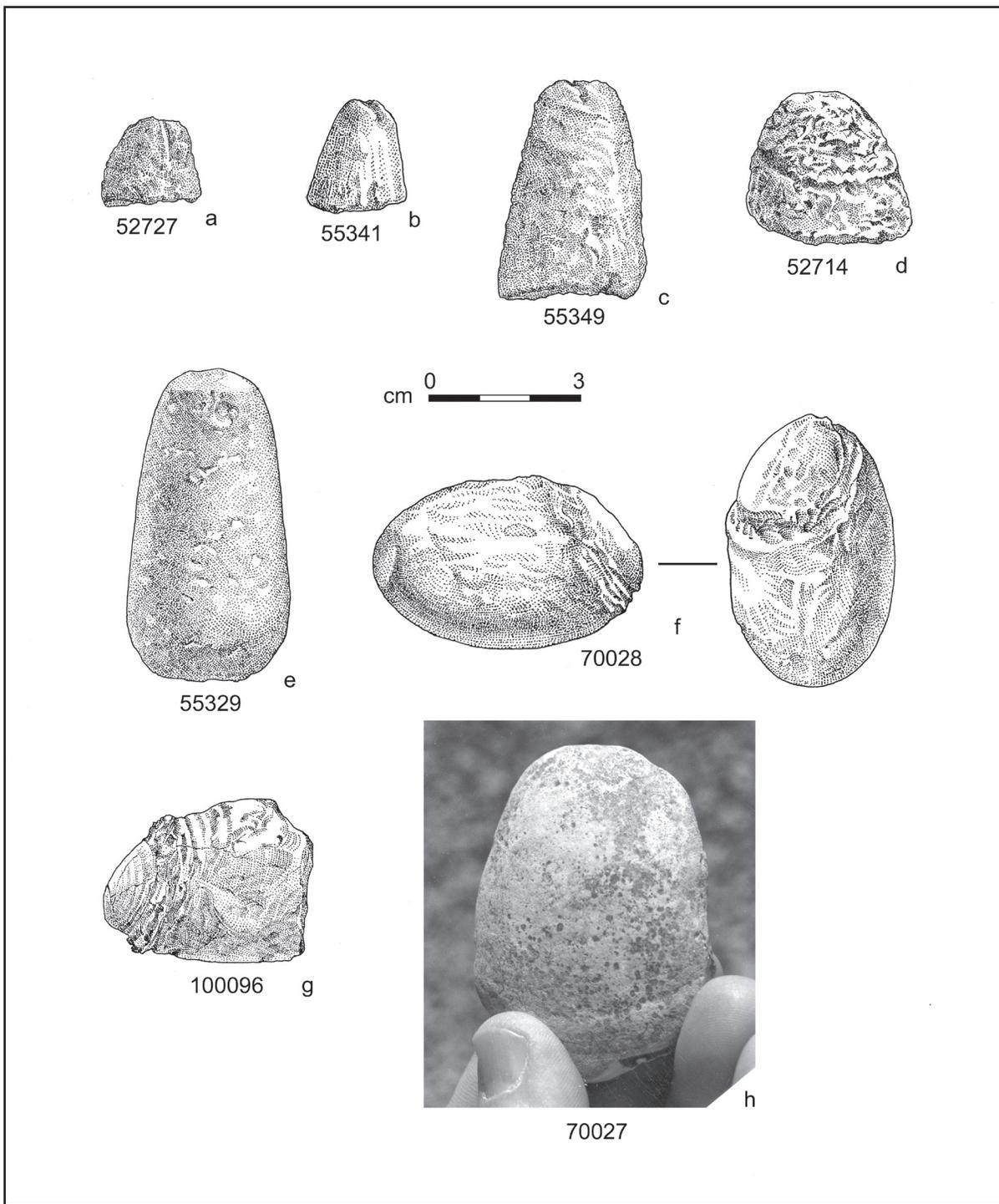


Figure 1. Glans penis effigies from CA-ORA-83. All drawings (a-g) to scale. Photographic image (h) not to scale.

placement of the eight talismans or talisman-like objects. A summary and concluding remarks section will observe that this study extends the range of shapes of artifacts whose sex-based symbology had been embedded in the durable portable cosmos of Native coastal southern California.

Descriptions

The Cogged Stone site at Bolsa Chica Mesa (Figure 2) contains Early, Middle, and Late Holocene components. The most notable events that occurred during the late Early Holocene were the manufacture of cogged stones, presumably magico-religious effigies/talismans (see e.g., Eberhart 1961; Koerper and Mason 1998; Koerper et al. 2006), and the development of a clam shell disc bead industry. It was during the Middle Holocene that some cogged stones were scavenged and ritually cached at ORA-83. The many plummet-like charmstones and lozenge stones (see

Sutton and Koerper 2009) recovered there date to the Middle Holocene, as do, we believe, eight objects (Figure 1) that are probable talismans or talisman-like objects whose morphologies recall the glans penis. Between 4,000 to 3,000 years ago the Orange County population focus was at Bolsa Chica Bay rather than at Newport Bay. By the early Late Prehistoric period there was a demographic shift; depopulation characterized the Bolsa Chica area, but population increase occurred at and near Newport Bay (Koerper et al. 2002:63).

Altogether the ORA-83 glans penis effigies do not constitute a particular type, per se, but rather they might be folded into a single genre. Five of these specimens appear to have been reconfigured from the broken ends of plummet-style charmstones. It is not possible to determine whether such breakage resulted from accident or by design (e.g., “ritual killing”). Of these five, three (Figures 1a, b, c) were each provided

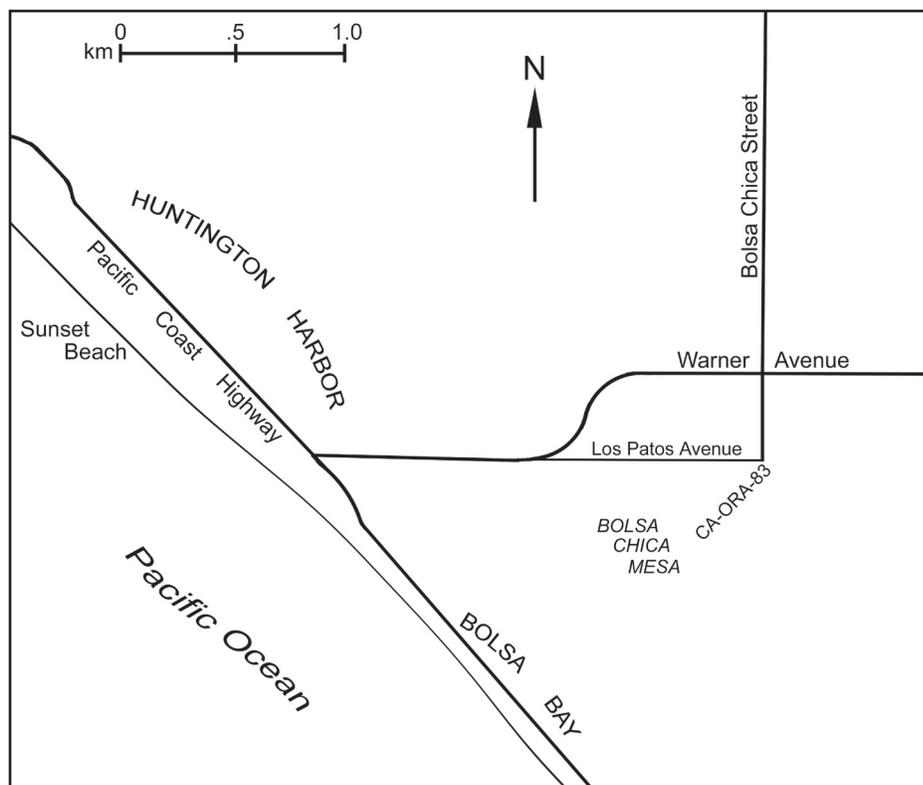


Figure 2. Location of CA-ORA-83, the Cogged Stone site.

a slit-like accouterment at a terminal end in order to stand for the urethral opening and/or *frenulum*. Another (Figure 1d), lacking such a design element, does have, however, an encircling incised line, which appears to mimic the *prepuce* and/or *corona glandis*. A fifth object (Figure 1e) has neither kind of grooved element. Another two or possibly three objects are concretions, one moderately modified by an artisan (Figure 1f), another (Figure 1g) showing no alteration, and the specimen of Figure 1h likely having had some shaping that would qualify it as an artifact rather than simply a manuport.

Five Reconfigurations from Broken Plummet-like Talismans

Three Specimens with Urethral and/or Frenulum Accouterments

The magnetite sandstone artifact (#52727) of Figure 1a was recovered from Trench 3A at the 50-60 cm level. Its height is 17.2 mm; maximum width measures 18.7 mm with maximum thickness at 16.8 mm. The cross section, then, is irregular roundish. It has the appearance of a moderately rounded, broken end of either a spindle-shaped or a cigar-shaped charmstone. There is no evidence of a perforation. It weighs 9.3 g.

The surfaces are somewhat rough and weathered-looking, at least partly the result, it seems, of less than accomplished pecking and grinding. There is no evidence of asphaltum, and no caliche adheres to the surfaces. Hardness is about 4 (Mohs scale).

The broken end is somewhat uneven, yet the specimen easily sits upright and stable on its broken part. The most salient design element is a groove at the tip running 9.3 mm in an arc from near the apex across part of the underside. Maximum depth of the groove is less than 1.0 mm. The anatomical communication is that of either a *frenulum* or a combination *frenulum*-urethral opening.

The Monterey Formation concretion specimen (#55341) of Figure 1b was discovered in the northwest quadrant of Unit Alpha 2 at the 70-80 cm level. It is 21.8 mm long. Maximum diameter is 18.6 mm, and minimum diameter is 18.2 mm. It weighs 18.2 g. Hardness is between 1 and 2 (Mohs scale). It is most probably the moderately rounded broken end of a spindle-shaped or a cigar-shaped charmstone that had been manufactured by pecking and grinding. The cross section was apparently symmetrically round.

The flat break allows the piece to easily be set upright. Around the surface that meets the broken edge, there are numerous crude incised lines, regular enough that they are most probably man-made rather than the tooth marks from gopher incisors. These rough incisions on average extend about 6.0 mm. They are very shallow, less than 0.5 mm deep. The most significant feature is the 6.5 mm groove at the tip. Maximum depth of the groove is under 0.5 mm. This design element surely represents the urethral opening, perhaps also implying a *frenulum*.

The magnetite sandstone artifact (#55349) of Figure 1c was found in the northeastern quadrant of Unit CC3 at the 60-70 cm level. Its length is 42.9 mm, and maximum width is 28.4 mm. Transverse to that, width measures 26.7 mm, and so the cross section is fairly round. Weight is 52.1 g. The tip of the artifact is moderately rounded, and a groove gently arcs over its surface. The straight line measurement of the groove is about 10.4 mm; the depth of this line is about 0.3 mm. The overall look is that of an elongated glans penis with a salient urethral opening.

Pecking and grinding account for its manufacture. The surface is not at all smooth on what is likely the broken end of a somewhat spindle-shaped charmstone. Hardness measures 5 (Mohs scale). Very small amounts of caliche are in evidence. The broken end is somewhat irregular, but there is some grinding modification encircling the circumference of the break; this

effort was perhaps to allow the talisman to be balanced in an upright position.

Specimen with a Circumferential Groove

Artifact #52714 (Figure 1d) was excavated from the 0-10 cm level at the northwest quadrant of Unit CB (Charlie Block) 19. Its material is Monterey Formation concretion (hardness 2, Mohs scale). Some caliche adheres to the surface, but there is no evidence of asphaltum. The specimen weighs 32.4 g. Maximum height is 26.5 mm. The cross section is very round, the maximum diameter being 30.9 mm with the transverse measurement being 30.1 mm.

This too is most likely the broken end of a pecked and ground charmstone, but one probably closer to cigar-shaped than the three specimens described above. The end is rounded, roughly so. The broken surface has been slightly ground at some high points, ostensibly to better allow the object to sit upright on a flat surface.

This effigy possesses neither a hole nor an end groove that would evoke either urethral or *frenulum* imagery. It does, however, exhibit a 0.5 mm incised groove encircling the artifact. This circular groove runs minimally about 15 mm from the rounded tip, and maximally about 18 mm. Clearly, this was meant to be a priapic enhancement to make the symbolic communication obvious. Such a design element recalls the *prepuce* and/or *corona glandis*.

Specimen with Incipient Drill Hole

Artifact #55329 (Figure 1e) is crafted of an igneous, plutonic stone. It wears a coat of caliche, but there is no asphaltum. The specimen weighs 83.7 g. Length is 52.2 mm, and maximum diameter is 31.8 mm. The cross section is symmetrically round.

This object is the broken end of a pecked and ground charmstone. The terminal end is low rounded, and

near it there is an incipient drill hole, about 7.5 mm below the high point on the terminal end. This placement is a typical location for perforations as judged by observations on a large sample of biconically drilled plummet-like charmstones. The side opposite the incipient perforation lacks any evidence of drilling. Perhaps the hardness of the material (6+ on the Mohs scale) discouraged the artisan from continuing to produce a hole for suspension.

The base of the specimen had been modified by pecking and grinding around its circumference, presumably to allow the piece to be balanced upright. But unlike the aforementioned phallic symbols, there is no groove serving as priapic enhancement. It would be overreaching to propose that the shallow drill hole had served as the symbolic equivalent of the urethral-like groove seen on the specimens of Figures 1a-c. Visually, then, the piece is less obviously a glans penis effigy; however, our interpretation receives strong contextual support since Artifact #55329 comes from the 0-10 cm level of Unit Romeo 3 where it was associated with Burial Feature XLIV. In coastal southern California, grave goods frequently embodied life-force symbolism; the complementarity of life imagery and death imagery has been the subject of recent discussions (e.g., Koerper 2006b:105; Koerper et al. 2008). Unfortunately, there are no radiocarbon assays for the burial.

Concretions with Glans Penis Appearances

Moderately Modified Specimen

Artifact #70028 (Figure 1f) was fashioned out of a concretion. It is uncertain how the concretion formed. According to Mary Stechison (personal communication 2009), invertebrate paleontologist with the Los Angeles County Museum of Natural History, the unmodified end of the specimen has the appearance of a cast of a limpet shell, and perhaps such a shell offered a nucleus around which the concretion began to

develop. Another possibility is that the concretion preserves the shape of what had been home to some kind of invertebrate. Object #100096 shown in Figure 1g is an identical kind of concretion.

The material is mainly sandstone with a hardness (Mohs scale) approaching 3. A thin layer of caliche clings to the surfaces of this 53.6 mm long and 31.9 mm maximum diameter object; a diameter measurement taken transversely at the same arc yields a value of 31.2 mm, not unexpected since the cross section appears nearly round. The object weighs 76.2 g.

The unmodified end of the object conveys the appearance of a glans protruding from a foreskin. The opposite end was modified by abrasive grinding to affect a smoothed egg-shaped surface which subsequently received a relatively symmetrical groove; the resultant look is that of a glans with a urethral opening. Hence, there is a Janus-like effect. This Janus motif design is not unknown for phallic imagery in coastal southern California. At CA-ORA-263, one of the Landing Hill sites, a well-crafted ceremonial pestle was found (Koerper 2006a:138; Cleland et al. 2007:104; Strauss 2007:218-219) that had at its opposite ends the following: (1) a natural hole whose location immediately evokes a urethral opening; and (2) a conventionalized representation of a *frenulum* that bisects the underside of a bulbous glans. One supposes that the raw lithic for this ORA-263 ceremonial pestle was selected because of the presence of the noted natural hole. Artifact #70028 was surface collected from ORA-83 by relic hunter Herrold Plante in the 1960s. He donated the specimen to the Bolsa Chica Archaeological Project (BCAP) in September 2002.

Unmodified Concretion

Another object (#100096) (Figure 1g) which was surface collected during archaeological monitoring (monitoring find #1923) resembles the artifact just described (Figure 1f) except that no effort had been

expended to effect shape. The protuberant end of this concretion is fully natural, thus likewise offering a mimic of a glans mostly enveloped in the foreskin. Maximum length is 41.7 mm. The maximum diameter is 31.8 mm, and the cross section is generally round. This manuport weighs 54.9 g. The hardness score is 3 (Mohs scale).

One can not be certain that specimen #100096 arrived at ORA-83 as a fragment. If it had been more complete, that is, possessing what would have appeared as a penile body, then it would not herein be identified as within the genre of what we are calling glans penis effigies.

Minimally Modified Specimen

Artifact #70027 (Figure 1h) is another ORA-83 surface discovery from the 1960s. Herrold Plante briefly showed this estimated 60 mm long specimen to BCAP archaeologists in 2002, at which time a photograph was taken. Maximum diameter is approximately three-quarters the measurement of the length; a measurement taken transversely would yield a similar value. In other words, the cross section is nearly round. We worked off a photograph for our estimates. Weight was not measured. A slight amount of caliche adheres to some of the surfaces.

There is an encircling, raised element towards one end of this generally oval shaped stone, appearing not unlike a *prepuce* and/or *corona glandis*. In this, there is a very strong suggestion that the glans-like appearance had recommended the manuport for collection in prehistory. Observations on the object were brief, and thus we are uncertain about the amount of modification to the surface of the object.

The observation that the object resembles an acorn piques our interest especially since the term “glans penis” is frequently defined as the “acorn-shaped termination of the penis” (e.g., NLWD 1989:405). We will return to this subject later in our essay.

Discussions

Introduction

As early as the 1870s, Sha Rocco (1874:62) hypothesized that sex-based imagery had attached to certain stone artifacts in California Indian culture, reasonably surmising that pestles and mortars had stood as phallic symbols and vulvar symbols, respectively. Published ethnographic data definitively supporting such interpretations were then unavailable, one reason, we suppose, why Charles Abbott (1879a:92) dismissed Rocco's "deductions" as "simply ridiculous," adding that "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." By the early twentieth century, Abbott's commentary would surely have been received as quaint, naive, ethnocentric, and familiarly Victorian.

Abbott was unprepared to accept such imagery/symbology as code for matters divorced of prurience, that is, matters involving the ideology of fertility/fecundity, increase, and nature's bounty. Such sex-based communications presently are associated not just with mortars and pestles but also with a broad range of other stone, ceramic, and shell talismans or talisman-like objects including spikes and other phallic-like "ceremonial pestles"; certain elongate and circular waterworn pebbles; cowrie shells; birdstones/pelican stones/hook stones; plummet-like charmstones; all manner of cup/bowl receptacles; arrowshaft straighteners and their mimics; donut stones and certain other round perforated objects; canoe charms/effigies; oversized projectile-like bifaces; and the crescent-shaped and U-shaped *atulkus* (e.g., Heye 1921:Plate 10; Bryan 1970:80; Butler 1974; Lee 1981; Hudson and Blackburn 1983:122, 126-127, 1986; Brown et al. 1986; Koerper and Labbé 1987, 1989; Koerper 2001, 2006a, 2006b, 2006c, 2007; Desautels et al. 2005; Sawyer and Koerper 2006; Strauss 2007; Koerper et al. 2008; Rick et al. 2008).

On Symbolic Interpretations

We suggest that each of the objects shown in Figures 1a-e had once served as a terminal end for some plummet-like charmstone whose shape had fallen somewhere around the range of spindle-like to cigar-like. That broken-off end pieces were selected to rework into glans penis effigies implies that elongate plummet-like charmstones had quite possibly communicated imagery whose referent was the male regenerative organ. Further recommending this hypothesis is recognition that among the greater inventory of elongated stone objects, most crafted, fewer unmodified or minimally worked, many kinds can reasonably be argued via graphic likeness, archaeological cache association, and/or burial association, to have harbored sex-based communications. The corollaries of such imagery/symbology, we believe, had likely projected fertility, fecundity, increase, and other life-force themes (e.g., see Meighan 1997:1).

With regard to "graphic likeness," many charmstones found in parts of the Central Valley and Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta regions had been crafted to unambiguously broadcast life-force content. Indeed, Ragir (1972:176-177, Figure 18 [E1, E2, E3]) identified, illustrated, and provided taxonomic labels for three distinct types—"Simple Phallic," "Spinner Phallic," and "Round Phallic." Elsasser and Rhode (1996:37-40, 69-75) gave type designation for charmstones reflecting "accurate representation of the human penis." This is their "Type PH: Phallic" category, which includes objects falling to Ragir's E1 and E2 types but not to her E3 type (Elsasser and Rhode 1996:69-75).

With regard to cache associations involving plummet-like charmstones, a local example comes immediately to mind. At CA-ORA-64, Newport Bay area, there were discovered two unusual cache features, each containing a pair of extremely large ceremonial bifaces (Macko et al. 2005; see also Koerper 2006b: Figures 15,16). The two ORA-64 pairings of large

ritual blades hints at a dualistic theme, to wit, a male-female referent (see Koerper 2006b:106-107). One of these caches also contained a Symmetric Spindle, or Type S (Elsasser and Rhode 1996:93-95), charmstone. This same cache had a globular perforated stone; such “Newport perforated stones” are implicated along with other kinds of roundish, holed objects (e.g., donut stones) in sex-based imagery likely relating to fertility, increase, and similar themes (see Koerper 2006b).

In coastal Santa Barbara County, David Banks Rogers (1929:213-224) discovered a concentration of carved stone sacred artifacts that is especially notable for the occurrence of two large glans penis effigies, or “snake heads” (Figures 3a, b) (Rogers 1929:388; see Lee 1981:82, Figure 32; Elsasser and Rhode 1996:75,D)

among numerous plummet-like charmstones. Rogers’ 1925 discovery of this remarkable grouping of objects was made at Las Llagas No. 1 (CA-SBA-81), a village site located 27 km west of Santa Barbara in territory occupied historically by the Barbareño Chumash.

Within the artifact concentration, which Rogers referred to as “a sacred compound,” or a medicine man’s shrine, there were two “sunburst” arrangements, each consisting of ten charmstones, characterized as “cigar-shaped ceremonial objects of exact form and exquisite finish” (1929:220). The twenty “plummet” radiated from around a central, circular stone that was encircled by a band of asphaltum. The circular stone rested in a small cup-shaped boulder (Rogers 1929:388, 418). Within the larger “shrine,” or “sacred

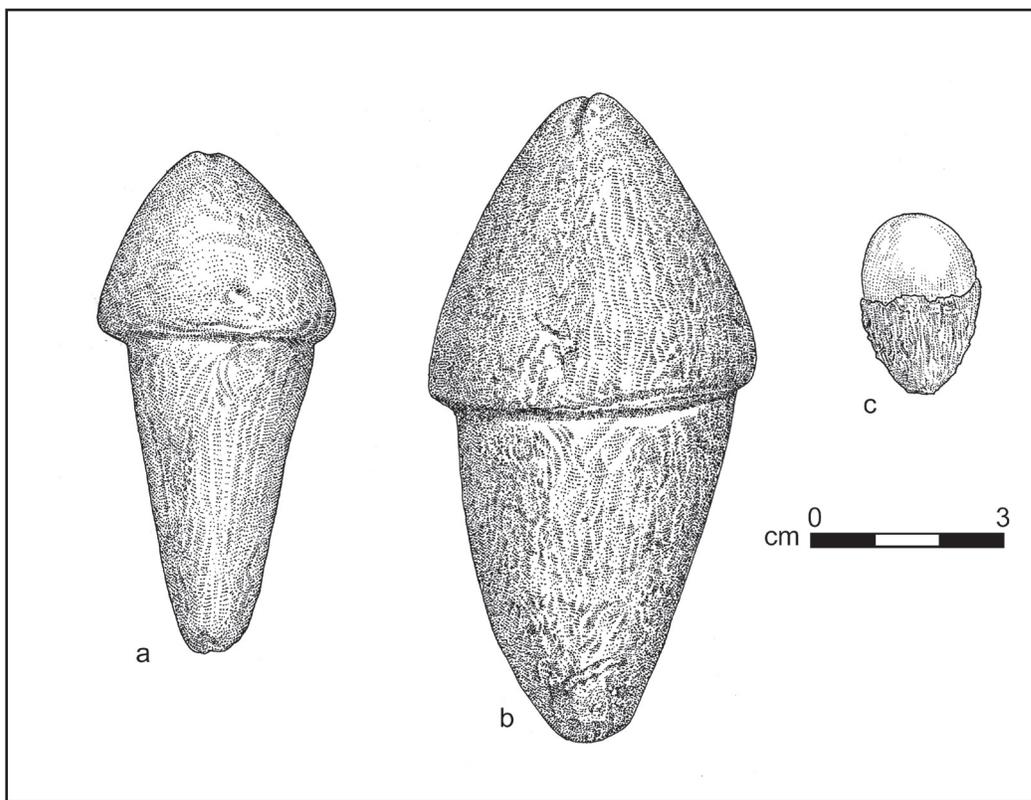


Figure 3. Probable glans penis representations. (a, b) carved shale effigies associated with Burial 4 at Barbareño Chumash site Las Llagas No. 1. Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History specimens 1858 and 1857, respectively. After Hudson and Blackburn (1986: Figure 318, 9-4); (c) quartz pebble inserted into a modified fish vertebra. Late Period Chumash. After Abbott (1879b: Figure 93).

compound” that sat among several hundred burials, there were other plummet-like charmstones, but they were in disarrangement due to disturbance from the subsequent digging of graves. Also recorded from the sacred compound were a “gambling top,” or game die (Rogers 1929:388, 318-419); four crudely carved whale effigies (Rogers 1929:388, 40, Plate 74; see also Lee 1981:81, 105, Figure 25; Hudson and Blackburn 1986:178, 197, Figures 318.9-26, 9-27, and 9-28); smoking pipes; and the two “strange, so-called ‘snake heads’” in which Rogers detected a “phallic suggestion” (1929:388; see also Lee 1981:82, Figure 32; Hudson and Blackburn 1986:176, Figure 318.9-4; El-sasser and Rhode 1996:74, 75D). Who would miss the “phallic suggestion,” as each “snake head” is topped with a urethral-like slit to unambiguously project glans penis iconography (Figures 3a, b). The Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History curates both of these shale specimens (SBMNH 1857, SBMNH 1858). Lee (1981:82) noted that the two were associated with Burial 4 at Las Llagas No. 1.

Rogers (1929:221) believed that the site dated mainly to a four hundred year period that ended not later than A.D. 1550 and contained the remains of the relatively “peaceful, pleasure-loving Canaliño.” The evidence suggests an earlier occupation. For instance, there was not a trace of steatite at the site, and the weapons were all “large, heavy, crude and business-like” (Rogers 1929:220). King (1981:Figure 33) placed these “snake heads” in his Phase M2a of the Middle period. Erlandson and Rick (2002:173-174) report Late Holocene radiocarbon dates (800-400 B.C.) for use of the cemetery.

More generally, and moving for the moment beyond those objects classified as plummet-like charmstones, there is a diverse array of other sorts of elongates, from shaped to minimally shaped to unshaped that almost certainly served as phallic symbols in coastal southern California. We offer here some examples that support our belief that phallic iconography had a

significant presence in middle through late Holocene magico-religious thought and behavior.

Consider the ceremonial cache reported from CA-ORA-365, the Borchard site in Huntington Beach (Desautels et al. 2005). This remarkable artifact grouping contained no plummet-like charmstone but rather a so-called “birdstone;” an obsidian biface; the bulbous knob of a “spike;” and six elongates, one with “graphic likeness” so dramatic as to leave no doubt regarding imagery. Another of the elongates shows a more subtle grooved design element that conveys phallic meaning. Of the remaining four that lack any priapic enhancement, two had received so little pecking and grinding as to give each the appearance of being a natural waterworn stone. Birdstones seem to have carried sex-based symbolism (Koerper and Labbé 1987, 1989) and likewise the so-called spikes (see Rozaire 1958:13; Lee 1981:50). It is uncertain whether ceremonial bifaces had also carried sex-based symbology (see Koerper 2006b:107). The points of evidence offered in the Borchard site cache help underscore the notion that a diverse array of shaped to minimally shaped elongates had projected phallic imagery in coastal southern California. The evidence of other regional caches that bolster this view include a small grouping of artifacts from CA-ORA-104, the Corona del Mar site (Winterbourne 1967:21), two groupings from a Pacific Palisades site (Wallace 1987), spikes and birdstones concentrated together at a Redondo Beach settlement (Van Valkenburgh 1931), and a late Intermediate period grouping of three elongates (two glaucophane schist and one siltstone) set vertically at CA-ORA-261 (Hellman Ranch) (Strauss 2007:221-223).

An important consideration is that plummet-like charmstones associated with burials are a fit to the proposition that these artifacts had served as life-force symbols. Indeed, in coastal southern California there are many kinds of life-force symbols whose final dispositions were in graves. Consider the following thoughts:

As symbolic expressions of regeneration, [certain] talismans in funerary ritual cast death as generator of life (see Geertz 1973; Bloch and Perry 1982; Donovan 1985; Salomon 1991; Arriaza 1995). Juxtapositions of death symbols and life symbols sustain allusions of the awesomeness of supernatural presence, thereby reinforcing belief in eternal life and mitigating the angst occasioned by mortality (see Geertz 1973:110).

Further, the apposition of life imagery and death imagery in mortuary ceremony reflects a contrastive association, specifically through opposition rather than inversion. This circumstance abets ease, economy, and clarity at symbolic communications, a desideratum for any venue so emotional as this kind of life-crisis rite. As David Whitley (2000:73) succinctly explains, oppositions embrace diametrically opposed elements to foster organization and reduce ambiguity when dealing with a difficult world whose realities break into varied shades of gray. Oppositions allow people to circumnavigate the grays and to instead perceive some aspects of existence in user-friendly simplistic terms of black and white [Koerper 2006b:105].

Olson (1930:14, Table 4, 15, Table 5), among others, has noted charmstone burial associations in coastal southern California not just on the mainland but also on the Channel Islands. Burial associations for the area with the greatest numbers of charmstones and the greatest morphological variety, that is, central California west of the Sierra foothills and through the Delta and beyond, are well documented (e.g., Lillard et al. 1939; Davis 1959:27; Gerow 1968:43; Ragir 1972; Heizer 1974:186; Elsasser and Rhode 1996:3).

The Cogged Stone site itself offers the observation of two plummet-like charmstones associated with burial remains. The burial from Unit X-ray 14(SE) had two

Type O (oval/egg-shaped) charmstones (see Elsasser and Rhode 1996:65-67); the Type O, however, is ambiguous with regard to imagery/symbology.

Chronological Issues

A recent article (Rick et al. 2008) focused attention on time depth for southern California phallic imagery in stone. Rick and his colleagues illustrated and discussed a 47 mm long, carved, fine-grained sandstone artifact from a Santa Rosa Island site (CA-SRI-667) that is dated to between 4800 and 4200 years ago. This Middle Holocene object is particularly relevant to our discussions since it is a glans penis representation. Rick, Erlandson, and Wolff described the object in detail:

The distal portion of the artifact strongly resembles a glans penis, with an ovoid or bulbous head and a distinct carved slit at the end that depicts a urethral opening... On the underside of this bulbous end, two diagonal grooves were carefully carved to mimic the appearance of a glans penis. This exaggerated bulbous end tapers to a distinct, parallel-sided stem or base that looks like the shaft of a phallus [Rick et al. 2008:50].

Rick et al. (2008:50) further noted that the grooves “slant away from the urethral slit, adding a three-dimensional quality.” Clearly, the *frenulum* is being represented. Since the artifact is “complete or nearly so” (Rick et al. 2008:49) and the shaft is undersized in both length and thickness, one must conclude that at least visually the major referent was the glans and not the entire anatomy. However, one reasonably wonders whether the part depicted had stood for the whole.

Does ORA-83 provide chronological information that would further support the idea that phallic imagery was a component in the ideology of coastal Milling Stone peoples before the onset of the Late Holocene?

Unfortunately, there are no radiocarbon data that could be used to directly and firmly link any of the specimens under discussion to a Middle Holocene context. The vast majority of ORA-83 ¹⁴C assays relate to events prior to the Late Holocene, and very few artifacts found at the Cogged Stone site are attributable to the Late Holocene.

One argument for Middle Holocene placement for five of the effigies (Figures 1a-e) is their probable derivation from plummet-like charmstones, most or all of which were probably manufactured before the Late Holocene. There are a number of charmstones from CA-ORA-64, a site abandoned by around 4300 B.P. The very few plummet-like charmstones that were used in the Late Prehistoric were most likely scavenged from early site components. Our view assumes that the five glans penis effigies represent the broken ends of charmstones and served cultural purposes at times broadly contemporaneous with the manufacture and first employments of charmstones.

One of the five, specimen #55329 (Figure 1e), was perhaps associated with Burial XLIV. Unfortunately, this interment has not been dated. The poor condition of this burial does suggest appreciable time depth. Three of the five (# 52727, #55341, and #55349) were recovered at significant depths, likely indicating pre-Late Holocene age. The three remaining effigies (Figures 1f-h) were collected off site surface, and thus the periods of cultural usages of specimens #70027, #70028, and #100096 are uncertain.

Additional Food for Thought: Acorn Imagery

We return to the specimen shown in Figure 1h (Cat. #70027), whose general shape easily evokes the acorn. Without the encircling, raised area, the acorn look would not be so readily perceived. As a mere manuport, had this concretion been imagined by its finder as having an acorn-like appearance? Would imagery suggesting the oak seed have played to a double

entendre involving the male anatomy? Hint—a standard dictionary definition of the glans penis is simply “the acorn-shaped termination of the penis” (NLWD 1989:405). Also, “glans” is Latin, and the word literally means “acorn.”

There is a strong suggestion that acorn imagery had figured into the creative inventory of some regional, late Prehistoric artisans. Abbott (1879b:214) reported that in Chumash territory small pebbles had been incorporated with bony elements to manufacture small effigy/talisman objects whose referent, he believed, was the acorn. Abbott (1879b:214, Figure 93) illustrated such a specimen (see Figure 3c) noting that it “throws some light on the use of the smaller pebbles.” (It was probably discovered during Yarrow’s 1879 excavations at Dos Pueblos). It is “an admirable imitation of an acorn, and consists of a small pinkish pebble of quartz carefully inserted into a portion of the vertebrae[sic] of a fish, which has been rubbed or cut down in size until it resembles an acorn-cup in shape.” Other evidence found with the “acorn” indicates additional artifacts with this intended imagery, specifically, several pebbles and five worked fish vertebrae of different sizes. “With one exception, [these vertebrae] have been much cut or ground down to their present cup-shaped condition” (Abbott 1879b:214). Again, it is reasonable to consider both whether the primary referent had actually been the glans penis rather than the acorn or whether a double entendre had been in place.

One final note of interest—there were found in Luiseño territory pieces of bulbous clay figurines which True, Meighan and Crew believed had been formed over acorns (1974:66-67). The three scholars offered that these were possibly ritual artifacts with a fertility theme.

Summary and Concluding Remarks

In the portable cosmos of coastal southern California, objects most obviously communicating fertility,

fecundity, and/or increase would probably have been artifacts whose morphologies projected phallic imagery/symbology. Among the varied kinds of phallic symbols, a small percentage were glans penis effigies. The Cogged Stone site (ORA-83) at Bolsa Chica Mesa in Huntington Beach has yielded the largest number of glans mimics documented for any Indian midden in southern California. The first purpose of this study has been to describe each, thereby expanding our understanding of the stylistic range of phallic stones in local prehistory and further emphasizing the ideational role of regeneration in Native world-view.

That five of the ORA-83 effigies (Figures 1a, b, c, d, and e) had likely been the broken ends of charmstones, subsequently modified, has important implications for interpreting the symbolism of the plummet-like talismans. That is, such observations further support the hypothesis that such charmstones had borne sex-based content.

The five abovementioned artifacts, the totality of their surfaces crafted by artisans, stand in contrast to the remaining three glans penis effigies whose shapes were significantly the outcomes of natural agencies. Two of these (Figures 1f, g) are fossil concretions of the same kind, their proximal ends reasonably close matches to the human anatomy. As previously explained, specimen #70028 had been modified at one end (Figure 1f), but specimen #100096 (Figure 1g) remained unmodified—a manuport but not technically an artifact. No doubt, both had been collected for their resemblance to the human glans penis.

The largest ORA-83 glans penis effigy (Figure 1h), a possible concretion with some small amount of modification, resembles an acorn. Was the object collected because its appearance suggested an acorn, a glans penis, or both at the same time? At some point it was almost certainly a sex-based symbol. The food for thought here turns partly on a linguistic observation, to wit, in Latin *glans* means “acorn.” Further, remember that some dictionaries define glans penis as

“the acorn-shaped termination of the penis” (NLWD 1989:405). Consideration of this information prompted reassessment of a Chumash artifact (Figure 3c) described by Abbott (1879b:214, Figure 93), which the 19th century scholar believed represented an acorn. We suggest that this natural pebble joined to a crafted fish vertebra had projected sex-based symbology. Abbott’s priggish response (1879a:92) to Sha Rocca’s (1874:62) symbolic take on pestle (“phallus”) and mortar (“vulva”) leaves us to wonder whether a familiarity with the etymology of “glans penis” would have cautioned Abbott to consider an obvious alternate interpretation.

Given mankind’s profound capacity for symboling, it is disappointing that cognitive archaeology is generally underappreciated and underutilized in studies of prehistoric life-way reconstruction. In recent years, one of us (HCK) has been engaged in a concerted effort to demonstrate that some archaeologies of the mind are doable and worth doing, at least for coastal southern California (see e.g., Koerper 2000, 2001, 2006a, 2006b, 2007; Koerper et al. 2006; Koerper et al. 2008). In this, middle ground was sought between processualism and what might be called moderate post-processualism. Two major sources of inspiration here have been the scholarship of Kent Flannery (1972), who pushed an “ecosystem approach” “to embrace all of the cultural mechanisms of information processing, and the work of Robert Hall (1977) who sought to supplement and qualify the geocentric perspective of traditional cultural ecology with an anthropocentric perspective emphasizing “symbolic systems and modes of adaptation to the world as perceived by humans” (1977:499).

We hope that this article with its focus on sex-based symbology and the associative mind has offered a productive continuation of directions explored in the several regional studies just listed. We further hope that our essay will help precipitate a well-attended dialectic on the possibilities and limits of cognitive archaeology applied to past life-way study in coastal southern California.

Acknowledgments

We very much appreciate the efforts and cooperation of several people. We acknowledge the late Herrold Plante for his donation of specimens. Andrew Garrison and Destiny Colocho provided lithic material identifications. Joe Cramer produced all of the figures, and Karen Koerper typed the several drafts of our study. We are grateful for the comments of Dr. Torben Rick, Dr. Paul Chace, and the anonymous reviewers.

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