

The Southern California Universe Effigy

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Abstract

Notwithstanding the remarkable visual appeal of the centrally holed, disc-shaped Universe Effigy, this ceremonial stone artifact is one of the least studied artifact types within the southern California portable cosmos. This inattention reflects an absence both of ethnographic references to the genre and of documentation of discoveries from scientific excavations. Here, an inventory includes descriptions, illustrations, and histories of all known specimens. The major discussion point revisits the proposition (see Chace 1972; Irwin 1978) that the basic symbology of the type might be understood through acquaintance with ground paintings produced for regional maturity rites. It is concluded that the large discs most probably represent the regional Late Prehistoric conception of the universe.

Introduction

At the southwestern corner of Takic territory (Figure 1), there is one genre within the Late Prehistoric portable cosmos, above all others, whose morphology and design elements immediately suggest a rich complexity of symbolic communications. For reasons to be made clear below, this genre will be referred to as the Universe Effigy (Figures 2-7), a taxon whose label implies wide ranging iconographic imagery.

The Universe Effigy is arguably the most aesthetically spectacular of all California magico-religious artifacts, yet, remarkably, there has been a paucity of scholarly attention paid to the type. This is partly explained by the fact that never once has a specimen been recognized from a scientifically controlled excavation. Also, the ethnographic and ethnohistoric records never specifically identify a Universe Effigy. Another factor is the artifact's sullied reputation, fed by undeserved

suspicious of fakery and/or fraud regarding especially the most celebrated examples, three effigies purchased by the Heye Foundation in 1941, all illustrated in Burnett (1944:Plate 37). This essay will clarify the heretofore incompletely understood circumstances surrounding these three objects now with the National Museum of the American Indian (NMAI) in order to dispel the idea that any one of the three, or any example of a purportedly authentic Universe Effigy, is anything but genuine.

The initial purpose of this study is to gather together observations upon the physical attributes of all known examples of the Universe Effigy. Historic documentation is provided for the discoveries and includes locational information. The finds with known proveniences are all from within the southern Gabrielino, Juaneño, and Mountain Cahuilla tribal areas (Figure 1).

Our study revisits a decades-old interpretive framework bearing on function and meaning that was first proposed by one of us (PGC) (Chace 1972; see also Irwin 1978). The article ends with a Summary and Concluding Remarks section.

The Type

Those rare artifacts subsumed under the Universe Effigy type are consistent in basic design, showing little variability (Figures 2-7). All were carefully fashioned on a template of general circularity. For purposes of description, each artifact may be said to have three

concentric components, the smallest of which is an opening positioned at the center of a large, flattish disc.

The second and third concentric components are distinguished from one another on each face of the stone disc by a circular incised line, an arc that runs somewhat equidistant from the circumference of the outer component. The two ends of the arc terminate just short of a design element composed of short straight to curvilinear incisions that adorn each side of a constriction at the disc's upper end. This constriction breaks the circumference of the central opening. It extends through the middle and outer components ringing the artifact to break to the outer circumference of the artifact. That is, it interrupts all three components. With one exception, the designs atop the faces of the constriction are close in artistic execution, the difference being the patterned count of incised lines.

Burnett (1944:42), who speculated that these artifacts might be ceremonial hand-axes, referred to the constricted area as a hand grip whose look perhaps depicted a butterfly or a crab. Neither the insect nor the crustacean was ever noted as significant in Native cosmogony or any other realm of regional world view. Since the arrangement of incised lines follows the contours of the constriction, Burnett (1944:42) also offered that the look of a butterfly or crab might be purely incidental. That is, the decoration was possibly without referent to anything other than a geometric abstraction.

The opposing sets of somewhat parallel to concentric grooves that make up the "butterfly-like" design are characteristic of nearly all discs whose conditions allow clear assessment of the constricted area (Figures 2, 3a, 4, and 7). Only one disc

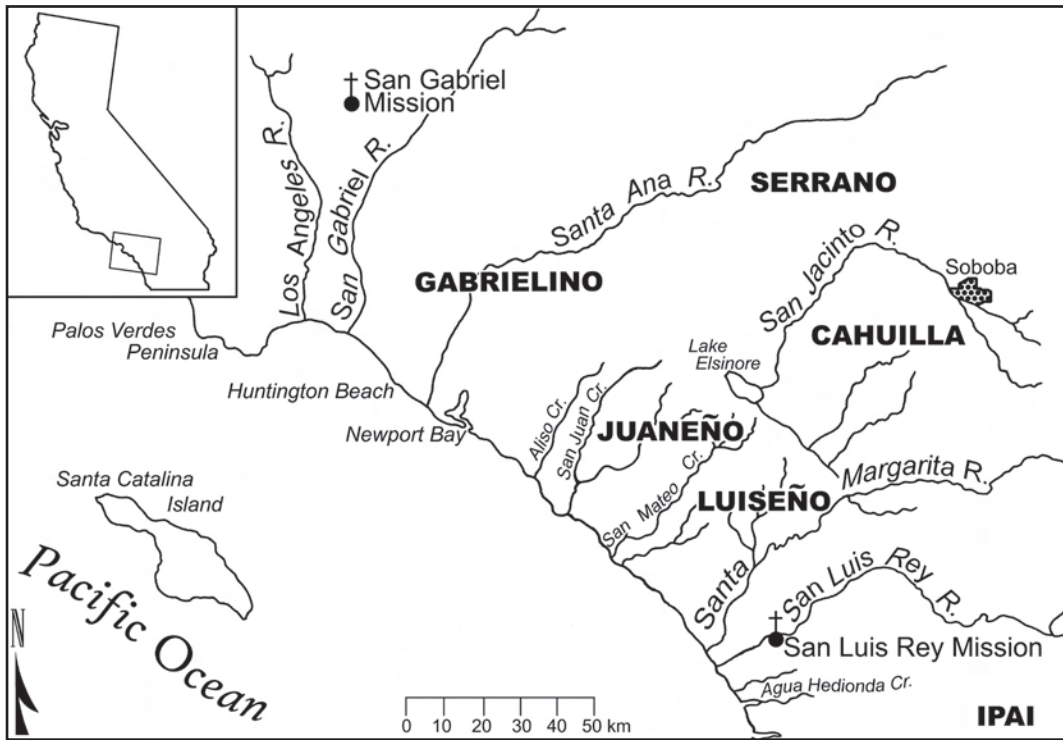


Figure 1. Location Map. Universe Effigies have been found at three known locations – one from the Huntington Beach-Fountain Valley area, about 12 in a cache at San Mateo Canyon on the lower San Mateo Creek drainage, and one from the Soboba Indian Reservation.

effigy has notably different groove patterns at the constriction (Figure 3b).

The various discs are moderately lenticular in cross-section. Almost all specimens are fashioned of chlorite schist. A single specimen is crafted of siltstone. Because beds of chlorite schist can be made to break out into sheets, it is an excellent choice of lithic material for an object with large surface areas but with a thin cross section. The softness of the stone allows quick shaping, near effortless incising, and smooth finishing of surfaces to the degree of effecting a polish.

The Inventory

The Cole Ranch Discovery

The first Universe Effigy to come to modern attention (Figure 2a) was found at ground surface by a plowman working on the Cole Ranch at Wintersburg, Orange County (Table 1). Wintersburg was located in the Huntington Beach-Fountain Valley area (Figure 1). In 1964, Jesse Hoffman Cole, the widow of ranch owner Homer L. Cole, recalled to one of us (PGC) that her husband, sometime between 1905 and 1910, brought home the chlorite schist artifact. The specimen was loaned to the Bowers Museum in 1937 and given Cat. No. 2878. It was logged in as a possible discus. Also recovered was a note that the disc was discovered “over 35 years ago,” making the discovery around 1902 or earlier, not between 1905-1910.

Of special interest is the circumstance, as remembered by Mrs. Cole, that the object was the only Indian artifact ever found on the property. As will be discussed later, there are other examples of large, sacred objects being secreted underground and outside the boundaries of habitation sites.

The Cole specimen (Bowers Cat. No. 2878) is about 24 cm in diameter. Its central hole is approximately 95 mm in diameter. Maximum thickness runs to about 9.5

mm. The incised design at the constriction is typical. With the positioning of the artifact in Figure 2a as a reference (the “upright” orientation), a vertical incised line is seen bisecting the motif into right and left sides. Transverse to that line is a linear demarcation between the topside and bottomside grooves, and that transverse element is plain (smooth), except where the just-noted vertical incised line courses deeply through it. The “butterfly” is thus conveniently quartered, thereby allowing a numerical characterization of the pattern of incised lines for each quadrant. The Cole Ranch specimen for the side shown has the following pattern:

6	7
6	7

The opposite side is slightly different:

6	6
6	6

Presently, the Cole Ranch effigy is on display at the Bowers Museum of Cultural Art in Santa Ana.

San Mateo Canyon Finds: Discovery and Dispersal

In 1940, a cache of about 12 Universe Effigy artifacts stacked vertically one upon the other was discovered at the lower San Mateo Creek drainage in San Mateo Canyon, San Diego County, near the border with Orange County (Table 1). Betty Forster, wife of Marco “Tom” Forster, recollected the spot at about one third the distance between the ocean and Los Cristianitos Canyon and on a sloping hillside (PGC interview notes with Betty Forster; Sept. 21, 1964). In an earlier telephone interview (Sept. 8, 1964) with PGC, Betty Forster stated that the cache was in loose soil in a flat, wide part of the canyon. An Indian village site exists 650 meters away. Once known as Campsite 110, it is now known as CA-SDI-4283 (see Young 1976).

The artifacts were unearthed during trenching for water lines by a digger operator on farmland worked and possibly owned by a truck farmer named Frank Wada. The digging machine cut into the artifact grouping, damaging many. The depth was estimated at five to six feet (Wada’s estimate in an undated interview with Jack Maddock). A Herman Strandt note had the depth at two to three feet. The equipment operator contacted Tom Forster shortly after the discovery. Whether Forster saw the objects after they had been dug out or whether he had assisted in digging them out is unclear.

Forster years later reported to Jack Maddock that there were 12 discs.

Four of the specimens were complete (Figures 3 and 4) and one nearly complete (Figure 2b), while the rest were in numerous pieces. Tom Forster somehow ended up with some of the better remains as did Wada. Forster also received a number of fragments. Herman Strandt, some time thereafter, secured one complete specimen (Figure 3a) from Forster and two other complete specimens (Figure 4), probably came from

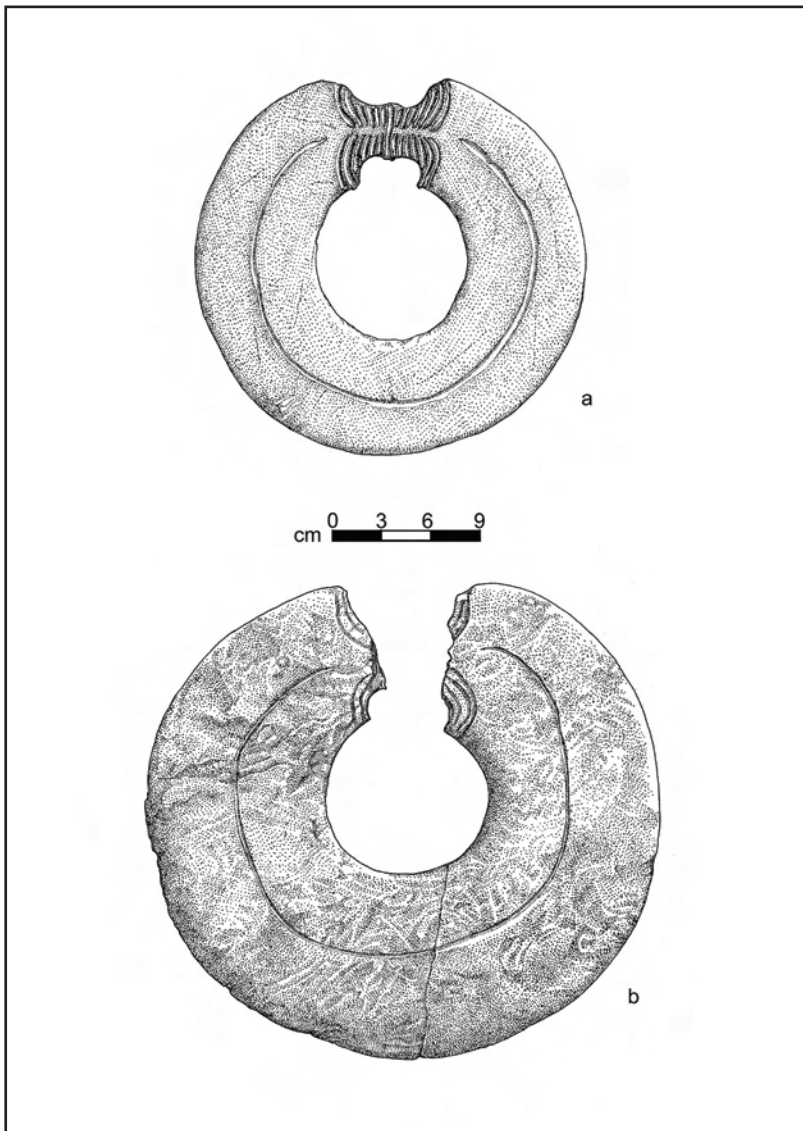


Figure 2. Universe Effigies: (a) Cole Ranch, Huntington Beach-Fountain Valley area. After photograph courtesy Bowers Museum of Cultural Art, Santa Ana; (b) San Mateo Canyon, northern San Diego County. O’Neill Museum collection, San Juan Capistrano.

Table 1. Inventory of Universe Effigies.

Figure No.	Provenience	Present Disposition	Collection Name	Date Discovered
2a	Cole Ranch, Huntington Beach, Orange County	Bowers Museum of Cultural Art, Santa Ana		First decade of 20th century
2b	San Mateo Canyon, NW San Diego County	O'Neill Museum, San Juan Capistrano	Marco Forster Collection	1940
3a	San Mateo Canyon, NW San Diego County	National Museum of the American Indian		1940
3b	San Mateo Canyon, NW San Diego County	O'Neill Museum, San Juan Capistrano	Marco Forster Collection	1940
4a, 4b, 5a	San Mateo Canyon, NW San Diego County	National Museum of the American Indian		1940
5b, d, 6a-6e	San Mateo Canyon, NW San Diego County	Bowers Museum of Cultural Art, Santa Ana	LaLonde Collection	1940
7a	Soboba area, Riverside County	privately owned		1968
7b	unknown	unknown		unknown

Wada. Strandt managed also to get a large fragment (Figure 5a). Forster held on to a complete specimen (Figure 3b) and the one that was nearly complete (but in two large sections) (Figure 2b). At least some of the fragments representing probably seven (less likely eight) effigies ended up with Forster. Some pieces may have been kept by the digging machine operator and/or Frank Wada. See Figures 5b, 5c, 5d, and 6.

Of the five best effigies, two from the Forster collection (Figures 2b and 3b) now reside with the O'Neill Museum in San Juan Capistrano. Strandt in 1941 sold three complete artifacts to the Museum of the American Indian, Heye Foundation, New York. These three (Figures 3a and 4) and a large fragment (Figure 5a) that also came via Strandt are now with the NMAI. Many of the fragments (Figures 5b, 5c, 5d, and 6) noted above reside with the LaLonde collection curated at the Bowers Museum of Cultural Art.

The O'Neill Museum Effigies (Marco Forster Collection)

Specimen C11-015 is illustrated in Figure 3b. It is made of chlorite schist. The design motifs at the upper

end of the artifact offer atypical configurations, each side having chevron-like decorations. This is not the butterfly-like design seen on other Universe Effigies. There is no evidence of ochre in the grooves. Maximum diameter is 31.5 cm, and maximum height measures 26.7 cm. Maximum thickness is about 19 mm. Maximum diameter for the central opening is 75.8 mm.

Specimen C11-016 (Figure 2b), also of chlorite schist, is missing much of the constricted area, the butterfly look only hinted at on each of the two opposite faces. It has been broken into two large pieces that are now glued together. There is no colorant apparent in the grooves. Its maximum diameter is 31.2 cm with the height estimated at about 29.3 cm. Maximum thickness is 12.5 mm. The maximum diameter of the central opening is 99.5 mm.

Both O'Neill Museum Universe Effigies are on loan from the Forster family (Tony Forster, personal communication 2007). They are part of the Marco Forster Collection of Indian artifacts, some local and some not, housed in two display cases at the O'Neill Museum in San Juan Capistrano.

The Heye Foundation Effigies

Herman Strandt sold three complete San Mateo Canyon Universe Effigies to the Museum of the American Indian, Heye Foundation. They are all presently in the collections of the NMAI. The senior author obtained a ledger page in Strandt's hand which indicates that George Heye purchased all three for \$550 in 1941 (see Koerper 2009:102, Figure 5).

Here, they are illustrated in Figures 3a, 4a, and 4b. In Burnett (1944), all appear in Plate 37. The three together share a single catalog number, 20/3797. In the photograph of Plate 37, each has its own label, a, b, or c.

The "a" specimen in Burnett (1944:Plate 37a) (Figure 3a) is about 25.5 cm, maximum diameter, with a height of 24.3 cm. Maximum thickness is 18 mm. Maximum diameter across the central opening measures 74.8 mm. The incised pattern on the surface shown in Figure 3a is:

7	8
7	6

and on the side opposite the pattern is:

7	8
7	7

The material is greenish grey micaceous chlorite schist (Burnett 1944:Plate 37). Traces of red ochre occur in the incised lines. Strandt made at least two plaster casts of the artifact. One he sent along to Tom Forster, and this copy is also in the O'Neill Museum (Cat. No. C11-014). Another copy went into the Bowers Museum, where its catalog number is 16206. Both copies have a red colorant, probably ochre, in the incisions, those rendered at the constrictions on each face as well as on the large arc design element

on each face. Strandt was obviously closely replicating the original.

The "b" artifact in Burnett (1944:Plate 37b) (Figure 4a) is the same material, chlorite schist. Diameter measures approximately 32.6 cm. Height is about 31.4 cm. Thickness could not be assessed. Maximum diameter of the irregular inner opening is approximately 11.7 cm. The numerical pattern of the "butterfly" incised lines in our Figure 4a is:

8	7
7	7

The opposite side has a different pattern:

7	7
5	6

Slight traces of red ochre remain in some of the grooves.

The "c" artifact in Burnett (1944:Plate 37c) (Figure 4b) was also manufactured of chlorite schist. Maximum diameter is 33.7 cm, while height measures 29.8 cm. Thickness is approximately 22 mm. Maximum diameter of the central opening is about 9.4 cm. The groove pattern of the butterfly-like element shown in Figure 4b is:

9	9
8	10

The numerical pattern on the opposite side is:

9	10
9	8

Traces of red paint are found in the incised lines. The Bowers Museum of Cultural Art curates a copy of the "c" disc shown in Burnett (1944:Plate 37c).

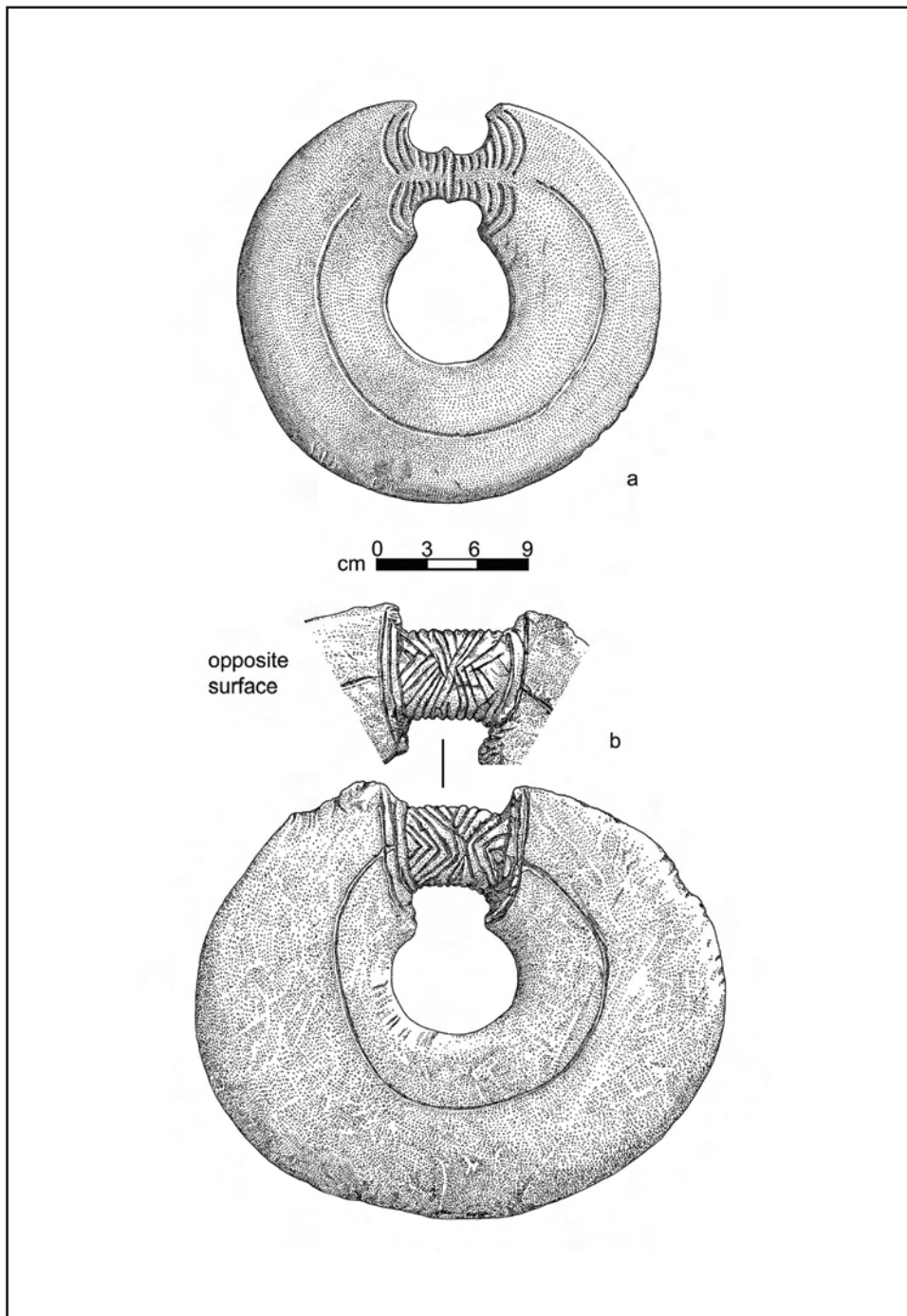


Figure 3. Universe Effigies discovered at San Mateo Canyon, northern San Diego County: (a) After plaster copy curated at the O'Neill Museum, San Juan Capistrano. Original at the National Museum of the American Indian; (b) O'Neill Museum collection.

It too is a plaster cast made by Herman Strandt. Its accession number is 16207.

We were recently apprised of another large disc specimen curated by the NMAI. It is a large fragment (Figure 5a) representing about a third of a chlorite schist Universe Effigy (Cat. No. 20/3796). Part of the butterfly-like design element is extant, its grooves filled with red ochre. The groove of the arc likewise

contains the pigment mineral. Maximum dimension of the artifact is about 24.5 cm. A maximum thickness estimate was not available.

NMAI records indicate that specimen 20/3796 was purchased from Herman Strandt in 1941. Provenance, not surprisingly, turns out to be San Mateo Canyon. It is not known from whom Strandt secured the piece. It is uncertain whether

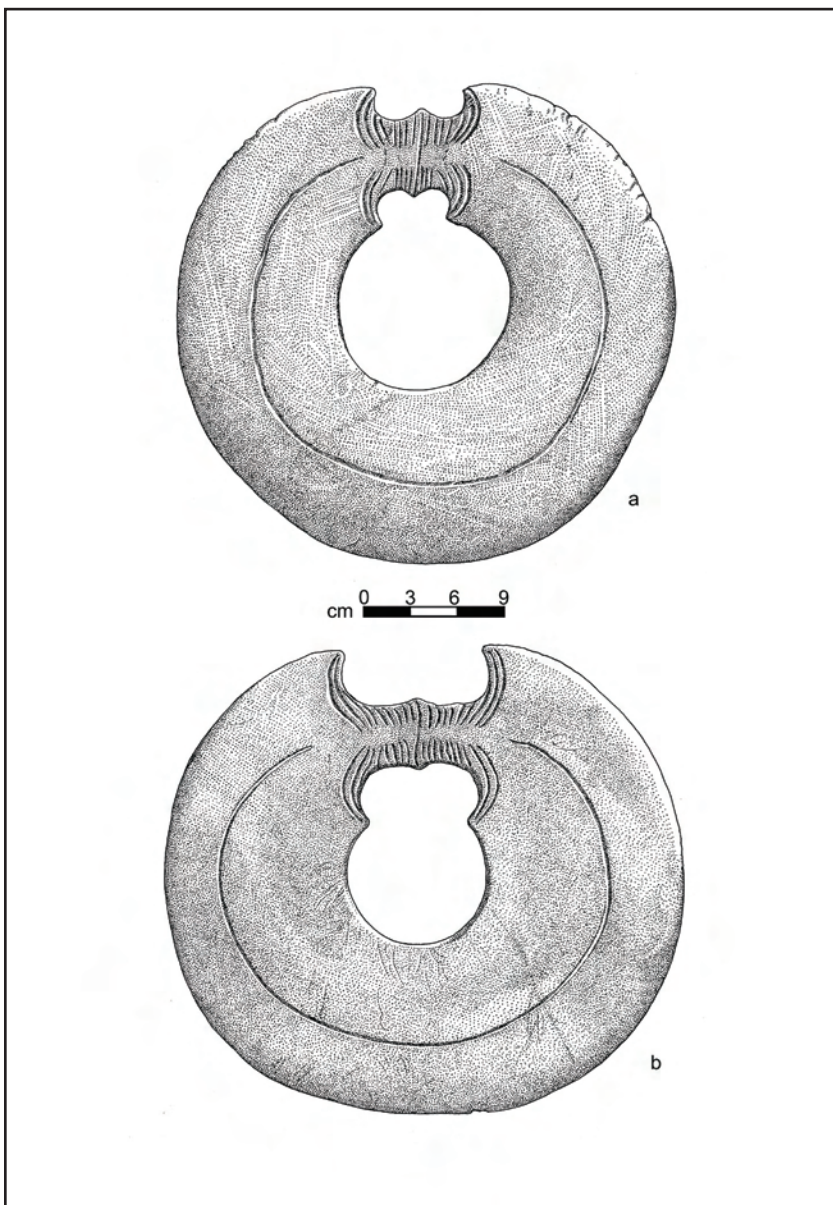


Figure 4. Universe Effigies found at San Mateo Canyon, northern San Diego County: (a) After photograph provided courtesy, National Museum of the American Indian, Smithsonian Institution; (b) After photograph of plaster copy curated at Bowers Museum of Cultural Art, Santa Ana. Originals of both artifacts curated at the National Museum of the American Indian.

this fragment might refit with a fragment from the LaLonde Collection.

The LaLonde Collection

In 1964, 11 pieces of stone disc effigies were cataloged as loan pieces at the Bowers Museum. This grouping (Figures 5b, 5c, 5d, and 6) includes three sets of two fragments that can be refitted together. The specimens are from probably seven, but perhaps eight, different effigies. The loan was made by John LaLonde.

LaLonde related in a July 8, 1964, interview with a Mrs. Margaret Key (Bowers Museum Collections Registrar) that these fragments had been in a room used for permanent storage at the home of LaLonde's recently deceased grandfather, whose last name was Ebargary. Other Indian artifacts, including about 100 stone bowls and mortars, had also been in the room. Indeed, LaLonde thought that there might be more pieces of discs in the "junk pile of old things." These interview notes are held by the Bowers Museum.

LaLonde had not remembered that his grandfather had been a collector of prehistoric relics. Ebargary had lived on Forster land for "50 years" and had married a Juaneño woman. It is unclear how Ebargary came to possess the ring fragments. The artifacts possibly had once belonged to Tom Forster. So many fragments from seven or eight different rings strongly suggests that all had derived from the San Mateo Canyon cache. This raises the possibility that the cache held 12 or 13 different Universe Effigies. We favor a count of 12.

Specimen 32486 (Figure 5b) (see Irwin 1978:92, Figure 2) is the most complete of all the LaLonde fragments. Unfortunately, its butterfly-like motif is largely missing. It is fashioned of chlorite schist. Its maximum dimension is 30.9 cm, and maximum

thickness is 18.2 mm. Red ochre is apparent in all the grooves on both sides.

Specimen 32487 (Figure 5c) is of chlorite schist, and it is the second most complete of the LaLonde fragments. It too possessed a "butterfly" design element. Red ochre adheres to the grooves on both faces. The maximum dimension is 27.0 cm, and maximum thickness is 18.8 mm. Irwin (1978:92) stated that the artifact originated in Mission Viejo, but this could only have been an assumption, and one not well considered.

Specimen 32488 (Figure 6a) is made of chlorite schist, and there is red ochre in the grooves on both sides. The maximum dimension is 13.4 cm, and maximum thickness is 12.3 mm. It does not seem to be part of any other LaLonde specimen.

Specimen 32489 (Figure 5d) (see also Irwin 1978:92, Figure 3) is of chlorite schist. The grooves on both faces retain red ochre. The maximum dimension is 29.4 cm, and maximum thickness is 18.9 mm. Irwin (1978:92) believed this specimen originated in Mission Viejo, but circumstantial evidence offers San Mateo Canyon as a much better possibility.

Specimens 32490-A and 32490-B are two chlorite schist fragments that are refitted (Figure 6b). On only one side does the groove show traces of red ochre. The maximum dimension of the larger piece (-A) is 10.7 cm, and maximum thickness is 13.8 mm. Maximum dimension of the smaller piece (-B) is 10.2 cm. These pieces may belong to a disc that included specimens 32491-A and 32491-B, which themselves refit (Figure 6d). This speculation develops from the very close inspection of the materials and groove similarities.

Specimen 32491-A refits with 32491-B (Figure 6d). Their chlorite schist material is very close in color, texture, etc. to that of 32490-A and 32490-B. Red ochre is barely present in grooves on both faces. The

-B part has a maximum dimension of 9.3 cm, and maximum thickness is 13.7 mm. The -A fragment has a maximum dimension of about 13.4 cm.

Specimens 32492-A and 32492-B (Figure 6c) are from a siltstone effigy and can be refitted. The design at the constriction would have been somewhat more crude than those configurations witnessed on other effigy discs. No colorant is visible in any groove. The smaller of the two pieces (32492-A) has a maximum dimension of 10.6 cm and a maximum thickness of 22.2 mm. For the -B specimen, these measurements are 17.3 cm and 23.0 mm.

Specimen 32493 (Figure 6e) is of chlorite schist. Grooves on each side show traces of red ochre. The

maximum dimension is 19.0 cm. Maximum thickness is 22.3 mm.

The Soboba Specimen

The Soboba Universe Effigy (Figure 7a) was discovered in 1968 on what was then private ranch property located in Riverside County (Table 1). The specific location was at the edge of Poppett Creek in Castile Canyon, which is not far from the casino at Soboba. The ranch was owned by Mr. James C. Ingebretsen. The land was later purchased by the Soboba Indian Reservation from another party.

Mr. R. M. Settle, an employee of Ingebretsen, made the discovery at the sloping side of a hill above the

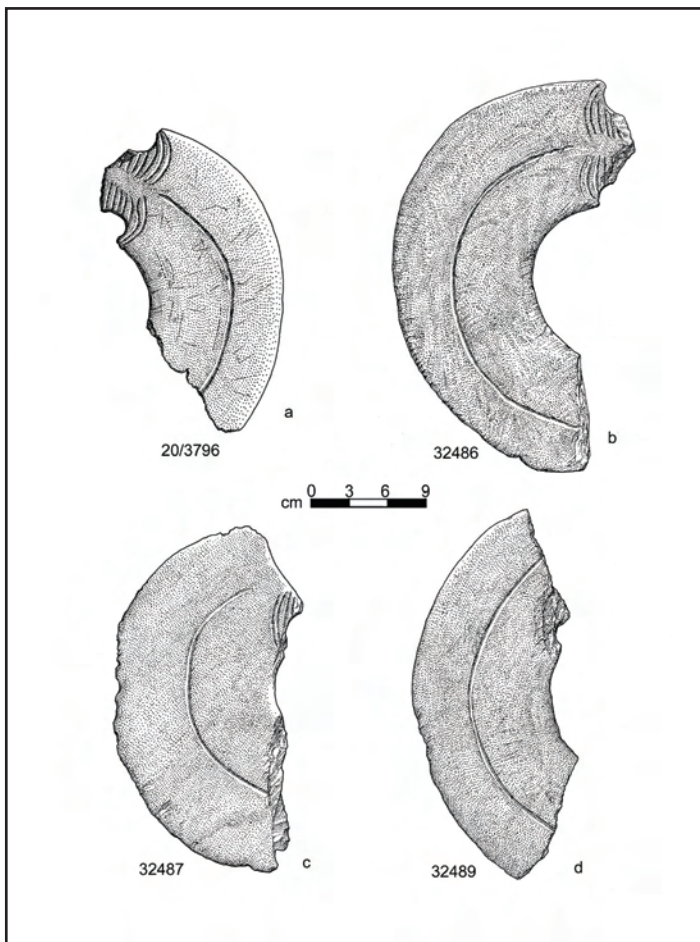


Figure 5. Universe Effigy fragments from San Mateo Canyon, northern San Diego County: (a) After photograph provided courtesy, National Museum of the American Indian, Smithsonian Institution; (b-d) LaLonde collection, Bowers Museum of Cultural Art, Santa Ana.

creek. It was positioned horizontally in the ground, with an edge exposed and with the remainder covered by soil. Significantly, a San Luis Rey II midden exists about 400 meters away from the discovery location.

The owner of the specimen, Ingebretsen, apparently allowed Mr. and Mrs. Settle to take the effigy to the Bowers Museum on July 17, 1968, to show to PGC. It was not loaned to the Museum, and it was taken away that same day. Presently, the artifact is privately held by a person unrelated to those mentioned above, and for now he wishes to remain anonymous.

The Soboba specimen is made of chlorite schist. Its maximum diameter is 23.9 cm, and height is 22.4 cm. Maximum thickness is 12.5 mm. Maximum diameter across the central hole is 7.9 cm. There are no traces of pigment in the grooves. The groove pattern on the side shown in Figure 7a is:

6	5
4	6

The opposite side is:

6	5
4	5

The Riddell Mystery Specimen

The Riddell Mystery Specimen (Figure 7b) is so named for its lack of provenance and knowledge of present whereabouts (Table 1) and in remembrance of a kindly and rigorous scholar who helped one of us (PGC) secure information about the piece. Knowing of Paul Chace’s interest in these kinds of artifacts, on April 4, 1972, Francis Riddell, then State of California Archaeologist, sent a note attached to a Xerox copy of a drawing of this Universe Effigy.

According to Albert Elsasser (May 14, 1975, correspondence to PGC), the artifact had probably

been brought into the Archaeological Survey, UC Berkeley, in 1957. A detailed rendition was provided by Eduardo Contreras of the INAH, Mexico City. The drawing of Figure 7b is after the drawing by Contreras. The Contreras drawing was turned over to Riddell. Elsasser could not find this object or any record of it in the Lowie Museum (now the Hearst Museum), and when questioned by Elsasser and also Riddell, Robert Heizer professed no recollection of ever having seen this effigy.

The specimen’s maximum diameter is about 34.4 cm. Its height is approximately 31.6 cm, and thickness is unknown. Maximum diameter of the inner circular opening is about 12.4 cm. There is no information on the material, but it is most probably of chlorite schist or, less likely, steatite. There is no data relevant to colorant in the incised grooves. Only one side is known to us. The “butterfly” area shows the following pattern of grooves:

10	9
10	8

What is particularly noteworthy is the presence of a small panel of cross-hatching running diagonally from the outer edge, just after 5:20 o’clock to a break that runs to about 6:00 o’clock. The cross-hatched motif is possibly the diamond pattern used traditionally to represent the rattlesnake (but more on this matter later). Its terminus at the break is curious and suggests the design may have been added after the fracture occurred. If so, perhaps the artifact retained its sacred status even after some of the object’s mass had become detached.

Misidentified Steatite Rings

A State Employment Relief Administration archaeology crew in March through April 1935 unearthed three “steatite ring” fragments at the “Limestone Canyon site” (Santiago Canyon) in the Santa Ana

Mountains (Anonymous 1935). Hudson (1969:36) misidentified these pieces found at the South Bank site as being from the same kinds of discs pictured in Burnett (1944:Plate 37). Irwin (1978:91) concurred, but unequivocally these fragments had not broken out of any Universe Effigy.

The specimens are too thin, ranging from 5 mm to 4 mm in thickness. The edges are much too sharp. The groove on each is disproportionately close to the edge. The cross-hatching shown on the smallest fragment (3.2 x 1.8 x .4 cm) covers the entire surface, a circumstance at odds with the large effigy discs. The other specimens are not much bigger (4.2 cm x 4.2 cm x .5 cm and 3.7 cm x 3.2 cm x .5

cm) (see Hudson 1969:39). The rush to regard them as effigy fragments seems to reflect wishful thinking.

Discussions

Fakery Issue

In conversational settings, questions periodically arise regarding the authenticity of artifacts of the Universe Effigy type. Doubters note that no specimen has ever been reported from a professional scientific excavation. This kind of argument (see Curtis 1959; Lee 1993:196, 213) applies reasonably enough to help expose as fraudulent many artifacts illustrated in Burnett's (1944) *Inlaid Stone and Bone Artifacts*

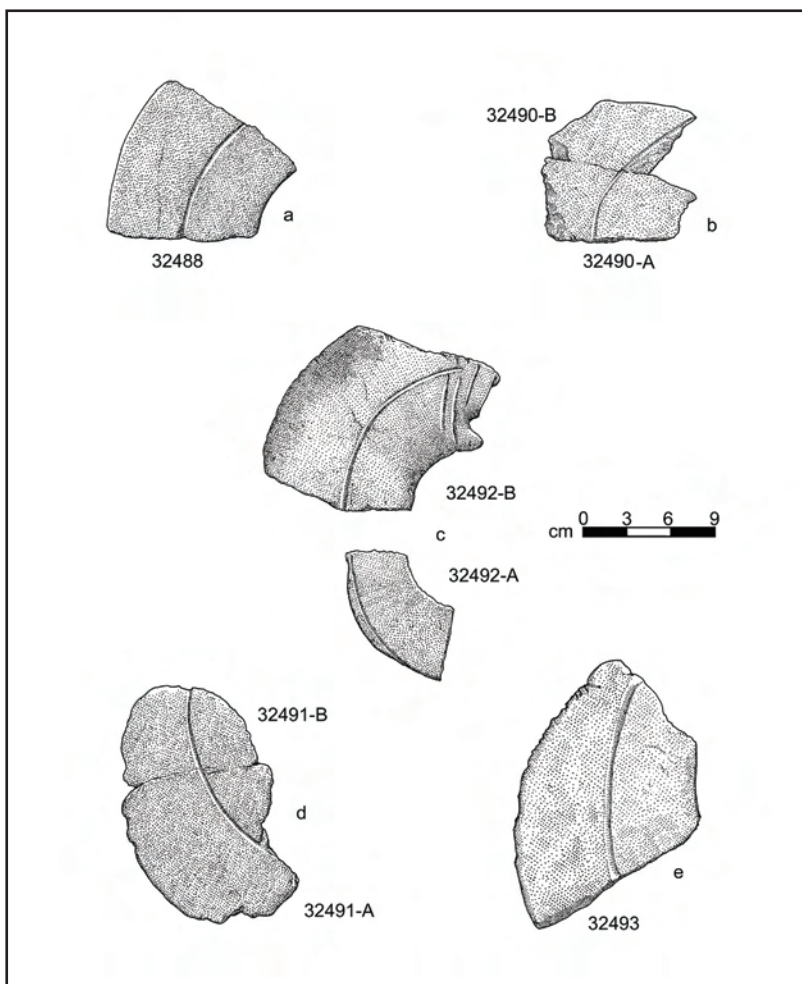


Figure 6. Small fragments of Universe Effigy artifacts. LaLonde collection, Bowers Museum of Cultural Art.

from *Southern California*, a work that pictures three Universe Effigies (1944:Plate 37).

Burnett (1944:13-21) believed that O. T. Littleton and Arthur Sanger had carried out honest fieldwork. Their “finds” have turned out to be forgeries and fantasy pieces. These two con artists misrepresented provenance and perpetuated what is perhaps the most egregious hoax in the annals of western United States prehistoric study (see Lee 1993; also Koerper and Chace 1995). However, the Universe Effigies presently held by the NMAI, as

well as nearly all other specimens kept elsewhere, have solid enough documentation of place and circumstance of discovery to vouch that they are genuine.

The three specimens pictured in Burnett (1944:Plate 37) were sold to the Museum of the American Indian Heye Foundation by Herman Strandt, a suspect in the faking of southern California artifacts (see Lee 1993). Almost certainly, this much misunderstood amateur archaeologist/pot hunter was not responsible for any fraudulent piece (see Koerper and Chace 1995).

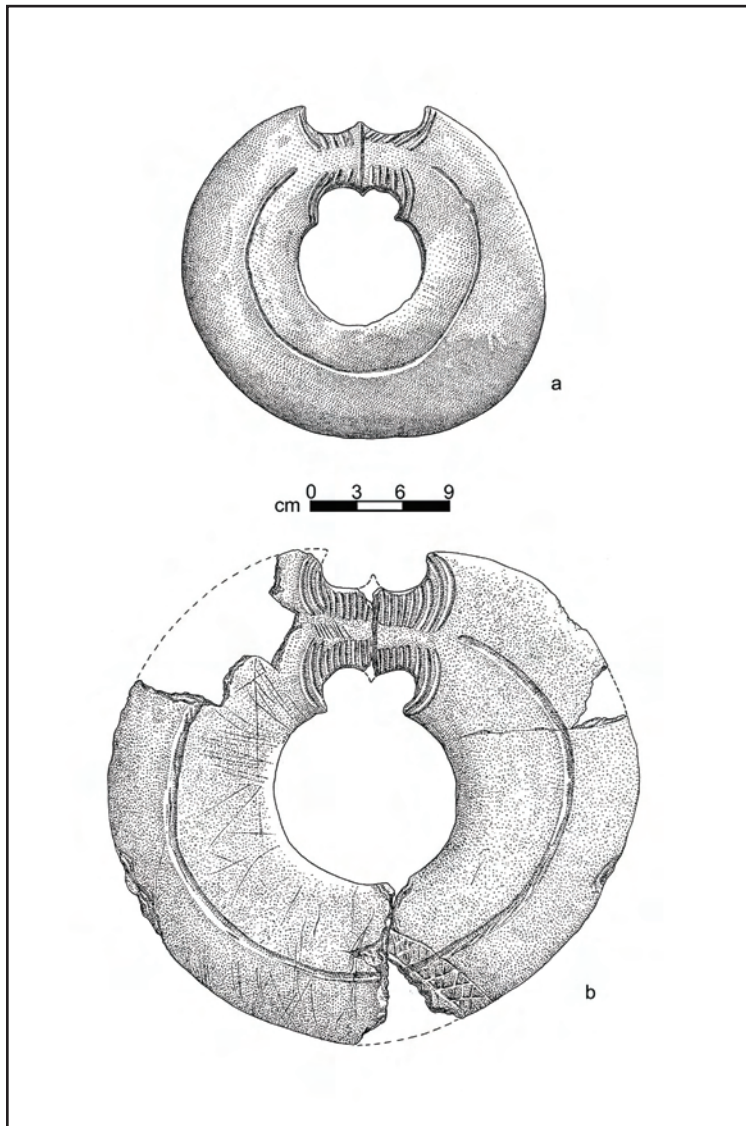


Figure 7. Universe Effigies: (a) Discovered on once private land now owned by the Soboba Indian Reservation. Private collection; (b) Riddell Mystery specimen, provenance and present disposition currently unknown. After drawing by Eduardo Contreras of the INAH, Mexico City.

Mrs. Forster did report in a September 21, 1964, telephone conversation with one of us (PGC) that Strandt “faked many artifacts.” The fact is that he only made casts of many of his artifacts and never, as far as we know, represented any copies as authentic. Mrs. Forster’s words were somewhat ill chosen, probably out of justified anger for an incident that does, however, place Strandt in a deserved bad light. What seems to have happened is that Strandt, on the pretext of a temporary borrowing, received one intact disc (Heye 20/3797a) (Burnett 1944:Plate 37) from Tom Forster. Whether he made the same agreement with farmer Tom Wada or purchased the other two complete specimens (Heye 20/3797b, c) (Burnett 1944:Plate 37) and a fragment (Heye 20/3796) is unclear. Strandt apparently told Tom Forster that he would send the disc to New York to the Museum of the American Indian, Heye Foundation, for identification. The Forsters were understandably upset to learn that their stone effigy was permanently with the museum and that Strandt had sold all three complete discs.¹ Strandt did send Mr. Forster a plaster cast of the 20/3797a specimen which is now on loan to the O’Neill Museum. The Forsters did not pursue the issue.

Another copy of Heye specimen 20/3797a, identical to that given Forster, went into the Bowers Museum collections in 1953 (Bowers No. 16206), along with a plaster copy of Heye 20/3797c (Bowers No. 16207). The two casts entered the Bowers Museum as gifts from the Irvine Foundation which had purchased them along with regional Native artifacts from Strandt.

Chlorite Schist

Harrington (1978:135) mentioned a kind of stone called *huula*, or arrow, characterized as “resembling somewhat steatite” and colored dark grey with a greenish tinge. He believed it was “possibly a chlorite schist,” a mineral thought to be sacred to Chinigchinich. If sacred to the god, there is consistency

with the fact that nearly all known Universe Effigy artifacts were fashioned of chlorite schist.

Regional chlorite schist is colored in the greenish, greyish, blackish ranges, and luster is somewhat dull glassy. Also, chlorite schist will cleave into sheets, a desideratum for crafting the large, thin artifacts under discussion.

Santa Catalina Island has steatite, soapstone, and chlorite schist (Rosenthal and Williams 1992). Perhaps the island had been a source of lithic material for the manufacture of Universe Effigies. Other source possibilities are San Diego County (see Polk 1972) and Riverside County (Adella Schroth, personal communication 2007).

Ground Paintings and the Universe Effigy

Chace (1972) was the first to propose that the large discs were probably representations of the universe (world) and that they likely were Chinigchinich cult objects. These hypotheses rested on observations of certain stylistic resemblances between the stone effigies and ethnographically documented Luiseño ground paintings (also known as altars) whose symbolic contents embodied Native conceptualizations of the universe and of behavior deemed righteous in Chinigchinich world view. Others concurred that the configurations of the two material phenomena reflected some common ideological landscape (Irwin 1978; Hudson et al. 1983:19).

These kinds of ground paintings were salient components of Luiseño rites of passage – male initiation rituals, the female maturity ceremony, and *Unish Matak-ish* (e.g., Sparkman 1908:221-226; DuBois 1908a:87-96; Kroeber 1908a:176-180, 1925:661-665).² The latter was a mortuary ceremony at which the feathers of a deceased male were buried, if that person had at one time undergone the toloache ritual.

Within the male initiation practices, ground painting occurred during the toloache ritual, but also during the ant ordeal, a kind of supplement to the toloache rites (DuBois 1908a:87-96). Kroeber (1908a:176-177), however, places the ant ordeal before the taking of toloache, but his notes are not clear as to whether the same ground painting applied in both settings or whether the painting was an artifact only at the ingesting of the narcotic. Differences between scholars' ethnographic accounts are understandable, given that scientific anthropology was on the scene after ground painting was in serious decline or had been abandoned for use in rites of passage. In the rites, the ground paintings were sacred props abetting religious and moral instruction.

The Luiseño ground paintings are known especially through the scholarship of Sparkman (1908:221-226, Plate 20), DuBois (1908a:87-91, Plate 17; see also 1905:632, 625) and Kroeber (1908a; 1925:661-667). Northern Diegueño ground painting is well covered by Waterman for boys' initiations (1910:300-304, 350-353). Drucker (1937:33) noted that ground paintings were made at the conclusion of puberty rites for Ipai girls. Tipai (Southern Diegueño) ground painting for male initiates was discussed by Spier (1923:319-320). Drucker's (1937:35) Tipai informants denied ground paintings for girls.

Ground paintings were strictly confined to the area of the Chinigchinich cult which was spreading through southern California at the very end of the Late Pre-historic Period and during the Contact Period (Cohen 1987:13-16). Cohen (1987:28, note 17) explained that the Luiseño paintings for boys ended around 1860, but, citing DuBois (1908a:77) and Sparkman (1908:225), noted that the artwork continued as a component in girls' initiations up to 1890. In fact, in the upper San Luis Rey Valley, boys' puberty rites in their entirety were most probably dead by 1870 (Sparkman 1908:225). In addition to the Luiseño and Diegueño, the Juaneño³, Gabrielino, Fernandeno,

Cupeño, Mountain Cahuilla, and Pass Cahuilla had ground paintings (see Kroeber 1925:661, 713; Drucker 1937:33; Harrington 1942:37, see also 1934:17-18; Venegas 1966:106-107). The Desert Cahuilla and Serano lacked ground paintings (Drucker 1937:33, 35), but that was a consequence of the Chinigchinich cult never having diffused to these tribes (Cohen 1987:14).

Sparkman (1908:Plate 20) illustrated a model of the Luiseño ground painting (Figure 8b) associated, he believed, with both girls' and boys' puberty rites. Kroeber (1925:664) was almost certainly correct in restricting this particular schematic to the female maturity ceremony. Kroeber (1908a:178, 1925:663, Figure 56d) provided a different design for the boys' painting (Figure 8d). Sparkman's drawing (1908: Plate 20) shows three concentric components, each a nearly complete ring. The outer arc denotes the Milky Way, the middle arc is "Night," and the inner one is labeled "Blood." At the very center of the triple circle is a small pit said to indicate "hell." The short break at the top end of each circle defines a path directed north. It stands for the route followed by the souls of good people when ascending to the sky (see Sparkman 1908:221-224).

In the area between the small circular pit and the "Blood" ring, sand was strewn in various places in order to represent the following: bear, panther, raven, black-rattlesnake, black spider, *Apmikat* (an avenger), breaker, and stick (Figure 8b). All such things threatened punishment for bad behavior. The boys, according to Sparkman, were positioned near the paintings, where they were admonished by a kind of religious guidance counselor to obey a number of rules, such as the necessity for respectful deportment before parents and all grown-ups. The boys were required to chew a mixture of salt and white sage flour, and one by one spat it into the small pit. The lecturer then examined what each had spat into the hole in order to ascertain whether an initiate had taken to heart the counsel just received (Sparkman 1908:221-224; see also Kroeber

1925:671, 684). Kroeber offered a perceptive accounting for the circular elements. He wrote,

In all cases, it is clear that the essential subject of the depiction is the world [universe]. The Luiseño, however, are chiefly concerned with revealing its subtler manifestations – the mysterious encircling Milky Way, the all-encompassing night or sky – or its still more spiritual

phases expressed in a symbolism of human personality: the arms, the blood, our root of origin, the spirit. [Kroeber 1925:663-664]

Kroeber (1925:662) further noted that the pit at the center of the girls' and boys' paintings reflected life-death themes. Not only was the pit connected to death/burial, but it stood for the navel of the universe.

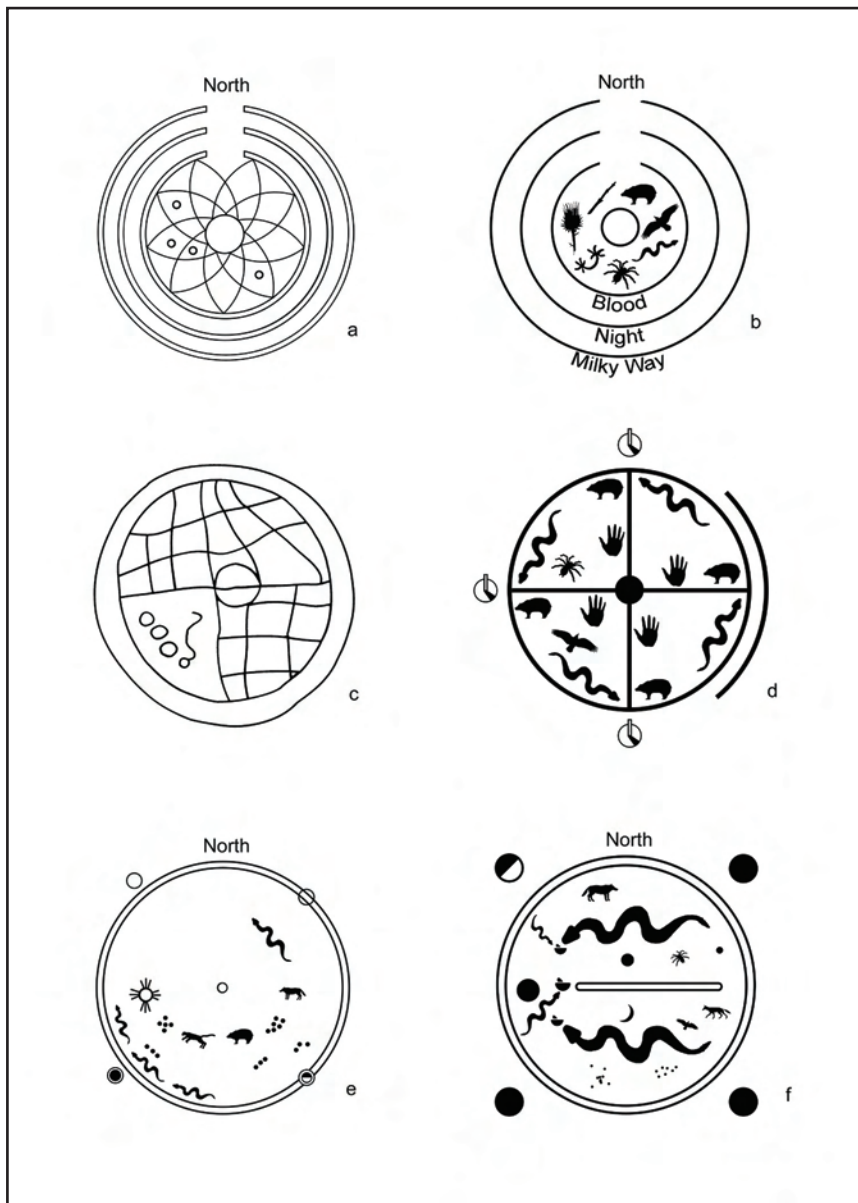


Figure 8. Ground paintings (models): (a-b) Luiseño girls' maturity rites; (c-d) Luiseño boys' initiation rites; (e-f) Ipai boys' maturity rites. (a) After Kroeber (1925:663), see also DuBois (1908a:Plate 17); (b) after Sparkman (1908:Plate 20); (c) after DuBois (1908a:90); (d) after Kroeber (1908a:178); (e-f) after Waterman (1910:351, 353).

As a thought-provoking aside, Hudson and Underhay (1978:118) suggested that the break in the ring representing the Milky Way perhaps stood for spring time when the Milky Way was not visible. A less credible speculation, we believe, is Oxendine's (1980:46) idea that the three concentric circles might have symbolized the rings that the First Children placed around the moon, that is, the body of *Wuyóot*, or *Ouiot*, to hide it from Coyote (see Henshaw 1972:98).

Sparkman made no reference to a ground painting in his discussion of the girls' puberty ceremony. DuBois (1908a:87-96) did, however, provide detailed information about the art form, and she concluded that it differed from the kind used in the toloache ritual, ant ritual, and *Unish Matakish*.

An informant crafted a girls' ground painting for DuBois (1908a:Plate 17, Figure 2; see also Kroeber 1925:663, Figure 56a) (Figure 8a). The artist used different colored sands or ground pigments and powdered charcoal. It was quite elaborate compared to Sparkman's schematic model since it had three concentric circular components defining the circumference. Within this border was a design that may be "imagined as consisting of nine pointed figures [each] of the form of a Gothic arch, intersecting, and surrounding the central hole [pit]" (Ed. Note in DuBois 1908a:88).

The symbology of the three circumferential rings, according to one informant, was (outer to inner) Milky Way, Our Spirit, and The Spirit. Another informant offered Our Spirit for each concentric arc, stating, however, that the central entirety referred to the Milky Way, that is, conflating Our Spirit and Milky Way. All but one of DuBois' authorities maintained that the "door" to the north allowed the escape route for spirits. Interestingly, "all ceremonies and invocations are performed facing the north" (DuBois 1908a:89). Parenthetically, the feet of Earth-mother (Tamaiauwot) point north (Kroeber 1906b:312-313, see DuBois 1906:52-54).

Into the hole at the center, the girls spat a lump of sage seed and salt when their ceremony ended. DuBois provided a succinct interpretation of the ground painting: "It represents the world. The sky bending above is supposed to rest upon the circle of the Milky Way. The whole visible universe is thus represented" (DuBois 1908a:99). The paintings' other symbols included Chinigchinich avengers.

DuBois (1908a:90) noted that all but one of her informants thought that the difference between the ground paintings for males and those for the females was the smaller size of the latter. She gave greatest credibility, however, to the lone dissenter, Salvador Cuevas, who sketched the boys' initiation ground painting showing two unbroken concentric circles at the outer margins (1908a:90, Figure 2; see Kroeber 1925:663, Figure 56c) (Figure 8c). There was no apparent directional cue for north.

DuBois observed that the circular area inside the smaller concentric circle was sectioned into quadrants, three of which were each partitioned into nine divisions. Inside the remaining quadrant were representations of a single rattlesnake and three winnowing baskets that were sacred to the god Chinigchinich. All of this represented the earth, the various colors standing for flowers, fields, and trees. As with the girls' ground painting, the artwork was a vehicle for instruction of the initiates, especially regarding righteous living (see also Kroeber 1925:685).

Kroeber (1908a:177-178, Figure 5, 1925:663, Figure 56d) provided a different model (Figure 8d) of a Luiseño "altar" for the boys' initiation. At the center of this 12 to 15 foot diameter painting, there was a navel/death hole, perhaps 1.5 feet in diameter, the spot where two diameters intersected. These two diameters bisected the circle from north to south and east to west, and at each end of the diameters were representations of the bear and rattlesnake avenger. An approximately quarter circle line close to and

parallel to the east side of the circle represented the mountains. Spider and raven were other symbols in the composition. The ground painting was used to instruct the initiates.

Northern Diegueño (Ipai) ground paintings for the boys' adolescence ceremony had an outer ring, but they did not show a basic plan of concentric circularity. They did reflect the world as understood by the Northern Diegueño (Waterman 1910:300-304, 350-353). Only one of the two models produced for Waterman by a Santa Ysabel informant (Figure 8e) had a spitting hole, about eight inches in diameter, but it lay near the edge of the circle and not at the center (Waterman 1910:351, Plate 24). Thus, it was probably not the typical navel/death symbol. There was, however, a small unidentified circle dead center, but Kroeber (1925:664) denied that it symbolized the navel of the universe.

Within the circle of this model were three symbols for mountains (one of which was identified with Coronado Island), one symbol for Catalina Island, and symbols for various constellations and various animals, including three kinds of nonpoisonous snakes. The Santa Ysabel informant did not put the Milky Way, sun, new moon, or old moon into the picture, since he could not remember where they should be placed. Also, this old man, Manuel Lachuso, made no mention of toloache mortars (Waterman 1910:350-351, Plate 24).

Toloache mortar and pestle symbology was present in the Mesa Grande ground painting model (Figure 8f) produced for Waterman by Antonio Maces and Jo Waters (Waterman 1910:352, 353, Plate 25). It too contained many celestial referents, and across the middle of the rendition, there was a symbol for the Milky Way. There was no center hole, or pit, and thus no navel/death symbol. Interestingly, the several mountains lay outside the circle. There were various animals, including snakes, but unlike the Santa Ysabel painting, rattlesnakes were included.

Kroeber (1925:664) noted the Diegueño ground painting was far less abstruse or mystic than those of the Luiseño. For instance, spiritual phases such as Blood and Spirit were not referenced. The enclosing circle, he pointed out, was simply the horizon of the earth. Interestingly, the Milky Way was shown as a long, narrow bar running through the middle of one of the paintings, Waterman's Mesa Grande model (Figure 8f) (1910:351, Plate 24). The navel of death was omitted since it was an idea, but not a feature of the land or sky (Kroeber 1925:664).

The ground painting in the Southern Diegueño (Tipai) toloache ceremony was altogether different from those of more northerly peoples (Spier 1923:319-320). The various elements were mainly representations of particular mountains and constellations. One element was a "rock in the ocean near San Diego," perhaps the Coronados. A spring, "white water," and a "spirits entrance" were also indicated. The medium was mostly piles of different kinds of seeds. The central figure was the Milky Way in the form of a braided cord of milkweed. No circle was drawn around these symbols. Parenthetically, the Akwa'ala made sand paintings representing the world (Gifford and Lowie 1928:342).

Irwin (1978) adopted Chace's hypothesis and fleshed out some of the details. Referencing Sparkman's (1908:Plate 20) model of the ground painting (Figure 8b), he equated the outer circumference of the stone effigy with the Milky Way, the groove with Night Sky, and the inner stone circumference with Blood. Irwin (1978:92) also opined that the grooves at the constriction might symbolize the gate to the North.

Irwin (see 1978:90, 94, note 3) possibly equated the central opening in these stone discs as the pit into which the seed/salt was spat. One is left to wonder whether Irwin was entertaining the idea that the discs might have been the functional equivalent of ground paintings, that is, substitutes for ground paintings in initiations.

Irwin (1978:92) also believed that the ground paintings and stone discs were schematic representations of the oval sacred enclosure, the *wamkish*, a ritual place for, among other things, initiations and ground paintings. The *wamkish*, he noted, stood as a microcosm of the earth and universe. He also speculated that the ground painting and stone effigy possibly represented the stages of ritual development of the individual.

We are in full agreement with Irwin's support of Chace's (1972) hypothesis that the large discs represent the universe. The hypothesis is based on observations of design elements that parallel certain design components of some ground paintings. Inexplicably, however, Irwin proposed that the disc effigy is analogous to the "crescentic" stones shown to Diegueño girls during their maturity rites, when, in fact, these *atulku* had a vulvar referent (Rust 1906:30; Strong 1929:299; see also Koerper 2007). The imageries, then, were quite different, yet there is one behavioral parallel worth noting. To wit, the crescent shaped *atulku* was buried away from a village to be unearthed on the occasion of sacred ceremony, and the Universe Effigies appear also to have been secreted underground and also at some distance from habitation sites. Another example of this basic storage pattern is witnessed with the *tamyush*, the toloache mortar/bowl used in boys' initiation ceremonies. The *tamyush* was kept buried in the ground in a location known only to the chief until it was needed for sacred practice. Then it was unearthed and freshly painted (DuBois 1908a:78, see also 1905:622-623). Harrington (1978:134) added that *tíutukwic*, or black tourmaline crystals (schorl), were dug up with the *tamyush* and subsequently reburied with the sacred mortar/bowl. In a final relevant observation, the largest concentration of bird stones, spikes, and canoe effigies from two closely placed lots were discovered at Pacific Palisades near the mouth of Santa Monica Canyon, "away from any settlement" (Wallace 1987:57). Wallace (1987:47) wrote that such "carved pieces appear regularly as burial accompaniments or in isolated caches. Only rather rarely is one recovered from amongst the domestic debris

of a deserted settlement." The occurrence of these types of objects together at Pacific Palisades and with sacred mortars/bowls makes sense since the common denominator was undoubtedly a fertility/fecundity or related theme (see e.g., Koerper and Labbé 1987, 1989; Desautels et al. 2005; Koerper 2006a, 2006b; see also Lee 1981).

Irwin (1978:92) also stated that Kroeber's (1925:674) reference to flat stones placed on the abdomens of Luiseño girl initiates at Pauma supports the proposition that the discs were employed in the Luiseño initiations. The logic is hard to follow here, unless Irwin is implying that the discs and the flat stones are one and the same; however, we can not imagine how Kroeber could dismiss so magnificent an artifact as the Universe Effigy as merely a "flat stone."

A Possible Rattlesnake Glyph on the Riddell Mystery Specimen

The "Riddell Mystery Specimen" (Figure 7b) displays a 7 to 8 cm long panel of cross-hatching running diagonally from the circumferential margin inward, crosscutting the grooved arc, and terminating at a break that ends at the bottom of the central hole. It is not known whether a similar panel exists on the opposite face since only one side of the effigy was ever drawn, and the artifact long ago disappeared.

Similar cross-hatchings, or diamond-shaped patterns, are said to denote the rattlesnake in southern California iconography (Cohen 1987:23, 24; see also Koerper 2006c). These designs were witnessed during puberty rituals.

At the end of Luiseño and Cupeño female puberty ceremonies, the girls raced to a rock (DuBois 1908a:96; Kroeber 1925:675; Strong 1929:257, 299; Harrington in Oxendine 1980:43, see also 48, note 27,) and after arrival at the boulder, either the initiate or the chief's wife painted the rock. These painted motifs were mainly geometric, many being diamond shapes strung together.

Informants described diamond shapes as representing the rattlesnake (e.g., Strong 1929:299, 314; see also Oxendine 1980:42, Figure 3). Harrington (in Oxendine 1980:43, 48, note 27) noted that the girls' designs specified person, moon, and rattlesnake. Kroeber (1908a:175) illustrated some of the variability of design.

Strong (1929:278-299) described "the rattlesnake design" adorning the girls' faces in the Luiseño Adolescence Ceremony as being wavy, red horizontal lines. Such wavy lines are stylistically not far removed from diamond patterns. Harrington (in Oxendine 1980:42) described the diamond design on Luiseño girls' faces during their puberty rites and gave the name, "the snake." The snake, the girls were told, would kill them if they did not believe.

Strong (1929:314) also described colored earth figures surrounding the ceremonial stepping stones within a rectangular pit (symbolic grave in the Luiseño boys' initiation). The figures included a representation or representations of the rattlesnake. Strong (1929:314) recorded that the reptile was "symbolized by a series of diamonds meeting end to end."

As previously noted, symbols clearly denoting snakes, as well as highly abstract symbols representing snakes (simply small piles of sand), were incorporated into puberty ritual ground paintings (Rust 1906; DuBois 1908a:88, 90, 1908b; Sparkman 1908:223, Plate 20; Kroeber 1908a:177-178, 1925:661-665; Waterman 1910:300-305; Strong 1929:314-315; Hudson 1979:358-359; Oxendine 1980:46; Cohen 1987). Perhaps the diamond-shaped incising of the Riddell Mystery Specimen was an attempt to indicate a rattler following the practice of embedding the viper into some ground paintings.

Grooves at the Constriction: Symbolic or Decorative?

The butterfly-like motifs found on both faces of most Universe Effigies were crafted by sculpting, incising,

and painting. Sculpting formed the constriction. Deep incising produced the grooves. Red ochre was probably painted into the grooves of the majority, if not all, effigies.

The constriction, by breaking into a foundation of concentric circularity, evoked imagery very likely denoting North. The role of ochre and the color red in symbolic communications is well documented (e.g., Koerper and Strudwick 2002:3-4), but whether the colorant coating the "butterfly" grooves or the incised arc meant Blood or had some other referent is probably an insoluble issue. Another difficult question is whether the deep incisions at the constriction, some curvilinear but others straight, were symbolic or merely decorative. Chace (1972) posited that these grooves were intended as symbolic reminders of the numerous Chinigchinich avengers protecting the cosmos, just as certain avengers are represented in ground paintings.

The variability in groove count within and between effigies precludes identification of any numerical encryption relating to cosmogony, a pantheon, ritual practice, etc. Another obstruction is our incomplete knowledge of meaningful integers that may have been embedded in Native world view.

Pattern recognition was attempted starting with characterizations of the butterfly designs based on groove counts by quadrant. Not only were no two "butterfly" designs identical on any single effigy, all 11 designs observed were different from one another. When we observed the number of contiguous quadrants on a vertical axis with an identical number of grooves, the tally was 10. This left a count of 12 examples where the numbers did not balance, the differentials being either 1 (7 cases) or 2 (5 cases). Looking at horizontal contiguous quadrants, those with the same groove count numbered 6. Sixteen had different groove counts, of which the differentials were 1 (13 cases) and 2 (3 cases). A frequency profile of quadrant

groove number approximates a bell-shaped curve. The data are fairly symmetric with median and mode at 7, and mean calculated to 6.9.

These observations imply that the grooves were likely to have been decorative, not symbolic. Some corroboration follows from the observation that one Universe Effigy (Figure 3b) has completely different incised motifs than other large discs. Even had a pattern emerged, there would be no reason to favor the hypothesis of symbolic content over that of geometric pattern in the absence of an understanding of what might have constituted special numbers for the makers of the Universe Effigies. The design elements in toto may have represented some symbolic object, but we are very skeptical of suggestions of a butterfly or a crab (see Burnett 1944:42).

Summary and Concluding Remarks

This study has described in detail and formally named an artifact from the portable cosmos of Late Prehistoric southern California. An inventory was provided of all artifacts within our purview that are included in this Universe Effigy type. Seven specimens are virtually complete, one nearly so. There are fragments from a minimum of seven to a maximum of nine different effigies. The best estimate is that our inventory brings together evidence of 15 or 16 different discs, certainly no more than 17 and no fewer than 15.

The pleasing renditions of Figures 2-7 by scientific illustrator Joe Cramer serve, in part, as an aesthetic ploy to pique greater curiosity regarding the mentalistic domains within regional past life-ways, subjects that all too often receive only epiphenominal status in the largely materialist-oriented research designs of local archaeological science. The drawings also serve a strategy of forcing observations that might occasion type recognition of fragments of a Universe Effigy encountered, say, during sorting of field screens or laboratory trays.

All stone Universe Effigy specimens known to science and discussed here are undoubtedly genuine. Three plaster casts representing two effigies from San Mateo Canyon are known to have been produced by Herman Strandt, but these copies were never intended to deceive.

Nearly all of the effigies were fashioned from chlorite schist, perhaps mined on Catalina Island. The mineral was probably sacred to the god Chinigchinich (Harrington 1978:135).

Over three decades ago, Chace (1972) observed certain stylistic resemblances between the large stone discs and ground paintings employed in maturity rites, particularly those of girls, and he suggested some degree of shared symbology. Detailed ethnographic notes reviewed here on the iconography of the paintings reemphasize that the primary referent is a Native conception of the universe, or world, and hence the inspiration for the stone discs' taxon name, Universe Effigy. If the diamond pattern panel seen on the Riddell Mystery Specimen is correctly interpreted as a rattlesnake glyph, then this probably bespeaks another parallel of imagery since the poisonous reptile has a recurrent presence in the ground art. Support for the Chace (1972) hypothesis remains strong.

The extreme flatness of a Universe Effigy recalls ground paintings which are nearly two dimensional. This leaves one to wonder whether this artifact type was intended as a mimic of the ground art or developed as an independent creation.

The concentric circularity of the Universe Effigy is more similar to the basic configuration of the girls' rather than the boys' ground paintings. If any gender association is valid, then the ceremonial venue is more likely to have been that of female rather than male maturity rites. While Kroeber (1906:32, 1908a:174) did report that "flat stones" were heated and placed atop girls' abdomens during their "roastings," he gives no indication that these heaters were shaped. Perhaps

his Luiseño informants, Felix Calac of Rincon and Pachito of Pauma, had not themselves known what the stones looked like, but this seems unlikely. Even had the objects been unremarkable, this does not rule out the possibility that elsewhere specially carved discs might have been functional equivalents of the “flat stones.” When set in the sun, chlorite schist readily absorbs heat and reaches temperatures which, while toasty, would be unlikely to produce serious burns to the bare skin of an initiate.

The fact that there were about a dozen discs in a single cache (San Mateo Canyon) suggests ceremonial activity with multiple participants. This would be consistent with Kroeber’s (1906a:32, 1908a:174) reports that several Luiseño girls would be put through puberty rites together. DuBois (1908a:94) noted that the rite could involve one to several girls, and Sparkman (1908:224) also stated that several girls might be placed together in the roasting pit.

On a final note, the discoveries of Universe Effigies with known provenance fit a larger pattern wherein sacred objects of the portable cosmos are secreted away from settlements. This practice undoubtedly reflected a belief regarding the potential of highly sacred objects with magico-religious potency to cause harm if subjected to careless treatment.

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and describe that artifact; we also appreciate his sharing of thoughts regarding functions of the type. Lou Stancari and Pat Nietfeld of the National Museum of the American Indian helped us secure images of four San Mateo Canyon specimens for renderings by our artist. All figures were produced by Joe Cramer, and Karen Koerper typed the various drafts and final copy. Dr. Jill Gardner, Dr. Roger Mason, and Sherri Gust were very helpful with their detailed critiques, offering numerous useful suggestions.

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Notes

1. In an interview with John Romero conducted by Helen Smith (1967), Romero called Strandt “a big thief.” He reported that Strandt took artifacts from the WPA excavations at the Banning Site (CA-ORA-58) (see Koerper et al. 1996). Helen Smith, a charter founder of the Pacific Coast Archaeological Society (see Knight 1984; see also Chace 1965:6), indicated she knew that to be true and that she was aware Strandt sold said artifacts.

2. There were also ground paintings put to shamanistic purposes. Harrington (Hudson 1979) recorded a Gabrielino story about malevolent sorcerers, two brothers from Santa Catalina Island, who were commissioned by a chief at San Gabriel to cause lethal sickness to befall the chief’s enemies. Together with a young apprentice, a ground painting was produced. It stood for the world and included a number of representations, some of which were avengers of the types associated with the Chinigchinich cult. In the story, the painting was also used to cause the earth to tremble. The evil shamans and the boy were eventually dispatched with arrows. In a Fernandeano story (Kroeber 1908b:40, 1925:626), ground painting, sickness, and an earthquake are similarly brought together.

3. Was Boscana (1978:38) reporting a ground painting when he described how a *puplem* “sketched upon the ground in front of Chinigchinich [idol] a very ridiculous figure...”? With reference to the toloache ceremony, the Franciscan cleric again referred to a *puplem* sketching on the ground, but he wrote more specifically of “a most uncouth and ridiculous figure of an animal...” (Boscana 1978:46). DuBois (1905:623) opined that the reference to the animal figure reflected the priest’s abysmal ignorance of the meaning of the ground painting in the boys’ initiation rites. Harrington (1978, note 103) was equivocal in his “Annotations,” stating that it was not clear whether the *toróohayic*, or ground painting, was Boscana’s referent or merely

some scratching on the ground. The “Annotations” were first published in 1933, but the following year, Harrington (1934) offered a previously unpublished Boscana manuscript with content that may have convinced the scholar that Boscana was indeed describing a ground painting. In the resurrected manuscript, Boscana wrote that the composition was “painted” on the ground near the Chinigchinich idol in the *Vanquex* (Harrington 1934:17-18). The figure was “the most ridiculous which can be imagined, for it consisted of nothing more than streaks of lines, horizontal and transverse, circular and semicircular, all poorly made without order or arrangement.” Most probably, what seemed inscrutable to the Franciscan was nothing less than Juaneño iconography that gathered together important components of the universe according to Native philosophy.