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Bircham Uplands, North Range at the Naval Air Weapons Station (NAWS)
China Lake, southern Argus Range, approximately 12 km southeast of the Coso Rock Art Landmark, California. Western Great Basin, United States. North America. Documentation. Research methodology. Digital photo enhancement. Desert varnish. Patina. Superpositioning. Abstract: "Color-enhancing tools in Adobe Photoshop® can be applied to digital photographs of complex rock art panels to identify different color densities of patination in petroglyphs and to delineate their extent and frequency in an objective and consistent manner. The resulting image produced is a digital reproduction of the rock art panel, which serves to analyze, layer-by-layer, sets of elements with a shared color value assumed to be from a single production event. For individual sites, this technique can help us understand how rock art panels were reused over time, based on element superimposition, adaption, rejuvenation, and integration. The implications of reuse suggest that rock art was not a “fixed” product, but was really an active process. Comparative studies may reveal patterns representing widespread changes or continuity in rock art styles, function, and meaning through time. This study is based on the assumptions that, in an arid environment, desert varnish accumulates in a more regular and consistent manner on an individual rock art panel and that older petroglyphs are more heavily varnished or patinated and darker in color than younger ones, which are unpatinated and lighter in color." Internet.

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Author abstract: "Presents chronometric age determinations of petroglyphs from the Coso Range and Cima volcanic field (both in California) and relative dating from other locations in the western United States using the new rock varnish technique of cation-ratio dating. Results verify the proposed Great Basin relative stylistic chronology, which indicates that curvilinear abstract was followed by rectilinear abstract and representational. However, these styles have greater antiquity than previously proposed, suggesting new interpretations for the significance of the Coso Range rock art."

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"Cation-Ratio Dating: A New Rock Varnish Age-Determination Technique" in Quaternary Research, Vol. 20:49-73, University of Washington, ISSN: 0033-5894


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Coso Range and Cima Volcanic Fields, Mojave Desert, California. United States. North America. Cation ratio dating, calibrated with AMS radiocarbon dating. Rock varnish. Abstract: "Rock varnish is a dark coating composed mostly of clays and manganese and iron oxides that accretes on rock surfaces in all terrestrial environments. Perry and Adams first observed micron-scale manganese-rich and manganese-poor (relatively iron-rich) layers in varnish and proposed that these may be related to unspecified environmental changes. Electron microprobe analyses reported here suggest that Mn:Fe ratios vary systematically with depth in varnishes on K/Ar-dated volcanic rocks from the Coso and Cima volcanic fields, eastern California, and on talus flatirons in the Negev Desert, Israel. These microchemical laminations probably reflect past fluctuations in the level of aeolian alkalinity, and possibly climatic change. This new indicator of terrestrial environmental change may be of importance to research on geomorphology, archaeology, palaeoclimatology, and Quaternary studies in arid environments."

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Meaning, Models, and Myths: Coso Rock Art Symbolism and Yahwera, Master of the Animals Icon Unpublished manuscript, :33 pgs, ,

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Garfinkel, Alan P. and Pringle, J. Kenneth
2004


Abstract: "Realistic point renderings are an unusual feature at rock art sites. A number of point petroglyphs are recognized within the Coso Range. Amy Gilreath used hydration rims associated with single period sites to date Coso rock art. Her research points to a production peak for Coso sites from ca. A.D. 600 to A.D. 1300 with little to no evidence for more recent expressions. The Coso points are consistent with the style of Eastgate forms (A.D. 600–1300). It is widely held that Great Basin Representational petroglyphs were manufactured by pre-Numatic peoples. Since no Desert Series point glyphs are recognized in the Coso inventory, the Eastgate points provide some further support for such a hypothesis."

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2011


Abstract: "A Sourcebook and Guide to the Primary Resources on the Native Peoples of the far southern Sierra Nevada, Tehachapi Mountains, and southwestern Great Basin. With Special Sections on Red Rock Canyon State Park and Tomo Kahlhi State Historic Park. The Handbook of the Kawaiisu, a new book by anthropologist Alan P. Garfinkel and Kawaiisu historian Harold Williams, includes a DVD with interview and traditional story by fluent Kawaiisu speaker Luther Girado. A total of nine experts contributed to the book, which has chapters on the Kawaiisu language, territory and ethnography, ethnohistory, precontact lifeways, basketry, prehistory and rock art, and important Kawaiisu sites. The book is illustrated with charts, graphics and photos; some of the photos, contributed by Kawaiisu families, date to the late 1800s/early 1900s. The authors used photo-enhancement technology to make rock art more visible. Pages 133-192 of this heavily documented book are devoted to resource listings, references and annotated bibliography. "There has never been a book like this before," contributor Jon Hammond writes in the foreword. "This volume is unique in several respects. Most noteworthy is that this is not only about the Kawaiisu, it is also by the Kawaiisu people themselves. It was prepared with the support of tribal members who generously shared their family photographs, memories, knowledge, and thoughts ... The level of cooperation and collaboration in this project is unprecedented."

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Garfinkel, Alan P., Austin, Donald R., Earle, David and Williams (Wokod), Harold
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2009


Author abstract: "The extraordinary record of prehistoric rock art depicting tens of thousands of animal images in the Coso Range of eastern California provides an opportunity to study the relationship between aboriginal hunting, forager ecology, bighorn prey population levels, and the production of rock art. We review archaeofaunal evidence that the Coso desert bighorn sheep population was strongly depleted during the Newberry era after 1500 B.C. We discuss the dating of the rock art and show a correlation between bighorn depletion and increased rock art production. These data are consistent with the arrival of Numic foragers ca. A.D. 600 who competed with the Coso Pre-Numics and eventually terminated the Coso rock art tradition. An ecological predator-prey computer simulation of the human populations (Numic and Pre-Numics), the sheep population, and the rock art “population”, demonstrates these proposed..."
interconnections and gives a reasonable fit to the observed rock art production rate."

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Garfinkel, Alan P., Young, David A. and Yohe, Robert M.
2010


Abstract: "The extraordinary record of prehistoric rock art depicting tens of thousands of animal images in the Coso Range of eastern California provides an opportunity to study the relationship between aboriginal hunting, forager ecology, bighorn prey population levels, and the production of rock art. We review archaeofaunal evidence that the Coso desert bighorn sheep population was strongly depleted during the Newberry era after 1500 B.C. We discuss the dating of the rock art and show a correlation between bighorn depletion and increased rock art production. These data are consistent with the arrival of Numic foragers ca. A.D. 600 who competed with the Coso Pre-Numics and eventually terminated the Coso rock art tradition. An ecological predator-prey computer simulation of the human populations (Numic and Pre-Numics), the sheep population, and the rock art "population", demonstrates these proposed interconnections and gives a reasonable fit to the observed rock art production rate."

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Great Basin, :97-134, Wa-hi Sina'avi
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Cache Creek, Jawbone Canyon, Nettle Springs, Walker Pass,
Sand Canyon, Creation Cave, El Paso Mountains, Coso
Range, Death Valley, Panamint Valley, souther Sierra
Mountains, Tehachapi Mountains, western Mojave Desert,
southwestern Great Basin, California. Kawaiisu rock art.

Abstract: "A Sourcebook and Guide to the Primary
Resources on the Native Peoples of the far southern Sierra
Nevada, Tehachapi Mountains, and southwestern Great
Basin. With Special Sections on Red Rock Canyon State Park
and Tomo Kuhn State Historic Park. The Handbook of the
Kawaiisu, a new book by anthropologist Alan P. Garfinkel
and Kawaiisu historian Harold Williams, includes a DVD
with interviews and traditional story by fluent Kawaiisu
speaker Luther Girado. A total of nine experts contributed to
the book, which has chapters on the Kawaiisu language,
territory and ethnography, ethnohistory, precontact lifeways,
basketry, prehistory and rock art, and important Kawaiisu
sites. The book is illustrated with charts, graphics and
photos; some of the photos contributed by Kawaiisu families,
date to the late 1800s/early 1900s. The authors used photo-
" enhancement technology to make rock art more visible.
Pages 133-192 of this heavily documented book are devoted
to resource listings, references and annotated bibliography.
"There has never been a book like this before," contributor
Jon Hammond writes in the foreword. "This volume is unique
in several respects. Most noteworthy is that this is not only
about the Kawaiisu, it is also by the Kawaiisu people
themselves. It was prepared with the support of tribal
members who generously shared their family photographs,
memories, knowledge, and thoughts ... The level of
cooperation and collaboration in this project is
unprecedented."" 
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Whitehead and Mavis Greer, eds. American
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Little Petroglyph Canyon, National Historic Landmark,
Naval Air Weapons Station, China Lake, Coso Range,
Numic Scratched rock art style. Authorship by women. Gender. Ladders, rakes, feather designs, and curvilinear motif(s).

Abstract: "A surprising number of scratched rock art designs are found throughout the Great Basin but are most abundant in the Coso Region of eastern California. Bettinger and Baumhoff (1982) were some of the earliest scholars to identify this unusual style of prehistoric rock art images and forward hypotheses related to the meaning, function and dating of this enigmatic style of rock drawing. Recently a number of researchers have continued studies of this type of rock art rendering and have begun to develop models of its authorship. Several researchers have tendered tentative suggestions that this rock art style was crafted by women. In this presentation, we examine such a novel notion and the implications for such a model. Also, we consider how such a perspective might also be formally evaluated. Additionally, we reconsider the results of previous studies that have documented Coso Range Scratched Rock Art and provide new information bearing on the authorship issue from other sites in the Coso Region. Formal evaluation of the archaeological contexts and landscape associations for this type of rock art provide us with contextual evidence to further our understanding of this important rock art tradition."

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COSO MOUNTAINS, CALIFORNIA. GREAT BASIN. United States. North America. ROCK ART IN ITS ARCHAEOLOGICAL CONTEXT SUGGESTS TO THESE AUTHORS THAT COSO ROCK ART MAY NOT BE RELATED TO NUMIC LANGUAGES (SHOSHONE) BUT TO CULTURES OF THE SOUTHWEST AND MESOAMERICAN.
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Rafter, John
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Rogers, A.K.
2000
Site Monitoring Program, Little Petroglyph Canyon, Plan of Action and Milestones Manuscript on File, Environmental Project Office, Naval Air Weapons Station, China Lake, California.

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Rogers, Alexander K.
2010


Abstract: "The Coso Rock Art National Landmark contains the richest display of rock art in the Western Hemisphere. A bewildering variety of motifs is represented, with bighorn sheep and patterned-body anthropomorphs (PBAs) being especially prominent. Building on previous work by Gilreath and by Lytle, this paper proposes a chronological sequence for six motifs. The temporal assignments are based on data on associated archaeological features and artifacts, notably obsidian hydration, amplified by recent XRF data. The motifs sequenced are “Classic Coso” Bighorn Sheep, other Bighorn Sheep, PBA, Archer, Atlatl, and Abstract."

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A Site-Monitoring Partnership at Little Petroglyph Canyon, Coso Range, California, 18+ pgs.


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Little Petroglyph Canyon, Naval Air Weapons Station, China Lake, Ridgecrest, Coso Range, California United States. North America. Cultural resource management. Conservation and preservation. Volunteer site monitoring. Abstract: "An innovative public-private partnership has been established to monitor conditions of the Little Petroglyph Canyon site, located in the Coso Range on the Naval Air Weapons Station, China Lake, California. The Navy, like other land management agencies today, is under budgetary and staff constraints. A partnership has been created with the Maturango Museum of Ridgecrest, California, using trained Museum volunteers to periodically monitor the canyon and document findings. We describe the legal and management status of the canyon, and summarize the partnership and the data protocols used and practical lessons learned from the first phases of the program."

*LMRAA.*


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LITTLE PETROGLYPH CANYON, COSO RANGE, INYO COUNTY, MOJAVE DESERT, CALIFORNIA. United States. North America. COSO ROCK ART. PATTERNED BODY ANTHROPOMORPH MOTIF(S). SHOSHONE. PAIUTE.

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1974

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1979 (Jul)

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COSO RANGE, INYO COUNTY, EASTERN CALIFORNIA. United States. North America. DATING. CHRONOLOGY. PATINATION. ‘An experiment was carried out to test whether or not it is possible to date rock art assemblages relatively by measuring the reflectance of repatination. Visual examination of repatination in rock art has long been used by archaeologists. 


COSO RANGE, INYO COUNTY, EASTERN CALIFORNIA. United States. North America. DATING. CHRONOLOGY. PATINATION. ‘An experiment was carried out to test whether or not it is possible to date rock art assemblages relatively by measuring the reflectance of repatination. Visual examination of repatination in rock art has long been used by archaeologists. 


COSO MOUNTAINS, CALIFORNIA. GREAT BASIN. United States. North America. VISION QUEST. SHAMANISM. CHRONOLOGY. INTERPRETATION. AND CONTINUITY AND CHANGE OVER TIME. ETHNOGRAPHY. BIG HORN SHEEP MOTIF(S) and RAIN MAKING. SEE ESPECIALLY TABLES 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10.
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