



THE ROCK PAINTING OF YUTECOO RIVER, OAXACA MÉXICO

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ABSTRACT

On the mountains of the Mixteca Alta in Oaxaca State, archaeologists found vestiges of fauna and human beings who lived during the Upper Pleistocene. They found dwellings, pebbly caves, remains of mammoths, equine and feline fossils. Some more representative elements of this period may have been lost as a consequence of human plunder and natural destruction. Nevertheless, rock paintings over the banks of the Yutecoo River, that have been made by inhabitants of that period, are still on the banks representing felines, mammals and perhaps Proboscidea too. The most representative painting is a scene of the everyday life; it provides historic elements uncommon in the Pleistocene art, and the hunting in the American Continent. Currently, these elements are damaged and run a great risk to disappear; that's why the archaeological analysis of the region is important, as it allows us to demonstrate the Pleistocene art of the Yutecoo River.

RIASSUNTO

Sulle montagne di Mixteca Alta nello Stato di Oaxaca, gli archeologi hanno rinvenuto resti di fauna e di esseri umani vissuti nel Pleistocene Superiore. Hanno scoperto abitazioni, grotte ciottolose, resti di mammut, fossili equini e felini. Tuttavia, è probabile che alcuni elementi più rappresentativi di questo periodo siano andati persi a causa di furti e distruzione naturale. Ciononostante, le pitture rupestri lungo le rive del fiume Yutecoo, create dagli abitanti dell'epoca, sono ancora sul luogo e rappresentano felini, mammiferi e forse anche proboscidiati.

La pittura più rappresentativa è una scena di vita quotidiana, e ci riferisce elementi storici non comuni nell'arte del Pleistocene, e la caccia nel continente americano. Attualmente, questi elementi sono danneggiati e corrono il forte rischio di scomparire, ecco perché l'analisi archeologica della regione è importante, e ci permette di parlare dell'arte del Pleistocene del fiume Yutecoo.

RESUME

Sur les montagnes de Mixteca Alta, État du Oaxaca, les archéologues ont découvert des restes de faune et d'êtres humains vécus pendant le Pléistocène Supérieur. Ils ont trouvé des habitations, grottes caillouteuses, restes de mammoths, fossiles équines et félins. Toutefois, il est probable que certains éléments plus représentatifs de cette période ont été perdus à cause de vols ou de la destruction naturelle. Malgré cela, les peintures rupestres tout au long du fleuve Yutecoo, réalisées par les habitants de l'époque, sont encore là bas, et représentent des félins, mammifères et peut-être aussi des proboscidiens.

La peinture la plus représentative est une scène de vie quotidienne, et nous réfère des éléments historiques non communs dans l'art du Pléistocène, et la chasse au continent américain. Aujourd'hui, ces éléments sont endommagés et courent le risque de disparaître, c'est à pour ça que l'analyse archéologique de la région est importante, et nous permet de parler de l'art rupestre du Pléistocène du fleuve Yutecoo.

THE PLACE

The Cave Painting mentioned in this paper is on a wall Angelito River, a tributary of the River Yutecoo (Snake River), located between latitudes 17 ° north and 97 ° 16' latitude west 15' longitude of the 14D36 topographic map, scale 1:50,000 INEGI, between the villages of La Union, El Venado, Guadalupe Victoria, Morelos, and San Miguel, municipality of Jaltepec, which is located in the District of Nochixtlan in the region known as the Mixteca Alta, in part western state of Oaxaca. The basis of this river is 1800msnm, 400m below the communities that surround observed in the letter as a deep depression which means that the water has eroded over the years.

The geographical area which consists of metamorphic rocks with large granitic intrusions, which form the complex and Metamorphic Crystalline Basement of Oaxaca, on which are not metamorphosed sedimentary rocks of the Jurassic, Cretaceous and Tertiary, which emerged over the transgressions Marine held NE to SW direction, which alternated with erosion inland marine sedi-

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ments. It was not until the third when removed Mesozoic seas and in the Miocene volcanic activity began with the emergence of andesites which form the high ranges that can be seen today in the region the Sierra Madre del Sur.

PAINTING

The river has great Yutecoo erosive activity, which has been defined as a river deep, 400m in relation to the mountains that surround it and from which one descends to normal. This erosion process has left all along the way, huge walls which show the materials that form mountains. Some walls are completely vertical, ranging from river bottom to its top edge, others are superimposed as forming terraces on two or three levels. These walls are the most famous people of the place called "boulders" and among them are the Peña Blanca, Peña del Alacran, Peña and Peña del Gato del Angelito. It is the latter that interest for this work, although we must stress that all have paintings relating to the name to them since, but not just them, because the river is full of representations of animals in walled small, and in caves in the same river.

La Peña del Angelito is a wall that is about 200m high and 300m wide, in upper middle part and south-facing, has some holes that appear to be the entry of 5 caves, three of which appear to have been part of a large cave, since they give the impression of being a continuation of a series of tunnels and spaces. The top of the caves or hollows, perishes continue horizontally, in a short space and then continues vertically upwards, so it follows that if it was a huge cave, but that the erosive processes that affected the area, ultimately collapsed, leaving only the part that can be seen today and where the painting is mentioned.

On this wall you can see two different scenes, drawn in white paint, which is difficult to infer the materials it was made. The scene above shows two elements: one human and another animal. The human figure might say that a character is an adult, is standing with legs apart, torso leaning back slightly, one arm stretched forward and the other backward and upward, in a position to throw something; long ago you could still see an element in this hand, appeared to be an atlatl, a spear or a sling, today, this element is almost unrecognizable by the action of water that flows over the wall. Given this character, on the right side of the scene shows what could be the representation of an animal, or is fleeing, or has not realized that they're going to attack. This animal appears to be a representation of a proboscidean (mammoth or mastodon) who lived in that area during the Pleistocene, which ends before 10,000 BC For the anatomical features that this animal presents: proboscis, hump, the four legs that are very broad, we can infer that a proboscidean not identify which of them is, mastodon or mammoth, and less to that species belongs.

The scene below represents what could be a solar eclipse. This scene was drawn with two circular elements, one large and one smaller target, for which no paint was used, simply left unpainted, with what was intended to exemplify the lack of color or shade of a star when brought about another light (to the human eye), ie, the moon obscuring the sun, to produce what we've discussed: a solar eclipse. This scene is accompanied, at the bottom of zoomorphic figures that are nearly erased from the wall. In itself, the scene of the eclipse, is greater than the hunter and the proboscidean. It may not be specifically and only an eclipse is the representation of the moon in its waning phase, or growing, or just the symbolic representation of the same during the night, as represented to this satellite anywhere in the world and culture.

These scenes painted on the wall are representations of what could be the activities of daily life at the time we're talking about, as is hunting, or ritual associated with it, which was carried out in different forms: direct that is, tracing the animal attacking or even killing him or making him fall in natural traps as gorges, lakes or swamps, and then gone to kill and butcher in the same place, the other is holding the animal or caught in traps designed specifically for effect and bring it home to kill it and eat it. These scenes of hunting or representation of everyday life, are not common in rock art, much less hunt for a proboscidean, few of them know that even in Europe, where only the Upper Palaeolithic to the Spanish Levante examples have been documented. (Aveleyra 2002).

What it is more common in rock art is the representation of some of the stars like the sun, moon, stars, etc., Alone or isolated, even as other elements associated with animals, plants or humans.

For the case, it is important to mention that the type of fauna that is represented there, became extinct toward the Upper Paleolithic, during the Pleistocene, that is, before 10,000 BC and that human beings developed the painting had to be the same that lived and fed on such animals, who saw and hunted, since they could not otherwise having represented on this wall.

As already mentioned, the figures represented in the Peña del Angelito, were drawn with white paint which is difficult to know its possible origin, mineral, vegetable or animal, since the target can be obtained from these three elements, but requires a more detailed study and analysis to determine its composition.

The lines that were developed with these elements were not made arbitrarily. In humans, measures were used at a glance which correspond to the anatomical proportions of the body, as in the proboscidean, which apparently is smaller than the hunter, but from the idea that is further away, is as the artist is smaller, making the effect of perspective, that by this time is difficult to conceptualize.

The shining star was pictured larger than the other elements, perhaps to emphasize their importance or to be the main element of the scene, suggesting that all of it revolves around him. But perhaps more important is that this painting was used to compile them the presence and absence of color to achieve the desired effect, common in prehistory, especially in the representation of anatomical elements, such as the representation of hands. Its importance in itself, is that it is the representation of a scene from everyday life very bygone era and perhaps only in our country.

During the Paleolithic MAN IN MEXICO

The Pleistocene is the stage of human development Paleolithic, when this gets food through hunting and gathering, as well as materials for making tools and materials for their homes. The man in this stage uses the carved stone, but also bone, wood, horn, leather, vegetable fibers. From the Lower Paleolithic Homo habilis began to use stone tools, but hunting was rare, dominated the gathering and scavenging. The Middle Paleolithic tools are obtained from slices from a lithic core. For the Upper Paleolithic lithic tools include the manufacture of knives, chisels and scrapers, as well as tools made of bone, antler and other materials, manufactured harpoons, spears, hooks, needles with eyes, oil lamps, ropes and the first pieces of ceramics (Francis Hours 1985).

The lytic phase in Mexico, which is located within the Pleistocene, groups the nomadic societies of hunter gatherers and fishermen, as well as the first to domesticate animals and plants and their cultivation techniques for establishing, managing to settle in one place. The use of ceramics in these societies is the final indicator of the lytic stage. This ranges from the first appearance of humans in our country in a period of 40,000 to 2,500 a. c., through the Holocene, which starts at around 10,000 BC, leaving some human evidence in places like: El Horno, El Cedral, Tlapacoya Chimalhuacan or Peñon de los Baños.

It is from different migrations across the Bering Strait, to whose researches, studies based on linguistic, genetic, dental and DNA, we infer a variety of cultures throughout the continent and not from the so-called complex Clovis, as previously thought, which was based on hunting of large animals, especially in North America.

In Mexico, Clovis groups coexisted with other resources exploiting different geographical environments as well as in Central and South America. During arqueológico (34000/33000 to 9500 BC) and lower cenolítico (9500 to 7000 BC), the man was devoted to hunting, so their hunting practices were diverse: sometimes a group chased the animal cornered, he threw stones to defeat them and followed him to a precipice, in others, an individual caught a small animal. They also picked fruits, flowers, leaves, tender shoots of various plants, insects, larvae, fishing and shellfishing. In the SLP Cedral, found a home with tarsi proboscidean (mammoth), a slice of waste, a projectile point fragment, a fragment of tibia of horses with signs of use, and much earlier, scraper of chalcedony. In the Basin of Mexico have found homes, specifically Tlapacoya dated between 22000 and 500 BC, associated with piles of animal bones, some now extinct. Santa Isabel Ixtapa, D. F., was found with mammoth bones out of their anatomical position, suggesting that was killed and dismembered in the same place about 10,000 years BC, were found associated with the three-pointed projectile. These remains, associated with lithic materials tell of the great hunting activity that was experienced in the Basin of Mexico for the period known as arqueológico and lower cenolítico.

PLEISTOCENE FAUNA OF THE UPPER

Among the large species that inhabited North America for this time some animals are already extinct today as bison, mammoth, mastodon, saber-toothed tiger, lions of the Pleistocene, Pleistocene wolves, sheep, elk, antelope, camels, llamas, giant ground sloths, glyptodonts, mastodons, gomphotheres, bears, deer, zebras, horses, tapirs, rodents.



One of the animals that may be related more to the man in this period is the mammoth, as associated with the elements found some produced by humans, which discusses the use of meat and maybe your skin obtained through hunting. In the case of Europe, has found that in addition to their meat, used their bones and tusks in housing construction

The mammoth *mamuthus* belongs to the genus, which includes several species, of which the best known is the woolly mammoth, which fossils have been found in North America, Eurasia and Africa. The mammoth's head was bulging, muscular proboscis and long curved tusks. The northern species were covered with hair to withstand the cold glacial ecosystem. Her back was arched and relatively small ears, its snout to the tip had two lobes and its forelegs endowed 5-finger, while the back four, the trunk or proboscis, was mobile and prehensile. Ate about 180kg of food daily. For the scaling of their molars have come to know that they were slow-growing animals, which reached full sexual maturity until age 20. Died between 60 and 70 years of age, when their molars were worn and could no longer feed themselves.

The tusks of mammoths used to measure more than 2.5m long and weighing about 50kg and they kept growing until the animal dies. They had a hump of fat, muscle and hair, a small tail. It is believed that the gestation period was 22 months and a single offspring born per pregnancy. The *mamuthus colombinus* is one of the largest species, grew to be up to 4m in height and weigh up to 10 tonnes. Lived in the late Pleistocene and was one of the last species of mega fauna of this period to become extinct. Found fossils of these specimens from California and Texas, to Nicaragua, and is more common in Mexico. This was less adapted to cold than the woolly mammoth. His fangs were the longest of all species of mammoths and measure up to 5m. He had a little thick hair coat.

The highest variety of North American mammoth was *mamuthus imperator* or imperial mammoth, with a height of about 5m, his hair coat was not very thick, curved tusks so to the point he got across.

The *mamuthus meridionalis* was the first species to leave Africa for Eurasia and North America reach across the Bering Strait. It is the direct ancestor of the Columbian mammoth, the imperial and steppe.

LYTIC STAGE OAXACA

Kent Flanery (1996) proposed that the first inhabitants of what is now known as Oaxaca, came from the areas known as Sonoran Life Zone and Zone of Chihuahua life, arid areas located north of Mexico, devoid of ice during the last glaciation, by moved where immigrants from Asia, where they learned to identify plants and animals useful to their diet and daily life. Was that following them to hunt, came south from Mexico, settling first in areas with similar climate and geography, as the Valley of Tehuacan, where the same elements found in the aforementioned areas, for subsistence. In addition to subsistence, these people brought with them the technology they had developed in those areas. Animals that were still at the end of the Ice Age Delayed, in the Tehuacan Valley was the American antelope, in the Valley of Oaxaca, the Texas tortoise.

During the late Pleistocene population size was very low in this part of the country, less than one person per 100km², lived by hunting wild animals and gathering wild plants. They lacked sharp stone tools and containers for cooking. They used plants such as agave, yucca and sotol, which prepared in earth ovens. Among his tools had hunting spear and atlatl, his shafts were topped with spikes of chalcedony, tuff, obsidian or flint. Late Pleistocene sites or base camps were Paleo Indians, they lived up to 25 people, others were employed to kill and butcher animals and were of brief occupation. By this time there is occupation in the Caves of Coxcatlán, Tehuacan Valley and Cueva Blanca del Valle de Oaxaca, where they found animal bones were small and medium butchered and consumed on site, such as rabbits, hares, deer, foxes, reptiles, rodents. In Coxcatlán horse bones were found in the Pleistocene and American antelope, but not mammoth. These caves have been given a temporality of 12,000 to 9,000 years BC

Among the lithic artifacts found and dated to this period are a point of type Scottsbluff, located near a chert quarry on a table west of Mitla. The quarry was occupied throughout prehistory. In San Juan Guelavia near Tlacolula surface was found in an arrowhead grooved 4.8 x 2.7 cm., Made of yellow chalcedony, which was probably thinned to put mango, removing foil a long narrow channel along its longitudinal axis. Similar spikes have been found in the southern United States, for the type associated with Clovis hunters and mega fauna of these regions. This has been considered by Marcus Winter (1997), as the oldest artifact found so

far in Oaxaca, testifying to the hunt for mega fauna of paleo Indians over 12,000 years ago. In 1953 José Luis Lorenzo Yanhuítlán visit in the Mixteca Alta, to identify the bones of an animal of great proportions, that the landslides by the rains had exposed. Identify the skeleton as belonging to a mammoth, but was associated with the *Equus a molar*, which spoke of a clear affiliation Pleistocene. In 1955 excavations initiated a project to study a possible preceramic site, although he and his team hoped they were a Pleistocene site, analysis, research and results indicated an approximate age of 4,000 ac therefore no site was located in the Pleistocene, but in the Archaean, specifically in the Protonolithic (Lorenzo 1991).

INTERPRETATION

As to its meaning, is difficult to give a possible interpretation, because as mentioned earlier in this work, we can not lower the vision that human beings had in the time of writing, he thought, he felt, what are your needs? or their priorities, if he intended to send us a message or contact others via a pictographic message.

Residents of communities around the river, call this wall "Peña del Angelito, because they say the moon" are the wings of the angel at the foot of the Virgin of Guadalupe ", others interpret the human or hunter there represented as a "little angel in profile, which is praying (arm extended toward the front would be the arms and hands together in prayer position, arm and back up would be the wings, in a very schematic interpretation of an angel heavenly), so that the devil (represented by proboscidean) exit fleeing before prayers angelic being.

This interpretation must be understood as "syncretized" from the influence of the Catholic Church has had on local residents.

The same people speak of the "heathen" people who lived in the world in ancient times, which were human giant of more than five feet tall, who lived in the woods, wild, huddled in groups in caves or stone houses, like animals, they had no language and who did not know God or know the love of the for men, were not baptized and therefore were not considered human beings were creatures just do not know the fire and ate raw meat is covered with leaves and skins of the animals they killed, they were always fighting each other, so God destroyed them and ordered the Christians to destroy their bones when found. Some people say that when bones are enormous, farmland, on the cliffs or in caves, believe they belong to the 'gentiles' and destroy them completely, not knowing that perhaps belong to some member of the mega fauna Pleistocene that inhabited those places a few thousand years ago.

In the communities there is still worshiped the God of Mt, of which one has no way to represent it, but described him as a being with animal costume and horns of deer, they say it is the owner and the wild animals are you have to ask permission to hunt, especially deer, and the recourse is carrying offerings of food and small animals that do not send their guards (wolves, coyotes, cougars) to harm pets or send diseases when angry with men. He is the god of the hunt and therefore the food.

nother deity still present in the thinking of these people is Mother Earth, which gives us life, which asks permission to plow and sow the seeds that serve as food for men, in turn, is offered the body when the person dies, it will be food for the mother goddess who continue to allow life on earth. It is the goddess of fertility, food and life-giving.

It is clear that its meaning is different and that the information it provides is unique painting as the representation of Pleistocene fauna in Mexico and the American continent is limited and this can be an invaluable document for our history.

CONCLUSION

I think the painting in question is the representation of a hunting or proboscidean mammoth, or a ritual associated with it, in a place where this animal existed for some time, because research conducted by José Luis Lorenzo in a place belonging to the same geographic region and prove it. Both the remains of *Equus mammoth* as reported by Flannery and antelopes, are located in the same region during the Upper Pleistocene. The Clovis Point Type *Guelavia* found in San Juan, speaks of the relationship that man could have with this kind of mega fauna and made use of it for their benefit and / or survival in this region. The gun used by the hunter, that it is almost imperceptible, may be an atlatl spear or even a sling, since the use of these instruments is reported for this time in the Valley of Oaxaca, and the latter is still used by locals. In relation to the theme embodied in the painting, the scene is repeated constantly since the Pleistocene-



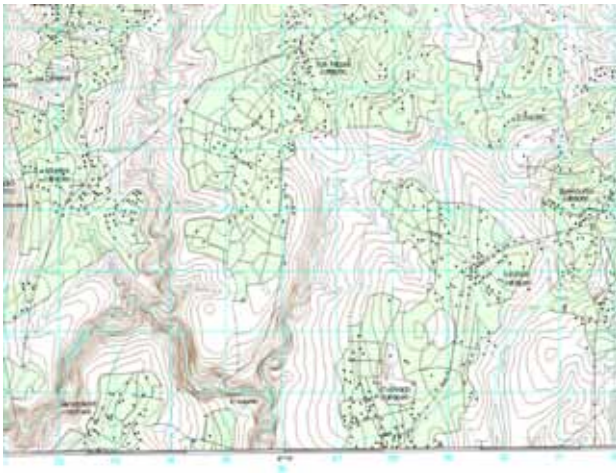
ne, especially for the Upper Palaeolithic in Europe to the colonial period in Mexico and elsewhere in the Americas, as reported by some researchers work in other parts of the country and the continent. For the above conclusion that the painting is reflected in the Peña del Angelito, is revealed as a document of great value in its content, a time when there is little information to the history of man, at least in Mexico, but their interpretation, their analysis must be cause for attention from specialists in the field.

COMPARISON

Similar scenes, with themes similar to the painting of the Rock del Angelito, but with many years apart, perhaps thousands of development between them, are in other parts of the country.

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14D36 1:50,000 topographic map showing the location and depth Yutecoo



La Peña del Gato



Printing fossil fish in a rock near the Yutecoo



La Peña del Angelito (Yutecoo in the river) where you can see a likely hunting scene and the representation of the moon or what would be a solar eclipse, both scenes occurred probably during the Pleistocene



The proboscideans as a sign of escape. At the foot of a character is seen lying in a fetal position and movement.
Fig. 17 The moon blocking the sun or waning



Other scenes and badly damaged, the opposite side of the cave. The scene in ocher perhaps representing the sun or a trace of a cat. The white scene is difficult to interpret