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# The Contributions of Polly Schaafsma to Stylistic Analysis of Great Basin Rock Art

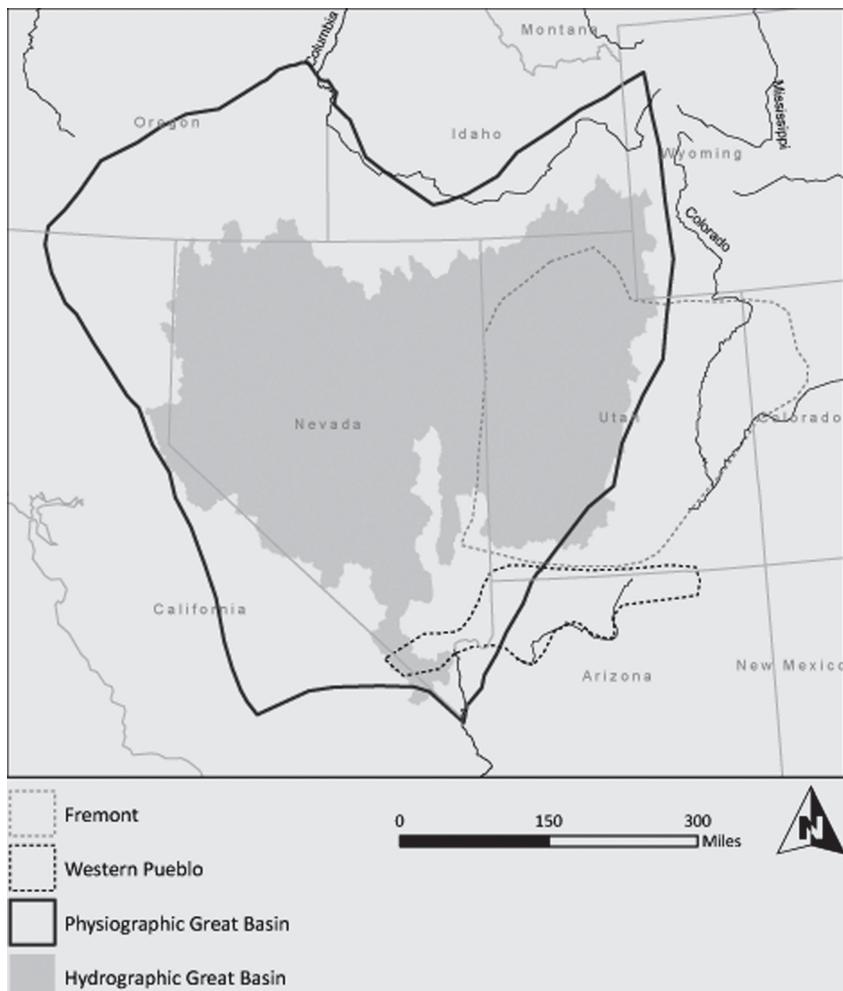
DARLA L. GAREY-SAGE AND ANGUS R. QUINLAN



Polly Schaafsma is best known for her seminal and wide-ranging studies of southwestern and Colorado Plateau rock art traditions. Her most important contributions to Great Basin rock art have been more regionally and temporally focused on the eastern and southeastern Basin, the period of Fremont and Ancestral Puebloan cultures (ca. 1,600–700 years ago), and methodological issues regarding the analysis of rock art traditions dominated by abstract imagery. These research interests are characterized by Schaafsma's best-known publications that deal with Great Basin rock art—*The Rock Art of Utah* (1971), *Indian Rock Art of the Southwest* (1980), and her chapter on rock art in the Great Basin volume of the *Handbook of North American Indians* (1986).<sup>1</sup> These works variously synthesize data on Great Basin rock art styles and stylistically analyze and class anthropomorph types associated with Ancestral Puebloan and Fremont cultures. Anthropomorphs range from simple shapes, either triangular or trapezoidal, with rudimentary arms and legs, simple horns or headgear; to more complex forms with long, tapering torsos, large rectangular heads with possible fringed horns, and a “distinctive line or dot facial decoration.”<sup>2</sup> Further, fringes may be found on the arms or torso. Besides classifying anthropomorphs, the three seminal works also emphasize reconstructing culture history and identifying the chronological outline of stylistic

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Map of the physiographic and hydrographic Great Basin, showing the approximate boundaries of Western Pueblo and Fremont culture settlement. Map courtesy Darla L. Garey-Sage and Angus R. Quinlan.

developments. Although over the course of her distinguished career, Great Basin rock art has not been the chief focus of Schaafsma's research, she has made lasting contributions to the field by providing stylistic analyses that refined approaches to abstract motifs and established a rigorous stylistic definition for Fremont anthropomorph styles. She has also set the tone for more recent research by demonstrating how studies of regional anthropomorph types can be productive for identifying rock art styles and reconstructions of culture history.

The Southwest and the Great Basin are both geographic regions treated as culture areas. The Great Basin, north of the Southwest region, is defined both hydrographically and physiographically.<sup>3</sup> Hydrographically, the Great Basin is an area of interior drainage, with waters flowing into remnant Pleistocene lakes or playas rather than into the sea. If this were the only definition of the Great Basin, then the eastern and southeastern edges of the area with Fremont and Puebloan influences would be excluded because the region's waters flow into the Colorado River and out to the sea. However, the physiographic Great Basin is slightly larger and includes these archaeological and ethnographic complexes.

Humans have lived in the Great Basin for at least 12,000 to 10,000 years, adapting their economic practices to changes in a generally semiarid and challenging environment. For most of the history of Great Basin human settlement, communities practiced variations of mobile hunter-forager economies. Residential strategies focused on moving to locations with seasonally available economic resources. Semihorticultural cultures in the southeastern and eastern Basin (ca. 1,600–700 years ago) punctuated this hunter-forager economic pattern, before resuming hunter-foraging lifeways that continued until European Americans entered the Great Basin.<sup>4</sup>

The very earliest evidence of the peopling of the Great Basin (14,000 to 12,000 years ago) suggests limited use of the region for short duration hunting expeditions. Sparse but repeated settlement is visible during the Palaeoarchaic (ca. 12,000–7,000 years ago), with early hunter-foragers focusing on big-game hunting and harvesting wetlands resources. Population densities were probably low and most archaeological remains are of hunting and foraging sites. In northwestern Nevada, the Winnemucca Lake rock art site dates to this period (and perhaps even predates it) and is the oldest scientifically dated rock art site in North America.<sup>5</sup> The site illustrates the long and enduring history of abstract-dominated rock art traditions.

During the Early Archaic (7,000–4,000 years ago) population densities increased and human settlement became more widespread. Use of the spear for hunting appears to have been replaced in favor of large dart points thrown from *atlatls* (spear throwing tool). Milling equipment (ground stone tools) became more common, indicating that people harvested seeds, tubers, and other plants. During the Middle Archaic (4,000–1,500 years) it appears that economic intensification developed in response to growing populations and seasonal rounds became more territorially established. A wider range of milling tools appeared, suggesting resource diversification, and marine shell and obsidian exchanges became evident. Surviving baskets and other tools made from cordage display mastery of textiles.

Evidence points to significant environmental, settlement, and technological changes beginning 2,000–1,500 years ago. Climates trended toward warmer and drier conditions that characterize the modern-day climate. The number of sites increased during the Late Archaic, indicating population growth and the peopling of previously little-settled areas in the Great Basin. Economic practices focused on hunting small mammals and harvesting plants and seeds. Bow and arrow technology was introduced from the west, evidenced by smaller projectile points; milling equipment became more elaborate and more frequent; and pottery began to be made around 1100 CE. These technological changes and concomitant changes in settlement practices are often viewed as responses to population pressure and the need for further economic intensification.

Since most rock art sites in the Great Basin have not been directly dated, relating rock art to changes in Middle and Late Archaic settlement and economic practices remains difficult. Based on their associated archaeological contexts, rock art sites appear to become more regular archaeological features during the Middle and Late Archaic. Considering that temporally distinct styles of abstract rock art are difficult to identify, it is generally only possible to identify temporally distinctive anthropomorph styles principally related to Fremont and Ancestral Puebloan presence in the southeastern and eastern Basin. Developing around sixteen hundred years ago, these cultures are associated with economies that exhibit variable reliance on horticulture and harvesting wild resources. Distinctive domestic architecture and villages characterize both cultures. In the southeastern Basin, this marks an Ancestral Puebloan presence and, in Utah and southeastern Nevada, Fremont settlement. Seven hundred years ago, economies focused on hunter-foraging replaced Ancestral Puebloan and Fremont economies, which is conventionally seen as marking the dispersal of the Numic language family and peoples ancestral to modern Indians in the Great Basin.

As noted above, Great Basin rock art is predominantly abstract petroglyphs with low percentages of “representational” images, with the exception of the eastern and southeastern Basin.<sup>6</sup> Robert Heizer and Martin Baumhoff estimated representational motif types made up 4 percent of Great Basin site assemblages, becoming frequent only in areas with Fremont settlement or Ancestral Puebloan influences, where they estimated the frequency of representational motifs rose to 45 percent.<sup>7</sup> Although detailed comparative data is rare, it seems that representational imagery is visually more prominent in the eastern and southeastern Basin. Representational motifs still make up less than 25 percent of motifs found, they are predominantly images of animals, and sites with large concentrations of representational images are patterned in distribution.<sup>8</sup> This contrasts with the rock art of the Southwest, where representational imagery is either more common or visually more prominent. This distinction between

rock art of the Great Basin and the Southwest still holds today. Researchers use terms such as Western Archaic Tradition or Basin and Range tradition to refer to a Great Basin rock art record of abstract motif types and stylistically undifferentiated anthropomorphs and zoomorphs that are difficult to assign to specific periods.

### Difficulties Dealing with Abstract Art

The predominance of abstract petroglyphs in the Great Basin has created something of a “desert” perception of the region’s art. Not unlike the seemingly inhospitable Basin and Range landscape, the region’s rock art could be characterized as an inconsistent tradition of incomprehensible abstract designs. The lack of easily identifiable referents in abstract-dominated rock art traditions precludes ready identification of stylistic variability in the treatment of repeated themes or meanings in contrast to figures identified as, at some levels, portraying humans or animals. The meaning of representational imagery may or may not be what appears apparent to the contemporary analyst, but at least it can be identified on morphological criteria and apparent stylistic variability can be tracked.

### Understandings of Style in Rock Art

Style is fundamental to classing, ordering, and consistently describing rock art data. Traditionally, styles have been defined based on a combination of the production method and the consideration of motif types or themes portrayed. Observable differences in style are frequently related to different periods or cultural identities, which can be related to known archaeological cultural groups.<sup>9</sup> Yet stylistic differences are also functional since artists selected from a defined set of styles depending on context, indicating that styles reflect social and symbolic practices that are not necessarily coterminous with cultural boundaries.<sup>10</sup>

Building on the work by art historian Meyer Schapiro, Schaafsma defined style as a “constant form” based on the elements or motive (for example a pattern) of form, relationships within the form, and the qualities of the form referred to as expression.<sup>11</sup> Schapiro’s relegation of technique, subject matter, and material to secondary importance did not apply well to rock art, according to Schaafsma, who stressed their significance in differentiating styles in rock art. Yet she reinforced the validity of the assumptions that style “can be used with confidence as an independent clue to time and place of origin.”<sup>12</sup> This approach, with its detailed analyses of elements, motifs, and their patterning, brings order to the complex dataset of rock art, but it potentially oversteps the boundaries of archaeological inference when assumptions about cultural affiliation and

chronology are made independently of correlative data.<sup>13</sup> Schaafsma's approach addressed these problems by trying to refer chronological sequences implied by stylistic developments in rock art traditions to associated dateable archaeological materials.

For example the use of style as an analytical construct does not productively incorporate the successive traditions—that is, reuse and reincorporation of elements and motifs by later artists—and complex compositions of panels that rarely represent only one style.<sup>14</sup> Trudy Thomas, building on Alexander Marshack's analysis of European Upper Paleolithic incised artifacts, microscopically examined the markings on incised stones from Gatecliff Shelter in central Nevada. Thomas found that seemingly integrated designs (elements and patterns seen as part of a constant form) were the product of sequential marking: nearly one-third of the Gatecliff Shelter dataset showed that decorative patterning was cumulative rather than made in a single session. Analysis of pigments from pictographs at the same shelter suggested similar sequentiality of painted motifs.<sup>15</sup> It was not possible to determine how much time elapsed between different episodes of marking, but recognizing the sequential construction of imagery is important for interpretations of rock art. Thomas's microscopic and chemical analysis suggested a different temporal trajectory in stylistic evolution than would be typically inferred from formal stylistic analysis in isolation.

### Style in Great Basin Rock Art

Despite the shortcomings of an uncritical approach to stylistic analysis for inferring cultural affiliation and chronology, the use of style as an analytical construct continues to dominate rock art studies. The rock art of the eastern and southeastern Great Basin, with its high percentage of pictographs and representational forms, derives its styles from a long period of settlement by hunter-foragers, traditionally associated with abstract petroglyphs. During the Late Archaic, Fremont and Ancestral Puebloan cultures punctuated the hunter-foraging economies with their distinctive horticultural economies, domestic architecture, and settlement patterns. The stylistic identification of the rock art signature of the Fremont and Ancestral Puebloan groups has been used to understand the emergence of Fremont and Puebloan cultural systems and the dispersal of the Numic language family.<sup>16</sup> This use of style to understand the history and processes of cultural groups within the southeastern Great Basin has focused on the perceived higher percentage of representational images assumed to have been created by horticultural groups. This perception, however, is not necessarily borne out by quantitative data in some areas of settlement peripheral to the Fremont core area.<sup>17</sup> As Schaafsma noted, these distinctive

anthropomorph styles reflect innovations in ceremonial practices associated with the different social worlds of Ancestral Puebloan and Fremont cultures.<sup>18</sup> They do not necessarily replace abstract rock art traditions. Rather, anthropomorphs assume a more prominent role in the rock art of these cultures, which is more readily identifiable than subtle changes in the character of abstract rock art also produced by these groups. Schaafsma attempted to identify stylistically distinct abstract designs that accompany Ancestral Puebloan and Fremont anthropomorphs, although her analyses were limited by the lack of quantifiable data for abstract motifs, a problem that continues to restrict rigorous stylistic analysis of abstract rock art.<sup>19</sup>

The most wide-ranging stylistic analyses of Great Basin rock art before Schaafsma's work are Julian Steward's inventory from 1929 of the Desert West's rock art and then Heizer and Baumhoff's compendium of Great Basin rock art sites in the early 1960s.<sup>20</sup> Schaafsma revised and recast the stylistic analyses provided by these researchers to give them continuing relevance.<sup>21</sup> Steward was the first to produce a systematic study of the regional distribution of motif types and styles in the Desert West. He focused on the content and distribution of recognizable "elements" or motif types, rather than describing formal stylistic categories. Steward felt this approach was superior to classifying sites according to whether they contained "realistic" or geometric designs (the widely employed baseline division in classification at the time) since he correctly observed that most of the sites were composed of many different kinds of figures. "Moreover," Steward wrote, "lacking meaning and definite identity of elements, this is our only hope to correlate the various sites."<sup>22</sup> Schaafsma followed Steward's lead in attempting to identify stylistically distinct abstract imagery in Ancestral Puebloan and Fremont rock art traditions, but separate from the imagery of the Western Archaic Tradition or the Basin and Range tradition that characterizes Archaic hunter-foragers in the northern and western Great Basin.<sup>23</sup>

Steward identified four areas (A–D) of variable element distribution. Area A, comprising the hydrographic Great Basin, was characterized by large numbers of geometric designs with curvilinear types being the most common and rectilinear motifs being more limited in distribution. Naturalistic zoomorphs, particularly bighorn sheep, were part of the element inventory as well. Area B, comprising the Southwest and Colorado Plateau regions, was defined by the presence of Area A's geometric and zoomorphic design types, but included rectilinear lizards and elaborate anthropomorphs, or "kachina-like" figures.

Abstract elements, for Steward, were as important as the more readily identified representational elements, and he compared numbers of abstract to representational elements as a characteristic of stylistic variation. Steward used his maps and tables of element distribution (like style) to hypothesize about

cultural affiliations and age, particularly for his Area B. He cautioned that “to assign groups and styles to definite cultures in the Southwest will require a detailed study of that area.”<sup>24</sup> This detailed study, of course, has been the focus of much of Schaafsma’s career. The “representational” images that Steward termed “kachina-like” have long captured the interest and focus of researchers, creating a precedent for emphasis on these distinctive elements.<sup>25</sup> The later work of Schaafsma, as well, revised these kachina-like figures into robust stylistic categories with culture-historical significance, which current researchers rely on when studying Fremont and Ancestral Puebloan rock art. Steward’s approach can be regarded as the first to use formal or morphological variability in rock art motif types to identify spatial patterning. He also recognized that a quantitative approach might be the most productive way of identifying stylistic variability in abstract motif types.<sup>26</sup>

Following Steward, Heizer and Baumhoff undertook the next exhaustive survey of the stylistic properties of Great Basin rock art.<sup>27</sup> They based their stylistic approach on technique primarily and motif type secondarily, classifying abstract and representational motif types into several overarching styles: Pit-and-Groove, Great Basin Pecked, Great Basin Painted, Puebloan Painted, and Great Basin Scratched. These were subdivided according to motif types (for example, Pecked Representational, Pecked Curvilinear, etc.) to produce a stylistic classification more detailed than Steward’s, although more inconsistent to apply.

For Heizer and Baumhoff, the Pit-and-Groove style was the oldest rock art style, with relative age estimates based on the heavy repatination of the elements comprising these styles. This style contains no “actual imagery or designs,” and it is rather manipulations of the rock surface.<sup>28</sup> Pits or cupules are circular depressions in the rock that are sometimes connected with deeply incised lines. The complete repatination of cupules at Grimes Point has been used to characterize these seemingly simple forms as the oldest in the Great Basin; estimates are for an age of 8,000 years or more.<sup>29</sup> In contrast recent research in northwestern Nevada has provided strong scientific dating evidence that deeply pecked curvilinear designs were made between 14,000 and 10,000 years ago, the oldest in North America.<sup>30</sup> This style, characterized by deeply incised petroglyphs, complex designs, and lack of white space in composition, contradicts the “simpler equals earlier” view.

Most of the Great Basin’s rock art was subsumed by Heizer and Baumhoff’s Great Basin Pecked style, which they saw dominating the Great Basin from the Sierra Nevada in the west to the Wasatch Range in the east, with limited distribution in the Southwest and the Plateau culture areas.<sup>31</sup> The style was identified based on method of production and then divided by content into abstract and representational substyles, which were further subdivided based on motif form.

The two main abstract substyles Heizer and Baumhoff identified in the Great Basin Pecked style were the curvilinear and rectilinear styles, characterized by a preference for curvilinear or rectilinear design types respectively.<sup>32</sup> Heizer and Baumhoff assigned dates of approximately 3,500 to 150 years ago to the Great Basin Pecked style and suggested that the curvilinear style was older than the rectilinear, based on a study of the Lagomarsino Canyon Petroglyph Site in northwestern Nevada.<sup>33</sup>

This chronological sequence is no longer accepted because abstract motifs in Heizer's and Baumhoff's definition of curvilinear and rectilinear styles may be as old as 10,000 to 14,000 years.<sup>34</sup> At Gatecliff Shelter, incised stones dated to occupation phases placed the curvilinear elements to around 1250 BCE and later, with rectilinear elements appearing around 3300 BCE, reversing Heizer and Baumhoff's relative sequence.<sup>35</sup> In general chronological resolution is lacking and only a general age range of production that spans the Archaic can currently be suggested for the curvilinear and rectilinear styles. These two styles (as understood by Heizer and Baumhoff) usually co-occur, are found widely throughout the Great Basin, and cannot be regarded as distinct "styles."<sup>36</sup> The rectilinear and curvilinear abstract styles collectively have been more recently termed the Basin and Range tradition or the Western Archaic Tradition.<sup>37</sup> The abstract motif types that are prominent in Basin and Range tradition rock art can be regarded as the building blocks of visual expression. Basin and Range tradition is a rubric for stylistically undifferentiated abstract, anthropomorphic, and zoomorphic design elements. This tradition is usually associated with hunter-forager populations, unlike "representational" style groups, which are mostly associated with Fremont and Ancestral Puebloan groups.

The Great Basin Pecked Representational was described by Heizer and Baumhoff as containing stick-figure anthropomorphs and "naturalistic" zoomorphs. As Schaafsma and other researchers noted, Great Basin Pecked Representational style does not function as a style per se because it includes all variants of stylized anthropomorph forms.<sup>38</sup> This style encompasses not only stylistically divergent Fremont and Ancestral Puebloan petroglyphs, but isolated examples of representational figures in western Nevada that are typologically at variance with both the Puebloan and Fremont materials.<sup>39</sup> For example morphologically identical anthropomorph types, such as Fremont types, are separated based on whether they are painted or pecked. Similarly, Heizer and Baumhoff limited their Great Basin Painted style to circles and parallel lines made as pictographs, without describing how these varied formally from identical examples made as petroglyphs. Likewise, they assigned "representational" figures that were made as pictographs to the Puebloan Painted style, restricted to southern and eastern Nevada and associated with the Puebloan and Fremont cultures.<sup>40</sup>

Lastly, and also illustrating the problems from overweighting method of production in stylistic criteria, is the Great Basin Scratched. For Heizer and Baumhoff, this style comprised incised lines made using a sharp stone tool. Its typical elements are a subset of common rectilinear and curvilinear abstract types (cross-hatching, grids, circles, etc.). This style was also assumed to be much more recent in age, dating from 1000 CE to the ethnohistoric period.

The problems of this system are well known, particularly that formally identical motif types are regarded as belonging to different styles.<sup>41</sup> Schaafsma addressed this problem in her revision to Heizer and Baumhoff's overall schema. She also set the direction for current researchers by placing the weight of stylistic analysis on morphologically distinct anthropomorphs and zoomorphs. It is this approach, exemplified by her treatment of Fremont-style anthropomorphs, which has influenced subsequent Great Basin researchers. Schaafsma largely recast Heizer and Baumhoff's styles by asserting the primacy of design type and form, and secondarily considering technique, although she did retain the Pit-and-Groove and Scratched styles. Schaafsma recognized that the Great Basin Representational style was not really a single style, but a collection of stylistically undifferentiated anthropomorph and zoomorph types that she refined through her analysis of Fremont anthropomorph styles. These styles are still relied upon by researchers today.<sup>42</sup>

Although Schaafsma's work is often perceived as primarily focused on identifying distinct styles of anthropomorphs in the Great Basin and the Southwest, her analyses have always attempted to identify a qualitatively singular set of abstract designs accompanying anthropomorph styles.<sup>43</sup> In this, Schaafsma's work sought to build on Steward's approach by considering the form that abstract imagery took in different rock art traditions. However, qualitative analysis of formal variability in abstract rock art traditions and Steward's quantitative approach are limited by the absence of a standardized motif key used to consistently class and describe rock art data. Accordingly, Schaafsma's lead in focusing on anthropomorph styles is partly a function of stylistic analysis; morphological variation can only be tracked when the referential subject of an image can be identified, allowing the choices made by different cultures in their depictions of the same referential subject to be identified.<sup>44</sup>

Reasserting the importance of motif morphology over production technique (in contrast to Heizer and Baumhoff) allowed Schaafsma to identify distinctive morphological types and styles of anthropomorphs, most relevantly for western Utah's Great Basin and Fremont-influenced eastern Nevada.<sup>45</sup> The Fremont culture occupied most of Utah, but varies in cultural symbolism and economic patterning (to a degree) east and west of the Wasatch Range. The western

Fremont is the focus here since the area west of the Wasatch Range falls within the physiographic Great Basin.

Western Utah is characterized by three deserts. To the north is the Great Salt Lake Desert, where pictographs Schaafsma identified as part of the western Utah Painted Style are located. The central part of the state is associated with the Sevier-Black Rock Desert and Fremont Sevier Style A sites (hereafter referred to as Sevier A) as well as Great Basin Curvilinear style sites. Schaafsma did not classify the Great Basin Curvilinear style as Fremont, but it is found along with Fremont motifs in western Utah. She distinguished the Fremont presence in eastern Nevada, noting the distinctive simplicity, or schematism, of anthropomorphs associated with Fremont settlement activities in that region.<sup>46</sup> The southern part of Utah is home to the Escalante Desert, which like the Sevier-Black Rock, is associated with Sevier A sites.

The Fremont archaeological culture in western Utah is defined as Great Salt Lake (north), Sevier (central), and Parowan (south).<sup>47</sup> Marwitt reviewed Carbon-14 dates available at the time and suggested beginning horizons of 400, 800, and 900 CE respectively for the three traditions, with all three ending around 1300 CE.<sup>48</sup> There is much debate, however, over this dating and a more conservative estimate dates Fremont rock art to between 1000–1200 CE. Later, Schaafsma gave date ranges based on cultural associations of 700–1000 CE for Virgin-Kayenta Pueblo rock art and 75–1300 CE for Fremont rock art.<sup>49</sup>

Fremont rock art, in general, is known for its “broad-shouldered human figure in ceremonial regalia.”<sup>50</sup> West of the Wasatch, Schaafsma identified two styles for the region: Sevier A and Western Utah Painted. Distinctive Fremont-style anthropomorphs, sometimes with horns, hair bobs, and shields, are present west of the Wasatch, but they lack the numbers, “heroic proportions,” or elaborations of eastern Utah Fremont. In the north, including the northern part of the Sevier drainage and the Great Salt Lake region, Schaafsma identified the Western Utah Painted Style by its triangular and trapezoidal anthropomorphic pictographs painted in red.<sup>51</sup> This general pattern of increasing schematism of Fremont-style anthropomorphs westward to the periphery of Fremont settlement activities is a critical research theme identified by Schaafsma. It still awaits researchers interested in exploring regional variability in Fremont social practices.

### Sevier A

In the Sevier region and in eastern Nevada, Schaafsma recognized “typological connections” between Fremont triangular anthropomorphs and the Cave Valley Representational (Puebloan) styles farther south. Additionally, Great Basin

curvilinear elements and Fremont elements co-occur, with much superimposition, indicating a long period of use. The Fremont petroglyphs of Sevier A appear to be compact arrangements of small, solidly pecked elements that are precisely made, and form well-composed panels. Anthropomorphs account for 11 percent of the element inventory, the lowest rate from any of the Fremont styles defined by Schaafsma. Sevier A anthropomorphs were made in various sizes but generally were solidly pecked. The triangular body is three times more frequent than trapezoidal, which is often strongly tapered toward the triangular. The addition of a basal element to the torso is a new feature to Sevier A anthropomorphs, and could take the form of another, smaller triangle, square, or boat-shaped object. One variation is perpendicular lines representing legs. In general there are few elaborations and torso decoration is rare. The hands and feet are suggested by few lines, but certain anthropomorphs appear to be carrying objects. Approximately 25 percent are “horned,” but “plumes,” facial features, and earbobs are rare.<sup>52</sup>

Sites with Sevier A anthropomorphs contain a higher proportion of quadrupeds (as much as 28 percent of a site’s motif assemblage) compared to other Sevier style sites. Usually, these are solid pecked and more than half are identifiable as bighorn sheep, birds, and animal tracks, while handprints and footprints occur less frequently. Abstract elements occur in larger numbers among Sevier A sites, making up approximately half of all designs. Schaafsma suggested that it can be difficult to distinguish Sevier A from the Basin and Range tradition because of a typological continuum between solid Sevier A figures and the stick figure anthropomorphs in the Basin and Range tradition. Schaafsma tentatively suggested a Sevier Style B for stick figure types that show partial typological resemblance to Fremont types. She explained in the *Rock Art of Utah*, “There is a typological continuum between the solid Sevier Style A figures which appear here from time to time and the stick figure representational elements which have become an integral part of the Curvilinear Style.”<sup>53</sup> A Sevier Style B generally has not been recognized by Great Basin researchers, in part, since stick figure anthropomorphs with “horns” or bodily adornments (such as earrings) are known to occur in areas far from any Fremont influence or settlement activity.

Basin and Range tradition motif types are well represented in western Utah, accompanied by transitional anthropomorphs between Fremont types and stick figures. Anthropomorphs in this transitional group lose the classic trapezoidal or triangular body, but more than half still have horns. Solid-bodied mountain sheep appear slightly thinner in this group. Highly schematic stick figure anthropomorphs are prevalent, with horns as the key, identifying element. Schaafsma suggested that these schematic anthropomorphs should be classed

as Great Basin Curvilinear, representing the incorporation of Fremont elements into Great Basin hunting and gathering groups.<sup>54</sup>

Schaafsma treated Fremont sites in the eastern Basin separately as “they seem to manifest a number of their own peculiarities which distinguish them from those of other regions.” She characterized eastern Nevada Fremont rock art largely as “painted representations of the Fremont anthropomorph.”<sup>55</sup> Eastern Nevada Fremont sites are therefore characterized by their schematism in contrast to the more elaborate Fremont anthropomorphs’ body forms and decoration displayed farther east in the core area of Fremont settlement.

Using the stylistic data to make inferences about Late Archaic intercultural communication, Schaafsma noted that influences on western Fremont included both Basin and Range and Puebloan cultures. Particularly for the region north of the Virgin-Kayenta area, Puebloan influences are evident in both abstract and representational forms, and are consistent with broader archaeological data.<sup>56</sup> Unfortunately, Schaafsma left the interplay between Great Basin hunter-foragers and Fremont cultures less defined and today it remains difficult to definitively resolve. She explained: “whether this phenomenon [integration of Fremont motifs and Great Basin Curvilinear style] indicates a direct continuity between the Desert Cultures of the area and the Fremont, or subsequent diffusion from one cultural group to the other after the Fremont culture was established is not clear.”<sup>57</sup>

Schaafsma concluded that western Utah’s rock art suggested that the characteristic abstract designs indicated ideological ties with Great Basin peoples to the west and that such an association prevailed for several thousand years. This pattern was punctuated by a limited period of rock art dominated by the presence of Fremont-style anthropomorphs. Her conclusion implied that Fremont culture included distinctive social practices and ideologies that differed dramatically from those of hunter-foragers in adjoining areas.<sup>58</sup> One wonders what influence Fremont ideologies and social practices may have had on hunter-foragers living in areas peripheral to Fremont settlement. Schaafsma noted one such possible manifestation. She related the Pahranagat Anthropomorph style, found to the west of peripheral Fremont settlement areas in southeastern Nevada, to a wider phenomenon of distinctive anthropomorph styles associated with hunter-foragers in the western Great Basin. Unlike Fremont rock art, the Pahranagat style leaves researchers unsure about its age and cultural affiliation, but they generally attribute it to the Middle and Late Archaic.<sup>59</sup> It is possible that this style was, for some period, contemporaneous with Fremont settlement activities in southeastern Nevada because it shares with Sevier A a tendency to schematism in its portrayal of the human form. One could argue that this may reflect the local adoption and adaptation of Fremont ideological practices by Great Basin hunter-foragers.

Although Great Basin rock art was not the principal focus of Schaafsma's long history of research, she nevertheless left her mark on Great Basin rock art studies. Her work identified research questions and themes that remain worthy of exploration today. Most significantly, her stylistic analyses established a robust and consistent framework that researchers continue to use, and her work on Fremont anthropomorph styles remains the definitive statement in the field. She also provided an example of how to conduct analyses to identify other distinctive regional anthropomorph styles. Her work, although highlighting "representational" elements in analysis, did not ignore abstract motif types. Instead, she always attempted to identify a distinctive abstract signature that accompanies the regional anthropomorph styles that her research uncovered. Not only does Schaafsma's work remain relevant, but her fellow scholars value and rely upon it in the field of rock art studies.

## Notes

1. Polly Schaafsma, *The Rock Art of Utah* (1971; repr., Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1994); Polly Schaafsma, *Indian Rock Art of the Southwest* (Santa Fe, N.Mex.: School of American Research, 1980); and Polly Schaafsma, "Rock Art," in *Great Basin*, vol. 11 of *Handbook of North American Indians*, ed. W. L. d'Azevedo (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution, 1986).
2. Schaafsma, *Rock Art of Utah*, 104.
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