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A Possible Plainview Component in Central Chihuahua, Mexico

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During 2003 excavations we located a possible Plainview base at a site (C75-01) located 40 km southwest of Chihuahua City (Figure 1). The Plainview base was found while testing for Archaic-period deposits in deep terrace fill.

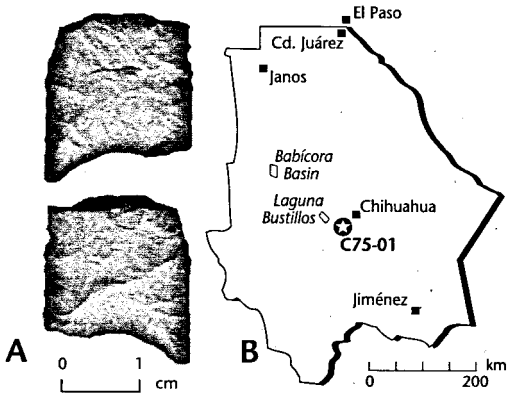

Figure 1. **A,** Plainview point base recovered from C75-01; **B,** map showing location of C75-01.

Site C75-01 is within the southern basin and range province at an approximate elevation of 1,850 m. Two adjacent caves at the base of a cliff overlook bajada and the Río Santa Isabel Valley to the west and north. A constructed

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terrace in front of the caves contains deposits exceeding 2 m in depth. We believe that the terrace was built during the middle- to late-Archaic period (ca. 5000–2000 yr B.P.). Ceramic-period artifacts are present in the uppermost strata of terrace fill and most abundant on the surface. However, deposits are bioturbated resulting in some artifact displacement. Such is the case in the stratum that contained the Plainview base found at 145 cm below surface, although well under all Ceramic-period materials. Late middle-Archaic-period projectile points were found both above and below the Plainview point base. Lithics from several strata may contain additional material equal in age to this broken point based on material type, condition, and morphology.

The maximum width (19.7mm) and thickness (5.1mm) of this point fragment are within the size range of Plainview points (Hartwell 1995, Johnson and Holliday 1987). Characteristic attributes of Plainview points that are present include basal thinning, lateral and basal grinding, and a biconvex or lenticular cross section. Lateral grinding extends 17.7 and 12.0 mm and is truncated by rejuvenation flake scars on both edges of the base.

A ^{14}C date of 9120 ± 50 yr B.P. (Beta 185635) comes from a fragment of charred, unidentified plant tissue found 20 cm deeper than the Plainview base in the same stratum of terrace fill. This ^{14}C age approximates the few other ^{14}C ages for Plainview contexts. Holliday et al. (1999:451) conclude that the Plainview type "centered around ca. 10,000 yr B.P., but perhaps continuing to 9000 yr B.P." Whether this ^{14}C date from C75-01 is fortuitous or genuinely represents the age of a Plainview component is irresolvable on present evidence. We strongly suspect that Archaic-period terrace construction incorporated an older Plainview component into the fill. Future excavation near the cave entrances is a possible solution for clarifying this issue.

The few preceding reports of Plainview projectile points from northwest Mexico are restricted to surface collections (Justice 2002:78, 85; Phelps 1990:54ff, 1998:103). Marrs (1949: Figures 30, 31) located possible Plainview points east of Jiménez that are also from surface scatters. If corroborated by additional diagnostic artifacts from secure contexts, this find expands the known distribution of Plainview artifacts into high basin and range country along the east flank of the Sierra Madre Occidental.

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Preliminary Results of Excavations at the Late-Pleistocene Site of Las Monedas, Semiarid Coast of Chile

César Méndez and Donald Jackson

Our ongoing early settlement research program along the Los Vilos coast (31° S) considers all Pleistocene evidence, with or without cultural associations (Méndez et al. 2004), and no matter how complex the depositional context of the remains. Under these premises, our research team excavated the Las Monedas site (LV. 210), where late-Pleistocene mammal bones were ambiguously associated with a few lithic artifacts (Méndez et al. 2006). The site lies along a small ravine that drains a paleolacustrine basin (Varela 1981), just 2 km from the edge of the sea. Discontinuous stratigraphic profiles expose evidences through different energy-event layers, defined by the particle size of the sediments. Most remains were identified within two low-energy strata composed mainly of fine-grained sands. Excavations limited to the upper cultural stratum (layer 6) involved in situ unearthing and piece plotting of all materials in a 15-m^2 area. The record was very sparse, with only 33 bone remains and 18 lithic artifacts. A small test pit (1 m^2) confirmed the presence of a lower, less dense stratum separated from the upper stratum by a thin sandy compact layer.

Among bone materials, native horse (*Equus* sp.), extinct camelid (*Palaeolama* sp.), and ground sloth (Milodontinae) were identified. Most are vertebrae of the first two taxa and ground sloth skin bones (i.e., ossicles). Nonetheless, remains are considerably fragmented, preservation is good, and there are no signs of weathering. Rootlet etching is present on one side of the bones, suggesting depositional stability, while evenly distributed abrasion implies flow of sediment particles carried by water (Lyman 1994). Culturally modified remains are restricted to a humerus of native horse, which bears a traumatic fracture with an impact point and negative flake scars. No carnivore action was detected on this bone; however, other horse and camelid remains exhibit these traces. One third metacarpal of *Equus* sp. was recorded in direct associa-

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