Joshua's El Jobo

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Introduction

This is dedicated to Joshua Ream, a good friend of mine and to the world of archaeology. Joshua lost his battle with Non-Hodgkin's Lymphoma in June of 2023. Among several degrees, Joshua held a bachelor's in anthropology from the University of Montana. He was a constant international traveler as an executive in the overseas hospitality industry for many years. His extreme curiosity in the pre-historic world drove him to avidly collect artifacts from wherever he went; to understand, preserve and appreciate the cultural past. No example of this was more important than his activities in his youth, living in Venezuela. Specifically, Joshua amassed what is believed to be one of the most extensive collections of El Jobo artifacts known. Joshua and I got together on several occasions to share information, and once even to safari together in the high country of Nevada. In those times I took many photographs of his artifacts for study and comparison with paleo artifacts from the Great Basin. This commentary is intended to share those experiences and insights

Figure 1 In Nevada, 2014

The El Jobo Point

The El Jobo point was first recognized by José Maria Cruxent, based on multiple finds in the Pedregal River Valley area of Northern Venezuela (Cruxent, Rouse 1956). After considerable controversy and debate over age, the famous archaeological site of Taima-Taima was excavated in the 1970s. An El Jobo point was found in direct association with an extinct mastodon. This well dated site confirmed finds from other sites, including other associations with mastodon and glyptodons (extinct armadillos). The age of 13,000 radio-carbon years (15,500 calibrated years) makes El Jobo significantly older than Clovis. Points very similar to El Jobo have also been discovered at the well-documented Monte Verde site in Chile, well over 3,000 miles away. The El Jobo point are typically made from quartzite sandstone, which sets them apart from other paleo points and tools from the same area. Fine grained crypto-crystalline material was available locally and used by fluted point makers. It is unclear why this was the case. Much thought has been given to investigate possible lineages and connections between El Jobo technology and similar technologies and points from Mesa/Sluiceway in Alaska, down to Haskett in the Great Basin and on to Agate Basin of the Plains (Admiraal 2013, Ives 2024, Kunz 2011). If a relationship does indeed exist between these, it suggests the earliest forms are in the south (Jobo) and progressively get younger as the technology spread Northward.

Joshua's Points

Figure 2 Small & Heavily Re-worked El Jobo, Showing the Flaking

Figure 3 Comparing the Small Jobo with a Variety of Great Basin Western Stemmed Points

Figure 4 A Fine Example of El Jobo

Figure 5 Four El Jobo Points

Figure 6 Group of El Jobo

Figure 7 Profile Showing Thickness of El Jobo

Figure 8 Extreme Patination on Unique Jobo Material

Figure 9 More Jobo, Second from Left is the Patinated Point from Figure 6

Figure 10 Comparing Thickness Profiles of Jobo and Great Basin Haskett

Figure 11 More Haskett vs. Jobo

Figure 12 Great Basin Haskett Between Two El Jobos

Figure 13 Alaska Mesa Point, El Jobo and Haskett

Other South American Paleo Points from Joshua

Figure 14 Fine Fishtail from Venezuela. These are found all over South America

Figure 15 Comparing Various Paleo Points from Venezuela

Figure 16 Early Stage Fluted Technology: Venezuela vs. Great Basin

Figure 17 Fluted Point Technology Flakes Venezuela vs. Great Basin

Figure 18 Variety of Flakes: Comparing Venezuela with Great Basin

Figure 19 Variety of Venezuela Paleo

Figure 20 Venezuela Fluted

Figure 21 Venezuela Fluted

Figure 22 Venezuela Fluted

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