CHUMAS UPRISING

Hannah RUTH

On two rocks, *Chumash Uprising* tells of two escapes by the Chumash Indian writer from a California Mission in 1824. The more elaborate rock mentions the first attempt, but focuses on his recapture and the successful second try. *First Escape* details that failed effort, when he ran away toward the coast, hid in a cave, then foolishly sought another, where he was recaptured. *Chumash Escape* says he was beaten, hobbled, and imprisoned to await execution, but again escaped due to the inattentiveness of a guard at night. This time, in spite of having to evade massive search parties (which identifies the date) he fled inland to Death Valley in the western U.S., where these rocks are located.

Over 10,000 Chumash Indians had been enslaved by the five Missions built in Chumash territory. Their unanimous rebellion and flight in 1824 was suppressed by the Missions'use of local garrisons. According to Mission records, the details of *Chumash Escape* are accurate.

Like all languages, petroglyphs are spontaneously expressed units of vocabulary, but called Σs. The writer arranges a Σ, not by arbitrary rules, but by a more creative display of meanings. The major difference from most languages is that petroglyphs are direct experience without intermediary of arbitrary symbols as demanded by the use of sound. Petroglyphs require a mentally unified activity rather than the dichotomy we practice of dividing text from illustration, a civilized habit very difficult to overcome.

To meet the grammatical requirements of our language, we sound-based, sequence-oriented thinkers must *rearrange* natural experiences like "hunger-thoughtapple-getupandgo." The petroglyph writer *recreates* experience using Nature's three-dimensional grammar, placing abstractions on top of each other so that parts are obscured, but enough is visible to contribute a meaning.

Without the intervention of sound, petroglyph vocabulary arises directly from its five grammatical categories or schemata: {immovable}, {holding}, {upright fig}, {lateral fig}, and {life tree}. Within the brackets are not translations, but "cues" referring to the schemata abstractions (at right) so we can discuss them. The abstraction for {immovable} has the edges and corners that grip and stabilize; the meaning includes an attracting force from within: gravity, awe, love, etc. {Holding} can change or roll; its force is peripheral, hence relatively fragile: attention, egg, site, capture, etc. {Upright fig} and {lateral fig} we retain today-unaware because we have not labeled them! Focus on something *overhead* as opposed to *ahead* to realize these concepts. {Life tree}, not used on these rocks, is in part a sprouting seed, in part a tree of nourishment and protection.

Each mark in a petroglyph can be assigned to one or even two of these basic abstractions or schemata, a sorting as seen on the Schemata Chart. Those assigned are part of the *lode* (wealth) of each schema, which is a collection of related abstractions
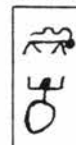
and meanings. The Formula Chart does not pretend to recreate a petroglyph the way the writer conceived it, but reconstructs in a way we beginners can understand.

The *Container Chart* traces the *Type* of meaning for each abstraction to its learning sources, experiences that contain it, and to its *Norm Shape,* a wordless shape refined and carried in the mind, ready for recognition and use. {K} comes from the Hopi *koyaanasqatsi,* "something that doesn't belong." {K} is not always bad, by the way; it can indicate possible water in the hole of a rock in the desert!

CONTAINER CHART

Container	Type	Norm Shape	Abstraction
Humans; birds; bear upright to see; human thinking "overhead"	Upright	{Upright fig}	
Human bars access	Stop	{Barring arms}	
Travel place, trodden by use or carved by Nature	Way-to-go	{Path}	
Night; nonfunctioning; out of place; abnormal	Tension	{K}	
Raised arm or stick attacks	Harm	{Weapon}	
Night; nonfunctioning; out of place; abnormal	Tension	{K}	*1.*
Egg is prey, helpless, vulnerable	Powerless	{Egg}	
Marked as unusual, abnormal wary; shrinking; nonaggressive	Ablative	{Held K}	
Pointing finger	Director	{Finger}	*2.*
Egg is prey, helpless, vulnerable	Powerless	{Egg}	
Grab arm; grasp someone; grip	Hold fast	{Griparm}	
Pointing finger	Director	{Finger}	
Night; nonfunctioning; out of place; abnormal	Tension	{K}	*3.*
All creatures go, turn, & come	Return	{Loopback}	
Encircle with arms or head	Holding	{Holding}	
Night; non functioning; out of place; abnormal	Tension	{K}	*4.*
Open & free = vector-perspective; hand opens creating light; stick in ground points direction	Freedom	{Opening}	
Birds, insects fly, soar, flee	Flight	{Feathers}	*5.*

For want of space, the enclosed charts analyze only a fraction of *Chumash Escape,* only enough to provide an example of the analytical process. Eventually, one can do less charting and can even express an idea with these abstractions as easily as with words. Translation from sound-based languages is not of the words but of the motivational sentiment. For example, the petroglyph writer would be uninterested in T.S. Eliot's imagery in "I should have been a pair of ragged claws scuttling across the floors of silent seas." The focus would be on the *physioprepositional* content, the complete and clearly expressed sentiment. If Eliot were cynical or depressed, the Σ for his line would differ considerably from a sentiment of shame or guilt, as illustrated. Eliot's line is more entertaining, but the petroglyph Σs are psychologically more specific and accurate.

A + S + Q

a.

t,
c,

d,

e,

f,

g,

1.

h,
i,

2.

j,

k,
l,

3.

m,
n,

4.

5,

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
○ ‾ ○ h. ○ e. o o k.

a. ‾ • b. ⌞ d. • f. ‾ g. ┤ x2 i. •• j. < m. ⫙ n.

∧ ‾ ∧ U l.

Riassunto

I petroglifi sono diversi da altre forme di espressione poiché sono un'esperienza diretta che non ricorre a simboli astratti, richiesti ad esempio dall'uso del suono. Tramite l'esempio della ribellione di Chumas, l'autore fa una breve panoramica del processo analitico coinvolto.

Summary

Petroglyphs are different from most languages in that they are direct experience without the intermediary of arbitrary symbols as demanded by the use of sound. Using the example of the Chumas Uprising the author gives a brief survey of the analytical processes involved.

Résumé

Les glyphes sont différents des autres formes d'expression car ils représentent une expérience directe qui n'utilise pas de symboles abstraits, nécessaires, par exemple, dans l'utilisation du son. À travers l'exemple de la rébellion de Chumas, l'auteur fait un bref panoramique du procédé analytique employé.