

ROCK ART AND ETHNOGRAPHY

Claire SMITH, *Department of Archaeology, Flinders University, Australia*

Sally K. MAY, *PERAHU - Place, Evolution and Rock Art Heritage Unit, Griffith University, QLD, Australia*

Ines DOMINGO, *ICREA, Humanities, Universitat de Barcelona (UB), Barcelona, Spain*

Contact email: claire.smith@flinders.edu.au; s.may@griffith.edu.au

The value of ethnography for the interpretation of rock art has been a matter of debate for over 100 years. Ethnography is much more than the study of the present to understand the past. It is a tool to observe and analyse material culture in a living context. It allows us to observe daily interactions between humans and objects, as inert materials are transformed into active agents of social, economic and/or cultural practices. Done well, ethnographic studies can produce new understandings of rock art from the recent as well as the distant past. They can reveal the role of rock art as visual communication in a complex world of human interaction, demonstrate the archaeological invisibility of many aspects of human cultures and engender new theories for understanding territory, landscape, society, culture and rules of behaviour. Done poorly, ethnographic studies can produce suppositions that are simply waiting to be disproved, grounded in an elision of temporal and cultural distances between groups of people and denying the history and modernity of contemporary peoples.

This session reflects on the use of ethnography to advance knowledge in the study of rock art.

It addresses the question: what constitutes good ethnographic practice in rock art research in the 21st century? It builds on the ethnography symposium, convened by Mike Morwood at the first Australian Rock Art Research Association Congress, held in Darwin, Australia, in 1988. Participants in this session are invited to reflect on the capacity of ethnography to advance knowledge in the study of rock art, to consider the limitations of this form of analysis and the ethics of conducting ethnographic research with living peoples. We imagine that the session will be interdisciplinary as archaeologists, anthropologists, historians, linguists and cultural scholars can all bring valuable perspectives to the study of rock art and ethnography.

Birds in Rock Art: Possible Interpretations

Birds and bird-forms are some of the earliest patterns in rock art. Present in portable rock art since the Upper Paleolithic, bird images are also abundantly documented everywhere in prehistoric rupestrian art in all the continents. There is also considerable ethnographic information relating to the symbolism of birds in all world cultures. This research intends to survey the representation of birds in known rock art and explore the related literature. It then attempts to identify possible iconographic patterns and relate them to various ethnographic interpretations. A particular focus is given to recurrent themes relating to birds in Eurasian arts and cultures.

Ahmed ACHRATI, *Howard
Community College, Columbia,
MD, USA*

Contact email:
aachrati@gmail.com

Keywords: birds, bird-forms,
symbolism, ethnography, rock
art

New dimensions in rock art ethnography

Several research developments of recent years imply the possibility that knowledge about the original meaning, significance and production of rock art may be available from various parts of the world besides Australia. That ethnographically accessible interpretation of rock art is often obtainable from Australian Aboriginal elders has been well known since the 19th century. Here we present possibilities, in some cases credibly demonstrated, that such knowledge may have survived among traditional societies in various continents. Similarly, the production of traditional rock art seems to have continued until the present time in a few regions whose number seems to be growing. Another new development in the ethnography of rock art is the realisation of the possibility of access to the motivation and cognitive world of rock art producers through the presence of accompanying rock inscriptions. Where these can be deciphered and clearly relate to the rock art, they can become messages illuminating the world the rock artists existed in. Such messages have been found to be up to a few millennia old and they are as valuable to science as the accounts of living informants.

Robert G. BEDNARIK, *ICRAD*,
IFRAO

Contact email: robertbednarik@
hotmail.com

Keywords: rock art, rock
inscription, ethnography,
interpretation, meaning

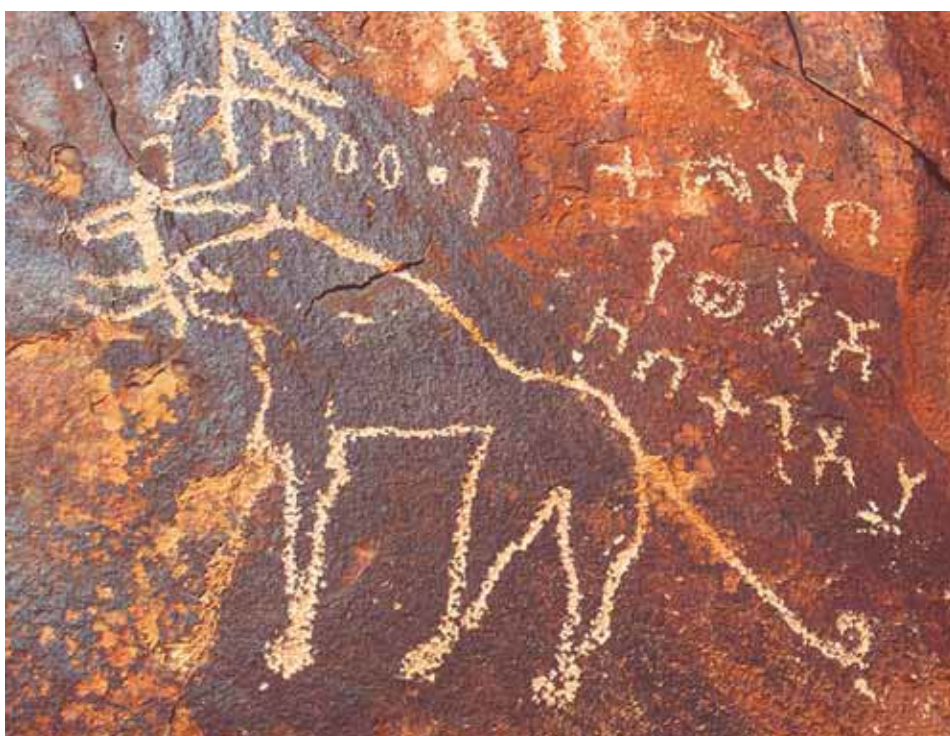


Fig.1 - Yatib site near Hail, Saudi Arabia. (© Robert G. Bednarik)

Rock Art and Ethnography in Australia

This presentation discusses the contribution of ethnography to the study of Australian rock art. With more than 100 years of ethnographic enquiry into rock art from across the country, valuable insights into the meaning, motives, function, and symbolism of images have been identified. However, with this information comes challenges with its use (and abuse), as well as the necessity to understand the cultural contexts of interpretation and meaning-making. This chapter explores the various ways Indigenous Australians (Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islanders) engage with and describe their understandings of rock art in a variety of contexts. This review also highlights the complex nature of the interpretative process and the ethnographic gaze in which it is embedded. At its core, ethnographic approaches to Australian rock art reveal the multidimensional referential qualities of images found across the landscape.

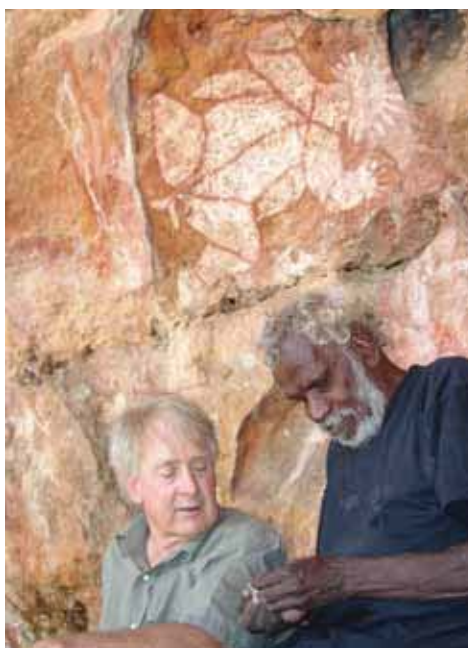
Liam M. BRADY, *Monash University, Australia*

Claire SMITH, *Flinders University, Australia*

Robert G. GUNN, *Monash University*

Bruno DAVID, *Monash University*

Contact email: claire.smith@flinders.edu.au



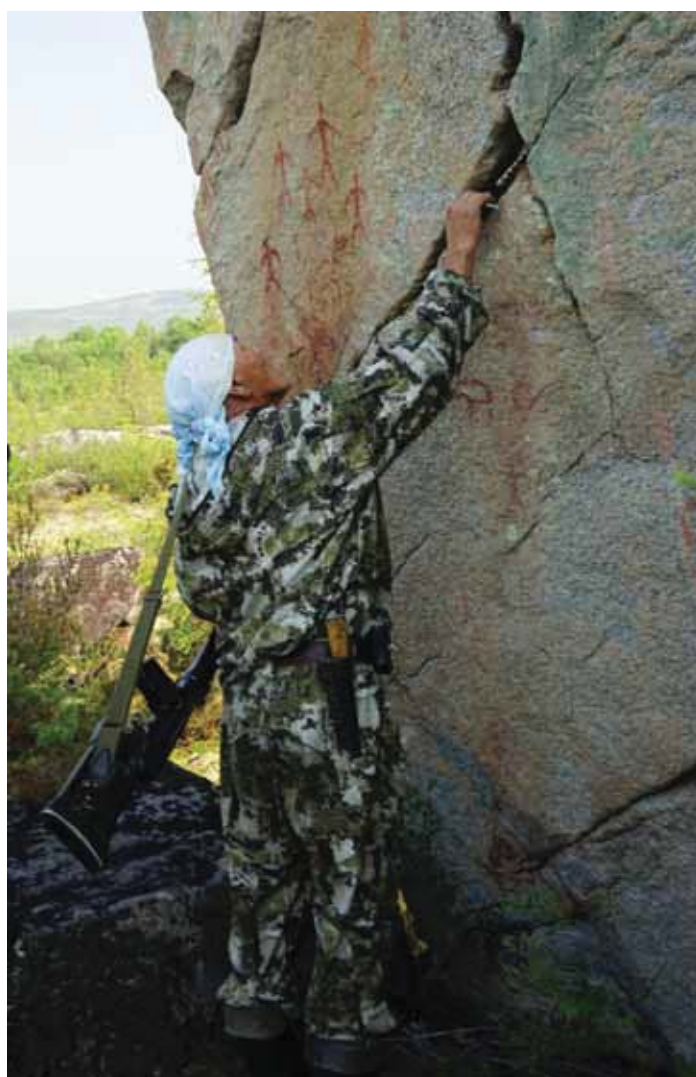
Keywords: ethnography, Australia, rock art, meaning, interpretation, symbolism, cultural contexts, themes

Rock art animism in the Siberian taiga: contemporary rituality, land use and multisensoric perceptions of Evenki hunters and reindeer herders

Donatas BRANDIŠAUSKAS,
Vilnius University, Lithuania
Contact email:
d.brandisauskas@gmail.com

Keywords: rock art rituals,
multisensoric perception,
Evenki reindeer herders and
hunters, history of research,
Southeast Siberia

Based on my long term fieldwork research in southeast Siberia (Amur, Zabaikal, Yakutiia and Buriatiia) I will provide an ethnographic account of how so-called archaeological monuments of rock art have been serving as sentient landscape features as well as sources of ritual and cosmological inspiration for Evenki hunters and reindeer herders for a long period of time. I will show how rock art can be understood through multisensoric perceptions of environment and persistency of animistic views and indigenous ontologies that embrace vernacular notions of personhood, human/animal/land interactions. I will also overview different contested views on how rock art sites were created, modified, used and interpreted over the centuries by different social actors.



Interdisciplinary interpretations of anthropomorphic composite beings in European Upper Palaeolithic cave art: an approach

Ingmar M. BRAUN, *Prehistorian*

Contact email:

ingmarbraun@gmx.ch;

www.palaeolithikum.com

Keywords: Upper Palaeolithic cave art, anthropomorphic composite beings, interpretations

Fig. 1 - The so-called "Dieu cornu" in Les Trois-Frères cave (France). (in: Bégouën, H. & Breuil, H., 1958, *Les Cavernes du Volp: Trois-Frères - Tuc d'Audoubert à Montesquieu-Avantès, Ariège*)

Fig. 2 - Representation of a Tungouse shaman published by Witsen in 1705. (in: Stolz, A., 1988, *Schamanen. Ekstase und Jenseitssymbolik*)

European Upper Palaeolithic cave art is especially known for the numerous and varied depictions of animals dominated by the herbivore groups. There are also a great number of different signs, indeterminable motifs and less frequent representations of human beings.

Furthermore, there are anthropomorphic composite beings and composite beings of different animals, which are both rather rare. The anthropomorphic composite beings are often attributed to the human being group. In my opinion they should be regarded as an independent motif. Anthropomorphic composite beings are figures which have human and animal attributes.

But what is the meaning of cave art and especially of these anthropomorphic composite beings? This contribution tries to provide interdisciplinary interpretations of the meaning of these figures also with the aid of an ethnological approach.



‘Riding Through Rock Art’: The archaeology and ethnography of some recent rock art at Djulirri, Northern Territory, Australia

Samuel DIX, Place, Evolution and Rock Art Heritage Unit (PERAHU), Griffith University, Gold Coast, Queensland, Australia

Contact email: samuel.dix@griffithuni.edu.au

Keywords: Ethnography, Contact Archaeology, Rock Art, Arnhem Land, Historical Archaeology

At a remote rockshelter in northwestern Arnhem Land, Australia, a rare and unusual depiction of a bicycle has intrigued researchers for some time. This painting is one of a number of contact rock art images depicted at the same site, known as Djulirri. This paper explores how combining archaeological analysis with ethnographic and historical research can lead to a more detailed and comprehensive understanding of, not only the individual motifs, but the contact history of this region in general. In this case, I critically evaluate arguments for this bicycle painting representing a particular individual in history. Edward ‘Ted’ Reichenbach, best known for breaking the riding record between Adelaide and Darwin in 1914 (a distance of over 3000 kms), travelled by bicycle through the Northern Territory over the following decade photographing people and places. His interactions with local Aboriginal community members are evidenced in the surviving photographs. Ethnographic accounts that the Djulirri painted bicycle represents Reichenbach’s visits are widespread and broadly accepted. Recent archaeological analysis and historical research throw doubt on this interpretation. This case study reveals the complexity of the relationship between archaeology, history and ethnography in the study of recent Australian rock art.



Fig.1 - Djulirri, Arnhem Land, Northern Territory, Australia. (in: Picturing Change: 21st Century Perspectives on Recent Australian Rock Art’ project, 2008-2012; modified by Samuel Dix)

Now as it always has been - Aboriginal Art on the South Coast of NSW, Australia

Clive FREEMAN, *Galamban, Australia*

Contact email:
clive.freeman@y7mail.com

Keywords: documentary, Aboriginal Art, continuing cultural practice, Sydney Basin

Artist/ Activist Clive Freeman is Traditional Owner of Wreck Bay in the Booderee National Park on the NSW South Coast. Clive is deeply connected to Yuin country, but also Eora and Wiradjuri through his family heritage. Clive's formal education in environmental sciences at the University of Wollongong informs his engagement with archaeological science and rock art research. He is a former artist-in-residence at the NSW Gallery, the former coordinator of Aboriginal Interpretation Programs at Sydney Living Museums' and is one of the founders of the ongoing 'Country' project on exhibition at the Venice Biennale. He sits on the Booderee National Park Board of Management. Like his family's totem, the wonga pigeon, Clive has a distinctive voice. His varied work sets out to share Aboriginal stories of connection so that all Australians can reconnect with Aboriginal history. Following a screening of an SBS Television's 'Colour Theory' documentary featuring his work, Clive will discuss a current project that aims to re-introduce Indigenous Master Carvers into the management of Sydney Basin engravings.

The context of Nawarla Gabarnmang: archaeology and ethnography

Nawarla Gabarnmang, in the Jawoyn Lands of the Arnhem Land Plateau, is one of Australia's richest and most well-publicised cultural sites. The site is of high cultural significance to Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people alike as it has historical significance to both peoples; an extensive, well-dated archaeological deposit; a history of human modification; and is one of Australia's most extensive, well-preserved rock art sites. As a background to these facets, this paper presents an overview of the shelter's setting within the cultural and temporal landscape of the Arnhem Land Plateau. Ethnographic inquiry revealed non-physical aspects of Nawarla Gabarnmang, while an archaeological survey of the site complex in which the site lies revealed additional aspects of the significance of the place; details that could not be achieved by investigation of the Nawarla Gabarnmang shelter alone. These included additional art styles and ceremonial activities that were practiced at some time during the 50,000 years of Nawarla Gabarnmang's occupation.

Robert GUNN, *Monash
University, Australia*

Ray Whear, Margaret Katherine,
Leigh Douglas, *Independent
Reserach*

Contact email:
gunnb@activ8.net.au

Keywords: Nawarla
Gabarnmang, Arnhem Land,
site complexes, site context



Fig.1 - The physical setting of Nawarla
Gabarnmang. (photo Robert Gunn;
copyright Jawoyn Association)

Fig.2 - Ceiling art and pillars within
Nawarla Gabarnmang

Relationship on the wall

The Setor de Arqueologia of University of Minas Gerais (Brazil) conducted many studies on rock art in different regions in central and northern Minas Gerais (Central Brazil). These studies led us to realize the major significance of diachronical relations between figures on rock art panels. In its turn, the Brazilian ethnology has been arguing, based in broad and abundant ethnographic research (by authors such as Viveiros de Castro, Vilaça, Stolze, Descola, Lagrou, Van Velthem and many others), that Amerindian cosmologies do not establish hard ontological distinctions between human and non-human (animals, supernatural beings and also artifacts). Another issue, underlined by ethnographic research, is the agency of non-human actors. The anthropologists had enhanced, according to those principles, the relationship between people and animals (and other non-humans) as having the same nature as the relationship between humans. There is also, in ethnological interpretation, a large consensus around the idea that Amerindian worlds are strongly relational. In this paper I wish to explore the interpretative possibilities offered to rock art studies by the dialogue with those ethnological understandings. With that aim I will discuss some examples from northern Minas Gerais rock art.

Andrei ISNARDIS, *Federal University of Minas Gerais - Brazil*

Contact email: isnardis@gmail.com

Keywords: relations, ethnological theory, ethnological interpretation, archaeological interpretation, Central Brazil, Amerindians



Fig. 1 - Lapa do Caboclo, Peruaçu Valley, northern Minas Gerais.
Fig. 2 - Lapa dos Desenhos, Peruaçu Valley, northern Minas Gerais

Djalalkurdubi and the archaeological invisibility of ethnographic significance

Djalalkurdubi is a small mushroom shaped rock shelter at the southern end of the Djawumbu-Madjawarrnja massif in Mirarr Country, western Arnhem Land, Australia. The rock art at this site, pictographs and beeswax, is typical of western Arnhem Land and consists of recent X-Ray fish, human figures and a faded crocodile. Djalalkurdubi is one of more than 528 rock art sites recorded by the Mirarr Gunwarddebim rock art project in the Djawumbu-Madjawarrnja area, and 'archaeologically' did not stand out compared to the massive shelters recorded in its vicinity - some hundreds of metres long with thousands of images and painted over as many years. Yet, through our ethnographic research it has emerged that Djalalkurdubi is highly significant due to its connection to ceremonial activities and its tangible and intangible associations with key players in recent western Arnhem Land history. In this paper, we discuss how ethnographic research can help to explore people's direct connections to place, their motivations for making rock art and the complex relationship rock art has with ceremony and knowledge.

Iain G. JOHNSTON, *Australian National University, Australia*
Sally K. MAY, *Griffith University, Australia*
Joakim GOLDHAHN, *Linnæus University, Sweden*
Contact email:
iain.johnston@anu.edu.au

Keywords: rock art, ethnography, Western Arnhem Land, ceremony, rock artists

The hunting weapons of Magdalenian culture in Ariège Department in France

Janusz KRUKOWSKI,
Independent researcher
Contact email: jkrukowski@onet.eu

Keywords: sling, atlatl, caprids, Magdalenian culture, Ariège, Niaux, Vache

At the end of the Pleistocene, from 15th to 12th millennia BP, in the basin of the Ariège River (North of the Pyrenees) lived people of Magdalenian culture, one of the last of the cultures of the Paleolithic.

The Magdalenian people created the great works of art on the walls of caves and they left tools, sculptures and a lot of bones in these caves. Several prominent French archeologists have investigated the caves of this region, including Nicole Pailhaugue (Pailhaugue, N., 1998) and Jean Clottes (Clottes, J., 1999). Based on the results of these investigations we can draw conclusions about the hunting weapons of Magdalenian culture.

Magdalenians hunted on the tundra using the javelin and an atlatl in the summer. They hunted bison, reindeer, horses, deer and antelopes. During winter they used to go to The Pyrenees to protect themselves in the caves from the frost. In the mountains Magdalenians hunted caprids using a sling with projectiles. They climbed the really difficult rocks and glaciers, better than contemporary alpinists.

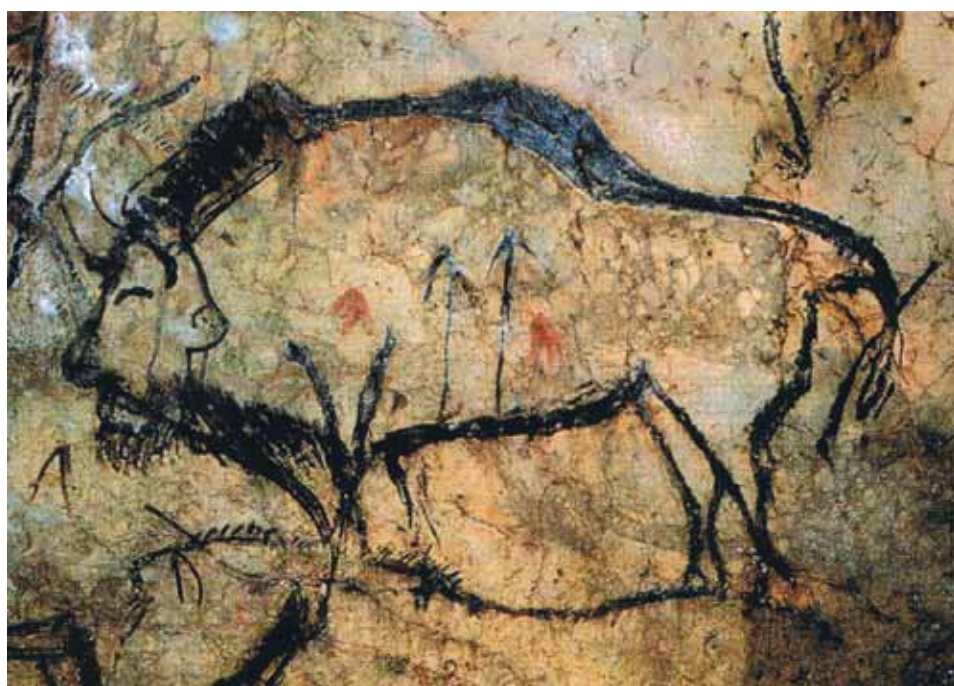


Fig. 1 - Bison with Spears in the side. Grotte Niaux, Salon Noir. (photo Editions D'Art Cdl. Toulouse)

Fig. 2 - Black Ibex, Grotte Niaux, Salon Noir. (photo Editions D'Art Cdl. Toulouse)

Rock art, regionality and ethnography: towards understanding difference in southern African rock art

Ghilraen LAUE, *KwaZulu-Natal Museum, South Africa*

Contact email:
glau@nmsa.org.za

Keywords: South Africa, regionality, ethnography, rock art

Rock art scholars in southern Africa have led the way using ethnography to understand the huge and varied artistic record painted and engraved across the subcontinent. This work has resulted in an understanding of Later Stone Age cosmology and religious beliefs which could not have been gained from other aspects of the archaeological record. Other ethnographic evidence dealing with social and political aspects of life among the San have not featured as prominently in rock art interpretation. In this paper I look to some of these facets of the San ethnographic record to understand regional differences in southern African rock art. Research has shown a unity in the religious beliefs that underlie the painted record across the sub-continent, but also distinct differences in what was painted and in the way images were made. Using the rock art of the Groot Winterhoek Mountains in the southern Cape of South Africa as a case study, I consider the San ethnographic record to understand why these differences occur and what they can tell us about regional identity



Fig.1 - Map showing two major rock art regions identified in the first half of the 20th century.

Fig.2 - McAll's Cave, Groot Winterhoek Mountains, Eastern Cape, South Africa. (photo G. Laue)

Short Film: The rock art of Koongarra, Kakadu National Park

This is a short film on the rock art of Koongarra in Kakadu National Park. In 2017 we began a new rock art project in Kakadu National Park. A key aim of this project is to document the cultural significance of sites within the Nourlangie and Koongarra areas of Kakadu National Park. Working with Senior Traditional Owners and a team of experienced rangers we are combining a need to better understand the cultural and archaeological complexity of this landscape with a desire for better conservation and management outcomes for the area. This film was made as part of this new project and highlights the role that contemporary Indigenous voices play in the interpretation and ongoing care of rock art areas.

Sally Kate MAY, *Griffith University, Australia*

Jeffrey LEE, *Kakadu National Park, Australia*

Ashil RANPARA, *Griffith University, Australia*

Contact email:
s.may@griffith.edu.au

Keywords: rock art, Kakadu, World Heritage, conservation, management, Aboriginal Australia

Rock Art and Ethnography of Fibre Objects in western Arnhem Land, Australia

Emily MILLER, *Griffith University, Australia*
Contact email: emily.miller@griffithuni.edu.au

Keywords: fibre objects, rock art, Arnhem Land

Depictions of fibre objects in the rock art of western Arnhem Land provide a unique opportunity to study an artefact type that has been largely ignored by previous archaeological studies. Ethnographic research highlights the wide-ranging significance of this artefact type in both cultural/spiritual practices and in the everyday life of the Aboriginal people of this region. With the arrival of Christian Missionaries in Arnhem Land the role of fibre objects shifted somewhat as did the gendered nature of their production. Given many fibre objects are still produced today, and the detailed ethno historic records that exist, there is the possibility to examine the changing production methods and use of this material culture over time. This is especially true when compared with the detailed rock art assemblage that provides insights into thousands of years of fibre object use. This paper draws together the threads of evidence to illustrate the significance of fibre objects in western Arnhem Land.



Fig. 1 - Rock painting showing male anthropomorphs with baskets, spears and spearthrowers (Mirarr Gunwarddebim site: I3 0129)

Fig. 2 - Trace of scene showing female anthropomorphs with Type 2 Rectangular Baskets and Type 11 Conical Baskets as well as long (digging) sticks (Mirarr Gunwarddebim Site: I3 0181). Tracing by author

Breaking ground: New insights into southern African Bushman ethnography and its implications for rock art research

Alice MULLEN, *Rock Art Research Institute, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, South Africa*
Contact email: mullenalice@gmail.com

Keywords: Southern Africa, ethnography, rock art, relational ontology, animism

Bushmen-authored southern African rock art has, for the last four decades, been yielding a rich crop of interpretative data thanks to the use of three sets of ethnographic archives from the nineteenth century /Xam Bushmen in the Western Cape, Qing's (a San man of the Maluti mountains where much of the art is found) 1870's interpretations of paintings and ethnographies of various Bushman groups in Botswana collected during the mid-twentieth century. Those working from an entirely shamanic model have, however, reached, to an extent, an impasse. Recent developments within social theory have enabled researchers to look with fresh eyes at these ethnographies, with the understanding of Bushman ontology as relational. By viewing the art as a product of an animist worldview, produced by a culture in which ritual specialists (shamans, if you will) are an integral part in the maintenance of relationships with non-human persons, and by extension, society, some of the more enigmatic features of the art may be brought to light. This paper examines cases in which this has been possible.



A proposed cultural affiliation of Western and Eastern Basketmaker II petroglyphs of the San Juan River drainages in Southeastern Utah

Carol PATTERSON, *Dominguez Archaeological Research Group*
 Contact email: Urraca2fly@gmail.com

Keywords: Basketmaker II, Katsinas, cloud beings, metaphors, cultural diagnostics, Keresan, Zuni

The cultural diagnostics within Basketmaker II petroglyphs of southeastern Utah along the San Juan river drainages, have equivalents found in katsina masks, ritual poetry and creation myths specific only to two Pueblo cultures, Keresan speakers and Zuni speakers. Both are linguistic isolates. Ethnographic analogy, superimposition sequences (Harris Matrix), gestures of anthropomorphic figures of 'dead' or 'spirit beings' are keys to the cultural metaphors ascribed to Katsinas and Cloud beings. Katsinas are beneficial spirits for all Pueblo people. Ethnographic analogy distinguishes the Zuni Katsinas (ancestors) from Keresan Katsinas (Cloud Beings). Creation myths of emergence through 4 previous worlds are common to both, but only the Keresan have deities from 'many skies' above, shown in their petroglyph panels, while Zuni deities live in the water below the earth. Their cultural metaphor is "ladder descending children," who will return there after death. Cultural metaphors can be identified in each panel of a large data base. These diagnostic elements found within Basketmaker II panels rule out Hopi and other tribal affiliations in this region.



Fig.1 - Comb Wash drainage, San Juan River, Colorado, USA. Zuni iconography
 Fig.2 - Montezuma Canyon, San Juan River, Colorado, USA. (White, 1939)

Blood-sweating horses - Petroglyphs in the Kyrgyz Fergana Valley in the process of transformation and interaction

Sylwia PIETROWIAK, *Faculty of History at the University of Gdansk, Poland*

Contact email: sylwia.pietrowiak@gmail.com

Keywords: petroglyphs, Central Asia, Fergana Valley, holy place, interact with rock

The petroglyphs representing horses located in Aravan, in the Kyrgyz Valley of Fergana, are an example of a unique palimpsest, which accumulates different content and is susceptible to numerous interpretations. Some scholars link them with the legendary, blood-sweating horses, which were claimed to have been bred in the region. The petroglyphs are assumed to have been created in the first half of the first millennium BC. The area where the petroglyphs are located (called *Dul-dul at*) is today a place of worship, where local rituals related to Islam are practiced. It is also the place of religious pilgrimages.

The ethnographic fieldwork, that I carried out in 2016 and 2017, showed numerous links between the images, the historical memory and practices. It appears that the petroglyphs are today an integral part of the entity including ritual practices, beliefs and other petroglyphs and other objects of worship in the region. The rock where the petroglyphs are located is personified as a place inhabited by various beings with causative powers. The rock is also transformed by petroglyphs, holes, graffiti and painting or burning candles. This paper will demonstrate how the Aravan petroglyphs are involved in a process of transforming a rock to form a relationship with it and how people interact with it.



Fig.1 - Rock with petroglyphs in Aravan, in the Kyrgyz Valley of Fergana (*Dul-dul at* complex). (photo © Sylwia Pietrowiak)

Fig.2 - Aravan, in the Kyrgyz Valley of Fergana. A woman in the course of performing a ritual in the *Dul-dul at* complex. (photo © Sylwia Pietrowiak)

The value of ethnographic research for rock art studies

This presentation provides the historical and theoretical basis for this IFRAO session on Rock Art and Ethnography. The papers in this session build on the shoulders of giants who opened up the study of rock art and ethnography at the end of the 1980s. In particular, they build on the work of contributors to the seminal publication *Rock art and ethnography: proceedings of the ethnography symposium (H)*, Australian Rock Art Research Association Congress, Darwin 1988, which was edited by Mike Morwood and Doug Hobbs from the University of New England. This book was part of a renewed global interest in rock art studies that emerged largely due to the impetus provided by IFRAO and national rock art organisations, such as AURA. Since then, the study of rock art and ethnography has grown, with dedicated studies across the globe. By capturing these developments, geographically, temporally and thematically, the papers in this session set the groundwork and establish the challenges for future ethnographic research in rock art studies.

Claire SMITH, *Flinders University, Australia*

Sally K. MAY, *Griffith University, Australia*

Ines DOMINGO, *Universitat de Barcelona, Spain*

Contact email:

claire.smith@flinders.edu.au

Keywords: IFRAO, ethnographic research, rock art, Australian Rock Art Research Association Congress

Rock art, China and ethnography

More than 2,000 years ago, when China began to record history in a written form, ethnography was already in existence. These records include the descriptive records of rock art, the earliest recording of ethnography and of rock art in China. Archaeological evidence found in the characters of this early writing found on surfaces other than rocks includes: oracle descriptions, seal scripts and other images that also appear in rock art, as well as evidence found on a large number of bronze, pottery and in vessel inscriptions. It appears that the same Chinese culture of calligraphy and painting, is reflected in the meaning and intent of the petroglyphs and appears to be consistent with those of the early Chinese characters. Links can also be found in the myths and folklore of the early Chinese ethnic origins, and other historical books can also be related to rock art and ancient culture. However, not all rock art can be interpreted in this way. At least a few typical petroglyph patterns are deciphered and interpreted by Chinese cultural scholars as a petroglyph symbol linked to the ancient cultural symbols of China. However, scholars who believe in the theory of cultural transmission believe that there is a possibility that these rock art images can be linked to ethnographic evidence.

Sheng SU, *independent research*

Contact email:
susheng2009@gmail.com

Keywords: rock art, ethnography, Chinese characters, seals, symbols, China

UTÃ WORITIRE - A preliminary experience of intercultural/ interepistemological theory-building on Negro River petroglyphs, Amazonas, Brazil

Raoni VALLE, *Federal University
of Western Pará - UFOPA*

Higino TENÓRIO, *Secretaria
Municipal de Educação (SEMEC),
São Gabriel da Cachoeira;
Federação das Organizações
Indígenas do Rio Negro (FOIRN),
Brazil*

Contact email:
figueiradoinferno@hotmail.com

Keywords: Amazonia, Negro
River, Utã Woritire, indigenous
theories, petroglyphs,
intercultural research

Amazonian Indigenous groups possess diverse and complex theories about the phenomenon that non-Indigenous archaeologists define as Rock Art. However, ethnographic or archaeological literature on that subject are scarce, pointing to the invisibility of the phenomenon (Indigenous theories on Amazonian rock art) and/or a lack of interest from those disciplines in problematizing such an epistemic field in a more in-depth and respectful manner, despite its complexity and diversity of expression. Therefore, this paper constitutes a theoretical provocation regarding this silence that permeates Amazonianist rock art ethnography and archaeology. This field of investigation on Amazonia could be understood as a “gray area” where little ethnographic and ethnoarchaeological understanding is evident regarding these relationships among people, rocks, graphics and knowledge on the Amazonian biome. On the other hand, Indigenous connoisseurs never ceased thinking on that subject, inserting rock art in effective “Cultures of Respect” (Basoka Niretirere Padeore) materialized in meaningful, sacred and dangerous places with “Art-Mythology” (Nimuãtirigere Masire). This research is based on an exchange of ideas between a Native Amazonian Tuyuka professor-researcher and a non-Indigenous rock art archaeologist during intercultural surveys for petroglyph sites (Utã Woritire) in the Negro River basin, Amazonas state, Brazil, between 2013 and 2017.

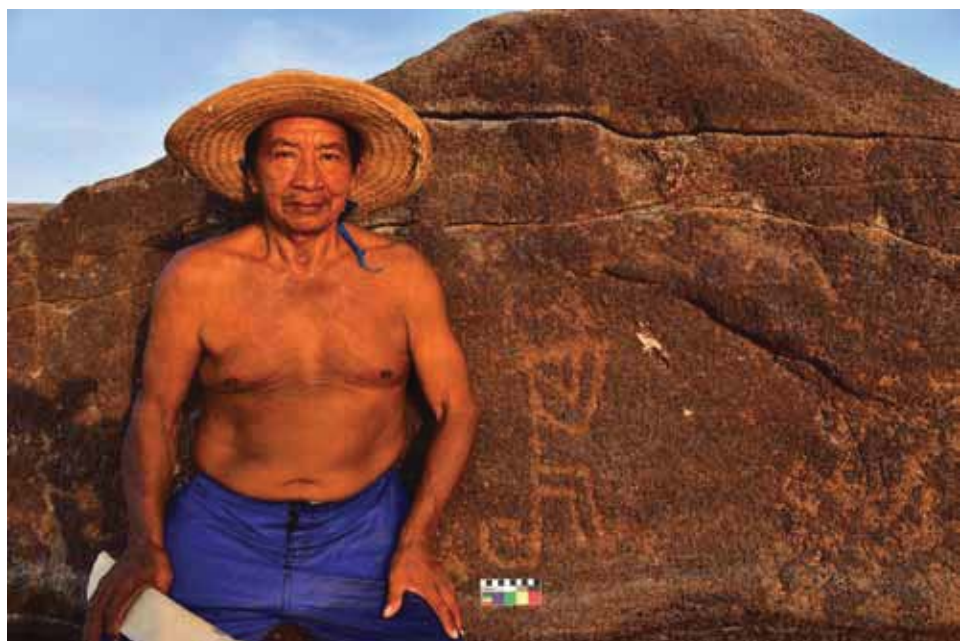


Fig.1 - Prof. Higino Tuyuka besides a masakura baya petroglyph (zoomorphic ritual fluteplayer) at the Ilha das Andorinhas site, Lower Negro River, Brazilian Amazonia. (photo Raoni Valle taken during 2016 fieldwork campaign)