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THE LEGACY OF JOHN CLEGG AND ROCK ART AESTHETICS WORKSHOP

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John Clegg always approached rock art in fresh, unconventional ways, to the delight of all those with an open mind and eagerness not to be limited by received methods. This workshop celebrates John as one of the 'giants' on whose shoulders many others have learnt to stand. The papers in this session display some of the diverse views that can be had from that vantage point, and in many ways reflect his delight in the aesthetics of humanly made markings on rock.

Introduction: 'Seeing is believing'?

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A personal account of my first encounter with John Clegg's scholarship, how he combined hardnosed methods for questioning all assumptions with innovative approaches to rock art sites. Brief summaries of presentations and how they relate to John's work.

Keywords: Method, rock art, science

John Clegg's Mathesis Words, Mathesis Pictures and the genesis of Australian rock art research

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Australian rock art research has progressed through a number of ontological phases. The earliest days of settler encounter/arrival/invasion realised the widespread presence of rock art across the continent. The first etic observations of this unfamiliar body of imagery saw first the beginning of extensive recording exercises of both Aboriginal art and mythology. Last century archaeologists and anthropologists began to document the variability in a long-term cultural practice. The 1960's flood of (mostly) Cambridge-trained archaeologists to Australia included John Clegg. Clegg was one of the key practitioners in the seventies and eighties (with Lesley Maynard, Michael Morwood and Andree Rosenfeld) when, for the first time, Australian universities offered specialised units in rock art studies within archaeology degrees. Australian rock art research began to flourish as a sub-discipline of archaeology, with approaches focused on regional and landscape studies. Interest shifted from the concept of 'art as an object' to a focus on rock art as an intentional creation of humans in the past. The particular way of producing rock art, its 'style' was viewed as a means of communication. Rock art was seen as a way of encoding a range of social, economic and ritual information. Conceived in this way, the form and structure of assemblages could thus be seen to express group interaction or differentiation, social boundaries or social organisation. And the way that we "see" rock art was key to the influence that John Clegg had in his formative role in the development of rock art research in Australia. This paper discusses the ontological innovations in Clegg's early work: and the way that these have affected archaeological approaches to Australian rock art research in the last three decades.

Keywords: John Clegg, rock art, motifs, archaeological approaches, Sturt's Meadows

‘Take a closer look: learning from the detail’

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A new framework for identifying contact rock art

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Buried beneath Baiame: Spatial modelling of geochemical data from the Baiame Cave, Australia

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In recording Aboriginal rock art throughout Australia, it was found that some aspects of the art, particularly in relation to the re-working of an image, could not be readily described with current terminology. In an effort to overcome this deficiency, avenues of Fine Art theory and semantics were explored. While exact equivalents could not be found, a number of concepts were considered useful as a basis for use in rock art. This paper then introduces the concepts of amendment and alteration (from *pentimenti*) and the subtleties of the Morellian Method.

Traditionally, the identification of contact rock art has depended on the recognition of introduced subject matter, such as guns, animals or ships. Authorship of this art has been attributed to the people for whom the depicted objects were new or remarkable. While this approach does work for some places, the focus on motif alone directs attention from other aspects of style that can provide important social information. Based on a case study in the Mid North of South Australia, this study presents a new analytical framework for analyzing style in rock art and using stylistic characteristics to identify authorship. The framework can be customised to different sites and/or regions to provide more nuanced understandings of specific contact trajectories. The results of this study suggest that innovation in contact rock art initially occurs in a single aspect of style, either motif, technique, or medium, and that a sequencing of innovations may be able to provide a temporal succession for contact motifs. The wider value of this framework is that it provides a basis for developing regional or site-specific models of style that may help researchers to obtain greater insight into the authorship of contact rock art in different parts of the world.

This paper presents reconstructions of pigment motifs based on their chemical characteristics, outlining the potential of these methods for rock art research and conservation/management applications in a case study from the well known Baiame Cave site, located in the Hunter Valley, NSW, Australia. It draws on a triptych of influences from John Clegg’s work in the Sydney Basin: 1) the development of novel rock art recording methodologies; 2) the exploration and use of multivariate statistical data treatments; and 3) a contemplation of the evidence present in Sydney Basin rock art in respect of the antiquity of Aboriginal cosmology.

Keywords: Spatial modelling, pigment geochemistry, Sydney Basin rock art, Baiame, pXRF, conservation and management implications

Rock engravings in western New South Wales: an analysis of the Panaramitee tradition site of Sturt's Meadows

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Pecked and pounded: recent research on the contemporary Indigenous importance of and conservation concerns for petroglyphs in New South Wales and Queensland, Australia

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Figures, scenes and narrative in the *pitoti*, the later prehistoric rock-engravings of Valcamonica (BS), Italy

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The complex of rock engravings at Sturt's Meadows in western New South Wales was a major focus for John Clegg's work over a number of years. The rock art at the site has been attributed to the Panaramitee tradition, a corpus of engravings found across Australia and first described in detail by Lesley Maynard, whose work John promoted and also extended in his own research. This paper presents the results of statistical analyses of the rock art at Sturt's Meadows using methods that were championed by John. The results not only confirm John's findings about the various sub-sites at Sturt's Meadows, but also fit well with the tenets of the Discontinuous Dreaming Network Model, which holds that the similarities between engraving sites across vast distances of Australia reflect the widespread links forged by Dreaming tracks and suggested by the trade and other social networks that sometimes spanned the continent.

Keywords: Sturt's Meadows, Panaramitee, correspondence analysis, cluster analysis, Dreaming tracks, Australia

In this highly visual presentation recent archaeological and ethnographic field research at petroglyph sites in various localities in Queensland and New South Wales, Australia is summarised. Case Studies include Gallery Rock in Wollemi National Park (NSW), Jibbon in Royal National Park (NSW), Chalawong (Queensland), the Burnett River rock engravings (Queensland) and Chillagoe sites (Queensland). In all areas local Aboriginal custodians are concerned about the management and future of their petroglyph rock art sites and want to work closely with archaeologists and other academics to better protect them. It is concluded that no matter the age of the imagery, and the cultural disruptions of over 200 years of European colonisation, the sites and designs remain an important and dynamic part of living Aboriginal culture.

Keywords: Petroglyphs, Wollemi, Jibbon, Chalawong, Burnett River, rock art management, Australia

One of us (Chippindale), lucky to have known John Clegg in person, has warm memories of Sydney sandstone rocks, with his sharp eyes and his mind ready to explore and imagine, rather than repeat standard guesses. An obvious guess was to identify subject: "This is a picture of a kangaroo." "No," said, John. "We don't know that. We guess it is but we should call it a 'kangaroo', the ! indicating that it looks like a kangaroo but may not actually represent one." Move to Valcamonica: quite small surfaces packed with many small figures, close together, surrounded by cool woods and meadows; contrast Sydney surfaces, very large with a few giant images separated well apart, under southern heat, enclosed by ferocious spiny scrub. We could ask the equivalent Alpine question: are "!deer" actually images of deer or something else? Are these "!dogs" dogs? Since Valcamonica surfaces are crowded, we instead ask a variant Clegg-y question: what mean these close groupings of figures? Are they just chance? Are they "!scenes"? Is something else going on? What? We offer what may be a first attempt at a systematics of how rock-art figures are placed on a surface in relation one to another.

Keywords: Composition, Scene, Valcamonica, Rock-engraving

Relating to Rock-art (and to John Clegg)

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'Seeing is questioning' or John Clegg's path in the landscape or rock art

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When John Clegg was at a Rock-art Site, he was part of that site. Standing on a carved site next to a road north of Sydney, he elevated us to another dimension. He affected that site. So, do we all and it alters us. John even changed and added language to it. We can know some of how we disturb the site, but it is not so easy to understand how it influences us? How and why do we judge and rate/rank it? Which rock-art is better, most significant? Must we consider descendent communities? Which needs more protection? How has it affected our lives? How has our relationships to rock-art prevented our acceptance as serious researchers? Most of all, what obligations, if any, do we owe to rock-art? A discussion will be presented related to these issues and the reliability of any decisions made. Why do we feel these considerations are important?

Keywords: John Clegg, rock-art history, recording, interpretation, appreciation, judgement

I discuss some of the approaches to theory and methodology that John brought to rock art research, as represented in his published articles and field work practices, and recount the anecdote of an inspired exploration with John of a one-image site on the shores of the Berowra River.

Keywords: Method, rock art, hermeneutics, science, landscape aesthetics