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ANTHROPOMORPHIC IMAGES IN ROCK ART

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Anthropomorphic images appear widely across the world of rock art from the Upper Palaeolithic through to the Neolithic and Bronze Age, and for some continents to later yet still prehistoric times. Artwork relevant to this session may be paintings, engravings or scratchings on cave walls, or as images pecked into rocky surfaces or on standing stones. The session is directed at anthropomorphic images in which the possibility of recovery of the meanings intended by the artists and sculptors exists. Such prospects might relate to known or inferred legends, myths or folklore, and include matters that recognize the unremitting importance of human, animal and crop fertility to humankind. Art forms may be present in whole or as *pars pro toto*, in which a part stands for or symbolizes the whole. Images or artistic compositions may articulate, in ways more or less manifest, scenes of dramatic action as with hunting and dancing, mating and birthing, ritual and ceremony, some of which may overtly or latently express yearnings for the rewards of fruitful fecundity.

Morphological Diversity of Anthropomorphs at Three Rock Art Sites in Canindé do São Francisco, Sergipe, Brazil

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Keywords: morphological diversity, anthropomorphs, rock sites, Sergipe, Brazil

Studies of rock art in Canindé do São Francisco city show the existence of an original set of graphics and a thematic heterogeneity that points to differing moments or epochs of decoration of the rock shelters, embracing elements of the São Francisco, Northeast and Agreste archaeological Traditions. At the Patrocina site, where the panel presents large geometric anthropomorphic figures of open contour traces 1m high, the figures form a principal axis of the panel. Morphologically they resemble figures of the Northeast archaeological Tradition by presenting rectangular shapes and geometric infills, more precisely with the Serra Branca style dating from 6000 BC. At the Candido site, the presence of an anthropomorphic giant on the ceiling, 2m long, and with anthropomorphic sets on the central wall of a small structure, is remarkable. This site has a differential in presenting small figures as well as the great figure painted on the ceiling of the cave (grotto), similar to anthropomorphs seen in the Agreste archaeological Tradition. At the "Letreiro" site, the figures prominently occupy the central wall of the shelter, and present morphological characteristics similar to those of the Agreste archaeological Tradition in which the anthropomorphic figure is well emphasized and highlighted with pigment infill throughout the body.



Hybrid Beings in the Rock Art of the Rapa Nui, Easter Island: Divisible and Compositional bodies

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Keywords: rock art, Easter Island, ontology, archaeology of the body, analogism

Rock art in Rapa Nui is one of the most ubiquitous archaeological material forms. It is also a great example of the huge diversity that defines the Rapanui visual arts. Among this diverse universe, rock art motifs depict human bodies, human body parts, human-animal hybrids, and what Lee called “combined sea creatures”. Rock art in general and these depictions in particular, have been rarely assessed beyond typological approaches and/or mythological interpretations. In this work, I intend to put in context these human and hybrid bodies and body parts by addressing them as part of the *bodyscape* of the Rapanui, evaluating the kind of discourse they encouraged about the body and the world. In order to do this, I will consider a broader set of anthropo-zoomorphic objects made by pre-European islanders, including wooden and stone carvings. This work is an attempt to re-value the material characteristics of rock art, its iconographic features, and its relation to other examples of visual arts. The work concludes that the depiction of beings composed of different body parts of humans and non-humans, is part of relational constructions of the body, and to a particular ontological frame, broadly characterised by Descola’s analogism.



Anthropomorphic images in the Alto de la Guitarra site in the Moche valley, Peru

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petroglyphs, Alto de la
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In 2010 we completed the first inventory of the natural and cultural landscape of the Alto de la Guitarra archaeological site in the Moche valley, La Libertad Department, Perú. 70 years of past research, in particular by Castillo (2000; 2008) and Campana (2004a; 2004b; 2006), enabled the development of a new holistic research strategy (Castillo and Barrau: 2010; 2014). The research included 401 engraved boulders, together with associated structures and communication pathways. The whole site is considered a major crossroad of trails connecting the Chicama valley to the north with the eastern Serranía de Carabamba, and the southern Virú valley. The Alto de la Guitarra site is considered an open-air rock art sanctuary.

In this article we present a set of anthropomorphic rock art engravings that represent a chronological and cultural sequence for the area. The study involves techniques of production, iconographic features and the spatial distribution of the boulders and the associated structures in relation to the tutelary mountains. The research is delivered in the context of the archaeological and ethnohistoric evidence on mythology and ritual, which may reflect aspects of the social dynamics and symbolic universe associated with the societies that produced the rock art at the site.



resolution pictures insufficient

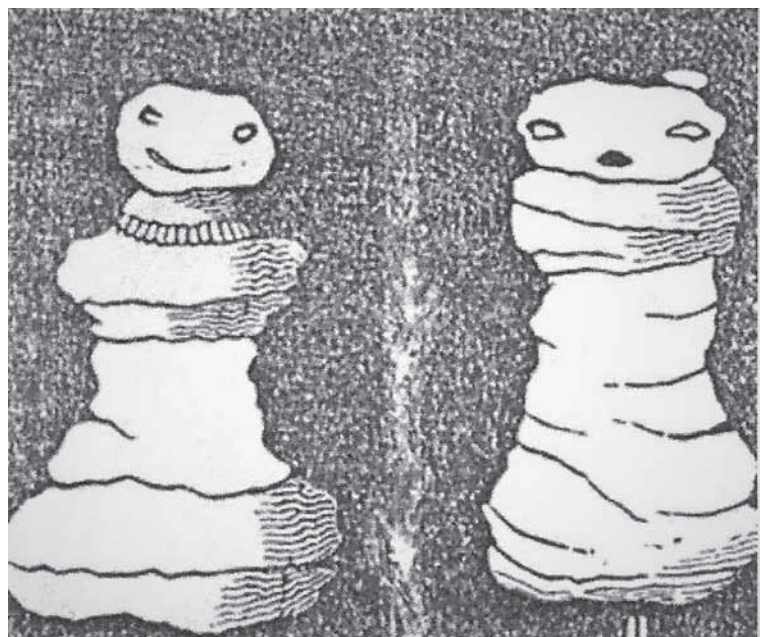
Manitou and image stones in North America

Since ancient times the Native or Indian people of North America have believed in the existence of a supernatural, omnipresent and omniscient 'force' or 'presence'. The recognition of this presence was and is a tangible entity seen and felt by hundreds of generations of the Indian people of North America, their daily lives filled with it. All-encompassing and pervasive, it is universal in scale. For many of the Native people living here, manifestations of the supernatural could be expressed by one word: Manitou. Manitou itself was seen to rest in distinctive rocks and boulders. Of these, some were looked upon as 'spirit' or 'image' stones. Image stones were often times altered or dabbed with paint to suggest a human appearance or profile. Many were the subject of legends and myths. When discovered or purposely placed on the cultural landscape, they afforded a sense-of-place and acted as 'guardians' to be propitiated through prayer and offerings.

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Keywords: Manitou, spirit, image stone, spirit, rocks, landscape



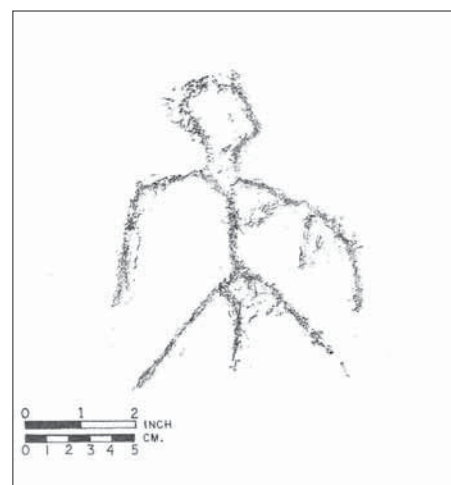
The thunderbird in native North American rock art

The Thunderbird tradition is likely one of the most ancient and widespread Native American traditions in all of North America. Stories of Thunderbirds are part of almost every tribe's mythology. The Thunderbird is said to arrive in the Spring of the year, its coming announced by thunderstorms. Lightning is said to flash from its eyes and the thunder is said to be the noise of a battle between the great bird and giant serpents. Thunderbirds have occurred as a rock art motif for millennia, some of the pecked images dating back at least 7000 years and likely far more. Many birds and insects are associated with the Thunderbird with other forms anthropomorphic in appearance. In this presentation, we will look at numerous rock art images of Thunderbirds, the physical setting, differing styles and what may have inspired the artists to create these ancient images

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Keywords: thunderbird,
storms, thunder, lightning,
serpent



Exceptional anthropomorphic images in the Monte Calvario site, Poro Poro, Cajamarca Peru

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Monte Calvario, Poro Poro,
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This article presents a set of exceptional anthropomorphic images that were painted in the Monte Calvario site, located within the Poro Poro archaeological complex, Department of Cajamarca, Peru. These expressions are described, and spatial, temporal and cultural parameters defined in order to achieve a solid foundation, in which anthropological and ethnohistorical data is added and analyzed. The remarkable results enabled us to define a sacred space in which ritual and ceremonial activities related to the cult of mythical ancestors, water and fertility, were performed. Furthermore, the identification of six anthropomorphic figures representing shamans, two of them couples, associated with the set of large anthropomorphic images, was crucial in reinforcing the idea of their role in mediating with deities. The aforementioned complex covers an area of approximately eight km², and in four field seasons we conducted surveys that involved the recording of five architectural units, rock art expressions, and also carried out a stratigraphic survey at the foot of panel 6 of Monte Calvario, that is, below most of the representations that we are dealing with in this occasion.



The Grotta Palmieri of Lettopalena (Chieti, Abruzzo, Italy): Preliminary Presentation of a New Site with Rock Paintings

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Keywords: anthropomorphic black figures, Grotta Palmieri (Abruzzo), liquid pigments, modern charcoal figures, prehistoric paintings

The recent discovery of the Grotta Palmieri (discovered October 2017 by Roberto Palmieri) extends our knowledge of prehistoric rock art in the territory of Lettopalena, which already included a site with paintings and an isolated boulder with many engravings. Grotta Palmieri is a shallow cavity, located in a steep part of the left bank of the Aventino River, just above a narrow path partially cut into the rock. A series of black figures are concentrated on the inner part of the left wall, while evidence of a sub-triangular stain and some other minor traces are in red-ochre. On the right-hand portion of the inner section there are some non-descript black signs, but they likely represent a name. An anthropomorphic figure (head and torso) seems modern, but we can attribute to prehistory the red stain and various black signs, both for the typology and the technique of application, not by charcoal, as with the more modern signs, but with liquid pigment. Highlighted, are a probable bird-head anthropomorphic figure, which may have a pendant motif inside the red stain, and other possibly anthropomorphic and zoomorphic figures. These will be examined and compared with paintings and engravings from other prehistoric sites of the territory.

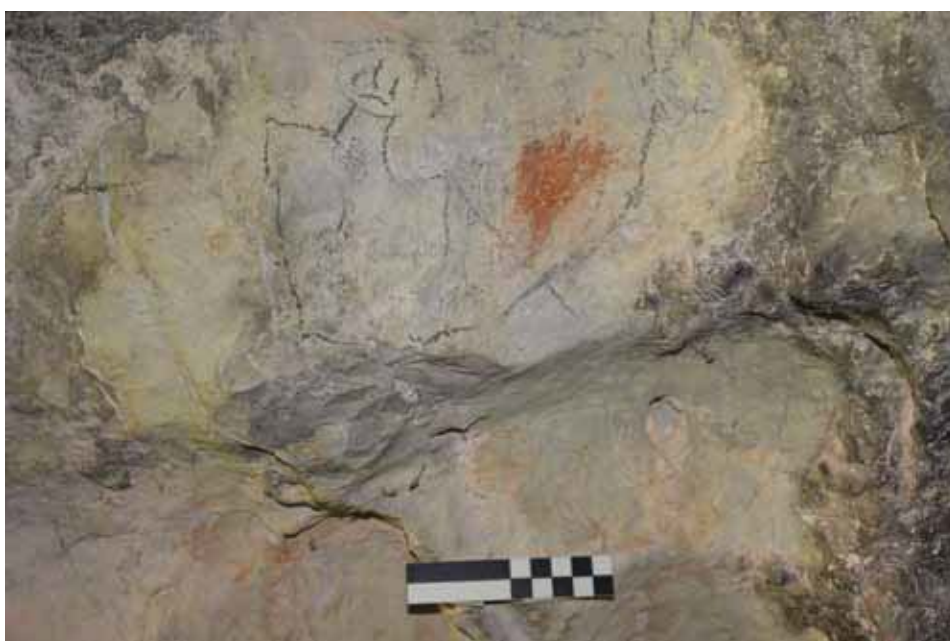


Fig.1 - Grotta Palmieri: Anthropomorphic figure and red stain. (photo Di Fraia)

Fig.2 - Grotta Palmieri: Anthropomorphic and possibly zoomorphic figures. (photo Di Fraia)

Anthropomorphic Images in Australian Rock Art through Time and Space

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Keywords: petroglyphs, rock paintings, footprints, vulvas, rock art

Anthropomorphic images occur throughout the Australian rock art repertoire, and from the earliest times, perhaps 40,000 years ago, to the present. Some of the earliest paintings have fine details including musculature, weapons, and personal adornments. Later paintings and petroglyphs are typically simpler and larger, and commonly portray human/spirit entities such as Wanjinjas, and Jilinjas in the Kimberley region, Quinkan in Cape York Peninsula, and Baiame or Bunji in south-east Australia. In the early 'Panaramitee tradition' in central Australia, pecked footprints are the most common anthropomorphic depiction, and petroglyphs of stylized 'Archaic faces' occur across the central deserts. In more recent rock art of Arnhem Land similar partial body depiction extends to paintings of human vulvas suggestive of the people's fertility hopes.



Fig.1 - Gwion painting, King Edward River, Kimberley, Australia. (photo Mike Donaldson)

Fig.2 - Human footprint petroglyph, Panaramitee, South Australia. (photo Mike Donaldson)



Anthropomorphic engraved images in south east Queensland, Australia

Unlike painted images there is limited evidence of engraved anthropomorphic figures in Australia. This is especially the case in south east Queensland (an area of around 22 420 km square) where there is little rock art evidence remaining. Apart from the Chalawong site, south of Gatton, and some scattered finds of minor and fast deteriorating engravings, there is little in regards to engraved rocks. One has to travel 370km north to the Burnett river, central Queensland, to reach another significant rock engraving site. The largely schematic representations that form the basis of current known engraved sites in south east Queensland highlight the rarity of anthropomorphic images in the area. This being the case, a small number of anthropomorphic images present on an engraved rock area, recorded at a new site 20km outside of Brisbane, represent significant new data and may indicate stylistic and cultural changes in the area. Importantly the engravings denote at least two different anthropomorphic styles with differing symbology associated with them. Furthermore, these images also represent new opportunities for local Indigenous groups to reconnect with their land and stories.

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Keywords: engravings, anthropomorphic, rock art, south east Queensland, petroglyphs



Fig. 1 - Kangaroo and anthropomorphic engraving, south east Queensland. (photo Marisa Giorgi)

Fig. 2 - Recording of the engraving, south east Queensland. (photo Marisa Giorgi)

Anthropomorphic figures with multi-layered meanings in Yokuts and Western Mono rock art (California, USA)

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Keywords: anthropomorph, rock art, iconography, Yokuts, Western Mono, California

Yokuts and Western Mono tribes of central California had close cultural ties, and many people were bilingual. They believed the present world was the only one. The human era followed a prehistoric period during which animals, birds, and other beings created the universe. The creator beings had human and animal attributes, and lived in a social context that set the example for the human descendants. Their worldview encompassed a reciprocal system where humans and animals were peers. Moiety lineages, associated with totemic animals and patrilineal descent, formed the basis of their societies. Pictographs combining human, bird, and animal traits are common, and reflect characteristics that are important in their traditional stories. This paper examines the iconographic clues that identify the anthropomorphic figures, and the role the anthropomorphs play in the oral narratives, which may combine totemic attributes that represent a moiety lineage or guardian spirit. The relationship between site size, whether the site is public or private, and the placement of the figure in relationship to others can be important. Also addressed, is the frequency a figure is painted, as well as artistic differences and similarities in content and presentation within tribal areas and across dialect borders.



Gender relations in the Upper Palaeolithic

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Keywords: Gender relations,
social conflict, image
description, narration,
Chauvet, Pech-Merle

My topic is the relationship between anthropomorphic motifs and animal representations. As in the case of some female figures in the women-bison-panel of the Pech-Merle Cave, which Leroi-Gourhan has interpreted as transformations between the motifs of bison and woman (see his illustration from Leroi-Gourhan 1958, fig. 1). Or, at the rock pendant in the Salle du Fond of the Chauvet Cave (fig. 2), which shows a female abdomen with a bison's head directly above the accented vulva. I would like to interpret this anthropo-zoomorphic representation as a key ingredient for a main narrative line in Chauvet's entire presentation program. A narrative that concerns the relationship between the sexes. My method is based on the Inquiring Image Description approach, which the art historian Hanna Deinhard developed as a basis for a Sociology of Art (Deinhard 1970). By adopting, as example, the depictions of the Chauvet Cave, I would like to demonstrate how such an image description may succeed in reconstructing narrative elements incorporated in Upper Palaeolithic representations. A.Leroi-Gourhan, "Lesymbolismedesgrandssignesdansl'artpariétalpaléolithique", *Bulletin de la Société préhistorique de France*, 55 (7-8), 1958, pp. 384-398. H. Deinhard, *Meaning and expression. Toward a sociology of art*, Boston 1970.



Anthropomorphic rock profiles from prehistoric cult places in Southern Thrace

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Keywords: Anthropomorphic rock profiles, prehistoric cult places, religion

Anthropomorphic rock profiles are often observed in the prehistoric cult places of Southern Thrace (this historic region nowadays extends over the territories of Bulgaria, Greece and Turkey). Their presence is often characterized as being an interesting natural phenomenon or is neglected because of the insufficient qualification of the researchers, the lack of any long-standing interdisciplinary research, and the absence of scientific research on the subject. This paper aims to analyze the Thracian anthropomorphic rock profiles in the context of archaeological material. These include pottery, figurines and petroglyphs (insofar as it is possible regarding the petroglyphs, as the data is limited). They are from sites located in the territory of Southern Thrace, allowing corresponding parallels with archaeological materials from the territory of the Western Balkans and Romania. In the second part of the paper the research is examined in the light of published studies by Prof. A. Raduncheva, Prof. M. Gimbutas and D. W. Bailey, where anthropomorphism, in the context of prehistoric art, is covered. In the final part, the anthropomorphic rock profiles and their presumptive relation with prehistoric Ancestor Worship is considered.

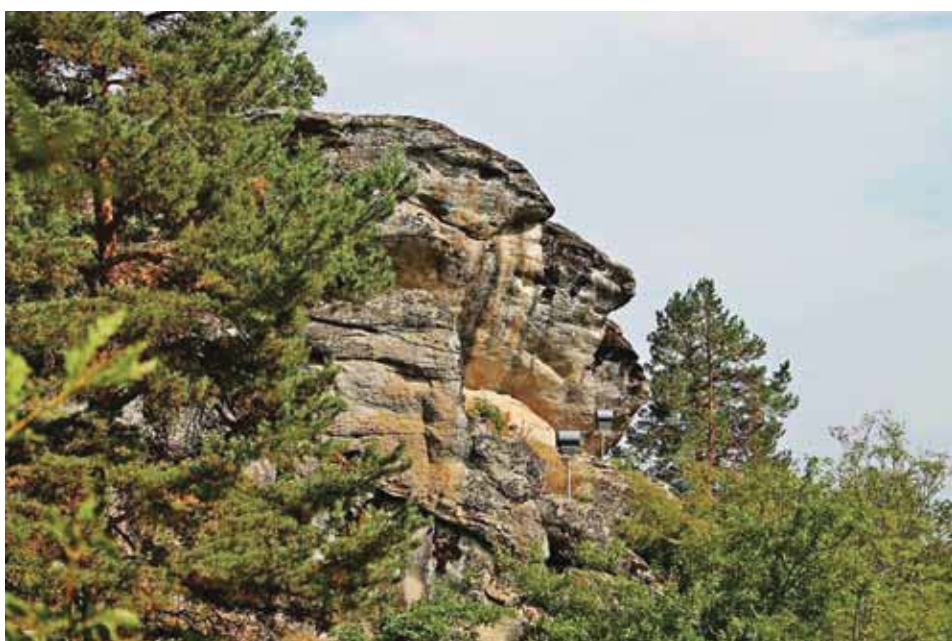


Fig.1 - The anthropomorphic rock profile at Popovo Gradishte (Bishop's Castle), Dolno Dryanovo village, Western Rhodopes Mountains, Bulgaria. (photo I. Filipov)

Fig.2 - The anthropomorphic rock profile at Tzareva Tzarkva, Zelenigrad village, Pernik Region, Bulgaria. (photo I. Filipov)

Hieros gamos or Ἱερός γάμος: symbol of fertility and of orphanism in Thracian ideology

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**Keywords: Great Mother
Goddess, anthropomorphic
face, mushroom hierophany,
sacred marriage, hieros
gamos, rock-cut throne**

Thracian iconography is based on two fundamental images around which developed the main mythological and epic cycles. These images are the figures of the Great Goddess and the Hero—supreme companion of the goddess. Their hierogamic relationship is evident in the mural fresco on the dome of Kazanlak's tomb, where goddess and hero hold each other's hand. Other data which inform us about this relationship also comes from literary sources, iconographic and epigraphic works which refer to the Hellenistic and Roman periods. But how are these deities represented or symbolized in earlier periods? What are the Greek colonies' contributions to the Thracian religion in regards to the images of the deities? The Thracian period in question is from the Late Copper Age to the Early Iron Age which goes to the 6th and 5th centuries BC.



Fig1 - Stone mushroom menhir of village Lyra Aegean Greek Thrace. (photo Stavros Kiotsekoglou)

Fig.2 - Anthropomorphic niche of village Lagyna, Aegean Greek Thrace. (photo Stavros Kiotsekoglou)

Anthropomorphic images in high Lunigiana (Massa Carrara MS, Italy)

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Keywords: High Lunigiana,
anthropomorphs, sexual
carvings, stele, petroglyphs

The anthropomorphic and fertility images of High Lunigiana are sculptures that have been carved in the rocks and are quite different from the engravings of Valcamonica where tooling only lightly cuts the surface. The Lunigiana images generally follow the natural shape of the rock whose surface is deeply carved so that it represents, for example, the essential anatomical aspects of the face. Some may represent a deceased person, with the function of protecting the surrounding environment, and some are fertility images. The carving techniques and polishing vary. The technique is less precise in the Rock of the Giant Anthropomorph whose image is etched in the sub-cylindrical vertical rock that serves as a neck. They are clearer in another anthropomorph, called The Sleeper, whose facial expression surprises viewers for its features and proportions. Another image is named the Archaic Cameo, which celebrates a dead person, possibly a clan hero, as identified by the oblong shield above it. Polibius wrote that this shield is typically Apuan-Ligurian, as such, this image possibly belonged to the archaic Apuo Ligure people. The period varies depending on the carving, but they can be dated to between the Neolithic and Bronze Age. Different from the anthropomorphic carvings of the Orans.



Fig.1 - Buttress of Mount Orsaro, Lunigiana, Italy. (photo and copyright Angelina Magnotta)

Fig.2 - Buttress of Mount Orsaro, Lunigiana, Italy. (photo and copyright Angelina Magnotta)

The anthropomorphic engravings of Azrou Iklane (Guelmim Region, Morocco)

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Keywords: Morocco, rock
carvings, recent prehistory,
historical eras, continuity,
anthropomorphic

The site of Azrou Iklane “The Tattooed Stone” in south-west Morocco is characterized by the presence, on the dry river bed of the oued, of a slab of brown quartzitic sandstone 140 m long by 20 m wide, with around 10,000 engravings. The oldest of them is attributed to the Bovidian style (ca. 3000-1000 BC), succeeded by the Libyco-Berber style, also known as the “stage of the horsemen” (500 BC – 1500 AD), before the tradition was perpetuated into modern and contemporary times. The site is a summer camp for various groups of the Aït Oussa Arabic tribe, which makes it an area for important social expressions. The anthropological research on the tribe adds contextual knowledge to the engraving dynamics whose temporal continuity is remarkable. Although each of the chronological phases has its own particular iconographic themes, the anthropomorphic image seems to be constantly present, in varying forms and numbers. The extensive analysis of this theme raises and questions the role of such images over time within such a major site of Moroccan rock art. This research is part of the ongoing multidisciplinary project carried out by a Franco-Moroccan team that will lead to a comprehensive publication of the site.



Fig. 1 - The slab of Azrou Iklane traveled by a shepherd and his flock. (© J. Masson Mourey - Mission « Paysages Gravés »)
Fig. 2 - Anthropomorphic engraved on the slab of Azrou Iklane (© J. Masson Mourey - Mission « Paysages Gravés »).

A unique example of engraved transfigurative rock art at Avebury Cove in Wessex, Southern England

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Keywords: Avebury, carved hare to human head, metamorphosis, rock-art transfiguration

At Avebury Cove in southern England is a master carving in which, with changing viewpoint of a single carved surface, transfiguration takes place between (a) a fine human face sculpted in profile and facing the winter solstice sunset, and (b) a hare seen in spring boxing mode when this same rock surface is viewed perpendicularly. The pecked carving is subtle and highly refined. It dates from the Late Neolithic. The head of the hare becomes the eye of the human when viewed edgewise. The back of the hare is the cheek of the human face. After nearly 5000 years the hard sarsen rock is a little weatherworn or damaged by cattle rubbing against its lower half. The human head is best seen in the morning after about 11 a.m. when sunlight is at an optimum angle. There is absolutely no possibility of pareidolia. The deep carving at the human eye is particularly impressive for stonemasonry skills. It is relevant to enquire, are there any other known examples of such metamorphosis in rock art images anywhere in the world?



Fig.1 - Avebury Cove. (photo Terence Meaden)

Fig.2 - Avebury Cove. (photo Terence Meaden)

Male and female anthropomorphic, pars-pro-toto, carved images and the hieros gamos at Drombeg Stone Circle, County Cork, Ireland

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Keywords: Neolithic calendar, Drombeg, fertility religion, hieros gamos, intelligent planning, Neolithic rock art.

Exquisitely pecked on two megaliths at Drombeg Stone Circle (Southern Ireland) are images whose functions likely expressed anthropomorphic gender identity to a comprehending community. One carving – ithyphallic and testicular – is pecked into a megalith that is 2m tall, narrow and straight-sided. This helps confirm long-held deductive reasoning suspected by megalith specialists that standing stones shaped like this denote masculinity. At Drombeg this evocative male stone casts at sunrise a 'male' shadow upon one of two stones deemed to be feminine. One recipient 'female' stone is lozenge-shaped – a traditionally recognized indication of femininity. The second is a very broad, 2.1m wide, 1.1m high megalith bearing a carved open vulva, firmly suggesting that this stone is feminine too. During the course of the farming year at 45-46 day intervals beginning with the winter solstice, the rising sun casts shadows from a sequence of male-type stones upon one or other of the female-type stones. The consequence is a working calendar with major dates encoded in the stones, in which union between opposite-gender pairs is achieved by the action of planned shadows that the community could watch in a world favourable to fertility religious ideas such as the hieros gamos between Sun and Earth. Other recumbent stone circles in County Cork function similarly as sunrise calendars – and so do Stonehenge and Avebury



Figs.1 - Drombeg Stone Circle. (photo Terence Meaden)

Fig.2. - Drombeg Stone Circle. (photo Terence Meaden)

Rethinking Gobekli Tepe - The Womb of the Mother Goddess

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Keywords: Gobekli Tepe, Mother Goddess, anthropomorphic and zoomorphic iconography

This paper is an interpretation of the iconography that is found etched on the limestone pillars at the archaeological site of Gobekli-Tepe. The methodology used is a comparison of Gobekli-Tepe's imagery with other schematic types found in Europe and the Fertile Crescent areas; over a period ranging from the Upper Palaeolithic to the Neolithic in order to establish a continuity of the belief paradigm. What emerges from the analysis of the anthropomorphic and zoomorphic forms, as well as symbols such as the 'H' and crescent shapes, is that this is a site that points to a centrality of the Mother Goddess. Whereas the Mother Goddess may not be explicitly represented as a female deity, the triad of her functions of birth, death and regeneration (as seen in the cycles of nature) have been expressed in the stone iconography as in the mythology of later times. Furthermore, symbols like bucrania and perforated stones, the metaphorical uteri and vulvas, point to a belief in the Mother Goddess. The fact that the stone circles are substratum and were possibly covered is another indication that the circles were the womb of the Mother Goddess, out of which a symbolic rebirth or transformation took place.



Fig.1 - Pillar 43, "Vulture Stone", Gobekli Tepe. (© Anu Nagappa)

Anthropomorphic representations in the archaeological area of Seridó in Brazil

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Keywords: anthropomorph, Seridó, cultural influences, materialization of thoughts, graphic dynamics

The Seridó region is located in northeastern Brazil, comprising an area of great archaeological potential. There are numerous sites containing a high diversity of image forms from which it is possible to identify examples of motifs that are related to cultural links between human groups. From this research there is the possibility of identifying migratory routes; cultural preferences reflected in rock art material; exteriorization of scenes reflecting aspects of daily life and other symbolic representations and peculiarities, all of which include in the analysis the anthropomorphic forms. The objective is to expose how the pictorial representations of anthropomorphs in the region can facilitate diverse research pathways, which will succeed in the interpretations of the image manifestations in terms of the preferences of its authors reflected by cultural influences. This includes analysis of the materialization of thoughts reflected in expression through images, possible links related to landscape, proximity of water sources, human burial sites and rock art sites associated with burials with or without funerary goods. Considering the elements of research presented, the aim is to reconstruct the role of the anthropomorphic representations within the aforementioned contexts.



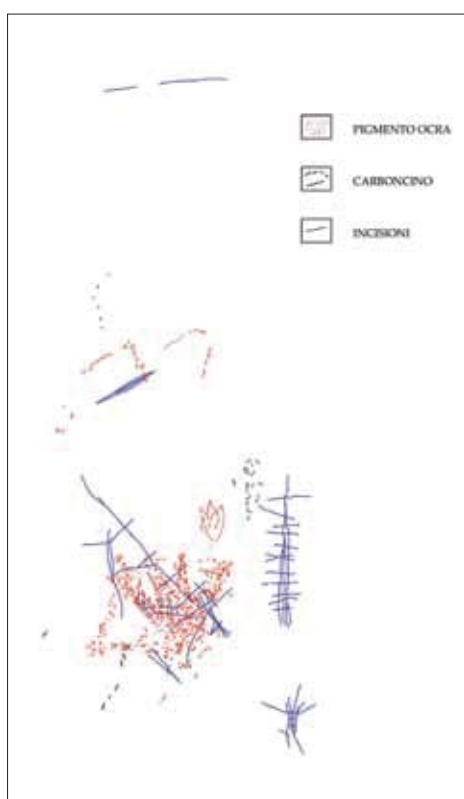
Representations of the human figure at the Anfratto Palmerini on Monte La Queglia: engravings, paintings, symbols

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Keywords: Anfratto Palmerini, filiform anthropomorphic figures, handprints, human figure, rock art

The discovery of Anfratto Palmerini in Pescosansonesco(PE) is presented to the international scientific community for the first time. This narrow cavity, unsuitable for any practical activity, was discovered in 2016 on Monte La Queglia, 560 metres above sea-level. It has a vaginal shape and its particular position receives total illumination only in the days following the winter solstice. Inside, the remains of several red ochre paintings are preserved, often overwritten by engravings, and there are some charcoal marks. This paper illustrates and documents the figurative repertoire of the cavity or crevice, among which are handprints in red ochre and various symbols, painted or engraved, such as floral pictograms, anthropomorphic figures and stylized female sexual symbols. The presence of these symbols, largely attributable to the representation of the human figure and some of its specific parts, suggests clues as to the first frequentation of the Anfratto that were probably of a ritual nature with implications related to the sphere of sexuality/fertility. Lastly, we try to understand how the environmental context has influenced the first artists in selecting the site, characterizing its functions and amplifying the symbolic implications of sexual/regenerative rituals, thus determining the semiotic value of handprints, engravings and symbols.



What can be learned from gestures in anthropomorphic figures: demonstrating a semiotic analysis of three petroglyph panels

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Keywords: syntagms, graphemes, grapho-kinemes, spatial syntax, gestures, ethnographic analogy, hermeneutic associations

Anthropomorphs are meaningful graphic systems, divided into syntagms that are supralinguistic and function with two paradigm subsets of codes: graphemes, which include head gear, body decorations, arms and legs apparel, and footwear; grapho-kinemes, which are hand and body gestures, including the directionality of legs, feet and head. Spatial syntax is the visual placement and juxtaposition of each element that encodes temporal and spatial context. These components combined suggest hermeneutic associations. Three panels in eastern Utah, USA, that span three millennia, are analysed. Anthropomorphs in panel one, circa 1900 CE have well-established declarative hermeneutic associations. Body postures and arm gestures, costumes and headdresses provide kino-graphic information that parallel historic events. Anthropomorphs in panel two, circa 1100 CE, have no known hermeneutic associations, but with this analysis, self-identity and a defined narrative emerges. Panel three, circa 1000 to 500 BCE, demonstrates the validity of this analysis, in a suggested narrative and surprisingly with existing ethnographic literature, explicative associations are provided. The application of this system demonstrates the potential of providing multiple lines of evidence for hermeneutic associations with anthropomorphic figures in rock art.

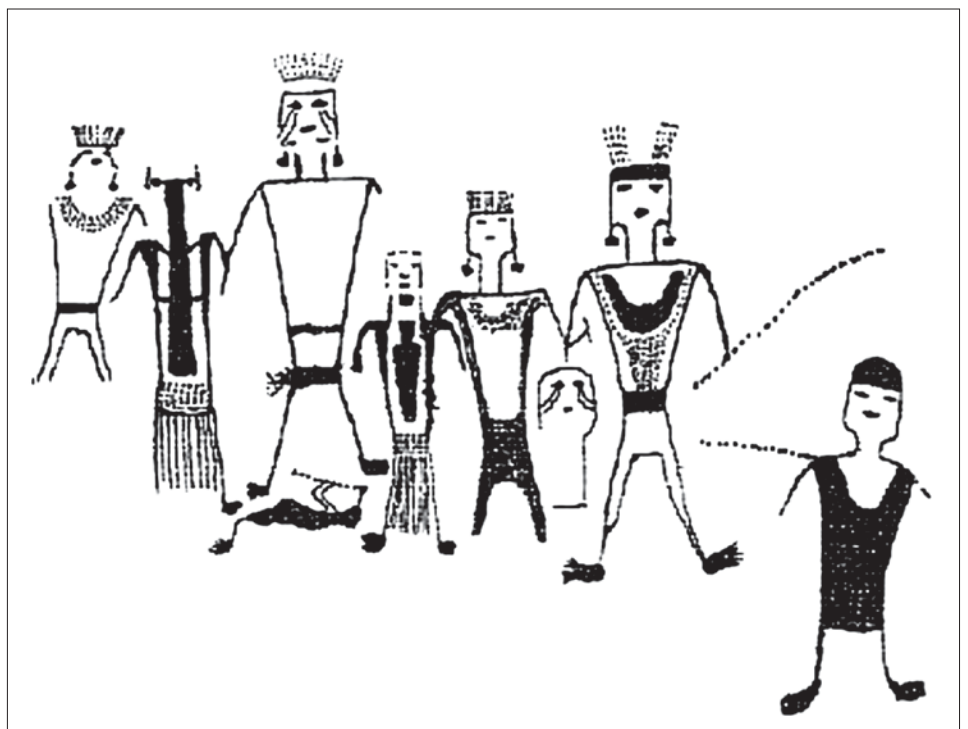


Fig.1 - Dry Fork, Ashley, Utah. (drawing C. Patterson)

Fig.2 - Willow Creek of Northern Ute Indian Reservation, Utah. (photo C. Patterson)

The mythical narrative of the “Dolmen Goddess” at Langeneichstädt, Germany. A misled interpretation of warrior armour depictions?

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Keywords: anthropomorphs, goddess, megalithic, menhir, statue-stelae, warrior

The megalithic stone cist of Langeneichstädt (Saxony-Anhalt, Germany) contained as capstone a reused menhir with an oval, dotted and dashed engraving. From its discovery in 1987 on, it was immediately interpreted as female deity with a chthonic context, although female attributes were completely lacking. Nowadays, the site is promoted for tourists and visitors with road signs to the “Dolmen Goddess”. This public notion strengthens the primary interpretation of the excavators without allowing other meanings. But the term “goddess” is misleading at this site. In comparison to other middle and western European engravings on menhirs and megaliths, six anthropomorphic motifs from Neolithic and Chalcolithic periods may be determined: 1. menhirs having an anthropomorphic shape, 2. statue-stelae, 3. orthostats with “breasts” and/or a necklace or vulva, 4. orthostats with a cauldron-shaped motif, 5. orthostats bearing a rectangular motif with a retracted middle top edge, and 6. the above mentioned filled oval motif. From these, just motif 3 and some statue-stelae are distinctly “female” depictions. In contrary to the common interpretation, the filled ovals seem not to be anthropomorphic deities nor yet “female”, but rather some kind of Neolithic buckler or pelte in analogy to similar motifs in warrior accoutrement depictions from stone cists and statue-stelae. The repeated portrayal of this kind of personal defensive weapon as pars pro toto for the complete armour or actually for the warrior himself may represent some kind of male narrative, especially in megalithic grave or hypogean contexts.

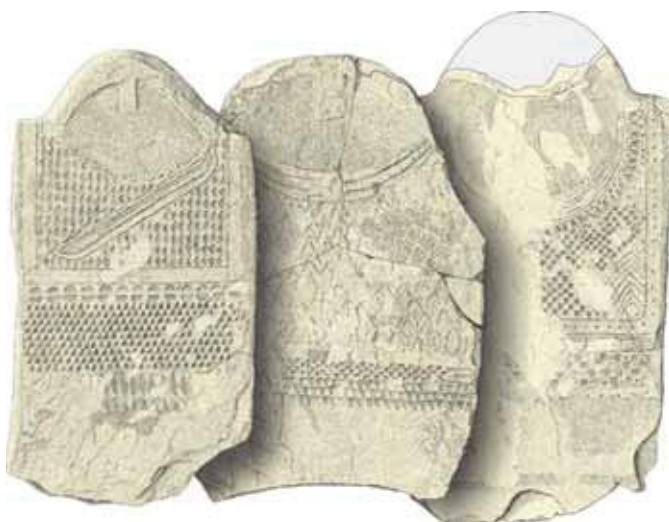


Fig.1 - The so-called “Dolmen Goddess” from Langeneichstädt (Germany)

Fig.2 - Menhirstelae from Petit-Sion, Switzerland (Corboud, 2009)

Anthropomorphic figures of East Siberia

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Keywords: anthropomorphic figures, Siberia, Transbaikal, Yakutia, Bronze Age

Fig.1 - The site of Kazachiy III, Zabaikalskiy krai, Russia. (Photograph and DStretched version by I. Ponomareva; tracing after Mazin, A.I., 1986. *Tayozhnye pisanitsy Priamur'ya* [The Taiga rock art sites of the Amur region], Novosibirsk: Nauka)

The anthropomorphic figures of East Siberia considered here have been presumably dated to the Bronze Age to Early Iron Age by previous researchers. They comprise of various scenes and compositions but many of them render a similar style throughout Cis-Baikal, Trans-Baikal and Yakutia. This paper explores the issue of general and specific traits in the rock art of this region based on the stylistic analysis of anthropomorphic figures. The region has seen very little rock art research in the last decades. In the 1960s to early 1990s more than 200 sites were published in a series of monographs in the form of black-and-white tracing copies. However, the author's fieldwork in the region uncovered many discrepancies with the publications and allow including more aspects of rock art sites in the analysis. For instance, many figures which looked the same in black-and-white copies have a different context such as the color of paint and the quality of the rock surface. On the other hand, some figures show stylistic similarity which was not rendered by tracing copies. This more detailed analysis which is based on the collected data will give a more thorough view into the prehistory of Siberia.



Revelatory style art and relational ecology: an ontological analysis of the Jiangjunya masks and crop images from China's East Coast

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Keywords: Cartesian anthropology, masks, rice-crop images, other-than-human, relational ecology

Cartesian dualism has dominated the archaeological understanding of material culture for more than a hundred years. Archaeologists have been separating the spiritual from the economic, the sacred from the mundane, and the religious from the social. However, depictions of human faces and rice-crop images found at the Jiangjunya rock art site in Lianyungang City, Jiangsu Province, China, reveal entangling relationships between spiritual and economic aspects. Drawing on the “relational ecology” model and the Amerindian perspectivism theory, the author provides an ontological analysis of the Jiangjunya rock art and its economic, social, spiritual, and historical contexts according to archaeological record, proposing that prehistoric farmers along China's East Coast perceived rice plants as relating to persons. It is argued that rice was conceptualized by them not in utilitarian terms as a means of subsistence to be used and consumed by humans; but rather as maintaining interpersonal and intersubjective relationships with humans. By means of comparison with Alaskan Eskimo ethnographic data, the author further hypothesizes that the human masks of Jiangjunya reveal a personhood of the rice rather than representing humans or anthropomorphic gods. This point of view transcends the boundaries of Cartesian anthropology.



Fig.1 - Jiangjunya, Lianyungang City, Jiangsu Province, China. (Photo Feng Qu)

Fig.2 - Jiangjunya, Lianyungang City, Jiangsu Province, China. (Photo Feng Qu)

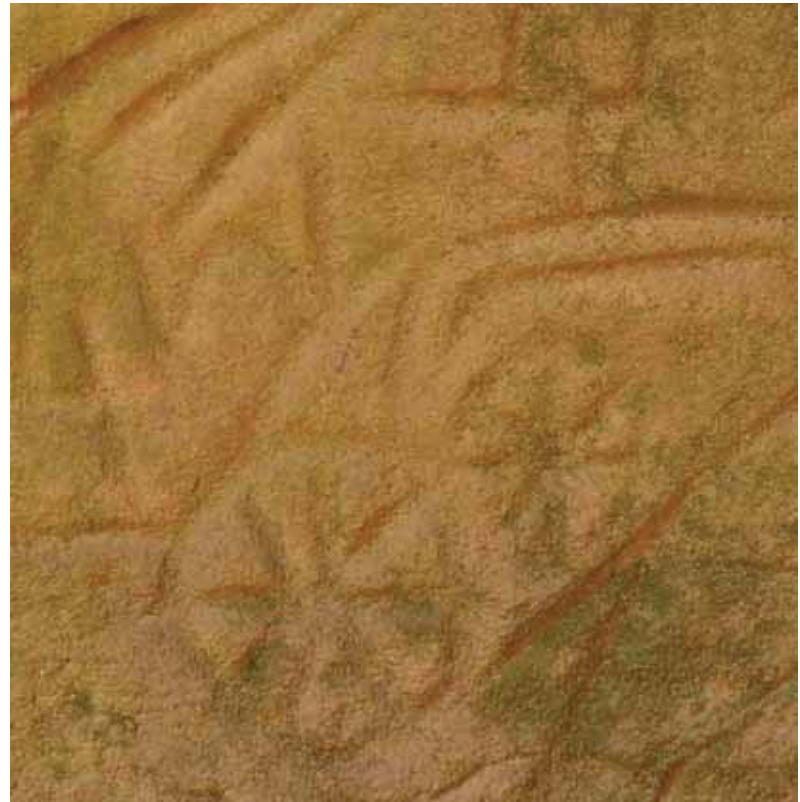
**Man on a cart with
a wheel in hand:
comparison of
the Edakkal Cave
petroglyph with
an earlier sign at
Mirzapur Cave**

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**Keywords: Edakkal Cave,
Deccan Plateau, Man with
wheel in hand**

Geographically, Edakkal Cave (11.6258° N, 76.2356° E) is situated on a section of the lower Deccan Plateau. Edakkal is a natural cave, probably created around 40,000 years ago by an earthquake. It is like a hall with a narrow corridor. A set of Brahmi inscriptions is situated on its walls and recently another Brahmi inscription (Sri Vazhumi) has been identified by Dr. M.R. Raghava Variyar. Various types of figures are portrayed on the rock wall, among them the obverse and reverse lines of a chieftain are significant. The author noticed a picture of a man standing on a cart and carrying a wheel in his hand. A similar picture in Mirzapur Cave was first studied by D. D. Kosambi as reported in his 1962 work 'The Myth and Reality'. This paper compares and discusses the older engraving of Mirzapur Cave along with this picture identified in the Edakkal Cave.



The embodiment of power and magic in the anthropomorphic representations of the Zopiloapam rock art site, Isthmus of Tehuantepec, Mexico

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Keywords: Zapotec rock art, conquest, migration, political and religious ideology

During the Mesoamerican Late Post-Classic Period (1350-1500 AD), the Zapotec people conquered the Isthmus of Tehuantepec. A new social and spacial interaction arose. The symbolic landscape passed through a process of appropriation and reinterpretation by the conquerors. The creation of new rock art expressions played a prominent role in this process. The paintings and engravings of rock art sites scattered all over the region are usually associated with mountain worship and its link with natural phenomena and agricultural cycles. However, the site of Zopiloapam stands out for its style, its iconography, the type of support and its location within the landscape. There is a predominance of anthropomorphic figures closely related to war and sacrifice symbolism that clearly express the idea of power and magic embodied in these images. The purpose of the present study is to explain the links between these characters, their attributes, the space in which they are immersed, and their possible relationship with the political and religious ideology of the time.



Fig.1 - Zopiloapam, Ciudad Ixtaltepec, Oaxaca, Mexico. (copyright María Luisa Rivas)

Fig.2 - Zopiloapam, Ciudad Ixtaltepec, Oaxaca, Mexico. (copyright María Luisa Rivas)

Rock Art in the High Atlas, Morocco: looking back over the 'tortured' man of the Azib n'kkis

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Keywords: rock art, Morocco, men, torture, sacrifice

Anthropomorphic images are numerous among the rock engravings of the Moroccan High Atlas Mountains. The life-size images of men are considered as representations of important figures, gods or heroes, tribal chiefs or valorous warriors. Some images show men hit or stabbed by different weapons such axes, daggers, arrows, etc... Yet it is undeniable that at least one image may represent the death of a man, in a deliberate, premeditated and cruel way.

Childbirth Postures Adopted by the Bovidien Women of Tassili n'Ajjer (Central Sahara of Algeria)

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Keywords: Tassili n'Ajjer rock art, woman, childbirth posture, physiological, gynaecological

Today, all women, whatever their background or culture, adopt a particular posture or position to facilitate delivery at the time of childbirth. The study of rock art scenes from Tassili n'Ajjer (Central Sahara), shows that Bovidian women chose some of these postures linked to delivery. The application of the physiological and gynecological parameters in the study of the delivery scenes of the Tassili n'Ajjer during the Bovidian Period, helped not only to identify these postures, but they also gave detailed information of the different phases of childbirth (contraction, effacement, dilatation and expulsion). The current study highlights an important element related to the societal life of the Bovidian women by going beyond aesthetic and stylistic considerations and studies.



Anthropomorphic images in the rock art of Sauyskandyk, Southern Kazakhstan

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Keywords: rock art, Southern Kazakhstan, shamanism, shamanic, anthropomorphic images, interpretation

During the last ten years in Kazakhstan as well as all over Central Asia new rock art sites have been discovered. New concentrations of petroglyphs were found in western, north-western, northern, southern and south-eastern Kazakhstan. These new findings brought about not only the identification of new regions with petroglyphs, but also new anthropomorphic images hitherto unknown in the Kazakh rock art. These new sites, to which we will make reference concerning our subject, are Bojan- Zhurek, Kuldzhabasy, and Sauyskandyk. Some anthropomorphic figures are related to similar examples of rock art in Central Asia from the beginning of the Bronze Age and reflect a closeness of ideology to the population of this territory.



Understanding Rock Art through Landscape Based Approaches: Fluteplayer Imagery in Chaco Canyon, New Mexico

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Keywords: Chaco Canyon,
fluteplayer, landscape

The Fluteplayer is an anthropomorphic figure characterised by the depiction of a flute being held or played. The image can be portrayed in numerous ways, and can often be shown with animal or insect like features and a humped back and/or headdress. Research has primarily focused on its symbolic interpretation, and although well informed and proposing a convincing argument, it fails to identify the individuality of Fluteplayer imagery and its placement within the landscape. Focusing on Fluteplayer rock art imagery in Chaco Canyon, this discussion will address these highlighted problems, and proposes that to gain an accurate understanding of the image the Fluteplayer needs to be situated back into its original context. By analysing the surrounding features associated with each site a context can be established, working to the theory that rock art is fluid and often incorporated into changing cultural landscapes. From this a greater knowledge and understanding of Fluteplayer placement and interaction within Ancient Chacoan society can be determined, and its wider cultural implications.



Fig.1 - Chaco Canyon. (photo Charlotte Vendome-Gardner)

Fig.2 - Chaco Canyon. (photo Charlotte Vendome-Gardner)