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EXPERIENCES OF COLONISATION: ROCK ART AS “SUBALTERN” NARRATIVES OF INDIGENOUS AND FIRST NATION PEOPLES LIVED EXPERIENCES DURING COLONIAL TIMES

Daryl WESLEY, *DECRA Fellow, Archaeology, College of Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences, Flinders University*

Cristiane BUCO, *Archaeologist, IPHAN - Instituto do Patrimônio Histórico e Artístico Nacional, Ceará, Brazil*

Jane FYFE, *Archaeology, The University of Western Australia*

Contact email: daryl.wesley@flinders.edu.au; jane.fyfe@research.uwa.edu.au; jafy62@live.com.au; arheocris@icloud.com

It can be argued that rock art is likely to reflect moments of culture-contact that has occurred between very different cultural groups throughout human history. This session examines the evidence of culture-contact that was experienced by Indigenous and First Nation peoples during the more recent phases of European colonisation that took place in many regions of the world. In particular this session draws on the ‘subaltern history movement’ or ‘history told from below’ where the historiographic writing has questioned dominant nationalist narratives where they represent only the history of ‘elites’ or the colonial state. There is greater understanding from this historical research of the ways that Indigenous and First Nation peoples engaged with the colonial state and settler society. The objective is to draw attention to the differing Indigenous and First Nation people’s understandings of colonialism by bringing together global examples of the colonisation experiences as demonstrated in their rock art. Rock art produced during colonial periods of history illustrate distinct maritime and terrestrial themes including ships, structures, wagons, objects, firearms, introduced animals and various scenes of interaction notably with an emphasis on conflict. Therefore we would like to invite papers that investigate rock art from this colonial period and have explored the narratives that were being communicated by the production of these rock art assemblages.

The colonial Zapotec religious creations painted in the rock art of Ba´cuana, Mexico

Fernando BERROJALBIZ,
*Instituto de Investigaciones
Estéticas, Universidad Nacional
Autónoma de México*
Contact email:
berlanz@hotmail.com

Keywords: Zapotec, colonial,
religious, hybridization,
agency, esoteric

The Ba´cuana rock art site was painted by the Zapotec, of Mesoamerican tradition, in the Postclassic (1350 - 1521 A.D.), on their arrival at the Isthmus of Tehuantepec. It is the most complex site with the largest number of images, so it was one of the most sacred places in the symbolic landscape built when they conquered this territory. During colonial times it was the only place where they continued to produce painted expressions, most of which were of a Christian religious character. These expressions, however, hide complex relationships with pre-Hispanic symbolisms. In this work I want to establish a sequence of the different colonial interventions. I will analyze how the religious aspects alluded to by the paintings changed throughout the colonial period, and how it relates to the pre-Hispanic expressions. The research will demonstrate how the Zapotecs were active agents in the creation of new religious and ritual developments where they fused and accommodated the European and the indigenous elements in a singular way. I will explain the evolution of this sacred place from the end of the pre-Hispanic era to the present day and how the changes in the Zapotec traditions were reflected in this place.



Áísinnahkiopi: The Place Where You Can See the Path Ahead. Writing-On-Stone and the narrative of cultural contact on the Northern Plains

Meg BERRY, *Alberta Parks: Writing-on-Stone Provincial Park / Áísínai'pi National Historic Site*

Rebecca WILDE, *Alberta Parks: Writing-on-Stone Provincial Park / Áísínai'pi National Historic Site*

Camina WEASEL MOCCASIN, *Kainai First Nations/ Head of Education: Head Smashed In Buffalo Jump (UNESCO World Heritage Site)*

Contact email: rebecca.toly@gov.ab.ca; megan.berry@gov.ab.ca; caminawm@gmail.com

Keywords: Áísínai'pi, Blackfoot, cultural contact, landscape, rock art

Writing-On-Stone/Áísínai'pi has always been a sacred place where one could connect with the spirit world. People have come for ceremonies, to seek visions, and the assistance of spirit beings. Áísínai'pi is situated within Blackfoot Country, along the waters of the Milk River, a tributary of the Missouri River. Áísínai'pi has long been a liminal space that many First Nations groups traversed, sought refuge, camped, hunted, and recorded their stories. The remarkable landscape contains a diverse rock art assemblage that provides stunning examples of transitions in subject matter and practice. These transitions reflect a changing world due to colonizing influences with the arrival of Euro-Canadians and Americans. Individual panels of petroglyphs encapsulate microcosms of emerging dynamics between First Nations groups, and between First Nations people and settler communities. In this paper we explore a range of illustrative examples associated with this period of Euro-Canadian and American cultural contact on the Northern Plains. Drawing from ethnohistorical evidence and oral histories, we investigate the sociocultural impacts that are mirrored in the rock art of Áísínai'pi. The aim of this paper is to explore how contact affected the lived experience of First Nations people, and the art they depicted, as they sought the path ahead.

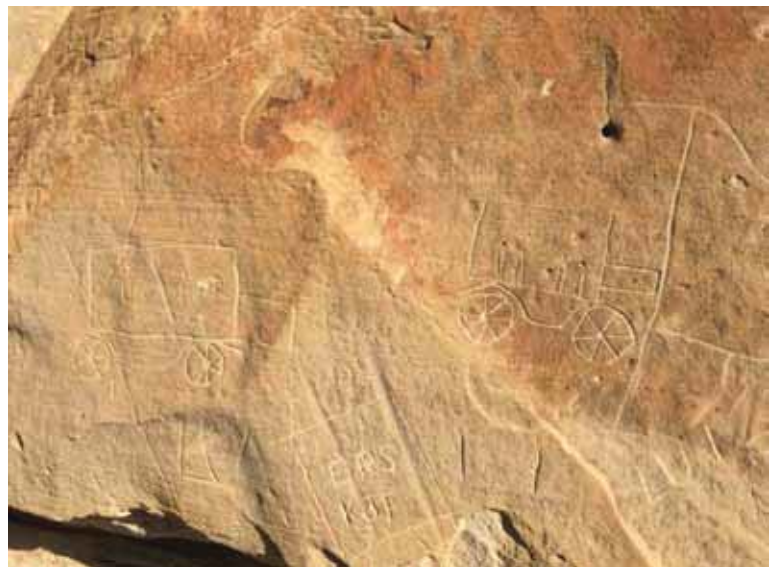


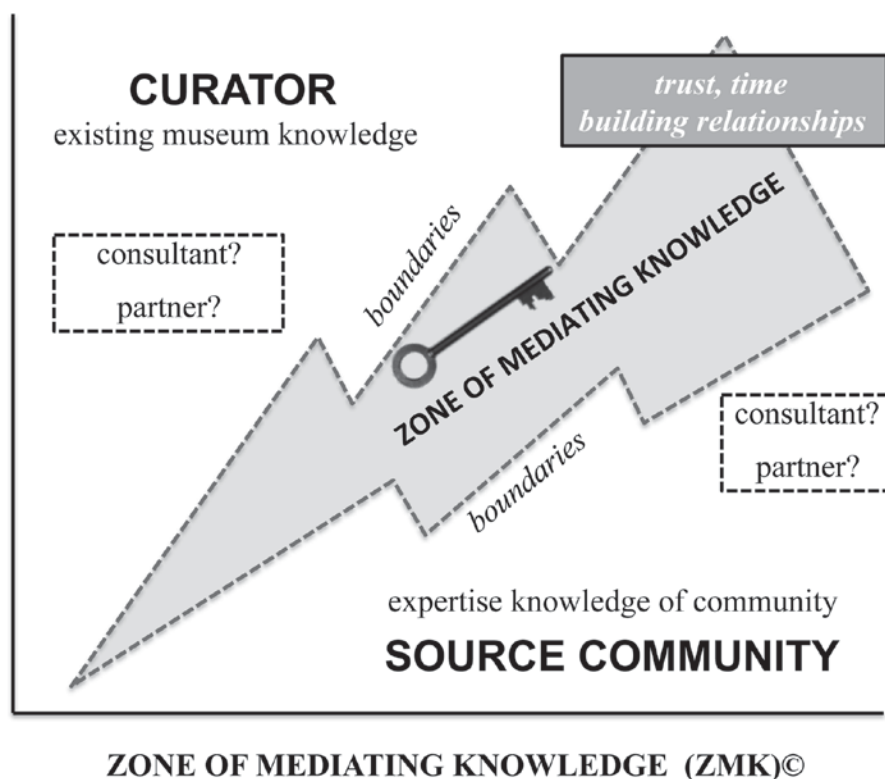
Fig.1 - DgOv 2 Bird Rattle, engraved panel.

Postcolonialism: Dead or Alive? How Indigenous' Peoples Voices are represented in rock art at National Museums

Anne J. COLE, *Department
of Learning and Philosophy,
Aalborg University,
Copenhagen, Denmark*
Contact email:
kesajc56@gmail.com

Keywords: tangible and
intangible heritage,
Indigenous Peoples voice,
social capital, Zone of
Mediational Knowledge

This article extends the discussion of rock art to the context of its representation in national museums. The article is based on five-years of doctoral research involving four museums on three different continents. National museums need to be sensitive to the complexities of representing cultural identities; however, too often narratives are conveyed through Eurocentric voices, which limits their social capital. Combining the theories of social semiotics and cultural historical activity theory, a model was developed to assess the process of representation, the Zone of Mediational Knowledge, which is viable for practitioners of rock art and museums alike. Western knowledge and Indigenous Peoples knowledge differ and acknowledges both tangible and intangible heritage. Collaborating with source communities needs to be an active part of the curating process and of an archaeologist's process of the contextual understanding of objects. The study found three out of the four museums had little or no representation of rock art. In conclusion, the national voice influenced what narratives were presented and the extent the Indigenous Peoples voices were empowered in the process of representation of their culture and history, especially their history during and after colonisation.



**Imitation, incursion
or exclusion?
Historical inscriptions
and rock art within
Indigenous rock art
provinces**

Jane FYFE, *University of
Western Australia*

Contact email:
jafy@live.com.au

Keywords: historical
Inscriptions, colonial rock art,
contact rock art, Indigenous
narratives

Colonial incursion in the lands of Indigenous peoples of the Pilbara and Kimberley regions of Western Australia through the establishments of sheep and cattle stations has been fraught with violence, rebellion, sexual and economic exploitation and damage to and loss of culture, as well documented in the historical record in Australia (e.g. Allbrook & Jebb, Gregory & Paterson 2015, Pederson & Woorunmurra 1995) and around the world (e.g. Taylor & Pease 1994). While it might be expected that rock art would reflect these types of changes in the life and the drama of such relationships, this may not always be the case. This paper explores the historical inscriptions and contact rock art in two Indigenous rock art provinces, one near Old Woodbrook Station in the Pilbara and the other in the south-central Kimberley region, to reveal the underlying narrative of colonial interactions with Indigenous peoples in those areas isolated from the Swan River Colony 1,200 - 2,500 kilometres to the south.

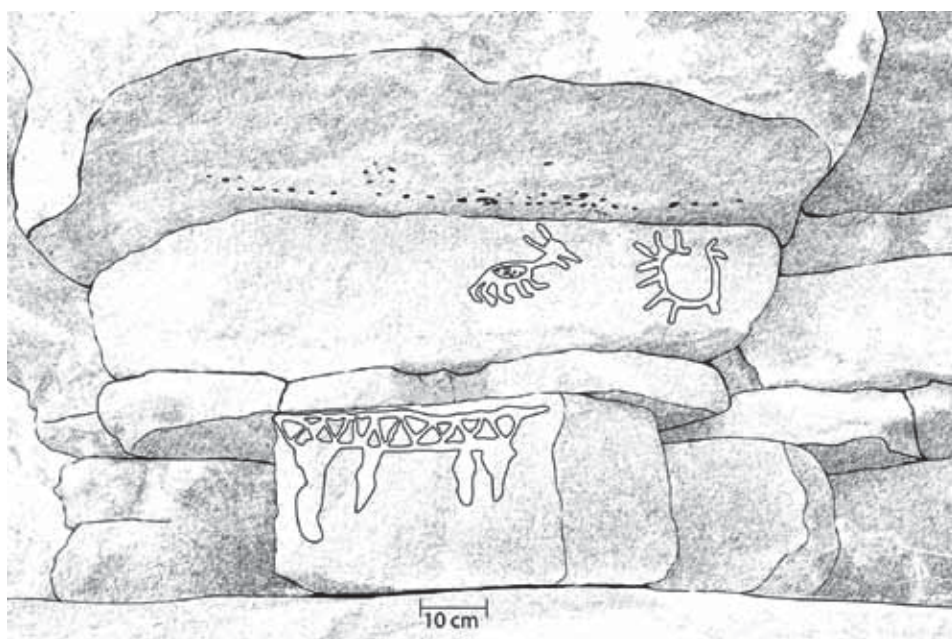
Dialogue between the Sacred Serpent *Bok'yä* and the Christ in Otomi rock art

Nicté HERNÁNDEZ ORTEGA,
*Universidad Nacional Autónoma
de México (UNAM)*

Contact email:
nicketate@hotmail.com

Keywords: Mezquital, Mexico,
Rock Christ, colonial rock art,
Otomi Christianity, *Bok'yä*

In the Mezquital region in the state of Hidalgo, Mexico, there are several canyons that descend from the Hualtepec volcano. In them, there are numerous sites of rock art that share the use of the color white, their themes are both pre-Hispanic as well as colonial in origin, forming a unit that can be attributed to the Otomí culture. It is of relevance that in the site of El Cajón the face of Christ is wearing the three 'potencias' inspired by the encoded images of the Testerian catechisms. It draws attention for being a unique case among the other Christian images in temples and on crosses, and because it is hidden in the roof of a small rocky niche, accompanied by the Otomi rain deity, the Sacred Serpent *Bok'yä*. Thus, this Christ image masterfully expresses how the Otomies integrated into the New Spanish world and how rock art was fundamental to attest to and reformulate their worldview. To carry out the research, different sources have been consulted: colonial writings, Testerian catechisms, the iconographic corpus of the region and the current oral history, where the figure of Christ and the Otomi culture are intertwined.



Second-hand? Insights into the age and 'authenticity' of colonial period rock art on the Sunshine Coast, Queensland, Australia

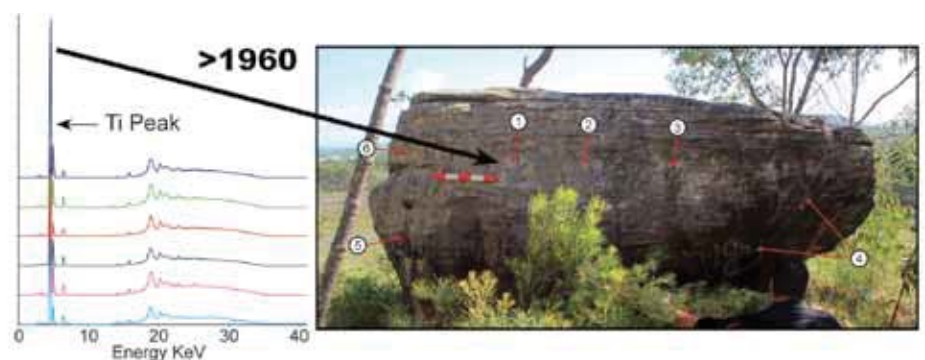
Jillian HUNTLEY, *Place Evolution Rock Art Heritage Unit, Griffith Centre for Social and Cultural Research*

Steven George, Mary-Jean Sutton and Paul Taçon

Contact email:
j.huntley@griffith.edu.au;
p.tacon@griffith.edu.au

Keywords: authenticity, pigment analysis, colonial rock art, Southeast Queensland, Titanium pigments

In Australia rock art records the experience of the colonised. Post-colonial rock art is a window into the complex interactions of cross-cultural exchange, preserving important perspectives from endemic Aboriginal societies across the continent in the face of often disempowering and violent interactions. But identifying colonial period rock art is not straightforward, leading to a reliance on depictions of 'exotic' animals and material culture. Here we consider the insights held by the fabric of a rock art site regarding how, and when, it was constructed. We report the identification of a mass produced, titanium based paint during the in-field, geochemical analysis of three white hand stencils in southeast Queensland. The authentic manner in which the stencils were made and their arrangement upon the sandstone boulder is consistent with Aboriginal rock art across the continent, and chemical indicators of post-depositional weathering suggest the stencils have been in place for many decades. Rather than 'second-hand copies' of Aboriginal art made by European descendants, we suggest that these stencils provide rare insight into the continuing cultural traditions during a time of significant socio-political change for Aboriginal Australians.



Stress, survival and the emergence of new rock art styles in the recent past

Sally Kate MAY, *Griffith University, Australia*

Daryl WESLEY, *Flinders University*

Tristen JONES, *Australian National University*

Paul S.C. TACON, *Griffith University*

Contact email:

s.may@griffith.edu.au;

daryl.wesley@flinders.edu.au;

tristen.jones@anu.edu.au;

p.tacon@griffith.edu.au

Keywords: Australia, contact, stress, identity, style

Artefacts have the remarkable ability to not only reflect periods of stress within and between different societies but to also play an active role in assisting these groups to navigate these experiences. As Hodder (1979: 450) argues, "When tensions exist between groups, specific artifacts may be used as part of the expression of within-group corporateness and 'belongingness' in reference to outsiders". If we accept this premise that in times of stress we may see an increase in the production of symbols of identity then it follows that sudden, obvious shifts in style evidenced in the archaeological record may be indicating such traumatic episodes. In this paper we test this theory against the emergence of a particular rock art style in Australia. We argue that the decorative painted hands of western Arnhem Land emerged in response to contact with groups from overseas in the recent past. The painted hands are more than simply hand stencils or markers of individuality. They represent stylized and intensely encoded motifs with the power to communicate a high level of individual, clan and ceremonial identity at a time when all aspects of identity were under threat.