

## ROCK ART, ETHNOGRAPHY AND RELIGION

OTTE Marcel, Liège, Belgium

The signs marked on stone have a permanent and public value. They occupy the role of intermediary between the creator and subsequent potential observers. In this sense, they possess an autonomous formal value, which is from then on independent of the creator's intuition and/or intention and of successive interpretations that they receive. Our own contemporaneous observations follow the existence of these forms that ethnographic studies reduce to a single conscious intention. This is expressed voluntarily to achieve a particular and reductive explanatory goal. Visual works "speak" to us directly, in ways that we want to hear, according to the questions that we want to ask of them. Ethnographic inquiry will reveal only a limited aspect of these meanings, taken by an external intelligence and selected from among those which it accepts to communicate. On the other hand, the relations between pigments, texture, form, or placement are defined by our own analysis, revealing mechanisms often unconscious in the producers.