

12 - Estética e Arte Rupestre

Esthetics and Rock Art
Esthétique et art rupestre
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PAPERS

Framing and the Organization of Space in Representation

Livio Dobrez - Australia

The paper argues that a discussion of the frame is highly relevant to rock art studies and has the added benefit of linking such studies to the discipline of art history. The frame, which need not be material but may be purely conceptual, functions differentially to isolate a representation from its surroundings so as to generate activity within the representation. This happens differently in three types of representation referred to respectively as narrative-dynamic, hieratic-performative and "surface effect". On the basis of the distinction between empirical, lived and representational space, the paper analyses space as constituted within representations of different kinds and also as organized around representations. It adds remarks about the operation of space in three-dimensional representations and also about the historical development of the material frame, including its modification in contemporary ("postmodern") art, pointing out the implications of this development for traditional Kantian aesthetics.

La Estética del Ser-En-El-Espacio: Explorando Más Allá de La Materialidad del Arte Rupestre en el Norte Semiárido de Chile

Andrés Troncoso - Chile

La conformación estética ha estado indisolublemente unida a la materialidad de los objetos y su percepción, reproduciendo una dicotomía entre objeto/sujeto-naturaleza/cultura propia a Occidente. En arte rupestre, como bien ha sido ya mencionado, no podemos excluir sus espacios de inserción como referente significativo para la comprensión de esta materialidad. En este trabajo, a partir de la definición del concepto de arquitectura imaginaria, proponemos que la conceptualización estética del arte rupestre se establece a partir de una relación dialógica entre un conjunto de elementos que traspasan la oposición naturaleza/cultura, tales como son: rocas con grabados, rocas sin grabados, espacios con rocas, espacios sin rocas, campos de visibilidad y otros. A partir de su sintaxis, el arte rupestre promueve una experiencia espacial anclada en la estética del ser-en-el-espacio. Esta proposición se explora a partir de la discusión de un caso de estudio en el Norte Semiárido de Chile.

Aesthetics and Ethics in rock art of the transition into farming

Luiz Oosterbeek, Guillermo Muñoz - Portugal, Colômbia

Rock art studies have been conducted, mainly under two major approaches: on one hand the identification of styles and motives; on the other the focus on techniques and places. Curiously, with few exceptions (including the series of seminars on Rock Art and Aesthetics that includes the present session), fewer considerations are to be found in terms of aesthetics. Yet, when Henri Breuil drew a parallel between Altamira and the Sistine Chapel he was valuing more than the symbolic role of the space, he was looking at the newborn rock art as...art. And he did so, being an artist as well as an archaeologist, from an aesthetic perspective, recognising such "capacity" in prehistoric people, largely a denial of the evolutionary Hegelian approach to aesthetics. In this paper, we attempt to review the evolution of the concept of rock art in its relation to aesthetics (perception and sensation, *poiesis*) and but also to ethics (character and traditions). In fact, rock art in the transition into farming, in various contexts, seems to proceed from implicit rules (not necessarily *nomoi*) that may be better understood in the context of ethics than of their aesthetic dimension.

Canadian Shield rock art: aesthetics of place and landscape

Dagmara Zawadzka - Canadá

Thousands of red ochre images and hundreds of carvings grace the cliffs and outcrops of a vast territory stretching from Québec to Saskatchewan. Aesthetic qualities in Canadian Shield rock art have rarely been addressed as scholars were especially preoccupied with elucidating the meaning of the images and their age, while coming up with ways to preserve them. However, Canadian Shield rock art offers a great potential for study as an aesthetic phenomenon. The ethos of a holistic approach to existence espoused by North American Indigenous people is reflected in their aesthetics where forms of visual expression are fully realized when being part of an embodied performance with spiritual connotations, where the functional and the beautiful co-exist. The aesthetic value of rock art is apprehended within its landscape context, where rock art can be experienced and where it can fulfill itself ritually. The aesthetic experience of rock art stems from the location of the images within the landscape, thus the properties of the surrounding landscape, as well as those of the rock outcrop (such as quartz veins and calcite/ silica precipitate deposits), as well as from the visual and acoustic properties encountered at the sites (such as shimmering light reflecting from water surface onto the cliffs or echo effects). All these characteristics possibly carry spiritual associations and enhance the ritual potential of rock art sites while creating an impact on those who view and experience the art.

The White Lady of the Deighton

Margaret Bullen - Austália

Unlike the White Lady of the Branderg the lady of the Deighton, in South East Cape York, is both white and female. An arresting figure, protected by rugged terrain and a jagged jumble of rocks, she holds centre stage in a difficult of access cave. She both bridges a cleft in the rock and is defined by it. She is both on and within the surface of the cave. She is not large or brightly coloured yet she commands attention. Perhaps it is because in this lonely place she has only a dingo for company or perhaps it is the hand print on her body which implies a power within her sought by others. She has been painted more than once, not in another part of the cave but reworked along the same break in the skin of the rock. Is she more pleasing to the eye because she is so hidden and is suddenly revealed or because of the innate symmetry of her image and its appeal to the imagination. This paper will explore ways in which the Lady of the Deighton seduces her visitors and yet remains as enigmatic as the Mona Lisa.

Vandalism, graffiti or 'just' rock art? The case of a very recent 'engraving' in the Côa Valley rock art complex (Portugal)

António Pedro Batará Fernandes - Portugal

A vandalism/graffiti/engraving episode occurred October 2001 in a Côa Valley rock art panel in which a hunter from the region engraved a motif (a defecating horse) superimposing two previously existing prehistoric engravings (one from the Upper Palaeolithic, the other from the Neolithic). We shall argue that the contemporary horse aims to question and satirize the value attributed by archaeologists to the prehistoric motifs inscribed by UNESCO in the World Heritage List. Therefore, we will discuss and to some degree challenge the predominant point of view regarding the need to erase all graffiti, the value of (ultra) contemporary motifs and ultimately how rock art researchers understand not only the competences and scope of their discipline of study but also the very concept of rock art aesthetic appreciation. Although being aware that this might be a highly controversial issue, we intend to question a certain dogmatic stance in which rock art sites are seen as pristine and static manifestations of a certain idea of a 'dead past', incapable of shaping and establishing dynamic 'live' connections into the present and subsequently into the future. We believe this to be a though provoking case study when considering the feelings of different interest groups on the overall value of rock art heritage and if (ultra) contemporary engraved or painted motifs can be considered rock art that possesses the same significant qualities, namely aesthetic dimension, rock art researchers usually bestow upon older motifs catalogued as *rock art*.

Evolutionary Aesthetics and Sexual Selection on Rock Art Evolution

Marco Antonio Correa Varela, Altay Alves Lino de Souza & José Henrique Benedetti Piccoli Ferreira, - Brasil

Evolutionary Aesthetics is a new field studying the evolution of psychological mechanisms that underlie aesthetic experiences. The evolutionary analysis provides understandings of the ultimate causes behind ancestral aesthetics. Human aesthetic value is viewed as a scale of survival and reproductive success in the ancestral environments: beauty means adaptive success and ugliness means failure. Evolutionary aestheticians have proposed that humans might have at least ten different aesthetics adaptations, those aesthetic judgment cognitive mechanisms focused on different aspects of our ancestral environment, all of them predating the onset of any artistic manifestation. Those could be adaptations for aesthetic valuation of: landscape features, nonhuman animals, acoustical behavior of nonhuman animals, daily or seasonal environmental change cues, human bodily form, status cues, social scenarios, skillfulness, food and ideas. It is probable that art manifestations had began by exploiting those aesthetic cognitive biases in various forms and combinations. In rock art's case it is possible to identify the capture of aesthetic judgments related at least to nonhuman animals, human bodily form, social scenarios and skill. One evolutionary explanation for the adaptative value of this artistic cooptation of the preexisting aesthetical biases lays on sexual selection. Animal's displays that are beautiful, costly, pompous, big and difficult to copy are product of ancestral female choice. And rock art presents some of these characteristics too. It might had evolved by sexual selection because on the one hand it might had promote adaptative advantages for the producers by over stimulating many aesthetic biases on receptors, charming them, and inducing on them a positive person perception and a better social status perception. On the other hand receptors might have taken adaptative advantages by capturing different fitness cues: genetic ones such as learning facilities, creativity level or skillfulness; and non genetic ones such as free time availability or painting resources.

Aesthetics and Brazilian Rock Ar

Reinaldo Morales Jr., Estados Unidos da América

This paper will address the application of living aesthetic attitudes as a means of better informing our assessment of prehistoric rock art in Brazil. From an initial investigation of the role of beauty in the arts of Brazilian Indians, this analysis will address the sophistication of these arts as vital, aesthetically charged contributions to the larger indigenous cultural landscape. With this ethnographic framework established, examples of rock art from Brazil will be introduced and critically examined as possible prehistoric examples of the same attitudes that are evident, indeed necessary, in the living arts of the Brazilian Indians
