



RAR REVIEW

COMMENTARY

By Majeed Khan

I refer to M. J. Rowland's review of my book *The tribal symbols of Saudi Arabia* in *RAR* Vol. 18, Nov. 2001.

I had hoped my book would be reviewed by someone familiar with the archaeology and rock art of Saudi Arabia, but unfortunately it went into the hands of a very prominent Australian scholar whose knowledge about Saudi Arabia seems based on his previous review of a book by Dr Nayeem—an Indian historian about whose book Dr Saad al-Rashid, the Deputy Minister of Antiquities and Museums issued an official press release mentioning that 'most of the material incorporated in the book, including photographs and sketches, are taken wholesale from Dr Khan's publications without his permission. He is neither an archaeologist nor a rock art specialist' (*The Daily Arab News*, Wed. 19 July 2000). Even Dr Nayeem has accepted in his letter to the editor (*RAR* 18: 129) that he did include published materials and photographs of sites he did not even visit. Rowland's comparison of my original research work with this book of Nayeem is therefore not warranted. Also, the editor could have found several archaeologists in the U.K., France and the U.S.A. who visited Saudi Arabia and published articles on the archaeology and rock art of this country to do this review.

Here I only wish to discuss two important points raised by Rowland, which I am sure will answer several of his questions. Rowland wrote, '[T]here are 82 pages showing 3936 Wusum. It was my understanding from the book that each Wasm is unique, with minor variations. However, I can make out no difference in the symbol [] between the following: 3867, 3808 ...' (Rowland then lists 33 identical symbols from my book). He further added, '[I]t is also indicated throughout the book that these signs were uniquely placed, which might account for their multiple listing, but there is no explanatory background to these pages in the book'.

My entire book and research depend on this particular point. It is a pity that Rowland overlooked my following words:

some Wusum are repeated on several sites, so is the case in the following list, the purpose is to record each Wasm wherever it is located. The exact recording of each Wasm, its dispersal in different regions of the country as well as in the neighboring countries will help greatly in tracing the origin, settlement, and migration of various tribes in the Arabian Peninsula. The migration, resettlement and camping sites of various tribes could be traced with the location of their Wusum in different region of the Peninsula (pp. 25-6).

Does this not explain the repetition of identical Wusum on different sites and their listing in my book?

Regarding the dating, Rowland wrote that I invented dates and meaning, although it is mentioned in the Foreword by Dr Ansari that 'although the exceptional accuracy of recording the location of most of the Wusum is appreciated, the dating of Wusum anyhow to differentiate between the old and new symbols still remains obscure'. I myself state on p. 261, 'although the absolute dating of Wusum is not possible, some of these could be dated in relation to the ancient Arabian inscriptions, and earlier rock art images with which these are located'. When the author and the foreword author both emphasise the difficulty in dating and the author insists that his dating is not absolute, why belabour the point further? The

dates given in the book are not invented, but are tentative and relative, which was the only available method to the author for dating petroglyphs.

Again, Rowland says, 'at times interpretations are confused, if not contradictory'. There are no interpretations in my book that could not be understood by a reader with some knowledge of Arabian nomads and their use of Wusum. Rowland seems apparently pre-occupied with Nayeem's book, which should not have been brought into this context. One work is purely original, based on twenty-five years of field and research work in Saudi Arabia, and the other is based on published and collected material from different sources. Nevertheless, I highly respect Rowland and value his criticism. I shall certainly keep in mind his positive remarks and clarify the points raised by him in my next volume of *The Encyclopedia of tribal symbols*.

Professor Majeed Khan
Riyadh, Saudi Arabia
E-mail: majeedkhan42@hotmail.com
RAR 19-600

Editor's reply

Concerning the selection of reviewer, I assume full responsibility—particularly as in this case the reviewer only accepted the task with some trepidation after his previous experience with another review. Few competent rock art specialists have ever worked in Saudi Arabia, and as a friend and close collaborator of the author I also precluded myself from reviewing this book. I thank Majeed Khan for clarifying the point concerning the identical Wusum motifs at various sites, which is indeed an important point to emphasise about his book. It is also good to see that he and Rowland agree that the rock art described in Dr Khan's book is undated at this stage.

I cannot agree with the proposition that an Australian rock art specialist is not an appropriate reviewer of a rock art book intended for a global audience of rock art specialists. The distinctive rock art research school that has emerged in Australia is universally accepted as the most rigorous we have, and while this is likely to yield reviews that impose high standards, we should not settle for less. In recent years international rock art researchers throughout the world have come to rely on Australian scholarship for setting the most stringent standards in the discipline, and if this process can be furthered through the review of books this can only be of benefit to all concerned.

For instance the constructive criticisms of Rowland will no doubt serve to improve the future work of Majeed Khan, even though he is clearly the foremost scholar on Arabian rock art. Already he has produced the finest work on this topic, but I know that his best work is yet to come. If the present book review can contribute to this, as Dr Khan graciously acknowledges it will, then it has been very worthwhile indeed. Ed.

RECENT ROCK ART JOURNALS

Purakala. Journal of the Rock Art Society of India (RASI). Edited by GIRIRAJ KUMAR. The most recent issue contains these research and review papers:

Volumes 11/12 (2000/01):

- KUMAR, G.: Chronology of Indian rock art: a fresh attempt.
 BEDNARIK, R. G.: Early Indian petroglyphs and their global context.
 KUMAR, G.: Early Indian petroglyphs: scientific investigations and dating by international commission, April 2001 to March 2004 project.
 CONSENS, M., A. M. BELLO and G. RODRIGUEZ: Rock art and education in Uruguay: what did the children say?
 SEGLIE, D.: Rock art: education is preventive conservation.
 KUMAR, G.: Planning rock art education in the new millennium in the light of a decade-long experience: the Indian case.
 BEDNARIK, R. G.: Rock art research, deontology and education.
 MANI, B. R.: Rock art of Ladakh: glimpses of economic and cultural life.
 CHAKRAVERTY, S.: Cultural configuration of rock art in Jharkhand: a holistic approach.
 PRADHAN, A.: Documentation of petroglyphs of Dhoba Taila Tangri Pahar in Rairakhol Tehsil, Orissa.

*

Boletín de Arte Rupestre de Aragón. Museo de Zaragoza, Spain.

Volume 4 (2001):

- BELTRÁN M., A.: Memoria grica del pasado. Conservación y salvaguarda de los mensajes. El caso de Aragón en España.
 BELTRÁN M., A. and J. ROYO L.: La cueva del 'Tío Garroso' en el Cerro Felío, Alacón (Teruel).
 PLACID, A.: Petroglifos en la Provincia de Huesca.
 MATEO S., M. Á. and A. CARREÑO C.: Arte rupestre esquemático en el alto Segura. La Tenada de Los Atochares (Yeste, Albacete).
 JORDÁN M., J. F.: Árboles del Paraíso y columnas de la vida en el arte rupestre postlaleolítico de la península ibérica.
 BRUNOD, G.: Consideraciones metodológicas sobre la 'rosa' camuna de Carpeno Sellero, Brescia - Valcamónica (Italia).
 DIMITRIADIS, G.: Arte rupestre mediterráneo: el ejemplo del arte rupestre helénico.
 ANATI, E.: Registro de una secuencia estratigráfica del arte rupestre en Azerbaidján.

RECENT BOOKS OF INTEREST

Dokumentation och registrering av hållristningar i Tanum – Documentation and registration of rock art in Tanum, edited by GERHARD MILSTREU and HENNING PROHL (bilingual). 1999. Tanums Hållristningsmuseum Underslöv, Tanumshede, Sweden, 128 pages, illustrated with drawings and monochrome plates. Soft cover, ISBN 91-630-5223-7.

De petroglyphis gallaeciae, by DARIO SEGLIE et al. 2000. Centro Studi e Museo d'Arte Preistorica, Pinerolo, Italy, 120 pages, numerous colour and monochrome plates, soft cover.

Rock art science: the scientific study of palaeoart, by ROBERT G. BEDNARIK. 2001. IFRAO-Brepols, Turnhout, Belgium, 219 pages, 70 plates and drawings, extensive bibliography, glossary and index. Soft cover, EUR74.00, 40% discount for members of IFRAO-affiliated rock art organisations, ISBN 2-503-99124-6.

Work and workshop: laser scanner analysis of Viking Age rune stones, by LAILA KITZLER ÄHFELDT. 2002. Theses and Papers in Archaeology B:9, Archaeological Research Laboratory,

Stockholm University, 255 pages, illustrated, several bibliographies. Soft cover, ISBN 91-89338-10-3.

RECENT PAPERS OF INTEREST

Art of the apocalypse: southern Africa's Bushmen left the agony of their end time on rock walls, by SVEN OUZMAN and JANNIE LOUBSER. 2000. *Discovering Archaeology*, November/December issue, pp. 38–44.

Kaosa's Shelter: the first public rock art site in the Limpopo-Shashi confluence area of South Africa, by EDEASTWOOD, SVEN OUZMAN and DUNCAN MACWHIRTER. 2000. *The Digging Stick*, Volume 17, Number 1, pp. 1–6.

Age estimates for the petroglyph sequence of Inca Huasi, Mizque, Bolivia, by ROBERT G. BEDNARIK. 2000. *Andean Past*, Volume 6, pp. 277–287.

The oldest known rock art in the world, by ROBERT G. BEDNARIK. 2001. *Anthropologie*, Volume 39, Number 2, pp. 81–89.

A rare Australian motif of art and its possible affiliations to Indonesia, Madagascar and even the Americas, by ANDREAS LOMMEL. 2001. *Migration and Diffusion*, Volume 2, Number 8, pp. 37–42.

AMS ¹⁴C age determinations of Rapanui (Easter Island) wood sculpture: moai kavakava ET 48.63 from Brussels, by F. FORMENT, D. HUYGE and H. VALLADAS. 2001. *Antiquity*, Volume 75 p, pp. 520–532.

New sites of the South Ethiopian rock engravings: Godana Kinjo, Ejersa Gara Hallo, Laga Harro, and remarks on the Sappe-Galma school, by JEAN-LOÏC LE QUELLEC and GIZACHEW ABEGAZ. 2001. *Annales d'Éthiopie*, Volume 17, pp. 203–222.

Seeing is deceiving: rock art and the non-visual, by SVEN OUZMAN. 2001. *World Archaeology*, Volume 33, Number 2, pp. 237–256.

Tandjesberg: San rock painting rehabilitation project, by DAVID MORRIS, SVEN OUZMAN and GABRIEL TLHAPI. 2001. *The Digging Stick*, Volume 18, Number 1, pp. 1–4.

Breakthrough in dating Australian Ice Age rock art, by ROBERT G. BEDNARIK. 2001. *Minerva*, Volume 12, Number 5, pp. 2–3.

Cupules: the oldest surviving rock art, by ROBERT G. BEDNARIK. 2001. *International Newsletter on Rock Art*, Number 30, pp. 18–23.

Excavations at Koongine Cave: lithics & land-use in the terminal Pleistocene & Holocene of South Australia, by C. E. M. BIRD and DAVID FRANKEL. 2001. *Proceedings of the Prehistoric Society* 67: 49–83.

Items listed in this column have been submitted for inclusion and are incorporated in the AURA Archive. The submission of suitable material is invited.



ORIENTATION

AURANET

AURANET is the entire Internet presence of AURA. It will at completion of its first stage (in 2003) occupy over 1000 MB and consist of seventeen subject groups. AURANET is a partnership between the government of Victoria and AURA, and is funded and hosted by Multimedia Victoria and VICNET, so it is entirely free of any advertising content and your member details remain confidential (i.e. your details are not made available to any commercial or other outside interests). AURANET is part of a system called My Connected Community (or mc²).

Membership with AURANET is free and is not limited to members of AURA, except for the AURA Members-only Group and the IFRAO Group. Membership must be applied for via e-mail, which is a simple formality as described below. AURANET membership entitles you to full access to the pages or groups you have nominated, you can open all newsletters, forums, guest books, chat rooms, event calendars, polls, links, member lists, and of course the homepages themselves. You are also entitled to up to 10 MB of Internet space for your own personal homepage, which is linked to AURANET (or alternatively link your existing personal homepage to AURANET). Its construction by yourself is very simple, with guided step-by-step instructions enabling you to present yourself, your work and your interests in text and picture. Designing your own homepage requires no special knowledge and takes little time.

It is strongly recommended that members and subscribers of AURA who have access to the Internet join AURANET, as this is by far the simplest and most effective means of being in contact with all other registered members, and of being in touch with the most recent developments. The following process only takes a few minutes, but it will give you instant access to a massive amount of downloadable information and to your colleagues throughout the world.

How to register

You must be connected to the Internet and have a Web browser (e.g. Internet Explorer) installed on your computer, and you must have an e-mail address. Best settings are achieved with Internet Explorer 5+, using a screen resolution of 800 x 600.

Click in the address bar (near top of browser window) and type

mc2.vicnet.net.au

Press ENTER on your keyboard. A new window opens, and in the 'Members Login' window click on

[New Users](#)

Fill in the page that opens (click on question marks if unsure about an entry). Ensure that you make a note of the password you nominate. Then click

[Register](#)

You will then receive an e-mail in the account that you have given as your contact address. You must reply to this e-mail to confirm its receipt, by clicking on the http link in the text of the message.

After this you can log in to mc², by typing in your e-mail address and password (which you selected). It is recommended that you add the mc² homepage address to your *Favourites* so that you don't need to type in your address and password in future. Once logged to mc², click on

[Join a Community](#)

Scroll down in the window to *Browse Categories* and click on

[Science & Technology](#)

This brings up a list of communities, at the top you find *AURANET*, click on it. Near the top of the new window, click on

[Subscribe now](#) then click [Yes](#)

Now start again with *Join a Community* and repeat the subsequent steps. From the following list of communities, select now those that you wish to join and repeat the procedure for each. Our preference is that you join all of the AURA groups, which currently are:

- Cave Art Research (under *Science & Technology*)
- Cognitive Archaeology (under *Science & Technology*)
- Indigenous management of rock art sites (under *Society & Culture > Art*)
- New developments in Aboriginal arts and culture (under *Society & Culture > Art*)
- Rock art recording (under *Science & Technology*)
- Rock Art Research (journal) (under *Science & Technology*)
- AURA Español (under *Science & Technology*)
- The First Mariners Project (under *Science & Technology*)

This means that the respective Group Moderators will receive notification that you have applied. They will accept your applications, usually within one or two days. You then receive an e-mail notice for each group you have registered with, after which you have full access to the pages or groups that you have nominated. You can open all newsletters, forums, guest books, chat rooms, event calendars, polls, links,

member lists, and of course the homepages themselves. The homepages are opened from the front page that opens when you log in (small house icon), all other facilities are listed on the left of the front page.

The AURANET homepages

The actual homepages are accessible to the general public also, so in a sense they present AURA to the world. The currently available homepages are:

AURANET main homepage

<http://mc2.vicnet.net.au/users/aura/index.html>

Moderated by Robert Bednarik, auraweb@hotmail.com

Cave art research (CARA)

<http://mc2.vicnet.net.au/users/cara13/myfiles/Caveart.htm>

Moderated by Elfriede Bednarik, calra1@hotmail.com

Cognitive archaeology

<http://mc2.vicnet.net.au/users/cognit/>

Moderated by Robert Bednarik,
robertbednarik@hotmail.com

Indigenous management of rock art sites

<http://mc2.vicnet.net.au/users/indigen/>

Moderated by Noëlle Rathmell-Stiels,
nrathmell_stiels@hotmail.com

New developments in Aboriginal arts and culture

<http://mc2.vicnet.net.au/users/aborart/>

Moderated by Noëlle Rathmell-Stiels,
nrathmell_stiels@hotmail.com

Rock art recording

<http://mc2.vicnet.net.au/users/record/>

Moderated by Cliff Ogleby, c.ogleby@eng.unimelb.edu.au

Rock Art Research (journal)

<http://mc2.vicnet.net.au/users/aura/rar.html>

Moderated by Robert Bednarik, auraweb@hotmail.com

AURA Español

<http://mc2.vicnet.net.au/users/auraesp/>

Moderated by Carola Kuramoto, kuramoto@yahoo.es

The First Mariners Project

<http://mc2.vicnet.net.au/users/mariners/mariners.html>

Moderated by International Institute of Replicative Archaeology, iinra@hotmail.com

If you should experience any difficulties please contact the moderator concerned, or me at auraweb@hotmail.com, or the help desk at mc² at mc2@vicnet.net.au.

AURA members with the inclination of becoming moderators of an AURAWEB site are cordially encouraged to contact me, either with a proposal of their own, or by selecting one of the following subjects: rock art conservation, online study resources, or recent rock art reports bulletin board. Support is available for training, ISP costs, software and in some cases hardware.

Robert G. Bednarik

RAR 19-601

World's largest rock art studies literature database

This is now available online at the University of California, Berkeley, Bancroft Library Web Site.

Rock art studies are primarily concerned with pre-Historic and Historic images created by indigenous peoples from all around the world who have pecked, painted and carved on rock surfaces found in natural landscape settings. Both academic and non-academic interest in indigenous rock art has exploded in recent years, resulting in a rich and expansive literature. Professional researchers and students have had a difficult time accessing this literature which, as often as not, has been published in specialised journals, small circulation editions and non-circulated 'grey' literature.

With over 10 500 citations to the world's rock art literature, *Rock art studies: a bibliographic database* is the world's largest rock art bibliographic database. Available for the first time for use by researchers and students, the database can be found at the University of California, Berkeley, Bancroft Library Web Site

<http://bancroft.berkeley.edu/collections/rockart.html>

Simple and complex literature searches are easily conducted using a simply formatted search engine which offers search fields based on author, title, place name, keyword and subject keyword. No other research tool is currently available where one can query the literature with the degree of specificity available here. In a matter of seconds, one can find, for example, 20 citations which deal with the 'hand' motif in Australian rock art, 385 citations which deal with the worldwide phenomena of 'cupules', or 504 citations which deal with 'cultural resource management'. Plans call for the data to be updated semi-annually.

Leigh Marymor, Co-Chairperson of the Bay Area Rock Art Research Association (BARARA), has spent over eight years compiling the rock art studies database and has recently donated the project to the Bay Area Rock Art Archive at the Bancroft Library. The Bay Area Rock Art Archive forms part of the Western Americana Collection, the Bancroft Library's largest resource, which documents the history of western North America, particularly from the Western Plains states to the Pacific Coast and from Panama to Alaska, with greatest emphasis on California and Mexico. The rock art studies database will hopefully soon be also available on CD-ROM disk. This version contains the same citations as the Internet version, but in addition allows the flexibility to browse the database, and to export the results of search criteria as a bibliography that can be edited with word-processing software. Indeed, if funds can be raised, the Archaeological Research Facility at U.C. Berkeley has shown interest in publishing the project as a hard-copy bibliography with the CD-ROM disk included to expedite searching the material.

Established in 1983, BARARA is an avocational association of professionals and amateur enthusiasts who share a dedication to rock art conservation, research and educa-

tion in the Greater San Francisco Bay Area and Northern California. BARARA publishes a semi-annual newsletter, organises field visits to rock art sites, sponsors the Bay Area Rock Art Conservation and Education Fund, the Bay Area Rock Art Archive at the U.C. Berkeley Bancroft Library, and other rock art conservation activities.

Contact: Leigh Marymor, Co-Chairperson
717 Spruce Street
Berkeley CA 94707
U.S.A.
MleighM@aol.com

RAR 19-602

Forthcoming events

Skopje 2002 - International Rock Art Conference of the Macedonian Rock Art Research Association. The IRAC 2002 will be held from 14 to 21 July 2002 at the University of Skopje, Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. Expressions of interest can be directed to Dr Dusko Aleksovski by e-mail: karpumet@mt.net.mk

The 12th Bilzingsleben Colloquium: 'Homo erectus—his culture and his environment: Bilzingsleben research from 1969–2002'. This conference will be held by the Friedrich-Schiller-Universität Jena from 25 to 28 September 2002 in Bad Frankenhausen, Germany. For further information contact Professor Dietrich Mania, Forschungsstelle Bilzingsleben, Forstweg 29, D-07745 Jena, Germany.

The 8th Icronos (International Archaeology Film Festival) will take place from 7 to 12 October 2002 in Bordeaux. The main theme this year is: 'Africa, lost civilisations'. Contact Laetitia Dion, Icronos, 20 quai de la Monnaie, 33800 Bordeaux, France.
www-icronos.montaigne.u-bordeaux.fr

The 2002 Chacmool Conference: 'Apocalypse then and now'. will be held from 13 to 17 November 2002 in Calgary, Canada. It will focus on how archaeology deals with disasters, both natural and human caused, and other world-ending crises. For details contact Larry Steinbrenner at llsteinb@ucalgary.ca or Meaghan Peuramaki-Brown at chacmool@ucalgary.ca; or visit the website at www.ucalgary.ca/UofC/faculties/SS/ARKY/Dept_Files/chacmool.html

Australian Archaeology Conferences 2002. Combined annual conference by the Australasian Institute for Maritime Archaeology (AIMA), the Australasian Society for Historical Archaeology (ASHA) and the Australian Archaeological Association (AAA), at Townsville from 17 to 22 November 2002. The topic will be 'Land and sea: common ground and contemporary issues for Australasian archaeology'. The conference will be jointly hosted by the Maritime Museum of Townsville and the School of Archaeology, Anthropology and Sociology at James Cook University. The venue is the Southbank Hotel and Convention Centre in Palmer Street,

South Townsville. Details from Land and Sea Conference Organisers, School of Anthropology, Archaeology and Sociology, James Cook University, Townsville, 4810 Qld, Australia. E-mail:

Martin.Gibbs@jcu.edu.au

Temporary conference website at:

<http://www.australianarchaeologicalassociation.com.au/conferences/2002/firstannouncement.html>

WAC Inter-Congress. 15-18 January 2003, National Museum of Australia, Canberra, Australia. See RAR 18: 126 for details.

AURA Inter-Congress Symposium 2003. To be held in early 2003 in western Victoria, in the vicinity of the Grampians-Gariwerd region. Details to be announced in the course of 2002.

The next *IFRAO Congress* is to be held in India either in late 2003 or early 2004, and it will be chaired by RASI (the Rock Art Society of India).

Notes

RAR has been able to bolster its *Board of Editorial Advisers* by securing two valuable new members, Bruno David (Australia) and Dario Seglie (Italy). Both scholars are well known to AURA members and *RAR* readers. Dr David, from Monash University in Melbourne, is a prolific archaeology writer specialising in the rock art of north-eastern Australia and Vanuatu. Professor Seglie is the IFRAO-UNESCO Liaison Officer and editor of *CeSMAP*, and also a member of the IFRAO-Brepols editorial committee.

The Cave Art Research Association (CARA) was launched last year and produces a newsletter, *Cave Art Research*. Membership is free to AURA members, who are encouraged to write to the *RAR* editor to join CARA. This new association is dedicated to the study, appreciation and protection of rock art in deep limestone caves, which occurs in all continents, but is most prominent in parts of Europe and Australia.

Recording equipment: as a special service to members of AURA, currently available in Australia only, AURA has acquired two sets of recording equipment. Each set consists of a high-resolution transparency and negative scanner, a high-quality digital camera, relevant software bundle, cables and adaptors, memory cards, spare batteries and manuals. These sets are intended for rapid and large volume field recording of rock art and for the digitisation of existing collections of photographic records (transparencies). Use of this equipment is particularly recommended to researchers who have access to a CD writer and a colour management system. The cost of this equipment to members is \$A20.00 per week (or \$A15.00 for either the scanner or the camera only) to cover the costs of transport and insurance. Please apply to the *RAR* editor and enclose payment for two weeks.

Advertising in RAR: at the discretion of the editor, AURA members can advertise free in this journal, provided that the material in question is produced on a non-commercial basis and there are no royalties involved, and provided further that the advertisement is deemed to be of genuine importance to readers. Commercial advertising of materials relevant to rock art specialists is available at \$A240 per full page or \$A120 per half page.

Back issues of RAR: all issues beginning with November 1988 are available at the advertised rates, price reductions apply to orders of full sets. The issues from May 1984 to May 1988 have been out of print for more than ten years, but as there have been many requests for them it is intended to make them available on CD-ROM soon, in two formats: as searchable texts and as PDF files.

AURA Inter-Congress Symposium

Following the successful Inter-Congress Symposia in Sydney, Halls Gap, Turin, Melbourne and Canberra, AURA plans to hold another such symposium in western Victoria in early 2003, in Hamilton in the Grampians-Gariwerd region. The Symposium will consist of lectures, field trips and a special meeting of the Moderators of AURANET (which must be held in Victoria).

The principal purpose of the Symposium will be to review the recent developments in the discipline, and to provide a forum and academic venue for the presentation of new work.

PROPOSALS are invited for topic-based sessions, and for individual papers. Please send these to AURA, P.O. Box 216, Caulfield South, Vic. 3162, Australia, or to *auraweb@hotmail.com*

Landscapes, rock art and the Dreaming

Bruno David

ISBN: 0 7185 0243 4 • 224 pp • June 2002

50% off normal price of £75.00

if you mention that you are a member of an IFRAO-affiliated organisation

This book contains the following chapters: Preface, 1. Introduction, *Part 1: The present past*, 2. The Dreaming, 3. Placing the Dreaming: the archaeology of a sacred mountain, 4. Performing the Dreaming: ritual in the arid zone, 5. Symbols of the Dreaming: rock art as representation, 6. The present past? *Part 2: Presenting the past*, 7. Archaeological trends in Australian pre-History, 8. Seeds of change, 9. Regionalisation, 10. Conclusion.

Bruno David is Logan Fellow and archaeologist in the Department of Geography and Environmental Science at Monash University. He has published over 100 academic and popular papers and monographs, is co-editor of *Inscribed Landscapes* (University of Hawaii Press) and has received many awards including the inaugural Antiquity Prize for his work on the archaeology of rock art in northern Australia. Bruno David is a member of the Board of Editorial Advisers of *RAR*.

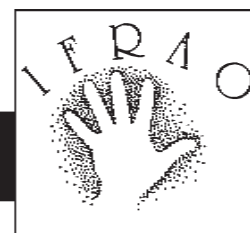
PLEASE SEND YOUR ORDERS TO:

Philip Law, Continuum, The Tower Building, 11 York Road, London SE1 7NX, United Kingdom

Tel: +44 (0) 20 7922 0923; Fax: +44 (0) 20 7928 7894

E-mail: PLAW@continuumbooks.com

IFRAO Report No. 28



Report of the International Workshop on Conservation and Documentation of Rock Art in Tanzania, 13–20 January 2002

Introduction

Tanzania claims a sizeable share of Africa's palaeo-rock art heritage. However, the continuity of this ancient symbolic expression bequeathed by our ancestors is jeopardised by deteriorative agents and lack of knowledge. Not only is the nature of the destructive processes unknown, but also knowledge of the whereabouts of the rock art is incomplete. Cognisant of the status quo, the East African Rock Research Association (EARARA), with funds made available predominantly by the Mfuko wa Utamaduni (Tanzania Cultural Trust Fund), organised an eight-day workshop. The workshop featured presentations, visits to rock art sites and practical in-field demonstrations on techniques of recording rock art. Contributions to supplement the grant from Mfuko wa Utamaduni came from the Ministry of Natural Resources and Tourism, the Bank of Tanzania and the Commission for Science and Technology (COSTECH).

Guest of honour

The opening ceremony was graced by Ms Zakia Meghji MP, the Hon. Minister for Natural Resources and Tourism. In her opening speech, the Minister acknowledged the vision shown by the EARARA in organising the workshop and reaching out to Natural Resources Officers in the regions. She also underscored the much too often forgotten and unexplored touristic potential of the rock art and challenged the stakeholders to work towards changing this status quo. In so doing she did not forget to remind professionals to make sure that the local community inhabiting areas rich in rock art is involved in all programs of conservation and documentation and at all levels, for without this approach, efforts will be met with half-successes. Indeed she challenged EARARA to come up with programs and recommendations for her Ministry to consider. Her speech drew stunning applause when she assured participants that lack of funding should not be an excuse for failing to conceive meaningful and sustainable conservation and documentation programs.

Participants

Contrary to the expectations of the organisers, the workshop was attended by all invitees from Tanzania. These included four representatives from the Ministry of Natural Resources headquarters, one from the Ministry of Education and Culture, four from the University of Dar es Salaam, two from the Open University of Tanzania, one from the Hubert Kairuki Memorial University, three from the National Museums of Tanzania, one from the Commission for Science and Technology, one from Mfuko wa Utamaduni, twenty Regional Natural Resources offices, seven District Cultural officers and two from the EARARA secretariat. Five foreign resource people had been invited from Australia, Portugal, Spain, South Africa and the United States of America, but only the U.S.A. and South Africa were represented. Together with drivers and secretaries, there were forty-eight participants. The organising committee had, on the basis of not receiving a response from the Regional Natural Resources officers (RNRO), budgeted for thirty-five participants. Only eight had confirmed their participation, but on the first day of the workshop, the committee was overwhelmed by all twenty RNROs showing up. It would have been impolite to send them back home since most of them had travelled long distances to get to Arusha. The committee was left with no option except to stretch its meagre resources in order to accommodate everybody. If anything, the attendance shows how interested Tanzanians are in appreciating their heritage.

Papers presented

Altogether eighteen papers covering a range of aspects all related to rock art studies were presented. The keynote address delivered by Professor Jengo underscored various theoretical constructs pertinent to the theme of the workshop. Subsequent papers dwelt on conservation, historical perspective of painting as a humanly innate activity, rock art and religion, the Islamic point of view, new rock art sites and possible connection between medicine men and rock paintings in southern Mbulu, rock art studies and the National curriculum, differences and similarities between pre-Historic and present-day painting, rock art recording in central Tanzania, rock art of the Lake Eyasi basin, recent work on the rock art of Lake Victoria, rock art sites and their other uses, Government policies regarding conservation and documentation of rock art in Tanzania, and the role of the Tanzania Cultural Trust Fund in funding cultural activities. These papers by professionals provoked a lot of interest and discussion, which prepared the participants for the excur-

sions and the field trips that had been planned subsequent to the discussions. The field excursions were followed by day-long recapitulative deliberations on the last day, featuring papers on basic conservation techniques, basic recording techniques, and rock art documentation and conservation in relation with tourism in Tanzania.

Field excursions

Participants visited sites in Ilongero, Mjughuda and Misughaa in Singida and Chiwandi, Pahi, Majilili and Mungumi in the Kondo district. For many, it was the first experience with pre-Historic rock art. Having spent as much time at the sites as they wished to satisfy their interest, participants were given practical experience in recording by Jane Kolber from Bisbee, Arizona. Many participated in the exercise and seem to have enjoyed the experience. Problems of conservation were pointed out at every site visited and discussions on how to arrest the problem encouraged.

Resolutions/recommendations

Participants were reminded that the Guest of Honour had requested recommendations from the workshop. They were therefore encouraged to write down their recommendations, which would then be scrutinised by the secretariat and prepared for submission to the Ministry of Natural Resources and Tourism. Participants made recommendations that can be subsumed under eight headings. These are addressed to EARARA, the Antiquities Department, and the Ministry of Natural Resources and Tourism:

1. Recommendations about follow up workshops/seminars/conferences
2. Recommendations about the structure of EARARA
3. Recommendations dealing with mass education and awareness
4. Recommendations about the curriculum
5. Recommendations about empowering Regional Natural Resources Officers
6. Recommendations about recording
7. Recommendation about multidisciplinary approach to conservation
8. Recommendations about promotion of tourism

Evaluation

There were a few hitches here and there which could have been avoided. These are discussed below under the following four headings.

Level of participation: invitations had been sent to all twenty Regional Natural Resources Officers (RNROs) in the first week of November 2001, but until the eve of the commencement of the workshop only eight had confirmed participation. Consequently, the organisers had budgeted for thirty-five people, but when the list shot up to forty-eight on account of attendance by the rest of the RNROs it meant, *inter alia*, that resources would fall short and costs would increase. A few people had to wait to get their registration material and the organisers were forced to remove most of the social activities such as the farewell dinner, so that participants could get their per diem. Money ran out and paper presenters were not paid their full honoraria.

Program: the program was a little too ambitious in that there were too many sites to visit, but since most of the participants had not seen the rock art sites, it was thought a worthwhile price to pay to see as many sites as possible. This is something to be borne in mind for future workshops/seminars.

Venue: costs and time could have been reduced if the workshop had been organised in a place like Kondo and/or Singida, which are close to the rock art sites. This should be kept in mind next time.

Secretariat. The two-person secretariat could not be expected to run the workshop efficiently. As it turned out, they were overworked and could not attend to the needs of the participants adequately.

Despite these shortcomings, the overall objectives of the workshop, i.e. to educate Tanzanians about their rock art heritage and to sensitise them about the conservation threats the heritage is faced with and ways of arresting or minimising the problem were achieved. Some of the participants were seeing the rock art in Singida and Kondo for the first time. In fact all the RNROs and one district cultural officer from Singida had never seen any rock art sites. As already remarked, the poor state of preservation and the agents responsible (vandalism as well as biophysical agents) were thoroughly discussed during the excursions. In order to minimise the problem, documentation is not an option but mandatory. In addition to documentation efforts, mass education programs aimed at making the community the primary stakeholders have to be generated urgently. Overall the workshop was a great success.

Financial report

Transportation of the workshop participants to the different sites was the most expensive item, taking 90% of the whole budget. Almost all the money for transportation came from Mfuko wa Utamaduni for which the association is very grateful. However, without the Association's own contribution, especially with regards to the sixth vehicle donated by the Chairman, it would have been impossible to transport all the participants. At this juncture it is important to put on record contributions by the Ministry of Natural Resources and Tourism, the Bank of Tanzania (BOT) and the Commission for Science and Technology (COSTECH).

Follow-up

This was the first ever national and international formal workshop on the conservation and documentation of rock art in Tanzania. Many suggestions were made and recommendations will be submitted to relevant authorities. The proceedings should be published in a format to be decided upon by an editorial board. The society has no resources with which to realise the publication, but it is hoped that the Ministry will find the funds necessary for the publication. To this end, the secretariat is instructed to contact the Ministry about the publication as soon as possible. This workshop should be followed by three specific seminars/workshops dedicated to documentation and instilling community

awareness, especially in the Singida, Kondoa and Mbulu districts. The venue for such workshops should be in the areas with the largest concentration of rock art such as Singida, Kondoa, Mbulu or Mang'ola. If possible one or two foreign resource people should be invited to complement local efforts. EARARA should start planning for these by inviting people to write the proposals. In addition, it is time to start thinking of developing special sites for tourism and multi-disciplinary experimental approach to conservation.

Acknowledgements

As already remarked, this workshop was made possible by a grant from Mfuko wa Utamaduni which paid for over 90% of all the costs arising from the workshop. The Ministry for Natural Resources and Tourism, the Bank of Tanzania and the Commission for Science and Technology also gave small grants, which have helped in offsetting some of the necessary expenses. Aside from the financial resources, without which the workshop could not have been realised, it is fitting to pay tribute to the people who went out of their way to ensure success. Among these is Ms Jane Kolber who used her own resources to travel all the way from the U.S.A. Her contribution in all the sessions was invaluable. Professor Elias Jengo willingly prepared and delivered the keynote address despite short notice. Paper presenters accepted very modest honoraria, while the Secretariat used personal property and other resources towards the cost of the workshop. To all these, the Association would like to record its appreciation and gratitude. We hope they will continue to support this noble cause of caring for our cultural heritage.

Professor Fidelis Masao, EARARA

RAR 19-603

Program of the EIP Project

The current program of the Early Indian Petroglyphs (EIP) Project envisages the following progress in this IFRAO project (see *RAR* 18: 138-40):

Phase 1: Preparatory work — April 2001 to March 2002 (successfully completed)

Phase 2: Major fieldwork A, includes excavations and scientific investigations at

Auditorium Cave — commenced March 2002

Daraki-Chattan — commencing 22 May 2002

Bajanibhat (Alwar) — commencing 5 June 2002

Cupule rocks at Ajmer — commencing 10 June 2002

Phase 3: Major fieldwork B, includes dating and other sci-

entific investigations of petroglyph and pictogram sites — 22 September to 20 October 2002

Phase 4: Analytical studies and submission of reports to project directors — November 2002 to June 2003

Phase 5: Preparation of final report by the project directors — July 2003 to November 2003

Phase 6: Publication of the results of the EIP Project — December 2003 to March 2004.

Giriraj Kumar and R. G. Bednarik

EIP Project Directors

Guadiana update

The Alqueva dam on the Guadiana river in southern Portugal was completed early in 2002, shortly before the defeat of the Portuguese government that had opposed IFRAO's proposals concerning the Guadiana rock art. The Minister of Culture responsible for the Guadiana fiasco was sacked a few weeks after an environmentalist NGO, the Liga para a Protecção da Natureza, announced the existence of the rock art in late April 2001. António Carlos Silva, the archaeologist in charge of the failed archaeological survey of the Guadiana valley, resigned in March 2002. On 6 May 2002, the newly elected government, after consultation with independent archaeologists and IFRAO, announced the downgrading of the Instituto Português de Arqueologia. Its controversial Director, Dr João Zilhão, immediately resigned. The government also mentioned the imminent demotion of another agency, declining to name it for the time being. This ends for Portuguese archaeology a period of six years that was marked by state-sanctioned rock art vandalism, political intrigue, academic xenophobia and obsessive research activities focused essentially on curtailing the influence of science in Portuguese archaeology.

The future of the more than 600 rock art sites on the Guadiana still hangs in the balance, however, and this corpus can only be saved by a miracle now. IFRAO has consistently demanded that if the rock art is to be destroyed it must at least be recorded by the best available methodology (see *AURA Newsletter* 18/1: 7-8). The filling of the reservoir should be deferred until this survey is completed to a standard that satisfies the requirements of independent NGOs, especially UISPP and IFRAO. Ed.

**To help IFRAO save the Guadiana rock art,
please sign the Alqueva petition online:
<http://www.PetitionOnline.com/Alqueva/petition.html>**

Visit the IFRAO HomePage on <http://www.cesmap.it/ifrao/ifrao.html>

VISIT AURANET ON <http://mc2.vicnet.net.au/users/aura/index.html>
