



## BRIEF REPORTS

### The Murujuga Campaign of 1868

By ROBERT G. BEDNARIK

In my paper about the survival of the Murujuga petroglyphs (*RAR* 19: 29) I made brief reference to an incident in 1868 that is known as the 'Flying Foam Massacre'. The information given there was related to me by an Indigenous informant who was born about twenty years after this incident, and whose version of the event was therefore second-hand. Because of the complexity of the issue, which is not central to my paper, I avoided going into further detail, particularly as I had not had the opportunity of consulting a paper I had for some time tried to track down. Patricia Vinnicombe has kindly provided me with a copy of that paper and I feel that some clarification may be requisite. The issue is not directly related to rock art, but in the particular circumstances it seems most pertinent. My paper addressed the ineptness of successive governments of Western Australia in dealing with the massive rock art corpus of Murujuga, and it seems relevant to consider how this government gained sovereignty over the land it now chooses to call Burrup Peninsula. Moreover, this example is also useful in illustrating the extreme violence with which the Australids were routinely 'pacified' by the British invaders.

First, I should clarify that I referred to a particular event that took place supposedly at Flying Foam Passage, located to the north of Murujuga, on 17 February 1868. However, this event was only one part of an extended campaign continuing into March and May 1868. During this period several massacres of Yaburara took place on and around Murujuga, so it is not correct to describe this period of systematic extermination as a single massacre that took place in a single locality. It may be more appropriate to speak of the Murujuga Campaign, which was apparently only survived by a few individuals.

The number of Aborigines killed in this campaign is unknown, because the official report is clearly unreliable, self-contradictory and self-serving. It must be appreciated that the hostilities were initiated by a police officer, Constable Griffis, who had apparently abducted a young Aboriginal woman at gunpoint and took her 'into the bush'. He then arrested her husband, Coolyerberri, on a charge of stealing flour from a pearling boat, on 6 February 1868. That night he and his native assistant, named Peter, camped with two pearlers, Bream and Jermy, on the west coast of Murujuga, chaining their prisoner by the neck to a tree. During the night they were attacked by nine Yaburara men who, in freeing Coolyerberri speared Griffis to death, also killing Peter and Bream in the ensuing fight. The Government Resident in Roebourne, R. J. Sholl, examined the site some days later and estimat-

ed from the tracks that about 100 Aborigines had been present. He swore in two parties of special constables, totalling nineteen men, and sent them to apprehend the nine Aboriginal men who had been named as the murderers. One party moved in by land, the other by sea, sailing to the north end of Murujuga on a cutter, ostensibly to prevent the Yaburara from escaping to other islands. No handcuffs or chains to secure any prisoners were carried by the government force, and in fact only two prisoners were taken but they escaped because of this lack of means to secure them (Gara 1983: 89). According to the police report, only a few people were killed when the main camp (presumably in King Bay rather than Flying Foam Passage; Gara 1983) was located and attacked on 17 February. However, according to David Carly, a settler from Roebourne, about sixty Yaburara were killed on that occasion. According to an old Ngarluma (or Ngaluma) man, whose information came from the few Yaburara who had survived the campaign, thirty or forty people were killed in that massacre (Gara 1983: 91). My own informant quoted a figure of twenty-six, but his account of Griffis' spearing differs significantly from the police report. Carly reported in 1885 that he himself examined fifteen skulls at the site, three of which were of children, 'and two of these small skulls had bullet holes in them' (Gribble 1905, in Gara 1983).

The indiscriminate killing of women and children, apparently even at close range, combined with the lack of materials to secure prisoners imply that there was no intention to limit the 'reprisals' to the apprehension and trial of the nine men accused of killing Griffis and his companions. This is confirmed by the events of the following ten weeks, during which an unknown number of further massacres occurred on Murujuga and nearby. Only a few such events have been recorded officially. On 19 February, Aborigines trying to cross Flying Foam Passage on logs were chased by a posse in a rowing boat and shot in the water, as were others on land nearby. Another attack occurred on the following day, on either Angel or Gidley Island, as the distraught fugitives tried to escape to other islands. Three Aborigines were shot dead in March at Maitland River, well into the territory of the Mardu-Dunera, presumably trying to escape into the mainland. By this time the campaign was conducted by a police party led by a Constable Francisco. In May, four more were arrested on Legendre Island, two of whom were sent to Rottne Island Prison for twelve years. Two more men 'gave themselves up' in early 1869, and it is interesting that Sholl exercised 'leniency' then. Perhaps by that time he had realised that the campaign had not been handled in a lawful manner, and there is historical evidence that certain Roebourne residents had expressed their disgust with the extermination campaign.

On this basis it would seem that only six Yaburara survived the bloodbath, according to the official records. What was their number before these events? Sholl himself acknowledges the presence of about 100 at the site where Griffis met his fate. There is thus a substantial deficiency between the vaguely implied but unstated numbers of dead in the police records, and the number of Yaburara before the massacres. Based on the demography of similarly resource-rich coastal environments as that of the Dampier Archipelago (Vinnicombe 2002) and on historical accounts, I believe that the Yaburara numbered between 100 and 200. Their numbers would have been limited by a shortage of freshwater supplies in the dry season and the need to move seasonally. No doubt some escaped the massacres by being sheltered by pearlers or settlers, and some may even have survived by hiding in the barren boulder piles of the islands, managing to avoid the constabulary. On that basis the number killed at the initial massacre was probably somewhere between twenty-six and sixty. The number that died in the entire campaign can only be conjectured, but could have been anywhere in the order of forty to 100 (including those who may have perished subsequently, due to injuries, starvation or other circumstances induced directly by the massacres).

After the initial ambush at King Bay, hunting down small groups or individuals in the rock piles and mangrove flats would have been difficult. Perhaps the most successful strategy was to push the scattered groups into the sea, prompting them to cross to the remaining islands of the archipelago. Once in the water they were easy targets and marine creatures would have consumed their remains. The killing of three people at Maitland River later in the campaign suggests that, once escape to the islands seemed futile, some of the desperate fugitives turned south in a final attempt to break out of their predicament. Significantly, the last contact is reported at Legendre Island, which is furthest out to sea: there was nowhere left to flee from there.

The perhaps most striking aspect of the Murujuga Campaign is the almost complete absence of any captives, in fact the only prisoners seem to have been men: two were apprehended early but escaped, four were taken prisoner at the end of the campaign, and two gave themselves up subsequently. So what was the fate of the women and children? It is not likely that they were perceived as a significant threat by the heavily armed posses, so why were they not spared and captured? Throughout Australia, the shortage of females in frontier regions led to the practice of 'recruiting' Indigenous females, and in fact the Murujuga Campaign was itself ignited by this very issue. The wholesale killing of women and children in this Campaign is therefore particularly important in understanding its agenda. I submit that this is a classical case of premeditated genocide, and that it was committed not by rogue settlers taking the law into their own hands, but by police officers and special constables working in the service of the State of Western Australia. Therefore this seems to be a *prima facie* case of the state-sanctioned, intentional extermination of an entire division of the Ngarluma people.

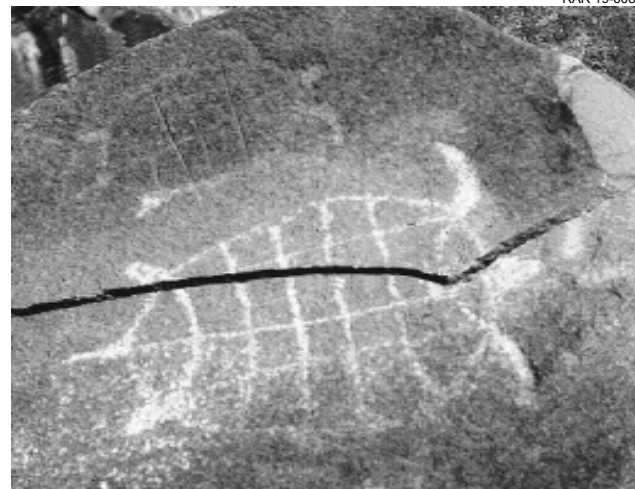
The Yaburara occupied a specific geographical area, encompassing Murujuga, the remaining eastern part of the Archipelago, and the coastal mainland region of Nickol Bay, including what today is Karratha. They would have regarded themselves as possessing sovereignty over this land, and the government of Western Australia acquired this sovereignty by an act of genocide. The current claims of this government over the land, its apportioning a century later of the land to various companies, its collection of royalties from these companies and its systematic destruction of the Yaburara's cultural remains since 1964 all need to be seen in this light. Not only do these claims need to be tested in an international court of law, there should be no doubt that the Ngarluma have a legitimate basis to seek compensation for the described action by servants of the State in 1868. Together with interest for the intervening period, such material compensation should be quite substantial. In return, the Ngarluma community should also make reparation to the State, by returning one small bag of flour that Coolyerberri is alleged to have stolen.

*Footnote.* It is of course irrelevant, but I would like to note that I commenced my program of recording Murujuga rock art on 18 February 1968, exactly one century after these massacres commenced. One of the records used in my deterioration study of four rock art panels was in fact acquired on that very day at a locality then known as 'Happy Valley'. An irony of history perhaps? The heavily corroded human tibia I found near the west coast of the Murujuga killing fields may well date from the massacres, but it was not in any officially acknowledged killing site.

Robert G. Bednarik  
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Two 'turtle' petroglyphs on the west coast of Murujuga, photographed in 1968.

**Please sign the Dampier Petition, see bottom of**  
**<http://mc2.vicnet.net.au/users/dampier/index.html>**

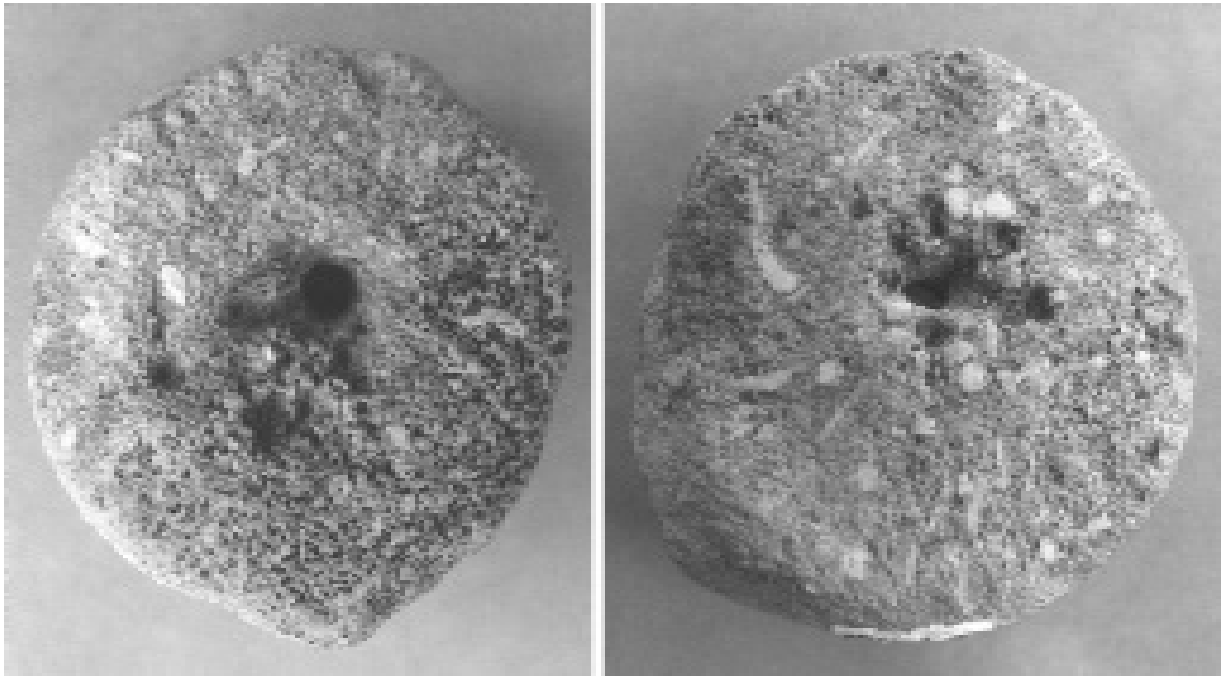


Figure 1. Two sides of a Mousterian bead of a fossil cast, modified on both sites. Fontmaure, France.

## A bead from the Mousterian site at Fontmaure, France

By HERMAN VAN DER MADE

Bednarik (2001) has reported a large number of beads from the Lower Palaeolithic period in various parts of the world, which has prompted me to write this report on some very early beads from Fontmaure.

Fontmaure is nowadays a farming estate near the community Vellèches in the Department Vienne in France. Originally it was a monastery founded around 1140 by the order of Grandmonts-lès-Chinon. Fontmaure has become well known as an archaeological open-air site through the fact that the tools which were found there are made of a multi-coloured jasper. Although the colour jaune is dominating, tools with red, green and violet colours are also often found. Especially the small bifaces were avidly sought by collectors.

The situation at Fontmaure is that there is an actual workshop site of at least 1000 square metres near the spring of a small stream. This area is surrounded by fields where today agriculture is being practised. The total surface of the site area is over 25 000 square metres. Before the area was developed for farming there was a fir wood surrounding the buildings. After the Second World War a quartzite quarry at the border of the workshop site has been exploited for some years.

The site has been researched since the beginning of the 20th century. An in-depth study of the workshop site has been undertaken by Dr Louis Pradel (University of Toulouse) in the 1940s and 1950s. He noticed two Mousterian levels, namely *Moustérien de tradition acheuléenne* (MTA) and *Moustérien final à lames*. At one spot the MTA-layer covered some tools of Abbevillian character.

The typology of the site has been confirmed by Professor François Bordes.

Pradel's (1967) research of the workshop site and the surrounding fields has not been followed by further in-depth research by professional archaeologists. However, the site as well as the surrounding fields are often visited by amateur archaeologists and sometimes also by professionals. Because of the fact that the agricultural fields are regularly ploughed a lot of tools continually come to the surface. Almost all tools are chipped from jasper but quartzite tools are also found. Even a very few flint tools occur but they have been imported from elsewhere.

On these fields as well as on the actual workshop site, quite a large number of stones of iconographic forms have been collected. Mostly they are naturally formed stones which exhibited already a certain iconic feature and which were chipped artificially on one or more spots, apparently to improve the image. Those possible figurine stones are also from jasper and quartzite. However, they have not yet been studied by mainstream archaeology.

Also on the site and in these fields a large number of fossilised sponges are being found. A very few of them (*Coscinopora* sp.?) have natural holes and could have been used as beads.

During a survey on one of the fields I found a bead made from the stem of a fossilised sponge. It is a circular disc with a diameter of 22 – 28 mm and a thickness of 8 mm. The central hole in the disc has been either made or enlarged artificially. On one side of the disc traces of hollowing from two different positions and on the other side even from five different positions can be seen (Figure 1).

Also at Fontmaure I found a bead or a pendant (resembling a tooth) which is a calcite concretion with a natural hole (Figure 2). At the base small chips have been removed. This specimen measures 75 × 28 × 17 mm.



**Figure 2.** Possible bead or pendant of the Mousterian, of calcite concretion, with natural perforation. Fontmaure, France.

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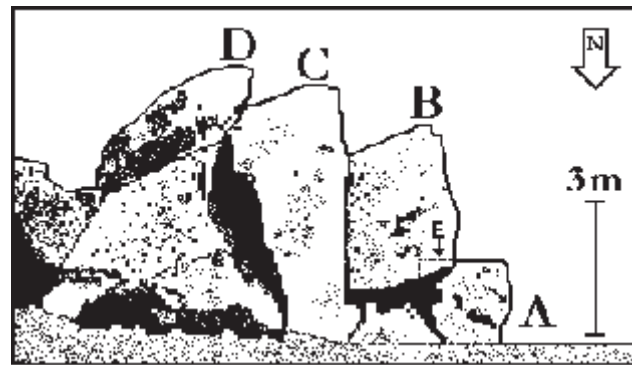
RAR 19-609

## New cupule rock art at Twyfelfontein, Namibia

By MAARTEN VAN HOEK

The rock art of Twyfelfontein in the north of Namibia is well known world wide for its remarkable array of mainly iconic petroglyphs, thought to depict giraffe, rhinoceros, antelope and zebra. The art is found on boulders on the slopes and at the foot of an extensive sandstone plateau. In a wide area, Twyfelfontein was and still is the only location where water from a small spring (*fontein*) is available all year round. For more than 10 000 years this spring attracted groups of people, especially in the dry season. To emphasise the importance of the place and the routes to it, they decorated many red sandstone boulders with hundreds of mainly zoomorphic petroglyphs.

However, Twyfelfontein also has a number of non-iconic (also called abstract) figures that tend to be undervalued by the visitors. Although Ernst Rudolph Scherz has surveyed almost every rock art panel at Twyfelfontein in the 1960s and 1970s, and although the results fortunately have been published in one of his three volumes on Namibian rock art (1975), every year new discoveries are made in the area. On our visit to the site in July 2001, my wife Elles found a rock panel with non-iconic figures that were not recorded previously (Tilman Lenssen-Erz, pers. comm. 2001). This panel will be described here. As the engraved rock lies outside the protected area, its exact location will not be revealed here.



**Figure 1.** The boulders at the new petroglyph site, Twyfelfontein, Namibia, looking south.

#### The petroglyphs

The decorated boulder forms the west end of a line of huge rocks on the northern fringe of a much larger group of boulders. It has been labelled A to distinguish it from other nearby boulders (B, C and D in Figure 1) that bear no decoration. Boulder A is a massive block of sandstone, roughly cube-shaped, with a smooth upper surface that slightly slopes to the SE. The decorated upper surface is only chest-high and can easily be viewed. Yet access and good observation of the petroglyphs (indicated by the small arrow E in Figure 1) is rather awkward because of obscuring blocks of stone, especially an overlying boulder (B in Figure 1).

The decorated surface has mainly been engraved with cupules (small hemispherical depressions pounded into the rock) and pecked grooves forming motifs that are mostly circular or oval in shape. All the petroglyphs have been placed apparently haphazardly across the surface, although most cupules and circles enclosing cupules are found on the central part of the panel.

The 'accessible' part of the panel has eleven, mostly small circles or ovals, mainly on the southern half. They have been executed rather superficial. Six more deeply executed circles (including one concentric set) have one central cupule each, whereas five circles enclose a number of cupules, some of which seem to have been intentionally arranged in rosettes and two have a tail-like groove attached. There are at least forty single cupules and other large peckmarks and one short and deep single groove (Figure 2).

Not shown in Figure 2 are the petroglyphs that could not be examined properly because they are obscured by block B. In some places there is only one centimetre of space between block B and the decorated panel. As far as they could be inspected, the now concealed petroglyphs on the northern part of the decorated panel comprise a small number of cupules, some grooves and one set of concentric (partial) circles with a bisecting groove (but no cupules). Iconic motifs could not be detected on panel A.

#### Discussion

Although not located near the spring, boulder A is remarkable for two reasons. Firstly, panel A is possibly the best example of a rock art tradition at Twyfelfontein that

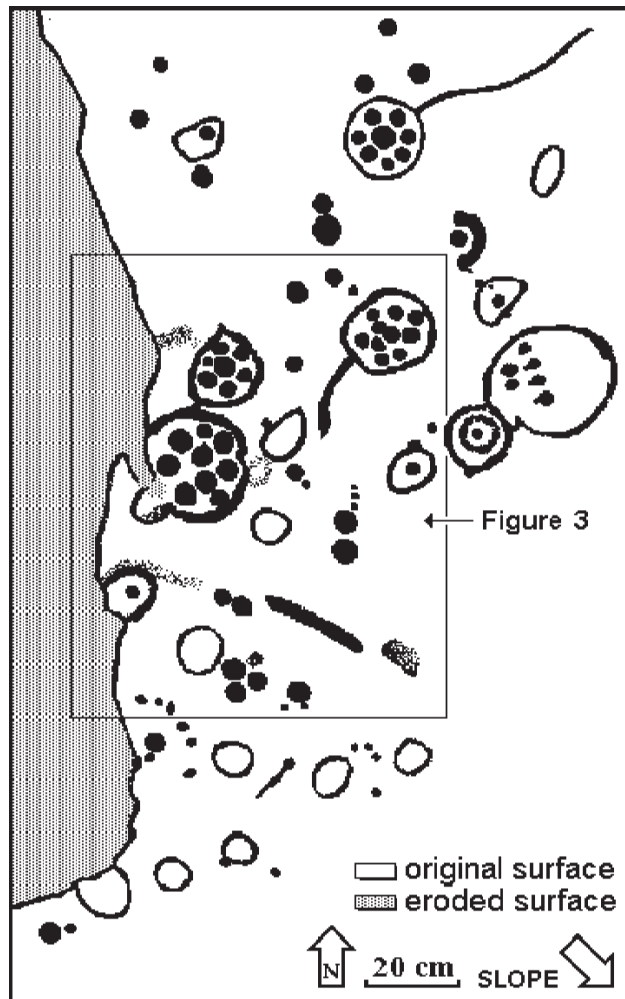


Figure 2. Boulder A, Twyfelfontein, Namibia.

involves only non-iconic figures inextricably associated with cupules. Notably, at Twyfelfontein relatively few boulders bear non-iconic figures (altogether 40 rocks: 15 % of the 266 decorated rocks of my 2001 count) and only ten boulders display cupules combined with non-iconic petroglyphs, but they lack iconic art.

Secondly, the upper surface of boulder A features two totally different parts. The petroglyphs have mainly survived where boulder B protects the decorated surface. Obviously the petroglyphs were already there when the block B fell upon it, as it is impossible to execute such deep marks with so little working space available. The exposed west part, however, has eroded considerably, possibly even a few centimetres in places. At the zone where the original rock surface and the eroded surface intermingle, several petroglyphs have eroded severely as well, showing very eroded edges (Figure 3). But because they had been so deeply engraved, they are still easily recognisable as anthropic marks.

Importantly, the petroglyphs survived because of block B. It is so large and wedged-in that humans cannot move it without mechanical aids. Moreover, block B seems to be part of a series of three large boulders (B, C and D in Figure 1) that apparently broke in a single event, possibly from the west face of a much larger boulder that bears a few animal petroglyphs as well as some non-iconic petroglyphs

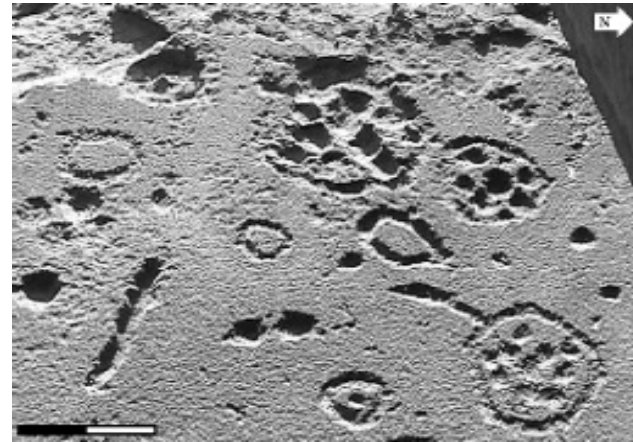


Figure 3. Partial view of Boulder A, scale 20 cm long. Note the retreat of the engraved surface in the upper part of the photograph.

(without cupules, however). Possibly, these petroglyphs were executed after boulders B, C and D tumbled down. But whenever boulder B fell, the petroglyphs on boulder A had definitely been executed earlier. They may therefore represent the oldest surviving rock art at Twyfelfontein. Importantly, most researchers agree that in general most geometric designs in Namibia, including at Twyfelfontein, are older than the zoomorphs. However, in a wider southern African context there seem to exist two non-iconic rock art traditions. One involves the combination of cupules with mainly simple circular designs (like boulder A), while the other, more complex style, generally excludes cupules from its repertoire. Without scientific dating it is impossible to tell whether there is a chronological gap between them. There is a possibility that both non-iconic traditions are contemporary, but nevertheless culturally distinct. Recent research (Sven Ouzman, pers. comm. 2002) seems to indicate that the Khoekhoen herder peoples might have produced most non-iconic designs that lack cupules.

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RAR 19-610

## An Acheulian palaeoart manuport from Morocco

By ROBERT G. BEDNARIK

One of the dominant issues in the ongoing debates about the world's earliest palaeoart evidence concerns the issue of the recognition of iconicity by Lower Palaeolithic hominids. This issue is rather complex, involving questions of

cognitive evolution, of hominid perception, of consciousness, and of what constitutes evidence of an intelligent organism's awareness of iconic properties. In this context it is of importance to consider objects that appear to have become manuports because of their iconic properties. Recently I have presented such an object from Tan-Tan, southern Morocco (Bednarik 2001). Another one of the earliest such finds currently known to us is reported here.

The object in question is from Site No. A-84-2, a surface cluster of Acheulian tools in the vicinity of the townships Erfoud and Rissani, eastern Morocco. The location is roughly at the same latitude as Marrakech, but about 330 km to the east of it. This is just south of the main range of the Atlas Mountains, the Haut Atlas (Fig. 1).



Figure 1. The location of the Erfoud (1) and Tan-Tan (2) Acheulian sites in Morocco.

The region is essentially a desert of small pebbles and sand, and the site consists of a dense cluster of numerous Late Acheulian stone tools, measuring about six metres across. It includes the apparent remains of a dwelling, consisting of a pile of stones forming an enclosed space of a few square metres, adjacent to a rock outcrop. Such hut remains have been found at various Acheulian sites, including in Algeria and Libya (Kuckenbug 2001: Figs 3.2, 3.3; Ziegert 1995), but also elsewhere in Africa and in Europe and India (Bednarik 1993). Within what appears to be the foundation of an Acheulian dwelling at Site A-84-2, Professor Lutz

Fiedler from Marburg University collected in 1984 an object called here the Erfoud manuport. The Acheulian remains at the site include numerous darkly patinated stone tools, but no stones of such large sizes occur for hundreds of metres around the site.

The manuport consists of a silicified fragment of a cuttlefish fossil cast dating from the Devonian or Carboniferous period (*Orthoceras* sp.). Such fossils are very common in other parts of Morocco, but they do not occur naturally in the region of the find site. The specimen appears to have been carried for a considerable distance before it was deposited within the outline of an apparent hut, together with now similarly patinated Late Acheulian tools. This manuport is 67.4 mm long, 34.3 mm wide at its widest point, and 32.8 mm thick at 90° to that width and to the long axis. The thickness of the broken base of the object ranges from 23.7 mm to 26.2 mm. The surface has a 'gnarled' texture of a deep-brown to almost black colour. This dark surface is attributable to a coat of manganese-rich rock varnish, occurring as distinctly patterned microscopic patches. The object's interior seems to consist, as far as it is possible to determine this without damaging it, of a light-brown and semitranslucent chalcedonic silica. Microscopic examination of the surface has not yielded a single indication that it has been modified by humans in any way, but it needs to be appreciated that the surface was weathered considerably before it became patinated.

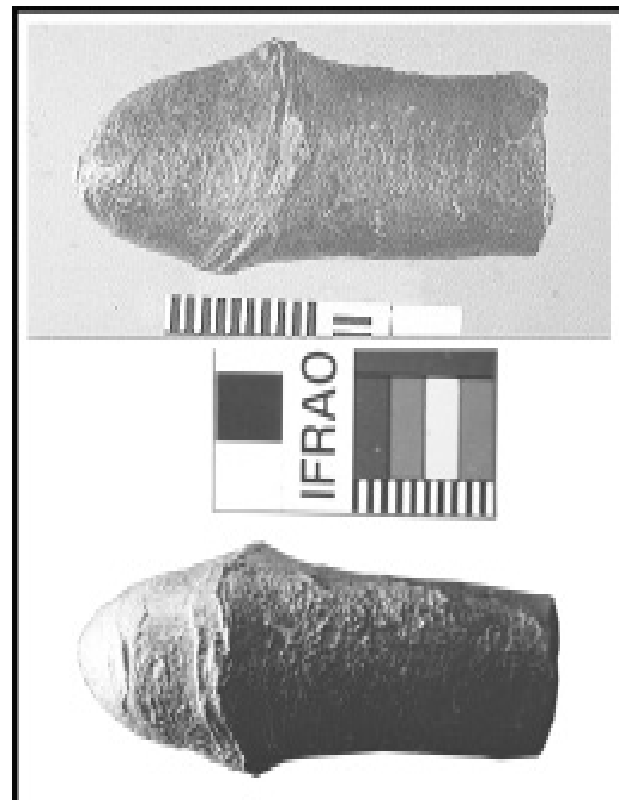


Figure 2. Two views of the Erfoud manuport.

The object's surface condition suggests that it was deposited in the same period as the stone tools found with it. An explanation is required for why it became a manuport, having been brought from some distance, and considering

its apparently unworked, non-artefact status. This is readily found in its shape, being that of a perfectly naturalistic and life-size, non-erect human penis (Fig. 2). The only realistic explanation for the curation of this object is that this clear similarity was perceived by a hominid. Bearing in mind that this would have occurred only in the order of 200 or 300 millennia ago, acceptance of this interpretation of the find should not present any difficulty. After all, the Makapansgat manuport is around ten times as old, and yet its presence in the South African dolomite cave can only realistically be accounted for by acceptance of a similar appreciation of certain visual properties (Bednarik 1998).

The Erfoud manuport is therefore not an unexpected find, but it challenges the hypothesis that pre-Upper Palaeolithic hominids lacked both symbolism and the ability to perceive iconicity. This is an important point in view of d'Errico and

Nowell's (2000) rejection of the latter ability, when they argue that the grooves on the Berekhat Ram figurine were not made to emphasise its iconic properties, but are randomly carved and essentially meaningless cuts.

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RAR 19-611

## AURA Inter-Congress Symposium 2003

AURA's next Inter-Congress Symposium will be held in Hamilton, western Victoria on the weekend of 4th and 5th October 2003. Monday, 6th October, is a public holiday in South Australia, New South Wales and the A.C.T. This event is to take place at the Hamilton Institute of Rural Learning (HIRL). The Symposium, to be chaired by R. G. Gunn and R. G. Bednarik, will be followed by field trips to the Grampians (Gariwerd) and Mt Gambier rock art regions. The academic proceedings will occupy the two days of the weekend. They will include the following sessions and events:

1. *The Dampier campaign*. This is to comprise reports by two organisers of the international campaign to save the petroglyphs of the Dampier Archipelago in Western Australia, including the presentation of documents and media coverage. Hopefully there will also be some relevant papers presented, and a round table discussion concerning aspects of strategy and future direction will be held. The Dampier campaign appears to be emerging as the largest endeavour in history to save rock art.
2. *Recent trends and developments in rock art research*. In the years since the Third AURA Congress, there have been many new developments in our field, and they will be the subject of a series of lectures and presentations.
3. *Oldest rock art of the world*. This session is dedicated to the work of the EIP (Early Indian Petroglyphs) Project, the latest results of which will be presented by project participants.
4. *South-eastern Australian rock art*. One of the most neglected rock art regions of Australia is to be the focus of this session. It will give special attention to the field trip destinations, and to introducing participants to particular issues relating to sites on the field trip itineraries.
5. *Meeting of the Moderators of AURANET*. The participation of all symposium delegates is invited.

Moderators are entitled to apply for assistance with travelling expenses and are exempt from conference registration fees.

Hamilton is a pleasant country town in western Victoria, close to the Grampians-Gariwerd National Park with its outstanding mountain scenery and many rock painting sites, but also close to the cave petroglyph concentration between Portland and Millicent. These areas are to be covered by field trips of one and two days (6–7 October 2003). Field trip participants will be issued with relevant literature packs. It is intended to have a bus take participants without own transport from Melbourne to Hamilton and back, and this bus will also be used on one of the field trips. AURANET Moderators are encouraged to request support with travel expenses, for which limited funds are available.

Hamilton offers excellent and modestly priced accommodation, ranging in cost from three very competitively priced 4½-star hotels to bed and breakfast establishments charging around \$20 per person. AURA will negotiate with all local accommodation providers and will then provide a list of all those offering reduced rates to symposium participants and accompanying persons. The registration fee for this event will be kept to an absolute minimum and Aboriginal participants will be exempt from it.

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More detailed announcements will be made in the next *AURA Newsletter* and in the May 2003 issue of *RAR*. Proposals for papers to be given in any of the above sessions are invited from readers. Please send titles of proposed papers and abstracts of 50–100 words to the AURA Secretary, either to

AURA, P.O. Box 216, Caulfield South, VIC 3162, Australia,  
 or to [auraweb@hotmail.com](mailto:auraweb@hotmail.com)



## RAR REVIEW

***Gwion Gwion: secret and sacred pathways of the Ngarinyin Aboriginal people of Australia***, edited by JEFF DORING, 2000. Könemann, Cologne. 336 pages, numerous colour photographs. ISBN 3-8290-4060-1 (cloth).

*Gwion Gwion: secret and sacred pathways of the Ngarinyin Aboriginal people of Australia* is a singular book. With a text translated into three languages—English, German, French—and containing a sprinkling of Ngarinyin, this book is magnificently illustrated with images of the Kimberley landscape, its peoples and its rock art. The book was written at the request of four senior Ngarinyin lawmen, Ngarjno (Laurie Gawanali), Banggal (the late David Mowaljarlai), Ungudman (Paddy Wamma) and Nyawarra (Paddy Neowarra). Fittingly, although it is edited by Jeff Doring, the book largely consists of Ngarjno, Banggal, Ungudman and Nyawarra's voices.

*Gwion Gwion* has a Preface, followed by an introductory section ('*Ngarinyin Munnumburra* – Ngarinyin Lawmen') on Ngarinyin people and country, the storytellers-authors, and the book's genesis. This is followed by five sections ('*Jilinya Mamaa* – the Great Sacred Mother'; '*Gwion* – Artists and Inventors'; '*Munga.Nunga* – Artists and Visionaries'; '*Jenagi* – Artists and Messengers'; '*Wanjina* – Life Source'), each of which addresses a major aspect of Ngarinyin world view and how that world view is expressed in rock art. Each of these sections concludes with a discussion of the lawmen's words for those unfamiliar with Ngarinyin ways. The book ends with useful notes on Ngarinyin narratives, Ngarinyin songs, and an excellent glossary of the Ngarinyin words used in this book.

*Gwion Gwion* is a timely book at a time when Kimberley rock art remains a focus of scientific archaeological and popular interest. Unlike its recent predecessors such as Grahame Walsh's *Bradshaws: ancient rock paintings of north-west Australia* (1994), or his more recent *Bradshaw art of the Kimberley* (2000), *Gwion Gwion* is not so much concerned with original artists in this part of the Kimberley, as with the art's recent and present meaningfulness to local Aboriginal peoples; in particular, its meaningfulness to local senior lawmen. The book is not so much concerned with what archaeologists have come to know as Bradshaw and Wanjina paintings or with their origins (again in contrast to most existing archaeological writings on the subject), as with their Dreaming significance, and their part in ongoing, living cultural traditions among the Ngarinyin and neighbouring groups. In doing so, this book does not address the rock art simply as paintings on rock, but as components or dimensions of presently relevant Ngarinyin Dreamings and Ngarinyin life. This message is successfully communicated by, in the first instance, presenting the Ngarinyin lawmen's own words, and by contextualising the rock art in broader dimensions of Ngarinyin culture, knowledge and experience.

It is difficult to gauge exactly to whom this book will find most interest. It is not in itself a university text, nor is it presented so much in standard narrative—a story with a beginning, a middle and an end—as glimpses of a world whose meaningfulness will be foreign to most non-Aboriginal people. And this may well be a source of its greatest and most educational usefulness. The book is beautifully and amply illustrated, and its central message of the art's continuing (yet perhaps transform-

ing) relevance to Ngarinyin people is clearly communicated. It is in many ways more a coffee table book than something one would normally read from cover to cover. Yet this book will nevertheless be of interest to many people: I imagine local Aboriginal people, archaeologists and anthropologists, and rock art enthusiasts in particular. And given the excellent French translation (I do not speak German and therefore cannot comment on this translation), it is likely to find a useful place in more than the English-speaking world.

All in all, a successful and timely book on Aboriginal rock art of the Kimberley that presents the art's meaningfulness for local Aboriginal elders. And given the price and quality of presentation, a valuable bargain that I would recommend to rock art enthusiasts in Australia and abroad.

### Dr Bruno David

Department of Geography and Environmental Science, Monash University

RAR 19-612

***Stone chisel and yucca brush. Colorado Plateau rock art***, by EKKEHART MALOTKI and DONALD E. WEAVER, Jr. 2002. Kiva Publications Inc., Walnut, California, 210 pages, numerous colour plates and drawings, glossary and index. Cloth, US\$55.00, Can\$88.00, ISBN 1-885772-27-0.

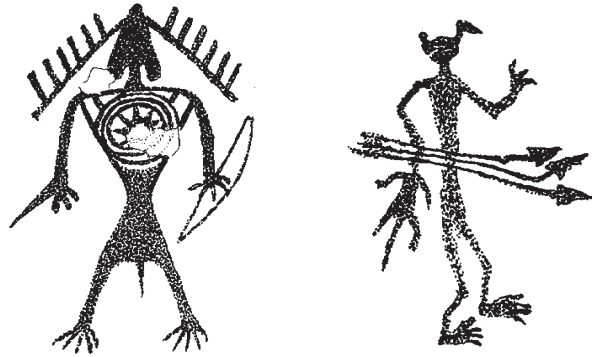
This volume follows in the tradition of previous work by linguist Professor Malotki, offering a consistently high quality of photography combined with minimal text of broadest appeal. Here, Malotki has combined his very special knack for presenting rock art at its aesthetic best with the solid knowledge of archaeologist Dr Weaver, the former ARARA leader who presided over that organisation's most successful conference ever. The result of this impressive combination of talents is reflected on every page of this volume.

Having had the privilege of visiting many of the sites featured in this book, I know how powerful their ambience can be. But I also know that to capture this on film in the way Malotki does, and apparently so effortlessly, will always remain unattainable for mediocre photographers such as I. Many of the photographs in this book are significantly more than mere documentation, they convey intrinsic properties of the sites themselves, and a deep love of the subject matter. To achieve this Malotki uses not just the traditional technique of exploiting the play of light, shadow and perspective, he has a gift for using aspects of the local vegetation to very deliberately enhance visual effects. Whether it is an ancient gnarled tree trunk at the Head of Sindbad pictogram site or the intricate lichen at various petroglyph sites, the effect always seems to be that somehow this tends to emphasise the great antiquity of the rock art. It is perhaps by visually contrasting the ephemeral desert bloom or sparse tuft of grass with the apparently timeless rock art motif that this technique achieves its striking effect.

This book brings to mind most effectively the concept of site fabric, which in rock art preservation has become a key concept of site protection. It is based on the view that the essence of a site amounts to more than the total sum of its component attributes,



and that all these components need to be preserved intact. The volume by Malotki and Weaver illustrates this principle most effectively. But there is another process at work here. Rock art protection depends entirely on the willingness of society to accept the importance of rock art, which in turn depends on how rock art is presented to the public. Books such as this volume, depicting it as a most precious but integral part of the planet's heritage, play a crucial role in this, and for that reason their value extends far beyond the immediately obvious.



Two of the numerous exquisite drawings in the Malotki and Weaver volume.

The text accompanying this visual feast is concise and appropriate. Instead of attributing the rock art to specific cultures or periods, the authors have chosen to use a system of very broadly defined artistic eras. They begin with a 'Palaeoconic' period, followed by the 'Archaeoconic' and a 'Mesoconic', then a 'Neoconic' and 'Protoconic', and finally a 'Historioconic'. While their desire to avoid more specific chronological labels for rock art is laudable, it remains to be seen whether this new convention will catch on. Concepts of rock art ages in the U.S.A. remain tainted by the wealth of premature data in the literature, especially through the legacy from Dorn's work, and it remains so difficult to separate fact from fiction that this kind of approach certainly has its advantages.

Less welcome are the interpretational attempts in this book, which occur occasionally even though the authors admit that many interpretations 'are most likely completely false':

This state of affairs has not stopped and undoubtedly will not stop art historians, anthropologists, archaeologists, linguists and other researchers from generating interpretations and deriving some level of meaning from the rock art images' (p. xxiii).

True, but the use of non-falsifiable propositions is precisely the reason why these researchers are representatives of non-scientific disciplines, and there is certainly no room for these scholarly mythologies in rock art science. For instance, when the authors state that '[t]he use of the shamanistic hypothesis as an interpretative strategy is justified due to several lines of evidence', they present a non-falsifiable proposition, as they do when they interpret an anthropomorph at Tsimona Site as a datura plant (p. 5).

Aside from this obvious weakness, the book contains many valuable observations. The 'confusing state of affairs' concerning rock art styles is well appreciated by the authors, as is the similarly perplexing state with technical terms supposedly designating categories. Malotki and Weaver opt for a sensible system of general morphological motif categories, dividing these into animate and inanimate initially. Needless to say, this is also unscientific, because it involves interpretation too, it is an etic system and has no objective currency. And while I am being pedantic, I might as well mention that as a geological period the Pleistocene ended everywhere at the same time, which is

not 6000 B.C. as stated.

Enough of the nit picking. This exceedingly handsome book is a valuable contribution to the literature on rock art, because it elicits respect for a fragile and irreplaceable heritage, and for the people who created it a very long time ago.

**R G. Bednarik**

Melbourne

RAR 19-613

## RECENT ROCK ART JOURNALS

**SAPAR Bulletin.** Journal of the Siberian Association of Prehistoric Art Researchers (SAPAR), bilingual in Russian and English. Edited by Y. A. SHER.

Volume 4 (2001):

KUBAREV, V. D.: Investigation of petroglyphs in the Altai in 2001.

CHEREMISIN, D. V.: Investigation of rock art in the valley of the Chaganka River (Altai) in 2001.



Scythian period, recording by D. V. Cheremisin (see also his paper in this issue of RAR, pp. 105-108).

BRODYANSKY, D. L.: The two-sided petroglyph from far-eastern Siberia.

MIKHAILOV, V. I.: Genre subject in the petroglyphs and portable art of the Okunevo Culture.

KOVTUN, I. V.: Asia's northernmost depiction of a chariot.

BAHN, P. G.: Altamira — the 'Neocueva'.

SHER, Y. A.: International seminar on rock art of central Asia, Kyrgyzstan.

DEVLET, M. A.: Obituary Vitaly V. Volkov.

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**Rupestre. Arte Rupestre en Colombia.** Journal of the Grupo de Investigación de Arte Rupestre Indígena (GIPRI). Edited by GUILLERMO MUÑOZ C. The fourth issue contains these research papers:

Volume 4 (2001):

FERNÁNDEZ O., R. and J. B. GONZÁLEZ T.: Afectaciones antrópicas al arte rupestre aborigen en Cuba.

STRECKER, M.: Vandalismo vs. conciencia? Las campañas educativas de SIARB.

SÁNCHEZ P., D.: Un observatorio indígena en Venezuela?

STEINBRING, J.: Proyectos de conservación exitosa en arte rupestre: dos experiencias.

BEDNARIK, R. G.: Inca Huasi: the first dating of Bolivian rock art.  
GIRÓN, L. M.: Las piedras grabadas de Chinauta y Anacuta.

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**Sahara.** International journal of pre-History and History of the Sahara, with a strong emphasis on the region's rock art. Edited by P. L. CALZOLARI, D. CALATI, G. NEGRO and R. SIMONIS. The most recent issue contains these articles:

Volume 13 (2001–02):

- DUPUY, C., P. FLUZIN, A. PLOQUIN, A. DURAND and C. ROLANDO: Nouvelles données sur l'Âge ancien des métaux au Mali.  
SCARPA FALCE, A. and S. SCARPA FALCE: Uadi Sakallem (Tardrat Acacus): il 'sítio del dragone'.  
BOCCAZZI, A. and D. CALATI: I pastori di Ouri.  
SEARIGHT, S. and G. MARTINET: Peintures rupestres d'un nouveau genre dans le Sud marocain.  
KAACHE, B.: Les anthropomorphes gravés de l'Anti-Atlas (Maroc).  
HALLIER, U. W. and B. C. HALLIER: New paintings in the central Tassili (south Algeria).  
PONTI, R.: Struttura megalitica nel Messak Settafet (Sahara libico).  
NEGRO, G.: Some 'Cabalistic' inscriptions around the Great Pyramid's original entrance. Dating the most ancient Libyco-Berber inscriptions.  
KAACHE, B.: À propos d'une inscription libyco-berbère du site de Boukerkour (Sud-est marocain).  
MILBURN, M.: Some ideas on conservation of Saharan rock pictures.

## RECENT BOOKS OF INTEREST

**Le gisement quaternaire de Pedra Furada (Piauí, Brésil). Stratigraphie, chronologie, évolution culturelle.** by FABIO PARENTI. 2001. Éditions Recherche sur les Civilisations, Paris, 312 pages of text with 24 monochrome plates, plus an additional 150 pages of line drawings, and separate package of maps and section drawings. Softcover, ISSN 2-86538-283-4.

**Almen im Herzen Österreichs. Dachsteingebirge, Niedere Tauern, Salzkammergut.** by FRANZ MANDL. 2002. Volume 22 of *Mitteilungen der ANISA*, Gröbming/Haus, Austria. Hardcover, ISBN 3-901071-12-1.

**Ithyphaliques, traditions orales, monuments lithiques et art rupestre au Sahara. Hommages à Henri Lhote.** edited by JEAN-LOÏC LE QUELLEC with the collaboration of d'Also Boccazzi, Yves Gauthier, Mark Milburn, Alfred Muzzolini and Jean Picard. 2002. Association des Amis de l'Art Rupestre Saharien, Les Cahiers de l'AARS No. 7, Saint-Lizier, France. Softcover, ISSN 1627-2773.

**Art rupestre dans l'Atlas d'Algérie: des trésors méconnus.** by FRANÇOIS SOLEILHAVOUP. 2002. PILOTE 24 Éditions, Périgueux.

## RECENT PAPERS OF INTEREST

**Bibliografia sobre registros rupestres da Amazonia Brasileira.** by EDITHE PEREIRA. 1999. *Revista do Museu de Arqueologia e Etnologia, São Paulo*, Number 9, pp. 269–277.

Los sitios rupestres del Valle del Río Hurtado superior (Norte Chico, Chile), by DOMINIQUE BALLEREAU and HANS NIEMEYER-FERNÁNDEZ. 1999. *Chungara, Revista de Antropología Chilena*, Volume 31, Number 2, pp. 229–292.

**Arte rupestre en San Antonio del Cajón provincia de Catamarca.** by MARIA DE HOYOS and MATILDE LANZA. 2000. *Relaciones de la Sociedad Argentina de Antropología*, Volume 25, pp. 119–144.

**Archaeological excavations at the Savonet Rock Paintings Site, Curaçao.** by JAY B. HAVISER. 2000. *Boletín de la Sociedad Venezolana de Espeleología*, Volume 34, pp. 1–5.

**A arte rupestre transmontana na Internet.** by MILA SIMÕES DE ABREU, MARCO VIEIRA, BELINHA CAMPOS, JOSÉ AFONSO BULAS CRUZ, PEDRO MELO and LUDWIG JAFFE. 2000. *Contributos das Ciências e das Tecnologias para a Arqueologia de Península Ibérica*, Volume 9, pp. 501–503.

**Versão electrónica da carta arqueológica do concelho de Vila Real (Trás-os-Montes, Portugal).** by MILA SIMÕES DE ABREU, MARCO VIEIRA, BELINHA CAMPOS, JOSÉ AFONSO BULAS CRUZ and PEDRO MELO. 2000. *Contributos das Ciências e das Tecnologias para a Arqueologia de Península Ibérica*, Volume 9, pp. 507–510.

**Testimony in stone: rock art in the Amazon.** by EDITHE PEREIRA. 2001. In Colin McEwan, Cristiana Barreto and Eduardo Neves (eds), *Unknown Amazon*, The British Museum Press, London, pp. 214–229.

**A propos des images rupestres d'ithyphalles dans les massifs centraux du Sahara.** by FRANÇOIS SOLEILHAVOUP. 2001. *Archeologia Africana - saggi occasionali*, Number 7, pp. 59–72.

**Grabados y pinturas del arte rupestre tardío de Caspana.** by F. VILCHES V. and M. URIBE R. 2001. *Estudios Atacameños*, Number 18, pp. 73–87.

**Alqueva: muore il fiume e l'arte preistorica.** by MILA SIMÕES DE ABREU, ANDREA ARCÀ and ANGELO FOSSATI. 2001. *Archeologia Viva*, Volume 20, Number 90 (November/December), pp. 78–83.

**Art rocks in Saudi Arabia.** by PETER HARRIGAN (photographs by Lars Bjurström). 2002. *Saudi Aramco World*, March/April 2002 issue, pp. 36–47.

**The Ahu o Rongo Project: archaeological research on Rapa Nui.** by DIRK HUYGE, NICOLAS CAUWE, FRANCINA FORMENT and SOMIA HAOA. 2002. *Rapa Nui Journal*, Volume 16, Number 1, pp. 11–16.

**Contact Period petroglyphs in Machias Bay, Maine.** by MARK HEDDEN. 2002. *Archaeology of Eastern North America*, Volume 30, pp. 1–20.

Items listed here have been submitted for inclusion and are incorporated in the AURA Archive.



## ORIENTATION

### Report on the conference

#### L'art avant l'histoire, Paris, May 2002

By ALAN WATCHMAN

A meeting of the Section Française de l'Institut International de Conservation (SFIIC) was held at the Institut de Paleontologie Humaine, Paris on 23-24 May 2002. The conference to discuss the conservation of rock art, 'L'art avant l'histoire' was attended by more than 120 specialists from more than 20 countries. Professor Henry de Lumley, Directeur de l'Institut de Paleontologie Humaine, opened the meeting. George Brunel, Conservateur de musée (curator) and Philippe Grenier de Monner (representing the Sous Directeur de l'Archaeologie, Ministry of Culture), remarked on the appropriateness and necessity of the meeting.

The conference was divided into three parts: Scientific Approach, Protection and Management, and Interventions and Case Studies. These parts were chaired in four sessions by Isabelle Pallot Frossard (Directrice of the Laboratoire des monuments historiques (LRMH), Conservator-Generale du Patrimoine, Ministry of Culture), Alan Watchman (Geoarchaeometrist, Department of Archaeology and Natural History, The Australian National University, Canberra), Sadotoshi Miura (Chief of Department of Science of Conservation, Tokyo, National Research Institute of Cultural Properties), and Jacques Tarrete (Conservateur general du Patrimoine, Sous Direction de l'Archeologie, Ministry of Culture).

In the first session the papers covered pigment analyses in Lascaux (Émilie Chalmin) and Argentina (Ian Wainwright and Mercedes Podesta), the impacts of dust in northern Australia (Alan Watchman), microclimatic modelling in Lascaux (Cendrille Ferchal), atmospheric pressure variations in the Cosquer Cave (Philippe Malaurant), the conservation of paintings in Baja California (Valerie Magar), and the microbiology of the Chauvet Cave (Geneviève Oriol).

The large section on the protection and management of sites was divided into two sessions and these covered the following topics. Heritage protection in Russia (Ekaterina and Marianna Devlet), conservation in the frequently visited park of Fontainebleau (Alain Benard), the conservation of carvings in the Savoie (Françoise Ballet), sustainable tourism in Australia (Graeme Ward), New Zealand rock art (Pamela and Peter Russell), preservation of Libyan rock art (Rosanna Ponti), features and preservation of Norwegian rock paintings (Terje Norsted), Iranian rock carvings (Elyas Saffaran), rock art conservation in Brazil (Helena David) and the conservation of the tumulus in Japan (Sadotoshi Miura).

The last part of the meeting provided examples of intervention at sites. The topics included the problem of making a cast in Niger (Pierre Mérindol), removing calcite that covers paintings at Arcy-sur-Cure (Michel Girard), conservation in the Spanish Levant (Eudald Guillemet), studies of mobiliary art (Ann-Catherine Welté), a summary of the interventions at the Roc-aux-Sorciers site (Geneviève Pinçon) and the conservation and restoration of mobiliary art (Sophie Tymula).

The meeting was closed by Professor Jean Clottes. Two tours were conducted to sites near Paris (Arcy-sur-Cure) and in the Perigord region. The tour to the site of Arcy-sur-Cure was guided by Dominique Baffier (conservator of the Cave of Chauvet, Ministry of Culture) and Michel Girard (Engineer of Research, Laboratoire de Palynologie CEPAM-CNRS). Jacques Brunet (specialist of the problems of conservation of rock art, member of LRMH, Ministry of Culture) and Marcel Stefanaggi (member of LRMH, Ministry of Culture and also conference secretary) guided delegates of the conference for two days to Font-de Gaume, Rouffignac, Cap Blanc and Lascaux II.

Copies of the proceedings *L'art avant l'histoire: la conservation de l'art préhistorique* can be obtained at a cost of Euro 36 (+ postal fee) by contacting Secrétariat de la SFIIC, 29 rue de Paris, 77420 CHAMPS SUR MARNE. It can also be ordered on the SFIIC web site:

[www.sfiic.asso.fr](http://www.sfiic.asso.fr)

Telephone: 33 1.60.37.77.80, Fax: 33 1.60.37.77.99, e-mail: [sfiic@lrhm.fr](mailto:sfiic@lrhm.fr)

RAR 19-614

### MA in Archaeology – Prehistoric Rock Art at the University of Durham (U.K.)

A new opportunity to study rock art at Masters level is offered by the University of Durham (U.K.). This is a one year (12 months) full-time or 24-month part-time course, commencing each October. Entry qualification is an honours degree in archaeology or related discipline or other appropriate background. If in doubt whether the appropriate entry qualifications are held please contact the course convenor, Dr Díaz-Andreu, at the address below.

The Rock Art MA in Archaeology strand offers students the opportunity to gain knowledge and an understanding of rock art in its archaeological and anthropological context. It also acquaints students with the principal debates affecting the recording, interpretation, conservation and preservation of rock art. Finally, this MA strand prepares students for

research or further study giving them the opportunity to investigate a topic in rock art in greater depth.

Rock art is one of fields in archaeological research that has seen a remarkable growth in interest in the last few years. This is because it is an ideal field for discussion of the ideological sphere of society. Research in anthropology has proved to be extremely useful for the study of rock art and Durham University is in an exceptionally good position in this respect, for this course benefits from the teaching by an archaeologist (Dr Margarita Díaz-Andreu) and by an anthropologist (Prof. Robert Layton). Our research focuses on explanations of the significance and location of rock art in relation to its landscape setting, on identities such as ethnicity and gender, on symbolism and on current issues relating the recording, preservation and management of rock art sites.

A major attraction of studying rock art at Durham is the high concentration of sites within the area. In addition to the art from County Durham, that of Yorkshire, Northumberland and even Scotland represent a teaching source students make use of during their studies. Links developed with other European countries—especially Scandinavia, Italy and Spain—can be instrumental for students willing to learn and specialise in other rock art traditions. Australian rock art is one of our other focuses of interest and American rock art counts with a well-provided library.

The course is taught via four modules: Archaeological Theory and Practice; Advanced Theory in Art Studies; Research and Management of Prehistoric Rock Art and a 10 000-word Dissertation. The Archaeological Theory and Practice module is taught by a number of members of staff from the Department of Archaeology and brings students into contact with a wide range of periods and ideas. Dr Díaz-Andreu and Prof. Layton teach the Advanced Theory in Art. Studies through a combination of lectures and advanced level tutorials. The Research and Presentation of Prehistoric Rock Art is lead by Dr Díaz-Andreu and uses a wide range of directed reading, seminars and tutorials as well as lectures on specific topics. All these modules are assessed through essays submitted during the year. These taught modules run from October to May. The Dissertation, a piece of postgraduate level research, is undertaken between May and September. Students are encouraged to develop their own ideas for the dissertation. The subject of the dissertation is discussed and agreed on between the student and his/her supervisor. The student develops a research proposal during the spring, and carries out the research and writing of a 10 000-word dissertation during the summer. The dissertation is submitted at the end of September. Several fieldtrips are organised throughout the year.

Further details and the application form can be found on <http://www.dur.ac.uk/Archaeology/>. You can also contact Dr M. Diaz-Andreu, Department of Archaeology, University of Durham, South Road, Durham DH1 3LE, U.K., e-mail: [m.diaz-andreu@durham.ac.uk](mailto:m.diaz-andreu@durham.ac.uk)



## Sixth International Symposium on Rock Art, Jujuy, Argentina, late 2003

The VI Simposio Internacional de Arte Rupestre will be held from 29 November to 4 December 2003, in Jujuy, north-western Argentina. Chaired by Alicia A. Fernández Distel, it will consist of five academic sessions. It will be preceded by a pre-symposium workshop on the documentation and survey of rock art at a site 120 km from Jujuy, and followed by a series of excursions and field-trips to rock art sites.

The academic sessions will be:

1. Sophisticated methods of rock art documentation, chaired by Mario Consens.
2. The dating of rock art, chaired by Robert G. Bednarik.
3. Production and use of rock art, chaired by Danae Fiore.
4. Rock art of the Americas, chaired by Agustín Llagostera.
5. Administration of natural and archaeological parks with rock art sites, chaired by Freddy Taboada and Matthias Strecker.

Papers will be a maximum of 15 minutes, followed by 10 minutes of discussion. Presentation may be in Spanish, Portuguese or English. Abstracts of a maximum of 150 words are invited by the chairpersons for papers proposed for any of these sessions and can be sent to the symposium secretariat now.

The Symposium will be followed by excursions, including to the following:

- Barrancas
- Santa Rosa de Tastil and Guapichas
- Inca Cueva, Sapagua and Coctaca
- Yavi, Yavi Chico, Lag. Colorada
- San Antonio, Calilegua and Ocloyas
- Tilcara, Quebrada de Humahuaca

Early registrations are invited, the cost being 50 \$Arg., which will rise to 65 \$Arg. on 29 September 2003. Please provide your name, address, telephone number and e-mail address, and where applicable the name of your paper presentation and the abstract. This should be sent to:

Centro Cultural y Museo Jorge Pasquini López  
Casilla de Correo 78  
S. S. de Jujuy  
Argentina  
or to: [grupoyav@imagine.com.ar](mailto:grupoyav@imagine.com.ar)

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## WAC-5, 21–26 June 2003 Fifth World Archaeological Congress Washington, D.C., U.S.A.

The Fifth World Archaeological Congress will be held in partnership with the Smithsonian Institution's National Museum of Natural History and National Museum of the American Indian, and in collaboration with the Getty Conservation Institute. The venue of WAC-5 will be the campus of the Catholic University of America, north-eastern Washington, D.C.

Proposals for new sessions and for individual contributed papers may be submitted until 1 January 2003. Please submit all program proposals to: WAC-5 Program Committee, Department of Anthropology, American University, Washington, D.C. 20016, U.S.A. The following congress themes have been established:

- Of the past, for the future: integrating archaeology and conservation
- Indigenous arrivals and First Peoples
- Past human environments in modern contexts
- Indigenous archaeologies
- Diasporas
- Managing archaeological resources
- Underwater and maritime archaeology
- Landscapes, gardens and dreamscapes
- North-South and South-South archaeological encounters
- Ways of remembering history
- Archaeology in the digital age
- Marketing heritage
- Moving images: film, video and archaeology
- Historical archaeology at the dawn of the 21st century
- Perspectives of repatriation for a new century
- The heavens above: archaeoastronomy, space heritage and SETI
- Rock art
- Technology: how people did things in the past

All plenary presentations and selected working sessions will be simultaneously translated into different languages, including Spanish, French and Russian. There will be pre- and post-congress tours to important local and national archaeological sites, and tours of the Smithsonian Institution museum facilities.

Registrations for WAC-5 are US\$335 before 31 December 2002, and US\$400 in 2003 for members of WAC, US\$200 for students. Registration fees are higher for non-members. For more information please contact:

WAC-Organising Committee  
Department of Anthropology  
American University  
Washington, D.C. 20016  
U.S.A.

E-mail: [wac5@american.edu](mailto:wac5@american.edu)

Fax No.: 1 (202) 885-1381

Visit the congress web site at

<http://www.american.edu/wac5>

## Forthcoming events

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

*128<sup>e</sup> Congrès des Sociétés Historiques et Scientifiques: Relations, échanges et coopération en Méditerranée*. Bastia, Corsica, France, 14 to 21 April 2003. This conference will address the history of the Mediterranean region, including its pre-History. Contact Isabelle Tarier, [congres.cths@recherche.gouv.fr](mailto:congres.cths@recherche.gouv.fr)

*WAC-5: the Fifth World Archaeological Congress*. Washington, D.C., U.S.A., 21 to 26 June 2003. See above for more details.

*Eighth RAI Festival of Ethnographic Film*. University of Durham, United Kingdom, 4 to 6 July 2003. Contact [film@therai.org.uk](mailto:film@therai.org.uk)

*Fifteenth ICAES Congress*. Florence, Italy, 5 to 10 July 2003. Humankind/nature interaction: past, present and future. Contact [anthropos@unifi.it](mailto:anthropos@unifi.it) or [secretariat@icaes-florence2003.com](mailto:secretariat@icaes-florence2003.com) or visit <http://www.studioscaramuzzi.com/icaes2003/>

*AURA Inter-Congress Symposium 2003*. Hamilton, Victoria (gateway to Grampians and Mt Gambier rock art regions), 4 and 5 October 2003. See announcement on p. 139. Contact [robertbednarik@hotmail.com](mailto:robertbednarik@hotmail.com) or [gunnb@netconnect.com.au](mailto:gunnb@netconnect.com.au)

*Conservation and Preservation of Cultural Heritage*. Prague, Czech Republic, early November 2003. Contact Irena Kucerova, Institute of Chemical Technology Prague, Department of Chemical Technology of Monument Conservation, Technicka 1905, 166 28 Praha 6, Czech Republic, Tel. No. +420 224354154, or e-mail [irena.kucerova@vscht.cz](mailto:irena.kucerova@vscht.cz)

*VI Simpoiso Internacional de Arte Rupestre*. This event will be held from 29 November to 4 December 2003, in Jujuy, north-western Argentina. Contact [grupoyav@imagine.com.ar](mailto:grupoyav@imagine.com.ar)

The next *IFRAO Congress* is to be held in India in the last week of December 2004 at Agra, India. It will be the only major rock art conference until 2006, and will be chaired by RASI (the Rock Art Society of India). Contact [girirajrasi@yahoo.com](mailto:girirajrasi@yahoo.com)

## Notes

The price of *RAR* has remained unchanged for ten years, i.e. since 1992. Significant increases in the cost of paper, printing, and especially postage render it inevitable that the price will soon increase, probably in 2003. One way to avoid a price increase in your subscription or membership is to join the more than one hundred *Life Members* of AURA,

whose membership or subscription has been paid for their lifetime. The cost of lifetime subscriptions remains \$A250 in Australia, \$A300 for full membership in Australia, and \$A400 (US\$230) for full overseas membership with air mail delivery of both periodicals.

All *back issues* of *RAR* from November 1988 onwards remain in print, please order back issues from the editor. As there have been requests for the issues from 1984 to May 1988, which have been out of print since about 1989, we intend to produce electronic and searchable copies of these issues which will be made available on CD in due course. It is also planned to eventually publish searchable digital versions of all remaining issues for the convenience of researchers.

The World's largest rock art studies literature *database* has been compiled by Leigh Marymor. It contains over 10 500 citations. For details contact Leigh Marymor, 717 Spruce Street, Berkeley, CA 94707, U.S.A., or [MleighM@aol.com](mailto:MleighM@aol.com)

## New AURA members

We have had the pleasure of welcoming the following new members of AURA during the past year:

James Cook University, Townsville, Queensland  
 Rebecca Edwards-Booth, Coffs Harbour, New South Wales  
 Renate Haupt, Filton, Bristol, United Kingdom  
 Geff Cramb, Jabiry, Northern Territory  
 Instituto Nacional de Antropología, Buenos Aires, Argentina  
 Professor Dr Majeed Khan, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia

Dr George Nash, Weobley Marsh, United Kingdom  
 Aboriginal Affairs Victoria, Melbourne, Victoria  
 Green Selma, Turku, Finland  
 D. J. Varney, Suibiac, Western Australia  
 Michele C. Ziolkowski, Baulkham Hills, New South Wales  
 Ronald Binns, Brighouse, United Kingdom  
 Peter Scott, Heywood, Victoria  
 Liam M. Brady, Monash University, Clayton, Victoria  
 EBSCO, Madrid, Spain  
 Arizona State University, Tempe, AZ, U.S.A.  
 Jennie Scott, Palm Cove, Cairns, Queensland  
 Heather O. Bice, Mount Clear, Victoria  
 Maarten van Hoek, Oisterwijk, Holland  
 Carola Kuramoto Bednarik, Nightcliff, Northern Territory  
 Maria Mercedes Podestá, Buenos Aires, Argentina  
 Dr Denise Smith, Pooler, Georgia U.S.A.  
 Gina M. Caddies, Macquarie Hills, New South Wales  
 Julien Monney, Geneva, Switzerland  
 Victoria Waldoock, San Francisco, CA, U.S.A.  
 Jane Austen, Mudgeeraba, Queensland  
 David Mott, Stirling, South Australia  
 Dr Neale Draper, Torrens Part, South Australia  
 Nerida Lombardi, Perth, Western Australia  
 Adam M. Black, Sydney, New South Wales  
 Rosalea Millard, Mt Gambier, South Australia  
 Adrian P. Parker, Merriwa, New South Wales  
 Dr Kieran L. Hotchin, Hughes, ACT  
 Denis Cosgrove, Nedlands, Western Australia  
 Christine Crassweller, Wanguri, Northern Territory  
 Jenny L Worth, Palm Desert, CA, U.S.A.  
 Dr Murari Lal Sharma, Kotputli, Raj., India  
 Michael R. B. Watt, Bentleigh, Victoria  
 Henric Nicholas, Sydney, New South Wales

## *Art rupestre dans l'Atlas d'Algérie: des trésors méconnus*

FRANÇOIS SOLEILHAVOUP

The seminal volume by Professor Soleilhavoup about Saharan rock art is now available and can be ordered from the publishers in France, PILOTE 24 Éditions. The book's contents are as follows:

Chapter 1: Un art méconnu dans des paysages magnifiques

Chapter 2: Paysages et parois ornées dans l'Atlas d'Algérie

Chapter 3: Sites et stations rupestres dans l'Atlas

Monts des Ksours: Gouiret Bent Saloul, Hassiane El-Krima, Kheloua Sidi Cheikh, Hadjrat Driess, Dekhilet El-Ateuch, Merdoufa, Hadjrat El-Kheil, Guebar Rechim, les stations de l'Oued Chréa  
 Djebel Amour et des Ouled Naïl: Boulaem El-Quidiane, Guerar El-Hamra, Djebel El-Hasbaïa, Safiet Bou Renan

Chapter 4: Quotidien et imaginaire des peuples anciens de l'Atlas. Thémes, associations et traditions rupestres

Conclusions, Index, Bibliography, Table des matières

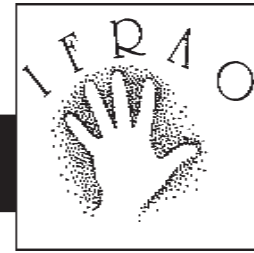
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## IFRAO Report No. 29



### Guadiana report

The two hardest-fought rock art conservation battles in the history of the International Federation of Rock Art Organisations (IFRAO) have been the campaigns to save the petroglyph sites in the lower Côa valley of north-eastern Portugal and those in the Guadiana valley in south-eastern Portugal. In 1997, a plan rejected or deferred since 1952 to dam the Guadiana was resurrected. The Alqueva dam will result in the inundation of 250 km<sup>2</sup>, making it the largest man-made lake of Europe. Substantial archaeological salvage operations were undertaken and according to the director of this project, no rock art would be submerged by this reservoir. Although about 100 archaeologists were working on the project by 2001, they still reported no finds of rock art (the Guadiana impact studies had been begun in the 1980s). In April 2001, however, Spanish researchers reported a significant number of rock art sites in the small area of Spanish territory that was to be inundated by the dam (published in the following month in *RAR*; Collado Giraldo 2001). Yet there were still no reports from the much greater Portuguese sector of the area. An environmentalist NGO then received an anonymous tip-off that a large corpus of rock art sites existed on the Portuguese side as well. The Institute of Portuguese Archaeology (IPA) finally admitted the existence of several hundred sites in the Portuguese area to be inundated.

This was about seven months before the final completion of the Alqueva dam in late 2001, and a hasty campaign to record the massive corpus commenced. The Portuguese office of IFRAO initiated immediate requests to defer construction work and I demanded that recording standards be greatly improved (Bednarik 2001). Mila Simões de Abreu also launched a petition to save the Guadiana rock art, which attracted the support of thousands of specialists and heritage administrators and of the International Union for Prehistoric and Protohistoric Sciences (UISPP). IFRAO's endeavours to save the Guadiana corpus were, however, brusquely rejected by the President of the ICOMOS-CAR Committee for Rock Art, and the petition was not signed by most of the members of the organisation he heads. Bearing in mind that by late 2001 it had transpired that there were 600 to 800 rock art sites to be destroyed by the project, this is of particular concern.

Equally interesting is the role of the Portuguese authorities responsible for rock art protection. Besides commencing

hurriedly to record the rock art as the dam was being completed and closed and the waters began to rise, they attacked everyone who was even slightly critical of their role. The Director of IPA suggested publicly that the reason why his teams may not have seen the rock art was because it was perhaps covered by river sand. So what he suggested was that during the sixteen years the valley had been studied, hundreds of petroglyph sites were covered by sediment, but in early 2001 they were all miraculously uncovered. He also claimed that the rock art was not important enough to warrant its preservation, but at no time did he admit that the rock art's existence had been concealed.

Within weeks of the admission that hundreds of rock art sites were known in the Guadiana valley, the responsible government minister, the Minister of Culture, was relieved of his duties, but the archaeologists responsible for the disaster remained in office. In September 2001 the Union of Prehistoric and Protohistoric Sciences voted to appoint a committee to investigate the Guadiana issues (UISPP 2001). This led to a scathing response by the Director of IPA (Zilhão 2001) and to his other unbecoming attacks on various individuals and international organisations, resulting in defamation proceedings. His main objection against the UISPP committee, apart from describing it as incompetent, was that it was 'uninvited', i.e. not invited by him. The huge Alqueva dam was completed in late 2001 and opened in February 2002, an event that was internationally condemned. Within weeks, the Director of the Guadiana archaeological salvage project, António Carlos Silva, resigned, shortly after publication of his report (Silva and Lanca 2001), and in April 2002 the government lost the national election.

The newly elected government wasted no time in acting on the state of public archaeology in Portugal, whose reputation even the Director of IPA admitted was in tatters by that time. On 6 May the government announced the downgrading of IPA, which prompted the immediate resignation of the Director of IPA, who commenced a campaign to reverse what he calls the 'extinction' of public archaeology in Portugal. But what in fact occurred was that the new government, concerned about the developments of recent years, merely promised to improve international collaboration in archaeology, and to decentralise the administration of public archaeology.

During June 2002, the major Guadiana rock art concentrations at Cheles became inundated. Most of the valley's rock art has remained unrecorded, and where records were made they do not meet any reasonable international record-

ing standards. Clearly there had been insufficient time for recording, and it was further reduced by several months during which there 'were too many mosquitos' in the valley. Moreover, the teams involved in the recording work were inadequately experienced in modern methods and lacked even rudimentary relevant equipment.

A lesson from the Côa controversy had been that 'the political nature of the archaeologists' strategy influenced their scientific discourse' (Gonçalves 1998: 18). To preserve their claim that the rock art is of Palaeolithic age, they tied its preservation to this age claim, and in fact demanded that it must be preserved *because* it is of Palaeolithic age. This was a fundamental error of strategy in several respects. The Palaeolithic age was far from demonstrated, and such an equation is unacceptable to rock art researchers and site managers around the world because it would prejudice demands for preserving Holocene rock art elsewhere. The argument that Holocene rock art is somehow less deserving of preservation than older rock art is emotive and subjective rather than rational. It is likely to be contradicted by many stakeholders, such as indigenous custodians in other world regions or researchers specialising in periods other than the Palaeolithic. It follows that the strategy Gonçalves (1998) examines was not only politically motivated, it implies a lack of consideration of the broader and long-term ramifications. It prepared the conditions leading to the Guadiana disaster, which in part was caused by the IPA's pronouncement of the rock art as being 'less important' than the much smaller Côa corpus.

Since 1994, political manoeuvring has become the hallmark of Portuguese state archaeology, and the objectionable technical practices of the past continued unabated. Indeed, in one case the Director of IPA even admitted that the two were linked, when he conceded that his scrubbing of the Côa petroglyphs was politically motivated (Zilhão 1996). The aspect of the Guadiana affair that is most difficult to understand is that it followed in the wake of the Côa fiasco, which has cost the public of Portugal so dearly. It was precisely this painful experience the country underwent in 1995 that was directly responsible for the establishment of IPA. Yet in all the subsequent years, it is claimed, it never occurred to this organisation to examine the location of the largest reservoir ever built in Europe to see if rock art was affected. Contract conditions of the participants of the project's environmental impact study include a requirement preventing them from making public statements about their project, which seems to explain why it was an anonymous tip-off that alerted the public. Of particular concern is that both the impact studies and the archaeological salvage work were conducted under the authority of the Empresa de Desenvolvimento e Infra-estruturas do Alqueva, which is the very same agency that built the dam. The concept of a conflict of interest does not seem to have been appreciated either by the Portuguese authorities, or by the relevant European Union agencies that blindly accepted the environmental impact assessment by the dam builders themselves.

The present government of Portugal has not planned or executed the Guadiana reservoir, it inherited it. Conse-

quently there appears to be no hope of saving the Guadiana rock art corpus, one of the largest concentrations of Europe, from being inundated first by water, then under billions of tonnes of sediment as the reservoir silts up. IFRAO has made a valiant attempt to avert the Guadiana catastrophe, but because the existence of the rock art was successfully concealed until the scenario of its destruction was complete, there was nothing left to do but to establish the reasons for this calamity. Responsibility for the Guadiana incident rests squarely with the former leadership of Portuguese public archaeology, and with the international spin-doctors who supported this clique during its reign.

**R. G. Bednarik**

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RAR 19-615

## Dampier report

In contrast to the Guadiana disaster, which seems destined to end with the complete obliteration of Portugal's largest remaining rock art concentration, the outlook for the Dampier rock art in Western Australia is considerably brighter. Here, IFRAO managed to catch the culprits in the early stages of their mischief, and the chances of success of our campaign are significantly better. However, the first year of the Dampier campaign has shown that this is going to be a long battle and IFRAO needs all the support it can muster. The stakes are much higher than on the Guadiana. For one thing, the Dampier rock art corpus is regarded as the largest complex of petroglyph sites in the world. But at the same time, the scale of the proposed development is also much greater than in Portugal. For instance, the largest export deal in the entire history of Australia has just been signed, for \$25 billion worth of natural gas to be processed at Dampier. Very powerful corporate interests are involved here, and a state government willing to bend its own rules to accommodate them.

Nevertheless, there are also some similarities with Guadiana. The Dampier issue, too, is attributable to a cover-up, but one that occurred decades ago. In 1962, in response to



a proposal to construct a deep-water port on Depuch Island, east of the Dampier Archipelago, the Western Australian Museum conducted an impact study (Ride and Neumann 1964). It found concentrations of rock art on the island and the plan was abandoned. In the following year, the government and mining interests decided to build the harbour and ore-processing plant on nearby Dampier Island instead. No mention of any rock art was made. Four years later I commenced my survey of the Dampier rock art, registering some 570 petroglyph sites and numerous rock arrangements over the following years. I witnessed destruction of rock art (Bednarik 1973, 1977) and my inability to prevent it contributed to my determination to establish an independent body that could oppose state vandalism of rock art. In part, AURA is a result of this experience of helplessness in the face of very powerful vested interests.

The discovery in 1971 of major off-shore natural gas deposits led to the establishment of a petrochemical industry in the early 1980s, and to further destruction of rock art (Vinnicombe 1987). Encouraged by the success of IFRAO in preventing rock art vandalism in other continents, and realising that the principal danger to the rock art was its legislative protector, the Western Australian state government, I proposed that the Dampier Archipelago be repatriated to indigenous ownership and be made a National Park (Bednarik 1994). This would excise at least part of the land from the jurisdiction of the corrupt state government and place it under the control of Aboriginal custodians and the federal government, and facilitate nomination to World Heritage status.

In 1996 the development of the Maitland Heavy Industry Estate, located on the mainland to the south-east of Dampier, was announced, and this seemed to remove the immediate main threat to the rock art. But a change in government led to a change in policy, and the current government is instead dedicated to trebling the industry on Murujuga (Burrup). It announced this plan in late 2001 and IFRAO, with the enthusiastic support of AURA, drew a line in the sand at the beginning of 2002. We informed the Premier and the four relevant State Ministers that IFRAO would not tolerate any further destruction of rock art in the Dampier Archipelago, and that we would use all means available to us to prevent it.

Since then there has been a considerable volume of correspondence with the state government, and we have joined forces with other interests seeking the protection of the area. Most particularly productive has been the collaboration of a Green politician, Robin Chapple MLC, who has repeatedly and profitably raised the matter in parliament. After the publication of two articles in the May 2002 issue of *RAR*, outlining the systematic neglect of Dampier rock art by the state government, IFRAO commenced a media campaign in Western Australia that led to extensive public debate. A webpage was established for the Dampier campaign and an international Internet petition begun. This soon illustrated the strong support the campaign enjoyed in Western Australia, confirming enthusiastic public support in the immediate geographical vicinity of Dampier (particularly in the towns Karratha and Dampier, those closest to the rock art) as

demonstrated by the huge turnout of local supporters at a public rally held at Hearson Cove, Murujuga. This event on 9 June 2002 became a spontaneous demonstration of unanimous support for the relocation of the planned industries to Maitland. On 22 August the National Trust of Australia accepted our nomination of the Dampier rock art to its list of Endangered Sites, and within a few days ICOMOS expressed its concern to the state government.

On 16 October the State Premier, Dr Geoff Gallop MLA, informed IFRAO that it has taken two important steps towards proper care for the Murujuga rock art—the first such initiatives in history. It has appointed a Rock Art Monitoring Reference Committee of nine members, which will oversee a four-year study of the deterioration of the petro-glyphs. This study will be undertaken by consultants sought through a process of public tenders, and its intended purpose is to test existing data on the rate and forms of deterioration. Secondly, and perhaps more significantly, the Department of Indigenous Affairs, which has been accused by us to have neglected its duty of protecting the Dampier rock art, has now been directed to develop a heritage management plan for the area. As of November 2002 it is in the process of developing the terms of reference and specifications for the commissioning of such a plan. It will be prepared by independent external consultants and it will cover all the points IFRAO, AURA and individual rock art researchers have raised. In short, it will end almost four decades of neglect by the state agency legally responsible for the petroglyphs.

Although two of IFRAO's demands, the establishment of an independent committee and the exercising of the liable Minister's responsibility for the protection of the rock art, have thus been met in principle, nothing in these concessions indicates that the key requirements will be met. They are a guarantee that no further rock art in the Dampier Archipelago will be removed, damaged or destroyed; a relocation of industrial expansion plans to alternative sites; and an undertaking that the local Aboriginal communities be compensated for the almost complete annihilation of the Yaburara by the police force of the State of Western Australia in 1868 (see paper in this issue, *Brief Reports*).

IFRAO is committed to preventing any further destruction of Dampier rock art, and I have now nominated it to the World Monuments Fund for inclusion in its *WMF List of the 100 Most Endangered Sites in the World*. This list includes currently no sites in Australia, and in contrast to UNESCO's World Heritage List, nominations need not have the support of either the site owner or the relevant government (it is this factor that prevents World Heritage nomination). It has become clear that the Dampier Archipelago needs to be excised from the jurisdiction of the state government, and one way to achieve this is to have it nominated as a National Park, as which it can then be nominated for World Heritage listing. To this end I have petitioned the Federal Minister for the Environment and Heritage, the Hon. Dr David Kemp MP, whose response has been significantly more helpful. Dr Kemp concurs that state agreement for World Heritage nomination, for which he feels there may be a good case, is not likely to be secured. He feels that the

Dampier 'petroglyphs would appear to be a good candidate for national heritage listing assessment under the national heritage regime proposed by the government's heritage bills currently before the federal Government'. He considers that IFRAO 'would be well placed to work in conjunction with Aboriginal people who have rights and interests in the area to prepare a quality nomination that would enable such an assessment to be undertaken'.

A most dramatic development has taken place immediately before this *IFRAO Report* went to press. I had made a submission to the National Native Title Tribunal (NNTT) in August 2002, concerning an upcoming hearing to determine whether the government of Western Australia should be allowed to compulsorily acquire the land of the Dampier Archipelago from three Native Claimant Groups (the Ngarluma, the Yindjibarndi, Yaburara and Mardudhunera, and the Wong-goo-tt-oo). This is itself a bogus procedure, because the Traditional Owners of the area have never been given the land; it is simply a pre-emptive strike to preclude land claims. It is stridently opposed by at least one of the Claimants, and on behalf of IFRAO I argued that the success of this legal manoeuvre would seriously endanger the remaining rock art. In an unprecedented ruling that made legal history in Australia, the NNTT decided on 6 November, on the basis of my submission and after having it debated exhaustively for many hours, to invite public comment on the case. On 9 November the NNTT advertised for submissions from the general public to establish the public interest of the issue. Numerous submissions were made, including many by IFRAO members and an 85-page submission by myself as President of IFRAO. The Summary of my submission to the NNTT is reproduced below.

All of these factors will add to the protection of Dampier rock art, and to an erosion of the influence of the state government that has been so disastrous not only for this heritage property, but also for the original creators of this great monument. With the support of thousands of people, IFRAO will eventually secure perpetual protection of Murujuga and the rest of the Dampier rock art precinct, but this will be a slow and frustrating process. We are opposed by immensely powerful corporate interests as well as political ones. The Federation needs to be clear that it will require all of the skill and determination it can muster to bring the Dampier issue to a fully successful conclusion, and that this will depend on international as well as domestic action.

### R. G. Bednarik

RAR 19-616



Dampier petroglyph motif -  
the face of genocide

## Summary of the IFRAO submission to the National Native Title Tribunal

There appears to be complete and worldwide consensus that, as far as is known, the petroglyph concentration of the Dampier Archipelago on the coast of Western Australia's Pilbara region is the largest concentration of such phenomena in the world. This immense cultural resource includes also what is suggested to be Australia's major concentration of megaliths, such as standing stones and other rock structures. The Dampier Rock Art Precinct, the subject of this submission, is generally agreed to be the largest cultural heritage property of Australia, and as such should be viewed primarily as one of the great historical monuments of the world, irrespective of who owns, controls or manages it. This is a fundamental issue to appreciate.

It follows from this that, as a nation that considers itself to be civilised in the full sense of that word, Australia has no choice but to thoroughly condemn the endemic culture of neglect that has marked the history of the management of this property. The National Native Title Tribunal faces an important task in assessing this issue. Two grave errors of judgment by the government of Western Australia have occurred historically in relation to it. The first was the decision in February 1868 of the then Government Resident in Roebourne, R. J. Sholl, to swear in a bloodthirsty mob as special constables and have them apprehend some Aboriginal fugitives. He thus unleashed a chain of events that led to a series of massacres over a period of about three months, resulting in the almost complete genocide of the Yaburara people. The second error occurred in 1963, when the existence of the rock art at Dampier was concealed because a previous inspection of an alternative site by the Western Australian Museum had led to the abandonment of plans of establishing industrial installations there.

In 2002, history offers an opportunity to correct these mistakes. The state government is determined to add a third fatal error of judgment to its record, but the Tribunal has the chance of changing history. It can set in motion developments that will reverse the mistake of 1963, and will help the nation to atone for the mistake of 1868. In this submission we illustrate the effects of the 1963 error, how it will be compounded if the present state government is allowed to proceed with its rush to destroy the Dampier Rock Art Precinct, and what the greater implications of its policy will be.

The state government's plan to fit as many petrochemical and other plants on the land surface of the 'Burrup Peninsula' as it can physically accommodate is entirely incompatible with the idea that the area features one of the world's major cultural heritage monuments. Previous development of this kind has destroyed between 20% and 25% of the rock art that existed there in the early 1960s, and the government has made no secret of the fact that further rock art sites will be destroyed if the new developments were to proceed. Moreover, there is scientific evidence pointing to a slower, but more thorough process of rock art destruction, through the massive volume of acidic emissions of the proposed industry. The most incredible aspect of this matter is that the very same state government that bears the legal responsibility of preserving this cultural heritage is planning to establish the nation's largest single polluter (in terms of concentration) in precisely the same location as the nation's largest cultural heritage property—and without any economic reason at all. There is absolutely no technical or logistic requirement for this industry to be in a specific locality. This petrochemical industry could be erected anywhere along the natural gas pipeline. The government's obsession with placing the plant that will increase emissions state-wide by at least

28% in this small area that is generally acknowledged to have world heritage significance can only be described as perverse.

The Tribunal has an opportunity to review the circumstances of this obsession as they are illustrated in this submission. It also has the opportunity to change the culture of endemic neglect as it persists in the state of Western Australia. Obsessed with selling off the state's natural resources at bargain prices (30% below world prices), the state government is now determined to deprive the local Indigenous community of its birthrights, and to deprive the nation of its greatest single cultural property as well as of a unique natural environment. It is determined to continue the practices of the 19th century, of dispossessing the Aborigines and of facilitating the enrichment of a small minority at the expense of the natural and cultural heritage of the state. Dampier resembles very closely the Franklin River controversy of Tasmania two decades ago: a state government blindly pursued a policy of large project development, determined to invest hugely in a project that would generate a few hundred permanent jobs, to compete in a depressed world energy market. In both cases there are no significant economic benefits, except for a very small number of privileged people, in both cases the proposal would destroy a property of world significance, and in both cases the same investment of money would, if applied to different industries, provide employment for tens of thousands. The main difference between Tasmania and the Pilbara is that in the latter case, the resource in question is non-renewable, we are depriving future generations of Western Australians by underselling countries such as Indonesia and Qatar on the world market. The extraordinary haste of the government to force through these projects speaks for itself.

The mistake of 1868, the genocide of the Yaburara, cannot be undone, but we can acknowledge it and atone for it. For instance, it was an insult to the Indigenes to rename the island formerly known as Dampier Island (an honourable and historically acceptable name) after a bank clerk of the 19th century, Henry Burrup, when a perfectly good Aboriginal name was available. Why not go all the way and name it Sholl Peninsula, in honour of the man who caused the near-annihilation of the Yaburara on the killing fields of Murujuga? The ignorance and impertinence of this state government is breathtaking and unbelievable, and just as all right-thinking citizens of the world would condemn the genocide of the Yaburara, history will condemn the present government for the deliberate destruction of the last vestiges of the Yaburara's culture: the haunting art they left on the boulders of their land Murujuga.

As a result of state policies, Western Australia presents to the world the picture of a dismal society with a tendency of denying history and creating its own distorted version of the past and present. Nowhere is this more obvious than in the choice of its heritage values. While practically all countries in the world, including the remaining states of Australia, make at least an attempt to present some semblance of balance in the way they present their past, as expressed in their heritage values, Western Australia's official heritage expresses only denial. In most countries, the history before the introduction of writing is well represented in their heritage, usually making up well in excess of 25% of the country's heritage sites, sometimes more than 50%. In Western Australia, no National Park has been created primarily for its Indigenous values, such as Aboriginal rock art. If rock art does occur in a National Park it is mere coincidence. There are no heritage sites in the state to celebrate its Macassan heritage, nor are there any heritage sites or properties (other than shipwreck sites) to present the pre-British European history of Western Australia. This state of denial is illustrated by the state's reaction to the only early Dutch rock inscription ever reported, which was erased by the state's operatives, presumably to protect the legality of British

sovereignty. Western Australia has a long history of historical denial, which is well reflected in the preoccupations of its contemporary society. More mature societies throughout the world honour their pre-Historic histories, even celebrate them. In this respect Western Australia has a lot to learn from all countries, ranging from Peru to Thailand to Britain. Where would English history and heritage be without its monuments of the Neolithic, the Bronze Age, the Iron Age? They consist primarily of stone arrangements, rock art and occupation sites, precisely as does the cultural heritage of Dampier. Western Australia ought to inquire into how much a relatively poor country, such as India, spends annually on the preservation and management of its cultural heritage that is older than 200 years, and then compare this with its own puny efforts in the same area, pre-1800 heritage.

This is not just about Western Australia deserving international pariah status in the area of heritage neglect and heritage denial—which it undeniably deserves and will secure if this Federation has its way—there are more serious aspects. Western Australia was first settled by people about 60 000 years ago. By encouraging the denial of 99.7% of its history through such measures as intentional destruction or systematic neglect of sites, the state of Western Australia not only seeks to eradicate most of its history, it offends those who reject the official lie that Western Australia has no history other than that which begins with British colonisation, and that this history was one of peaceful acquisition. The policy of denial offends four types of people: the Indigenous citizens, the citizens who are of non-British extraction, those who are of British extraction but would prefer the truth, and those people who live in other countries and object to a history made up of lies.

One importance of Dampier is that it provides a poignant illustration of this. Here we have a cultural heritage property any country in the world would be proud to call its own, a monument the size of countless Stonehenges, a monument that exceeds in size and age and impact most of what the rest of the world offers. Its rock art illustrates a culture and a way of life that extends into the very mists of early history. This property was acquired not peacefully, as the campaign of denial that passes as history in Western Australian school curricula would have it, it was acquired by rudely genocidal means. The history of denial, which began in the 19th century, continues at Dampier in 2002. There is absolutely no reason why the planned petrochemical industry needs to be on Murujuga, and alternative sites are available, so we need to ask: why this obsessive insistence of destroying this heritage? The answer is to be found in the fundamental structures of denial. How are Aboriginal people expected to feel about this abomination of history? Were the sacrifices of their ancestors entirely in vain?

The history of the neglect and fully intentional destruction of the world's greatest collection of rock carvings demonstrates clearly enough that this government is unfit to manage the world heritage property it has control over. It is either unwilling or incapable of discharging its duties under its own *Aboriginal Heritage Act* of 1972, it projects to the rest of the world the image of a banana republic whose population is driven only by one motivation, greed. This is an insult to all citizens of Western Australia. It is self-evident and does not need to be demonstrated that this government is unfit to manage Murujuga. Therefore the specific recommendations this submission has arrived at are not just obvious—they are inescapable:

- (1) **The Place Names Committee should be requested to replace the offensive name 'Burrup Peninsula' with 'Murujuga', the name that indisputably has historical precedence.**
- (2) **All currently undeveloped land of the Dampier Archipelago should be declared a National Park and should be managed**

- by a competent entity such as the NPWS.
- (3) **The entire archipelago should be returned to Indigenous ownership, to be held in perpetuity by all members of the local Indigenous communities, with the proviso that the rock art precinct be leased as a National Park to the Commonwealth.**
- (4) **To facilitate item (3) a working party needs to be established that will examine similar arrangements elsewhere, most especially in Kakadu and Uluru National Parks, to adopt any suitable practical arrangements that have worked successfully there.**
- (5) **Concerning existing industrial installations on Murujuga, their operators should be required to pay appropriate rent to the Indigenous land owners.**

Further to item (5), we already have such an arrangement in Kakadu, where a mining venture (Ranger Uranium) operates within a National Park owned by Aboriginal people. Once item (2) is implemented, there will be no obstacle to nominating Dampier for UNESCO World Heritage listing. The only obstacle to this is the fact that the state government will veto such an application under the current conditions (cf. advice by the federal Minister for the Environment and Heritage).

The almost complete extermination of the Yaburara was conducted entirely by police, consisting of regular officers and sworn-in special constables. Therefore the government of Western Australia bears full responsibility for the Murujuga Campaign of February – May 1868. No compensation for the wholesale massacre of men, women and children (the only known survivors were adult males) has been made for this hideous crime. This case needs to be taken to the international court for determination of compensation—if only to demonstrate the point that greed is not as good as the ‘social elite’ of Western Australia seems to think.

The above recommendations would have massive economic, social, cultural and political effects on the relevant Indigenous communities. The short-term effects would be communal confi-

dence and sense of direction, and a perception that justice was done at last. The long-term effects would include economic independence, as members of the community would find employment in park management and in the local industries (as is the case in Kakadu), and the community would collect and distribute regular income from royalties. Presumably any surplus would be invested in the community’s own initiatives to secure an economic future. These benefits would accrue gradually, under managed conditions, but within decades they would lead to the development of a community resembling that of Arnhem Land: full of confidence and as equal partners in the development of Australia. The state government, on the other hand, wishes to resolve the issue via a package that requires the community to forego the right to claim the sacred sites. The money it offers will soon be frittered away, and the right to own their ancestors’ sacred sites should not even be for sale in the first place. There is no concept of selling sacred sites in a traditional Indigenous code, anywhere in the world, nor do any individual Aborigines have the right to sell such land rights. Moreover, while there can be no doubt that these sites belong to the local Indigenous communities, there is equally no doubt that in a wider sense, they are also the property of all of humanity. Nobody buys or sells Stonehenge or the Taj Mahal. Such monuments are not commodities, they are part of the Dreaming of all human beings—past, present and future. The Dampier rock art precinct certainly falls into the same category, and once it has been inscribed in the World Heritage List, all Australians will rejoice, together with the immediate owners and perpetual custodians.

It is the prerogative of the Tribunal to create the circumstances that will lead to this—the only solution for the Dampier rock art that is worthy of consideration.

**Robert G. Bednarik**

RAR 19-617

Further information about the NNTT case State of Western Australia vs the Dampier Native Title Claimants can be found at  
<http://mc2.vicnet.net.au/users/dampier/urgent.html>

Full background information about the Dampier rock art issue is at  
<http://mc2.vicnet.net.au/users/dampier/>

The Save Dampier Rock Art Petition is at  
<http://www.petitiononline.com/dampier/petition.html>  
Please sign this petition.

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

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

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