

RITUAL LANDSCAPES AND
BORDERS WITHIN
ROCK ART RESEARCH

PAPERS IN HONOUR OF PROFESSOR
KALLE SOGNNES

edited by

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Cover image: Crossing borders. Leirfall in Stjørdal, central Norway. Photo: Helle Vangen Stuedal

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Editorial preface



KALLE SOGNNES, AUGUST 1970. PHOTO LARS G. STRÖMBERG.

We are proud to present this anthology in honour of Professor Sognnes, in recognition of his research and academic career as well as his contributions to the preservation of panels and dissemination of rock art to a wider public. In September 2015 Karl Johan Sognnes or ‘Kalle’, as he is best known, turns 70. On this occasion we wish to present to him this anthology as a sign of appreciation of his many efforts within the field of rock art. Sognnes’ career has been long and covered many topics in archeology. However, we wanted this book to concentrate on rock art, which has been his main research area for the last 40 years.

Since the 1970s Kalle Sognnes has worked with the rock art of central Norway, and has made rock art from this area known through a variety of international and domestic publications. Kalle was one of few pioneers bringing into Norwegian rock art research new thoughts and methods inspired from the concepts of New Archaeology, which meant a fertilizing and innovative approach and an incentive to re-thinking rock art studies. The grounds for this new mindset were laid during a longer stay in the USA and also exchanging ideas and thoughts with colleagues on the continent and the British Isles. Continuing Scandinavian contacts were also an impetus. From the 1970s and through the following decades Kalle Sognnes stood out as one of the most influential in this part of Norwegian archaeology. He brought Norwegian rock art to international academia, but he also made rock art sites of central Norway a gathering place for international researchers. One of these occasions was the *Vitark International Rock Art Seminar: Rock art in landscapes – landscapes in Rock art* held in Trondheim in 1998. At a more local level he played a significant part in the establishment of the Museum for rock art *Bergkunstmuseet* at Stjørdal, central Norway, which is centered round the sites of Leirfall and Bardal. Sognnes has been an active speaker, and has expressed the importance of communicating rock art to local communities.

Kalle Sognnes has also served as Head of Department of different archaeological departments at NTNU, and has mentored numerous master students. He was among the initiators of the archaeological study program at NTNU, which started in 1994. The degree program is still characterized by a profile which integrates theoretical studies and practical skills.

Emphasizing the prehistoric periods and rock art studies in particular, he advocated a central Nordic perspective and encouraged students to look beyond national borders. Kalle also generously has invited students to take part in his research, both on home grounds, but also in projects which have brought students as far as Maya cenotes at Yucatán, Mexico.

We believe that Professor Sognnes deserves an attention for the effort he has made not only for NTNU and the archeological environment in the Trondheim-region, but also for his work at a national and international level. Drawing up the lines for this book we aimed for a strong academic profile, where the selection of authors would reflect the range of Kalle's network, and invited both national, Scandinavian and international authors. We sought a variation of writers both in terms of theoretical and methodical orientations, but also with respect to nationality, age and gender. The contributions in this present book is a strong testimony to Kalle's influence and personal engagement in the field of rock art archaeology. We warmly thank the authors of this volume for your enthusiastic response to the plan for the book and for your cooperation and patience during the process of getting from idea to finished product. We likewise heartily thank the referees for your meticulous work – anonymous, but indispensable. We thank Terje Brattli, Martin Callanan, Sophie Bergerbrant, Marek E. Jasinski and Lise Bender Jørgensen for support and advice along the editorial process. We are also thankful for the support and cooperation of our publishers at Archaeopress.

For funding this book we are grateful to the Department of Historical studies, NTNU; the Faculty of Humanities; NTNU, The Royal Norwegian Society of Sciences and Letters and The Norwegian Archaeological Society (Norsk arkeologisk selskap).

Finally we will take this opportunity to congratulate Kalle so much on his 70th birthday.

Happy birthday Professor! Rock on!

The editorial committee

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Introduction

Ragnhild BERGE and Heidrun STEBERGLØKKEN

This book opens with reflections on a Nordic field course in rock art studies by Jarl Nordbladh, describing the early 1970s as period of change in the research of prehistoric images. His article *Knowing by learning by being there – The course which formed a new generation of rock art researchers* is an appropriate angel to this anthology as it draws up backgrounds for the scholarship of a whole generation of researchers, antiquarians and museum curators with special interest in rock art. Focus changed from primarily stylistic studies toward a multifaceted approach. Topics such as symbolism and power relations, ritual landscapes, different aspects regarding societal borders and methods came on the agenda to a greater extent and in new ways. Today studies are conducted on all these areas of research. The contributions in this book are all adequate examples of how this has developed during the last four decades. The fact that the articles may be grouped in several ways illustrates that they address several aspects simultaneously. This shows a greater range and combination of approaches than previously.

However, the content of this book has to be arranged in one way or another and as such for practical reasons the articles have to be placed in categories. They all deal with different aspects of the book's outset; ritual landscapes and borders within rock art research. Based on the contributions' themes and research questions we have identified five categories: power relations and symbolism, theory and methods, hunter-gatherers-agriculturalist, land-sea/water and style.

The first three articles deal with issues concerning power relations and symbolism. In *Contested worlds – A chronotopic essay about mortuary monuments and cultural change in Northern Europe in the second millennium BC* Joakim Goldhahn studies the significance of mortuary monuments and memory praxis in the transition from a society ranked by kin in the Early Bronze Age to Chiefdoms in the Middle Bronze Age in Northern Europe. The analysis is an overall focus on social strategies related to the creation of new monuments and the destruction and reuse of older monuments. *Art and intimacy within the prehistoric landscapes of Norway: how hunter/fisher/gatherers organised their ritual and political worlds through art* by George Nash & May-Tove Smiseth brings into discussion the location of a selected number of rock paintings in Norway. The authors argue that the position of the panels was chosen in order to control the accessibility to these sites. Rockart was part of an order to maintain social and political control and thus reinforcing tribal

hierarchies in hunter/gatherer societies. Mark Sapwell and Liliana Janik put forward a new approach on how to understand the accumulation of images at panels over time using examples from Laxön, Nämforsen in Sweden and Zalavruga in Russia in their article *Making Community: Rock Art and the Creative Acts of Accumulation*. New perspectives on rock art are combined with new methodologies. They argue that for both rock art landscapes there exist consistent patterns in how motifs are placed in relation to each other, and demonstrate selective acts of accumulation where the community used art in the act of including and excluding ideas.

Two of the contributions discuss aspects on theory and methods respectively. Through a critical reassessment of earlier research on the engravings in the cave of Les Trois Frères in Ariège, France, Paul Bahn in *Bow and Errors* warns against dangers of poorly-founded interpretations and of arguments from authority in rock art studies. Using ethnographic and artistic evidence from southern Africa, he examines the basis of Henri Breuil's original interpretation that it depicts a player of a musical bow. In *The method and physical processes behind the making of Hunters' Rock Art in Western Norway: the experimental production of images* Trond Lødøen presents results from the experimental production of rock art, making images on sandstone with a stone chisel. The article takes its point of departure in the rock carvings of the hunter's type, at the site of Vingen, in Bremanger, Western Norway. He combines a background on the research on the production of rock art with special focus on time and production.

The next two articles share a critical approach towards the traditional idea of division between rock art produced by hunter-gatherers and by agriculturalists. In *Boundless rock art – symbols, contexts and times in prehistoric imagery of Fennoscandia* Ulf Bertilsson studies the dichotomous relationships between the traditional blocks of hunter-gatherers' and farmers' rock art, by presenting so far unknown examples of images, symbols and panels that seem to transcend the boundaries of these established concepts. *Subsistence in central Norway elucidated through rock art excavation and documentation*, by Eva Lindgaard presents a case study on rock art sites from Beitstad, central Norway holding rock art from both Stone Age hunter-gatherers and Bronze Age agriculturalists. The division between these traditions is challenged by recent rock art research and the absence of cereal cultivation indicators prior to the pre-Roman Age. By combining analyses of rock art with research on early agriculture,

Lindgaard seeks to investigate continuity and discontinuity within subsistence.

Relations between land and sea/water are treated in three articles where rituals and the liminal are central issues. Melanie Wrigglesworth explores the relations between maritime interactions and cosmology in *Between land and water: the ship in Bronze Age West Norway*. Four rock art sites dated to the Bronze Age in Hardangerfjord, Western Norway are presented and discussed. The ship's importance in everyday life and in cosmology is reflected in motives on rock art panels, which the author sees as sites for rituals influential to the regulation of maritime networks. In *The motif of the boat in Valcamonica Rock Art. Problems of chronology and interpretation* Angelo Fossati discusses the Alpine ship images in relation to a general Alpine chronology. The article places ship images into a detailed chronological framework and further, other water-related images like waterfowls are discussed. He identifies several problematic issues and concludes that there is a need for continuous analysis to ascertain the scope of the ritualistic value of these themes in rock art. *Contrasts of the maritime environment. Possible implications in prehistory* by Christer Westerdahl puts forward the view that maritime communities' two poles of subsistence is reflected in a cognitive dual structure sea/water-land. Various details of the rock carvings, such as the heads of land animals on the ships, may illustrate negotiation between these

two perspectives. Their representations, in the form of great animals etc. are understood as liminal agents passing from one sphere to the other. The main source material is maritime folklore documented during historical times.

The section of articles ends with two contributions representing new approaches to the traditional topic of style. In his article *Rock art and the importance of style. Style complexes and group identity – South-Western United States and Mid-Scandinavia – a comparable approach* David Vogt makes a comparison between the rock art at Sears point Arizona and the rock art in Trøndelag, Norway. He analyses rock art style as a medium for sending coded and multilevelled messages between people against a background of social stress and conflicts. The article *Memory and destruction. Patterns of practices during the latest stylistic phase within the north Swedish rock painting tradition* presents results concerning long term changes in expressing and depicting the elk. Ylva Sjöstrand suggests that the role of red ochre pictures during the late Neolithic functioned as a complex semiotic tool, used for appreciating the balance between tradition and revitalization.

The final section of the book is a bibliography of Professor Kalle Sogannes' papers, articles and other publications compiled by Eva Lindgaard.