

**PUBLIC IMAGES,
PRIVATE READINGS:
MULTI-PERSPECTIVE
APPROACHES TO THE
POST-PALAEOLITHIC
ROCK ART**

PROCEEDINGS OF THE XVII UISPP WORLD
CONGRESS (1–7 SEPTEMBER 2014, BURGOS, SPAIN)

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Foreword to the XVII UISPP Congress Proceedings Series Edition

Luiz OOSTERBEEK
Secretary-General

UISPP has a long history, starting with the old International Association of Anthropology and Archaeology, back in 1865, until the foundation of UISPP itself in Bern, in 1931, and its growing relevance after WWII, from the 1950's. We also became members of the International Council of Philosophy and Human Sciences, associate of UNESCO, in 1955.

In its XIVth world congress in 2001, in Liège, UISPP started a reorganization process that was deepened in the congresses of Lisbon (2006) and Florianópolis (2011), leading to its current structure, solidly anchored in more than twenty-five international scientific commissions, each coordinating a major cluster of research within six major chapters: Historiography, methods and theories; Culture, economy and environments; Archaeology of specific environments; Art and culture; Technology and economy; Archaeology and societies.

The XVIIth world congress of 2014, in Burgos, with the strong support of Fundación Atapuerca and other institutions, involved over 1700 papers from almost 60 countries of all continents. The proceedings, edited in this series but also as special issues of specialized scientific journals, will remain as the most important outcome of the congress.

Research faces growing threats all over the planet, due to lack of funding, repressive behavior and other constraints. UISPP moves ahead in this context with a strictly scientific programme, focused on the origins and evolution of humans, without conceding any room to short term agendas that are not root in the interest of knowledge.

In the long run, which is the terrain of knowledge and science, not much will remain from the contextual political constraints, as severe or dramatic as they may be, but the new advances into understanding the human past and its cultural diversity will last, this being a relevant contribution for contemporary and future societies.

This is what UISPP is for, and this is also why we are currently engaged in contributing for the relaunching of Human Sciences in their relations with social and natural sciences, namely collaborating with the International Year of Global Understanding, in 2016, and with the World Conference of the Humanities, in 2017.

The next two congresses of UISPP, in Melbourne (2017) and in Geneva (2020), will confirm this route.

Introduction

Ramón FÁBREGAS VALCARCE, Carlos RODRÍGUEZ-RELLÁN

A significant number of Holocene societies throughout the world have resorted at one time or another to the making of paints or carvings on different places (tombs, rock-shelters or caves, open-air outcrops). The aim of the session “A11e. Public images, private readings: multi-perspective approaches to the post-Palaeolithic rock art”, which was held within the XVII World UISPP Congress (Burgos, September 1-7 2014), was to put together the experiences of specialists from different areas of the Iberian Peninsula and the World. The approaches ranged from the archaeological definition of the artistic phenomena and their socioeconomic background to those concerning themselves with the symbolic and ritual nature of those practices, including the definition of the audience to which the graphic manifestations were addressed and the potential role of the latter in the making up of social identities and the enforcement of territorial claims. More empirical issues, such as new recording methodologies and data management or even dating were also considered during this session.

The papers presented at the session might be grouped in three sections: those dealing with the objectification/quantification of the graphic record and here would fit that by A. Vázquez *et alii*, aiming at the elaboration of a first general inventory of the Galician prehistoric art (North-western Spain), charting the variability of its manifestations.

A second group of papers has to do with the actual insertion of the prehistoric art in the wider landscape: Rodríguez-Rellán & Fábregas deal with the question of the alleged association of Galician petroglyphs to the natural routes and certain resource-rich areas by mobilizing techniques such as GIS applications.

The last section has to do with several case studies, where biographic, continuity and symbolic aspects may be ascertained. In Bueno *et alii*, the authors deal with the possible existence of megalithic stelae prior to the raising of megalithic chambers that quite often reused some of the former. One of the most talked-upon themes in the Iberian art belonging to the Neolithic and Copper Age, that of masks and eye motifs and their presence in N Portugal is addressed in Sanches's paper. Also dealing with the prehistoric art of N Portugal is Figueiredo *et alii*'s presentation, this time centering on the Sabor valley whose CRM archaeology has yielded a vast number of art manifestations, otherwise ranging from the Upper Palaeolithic to the Iron Age. Finally, Muñiz-López *et alii* report on their survey carried out in an all too-forgotten area, Western Sahara, that has produced a large number of new painted shelters, adding significantly to the catalogue of graphisms already known there.