

25th Valcamonica Symposium

Capo di Ponte, 20-26 September, 2013

Final Session

CONCLUSIONS, DELIBERATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

(Thursday 26th September, 2013)

The six day long XXV Valcamonica Symposium, which took place at Capo di Ponte, Valcamonica, Italy, between Friday the 20th September and Thursday 26th September, 2013 was entitled "*Art as a Source of History.*" A total of 105 people from different disciplines and 38 different countries registered to attend the symposium, which comprised a total of seven sessions and one roundtable discussion based on texts previously presented and published in a booklet form. An average of 60-80 people attended each session.

Sessions addressed the following themes:

- 1.) Decoding religion, myths, and beliefs through rock art;
- 2.) Art as world heritage;
- 3.) Regional identities and common themes in rock art;
- 4.) Making history of prehistory;
- 5.) Psychic stories revealed by the arts;
- 6.) Decoding rock art: a worldwide survey on methods and theories;
- 7.) Ancient graffiti and modern graffiti.

The Round Table held on September 21st examined the question of "What Caused the Creation of Art".

The final session held on Thursday, September 26th is unanimously expressing thanks to the organizing team, to the supporting institutions and to the active participants.

An appeal is addressed to the IUPPS/UISPP (International Union of Prehistoric and Proto-historic Sciences), to stimulate and develop coordinated research programs for the advancement of research in the field of prehistoric and proto-historic intellectual and spiritual expressions, for international funding, which will involve joint projects of at least three institutions, each from a different country. The research goals have to conform to the aims of the respective institutions.

An on-line newsletter to be published every two months by the UISPP-CISENP Scientific Committee will communicate the goals and content of projects. A major aim will be the development of cooperation in research projects and the promotion of electronic publications.

The next UISPP conference is scheduled in Burgos, Spain, for September of 2014. Colleagues are invited to propose papers for the session on “Intellectual and Spiritual Expressions of Non-literate People” by sending title and short summary (10 lines) to the President of CISENP, Prof. Emmanuel Anati, <cispe.research@gmail.com>.

Lal Malla from India suggested replacing the mention of “illiterate” with “non-literate” as it has been applied in this Symposium. He also proposed the compilation of a manual of rock art studies. It was suggested that Anati’s book “World Rock Art” (Oxford, 2010) should be made available on internet. Other basic papers and books should be made available the same way. Free access of books on internet should not conflict with copyright agreements and regulations.

Debate developed on research topics concerning rock art. Emmanuel Anati suggested three sectors requiring specific professional knowledge:

- 1 - Management, conservation, promotion, information and public enjoyment of rock art;
- 2 - Methods of recording and data storing (including explorations, surveys, mapping, tracing and photography).

3 - Decoding and understanding rock art.

Anati emphasized the need for more informed conservation and management, recording, and interpretation. Johannes Loubser from the United States and Fernando Coimbra from Portugal emphasized the need for archaeologists to be included in the conservation and management of rock art and so be able to provide essential orientation to conservation technicians.

Anati mentioned that conservation procedures must not be used as excuse to stop or delay research. He also recommended that rock art sites be open to the public as far as possible to favor their cultural and educational function and for the promotion of research.

George Nash from the United Kingdom called for the updating of a world heritage list/directory for global circulation. Anati suggested that Ariela Fradkin-Anati (Editor of the previous edition) and George Nash update the existing "Who's Who" schedule of rock art scholars.

Fernando Coimbra proposed the creation of an International School of Rock Art, with theoretical and practical sessions, involving at least three different countries. Anati considered the idea as positive, practical and feasible. The term "school" should be used in a generic way. It could be called "Educational Project" and may use, continue, unify and coordinate existing local educational projects. Colleagues could probably involve their institutions in countries such as India, China, Italy and Portugal, to conduct seminars or two-week long classes to train people including also participants from other countries.

Fernando Coimbra recommended that seminars should be given to both archaeologists and non-archaeologists concerning the conservation and management of rock art.

A.K. Prasad from India called for ways to create a greater awareness and appreciation of rock art among the public. Anati added that rock art scholars should aim at writing broadly cultural articles to attract wider public attention. George Nash suggested that reporting rock art news on Facebook will be an effective way to promote awareness among the public. Primadi Tabrani from Indonesia pointed at the need to create awareness at the local

level too. Arsen Fardzhev from Russia proposed ways to link rock art animal imagery with visit to nearby parks of actual live animals. Erwin Neumayer from Austria mentioned the problem of disseminating information pertaining to conservation and management to the general population in India with the goal of avoiding further damages.

The topic of the 26th Valcamonica Symposium was the last issue on the agenda.

Lisbeth Bredholt from Denmark suggested that the next Symposium be shortened by one day. Anati suggested a structure consisting of three days of general sessions, with additional days of more specific sessions. Primadi Tabrani requested that Italian presentations are accompanied by English translations.

In the course of the Symposium the following titles were proposed for the forthcoming 26th Valcamonica Symposium to be held in 2015:

- Multi-disciplinary approaches to prehistoric and tribal art;
- Prehistoric art and its context;
- The relationship between prehistoric art and material culture;
- Prehistoric people and cultures that have produced rock art;
- Differences in art between non-literate and literate cultures;
- Prehistoric art as memory for the future;
- Rock art research: past, present, and future;
- Rock art conservation for future generations;
- Defining dating and motivations of rock art.

Additional titles were proposed in the course of the session:

- Palaeo-art (proposed by Arsen Faradzhev);
- Contemporary art (proposed by Andrzej Rozwadowski);
- Experiencing art (proposed by Lisbeth Bredholt);
- The production and re-adaptation of rock art in later periods (proposed by Bobrowski Przemyslaw);
- Rock art as performance (proposed by George Nash);

- Relationship between zoomorphic and anthropomorphic imagery (proposed by Umberto Sasoni);
- Rock art between archaeology and spirituality (proposed by Fernando Coimbra);
- Art as experience and experiencing art (proposed by Lisbeth Bredholt);
- Meaningful experiences and experiencing rock art (proposed by Andrzej Rozwadowski).

After debate it was decided that several of the proposed titles could be themes for specific sessions. Considering their variety and range, the forthcoming Symposium should have a broad title. The title of *“Prehistoric and tribal art: spiritual and intellectual aspects”* was unanimously accepted. Participants were invited to submit titles and abstracts of their proposed papers for the forthcoming Symposium. Colleagues intended to organize and coordinate specific sessions should present their proposal as soon as possible.

Items for action:

- Ariela Fradkin-Anati and George Nash: update the existing “Who is Who in Rock Art” directory and prepare a new edition for publication; possible diffusion of electronic edition.
- UISPP: approach potential funding sources for multi-national cooperation projects in rock art studies;
- Various members: verify feasibility of “Educational Project”: seminars and courses in conservation and management of rock art.
- UISPP-CISNEP: Develop and promote bi-monthly Newsletter;
- UISPP-CISNEP: Verify and promote diffusion of educational publications by internet.
- CCSP: Organize the 26th Symposium in 2015.

Edited by:

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