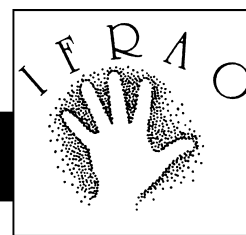


IFRAO Report No. 53



Minutes of the 2014 IFRAO Business Meeting Guiyang, China, 18 July 2014

Organisations represented: American Rock Art Research Association (ARARA), represented by Mavis Greer (U.S.A.); Association pour le Rayonnement de l'Art Pariétal Européen (ARAPE), represented by Jean Clottes (France); Australian Rock Art Research Association, Inc. (AURA), represented by Robert G. Bednarik (Australia); Cave Art Research Association (CARA), represented by Robert G. Bednarik (Australia); Centro Studi e Museo d'Arte Preistorica (CeSMAP), represented by proxy by Robert G. Bednarik; Rock Art Research Association of China (RARAC), represented by Zhang Yasha (China); Rock Art Society of India (RASI), represented by Giriraj Kumar; Société Préhistorique Ariège-Pyrénées (SPAP), represented by Jean Clottes (France). The meeting is also attended by two observers, Anneliese Peschlow and Tang Huisheng, to enable them to present specific requests.

The meeting was held in the Pullman Hotel in Guiyang City, Guizhou Province, China, on 18 July 2014, and it commenced at 2.00 p.m. It was chaired by Mavis Greer, the Immediate-Past President of IFRAO. The minutes were recorded by the Convener of IFRAO.

1. *Apologies and declaration of proxies.* There were no apologies, and the proxy by CeSMAP was declared.
2. *Confirmation of previous minutes.* The minutes of the previous IFRAO Business Meeting (Albuquerque, U.S.A., 31 May 2013) have been published in *Rock Art Research* 31(1): 127–128. RASI moved to accept them, seconded by ARAPE, and they were accepted unanimously.
3. *Matters arising from these minutes.* No matters arising from the previous meeting were raised or discussed.
4. *Report of the IFRAO President.* The IFRAO President (Mavis Greer) proposed that IFRAO's on-line presence would be enhanced by establishing a Facebook page, and she proposes to effect and maintain this initiative. She was encouraged to do so, especially for the purpose of securing greater public support for rock art preservation campaigns.
5. *Report of the IFRAO-UNESCO Liaison Officer.* No report was tabled.
 - 5.1. The CeSMAP Proposal for an action by UNESCO and ICOM to put every IFRAO Member in permanent connection with the UNESCO and ICOM publication

centres was discussed, but no specific action by IFRAO was recommended, primarily because IFRAO preserves full autonomy of its member organisations.

6. *Report by the IFRAO Convener.*

6.1. The issue of global rock art protection was raised, citing issues in Chile, Peru, France, U.S.A., Turkey, Australia etc. Members were encouraged to further collaborate in such matters.

6.2. The developments in prioritising World Heritage listing criteria, pursued by Past President Jean Clottes and the Convener since 2006, were discussed. The Past President advised that the standards required by UNESCO are now higher than in the past, and that submissions to the List need to be extremely well presented.

7. Proposal by AURA to nominate the Fourth AURA Congress in Melbourne, Australia, as that year's IFRAO Congress. In view of the concerns expressed by some IFRAO members about the frequency of IFRAO congresses, it was proposed that there be no event in 2016. The AURA proposal was supported by RASI and seconded by ARAPE, and accepted unanimously.

8. *Reports of IFRAO Representatives.*

8.1. ARARA has held its annual meeting in Wyoming, and much of its recent effort has been focused on work with the ARARA Archive, which has been affected by flooding of the building in which it was housed. ARARA also continues to publish its newsletter, *La Pintura*.

8.2. ARAPE's newsletter *INORA* is now in its 24th year and the organisation manages cave art research, e.g. by channelling the funding of the Chauvet Cave project.

8.3. RASI continues to operate the EIP Project together with AURA; will conduct a rock art symposium in Pondicherry in December 2014; and continues to produce its journal *Purakala*.

8.4. RARAC has been preoccupied with the preparations for the Guiyang rock art congress, but its publishing program has also progressed well in 2013/14, with the publication of two books, and the translation of foreign books is being undertaken.

8.5. AURA's members are conducting field work in all continents and the preparation of the 32nd volume of its journal *RAR* is in progress.

9. *Further matters raised by delegates.* CeSMAP suggested that the publications exchange between the IFRAO

Members should become systematic, automatic and permanent for the progress of the related IFRAO libraries. The meeting proposed that a detailed representation is required from CeSMAP which takes into consideration the preservation of the autonomy of individual member organisations.

10. *General matters.*

10.1. Observer Anneliese Peschlow presented the imminent threat to the rock paintings of the Latmos Mountains in western Turkey, posed by large-scale quarrying of feldspar. The rock art is likely to be destroyed within one or two years, and to have the issue raised in parliament requires a petition with 30 000 signatures. IFRAO was asked to help with the campaign and Dr Peschlow will provide details, including addresses of the relevant people, to the Convener, who is to request the IFRAO members to take specific action. The proposal was supported by AURA, seconded by ARARA, and carried.

10.2. Observer Tang Huisheng announced that he will endeavour to establish an international rock art dating institute in a Chinese university, to include a global data bank of direct dating work, a library and a laboratory. The facility will conduct its own research as well. Professor Tang asked for IFRAO's collaboration with this initiative, and was assured that it will be given.

11. Zhang Yasha, chairperson of the Guiyang IFRAO Congress, was unanimously elected as the IFRAO President for the new term, beginning immediately.

12. *Adjournment.* The new President adjourned the meeting at 3.20 p.m.

The 2014 IFRAO Congress in China

The 2014 IFRAO Congress conducted by the Rock Art Research Association of China (RARAC) was a demonstration of Chinese ingenuity and resolve, considering its successful performance in spite of all the adversities it had to contend with. Government interference began soon after the event was announced: government agencies dictated two changes of timing and two changes of venue in the lead-up to the event, and threatened to limit the number of admitted foreign participants. One government organisation virtually wrested control of the event from RARAC. Then a natural disaster struck Guiyang City on the day the congress began, in the form of widespread flooding. The basement of the venue, the Pullman Hotel, was completely flooded, shutting down not only electricity and water supply, but also the emergency generator and the food supply. This occurred a few minutes after the opening ceremony, when the lights suddenly went out. At that point, the event seemed to have ended in disaster, and the government agency that had tried so hard to usurp it was only too willing to hand control

back to RARAC.

What happened next was a superhuman effort by the Pullman to salvage the event, its operations now paralysed: no lifts in a 5-star hotel of 30 storeys, no water, no electricity or air conditioning, no food, in the midst of a city-wide colossal traffic jam. The Pullman worked day and night to install huge temporary cabling for restoring power to the congress lecture halls and to restore limited lift mobility, and on the following day, 17 July 2014, the Congress continued unimpeded as if nothing had happened. It was conducted without the slightest glitch, meals were brought in from outside, and the entire event ran like clockwork. It is a tribute to Chinese determination and resourcefulness, and we thank RARAC, especially Professor Zhang Yasha, and the Pullman for accomplishing the seemingly impossible, against overwhelming odds.

The following two days of presentations in three lecture theatres included ten symposia, of which five addressed Chinese rock art, and the remainder dealt with technology, dating, conservation and management, and North and South American rock art. The proceedings also included the IFRAO Business Meeting on 18 July, the minutes of which are presented above. The Congress was attended by over 200 participants, a good result in view of the great adversities the organisers had to contend with.

The event was preceded by a separate project that was connected to it by the participation of many of the congress delegates. For the three weeks before the event, a large contingent of rock art researchers under the leadership of Professor Tang Huisheng conducted an expedition to many dozens of petroglyph sites and rock inscriptions across three Provinces of China (see front cover). This project involved up to thirty participants and its purpose was to secure microerosion data from as many sites and motifs as possible, as well as to obtain calibration curves for these regions. This project led to Professor Tang's decision to establish an international rock art dating centre at Hebei University, which he announced during the IFRAO Congress.

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The First International Rock Art and Ethnography Conference

The Asociación de Estudios del Arte Rupestre de Cochabamba (AEARC; Association for the Study of Rock Art of Cochabamba) and the Educational and Cultural Centre Simón I. Patiño conducted the First International Rock Art and Ethnography Conference from 23 to 26 September 2014 in Cochabamba, Bolivia. The central theme of the conference was the salvage of surviving evidence of traditional uses of rock art sites; of how living indigenous societies conceptualise rock

art, be it as sacred or as imbued with evil powers; and to what extent rituals are still held at rock art sites, especially in parts of South America. As there are very few countries where evidence of contemporary use of rock art by traditional people has been reported, one of the four sessions was dedicated to ethnographic knowledge about Australian rock art. However, there is also limited evidence from Bolivia and Brazil of current practices involving rock art, although as yet its recent production has not been demonstrated. It has, however, been shown to occur in Pakistan and possibly in India.

The other three sessions of the conference addressed the following topics: 'Rock art sites as sacral spaces'; 'Ceremonial use of rock art sites, past and present'; and 'Traditional interpretations of rock art sites'. Two of these were chaired by indigenous scholars, Gori Tumi Echevarría (Peru) and David Camacho (Bolivia). The conference chair and principal organiser of the event was Professor Roy Querejazu Lewis. The conference attracted about one hundred participants and was held in a pleasant, relaxed atmosphere. There was ample opportunity for constructive debate.

The conference was followed by three fieldtrips, the first of which, on 27 September, provided an unexpected surprise when a visit of the Kalatrancani petroglyph complex yielded clear evidence that at least some of the cupules at one of the twenty-eight sites includes cupules that were made or retouched only in the last fifty years (Fig. 1). This adds considerable weight to other indications that in parts of Bolivia, traditional use of rock art sites has continued to the present (Querejazu Lewis 1994). On the following day, many of the conference delegates visited several petroglyph sites at the Santivañez rock art complex that has been studied in recent years. Finally, a small group of conference participants conducted a four-day field trip to Mizque, where they managed to secure important new discoveries.

The Cochabamba conference formulated the following recommendations:

1. To the national governments, to protect and promote rock art research based on the fact that it is part of the heritage of humanity.
2. To make rock art studies an instrument of support for strengthening processes of cultural self-determination.
3. To encourage the diffusion of rock art research results in villages where rock art sites are located.
4. To underline the necessity of consultation within different levels of society regarding planning of hydroelectric dams, roads and extractive

- activities in order to prevent the destruction of natural heritage (environment and biodiversity).
5. To encourage the improvement of existing legal norms and procedures regarding the protection of cultural heritage.
6. To respect the norms of the Convention 169 of ILO on indigenous self-determination and respect for their cultural heritage.
7. To respect the authentic indigenous traditions (sacred and secular) related to rock art, as well as tangible and intangible heritage.
8. To promote and establish a disciplinary collaboration within South American countries, especially in the Andes mountain chain and the Amazon basin, where ethnography has been ignored in rock art research.
9. To congratulate the organisers of the conference for the success of the event.
10. To publish the proceedings of the conference.

In all, the First International Rock Art and Ethnography Conference was a resounding success, both through its excellent academic sessions and its very productive fieldtrips. It follows the similar success of the First International Cupule Conference of 2007 (Bednarik 2007), also held in Cochabamba and also chaired by Professor Querejazu Lewis. Together the two events demonstrate the great value that smaller, topic-orientated international conferences in rock art can offer to the discipline of rock art research (Querejazu Lewis and Bednarik 2010).

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Figure 1. The sacred site of Mama Rumi, Kalatrancani petroglyph complex, near Cochabamba, central Bolivia.