

Essay on description

[Environment](#), [Animals](#)



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Question 1: Anthropology

Introduction

The word “ Paleolithic” means the “ old stone age.” The late upper Paleolithic period began about 40, 000 years ago, lasting through the Pleistocene ice age, which is believed to have ended around 8, 000 B. C. Upper Paleolithic art was first discovered in Aurignac (Dordogne, France). Expert archeologist have documented that the geography of upper Paleolithic art spans through Eurasia and Siberia. Some of the notable characteristics of Paleolithic art include engraved limestone blocks, parietal art, human and animal figurines. For engraved blocks, characteristics include deep incisions, stiff outlines, sexual symbols represented realistically, animal heads, and dorsal quarters. This essay provides a descriptive account of the sketch of an image taken in a poorly-lit cave with the intention of proving its Upper Paleolithic provenance.

The photographed image has clearly undergone the ravages of time and weather elements as indicated by its lack of clarity. However, a close examination of the image reveals what appear to be animal figurines. Predominantly, only the front and hind quarters of the animal figurines are

shown in the image. The art is primitive and appears to have been made using a sharp tool, which was used to make incisions on the surface or panel. The drawings could also have been painted using primitive paint such as ochre because they are made purely of light and dark areas. There are seven distinct animal figurines in the image and three or four animal species (The animal figurines are numbered in a clockwise direction on the sketch). The first animal appears to be a bison or cow based on the shape of the horns that curve inward and upwards. Along the neck, there appears to be a hump-like protrusion which is common in some cows or bison. The second, third and fourth figurines appear to be drawings of horses based on the shape of the heads and jaws. Along the necks, there are up-standing tufts of hair that appear to be manes. The fourth figurine appears to be a goat or deer based on the standing position and the shape of the horns. The horns curve sharply backwards. The sixth animal figurine in the image could be a representation of a bison or a lion. The front quarters of an animal not clearly shown but the thick and hairy mid-section, muscular hind-legs, and short tail are consistent with the looks of a bison or lion. The seventh figurine appears to be a horse, based on its smooth hind quarters, long legs, and mane.

Figure 1: Sketch of the image

The figurines are made up of light areas and silhouettes. This is done to indicate sunken or protruding areas, giving a three-dimensional feel in the two-dimensional art. The image indicates a keen understanding of animal forms and closeness with animals for subsistence or livelihood.

Interpretation

The figurines may be interpreted to determine the provenance of the image. Since the provenience of the image is unknown, it becomes difficult to ascertain its provenance. However, the types of animals in the image may be used to provide a rough idea on the image's period and region of origin. In addition, the technique used to achieve the figurines may be analyzed to determine when and where it was practiced in history. During the Upper Paleolithic period, people in Eurasia (what is now Europe and Asia) made cave art representing the main animals that were hunted during that period. Most of the common themes in cave paintings include large hunted wild animals such as horses, bison and deer. However, other paintings also included dangerous wild Animals such as bears, felines and small carnivores. The image described in this paper is consistent with this information and may indicate a relationship with the Upper Paleolithic age. Secondly, the primitive nature of the art that makes up the image is also consistent with the Upper Paleolithic age. Thirdly, the lack of detail in the image may be attributed to its age as well as the nature of art. Some of the figurines indicate that the animals they represent were not drawn to conclusion. Moreover, some of the sections of the images may have become blurred or erased over time.

Conclusion

The image described in this paper comprises of what appears to be animal figurines. These animals are all herbivores and likely to have been hunted by the people who made this cave art. The animals in the image are horses, bison and a goat. This has been determined by examining their physical

features such as manes, horns, necks, legs, tails and muscles. For example, the first animal figurine in figure one could be a cow or bison based on the muscularity of its front legs; the hump-like protrusion on its back and the upwardly-curved horns. The painting/ carving is a form of primitive art, and the type of art may be used to give a rough estimate of the period during which it was made. Overall, the image is not clear enough for conclusive facts to be drawn from it. However, it represents a good subject for interpretation.