

Despite a common set of themes, there is little in the way of a common theoretical understanding. Given the explicit focus on learning, one might expect an equally explicit shared theory of the cognitive basis of learning. Without such a shared understanding it will be difficult to make sense of the huge variety of research results. Yet this key piece to the puzzle is nowhere to be found. Instead, individuals and teams operate with their own explicit, or more commonly implicit, understanding of learning.

Two points deserve commendation. First, the volume became available within four months of the actual conference, a remarkably fast turnaround for a print volume. Second, all of the contributions are in English, even though the vast majority of participants are Japanese. Few Japanese academics are comfortable enough in English to write effective prose, and of course fewer Anglo/American scholars can even read Japanese. But to their credit all of the authors produced at least readable texts. This nod to international communication means that readers from all over the world have access to the preliminary findings of a truly massive research undertaking concerning the fate of Neanderthals.

Thomas Wynn

University of Colorado, Colorado Springs

La Cueva de El Pindal, 1911–2011: Estudio de su Arte Rupestre Cien Años después de *Les Cavernes de la Région Cantabrique*. María González-Pumariega Solís. Oviedo: Ménsula Ediciones, 2011, 212 pp. Price unknown, paper.

El Arte Paleolítico de Tito Bustillo: Cazadores y Artistas en la Cueva del Pozu’l Ramu. Miguel Polledo González. Oviedo: Ménsula Ediciones, 2011, 141 pp. Price unknown, paper.

A new generation of specialists in Upper Paleolithic cave art is rising and a new way of “seeing” the art is dawning. And a new role for cave guides—as scholars of the phenomenon—is replacing the old model, namely “guide discovers figures; shows them to academic expert; expert publishes.” Traditionally guides would not be university-trained individuals, and a social gulf could exist between them and the experts, who, as academic researchers, represented intellectual authority and held high status. Now, fortunately, the anonymity of the people who sometimes spend years, decades, even lifetimes in intimate observation of every square meter of the floor, ceiling, and walls of “their” caves is receding, and their discoveries and opinions are being published in their own words. It is the guides’ turn to speak for themselves and, in fact, to become some of the new “academic experts.” Indeed, archaeology in general has been casting off its elitism ever since World War II, admittedly at varying speeds for different specialties, with cave art perhaps one of the areas where the gap between actual discoverers and the professorial interpreters has been greatest and

lingered longest. The two books briefly reviewed here constitute significant chunks in the old hierarchical edifice of cave art scholarship.

This reviewer is acquainted with both Pumariega and Polledo, having visited caves in Asturias and shared academic settings with them. Both for many years have been earning their livings as guides and both have been archaeology graduate students at the Universidad de Oviedo. Their enthusiasm (nay, passion) for and knowledge of El Pindal and Tito Bustillo, respectively, are extraordinary, and their books bridge the gap between tomes written for the relatively small guild of academic experts and the small booklets normally written for cave tourists. Both caves are on the present-day shore of eastern Asturias, though when decorated they would have been a few kilometers from the Last Glacial littoral.

María Pumariega's book on the dramatically located, but understudied cave of El Pindal (among the first cave art sites to be discovered in Asturias by H. Alcalde del Río and L. Sierra, from adjacent Cantabria, in 1908) is derived from her doctoral work and follows fairly traditional lines but is accessible to both scholars and members of the interested public. Miguel Polledo's is more specifically written with the "high-end" visitor in mind and also explicitly deals with issues of cave art preservation—most appropriate for the case of Tito Bustillo (a.k.a. El Ramu), one of the greatest cave art discoveries of the modern era of research in northern Spain (discovery in 1968) but also one whose management has been among the most polemic (a tunnel quickly blasted to give access for massive tourism). The Pindal book provides the necessary geographic, geological, and historical background but concentrates on a very detailed description of the images (paintings and engravings), including comparisons between earlier "readings" and those of the author. The Tito Bustillo book gives much wider contextualization of the site within the Cantabrian region and in particular its Upper Paleolithic prehistory, with a brief synthesis of the rich archaeology of eastern Asturias and a well-informed overview of the adaptations of Ice Age foragers along the southern shore of the Bay of Biscay. Far more complex a cave than the straight, simple gallery of El Pindal, Tito Bustillo is part of a vast karstic system with Magdalenian sites at several of its entrances, including La Lloseta (a.k.a. Cueva del Río) and La Cuevaona. Much of it is not visited by tourists, and the numbers of art images are vastly greater than those of El Pindal with its 30 zoomorphs and several "signs"—both complex and simple. In short, Tito Bustillo is in the category of the "great" Cantabrian cave art sanctuaries (e.g., Altamira, El Castillo, La Pasiega), whereas El Pindal is a major, but far less complicated, perhaps straightforward site, though not lacking in possible time depth. Of the latter kind of cave art sanctuary there are many in the region and Pumariega's book does a superb job of bringing us up-to-date on the state of our knowledge of this rather marginalized site. A complete photographic and technical inventory of the images constitutes the second half of the Pindal book.

El Pindal is famous for its red drawing of a trunkless mammoth with a blotch in its interior that Breuil had interpreted as a heart and for an engraving of a large fish that seems to be a combination of a salmon and a tuna (Pumariega shows that the tuna features were added to the original salmon, albeit in antiquity). Indeed there is a second mammoth, and the presence of this species, which probably went extinct before the Late Glacial in Iberia, is among the indicators that at least some of the art in El Pindal is relatively old (i.e., pre-Magdalenian). Despite a degree of stylistic homogeneity, this cave may have been decorated at various times, although the (apparent) lack of a substantial archaeological site and of any radiometric dates leaves many doubts as to the chronology of the art. (Small-scale archaeological testing by Francisco Jordá and gate construction in the 1950s yielded only one diagnostic artifact: a painted pebble of probable Azilian age.) Pumariega's book makes it clear that further detailed research (perhaps including more archaeological testing) is needed at El Pindal.

Polledo does a thorough job of describing the history of discovery and research at Tito Bustillo (beginning with the excavations of M. A. García Guinea and then of J. A. Moure, in which this reviewer participated in 1974), bringing the reader up-to-date with the recent (and ongoing) research by Rodrigo de Balbín and colleagues. The current state of knowledge on this very complex cave is that it was occupied (and possibly decorated) by people as early as the Aurignacian, as supported by a radiocarbon date (37 cal kya) from an archaeological layer and—after Polledo's book was completed—uranium series dates on speleothems of 25–29 kya above and 35–38 kya below a red painting in the same chamber (see A. Pike et al., *Nature* 336:1409–13, 2012). The vast bulk of the rupestral art is late Lower, Middle, and early Upper Magdalenian, in consonance with the archaeology, which is rich in portable art. Human occupation (and burial) ended in the early Mesolithic, with an interment radiocarbon dated to about 9 kya. The Tito Bustillo book is copiously illustrated and thoroughly set in both the geographic and archaeological contexts of the Río Sella valley and locally of the Ardines coastal hill range at the present mouth of that valley. Unusual for a book of its nature, it is very well referenced and should satisfy the interests of people more curious and scholarly than the “normal” tourists. And to his credit, Polledo does not shy away from addressing conservation questions in this sometimes badly treated cave—too spectacular for its own good, like Lascaux and Altamira, whose lessons we never seem to learn completely.

Together with the recent monographic works on the art of Covalanas, La Haza, and Venta Laperra in eastern Cantabria/western Vizcaya by cave guide Joaquín (“Pencho”) Eguizabal with Marcos Garcia, these books mark milestones in the transformation of guides into legitimate experts in the subjects they not only know intimately, but also have studied professionally.

Lawrence Guy Straus,
University of New Mexico