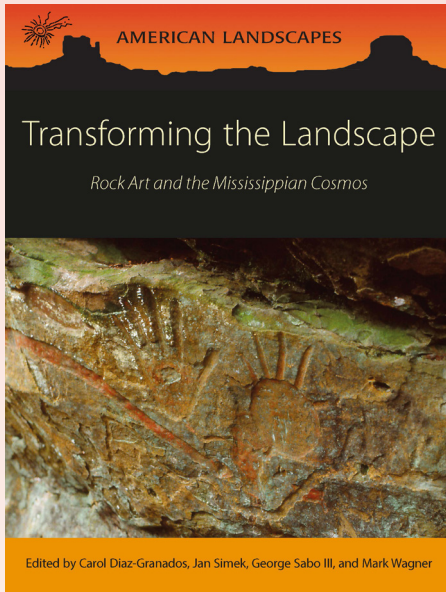




AMERICAN LANDSCAPES



Transforming the Landscape: Rock Art and the Mississippian Cosmos

Edited by Carol Diaz-Granados, Jan Simek, George Sabo, and Mark Wagner

- This volume takes a wide-ranging and holistic approach to the study of pictographs and petroglyphs which emphasizes the cultural over the physical landscape and the connections between imagery and material culture.
- Explores new avenues for determining meaning in rock art through a combination of in situ, ethnographic and oral evidence for ritual, ideology and, especially, cosmological beliefs among Native American communities in the past and present.
- Fully illustrated, presenting a comprehensive range of motifs and designs with photographs of in situ rock art, many illustrated for the first time in print.

Over the past 25 years, major rock art research has been performed in the North American eastern woodlands – in Alabama, Arkansas, Illinois, Kentucky, Missouri, Tennessee, and parts of Georgia and North Carolina. Because of the enormity of the eastern landscape and the growing number of rock art sites, the editors of *Transforming the Landscape* decided to focus in on the topic of cultural landscapes and cosmology – that is, the graphic reflection of beliefs about the cosmos within rock art imagery and how this art is located across a region since, unlike portable cultural material, rock art provides in situ evidence of ritual activity that links ideology and place. This constitutes a major component of pre-contact petroglyphs and pictographs – and a fascinating one at that. In this beautifully illustrated volume leading rock art specialists cover a wide range of methodologies regarding the placement of rock art on the landscape as well as various approaches to uncovering meaning in the rock art imagery during the Mississippian Period (post AD 900). Authors discuss compelling connections between the imagery and cultural materials, including oral traditions collected by ethnographers from American Indians in the 19th century and more recently, what a cosmogram-based approach can teach us about people, places, and past environments and what it may reveal that more conventional approaches overlook. Geographical variations across the landscape, regional similarities, and derived meaning found in these data are described. The authors also consider the difficult subject of how to develop a more detailed chronology for eastern rock art.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS:

List of Illustration -- Captions, Charts, Tables

Preface

1. Materiality and Cultural Landscapes in Native America: George Sabo and Jan Simek

Missouri: West Mississippi River Valley

2. The Big Five Petroglyph Sites: Their Place on the Landscape and Relation to Their Creators:

James R. Duncan and Carol Diaz-Granados

3. Landscape, Cosmology, and the Old Woman: A Strong Feminine Presence:

James R. Duncan and Carol Diaz-Granados

Arkansas: Ozark Escarpment West of the Mississippi River

4. Petroglyph's, Portals, and People: Along the Eastern Ozark Escarpment, Arkansas:

George Sabo III, Jerry E. Hilliard, Jami J. Lockhart, and Leslie C. Walker

Illinois: East Mississippi River Valley

5. Transformed Spaces: A Landscape Approach to the Rock Art of Illinois:

Mark J. Wagner, Kayeleigh Sharp, and Jonathan Remo

Appalachian Plateau

6. Prehistoric Rock Art, Social Boundaries, and Cultural Landscapes on the Cumberland Plateau of Southeast North America:

Jan F. Simek, Alan Cressler, and B. Bart Henson

Appalachian Mountains

7. Betwixt And Between: The Occurrence of Petroglyph's Between Townhouses of The Living and Townhouses of Spirit Beings in Northern Georgia and Western North Carolina:

Johannes Loubser, Scott Ashcraft, James Wettstaed

References

Index

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