
Rock art in the Chicamocha Canyon, Colombia

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Abstract

This study describes rock art panels located in the Northeastern area of Colombia especially in the Chicamocha Canyon, which is considered the second largest seismic nest in the World. Spanish chroniclers described that area was inhabited by indigenous communities called as *Guanes*. Archaeological research aims to know how this prehispanic society thrived in this particular territory. For instance, the geological formation features a wide range of pictographs which vary in design: human like shapes, animals and plants designs as well as a wide range of colours: ocher, orange, white, black, cream in monochromatic and bichromatic drawings.

Most efforts have been orientated in the description of the rock supports, motifs and weathering, in order to identify criteria of rock art distribution and preservation. So far, fifty-seven panels have been recorded *in situ* following a systematic survey that aims to elaborate a baseline from which further studies can be developed to answer some of the following inquiries. First, relationships between the type of motifs and its location over the rock. Second, distribution of rock carving within the landscape particularly water resources. Third, list of main factors of weathering for finding measures of preservation. Fourth, identification of painting techniques and pigments used. Fifth, classification of rock supports where drawings are located, to mention some of them.

Finally, the study wants to contribute with the understanding of rock art in Colombia and the American region by engaging archaeologists and other kind of in the protection and promotion of this cultural heritage.

Keywords: Rock art, Chicamocha Canyon, Guanes, Colombia

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