

Arte Prehistórico

Idioma: EN

EXAM STATEMENT:

Theoretical part: 1st question: Paleolithic cave art in the Cantabrian region. 2nd question: The art of Phoenician colonization. Practical part: Comment on the figures in the plate that will be provided. The exam, in all its parts, is an exercise in development. This means that it is not merely a matter of listing data or creating an outline with keywords. The practical part is a reasoned commentary on a figure; it is not an excuse to present a theme. The latter will be graded negatively.

Question 1: Paleolithic cave art in the Cantabrian region.

Question 2: The art of Phoenician colonization.

Question 3:

A) Comment on the figures in Plate A

B) Comment on the figures in Plate B

Question 1

Paleolithic cave art in the Cantabrian region.

STUDENT RESPONSE:

The Paleolithic cave art of the Cantabrian region, specifically in sites like Altamira and La Pasiega, represents a pivotal stage in the development of Upper Paleolithic art. Characterized by extraordinary naturalistic representations of animals – primarily bison, horses, deer, and aurochs – the style is broadly defined as “Chorro,” reflecting the reddish pigment used to outline the figures. These outlines, applied with a simple, almost childlike technique, create a striking contrast against the dark backgrounds of the caves, enhancing the three-dimensionality of the animals. The depictions are not merely realistic; they exhibit a degree of abstraction and simplification, prioritizing movement and dynamism over precise anatomical detail. The figures are often depicted in profile, with frontal views of the head, suggesting an understanding of animal anatomy and a desire to capture their essence. The spatial arrangement within the caves is significant, with animals clustered together, sometimes overlapping, creating a sense of a dynamic herd or group. The presence of handprints, both single and composite, indicates a deliberate engagement with the space and a possible ritualistic function of the art. The chronological range of the Cantabrian art, spanning from approximately 36,000 to 14,000 years ago, demonstrates a sustained artistic tradition and a gradual evolution in technique and style. The art’s location within a relatively inaccessible mountainous region suggests a specialized knowledge of the landscape and a deliberate choice of site, possibly linked to beliefs or practices associated with the natural world. Finally, the preservation of these paintings, due to the stable microclimate of the caves, provides invaluable insights into the cognitive abilities and symbolic thinking of early humans.

Question 2

The art of Phoenician colonization.

STUDENT RESPONSE:

The Phoenician art of colonization was characterized by a pragmatic adaptation to the cultures they encountered, resulting in a syncretic style rather than a wholly original one. Initially, Phoenician artistic expression mirrored their own, focusing on maritime motifs – ships, seals, and depictions of seafaring life – frequently used as decorative elements on imported goods and temple furnishings. As they established trading posts and colonies across the Mediterranean, this initial style evolved.

In the Levant, Phoenician art developed a distinctive linear style, particularly evident in their cylinder seals and inscriptions. These seals, often carved from stone, featured stylized representations of deities, animals, and scenes of daily life, demonstrating a sophisticated understanding of iconography and a preference for geometric abstraction. This linear aesthetic was then transmitted to their colonies.

However, the Phoenicians were not simply replicators. They actively incorporated local artistic traditions. In Carthage, for example, Punic art blended Phoenician elements with North African influences, resulting in a hybrid style characterized by the use of vibrant colors, particularly red and purple, and the depiction of local flora and fauna. Similarly, in Sardinia, Phoenician art absorbed elements of the native Nuragic culture, evidenced by the incorporation of Nuragic architectural motifs into their own designs.

Furthermore, Phoenician colonization facilitated the exchange of artistic techniques and materials. They introduced purple dye production to regions previously lacking it, and disseminated their mastery of glassmaking. Their artistic output reflected this exchange, incorporating new materials and techniques into their existing repertoire.

Ultimately, Phoenician art of colonization represents a process of cultural negotiation and adaptation, resulting in a diverse and regionally specific artistic expression that reflects the complex interactions between the Phoenicians and the societies they encountered.

Question 3

Comment on the figures in Plate A



Figura 1

STUDENT RESPONSE:

The image depicts a Paleolithic hand stencil, executed on a light-colored limestone surface. The stencil is formed by pressing a hand against the rock, leaving an impression of the palm and fingers. The negative space surrounding the hand creates the illusion of a three-dimensional object. The lines are simple and direct, demonstrating a deliberate and controlled technique. The stencil's placement on the rock suggests a deliberate choice of location, possibly related to the natural contours of the stone. The style is characteristic of Paleolithic stencil art, prioritizing the immediate and direct representation of the hand.

Question 4

Comment on the figures in Plate B

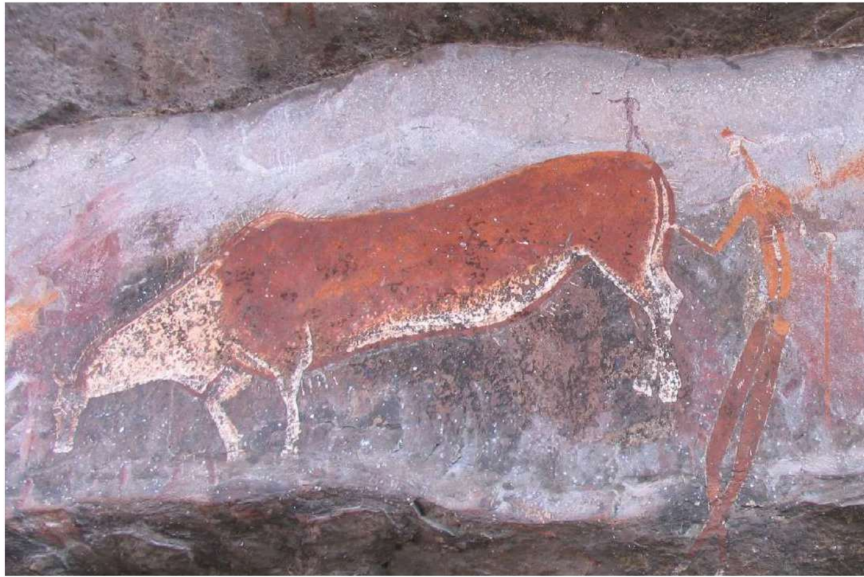


Figura 2

STUDENT RESPONSE:

The dominant figure is a large, schematic bison, rendered in a reddish-brown pigment. Its body is simplified, with a clear delineation of the head, torso, and legs. The bison's form is characterized by a lack of anatomical detail, relying instead on a series of overlapping, geometric shapes to suggest volume and movement. The animal's legs are extended, creating a sense of dynamism, and the head is slightly turned, suggesting a gaze.

To the right of the bison is a smaller, more abstracted human figure. This figure is depicted in a similar style to the bison, with simplified lines and a lack of detailed features. It appears to be walking or running, indicated by the position of its arms and legs. The figure's body is elongated and somewhat flattened, and its head is small and triangular.

The background is a pale grey, providing a neutral backdrop for the figures. The pigment application is relatively crude, with visible brushstrokes and a lack of blending. The composition is straightforward, with the bison centrally positioned and the human figure placed to its right. The overall impression is one of primitive, expressive art, reflecting the Paleolithic period's focus on representing animals and human activity in a stylized manner.