

Abstract

The Orgosolo's Murals in Sardinia. An anthropological study

This investigation has the objective to give a description of the phenomenon "murals" in Sardinia in its different moments of evolution from the late 1970s to today. It seeks to determine the use of these artefacts primarily in the village of Orgosolo - where this phenomenon has emerged - to understand how the practice of mural painting has marked the history and the social life of this community. The anthropological aspect comes first in this work, which has led us to realize the ethnography of an artistic practice.

A strong historical theme underlies this phenomenon from its origins to today. We traced it on several levels. We've traced the main lines of a scholarly discourse rooted in ethnographic investigations which disseminates and builds the myth of Orgosolo as a hot-spot of Sardinia. We compared the model produced by this discourse to elements of recent history. This approach allowed us to distinguish two historical models and to understand the existence of a tension between them. We named the first scholar - "sardiste" and the second internationalist - activist. The tension between these two models is found both in the writings and the images of the frescoes.

The development and dissemination of the murals caused recently, the emergence of a discourse that is spreading the history of the murals as the village history. A manufacturing of its history takes place through the murals themselves and is displayed on the walls of the village.

We then explored the context of emergence and evolution of the phenomenon and the consequences of this operation. It allowed us to highlight the difference in uses of the frescoes and the diversity of internationalities of its actors, who have gradually built this phenomenon. Three moments can be distinguished : a first moment, in which murals are used as means of making contest and then, as means of celebrating this period of protest. A second moment sees the murals become tools for an educational activity designed to make murals' history, the history of the village and a third currently underway, in which the murals becomes the object of an operation of heritage conservation.

The analysis highlights the richness of a case of mural painting quite singular, which is spreading throughout the island and helps seize how these artefacts have become a patrimonial property, due to, on one hand, an adaptation to the tourist market, and on the other an institutional process.

This research is largely exploratory and based on the fact that work on murals in an anthropological perspective are very rare. Rather it leverages on works of ethnographers who worked the notion of exoticism and issues related to tourism from an anthropological perspective (Satta, 2001 and Ciarcia, 2003), on various anthropological works of writing (Fraenkel, 1995, 2001 and 2005), and on a sociology of art working the concept of *artification* (Shapiro 2004, 2007 and Heinich 2008).

Keywords: murals paintings, Sardinia, anthropology of art, anthropology of writing, patrimonialization, ethnography, Orgosolo, tourism.