

Meaning Often Lurks



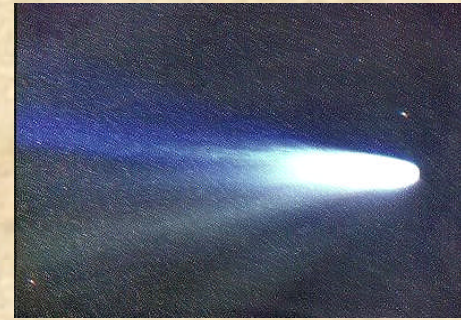
“Thus, if we seriously want to penetrate alien [i.e. Not-Well-Enough-Understood-by-Us] cultures to reveal their internal complexity and coherence ... , we must leave the ethno-centric labels ('geometric/'representational') behind....

“I maintain that behind every ‘decorative’ layout lies the hidden visage of a breathing icon giving life (animation) to the design [emphasis added]

“Perhaps this explains the current emphasis on cultural syntax or grammars rather than the decoding of iconography and symbolism. Shouldn’t we try to escape this mental prison of our own ethno-taxonomy of form...? Meaning often lurks where we expect it least [emphasis added].

Hence we need to pursue the ‘archaeology of signification,’ even in symmetry. Otherwise symmetry analysis becomes mere[ly]... theoretically interesting, but of limited cultural significance....”

[Peter G. Roe, Washburn 2004:98]



3 Mimbres bowls: (top, right) full-bodied comet with 5 tips—its icon is rotated once; (center, right) probable Kreutz sun-grazing comet with spiraling of the rotating comet-head shown down the length of the tail (a pun of a long comet in a small bowl); Venus, as Outlined Cross, in conjunction with comet (as Interlocking Spiral motif, rotated 3 times—possibly of comet event of AD868, though photo is of Comet Halley in conjunction with Venus in AD1910). Long-tailed, long-period comet, center left, is Ikeya-Seki, 1965, Lick Observatory; full-tailed comet photo, top, left, is Comet Halley, 1986.