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**THE CHALLENGES OF
CONCEPTUAL ANTHROPOLOGY**

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EDITORIAL NOTES

INTRODUCTION

THE CHALLENGES OF CONCEPTUAL ANTHROPOLOGY

Discovering and bringing to light, excavating, recording, and dating the material remains of the past are the solid foundations of archeology, a discipline whose task is to identify, study, and protect the traces of the past. Archeology has made accessible an immense documentation of remains on every continent to our knowledge of the past: artifacts, art, settlements, ceremonial and cultic sites, witnesses to human actions that have left material traces. Archeological sites are sources of culture, history, identity with one's own past, and tourist attractions. They are also the main resource available for understanding the causes and motivations that led humans to produce what is testified by archeological finds. Material reality is the source through which one may trace back to the minds of those who produced it. Reconstructing conceptual processes from effect to cause is a challenge of conceptual anthropology, aiming at opening further horizons in the understanding of human nature and behavioral trends among different cultures and millennia from as far back as possible to the present.

The remains brought to light, material culture, living sites and monuments alike, are witnesses to past experiences; they represent ways of life and moments in events that gave rise to the life and death of human adventures. Above all this stands one question: why? What moved man to its actions, beyond the primary instincts of survival and reproduction? Seeking an answer to this question makes a difference to the scale of understanding.

There are various levels of understanding, ranging from understanding the artifact or the structure itself, to its function and history, to reconstructing the events and circumstances that produced it, to the mental processes underlying the actions that generated it. Understanding the why serves to understand human nature. Misunderstandings are the main source of con-

flcts in logical reasoning, as they are in human relations. Every human work is the effect of an action deriving from a will, provoked by the conceptual process that reveals its mental logic. Understanding people of different societies through the effects of their actions generates behavioral perspectives in a search for the conceptual nature of the species, aimed at reconstructing the motivations and mental processes of human beings through their actions on a global level. Every mind is different, yet all respond to common denominators. The artifact thus becomes a means of tracing back to the mind that conceived it. Different contexts – material, social, and conceptual – condition the mental processes of both individuals and societies, revealing constants and variations in conceptual identity and in the nature of human behavior. Establishing the facts is the means for understanding motivations, and motivations define the identity of the being, whether individual or collective.

The traces left by actions reveal their spirit; they are expressions of culture in the process of evolution and adaptation to, and under the diverse conditions and environmental settings of human society. Research advances through the practical application of the discipline, by means of the study of individual cases and works of overviews and synthesis, leading to the definition of trends. The accumulation of specific cases constitutes the corpus of the raw material of research. In the present volume, some meaningful cases are considered. Two themes are causing debate in the Discussion Forum, the historical core behind the myth, and the range of possible meanings of conceptual or religious monuments. The first concerns the possible historical background of the biblical mythic-history of the exodus by Fabio Crosilla, and the second concerns the possible meaning of funerary symbols at Newgrange, a major Neolithic monument in Ireland, by John Atkins.

The main articles are about different topics. Emmanuel Anati considers the controversial rock art site of Addaura, which may well reveal the arrival of African sailors in Sicily in Neolithic times, and the perfor-

mance of rituals likely related to their landing. Terence Meaden elaborates on the function of Stonehenge, the major prehistoric monument of the British Isles, as a Bronze age sanctuary of solar worship, Gregor Vahanyan presents ideas about the origins of natural philosophy and metaphysics in relation to Armenian rock arts and Liudmila Lbova brings new data and perspectives on the function of prehistoric mobile art as a key to understanding Paleolithic migration processes in northeast Eurasia. These articles analyze the way of thinking of four different societies, in four different cultures and environments, in four different regions of the world, by four different researchers.

These different cases together represent a conceptual background within the range of human logical thought, which suggests a major quandary of conceptual anthropology, that is, the functioning of the human mind in two different horizons, that of prehistoric minds and that of the scholars analyzing them.

Two alternatives stand before the progress of research: to refrain from debatable ideas, or to present them; to avoid criticism, or to confront it and use it as a means of verification and debate.

Which of these would contribute more to the progress of knowledge?

E.A.

A NOTE FOR THE AUTHORS

EXPRESSION is a journal focused on conceptual anthropology, distributed in over 90 countries. Both the authors and readers are researchers, scholars, and students in various fields of the humanities, most of whom are eager to maintain a lively multidisciplinary dialogue, communicate, learn, and explore new trends in humanistic studies.

This journal provides a platform for expression and communication to researchers and authors from around the world. The published papers are meant to be read, not simply added to a bibliography. They are aimed at cultured, open-minded individuals with critical thinking.

The goal of **EXPRESSION** is to foster dialogue, communication, knowledge, and ideas about the intellectual and spiritual expressions of past and present cultures and societies. It is an open forum on conceptual anthropology, where more than 280 authors from 50 countries have published their research and concepts.

If you wish to contribute a paper, consider that you are promoting your topic, your ideas, and yourself. Try to make it engaging for those who are not specialists in your specific research field. You must speak to all readers, not just the restricted circle of experts in your particular area. Articles should be scientifically sound, innovative, original, stimulating, and enjoyable for a broad audience.

Your topic, even if focused on a local or specific theme, should ignite the interest of an international and interdisciplinary audience.

The visual aspect is important: images provide visual testimony, enhancing the article's impact. Images and text should complement each other.

Authors should engage directly with the readers, speaking to them incisively, and avoiding long descriptions, catalogs, and rhetorical arguments.

Refrain from unnecessary references, as they may demonstrate the author's erudition but do not enhance the scientific and cultural value of the article and do not contribute to the flowing reading of the article.

Avoid excessive quotations, which might suggest an inability to express independent ideas. Use your own

words and refrain from discursive arguments.

Consider that shorter articles are generally read more and appreciated more than longer ones.

The main articles should address innovative, relevant issues. Communications on current topics, debates, and short notes can be included in the 'Discussion Forum' or the 'Notes and News' sections.

Papers are submitted for review, not to judge their merit, but to assist authors in better communicating with their readers, if necessary. Controversial ideas are not censored as long as they are rational.

Progress in research is often driven by disputable ideas. New thoughts and concepts are welcome; they may provoke debate and criticism, keeping communication dynamic. Time will be their judge.

If you have something new to share or display, you are welcome. **EXPRESSION** is an independent, free journal that does not adhere to formal traditional regulations. It offers space for ideas and discoveries, including contentious issues, healthy discussions, and imaginative, creative papers, provided they contribute to research, are conceptually sound, and respect the integrity, ethics, and dignity of authors, colleagues, and readers.

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Kokopeli, The American Pueblo story-teller.
Tracing from rock engraving, Arizona, USA

Front page image

Drawing of the threshold stone K1 at Newgrange (Ireland).

DISCUSSION FORUM

The Discussion Forum invites readers to be active protagonists in debates of worldwide interest in Conceptual Anthropology.

HAR KARKOM AND THE QUESTION OF SINAI: EMMANUEL ANATI'S CONTRIBUTION TO THE DEBATE ON THE EXODUS

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Abstract

This article examines Emmanuel Anati's contribution to the debate on the Exodus, interpreting Har Karkom as an ancient sacred mountain and a possible geographical matrix of the biblical Sinai. Moving beyond the opposition between historicism and symbolism, the study proposes the concept of "*long-term territorial memory*", highlighting the role of landscape in shaping biblical narrative and religious identity.

Introduction

The biblical account of the Exodus lies at the heart of Jewish and Christian identity, yet it remains one of the most debated and controversial traditions in contemporary scholarship. The narrative of liberation from Egypt, the journey through the desert, and the revelation on Mount Sinai has generated centuries of theological reflection and, in the modern era, intense historical and archaeological analysis.

The present study offers a nuanced and articulated examination of this debate by placing four interpretative approaches in dialogue: the historical-critical archaeology of Israel Finkelstein, the symbolic-theological reading of Silvio Barbaglia, the archaeological-anthropological proposal of Emmanuel Anati, and the geographical-spiritual reflection of Fabio Crosilla. Rather than viewing these perspectives as mutually exclusive, the article argues for their

complementarity, with particular attention to the originality and relevance of Anati's work.

At the center of the discussion lies a fundamental methodological question: how should the relationship between biblical narrative, historical reality, and geographical space be understood? Is the Exodus primarily a historical event, a symbolic narrative, or a memory rooted in a specific landscape? Emmanuel Anati's contribution is particularly significant because it challenges the rigid opposition between history and myth by introducing the concept of long-term territorial memory embedded in the desert landscape.

The Limits of Historicism:

The Context of the Debate

Modern archaeological research, especially since the late twentieth century, has profoundly transformed the discussion on the Exodus. The work of Israel Finkelstein (e.g., Finkelstein 1988, 1995) represents a decisive turning point. Through systematic archaeological surveys in the Sinai and the Negev, Finkelstein demonstrated the absence of material evidence compatible with a large-scale migration of Israelites through the desert during the Late Bronze Age (13th century BCE). No remains of encampments, cemeteries, or material culture attributable to such a population have been identified. From this perspective, the Exodus as described in the biblical text cannot be treated as a historical chronicle in the modern sense.

Finkelstein's conclusions extend beyond archaeology to the history of the text itself. He situates the formation of the Exodus narrative primarily in the first millennium BCE, particularly during the Persian and Hellenistic periods, when Israel and Judah were confronting exile, imperial domination, and the reconstruction of collective identity. Within this framework, the Exodus functions as a national founding myth: a powerful narrative of liberation and covenant that interprets the present through an imagined past (Finkelstein & Silberman 2002).

While this approach has effectively dismantled naïve historicism and biblical fundamentalism, the present article also highlights its limitations. By equating the late redaction of the text with a late invention of its geography, historical-critical reductionism risks overlooking the possibility that much older spatial

memories may have survived independently of the final literary form. It is precisely at this point that Emmanuel Anati's proposal becomes decisive.

Emmanuel Anati and the Question of a Real Sacred Landscape

Emmanuel Anati (2025) does not attempt to "prove" the historical Exodus as a single datable event, nor does he deny the late composition of the biblical text. His research instead focuses on a different question: whether the geographical framework presupposed by the Exodus narrative corresponds to a real and coherent landscape, known, experienced, and remembered long before the text was committed to writing.

Anati's most influential and controversial proposal is the identification of Har Karkom, in the central-western Negev, as a plausible candidate for the biblical Mount Sinai. This hypothesis is based on decades of archaeological fieldwork, which have revealed an extraordinary concentration of cultic installations, ritual structures, lithic alignments, tumuli, and rock art, primarily dating to the Early Bronze Age (fourth-third millennium BCE) (Anati 2017). Unlike many desert sites characterized by sporadic or utilitarian use, Har Karkom emerges as a genuine sacred mountain embedded within a broader ritual landscape.

What distinguishes Anati's approach is not merely the quantity of archaeological data, but the way in which these data are interpreted. Har Karkom is not viewed as an isolated site, but as the focal point of a structured sacred geography. The distribution of altars, enclosures, pathways, and rock engravings suggests repeated gatherings, ritual movements, and a symbolic orientation toward the mountain. In anthropological terms, the site functioned as a place of convergence, pilgrimage, and collective meaning-making.

The use of rock art as an interpretative key has generated debate, particularly where Anati proposes symbolic parallels with later biblical motifs. He is careful, however, to present such readings as hypotheses rather than definitive identifications (Anati 2025). The strength of his argument lies not in precise iconographic correspondences, but in the overall coherence of the ritual landscape and its persistence over time.

Chronology and the Concept of "Long-Term Territorial Memory"

The most critical issue in Anati's proposal concerns chronology. The period of Har Karkom's greatest sacrality precedes conventional dating of the Exodus by many centuries. Rather than treating this as an insurmountable flaw, Anati (2025) reframes the problem by introducing the concept of *long-term territorial memory*. In desert environments, where ecological constraints limit routes of movement and settlement, certain places retain their significance for millennia. Memory is transmitted not primarily through texts or monuments, but through paths, toponyms, ritual practices, and oral traditions shared by pastoral and nomadic groups.

Within this model, Har Karkom need not be the Sinai of an Exodus dated to the thirteenth century BCE. It can instead be understood as an extremely ancient sacred mountain whose memory survived into the first millennium BCE and was later incorporated into Israel's theological narrative. In this sense, the biblical Sinai would not be a fictitious invention, but a symbolic reappropriation of a real and already sacralized landscape.

This perspective allows Anati to navigate between two extremes: on the one hand, the positivistic demand for direct archaeological proof; on the other, a purely symbolic reading detached from geography. His proposal is not a historical demonstration in the strict sense, but an anthropologically plausible explanation of how sacred landscapes generate and sustain narratives over the long term.

The Coherence of the Exodus Itinerary

A further contribution of Anati's work (2025) concerns the analysis of the Exodus itinerary. By examining the sequence of places mentioned in the biblical text and their environmental logic, he argues that the described route is neither random nor internally contradictory. On the contrary, it corresponds more convincingly to the geography of the Negev and northern Sinai than to the traditional locations in the southern Sinai.

This observation is significant because it challenges the assumption - common in some historical-critical approaches - that the geography of the Exodus is

a late literary construction devoid of connection to real territory. Anati instead shows that the narrative presupposes detailed knowledge of desert environments, water resources, and constraints on movement—knowledge difficult to invent retrospectively without an experiential foundation.

From Site to Meaning: Integration with Symbolic and Theological Readings

This article further emphasizes that Anati's work does not compete with symbolic or theological interpretations of the Exodus, but rather integrates them. The approach of Silvio Barbaglia, for example, rightly insists that the truth of the Exodus does not depend solely on archaeological verification. The narrative functions as a theological proclamation: God hears the cry of the oppressed, guides them through the desert, and establishes a covenant that transforms freedom into responsibility (Barbaglia 2011).

Anati's research, however, addresses a question left open by purely symbolic readings: why has this particular narrative, with its specific spatial sequence, demonstrated such resilience and power over the centuries? His answer is that symbols gain strength when anchored to real places capable of sustaining memory and experience. A symbol detached from landscape risks becoming abstract; a symbol rooted in a lived environment can endure.

Geography, *Genius Loci*, and the Legacy of Anati's Work

Fabio Crosilla's contribution builds directly upon the archaeological foundation provided by Anati, introducing the concept of *Genius loci*—the spirit of place—and proposing the idea of the Exodus as a "literary park" (Crosilla 2024, 2026). Within this framework, Har Karkom is significant not only because it may correspond to Mount Sinai, but because it possesses the characteristics of a place of revelation: isolation, silence, stratification, and resistance to monumentalization.

Anati's archaeology provides the material substratum for this interpretation. His identification of Har Karkom as an ancient sacred mountain enables Crosilla to argue that certain places are intrinsically capable of generating religious experience, independently of

definitive historical identification. The mountain thus becomes a space of encounter rather than a mere point on a map.

Strengths and Limits of Anati's Proposal

This article does not conceal the limits of Anati's approach. The continuity of memory over one or two millennia cannot be conclusively demonstrated, and the identification of Har Karkom with Sinai remains hypothetical. Nevertheless, these limits do not invalidate the proposal; rather, they correctly define its scope. Anati offers not certainties, but plausibility; not definitive proof, but interpretative coherence.

His greatest strength lies in reintroducing landscape as an active agent in the formation of biblical tradition. In doing so, the debate shifts from the sterile question "Did it happen exactly this way?" to a more fruitful one: "How do places shape memory, identity, and narrative?"

Conclusion:

Emmanuel Anati's Enduring Contribution

Within the complex and often polarized debate on the Exodus, Emmanuel Anati occupies a distinctive position. He neither defends literalist historicity nor dissolves the narrative into pure symbolism. Instead, he proposes a model in which myth, memory, and geography are inseparably intertwined.

From this perspective, the Exodus emerges as a symbolically elaborated narrative rooted in a real and extremely ancient sacred landscape. Har Karkom is not "proof" of Sinai, but a highly significant candidate for understanding how a mountain can become the axis of revelation in collective memory.

Anati's work thus opens a space for dialogue among archaeology, anthropology, biblical studies, and theology, offering a true geography of meaning in which place, narrative, and identity converge.

In this sense, his contribution goes beyond the question of the Exodus itself. It invites contemporary scholarship to rethink the epistemological status of sacred landscapes and to recognize that the truth of biblical tradition may reside not in chronological precision, but in the enduring relationship between narrative and place.

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THE DEBATE ON THE CORE AND AGE OF THE BIBLICAL NARRATION OF EXODUS

Prof. Fabio Crosilla, along with an Italian study group, promoted a healthy debate between followers of different views concerning the possible historical background of the biblical texts related to the epos of Exodus. This debate re-elaborates a discussion, lasting already more than half a century, on the time of

Exodus and the location of the biblical mount Sinai, reconsidering traditional commonplaces. Possible solutions can only come from a sound reflection of the available documentation, both literary and archeological. The shared goal is understanding the messages of the past, and the meaning of the biblical script: recovering the concepts behind a text which may well be about 3,000 years old.

Traditional views have to be reconsidered in view of new archeological evidence. Two crucial questions arise: 1- To what extent does archeology fit the biblical narration, or rather, to what extent does the biblical narration fit the archeological context; and 2- To what extent can the biblical narration reflect real events. Both questions concern not just anthropologists, also biblical scholars, religious believers, historians and culture at large. To our modest view, the written compilation of the biblical narration relies on a long tradition of oral transmission, the original core was elaborated by generations of storytellers. The archeological evidence can and should help identifying the core.

Recent tendencies just dismissing the historicity of the epos and making of it a myth born in the Iron Age, are ignoring passages and information contained in the text that can only have a Bronze Age derivation. As already specified (Anati, 2017, 2018), the assumption that the whole story originated after the Bronze Age, to our mind, does not hold.

Traditional studies located the biblical Exodus saga in the Late Bronze Age. The archeological survey of the Sinai Peninsula evidenced the lack of tribal life during the Late Bronze Age, causing the conclusion that the Exodus could not have taken place, thus hypothesizing the building of the story in the Iron Age. This conclusion omitted a crucial point: the lack of archeological evidence in the Late Bronze Age presents two alternative interpretations: 1- Since the Exodus is considered to have taken place in the Late Bronze, the lack of tribal life in the LB demonstrates that no Exodus could have taken place; or: 2- The lack of archeological evidence in the LB demonstrates that if there was an Exodus, it should have taken place in a different period.

The widespread presumption that the Exodus must have taken place in the Late Bronze is therefore

erroneous (See analysis in Anati, 2017). This does not mean that it did not take place, it simply says that it did not happen in the LB. Archeological evidence is the main source. The biblical narrative refers of wars and destruction of living settlements, in sites excavated and documented such as Arad, several towns in the area of Trans-Jordan, Jericho and Ai. Archeology confirms that all these sites were destroyed by warfare and the dates of such destructions are defined. Such destructions took place in the late third millennium BCE, toward the end of the Early Bronze Age. Most of these sites were never re-settled thereafter. If there is a relation between the narrative and the described sites, the age of the events is provided by archeology. Most of the surveyed sites mentioned in the biblical narration of Exodus have archeological evidence of this same period.

The Biblical text provides details of the geographic location of Mount Sinai, showing that the compilers had a precise knowledge of the regional topography, as specified in *Expression*, vol. 50. The biblical description of the tribal territories, mainly of the Amalekites and Midianites, and their relation to the Mountain, the sequence of the stations in the itinerary before and after the Sinai event which, knowing the area, can be located on a map; and the localization of the “deserts” (or rather *midbar*, free territories), make the intended location of the Mountain of God clearly positioned in the north of the Sinai Peninsula, in Negev Desert. According to the geography, the topography and the archeological records of the area, the biblical Mount Sinai appears to be where the present-day Har Karkom is located. A mapping of these notions provides the identification of Har Karkom with the Biblical Mount Sinai. All the above data are published, can be verified, and offer new orientations for this debate. If indeed a Mount Sinai existed, it must have

archeological remains testifying its role. The archeology confirms the deductions of the topography. As already amply documented, Har Karkom has remarkable Bronze Age archeological evidence, both large camping sites at the foot and varieties and quantities of shrines, altars and other cult sites on the plateau, a unique paramount cult site. But it is not from the Late Bronze Age, it is from the Early Bronze Age. No other such Bronze Age holy mountain is known in the entire Sinai Peninsula. The archeological findings, their exegesis, the topographic implications, all that is published and available to all. (Anati, 1986, 2017, 2018, 2022, 2025). And of course, all that is open to further disquisition.

It looks like the two questions posed at the beginning of this text find a solution: 1- To what extent does archeology fit the biblical narration, or rather, does the biblical narration fit the archeological context? It does. The archeological testimony is the material evidence left behind by happenings. And 2- To what extent does biblical narration reflect real events? The territory preserves the traces of events, being the material field for recovering the core behind the narration of the epos.

Professor Crosilla deserves our gratitude for having stimulated this fascinating debate.

E.A.

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DO THE ICONIC NEWGRANGE TRI-SPIRAL MOTIFS EXPRESS HEA- VENLY AFFINITIES BETWEEN THE SUN GOD, MOTHER EARTH GOD- DESS AND THE HUMAN RULERS RE- GARDED AS DIVINE?

John F. Atkins

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Honorary Professor, Genetics, Trinity College Dublin.*

This communication discusses the interconnected triple-spiral carvings which are unexplained features of the Late Neolithic monument in County Meath, Ireland, known as Newgrange.

One tri-spiral motif is carved on an inside wall of chamber C10. A much larger spiral counterpart is on the recumbent kerbstone K1 at the threshold to the passageway entrance. These much-cherished features of Irish Megalithic art (Figs. 2 and 3) are the only examples known from the Irish Neolithic and Early Bronze Age and are likely to be the oldest in the world. The triple spirals on K1 date from c.3200 BC, and the impressive and intriguing internal one may also be as old. To my knowledge no images carved on stone

of interlocking returning spiral-triplicity are known anywhere else for ancient rock art or monuments. The older spirals in Malta are of independent origin and different insofar as by not expressing triplicity.

K1, being outside the mound of Newgrange, would have been seen by every passing visitor throughout prehistory from c.3200 to beyond 2000 BC when the site was abandoned and until mound-slip eventually reached the entrance of the monument. This extensive time period can explain the widespread appreciation and love for the development of the 'Celtic' triskelion, which is a simpler variation of the symbol, through the Bronze Age, Iron Age and medieval times until now but what did the spirals really represent in antiquity when the idea was first carved by some unknown very competent and patient artist?

Of course, we shall never know what the first illiterate carvers were thinking but an explanation based on aspects of religious belief is likely because of what is known and inferred about the nature of the community and its builders, who were mostly farmers and farmworkers dependent on successful fertility of crops, livestock and their families. The character of the vast mound with passage to its interior directed to receive the light of the winter-solstice sunrise and what can be judged from ancient legendry points to strong leadership at the time of building the great mound. Commonplace today is the proposal that the engraving represents triple aspects of the divine feminine, such as an Irish goddess in her threefold manifestation as maiden, mother and elderly wise-woman. Other suggestions include a representation of the cycling nature of existence, i.e., of life, death and rebirth.

The new suggestion here has been influenced by considerations of the organization needed to construct the Newgrange mound and recent discoveries about the ancient human bones found in the interior of the Newgrange mound. Successive rulers who oversaw the vast effort to construct the Newgrange mound and its later functioning, were likely regarded as divine by their subjects and indeed by themselves. Also supportive of 'special' status is DNA sequence evidence for high-degree incest among the 'inner elite' (Cassidy et al., 2020). The technical triumph of recent years in being able to generate extensive DNA

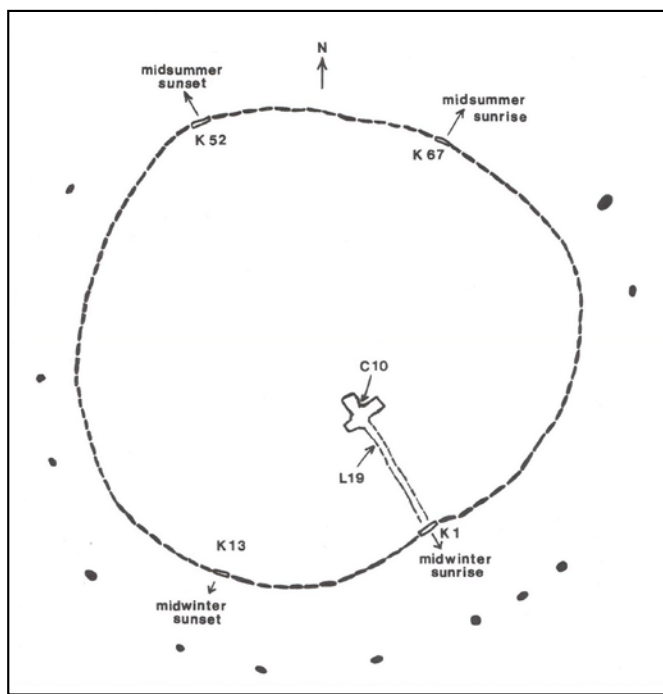


Fig. 1. Plan of Newgrange, after M. O'Kelly, showing locations of chamber C10 and kerbstone K1.



Fig. 2a and 2b The carving on a wall of chamber C10. ©Photographic Archive, National Monuments Service, Government of Ireland.



sequence information and sophisticated analyses has provided strong evidence for inheritance by family descent. Such restriction or avoidance of rulers mating with 'common humans' in ancient Ireland

predates the similar reported behavior of the Egyptian Pharaohs, Incan rulers and the Hawaiian Royalty.

Central tenets of the pagan religion which was widespread at the time Newgrange was constructed and for long afterwards, was the concept of a Heavenly Father, one of whose main manifestations (epiphanies) was the Sun God, and a Mother Earth Goddess. Unsurprisingly given the absence of scientific knowledge available at the time and considering the living conditions, provision of light and warmth from the sun, and growth from the earth on which most food depended, Sun and Earth were both regarded as divinely sacred. Mating and fertility, including of farm animals, was of prime importance. Would not perceived symbolic mating of the Sun God and Mother Earth Goddess have been considered logical, besides being a key enabler of the practice of their religion? The earliest words we know for such 'divine mating' is the ancient Greek 'Hieros Gamos' (sacred marriage), which is unsurprising since we do not know the language of the more ancient Newgrange community.

At winter solstice, as the rays (the 'spirit') from the rising Sun God penetrated the symbolic womb of the Mother Earth Goddess at Newgrange, is it not unreasonable to consider that rulers, who regarded themselves divine, when ensconced in its inner recess might have considered they had cognate privileged connections with the two traditional divinities to form a triad? Perhaps the interconnected triple-spiral-motif carving (Figs. 2 and 3) symbolized such a trinity belief. An alternative is that the third spiral represented what they may have regarded as the Holy Spirit/Ghost of specific sunrise shafts of light from the Heavenly Father or derived shadows (if ever correct, that may only have been a much later belief). However, given the perceived status of a subset of all-powerful rulers in human history, the proposal here that the third spiral was included to represent the Newgrange Ruler seems more plausible. If so, it would have been natural for the divine ruler(s) to want to declare and share such important revelations

with their subjects, and it would have had a practical consequence because it would endorse their divine status to their faithful subjects on whose worship and labor the rulers depended. So, at the winter-solstice sunrise the ruler(s) would emerge from the passageway and tell the assembled congregation what had just happened inside, while pointing to a bigger version of the motif carved on the recumbent stone K1 in front of the entrance to the passageway.

Although peripheral to the above proposal, another mainstay could have been used to accompany delivery of the 'sermon' to the masses just after winter-solstice sunrise. This refers to the positioning of a tall, straight-sided (arguably male-symbolic) stone outside Newgrange mound such that the shadow it cast shortly after winter solstice sunrise would fall on the spiral-carved recumbent female-symbolic threshold stone. Since the shadow is cast by the action of the sun's rays, might it have been regarded as symbolizing the holy spirit (the holy ghost of the rays) of the Sun-God



Fig. 3. The threshold stone K1 at Newgrange. ©Photographic Archive, National Monuments Service, Government of Ireland.

connecting with the recumbent stone symbolizing the Mother Earth Goddess? It may seem strange to us to consider the possibility that sunlight penetrating the dark inner chamber which is C10, and followed some minutes later by a shadow cast on a sunlit area of the threshold stone where the triple spirals are, could both be regarded as 'spirits' of the Sun-God. However, if one tries to imagine it from the perspective of Sun-God-believing pagans maybe it would appear sensible. For example, the path of the shaft of winter-solstice sunrise light entering Newgrange was written by Kate Prendergast (2012) as symbolically entering a womb. The assessment by M. O'Kelly in the 1960s that those upright stones beyond the threshold stone outside the mound were erected at the same time as the Newgrange mound has recently been strongly supported by K. Williams (2023).

Hopefully the above suggestions will provoke discussion among conceptual anthropologists as to its merits in relation to alternatives.

Acknowledgements:

Thanks to Frank Prendergast for discussion about shadow casting outside Newgrange and to Joe Fenwick, School of Geography, Archaeology and Irish Studies, University of Galway, for a C10 reference.

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THE MEANING OF SPIRALS AND MEANDERS IN THE EUROPEAN NEOLITHIC AND BRONZE AGE ART

Professor Atkins' provocative paper suggests an interpretation of the tri-spiral engraving in the Neolithic monument of Newgrange (County Meath, Ireland), as representing the union of "the Sun God, Mother Earth Goddess and the human rulers considered as divine". This theory is worth a debate on the ideological concepts of the builders and worshipers of this monument.

Additional questions should stimulate wider discussion. The first one is what is the meaning of the spiral. These spirals are not made just of a line leading from an external entrance to the center as an end, but the spiral line leads to the center and then returns back to an external exit. It does not indicate a dead-end and implies the concept of an active two-way spiral.

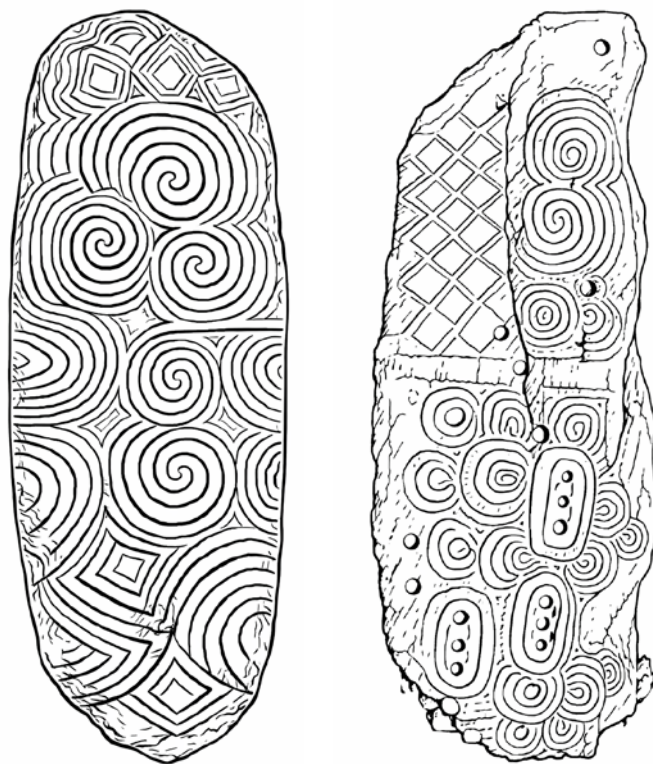
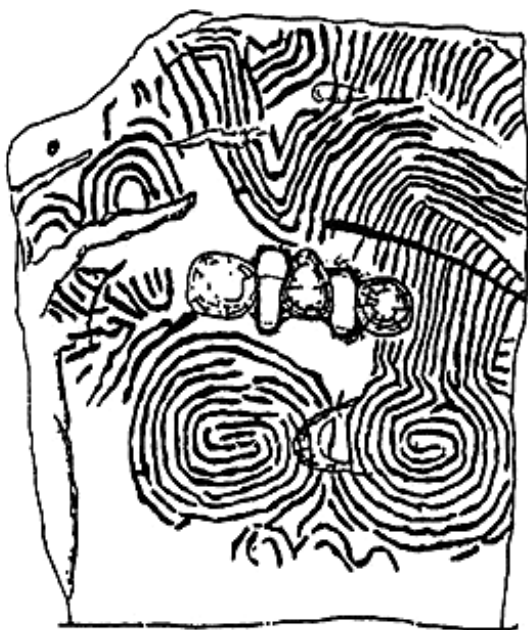


Fig. 1 a, b. Drawings of two engraved stones from Newgrange seen in the erect position. Both of them have a line separating two sectors. In both of them the upper sector has spirals and lozenges patterns; spirals are in both sectors, while concentric circles and concentric half-circles are located in the lower sector.



Figs 2a, b. Funerary monument of Gavrinis, Brittany, France. Engraved stone with two spirals, concentric semicircles and other motifs (M.S.J. Pequart and Z. Le Rouzic, 1927, *Corpus des signes gravées des monuments mégalithiques du Morbihan*, Paris, Picard).

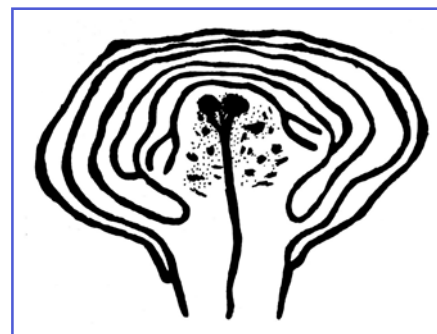


Fig. 3 Monte de Eiro, Marco de Canavesas, Spain. Menhir engraved with two spirals connected by a wavy line covering the entire surface (E. Anati, 1968, *Arte rupestre nelle regioni occidentali della penisola iberica*, Capo di Ponte, Edizioni del Centro).

Fig. 4. Laxe da Roteo de Mende, Campo Lameiro, Spain. Rock engraving of a meandric image of a spirit, on a rock surface with numerous vaguely anthropomorphic images related to meandric patterns (E. Anati, 1968, *Arte rupestre nelle regioni occidentali della penisola iberica*, Capo di Ponte, Edizioni del Centro).

Fig. 5. Laxe do Pombal, Spain. Rock engraving of spirit (E. Anati, 1968, *Arte rupestre nelle regioni occidentali della penisola iberica*, Capo di Ponte, Edizioni del Centro).



Fig. 6a. Naquane, Camonica Valley, Italy. Rock engraving of a spiral enveloping a vaguely anthropomorphic image (E. Anati, 2023, *Arte rupestre della Valcamonica*, Capo di Ponte, Atelier).

This peculiar spiral pattern is present in other Neolithic and Bronze Age monuments in different parts of Europe.

The tri-spiral engraving is the union of three interlocking meaningful components in the form of spirals. The presence of the tri-spiral, repeated more than once, is peculiar to Newgrange, while single spirals, coupled spirals, and multiple associations of spirals are present in various Neolithic and Bronze Age sites throughout Europe. Also, the association of three graphemes is a repetitive pattern. Presumably their executors attributed conceptual meanings to them. Spirals, concentric circles, and associated concentric half-circles jointly appear in other engraved stone surfaces of the Newgrange monument and elsewhere, along with meanders, lozenges, and other motifs which also should have a conceptual meaning.

The assemblage of these patterns is a graphic language of ideograms. We may presume that their makers intended to convey their content. What were their meaning and function? We may question whether the k1 stone in front of the entrance engraved with spirals and other such graphemes could have been standing, representing an imposing, meaningful image that could be seen, honored or worshiped at the gate, without entering the monument. The engravings are an association of symbols. The function was displaying concepts.

Similar associations of graphic elements, spirals,

concentric circles, concentric half-circles, and meanders, presenting different stylistic fashions but similar graphic contents, are present in different European megalithic and rock art sites, from the Neolithic and the Bronze Age, in Brittany, France, , the Iberian Peninsula, Camonica Valley in Northern Italy or the Badisco cave in southern Italy. The association of spirals, concentric circles, meanders, and other repeated ideograms appear to represent the invisible energies of souls in the afterworld. These graphic expressions are likely to visualize the presence of such powers behind the surfaces where they appear, the stone being their receptacle. Comparative analyses unveil a complex and diffused conceptual ideology (E. Anati, 2023, *Spirits in Stone, Menhir, Menhir Statues and Other Images of the Invisible*, Capo di Ponte, Atelier). The monument has a narrow space for the material bones and a huge space, a mound of stone, to shelter the invisible spirits. Likely, the main object of worship was the mound itself. We may deduce that at Newgrange such graphic ideograms had analogous meanings, as elsewhere. Likely the tri-spiral represents three specific souls (spirits), or three aspects of a soul, or a trinity of entities. Atkins' hypothesis that the tri-spiral motif is the association of three spirits is highly plausible.

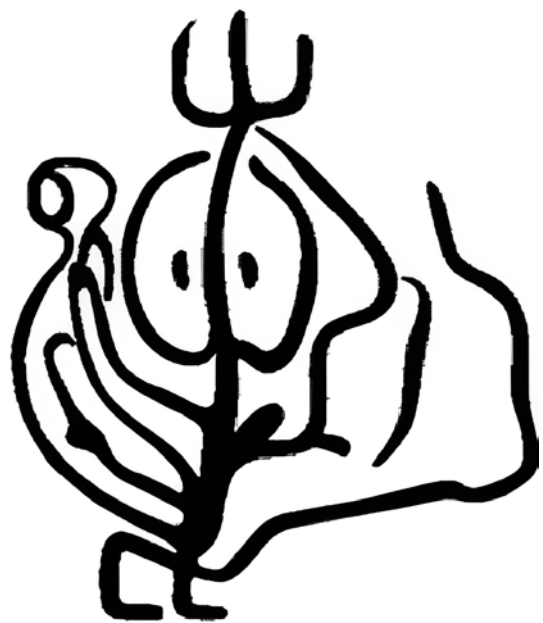


Fig. 6b. Neolithic rock engravings, Armenia. Vaguely anthropomorphic image surrounded by significant lines (G. Vahanyan, see page 55).



Fig. 7. Sonico, Camonica Valley, Italy. Rock engraving uniting three elements, a vaguely anthropomorphic image and two spirals, connected together by lines (E. Anati, 2023, *Arte rupestre della Valcamonica*, Capo di Ponte, Atelier).

Whether it represents the association of sun, earth and human headship is open to debate.

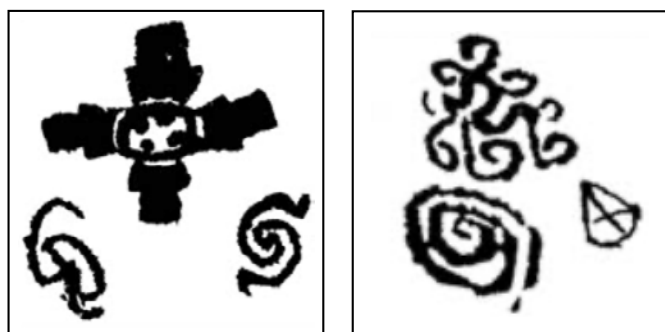
A rock engraving at Derrynablaha, County Kerry, Ireland, might provide a hint that the unions of circles, spirals and half-circles present in the engraved motifs of Newgrange and elsewhere may represent imaginary beings, likely spirits, having vague human features.



Fig. 9. Rock engraving of Derrynablaha, County Kerry, Ireland. Combination of concentric circles, an assemblage of ideograms, producing a vaguely anthropomorphic image, including U-shapes penetrated by lines, likely representing sexual intercourse. The image may represent a spirit (E. Anati, 1963, *New Petroglyphs at Derrynablaha*, County Kerry, Ireland, *Journal of the Cork Historical and Archaeological Society* 68, nos. 207-208, 1-15).

Another issue worth debating is terminology. The frequently used and apparently commonly accepted terms of Sun God or Mother Earth Goddess are arguable. The animistic concepts attribute invisible powers to spirits and the concept of God as a creator entity is absent or not common. The sun or the earth are conceived as spirits, as also in recent animistic societies like the Sandawe of Tanzania or the aborigines of the Arnhem Land. Perhaps the terms “Sun Spirit” or “Sun High Spirit” would be more appropriate than “Sun God”. Likewise, in animistic concepts, the term “Earth Spirit” or “Mother Earth Spirit” might be more appropriate than “Mother Earth Goddess.” At this period, in the Neolithic and Bronze Age cultures of Europe, there is ample evidence of animistic concepts concerning beliefs and cults of spirits of ancestors, anthropomorphized images of natural elements, and imaginary beings. Such concepts are likely to be at the core of the stone engravings at Newgrange.

E.A.



Figs 8a, b. Porto Badisco Cave. Italy. Paintings related to the cult of spirits and ancestors. Two examples of associations of three ideograms, including spirals, painted on the walls of the cave (E. Anati, 2025, *The Badisco cave paintings - a Neolithic Sanctuary in Southern Italy*, *Expression* 49, 12-36).

FORTHCOMING NEW DEBATES

Readers are proposing themes for debate. When at least three articles are submitted on the same theme, the topic is considered for a forthcoming issue.

1. **MIGRATIONS OUT OF AFRICA?**

Out of an immense continent the Homo species, in various ages, crossed the Sinai Peninsula and spread over Asia and the rest of the planet. Did other terrestrial animals do the same? When did Gibraltar became a second canal of migration?

2. **THE IDEOLOGY OF PREHISTORIC ART.**

What does prehistoric art reveal on beliefs, concepts, rituals and religion?

3. **TPOLOGY OF THE ART OF HUNTER-GATHERERS.**

Persistence and changes in the typology of cave art, rock art, portable art. The concepts behind the images.

4. **CONCEPTUAL IDENTITIES AND PECULIARITIES OF CULTURAL AGES FROM THE PALEOLITHIC TO THE METAL AGES.**

How do the traces left behind by different human groups reflect their conceptual abilities? How do they reveal pattern and trends of culture?

5. **WHY MEGALITHISM: THE LOGIC BEHIND.**

Why building with cycloptic stones? What was the conceptual role? Social and political functions of the monuments.

PROPOSALS FOR NEW ARTICLES AND NEW DEBATES

Proposals for papers and suggestions on these and other issues are welcome.

MAIN ARTICLES

RECONSIDERING THE PREHISTORIC ART OF THE ADDAURA CAVE, SICILY

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Abstract:

Defining dates and meaning of the Addaura rock engravings, a major and much discussed cave art site in Sicily, and its evidence of African connections.

Preamble

The prehistoric parietal art of the Addaura cave on Monte Pellegrino near Palermo, Sicily, has generated debate and differing interpretations because of its uniqueness. The rock engravings display different styles and figurative types, regarded by some researchers as a single complex and by others as a succession of several phases. Indeed, the presence of superimpositions of

certain figures over others suggests that the ensemble is the product of different hands. There are both anthropomorphic and zoomorphic figures displaying various stylistic and typological characters. One particular group of anthropomorphic figures has been the subject of conflicting hypotheses concerning its age, meaning, and cultural context.

The small cave is about 6 m deep and about as wide, and is located at the foot of a vertical rock surface, facing the sea, about 70 m above sea level. The engravings are concentrated on a single wall, covering an area ranging from 1.5 m to 4.5 m above the present soil. Archeological excavations outside the cave yielded lithic artifacts from the Upper Paleolithic and the Mesolithic (excavations by J. Marconi-Bovio and L. Bernabo Brea). The bones of fossil fauna included Pleistocene dwarf elephants and hippopotamuses.

Monte Pellegrino has two other decorated caves of lesser importance. Next to Addaura I, a second small cave (Addaura II) contains engravings of two bovids. In another cave on Monte Pellegrino there are engravings of two equids and three bovids. The wild fauna depicted belong to the Late Pleistocene. These figures and similar ones from Addaura display typological and stylistic characteristics comparable with those of other sites in southern Italy and can be attributed to advanced phases of the Upper Paleolithic. They fall within the repertoire of prehistoric art defined by Paolo Graziosi as Mediterranean, belonging to the Late Pleistocene or the transitional phase from Pleistocene to Holocene, between 20,000 and 10,000 years ago. Often, they are attributed a function of hunting magic: depicting the animal in order to capture it virtually, thereby obtaining a pledge for its capture (Graziosi, 1950). Besides these animal images



Fig. 1. Map locating the Addaura cave in the central Mediterranean.



Fig. 2. View of the Addaura caves.

there is a group of anthropomorphic figures, which completely departs from currently defined stylistic, typological, and conceptual frameworks.¹

Stratigraphy and superimpositions

The group of anthropomorphic images is concentrated on the upper part of the engraved surface. The superimpositions indicate that the anthropomorphic figures cut across earlier animal figures, more or less ignoring them. Traces of engraved lines of figures appear

to have been partially removed in the central part of this group by scraping the surface, indicating an operation intended to erase earlier figures, before engraving the scene. We deduce that the anthropomorphic ensemble is later than the zoomorphic figures.

The animal figures themselves show various superimpositions, with figures in a more naturalistic and detailed style overlain by more schematic figures. Two phases of animal engraving are present, certainly one and probably both of them predating the anthropomorphic ensemble. These phases of the animal figures, characterized by different styles, mark two moments in Italian prehistoric art. The first displays a well-detailed naturalistic Late Paleolithic style, analogous to that of the animal figures at Levanzo; the other, more schematic, belongs to the Final Paleolithic or Epipaleolithic style defined as Romanellian (Graziosi, 1956, 1973).

¹ This paper is the reworking of a research project carried out in the 1950s and never fully published, just recorded in generic terms (Anati, 1993, 102-103; 2007, 185-195). Both figures and photos are made partly by myself and partly by P. Graziosi who encouraged this research. The figures of Saharan rock art come from the Anati Archives. The ethnographic photos are from the Musée de l'Homme, Paris. Reaching publication after over half a century, grateful thanks are extended to these sources.

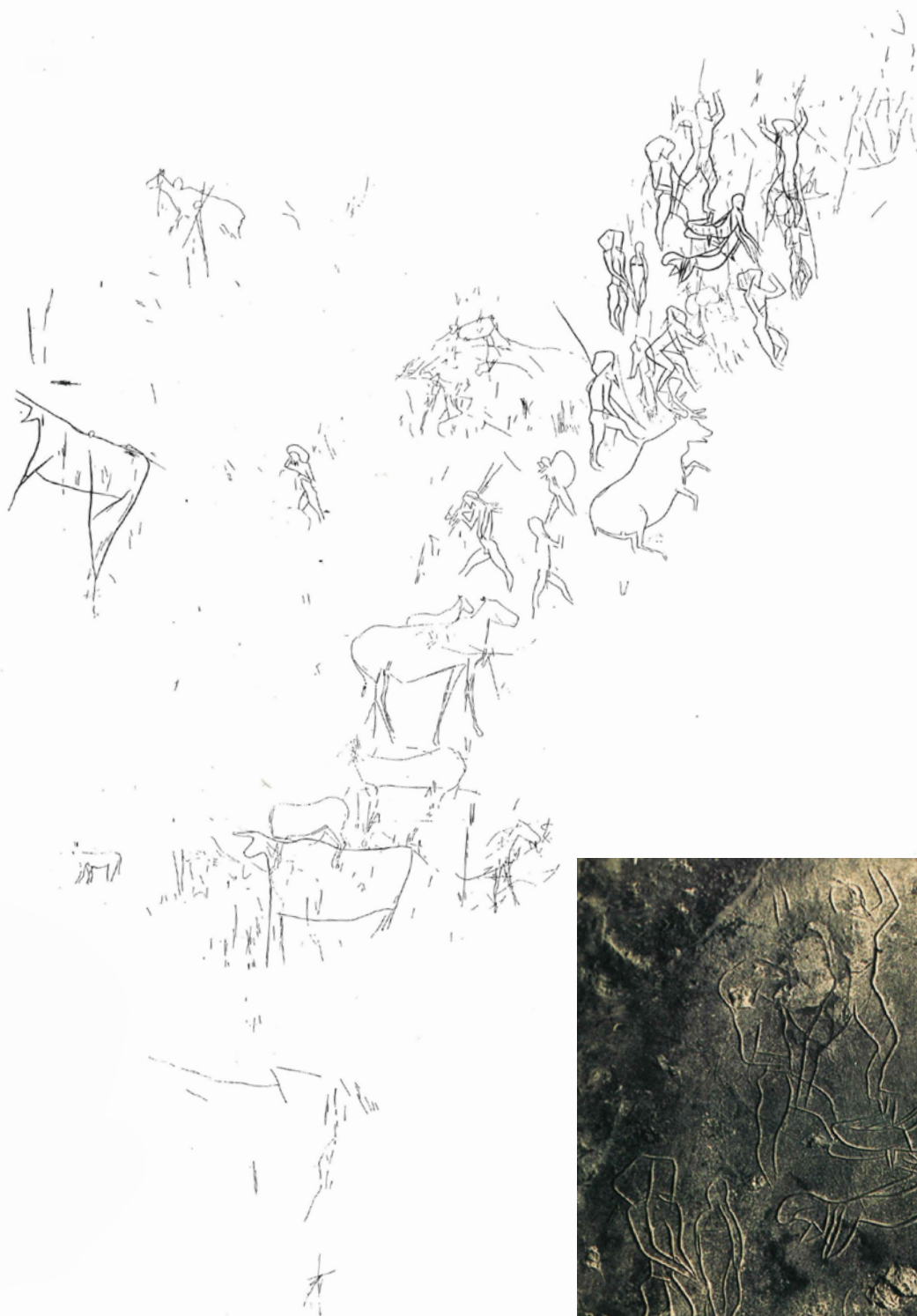


Fig. 3. Tracing of the Addaura engravings.



Fig. 4. The main scene.



Fig. 5. Anthropomorphic figures in the central part of the decorated surface, seemingly three males and one female, describing people in motion carrying on activities and transporting something, likely describing an event.

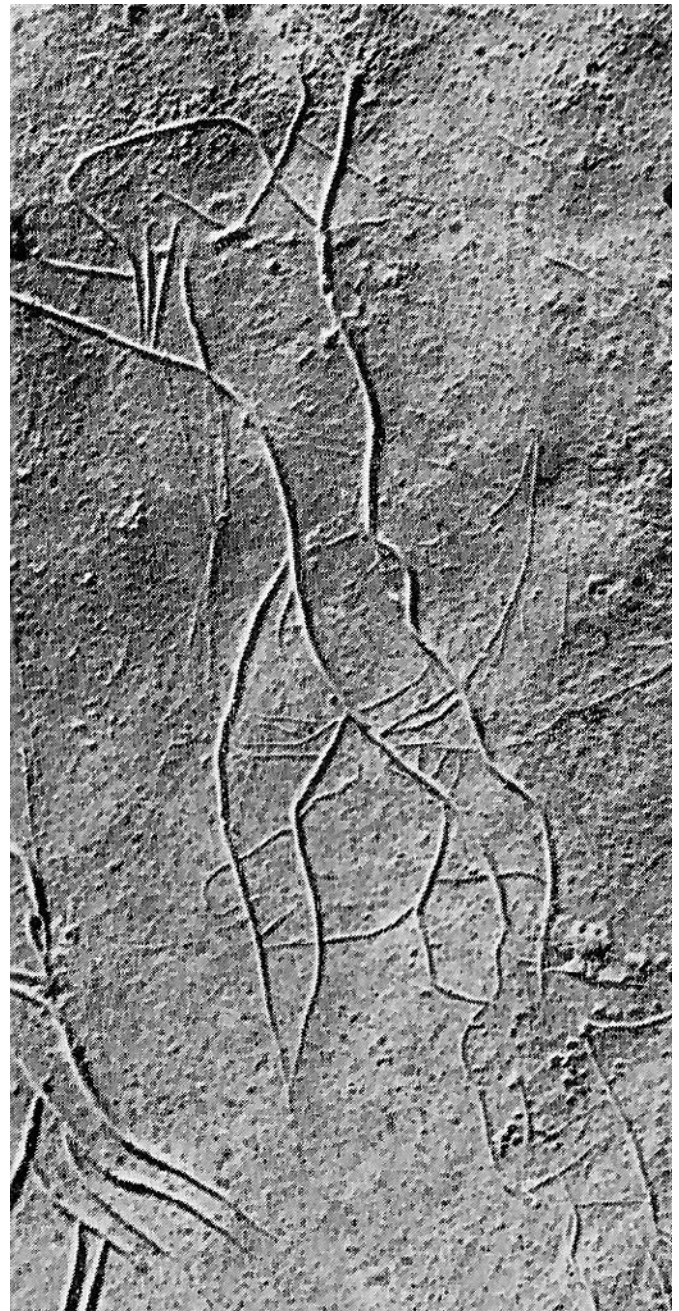
Fig. 6. Engravings of animal figures showing superimpositions of more schematic figures upon the naturalistic ones. For a definition of the animal species see Marconi Bovio (1953a).

Fig. 7. A schematic animal figure belonging to the later phase.



Fig. 8. A naturalistic animal figure. The foot of an anthropomorphic being overlies the antler of the animal.

Fig. 9. Superimposition of a naturalistic animal figure with an anthropomorphic figure.



The scene

The assemblage of anthropomorphic figures, which we hypothesize to be later than the zoomorphic phases, is a scene featuring an event happening. It shows two performers surrounded by people, some in the posture of dancing. In terms of style and typology, it is a unique case in the entire repertoire of southern Italian prehistoric art. The figures are executed with concise, confident engraved strokes of exceptional vigor, in a realistic, balanced, and synthetic style unlikely to belong, as claimed by Marconi-Bovio and others, to the stylistic and conceptual characters of the local Upper Paleolithic.

It is a scene, and the syntactic form of the scene is rare or practically non-existent in pre-Neolithic European art. Moreover, it is a dynamic scene, depicting action. In this respect it has parallels with the post-Paleolithic rock engravings of the Alpine Camonica Valley and the Spain Levante paintings, but both style and concept are different. Here an event is described, a ceremony or something else, and the scene looks like a report of something specific that really happened. Such images of realistic records of moments of actual life are rare or non-existent in European prehistoric art before the

Bronze Age, while they are common in the Neolithic rock art of Saharan North Africa.

There are 16 anthropomorphic figures in the same style. It looks as if all of them are represented naked – or at least without any trace of clothing. A possible exception is where the two main actors have lines marked at

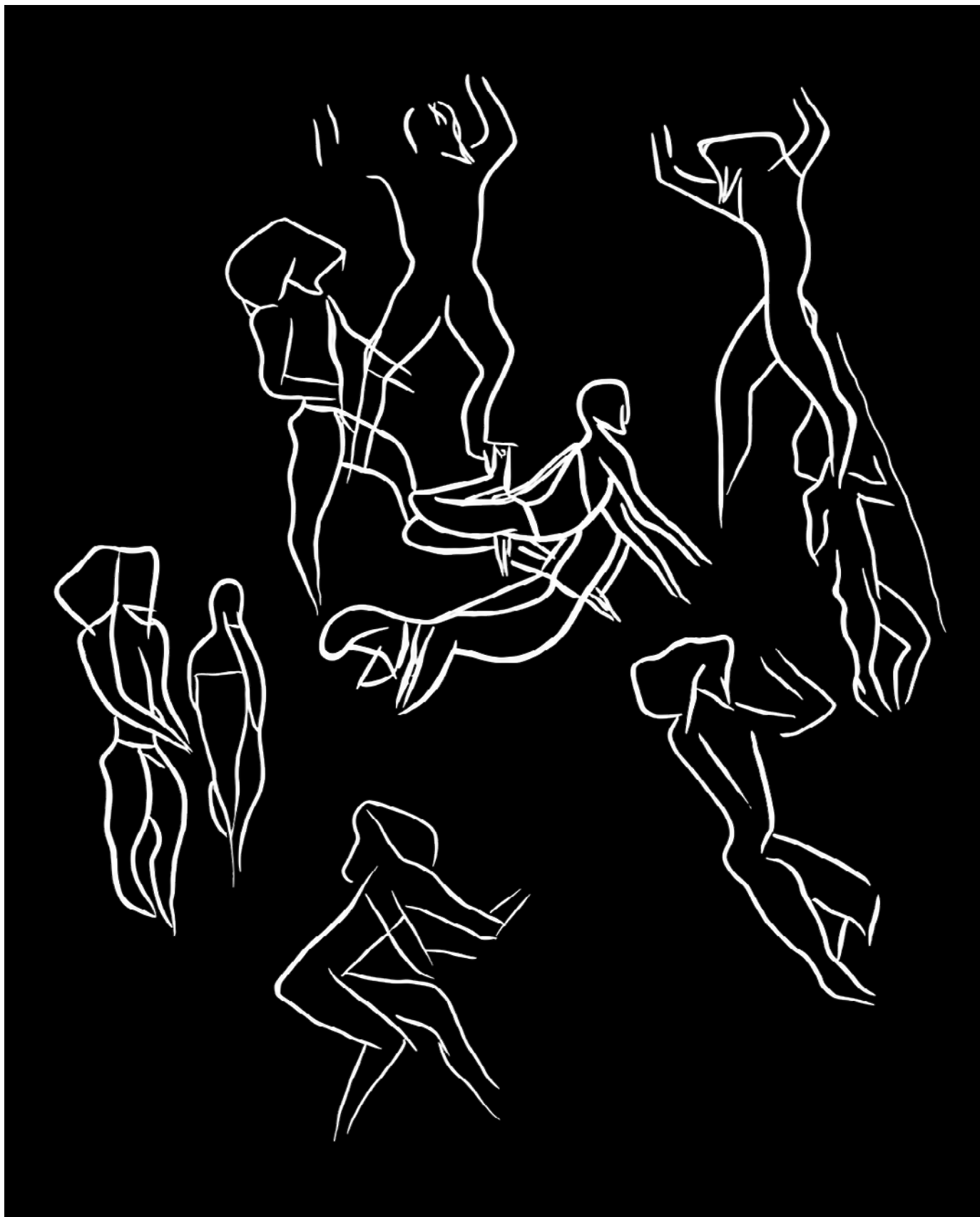
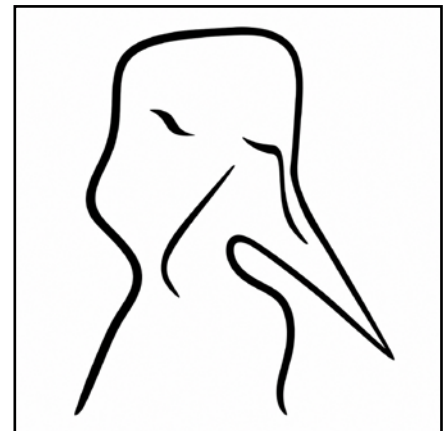
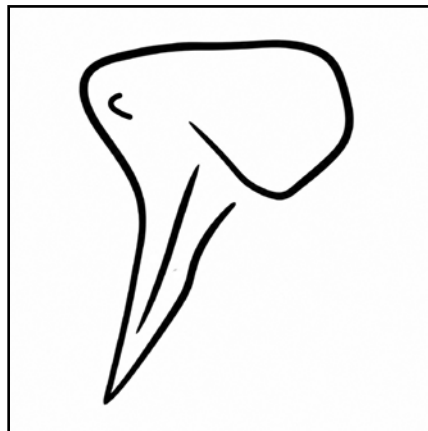


Fig. 10. Tracing of the main scene representing the event of two actors surrounded by a circle of people, some dancing.



Figs 11a, 11b, 11c. The three totemic spirits with animal heads present at the ceremony.

their waists, possibly representing a belt or some garment inherent in their function in the ceremony.

Four of these figures, smaller in size, appear to be separate from the main scene; they display a state of motion, engaged in activities, carrying objects, a factual documentation of an event. They represent another realistic scene of people in motion, doing something

worth recording. Two other anthropomorphic figures, one fully defined and the other sketched, look like side observers of the scene.

Ten anthropomorphic figures, some apparently in dancing positions, form a scene: eight are arranged in a circle around two main actors, in unusual positions, presumably acting on the ground. The scene illustrates

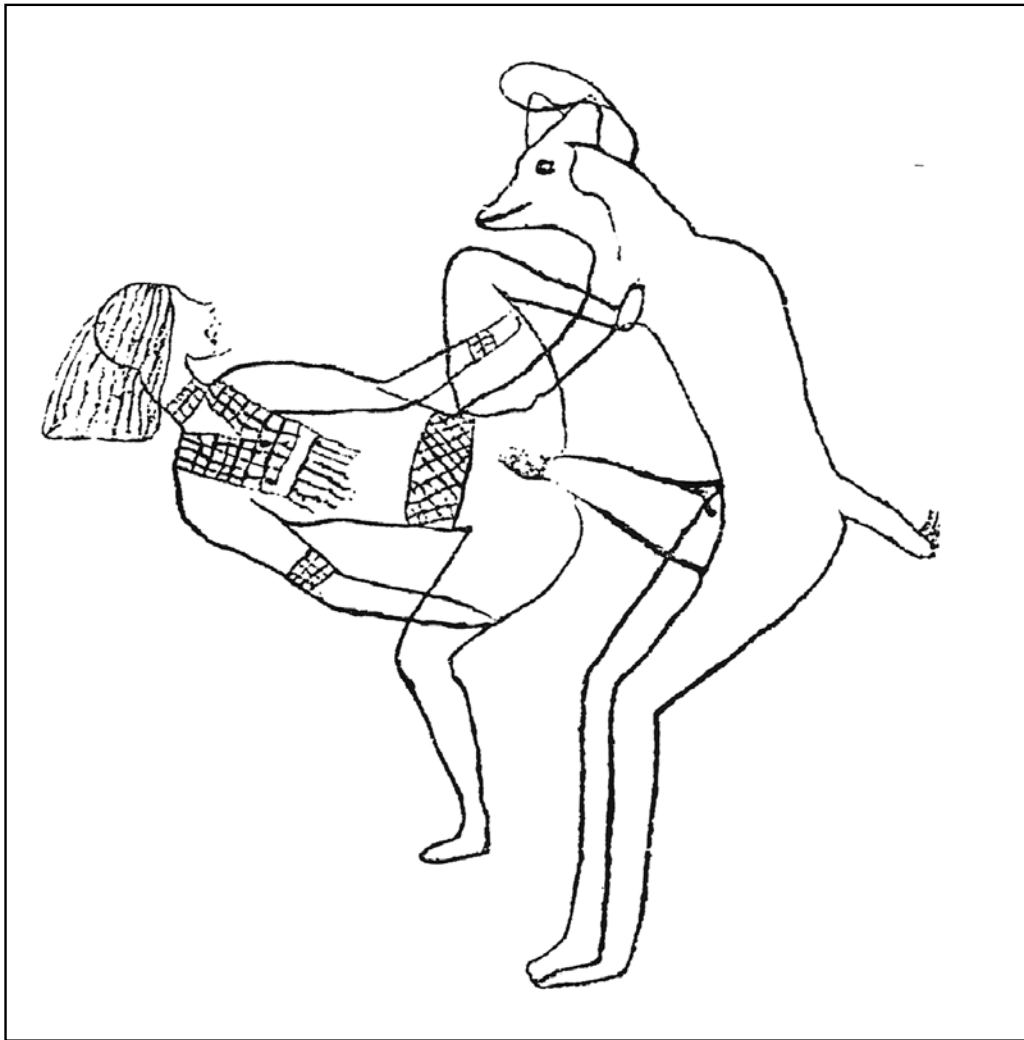


Fig. 12. Tadrart Acacus, Libya. Rock engraving describing a totemic spirit with an animal head penetrating a woman. The image is attributed to the early pastoral Neolithic.

an event, presenting what was intended to be explicit details of what was happening.

The scene seems to have undergone some remaking. The upper two anthropomorphic figures with strange faces, either carrying an animal head or masked, or mythical images, are a different, slightly larger size. While all the other figures in the scene are harmoniously placed in a balanced position with each other and do not touch each other, the two figures with strange heads and upraised arms overlap previous figures, and their legs are superimposed upon other figures. Seemingly they have been added after the others. Between the two, there are faded remnants of engraved lines, likely traces of figures that have been deleted by scraping the surface.

The scene appears to have had two phases, the second one with the addition of the two beings with animal-like faces and upraised arms. Another figure with the same face is present on the opposite side of the scene, outside the circle round the actors, seemingly an external spectator. The three beings with the strange faces are not dancing, but appear to be observers. The upraised hands have a meaning, tentatively a sign of involvement or approval.

When compared with beings with animal faces in North African rock art, they appear to be totemic spirits. This hypothesis would indicate the concept of the presence of imaginary beings in the ceremony, a common concept repeated in the rock art images of North Africa and persisting in tribal traditions. The



totemic spirits are present; they evaluate the actions of the living humans and they have the power of making the human actions successful or unsuccessful according to their will.

The same concept of the function of ancestral spirits is still present in the animistic ceremonies of Central Africa. Migrations of the last 5,000 years have changed the population of the Maghreb, pushing native populations further south. But before that these populations were present throughout North Africa as far as the Mediterranean coast. And likely they professed the art of navigation.

The style and concept of the Addaura cave are nearer to African than European prehistoric art. Even the elegant representation of dancing figures is nearer to the African parallel rather than the European. These various considerations of both conceptual background and figurative style would indicate the Addaura cave has an African nature, suggesting both its conceptual background and its date. This third phase of the Addaura engravings to our mind has African roots, and is not Paleolithic, as is claimed by the publications mentioned above, but belongs to the Neolithic period.



Fig. 13a. One of the dancers of the main scene, displaying a style nearer to African than Italian rock art.

Fig. 13b. Rock paintings of Wed Mertoitek, Hoggar, Algeria. Elegant and harmonious dancing girls, early pastoral Neolithic period.

The two actors

Facial features are absent in all the figures of the scene: there are no traces of eyes, mouths or noses. Some evidence abundant hair, others appear bald. Of the two main actors, one has abundant hair, the other is bald. The presence or absence of hair might distinguish between two different identities, but is unlikely to indicate the male and female gender as no breast or other features of the body indicate difference in gender. It might show two different status of beings



Figs 14a, 14b. Photo and tracing of the two actors. Nothing is tying their necks.

in the scene. The dancers have hair; one of the two actors is bald and the other has hair; and one of the two totemic spirits with upraised arms has hair and the other is bald. What does all this mean? No doubt, if commemorating an event in which spirits also had a role, history and mythology are partners in this scene. The two actors' legs are bent at the knees; one has arms bent at the elbow, the other has arms extended forward in a posture like jumping and protecting his fall with his arms. These postures are meant to describe the action, but it is not totally explicit to our minds, thus causing disparate hypotheses. Both actors' sexual organs are much more emphatic than the other figures in the circle (perhaps because it is a phallic sheath or an artificial sexual appendage).

Both of them have lines behind their backs which may represent ropes or strings. Previous authors have claimed that the strings are tying the legs to the neck, in order to strangle them, but the images do not show any trace of tying at the neck or the legs. The lines must have a meaning; maybe they represent ropes or something else, perhaps garments related to the performance. One of the actors, the one with hair, has one line marked, while the bald one has two lines. Whether representing a material item or a symbolic sign, the lines could indicate the different status of the two.

Hypotheses on the function of the scene

In order to understand the meaning of the scene, the first question is what was the motive for producing the image. This question was barely considered in earlier interpretations. The scene seems to commemorate an event which took place locally with the participation of beings with animal heads, presumably totemic spirits.

Various interpretations have been suggested. The first scholar to study these engravings, J. Marconi-Bovio (1953a, 1953b), considered the scene to be a performance of acrobats, with the two actors displaying their skills while the audience danced around them. This would be relevant for a recent circus, but is unlikely in a tribal context. The figurative art of animistic societies are records of meaningful events or beliefs, with the participation of spirits and other mysterious forces; thus, human events have a conceptual background.

What made them represent this scene? What event is immortalized that took place on the seashore of Sicily by the will of totemic spirits?

Another hypothesis was that of A.C. Blanc (1954, 1955), who considered it described ritual killing by strangulation. The lines behind the back of each actor were defined as ropes tied between the neck and the legs, causing self-strangulation, while the audience was happily dancing around. The figures do not show any binding of ropes around the neck, which makes this interpretation theoretical and speculative, with no contextual support.

Yet another hypothesis was elaborated by F. Mezzena, who compiled a detailed though theoretical stratigraphy of the panel, dating various phases to the Paleolithic and the Epipaleolithic, seeing the scene as a game between two people, one throwing something and the other catching it (Mezzena, 1976). Other authors have suggested other interpretations, from a

homosexual male performance to a generic fertility cult, to a fight between rivals.

The fact that the scene was engraved supposes that the event had to be recorded and remembered. The dancers represent socialization and presumably an agreeable event. The presence of the emphatic sex, be it with a penis-sheath or artificial penis, indicates sexual function. The hypothesized presence of totemic spirits would indicate the important conceptual background of the scene.

Theoretically, it may represent an initiation rite or another ritual ceremonial event such as is still performed in African tribal traditions. The location on the seashore may point to the commemoration of something real or mythical connected with the seashore, an event concerning beings with and without hair, a happening, an encounter or a fight. Recording the event on the rock surface may indicate the function of the site in what is being commemorated.



Fig. 15. Initiation fertility dance, c. 1930. Two male actors perform the union while people dance in a circle around them. See posture of the dancers in the background. Region of Oubagui, Bambari, Central African Republic.

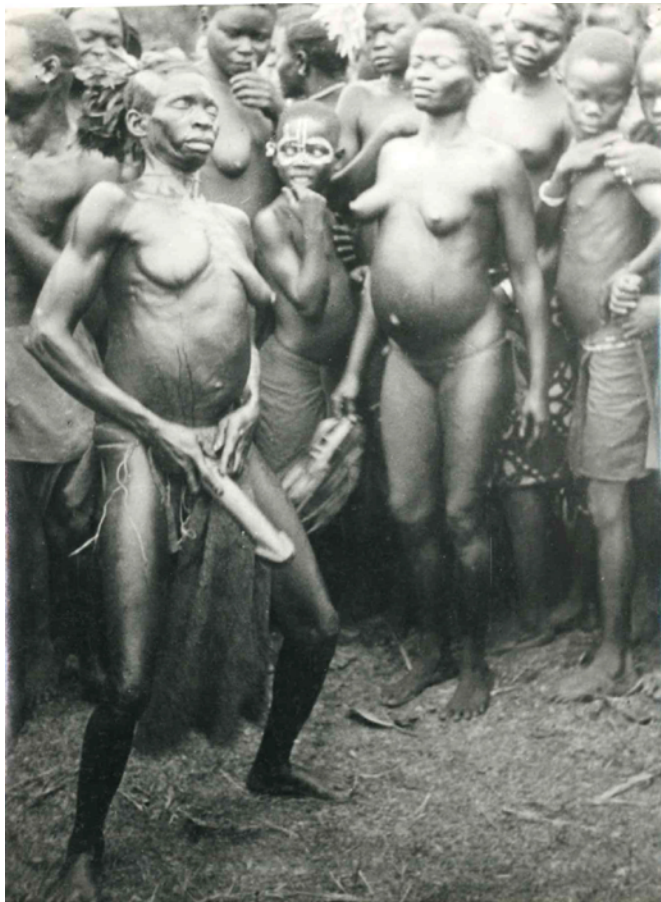


Fig. 16a. An old woman wearing a wooden penis prepares for symbolic penetration, while the young woman waits for the act of initiation. Region of Oubagui, Bambari, Central African Republic.

Fig. 16b. The process of initiation with symbolic penetration.



Ethnographic parallels

Ethnographic records indicate the persistence of traditional habits and ceremonies among animistic societies in sub-Saharan and central Africa, mainly related to initiation practices and other rites of passage, or the commemoration of real or mythical events, as illustrated by the images.

Conclusions

The engraved surface of the Addaura cave, as described above, includes three phases of engravings. The earlier two have animal figures as the dominant subject, and they fit the typology and stylistic definitions of two local patterns, one belonging to the late Upper Paleolithic defined by Graziosi as Mediterranean, the other to the Epipaleolithic currently defined as Romanellian. The third phase has anthropomorphic images as the dominant subject. Typological and stylistic considerations have led us to derive it from Neolithic African roots.

This phase is likely to have been the work of people reaching Sicily from Africa by sea sometime between 8000 and 5000 BC. So far it is a unique visual case testimony of an African presence in Sicily in the Neolithic, which raises further enquiry on other evidence for this presence.

The scene is describing and likely commemorating an event which could have taken place in its vicinity, on the waterfront, where the sea presents a sure and suitable anchorage. The event could have been an initiation ceremony or a thanksgiving performance, with the presence of ancestral spirits. A hypothesis suggested by its location is its relation to the successful landfall of a seafarer and an encounter between two different people, those without and those with hair.

One way or the other, the scene causes us to question the African presence in Sicily during the Neolithic period, and whether the Addaura cave presents an

isolated event or part of some sort of colonization. A systematic rethinking of the many and rich Neolithic findings in Sicily may help us to further consider the serious question of how much of Africa there is in the prehistory of Sicily.

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THE FUNCTION OF PALEOLITHIC MOBILE ART IN SIBERIA¹

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Introduction

Our understanding and emotional interpretation of environments are influenced by deeply rooted dispositions. Certain sensation enter our sensory system is highly specific signals carrying a message. Paleolithic cultures are important pacemakers of the evolution, especially in art, and symbolic activity in the Past in whole. The evaluation and interpretation of signs in our environment can be seen as a result of special our senses to the impact and mass of information from outside and have been selected for in the long process of human evolution. The discussion about signs and their interpretations as a markers of cultures of the Past can has a lot of wide fields and directions. We are not believe that we are be able to postulate universal human disposition to perceive, feel, think and behave, also to express the ideas using the images of the Past. Siberian Upper Paleolithic assemblages display cultural traits similar to European Upper Paleolithic assemblages. However, this superficial similarity does not provide ground either for the correspondence of the European to the northeast Asian Paleolithic record, or for speculations about long-distance migration of prehistoric European populations. Siberia is also relevant to the timing and conditions of human adaptation to the high latitudes of Eurasia, as well as the initial colonization of Pleistocene Beringia and the northwestern part of the American continent. The Malta site is located in Baikal-zone (South Siberia) (Fig.1), and is look as a key to understanding Paleolithic migration processes in northeast Eurasia, especially in combination with ancient DNA (Willerslev & Raghavan, 2013).

The time-space structure of the classical stage of the Upper Paleolithic is very complicated. Industries based on advanced blade technologies with rich, diversified lithic, bone, and antler tools, predominate. One of the famous Siberian archaeological objects of the last Glacial is Malta-Site (Baikal-region).

The Malta assemblage includes many archaic components such as side scrapers, pebble tools, and Levallois and discoidal cores. As such, the Malta Culture is now regarded as having local roots (Medvedev et al., 1996, 2001; Lipnina, 2012; Lbova, 2014). The Ice Age period is, like in other parts of the Old World, rich in artifacts, such as superb mobile art and personal ornaments, which reflect more than their utilitarian way of life. No other period in Paleolithic northeast Asia is comparable. Upper Paleolithic sites show evidence of intensive procurement of reindeer, mammoth, and woolly rhinoceros, and at such sites as Malta and Buret', there is evidence of specialized reindeer hunting. Of course, hunting was not for meat only.

Numerous remains of arctic fox, red fox, wolverine, and wolf at Malta imply a source of fur for the Paleolithic inhabitants. During the classical stage of Upper Paleolithic, we see evidence for a flourishing culture of reindeer and mammoth hunters as evidenced by diverse blade let lithic industries, a rich series of bone and antler implements, personal ornaments, and mobile art objects. Along with stone tool industries based on the removal of blades from prismatic cores, the classic period also witnessed the growth of bone tools and small forms of expressive art.



Fig. 1 Situational location Malta's sites position in the Baikal region (South Siberia)

¹ We are republishing an article which is actual again and fits the topic of the present issue.

The middle Upper Paleolithic assemblages such as of Malta, Buret' and Achinskaia, with the majority of tools on small blades, were contemporaneous with another sites of East and West part of Siberia. Despite some shared features, mostly in lithotechnology, there are marked differences, and entirely grouping them is impossible. Similarities in tool types, ornamental designs, and art styles of Malta and Buret', however, gave rise to the definition of the Malta Culture by A. P. Okladnikov (Okladnikov, 1968). Worth mentioning here is the appearance of micro blade technology, which became ubiquitous in Siberia in the Final Paleolithic.

To summarize, Malta is the typical site of the final stage of Siberian's Ice Age, especially middle of Upper Paleolithic Period (Last Glacial Maximum). The site was discovered and excavated between 1928 and 1958 by M. M. Gerasimov (Gerasimov, 1931, 1941, 1958), the group of Irkutsk State University scholars has continued research there until now. Currently, Malta has produced stratified culture deposits dating from 43,000/41,000 to 12,000 years 14C BP.



Fig. 2 Option interpretation of the furs clothing Malta's figurines.
a - Child's figurines, Hermitage Museum No. 370/752
b - Photo of the Chukchi child's "kerker" (V. Bogoraz, 1904, plate XXVI, fig. 1)

The "classical" component from Gerasimov's excavation, characterized by ivory artifacts, anthropomorphic sculptures, and habitation features, dates between 19,000 and 23,000 years 14C BP according last results (Medvedev et al., 1996; Lipnina, 2002, 2012). Particular attention among the archaeological finds in Malta-site always attract anthropomorphic figurines, which have become a historical source for our understanding of the life characteristics of the population of Siberia during the Ice Age. In this article, we wish to show our results obtained using microscopic analysis in the collection of anthropomorphic figurines. The most unexpected result was that we saw the traces on the surface of the figurines that were not spotted earlier, as they are not visible to the naked eye, due to the ravages of time. New results help us to reconstruct the technological steps of the processing anthropomorphic figurines (Lbova & Volkov, 2015). May be in future we can answer more questions.

Materials and methods

Our investigation of the ivory samples focused on morphology, technical and typological classification, experiment and microscopic analysis (Gerasimov, 1941; Semenov, 1964; Filippov, 2004). We used dry, wet, and frozen ivory to replicate the ornamental technology. We believe the decorative surfaces of moister ivory were easier to work. The ivory's Malta anthropomorphic and zoomorphic sculptures, rods, and disks are of the utmost importance when we evaluate Malta's symbolic material culture. One of our tasks is to find continuity to understand if there is retention of elements, techniques, and composition.

Malta's materials of mobile art collect 856 products of bone, horns, and ivory materials (Lipnina, 2012). There are identified few categories of figurines based on morphology, of these value anthropomorphic group (including figurines, blanks, pieces and parts (head) – 32 objects. All but two of these are made of ivory, most are complete and they show remarkable homogeneity. All have heads and many detailed faces and hair (or headdress). Their bodies and flat and elongated and there are no signs of obesity or pregnancy. Z. Abramova on the basis of detailed stylistic analysis of European and Siberian female statuettes identified



Fig. 3 Alternative interpretation of the ornament Malta figurine.

a - Child's figure, Hermitage Museum No. 370/753

b - picture of summer clothes of seal intestines by V. Bogoraz (V. Bogoraz, 1904, p. 247, fig. 180a)

some specific features Malta and Buret' collections (Abramova, 1995).

According our technological principles all anthropomorphic sculptures (i.e., finished products) we divided in three categories (Lbova&Volkov, 2015):

1. Shaped figures with body elements with and without decoration, but with clothes and accessories engraved,
2. Flat, engraved figures with and without decoration,
3. Decorated heads.

Some of the figurines are just blank pieces, which were ready to the sculpture's works. Previously, there had been different approaches to the classification of these figurines, but the basic division of the figurines was into "dressed" and "naked" (Gerasimov, 1958; Abramova, 1966; Filippov, 2004). Our research

showed that all of them are more or less "dressed". There were not only technological traces of processing the ivory with knife or burin, microscope analysis showed the elements of the dresses and accessories of Paleolithic persons. These traces showed more details of clothes than we had seen previously: bracelets, hats, shoes, bags and even backpacks. In other words, they are prototypes and this allows us to reconstruct all the steps in their creation. This approach allowed us to reveal many interesting new details and review some ideas about these sculptures. Microscopic analysis allows seeing the different types of hats, hairstyles, shoes and accessories, which were depicted with thin lines by stone burin or special type of knife. The ancient masters used different techniques to

highlight the different materials - furlather, and special symbols or decorations. In the realistic elements of clothing and hats are obviously seen the details of traditional outerwear of Ice Age peoples. The most popular outerwear on the figurines are fur coveralls - "kerkery" as worn by children and women in the extreme North of Siberia (Fig.2). In the collection of Mal'ta figurines, the overalls are more typical for small sculptures (2-5 cm in height). Besides, all the figures dressed in overalls have a disproportionately large head, such proportions we see in children under 5 years old, dressed in overalls with high hoods. In other words, these sculptures show small children in clothes typical for them and in the same proportions. We believe Mikhail Gerasimov was right describing these figurines as a "kinder garden".

On other sculptures, possible, we can see overalls made of guts, probably from fish or seals, which people wore in summer (Fig.3).

On the next figurines, we establish short parkas, similar ones in the culture of the indigenous people who live in the northeast of Eurasia, like the Koryaks and Itilmens people (Fig.4). One of the more interesting details there is image of the one nude breast. The fact was marked earlier, and it was reading as the symbol of Death, underground sphere.

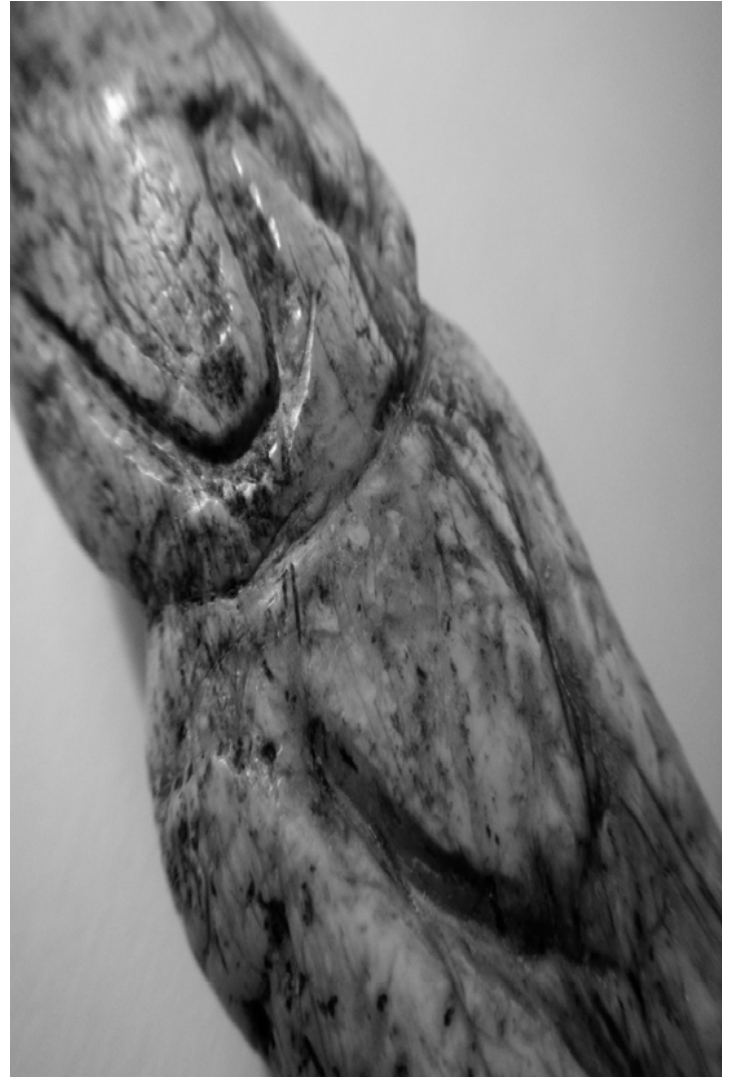
On one hand the base of this fact, some of scientists believe the Malta figurines are symbol of death people. However, another hand we find analogy in the real life of Chukchi. As a rule on summer, the nurse-women do not close one breast for the baby (Fig.5) (Bogoraz, 1904).



Fig. 4 Interpretation of outerwear such as "parks" adult.
a - Anthropomorphic figure, Hermitage Museum No. 370/748
b - Pattern winter clothing Northern Aboriginal



Fig. 5 Interpretation of partially clothed figures
a - Photo Chukchi women in a typical (V. Bogoraz, 1904, plate XXVII, fig. 3)



b - fragment of the figures "with one breast" Hermitage Museum No. 370/748

On the two figurines, we can also see the bags and in one case a traditional back pack with two straps (FIG. 6). The figure is probably showing a teenager. It has not so much detail, and it is not clear if this is male or female, yet the proportions of bodies show that this is definitely a teenager.

There are no indication of breasts on the one of the pieces, as on the "kinder garden's group".

Most interesting are the hats and hairstyles. There are fur 'helmets' meaning a hat that covers the head and part of shoulders; normal hats and hoods (FIG. 7 - a,b). The most common are these fur 'helmets' that cover the head, neck, ears, cheeks and chin. In one case, there was a high roll under the chin like a fur scarf,

or a closed collar of fur. Another type is the helmet, which gently falls on the back and shoulders, as might a modern firefighter's hat (FIG. 7-c). In all cases, the depictions are cleared between the headdresses and the hairstyles.

Discussion

More than 150 years of studying Paleolithic mobile art, and especially the anthropomorphic figures in terms of their semantic meaning allows us to offer several associated areas of interpretations (Marshak, 1991; Barton et al, 1994; Soffer et. al, 2000; Art as Behavior. An Ethnological Approach to Visual and Verbal Art, Music and Architecture. 2014), etc.



Fig. 6 Detail of the image “shoulders bags”, or bags:

a1 - Women's figure with bag, Hermitage Museum No. 370/743

a2 - a. “Teenager's figurine” - Hermitage Museum No. 370/755

b. The enlarged detail (backpack), Hermitage Museum No. 370/755

We have tried to link the known variants of explanations anthropomorphic figurines function in archaic societies and indicate some authors and their basic research in relation to Malta figurines:

1. The image of specific living people (live model) (Abramova, 1966; Frolov, 1987; Soffer et al., 2000; Cohen, 2003; Lbova & Volkov, 2015):

- a copy of the individual with the characteristic elements of the constitution, clothing, accessories;
- individual physical type as an aesthetic ideal;
- personal physiological state (pregnancy, feature of the constitution);
- fixing the age and sex categories of the community (children, teenager, girls, woman of the productive age, old woman);
- magic wishes of the target or promising of the sexual actions;
- nostalgia for the departed (deceased) person

2. The image of the woman as an object of ritual actions, including image of a nude women (or breastfeeding women) as a tool in the rituals associated with fertility

(Frolov, 1975; Cohen, 2003);

3. The generalized image of progenitor (ancestor's legendary image) as a symbolic expression of blood-related family was proposed by A. P. Okladnikov (Okladnikov, 1968);

4. Domestic patron, spirits in the pantheon of the family (grandma, hostess, mistress of animals) or a universal spirit helper (Tokarev, 1961; Frolov, 1975, 1987; Cohen, 2003).

5. Malta's figurine as the tool of astrological operations (Larichev, 1999; Frolov, 1975, 1987).

M. Gerasimov, who excavated this rare Ice Age settlement, considered the clear connection between the anthropomorphic figurines and habitation sphere, or persons who lived in it. All the figurines were found within the living facilities of ancient settlement, some of them even in ritual places in limit the home: some of them were covered with mammoth scapula bone or sprinkled with ochre (Gerasimov, 1931, 1958).

Some of the Malta figurines are perforated by a circular hole at the base or an oval slit between the lower legs

Fig. 7 Options of the different head (cap.)



1 - Men's cap (a. Hermitage Museum No. 370/748; b. picture by V. Bogoraz (V. Bogoraz, 1904, page 242, Fig. 173b)



2 - Children's hats (a. Hermitage Museum No. 370/752; b. picture by Bogoraz V (V. Bogoraz, 1904, page 242, fig. 173a)



3 - type headdress "firefighter helmet" (a. Hermitage Museum No. 370/743; b. picture of the same type of hat (V. Bogoraz, 1904, p. 243, fig. 175)

so that they could be treated and worn upside down as pendant and seen the right way round when held in the hand. However, our analysis also shows that small holes on the figurine likely have another purpose. We can only suggest that they could be firmly attached to clothing, so they did not to move. The other idea is that they could be attached to a cradle with leather laces, in keeping with a known tradition among Siberian indigenous groups. Both ideas are suppose the idea of the defense, guarding function for the person (or baby).

There is surprisingly presentation of the hard realism and a clear-detailed image of the Malta figurines. We also noted portrait individuality of each figure, the characteristic features of the natural constitution, age features (baby, infant, teenager, young women, nurse-women, old women), individual clothing and accessories. These circumstances certainly point to the real image of the person, who ancient master looked and knew.

Conclusion

In recent years, the phenomena of the Art increasingly been examined from the vantage point of human ethology and evolutionary psychology. Several book publications, inspired by this novel approach, have found an interdisciplinary readership, among them: *Beauty and the Brain* (1988), *Homo Aesthetic* (1992), *An Anthropology of Art* (2006), *Art as Behavior* (2014) and so on, using on a large comparative diachronic and cross-cultural study of the paintings and sculptures basing on the evolutionary paradigm.

In the process of the evolution by the Man was a formed system of signs from simple, from based on simulation of the natural phenomena to the complicated cultural system. One key-concept of ethology is that of ritualization. During the process of the ritualization of behavior into expressive movement, behavioral patterns undergo specific changes serving conspicuousness, distinctiveness and unambiguity. Simplification and exaggeration of behavioral sequences and amplitudes of movements occur as well as a rhythmic repetition. Cultural symbols, along with the symbols body, gestures and language are constants of human communications. Study Malta anthropomorphic sculpture in the

framework of symbolic interactionism concept by G. Mead (Mead, 1934) can explain the realistic art style, attention of the ancient masters to detail (also clothing and accessories), the selection of technology and the nature of the engravings. Microscopic studies of anthropomorphic sculpture collection it possible to identify process steps of raw material selection, its primary processing, techniques of engraving elements of figures, as well as features of the decor. The cumulative technological and iconographic analysis leads us to the understanding of the sculpture such as Maltinskaya as sustainable element of culture and social communication that determined realism of the artistic style.

The new technical possibilities and new data propose analyze the objects of mobile art not only as a source for the study of the material culture of the Paleolithic population of Siberia. Hope, they will be help to find base moment in the system of evidence of the functional purpose in the semantic context of mobile art in Malta.

Considering the features of the processing technology raw materials, techniques and decoration detail of the mobile art subjects as part of the behavior of Paleolithic man, with the release of the most common elements, it is possible to set the behavioral “cultural pattern” for the Upper Paleolithic communities in the northern. The study of visual techniques in primitive art Siberia reveals a number of artistic features, which form a system unconsciously, developed cultural codes transmitted through symbols and images.

One of the main theses of symbolic interactionism is the assertion that the individual personality is always social, ie, a person cannot be formed outside society. The behavior of an individual is determined, according to the symbolic concept of communication by three variables: the structure of the personality, the role of the reference group and the “recognition” symbol. From our understanding, Malta’s figurines there are an element of social communication that determines the realism of the artistic style.

In the process of the evolution by the Man were formed systems of signs from simple, based on simulation of the natural phenomena to the complicated cultural system. One key-concept of ethology is that of ritualization. During the process of the ritualization of behavior

into an expressive movement, behavioral patterns undergo specific changes serving conspicuousness, distinctiveness and unambiguity. Simplification and exaggeration of behavioral sequences and amplitudes of movements occur as well as a rhythmic repetition. We have, in principle, an enormously wide range of individual perception and action, but it has become reasonably clear in the last decades that Primitive Art has some fundamental mainstream on the biopsychological, and social levels, thereby supra-individual.

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STONEHENGE: THE STATION STONES WHICH SERVED AS INTERIM SOLAR ICONS DURING THE BUILDING PERIOD OF THE SARSEN-STONE MONUMENT

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Abstract

Examined anew at Stonehenge are the meanings of the four stones known as 'station stones' each of which stood separately in the temenos near the surrounding circular outer ditch. Flinders Petrie in 1880 numbered the stones 91 to 94. It has long been known that each pair, 91/92 and 93/94, align to the summer solstice sunrise and the winter-solstice sunset. Now that Stonehenge has been proved to be a temple (Meaden 2023; 2024a,b,c; 2026), a new explanation can be given which recognizes that during the sarsen-building phase lasting many decades, Stonehenge was a chaotic building site and that the four stones were positioned distantly from the works so that they would serve the sun-worshipping needs of priests and people at the solstices. Afterwards, when no longer needed, the stones were retained and preserved in memoriam. Stone G was a fifth stone introduced to complete the set of four solstice alignments and four extreme lunar alignments.

Introduction

The masterpiece of architecture which is Stonehenge (Fig. 1; Fig. 2) was for at least 2200 years a fully functioning temple in which the sun was worshipped as divine because its everlasting radiance was recognized as essential for life on Earth. Such beliefs were typical of prehistoric farming communities who lacked scientific knowledge about the true nature of the sun. Antiquarians and archaeologists of recent centuries admitted to never understanding the original true purpose of Stonehenge. In recent months a monograph by Prof. Clive Ruggles and Amanda Chapman (2024, 176) compiled for The Historic England/English Heritage Trust concluded "Stonehenge. Was it a sun temple ...? We think not—not in the sense that it was built to worship a sun deity ... Stonehenge was not built as a temple to the sun, but rather to sight the sun.... at the solstices." In similar vein Prof. Mike

Parker Pearson (2024; 2025) "claimed Stonehenge is "not a temple—that has been a major stumbling block for hundreds of years. It's not a calendar, and it's not an observatory".

It is only with the publication of the present author's reappraisal of Pytheas the Greek's voyage to Britain about 325 BCE (Meaden 2023a; 2024a,b,c) and the recognition that the monument was centered by a carved, phallic standing stone next to the Altar Stone, that Stonehenge has been demonstrably proved to be a temple to the sun. By reason of the author's research of the last 40 years (Meaden 2024d; 2026), the several dozen prehistoric stone circles of Britain and Ireland so far analyzed are also known to be sanctuaries devoted to the sun.

Neolithic communities daily knew that after the darkness of night their lives depended upon the morning return of the sun with its vital light and warmth. The world was a precarious place for farming folk who, then as now, needed the right weather, especially rain and sunshine, at timely intervals during the cycles of the seasons for successful crop cultivation

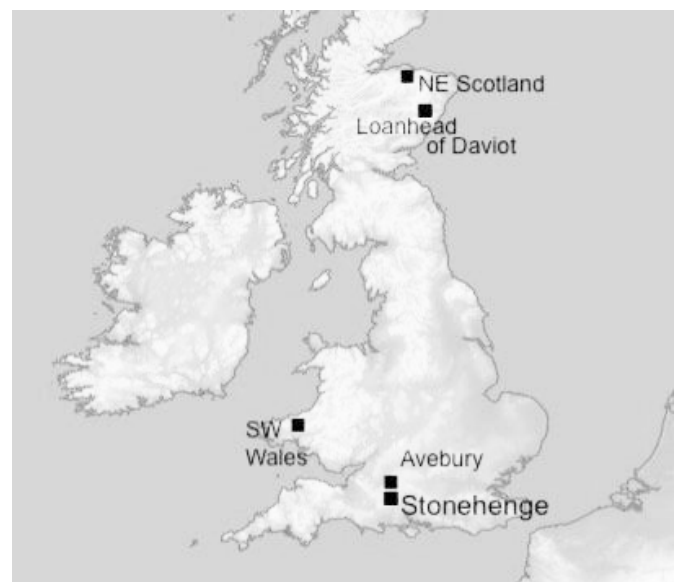


Fig. 1. The location in northwest Europe of Stonehenge, England.



Fig. 2. Stonehenge, showing Stone 91 at the extreme left, far to the southeast of the monument after sunrise on 14 June 2021.

and animal-stock rearing. Effective fertility was key to their lives. Religion was believed to provide the beneficent answers they wanted. A priestly class would arise whose intention at Stonehenge was to deliver a unique fertility-type spectacle as a marvel to behold. Fundamental to the issue is that nobody knew the science behind the creation of life, the Earth, the sun, and the world. In earlier millennia someone devised the idea that the sun was responsible for everything, and that in the course of time hunting, farming and fertility success depended on recognizing this in appropriate ways. Sometime after agriculture and stock-raising commenced, the first monuments were being built. In Britain, all the chambered long barrows of Wessex (Wiltshire, Dorset, Somerset and Gloucestershire have been provenly sunrise-orientated (Meaden 2025). The concept of stone circles followed a few centuries later. Many were sunrise-orientated. The nearest circles to the Salisbury Plain clan where Stonehenge would be built were at Avebury, the stone circles gigantic in circumference and individual-stone-size. The Stonehenge people likely thought they could never compete in a similar way; they had almost no megaliths of comparable size. Time passed. Eventually, in the 26th-century BCE an ambitious leader arose—powerful, religious, authoritative—who, thro timely good luck, had within his clan a person or priest with the capability of being, or becoming, a gifted architect. This person proposed an exceptional structure of such audacity that the community likely thought the Sun-God would approve and the builders would be rewarded thereby. Sources of the required

sarsen stones were known but they had to moved, shaped and raised. The work would take decades. The people who would do the hardest work were ordinary farmworkers who would need tactful encouragement by inspiring priests to be freed from farmwork and labor at transportation, stone-abrasion, modeling and erection. Rewards would follow completion: better crops, healthier livestock, easier farmwork, a fulfilling eternity.

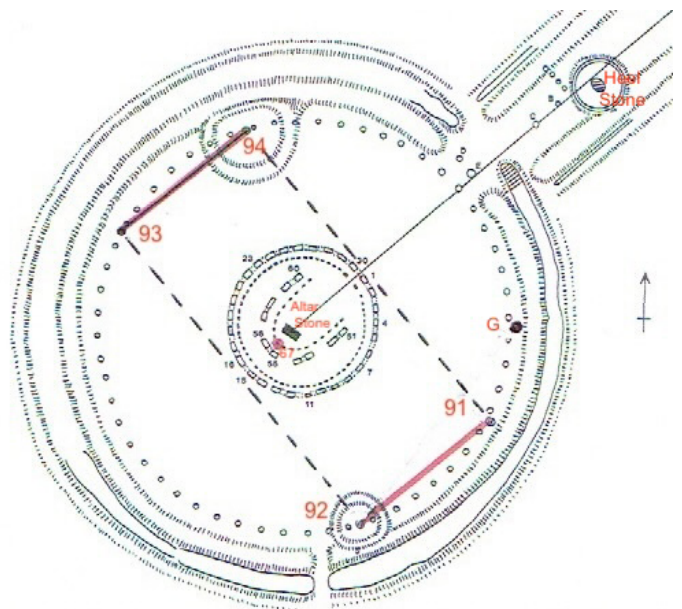


Fig. 3. Plan showing the positions of the four station stones relative to midsummer sunrise and midwinter sunset. Supposing that the missing Stones 92 and 94 were male-symbolic (because each is surrounded by the sacrality of a ring-ditch like the Heel Stone), Stones 93 to 94 align to the summer-solstice sunrise. Stones 91 to 92 align to the winter-solstice sunset. The carved phallic Stone 67 is indicated by a red spot on the axis behind the Altar Stone.



Fig. 4. A reconstruction showing how the sun used to be eclipsed by the Heel Stone at the summer solstice 4500 years ago.

Fig. 5. The shadow enters Stonehenge and unites with the female-symbolic Altar Stone.

There must have been a strongly religious powerbase, although not necessarily politically organized as in a totalitarian theocracy.

Work on the sarsen stage from about 2550 BCE

The sarsens of the monument including the station stones came from the beds of sarsen stones at West Woods, near Marlborough 30 km away. Those raised to the vertical in the outer ring of the main monument mostly weighed 15 to 20 tonnes apiece. The heaviest and highest trilithon stone (Stone 56, at 28-30 tonnes) is 9 m long allowing for the length below ground. Construction works likely took a century or more with ramps, trenches, timbers and ropes across the site. It is proposed that in this period the stones known as 'station' stones were purposefully paired with respect to the summer-solstice sunrise and winter-solstice sunset (Fig. 3).

Fertility and solar temples have an inner sanctum centered with icons to the deities. Millions of temples built to Hindu gods in the last five thousand years bear witness to this. Stonehenge has cult stones too. In order to explain the purpose of the four 'station stones' we need first to examine the two cult images

which center Stonehenge and consider the singleton known as the Heel Stone which stands 80 m away in the direction of summer-solstice sunrise.

The cult stone named the Altar Stone was laid flat on the ground across the axis near the circle center. Its origin was a quarry some 750 km away in northeast Scotland where recumbent stone circles are numerous (Bevins et al. (2023); Parker Pearson et al. 2025). The Scottish stone was perhaps a generous religious gift which replaced a preceding lesser stone. At Stonehenge the Altar Stone served two functions when lying lengthwise on the earthen soil and conforming to figuratively-feminine qualities, much explained for the Aberdeenshire stone circles (Meaden 2023b; 2025a) where each female-symbolic recumbent stone is attended by a figuratively-phallic upright stone abutting either end like a guardian sentinel. The appellation Earth Mother, or *Màthair na Talmhainn* in Scottish Gaelic, may apply.

Close behind on the Stonehenge axis, a slim 4-metre-long Welsh bluestone stood 2.6 m high above ground level. Its shape was recently recognized as a sculptured phallus (Meaden 2023a; 2024a,b,c). This powerful male fertility image was deliberately positioned on the



Fig. 6. Stone 91 on 8 July 2016.

axis to accompany the feminine-symbolic Altar Stone. Such icons when paired inside an inner sanctuary were ritual foci available for worship by devotees at any time of the year, day or night, and not just at the summer solstice which is the second situation involving the Altar Stone although this time it is allied with the distant Heel Stone (Fig. 4). Remark how the purpose of the Heel Stone is well perceived from within the inner sanctum of Stonehenge when the summer-solstice sun gets to be eclipsed at sunrise, but also note that the same occasion is widely and well appreciated when witnessed by hundreds of spectators standing outside (Fig. 5). External observers could watch the shadow of the Heel Stone penetrate the monument; while watchers inside see the phallic shadow of the Heel Stone make union with the Altar Stone (Meaden 2023a; 2024a,b,c,d).

The Station Stones

The geological research of Nash et al. (2020; 2021) informs that the surviving station stones 91 and 93 (and therefore likely the irretrievable missing Stones 92 and 94) came from the sarsen-stone beds in West Woods near Marlborough, about 30 km north of Stonehenge. This suggests it is likely that their arrival at Stonehenge may have coincided with the sarsen-stone building period of 2550 BCE onward. The bluestone period of the Late Neolithic Age at Stonehenge from ca. 3000 BCE would have been an earlier time and place of solar devotion, as at neighboring Avebury in this same 500-year time interval.

Hence, it is here proposed that the 'station' stones were positioned not for architectural reasons of so-called geometrical 'station-setting' but because of being given functional duties to do with the community's



Fig. 7. Stone 91 on 27 July 1999 at 0618 GMT.



Fig. 8. Stone 91 on 17 April 1998.



Fig. 9. Stone 91 on 8 July 2016.

need to perpetuate and not suspend their solstice sun worship. This leads to a realistic fresh suggestion about the purpose of the stones. It recognizes that the two station-stone pairs were positioned so that solstice-sunrise worship would continue during the long years of the laborious building works when devotion inside the unfinished inner temple was impossible. This explanation starts with the plan in Fig. 3 as previously indicated.

Although Stones 92 and 94 are missing we can suppose that each stone must have been highly regarded by the priest-led community because both were accorded a zone of sacred space enclosed by a ring ditch. Like the Heel Stone and its ring ditch, Stones 92 and 94 could have been phallic. By contrast, the remains of the surviving damaged Stones 91 and 93 are not phallic (Figs. 6 to 11).

Feminine symbolism may be apparent in various facets of the images of Stone 91. Little can be said about the much abused, truncated Stone 93 (Figs. 10; 11).

Fig. 10. The battered Stone 93. 27 July 1999.

Fig. 11. Stone 93 and the last sight of the upper limb of the setting sun. 11 September 2025.





Fig. 12. Between Stone 91 and the camera is the circular area which used to be centered by Stone 92. 92-to-91 is the direction along which a winter-solstice shadow at sunset would fall.

Fig. 13. 15 December 2005: This is the week of the winter-solstice sunset. The hump at the left is the fallen Stone 91 viewed in profile. The author as photographer is standing at the foot of this fallen stone while facing the position of distant Stone 92 where a colleague stands.

Regarding the plan in Fig. 3 the four 'station' stones were likely positioned for the solar-solstice pairings using contrasting symbolic genders that functioned at midsummer sunrise and at midwinter sunset. Remembering that because in the 26th century BC, and likely for part of the next century too, the sacred precinct of Stonehenge was a vast building site, then the author's proposal is that the paired likely-dimorphic stones (91/92 and 93/94) were set as far from the central area of construction work as was reasonably possible, in the northwestern and southeastern segments of the Stonehenge temenos.

Experiment

While the five trilithons of the inner sanctuary were under construction, the cult stones, Stone 67 and the Altar Stone, could not be positioned inside the sanctum for praise and worship. Instead, veneration at the summer-solstice sunrise was rendered feasible by another means using positioned stones 94 and 93 and at the winter-solstice sunset using stones 92 and 91. Figures 12 and 13 disclose the landscape situation for the latter pair of stones.

A reconstruction was attempted on 15 December 2005. The concept was that at winter-solstice sunset a shadow would reach Stone 91 from a proxy for Stone 92 at Stone-hole 92 (Fig. 13). A colleague stood at the vacant position of Stone 92 with the December afternoon sun setting behind, while the author with camera stood in line at the foot of the reclining Stone 91. The image demonstrates the landscape relationship between Stones 92, 91 and the setting sun. Allowing for the date of the year being six days before the winter solstice and that the sun had not yet set, the solstice sunset clearly works as providing another distinct potentiality for hierogamy by alignment and shadow casting at Stonehenge.

A similar test idea could be repeated in the week of the summer-solstice sunrise when a shadow from a replacement for Stone 94 would meet 93.

Why were the four station stones disposed like this?

A practical credible explanation for arranging the station stones could have been as a short-term measure during the initial decades of the building of the sarsen monument when the inner space or naos was in

upheaval as a construction site. At the time of raising every stone, individual ramps were constructed as proved by evidence from modern excavations (Cleal et al. 1995). Until the raising of the five trilithons of the naos had been completed, neither cult stone (namely, the medial phallic Stone 67 and the Altar Stone) could have been positioned. Despite the confusion of the work site, the judicious placing of the four so-called station stones would have allowed religious devotion to continue at the solstices, including the witnessing of stone-to-stone connections by shadow at summer-solstice sunrise. We now address what might be regarded as feasible, but unintended, consequences of the station-stone positionings.

The moon

This next consideration follows from noting that the direction from 92 to 93 is the direction on the horizon where the moon sets at its extreme northerly limit (Fig. 14). Contrariwise, the sightline from 93 to 92 corresponds to the extreme southerly moonrise.

It is suspected that these lunar alignments involving 92 and 93 (and 91 and 94) result from what is only a chance situation of geographical latitude. It simply happens that at the latitudes of the southern part

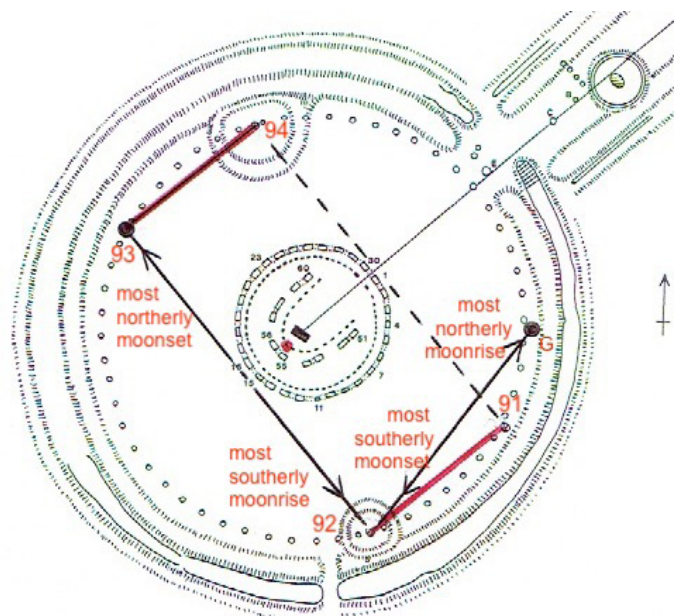


Fig. 14. Showing how Stone 92 may be pivotal as to lunar extreme risings and settings. Additionally, Stone G when observed from Stone 94 is the direction of winter solstice sunrise.

of Wiltshire which include Stonehenge two of the extreme solar and two of aforementioned extreme lunar sightlines are geometrically at right angles to one another.

Hence, one can understand that once the positionings of 91/92 and 93/94 as paired sunrise/sunset directions had been decided, the directional settings of 91/94 and 92/93 at right angles follow without further aforethought. In other words, the stated lunar lines could be merely a geometrically logical but wholly unintended consequence, achieved without any knowledge as to limits of extreme lunar risings and settings. In other words, the extreme northerly moonset and extreme southerly moonrise in the arranged station-stone plan may be accidental.

This could also explain why the extreme lunar directions for the most northerly rising and most southerly settings appear to be absent from the sacred 91-94 four-stone precinct (cf., Ruggles and Chapman 2024, 75; 120, note 28). However, another factor to consider is Stone G where an empty stone-hole exists. Although missing, it needs to be examined operationally in relation to the position of Stone 92 by serving as a fifth station stone.

Stone-hole G and the moon

The plan in Fig. 14 illustrates. The line Stone 92 to G, and its opposite direction G to 92, account for the directions of respectively, the extreme northerly moonrise and the extreme southerly moonset. The reason that this possibility is contemplated is that Position G is the location of an archaeologically-excavated stone-hole but from which the stone has long been absent (Hawley 1923; Cleal et al. 1995, 290).

Stone-hole G and the sun

Another consequence that may or may not have been incidental, but exists, is recognizing that a line from Stone 94 to the point G, is the direction whither the sun rises at the winter solstice (Fig. 15). The converse, of course, also follows, namely that an observer at point G looking to Stone 94 would witness the sun setting at the summer solstice along this line.

The four solar extreme risings and settings are accounted for, and the four lunar extremes too.

Summarizing the purpose of the station stones

The four station stones were likely set up during the sarsen-building period of the inner temple and before the positions of the cult phallic bluestone 67 and the Altar Stone were finalized. Stones 94 and 93 functioned together, much as the Heel Stone and Altar Stone still do when they are paired by shadow, in order to signify the annual return of the midsummer festival that the locals awaited every June. It would have been similar for the expected timing of any midwinter sunset festival indicated by the alignment between stones 92 and 91, and also winter-solstice sunrise (when viewed from 94 to G). These station-stone emplacements may have been deemed necessary to ensure uninterrupted worship during the decades while the inner temple or naos was under construction.

Following the placing of the four stones 91 to 94 for solar purposes, it was conceivably due to an unanticipated circumstance that by virtue of the sunrise geometry appropriate for the latitude of south Wiltshire which includes Stonehenge, an unplanned lunar alignment came to the attention of the functionaries, namely that of the northernmost moonset and its corollary the most southerly moonrise, for the stone pairs 91/92 and 93/94. Ultimately, a question may have been raised as to how to integrate the aforesaid missing

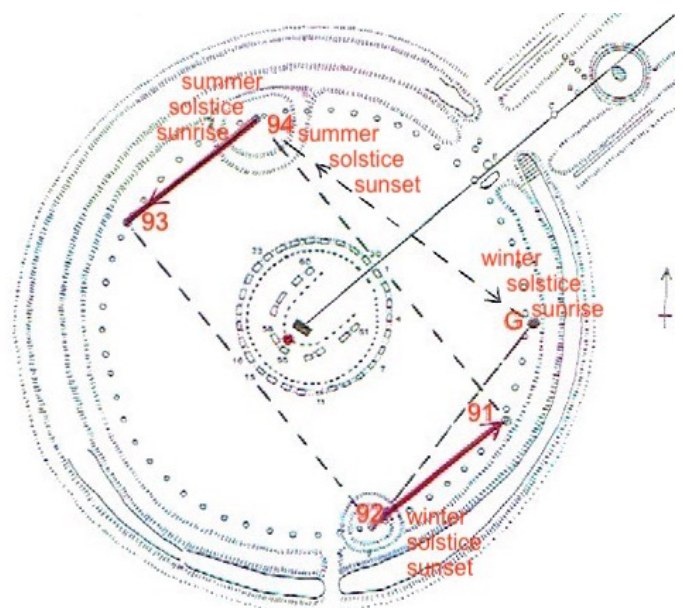


Fig. 15. Showing how observations of solar extremes could continue while the great monument was being built.

lunar and solar extremes into the patterned stone-to-horizon topography. The answer may lie with Position G which indicates where a hollow 1.2 m deep—a probable stone hole—was found by Hawley in 1923 on the circumference between Aubrey holes 7 and 8. The line between Stone 92 and hole G is that of the most northerly moonrise and southerly moonset. It is probable that a stone once stood at position G.

This reasoning could answer the puzzle of absence raised by Ruggles and Chadburn (2024, 75 and 120, note 28); “... two of the four possible lunar alignments and targets are conspicuous by their absence. We have no clear evidence of an interest in the most northerly moonrise ... nor of the southernmost moonset.”

The present author reflects that not only are there indications of ‘lunar alignment presence’ rather than ‘alignment absence’, but wonders whether the so-called ‘four station stones’ might better be renumbered ‘five station stones, or five cult stones’. This would introduce Stone G as a fifth functional stone whose purpose could account for the two additional extreme-direction moonrises.

The fresh ideas expressed in this paper reveal much about the likely thinking of the Britons responsible for the stupendous feat of construction. The work was tough and tedious. The station stones operating in pairs could have served as temporary replacements when the mid-temple cult idols were unavailable, and in subsequent centuries the same station stones served to remind everyone of those sarsen-building days. Indicated is a socially well-structured tribal society under priestly and chieftain leadership that supervised and maintained the task, inspiring the workers through any setbacks until completion decades later.

We sense a dogged determination for the construction teams because most of the artisans and laborers never saw the finished monument, much like the folk building cathedrals across Europe four thousand years later. What sort of motive can inspire dedication like this? William Stukeley used an epitome familiar to scholars of his time: *Tantum religio potuit*, “Only religion could”, which in this case was profound belief in a Sun-God.

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NATURAL PHILOSOPHY AND METAPHYSICS IN THE ROCK ART OF ARMENIA¹

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Abstract

Ideas about the origins of natural philosophy and metaphysics have been reconstructed by the author in relation to Armenian rock arts (10000-5000 BC). The article presents the images that indicate the existence of prehistoric ideas about the four elements of nature. These ideas are described in various compositions a tree of life, a man, family, direct and winged crosses, swastikas, spirals, eight-pointed stars, circles and balls - the earthly and heavenly worlds, carts, tridents and the sun's rays, as well as natural phenomena such as volcanic eruptions and earthquakes.

Reconstructing ideas of natural philosophy and metaphysical subjects using the cognitive abilities demonstrated in rock art, the author relies on the context of systems engineering, which describes the genesis of knowledge (in particular, as it is based on the asymmetry of logical and visual thinking), as well as on the language of communication. Based on recurring elements of language, their frames, and audio information, the content of rock arts of the Araratian mountains, can be interpreted and compared with Anatolian, Indo-Iranian, European, Balkan and Italian (Alpine) rock art. Signs show that the basic philosophical study of nature and the universe as well as the intellectual and spiritual expressions of the knowledge of the basic causes and nature of things, were "documented" on Araratian mountains.

As a result of catastrophic earthquakes and volcanic eruptions, surviving archaic civilizations endured with knowledge, which had been transformed or implemented in the universal mythological motifs in Old Europe, in the river delta Tanais, Scandinavia, Sumer, Egypt, Phoenicia, East and Minor Asia.

The four elements in Greece

The ancient Greek belief in five basic elements, these being earth, water, air, fire and ether, dates from preSocratic times and persisted throughout the Middle

Ages and into the Renaissance, deeply influencing European thought and culture. These five elements are sometimes associated with the five platonic solids. It was Empedocles who established four ultimate elements which make all the structures in the world - fire, air, water, earth. Empedocles called these four elements "roots", which he also identified with the mythical names of Zeus, Hera, Nestis, and Aidoneus (e.g., "Now hear the fourfold roots of everything: enlivening Hera, Hades, shining Zeus"). This theory of the four elements became the standard dogma for the next two thousand years. Many philosophies and worldviews have a set of classical elements believed to reflect the simplest essential parts and principles of which anything can consist or upon which the constitution and fundamental powers of everything are based. In classical thought, the four elements earth, water, air, and fire frequently occur; sometimes including a fifth element or quintessence (after "quint" meaning "fifth") called ether in ancient Greece and akasha in India. The concept of the five elements formed a basis of analysis in both Hinduism and Buddhism.

Cosmic elements in Babylonia

In Babylonian mythology, the cosmogony called Enûma Eliš, a text written between the 18th and 16th centuries BC, involves five gods that we might see as personified cosmic elements: sea, earth, sky, wind. In other Babylonian texts these phenomena are considered independent of their association with deities, though they are not treated as the component elements of the universe, as later in Empedocles.

Araratian Mountains and the Caucasus

The action of four forces of nature partaking in volcanic activity is evident in Armenian rock art, as well as in the song about Vahagn where the hero - the thunder, Dragon Reaper releases water, earth, sun and fire from

¹ We are reproposing an article which is actual again and fits the topic of the present issue.

the dragons (serpents). The author has demonstrated that the Araradian Mountains preserve the origins of the cult of Zeus-Yahweh, ideas about the four forces of natural philosophy, which were transformed into the names of the gods Zeus (Zeus) and Yahweh (Yahwe), which has four letters. Biblical names, such as the first man Adam, also have four letters. Zeus imprisoned Prometheus in the Caucasus Mountains for telling people the secret of fire. Zeus kidnapped Europe (Cadmos sister). Cadmos was Armenian Hayk's grandson, who had returned from Babylon after the collapse of language on father's land— Askanaz'es and Torgom's house. Precisely in Colchis (Caucasus) Greek Argonauts stole the "golden fleece".

Vahagn Vishapakagh and act of birthday

Vahagn Vishapakagh (Vahagn the Dragon Reaper) or Vahag(k)n was the first human, god of fire and war worshiped anciently and historically in Armenia. Vahagn was identified with the Greek Heracles. The priests of Vahévahian temple, who claimed Vahagn as their own ancestor, placed a statue of the Greek hero in their sanctuary. In the Armenian translation of the Bible, "Heracles, worshipped at Tyr" is renamed "Vahagn". Historian Khorenatsi's report of an ancient song gives a clue to his nature and ancient Armenian origin in Vahagn's birth song:

*In travail were heaven and earth,
In travail, too, the purple sea!
The travail held in the sea the small red reed.
Through the hollow of the stalk came forth smoke,
Through the hollow of the stalk came forth flame,
And out of the flame a youth ran!
Fiery hair had he,
Ay, too, he had flaming beard,
And his eyes, they were as suns!*

Other parts of the song, now lost, said that Vahagn fought and conquered dragons (snakes), hence his title Vishapakagh, "dragon reaper", where dragons in Armenian lore are identified as "Vishaps". The Vahagnian song was sung to the accompaniment of the lyre by the bards of Goghten (modern Akulis). The stalk or reed, key to the situation, is an important word in Indo-European mythology, in connection with heaven, earth, sea, fire in its forms (fire, air, water, earth).

The oldest myths and legends

Prometheus, in eternal punishment, is chained to a rock in the Caucasus, where his liver is eaten daily by an eagle, only to be regenerated by night, due to his immortality. The eagle is a symbol of Zeus Himself. Years later, the Greek hero Heracles (Hercules) slays the eagle and frees Prometheus from his chains.

The four most ancient sources for understanding the origin of the Prometheus myths and legends all rely on the images represented in the Titanomachia, or the cosmological climactic struggle between the Greek gods and their parents, the Titans. Prometheus himself was a titan who managed to avoid being in the direct confrontational cosmic battle between Zeus and his followers against Cronus, Uranus and their followers.

The first temple of knowledge

The first temple of Jerusalem was built during the 10th c. - 586 BC. As noted by M. Khorenatsy the first Temple of knowledge built Hayk, which passed by inheritance to his (his grandson) Cadmos. The whole galaxy of Armenian aristocratic families

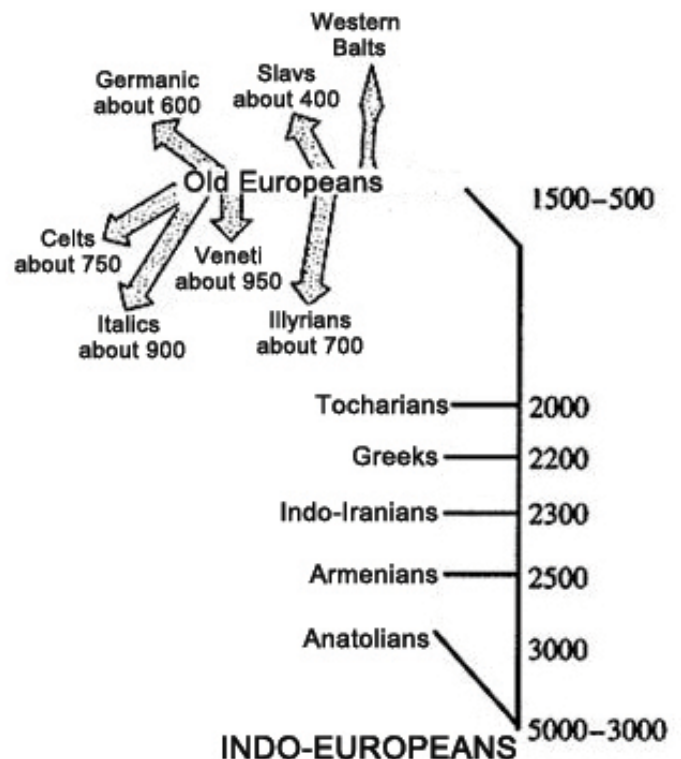


Fig.1 Differentiation of Indo-European (by S. Sedov),

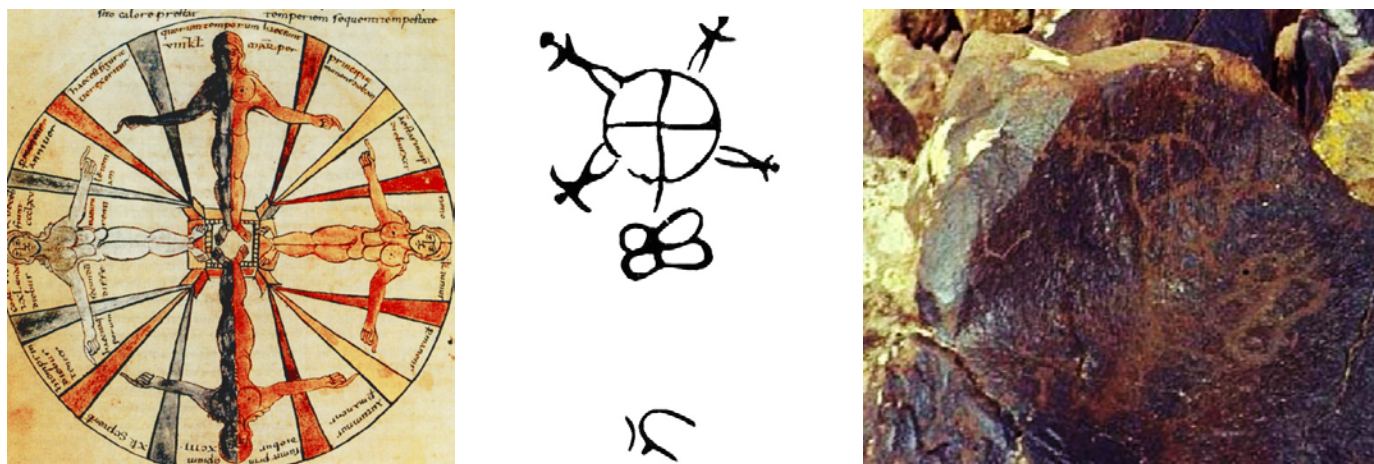


Fig. 2a. Allegory of the four elements of ancient natural philosophy (the manuscript of Isidore of Seville "On the Nature of things")
b. c. Armenian rock art "Holy Cross" in the spherical shape of the Earth with four antipodes or four ends of the earth.

considers its overall direct primogenitor to be Hayk Nahapet, the patriarch of the Armenian people, whose epithet was "dyutsazn" that was "derived from ditsov", "son of the deity" (meaning Vahagn).

The idea of the four elements in the alphabets

Ideas of four elements are embedded into the structure of the Armenian alphabet (the inventor of the alphabet M. Mashtots is M. Khorenatsy's teacher). The Armenian alphabet is divided into fi rows under the signs of fi elements. The structure of four elements is also inherent to the Greek and Phoenician alphabet, as well as Daniels ancient Armenian signs for writing are implementing the system of four elements (S. Babayan, G. Pogosyan). Daniels old Armenian signs

were used by M. Mashtots, but in a couple of years the teacher refused them, as the signs could not reflect all the sounds of the Armenian language any longer. As per legend, the Greek alphabet was invented from Phoenician on the basis of Phoenician alphabet established by Cadmus nearly 1,000 years before the invention of the modern Armenian alphabet. However, some works of the Greek scholars of antiquity are preserved only in Armenian translations. During the creation of the Greek alphabet, Greeks were not familiar with the doctrine of the four forces. Greek Cadmus is the hellenized Armenian Cadmos (master of the temple of knowledge). The Armenian Cadmos initially invented for the Phoenician alphabet and then for the Greek alphabet, based on Daniel's

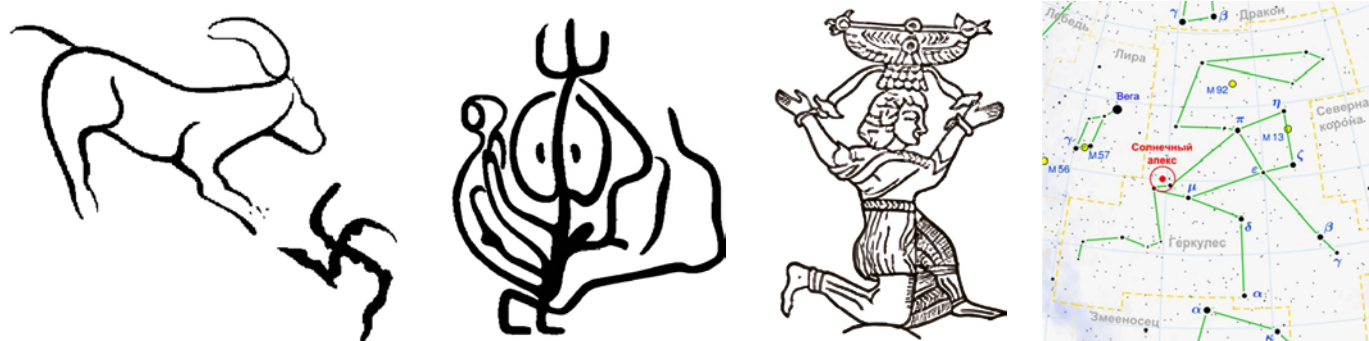


Fig. 3. The solar hieron in the form of a swastika (four elements - thunder, lightning, fire and flames). a. Cosmic battle between Hayk (swastika) with Heavenly Bull b. Image of the human soul, which is the light of the four elements b. Kneeling Vahagn - "message", cosmos - man and nature, the four elements, 7-5 millennium BC, Armenia. c. Kneeling man from the Urartian bronze belt d. Historical Museum of Armenia. Constellation "Kneeling"

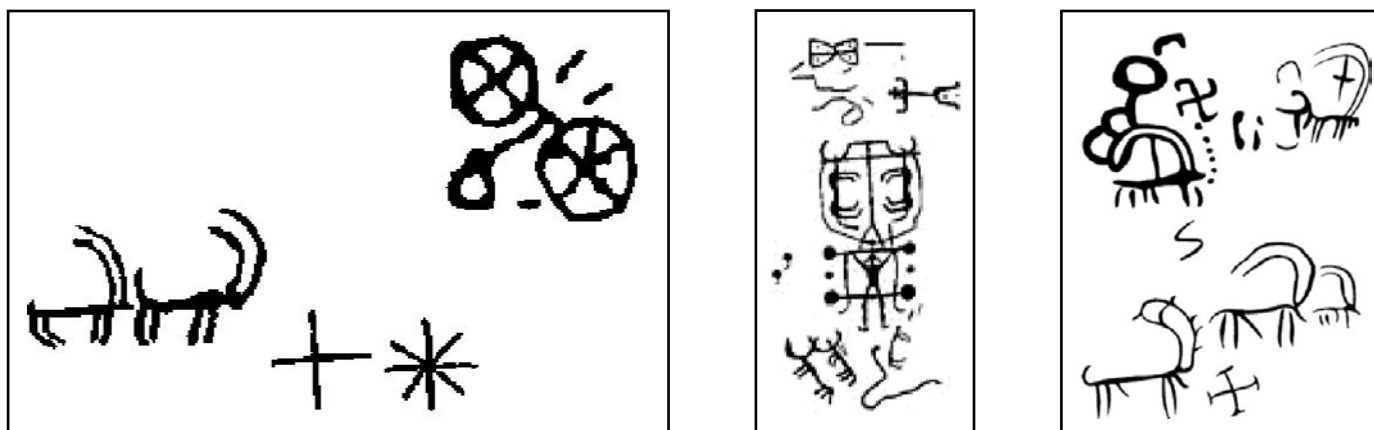


Figure 4 Petroglyphs of the four elements, solar (heavenly) and ideograms with crosses, swastikas, eight-pointed star, snakes and deer.

writing systems which embodied ideas about the four forces of nature.

It should be noted that, according to one ancient manuscript from Matenadaran (N 6962, 68 A), in the Armenian alphabet, written in four columns, each of them has the following names (left to right): fire, air, water and earth. S. Babayan showed that the line elements (9 x 4) correspond to the philosophical elements in this order, and if the line rotated 90 degrees clockwise, then these series get the reverse order, as evidenced by the said manuscript from Matenadaran (S. Babayan in "Ancient alphabets - graphical models, reflecting the philosophical concept of the soul" (www.iatp.am) provides additional information on this topic).

In the ancient tradition, the fifth element is typically the Armenian word "ban" or "logo" (Marr). The terms "Ban" and "Van" are interconnected as Water and Logos. N. Marr believed that all languages were

composed of four elements within language (universal language frame elements).

Chronology

V. Sedov leads some studies in the field of ethnogenesis (Fig. 1), where the emphasis is on a multidisciplinary approach in addressing issues (Proceedings of the Russian Academy of Sciences, Volume 73, No. 7, p. 594-605, 2003, <http://slavya.ru/trad/history/genezis/sed.htm>).

Name of the first man Vahagn

The name of the first human (man) Vahagn is split into four elements - fire, air, water and earth. Before Aristotle, the rock art of the Araradian Mountains taught that the Earth is a sphere and the center of the universe (Figs. 2b and 2c).

Figures 3a and 3b are examples of rock art from the treasury of the history of natural philosophy and



Fig. 5. a., b. Petroglyphs with the rides bulls Ukhtasar, c. Armenia. Stone tomb, Ukraine



Fig. 6. Philosophical picture of the world - the four forces and act of birth, Geghama Mountains, Armenia

metaphysics, intellectual and spiritual knowledge. Man (3b) consists of four elements - earth, water, air and fire; it contains the same heat and cold, moisture and dryness, as well as his soul consisting of three parts.

“Adam”

The name “Adam” is regarded as an abbreviation consisting of the names of the four cardinal directions, and it is believed that God took the dust for the creation of Adam, respectively, from all ends of the earth (Sibylline Oracles, 3:26): east, west, and north, south.

Cadmus

Cadmus (Ancient Greek: Κάδμος), in Greek mythology, was a Phoenician prince, the son of king Agenor and queen Telephassa of Tyre and the brother of Phoenix, Cilix and Europa. He was originally sent

by his royal parents to seek out and escort his sister Europa back to Tyre after she was abducted from the shores of Phoenicia by Zeus. Cadmus was credited by the ancient Greeks (Herodotus is an example) with introducing the original Alphabet or Phoenician alphabet—phoinikeia grammata, “Phoenician letters”—to the Greeks, who adapted it to form their Greek alphabet. Herodotus estimates that Cadmus lived sixteen hundred years before his time, or around 2000 BC. Mikael Chamchyan date leads battle with Hayk and Bel - 2492 BC.

Moon as the result of collision between earth and another planet? June 6, 2014

“One possible explanation for how the moon formed is that another planet, which some scientists refer to as Theia, collided with Earth billions of years ago. Scientists have attempted to find enough differences in moon rock samples compared to rocks found on Earth to prove that the moon was created when our planet collided with another world in the distant past. Now, they may have discovered enough of a difference in the lunar rocks, though it’s a minor one, to validate the theory that the moon has both Earthly and other-worldly origins. Three lunar rocks which Apollo astronauts collected from the moon’s surface and returned to Earth with in the 1960s have been re-analysed by scientists from Germany’s GeorgAugust-Universität Göttingen. The rocks might offer proof that they are different enough from Earth rocks that they came from another planet when it collided with our own. After another world, let’s say one called “Theia,”



Fig. 7. Depiction of how the moon was created a. by modern scientists and b. by ancient people in rock art from Araradian Mountains.

slammed into Earth, the theory goes that molten rock was formed and flung up into orbit around our planet where it cooled and became Earth's largest natural satellite. In mythology, the Greek goddess, Theia, was the mother of the moon.

Scientists may never know with 100 percent certainty how the moon was formed, but the re-analysis of the three lunar rocks by scientists from Germany has helped add validity to the giant impact idea.

Conclusions

1. Names of gods Vahagn (Vahagn), Zeus (Zeus) and Yahweh (Yahwe) consist of four letters, as well as the name of the Biblical Adam, and symbolize the four elements of nature.

2. Traditional views of scientists on the impact of prehistoric Armenian culture and art on the genesis of the world's culture and science do not correspond to the history of M. Khorenatsy and the modern theory of the collapse of the language, especially in Armenian rock art and language in its prehistoric connections with the European, Greek (Phrygian, Thracian) rock art and language which do not conform to the basic features of Armenian-Greek and Biblical mythologies. Re-assessment is called for to address these issues.

3. Petroglyphs from the Araradian Mountains indicate intellectually and spiritually keep many elements of prehistoric knowledge. They are priceless and not yet fully deciphered. They can learn a lot, in particular, how the moon was formed, tell us about the role of man and his place in the cosmos, as well as the future of humanity.

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NOTES AND NEWS

ATELIER, RESEARCH CENTER FOR CONCEPTUAL ANTHROPOLOGY

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NEW BOOKS, NEW TRENDS

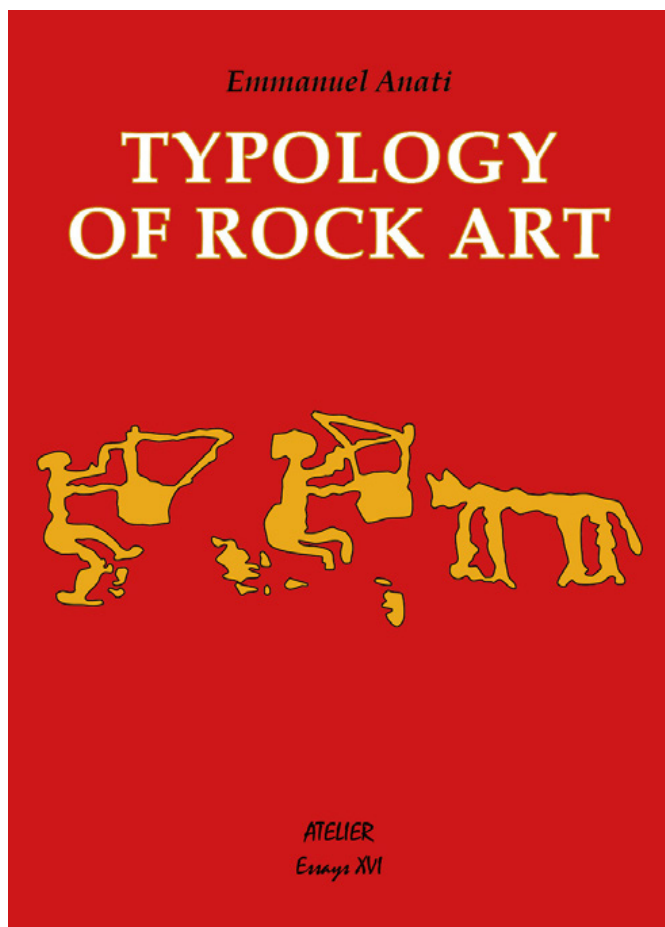
New releases: new books or new reprints published by Atelier Research Center:

TYPOLOGY OF ROCK ART (Essays XVI): Rock art is a human expression, produced over the millennia, on five continents. In the frame of the UNESCO “World Report on Rock Art: the state of the art” (2008), the author presented a typological structure of rock art, which has since been updated and revised. This text presents an updated version considering the following problems: elementary concepts of typology; definition of rock art site; the grammar of rock art: typology of signs and figures; categories of rock art according to the way of life of their creators: archaic hunter-gatherers, hunters who use bow and arrows, shepherds and animal breeders, complex economy including agriculture, others; syntax: the systems of associations of graphemes, associations, compositions, sequences, scenes, etc .; archetypes and variants; purpose, results and purpose of the typology; conclusions.

LOOKING FOR THE MISSING LINK (Colloqui XXXV): The Discussion Forum addresses peer reviewing and methodology. The articles focus on different aspects of recovering missing knowledge: the missing material culture in Paleolithic sites, the search for meaning and function of European megalithic monuments, the background of early African rock art and its religious and magical functions. Different topics from different corners of the world have the search for missing links in common. These examples reveal common denominators.

ARTE RUPESTRE DELLA VALCAMONICA (Monographs XXI): Valcamonica, located in the Italian Alps, is home to more than 300,000 rock engravings, making it the largest rock art site in Europe. It was also the first Italian site to be inscribed on UNESCO’s World Heritage List. The study of this remarkable heritage reveals the largest archive left by the ancient inhabitants of Europe. After half a century of excavation, recording, documentation, and analysis, the author presents a synthesis that sheds new light on 10,000 years of history. This work represents a turning point in the methodology of archaeological research, enabling Europe to reclaim millennia of its forgotten past.

For further information or orders contact: atelier.etno@gmail.com or visit www.atelier-etno.it/info-news



Typology of Rock Art

Anati, E.

Essays XVI - Capo di Ponte (Atelier)

First edition: 2023

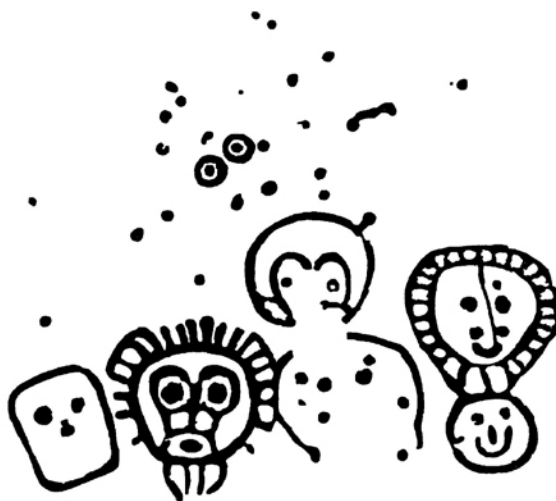
ISBN 9788898284771

106 pp., 37 figg. € 20

Rock art is a human expression, produced over the millennia, on five continents. In the frame of the UNESCO “World Report on Rock Art: the state of the art” (2008), the author presented a typological structure of rock art, which has since been updated and revised. This text presents an updated version considering the following topics: elementary concepts of typology; definition of rock art site; the grammar of rock art: typology of signs and figures; categories of rock art according to the way of life of their creators: archaic hunter-gatherers, hunters who use bow and arrows, shepherds and animal breeders, complex economy including agriculture, others; syntax: the systems of associations of graphemes, associations, compositions, sequences, scenes, etc.; archetypes and variants; purpose, results and purpose of the typology.

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 - The Grammar
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6. Conclusions
7. References



Helan Shan, Ningxia, China. Rock engravings of Bronze Age farmers-pastoralists. Spirits on the rocks. Each of the masks seems to have its own personality. (Adapted from Chen Zhao-Fu, 1988, p. 162).

LOOKING FOR THE MISSING LINK

General editor
Emmanuel Anati



ATELIER
Colloqui XXXIV

Looking for the Missing Link

Anati, E. (ed.)

Colloqui XXXIV - Capo di Ponte (Atelier)

First edition: 2023

ISBN 9788898284832

124 pp., 72 figg. € 25

Looking for the link between the facts and their roots is a constant concern of the human mind. Our knowledge is made up of segments of evidence defined by the information available and by both, individual and collective, rational and emotional abilities.

The Discussion Forum addresses peer reviewing and methodology. The articles focus on different aspects of recovering missing knowledge: the missing material culture in Paleolithic sites, the search for meaning and function of European megalithic monuments, the background of early African rock art and its religious and magical functions. Different topics from different corners of the world have the search for missing links in common. These examples reveal common denominators.

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Anati, E.

Monografie XXI - Capo di Ponte (Atelier)

First edition: 2023 (in Italian)

ISBN 9788898284733

308 pp., 145 figg. € 30

Valcamonica, in the Italian Alps, with over 300,000 images engraved on rocks, is the major rock art site in Europe.

It is the first “World Heritage Site” listed by UNESCO in Italy and the first rock art site listed in the world. Its study reveals the largest archive left behind by the ancient inhabitants of Europe. After having excavated, traced, described and analyzed it for over half a century, the author present this synthesis bringing new light on 10,000 years of history.

The present work represents a turning point in the methodology of archaeological research. Europe regains millennia of its forgotten history.

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WHAT IS CONCEPTUAL ANTHROPOLOGY?

Atelier is the research center of conceptual anthropology and *EXPRESSION* is the journal of conceptual anthropology. They are the main expressions of this new - though very old - domain of enquiry. Conceptual anthropology is the discipline that explores the concepts and the “why” behind human actions, studying archeological, anthropological and historical records through semiotic and sociological lenses: looking for the causes of effects. It is a conceptual analytical system applicable to various fields of the humanistic studies for recovering the meaning of actions documented by their outcomes. It analyzes the causes behind the individual and social indicators, behaviors, rituals, beliefs, artistic creativity, and other cultural expressions, to understand their underlying reasons and motivations: their soul.

Understanding the why is a step for understanding human thinking, and understanding human thinking is a step for understanding human relations, coexistence, peace and conflicts, in the past and in the present. Understanding and misunderstanding make the difference. Every tangible effect of human action is a manifestation that has roots to be traced.

The concepts behind facts reveal the dynamics of actions and events, relating effect to cause. The goal of conceptual anthropology is to understand human behavior and cultural trends, material, economic, and technical aspects, as well as social, ethical, aesthetic, conceptual and ideological orientations and dimensions. It seeks to uncover the various factors behind actions, and events and human behavior can be caused by multiple factors. The building of a monument, or the fight between two ethnic groups, or the migration of a tribe, or the birth of a cult center, or other events, are caused by an assemblage of factors that reveal their conceptual nature and allow to understand the minds behind the actions.

While media, aided by artificial intelligence, accumulate technical and historical knowledge, the associative process of the human mind remains irreplaceable. Our being and actions are rooted in memory, which has both individual and collective aspects. Human behavior is

shaped by memory, influenced by indoctrination and contextual conditions. Mistakes often arise from the obscuring of memory, while positive outcomes come from its proper use. This is not just an electronic memory, but the type of memory that transforms into intuition and rediscovery, the memory that originates from the associative individual and collective processes of the human mind. Ideological conditioning may act as a selector or deformer of memory (history). Conceptual anthropology tends to recording and evidencing such trends in both, past events and their present analytical evaluations.

In an age of extreme specialization, which risks reducing scholars to technicians and workers to robots, conceptual anthropology offers an alternative. While technicians are undoubtedly necessary, conceptual anthropology proposes a new (yet ancient) trend in research, centered on a broad vision of the humanistic and social sciences.

Let technicians and conceptual anthropologists recognize their distinct roles, carry out their work, and enrich each other through their different conceptual approaches. Research serves its true purpose when it fosters intuitions, deeper understanding and discovery. Research should originate further research. When culture is creative and innovative, it promotes intellectual growth and stimulates new ways of thinking.

Conceptual anthropology opens broad perspectives in social and conceptual analysis, intercultural understanding, offering stimulating awareness and enriching the intellect. It should be an integral part of education for people of all ages.

Conceptual anthropology took formal shape in 2011 at the congress of the International Union of Prehistoric Sciences in Florianópolis, Brazil, when it was recognized as a research discipline, in a session chaired by Professor Emmanuel Anati. The Atelier Research Center was then founded by Professor Anati as the headquarters for this discipline.

Based in Valcamonica, Italy, *Atelier* has a dedicated editorial sector for conceptual anthropology which, in the past twelve years, has published over 80 books and

50 issues of the quarterly journal **EXPRESSION**. These publications have involved 280 authors and researchers from 50 countries across five continents. They gather ongoing research in conceptual anthropology and constitute a solid base for the discipline.

In a world searching for its uncertain future, facing an age of changes and innovations, besides the tendencies to technical and specialist formation, there is a profound need for open, broadminded, humanistic studies. They are the soul of culture. The publications produced by Atelier offer compelling inquiries into conceptual anthropology, introducing this emerging research field, contributing to the understanding of the nature, trends and patterns of behavior throughout the ages: a conceptual archive of our human heritage. To understand your world, you have to understand who you are, to understand who you are you have to understand your world.

Apprentices and volunteers are welcome. If interested contact us: <atelier.etno@gmail.com>.

For further details on conceptual anthropology, see **EXPRESSION** vol. 29, 2020, pp. 72-80.

ATELIER RESEARCH CENTER

Atelier Research Center is the international headquarter for Conceptual Anthropology. It is a workshop for research, experiment, and debates on intellectual and spiritual expressions: traditions, art, ideology, religion, and other social and conceptual aspects of human society. It is a meeting place for the human sciences, where artists, philosophers, anthropologists, archeologists, semioticians, psychologists, and students of other disciplines find a common language.

Atelier organizes meetings, seminars and exhibitions, it benefits of spaces for exhibitions, a laboratory and meeting facilities in the Camonica Valley, in the Italian Alps, and a research field base in the Negev Desert. It runs a publishing department producing books and the journal **EXPRESSION**. It is open to supporters and followers wishing to be adherents and

share knowledge, ideas, and debates. Those interested may participate in research and editorial project, and become involved in different activities.

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THE ANATI FOUNDATION

The Anati Foundation was established to preserve, advance, and share the intellectual legacy of Professor Emmanuel Anati, one of the foremost anthropologists and rock art scholars of the 20th and 21st centuries.

Operating at the intersection of scientific research, cultural heritage, art, symbolism, and early spirituality, the Foundation engages with cultural institutions, museums, researchers, and the contemporary art world to explore the enduring significance of humanity's forms of communication.

Prehistoric art, one of the earliest known expressions of intellectual creativity, is a universal cultural heritage found across the globe. It offers a unique window into the origins of human thought and continues to inspire reflection on the shared ideas, symbols, and experiences that connect past and present.

Looking toward the future, the Anati Foundation serves as a platform for international cultural dialogue, fostering meaningful connections between ancient knowledge and contemporary culture through exhibitions, conferences, educational initiatives, and publications.

The Anati Foundation Board

ADVICE TO AUTHORS: HOW TO SUBMIT YOUR PAPER FOR THE EXPRESSION JOURNAL

EXPRESSION is a journal addressed to readers in the human and social sciences. It reaches academic institutions and cultured people in over 90 countries of five continents. Even an article on a local topic should awaken interest to this kind of audience, and be appealing to readers involved in various sectors of the humanities. Texts should be innovative, arising curiosity and queries, provoking thinking and, obviously, be reliable and clear. The journal does not publish dry technical or purely descriptive reports and tries to avoid theoretical general disquisitions. Irrelevant references and other unnecessary displays of erudition should be avoided. The publishing language is English (American spelling). Articles are submitted

to reviewers but the acceptance for publication is decided by the editor. The recommended length of a paper is 2,000 to 5,000 words. Articles counting less than 2,000 words or having no consistent illustration, may be considered for the 'Discussion Forum' or for the 'Notes and News'. Illustrations should have the resolution of 300 dpi, with a base of 14 cm. They should have explanatory captions, including source when relevant. Illustrations should be presented separately from the text. Both text and illustration should be free from copyright and any other obligation, and preferably not yet published elsewhere. Authors are fully responsible for the submitted text, illustrations, and contents. Their ideas are not necessarily shared by the publisher or the editors. Every idea and concept expressed by the authors is open to debate and criticism.

SHORT NOTES AND COMMENTS BY READERS

Effects of climate change on rock art

Dear colleagues:

At the University of Vigo, we are beginning an initial reflection on the effects of climate change on rock art. For this reason, I would like to know your opinion on the possible hazards to the rock art that you study most.

Fernando Carrera Ramírez
University of Vigo

Reply:

Dear colleagues,

In different parts of the world, in the Sahara Desert, in arctic Norway, in Arabia or in the Gobi Desert, rock art survived climatic changes far more drastic than the actual ones. This does not exempt us from worrying about future possible harms. The damages done so far to rock art have been caused mainly by human actions: mining, agricultural bonifications, road building, urbanization, have caused destruction

of rock art in different countries. Discussion on protection can hardly stop development projects of weather deterioration. But the principle should be to save what can be saved.

The main action for preserving the cultural patrimony is recording. If a monument is in danger or not, documentation will save its content and concepts for future generations. What is needed the world over is recording and documenting: photography, filming, tracing, describing, creating a databank. Deterioration caused by climatic changes, or by other causes, is in progress as it has been, with ups and downs, with glaciations, deluges, desertifications, and other natural events, in the last 50,000 years.

The urgent task is documenting now what may or may not be damaged tomorrow. Join the world data bank of rock art¹, by providing your data, on the sites you are dealing with.

And then keep it updated as you progress in research.
atelier.etno@gmail.com

¹ world data bank of rock art, started a few years ago as WARA, now being revised

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