

# EXPRESSION

QUARTERLY E-JOURNAL OF ATELIER IN COOPERATION WITH UISPP-CISENP. INTERNATIONAL SCIENTIFIC COMMISSION ON  
THE INTELLECTUAL AND SPIRITUAL EXPRESSIONS OF NON-LITERATE PEOPLES

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## CULT SITES AND ART

Anthropomorphic face on the entrance slab of a circular ceremonial structure from Har Karkom, Negev desert, Israel (Pre-pottery Neolithic site BK 608).

## EDITORIAL NOTES

# CULT SITES AND ART

Walking along a narrow trail, on the edge of a steep valley in the middle of a deep forest, we suddenly heard noises of human presence, voices that were neither speeches nor songs, something in between. We reached a cave where a number of people were assembled in a corner and an old bearded man was standing on an upper step of the rock talking ... perhaps talking, perhaps declaiming, perhaps singing, but not to the people below. He was talking or performing or praying in front of a white rock painting showing a being with a horned animal head and a human body. This was happening about half a century ago, in a mountainous area of Malawi in the heart of Africa. We were present at a *Nyau* ceremony. The clan, guided by a shaman, was preparing for a performance where the actors were becoming spirits, behaving as expected by the spirit painted on the rock. The cave is a sacred site where the ancestral spirits were resting and where the rock paintings indicated their presence.

In another occasion, this time in Tanzania, we were prevented from reaching a painted rock shelter. The initiation of girls was taking place and the area was taboo for all those not involved in the event.

Where rock art sites are still in use we can learn something of their function, but when the art is thousands of years old we can only figure out what may have happened there and what was the function of the site or of the signs and pictures left behind.

The relationship of art and cult sites is still a source of inspiration in richly decorated Buddhist temples or Christian cathedrals. The voices and songs of the believers or of their priests

accompany them. What echoes accompanied the paintings in the prehistoric caves? What performances, if any, were taking place in front of the decorated rock surfaces?

The visual art stresses myths, mythical beings and/or historical facts, which are related to the cult and to the sanctity of the site. It is the visual memory that justifies the function of the site. Was it the same in prehistoric times? In front of rock art sites, in the Camonica Valley, Italy, or in Kakadu in Arnhem Land, Australia, or in the Drakensberg caves, South Africa, or in the Altamira cave, Spain, the presence of prehistoric art awakens a sense of sacredness, we feel that these were and are special places but ... what happened there? What can we say about the relationship between the surviving works of art and the function of the site?

What made people produce the works of art left behind in grandiose art galleries in the four corners of the world over millennia? Do these works make sacred the site or were they inspired by the sacredness of the site? The project 'Cult sites and art' invites colleagues and friends, who can contribute facts, testimonies and ideas, about the function of art in prehistoric and tribal sites and their possible relations to myths, beliefs and cult practices, to contribute to the understanding of the functions of these sites.

What do colleagues and friends who invest time and energy in describing these works of art have to say about their meaning and function? General ideas and proposed interpretations will be evaluated, both, by reviewers and by the readers. The function of decorated caves and open-air rock art galleries produced by prehistoric and tribal people demands explanations. Also the interpretation of a single object or of a single figure may constitute a valuable contribution.

Some of the papers concerning this topic are presented in the following pages. Other contributions may follow.

Several of the past issues of EXPRESSION magazine focus on specific themes defined 'project'. The results of the adopted system are evident from the responses received and published in the succession of the issues during these first four years of life of the periodical.

E.A.

## EDITORIAL NOTE

EXPRESSION magazine is published by Atelier Research Center in cooperation with UISPP-CI-SENP, the "International Scientific Commission on the Intellectual and Spiritual Expressions of Non-literate Peoples" of the UISPP, *Union Internationale des Sciences Préhistoriques et Protohistoriques*.

The goal of EXPRESSION is to promote knowledge and ideas concerning the intellectual and spiritual expressions of non-literate societies. It is an open forum in conceptual anthropology, welcoming contributions. Colleagues having something to say will find space in this e-magazine, which is reaching people of culture and academic institutions in over 60 countries. Authors are fully responsible for their ideas and for the information and illustrations they submit. Letters on current topics and short notes are welcome and may be published in the section "Discussion Forum".

Publication in EXPRESSION magazine does not imply that the publishers agree with the exposed ideas. Papers are submitted to reviewers for their evaluation, but controversial ideas, if they make sense, are not censured. Time will be their judge.

# DISCUSSION FORUM

The Discussion Forum invites readers to be active in debates of worldwide interest in conceptual anthropology.

## MYTHS AND MEMORIES STORIES TOLD BY PICTURES

What myths and what memories are revealing early monuments? What are the stories behind a painted caves in Dordogne, a megalithic monuments in Ireland, Gobleky Tepe pre-ceramic ceremonial center in Anatolia, the Paleolithic shrine at Har Karkom in the Negev desert, the immense concentrations of rock art in the Drakensberg, South Africa, Serra da Capivara, Brazil or Kimberley, Australia? What stories are hidden behind a standing stone erected by some human being of a forgotten culture, or behind a group of markings on the wall of a rock-shelter? These monuments preserve myths and memories of cultures and ages around the world. Each monument, each rock picture, each standing stone, has its stories. By decoding them, history is being produced out of prehistory. Awakening curiosity, asking questions, is no less important than answering questions and solving problems. People having ideas or just curiosity are invited to join this search for the common roots of memories and myths. A coming issue of EXPRESSION will be dedicated to this topic.

Reality and imagination are ingredients of our intellect. They complete each other. Reality without imagination and imagination without reality would be void of interest. What is captured by our senses awakens a double process, that of acquiring a sense of the reality and that of applying our imagination to search for a meaning to such sense. Often discerning what is real and what is imagination is a subjective

matter. Images and signs are conveying just a part of the reality they refer to. The rest of such reality has to be decoded.

A few days ago I was looking at a splendid exhibition of early Chinese paintings: landscapes with small human beings and gigantic sea waves, dreamy, misty mountains, flowers and leaves having shapes and colors more real than the real ones.... but the smell of the paintings was not that of the depicted flowers. The paintings were communicating the connection between the theme depicted and the hand and mind of the artist. They express the sense of aesthetic and the metaphoric concepts of a culture that have to be decoded.

Senses are means of access to reality both for us and for prehistoric man. But such reality may be subjective and is formed, deformed or transformed by our senses. They select reality, they make us decide what is real and what unreal, what to remember and what to forget, they coordinate our feelings of pleasant or unpleasant, beauty or ugliness, appealing or not appealing. The real and the imaginary may vary from person to person and both, real and imaginary, can be accepted or refused. Was the mind of early man much different from ours?

Decorated caves, megalithic monuments, early shrines, sites of rock art, are the containers of myths and memories, are the testimony of the immense variety of beliefs and habits, are the source for an as yet unwritten history of mankind: the existential history of people's real and imaginary, myths and memories. Even small contributions may enrich our knowledge and whoever has something to say is invited to share such knowledge.

The selection of the real from the imaginary varies from person to person. It varies in different tribes and, no doubt, the same is true for

prehistoric societies. The variety in style and subject matter of prehistoric and tribal art is the mirror of the immense alternatives of the human mind. It is the medium to unveil past adventures of human myths and memories. What do they tell us? What do they tell you?

Colleagues and friends are welcome to share the results of their research, discoveries or ideas and submit their papers. Please consider that EXPRESSION is a quarterly magazine in English, dedicated to the human sciences; it reaches institutions and colleagues in over 60 countries. Papers should be of interest to this kind of audience. Not all of the readers may be specialists in your specialty but they are open-minded and curious. We recommend short texts, around 3000 words, good illustrations and, most important, creative ideas, new discoveries, new visions, new tendencies of research.

For submitting articles to the issue of EXPRESSION magazine dedicated to "MYTHS AND MEMORIES" the deadline is November 20, 2017. Please join us, addressing ideas, abstracts and papers to atelier.etno@gmail.com.

E.A.

## **On the meaning of footprints in prehistoric and tribal art**

Bulu Imam, India

Wherever one goes in India, especially where ancient Buddhist, Jain or Hindu traditions exist (which is everywhere, and I exclude "Tribal" or Sarna Worship) one hears of miraculous foot prints either impressed upon stone or engraved in it and attributed to Buddha, Mahavira or Ram, but never Shiva or any tribal deity such as the Oraon Dharmes. Most footprints

are considered to be those of gods. These "footprints" are invariably larger than life size and where found impressed in stone obviously man-formed they are attributed to a great hero such as one of the religious heros of Buddhist, Jain or Hindu pantheon but in my experience never Shiva, the original forest god who may have been an original tribal deity who was Brahminized by the Rig Veda. Some such footprints in stone are carved by some distant hand and accepted without question as foot prints of the deity; when in relief they are accepted as symbolic representation of the deity (whether Buddha, Mahavira or Ram). Such footprints are sometimes to be pre-Buddhist/Jain/Hindu, from an existing local religious tradition possibly connected with the Mahabharata (i.e.Pandavas) or Ramayana (Ram) or even Jain or Buddhist (but never Adivasi or tribal) and there will be a related local folk oral tradition.

To my knowledge there are no footprints in the prehistoric rock art in Jharkhand which I am familiar with. I will not be at all surprised if there are foot prints in the Valcamonica rock art or other European sites, because these come from a more recent mental time-frame than India where even the present mind-set is often several millennia old and where most rural societies are semi or pre-literate.

I have found in my own Jharkhand area in eastern India such supposed huge footprints, which locals say are the footprints of Lord Ram. I am referring to the Ramrekha site in Gumla/Simdega districts in south Ranchi plateau on the edge of the Jharkhand plateau. From my knowledge, ancient human footprints have been found with animal footprints (including footprints of dogs) in prehistoric lava beds. These natural footprints may have made an impression on early human consciousness.

## **HOW TO CONCEIVE YOUR PAPER**

Please consider that the magazine is reaching readers from various disciplines of the human sciences in over 60 countries of five continents and should be of interest to all of them. The language is English, using the American spelling. We recommend authors to present papers pleasant to read, avoiding dry scientific reports or inventories. The readers are cultured people involved in the various sectors of the human sciences. The average size of each paper should be 1,500 to 3,000 words. Illustrations are welcome: please calibrate the resolution to 300 dpi with a base of 14 cm, providing pertinent, explanatory captions, including source where relevant. All the material presented, texts and illustrations, should be free from copyright and any other obligation, and possibly not yet published elsewhere.

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# FORTHCOMING DEBATES

**Readers are proposing themes for debate. Some of them may be considered in future issues:**

- 1- DOMINANT THEMES** in prehistoric and tribal iconography: human, animal, objects, structures or signs?
- 2- WOMEN:** their role in prehistoric and tribal art.
- 3- ART AND ECONOMY:** relations between economic conditions and art creativity..
- 4- SOCIAL STRUCTURE AS REVEALED BY PREHISTORIC AND TRIBAL ART:** how depictions reveal social relations and social organization.
- 5- NEW HORIZONS OF RESEARCH:** the role of conceptual anthropology.
- 6- DEFINING THE DOMINANT THEME** of prehistoric and tribal art assemblages. Defining the conceptual motivations in the diversity of thematic typology.

- 7- DEFINING PERSONAL IDENTITIES OF ARTISTS** in prehistoric and tribal art.
- 8- ART AS A SOURCE OF PSYCHOANALYSIS OF PREHISTORIC COMMUNITIES:** the choice of the themes to be represented and the associative system or syntax of the depictions reveals conceptual and social trends.
- 9- BURIAL CUSTOMS AND PRACTICES** as expressions of beliefs in afterlife.
- 10- IMAGES OF WARFARE AND FIGHTING IN PREHISTORIC AND TRIBAL ART: THEIR COMMEMORATING ROLE.**
- 11- SEAFARING DEPICTIONS: RECORDING MYTHS OR EVENTS?**
- 12- REALITY AND IMAGINATION IN MYTHIC TRADITIONS**

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

*The Discussion Forum invites readers to be active in debates of worldwide interest in conceptual anthropology.*

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# SHRINES IN THE DESERT

Emmanuel Anati (Italy)

Atelier Research Center for Conceptual Anthropology

Cult habits change but cult sites retain such role for ages, adapting each time to the changing traditions. Cult and worship require images or symbols to be worshipped or as a point of reference, thus generating a link between the reality and the imaginary, between cult sites and visual objects of cult. The primary selection of the place and the persistence of cult traditions in the same place reflect the human reactions to the nature of the site. In India, in Madja Pradesh, Buddhist cult caves have historic religious images painted on top of prehistoric rock paintings. Palaeolithic caves in France and Spain have been used and reused for millennia as receptacles for images and symbols.

Some modern churches and temples, in Europe, in the Near East and in the Far East, are built on the remains of earlier sanctuaries of other faiths. Religions change, presenting each time a new related symbols or images, and cult sites adapt each time to the new.

A peculiar case is that of a site, in the middle of the desert, that maintained traditions of cult and produced art from the time of Palaeolithic hunters, to recent pastoral nomads, where various forms of cult and art accumulated for millennia. It is in the Negev Desert (the eastern region of the Sinai Peninsula, part of the state of Israel), and had remained unknown to historians and archaeologists until it was discovered a few years ago.

This site is a flat mesa of about 4x2 km, surrounded by precipices. All around is deep desert. The only water source is a shallow well 7 km. away.



Fig. 1 - The desert of Paran in an aerial view. Har Karkom in the flat mountain at the horizon. (ISR85:CI-6).



The Bedouin call it Jebel Ideid, the mountain of festivities or of gatherings; the Israeli name is Har Karkom or Mount of Saffron. Both these names are hardly understandable for a mountain in the middle of a totally desert area, where saffron does not grow and where recent gatherings after the discoveries started with the presence of archaeologists and tourists.

The survey recorded over 1300 archaeological sites. Shrines on the mountain and remains of camping sites in the valleys at its foot, define the peculiar identity of the site. Multitudes of people were gathered at the foot of a holy mountain.

Fig. 2 a/b - Detail and general view of the standing pillars of site HK 86b.

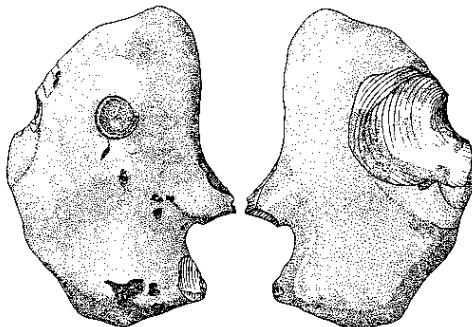
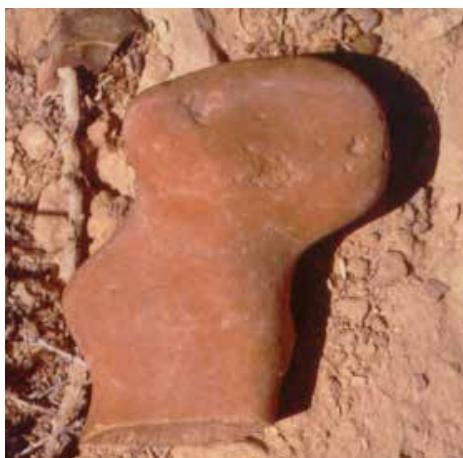


Fig. 3 a/b - Photograph and tracing of a flint nodule with a natural form of a human face, completed by man with secondary retouching, some flaking, and a thin line to complete the eye. (Site HK 86b; photo EA92: CXX-23; drawing: HK Archive. E.A. 1994, fig. 90; WARA W06052, W06053). Base 12 cm.

c - Flint nodule with three hammered dots, which probably indicate the eyes and mouth of an anthropomorphic face. (Site HK 86b; photo EA93: XXXV-21 E.A. 1994, fig. 96; WARA W06049).

d - Flint nodule in the form of a bird retouched in the tail and base with flaking. Finely incised lines define the eyes and beak. (Site HK 86b; photo EA92: XXXV-16 E.A. 1994, fig. 95; WARA W06047).

e - Flint nodule having the shape of a bison, some retouching indicate minor human actions. In a later period, probably Neolithic the nodule has been reused with engraving of caprine showing a much lighter patina. Base 11 cm.



Forty thousand rock engravings spanning over the last 10,000 years form a major concentration of rock art in the Sinai Peninsula. Over 120 cult sites, small temples, open-air altars, various types of shrines, standing pillars and anthropomorphic *menhirs* (*menhir* means standing stone or pillar), stone circles, other megalithic monuments and other landscape installations, illustrate the ceremonial and cult roles of this mountain for many millennia. An unsolved problem is, how and why, such an inhospitable place, was selected by human beings for cult and worship. The mountain and its surroundings were intensely occupied during certain periods and abandoned in other periods. The human presence is believed to have followed climatic fluctuations

make the difference. In ages of extreme drought the area was abandoned, in wetter periods people were able to survive there. But people came back to the same site over and over again: just to this mountain.

From the considerable number of Palaeolithic sites we deduce that it had been much frequented during Pleistocene humid episodes, when grassland vegetation supported the animal life and consequently provided hunting game. The presence of mammals in ancient times is recorded on the plateau by large size geoglyphs, or pebble drawings, up to over 30 m. long, representing animal species, like the elephant and the rhinoceros which animals became extinct in the area in the Pleistocene, probably around 30,000 years ago.

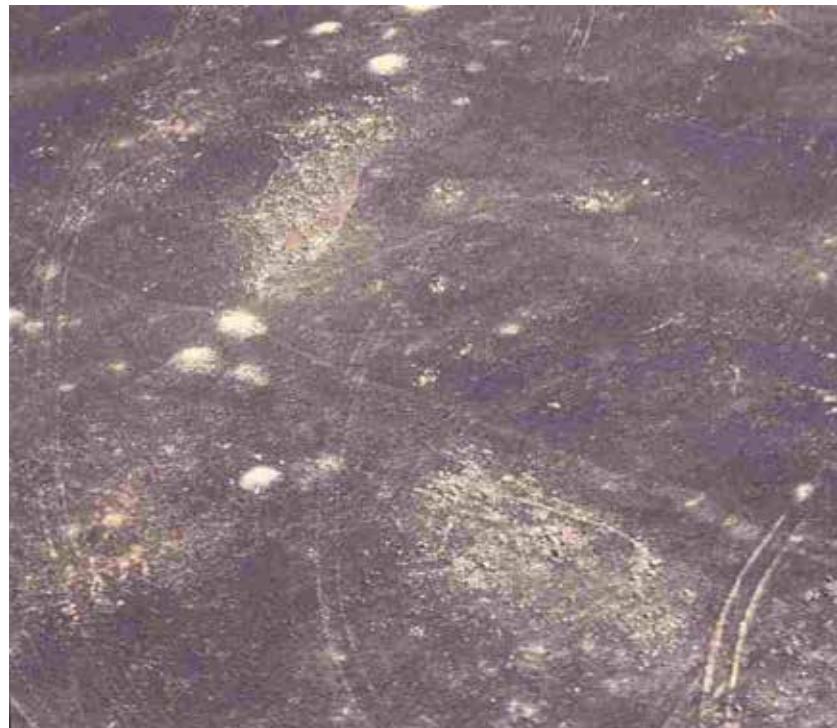


Fig. 4 a/b/c - Large size geoglyphs on the plateau. The image apparently representing a rhinoceros is over 30 meters long. Another smaller geoglyphs seems to represent an elephant. (Site HK 24c; photo EA94: II-27 E.A. 1994, fig. 15; WARA W05919). (Site HK 24b; photo and draw by F. Mailland; WARA W05920b/d).

Also Paleolithic flint figurines of a rhino and what seems to be the head of a wild horse, are documenting the early fauna. (Figure 1a-b-c-d-).

The mountain was a place of worship for human groups having a hunter-gatherer economy since the beginning of the Upper Palaeolithic. A Paleolithic shrine (Site HK/86b) has a group of standing pillars, natural flint nodules up to 120 cm high, selected and collected by early man because of their naturally anthropomorphic or zoomorphic shapes.

They have secondary human-made retouches such as eyes or thin geometric graffiti decorating the body surface. The associated flint artefacts belong to an archaic facies of Near-Eastern Aurignacian-like industry, named Karkomian.



Fig. 5 a/b/c - Upper Paleolithic site on the plateau of Har Karkom with a group of basement of hats around a central common area. To the north basement of poles indicate the emplacement of a structure likely to have been a ceremonial place. To the right side a flint workshop with heaps of debris of flint working. The yellow squares indicate the area where the flint implements were collected.

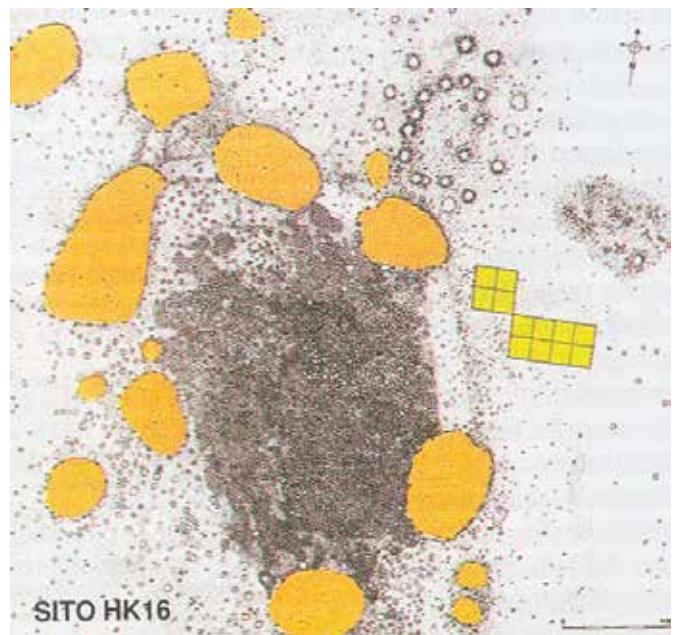




Fig. 6 a/b - A pre-pottery Neolithic site has the remains of a larger round structure. The slab near the entrance has a deeply engraved human face.





Fig. 7 - Private sanctuary at the foot of the summit of Har Karkom. On the left side is a stone with a large basin. (Sithe HK 212 b,

Some of the anthropomorphic monoliths of the Palaeolithic sanctuary are still in situ and they have remained visible for the last 45,000 or 50,000 years.

Near the standing monoliths there are pebble alignments, associated with flint implements. They are a sort of installation, marking the surface with deliberate visual motifs. They must have had a meaning for their makers. Their function remains an open query and we are not sure they can be classified as art: just linear and rounded lines of small stones incrusted in the palaeo-soil. A number of "*figurines*", small flint nodules (about 10-20 cm length) with anthropomorphic and zoomorphic shapes, were

concentrated in a few sq. meters on the ground of the sanctuary, along with flint implements; most of them are roughly retouched to emphasize some anatomical parts like eyes or nose. In other sites with a similar flint industry other such figurines were found as well. They are flint nodules having evocative shapes. They were collected by early man and enhanced by adding details. Usually the shapes

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Note: About two decades ago, non-professional and non-authorized visitors have redressed some of the fallen pillars in the wrong positions. Ancient traces of holes in the fossil soil indicate the original position of some of them, where they could be relocated in a future project of conservation).



Fig. 8 - Beer Karkom, site BK552. Series of orthostats, some of the fallen and traces of a large circular basin. (EA96:X-26).



Fig. 9 a/b - Photograph and tracing of an anthropomorphic stone in which eyes and nostrils have been emphasised. On the "forehead" of the figure an image of an antelope has been engraved. (Site HK 64b; drawing: HK Archive, photo EA93: XIXX-9; WARA W01836, W05895).

of these figurines are natural, the human actions were that of collecting them and that of completing the shapes, interpreting and/or explaining the forms offered by nature. This pattern of collecting natural forms and adding some minor enhancing engraved signs to them was defined as "proto-art"; it may have been one of the possible beginnings of figurative art. It opens up a chapter in art history to be further delineated. In a later phase of the Upper Palaeolithic, related to a flint industry of Gravettian type, likely to be about 25,000 years old, in a camping site on

the mesa, eight hut-floors are around a slightly oval common area with a diameter of ca. 16 to 18 meters. Just outside this living area, there is a double circle of pole holes. From the reconstruction it seems that both circles have 12 pole holes. The inner circle has a diameter of ca. 5 meters and the external circle of ca. 8 meters. What was its function? It is likely to have been a ceremonial site (Site HK16). This installation was conceived following a precise concept and displays a sense of aesthetic and harmony (Fig. 3). No Neolithic cult sites have been detected on

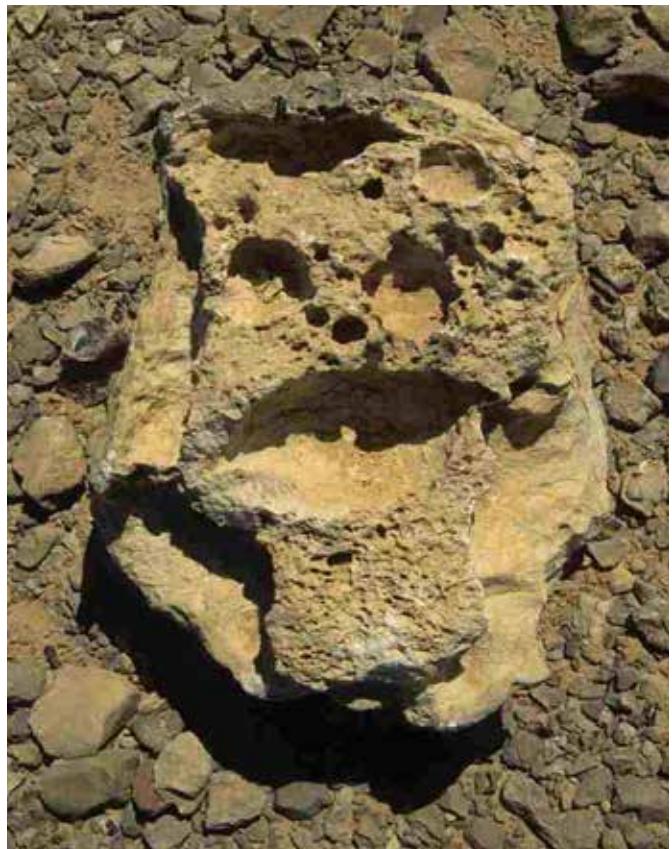
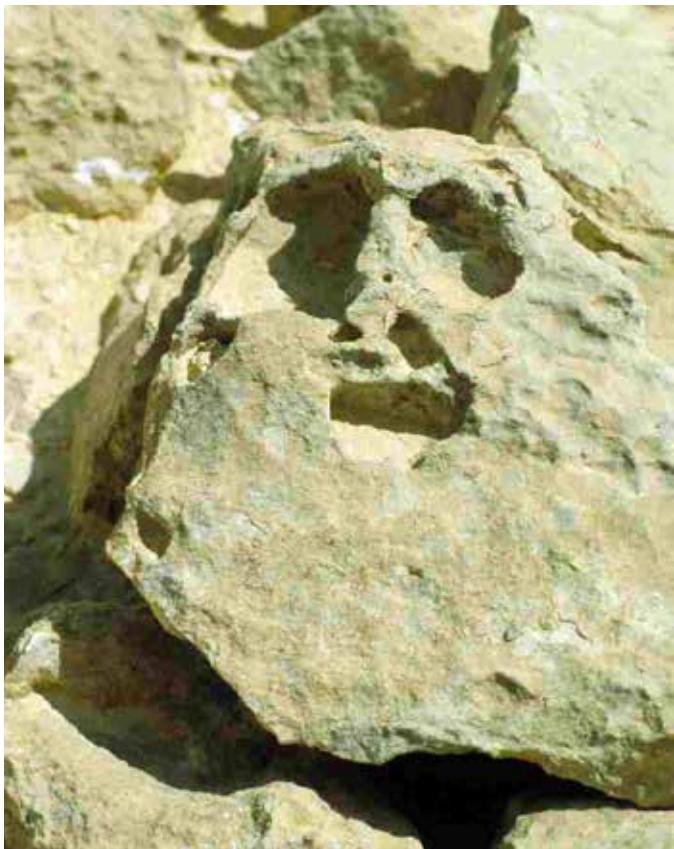


Fig. 10 a - An anthropomorphic stone on which the eyes have been emphasised. In front of it are the remains of a stone alignment. (Site HK 369; photo EA96: XVII-14; WARA W05884).  
b - Deeply eroded rock which shows traces of a monstrous face, with eyes, nose, and a large mouth. This anthropomorphic stone is near the BAC sanctuary of site HK 1b. (Site HK 1b; photo EA 96: I-24; WARA W05992).

the mountain but a few kilometres to the north, there is a pre-pottery Neolithic site, about 10,000 years old, with several stone basements of huts including a large circular structure, with a group of fallen pillars concentrated in a corner, and the engraving of an anthropomorphic face on a standing slab by the entrance of the circle. Inside the circle there is a dark, almost rectangular stone, weighting over 100kg, of a non-local type of stone, which must have been deliberately brought to its location. (Site BK608). (Fig 4 a - b). Cult sites are spread over the mountain and its surroundings between 4500 and 2000 BC, a period defined as BAC (BAC=Bronze Age

Complex, including Chalcolithic, Early Bronze, and beginning of the Middle Bronze age). The mountain became a paramount ceremonial high place: rock engravings describe worship, cult and mythological themes (Figure 5 a-b); standing pillars, stone circles, altars and shrines were erected (Fig. 6 a-b-c). About 120 sites of this period display “ceremonial” features, evidencing a variety of cult features of this mountain in the Bronze Age. Human groups gathered at the foot of the mountain and left behind remains of numerous stone built living sites. It is the only known mountain in the entire Sinai Peninsula displaying archaeological

Fig. 11 a/b/c - Standing stones, engraved with worshipping figures. (Site HK 2; photo ISR84 XXXIII-31; WARA W06005), (Site HK 56c; photo EA93: XX-1; drawing: HK Archive; WARA W06006, W06007).

d - Standing stone with engraving called "the staff and the serpent." The staff has horns which indicate energy or power, and the ideograms on the left include a 'u' sign and a parallel line with dots above and below. (Site HK 32; photo ISR84: XLVII-27, drawing: HK Archive; WARA W06008, W00077).

e - Rock engraving representing a group of poisonous creatures: scorpions, serpents, and a venomous lizard. The rock is located at the side of a path and seems to indicate a water source below in the wadi. (Drawing Hk Archive)

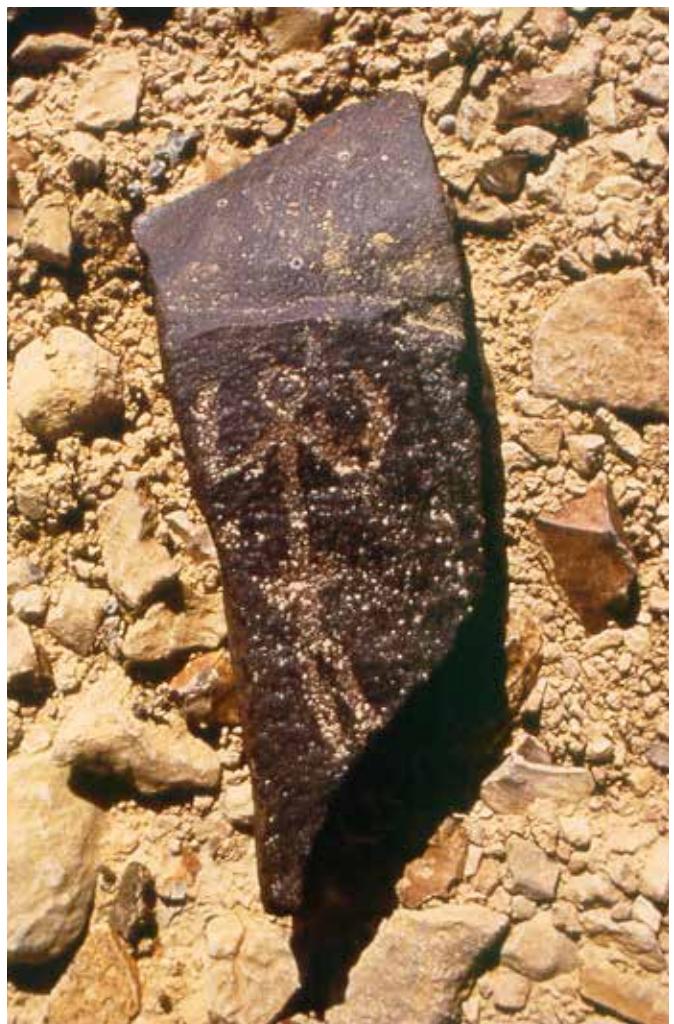




Fig. 12 a/b - Small private sanctuaries with anthropomorphic orthostats surrounded by stones. In the left one eyes and mouth have been emphasized by intentional engraving. In front of the orthostats smaller fallen slabs were probably once set in a vertical position. (Site BK 776; photo EA91: LXVII-26; WARA W06023), (Site BK 607b; photo EA91 LXVIII-6; WARA W06024).

evidence of such central role as a cult site in the Bronze Age. A number of findings related this period led to the hypothesis that this mountain might be the biblical Mount Sinai. This proposal opened up a wide debate, still in progress, which is beyond the purpose of the present paper (Anati, 2015).

At the western and northern feet of the mountain there are two major valleys with numerous remains of settlements belonging to the BAC period (Figure 7 a-b). The material culture of this period consists in abundant flint tools, grindstones, cup-stones and scanty pottery sherds. It reflects the daily activities of semi-nomadic pastoral clans.

On the plateau there are Palaeolithic living sites but no BAC living sites, just ceremonial or cult sites of that period. The many BAC camping sites, in the two main valleys at the foot of the mountain, may have sheltered thousands human beings. The habitation quarters are defined by stone built basements of huts. A ceremonial site is present near almost every such cluster. The mountain was a sort of prehistoric Mecca.

Likely the BAC period had a climate wetter than at present, nevertheless it is not clear how all these peoples could have obtained water and food for their survival.

The excellent state of preservation of the Palaeolithic hut floors, fireplaces, flint workshops and clusters of material culture, found in the upper plateau, awakens a query: did the multitudes of the BAC camping sites have access to the mountain?

If all these people had had access the Palaeolithic sites could hardly have been preserved as they are. It seems that at the time of the large camping sites the access to the plateau was restricted to selected persons.

Likely, many people in sites in the surrounding valleys never reached the plateau. They may have expressed their devotion in the numerous shrines found near the habitation sites, at the foot of the mountain (Figure 8).

Most of the shrines on the plateau have been defined as "private shrines" because of their modest size. Large human assemblies were probably held in the vast courtyards near the camping sites in the valleys at the foot of the

mountain. Some local stones were positioned around a central, larger slab, producing a simple structure probably created by just one or two people. Most of these shrines have one or more anthropomorphic standing pillars. Usually the stone was selected because of its natural anthropomorphic shape. Occasionally, human hands have added minor engravings, representing the eyes or other human features. Nature created the shapes, humans tried to interpret and complete them. The same treatment for the selected stones is repeated in the BAC age as in the Paleolithic age. And similar expressions were present until recently among tribal populations in Africa, the Pacific islands, Siberia and elsewhere. The shapes of the stones were considered to reveal their being the receptacle of ancestral spirits to be revered and worshipped.

After the BAC period of intense occupation, the plateau and the valleys around it were abandoned from ca. 1950 to 1050 BC. No archeological evidence was found of human presence from the beginning of the Middle Bronze Age II to Iron Age I. This gap is explained by a climatic episode of drought. Evidence of this dry period is confirmed by geological studies on the fluctuations of the Dead Sea shores and the variations in stalagmite formation studied in a cave (in the Sorek Valley).

Archeological traces reappear in Iron Age II, after 1050 BC, including remains of a hamlet of 8 basements of huts and a shrine. Again the main object is a standing pillar. It has faded traces of red paint and some image or symbol may have been painted, though it is no more recognizable. Another relation between cult and art, this time is produced by a society with an agricultural economy.

The number of sites in the surveyed area consistently grew in Hellenistic, Roman and Byzantine times with a number of large villages

and terraced agricultural fields. Again, climatic episodes may have been partly responsible for such fluctuation in the density of population as reflected by the density of archaeological habitation sites. In the Byzantine period some of the remains of major buildings are likely to have been churches; the cross is repeated among the symbols engraved on the rock surfaces.

The human presence sharply decreased in Early Islamic times after the 8th century. Desert nomads, who left behind traces of shallow encampments, then occupied the area. Their rock art is more schematic than in previous periods and non-figurative motifs are dominant. Symbols replaced images, likely under the influence of an iconoclastic tendency.

From the earliest pebble tools produced by hominids to the remains of Bedouin camping sites, a story of over one million years is present in this area. From what we found so far, remains of art and testimony of cult are present only in the last 50,000 years, from the Upper Paleolithic hunting-gathering societies to recent Bedouin tribal art. Har Karkom provides a section of the history of human kind over in a crucial place, the land bridge that links Africa to Asia, where hominids and then humans crossed from the African "Garden of Eden" to the rest of the planet Earth. Later myths and historical records refer to migrations and contacts between the Nile valley and the Fertile Crescent. In various periods the mountain has been a cult site and both, the built structures and the art, illustrate beliefs and practices, which have been analyzed in previous texts (Anati. *The Mountain of God; The Riddle of Mount Sinai*).

The mountain has been a cult site over and over again for Paleolithic hunters-gatherers, Neolithic early agriculturalists, Bronze Age pastoralists, people with a complex economy in Roman-Byzantine times, and

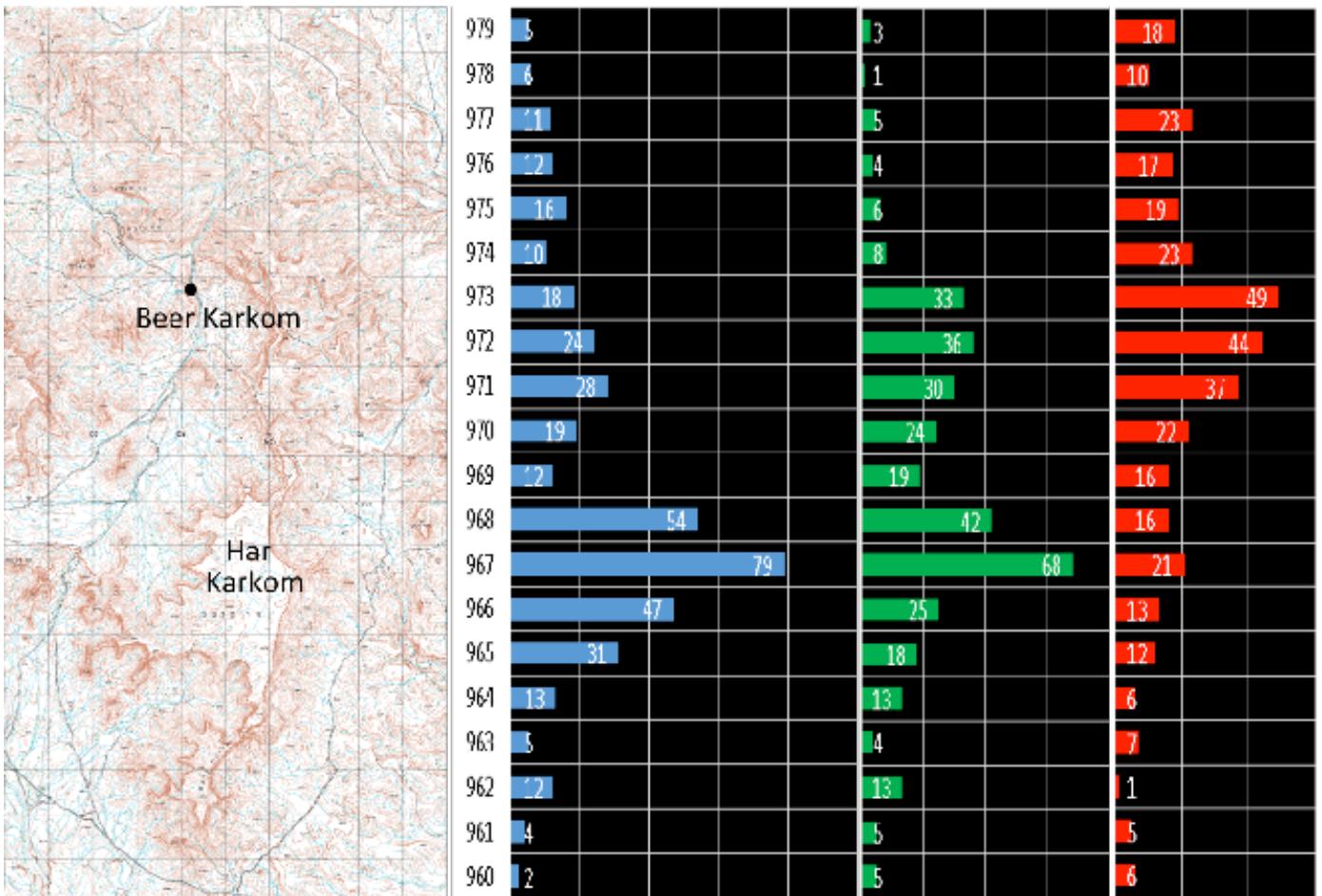


Fig. 13 - Changing concentration of sites: the map is showing the locations of the holy mountain and of the water source. The three different rows show the concentration of site per sq.km of the Paleolithic period, the Bronze age and the Roman-Byzantine period. In the Paleolithic and the Bronze age the major concentration is on the mountain. In the Roman-Byzantine times the water source was the main concentration while the mountain had ceased to be center of human presence. Likely the cult functions of the mountain had ceased. (Chart by F. Mailland, Har Karkom Archives).

recent nomadic pastoral and trading nomads. We failed to find the reason why just here people from different ages and beliefs repeatedly selected this mountain as their sacred site. The main question is why such flat mesa was selected, repeatedly, in different ages, as a cult site. It is not a prominent peak; it is an almost hidden mountain. It does not have water or other material resources more than elsewhere. And yet, out of all the mountains around, it was selected again and again as a cult site. Why?

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# AÏN KHANFOUS (JEBEL OUS-SELAT - CENTRAL TUNISIA) : A SYMBOLICALLY CHOSEN ROCK ART SITE

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Jebel Ousselat, the middle mountain of Central Tunisia, is one of the oldest foothills of prehistoric mountainous settlement in Tunisia.

Several painted and engraved shelters have been inventoried in recent years (Gragueb et al. 1991, Ben Nasr: 2001-2002, 2007, 2015). They have revealed a rich collection of paintings and rock engravings relating to the various styles and periods conventionally recognized in all North African rock art.

Ain Khanfous (literally the “source of the betle”) is the most abundant rock art site of Jebel Ousselat. Located in a rocky escarpment, inside the massif, the site is perched up high and difficult of access. It is a series of cavities



Fig. 1 - Aïn Khanfous: general view (at the top : the rock art site and below, indicated by the arrow, the source).



Fig. 2 - A panel named "The Archer Scene", where several phases of paintings are represented.

overhanging a shallow cave inside which is a water source (Aïn Khanfous) (Fig.1).

At Jebel Ousselat, Aïn Khanfous is the only rock site directly in connection with a source of water, the only one inside the massif.

Here we have a unique example of a coexistence of water and artistic expression.

The source and the dominant position of the site offering an extensive panorama, seems to be the main elements that caught the attention of prehistoric men for the choice of surfaces to adorn.

The site is distinguished by its iconographic richness and by the stylistic and technical diversity of its rock images.

One can find there paintings and engravings, or rather paintings with engraved contours, witnesses of the long frequentation of the site and the continuity of the artistic tradition over a prolonged period.

### The paintings

There are many paintings, organized in a number of panels. Two distinct groups can be differentiated and may correspond to two chronologically different phases of site use.

The first and oldest group concerns paintings of a more or less realistic style. Human representations seem to be related to particular events (hunting, rites, and symbolic scenes)

rather than to daily activities. We can distinguish grouped or isolated personas, armed essentially with bows and arrows in an environment where occupants concerns seem to have been mainly concerned with hunting. The associated fauna are marked by the presence of the ancient buffalo (*Bubalus antiquus*) (fig. 2). On the other side, some figures are represented in attitudes that suggest a ritual or symbolic atmosphere. This is the case of static, unarmed subjects; seen from the front, their silhouettes, technique of execution and the circular shapes of their heads remind the observer of the paintings of Jabbareen and Sefar at Tassili. Other painted figures join hands, thus evoking a dance or ritual procession.

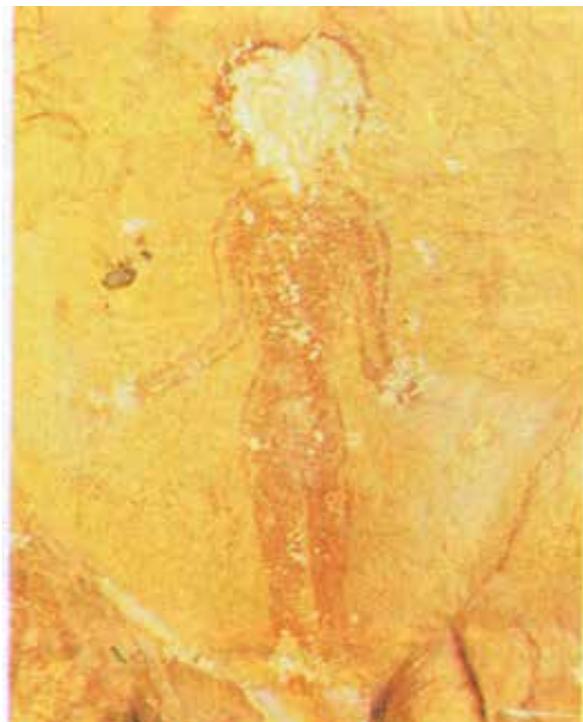


Fig. 3 - Anthropomorphic figure having the head intentionally erased. Also the hands seem to have been erased. Other similar painted figures are present on the same surface.

Let us look at these strange figures with a heart-shaped heads (fig.3). Because the fantastic aspect of the head is unreal, these are likely to be masked characters ("false face masks") related in acts or ceremonies of a symbolic or ritual nature. These exceptional paintings can reasonably be compared stylistically with Saharan rock art, namely the paintings attributed to the "Round Heads" school at the Séfar site at Tassili-n-Ajjer (Sansoni 1994, p. 99).

If these paintings are part of the "Round Heads school", as we believe, they are located outside the areas of high concentration of this style identified mainly with the Tassili of Tamrit and Akakus (Libya) (Muzzolini 1995). Researchers are far from agreeing on the chronological position of this school: from 8000 to 7000 BC. J. C. (Mori 1968), between 5000 and 4000 BC. J. C. (Lhote 1958, Hachid 1998) or after 4500 BC. J.C. (Le Quellec 1998).

The second group consists of some human and animal representations in a schematic style. This ensemble, which we consider to chronologically predate the first group, is characterized, among other things, by the representation of the shield in the shape of a "pelte" (pelta), a combat weapon of characteristic of the recent period of the North African rock art (fig.4).

The paintings contain a considerable number of non-figurative representations whose interpretation is only the projection of our imagination, without being able to recognize an object represented with certainty. There are rod-shaped signs / or patterns which are arranged to form rows (panel 2), punctuations which draw a closed oval shape, or these two enigmatic signs in the form of a hand with four fingers or an object with four branches of which one is shown isolated at the top of the wall and the other is touching a bovid. Is this a representation of an object? Is it rather a property mark of the place, a "tribal" signature or a convention specific to

the group and having a symbolic connotation? These repetitive and recurring signs are ideograms. Their particular associations indicate that they convey conventional concepts. (Fig. 5). Note that it is not always easy to read the painted surfaces. There are panels where compositions overlap and intermingle, forming a complex rock art stratigraphy difficult to decipher.

### The Engravings

Some Tazina-style engravings finely engraved and totally patinated, are hardly distinguishable on the sloping lime flagstone of the shelter. One is a small engraving (10 cm) of a ram with a globular cap of spherical shape and decorated with a collar (fig.6). The same cephalic attribute and collar are also observed on another small engraving of the same style of a horned and halo-headed bovid.

In the Maghreb, engravings of the ornate ram (spheroid ram) have been correlated with interpretations related to water or rain rituals. A neolithic cult of the ram is evoked in connection with a pastoral symbolism that would have been common to all of North Africa.



Fig. 4 - An anthropomorphic figure personage with shield is painted near older figures.

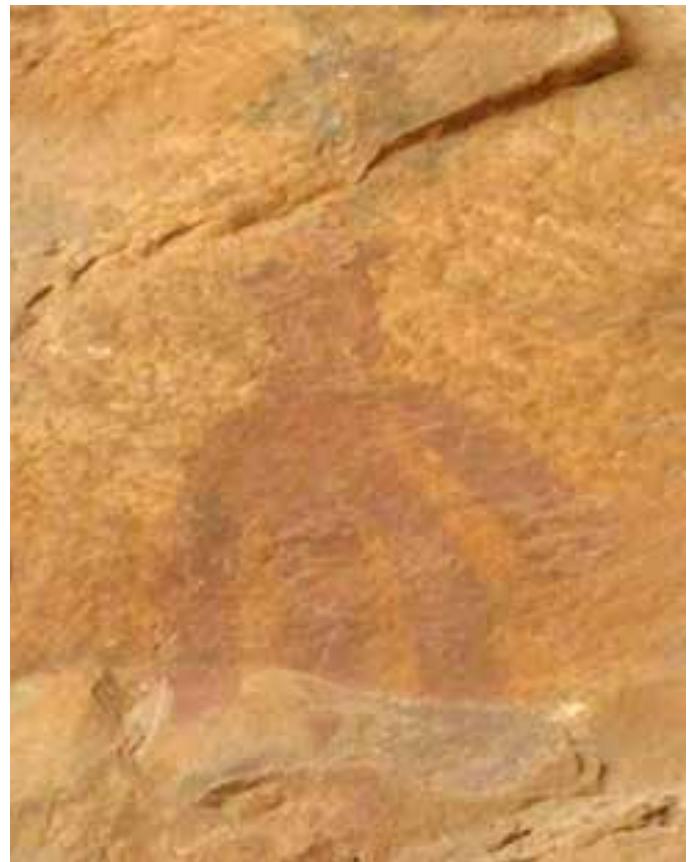


Fig. 5 - Non-figurative representations: object with four branches or legs and space defined by punctuations.



The ram could be the god of water, rain and fertility, symbol of agriculture, thunder, storm and the sacred strength of the flock (Joleaud 1933).

This cult, which was widely practiced during antiquity (Gsell 1914), had intermittent permanence during medieval times despite the massive Islamization of the Berber populations of the Maghreb. Indeed, in the 11th century, the Ibadite writer al-Chammakhi testifies to the presence of ram-worshipers among the Berber populations near Kairouan, probably among the Amazigh ibadites of the Mazata tribe of Jebel Ousselat (Lewicki 1935). We have, therefore, a textual proof of the permanence of this cult during the Islamic period. It is not impossible that Ain Khanfous was one of the places where the ancient inhabitants of the mountain celebrated their cults, including that of the ram. Besides these engravings, executed on the sub-horizontal slab of the shelter of the paintings, others are observed on the limestone wall of the cavity where the source seeps out.

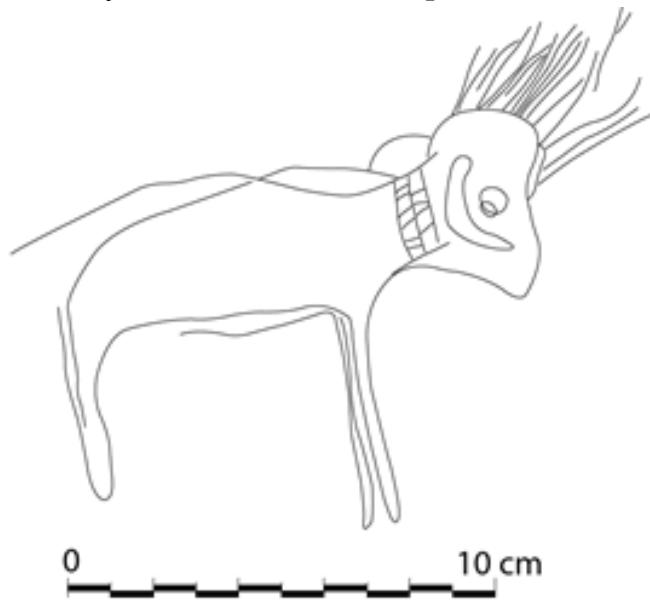


Fig. 6 – Engraving resembling Tazina style: ornate ram.

It is mainly a pattern in the form of a gourd with some internal longitudinal lines associated with several elongated oval bodies which appear to be vulvar symbols (fig.7). This motif is reminiscent of the "nasses" (creels) ("incomplete creels" because they lack an appendix), enigmatic figures, numerous on many Tazinian sites (Masy 1998: 21). Several interpretations have been given to this pattern, but it seems more to have a propitiatory role (Le Quellec 1993). Higher up, on the limestone slab of the principal painted cavity, numerous anthropomorphs are sketched in a crude manner (coarse line and very rudimentary style).

Some subjects are armed (shield, sword ...), others are "ithyphallic", with the sex emphatically exaggerated or unnatural. One of the subjects is engraved in the frontal position and is characterized by an emission indicated by a line. All these anthropomorphs are not represented in coitus scenes. Their "erethism" probably has a symbolic motivation. Phallic figurations are universally known as symbols of reproductive or vital power. It is often thought of as a "cult of fertility" or a "phallic cult". These anthropomorphs are associated with a large number of Arabic graffiti, from medieval and modern times,<sup>1</sup> with the same clear patina (fig.8). These graffiti are also present on the walls of the cave located below where the source oozes. The texts are short and repetitive and formulaic. The content is funerary (profession of faith and prayers).

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<sup>1</sup> Technically, it is a local, rudimentary script, not influenced by the advanced techniques used in the execution of official commemorative religious inscriptions. In Tunisia, this type of writing is attested in the religious monuments of the island of Jerba and in the Ksours of the south-east (Tataouine and Medenine). It dates from the end of the medieval era and the beginning of modern times.



Fig. 7 – The source: an enigmatic sign similar to the “nasses” of Tazinian engravings associated with "vulvar signs"?

They evoke names of people and a determinant constituted by an attribute of Allah as well as prayers for the deceased. These funeral inscriptions are a manifestation of the thought of the ancient inhabitants. It was surely with a religious intention that these inscriptions were engraved expressing spiritual preoccupations (fig.9).

Near the source, some shelters revealed the presence of many Arabic graffiti sometimes associated with anthropomorphs, similar to those of Ain Khanfous, and some tifinagh characters (fig.10). But why is there such a collections of funeral inscriptions in this place? It is certain that

this source has exerted a real attraction, a sort of sacralization of places where there was water. In a region characterized by a semi-arid climate, water has preoccupied the minds of the mountaineers and sources received tokens of veneration. The source (El-Ain) that gathers crowds is probably transformed into a sanctuary or m'zara (place of visiting). ). It is also possible that we are in the presence of a very old cult of the caves, and many similar practices have been identified in the Maghreb] (Basset 1920; Alquier 1929).

This concentration in space and extension in time of rock images probably is intended to emphasize the sanctity of the place as well as to demarcate it in its space.

The rock art tradition has persisted under different variants. The sanctity of the site did not disappear with the disappearance of prehistoric beliefs. There has been a temporal continuity of the “sacred” until a recent period before the definitive depopulation of the mountain in the 18th century.

Ain Khanfous evinces a spectacular stratification of images that relate to different periods. Several men frequented the same place to put down their imprints on the rock. The paintings of different styles, engravings and votive inscriptions are all indications of the cultural continuity of which this place is the witness.

Various generations, with different artistic languages, succeeded each other in expressing their beliefs in the same place. It cannot be ruled out that the source has preserved a sacred character for millennia. Settlers were particularly attracted towards this naturally privileged place, blessed by the presence of a perennial stream, and symbolically marked as a place of devotion. At present, no worship is attested for this source. Beliefs may have changed, declined and finally disappeared over time.

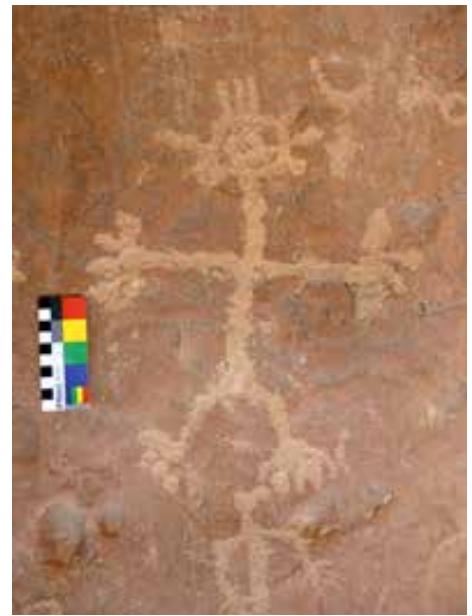
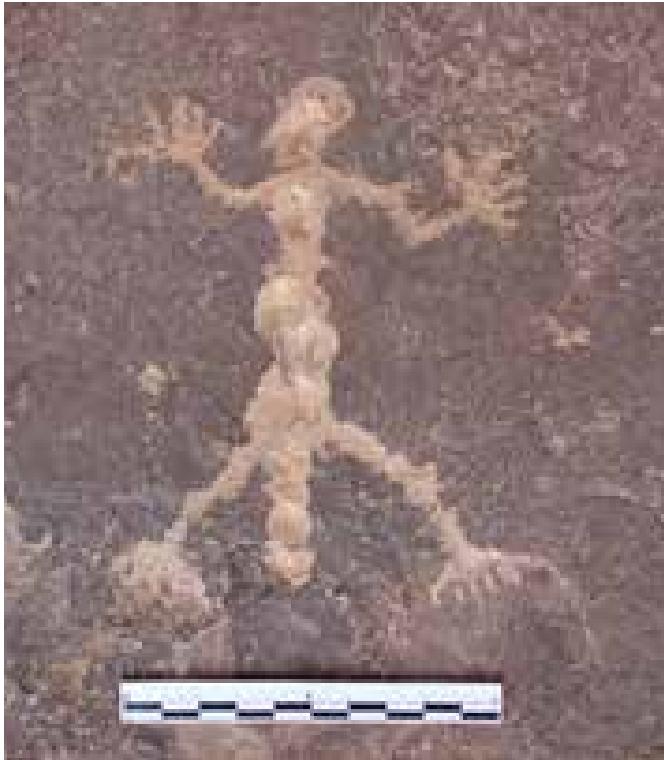


Fig.8 - the limestone slab of the principal painted cavity : anthropomorphs and Arab writing (general view and details)



Fig.9 - Example of funeral inscriptions of Aïn Khanfous

Fig. 10 – The surroundings of ain khanfous: anthropomorphic figures(1 & 2).



#### Photo credit

Fig. 2 & 3 : Gragueb & al. 1991

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# ROCK ART AND LOCAL RELIGIOUS PRACTICES IN KAZAKHSTAN AND KYRGYZSTAN

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## Introduction

Rock art sites are found in many of the rocky outcrops of Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan in Central Asia and their diverse chronologies range from prehistoric to ethno-historic times. The majority of these panels were executed as petroglyphs, images carved or pecked into natural stone, while the occurrences of rock paintings are quite rare. Significantly, it is known that particular prehistoric petroglyph sites have been the focus of folk Islamic traditions carried out by individuals and families from local communities and also by travelling pilgrims. These activities, however, are not the fossil remnants of ancient rituals, but nuanced interactions with the images from the past, re-engaging with them in a contemporary socio-religious milieu.

One of the most prominent features of Central Asian folk Islamic practices involves visiting a *mazar*, a holy place. The well-known alternative to the *hajj*, the pilgrimage to Mecca, found throughout the Muslim world involves the practice of *ziyarat* (Arabic for pilgrimage), that involves visitations to the tombs of holy persons, who are commonly referred to by westerners as 'saints'. The Arabic word for 'saint' is *walī* (plural *awliyā*), 'a friend of God', an individual marked by divine favor who is endowed with special abilities and is able to bring about miracles (Radtke et al. 2002). The word has been adapted into Kazakh as *auliye* and can also refer to the saint's burial place from which *baraka*, spiritual power, emanates

from the tomb. In Kyrgyz *oliya*/*oluya* refers to a wise person, usually deceased, who foretells the future and can offer protection from the various problems of life (Aitpaeva 2007: 527). Additionally, journeys to major holy shrines or mausolea located in or nearby urban areas is the accepted equivalent to the *hajj* that is carried out by Central Asian Muslims, as well as visiting special *mazars* in rural areas. A Kyrgyz individual who visits these sacred sites is known as a *zyyaratchy* (derived from *zyyarat*, Kyrgyz for *ziyarat*).

Central Asian *mazars*, however, are not only connected to the saints, but also have associations with prophets, heroes, ancestors and guardians. The *mazar* does not have to be a tomb: it could also be the cemetery where clan ancestors are buried, as well as sacred trees, springs and grottos. Most *mazars* possess healing powers and are sought by pilgrims in search of cures for physical or spiritual illnesses, and also by women seeking to become pregnant. Moreover, these holy personages may reveal themselves to the pilgrim in a dream at a *mazar* or appear in dreams instructing an individual to go on a shrine pilgrimage. This, in turn, reflects the Sufi heritage of Central Asia that observes *ayan* (personal revelation, Arabic), the illuminationist dimension of Sufi spirituality, which manifests itself in dreams and impels religious activities.

## Rock art *mazars*

The major rock art complex of Saimaluu Tash (decorated stones, Kyrgyz) is, perhaps, the highest *mazar* in Central Asia. It extends across two valleys that are situated high in the Fergana mountain range, western Kyrgyzstan, at about 3,200 m above sea level. The local Kyrgyz believe the prehistoric carvings were not made by human hands and consider the area to be *iyik zher* (holy, Kyrgyz). Abramzon (1971)



Figure 1. Healing hollow of Kol Tash ('hand stone', Kyrgyz) with circular petroglyph images that is found along the mountain-side of Sulaiman-Too, Kyrgyzstan.

importantly documents the practice of pilgrimages in the 20th century that were carried by Kyrgyz seeking healing and women seeking a cure for infertility. Pilgrims brought livestock to be killed and eaten in a ritual meal accompanied by prayers and readings from the Qurān. Abramzon also informs us that even entire cattle herds have been brought up to Saimaluu Tash to receive protection from harm during times of epizootic spreads of animal disease.

In more recent times, the large shrine complex of Sulaiman-Too in the city of Osh, southern Kyrgyzstan, has become a major pilgrimage

site (Aitpaeva 2013: 95–8). It covers the entire mountain, which is named after the Muslim prophet Sulaiman, King Solomon (Zarcone 2013). A mosque was built for him on the eastern side of the mountain in the 16th century and, according to legend, this is the place where Sulaiman admired the mountain. This is affirmed by the presence of natural markings in the shrine, considered to be handprints which are believed to be the impressions he left in the rock.

Petroglyphs occur at Sulaiman-Too on some exposed surfaces situated around the

mountain and date from the Bronze Age to the Middle Ages and even later times. Kyrgyz pilgrims visit particular localities decorated with rock art for blessings and some of these depictions have been worn smooth by constant touching (Figure 1). In particular, one rock art panel is believed to treat headaches, while another bestows longevity upon children. Additionally, the Chilten-Khana cave located on the southwestern slope has many abstract rock art images. It is named after the *chiltens*, helpful spirits, and local tradition considers the cave passage to be a pathway to Mecca.

The famous rock art complex of Tamgaly in

Kazakhstan is situated along the Tamgaly River valley and has become a popular tourist destination (Lymer 2004). Its rock art chronology extends from the Bronze Age up to the Middle Ages. It is, however, referred to by the local Kazakhs as *Tangbaly Aulie*, sainted place of clan-markings. Communal celebrations are held by local Kazakh communities within the Tamgaly petroglyph complex during spring or summer and usually involve the traditional nomadic horse competition of *kokpar*. Large bushes growing near the river are covered with numerous rags, tied by pilgrims and other visitors seeking blessings.



Figure 2. Former shrine stone tied with rags set upon a large scene of Bronze Age horse petroglyphs at Terekty Aulie, central Kazakhstan. (The photo dates to the year 2000 and the stone is now removed).

Sometimes rags have been tied also on to small jutting rocks near various petroglyph panels around the valley. Rags have been also tied on the bushes growing beside the famous scene of six Bronze Age solar gods. Locals believe that the ground in front of this scene was once the grave of an unknown saint; however, archaeological excavations of the site did not find any evidence for such a burial. Moreover, Rogozhinskii (2004: 59) tells us that among the Kazakhs there are local stories about a heavenly punishment that falls upon those who defile this sacred place.

Another important Kazakhstani rock art site covered in rags is Terekty Aulie, an area of granite hills covered with Bronze Age petroglyphs that is situated north of the city of Jezqazghan, central Kazakhstan (Lymer 2004, 2015). An important 19th-century Kazakh clan cemetery was also found at the base of the highest hill. Pilgrims had erected a stone shrine post atop this hill, in the natural crevice between two large petroglyph panels depicting numerous

Bronze Age horses (Figure 2). Rags not only covered the stone, but they have also been tied to any stray bush growing from the cracks of the hillside. After visiting the shrine, Kazakh pilgrims return below to have a ritual meal involving the sacrifice of a live goat, which is accompanied with prayers and Qurān readings. They then visit the cemetery to commemorate the ancestors and tie rags to its fence. The rag stone was removed a few years ago and a post was erected to continue the traditional tying of rags, but, alas, it has also been taken down in recent times. Terekty Aulie is a place of healing and its *baraka* derives from a visit by the prophet Khazrat Ali (Kazakh), Alī (Arabic), the son-in-law of Muhammad.

There are also rock art images of his footprints as well as petroglyph hoofprints belonging to his faithful horse, Duldul. Alī has also left traces in the rock at sacred sites in the Batken province of southern Kyrgyzstan, including a stone with large footprints found at the Azireti-Ali *mazar* in Shaimerden Valley and a rock with fingerprints sitting in the natural spring of the Kyzyl *mazar*, near the village of Sur (Aitpaeva 2013: 106–8). Furthermore, it is also interesting to note that in the Aravan region of Osh province, southern Kyrgyzstan, there is a small rock art site featuring the ancient petroglyphs of two horses, situated near a cave and holy spring with healing powers which has become incorporated into the Duldul-At *mazar* (Aitpaeva 2013: 61–3). The *mazar* features the mysterious tomb of an unknown individual, which is now enclosed by the construction of a small mausoleum.

The petroglyph images of horses date, perhaps, to the later first millennium BCE (Figure 3). According to a local legend, there is an invisible horse-spirit that once dwelled in the vicinity and its neighs can only be heard by one person in a thousand.



Figure 3. Tracing of the Aravan petroglyph scene of horses, southern Kyrgyzstan (after Frumkin 1970: fig. 9).

## Concluding remarks

Overall, rock art sites have many potential possibilities, including being important places where significant religious relationships and connections are realized. As we have seen from the examples above, petroglyphs and their settings are a part of the experiences and practices through which socio-religious realities are generated and constituted. Concentrations of rock art images can in effect become the medium through which people engage in and enact religious beliefs and activities. The folk Islamic practices carried out by Kazakhs and Kyrgyz are deeply embedded in a nexus of relationships related to how a local community conceives and interacts with the tangible and intangible worlds around them. Discussions about the complexities of these phenomena assist in providing us with deeper understandings about the dynamic roles that rock art imagery plays in the landscape of folk Islamic pilgrimages. Moreover, these rock art *mazars* are situated at the crossroads of time, where present-day practices acknowledge and dynamically interact in exceptional ways with the artistic and religious endeavors of past societies.

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## CULT SITES AND ART

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### Images of a deer and the cult places of Europe and Northern Asia

The cult of the deer is one of the most important phenomena of the first spiritual culture. Material and visual evidence of the deer cult in ancient and modern societies, as a rule, is connected with outstanding landscape sites (caves, cliffs, rocks) and with water (islands, waterfalls, etc). All these remarkable places played the role of the border between worlds in the earliest semantic field.

Myths and rites were the main components of the cult. Deer worship was the essential side of the ritual. Rites of transition (liminal rituals) or other life cycle rites were carried out according to the scheme defined by A. Van Gennep: 'separation – passage (*limen*) – reaggregation' (Gennep, 1960), in other words: first, isolation of the object; second, transition; third, acquisition of a new status (revival). Hunting rituals have the same number of actions connected with the natural cycle (Mykhailova, 2009, 269, Mykhailova, 2016). Hunting reindeer ceremonies were as follows: first, killing the sacred deer; second, butchering and collective eating of the sacred animal (familiarization with the totem); third, return of the remnants (antlers, skulls, jaws, scapulas, limbs) to the world of others (dead/animals) for the future regeneration of the deer. An important part of the ritual was the drawing of the deer or deer heads (antlers) on the rocks or in the caves, in the special places which served as boundaries between worlds.

The most ancient evidence of the deer cult, which belongs to the Upper Palaeolithic, is

concentrated in the caves. The cave was associated with the woman's womb in early consciousness. There were accumulations of deer antlers in the caves of Western Europe (Aschenstein in Germany and the reindeer cave in Scotland, figs. 1, 3) and in the Urals (Bearish cave, fig. 1, 2, Un'inskaya cave and Azhurnaya cave). Probably they are testimonies of fertility rituals, similar to the totemic rituals of the Saami people, during which people imitated reindeer coupling using shed antlers, which were later put away in the remote cave (fig. 1, 1) (Mykhailova, 2009).

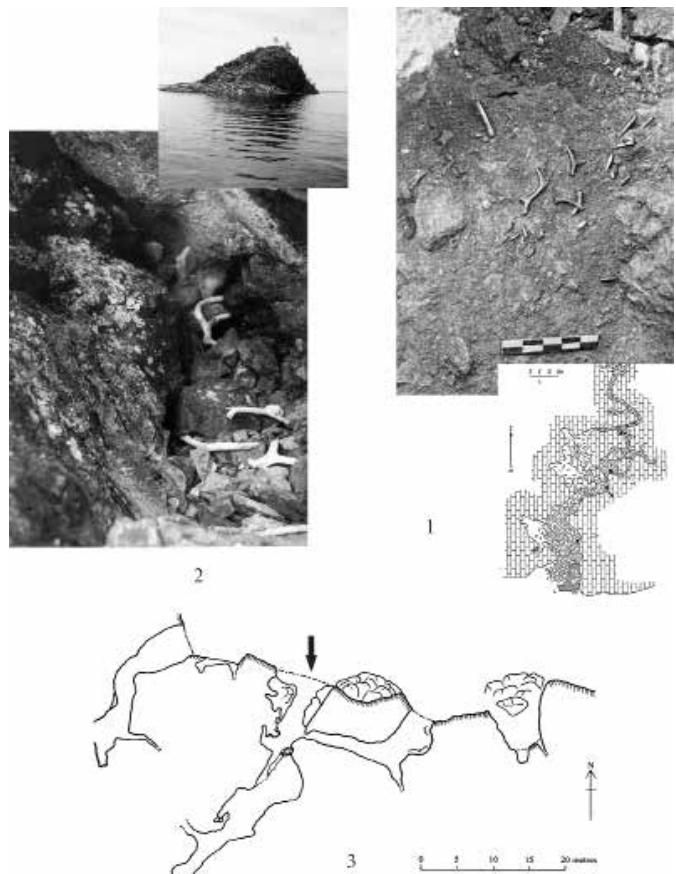


Fig.1. Caves with the accumulations of the shed antlers: 1- Ukonsaari cave, Finland, historical time (Tromnau, 1991), 2 - Bearish Cave , Ural, Upper Palaeolithic; (Guslitser, Kanivets, 1962); 3 - The plan of the Reindeer cave, Scotland, Upper Palaeolithic (Morrison, Bonsall, 1989).

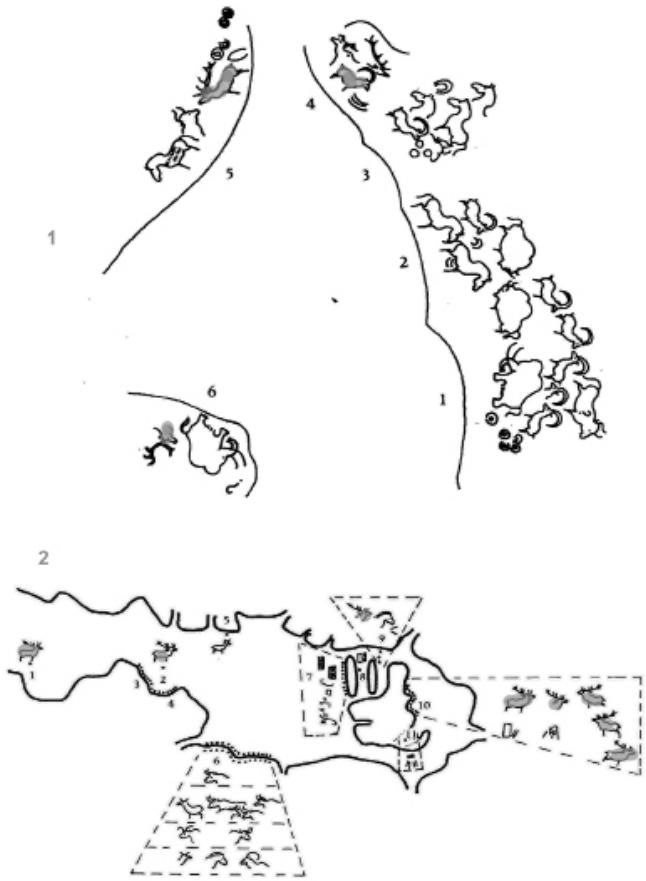


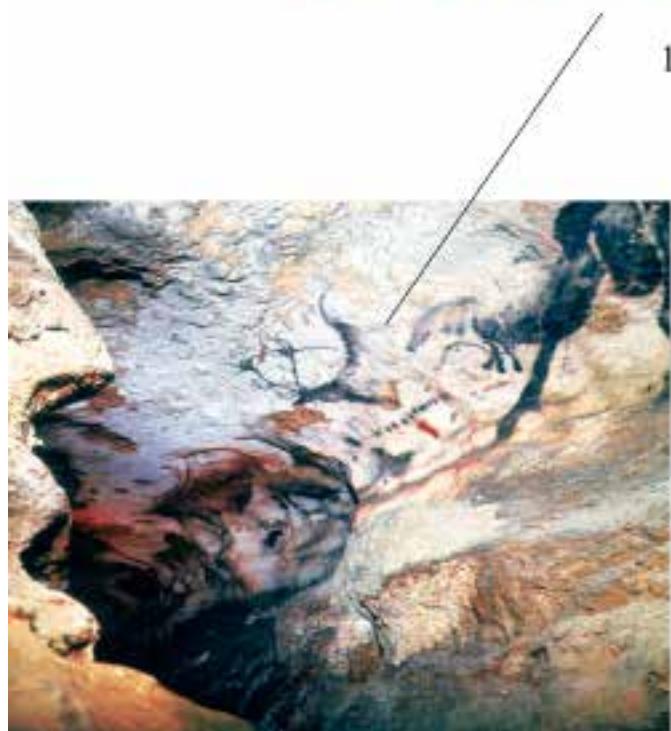
Fig. 2. Plans for placing deer images in Franco-Cantabrian Upper Palaeolithic caves: 1 - Pair-non-Pair; 2 - Chimenes (за Leroi-Gourhan, 1965).

There are numerous Upper Palaeolithic deer depictions in the caves of the Cantabrian and Pyrenean mountains, the Dordogne and the Mediterranean Basin. In many cases deer images marked the entrances, the borders of chambers and the remote places of the caves (fig. 2). A. Leroi-Gourhan characterized deer as 'the animals of the entrances and depths' (Leroi-Gourhan, 1965, 259, 441-446). The most impressive tradition was in the Magdalenian time, for example, in Lascaux (fig. 3), Font-de-Gaume (fig. 4), Gabillou, Chimenos, Villard, Pech-Merle and other caves (Leroi-Gourhan, 1965, 264, 269, 281, 308-310).

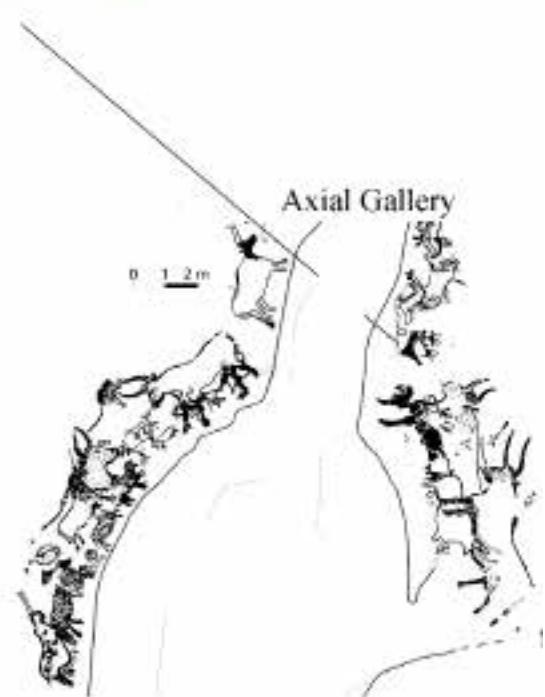
In my opinion, complete or partial depictions of deer marked the places of great semantic significance (entrances, crossroads and the most distant parts of the caves). In the binary coordinate system of us and others, these places served as the 'border between worlds' (Bayburin, 1990, 9). The deer was a mediator between people and the others (Mykhailova, 2008, 30-40). The concentration of repeating, complete or partial depictions of deer in the far, hard-to-reach parts of the caves is the second topographic manifestation of the symbolic significance of these animals. There is the so-called deer gallery in Altamira, which is considered to be the oldest in the cave. The chamber is filled with images of the heads of female deer (Quiros, 1991, 81-91). There is a zoanthropomorphic depiction of an antlered 'sorcerer' in the 'sanctuary' in the Trois Frères cave. In a very small and difficult-to-reach chamber in the niche of the sanctuary there is a great panel with reindeer depictions (Abramova, 1980, 81). In my opinion, the 'peripheral' areas of the caves, using the words of E. Anati, 'fit the revelation pattern' (Anati, 1993, 28).

The cult of the deer developed the most in the Mesolithic period, when deer had the greatest value in the economy of ancient hunters of Europe and northern Eurasia. Deer depictions are known in the Levantine art of the eastern Iberian Peninsula (Dias-Andreu, 2001). Usually, pictures are concentrated on vertical rock surfaces, rock-shelters or abris. During Neolithic and Chalcolithic times 'schematic' figures of deer were also depicted on stelae, plates and megaliths (Diaz-Andreu, 2001, 164; Ripoll, 1977, 418-429). There are numerous megaliths with engraved depictions of deer and solar symbols in Galicia (fig. 5). According to R. Bradley, these depictions marked the routes of the deer herds migrations (Bradley, 1994).

Deer and elk depictions play an important role



1



2

3

Fig. 3. Lascaux cave, France, Upper Palaeolithic. The partial drawing of the deer on the right side of the entrance to the Axial Gallery (after Delluc, 2006).

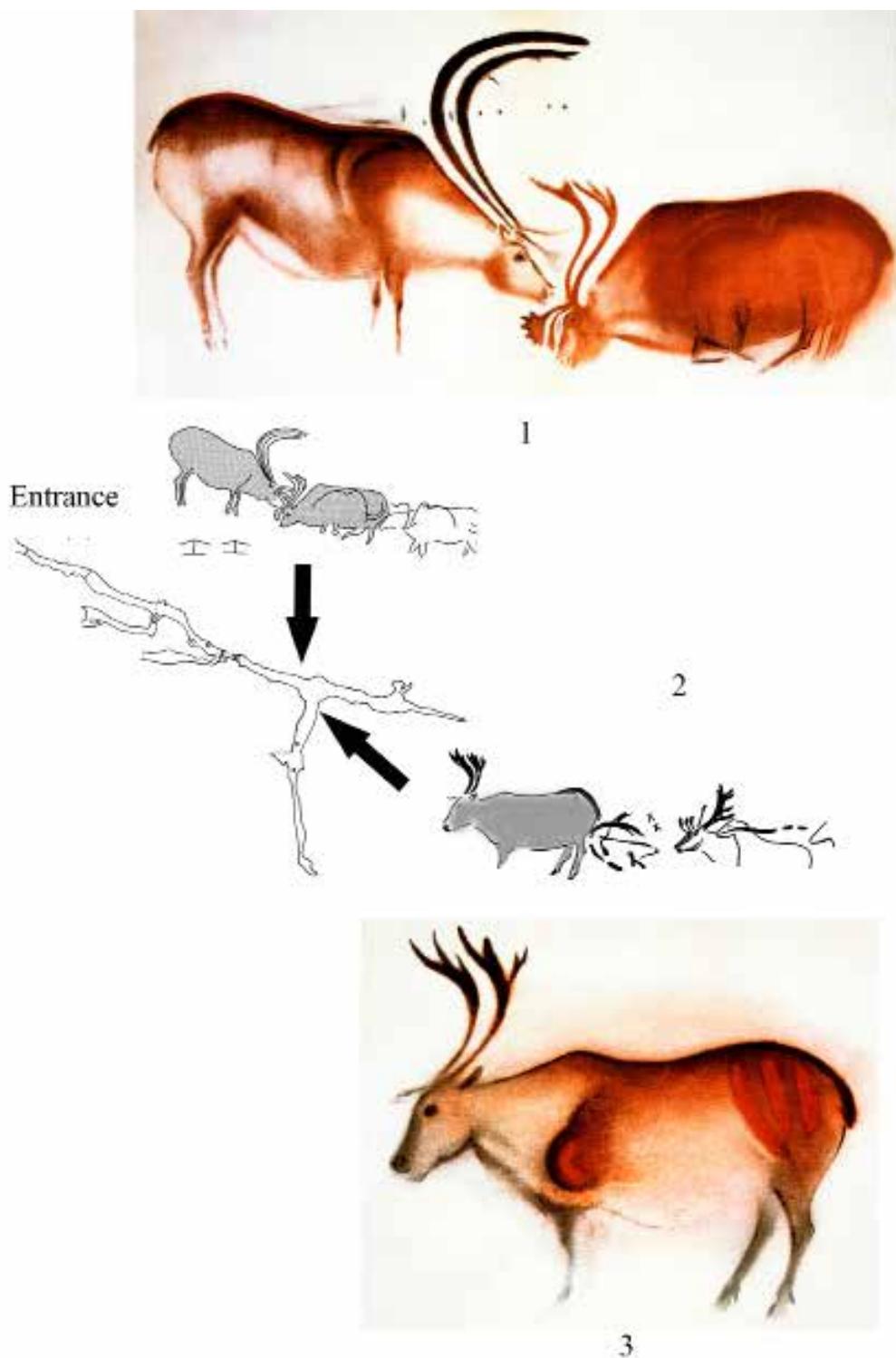


Fig.4. Deer images on the crossroad in the Font-de-Gaume cave (after Daubisse et al, 1994).

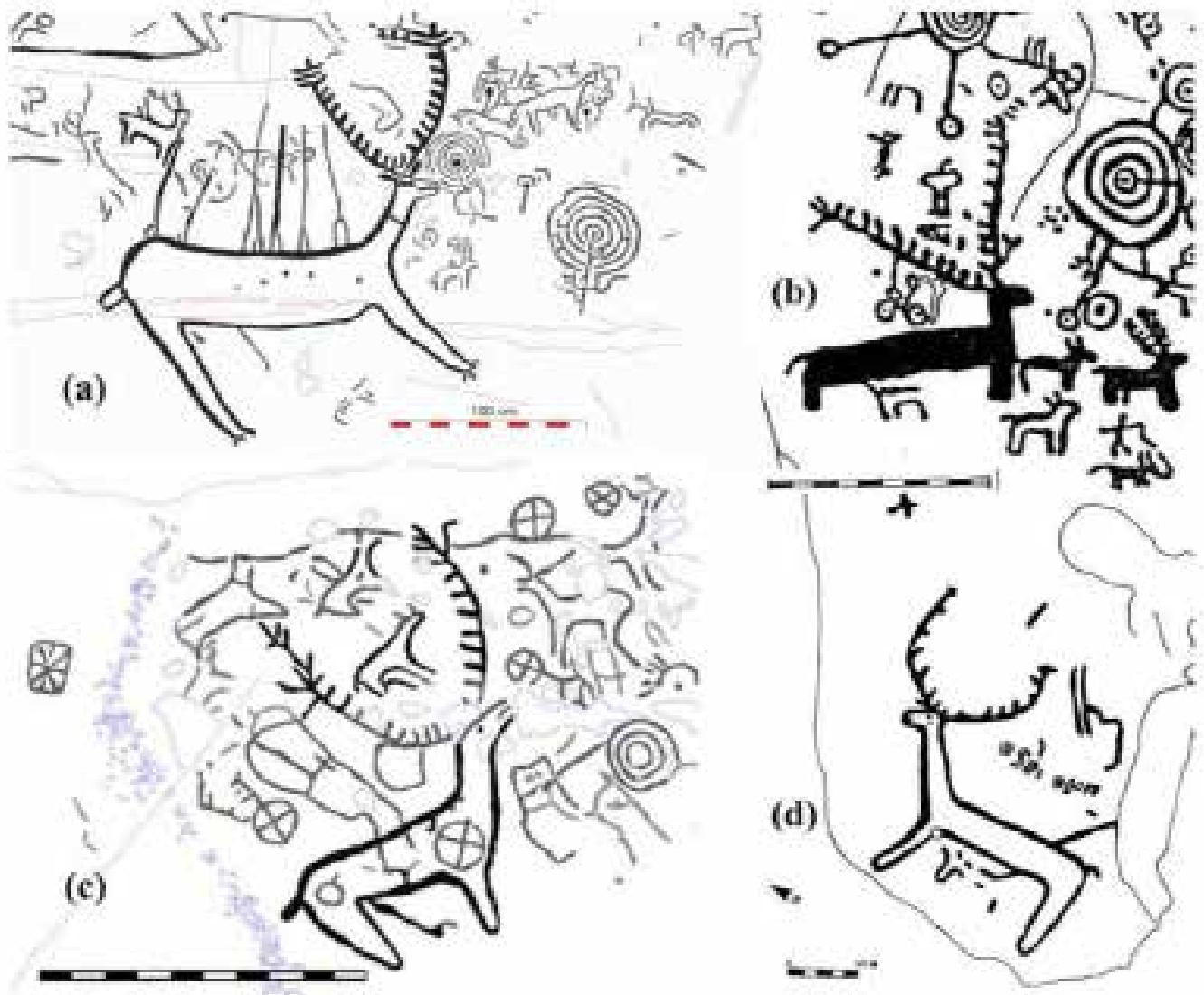


Fig. 5. Deer depictions in the rock engravings of Galicia, Spain (after Gonsales Garsia, 2007).

in Mesolithic and Neolithic rock art from northern Europe and Asia (5500-4200 BC). The most impressive and significant complexes of northern European petroglyphs are located mostly in coastal areas, islands and capes. As usual, there are horizontal rock surfaces with thousands of the petroglyphs (Zalavruga, Peri-Nos, Alta, Namforsen, Chalmn-Varre, Kanozero-Helskog, 1995, p. 43; Ravdonikas, 1936). In the inner regions of Fennoscandia and partly in

coastal Norway there are drawings also on vertical surfaces, made with charcoal, ochre and red pigment (Lahelma, 2008).

North Asian rock art manifestations are concentrated mostly in the Ural and Altay Mountains, in the region of Chukotka, among the basins of Lena, Angara, Yenisei and Tom and in Mongolia. Petroglyphs and drawings were depicted on the vertical surfaces of rocks and cliffs. Depictions of elks dominated in Neolithic

times. During this period, the depictions were concentrated in places that served as sacral centers in ancient times. This hypothesis can be confirmed by the sacrificial places at the foot of the rocks drawn on (Bader, 1954; Okladnikova, 1984, 37; Mazin, 1994, 67). The artefacts found near the figures cannot be regarded as evidence of housing. 'People were afraid to settle near the spirits' dwellings' (Mazin, 1994, 67).

Elk depictions were concentrated in isolated places, which were really hard to reach, on cliffs, islands or in caves, and had sun exposure, which shows the importance of the rituals performed there. Depictions were situated on anthropomorphic or zoomorphic rocks, capes and cliffs, often surrounded by water. Sometimes depictions marked crossroads, the places where deer calved or paths along which deer migrated, hunting places (Lahelma, 2008, 20; Симченко, 1976, 256). 'Favorable area next to the rock art site connected the crossing places or lines of movement for the elks' (Gjerde, 2010, 431-432). Some sacred places are still in use in modern times. Numerous drawings are connected with water, which symbolized the border between worlds. According to J. Goldhann, running water creates audiovisual phenomena and states of altered consciousness, like the shamanic trance (Goldhann, 2002, 29-61).

In these sacred places were found bones, skulls and antlers of the sacred deer and elks, weapons (to kill the sacrificial deer), tools for lighting fires, knives for butchering, a cauldron for the sacrificial meat, mobile artworks with deer depictions, precious gifts for the spirits and so on.

Three fireplace traces and three quartzite arrowheads have been found under the Flatruet rock drawings in Sweden, which include numerous reindeer, elk and human depictions. The arrowheads (fig. 6) were damaged, probably because they had been 'shot straight

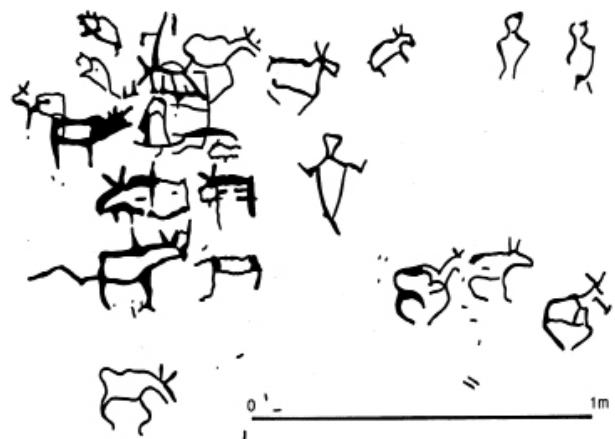


Fig. 6. Rock engravings of Flatruet rock artsite. (Hansson, 2007).

into a hard surface' (Hansson, 2006, 109, 112). A. Hansson suggests that 'people fired arrows at the images' (Hansson, 2006, 111). The bones recovered from a test-pit in the shallow water immediately in front of the Kotojarvi painting, belonged to elks and various bird species (Lahelma, 2008, 38). Four amber pendants were found in the underwater excavation under the drawing in Astuvansaalmi, Finland, which included depictions of elks, horned humans and women with a bow (fig. 7) (Taskinen, 2006, 26). The petroglyph site in Ausevik, Norway, shows depictions of deer and humans in X-ray style. Traces of fire and ochre testify to the rituals (Viste, 2003, 66-67).

The offering place under Pisany Kamen' (its name literally means written rock, fig. 8) in the Ural Mountains (Russia) is located on a narrow platform, isolated from the dry land. There were numerous artefacts on this platform: flint, bone, bronze and iron ware, many animal bones (mostly elks'). There were two arrowheads, a copper plaque and a silver plate with a hole.

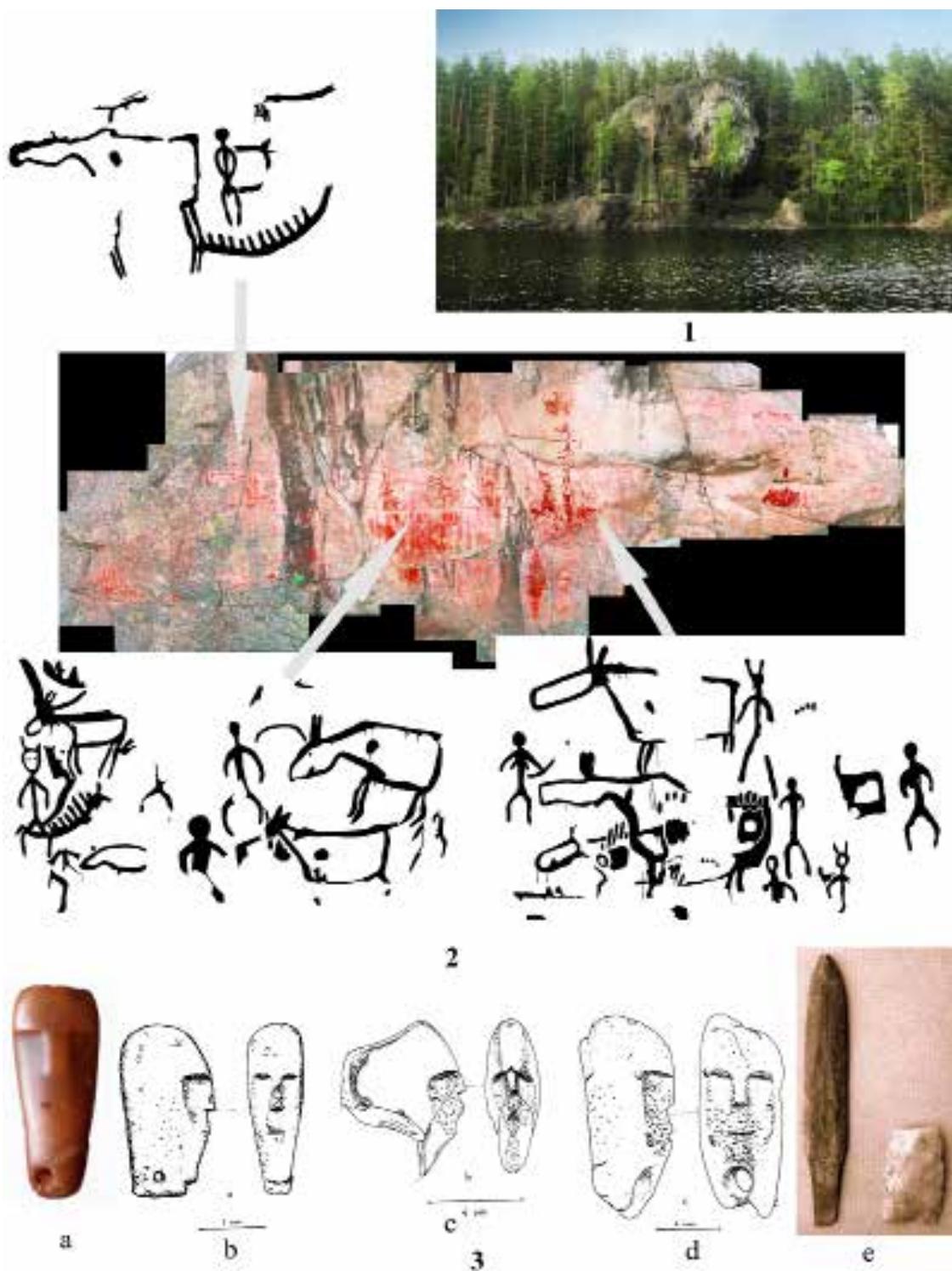


Fig. 7. Astuvansaalmi rock art site (Neolithic, Finland) and artifacts from the underwater excavations (after Sarvas, 1969, Irsenäs, 2010).

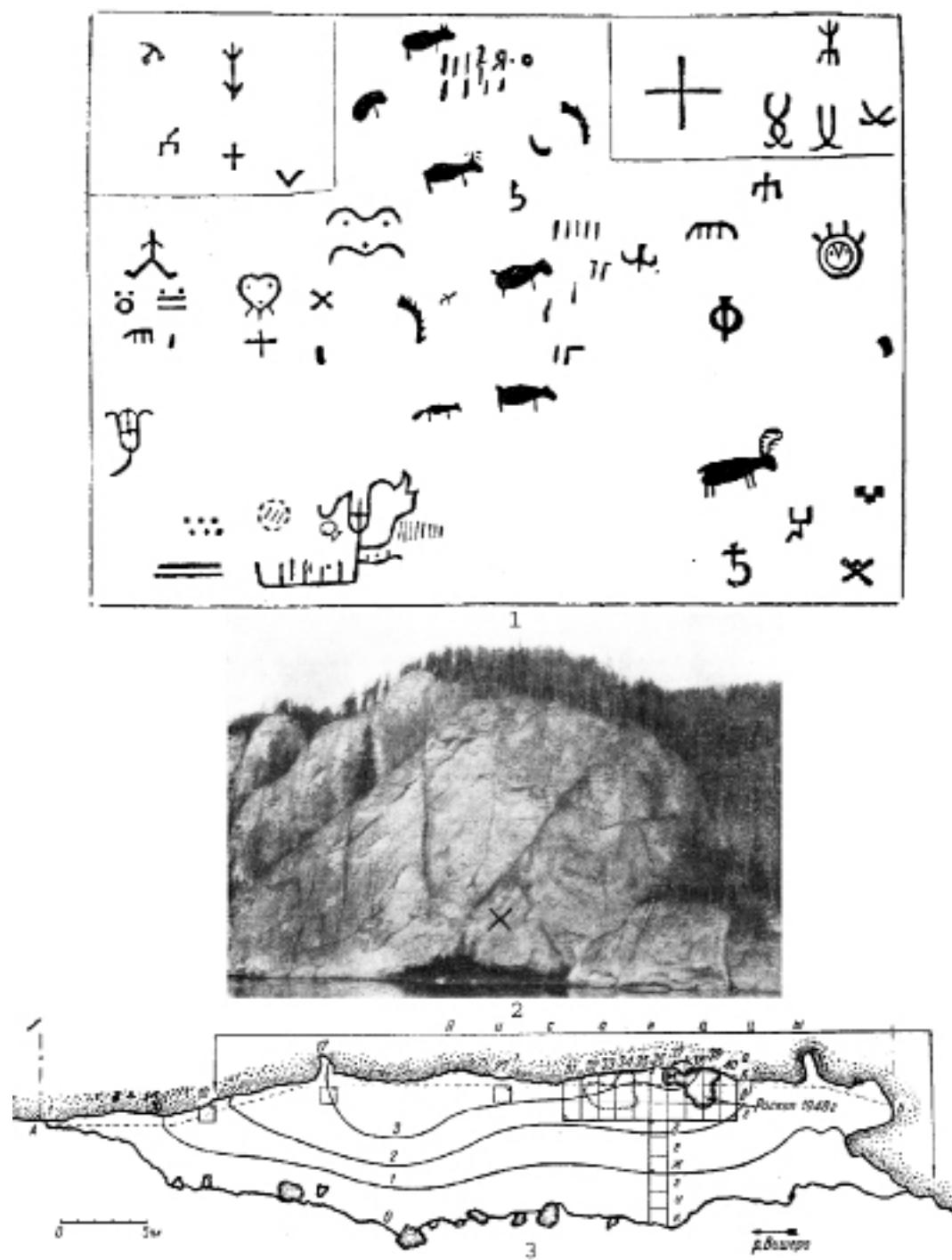


Fig. 8. Pisany Kamen Petrogliphes and offering place. Urals, Neolithic – Iron age) (after Bader, 1954).

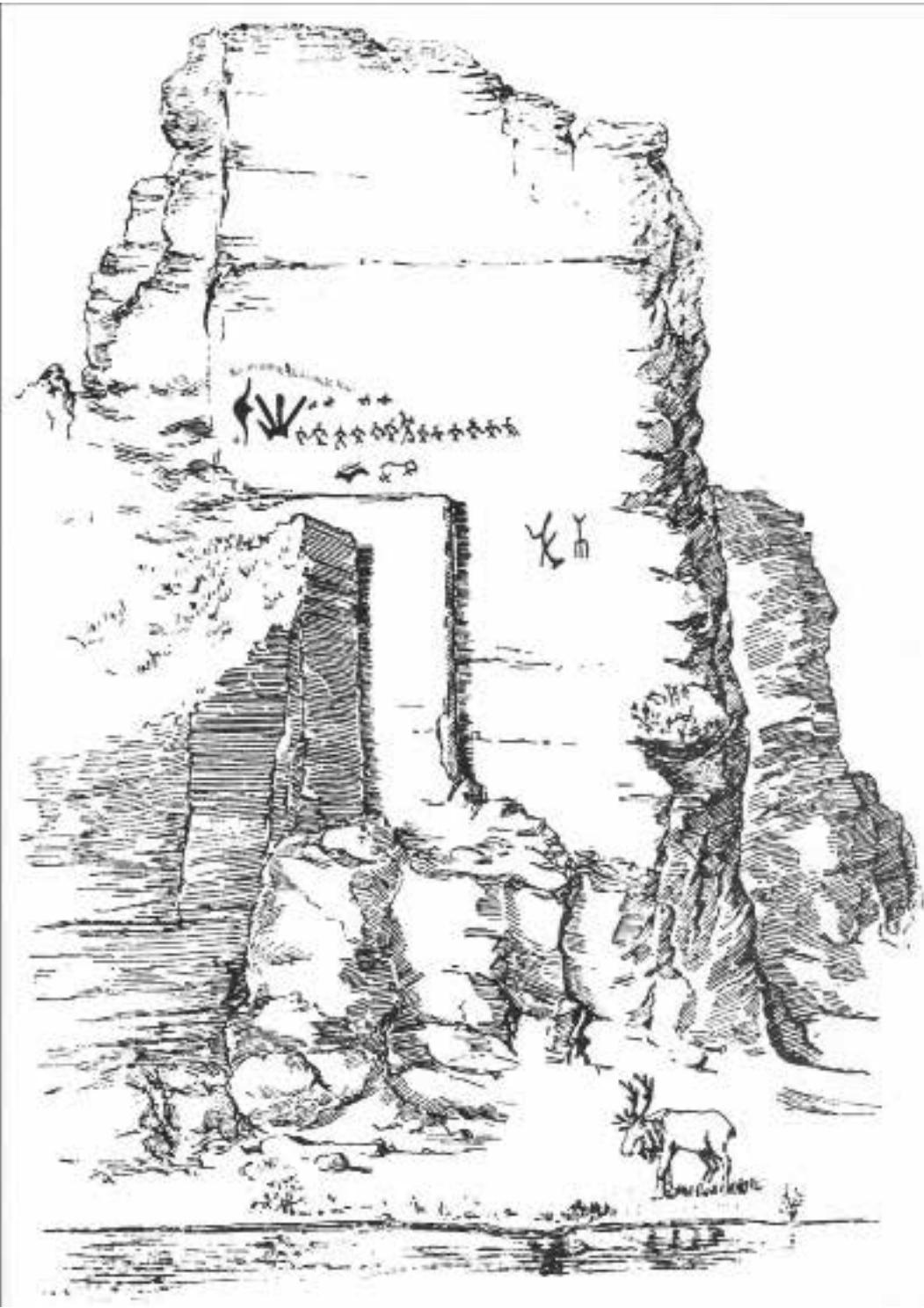


Fig. 9. Suruhtah-Kaya drawing and offering place. Siberia, Neolithic (Okladnikov, 1972).

Fig. 10. Suruhtah-Kaya drawing. Ritual scene (Okladnikov, 1972).



G. Bader suggested that these gifts were sent to the island with the arrows (Bader, 1954). Probably, the same practice was in use in Flatruet. The earliest Neolithic pictures on the platform are depictions of elks.

The Neolithic site of Lysa Gora, located on the northern coast of Lake Baikal (Russia), is situated on the top of a steep mountain, covered with petroglyphs. There were nearly 3,000 elk and roe deer bones in a crag cut? the foot of the mountain. Traces of fires were also found there (Тиваненко, 1989, p. 51). The location of this site and its proximity to the petroglyphs is evidence of the sacral role of the site.

The most impressive rock art site is the Neolithic site of Suruhtakh-Kaya (fig. 9) on the banks of the Middle Lena River (Siberia). There is a rich complex of rock art subjects, including rituals (fig. 10) and elks and shaman images (fig. 11). Neolithic artefacts were found in the crack under the drawings: flint tools, arrowheads and spears, scrapers, cutters, awls, a bone

harpoon, pearl beads. There were also modern analogues of the ancient offerings on the surface near the crack: gunpowder, bullets, empty cartridges, coins, beads and matches. All these artifacts are typical offerings for sacral places (Окладников, 1972, 72–73).

So, rituals connected with deer reproduction were held among the people living in Europe and Northern Asia in Upper Palaeolithic, Mesolithic and Neolithic times. They included the returning of the remnants of the sacred animal to the other world and/or drawing deer on the cave walls or rock surfaces. Accumulations of deer antlers in the caves and Franco-Cantabrian artworks are the archaeological evidences of these rites. The location of deer depictions in places considered to be crossroads between the worlds, like at the entrances or depths of the caves, proves the symbolic significance. During the Post-Palaeolithic age, the image of the deer takes a prominent place in the so-called Levantine and schematic art of Spain and Portugal.



Fig. 11. Suruhtah-Kaya drawing. Shamanic scene (Okladnikov, 1972)

Images of deer and elk play a dominant role in the rock and mobile art of Scandinavia, northern Russia and Siberia during the Mesolithic and Neolithic times and retain its significance during the Bronze Age. Archaeological evidence of the deer cult and depictions of deer and elk were connected with peculiar places, which were considered to be the border between worlds: caves, cliffs, rocks and places near the water – islands, waterfalls and so on. Rituals recalling elk reproduction were held near the depictions of the great mother-elk. The purpose of these rituals was to regulate the

relationships between worlds with the help of the spirits-mediators that lived in the rocks. The gifts to the spirits included weapons (like arrows or spears, tools used to sacrifice the sacred deer), flint tools for making fire, bowls for the sacred meal, deer figurines, jewels, coins and so on. Some offering places were used until modern times.

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# **NEUROMYTHOLOGY: RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN BRAIN, EVOLUTION, AND MYTHOLOGY**

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## **On the meaning of mythology**

Neuromythology seeks out to know the extent to which a myth is influenced by human brain mechanisms in terms of its creation and development. Can a myth be created because of the particular form of the connection between the brain and the world? Can human brain mechanisms be effective in the changes made to myths as well? If myths—or parts of them—are rooted in the brain and its way of processing, would this not justify the existence of parallel myths in different countries? Are not these the biological roots of a myth that have changed it into a category that mankind cannot escape from, and have made mythological comprehension practically one of the eternal ways of cognition? These are all questions that this science deals with, but it is still not limited to them.

## **Introduction**

For the origins of a myth we have to go back in history and see what the alphabet of making a myth has been. Powerful myths, such as the battle of Ahura Mazda and Ahriman<sup>3</sup> or the story of Prometheus,<sup>4</sup> astonish us with their glory and the depth of their insight and penetration. However, we forget that, like any other idea and structure, these magnificent and powerful myths have not been created overnight; probably, preceding myths have gone a long way. Eventually, they have achieved such

harmony and splendor through a process of transformation. These preceding myths have remained hidden because of our lack of registration or our inability to analyze the residual symbols of previous civilizations. For example, Gilgamesh is one of the most magnificent and powerful myths of humanity, which targets one of the most important human conceptions (i.e., death).<sup>5</sup> The insight in this myth is not a mere narration, but it also shows the human inability to stop death. Even after thousands of years, it is still one of the most important philosophical problems: what is death? It still remains a dilemma that mankind cannot overcome. Surely there must have been some background for such a magnificent myth in the culture of this civilization or of previous ones. Because of their elementary form, preceding myths can be our best guide in examining how the brain interacts with the world and they can help us understand the neuroscientific roots of the myth. Seeing the famous Marlik Cup at the Museum of Ancient Iran made me clearly understand that the thought of death as something ordinary and inevitable also existed before the Sumerians<sup>1</sup> (Figure 3). The Marlik Cup displays the story of a mountain goat from its birth to death, a story that, perhaps, may be the epitome of a mythical narrative from the Marlik civilization, a myth that introduces death as an inevitable fact and, like Gilgamesh's story, as a natural part of human life. Gilgamesh's story has also other preceding myths. Thanks to discoveries made in Jiroft, it was revealed that what is now called the Jiroft Champion (Figure 4) depicted on remnants of the artefacts of this civilization, is in fact a pre-mythic example of Gilgamesh himself.<sup>6</sup>

## **Going further**

Neuromythological understanding of mythological structures makes us consider myths as a

form of consciousness. Myth is understood as a form of human experience of the world, inside and outside. When we consider the myth as a form of consciousness and experience, we have the possibility to look at its roots. Accordingly, the quest for the origins of myths turns into a search for consciousness from the roots. It is not an innovation to consider myths as a form of consciousness, as Ernst Cassirer<sup>7</sup> and Mircea Eliade,<sup>8</sup> two great mythologists, have earlier pointed out. The discussion on how consciousness is created is one of the most important and difficult questions scientists are faced with.<sup>9</sup> But despite all the complexities, there might be a consensus on a subject (i.e., consciousness stems from our brain mechanisms and processes). Perhaps, the best theory that shows us this cause-effect relationship between consciousness and the brain is the theory of Gerald Edelman, winner of the Nobel Prize for Medicine, who discussed consciousness from an evolutionary point of view. Edelman pointed out that the brain is the result of evolution and because of this also the theory of consciousness must be based on the assumption of evolution. Thus, he introduced the theory of neuronal group selection (TNGS). According to this assumption, a large number of different cycles is created in the human brain in the form of interactions between neurons and different regions of the brain. Natural selection and Darwinism determine which ones of these neuronal cycles should remain. This selection is made through changes in synapses and their capabilities. The paths and connections that have more positive inputs and are used more in the experiences of human beings and their connections with the environment have a higher chance of survival.<sup>1</sup> The major point of the theory of TNGS as a consciousness generator, however, is a principle called the re-entry relationship or the recursive principle: 'The re-entry relationship refers

to permanent repetitive exchanges of parallel information between brain regions, acting as a coordinator, spatially and temporally, in the activity of different areas of the brain.'<sup>10</sup> Re-entry is a kind of exchange, i.e. a fluid exchange of information between a wide extension of parallel axonal systems which, as a mirror, connect maps and nuclei in the brain.<sup>1</sup> As a result of re-entry interactions, a kind of synchronization is created between active cycles in all parts of the brain.

Primary consciousness (the kind present in primary living creatures) becomes superior consciousness through a re-entrant activity between the back of the brain and its anterior parts, which have the ability to evaluate it. This re-entrant activity is the neuronal base for the coordination and creation of what are called mental states or qualia.<sup>1</sup> This perspective shows how consciousness is gradually formed and created. Every experience of the primates which adds to their perception of the world has virtually contributed to the formation and development of human consciousness. This theory gives us the opportunity to find the roots of consciousness. This kind of mythology study becomes the study of consciousness, thus enabling neurosciences to explore myths.

### Scientific sources of neuromythology

Neuromythology was presented in two books (published in Farsi) titled *The Revival of Myth*<sup>1</sup> and *An Introduction to Neuromythology*.<sup>2</sup> The purpose of *An Introduction to Neuromythology* is to know whether or not the mythological experience is limited only to *Homo sapiens*. Did the other genera of the *Homo genus*, such as *Homo habilis* or *Homo erectus*, also have mythical experiences? If that is the case, what were these experiences? And were they involved in the creation of the glorious myths we know? The construction of stone tools goes back to *Homo*

*habilis* and the discovery of fire is more than a million years old.<sup>1</sup> All of these are very important experiences involved in the evolution of the brain of the genus *Homo*. This book explains how such experiences contributed to the development of myths. After a careful analysis of these concepts, it is the turn of the *Homo sapiens* species. However, considering the fact that the present-day human species is almost 300,000 years old,<sup>14</sup> the power of language and the ability to write have caused myths to take their present shape and form and to be recorded. Hence, cognitive abilities and the brain processing power of *Homo sapiens* must have heavily influenced the formation of myths. In the case of the evolution of human beings—and especially with the advent of artificial intelligence—what will happen to myth? Will the mythical experience continue in this new human being?

## Conclusion

Neuromythology is a new science that examines the neuroscientific origins of myths. The main axis of this science is the consideration of myth as a form of human consciousness and experience of the worlds inside and outside him/her. Hopefully, further research and the use of image methods will be able to delineate various aspects of this interdisciplinary science.

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# THE IMPACT OF ANCIENT ARMENIAN TRADITIONS AND WORLDVIEW ON THE COGNITIVE CORE OF NORDIC CULTURE

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**Keywords:** worldview, cognitive core of civilization, rock art, Armenian and Norse mythological and historical heroes, the Aesir and the Vanir, runes, dragon stones, cross-stones, konungs, the Ynglings, cultural and linguistic picture of the world.

## Introduction

Historians refer to records of the origin or genesis of the world civilizations, analyzing the given archaeological data individually, together with the processes and language of the indigenous population. More frequently, the data are incomplete and wide open to criticism. Human thought formation is based not only on the categories and units of a particular language, but also on the universal content structures of logical and figurative thinking in their constant interaction and reciprocal influences. People more frequently use words not at their semantical level (**in the integrity or cognitive concept of the knowledge spiral**), but at the level of transmitted meanings, that is concepts and conceptual features in entirely different contexts, without conceiving the way a particular word is formed, which serves the basis for the recipient to perceive the meaning. A language reflects contemporary culture; it also bears the imprint of its previous forms, which reflect a universal worldview, the system of sustainable figures and the cognitive

abilities of our ancestors in a historical context. Through a cognitive linguistic and mythological analysis of the archetypes of old Armenian and Nordic cultures, the authors have identified a number of provisions proving the impact of the Armenian language and culture on European cultural and civilization formation, particularly the mythology and worldview of the Nordic countries. This article summarizes the results of the research in comparison with the works of medieval Armenian Scandinavian and ancient Greek historians.

The identified linguistic, cultural and ideological cohesion (similarity) is manifested not only in the toponyms, the language and mythological motifs, but also in the artefacts of material and non-material cultural monuments: rock art, dragon- and cross-stones, ornaments, etc. The revealed data is an important source for comparative historical, cultural, psycho-linguistic and anthropological studies. The origin of the royal descents (konungs) is from the native speakers of old Armenian - the substrate language, to the descendants of the Aesir and the Vanir.

## Methodology

**Mythological, religious and historical models of the worldview** are constructed through transformation of the archetypes of historical events and developments and religious patterns, which study myth as a condensed story about history.

Myth is a tool available for the cognitive abilities of ancient man, to perceive fractals, the most fundamental events and notable characters, heroes in history and traditions of particular peoples or tribes.

**The visual model of the worldview** is a multi-dimensional, figurative picture, which implements common, typical motifs of rock art, graphic symbols and signs of rock and fine arts



Figure 2. Armenian vishapakars (dragon-stones – basalt steles depicting dragon)

of different peoples. Contrasting, analyzing, assessing and evaluating linguistic, mythological, historical and visual patterns of culture in the frameworks of invariant multi-dimensional knowledge systems, makes it possible to reconstruct **a unified worldview adequate to the reality, which was perceived and reflected in the collective or social consciousness of particular people in time and space.**

It is well known that the names of geographical areas and waterbodies are formed as a result of a sequence of related historical events and thinking process of culturally developed/people inhabiting a territory. The steady geographical area names have become a peculiar historical monument. For their perception and accurate interpretation, we should reconstruct their original forms. Some of them, however, absorb to some extent not only the processes that are typical of the cognitive abilities of the indigenous population, but often are the result of mental activity, worldview

and culture of migrants, particularly either the Aesir (**house of Askanaz**) and the Vanir (**house of Torgom**) or from the Caucasus – and the Black Sea shore. According to the authors, the old Armenian civilization, the old Indo-European or Japhetic Armenian language and the old Armenian temple of knowledge (known also as the **Dwelling of God**) are the quintessence or archematrix of knowledge, which affected the development and formation of human culture in different parts of the world. According to the Edda [1], the Aesir, the descendants of Odin and the Vanir, settled in the Saxon lands and conveyed the ancient language and cultural traditions from Asia.

### **The Armenian Origins of Norse Toponyms and the Dynasty of the Ynglings**

The authors present a number of toponyms retaining linguistic features of the old Armenian language. The most capacious and core designations are the names of



Figure 4. Armenian khachqars (cross-stones, stone steles depicting cross)

**Scandinavia, Noatun, Sveygdir, etc.** The earliest identified source for the word form Scadinavia is Pliny the Elder's "Natural History" [2]. Researchers consider that the goddess and the giantess Skadi might have once been a personification of Scandinavia, which goes back to proto-Germanic *skadinaujo* – "the Island of (goddess) Skadi"<sup>1</sup>.

According to the authors, the etymology of this toponym stems back from the old Armenian semantic components \**hska* (Armenian *giant*)

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<sup>1</sup> The belief that Scandinavia was an island became widespread among classical authors and the name Scandinavia roots back to this notion.



Figure 5. Scandinavian runic stones depicting cross, Sweden

and \*nav (Armenian *ship*). According to Norse mythology, Aesir **Odin** came to Scandinavia with the sage Vanir **Njord**, who settled in Noatun. The shipyard **Noatun** goes back to old Armenian semantic compounds \*nav (Armenian *ship*) and \*tun (Armenian *home/house*), and is translated literally as the *ship house*.

The name of the forefather of the Ynglings Njord goes back to the Armenian morpheme \*nord – leading, prevailing, predominant, superior. The semantic basis of this notion (Njord, nord) is identified in the Armenian word \*arachnord – literally leader, chief, guiding, going ahead. The transformational transition of the given two components \*nord and \*van is also identified in the English word vanguard (compare with Swedish van – experienced, skilled) – progressive, leading. The word Nord has an identical semantic basis.

The first historical rulers of Sweden and Norway were descended from the **Ynglings**, a Scandinavian dynasty of konungs. This name goes back to the Armenian \*inqn/ingn (Armenian *inknutyun* (Armenian *identity*), origin).

The name of **Sveigðir** (the son of Fjölnir<sup>2</sup>) goes back to the Armenian morpheme \*dir with a semantic content *establish/found, put* (compare with Armenian **himnadir** – *founder*). The semantic components of the name **Vanadis** (Freyja – daughter of Njord) stem from the Armenian \*van/a (Armenian *coming from Van*) and \*dis (Armenian \*dustr – *daughter*) and is translated as **daughter of Van** (compare with Armenian \*dits – *divine*).

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<sup>2</sup>Fjölnir (c. I century BC – I century AC) – legendary ruler of Uppsala from the Yngling dynasty [3].



Figure 6. Depictions of crosses and swastikas in the Armenian rock art

Of particular interest is the etymology of the musical instrument **Lur**, discovered at Nordic excavation and depicted in rock art. This cultic and ceremonial instrument was used either for ritual purposes or to attract attention, report news, etc. In Armenian language the morpheme \*lur' means *news, rumor* (compare with Armenian \*lur - *silent, noiseless*).

The etymology of the term **runes** goes back to the old Germanic root \*run (*secret*). This name is derived from the fact that the ancient Germanic peoples attributed mystic properties to the runes. According to Norse mythology, Odin originally inscribed the runes with a spear on a tree using his own blood. The authors identify a relationship of the word **rune** with the Armenian morpheme \*arun (*blood*).

The name of the world tree **Yggdrasil** derives from the Armenian morpheme \*ig(eg) - *feminine*, and \*dir with a semantic content *establish/found, put, lead*. **Havet** (*Swedish sea*) is identical to Armenian \*havet - *eternal, endless/infinite*.

**Nanna** (Old Norse **Nanna** - "mother") is the

daughter of Nepr, **wife of Baldr** (son of **Odin and Frigg**), mother of **Forseti**<sup>3</sup>. The goddess from the Aesir clan of Norse deities lived with her husband in Breidablik Castle in Asgard. Tricked by **Loki**, blind **Höðr** kills **Baldr** and Nanna throws herself on the funeral pyre of Baldr (**Frigg**<sup>4</sup> - mother of the gods **Baldr, Höðr** and **Hermóðr**<sup>5</sup>).

According to modern researchers, the etymology of the name of the goddess **Nanna** is debated. Some scholars have proposed that the name may derive from the word *nanna*, meaning "mother". The name *Nanna* is connected to the root \*nanþ-, leading to "the daring one"<sup>6</sup>.

<sup>3</sup>Forseti (Old Norse - "the presiding one") - in Norse mythology is the son of Baldr and Nanna, the god of Justice and reconciliation. Forseti was one of the wisest and most eloquent among the Aesir.

<sup>4</sup>Freyja (Old German Frija, "beloved").

<sup>5</sup>Hermodr ("brave").

<sup>6</sup>Simek R. Translated by Angela Hall. Dictionary of Northern Mythology // Jan de Vries' root theory, 2007, p. 227.



Figure 7. Swastika symbols in the Armenian cultural artifacts.

A common noun may have existed in Old Norse *nanna* that roughly meant *woman*<sup>7</sup>. *Nanna* might have the meaning "of she who empowers"<sup>8</sup>. Some scholars have attempted to link Old Norse goddess *Nanna* with the Sumerian goddess *Inanna*, the Babylonian goddess *Ishtar*, and the Phrygian goddess *Nana*, mother of the god *Attis*. Some scholars think that identification with *Inanna*, *Nannar* or *Nana* is "hardly likely" due to the large distances in time and location between the figures<sup>9</sup>; and the idea of a link with Sumerian *Inanna*, "the Lady of Heaven" seems unlikely. On the other hand, considering the records provided by G. Dumezil<sup>10</sup> on the twin gods (*the Ashwins - Ašvieniai*) and the fact that in Armenian *Asvien* means \*as + \*van (i.e. *Aesir from Van*) and a number of other arguments, the argument of geographical distance is not tenable.

The Old Norse goddess *Nanna* can be associated with Sumerian *Inanna*, Babylonian *Ishtar*, and Phrygian *Nana* if the cause-effect connection of the following key facts: the Old Armenian goddess of maternity **Nane** – as the *great mother of the Aesir and the Vanir* (the name is also used as a common noun, meaning *grandmother, mother*);

**Nane** is the transformation of **Anahit** (the goddess of fertility, healing, wisdom and water in Old Armenia); Anahit goes back to **Astghik** (Armenian *little star*; associated with the Greek Venus and the Roman Aphrodite) – the beloved of Vahagn. According to Sumerian and Akkadian mythology, Astghik/ Anahit/Inanna was abducted from the kingdom of **Aratta**.

Later, she was transformed into Sumerian *Inanna*, Akkadian *Ishtar* and Semitic *Astarta*. With reference the Phrygian goddess *Nana*, it should be mentioned that the ruler of Phrygia **Tiras** is the father of **Askanaz** and **Torgom**. According to Herodotus, one of the Phrygian tribes spoke a language similar to the Armenian language. Apparently, the father and the sons shared the worldview and followed the same cultural traditions.

<sup>7</sup>Lindow J. Norse Mythology: A Guide to the Gods, Heroes, Rituals, and Beliefs. 2001, Oxford University Press.

<sup>8</sup>McKinnell, John. Meeting the Other in Norse Myth and Legend, 2015, p. 144.

<sup>9</sup>Simek, Rudolf. Translated by Angela Hall. Dictionary of Northern Mythology, 2007.

<sup>10</sup>G. Dumezil compares the Ashwins, the Greek Dioscuri and Norse twins Freyr and Njordr, considering them the personification of the social function – fertility and welfare. According to Dumezil, these mythological figures of twin deities date back to the common Indo-European period. The Ashwins are mentioned in the Rigveda.

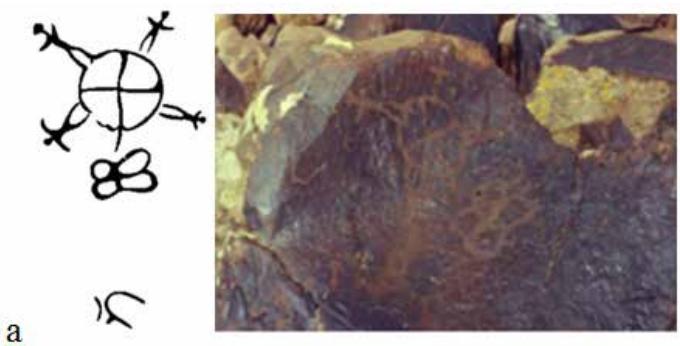


Figure 9. Armenian rock art: the World Tree



Figure 14. Rocks and figures depicting ships, Ughtasar (Armenia).

According to the Swedish National Encyclopedia, *tumulus* is an absolute synonym of the word *kurgan* (Swedish - *gravhög*)<sup>11</sup>. The etymology of this toponym goes back to old Armenian language: with the semantic components **\*grav** (Armenian *sign, affirmation*) and **\*hogh** (Armenian *land*). The name of the toponym **Tanum**<sup>12</sup> (Norse **Túnheimr**) goes back to the components **\*tun** (Armenian *home, land*, comparable with Armenian **\*tanel** – *lead, take*) and **\*hem** (Armenian *now, current*), forming the semantic core “*current home*”.

### Linguistic Affinity

In addition to the above-mentioned semantic field of the key words with cognitive content, such as toponyms, and names of sages and leaders, the authors identify a number of other related words: father - Swedish **here**, Armenian **\*her**; mother - Swedish **mor**, Armenian **\*mer**; eye - Swedish **öga**, Armenian **\*akn**; heart - Swedish

**hjärta**, Armenian **\*sirt**; moon - Swedish **måne**, Armenian **\*lusin**; donkey - Swedish **åsna**, Armenian **\*esh**, paradise - Swedish **lustgård**, Armenian **\*lu(y)s** свет/светлый; city/settlement - Swedish **gard**, Armenian **\*qaghqaq**; smart - Swedish **klok**, Armenian **\*xeloq**; fool/stupid - Swedish **dumbum**, Armenian **\*dmbo**.

Table 1 shows 36 (out of 100) basic key related words and notions in diverse thematic ranges, illustrating the cognitive abilities, experience and knowledge, capacities and skills, power and wisdom of the **Aesir** and the **Vanir**, which penetrated into the nature of the cultural space of the old Scandinavians and have been factual, cognitive and linguistic evidence of the unity between old Armenian and Norse cultural values, when the values formed at a later period are the factor of influence and the source of origin of the others.

Thus, the contrasting analysis of the cognitive meanings of the related Armenian and Swedish key notions and words (Table 1) highlights the main directions of the semantic core of the relations and transformation of the main motifs of cultural origin in the projection of the worldview picture of the Norse world. They include fragments and projections of knowledge frames and archetypes of cultural heritage of the old Armenian civilization. **Thus, the authors first distinguish a common layer of the relation matrix between Armenian and Swedish linguistic frameworks.**

<sup>11</sup>Online available from: <http://swordmaster.org/2013/10/27/bolshie-kurgany-letopisnogo-plesneka.html>

<sup>12</sup>The first church built in Tanum.



Figure 15. Petroglyphs: ships and boats, Ughtasar, Armenia

Table 1

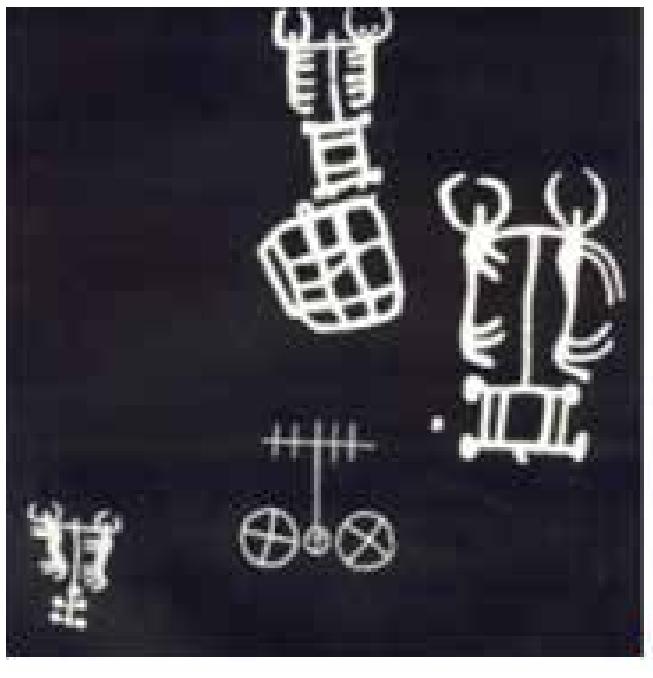
BASIC KEY WORDS AND NOTIONS			
N	Swedish	Meaning in Swedish	Meaning in Armenian
1	älv	river	*ali ( <i>wave, oscillation</i> ), *al(q) ( <i>deep</i> )
2	Asgardr (Asgard) (Heim der Asen)	enclosure of the Aesir	*as + qar + dir ( <i>city, founded by the Aesir</i> )
3	berg	mountain, rock	*burg ( <i>piramid, tower</i> )
4	Bohuslän	the historical area in Sweden	*boh ( <i>bah, vah, Vahagn, Bahavan</i> )
5	brasa	fire (fire brought by the Aesir)	*b(e)r ( <i>bring</i> ) + *as (compare with Askanaz)
6	gå (old Norse)	go, walk	*ga(l) ( <i>come</i> )
7	gravhög	kurgan/tumulus	*grav ( <i>sign, confirmation</i> ) + *hogh ( <i>land</i> )
8	hakkors	swastika	*hak ( <i>oblique, opposite, reverse</i> ) + *kor ( <i>crooked, bent, curved</i> )
9	havet	sea	*havet ( <i>eternal, infinite</i> )
10	Iggdrasil	life-giving	*ig(eg) ( <i>feminine</i> ) + *dir ( <i>found, put</i> ) + *as
11	jord	land, ground	*hord ( <i>trampled, straight /the way/</i> )
12	klok	smart, clever	*xeloq ( <i>smart, clever, intelligent</i> )
13	kod, caudex (kernel, stem, tree trunk, stump, ash tree)	code, sequence, turn, line (runic code – cryptography)	Old Armenian *hatsi ( <i>ash tree</i> , cf. *hatsut – <i>ash forest</i> ), *Kadm ( <i>Cadmus</i> ) – grandson of Hayk, creator of Phoenician and Greek alphabets. Moreover, *hatsabekor – <i>piece of bread</i> ,

			in Phrygian <i>bekos</i> means bread <sup>13</sup>
14	lär	teach	*larel ( <i>tune, incline, adjust, organize</i> )
15	ljus	light	*luys ( <i>light</i> )
16	luft	air, atmosphere	*lurt ( <i>open, light, dark, blue</i> )
17	lur	news	*lur ( <i>news, tidings, fame</i> )
18	måne	moon	*mān ( <i>oblique, crooked, bent, curved</i> )
19	mot	near, besides	*mot ( <i>near, besides, nearly</i> )
20	Njord	leader, chief, leading, going ahead	*nord ( <i>leading, prevailing, superior, predominant</i> )
21	Noatun	ship enclosure	*nav ( <i>ship</i> ) + *tun ( <i>home</i> )
22	norr	north	*nor ( <i>near</i> )
23	Odin	the main god	*v(w)an ( <i>transformation of - odin – first, wifified, one</i> )
24	runes (runor)	Runes (bloody, colored in red)	*arun ( <i>blood</i> )
25	Scandinavia (Skandinavien)	huge ship	*hska ( <i>huge, giant</i> ) + *nav ( <i>ship</i> )
26	Skadi	giantess/goddess	*hska ( <i>huge, giant</i> )
27	slag	fight, battle	*slaq ( <i>arrow, arm</i> )
28	Sveigdir (Sveigder)	the founder of Sweden	*shve + *dir ( <i>found, put</i> )
29	tänder	light, burn	*tonir ( <i>tonir - пачь, сооруженная в земле</i> )
30	Tanum	commune in Sweden	*tun ( <i>home, country, cp. *tanel – lead</i> ) + *hem ( <i>now, currently</i> )
31	tar <sup>1</sup>	touch	*tar ( <i>letter</i> )
32	tar <sup>2</sup>	take/carry away	*tar ( <i>far, distant</i> )
33	Tor (Thor)	god of thunder	*tir ( <i>cp. *tor - grandchild</i> ), Тир- <i>god of writing</i>
34	Vanadis (Freja)	daughter of the Vanir	*van/a ( <i>from Van</i> ) + *dis ( <i>*dustr – daughter, compare with Armenian *dits – divine</i> )
35	Vanlandi	komung fro the land of Van	*van ( <i>compare with Yervand, Vahagn, the Kingdom of Van, Lake Van, Van city</i> )
36	Yngling (Ynglingaätten)	dynasty of komungs	*imnq ( <i>self, identity</i> )

<sup>13</sup>Herodotus mentions a “linguistic experiment” conducted by Egyptian pharaoh Psammetichus I to discover the oldest language. He gave two newborn babies to a shepherd, with the instructions that no one should speak to them until they utter the first word. Bekos was the first word uttered by the child. It was the Phrygian word for bread, and the pharaoh stated that Phrygian was the oldest language. The historian points out that one of the Phrygian tribes spoke a language similar to the Armenian language. The Armenian medieval historians (M. Khoranatsi, H. Draskhanakertsi) mention that the Phrygians are the descendants of Phiras/Tiras, the father of Askanaz – the founder of the Armenian house, which he passed over to his younger brother Torgom. This house locates the territory near Lake Van. Askanaz settled on Black Sea coast and became the leader of the Sarmatians.



Figure 16. Tumulus on Mount Nemrut  
Figure 17. Rock Art: ploughs, carts, Armenia



### The Armenian Patriarchs and Sages – the Heroes in Norse Myths, the Forefathers of Könungs

According to Scandinavian historians [1, 4], the **Vanir** and the **Aesir** are groups of gods (sages). The **Vanir** settled **Vanaheimr**<sup>14</sup> (Old Norse “home of the Vanir”), and the **Aesir** – **Asgard**<sup>15</sup> (one of the three roots of the world tree - Yggdrasil – stretches towards Asgard). In the Armenian tradition **Yggdrasil** goes back to three roots – **\*eg/ig** (feminine), **\*dir** (plant, establish/ found) and **\*as** (from the Aesir, from the house of Askanaz). There are descendants from Njord among the rulers of Sweden, Norway, England and Ruthenia.

The study of the records provided by the Armenian medieval historians shows, that the **Aesir** and the **Vanir** are the descendants of the sons of **Tiras**<sup>16</sup> (the forefather of the Phrygians) – the father of Askanaz/Ashkenaz, Riphath

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<sup>14</sup>Located in the North Black Sea region, westwards of Vanakvisl (Don) [1, 4].

<sup>15</sup>On the Black Sea shore, eastwards of Tanais [1, 4].

<sup>16</sup>Son of Japheth.



Figure 18. Rock Art: man and serpent, Armenia

(the forefather of the Sauromats), Torgom/Togarmah (the forefather of the Caucasians, particularly, his son Hayk – is the patriarch of the Armenians) and Javan (the forefather of the Greek people). The Armenian historian H. Draskhanakerti (10th century) mentions, that **Tiras** and **Javan** moved to Europe, the Balkans, **Tiras** ruled **Phrygia**, **Javan** – Greece, and his son **Elishah** is the ancestor of the Sicilians and the Athenians [4]. Askanaz moved to the coast of the Black Sea (further towards the Sea of Azov), the Aesir settled in the Tanais river delta (**Vanakvisl**, present-day **Don**)<sup>17</sup>. According to ancient historians, this river separated Asia from Europe.

A number of sources [1, 3, 4] mention that the Aesir descended from Asia. Through comparative historical analysis the authors managed to convincingly substantiate the hypothesis that the Aesir are the descendants of **Askanaz** (**founder of Sarmatia**, 2 Sarmatias are differentiated – European and Asian), and the **Vanir** are the descendants of **Torgom** [5-8]. Their lands **Vanaheimr/Vanaland** were located in the territory of the **old Armenian kingdom of Van** near **Lake Van** (present-day Turkey). Norse sagas mention **Turkland – the country**

**of the Turks**, but before the Turks settled Asia, this territory was a part of the Armenian state and belonged to the Armenians.

The description of European Sarmatia in “Ashkharatsuyts” by the Armenian scientist, astronomer, mathematician, philosopher A. Shirakatsi (VII century) [13] is of great importance: “Ninth part of Europe locates the European Sarmatia, to the east of Germany, from Histuli/Vistula River and the mountains with an identical name, (i.e. Sarmatian).

<sup>17</sup>There is a district in Rostov on Don (Russia), founded by Armenian migrants, which used to be a city - **Nor Nakhichevan**. Its etymology is adequately interpreted as Armenian \*nor (new, original) \*ijevan (lodge, possibly from a ship) city (Ijevan – city in Armenia), founded by the migrants, newcomers. There is another city **Nakhichevan** in Historical Armenia (currently the capital city of the Nakhchivan Autonomous Republic, Azerbaijan).



Figure 19. Rock art: serpent swallowing the sun (conceptual model of the results of the volcanic eruptions and lava flow), Armenia

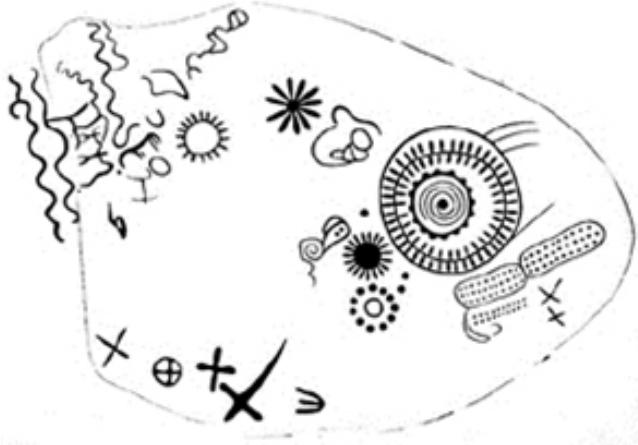


Figure 20. Astronomical representations in Rock Art: Armenia

*It stretches along the shore of the Arctic Ocean to an unknown country and to the eastern end of the mountain Riphah, where the River tanais takes its source, which flows to the south, dividing Sarmatia into 2 parts: the eastern in Asia and the western in Europe, and further flows into Meotian Sea... It borders along Pontus to the River Tanais (Tyras), which separates Dacia from Sarmatia. There are several small countries in Sarmatia. The Tauric peninsula (Chersonesus) belongs to the Christians. It is located between Lake Byuke (Vuse), Meotian Sea and Pontus Sea, before the point where River Karkinit flows into Karkinit Bay. The other part of the area belongs to the pagans. Some of them are called the Amaksads, i.e. living in carts. There are seven round mountains in Sarmatia, of which take their source several rivers, flowing into Pontus. Some of them form another river called Koco. There is a small lake, two islands and two pagan temples<sup>18</sup>.*

According to a number of references in Norse mythology and legends, the origin of the Norse forefathers is also associated, as mentioned above, with the tribe of the Vanir, inhabiting the country of **Vanaheimr** and with the

**Aspurgiani** (compare with Armenian principality near Lake Van - **Vaspurakan**). The people or the “tribe” Van indicates directly the homeland of the Armenians - Lake Van and the land of Van. The “tribe” (people) of **Aspurgiani** may also be interpreted as the oldest Armenian from the principality of Van, **Vaspurakan**. Ancient authors [10] mention the **Aspurgiani** - one of the tribes of the Maeotae, dwelling on the east and south-east coast of the Sea of Azov during I millennium BC. Some historians believe that the **Aspurgiani** are not a nation, but a class of heavily armed warriors and riders in the service of the Bosporan rulers [11]. Gumilev's followers argue that the Aspurgiani is the ruling dynasty of the Sarmatian tribe of Siraces<sup>19</sup>.

<sup>18</sup>Translated by Patkanyan, published in N XI “Journal of the Ministry of Public Education”, 1885.

<sup>19</sup>Bulat V.. Ethnopolitical atlas of Eurasia of the Antiquity and the Middle Ages. Online available from: <http://gumilevica.kulichki.net/chronosophy/atlasIAD.htm#atlasIAD-063>



Figure 28. Deer depiction in Rock Art: Armenia



Figure 29. Stone observatories: Armenia

The history of the Aesir and the Vanir [1, 3] and their resettlement from Asia to Sweden includes the description of Odin's (the chief god of Norse mythology) visit to Scandinavia. The proper noun **Óðinn** or **Wōdan/Wōtan** stem from **Wōðanaz** or **Wōðinaz**, which go back to Proto-Germanic **Wōðaz** (*seer, prophet*). In fact the name **Wōdan** or **Wōðanaz/Wōðinaz** include Armenian components **\*vo** (*va/wa/ua - Van*), **\*da/di** (*\*dits - divine*) and **\*az/as** (from Askanaz – name of the founder of first Armenian home (Armenian **\*tun/tan - home**).

Considering the two compounds “wo/wa” and “tan/tun”, the name **Wōdan/Wōtan** may as well be interpreted as the home/house (Armenian tun) of water (living, sacred, life-giving water), which conceptually identifies its affiliation with the people in the kingdom of Van – the house of the Vanir, or initially the house of Askanaz, considering the fact that before moving to Sarmatia, **Askanaz** founded the house (Askanazi tun), which he passed over to his younger brother **Torgom**. It was later renamed to the *tun of Torgom* (the house of the people in the kingdom of Van, located near the

legendary Lake **Van**, eponymously named the **Vanir**). Thus, the Aesir and the Vanir should be considered as the successors of the two patriarchs – the blood brothers **Askanaz** and **Torgom**, whose son **Hayk** is the legendary patriarch of modern Armenians.

Odin<sup>20</sup> is referred to in more than 200 names, such as **Alföðr** (*father of all*), **Ygg** (*Yggdrasil*), **Har** (*high*). According to the authors, one the names of Odin – **Veratyr** – stem from old Armenian semantic components **\*ver** (Armenian *supreme*, Armenian **\*vera** – *again, anew, afresh*) and **\*Tir** (Armenian *god of written language and prophecy*); **Har** – from Armenian **\*hayr** (*father*). In Norse tradition Asagrim is interpreted as “*the ruler of the Aesir*”. The name also goes back to the Armenian components **\*as** (*as*<sup>21</sup>, compare with Armenian

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<sup>20</sup>Wikipedia // List of names of Odin. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List\\_of\\_names\\_of\\_Odin#cite\\_note-2](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_names_of_Odin#cite_note-2)

<sup>21</sup>French – master.

\***astvats** – god, diety) and \***qurm** (priest, sage)<sup>22</sup>. Through the analysis of the mythological motifs describing Aesir Odin, the authors distinguish a number of archetypes depicted in cultural artefacts having their prototypes in Armenian rock art and the old Armenian song “The Birth of Vahagn” (M. Khorenatsi).

Vanir **Njord** is the ancestor of the **Ynglings** (the oldest dynasty of Scandinavian konungs), to which belonged first historical rulers of Sweden and Norway. His power passed to his son **Freyr**. In “Ynglinga saga” **Snorri Sturluson** [3] refers to them as the descendants of Vanir Freyr and describes detailed genealogies. Galma Uppsala was the residence of the first Swedish kings of the Yngling dynasty. The son of **Fjölnir**<sup>23</sup> - **Sveigðir** - is the founder of Sweden [3]. He vowed to find the Dwelling of the Gods (cf. the **Dwelling of the God/the Temple of Knowledge**, founded by Hayk near Lake Van) and old Odin. With his 11 companions Sveygdir traveled to different countries for five years, including “Great Sweden” and the “Land of the Turks”. The country of the Vans was in the Araratian kingdom. The Turks occupied this territory after XI century.

Askanaz founded the country of the Vans (**house of Askanaz**), passed it over to his brother Torgom (**house of Torgom**) and moved to Sarmatia. This country of the Vans (**the kingdom of Van, Vaspurakan**), **Nairi**<sup>24</sup>, **Vanaland** or **Vanaheimr** was reestablished and extended by **Hayk (son of Torgom)** and his descendants after their resettlement from Babylon. Later, the Greeks named the country Armenia after **Aram** – one of the descendants of Hayk.

According to the “Ynglinga saga” [3], **Sveigðir** was married to **Vana** of Vanaheimr - the **dwelling of the Vans**. He was succeeded by his son **Vanlandi** (Swedish konung). **Vanaheimr** (probably the second country of the Vanir, who resettled with Askanaz on the Black Sea shore,

where a new habitation of the Vanir was founded) according to several sources was located on the Black Sea shore in **Sarmatia** near the mouth of the **Tanais**, which was also referred as **Vanakvisl** [4]. According to some researchers, including the Armenian scientist, philosopher and mathematician A. Shirakatsi (VII century), **Vanaheimr** geographically accurately matches the description of **Sarmatia** [13]. The River **Vanakvisl** is the road, leading the Aesir and the Vanir, who had settled in Europe (Asaland and Vanaland), to their homeland – the Araratian mountains, on the shores of the Lake Van<sup>25</sup>. The illustrations (maps) of the Norse myths [3] depict with documentary precision not only the Mountains of Ararat with its two peaks, but also Lake Van, which after the flood as a result of water rising after the flood through the reformed strait merged into the Black, Mediterranean and Caspian Seas.

The maps (Fig. 1) depict the figure of a huge dragon (symbolizing the catastrophic volcanic eruption), leaving no doubt that these illustrations also describe terrestrial volcanic and

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<sup>22</sup>According to M. Khorenatsi, the first priest of the dwelling of the God, founded by Hayk, was his grandson – Cadmus.

<sup>24</sup> The name of the country of Nairi (Urartu or Ararat) sounded Urashlu in Babylon. It is associated to the name Urash (earth) in the Sumerian legends. In the biblical tradition it could coincide with the name of the country Rosh (or Ros). Faustus of Byzantium [12] refers Lake Van as the Rshtuni Sea.

<sup>25</sup> According to the Greek tradition beautiful Europa (sister of Cadmus, granddaughter of Hayk) was abducted by Zeus. Her name is associated to the name of Europe. The name of Askanaz is associated with Asia and the Sea of Azov. East is the direction toward which the Earth rotates about its axis. The word east means “(sun)rise”, which is semantically associated with Vaspurakan and the motif of the birth of Vahagn (the first man, dragon-slayer, thunderer). At the equinoxes, the sun rises due east.

submarine eruption on the Mountains of Ararat, which correspond to the motif of the song of the birth of Vahagn [9]. Thus, the authors who created these illustrations, were assured that the Aesir and the Vanir, who had survived, moved with their goods and chattels in their ships through the Strait of Lake Van to the shores of the Black Sea, and then to Scandinavia.

Traces of historical ties and relations of the ancestors of the Armenians with the territories in the vicinity of the river **Tanais** (Armenian **\*tun** and **\*nai** – *look into home, Nairi, \*ари* – Armenian *come*) are also identified in the name of the Armenian town Nor Nakhijevan.

### The Armenian Rock Art<sup>26</sup> and the Nordic Runes

The authors have put forward and substantiated the hypothesis that the signs, identified in the Armenian rock art, formed the basis for “ethnogenesis” of the signs of the cultures of old Europe (Starcevo and Vinca), and the Hittite, Urartian, Indian and Egyptian ideograms and hieroglyphs [36, 37]. Moreover, the idea has been substantiated that signs in Armenian rock art are the prototype of the signs of the Phoenician and Greek alphabets and the Scandinavian runes. According to Herodotus [17], **Cadmus** created the Phoenician and Greek alphabets. It should be repeated, that according to Armenian historians, **Cadmus is the grandson of Hayk, the forefather of the Armenians**. The authors refer to a number of examples and illustrations, denoting that a number of old Armenian traditions of stone culture, e.g. **rock art, art of vishapakars (dragon-stones) and cross-stones**, the art of depicting diverse forms, styles and compositions with **crosses** and **swastikas**, etc., were the prototype for the

construction of the Nordic dragon-stones and cross-stones, diverse petroglyphs, etc.

### Armenian Rock Art, Vishapakars and Nordic Dragon- and Cross-Stones

According to Norse mythology, Odin received the runes through self-sacrifice: he ran himself through with a spear, hanging on the **World Tree** for nine days and nights without eating or drinking. He then quenched his thirst with sacred (shamanic) honey from his grandfather Beltorn, heard the runes and inscribed them with a spear **on the tree, using his own blood**. The concept of genesis with the image of the tree of life in the terrestrial sphere is represented by the ancient Scandinavians in images similar to the ones identified in the Armenian rock art. There are about 5,000 runic inscriptions (Fig. 3), mostly found in Sweden.

Of particular interest is the stone from Uppsala (Fig. 4), depicting runes in the body of a huge dragon. A winged cross-symbol of the tree of life is depicted on the Armenian cross-stone. The firmament of heaven is depicted above the cross. Presenting the Scandinavian runes in the body of a dragon symbolizes the concept of life-giving blood, running through the body of a dragon. The savor fights the dragon and releases water. Fighting a dragon is a universal motif, symbolizing the release of water, life-giving water or knowledge (cf. knowing “the tree of good and evil” and salvation of the tree of life; cf. the motifs of Armenian Vahagn fighting a dragon near Lake Van; Cadmus and the Greek hero Jason fighting a dragon; and abduction of the Golden Fleece (ancient knowledge, preserved in cryptography – the runes).

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<sup>26</sup> Vahanyan G., Petrosyan S. Karedaran - The Database of Armenian Rock Art (Tracce #12, Online Bulletin by Footsteps of Man), 1991, Italy.

## **Armenian Rock Art and the Signs of Cultures of Old Europe (Starcevo and Vinca)**

The individual complex analysis of the signs in each group shows that Vinca signs and the typical signs, identified in Old Armenian rock art (archetypes of the signs of the pictorial writing system), are identical [8]. The level of identity is higher in earlier symbols.

Complete (100%) identity is observed in 28 symbols of Vincha of the early period, 90% - in 37 common symbols and about 80% in the rest 142 symbols [8]. Studying the 142 signs, the authors came to the conclusion, that the Vinca signs go back to the culture of the signs of the Armenian rock art – the prototype of the pictorial writing system. This firmly indicates on the existence of the earliest network of intercultural communication between old Europe (presented in the cultures of Starcevo and Vinca, 6-5 millennium BC) and the Armenian highlands (presented in the culture of old Armenian civilization, 7-6 millennia BC).

## **The Tree of Life and the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil**

A number of mythologies consider the moment of the separation of heaven and earth the very instant the Tree of life (egg, mountain, rock, lotus) arises. It gives birth to man (Fig. 9a). In Norse mythology, **Yggdrasil** (Fig. 9b) is an ever-green tree of life, saturated with life-giving holly honey. It is an immense ash tree (yew tree), which the Scandinavians considered to be the model of the universe. The tree is the structural framework of the matter and life, combining nine worlds. An eagle is depicted atop the tree, serpents and the dragon Níðhöggr coil around nibbling the roots of the tree.

According to the Armenian tradition, the Tree of life – **Kenats Car** – is a prevalent religious symbol, depicted on walls of fortresses and carved on the armor of warrior.

The branches of the tree are equally divided on the right and left sides of the main trunk, with each branch having one leaf and one leaf on the apex of the tree. Winged angels are depicted standing on each side of the tree, stretching their hands towards the tree as if they are taking care of it (Fig. 10).

According to the Bible, the tree of life was located in the Garden of Eden, on the site of the original habitat of the people. The garden was irrigated by the four rivers. This description corresponds to the Natural Philosophical motif of the four elements, and the motif of the song of the birth of Vahagn, describing the interaction of the four classical elements, the four forces of nature (earh, water, air and fire) giving birth to the first man, who saves the world and the people fighting the dragon and releasing water.

**Husaby Church** is the first stave church, where Olof Skötkonung, the first Christian konung of Sweden, was baptized in the XI century. According to the authors, the motifs in the depiction of the tree of life near the church in Husaby (XI century) (Fig. 11b) resemble old Armenian motifs. Such depictions of a stylized tree of life and dragons are identified in Echmiadzin Cathedral (IV century) – the mother church of the Armenian Apostolic Church (Fig. 11a). The prototypes of the main pictorial elements of the motifs of the tree of knowledge of good and evil and the tree of life are identified in Armenian rock art. This tradition was used in Cheitan culture (Fig. 11c).

The vishapakar (dragon-stone), discovered near the temple of Ulguri (Fig. 4), depicts the tree trunk – a stylized winged eight-pointed cross with fruitage. The tree arises out of the top of the stepped-mountain (house, glkhatun). Two intersected wings of a cross (symbolizing the four elements, the four cardinal directions) with fruitage are depicted on the trunk. The circle wreath-shaped (disc) is depicted on the head

of the bull (vishap – horned dragon). Inside the wreath a winged cross with arms of equal length is carved. The mentioned plot composition is the artistic depiction of the model of the universal concept of the world, described in the song of the birth of Vahagn. A unique cross-stone from South-Eastern Anatolia is excavated in the vicinity of Van (Fig. 4). It includes elements of the motifs, depicted on the dragon-stone from Eghegnadzor (Fig. 4). The motifs of the cross-stone (Fig. 4) and the stele from Talin (Fig. 4) repeat the concept of the cross- and dragon-stone. The pictorial elements, their shape and proportions are transformed.

The eight-pointed cross on a stepped-mountain, depicted on the cross-stone from Geghard (Fig. 10), is similar to the eight-pointed cross, depicted on a vishapakar (Fig. 4). Wings of the cross are intersected in its centre, blooming, fructifying. The cross is framed in a cartouche, with the upper convex part symbolizing the firmament. The ornamental composition has the following pattern: calvary – column – cross in a round frame. This pattern is widely spread in the Armenian decorative-applied arts, the art of manuscript miniatures (Fig. 12).

The “Ynglinga saga” [3] describes a folding ship of Odin. Norse mythology attests that the finest of the ships of the Aesir is owned by the god Freyr. **Skíðblaðnir** “sailed over seas and by land”. It could hold the whole warrior host of **Asgard**. The ship was skillfully constructed of many small particles and was attributed the ability to be folded up – as cloth may be – and bagged when not needed.

Describing the unique designs of folding ships made in Armenia, Herodotus (V century BC) mentions: “there are perfectly round ships made of leather that float down the river to Babylon. In Armenia, which lies above the Assyria, the Babylonians cut willow twigs for the edge of the ship. The largest can accommodate up to 5000 talent of load.

*There is a donkey in each ship, and a few of them in larger ones. Sailing to Babylon, the merchants sell their goods and [woven] frame of the ship, and all the straw. Then they return to Armenia, loading the skin on the donkey. When the merchants reach Armenia on their donkeys, they build new ships with the same technique. These are their [river] ships” [17].*

### **Ships, Seagoing Vessels and Boats, Skíðblaðnir**

The Armenian rock art reveals earlier prototypes of such ships (Fig. 13a, 14, 15). Thus the prototype for creating folding and light ships resembling **Skíðblaðnir** is the ship design, used in the homeland of the Aesir and the Vanir, Askanaz and Torgom. Ships are most common in the Scandinavian rock art. In a number of images, it is held by a man (Fig. 13b). According to the images, the cultic ships or their depictions were carried during sacred processions. The Egyptians considered that the solar ferry travels in the sky and under the ground. Boats/ships were put in the tombs, and real size ships were found not far from the pyramids of the rulers of ancient date.

The emergence of the notion that the divine ferry travelling under the earth can explain the reason that ships played such an important role at the burials: the son god was to take care of the dead and carry him through all the trials of the underworld. During the bronze age, the ships were connected not only with men's burials, as women and children were buried in wooden coffins as well.

The spread of cremation, may possibly be associated with the notion of traveling of a dead in the afterlife (and with an increase in the number of collective burials), because many of those who had recourse to it, believed that the deceased must be freed from the flesh, to reach the boundaries of the afterlife.

The wings of birds, which are often found in the cinerary urns of the deceased, are also associated with the dissemination of the conception of the wandering spirit. This idea is reflected in the fact that sculptures of birds were placed into the sacred chariots distributed in the Middle and Southern Europe. Among the petroglyphs in Ughtasar (Armenia), ship images facing west (Fig. 14) were discovered. Both images were similar to the images of Scandinavian vessels (Fig. 12) [18, 19].

Studying the images in a symbolic context in relation to other petroglyphs of the site, depictions of snakes are identified, which are also associated with the ships according to Scandinavian tradition [19]. Other images of ships and boats (Fig. 15) are found among the petroglyphs.

### Transgression of the Caspian Sea

During the last transgression of the Caspian Sea about 20-17 thousand years ago, its waters reached the region of mountainous Karabakh. Syunik (Armenia) had become a peninsula by that time with a number of sea trenches through its territory, which were linked to the northern part of the land. This system of large lakes disintegrated at the beginning of Holocene (10th millennium BC). Studies carried out by scientists exposed the existence of a lake on the territory of the Ararat Valley (after the volcanic eruption, lava overlapped on to the River Araks). The lake completely dried up in the 8th millennium BC, as the first settlements appeared on this territory by that period. Thus, considering that the above-mentioned lakes were still suitable for sailing in the 12th-11th millennia BC, the petroglyphs of the sailing ships from Ughtasar-Djermadzor (Syunik) may date back to the 12th-11th millennia BC [18].

### Mountains and Kurgans/Tumuli

In the "Prose Edda" [1] Snorri Sturluson states that the Nordic gods are the leaders and kings of antiquity. With a large group of people, Aesir **Odin** moved to the north and whatever countries they passed through "*they seemed more like gods than men*". According to "Ynglinga saga", a dwarf lured **Sveigðir** into a huge stone like a large house, telling him that he could see Odin there. **Sveigðir** ran into the stone and he never came back and did not come out of this stone [3]. Similar parallels can be drawn. In the Armenian epos "*Daredevils of Sassoun*" - the hero **Mher** rides into the mountain; and the Greek myth describes **Cadmus** and his wife Harmony being turned into stone. According to Armenian legends, the mountains were once men. Archaeological researches confirm that **kurgans/tumuli** (Fig. 16) are burial mounds (cf. the tumulus on Mount Nimrud<sup>27</sup>).

As mentioned above, *tumulus* is an absolute synonym of the word *kurgan* (Swedish - *gravhög*)<sup>28</sup>.

The etymology of this toponym roots to old Armenian language: to the semantic components **\*grav** (Armenian *sign, affirmation*) and **\*hogh** (Armenian land).

Among the complexes of funerary monuments, the kurgans of konungs stand out for their architectural structure and ideological concept, related to the special group of the same ritual of "burials in a ship" (Fig. 16b).

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<sup>27</sup>Built by the descendant of the Armenian house of the Yervanduni (Orontid) dynasti, Antiochus I (69-38 BC).

<sup>28</sup>Online available from: <http://swordmaster.org/2013/10/27/bolshie-kurgany-letopisnogo-ple-snecka.html>

## **Mythological Motifs, Agriculture and Hunting Scenes, Animal Species (Horses, Snakes/Serpents, Fish), Weapons, Astronomical Symbols and Observatories**

Comparison of the images of astronomical symbols, carts, deer, hunters, snakes (conceptual models of volcanic eruptions and lava flow), spearmen and horsemen<sup>29</sup> in Armenian rock art and rock arts of Nordic countries, proves their common roots and is an indisputable determinant of the outcomes of intercultural communication (Fig. 17-30).

## **Conclusion**

The unified cognitive interdisciplinary common core is identified in old Armenian and Nordic cultures, based on the comparative analysis of the results of historical, linguistic, mythological, religious and archeological data. The core allows us to identify earlier tacit denotations of intercultural communication contexts, impact of old Armenian civilization and the people on genesis of culture and dynasties of old Europe and Scandinavia.

The occurrence of the identical archetypes in the cultural monuments indicates on sustainability of the linguistic values, ideology, world-view and knowledge, cognitive abilities of the houses of Askanaz and Torgom, who managed to preserve it in a new ethno-linguistic and natural environments. The new approach provides definite interpretation and scientific rationale for a number of disputed mythological and historical facts.

**The law of thickening and spraying or concurrence of the correlated units in the mythological thinking of the ancient inhabitants of Scandinavia and Armenia can be retraced in logics and genesis of wisdom of ancient people, which are modeled based on interpretation of motifs and scenes in the complexes of Armenian and Scandinavian rock arts, depicting**

common archetypes of old Armenian language, which left persistent traces in Norse linguistic thinking.

**Chronological analysis of the historical data prove the undeniable fact of the impact of the civilization of the old Armenians (descendants of Askanaz – the Aesir, and Torgom – the Vanir) on the language, culture and everyday life of the people in Scandinavian countries, on the process of electing wise rulers - konungs, who had resettled from Sarmatia and the kingdom of Van.**

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## NOTES AND NEWS

### WHAT IS CONCEPTUAL ANTHROPOLOGY?

*Conceptual anthropology* is the discipline concerned with the arts, rituals, beliefs and other intellectual expressions; it combines various sectors of the human and social sciences in respect of behavior and cultural manifestations, using experiences of the past to understand the present and conceive the future. The concept gestated for some time until it was formalized during the UISPP Congress in Florianopolis, Brazil, in 2011, setting new horizons for human sciences. It was decided to make of the newly proposed discipline, *conceptual anthropology*, a concern of the International Scientific Committee on the Intellectual and Spiritual Expressions of Non-Literate Societies (UISPP-CISNEP). The goal of this new discipline is to understand human behavior and cultural trends, recurring and isolated phenomena, predictable and unpredictable evolution and change, not only in technology, but also in social, intellectual and spiritual life. It is a permanent journey of discovery and emotions.

Archaeology and anthropology can benefit enormously from the cooperation of sociology, psychology, semiotics and other sectors of the human and social sciences. Each discipline has its own memory as the basis of research and the advancement of the discipline itself. Combining disciplines is also a union of memories for a broader base of research and culture.

Today media replace technical and historical memory. But the human mind's insights and associations are still irreplaceable.

Our being and our actions are rooted in the memory. When we err, we often owe it to our memory blurring. When we reach positive results, it is because we have made good use of our memory. We do not refer to electronic memory but to the one expressed in intuition and discovery, the memory that springs from the deep well of our psyches.

Every being, like every discipline, focuses on certain aspects of memory and neglects others. Together, various disciplines and various cultures share wider dimensions of memory. Such an approach offers an immense contribution to the study of the intellectual and spiritual expressions of non-literate peoples.

One of the purposes of UISPP-CISENP, in addition to the pleasure of meeting and growing together by dialogue, is to promote a common commitment to the understanding of such human expressions, with the support of multidisciplinary research. As students of various disciplines, anthropologists and archaeologists, psychoanalysts, educators, sociologists, semioticians, philosophers and historians, we all wish to face questions which a shared commitment can help clarify. The meeting of different disciplines offers a wider dimension of shared knowledge and greater capacity for analysis and synthesis. Faced with the fashion of extreme specialization, which risks reducing scholars to technicians, conceptual anthropology goes against the tide.

No doubt technicians are needed, but we seek a cultural vision and broad overview in the common work of the humanities and social sciences. Let technicians and intellectuals be aware of their different roles, let them do their own jobs and then enrich each other through the joint dialogue.

Research has a real social function when it produces culture. When culture is creative and innovative, it promotes the growth of intellect and stimulates new thought. The dialogue is open to all disciplines of the humanities and social sciences as well as to those who do not identify themselves with any specific discipline or who just want to listen. Each listener is a potential transmitter of ideas and ideas grow and spread not only through those who produce them, but also through those who listen. The dialogue does not stop and is a source of growth and enrichment, and also of cooperation and friendship. Research is a provocative, stimulating and inspiring source of awareness. You are welcome to join.

The present world crisis is a cultural crisis, a crisis of values and wisdom that has economic, social and political consequences. Reviving the role of culture is our modest joint effort to contribute to overcoming the crisis.

## RETHINKING EINSTEIN KNOWLEDGE VS. IMAGINATION

"The true sign of intelligence is not knowledge but imagination" (Albert Einstein).

May we claim that both of them are needed?

Imagination without knowledge and knowledge without imagination are the two extremes of dullness.

E.A.

# APPRENTICESHIP IN CONCEPTUAL ANTHROPOLOGY

The apprenticeship, under the guidance of Prof. Emmanuel Anati, the founder of conceptual anthropology, may last from a minimum of two months to a maximum of one year. It grants the apprentice the title of *Research Assistant*. The apprenticeship is oriented to the acquisition of practical operational abilities and conceptual formation; it includes participation in research, editorial activities, compilation, organization and layout of exhibitions and publications, the arrangement and cataloguing of ethnological collections, and the planning of cultural and scientific projects. It is a way to touch with your hands and your mind the practical work of producing culture.

Traditional learning as an accumulation of theoretical notions is enhanced by applying the notions in practical activities, learning to do by doing.

During their stay in the Camonica Valley, the student will have access to self-catering accommodation on campus, at a student fee. Preference is given to graduates and other seriously motivated young people with knowledge of the English language and operational abilities on a database. Application in an informal letter should specify the motivations and skills of the candidate and be accompanied by: a curriculum vitae; a copy of record of studies; a copy

of identity card or passport; a recent passport standard photo; letter of presentation or recommendation from a university professor or a previous employer. Applications should be addressed by email to: <atelier.etno@gmail.com>.

## LEARNING TO BE AN EDITOR

Readers interested in learning editorial work may apply for three months' editorial training at EXPRESSION Quarterly Magazine. Skills required: perfect knowledge of the English language; ability to manage various relevant computer programs; ability in public relations; special interest in anthropology and archaeology. For applications or further information, please address a letter expressing your interest and motivation, including a copy of an identity document, to: <atelier.etno@gmail.com>.

## POSITION OF ASSISTANT CURATOR OF ETHNOGRAPHY

Graduate students in anthropology and ethnography are given the opportunity of training as **curator of ethnography**. The engagement consists in classifying old ethnographic collections of art objects from Oceania and Africa. The expected result is the compilation of a catalogue of a given collection, eventually to be published under the name of the compiler. The successful experience gives the apprentice two important additions to his/her curriculum vitae:

the publication of a scientific work and the position of **Assistant Curator of Ethnography** for the period of time of his/her engagement. The experience takes place in the Camonica Valley, northern Italy, and is expected to last a minimum of three months. Candidates should have mastered the English language and possess a university degree in human sciences.

During their active presence the accepted candidates will have access to self-catering accommodation on campus at a student fee. Applications should include a letter expressing motivation, a record of studies, a copy of an identity document and any other document worthy of consideration. Applications should be addressed by email to: <atelier.etno@gmail.com>.

## HOW TO BECOME A MEMBER OF THE UISPP

EXPRESSION, this e-journal, is produced by ATELIER, the Research Centre in Conceptual Anthropology, in cooperation with the UISPP-CISENP (the International Scientific Committee on the Intellectual and Spiritual Expressions of Non-Literate Societies), an organ of the UISPP. UISPP also offers other facilities, including participation in its World Congress. Membership of the UISPP will ensure your official status as a UISPP Active Member of CISENP. If you are a member of UISPP, please confirm your status to <atelier.etno@gmail.com>.

If you are not yet a member, and you wish to attend the World Congress, become a

member of the UISPP. For further information contact the office of the General Secretary: [loost@ipt.pt](mailto:loost@ipt.pt).

## **HOW TO BE A MEMBER OF CISENP**

Very simple. Be active and you are a member: you express your ideas, participate in debates, develop dialogues with other members, orally, by email, or through the pages of EXPRESSION magazine. If you have something to say this is your home. Membership to CISENP is free of material charges, no fees requested; it just implies your active conceptual presence. Membership is not exclusive of prehistorians; it is open to all the human and social sciences. It is advisable, but is not compulsory, to be a member of UISPP. CISENP is a free association, free also from bureaucratic procedures.

# CISENP

COMITÈ INTERNATIONAL SCIENTIFIQUE: LES EXPRESSIONS INTELLECTUELLES ET SPIRITUELLES DES  
PEUPLES SANS ECRITURE  
INTERNATIONAL SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE: THE INTELLECTUAL AND SPIRITUAL EXPRESSIONS OF  
NON-LITERATE PEOPLES

## THE INTELLECTUAL AND SPIRITUAL EXPRESSIONS OF NON- LITERATE SOCIETIES

### Presentation of papers for the CISENP session at the UISPP 2018 Congress

Dear colleagues and friends,

The UISPP, *International Union of Prehistoric and Protohistoric Sciences*, is organizing in Paris the forthcoming World Congress of Prehistory (3-9 June 2018). The CISENP session in the World Congress will be an opportunity for a global gathering of all of us, members of CISENP and authors and friends of EXPRESSION.

Following the tradition of previous congresses, the theme of the CISENP session remains "*The intellectual and spiritual expressions of non literate societies*".

Accepted papers for the CISENP session will dispose of 20 minutes time for their oral presentation. They should focus on essential points and stimulate debate. The text for publication may be longer but no more than 6.000 words. Texts for publication of this session will be in English.

Illustrations should be pertinent to the text (resolution 300dpi) and have each a caption including description, locality, size (if pertinent) and source (if any). Preferably the illustrations should not have been previously published.

Illustrations should be presented in a separate folder, not inside the text.

Papers are submitted to reviewers. They should be scientifically reliable, provocative and have aspects of innovation. Catalogues, purely descriptive or theoretical papers and traditional research reports should be avoided.

Authors are recommended to present titles and summaries as soon as possible, possibly before the 1st of November. It may help to provide an orientation if useful.

**December 15, 2017 is the deadline for the final submission of papers.**

Please do not leave it to the last minute. Papers should be submitted to "CISENP-UISPP Congress" [atelier.etno@gmail.com](mailto:atelier.etno@gmail.com).

As in previous congresses, the texts of accepted papers in our session will be fully edited, published and presented at the congress.

We look forward to receiving your paper and to share with you the experience of the congress.

Cordial regards,  
Emmanuel Anati  
(President CISENP)

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COUNTRY	NUMBER OF AUTHORS	COUNTRY	NUMBER OF AUTHORS
Australia	8	Mexico	3
Austria	3	Morocco	1
Argentina	7	Namibia	1
Armenia	2	Netherlands	1
Belgium	2	Norway	2
Botswana	1	Poland	1
Brazil	6	Portugal	7
Bulgaria	1	Russia	3
Canada	4	South Africa	4
China	28	Spain	6
Colombia	1	Sri Lanka	1
Denmark	2	Sweden	1
France	11	Switzerland	4
Japan	1	Tunisia	1
Kosovo	1	UK	9
India	8	Ukraine	2
Israel	3	USA	11
Italy	12	Zimbabwe	1
Malta	1		



Newspaper Rock, Utah

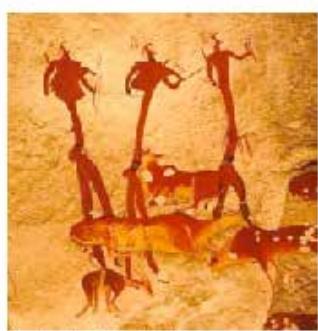
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With articles by Alberto Marretta (Italy), Fernando Coimbra (Portugal) and Johannes Loubser (USA).



Sidi Rock Art (South Africa)

**Expression Vol.3** *Discussion about the premises of our research group*

With articles by Emmanuel Anati (Italy) and many other issues.



Figure 1. Toca do Sossego, Serra da Capivara, Piauí, Brasil. Symbole male character with his androgynous character, a pregnant woman

**Expression Vol.4** *A preliminar selection of the abstracts of participants at the UISPP World Congress "Atapuerca" in Burgos, Spain*

With articles by Emmanuel Anati and Ariela Fradkin (Italy), Daniel Arsenault (Canada), Ulf Bertilsson (Sweden), Pascale Binant (France), Paul Bouissac (France), Paul D. Burley (UK), Fernando Coimbra (Portugal), Léo Dubal (France), Arsen Faradzhev (Russia), Francesco Ghilotti (Italy), Lysa Hochroth (France), Bulu Imam (India), Shemsi Krasniqi (Kosovo), Gang Li and Xifeng Li (China), G. Terence Meaden (UK), Louis Oosterbeeck (Portugal), Hua Qiao/Li Bin Gong and Hui Liu (China), Marcel Otte (Belgium), Andrea Rocchitelli (Italy), Umberto Sansoni (Italy), Tsioni Tsonev (Bulgaria), Gregor Vahanyan (Armenia), Huiling Yang (China), Yuan Zhu and Zhuoran Yu (China).



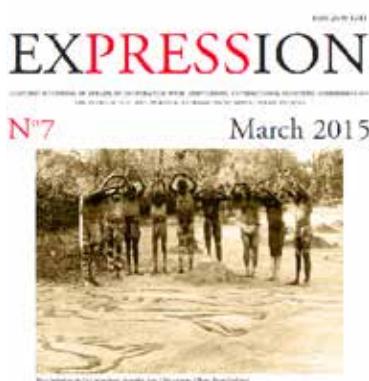
## **Expression Vol.5** *Presentation of the final group of abstracts of participants at the UISPP World Congress "Atapuerca" in Burgos, Spain*

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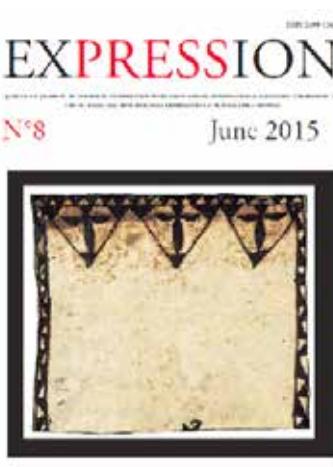
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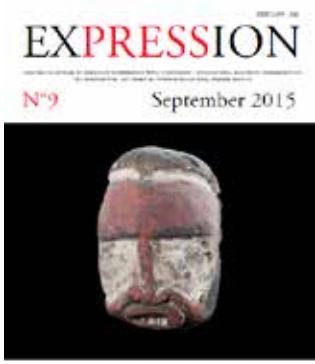
## **Expression Vol.7** *Spiritual dimensions of rock art*

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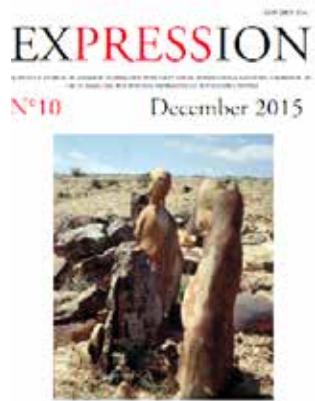
## **Expression Vol.8** *Rock Art: When, Why and to Whom?*

With articles by Mara Basile and Norma Ratto (Argentina), Jaâfar Ben Nasr (Tunisia), Luigi J. Boro (USA), Christopher Chippindale (UK), Jessica Joyce Christie (USA), Fernando Coimbra (Portugal), Ib Ivar Dahl (DK), Sofia Soares de Figueiredo (Portugal), Inés Domingo Sanz (Spain), Bernadette Drabsch (Australia), Louise Felding (Denmark), Dánae Fiore and Agustín Acevedo (Argentina), Natalie R. Franklin and Phillip J. Habgood (Australia), Marisa Dawn Giorgi (Australia), Philippe Hameau (France), Arnaud F. Lambert (USA), Arnaud F. Lambert (USA), J. David Lewis-Williams (South-Africa) and Kenneth Lymer (UK).



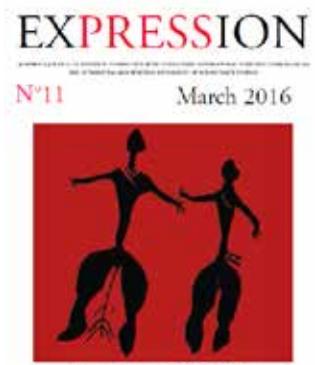
## **Expression Vol.9** *Papers from the WWW Project (Tribal and Prehistoric Art: When, Why and to Whom?)*

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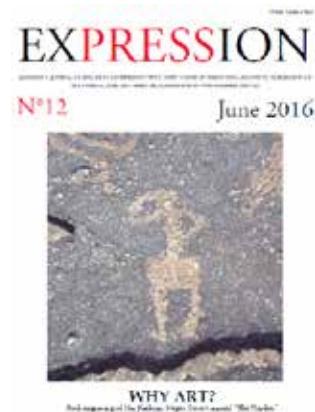
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## **Expression Vol.11** *Papers from the M-F Project (Male and Female in prehistoric and tribal Art)*

With articles by Margalit Berriet (France), Carl Bjork (USA), Pascale Binant (France), Brian Britten (Canada), Jessica Joyce Christie (USA), Santiago Wolnei Ferreira Guimaraes (Brazil), Deb Holt and Jane Ross (Australia), Arnaud F. Lambert (USA), Federico Mailland and Angelina Magnotta (Italy), Katharina Rebay-Salisbury (Austria), Susan Searight - Martinet (Morocco), Jitka Soukopova (Italy), Sachin Kr Tiwary (India), Maarten Van Hoek (Holland), Aixa Vidal/Lorena Ferraro and Maria Teresa Pagni (Argentina).



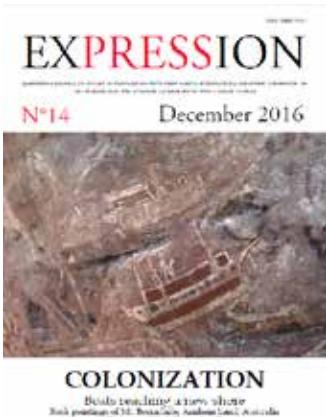
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**Expression Vol.14** Colonization: How did humans reach all the lands of the planet? Many different stories can be like stones in a mosaic piecing together an overview

mobile piecing together an overview. With articles by Emmanuel Anati (Italy), Marta Arzarello (Italy), Robert G. Be-dnarik (Australia), Anthony Bonanno (Malta), José Farruha de la Rosa (Spain), Edmund Furter (South Africa), Marcel Otte (Belgium), Santiago Wolnei Ferreira Guimaraes and Leidiana Alves de Mota (Brazil).



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# EXPRESSION

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What is the role of religion, magic and witchcraft in prehistoric and tribal art? The intellectual and spiritual motivations of art produced various theories since the first attempts to explain prehistoric art over a century ago. Recent research is revealing more complex conceptual connections. In this book, authors of different backgrounds and countries, from four continents, are presenting examples of specific aspects, providing first-hand data. The confrontation of different ideas and methods is contributing to .reconsider some past simplifications and generalizations

Anati, E. (ed.) 2016 Art and Religion Capo di Ponte, (Atelier), 114 pp. 73 ill. € 40

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## **“MALE AND FEMALE”**

The book includes papers of 20 authors from five continents. It considers human representations in prehistoric and tribal art presenting a broad landscape of different views and cases. In each age and culture a specific choice is emerging in the visual arts, between preferring male or female images, and between having or not the human figure as the main concern. The book presents different cases and views from experts of five continents

Anati, E. (ed.) 2017 Male and Female, Capo di Ponte, (Atelier), 119 pp. 60 ill. € 40

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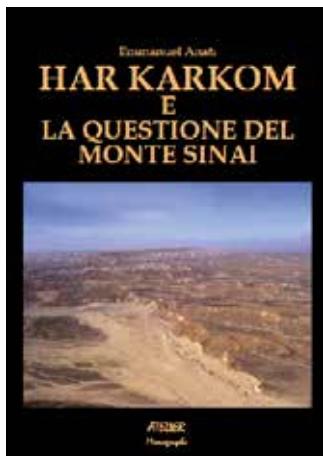
# ARCHEOLOGY AND THE BIBLE

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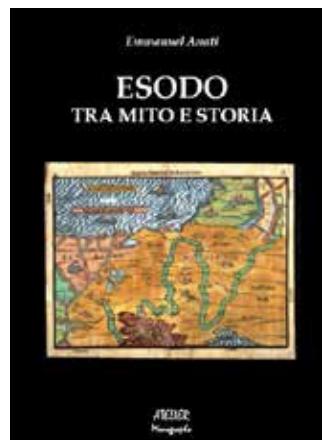
ARCHAEOLOGY IN THE DESERT EXODUS:

NEW DISCOVERIES RELATED TO BIBLICAL ARCHEOLOGY

From excavations and explorations in the deserts that separate the land of Canaan from Egypt, Emmanuel Anati, the scholar who for half a century is exploring these deserts, sums up new discoveries in two volumes. Two richly illustrated books bring new light on the events that inspired the Biblical narrative...and a new re-edition of an important book.



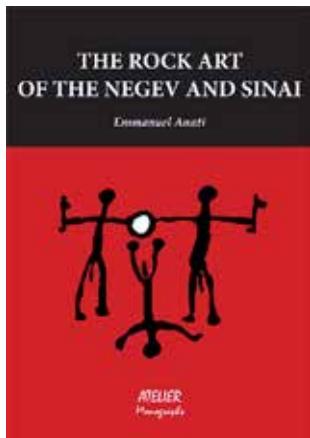
Anati, E., 2016: *Har Karkom e la questione del Monte Sinai*, Capodiponte (Atelier), pp 220; 138 ill., Italian edition, (€30,00)  
The findings of shrines and encampments of the Bronze Age at Har Karkom, a mountain located in one of the driest places and inhospitable parts of the Negev desert, in the north of the Sinai Peninsula, arouses a global debate on the hypothesis that this mountain can identify with the biblical Mount Sinai. The book presents a summary of the discoveries; it calls into question previous assumptions about the reliability of the Exodus Biblical narrative, both on the location of the mythical Mount Sinai, and on the chronological discrepancies proposed by various researchers. The book is richly documented by photographs, maps and other illustrations, it updates on recent discoveries, analyzing their possible historical significance, suggesting a new vision of the events narrated in the Bible.



Anati, E., 2016: *Esodo tra mito e storia* (*Exodus between myth and history*), Capodiponte (Atelier) pp. 340; 138 ill., Analytical Appendix. Italian edition, (€ 40,00)

Different opinions divided the academic world about the historic reliability of the Biblical narrative of Exodus. The events in Egypt, the wanderings in the desert under the leadership of Moses and the events at the foot of Mount Sinai are they based on facts or are they just legend? Broad and systematic explorations on the ground and new archaeological discoveries open up the possibility of tracing back the geographical and environmental context, by providing elements that bring new insight on the historical roots of this magnificent epic passed down from the Bible.

## ANOTHER BOOK ON THE SINAI DISCOVERIES



Anati, E. 2015, *The Rock Art of the Negev and Sinai*, Third English edition, Capodiponte (Atelier), 248 pp.248; 196 ill., €20,00

The book deals with a new theme of Near-eastern archeology: the rock art of the Negev and Sinai. It presents new discoveries and reconsiders content and assumptions of previous articles and of a book by the same author that dates back to 1979. The richly illustrated book is offering a new vision of this immense archive engraved and painted on rocks that reveals events and beliefs of the desert. The rock art of the Negev and Sinai illustrates stories and customs of the Sinai Peninsula over the past 10,000 years. Some depictions of the Bronze Age may refer to people mentioned in the Pentateuch. Others, of Roman-Byzantine times, illustrate life and customs from the age of early spread of Christianity.

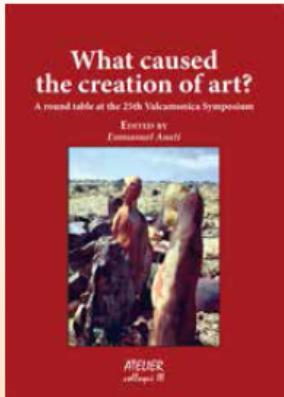
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# ATELIER PUBLICATIONS IN CONCEPTUAL ANTHROPOLOGY

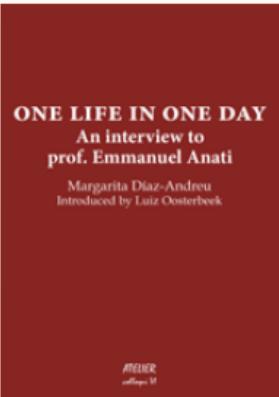
## ENGLISH EDITIONS

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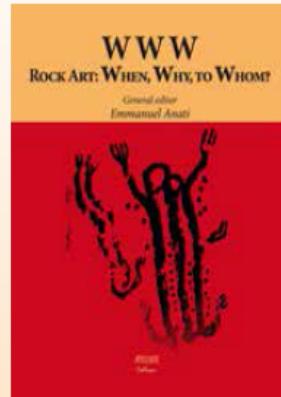
Anati, E. (ed.) 2013. *What Caused the Creation of Art? A Round Table at the 25th Valcamonica Symposium*, Capo di Ponte (Atelier) 44 pp. € 10.

'What caused the creation of art?' People from different disciplines and different cultural backgrounds present contrasting views. And yet, the same question has bothered thinkers for generation.



Díaz-Andreu, M. 2015 *One life in one day, an interview to prof. Emmanuel Anati*, Capo di Ponte, (Atelier), 104 pp. 51 pls. € 20.

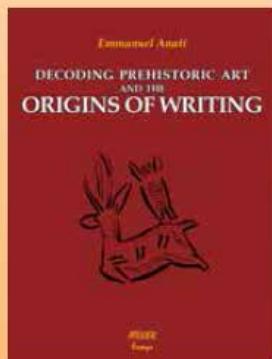
In the gardens of the campus of Burgos University, while delegates were moving from sessions and lectures to coffee breaks and back, Margarita Diaz-Andreu recorded, for hours, the words of Professor Emmanuel Anati. It was the 5th of September 2014 and when the electric lights of the evening replaced the sunlight, a life-long story was drafted.



Anati, E. (ed.). 2015 *WWW. Rock Art: when, why, to whom?* Capo di Ponte, (Atelier), 218 pp. 184 pls. € 20

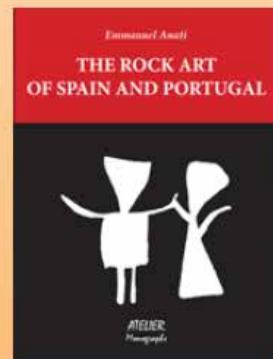
How come that Rock art is widespread in five continents? Some sites, in South Africa, Australia or Brazil, count well over one million figures. They were produced over centuries and millennia. What made generations persist in this tradition of marking the stone surfaces with the records of their minds? Why did they invest on it such immense time and energy? Fifty authors from five continent face the query: when, why and to whom?

ESSAYS OF ATELIER



Anati, E. 2015. *Decoding Prehistoric Art and the Origins of Writing*, Capo di Ponte (Atelier), 152 pp. 83 pls. € 20.

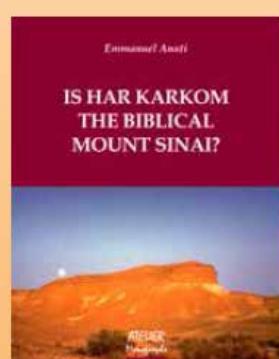
This text examines the cognitive process that led to the invention of writing and highlights constants of memorization and associative synthesis held in the mind of Homo sapiens for thousands of years. Some examples of decoding prehistoric art propose a new vision for the beginning of writing.



Anati, E. 2014. *The rock Art of Spain and Portugal, a Study of Conceptual Anthropology*, Capo di Ponte (Atelier), 104 pp. 87 pls. € 20.

An analytical synthesis of the rock art in the Iberian peninsula from the conceptual anthropology approach. The major concentrations of rock art are considered as expressions of their different cultural and social patterns.

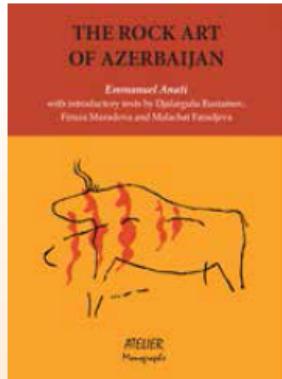
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Anati, E. 2013. *Is Har Karkom the Biblical Mount Sinai?* (II ed.), Capo di Ponte (Atelier), 96 pp. 53 pls. € 20.

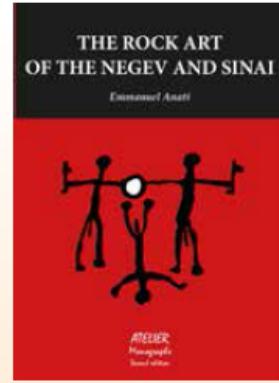
Remains of ancient sanctuaries and camp-sites tell the story of a hitherto unknown mountain in the heart of the desert of Exodus. Is Har Karkom the biblical Mount Sinai? To what point can we consider the biblical narratives as a source of historical documentation?

MONOGRAPHIES



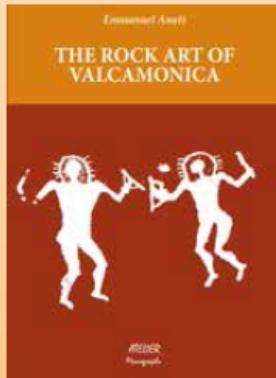
Anati, E. 2015. *The Rock art of Azerbaijan*, Capo di Ponte (Atelier), 156 pp. 190 pls. € 20

In the course of centuries, Azerbaijan, was a great centre of rock art. This gateway of Europe, between the Caucasus Mountains and the Caspian Sea, was a major way of migrations from Asia to Europe. New chapters in the history of art are revealed by beautiful design and stylisation.



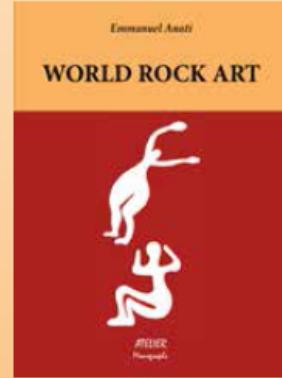
Anati, E. 2015. *The Rock Art of the Negev and Sinai*, second edition, Capo di Ponte (Atelier), 242 pp., 190 pls. € 25.

The present volume is concerned with a new theme of archeology and anthropology: the rock art of the Negev and Sinai, which never had before a general analysis in English. It elaborates on articles and a book written in the last 60 years, to produce a synthesis and an overview.



Anati, E. 2015. *The Rock art of Valcamonica*, Capo di Ponte (Atelier), 260 pp. 153 pls. € 20

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 presents 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 acquires back millennia of its forgotten history.



Anati, E. 2015. *World Rock Art*, Capo di Ponte (Atelier), 208 pp. 193 pls. € 20

This book is a fundamental introduction to rock art studies. It marks the starting point of a new methodology for rock art analysis, based on typology and style, first developed by the author at the Centro camuno di Studi Preistorici, Capo di Ponte, Brescia, Italy. He can be seen the beginning of a new discipline, the systematic study of world rock art.

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