

14. 31,000, Chauvet Cave and Vulva Engravings

ReGenesis is the first open-access encyclopedia to
liberate pre-colonial research
to its rightful 3,000,000 BCE origins
- and -
liberate female spirituality.
(RGS.)

* * *

Upper Paleolithic.

The female sexes, frequent at the very beginning
(Chauvet, Cosquer [and] several shelters in Dordogne),
can also be found in the Solutrean
and above all in the
Magdalenian (Font-Bargeix, Bedeilhac).
That sexual theme is thus a constant
of the Upper Paleolithic,
with more or less frequent occurrences
according to the times and places.
(PAF: 4.)

Vulvas.

Of the more than 1,000 creatures inventoried
on the walls of the Chauvet Cave,
just one appears to be human:
a woman with the head of a bison,
suggesting to some archaeologists that the cave
was used for shamanistic practices.
There are also several images of vulvas,
presumably a tribute to the power to give birth.
(MSW: C2, 2015.)

Human Hand on a Cave Wall.

A powerful mental heuristic design
to conjure a particular emotion,
a memory, an idea.
Rather than directly changing the world around us,
symbols change the way we perceive it.
(ARSL: 20.)

According to Reid-Bowen, the entrance to caves along with tombs and barrow mounds * demonstrates various understandings including shelter, sacred passage-

ways, a ritual landscape plus special focus on entering the goddess or earth's womb. * (Anglo-Saxon burial mounds.)

The cave is theologically conceived as analogous or equivalent to the entry point into the chaotic/earthly body of the Goddess: or, as theologian Rachel Pollack (GAN 90) expresses the point, 'if the Earth is our mother, then the cave becomes an image of her womb and a place to enter into her actual body' (GAN 91, n. 21). ... In many mythic narratives, the origins of the human race are traced to an emergence from a womb-like cave. (GAN: 91, n. 23.)

The Chauvet Cave complex discovered in 1994, is located in southeast France near Vallon-Pont-d'Arc in the Ardèche (Ardecha) River region, renowned as Europe's richest collection of Paleolithic art and considered to be the oldest cave with such high-level paintings. "Different periods of visitation are between 31,000 and 27,000 (23,000)" (PO: 128). ** In addition to stalactites and stalagmites, plus memorial remains, ochre and charcoal artwork include significant animals, hand stencils, ** and triangles, plus the Chauvet "Venus" (object of veneration) and Sorcerer.

* Radiocarbon chronology as of 2016 CE: updated visitation dates are 37,000-33,500 and again in 31,000 to 28,000 years ago.

** According to stencil (published on October 2-2014) is 39,900 years old from the Sulawesi's cave in Indonesia. Jabr, Ferris. "Ars Longa." *New York Times Magazine*, Dec. 7, 2014: 18, 20. (ARSL.)

The Chauvet walls have richly decorated paintings and engravings of numerous animals and several birds including an eagle and a remarkable owl. These modern humans were illustrating "complex mythologies, involving supernatural beings. ... Some of the most telling images from their art are those of part human/part animal figures." (EI: 48.) Two other world-renowned drawings include the lioness area plus the panel of four horses' heads. The Sorcerer and the Chauvet "Venus" (object of veneration) are deep inside the cave in the Salle du Fond Chambers. Three additional pubic triangles are located at the entrances of each the adjoining cavities.

Of the more than 1,000 creatures inventoried on the walls of the Chauvet Cave, just one appears to be human: a woman with the head of a bison, suggesting to some archaeologists that the cave was used for shamanistic practices. There are also several images of vulvas, presumably a tribute to the power to give birth (MSW: C2, 2015.)

Steven Mithen says that in 30,000 BCE modern humans "were engaging in thoughts and behavior of a radically different kind from that of Neanderthals and Early Humans." (EI: 48.)

A simple way of describing this is that modern humans were far more imaginative than all human ancestors and relatives. ... [Chauvet's] key features include religious and ritualistic behavior, production of paintings and sculpted objects, multi-component tools, and substantial architecture. ... These demonstrate most clearly that modern humans of 30,000 years ago were able to conceive of entities that broke the rules of nature, entities that could not exist in the physical world. In other words, they were engaging in the type of imagination that can be described as fantasy. ... I have termed this ability 'cognitive fluidity' and have argued that it underlies art, religion and science (EI: 48).

Although discussing later Cycladic finds c. 3300-2000 BCE, Gimbutas' reflections also relate to engravings throughout the ancient world including the Chauvet's "Venus" (object of veneration) and pubic triangle.

Through the act of engraving an enormous triangle in the center of the sculpture the artist perhaps visualized the universal womb, the inexhaustible source of life, to which the dead man [deceased] returns in order to be born again. In this sense, the Great Goddess is the magician-mother (GGE: 159).

Further cave and grotto research, keyword suggestions include: Cosquer; Grotte de Bédeilhac; Laugerie Basse; Font-Bergeix; Cussac; "Venus" of Cussac; or Périgieux, and Sulawesi.

For selections of the interior landscape of Chauvet Cave and the Chauvet Cave Project plus Aurignacian art as discussed and recorded by filmmaker Werner Herzog in the 2011 film, *Cave of Forgotten Dreams*, recommend: Zach Zorich. "Interview: Werner Herzog On the Birth of Art." *Archaeology* 64.2 (Mar.-Apr. 2011): 32-39. (IWH.)

For a selection of finds from the Chauvet cave plus other artifacts from nearby caves, suggest the Toulouse-Lautrec Museum in the Palais de la Berbie just off the Cathedral Square in Albi, France.

Further research on symbolic systems including the V/triangle/vulvic cave engravings and gender emergence: Caldwell, Duncan. "Supernatural Pregnancies: Common Features and New Ideas Concerning Upper Paleolithic Feminine Imagery." *Arts & Cultures*. Geneva, Switzerland: Barbier-Mueller Museums, 2010. 52-75. (SPC.)

Clottes, Jean, and J. David Lewis-Williams. *The Shamans of Prehistory: Trance and Magic in the Painted Caves*. Trans. Sophie Hawkes. New York, NY: Harry N. Abrams, 1998. (SOP.)

Conroy, L. P. "Female Figurines of the Upper Paleolithic and the Emergence of Gender." *Women in Archaeology: A Feminist Critique*. Eds. Hilary du Cros and Laurajane Smith. Canberra, Australia: Dept. of Prehistory, Research School of Pacific Studies, Australian National University, 1993. 153-160. (FF.)

Herzog, Werner, Erik Nelson, Adrienne Ciuffo, et al. *Cave of Forgotten Dreams*. Los Angeles, CA: Creative Differences Productions, Inc., 2011. (CFD.)

Jabr, Ferris. "Ars Longa." *New York Times Magazine*, Dec. 7, 2014: 18, 20. (ARSL.)

Joan, Eahr Amelia. "Ochre's Living Lineage: The Gyne-Morphic Bloodline of Spirituality." Publication, 2018. (OLL.)

Lewis-Williams, David J. *The Mind in the Cave: Consciousness and the Origins of Art*. London, England: Thames and Hudson, 2002. (MIC.)

Marler, Joan, and Miriam R. Dexter, Eds. *Signs of Civilization: Neolithic Symbol System of Southeast Europe*. Novi Sad, Hungary: Institute of Archaeomythology, 2009. (SC.)

McCoid, Catherine Hodge and LeRoy D. McDermott. "Toward Decolonizing Gender." *American Anthropologist* 98.2 (Jun. 1996): 319-326. (TDG.)

Rubin, Alissa J. "A Mirror of Subterranean Wonders: Replica of

Chauvet Cave Bristles with Lifelike Paintings.” *New York Times*, Apr. 25, 2015: C1-C2. (MSW.)

Tedlock, Barbara. *The Woman in the Shaman's Body: Reclaiming the Feminine in Religion and Medicine*. New York, NY: Bantam Books, 2005. (WSB.)

Further considerations of cave sculptures and wall murals:

Anati, Emmanuel. *World Rock Art: The Primordial Language*. Capo di Ponte, Italy: Edizioni del Centro, 1993. (WRAP.)

Bataille, Georges. *Lascaux; Or, The Birth of Art: Prehistoric Painting. The Great Centuries of Painting*. Lausanne, Switzerland: 1955. (LBA.)

Bisson, Michael S. and Pierre Bolduc. “Previously Undescribed Figurines from the Grimaldi Caves.” *Current Anthropology* 35.4 (Aug.-Oct. 1994): 458-468. (PU.)

Clottes, Jean. “Paleolithic Cave Art of France.” *Bradshaw Foundation* (1995) Jun. 29, 2008 <<http://www.bradshawfoundation.com/clottes/page4.php>>. (PAF.)

Jabr, Ferris. “Ars Longa.” *New York Times Magazine*, Dec. 7, 2014: 18, 20. (ARSL.)

Mithen, Steven. “The Evolution of Imagination: An Archaeological Perspective.” *Sub-Stance* 30.1/2 (2001): 28-54. (EI.)

Pfeiffer, John E. *The Creative Explosion: An Inquiry into the Origins of Art and Religion*. New York, NY: Harper & Row, 1982. (TCE.)

Wildgen, Wolfgang. “The Paleolithic Origins of Art, Its Dynamic and Topological Aspects, and the Transition to Writing.” *Semiotic Evolution and the Dynamics of Culture*. Eds. Bax, Marcel, Barend van Heusden, and Wolfgang Wildgen. Bern, Switzerland: Peter Lang, 2004. 128-132. (PO.)

Further research indicates that ancient cave artists who made the hand stencils ‘were predominately female’:

Snow, Dean. “Sexual Dimorphism in European Upper Paleolithic Cave Art.” *American Antiquity* 78.4 (Oct. 2013): 746-761. (SDE.)

Recommended article that initiated this *Re-Genesis* entry:

Thurman, Judith. “Letters from Southern France: Impressions, What Were the Earliest Painters Thinking?” *New Yorker* 84.18 (Jun. 23, 2008): 59-67. (LFSF.)

Further cave research: 15,000-12,000, Lascaux Cave; 15,000-10,000, Magdalenian Age; and 13,000-11,000, Altamira Cave. (RGS.)

Further Paleolithic research : 1,000,000-10,000, Paleolithic Overview; 1,000,000-50,000, Early (Lower) Paleolithic Age; 50,000-10,000, Late (Upper) Paleolithic Age; 50,000-30,000, Mousterian Age; 34,000-28,000, Les Eyzies Vulva Engravings, Dordogne Caves; 31,000, Chauvet Cave and Vulva Engraving; 30,000-25,000, Aurignacian Age; 30,000-25,000, Goddess of Willendorf, Austria; 25,000-20,000, Gravettian Age; 25,000-20,000, Goddess of Laussel; 24,000, Dolni Vestonice; 23,000, Goddess of Lespugue; 22,000, Maiden with Hood from Brassempouy; 20,000-15,000, Solutrean Age; 15,000-10,000, Magdalenian Age; 15,000-12,000, Lascaux Cave; and 12,000, Pamukkale/Hierapolis, Anatolia (Central Turkey). (RGS.)

Further research on vulva images: 34,000-28,000, Les Eyzies Vulva Engravings, Dordogne Caves; 30,000-25,000, Aurignacian Age; 30,000-25,000, Goddess of

Willendorf, Austria; 25,000-20,000, Goddess of Laussel; 5300-4300, Climactic Phase and Script in Old Europe; 3000-2000, Cycladic Goddesses; 2600-2000, Early Bronze Age, Crete, Chthonian; and 400, Celtic Sheela-na-gig. (RGS.) *

* For additional CE information, see illustration of a 1600 c. vulva labyrinth design in: Bord, Janet. *Mazes and Labyrinths of the World*. New York, NY: Dutton, 1976. 85, Fig. 127.) (MLW.)

Further V/triangle/vulvic research: 70,000, Blombos Cave; 34,000-28,000, Les Eyzies Vulva Engravings, Dordogne Caves; 30,000-25,000, The Aurignacian Age; 30,000, Labyrinths, Spirals, and Meanders; 30,000-25,000, Goddess of Willendorf, Austria; 8000/7000-5000, Early Neolithic; 7000-5000, Early Neolithic Crete; 5500-3500, Cucuteni (Tripolye) Culture, Eastern Europe; 5300-4300, Climactic Phase and Script in Old Europe; 4000-3000, Locmariaquer, Brittany Hook Symbology; 4000-3500, Gavrinis, Brittany France; 2000, Asherah; 1900-1800, Dawning of the African Alphabet and the Aniconic Goddess Triangle; 1790-1700, Goddess of Kultepe, Anatolia; 1500, Lachish Ewer, Triangle, and Menorah; and 800, Tanit (Also Taanit, Ta'anit, Tannit, or Tannin). (RGS.)

Further ancient ochre research: 500,000-300,000, Dark Mother Tan-Tan of Morocco; 285,000, Ochre at Kapthurin Formation Plus Other Sites; 280,000-250,000, The Berekhat Ram Figure; 92,000, Qafzeh Cave and Ochre Symbolism; 70,000, Blombos Cave and V Shaped Engraving; 50,000, African Homo Sapiens Migrations and Matrilineal Motherline; 10,000, Grotta dell'Addaura; 2600-2000, Early Bronze Age, Crete, Chthonian * Prepalatial/Early Minoan (EM I-III); and 1500, Lachish Ewer, Triangle, and Menorah. (RGS.)

* (Earth mother, Chthonia.)

Further ochre and ritual research:

Caldwell, Duncan. "Supernatural Pregnancies: Common Features and New Ideas Concerning Upper Paleolithic Feminine Imagery." *Arts & Cultures*. Geneva, Switzerland: Barbier-Mueller Museums, 2010. 52-75. (SPC.)

Dunbar, Robin Ian MacDonald, Chris Knight, and Camilla Power, Eds. *The Evolution of Culture: A Historical and Scientific Overview*. Edinburgh: Scotland: Edinburgh University Press, 1999. (EC.)

Greenspan, Stanley and Stuart Shanker. *The First Idea: How Symbols, Language, and Intelligence Evolved from Our Early Primate Ancestors to Modern Humans*. Cambridge, MA: Da Capo Press, 2004. (FI.)

Hovers, Erella, Shimon Ilani, et al. "An Early Case of Color Symbolism: Ochre Use by Modern Humans in Qafzeh Cave." *Current Anthropology* 44.4 (Aug.-Oct. 2003): 491-522. (ECC.)

Joan, Eahr Amelia. "Ochre's Living Lineage: The Gyne-Morphic Bloodline of Spirituality." Publication, 2018. (OLL.)

Knight, C. *Blood Relations: Menstruation and the Origins of Culture*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press. 1991. (BR.)

Lincoln, Bruce. *Emerging from the Chrysalis: Studies in Rituals of Women's Initiation*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press. 1981. (EFTC.)

Marshack, Alexander. "On Paleolithic Ochre and the Early Uses of Color and Symbols." *Current Anthropology* 22.2 (Apr. 1981): 188-191. (POE.)

McBrearty, S. "The Middle Pleistocene of East Africa." *Human Roots: Africa and Asia in the Middle Pleistocene*. Eds. Lawrence S. Barham, and K. Robson-Brown. Bristol, England: Published for the Centre for Human Evolutionary Research at the University of

Bristol, by the Western Academic & Specialist Press, 2001. 81-92. (MPEA.)
Zorich, Zach. "Neanderthals in Color." *Archaeology* 65.3 (May-Jun. 2012): 18. (NC.)

IMAGE: CHAUVET PUBIC TRIANGLES: CHAUVET CAVE, FRANCE.
ILLUSTRATED: CHAUVET PUBIC TRIANGLES, CHAUVET CAVE COMPLEX.
SLIDE LOCATION , SHEET , ROW , SLEEVE , SLIDE # , 31,000 BCE.
SHOT ON LOCATION: IN SOUTHEAST FRANCE NEAR VALLON-PONT-D'ARC IN THE ARDÈCHE REGION.
ILLUSTRATION/IMAGE IN PROCESS.
PHOTO NOTE: FOR FURTHER CHAUVET RESEARCH AND IMAGES:
INDEX REQUIRES FURTHER RESEARCH (ARCHAEOLOGY, ARCHITECTURE & ART.)
FOR FURTHER CHAUVET TRIANGLE INFORMATION:
FOR FURTHER PALEOLITHIC ART AND CAVE WEBSITES:
<http://www.donsmaps.com/indexpaintings.html>
RESOURCE: (BRITISH MUSEUM: LONDON, ENGLAND.)
PHOTO NOTE: ILLUSTRATOR, CHRISI KARVONIDES.

IMAGE: PUBIC TRIANGLE, TREE – OF – LIFE AND BULL: BABYLONIAN.
PHOTO: © GSA. DESCRIPTION: PLAQUE OF A BULL, TRIANGLE (VULVA) AND TREE OF LIFE DEDICATED TO BABYLONIAN GULA (ALSO NIN-DIN-DUNG), RENOWNED HEALING GODDESS WHO RESTORES LIFE.
SLIDE LOCATION NEAR EAST, SHEET 3, ROW 1, SLEEVE 3, SLIDE #18, 1110-900 BCE.
CU_NEA_S3_R1_SL3_S18.jpg
SHOT ON LOCATION: BRITISH MUSEUM: LONDON, ENGLAND.
NOTE 1: (CDBL: 108-9.)
NOTE 2: FIELD WORK PROJECT: 1998-2002.

IMAGE: INCISED POTTERY WITH DANCING WOMAN/VULVA: NINEVEH.
PHOTO: © GSA. DESCRIPTION: INCISED RITUAL POTTERY OF STICK FIGURES OF REINDEER – AND – A DANCING KA FEMALE EMERGING OUT OF PRONOUNCED VULVA, NINEVEH.
SLIDE LOCATION, NEAR EAST, SHEET 10, ROW 3, SLEEVE 1, SLIDE #33, BCE.
CU_NEA_S10_R3_SL1_S33.jpg
SHOT ON LOCATION: BRITISH MUSEUM: LONDON, ENGLAND.
NOTE 1: FIELDWORK PROJECT 1998-2002.

IMAGE: MEGALITH TOMB WITH TRIANGULAR (VULVA) AT THE ENTRANCE: FRANCE.
PHOTO: © GSA. DESCRIPTION: MEGALITH TOMB WITH TRIANGULAR (VULVA) AT THE ENTRANCE, PLUS A CAPSTONE AND NEARBY AVENUE OF PILLAR-LIKE STANDING STONES, SAINT-GERMAIN-EN-LAYE, FRANCE.
SLIDE LOCATION FRANCE, SHEET 4, ROW 3, SLEEVE 1, SLIDE #18, BCE.
CO_FRA_S4_R3_SL1_S18.jpg
SHOT ON LOCATION: MUSÉE DES ANTIQUITÉS NATIONALES: SAINT-GERMAIN-EN-LAYE, FRANCE, JUST OUTSIDE OF PARIS.
NOTE 1: THIS SITE IS POSSIBLY PART OF A LARGER CEREMONIAL COMPLEX?
NOTE 2: "THE VULVA IS AN ANCIENT SYMBOL OF THE DIVINE HUMAN FEMALE" (RGS).
NOTE 3: YONI. "THE TRIANGLE AS THE GENERATIVE YONI (WOMB, VAGINA, VULVA: PLACE OF ORIGIN, BIRTH, AND REST)" (MN: 78; RGS.).
NOTE 4: FIELDWORK PROJECT 1985-1989.

IMAGE: TANIT'S HAND-BLESSING OVER A DOORWAY: TUNIS, TUNISIA.
PHOTO: © GSA. DESCRIPTION: TANIT'S OUTSTRETCHED RIGHT HAND IS AN ANCIENT PROTECTION AMULET THAT MAY ALSO INVOKE BENEVOLENT BLESSINGS.
SLIDE LOCATION TUNISIA, SHEET 6, ROW 2, SLEEVE 3, SLIDE #1A, BCE.
CO_TUN_S6_R2_SL3_S1A.jpg
SHOT ON LOCATION: TUNIS, TUNISIA.

NOTE 1: IN ADDITION TO PALEOLITHIC CAVE FINDINGS, THIS ICONOGRAPHY WAS LATER ADOPTED BY: MESOPOTAMIAN ISHTAR/INANNA; EGYPTIAN ISIS; ISLAMIC FATIMA; SEPHARDIC AND MIZRAHI TRADITIONS; KABBALAH THEOSOPHY, BERBER CULTURES; AND A CHRISTIAN VIRGIN-MARY-HAND REVERENCE. ADDITIONALLY, THIS TALISMAN IS FOUND IN BOTH EVIL EYE PRACTICES - AND - SACRED EYE PRACTICES.

NOTE: 2: ACCORDING TO FERRIS JABR, THE OLDEST HAND STENCIL IS 39,900 YEARS OLD FROM THE SULAWESI'S CAVE IN INDONESIA. (ARSL.)

NOTE 3: FIELDWORK PROJECT 1989.

IMAGE: BLACK BAETYL WITH INCISED OUTSTRETCHED HAND: ALGERIA.

PHOTO: © GSA. DESCRIPTION: BLACK TRIANGULAR ALGERIAN BAETYL WITH AN INCISED OUTSTRETCHED HAND, TANIT, CADUCEUS, AND A NEW MOON.

SLIDE LOCATION TUNISIA, SHEET 6, ROW 2, SLEEVE 5, SLIDE #1C, BCE.

CO_TUN_S6_R2_SL5_S1C.jpg

SHOT ON LOCATION: PARIS, FRANCE.

NOTE 1: GODDESS'S TANIT OUTSTRETCHED RIGHT HAND IS AN ANCIENT PROTECTION AMULET THAT MAY ALSO INVOKE BENEVOLENT BLESSINGS.

NOTE 2: IN ADDITION TO GODDESS TANIT, FURTHER SOURCES OF INFORMATION AND ICONOGRAPHY INCLUDES: PALEOLITHIC CAVE FINDINGS: MESOPOTAMIAN ISHTAR/INANNA; EGYPTIAN ISIS; ISLAMIC FATIMA; SEPHARDIC AND MIZRAHI TRADITIONS; KABBALAH THEOSOPHY; BERBER CULTURES; AND CHRISTIAN VIRGIN-MARY-HAND REVERENCE. IT IS ALSO A TALISMAN FOUND IN BOTH EVIL EYE PRACTICES - AND - SACRED EYE PRACTICES.

NOTE: 3: ACCORDING TO FERRIS JABR, THE OLDEST HAND STENCIL IS 39,900 YEARS OLD FROM THE SULAWESI'S CAVE IN INDONESIA. (ARSL.)

NOTE 4: FIELDWORK PROJECT 1988.

PHOTO NOTE: ILLUSTRATOR, CHRISI KARVONIDES.

