

SUMMARIES
OF
PAPERS

Section I:**Palaeolithic****ICONOGRAPHY AND INTERPRETATION**

Leroi-Gourhan, André, Paris, France

This paper raises a number of questions about the use of prehistoric iconographic documents as a source for religious investigation, and in particular about the use of present-day ethnological data as one of the bases for the formation of hypotheses. Having considered some aspects of the relationship between « religion » and « representation » in recent societies and tackled the problem of the variability of ideological data for the same figurative expression, as a function of time and space, we question the religious, social and aesthetic value of symbols. We then consider a second, and genuinely iconographic aspect: that of the mode of figurative expression, in conjunction with the problems of interpreting non-narrative (mythogrammic) and narrative (pictogrammic) complexes, where the same iconographic theme may have corresponded to different ideological contents. Conversely, ethnological experience shows that the same ideological content may be expressed in different figurative symbols. These problems of interpretation could be simplified, if not solved, by a standardisation of research procedures, leading on the one hand to a chronological and geographical inventory of subjects and themes, and on the other to a systematic analysis of ethnological materials for which both an iconography and an ascriptive interpretation exist.

THE IMPORTANCE OF CHOICE IN THE RELIGIOUS INTERPRETATION OF QUATERNARY ART

Nougier, Louis-René, Toulouse, France

The author takes the view that a work of rock art is a function of the rock on which it is inscribed. The natural framework which surrounds it is an integral part of its deeper meaning. A hierarchy of choices has been ascertained, from choice of region (Périgord, for example), valley (La Beune), cave (as a function of its environment, outlook, galleries, etc.) to that of a particular gallery. The works themselves are attached to chosen natural accidents: relief or even « bas relief », cup-mark, fissure or « bouche d'ombre ». The author gives some examples from the cave at Rouffignac which he discovered in 1956. Here the choices are innumerable, except in the case of the digitate figures' which have a diffuse distribution. The Red Snake Ceiling shows snake figures and evokes the chthonic gods. The Great Ceiling is crowded with representations of real objects, including a quarter of the cave's bestiary, and the author seeks the reason for this. Under this Great Ceiling, a vast underground dolina leads to a narrow diacalse which winds up to the second level. One fissure leads to a total impasse; while a second leads through a chimney to the third level, and to the « Ruisseau des Profondeurs ». Above this fissure, a natural pillar bears ten painted animals, surrounding an anthropomorphic figure of noble dimensions, the « Great Being » of Rouffignac. This is the most important figure in the cave, and is compared to the « Horned God » in the Trois Frères cave. This gives a new meaning to the Great Ceiling, suggesting the world of chthonic deities, the cult of the Earth Mother, presiding over the origin of horses, mammoths and men. The Tito Bustillo cave presents an analogous phenomenon: a close link between a large rock panel and a « bouche d'ombre » which also leads to a « ruisseau des profondeurs ». The choice of position in cave art characterises *homo religiosus*.

RELIGIOUS SIGNIFICANCE AND SEMIOLOGICAL FUNCTION IN ASTURO-CANTABRIAN PALAEO-LITHIC ROCK ART

Gomez-Tabanera, José Manuel, Oviedo, Spain

The author presents a semiology-based structural analysis of myths which may have been represented in parietal art, taking as his starting point:

- a) the semiological structure of myth among the present-day hunting peoples;
- b) the mythopoetic mechanisms governing these peoples' communication systems;
- c) differentiation within these mythopoetic mechanisms of those with binary, ternary or multiple structures, excluding those which might give ambiguous results;
- d) the origin of the mythopoetic processes specific to Palaeolithic rock and mobiliary art;
- e) the origin of mythopoetic processes in general.

IDEOMORPHS AND HEADLESS ANIMALS

Jordá Cerdá, Francisco, Salamanca, Spain

While it is true that many Palaeolithic parietal figures may be related to magic or sexuality, it must be granted that this is not always the case. At Las Herrerias and Les Pedroses (Asturia) there are two « sanctuaries » which differ by conception and content. At Las Herrerias the decorations relate to a single theme: the combination of parallel lines and points distinguishes a sanctuary specialised in the representation of ideomorphs, with a complete absence of zoomorphic and anthropomorphic figures. On the other hand, Les Pedroses is a sanctuary specialising in the representation of headless animals. These two examples call for an explanation which is neither magic nor sexual. The obvious opposition which exists between the contents of Las Herrerias and Les Pedroses is an argument which invalidates any theory based on « compositions » of sexually opposed elements. The « parallel line ensembles » are also found in other caves in the Canta-

brian region (Pindal, La Loja, Concha la Cova), where they are related to other animal figures. We can therefore advance the hypothesis that we are dealing with a symbolic element specific to a certain human group, seen in isolation at Las Herrerias and associated with a lifegiving animal in other caves. As regards the headless animals of Les Pedroses, these must be seen in relation to a totemic cult. It will be recalled that at Altamira the bison is the predominant animal, and that the headless animal at Gran Techo is also the bison. Las Herrerias and Les Pedroses show the necessity of studying Palaeolithic rock art from a wide socio-religious view-point, and not within the narrow confines of magic or sexuality.

MYTHS AND PALAEOLITHIC FIGURATIONS IN THE BASQUE COUNTRY

Barandiaran, José Miguel de, Atáun, Spain

The decorated caves of the Upper Palaeolithic in the Basque country form the central part of the Franco-Cantabrian group of art, and include the « sanctuaries » of Etxeberri, Sasixiloaga, Isturitz, Alquerdi, Ekain, Goikolan, Santimamiñe, Laperra etc. The artists who decorated the naturalistic signs, taking account of their position and grouping. The present-day Basques, who have preserved their own language and ethnic identity over such a long period, still see in these caves numerous spirits, embodied in the ox, cow, horse, goat etc., as is shown by the myths relating to the caves at Otsibarre, Lexarrigubelle, Isturitz, Lezia (Sare), Akelarre, Austokieta, Obanzun, Marizulo, Usategui, Ubedi, Putterri, Olanoi, Aketegui, Kapildui, Oquina, and Santimamiñe. It may be possible to discover some relationship between the Basque myths and the Upper Palaeolithic figurations of the same region.

Section II:**European
Neolithic and
Eneolithic****EUROPEAN NEOLITHIC FIGURINES:
WHAT DO THEY REPRESENT?**

Gimbutas, Marija, Los Angeles, USA

Through the deciphering of stereotype images it becomes clear that the neolithic Europeans expressed their communal worship through the medium of the puppet. Many of these puppets were probably made of wood or other perishable material, but others, fortunately, were carved out of stone or bone or modeled in clay. The small sculptures of Old Europe are witnesses of the re-enactment of emotions through ritual drama with many actors present, both gods and worshippers. The same practice seems to have been present in Anatolia, Syria, Palestine and Mesopotamia in the respective periods, but only in southeastern Europe is such a quantity of figurines available for a comparative study. Hitherto the figurines have been simplistically treated (with very few exceptions) as « Fertility Goddesses », a result of the archaeologist's divorce from comparative mythological studies and the lack of insight into the level of the Neolithic and Chalcolithic culture of southeastern Europe. During the three millennia or more of the Neolithic and Chalcolithic era, formal change evolved toward the increase of stylistic diversity, producing a greater variety of individual forms. Simultaneously, a more naturalistic expression of anatomical generalities gradually emancipated itself from an initial subordination to the symbolic purpose. The study of these more articulated sculptures, their ideograms and symbols and the highly developed vase painting enabled the author to distinguish the differentiated types of goddesses and gods, their epiphanies, their worshippers, various cult scenes, etc. Thus, it is possible to speak of the pantheon of gods, and to reconstruct the various costumes and masks, which throw much light on ritual drama and

the standard of life. There consistently appear several clearly defined types of goddesses and gods: the Bird and Snake Goddess of Life and Death or of Regeneration, the Vegetation Goddess, and a Male God, the infant, mature and old, as a vegetation daemon or as a consort or companion of a female goddess. Their masks and accompanying symbols and ideograms consistently reappear in all parts of Old Europe. The mythical imagery proves to be much more complex than it has hitherto been believed and it is therefore difficult to adjust our thinking and accept it; it is in fact just as difficult as to accept the presence of writing in Old Europe. *Ex oriente lux* is no longer an adequate dismissal of European Neolithic- Chalcolithic developments. The shrines, cult objects, magnificent painted and black pottery, costumes, and elaborate religious ceremonialism speak of a refined culture and society.

TYPOLOGY AND MEANING OF NEOLITHIC
ANTHROPOMORPHIC FIGURINES DISCOVERED
IN RUMANIA

Comsa, Eugen, Bucharest, Rumania

The author considers that, during the early Neolithic, the greater part both of the population on Rumanian territory and of its religious expressions are of Mediterranean origin. The anthropomorphic figurines were made from the following materials: clay during the first phase of the Neolithic, clay and marble in the middle Neolithic, and thereafter clay, marble, bone, leather or gold. The whole Neolithic was dominated by female figurines, portrayed in different positions (standing, arms crossed on the breast, or raised, kneeling or seated on a « throne »). The frequency of masked figures varies according to the civilisation. At the beginning of the Neolithic, the female figures are related to a hunting divinity. Gradually, possibly in conjunction with the intensification of agriculture, a female fertility goddess becomes predominant; this goddess is also a protector of dwellings and, later, in the cemeteries, the protector of the dead. It seems that male

figures used for religious purposes appear only in the last phase of the Neolithic, with the increase in man's economic activity. The manifold changes which marked the end of the Neolithic brought with them the partial, if not total disappearance of these cult figurines.

SOME DISCOVERIES RELATING TO THE RELIGION OF THE ENEOLITHIC PERIOD IN RUMANIA

Dumitrescu, Vladimir, Bucharest, Rumania

During the last few years a number of discoveries have been made in Rumania which relate directly to cult practices during the Late Neolithic and Eneolithic periods. Apart from numerous figurines made of terracotta and bone, and occasionally also of marble, the remains of some constructions have also been found. These include some terracotta altars discovered several years ago in Moldavia at Trusesti, in houses of the Cucuteni A culture; a genuine sanctuary unearthed in the layer of the last phase of the Boian culture; and a terracotta model of a sanctuary in the layer of phase A2 of the Gumelnita culture. The latter were both found at the Cascioarele settlement, south of Bucharest, near the Danube. All these discoveries prove the existence of fairly well defined cult practices and show that religious organisation was at a relatively advanced stage during the Eneolithic period in Rumania.

PROBLEMS OF NEOLITHIC AND ENEOLITHIC RELIGIONS IN CENTRAL EUROPE

Neustupny, Jiri, Prague, Czechoslovakia

From the Early Neolithic period man began to be able to control the natural processes more effectively in accordance with his own needs. This new attitude towards nature, prepared for by the preceding Late Palaeolithic and Mesolithic peoples, had great importance both for the development of the economy and for the evolution

of social life, including religion. The first Neolithic farmers of Central Europe, in the 6th and 5th millennia B.C. (Linear Pottery culture) did not worship individual deities, apparently because the individual had no great significance in the primitive society of the time. We may assume that the primitive agriculturalists worshipped the natural phenomena on which they were dependent in their daily life; but as yet there are no archaeological finds to prove the worship of such phenomena (the sun etc.) unless this is concealed in the various symbolic signs of the period (double axe, swastika, etc.). Zoomorphic and anthropomorphic vases dating from the Early and Late Neolithic periods have been found; these were used for the pouring of liquids, probably during religious rites. The anthropomorphic idols (almost exclusively female figures) are not easy to explain satisfactorily; they may have been used as accessories for the magic rites. In the Late Neolithic period (Lengyel culture) they occur more frequently and fragments are found in the settlements together with other remains of daily life; they seem therefore to be part of the household belongings. From this one could deduce that the ceremonies took place among small groups within the society. All the features of the ritual ware, with their emphasis on the representation of sex, seem to indicate a magic fertility cult which was of basic importance to the farmer - this was, understandably, an agricultural cult. In accordance with the individual's lack of importance in primitive society, the funeral cult was relatively undeveloped among the farmers of the Early and Late Neolithic periods (Linear Pottery and Lengyel cultures). The number of burials is very small and cemeteries are extremely rare, although inhumations, and later also cremations are known. In addition to the formal graves, there is evidence of burials in settlement pits and of cannibalism. So far we have been unable to explain which members of society were interred in this way. The above-mentioned religious pictures changed considerably in the Eneolithic period (4th and 3rd millennia B.C.). These changes are related to transformations within primitive society. As early as the Late Neolithic period patriarchal units began to form; man took positive control over the economic, social and religious life of society. He was a

warrior: the first specialised weapons appeared, and miniature clay battleaxes reflect this situation in the cult. He was a hunter: in this period the hunting of wild animals increased. He was a cattle-breeder: the graves of domestic animals testify to their increased rôle in the economy. He was a ploughman, and sometimes the ox team was buried with him. He became a miner, since there was an increased need for stone, and later for copper. All these factors in the economy gave great power to man, the head of the family, and so sometimes his wife or other members of the family followed him into the grave. The female idols continue to appear, but in smaller numbers, and they are highly schematised. Later horned idols, which combine human and animal features, are found; and in the same period there were special vases with handles shaped like animal horns, which were probably used for rituals. It is probable that the increasing importance of the individual in society also influenced the religious rites, in which the idols now began to represent the deities. There are also indications that the rites were no longer performed everywhere by everybody, but were transferred to specialised people, probably to the family heads. At the beginning of the Eneolithic period (TRB and Channeled Ware cultures) probably only the heads of families were buried; but later (Corded Ware and Bell Beakers) the ritual burials were extended to many if not all members of the family. Not until the Late Eneolithic Period do archaeologists find common ritual graves and cemeteries. Among other religious practices of the Late Eneolithic period are the cult of the sun (shell discs with crosses), various amulets, trepanning and possibly a primitive form of circular sanctuary. This is a very brief outline of the religious phenomena of the Neolithic and Eneolithic periods as they are known from archaeological finds and interpretations with the aid of models. The most important task is to attempt to interpret the religious phenomena in close connection with the economic and social status of the society. Religion is only one aspect of the superstructure of primitive society; and the prehistoric society of the Neolithic and Eneolithic periods was a primitive one.

RELIGION AND IDEOLOGY OF THE LEPENSKI VIR CULTURE

Srejsovic, Dragoslav, Belgrade, Jugoslavia

The religion, (i. e. the ideology) of the Lepenski Vir culture, formed in the time which immediately precedes the Neolithic, supercedes in its complexity the forms of religious concepts of both earlier (Palaeolithic), and later (Neolithic) cultures of prehistoric Europe.

This is not an accident. It seems to demonstrate that a highly developed religion with its complex practices, represents an essential condition for a cultural and economic revolution. In this particular case, the domestication of animals and the cultivation of plants, which are the basic characteristics of the « neolithic revolution » result to a great extent from a continuous observation of natural phenomena and processes, something which profoundly concerned the religion of the Lepenski Vir culture.

BURIAL AND FUNERAL RITES IN THE CULTURE OF LEPENSKI VIR

Letica, Zagorka, Belgrade, Jugoslavia

Among the recently discovered settlements of the Lepenski Vir culture, those on the eponymous site and at the Vlasac, Padina and Schela Cladovei sites have been systematically explored. The excavations have revealed almost two hundred tombs, all inside the settlements. By their number and stratigraphic position, these enable us to form an idea of the methods of burial and funeral rites practised between 6,000 and 4,500 B. C. Three types of burial can be distinguished:

1. Inhumation
2. Secondary or partial burial
3. Incineration

The two former types are found throughout the whole culture of Lepenski Vir, whereas incineration is rare, and found only in the earliest phase. The custom of scattering ochre on corpses (though rare) bears witness to the fune-

ral rites. Grave goods are rare, and in general rather poor: pieces of graphite, fish teeth, and, occasionally, decorative objects made of stone or bone; but deer antlers are often found placed around the head of the corpse. Most of the dead seem to have been buried outside the settlements, while the interior was reserved for persons of particular importance. In the latter case, there are three possible positions:

1. Near the hearth (most frequent position).
2. Between the stone sculptures and the hearth (secondary adult burial).
3. Under the flooring in the back part of the house (children).

It is thus clear that the funeral rites can only be understood when seen within the totality of the cultural manifestations of Lepenski Vir, which gives a new and unexpected dimension to the study of prehistoric European religions.

AN ALTAR DISCOVERED IN THE NEOLITHIC SETTLEMENT AT GHIRBOM (RUMANIA)

Aldea, Ioan A., Alba Iulia, Rumania

The excavations carried out at Ghirbom (municipality of Berghiu, department of Alba, Transylvania) have revealed a vast Late Neolithic settlement of the Petresti culture. In 1971 a large house was unearthed which was rectangular in plan, and whose East side contained a hearth with the remains of a layer of calcinated earth, the clay head of a deer, many ceramic vases and a concave tablet with engraved signs. This was an altar on which the above-mentioned objects were placed. In a similar discovery, made in 1963 at Pianul de Jos, the triangular shape of the altar could be made out and several vases were completely reassembled. In the area of the Petresti culture, three other cult ensembles are known: pits filled with vases and other objects, which belong to the settlement at Poiana în Pisc and are analogous to the finds at Traian in Moldavia, in the area of the Cucuteni-Tripolye culture. These pits have been interpreted as being related to agrarian rites.

VARIOUS TYPES OF NEOLITHIC OFFERINGS

Makkay, János, Székesfehérvár, Hungary

According to Carsten Colpe, establishment of the religious character of an archaeological object depends on the conjunction of two criteria:

- a) repetition
- b) unusualness (separation from everyday life).

The author considers three types of sacrifice in the Neolithic epoch:

1. Sacrificial pits: found throughout South Eastern Europe, and in unbroken continuity from the Neolithic to the Iron Age.
2. In the Koros culture, a vase was discovered, shaped like a female torso and filled with fragments of burned human skulls. It dated from an epoch when burial by incineration was unknown. In the author's view, these are the remains of a human sacrifice by burning.
3. A stone and clay altar found in a pit at Aggtelek (North East Hungary).

While the criteria of repetition and strangeness can both be applied in the first case, in the latter two cases the unusualness of the objects is sufficient to demonstrate their religious purpose.

EARTH FERTILITY CULTS AS SEEN IN SOME ITALIAN NEOLITHIC SITES

Radmilli, Antonio, Pisa, Italy

Sixteen stone and clay circles have been discovered in the Piccioni cave at Bolognano (Abruzzo): one contained the skeleton of a new-born child; two others held infant skulls, Ripoli pottery, and five *Palumba liria* humeri, each with a pellet of clay mixed with ochre at the distal end; and the rest contained the bones of wild and domestic animals and pottery fragments. This monument may be interpreted as evidence of an earth fertility cult, within the framework of a cycle of death and resurrection, and including human sacrifice. Further evidence of the pro-

pitiatory rites of an earth fertility cult is provided by other finds made in Italy and other parts of Europe. In the deposit of the cave of Sant' Angelo at Civitella del Tronto, for example, on the impressed ware levels, pits were discovered, containing human and animal bones, fragments of pottery, stones and a large number of wild apples. In the Porto Badisco cave, paintings appear on the rock faces near certain pits; we know that this cave can be considered as a genuine sanctuary. When the rites had been carried out, the pits were filled in, and it is a common characteristic of all Neolithic pits that the filling was of stones; this is found not only in the Abruzzo caves, but also in Puglia. In the Venus cave at Parabita, natural pot-holes were used and their openings surrounded by stone circles. In the Neolithic agricultural world all life, as Maringer rightly says, moved between the two poles of seedtime and harvest. The purpose of the magic rites and ceremonies was to influence those natural elements which favoured the growth of plants; and these rites were performed in the caves, the places best suited for contacting the gods of the earth.

THE NEOLITHIC WATER CULT IN THE SCALORIA CAVE (PUGLIA, ITALY)

Tinë, Santo, Genoa, Italy

Recently a new part of the Scaloria cave (near Manfredonia, Puglia) was discovered. Despite the fact that the discoverers had partly violated the environment, we can assert that in the Middle Neolithic, towards the middle of the 4th millenium B.C., this part of the cave was exclusively consecrated to a cult of the waters which dripped from the stalactites. Around the stalagmites, groups of figuline clay vases were found; most were painted, some with red motifs, the others with red motifs bordered in black; this latter design is called « Scaloria Bassa » technique by the author. The large stalagmites had been deliberately broken off at some time in the past, and their upper parts are today reintegrated into new concretions on the ground in the immediate vicinity. Some

stalagmite stumps held a vase, probably designed to catch the drips from the corresponding stalactite. On a flat surface, the only free space in this almost impassable gallery, a small rectangular basin (90 x 50 cm.) had been dug; this was designed to catch the waters dripping from the dense stalactites on the roof of the cave, and fires had been lit around it. Radio-carbon tests date these as 3650 ± 70 B.C.

A PREHISTORIC SANCTUARY IN CRETE

Papoutsakis, Christos G., Athens, Greece

Several series of superimposed rock engravings decorate the floor of the rock shelter of Asfendos in the Sphakion region of Crete. The author ascribes them to the Epipalaeolithic and offers an interpretation of these figurative and abstract signs, relating them to other local monuments. The Asfendos shelter also opens up new perspectives on the origin and evolution of religious thought during the Minoan period, and enables comparison with other religious centres in primitive communities. This discovery, examined in the light of recent anthropological and archaeological research, represents an additional document on the Epipalaeolithic in the Eastern Mediterranean.

ANALYTICAL APPROACHES TO THE DESIGN OF CEREMONIAL MONUMENTS IN NORTH-WEST EUROPE

Fleming, Andrew, Sheffield, Great Britain

In the past there have been two approaches to the study of megalithic religion in north-west Europe - firstly, to make comparisons between the ground plans of tombs; secondly to make intuitive guesses about religion from the engravings on tomb walls, statue-menhirs, etc. The author attempts the following:

1. To trace briefly the history of the idea that the « spreading » of megalithic tombs can be compared to the

spreading of the Christian religion or that of e. g. Gothic architecture.

2. To argue that this is not a relevant or useful approach.

3. To generalise about the ways in which megalithic architects used space and mass; to point out that tombs were functionally designed to reflect synchronically, diachronically or symbolically the requirements of ritual. The prehistorian's first duty is not to speculate but to establish patterns in the material.

4. To extend these arguments to deal with later ceremonial monuments e. g. henge monuments and stone circles.

Section III:**European
Bronze and
Iron Ages****THE PREHISPANIC RELIGIONS OF THE CANARY
ISLANDS AS SEEN IN ROCK ART**

Beltran, Antonio, Saragossa, Spain

The rock art of the islands of Lanzarote, Gran Canaria, La Palma and El Hierro raises problems of chronology and access routes which can be solved, at least in part. Given the almost total absence of contact between these islands during the prehistoric period, rock art developed independently and has its own characteristics in each case. Thus even the contacts with Africa (as shown by ceramics, for example) were closer in La Palma than in Tenerife or Lanzarote. Contacts with the Atlantic world (Ireland, Scotland and Galicia) and megalithic art, with North West Africa and the Mediterranean cannot be earlier than the Neolithic, and are closer to the Bronze Age. Interpretation of the engravings must take account of their position, which is very significant in La Palma. They are found:

- a) In shelters near a source of water (« caboco »), on vertical slabs or rock faces. They involve spirals or concentric circles associated with meanders.
- b) By the sea, near the cliffs, where circular or semicircular signs are predominant.

The great difficulty which the Canary Islanders always had in finding water would be sufficient justification for the existence of water conservation or rain rites. The meanders may be the graphic expression of these rites, while the circular signs may be solar discs. Both signs may be related to megalithic religion in that the source of water may also have been understood as the source of life, and the tomb as the passage to a new life. The spirals and labyrinths with their unfinished lines would

reflect the unbroken passage from life to death. The large number of engravings in each site suggests that these places were cult centres related to water, sun, life and death.

CHANGES IN SCANDINAVIAN BRONZE AGE RELIGION AS REFLECTED BY ROCK ART

Almgren, Bertil, Uppsala, Sweden

The South Scandinavian rock art of the Bronze Age (c. 1500-500 B. C.) which, for a long time, has been related to the religion of a farmers' society, consists of representations (if put into order of relative frequency) of cup marks, ships, men, often carrying weapons, sometimes symbols, footprints, animals and different symbolic figures. As most of the overwhelmingly frequent ships (and other vehicles) are totally lacking any kind of religious symbols attached to them, — let alone the so-called « sun wheels » — the idea of a religion of sun worship must be abandoned. The concept of an aniconic deity which, in Tacitus's view exists in Germanic religion, seems useful in interpreting the main part of even very specialized representations on the rock carvings (such as the footprints, which are otherwise very difficult to explain). By a new method of detailed stylistic dating, changes in religious concepts during the Bronze Age can be observed. About 1000 B. C. very large anthropomorphic figures — often armed — are found superimposed on earlier rock carvings; they may be interpreted as representations of gods, thus showing a change from the previous aniconic concept of divinity. Some of these « gods » are seen in an act of epiphany, which has Late Minoan analogies. However, these « gods » are rather infrequent, and seem to disappear gradually, after having given rise to the idea of « illustrations of cult actions » (without the presence of a cult image), sometimes performed by men carrying animal masks, or the attributes of gods (cf. Oscar Almgren). Towards the end of the Bronze Age, there is a return to the earlier, aniconic representations.

MASSACRE AND CULT SACRIFICE: TWO INTERPRETATIONS

Mariën, Marc E., Brussels, Belgium

Two sites in the province of Namur in Belgium, the Trou de l'Ambre at Eprave and the Trou de Han at Han-sur-Lesse, have revealed bones bearing traces of lesions. Because of the context of their discovery, these two finds give rise to contrasting interpretations. In the first case, at the Trou de l'Ambre, it was a massacre of 75 persons (45 adults and 30 children), carried out in a cave whose use as a shelter is clearly indicated by the presence of a hearth and objects of daily use (iron and bone implements, clay and wooden vessels, and spindle whorls). Lesions on the cervical and lumbar vertebrae, facial and leg bones of the victims bear witness to the savage massacre of the refugees. Their mutilated bodies had been cast to the bottom of a steeply sloping passage. No element of a religious nature can be extracted from this instance. In the second case, at the Trou de Han, seven jaw-bones, three of which bore clear traces of decapitation, were found together in level IV of the shore in front of the Gallery of the Small Wells, under a potsherd layer of the Neuheim phase (La Tène III b). These must be interpreted as the « remains » of severed heads, which had probably been impaled on poles placed on the shore inside the cave. From this one must conclude that at the end of the Iron Age, the Trou de Han was considered as a shrine; and this hypothesis is supported by the presence of isolated fibulae, dating from Early La Tène. A cult site must have supplanted a dwelling site, which is documented by the presence of a great number of objects of everyday use dating from the Late Bronze Age.

ANTHROPOMORPHIC STELAE IN BULGARIA

Tontcheva, Goranka, Sofia, Bulgaria

The author details the results of her research on Bulgarian anthropomorphic stelae, which she dates from the late Bronze Age and the Hallstatt era. She analyses the

content, purpose, and religious meaning of these monuments, and attempts to establish parallels with the stelae and statues of Rumania, the Soviet Union, France and other countries.

PERSPECTIVES ON THE RELIGION OF PREHISTORIC CRETE

Chao, Nancy Bong, Los Angeles, U.S.A.

Evans, Perssons and Nilsson considered Cretan religion as a precursor of historical Greek religion. Subsequently, Mycenaean and Cretan religion were studied as a single entity, even though many archaeologists have stressed the contrasts which differentiate the two cultures. The author attempts a broad outline of the history of Minoan society and religion, based on archaeological evidence, in order to determine its specific character and to show how the Mycenaean contribution caused a radical transformation in Cretan social and religious life. A more precise point of departure is thereby established for future working hypotheses on the nature and function of religion within the framework of Minoan society.

THE INTERPRETATION OF AEGEAN AND CYPRIOT BRONZE AGE FIGURINES

Tamvaki, Angela, Athens, Greece

Religious functions have usually been attributed to Early Bronze Age Cycladic, Mycenaean and Cypriot figurines. The Aegean group has been related to mother goddesses, votive offerings, simulacra of the dead, psychopomp gods and parallels to the Egyptian Ushabtis. The fact that Cypriot figurines were discovered in graves also leads to the assumption that they have a religious significance, and probably represent gods. The author discusses the validity of applying the concept of the mother goddess

to the prehistoric Aegean, on the basis of analogies with Middle Eastern religions. The interpretations offered are based as far as possible on detailed examination of the archaeological context, and lead to the following conclusions:

1. Figurines found in different contexts do not necessarily have the same function.
2. Some figurines found in similar contexts do not necessarily have the same function.

Without denying that certain figurines have a magico-religious purpose, anthropological and other sources suggest that they have several possible functions, and make them available as a new source of information about economic and social life.

THE SNAKE GODDESS: ONE ASPECT OF THE MINOAN GODDESS

Sakellarakis, John A., Athens, Greece

Since the discovery of cult images of the snake goddess in the deposits of the Central Shrine of the Palace of Knossos, this goddess has been considered the principal deity of the Minoan pantheon. The longevity of the cult is proved by the discovery of other images of the goddess at Gournia, Prinias and Gortys, and by the statue in the Boston Museum. Excavations recently carried out at Mycenae also establish her presence on the mainland. Scholars have considered the snake goddess to be a patroness of the household and linked the so-called « bell » statuettes to the same cult, since they have many objects in common, including the « clay tubes ». Since the snake goddess does not appear on the seals, it was thought that she had a very specialised function in the Minoan cult. However, new evidence suggests that the snake goddess has links with the tree cult and with the goddess of death. Thus it seems that the snake goddess is only one aspect of a single Minoan goddess.

NEW EVIDENCE FOR THE MYCENAEAN RELIGION

Mylonas, George E., Athens, Greece

Our knowledge of the Mycenaean religion is based upon a few works of art bearing representations of presumably cult scenes, upon the text of tablets in Linear B script and upon parallels with Minoan remains. All these provide but a very inadequate source for definite and complete knowledge. Consequently any new evidence brought to light by excavations is of importance. Such has been uncovered in the last few years at Mycenae by its excavators. The results of these excavations will be presented and illustrated. The author has now fully revealed the remains of a monumental altar situated among shrines, reached by an impressive processional way and flanked by buildings presumably used by the priesthood. The area in which these are found, the west slope of the Acropolis of Mycenae, is clearly its Cult Centre, proving the existence of such centres in Mycenaean times as indicated by the Pylos tablets. Besides the foundations of structures fragments of frescoes, apparently of a religious nature, were also found. The aggregate of the discoveries enriches considerably our knowledge of the religious practices of the Mycenaeans.

NEKYA, IN THE RELIGIOUS RITES OF ANCIENT AND MODERN GREECE

Papadimas, Stylianos, Athens, Greece

Nekya, as a religious representation, is a basic element of the beliefs of the ancient Greeks. There is clear evidence of such elements both in Homer and Plato, and they are also to be found in modern Greece. What traits of religious psychology have enabled the preservation of these elements intact down to the present day? Firstly the optimistic belief that death is simply the journey to another life and represents only a temporary separation. The living are thus able to preserve their contact with the dead. Christianity has been unable either to eradicate

or to change these elements in the soul of the modern Greeks. The objects placed in tombs have also remained identical since Antiquity: even today a coin to pay the dead man's passage to the world of the dead is placed in the tomb. The popular beliefs of the modern Greeks have preserved some earlier forms of belief.

THE MEANING OF PADDLES IN THE ROCK ART OF VALCAMONICA

Ferri, Silvio, Pisa, Italy

The paddle is a rectangle of metal or wood, solid or hollow, with a kind of handle with a terminal button or a single or double eyelet. From the archaeological point of view, similar objects, made of bronze, iron or wood, are found in graves in Italy and Europe: there are hundreds, if not thousands of them, but they have never been catalogued. Anati has counted almost a thousand of them on the rocks of Valcamonica. There the paddle appears mainly in the following contexts:

- a) a paddle whose meaning is related to the hunt (three paddles « encircle » a stag; elsewhere, they « cover » the animal; usually every animal to be captured is accompanied by a paddle);
- b) a pentagonal paddle accompanied by a lance protruding from the body of the paddle;
- c) a paddle associated with a labyrinth;
- d) a chain of two or three paddles;
- e) a paddle associated with a « praying figure »
- f) a paddle held in the hand by the corner, the handle pointing upwards
- g) a paddle held by the handle;
- h) paddles associated with a loom;
- i) a paddle used as a shield;
- j) a paddle and a « solar disc »;
- k) a paddle at the scene of a combat between two figures: there are two or three paddles beside the victor, and a « praying bust » beside the wounded figure.

Several interpretations of this motif have been advanced, most of which take no account of historical or functional

contingencies (razors, double axes, paddles for beating laundry, oars; Monseigneur Bonomelli suggests that they may be « mirrors »). From a consideration of all the documentation, it is clear that the object is autonomous, self-sufficient, or in technical terms, has « mana ». On the level of methodology it follows that when a paddle has two eyelets, these may be considered as the « eyes » of the magical entity to which they belong. Still on the methodological level, it is impossible not to compare the paddle to the « idols » of a similar form in Spain, Cyprus, etc., which have eyes, necklaces, jewels and embroidered clothing. A paddle is found beside a person holding his shield above his head, which means that he is « dead ». The paddle is an object which accompanies the dead, and is therefore, in historical terms, an object which « causes death ». There is only one object in primitive tradition which corresponds to these conditions: the mirror. The written documentation is rich and all leads to the same conclusion, in both the classical and barbarian worlds: this is a religious fact which is closely related to the Indo-European world: the mirror signifies death and causes death.

ASPECTS OF PALAEOVENETIC RELIGION

Prosdocimi, Aldo, Este, Italy

The relationship between the history of religion and its auxiliary sciences becomes a dialectic between science and data processing techniques. In our case, the sciences used as techniques are linguistics, archaeology, philology, and sometimes the study of popular traditions. The glossologist will give preference to linguistic data, and in view of the above methodological perspective, this is not wrong, but represents a necessary stage towards a final synthesis which will be supra-disciplinary rather than interdisciplinary. Starting from a study of the form of the theonyms and not of their content, we reach the conclusion that the Palaeoveneti had an embryonic system of the « italic »

type, in which the divine attributes tend to be used autonomously. We study this phenomenon in various centres of Palaeovenetic culture (Este, Lagole di Calalzo, Cadore, Idria della Baccia, Vicenza, etc.). Having established this general framework and looked at some problematic cases, the author studies the sacred terminology, particularly that used in the dedications and funeral inscriptions. From this one can deduce some details of the cults themselves, in their relation to the social structure and cultural organisation of the society. Finally, certain Greek and Latin texts give a historical substance, or ideological key, to the local cults.

CELTIC HILL FIGURES OF SOUTHERN BRITAIN

Burland, C. A., West Molesey, Great Britain

A group of existing figures of « Giants » cut in the chalk downs of Britain have traditional links with the names of gods of Celtic origin. They appear to have represented a solar circuit around a central figure. Some however are missing, the western one of Pwyll, and the southern ones of Gog Magog and Corineus. The sites of these figures have been considered holy for a long time. In the post-Celtic period, the most important have been associated with monastic buildings and churches. In pre-Celtic times, the sites have mostly been associated with Bronze Age barrows. An outlying group of figures in East Anglia also cut in the chalk do not belong to the main group — if group it is — but are associated with a Late Iron Age fortress. This association is quite similar to that of the « White Horse » of Uffington which is the northern member of the main group. The main group has members who have been associated with folklore customs in their neighbourhood. The lack of sound archaeological evidence has led to their date being quite uncertain; they may be just pre-Roman (Belgic) or just post-Roman survivals of a more ancient cult. The art style is however strongly Celtic and the local place names all refer to Celtic deities.

THE PAGAN GOD OF THE SMITHY AMONG THE ANCIENT ABKHAZIANS

Adjindjal, Ermolaj Kesugovic, Sukhumi, USSR

The Abkhazians are the earliest inhabitants of south-west Caucasia and north-eastern Asia Minor. In an inscription of Tiglath-Pileser I they are mentioned under the name of Abeshla and they have had their own writing since the 12th or 11th century B.C. (Turtsianov). Before they adopted Christianity in the 6th century, the Abkhazians were pagan. Their early religious beliefs formed a complex system of totemist, animist and magic beliefs. The patron gods of hunting, husbandry, agriculture, sacred woods etc. played an important rôle in these beliefs. One of the main figures in this pantheon was Shashvi, god of the smithy and the forge. The smelting process, which the author describes in detail, was a great event and was preceded by animal sacrifices, feasts and ritual dances. These were performed on tip-toe on the still-warm ground around the forge where the smelting was carried out. On the « day of the forge » - Adjirami - prayers and supplications accompanied by offerings were addressed to Shashvi. There were also consecration rites for children who were to learn the trade of smelter or smith.

PREISLAMIC FORMS OF RELIGION AMONG THE ANCIENT BASHKIRS

Girfanov, Kamil Valeevich, Ufa, USSR

Before their acceptance of Islam, the Bashkirs had various older forms of religion, of which fetish worship was the most important. Ibn Fadlan mentions the existence of a phallic cult. The early Bashkirs made various requests of their personal idol, as is shown by recent archaeological finds and by existing traces of amulet worship. Totemic representations had an important place in early Bashkir

religion (R.G. Kuzeev). However, we do not have sufficient evidence to claim the existence of belief in supernatural consanguinity with certain animals (snake, fish, crane and wolf). This religion was related both to concepts of a hereafter and to belief in the omnipotent deities of nature, principally, according to Ibn Fadlan, the god Neba. There was also an ancestor cult (M.Z. Gadel'gareev). Bashkir religious organisation was thus quite well developed.

Section IV:**Africa****RESEARCH ON THE RELIGION OF PREHISTORIC
EGYPT: A HISTORICAL REVIEW**

Ries, Julien, Louvain, Belgium

The first reconstructions of prehistoric Egyptian religious thought (Pietschmann, 1878; Maspero, 1888) are based on Tylor's animist concepts, complemented by fetish interpretation. Later Loret (1906) and particularly Ame-lineau (1908) interpreted the origin and evolution of Egyptian religion with reference to Frazer's theory of totemism. Using the same approach to interpret the legends and traditions recounted by the texts of the Pyramids, Virey (1910) derived the Egyptian gods from mythical ancestors: the gods were seen as the personification of clans and legendary ancestors. Moret (1923, 1926, 1936) followed Durkheim's approach and arrived at a definitive statement of the totemist thesis. The standards of the nomes are seen as the earliest religious element; and the ka itself is a former totem. The mana, source of all life and power, is concentrated and personified in the clan symbols, the totems. With the advent of historical interpretation, Egyptologists began to react against systematisations which claim to explain primitive religions with the aid of the fashionable theories. Sethe (1930) attempted a historical outline of archaic religion and of prehistory. He saw Egyptian religion as a reflection of Egypt's primitive history. Later, attempts were made to derive prehistoric Egyptian religion from the fertility cult based on a celestial god who gave the fruitful rain (Wainwright, 1938) or on a mother-goddess related to the heavens, death and the tomb (Baumgartel, 1947, 1955, 1960). Pirenne (1961, 1965) also sees the cult of the mother-goddess as the origin of prehistoric Egyptian religion: first chthonic and then uranian, this mother-goddess bears a direct relationship to creation. With the

advent of the patriarchal family she is supplanted by a creator god. The nomes later give birth to local gods; then the cosmogony demonstrates the order of the world; and finally the centralisation of the monarchy establishes the king as a second Horus. Frankfort's (1948) attempt at a phenomenological interpretation opens new avenues of research in prehistoric religion. Religion is to be seen as a social fact; it interprets the cosmos as a universe peopled with powers which have the task of maintaining order. The king is also a god, the corner-stone of the country's religious organisation.

A STONE IDOL FROM PREHISTORIC EGYPT

Griffiths, Kate Bosse, Swansea, Great Britain

Cone-shaped objects made from hippopotamus tusks have been discovered in the prehistoric tombs of el-Mahasnā, near Abydos, at Naqada and at other sites. Since these cones are usually found in pairs, one solid and the other hollow, it is thought that they may be related to fertility rites. Some ivory cones surmounted by a bearded male head are also known. In 1971 the Wellcome Collection of Egyptian Antiquities was donated to the University College of Swansea. This included a hollow cone made of ivory-coloured stone and surmounted by a male head, which is the only known object of its kind. The author traces possible connections between this stone figure and similar ivory objects found in excavations.

ANTICIPATIONS OF THE TRIAD IN PREHISTORIC EGYPT

Griffiths, John Gwyn, Swansea, Great Britain

The triadic grouping of gods was an early and persistent tradition in the religion of ancient Egypt, of which one finds the first instance in prehistoric times. A well-known vase of the Metropolitan Museum depicts three boats. One of these shows three figures, one male and two

female. Baumgartel's claim that it is the first divine triad so far known in Egypt, is certainly justified, but the exact interpretation of the group raises difficulties. Baumgartel explains the female figures as the fertility goddess and her daughter, and the male one as her lover and her son. Basing himself on the earliest historic evidence, the author suggests a new explanation of the rôle of the figures depicted.

RELIGIOUS SYMBOLS IN NORTH AFRICAN ROCK ART

Camps, Gabriel, Aix-en-Provence, France

The abundance of examples of rock art in North Africa and the Sahara enables us to make a special study of those of the many figures and scenes which are not open to realistic interpretation. These can be divided into:

1. imaginary mythical beings (particularly in the rock paintings of the so-called « Round Head » period).
2. animals bearing attributes which have no material use (recurrence of sheep with a disc-like device).
3. symbolic motifs formed by the juxtaposition of repeated, stylised parts of animals (the « sign » of Ait Ouazik, monoglyphic ostrich « spirals »).

It would seem that Neolithic man in North Africa not only depicted everyday scenes, in which the naturalistic treatment of both men and animals is indisputable; but also his gods and divine symbols. The men with animal heads are not masked hunters but divine or semi-divine beings, probably indicating an early form of anthropomorphism.

LHOTE'S « ROUND-HEAD » PHASE IN THE TASSILI-N-AJJER AS A PROBLEM FOR THE HISTORIAN OF RELIGIONS

Denny, Frederick M., New Haven, U.S.A.

There is little doubt that the rock-art of Henri Lhote's « Round-Head » phase in the Tassili-n-Ajjer is of great

religious significance. Conspicuously absent are hunting, herding and domestic scenes, which abound in other sections of the region. Everything seems to concentrate on the depiction of a special world. Superimpositions tend to follow similar thematic lines, but with a great range of phases and styles, suggesting a long-lived cult, through which men gave expression (through their paintings which alone remain) to an overwhelming sense of the presence of the sacred. This paper will evaluate various conjectures regarding the meaning of these frescoes and suggest a possible avenue of approach to such a difficult symbol depository.

THE RELIGIOUS PROTO-HISTORY OF A MOROCCAN MOUNTAIN: RHAT (HIGH ATLAS)

Simoneau, André, Marrakesh, Morocco

Djebel Rhat (3,788 metres) stands like a panoramic platform in the heart of the central High Atlas. Celebrated in Moroccan legend as a sacred mountain, it is the goal of a summer pilgrimage for two thousand people who come from the foot-hills, from an area which seems to coincide with the mountain herdsman's winter pasturage. Each participant enters a cave on the summit and brings back a handful of earth, following the path indicated by numerous ritual stone cairns, exceptional for their size and number. The calcareous synclinal which forms the bastion of the Rhat mountain stands on an encircling sand-stone base; the rock carvings which decorate it demonstrate the antiquity of this mountain cult: halberds and riveted daggers, chariots and various animals. The images reveal the role of metallurgy at the dawn of transhumance, which is re-enacted as a pilgrimage. At the foot of the sacred mountain, the Mohammedan pilgrim walks in the footsteps of the Bronze Age pilgrim. Through its circular idols, the Rhat mountain gives us an insight into a whole mythical anthropology. Through its rites, its hand and crescent figurations, it helps us to understand the cosmic vision of the pastoral and metal-working peoples who first consecrated this peak.

THE THERIANTHROPIC FIGURES OF FEZZAN AND THEIR MEANING

Graziosi, Paolo, Florence, Italy

Leo Frobenius's expedition of 1932 to the Bergiug region, south west of Murzuch, in the Fezzan, described human figures with animal heads engraved on the rocks of Wadi Mathenduschi (which Frobenius called In Abater). During several of his recent expeditions to this region, the author found numerous human figures with animal heads. Some of these duplicate the types noted by Frobenius, while others present new characteristics. By style and subject, these findings can be related to a specific chronological and cultural phase within the framework of North African rock art. The main task, however, is to attempt an interpretation of these figures, probably related to a mythical or magico-religious world, which must have had widespread significance among the Saharan peoples during an early period of North African rock art. This importance is suggested by the frequent repetition of the figures and their methods of design and composition. Human figures with the heads of jackals, bulls, donkeys, hares and cats present a totally new element in the area. Frobenius made comparisons between the jackal-headed figures and those of dynastic Egypt. However, it seems that in many respects the therianthropic figures of Fezzan present specific characters which, by their dynamism, have no parallel in the Egyptian pantheon, nor among the *ostraca* figures, which represent animals performing human actions, not men with animal characteristics. The presentation of these documents is designed to open discussion on the complex and hitherto unexplained problem of the therianthropic figures of Fezzan and other regions of the Sahara.

A CONTRIBUTION TO THE STUDY OF MAGICO-RELIGIOUS THOUGHT BASED ON SOME SAHARAN ROCK REPRESENTATIONS

Mori, Fabrizio, Rome, Italy

After a brief examination of the methods and principles used by the adherents of various disciplines in the study

of the origins of magico-religious thought, the author shows the need for effective collaboration between scholars of different schools in order to deal with the question as rigorously as possible. Apart from its scientific aspect, this problem has important social implications and a strong influence on the culture of contemporary man. The author then sets out some of the results obtained during his expeditions to the Sahara. Some of the thousands of graffiti and paintings show a genuinely magico-religious spirit. They belong to various phases of prehistoric Saharan rock art and, even if their meaning cannot be explained fully, they provide sufficient indicators to reveal the depth of the spiritual life of the hunting and pastoral peoples who inhabited this vast, now desert region from the last phases of the Pleistocene until the first millennium B.C.

A CONTRIBUTION TO THE STUDY OF
PROTO-HISTORIC RELATIONS BETWEEN THE
MANDINGO AREA AND PRESENT-DAY GHANA

Dieterlen, Germaine, Paris, France

The existence of communication routes between Niger and the Mandingo area in the proto-historic period is documented by early authors and modern geographers. From the point of view of oral tradition, study of certain religious phenomena among the peoples of the Niger basin also contributes precise information on this subject. Attention was first drawn to this possibility by two facts:

1. Contemporary pilgrimages made by the Dogon to the Ivory Coast or the Gold Coast to bring back the loin-cloths and cowrie shells needed for their wedding.
2. The totemic priests' re-enactment, on the occasion of possession ceremonies, of the journey they made to Accra before their admission to the priesthood.

Further research has shown that these journeys are closely linked to mythical representations of the appearance of man on earth and the life of humanity, related to the Dya lagoon in Macina and the lagoon of the Gâ priests at Accra. Another series of myths mentions the journey

of mythical Dogon ancestors from the Mandingo area to Ghana. Dogon mythology accords an important place to events which occurred in the Mandingo area, and both the Dogon and other ethnic groups have symbolic representations of places in Ghana. It is known that because they did not wish to convert to Islam, the Dogon had to leave the Mandingo area in about the thirteenth century. This leads one to wonder whether the commercial routes between the Mandingo area and Ghana may not already have existed before the departure of the Dogon.

THE RITUAL SIGNIFICANCE OF ELAND IN THE ROCK ART OF SOUTHERN AFRICA

Vinnicombe, Patricia, Cambridge, Great Britain

Recent quantitative analyses of the rock art in specific areas of southern Africa have established subject matter preferences which emphasise eland (*Taurotragus oryx oryx*) out of all proportion to the former faunal population of the area, or the daily diet of the hunters. A critical study of Bushman myth and ritual establishes that this selectivity can be related to religious factors. Eland creation myths in conjunction with prescribed hunting rules clearly signify a ritual relationship between man, eland and creator deity which is symbolised by a complex sacrificial order. It is suggested that in this rite, the pictorial depiction of eland symbolised not only the regeneration of life, but also the solidarity of Bushman social structure and the maintenance of right relations with the supernatural.

THE ANTELOPE CULT OF THE PREHISTORIC HUNTERS OF SOUTH AFRICA

Pager, Harald, Newville, South Africa

Animal-headed human figures are a recurring feature in South African parietal art. A study of two samples of rock paintings, as well as historical and ethnological sources reveals that only a small proportion of these figu-

res depict hunters in disguise or, in a few cases, masked dancers, while the majority illustrate mythological creatures. The ubiquity of antelope features among these mythological creatures seen in the rock paintings justifies the conclusion that an antelope cult of some kind was the major religious trend among the prehistoric hunters of South Africa.

THE DRAKENSBERG ROCK PAINTINGS AS AN EXPRESSION OF RELIGIOUS THOUGHT

Lewis-Williams, James David, Botha's Hill, South Africa

A detailed examination of the « prehistoric » paintings in a restricted area of the Natal Drakensberg lends no support to the classic theories concerning the motivation of rock art. The way in which representations are related to one another and other features revealed by an inventory of over thirteen hundred paintings strongly indicate that the art is symbolic. Some of the themes that feature in the Bushman myths that were recorded at the middle of the last century also occur in the art. It is suggested that the paintings are not simply illustrations of myths, but that both myth and art independently perform similar functions: they employ symbols to create and reinforce social and emotional states, and to present a conception of reality that mediates oppositions.

Section V:**Asia****PREHISTORIC RELIGION FROM INDIAN MEGALITHS**

Ghosh, Asok Kumar, Calcutta, India

In India, the megalithic tradition is found to have persisted among different tribal groups in various forms. The earlier (prehistoric) megaliths with their structure, orientation and associated grave goods form a diversified complex; from them it is not always possible to reconstruct the religious ideas behind the megalithic «cult». An intensive study of the tribal megaliths may throw light on this problem and the reconstruction of religious ideas, mentioned above, would be more plausible. Religion is considered by the author to be a particular system of faith, action or conduct indicating a belief in, reverence for, and desire to please some higher unseen power. In the present system, the method of superimposition of the present known forms on the unknown and little-known traits of the past is, perhaps, reasonable.

**PRIMITIVE RELIGION AND MEGALITHISM
IN SOUTH INDIA**

Devashayam, N., Madras, India

For many primitive peoples, man has two souls: one closely associated with the body (body soul) and the other more spiritual in nature (free soul). In order to hinder the «free soul» from returning to harm the living, it must be prevented from escaping. Megaliths placed on the graves are designed precisely for this purpose. The author then reviews both the different types of Iron Age burial, which include the erection of megalithic structures, and the grave goods. The origin of the megalithic tradition

in India is little known and forms the object of various hypotheses (Reuben, Haimendorf, Smith, Zuckerman). Megalithic art is still a living tradition among certain tribes in Kerala, Assam, Chota Nagpur, Bastar and Madras, but wood is substituted for stone in most of the graves.

THE EARLIEST PRIVATE SHRINE IN WESTERN INDIA AND ITS RELATIONSHIP WITH THE MOTHER GODDESS IN EUROPE AND WESTERN ASIA

Sankalia, Hasmukh D., Poona, India

Excavations carried out in 1970-71 at Inamgaon, Poona District (Maharashtra) have demonstrated that the pre- and proto-historic clay and terracotta figurines were in fact cult objects representing gods, and not children's toys. Under the flooring of a house from the early phase of Jorwe culture, a cavity was discovered, which contained an oval box of unbaked clay. A headless female figure lay on its lid and a bull was found beside it. Within this receptacle lay a second female figure which, like the first, had very prominent breasts. The fact that the headless statuette could be seated on the bull is reminiscent of the goddess seated on a leopard at Çatal Hüyük. The care with which these figurines were preserved proves that this must have been a private shrine of the Chalcolithic Age. The custom of taking a statuette out of its box every morning in order to worship the god still exists among millions of Indian families. Female figurines with prominent sexual features belong to a long tradition which dates back to the Euro-Asian Upper Palaeolithic and Neolithic.

RELIGION IN PREHISTORIC INDIA

Billorey, Ramesh Kumar, Calcutta, India

Archaeology affords some evidence regarding the nature of religion in prehistoric India. The evidence of painted pottery, clay, stone and metal sculptures and seals is corroborated by that of the rock shelter paintings discovered at several prehistoric sites in different parts

of India. The primitive beliefs in magic and spirits and the worship of the Mother Goddess, the tree, animals, snake etc., are still in vogue, as is testified by the persistence of the same motives and symbols in Indian art, early as well as late, as also in the art of various tribes and rural folk of different regions of the country. It has been rightly suggested that a very large part of modern folk religion in India is extremely ancient and contains traits which originated during the earliest periods of Neolithic-Chalcolithic settlement.

FUNERAL RITES IN THAILAND FROM PREHISTORY TO THE BEGINNING OF HISTORICAL TIMES

Charoenwongsa, Pisit, Bangkok, Thailand

The earliest traces of religious beliefs can be observed in the cult of the dead. No Palaeolithic burial sites have been found in Thailand. The earliest known burial dates back to the Mesolithic and was discovered in the rock shelter of Sai-Yok. The skeleton lay in a bent position, facing North; the animal bones and shells found there were perhaps an offering. A stone slab covered the upper part of the body. This latter rite is also found in the Bronze Age at Lopburi (one single example out of 60 tombs) and still exists in the villages. The Ban Kao people believe this to be a way of preventing the dead man's spirit from rising and returning to harm or revenge itself on the living. The orientation of the tombs is not uniform either in the Neolithic or in the Bronze Age. In present-day villages, burial with the head pointing West is the custom, because the West is considered to be the « direction of death ». The same belief is found among the Badarians in Egypt and the Nuer in the Sudan. Although inhumation was the normal method of burial throughout the prehistoric period, there are traces of bone burning dating from the beginning of the Neolithic. Cremation only became widespread at the beginning of the proto-historic period in Thailand, and is linked with Hindu and Buddhist influence. The ashes were placed in clay, bronze or pottery urns and were sometimes accompanied by very beautiful statuettes of the Buddha.

Section VI:**America,
Oceania and
Australia****HYPOTHESES ON SHAMANISM IN THE PREHISTORIC
DORSET CULTURE, ARCTIC CANADA**

Taylor, W. E., Ottawa, Canada

The Cape Dorset culture, a prehistoric Eskimo phase, existed across most of Arctic Canada from about 800 BC until shortly after 1000 AD. Its origins rest generally in the Pre-Dorset culture, an eastward extension from Alaska of the Arctic Small Tool Tradition. Beginning about 900 AD, Dorset was replaced by Thule culture brought east from Greenland and Labrador. Ethnographic analogy and archaeological data allow the suggestion that the Dorset people practised a variant of shamanism. Some of the small ivory, antler and wood carvings of Dorset culture seem explicable in part by the religious beliefs and the oral traditions of the historic Central Eskimo who, however, descended culturally, physically and linguistically from the prehistoric Thule culture. Recent finds in the Canadian Arctic Islands reinforce the suggestion of Dorset shamanism and indicate a special bear concept in the belief system, the use of the shaman's drum and sympathetic magic. Stretching the data further, one may speculate on the existence, in Dorset religious life, of a burial ritual perhaps associated with the death of shamans.

**RELIGIOUS FIGURES ON THE PETROGLYPHS
IN THE UPPER OHIO VALLEY**

Swauger, James L., Pittsburgh, USA

Despite the investigator's initial belief that it would not be possible to achieve valid chronological and cultural placement of American-Indian petroglyphs occurring in the

Upper Ohio Valley of the United States, the religious figures carved on the sites provided clues by which he reached the conclusions that the petroglyphs were carved sometime between A. D. 1200 and 1750, that they were carved by the Late Prehistoric Woodland archaeological group known as Monongahela Man, and that Monongahela Man was proto-Shawnee.

PSYCHIC EXPERIENCES AND ESOTERIC CULTS IN SOUTH AMERICAN ROCK ART

Schobinger, Juan, Mendoza, Argentina

Although rock art is a cultural fact, conditioned by time and place, research should not concentrate exclusively on isolating styles, placing them in their context or establishing their absolute or relative chronology as precisely as possible. There must also be comparative and interdisciplinary studies based on the function and meaning of this art. If carried out rigorously, such research could produce results of great historical and cultural interest. On some of the fifty sites discovered by the author in Western Central Argentina, which date from between the beginning of our era and the end of the fifteenth century, we find engraved motives suggesting the visual expression of man's inner powers, particularly those relating to the head. It would appear that these are not abstract symbolic representations, but the more or less schematic expression of actual psychic experiences, such as clairvoyance, which is now accepted by parapsychology as a real faculty in certain individuals. Many of the heads with undulating or radiating extensions could then be seen as what some people call the « aura ». The ecological environment of the main groups of petroglyphs supports the idea that these figures are related to certain esoteric or initiation rites.

BURIAL RITES IN PREHISTORIC NEW SOUTH WALES

McBryde, Isabel, Armidale, Australia

The author is considering some of the prehistoric burial sites excavated in the state for the evidence they provide on the rites accorded the dead, and beliefs about death.

The sites chosen for discussion span a wide period in the prehistory of eastern Australia, as well as differing in their cultural and environmental settings. They include the Lake Mungo cremation burial, at present the earliest burial site for the continent as a whole, dated to c. 25,000 years ago. This site is in the arid western plains of New South Wales, set on the shores of a now-dry Pleistocene lake. Also from the western area are the two inhumation burials from Mossgiel and Lake Nitchie, both post-Pleistocene in age. The lake Nitchie find included the unique discovery of a necklace of teeth from *Sarcophilus* (The Tasmanian Devil), long extinct on the mainland. This had been buried with the body. The last two sites to be discussed are those at Blaxlands Flat and at Gynea Bay, both coastal sites and both belonging to the first millennium A. D. The first is a cave burial site of several inhumations, wrapped in bark sheets, the other represents more casual inhumation within the deposits of a living site.

In Australia there is a continuity from the prehistoric past to the ethnographic present, so in looking at the evidence for ritual and belief at these sites one cannot ignore the record of the beliefs and practices of the tribal groups of these regions in the recent past. The evidence from the ethnographic record is discussed, also the problems involved in invoking it to illumine the distant prehistoric past.

RELIGIOUS CHANGE IN EARLY EASTERN POLYNESIA

Koskinen, Aarne A., Helsinki, Finland

In Eastern Polynesia a complex religious system of the Olympian type had developed before the arrival of the Europeans. The religious evolution peculiar to this

region is a purely local phenomenon, independent of any external influence. In this connection it is interesting to note the homogeneity of religious ideas from Hawaii to Easter Island and New Zealand, and to raise the question of the genesis and diffusion of these ideas in Eastern Polynesia. The first inhabitants of these islands cannot have felt safe, surrounded by a hostile environment. In these conditions a religious system evolved in which natural and human events were directly subordinated to the divine will. This resulted in the development of a highly complex form of ritual designed to propitiate the gods and spirits. A hierarchical class of ritual specialists then formed. The author also considers linguistic aspects which may contribute to an interpretation of this problem.

Section VII:**Methodology
and General
Problems****THE RELIGIO-ECOLOGICAL METHOD IN
RESEARCH ON PREHISTORIC RELIGION**

Hultkrantz, Ake, Stockholm, Sweden

It seems rather fruitless to speculate on the individual religious ideas once held by our human ancestors at the dawn of humanity. The high age of certain concepts may possibly be established with the aid of canons worked out by earlier scholars, but these cases are exceptional. The only reliable method to reveal something of past ideologies is to my mind the religio-ecological method. By analysing the close relations between religious forms and the environmental setting at different technological levels we are able to observe certain regularities which are independent of time and (exact) place. These observations may consequently also be applied to religions in the distant past. Although historical traditions modify the ecological perspective they scarcely influence the fundamental religious patterns and configurations. It is the latter, and not the various religious ideas and concepts, which may be revealed by the religio-ecological method. Some details of this method have been worked out by the author.

**THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN RELIGION, SOCIETY,
ECONOMY AND ENVIRONMENT:
A PROBLEM OF HISTORICAL ANTHROPO-ECOLOGY**

Forni, Gaetano, Milan, Italy

In analysing the relationship between religion and economics, many authors have followed the Marxist line («using analysis to discover the earthly nucleus of religious ne-

bulae ») and seen the economic, lay and profane moment as preceding and determining the religious moment. According to these authors, the religious phenomenon is determined by economic and social processes (De Martino, Brelich, Lanternari), or by an economically or socially utilitarian function (Malinowski, Rappaport) or by the psyche (Jung, and in another way Marett and Otto, who base religion on the principle of *timor fecit deos*). Other scholars, taking the opposite line, have claimed that religion influences the development of technical and economic innovations (Weber, Hahn, Frobenius, Meinhof, Jensen). In Forni's view, it is erroneous to separate the sacred and profane moments. The various theories of the origins and nature of the religious phenomenon only deal with one aspect of reality, and fail to explain the religious fact in itself. Man's religious consciousness is born of his knowledge that the «I» is dependent on the «not-I». It is therefore pre-existent, whereas variations in the environment and way of life merely determine the forms and structures of the religious phenomenon. The structure and meaning of religious experience changed radically when the human species left the status of *accidental species* to become the *dominant species*, i.e. during the transition from a hunting and food-gathering economy to the production of food by agriculture and husbandry.

METAMORPHOSIS OF A SAINT

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Saint Anthony (\pm 356 A. D.), founder of Christian monasticism, was from the late Middle Ages one of the most popular saints among two peoples of the Eastern Baltic area, viz. the Indo-European Latvians and the Finno-Ugric Estonians. He achieved this position as the patron saint of domestic animals, mainly the pigs. As such he was called *Tenis* or even *Pig-Tenis* by the Latvians, and *Tönn* by the Estonians. Gradually he ceased to be venerated as a saint but was worshipped as a supernatural being with obvious heathen traits. This change manifested itself in a variety of rites which took place on hills, at certain

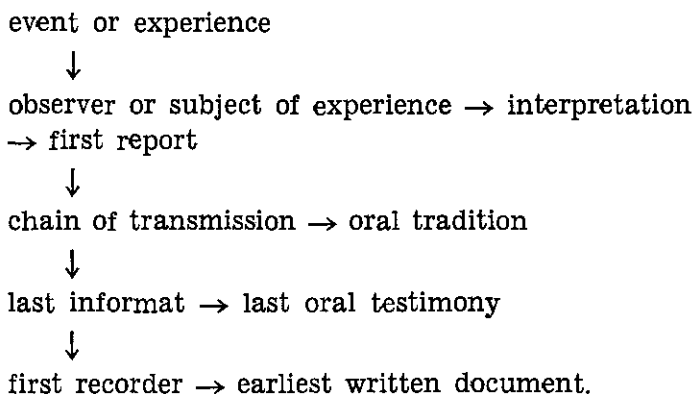
big stones, in the stables etc. The Estonians not only affiliated their Tönn with the concepts of a household spirit and brownie, but also relied upon the power of a Tönn-figure which was made of wax or rags, kept in a special box and used for ceremonial purposes. Although these types of worship were condemned both by the Roman Catholic and the Lutheran clergy, they flourished in some Latvian and Estonian peasant communities till the end of the 19th century. Neither Tennis nor Tönn, however, lost the connection with the 17th January, the feast of St. Anthony. On the other hand, the day was hardly celebrated in a Christian manner, and in Latvian popular tradition it became the «Pig-feast». The celebration included ceremonies in front of the pigsty and in the cattle-shed, a meal consisting of appropriate dishes (preferably pork), the performance of a burlesque, and many other usages, whose main emphasis was on fertility, prophecy and weather forecast.

THE PRE-LITERATE STAGE OF RELIGIOUS TRADITION

Pentikäinen, Juha, Turku, Finland

Historians of religion usually distinguish between two main groups of religions, according to the sources. For the religions of the so-called historical literate cultures, we have at our disposal a wealth of documentation, which can be analysed by historical, archaeological and philological methods. The religions of pre-literate cultures form the second main group, and here oral tradition is the chief source. All religions were originally handed down by oral tradition, and the precondition for their written documentation is of course the development of a literate culture within the given community. In studying the religion of literate societies, problems of the transmission of the tradition should be seen as important not only in cases where there is documentation of the existence of these religions, their sub-cultures, religious communities or individuals. They must also be central to our attempts to discover and interpret the genetic and organisational process of these religions by research in the history of

religion proper. We then study the sequence of events which marks the transition from the first historico-religious manifestations leading to the creation of a religion, to its earliest written documentation. This phase can be represented in the following diagrammatic form:



ICONOGRAPHIC REPRESENTATIONS OF ASTRA-SET PROTOHISTORIC RITUALS

Chesley Baity, Elizabeth, Mourex-par-Divonne, France

The author is carrying out research on astronomically-set protohistoric religious rituals, which may relate to a New Year set by astronomical events at a spring equinox or summer solstice. Two types of evidence are compared: ethnographic material and the iconographic representations which appear to have recorded the performance of these rituals. Part of the research includes fire and bull rituals, which are studied ethnographically in Iberia, Greece, India and the Pacific. Brief reference is made to prehistoric Italian, Iranian and Iberian iconography, which suggests a similar but perhaps earlier ritual in which the stag rather than the bull represented the deity. Extensive research in archaeoastronomy offers the basis for the hypothesis that these animal figures were zodiacal signs representing the heliacal rising of certain constellations, to which divine status had been attributed in the Early Bronze Age or somewhat earlier.

THE RELIGION OF THE LIVING IN STONE AGE NORTHERN EUROPE

Ström, Ake V., Lund, Sweden

In 1956 Jan de Vries stated that we know nothing about the religion of the living in the Stone Age, since our only documentation is related to burials. However, we have other archaeological finds, which include:

1. Hunting sacrifices, including animals specially prepared for the purpose, at Meiendorf and Stellmoor dating from about 12,000 B. C.
2. Coloured rock engravings in Scandinavia and Karelia, ca. 8,000 B. C.
3. Cult musical instruments and traces of scalping and human sacrifice.
4. Cult axes and their representations, and a possible axe sanctuary.
5. A cult pillar and an idol at Ahrensburg in North Germany.
6. Animal heads of various materials designed to be strung on a stick (in Denmark and Sweden).
7. Some constructions in Denmark which may be interpreted as cult sites.

Problems relating to a possible relationship between Stone Age and Indo-European religion still remain to be solved by tracing the successive stages of Bronze and Iron Age religion.

SOME REMARKS ON THE CONSCIOUSNESS OF HISTORY AMONG SO-CALLED PRIMITIVE PEOPLES

Rupp, Alfred, Saarbrücken, Germany (B.R.D.)

Generally non-literate groups are characterised as prehistoric. This definition is often combined with the interpretation that such groups have no understanding of history, as can be seen in their religious ideas. However, several questions arise concerning this hypothesis. First

of all, we must ask what the meaning of « understanding of history » is, and whether the fact has been taken into account that it is not possible to postulate one single understanding of history. Therefore it would be more suitable to ask for a criterion to distinguish cases in which it is possible to speak of an understanding of history and those in which it is not possible. Here a fundamental problem is encountered: is it at all possible that a human being can have no understanding of history? Careful studies show that understanding of history and individual existence cannot be separated. The interpretation of religious ideas cannot disregard this fact.