

CRETE'S ASPHENDOU CAVE AND GREECE'S OLDEST FIGURAL ART
A Debate and Historical Archive

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TRANSLATOR'S INTRODUCTION

Preliminaries and Terminology

Since its inception, and well before it had a nation and a national ministry to promote its interests,¹ Greek Archaeology has been defined by twinned areas of historical interest. The first is the Bronze Age: Mycenaean on the mainland, Cycladic in the Aegean islands, and--after its discovery in 1900--Minoan on Crete. The second is loosely considered Classical, and primarily, though not exclusively, Athenian. All archaeological roads tended to lead to, or flow from, these hallowed Hellenic sources. It is thus more than symbolically telling to note that by far the most oft-visited archaeological sites in Greece today are the Classical Acropolis in Athens and the reconstructed Bronze Age Palace of Knossos on Crete. One of the most striking developments in Greek Archaeology over the past fifteen years has been a resounding, and rather sudden, explosion of interest in earlier, Stone Age Greek remains.² As I hope to show in the archive of

¹. This story is well told by Yannis Hamilakis, *The Nation and Its Ruins: Antiquity, Archaeology, and National Imagination in Greece* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007). It is significant to note how the post-Alexandrian, Hellenistic period also came to play a dramatic role in Hamilakis's story, notably in the Macedonian north.

². A brief summary of the relevant prehistoric chronologies, specifically as they relate to the emergence of stone tools and other technologies among our human ancestors, is as follows:
Paleolithic (3 million-200,000 years BP)

This is the period associated with the emergence of crudely chipped stone tools fashioned by members of the species-family, *homo*.

Mesolithic (or Epipaleolithic, 200,000-8000 years BP)

This period is characterized by the emergence of microliths, especially blades that could be affixed to sawing devices and/or projectiles such as lances and spears. The bow and arrow appears to have been invented in the later stages of this period. The earliest painted cave art, stone carving, and sculpture is also associated with this period.

Neolithic (8000-3000 years BP)

The great Neolithic Revolution witnessed the emergence of polished and finished stone tools of great sophistication, as well as the first domestication of crops that inspired the shift from a hunter-gatherer to a more stationary farming economy. Such partial control of the food supply led to the creation of the first cities and a more sedentary way of life, enabling further technological innovations that will subsequently constitute the artifacts of "civilization." With the invention of writing approximately 6000 years BP, the so-called historical period may be said to begin.

We will also meet references to: The *Middle Pleistocene Epoch* (800,000-130,000 years BP), when *homo sapiens sapiens* emerged on the scene (and appears to have taken to sea); The *Later (Upper) Pleistocene Epoch* (130,000-12,000 years BP), when warming trends, and more significant sea-level rise, prompted advances in human seafaring; and The *Holocene Epoch* (12,000 years BP-present), when the last glacial period ended, with attendant further sea-level rise, and even more advanced human seafaring techniques.

historical materials that I present in English translation for the first time here, the interest in, and debates about, human arrival in Greece in the Paleolithic and Mesolithic periods were significantly joined more than a generation ago, focusing upon a Cretan cave.

That said, the up-tick in Greek Stone Age discoveries in the past fifteen years, and the fascinating discussions they have prompted, have made Stone Age Greece a real growth industry in contemporary archaeological and historical studies. We now have evidence from Paleolithic and Mesolithic sites throughout Greece: on the mainland in Epirus, Thessaly, the Chalkidiki, the Argolid, and the Mani; on Euboea; on the Ionian islands at Corfu, Kephallonia, Lefkada and Zakynthos; on the Cycladic islands at Alonnessos, Thasos, Kythnos, Naxos, and Melos; on the Dodecanesian islands at Lemnos, Lesbos and Astypalea; as well as on the southern coast of Crete.³ As we have pushed *homo sapiens sapiens*'s long tenure on this planet further back into the prehistoric record, so too have we pushed back the evidence for our species's arrival in what is Greek territory today. As we shall see, lying at the very heart of these archaeological sea-changes is the island of Crete.

Paleolithic Seafaring and Arrival on Crete

I use the idiom of “sea-change” intentionally, for reasons that will soon become apparent. Just fifteen years ago, an astonishing article was published in *Hesperia*, the journal of the American School of Classical Studies at Athens.⁴ This 2010 article presented a summary of primarily stone tool evidence gathered from surface surveys along a system of caves and gorges on the southwestern coast of Crete, the evidence suggesting that humans arrived there by sea some 200,000-300,000 years ago.⁵ The article also noted that obsidian tools, likely sourced from the island of Melos, suggest the existence of sophisticated Aegean trading networks at an

³. An excellent overview of this material may be found in Curtis Runnels, “Early Paleolithic on the Greek Islands?,” *Journal of Mediterranean Archaeology* 27.2 (2014): 211-230.

⁴. Thomas F. Strasser, Eleni Panagopoulou, Curtis N. Runnels, Nicholas Thompson, Panayiotis Karkanias, Floyd W. McCoy, Karl W. Wegmann, “Stone Age Seafaring in the Mediterranean: Evidence from the Plakias Region for Lower Paleolithic and Mesolithic Habitation of Crete,” *Hesperia* 79.2 (2010): 145-190.

The news was first reported in *The New York Times*, which was where I first heard about it: see John Noble Wilford, “On Crete, New Evidence of Very Ancient Mariners” (February 15, 2010).

⁵. The following year, team partners published a densely methodological presentation of their chronological evidence, mostly from southwestern Cretan sites at Preveli and Plakias, to confirm a human presence on the island in the Paleolithic period, and by implication, to suggest that such inhabitants must have come by sea. See Thomas F. Strasser, Curtis Runnels, Karl Wegmann, Eleni Panagopoulou, Floyd McCoy, Chad Digregario, Panagiotis Karkanias, and Nick Thompson, “Dating Paleolithic Sites in Southwestern Crete, Greece,” *Journal of Quaternary Science* 26.5 (2011): 553-560.

astonishingly early date.⁶ More remarkably still, as the title suggested, our ancient ancestors were already seafarers, traveling from north Africa and throughout the Aegean islands by boat at a surprisingly early stage of their technical development. All of this suggests the startling presence already of three defining singularities of the species: technological adaptability; communicative language; and (what links the two) abstract symbolic thinking.⁷

Two implications of these findings are worthy of emphasis. First, true to the “cosmopolitan” claim that the question of where one is from may be less consequential than the question of where one wishes to go, the important point established by this new evidence was less where these people came from (presumably North Africa rather than the Near East), and far more where they went (namely, to Crete) and how they traveled (that is, via an impressive array of early boats or rafts).⁸ Second, such findings suggest a significant alteration of the standard story of human dispersion out of Africa, whereby our ancestors were alleged to have traveled up the Nile river valley to the Mediterranean coast, and then (due, presumably, to a natural fear of open water) taken a hard right-hand turn in order to travel overland throughout the Fertile Crescent and Mesopotamia, then turning west into the Anatolian plain before arriving, countless millennia later, in the Aegean basin via the Dodecanesian islands. By contrast, these many new Paleolithic

⁶. The claim that this obsidian came from Melos is now more secure. See Tristan Carter, Thomas F. Strasser, Eleni Panagopoulou, Kathryn Campeau, Danica D. Mihailovic, “Obsidian Circulation in the Early Holocene Aegean: A Case Study from Mesolithic Damnoni,” *Journal of Archaeological Science: Reports* 17 (2018): 173-183.

⁷. See Jean Kitahara-Frisch, “Symbolizing Technology as a Key to Human Evolution,” in Mary LeCron Foster and Stanley H. Brandes, eds., *Symbol as Sense: New Approaches to the Analysis of Meaning* (New York, NY: Academic Press, 1980), 211-223, esp. 212-213, as well as the first four chapters of Robert N. Bellah, *Religion in Human Evolution: From the Paleolithic to the Axial Age* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2011).

⁸. I appreciate the prescient claim in Cyprian Broodbank and Thomas F. Strasser, “Migrant Farmers and the Neolithic Colonization of Crete,” *Antiquity* 65 (1991): 233-245. They already marshaled the relevant evidence needed to confirm that such Cretan colonists could indeed have arrived by sea: “[m]ore promising... than the question of ultimate origins is the process by which the earliest farmers arrived on Crete [through maritime transfer]” (237).

For more recent reflections on this idea, see Alan Simmons, “Mediterranean Island Voyagers,” *Science* Volume 338, No. 6109 (16 November 2012): 895-897, and (with contribution by Katelyn DiBenedetto) *Stone Age Seafarers: Paleolithic Seafaring in the Mediterranean* (Walnut Creek, CA: Left Coast Press, 2014), especially the Introduction (9-20), the brief history of global seafaring (21-39), the survey of boat types and archaeological method (76-101), the discussion of the pre-Neolithic Mediterranean (102-131) and the specific analysis of Cretan materials from Loutro, the Preveli Gorge, Gavdos and Damnoni (182-191, 200-202). Simmons also adds important evidence from his own extensive work on Cyprus, as well as related materials from Malta, Sardinia and a wide array of Greek islands.

sites in Greece suggest the strong possibility that these early travelers met the sea and immediately traversed it--likely on the same rafts and barges they used on the Nile--thereby making the island of Crete (together with Cyprus) the likely first point of entry into what would come to be known, at a much later date, as Europe.

Zeroing-In on the Asphendou Cave

These systems of south-facing caves on Crete--most of them close to fresh water sources where great rivers ran through what are now enormous incised gorges spilling into the Libyan Sea--would have provided ideal Paleolithic and Mesolithic habitation. They had all the essentials: south-facing shelter; hard stone for fashioning tools; secure sources of fresh water; and abundant animal resources on land and sea. Some of these coastal caves may have served as stone-tool making workshops as well as shelters.

But it is another south Cretan cave--located some 6 km inland from the southern coast near Frankokastello, some 25-30 km from the system of caves mentioned above, and at an altitude of roughly 700 m--that will receive my primary attention here. The Asphendou Cave is less noteworthy for the evidence of stone tools than for a complex palimpsest of engraved images visible on the flow stone that comprises the cave floor. The center of the image field is badly damaged, presumably due to the intrusive activities of later treasure-hunters. The remaining lottery of images includes abstract markings comprised of small incised holes, a large number of quadrupeds (some 37 in all) inscribed against a featureless background, a large boat, what appear to be two-headed harpoons or oars, and some modern graffiti on the upper edges of the image-field.

One of the most striking features of these admittedly innocent and unsophisticated cave renderings of the quadrupeds is the exaggerated length of the antlers which, in many cases, exceed the length of the animal's body. This art-historical detail had previously been ignored, especially by those who believed that these images were carved no earlier than the Bronze Age; thus they were simply assumed to be depictions of the Cretan feral goat: the *agrimi*, or "gri-gri/kri-kri." A new interpretation of the Asphendou Cave rock carvings was published in 2018,⁹ which presented new evidence to correlate these engraved images with a pre-Holocene form of

⁹. Thomas F. Strasser, Sarah Murray, Alexandra van der Geer, Christina Kolb, and Louis A. Ruprecht Jr., "Paleolithic Cave Art from Crete, Greece," *Journal of Archaeological Science: Reports* 18 (2018): 100-108.

A second summary of this material was published two years later: Thomas F. Strasser, Sarah Murray, Alexandra A. E. van der Geer, Christina Kolb, and Louis A. Ruprecht Jr., "The Asphendou Cave Petroglyphs: A Palimpsest in Stone," in Παυλίνα Καρανασταση, Αναστασια Τζιγκουνακη, Χριστινα Τζιγκωνακη, eds., *Αρχαιολογικο Εργο Κρητης 4* (Ρεθυμνο: Εφορεια Αρχαιοτητων Ρεθυμνου, 2020), 649-657.

Cretan dwarf deer (*Candiacervus ropalophorus*¹⁰) that was extinct by the end of the last Ice Age some 12,000 years ago. One of this deer's distinguishing features was the exaggerated length of its antlers. This correlation of the deer's fossil remains with the image field at Asphendou was utilized to suggest a Stone Age dating for the oldest portions of the rock engravings. This claim also served to establish them as the oldest figural art yet discovered in Greece.¹¹

In the next year, some members of the same research team published their summary interpretation of the various layers of the Asphendou Cave palimpsest.¹² Identifying four distinct iconic layers on the incised cave floor, they itemized them as follows:

1) medieval images of two boat-shaped objects and one “compass-like icon” at the top

¹⁰. See the excellent discussions of this species of Cretan dwarf deer in: John de Vos, “The endemic Pleistocene deer of Crete,” *Verhandelingen der Koninklijke Nederlandse Akademie van Wetenschappen*, Series B: Paleontology, Geology, Physics, Chemistry, Anthropology 82 (1979): 59-90; John de Vos, “The endemic Pleistocene deer of Crete,” *Verhandelingen der Koninklijke Nederlandse Akademie van Wetenschappen*, afd. Naturkunde. Eerste Reeks, Deel 31 (1984): 1-100; John de Vos, “Taxonomy, ancestry and speciation of the endemic Pleistocene deer of Crete compared with the taxonomy, ancestry and speciation of Darwin's finches,” in D. S. Reese, ed., *Pleistocene and Holocene Fauna of Crete and Its First Settlers* (Madison, WI: Prehistory Press, 1996), 111-124; Alexandra van der Geer, George Lyras, John de Vos and Michael Dermitzakis, “New data on the Pleistocene Cretan deer *Candiacervus* sp. II (Cervinae, Mammalia),” *Courier Forschungsinstitut Senckenberg* 256 (2010): 131-137; and Alexandra van der Geer, George Lyras, Ross MacPhee, Mark Lomolino and Hara Drinia, “Mortality in a predator-free insular environment: the dwarf deer of Crete,” *American Museum Novitates* 3807 (June 30, 2014): 1-26.

It is important to note that three new species of Cretan deer have since been identified, based on the wide variety of their antler-types. See Alexandra A. E. van der Geer, “Uniformity in variety: Antler morphology and evolution in a predator-free environment,” *Paleontologia Electronica* (March 2018): <https://doi.org/10.26879/834> palaeo-electronica.org/content/2018/2159-uniformity-in-variety

¹¹. See Norman Hammond, “Cretan Cave Art Is from the Ice Age,” *London Times* (April 7, 2018), and “10 Most Important Archaeological Finds in Greece of the Last Decade,” *Greek Reporter* (August 11, 2018).

¹². Thomas Strasser, Sarah Murray and Christina Kolb, “The Asphendou Cave Petroglyphs: Reading and Recording an Eye-Witness to the Stone Age,” *MNHMH/MNEME: Past and Memory in the Aegean Bronze Age*, Proceedings of the 17th International Aegean Conference, University of Udine (2019): 377-382.

- and bottom of the image-field;
- 2) the complex of spirals and cupules that cover the entire surface of the flow stone and are dated to the end of the Neolithic or beginning of the Bronze Age;
 - 3) a complex series of “paddle-like icons” that appear to be “cross-cut” in relation to the oldest images on the cave floor; namely
 - 4) a large group of quadrupeds that are distributed across the entirety of the image field.¹³

The team noted that “the lack of a ground-line in the rendering of the herd is very similar to Paleolithic art seen elsewhere,” whereas “the absence of a ground-line is very rare in Minoan art.”¹⁴ The Asphendou Cave images thus “demonstrate that humans have been visiting and carving images into the cave surface for thousands, if not tens of thousands of years.”¹⁵

We need not imagine that such engraved cave art aimed at realistic or naturalistic depiction; it is simply the case that our imagined Stone Age artists would have rendered their images based on what they saw around them. In this case, what they saw were unusual game animals with extremely elongated antlers that likely made them fairer game. It is this intriguing connection that would seem to establish the Asphendou Cave rock carvings as the oldest figural art ever found in Greece, to date. It is also noteworthy that these images represent the oldest evidence which places our Stone Age ancestors from the southern coast of Crete in proximity to this extinct species of deer, whose remains had been discovered on the northern coast. The Asphendou Cave lies along the only traversable pathway in the forbidding landscape of the White Mountains in southwestern Crete, one that would permit passage from the northern coast to the southern, and vice versa. Here, then, is where the two ecosystems of northwestern and southwestern Crete came together.¹⁶ Whether human hunters played a role in the Cretan dwarf deer’s extinction is another, as yet

¹³. Ibid., 378.

¹⁴. Ibid., 380; see also Strasser, et. al., “Paleolithic Cave Art from Crete, Greece,” 106. This consistent feature was noted by Margaret W. Conkey in “Context, Structure, and Efficacy in Paleolithic Art and Design,” in Mary LeCron Foster and Stanley H. Brandes, eds., *Symbol as Sense: New Approaches to the Analysis of Meaning* (New York, NY: Academic Press, 1980), 225-248, esp. 235. Conkey considers stone tool-making and the creation of figural art in caves and on portable objects to be fairly sudden developments, both of which she deems “discernible rubicons in hominid cultural evolution” (225-227).

¹⁵. Strasser, et. al., “The Asphendou Cave Petroglyphs: Reading and Recording an Eye-Witness to the Stone Age,” 377.

¹⁶. See the map at Strasser, et. al., “Paleolithic Cave Art from Crete, Greece,” 101.

unanswerable, question.¹⁷

The First Debate Over the Asphendou Cave

It is important to emphasize that the Asphendou Cave, with its very peculiar rock engravings, was not “discovered” in the 21st century; in fact, these images had already been the subject of heated scholarly controversy a generation before, and that is the history whose archive I present for the first time in English translation here.¹⁸ What this archive reveals is that the Asphendou Cave was first brought to public attention by Christos Papoutsakis (1934-2009) who, in the course of a walking survey of the Sphakia region of southwestern Crete, came to the village of Asphendou and was directed to the cave by his local informants. That, he tells us, was in August of 1957.

The first public notice concerning the Asphendou Cave came in the form of a survey of Cretan caves published by Eleutherios Platakis (1910-1986), President of the Greek Speliological Society;¹⁹ he listed the Asphendou Cave as #803 in a survey he published serially in the Xania newspaper, *Κηρυξ* [*Kêryx*, The Herald], appearing on March 4, 1963; that itemized list made no mention of the rock engravings, however. Less than a decade later, debates about the Asphendou Cave rock carvings, and their apparent age, suddenly emerged in print. On September 10, 1971, Christos Papoutsakis returned to the Asphendou Cave with two colleagues, in order to take plaster cast impressions of the rock carvings. Just four days later, Eleutherios Platakis brought Professor Paul Faure (1916-2007)--together with Yannis Tsiphetakis, who took photographs for the team--for Faure’s first visit to the Asphendou Cave. Faure, it bears noting, was a prolific and well-respected specialist on Cretan caves, having published his thesis for the Faculty of Letters at the University of Paris just six years previously.²⁰

¹⁷. This question was already of interest to Thomas Strasser in his dissertation, “Neolithic Settlement and Land-Use on Crete” (PhD Dissertation, Indiana University, 1992), the sixth and final chapter of which discusses “Early Holocene Extinctions on Crete” (152-176).

¹⁸. For the first English language summary of this historical archive, see Thomas F. Strasser, “Neolithic Settlement and Land-Use on Crete” (PhD Dissertation, Indiana University, 1992), 30-34. See also Strasser, et. al., “Paleolithic Cave Art from Crete, Greece,” 100.

¹⁹. See Θ. Δετοράκης, “Ο Ελευθέριος Πλατάκης και το έργο του/Elleuthere Platakis et son oeuvre,” *Δελτίο Ελληνικής Σπηλαιολογικής Εταιρείας* [Bulletin of the Greek Speliological Society]19.2 (1989): 180-184.

The *Deltion Ellênikês Spêlaiologikês Etaireias*, or “Bulletin of the Greek Speliological Society,” was founded in 1950 and published bilingually in Greek and French; it may be consulted online at <https://ese.edu.gr/category/deltio-ese>.

²⁰. Paul Faure, *Fonctions des cavernes Crétoises* (Paris: Éditions E. De Boccard, 1964). Faure was already a prolific and well-respected figure in Cretan speleology. See (in chronological order) his: “Grottes crétoises,” *Bulletin de correspondance hellénique* 80 (1956): 95-103;

In the preface to his thesis, Faure offered an instructive overview of how his and Eleutherios Platakis's catalogue of Cretan caves was first produced.²¹ Faure expanded upon this material to suggest that there were likely to be between 1400 and 2000 such edifices on Crete worthy of scholarly investigation. In any case, it was around the same time that this catalogue of Cretan caves was produced that the debate over the dating of the Asphendou Cave rock carvings was initiated, and almost immediately intensified.

Papoutsakis published a preliminary report on the Asphendou Cave and its rock engravings on

“Spéléologie et topographie crétoises,” *Bulletin de correspondance hellénique* 82 (1958): 495-515; “Nouvelles recherches de spéléologie et de topographie crétoises,” *Bulletin de correspondance hellénique* 84 (1960): 189-220; “La grotte de Léra (Kydonias) et la nymphe Akakallis,” *Κρητικά Χρονικά* 15-16 (1961-1962): 195-199; “Cavernes et sites aux deux extrémités de la Crète,” *Bulletin de correspondance hellénique* 86 (1962): 36-56; “Recherches de peuplement des montagnes de Crète. Sites, cavernes et cultes,” *Bulletin de correspondance hellénique* 89 (1965): 27-63; “Nouvelles recherches sur trois sortes de sanctuaires crétois,” *Bulletin de correspondance hellénique* 91 (1967): 114-150; “Sur trois sortes de sanctuaires crétois (suite),” *Bulletin de correspondance hellénique* 93 (1969): 174-213; “Antiques cavernes de refuge dans la Crète de l’Ouest,” *Archaïologika Analekta Athenon* 2 (1969): 213-216; “Cavernes sacrées de la Crète antique,” *Cretan Studies* 4 (1994): 77-83; as well as his later book, *La Vie Quotidienne en Crète au Temps de Minos (1500 avant Jésus-Christ)* (Paris: Librairie Hachette, 1973).

²¹. Paul Faure, *Fonctions des cavernes Crétoises*, 1, notes omitted:

The Speliological Society of Greece--established in Athens in January of 1950 by the late Yannis Petrokhilos, a geologist who died on the 10th of February 1960, and presided over after that date by his beloved companion, Ms. Anna Petrokhilos--assigned to the care of Mr. Eleutherios Platakis, Professor of Physics and Principal of the Rethymnon Lyceum, the compilation of an inventory of all the known caves on the island of Crete. After 9 exploratory campaigns and personal enquiries, in September of 1962 I was able to provide him with a list of 747 caves, rock shelters, chasms and various crevices for which I possessed confirmed information. For his part, in April he sent a questionnaire to 850 teachers, to local police, and to the offices of the prefectures, asking them “to fill it in as accurately as possible”: adding the name, the location, the altitude, the depth, and the dimensions of the caves in each village. In November, he collated 970 responses which, combined with his own personal information, was published as a list in the *Bulletin of the Greek Speliological Society* and, taken together with the materials I had provided to him, contain according to his calculations a printed list of Cretan caves numbering 1073 in total. (Translation mine)

October 31, 1971, in the Athenian newspaper, *To Bēma* [*To Bēma*, The Stand].²² Faure published an immediate rejoinder in the Cretan journal from Agios Nikolaos, *Αμαλθεια* [*Amaltheia*], which Eleutherios Platakis translated from French into Greek.²³ In the following year (1972), at the same time that the Greek Ministry of Archaeology organized a brief, but abortive, excavation at the mouth of the Asphendou Cave,²⁴ Papoutsakis and Faure completed their longer, more scholarly analyses of the Asphendou engravings. Paul Faure published his analysis in French, in the *Bulletin de correspondance hellénique*, the publication of the French School in Athens.²⁵ Christos Papoutsakis published his analysis in Greek in that same year, in the *Κρητικά Χρονικά* [*Krētika Chronika*, or “Cretan Chronicle”], published in Herakleion by the Society of Cretan Historical Studies.²⁶ It is this archive of four publications that I present here,²⁷ with supplemental

²². Christos G. Papoutsakis, “Οἱ βραχογραφίες στ’ Ἀσφέντου τῶν Σφακιῶν [The Rock Carvings at Aspendou in Sphakia],” *To Bēma* [*To Bēma*] (31 October 1971).

I should add here that Papoutsakis did in fact suggest that the Asphendou Cave had been in use over a very long period, from the Paleolithic through the Neolithic periods, and that the engraved images were thus cumulative. He too was drawn to the abstract symbols, spirals and cupules as representing what he deemed likely to be the oldest portions of the image field.

²³. Paul Faure, “Αἱ Ἐγχαρακτοὶ Βραχογραφίαι τοῦ Σπηλίου Ἀσφέντου Σφακιῶν [The Engraved Rock-Carvings of the Asphendou Cave in Sphakia],” Eleutherios Platakis, trans., *Αμαλθεια* [*Amaltheia*] 2 (1971): 277-283.

“Amaltheia” was the name of the mythic goat that miraculously nursed the infant Zeus in his cave hideaway on Mount Ida.

²⁴. See the brief notes in: “Τα Σκορδολακκία,” in *To Ergon/ To Ergon: The Historical and Archaeological Society of West Crete [For the Years 1969-1970-1971]* (Xania, July 1972): 71; and Γιαννης Τζεδακης, “Ἀσφενδου Σφακιων,” *Αρχαιολογικον Δελτιον 28.2 Χρονικα* (1973) (Athens: 1977): 583.

The excavation was led by Dr. A. Mavredakis. Tzedakis noted that Minoan pottery from all three periods had been recovered at the cave entrance, and recommended returning to Asphendou to excavate the open plain in front of the cave. That work has not been performed, to date.

²⁵. Paul Faure, “Cultes populaires dans la Crète antique,” *Bulletin de correspondance hellénique* 96.1 (1972): 389-426; pages 406-413 are dedicated to the Asphendou Cave.

²⁶. Christos Papoutsakis, “Οἱ Βραχογραφίες στ’ Ἀσφέντου τῶν Σφακιῶν [The Rock Carvings at Asphendou in Sphakia]” *Κρητικά Χρονικά*, Second Series, Fourth Year (1972): 107-139.

This text was then reprinted as an independent pamphlet, *Οἱ βραχογραφίες στ’ Ἀσφέντου τῶν Σφακιῶν* (Ηρακλειον Κρητης: Ανδρεας Γ. Καλοκαιρινος, 1972).

²⁷. There were several other scholarly discussions at this time, but for my purposes and in my judgment, the exchanges between Faure and Papoutsakis are the most consequential and

notes concerning their respective bibliographies.

The debate between Faure and Papoutsakis is interesting for many reasons, but for my purposes one central issue stands out: their respective dating of the Asphendou rock carvings. Papoutsakis marshaled the available Mediterranean and Balkan comparanda to argue that the Asphendou images dated from the Stone Age, and might even be Paleolithic (or Mesolithic). Faure insisted that they were produced in the Minoan Bronze Age, believing (so it would appear) that there were no Paleolithic remains anywhere on Crete.

There is more than a whiff of what Michael Herzfeld has aptly identified as the “crypto-colonial”²⁸ attitude in relation to Greece, and Greek scholarship, in Faure’s remarks. He was an established French professor; Christos Papoutsakis was a Greek amateur.²⁹ Faure was

relevant. They also lay out the fundamental terms of the debate over the dating of the Asphendou petroglyphs: namely, whether they should be associated with the Stone Age or the Bronze Age on Crete. The most significant other early publications include:

Sinclair Hood, “Primitive Rock Engravings from Crete,” *The J. Paul Getty Museum Journal* 1 (1974): 101-111 (which utilizes many of the comparable Greek and Balkan rock carvings to date the Asphendou Cave engravings quite late, to the period of Dorian settlement in the Iron Age);

Adonis Zoïs, “A propos des gravures rupestres d’Asfendou (Crète),” *Bulletin de correspondance hellénique* 97.1 (1973): 23-30 (which engages in a point-for-point refutation of Faure’s publications in order to defend Papoutsakis’s dating of the Asphendou Cave engravings to the Late Paleolithic or Mesolithic era);

as well as the brief reports from the relevant Greek archaeological ministries cited above.

²⁸. See Michael Herzfeld, “The Absent Presence: Discourses of Crypto-Colonialism,” *South Atlantic Quarterly* 101.4 (2002): 899-926. Herzfeld is currently working on a book-length study of this highly influential idea.

²⁹. Faure’s fairly overt chauvinism appears to be the source of the antagonism evident in Adonis Zoïs’s rejoinder, “A propos des gravures rupestres d’Asfendou (Crète),” which the journal editors confess produced “a text in which the polemic is not missing,” and which inspired them to offer Faure the opportunity to publish a brief rejoinder.

Zoïs urged seven points: 1) Papoutsakis discovered the Asphendou rock carvings, but Faure neglected at times to acknowledge this fact; 2) Papoutsakis used fine-grained dental plaster to make his cast, which left no residue on the cave floor, as Faure alleged; 3) Faure’s own sketch reconstruction of the Asphendou composition was unnecessary, since Papoutsakis had already produced one superior to Faure’s effort; 4) Faure asserted the existence of Cretan comparanda for his dating of the carvings, but did not provide them; 5) Faure simply assumed Minoan parallels to the Asphendou rock carvings, which was an error; 6) Faure wrongly interpreted the composition as one extended “hunting scene,” by failing to recognize that the figures were created independently of one another; and 7) Faure relied on his own errant dating of other Cretan cave

emphatically European; Papoutsakis's credentials were less clearly legible. It is all the more remarkable, then, to note that Papoutsakis was working with published scholarship in five languages (English, French, German, Italian and Russian), as well as in his native Greek.³⁰ And his survey of the then-available comparanda is impressive, by any standard.

Here, in any case, was where the debate over the dating of the Asphendou Cave rock carvings stalled by the mid-1970s. Naturally, significant advances have taken place since these publications first appeared, advances that have enabled a new look at the Asphendou Cave and its curious panoply of overlapping images. First and foremost was the discovery of the Cretan dwarf deer fossils at the Liko and Gerani Caves in the later 1970s. Secondly, and of equal importance, has been the technological revolution initiated in this new millennium by digital

sites in order to draw his conclusions. Zoïs cites the criticism of Faure's dating by R. Treuil, "Les sites néolithiques de Crète occidentale," *Bulletin de correspondance hellénique* 94 (1970): 5-25, for this last point, as well as his own publications on Neolithic Crete that defended Papoutsakis's interpretations. Treuil's article in fact expresses great appreciation for Faure's contributions to Cretan archaeology, disagreeing mainly with his hypothesis concerning human arrival in west Crete from the Peloponnese (23-24, cf. 8, 11-12). Faure's rejoinder to Zoïs was fairly curt:

I consider the essence of the debate to be neither the priority of Mr. Papoutsakis's visits which have been acknowledged several times, nor the awareness of the engravings at Asphendou in the Prefecture of Xania in 1962, nor the regrettable method of plaster casting which confuses the lines and soils the rock's surface, nor even the imprecision of statements, including this one, which may always be contested, *but rather the dating of the engraved figures*. A dating to the late Paleolithic or Mesolithic eras seems illogical to me, given that the archaeological context is Minoan and the weapons depicted (the composite bow, long spears with metal blades) and the system of holes are clearly from the second millennium BC. We will need to wait on the publication of the shards and tools by the Greek excavators in order to date the habitation of the so-called Skordolakkia [sic] with greater precision, without either exaggerating or minimizing the importance of banal and historically recent phenomenon. (29-30, translation and italics mine)

³⁰. The academic presumption which establishes French and German as the obligatory foreign languages for doctoral study in the United States, except in cases where an exception has obvious warrant, has the unintended consequence of reinforcing the centrality of scholarship in these very languages. No one would deny the importance of French and German to the intellectual and archaeological history of the past three centuries, of course, but this linguistic predisposition has a way of writing the enormously significant contributions in Greek, Italian and Russian archaeology out of our shared intellectual history. Papoutsakis suffered from no such curtailment of scholarly vision.

photography and 3-D photogrammetry.³¹ These technologies have enabled the creation of new images and sketches of the Asphendou Cave rock carvings that have revealed the presence of more images than those of which Faure and Papoutsakis were aware. When these novel archaeological and technological advances were combined with recent evidence suggesting that there was, in fact, Paleolithic human habitation on Crete, then the stage was set for a decisive re-reading of these images.

Ancient Waves of Human Origins

In 2011, discoveries at the Blombos Cave in South Africa pushed the date of the oldest cave art back to 73,000 years BP.³² In 2017, at Jebel Irhoud in Morocco, skeletal remains of *homo sapiens* were retrieved which date to approximately 300,000 years BP.³³ In 2018, at the Mislaya Cave in

³¹. The MIT Museum sponsored an exhibition entitled “The Polaroid Project: At the Intersection of Art and Technology” (October 11, 2019-June 21, 2020) that brilliantly situated technological innovation in the photographic arts within a longer cultural history of the United States since the Second World War, and culminated with the digital technologies of the early 21st century. See *The Polaroid Project: At the Intersection of Art and Technology* (London and New York, NY: Thames and Hudson, Ltd., 2017).

³². Christopher S. Henshilwood, Francesco d’Errico, Karen L. van Niekerk, Yvan Coquinot, Zenobia Jacobs, Stein-Erik Lauritzen, Michael Menu, and Renata Garcia-Moreno, “A 100,000-Year-Old Ochre-processing workshop at Blombos Cave, South Africa,” *Science*, Volume 334 (14 October 2011): 219-222, reported the surprising discovery of processed red ochre stored in two abalone shells in the Blombos Cave, which the authors surmised might have been used for bodily decoration or cave art.

Further exploration of the Blombos Cave revealed the existence of abstract and figural drawing produced with an ochre crayon in a layer dated to approximately 73,000 BP. See Christopher S. Henshilwood, Francesco d’Errico, Karen L. van Niekerk, Laure Dayet, Alain Quesfellec, and Luca Pollario, “An Abstract Drawing from the 73,000-Year-Old Levels at Blombos Cave, South Africa,” *Nature*, Volume 562 (4 October 2018): 115-127.

³³. Jean-Jacques Hublin, Abdelouahed Ben-Ncer, Shara E. Bailey, Sarah E. Friedline, Simon Neubauer, Matthew M. Skinner, Inga Bergmann, Adeline Le Cabec, Stefano Benazzi, Katerina Harvati, and Philipp Gunz, “New Fossils from Jebel Irhoud, Morocco and the Pan-African Origin of *homo sapiens*,” *Nature*, Volume 546 (8 June 2017): 289-305.

In fact, mining operations accidentally revealed some skeletal remains at Irhoud in 1960 and 1961, but new excavations produced five new sets of remains and a more secure stratigraphy, resulting in a significantly older dating of the entire collection of remains (to 315,000BP ±34,000 BP). Statistical and morphological analysis comparing these skeletal remains to *homo erectus*, Neanderthal, Early Anatomically Modern Human (EMH) and Recent Modern Human (RMH) remains confirmed their identity as early examples of *homo sapiens* of astonishing antiquity. The corrections of some specific data points published by the team in *Nature*, Volume 558 (28 June 2018): E6 “do not alter any inferences drawn from the data.”

Israel, skeletal remains confirmed the presence of *homo sapiens* outside of continental Africa some 175,000-200,000 years BP.³⁴ Carving marks on mastodon bones uncovered near San Diego, CA, have now been dated, suggesting some form of human presence in North America 130,000 years BP.³⁵ And finally, just six years ago, analysis of remains from the Apidima Cave in the Mani (southern Greece)³⁶ place *homo sapiens* on the Greek mainland some 210,000 years ago.³⁷

That our ancient ancestors were capable of abstract cognition, symbolic thinking and aesthetic creativity is also presumably the reason they were capable of taking to sea as seafarers,³⁸ an uncanny feat that led to the dispersion of ancient populations to Asia and Australia more than 60,000 years ago, and to Cyprus and Crete³⁹ much earlier than that. This, I would like to suggest, set a pattern for these islands habitats that would be the norm for tens, if not hundreds, of millennia. People come, and settle; new people come and settle nearby. This all happens, appropriately enough for seafarers, in *waves* of migration, not conquest. The people freely

³⁴. The more precise dating range for the mandibular and dental remains found here was 177,000-194,000 years BP.

See Israel Hershkovitz, Gerhard W. Weber, Rolf Quam, Mathieu Duval, Rainer Grün, Leslie Kinsley, Avner Ayalon, Miryam Bar-Matthews, Helene Valladas, Norbert Mercier, Juan Luis Arsuaga, María Martín-Torres, José María Bermúdez de Castro, Cinzia Fornal, Laura Martín-Francés, Rachel Sarig, Hila May, Viktoria A. Krenn, Viviane Slon, Laura Rodríguez, Rebecca García, Carlos Lorenzo, Jose Miguel Carretero, Amos Frumkin, Ruth Shahack-Gross, Daniella E. Bar-Yosef Mayer, Yaming Cui, Xinzhi Wu, Natan Peled, Iris Groman-Yaroslavski, Lior Weissbrod, Reuven Yeshurum, Alexander Tsatskin, Yossi Zaidner, and Mina Weinstein-Evron, “The Earliest Modern Humans Outside Africa,” *Science*, Volume 359 (26 January 2018): 456-459.

³⁵. Brigit Katz, “Remarkable Evidence for Human Activity in North American 130,000 Years Ago,” *Smithsonian Magazine* (April 26, 2017).

³⁶. See Katerina Harvati, Carolin Röding, Abel M. Bosman, Fotios A. Karakostis, Rainer Grün, Chris Stringer, Panagiotis Karkanas, Nicholas C. Thompson, Vassilis Koutoulidis, Lia A. Mouloupoulos, Vassilis G. Gorgoulis, and Mirsini Kouloukoussa, “Apidimia Cave Fossils Provide Earliest Evidence of *homo sapiens* in Eurasia,” *Nature*, Volume 571 (25 July 2019): 500-517.

³⁷. For an interesting discussion of the 21st century state of thinking about Paleolithic evidence from the Aegean basin, see Curtis Runnels, “Early Paleolithic on the Greek Islands?,” *op. cit.*, as well as “Discussion and Debate,” *Journal of Mediterranean Archaeology* 27.2 (2014): 255-278.

³⁸. This idea is superbly defended by Duncan Howitt-Marshall and Curtis Runnels, in “Middle Pleistocene Sea-Crossings in the Eastern Mediterranean?” *Journal of Anthropological Archaeology* 42 (2016): 140-153.

³⁹. See Alan Simmons, “Mediterranean Island Voyages,” *op. cit.*

exchange their various arts and crafts and other technologies. They freely engage in mutual childbearing and childrearing. They were, in the words of Gaia Vince, “ancient yet cosmopolitan.”⁴⁰ Their mixing was as pervasive as it was productive. What this rich historical archive of research on the cave art at Asphendou reveals is that scholarship is also cumulative--much as Cretan culture has been.

That the most recent scholarly research has offered confirmation of Christos Papoutsakis’s remarkably prescient intuition about the Asphendou images’ great antiquity is a fitting testament to the virtues of Greek archaeology as well as the value of “amateur” scholarship, in Greece and elsewhere. The palimpsestic quality of mingled abstract and figural representation may also serve as a model for the island of Crete, the proverbial “mixed place,” since its first description in the Homeric poems.⁴¹ The provocative idea on display at Asphendou is that waves of migration, cultural mixing, and the correlative technical and artistic innovations, are a hallmark of our species, one that is especially evident on Crete.

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⁴⁰. Gaia Vince, “Ancient yet Cosmopolitan,” *Aeon*
<https://qoshe.com/aeon/gaia-vince/ancient-yet-cosmopolitan/76542429> (accessed June 23, 2020).

See also Gaia Vince, *Transcendence: How Humans Evolved Through Fire, Language, Beauty, and Time* (New York, NY: Basic Books, 2019).

⁴¹. *Odyssey* 19. 171-181ff.

For more on this trope, see Louis A. Ruprecht Jr., “Myths, Marvels, Monsters: Cosmopolitan Mixing on Crete in the Homeric Bronze Age,” in Nikolaos C. Stampolides and Mimika Giannopoulou, eds., *Η Ελεύθερνα, η Κρήτη και ο Έξω Κόσμος/ Eleutherna, Crete and the Outside World* (Αθίνα-Ρεθυμνο: Γραφοτεχνική Κρήτης, Α.Ε.Ε., 2020), 338-350, as well as *Cosmopolitan Crete: A History of Cultural, Ethnic, Linguistic and Religious Mixing* (Bloomsbury Academic, 2026), forthcoming.

THE ASPHENDOU CAVE TIMELINE

- 1957: August, Christos Papoutsakis's first visit to the Asphendou Cave
- 1962: September 7, the Asphendou Cave is brought to the attention of the Office of Tourism for the Prefecture of Xania
October 3, the Asphendou Cave is brought to the attention of the Greek Speliological Society
- 1963: March 4, the Asphendou Cave is first mentioned in the Cretan newspaper, *Kéryx* (Xania). The Asphendou Cave is catalogued as Cave #803 by the Greek Speliological Society
- 1971: September 10, Christos Papoutsakis's second visit to the Asphendou Cave
September 14, Paul Faure's first visit to the Asphendou Cave
October 21, Themistocles Mitsotakis publishes a brief report on the Asphendou Cave rock engravings in *Ethnikê Phônê* (Xania)
October 27, Eleutherios Platakis publishes a brief report on the Asphendou Cave rock engravings in *Bêma* (Rethymnon)
October 30, Eleutherios Platakis publishes a brief report on the Asphendou Cave rock engravings in *Ethnikê Phônê* (Xania)
October 31, Christos Papoutsakis publishes a brief report on the Asphendou Cave in *To Bêma* (Athens)
November-December, Paul Faure publishes a brief rejoinder to Papoutsakis, translated into Greek by Eleutherios Platakis, in *Amaltheia* (Agios Nikolaos)
- 1972: Report on an abbreviated excavation campaign at the mouth of the Asphendou Cave is published by the Greek Ministry of Archaeology
Paul Faure publishes a longer analysis of the Asphendou Cave rock engravings in his article about "Popular Cults on Ancient Crete" in the *Bulletin de correspondance hellénique*
Christos Papoutsakis publishes his longer analysis of "The Stone Carvings at Asphendou in Sphakia" in the *Cretan Chronicle* [Κρητικά Χρονικά (Herakleion)].
This text is then published as an independent pamphlet, Οἱ βραχογραφίες στ' Ἀσφέντου τῶν Σφακιῶν (Ηρακλειον Κρητης: Ανδρεας Γ. Καλοκαιρινος, 1972)
- 1973: Yiannis Tzedakis publishes a brief report about excavation at the Asphendou Cave in *Archaiologikon Deltion* ["Archaeological Bulletin"], describing finds of Minoan-era pottery fragments at the mouth of the cave
- 1978: Discovery of fossil remains of the Cretan dwarf deer, *Candiacervus ropalophorus*, in the Liko and Gerani Caves on the coast of northwestern Crete; this species was extinct before the last Ice Age
- 2010: Thomas Strasser, et. al., publish evidence in *Hesperia* of human presence in southern Crete some 200,000-300,000 years BP

2012-2013: Strasser excavates a system of caves on the south-central Cretan coast at Damnoni

2016-2017: Strasser, et. al., produce 3-D photogrammetric images and new sketches of the Asphendou Cave rock engravings

2018: Strasser, et. al., publish a report on the Asphendou Cave rock engravings suggesting that the oldest layers of the image field's palimpsest contain portrayals of the Cretan dwarf deer, thus confirming Christos Papoutsakis's original hypothesis as to their Paleolithic/Mesolithic pedigree

2019: Strasser, et. al., publish a second report, offering an art-historical and anthropological interpretation of the oldest layer of the Asphendou Cave image field

2020: Strasser, et. al., publish a third report, on the Asphendou Cave rock engravings as a "palimpsest in stone"

**THE DOCUMENTARY ARCHIVE OF THE ASPHENDOU CAVE
AND ITS ROCK CARVINGS**

IN ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Louis A. Ruprecht Jr.

Document One

Christos G. Papoutsakis, "The Rock Carvings at Asphendou in Sphakia," *To Bêma* (31 October 1971): 12

"Οἱ βραχογραφίες στ' Ἀσφέντου τῶν Σφακιῶν," *Το Βῆμα* (31 October 1971)

Document Two

Paul Faure, Professor at the University of Clermont-Ferrand, "The Engraved Rock-Carvings of the Asphendou Cave in Sphakia," *Amaltheia* 2.9 (1971): 277-283

"Αἱ Εγγαρακτοὶ Βραχογραφίαι τοῦ Σπηλαιοῦ Ἀσφεντοῦ Σφακιῶν," *Αμαλθεία* Τομὸς Β', Τεύχος 9 (Νοεμβρίου-Δεκεμβρίου 1971): 277-283

Document Three

Paul Faure, "Popular Cults on Ancient Crete," *Bulletin de correspondance hellénique* 96.1 (1972): 389-426 (pages 406-413 are dedicated to the Asphendou Cave)

"Cultes populaires dans la Crète antique," *Bulletin de correspondance hellénique* 96.1 (1972): 406-413

Document Four

Christos Papoutsakis, "The Stone Carvings at Asphendou in Sphakia," *Cretan Chronicle*, Second Series, Fourth Year (1972): 107-139

"Οἱ βραχογραφίες στ' Ἀσφέντου τῶν Σφακιῶν," *ΚΡΗΤΙΚΑ ΧΡΟΝΙΚΑ* (1972): 107-139

and

Οἱ βραχογραφίες στ' Ἀσφέντου τῶν Σφακιῶν (Ἡρακλεῖον Κρήτης: Ἀνδρέας Γ. Καλοκαιρινός, 1972)

DOCUMENT ONE

TO BEMA, Sunday, 31 October 1971 (page 12)

Christos G. Papoutsakis

“The Rock Carvings at Asphendou in Sphakia”

A very important discovery for our knowledge of prehistoric Greece is the remarkable engraved rock carvings in a cave located at Skordollakia, outside of the village of Asphendou in the administrative region of Sphakia, in Crete.

When, at the last Cretological conference, there was an announcement concerning the fauna from the Paleolithic period on Crete, conjectures were also formulated regarding the human presence at this same stage of prehistory. I submit that these rock carvings serve to underscore and confirm these conjectures.

In any case, the need for significant revisions to the contemporary state of prehistoric knowledge in Greece has been clearly demonstrated by developments in recent years, such as the discovery by Mr. D. Theocharis of painted (*graptos*) and engraved (*charaktes*) figures in a total of six caves on [Mount] Pelion; similar finds came to light in Epirus and Thessaly, in addition to other such evidence throughout our country, such as Paleolithic tools and a Neanderthal skull in the Chalkidiki.

But for the fact that all of this material is not yet known in its entirety, since the finds are incomplete and in some cases unpublished, these problems could already have been clarified.

Up to now, in the most widely explored region of Europe and the Mediterranean, a human presence in the Paleolithic and Mesolithic periods has been well established--that is, in the civilization primarily characterized by the society of a hunting and gathering economy--in all the main centers such as Spain, France, North Germany, Moravia, Russia, Italy, Central Asia and North Africa.

Some related new questions concerning population movement to the edges of the Paleolithic world, whether due to some triggering event or independent developments, are less controversial after the establishment of the existence of a Paleolithic society in Greece.

Specifically as it relates to Crete, it must be borne in mind that the island had already been formed in the essential shape (*morphê*) it has today at the end of the Pleistocene Era. Today, no one would say that the subsequent peak of Minoan civilization, in relation to its first glimmerings, was a sudden, meteoric event.

I discovered the rock carvings at Skordollakia for the first time in August of 1957 when I found myself at Asphendou, together with some friends while I was still studying at the Polytechnic, with the aim of examining the folk architecture of Sphakia.

Asphendou, nestled in the Sphakiot mountain range, at a height of roughly 750 meters, provides a summer retreat for householders from the seaside villages of Vouvas, Nomêkiana and Kolokasia, which you can locate “with your glasses” along the flat southern beaches of this region.

Built at the edge of a dry river-bed, planted with a few vineyards and walnut trees, it boasts austere, small stone huts (*spitakia*) with a few small openings—the door, along with two or three small windows like casements—that punctuate the naked, rocky area which constitutes the characteristic frame of Sphakiot life, a life as sparing as it is primitive.

To the west of the village, at the first sight of a structure with an utterly ancient shape, we came upon the *mêtata*--cheese-making huts (*turokomia*), which have the shape of a “cone”⁴²--circular tholos-style buildings with the same form as tholoi built in the traditional manner, precisely resembling Minoan tholos tombs and other ancient types of roofing.

At a distance of roughly one quarter-hour from the center of the village lies Skordollakia--or Skordoulakia--at the place where the path (*monopati*) splits, taking you either to the upper village of Kallikrates or to the mouth of the Asphendou Gorge.

There, situated on a precipitous ledge, you come to the cave--a Rock Shelter⁴³--on the floor of which are the engravings (*charagmata*) which may be compared to the sketches and photographs.⁴⁴

The orientation of the “way in” (opening) to the small cave is south-facing and it commands the hunter’s “passage” at the beginning of the Asphendian Gorge. The view extends to the Libyan Sea, with [the island of] Gaudos visible in the distance. This cave is well-known to the inhabitants of the area and was reported in the catalogue of caves in the small-scale map of Crete produced by the Greek Speliological Society. Registered as Number 803, it was reported by Mr. E. K. Platakis in the Xania newspaper “*Kêrux*” on March 14, 1963.

Apparently the site was registered according to the description of the village teacher, who either had not visited the surrounding area and simply reported the description of the villagers, or, if he did indeed visit the site, then he failed to appreciate its significance.

⁴². **Translator’s Note.** The term Papoutsakis uses is “*koumou*,” apparently abbreviated from *koumounari*, the Greek name for a pine cone.

⁴³. **Translator’s Note.** The word Papoutsakis uses is *brachoskepê*; he then included the term ‘Rock Shelter’ in brackets in English.

⁴⁴. **Translator’s Note.** The article included one photograph of the village of Asphendou nestled in the mountains, one photograph of a portion of the Asphendou cave floor, and four sketches of “the tree, the bow, the prey, and the spears (?)”

To date, the village of Asphendou, lying apart from every major artery connecting various points in the region, never received any significant attention from a guide or explorer who might have understood the significance of the rock carvings.

The carvings (*charagmata*) are located on the smooth surface of the limestone floor of the cave and occupy a space constituted by a depth of 1,20 meters and a width of 0,90 meters.

Roughly in the center of the surface with the carvings (*charagmata*), there is a hole of roughly 20 centimeters in diameter which resulted from the violent hacking at an area which most likely contained more figures.

The carvings (*charagmata*) were apparently made with stone tools--probably horn or "dragonstone" which is well-known in the area. The relationship between the figures and their varying renderings--the width and depth of the carving (*charagmatos*)--suggests that the cave was used in different historical periods. A classification of the carvings (*charagmatôn*) according to their visual similarities produces the following summary:

A.1. Carvings (*charagmata*) of animals--game animals which may be identified with precision (kri-kri, *Capra Ibex*) or antelopes.

A.2. An image of a drawn bow with an arrow (2 times), and related to this, a type of spear (if anyone can really call them that) with 2 points which usually appear in a crossed arrangement.

In addition, two carvings (*charaxeis*) may be identified with trees or branches.

B.1. "Little holes" (*Lakouvitses*)--small dots (*mikres koiotêtes*)--with a diameter of between one and five millimeters and a depth of up to 5 millimeters, arranged for the most part in a spiral design of between 15 and 50 millimeters [in diameter].

Sometimes these "little holes" are arranged axially and at other times they appear to be randomly arranged.

B.2. A group of abstract geometric symbols including a more deeply engraved circle with 3 diametrical cross-hatchings. This image may be associated with the uncertain symbolism of a figure in the upper portion (furthest from the entrance) which resembles the form of a ship and is similar to those represented on Minoan stone seals.

C.1. Finally there are a few carvings (*charagmata*) that I would call formless endeavors or happenstance etchings (*tuxaies charaxeis*).

The superimposition of design and the diverse arrangement of themes: the combination of specific figures (game animals, hunting weapons, trees) and of abstract symbols suggests a view of these carvings (*charaxes*) as the product of different chronological periods and also of diverse socio-political phases. I assume that the cave must have been in use for a long period of time

during the Late Paleolithic/Mesolithic Period--when hunting provided the greater part of human nutrition--until the Mesolithic/Pre-Neolithic Period, when new social structures and changing lifeways altered the modes of expression. New themes (*tropoi*) with abstract symbols and decorative meaning or magical application began to constitute the most characteristic forms of expression.

The superimposed and repeated carving (*charaxê*) on the same rock--especially game animals and hunting weapons--connect these figures to Paleolithic and Mesolithic peoples.

It is generally accepted--without applying this chronology everywhere--that the Mesolithic Period begins approximately 10,000 years BC. In order to link this with Cretan chronology, let us recall that the Neolithic Era began approximately 6000 BC (confirmed by the excavations at Knossos by Jhon [sic] Evans) and that the dawn of the Proto-Minoan Period is approximately 2800 BC.

The correlation of the Asphendou rock engravings with corresponding discoveries is difficult and inconclusive. From the technical standpoint--of the engraving and the arrangements, quite apart from the details of representation--they recall comparable figures from Italy (Egadi-Otranto-Palermo) as well as those from the Arctic Circle (Scandinavia)--and everything else that preceded the age of metal. As for the rock carvings (*brachographêmata*) in Greece that are currently known (on Pelion, such as the portable engraved [*charaktes*] plates), the manner in which they were reported and compared presents difficulties, due to their lack of stylistic similarities. Thus *l.x.*⁴⁵ on Pelion have well-known and recognizable images (mammoth, images of oxen, images of deer, human forms) but they do not correlate with the compositional arrangement (*sunthetê eikona*) of the rock carvings at Asphendou. What do possess interest for their differences and similarities--and thus call for closer study--are several other painted images (*graptôn mnêmeion*) from other locations. These include:

a) Naxos:

1) The Peak of Arônios: figural arrangements--hunting, dancing, ships--in a different style and technique which have been dated to the Proto-Cycladic Era (3,000-2,500 BC).

2) Plates with spiral and circular designs.

b) A plate which was found at Dreros on Crete and which contains images of goats and hunting bows which Mr. Marinatos dated to the end of the 7th century BC.

c) Another plate which was found in Tsouda at the beginning of this century in the excavation of the prehistoric acropolis of Sesklos, both sides of which contain formless lines (*amorphopoiêtes grammes*), a group of circles in the shape of a wheel, and many small holes. This plate was found in a pavement from the Bronze Age. Naturally, nothing precludes the possibility that it was taken

⁴⁵. **Translator's Note.** Presumably this is shorthand for "rock carvings" (*lithikê charaxê*).

up and re-used, thus originating in a much older period.

The general appearance of the small dots (*koilotêtôn*) (little holes [*lakouvitses*]) which are either separate or else arranged in circular and other patterns, provide another interesting theme with which to resolve the mystery of the rock carvings at Skordoulakia. In the past, many different explanations were provided for similar carvings (*charaxeis*)--in Scandinavia, in Palestine, in Greece, and elsewhere. Among them, theories have been proposed that they were used for religious libations (*thrêskeutikes spondes*), or that they provided a topographic diagram of the area, or that they were a representation of the starry heavens.

Regardless of whether these interpretations are well-founded or not, in relation to the cave at Asphendou we find them inadequate. And if we wish to promote the meaning of this discovery, and so to add a new proposal to the currently available hypotheses, then we might say that the rendering of a hermetic geometric symbol such as the small dots (*koilotêtes*)--whether arranged in an order or not--is the labor (*askêsê*) of a “sorceress” (*mias “mageias”*) from primitive humanity, a “sorceress” who was accorded preeminence as one possessed with the inspiration that enabled the realistic depiction of a hunting scene. All the more so if that person was perhaps not quite so primitive, but already marching forward, both agriculturally and politically, into a higher form of social life--namely, the Neolithic Era. Analogously, we might say that the visual artist of our time in his compositions has decidedly lost the power of a “magic-symbolic” subject and the desire for a catholic (common) experience, and provides a type of representation that offers a multiplicity of interpretations rather than a total-synoptic viewing experience.

To be sure, it is not possible at the current state of discussion to exhaust all of the archaeological and interpretive themes which emerge from what we take to be the significant revelations of the rock carvings at Asphendou presented here today. That will require more intense further study.⁴⁶

⁴⁶. **Translator’s Note.** As noted previously, this article is accompanied by a photograph of the village of Asphendou, a photograph of the plaster cast of the cave floor, and sketches of images of the tree, the bow, and the spears (?).

It is noteworthy that Papaoutsakis immediately dated the Asphendou rock carvings to the Stone Age (whether Paleolithic or Mesolithic). It is also notable that he understood the palimpsestic nature of the cave floor and theorized that it had been used repeatedly over many millennia. Yet he was preoccupied here far more with the abstract geometric designs than with the figural images of game animals. These abstract (or, if you will, “magical”) symbols provide the main comparanda he discusses here and also in the longer article below.

We can see how and why the fact that the Stone Age Cretan dwarf deer were unknown at this time had such a significant impact on the early interpretation of the rock carvings.

DOCUMENT TWO

PAUL FAURE, Professor at the University of Clermont-Ferrand

Αι Εγχαρακτοι Βραχογραφιαι του Σπηλιου Ασφεντου Σφακιων

“The Engraved Rock-Carvings of the Asphendou Cave in Sphakia,” *Amaltheia* 2.9 (1971): 277-283

[277] On October 31, 1971, the newspaper “The Stand” (“*To Bêma*”) (page 12) published a most interesting article by *Mr. Christos G. Papoutsakis* entitled “The Rock Carvings at Asphendou in Sphakia.” The author, an architect who knows the area very well, visited the cave with the rock carvings not only in August of 1957 when he was a student, but at least two more times in 1971, first on September 10 and a second time around the middle of October. He is neither an archaeologist nor a speliologist nor an historian, and in his published study he attempts to promote his belief that this is “an important discovery for prehistoric knowledge in Greece,” confirming this hypothesis by noting similar characteristics from other examples and using these to justify his beliefs. As a Professor of ancient Greek literature and politics, and as a member of various archaeological and speliological societies in Greece with more than twenty years of experience in the caves of Crete, I propose to offer my own speculations about the significance of the Asphendou cave.

First, then, a few words of an historical nature. The distinctive rock carvings have been known for many years among the Cretans of Xania and other parts of the island, not only from advanced studies, but also through information provided by the Tourist Bureau of Xania, whose Director confirmed to me on September 7, 1962, what I also heard from a woman who hails from Sphakia, regarding the rock carvings in the cave at Asphendou and their importance. In addition, Mr. Elefth[erios] Platakis--a doctor, and president of the Cretan Speliological Society, who has with great effort mapped and catalogued some 3300 features of the island over more than thirty years--also became aware of these rock carvings and confirmed their existence when he received an answer to the questionnaire he sent to Mr. G. Thalassinon, a teacher at Saint George in Sphakia, on October 3, 1962. Since then others have gathered further information about the area. Among them, Mr. Elefth[erios] Platakis, Mr. Ioannis Tsiphetakis, a serious student of the antiquities of Xania, and I arranged to travel there for the purpose of sketching the figures in this rock carving with great care, in order to produce a precise rendering (*schedion*) of the appearance of the cave and to attempt to assign a date to the rock carving. Our visit took place on September 14, 1971.

[278] The cave located at “Skordolakkia” (at a height of roughly 700 meters) is composed of Jurassic limestone. It has a height of 8.5 meters south to north, a width of 3 meters at the center, and a height ranging from 2.5 to 0.35 meters. The stone on the floor where the carvings are found, contains roughly 45 figures carved on an area with dimensions of 3.5 by 2.75 meters.

[SKETCH: The “Skordolakkia” Cave, Asphendou, Measurements made on 14 September 1971]

The rock carvings occupy an area measuring 1.15 meters from top to bottom and 0.78 meters

from left to right. 2/3 of the way (from the top) there is damage done by human design to a very ancient part of the rock, measuring less than 20 centimeters in diameter but encompassing roughly 1/4 of the extent of the section, reminiscent in outline of the island of Cyprus. Unfortunately there is further damage to the interior of the stone, in the form of names inscribed in ancient letters from our era (1959 AD) around the figures of the rock carvings, as well as incisions and scraping on the images (*schediôn*) themselves with the intention of making them more legible, and through the use of plaster to create a model of the rock carving. The photograph [279] which was published in “*To Bêma*” on October 31 is that of a model made from this plaster cast, which omitted a rather large section of the figures from the rock carving.

[PHOTO: “The entrance to the ‘Skordolakkia’ cave. Photograph by Mr. Io. Tsiphetakis”]

Was it necessary to publish this photograph in such a way that we see the scene “in reverse”?

[PHOTO: “The rock on top of which the engraved images are located. Photograph by Mr. Io. Tsiphetakis.”]

For these reasons we, working with great care and patience for more than three hours, and after carefully re-checking our work, took care to produce a sketch of all the details by hand, in order to be able to compare them with the photographs we took and with others which we know from Cretan archaeology. The critical study based on [280] our efforts will be carefully published in an international scientific periodical.

Two essential aspects of our interpretation differ from the conclusions reached by Mr. Chr. Papoutsakis. The first is that there is nothing in these figures related to the Paleolithic or Mesolithic era, as he asserts. He also asserts that the images from Sphakia, taken in their entirety, are reminiscent of corresponding images from south Italy and Sicily, from Naxos and at Sesklos [Thessaly], all of which are datable to the Bronze Age.

[PHOTO: “A group of the rock carvings: One can distinguish a bow, an arrow (or spear), goats (*agrimia*), and groups of holes (*lakkiskôn*). Photograph by Mr. Io. Tsiphetakis.”]

Besides, this, we know of even later images from the region around Xania, and especially from Agios Nikolaos (Perichora) and from the eastern end of the island. For the dating of such images archaeology utilizes three methods: the study of the appearance of the stone; the working and character of the scenes which may be compared with other figural images; and finally the study of the totality of the archaeological surroundings where these discoveries were made. It is certain that the rock carvings at the Skordolakkia cave are not in any way Neolithic, but rather of much later origin, clearly from the period of the earliest Bronze Age (roughly 2000 BC), or even later, in other words between 2000 and 1500 BC. The central hunting scene, including the bow (*toxon*) with its clear curvature, but even more the entire composition (see the very edge), spears with flat metallic points, nets, circular animal traps, the round and labyrinthine patterns of rather simple arrangement, the strictly separate character of these various sets of images, the discovery of pottery shards at the mouth of the cave from the second millennium BC, and finally everything

one observes in the [281] arrangement--all of this confirms to anyone familiar with Minoan seals and the study of ancient weapons, that

[SKETCH: “A group from the rock carvings of Asphendou.”]

these images are products of a highly developed human society, both from the perspective of politics and of art. In point of fact, what we see in this scene are one bow (only one), 12 arrows or spears and 25 or 26 [282] animals--game animals (the majority of them wild goat [*agrimia*] and deer [*elaphia*]) do not suggest that these derive from a hunting community of the Paleolithic era. We should recall that the bow was still in use in Sphakia in the 16th or 17th century AD, as is confirmed by various foreign travelers and explorers, and

[SKETCH: “The assemblages (*omades*) of small holes (*lakkiskôn*) from the rock carving.”]

that even in our own day Cretans hunt the wild goat (*agrimi*), especially the Sphakians, the austere rulers of this region.

To the upper right hand edge of the rock, under a very low part of the cave which prevents photographing it, there is not the image of a Minoan ship nor is there a rendering of an abstract geometric symbol, as Mr. Chr. Papoutsakis writes, but rather the image of a deer (*elaphou*) fallen into a net or hunting trap. This was nearly the only way to capture large animals in Greek antiquity. There were deer (*elaphoi*) in the White Mountains of Crete at the time of Pliny the Elder (1st century AD). [283] We know of one painted hunting scene, very similar to this one and suggesting the use of hunting nets, in the Bornopheto [sic] Cave (Lower Perbolakia, Sitia) which we published in the B. C. H. of 1969, at pages 193, 195, 196ff.⁴⁷

The one thing which remains a mystery about the Skordolakkia Cave of Aphendou is the meaning of the small holes (*lakkoudakia*, *lakkoubiteses*) which are carved into the rock in between the animal images. Mr. Chr. Papoutsakis assessed them correctly and worked carefully to exclude the groundless hypotheses suggesting that they represent libation drains (*spondikôn lakkiskôn*), or topographical representations of the area, or a rendering of the night sky. The idea that they are magical images (*eidous mageias*) related in some way to hunting deserves closer consideration. It must be said that this kind of magic (*hê mageia hautê*) was not exclusive to the Paleolithic era, but rather we find it among all kinds of hunters even today. We must also make two things clear.

⁴⁷. **Translator’s Note.** The full citation is as follows:
Paul Faure, “Sur Trois Sortes de Sanctuaires Crétois (cont.),” *Bulletin de Correspondance Hellénique* 93.1 (1969): 174-213 [Figure 13 on page 193 is a blurry photograph of “the wall of the Βερνόφετο cave at Kato Pervolakia (Sitias)”; Figure 14 provides a sketch of the “traces of figures still visible in the Βερνόφετο cave” and Figure 15 provides Faure’s overly imaginative “reconstruction of the figures in the Βερνόφετο cave”; Faure’s interpretation of these images then follows at pages 196-199].

The first is that the 575 holes (*lakkiskoi*) in total on this rock carving are not placed randomly, but rather are arranged in groups in between the animals and on top of the hunting instruments. The second is that no one of these seventy groups (composed of between 2 and 36 points) is similar to any other and that consequently these are personal symbols, analogous to our modern signatures or to the Minoan seals which contain analogous designs and may be dated between 2200 and 1700 BC. There is much more to say hypothetically about the group of seventy hunters who came to this cave to write (each in their own way) their names on the sacred rock (*hierou brachou*) in order to guarantee a successful hunt by means of magic (*kata tropon magikon*).

Only the precise comparative study of the 30 sacred caves (*latreutikôn spêliôn*) which we know and have studied on Crete, as well as of rock carvings and small holes on the rocks in the region of the White Mountains, will enable us to offer an interpretation as to the meaning of these mysterious designs. This is a task in which Mr. Eleuth[erios] Platakis, Mr. Ioannis Tsiphetakis and the undersigned are intensely engaged, with the present note for the readers of “Amaltheia”(*).

PAUL FAURE

(*) . Editor’s Note. The above article was written in French. It was translated for our Journal by our distinguished colleague, Mr. Eleuth. Platakis.⁴⁸

⁴⁸. **Translator’s Note.** One is struck by the subtle barbs at the beginning of this article, designed to undercut Papoutsakis’s authority by establishing Faure’s own professional credentials. Why Platakis, who may have traveled to the Asphendou Cave with Papoutsakis, would have supported this unnecessary polemic is unclear.

It is fascinating to note that Faure recognizes deer as well as wild goats in the carved images of animals he describes. The later discovery of fossils of Cretan dwarf deer would provide new evidence with which to assert a Mesolithic, or even Paleolithic, dating for the cave art at Asphendou. This makes Faure’s round-house dismissal of any possibility that the rock carvings at Asphendou might be from the Stone Age even more striking. In rendering this judgment, he focuses far more on the animal figures and what he takes to be bows, arrows and spears (we will see Papoutsakis’s rejoinder to the idea that the upper image of a boat is actually a net in the second, much longer article which I have translated below).

Finally, Faure grants the virtues of Papoutsakis’s interpretation of the abstract geometric figures, about which he himself has far less to say. Though Faure seems inclined to a “religious” and/or “magical” interpretation, such as the one that Papoutsakis proffers, his notion that these symbols are “signatures” is asserted without evidence or relevant comparanda.

DOCUMENT THREE

Paul Faure, "Popular Cults on Ancient Crete," *Bulletin de correspondance hellénique* 96.1 (1972): 389-426, with pages 406-413 dedicated to the Asphendou Cave

[406]

The cave, called *sta Skordolákkia*, or rather *st'Askordólakia*,⁴⁹ lies 600 meters to the southeast from the center of Asphendou (Sphakion) and at an altitude of 730 meters, in a deposit of Jurassic limestone on the southern flank of the White Mountains. It overlooks the entrance to a gorge which leads in two hours by foot to the neighboring villages of Vouvas, Agios Giorgios and Nomikiana. Nestled in its high karstic valley, Asphendou, with its few primitive houses and vaulted cisterns, serves them as a summer hamlet (Fig. 10). Its name is related to the city of *Aspendos* in Pamphylia and the village of *Asphendiou* on Kos. Like the neighboring villages of Imbros, Vraskas, Kolokasia and Patsianos, it is situated in an area with the greatest likelihood of possessing pre-hellenic settlements.

The cave in question, brought to the attention of the Office of Tourism and the Prefecture of Xania on 7 September 1962, and to the Speliological Society

[407]

Fig. 10: *Buron de bergers au lieu-dit Seli à Asphendou*; [photograph of] "A shepherds' hut at a place called Seli in Asphendou."

of Greece on 3 October 1962,⁵⁰ was the subject on 14 September 1971 of the detailed notes that

⁴⁹. (35) No relationship with *to skordo*, garlic, which does not grow here. The only vegetable species identified on the terrace 5 meters below the cave, according to Mr. Platakis, were: ἀγκάραθος [*angáraphos*, small Jerusalem sage], ἀκόκλαστρος [*akókalastros*] or ρόκα [*roka*, arugula], ἄθαστος [*áthastos*, **unidentified**], ἀωνίδα [*anónida*, rest-harrow], ἀσκόλυπρος [*askólupros*, common golden thistle, or Spanish oyster thistle], ἀστιβίδα [*astibída*, prickly, spiny or thorny burnet], ἀσφενταμές [*asphentamés*, sycamore maple], βάτος [*bátos*, berries], γαϊδουρότσιτα [*gaïdourótsita*, cotton or Scotch thistle], γαλαστιβίδος [*galastibidos*, spiny spurge (poisonous)], κατσοπρινές [*katsoprinés* [Kermes (or Quercus) Oak], μανουσάκια [*manousákia*, narcissus], σφαράγγι [*spharángi*, asparagus], τυραστιβίδα [*turastibída*, **unidentified**], ψήφια [*psêphia*, herbaceous peony] and, in particular, that which shepherds still call *brobloi* (= *bolboi*), which on Crete they call *skordolakas* or *askordolakas*, and which is a hyacinth with an edible bulb, *Muscari Comosum* Mill. The locals attribute appetite-inducing, diuretic and aphrodisiac qualities to it. *Skordolak(k)ia* is the simple diminutive of *askordoulakoi*, the hyacinth.

Translator's Note: I am indebted to Anastasia Tzigounaki, of the Greek Ministry of Archaeology for Western Crete, for the identification of most of these Cretan varieties.

The numbers in parentheses here correspond to Faure's own notes.

⁵⁰. (36) Mr. El. Platakis published a notice of its existence in the journal *Kéryx* of Xania on 14 March 1963 (no. 803 in the catalogue of Cretan caves), and provided more precise details

were published by Mssrs. Platakis, Tsiphetakis and myself. Outside the cave and 4 to 5 meters below it, there is an elliptical terrace, 84 meters by 49 meters, enclosed by stones and arranged in sections. At the foot of the path which ascends to the cave are two tall cones made of stone, which serve as landmarks and possibly once held masts, pillars or poles. We noticed a scatter of broken pottery shards on this path during our visit, including an elliptical section of the base of a pot along with the lip and throat of another turned at a sharp angle. They reminded us of the ceramics found in the northern caves of this same mountain range, as well as on the Karès hill in the field (*polje*) of Askyprou, which have been dated to the end of the Early Minoan or the

in the description of 27 October 1971 in *To Bêma* of Rethymnon, thus preceding by 4 days the publication of an article by the architect, Mr. Christos Papoutsakis, in the journal *To Bêma* of Athens, on 31 October 1971, page 12: “Οι Βραχογραφίες στ’ Ασφένδου τὸν Σφακίῳν,” an article whose errors (*inexactitudes*) we have corrected in the review for *Amaltheia*, of *Agios Nikolaos* 2 (1971): 277-283.

Translator’s Note. The Xania Newspaper, *Kêrux*, published a brief excerpt from Platakis’s speliological report on its front page on Thursday, March 14, 1963. Subsequent excerpts from his report were published on March 15 and 16. In Ελευθ. Κ. Πλατακη, “Τα Σπηλαια του Νομου Χανίων (πρόδρομος ἀνακοίνησις),” the report about the Asphendou Cave is one of five listed from the Asphendou region and reads as follows: “4. Skordolakkia (803). In the SE part of the Asphendou region. 950 [meters above sea level] - 6,6.1,5 [depth and width of the cave in meters]” (translation mine). There is no mention of the rock carvings.

Faure is correct that Platakis published an article in the Rethymnon newspaper, *Bêma*, on October 27, 1971. The full citation is Ελευθ. Κ. Πλατακη, “Ἡ Βραχογραφία του Σπηλαιου των Σφαριων,” ΒΗΜΑ (Ρεθυμνης) 27 Οκτωβρίου 1971. This short letter (*Epistolai*) notes that news of the discovery at the Asphendou Cave was reported in Xania (by *Ethnikê Phônê*) on October 21, 1971, and in Rethymnon (by *Bêma*) on October 22, 1971. Platakis notes that rock engravings in caves are attested elsewhere in Greece and on Crete, citing a 1963 article by Paul Faure, and concludes that these rock carvings at Asphendou warrant further study. I am grateful to Dr. Dimitra Mylona for this reference.

The article by Themistocles Mitsotakis, Secretary General of the Historical and Archaeological Society of West Crete, appeared in the Xania newspaper, *Ethnikê Phônê*, on Thursday, October 21, 1971. He mentioned the discovery of engraved rock carvings (*encharaktos* “*brachographia*”) in the region of Sphakia, noting (contra Platakis) that such images were previously known only from the Pyrenees. The team he sent to examine the rock carvings consisted of two archaeologists (Antonios Zoïs and Angeliki Klutoi), three architects, including Christos Papoutsakis (with Dimitrius Papanikolaou and Marika Zagorisiou), and was joined by Styliou Apokoronou, a well known Cretan archaeologist who worked on various sites in the Xania region including Aptera, Polyrrhenia and Phalasarna.

A review of the Rethymnon newspaper, *Bêma*, reveals no additional reports between October 19-31, 1971.

beginning of the Middle Minoan period on West Crete.⁵¹ The entrance to the cave is 6.25 meters wide and 2.10 meters high

[408]

Fig. 11: *Plan de la caverne Skordolakkia à Asfendou*; [sketch] “Plan of the Skordolakkia Cave at Asfendou”]

viewed from the south. It is encased by an enormous rock of white and pink limestone, with surface measurements of 3.50 by 2.75 meters. Above it the vault, which is completely dry, allows only 50 to 80 cm of free passage for the human body. The depth of the cave is 8.50 meters, and the width is 3.50 meters; its height runs from 2.50 to 0.35 meters. The innermost part, which is inaccessible to adults, is composed of a conglomerate of chunks of pure limestone (Fig. 11).

On 1.15 meters of its length from north-to-south, and on 0.78 meters of its width, the gently sloping upper surface of the center of the stone is covered with graffiti and various signs. The engraved portion is interrupted near the center by a hole, as deep as it is wide (one cubit) whose highly irregular shape resembles the form of the island of Cyprus in reverse.⁵² One or more of the central figures were the object of

⁵¹. (37) For the elements of dating the ceramics from West Crete, cf. the articles by S. Hood, P. Warren and G. Cadogan in *BSA* 59 (1964), p. 50-80; 60 (1965), p. 99-113; 61 (1966), p. 163-191; 62 (1967), p. 47-56.

Translator’s Note. The full citations are as follows:
Sinclair Hood, Peter Warren and Gerald Cadogan, “Travels in Crete, 1962,” *Annual of the British School at Athens* 59 (1964): 50-99;
M. S. F. Hood, “Minoan Sites in the Far West of Crete,” *Annual of the British School at Athens* 60 (1965): 99-113;
Sinclair Hood and Peter Warren, “Ancient Sites in the Province of Ayios Vasilios, Crete,” *Annual of the British School at Athens* 61 (1966): 163-191; and
M. S. F. Hood, “Some Ancient Sites in South-West Crete,” *Annual of the British School at Athens* 62 (1967): 47-56.

It is noteworthy that each of these articles trouble to mention Neolithic and older material among the surface finds from their various surveys.

⁵². (38) The hole in the rock was filled with soil by Mr. Chr. Papoutsakis on 10 September 1971 (op.cit. Note 36). He made a cast of the figures in plaster, which left some traces of material behind. [409] Apart from the fact that the process of making a plaster mold introduced numerous errors of interpretation, it also requires reading the images in reverse. Additionally the photograph of the cast published in *To Bêma* in Athens on 31 October 1971 must be corrected in two ways: 1) by the images themselves, viewed directly on the rock independent of the plaster cast; and 2) by the sketches we made personally during three hours *in situ*. The human eye alone can distinguish an intentional image from a sheerly accidental feature of the rock or from a stain caused by the soil.

[409]

Fig. 12 : *Partie centrale des gravures rupestres de la caverne Skordolakkia*; [photograph of] “Central section of the rock engravings in the Skordolakkia Cave.”

systematic destruction, apparently a very long time ago.⁵³ To the left, modern shepherds have added their initials and the date (1959) over the ancient carvings. These images, more or less marked and worn, were not etched with copper, bronze or iron, metals which are not very resistant to this rock, which is as hard as a sharpening stone,⁵⁴ but rather with a punch made of black quartzite which is very abundant throughout this region, or else of obsidian, of which we found a blade near the pass of Seli, called *sto Geristo*, located between Asphendou and Askypou. The saw teeth along certain lines are due to the impact of a small chisel (Fig. 12).

The figures appear to come from many different hands and many different eras. The most ancient of them, because they are the most effaced and partially covered by others, appear to be geometric lines: crosses, sharp angles, [410] circles. Roughly twenty angles of slight curvature suggest horns (*cornes*). Five others, extended in a long line or two parallel lines, suggest an animal's muzzle together with a long neck. Then there are engraved hunting scenes. One can discern the shape of some 30 wild animals: 3 deer (*cervidés*) recognizable by their antlers (*bois*), 23 ibex, *bouquetins* or wild goats which are still called *agrimia* or *krikri* in the White Mountains, and 4 indeterminate quadrupeds. Most are distributed in the lower part of the drawing and are running in all directions, as if it were a flock gathered in front of the cave and agitated before the massacre. The antlers (*ramures*) densely assembled in the middle part, are rendered in simplified or symbolic ways. It is possible in at least two cases that the engraver wished to depict a male covering a female. The large deer (*cerf*) at the top is caught in a net; an ibex rushes into a rectangular trap; two circular traps covered with branches are visible in the center and at the bottom. One may distinguish 12 spears with large metal points⁵⁵; 6 of them are two-

⁵³. (39) More figures on the border of the hole are incomplete. In addition, the rock was partially destroyed at the bottom and on the right side. The bodies of several wild goats (*bouquetins*) are cut in two.

⁵⁴. (40) It was used and sold in the region of Samaria, in the gorge close to Asphendou, until the end of the 19th century.

⁵⁵. (41) cf. The so-called triangular points of EM II-MM Ia, analyzed by K. Branigan, *Copper and Bronze Working in Early Bronze Age Crete* (Lund, 1966), fig. 5 and 6, p. 110-111, and S. Hood, *The Minoans* (London, 1971), p. 118-119.

Translator's Note. The full citations are as follows:
Keith Branigan, *Copper and Bronze Working in Early Bronze Age Crete* (Lund: Studies in Mediterranean Archaeology, 1968) [Figures ##5-6, at pages 110-111, depict eight versions of what Branigan calls “Triangular Daggers” from Agia Triadha, Koumasa, Marathokephalo and Mochlos]; and
Sinclair Hood, *The Minoans: The Story of Bronze Age Crete* (New York, NY: Praeger

sided. Four times they are depicted crossing one another. In five cases they cover the body of an animal. Near the center, on the border of the hole in the rock, one may discern a bow and arrow. It is a composite bow with two lateral extensions clearly visible.⁵⁶ In addition, one should note that the bodies of most of the animals are traversed by one or more oblique lines, links, darts or arrows. No representation of a human being is visible (Fig. 13).

Finally--almost always placed between the various animals, but sometimes superimposed on their horns or feet, or else at the point of the spear-shaft--one finds groups of small holes, composed of anywhere from 2 to 36 elements. They were drilled in a circle in the rock and range from 1 to 5 millimeters in diameter and depth. There are about 575 in all. Some of them are very superficial

Publishers, 1971), 118-119:

The weapons used by Cretans during the earlier part of the Bronze Age included short daggers and swords of types evolved in Syria in the first instance. Curious wide flat blades peculiar to Crete may have been hafted as spear-heads. But in Middle Minoan times socketed spear-heads were made, together with long swords or rapiers. Some of these rapiers were nearly three feet in length. Their hilts were riveted to short tangs which projected from the shoulders of the blade. Large pommels of stone or ivory, or of wood plated with gold, helped to balance the weight of the long blades. These weapons were designed for thrusting and they had rounded shoulders like the daggers from which they had evolved.

⁵⁶. (42) On this type of bow, see A. Snodgrass, *Early Greek Armor and Weapons* (Edinburgh, 1964), p. 142 and 249.

Translator's Note. The full citation is Anthony M. Snodgrass, *Early Greek Armor and Weapons: From the End of the Bronze Age to 600 B.C.* (Edinburgh at the University Press, 1964), 142-143 (with Notes 7-9, at page 249):

Both [double and composite bows] had been known in the Bronze Age, the composite in Crete alone, the "European" on the mainland too; but to judge from the almost complete absence of arrowheads on the mainland from the Protogeometric and Geometric ages (for most of which they are the only evidence available), archery in mainland Greece suffered a long eclipse, and the bow-types were reintroduced afterwards. In Crete, however, the evidence tells a different story. The single-curved composite bow had been at home here in the Minoan era, and was again predominant in the Orientalizing period; more important, there are a number of arrowheads to testify to the continuance of archery in Crete through the intervening centuries, and what is more, these arrowheads in many cases conform to a type known to have originated in the Bronze Age.... The earliest, probably sub-Minoan examples are from Karphi; Kofina (Panagia) can offer specimens of Protogeometric date, and the Geometric age is represented at Dreros, Kavousi, and Prinias.... [I]f the composite bow could survive in Crete, then *a fortiori* the European one (also well known to the Minoans and more particularly to the Mycenaean) could have been retained in the same way; and we may therefore look to Crete for the source of the apparent reintroduction of archery in Geometric Greece.

and barely noticeable. Most of them constitute abstract designs, or simple geometric figures, triangles (in fifteen cases), squares, rhomboids, circles (4 cases). Others are grouped without any clear design. Certain others, by contrast, represent spirals (4 or 5 cases), animals (snake, rabbit, dog), tools (basket, bucket, vase, single or double axe, seat...), a buckle, a flower, a labyrinth (Fig. 14). Since there are no two groupings that are identical in the entire collection of 70, one is forced (*on est contraint*) to view them as personal symbols, analogous to the engraved holes on Cretan seals at the end of the Early Minoan and the period of the first palaces.⁵⁷

[411]

Fig. 13: *Gravures rupestres de la caverne Skordolakkia à Asfendou*; [sketch of the] “rock carvings of the Skordolakkia cave at Asfendou.”

[412]

Fig. 14: *Groupes (70) de points gravés parmi les figures de la caverne Skordolakkia à Asfendou*; [sketches of] “70 grouped figures composed of engraved holes in the Skordolakkia Cave at Asfendou.”

The essence of these engravings recalls the rock painting at Kato Pervolaki (Sitias) which we published in BCH (1969), p. 195-199.⁵⁸ These are scenes of bewitching game animals. But in addition, at Asfendou, 70 hunters have seen fit to leave their signature on the sacred rock, as elsewhere on Crete others have traced the outline of a hand or foot.⁵⁹ The Master and the

⁵⁷. (43) K. Branigan, “The Earliest Minoan Scripts. The Pre-Palatial Background,” *Kadmos* 8 [413] (1969), p. 15-16– Note also the presence of holes in the rock at Meskla, ancient Keraia, on the facing north side of this same mountain range: BCH 86 (1962), p. 50, fig. 11.

Translator’s Note. The full citations are as follows:
Keith Branigan, “The Earliest Minoan Scripts--The Pre-Palatial Background,” *Kadmos* 8 (1969): 1-22 [the discussion at 15-16 draws parallels between the use of incised holes (always even-numbered) on Minoan seal stones and some disc-shaped versions discovered at Phaistos]; and Paul Faure, “Cavernes et Sites aux deux Extrémités de la Crète,” *Bulletin de Correspondance Hellénique* 86.1 (1962): 36-56 [Figure 11 on page 50 is a photograph of “*Pierre à cupules* (ἀρόλιθος) de Kalogeriana au Nord de Meskla (Kydonias),” that is, a rough stone with small incised holes found at Kalogeriana to the north of Meskla (Kydonia). Figure 10 on page 49 is a photograph of a foundation stone with a similarly random group of incised holes from the sanctuary at the same site].

⁵⁸. **Translator’s Note.** The full citation is as follows:
Paul Faure, “Sur Trois Sortes de Sanctuaires Crétois (cont.),” *Bulletin de Correspondance Hellénique* 93.1 (1969): 174-213 [pages 195-199 discuss some images inscribed in the “cave sanctuary” of Bernópheto, cited above].

⁵⁹. (44) P. Faure, BCH 87.2 (1963), p. 496-497.

Translator’s Note. The full citation is as follows:

Mistress of the animals represented here grant their assurance of success and abundance. The archaeological context of EM-MM I-II, the composite bow, the twin-headed spears with metal tips, the use of the net, the holes drilled in the rock, the spiral, the double axe, the labyrinth, together with the comparison to analogous assemblages at Naxos,⁶⁰ Sesklos, Otranto, Palermo, Lipari, as well as on Cyprus and in [413] Palestine⁶¹—all of this suggests that the Skordolakia

Paul Faure, “Cultes de Sommets et Cultes de Cavernes en Crète,” *Bulletin de Correspondance Hellénique* 87.2 (1963): 493-508 [pages 496-497 discuss the various “signatures” in the *Kouphospélios*, near the village of Katsidoni; Figure 4 is a photograph “*Dalle gravée d’empreintes de pieds dans l’antichambre de la grotte à Katsidoni* (Sitias); that is, of engraved footprints from the antechamber of the cave at Katsidonia].

⁶⁰. (45) Δελτ. Ελλ. Σπηλ. Εταιρίας 6 (1962), p. 46-48.

Translator’s Note. The *Deltion Ellênikês Spêlaiologikês Etaireias*, or “Bulletin of the Greek Speliological Society,” which was founded in 1950 and published bilingually in Greek and French, may be consulted online at <https://ese.edu.gr/category/deltio-ese>.

In this case, the full citation is Anne Petrochilos- J. Ioannou, “Το σπ. Καλοριτσας (Ναξου)/La grotte Kaloritza (Naxos) [The Cave of Kaloritza (Naxos)],” *Δελτιον Ελληνικης Σπηλαιολογικης Εταιρειας/Bulletin de la Societé Spéliologique de Grèce*, Volume 6 (1961-1962), Fasc. 7-8: 43-50. Pages 46-48 offer photographs of deer, hunters, dancers and spirals all inscribed on stone, as well as a detailed sketch of the cave interior.

⁶¹. (46) H. G. Buchholz, “Die ägäischen Schriftsysteme und ihre Ausstrahlung in die ostmediterranen Kulturen,” in *Frühe Schriftzeugnisse der Menschheit* (1971), added, p. 101-103, examples of points and geometric signs from the island of Lipari to Keratos-Semayük in Lycia (ancient Bronze Age). One might also mention the examples from Libyan hunters (Tibesti, Fezzun Tassili): Pierre Beck and Paul Huard, *Tibesti, carrefour de la préhistoire saharienne* (Paris, 1969), p. 163-174. Mr. S. Hood kindly informed me of the undated graffiti from a cave at Gezer: cf. R. A. S. MacAlister, *Gezer* III (1912), plates 56 and 57. Circular points appear as pottery marks in Cyprus and Palestine: cf. P. Aström, *Excavations at Kalopaidha and Agios Iakovos in Cyprus* (Lund, 1966), p. 167-173, the majority of it Cypriot.

Translator’s Note. The full citations are as follows:

Hans-Günter Buchholz, “Die ägäischen Schriftsysteme und ihre Ausstrahlung in die ostmediterranen Kulturen,” in *Frühe Schriftzeugnisse der Menschheit* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1969), 88-150 [These papers represent the proceedings of a conference held October 9-10, 1969, at the Joachim Jungius Gesellschaft der Wissenschaften in Hamburg, where Buchholz was in residence. Pages 101-102 of Buchholz’s essay present sketches of “Select Bronze Age Writing from the Island of Lipari” (Plate 12), and photographs of “Vessel Fragments with Incisions Resembling Writing from the Island of Lipari” (Plate 13), and “Incisions on an Early Bronze Age Vessel from Karataş-Semayük, Lydia” (Plate 14), with discussion of this highly suggestive material following on page 103];

Pierre Beck and Général Paul Huard, *Tibesti, carrefour de la préhistoire saharienne* (Paris: B. Artaud, 1969), 163-176 [a chapter entitled “Les traits culturels des chasseurs” provides a brief

[sic] cave of Asphendou became sacred at the beginning of the second millennium BCE and did not remain so for long. It is the second cave of this type (*de ce genre*) that we have identified in the region of Sphakia. The other is the cave of Agiasmatsi, 7 km to the south-east. But the cave of Asphendou sheds new light on the magico-religious practices of the peoples of West Crete, their hunting techniques, and perhaps even their first attempts at writing.

Thus do cave sanctuaries abound at the western end of Crete. Each ancient city in the west seems to have had its own: Amphimalia at Asprosykia, Aptera at Lakhtarides (?), Minoa at Marathospilios (cult of Diktyнна?), Kydonia at the cave of Lera (Pan and the Nymphs, including Akakallis) and at Arkoudia (Apollo and Artemis), Apollonia on the southern coast at Agiasmatsi (Pan and the Nymphs), Anopolis at the site of Korakoskydaki, Tarrha in the Samaria Gorge (at the cave of Agios Nikolaos or at the Nereids' cave near the site of Linoseli?), Elyros in the Skotini cave near Moni (?), Lissos in the "Cave" of the Spile ravine (Pan and the Nymphs), Hyrtakina at Kaminia (Demeter, Kore, Dionysus), Polyrrhènia at Agia Sophia of Topolia and perhaps also in some of the numerous caves on its akropolis, Phalasarna at Kastri on Cape Koutri.⁶² The cave refuge Κερά Σπηλιώτισσα [*Kera Spèliôtissa*] of Vrysses (Kydonia), ancient

discussion of "Pratiques magique. Spirales" at pages 168-169];

R. A. S. MacAlister, *The Excavation of Gezer, 1902-1905 and 1907-1909* III (np, 1912) [Plates 56 and 57 both depict an array of strangely shaped "Tomb Plans" (Tombs ##1-14); what Faure intends with this reference is unclear]; and

Paul Åström, *Excavations at Kalopsidha and Ayios Iakovos in Cyprus*, with contributions by several scholars (Lund: Studies in Mediterranean Archaeology, Volume II, 1966), 167-173 [offers a survey of ceramic finds from Swedish excavations on Cyprus conducted in 1959, with "circular cavities" numbering one, two, three, four, five, six, seven, twelve, and "numerous"].

⁶². (47) P. Faure, *Functions des cavernes crétoise* (Paris, 1964), *passim*, and BCH 91 (1967), p. 133-138; 93 (1969), p. 200-206. In 1969, in a private collection in Xania, I saw some classical heads in clay analogous to those I have published, BCH 86 (1962), p. 46, fig. 6 and 7, a fragment of a votive plaque representing the bottom of a peplos, and a very small clay plaque from the fourth century depicting a bearded god, a bared breast, a scepter to the side, protecting a small clothed child standing on the right hand side; all of this came from the cave of Lera. In 1970, I saw a small dog's head in clay in another collection taken from the cave of Arkoudia.

Translator's Note. The full citations are as follows:

Paul Faure, *Fonctions des cavernes Crétoises* (Paris: Éditions E. De Boccard, 1964) [page 1 offers an important overview of how the catalogue of Cretan caves was first produced through Faure's and Platakis's collaboration, which I quote and translate in the Introduction];

Paul Faure, "Cavernes et Sites aux deux Extrémités de la Crète," *Bulletin de Correspondance Hellénique* 86 (1962): 36-56 [Figures 6 and 7 at page 46 depict some rough-hewn and badly worn votive heads taken from the innermost room at the grotto of Lera (Kydonia)];

Paul Faure, "Nouvelles Recherches sur Trois Sortes de Sanctuaires Crétois," *Bulletin de Correspondance Hellénique* 91.1 (1967): 114-150 [pages 133-138 comprise a section entitled "Sanctuaires de cavernes," and conclude with mention of the "prehellenic" names of "Ἀσφενδοῦς

Polikhna (?), may have served temporarily as a cult site for LM, given the abundance of abandoned shards in the vicinity of the water and a wall of conglomerate in the second subterranean level.⁶³ The same dedication is likely at Agios Ioannis of Spilia (Kisamou) a vast rock shelter near Gribiliana, ancient Pergamos (?).

[414] The same religious phenomenon, but more certain in this case, may be witnessed in the Μαμελούκου τρύπα [*Mameloukou trupa*, “Mamluk’s Trace”] cave at Perivolia (Kydonia),⁶⁴ 6 km to the southwest of Xania and 1,80 km to the northeast of the site of Kastello Varypetrou.

and Ἴμβρος]; and

Paul Faure, “Sur Trois Sortes de Sanctuaires Crétois (cont.),” *Bulletin de Correspondance Hellénique* 93.1 (1969): 174-213 [pages 194-206 continue the discussion of “sanctuaires de cavernes”].

⁶³. (48) I. Tsiphetakis, “Τὸ σπήλιον Κερά Σπηλιώτισσα,” *Δελτ. Ελλ. Σπηλ. Εταιρίας* 9 (1967), p. 61-68.

Translator’s Note. The *Deltion Ellênikês Spêlaiologikês Etaireias*, or “Bulletin of the Greek Speliological Society,” which was founded in 1950 and published bilingually in Greek and French, may be consulted online at <https://ese.edu.gr/category/deltio-ese>.

In this case, the full citation is J. Tsifetakis, “Τὸ σπήλιον “Κερά Σπηλιώτισσα,” Βρυσσῶν Κυδωνίας / La grotte “Kera Spiliotissa” a Vrysses de Kydonia [The “Candle Cave” in Vrysses in the Region of Kydonia],” *Δελτιον Ελληνικης Σπηλαιολογικης Εταιρειας/Bulletin de la Societé Spéliologique de Grèce*, Volume 9 (1967), Fasc. 3: 61-68. The Résumé states that:

Cette grotte connue depuis l’antiquité se trouve près du village “Vrysses” province de Cydonia (Crète). Elle se compose de sept salles et est habitée de chauves-souris, helix pomarie et divers Coleopteres et Arachnoïdes. La 6eme salle contient un petit lac. Cette grotte contient beaucoup de fragments de potteries ayante été habitée depuis l’antiquité minoenne comme refuge et lieu de culte.

This cave was known since antiquity near the village of “Vrysses” in the province of Kydonia (Crete). It is composed of seven rooms and is inhabited by bats, flies, as well as various beetles and spiders. The 6th room contains a small pool. This cave contains a great many pottery fragments having been inhabited since the Minoan period as a refuge and a cult location.

⁶⁴. (49) *PraktAE* (1968), p. 133-138 (summary report by I. Tzedakis, plan by I. Tsiphetakis).

Translator’s Note. The full citation is as follows: Ιωαννης Τζεδακις, “Ανασκαφη Σπηλιου ‘Μαμελουκου Τρυπα’ (Περιβολια Κυδωνιας),” *Πρακτικα της εν Αθηναις Αρχαιολογικης Εταιρειας* (1968): 133-138 [or “Excavation of the Cave of the Mamluk’s Trace (Outskirts of Kydonia)” which summarizes archaeological exploration of the large Late Minoan IIIB cave complex (“Mamluk’s Trace”) roughly 6 km north of the city of Xania.]

The excavations carried out there since 1968 by Dr. Vardinogiannis have gradually revealed the ruins of a small village which was perhaps the ancient Λαχανία κώμα (*Lachania kōma*) attested in an inscription from Kydonia.⁶⁵ It is to her, in any case, that modern Xania owes its name. Small cups or unpainted jars, MM III-LM IA, with internal decorations, analogous to these kernoi or bucket vases, were found in a pile near the wall of the first room of the Μαμελούκου τρύπα cave. From the preNeolithic to late LM IIIb it served as a refuge in times of uncertainty and was always a source of water, given its extreme humidity. At one point, water was considered sacred: a natural fact in a country where the water dripping inside of most caves is still considered to be a holy fountain today, ἀγίασμα [*ayiamsa*].

At the end of this new survey of Cretan caves, let us admit that water does not explain everything. Closed or secret societies have their say, as do those of hunters, shepherds and metalworkers. Cults depend on cultures (*civilizations*). The country of the Eteocretans to the east of the island is as devoid of caves as it is rich in open-air sanctuaries. Even the small rock shelter at the site of Αθροπολίθους (*Athrōpolithous*), 1,500 m to the south of Zakro and attached to a countryside sanctuary,⁶⁶ cannot be considered a sacred cave of the Eteocretans. The true cave cults only appear to the west of Mirabello. As for the first appearance of these cults on the island, we are not better informed in 1972 than we were in 1969. They seem to begin on Crete toward the end of the third millennium. The four small Neolithic idols from the anonymous cave at Gerani, opened accidentally on the 15th of March 1969, 7km west of Rethymnon,⁶⁷ are individual

⁶⁵. (50) *Insc. Cret.*, II, X, 1, line 23: cf. BCH 93 (1969), p. 203 n. 3.

Translator's Note. The first citation is from Margarita Guarducci, ed., *Inscriptiones Creticae: Opera et Consilio Friderici Halbherr Collectae*, Volume II: *Tituli Cretae Occidentalis* (Roma: La Libreria Dello Stato, 1939), Section X ("Cydonia"), page 116, which contains a 23 line inscription, the last line of which reads: ἐν τᾷ Λαχανίαι κ(ώ)μαι; and page 117, which adds the notation "Λαχανία modo nomine κώμα distinguitur."

The second citation is:

Paul Faure, "Sur Trois Sortes de Sanctuaires Crétois (cont.)," *Bulletin de Correspondance Hellénique* 93.1 (1969): 174-213 [203n3 refers to three newspaper reports concerning *Mournidákê*, or *Blázianas Spélios*, from 1964, and one from 1965].

⁶⁶. (51) P. Faure, BCH 91 (1967), p. 115 and 138-140.

Translator's Note. The full citation is as follows:

Paul Faure, "Nouvelles Recherches sur Trois Sortes de Sanctuaires Crétois," *Bulletin de Correspondance Hellénique* 91.1 (1967): 114-150 [115 and 138-140 represent the beginning of his discussions of "sanctuaires de sommets" and sanctuaires de villages ou de campagne," respectively].

⁶⁷. (52) Khristos Makris, Τὸ νεοανακαλυφρὲν σπήλαιον εἰς Γεράνι Ρεθύμνης (Xania 1969). The 4 feminine idols in question, finely worked and not *stéatopyges*, are worked in red and white stone. They were found together with the points, bone tools and axes which are displayed together in the same case in the Rethymnon Museum. The accompanying stone flakes

talismans of the human beings who lived and worked in the cave, rather than cult offerings. It is rather to the caves of the Mani (Dirou),⁶⁸ of Phocis (Korykion antron), of Boeotia

and other debris suggest the existence of a workshop (*atelier*) inside this cave.

Translator's Note. The full citation is as follows:

Χρίστου Μακρή, “Το Σπηλαιον ‘Γερανι’ Ρεθυμνης (Αριθμ. 3553)” (1969): 95-101 [Christos Makris, “The ‘Gerani’ Cave Near Rethymnon (No. 3553),” made available by the Theophrastos Digital Library–Department of Geology, University of Crete (Ψηφιακή Βιβλιοθήκη Θεόραστος--Τμήμα Γεολογίας. Α.Π.Θ.)]. The cave was revealed when cuttings were initiated to construct a large bridge for the National Highway on March 15, 1969. Excavations undertaken by Yannis Tzedakis found evidence of Minoan religious (and possibly funerary) use of the cave, but beneath these remains he also found Late Neolithic human and animal skeletons, as well as four anthropomorphic stalagmites well to the interior. Makris concluded that the cave was sealed by earthquake sometime around 1700 BCE, but felt that interpretation of the site suffered from the lack of clearer remains.

⁶⁸. (53) A Neolithic idol from the 4th millennium taken from the Alepotrypa Cave at Diros: G. A. Papathanassopoulos, “Σπήλαια Διρού, αἱ ἀνασκαφαὶ τοῦ 1970-1971,” *ArchAnAth* 4 (1971), p. 12-26 and figs. 18-19. Photographs of rock engravings from that cave (5 schematic human bodies, one bird, one jellyfish (?), sexual symbols) in the Athenian magazine, *Epikaira*, dated 14 February 1969, p. 54.

Translator's Note. The full citation is as follows:

Γ. Α. Παπαθανασοπουλος, “Σπηλια Διρου: Αι Ανασκαφαι του 1970-1971,” *Αρχαιολογικα Αναλεκτα εξ Αθηνων* 4 (1971): 12-26 [G. A. Papathanasopoulos, “The Diros Caves: Excavations of 1970-1971,” *Athens Annals of Archaeology* 4 (1971): 12-26].

The report concerns work focused on the Alepotrypa Cave in the southern Mani, a cave complex inhabited from at least the Neolithic period, and later enhanced with carved stairs to the interior. In addition to fragments of Neolithic pottery, stone and bone hand tools and weapons, and two inhumation burials, Figures 18 and 19 provide photographs of the undistinguished head of a carved marble idol.

Αννας Πετροχειλου, “Τα Σπηλια της Ελλαδος,” *Epikaira* (Παρασκευη 14 Φεβρουαριου 1969)--Αρ. Τευχους 28, 51-60, provides a brief narrative description, with photographic images, of the caves of Alepotrypa, Agios Andreas, and Limnôn. Page 54 contains four photographic plates from the Alepotrypa Cave. Above is an image of the stalagmites and stalactites inside the Cave. Below is the image of an exposed rock carving found outside of the Cave: a roundish shape with 12 radial external lines and one line inside the round. The two central plates (in lesser resolution) are described as depicting: (left) “three dancers, to the lower left a bird, in the center the symbol to ward off evil spirits and to the right a jellyfish”; (right) “an animal form, a woman who is dancing, a man with a diadem, a human shape, and below the familiar symbol against evil spirits and the diagram of the female sex.” [This last image is the same as the one that appears outside of the Cave, and is interpreted as a vaginal image by Petroxeilou].

Of greatest significance is the fact that Petroxeilou dates all of these images to “the Later Paleolithic (30 - 5.000 BC),” a detail that Faure fails to mention.

(Orchomenos)⁶⁹ [415] or Attica (Marathon) that we must turn to find true offerings which may be older than those from Crete.⁷⁰

⁶⁹. (54) In a lecture delivered by Professor Bertolani on 31 August 1971 at the 2nd International Colloquium of Speliology at Athens, one would have learned of a cave in the vicinity of Lake Copaïs where a cache of clay idols dated to the Late Neolithic were retrieved.

⁷⁰. **Translator's Note.** The main contours of Faure's interpretation of the Asphendou rock carvings have already been enumerated. Here, I wish to highlight four items: 1) Faure faults Papoutsakis for making sloppy plaster casts of the cave floor and for misrepresenting what they depict, largely by forgetting to reverse the images; 2) he devotes far more attention to the animals and weaponry than to the abstract geometric symbols, reading them (like the Abbé Breuil) as traditional hunting scenes, and insisting that the weapons and "nets" confirm his dating of these images to the Minoan period; 3) he reiterates and elaborates upon his unusual hypothesis that the geometric symbols represent actual signatures of 70 individuals, possibly representing the first attempts at writing on the island of Crete; and 4) he relies on his truly impressive knowledge of Cretan comparanda, concluding his exhaustive survey with the ironic and accidental recent discovery of Neolithic materials in a cave at Gerani (near Rethymnon), where the Cretan dwarf deer would also be discovered just a few years later.

DOCUMENT FOUR

[107] Christos Papoutsakis, “The Stone Carvings at Asphendou in Sphakia”
Cretan Chronicle [KRHTIKA XPONIKA], Second Series, Fourth Year (1972): 107-139
[reprinted as a pamphlet in that same year by the Herakleion publishing house of Andreas G.
Kalokairinos; I have utilized that manuscript in the preparation of this translation]

1. PREFACE

The rock carvings at Asphendou have already been presented in an announcement published by an Athenian daily newspaper.⁷¹ This article, the first analytical publication dedicated the carvings, I take to be indispensable, not least for the small stir it aroused.⁷² To be sure, this is not

⁷¹. (1) Newspaper, “*To Bêma*,” Athens, Sunday, October 31, 1971, p. 12.

⁷². (2) “*Ethnikê Phônê*,” Xania, October 21, 1971 and October 30, 1971, as well as other Cretan newspapers and the periodical, “*Amaltheia*” as in our Note 7.

Translator’s Note: Papoutsakis is being both circumspect and generous in referring to this as a “small stir” [*mikro thorubo*]. As I have noted above, the first article is Themistocles Mitsotakis’s description of the archaeological and architectural team’s visit to the Asphendou Cave, published in the Xania newspaper, *Ethnikê Phônê* [People’s Voice], on October 21, 1971; Papoutsakis was a part of that team.

As also noted, Platakis, who was the President of the Cretan Speliological Society, published a letter entitled “The Rock Carvings of a Cave in Sphakia” [Η Βραχογραφία του Σπηλαιου των Σφακιων] in the Rethymnon newspaper, *Bêma* [The Stand], dated October 27, 1971. Platakis also published a second, and much longer, article with the same title in *Ethnikê Phônê*, on Saturday, October 30, 1971. This far more polemical article is presumably the one Papoutsakis has in mind. In this latter article, Platakis reiterates his reference to earlier newspaper articles in *Ethnikê Phônê* (October 21, 1971) and *Bêma* (October 22, 1971 [actually dated October 27, 1971]), and the idea that carvings of this kind were previously known only in the Pyrenees. But the lion’s share of this latter article is designed to undercut Papaoutsakis’s authority by insisting that the Asphendou rock carvings had been known well before his report was published. Platakis notes that the Asphendou Cave art was known to the Speliological Society of Crete already in 1962, one of whose members, Giorgos Thalassinou, published a notice in the Society’s periodical, *Deltion Ellênikês Spêlaiologikês Etaireias*, or “Bulletin of the Greek Speliological Society” (as I have noted, the Bulletin was founded in 1950 and published bilingually in Greek and French), on October 3, 1962. This date is difficult to understand, as the *Deltion* Volume VI, fasc. 7-8, was dated July-December 1962; Platakis has an article there, but not Thalassilou. Platakis next states that a second notice was submitted to the *Deltion* by Kanaki Geronumaki on June 26, 1967 (again, Volume IX, fasc. 1-2, is dated January-June 1967, and also contains an article by Platakis, but nothing from Geronumaki). We should also note that Platakis’s own notice in 1963 mentioned the Asphendou Cave, but nothing about the cave art. Platakis goes on to state that engraved rock art from caves is also known elsewhere in Greece (as noted in volume 28 of the Athenian periodical, *Epikaira*, on page 54, dated February 14, 1969),

a definitive study. The entire material record of these rock carvings requires a more extensive presentation, including from the standpoint of the illustrations to be used as rigorous scientific evidence.

On the other hand, an archaeological exploration of the area around the cave will increase the likelihood of achieving a fuller understanding of the subject matter, given that a comparison with other known sites will assist in ensuring that our conjectures come closer to the truth.

The hypotheses that have been formulated thus far do little more than look back at earlier corresponding studies. Thus, the analysis which follows will remain open to disagreement and further discussion. And this is because today many fundamental revisions have occurred in the standard view of the social organization [*politismo*] of prehistoric hunters. The study of analogous sites in our country is entirely undeveloped, and the Greek bibliography is virtually nonexistent.

2. TREKKING

The rock carvings at Asphendou were discovered in the summer of 1957 when, while still students, and with the aim of studying folk architecture--both secular and sacred--in the region of Sphakia, we (myself, together with my colleague Ms. Soula Tsêrilakê-Barzouka, my sister Ms. K. Zarbanê, and the journalist Mr. Takis Kalonaro) discovered them on the Askyphou mountain path, during the first stage of our exploration of this isolated corner of Crete. Passing through the settlement [*sunoikismo*] of Gonê, we arrived in the village of Asphendou and broke our fast at the home of the Boliôtês family.⁷³

and more specifically on Crete, such as at the Kouphospilios Cave published by Paul Faure in 1963 (in the *Bulletin de Classique Hellenique*, volume 87, pages 496 and 497). Finally, he adds that other cave art, though not engraved, is also known to exist on Crete. All of this, he concludes, requires further study.

The editors of *Ethnikê Phônê* append a notice thanking Platakis for this announcement. They observe that it took five years (1962-1967) for the first announcement to appear in the *Deltion*. They express their desire for more rapid dissemination of such information, and promise Eletherios Platakis that they will promptly publish any further material he wishes to provide to them. So the principle purpose of this essay is to say that the material from the Asphendou Cave has been known since 1962, well before Christos Papoutsakis ever sought to publish the material, and thus to establish Platakis (rather than Papoutsakis) as the chief authority on the Asphendou Cave.

Online sources for these sources include www.epikaira.gr and <https://ese.edu.gr/category/deltio-ese>.

⁷³. (3) I deem it my duty once again to express my gratitude for the generous hospitality of the Boliôtêdes who, ever since then, have repeatedly taken me into their home. And one more detail which may interest the anthropologists: Manousos Boliôtês “is the tallest man in the

[108] Asphendou,⁷⁴ nestled in the Sphakiot mountain range, at a height of roughly 750 meters, provides a summer retreat for householders from the seaside villages of Vouvas, Nomêkiana and Kolokasia, which you can locate “with your glasses” along the flat southern beaches of this region, at a distance of roughly one and one half hours by foot. Climbing up along the edge of a dry river-bed, planted with a few vineyards and walnut trees that surround the stone paving and cobbled paths, and framed by stone walls that surround the austere, small stone huts (*spitakia*) with a few small openings--the door, along with two or three small windows like casements--that punctuate the naked, rocky area which constitutes the characteristic frame of Sphakiot life, a life as sparing as it is primitive.⁷⁵ (Plate 3, fig. 1).

To the west of the village, at the first sight of a structure with an utterly ancient shape, we came upon the “*mêtata*,”⁷⁶ or cheese-making huts (*turokomia*), which have the shape of a “cone”⁷⁷--

region,” according to the testimony of his fellow villagers, standing more than 2 meters tall.

⁷⁴. (4) Pronounced Asphédou--it probably derives from the term *asphedoura* which means throwing or casting. Probably because the village seems to be virtually “cast” into the soil. See Γ. Πάγκαλος, Περὶ τοῦ γλωσσικοῦ ιδιώματος τῆς Κρήτης, τόμ. Β', 184.

Translators's Note. The full citation is as follows:

Γ. Πάγκαλος, Περὶ τοῦ γλωσσικοῦ ιδιώματος τῆς Κρήτης, Τομ. 2. Εισαγωγή: Γλωσσάριον Α-Κ [G. Pankalos, *The Linguistic Idioms of Crete* (1961), Volume 2, *Introduction: Glossary A-K*].

Page 184 contains the following entry:

asphedoura, feminine, East Crete:

hurling, unleashing, a handmade stone or dart:

“He cast an *asphedoura* at the wild goat and broke its neck.”

Synonymous with *apolutara*. (Translation mine)

⁷⁵. **Translator's Note.** Five of the next eight paragraphs are lifted nearly verbatim from Papoutsakis's previous 1971 article in *To Bêma*.

⁷⁶. (5) “*Mêtato*” (Byzantine). Ancient word meaning an abandoned military camp--later used for cheesemaking. See Πάγκαλος, τόμ. Γ', 100, and Ιωαν. Μαυρακάκη, Ποιμενικά Δυτικής Κρήτης.

Translator's Note. The full citations are as follows:

Γ. Πάγκαλος, Περὶ τοῦ γλωσσικοῦ ιδιώματος τῆς Κρήτης, Τομ. 3. Εισαγωγή: Γλωσσάριον Λ-Σ [G. Pankalos, *The Linguistic Idioms of Crete* (1961), Volume 3, *Introduction: Glossary L-S*].

Page 100 contains the following entry:

mêtato, neuter, East Crete.

The Byzantine μητᾶτον (see the Lexicon for Sophocles and Du Cange). From the Latin *castra metata* (prob. der. from *metor* [*metior*], to measure) a formally organized military encampment, but with the omission of the noun *castra*, the *metata* (der. from *metatum* [*metatus-a-um*]) in its nominal form is defined not as a military encampment, but rather a stone structure near the animal pens, in which the cheese is processed from milk, the

circular tholos-style buildings [*kukloterous tholôtu ktismatos*]--with the same form as tholoi built in the traditional manner, and precisely resembling Minoan tholos tombs and other ancient types of roofing.

Having completed our exploratory work, we prepared to return to the village of Kallikratês, our next stop. Before leaving, we asked the inhabitants if perhaps they knew of other points of interest in the area--some old church with wall paintings or something else like that. Mrs. Iph. Boliôtê answered us: "At the edge of the village, at Skordoulakia, on the road to Kallikratês, there is a cave with *Roman letters*." Her voice was colorless and indifferent in its description of this "insignificant" cave, where the inhabitants of the village "had always known about the etchings."

A quarter hour by foot from the center of the village brought us to Skordollakia--or Skordoulakia,⁷⁸ at the place where the path splits [109], taking you either to the upper village of Kallikratês or to the mouth of the Asphendou Gorge.

cheese-making equipment is stored, and the cheesemaker temporarily resides.
(Translation mine)

and,

Γιαννη Μαυρακακη, Ποιμενικὰ Δυτικῆς Κρήτης (Χανιά: 1948) [*Pastoralists of West Crete*], 24-25:

The pastures of the White Mountains are called **Madares**. It comes from the verb **madô-madomai**. **Madára** comes from **madarós**, which means **plucked, bald**, naked, because they are stripped of all trees.... [Mavrakaki then distinguishes communal from privately owned *madares*, and the thirty types of cheese made in them]... Pastures are rented in the spring⁷⁸ when the herds of goats and sheep are brought up to make cheese. That is when the general **division** (*moirasma*) **of the madares** takes place, into various portions called **mitata** in which certain goats and sheep will be pastured. The *madares* of West Crete are identified by three categories, when the *mitata* are distributed in the spring: 1) **generally divided**, 2) **rented**, 3) **exchanged**. (Translation mine)

⁷⁷. **Translator's Note.** As I noted in the previous article from *To Bêma*, the term that Papoutsakis uses is "*koumou*," apparently abbreviated from *koumounari*, the Greek name for a pine cone.

⁷⁸. (6) Probably derived from the word *askordoulakas* or *askourdoulakas*--as they call the bulbs on Crete. See Πάγκαλος, τόμ. Β', 117.

Translator's Note. The full citation is as follows:

Γ. Πάγκαλος, Περὶ τοῦ γλωσσικοῦ ιδιώματος τῆς Κρήτης, Τομ. 2. Εἰσαγωγή: Γλωσσάριον Α-Κ [G. Pankalos, *The Linguistic Idioms of Crete* (1961), Volume 2, *Introduction: Glossary A-K*.

Page 177 contains the following entry:

askourdoulakas, masculine, East Crete (Ancient)

the bulb (*bolbos*), also called *borbos*, *leopardia comosa*. (Translation mine)

There, situated on a precipitous ledge, we came to the “cave,” a protected hollow [*koilotêta*] (rock roof, porch, rock-shelter [English in the original], *abri*), on the floor of which are the engravings [*charagmata*] which may be compared to the photographs and sketches (Plate 3, fig. 2 and Plate 4).

Since then I have visited Asphendou repeatedly, alone and in the company of friends who eagerly assisted with the gathering of material.

For that reason, I would like to thank my friend, the talented archaeologist Mr. Adonis Zoïs.⁷⁹ The gift of his encouragement in pursuing the study of this material, that is, his assistance in providing comparisons and suggestions, has placed me in his debt for the completion of this publication. In addition, I thank the sculptor, Mr. Chr. Didônês, the architect, Mr. Phil. Zannara, as well as the archaeologist, Ms. Radka Koundourou, and the Ph.D., Ang. Kloutsiniôtou, for their help in compiling the various elements of this study.

Much later (in September 1971), I was accompanied on one of my visits by Mssrs. Th. Mitsoutakis and I. Tsiphetakis, advisors [*sumbouloi*] of the Historical and Archaeological Society of West Crete. At the same time that I was completing the text of this presentation of the rock carvings, Mr. I. Tsiphetakis brought Mssrs. El. Platakis and P. Faure to Skordoulakia.⁸⁰

Well known to the inhabitants of the region “from time immemorial” the cave was reported for

⁷⁹. **Translator’s Note.** Zoïs offered his analysis of the Asphendou rock carvings not long after Papoutsakis’s article appeared. This is Antonis A. Zoïs, “À propos des gravures rupestres d’Asfendou (Crète),” *Bulletin de Correspondance Hellénique* 97.1 (1973): 23-30. It bears noting that Faure appended his own dismissive comments to the end of this article, as follows:

I think that what constitutes the heart of the debate are not the previous visits of Mr. Papoutsakis, nor the awareness of *engravings* at Asphendou by the Prefecture of Xania in 1962, nor the unfortunate method of plaster casting that confused the lines and disturbed the rock surface, nor even the precision of the sketches that have been published to date, which are always questionable, but rather *the dating of the engraved figures*. It seems illogical to me to date them to the Later Paleolithic or Mesolithic, when the archaeological context is Minoan, and the weapons depicted (composite bow, spears tipped with large metal blades) as well as the system of holes are clearly from the second millennium BC. We will need to wait for the publication of the shards and tools by the Greek excavators for more precise dating of the habitation of the so-called Skordolakkia (sic), without unnecessarily exaggerating or minimizing the importance of a common (*banal*) phenomenon that is also of recent date. (Translation mine)

⁸⁰. (7) The report of this visit may be found in an article by Mr. Paul Faure, “The Engraved Rock Carvings of the Asphendou Cave in Sphakia,” *Amaltheia* 2 (1971): 277-283.

Translator’s Note. This article, which was translated by Eleftherios Platakis from Faure’s French into Greek for this Cretan publication, is included in English translation above.

the first time in 1963 without critical analysis, in the small-scale catalogue of the caves of Crete produced by the Greek Speliological Society, with the catalogue number 803.⁸¹

The village of Asphendou, lying apart from every major artery connecting various points in the region, is in general a place that has not been visited to this day by any hiker or explorer who might have been interested in the cave or have understood its real significance. That is why its presence would have been registered much as the village teacher described it, whether he contented himself with repeating villagers' reports, or he actually visited it himself but could not understand what its interior contents revealed.

[110] The orientation of the “way in” (opening) to the small cave is south-facing and it commands the hunter's⁸² “passage” at the beginning of the Asphendian Gorge. The view extends to the Libyan Sea, with [the island of] Gaudos visible in the distance. Directly in front [of the cave] there is a plain of roughly 2000 square meters.

THE ROCK CARVINGS

As noted above, the engravings are situated on a smooth, polished limestone surface on the floor of the cave, covering an area 116cm in height and 63cm in width (Plates 5, 10 and 13).

Roughly at the center of the “synthesis”⁸³ there is a hole with a diameter of approximately twenty centimeters (Plate 5, Letter A). This hole is the result of a violent cutting, and in a part of the design that clearly contained more images. The motivation for this destruction was most likely the widespread village belief,⁸⁴ that hidden treasure was to be found beneath the surface of

⁸¹. (8) El. Platakis, “The Caves of the Nomos of Xania,” in the Xania newspaper, *Kéryx* [“The Herald”] (March 14, 1963), where it is reported that the cave stands at an elevation of 950 meters and the dimensions of the cave were: 6 meters in depth, 4 meters in width, and 1.5 meters in height.

⁸². (9) Asphendou is well known today as a hunting ground for the entire Nomos of Xania.

⁸³. (10) The word ‘synthesis’ is not used here to imply the rational attempt to provide a determinate and final conclusion. Not at all. As used here, it simply refers to the overall composition [*apeikonisē*] and initial impression [*entupōsē*].

Translator's Note. Accordingly, I will normally translate Papoutsakis's term ‘synthesis’ as “composition.”

⁸⁴. (11) Thrace: N. Μουτσόπουλος, *Τὰ ἀκιδιογραφήματα τοῦ Παγγαίου*, 1969, 8; Bulgaria: V. Mikov, “Gravures rupestres en Bulgarie,” *BIAB* 5 (1929): 293; Turkey: Bostanci, “Researches on the Mediterranean Coast of Anatolia,” *Anatolia* (1959): 129-178.

Translator's Note. The full citations are as follows:
Νίκου Κ. Μουτσοπουλου, *Τὰ Ἀκιδιογραφήματα τοῦ Παγγαίου* [“The Lance Engravings of

engraved stone.

The superimposition and variety of the engravings suggests first and foremost a very ancient usage of the rock shelter. When the first period of this use was, we shall attempt to determine with an analysis of the various elements.

The conclusive examination of the iconographic themes will justify, I believe, the interpretation which follows. My conclusions are based on the interpretation of the diachronic evolution of each theme: we meet the same “dressing” [*ntuma*], the same subject, from the Paleolithic era right up to the age of metal--and even later. But the concept [*noêma*] changes. The sequence of corresponding images has, in each period, a different meaning. And precisely this is the interesting thing: the preservation of a subject--with virtually identical formal [*morphikê*] properties--does not necessarily serve to identify the content. The similarity among analogous forms [*tôn morphôn*] provides an uncertain means of attaining to a chronology and an interpretation. Nonetheless the knowledge of all the stages of diachronic variation provides a point of view from which to obtain some insight.

[111] The first general classification of the engravings provides us with the following:

- a) a group composed of specific figural subjects, and
- b) a group comprised of abstract symbols.

Apart from the first group of engravings which can be discerned quite clearly, and the others on top of them, we meet more recent contemporary engravings, such as names and one isosceles cross.

Pangaio”] (Αθήναι: np, 1969). It consists of a descriptive analysis (1-8), 44 sketched figures (9-29), and eight photographic plates (30-38).

A two-page synopsis of the book available in the Theophrastus Digital Library describes the book as containing 38 pages of text, 44 figures, and 8 plates. According to this synopsis, the cave art at Pangaio, near Lake Karlas in Thessaly, “contains animal figures, human figures, bows and arrows, armed hunters, horsemen with spears, shields and swords.” It adds that this cave art “has confirmed the continuity of worship between the idol worship in caves and that of the Christian religion in cave-churches”;

V. Mikov, “Gravures rupestres en Bulgarie,” *Isvestiii, ai, j na Bulgarskiii, ai, j arkheologicheski institut* 5 (1929): 290-308 (the French summary is at 307-308 [describing some engraved animal, geometric, and human figures at Karagouy, which he dates to the Late Neolithic/Early Bronze Age and associates with similar figures in Portugal, Italy, Scandinavia and the Caucasus]; and

Enver Y. Bostanci, “Researches on the Mediterranean Coast of Anatolia: A New Paleolithic Site at Beldibi Near Antalya, Preliminary Report,” *Anatolia/Anadolu* (1959): 129-178 [with evidence of abundant stone tools, Mesolithic rock painting, and Upper Paleolithic rock engraving].

A) First Group: *Figural subjects*.

a. 1–*Engravings of game animals*.

On the preserved portion of the image field we meet the portrayal of game animals 22 times, which I identify with the legendary “agrimi” of Crete (*capra ibex*, *capra aegagrus creticus*).⁸⁵ Some of the engravings are clear and deeply incised, well-defined and complete, whereas others are obscure, vague and unfinished, with a length ranging from 3 to 9 cm.

⁸⁵. (12) For the various ages and naturalists’ names for the “agrimi” see: V. Raulin, *Description physique de l’Ile de Crète* (1869), Vol. II, 1034. For its general appearance on Crete from the Pleistocene Era, see S. E. Küss, *Abfolge und alter der Pleistozänen Säugetierfaunen der Insel Kreta*, Ber. Naturf. Ges. Freiburg. Br. 60 (1970), 35-83.

Translator’s Note. The full citations are as follows:

Victor Raulin, *Description Physique et Naturelle de l’Ile de Crète* (Paris: Arthus Bertrand, Editeur, 1869), Vol. II, 1034:

L’animal sauvage le plus intéressant de l’Ile, est sans contredit la chèvre sauvage ou chamois qu’Edrisi signalait au milieu du XII^e siècle, comme peuplant les montagnes de la Crète; animal que Belon a le premier décrit et figuré sous le nom de *Bouc estain*, et dont se sont occupés la plupart des voyageurs en Crète et des Zoologistes, en la rapportant alternativement aux quatre espèces différentes qui habitent les pays montagneux du pourtour de la Méditerranée: les Alpes, le Caucase, la Perse et la Haute-Égypte...

The wildest and most interesting animal on the island is without a doubt the wild goat or *chamois* which Edrisi noted there in the 12th century as inhabiting the mountains of Crete; the animal which Belon first described and gave the name *Bouc estain*, which fascinated most Cretan travelers and Zoologists, and which are related to four different species which inhabit the mountainous regions on the periphery of the Mediterranean: the Alps, the Caucasus, Persia and Upper Egypt...; and

Siegfried E. Küss, “Abfolge und Alter der pleistozänen Säugetierfaunen der Insel Kreta,” in Max Pfannenstiel, ed., *Berichte der Naturforschenden Gesellschaft zu Freiburg I. Br.*, 60.1 (Freiburg im Breisgau: Selbstverlag der Gesellschaft, 1970), 35-83 [the English language Abstract at page 36 reads:

The pleistocene mammalian faunas of Crete are subdivided into an elder *Kritimys* stage with *Kritimys*, *Elephas antiquus*, *Elephas creticus*, *Hippopotamos* and *Cervus creticus* and into a younger *Mus minotaurus* stage with *Mus minotaurus*, *Loxodonta creutzburgi*, *Cervus creticus*, *Cervus sp.*, and a hominid. The *Mus minotaurus* stage comprises two faunas of different age: The elder Kaló Chorafi fauna and the younger Grida Avlaki fauna. The age of the Grida Avlaki fauna has been determined by geological criteria. It corresponds to the transgressive phase, which ended with formation of the terrace +30m. Here this terrace is correlated with the Eutyrrhénien in the sense of Riss/Würm-interglacial. The age of the elder faunas can only be estimated.

He discusses the age of the *Cervus creticus*, in conversation with Paul Faure, at pages 74-75].

The identification of these game animals with “agrimi” is surely the most probable one. We also find it to be the most attractive option. Moreover, the “agrimi” remains on Crete to this day, especially in the region of the Samaria Gorge. Its presence on the island in more recent times is indicated in much lesser numbers.⁸⁶

We find them still today in the Alps and the Caucasus, and they are the most precious game animal for hunting communities throughout a much wider zone, ranging from the Caucasus, to Central Asia, Africa, the Balkans, Italy, Spain, France and elsewhere.⁸⁷

⁸⁶. (13) See especially: R. Hutchinson, *Prehistoric Crete* (1968), 37-38.

Translator’s Note. The full citation is as follows:

R. W. Hutchinson, *Prehistoric Crete* (Middlesex: Penguin Books, 1962, 1968), 37-38:

FAUNA. In the far west the schist valleys of the Kandanos and Ennea Khoria districts are better watered than the average and tolerably fertile, as are also the two coastal plains of Kisamos and Khania. In the White Mountains are the remains of the great cypress woods that still supplied material to the Venetian navy as late as the sixteenth century and which in the Keramia district will grow up to a level of 6500 feet. These parts have always been a refuge for the hunted, whether man or beast. In the time of Pliny, or at least in that of his authority, the province of Khania was the only part of Crete where deer still survived, and the wooded heights west of the Hagio Roumeli gorge are now the last refuge of the *agrimi*, the Cretan ibex which was still to be found in the Ida and Lasithi districts fifty years ago. Evans’s statement, however, that they still existed on Dhia is not correct.

⁸⁷. (14) Raulin, op. cit., and H. Müller-Karpe, *Handbuch der Vorgeschichte* (1966), I, Pl. 31, 85, 100, 111, etc. The ibex is found depicted in many areas and especially in mountain settings. See: Abbè H. Breuil, *Four Hundred centuries of Cave Art* (1952), 43.

Translator’s Note. The full citations are as follows:

Victor Raulin, *Description Physique et Naturelle de l’Ile de Crète* (Paris: Arthus Bertrand, Editeur, 1869), Vol. II, 1034 [“...quatre espèces différentes qui habitent les pays montagneux du pourtour de la Méditerranée: les Alpes, le Caucase, la Perse et la Haute-Égypte; “four different species which inhabit the mountainous regions on the periphery of the Mediterranean: the Alps, the Caucasus, Persia and Upper Egypt...”];

Hermann Müller-Karpe, *Handbuch der Vorgeschichte*, Erster Band: *Altsteinzeit* (München: C. H. Beck’sche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1966) [Tafel 31 depicts a wide variety of horned and antlered animals, together with a variety of stone tools, Tafel 85 depicts more of the same, Tafel 100 presents a wide range of renderings of various animals, and Tafeln 111-116 present renderings of bison, mammoth, horses, reindeer, and other antlered creatures; all of these images are taken from caves in France, though none of them resemble the *agrimi*]; and

Abbè Henri Breuil, *Four Hundred Centuries of Cave Art*, Mary E. Boyle, trans. (New York: Hacker Art Books, 1952, 1979), 43:

Taken as a whole in Quaternary wall Art, the fauna painted in the caves includes: the Lion, brown Bear, Wolf, Fox, Hare, Mammoth, woolly Rhinoceros, Wild Boar, Horse, Wild Ass, Hemione, Bison, Ox, Ibex, Chamois, Saiga, Musk Ox, Red Deer, Elk, Cervus

That said, however, we might well interpret them with equal probability as the depiction of antelope, since their presence on the island is also attested from the Pleistocene Era.⁸⁸

a. 2–*Representation of a bow and arrow.*

This image is clearly recognizable one time and possibly again in two other renderings that are less clear and distinct.

[112] The clearest depiction of the bow seems to be of the “compound” type, which originated in Central Asia. The Beaker [English term in original] appears to be the type of bow most clearly used in Europe.⁸⁹ It is most likely that the discovery of this bow was subsequent to the “simple”

megaceros, Fallow Deer, Reindeer, to which we must add a very few Hyena, Glutton, birds and fishes, and perhaps some snakes....

We see the Ibex everywhere, a little more numerous, as it is natural, in mountainous [sic] districts. Though not rare in the wall Art of the low lands, it is usually in the older periods, and is fairly frequent in the paintings and engravings in the Pyrénées, even amongst those which are relatively recent, but there are more on small objects than on walls.

⁸⁸. (15) See chiefly: ”Αρη Πουλιανού, *Ἡ Καταγωγή τῶν Κρητῶν*, 1971, 233.

Translator’s Note. The full citation for Ares Poulianos, *The Origin of the Cretans* (1971) is as follows:

”Αρη Ν. Πουλιανού, *Ἡ Καταγωγή τῶν Κρητῶν: Ανθρωπολογικὴ Ἐρευνὰ στὸ νησι Λεβεντίας*, (Αθήνα: Βιβλιοθήκη Ανθρωπολογικῆς Ἐταιρείας, 1971, 2004), 253:

On Crete were found hippopotami, antelope, *various types of deer*, dwarf elephants, and other animals which naturally came “by land” at the beginning of the Late Pleistocene (*italics and translation mine*)

It is noteworthy that Papoutsakis would suggest the figural depiction of animals as a possible dating mechanism, much as Strasser, et. al., have done more recently. First inclined to see the animal figures as renderings of wild goats, and thus of more recent date, Papoutsakis immediately mentions other possibilities such as antelope. Poulianos’s mention of “various types of deer” now bears greater significance, given the discovery of the Cretan dwarf deer some few short years after Papoutsakis published this study, a discovery that Strasser, et. al., exploited to great effect.

⁸⁹. (16) See Stuart Piggott, “Beaker Bows: A suggestion,” PPS 37, 80-94.

Translator’s Note. The full citation is as follows:

Stuart Piggott, “Beaker Bows: A Suggestion,” *Proceedings of the Prehistoric Society* 37 (1971): 80-94. Piggott observes that “[f]rom around 30 graves of the Beaker culture in Bavaria, Switzerland, Austria, Bohemia, Moravia and Slovakia come objects carved from bone, antler or boar’s tusk,” and concludes that “certain distinctive forms of arc-shaped or bow-shaped pendants... are in fact miniature representations, in some detail, of actual archers’ bows of

type, the use of which must have begun very much earlier.

On Crete, at Marinatos's excavation of Dreros,⁹⁰ they recovered one plate with the primitive engraving of a hunting scene: on it, the archer holds a similar--that is, a compound--bow.

We frequently find the bow in illustrations from the Mesolithic Era. The "classical" depictions from eastern Spain⁹¹ commonly represent hunting scenes together with armed fighting by archers.

The bow, as used for hunting, dominated the era of prehistoric hunters, given the need to hunt swift-footed smaller game, and it was necessary in order to gain advantage over deer [*elaphiou*] and agrimi. The first invention of the bow appears to belong to the Aterians (Aterian [in English]),⁹² a society from North Africa in the Upper Paleolithic. From there it spread to Spain

uniform type" (80), dated to c2000 BCE; he also acknowledges the evidence of much older Neolithic bows and arrows elsewhere in Europe.

⁹⁰. (17) See Marinatos, "Le temple geometrique de Drèros," BCH 40 (1936): 278-280, Fig. 44.

Translator's Note. The full citation is as follows:
Spiridon Marinatos, "Le Temple Géométrique de Dréros," *Bulletin de Correspondance Hellénique* 60.2 (1936): 257-285. Pages 278-280 discuss the inscribed stones and graffiti from Dreros, and Figure 44 offers a stunning inscribed image of five animals (Marinatos identified them as goats, *chèvres*), with the same elongated antlers we find at Asphendou, together with two persons holding bows and arrows. Four more supine human figures at the top border are more difficult to interpret.

⁹¹. (18) *Pre-Christian caves* at Caballos, Remigia, Morella la Vella, etc.

⁹². (19) See Clark, "Neolithic bows from Somerset," PPS 29 (1963) and J. Hawkes, *Prehistory* (1963), 87, 173.

Translator's Note. The full citations are as follows:
J. G. D. Clark, "Neolithic Bows from Somerset, England, and the Prehistory of Archery in North-western Europe," *Proceedings of the Prehistoric Society* 29.3 (1963): 50-98. Clark offers an impressive survey of archaeological remains of bows, arrow shafts and arrowheads primarily from Britain, Denmark, Germany, Austria, Switzerland, the Netherlands and Sweden (with a brief gesture to Mycenaean Greece at 84-85, and the English Long Bow at 88), as well as of rock paintings from Spain and France; and
Jacquetta Hawkes and Sir Leonard Woolley, *History of Mankind: Cultural and Scientific Development: Volume I: Prehistory and the Beginnings of Civilization* (London: Unwin Brothers Limited, Copyright 1963 by UNESCO), 87:

The Aterian culture, which seems to have originated in the north-western end of the coastal strip [of north Africa] and to have spread from thence eastward, suggests a people of some creative energy. It is thought to have grown from the local Mousterian, but its

and the rest of Europe. According to Gr. Clark,⁹³ the dominance of the bow was established in southern Europe in the 13th millennium B.C. and in northern Europe in the 8th millennium B.C.

Most likely the dispersion of the bow among Mesolithic hunting societies in the Aegean region was earlier than its dispersion among societies of hunters in southern Europe.

In Greece, apart from the representations in Pangaio [*Paggaiou*] which we will examine more closely later in our study, we find the “simple” bow but with a greater curvature, on engraved plates which were recovered by D. Theocharis at Sarrakêno on Mount Pelion.⁹⁴

possessors were skilful workers in flint, using, among others, the pressure-flaking technique which has led to a belief that Aterians may have had some share in the Solutrean culture of Europe (p.86). They have also been credited with being the inventors of the bow and arrow. Their expansion carried them as far as the Kharga oasis which they (or their cultural influence) reached at the very end of the Paleolithic Age; some may have crossed into Spain at an earlier date,...

and 173:

The Aterian Culture

This north African and, perhaps, Spanish flake culture is thought to be descended from the Mousterian. Its most typical manufacture is a small tanged and barbed point, usually with a plain flake surface on the underside and flaking over the upper. It has exactly the appearance of an arrow-head and has brought the Aterians the credit of having invented men’s first long-distance weapon--the bow and arrow. The Aterians also made small leaf-shaped lance-heads recalling Solutrean workmanship.

⁹³. (20) Clark, “Neolithic bows from Somerset,” op. cit., 62.

Translator’s Note. The relevant citation is:

J. G. D. Clark, “Neolithic Bows from Somerset, England, and the Prehistory of Archery in North-western Europe,” *Proceedings of the Prehistoric Society* 29.3 (1963): 62

To sum up, one must conclude that, in relation to the million years or so of man’s prehistory, the bow is a comparatively recent invention; that it may have appeared in southern Europe and northern Africa around 15,000 B.C.; and that in northern Europe it had almost certainly begun to come into use during the final (Younger Dryas) phase of the late-glacial period, that is during the 9th millennium B.C.

⁹⁴. (21) Δ. Ρ. Θεοχάρη, Ἡ ἀύγῃ τῆς Θεσσαλικῆς Προϊστορίας 1967, 53-54, εἰκ. 29, πίν. VII κάτω.

Translator’s Note. The full citation is as follows:

Δημητρίου Ρ. Θεοχάρη, Ἡ ἀύγῃ τῆς Θεσσαλικῆς Προϊστορίας: Ἀρχὴ καὶ Πρωίμη Εξελίξη τῆς Νεολιθικῆς (Βολος: Ἐκδοσις τῆς Φιλαρχαίου Ἐταιρείας Βολου. 1967), Θεσσαλικά Μελετήματα, Ἀριθ. 4

Dimitrius R. Theocharis, *The Dawn of Prehistoric Thessaly: The Beginning and Early Development of the Neolithic* (Volos: Publications of the Society of the Friends of Antiquity of

a. 3–Representation of a tree.

The representation of branches or a tree is the most likely interpretation of the engraving to the left of the central section of the rock carvings.

PLATE 3: [Fig. 1: “Partial view of the village of Asphendou from the west”; Fig. 2: The rock shelter at Skordoulakia from the south.”]

PLATE 4 [Fig. 3: “Interior of the cave. The engravings are visible on the floor.”].

[113] As far as cave art is concerned, there are no recognizable depictions of trees from the Paleolithic Era,⁹⁵ and this is quite understandable: for hunters, wild game--either for purposes of sympathetic magic, or as a symbol of fertility--were always the center of interest. This constitutes the principle, and really the only, subject of these scenes. Only when, given the change in climatic conditions, gathering (*karposullogê*) once again⁹⁶ became an essential element for the

Volos, 1967), Thessalian Studies, No. 4, pages 53-54, Figure 29, and Plate VII, lower image.

The so-called “Archer’s Plate” (*Plakidio tou toxotê*) discovered on Mount Pelion depicts, from left to right: a female figure, a drilled hole above her, an ithyphallic archer with a curved bow, an animal with long antlers and a curvilinear snake-like figure below it. Fragments of the designs appear at the (broken?) edge of the plate.

⁹⁵. (22) Sacrificial boughs (?) above the horses at Lascaux have been interpreted as depicting bows. See P. Graziosi, *Paleolithic Art* (1960), Plate 186.

Translator’s Note. The full citation is as follows:

Paolo Graziosi, *Paleolithic Art* (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1960), Pl. 186. Graziosi calls this image from Lascaux a “‘Chinese’ horse surrounded by probable representations of arrows,” though there is some possible indication of vegetation as well.

⁹⁶. (23) We say “once again” (*kai pali*) in order to differentiate between the first phase of gathering and the Lower Paleolithic version. See Σ. Δημητρίου, Προϊστορικοί πολιτισμοί και εξέλιξη, 1964, 132 κ.ά.

Translators’s Note. The full citation is as follows:

Σωτήρη Δημητρίου, Προϊστορικοί πολιτισμοί και εξέλιξη [“Prehistoric Society and Development”] (Αθήνα: Εκδοσεις Φυτρακη Ο. Ε., 1964). Pages 132-138 are dedicated to “The Mesolithic Transformation [Μεταβαση],” and pages 138-142 are dedicated to “The Acme and After.” Dimitriou’s story is one that encompasses the entire globe: Northern Europe, the Mediterranean, Anatolia, the Middle East, the Russian steppes, Africa, India, North and South America, Alaska, Australia, and even Japan. It is characterized by significant technological innovations--the use of new materials for tools, microlithic manufacture, new weapons like the first primitive bows and arrows, the use of domesticated dogs for herding--together with important Paleolithic retentions--like the use of large stone plates and stelae. The end of the Ice Age would make scavenging a fruitful source of nourishment once again, and eventually this

nourishment of primitive peoples, do we find the representation of trees. Nevertheless, vegetal themes were found for the first time in Magdalenian portable objects and tools.⁹⁷ In the Mesolithic Era, one rendering of a tree with fruit falling from it is known to us from the site at Teruel in Spain.⁹⁸

In addition, there are representations of trees in complex arrangement on ceramics from pre-dynastic Egypt, at Ierakonpoli.⁹⁹ The rock carvings at Val Meraviglie¹⁰⁰ are also full of engravings in the form of trees. They should be situated chronologically in the Bronze Age and associated with societies of mountain-dwelling hunters-herders in North Italy.

would culminate in the watershed event that led to the Neolithic revolution: the domestication of crops and the gradual establishment of citted life.

⁹⁷. (24) See Graziosi, *Paleolithic Art* (1960), Plate 91.

Translator's Note. Graziosi, *Paleolithic Art*, (Florence: G. C. Sansoni, 1960), Plate 91, deems these eight renderings on portable artifacts to be "vegetable forms and weapons in Franco-Cantabrian Art."

⁹⁸. (25) H. Kühn, *The rock pictures of Europe* (1956), see pl. XXIX according to Dona Clotilde.

Translator's Note. The full citation is as follows:
Herbert Kühn, *The Rock Pictures of Europe*, Aklan Houghton Brodrick, trans. (Fair Lawn, NJ: Essential Books, 1956). Plate #29 (from Teruel, Spain) is described by Clotilde thus: "Man leading an Animal by a Halter, Stylized Figures of Men, Tree with Falling Fruit, Painting in Red."

⁹⁹. (26) H. Müller-Karpe, *Handbuch der Vorgeschichte*, II, pl. 27.

Translator's Note. The full citation is as follows:
Hermann Müller-Karpe, *Handbuch der Vorgeschichte*, Zweiter Band: *Jungsteinzeit: Tafeln* (München: C. H. Beck'sche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1968). Tafel 27 presents a number of images of humans and animals, one of which (Figure 6a) depicts lions killing men and birds devouring corpses; two images (Figures 4a and 6b) possess one stylized palm tree dividing the scene in two halves, whereas Figure 2 is the only one with multiple examples of small flora.

¹⁰⁰. (27) Isetti, *Corpus delle incisioni lineari di Val Meraviglie*, RSL 31, 1965, 57-75, pl. 13-31.

Translator's Note. The full citation is as follows:
Giuseppe Isetti, "Corpus delle incisioni lineari di Val Meraviglie," *Rivista di Studi Liguri* 31 (1965): 45-110. Plates ##13-31, which are indeed found at pages 57-75, are not so clearly suggestive of trees; some seem like branches or fronds, and some are more abstract still. The so-called Valley of Marvels is located in the Mercantour National Park in southern France, boasting an impressive range of Bronze Age open-air petroglyphs. There is a moving testimonial to Isetti, who had recently died unexpectedly, written by Mimmi Rosi in this volume and appearing at page 44.

In Crete, on the other hand, trees are known to have constituted an important element of Minoan religion. The oldest illustrations which may be taken to be trees are found incised on Neolithic pots from Knossos.¹⁰¹

a. 4—*The Representation of the Ship.*

In that part of the “composition” [*sunthesis*] in the deepest part of the cave farthest from the entrance, there is a sharply incised engraving which, if we agree that it is a “figural” representation, is most plausibly interpreted as a ship with sails.¹⁰² This engraving [114] has a length of 21 centimeters and a height—with the attached mast—of 16 centimeters.

Immediately above it there is a second similar engraving, but less visible and of smaller size. Both of them are reminiscent of the ships which appear on Syrian “frying pans” or Minoan stone seals.¹⁰³ They are rendered from an oblique perspective which appears to show the upper deck and at the same time the profile of the dock. At least that is how we would explain the middle lines of the drawing which, in place of the expected stern, have added a drawing of the forked joint for the oar-rudder.

¹⁰¹. (28) A. Zoīs, *Kamares-Stil*, 1968, pl. 5, nos. 44-46 and pl. 6, nos. 51-53.

Translator’s Note. The full citation is as follows:

Antonīs A. Zoīs, *Der Kamares-Stil: Werden und Wesen* (Inaugural Dissertation zur Erlangung des Doktorgrades einer Hohen Philosophischen Fakultät der Eberhard-Karls-Universität zu Tübingen, 1968). Tafel 5, nos. 44-46 depict branch-shaped figures, and Tafel 6, nos. 51 and 53 depict centipede-like branched figures, all taken from Neolithic ceramics.

It bears noting that Zoīs also published a study of “Crete in the Stone Age” in 1973: A. Ζωής, *Κρήτη--Εποχή του Λίθου* (Athens Technological Organization/Athens Center of Ekistics, 1973).

¹⁰². (29) The trap suggested by Mr. Paul Faure, *Amaltheia* op. cit., does not seem plausible. In addition, the *agrimi* which is depicted in the area above the ship in this same picture, p.281, is fancifully rendered.

Translator’s Note. We should recall that Faure’s observation was the following:

To the upper right hand edge of the rock, under a very low part of the cave which prevents photographing it, there is not the image of a Minoan ship nor is there a rendering of an abstract geometric symbol, as Mr. Chr. Papoutsakis writes, but rather the image of a deer fallen into a net or animal trap. This was the only way with which to capture large animals in Greek antiquity. (Translation mine)

¹⁰³. (30) See chiefly: Hutchinson, *Prehistoric Crete* (1968), 91-100 and pl. 15.

Translator’s Note. The full citation is as follows:

R. W. Hutchinson, *Prehistoric Crete* (Middlesex: Penguin Books, 1962, 1968). Pages 91-100 discuss the earliest Cretan boats, and Figure 15 shows three depictions of boats on Minoan seals.

Generally speaking, when ships are depicted, they are rendered in battle with one another,¹⁰⁴ arranged in such a way as to indicate the position of the prow. Without having much importance at first glance, for the specific engraving I am describing here, I believe that the stern coincides with the forked object at the end.

Apart from that, however, the mere fact that the presence of a ship is recognizable in the Aspendou drawings is extremely important. And this is due to the absence of the portrayal of any ship in the Mediterranean “littoral” or the Mesolithic societies of the Spanish Levant, which

¹⁰⁴. (31) See the bibliography: Χρήστου Ντούμα, Κορφὴ τ’ Ἀρωνιοῦ, ΑΔ, 1965, Μέρος Α’, 48 and idem., “Remarques sur la forme du bateau égéen,” *Valcamonica Symposium* [sic], 1968.

Translator’s Note. The full citations are as follows:

Χρήστου Ντούμα, “Κορφὴ τ’ Ἀρωνιοῦ,” *Αρχαιολογικόν Δελτίον* 20-21 (1965-66): 41-64.

Christos Douma, “The Peak of Arônios,” *Archaeological Bulletin* 20 (1965), Part A, page 48 does not contain bibliographic references, but Figure 4 (Plate 2) on page 49 depicts an antlered animal above a boat, with an anthropomorphic archer nearby, suggestively similar to this image in the Aspendou Cave]; and

Chr. Doumas, “Remarques sur la forme du bateau égéen à l’âge du Bronze ancien,” in Emmanuel Anati, ed., *Valcamonica Symposium: Symposium International d’Art Préhistorique, Valcamonica 23-28 Septembre 1968* (Capo di Ponte (Brescia): Edizione del Centro Camuno di Studi Preistorici, 1970), 285-290. Figures 135-140 display various depictions of boats in various media, but only that of Figure 139, a ceramic vase painting from Orchomenos, is clearly military in design.

Doumas was a significant member of the international circle of Bronze Age and Prehistoric historians of his time, many of whom appear in Papoutsakis’s notes. Doumas served for many years as Curator of Antiquities for the Cycladic Islands and excavated extensively.

Some of his representative later publications include:

Christos Doumas, “Early Bronze Age Burial Habits in the Cyclades,” *Studies in Mediterranean Archaeology* 48 (Lund: Paul Åströms Förlag, 1977);

C. Doumas, ed., *Thera and the Aegean World II* [Papers and Proceedings of the Second International Scientific Congress, Santorini, Greece, August 1978] (Athens: G. Tsiveriotis Ltd., London: Thera and the Aegean World, 1980);

Christos Doumas, “La collection d’art cycladique de N. P. Goulandris,” in *L’Art des Cyclades dans la Collection N. P. Goulandris* [“Marbre, Céramique et Métal à l’Âge du Bronze Ancien” (7 Octobre-9 Janvier 1984)] (Paris: Editions de la Réunion des musées nationaux Paris, 1983), 27-49; and

Chr. G. Doumas and V. La Rosa, eds., *Η ΠΟΛΙΟΧΝΗ και η Πρωιμη Εποχη του Χαλκου στο Βορειο Αιγαίο/POLIOCHNI e l’Antica Età del Bronzo nell’Egeo Settentrionale* (Atene: Scuola Archeologica Italiana di Atene, 1997).

has already been well established.¹⁰⁵ This has been explained by the assumption that their social ties to the interior were far stronger than those to the North African societies on the other end of the Mediterranean. The representation of a ship certainly occurs frequently in iconography at the Arctic Circle, in a form that fixes its date to the Bronze Age.¹⁰⁶

I believe that the subject, as well as the technique of the engraving, dates this scene to a much later period of use of the rock shelter and a later iconographic style.

[115] Later in this article, we shall return to the themes which emerge from the probable representation of a ship in the rock carvings at Asphendou.

a. 5–*Cross-shaped spears or oars.*

¹⁰⁵. (32) H. G. Bandi, *Peintures rupestres du Levant Espagnol*, in the volume *L'âge de pierre*, 1960, 86.

Translator's Note. The full citation is as follows:

Hans-Georg Bandi, Henri Breuil, Lilo Berger-Kirchner, Henri Lhote, Erik Holm, Andreas Lommel, *L'Âge de Pierre: Quarante millénaires d'art pariétal* (Paris: Éditions Albin Michel, 1960), 86:

Il est, d'autre part, étrange que, malgré la proximité relative de la Méditerranée, on n'ait découvert dans cette zone ni scène de pêche ni peinture représentant une embarcation. L'éventualité de l'occupation de la bande littorale par une population différente est en tout cas plausible.

On the other hand, it is strange that, despite the relative proximity to the Mediterranean, we have found no painted scenes of fishing or sailing in this area. The eventual occupation of the littoral by a different population is in any case quite plausible. (Translation mine)

¹⁰⁶. (33) Gr. Clark, *World Prehistory. A new outline*, 1969, 147 and O. Montelius, *Les temps préhistoriques en Suède*, 1895, 109-118, with scenes from Bohuslan, fig. 152, 153 (combined with holes [*koiotêtes*]) and in other places, such as fig. 154, 155.

Translator's Note. The full citations are as follows:

Grahame Clark, *World Prehistory: A New Outline*, 2 Ed. (Cambridge at the University Press, 1969). Page 147 discusses the "peasant communities of Neolithic Europe" which "created an impressive body of art... devoted primarily to representations of the animals on which they depended, above all elk, bear, reindeer, seals, small toothed whales, fish and water birds, but also including human beings and boats"; and

Oscar Montelius, *Les Temps Préhistoriques en Suède et dans les autres Pays Scandinaves*, Saloman Reinach, trans. (Paris: Ernest Leroux, Éditeur, 1895), 109-118

An excellent English language volume is Oscar Montelius, *Swedish Antiquities*, Volume 1: *The Stone Age and the Bronze Age* (Stockholm: P. A. Norstedt & Söners Förlag, 1922).

On many portions of the decorated surface there appear to be spears with leaf-like points, a total of 14 in all. Six of them have only one point and indeed two times in the “composition” [sunthesis] one such spear--not analogous to those used for hunting--touches upon an agrimi. The remaining spears each have a decorated point at each end. Two pairs of spears with doubled points are depicted in a cross-like arrangement. It is difficult for us to imagine the use or the advantage of such a weapon with two points. If we take up the possibility that they are pairs of oars in a simplistic form, then this may better accord with the evidence since representations of spears with two points are entirely unknown.¹⁰⁷

a. 6–Harpoon.

The harpoon, as a weapon for hunting, is older than the bow; it lived on, however, and coexisted with the bow in many hunting societies.

In our “composition” [sunthesis] there is a pair of one-sided harpoons (uniserial harpoon [cited in English]). However since the engravings that we have characterized as “harpoons” are carved with a slight curvature, one may interpret them as deer antlers which have been severed from the bodies. Nevertheless, such an interpretation is highly improbable, since no goat-shaped figure [aigoeides] with similarly shaped antlers appears anywhere else in this “composition” [sunthesis]. In addition, we have harpoons with a slight curvature also in the Star Carr in England,¹⁰⁸ and the Mas d’Azil region, a Mesolithic settlement.¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁷. (34) The image of “strangling in battle” from *Cueva Saltadora* in the Spanish Levant in the *Valltorta* Valley resembles this image, but for the fact that the spears (or bows) pierce the body, and it is difficult to determine whether they should be seen as one weapon or the coincidence of two in close alignment. See Ebert, *Reallexikon der Vorgeschichte*, vol. 7, 150, pl. 110b.

Translator’s Note. The full citation is as follows:
Max Ebert, *Reallexikon der Vorgeschichte*, Band 7: *Kleinasien-Malta* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter & Co., 1926). Page 150 contains Tafel 57, a sample of terracotta models of cultic sites from Knossos, excavated by Sir Arthur Evans; page 274 contains two Paleolithic images of armed hunters (110a-b, which also appear on pages 73 and 80 of *L’Age de Pierre*, identifying them as images in red ochre from the “Cave of the Horses” at Barranco Valltorta, Spain).

¹⁰⁸. (35) See mainly: Müller-Carpe, vol. II, pl. 281, no. 13 etc.

Translator’s Note. The full citation is as follows:
Hermann Müller-Karpe, *Handbuch der Vorgeschichte*, Zweiter Band: *Jungsteinzeit: Tafeln* (München: C. H. Beck’sche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1968). Tafel 281 presents a number of artifacts from Star Carr in Great Britain (all taken from J. G. D. Clark); nos. 4-6, 11-13 and 16-17 all depict curved harpoons, of which no. 13 is by far the most exaggerated in its curvature.

¹⁰⁹. **Translator’s Note.** It is worth pausing here to summarize what Papoutsakis has just presented to us. In referring to the image field at Asphendou as a “composition,” or “synthesis,”

b) Second group: *Abstract Symbols*.

In images from the Paleolithic and Mesolithic eras, especially ones with this specific configuration, there are various interpretive difficulties regarding the abstract symbols: they are densely packed and they intrude upon earlier images as time goes on. To simplify matters, we may make the following general observation: in the Neolithic [116] Era such iconic images disappear--except on religious images [*thrêskeutika eidôlia*]--and are limited to appearing as decorative devices.

A characteristic feature of the rock carvings at Asphendou is the frequent appearance of abstract designs: it is full of small holes [*koilotêtes*] and linear outlines [*diagrammata grammika*]. Some are clear and deeply incised, others are vague and unclear, and they cover the entire surface. With some, it is anyone's guess as to whether they are pointless and meaningless engravings. Interpreting them is difficult in any case, precisely because in their totality these designs [*diagrammata*], the clearer ones and those more poorly rendered, do not communicate a clear intention. As to their appearance however, even the poorly rendered ones, hesitantly inscribed on this "sacred stone" [*hierô bracho*], do they not suggest the first glimmerings of a rather uncertain effort, an effort that may be compared to the simple lines drawn by young children?

b. 1-*Linear symbols* (Plate 6):

Circular symbol

A circular image with 3 diagonal cross-hatchings, located on the most accessible part of the "path" [*porou*] to the rock shelter, resembles a wheel. The diagonal lines extend beyond the perimeter, and the appearance of small holes inside the circle and around it suggests that the symbol is a part of the entire system of non-figural forms. Deeply incised, its presence stands out even at first glance, and thus we may associate it with the group of later engravings.

he is emphasizing what he takes to be the palimpsestic character of the rock engravings. The animals, if they are *agrimi*, are likely less than 8000 years old, but if antelope or deer, then they are possibly much older. The bow and arrow is a very ancient technology, dating back to the Mesolithic era at least. Trees are not a feature of Paleolithic art, but figure prominently in the Cretan Bronze Age. Ships would also more likely be products of the Bronze Age. And depictions of spears, oars, or harpoons could be very ancient, indeed. Thus two of the five types of figural images (bow and arrows, and harpoons) might be associated with Paleolithic art, and one of them (the ship) he already recognized had been added at a later stage of the cave's use. Had Papoutsakis known of the Cretan dwarf deer, then the antlers which puzzle him here might also have seemed less puzzling, and would have counted as further evidence of an early date for the oldest portions of the Asphendou rock carvings. Papoutsakis will turn next to the abstract symbols in order to nail down his case for the Stone Age antiquity of the oldest portions of the Asphendou palimpsest.

Analogous circular images (one a wheel,¹¹⁰ one a mill,¹¹¹ perhaps a solar disc,¹¹² one image rendered in singular “geometric” terms,¹¹³ are what we take to be the most relevant examples) appear frequently from very early on such that the collection of parallels and correlations is extensive.

The symbol M (Plate 6 a)

The symbol M, appears in isolation and was deeply incised with lines that vary in both depth and breadth. It is familiar to us [117] from the rock shelter at Masaculos (Spain), and is related to a group of dots in a linear arrangement. Abbè Breuil dates it to the Mesolithic Era.¹¹⁴ Paired with its mirror image, it offers the simplified rendering of a human form in outline--very similar to the art of primitive peoples. It may also be interpreted as related to the invention of the serrated saw,

¹¹⁰. (36) Isetti, *Corpus delle incisioni*, op. cit., pl. 52, no. 3, from Monte Bego.

Translator’s Note. The full citation is as follows:

Giuseppe Isetti, “Corpus delle incisioni lineari di Val Meraviglie,” *Rivista di Studi Liguri* 31 (1965): 45-110. Plate 52 on page 96 does indeed possess two sketches of a spiral (no. 2) and a wheel (no. 3).

¹¹¹. (37) Isetti, op. cit., pl. 52, no.1, again from the region of Monte Bego.

Translator’s Note. The full citation is as follows:

Giuseppe Isetti, “Corpus delle incisioni lineari di Val Meraviglie,” *Rivista di Studi Liguri* 31 (1965): 45-110. Plate 52 (no. 1) on page 96 displays the strange image of a wheel with a thick surface and broken circumference, vaguely suggestive of a milling wheel or stone.

¹¹². (38) Ksica, *Gravures rupestres et culte du soleil...*, *Archeologia*, 28, 1969, 6-11.

Translator’s Note. The full citation is as follows:

Miroslav Ksica, “Gravures rupestres et culte du soleil dans le défilé de Tamgaly,” *Archeologia* 28 (May 1969): 6-11, displays striking petroglyphic images of solar-headed figures from the site of Tamgaly.

¹¹³. (39) Abbè H. Breuil, “Presidential Address for 1934,” *PPS of East Anglia*, 7, 289-322, pl. 5ff.

Translator’s Note. The full citation is as follows:

L’Abbè Henri Breuil, “Presidential Address of 1934,” Mary E. Boyle, trans., *Proceedings of the Prehistoric Society of East Anglia* Vol. VII, No. 21 (1934): 289-322, illustrated with impressive illustrations of incised dots, spirals and other geometric designs from Ireland and Iberia, with suggestive connections to Scotland and the Continent; Plates 5ff display a wealth of geometric, curvilinear and other abstract carvings from a variety of these sites.

¹¹⁴. (40) Abbè H. Breuil, *Four Hundred Centuries of Cave Art*, 1952, fig. 494.

Translator’s Note. Breuil’s Plate 494 (see previous note) depicts a “line of red dots and zigzag [in the form of a W],” taken from Mazaculos.”

which are apparent in many of the petroglyphs from Ireland and elsewhere.¹¹⁵

Tectonic Designs

Several tectonic symbols (*tectiformes*), such as the ones described below, may also be seen engraved in the composition [*synthesē*].

1. Irregular latticework engraving (Plate 6, b and c).
2. Linear symbols (Plate 6 d).
3. The symbol D, which is also familiar from Mesolithic remains (Plate 6 e).
4. Isolated holes that were cut very deep and resemble a “tail.”

b. 2–*The holes (koilotêtes)*.

Engraved holes [*koilotêtes*] made with a pointed tool--probably a rotating drill--are dispersed across the entire surface of the rock carving and are characteristic of the whole composition [*synthesē*]. Their diameter varies from 2 to 7 millimeters and their depth from 1 to 3. The total number of holes [*koilotêtôn*] is roughly 800. Many are scattered “randomly,” however the majority appear to be organically related to the whole composition. The entire array of images generally comprise circular shaoes with a diameter of between 10 and 43 millimeters. Sometimes, the little holes [*lakkouvitses*] run on top of one another in circular designs.

It is not always possible to arrange all of the holes [*koilotêtes*] precisely into groups, integrated wholes, or patterns. I attempted however, making certain assumptions based on proximity, as well as on artistic or visible designs, to provide the following classification of the whole composition:

Scattered and largely isolated engraved holes,^{*116} which for this reason were difficult to arrange among themselves or with some other group, were found to total: 161

| | | | |
|-------|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------|-----|
| [118] | | from the previous page | 161 |
| 30 | groups of related holes numbering 2, | which amounts to a total of | 60 |
| 15 | “ ” “ ” | 3, “ ” “ | 45 |
| 7 | “ ” “ ” | 4, “ ” “ | 28 |
| 4 | “ ” “ ” | 5, “ ” “ | 20 |
| 10 | “ ” “ ” | 6, “ ” “ | 60 |

¹¹⁵. (41) Abbè H. Breuil, Presidential Address for 1934, op. cit., figs. 20-22.

Translator’s Note. Figures No. 20-22 are said to depict: a “triple spiral from New Grange”; “three sculptured rocks in the outer ring of New Grange”; and a “collection of the most recent decorations (series 4), from the galleries under tumuli of Ireland and Scotland.” Papoutsakis’s intention in this reference is unclear to me.

¹¹⁶. *[Papoutsakis appears to have added this note later; there are five more such notes in the following table]. Among them, 31 correspond to markings characteristic of the eyes of the animals or else of their feet (see below for comments related to the engraving technique).

| | | | | | | | | | |
|---------------------------|----------------------|---|---|---|-----|---|---|---|-----|
| 3 | “ | ” | “ | ” | 7, | “ | ” | “ | 21 |
| 2 | “ | ” | “ | ” | 8, | “ | ” | “ | 16 |
| 3 | “ | ” | “ | ” | 9, | “ | ” | “ | 27 |
| 2 | “ | ” | “ | ” | 10, | “ | ” | “ | 20 |
| 1 group | “ | ” | “ | ” | 11, | “ | ” | “ | 11 |
| 1 | “ | ” | “ | ” | 12, | “ | ” | “ | 12 |
| 2 groups | “ | ” | “ | ” | 13, | “ | ” | “ | 26 |
| 1 group | “ | ” | “ | ” | 19, | “ | ” | “ | 19 |
| 1 | “ | ” | “ | ” | 21, | “ | ” | “ | 21 |
| 2 groups* ¹¹⁷ | “ | ” | “ | ” | 22, | “ | ” | “ | 44 |
| 3 | *** ¹¹⁸ | ” | “ | ” | 25, | “ | ” | “ | 75 |
| 1 group*** ¹¹⁹ | “ | ” | “ | ” | 26, | “ | ” | “ | 26 |
| 1 | “ | ” | “ | ” | 27, | “ | ” | “ | 27 |
| 1 | ***** ¹²⁰ | ” | “ | ” | 29, | “ | ” | “ | 29 |
| 1 | ***** ¹²¹ | ” | “ | ” | 49, | “ | ” | “ | 49 |
| Total | | | | | | | | | 797 |

TECHNIQUE OF THE ENGRAVING

The tools used for engraving the rock carvings at Asphendou must have been stone tools with a sharp point, probably a chisel (*burin*). This may be concluded from the unsteady and shaky incisions, a sign that it was not unusual for them to return to the engraving in order to make the incision clearer and more continuous. The hardness of the limestone surface of the rock, and its resistance to erosion, is apparent.

The material of the engraving tool must have been horn-stone [*keratolithos*]-abundant in the region, and known as “dragon-stone” [*drakonopetra*]¹²² by the inhabitants [119] of the village. The horn-stone is dark grey in color, has the same composition as obsidian (limestone mixed

¹¹⁷. *) One of these is very lightly incised and its composition is unclear.

¹¹⁸. **) Two of them may be seen in sketches a and c of Plate 7.

¹¹⁹. ***) May be seen in sketch b of Plate 7.

¹²⁰. ****) May be seen in sketch z of Plate 7.

¹²¹. *****) May be seen in sketch 7 of Plate 7.

¹²². (42) *Drakona, drakoni, adrakono*. According to Pankalos, Volume 5, Part 1, page 120, derived from ‘big’ [*adros*] and ‘whetstone’ [*akoni*]. *Drakôna*, or *Drakona*, is a common place-name on Crete.

with silicon), and appears to have the same degree of hardness (roughly 7¹²³). Nevertheless, as a sedimentary material, it is less susceptible to knapping than obsidian, whose origin is volcanic.¹²⁴

Some of the engravings, such as the circular design and the ship, are deeper, possess a V-shape and must have been made with a triangular-shaped tool--probably also made of stone. The small holes have a semi-circular U-shape, and appear to have been made through rotational drilling with a similar tool.

The agrimi are represented from the sides, always from an angled (*twisted, tordue*)¹²⁵ perspective, such that 2 antlers and 2 pairs of legs are visible.

At the end of the tail, the antlers, and the legs there is almost always a hole [*koilotêta*] like a punctuation point. On the legs, they give the appearance of being the soles--I believe however that they constitute the punctuation, the clear conclusion of the image--and are characteristic of this engraving technique. It is interesting to note that this same detail is a common feature of many engravings from Pangaio, from Karaguay, from Troyian, and elsewhere; everywhere it appears on the tip [*telitsa*] at the end of the legs and the phallus of the animals or the hands of the human forms. The technical nature of these details accords happily enough with the presence of tips [*telitsas*] at the end of the legs of a horse in the image on a bone carving from the community

¹²³. **Translator's note:** This is a reference to the Mohs scale for assessing the relative hardness of gems and other stones. Ranging from 1 (talc) to 10 (diamond), 7 is associated with quartz and similar crystals.

¹²⁴. (43) The stone tools that have been found up to now on Crete are believed to have been produced from obsidian which came from the island of Melos.

¹²⁵. (44) Technically "artless," in the total rendering of the image, the style already appears in the region of Gallokadavriani. See T. G. E. Powell, *Prehistoric Art*, 1966, 36 and A. Leroi-Gourhan, *The Art of Prehistoric Man in Western Europe*, 1968, 108-109. It has, however, "survived" in art to this day.

Translator's Note. The full citations are as follows:
T. G. E. Powell, *Prehistoric Art* (New York, NY: Frederick A. Praeger, Publishers, 1966), 36, which describes "a practice in many primitive and peasant arts of showing pairs of horns, ears, even legs, in frontal view when the rest of the animal is presented laterally. Although widespread, and found too in children's art, twisted perspective is not a consistent element, and certainly not in Franco-Cantabrian cave art"; and
André Leroi-Gourhan, *The Art of Prehistoric Man in Western Europe* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1968), 108-109, which offers a detailed discussion of "Twisted Perspective" in dialogue primarily with the Abbé Breuil's work.

Papoutsakis cites this latter work in English, though the original is André Leroi-Gourhan, *Préhistoire de l'Art Occidental* (Paris: Éditions d'Art Lucien Mazenod, 1965).

of Hallstat in Moravia¹²⁶: a time, a place and a material very different from the ones we are studying.

On the agrimi, the carving of the front legs is managed in such a way that they appear to be attached to the basic outline of the body, in contrast to the rear legs which seem to be continuous with the thin body outline of the animal. Generally speaking, the spirit of this design, which is typical of all the images of the game animals, cannot be characterized as naturalistic: [120] the movement is stiff; the rendering succinct. The technique is reminiscent of the linear rendering of the engravings from Addaura, and generally throughout Italy, as well as of rock carvings from the Arctic Circle.

The eye is represented by a small dot. Sometimes the shape of the animal's snout indicates breathing--a half-open mouth--and in once case the tongue is extended. We might consider this one small moment of naturalism.

In the representation of the agrimi, the bow, and the crossed spears, the line is fluid, continuous and of consistent width, although the "patina" has frequently reduced the depth of the engraving--a sign of its great age. On the other hand, in the representation of the circle with diagonal crosses, as well as that of the ship, the line is deep, forceful, of varying width and depth--and it softens at the end. This manner of carving provides evidence, I should think, of a later carving over an older engraving: the placement of new lines and simultaneously the "erasing" of the previous engraving. The same observation applies to the "chewing up" of the holes.

THE APPEARANCE OF THE HOLES (*koilotêtôn*)

The series of analogous monuments [*mnêmeia*] with similar holes [*homoies koilotêtes*] or incised points [*graptés stígmés*] is endless. Frequently the comparisons have been imprecise. Nonetheless the general subject regarding such holes is one with extensive parallels, and that is why I believe it requires a more all-encompassing study, which will be my main focus here.

The first appearance of such holes is on a grave marker from the Middle Paleolithic: on the lower surface of a large stone which covers a Neanderthal child in the La Ferassie cave, there are cut

¹²⁶. (45) Josef Poulik, *Prehistoric Art*, fig. 117.

Translator's Note. The full citation is as follows:

Josef Poulik, *Prehistoric Art, Including some recent cave-culture discoveries and subsequent developments up to Roman times*, R. Finlayson Samsour, trans. (London: Spring Books, nd). Figure 117 is identified as a "Stylised figure of a horse. Bronze. Hallstatt. 'Podolí' culture. Maximum height: 9.0cm. Brno-Obřany. Moravian Museum, Brno." It is a very angular and quite elegant figure.

holes [*koilotêtes*] in a paired arrangement.¹²⁷

A very early contribution to the bibliography is Mich. Defner's wide-ranging book filled with precise observations, "Traveling Impressions from West Crete,"¹²⁸ in which he compared a stele that he found at Meskla on the outskirts of Xania,¹²⁹ with the "pitted stones" [*arolithous*] which

¹²⁷. (46) N. K. Sanders, *Prehistoric art in Europe*, 1968, 7.

Translator's Note. The full citation is as follows:

N. K. Sanders, *Prehistoric Art in Europe* (Middlesex: Penguin Books, 1968), 7:

Once, at the cave of La Ferrassie in France, the body of a child was covered with a large stone on the underside of which deep pits or "cup-marks" had been pecked out in roughly placed pairs. They are not very impressive monuments but cup-marks exactly like them were being made during the comparatively recent Neolithic, and are still objects of superstitious veneration in remote places; bodies too were daubed with red ochre.

¹²⁸. (47) Μιχ. Δέφνερ, 'Οδοιπορικὰ ἐντυπώσεις ἀπὸ τὴν δυτικὴν Κρήτην, no. 49 in the series, Συλλόγου πρὸς διάδοσιν ὠφελίμων βιβλίων I. Ν. Σιδέρης, 'Ἐν Αθήναις (?). In the Epilogue (pp. 241-256) there is a discussion of "pitted stones."

Translator's Note. The full citation is as follows:

Μιχαὴλ Δεφνερ, 'Οδοιπορικὰ ἐντυπώσεις ἀπὸ τὴν δυτικὴν Κρήτην: μετὰ πόλλων εἰκόνων (52 Ὀδὸς Σταδίου [Athens]: Βιβλιοπωλεῖον Ἰωάννου Ν. Σιδέρη, nd); Michael Deffner, *Traveling Impressions from West Crete: with accompanying images* (Athens: John N. Sideris Publishers). It is actually No. 54 in the publication series of the Society for the Circulation of Important Books [Σύλλογος πρὸς διάδοσιν ὠφελίμων βιβλίων] which was established by Demetrius Vikelas (also a founding member of the Modern International Olympic Committee) in 1899.

In the "Epilogue" (241-256), Defner describes some further research conducted in Athens after his Cretan travels, research focused on the pitted stele from Meskla, which, as he discovered in a photograph, had actually been built into a bench, as was commonly done (he notes) among illiterate priests [*agrammatoi papades*] and fanatical religious women [*thrêskomaneis gynaikeis*, 242]. Defner first tackled the etymology of stones [*lithoi*] decorated with pits and holes [*aroi*], demonstrating that *arolithoi* is in fact an ancient Greek term (243-245; there was even an old village near Rethymnon then still called *Arolithiou*). Defner next referred to comparanda from North America, Mexico, northern Europe, India, and especially Palestine (citing examples from Megiddo, Tel Gezer, Tel Taanek, and Tel Jedeidi), before returning to another Cretan example (Polyrrenia), and Christos Tsoudas's 1908 discoveries at Dimenios and Sesklas. Taken together, and illustrating the point with a photograph of the paired stelai from Tel Taanek (252), Defner suggests that the Meskla stone was originally a vertical stele, one used in divine worship much as the later Greeks did in honor of Hermes (253). The point most relevant to Papoutsakis's argument is thus the relatively direct linkage between Neolithic and later Greek religious practices.

¹²⁹. (48) For another pitted stone [*arolitho*] at Meskla near Xania, see Ἰωάν. Μαυρακάκη, Ἡ ἀρχαία πόλις Ριζηνία--τὰ νῦν Μεσκλὰ τῆς Δυτικῆς Κρήτης, 1933, 21.

are rich with suggestive parallels and interpretive possibilities. In order to [121] accept the views of Defner, we would need to broaden the circle to include the offerings from Eleusis or from Crete--offerings of welcome by worshippers. Defner finally concluded that the “pits” [*aroi*], that is the holes [*koilotêtes*], “commemorate sacrificial offerings dedicated to the honor and worship of a female goddess.”¹³⁰

Translator’s Note. The full citation is as follows:

Ἰωάννου Π. Ι. Μαυρακάκη, Ἡ ἀρχαία πόλις Ριζηνία--τὰ νῦν Μεσκλὰ τῆς Δυτικῆς Κρήτης: Ἀπ’ ἀρχαιοτάτων μέχρι τῶν καθ’ ἡμᾶς χρονῶν (Χανιά: Τυποὺς Εὐμαουήλ Πετρακῆ, 1938); John P. I. Mavrakakis, *The Ancient City of Rizinia, or, Latter-day Meskla in West Crete: From the Earliest Times to Our Own* (Xania: Emmanuel Petrakis Printers, 1938).

Pages 20-22 discuss “*arolithoi*,” which name Mavrakakis explains thusly:

The stones [*lithoi*] that have pits [*arous*] are called *arolithoi* [he explains the term *arous* in parentheses as (*lakkoudakia*), or small holes, a term that Papoutsakis uses frequently].

We have natural [*physikous*] and carved [*technikous*] *arolithoi*. There are various thoughts and opinions as to their meaning.

Some associate them with ancient religion and others link them to topography, astronomy, etc. (20, (translation mine))

Mavrakakis goes on to describe the *arolithos* that Defner discovered in Rizênia at the Church of the Panagia, as a singular monument [*monadikon mnêmeion*] unique in all of Greece. It stood 1.65 meters in height, with a thickness of 0.47 meters, and a slightly curved surface. It bore holes on three sides and Defner associated it with a female goddess. Mavrakakis next adds several comparable artifacts to this archive:

Three years ago, in the region of Kaloyeriana just outside the Philippakidos garden, another *arolithos* was discovered which is worthy of study and may be found there to this day. It is a bloodstone [*splênopetra*] with a height of 0.65 meters, a width of 0.35 meters and a depth of 0.40 meters. It has an irregular shape. On its lateral side it has 22 pits [*lakkoudakia*] with a diameter of 1-2 centimeters and a depth of 1.3-11.2 centimeters. This stone has anomalous features and is a carved [*technitos*] *arolithos*. The pits of this *arolithos* have traces of a mixture of metals at the bottom (iron and tin or lead). (21-22, translation mine)

He then mentions the *arolithos* discovered by Christos Tsoudas in the excavation of the akropoleis of Dimênios and Sesklos, as well as the large stone located at Drakona. He utilizes these comparanda to differ with Defner’s interpretation:

We offer the daring hypothesis that they [the pitted designs] are associated with the topography of the people of Polichnitos, or ancient Rizênia, and its surrounding territory. (22, translation mine)

¹³⁰. (49) Defner, op. cit., 255.

Translator’s Note. The full citation is as follows:

Μιχαήλ Δεφνερ, Ὀδοιπορικὰ ἐντυπώσεις ἀπὸ τὴν δυτικὴν Κρήτην: μετὰ πόλλων εἰκόνων (52 Ὀδὸς Σταδίου [Athens]: Βιβλιοπωλεῖον Ἰωάννου Ν. Σιδερη, nd); Michael Deffner, *Traveling Impressions from West Crete: with accompanying images* (Athens: John N. Sideris Publishers).

This view derives from the fact that the circle [*koilotêta*] symbolizes the female sex in many societies. A precursor to this form is the Sumerian wedge-shape (4th millennium B.C.); they used this shape to depict women.¹³¹ The Abbè Breuil believes that a pair of holes [*ena zeugari koilotêtôn*] joined by an axle depicts the female sex.¹³²

Another possibility is that the little dots [*lakkouvitses*] have been linked to holes [*koilotêtes*] on Bronze Age swords in Italy and, due to this similarity, provide a criterion for dating.¹³³

As noted above, it is actually No. 54 in the publication series of the Society for the Circulation of Important Books [Σύλλογος πρὸς διάδοσιν ὠφελίμων βιβλίων] which was established by Demetrius Vikelas (founding member of the Modern Olympic Committee) in 1899. Page 255 provides a concluding link between pitted stones, Nature religion and the Great Goddess, while puzzling over the varied meanings of one versus multiple pits in the stone:

In this case the pits [*aroi*] evidently have a commemorative meaning; that is, they commemorate sacrificial offerings dedicated to the honor and worship of a female goddess.

¹³¹. (50) N. K. Sanders, *Prehistoric art in Europe*, 14.

Translator's Note. Sanders notes at pages 13-14 of *Prehistoric Art in Europe* that “such objects are truly instruments of a cult, ‘tool-like minimum images’ for the production of which we do not have to wait till the settled communities of the Neolithic. In them the idea of nourishment is represented in as nearly impersonal a form as the artist could compass.”

¹³². (51) Abbè Breuil, Presidential Address for 1934, op. cit., fig. 40, 42, 44.

Translator's Note. Breuil's Figure 40 depicts a “[s]election of cup, ring and stroke signs, many of which (at least until 58) are derived from human figurations”; Figure 42 depicts “[s]ome groups, with connecting lines, of cup, ring and stroke figures, possibly indicating some relationship or lineage between the people represented”; and Figure 44 depicts a “[m]edley of cup-and-ring patterns, with two big circle like cart-wheels on a rock near Staigue Bridge, Kerry, Ireland.”

¹³³. (52) Mikov, *Gravures rupestres en Bulgarie*, op. cit., 304. See also Mikov's report in O. Montelius, *La civilization primitive en Italie depuis l'introduction des metaux*, 1895, where other objects with different uses also have holes (*koilotêtes*), such as a *pendeloque* made of steatite from the region of Brescia, Series B, pl. 33.4.

Translator's Note. The full citations are as follows:

V. Mikov, “Gravures rupestres en Bulgarie,” *Isvestiii, ai, j na Bulgarskiii, ai, j arkheologicheski institut* 5 (1929): 290-308 [the French summary is at pages 307-308, but I am unable to read the Russian text at page 304]; and

Oscar Montelius, *La Civilization Primitive en Italie depuis l'Introduction des Métaux*, Première Partie, *Fibules et Italie Septentrionale* (Stockholm: Imprimerie Royale, 1895), 184. “Fig. 4. Hache à ailerons en bronze. Vue de deux côtés et coupe. – Trouvée, en 1874, au pied du **Monte S. Floriano** à Imponzo, près de Tolmezzo. – Collection de M. le docteur G. Gortani d'Arta. –

In addition, we meet these same incisions [*charaxeis*]--holes [*koilotêtes*] on both stone and bronze vessels from various regions and time-periods. In Hungary, Italy, Thessaly, Troy, Anatolia, Crete,¹³⁴ and virtually everywhere, on ancient Neolithic ceramics the holes [*koilotêtes*] on the surface of the pots are a common trope.

We even find holes [*koilotêtes*] on images of humans and animals.

Finally, as for the *pintaderas*, their appearance and their general stylistic arrangement are entirely characteristic and at first sight invite comparison with the objects previously discussed.¹³⁵

Nevertheless, the attempt to analyze the meaning of these incisions [*charaxeôn*] from every possible perspective may at least exclude certain correlations and conclusions.

[122] The line and the point [*hê grammê kai hê stigmê*]--in short, these are the fundamental symbols, as is well known from mathematical analysis. The various forms that can be made by

MARINONI l.c. pl. 15 fig. 14 p. 511.”

¹³⁴. (53) A. Zois, *Kamares-Stil*, 1968, 302-305.

Translator’s Note. The complete citation is as follows:

Antonis A. Zoïs, *Der Kamares-Stil: Werden und Wesen* (Inaugural Dissertation zur Erlangung des Doktorgrades einer Hohen Philosophischen Fakultät der Eberhard-Karls-Universität zu Tübingen, 1968). Pages 302-305 (“Entwicklungsgeschichtliches”) discuss incised dots as well as circular and spiral ceramic designs from the Middle Minoan period, including at Knossos and Palaioakastro.

¹³⁵. (54) See Castiglioni, *Origini e distribuzione delle pintaderas preistoriche “Euro-asiatiche,”* RSP (1956): 109-191, with plates. Also in Müller-Karpe, II, Plate 111 A, nos. 1-11, where we find *pintaderas* from Choirokoitia on Cyprus.

Translator’s Note. The full citations are as follows:

Ottavio Cornaggia Castiglioni, “Origini e distribuzione delle *Pintaderas* preistoriche ‘Euro-asiatiche’: Contributi alla conoscenza delle culture preistoriche della valle del Po,” *Rivista di Scienze Preistoriche* 11 (1956): 109-191. Castiglioni notes that the term ‘*Pintaderas*’ was first used in 1519 by the Spanish in Mexico, upon first seeing the brightly colored and symmetrically designed indigenous local pottery. It became an ethnographic term of sorts in 1883, when Verneau used it to refer to a ceramic style discovered in several caves on Grand Canary Island, and in 1884, when Issel applied the same term to some “enigmatic” prehistoric finds from the Arene Candide Cave in western Liguria. Castiglioni’s analysis then extends to materials from Anatolia, the Aegean, Crete, Tessaglia, Macedonia, the Danube Basin, and especially Italy. He offers a more specific definition of the term at page 113; and Hermann Müller-Karpe, *Handbuch der Vorgeschichte, Zweier Band: Jungsteinzeit: Tafeln* (München: C. H. Beck’sche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1968). Tafel 111, nos. 1-11, depict carefully incised round objects of relative flatness, all from Cyprus.

combining them--restricting ourselves to non-representational forms--are endless and endlessly recur in various times and places.

As we have already reported, the characteristic little dots [*lakkouvitses*] frequently appear on figurines [*eidôlia*]. Thus in the examples of a combination of leopard and human shapes from Catal Hüyük,¹³⁶ a Gravettian figurine [*eidôliou*] from Russia,¹³⁷ and a final one from Moravia,¹³⁸ the little dots [*lakkouvitses*] are assembled to depict, in various arrangements, either an animal skin, such as the sheepskin which they wore, or else a decorative adaptation to the texture of the finished surface.

This decorative adaptation of the finished surface--that is, independent of any votive [*latreutêtôn*] or symbolic meaning--is the reason for the appearance of the holes [*koilotétôn*] on vessels from various regions and time-periods. The list of examples is very long, even limiting ourselves to the earliest Neolithic ceramics.

¹³⁶. (55) J. Mellaart, *Earliest Civilizations of the Near East*, 1965, 94, pl. 70-71.

Translator's Note. The full citation is as follows:

James Mellaart, *Earliest Civilizations of the Near East* (New York, NY: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1965), 94. Plates 70-71 depict "a boy-god riding on a leopard and a female deity standing behind a leopard"; both are covered with incised holes.

¹³⁷. (56) J. Hawkes, *Prehistory*, 1963, 162.

Translator's Note. The full citation is as follows:

Jacquetta Hawkes and Sir Leonard Woolley, *History of Mankind: Cultural and Scientific Development: Volume I: Prehistory and the Beginnings of Civilization* (London: Unwin Brothers Limited, Copyright 1963 by UNESCO), 162:

With the Upper Paleolithic Age both art and the remains of material culture lift us on to certain ground.... A Gravettian statuette from Mal'ta, Siberia, shows a man wearing a hood and closely fitting body garment and trousers of skins with the fur outside (Fig. 26); these seem to have been made all in one piece like the "siren suit" of the English in the Second World War. Most of the female statuettes of the period, being cult objects, are naked,...

¹³⁸. (57) An ox head on a Neolithic figurine [*eidôlio*], see J. Poulik, *Prehistoric Art*, fig. 33.

Translator's Note. The full citation is as follows:

Josef Poulik, *Prehistoric Art, Including some recent cave-culture discoveries and subsequent developments up to Roman times*, R. Finlayson Samsour, trans. (London: Spring Books, nd). Figure 33 depicts a "Moulded bull's head. Baked clay. Neolithic 'stroke-ornamented' ware. Height of head (snout-to-temple) 5.4cm. Státenice-Cerný Vůl (Prague District). National Museum, Prague. Plaster cast. Original destroyed during the War." The entire surface of the head is decorated with deeply incised holes, mostly in pairs.

The appearance of these holes [*koilotétôn*] is in itself, I believe, a rather thin rationale for proposing a date. Thus, holes [*koilotêtes*] on Bronze Age swords from Italy confirm the decorative intent of one such artifice: nail holes. Their use in dating the rock carvings--as was attempted by Mikov--is imprecise.

Among the portable works of art or worship, the most probable evidence of a “function” [*leitourgias*] for the holes [*koilotétôn*] are the *pintaderas*: stone seal stones which we hypothesize were used for marking or “sealing” the body, after first being coated with paint. We recognize that such a “sealing” of body parts--especially the legs--occurs among the earliest peoples when, upon entering a “sacred” cave, they were required to walk along areas designated for performance. On figurine-plates [*eidôlia-plakes*] from Bulgaria the body appears to be defined by drill-holes [*trupêmata-koilotêtes*].¹³⁹ In addition, [123] we have evidence from a region in the USA: “early Spanish explorers found that the local petroglyphs in Arizona resembled the tattoos on the skin of indigenous peoples.”¹⁴⁰ Might this suggest the following hypothesis: namely, that all of this confirms the first association of religious beliefs [*latreutikôn ideolêpsiôn*] with the close study of abstract symbols?

Another similarity is found in the distinctive form of portable carved plates [*plakes*]. One such type of plate was used as a floor tile. Tsoudas discovered one in the prehistoric excavation at Sesklos.¹⁴¹ One side of it was pitted with small holes [*koilotêtes*]. On the other side, in addition to

¹³⁹. (58) See especially: Georgiev-Angelov, *Ausgrabungen des Siedlungshügels, BIAB*, 21, 1957, 41-127.

Translator’s Note. The full citation is as follows:
G. Georgiev and N. Angelov, “Ausgrabungen des Siedlungshügels bei Russe in dem Jahren 1950 bis 1953,” *Isvestiia na Arkheologicheskiia Institut* 21 (1957): 41-127. Pages 125-127 provide a German summary of this long article in Russian, with copious illustrations of graves goods and settlement debris, at 41-124; see Figures ## 10, 34, 40, 42 44-48, for drill-holes, linear designs and stamps.

¹⁴⁰. (59) See Dale W. Ritter: *Sympathetic magic of the hunt as suggested by petroglyphs...*, *Valcamonica Symposium*, 1968, 410-411.

Translator’s Note. The full citation is as follows:
Dale W. Ritter, “Sympathetic Magic of the Hunt as Suggested by Petroglyphs and Pictographs of the Western United States,” in Emmanuel Anati, ed., *Valcamonica Symposium: Symposium International d'Art Prehistorique, Valcamonica 23-28 Septembre 1968* (Capo di Ponte (Brescia): Edizione del Centro Camuno di Studi Preistorici, 1970), 397-421. Pages 410-411 contain the section on “Personal marks and totem signs”; the relevant quotation is this: “Early Spanish explorers in the Gila Bend area of Arizona found local petroglyphs looked like personal skin tattoos of the natives.”

¹⁴¹. (60) See Χρ. Τσούντα, *Αἱ προϊστορικὰ ἀκροπόλεις: Διμηνίου καὶ Σέσκλου*, 1908, 111-112, fig. 24a, 24b.

the holes [*koilotêtes*], there was a circle with a diametrical cross reminiscent of a wheel, similar to the circular symbol in the rock carving at Asphendou. Tsoudas, judging by the form of the floor tiles, dated this to the Bronze Age at Sesklos, though it was more likely to have been repurposed from an earlier monument [*mnêmeio*]. In the case of floor tiling from the Minoan palaces on Crete,¹⁴² groups of tiles also appear with holes [*koilotêtes*]. More familiar are the “offering plates” at Mallia. Finally, we should recall the tiles on Naxos with holes cut in a spiral

Translator’s Note. The full citation is as follows:

Χρηστού Τσουντα, Αι Προϊστορικοί Ακροπόλεις ΔΙΜΗΝΙΟΥ και ΣΕΣΚΛΟΥ, μετα 47 πινακῶν και 312 εικονῶν εν τῷ κειμένῳ (Ἐν Αθηναίς: Τυποίς Π. Δ. Σακελλαρίου, 1908); Christos Tsoudas, *The Prehistoric Akropoleis of Diminios and Sesklos, with 47 Plates and 312 Figures* (Athens: P. D. Sakellarios, 1908). This is a publication for the Library of the Athenian Archaeological Society.

In the middle of a section entitled “Houses from the Bronze Age,” Tsoudas makes the following observation:

Among these Bronze Age remains were discovered [Note 32 (I 1)] some plates made of slate cut from the earth and which constituted the floor of a room or road, one of which is broken and contains strange carvings on both sides, carvings which are illustrated here. On one side (Fig. 24a) we may detect grooved lines [*grammai*] and many small holes [*koilotêtes*], and on the other (Fig. 24b) there are similar, but far fewer, carvings in the form of a circle with a cross, as is evident. The plate has a length of 1.63 m and a width of 0.52m; probably before it was used for flooring it was installed somewhere else. Nonetheless I believe that the carvings were made in the Bronze Age. Such carving may also be seen on a plate serving as a grave marker, but it was rather unclear, and I am not able to determine whether it was carved or is a naturally occurring mark. (Translation mine)

¹⁴². (61) See Sinos, AA 1970, 1ff. The examples of royal “offerings” were increased in recent (1970-1971) discoveries by Mr. Zoīs. For their interpretation, see H. van Effenterre, Cupules et Naumachie, BCH, 79, 1955, 541-548. See also Cl. Tiré and H. Van Effenterre, Guide des fouilles françaises en Crète, 12-13.

Translator’s Note. The full citations are as follows:

Stefan Sinos, “Eine Untersuchung der sogenannten ‘Palastanlage’ von Vasiliki,” *Archäologischer Anzeiger* 85 (1970): 1-24. Abb.2 is a photograph of “Hofpflasterung nach Westen”; Henri van Effenterre, “Cupules et naumachie,” *Bulletin de Correspondance Hellénique* 79 (1955): 541-548, page 545 contains four images of incised stones from Gournia and Mallia; and Claire Tiré et Henri van Effenterre, *Guides des Fouilles Françaises en Crète* (Paris: École Française d’Athènes en dépôt aux Éditions E. de Boccard, 1966), 13-14, with Plate IV, offering a discussion of “La Pierre à Cupules” at the Minoan Palace of Mallia, a large round stone with a large hole incised in the center and smaller holes ringing the circumference.

design.¹⁴³

Nonetheless the function of the holes [*leitourgia tôn koilotêtôn*] on the rock carvings is difficult to correlate with the more commonplace works of art and religious worship; interpretations relying on them remain relatively indeterminate. Symbols alter their meaning in every age and in various places, in accordance with the material and the design, as well as in accordance with the relative sequence of successive images.

Nevertheless, let us return once again to the image fields of caves and rock shelters for a fuller investigation of every possible comparison. The dots [*kérides*] here, whether painted or engraved, appear in the Upper Paleolithic and may be grouped into three main cases.

[124]

Case 1: The interior portion of the animal's body is completely covered with spots, a technique that is designed to represent the pattern or the color of the hide.¹⁴⁴

Case 2: The image of the javelin, whether as wounding or as a mark of fertility, is often represented by painted or engraved lines.¹⁴⁵

¹⁴³. (62) See Χρ. Ντούμας, “Κορυφή τ’ Ἀρωνιοῦ,” *op. cit.* 63, fig. 40b, c, d and 41 b, c.

Translator's Note. Christos Doumas's article, “The Peak of Arônios,” *Αρχαιολογικόν Δελτίον* 20-21 (1965-66): 41-64: Plate 40b, which depicts an engraved plate [*plax*] with spirals; 40c, which depicts the reverse side of this same plate incised with small holes [*lakkidia*]; 40d, which provides a side view of the same plate; and Plate 41b-c, which depicts plates with shallow holes [*lakkidia*] from the Archaeological Collections of Apeiranthos.

¹⁴⁴. (63) See T. G. E. Powell, *Prehistoric art*, 1966, 46, as well as images of the horses from Pech Merle (Lot) or of bison from Marsoulas (Haute-Garonne) in Graziosi, *Paleolithic art*, pl. 196 and 213b.

Translator's Note. Powell's discussion of two images of bison from Castillo and the Marsoulas Cave does refer to a “simple outline in dots,” which he distinguishes from “the application of magical dots,” but does not mention Papoutsakis's thesis as stated here.

See Paolo Graziosi, *Paleolithic Art* (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1960), where Plate 196 (“Cave Paintings in France: Pech-Merle (*Lot*): horses covered with dots and negative impressions of hands”) and 213b (“Cave Paintings in France: b) Marsoulas (*Haute Garonne*): dotted bison, drawn by Breuil”) do indeed depict this technique.

¹⁴⁵. (64) Such as: on the outline of bison at Niaux (Ariège) or Montespan (Haute Garonne) or the Les trois Frères cave (Ariège). See Graziosi, *op. cit.*, pl. 277, 280C and 280 D, corresponding to Abbé Breuil, *Les Cavernes du Volp*, 1958, 46-49, pl. 50, 51 and XVlb.

Translator's Note. The full citations are as follows:
Paolo Graziosi, *Paleolithic Art* (New York, NY: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1960). Plate 277 depicts “Utilization of Natural Accidents: Niaux (*Ariège*) : impression made by water

Case 3: Entire groups of generally straight lines, whether arranged at the perimeter or with other geometric symbols, are very widespread. Sometimes the points appear to be arranged linearly and, it is believed, symbolize the path to inaccessible portions of the cave.¹⁴⁶

We also find painted points [*teleies graptas*] at the beginning and end of representations of sacred processions [*latreutikou hierou*]. We find them as well in intermediate positions--where the topography of the cave changes--resulting in a rhythmic movement to the whole arrangement. In any case, according to the currently dominant point of view, the incisions, the points, and the linear strokes, all likely constituted fertility symbols. According to A. Leroi-Gourhan they are “abstract, schematic expressions of male representations.”¹⁴⁷

dropping on clay, used to represent the eye and wounds of a bison”; Plates 280c-d depict “Paleolithic Magic: Hunting magic. Wounded animals, from Montespan (*Haute-Garonne*) and Les Trois Frères (*Ariège*), according to Breuil’s tracing”; and Henri Bégouën and l’Abbé H. Breuil, *Les Cavernes du Volp: Trois Frères-Tuc d’Audoubert a Montesquieu-Avantès (Ariège)* (Paris: Arts et Métiers Graphiques, 1958). Pages 46-49 discuss the “Panneau des Deux Ours,” a very complex group of large animals inscribed on top of one another, and Plate XVIIb provides the image of a rhinoceros and bison drawn over one another.

¹⁴⁶. (65) Such as at the Les Trois Frères cave (Ariège) or at Oviedo (Spain). See Abbé Breuil, *Les Caveres du Volp*, 9, pl. VIIa, and Graziosi, op. cit., pl. 235.

Translator’s Note. The full citations are as follows: Henri Bégouën and l’Abbé H. Breuil, *Les Cavernes du Volp: Trois Frères-Tuc d’Audoubert a Montesquieu-Avantès (Ariège)* (Paris: Arts et Métiers Graphiques, 1958). Plate VIIa depicts the interior of the “Three Brothers” cave: “Paroi ornée de ponctuations de la Galerie des Points”; and Paolo Graziosi, *Paleolithic Art* (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1960). Plates 235a-b depict “Cave Paintings in Spain: Pindal (*Oviedo*): bison, horses and various signs, painted and lightly engraved. Overall view and detail.”

¹⁴⁷. (66) See A. Leroi-Gourhan, *The art of Prehistoric Man in Western Europe*, 1968, 171.

Translator’s Note. The full citation is as follows, and relates to the sexual/fertility thesis for which he was best known. André Leroi-Gourhan, *The Art of Prehistoric Man in Western Europe* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1968), 171:

Judging by what we have established earlier, the strokes and rows of dots are abstract, schematic expressions of male representations. Why Paleolithic man placed the central panels that contain paired representations between areas that were reserved exclusively for male symbols can only be a matter of conjecture. The fact that it is very often the first narrowing of the path leading to the sanctuary and the last dead-end passage, or more commonly the narrow recesses and deep cavities, that are marked with male symbols suggests that these are governed by the same rule of complementarity as the paired figures. Certain natural irregularities in the caves, evocative of female symbolism, would thus have been complemented by the male signs. What is certain is that Paleolithic men really intended to place male symbols at those spots, for it is in the same locations

On monuments [*mnêmeia*] from the Late Paleolithic and Mesolithic eras, similar engravings with small dots [*lakkouvitses*] like those from Aspendou are widespread. Mr. E. Anati¹⁴⁸ observed, and we find it here, that in many caves in the Alps, in Turkey, in Bulgaria and elsewhere the appearance of holes [*koilotêtôn*] close to the cave entrance or else along the pathway leading to some interior place is a recurrent feature, and it clearly had religious significance [*latreutikê sêmasia*].¹⁴⁹ In the British Isles, [125] for many years now scholars following the Abbè Breuil have studied and classified rock carvings on large stones, megalithic structures, and portable plates. Filled with geometric symbols and dots [*koilotêtôn*], they demonstrate a link to Iberian societies and continuity with southern Europe.¹⁵⁰

(entrances, passages, and back areas) that we find either male signs, stags or ibexes, or horses; these different animal species of the male category may occur either alone, or associated with one another or with signs.

¹⁴⁸. (67) See E. Anati, *Camonica Valley*, 1961, 152-166. Idem.: *Arte preistorica in Valtellina*, Arch. di arte preistorica, 1968, 25-35.

Translator's Note. The full citations are as follows:

Emmanuel Anati, *Camonica Valley: A Depiction of Village Life in the Alps from Neolithic Times to the Birth of Christ, as Revealed by Thousands of Newly Found Rock Carvings*, Linda Asher, trans. (New York, NY: Alfred A. Knopf, 1961), 151-166, is the first part of a chapter on "Religion and Beliefs"[with illustrations of depictions of humans, animals and what Anati calls "solar discs"; it is instructive that the figure on page 159 depicts later images "superimposed on earlier animals," such as appears to be the case at the Aspendou Cave]; and

Emmanuel Anati, *Arte Preistorica in Valtellina*, Renzo Sertoli Salis, pres. (Edizioni del Centro, 1968). A survey of cave art from the Italian Alps, pages 23-39 offers a "Descrizione dei Monumenti" and pages 63-66 "Figure Animali"; the earlier images depict human and animal figures, together with abstract shapes, mostly spirals.

¹⁴⁹. (68) At Niaux, see Abbè H. Breuil, *Four Hundred centuries of Cave Art*, 194, fig. 165. A. Breuil believes that the points [*teleies*] and lines [*grammes*] here were the most visible means with which to lead prehistoric hunters to the "sacred cave."

Translator's Note. Breuil notes that "the finest black figures at Niaux recall the best Magdalenian Art on small objects... and take their place amongst the masterpieces of Quaternary Art by their exceptional purity of line" (194). He suggests that later red dots "are topographical, to help the brave explorers of the Reindeer Age to find their way on their visits to the Sanctuary" (195).

¹⁵⁰. (69) Abbè H. Breuil, Presidential address for 1934, op. cit., 322.

Translator's Note. Breuil's Conclusions are as follows:

From the facts reviewed in this lecture, we learn that important relations existed between Iberia and Ireland, and, in a lesser degree, extended to England and Scotland, which, by the erection of funerary monuments, and some types of jewelry and arms, formed an artistic background of conventional design which had a remarkable development.

In the Helladic region of eastern Thrace, on the border with Turkey and Bulgaria, where for the first time megalithic structures have been found, their dolmen with clear engravings have not yet been studied; their vicinity to Pangaio is highly suggestive.¹⁵¹

Liguria is also full of similar engravings. The region of Hérault, on the exposed rock surfaces throughout the region, is full of megalithic structures where we once again find holes [*koilotêtes*] in very close proximity to cross-shaped symbols.¹⁵² The symbol of the cross is a very ancient symbol--going back to the Upper Paleolithic--and it stands for the male in fertility scenes, or else more generally for the human being.¹⁵³ Naturally these must be differentiated from the cross-shaped symbols that Christians carved in many cases in order to “exorcise” the pagan spirits of the engravings.¹⁵⁴

These influences crossed the British Isles and slightly affected Scandinavia, where they gained an admixture of quite different Asiatic elements. (322)

¹⁵¹. (70) D. Theocharis, *Prehistory of East Macedonia and Thrace*, 1971, in the series “Ancient Greek Cities” of ATO. In Appendix I, 1-2: Megalithic [sic] Monuments in Thrace?

Translator’s Note. The full citation is as follows:

D. Theocharis, *Prehistory of Eastern Macedonia and Thrace* (Athens: Athens Technical Organization, Athens Center of Ekistics, 1971). Appendix I is entitled “Megalithic Monuments in Thrace (?)” and surveys the occasional evidence assembled in the 1960s for dolmens and menhirs in Bulgaria, Greece and Turkey, a suggestive accumulation that calls for further research; Appendix II offers a list of 54 “Prehistoric Sites of Eastern Macedonia and Thrace.”

¹⁵². (71) Rob. Guiraud: *Cupules et gravures....*, CLPA 13, 1, 1964, 125-137.

Translator’s Note. The full citation is as follows:

Robert Guiraud, “Cupules et Gravures dans la Commune de Combes (Hérault),” *Cahiers Ligures de Préhistoires et d’Archéologie* 13.1 (1964): 125-137. Figures ##16-18 identify a body of cross-shaped images as either “Figures Anthropomorphes” or “Anciens Combattants.”

¹⁵³. (72) Bostanci, *Researches on the Mediterranean coast*, op. cit., 129-170, together with the Bibliography in R. Guiraud, *Cupules et gravures*, op. cit.

Translator’s Note. The full citations are as follows:

Enver Y. Bostanci, “Researches on the Mediterranean Coast of Anatolia: A New Paleolithic Site at Beldibi near Antalya: Preliminary Report,” *Anatolia/Anadolu* 4 (1959): 129-178 [see Plate 1, at page 164]; and

Robert Guiraud, “Cupules et Gravures dans la Commune de Combes (Hérault),” *Cahiers Ligures de Préhistoires et d’Archéologie* 13.1 (1964): 125-137, which includes 15 sources in the footnotes.

¹⁵⁴. (73) See A. A. Formozov, *Očerki po pervobythomu iskusstvu*, 1969, No. 165 in *Materialy i issledovanija po archeologi SSSR* [“Materials and Research on the Archaeology of the USSR”], 127, Pl. 46.

Translator’s Note. The full citation is as follows:

As far away as Malaysia, India, Ireland, Russia, North and South America, we once again find holes [*koilotêtes*] on rocks or rock shelters--of various diameters--most frequently arranged in clusters. Closer to home, in the Alps, in Italian Liguria, on the engraved rocks of Olargues, in the Magourata Cave in Bulgaria, in Palestine, and elsewhere, analogous holes [*koilotêtes*] abound.

Once again on Crete, in the ridge along the south side of the White Mountains, in the village of Drakona, there is still a large rock, “the ruler” [*charakas*]. If we follow the description of Mr. I. Mavrakakis who visited in 1932, then the “the ruler” depicted “pits” [*arous*], that is, [126] small dots [*lakkouvakia*] arranged in the same pattern as found on the Hérault rock. Regrettably, an explosion of dynamite destroyed this image with the “pits” shortly before the Second World War, and there is nothing left other than a single written description of it.¹⁵⁵

Finally, on a natural rock in the flat foundation of a Neolithic house at Phaestos, Mr. Doro Levi¹⁵⁶ found 9 small holes [*koilotêtes*], and close to them, 12 heavily worn animal bones. Perhaps they were part of a “game” [*paidiá*].¹⁵⁷

A. A. Formozov, *Očerki po pervobyitnomu iskusstvu* [“Essays on Primitive Art”] (Moscow: “Havka” Publishers, 1969). Plate 46 on page 127 displays one such rock carving, with an Eastern Orthodox cross incised over an anthropomorphic figure surrounded by small animals.

¹⁵⁵. (74) See Ιω. Μαυρακάκη, ‘Ο ἀρχαῖος τεχνητὸς ἀρόλιθος Δρακῶνας Κεραμειῶν καὶ τὰ τοπωνύμια της, newspaper “Ἐθνικὴ Φωνὴ” Χανίων, 9-2-1939.

Translator’s Note. The actual citation is Γιαννη Μαυρακάκη, ‘Ο ἀρχαῖος τεχνητὸς ἀρόλιθος Δρακῶνας Κεραμειῶν καὶ τὰ τοπωνύμια της [“The Ancient Carved *Arolithos* of Drakona (Kerameiôn) and Its Place Name”], which appeared on the front page of the Xania-based newspaper, *Ethnikê Phônê* [Peoples’ Voice] on February 9, 1939. Mavrakakê is identified there as the Director of the Gymnasion of Sphakia. I am indebted to Dr. Dimitra Mylona for this reference.

¹⁵⁶. (75) D. Levi, *ASAtene*, 1957-1958, 340.

Translator’s Note. The full citation is as follows:
Doro Levi, “Gli scavi a Festòs nel 1956 e 1957,” *Annuario della Scuola Archeologica di Atene e delle Missioni Italiane in Oriente* 19-20 (1957-1958): 193-361. Page 340 notes:

Arrivando alla roccia notiamo qui 9 piccoli buchi scavati nella roccia stessa; nello strato di terra sopra e attorno ad essi sono stati raccolti 12 astragali animali, logorati per lungo uso.

Arriving at the rock we observe 9 small holes incised in the rock; the layer of soil surrounding and above the rock produced a collection of 12 animal bones, worn away through long use. (Translation mine)

¹⁵⁷. (76) On the island of *Penang* in Malaysia, a similar stone has 9 holes [*koilotêtes*] which are arranged in 3 rows. See BCSP 5, 1970, 219-220, fig. 143.

Closely related, and similar in arrangement, to the engravings of Asphendou are two well-known and intact monuments [*mnêmeia*] located in the broader Mediterranean-Balkan region, as described below:

1. The “Lance Engravings” (*akidographêmata*) of Pangaio.

The tireless professor N. Moutsopoulos, together with his students, discovered Pangaio in Thrace, a site filled with (nearly 200) “lance engravings,” as he characterized them in his publication of them.¹⁵⁸ All of the published sketches and plates possess great interest, especially in relation to the well-documented rock carvings in Bulgaria.

The images of Pangaio, some of which are found on exposed rock and some in rock shelters, are engraved [*charagmenes*]--others of which, however, appear to be painted [*technikes*]--depict hunting scenes, game animals, horses, but without figural linear engravings. On one of the published paintings [*pinakes*]¹⁵⁹ of the “lance engravings” of Pangaio, we observe small dots [*lakkouvitses*] arranged in the form of a circle. Coincident with the description of Professor Moutsopoulos, as well as many other cases, there is clearly an abundance of such holes [*koilotêtes*].

Translator’s Note. The full citation is as follows:
“Segnalazioni d’Archivio,” *Bolletino del Centro Camuno di Studi Preistorici* 5 (1970): 199-220. Pages 219-200 conclude with the description of a “Serie a coppelle nell’isola di Penang (Malaysia),” with Figure 143 depicting the stone which Professor M. Scarzella discovered in August of 1969, bearing 9 holes arranged in 3 parallel lines.

¹⁵⁸. (77) N. Μουτσόπουλος, *Τὰ ἀκιδογραφήματα τοῦ Παγγαίου*, 1969, 1-8, εἰκ. 1-40, πίν. Α’-Η’.

Translator’s Note. The full citation for this pamphlet is as follows:
Νίκου Κ. Μουτσοπούλου, *Τὰ Ἀκιδογραφήματα τοῦ Παγγαίου* [“The Lance Engravings of Pangaio”] (Αθήναι: ηρ, 1969). It consists of a descriptive analysis (1-8), 44 sketched figures (9-29), and eight photographic plates (30-38).

A two-page synopsis of the book available in the Theophrastus Digital Library describes the book as containing 8 pages of text, 44 figures, and 8 plates. According to this synopsis, the cave art at Pangaio, near Lake Karlas in Thessaly, “contains animal figures, human figures, bows and arrows, armed hunters, horsemen with spears, shields and swords.” It adds that this cave art “has confirmed the continuity of worship between the idol worship in caves and that of the Christian religion in cave-churches.”

¹⁵⁹. (78) Moutsopoulos, op. cit., pl. 5, top.

Translator’s Note. The stick-figured animals carved on stone plates and depicted in Moutsopoulos’s Plate #5 (above and below) are remarkably similar to the deer from Asphendou. Equally suggestive parallels may be found in Figures ##1-2, 13, 19-24, as well as Plates ##4, 5 and 8.

As for conclusions regarding the dating of these images, I must differ with the esteemed professor. For starters, it is not absolutely necessary to associate crosses with the Christian era. The presence of such religious [*latreutikês*] iconography most likely belongs to the pre-Christian, and even prehistoric, era.

[127]

2. The “Petroglyphs” of Bulgaria.

Many years ago (1929), the Bulgarian prehistorian, V. Mikov,¹⁶⁰ identified in the region of Pleven and Troyian (where there are remains of a prehistoric settlement) rock carvings that appear highly analogous to those from Pangaio and Sphakia.

Outside of the village of Karaguay near Pleven, in a valley which recalls the *hunting grounds* of prehistoric societies, as well as the “Metska” (bear) rock shelter, he found engraved hunting scenes as well as incised holes [*koilotêtôn*] and linear [*grammikôn*] symbols. Similarly, in the village of Orechaka at Troyian, atop the massive rock--where at that time (1929) the public reading room of the city of Lovetz was located--there appeared to be an image, of far lesser extent, depicting equestrian hunting scenes with linear [*grammikôn*] symbols decorated with holes [*koilotêtes*].

Mikov, dealing at the time with the challenge of a nearly non-existent bibliography, compared the appearance of the cross-shaped symbols, together with the surface similarity of the holes [*koilotêtôn*] to those found on vessels from neighboring areas, and to sword handles from the Bronze Age in Italy, and thus he dated the arrangements to the Chalcolithic era, to the Bronze Age and to the Christian period.

The non-figural linear [*grammika*] symbols--a circle and holes [*kyklos kai koilotêtes*]--an analysis of which was published by Mikov, appear to be analogous to those at Asphendou.

In Bulgaria as well as in the Magourata Cave,¹⁶¹ already well known in the 18th century, we find

¹⁶⁰. (79) See Mikov, *Gravures rupestres en Bulgarie*, BIAB, 5, 1929, 291-308.

Translator’s Note. The full citation is as follows:

V. Mikov, “Gravures rupestres en Bulgarie,” *Isvestiii, ai, j na Bulgarskiii, ai, j arkheologicheski institut* 5 (1929): 290-308. As I have noted, the article is in Russian, with a French summary at pages 307-308.

¹⁶¹. (80) Anati, *Magourata Cave, Bulgaria*, BCSP, 6, 1971, 83-107.

Translator’s Note. The full citation is as follows:

Emmanuel Anati, “Magourata Cave, Bulgaria,” *Bolletino del Centro Camuno di Studi Preistorici* 6 (1971): 83-107. Page 83 observes that the “cave penetrates into the mountain for about four kilometers. Near the narrow entrance a series of cup-marks appears on the rock surface. As in other similar instances elsewhere, this may be a sign that the cave had a religious function.”

holes [*koilotêtes*] carved in the rock located close to the entrance, whereas deeper in the interior we also find depictions of hunting scenes, game animals, the sun, and the “Goddess of the Cave.”¹⁶²

Discoveries from Other Regions

If we transfer ourselves to another area--very little known in comparison to the “classic” French caves and those of the Spanish Levant--that is to say, East Asia and Russia, we will find a single unique example. Nevertheless, even this is useful to us. Aiding our understanding of the subject, either we will accept the theory of the dispersion (*diffusion*) of warlike social groups unrelated to current ethnic groups, but better [128] viewed as part of a unified geographical area with well-established lines of communication, or else we will return to the theory of a spontaneous and simultaneous emergence of common art forms and common structures in various areas.

In the extensive zones of Russia, East and Central Asia, the Caucasus, Uzbekistan, Armenia and elsewhere, many groups of hunting scenes together with linear [*grammika*] symbols and small holes [*koukides*] have been found. These symbols, whether painted or carved, provide artistic analogues, both in regions that are directly related (North Europe), as well as in regions that are much further removed (North Africa). In recent years (1957), at the Tamgaly pass (Russia) roughly 1000 petroglyphs have been discovered--discoveries which are particularly rich comparanda even with those from the Sahara.

This agrees with the published views of M. Ksica, concerning the emergence of societies where expert hunters coexisted with farmers and herders.¹⁶³ The “totemic” symbols, as they are called,

¹⁶². (81) Δ. Θεοχάρης, Ἡ παλαιολιθικὴ τέχνη στὸ Πήλιο (προσωπινὴ ἀνακοίνωση), Θεσσαλικά, τόμ. Ε', 1969, pl. IX and p. 79: present the “Aphrodite of the Cave,” although the question of its authenticity remains in doubt.

Translator’s Note. The full citation for D. Theocharis, “The Paleolithic Art on Pelion (Preliminary Report),” is as follows:

Δημήτριος Ρ. Θεοχάρης, Ἡ παλαιολιθικὴ τέχνη στὸ Πήλιο (προσωπινὴ ἀνακοίνωση), Θεσσαλικά, τόμ. 5 (1969): 76-82. The brief English abstract is as follows:

In a short preliminary report the author announces the discovery of the first caves in Greece with rock-paintings and engravings of a palaeolithic date, in the flanks of Mount Pelion, Thessaly.

From one of these caves (Cave A) some characteristic specimens [sic] are figured: A mammoth painted in red (Plate IV); two animals and an incised “sign” (Pl. V); a wounded cervid--the most important painting of that cave (Pl. VI); an engraved mammoth (Pl. VII); three late palaeolithic ivory statuettes (Pl. VIII); engraved silhouette [sic] of a nude woman (Pl. IX).

¹⁶³. (82) Ksica, Gravures rupestres et cultes du soleil..., Archeologia, 28, 1969, 6-11.

Translator’s Note. The full citation is as follows:

depict the head rendered as a circle with holes [*koilotêtes*] arranged inside it--usually 12 in number. This scholar believes that they symbolize the twelve months of the year--a rather unconvincing hypothesis, if we consider for a moment that the twelve-month calendar was not in general use. The appearance of the sun in these images may suggest an association of the holes [*koilotêtôn*] with astronomical theories, or with the view that the image of the male/sun is associated with fertility cycles.

THE EARLY APPEARANCE OF HUMAN BEINGS ON CRETE

Up to now, despite the numerous caves on the island that are known to have served as sacred places [*latreutika hiera*], no rock carvings have been found on Crete. The caves of Crete clearly were elements of early interest among researchers, as early as Spratt. Recent works have appeared: Mr. El. Platakis¹⁶⁴ has produced an inventory of the majority, though not all, of the karstic features on the island; and the Frenchman, P. Faure,¹⁶⁵ has produced a more synthetic study.

Miroslav Ksica, "Gravures rupestres et culte du soleil dans le Défilé de Tamgaly," *Archeologia* 28 (1969): 6-11, surveying material from some 160 sites in the Soviet republics of Central Asia, including Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Kirghistan, Kazakhstan and Tadjikstan, but focusing closely on some abstract anthropomorphic figures painted together with animals at the site of Tamgaly, north of Tolmak.

¹⁶⁴. (83) See 'Ελευθ. Πλατάκη, Σπήλαια καὶ ἄλλαι καρστικαὶ μορφαὶ τῆς Κρήτης, ΔΕΣΕ, 1969, 10, and the article by the same[,] the historian of speliological discoveries on Crete, in the volume of "Ἐὖος" dedicated to Crete, 76-85, 1964, 553-567.

Translator's Note. The *Deltion Ellēnikēs Spēlaiologikēs Etaireias*, or "Bulletin of the Greek Speliological Society," which was founded in 1950 and published bilingually in Greek and French, may be consulted online at <https://ese.edu.gr/category/deltio-ese>.

In this case, the full citation is Eleutherios Platakis, "Σπήλαια καὶ Ἄλλαι Καρστικαὶ Μορφαὶ τῆς Κρήτης/ Grottes et Formations Karstiques de la Crète [The Caves and Other Karstic Formations of Crete]," *Δελτιον Ἑλληνικῆς Σπηλαιολογικῆς Ἐταιρείας/Bulletin de la Société Spéiologique de Grèce*, Volume 10 (1969-1970), Fasc. 1-2: 31-36, and Fasc. 3-4: 78-86, offering brief descriptions of 80 newly discovered caves and rock shelters on Crete.

The latter citation of *Ἡὸς* (presumably a newspaper or bulletin) with its errant pagination is unclear to me.

¹⁶⁵. (84) P. Faure, *Fonctions des cavernes crétoises*, 1964, 1-250.

Translator's Note. The full citation of Faure's Thesis for the Faculty of Letters at the University of Paris is as follows:
Paul Faure, *Fonctions des Cavernes Crétoises* (Paris: Éditions E. De Boccard, 1964); Papoutsakis cites only the main text, excluding the Introduction, various bibliographies and other critical apparatus.

PLATE 5 [Fig. 5: “Overall rendering of the rock carvings of Asphendou.”]

PLATE 6a [Fig. 5 [sic]: “Linear and tectonic (*tectiformes*) designs from the rock carvings of Asphendou” (full size)]

PLATE 6 [Fig. 6: “Characteristic assemblages of holes [*koilotêtôn*] from the rock carvings of Asphendou.”]

PLATE 7 [Fig. 7: “Indeterminate images from Karaguay, according to V. Mikov. (See figure 163, p. 300, in BIAB, 5, 1928-1929)”]; Fig. 8: “Engravings [*charagmata*] and holes [*koilotêtes*] from Karaguay, according to V. Mikov. (See fig. 160, p. 295, in BIAB, 5, 1928-1929.)”]

PLATE 8 [Fig 9: “ ‘Lance Engravings’ from Pangaio according to N. Moutsopoulos. (See N. Moutsopoulos, *The lance engravings of Pangaio*, 1969, figs. 14-18, p. 13)”]; Fig. 10: “Holes [*koilotêtes*] and linear [*grammatika*] symbols from petroglyphs in Ireland and other regions, according to A. Breuil. (See A. Breuil, *Presidential address [sic]...*, PPS of East Anglia, VII, p. 316, fig. 40).”]

[129]

The latter has identified several engravings from the Bornopheto Cave at Siteia,¹⁶⁶ but in the end I do not believe that these engravings confirm his interpretation of the scene. This appears more clearly if you compare the published photographs with the sketches in his study.¹⁶⁷

One explanation for this absence, which is apparent in the analyses of rock carvings and caves in Crete, is the intensive search for Minoan monuments which has created a second class status to the search for the social precursors on the island. The archaeologists who have worked here were generally uninterested in the Paleolithic and Mesolithic era.¹⁶⁸

¹⁶⁶. (85) P. Faure, *Sur trois sortes de sanctuaires crétoises*, BCH, 93, 1969.

Translator’s Note. The full citation is as follows:

Paul Faure, “*Sur Trois Sortes de Sanctuaires Crétois (cont.)*,” *Bulletin de Correspondance Hellénique* 93.1 (1969): 174-213.

¹⁶⁷. (86) P. Faure, *op. cit.*, 198, see also the sketch and photograph at 14-15.

Translator’s Note. Figure 14 presents the “*traces encore visibles des figures de la caverne*” from what Faure identifies as the Bernepheto Cave; Figure 15 provides Faure’s theoretical reconstruction which bears little relation to the limited remains and seems scarcely warranted. I can find no photograph of this cave in the article.

¹⁶⁸. (87) R. Hutchinson, *Prehistoric Crete*, 1968, 45.

Translator’s Note.

The full citation is R. W. Hutchinson, *Prehistoric Crete* (Middlesex: Penguin Books, 1962, 1968), 45.

Authorities such as A. Evans,¹⁶⁹ Pendlebury, G. Childe,¹⁷⁰ Marinatos,¹⁷¹ Gr. Clark,¹⁷² and others

Hutchinson begins his chapter on The Stone Age by saying that “[w]e can say nothing definite about the existence of men in Crete during the Old Stone Age” (45). But he does mention some suggestive finds by Pendlebury (at Lasithi), by Simonelli (in the caves near Rethymnon) and by Dorothea Bate (at Sphinari, Phalasarna, the Akrotiri peninsula, Milatos and Kharoumes).

¹⁶⁹. (88) Egypt and Libya. See A. Evans, *The Palace of Minos II*, 22-59. See also Pendlebury, *Archeology of Crete*, 74. Also see Schachermeyr, *Die minoische Kultur des Alten Kreta*, 49-51 and 235-236.

Translator’s Note. The full citations are as follows:

Sir Arthur Evans, *The Palace of Minos: A Comparative Account of the Successive Stages of the Early Cretan Civilization as Illustrated by the Discoveries at Knossos* (London: Macmillan and Co., Limited., 1921-1935), Volume II, Part I: *Fresh Lights on Origins and External Relations: The Restoration in Town and Palace After Seismic Catastrophe Towards Close of M.M. III, and the Beginnings of the New Era* (1928). The chapter at pages 22-59 is entitled “Impulse from the South--New Lights on Early Nilotic Connexions: Libyan and Egyptian Factors,” and suggests that trade connections between Crete and North Africa likely were established in the Neolithic period, and that Libyan and Nilotic settlers likely came to the island already at that time:

For the evidence tends more and more to the conclusion that it is all part of the same story, and that, as already suggested, this gifted Nilotic race actually found a foothold on Cretan soil. There is indeed good warrant for concluding not only that there was a direct tradition with regard to many technical processes and cultural ideas, but that something of the inborn artistic spirit of the old Nilotic people may have been physically infused into the indigenous Cretan population. The choicest flowers of the Minoan civilization that was afterwards to arise may well be regarded as, in part at least, the result of this engrafting. (24) ...

The conclusion is unavoidable, that, long before the foundation of the Great Palace as we know it, the site of Knossos was playing a historic part as a centre of connexions--not perhaps exclusively commercial--between the Minoan Priest-Kings and official Egypt of which we have other later indications (59);

J. D. S. Pendlebury, *The Archaeology of Crete: An Introduction* (London: Methuen & Co., Ltd., 1939). Page 74 offers a far more circumspect suggestion about links to Egypt in the Minoan period. In actual fact, his chapter on “The Neolithic Period” is found at pages 35-45, and focuses entirely on the eastern half of the island (“[p]robably the country [to the west] was too wild”). Page 35 offers the following cautious summary:

The full extent of the Neolithic habitation of Crete is as yet undetermined.... With so few sites upon which to base an argument it would be unsafe to draw definite conclusions as to the places favoured as settlements by the folk of this period. It is, however, remarkable that... [almost] every settlement lies a good hour or more from the sea; and

Fritz Schachermeyr, *Die minoische Kultur des alten Kreta* (Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer Verlag, 1964) 49-51 (with illustrations of Egyptian goods and influence at Knossos) states:

Auch die feine Rippung hochpolierter Ware (wohl um deren Glanz noch zu erhöhen),

gelangte von Ägypten nach Kreta. Gleiches gilt von manchen Gefäßformen. Im Jüngeren Neolithikum importierte man aus Afrika zudem die so charakteristischen Typen der ägyptischen Steingefäße. So wirkte sich nun auch die Nordafrikanische Kulturtrift, von den wir bereits S. 16f. sprachen, auf Kreta nachhaltig aus...

The fine ribbing of highly polished goods (probably done to improve their sheen) also came from Egypt to Crete. The same applies to certain vessel shapes. In the Later Neolithic, the characteristic types of Egyptian stone vessels were also imported from Africa. Thus the effect of North African cultural dispersion, which we already discussed on pages 16 and following, had a lasting impact on Crete...

and 233-236 which, after discussing the extensive Near Eastern influences on the Greek language, once again cautions the reader about how limited our knowledge is regarding the potential north African influences on place-names and such:

Nach den starken Kultureinflüssen, welche seit frühesten Zeiten von Nordafrika her auf Kreta einwirkten, möchte man erwarten, daß auch libyische Sprachelemente nach unserer Insel gelangt wären. Leider kennen wir aber, vom Ägyptischen abgesehen, die einstigen nordafrikanischen Sprachen viel zu wenig, um sie für einen Vergleich mit den kretischen Ortsnamen wahrhaft fruchtbar werden zu lassen. (235)

Given the strong cultural influences from North Africa that have had an impact on Crete since the earliest times, one might expect that Libyan language elements would also have reached our island. Unfortunately, apart from Egyptian, we know far too little about other North African languages to be able to make comparative analysis with Cretan place names fruitful.

Finally, a good summary of the limited evidence for an actual Egyptian influence in Minoan Crete is J. D. S. Pendlebury, *A Handbook to the Palace of Minos: Knossos with Its Dependencies* (London: Max Parrish, 1954), 11-12, 16, 26-27, 41, and 46.

¹⁷⁰. (89) G. Childe, *New Views on the Relations of the Aegean and the North Balkans*, JHS, 1930, 261.

Translator's Note. The full citation is as follows:

V. G. Childe, "New Views on the Relations of the Aegean and the North Balkans," *Journal of Hellenic Studies* 50.2 (1930): 255-262:

We must assume then that the neolithic population of the Danube valley came from the south-east, immediately from Anatolia, whence also the first settlers in Crete had come. Early infiltrations into Macedonia and Mainland Greece from the same quarter would be a reasonable and, in view of the extensive Anatolian penetration along the land route by Early Helladic times demonstrated by Heurtley, a necessary postulate.... Naturally the colonisation of such areas would be a gradual process accomplished, not by a single migration but by a series of waves spreading from an as yet ill-defined centre. (261, notes omitted)

more recently¹⁷³ all support the view that Crete was settled in the Neolithic period. The first of these [Evans] thought the most likely source for these settlers was Libya, but the majority--largely based on the similarity in ceramics--supported the view that the stream of migration came from the East. Thus G. Childe,¹⁷⁴ who felt that evidence of strong Egyptian influence could only

¹⁷¹. (90) Σπ. Μαρινάτος, Κρήτη καὶ Μυκηναϊκὴ Ἑλλάς, 1959, 11.

Translator's Note. The full citation of the English version is as follows:
Spyridon Marinatos, *Crete and Mycenae* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1960), 11:

The history of Greek civilisation and art is as complex and full of contrasts as Greece's own chequered landscapes and rugged coastline. Man appeared in Greece about as early as in the rest of Europe. The most recent finds in Thessaly have proved that the area was inhabited in the earlier Paleolithic periods, but great floods, silting and violent geological changes brought this primitive life to a sudden end.

Crete's part in this earliest civilisation is still not clear. From the beginning it formed a small world on its own...

¹⁷². (91) Cr. [sic] Clark, *World Prehistory*, 1969, 135.

Translator's Note. The full citation is as follows:
Grahame Clark, *World Prehistory: A New Outline*, 2 Ed. (Cambridge at the University Press, 1969), 135:

Minoan civilization

The island of Crete, legendary home of the Minotaur and hence of Minoan culture, was originally colonized by immigrants from Asia Minor in a Neolithic stage of culture, but from an early period Egyptian influences made themselves felt in the central and southern regions. The Early Minoan culture grew up in eastern Crete under the impact of the fresh immigration from Asia Minor, but it was on the Messara Plain in the area cross-fertilized by Egyptian contacts that the richer culture of Early Minoan I-II developed.

¹⁷³. (92) N. K. Sandars, *Prehistoric Art in Europe*, 1968, 132.

Translator's Note. Sandars titles the chapter beginning on page 132 "From the Mediterranean to the Baltic: 4000-2000."

¹⁷⁴. (93) V. G. Childe, *New Light on the most Ancient East*, 1934, 288. He had previously supported the view of probable migration from the Middle East. See our Note 89 [my Note 170].

Translator's Note. The full citation is as follows:
V. Gordon Childe, *New Light on the Most Ancient East: The Oriental Prelude to European Prehistory* (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co., Ltd., 1934), 288-289:

Finally, the warlike incidents of the second revolution provoked migrations. In the Early Minoan civilization of south Crete, Egyptian inspiration is so profound and comprehensive that only an actual settlement of Egyptian colonists among the neolithic Cretans (who themselves may have been akin to the Merimadians) will explain it. Evans suggests that people from the Delta, fleeing before Menes' conquest, had sought refuge on the island, [sic] Similarly in the Cyclades we meet early in the third millennium

be explained by settlement from Egypt, reports¹⁷⁵: “Since paleolithic food-gatherers have left no relics on the island, we may assume that the earliest Cretan farmers were immigrants *who brought their neolithic equipment with them.*”¹⁷⁶

The traces of evidence from the Paleolithic era suggest that the island was settled much earlier. In 1911, L. Francet [sic]¹⁷⁷ published [130] microlithic tools that were found east of Herakleion. Pendlebury¹⁷⁸ also discovered tools at Lasithi which he characterized as Paleolithic, and more

pictures of ships flying the fish standard; the same ensign had been born by boats from the Delta depicted in Gerzean vases, but it disappeared from the Nile before the beginning of history. The Aegean boats may accordingly belong to other refugees from the Delta who settled in the islands as pirates and traders. At the same time the colonists in the islands and (perhaps later) in Cyprus were mainly Asiatic and inspired primarily with the hope of a livelihood in supplying the growing demands of the primary and secondary centres of urban civilization. Even in Crete this Asiatic element was prominent. (note omitted)

¹⁷⁵. (94) V. G. Childe, *The Dawn of European Civilization*, 1950, 17.

Translator’s Note. The full citation is as follows:

V. Gordon Childe, *The Dawn of European Civilization* (New York, NY: Alfred A. Knopf, 1948), 17: “Since paleolithic food-gatherers have left no relics on the island, we may assume that the earliest Cretan farmers were immigrants who brought their neolithic equipment with them.” Childe then quotes Sir Arthur Evans to the effect that “Neolithic Crete may be regarded as an insular offshoot of an extensive Anatolian province.”

¹⁷⁶. (95) Italics ours.

¹⁷⁷. (96) L. Franchet, *Ceramique antique...* in *Nouvelles archives des missions scientifiques*, 1911, tom. 22, fasc. 1.

Translator’s Note. The full citation would appear to be as follows:

L. Franchet, “Rapport sur une Mission en Crète et en Égypte (1912-1913),” in *Nouvelles archives des missions scientifiques et littéraires choix des rapports et instructions publié sous les auspices du Ministère de l’Instruction Publique et des Beaux-Arts* (Paris: Imprimerie Nationale, 1917), Tome XXII, Fascicule 1, pages 7-81 (for Crete), esp. 13-15 on Neolithic pottery, and 68-72 for the microliths; and pages 83-131, plus Plates (for Egypt).

¹⁷⁸. (97) See Pendlebury, *BSA*, 38, 50, pl. 1.

Translator’s Note. The full citation is as follows:

H. W. and J. D. S. Pendlebury and M. B. Money-Coutts, “Excavations in the Plain of Lasithi. II,” *The Annual of the British School at Athens* 38 (1937-1938): 1-56 [Figure 21 depicts a roughly knapped chert stone, but the surrounding discussion raises doubt as to the age of these stone tools (that is, their assessment is more likely MMIII than Neolithic)].

recently S. Küss¹⁷⁹ published an entire theory based on bone material which he found at Rethymnon and which he took to be tools. To take up the view of another science, we report that Ares Poulianos,¹⁸⁰ based on anthropological research, does not deny the probability that there was a population stock earlier than the Neolithic predecessors to Minoan society, “at least as early as the Mesolithic period.”

Thus, one further piece of evidence for the controversial view that Crete could have been inhabited for the first time prior to the Neolithic period that is beginning to be accepted today, is provided by the rock carvings at Asphendou.

THE POSSIBILITIES OF APPROACH BY SEA

Apart from the lack of much Paleolithic or Mesolithic material, until now the resistance to such a dating of the settlement of Crete has also relied on the belief that Paleolithic and Mesolithic hunters did not use hollow ships [*plôta mesa*]. The perspective from the geological sciences, however, is that prior to the Holocene period, on account of the ice formations and isostatic variations, the sea level in the Mediterranean was roughly 100-200 meters lower than it is today. Thus the approach from the Peloponnese to Crete would have been much easier: there was one narrow passage linking the Aegean to the Mediterranean near Kythera.¹⁸¹ To the east, the path

¹⁷⁹. (98) S. E. Küss, Die paleolithische osteokeratische “Kultur” der Insel Kreta (Griechenland), Ber. Naturf. Ges. Freiburg i Br, 59, pp. 137-168.

Translator’s Note. The full citation is as follows:
Siegfried E. Küss, “Abfolge und Alter der pleistozänen Säugetierfaunen der Insel Kreta,” in Max Pfannenstiel, ed., *Berichte der Naturforschenden Gesellschaft zu Freiburg I. Br.*, 60.1 (Freiburg im Breisgau: Selbstverlag der Gesellschaft, 1970), 35-83, with an English language Abstract at page 36; Papoutsakis’s numbering is uncharacteristically errant again here.

¹⁸⁰. (99) Άρη Ν. Πουλιανού, Ἡ καταγωγή τῶν Κρητῶν, Ἐνθροπολογικὴ ἔρευνα, 1971, 281.

Translator’s Note. The full citation for Ares N. Pouliauou, *The Origin of the Cretans* (1971) is as follows:

Άρη Ν. Πουλιανού, Ἡ Καταγωγή τῶν Κρητῶν: Ἀνθροπολογικὴ Ἐρευνα στο νησι Λεβεντίας, (Ἀθῆνα: Βιβλιοθηκὴ Ἀνθροπολογικῆς Ἐταιρείας, 1971, 2004), 255:

Thus Man must have inhabited the Aegean islands, including Crete, since at least the beginning of the Mesolithic [*apo tēn archē akomē tēs Mesolithikēs*], if not even the Late Paleolithic, Era. (Translation mine)

¹⁸¹. (100) See Ἱστορία τοῦ Ἑλληνικοῦ Ἔθνους, Ἐκδοτικὴ Ἀθηνῶν, 1970, Α’, 12.

Translator’s Note. The full citation for the *History of the Greek Peoples* that I have consulted is Ἱστορία τοῦ Ἑλληνικοῦ Ἔθνους, (Ἀθῆνα: Ἐκδοτικὴ Ἀθηνῶν ΑΕ, Ἐταιρεία Ἱστορικῶν Ἐκδόσεων, 1980), 12:

Successive submergences may be seen in the eastern portion of the Aegean. The sea first

from the Near East to the network of Dodecanesian islands appears to have been much better established. Thus anyone could have arrived on the Island, as easily from Epirus in northern Greece as from the Near East, with very simple instruments of primitive construction.

In the eastern Mediterranean, specifically the Aegean and the Adriatic, we have indications of a seafaring society from very ancient times. The Mesolithic tools made of obsidian from Melos, which were found at Porto-Cheli in the Franchti Cave, suggest travel throughout the Aegean in the 10th or 8th [131] millennium.¹⁸² Similar observations have been made regarding communication in the northern Sporades, where Mesolithic tools have also been found.¹⁸³

Ang. [sic] Sordinas describes the “reed boats,” primitive straw boats which have survived in northwestern Corfu and are similar to those from Lake Sana and Zwai in Egypt. Works from other Neolithic stamped (impressed [in English]) ceramics from the 6th millennium BCE which have been found on both the Italian and Greek sides of the Otranto passage display profound similarities. The scholar can explain this fact by the connection made possible by a form of “reed

penetrated the channel between Kythera and Crete, then later the wider basin between Crete and the Dodecanese and the strait of Kaphirea-Andros. (Translation mine)

¹⁸². (101) See 'Ιστορία του Ἑλληνικοῦ Ἔθνους, op. cit., 46-47.

Translator’s Note. The full citation from the *History of the Greek Peoples* (Ibid.) is as follows, at page 46:

Truly revelatory were the finds made at the Franchthi Cave near the village of Koilada in the Argolid, a short distance from Porto Cheli. There they found successive Paleolithic and Mesolithic levels in the same spot (the Mesolithic layer at a depth of 4 meters). (Translation mine)

¹⁸³. (102) S. S. Weinberg, “The stone age in the Aegean,” in CAH, 1970, Chapt. X, 563-564.

Translator’s Note. The full citation is as follows:

S. S. Weinberg, “The Stone Age in the Aegean,” in *Cambridge Ancient History* (Cambridge University Press, 1970); Chapter X is entitled “The Stone Age in the Aegean” and pages 563-564 state:

[t]hat Thessaly too was re-occupied after it had reverted to dry land is indicated by a couple of Mesolithic microliths found in the Argissa area. But there are indications that by this time the human occupants of Greece were capable of travel by sea, for on the island of Scyrus in the Sporades, only some twenty-two miles from Cyme on the east side of Euboea, Theochares has recently found remains of microliths, largely of flint but some of obsidian, which he believes to be certainly Mesolithic; some stone artefacts from the island may be even older, Late Paleolithic, types.

boat.”¹⁸⁴

A report on the social organization in the Pacific Ocean may also be useful, to remind us that the settlement of Melanesia, Polynesia and Australia was accomplished by skillful seafarers who passed through the same Paleolithic phase of social organization.¹⁸⁵

In summary--and contrary to what we have believed up to now--archaeological evidence and the possibility of such crossings offer important support to the hypothesis concerning the settlement of Crete at a time much earlier than the Neolithic period.

To return now to the rock carvings of Asphendou: the identification of two carvings as images of a ship, together with the interpretation of the crossed spears as actually oars, is now greatly strengthened. It is probably the first seafaring image on a rock carving in the Mediterranean. Naturally, the ship in this image is reminiscent of Minoan construction, and perhaps it is an image carved [over] at a much later phase in the rock shelter's use. The double oars, which I deem to be much older and rendered in a style very different from the ships, allude to simple low boats rather than ships with sails. The form of the end of the oar which resembles a spear-point appears in Cycladic scenes.¹⁸⁶ Nevertheless, the older preserved oars from the Maglemosians of

¹⁸⁴. (103) Ang. [sic] Sordinas, “Stone implements from north-western Corfu,” *Memphis State Univ., Occas. papers*, No. 4, 1970, in the appendix pp. 31-34. We also have images in the form of a “reed boat” (?) from Malta: see L. Casson, *Ships and Seamanship in the Ancient World*, 1971, fig. 56.

Translator's Note. The full citations are as follows:
Augustus Sordinas, “Stone Implements, From Northwestern Corfu, Greece,” *Memphis State University Occasional Papers* (1970), 31-34, providing evidence for “Primitive Reed Boats in Northwestern Corfu”; and
Lionel Casson, *Ships and Seamanship in the Ancient World* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1971). [Figure 56 reproduces a “Graffito from Malta ca. 1600 BC.”] The book was reprinted by Johns Hopkins University Press in 1995.

¹⁸⁵. (104) See Andreas Lommel, *Prehistoric and Primitive Man*, 1966, 101.

Translator's Note. The full citation is as follows:
Andreas Lommel, *Prehistoric and Primitive Man* (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1966). Page 101 provides a brief sketch of “Circumpacific Art.”

¹⁸⁶. (105) From Phulakôpê on Melos: see especially L. Casson, *Ships and Seamanship*, op. cit., fig. 46; also see fig. 3, 19, etc., for the shape.

Translator's Note. The full citation is as follows:
Lionel Casson, *Ships and Seamanship in the Ancient World* (Princeton University Press, 1971) [Figure 46 depicts a “fragment from Phylokopi on Melos, 3rd millennium B.C.” in which the rear of a “[r]ound-hulled Cretan vessel[]” is depicted with a person holding an oar or rudder. Figure 3 depicts a “[p]rimitive oared riverboat in bird's-eye view, ca. 3500 B.C.” and Figure 19 is an

northern Europe possess tips with a similar [132] shape.¹⁸⁷ The probable point of embarkation would have been the Libyan coast. The distance from Libya to Sphakia is shorter than that from the north side of the island to Attika. It is already known and quite well established that in the Middle and Late Minoan period Crete had contacts with the Libyan coast,¹⁸⁸ and naturally with other parts of the Mediterranean as well.

THE WIDER CIRCLE OF INFLUENCE

Examination of the broader geographical context of Crete--from which we conclude that its settlement at a much earlier date is most likely--is necessary for us to resolve the interpretive problems posed by the rock carvings of Asphendou.

Egyptian depiction of a “[s]ailing craft with bipod mast and tall, narrow sail, 2400-2300 B.C.”].

¹⁸⁷. (106) J. Howkes [sic], *Prehistory*, 1963, 160.

Translator’s Note. The full citation is as follows:

Jacquetta Hawkes and Sir Leonard Woolley, *History of Mankind: Cultural and Scientific Development: Volume I: Prehistory and the Beginnings of Civilization* (London: Unwin Brothers Limited, Copyright 1963 by UNESCO), 159-160:

“Boats and Other Transport”

No actual remains or pictures of Paleolithic boats have been found, nor is there any evidence implying sea passages by Paleolithic peoples. Nevertheless, it seems almost certain that they must have used logs or rough rafts on lakes and rivers from time to time, particularly after they became interested in fishing.

The use of the seine fishing-net implies the use of a boat, even if one end is attached to bank or shore, and it so happens that the oldest known boats also date from Mesolithic times in northern Europe. [A canoe found in Perth, Scotland] had been made in the second half of the Ancylus Lake period, and can probably be credited to the Maglemosians. Maglemosian steering paddles with oblong or roughly rectangular blades have been found in both Denmark and England.

¹⁸⁸. (107) Sandro Stucchi, *Prime tracce tardo-minoiche a Cirene QAL*, 5, 1967, 19-36, with bibliography.

Translator’s Note. The full citation for “Early traces of Late Minoans in Cyrene: the relations between Libya and the Aegean world” is as follows:

Sandro Stucchi, “Prime tracce tardo-minoiche a Cirene: i rapporti della Libya con il mondo egeo,” *Quaderni di Archeologia della Libya* 5 (1967): 19-45. Stucchi’s article summarizes a vast amount of material from museum collections around the world; pages 37-45 contain his copious notes, numbering 221 in total.

Some time ago P. Graziosi¹⁸⁹ formulated the idea of a Mediterranean social organization in the Upper Paleolithic and Mesolithic phase. D. Theocharis returned to the idea and developed the helpful concept of a “Mediterranean” or “pan-Mediterranean” school. This idea, inspired by the stylistic similarity of scenes across a broad swath of the Mediterranean, includes the Paleolithic

¹⁸⁹. (108) See Graziosi, *Paleolithic Art*, 1960, 107-115. See also Abbè H. Breuil and L. Berger-Kirchener, *L’art pariétal franco-cantabrique*, in the volume *L’âge de Pierre*, 1960, 60-61, and A. Lommel, *Prehistoric and Primitive Man*, 1966, 9, 11, 48 and 135. For the linkage between the Mediterranean and African regions, see A. Πουλιανού, *Ἡ καταγωγή τῶν Ἑλλήνων*, 1966, 270 and 296.

Translator’s Note. This is a complex set of citations.

Graziosi entitles his chapter in *Paleolithic Art*, at pages 107-115, “The Mediterranean Province”; Lommel’s discussion of the “the Spanish Levant” was extremely influential on Papoutsakis, as we see at pages 8-9:

Boundaries were naturally fluid and uncertain, and in many areas the two cultures, hunter and farmer, coexisted with mutual interaction between them. For example, the art of the hunter peoples was still flourishing in parts of the Mediterranean as late as the Neolithic period as can be seen from the coastal region of eastern Spain known as the *Levante*. The rock paintings there combine the innovation of lively representations of the human figure--comparable with those found at the other end of the Mediterranean area, in the fortified Anatolian settlement of Çatal Hüyük, from about 6000 BC--with remnants of the hunters’ animal style. This produced the style known equally as the ‘Spanish Levant’ or ‘Second Hunter’ style, which flourished between about 6000 and 2000 BC. Itself the distant product of influences from the mature cultures of the eastern Mediterranean, the Spanish Levant style was in turn transmitted to North Africa and was carried across the fertile regions of what is now the Sahara down as far as southern Africa.

Lommel then provides “An Outline History of the Primitive Cultures” at page 11, and returns to the “Spanish Levant” at page 48 (page 145, by contrast, discusses “America”);

Hans-Georg Bandi, Henri Breuil, Lilo Berger-Kirchner, Henri Lhote, Erik Holm and Andreas Lommel, *L’Âge de Pierre* (Paris: Éditions Albin Michel, 1960), 60-61, discusses “Grottes Italiennes” (at Levanzo, Romanelli, Addaura, and Niscemi); and finally

the third expanded edition of Ares N. Poulilianou’s text is actually entitled *Ἡ Προελευση των Ἑλλήνων: Εθνογενετικη Ερευνα* (Αθηνα: Εκδοτικο “Αθηναϊκον,” 1968) [Ares N. Poulianos, *The Origin of the Greeks: Ethnogenetic Studies*]:

Concerning his last discoveries, Soter wrote: “Prior to the ‘Greek miracle’ and the ‘miracle of Crete,’ shall Greece now provide us with the ‘miracle of the Paleolithic era’?” The discovery of stone tools from the Paleolithic era in the Near East and Greece defines the “Hot Spot” (“*Kapsikê*” *perioxê*) that encompasses all of Africa, the Mediterranean coast and the Black Sea. These discoveries demonstrate that this area was the crucible in which human beings evolved and provides the surest evidence that **Homo Sapiens** did not arrive from elsewhere. (270, translation mine)

Poulilianou’s discussion of Greek etymologies on page 296 does not seem relevant to this footnote, however.

monuments [*mnêmeia*] in Thessaly.¹⁹⁰ The common habitat, the acceptance of common influences--which arrived from East Asia via the Near East, but also from North Africa--led to forms of art, tools, and weapons with common features.

South Italy and Sicily are now hypothesized¹⁹¹ as likely links in the circulation of political ideas from the east (Catal Hüyük) to the west (the Spanish *Levant*). Does it not make sense to search for another link in this same political stream [133] in the Aegean region? The Aegean basin and Greek Epirus, no longer a completely frozen zone but returning to one with a milder climate, are already a confirmed cradle of Paleolithic society. The vanguard studies by Markovitz and Stampfuss are now received without the previous skepticism.

There are entire works devoted to the Peloponnese (Servais and A. Leroi-Gourhan), the Epirus (Higgs), the Ionian islands (Sordinas), Thessaly (Milojcits, Theocharis), the Sporades (Theocharis), all of them concerned with the Paleolithic (Middle and Upper) and Mesolithic periods. Finally the discovery of Neanderthal remains in the Chalkidiki is yet another

¹⁹⁰. (109) Δ. Ρ. Θεοχάρης, Ἡ ἀύγῃ τῆς Θεσσαλικῆς Προϊστορίας, 1967, 45-46, 48. The author observes elsewhere (pp. 50, 55) that this style is related to the Greek artistic spirit!

Translator's Note. The full citation is as follows:

Δημητρίου Ρ. Θεοχάρη, Ἡ ἀύγῃ τῆς Θεσσαλικῆς Προϊστορίας: Ἀρχὴ καὶ Πρωίμη Εξελίξη τῆς Νεολιθικῆς (Βολός: Ἐκδόσεις τῆς Φιλαρχαίου Ἐταιρείας Βολοῦ. 1967), Θεσσαλικά Μελετήματα, Ἀριθ. 4; Demetrius R. Theocharis, *The Dawn of Prehistoric Thessaly: The Beginning and Early Development of the Neolithic* (Volos: Publications of the Society of the Friends of Antiquity of Volos, 1967), Thessalian Studies, No. 4.

Pages 44-46 discuss "Pre-Neolithic Art" from Malta, Asia Minor, Italy, Sicily and Spain (at Çatal Hüyük, Alpera, Minateda, Castellon, Addaura near Palermo, Romanelli, Otranto, and Beldibi). Page 48 compares these to recent discoveries on the Mount Pelion peninsula near Volos. The primitive stick-figures depicted on pages 50 and 55 do not appear "Greek" in any significant sense, however, save for the appearance of a Minoan-style "horn of consecration" hovering above the two figures on page 55.

¹⁹¹. (110) See A. Lommel, *Prehistoric and Primitive Man*, 1966, 48. Recently Higgs, after explorations in Epirus, confirms that the Kokkino-pylos [Red-clay] in the valley of Louros and the Romanelli Cave in Puglia are sites of political displacement from the east to the west.

Translator's Note. The full citation is as follows:

Andreas Lommel, *Prehistoric and Primitive Man* (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1966), 48:

If the original hunter style in the northern Spanish caves provides no immediate antecedents for the much later 'Spanish Levant' style, it seems highly likely that influences other than those of the older style were at work. If so, a connection with the recently-discovered frescoes at Çatal Hüyük in Anatolia is the obvious line of enquiry. It is interesting that these indoor wall-paintings on plaster of lively human figures are dated around 6000 BC--the upper limit of the Spanish Levant style.

confirmation of the ancient appearance of human beings in the Helladic region. Thus we may theorize a Paleolithic and Mesolithic substratum beneath the Neolithic societies in our area which pre-existed them and with which they later mixed.¹⁹²

The technical working of the stone tools and implements demonstrates in its general form the opposite of a practical use and rather satisfies an aesthetic purpose: many suggest that some of the large worked axes and many other tools were likely made to serve religious [*latreutikous*] purposes. It is interesting on its own terms to become acquainted with these objects which, contrary to some arguments, served a primarily spiritual [*pneumatikes*] purpose. This part of our knowledge base is most defective, especially for Greece. Only now have we begun to combine these discoveries with other artful compositions in order to get to pre-Neolithic times; the relevant studies and publications have yet to be integrated.

Evidence from the Paleolithic and Mesolithic periods has already been seen on the periphery of the Helladic region. The recent discovery of a relationship between corresponding sites in Anatolia, in Antalya (Phrygia),¹⁹³ to the south of Lake Van,¹⁹⁴ and at other mountain sites in the

¹⁹². (111) See *Ἱστορία Ἑλλην. Ἔθνους*, op. cit. A', 44.

Translator's Note. The full citation for the *History of the Greek Peoples* that I have consulted is *Ἱστορία τοῦ Ἑλληνικοῦ Ἔθνους*, (Αθήνα: Εκδοτικὴ Αθηνῶν ΑΕ, Ἐταιρία Ἱστορικῶν Ἐκδόσεων, 1980), 44-45:

The physical type of human being that lived in the Later Paleolithic in Greece is unknown, since there is a complete lack of corresponding anthropological remains. It certainly appears that these people belonged to the same type that spread with fresh dynamism throughout the regions of Europe and the Near East at the beginning of the Upper Paleolithic. These people served as the vanguard for subsequent developments and left surviving traces of their activity in this region of the Ancient World, which later would serve as the birthplace of Civilization. These elements did not appear at the end of the Pleistocene, nor did they vanish from the world stage, like the Neanderthal. They simply did not leave this region of the earth, which was geographically and climatologically among the most favorable. They remained here, and probably contributed to the foundation of those races [*tôn phylôn*] that later passed from a brief and fleeting episode (the "Mesolithic") on to the "creative" stage. (Translation mine)

¹⁹³. (112) Bostanci, *Researches on the Mediterranean coast*, op. cit., 129-178.

Translator's Note. The full citation is as follows:
Enver Y. Bostanci, "Researches on the Mediterranean Coast of Anatolia: A New Paleolithic Site at Beldibi near Antalya, Preliminary Report," *Anatolia/Anadolu* 4 (1959): 129-178. The site report primarily concerns new finds at Beldibi, as cited above at Note #153 (72).

¹⁹⁴. (113) Uyanik, *Ricerche preistoriche nell'Anatolia sud-orientale*, BCSP, 5, 1970, 156-174.

Translator's Note. The full citation is as follows:

area--the mountain chain of *Sat Daglari*¹⁹⁵--provides a link to the development of these places from the Paleolithic era to the early, more settled form of agricultural [134] life. This constitutes a very significant moment for the study of social organization more generally.

If we connect the already familiar sites in Puglia and Sicily, in Liguria, in Bulgaria (Pleven, Troyan, Magourata), in Montenegro,¹⁹⁶ in southern Russia,¹⁹⁷ in Albania,¹⁹⁸ then the hypothesis

Muvaffak Uyanik, "Ricerche preistoriche nell'Anatolia sud-orientale," *Bolletino del Centro Camuno di Studi Preistorica* 5 (1970): 159-174 (Asim Tamiş, trans.); the article is richly illustrated with rock engravings depicting various horned and antlered animals, some anthropomorphic figures, and an example of abstract, geometric designs made from similarly incised holes. As such it provides an important comparandum for Papoutsakis's analysis of the image field at Asphendou.

¹⁹⁵. (114) Freh-Uyanik, Felszeichnungen in Sudostanatolien, *Belleten*, 21, 1957, 621-623, pl. 1-16.

Translator's Note. The full citation is as follows:

Wilhelm Freh and Muvaffak Uyanik, "Felszeichnungen in Südostanatolien," *Belleten* 21 (1957): 619-623. Plates 2-6, and 9-16 provide photographs and sketches from depictions of a large number of animals with very exaggerated antlers, both in terms of length and, in some cases, termination.

¹⁹⁶. (115) M. V. Garazanin, Neue prahistorische Felsbilder an der adriatischen Küste der Crna Gora (Montenegro), *Germania* 46, 1968, 213-224.

Translator's note. The full citation is as follows:

Milutin V. Garašanin, "Neue prähistorische Felsbilder an der adriatischen Küste der Crna Gora (Montenegro)," *Germania: Anzeiger der Römisch-Germanischen Kommission des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts* 46 (1968): 213-224. Tafeln 28-30 are photographs of the petroglyphs from Lipci, depicting a variety of horned and antlered animals.

¹⁹⁷. (116) Generally, see A. A. Formozov, *Očerki po pervobytnomu iskusstvu* ["Essays on Primitive Art"], 1969, op. cit.

Translator's Note. The full citation is as follows:

A. A. Formozov, *Očerki po pervobytnomu iskusstvu* (Moscow: "Havka" Publishers, 1969). While I am unable to read this Russian text, it offers an impressive overview of Paleolithic and Neolithic materials from the southern regions of the former Soviet Union.

I am grateful to the Honorable Emmanouil Androulakis--formerly the Greek Consul to Atlanta, and currently Chargé d'affaires of the Greek Embassy in Kyiv, Ukraine--for helping me to examine this text.

¹⁹⁸. (117) The *Spileja* outcrop in the vicinity of the Treni Cave: see Mur. Korkuti, *Le pitture rupestri di Treni*, BCSP, 4, 1968.

Translator's Note. The full citation is as follows:

Muzafer Korkuti, "Le pitture rupestri di Treni," *Bolletino del Centro Camuno di Studi*

regarding a civilizational center located in the Eastern Mediterranean and the Balkans becomes more secure.

In Greece, information about artworks in caves has appeared from time to time.¹⁹⁹ The fever has gradually died down after a heated dispute over certain specific finds. The authenticity of the rock carvings in Alepotrupa at the Dêros Tower has already been rejected by G. Papathanasopoulos.²⁰⁰ The well-studied rock carvings on Mount Pelion still await serious publication by the researcher. Their first publication²⁰¹ was offered to integrate them into his

Preistoriche 4 (1968): 89-97. Figures 29-32 depict carved images of hunting scenes with hunters on horses in pursuit of game animals with large antlers.

¹⁹⁹. (118) See ΔΕΣΕ, τόμ. X, τεύχος 1, 1968, op. cit.

Translator's Note. The *Deltion Ellênikês Spêlaiologikês Etaireias*, or “Bulletin of the Greek Speliological Society,” which was founded in 1950 and published bilingually in Greek and French, may be consulted online at <https://ese.edu.gr/category/deltio-ese>.

In this case, the Δελτιον Ελληνικης Σπηλαιολογικης Εταιρειας/Bulletin de la Societé Spéiologique de Grèce, Volume 9 (1968), Fasc. 5-8, summarized the work of a Greco-Czech speliological expedition on Crete in 1966 (participants were led by Anne Petrochilos and included A. Pangalos, G. Barnaios, E. Coufalik, M. Kala, O. Ondrousek, and S. Vodinsky).

²⁰⁰. (119) Γ. Παπαθανασόπουλος, Σπήλαια Διροῦ: Αἱ ἀνασκαφαὶ τοῦ 1970-1971, AAA, 25-26.

Translator's Note. The full citation is as follows:

Γ. Α. Παπαθανασόπουλος, “Σπήλαια Διροῦ: Αἱ Ἴ�νασκαφαὶ τοῦ 1970-1971,” *Αρχαιολογικὰ Ἀναλεκτὰ ἐξ Ἀθηνῶν* 4 (1971): 12-26 [G. Papathanasopoulos, “Caves of Dêros: The Excavations of 1970-1971]. This article summarizes findings in the Alepotrupa Cave in the Mani, including Neolithic burials, stone and bone tools, a marble face carving, and bronze weaponry; pages 25-26 summarize the findings in Greek and French, dating human habitation of the Cave from the Late Neolithic (c4000 BCE) through the Bronze Age, without dating the rock carvings securely.

²⁰¹. (120) Θεοχάρης, Παλαιολιθικὴ τέχνη στὸ Πήλιο, Θεσσαλικά, 76-82, pl. IV-IX.

Translator's Note. The full citation for D. Theocharis, “The Paleolithic Art on Pelion (Preliminary Report),” is as follows:

Δημήτριος Ρ. Θεοχάρης, Ἡ παλαιολιθικὴ τέχνη στὸ Πήλιο (προσωπινὴ ἀνακοίνωση), Θεσσαλικά, τόμ. 5 (1969): 76-82. As I noted previously, the brief English abstract states the following:

In a short preliminary report the author announces the discovery of the first caves in Greece with rock-paintings and engravings of a palaeolithic date, in the flanks of Mount Pelion, Thessaly.

From one of these caves (Cave A) some characteristic specimens [sic] are figured: A mammoth painted in red (Plate IV); two animals and an incised “sign” (Pl. V); a wounded cervid--the most important painting of that cave (Pl. VI); an engraved mammoth (Pl. VII);

superb previous study: “The Dawn of Prehistoric Thessaly.” In it, however, he analyzed only the portable works of art (amulets and religious votive plates [*latreutikes anathêmatikes plakes*]) which he was able to date most easily due to their undisturbed stratigraphy. Thus it is not yet possible for us to associate the rock carvings of Pelion with our own. The “lance carvings” of Pangaio nonetheless constitute one of the first in a series of such discoveries.

INTERPRETATION-CHRONOLOGY

The general interest of the surviving rock carvings at Asphendou contributes to the view that this was a sacred place of worship [*latreutiko hiero*] for a prehistoric society of hunters. This very general formulation does not entirely clarify the situation, because the “sanctuary” [*iero*] must have been in use over a very long period of time which may well have extended over millennia.

[135] A unitary interpretation and dating is most likely an error. The period of use of the cave may be situated in the Mesolithic period; the carving however, did not occur all at one time, nor by the same hand.

The exclusive representation of the agrimi points to a society of hunters which “identified” with just one form of game. The phenomenon of such identification of the hunter appears in the Ice Age Upper Pleistocene and beginning of the Holocene, which coincides with the Upper Paleolithic period.²⁰²

The representation of hunters or game animals does not provide sufficient rationale for a chronology. It is nevertheless persuasive when it is combined with a specific technique, a general appearance, and a topography. The subject of the carving, the superimposed engravings, the mixture of figural scenes and symbolic images, and all of this in one rock shelter which overlooks a natural pass for hunters--these are, I believe, sufficient elements with which to offer a preliminary classification.

Another important key for dating one part of the rock carving will be provided if we accept the fact that the deeper cut represents a ship. I believe that it is undoubtedly later than the other engravings (i.e., the game animals or the bow) especially with the appearance of a transom or anchor at the ship’s stern.

Returning to the art of hunting, the form of this art was developed in the Spanish Levant in

three late palaeolithic ivory statuettes (Pl. VIII); engraved silhouette [sic] of a nude woman (Pl. IX).

²⁰². (121) See Gr. Clark, *World prehistory*, 1969, 73ff.

Translator’s Note. The full citation is:

Grahame Clark, *World Prehistory: A New Outline*, 2 Ed. (Cambridge at the University Press, 1969); Clark’s discussion at 73-75 is entitled “Specialized Hunting.”

epipaleolithic societies and it enjoyed a wide range of influence in Chalcolithic societies: in Liguria, in the Alps, and the Balkans.²⁰³

Thus, it is high time to present the following model for the spread of epipaleolithic societies throughout the Mediterranean: whether independently in fertile and self-sufficient plains, or under foreign influence, Neolithic social groups took shape and advanced into the age of metal. At the same time, the remaining groups of hunters or nomadic hunter-gatherers that lived in the mountains maintained their way of life and their inherited forms of social organization. Under the influence of the ensuing farming settlements in the neighboring regions, together with the enrichment of metal tools and weapons or their importation, the social organization of these mountains must be characterized as essentially the survival of an epipaleolithic stage: [136] mainly through their means of procuring food, but also through their social-and-political life.

Thus, in genuinely Neolithic societies, with the notable exception of the short-lived political organization of Çatal Hüyük, the tradition of iconic and symbolic art fell into decline and decorative tools and ornaments became entirely aniconic; among mountain hunters, this tradition of figural cave arts continued, with all the changes in forms and function, as essentially epipaleolithic art.

G. Isetti²⁰⁴ ascribes the propagation of the art of rock carving in the age of metal to groups of herders and hunters in the mountains dispersed throughout Europe. With this idea in mind, we can understand the social organization in Monte Bego, certain areas in the Balkans, the mountains of Turkey, and thus perhaps also in Pangaio and Sphakia.

²⁰³. (122) H. Kühn, *The rock pictures of Europe*, 1956, 131-134.

Translator's Note. The full citation is:

Herbert Kühn, *The Rock Pictures of Europe*, Aklan Houghton Brodrick, trans. (Fair Lawn, NJ: Essential Books, 1956); Kühn's chapter at 131-137 is entitled "The Rock Pictures of Italy."

²⁰⁴. (123) Isetti, *Nota sulle incisioni dell'Arma della Moretta*, RSL, 31, No. 1-2, 1965, 116.

Translator's Note. The full citation is as follows:

Giuseppe Isetti, "Nota sulle incisioni dell'Arma della Moretta," *Rivista di Studi Liguri* 31.1-2 (1965): 111-116:

C'è invece maggior analogia con i graffiti di Orco Feglino (1) e di Monte Pellegrino presso Triora (2), per cui chollocheremo le incisioni di della Moretta tra quel fiorire di arte rupestre diffuso in Europa nell'età dei metalli, e parleremmo specificamente di arte rupestre schematica ligure con particolarità sue proprie.

There are analogous graffiti from Orco Feglino and Monte Pellegrino near Triora, with which we may associate the engravings from Moretta that inspired cave art throughout Europe in the age of metal. We are speaking specifically of the schematic art of Liguria with its distinctive properties. (Translation mine)

Hunting in the age of agriculture did not constitute the primary source of food--it was far more a “sport” [*paidiá*]. The depiction of hunting scenes consequently did not derive from anxiety, and the supplication of magical help, as it had earlier--it was only a narrative, a clearly “artistic” sketch of a charming incident taken from life. *Magical and symbolic* in the beginning, *dedicatory* next, and in the end merely *decorative*: this is the development of the meaning of hunting scenes.

The votive plates [*anathématikes plakes*] from Saracêno²⁰⁵ on Mount Pelion must be ancient monuments [*mnêmeia*] with images of hunting scenes from the post-Paleolithic period. The hunting scenes on a plate [*plakas*] that Marinatos found at Dreros,²⁰⁶ and the striking hunting scenes from the Aronios Peak on Naxos,²⁰⁷ the first dated to the 6th century, and the second to the ancient Cycladic period, actually survived the demise of such hunting societies. I believe that this chronological arrangement satisfies the demands of reason.

Associated with the hunting subject, the abstract and non-figural

PLATE 10²⁰⁸ [Fig. 11: “Details of the rock carvings. The bow is visible to the upper right”; Fig. 12: “Details of the rock carvings. The bow is visible in the upper center.”]

²⁰⁵. (124) Δ. Θεοχάρης, Ἡ ἀύγῃ τῆς Θεσσαλικῆς Προϊστορίας, 1967, 53-54, fig. 29, pl. VII2.

Translator’s Note. The full citation for D. Theocharis, *The Dawn of Prehistoric Thessaly* (1967), 53-54 (Figure 29, and Plate VII-2) is as follows:

Δημητριου Ρ. Θεοχάρη, Ἡ Αύγῃ τῆς Θεσσαλικῆς Προϊστορίας: Αρχὴ καὶ Πρωιμὴ Εξελίξις τῆς Νεολιθικῆς (Βολος: Εκδόσις τῆς Φιλαρχαίου Ἐταιρείας Βολου, 1967). Figure 29 on page 53 depicts a complex scene with, from left to right, a female figure depicted with breasts and vulva, an ithyphallic archer with a curved bow, an animal with large antlers, and several other linear and fluid shapes (possibly depicting a snake and staff, respectively); a photograph of this same image is found at Plate VIIb.

²⁰⁶. (125) See our Note 17.

²⁰⁷. (126) See Χρ. Ντούμας, Κορφὴ τ’ Ἀρωνιοῦ, ΑΔ, 1966, pl. I-IV, VI, VIII, and X.

Translator’s Note. See Christos Doumas’s 1965 article on recent discoveries from Naxos, “The Peak of Arônios,” *Αρχαιολογικὸν Δελτιον* 20-21 (1965-66): 41-64 [the article was not illustrated with any photographic plates [*pinax*], however several figures [*schedia*] depict some engraved plates [*plakes*] from Naxos. These include: Plates 1 and 3, depicting “an animal with a human figure”; Plate 2, depicting the “representation of a boat”; Plate 4, depicting the “sacrifice (?) of a deer”; Plate 6, depicting “a hunting scene (?)”; Plate 8, depicting a “feline form (?) with a human form”; and Plate 10, depicting “a scene of sacrifice (?)”].

²⁰⁸. **Translator’s Note:** The numbering is discontinuous here, correcting for the doubling of numbers 6 and 6a in the previous collection of Plates.

PLATE 11 [Fig. 13: “Characteristic group in the center of the ‘composition’ [*synthesis*]: to the lower left, a group of circular symbols”; Fig. 14: “Details of the rock carving. The circular symbol.”]

PLATE 12 [Fig 15: “Engravings from the deeper portion of the rock carvings of Asphendou reminiscent of Minoan ships. Scale 1:2.”]

PLATE 13 [Fig. 16: “The tree: details from the engravings of Asphendou. Full size”; Fig. 17: “The bow: details from the engravings of Asphendou. Full size.”]

[137] images, the holes [*koilotêtes*], trace a similar path in the evolution of their meaning, from the earliest years of the Upper Paleolithic and Mesolithic up through the Neolithic and Chalcolithic periods. The material, the placement, and the means all display the following succession: from painted or incised rock carving, to megalithic monuments [*mnêmeia*], to votives [*angeia*] or figurines [*eidôlia*].

Previously, we studied the form of the holes [*koilotêtes*] on our rock carvings by comparing them with analogous monuments [*mnêmeia*]. Let us pause briefly, to summarize some of the conclusions we have derived from these comparanda.

“Marks,” physical blows, submission and conquest of game animals: these are the explanations that have been dominant in the past. More recently, there is a tendency to accept a “fertility” interpretation of the holes [*koilotêtes*] and points [*stigmes*]. The feminine, the worship of the Mother Goddess, the exploration of creation and the eternity of the animals that provide food, these are taken to be the meaning attached to such scenes.

On the rock carvings of Asphendou, the repeated juxtaposition of the holes [*koilotêtôn*] (which possibly refer to the feminine) with the agrimi--a symbol of the male sex²⁰⁹--support the

²⁰⁹. (127) Gr. Clark, *Stone Age Hunters*, 1969, 83.

Translator’s Note. The full citation is as follows:
Grahame Clark, *The Stone Age Hunters* (New York, NY: McGraw Hill Book Company, 1967), 83:

It is even claimed with some show of plausibility by the eminent French prehistorian André Leroi-Gourhan that the animals that make up the main element in parietal art may also have a specifically sexual connotation. Analysis of over two thousand animal representations in the Franco-Cantabrian art and of their locations and associations suggests that the animals shown, or at least many of them, were divided symbolically into two moities, male and female, the former including horses, ibex and deer, the latter bison, cattle and mammoths. In fact some French authorities see the essence of Paleolithic religion, as expressed in the art, revolving round the opposition and complementarity of male and female essence and values, expressed symbolically in representations of humans and animals and in signs....

interpretation that they are associated with fertility. The presupposition behind this interpretation, however, is a chronological identification that is not borne out by the close study of the two groups of images.

Associating the holes [*koilotêtes*] with the votives and libation stones, we might accept the view that they were used for religious offerings [*thréskeutikes spondes*].²¹⁰ Another view suggests that they are maps or topographical diagrams.²¹¹ Finally, a more commonly held interpretation views

The interpretation of Paleolithic cave art as if its main function was to provide magical power for the food-quest is no longer tenable. Indeed the theory that its driving power was hunting-magic was based on two concepts, neither of which can any longer be sustained, at least in their full vigour, namely that the cave artists were intent on naturalistic rendering of detail and that this detail can be validly interpreted by invoking superficial parallels with selected elements of modern primitive culture. In point of fact several of the most telling details of the art can equally well be interpreted in terms of sexual symbolism.

²¹⁰. (128) See op. cit.. O. Montelius, *Les temps préhistoriques en Suède...*, 1895, 38-39, fig. 41.

Translator's Note. The full citation is as follows:

Oscar Montelius, *Les Temps Préhistoriques en Suède et dans les autres Pays Scandinaves*, Saloman Reinach, trad. (Paris: Ernest Leroux, Éditeur, 1895), 38-39:

A la surface des pierres de toiture des tombes mégalithiques, et parfois aussi sur d'autres pierres de ces monuments, on voit souvent de petites cavités circulaires, quelquefois oblongues, en forme de cupules. Il semble qu'elles ont servi à recevoir des offrandes faites au mort lui-même ou dans l'intérêt de son repos. La figure 41 nous montre une *Pierre de sacrifice* de ce genre, qui fut découverte il y a quelques années dans le couloir d'une allée couverte. Ce qui nous autorise à croire que ces blocs à cupules, aujourd'hui appelés par le peuple "pierres des elfes," étaient destinés à offrandes, c'est que maintenant encore on les considère comme sacrés en divers lieux, même en Suède, et qu'on y dépose secrètement des *ex voto*.

On the surface of the roof stones of megalithic tombs, as well as on other stones of these same monuments, we often see small circular cavities, sometimes oblong, in the shape of cupules. They appear to have been used to receive offerings made to the deceased himself or for the sake of his descendants. Figure 41 displays such a sacrificial stone, which was discovered a few years ago in the hallway of a covered alley. What allows us to believe that these cup-shaped blocks, called "elves' stones" by the people today, were intended for offerings, is that even now they are considered sacred in various places, even in Sweden, and that they are secretly deposited *ex voto*. (Translation mine)

²¹¹. (129) See Abbé H. Breuil and E. Anati, in our Notes 65, 67, and 68.

these images as representations of the starry heavens.²¹²

In the case of Asphendou, I believe that the holes [*koilotêtes*] did not possess a practical use-value (i.e., for collecting fluids, which is highly unlikely given the small diameter of the incisions). After all, the deciphering of *certain* images (as map, as sky, etc.) will not resolve the problem.

I now return²¹³ with renewed confidence to the idea that the image of a hermetic [138] geometric symbol, such as the holes [*koilotêtes*], whether related or not, as well as the circle, is the sacred work [*askêsê*] of a “shaman” [*mageias*] in a symbol [*mesô enas symbolou*], a shaman who rendered polysemantic images untethered to any specific figural depiction--but rather one charged with the experience of the ages. This hypothesis becomes stronger, when we consider that the person in this phase is not so much a “primitive” [*prôtogonos*] who advances gradually to the later form of social organization that we find in the Neolithic period. By contrast, the contemporary visual artist with his compositions [*suntheseis*], deprived of the power of a “magic-symbolic” subject, and lacking any desire to promote a catholic-and-common experience--by which I mean one who does not care for and discards the realistic image as actually restrictive in promoting their effects--this artist also offers a type of representation, but one that may offer a multiplicity of interpretations rather than a total-synoptic experience.

A FINAL HYPOTHESIS

According to received opinion that the earliest prehistory of Crete was, politically speaking, Neolithic, Chalcolithic and Bronze Age--Minoan--the presence of a rock shelter in the mountainous hunting region of Asphendou with images that, according to our analysis, were related to prehistoric societies, will seem shocking [*meteôrikê*].

If, however, one dares to question this received wisdom, by making a moderate hypothesis concerning the entire chronology of the rock carvings at Asphendou: then who will deny the

²¹². (130) See: Ksica, *Gravures rupestres et cultes du soleil....*, op. cit., and Mikov, *Gravures rupestres en Bulgarie*, op.cit.

Translator’s Note. The full citations are as follows: Miroslav Ksica, “Gravures rupestres et culte du soleil dans le défilé de Tamgaly,” *Archeologia* 28 (May 1969): 6-11, with some remarkable solar-headed figures carved in the rock; and V. Mikov, “Gravures rupestres en Bulgarie,” *Isvestiii, aï, j na Bulgarskiii, aï, j arkheologicheski institut* 5 (1929): 290-308 [as I have noted, the French summary is at 307-308]. Figure 158 displays anthropomorphic images, Figure 159 some horned and antlered game animals, Figures 160-162 some incised holes and linear geometric designs, and Figure 163 some more solar images.

²¹³. (131) See our article in “BHMA” 31-10-71.

Translator’s Note. That article has also been translated above.

suggestion that two political phases may have coexisted on Crete?

If we draw an analogy from the precise hypothesis of J. Mellaart concerning the social-political structure of Central Asia,²¹⁴ we may easily conclude that, at precisely the same time, a farming-and-herding way of life flourished in the fruitful plains of the island, while a hunting society was preserved in the mountains of Sphakia.

After all, to this day the economy, the production, and the anthropological features in this area have resisted changes with time more so than the rest of the island--for it is, or until recently it was, entirely cut off from the rest of Crete. Still, it seems fairly natural for these societies of hunters to have remained a primitive [139] stock which was then mixed with later settlers. Moreover, something similar may be gleaned from the archaeological study of Neolithic Thessaly.²¹⁵

²¹⁴. (132) J. Mellaart, *Earliest Civilizations of the Near East*, 1965, 77. Compare analogues from the Spanish Levant in H. G. Bandi, *Peintures rupestres du Levant Espagnol*, op. cit., 83.

Translator's Note. The full citations are as follows:

James Mellaart, *Earliest Civilizations of the Near East* (New York, NY: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1965), 77: "it was to this new continent that the Neolithic cultures of Anatolia introduced the first beginnings of agriculture and stockbreeding and a cult of the Mother Goddess, the basis of our civilization"; and
Hans-Georg Bandi, Henri Breuil, Lilo Berger-Kirchner, Henri Lhote, Erik Holm, Andreas Lommel, *L'Âge de Pierre: Quarante millénaires d'art pariétal* (Paris: Éditions Albin Michel, 1960), 83:

L'abbé Breuil, H. Obermaier et d'autres préhistoriens soulignent l'existence de rapports entre l'art levantin et l'art franco-cantabrique; ils se fondent sur ces relations pour le dater du Paléolithique supérieur.

The Abbé Breuil, H. Obermaier, and other prehistorians underscore the relations between Levantine art and Franco-Cantabrian art; these relations suggest a date in the Later Paleolithic. (Translation mine)

²¹⁵. (133) Δ. Ρ. Θεοχάρης, 'Η αύγή τῆς Θεσσαλικῆς Προϊστορίας, 3-5 and 34.

Translator's Note. The full citation for D. R. Theocharis, *The Dawn of Prehistoric Thessaly*, is as follows:

Δημητριου Ρ. Θεοχάρη, 'Η αύγή τῆς Θεσσαλικῆς Προϊστορίας: Αρχὴ καὶ Πρωίμη Εξελίξη τῆς Νεολιθικῆς (Βολος: Εκδοσις τῆς Φιλαρχαίου Εταιρείας Βολου. 1967), Θεσσαλικά Μελετήματα, Αριθ. 4; Demetrius R. Theocharis, *The Dawn of Prehistoric Thessaly: The Beginning and Early Development of the Neolithic* (Volos: Publications of the Society of the Friends of Antiquity of Volos, 1967), Thessalian Studies, No. 4.

Pages 3-5 discuss the long period of social transition from the Paleolithic to the Neolithic eras (100,000-10,000 BP). Pages 33-34 make four essential points: 1) that human presence in

The opposite hypothesis, namely, how an isolated society of farmers-settlers on the island could have given up and handed over their former way of life, and to regress in the face of a hunting-gathering mode of production, does not seem to clarify anything, nor has it received any confirmation from history or ethnopaleontology up to now.

Let us hope that further study will provide us with more complete and clearer answers to the problems that have emerged through the discovery of the rock carvings at Skordoulakia.

Athens, March 1972

CHRISTOS G. PAPOUTSAKIS

POSTSCRIPT

During the period in which this volume of the “Cretan Chronicle” was being prepared for publication, an article appeared in the latest (96) volume of BCH, written by Mr. P. Faure with the title “Cultes populaires dans la Crète antique” (pag. 389-426), in which the rock carvings of Asphendou are discussed (pag. 406-413, fig. 10-14).

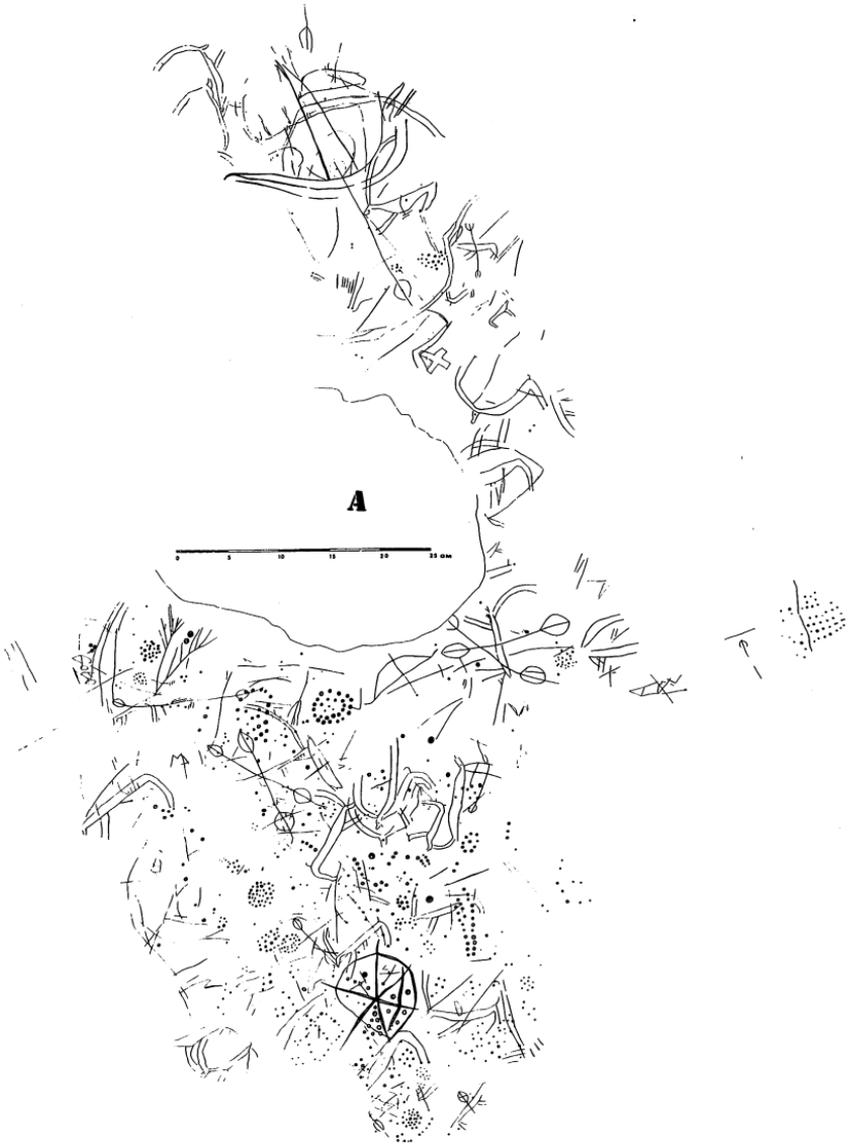
In this case, I should note that:

- a) regrettably, his drawings (fig. 13 and 14) are not entirely accurate
- b) I find Mr. Faure’s interpretation of the rock carvings and his association of them with Minoan worship [*latreia*] groundless;
- c) Mr. Faure neglected to note that he was taken to Skordoulakia by Mr. I. Tsiphetakis, the same man whom, as I reported on page 109, I had previously taken to the cave, and thus he had been made aware, one way or another, of my work there.

Athens, August 1972

CH. G. P.

Thessaly is confirmed by the Middle Paleolithic period; 2) that the settlement and stone tool technology of the Late Paleolithic is *homo sapien* in design; 3) that the dynamics which led to the end of the Paleolithic era will never be understood until closer archaeological attention is paid to *the caves* of Thessaly; and 4) that however the transition to “a new way of life” in the Neolithic period took place, it was gradual, and permitted the existence of Paleolithic residues for a long time thereafter.



Christos Papoutsakis's line drawing of Asphendou Cave rock carvings. Reproduced with permission from the Historical Museum of Crete.