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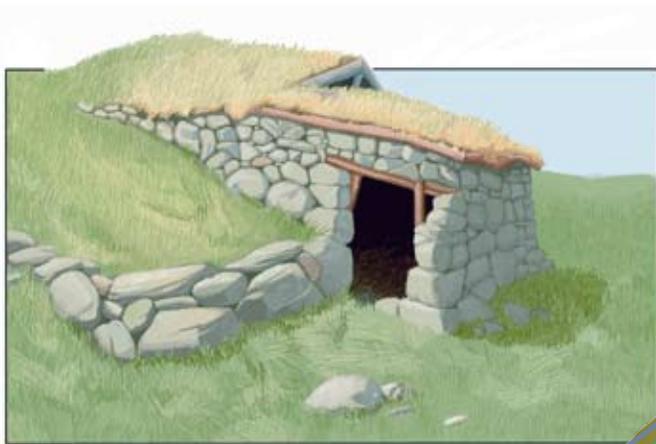
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CHAPTER ONE

HUMANS AND CAVES — A LONG HISTORY

We do not know (there is no scriptural evidence) whether substantial caves existed before the Flood. If they did, they must have formed by different processes, since the very slow cave-forming processes we can see and measure today could have not created them in the relatively short time available. God may have created pre-Flood caves, of course.



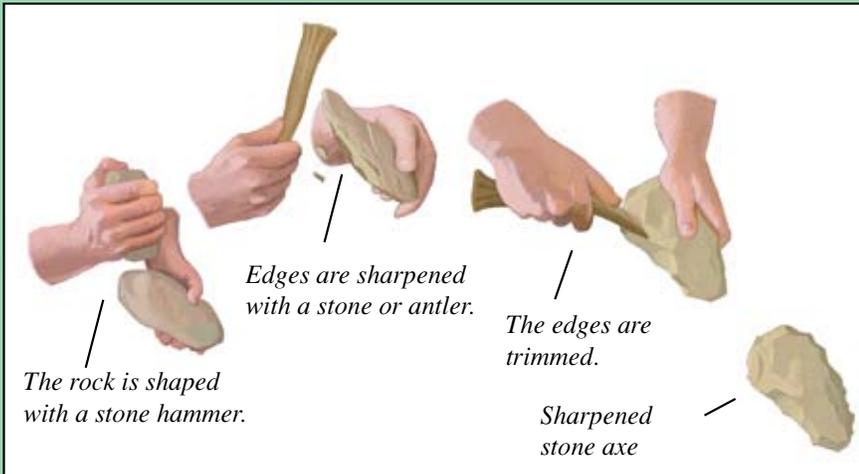
Two examples of simple dwellings used after the Flood

In any case, whatever caves there were pre-Flood would have been destroyed in the global cataclysm. Thus, all of the caves existing today must have formed after most of the sediments had been deposited during the Flood. In fact, the fossils of creatures buried during Noah's flood can be seen lining the walls of many caves.

Secular history teaches that caves were the very first shelters that humans used, yet Genesis 4:17 clearly indicates that humans built cities at the dawn of human history — before the Flood. Later, some people used tents (Genesis 4:20). The word “cave” appears some 40 times in the Bible (depending on the version), in most cases as a hiding place, but also as a burial (and on one occasion as a dwelling) place. The first mention is in Genesis 19:30, referring to the cave in which Lot and his daughters dwelt. Thus, we know



HOW TO MAKE A STONE AXE



that roughly 400 years after the Flood, caves were available to humans in the Middle East.

When they moved into caves, humans used them as shelters or as religious sanctuaries. One cave seldom played both roles — most probably because permanent habitation (especially continuous open fires) substantially affected those deeper parts of caves that would usually be chosen as religious sanctuaries. It is also possible that the belief systems involved did not allow the use of the same caves as habitat and sanctuary.

Many different human traces have been found in caves, from artifacts like tools (mostly made of stone and bone), pottery, and hearths to human bones. Many human footprints have also been found, usually preserved in still-soft clay. In a few cases, the sediment bearing the print has hardened, of which the completely petrified footprints in the cave Ghe arul de la Vârtope in Romania are the most outstanding example.

Human footprints are sometimes associated with, or even superimposed by, cave bear prints. One splendid yet little-known example comes from another Romanian cave — Ciurului Izbuca — where over 400 human footprints have been found and investigated. They belonged to a man, a woman, and a child who may have entered the cave to hunt the very cave bear that left the superimposing footprints. Although the

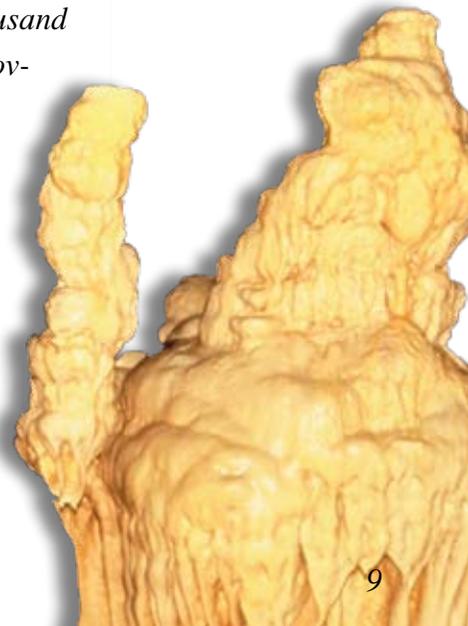
prints in this particular case are exceptional in terms of their number and the quality of their preservation, such traces are rather common. They reveal the fact that humans were in fierce competition for caves with other large contemporaneous cave dwellers.

The cave bear (*Ursus spelaeus*) was the most frequent such inhabitant. Sometimes the cave lion (*Felis spelaea*) and cave hyena (*Crocuta spelaea*) were also present alongside humans. While all three of these mammals disappeared by the end of the

Pleistocene, humans, as we know, left caves to follow a different destiny.

The oldest tools found in caves appear to be the ones in Longgupo Cave in China, where stone artifacts were found next to “hominid” remains. These remains have been dated at 1.96 to 1.78 million years (Myr) by the use of many unproven assumptions. (More will be said about the methods of radiometric dating later, but let it be said at this point that this writer does not support any age that goes beyond 6,000 to 10,000 years into the past!) Many more recent tools and other artifacts have been discovered in caves worldwide.

Art associated with burial was found in Twin Rivers Cave, Zambia. It consists of pigments and paint-grinding tools and these are considered to be 200 to 350 thousand years (Kyr) old. The discoverers believe that the pigments were used both for body painting and for rituals, hence “people who were perhaps using symbols far earlier than we expected.” This may well imply the use of a language.





A) Painting of wounded bison in cave of Altamira, Spain

Finally, there are paintings in a number of caves and rock shelters that are believed to be non-religious. Probably the oldest among them are (at least for the time being) the painted slabs in Fumane Cave, near Verona in Italy. The animal and human figures depicted on these slabs have been dated between 32 and 36.5 Kyr.

Worship activities have also been revealed in many caves, especially as cave art. There are three different kinds of cave art recorded on cave (and rock shelter) walls and/or individual cobbles or slabs: (a) paintings, (b) engravings, and (c) bas-reliefs.

A. Paintings are either simple outlines (drawn with charcoal or mineral pigment) with no pigment fill, or true paintings with outlines, crafty charcoal shadings, and sometimes vivid pigment fills. The most revered and supreme among wall paintings are the ones in the Chauvet Cave in southern France. They have been radiocarbon dated at 32 to 35 Kyr. The artistry of the Chauvet Cave paintings is remarkable – not only the firm, almost one-stroke drawing technique, but also the amazing use of perspective and lighting. The artistry is even more admirable considering the precarious lighting conditions the artists had: tiny, flickering, animal-fat-burning, stone-carved lamps!

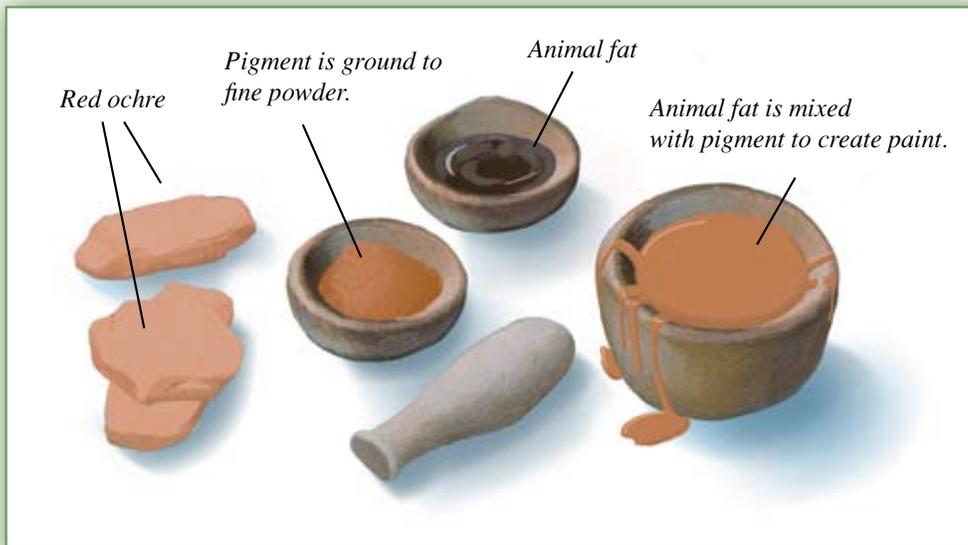
B. Engravings are usually made on soft limestone surfaces. In most cases they are found alongside paintings (they may in fact represent pre-painting “warm-ups” or even raw drafts of the real thing, as the frequent corrections or even erasures — in contrast with the paintings — suggest). In some cases they are superimposed on paintings, like in the above mentioned Chauvet Cave, usually revealing the loss of artistry and skills within subsequent generations. Of the many engravings I have seen, the ones of horses in the cave Isturiz-Oxochelaya (in the French Pyrenees) have impressed me the most, because of the powerful expression and the skillful use of the cave wall micro-relief.

C. The bas-reliefs are usually made of soft, pliable clay attached to the walls or even to large blocks. The most famous ones are the bear and feline figurines in Montespan Cave and the bison in Tuc d’Audoubert Cave, both in the French Pyrenees.



Lamps were simply stone bowls with wicks that hung over the edge.

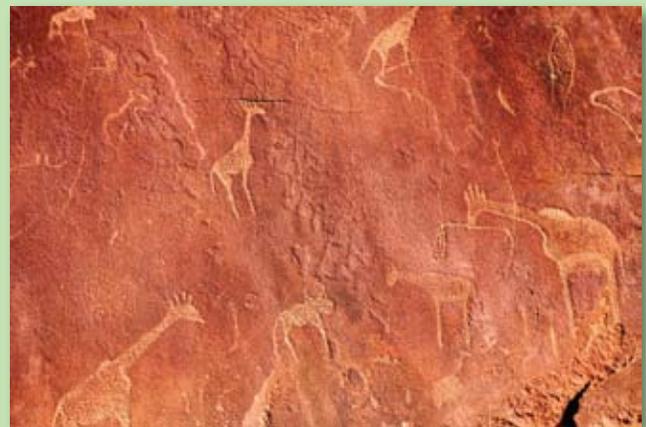
HOW DID STONE AGE MAN CREATE HIS PAINT?



wealth of radiometric datings performed on speleothems in the close vicinity of cave art. Many of the alleged ages are much older than the ones attributed to cave art. I find it very difficult to believe that the experienced eyes of the ancient artists failed to identify any speleothem suitable for “artistic improvement.” Yet, to my knowledge, no one has addressed this issue thus far. (A later section deals with additional arguments against long ages for speleothems.)

CAVE ART AND THE AGE OF SPELEOTHEMS

It is interesting to note that no cave formations (dripstones called speleothems — especially stalagmites and stalactites) have been reported thus far as part of cave art. It is almost certain that the artists (and especially the shamans who chose the locations) would have noticed the resemblance to animals in many of the cave formations. They likely would have seen this as a sign, omen, or invitation to use the speleothems in their art and acted accordingly. I see this as a strong argument that these structures formed after the artists left. I had the opportunity to see a number of caves in France in which new wall speleothems — flowstone — partly or completely covered ancient paintings. This became a serious conservation problem and triggered thorough scientific investigation in which I was involved for a short period. On the other hand, there is a

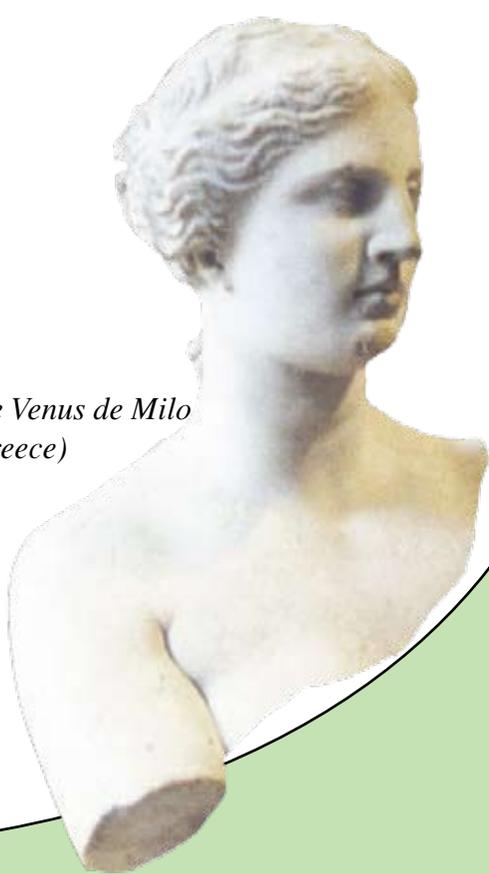


B) Engraving-graffiti from Twyfelfontein, the largest concentration of stone-age petroglyphs in Namibia



C) Illustration of bas-relief of a feline figurine

*The Venus de Milo
(Greece)*



Coastal cave

RELIGIOUS SANCTUARIES OR THE FIRST ART GALLERIES?

When first discovered, cave paintings were considered to be recent artifacts, created by some eccentric character. As a better understanding of caves and their history was gained, they became widely recognized as early manifestations of the human intellect.

Although at some locations the intentional layout of animal bones (like four cave bear skulls positioned in the shape of a cross found in Peștera Rece Cave in Romania) clearly points to some kind of ritual, there is still no agreement among specialists as to the purpose of cave paintings, engravings, and bas-reliefs. Some consider them as elements of magic/religious cults while others believe

they are simple artistic expressions at the dawn of human culture.¹

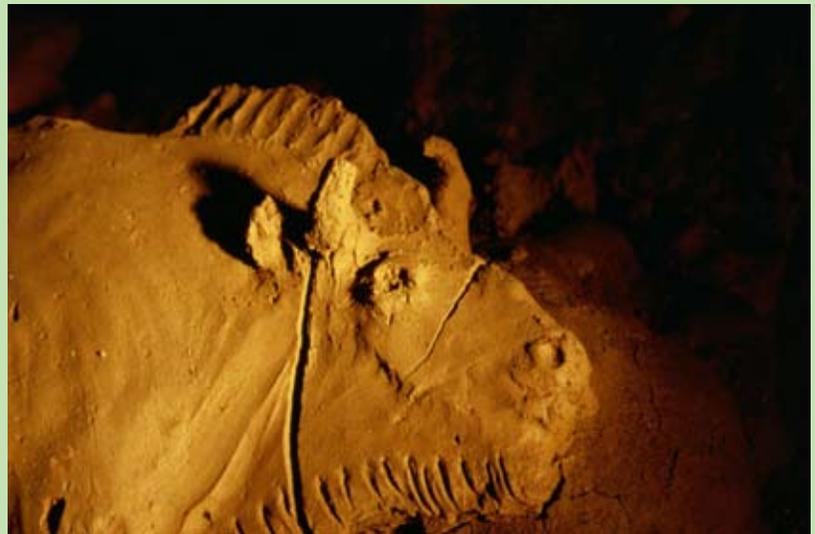
In my view — which I share with quite a number of predecessors — there is little doubt that these complex representations are deeply rooted in religious beliefs. The small population of humans descended from the occupants of the ark had a clear system of beliefs from the beginning since their ancestor Noah “walked with God” (Genesis 6: 9). But as they spread out and lost contact with each other, their religious inheritance may well have started to dilute, with priority given to more direct and pressing issues, like survival by multiplication, which was still a divine commandment: “Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth” (Genesis 9:1). If so, women and the mystery of conception and birth they embodied could have become one of the most important elements of their values. It is most probable that this is the reason why the earliest statues ever discovered — the so-called “Venuses” — represent women with strongly em-

phasized female features. Now, one may reasonably assume that plants and many ground-burrowing or cave-dwelling animals drew our ancestors' attention, especially as they grew more remote in time from their point of origin, toward the ultimate female (metaphorically speaking) — the earth itself — that they believed delivered them from her womb. In a way, we may see this as an attempt to forget the burden of Adam and Eve's sin, replacing God, the holy and just, with an unconditionally loving "Mother Earth." It was inside that same womb that the secret of all creatures' souls would be found. No wonder caves were associated with ritual entrances to "Mother Earth's" primordial womb. It may be that humans of the past believed that if they had the courage to penetrate deep enough, scratch, draw, paint, or model their main games' images, and ritually hunt them, the real hunting would be successful. Power would somehow be gained over those animals if their spirits were hunted first inside the sacred womb.

Evidence for this is provided by the bison in Tuc d'Audoubert Cave and the bear and felines in Montespan Cave, located deep

always located very close to such points of resonance. When the cave walls do not have enough room for image paintings close to points of resonance, red spots are painted on the walls to mark the points instead. Conversely, there are significantly less paintings away from resonance points, even on walls with excellent painting conditions. It seems quite probable that chanting, dancing, and other types of ritual musical activities were associated with cave paintings, which reveals the rather sophisticated social and religious life of these so-called "cavemen."

Along the same line of reasoning, one must consider the recurrent presence of various representations of what appear to be masked humans, collectively termed "sorcerers" or "shamans" (most famous are the ones in the caves Trois Frères and Chauvet). Their presence alongside the most frequently hunted animals leaves little room for anything other than religious interpretations. As one may have already noticed, all



Detail of bison in Tuc d'Audoubert Cave

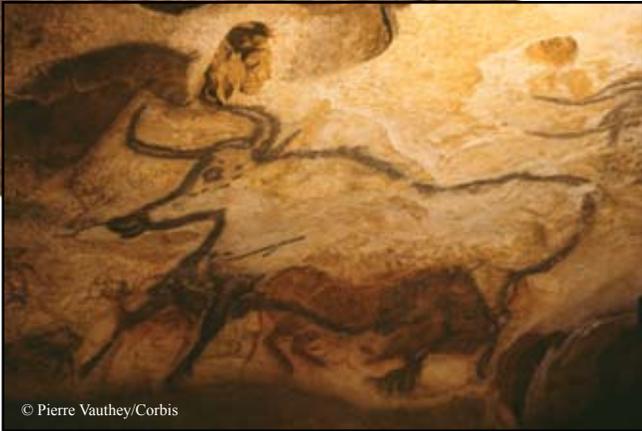
Cave paintings seem to have another interesting feature that is linked to acoustics. All cave rooms and larger passages have one or several points of resonance (i.e., locations where if certain musical notes are emitted, they will bounce back, amplified, from the walls). Studies in several caves in the Pyrenees have revealed that the largest number of paintings is

examples in this section come from European caves. And this raises an interesting question: Why is all cave art almost entirely restricted to Western Europe?

Europe has over 300 "decorated" (painted) caves (from Spain to the Urals), with the majority being found in France, Spain, and Italy. Some more

recent cave paintings, very few actually, have been found in Brazil, at a locale called Pedra Pintada (near the town of Monte Alegre) and are estimated to be at least 11 Kyr old. These paintings are completely different, very schematic, and have no apparent connection to either the style or purpose of the European ones. The numerous rock paintings in Australia, Africa, and North America are not taken into consideration here, not only because they are not cave paintings but also because they are considered much more recent than the cave art.

So why this restriction to Europe? Consider the clarifying question: “Why is Egyptian art almost exclusively confined to Egypt?” Now the answer is clear to any educated person: “Because it was created by Egyptians as part of their civilization.” Here is the magic word: “civilization.” Returning to the subject of cave art, one may confidently state that the paintings, engravings, and bas-reliefs in those European caves are the expression of an ancient European civilization. Certainly, this is not the picture mainstream anthropology and art history offers us! The concept of civilization is associated with the first sedentary, agricultural Neolithic peoples, and by accepting a Pleistocene (Paleolithic) civilization, the entire beautifully written and illustrated mainstream anthropology is seriously undermined. Man has evolved, we are told over and over again, and a civilization as early as the Paleolithic doesn’t fit the evolutionary schedule. But it surely fits the Bible! Man was created by God in His own image and was very intelligent and skilled from the beginning. Only after the great dispersion of Babel did many human groups lose a lot of their knowledge, becoming more technologically “primitive.” Take the case of the



*Native American petroglyphs in Nine Mile Canyon
in southern Utah*



Two visitors inside Lascaux II Grotto in France

Chauvet Cave paintings. When first investigated by specialists, their artistry convinced everybody they must be younger than the ones at Lascaux and Altamira, because they are more evolved. “Stylistic dating” was being used and that was unanimous until carbon dating “proved” them wrong. The Chauvet paintings are now believed to be twice as old as the ones at Lascaux and Altamira (which were already considered the pinnacle of “paleoart”).

A serious conflict emerged from this: on one side stand the established and revered mainstream anthropologists, desperately holding to their evolutionary view of human culture, according to which art emerged at the end of the Paleolithic. (As somebody once said: “Archaeology is what the most powerful practitioners, usually professors, say it is.”²)

On the other side, there is a rapidly growing group of “taphonomists” (from the Greek word taphos meaning “death”; it refers to all the complex transformations artifacts in the archaeological record have undergone, including the subjective elements introduced by researchers and their biases when interpreting those artifacts). Theirs is a completely different — though still evolutionary — approach, based on techniques of “direct dating” which have yielded results that blow traditional archaeology apart. The ages they have revealed for long-established tenets of anthropology, for example, push the moment of the birth of art way back into the Middle Paleolithic.

The taphonomic approach not only assessed some rock art to be much older than believed but it also

claimed, for example, that what was stylistically believed to be Paleolithic rock art at Coa, Portugal, was in fact less than three thousand years old!

Taphonomists believe that cave art could not have possibly been restricted only to southwestern Europe and that the lack of paintings in other European caves is due to the destructive processes of glaciation. As the massive ice cover was building up during the Ice Age, the overburden compressed the rocks in which caves are located and often times the walls and ceilings would start to break down, sometimes completely, sometimes reshaping the voids until a balance was reached. Such an argument, however, is invalid because thousands of caves in Europe with similar-to-identical “art-inviting” morphologies have survived the Ice Age unharmed by breakdown and yet have no trace of cave art. Taphonomists further say there is no reason to believe that rock art was not widespread worldwide and was not limited only to caves, only that it did not survive outside caves because of much poorer conservation conditions.

In the taphonomic approach, spirituality seems to be completely ignored, cave and rock art being seen as a sort of popular entertainment! In my view, the primordial womb argument makes more sense and also provides

an acceptable motivation for all this early yet elaborate form of art.

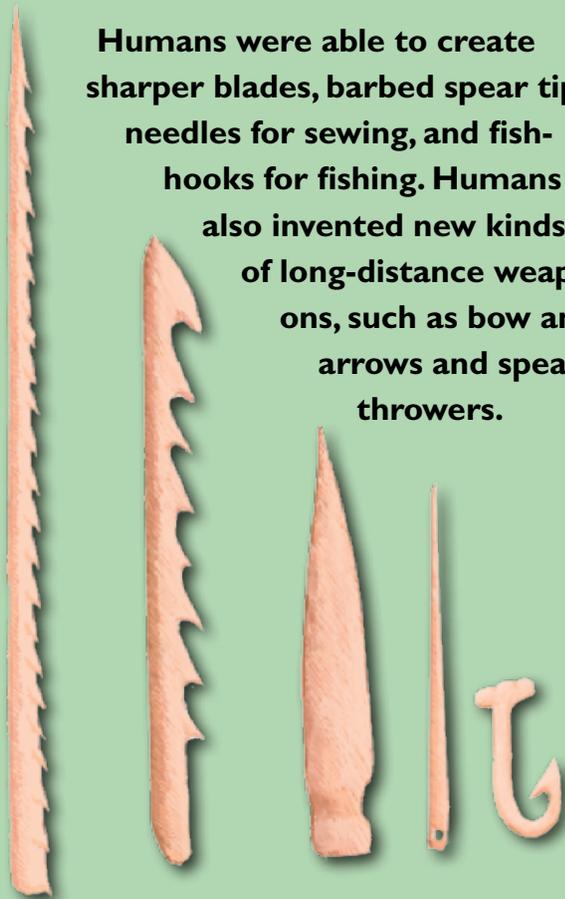
DID CAVEMEN EVOLVE?

Certainly! But not on the scale that evolutionists claim! There is no doubt that humans changed during the ages. They changed into different — sometimes worse — humans, but they were, are, and will always be humans. They did not evolve from apes, and many artifacts discovered in caves demonstrate this. But before we look at these artifacts, we need to have a look at what evolutionary scientists claim to be the history of ancient humanity.

The main criterion used to separate various human cultures of the past is the tools they made (or tool “industry”). Thus, at what is called the “dawn of humanity” (the Lower Paleolithic) we have the Oldowan industry (from the Olduvai Gorge site in Northern Tanzania). It is sometimes referred to as the “chopper-core” or “pebble-tool” industry. This is followed by the Acheulean industry (from the town of Saint-Acheul in northern France), whose most characteristic tool was the stone hand axe. During the Middle Paleolithic there is the Mousterian industry (from Le Moustier rock shelter in Dordogne, France), characterized by flint hand axes, scrapers, and points. The Upper Paleolithic had, according to evolutionary anthropology, brought into



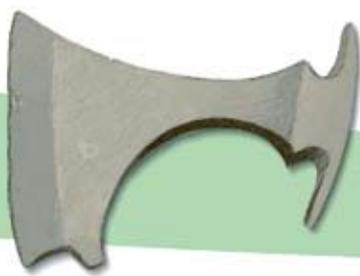
Humans were able to create sharper blades, barbed spear tips, needles for sewing, and fish-hooks for fishing. Humans also invented new kinds of long-distance weapons, such as bow and arrows and spear throwers.



dustry — the Azilian (from the cave Mas d'Azil in Southern France).

The humans that created the Oldowan and Acheulean industries are referred to as archaic Homo sapiens. The Mousterian industry belongs mostly to Neanderthals (Homo sapiens neanderthalensis) and the rest to the modern Homo sapiens. While these various tool industries undoubtedly prove a continuous progress, they do not prove any evolution from pre-humans to humans, only from less to more knowledgeable humans! There are other, more complex arguments that disprove pre-human-to-human evolution. The following is a list of human technologies and arts, their authors, and the characteristics revealed by these achievements. The age (according to evolutionary scientists) is in thousands of years. Even though wrong in absolute values, these ages still represent patterns through time. (See chart next page.)

being a number of different industries like Châtelperronian, Aurignacian, Gravetian, and Solutrean (all named after sites in France) toward the end of the Paleolithic, and into the Mesolithic (Middle Stone Age) another in-



Iron axe head

Iron casted pot



Horse trappings

IRON AGE