

PALAEOLITHIC UFO-SHAPES

Mysterious drawings in the Stone Age caves
of France and Spain

Aimé Michel

FOR two hundred uninterrupted centuries, from about the year 30,000 B.C. to around 10,000 B.C., in the Palaeolithic or Old Stone Age, a brilliant civilisation flourished in that region of continental Europe which is today south-western France and Cantabrian Spain. Throughout the whole of this period, the equivalent of about 700 or 800 human generations, a race of people of whom we have no direct knowledge, painted, carved, and sculpted, for an unknown purpose and under an unknown inspiration, masterpieces that still today are numbered among the high peaks of World Art. The entire world knows the names of Les Eyzies, Lascaux, Altamira, and all who reflect upon the origins of Mankind and, more particularly, upon the origins of western thought, dream of going there once in their lifetime.¹

Entering the cave at Lascaux is like visiting the Parthenon or the Sistine Chapel. Every time that I have been there, I have seen the same impressive spectacle: the crowd of visitors, chattering, passes into a semi-darkness. And then the walls are lit up, and suddenly all is silence: 15,000 years after the deaths of those who painted them, the pictures still produce the effect of a sublime presence that imposes respect for its genius and prompts us to meditation and contemplation. The men who fashioned these masterpieces may lie beneath the dust of the centuries: but at the very first glance we understand that, if there is something in us that escapes death, that something is there, on that white stone, and will remain there until the end of the world.

At first sight, the subjects from which they drew their inspiration seem to be solely of an animal nature. We are in fact impressed to begin with by the portrayals of bison, horses, reindeer, mammoths, and so on. There are lots of them, thousands of them, throughout the whole Franco-Cantabrian region.

Since the opening years of the present century, and especially under the stimulus of the celebrated Abbé Breuil², they have been the object of detailed studies. The writers on Prehistory have counted them, classified them, photographed them, and drawn them. In a total of 72 painted caverns, there have been enumerated 610 horses, 510 bison, 205 mammoths, 176 ibex, as well as other species. Altogether, more than 2,000 animals.

Alongside the animals, however, you notice finally that there is something else: incomprehensible signs

and pictures which do not attract attention at first and which the students of Prehistory have long had a tendency to neglect—until they began to perceive in them a certain uniformity: for in fact identical signs are found in different caves, often very far apart from each other. And even among the different signs a typology begins to be perceived. There are resemblances, like, for example, the resemblances between the hieroglyphs of the earliest Egyptian dynasties and the hieroglyphs of the classical period of Egypt, though these resemblances are looser. Is it perhaps that this is a sort of writing in the caves, as some people have suggested? Is it perhaps a vaguer sort of picture-writing, like that of the North American Indians? Various theories have been offered during these last few years. So far none of these theories have convinced all the specialists. Not being an expert on Prehistory myself, I naturally have no interesting ideas on this difficult and fascinating subject. However, I do not doubt that, like myself, my readers will be profoundly puzzled and intrigued by a considerable number of these signs, and will deem them worthy of serious attention.

I The Reliability of Franco-Cantabrian Art

One initial question and one that must precede any research into what these signs portray, concerns the degree of confidence that, generally speaking, can be placed in the accuracy of the drawings in the Franco-Cantabrian caves. A mere glance suffices to give us the answer. It is art of an admirably representational quality.

The painters at Lascaux and Rouffignac and Altamira possessed a sureness of vision and of execution that is comparable to the vision of the great painters of the Renaissance, and that, by its realism and its movement and at times even its humour, is greatly superior to all that has been bequeathed to us by the Classical and Near Eastern worlds of Antiquity. It is impossible to stand and look at the frieze of little horses at Lascaux, so adorably lively in their thick coats, without being seized with love for their painter. Frequently, just as in the most modern of drawings, one fleeting moment is immobilised and held for all eternity by a single stroke. (As for example—again at Lascaux—in the frieze showing deer about to swim, one behind another, across a stream.)

At the Font de Gaume a reindeer, standing, inclines its head downwards over its recumbent dame that is in calf, and you have the feeling that in a second from now he will stretch out his neck and lick her.

At Rouffignac a woolly rhinoceros, with two horns, stands with his head lowered, ready to charge. And the two reclining women in the Madeleine cave have the languid, buxom grace of a Renoir. And animals that the eyes of modern man will never see, such as the mammoth, are caught so well in their familiar attitudes that you can still feel them to be quivering with powerful life (at Les Combarelles, for example).

We know therefore that when they desired to portray reality the painters of Palaeolithic times were the equals of Leonardo and Picasso. Whatever may be the meaning of the drawings by which they have portrayed objects unrecognisable to us, one thing at least is certain: **these drawings show very faithfully what they desired to show.** Their reliability is absolute. If these works of art portray nothing, then it is necessary to explain to us why artists so concerned with realism in all other cases have chosen, for their non-representational fantasies, to imagine precisely, and with an astonishing exactitude, those forms whose non-existence has been demonstrated, some 15,000 or 20,000 years later, by the Condon Report.

II The types of the things imagined by the Franco-Cantabrians

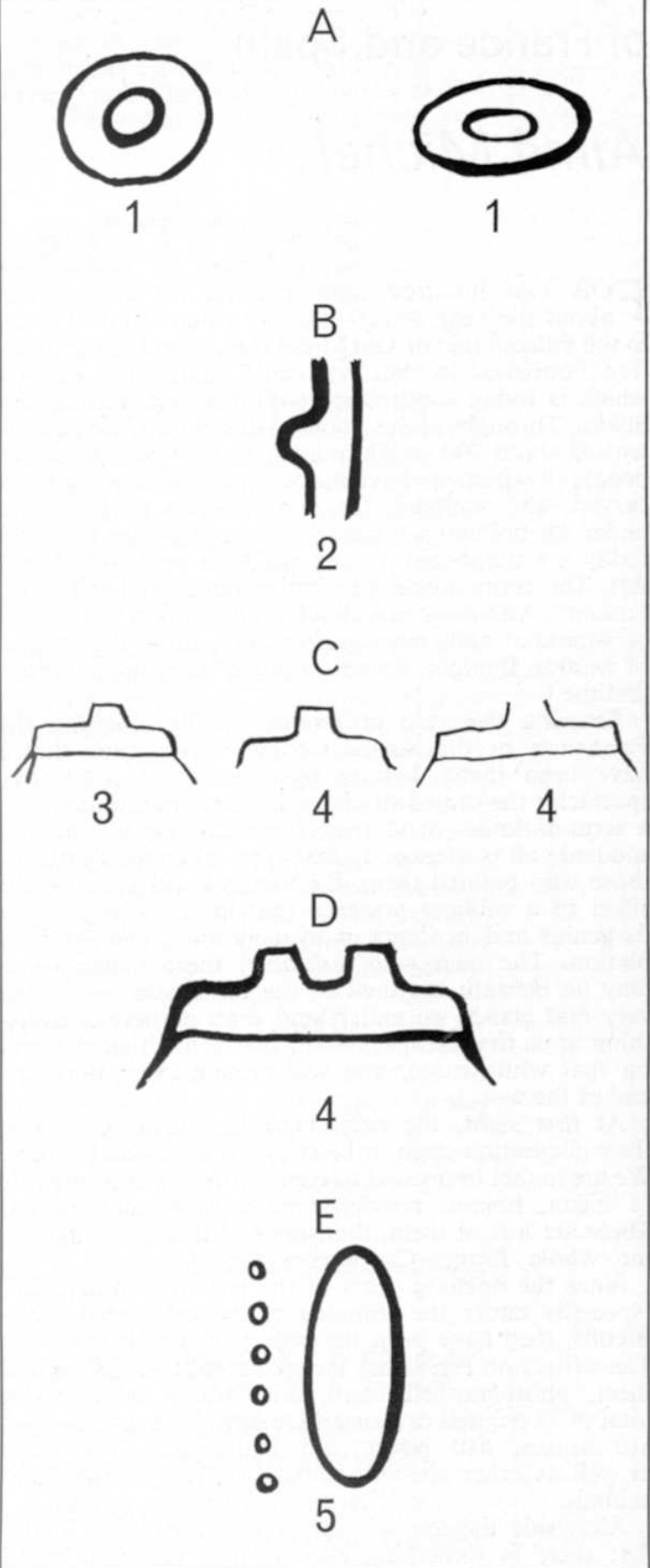
Throughout all the caves we can collect say from twenty to forty different types of imaginary objects, depending upon how strict we are in equating one type of object with another type, or, contrariwise, on how strict we are in our specification of each object.

A considerable number of the objects are geometrical quadrilaterals (examples: Nos. 15, 16, 17, as shown herein, which are from Lascaux, Le Gabillou, and El Castillo). Others look like arrows, or feathers, or harpoons (Niaux, Le Gabrillou, Lascaux, Les Combarelles, etc.). And there are yet others that are rows of dots (in many of the caves).

After we have eliminated these various items, along with a few others, we are left with a dozen types of object of which the very least that we can say is that *they remind us of something!* The reproductions which I give here are faithful enlargements of the drawings done by Professor André Leroi-Gourhan³ who is at the present time the top authority in this whole field. Many of them can also be checked against the various special studies that have been devoted to each of the caves and for which I give the bibliographical references. In order to understand the various shapes and their relation to the text, the reader should know that:—

- (a) The letters (A,B,C,L,M,N) serve to designate each of the types of object that—perhaps a little arbitrarily—I have distinguished among them.
- (b) The numbers given after each type of object refer to a summary description of the caves in which this type of object is portrayed. Certain of the objects are followed by no number: this means that the author (Leroi-Gourhan), from whom I have taken them, does not state their precise origin.

Types of unknown objects portrayed in the Palaeolithic caves of France and Spain



III The Caves with Forms Resembling UFOs

I give here the main data pertaining to the fifteen caves in which the images studied in the present article have been found. As stated above, the numbers relate to the shapes.

1 Pair-Non-Pair (Gironde, France).

A Cave some 20 metres long, with roof partly collapsed, located at Marcamps in the Gironde.

The circular incisions are on the right-hand side as you go in, behind a mammoth and a number of ibex. The same type of images appear again on the left-hand side at the far end of the cave, behind and on the same level as the horns of a deer. Altogether there are a total of nine of the circular images here.

The dating of the Pair-Non-Pair Cave is uncertain. The cultural fragments and debris found there are those of human activities lying between the Aurignacian and the Solutrean Periods, i.e., between 30,000 and 20,000 B.C. *In addition to the circular forms, we find others (always done with double lines) which are elliptical.*⁴

2 Villars (Dordogne, France).

Discovered in 1958, this cave has not yet been studied fully. Leroi-Gourhan dates it from the old Magdalenian IV, that is to say it is roughly contemporary with Lascaux, which it greatly resembles.

3 Pech Merle, near the village of le Cabrerets (Lot, France).

Is an immense labyrinth more than two kilometres in length. "One of the most impressive of the painted murals" (Leroi-Gourhan). Symbol No. 3 is painted, in red, in a niche running off from the big central chamber, above the form of a human being (J.3), very impressive, and also painted in red: the personage is not only wounded, perhaps dead, pierced with straight lines penetrating his body which the experts on Pre-history take to be assegais (spears), but his head, bald and beardless, has an enormous cranium, a pointed chin, no ears, **and his eyes are represented by two lines, very elongated and slanted and running up towards the sides.** Contrary to the majority of the other personages and forms depicted in the cave, this one is drawn (just as the symbol No. 3 is) with rapid strokes and no shading off. It cannot have taken the painter more than a few minutes to do it. Symbol No. 3 seems to be flying above the man, or to be settled on the ground further back behind him. Its width is equal to the length of the personage's body. The date suggested by Leroi-Gourhan corresponds to the Magdalenian of Lascaux.⁵

4 Cougnac (Lot, France).

In this cave we find exactly the same sign as at Pech Merle, and here too it is associated with the theme of the wounded or dead "man". It seems to date from the same period. The sign is repeated six times. The distance between these two caves is about 40 kilometres as the crow flies (Cougnac is on National Highway No. 704, to the N.W. of Gourdon, in the commune of Payrignac).

In addition to the symbol with *one* protuberance on

top, symbol D, with two precisely symmetrical protuberances, is also found at Cougnac.⁶ This cave was discovered by Jean Mazet. (It is perhaps worth mentioning that Mazet embarked on his search for the cave as the result of indications given by a pendulum dowser working over a map and far away from there!)

5 Las Chimeneas (Puente Viesgo, Province of Santander, Spain).

The symbol shown at E is in close proximity to several of the quadrilateral forms. The dating: end of the Solutrean or beginning of the Magdalenian, i.e., shortly after 20,000 B.C. The entrance to the cave is on a mountain, the Monte Castillo, and near the entrance to the Pasiega cave⁷ which we will deal with later on.

6 Altamira (Santillana, Province of Santander, Spain).

One of the most famous of all the Franco-Cantabrian caves. It is a vast S-shaped chamber, over 200 metres long. You will see here at least three types of interesting symbols (F, G, P). And here, for the first time, we find, side by side, two drawings, each of which is food for thought, and moreover placed in relation to each other in such a way that the effect is reinforced still further (P). The G-6 type of sign (which appears again also in Group P) *is by predilection painted on the cave-ceilings and in every possible position, and in several places it appears in groups of two or three or even more.* And here is a remarkable detail: the area of ceiling where these objects appear in a group is devoted entirely to them, while the neighbouring area, which portrays bison almost exclusively, is crowded with the animals, all huddled close together and at times in quite a tangle. We have the impression that the painters wanted to emphasise the *importance* of these unknown forms, and to emphasise their *different character*.

The saucer-shaped objects do literally create as it were a vacuum around themselves. Symbol F-6, particularly suggestive, is in the bottom gallery, more than 150 metres from the entrance of the cave.

According to Leroi-Gourhan, Altamira dates from the Magdalenian III—IV (i.e. around 12,000 B.C.). Or, according to Breuil, it is Magdalenian VI (about 10,000 B.C.).⁸

7 Les Combarelles (Commune of Les Eyzies, Dordogne, France).

A long, narrow, winding corridor extending for 237 metres, opening out at the foot of a high beetling cliff. Les Combarelles is a cave with *incised and carved* signs—not painted.

The symbols are of all sorts, and very numerous. Straight off, among the first signs (namely about half way along) we find a human face that is astonishing for its unrealistic character (in contrast to the realistic portrayal of the animals), for the development of its cranium, for its almond-shaped *but vertical* eyes, for its beardless and pointed chin, and the absence of a mouth (J-7). Underneath it are three "curious" signs (to quote Leroi-Gourhan), namely horizontal ovals with lines running through them (I-7). Leroi-Gourhan

says: "I know of no other signs like these, except perhaps the signs, with spiky lines projecting, that are found coupled with large figures bracketed together in the deep gallery at Altamira". This scholar makes a very interesting observation, for what he calls "signs bracketed together" are types C, G, and P of our present classification.

As you continue on towards the interior or the cave you find the sign H-7 several times in succession and then, a number of times, the sign F under various forms (i.e., as F-9 and F-16, for example).

At the end of the cave, on the right-hand side, close to a magnificent bison in profile, comes the best rendered one of all (F-7). Further on, there are more figures of humanoids, always rendered so unrealistically that they prompt Leroi-Gourhan to make another interesting comment: "Almost all of the faces show an animalised profile and they have contributed a good deal towards giving sanction to the theory that they are people wearing animal-masks—a view which I do not reject but which, before we accept it, must explain why, when we gather together all the known human profiles, there is a transition, without our noticing it, from the normal profile to the profile of an animal's head". (There is thus a *continuity* between man and the beings portrayed there.)

As for the date, Leroi-Gourhan says: "I think it falls in the Middle Magdalenian, around 12,000 B.C., with a duration that brings it no doubt to the start of the Later Magdalenian, about 10,500 B.C."⁹

8 Font De Gaume (Commune of Les Eyzies, Dordogne, France).

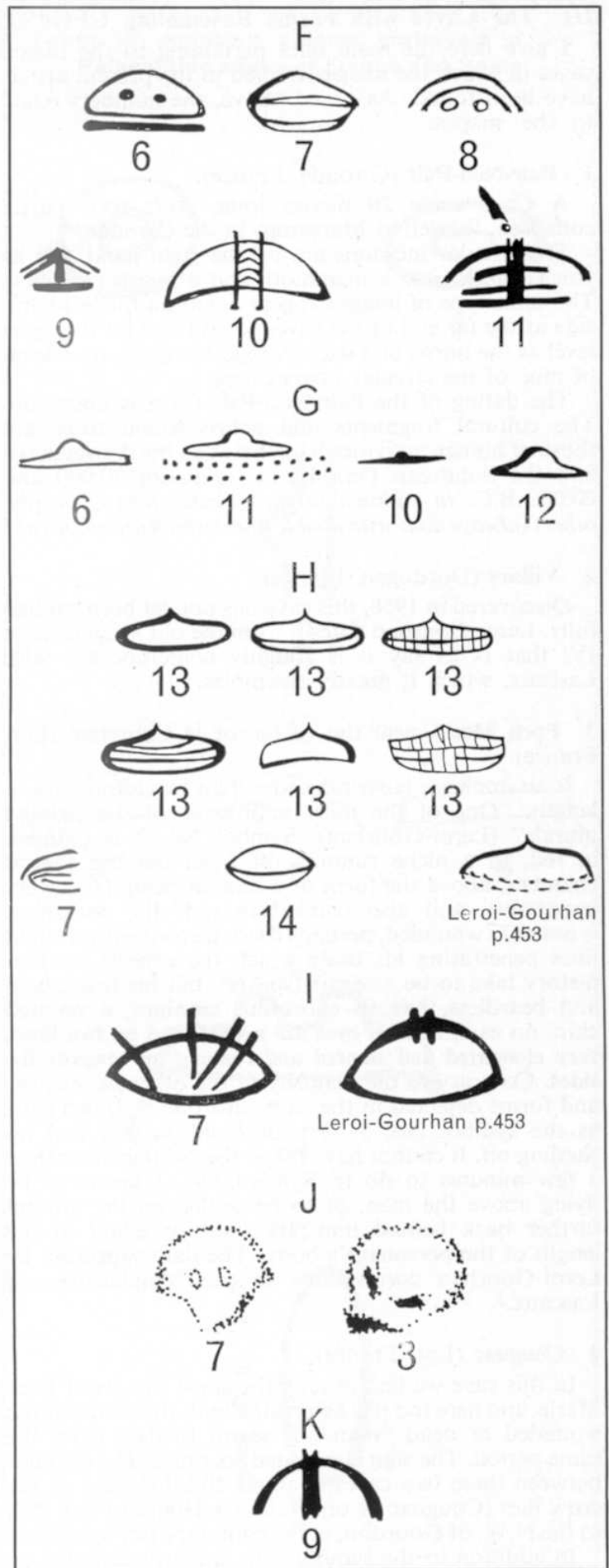
This again is a corridor (130 metres long), but with two side-galleries and a number of offshoots. We find here numerous signs of type F, very well drawn, and identical with F-7 or F-16. One of them (F-8) is particularly interesting on account of its resemblance to one of the Altamira signs (compare with F-6). And Altamira is about 500 kilometres distant.

In the literature on Prehistory, this type F is called "tectiform", i.e., roof-shaped. It has given rise to countless speculations, which Leroi-Gourhan's book discusses at length. He makes one comment which will catch our attention: he says the "tectiform" signs are often covered over with a scrawled representation of the oval sign (Sign H in our present classification), as is shown by examples at Les Combarelles, Les Trios Frères, Montespan, and Altamira. The comparative study of these signs made by Leroi-Gourhan leads to acceptance of the view that these tectiform signs are all contemporary with each other (old Magdalenian IV) and a little earlier than the oval signs (Later Magdalenian IV). In other words, we are here again dealing with about 12,000 B.C.¹⁰

9 Rouffignac (Commune of Fleurac, Dordogne, France).

This is an immense labyrinth over one kilometre long, decorated from about 300 metres from the entrance, and with numerous side corridors.

Rouffignac is the place you must visit if you want to have an idea of what a live mammoth could have been like. From the point of view of what we are here con-



cerned with, we find in this cave the tectiform F sign reduced to its simplest form (i.e., F-9), and also we find here another nearly related shape (K-9) of which, so far as I know, there is no other example.

At the end of the right-hand gallery you can also see human faces, which thus enable you to make a comparison between them and the humanoid faces mentioned above (J-3 and J-7). At Rouffignac, no doubt whatever about it, we are dealing with drawings of men like ourselves, incised with both humour and sobriety. One of them, with a nose from a modern cartoon (S-9), is opening his mouth in a hilarious mood, showing that good spirits were not unknown to the Magdalenians. I should be happy to count this jolly Périgordian among my ancestors.¹¹

10 **Les Trois Frères** (Commune of Montesquieu—Aventès, Ariège, France).

This cave enjoys universal fame on account of its celebrated dancing sorcerer, or dancing god, which was long considered to be the only palaeolithic human representation worthy of the name. But the eye of the Ufologist will be drawn more to symbols F-10, G-10, and L-10. There are several examples of F-10 in the "Hémione Gallery" and, with its accompanying artifact in the shape of a ladder, it certainly does constitute one of the most remarkable of all the Palaeolithic types of symbols. The Abbé Breuil regards it as a variant of the tectiform type, and this deepens our curiosity.

Type L is no less curious. One cannot readily grant that the Magdalenian artist was desirous of portraying a barber's shaving dish upside down, a hub-cap from a motor-car, or a British Tommy's tin hat. So, what then is it? The same question goes for type I-7 with its "antennae". The dating is probably the same as for Les Combarelles, Rouffignac, and Font de Gaume.¹²

11 **Niaux** (Ariège, France).

This extremely vast Pyrenean cavern is one of the most important for both the student of Prehistory and the Ufologist. There are innumerable type G symbols here and, as at Altamira, they are sometimes in groups (in the side-gallery known as the "Diverticule des Signes", particularly, about 600 metres from the entrance, and also after the Terminal Lake). In at least two of the cases (O-11 and Q-11) type G and type F signs plainly suggest something more than their mere representation. The scene shown in Q-11 gives one the idea of movement and even of a take-off, and perhaps also of those flashes of light frequently reported as seen between two UFOs moving along together. The scene in O-11 also suggests movement. We shall of course be forced to wonder whether the mind of a Magdalenian could have thought of this manner of suggesting movement. But what do we know about it, anyway? In any case, the drawing is there, and can be examined at leisure. Date: Middle Magdalenian, about 12,000 B.C.¹³

12 **La Cullalvera** (Ramales, Province of Santander, Spain).

An immense cavern, about two kilometres of which have been explored. The signs are at about 700 metres

from the entrance, in a big off-shoot on the left-hand side. They are of type G.

Date: old Magdalenian IV, still roughly about the same period.¹⁴

13 **La Pasiëga** (Puente Viesgo, Santander, Spain).

This corridor-shaped cave, about 100 metres long, contains a whole assortment of signs of one same type (H in our classification) calculated to evoke perplexity. If the Magdalenian artist had intended to portray the objects described by Dr. 'X' (FSR Special Issue No. 3, page 3) it would have been difficult for him to have made a better job of it. There is more than a mere resemblance. There is identity. Is this chance? How can we know?

At La Pasiëga these objects are shown sometimes horizontally, sometimes vertically—so too are the objects described by Dr. 'X'.—and sometimes with vertical lines and sometimes without them (so too those of Dr. 'X').

Date: Students of Prehistory accept that the first part of the cave, which is *without signs*, is the oldest, from around 13,000 B.C. The part containing the signs would, they say, again be of the Magdalenian IV.¹⁵

14 **Ussat** (Ariège, France).

This Pyrenean cave, while of only minor interest from the prehistorical point of view, is for us perhaps the most disturbing of all by reason of two signs (see Category N) described by Leroi-Gourhan as "of a unique type, though easily attributable to the bracketed signs or the tectiform signs". (In our classification, the former are types C and D, and the latter are type F.)

The Ufologist will be strongly inclined to agree with this comparison, and also to emphasise the unique, and indeed the astounding nature of these type N signs.

It is fantastic that primitive men of the Magdalenian period equipped with stone axes and clad in animal skins could, merely by the power of their own imagination, have conceived of objects so greatly resembling machines standing on four legs, equipped with antennae and ladders and displaying geometrical superstructures. And, to raise our stupefaction to a supreme pitch, this sketch of a human figure underneath one of the two signs gives us an idea of the dimensions that the Magdalenian artist was allocating to this imaginary object of his: they are the dimensions of the L.M., (Lunar Module) or of the machine described by Antônio Villas Boas.

Date: End of the Magdalenian, i.e., 10,500 B.C., according to Breuil. Leroi-Gourhan contests so late a dating and thinks Ussat is contemporary with La Pasiëga.¹⁶

15 **El Castillo** (Puente Viesgo, Santander, Spain).

A quite complex labyrinth, adjoining the La Pasiëga and the other Puente Viesgo caves, with a profusion of geometrical signs more or less related to type H. A good many of them only need the four "legs" to be exact reproductions of the drawings at Ussat.

Date: According to Leroi-Gourhan, contemporary with Altamira.¹⁷

16 **Lascaux** (Commune of Montignac, Dordogne, France).

It is undeserving that we should give but scant mention to this high point in World Art, but Lascaux has no interest for the Ufologist. I have mentioned it here only as having a specimen of a quadrilateral (R-16).

17 **Le Gabillou** (Commune of Sourzac, Dordogne, France).

The same comment applies here as to Lascaux. It has a quadrilateral (R-17).

IV The Caves, Sex, and UFOs

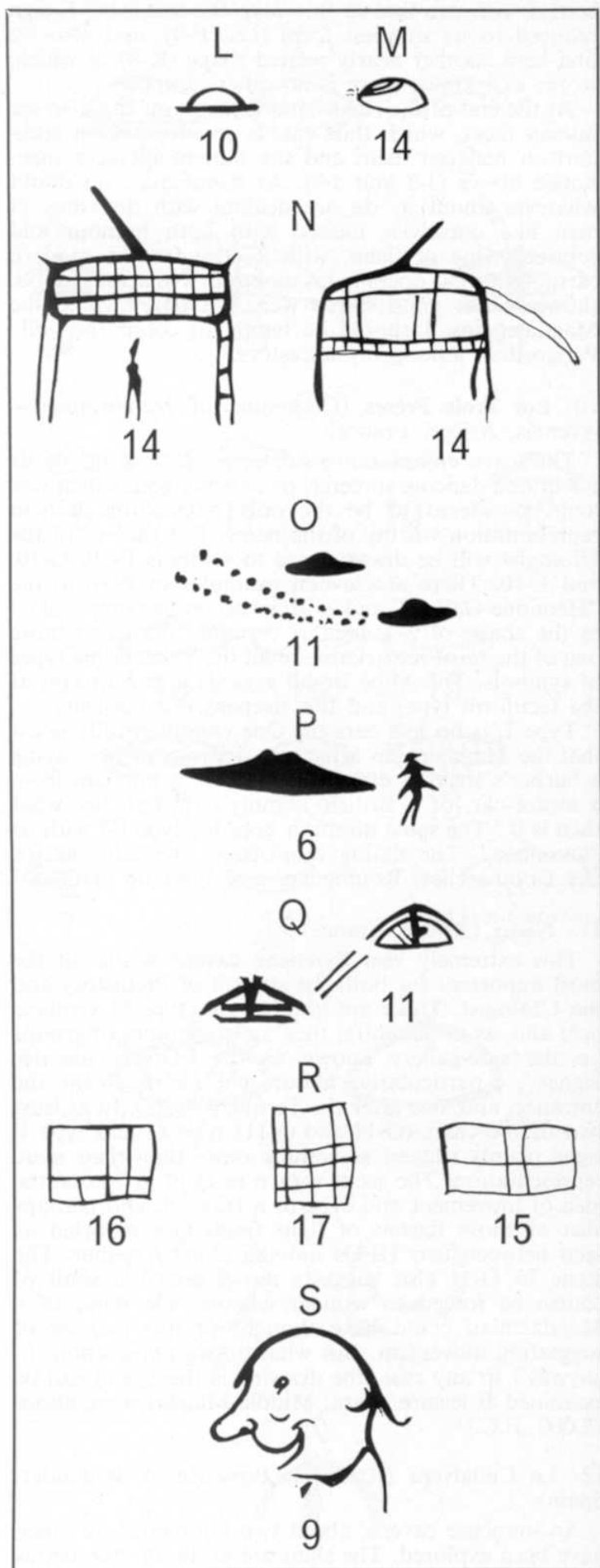
The present article has merely the modest ambition of directing the curiosity of more competent investigators. The realities of prehistorical times are so far distant from our modern experience that only an expert in Prehistory with a good knowledge of the literature of Ufology will be able (with a great deal of prudence) to judge the significance of the similarities that I have cited here.

For the purpose of considering the parallels which I have suggested, it is not necessary to believe in the physical reality of flying saucers. It is enough if we note that XIXth and XXth century Man sometimes gives a description of things that he says he has seen, and that these descriptions agree, feature for feature, with drawings and carvings made in the prehistorical caves of the second half of the Magdalenian period, i.e., between B.C. 12,000 and B.C. 10,500.

As I have said, these drawings have given rise to innumerable speculations, from the most naive (namely that the signs were the artists' signatures; that they were magical marks in connection with ceremonies; that they were symbolic indicator-panels like those used for the Highway Code; that they were a kind of writing, etc., etc.) to the most sophisticated, which nowadays claims that they have been identified as sexual symbols.

This interpretation is naturally highly reasonable, since even an austere scholar like Leroi-Gourhan seems to believe in it. It is only the Ufological interpretation that is fantastic. However, we ought to be told, once and for all, what there is that *might not*, by chance, be a sexual symbol. As for myself, I am—being as I am, a compatriot of Brigitte Bardot—strongly in favour of sexual symbolism, which affords me the most lively of satisfactions in this vale of tears. The readers of FSR know that long ago I finished off Religion by demonstrating that church-steeple is phallic symbols. I have also discovered a phallic symbol in the formulae of Taylor and McLaurin, which shows that British mathematicians are sexually obsessed. My friend Jacques Bergier, for his part, has proved the non-existence of the giraffe, which is simply a badly interpreted cow decked out imaginarily with a phallic symbol instead of a neck. (For some time past I have thought that, as a sequel to this, Bergier is pondering the possibility of proving the non-existence of Dr. High Neck.)

Well, of course all this is excellent, and reasonable,



and serious. So, let us accept it: the saucerish signs in the Magdalenian caves *are* sexual symbols.

No admission could be more valuable to us since we know, after the brilliant proof that was given by C. G. Jung,¹⁸ that the flying saucers are also sexual symbols. So this is something, isn't it, that serves to reinforce our belief that our reasoning is sound: thanks to all these true scholars we are well justified in supposing that there is a relationship between Ufology and Prehistory. And this will permit me to add yet a further contribution to true rational science:

V Bavic and the Magdalenian Signs

The students of Prehistory have established the synchronicities between numerous regional prehistoric cultures.¹⁹ As a result, it is found that at the time when the Franco-Cantabrian artists were painting and carving on the walls of their caves the Magdalenian signs that we are here discussing, other cultures, more or less similar but also often quite different, were developing in Belgium, Germany (the Hamburgian), in the Czechoslovakian-Austrian area, in Holland, and in Hungary. In the European part of Russia the sites known as Siuren II, Borchevo II, Molodova V, Kostienki I, and Markina-Gora I, all date from this period. In Poland there were the Masovian and

Tarnovian cultures (Magdalenian traces are found in Poland at shortly after 15,000 B.C.) In Italy, Sicily and, finally, throughout the whole of the old continent, we find cultures contemporary with the Franco-Cantabrian Magdalenian.

However, all the Magdalenian of the flying saucer signs is localised in the South-West of France and in Cantabrian Spain. **These signs are found nowhere else**, despite the fact that all the other features of the Magdalenian civilisation may be present as far distant as in Poland or Czechoslovakia.

The region in the world where this "Flying Saucer Sign Culture" reached its maximum splendour was very localised: this is the valley of the river Vézère, a tributary of the river Dordogne, in which valley, over a distance of some tens of kilometres, there is a string of wonderful caves (Lascaux, Les Combarelles, etc.) It is not necessarily here that we find the most remarkable of the saucer signs, though many of them *are* in fact here. But it is here that the art historically linked with the signs reached its highest level and its manifestations attained their greatest density. Decorated cave succeeds decorated cave, masterpiece succeeds masterpiece.

Well now, this region, which has its like nowhere in the world, and which covers an area less than that of London, has the BAVIC Line passing right through its centre. The Line runs, parallel to the Vézère itself, five kilometres from Les Eyzies, five kilometres from Les Combarelles, four kilometres from La Mouthe, four-and-a-half kilometres from Font de Gaume, two kilometres from Laussel, nine kilometres from Laugerie Basse, nine kilometres from La Madeleine, ten kilometres from Lascaux, ten kilometres from Bara-Bahau, and two kilometres from Cap Blanc.

Bernifal (near Meyrals, Dordogne), where there are numerous tectiform signs, is *right on Bavic*. So is Commarque (Sireuil area, Dordogne). Cougnac, les Jean-Blancs, Rouffignac, La Sudrie, Pech-Merle, Marcenac, Sainte Eulalie, Le Gabillou, in addition to other places, are all close to the Bavic Line.

This arrangement can surely only be the result of chance. Any supposition to the contrary would be absurd. But we must recognise that it is a very kindly chance. For, after the Vézère-Dordogne area, the next richest region of the world in flying saucer symbols is the Cantabrian mountain region, in Spain. And, without being quite so precisely centred on the Bavic Line as the Vézère-Dordogne area, the region does nevertheless overlap the Line. Covalanas, La Venta de la Perra, La Haza, and Sotarriza are all either right on the Line or only a few kilometres off it. The whole of the El Castillo area is but a few tens of kilometres from it. The densest region of the decorated Cantabrian caves is less than 100 kilometres from it.

This leaves us with the Pyrenean region, so rich in very characteristic tectiform signs and, moreover, the location of the two extraordinary "machines" in the shape of the L.M. (Lunar Module) (type N). The distance between the caves of L'Ariège and BAVIC is in the neighbourhood of 200 kilometres. But the datings indicate that the civilisation of the Pyrenean caves came from La Vézère, where there are a great many sites earlier than the Magdalenian. The Périgord



Bavic and the caves

1. Vézère region; 2. Cantabrian region; 3. Ariège region

region, for example, is dated at thousands of years earlier than the Magdalenian. When the first UFO-shaped signs appear, it is in the valley of La Vézère, on the Bavic Line, and nowhere else.

Let us repeat: all this is the result of chance. But, finally, since it is well accepted that flying saucers are sonde-balloons incorrectly interpreted by ignorant folk obsessed with Science Fiction, and that BAVIC is an illusion, we are forced to conclude that Cro-Magnon Man, the producer of the Magdalenian works of art in Europe, was just as obsessed with bad literature as our contemporaries are today, and just as ready to take his own illusions for reality. Although he cannot possibly have seen any flying saucers, since they don't exist, this did not stop him from drawing them with great profusion of detail, in all the variety in which we know them one hundred and fifty centuries later—including their occupants with their big heads and their slanted eyes. It is comforting, to be sure, to believe that all these UFO-shaped drawings are sexual symbols, despite the fact that scholars like Dr. Peter J. Ucko,²⁰ professor of Anthropology at University College in London University, vigorously dispute this, and despite the fact that for the majority of experts on Prehistory these symbols are a complete enigma. But, if these signs dating from 12,000 B.C. are sexual symbols, why did Condon fritter away \$500,000 in proving that the signs of 1969 are bolides, aeroplanes, sonde balloons and temperature inversions? In order to introduce a little variety into our pleasures, I propose the opposite: I propose that the Magdalenian flying saucers were aeroplanes and sonde balloons, and that *our* flying saucers are symbols of a Divine Phallus favourable to the mammoth hunt.

We are still left with BAVIC, which, as we know, exists even less than flying saucers do. An examination of the possible links between BAVIC and the wall paintings of the Magdalenian period can consequently only belong in the realm of the "paranoia-criticism" invented by the surrealist painter Salvador Dali. Drawing our inspiration from Dali, we can imagine beings that have arrived from elsewhere ranging through the palaeolithic lands in search of the most advanced civilisation, discovering it in the valley of La Vézère and in Cantabria, and then maintaining the terrestrial Great Circle that passes through those two regions as a system of reference for their visits there. After which, be it due to laziness, or to lack of imagination, or in order to encourage the soaring flight of paranoia-criticism, or perhaps because time does not count for them, they have continued to keep this system of reference indefinitely.

But these theories are of course absurd. The true and rational explanation is that Divine Phalluses operate along orthodromic lines.

VI Suggestions

The serious study of the problem propounded in this article would demand much time and money and a thorough knowledge of the techniques of prehistorical research.

The few caves that I have visited and studied attentively have convinced me that, whatever the true inter-

pretation of the UFO-shaped signs may be, those signs were something very important for the people who drew them. If the UFO-like shape is not due to chance, it is evident that we shall have to make a lot of changes in our ideas about the UFO Phenomenon and, incidentally, also in our ideas about Prehistory and about the part that the UFOs may perhaps have played in the birth of Western Civilization. But how can we know whether this is so?

One indispensable initial job would be to make a complete inventory of the caves and of the signs. Then it would be necessary to establish their exact chronology. Finally (and this would be the most important part of all) it would be necessary to investigate whether the *appearance* and the *evolution* of the signs did not perhaps coincide with interesting cultural or technological facts, so that we can reveal an influence, if there was one.

Here, as always, the principal obstacle to serious research will be psychological. Time is needed to get used to fantastic ideas. But the day will come when that time has elapsed, and when we discover that the thing that really would have been fantastic would have been for matters to have been any different.

[Translated from the French by Gordon Creighton]

Bibliographical Notes

The two most important works are those by H. Breuil and A. Leroi-Gourhan, details of which are given below. For those who have read Leroi-Gourhan, the next books to read would be those by Peter J. Ucko and André Rosenfeld.

Other recommended works on the subject are the following:

- D. de Sonneville-Bordes: *Le Paléolithique supérieur en Périgord*. 2 vols. (Delmar, Bordeaux, 1960.)
- S. Giedion: *The Eternal Present: The Beginnings of Art. A Contribution to Constancy and Change* (Bollingen Series XXXV, 6, 1, Bollingen Foundation, New York, 1962).
- P. Graziosi: *L'Arte dell' Antica Età della Pietra* (Sansoni, Firenze, 1956).

Notes, with Titles of Works Cited in the Text

- 1 A. and G. Sieveking: *The Caves of France and Northern Spain: A Guide* (London, 1962).
- 2 H. Breuil et F. Windels: *Quatre Cents Siècles d'Art Pariétal* (Montignac, 1952).
- 3 André Leroi-Gourhan: *Préhistoire de l'Art Occidental* (Lucien Mazenod Editeur, Paris, 1965). English translation: *The Art of Prehistoric Man* (Thames & Hudson, London, 1967) and Abrams (6 West 57th St., New York 19, 1967).
- 4 A. Cheyrier: *La Caverne de Pair Non Pair* (Documents d'Aquitaine 3, Société Archéologique, Bordeaux, 1963).
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- 6 L. Méroc et J. Mazet: *Cougnac, Grotte Peinte* (Stuttgart, 1956).
- 7 Gonzales and Echegaray: *La Cueva de Las Chimeneas* (Madrid, 1963).
- 8 H. Breuil and H. Obermaier: *The Cave of Altamira at Santillana del Mar* (Madrid, 1935).
- 9 A. Leroi-Gourhan: *op. cit.*
- 10 A. Leroi-Gourhan: *op. cit.*
- 11 A. Leroi-Gourhan: *op. cit.* (See Fig. 543 for the "hilarious Magdalenian").
- 12 H. Bégouen: *Les Grottes de Montesquieu-Avantès*. (Editions du Travail, Toulouse, 1936.) (Count Bégouen is one of the "Three Brothers" who discovered the cave in 1912.)

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and
La Caverne de Niaux. Compléments Inédits sur sa Décoration in: *Préhistoire et Spéléologie Ariégeoises*, Tome 7, 1952.
- ¹⁴ Echegaray and Gonzales: *La Cueva de Cullalvera* in: *Préhistoire et Spéléologie Ariégeoises*, Tome 14, 1959.
- ¹⁵ H. Breuil, H. Obermaier and H. Alcade del Rio: *La Pasiega à Puente Viesgo* (Monaco, 1913)
and
A. Leroi-Gourhan: *op. cit.*
- ¹⁶ H. Breuil: *Peintures Magdaléniennes de la Grotte des Eglises à Ussat, Arièges* in: *Mélanges de Préhistoire et d'Anthropologie Offerts au Professeur Comte H. Bégouen* (Toulouse, 1939)
and

- A. Leroi-Gourhan: *op. cit.* (p. 321).
- ¹⁷ H. Alcade del Rio, H. Breuil and L. Sierra: *Les Cavernes de la Région Cantabrique* (Monaco, 1911)
and
A. Leroi-Gourhan, *op. cit.* (p. 275).
- ¹⁸ C. G. Jung: *Flying Saucers: A Modern Myth of Things Seen in the Skies* (English and American editions, London and New York, 1959).
- ¹⁹ See, for example, François Bordes: *Le Paléolithique Dans Le Monde* (Hachette, Paris, 1968) (pp. 222-223).
- ²⁰ Peter J. Ucko and Andrée Rosenfeld: *L'Art Paléolithique* (Paris, 1966).

Our cover design is a montage of Stone Age drawings from Franco-Cantabrian caves, based on reproductions in *Préhistoire de l'Art Occidental* by André Leroi-Gourhan (see note 3).

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When we published John Keel's article on the alleged North Carolina photograph by Ronnie Hill of a 'little man' (see FSR for January/February 1969), we did so with the reservation that it should be viewed in the same critical way that UFO photographs should be viewed. John Keel, and correspondents of his, have kept a watch on this case and now report that developments have cast doubts on the authenticity of the photograph. Dr. Berthold Schwarz is now also looking into the matter for FSR.

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