

# Neolithic (New Stone) Art

**8,000-3000 BCE – Near East**

**4,000-1500 BCE – Europe**

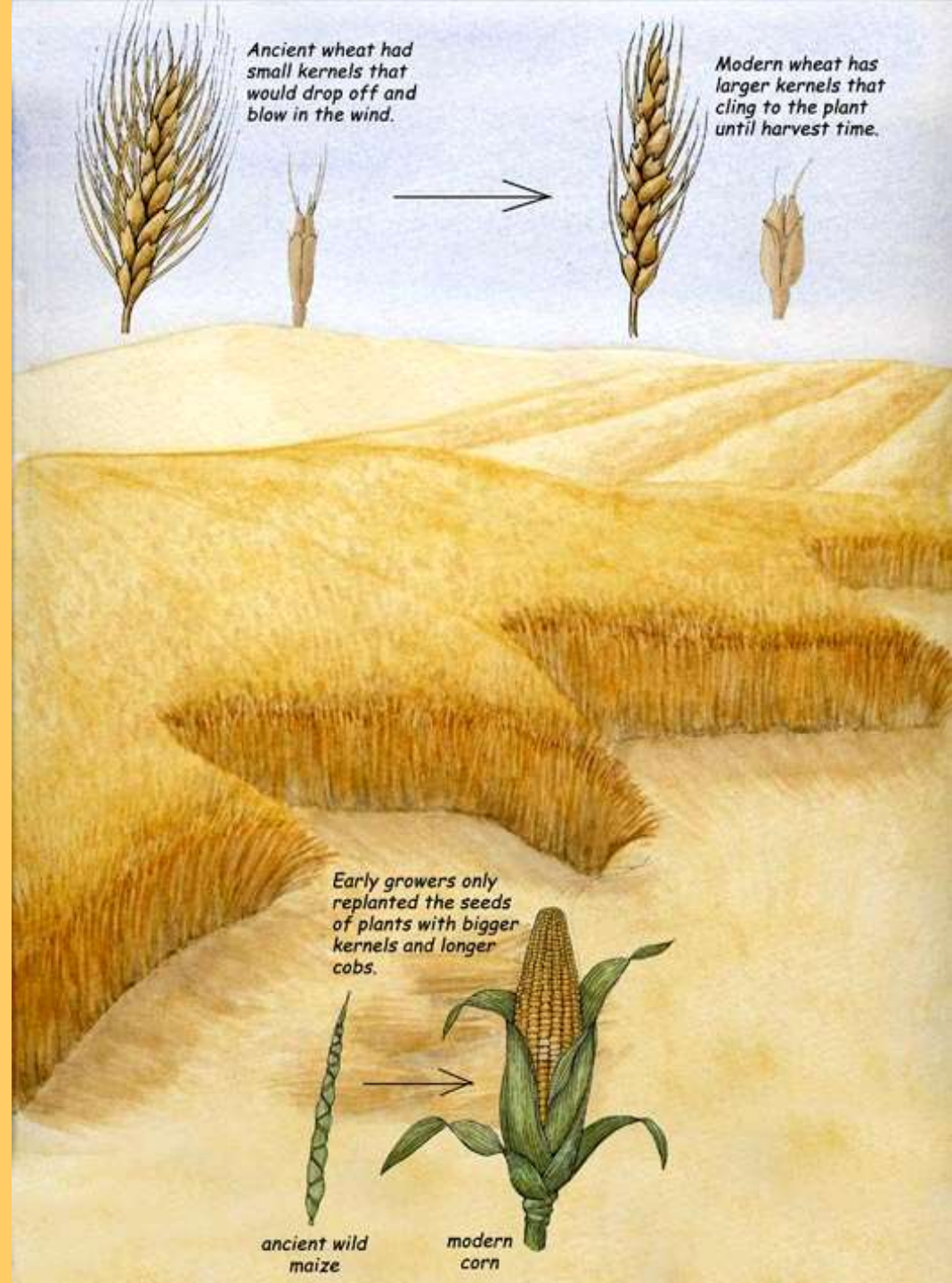
# Prehistoric Europe and the Near East



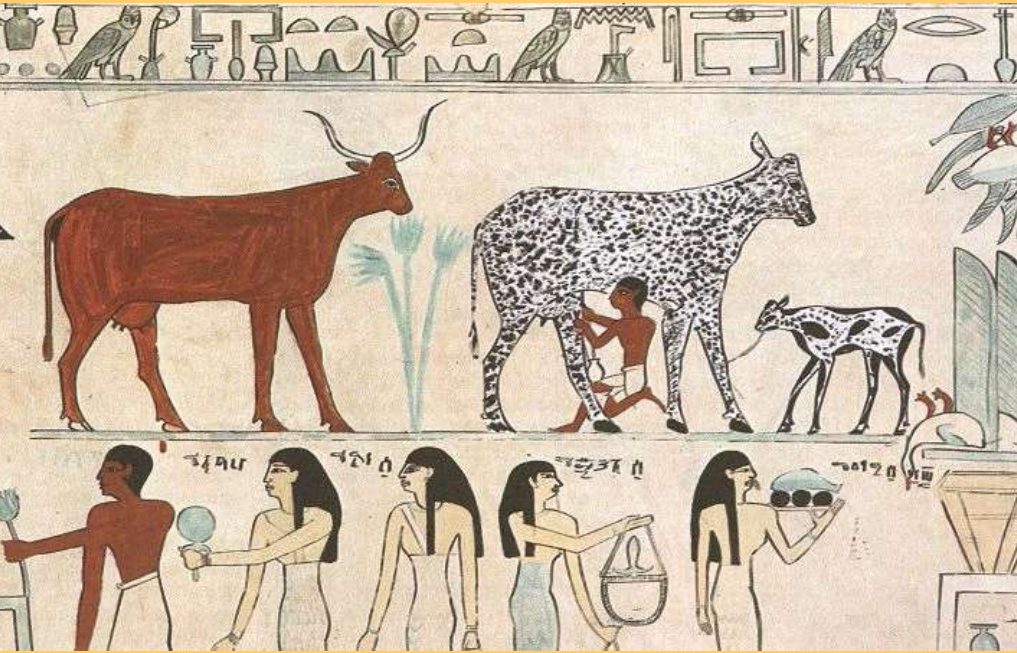
**Neolithic: Ancient Near East**  
**8000-3000 BCE**

**Agriculture** :  
The Domestication of Plants  
(Wheat, barley, figs etc.)

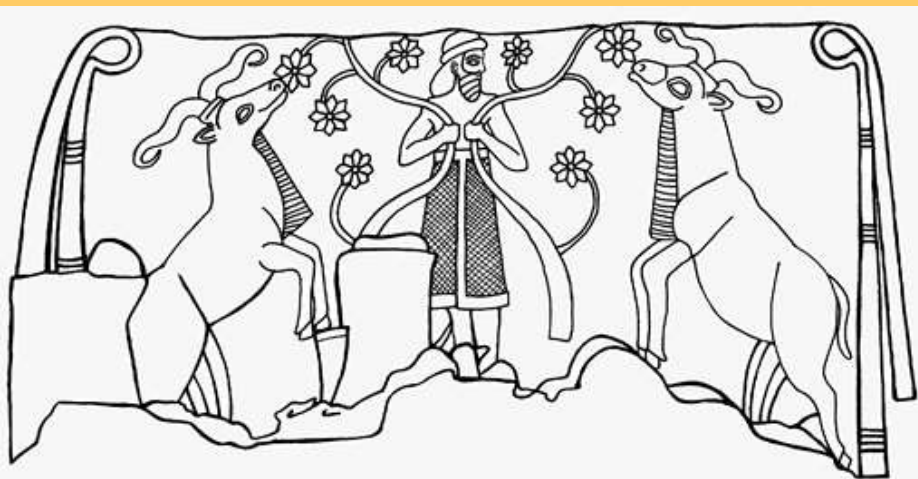
Wild plants were domesticated



# Domestication of Animals



Egyptian mural showing cows being milked



*Dumuzi feeding sheep.*

Mesopotamian cylinder seal. Marble. c. 3200-3000 BCE.

*Funerary Stela of Intef and Senettekh.* Egypt, c. 2065–2000 B.C.



## List of domesticated animals

**Dog** - c. 30,000-15000 BCE Euroasia

**Sheep** 11000-9000 BCE Southwest Asia

**Pig** 9000 BCE Near East, China

**Goat** c. 8000 BCE Iran

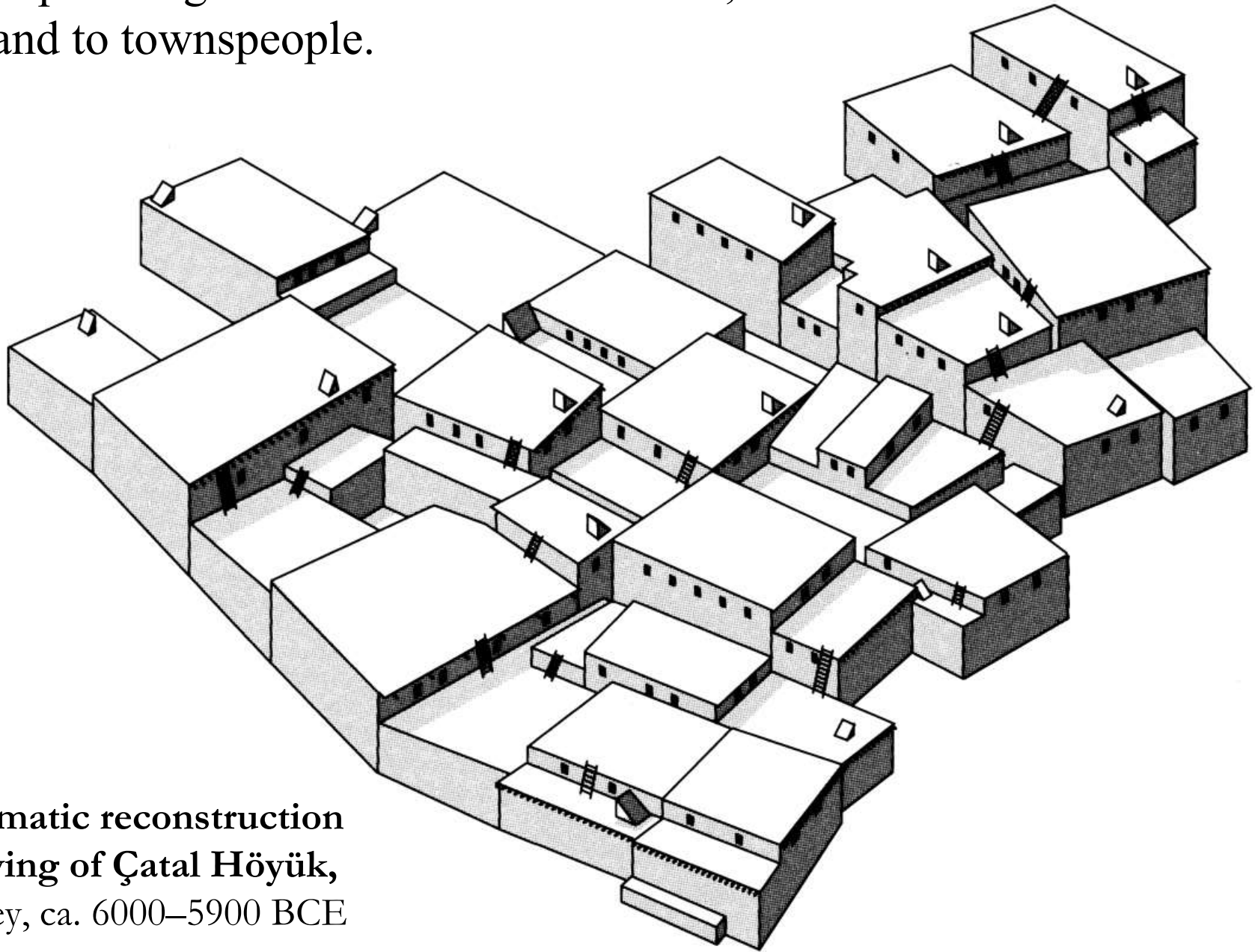
**Cow** c. 8000 BCE India, Middle East, and Sub-Saharan Africa

**Donkey** c. 5000 BCE Egypt



**Neolithic Grinding Stone.** France. Beauvais Museum

**Permanent Settlements:** Their food supply assured, many groups changed from hunters to herders, to farmers and to townspeople.

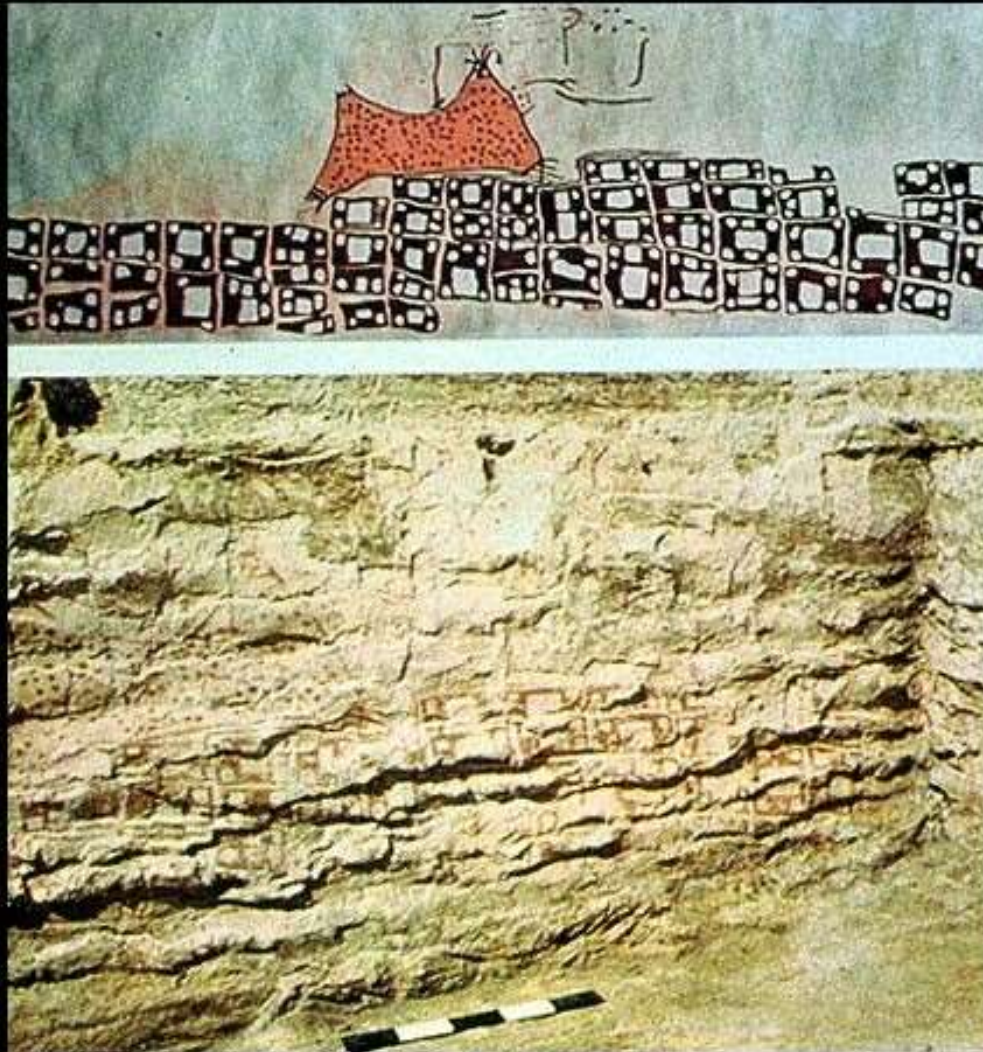


Schematic reconstruction  
drawing of Çatal Höyük,  
Turkey, ca. 6000–5900 BCE





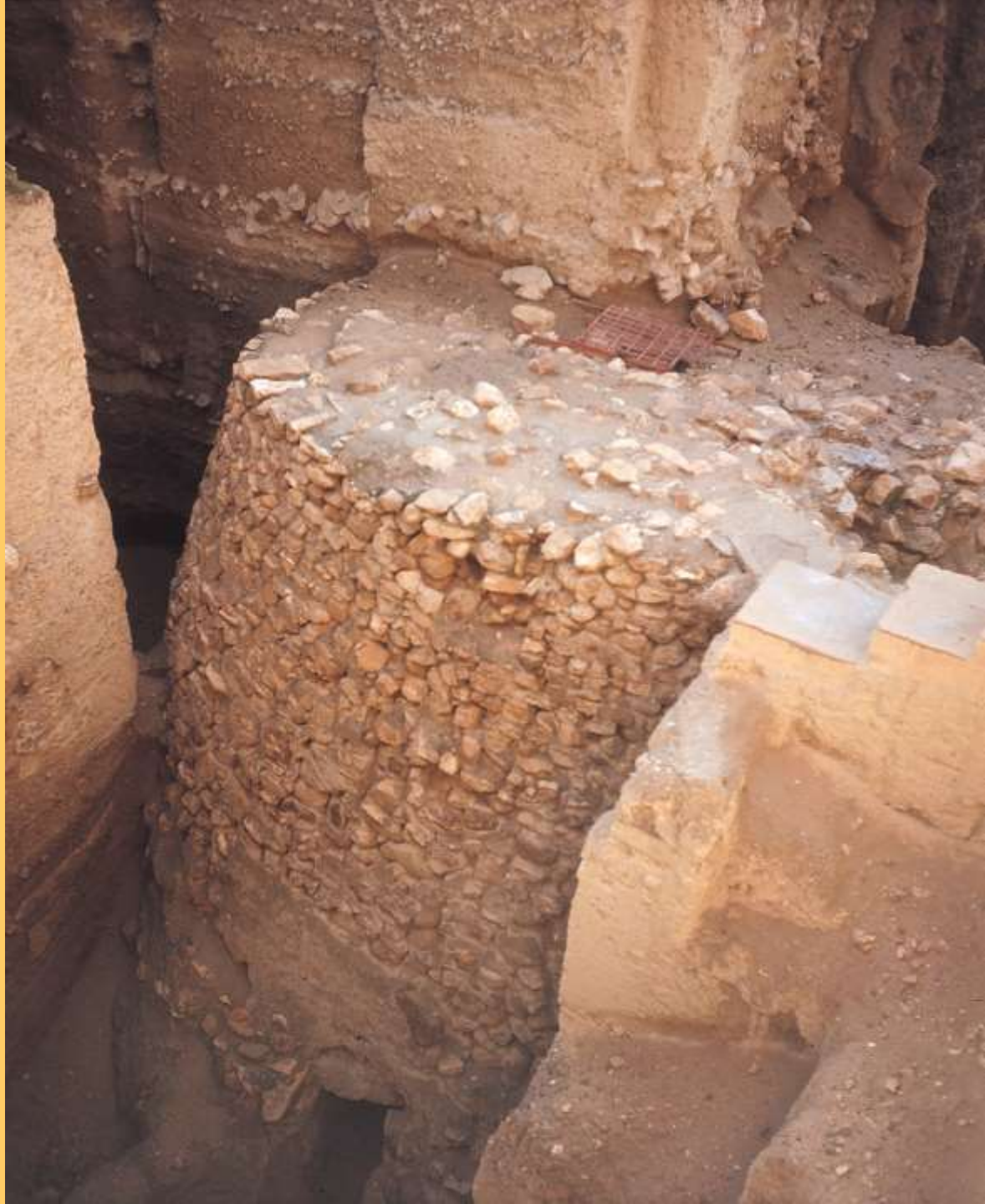
Restored view of a section of Level VI, **Çatal Höyük**, Turkey, ca. 6000–5900 BCE



**Landscape with Volcanic Eruption (?)**  
Wall painting at Çatal Höyük, Turkey. C. 6150 BCE

**Great Tower of Jericho**  
Jericho, Palestinian Authority.  
ca. 8000–7000 BCE.  
8.5-metre-tall (28 ft) stone  
structure

The tower contains an internal  
staircase





**Restored Pottery** from Tell Sabi Abyad, Syria. c. 6600-6500 BCE

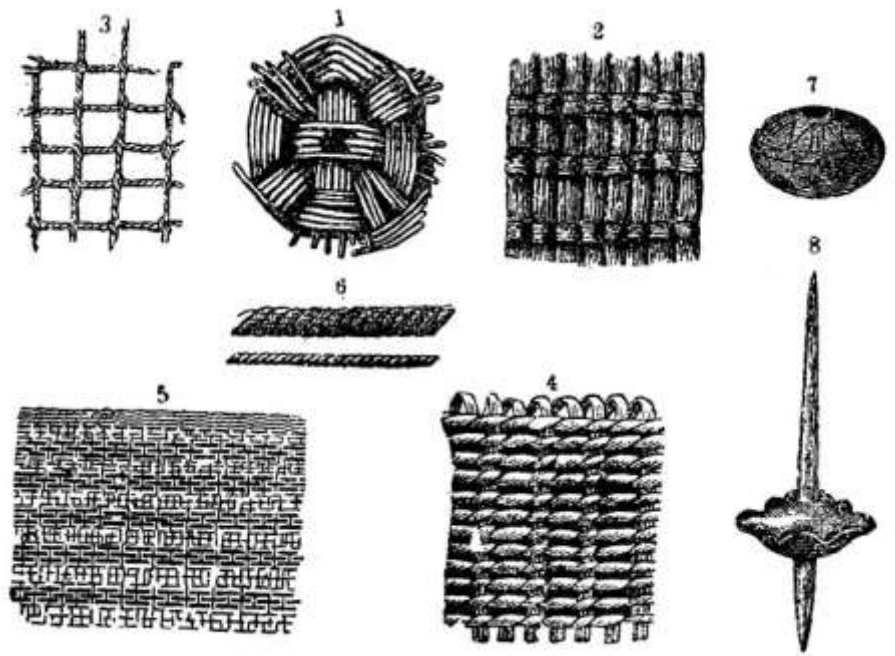
**Weaving** is the systematic interlacing of two or more sets of elements to form a coherent structure.

Ancient textiles were made mostly of linen, wool, cotton (india), and silk (China)

### Weaving in Ancient Egypt



### Prehistoric woven objects and weaving tools





**Fragments of earliest-known surviving textile.** Maybe used fabrics used to wrap the dead. From Çatalhöyük; Turkey, 6th millennium BC; Museum of Anatolian Civilizations, Ankara, Turkey



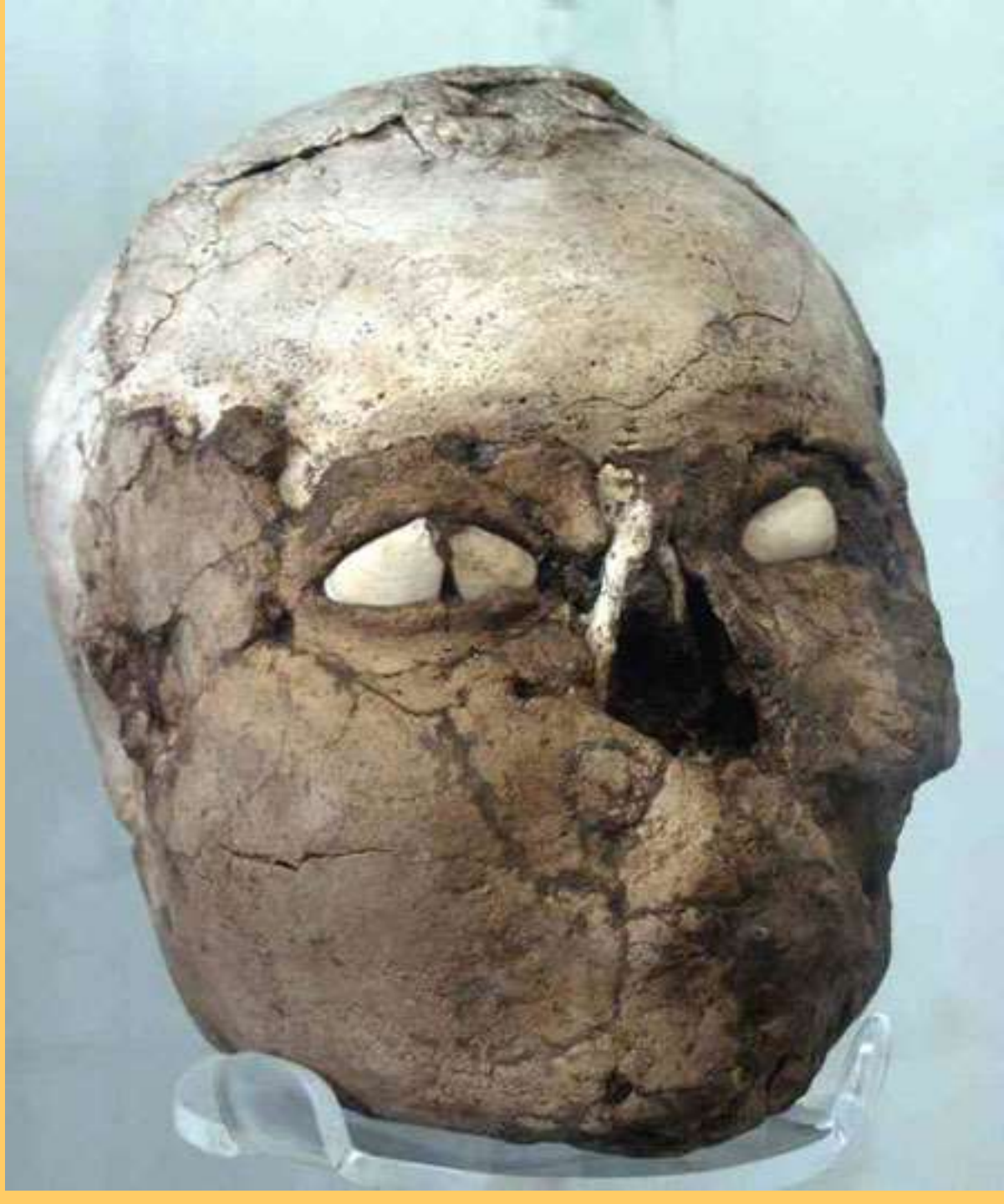
### Funerary Scene (?)

From shrine in Hierakonpolis. Upper Egypt. c. 3500 BCE. Wall painting

**Head from Jericho**

c. 7000-6000 BCE

Human skull; Plaster; Shells







**L. Human skull with molded features. Jericho. 7000-6000 BCE**  
**R. Painted Skull from Papua-New Guinea. 19<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup> c.**

**Human figure**, from Ain Ghazal, Jordan  
ca. 6750–6250 BCE. Plaster, painted and inlaid  
with cowrie shell and bitumen, 3' 5 3/8" high





**Human figure**, from Ain Ghazal, Jordan. ca. 6750–6250 BCE.  
Plaster, painted and inlaid with cowrie shell and bitumen. 3'5"



Neolithic 'spirit' masks from the  
Judean Desert.  
C 7000 BCE.



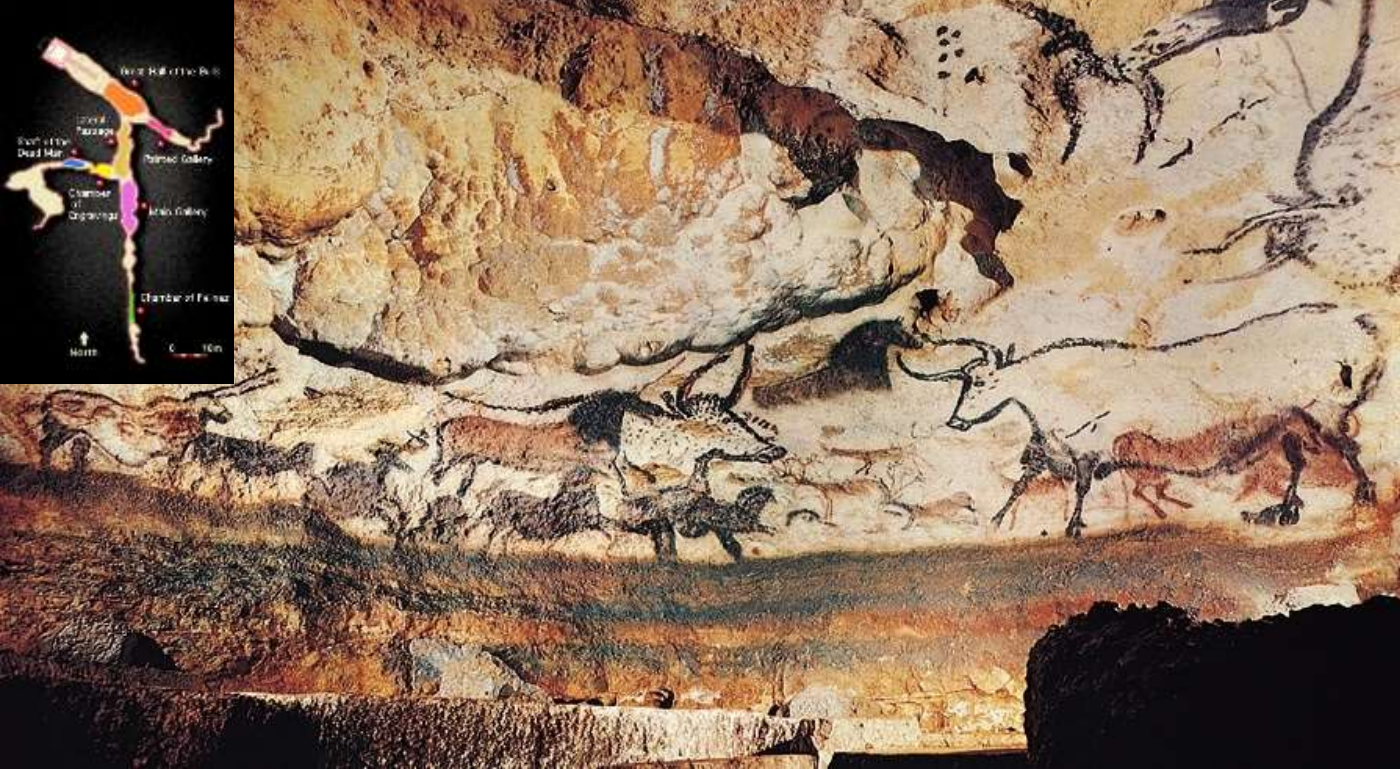
## Lovers

Ain Sakhri. Judean Desert  
Early Neolithic. C. 9,000 BCE  
Calcite cobble. 10.2 X 6.3 cm  
British Museum





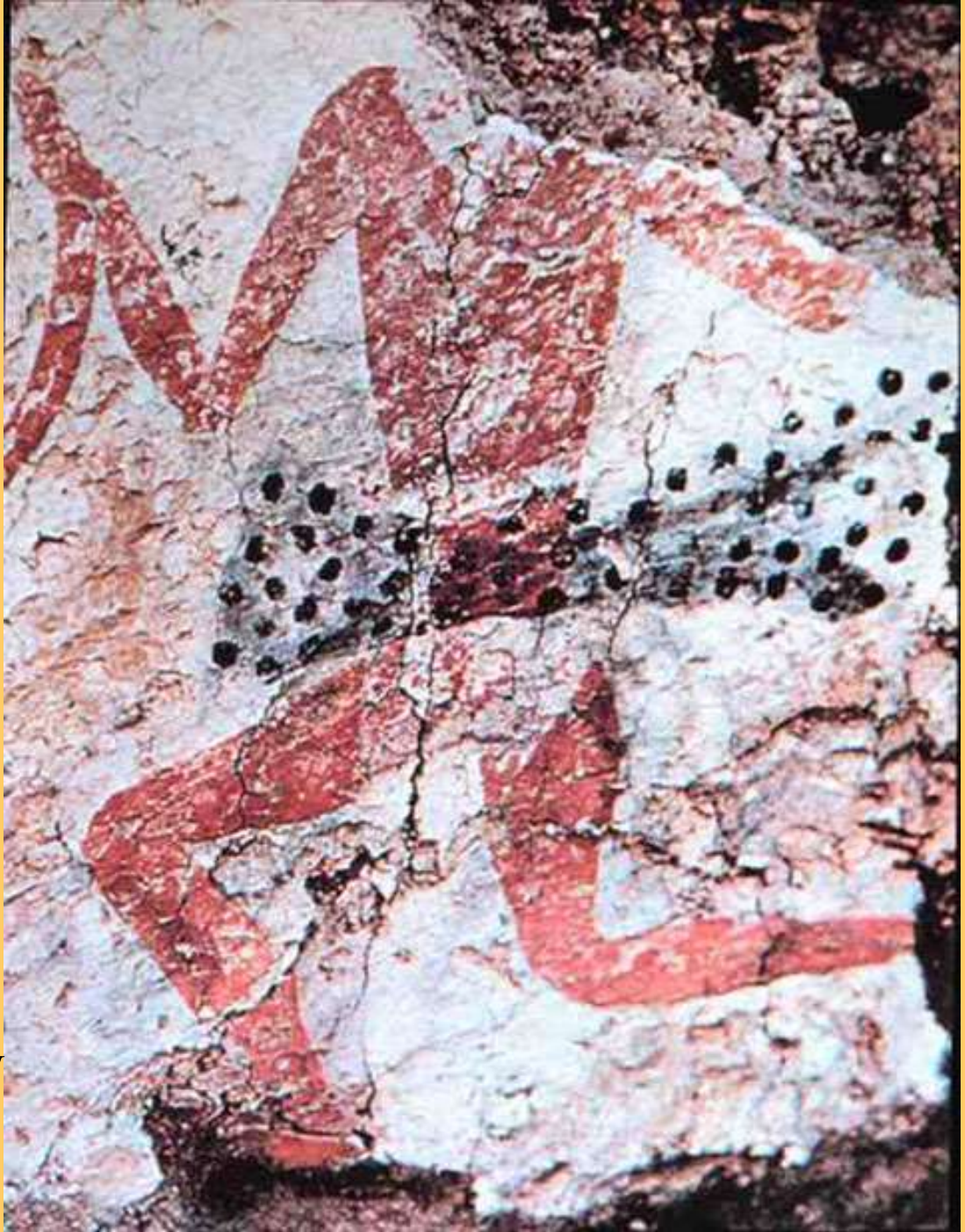
**Deer Hunt.** Wall painting from Çatal Höyük, Turkey, ca. 5750 BCE



**Comparison: Hall of the Bulls,**  
Lascaux, Dordogne, France  
ca. 15,000–13,000 BCE. Largest bull  
approx. 11' 6" long

**Deer Hunt.** Wall painting from  
Çatal Höyük, Turkey, ca. 5750 BCE

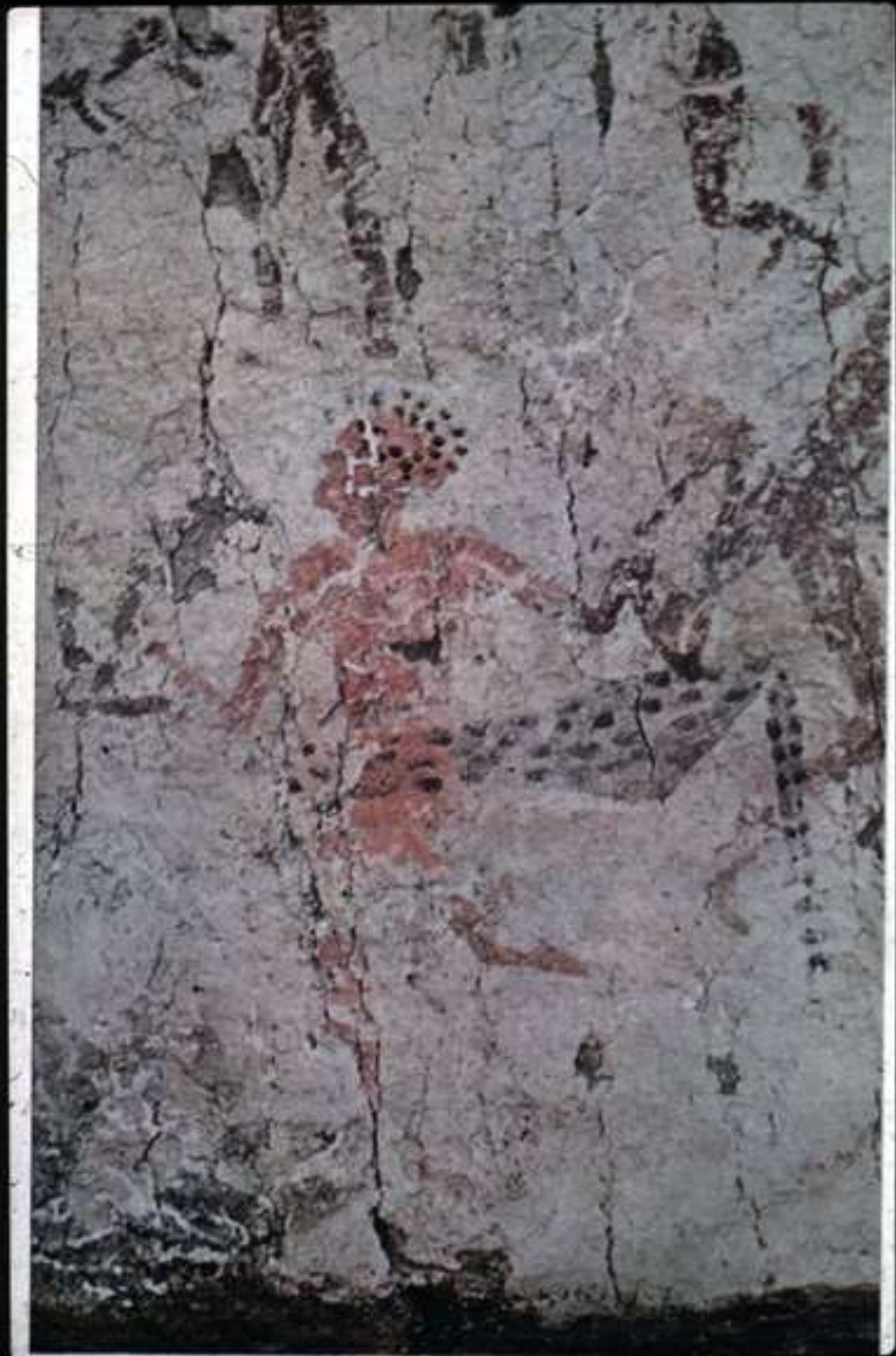




**Hunter.** Çatal Höyük, Turkey  
c.5750 BCE



**Wall painting, hunter wearing  
leopard skin, Çatal Höyük, Turkey  
c.5750 BCE.**

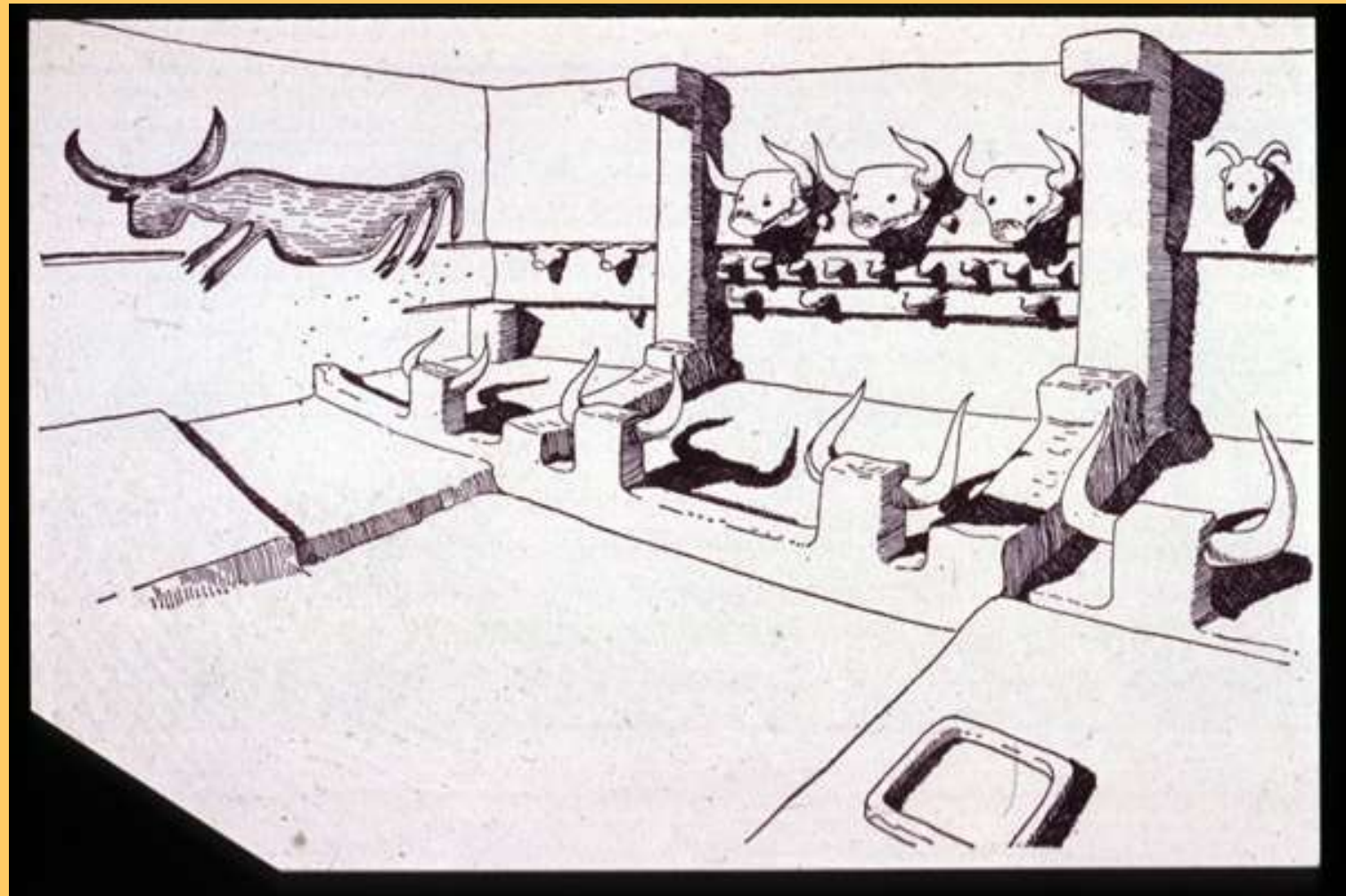




## Wild-Bull Hunt

Wall painting from Çatal Höyük, Turkey.  
c. 5750 BCE





**Reconstruction of shrine.** Çatal Huyuk Level VI. Turkey. c. 5900 BCE



**Comparison: Woman holding  
a bison horn**

from Laussel, Dordogne, France,  
ca. 25,000–20,000 BCE. Painted  
limestone 1' 6" high

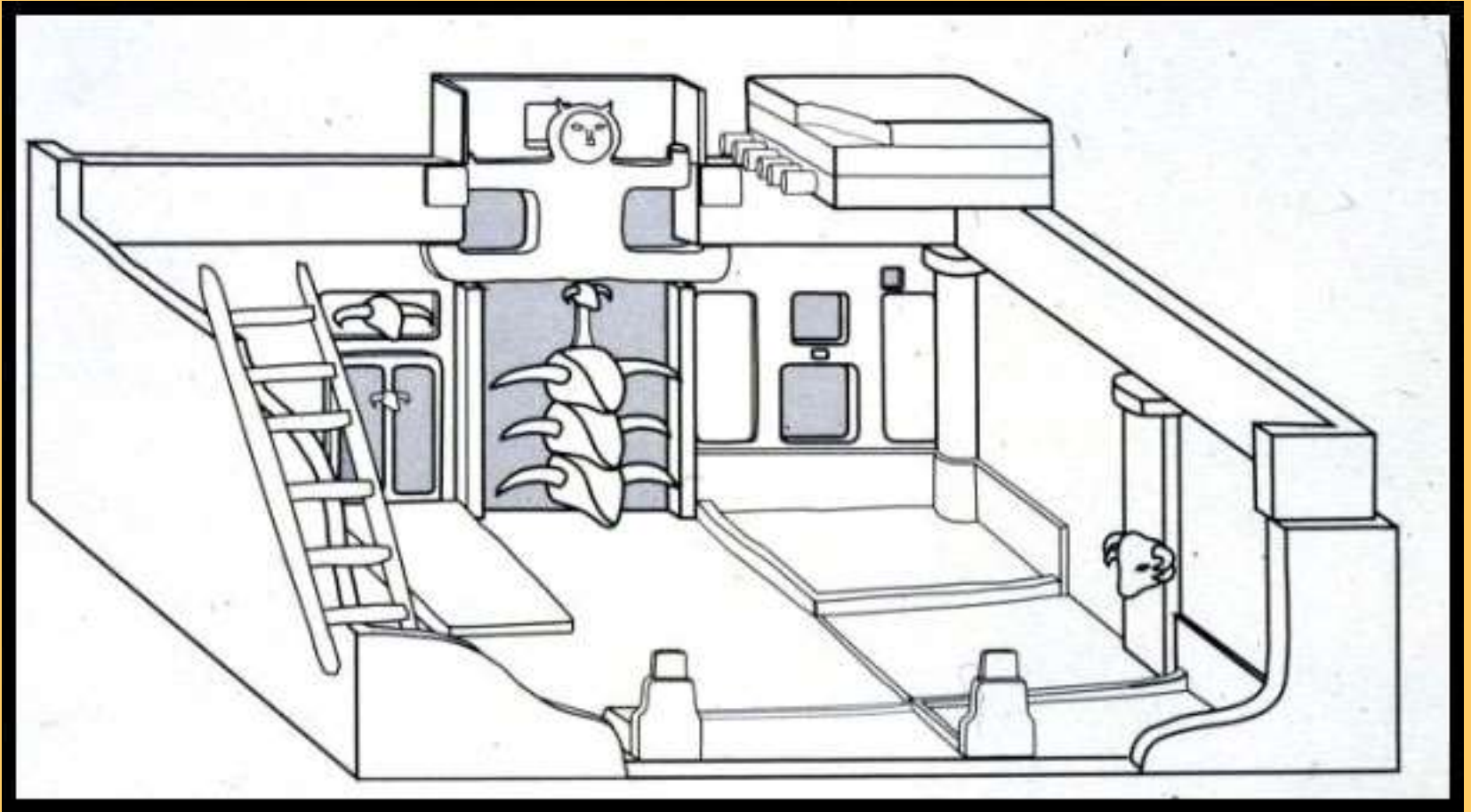
**Reconstruction of shrine**

Çatal Huyuk Level VI.

Turkey

c. 5900 BCE





**Reconstruction of shrine.** Çatal Höyük. Turkey. c. 5900 BCE



**Goddess (?)** from Chatal Huyuk. 5900 BCE



## Enthroned Birth Goddess

Çatal Huyuk.c. Turkey. 6000  
BCE







**Comparison: Venus of Willendorf**  
from Willendorf, Austria, ca. 28,000–25,000  
BCE Limestone, approx. 4 1/4” high



**Enthroned Birth Goddess.** Çatal Huyuk.c. Turkey. 6000 BCE



## **Marija Gimbutas (1921-1994)**

Professor of European Archaeology at the University of California, Los Angeles. She published twenty books during her long and distinguished career.

Gimbutas argued that the Neolithic cultures of Europe and Asia Minor (Turkey) were peaceful, matrifocal, egalitarian, sedentary, agricultural, highly artistic, and worshiped the Goddess. These cultures, Gimbutas argued, were overthrown between 4500 and 2500 BCE by patriarchal invaders who domesticated horses, worshiped male sky gods, and spoke Indo-European languages.

**Yarmukian  
Goddesses**

Jordan Valley  
5500-5000 BCE

Clay & pigment.  
65x14 cm



**Snake Goddess (?)** Tel Halaf, Syria  
6000-5200 BCE. Terracotta



**Neolithic: Europe**  
**4,000-1500 BCE**

# Megalithic Monuments

(Megalith= Huge, often undressed stone used in various types of Neolithic monuments.)

**Henge** : a circular area, often containing a circle of stones or sometimes wooden posts, dating from the Neolithic and Bronze Ages.



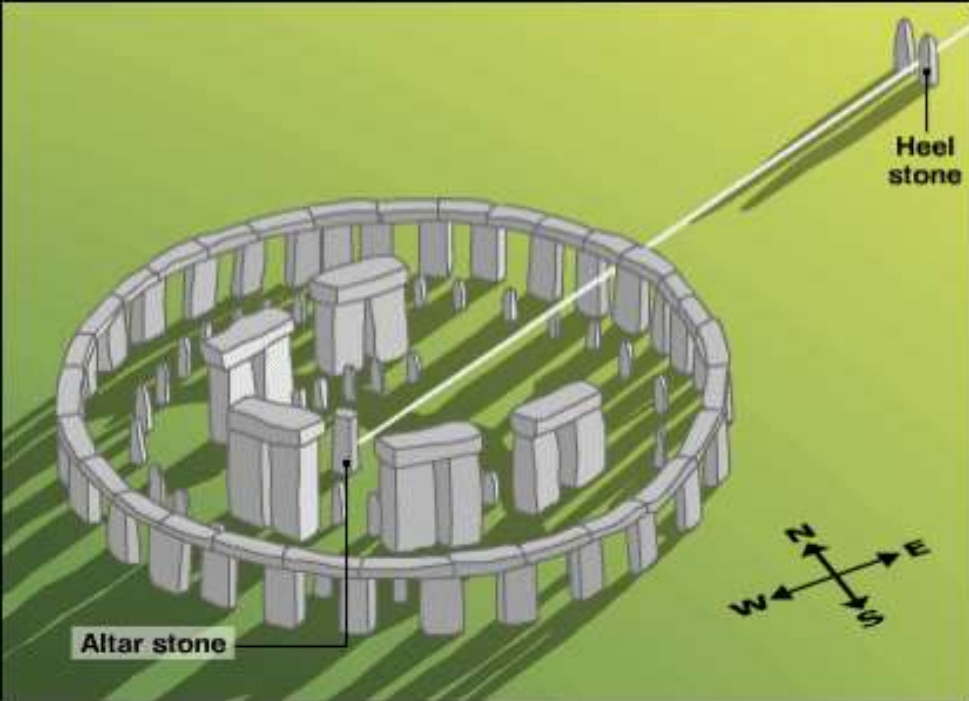
**Aerial view of Stonehenge**, Salisbury Plain, Wiltshire, England, ca. 2550–1600 BCE.  
Circle is 97' in diameter; approx. 24' high.



Heel Stone

Astronomers have determined that the sun appeared to rise over the “heel stone” at the midsummer solstice when one stood in the center of the circle in front of the altar.





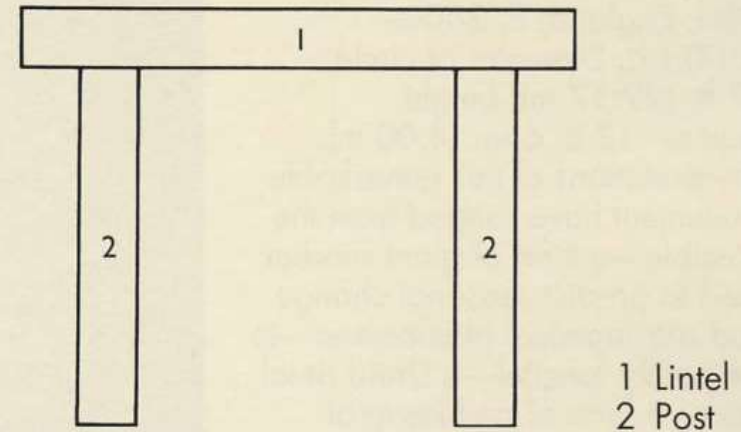
**Stonehenge.  
Reconstructive  
models**

Sarsen (gray stone) and  
bluestones



## Post-and-Lintel Construction

In this system of construction, vertical uprights (posts) support a horizontal element (the lintel). Figure **1.24** is a diagram of the most basic single post-and-lintel form, called a **trilithon**. In later eras, this simple system was elaborated into highly complex structures.



**1.24** Post-and-lintel construction.

**Major trilithon** (three stones construction.) Stonehenge





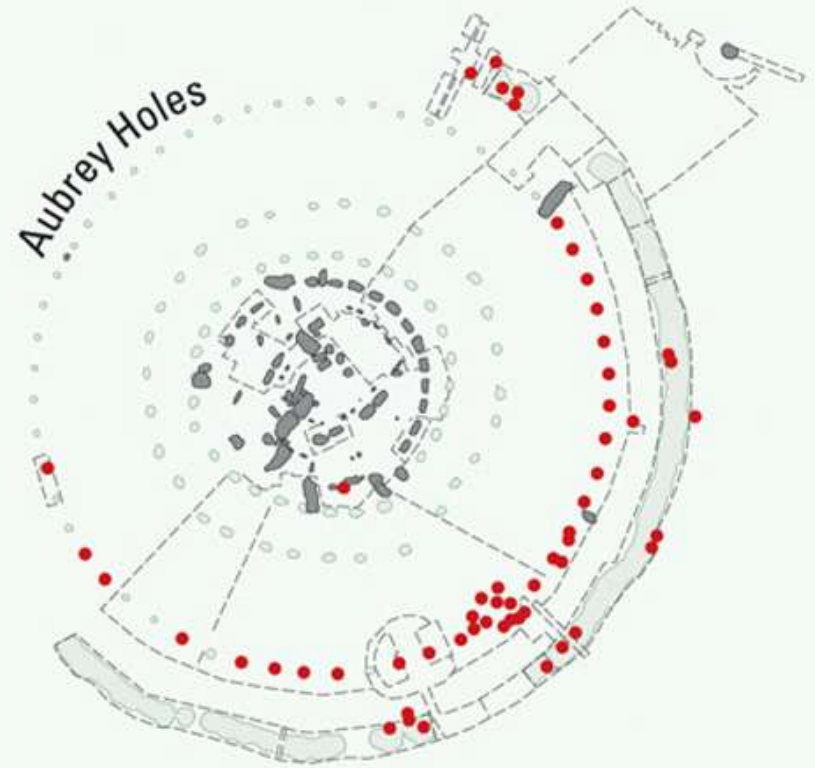
**Stone from the inner circle of Stonehenge.**

Approximately 50 tons

At the top is a small protuberance called a “tenon” which was used to secure the upper lintel that connected this stone with its mate.

## Bones from a burial site at Stonehenge.

Radiocarbon dating indicates that they date back to the same time people started to erect the mysterious landmark. Other bones found there suggest people continued to use the area as a burial site until well after the stones went up around 2500 B.C.



- Cremation deposit
- Excavation trench
- ◐ Pit, ditch, or bank

► Stone

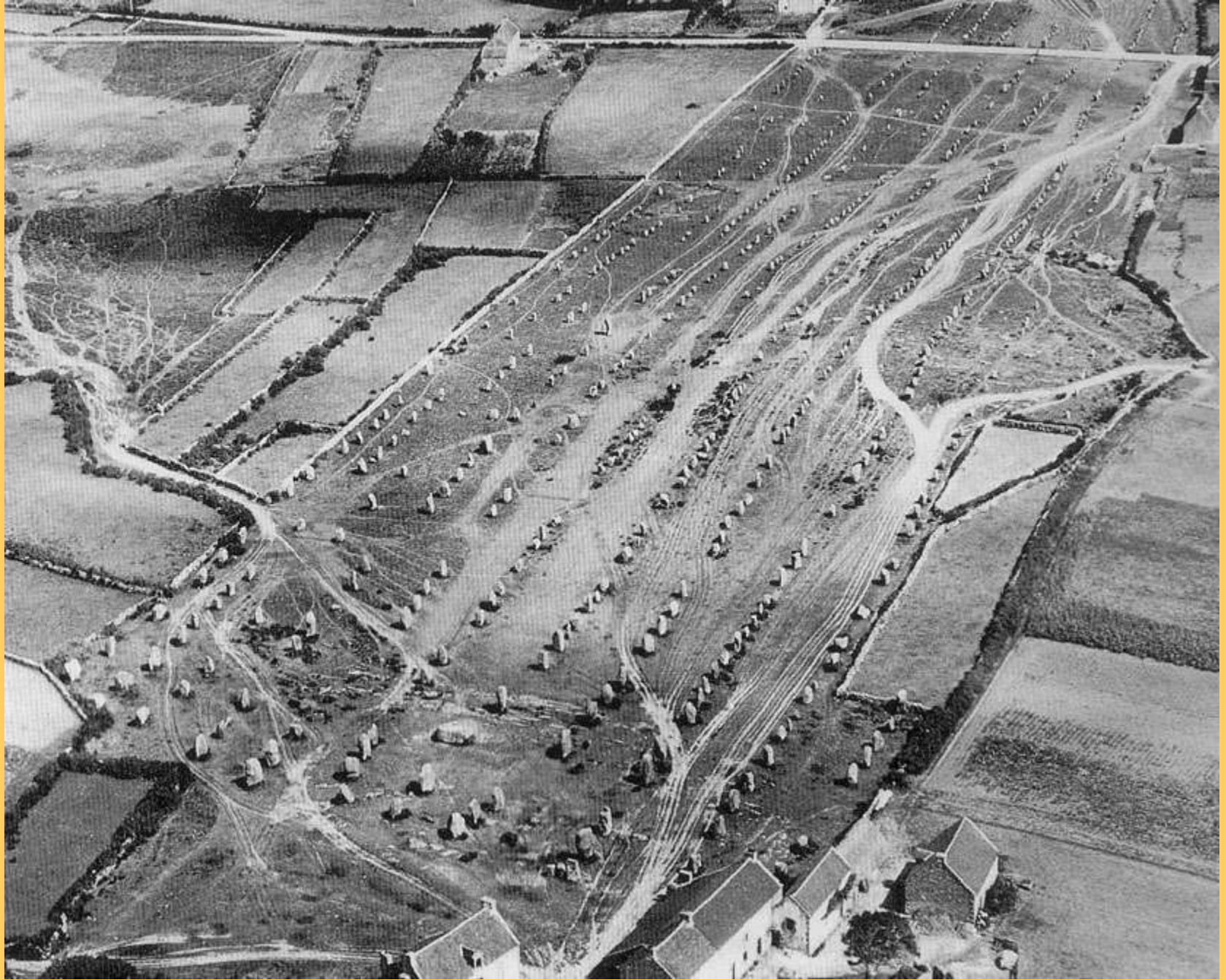
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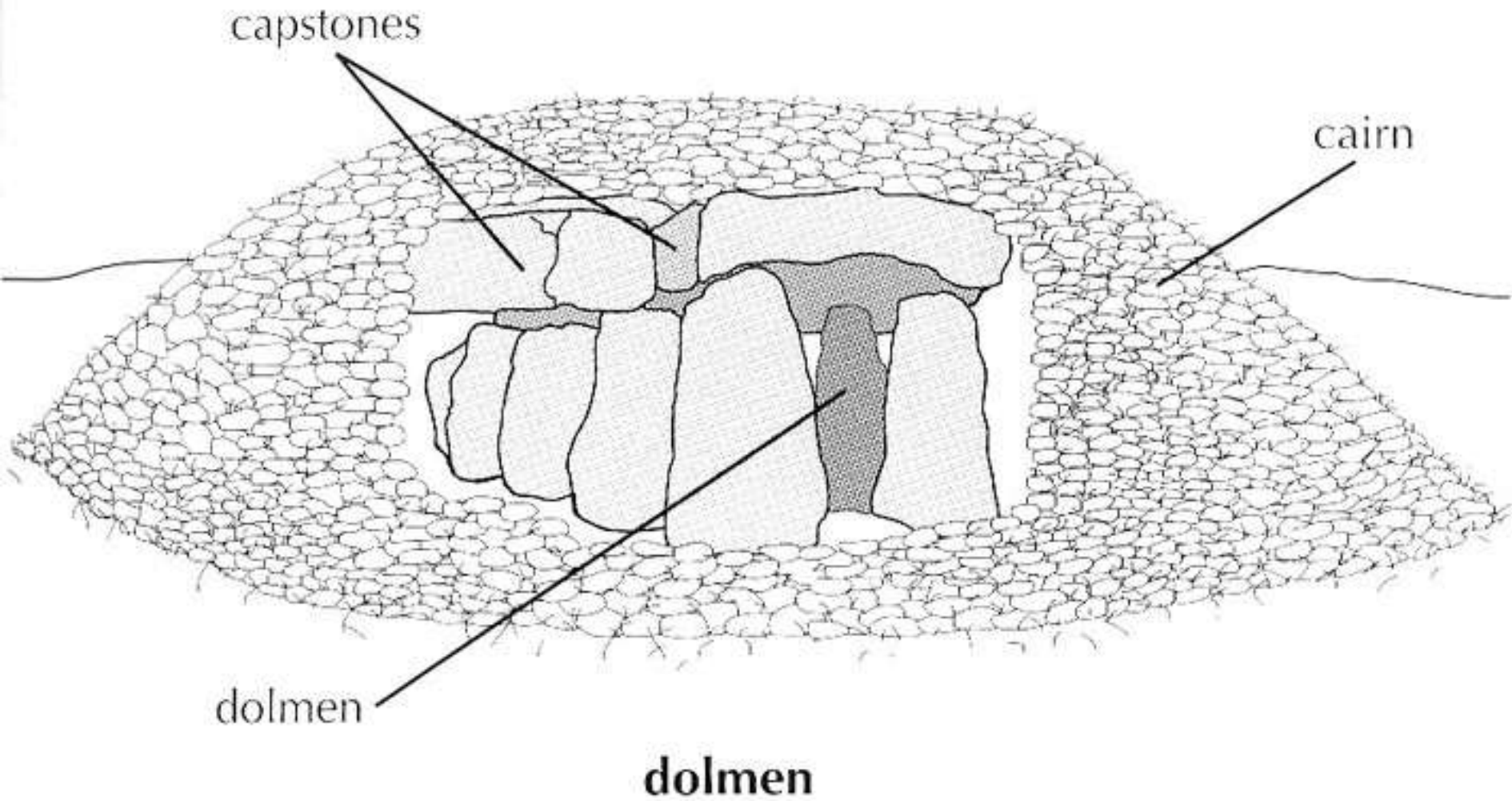
**Stone Alignments** . Carnac, France. c. 4250-3750 BCE. Over 3000 granite stones. 20-350 tons. Approximately 12 feet high. Each set begins at the west with the tallest stones and ends with shorter ones.



**Stone Alignments.** Carnac, Brittany, France. c. 4250-3750 BCE



**Stone Alignments, Carnac, Brittany, France, c. 4250-3750 BCE**



**Dolmen ("stone table" in Breton):** Single-chamber megalithic monument usually consisting of several large stone slabs set upright to support a flat stone roof, all covered by a mound of earth that in most cases has weathered away. Frequently served as tomb.





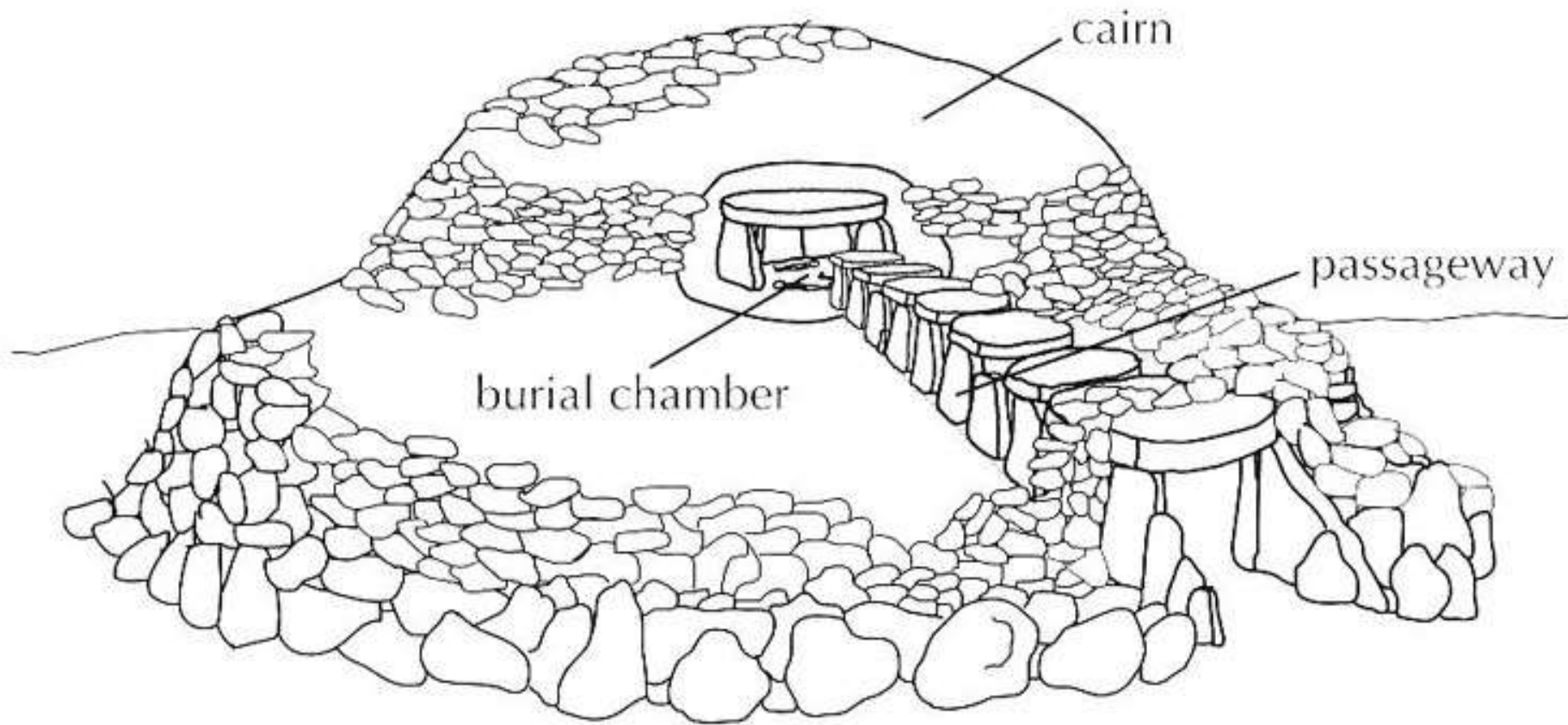
**Poulnabrone Dolmen.** Ireland. 3800 to 3200 BCE



**Dolmen from Garde-Epee. Near Angouleme. France**



Boston Historic Graveyard



**passage grave**

**Passage Grave:** form of megalithic tomb in which a burial chamber set in the centre of a barrow is approached by means of a narrow passage. The barrow is usually round in plan, but other shapes are known.



**Passage Grave.** Loughcrew, Ireland. c. 3300 BCE



**Autumn Equinox.. Loughcrew, Ireland**

The main cairn of Loughcrew is illuminated on the Spring and Fall Equinox

The back stone at the chamber  
of Loughcrew, Ireland. c. 3300  
BCE





**Passage grave at Newgrange**, Ireland. c. 3100 BCE. 300 feet in diameter and 36 feet high. The white quartz is modern reconstruction based on excavations.

In the five days around the winter solstice, light from the rising sun enters through the doorway and the roofbox and illuminates the chamber for about 15 minutes.



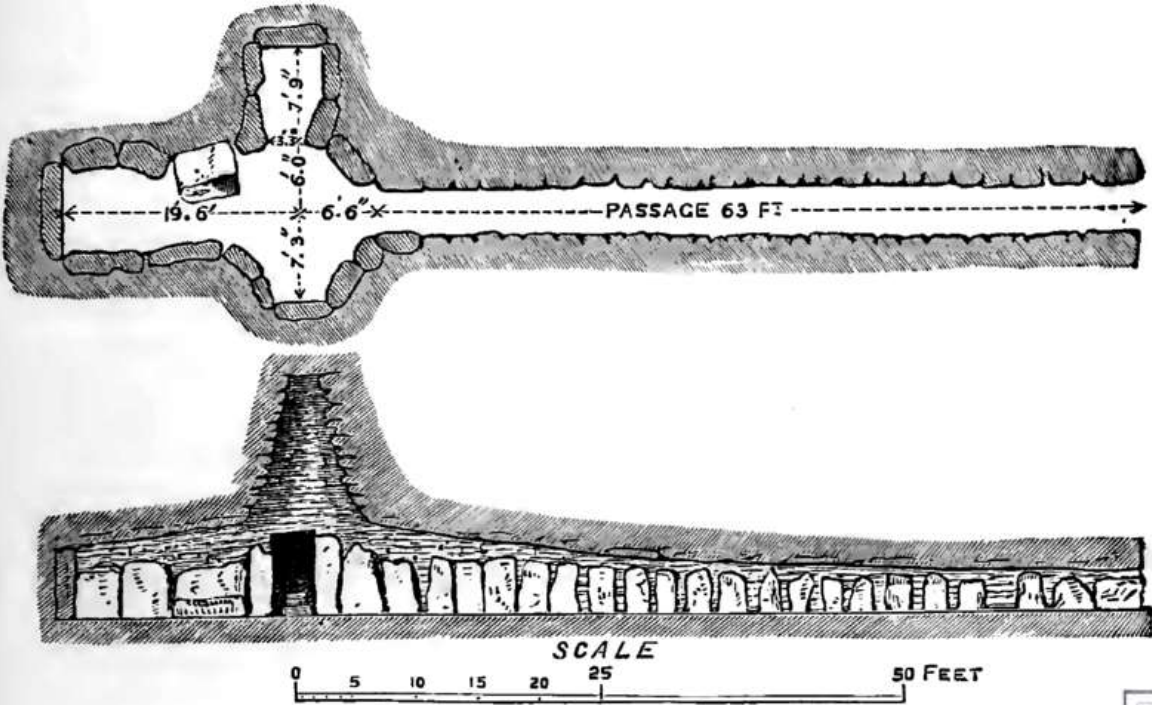


**Passage grave at Newgrange, Ireland. c. 3100 BCE**

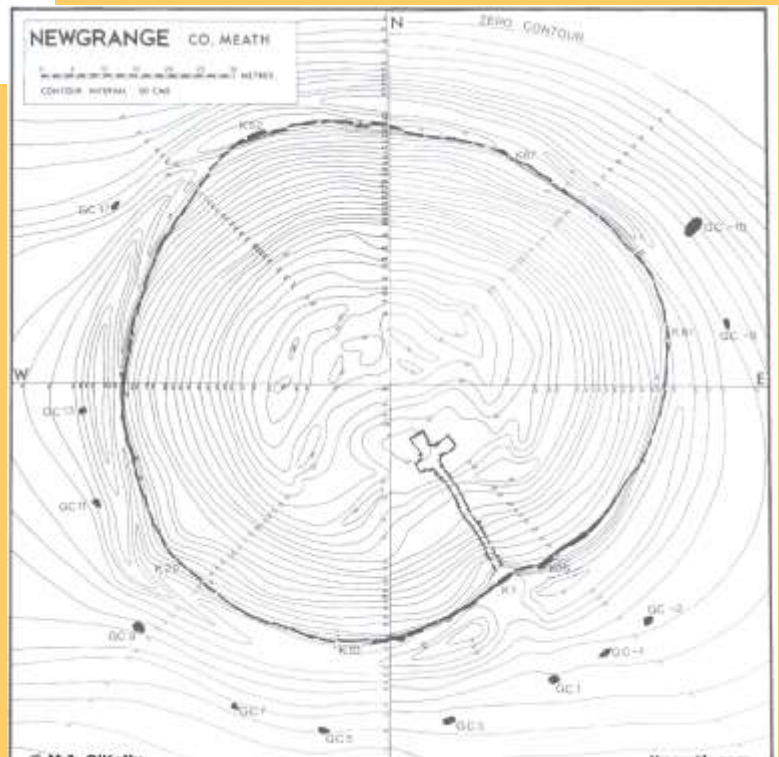


Newgrange.com

The Roofbox over the entrance where the solstice sun is beamed to the chamber.



Plan and Section of Chamber in Newgrange Tumulus.





**Entrance Stone** from passage grave at Newgrange, Ireland  
c. 3500-2000 BCE



**Silbury Hill.** Wiltshire, England. 2700 BCE. 130 feet (40 m.) high. 5 acres.



**Silbury Hill.** Wiltshire, England. 2700 BCE 130 feet (40 m.) high. 5 acres.



***Venus of Willendorf***  
from Willendorf  
Austria, ca. 28,000–25,000  
BCE approx. 4 1/4" high

**Aurochs, horses, and  
rhinoceroses**, wall  
painting in Chauvet Cave,  
France, ca. 30,000–28,000  
BCE.



### Discussion Question:

In what way did the social and economic changes that took place in human development between the Paleolithic and Neolithic periods affect the art and architecture produced in each period?



**Human figure**, from Ain Ghazal,  
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ca. 6750–6250 BCE. 3'5"

**Deer Hunt.** Wall painting from  
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**Aerial view of Stonehenge**,  
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