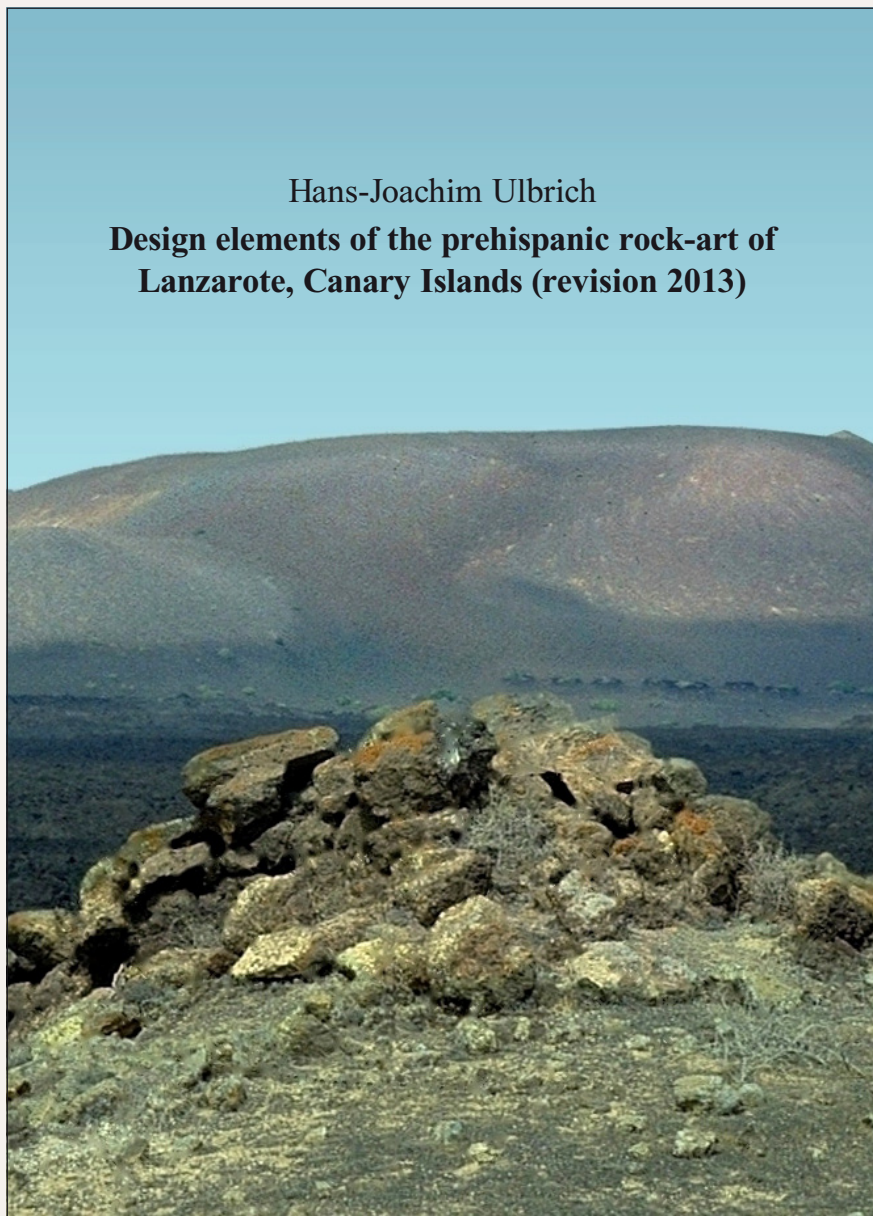


Hans-Joachim Ulbrich  
**Design elements of the prehispanic rock-art of  
Lanzarote, Canary Islands (revision 2013)**





A PDF series of the Institutum Canarium  
edited by  
Hans-Joachim Ulbrich

Digital IC separates and books are made available freely to interested scientists and researchers. It is strongly forbidden to sell IC PDFs in any form or to integrate their files in websites of commercial character. Furthermore links to our websites may not be sold on other websites of any kind. IC PDFs may not be altered, neither its content, nor its security status. Copyright infringements will be prosecuted.

Contents reflect the opinion of the author, not of the Institutum Canarium. Dark-red texts are present-day completions or corrections by the redaction.

Contact:  
Institutum Canarium  
Hauslabgasse 31/6  
A-1050 Wien

[institutum-canarium.org](http://institutum-canarium.org)  
[almogaren.org](http://almogaren.org)

Title illustration:  
Rock-art station near the Montaña de la Vieja Gabriela, Lanzarote  
(photo: Hans-Joachim Ulbrich). In the background the Mña. Tremesana.

© Institutum Canarium 1969-2015 for all its logos, services, contents and websites.

Hans-Joachim Ulbrich

**Design elements of the prehispanic rock-art of  
Lanzarote, Canary Islands (revision 2013)**

Updating of a lecture held at the "I Simposio de Manifestaciones Rupestres del Archipiélago Canario y Norte de Africa", Las Palmas April 1995. The proceedings were published on CD by Ernesto Martín Rodríguez (Las Palmas de Gran Canaria) in 2002.

Keywords: Canary Islands, Lanzarote, aborigines, rock-art, symbols, epigraphy, religion, Libyco-Berber script, Latin Cursive

**Please cite this article as follows / Zitieren Sie bitte diesen Aufsatz folgendermaßen:**

Ulbrich, Hans-Joachim (2015): Design elements of the prehispanic rock-art of Lanzarote, Canary Islands (revision 2013).- Special Publication 3 (Institutum Canarium), Wien, 39 p. (PDF)

Basing on / Basierend auf: Ulbrich 1995a (see here "Literature", p. 15)

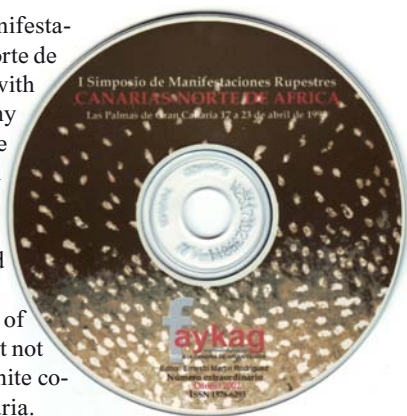
## I. Introduction

Lanzarote (862 km<sup>2</sup>) is the most northern and eastern of the seven great Canary Islands. Its proximity to the African continent caused many archaeologists to assume a strong relationship to the cultures of antique Berber tribes. Indeed archaeological and linguistic investigations proved that. But there are also hints to other Atlantic and Mediterranean cultures. This state of unsolved questions is also characteristic for the prehispanic rock-art of Lanzarote. The present little paper is aimed at giving the reader some basic information for his own conclusions.<sup>1</sup>

When in 1962 Agustín de la Hoz informed about the prehispanic "Palacio de Zonzamas" and other aboriginal manifestations in its neighbourhood it was for the first time that also rock-art was mentioned. More details of this site were made public with three photographs in the *Revista de Historia Canaria* (Nr.157-164, La Laguna 1969, p.304). Luis & Manuel Hernández Crespo and Agustín Acosta Cruz who revisited in 1968 Zonzamas and the "Quesera del Majo" [little channels in rocky ground] reported about rock-carvings which they called "pentágono" and "mariposa" [pentagon and butterfly] and which represent – as we know today – silhouettes of feet and sometimes sandals. A first summary gave Nowak (1977, 1979). Juan Brito Martín, sculptor and explorer of the countryside, exposed from 1980 on in the *Museo Arqueológico* in Arrecife [capital of Lanzarote] some drawings of new linear carvings and pictograms which he had found on the basalts of the island. The finds included also Libyco-Berber inscriptions together with a then unknown type of inscriptions which is now definitely recognized as a Canarian form of antique Latin (Pichler 1994). Since 1981 investigations in the rock-art of Lanzarote intensified, leading to the first more detailed scientific publications on this

<sup>1</sup> Eighteen years after the "I Simposio de Manifestaciones Rupestres del Archipiélago Canario y Norte de Africa – Las Palmas 1995" (see photo of CD with the proceedings) I updated to a certain extent my then delivered paper to integrate the knowledge of 2013. A more circumstantial elaboration with all relevant details would have exceeded the limits of a short article. Nevertheless I considered it helpful to let the information in hand reach the scientific reader.

By the way: The dot-like elements on the cover of the CD show what is called "Type 29" here – but not punched like on Lanzarote, but painted with white color as in some prehispanic caves of Gran Canaria.



subject (Beltrán Martínez 1981; León Hernández et alii 1983, 1988, 1990; Balbin Behrmann et alii 1987; Cortés Vázquez 1990; León Hernández 1990). A first corpus of the prehispanic rock-art panels of Lanzarote – together with new finds – was published by myself (Ulbrich 1990)<sup>2</sup>.

In the aforementioned publication I made the attempt to classify the different types of Lanzarotian rock-art in tabular form [there p. 13]. New field work in 1992 and 1994 – partly published in Ulbrich (1993, 1994, 1995a, 1996) – made it necessary to revise and renew this schedule. The increasing number of discoveries has extended our view both regarding geometric and script-like engravings. A few of the linear-geometric and pictographic engravings originate probably from Spanish herdsmen as Spaniards live on Lanzarote since the beginning of the 15th century. These engravings are distinguishable from older ones by the brighter patina and sometimes by its geometric form [e.g. Christian crosses/plate 34]. Another part is modern "x-was-here-scrawling" and vandalism which has been scratched over older engravings. Plate 1 [here p.16] represents the latest realizations; at the same time it is a suggestion for the structuring of the Lanzarotian rock-art. This systematization shall help us to proceed in our understanding of the cultural contents which have to be seen behind it. In this context: The first colonists reached Lanzarote presumably around 3000 BCE, the first European landed 1312 on the island.

## **II. Type 1-19 (linear-geometric abstractions)**

Linear-geometric forms are by far the most frequent [see statistics in plate 2]. One hint that these structures are not only meaningless scribbling gives plate 3: It indicates that around 90 % of the panels face the rising or high standing sun. Nearly no panel can be found on the north-side of a rock. Sun, stars and rain-cults played a major rôle in the religious life of the aborigines as we know from reports of the Spanish conquerors; and these carvings could well be related with such cults. The Canarian historian Marín de Cubas (1694/1986: 254) tells us about rays engraved in rocks on the occasion of a sun-feast on Gran Canaria. Striking is that especially the chaotic combinations like type 4 [see plates 4, 5, 17, 42], which seemed to be very important to the Lanzarotian

---

<sup>2</sup> In this book I tried to identify some of the epigraphic signs – which we call Latino-Canarian today – with Southeastern Iberian script. This hypothesis could not be verified; and after increasing Latino-Canarian finds on Fuerteventura and Lanzarote by myself and by other researchers in the following years I was convinced of the Latin interpretation which I defend with determination since then (first in Ulbrich 1994: 76). Unfortunately most of the Canarian authors remind their readers of my outdated Iberian hypothesis while not mentioning my "conversion" to the Latin classification. To say it frankly: I find this rather unscientific.

islander, is indeed present in neighbouring Morocco, but not to the extent which one would expect. Looking for closer relationships we find this type on the Iberian Peninsula where it was practised from the Neolithic to the Bronze Age; see for example Beltrán Martínez (1983: 39) who speaks of "lines of rain" and "sunrays". See also below type 25, rain cult. Regarding the more concrete forms [type 2, 5-11, 13-19 – see here plates 6, 8, 9, 22, 31] we find them as well in Morocco as on the Iberian Peninsula including the Pyrenees. For crosses like type 14 see plate 44 with a possible pubic connotation [as in plate 43].

A wavy-line exists only once [type 15b, plate 39], while zigzags [type 15a] can be seen a bit more often. A general observation is that curves and round elements were gladly replaced by angles and straight lines, sometimes within one graphical form; apparently this was easier and faster to engrave or scratch.

Type 16 [multiple angles] is rare and exists only on a few panels. The clearest example can be found on a small Lanzarotian stele [plate 33]. See also figs. 119a & 120 in Ulbrich 1990 and here plates 5 & 22.

Type 17 [concentric semi-circles] occurs on Lanzarote only one time on a stele [plate 19]; this kind of engraved monoliths were in use in Morocco until the Middle Ages and the Lanzarotian example originates perhaps from the 8th-14th c., before the Franco-Spanish conquest started in 1402. Nevertheless another – Bronze Age or antique – origin is well imaginable. The meaning may lie in beads which we know from many Mediterranean figurines and plaquettes or in rebirth symbolism. Extremely rare is also type 2 [circles] what is contrary to islands like Gran Canaria, El Hierro and La Palma. Especially rock-art of La Palma shows resemblances to Portuguese/Spanish Galicia (Ulbrich 1989: fig. 23; Costas Goberna et alii 1995; Vázquez Varela 1995).

Type 18 represents a number of panels with relative old patina containing rectangles which are more or less divided up with symmetrical and/or diagonal lines; these rectangles or squares were carved by the aborigines as well as by the Spaniards. Engraved on horizontal surfaces of rocks they might be used – in some playable cases – as game-boards [Spanish *damero*; type 18a]. But carved by the aborigines on a vertical or sloping panel – as on Lanzarote – both types represent wishes to the gods for good luck, regarding rain, harvests and cattle [see plates 10/11 and Ulbrich 1996: 295-296]. Type 19: Ulbrich (1994: fig. 2) shows an example of such a mysterious rhomb [script ?].

### III. Type 20-28 (pictograms, incl. pubics)

Regarding more objective engravings we find some silhouettes of feet [podomorphs type 20; see here plates 12, 13, 14 and detailed Ulbrich 2011]. The versions without toes may be more abstract feet or a kind of sandal or

shoe, having in mind that "maho/majo", the aboriginal name of the islanders of Fuerteventura and Lanzarote, is explained with "skin-shoe" by old chroniclers (e.g. Abreu Galindo 1602). Stylistic similarities exist with podomorph engravings in Morocco, Galicia and Portugal (see also Ulbrich 1989: 62, 64). Silhouettes of feet engraved in rocks can be observed around the Mediterranean Sea, in many parts of Europe, in the Sahara and in Nubia. Rock-art of this kind may be connected with the presence of a supernatural being, with might and power, with nearness to a divinity and with cults of fertility and purification.

Ovals and triangles with a centered line [type 21a/b/c; see here plates 4, 15, 16 and Ulbrich 1990: figs. 111/112] can be interpreted as vulvae; also triangles without such a line [type 21d] including V-signs [like in plates 4, 5]. Type 21c/d is also present in the Cueva Los Candiles, Gran Canaria, in the form of hollow reliefs. Plate 15 [type 21b] is possibly the combination of a vulva and a sun. Furthermore there are some versions varying between oval and rhomb [type 21e/f/g; see plates 40, 42]. Symbol-like depictions of pubic triangles and vulvae are wide-spread in the prehistoric and protohistoric rock-art of the Atlantic, Mediterranean and African regions – in fact of the whole world.


In Mediterranean/North African rock-art the body of the Great Mother Goddess can often be seen divided with lines [furrows] and/or rectangles [fields] what determines her in such cases as "goddess of the fields"; here in plate 40 we see this agricultural field symbolism [type 10] integrated into the abstraction of a vulva. The combination 'field + phallus' [incl. type 22a] is frequent in neighboring Morocco [especially Atlas mountains].

Depictions of phalli are also existent [e.g. type 22a in plate 40]. iiiii can only be found on a Lanzarotian stele as part of double-penises (Ulbrich 2012); this kind of design lead apparently to versions like type 22c [a "comb" as in plate 41] where the dots changed to lines. The latter can also have produced types 8 and 9. The horizontal line omitted shows in type 22b and partly in type 11; both can also be the result of another simplification:  $\Pi \rightarrow \bar{\Pi} \rightarrow \Pi \rightarrow \text{I}$ .

Stars and sun-like forms are very rare on Lanzarote. Examples of type 23b might be seen on a rock north of the Mña. Maneje (Ulbrich 1994: fig. 12) and on a panel of the Barranco de las Piletas (Ulbrich 1998: fig. 11). A probably recent star shows a rock at Argana Alta III (Ulbrich 2002: fig. 12). León & Robayna (1989: 53) report of an engraving tending to "rays superposing a central circle" on the Peñas del Santo, Mozaga [type 23a ?; see also type 21b].

Motifs of a nature aspect are probably those more or less parallel curves [type 24] which we find near the Montaña Maneje and in the Barranco de las Piletas [here plate 37; Ulbrich 1998: figs. 17/18]. It is surely not too daring to interpret these on a volcanic island like Lanzarote as typical Pahoehoe lava.



To recognize types 3 & 11 partly and type 25 fully as rain resp. raindrops is relatively easy because especially type 25 shows at the end of its lines short drop-like swellings or even single drops [Cueva Palomas, Femés: ] among lines without such swellings. A weapon like an arrow or a lance is clearly not meant. See also here p. 7, first paragraph (Beltrán Martínez), and Ulbrich (2009) with more details on the rain-cult of arid Lanzarote.

Difficult to date are certain silhouettes of sailing-ships [type 26; see also Ulbrich 1990: fig. 114]. The patina of these engravings looks like the surrounding rock, but that must not mean a prehispanic age. I suppose that this type with one or several masts was carved both by the aborigines [impressed by Spanish ships] and by the Spaniards themselves. A newer find of a ship in the Valle de Fuente Salada shows a type which could well be protohistoric [plate 20; all ship depictions of Lanzarote – pre- and post-hispanic – in Ulbrich 1999b].

Type 27 – an ear – can most likely be found on two panels; one near Argana Alta (Ulbrich 2002: fig. 17) and one at Los Roques I, Las Breñas (Ulbrich 1994: fig. 22). Our knowledge about the aborigines includes the cultivation of wheat and barley so that an ear-like engraving has certainly an agricultural context and is not simply depicting an unknown plant.

Highly important is a pictogram of a steatopygic female idol [type 28, plate 39] showing the Mother Goddess with a gesture of breast-offering or breast-supporting (details in Ulbrich 2000). This type of idol is common to the [mainly eastern] Mediterranean region but not to nearby Morocco; there we find as idol of the goddess the so-called "violin-shaped" type which is clearly distinguishable. Not really surprising Lanzarote's type 28 was found too on Gran Canaria and neighboring Fuerteventura as more or less similar terra-cotta idols.

A sheep-like scratching of unsure age and origin was found on the Peñas Hendidias, Orzola (Ulbrich 1996: fig. 37). A combination of lines in the Valle de Fuente Salada may show a fish (Ulbrich 1999: fig. 33); part of this construction is a phallus of type 22d and a vulva of type 21h.

#### **IV. Type 29-31 (punchings and grindings)**

Some panels on Lanzarote show round and/or oval punchings [type 29] with a patina which is not distinguishable from the surrounding rock [see Ulbrich 1990: figs. 159, 172, 182, 194; and clearly Ulbrich 1996: fig. 69 > here plate 35]. Do they mean seed or raindrops? A rectangular punching [type 30] appeared so far only once on the Mña. Tenezar [plate 28]; this punching lies under a Latino-Canarian inscription and can therefore be classified as definitely prehispanic. There are a few grindings [type 31] of difficult to judge age [e.g. Los Roques II, Las Breñas, in Ulbrich 1994: fig. 34]. Some grindings

originate from the use of prehispanic lithophones like the one on the Peña de Luis Cabrera [SE-slope of the Mña. Guenia].

## V. Type 32-37 (epigraphy)

Most interesting are the inscriptions on Lanzarotian rocks. We can until today distinguish five – or perhaps six – types (apart from unsolved signs and modern scrawling):

- 1. **Libyco-Berber** of a type that could originate from the centuries around Christ's birth [type 32; see here plates 23, 24, 27, 28]. New finds with "old" signs but bright patina on the Peña de Luis Cabrera (Ulbrich 1996: fig. 55) create some problems but seem to be genuinely prehispanic – apparently because of a special micro-climate at this panel and the presence of certain geological conditions in the underlying rock.

- 2. More recent Berber, so-called **Tifinagh**, on Lanzarote from the late antiquity until the Late Middle Ages and most probably also in the 16th and 17th centuries when Berber slaves were brought to the island [type 33; see here plate 21]. Types 32 and 33 are sometimes difficult to distinguish.

- 3. **Latino-Canarian** [type 34] which appears frequently only on Fuerteventura and Lanzarote as a special version of the Latin Cursive whose ductus – when strikingly slim – is probably influenced by Neo-Punic script (Ulbrich 2004). Pichler (1994) has shown with his graphical and linguistic analysis and with some convincing transcriptions [e.g. ANIBAL, a well-known North African name] that this type of inscriptions shows without doubt Latin characters. The transcriptions of the Lanzarotian lines too produce useful results when one employs the Latin interpretation: The transcription of plate 26 [MASENT] can be found in the prehispanic place-name Masintafe [this Lanzarotian village was destroyed 1730-36 by a volcanic eruption]. One inscription of plate 27 [TADUSAN] reminds of proto-Berber personal names basing on the radicals TD or TDS; furthermore -san and -an are well-known Berber suffixes. The inscription of plate 28 [RIANU] reminds of the Roman name ARRIANUS. All this is not accidental!

The knowledge of writing Latin script on Lanzarote has probably developed and vanished quickly, thus producing also confuse versions. Already in Ulbrich (1990: 29) I presumed that certain script-like engravings represent a phase of unlearning; see here plates 29 & 30 and Ulbrich (1990: figs. 94, 240, 241) with panels found in the Vega de Temuime – all on loose little rocks. W. & L. Pichler (1995) have come to the same conclusions for what they call "Rillensteine" [loose stones with grooves] on Fuerteventura.

- 4. Meanwhile there has to be added a fourth script or better script category:

**Berbero-Latin**, a mixture of Latin and Libyco-Berber writing methods [type 35; see plates 26/29/32/36 and Ulbrich 2004, 2013]. That literate Berber citizens already in the 2nd century BCE were able to speak and write in Latin is fact: The young comedy writer Publius Terentius Afer [\*ca. 195/184 near Carthage – † ca. 159/158 in Greece or on sea] is author of at least six famous plays in Latin language. He is most likely of Afri origin [Tunisia] what his cognomen *Afer* indicates. So I suppose that Berber people who were in rudimentary command of Latin reached Lanzarote and Fuerteventura as early as the 2nd century BCE. They were probably collectors of dyeing lichens for the production of purple. Epigraphy on the two islands qualifies for Berbero-Latin when one of the following conditions is fulfilled [signs always in normal upright position]:

- Latin Cursive written vertically like Libyco-Berber (LB). To be read from above to below or from below to above [the latter like type 35 in plate 1].
- Latin Cursive written vertically or horizontally without vowels [i.e. only consonants like LB].
- Latin Cursive written vertically or horizontally with only one vowel among several consonants.
- Vertical or horizontal lines written by mixing Latin and LB characters, no vowels.
- Vertical or horizontal lines written by mixing Latin and LB characters, vowels correctly used.
- Latin Cursive line to be read from right to left [if not Neo-Punic influence].

Not meant in this context are cases where script and language of a word or sentence are not the same what can be watched on Lanzarote quite often.

● 5. On Lanzarote and also on Fuerteventura we have several inscriptions which could belong more or less vaguely to the **Phoenician/Punic/Neo-Punic** complex. On the more secure side Lanzarote can only deliver one line which could be Punic or Neo-Punic [type 36; see plate 38]. This assumption is supported by the fact that the male personal name FAU [in Latino-Canarian script; details Ulbrich 1999a] appears only millimeters away. This name was used in Carthage. Remarkable is also the extreme difference of size between the two signs which is typical for Punic/Neo-Punic scripts.

● 6. The panels of the Peña del Letrero include an inscription [type 37; plate 25] which is difficult to interpret. The engraving – which is in my eyes script – shows vague resemblances to Libyco-Berber, Tartessian and Punic scripts.

● There are also several other enigmatic inscriptions and single characters [besides type 37] which cannot be attributed clearly. Punic, Neo-Punic, Greek, Iberian [southern types] and Neo-Tifinagh may have had an influence, each in different cases [see for example type 19, plates 29/30 and Ulbrich 2004: fig. 4].

More information on the linguistic situation on Lanzarote offers Ulbrich (1995b) where many place names of prehispanic origin are examined.

## VI. Design relationships and problems

Finally: The meaning and semantic contents of several design types overlap – as we have seen – in certain aspects with others. Here is an overview to make the understanding of plate 1 and the preceding explanations easier for the reader.

Design type	Other types with related or similar meanings in special cases
1	32-37 (script; e.g. C = Latin C)
2	21
3a	22b
3b	25
5	21d
6	16, 27
7	18 (dividing lines not executed)
8, 9	22c
10	18a
11	22b
12	4
13	21d
14	21? (read below)
15a	15b and vice versa
16	6, 17 (to avoid the more difficult carving of curves), 27
17	2
18a	10
19	script ?
25	11
27	6
32	33 and vice versa

This listing illustrates the difficulties which can occur when interpreting such graphical forms. For example: It is totally unclear what the crossings of type 14 do mean; but there are figurines of female idols on Crete [Knossos] where the vulva is executed exactly like a cross [see here plates 43/44]. Another problem is the chronology of rock-art panels. Type 28 resembles some figurines which are typical for certain phases of the central and eastern Mediterranean Neolithic. Has type 28 [plate 39] the same remote age on Lanzarote or is this carving younger, keeping in mind that Lanzarote was isolated until around 1000 BCE [first Phoenicians] so that old styles and rites could have survived

hundreds of years? Not to forget that some Bronze Age amulets of eastern Andalusia are quite similar: ⚡ (e.g. Cueva de la Barsella). Rock-art exploration is to a great extent building up on suppositions which one day may verify.






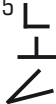
















































A closer look on Canarian rock-art shows many similarities to the North African continent, but not enough to say that the Canary Islands – and especially Lanzarote – are a 'proto-Berber province'. In fact altogether there are – regarding several important aspects – more hints to the non-Berber Mediterranean and Iberian regions. So the proto-Berber part in Lanzarote's history is a matter of the last three centuries BCE which extended over thirteen centuries into our era because of an isolation which was ended by visits of the first Europeans in the 14th century.

## VI. Literature:

- Abreu Galindo, Fray Juan de (Ms. ca. 1602): *Historia de la Conquista de las siete Islas de Canaria*.- Editorial Goya, Sta. Cruz de Tenerife 1977, 367 p.
- Almagro Gorbea, Maria José (1973): *Los ídolos del Bronce I Hispano*.- *Bibliotheca Praehistorica Hispana XII* (Univ. de Madrid / CSIC), Madrid, 354 p. + LVII p. figures
- Balbin Behrmann, R. de; Fernández Miranda-Fernández, M.; Tejera Gaspar, A. (1987): *Lanzarote prehistórico, notas para su estudio*.- *Crónica del XVIII Congreso Nacional de Arqueología* (Islas Canarias 1985), Zaragoza 1987, 19-53
- Beltrán Martínez, A. (1981): *Los grabados rupestres de Lanzarote*.- in Balout, L. (Ed.): *Prehistoire Africain*.- A.D.P.F., Paris, 151-154
- Beltrán Martínez, A. (1983): *El arte esquemático en la Península Ibérica: orígenes e interrelación. Bases para un debate*.- "Actas del Coloquio Internacional sobre Arte Esquemático de la Península Ibérica, Salamanca 1982" (= *Zephyrus XXXVI*), Salamanca 1983, 37-41
- Cortés Vázquez, M. (1990): *Los petroglifos del yacimiento de Zonzamas, Lanzarote*.- *II Jornadas de Historia de Lanzarote y Fuerteventura* (1985) t.II (Serv. de Publ. del Cabildo Insular de Lanzarote), Arrecife 1990, 329-338 (incl. a poster with sketches)
- Costas Goberna, F.J.; Hidalgo Cuñarro, J.M.; de la Peña Santos, A. (1995): *Similitudes y divergencias en el repertorio de motivos de los petroglifos de la isla de La Palma (Canarias) y los grabados rupestres del noroeste de la Península Ibérica*.- in "I Simposio Manifestaciones Rupestres Canarias-Norte de Africa" Las Palmas 1995, *Revista Faykag Número Extraordinario Otoño 2002* (CD), Las Palmas de Gran Canaria, 107-134
- Hoz, Agustín de la (1962): *Lanzarote*.- *Gobierno Civil de Las Palmas / Cabildo Insular de Gran Canaria / Ayuntamientos y Cabildo Insular de Lanzarote* (Eds.), Madrid, 286 p.

- León Hernández, J. de; et alii (1983): Los grabados rupestres de la Peña del Conchero: Nueva aportación a la prehistoria de Lanzarote.- Homenaje a Don Juan Bosch Millares t.II (= Museo Canario XLII/1982), Las Palmas 1983, 83-97
- León Hernández, J. de; et alii (1988): La importancia de las vías metodológicas en la investigación de nuestro pasado, una aportación concreta: los primeros grabados latinos hallados en Canarias.- *Tebeto 1* (Cabildo Insular de Fuerteventura), Sta. Cruz de Tenerife (D.L.), 129-201
- León Hernández, J. de; Robayna Fernández, M.A. (1989): El Jable, poblamiento y aprovechamiento en el mundo de los antiguos mahos de Lanzarote y Fuerteventura.- III Jornadas de Estudios de Fuerteventura y Lanzarote 1987 t.II (Servicio de Publ. del Cabildo Insular de Fuerteventura/Cabildo Insular de Lanzarote), Puerto del Rosario 1989, 11-105
- León Hernández, J. de (1990): Los grabados rupestres de la isla de Lanzarote.- in Oropesa, T.; Valencia, V. (Eds.): *Grabados rupestres de Canarias*.- Sta. Cruz de Tenerife, 83-89
- León Hernández, J. de; et alii (1990): Aspectos arqueológicos y etnográficos de la comarca del Jable.- II Jornadas de Historia de Lanzarote y Fuerteventura (1985) t.II (Serv. de Publ. del Cabildo Insular de Lanzarote), Arrecife 1990, 283-319
- Marín de Cubas, Tomas Arias (ms. 1694): Historia de las siete islas de Canaria.- Real Sociedad Económica de Amigos del País, Las Palmas 1986, 342 p.
- Nowak, Herbert (1977): *Archäologische Monumente der Kanareninsel Lanzarote*, 1. Teil: Queseras, Monolithen, Steinfunde, Felsbilder.- *Almogaren VIII/1977* (ADEVA), Graz 1978, 1-20
- Nowak, Herbert (1979): *Archäologische Monumente der Kanareninsel Lanzarote*, 2. Teil: Zonzamas, Casas Hondas, Felsbilder, Queseras.- *Almogaren IX-X/1978-79* (ADEVA), Graz 1980, 35-46
- Pichler, Werner (1994): *Die Ostinsel-Inschriften Fuerteventuras, Transkription und Lesung*.- *Almogaren XXIV-XXV/1993-94* (Institutum Canarium), Hallein 1994, 117-220
- Pichler, Werner & Lucia (1995): *Das Phänomen der "Rillensteine" auf Fuerteventura*.- *Almogaren XXVI* (Institutum Canarium), Hallein, 47-66
- Ucko, Peter J. (1968): *Anthropomorphic figurines of Predynastic Egypt and Neolithic Crete with comparative material from Prehistoric Near East and Mainland Greece*.- Occasional Papers 24 - Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain & Ireland (Szmidla Editors), London, 530 p.
- Ulbrich, Hans-Joachim (1989): *Die Besiedlung der Kanarischen Inseln – Ursprung und Chronologie*.- *Almogaren XX/2/1989* (Institutum Canarium), Hallein 1990, 33-99
- Ulbrich, Hans-Joachim (1990): *Felsbildforschung auf Lanzarote*.- *Almogaren XXI/2/1990* (Institutum Canarium), Hallein 1991, 319 p.
- Ulbrich, Hans-Joachim (1993): *Neue Felsbildstationen auf Lanzarote – ein Vorbe-*

- richt.- IC-Nachrichten 72 (Institutum Canarium), Hallein, 8-10
- Ulbrich, Hans-Joachim (1994): Neue Felsbildstationen auf der Kanareninsel Lanzarote (I).- *Almogaren XXIV-XXV/1993-94* (Institutum Canarium), Hallein 1994, 75-112
- Ulbrich, Hans-Joachim (1995a): Elements of the prehispanic rock-art of Lanzarote (Canary Islands).- in "I Simposio de Manifestaciones Rupestres del Archipiélago Canario y Norte de Africa" Las Palmas 1995, *Revista Faykag Número Extraordinario Otoño 2002* (CD), Las Palmas de Gran Canaria, 393-400
- Ulbrich, Hans-Joachim (1995b): Prähispanische Ortsnamen von Lanzarote (Kanarische Inseln).- *Almogaren XXVI* (Institutum Canarium), Hallein, 213-350
- Ulbrich, Hans-Joachim (1996): Neue Felsbildstationen auf der Kanareninsel Lanzarote (II).- *Almogaren XXVII* (Institutum Canarium), Vöcklabruck, 285-357
- Ulbrich, Hans-Joachim (1998): Neue Felsbildstationen auf der Kanareninsel Lanzarote (III).- *Almogaren XXIX* (Institutum Canarium), Vöcklabruck, 103-132
- Ulbrich, Hans-Joachim (1999a): Gibt es neupunische Felsinschriften auf den Kanarischen Inseln?- *Almogaren XXX/1999* (Institutum Canarium), Vöcklabruck, 65-75
- Ulbrich, Hans-Joachim (1999b): Die naviformen Felsbilder von Lanzarote (Kanarische Inseln).- *Almogaren XXX/1999* (Institutum Canarium), Vöcklabruck, 275-319
- Ulbrich, Hans-Joachim (2000): Eine Spur der Großen Mutter auf Lanzarote (Kanarische Inseln).- *Almogaren XXXI* (Institutum Canarium), Wien, 71-88
- Ulbrich, Hans-Joachim (2002): Eine bedeutende Felsbild-Fundstelle auf Lanzarote (Kanarische Inseln): Argana Alta bei Arrecife.- *Almogaren XXXII-XXXIII / 2001-2002* (Institutum Canarium), Wien, 251-274
- Ulbrich, Hans-Joachim (2004): Transkulturelle Schriftvariation in den prähispanischen Felsbildern Lanzarotes (Kanarische Inseln).- *IC-Nachrichten 86* (Institutum Canarium), Wien, 35-40 (PDF version)
- Ulbrich, Hans-Joachim (2009): Kontakt zur Großen Mutter – Felsritzungen auf Lanzarote als Emanation des altkanarischen Regenkultes.- *IC-Nachrichten 91* (Institutum Canarium), Wien, 57-59
- Ulbrich, Hans-Joachim (2011): Die podomorphen Felsbilder von Lanzarote (Kanarische Inseln).- *Almogaren XLII* (Institutum Canarium), Wien, 133-168
- Ulbrich, Hans-Joachim (2012): Eine enigmatische altkanarische Stele von der Insel Lanzarote.- *IC-Nachrichten 94* (Institutum Canarium), Wien, 39-49
- Ulbrich, Hans-Joachim (2013): Ostinseln – Benennung der altkanarischen Schriften.- *IC-Nachrichten 95* (Institutum Canarium), Wien, 16-17 (PDF version on [institutum-canarium.org](http://institutum-canarium.org))
- Vázquez Varela, J.M. (1995): Las relaciones atlánticas del arte rupestre canario: estado de la cuestion y nuevas perspectivas.- in "I Simposio Manifestaciones Rupestres Canarias-Norte de Africa" Las Palmas 1995, *Revista Faykag Número Extraordinario Otoño 2002* (CD), Las Palmas de Gran Canaria, 401-408

Linear-schematic	Ideograms — linear-geometric (1-19)	Separate lines and curves				Chaotic groups						
		1  bends/curves	2  circles, light ovals	3a  slim lines	3b  fat or swelling lines, deeply carved	4  can include types 1-3, 5-16, 18, 20-24						
		Lines in deliberate combinations										
		5  angles	6  "fish-bones"	7  rectangles	8  "fences"	9  "ladders"	10  nets & grids	11  parallels	12  rays	13  triangles		
	Lines in deliberate combinations								Feet			
	14  crossings	15a  zigzags	15b  wavy line	16  multiple angles	17  concentric semicircles	18a  subdivided rectangles	18b  subdivided rectangles	19  subdivided rhomb	20a  Feet	20b  Feet		
	Feet		Pubic triangles and vulvae							Phalli		
	20c  (sandals ?)	21a  Phalli	21b*  Nature	21c  Nature	21d  Nature	21e  Ships	21f  Ships	21g  Ships	21h  Agriculture	22a  Idol		
	Phalli		Nature				Ships		Agriculture	Idol		
	22b  incl. manifold 22c "combs"	22d  Phalli	23a  astral signs sun	23b  astral signs star	24  lava flow	25  rain	26a  prehispanic	26b**  mediaeval	27  ears	28  female		
Special forms of rock treatment	Punchings					Grindings (abrasion)						
	29  little punched holes				30  punched rectangle (one)		31  round or irregular forms					
Epigraphy	Libyco-Berber		Tifinagh		Latino-Canarian		Berbero-Latin		Neo-Punic		Unknown	
	32 incl. transitions  or 		33  3rd — 17th c.		34  -1st c. — +2nd c.		35  -2nd c. — +4th c.		36 (or Punic)  -2nd c. — +4th c. (or -5th c. — -1st c.)		37  antique	

\* Combination of sun and vulva?

\*\* Partly by aborigines before and during Spanish colonization, partly by Spaniards themselves.

© Hans-Joachim Ulbrich (Institutum Canarium)

All dates given regard the approx. duration of the use of certain scripts on Lanzarote, not the time of existence in general.



## Statistics

Plate 2

Lanzarote:  
frequency of  
rock-art panels  
(as of 1995)

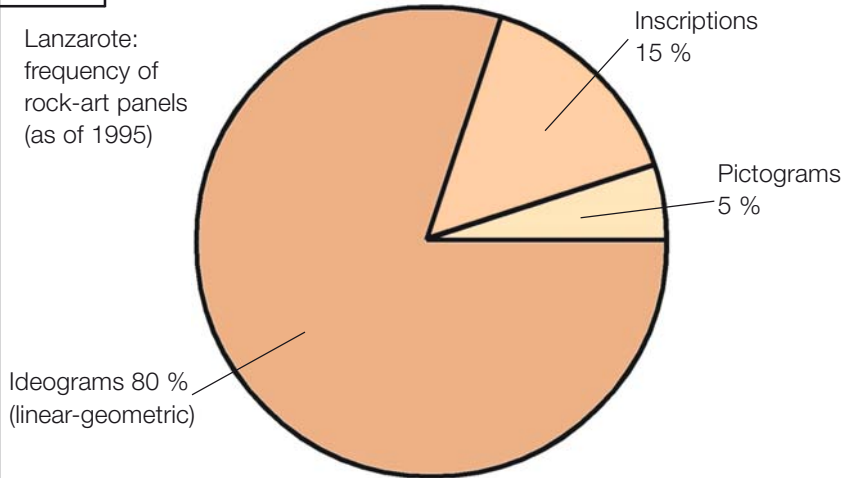
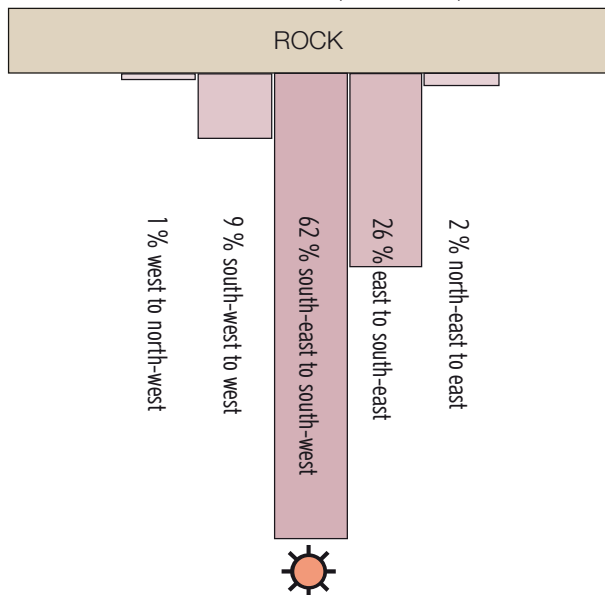


Plate 3

Lanzarote: orientation of rock-art panels  
towards the sun (as of 1995)



Prehispanic rock-art panels facing the north are practically neglectable.

\*Including types  
1, 2, 3a/b, 5, 11,  
12, 14, 21 a/b/d and  
hybrids of 21e/f





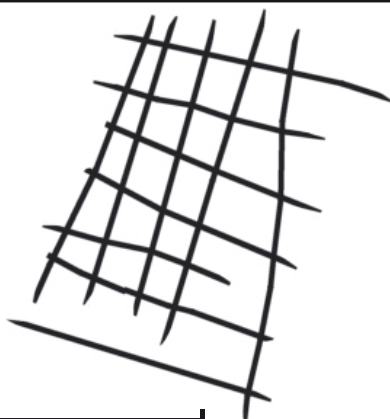
\*Including types 3a/b,  
5, 11, 21d and hybrids  
of types 6, 15a and 16



## Nets and grids

Plate 6

Barranco de Las Piletas, El Mojón (typical type 10)



5 cm

Plate 7

Vega de Temuime I, Playa Quemada (detail; vague type 10\*)



10 cm

\*Incl. type 1 overlaid

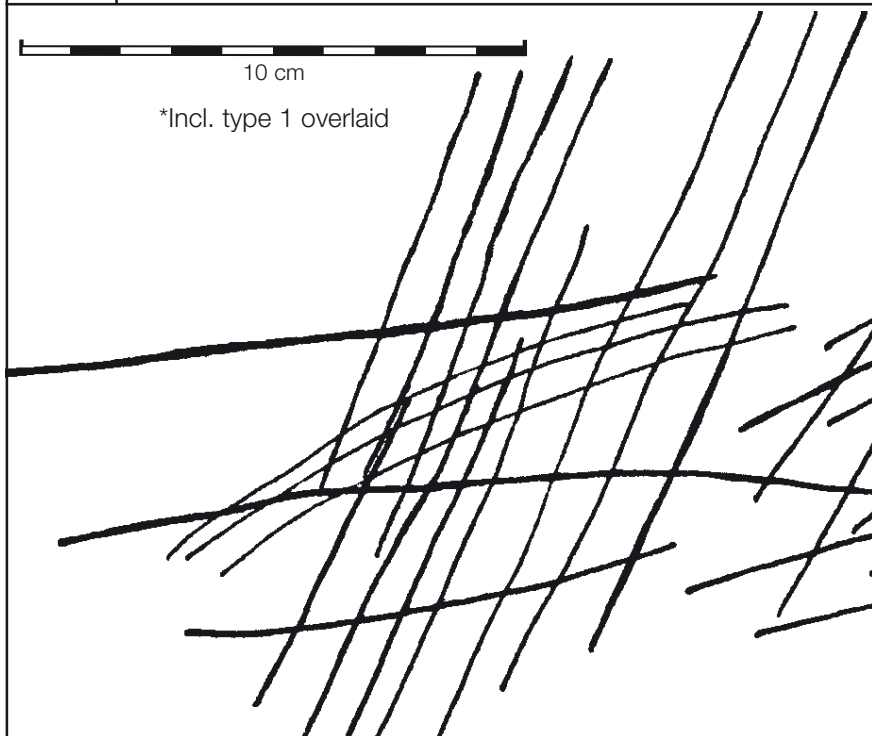


Plate 8

Peña del Letrero, Llano de Zonzamas (type 8)

"Fence"

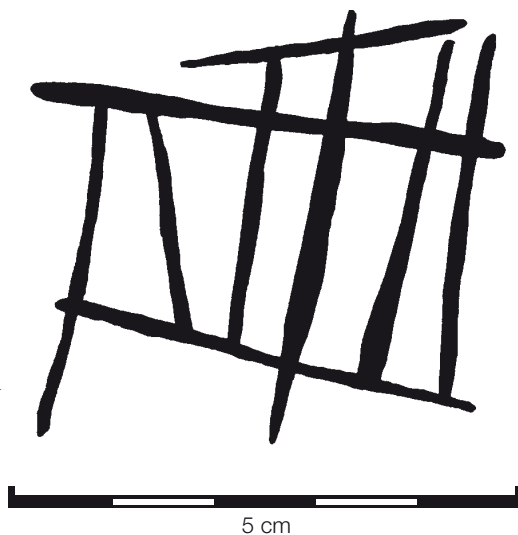
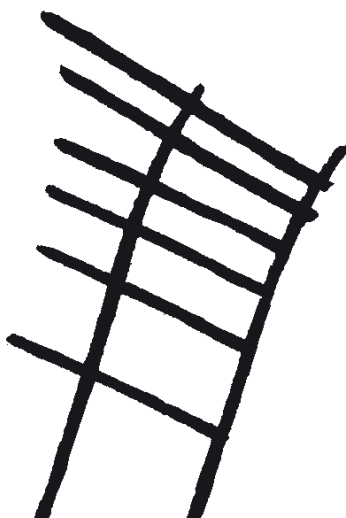


Plate 9

Peña del Letrero, Llano de Zonzamas (detail; type 9)

"Ladder"

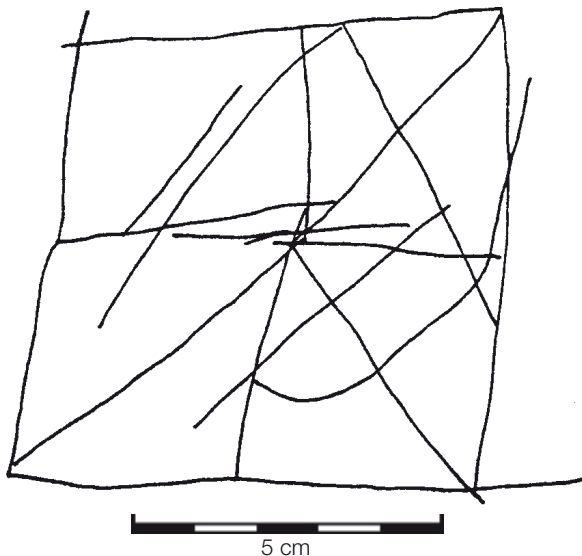
See also plate 31.



Subdivided rectangles on non-horizontal panels  
(inclusive other superposing and underlying lines)

Plate 10

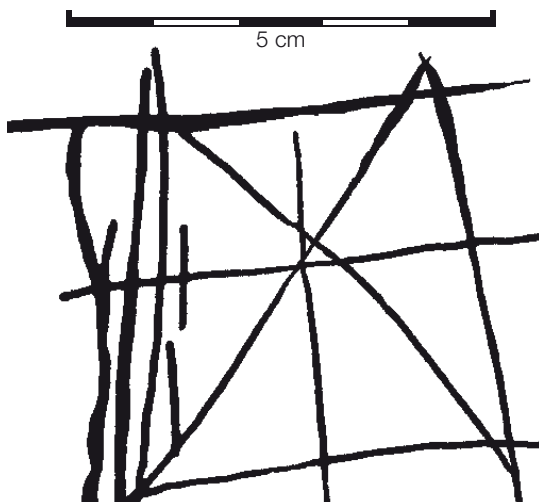
Peña del Conchero, Llano de Zonzamas (type 18b)



Both examples are "graphical prayers" for happiness, derived from antique board games (*tabulae lusoriae*).

Plate 11

Los Roques II, Las Breñas (detail; type 18b)



Silhouettes of feet and sandals  
(inclusive other superposing and underlying lines)

Plate 12 | Piedra del Majo, Caldera de Zonzamas (type 20b)

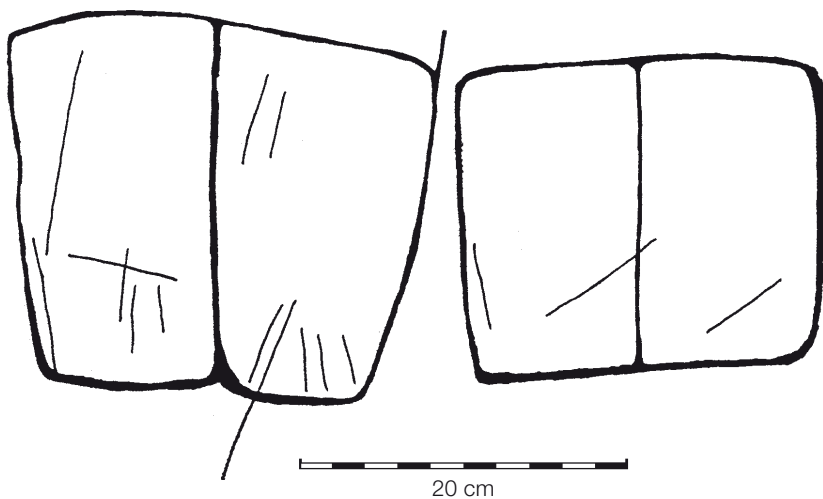
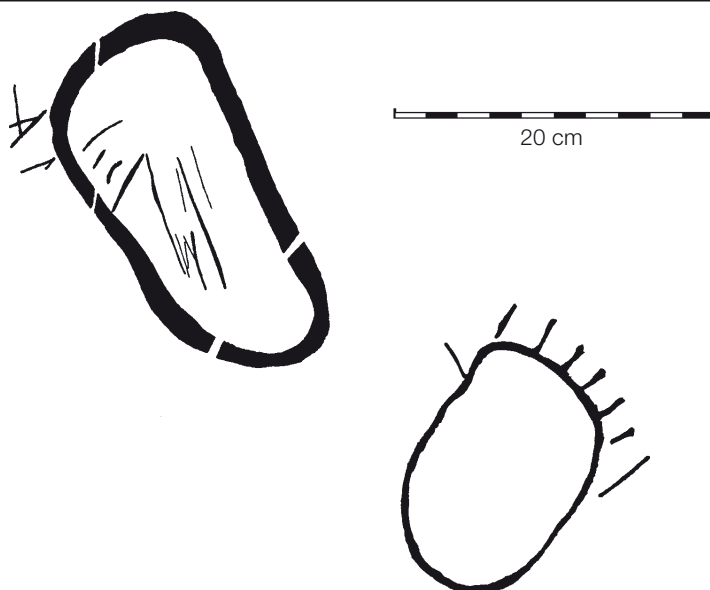
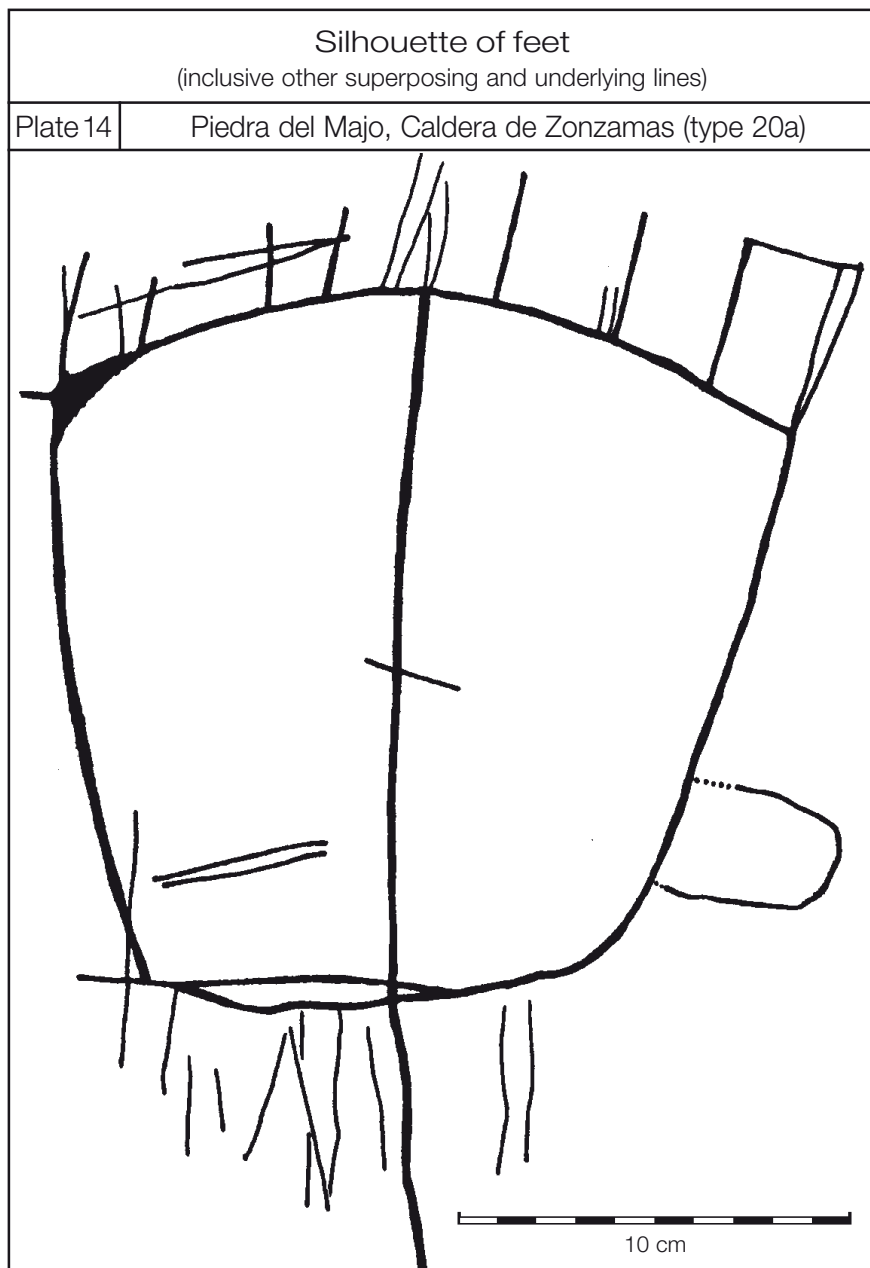


Plate 13 | Peña del Conchero, Llano de Zonzamas (type 20a/c)



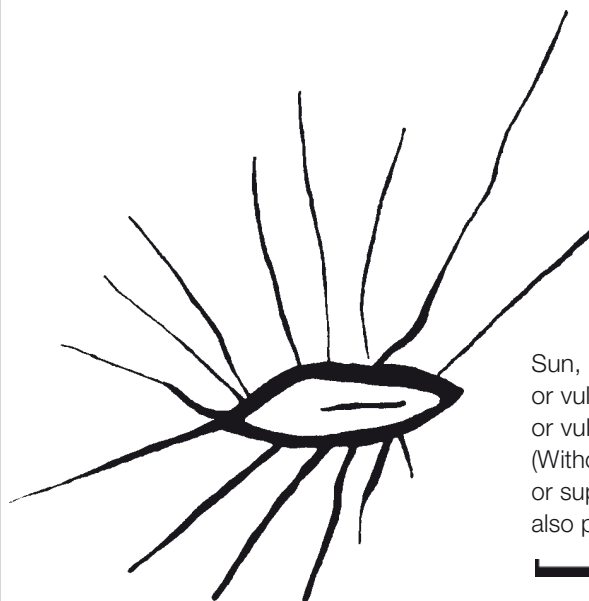


The dividing-up of the podomorphs on Lanzarote into only three types is a simplification for the overview in Plate 1 (please see Ulbrich 2011: 137 for full specifications).



Plate 15

Peña de la Fecundidad, Vega de Guenia (detail; type 21b)



Sun, or vulva with hair,  
or vulva with sunrays,  
or vulva with liquids?  
(Without other underlying  
or superposing lines; see  
also plate 4, right part)



Plate 16

Vega de Temuime I, Playa Quemada (types 21c, 3b)



Most probably a pubic tri-  
angle/vulva (without other  
underlying or superposing  
lines).


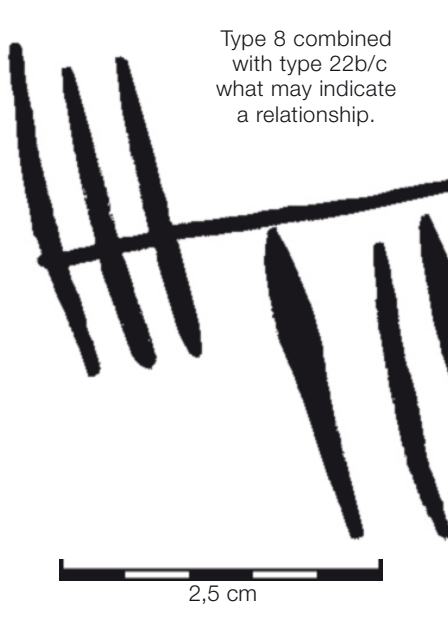


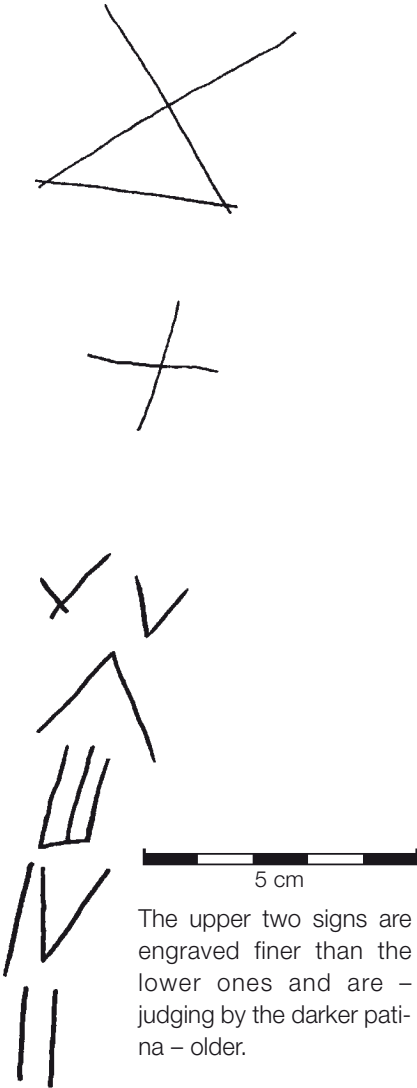

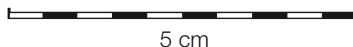
Plate 17	Peña del Conchero, Llano de Zonzamas (detail; type 4*)	Plate 18	Barranco de Las Piletas, El Mojón (detail; type 8)
 <p>*Including types 3a/b, 11, 14 and perhaps 27.</p>		 <p>Type 8 combined with type 22b/c what may indicate a relationship.</p>	
Plate 19	Stele I, Zonzamas (type 17)	Plate 20	Valle de Fuente Salada (type 26a)
 <p>(Sketch: Balbin Behrmann et alii 1987)</p>		 <p>Boat with Late Bronze Age ornament on bow or stem (panel approximately 1000-900 BCE)</p>	

Plate 21	Llano de Zonzamas (type 33)	Plate 22	Peña del Espino, Vega de Guenia (type 16*)
	<p data-bbox="165 240 533 344">Recent Berber inscription, probably Tifinagh-style of slaves (14th to 17th century)</p>   <p data-bbox="138 1299 560 1426">According to the discoverer – Agustín Pallarés Padilla (who made a photo) – the signs are approximately 1 cm wide.</p>		<p data-bbox="631 240 938 309">*Combined with types 3b, 11 and perhaps 13</p>   <p data-bbox="598 1307 972 1370">The fat lines on the right side are very deeply carved.</p>

Libyco-Berber script (without other superposing or underlying lines)			
Plate 23	Peña de Juan del Hierro, Sóo (type 32)	Plate 24	Peña de Luis Cabrera, Mña. Guenia (type 32)
 <p>The upper two signs are engraved finer than the lower ones and are – judging by the darker patina – older.</p>		 <p>The inscription is very small and fine engraved. The dot in the lowest sign is most likely artificial.</p>	

Unknown script, deeply engraved, dark patina.  
Resemblances to Libyco-Berber, Tartessic, Punic and Neo-Punic.  
(fine lines of type 11 neighboring).



Berbero-Latin inscription

Script: Latino-Canarian with vowels,  
including one Libyco-Berber character and one Latin ligature.

Direction: horizontal, left to right – Transcription: MASENT

Language: Proto-Berber.

Latino-Canarian and Libyco-Berber scripts on one panel  
(dotted lines are unsure or reconstructed)

Plate 27

Montaña Tenezar, Tinajo (detail; types 32, 34)

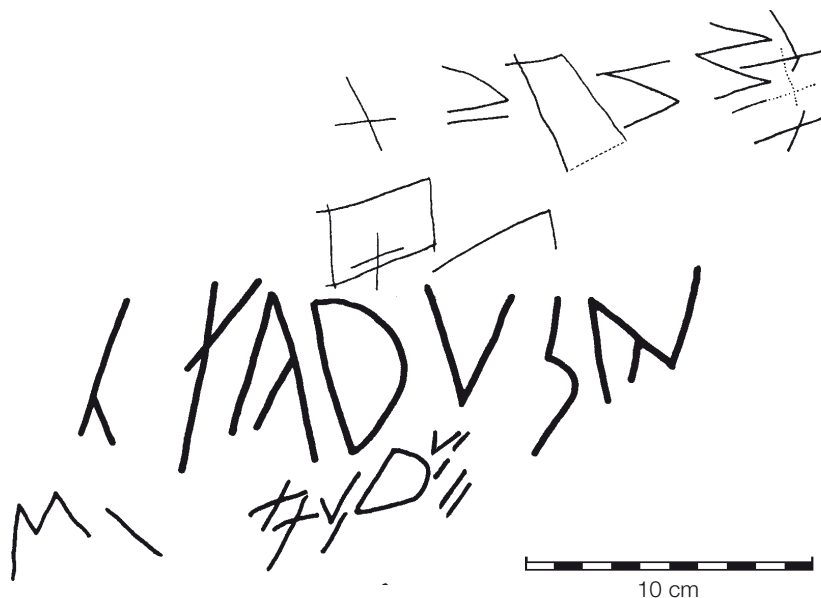
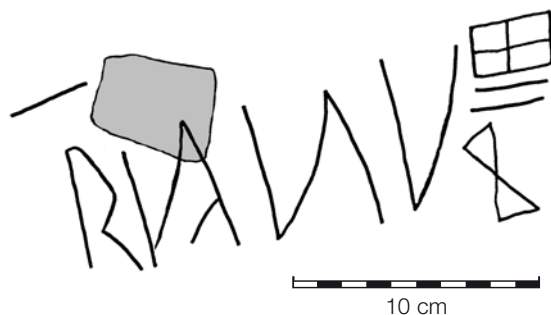


Plate 28

Montaña Tenezar, Tinajo (types 30, 32, 34)

The punched area is lying under the A of RIANV and is therefore contemporaneous or older.



# Script-like engravings

(perhaps phases of learning or unlearning)

Plate 29

Upper Barranco de las Piletas II, El Mojón (type 35?)

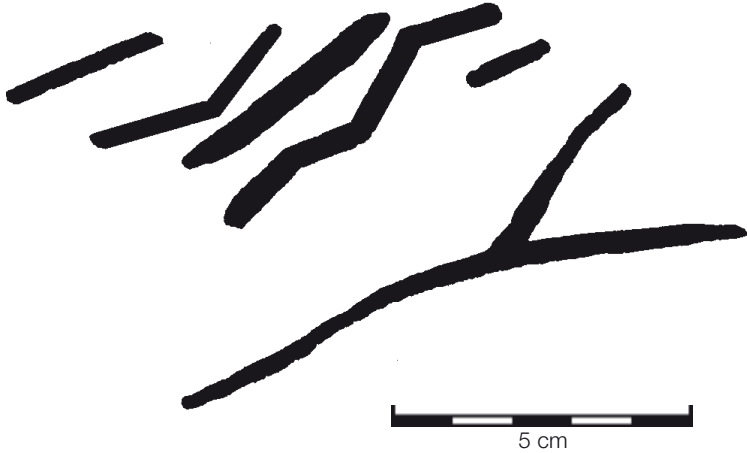
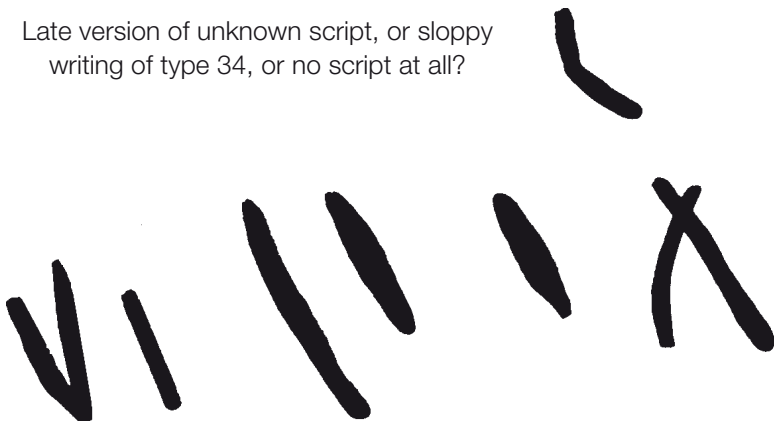


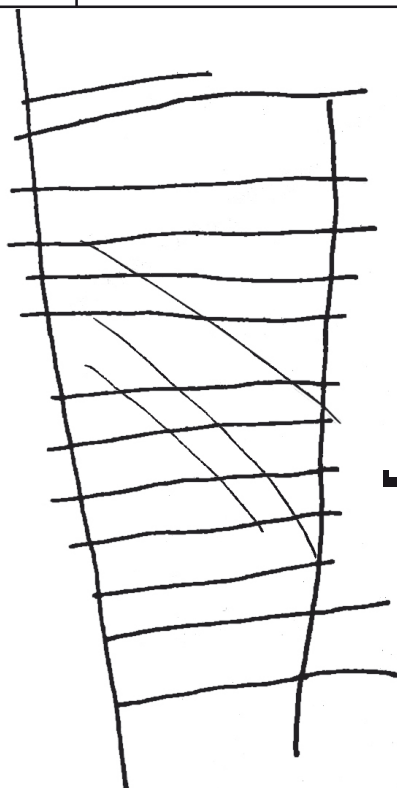
Plate 30

Upper Barranco de las Piletas II, El Mojón



Late version of unknown script, or sloppy  
writing of type 34, or no script at all?





"Ladder" – see also plate 9.  
Three lines of types 3a/11(/1)  
are superposed.



Berbero-Latin inscription

Script: Latino-Canarian with vowels,  
including one Libyco-Berber character  
Direction: vertical, from above to below  
Transcription: FELIS (= Roman "Felix")  
Language: Latin

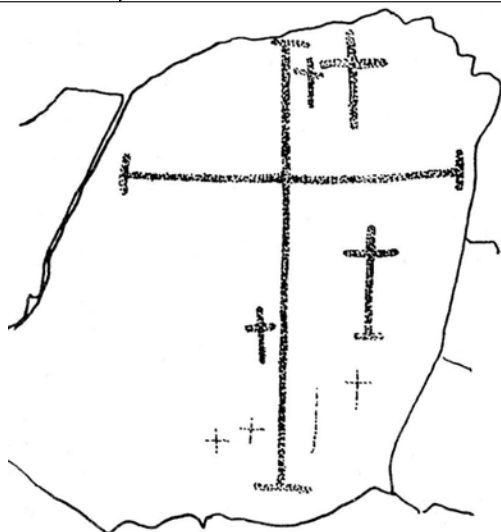






30 cm

(Sketch: Balbin Behrmann et alii 1987)



Probably  
Christian  
crosses.

\*Since this panel and its type of graphics is of unsure age and origin it has not been included in Plate 1.  
Sketch: H. Nowak (1977).

Small punched holes,  
representing most pro-  
bably seed (or rain).

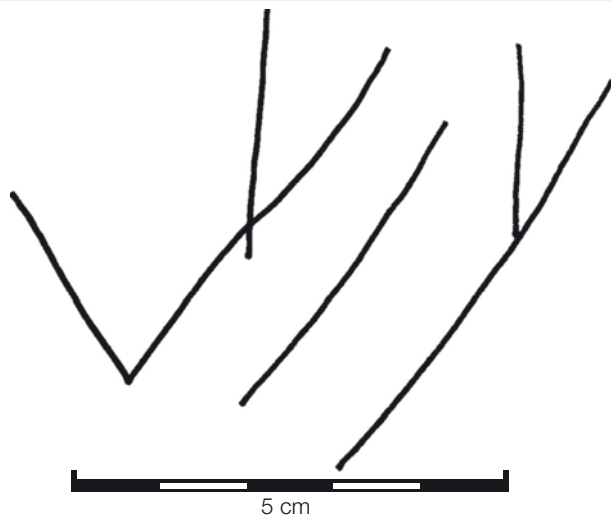


10 cm



All sketches by the author, if not otherwise noted.

Locations include the nearest village or better known point within a rural region,  
not necessarily the official center of a municipality.



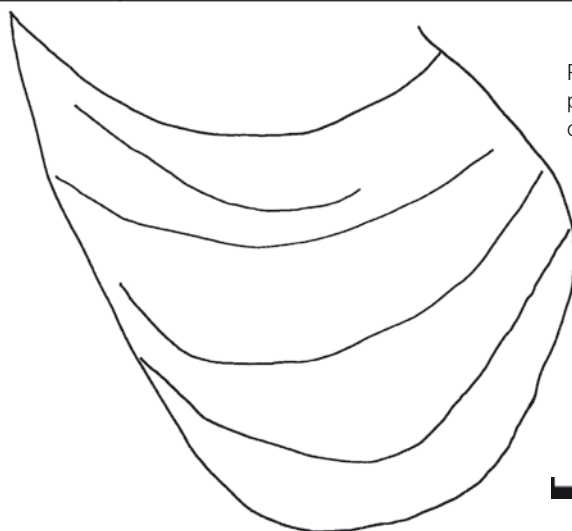
Berbero-Latin inscription

Script: Latino-Canarian with vowels and one Latin ligature

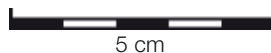
Direction: horizontal, from right to left – Transcription: TITU (Roman "Titus")

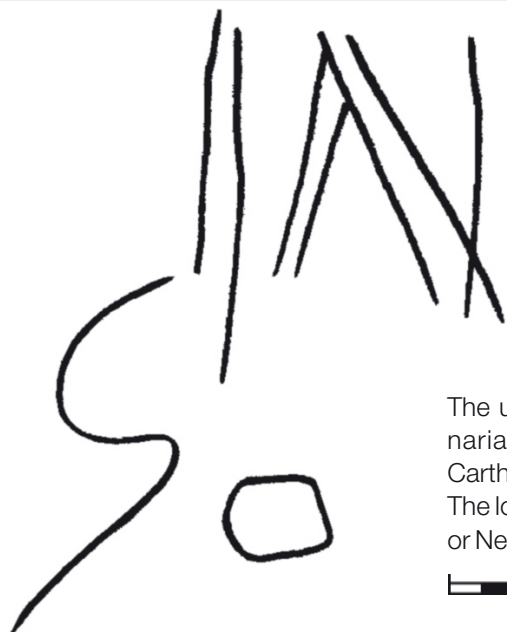
Language: Latin

(Or pure Latino-Canarian, transcribed from left to right U-TIT, language proto-Berber)



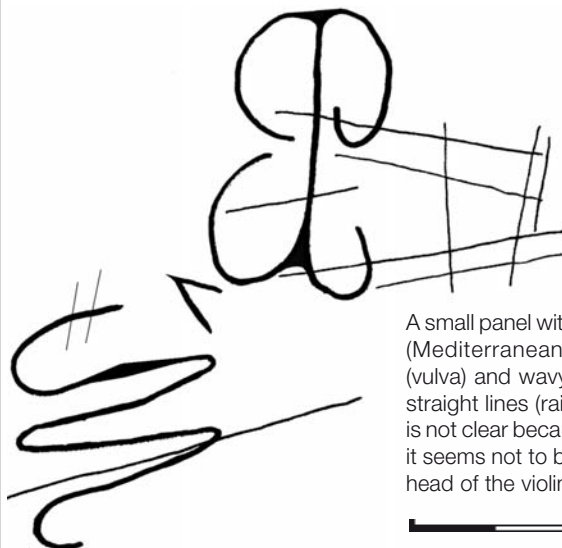
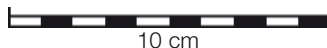
Perhaps one of the rare  
prehispanic depictions  
of nature: a lava flow?





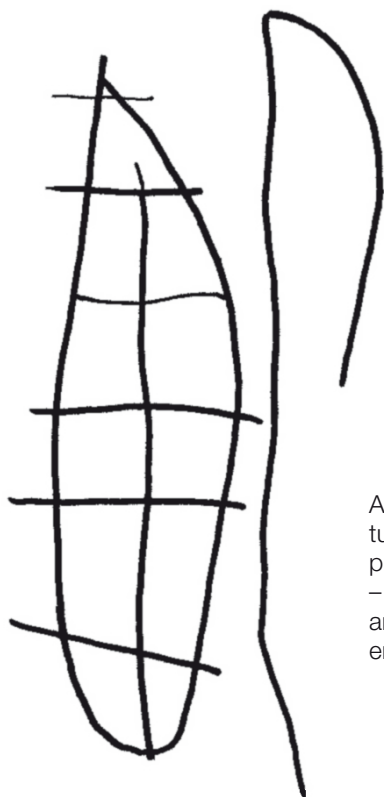
The upper line is Latino-Canarian script meaning the Carthaginian name FAU.

The lower line could be Punic or Neo-Punic, transcribed 'N.

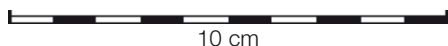


A small panel with a strong symbolism: fat idol (Mediterranean Mother Goddess), V-sign (vulva) and wavy line (liquid), superposed by straight lines (rain cult). If the idol has a head is not clear because of lichens in this area. But it seems not to be the long neck with faceless head of the violin-idols. Read also p.9 & 12.



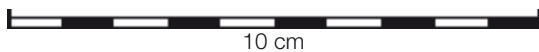
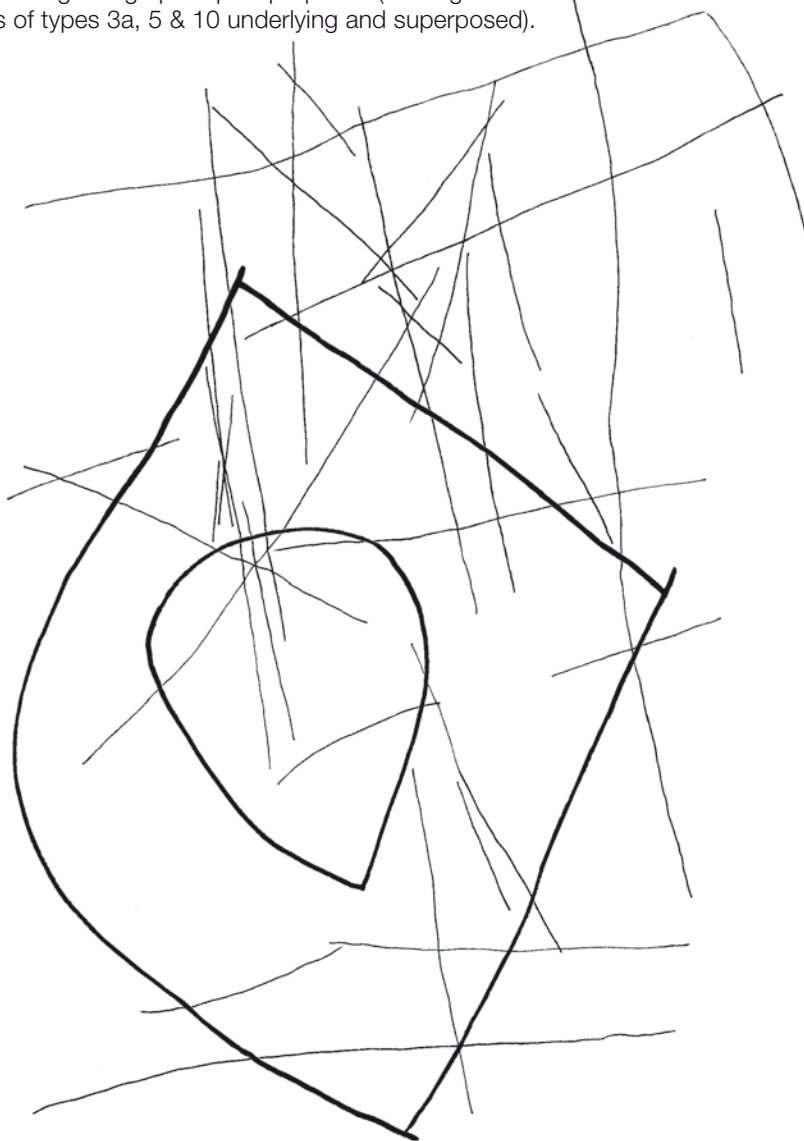


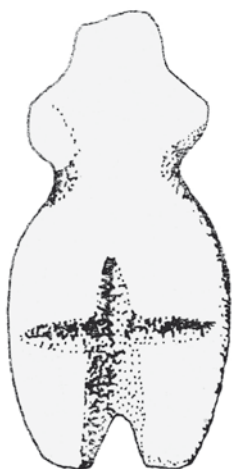
A vulva combined with agricultural field symbolism next to a phallus, the necessary "plough" – following the conceptions of antique, mediaeval and modern era Mediterranean farmers.



In certain cases this may also be type 8, 9 or 11 with a signification of multiplied phalli too. The multiplying of a symbol is often used to strengthen its effect.

A double-vulva – kind of vulva-in-vulva to strengthen its effects regarding apotropaic purposes (linear-geometric lines of types 3a, 5 & 10 underlying and superposed).





This little idol was found by Sir Arthur Evans in Knossos (sketch: Ucko 1968). It demonstrates that the vulva could be depicted during Neolithic I as a cross. This must not mean that type 14 of Lanzarote has the same origin; but it is striking that crosses with deeply carved lines can be found near pubic signs of type 21d (see sketch below, plate 44). Can it be that the idea of the cross in the Cretan figurine was invented anew by a person or a human group who lived later and at the western side of the Mediterranean Sea?



Deeply engraved crosses and pubics (V-signs) together on one panel, near the similar content of plate 39. This combination and make shows that crossing lines must not be meaningless or accidental scribbling.



