

Paleolithic vs. Neolithic Art

Major changes in style reflect different social conditions. During the Neolithic period (10.000 – 3.500 B.C.) the beginning of farming let society evolve in a more structured community, organized in densely built settlements. Symbolic representations of human activities, animals, rural life and weapons became very simplified signs carved in stones, and painted on potteries. Artist used just lines to represent human beings, animals, trophies, ploughs, weapons and tools. The organic forms of the realistic representation of Paleolithic time, like the Woman of Willendorf and cave paintings of Lascaux and Altamira caves, are replaced by very simple geometric shapes and lines. It's a strictly symbolic art that will later evolve into hieroglyphic and ideograms.



Valle delle Meraviglie, Italy, Neolithic

1.trophies 2. yoked oxes, ploughs 3.arrows, tools 4. human figures 5. farms 6. leather tanning 7. symbols

Any kind of paint is based on *pigments*. Pigment is a color powder that can be obtained with ground animal, vegetable, mineral or artificial sources. Pigments need a *binder* to coat a surface with color and make a painting. For their paintings prehistoric artists used black and yellow manganese, red and yellow ochre, violet mixed with milk, blood and grease as a binder.

Please have a look at the wonderful Paleolithic paintings of Lascaux caves, France

www.lascaux.culture.fr/index.php?lng=en and learn more on the Neolithic tombstones of Lunigiana, Italy:

<http://www.statuestele.org/ing/116/1/statue-stele-lunigianesi.htm>.