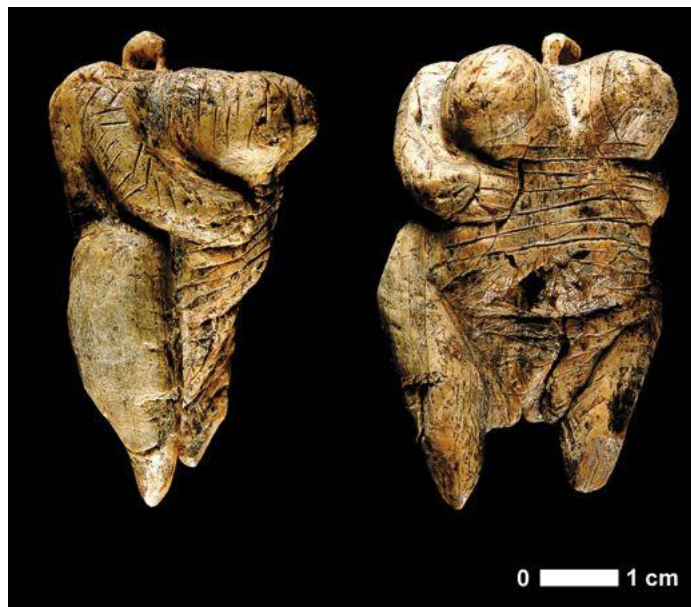


What are the ancient roots of Goddess culture in which our modern Goddess spirituality is based? ~ by Yukiko Amaya for POA 3. December, 2019

Ancient roots of Goddess culture go back into the mists of time. Despite patriarchy that took over many cultures around the beginning of the bronze age, the existence of Goddess could not be completely eradicated. No wonder. From archeological digs, we are discovering that the time of the Goddess may go back not just 40,000 years, but much longer into the human past. This means that the time of the Goddess, of living in harmony and respect and relationship with Nature and with each other, of creating art and beauty as an expression of these relationships, of placing value on non-material wealth, is deeply imbedded within our DNA and speaks of the deep and powerful, underground current of wholeness that underlies the surface structures of patriarchal dominance that suffocates life today.



“Venus of Hohle Fels” – 40,000years ago – carved out of Mammoth ivory, found in a vaulted cave in Southwestern Germany.

Thanks to works by people such as Marija Gimbutas, Monica Sjoo, Barbara Mor, Starhawk, Robert Graves, Michael Dames, Riane Eisler, Dion Fortune, to name just a few, information about Goddess spirituality that had for so long been relegated to the shadows is being brought forward into scholarship and rebirthed into our current day reality. It seems that up till around late Neolithic, early Bronze Age (ca. 3500 - 2500 B.C.), when the penetration of sky god / patriarchal Indo-Europeans into Europe began, Old Europe had developed into a place of matrilineal, matrifocal, Goddess centered agrarian communities, living in largely egalitarian societies led by priestesses. This vision of another possibility in human social and spiritual organization and orientation is so critical right now as we face the cumulative outcome of around 5000 years of patriarchal

separation and domination of Nature, women / children and enslavement / exploitation of many for the benefit of the few at the top.

What is really fascinating is that the interpretation of pre-history, of how to look at and understand archeological digs, started to shift in the 60's and 70's as women archeologists and anthropologists and mythology scholars started to look at the spiritual and daily life of these societies instead of just focusing on economics and trade through a patriarchal lens. We needed the feminine, circular, intuitive and inclusive thinking in order to bring to light these Goddess societies that were based on the life-giving, life-generating Great Mother. The "coming out" of Goddess spirituality and culture in our modern era coincides with the rise of feminism, and as women become more and more represented in all areas of life.

Goddess spirituality and knowing never could be eradicated because we are surrounded by Her, despite all the efforts made to annihilate Her presence. How could



She be? The power and beauty of Nature still awes us. Females still become pregnant and give birth, the moon still influences women's blood mysteries of the menses, the tides and growth of plants, the mating habits of animals, and the cycle of birth, life and death is all around us with the turning of the seasons and the passing of the years. We

all dream at night, and no matter how much we try to control our lives, things will happen that rip our clutching fingers right off and spin us out into the dark universe where logic and prior experiences only create more deadness.

When we are open to our senses and we are alive and with the world, in the world, then it is inevitable that we sense we are a part of the whole, of a mystery that is profound and dark, cyclical and wild, chaotic and beautiful. Perhaps this Earth based spirituality of the Goddess is not



something that the humans have fabricated, but it is part of the reality of what it is to be alive on this planet, Earth, that our ancestors in the far mist of time were able to sense through every fiber of their being. In order to live in Nature, with Nature, one has to come into relationship with Nature. Entering into relationship means that we need to learn how to listen deeply, with respect, to the other. Their lives literally depended upon it.

In that sense, our modern-day Goddess spirituality is all about re-remembering who we are, reconnecting back into what we feel, what we know deep in our bones, in our cells, in our DNA, in the spiraling energy vortex of ever renewing life. It is about reawakening our senses, our capacity to listen, to feel, to intuit, to *see*, deeper and wider than our eyes. It is to come back fully into presence – mind, body, soul, heart, spirit all interconnected and functioning as a whole.

The places and monuments that the ancients have left us help us regain this capacity to “walk both worlds”, i.e. to go beyond our ego-bound, human centric and limited sensory being that most of us get socialized into quite young. I have been fascinated with the megalithic monuments and the tomb-wombs of Old Europe, as well as caves and underground waterways, the sacred springs and holy wells. There is a resonance and frequency in these places that help awaken the psychic powers within us. It is a mystical experience that is not easily explained with our logical language and education. But, there is a feeling of being aligned and tuned into a much larger, cosmic resonance that helps me to open to a more expanded vision of Life. We are able to shift out of a contracted place of ego-interest, i.e. “What about me?”. Crawl into a long barrow such as Stoney Littleton in the Mendips, or West Kennet in the Avebury ritual complex. Sitting there in the middle of sheep fields, these long barrows still convey the power and magic of the tomb-womb. I believe that it is because of where they are sited, aligned with the power of the geomagnetic earth energies and cosmic vibrations of the sun or moon rises running through them, as well as ritual intent of regeneration soaked into the bones of the stones.



This knowing of the world and the cycle of our lives were kept alive through the patriarchal ages by women healers and herbalists, mystical societies and individuals who were connected in with the energies of the earth and the moon. It was hidden in plain sight – Stone of the Goddess in Mecca, Mary the Mother of God, the cult of the

Black Madonna harking back to our goddess origins in Africa, the female saints that took over the Goddess such as Brigid and Saint Brigid, the churches and cathedrals that were built over the ancient power sites and springs to ensure continuity of worship inadvertently kept the earth powers there alive.

Even so, it is a miracle that the Goddess survived through the massive witch-hunts that killed millions in Europe over 3 centuries, the thousands of years that the sacred blood mysteries of women were (and still is) deemed “polluted” and “unclean”, and women along with the Goddess were shunned, shamed, stripped of power and respect. Yet, truth could not be suppressed. Goddess culture was also kept alive in some myths, folk tales, herbal remedies, customs, certain community celebrations, rituals, and “primitive societies” such as the Hopis, the Akan people of Ghana, the Mosuo of China, that were able to escape the dominating influence of patriarchy over the milleniums. We find the matriarchal societies within Nature, such as the honeybees, elephants, bonobos, and orcas to name a few.

However, to find the Goddess of old in stories and traditions, we have to dig between the patriarchal overlay. For example, even a celebration like Christmas which has been completely taken over by Christianity conveys the empowering message of the Goddess if one digs but just a little. Christ-mas, the celebration of Light is very much the Winter Solstice, celebrating the rebirth of the Sun and light. The red and white garb of Santa Clause as he flies through the air drawn by reindeer, bearing gifts can be a thinly



disguised version of the Siberian, female shaman, taking Fly Agaric, the red and white mushroom found often beneath the pine tree, and either dried or transformed by the reindeer into a psychotropic drug, she would “fly” for

her people to receive vision for the coming year at Winter Solstice.

Another common clue is the slaying of dragons and snakes to signify the overthrowing of Goddess culture and matrilineal / matrifocal societies. In Japanese mythology, *Yamata-no-Orochi*, the Storm God Susano-o, brother to Amaterasu the Great Goddess of the Shining Heavens, is banished from Heaven and comes down to earth. There he

successfully kills the 8 headed, 8 tailed dragon/snake/monster, Yamata-no-orochi, who is described as being like 8 mountains and 8 valleys moving with red eyes. It seems me that it is a veiled tale of the conquering of a land by an invading race, and the defeat of a pre-existing Goddess culture there.

The amazing amount of scholarship, practice, experience and experimentations that have gone into understanding and reviving the Goddess spirituality in present day is truly a blessing. It is a powerful feat of revolutionary, visionary and evolutionary explosion out of the patriarchal stranglehold on our entire beings. It has been immensely helped by archeological, anthropological, ethnological, linguistic, artistic, mythological, cross-disciplinary work of brilliant and innovative women as well as men. I am personally very grateful for the gateway into goddess spirituality that was an “accident” in my yogic studies. I happened to meet up with the one yogi who was working with the tantric goddesses and teaching Tibetan style tantric meditation and energy / breath work. I am also fortunate to have been from Japan where despite its very patriarchal society and culture, the main deity is still the Goddess Amaterasu, and echoes of an ancient, matrilineal culture can be seen in the historic figures of female Empresses and renowned poetesses and writers such as Ono no Komachi and Murasaki Shikibu the 8th century, as well as in the legend of Himiko, the Shaman queen of Japan who appears in Chinese historical record. I have had the great fortune to have been mentored by an empowered elder, Deena Metzger, right as I was going into the “dark night of the soul” in my late 30’s. She taught me the importance of going into the shadows, into the underworld, to trust the dark, and to rely on other women.



In the end, I feel that the ancient roots of Goddess Culture is essentially the Earth herself and in the Moon, the night sky, as well as the Sun. We are being taught by Mother Earth to awaken again to being part of the whole, to open our senses and listen, to open our hearts and intuition and intelligence in service of all. We humans are definitely not the only ones with intelligence, emotions and sensitivity. As a dowser, I have

monitored and experience the energy lines, ley lines and spirals in the earth and the underground waterways that flow in temples and sacred sites everywhere, from Santa Fe, New Mexico to Avebury, to the Shrine of Amaterasu in Ise, to the powerful Aire’s Rock in central Australia, and the Temple of Bats in Bali. Everything is alive, as various entry points into the infinite whole are being more open to cross disciplinary

understandings, where biology combines with etymology, anthropology with archeology, music with science, environmental studies with spiritual studies. When I see the immense sophistication of the ancients in their abstract designs and art, in their understanding and exact calculations of astronomy and earth sciences, in sensing geomagnetic vibrations and grain cultivation timings, in the ways they were able to connect with the rhythm of Nature, and create a society that was peaceful, respectful and egalitarian, it is a great gift and revelation to know that these are capacities that we are invited to open into which we are capable of as a species.

And as more and more women and men are called to serve the Goddess, especially in face of the manifest devastation of Nature, habitat, and resources, I see this as Mother Earth calling us to wake up and realign ourselves with Her energy, to come back into balance with All.

