

Dear colleague and friend,

Please find enclosed EXPRESSION 17, an issue devoted to “Cult sites and art”. It opens up a debate on the role of art in cult sites and the role of cult in art. EXP18 will soon be out. It will focus on "Myths and memories: stories told by pictures". Ever since the first appearance of Homo sapiens, men tried to immortalize myths, to assure the survival of their memory. Myths are fundamental elements of the world culture, especially when they are the expression of forgotten cultures. Decoding such traces of identity and make their contents accessible to culture is an important task of research.

Megalithic monuments, ancient shrines and cult sites, decorated caves and rock art sites, are the containers of myths and memories; they are the source of a yet unwritten history of mankind: the history of what has contributed to its intellectual and spiritual identity.

Also we started working on a following issue that will focus on another fascinating topic. “The function of art: memorization, communication, identification and what else?” Such functions may vary from site to site and from one culture to another. Much has been written on the topic of motivation for art creation, in an old book of mine (2003) I listed 12 major theories and hypotheses expressed by researchers in the last one hundred years. Direct information from the field, provided by people who know the sites they are studying, contributing to an overview on an important issue: what was the function of art for those that made it? Why did they produce art? Colleagues and friends with pertinent ideas are cordially invited to express them. Do you know why the art you are interested in was done? We look forward to hearing from you.

Best wishes and cordial regards,  
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