

Before the Presocratics:

Corroborating the world-wide antecedents of Western philosophy, while pinpointing the rupture which Empedocles and his contemporaries constituted

van Binsbergen, Wim M.J., 2012, *Before the Presocratics: Cyclicity, transformation, and element cosmology: The case of transcontinental pre- or protohistoric cosmological substrates linking Africa, Eurasia and North America*, special issue, *QUEST: An African Journal of Philosophy/Revue Africaine de Philosophie*, Vol. XXIII-XXIV, No. 1-2, 2009-2010, pp. 1-398 (effective date of publication April 2013), book version: Haarlem: Shikanda, ISBN / EAN 978-90-78382-15-7; 398 pp, 58 figures, 17 tables, bibliography, index of authors cited, explanatory index of proper names other than authors cited, 15 x 20 cm, retail price EURO €80, order from http://www.quest-journal.net/back_copies.htm

Hegemony and counter-hegemony

In Early Modern times, Western Europe's military, economic and political power began effectively to extend to many parts of the world. This culminated in the 19th c. CE in the Age of Colonialism. The intellectual side of this process was the view that European (and soon, general North Atlantic)

- culture, art and science (then mainly viewed as the legacy of Ancient Greece),
- religion (mainly Christianity),
- languages (mainly 'Aryan', i.e. Indo-European)
- and even bodily characteristics ('Caucasian'),

were considered incomparably superior to those in the rest of the world, and without historical debts to other continents. Today, this *hegemonic* perspective is obsolete. In such fields as archaeology, ancient history, cultural history, anthropology, Eurocentric views have gradually been discarded in the course of the 20th century CE – under the impact of the decolonization of Asia and Africa; the explosion of transcontinental travelling and migration; the emergence worldwide of the multicultural society with an eclectically globalizing culture; counter-hegemonic intellectual movements such as *Ex Oriente Lux* (which recognized Europe's indebtedness to the Ancient Near East), Postmodernism, Afrocentricity (including the *Black Athena* thesis), Postcolonial Theory and its African variant as represented by e.g. Valentin Mudimbe, and Intercultural Philosophy; and, finally, in the last few decades, the decline of Western hegemony in the military, economic, scientific, artistic, and religious fields.

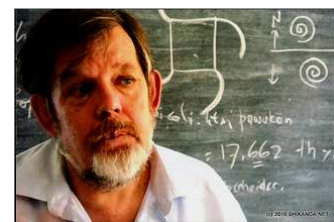
However, in the specialist field of the history of philosophy the construction of Western uniqueness has largely persisted unabated. Here the emergence of philosophy and science has continued to be attributed to the *Presocratic philosophers* in the Eastern and Western fringes of the Ancient Greek world (Ionia *i.e.* South-western Turkey, and Graecia Magna *i.e.* South Italy) – despite occasional, and generally dismissed, challenges to the contrary by the above counter-hegemonic movements.

The author and his quest for intercultural counter-hegemony

Wim van Binsbergen (1947) started out as an anthropologist of North African popular Islam, and of ecstatic religion and healing in South Central Africa. Several factors:

- his own extensive ethnohistorical and ethnographic fieldwork, and attending language acquisition, in several parts of Africa;
- his decades of supervising others in Africanist research mainly in the context of the famous African Studies Centre, Leiden, the Netherlands;
- and (in the last ten years) his sustained investigations of world mythology and extensive travelling in South, South East and East Asia and in Oceania,

made him aware of the deep-seated cultural continuities within Africa, and between Africa and other continents. These apparent continuities have subsequently been corroborated by extensive library research, travelling and incidental field research in Asia, North America and North America, and an international conference (Leiden



The author (Parahyangan University, Bandung, Indonesia, 2007)



Valentin Mudimbe



the author (squatting, left) in the final stages of his initiation to diviner-healer, Botswana, 1991



the author (foreground, right) during fieldwork in West Java, Indonesia, 2007

2012) now in the press. Selectively giving up his professional analytical distance in fieldwork enabled him to enter African life as a practicing diviner-healer in Botswana, and as a sub-chief in Zambia. These roles have constituted exercises in counter-hegemony. When anthropologists and other Westerners reject African cosmologies and epistemologies as *a priori* invalid, are they not overlooking the essential continuity between African and Western modes of thought, and do they not underestimate the world-creating, truth-producing potential of non-Western cosmologies? Is it at all possible to produce valid intercultural knowledge – the proclaimed aim of anthropology? Or is perhaps the very notion of a plurality of cultures, a hegemonic illusion? How should we rewrite African history, and global cultural history, when trying to counteract the mystifying effects of an hegemonic Western perspective?

From philosophical conceptual analysis to empirical historical research

Having established himself as a specialist in the history, ethnography and comparative study of African religion, around 1980, these are the questions that have increasingly dominated Wim van Binsbergen's research and writing. After occupying a sequence of professorial chairs in anthropology (including Leiden, Manchester, and Amsterdam), in combination with his senior appointment at the Leiden African Studies Centre, in 1996 he was offered the chair of intercultural philosophy, Erasmus University Rotterdam, which proved a stimulating context to pursue these questions from a different angle. Meanwhile he had initiated, with Peter Geschiere, the extensive research programme 'Globalization and the construction of communal identities' (1994-1999), in which dozens of researchers participated both nationally and internationally. In his emerging philosophy of interculturality, and greatly inspired by his counter-hegemonic roles in the field, the premise of the fundamental unity of humankind came to occupy a central place, but he had to admit that the empirical underpinning of that premise left a lot to be desired. Around 1930, the rise of classic, fieldwork-based structural-functionalist anthropology had meant the end of the prior paradigm of naïve diffusionism. After 1990, globalisation studies meant renewed and now more sophisticated attention for cultural transmission through space and time, but by then the main heritage of classic anthropology consisted in the paradigm of a totally fragmented patchwork of cultures, whose irreducible separate identity had to be cherished for political correctness, and whose historical connections thus remained out of scope. Wim van Binsbergen's intercultural-philosophical focus drove him increasingly, not so much to conceptual theorising, but to empirical historical exploration in wider and wider stretches of space and time. Ever since his pre-doctorate research on North African popular Islam (1800-1968), and his doctorate on *Religious change in Zambia* (1500-1964; both *cum laude*), his main research passion had been to create history where previously there had been none – like in regard of the effectively sub-literate segmentary society of the easternmost Atlas Mountains, or in regard of illiterate, pre-colonial South Central Africa. And ever since his first North African and Zambian researches, personal field observations would provide (in combination with comparative distributional analyses) the major inspiration and substantiation for his historical hypotheses – this is the reason why *Before the Presocratics*, although reaching far beyond fieldwork ethnography and ethnohistory, is dedicated to the memory of Douwe Jongmans (1922-2011), the author's teacher of field methods.

Challenges of method and interdisciplinary data

Seeking to empirically underpin the premise of the fundamental unity of humankind, meant major methodological challenges, and required access to a much wider field of data and specialist research than habitually available to an Africanist anthropologist. A decisive part of that trajectory was already being covered when, from 1990 onward, Wim van Binsbergen engaged in the comparative transcontinental study of divinatory (oracular, sooth-saying) systems, seeking to illuminate the striking similarities that became manifest between the divination system he had learned as a diviner in Botswana, on the one hand, and on the other hand other Southern African divination systems; the *Ifa* and *Sixteen Cowries* systems of West Africa and the New World; *Sikidy* of Madagascar and the Comoro Islands; the *'ilm al-raml* ('Sand Science') divination system recorded for Southern Iraq c. 1000 CE and subsequently spread all



Nkoya sub-chiefs including the author seated on the ground before the throne of King Mutondo, Zambia, 2011



Douwe Jongmans

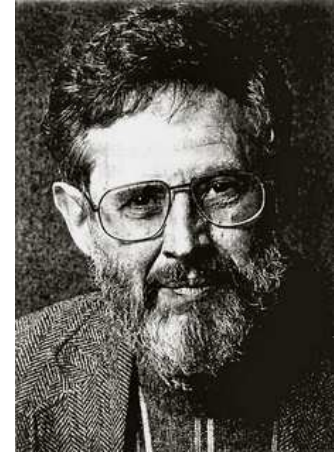
over the Islamic world of South and South-West Asia as well as North East and East Africa (with ramifications into medieval and Renaissance European specialist magic and even into Early-Modern peasant practices); and beyond that even, puzzlingly similar in notational system and divinatory symbolism, the Chinese wisdom system of *I Ching*, with its enormous impact on East Asian cultural history. Since Varro and St Isidore, such systems have been known under the heading of *geomancy*, i.e. ‘divination by earth’ (and not by heaven, as in astrology), earth or sand playing a role in some of the manipulations by which random numbers are generated in order to identify the supposedly supernaturally chosen entries in the diviner’s oral or written interpretative catalogue. Spending a year with the Netherlands Institute for Advanced Study’s Research Group on Religion and Magic in the Ancient Near East (1994-1995), brought within Wim van Binsbergen’s reach the specialists’ knowledge, vast library resources and inspiration with which he could lay a solid interdisciplinary foundation for his unbounded research ambitions. Further major steps widened and deepened this foundation. He joined the *Black Athena* debate that had been initiated in 1987 by the Sinologist and intellectual historian Martin Bernal (without turning a blind eye to the latter’s shortcomings, van Binsbergen largely defended Bernal against implicitly hegemonic criticism). Also Wim van Binsbergen was co-opted into the Harvard-focused rise of a new, sophisticated comparative mythology under the initiative of Sanskritist Michael Witzel from c. 2000 onward. All this afforded our author a stimulating context in which major methodological challenges could begin to be met; where he could blend in with numerous specialists in such indispensable ancillary disciplines as archaeology, linguistics, genetics, comparative mythology, classics, Ancient history, Old Testament studies, Sanskrit studies, Sinology; and where he could adopt-a number of existing theoretical models that were to guide his subsequent specific empirical historical research:

- geneticists’ now widely accepted ‘Out-of-Africa’ model;
- the state-of-the-art ‘Back-into-Africa’ model, covering more recent movement from Asia into Africa from c. 15 ka BP on;
- Starostin and Fleming’s *Borean hypothesis identifying, in nearly all major linguistic groups (*macrophyla*) today, traces of a reconstructed parent language supposed to have been spoken in Asia in the Upper Palaeolithic;
- and Stephen Oppenheimer’s Sunda hypothesis claiming decisive influence upon Western Eurasia (and, by implication, Africa) from flooding South East Asia from the onset of the early Holocene (10 ka BP) onwards.

Illuminating though these existing models were, Wim van Binsbergen yet felt the need to develop additional models of his own:

- the Aggregative Diachronic Model of World Mythology;
- the Pelasgian Hypothesis, claiming major cultural innovation in Neolithic West Asia followed by expansion into the Bronze Age Mediterranean and, from there, cultural transmission into the four directions of the ‘*cross model*’: North into North-western Eurasia, West into Western Europe, East into Eurasia all the way to India, China, South East Asia and even Oceania; and South into sub-Saharan Africa;
- the Hypothesis claiming a considerable *Borean component for the Niger-Congo macrophylum that today covers a large part of sub-Saharan Africa and that includes the widespread Bantu phylum to which e.g. Nkoya and Zulu belong;
- a world-wide iconographic and linguistic analysis of leopard-skin symbolism as revolving on the conceptual and cosmological contrast between granulation and smoothness;
- a model for the evolution of human logical capabilities from the Upper Palaeolithic on, from ‘range semantics’ via transformational cyclicality to, finally, the standard logic of the *Excluded Third* as defined by Aristotle;
- and a model for the specific succession of types of cosmogonic myths and Flood myths in the Eurasian Upper Palaeolithic.

These models and their empirical and bibliographical substantiation are now gradually being published (for details, see the bibliography in the present book), and they have meanwhile spawned a number of studies on such specific topics as the relationship between Ancient Greek Hephaestus and Ancient Egyptian Ptah; a statistical



Martin Bernal



Michael Witzel

analysis supporting the ‘Bantu as *Borean’ Hypothesis; a statistical contents analysis of Flood myths world-wide as a surprisingly clear window on the deepest long-range history of mythology; a massive book *Ethnicity in Mediterranean Protohistory* (with Woudhuizen, 2011); an edited collection *Black Athena Comes of Age* (2011), etc.

Into the Mediterranean / West Asian Bronze Age, and then the transcontinental jump into cyclicity and transformation

As long as the relevant language skills were mastered or refreshed, and the relevant library resources identified and perused, the geomantic research’s progress into the other parts of Africa, the Islamic and Jewish Middle Ages, Western Europe, even China, proved relatively effortless though time-consuming. Given the author’s numerous publications on this topic there is no need for an elaborate summary here. In the book, geomancy in the first place serves to drive home the undeniable empirical reality of massive cultural continuities through space and time, on a transcontinental scale, and profoundly involving Africa. However, the comparative divination project stagnated in the Late-Antiquity Eastern Mediterranean. Despite the long-standing consensus that Ancient Greece had significantly informed the Islamic and Jewish Middle Ages and well as South Asia, and the more recent insight (popularised by Martin Bernal) that Ancient Greece in its turn had been informed by Ancient Egypt (perhaps as a child of Africa) and Mesopotamia, nothing older than Byzantine sources could be found in the way of proto-geomancy. One striking fact however captured the attention. *Foursomes* (notably, four broken or unbroken lines superimposed upon each other) make up the standard geomantic configurations open for divinatory interpretation. Now, parallel to this Wim van Binsbergen noted the abundance and central significance of foursomes in the Eastern Mediterranean Iron Age and Bronze Age material – 6th-c. BCE Empedocles’ four-element doctrine (Fire, Air, Earth and Water, personified in the deities Zeus, Hera, Aidoneus and Nestis) as the alleged origin of modern natural science; Pythagoras’ *tetractys* built up out of lines of four, three, three and one dots; the Ancient Israelite *tetragrammaton*, – with a striking parallel in the eight Chinese trigrams leading to the 64 configurations of the Chinese *I Ching* oracle... Was there some underlying, pre- or protohistorical transcontinental system here?



the author engaged in debate with Egyptologists and philosophers, Université Catholique de l’Afrique Centrale, Yaounde, Cameroon, 2005



Pythagoras’ *tetractys* ⋮⋮⋮⋮ (see below, Chapter 5) and the Ancient Israelite *tetragrammaton* יהוה are shown as early expressions of a four-element system foreshadowing proto-geomancies in Mediterranean Late Antiquity

Fig. 2.14. Comparing geomantic notational systems worldwide (p. 68)

Three descriptive cases from three continents helped to articulate this hunch, and began to reveal the contours of what, *at least initially*, appeared to be an almost worldwide cosmology or worldview hinging on the idea of ‘element’, *i.e.* a handful of basic categories into which reality was thought to be divided.

- (1) Characteristic of the East Asian cosmological system is the notion of cyclical transformation, and while well documented for Taoism and throughout Chinese cultural history, it was particularly drawn within the orbit of Wim van Binsbergen’s research when in 2009 he was to give a paper on Japanese mythology at the Kokugakuin Shinto University in Tokyo, Japan. Here the fo-

cus was on Izanami, the primal Japanese goddess as described in Japan's *Kojiki* classic (early 9th c. CE). From her womb, Izanami produced the whole world without difficulty, but when it came to giving birth to Kagutsuchi, 'Fire', her reproductive organs were fatally burned and she died. Against an elaborate Taoist five-element cosmological background (*Kojiki* was still written in classical Chinese) Izanami's death may be interpreted as just a narrative elaboration of the logic of the transformative cycle of elements:

element A destroys / kills B under the catalytic influence of C

which has as its counterpart:

element A produces / furthers D under the catalytic influence of E,

and so on for all five elements Earth, Water, Fire, Wood and Metal.

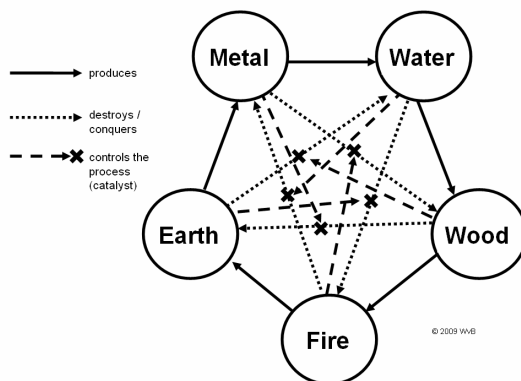
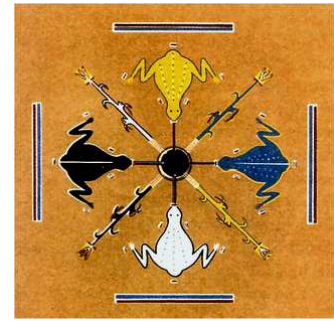


Fig. 4.2. The Taoist five-element transformation cycle according to Needham with Ling. (p. 121)

- (2) The second descriptive case comes from Zambia, South Central Africa, where Wim van Binsbergen has been at home since 1972. The Nkoya people possess an elaborate clan system that however is so contradictory and inconsistent, that one is inclined to see its present-day features as remnants, no longer understood by contemporary local actors, of what was once consistent and systemic. Over a dozen categories (totemic animals such as Elephant, Buzzard, and Goat, and further Wood, Smoke, Bell, etc.) feature in this system in dazzling arrays of combination and dissociation, of killing and producing – and thus inform clan joking, funerary responsibilities, and eligibility to the kingship. After years of puzzling the solution comes within reach once we consider these positions as superimposed threesomes (often synonymous), involved in a constant cycle of transformation distinguishing six elements – with a seventh, royal element added for the sake of dynastic history.
- (3) The final heuristic case derives from North American Flood myths. While such myths may be said to be of all places and of all times, as much as half of our present worldwide corpus of recorded Flood myths specifically comes from North America, and in many of these we see a thinly-disguised play on cyclical transformations between a handful of elements – Water (the Flood!) destroying Fire but being in its turn countered by whimsical other forces, especially Earth brought up by a mythical Earth-Diver in the form of a rodent.

Whence cyclicity and transformation?

Comparative linguistic and genetic research (*Borean hypothesis and Out-of-Africa and Back-into-Africa hypotheses combined) shows that only in the Upper Palaeolithic, at least 12,000 years ago, strands contributing to the cultures of East Asia, South Central Africa, and North America could have shared a common geography, in Asia. Could this mean the discovery of an Upper Palaeolithic, *substrate* element cosmology spanning three continents? Is this where the foursomes of geomancy came from? And the fivesomes of Taoism? And the eightsomes of *I Ching*? And perhaps



Navaho sand painting, North America, suggestive of a four-element cosmology



drawing by the Zulu lightning wizard Madela, South Africa, mid-20th century CE, suggestive of a four-element cosmology

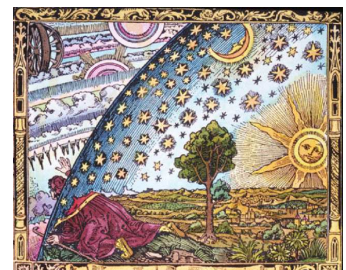
even the famous, allegedly seminal foursome of Empedocles? Did the putative Upper Palaeolithic cosmology merely distinguish a handful of simple elements existing and persisting side by side as immutable and irreducible ontological givens (as in the Empedocles reception, initiated by Plato and Aristotle)? Or did the putative Upper Palaeolithic system already have the idea of cyclical transformation that is at the heart of the Taoist and Nkoya model, and that reveals an ontology of ephemeral surface diversity under which the fundamental unity, not of humankind, but even of Being itself lurks? When and where did the putative system acquire its features of cyclicity and transformation? And if these features are certainly not generally *recognised* to be part of the Empedocles system, is it because they constitute a later innovation long after Empedocles? Or, on the contrary, because the more original system of cyclical transformations *was misunderstood and adulterated* when appropriated by the Presocratics in the relative backwaters that Ionia and Graecia Magna were at the time – as compared to the great centres of civilisation that had already thrived for millennia (Egypt, Mesopotamia, China); adulterated – and subsequently (devoid of its originally central transformative cyclical features hence ontological unity of Being) handed down in the Empedocles reception (which certainly extended to South Asia, Medieval Islamic and Jewish magic), to end up as a major stepping-stone for modern science? Or are all these (implicitly counter-hegemonic, anti-Eurocentric) long-range perspectives mere products of wishful thinking and political correctness, and should we instead interpret the available data, in the best hegemonic and Eurocentric tradition, as the gradual transcontinental spilling, in the course of over two millennia, of Empedoclean totally original four-element doctrine over three continents, with transformational cyclicity spuriously added in the process as far as East Asia and South Central Africa are concerned?

Transcontinental continuity in the Bronze Age ontology of the cyclical transformative unity of Being, and the Presocratics’ rupture

Before the Presocratics seeks to offer provisional answers to these momentous questions in a way that is methodologically sophisticated and that is painstakingly underpinned by high-quality empirical data. The book constitutes a radical departure from the still reigning *divide-and-rule* paradigm of compartmentalised cultures, regions, continents, and regional specialisations. Needless to say, the book does not claim to clinch, once for all, the case for the fundamental unity of present-day humankind. But it does offer a model of thought hinging on the plausibility, not to say factuality, of massive transcontinental continuity of culture and language from at least the Upper Palaeolithic on. For Africa, more and more marginalised in the last centuries and only in the last decade beginning to make a comeback, these findings highlight the great extent to which that continent and its inhabitants have always been part of global cultural history – and not just since the Arabian, Indian, Chinese and trans-Atlantic slave trade, the arrival of Christianity and European rule – in other words, not just because of other continents’ inroads into Africa. For Empedocles and certain other Presocratics this throws an ironic light on their proclaimed originality – although admittedly there is unmistakable, destructive, alienating but perhaps – considering the history of science – ultimately rewarding originality in the dropping of transformative cyclicity and in rejecting the standard system’s implied ontological unity of Being. *Before the Presocratics* thus on the one hand reinforces the eminently counter-hegemonic and counter-Eurocentric position to the effect that philosophy and science have been the products of all continents, and constitute the common heritage of all humankind. On the other hand, however, the book does admit that the Presocratics made a difference, and enables us to pinpoint what that difference consisted in. When various Presocratics, in succession, propose (p. 149) Water, Fire, Air and Earth as the ultimate primal matter, this can only mean that they were fundamentally out of touch but still remotely conversant with the standard Bronze Age cosmology of cyclical transformation of elements. With the exception of Parmenides (who continued to stress the unity and immutability of Being), the Presocratics had begun to reject the Bronze Age standard ontology (for which the Egyptologist Hornung coined the phrase *Der Eine und die Vielen*): *the fundamental unity of Being*, of which the specific forms in which the world presented itself to the senses (as any of the elements) were only ephemeral and transitory. Empedocles, and the Empedoclean passages in Plato and Aristotle, may (Chapter 5) still be read as testimonies of the



Ancient Egyptian Canopian vessels to contain a mummified person’s viscera – suggestive of a four-element cosmology



The Eurocentric myth of the Presocratics: Early Modern or more recent representation of Empedocles breaking through the sphere of Heaven

standard Bronze Age element cosmology of cyclical transformation. But especially in the subsequent reception, as Greek science and philosophy were firmly establishing themselves, an ontology of fragmented, parallel disunity of Being, of *stable and immutable* elements, eclipsed this older, more harmonious and healthy insight. This opened the way towards Man's not just linguistic and reflexive, *but collectively institutionalised and scientifically underpinned* separation from the world, in Hellenism, the first-millennium Arabs and Indians, and the emergence of modern science in Late Mediaeval and Early Modern Europe. In the last analysis, that – from a fragmented, Modern scientific position of entrenched parallel positions of identity – we need to *argue* the fundamental unity of humankind, has part of its roots here, in the Presocratic's initiating ontologically estranged science.



The famous 'dead-man' scene, Lascaux, France, Upper Palaeolithic

Across its nine chapters, *Before the Presocratics* tests Working Hypothesis (1):

- (1) 'a transformative cycle of elements (as attested in East Asia and Central Africa) has constituted a global substrate since the Upper Palaeolithic (over 12,000 years ago), informing (*but not from a Pelasgian source, as the book's blurb states by a slip of the pen – the original Pelasgian context is the West Asian Neolithic and not the Upper Palaeolithic*) Eurasian, African and North American cosmologies'.

An Alternative Working Hypothesis posits (2):

- (2) 'the transformative cycle of elements only dates from the West Asian Bronze Age' (5,000-3,000 years ago), perhaps from a "Pelasgian", supposedly proto-African source, and was subsequently transmitted transcontinentally on the wings of the Pelasgian 'cross model'; it was in this way that it ended up in East Asia

We also examine (3)

- (3) 'the possibility of this system's occasional transcontinental transmission in historical times', *i.e.* in the last few millennia – e.g. to the Nkoya, and parts of North America.

Painstakingly, (2) and (3) are empirically vindicated in the book. Intermediate element cosmologies lacking the full transformative cycle are identified in sub-Saharan Africa and (as claimed decades ago by the Afrocentrist historian and physicist Cheikh Anta Diop) in Ancient Egypt, up to two millennia before Empedocles. The occurrences, in historical times, of the transformative cyclical element cosmology in East Asia, the New World, and South Central Africa (the latter most probably via a hitherto unrecognised *demio diffusion* from East Asia – a relatively recent event in historical times) are argued to be ultimately dependent upon this West Asian Bronze Age invention. This deliberately revives, with state-of-the-art linguistic material, Terrien de Lacouperie's notorious, late-19th c. CE claim to the effect that *I Ching* hailed from West Asia. Seeking to highlight the emergence of the transformative cycle in the West Asian Bronze Age, and its (proclaimed) subsequent transmission to East Asia, a pet Afrocentrist idea (e.g. R. Rashidi) is adopted: the presence (for which new archaeological and linguistic indications are adduced), in West Africa during the Neolithic and Bronze Ages, of a relatively pigmented, Pelasgian-like, Bantoid-speaking population associated with metallurgy *as a science of transformations*. The original Working Hypothesis (1), meanwhile, cannot be sustained: much evidence (Chapter 6) of Upper Palaeolithic element cosmologies is found (for instance through a linguistic reading of the famous 'dead-man' scene in the Lascaux Cave), and even indications for proto-elements are argued to exist among the oldest mythologies in the Middle Palaeolithic, but without cyclicity, transformation, and catalysis.



Elongated *labia minora* depicted at Göbekli Tepe. Pre-Pottery Neolithic B. Anatolia (8800-8000 BCE), suggestive of proto-African presence – just like the Biblical water name *Jabbok*, *i.e.* 'fordable stream' in proto-Bantu

Conclusion

Considering the immense skills, resources and collective efforts that a satisfactory treatment of the central questions *would* have required, there can be no doubt as to *Before the Presocratics'* immense shortcomings. And considering the geopolitically reinforced paradigm confronted in this book the author has no illusions about the dismissive reception awaiting his book in many scholarly circles: (as happened to Martin Bernal) inevitable transdisciplinary errors of fact and presentation will serve as pretexts *for an a priori rejection on paradigmatic grounds*. Yet the train of innovative and liberating rethinking the argument has started rolling, cannot be stopped.