

image). Rather, such images were born within these people's own minds, serendipitously generated as a neurochemical byproduct of an altered state of reality. Eventually, they realized that these images were culturally significant and needed to be preserved. And so they were. Early two-dimensional images, therefore, were not meant to be representations of the physical world *per se*, but of the shamans' own mystical journeys—snapshots, if you will, of a spirit realm miraculously projected onto and floating across the walls about them. Once this initial step was taken, however, symbolic art flourished.

Lastly, Lewis-Williams considers the question of why these paintings were made deep inside of caves. In this regard, he focuses on the belief that caves and rock shelters have typically been considered by ancient peoples to be portals to another world, allowing select individuals access to spirit realms. Indeed, to people of the Upper Paleolithic age, the very act of entering certain cave passages may have been equivalent to entering an altered state of consciousness. As such, the walls of caves were more than simple structural members. They most likely represented a veil or membrane separating the real world from the world of spirits. Depending on how a lamp was held, the play of light and shadow along the walls allowed vision animals to appear and disappear, seemingly to pass through this veil between worlds. Behind the veil was a world filled with powerful animal totems. The animal visions affixed to cave walls provided the people with tangible evidence that the animal spirits were really there. Within these chambers, they could see for themselves the magnificent visions that empowered the shamans of their community.

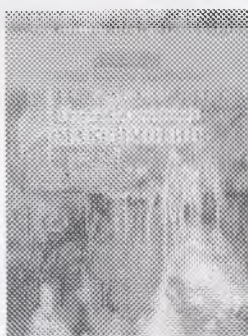
In *The Mind in the Cave*, Lewis-Williams blends laboratory and field studies from such diverse disciplines as sociology, archaeology, anthropology, ethnography, and neuropsychology to synthesize a shamanistic view of Upper Paleolithic art. From the vantage of this interdisciplinary approach, he convincingly suggests that the incredible parallels between shamanistic beliefs in such unrelated communities as North American Indians and South African San are related to the underlying neurochemistry of the human brain during altered states of consciousness. In a series of lucid and well-thought-out analyses, he uses these studies as building blocks to help bridge the gaps

in our understanding of the origins and meaning of Upper Paleolithic art.

Although it contains 27 exquisite color plates and 67 relevant black-and-white line drawings, *The Mind in the Cave* is not a coffee table art book of prehistoric cave paintings. It is a weighty read by any standard. However, for the reader interested in the cultural underpinnings of this spectacular imagery, Lewis-Williams' intriguing speculations about consciousness and the origin of art are sure to fascinate.

This engaging and thought-provoking book was awarded the American Historical Association's James Henry Breasted Prize. This award is offered on a four-year rotating cycle for the best scholarly work in the English language in any field of history prior to 1000 AD.

Danny A. Brass



GEORGE ALEXEJEVICH MAXIMOVICH

Edited by E. G. Maximovich, N. G. Maximovich, and V. N. Kataev. Perm, Russia: 2004. 17 by 12 cm, 512 pp, hardbound. In Russian with English summary. For ordering information, contact meg@permonline.ru or tonyfoldham@hotmail.com.

This book, unseen by me, was published by the editors to commemorate the hundredth anniversary of the birth of noted Soviet speleologist G. A. Maximovich (1904–1979), who founded the Russian periodical *Caves* and edited it for its first seventeen years. He also founded and edited the journal *Hydrogeology and Karstology*. His two-volume *Basics of Karstology* served as an encyclopedia for karst researchers. Because of language and political difficulties, his work has been too little known in the West. Jim Quinlan, the only American speleologist who followed the Soviet literature, cites several of his works in his dissertation. The book contains a biography of Maximovich, his bibliography of 544 works, memoirs by and correspondence with some of his colleagues, and photos of his life and career.

Bill Mixon