

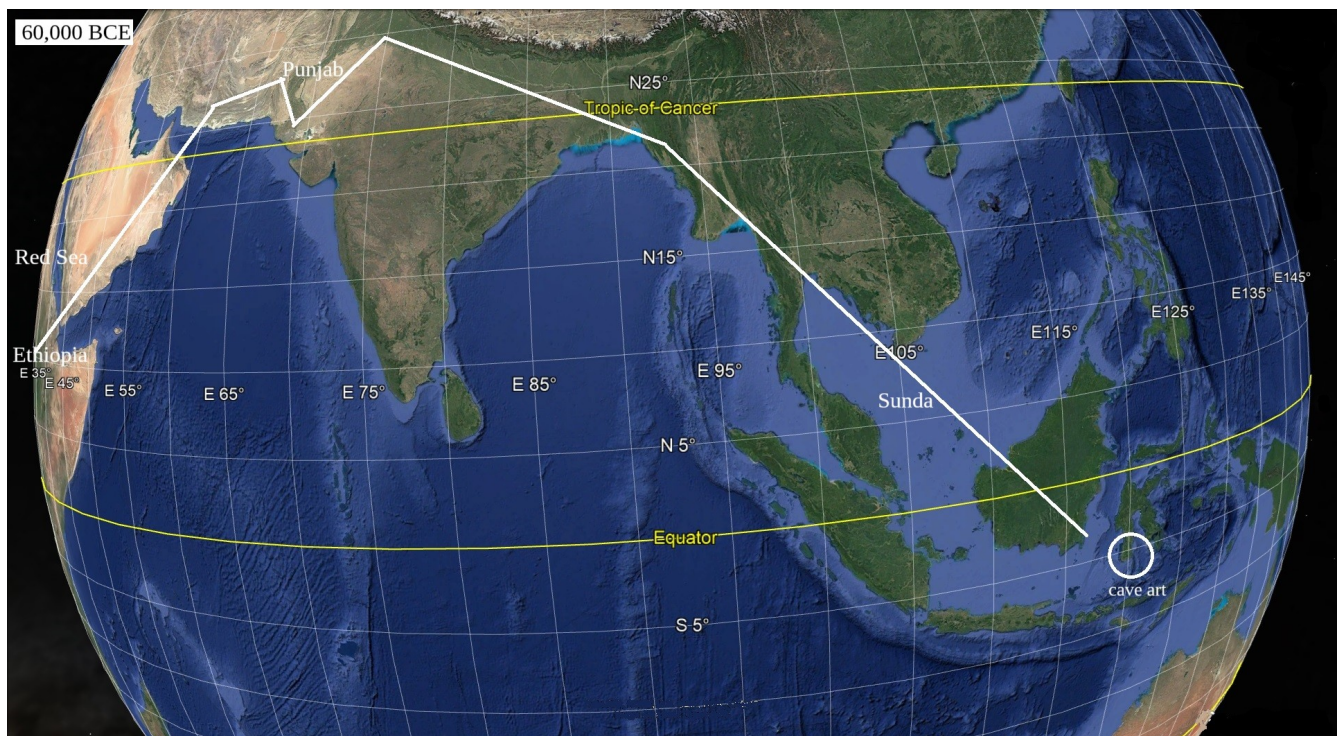
DNA C Painted the Oldest Cave Art in Sunda Land

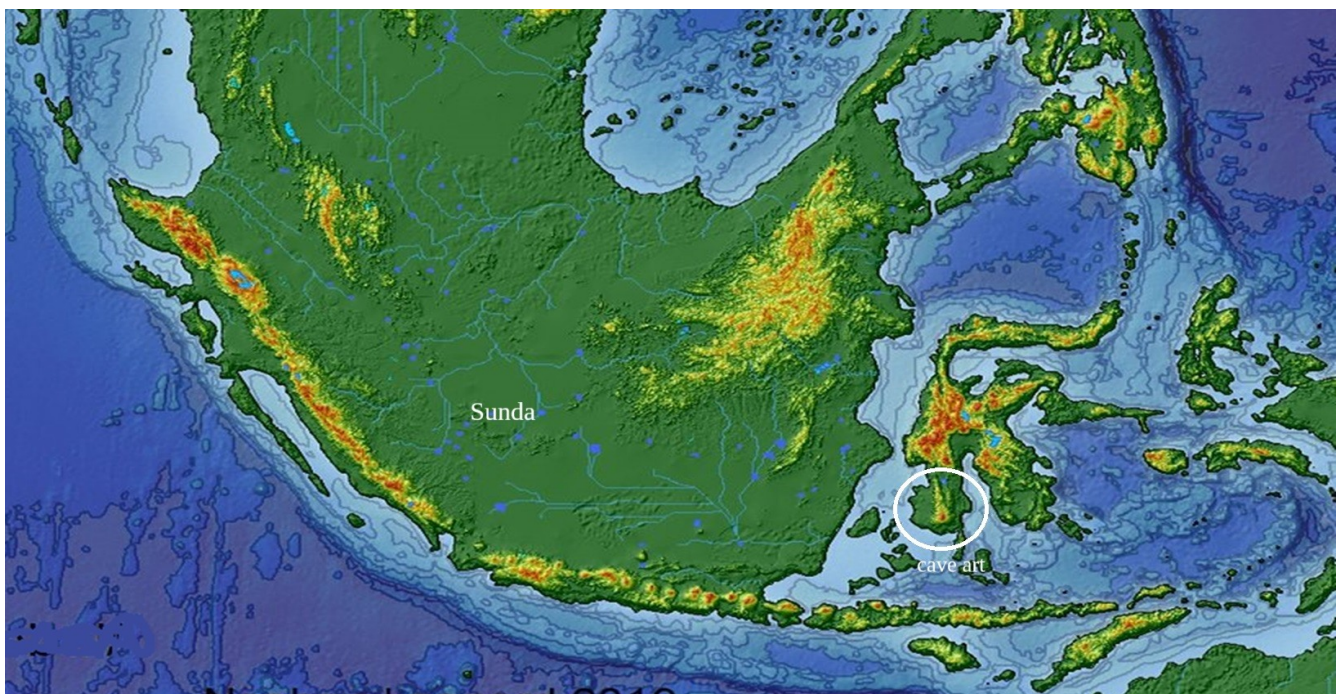
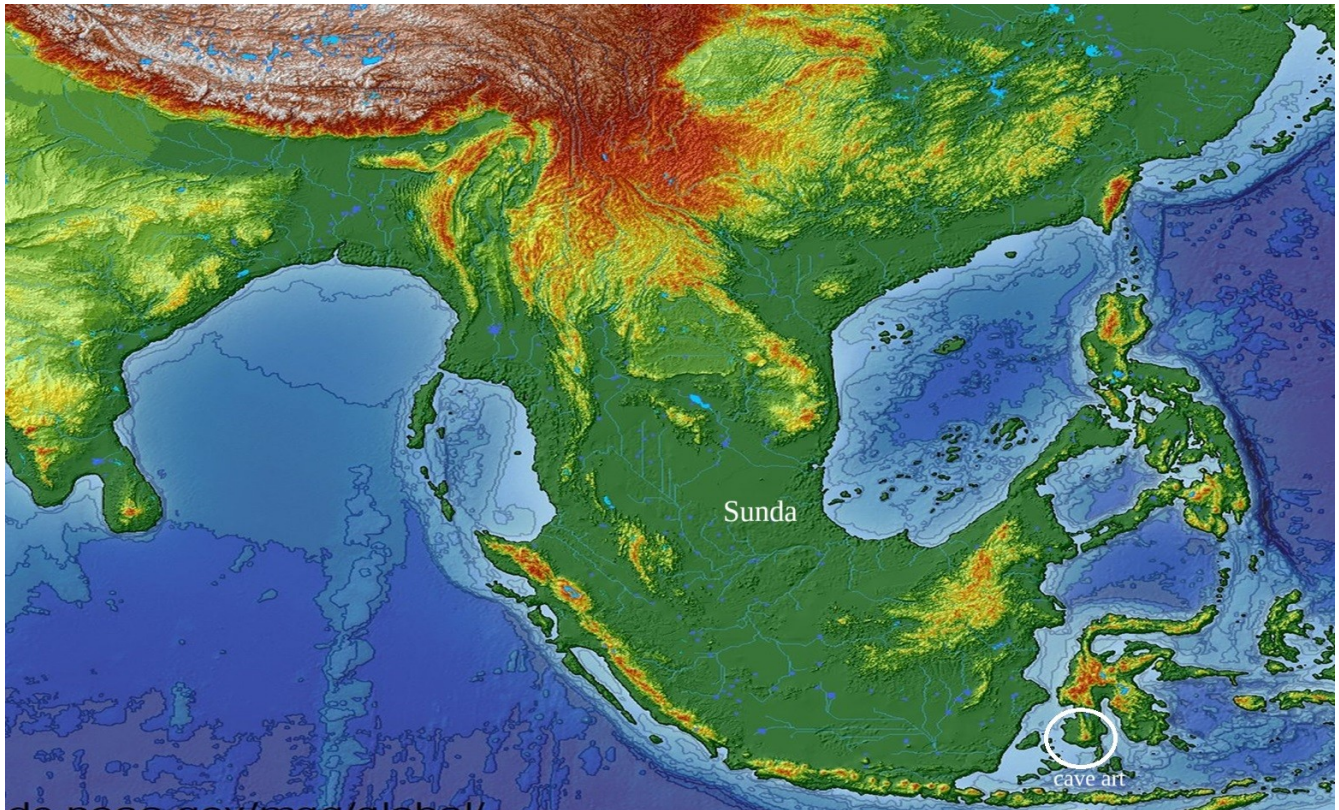
by Potluri Rao In Seattle ©2018 (CC BY 4.0)

Fifty years ago, people discovered some cave art on the island of Sulawesi in Indonesia. They were dated to be more than 50,000 years old. They were the oldest known narrative cave art, in the middle of nowhere.

Who were the people who painted the superb paintings that are comparable in technical skills to the modern-day paintings?

To find an answer, we created a computer-generated landscape of 50,000 years ago. Before the glacial melt, the seawater was far below the current levels. As shown in the map below, the area that is medium blue was fertile land with rainwater rivers. The ancient fertile lands are now submerged or turned to wasteland. We used NASA satellite images to artificially lower the sea levels. We traced DNA samples from Somalia to the cave art along the white line. The people in Sunda were the DNA C, the current population in China. When Sunda was submerged 10,000 years ago, they moved to China. They lived only along the Equator, warm and toasty. They never heard of the Ice Age or the Stone Age. They had nothing to do with the Africans or Europeans. They were highly advanced logic-based cultures of explorers and pioneers. They had an abundant supply of food resources year-round.

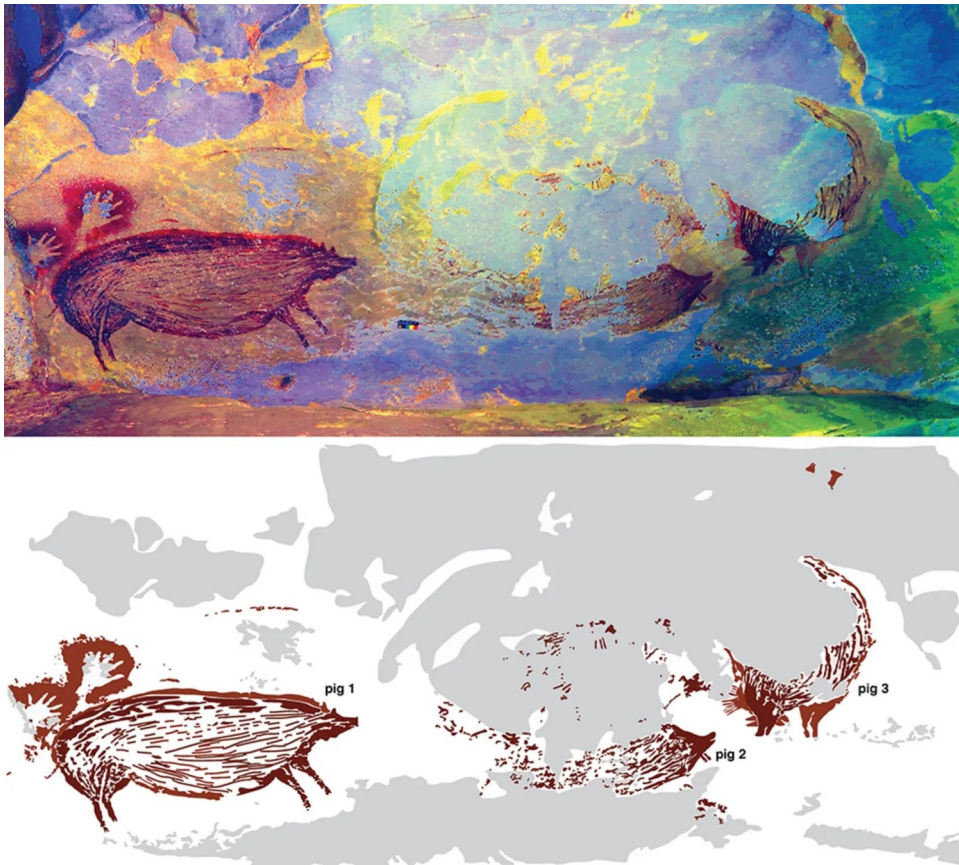




The above maps are computer-generated landscapes at the time the Sulawesi caves were painted. At that time, the seawater was far below the current levels, the current Thar desert was a fertile valley, and the perennial rainwater river the Yamuna connected Punjab and Sunda. There was a continuous path of rainwater rivers from Somalia to Sunda. DNA C voluntarily left Somalia 100,000 years ago and followed the Indian monsoon winds from Somalia to the caves.

Source: <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-55657257> 13 January 2021

Archaeologists have discovered the world's oldest known animal cave painting in Indonesia - a wild pig - believed to be drawn 45,500 years ago.



Painted using dark red ochre pigment, the life-sized picture of the Sulawesi warty pig appears to be part of a narrative scene.

The picture was found in the Leang Tedongnge cave in a remote valley on the island of Sulawesi.

It provides the earliest evidence of human settlement of the region.

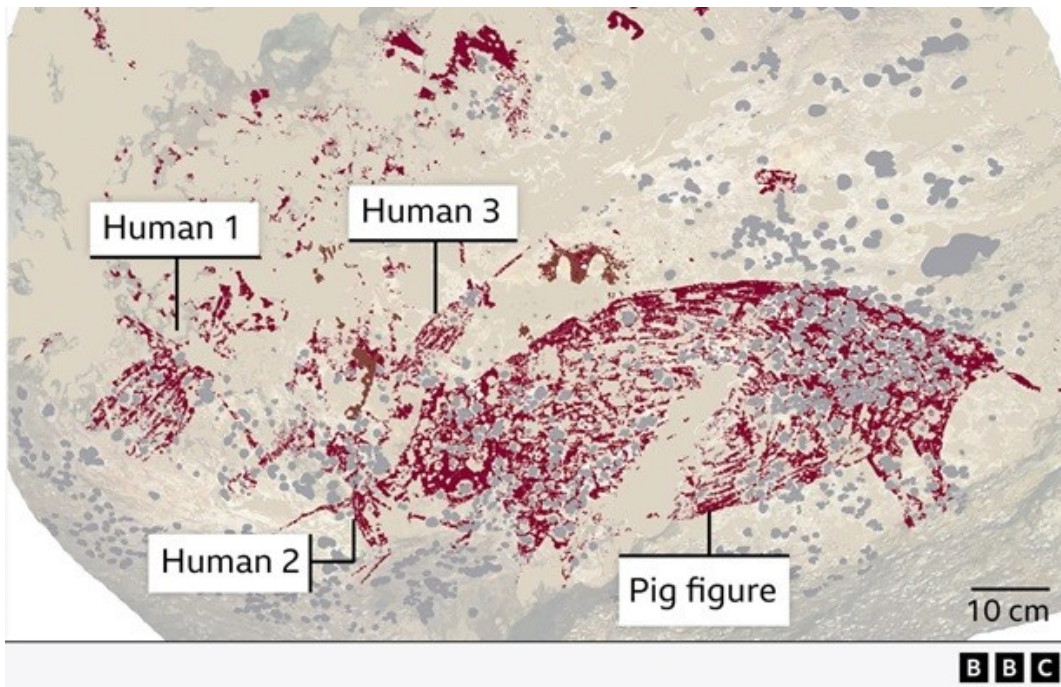
"The people who made it were fully modern, they were just like us, they had all of the capacity and the tools to do any painting that they liked," said Maxime Aubert, the co-author of the report **published in Science Advances journal**.

A dating specialist, Mr Aubert had identified a calcite deposit that had formed on top of the painting, and used Uranium-series isotope dating to determine that the deposit was 45,500 years old.

This makes the artwork at least that old. "But it could be much older because the dating that we're using only dates the calcite on top of it," he added.

Source: <https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/c0vewjq4dxwo> 3 July 2024
Pallab Ghosh Science Correspondent • [@BBCPallab](#)

The oldest example of figurative cave art has been discovered in the Indonesian Island of Sulawesi by Australian and Indonesian scientists.



The painting of a wild pig and three human-like figures is at least 51,200 years old, more than 5,000 years older than the previous oldest cave art.

The new dating was made possible using a new method which involves cutting tiny amounts of the art using a laser. This enables researchers to study different parts of the artwork in greater detail and come up with a more accurate dating.

The discovery pushes back the time that modern humans first showed the capacity for creative thought.

Prof Maxime Aubert from Griffith University in Australia told BBC News that the discovery would change ideas about human evolution.

“The painting tells a complex story. It is the oldest evidence we have for storytelling. It shows that humans at the time had the capacity to think in abstract terms,” he said

The painting shows a pig standing still with its mouth partly open and at least three human-like figures.

The largest human figure has both arms extended and appears to be holding a rod. The second is immediately in front of the pig with its head next to its snout. It also seems to be holding a stick, one end of which may be in contact with the pig's throat. The last human-like figure seems to be upside-down with its legs facing up and splayed outwards. It has one hand reaching towards and seemingly touching the pig's head.

The team of scientists was led by Adhi Agus Oktaviana, an Indonesian rock art specialist from the National Research and Innovation Agency (BRIN) in Jakarta. He says that that narrative storytelling was a crucial part of early human culture in Indonesia from a very early point in time.

“Humans have probably been telling stories for much longer than 51,200 years, but as words do not fossilise we can only go by indirect proxies like depictions of scenes in art – and the Sulawesi art is now the oldest such evidence by far that is known to archaeology,” he said.

The new painting, in the limestone cave of Leang Karampuang in the Maros-Pangkep region of South Sulawesi, shows representational art – an abstract representation of the world around the person or people that painted it.

It therefore represents an evolution in the thought processes in our species that gave rise to art and science.

Until 10 years ago, the only evidence of ancient cave art was found in places such as Spain and Southern France. It led some to believe that the creative explosion that led to the art and science we know today began in Europe.

But the discovery of coloured outlines of human hands in South Sulawesi in 2014 shattered that view.