

THE
COUNTERCURRENTS
OF PREHISTORY

*What Rare Genes Can Say about
Early Human Migration*



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5 ATALA

I don't believe in God but I'm very interested in her.

—Arthur C. Clarke

It's not every day that an academic anthropology journal publishes an article with the name Mother Goddess in its title.¹⁶¹ Most modern-day authorities ridicule the mere notion of "goddess religion." Nor is it a common occurrence for a prestigious medical journal to withdraw an article and instruct their readers to physically rip out pages in their copies as though it had never existed.¹⁶² Yet these were the very events that befell Antonio Arnaiz-Villena, a Spanish immunologist. Arnaiz-Villena was also accused by his scientific brethren of embezzling funds thought to exceed EU 300,000. It was an accusation from which he was exonerated, 20 years after the fact.¹⁶³

Arnaiz-Villena has an unusual approach to deciphering unknown scripts. He believes that 85% of the words that occur in Iberian, and other ancient writing systems, are related to the burial and funeral practices of the Mother Goddess

¹⁶¹ "The Iberian-Tartessian Semi-syllabary: Possible Evolution from Lineal Megalithic/Paleolithic Scripts and the Mother Goddess Religion," *International Journal of Modern Anthropology* 2/17 (2022), pp. 820-41.

¹⁶² A. Arnaiz-Villena et al, "The Origin of Palestinians and Their Genetic Relatedness with Other Mediterranean Populations," *Human Immunology* 62/9 (September 2001), pp. 889-900. doi:10.1016/S0198-8859(01)00288-9.. See Robin McKie (25 November 2001), "Journal Axes Gene Research on Jews and Palestinians," *The Observer*, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2001/nov/25/medical.science.genetics>.

¹⁶³ "Antonio Arnaiz-Villena," art. in Wikipedia, accessed Aug. 2, 2022. To give his critics their due, the HLAs (human lymphocyte markers) upon which Arnaiz-Villena relies to prove his point do not seem to be completely neutral but partly affected by evolution, environment and selection. That can be said of all genes and genotypes.

religion. He calls the Goddess religion a worldwide faith, with unified institutions, whose origins lie in the Mesolithic if not Paleolithic era. The Spanish physician also insists that the key to unlocking the meaning and mysteries of surviving inscriptions is a language similar to Basque.¹⁶⁴ He claims, furthermore, that writing systems developed in the West, not in the Middle East or with the Phoenicians, and much earlier than most people believe. Moreover, there was a time when the Sahara Desert was home to an advanced civilization that migrated west, north and south as the vast region dried up and became uninhabitable.

Desertification of Saharia

The transformation of Saharia is certainly a fact. The most recent green phase of North Africa lasted from around 12,000 to 4,000 BCE. Soil sediments show there had been a previous period of lush forests and jungles peopled by Old Stone Age tribes. In fact, the region had switched back and forth repeatedly over the centuries. During the last phase, corresponding to the Neolithic Age, as attested by rock art, North Africa was an idyllic hunting ground and then a favorable place for agriculture.

While Europe was still locked in the Ice Age, soil samples prove that North Africa received 30-40 times as much rain as it does today. Rivers flowed from the highlands of Adair, Aïr and Ahaggar, and Lake Chad stretched 400 miles north beyond its present shores. By the time of Egypt's Old Kingdom (after 3000), arid conditions caused another great exodus of wildlife conjointly with wave after wave of people immigrating.¹⁶⁵

¹⁶⁴ See also George Díaz-Montexano, *¿La Escritura Nació en Occidente? Marcelina Sanz de Sautuola y Altamira. Ensayo sobre la Escritura Lineal Paleolítica: El Descubrimiento de las primeras Escrituras Lineales Fonográficas y los primeros Mapas de la Historia, en Cuevas y Artefactos Paleolíticos de España, Portugal y Francia* (N.p.: CreateSpace, 2014). A western rather than eastern origin of the alphabet was espoused by the polymath Francisco Xanier Manuel de la Huerta y Vega as early as 1738 (Díaz-Montexano, p. 143). For a rather outdated discussion of the Iberian script in comparison with Phoenician, Punic and a syllabic form from the tombs of Alvão in Portugal, see Hans Jensen, *Sign, Symbol and Script*, 3rd rev. and enl. ed., transl. George Unwin (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons), pp. 38, 290-293. See also David Diringer, *The Alphabet: A Key to the History of Mankind*, 3rd ed. rev. Reinhold Regensburg (New York: Funk & Wagnalls, 1968), pp. 192-95. In vol. 2 are reproductions of inscriptions of Iberian and Libyan, including Turdetan, see vol. 2, pp. 174 (Fig. 14.15), 182-84 (Fig. 14.23-14.25). Diringer, like many others, has the relationship between Iberian scripts and Phoenician backwards, deriving the former, along with Libyan, from the latter. Iberian writing clearly predates Phoenician, by at least a thousand years.

¹⁶⁵ Brian Griffith, *The Gardens of Their Dreams: Desertification and Culture in World History* (Halifax: Fernwood, 2001), pp. 18-19.



52. The cover of the bestseller *Atala*, by François-René de Chateaubriand, illustrated by Gustave Doré (New York: Cassell, 1884), depicts its leading lady as a tall, blond, light-skinned, voluptuous, barefoot goddess with feather headdress, magic wand and shell necklace. She seems to wear a belt of tobacco leaves or herbs.

Basque, or Euskara, is a language isolate used today by about 750,000 people living on the westernmost ridges of the Pyrenees toward the Bay of Biscayne and Atlantic in northwest Spain and southwest France. Aquitanian, a language once spoken in most of western France, from the Loire River towards the South, was related to it. It is believed by one school of thought in linguistics that the ancient language documented throughout Iberia, Iberian-Tartessian, was its precursor. Basque is the only language isolate in Western Europe.

Arnaiz-Vellena's heresies do not end with his theory of a Basque-like substrate beneath Europe's Indo-European languages. His unorthodoxy extends to the hypothesis of an African origin for the Greeks, as well as Celts from the West. He thought matriarchal societies preceding patriarchal ones and an Indo-European homeland in Central Asia were myths. He believed the Jews came from Crete.

Arnaiz-Vellena's ideas and research turn European history on its ear.¹⁶⁶ Probably few historians have been so reviled since Marija Gimbutas.



53. Saharan Civilization migrations after 7000 BCE, slightly modified from Arnaiz-Villena. Dots indicate centers of matriarchal societies in Old Europe (Goddess Gene). Arnaiz-Villena; *atDNA* 11.5.

Marija Gimbutas, Arnaiz-Vellena's fellow heresiarch, long ago drew attention to a megalithic tomb and relief of the Goddess at Trigueros. She identified the famous Dolmen de Soto as one of two thousand ritual burial sites from around 4000 BCE in the province of Huelva, the Tartessian heartland.¹⁶⁷

A key concept in Arnaiz-Vellena's linguistic analysis is the religious term *The Door, ata*. This means "entryway" in Basque and Iberian-Tartessian, as well as in Guanche, Etruscan, Minoan, Berber, Punic/Phoenician, Hittite, Sumerian and Egyptian. The word appears on epitaphs and in cemeteries and megaliths in the sense of "entry to another dimension, the underworld, death." It expressed a

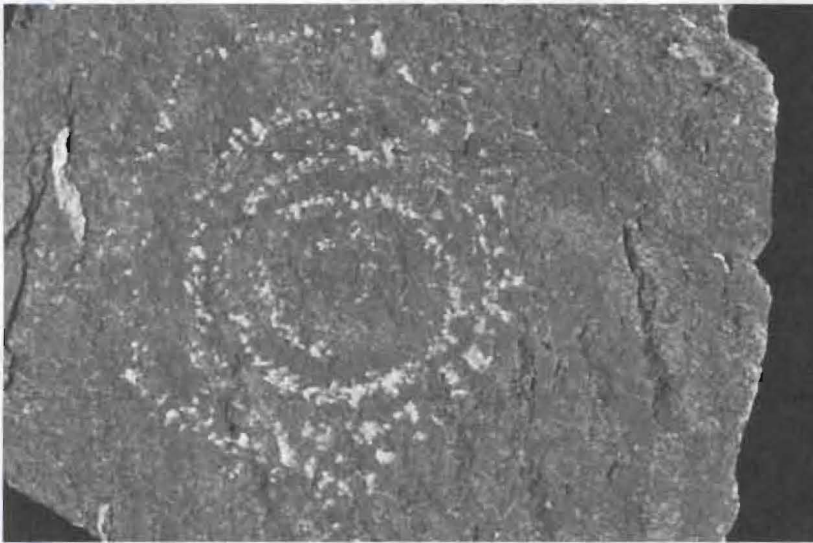
¹⁶⁶ See *Prehistoric Iberia: Genetics, Anthropology, and Linguistics*, ed. Antonio Arnaiz-Villena (conference proceedings from 1998, New York: Springer, 2012), with J. Alonso-Garcia, Chapter 9: "The *Usko*-Mediterranean Languages," pp. 205-46. One of his team's latest and best publications is A. Arnaiz-Villena et al, "Cumbres Mayores (Huelva, Spain): A New Striking Megalith Complex and Its Incise[d] Lineal Megalithic and Tartessian Scripts," *International Journal of Modern Anthropology* 2/17 (2022): 778 – 802.

¹⁶⁷ *Language of the Goddess*, p. 350.

central rite in the Goddess Religion.¹⁶⁸ Other matriarchal religious terms in Uskan /Euskan (Basque) that are identical or cognate in the same adjacent nexus of circum-Mediterranean languages are:

...land," *arka*, "grave," *arri*, "stone," *arren* "pray," *ba* "yes," *baba* "spirit," *bake* "peace," *bitu* "gather together," *eba* "dead" (literally, 'cut,'), *eme* "goddess," *ez* "no," *gune* "place," *il* "dead," *Jauri*, *Iuna* "Lady, Goddess," cf. Juno," *kai* "ravine, cemetery," *mama* "Little Mother, Goddess," *mu* "word, prayer," *su* "fire" (Sumer=literally Fire or Hot Land and *uda*, *ur* "water."

As I studied Arnaiz-Vellena's work, the meaning and significance of *ata* (or *AT* in semi-syllabary or abbreviated form) dawned on me. I reevaluated a rock inscription in Arizona which my wife Teresa and I had discovered in 2013. I had first thought it to be Latin.¹⁶⁹



54. Petroglyph standing for transformation and rebirth at the AT site in Tator Hills. The same meaning attaches to spirals and labyrinths on Hopi and Pueblo pottery and passage graves like Newgrange in Ireland and Gavrinis in Brittany. Nearby are symbols of fertility and food, butterflies and dragonflies. Photo by author

¹⁶⁸ See *Prehistoric Iberia*, Table 1, p. 222. It is distinguished from *ate*, the common word for "door," which is also the same in all the related languages, as *ata* (p. 223).

¹⁶⁹ On Latin in the ancient Southwest, see Donald N. Yates, *Merchant Adventurer Kings of Rhoda: The Lost World of the Tucson Artifacts*, 2nd corr. ed. (Longmont: Panther's Lodge, 2018), p. xv.



55. *Great Goddess with a fancy skirt at the Tator Hills site. She seems to hold a knife, representing death, and have two bowls. Like other goddesses of the dead, she brings new souls back to life and protects them like children under the ample folds of her skirt. The two bowls suggest weighing sins and rewarding good and evil. In her Egyptian counterpart, Hathor, one is full of milk and nourishment and the other full of gall and bitterness. Photo by author.*

Fertility and transformation symbolism dominates at this site. AT is probably the Usko-Mediterranean name *Ata* and marks a place where people held funerals, girls' coming of age ceremonies and rebirth rites, in other words, rituals of the goddess cult. The goddess figure in the skirt embodies life and death. She uses her knife to "cut" the thread of existence, like Atropos (Greek Ἀτροπος "without turn") or Aisa, one of the three Moirai, goddesses of fate and destiny, whose Roman equivalent was Morta. Atropos was the oldest of the Three Fates. She was known as "the Inflexible One." It was Atropos who chose the manner of death and ended the life of mortals by cutting their thread.

The style of the lettering is definitely Roman, a form known as *littera monumentalis*, with pronounced serifs, but it seems to have been incised *over* an older petroglyph or pecked markings, suggesting that the inscribers with their metal tools simply superimposed their own inscription on an ancient sign. An adjacent phoenix or thunderbird is pecked in the same way.

On the level surface of the outcropping is an inscription in the Iberian/Guanche linear form of writing, resembling the Roman numeral IV. It

could be the same as the word *BA*, marking the spot as sacred ground.¹⁷⁰ Iberian semi-syllabary characters are often mistaken for Latin.

In Basque and related or borrowing languages, one of the words for “dead person” is *eba*, meaning, literally, “cut.” So the worshipers of the Goddess prayed to her in her aspect as the Terrible One (Hecate in Greek tradition) to accept their dead ones and reincarnate them in the same clan or community. The Underworld was marked as The Door (AT). Atropos, or Aisa, or Morta, corresponded to the White Goddess, the crone. The other two Fates were Clotho and Lachesis, stand-ins for the Goddess in her Virgin and Matron phases.

While we were investigating this site, a flutter of tiny white butterflies poured out of the rocks and gently alighted on Teresa, covering her bare arms. Their presence seemed appropriate, since *psyche* can mean both soul and butterfly. In many ancient religions, including the Great Goddess cult, white butterflies represent transformation, renewal and rebirth. These had no markings and their wingspread was about half an inch, smaller than common cabbage butterflies. We found no identifying pictures on the Web.



56. Inscription enhanced to show detail. Photographed October 16, 2013 by author.

¹⁷⁰ See Díaz-Montexano, p. 436 for a site with a similar inscription. Roman numeral-looking inscriptions that are actually linear Iberian Neolithic semi-syllabaries are found in several funeral or burial contexts in Arizona and France; see *ibid.*, p. 437. For comparative tables of Iberian and Tartessian signs, see Elena Maria Whitshaw, *Atlantis in Spain* (Stelle: Adventures Unlimited Press; orig. title *Atlantis in Andalusia*, London: Rider, 1928), pp. 282-84.

Indeed, there was a prominent butterfly petroglyph beside a phoenix or thunderbird on the largest panel at the Tator Hills AT site. There was also a giant crack in the desert nearby, a two-mile-long earth fissure that opened around 2015. Could there have been other such gaping "entryways" to underground spaces in the area in the past? Was that why this outcropping was chosen as a birth-rebirth site? Certainly neither the modern inhabitants of Arizona City nor the state's archeologists had any respect for its possible importance. The former had littered the site with trash, including old tires and broken appliances. The latter did not mention it in any of their publications or surveys.

Tau Cross Motif

Todd Greaves was an amateur archeo-astronomer and rock art expert, as well as "former military man, cowboy, guide, graphic designer and contemporary designer, from Arizona, who died in 2008. Greaves authored several articles on the symbolism, history and dispersal of the tau cross motif (T) in archeology and art. He documented the Tau Cross in temples, tombs and monuments worldwide, from the early Neolithic Age (witness the stone pillars of Göbekli Tepe in Turkey) to the second millennium CE in the American Southwest (Chaco Canyon, for instance). He found its iconography in the Pyramids of Giza, Casas Grandes in Mexico, Indo-Tibetan mandalas, Old Europe, Palenque in Chiapas, Mitlá in Oaxaca, Tzintzuntzan in Michoacán, China, Korea, Peru, Etruscan tombs, Ecuador, Sulawesi, Bahrain, Sumeria and Oceania.

Everywhere the Tau appeared in prehistory, it seemed to have the same religious significance, a doorway, window or passageway serving to connect the Upper and Lower worlds, a symbol of the goddess as the transitional force of birth, life and death, of the Sun-god, and of royalty as ritual impersonators of the Sun—the sacerdotal emblem of the Son of the Sun and Children of the Sun. As to where its use and meaning originated, it could have been the Middle East or the Far East, but it was introduced into the high-culture civilizations of North And South America sometime before the fourth millennium BCE.

By tracing the Tau to all of the world's civilizations, Greaves wrote that it represented "the Holy Grail of diffusionism." Of the uniformity of the Tau tradition, he thought that "Understanding the role and the symbolism of the Great Goddess ... proved to be the key." Greaves concluded:

Her body represented, simultaneously, the Universal Womb and the Universal Tomb of mankind, making her the very personification of the concepts of the *threshold*, and the *rite of passage*. The *doorway/gateway* was also assimilated at some early point of time. The vagina became the Mother of All Doors, leading "out of the nowhere into the here," and an object of religious awe....

Greaves linked the Tau to religious rites at Çatalhöyük (7500 - 5500 BCE), to clay hut shrines in Old Europe, to the throne of Cybele from as late as the third century CE, to Inanna from early Sumer and to the Hathor/Isis cult of Egypt.¹⁷¹ In other words, before the world religions of Christianity, Judaism and others, the entire world worshiped a Supreme Goddess in charge of life and death, the visible and the invisible.



57. *Tau-shaped windows overlooking a kiva in Mesa Verde, Colorado. Photograph by author.*

¹⁷¹ Todd Greaves, "The Tau (T) in Eschatology and Religious Architecture around the World," *Pre-Columbiana* 3/4 and 4/1 & 2 (2005-2007), pp. 183-212.

Significance of a Name

Atala (or Atalia) was the name given to the Americas when North Africans and Europeans first sailed to its shores. Its inhabitants were called Atalans. Back in their homeland they were called Atalantes. We would call them Berbers today. They, together with their fellow travelers, the Cutans, made up the first peoples of North America, the first American Indian nations. Rafinesque refers to the New World as Atala or Great Atlantes. As we have seen, Ata means “The Door, Entryway,” entrance to another dimension, death, Underworld, Land of Souls, in the Uskan (Euskaran, Basque) languages that were once widespread in North Africa and Europe. This meaning seems to be the reason why we speak of “passage graves.” By extension, then, Atala can be taken as a title for the White Goddess in her role as keeper of the gates of the Other World, transformer of the dead and lady of magic.

Anciently, the New World, or at least the North American continent, was widely known as Atala. Berbers in North Africa used the name Atala or Atala of an island in the Atlantic. In the sacred books of the Hindus, Atala, or the White Island, was used to identify a continent in the Western Ocean. Francis Wilford, the translator of the Vishnu Purana in 1808, located Atala on the same latitude as the Canary Islands (about 28° N).¹⁷² Early accounts portrayed Atala as a type of happy or blessed Other World. A paradise.

Bold Navigators

“America was discovered by some bold navigators who were led by the trade winds to the West Indies in a few days from the Atlantic islands,” according to Constantine S. Rafinesque. “They called them Antila Islands, which meant before the land, and America was called Atala or Great Atlantes.” The first settlers, he wrote, came from the western edge of North Africa, the Canary Islands and the Caribbean. He makes them into the Atalans and compiles their history based on American Indian oral sources, including a version of the Wallam Olum traced historically to Tenskwatawa (The Open Door), Tecumseh’s brother.¹⁷³

¹⁷² See Tony O’Connell, Atlantipedia.ie s.v. “Atala.” Id., *Joining the Dots: Plato’s Atlantis in the Central Mediterranean*, ebook, (N.p.: 2018), forward by Dr. Anton Mifsud; review by Heinz-Günther Nesselrath, hnessel@gwdg.de, in *Bryn Mawr Classical Review* (2020): <https://bmcr.brynmawr.edu/2020/2020.04.15/>. Despite O’Connell’s many mistakes, as pointed out by the review (not to mention the fundamental impossibility of trying to locate a philosopher’s fictive device on maps), the work has some merit. O’Connell suggests Atlanteans were synonymous with the Sea Peoples. The Sea Peoples are very real and quite historical, as readers here have repeatedly seen.

¹⁷³ Constantine Samuel Rafinesque, *Ancient History, or Annals of Kentucky: with a Survey of the Ancient Monuments of North America, and a Tabular View of the Principal Languages and Primitive Nations of the Whole Earth* (Frankfort, Ky.: Printed for the

In support of Arnaiz-Villena's Usko-Saharan thesis, Rafinesque notes that the North Africans were the most sophisticated of the Old World peoples, and that "all those nations were intimately connected in languages and manners." The Kutans, of different culture, followed the Atalans. They were what we might call Middle Easterners or people from the East Mediterranean.

Plutarch (died about 120 CE) recorded that Greeks settled among natives who lived across the Atlantic Ocean. The Carthaginians preceded them. The Canary Current was described as early as the first century BCE by the Greek encyclopedist Diodorus Siculus. In 1492, it carried Columbus to the Antilles.

Atala and Athena

Atala is a formation related to Athena, whose name, however, is *not* Greek in origin. In Mycenaean and Minoan, it is Atana. Curiously, Athena was not originally a Greek divinity, nor was she patron of the city Athens. She is said to have been born in the Sahara, when there was an inland sea there called Lake Tritonis, now salt marshes.¹⁷⁴ One of her original titles was *tritogeneia*.¹⁷⁵ Her "parthenogenesis" (virgin birth) from the head of Zeus is "another example" of patriarchy assimilating the Goddess.¹⁷⁶ The word (or name) Ἀτάλος is derived from an "unknown substrate," according to authorities.¹⁷⁷ In other words, it does not seem to be Pelasgian or pre-Greek or even Indo-European. Cognate to it are Atlas, Atalanta (the goddess figure and namesake of the city Atlanta), Attis (in the Phrygian

Author, 1824). He later wrote *The American Nations, or, Outlines of Their General History, Ancient and Modern: Including the Whole History of the Earth and Mankind in the Western Hemisphere: the Philosophy of American History: the Annals, Traditions, Civilization, Languages, &c., of All the American Nations, Empires, and States...* (Philadelphia: Printed for the Author, 1836). He had not read the Wallam Olum before writing *The American Nations*. For summaries and discussion of the trustworthiness of Rafinesque's tribal histories, see Donald N. Yates, *Old World Roots of the Cherokee: How DNA, Ancient Alphabets and Religion Explain the Origins of America's Largest Indian Nation*, foreword by Richard Mack Bettis (Jefferson, N.C.: McFarland, 2012), esp. Ch. 4, "Ancient History of the Indians," pp. 58-7, and Ch. 5, "America's Middle Ages," pp. 74-85.

¹⁷⁴ Robert Graves, *The White Goddess: A Historical Grammar of Poetic Myth* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2000), p. 218. See also id., *The Greek Myths* I, pp. 50-51.

¹⁷⁵ Tritogeneia, which is also sometimes glossed as "thrice born," see Jane Ellen Harrison, *Themis: A Study of the Social Origins of Greek Religion* (Andover: Chapel River, 1977; first pub. London: Merlin, 1963), pp. 499-500.

¹⁷⁶ Campbell, *Goddesses*, p. 136.

¹⁷⁷ Robert Beeks, with Lucien Van Beek, *Etymological Dictionary of Greek*, Leiden Indo-European Etymological Dictionary Series 10/1-2 (Leiden: Brill, 2010), pp. 16, 29. The great goddess is named as *a-ta-na po-ti-ni-j-i-a* (Atana the Ruler) in Mycenaean Linear B.

religion of the Mother Goddess), Attica, Atabyrius (deity in Crete), Attalus and Atlantic (once called the White Ocean).

Atala could well stem from the Basque-like substrate that emerged from Africa after 7000 BCE. Significantly, the goddess Athena was born in North Africa, as we just mentioned. In the Greek language Atala means "the tender one," but to the devotees of the Goddess religion it seems to be used as the name of the Goddess who cared for us all in life and death. Perhaps originally it literally meant, or was understood to mean, "The One by the Door of Life and Death."

Connecting the Mediterranean lands where goddess-religion was introduced and practiced, Robert Graves writes (p. 51):

Pottery finds suggest a Libyan immigration into Crete as early as 4000 BC; and a large number of goddess-worshipping Libyan refugees from the Western Delta seem to have arrived there when Upper and Lower Egypt were forcibly united under the First Dynasty about the year 3000 BC. The first Minoan Age began soon afterwards, and Cretan culture spread to Thrace and early Helladic Greece.

Graves' diagram for cultural and religious influences mirrors the model of Arnaiz-Villena. The cultural influences can be extended to show how the Sea Peoples practiced goddess-worship and to explain how Athena/Atabey arrived in the New World.

French Connection

Chateaubriand made Atala the heroine of his novel about the tragic love between the Indian Chacta and the half-caste daughter of Creek Indian chief Simagan. The heroine's name being Greek ("young girl") is appropriate in that Chateaubriand made her mother a Creek Indian, but he was thinking of the Apalachite Indians, known so well to French Huguenot missionaries. The Apalachites' original language, as represented in Charles de Rochefort's *History of the Antilles*, was Ancient Greek.¹⁷⁸ In this sense, the character Atala seems to embody all the "civilized" Indians of the Americas.

"Atalà" was believed by Rafinesque to be related to the root Tol, as in Toltecas. He also recorded that the root Atta- appears in the name of the Supreme God of the Tainos, Arawaks and other Caribbean Indians—Attabei, Attabeira or Atabex (Cuba). The goddess, along with the language and the first people, came apparently from the Canary Islands or Berber/Basque/Iberian lands, which Arnaiz-Villena would identify as the Usko-Mediterranean orbit. Says Rafinesque: "Titles of this god have astonishing analogies with the primitive God of Asia and Europe, the

¹⁷⁸ Charles de Rochefort, *Histoire Naturelle et Morale des Iles Antilles d l'Amerique* (Rotterdam: Chez Reinier Leers, 1681).

Basks [sic], Pelasgians, Atlantes [North Africans, Berbers], Guanches etc.”¹⁷⁹ In other words, Atabex is the same as the universally worshiped White Goddess or Neumann’s Great Mother Goddess. Atala was the Great Mother.¹⁸⁰

The divine name appears also in the Syrian supreme goddess Atargatis or Ata or Tarata, a favorite of the Phoenicians.

A similar name is passed down among the Iroquois. “One traditional name of Sky Woman, the progenitrix of life on Earth, is *Ataensic*....” The same Goddess is venerated as Grandmother Moon.¹⁸¹

Some other parallels from around the world are instructive. Atete was the original pagan goddess later subsumed under the guise of Saint Mary in Ethiopia. Among the Hebrews, Athaliah, the daughter of Jezebel, was a rare ruling queen. Both were devotees of the ancient life-and-death goddess Asherah, and Athaliah was regarded as a name of the Goddess.¹⁸²

Athena was the patron goddess of Lindos, one of the early symbols in the Greek world of the united power of fertile fields and a peaceful community. Atc, a daughter of Eris, or chaos, was a minor goddess of folly who was banished from Olympus for her mischief making. Her golden apple inscribed “to the fairest” set off the Trojan War.

From this description it is apparent that both Eris and Atc were demonized by the patriarchal peoples from the steppes who followed the matriarchally-oriented Pelasgians. Chaos and the primeval snake were more positive figures in the original creation myth.¹⁸³

Polynesian Counterparts

We haven’t yet mentioned Oceania’s ancient goddess Atanea. This name resembles Atana and Athena. She was the daughter of the high divinity Atea, the supreme sky mother in the Marquesas Islands of French Polynesia. Atanea “created the sea accidentally when she miscarried and filled the hollows of the earth with amniotic fluid.”¹⁸⁴

¹⁷⁹ Rafinesque, *The American Nations*, pp. 90, 166. Cf. Donald N. Yates and Teresa A. Yates, *Cherokee DNA Studies II: More Real People Who Proved the Geneticists Wrong* (Longmont: Panther’s Lodge, 2021), p. 109.

¹⁸⁰ Robert Graves, *The White Goddess: a Historical Grammar of Poetic Myth* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1966); Erich Neumann, *The Great Mother: An Analysis of the Archetype*, trans. by Ralph Manheim (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1972).

¹⁸¹ Barbara Alice Mann, *Native Americans, Archaeologists, and the Mounds* (New York: Peter Lang, 2010), p. 232; cf. Goettner-Abendroth, *Matriarchal Societies*, pp. 296-328.

¹⁸² Patricia Monaghan, *The New Book of Goddesses and Heroines* (St. Paul: Llewellyn, 1998), p. 59, 338. Cf. 2 Kings 8:26, 11:1-3 etc.

¹⁸³ See Robert Graves, *The Greek Myths* (Folio, 1996), vol. I, p. 35.

¹⁸⁴ Monaghan, pp. 58-59.



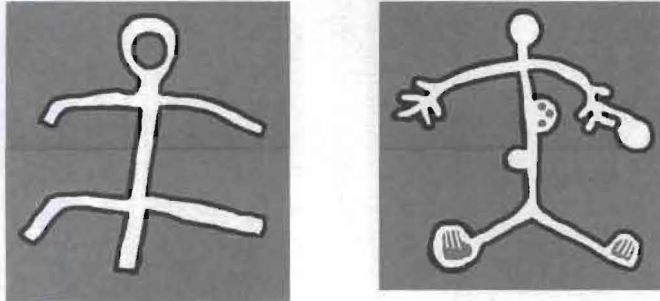
58. Atia was the storied meeting place of gods and men in Austronesian myth. It was also the source of wars that drove the people into and across the Pacific. Illustration by Richard L. Thornton.

Revealingly, the ancient homeland of the Polynsians to the west was a country called Atia. Later Spanish, Dutch and English navigators placed it in the region of the Moluccas in Indonesia, in Wallacea. It was full of high alabaster temples, games and gatherings.

One temple was very spacious, and was built as a meeting place for gods and men; and here after death the spirits of the ancients foregathered with the gods. Here originated different kinds of sports, and games and feasts to the

gods Rongo,' Tane,' Rua-nuku, Tu,' Tangaroa, and Tongaiti. Here were meeting-places for the great chiefs of those days.... When appointing rulers, and devising measures for the good of the people. Here, too, originated the wars that caused the people to enter and spread over the Pacific.¹⁸⁵

One could not wish for a better description of Sundaland before its downfall!



59. Perhaps the oldest global symbol of the Mother Goddess, and earliest common depiction of female mystery and sacredness, is a woman giving birth or emergence symbol...note fingers outspread in pain and squatting posture.¹⁸⁶ Left: Hawaii, from sacred marae. Right: Kentucky. Redrawn by Richard L. Thornton.

As Heide Goettner-Abendroth reminds us in an "Introduction to Matriarchal Landscape Mythology," the concepts and characteristics that go with a geographical name are as important as its usage. Neolithic societies that became the first enduring residents of various places on earth did not interact with the topography in terms of just what was useful to them. They established their habitations and fields not just where water, fertile ground and resources like flint and salt were found. They regarded Earth as a divine being, as a primal goddess. A concept that the expression Mother Earth still (approximately) captures today. "Such a viewpoint of seeing the earth as goddess is fundamentally opposed to the patriarchal one. Indeed, patriarchal societies find gods for themselves that have to do, by and large, with conquest and mastering, not with conditions for the creation and maintenance of life, such as propagation, nourishment and protection, qualities ascribed to the earth as mother by all living beings."

¹⁸⁵ Johannes C. Andersen, *Myths and Legends of the Polynesians* (Tokyo: Tuttle, 1969), pp. 216, 246, 377-80, 436, 429.

¹⁸⁶ A good resource for the study of rock art and cave paintings around the world is the Bradshaw Foundation. Website: <https://www.bradshawfoundation.com/>.

So the "bold seafarers" who first named, explored and mapped America called it by the name of a goddess, Atala. America was the land of the Goddess, its rivers and mountains were endowed with a sacred nature, never to be disrespected.

According to Díaz-Montexando, the Guanches of the Canaries derived their name from the Uskan language: Gu=we, Ana=brotherhood of dead souls and Etche=clan, pedigree.

The Atlantic Isles were known as the Hesperides, the golden Sunset Lands, and Haiti was the Isle of the Blessed or Fortunate Isles. The whole of the West was conceived of as the domicile of happy souls where being dead was tantamount to eternal life. A paradise of carefree societies living amidst plenty without strife or warfare. In the Phoenician language, the Straits of Gibraltar were known as Calpe, a "passage to the western paradise of the Mother."

Matriarchies Melding

At first, the matriarchal culture of the Iberians and Berbers and Basques melded with the matriarchies of the American Indian tribes. Together they were called Atalans, Children of the Goddess. America was named after a goddess.

Other lands named after goddesses are Denmark (Dana), Ireland (Eriu), Scotland (Scota), Libya (White Goddess, also called Ina) and Europe (Europa). The first and most important was Atia, the motherland of Austronesians, Melanesians and Polynesians.

The centrality of Basque or a Basque-like substrate language is the main thread in Jacques R. Pauwels' *Beneath the Dust of Time*. The Indian nations encountered about 3,000 years later by the English were named Atzuli or Azilia Empire. That was a name in the Pelasgian or pre-Greek language for the powerful Apalache kingdom. It meant, literally, Children of the Sun. The sun, of course, was female, a heavenly goddess, just as Atala was an earthly goddess. The Euchee even today have a myth that tells how they began as drops of blood falling from the Mother Sun.

The circumstance that North America was discovered, explored and first settled by matriarchal people like the Basques, Berbers and Polynesians carrying the Goddess religion has far-reaching ramifications. The fact is important not only for the study of place-names in America but its archeology, anthropology, art and history. In short, matriarchal values are the key to everything in America's pre-Columbian past.

The Goddess-religion was unified, universal and worldwide. There was only one Goddess. Study of the AT site in Tator Hills in Arizona and comparison with other burial places in the Iberian Peninsula and elsewhere in the Old World suggest as much. Its familiar form is from around 3000 to 2000 BCE, that is, the Chalcolithic, or Copper Age, in Europe.



60. Amerind Gene. Matches are mostly up and down the Americas, with a few related populations in the Old World. Note Austronesian matches in Polynesia, Madagascar and Persian Gulf (Sumerians).



61. Cochise Gene. Only a one-step mutation distant from the Amerind Gene, the Cochise Gene has almost the same coverage, suggesting the two haplotypes are related and have the same deep history. Note, again, Austronesian and Austronesian-influenced populations such as Madagascar, Egypt and Zoque.

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