Case 1-Eur-Germany-Hohlenstein-Stadel- Löwenmensch-40 kya



The Löwenmensch from Hohlenstein-Stadel. Height 30 cm, about 6 cm diameter. Made of mammoth ivory. Found in the cave of Hohlenstein-Stadel in the Valley of Lone, Baden-Wurttemberg Germany, in 1931. Dated as Aurignacian, in a level now dated at 40 000 years old.  
  
Although this is known in some places as the lion lady, it is now known to be male. It is known as both Die Lowenfrau and Der Lowenmensch.  
  
The arms bear striations carved into the ivory. Years after the initial discovery the museum officials were presented with an ivory lion muzzle found in the cave. It was a perfect fit. Today it is pieced together from more than 1000 tiny pieces. This 'venus' may be an attempt to capture the power of the lion.

Discussion:

**Case No.: 1**

**Accession Number:**

**Formal Label:** Eur-Germany-Hohlenstein-Stadel- Löwenmensch-40 kya

**Display Description:**

The Löwenmensch from Hohlenstein-Stadel. Height 30 cm, about 6 cm diameter. Made of mammoth ivory. The arms bear striations carved into the ivory. Years after the initial discovery the museum officials were presented with an ivory lion muzzle found in the cave. It was a perfect fit. Today it is pieced together from more than 1000 tiny pieces.

Lion Man is a shaman in the process of spiritually not physically being transformed from his human self into the spirit of the powerful *Panthera leo spelaea* or Eurasian Cave Lion. Fragments of a piece were uncovered in 1939 on the very last day of excavation of the Hohlenstein-Stadel cave in the Lone valley. Archaeological activity was then disrupted by the commencement of World War II. More than thirty years later it was finally recognized that the ivory pieces were part of a figurine. Another two decades passed before experts restored the statuette. Restoration could only be partial, however, because significant sections had not yet been retrieved. In 2009 new excavations in the Hohlenstein-Stadel led to a re-discovery of the statuette’s previous location identified in 1939, and from that locus they were able to retrieve many more fragments. There followed a very complex project of reconstruction 2012-2013. The sculpture, comprises more than 300 fragments and reveals much more detail than had previously been possible. This has provided insights into some of the techniques involved in its creation, the statuette fuses animal and human elements: lion attributes are the head, elongated body and forelimbs, while human attributes are legs and feet in a bi-pedal stance and the genital area signifying maleness.

**LC Classification:**

**Date or Time Horizon:** Found in the cave of Hohlenstein-Stadel in the Valley of Lone, Baden-Wurttemberg Germany, in 1931. Dated as Aurignacian, in a level now dated at 40 000 years old.

**Geographical Area: after** Conard, N.J., Münzel, S., Kitagawa, K., Krönneck, P. and Münzel, S.C., 2012. Exploring cave use and exploitation among cave bears, carnivores and hominins in the Swabian Jura, Germany. *Journal of taphonomy*, *10*3, pp.439-461.

The geographical area of Swabian Jura is the largest karst system in southwestern Germany Figure 1. Several caves with Paleolithic deposits are mainly found in two valleys of the Swabian Jura, the Ach and Lone. Sites shown on the map are situated in these valleys that cut through a dry upland plateau, which formed during the Upper Jurassic period and reaches as high as 1000 m asl, dipping slightly towards the southeast. Most of the archaeological sites are found at an elevation of approximately 560-585 m asl Abel et al., 2002. The Ach Valley formed as the Danube River, which runs 5-10 km south in the present, meandered into the plateau before the Riss Glacial Stage, and the Lone Valley formed as a result of a meandering tributary, which drained into the Danube River. Local flints with sources usually within 5-10 km distance from all caves were commonly used for the production of lithic artifacts Burkert & Floss, 2006. Ach and Lone Valleys are similar in their geological setting, but the Ach Valley is deeply incised compared to the Lone Valley while the latter is dominated by open grassland at a lower elevation, a factor that may explain the abundance of horses in the Paleolithic period. Further, the Lone River is fed by the karst aquifer with no permanent water source whereas the Ach River flows year round in the Ach Valley today. Major sites in the Lone Valley include Hohlenstein -Stadel, Vogelherd and Bockstein and in the Ach Valley, Hohle Fels and Geißenklösterle early emergence of the Aurignacian culture with an array of innovation and new forms of symbolic expression including ivory figurines, music and ornaments Conard, 2009; Conard & Malina, 2006; Conard et al., 2009; Kölbl & Conard, 2003.

**Map:**



**After** Conard, N.J., Münzel, S., Kitagawa, K., Krönneck, P. and Münzel, S.C., 2012. Exploring cave use and exploitation among cave bears, carnivores and hominins in the Swabian Jura, Germany. *Journal of taphonomy*, *10*3, pp.439-461.

**GPS Coordinates:**

**Cultural Affiliation:**

**Medium:**

**Dimensions**: Dimensions: height 281 mm, width 63 mm, thickness 59 mm

**Weight:**

**Provenance:** Hohlenstein-Stadel

**Condition: replica**

**Discussion:**

In 2009 new excavations in the Hohlenstein-Stadel led to a re-discovery of the statuette’s previous location identified in 1939, and from that locus they were able to retrieve many more fragments.

There followed a very complex project of reconstruction 2012-2013. The sculpture, comprises more than 300 fragments and reveals much more detail than had previously been possible. This has provided insights into some of the techniques involved in its creation, the statuette fuses animal and human elements: lion attributes are the head, elongated body and forelimbs, while human attributes are legs and feet in a bi-pedal stance and the genital area signifying maleness.

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