

Python shrine found in Botswana

A Norway-based archaeologist has found a cave in Botswana that appears to be a 70,000-year-old religious shrine.

The cave in the Tsodilo hills has a rock with a marked resemblance to a python's head, The Times of London reported. The rock has manmade marks on it and a hiding place behind it that could have been used by a shaman appearing to speak for the python.

Sheila Coulson of the University of Oslo said the indentations on the rock in daylight look like scales. In the light of a fire, the snake appears to move.

"The shaman would have been able to control everything. It was perfect," Coulson said.

If Coulson's find is a shrine, it pushes back the first archaeological evidence of religious beliefs back 40,000 years.

The cave also contained artifacts buried in the floor, including red stone spearheads that had the marks of burning on them.

"It was a ritual destruction of artifacts," Coulson said. "There was no sign of normal habitation. No ordinary tools were found at the site."

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