

Engraved, painted and carved mammoths of the Rhône basin (Upper Palaeolithic)

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Mammoths have been depicted in the Rhône basin by prehistoric hunter-gatherers since the Aurignacian, and mostly so from Solutrean to middle Magdalenian times, as it can be seen at a dozen sites (Gard, Ardèche and Bourgogne regions). The record includes parietal art (engravings and paintings), as well as portable art (bone and stone engravings, and even an

unpublished statuette from Solutré). The many palaeontological remains of this proboscidean, also discovered in the area, further suggest a long and continuous coexistence. Some very schematic figures, however, point to the fact that this species had a special place in collective imagery, and probably in *Homo sapiens sapiens* ritual activity as well.