

# **ALMOGAREN**

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Hans-Joachim Ulbrich

## **Phalli and vulvae as apotropaic geoglyphs in a sacred plain south of Albacete (Spain)**

Keywords: Albacete, Algeria, Canary Islands, dry-stone technique, fertility cult, Great Mother Goddess, Iberian Peninsula, Jordan, La Mancha, Mediterranean, Mother Earth, Near East, phallus, pre-history, pubic geoglyphs, Spain, U-shaped monument (USM), vulva

### **Abstract:**

In the south of the Spanish city of Albacete (Castilla-La Mancha) there is a plain which is cultivated only partially by farmers. Striking are the irregular, not angled fields which have an apotropaic protection by big geoglyphic phalli which are added to them. In the savannah between the fields there are hundreds of U-shaped monuments (USM) which have to be interpreted as vulvae. Phalli and vulvae represent two fertility cults which had a similar development and – regarding symbolic power – have big overlaps. The main appearance of the monuments seems to have been in the early or middle Bronze Hispano.<sup>1/2</sup>

### **Zusammenfassung:**

Im Süden der spanischen Stadt Albacete (Castilla-La Mancha) befindet sich eine savannenartige Ebene, die nur zum Teil landwirtschaftlich genutzt wird. Auffallend sind unregelmäßige, nicht eckig angelegte Felder, zu deren apotropaëischem Schutz große, geoglyphische Phalli angefügt sind. Zwischen den Feldern befinden sich hunderte "U-shaped monuments" (USM = U-förmiges Monument), die als Vulven-Symbole interpretiert werden müssen. Phalli und Vulven gehören zwei Fruchtbarkeitskulten an, die aber eine ähnliche Entwicklung genommen haben und bezüglich der Symbolkraft große Überschneidungen aufweisen. Das Hauptauftreten der Monamente scheint im frühen oder mittleren Bronze Hispano zu liegen.<sup>1/2</sup>

### **Resumen:**

Al sur de la ciudad española de Albacete (Castilla-La Mancha) se encuentra una planicie tipo sabana parcialmente explotada para la agricultura. Resultan llamativos los terrenos dispuestos de forma irregular, no angular, para cuya protección apotropaica hay añadidos grandes falos geoglíficos. Entre los terrenos se encuentran cientos de los denominados "monumentos en forma de U" (USM, por sus siglas en inglés) que han de interpretarse como símbolos vulvares. Falos y vulvas forman parte de dos cultos a la fertilidad que, no obstante, han tenido un desarrollo similar y muestran considerables coincidencias en cuanto a la fuerza simbólica. Las principales apariciones de los monumentos parecen situarse en el antiguo o avanzado Bronce Hispano.<sup>1/2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Please contact me if you find additions or corrections: [hjulbrich@institutum-canarium.org](mailto:hjulbrich@institutum-canarium.org)

<sup>2</sup>ME [jn the text] = maximal extension of a monument, field or artefact in cm/m

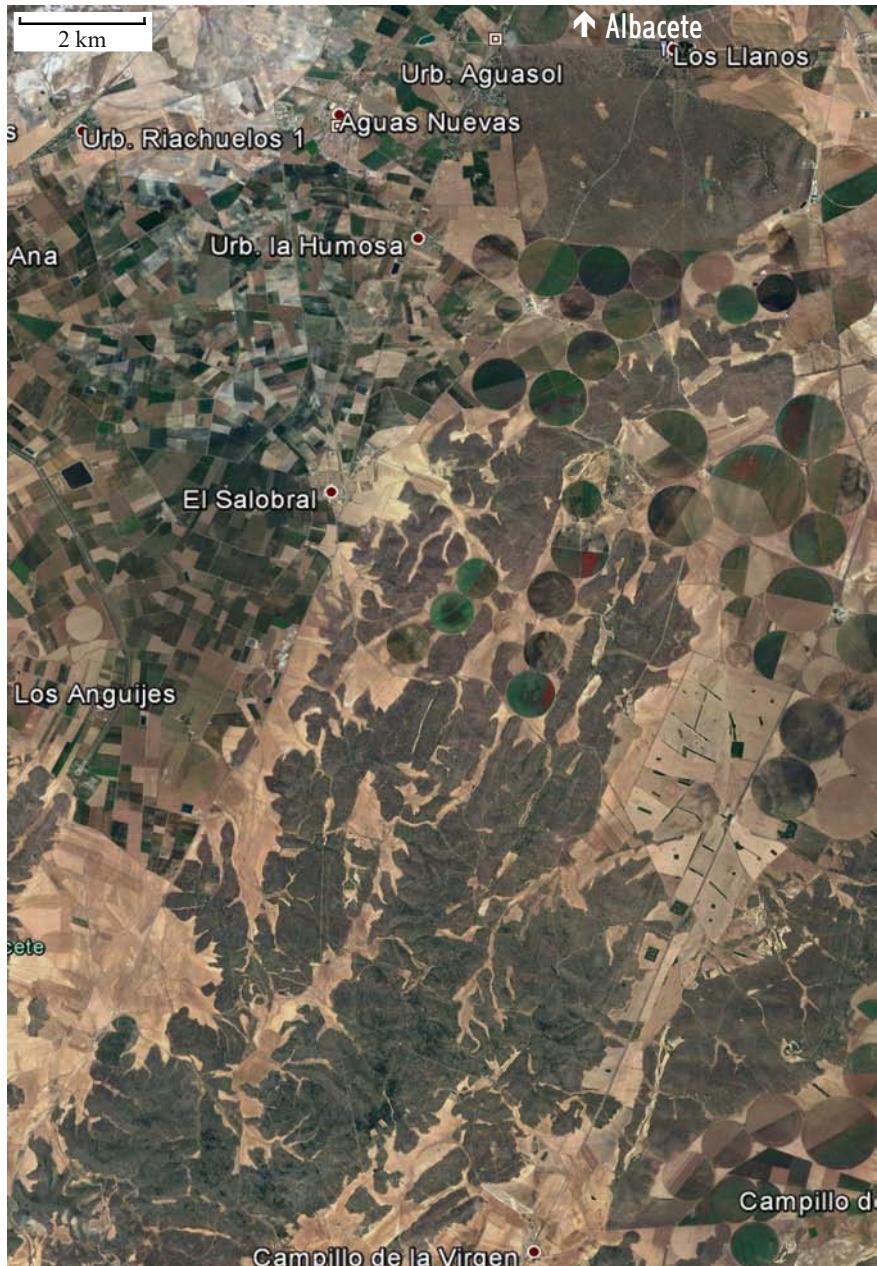


Fig.1 - The dark parts south and south-west of the circles with pivot-irrigation represent the savannah-like plain near Albacete (Arab. al-Basit = plain) [Photo: Google Earth].

**The field of research.** When I published in December 2016 an article about the *U-shaped monuments* (USMs) in Jordan (Ulbrich 2016) I mentioned also the existence of these on the Canary Islands, in the Mediterranean area [incl. North Africa and the Sahara – the latter reported by Y. & C. Gauthier 1999, 2004] and in the countries around the Black Sea, to name only a few regions. First I found USMs on the Canary Islands (Fig. 19), researching their pre- and proto-history being my core activity. Starting from there I looked for parallels. I knew that North Africa had a rich repertoire of USMs but it was quite astonishing to find them also in countless other living environments – in a variety and number which grew and still grows constantly.

In this context it is time to focus also on the Iberian Peninsula. Modern Canarian scholars tend to see the origin of the colonizing islanders only in North Africa with its proto-Berber ethnics. These people indeed made a big contribution to the Canarian aborigines – but not alone. Many cultural characteristics point besides North Africa to the Iberian Peninsula and the central Mediterranean islands. For example the USMs: North Africa as well as the Iberian Peninsula have places where hundreds of these monuments are combined in geoglyphic rows. To underline that I present here a (once) sacred plain south of Albacete, the capital of the Spanish province of the same name. The latter belongs to the region known as La Mancha. The beeline between Albacete and Alicante at the Spanish levant amounts to not more than 142 km. Thereby Albacete belongs to the zone of influence of natural and human Mediterranean processes – particularly the wide range travels of seafaring people.

When I checked La Mancha via Google Earth<sup>3</sup> for USMs the terrain south of Albacete (Fig. 1) caught my attention. There the usual agrarian net of quadrangular cultivated land and big circles for pivot-irrigation was interrupted by strange, irregular formed fields. They look like sickles, snakes, cucumbers, aubergines, melons or the silhouettes of amoebae (Fig. 2) – totally contrary to that what a mediaeval or modern farmer would logically lay out having efficient work in mind. All that in a kind of stony savannah or shrub with a loose or non-existent tree vegetation (Fig. 2) where the flat or undulating terrain does not require that the form of the fields is adapted – for instance – to narrow meandering valleys or small eroded mesas.

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<sup>3</sup>Finding places: In this paper only the UTM references (e.g. 30SWJ9873300137) are used, not the geographical latitude and longitude. The form of the latter – e.g. 47°50'29.08"N 9°21'39.208"E – is in file names for computing and in text writing not as simple to handle like UTM data. So one can easily use the UTM reference as a kind of "picture number" in file names of aerial images. Readers who want to apply the here mentioned UTM coordinates should switch on the highest resolution possible in Google Earth Pro (4800 x 2417) when copying/saving a location.



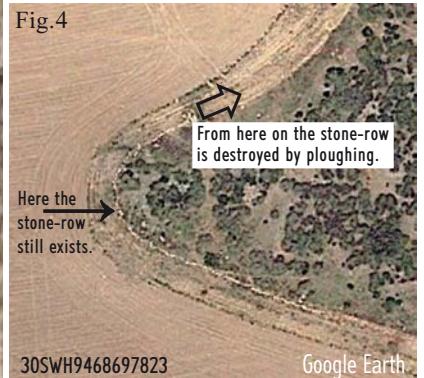
Fig.2 - One of the characteristic irregular fields south of Albacete (30SWJ9873300137) whose origin is probably pre-Hispanic. We can assume that many of these were taken over in mediaeval times. But today the most uneconomic ones are abandoned like this "amoeba". ME of the field: 526 m

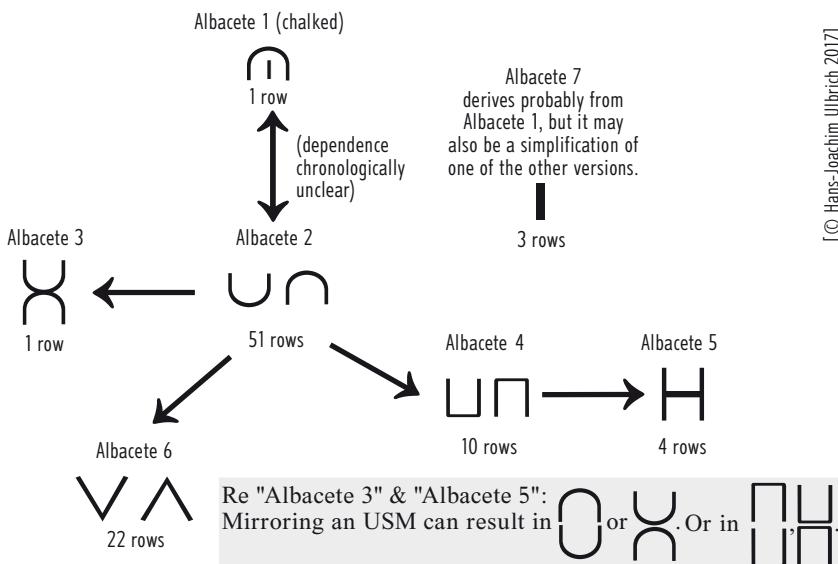
Many of these fields have a visible limitation by a line-up of low, mostly less than leg-high stones (Figs. 3/4/140) arranged in a distance of ca. 1-5 m around the complete ploughing zone, quasi a little wall out of bright geologic material. Which modern farmer submits himself to such an effort which apparently has nothing to do with flagging the beginning or end of a property or with keeping someone off (e.g. enemies, thieves, animals)? Unpractical fields with abnormal, ineconomic – if not wasteful – forms can be found elsewhere in Spain, there either without or with a surrounding wall, but the latter without a geoglyphic function. Extremely crazy field patterns exist – for example – between the river Ebro and Valmuel (Aragón). Have such fields perhaps a long tradition which reaches back to pre-Hispanic times when big angled fields were not necessary to nourish a family or a clan? Regarding Fig. 2: Was the purpose of this strange field combination a non-agrarian one? Its four pseudo-paths allow even more to challenge a mere agrarian usage. Historic fields with no visible access and no settlement nearby – whose presence would point to a daily use – can have a geoglyphic aim: Perhaps they were meant to be visible from above, for the gods in the sky.

Fields south of Albacete without a stone-row belong either to a chronologically different group or were expanded in recent times so that ploughing destroyed the row (Fig.4); or the stones were displaced by heavy storms. Often a path or a drivable piste was added in mediaeval or younger times at the inner or outer side of the little wall to be able to manage the field; the brighter area in the southeastern corner of Fig.2 shows such pistes. The most likely older "amoeba" in Fig.2 lacks surrounding farming pistes.



Fig.3 - Geoglyphs or long rows of stones respectively surround the fields – probably a cultic measure to protect them from evil (read paragraph on phalli).





The female connotation of the eastern La Mancha USMs (vulvae) is obvious. The forms, their appearance in mirrored rows and the dependencies among each other show also that the USMs are no simple windbreaks. Rules for the direction of a monument did apparently not exist. But within a line-up the monuments have more or less the same direction! "Albacete 3" is a combination of two "Albacete 2" USMs with opposite – or mirrored – direction; ditto with "Albacete 4" and "Albacete 5". The numbers 1-6 give a vague and speculative hint on the chronology: 1 the most original form, 6 the longest and last used one.

White was in many old cultures a holy colour; in Egypt it was the colour of Isis and the sun, used for the plaster of sacral buildings. Maybe that a similar idea applies for the chalked "Albacete 1" monuments.

Generally USMs have a long lasting tradition with occurrences up to the presence. In the case of Albacete the Plate-1-types accompanied the phallus geoglyphs during their appearance with special construction techniques and more or less uncommon forms.

Those fields – their inner part and the stone boundary – together with the savannah between them play a big role in this paper: In this environment we find hundreds of pre-Hispanic stone monuments which justify to speak of a sacred area, as we will see. Its monument density is extremely high, probably the highest of the entire Iberian Peninsula, higher than the density of megalithic monuments in the northern Ampurdán, Catalonia (Ulbrich 2015: 71).

Furthermore we can assume that the construction of the giant circle fields with pivot irrigation destroyed many pre-Hispanic monuments.



Fig. 5 – Egyptian Red Sea coast: A line-up of phalli with an USM (type "Albacete 4") including a center point.



Fig. 6 – Lake Urmia coast (Iran): A double-USM (type "Albacete 3"). It shows once more that no bulldozing was involved.

**U-shaped monuments (USM).** To learn something about USMs – and on the arguments against an interpretation being the result of bulldozing – I recommend to read first Gauthier (2004) and Ulbrich (2016). Especially in the case of the small, grey USMs near Albacete bulldozing can be no explanation because the different versions (Plate 1) can only be built by human hands as the high-resolution photos of Google Earth Pro clearly show. Contrary to many other USMs in the Mediterranean, Africa and the Near East the Plate-1-types have no distinguishable "mound" and "wings"; they are built as one piece of a slim curved or angled wall (Figs. 8-14, 16-17), using a compact dry-stone technique. Their ME amounts to 2-12 m.

The more USMs are found all around in the mentioned regions the more their interpretation as vulva symbol solidifies [Figs. 5, 6, 18, 21, 22 here; Ulbrich 2016: 44-48; compare also the forms in Plate 1 with the idols and rock-art motifs in Ulbrich (1997: 60-67)]. The versions in Plate 1 show also that there was a process from curved to angled; the latter monuments are easier to construct (Figs.11-13; Jordan example in Fig.20). We have the same phenomenon with rock engravings; Libyco-Berber epigraphy on the Canary Islands for example changed in some cases from  $\circ$  to  $\square$ .

The most striking fact about the Albacete USMs is their organisation in 92 rows (probably even more) which represent a total of 1087 monuments; these line-ups constitute the geoglyphic character. The rows (Fig.17; Tables 1-3) feature nearly all even numbers of USMs between 2 and 18; a row of 16 USMs seems to have been the standard. For the few odd exceptions we can assume destruction at one of the ends when modern pistes and fields were built or when violent storms unloosed the structures over time. Most of the line-ups are more or less curved but some are perfectly straight over hundreds of meters! Quite a

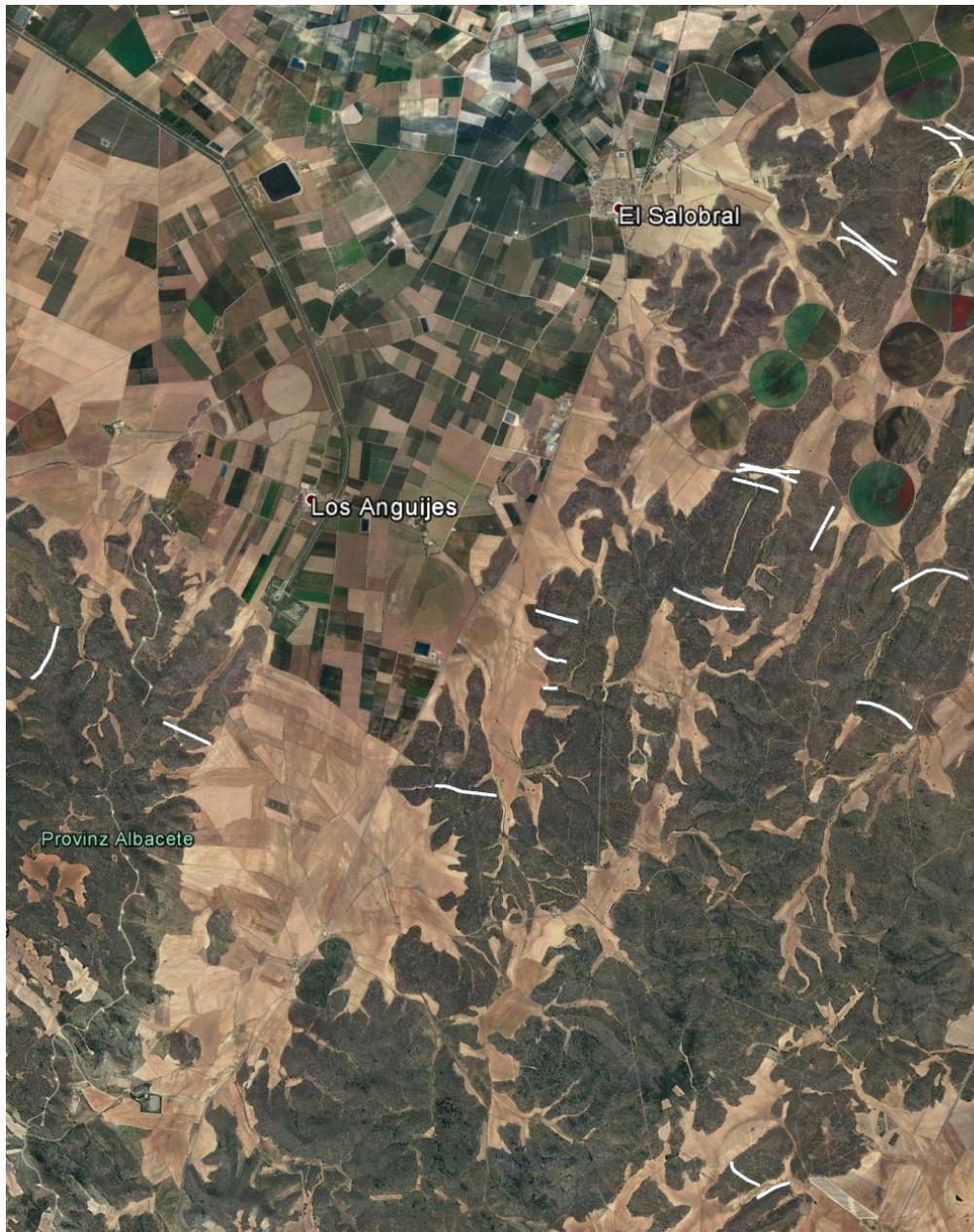


Fig.7 - The main region of the USM-rows south of Albacete (Spain), emphasizing 65 of 92 routes. We see that several lines (white) run parallel or even cross each other. These can be

### Campillo de las Doblas

considered as pairs with opposite USMs. This indicates that such pairs were either built by the same people or that there was a design consensus among different groups (© H.-J. Ulbrich 2018).

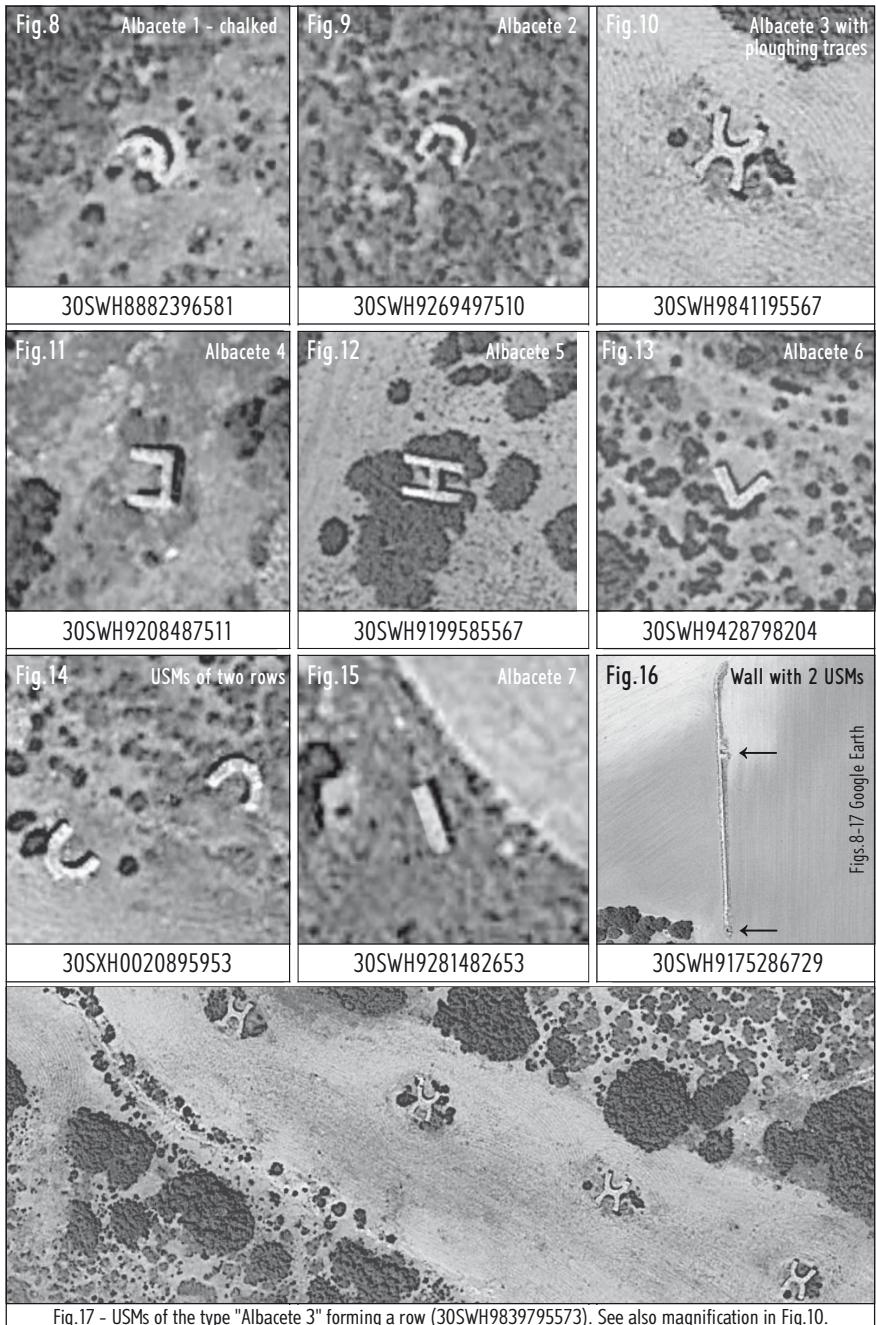
few rows appear as pairs where the respective USMs are built mirror-imaged (Figs. 7/14). Why rows at all? The idea is simple: The doubling and all the more the higher multiplication of a monument strengthens its transcendent impact – more symbols = more protection, fortune etc (read also Ulbrich 2016: 42-43).

The partly continuation of rows (positive geoglyphs<sup>4</sup>) into fields and the ploughing around USMs, creating a kind of oasis or island in a field (Fig. 10), shows that USMs were respected at all times and that both can have a certain symbolic relationship. Furrows were – from prehistoric to modern times – associated in rural regions with the penis, the latter being the plough which fertilises Mother Earth (Fig. 24). Fertility cults were therefore practiced near or directly on fields. Mythology delivered the paragon: Demeter – the Greek goddess of fertility, seeds and seasons – abandoned herself to the cereals god and inventor of the plough Jasio on a three times ploughed fallow (Hesiod, Homer).

Type "Albacete 2" can also be integrated in long walls (Fig. 16). This demonstrates that irrational buildings in the middle of a field – thus interrupting and disturbing the ploughing, seeding and harvesting – had probably a cultic purpose, especially when they were combined with an apotropaic vulva. Interpreting an USM as vulva is supported not only by the design of the monuments but also by the ability of respective pubic symbols and the genitals themselves to avert the evil. Presenting a nude vulva in the public was in ancient times a measure of calculated exhibitionism (*anasyrma*) which aimed at keeping off enemies, bad spirits and sinister eyes. Accordingly apotropaic signs, gestures and activities meant also to stimulate health, fortune and fertility; all that is helpful for the farmer with regard to his fields and harvests.

**Other USMs.** The common Atlantic, Mediterranean etc. type of USM exists too in the Albacete region what demonstrate some single monuments which are not part of a row or occur only in small groups (30SWH9778984186, 30SWH9820987916). These USMs are built not so compact and joined as the ones in Figs. 8-17. Their sometimes desolate condition could point to an age higher than that of the better preserved Plate-1-specimens and their rows. Furthermore several USMs indicate the classic "mound & wings" structure like in Figs. 18/19/21; for the southern Albacete region visit 30SWH9940395833 and 30SWH8462091541 (basic information also in Ulbrich 2016: Fig. 4).

<sup>4</sup>Cultic geoglyphs were first recognised as lines or areas where the uppermost layer of debris and/or vegetation was removed to achieve a pattern brighter than the natural ground (negative geoglyph / in German "Scharrbild"). But today we have also the term "positive geoglyph" (similar to a petroform) where material was accumulated on the ground to reach a 3-dimensional effect by the colour and form of the object and by its shadow. In the Albacete region we have both: pseudo-paths and fields which have no practical purpose and geometrically designed stone patterns like the USM rows and the phalli.



Figs.8-17 Google Earth



Fig.18

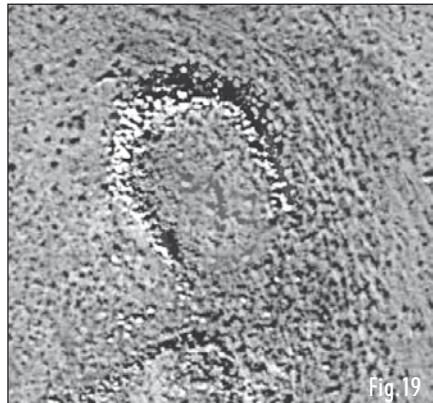


Fig.19

Jordan (Google Earth - 37SCR2058663553): El Jable, Lanzarote (28RFT3111017256): a small USM of the classic type combined with a big geoglyphic phallus (ME 104 m). (ME 15 m) – not a windbreak because the prevailing tradewind blows from NE.



Fig.20 (Google Earth)



Fig.21

An USM line-up in the Jordan desert (type "Albacete 4"), Northeast of this row there are more of this kind. ME of group 71 m. ME 20 m (Google Earth).



Google Earth

Fig.22

Old part of Bou Cra, territory of Western Sahara (SADR), occupied by Morocco: three USMs with center-line, type "Albacete 1" (28RGQ1567417277). ME ca. 33 m each. Perhaps younger constructions, but basing on timeless traditions.

Table 1		<b>USM rows south of Albacete (Spain)</b>			
Running nr.	Type of USM*	Length of row	Number of monuments	UTM start	UTM end
1	ㄣ (Albacete 1)	240 m	3	30SWH8866196658	30SWH887596554
2	ㄣ (Albacete 2)	370 m	10	30SXH0438493360	30SXH0468793153
3	ㄣ (Albacete 2)	407 m	9	30SWH9252697634	30SWH9288597474
4	ㄣ (Albacete 2)	500 m	15	30SJ0473300703	30SJ0426700600
5	ㄣ (Albacete 2)	531 m	16	30SWH9771692017	30SWH9820291832
6	ㄣ (Albacete 2)	636 m	17	30SXH0058596648	30SXH0117596424
7	ㄣ (Albacete 2)	658 m	16	30SWH9960493581	30SXH0003993096
8	ㄣ (Albacete 2)	661 m	16	30SWH9833093874	30SWH9890193600
9	ㄣ (Albacete 2)	663 m	13	30SXH0261897865	30SXH0323797715
10	ㄣ (Albacete 2)	747 m	16	30SXH0005895201	30SWH9936994919
11	ㄣ (Albacete 2)	75 m	3	30SWH9803195739	30SWH9809695709
12	ㄣ (Albacete 2)	77 m	3	30SJ0544200746	30SJ0537100723
13	ㄣ (Albacete 2)	775 m	15	30SJ0551700712	30SJ0596400254
14	∪ (Albacete 2)	165 m	4	30SWH9261497182	30SWH9277697179
15	∪ (Albacete 2)	228 m	6	30SXH0426793044	30SXH0442792884
16	∪ (Albacete 2)	324 m	9	30SXH0466093910	30SXH0497793866
17	∪ (Albacete 2)	393 m	10	30SWH9537791639	30SWH9502491477
18	∪ (Albacete 2)	513 m	10	30SWH9252998051	30SWH9302197918
19	∪ (Albacete 2)	535 m	16	30SWH9780592185	30SWH9822791859
20	∪ (Albacete 2)	615 m	16	30SWH9851592940	30SWH9892592620
21	∪ (Albacete 2)	646 m	16	30SWH9937993583	30SWH9977093086
22	∪ (Albacete 2)	680 m	11	30SWH9143696079	30SWH9210295976
23	∪ (Albacete 2)	681 m	16	30SWH9822193731	30SWH9882993428
24	∪ (Albacete 2)	719 m	16	30SWH9904095133	30SWH9952994627
25	∪ (Albacete 2)	757 m	18	30SXH0033195859	30SWH9967095548
26	∪ (Albacete 2)	84 m	3	30SWH9801395709	30SWH9809395704
27	∪ (Albacete 2)	99,7m	3	30SWH9371290990	30SWH9377390914
28	C (Albacete 2)	131 m	4	30SJ0464100796	30SJ0460800672
29	C (Albacete 2)	291 m	9	30SXH0164097491	30SXH0177397247
30	C (Albacete 2)	527 m	16	30SWH9846892862	30SWH9829692372
31	C (Albacete 2)	548 m	11	30SXH1369192246	30SXH1339491868
32	C (Albacete 2)	56,5m	2	30SXH0448792816	30SXH0449192763
33	C (Albacete 2)	617 m	16	30SWH9907293880	30SWH9896593282
34	C (Albacete 2)	620 m	16	30SWH9933694678	30SWH9908394113
35	C (Albacete 2)	624 m	16	30SXH0101296039	30SXH0067595516
36	C (Albacete 2)	631 m	16	30SXH0079296575	30SXH0106496007

© Hans-Joachim Ulbrich 2017 – Length approximately – \*Direction simplified

Table 2		<b>USM rows south of Albacete (Spain)</b>			
Running nr.	Type of USM*	Length of row	Number of monuments	UTM start	UTM end
37	C (Albacete 2)	634 m	16	30SXH0045296401	30SXH0062595798
38	C (Albacete 2)	645 m	14	30SWH9122583387	30SWH9165882911
39	C (Albacete 2)	707 m	14	30SWH8198895603	30SWH8177694933
40	C (Albacete 2)	744 m	16	30SXH0142296958	30SXH0110096289
41	C (Albacete 2)	747 m	16	30SWH9979796385	30SXH0030395839
42	C (Albacete 2)	823 m	18	30SXH0474199885	30SXH0532599346
43	D (Albacete 2)	192 m	4	30SXH0170497577	30SXH0182197426
44	D (Albacete 2)	365 m	6	30SWH9898689659	30SWH9918689379
45	D (Albacete 2)	446 m	10	30SWH9473091879	30SWH9506191615
46	D (Albacete 2)	490 m	13	30SXH0162597959	30SXH0192597572
47	D (Albacete 2)	570 m	16	30SWH9948794557	30SWH9919894083
48	D (Albacete 2)	588 m	16	30SWH9778493032	30SWH9749392529
49	D (Albacete 2)	590 m	14	30SWH8206795540	30SWH8200794977
50	D (Albacete 2)	656 m	16	30SWH9996396362	30SXH0036695869
51	D (Albacete 2)	688 m	16	30SWH9907695180	30SWH9946994619
52	D (Albacete 2)	977 m	16	30SWH9876793110	30SWH9956692572
53	X (Albacete 3)	314 m	11	30SWH9815695685	30SWH9843995556
54	L (Albacete 4)	154 m	4	30SXH0467589485	30SXH0481889434
55	L (Albacete 4)	430 m	12	30SWH9197186651	30SWH9189586261
56	L (Albacete 4)	540 m	8	30SWH9881390510	30SWH9898990087
57	M (Albacete 4)	117 m	3	30SXH0476989530	30SXH0465489521
58	M (Albacete 4)	239 m	4	30SWH9076484278	30SWH8993184402
59	M (Albacete 4)	383 m	10	30SXH0477990338	30SXH0514590234
60	M (Albacete 4)	485 m	8	30SWH9032784667	30SWH8993184402
61	N (Albacete 4)	214 m	4	30SXH0405789586	30SXH0388689463
62	N (Albacete 4)	404 m	10	30SWH9296487510	30SWH9273687184
63	N (Albacete 4)	522 m	13	30SWH9208887567	30SWH9236587175
64	H (Albacete 5)	244 m	6	30SXH0442989634	30SXH0463489507
65	H (Albacete 5)	267 m	7	30SXJ0871600535	30SXJ0889600342
66	H (Albacete 5)	343 m	8	30SXH1470591098	30SXH1469090766
67	H (Albacete 5)	670 m	10	30SWH9202686083	30SWH9196685423
68	V (Albacete 6)	231 m	4	30SWJ9753600098	30SWJ9776000107
69	V (Albacete 6)	543 m	10	30SWH9473099526	30SWH9525099381
70	V (Albacete 6)	578 m	15	30SWJ9685103463	30SWJ9728903141
71	V (Albacete 6)	599 m	12	30SWJ9929507107	30SWJ9962906617
72	V (Albacete 6)	707 m	16	30SWH9613397032	30SWH9674896734

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Table 3	USM rows south of Albacete (Spain)				
Running nr.	Type of USM*	Length of row	Number of monuments	UTM start	UTM end
73	V(Albacete 6)	712 m	16	30SWJ9943904397	30SWJ9888103971
74	V(Albacete 6)	719 m	16	30SWH9477199618	30SWH9546099488
75	V(Albacete 6)	721 m	16	30SWJ9846004666	30SWJ9856804001
76	V(Albacete 6)	765 m	16	30SWJ9787701854	30SWJ9758601197
77	V(Albacete 6)	766 m	15	30SWH9817599812	30SWH9746299970
78	V(Albacete 6)	838 m	16	30SWH9408098295	30SWH9487198062
79	V(Albacete 6)	926 m	16	30SWH9651898269	30SWH9736198412
80	Λ(Albacete 6)	530 m	12	30SWJ9952707173	30SWJ9966506670
81	Λ(Albacete 6)	547 m	15	30SXJ0259203329	30SXJ0241802849
82	Λ(Albacete 6)	586 m	13	30SWH9481199685	30SWH9538499604
83	<(Albacete 6)	754 m	14	30SWJ9858001125	30SWJ9807900576
84	<(Albacete 6)	532 m	14	30SWH9586399202	30SWH9561498736
85	<(Albacete 6)	780 m	16	30SWJ9594802396	30SWJ9657401954
86	<(Albacete 6)	864 m	16	30SWJ9990404375	30SXJ0005503719
87	>(Albacete 6)	691 m	15	30SXJ0384003989	30SXJ0409203407
88	>(Albacete 6)	780 m	16	30SWJ9589702216	30SWJ9656401819
89	>(Albacete 6)	865 m	16	30SWJ9990404374	30SXJ0005503719
90	I(Albacete 7)	111 m	3	30SWH9378090996	30SWH9380790958
91	I(Albacete 7)	146 m	6	30SWH9269682732	30SWH9281482652
92	I(Albacete 7)	596 m	12	30SWH8836696799	30SWH8890396543

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**The phallus geoglyphs – unique in La Mancha.** The 110 phalli of Albacete are part of the above described stone-rows which surround the fields (Figs. 3/4), *in concreto*, they emerge out of them (Fig. 23) – preferably at peaky ends of the fields –, thus building an architectonic and cultic unity. This means that for the phalli the same loose-stone-technique was applied as for the stone line-ups, what makes the phalli vulnerable for displacement or even destruction of the geometric design. The state of preservation is generally bad and often vegetation covers the geoglyph (Fig. 23) what complicates correct sketches.

We can observe that the phalli underwent the same graphical changes from curved to angled like the USMs. And again this seems to indicate a temporal process. The sketches are therefore divided into two groups: phalli with round glans (48 / older / Figs. 30-77) and phalli with angled glans (24 + 38 / younger / Figs. 78-101, 102-139), the latter group containing also the pointy versions. Nearly all examples look like having the *Praeputium* (foreskin) drawn back so that the *Frenulum praeputii* and the *Corona glandis* become visible (Fig. 140).

Fig.23 (see also Fig. 39) - 30SWH9483999787

The phallus geoglyph is growing out of the field boundary.

ME: 20,8 m - The triangles are here filled with darker material or vegetation.

N  
↑



If the geoglyphs show an erect or non-erect phallus is not conclusive, but in the sense of an apotropaic effect – which needs an ithyphallic state – I would assume in most cases an erection, even if the shaft is bent. Analysing the forms it becomes clear that the constructions are not meant to be naturalistic but symbolic; nevertheless the occurring layouts have an amazing range (Figs.30-139).

With only a few exceptions the phalli are decorated with empty or filled triangles. That these represent the female pubics is beyond doubt; there are countless plaques (Late Neolithic-Copper Age I) in the southwestern Iberian Peninsula showing the owl-faced or eye goddess with triangles on her body

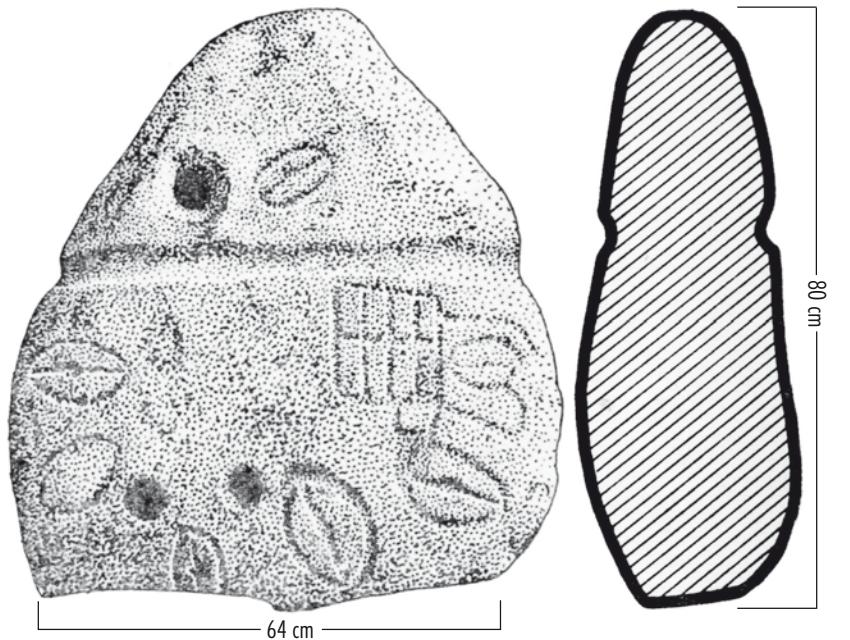


Fig. 24 - This phallic basalt betyl from Rodicol (León, Spain) shows engravings which can be interpreted as seed (corn) and as an agrarian field pattern; both underlines the connex which a penis/phallus<sup>5</sup> can have with the ploughing and seeding of a field. [Sketch from Almagro Basch 1969: Lámina 2]

Fig. 25 - This amulet from Brissos, Dolmen 6 (central Portugal) shows the characteristic triangles attributed to the Magna Mater Mediterranea [sketch Almagro Gorbea 1973: 215].



Fig. 26 - An amulet from Comenda da Igreja (central Portugal) showing the triangles interestingly in two groups and two opposite rows, like the Albacete phallus geoglyphs and USM rows [sketch Almagro Gorbea 1973: 216].

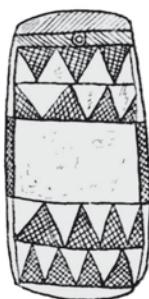


Fig. 27 - This phallic fetish from the Serra da Moinha (Portugal) shows on one side, near the lacking scrotum, small engraved rings (seed) and on the other side stylized vulvae. [Sketch adopted from Almagro Gorbea 1973: 91]

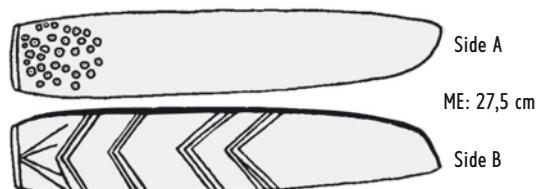
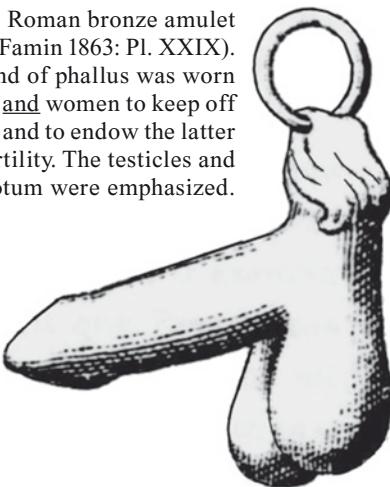




Fig.28

Fig.28 - Phallic artefact from Cabezo da Arruda, Portugal (sketch from Almagro Gorbea 1973: 77). The similarity to the contours in Figs. 108/120/138 is striking.

Fig.29 - Roman bronze amulet (sketch Famin 1863: Pl. XXIX). This kind of phallus was worn by men and women to keep off the evil and to endow the latter with fertility. The testicles and the scrotum were emphasized.



(Figs. 25/26). That phallic idols can contain engraved female pubics shows Fig. 27. Were the triangles a common ornament of the Albacete geoglyphs or do they perhaps point to the custom of tattooing or painting as a kind of body art? Both cases must be considered as ritual. If the pre- and proto-historic population of La Mancha (or conquerors like Romans, Visigoths, Arabs) practiced penis tattooing is not recorded. In the Arabic-Islamic world only women apply pubic tattooing (Chebel 1997: 406-407; Herber 1922: 40-41). Nevertheless the phallus cult was important and widespread on the pre-Hispanic Iberian Peninsula; this includes – for instance – the numerous phallic menhirs of megalithic times (Ulbrich 2014, 2015). The form of the phallus in Figs. 108, 120 & 138 has an amazing parallel in Fig. 28.

Some phallic geoglyphs (e.g. Figs. 30/31) are not connected to a field wall so that we can assume that in the Albacete region existed for a limited time a special phallus cult in which agriculture was a part. Local rock art reveals an ithyphallic depiction already for the Spanish "Arte Levantino" (10.000-4.000 BC): e.g. the Abrigo Grande de Minateda, Hellín (Jordán Montés 2004: 95). Extreme dimensions of the penis show also rock art panels of the Cueva de la Vieja, Alpera (Cabré Aguiló 1915: fig. 96), belonging also to the east Iberian *Arte Levantino*. For the time period ca. 4.-1. m. BC we find examples of the *Arte Esquemático*, male anthropomorphs with exaggerated penis, in the Abrigo de La Solana del Molinico, Socovos (Grupo de Acción Local de la Sierra del

Segura 2015: 35-36). The inventory of the museum in Albacete comprises a phallic amulet from Castillo, Lezuza, and a small phallic lamp from Los Cabezos, Mahora; both are dated tentatively into the 1st or 2nd century AD (Abascal & Sanz 1993: 26) and are therefore part of the Roman era. These examples from the Albacete province indicate that the physical penis in his ritual meaning, the phallus<sup>5</sup>, played at all times an important role in this region.

**Final reflections.** The rich manifestation of phallic Roman artefacts on the Iberian Peninsula (e.g. Zarzalejos Prieto et al. 1988) reveals that not one of these is decorated with triangles. Furthermore the typic Roman phallus amulet (Fig. 29) shows a scrotum which in the Albacete geoglyphs is lacking (Figs. 30-139). This points to a time when the scrotum was unimportant in cultic contexts [in the Greek/Roman world the first ideas on a relation between testicles and sperm came up in the 1st c. AD]. When chronological questions arise, one can cautiously answer with "early to middle Bronze Age of the Iberian Peninsula". The physical state of the phallus geoglyphs seems to exclude an older age; although the tradition of their design elements – especially the triangles – may reach back to the Late Neolithic. Supported were the phalli by over 1000 female occupied USMs; some of these can be found within phallus geoglyphs. The creators seem to be a limited human group, possibly a tribe or a bigger clan engaged in agriculture, perhaps organized as *jefatura*. This group appeared and vanished with no further traces of phallus geoglyphs in Spain – at least regarding our current knowledge. Were they local ethnics or were they Mediterranean shipwrecked travellers or even refugees? The latter could explain the smallness of the group. If there are affinities to the *Bronce Manchego* or the *Bronce del Levante* is not clear; aerial investigation alone cannot decide this, the rationale is too thin. Intensive surface investigation is now required.

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<sup>5</sup> Since antiquity Greek *phallós* and Lat. *phallus* means the erected *Membrum virile*. Following Artemidor the male erection was interpreted as potency, virility, soldiership and political authority. In this paper "phallus/phalli" is used to describe non-physical, non-biological aspects of the male sex organ, e.g. regarding symbolism and religious topics.

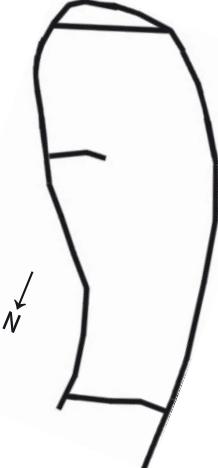
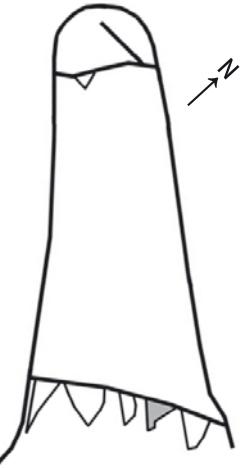
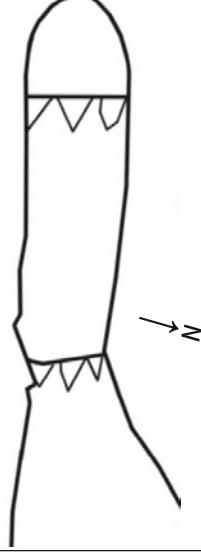
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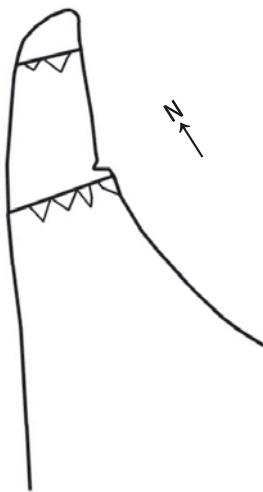
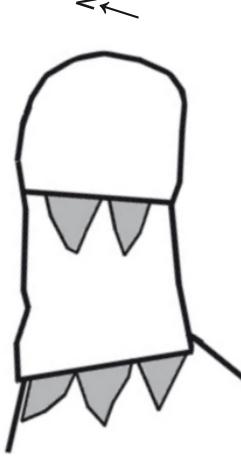
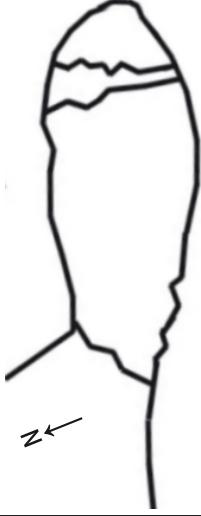
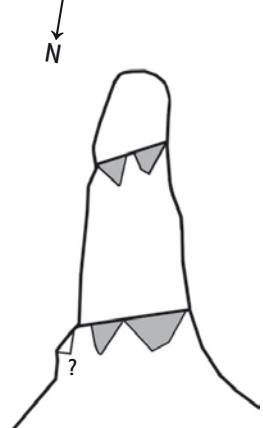
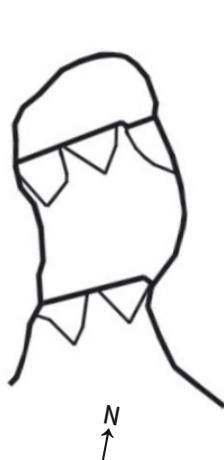
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#### **An important hint:**

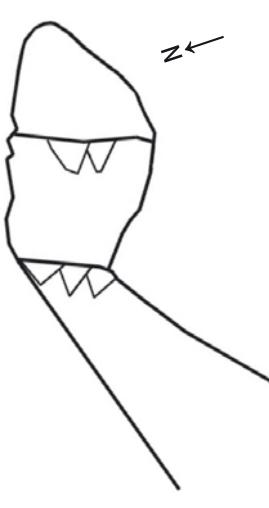
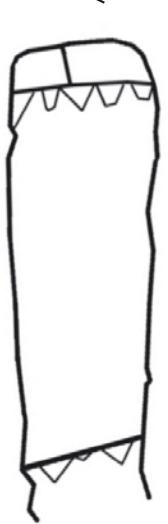
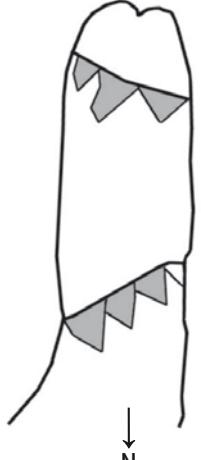
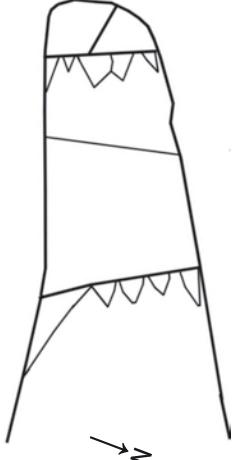
Google Earth photos can have in certain regions an age of 20 or even more years – despite a younger "Imagery Date". The consequence may be that one or another monument described here on the basis of satellite photography can no longer be found *in situ*. Sketches by the author of Albacete monuments base on the Google Earth satellite images from 2013; these show the structures mostly better and more original than the actual ones of 2017.

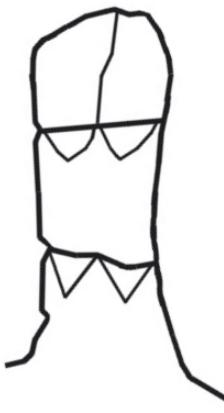
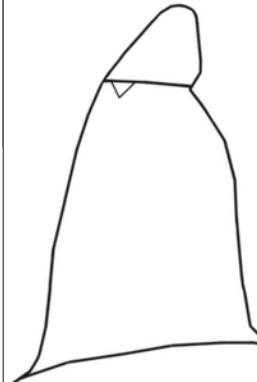
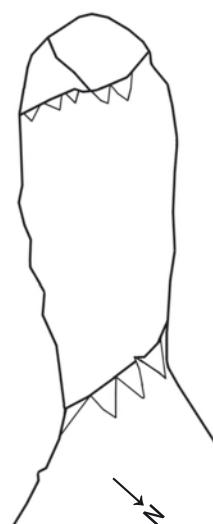
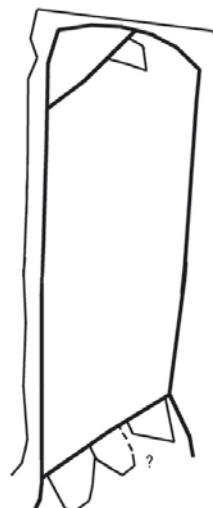
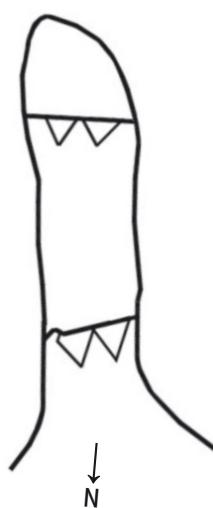
Figs. 30-140 →

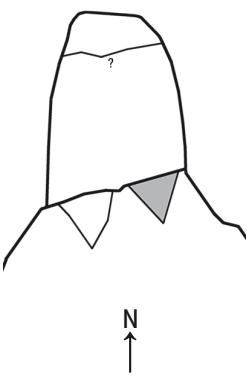
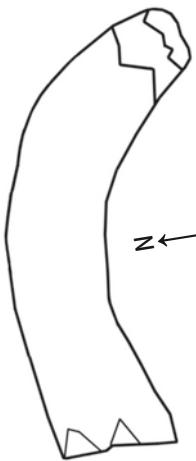
Geoglyphic phalli south of Albacete (Spain)			Sketches © Hans-Joachim Ulbrich 2018
Fig.30 No connection to a field. Vague silhouette.	ME 34 m	Fig.31 No connection to a field. Vague silhouette.	ME 62 m
			
30SWH9388794984		30SWH9814090107	Fig.32 ME 81 m
Fig.33 ME 39 m		Fig.34 ME 46,5 m	ME 33, 3 m
			
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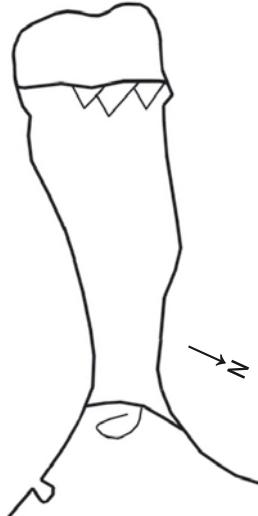
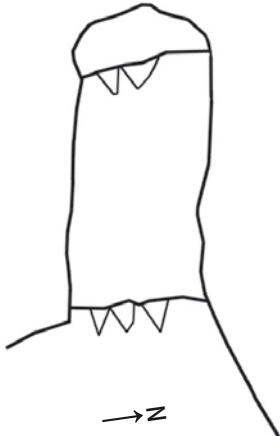
Geoglyphic phalli south of Albacete (Spain)		Sketches © Hans-Joachim Ulbrich 2018			
Fig.36	ME 54,5 m	Fig.37	ME 18,5 m	Fig.38	ME 23,2 m
					
30SWH9398698197		30SWH9418496020		30SWH9465797492	
Fig.39	ME 20,8 m	Fig.40	ME 25,7 m	Fig.41	ME 18,8 m
					
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Geoglyphic phalli south of Albacete (Spain)			Sketches © Hans-Joachim Ulbrich 2018
Fig.42	ME 17,3 m	Fig.43	ME 36,7 m
30SWH9578998956		30SWH9582096227	
Fig.44	ME 23,8 m		
30SWH9587299489			
Fig.45	ME 21 m	Fig.46	ME 75 m
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Fig.47	ME 41,7 m		
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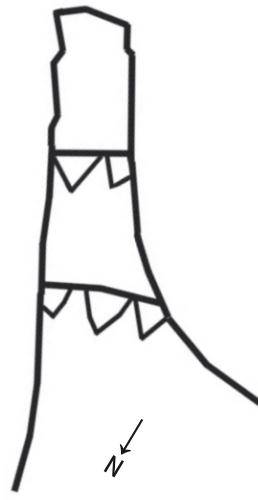
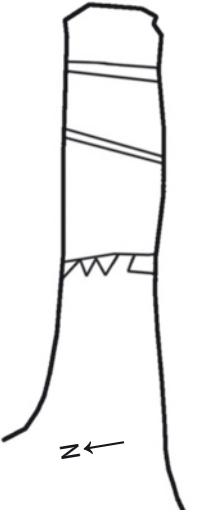
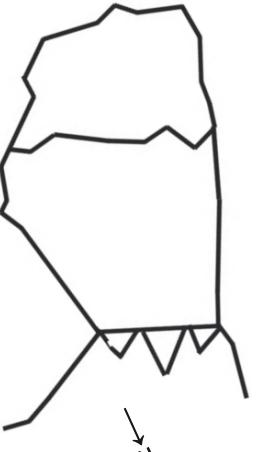
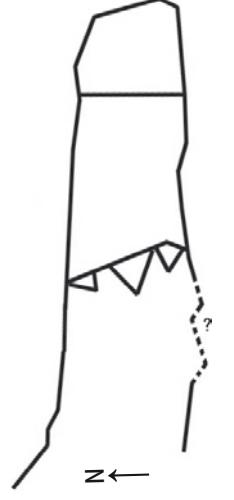
Geoglyphic phalli south of Albacete (Spain)			Sketches © Hans-Joachim Ulbrich 2018
Fig.48	ME 34 m	Fig.49	ME 14,8 m (42,2 m)
			
30SWJ9417701643		30SWJ9418501211	
Fig.50	ME 48,4 m		
			
30SWJ9438800765			
Fig.51	ME 24,5 m	Fig.52	ME 29,8 m
			
30SWJ9441001365		30SWJ9492902190	
Fig.53	ME 46,6 m		
			
30SWJ9510601231			

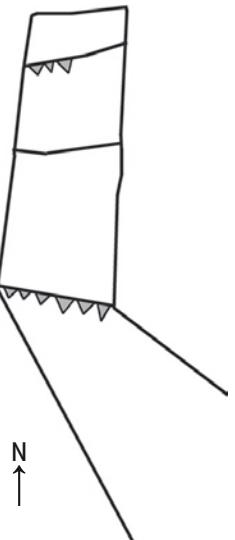
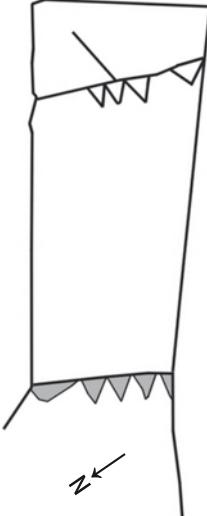
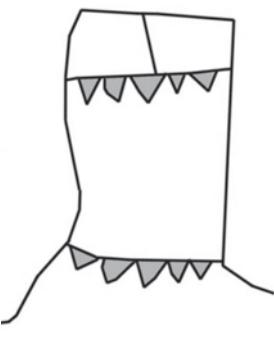
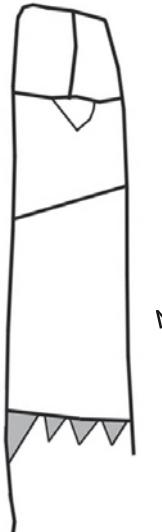
Geoglyphic phalli south of Albacete (Spain)			Sketches © Hans-Joachim Ulbrich 2018
Fig.54	ME 19,5 m	Fig.55	ME 33,2 m
			
30SWJ9511403538		30SWJ9512801864	
Fig.56	ME 56.4 m		
			
30SWJ9627203082			
Fig.57	ME 45 m	Fig.58	ME 34,6 m
			
30SWJ9651803513		30SWH9741899677	
Fig.59	ME 20 m		
			
30SWJ9793304407			

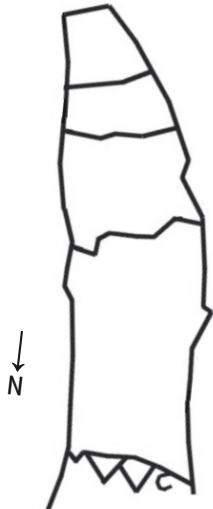
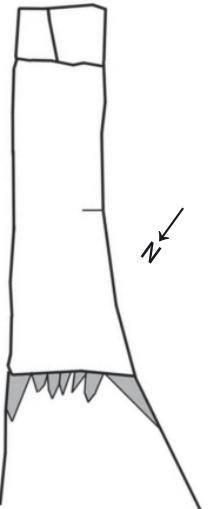
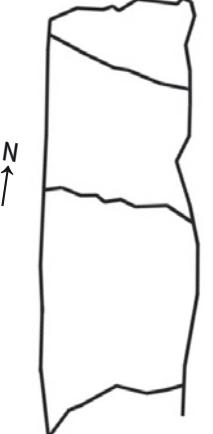
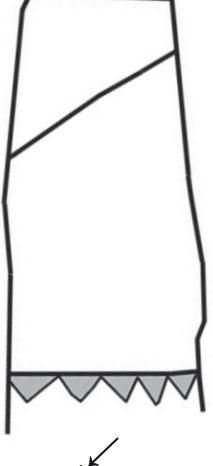
Geoglyphic phalli south of Albacete (Spain)			Sketches © Hans-Joachim Ulbrich 2018
Fig.60	ME 32 m	Fig.61	ME 68 m
			
30SWJ9795400754		30SWJ9821904386	Fig.62 ME 38 m Very vague.
Fig.63	ME 12,8 m	Fig.64	ME 53 m Very vague.
			
30SWJ9834703799		30SXH1318899696	Fig.65 ME 41,7 m
			
			30SXJ0242405678

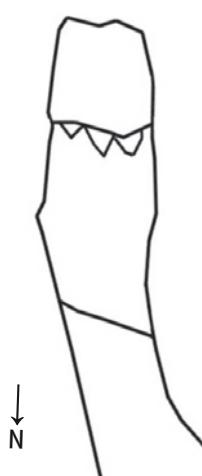
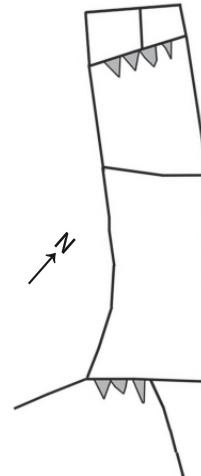
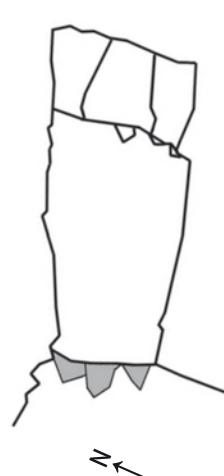
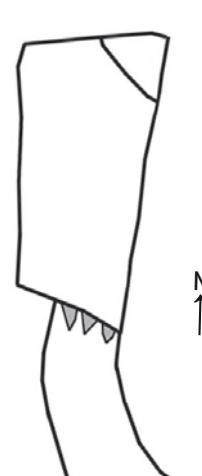
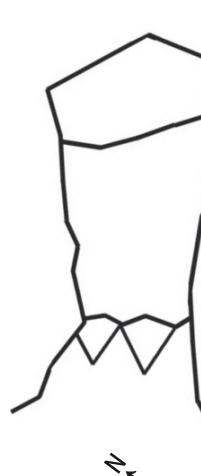
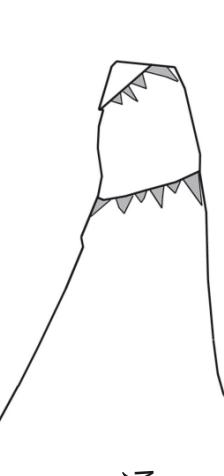
Geoglyphic phalli south of Albacete (Spain)			Sketches © Hans-Joachim Ulbrich 2018
Fig.66	ME 40,6 m	Fig.67	ME 38,8 m
			
30SXJ0257403082		30SXJ0275102908	
Fig.68	ME 79,2 m		
			
30SXJ0294805425			
Fig.69	ME 52 m	Fig.70	ME 35,9 m
			
30SXJ0320501633		30SXJ0356205112	
Fig.71	ME 34,2 m		
			
30SXJ0358804167			

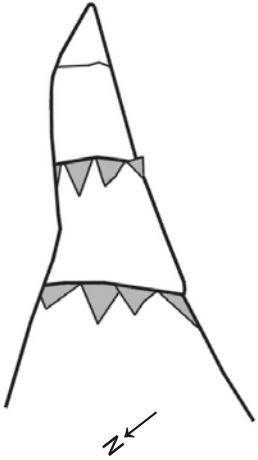
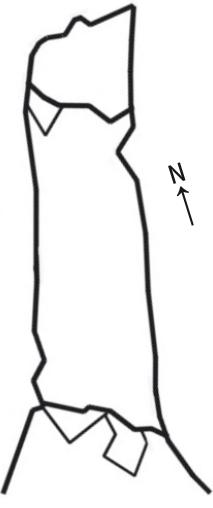
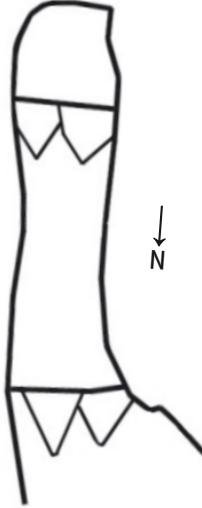
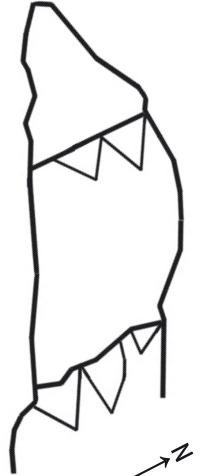
Geoglyphic phalli south of Albacete (Spain)			Sketches © Hans-Joachim Ulbrich 2018
Fig.72	ME 22 m	Fig.73	ME 30,2 m
			
30SXJ0361402221		30SXJ0389303485	
Fig.74	ME 32,5 m		
			
30SXJ0465505434			
Fig.75	ME 45,3 m	Fig.76	ME 56,5 m Thin lines very vague.
			
30SXJ0938405515		30SXJ0949702779	
Fig.77	ME 27 m Very vague.		
			
30SXJ1337203092			

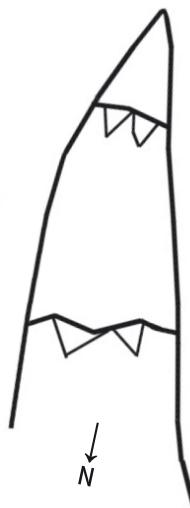
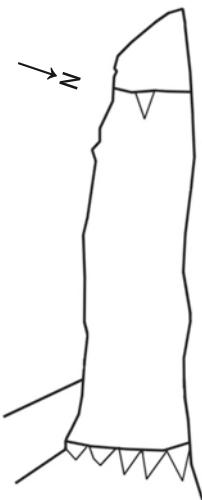
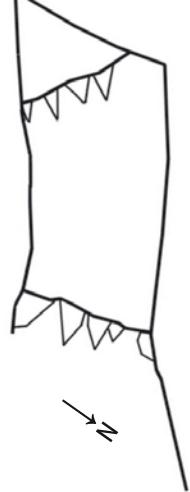
Geoglyphic phalli south of Albacete (Spain)			Sketches © Hans-Joachim Ulbrich 2018
Fig.78	ME 22,6 m	Fig.79	ME 26,8 m Thin lines very vague.
			
30SWH9327999079		30SWH9343897763	
Fig.80	ME 68 m	Fig.81	ME 36,3 m
			
30SWH9368894935		30SWH9413595480	Fig.82
Fig.83	ME 26,4 m	30SWH9423596100	ME 24,5 m
			
30SWH9766398692			

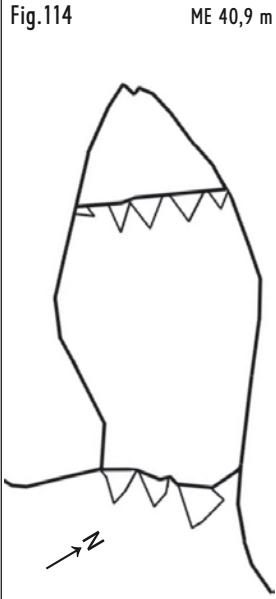
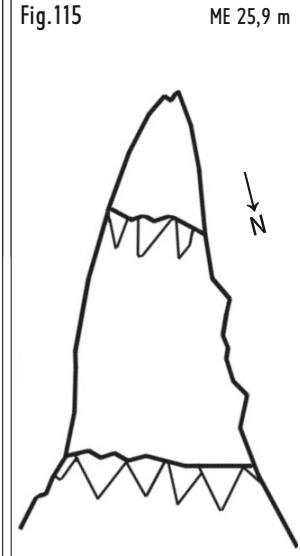
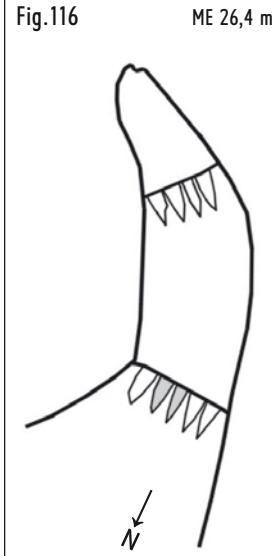
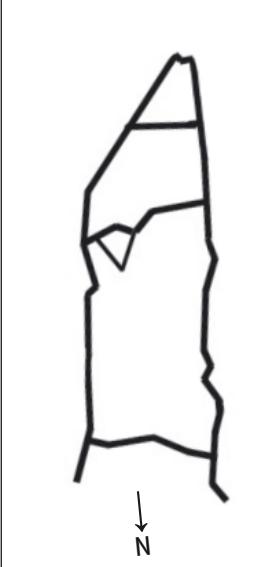
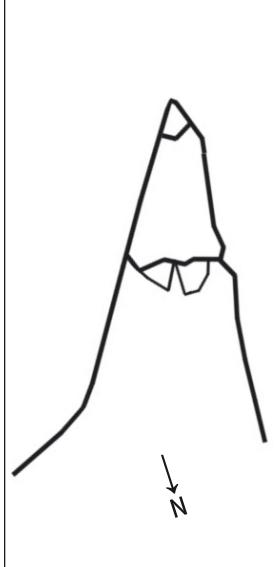
Geoglyphic phalli south of Albacete (Spain)			Sketches © Hans-Joachim Ulbrich 2018
Fig.84	ME 14,2 m	Fig.85	ME 62 m
			
30SWH9786296943		30SWJ9456401125	
Fig.86	ME 105,4 m		
			
30SWJ9485700880			
Fig.87	ME 57 m	Fig.88	ME 31,3 m
			
30SWJ9544700278		30SWJ9583000432	
Fig.89	ME 50 m		
			
30SWJ9598301555			

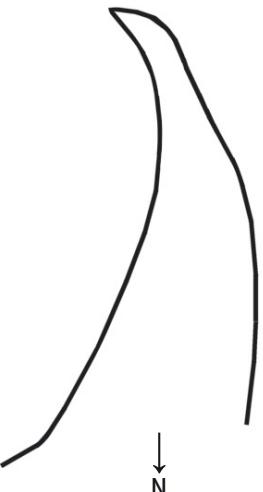
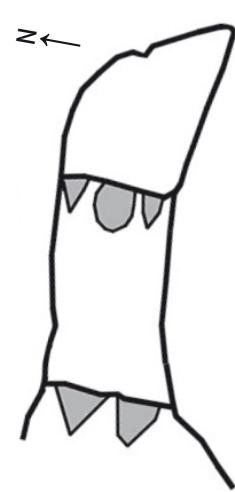
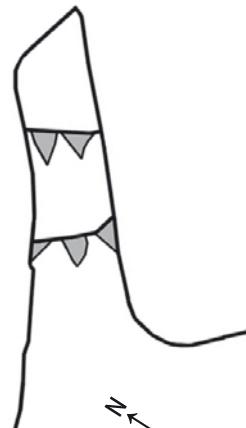
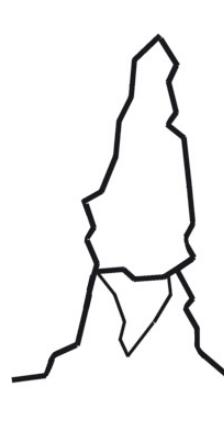
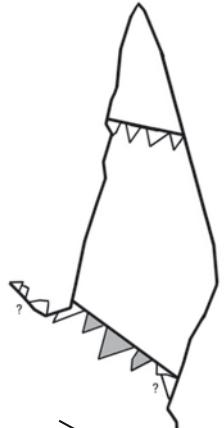
Geoglyphic phalli south of Albacete (Spain)				Sketches © Hans-Joachim Ulbrich 2018	
Fig.90	ME 25 m	Fig.91	ME 52 m	Fig.92	ME 50 m
					
30SWJ9599000931		30SWJ9734100536		30SWJ9748401196	
Fig.93	ME 44 m	Fig.94	ME 34,3 m	Fig.95	ME 24 m
					
30SWJ9833903820		30SWJ9849801377		30SWJ9868804223	

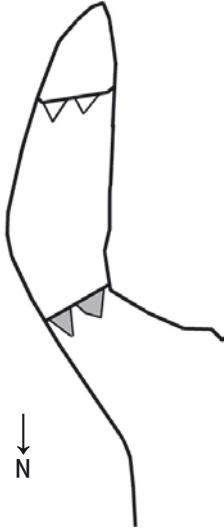
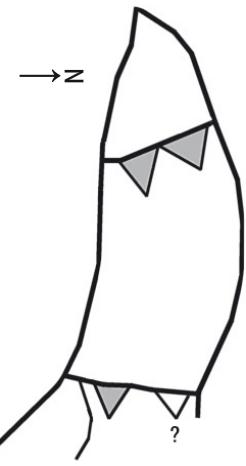
Geoglyphic phalli south of Albacete (Spain)			Sketches © Hans-Joachim Ulbrich 2018
Fig.96	ME 29 m	Fig.97	ME 59 m
			
30SWJ9899104699		30SWJ9928203955	
Fig.98	ME 30,4 m		
			
30SWJ9929304493			
Fig.99	ME 85 m	Fig.100	ME 19 m
			
30SWJ9964803739		30SXJ0214104776	
Fig.101	ME 73 m		
			
30SWH9354699800			

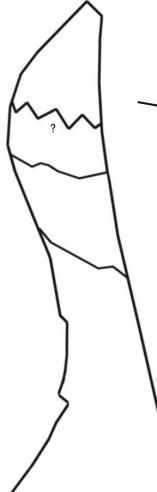
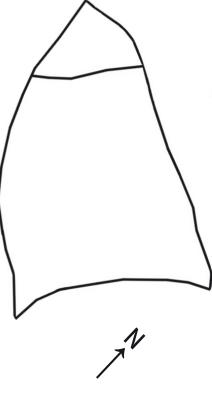
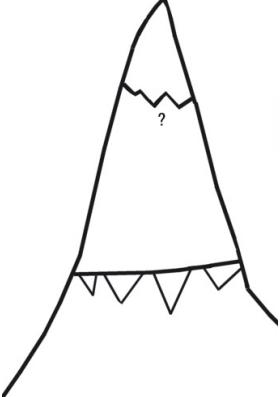
Geoglyphic phalli south of Albacete (Spain)				Sketches © Hans-Joachim Ulbrich 2018	
Fig.102	ME 49 m	Fig.103	ME 27 m	Fig.104	ME 21,7 m
					
30SWH9323399871		30SWH9329298879		30SWH9361596040	
Fig.105	ME 15,2 m	Fig.106	ME 21,2 m	Fig.107	ME 39,3 m
					
30SWH9378396125		30SWH9434297959		30SWH9439096224	

Geoglyphic phalli south of Albacete (Spain)			Sketches © Hans-Joachim Ulbrich 2018
Fig.108	ME 33,6 m	Fig.109	ME 24 m
			
30SWH9456196856		30SWH9488298103	
Fig.110	ME 53,3 m		
			
30SWH9516397821			
Fig.111	ME 27 m	Fig.112	ME 33,3 m
			
30SWH9516598088		30SWH9611598525	
Fig.113	ME 43,4 m		
			
30SWH9630996417			

Geoglyphic phalli south of Albacete (Spain)		Sketches © Hans-Joachim Ulbrich 2018			
Fig.114	ME 40,9 m	Fig.115	ME 25,9 m	Fig.116	ME 26,4 m
					
30SWH9715697135		30SWH9734299811		30SWJ9685202388	
Fig.117	ME 20 m	Fig.118	ME 54,2 m	Fig.119	ME 17,9 m
					
30SWH9751199050		30SWH9755998824		30SWH9773196658	

Geoglyphic phalli south of Albacete (Spain)		Sketches © Hans-Joachim Ulbrich 2018			
Fig.120	ME 25,3 m	Fig.121	ME 68 m	Fig.122	ME 25,6 m
					
30SWH9786099203		30SWH9813899733		30SWJ9334900711	
Fig.123	ME 33,2 m	Fig.124	ME 12,3 m	Fig.125	ME 33 m
					
30SWJ9337700274		30SWJ9398300762		30SWJ9586503112	

Geoglyphic phalli south of Albacete (Spain)			Sketches © Hans-Joachim Ulbrich 2018
Fig.126	ME 31,3 m	Fig.127	ME 24,5 m
			
30SWJ9747304237		30SWJ9599000942	
Fig.128	ME 19,3 m		
			
			?
30SWJ9765102433			
Fig.129	ME 28,7 m	Fig.130	ME 52 m
			
30SWJ9774702885		30SWJ9779903706	
Fig.131	ME 58 m		
			
			→z
30SWJ9811401548			

Geoglyphic phalli south of Albacete (Spain)			Sketches © Hans-Joachim Ulbrich 2018
Fig.132	ME 60 m	Fig.133	ME 95 m
			
30SWJ9860700800		30SWJ9877300667	
Fig.134	ME 40 m		
			
30SWJ9891100307			
Fig.135	ME 72 m	Fig.136	ME 38,2 m
			
30SXJ0268804509		30SXJ0306504571	
Fig.137	ME 33,4 m		
			
30SXJ0338902145			

Geoglyphic phalli south of Albacete (Spain)		Sketches © Hans-Joachim Ulbrich 2018
Fig.138	ME 18,6 m	<p>Fig.140</p> <p>The diagram illustrates a stylized phallus shape with various anatomical features labeled:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Frenulum praeputii (only sometimes)</li> <li>Glans penis</li> <li>Corona glandis</li> <li>Corpus penis (shaft)</li> <li>Perhaps the dorsal side of the penis root?</li> <li>Surrounding apotropaic wall</li> <li>Unclear zone where the surrounding wall ends and the phallus begins.</li> <li>This part of the wall (without interruptions) may exist or not.</li> </ul> <p>Below the diagram, it says "Pointy end of a field" and "Fictitious form for explanatory purposes".</p>
30SXJ0379706505		
Fig.139	ME 31,8 m	<p>The sketches have <u>not</u> the same scale. All maximal extensions (ME) and all sketches in Figs. 30-139 are more or less approximately. In most cases it is not clear how long the shaft of the phallus was originally meant to be. Sudden changes in the direction of lines may not be the intention of the original constructor, but rather the result of dislocation of the stones by meteorological processes (erosion, storms etc). The above mentioned "darker material" in some of the triangles could in fact be a different kind of soil or a layer of fine-grain debris, but possible is also a low vegetation blanket which had a slightly better protection between the low walls of a triangle than in the open savannah – the satellite images deliver not enough resolution to evaluate this exactly. Fig. 140 shows an idealizing sketch of the "average" Albacete phallus geoglyph.</p>
30SXJ0465905434		