

Harald Haarmann is one of the world's best-known linguists. He studied general linguistics, various philological disciplines and prehistory at the universities of Hamburg, Bonn, Coimbra and Bangor. He obtained his PhD in Bonn and his Habilitation (qualification at professorship level) in Trier. He taught and researched at a number of German and Japanese universities. Since 2003 he has been Vice-President of the Institute of Archaeomythology (main office in Sebastopol, California, USA) and director of its "European Branch" (located in Luumäki, Finland). Professor Haarmann has authored more than 70 books in German and English, some of which have been translated into over a dozen languages. In addition to this study on the Danube Civilisation, he has produced remarkable insights into the roots of ancient Greek civilisation and the early history of Rome. His work has earned him the Prix logos (1999), awarded by the Association européenne des linguistes et des professeurs de langues (Paris) and the Premio Jean Monnet (Genova, 1999) for essay writing. In 2006 he received the Plato Award (UK). He lives and works in Finland.

**"Those who admire the brilliance of Classical Greek culture should not overlook the background glow of Old Europe."**

Harald Haarmann

Over the last few years, archaeologists have been finding more and more evidence for the existence of a civilisation on the Balkan peninsula, which, between the 6th and 4th millennia BCE, was using a writing system long before the Mesopotamians. In this book, Harald Haarmann provides the first comprehensive insight into this enigmatic Old European culture, which, until recently, was unknown. He describes trade routes and settlements, arts and crafts, the mythology and writing system of the Danube Civilisation; he traces its origins to the Black Sea area and shows which cultural influences it had on Ancient Greece and the Near East.

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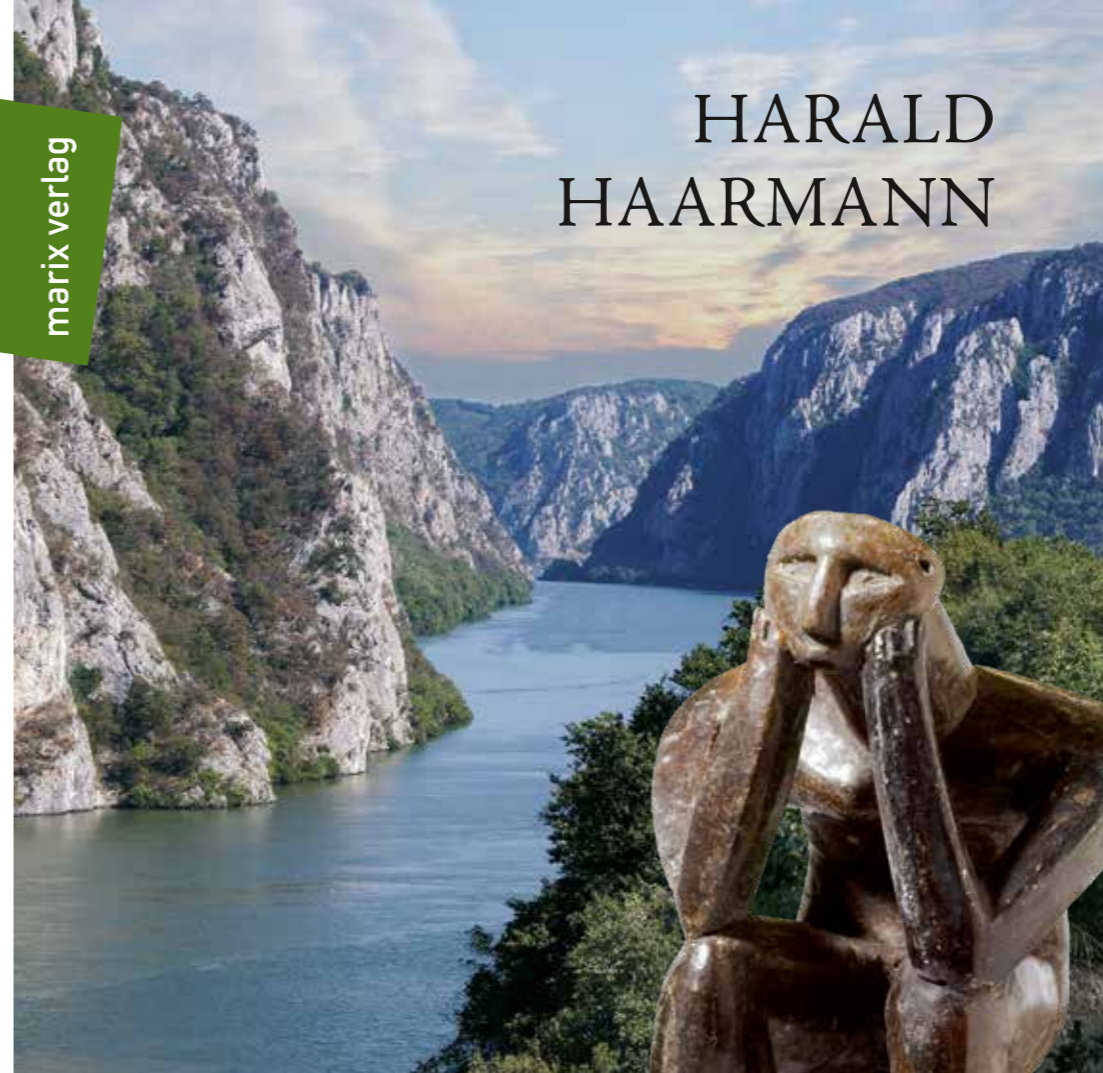
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HARALD HAARMANN  
THE MYSTERY OF THE  
DANUBE CIVILISATION

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THE MYSTERY  
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CIVILISATION

The discovery of Europe's oldest civilisation

"In recent years, a series of amazing discoveries have been made about the life of early farmers in the valleys of the Danube and its tributaries, and in the catchment areas of the water-ways: There was already a rudimentary writing system in this area, long before writing came into being in Mesopotamia; metalworking had reached a level of development seen nowhere else in the world; the visual arts produced amazing masterpieces; and there were large urban-scale settlements. We do not (yet) know what the Old Europeans called their cities and the modern names of some of the new sites, such as Tallyanky or Majdanec'ke south of Kiev, are still unfamiliar to us. But we have now mapped out their ground plans and know that thousands of people lived in these settlements. Majdanec'ke had between 5,500 and 8,000 inhabitants. Some of these settlements were two to three times the size of the early cities in Mesopotamia. A few years ago, I coined the name 'Danube Civilisation' for this highly developed culture. In the meantime, the terms 'Danube Civilisation' and 'Old Europe' tend to be used interchangeably."

(from the introduction)