

# From the core to the periphery: notes on recent research in western rock art areas of Central Valcamonica

## Introduction

In the last decade, extensive research in various areas of the central Valcamonica (Capo di Ponte, Nadro di Ceto and Paspardo) has brought to light an immense treasure of rock art (Cittadini 2017; Marretta 2018; Medici & Gavaldo 2019; Rondini & Marretta 2021). Systematic fieldwork, focused here only on the western sites, is reaching an important milestone in the Seradina and Bedolina areas, two important parts of Unesco Site No. 94, where full documentation and analysis of all identified carved panels is rapidly becoming a reality. At the same time, new discoveries of rock carvings not only within the main sites, but also in neighbouring and still little explored areas, significantly increase the density and territorial extent of the carved panels made here in prehistoric times and, as we shall see, contribute to the clarification of old or still unsolved problems. Finally, the now solid data on the distribution of motifs increasingly support the recent hypothesis that certain features of rock art in the western and eastern areas reflect a highly localised phenomenon that remains to be explained in terms of causes and evolution (Sansoni 2016).

Although the relationship between rock art and other evidence of human presence in the territory—such as settlements, cult sites or necropolises—is still weak, new interesting data are also coming from this fundamental area. The most important project in this direction is the Quattro Dossi project, which includes the investigation of the famous Dos dell’Arca site and, after the last campaign in 2022, revealed a surprising

concentration of more than fifty carved rocks embedded in a complex web of archaeological layers from the Neolithic to the Late Iron Age (Rondini & Marretta 2017, 2019, 2021; Rondini *et al.* 2018). However, the renewed excavations at Seradina have also revealed interesting elements. The known site on the top of the hill of Seradina I (Sansoni 1984) was in fact re-explored in 2021 thanks to new archaeological excavations and a complete re-examination of the unpublished material recovered in the 1980s.

This article will focus only on part of the vast western macro-area, which extends in its entirety from the northern limit of the urban centres of Cemmo-Capo di Ponte to the rural area of the municipality of Sellero, without any significant break in the presence of rock art (Fig. 1). The sites presented here are Seradina and Bedolina, partially included in the Seradina-Bedolina Archaeological Park since 2005, and the northern Ronchi di Scianica/Bosc del Cok and Coren di Redondo (Marretta 2011, 2014, *in press*), which have only recently been studied and researched in more detail.<sup>2</sup>

## The Seradina and Bedolina areas: state of research

Seradina and Bedolina, first mentioned in the 1930s and subsequently visited to record the found rock art in the mid-1960s and early 1980s by Emmanuel Anati and the Centro Camuno di Studi Preistorici (CCSP) team, have been re-examined since 2011 as part of a broader project to fully survey,

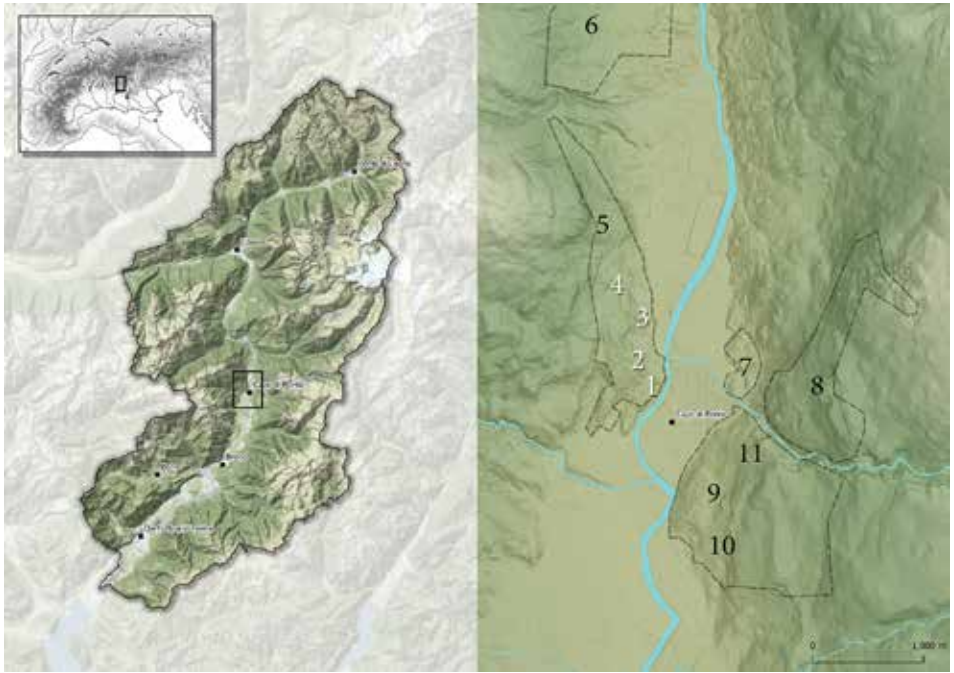


Fig. 1. On the right: location of the main rock art areas surrounding Capo di Ponte: Western sites: 1. Seradina, 2. Bedolina, 3. Ronchi di Scianica, 4. Coren di Redondo, 5. Pià d'Ort, 6. Sellero group; Eastern sites: 7. Quattro Dossi macro-area, 8. Paspardo macro-area, 9. Naquane, 10. Foppe di Nadro, 11. Campanine.

record, and analyse the archaeological evidence. As we write, Seradina—which has traditionally been divided into three sectors (I-III) (Anati 1965; Marretta 2014, 2018)—lists 193 carved rocks, while Bedolina includes 53 rocks. The fully recorded rocks (contact tracing, oblique light photographs, 3D models, etc.) amount to 80%, indicating a possible completion of both areas in the near future.

***In the beginning... An erratic and very limited thematic presence***

As for the earliest traces of carving, a phase that can be dated to the Late Neolithic/ Early Copper Age (IV-beginning of the III millennium BC), represented almost exclusively by a few<sup>3</sup> geometric images belonging to the “map” trend of the early type,<sup>4</sup> we must now take into account a new panel found in Seradina I. It consists of an extraordinary series of daggers discovered and recorded in 2016 (R. 29). Images of weap-

ons from the Copper or Bronze Age have important concentrations in the central-eastern areas (Foppe di Nadro, Dos Cui) and the southern areas (Luine), while they are very rare in the central-western areas. This discovery complements the previously known finds from Seradina II R. 36 and Seradina III R. 28 (Anati 1982), where daggers with triangular blade and semi-circularommel (Remedello type, 2900-2500 BC) are present.

In the case of the latter rock, which also contains some Iron Age warriors from the previous phase, the weapons are associated with an unusual meander motif, groups of aligned points/cup-marks, and a geometric/“topographical” element consisting of a series of points/ cup-marks enclosed by a sub-oval line (Fig. 2). This association is also found at the few other sites where a Copper/Early Bronze Age phase occurs, such as Foppe di Nadro R. 22/23



Fig. 2. Seradina III R. 28. Amidst ordered columns of cup-marks (left) and intertwined meander lines, two Remedello-type daggers can be seen (centre right). This Copper Age phase is partially covered in the lower register by the usual presence of armed human figures from the Iron Age.

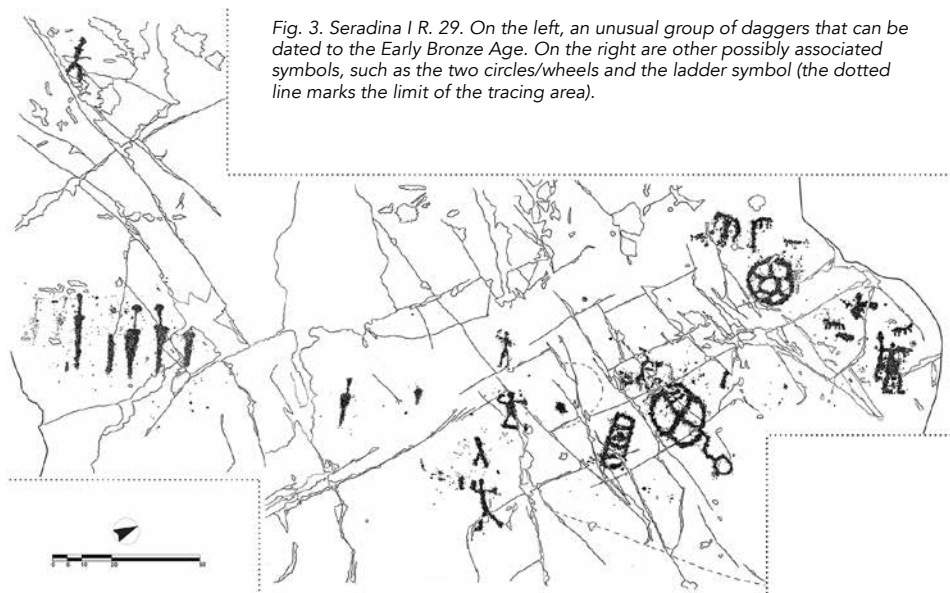


Fig. 3. Seradina I R. 29. On the left, an unusual group of daggers that can be dated to the Early Bronze Age. On the right are other possibly associated symbols, such as the two circles/wheels and the ladder symbol (the dotted line marks the limit of the tracing area).

(Cittadini 2017) or Vite R. 36 (Arcà et al. 2001).

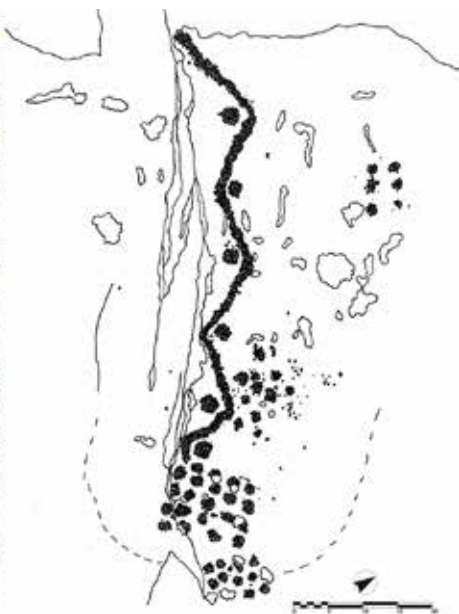
The daggers<sup>5</sup> of R. 29 (Fig. 3), typologically distinguished by the tendentially spherical pommel and the narrow and long blades with sometimes curved sides, find interesting comparisons in variant 1 of Foppe di Nadro R. 23, studied by S. Casini on the basis of comparisons with metal daggers from Lavagnone, Ledro, Fontanella Mantovana, Bande di Cavriana, Gabbiano, Manerba and Barche di Solferino and attributed to the Early Bronze Age (Casini 2012; Casini & Fossati 2007).

On the right side of the sector, a mixed group of signs can be dated to the Iron Age (almost exclusively human figures), although the wheel, the crossed circle with appendage and the "ladder" sign, which some scholars consider part of the limited and highly symbolic Bronze Age symbolism known so far in Valcamonica and Valtellina along the weapons (Martinotti 2009; Sansoni et al. 1999), are subject to greater uncertainty<sup>6</sup>.

### **The intriguing diffusion of "adaptive maps"**

Geometric compositions of varying complexity, commonly referred to as "maps", are known throughout Valcamonica. We limit ourselves here to a subset of this extensive category, which we call "adaptive maps" because of their special characteristics. What are "adaptive maps"? They are geometric compositions that clearly follow the 3D surface of the rock. Some cases consist for examples of simple lines carefully aligned with natural ridges or running around bulges or depressions. A long-lost image of this type is located on Seradina III R. 12. It is part of an articulated outcrop in the lower part of Seradina III. The surface on which the image is seen (Fig. 4) consists of a bulge in the rock facing east with two flat sections at different elevations and a gentle slope between them. The carving is composed by groups of point/cup-mark arranged in a square formation in one case, as in the basic modules of the Bedolina map (although a boundary line is missing here),

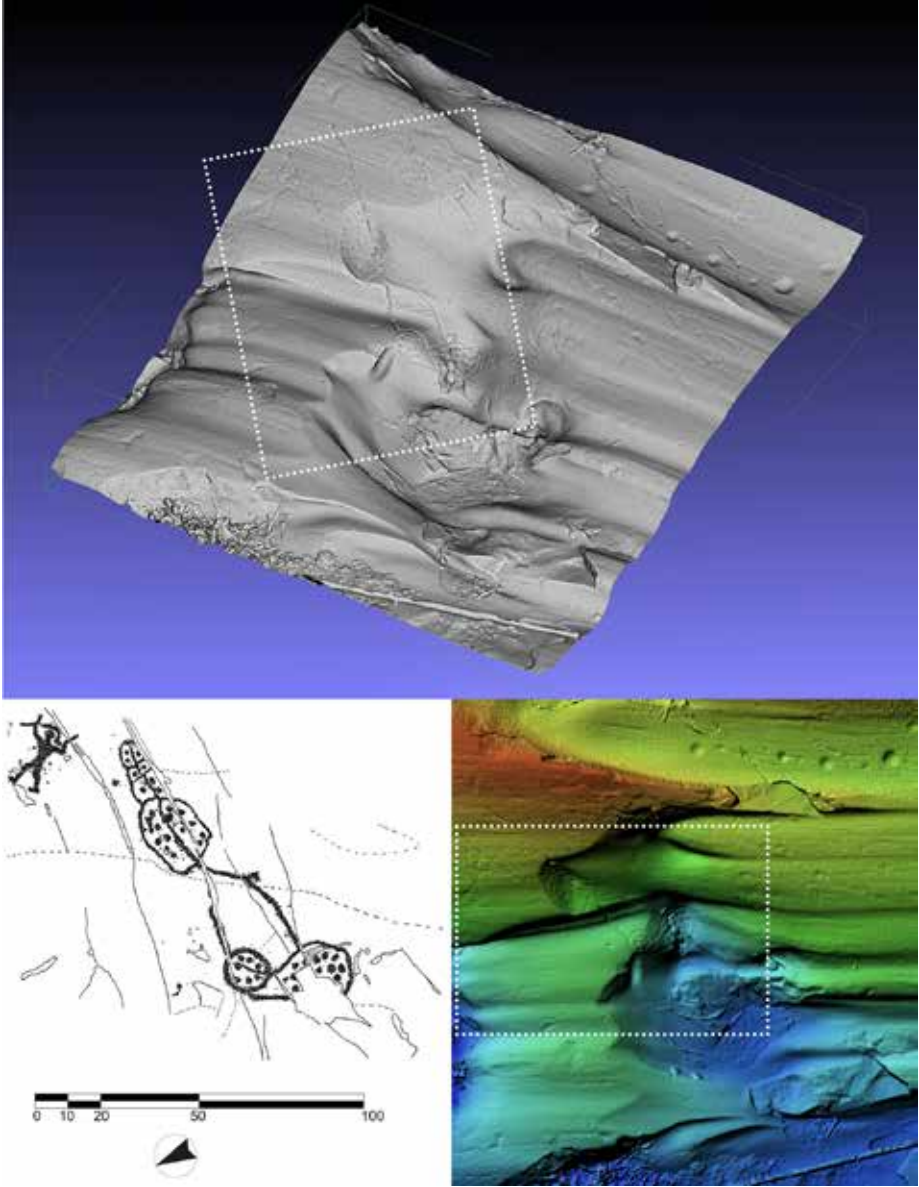
Fig. 4. Seradina III R. 12. Group of ordered points/cup-marks and a zigzag line "running up" the natural slope of the surface.



and a sequence of bigger points/cup-marks running up the slope with a line zigzagging along them. This unique composition has a quite similar counterpart in Pià d'Ort-Convai

R. 13 (Sansoni & Gavaldo 1995), although here the same line/cup-marks formation ends with the head of a horned serpent.

Fig. 5. Bedolina R. 7, Sector B. Tracing and 3D renderings (top: mesh model, bottom right: false colours DEM) of the articulated rock with a small "map-like" motif.



In Seradina, it is not uncommon to find simple lines extending across an inclined portion of the surface, maybe with the idea, as some scholars argue (Casti 2018), to represent real paths leading up the mountainside. This type of images, almost unknown in the eastern areas, are called “path maps”<sup>7</sup> and have remarkable examples, especially in Pià d’Ort (Sansoni & Gavaldo 1995). The similarities with basic elements also found on the famous and well-studied Bedolina R. 1—better known as the *Bedolina Map* (Beltràn Lloris 1972; Turconi 1997)—suggest an analogous dating to the middle centuries of the Iron Age.

Another clear example of “adaptive maps” can be found in the concentration of rock art in the Bedolina area. The huge Bedolina R. 7, for example, is dominated by an almost inextricable palimpsest of superimposition’s involving an extended “map” very similar to Bedolina R. 1, warriors, animals and symbols. In Sector B, among many other figures, there is a group of specific geometric components—circles or ovals filled with cup-marks—connected by lines and deliberately adapted to the complex morphology of the rock surface (Fig. 5).

These few examples force us to look more closely at the obvious relationship between the 2D image and the 3D natu-

ral support, a connection that has been noted in the past in the occasional careful positioning of single images (Fossati 2011) and is now essential to understanding the ever-growing data coming from the “maps” trend. Whether or not they are topographic representations, these images were clearly conceived as a whole with the underlying rocks and must henceforth be analysed in accordance with this new and overlooked dimension (Casti 2018; Martinotti & Marretta 2022).

### **The slender tribe and the stumpy gang**

Looking at the typical panels of the Iron Age, it is now well-noticeable the recurrent alternation between the linear armed men, often duelling and turning one arm behind the body, and the rectangular warriors with empty bodies found on many rocks, especially in the Corno sector of Seradina I. These two representations of the human figure, which of course do not fully cover the many occurrences with mixed features and consequently difficult typological classification, are traditionally dated to the Early Iron Age (IX-VI century BC) and the Late Iron Age (III-I century BC) respectively.

The first format is well illustrated by Seradina I R. 1 (Corno), which has many features of nearby R. 12, but also an unusual

Fig. 6. Seradina I R. 1. Complete recording of sector A showing many duels with linear humans accompanied by standing warriors with high helmets, spears and large shields. Few animals and a hunting scene gather rather on the right side of the panel.



concentration of helmeted, standing people depicted in frontal view (Fig. 6). Typical features of R. 12, located just a few metres above, can be seen in a duelling scene with armed helpers at each warrior's side—a type of enlarged scene that has not yet appeared outside Seradina—and in some hunting scenes that make use of the glacial grinds to place the bodies of deer and hunting dogs. The high number of linear duels is also typical of this area, although this motif is used so systematically that we find it even on the most peripheral rocks of the western macro-area uncovered by recent research.

Quite unusual is the concentration of twelve warriors with high pointed helmets, large elongated shields and spears. In Western areas, this type of helmet is never worn by fighting warriors, who instead sometimes have crested helmets with long tails, but only when the human figures are not depicted in the linear style. Horsemen are also never depicted wearing helmets. Thus,

in conjunction with the large shields and long spears, the helmet seems to serve as a distinguishing feature for individuals/groups of special status, perhaps by age or social rank. The surprising rarity of this defensive weapon in the large and rich sites on the eastern side of the valley, such as Campanine, where the helmet appears almost only on the head of an exceptional warrior of the area (Sansoni & Galvaldo 2009), confirms its particular use in the rock art tradition.

The second format is the preferred choice for the human figures depicted on a new rock in Seradina I Corno, which confirms the strong preference for this type in this very portion of Seradina. The highest part of the hill is entirely occupied by R. 18, a large surface that slopes south-east into R. 19 and R. 62. The newly found R. 62 (2020) is now by far the most important and richest surface of this part of Seradina I (Fig. 7). The images show almost exclusively warriors with rectangular, empty bodies, very often grouped in symmetrical pairs, fighting each other with large, rectangular shields

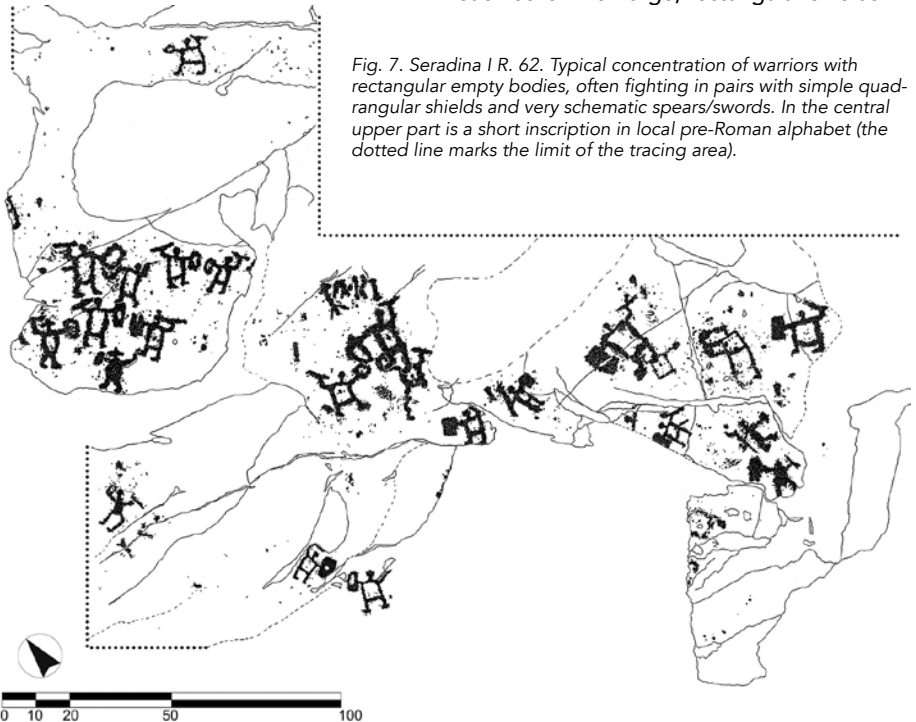


Fig. 7. Seradina I R. 62. Typical concentration of warriors with rectangular empty bodies, often fighting in pairs with simple quadrangular shields and very schematic spears/swords. In the central upper part is a short inscription in local pre-Roman alphabet (the dotted line marks the limit of the tracing area).

and spears. Few notable features should be noted. Some warriors bear a single dot in the centre of the empty body, perhaps a symbolic distinction or an indication of a special defensive armour. Shields vary in size and shape, ranging from rectangular to smaller square examples. Sometimes the shield is fully pecked except for a small round area in the centre, which in this case could indicate the presence of a boss. The spear, which is usually very short and held horizontally above the head, seems to be ubiquitous, as we have also seen, for example, on R. 18. Only two warriors have the sword hanging from their waist, as is the case with other stylistically identical human figures, notably in Seradina I (e.g., R. 5). Normally, this type of warrior does not wear a helmet. Here, however, an interesting pair is distinguished by a kind of pointed "hat" with a wide brim worn by the respective warriors. Although some images could belong to different phases, the superimposition recorded here are of warriors of the same style, probably due to lack of space rather than chronological reasons.

**The occasional novelty of alphabetic writing amid a resistant milieu of traditional motifs**

An important novelty is the recent discovery of a short pre-Roman inscription, which

can be seen in the central part of Seradina I R. 62 (Fig. 8). This is the first discovery of a new inscription at Seradina in 40 years (Mancini 1980). This new unexpected epigraphic evidence is crucial to finally untangle the confused inscription—consisting of two words—known on Seradina I R. 6 since the 1960s. A possible solution to the transcription of the word on the left, which until now has not been read or even ignored by scholars because of its confused rendering, can be proposed thanks to the new evidence from R. 62.

The inscription on Seradina I R. 62 consists of a single word with five letters. The alignment of some of the letters, especially the *a*, indicates a reading from right to left. The first character is almost certainly a *i*, with two "bulges" at the ends that seem to imitate a Latin capital letter. The second character looks like a three-part *s*, which is very rare in the known Valcamonica inscriptions. Then, very close to the previous character, but still to be considered as a separate element, we see a simple *i* in the form of a vertical segment. In the fourth position there is a dot instead of a letter. The dot is followed by a very frequent ending in *-az*, with *a* and *z* rendered in the usual inverted form common in the inscriptions of the western areas, including the peripheral Pià d'Ort. The final suggested reading is

Fig. 8. Seradina I R. 62. Inscription in pre-Roman alphabet. Proposed reading (from right to left): *isi.az*.





Fig. 9. Seradina I R. 6. Inscription in pre-Roman characters consisting of two words associated with fighting warriors. The term on the left can now be read as *isi.az* as on R. 62, but with the reading direction reversed (here from left to right). The entire inscription, a recurring binomial formula ending in *-az/-au* (personal name+patronym?), can be transcribed as *isi.az xeriau*.

thus *isi.az*, which gives a new sense to the confused *z??az* proposed by Mancini for the left word on Seradina I R. 6 (Mancini 1980: 123). The latter can indeed be read as a cruder rendering of the same word, marking for the first time the exact repetition of a term throughout the macro-area of Western rock art on two separate surfaces (Fig. 9). Last but not least, the strong association with a homogeneous imagery both on R. 62 and on the not yet so distant R. 6 points to

a specific chronology that refers to the Late Iron Age, i.e., between the V and I centuries BC.

### **Fantastic rocks and where to find them: two new areas North of Seradina and Bedolina**

The first area named Ronchi di Scianica, collects all the carved rocks north of Seradina, previously uncatalogued and provisionally



Fig. 10. Ronchi di Scianica R. 7. Warrior with crested helmet on the vertical side of a rock facing the main path.

counted by the CCSP between the 1960s and 1970s under the generic locality 'Ronchi' (Anati 1976). The site extends in a northerly direction and at the same altitude as Seradina, along a narrow strip of hillside between 400 and 500 metres above sea level, crossed in its entirety by a well-known path leading to the village of Sellero. Many rock art panels are located on rocks in the middle of the path (Fig. 10), while others are hidden among trees and shrubs, especially in the forest above, which merges seamlessly into the small area of Bosc del Cok (three richly carved rocks known so far).

The area shows all the classical themes of Seradina and Bedolina, such as symmetrical duels with linear warriors, acrobatic riders, groups of dogs, hunting scenes, etc. On the other hand, more original panels have been observed so far, such as a part covered with cup marks on R. 1 or the rich group of modern carvings (personal names

in capital Latin letters, tree-like signs, etc.) seen on R. 4-5.

The second area is called Coren di Redondo, referring to its exposed location<sup>8</sup> at the foot of a rocky ridge just below the Redondo site. The rock art, which cover a narrow section between 500 and 600 m a.s.l., were discovered by the author in 2005 during research for the creation of the Seradina-Bedolina Archaeological Park and after the reopening of an old path north of Bedolina. The path is paved in several places and seems to have been frequently used at least during the Middle Ages and recent history. According to the old inventories (Poggiani Keller *et al.* 2007) and based on a thorough check in the CCSP archives, where it is never mentioned (Anati 1976), it seems that no rock has ever been found in this area. Only a few preliminary reports on the discoveries and the documentation campaigns have been published so far (Marretta 2009, 2011).



Fig. 11. Coren di Redondo R. 9, sector A. A good example of the rich imagery of the area, showing a concentration of animals, dynamic people with specific small rectangular/square shields, occasional horsemen and the characteristic presence of G-shaped horns with central bars (cornua), a musical instrument used during the Roman era.

Earlier research at Coren di Redondo had brought to light some twenty engraved surfaces with a total of more than a thousand prehistoric figures (Marretta 2009, 2011). Beyond the ordinary frequency of warriors and animals, specific and/or unique images are present (Fig. 11): a rare two-wheeled chariot, musical instruments (horns from the Roman period), footprints, geometric compositions of the "map" type and a number of animals (especially horses) and human figures attributed to a hypothetical local "master/artist". One of the largest surfaces is almost exclusively characterised by the extremely rare motif of the human figure with arms pointing downwards (sometimes with weapons) and the presence of mythological creatures with oversized legs and arms.

Both Ronchi di Scianica and Coren di Redondo represent very important novelties, as they show a continuous presence of rock art still hidden under the forest, extending by hectares beyond the known areas of Seradina and Bedolina. It remains to be clarified whether the rock art stops with the end of the typical sandstone formation around Capo di Ponte or whether it continues in the schist of the Sellero area without significant changes. As we shall see, some rocks

show that at least part of these areas were already discovered at the beginning of the research in the early 1930s and have since been lost to archaeological investigation.

**The lost 'map':  
a ninety-two-year-old mystery solved**

During the dry and sunny winter months at the beginning of 2022, explorations in the Ronchi di Scianica area have led to the discovery of many new engravings. There are now a total of 26 carved rocks in the area. The rock art, of which only a minimal part is visible under the dense vegetation, consists of the usual range of armed people and animals depicted in the Iron Age. On the other hand, the most interesting discovery is actually a rediscovery, as it relates to a startling image published by the archaeologist Raffaello Battaglia almost ninety-two years ago (Fig. 12). Since he was also the first to mention the Bedolina map two years earlier, every scholar since then has been convinced that this "map" was in Bedolina<sup>9</sup>, as Battaglia's caption says. But in fact, no one has ever had any idea on which rock of Bedolina this particular image could be found.

As mentioned earlier, the rock is instead located in Ronchi di Scianica, north of Bedo-

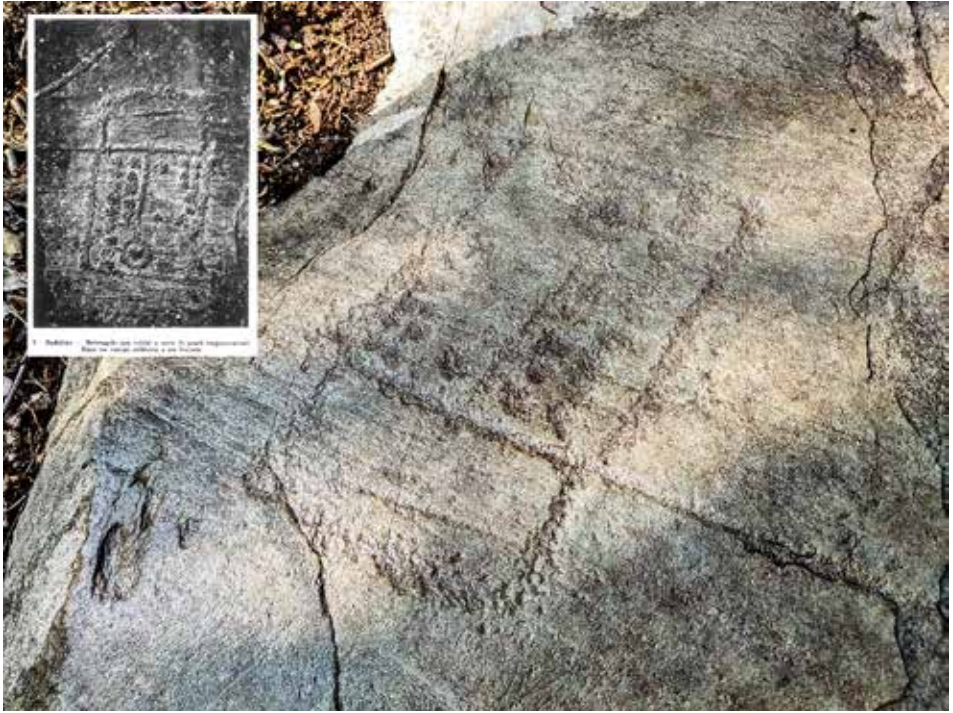


Fig. 12. Ronchi di Scianica R. 19. Detail of the geometric element in 2022 and as it appears (printed upside down) in the article published by Raffaello Battaglia in 1934. The caption reads: "Bedoline. Rectangle with grooves and a series of dots possibly representing a cultivated field or orchard."

lina and Seradina, in an area not very far from the present Bedolina, but very different in terms of morphology and landscape. The surface, called R. 19, consists of the usual large slab of smooth local sandstone, damaged here and there by weathering and flaking. The rock art shows in the upper left corner a characteristic element of the Bedolina Map three fighting couples, a single warrior and an isolated dog (Fig. 13). The geometric element not only features the typical ordered columns of points/cups within a subdivided rectangle, but also an encircled points/cup, a detail known so far only from the most famous "maps" of Bedolina, such as R. 1 and, more recently, R. 7. No less interesting are the three duels, two of which are fought with long spears and shields, while the remaining one is fought with the warriors usually armed with swords and round shields. As in many other rocks,

it is the lone warrior who displays a tall, crest-like helmet in frontal view and a sword with a large, round pommel, while the other arm brandishes a semi-circular shield in front of the body. The recurring association between this type of warrior, generally attributed to the Early Iron Age, and the geometric element is an important confirmation of the chronology of the geometric element as well. Furthermore, the systematic occurrence of the simple fighting pairs in all western areas indicates an overwhelming importance that needs to be further investigated in the future.

#### **Hidden gems under the cliff**

Recent explorations at Ronchi di Scianica have led to new discoveries here as well. Among the new surfaces, where for example two new acrobatic riders can be seen, is R. 22, a panel with an unusual concentra-

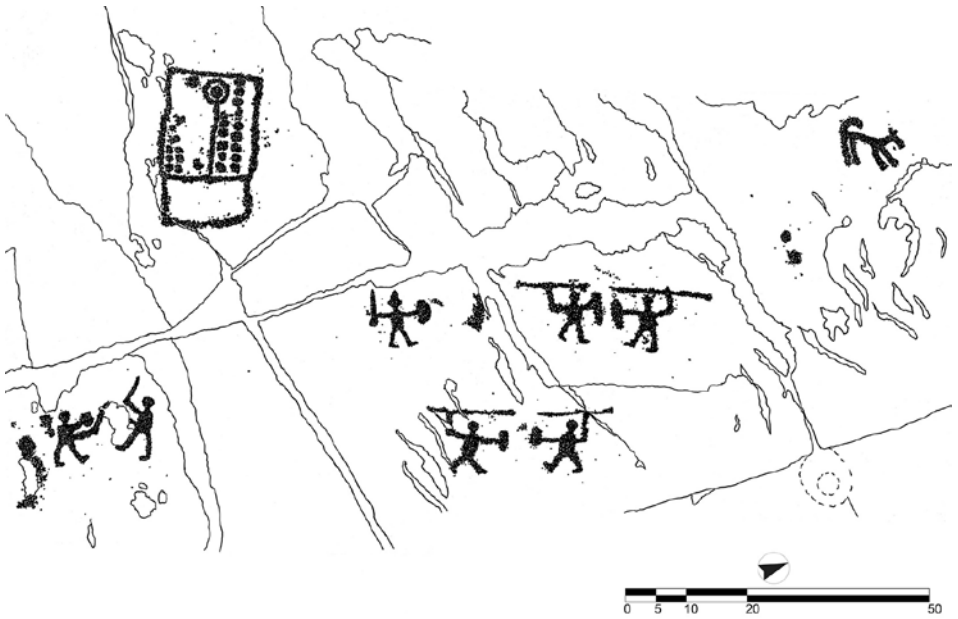


Fig. 13. Ronchi di Scianica R. 19. A geometric element strikingly similar to the Bedolina Map basic components stands isolated between duelling warriors and a single person armed with sword, shield and helmet. The panel is completed by an isolated dog in the upper right corner.

tion of images in a relatively limited space. The subjects are sometimes very small but exquisitely executed, with naturalistic renderings of many animals and even people. The animals, often generic quadrupeds that cannot be identified as a species, are depicted in a peculiar style with curved legs: the bodies may be empty or pecked, with a straight horizontal back and legs—often only the rear ones—typically curved towards the centre of the figure. These animals appear on certain rocks at all western sites, usually in association with armed humans who, as here, wield upward-pointing, unique small quadrangular/square shields alongside swords or spears and crouch in a peculiarly aggressive posture, i.e., with legs bent and the whole body “frozen” in a kind of attack posture, with the weapons ready to strike the opponent (Fig. 14). This type of warrior and animal are the focus of a richly decorated rock at Redondo (Marchi 1997), where the association is reinforced by the presence of extraordinary horsemen

who combine both styles in unique and very recognisable representations.

It is not uncommon for footprints to be used as a kind of seal, a mark overlaying other figures in this case, at the cost of making it very difficult to recognize the animals it covers. The originality of the footprint on the left, which is a kind of shoe print with toe marks and other unusual internal decorations, underlines the uniqueness of some of the panels amidst the huge background of rocks with more common and stylistically less characteristic motifs. Footprints and linear duels, for example, seem to be mutually exclusive and could indicate a chronological change, but also an internal semantic logic from the same age that cannot yet be deciphered.

R. 22 illustrates the strict relationships that link many distant rocks on the west side in terms of style and thematic choice. The abundance of animals in the “curved legs” style, the presence of a certain type of warrior with small rectangular/square

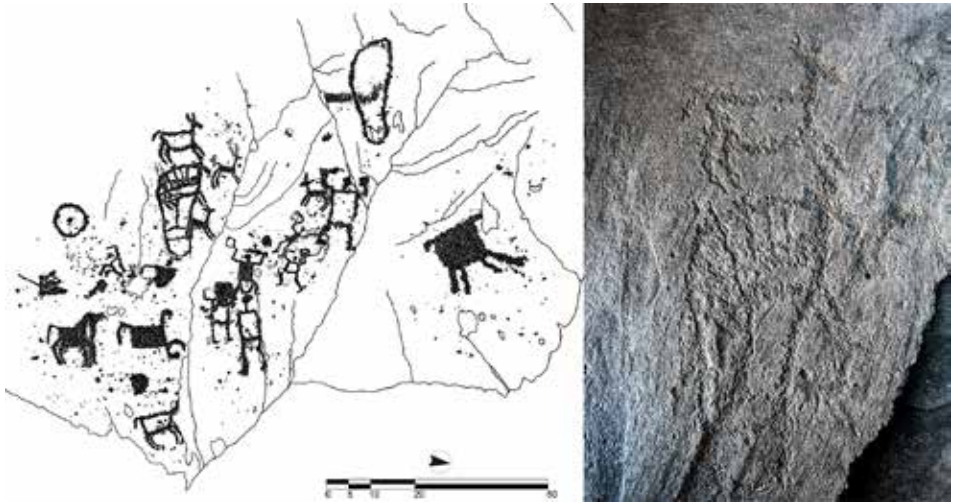


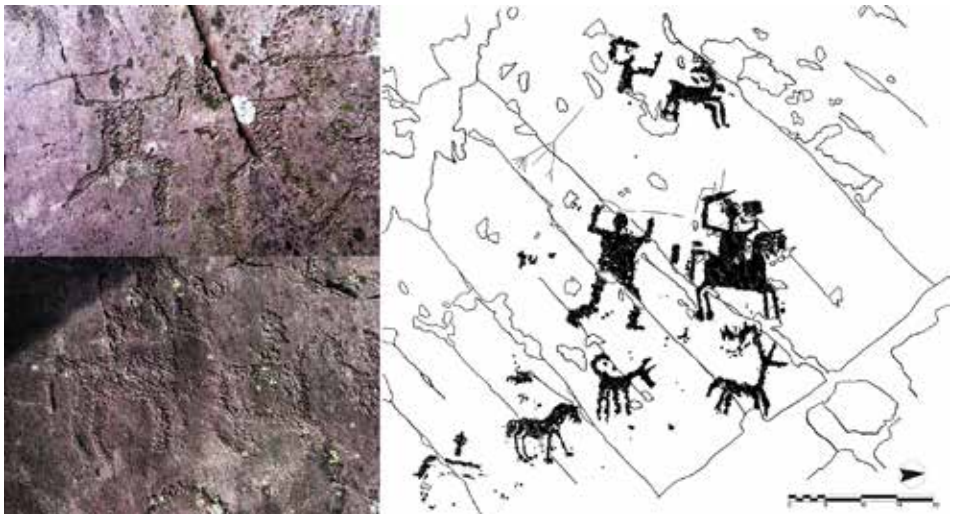
Fig. 14. Coren di Redondo R. 22, sector A. Panels with a concentration of peculiar themes and styles, such as the dynamic warriors, the animals with bent legs and the footprints.

shields and very dynamic postures, the occurrence of isolated individual footprints and the absence of the linear-style duels, common elsewhere, link this panel, for example, with Seradina III R. 18, Coren di Redondo R. 9 and especially with Redondo R. 20 (Marchi 1997) (Fig. 15).

### Discussion and conclusion

The data presented in the above sections on some parts of the western rock art areas allow for some initial general observations. First of all, as research progresses, there is a tendency for the density of rock art panels to increase, but the density of figures

Fig. 15. Comparison across different sites for style and themes on Coren di Redondo R. 22: Redondo R. 20 (left), Seradina III R. 18 (right).



to decrease. This means that the rock art is scattered all over the landscape, but in the form of small panels with few images, very often placed in corners that are difficult to access. This is partly in contrast to the predominant eastern model, where it is not uncommon to find many large rocks close together, each with hundreds of images, such as in Naquane or Foppe di Nadro.

A second achievement is the almost ubiquitous presence of the linear and symmetrical duel scene, which begins near the river in the area of Seradina and is present at all rock art sites until it reaches its limits in the northern area of Sellero. In contrast to this obsessive repetition is the more selective appearance of the square and empty bodied warriors, especially in the form of the fighting couple, which is decisively concentrated in Seradina I Corno. If this marks a specific change in the format of the people in the Late Iron Age, as some evidence, such as the association of inscriptions in local pre-Roman alphabet suggests, we must definitely point to its geographical focus in a relatively small area, in contrast to the wide distribution that took place in the Early Iron Age with the linear duels and other few motifs such as the acrobatic rider.<sup>10</sup> On the other hand, other strong archaeological evidence, such as the knives of Introbio-Lovere (II c. BC-I c. AD) or the Roman horn images (I-II c. AD) scattered over Seradina, Bedolina and Pià d'Ort, show beyond doubt that human frequentation of rock art sites in later phases was not sporadic or strictly localised, as it seems. And this suggests that we should be cautious with overly simplistic models as the data increases and clearly requires more sophisticated solutions.

Well-recognisable styles and manners, as in Seradina R. 12 or in the probable 'master' depicting dynamic attacking warriors and "curved legged" animals on rocks gravitating around the Redondo area, further confirm the possibility of isolating specific moments and individuals/groups against a background of more standardised and widespread motifs. Combined with the very limited use of "icons", almost restricted to

footprints and the even rarer huts, these new data definitely help to mark the specificity of the western areas. During the Iron Age, the two sides of the valley around Capo di Ponte had a different appearance of rock art, a fact that needs a reasonable explanation, since research is progressing and the data from the archaeological excavations are greatly improving our knowledge of the human presence here.

Finally, one of the most striking elements is the diffusion of the geometric-abstract trend, which can be found almost everywhere, not only in the western and eastern sites of the Central Valcamonica, but also in other places such as Luine, Esine-Plemo or Sonico-Edolo. Some areas such as Dos dell'Arca, Vite, Redondo, the obvious Bedolina or the same Luine are literally colonised by this type of imagery and certainly require future in-depth analysis. In particular, the "adaptive maps" force us to include the 3D information not only in the documentation process, but especially in the delicate further step of interpretation. The expansion of our toolbox will certainly provide us with new clues to confirm or question old but well-established theoretical ideas such as the "topographical" interpretation, or even to find completely new lines of investigation.

## Aknowledgements

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## Notes

- <sup>1</sup> A specific article with new analyses on this particular site of the Seradina rock art area is in preparation.
- <sup>2</sup> Where not specifically indicated, all photographs and tracings are by the author. Research and documentation were carried out under the direction of SABAP (Soprintendenza Archeologia, Belle Arti e Paesaggio per le province di Bergamo e Brescia).
- <sup>3</sup> Compared to other areas such as Redondo, Pià d'Ort or other places on the eastern side of the valley.
- <sup>4</sup> For more information on this topic, especially on the difference between the more famous and complex "Bedolina-type" maps and their Neolithic/Copper Age counterparts, see Arcà 2004.
- <sup>5</sup> Some are incomplete or very lightly pecked and therefore poorly visible.
- <sup>6</sup> Decorations in the form of crossed circles are also found, for example, on the base of the typical Dos dell'Arca cup, dated to the III-II century BC. See Anati 1968, p. 43, fig. 32.
- <sup>7</sup> Mappe-sentiero in Italian.
- <sup>8</sup> The local dialectal toponym 'coren' literally means 'horn', which refers to a mountain-specific feature that can be translated as 'protruding rocky outcrop'.
- <sup>9</sup> The image has also puzzled map expert Andrea Arcà, who has used Battaglia's photo as an example of Bedolina-type "maps" in many publications. See for example Arcà 2010, p. 257, fig. 4.
- <sup>10</sup> This peculiar motif, like the horseman in general, is absolutely rare when the square and empty body is used.

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