NOTIZIE SCIENTIFICHE

EXCAVATION OF PLATFORM 1, CAPO DI PONTE – VAL CAMONICA, ITALY, 1975, 1977

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The Val Camonica region in northern Italy is renowned for the fine rock engravings, which are found in great quantities on its rocky slopes, from Lago Iseo in the south to the inner Alpine valleys in the Alto Adige - Valtellina, on the Italian - Swiss border. These rock engravings were produced from the Epipaleolithic period until the close of the Iron Age, which is ended by the advent of the Romans in 16 B.C. (E. Anati, 1976; 1968).

More problematic are the attempts to locate the remains of the sites inhabited during thousands of years by the people belonging to this civilisation. These attempts have to contend with many difficulties, such as the nature of the settlements, which were probably agricultural villages with houses built of wood or other perishable materials, as well as with the large-scale natural depositing, erosion processes and a dense cover of vegetation.

The Centro Camuno di Studi Preistorici, whose main purpose is the study of the rock engravings, also engages in a survey of settlement remains of various periods in the Valley. A number of sites have been excavated, including settlements from the Neolithic period, the Bronze and Iron Ages and the early Roman period.

The excavation of the large platform in the vicinity of Capo di Ponte during two seasons, in the summers of 1975 and 1977, was also undertaken within the framework of these research projects (Y. Shiloh 1976, pp. 182-187).

The excavations were sponsored by the Centro Camuno di Studi Preistorici in Capo di Ponte, and Prof. E. Anati, Director of the Centro, extended all necessary assistance to the excavation. The expedition was headed by the author of this report, from the Hebrew University, Jerusalem, who was assisted by the permanent staff of the Centro. The drawings were prepared by Miss. Tiziana Cittadini and Mr. Savio Giacomelli. Students from several countries, who participated in the summer activities of the Centro, and groups of students from the AFSAI organization, took part in the excavation. The research project was assisted by the Consiglio Nazionale delle Ricerche, Roma. Thanks are due to Mr. Laffranchi, who allowed us to carry out the excavations on his property.

The report will first deal with a general description of the structure, its architectural elements and the analysis of the building phases. This will be followed by a discussion of the stratigraphical conclusions and of the elements of the early and the late phases of the platform. In the light of these conclusions we shall discuss the possibilities of determining the chronology and of suggesting a possible function for the platform.

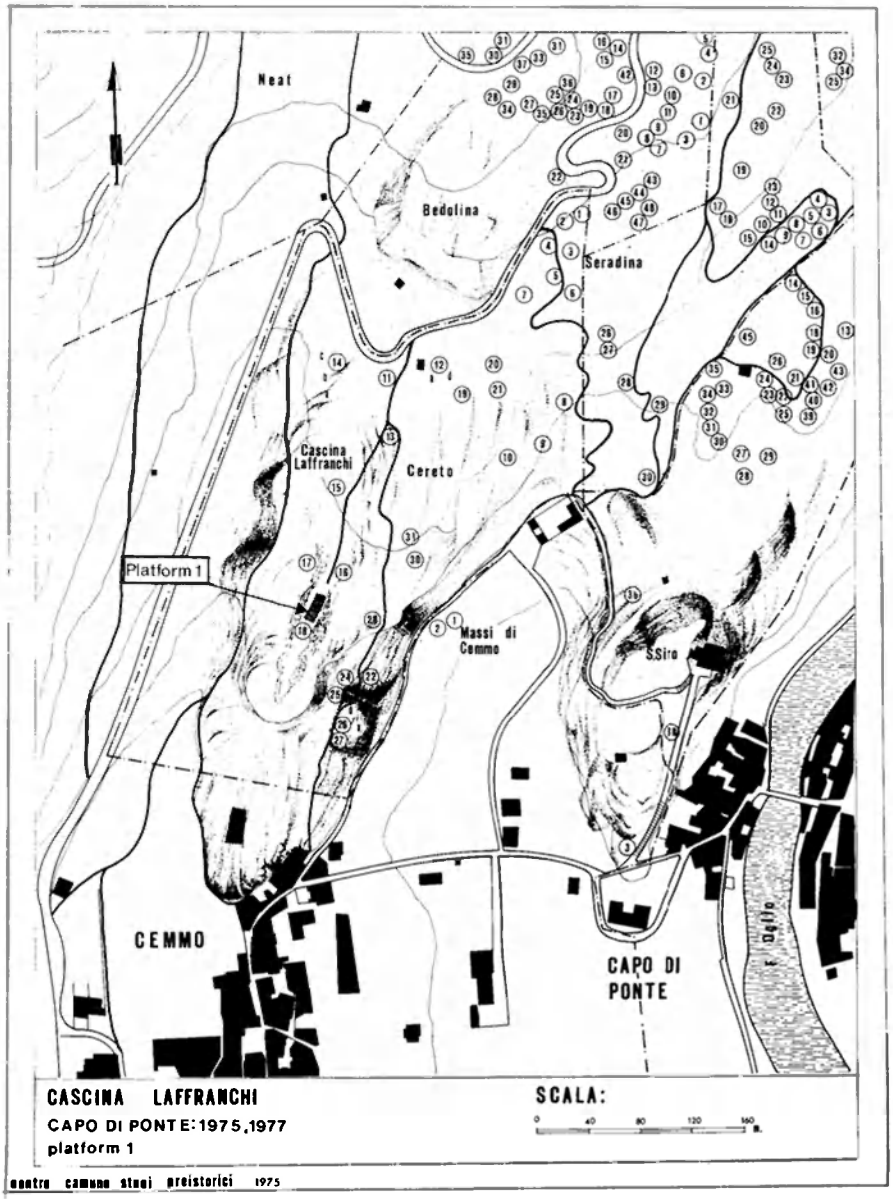


Fig. 2
Plan of the Capo di Ponte region, indicating Platform 1. The location of the rock engravings is marked by numerals within circles.

Fig. 3
General view of the platform from the North, after clearance of vegetation and exposure of the enclosure walls. On the left, Wall 1. In the background, Mt. Concarena.

I. The Site. The platform is situated on a long, narrow hill, between Capo di Ponte and Cemmo, at a height of 580 m. above sea level. The hill is shaped like a narrow, elongated triangle, with the apex towards the south. East and west of the hill are steep slopes, rising about 80 -100 m. above the narrow ravines surrounding the hill on three sides. On the north the hill is joined to the western slope of the valley, and from here a path provides an access to the region of the platform.

The entire hill is situated in hard rock of the Verrucano Lombardo formation, belonging to the upper phase of the Permiano - Sup - Medio, and consisting

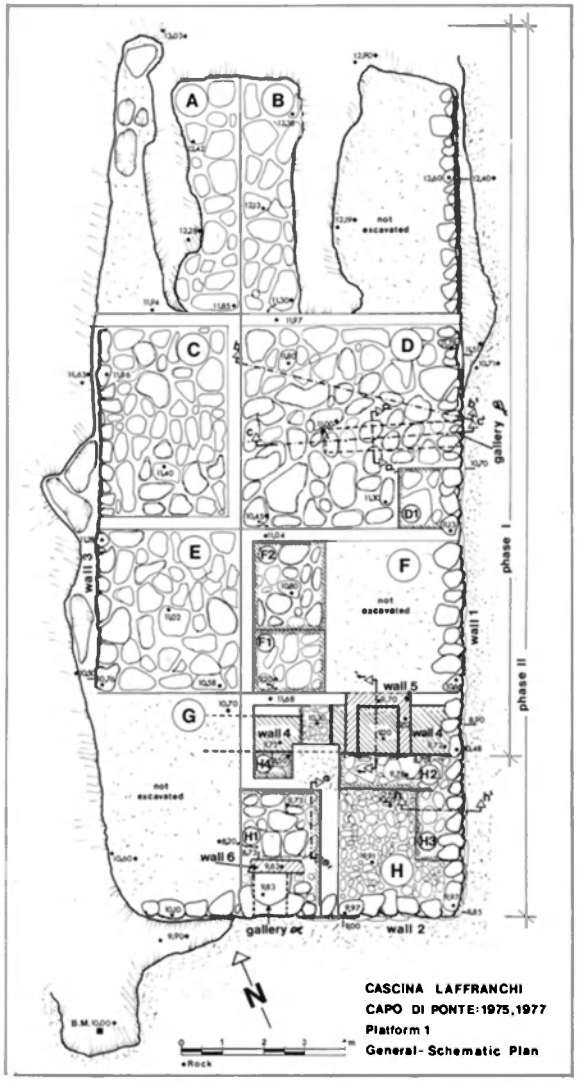


Fig. 4
Schematic general plan of the platform.

Fig. 5
General view of the platform from the South, after the surface of the upper pavement had been cleared in Squares A-F. On the left, Wall 3, which merges with the natural rock.

of a hard conglomerate of volcanic and quartziferous elements (*Carta Geologica d'Italia,* Foglio 19, 1969). This formation is responsible for the sharp contours of the hill, with its wide rock slabs descending at a steep angle to the valley.

On the top of the hill only a very narrow level space remained on which the platform could be built. In spite of the difficult terrain and probably even because of it, the builders of the platform chose to erect their structure in this high spot which is visible from all sides and overlooks the entire valley.

The outline of the platform could be traced even before the excavation. The structure had been discovered in aerial photographs and in surface surveys. As the boundaries of the excavation were fixed, the excavation areas were planned in advance in accordance with the rock contours and the outer walls of the structure. The area excavated (about 25 x 12 m.), was divided into 8 squares of excavation areas, laid out on both sides of a central dividing line These areas were marked A - H. Area G and the east half of Area F were not excavated. If only part of an area was excavated, a secondary number was added to the letter marking the area - D1, F1-F2, H1-H4. Fig.14 is a schematic drawing which will help the reader to locate the main and the secondary excavation areas, the walls and the sections described below. The benchmark (BM) - 10.00 m. for height measurements was fixed on the rock in the southwest corner of the platform. Because of the limited area and the clear elements of the structure it was thought preferable not to use locus numbers in this report, but to refer to each element by name.

II. The Platform - IIa. The Enclosure Walls. At the beginning of the work, three days had to be spent on clearing the trees and the dense vegetation which covered the structure. Following this, the edges of the structure were excavated and cleared on all sides until they were fully exposed.

The outer frame of the platform, in its second, enlarged phase, consists of three walls: Wall 1 in the east, Wall 2 in the south, and Wall 3 in the west. Together with the natural rock contours, these walls form a rectangular platform 20.40 m. long and 8.80 m. wide. The rock contours on the hilltop determined in fact the size of the platform and especially its width. The builders of the platform made use of the natural rock as a solid base on which to erect the enclosure walls, adapting them to the rock contours. Thus, the elevation of the rock in the north and west determined the height of the walls, which had to be built up to the level of the rock. As the rock surface slopes from north-west to south-east, the enclosure walls (Wall 1-2) had to be built up to a height of about 1.80 m. mainly on the south and east sides of the platform (Area H). On the west side the platform was buttressed entirely by natural rock. Wall 3, on the edge of Areas C-E, was built only of one or two courses.

A short cross-section was dug in Area H 3, in order to investigate the relationship between Wall 1 and the internal elements of the platform (Section h - h^1). Similar results were obtained in Area D1. Wall 1 is about 40-50 cm. wide, with well fitted stones facing outwards.

The south-east corner of the structure (Area H), as well as the corner of

Fig. 6
The southeast corner of the platform, phase II.

Fig. 7
Reconstruction of the platform.

the platform in its early phase (Area H2), and the gallery openings α, β are more carefully built, with the stones more evenly matched in size and shape. The rest of the wall is built of small stones not especially well matched and carelessly laid. The upper course of the enclosure walls, especially in Areas G and H, consisted in many cases of flatter stone slabs which merged with the pavement of the platform.

IIb. The Pavement of the Platform. All areas of the platform surface which were examined revealed the existence of a pavement forming a plane surface and sloping towards the south. The nature of the fill surface varied from area to area in accordance with the material used for the fill. In Areas A, B, the natural rock, which seems to have been intentionally levelled in some places, forms the greater part of the pavement. In the inner half of Areas A and B and in Areas C-F, the pavement consists of the flat upper side of the large stones used in the fill. Here and there smaller stones were used to fill the interstices between the large stones, or between the fill and the natural rock surface.

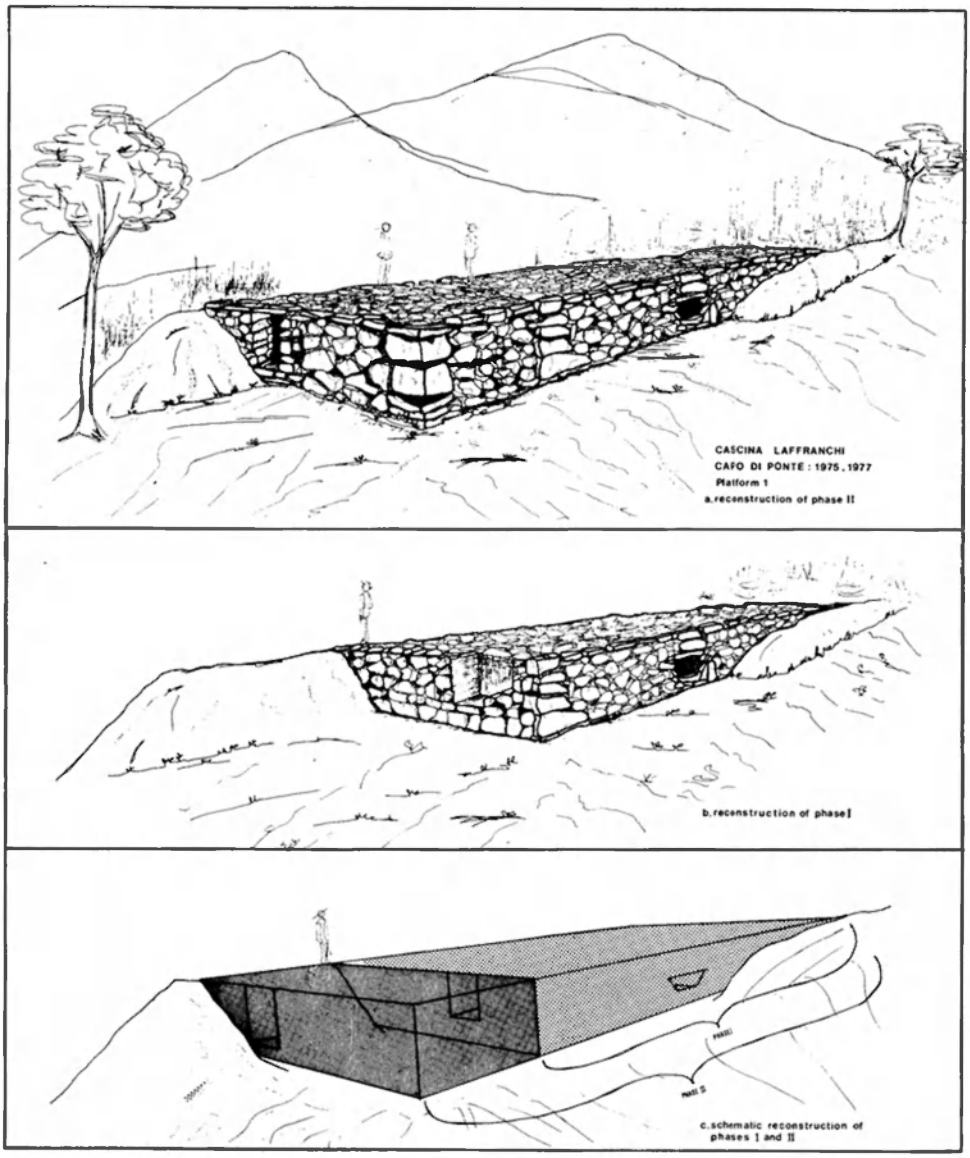
Already in the first stages of the work, after the surface of the pavement had been cleared along its entire length, a difference could be observed in the character of the pavement between Areas G-H in the south and all the other areas. The pavement in G-H is made up of smaller and flatter stones, fairly widely spaced.

IIc. The fill (Areas A - F). The pavement of the platform rests everywhere on a stone fill. We have already noted the difference in quality between the pavement in Areas G-H and that in the other areas. Similarly, there is a difference in the character of the fill between Area H and the areas north of it. The results of the excavation in Square H are described separately.

The surface of the natural rock slopes fairly steeply in a north-south direction, from a level of 12.90 m. in the middle of the platform's north end, down to 9.20 m. at the southern edge of Area F 1, a difference of 3.70 m. The fill in areas A-F consists mainly of very large stones, geologically identi-

cal with the natural rock of the hill. They vary in size, measuring roughly 60/100 x 40/60 x 30/40 cm. and some weigh more than 200 Kg. Where the depth of the fill is greater, due to the steep incline of the rock, the stones are laid one on top of the other in two or three layers. This is clearly visible at the south end of Area F. where the difference in level is greatest: from 10.80 m. on the surface, to 9.20 m. at rock level, a drop of 1.60 m.

IId. The Galleries - Gallery α . Gallery α is situated in the centre of the south side of the platform, in the south-west corner of Area H (Area H1). The gallery, which is a kind of opening built across the width of Wall 2 , is 70-80 cm. wide, 1.20 m. deep and 1.10 m. high. Its sides are of



better construction than the rest of Wall 2, and it is roofed by two flat stone slabs which form part of the platform pavement, so that the top of the gallery is level with the pavement. Three low steps in the floor lead up into the gallery until they reach Wall 6, built across the end of the gallery and blocking the way inside (Y. Shiloh 1976, Fig. 105). After this wall had been built, the stone slabs of the pavement in Area H were laid over it.

Gallery β . This gallery or channel differs from Gallery α in date, character, building methods, and probably even in purpose. It is in fact a channel with stone walls, about 3.00 m. long, 60-70 cm. wide and 25-30 cm. deep. The inner, western, part is built on the rock surface sloping to the east and the rock also serves as its floor. Further on, the channel is bonded into the fill and into Wall 1. After the walls had been built, the channel was covered by 7 large, heavy stone slabs (the largest measures 100 x 80 x 15 cm.). These slabs carry the top layer of the fill, consisting of large stones whose roughly flat tops serve as the platform's pavement in Square D. In this gallery, as well as in Gallery α, there was no binding material between the stones.

IIe. Area H. Area H is described as a separate unit, because it became clear during the excavations that this area contained all the characteristic structural and stratigraphic elements of both phases of the platform. In Area H, four secondary areas, H1 - H4, were excavated; H2 and H3 were later joined into one area.

The pavement appeared over the entire area 25-30 cm. below the surface, and consisted here of smaller and thinner slabs than in Areas A-F. A trial sounding in Area G showed that there too the pavement was of a similar character.

These slabs were laid on a thin bed of earth which rested directly on a foundation of larger stone slabs, measuring on the average 40 x 60 cm. The character of the construction under the pavement in this area is quite different form the fill of large boulders heaped one on top of the other which was observed in Areas A-F.

The detail shown in section e - e^1 , h - h^1 , f - f^1 , are characteristic of this construction. Directly on the rock, or on a rough fill of stones and earth laid over the rock, stand upright stones, abouth 50 - 70 cm. high. These short monoliths support the flat horizontal slabs forming the foundation for the upper pavement. An underground space was thus created under the entire area between the rock and the stone pavement.

The early phase of the platform. At this stage of the excavation, it was obvious that the structural elements in Area H were quite different from those making up the fill in the squares situated to the north. At that time it could still be assumed, in view of the retaining walls enclosing the platform, that both elements were coexistent. However, a better understanding of the stratigraphy was obtained when the excavation went deeper in Areas H2 and H4.

After dismantling the stone pavement and the upright stone supports, the

Fig. 8
Area D, from the South. Drawing of the megalithic fill pavement stone by stone.

clear outline of a narrow stone wall (Wall 4) began to appear. The wall is solid and more neatly built than the walls previously encountered. It runs across the width of the platform in Areas H2 and H4. Along most of its lenght, two solid courses have been preserved. At its east end, the wall forms a well built corner. which is bonded into Wall 1 about 4 m. from the outher south-east corner of the platform. Five courses of the wall have been preserved in this corner indicating that Wall 4 was at least that high in the earlier phase of the platform - Phase I.

Not all of Wall 4 was built as a solid wall. The remains of Wall 5, built into Wall 4 across its entire width, were uncovered in the centre of Area H2. This is a small rectangular installation closed on three sides - east, north and west - by a thin wall 30 - 40 cm. high, and open to the south. The north side of the structure is better preserved than the other sides, and has survived to a height of 50 cm. Its inner face and its floor (which is, in fact, the width of the top of Wall 4) are plastered with a thick greyish-white plaster, mixed with large grey grits.

The purpose of this structure is unclear, but it was certainly built at the same time as Wall 4 and incorporated into it from its very beginning. Therefore it served as a reference point for a stratigraphic check on the attribution of the elements in Area H to Phase I or Phase II. The upright stones and the large flat slabs supporting the upper pavement were placed by the builders of that pavement in Phase II over Wall 4 and inside the installation, which by that time was completely ruined. The stone slab pavement extends to the dividing line between Areas E-F and G-H. At the south end of F1, along the south baulk of F, it can be distinctly seen that the fill of large stones laid on the natural rock, leans directly against the north side of Wall 4, which serves as a retaining wall.

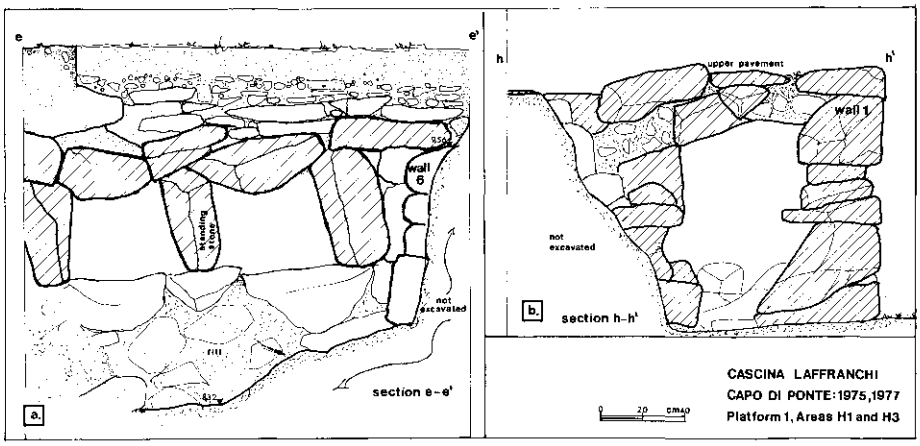


Fig. 9
a. Area H1, section e-e [1]
b. Area H3, section h-h [1]

III. Stratigraphy and Phases in the Development of the Platform. Figure12 show a reconstruction of the two phases of the platform: Phase I, the earlier which is limited in extent, and Phase II, the later, which represents the full development of the platform. This division into two phases is based on the stratigraphic analysis of the discoveries in Area H and especially in H1 and H2.

Wall 4 formed part of the platform only in its earlier phase. In that phase the platform was about 16 m. long. It could be argued that Wall 4 was only an internal structural element in the complete platform as revealed in the later phase, and that its function was to support the fill of large stones north of it. However, this suggestion is unacceptable, mainly because of the existence of the plastered structure (Wall 5), which is incorporated into Wall 4, and which went out of use when the stone-slab pavement was added in Phase II.

The Platform - Phase I. Originally (in Phase I), the platform was shorter than in Phase II. Walls 1 and 3 were erected in Phase I and Wall 4 bounded the platform in the south. Gallery β was built together with Wall 1. After this framework of walls had been built, the whole area enclosed by them was filled with large boulders. The upper layer of this fill was laid with greater care, with the roughly flat tops of the stones set so as to form the pavement. On the south side, the plastered structure (Wall 5) was built into Wall 4. It was about 1.0 m. wide and originally it must have been about 0.9 - 1.0 m. high, if it reached up to the height of the pavement.

The Platform - Phase II. In the later phase (II), the width of the platform remained unchanged, but its lenght was increased from 16 m. to 20.40 m. On the west, this addition was built against the line of the natural rock-face. In the east, Wall 1 was lengthened, and this addition is clearly visible, inside and outside at the junction of Walls 1 and 4. The three original cornerstones form a joint which clearly separates the later addition from the

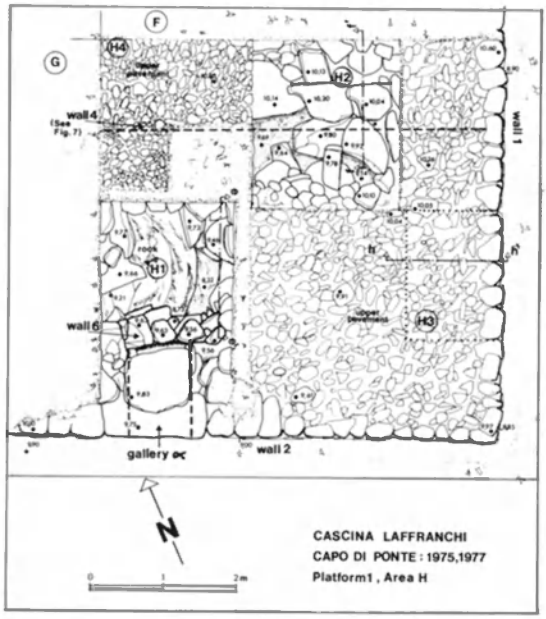


Fig. 10
Area H, plan of the stone-slab pavement and Area H1.

Fig. 11
Gallery α in Wall 2, from the South.

original corner. An oblong slab was laid above these three cornerstones, linking the upper part of the wall with its new continuation. Wall 2 is thus a new element particular to Platform II, as are Gallery α, Wall 6 and the stone-slab pavement in Area H.

The building technique of the underground complex below that pavement is quite different from the method used for the rough fill. However, in spite of this difference, the common denominator of both phases should be emphasized: the creation of an oblong, stone-paved platform. After the Phase II addition had been completed, it would have been difficult to discern the earlier Phase I platform, except by noting the line of the joint between Walls 1 and 4 in the east and the difference in paving technique between Areas A-F

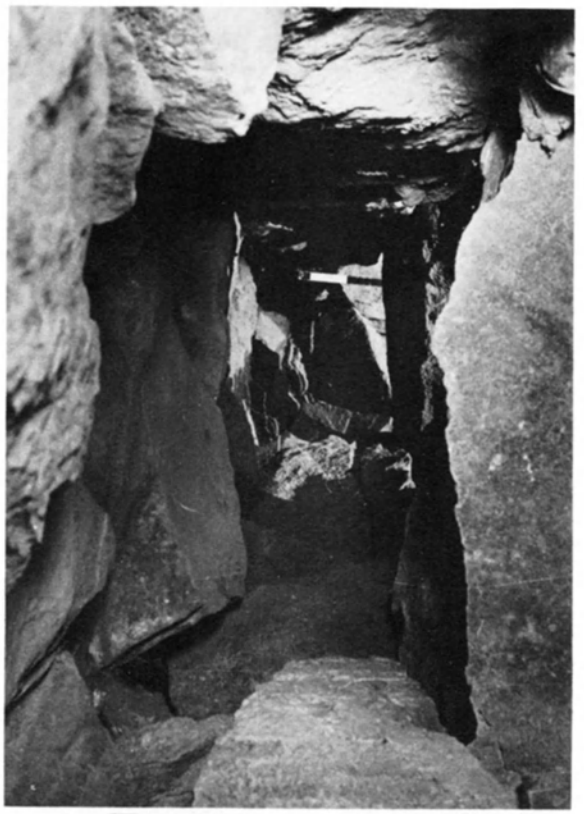


Fig. 12
Gallery β, looking from the entrance in the east towards the west end.

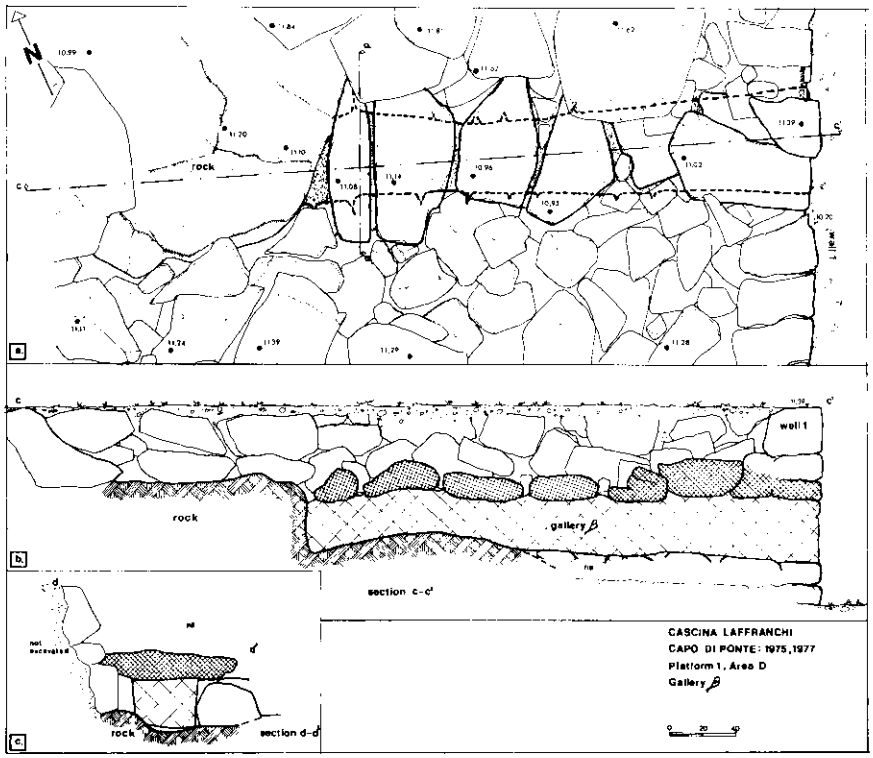
Fig. 13
a. Area D, Gallery β, general plan.
b. Area D, Gallery β, longitudinal section c-c[1]
c. Area D, Gallery β, cross section d-d[1]

and G-H. The Phase II pavement conforms to the original level of Phase I and continues it southward at a similar angle of inclination.

III. Conclusions. In the two preceding chapters we have presented the architectural and stratigraphic details of the platform in both phases. Two questions have remained open - the date of the structure and its purpose. We are not sure whether we have the answers to these questions, but we have thought it best to set out the facts and the possible solutions, so that they may serve as a basis for future discussions. We shall, therefore, deal with both questions at the same time, as they are interrelated.

We have no means of dating the platform, and the reasons for this are twofold. Firstly, the excavations did not yield any finds which could provide a clue to the date. The only objects found were two badly preserved fragments of iron nails (?), picked up on the surface while clearing the earth off the platform pavement. Even if it were possible to date them, these nails could not serve as chronological evidence. The fragments are similar to objects found in the excavations of Dos dell'Arca (E. Anati 1974, Figs. 34:237, 152). Secondly, as far as we know, there is no architectural parallel to this structure in any period.

We have, therefore, no direct absolute chronological data which could help in establishing the date of the platform. On the other hand, the platform did exist during two phases, Phase II being a continuation and expansion of Pha-



se I. Therefore, the structure must have had a certain life-span. Had the structure been of the Roman or later periods, up to modern times, we would have expected to find some objects nearby, such as potsherds, remains of wood, or other items. Surprising as it is, for any of these periods, there are no finds whatsoever in the excavation area.

In the preliminary report on the first season of excavations, we mentioned the existence of another "platform", further down on the mountain-spur on which Platform 1 is situated (Y. Shiloh 1976, p. 187). A short sounding which we undertook since then showed that there is no similarity between the two structures. The second "platform" seems to be of a very late date, probably approaching modern times. It is simply built of terrace walls, without any pavement. The very large stones of which it is constructed, were apparently quarried from the nearby rock by means of iron rods. Had we found this kind of evidence in Platform 1, we would have been inclined towards a late date. However, with the exception of one stone which bore similar (?) signs, no such evidence was found in Platform 1.

Our attempts to determine the function of the platform, whatever its period, also did not produce any clear answer. We hope that the reader is by now sufficiently familiar with the known facts. Below, we shall suggest a number of possible answers to our problems, and discuss them, mainly by a process of elimination.

Before embarking on this discussion, we should like to emphasize again seve-

ral physical and technical facts relating to the character of the structure and of some of its elements.

The platform could not have served, in either of its phases, as a podium for a structure erected on it. The method of constructing the upper course of the enclosure walls and of bonding it to the pavement, as well as the absence of any architectural fragments of stone or wood which could indicate the existence of a superstructure, show that it was the intention of the builders to erect in this particular spot a stone-paved open-air platform. Furthermore, the surface of the platform is not level, as we would expect it to be if it was intended as a podium for a monumental building, whatever its period. The pavement of the platform slopes steeply from north to south and from west to east. The difference of level from north to south is more than 2 m. over a length of 20 m. From west to east the difference is 60 cm. over 8 m.

A better understanding of the structure's purpose would perhaps enable us to comprehend the reason for the massive megalithic fill. Anybody who has had the experience, like the author, of having to shift these stones, some of which weigh more than 200 Kg., must seek a logical explanation of their deliberate use. The character of the substructure supporting the pavement in the Phase II addition is quite different from that of the megalithic fill of Phase I. Certainly, the stability of the Phase II pavement cannot be compared to that of Phase I. Was the additional structure built in this fashion so as to create a system of underground tunnels, or was there an architectural reason?

The use in Square H of a massive fill, similar to that of Phase I, would have exerted heavy pressure against Walls 1-2, which are here high supporting walls. Perhaps it can be suggested that the builders of the platform were aware of this risk and erected a primitive underground supporting structure similar in principle to the subterranean vaults in Roman buildings. Both answers to our problem deserve critical consideration.

What was the character of the galleries? It should again be stressed that Gallery α does not resemble Gallery β, and that they belong to different platform phases. Gallery β could perhaps be explained simply as an arrangement for draining rainwater or melting snow percolating between the stones of the pavement. However, if this was the reason for its construction, why was it not built so that it could drain the entire area of the undergound fill in Areas A-G? In view of its situation on the sloping rock facing eastward, the gallery could at best drain only the north half of Area D.

Gallery α is shorter, but is of better workmanship. The three steps in the gallery and Wall 6 which blocks it, certainly preclude any suggestion that it served for drainage. This gallery was very carefully built, supported by the rock in the west and giving access to the underground system below the slab pavement. In addition, it was deliberately blocked during the construction of Phase II by Wall 6, which itself is covered by the slab pavement.

One can see a resemblance between the location of Gallery α in the south wall of the Phase II platform, and the location of the plastered structure (Wall 5) in Wall 4 of the Phase I platform. Although only the foundations of this structure have been preserved, it can be reconstructed as a blocked

entrance chamber built in Wall 4, in the same way as Gallery α is built in Wall 2.

Even though we have succeeded in defining the various elements of the platform and their place in both structural phases, we have not reached any reasonable conclusions concerning its function. In our search for information we also questioned the local inhabitants; after all, the structure might not be ancient and they might have some explanation of its function. The answers, based on local traditions, were not particularly convincing: the platform was built for burning wood for charcoal; or, that in the Middle Ages, fires were lit on the platform as signals in times of war or during holiday celebrations. However, no trace whatsoever of fire or charcoal was found. At least, these could have served for a C-14 test. Still another view held that the platform was used to set up nets for snaring birds flying through the valley. We visited a modern bird-trapping device near Lovere in the southern Val Camonica and found that it consists of completely different elements. Certainly, nothing like the same amount of technical and architectural effort has been spent on it.

As against these suggestions or interpretations, we had to consider the complicated and massive construction of the platform, and such architectural details as the galleries and the plastered structure. Surely, it is unlikely that in

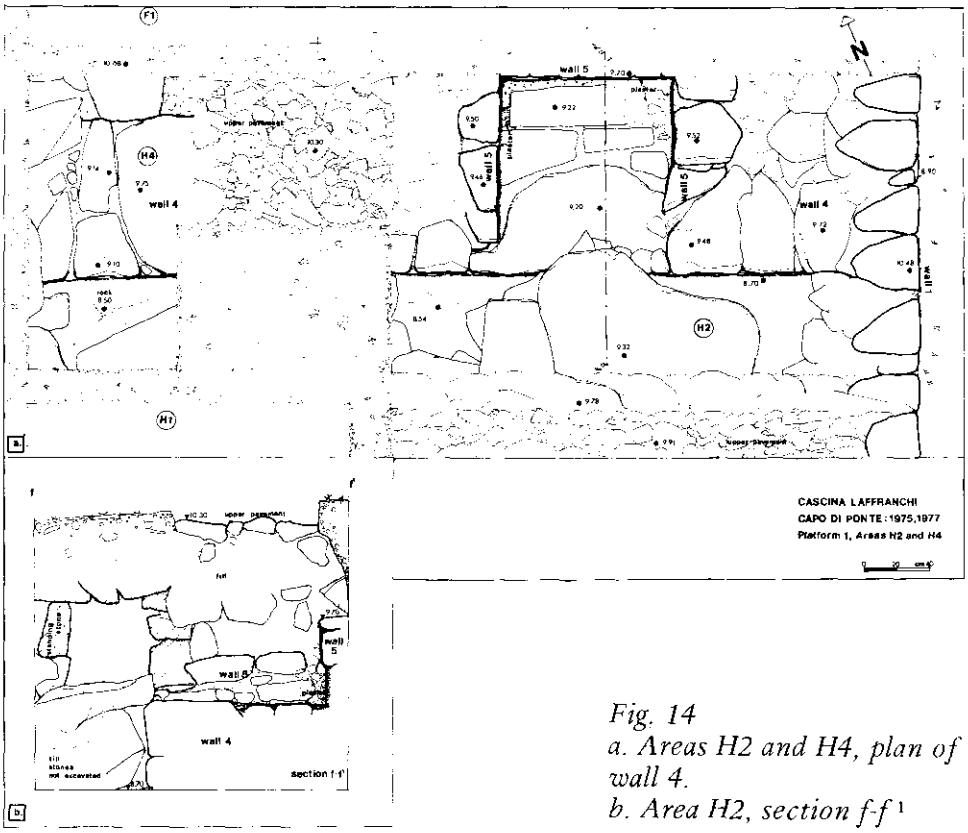


Fig. 14
a. Areas H2 and H4, plan of wall 4.
b. Area H2, section f-f'[1]

Fig. 15
Area H2, the plastered installation (Wall 5) on Wall 4 (phase I) looking north. Above the back of Wall 5 the stone-slab base of phase II is visible.

order to make a surface for a bird-snare or for lighting beacons, the local people, in any period, would have gone to the trouble of moving the enormous stones used for the fill of the platform, such as we found in Areas F-D, and then building the complex structure in Area H.

Thus, we are left with most common interpretation, which is based mainly on the situation of the platform on a high commanding hill. According to this theory, the platform is some kind of military device, built by an army unit passing through Val Camonica at some period of its long history. This interpretation is possible, but in such a case we would have expected to find some object which could provide a clue, if not from the earlier periods, then certainly from the later historical periods.

Had we been able to prove with some measure ot certainty that the platform belongs to the Bronze or Iron Ages, we would be more confident in our search for some function appropriate to stone structures of these periods. However, even were this the case, and for the reasons outlined above we consider it unlikely that it was a podium for some superstructure. The shape of the dwellings in Val Camonica is well known from the rock art, and up to the present no representation of any structure resembling our platform has been found. All the dwellings represented in the rock engravings are huts built of wooden beams (E. Anati 1976, figs. 100, 101-134).

When we set out to excavate this site, we considered, among other theories, the possibility that the platform was a megalithic structure concealing a megalithic tomb of the kind known in various prehistoric civilizations of southern Europe. However, no evidence to support this theory was found and we were finally disappointed in our hopes when we broke through the back wall of the plastered structure (Wall 5) and found only more stone fill in Square F.

We are left with the last explanation - a cult function of some kind. The platform is situated on a high, narrow hilltop, in the centre of that part of Val Camonica which is richest in rock engravings - between Capo di Ponte, Cemmo, Naquane, Nadro, Paspardo, Bedolina, Seradina, etc. (E. Anati 1976, figs. 18-20). Some of these are found in the immediate vicinity of the platform,

at a distance of 10-20 m. Most of the rock drawings in this region are dated to the Iron Age.

If we had to propose a location for a prehistoric centre for the inhabitants of this region, this impressive hill, towering about 80 m. above the Massi di Cemmo, would be one of the most suitable candidates (E. Anati 1972).

However, this theory must remain only one of several hypothetical possibilities, mainly because there exists the alternative possibility that our structure cannot be of such an early date. It is true that it contains several elements of megalithic construction - the size of the stones, the way stone walls are combined with the natural rock, the manner of laying the large slabs of the pavement and the underground construction below it. All these would justify classifying our platform typologically as a megalithic structure. However, we hesitate to do so, mainly because of the possibility that some of the stones used in the Platform were quarried and split off in a primitive fashion from the rock itself, but also because of the presence of the coarse plaster in the early phase of the platform (Phase I).

In this part of Val Camonica, several sites were investigated in recent years and several structures were found which, in the crude manner of their construction and the use of large stones, resemble our platform. One of these sites is Lovere (L. Cottinelli 1971, pp. 59-66).

Another site, Dos dell'Arca, was excavated, and remains of buildings and fortifications of the Bronze and Iron Ages were uncovered. The building methos used at this site resembles that of the platform walls (E. Anati 1974, pp.15-40). In this excavation, the buildings could be dated by the ceramic material uncovered in an orderly stratigraphic context. Such important and essential evidence is lacking in our excavation. For this reason we believe that we cannot date the platform with any confidence on the basis of the typological parallel of the crude stone construction.

We prefer, therefore, not to impose on the reader any one of the possibilities we have outlined above concerning the function of the structure (although in this respect various suggestions can be more easily refuted as they do not fit the available facts) or its date.

Now that we have set out all the facts and the architectural evidence uncovered in the excavation and listed all possible explanations, we are finally left with the problem as a starting point for further discussion. We can only hope that, as is often the case with enigmas in the study of past civilizations, sooner or later additional structures and other data will come to light in this part of North Italy, which will help to solve the puzzle of the platform at Capo di Ponte and of its use by the Camunians during one period in the past, out of 10.000 years, during which they lived and built in the Val Camonica.

Riassunto: L'Autore dell'articolo dà una dettagliata descrizione della piattaforma 1, situata nella Cascina Laffranchi in Valcamonica, Nord Italia. Inizia con una descrizione delle diverse parti della struttura, le mura di recinzione, la pavimentazione, le gallerie ed il riempimento. Vengono quindi trattati i particolari archeologici e stratigrafici, seguono la cronologia e le conclusioni. Riguardo alla funzione della struttura scavata, vengono considerate diverse ipotesi, piattaforma rituale, luogo funerario, struttura difensiva, base per abitazione costruita in materie organiche, torre di osservazione; ma non vi sono prove concrete per determinare la data e le motivazioni per la piattaforma. Il problema resta pertanto aperto.

Résumé: L'Auteur illustre en detail les fouilles de la Plateforme 1, en localité cascina Laffranchi, près de Capo di Ponte, Valcamonica, Italie. Après la description de la structure, des murs d'enceinte, des galéries et du remplissage, l'Auteur entre dans les détails stratigraphiques et cronologiques. En ce qui concerne l'utilisation de la structure fouillée, l'Auteur propose des différents hypothèses: plateforme rituelle, lieu de culte funeraire, structure défensive, base pour une maison en matériel organique, tour d'observation. Mais aucune de celles-ci ne peut être prouvée. Il n'ya pas des données concrètes pour une précise datation et beaucoup de problèms restent encore à résoudre.

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