

LETTERE AL DIRETTORE – LETTERS TO THE EDITOR
LETTRES AU DIRECTEUR – CARTAS AL DIRECTOR

THE WORLD REPORT
ON CHINA

In the map of world distribution of rock art I noticed the area of China is almost empty. In fact, over one hundred rock art sites have been discovered in China in the last thirty years but they are not well known to international scholars. An inventory is now under way.

Chen Zhao Fu
Head of Research
Nationalities' Fine Art
Beijing, China

In a forthcoming issue we hope to publish an article on these recent discoveries in China.

THE WORLD REPORT
ON AUSTRALIA

I was delighted to receive Bulletin no. 21. The photographs are excellent. It is good to have at last a World Review of rock art in so compact a form.

Your approach to the chronology of Australian Rock Art appears to me more realistic than that of previous attempts by other authors. I am inclined to accept Chalupka's view that the Nimi and Bradshaw tradition of N. Australia are relatively old.

Yours sincerely

Robert Layton
Anthropology Dept.
University of Durham
England

ROCK ART AND PSYCHOLOGY

I was most interested in your remarks concerning the *origins* of art. The same associations and subject matter are found around the world. Analogous questions arise concerning fairy tales. The same tale

motifs are found all over the world, some of them in a primitive (or degenerated) form, others in most beautifully expanded forms with rich variations. There are some authors who claim that all fairy tales originated in the same place, for example Babylon, and migrated across Asia to Europe. But what with America then? I am inclined to think that the motifs of fairy tales as well as of rock art are part of the collective unconscious (C.G. Jung) of mankind. Therefore, individuals all over the world are *potentially* able to perceive those unconscious contents, but only a few sensitive ones can do it *practically*; we call them artists, shamans, priests, prophets, etc. And each of these gifted individuals portrays, of course, the "psychological context" of his time and his tribe, unless he is ahead of his time (and then he might be killed as a heretic, agnostic, blasphemer, madman, and so on).

I believe that depth psychology can learn a lot from rock art, and that perhaps it may also provide an important way of looking at the traces and remnants of early mankind.

Dr. Avo Harnik
Bern, Switzerland

NEW APPROACH TO PREHISTORY

It was with great delight that we received Vol. 21 of BCSP. We should have thanked you and the Centro long before this. Yours is a wonderful and inspiring work. We are glad that in it you emphasize the imaginative conceptual gifts of the rock artists, as opposed to the generally held view that early man was only concerned with survival and food.

We feel that your world-wide approach to the subject (World Report) gives a new direction to the study of prehistory, which may have to be re-written!

Patricia Mommens
Presicce, Lecce, Italy

ART RUPESTRE EN ALBANIE

En Octobre 1983 j'ai découvert un autre site d'art rupestre préhistorique à Reçi, dans le Nord-Est de l'Albanie. Les figures sont gravées sur une paroi verticale d'un abri rupestre à la hauteur de m. 1,80 du niveau du terrain et couvrent une surface d'environ m. 1,8 x 1,70. Elles représentent des anthropomorphes, des motifs géométriques et des cercles "solaires". Les figures anthropomorphes ressemblent à celles des peintures de Lépénica (Vlora) et elles devraient appartenir à la même époque.

Muzafer Korkuti
Centre de recherches archéologiques
Tirana, Albanie

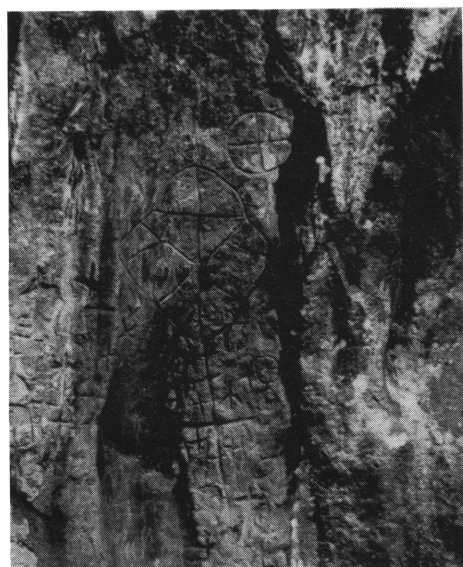


Fig. 1
Gravures rupestres de Reçi, Albanie.

ARTE RUPESTRE IN SICILIA

Pitture rupestri sono state localizzate nella provincia di Trapani, durante una ricognizione del Museo Trapanese di Preistoria, guidata da Francesco Torre e Sebastiano Tusa, d'intesa con la Soprintendenza Archeologica della Sicilia Occidentale.

Nei pressi di Cala Mancina, sulle pareti più interne di una cavità, sono stati rinvenuti più gruppi di elementi figurati dipinti in rosso. Il tratto è sicuro e largo anche se l'intensità variabile del colore dimostra la diversa densità delle sostanze coloranti utilizzate.

Il gruppo più cospicuo si trova su una parete. lascia che, malgrado la sua lontananza

dall'ingresso, viene, a tratti, rischiarata da luce radente. In tale gruppo compaiono figure antropomorfe lineari schematiche con o senza braccia alzate. Quasi sempre si tratta di figure chiaramente maschili. Compare anche un antropomorfo a forma di omega rovesciata.

Si notano, inoltre, diversi elementi geometrici circolari o irregolarmente poligonali corredati di corollari radiali o di elaborate appendici filiformi e puntinate. Detti elementi conservano anche una elaborata partizione interna spesso campita da punti e tratti.

Vi è anche una raffigurazione di imbarcazione, quasi certamente del tipo costruito da un semplice tronco scavato, con la prora e la poppa leggermente rialzate.

Sulle altre pareti della stessa parte più interna della grotta troviamo figure antropomorfe insieme a punti e tratti lineari apparentemente disordinati.

Nella parete di fronte a quella che reca il maggior numero di figure, si ubica un elemento poligonale irregolare riccamente corredato di punti e tratti lineari.

Il complesso mostra certe analogie con le pitture di Porto Badisco, nelle Puglie, pur con le dovute differenze quantitative e qualitative. La convergenza tematica, oltre che stilistica, suggerisce anche una concordanza cronologica nel Neolitico e nell'Eneolitico.

Quanto al significato dei poligonali sembra prematuro azzardare ipotesi. Del resto anche l'interpretazione di analoghe raffigurazioni a Porto Badisco e altrove non va al di là di circostanziate, ma pur sempre ipotetiche, congetture. Se il riferimento ad elementi o simboli astrali e solari può apparire ovvio per alcuni di essi, una generalizzazione in tal senso sembra azzardata. Non si esclude l'eventualità che si tratti invece di rudimentali esemplificazioni visive di ripartizioni spaziali effettive, o di schematiche raffigurazioni di sistemi di cattura del pesce, dal significato didattico-propiziatorio. In tal senso giustificata sarebbe la preminente raffigurazione dell'imbarcazione.

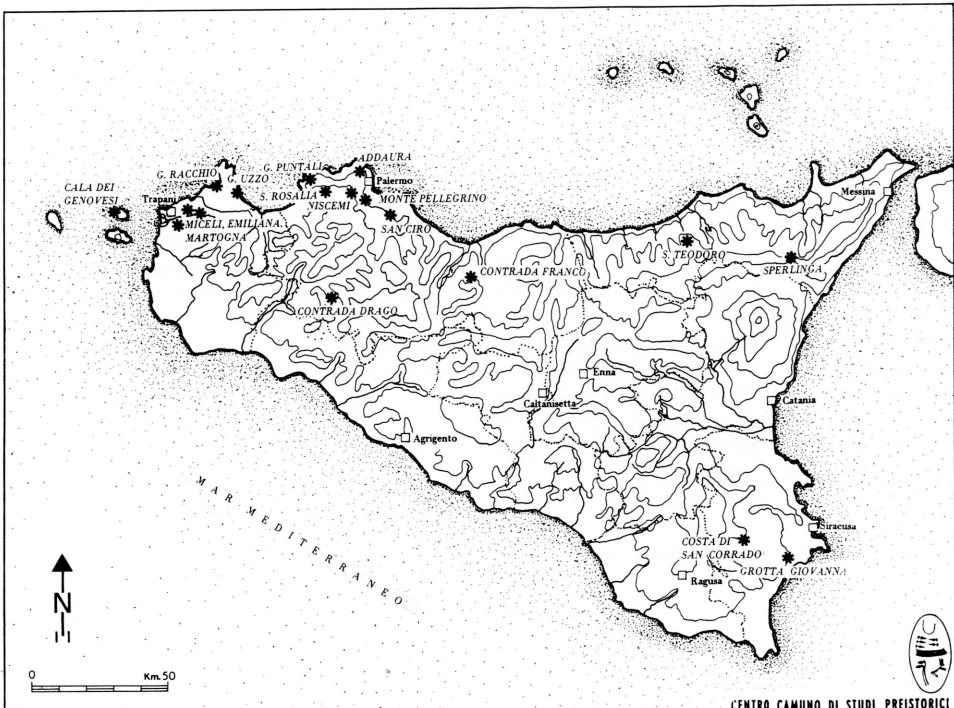
Ulteriori elementi verranno raccolti nel corso dell'analisi attualmente in corso.

Sebastiano Tusa
Museo trapanese di preistoria
Soprintendenza archeologica, Palermo



Fig. 2
Pitture rupestri di Cala
Mancina, Trapani.

Fig. 3
Distribuzione dell'arte
rupestre in Sicilia.



FIGURES OF BOATS AND CUP-MARKS IN QATAR

In a 1983 issue of *ARRAYAN*, Mr. H. Kopel published a series of engravings representing plans of boats with oars, from Jabal Jusasiyah in Qatar. It is interesting to note the use of cup-marks in these figures: they represent details of plans, and of features of boats and fishing gear.

The problem which arises is whether isolated groups of cup-marks in the same area may have similar meanings and purposes.

D.F. Hawkins
London, England

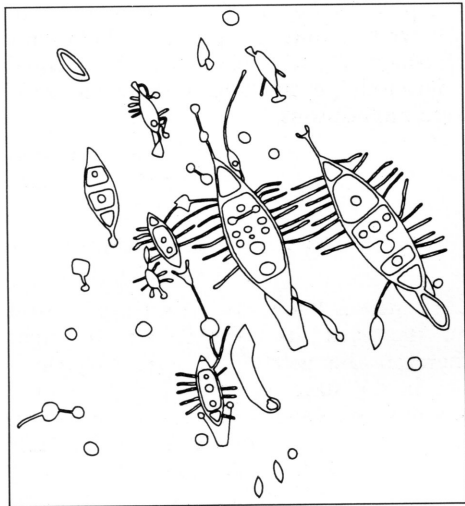


Fig. 4
Rock art describing boats in Qatar.

Cup-marks may have a variety of uses and purposes. Though your approach is, no doubt, to be followed further, the issue reminds us of a passage from our notebook Mission to India, 1981: "... Our friend Visbnayam spent some time on a rock and produced a cup-mark. When we asked him what he was doing he said: "I have left my signature on the rock... this is me, but for the next visitor this will be the mark of a god and for the passer-by it will indicate the location of a water-hole. For the Yogi, it is the symbol of Prana. When it rains there will be water in it and the birds will drink..."

HOMO ANTARCTICUS

En relación a la carta del Señor Barbiero aparecida en el *BCSP* 21 de Abril 1984,

p. 9, en que se hace alusión a nuestras investigaciones arqueológicas en la Antártica; quisiera señalar lo siguiente:

1- Las dos puntas de proyectil presuntamente enontradas en las Islas Shetland del Sur fueron sometidas a un completo análisis geográfico, lítico, petrográfico-sedimentológico y tipológico, que demostró de forma encuestionable una procedencia distinta a la originalmente asignada a dichos artefactos arqueológicos. El informe en extenso fué publicado en la Serie Científicas, Instituto Antártico Chileno 30:61-76, 1983. En consecuencia, el hallazgo arqueológico en referencia no debe ser considerado en ningún caso como una prueba de la presencia del hombre primitivo o de grupos indígenas en territorio antártico.

2- Sin embargo, en otro artículo titulado "Terra Australis Incognita: una ruta de investigación arqueológica" publicado en la misma Serie, *INACH* 30:77-86, 1983, proporcionó una discusión teórica amplia en torno a la posibilidad de que grupos indígenas del extremo sur del continente americano hubiesen contactado en forma casual con tierras del contorno antártico.

3- Una primera posibilidad dice tener relación con la existencia en el Paso Drake de fuertes y persistentes vientos de dirección suroeste que son responsables de la principal corriente marina conocida como Deriva del Viento del Oeste. Antecedentes históricos señalan que el holandés Dirk Gherritz (1598), el español Gabriel de Castilla (1603), el holandés Roggeveen (1721) y el inglés Guillermo Smith (1603), fueron arrastrados por la fuerza de los temporales hacia territorio antártico mientras se en contraban navegando el Cabo de Hornos e incluso el Estrecho de Magallanes. Como esta misma zona estuvo habitada por grupos indígenas de vida canoera y marítima, es ilícito postular que alguna embarcación nativa sufriera igual percance; logrando arribar a igual destino.

Una segunda posibilidad se planteó en términos de que navegantes y cazadores antárticos de origen europeo contrataron personal americano, que hubiera incluido aborígenes australes, por su óptima adaptación a las condiciones climáticas severas.

4- El descubrimiento de numerosos vestigios correspondientes a grupos de cazadores de lobos y focas del siglo pasado, han motivado la orientación del programa de investigación hacia la arqueología histórica antártica. En enero de 1984, Chile realizó

con éxito la primera excavación sistemática en territorio antártico abriéndose como acertadamente lo escribe F. Barbiero, "un nuovo capitolo delle ricerche archeologiche".

Rubén Stehberg
Programa Arqueología Antártica
M.N.H.N. - INACH - Santiago, Chile

YOUR MEMORIAL FOR THE PROGRESS OF CULTURE

I have often thought of the difficulties for research caused by the lack of funding. The results of archaeological discoveries are continually enriching our culture and our imagination, and yet many of us do so little in our lives to support such an important aspect of our heritage.

If one believes that this common enrichment of humanity is worth being supported, one should consider making a bequest to the Centro Camuno di Studi Preistorici.

Could the Centro name a research project, an excavation, or a discovery, after a donor?

Letter signed
Glasgow, Scotland

The Centro would certainly wish to satisfy the requests of donors in any appropriate manner, as their contributions would be a valuable and appreciated support to scientific research. In fact, as the Centro is a non-profit institution, gifts or legacies would be tax-exempt. We would be glad to see that you have set an example and that others may be inspired by your generosity.

ON HAR KARKOM

Ever since I first read about the walls of Jericho falling outwards in repeated earthquakes at the end of the EB period, followed by a vast nomadic invasion, I have been investigating the possibility that this event reflected in fact the Hebrew conquest of Canaan described in the Bible. The evidence for it only seems to increase: your findings at Mt Karkom has added another link in the chain.

I am writing briefly to beg you not to dismiss totally the possibility that the Exodus took place at the collapse of the

Old Kingdom of Egypt – which involves taking seriously the striking parallels between Ipuwer and the description of the Plagues (for example, in both, the Nile is turned to blood). In this period there is a freak occupation of the Negev, first investigated by Nelson Glueck and now by you. This occupation occurs in relation to the invasion of Canaan by a people with tribal burial customs (K. Kenyon). Shortly afterwards the Sinatic Script (the proto-Hebrew alphabet) was introduced into the land and, apparently, the Hebrew-speaking West Semites are established in Canaan from then on.

I realise that this scheme is fraught with difficulties, but it has many strong points. The parallels between the rise and fall of the West Semite people and the events described in the Bible cannot be ignored indefinitely, even though there are awkward implications.

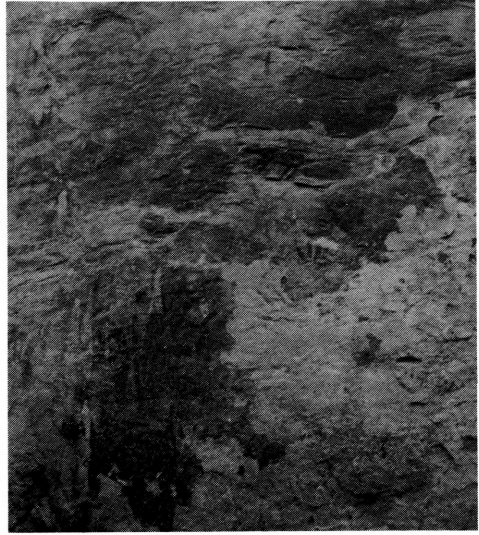
Tom Chetwynd
London, England

ROCK ART IN MALAYSIA

Very little is known to the scientific world on the rock art of Malaysia. It might therefore be worthwhile reporting on a site in the state of Perak, just outside of the town of Ipoh. The rock is limestone, and there is a quarry about 1/8 of a mile down the hill from the paintings. Flaking of the cliff wall and limestone excretions have badly damaged the paintings; rain also falls directly on the paintings. As far as we know, the site has never been adequately documented.

The four photographs enclosed demand some comments:

- 1) The large painting which stands out here appears to be a catfish or perhaps a dugon. In the lower right some wonderful "X-ray" paintings may be noted. A pregnant animal reveals the baby inside. These are strangely similar to Australian rock paintings of Arnhem Land. In the extreme lower left there is an unusual stick figure with facial details. The large painting in the lower center appears to be an "X-ray" creature as well.
- 2) Notice the painting in the far upper right – any ideas on what this might be? Also interesting is the line drawing of a man, above the central animal figure. I am told that when you visit this site in person, you can see all of the details



- which do not reproduce in these photos.
- 3) Here there are numerous white line drawings, along with the red-brown paintings.
 - 4) Superimposed abstractions (?).

As one can see, preservation is a real problem with this site. It should be documented, and we suspect that there are other sites in the area. The museum in Malaya knows about this sites, but we do

not think that anything has been done with it.

We would appreciate suggestions about how to increase interest in this site as well as in others. This site is quickly deteriorating.

Paul Faulstich and
Suzanne Hashim
Los Angeles, California

Fig. 5-6-7-8
Rock art in Malaysia (see description in text).