process, the original photograph, unenhanced, should always be reproduced alongside the interpretation. This then provides yet another tool for site recorders and analysts to use, to improve their perceptions and presentations of polychrome images.

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Morricone del Pesco rockshelter, a new rock art discovery in southern Italy
By DARIO SIGARI and CARLO PERETTO

Introduction
Fieldwork co-ordinated by the University of Ferrara, has recently recognised a rock surface with paintings and engravings in Molise. The rock art site, a rockshelter, was initially discovered by a local inhabitant, Guido Lastoria, in the nearby village of Civitanova del Sannio in 2011. The shelter opens in a rocky promontory along the northern bench of the Serrata valley and is crossed by the tratturo Lucera-Castel di Sangro, an ancient path that connects the inner part of Abruzzo with the Gargano area, in Puglia. The authors of this paper try to add a little to our knowledge about the rock art in central and southern Italy by introducing this newly discovered site.

Morricone del Pesco rockshelter
The shelter is oriented westwards and sloping towards the Adriatic Sea, at c. 750 m a.s.l. It is in a relatively accessible location, on a steep slope covered with grass and bush scrub and was formed on a geological fault line which typically has highly polished surfaces. Areas of the rockshelter show evidence of frost action and natural weathering processes (Fig. 1). Both the Gargano area, in Puglia, and the Majella area, in Abruzzo, are rich in pre-Historic archaeology (e.g. Palma di Cesnola 2003; Mattioli 2007; Pessina and Tinè 2008; Gravina 2010; Gravina and Mattioli 2010; Di Fraia and Manzi 2012).

The panel measures c. 8 m wide with a small overhang above it. The engraved and painted panel is a Miocene limestone marl. The landscape around the shelter is mainly mountainous, reaching up to 1450 m a.s.l. The rock surface has been painted black, probably with charcoal, and engraved, probably with a metal chisel. A number of engravings have

Figure 1. Panoramic view of Morricone del Pesco shelter (photo D. Sigari).
eroded since their production, making their identification difficult. Similar problems exist for paintings damaged from periodic floodwater episodes and run-offs. Figures present on the rock surface have been grouped into four sectors (from west to east, sectors A to D) of the panel.

The imagery can be grouped into five clear categories, which are anthropomorphs, geometrics, zoomorphs, simple groups of lines and unidentifiable figures. These categories are arguably schematic in form and are typical of imagery found within the central Italian later pre-Historic and Historic rock art tradition (see Graziosi 1973; Mezzena and Palma di Cesnola 1987; Palma di Cesnola 1987; Mattioli 2007, 2012; Gravina and Mattioli 2010; Di Fraia and Manzi 2012). Due to weathering and recent human actions, it is not possible to give the exact number of the images present.

Paintings include on sector A: a meander-labyrinth superimposed on three zoomorphs (labelled A1, A2 and A3), organised in three rows. A1 and A3 are not complete: A1 has the ventral line, forelegs, one hind leg and the muzzle; A3 has hind legs and a tail. A2 is complete. It has a triangular muzzle and two small lines representing the ears or the antlers. Forelegs were sketched with two parallel oblique lines, whilst hind legs have a curved appendix, like a tail (Fig. 2).

A black painted reticulate shape and an anthropomorph are just above the zoomorphic figures. Further eastward is the last painted anthropomorph with one clear ‘leg’, ‘sex’ and ‘trunk’. At the bottom of the panel there is a reticulate motif, while at the top other scratched lines result from some scratching activity.

At sector B’s top are five groups of lines in a reticulate shape. In the upper part they are just scratched, while a painted one is in the middle (Fig. 3). A black-painted zoomorph (12 cm × 8 cm), though not easy to define as the ‘animal’ has neither a head nor a tail, has been represented in the naturalistic, with its head downward. Under its dorsal line are five dots, possibly to represent the animal’s hair, its ventral line curves in correspondence to the ‘legs’. Several black painted dots are below the ani-

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**Figure 2.** Painted zoomorphs on panel A (photo D. Sigari).  
**Figure 3.** Black painted zoomorph on panel B (drawing D. Sigari).  
**Figure 4.** Scratched anthropomorphs and painted geometrics on east side of panel C (photo D. Sigari).
mal. The palimpsest continues downward with two horizontal and parallel zigzag lines (12 cm long).

Then there is sector C which is the best preserved and largest one and it presents the richest and most complex palimpsest of figures and motifs. Its figures are both scratched and painted in black. Almost all of the engravings overlie painted images suggesting a crude chronology. Among the paintings there are a black motif in the upper right of the east section of the panel includes a vertical line across a circle, in a flower-shape. Just above it, is a possible schematic zoomorph (Fig. 4). This enigmatic schematic figure consists of a central line from which three perpendicular couples of lines radiate from the central body. Near it a circular image is within other non-concentric circles. Under this figure are clear traces of black paint interrupted by a calcareous film deposit on the rock surface.

Concerning the petroglyphs, all of which are executed as engravings, anthropomorphs, geometrics, ladders, symbols and groups of lines are present. The anthropomorphs are the most recurrent theme with five or six figures. In addition there are two circular motifs which probably form part of an anthropomorphous figure; both types of figures possess a similar decorative patterning. Other geometrics are spread around the panel, some of them schematic. Within the same sector are several engraved anthropomorphs, one complete with the clear outline of an exaggerated breast and large hips.

At last a black painted inscription in sector D, behind the overhang, reads: ‘L[a] f[iss]a di Pina […] è un[a] pot[…]’. The sentence is not entirely readable because of its bad conservation; the sector is exposed eastward and eroded.

Conclusions

In order to attempt to give a chronological and cultural attribution to the carved and painted figures it is necessary to consider the Lucera-Castel di Sangro tratto, in that its path leads to places where a number of rock art sites have been recently discovered. These sites could be markers within a wider landscape, connecting Abruzzo and Gargano, the Appennines and the Adriatic Sea. Recent discoveries of rock art sites, mainly in Abruzzo, have been useful in understanding the rock art of Morricone del Pesco. The shelter in Civitanova del Sannio fills an important gap in assessing the later pre-Historic chronology of the area.

Most of the repertory of Morricone del Pesco seems to be comparable with other Italian and European figurative art and rock art traditions (see Borzatti von Lowenstern 1971; Graziosi 1973, 1980; Nash 2001; Clottes 2008; Pinheiro 2010; Fossati and Arcà 2012; Martini 2012), suggesting a long history of the shelter. However, giving a precise chronological estimate would be untimely and risky, with the great number of stylistic and chronological comparisons.

In summary, the rock art contained within the Morricone del Pesco shelter is the first rock art discovery in the Molise region. The hope is to establish a more precise chronology of the paintings, in order to better understand the cultural context of the shelter itself.

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Data and interpretation in the Côa valley, Portugal

By ROBERT G. BEDNARIK

Substantial agreement

In view of the controversial status of the archaeological data from Portugal’s Côa valley (Bednarik, 1995, Watchman 1995; Zilhão 1995) it is perhaps more constructive to explore areas of agreement than to dwell needlessly on areas of disagreement between the warring factions. The paper of Aubry et al. (2002, henceforth referred to as ‘the Paper’) provides an excellent basis for exploring such areas of agreement. It shows that there is much more consensus than the polemic on this subject might suggest.

For instance, the Paper affords great care to the geological circumstances of the valley, its lithology, to how and when it was formed. It agrees that in geological terms it is a very young feature. That it has been cut into a Plio-Pleistocene planation surface has been universally accepted now it seems. The Paper even shows how the valley truncates a fluvial terrace of the Middle or Lower Pleistocene (in Fig. 4, Penascosa section), which grants the valley an age lower than that of these deposits. It is also noted how Acheulian handaxes and cleavers can be found in the Pleistocene sediments high along the Douro, where they occur also in the vicinity of the Côa valley. The complete absence of such finds in the lower reaches of the valley confirms that all sediments close to valley floors are very young, and that they are mostly Holocene is also the finding of the Paper. The mention of occasional Pleistocene pockets and sediment residues on valley slopes agrees with the discovery of a Late Pleistocene deposit previously found at Penascosa, 40 m above the present river (Zilhão et al. 1997: Fig. 3). Since the formation of the valley began, apparently during the Middle Pleistocene, erosion of the soft schists and phyllites has cut over 300 m deep into the planation surface. So 20000 years ago the river might have been perhaps 10 m above its present level. This illustrates once again the absurdity of the cosmicogenic radiation results from the valley (Phillips et al. 1997), according to which rocks at its base would have become exposed to the atmosphere hundreds of millennia ago, when the river was in fact at an elevation at least 100 m higher than today.

Even on the subject of the Fariseu site, the Paper agrees largely with those sceptical of the precipitous Palaeolithic claims. It accepts, for instance, the criticism by Abreu and Bednarik (2000) that the stratigraphy consists entirely of layers of lake sediment, alluvial and colluvial deposits, and that much of this detritus postdates the establishment of the Pocinho dam about 15 years ago. But perhaps most importantly, the Paper concedes that there is currently no form of radiometric or other objective dating evidence from the excavation of Fariseu. It states quite explicitly that TL analysis of the Fariseu samples is currently still in progress (p. 71), three years after these samples were submitted. Therefore the Paper also agrees, at least implicitly (because Fariseu is the only site of dozens excavated where rock art has been claimed to be relatable to archaeological evidence), that there is currently no evidence linking any of the rock art of the Côa valley to any of the archaeological dates so far presented.

The Paper disagrees, however, with an earlier Instituto Português de Arqueologia (IPA) report on the nature of the lithic industry found in the Fariseu excavation. Whereas Anonymous (2000) reports that the lithic sample ‘is not big enough to allow a precise diagnostic of the assemblage’, the Paper is much more confident: the very few lithics are now attributed to the Early Magdalenian or Proto-Solutrean. It would help us to have confidence in these pronouncements if the purported artefacts had been illustrated, in the Paper or in any other publication. The only lithics ever published from the lower Côa valley (e.g. Carvalho et al. 1996; Zilhão 1997) are a few mostly microlithic pieces from Cardina 1 and Quinta da Barca, nearly all of them backed bladelets and geometric forms such as trapezoids, most being under 15 mm long (Bednarik 2003: Fig. 3). Again the Paper is in agreement with this concern by reporting that the few lithics found at lower Côa sites are largely microlithic. None of these specimens are diagnostic of an Upper Palaeolithic period, and bearing in mind that most were found in the same horizons as decorated ceramic shards (e.g. at Quinta da Barca, cf. Zilhão 1997: Fig. 4; and Salto do Boi - Cardina 1, cf. Zilhão 1997: Fig 5) it seems reasonable to assume that they are perhaps Neolithic. Here the