

Rock Drawings in Valcamonica

Historical background - Engineering geological conditions and problems:

Valcamonica is a north-south oriented valley, 80 km long, in the Lombards Alps, north of Brescia and Iseo Lake. The engraved zone (40 km long) corresponds to the lower part of middle valley, between the peaks of Concarena and Pizzo Badile Camuno (3000 meters high).

All the engraved figures are pecked in a hard Permian sandstone, heavily polished by the Würm glacier. It represents a natural blackboard, collecting hundreds of thousands figures from various prehistoric period.

Valcamonica has been repeatedly interested by floods: an historical research reported a large number of events from 1506 to 1997. These floods didn't involve the rock drawings located around the top of the valley. Possible problems should concern the approaching of the site.

Actually, the most relevant geological problem concerns the weathering.



Supplementary information:

The rock drawings in Valcamonica is the first Italian site inserted in UNESCO World Heritage List in 1979 because it has one of the greatest collection of prehistoric petroglyphs to be found - more than 140,000 signs and figures carved in rock over a period of 8,000 years, depicting themes of agriculture, navigation, war and magic.

The engravings of the CAMUNNI were only noted in 1909 when Walter Laeng, a geographer of Brescia, gave news about two engraved boulders at Pian delle Greppe of Cemmo in the municipality of Capo di Ponte: these two boulders are now one of the most important Copper Age monuments in Italy.



Examples of rock drawings representing human and animal figures

(<http://rupestre.net/alps/pgall.html>)

References on studies already done:

LUINO F., BASSI M., BOSSUTO P. e FASSI P. (2001) "Individuazione ai fini urbanistici delle zone potenzialmente inondabili. Ricerca storica e analisi geomorfologia. Fiume Oglio – Valcamonica." Quaderni Regionali di Ricerca, 22, IRER della Lombardia.