

**LETTERE AL DIRETTORE - LETTERS TO THE DIRECTOR  
LETTRES AU DIRECTEUR**

LOMBARDY:

AN ASTRONOMICAL INTERPRETATION OF  
THE CAVEN STELE IN VALTELLINA

The Caven stele n° 3 described in Anati's *Camuni* (p. 194, fig. 209) appears to my mind as a composition of aesthetic, magical-astrological and mathematic-astronomic calender-stone. Several such stones are known all over the world with different graphic patterns, such as some steles of Le Petit Chasseur (unfortunately damaged) or La Table des Marchands with its 56 moon-symbols. Is it really astonishing, that already in the Neolithic and even earlier "priests" had to observe the sky by day and especially by night? The other two steles of Caven are no calender-stones: their graphics look like symbolic pictograms dealing with death and (new) life, (though the number of graphemes may be of interest). On all three steles however we find the full moon with twice the new moon, which is the "dead" moon. Axes and daggers are related to weapon worship which is likely to have to do with

death, sometimes also with rebirth. But there is another association: the graphs of the triangle, which mean: a) the three main phases of the moon (heaven-bulls with set off horns and a triangle on their foreheads); b) the "death" or "killing" of the moon (the blades). Probably the "message" of the animals on stele 1 and 2 of Caven is of that kind and so we may guess, that -like in Sion/Sitten- all three steles belonged to a graveyard. Caven stele n° 3, in my opinion, is a counting of 56 years, (54+2 years). We have 18 triangles, 9 circles (figure of eternity) and 6 stripes or lines on the shank; 18 (18, 6) is the number of a "simple" Metonic Year. We can count with those triangles year by year, and we will do it 3x18 times (and then add 2 more triangles). I suggest:

1 triangle	= 1 year
6 triangles	= 6 years = 1 circle
54 triangles	= 9 circles
9 triangles	= 9 years = 1 stripe
54 triangles	= 6 stripes

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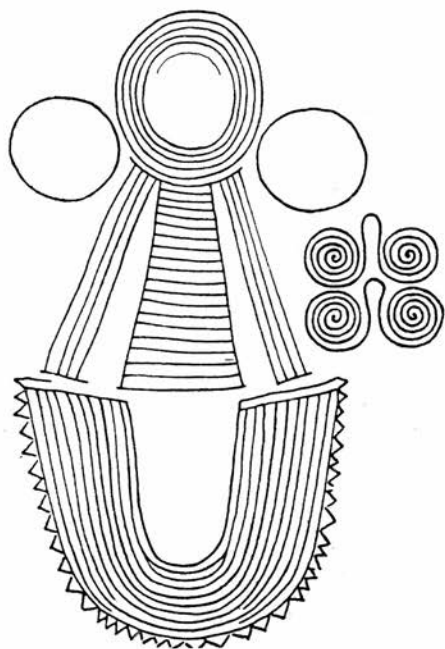


Fig. 1. Tracing of stele nr. 3 of Caven, near Teglio, Valtellina. Dimensions m 0,50x0,80. Rilievo della stele nr. 3 di Caven, presso Teglio in Valtellina. Dimensioni m 0,50x0,80.

LIGURIA:  
ARTE RUPESTRE E CULTO DELLE ACQUE  
IN LUNIGIANA

In comune di Bagnone (Massa), luogo in cui sono già state rinvenute statue-stele, esiste un'antica via appenninica che presenta molti reperti (stele, incisioni, megaliti). Il percorso sale da Treschietto (quota 486) fino al crinale Badignana (quota 1685). Il sito è percorso da faglie ed è ricco di sorgenti e corsi d'acqua. Parte delle pietre fitte poste lungo il sentiero è stata cristianizzata con effigi scolpite. Molte incisioni appaiono di carattere esoterico. Il simbolo più frequente è la verga del raddomante, del tipo a rotazione verticale (che doveva essere in metallo). In una piccola incisione appare anche il *torque*. A quota 1350 esiste un pianoro, sormontato da un crinale fortificato, con costruzioni in pietra. All'interno si rinvengono due massi scolpiti a forma di losanga, di cui una munita di coppella centrale. Si presume che tali istoriazioni abbiano avuto specifiche funzioni concettuali di tipo sacro-terapeutico, probabilmente connesse con la realtà tettonica dell'area e le numerose sorgenti di acque minerali.

Enrico Calzolari  
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## “ART, ANTIQUITY AND LAW: PRESERVING OUR GLOBAL CULTURAL HERITAGE”

Members of Centro Camuno are invited to attend the conference “Art, Antiquity and Law: Preserving our Global Cultural Heritage”, to be held at Rutgers University in New Jersey on October 30 - November 1, 1998. On the agenda are major and timely issues regarding the ownership and preservation of the monuments, sites, artifacts and works of art that comprise our worldwide cultural heritage. Directed by Archer St. Clair Harvey, professor of art history at Rutgers University, and Sharon Lorenzo, J.D. and graduate student in art history, the conference will address the looting and theft of cultural material from private collections, public monuments and museums, houses of worship, and archaeological sites, as well as the legal and illegal transfer of cultural property that continues throughout the world despite growing global controversy. “Art, Antiquity and Law” will also focus on new preservation initiatives and efforts to regulate the trade of cultural material on both national and international levels. The conference will bring together experts on cultural property from five continents, including archaeologists, art dealers, museum administrators, specialists in cultural property law and representatives of national and international agencies. For further information please contact me.

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## RESPONSIBILITY FOR EDUCATION

I would like to suggest a debate on “Who is responsible for informing and educating the general public about recording rock art?” Rock art has an increasing impact on daily life, rock art is in vogue. Just visit any gift shop at National Parks in the USA: everywhere, on tee-shirts, coffee cups, calendars, posters, books. There are many people making money copying and using pre-historic rock art symbols (this is a moral question in itself). “Will someone copyright a rock art site?”. Rock art specialists have the responsibility for educating the public. An elementary strategy on this matter should be reached through debate.

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Fig. 2. Rock art of Har Karkom, Negev desert, Israel. Tracing of an animated hunting scene dating to period III (Chalcolithic). The hunter is using a bow and arrow and is being helped by dogs. (From: Anati, *The Mountain of God*, New York, 1986, p. 64, fig. 50b).

## ON A “HUNTING SCENE” FROM HAR KARKOM. ARE THEY PICTOGRAMS OR IDEOGRAMS?

The well know “hunting scene” from Har Karkom rock art has been seen by Anati as a descriptive scene (E. Anati, *The Mountain of God*, New York, 1986, p. 64, fig. 50b). I disagree with this interpretation and consider it not illustration but text. This rock art composition appears to me as the metaphorical description of two “rams”, human beings of the same clan or two clans of the same tribe, having a frontal discussion with each other. At the same time they are surrounded by “dogs”, probably another clan or tribe and ultimately one of the “rams” is killed by a “hunter”. The depiction may be related to the biblical story of the twelve “spies” sent by Moses to explore the “Land of Milk and Honey”. When they returned to Moses they were divided into two factions regarding the possibility of entering and conquering Canaan. Ultimately those belongs to the faction that was against the conquest, were killed by a plague. The present hypothesis is relying upon the allegorical vision of the biblical story as conceived by Nelson Glueck in this book *Rivers in the Desert*.

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