

## Local and inter-regional aspects of the Paleolithic and Mesolithic figurative art in Trentino and suburbs

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**ABSTRACT** - The figurative production in north-eastern Italy (Trentino and the bordering areas) have the same characteristics as wide ranging iconographic styles. These tendencies were manifested during the Final Epigravetian (Riparo Tagliente) and the Sauveterrian (Riparo Gaban) with regards western and eastern European areas. Other expressions are indicative of local elaborations, which fall within an intermediate stylistic production between Franco-Cantabrian and Mediterranean iconography.

*Key words:* Art, Paleolithic, Mesolithic, Trentino

*Parole chiave:* Arte, Paleolitico, Mesolitico, Trentino

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### 1. INTRODUCTION

There are not many representations that can give indications as to the figurative art of North Eastern Italy during the Paleolithic and the Mesolithic periods. Nevertheless, the various styles, the restricted geographical area, the frequent chronostratigraphic and radiometric dates allow to achieve a general outline of the type of style of these productions, of the schools that inspired it and the re-elaboration carried out locally. The repertoire of the twenty thousand manufactures included in these works is not complete but regards figurations that are useful and pertinent to this theme.

The figurative art productions in North Eastern Italy are related to the different typologies of the areas. They can be found in funeral depositions and are strictly connected to the ideology of burial rituals (Tagliente rockshelter, Villabruna-A rockshelter), or in dwelling contexts (Tagliente rockshelter, Gaban rockshelter, Pradestel, and Romagnano III).

### 2. INTERRELATIONS WITH EASTERN EUROPE

Among the most ancient iconographic productions, there are two objects of great interest from the

Tagliente rockshelter. A bowl and a flint nodule, worked in various ways, which probably refer to the casual and hasty use of poorly elaborated natural lithic materials, suggesting the specific manufacturing of small products (LEONARDI, 1992, fig.1b,4)<sup>1</sup>. The first (Fig.1:1), relative to level 13, between  $13430 \pm 180$  BP (cuts 15-16) and  $12040 \pm 170$  BP (cuts 8-10), is a flint nodule with two natural symmetrical perforations. One end vaguely features a zoomorphic shape ("which seems like the head of a hare" according to P.Leonardi).

The second object (Fig.1:2), from level 15-18 (cuts 15-16;  $13430 \pm 180$  BP), is an incomplete siliceous bowl, which has been intentionally decorticated. On the remaining cortex there are engravings featuring rows of quite orderly dots and lines. The reference to human or animal figures, on this object, is vaguer than in the preceding one (two small cavities could represent the eyes).

The indistinct morphology of these two artefacts does not help to interpret them as figurative products. However, the materials, the dimensions, the type of working carried out and the engraved decor on one of the specimens are all aspects that can help determine analogies with other similar manufactures of east European areas, as far as the Black Sea.

At Kostienki 4 (Alexandrovka) there are various specimens of zoomorphic figures (Fig.1:3-4) made of calcareous marble that have been decorticated and

flaked in various ways and finally worked to produce a very vague and unidentifiable zoomorphic outline. Sometimes these figures are vaguely recognizable (mammoth, bison)<sup>2</sup>. They are modest representations, completely different in style from other aesthetic and figurative mobile zoomorphic plastics found in Eastern Middle-Late Upper Paleolithic<sup>3</sup>. Nevertheless, they are similar to these with regard to the concept (lack of realism, schematization, essential outlines) as well as the working (flaking and decortication). The same conceptual inspiration with approximate and summary results is also found in some anthropomorphic figures (for example Kosseoutzy; ABRAMOVA, 1995:122-)<sup>4</sup> that differ from other eastern standardized repertoires, divided in distinct groups (ABRAMOVA, 1995).

The comparisons proposed for these two objects is very uncertain, however, the styles can be associated (schematic view), as well as the working methods (decortication and flaking) and in one particular case the ornaments (series of dots in regular rows).

The standard of the working of the pebbles and other lithic fragments adopted by the Late Epigravettian groups of the Pontic steppe and of the Danube basin is referable to the eastern ambit (KOZLOWSKI, 1997) (Fig.1:6). The different areas of diffusion of this figurative standard include areas relatively near to Northeast Italy, such as Hungary, but also to other distribution areas beyond the Carpathian Mountains.

At the present time, the two objects of the Tagliente rockshelter are unique specimens in Italy. P. LEONARDI pointed out (1992:219) the similar syntax and composition of this bowl and the Niaux grotta rock art, both featuring dots and "sticks", considering them as a "casual combination". In fact, a sequence of painted dots is geographically widely used (the dates are not always certain) and is considered as a general graphic element in simple schemes (e.g. Niaux). Engravings are not so frequent, especially mobile ones, like the one found in the Tagliente rockshelter. An example of engravings with lines of dots referring to an amulet-pendant (Fig.1:5) can be found in the Kosseoutzy site and features decorations similar to the Tagliente pebble (ABRAMOVA 1995:122-, fig.2,5).

There are other analogies with East Europe in a geometrical drawing on a flint cortex found in level 14 of Tagliente rockshelter, which was firstly reported by P.LEONARDI (1992) (Fig.1:7) and then twenty years later by A.GUERRESCHI (1996:116) who discovered the matching piece. It is the most ancient mobile engraving of the upper Paleolithic in North East Italy and dates back to about 13 thousand years before our time. A band painted with ochre is applied in the middle and dominates between two engraved parallel bands against a background of engraved slanting dashed. Even though the piece is fragmented, it is obvious that the emphasis is on the red

central band, which is enhanced by the other two bands.

This is a very unusual pattern in the Italian repertoire, even in the most recent Epigravettian geometrical figures but a similar graphic and composition typology can be found in a small engraved pebble at the Balin-Kosh Grotta in Crimea (KOZLOWSKI, 1992, fig.126) (Fig.1:8). The central band of this small pebble is applied on a background featuring short parallel lines forming a type of ladder. The small pebble was found on the most eastern limit of an area where objects with similar characteristics (style and composition) are found. It is part of a production of pebbles and small slabs of sandstone and shale, decorated in a geometric style with zigzags, bands of dashes, short lines, marginal carvings, barbeleès etc. There are certain parallels between these and Epigravettian iconography of the Mediterranean area<sup>5</sup>. The similarities between the two patterns are somewhat uncertain. There is insufficient information on the industrial contexts and on the chronology of Balin-Kosh Grotta where the lithic industries, similarly to Crimea, can be defined as Epigravettian type and the chronology is generally pre-Holocene<sup>6</sup>.

There are similar analogies with East Europe even later on, referring to the Mesolithic productions of Gaban rockshelter (see Paragrap 4), which belong to the widely diffused iconography concept which includes East Europe and Southern Italy in the area of diffusion of the Late Epigravettian epoch.

### 3. INTERRELATIONS WITH WESTERN EUROPE

The stylistic similarities with western Europe can be seen in the Franco-Cantabria style underlined in the past by many scholars (GRAZIOSI, 1973; LEONARDI, 1992; VIGLIARDI, 1996). I refer to a head and a hind part engraved on a calcareous slab (GRAZIOSI, 1973, fig.9a-b), the feline animal on calcareous stone connected to Epigravettian burials, the ibex (only the front part is left) engraved on a fragment of a calcareous pebble and unfortunately found out of the stratigraphy, the drawing of part of a bison on bone (LEONARDI, 1984:275-276), five representations in a flowing and sumptuous style, similar to productions from beyond the Alps. The anatomical proportions are respected particularly in the feline illustrations (Fig.2:2). The details of the head are represented accurately. The various lengths of intersecting and layered lines of the profile create a dynamic effect that also reflects the Franco-Cantabria style (Fig.2:6). The Franco-Cantabria inspiration is still revealed in the softly etched lines of the legs.

The same inspiration is still evident in the natural fluidity of the hind leg and in the flowing and casual style of the ibex, while there is a minimal sign of local originality, in comparison to the bison, in some approximate details of the head and the horn which have been drawn casually (Fig.2:7). The sinuous lines of the hump and the bristle fur above the head (Fig.2:1) are all that is left of the partial sketch of a bison engraved on bone, using a graphic style typical of Franco-Cantabria art<sup>7</sup> (Fig.2:3-4).

With reference to western influence, local original characteristics can be seen in some personal re-elaborated traits inspired by the Franco-Cantabria school.

This can also be seen in the bison engraved on the pebble found in Tagliente rockshelter - level 10e (dated 13270±170 BP) (LEONARDI, 1972). In the drawing (Fig.2:2), where the anatomical details and proportions are well represented, the enormous hump, the sketched head, with particular attention to the details (small horns, front fur, beard...), indicate a realistic interpretation of the animal which undoubtedly refers to the Franco-Cantabria style. However, the rigidity of the forms, the graphic schematism, visible above all in the sharp and angular traits of the protruding parts of the head (nose and beard) reflect original aspects. The rigidity is accentuated by the use of just one single outline. This representation is contemporary to the Maddalenian III-IV productions (Middle Maddalenian), in which the proportions and the anatomic details of the animal are carefully represented. The realistic perspective and graphic conventions in the reproduction of some parts of the body are obtained by the use of soft flowing lines. An example of this can be seen on the walls of the Trois Frères cave<sup>8</sup>. It is therefore evident that even though the Tagliente representation is generally similar to the Franco-Cantabria style of the Middle Maddalenian, it differs in the rigidity of its lines and the heaviness of the figures. These particular aspects could be interpreted as a local production, indicating that this style was diffused in the surrounding areas. This style maintains the main Franco-Cantabria traits (well proportioned, anatomic details) but has lost smoothness and fluidity of the lines, and has therefore been re-elaborated.

It is significant that figures that are more or less similar to the canonic smooth and fluid style, typical of beyond the Alps, can be found in the same site. Figures that maintain the original style show that the French influence is not occasional. In fact, even though it is not common in North-Western Italy, it can be found in the Italian peninsula (Vado all'Arancio, Polesini) and even in Puglia (Grotta Paglicci), in more or less contemporary periods, from the Advanced Epigravettian of Paglicci to the Final Epigravettian of Polesini. It must be stressed that the figurative language is very provincial

in some of the Southern manifestations (Polesini), probably due to the distance from the original area. This provincialism was sometimes detected in the past by the Authors who dealt with such figures and refer to them as "comparisons" (GRAZIOSI, 1973:25) or "evident comparisons" (VIGLIARDI, 1996:25) to the Franco-Cantabria repertoire, contacts with this realistic sphere (PALMA DI CESNOLA, 1993:474), or they captured the "intermediate features" of both Franco-Cantabria...and the Mediterranean (LEONARDI, 1984:274).

More thorough considerations should be made in another occasion, on what was defined by P.Graziosi in 1956 as "Mediterranean" art and which was recently rediscussed by VIGLIARDI (1996). The zoomorphic naturalistic style representations of the Mediterranean area are characterized by recurring conventions such as simple drawings carried out with more or less defined strokes, quite realistic representations of animal legs (sometimes not all four or without hooves) and where little attention is paid to the anatomical details which are practically non-existent. It is quite difficult to trace a line between the rigid and less fluid provincial features of the Franco-Cantabria style, elaborated in the Italian area, and the more essential, graphic representations typical of the Mediterranean style. Apart from the later "rigid" animal figures in a vaguely geometrical schematism of Southern Italy in the well defined "Mediterranean" contexts (non-figurative drawings), in many cases the attribution of these zoomorphic figures to one or the other style can prove to be risky and subjective and therefore, in literature, the definition - "intermediate character" is justified. There are also graphic expressions that are common to both the mentioned styles, as for example the representation of only one horn jutting out. On the one hand, the horn appears as...sinuous, jutting out, open or closed at the far end, with a space between the two lines of the profile of the horn and the head in typical "Mediterranean" products (VIGLIARDI, 1996:97). On the other hand, the jutting out horn is also present in other graphic expressions both in France and in the Iberian Peninsula and cannot be solely ascribed to the "Mediterranean" style as stated by VIGLIARDI (1996:99). In the investigated area, a long bovine horn appears in level 13a of Tagliente rockshelter on an engraved flint flake and on the stone related to the burial along with the feline animal (LEONARDI, 1992, fig.3).

Western aspects can also be found in the scarce production in Azilian style. The chronology and culture of the engraved pebble of Terlago (Fig.3,1) is unknown and its dating probably ranges from the end of the Epigravettian to the Mesolithic. Many scholars have associated it with Azilian style productions (BAGOLINI & DALMERI, 1983; LEONARDI, 1984; MARTINI, 1992) because of the material used, the concept scheme, the linear syntax. There are graphic similarities with western engra-

vings (THEVENIN, 1989) both in the Rochedane and in the Mas d'Azil groups (Fig.3:2-3), revealing a certain originality in the typologies of the trait. There are regular bands, each consisting of five parallel lines applied in the middle that do not fill the whole surface.

The Azilian inspiration is also proved by pebbles painted with red ochre relative to the Middle, Recent and Final Sauveterre levels of Pradestel (DALMERI, 1992a).

These productions are similar to the Azilian pebbles in the typology of the material, the engraved graphics and the use of ochre. However, the provincial character can be seen by the scarce number of "Azilian"-type objects but also from the final result. The typology of the engraved sign of Terlago and of the unorganized use of colour at Pradestel partly reflects original patterns. The distribution of ochre, similarly to the almost intact specimens of Grotta Polesini, is another provincial manifestation of this style. Trentino, Lazio and the Central-South of the peninsula represent the most lateral areas of distribution of this graphic expression of the Pyrenées.

Parallels with western art continue even during the Mesolithic. The famous female figure of Gaban rockshelter (FASOLO, 1978; BROGLIO, 1984)<sup>9</sup> fits in with the tradition of the small plastic female naturalistic style of Paleolithic origin with details such as the upright position, the oval head, the relaxed position of the arms and the lack of anatomic features that are not tied to femininity (Fig.4:1). The composition scheme, the concept and formal standard refer to the Mediterranean and Western world in general and exclude Eastern inspirations. This is even more stressed by the comparison with the female representations of Eastern Europe. In fact, more or less realistic anthropomorphic figures disappear from the Balkans to the East with the appearance of Epigravettian complexes, in which the schematic anthropomorphic pattern is diffused and continues up till the beginning of the Holocene (KOZLOWSKI 1997). The Gaban figurine represents the last expression inspired by the tradition of the groups of hunters/gatherers before the schematic changes of the Neolithic period, which introduces standardized forms differing from the Pleistocene ones, probably under the influence of Balkan ideologies and culture. There are therefore strong ties with tradition, which cannot be assessed for the present and which could be interpreted, on the one hand, as a natural continuation of the Paleolithic inspiration. This inspiration lasts, without undergoing important changes, throughout the Early Mesolithic along with other cultural (e.g. burials) and economical aspects. On the other hand it can be interpreted as a late culturization beyond the Pleistocene-Holocene period.

#### 4. INTERRELATIONS WITH SOUTH ITALY

Some geometric figurines referring to Central-South Italy feature ladder-type shapes, meanders, Greek frets and square signs as well as engraved grooves on bones that cannot be taken into consideration for the present.

A sequence of non-figurative drawings engraved on a flint flake cortex, limestone slabs, bone (LEONARDI, 1984:268-) were found in Tagliente rockshelter, in the layers above n°10. Apart from the scattered lines present, I would like to focus the attention on some of the geometrical patterns such as ladders and meanders which fit in with the geometrical figures found in the Central-South of the peninsula in the date range from approx 12-10 thousand years to the present day and which continued in the Early Holocene.

An engraving on a bone fragment (LEONARDI, 1984:272) presents an association of different geometrical, linear signs (a sort of painted metope background, a linear Greek fret, painted bands in the background or in relief) (Fig.3: 4) that can be compared to similar engravings on bones and stone in Polesini (RADMILLI, 1974, fig.27:1-2, fig.28:2) (Fig.3:5-6) and in Grotta del Cavallo<sup>10</sup> (Fig.3:7-8). The square motif<sup>11</sup> (Fig.3:11-14) and the ladder<sup>12</sup> refer to the Romanelliano repertoire of Grotta del Cavallo.

On the whole, we are referring to a graphic and syntactic expression that characterizes the so-called "Mediterranean" production, in which zoomorphic iconography and its rigid style slowly fades out. In some areas (Salento), this style trend will lead (in the Pleistocene-Holocene transition and in Early Holocene) to the formation of an original figurative facies linked with Romanellian (Romanelli cave and Del Cavallo cave), EpiRomanellian (Del Cavallo cave and Delle Veneri cave), and Sauveterre technocomplexes (Maritza cave and Delle Mura cave-str.2) (see MARTINI, 1996:39).

The Tagliente representations are contemporary with Tardiglacial productions of Grotta Polesini and partly also Grotta del Cavallo, and similarly come under an initial pre-Holocene stage of geometrical figures. It is only in the Holocene stage, however, that these geometrical graphics are emphasized, at least with regard to the South.

There is however a major difference: whereas the Tagliente figures are carried out on small size materials (usually corticated flints, reused as artefacts), in South Italy the Romanellian engravings are found on large size materials, even on enormous slabs which are difficult to transport (Del Cavallo cave). Materials of smaller dimensions are only used for later geometrical-linear figures (Delle Veneri cave, Maritza cave) at a later date than the North-East repertoire in question.

## 5. MOST DIFFUSED ASPECTS

It is not always possible to divide the formal and composition analogies in distinct areas in that sometimes there has been a vast diffusion of graphic expressions, probably transmitted by easily adoptable cultural aspects. A typical example is the Mesolithic bone spatula found in Gaban rockshelter (Fig.4:5) made from a long section of deer bone. The whole length of the artefact is decorated with a bilateral symmetry of short lines. A band of three more or less parallel lines (BROGLIO, 1984; some observations considered here, in MARTINI, 1996) is applied in the centre. This object is important because its composition scheme, composed of different areas, recalls the Centre-South of the Italian peninsula and East Europe. With regard to the peninsula, this scheme fits in with the type of zigzag decorations found on bones during the Final Epigravettian epoch. Repetitive series of short, single, margined, partial or continuous lines and also ladders on the whole of the length of the margins of the artefacts, can be seen in the Polesini, Maritza and Romito caves (GRAZIOSI, 1973). The usable part is not ornate and there is a background frame of simple geometrical figures which create a metopa effect (triangles at Gaban, oblongs at Grotta del Romito) (Fig.4:6).

Graphic and composition similarities can also be found in some Tardiglacial productions in East Europe and particularly in the geometrical-linear iconography of Cuina Turcului in Rumania (Paunescu *et al.*, 1970 in: KOZLOWSKI, 1992; BORONEANT, 1996), related to two dwelling settlements. The most ancient dates between 12000 and 12600 years before and the other to 10125 years ago. These are bone and deer antler artefacts (there is also a spatula from the most recent settlement), decorated with curved lines, zigzags, network patterns, sometimes elaborated and complex (Fig.4:9-10).

A fragment of an ornate awl with casual linear engravings (Fig.4:4) was found in Gaban rockshelter (DALMERI, 1992b, fig.1:1) attributable to the Castelnova school. This object along with other artefacts pointed out by G.Dalmeri at the Gaban rockshelter (Fig.4:3,7-8) are inspired by the geometrical linear schemes mentioned above, adopted locally and elsewhere since the Late Epigravettian period, in South Italy and in West Europe. The Gaban findings are less neat and the basic motifs are only summarily re-elaborated.

This simple, casual figurative production can be associated with other Sauveterre and Castelnova documentation, found both at Gaban, at Romagnano III (Fig.4,9) and at Pradestel, featuring casual, summary and plain linear engravings, with irregular network grooves. An Eastern production that is sometimes similar is the one belonging to some of the complexes of the Rumanian Schela Cladovei Culture (BORONEANT, 1996).

The painted stones of Villabruna-A rockshelter (BROGLIO, 1992; MARTINI, 1995-96) should also be mentioned. This is a unique case in the Italian figurative panorama for its precocious schematic expressions dating back to about 12 thousand years before our time (Fig.2:8-9). The originality of these artistic representations in the Tardiglacial figurative panorama are isolated examples at the moment. It is difficult to hypothesise the cultural and geographic origins of this style. There could be references to other figures of the Late Upper Paleolithic, both in Italy and perhaps in Western Europe, not so much for the signs used, but for the conceptual inspiration of these figures.

As I have already underlined, the (MARTINI, 1995-96:192-) schematism of stone n.2 is based on the use of lines as formal elements (signs): the association of many lines form a figure. This is a fundamental procedure in the use of schematic or "abstract" expressions, where the realistic image of the subject is broken down and then reassembled by means of primary graphic elements (dots, lines) in a drawing. The result can be: a figuration in which the subject can be clearly recognized, as for example in the figure of the bison in the Marsoulas cave<sup>13</sup> whose head is drawn realistically, while the body is made up of a mass of very small dots, painted without an outline. The anthropomorphic stone n.2 of the Villabruna-A shelter is a more mysterious figure. The subject is a human being and can be recognized. Another figure that is more difficult to interpret is the painted slab with "comb pattern" signs at Romanelli cave. These are essential figures and cannot be interpreted, like the ones belonging to the Azilian art.

We are referring to a mental process, widely diffused in all Central Western Europe, localized in regions where the Franco-Cantabria style is present. This is a figurative expression that has not yet been investigated or defined with regard to its spatial and chronological limits.

## 6. CONCLUSIONS

From the result of the comparative analysis proposed, we can come to the conclusion that the iconographic repertoire and the figurative setting of North-East Italian production has comparisons with other European distribution areas. There are clear and indisputable parallels with the Franco-Cantabria culture. Other analogies regarding East Europe and Central Southern Italy repertoires are widely referred to, like long gone echoes, memories of conceptual models or of graphic solutions, which give rise to analogies.

From the comparisons it is understood that cultural aspects were introduced into the artistic figurative

ve sphere of the Eastern Sub-Alpine area. These influences came from various directions and lasted for a long time, often lingering on.

On the basis of absolute and relative dating of the manufacts taken into consideration, two different phases of connections between North-East Italy and other European areas can be schematized. The stylistic and conceptual analogies of the mobile figures dating back to more than 12 thousand years before our time refer to the Franco-Cantabria and Balkan Europe. The more recent repertoire dated less than 12 thousand years before our time and the First Holocene, has similarities that refer to East Europe and South Italy where the "Mediterranean" figure sometimes develops into local standardized iconographic facies.

Therefore, on the basis of the comparisons, the Trento-Veneto area appears to be placed in the circuits of the main graphic expressions that have characterised the late Upper Paleolithic of South Europe, both to the East and to the West of the Alps. The schemes of expression were also adopted (the essential features reveal the original source of inspiration), often re-elaborating them into a local expression.

The above-mentioned analogies therefore imply a vast geographical diffusion of the graphic expressions examined. This is particularly so for the rather elaborate, tidy geometrical linear style of the works, documented at the end of the Tardiglacial and during the First Holocene in South Italy through to East Europe.

However, these parallels, which certainly exist in the formal and conceptual scheme, could be doubted upon because of the distance between the compared areas. This could be justified by the transmission of conceptual models and graphic methods over long distances, consolidating in one common sign a similar ideology of viewpoints.

I believe that this diffusion could be related to homogeneity of the features of the lithic industry. In fact, during the Tardiglacial and the transition to the Holocene, the Central-Eastern area of Mediterranean Europe and partly the Balkans were affected by the cultural Epigravettian *koinè* identified in the highly "Azilianized" complexes (Azilian, Romanellian, Tarnow...), which spread over the Pontic area but which however remained apart from the Eastern Epigravettian of the region (KOZŁOWSKI, 1992). The widespread of this tidy geometric linear composition scheme therefore came about through the capacity of diffusion of the "Azilianized" complexes. This would also explain the vast distances that separated very similar contemporary productions, from the far end of the Mediterranean almost through to the Black Sea. In fact, on the basis of the scarce information available and according to J.Kozłowski, it would seem that in the transition from the middle Danube to the Pontic area and further north to the North of the Black Sea, the Medi-

terranean Epigravettian characters progressively diminish. In the final phase of the Molodova Culture (Black Sea), dated about 12300 and 10600 from present day, the lithic contexts of the Molodova site vaguely perceive the Western Final Epigravettian influence<sup>14</sup>. This is stressed by the presence, amongst other objects, of flat hooks that could derive from the neighbouring areas of distribution of the traditional Epigravettian complexes.

In conclusion, therefore, a formal analogy like the above mentioned one is not necessarily tied to a casual merging of graphic expression but to models inspired within the ideological and figurative Epigravettian Culture which spread in the steppe areas North of the Black Sea. Other figurative expressions have covered long distances. The Azilian production, for example, reached the Alpine area (Terlago), Puglia (Prazziche) and Sicily (Levanzo) from the nuclear area of the Pyrenees, showing how the diffusion of lithic industry characteristics can be transversal.

Another example is attested in the Eastern Sub-Alpine areas, where there are parallels with the Franco-Cantabria art. In fact, even if this Western style presents local expressive aspects, its cosmopolitanism prevails over the regional aspects of the lithic industries of the Tardiglacial. This can be seen in our particular case in the similarities found in some animal engravings of Tagliente rockshelter and in the French Maddalenian figures.

If these analogies are diachronically analysed, it could be hypothesized that the presence of tidy geometric linear schemes in Trentino lingered on after the Tardiglacial period. Along with the conservative tendency there is also a degeneration of the rigid composition, a graphic and syntactic decline, which can be seen in the summarily engraved products of Romagnano III, Pradestel and other artefacts of Gaban rockshelter.

## NOTES

- 1 - In the description of the two artefacts, the indications of the author are followed
- 2 - The industrial context of the two archaeological levels, according to ABRAMOVA (1995:221 and following pages), mainly containing dorsal microlamellae and burins (upper level), dorsal points and lamellae and flaked objects (lower level)
- 3 - Kostienki 1 and Avdevo, the latter dated around 22500 approximately BP; Dobranitchevka dating back to the end of the Upper Paleolithic
- 4 - The date is between 19000-17000 approx. BP
- 5 - Expressed in the same way as J.KOZŁOWSKI (1992) also referring to the Azilian art
- 6 - Kozłowski describes the complexes of the local Shangkoba phase as very "Azilianized" for the presence of short scrapers and Azilian points
- 7 - The bisons of Marsoulas can be seen in: L'Art des Cavernes 1984:447 and following pages

- 8 - Atlas des grottes ornées paléolithiques françaises 1984:400 and the following pages  
 9 - I recall that the chronological position is uncertain in that the three manufactures were found in reworked "pits" in the Mesolithic. A comment on these works also in 1996  
 10 - Stones n.3 (MARTINI, 1992) and n.5 (MARTINI, unpublished data)  
 11 - Riparo Tagliente: LEONARDI, 1984:271, n.1-3; Grotta del Cavallo: stones n.14-15 (MARTINI, unpublished data)  
 12 - Widely distributed in Southern Romanellian, the ladder

- also appears at Polesini (RADMILLI, 1974, fig.28:1) in a different industrial context  
 13 - "L'Art des Cavernes" 1984:449, fig.8  
 14 - It is possible that the definition "Azilian" (with quote marks) that J.Kozłowski often repeats, does not mean an influence with the Pyrenees but rather with the wide cultural tendency (Azilian and Federmesser to the West and North of the Alps, Romanellian in the Italian peninsula, Tarnow more towards East...) regarding the end of the Tardiglacial in some areas of Southern and Central Europe

**SUMMARY** - The figurative production in north-eastern Italy (Trentino and the bordering areas) have the same characteristics as wide ranging iconographic styles. These tendencies were manifested during the Final Epigravettian (Riparo Tagliente) and the Sauveterrian (Riparo Gaban) with regards western and eastern European areas. Other expressions are indicative of local elaborations, which fall within an intermediate stylistic production between Franco-Cantabrian and Mediterranean iconography.

**RIASSUNTO** - Le produzioni figurative in Italia nord-occidentale (Trentino e zone limitrofe) mostrano caratteri talora inseribili in correnti iconografiche di ampia diffusione. Tale tendenza si manifesta nell'Epigravettiano finale (Riparo Tagliente) e nel Sauveterriano (Riparo Gaban) nei confronti di aree europee occidentali e orientali. Altre espressioni sono indicative di rielaborazioni locali, che si configurano in una produzione stilisticamente intermedia tra l'iconografia franco-cantabrica e quella mediterranea.

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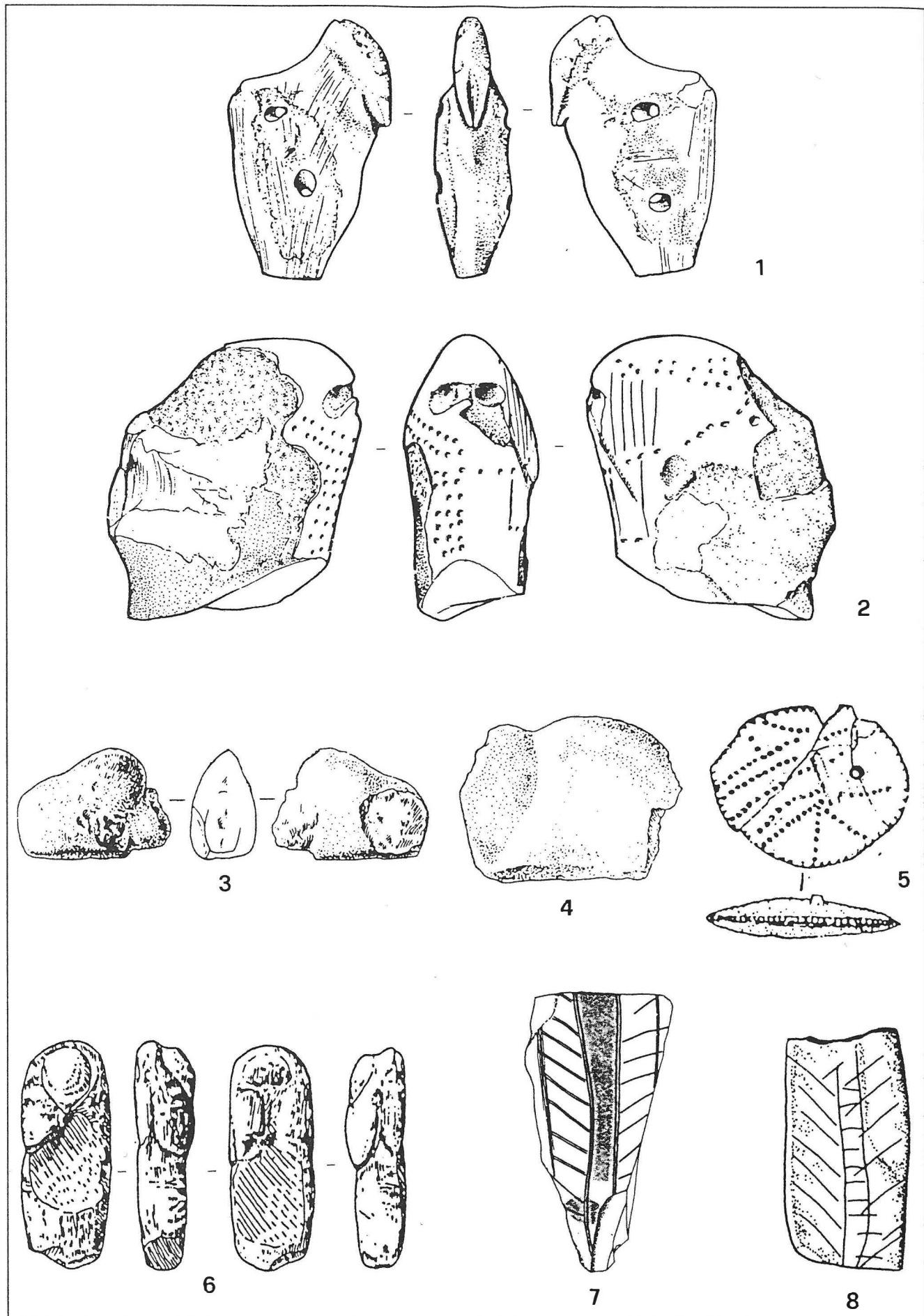


Fig. 1 – 1-2,7) Tagliente rockshelter; 3-4) Kostienki 4; 5-6) Kossoutsy; 8) Balin Kosh (different metric scales)



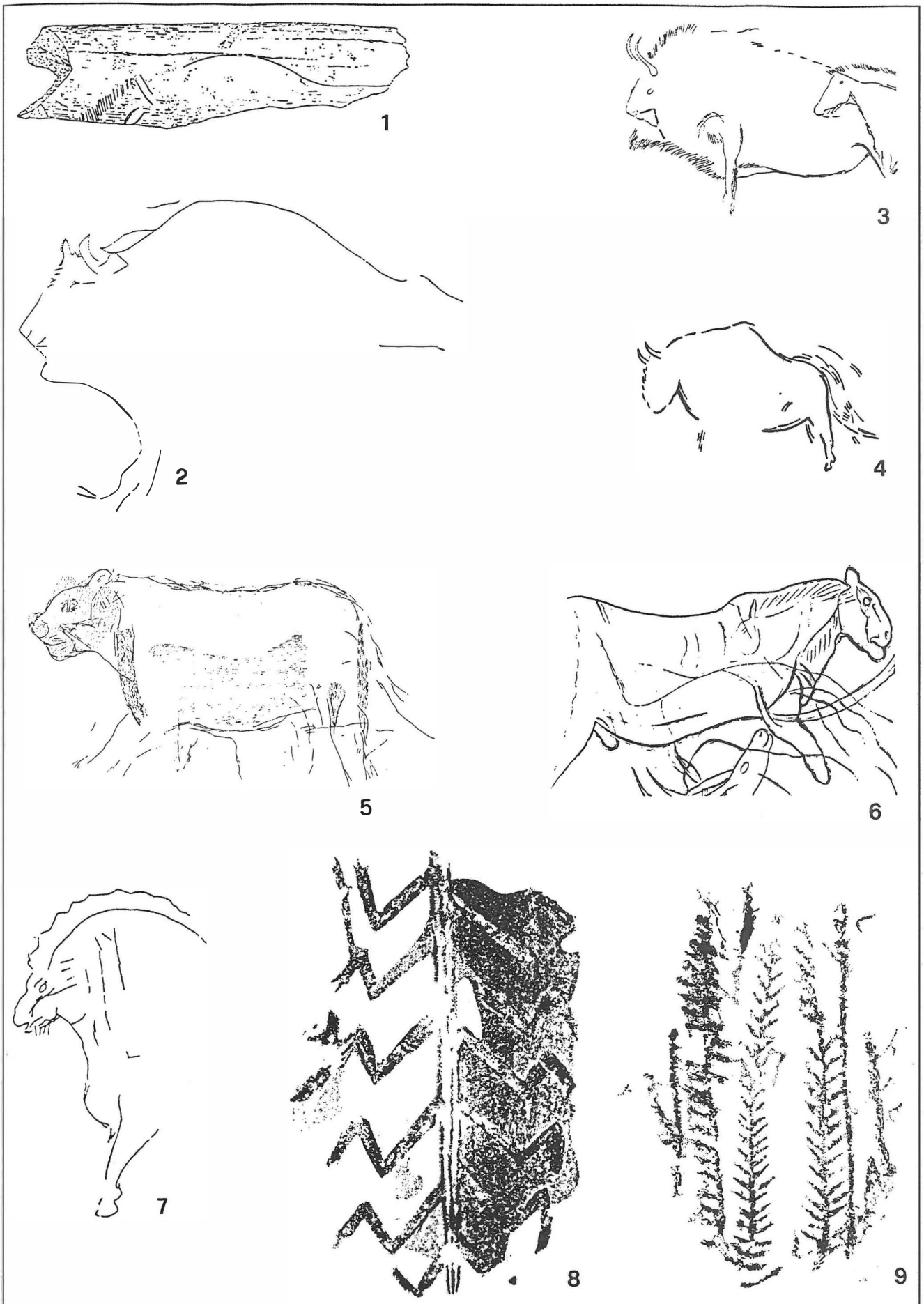


Fig. 2 – 1-2,5,7) Tagliente rockshelter; 3-4) Marsoulas; 6) Combarelles; 8-9) Villabruna-A rockshelter (different metric scales)

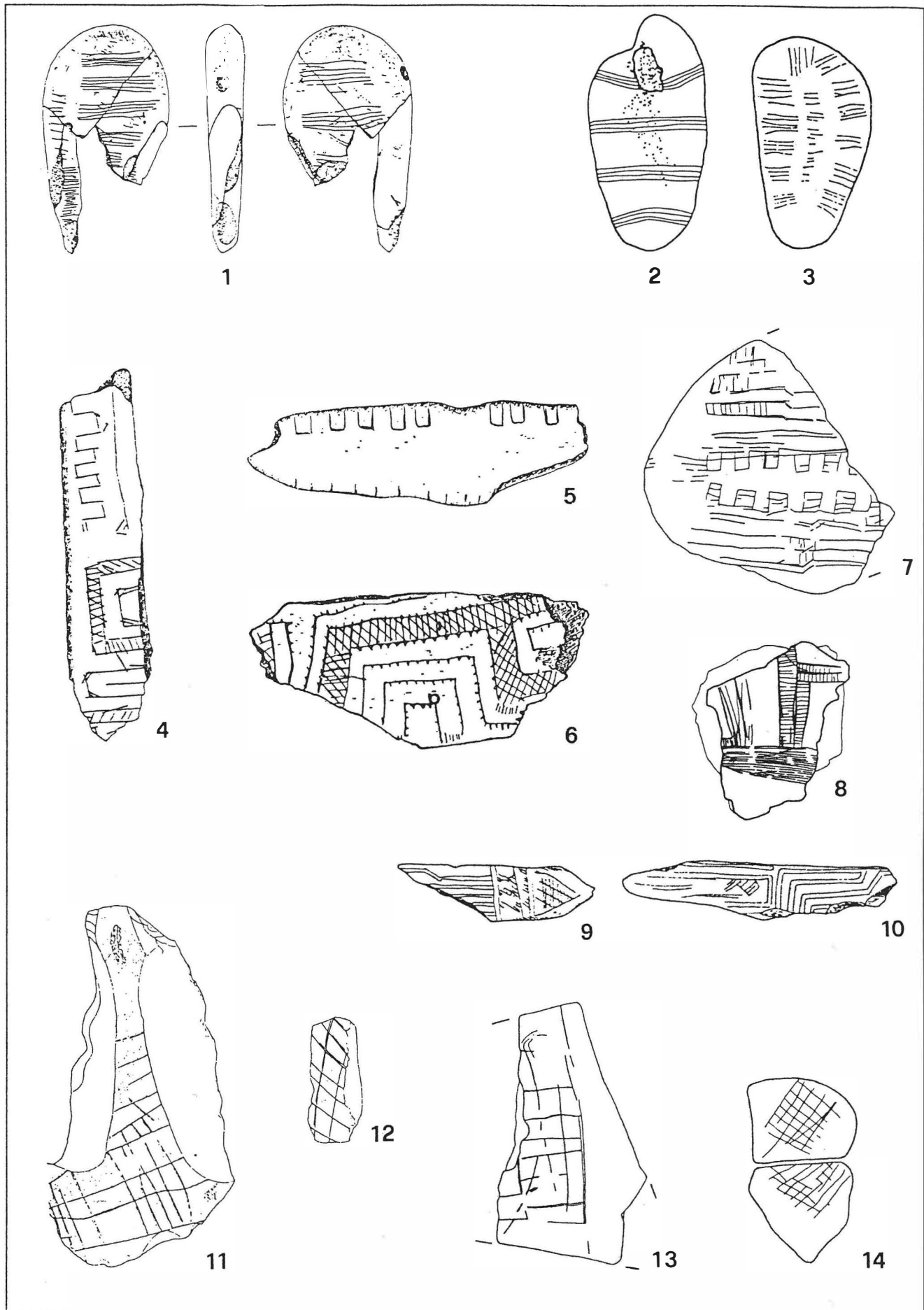


Fig. 3 – 1) Terlago; 2-3) Azilian pebbles; 4,11-12) Tagliente rockshelter; 5-6) Polesini Grotta; 7-8,13-14) Grotta del Cavallo; 9-10) Cuina Turcului (different metric scales)

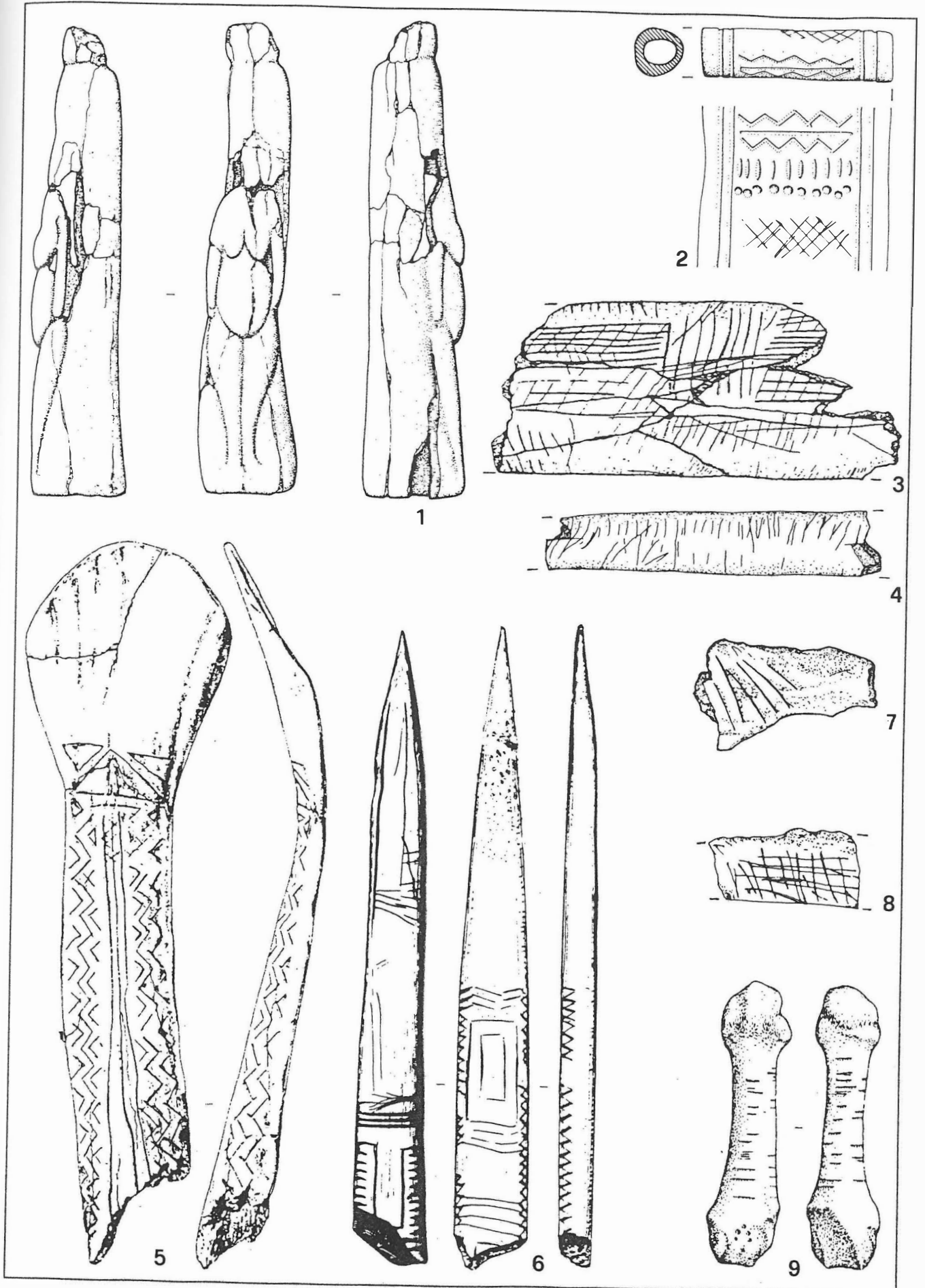


Fig. 4 - 1-5,7-8) Gaban rockshelter; 6) Grotta del Romito; 9) Romagnano III (different metric scales)