

A Neolithic highland dwelling in Rosszähne in the municipality of Vadena

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ABSTRACT - Several findings were discovered during a brief survey. Some of them can be dated back to the late phase of the Square Mouth Pottery Culture, while other cultural influences can be detected in other artefacts. On the whole, with regard to this site, we can confirm the presence of a sequence of phases of occupation with long intervals of absence.

KEY WORDS: Alto Adige, Bassa Atesina, Late Neolithic, Vadena, Pigion, Lithic industry

PAROLE CHIAVE: Alto Adige, Bassa Atesina, Tardo Neolitico, Vadena, Pigion, Industria litica

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Monte di Mezzo stretches from Castel Firmiano to Gmund across the lower part of the Adige valley (Fig. 1); to the East its towering rocky cliffs dominate the Adige valley below, whereas to the West its slopes gently wind their way down towards the extended basin of the valley beyond the Adige river. The Kreither Sattel divides the Monte di Mezzo in two, the northern and the southern part and is a good passage way from Vadena to Caldaro Lake. The northern part is mainly composed of porphyry while the southern part is composed of articulate vulcanite formations similar to those of Castelchiaro hill, the Roßzähne and the nearby mountain pass of Gmund and towards South-East reaches the Adige valley at the Gmund ridge (Fig. 2).

The research area subject to investigation is composed of tufaceous vulcanite divided in wide clefts of massive pillars and slabs, the aspect of which has determined the toponym of Roßzähne. Along with the numerous archaeological sites of the lower Adige valley and precisely of the area beyond the River Adige, another very interesting site has been spotted above Pigion in the southern area of the Roßzähne. The site is to be found on a rocky buttress (Fig. 3), which stands out from the

ridge overlooking the Adige valley and which skirts it a little further down.

Here there is a small basin, which towards North-East, forms a narrow valley at the bottom of which there are great masses of crumbled rock. Here there is a sequence of narrow passages and wider areas as well as some shelters.

Even though it is still accessible on foot, this valley descends steeply towards East to the Adige valley. Towards North, the 30-50m steep rock faces tower above interrupted only by a tier of small plains and towards south the above mentioned 20m buttress rises high and is only accessible from two directions.

During a brief survey six almond-shaped spearheads (Fig. 4), a broken arrowhead and a fragment of flintstone blade as well as other atypical ceramic fragments were discovered on a 30x30cm site (OBERRAUCH, 1996). Later, during a small excavation conducted on the top of the mountain by the Soprintendenza Provinciale di Bolzano, other findings were discovered: a hearth together with ceramic and flint were found near a sort of shelter.

Some of the potsherds and maybe even the six almond-shaped arrowheads can be dated back

to the late phase of the Square Mouth Pottery Culture, while other cultural influences can be detected in other artefacts, as for example in a fragment of a fine piece of ceramic with a horizontal hold featuring vertical holes.

This type of small grip is common in the ceramic containers of Lagozza and a well-known example is the one of the Johanneskofel Complex (NIEDERWANGER, 1984; LUNZ, 1986).

As well as a "saddle" millstone with a muller (Fig. 6) there was a bifacial retouch arrow-head and tang (Fig. 5) dating back to the Remedello Culture.

A similar sample is the one found in the Early Neolithic site of S.Giacomo in Augia and interpreted as a sporadic Eneolithic finding (NIEDERWANGER, 1988).

Some ceramic similar to the bell-shaped culture was found in the sheltered hearth and can be compared to the Begleit-Keramik of the bell-shape culture of the site 2a of Monte Mezzana near Terlagio (BAGOLINI *et al.*, 1985), a site which presents obvious similarities to ours.

On the whole, with regard to this site, we can confirm the presence of a sequence of phases of occupation with long intervals of absence.

SUMMARY - Several findings were discovered during a brief survey. Some of them can be dated back to the late phase of the Square Mouth Pottery Culture, while other cultural influences can be detected in other artefacts. On the whole, with regard to this site, we can confirm the presence of a sequence of phases of occupation with long intervals of absence.

RIASSUNTO - Nel comune di Vadena, su di uno sperone roccioso che fa parte dei Roßzähne sul Monte di Mezzo, durante un piccolo sondaggio vennero alla luce punte di lancia a mandorla, una punta di freccia spezzata e un frammento di lama di selce, come pure alcuni frammenti ceramici atipici. In occasione di uno scavo successivo vennero individuati altri reperti ceramici e litici attribuibili all' ultima fase del VBQ, come pure alla cultura di Lagozza. Oltre ad una macina a sella con macinello sarebbe da menzionare ancora una cuspidi di freccia con ritocco piano bifacciale e codolo, da mettere in relazione con la cultura di Remedello. Da un focolare in un riparo sottostante proviene della ceramica che possiamo paragonare alla Begleit-Keramik del campaniforme del sito 2a del Monte Mezzana presso Terlagio. Complessivamente possiamo affermare, che ci troviamo di fronte ad una sequenza di più fasi di frequentazione, intervallate da lunghi momenti di abbandono.

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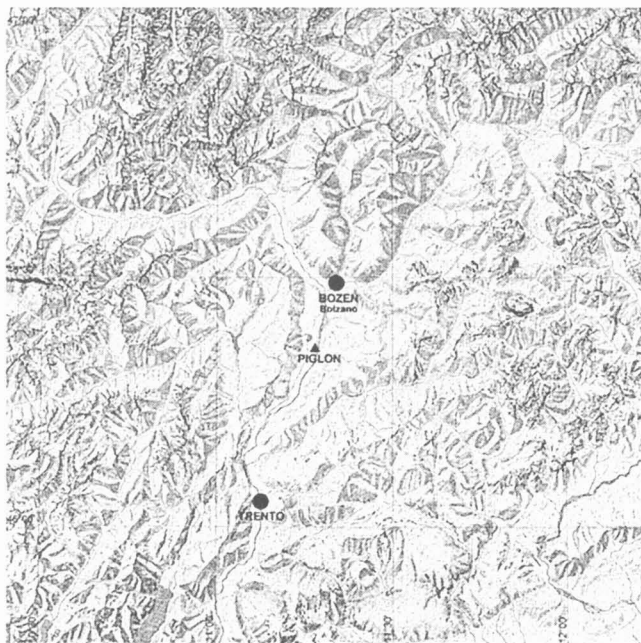


Fig. 1 - Geographic position of the site

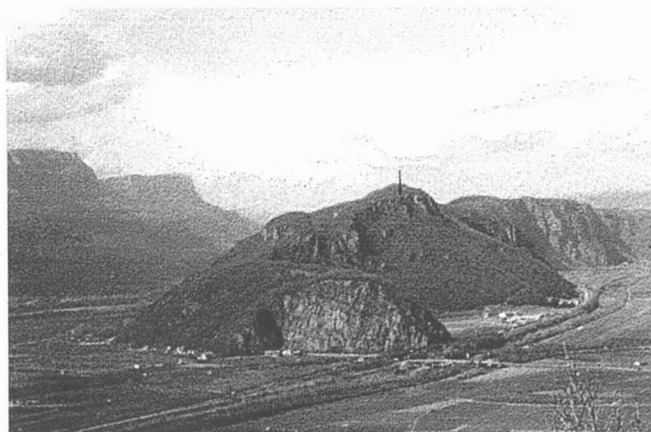


Fig. 2 - Monte di Mezzo / Mitterberg: The southern part of the "Roßzähne" with the Late Neolithic site on the "Pigloner Kopf"



Fig. 3 - View of the rocky butress "Pigloner Kopf" overlooking the Adige valley

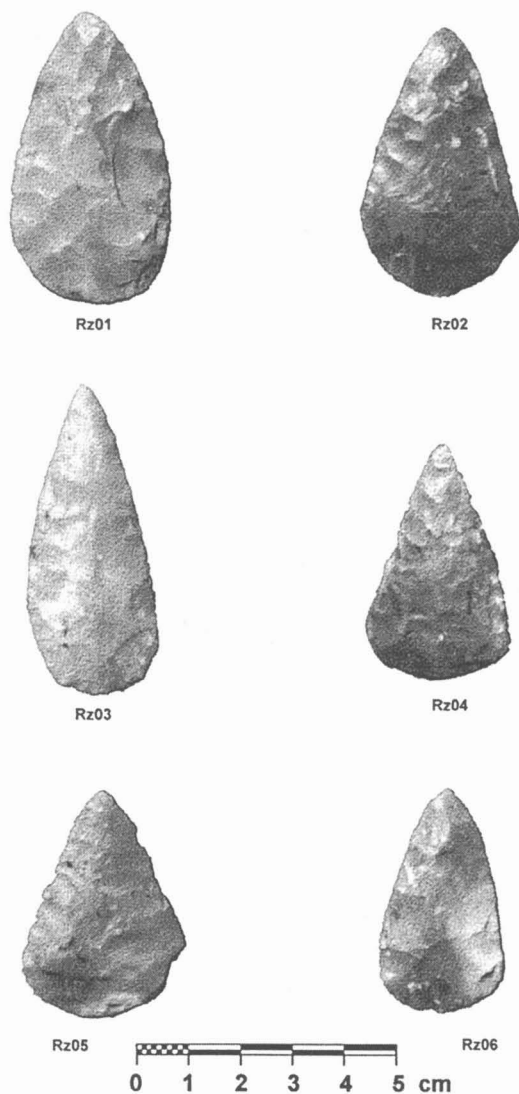


Fig. 4 - The lithic industry: almond-shaped bifacial retouched spearheads (scale 2:3)



Fig. 5 - The lithic industry: bifacial retouched arrowheads and tang (scale 2:3)

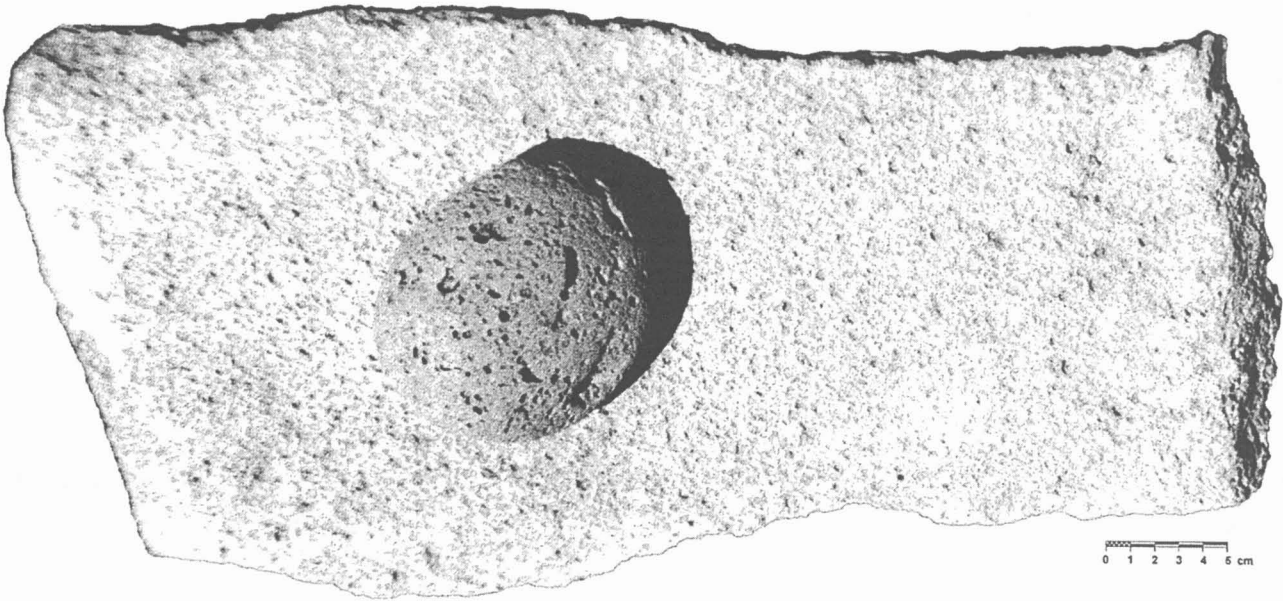


Fig. 6 - "Saddle" millstone with a muller (scale 1:3)