

## Valcamonica, visit the *Great Rock!*

Surfing over the Naquane *Great Rock* (virtual tour)

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October 9, 2020: on the occasion of the *European Day of Rock Art*<sup>1</sup> (*European Heritage Days*), it is a real pleasure to invite enthusiasts and scholars to visit the *Great Rock* of Naquane in Valcamonica and to surf over it.

During these coronavirus days, traveling abroad is subject to many restrictions; it is not easy to reach Italy from overseas, not easy to visit the beautiful Naquane Park in Valcamonica, one of the most interesting European rock art sites, where over 100 rocks are populated by tens of thousands of engraved prehistoric figures.

Even if the Park is open to visitors, there is a shortcut: you may enjoy an online free visit. Just find the door, open it with a click, click again inside and enter the virtual tour of the



How-to video 1: entering the NAQ1 Virtual Tour ([http://www.rupestre.net/tracce/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/NAQ1\\_01\\_enter.mp4?\\_f=1](http://www.rupestre.net/tracce/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/NAQ1_01_enter.mp4?_f=1))

*Great Rock* of the Naquane Rock Art National Park, the most richly engraved in the whole Park: it is also known as *Rock One*, and coded NAQ1. The virtual tour works both on PCs and on smartphones; the PC screen is larger, anyway. A tip: activate fullscreen by clicking on F11. Valcamonica and the *Naquane Park* kindly invites you to join. The tour is free, open 7 days a week and 24 hours a day, online at <http://www.europreart.net/NAQ1>

You are welcome! Come and visit it, you can come back as many times as you want.

### WHAT CAN YOU DO

You can take a general look at the *Great Rock*, observe the landscape, admire the surrounding snow-capped peaks of the Valcamonica mountains...

You can move along the wooden walkways just as if you were visiting the *Great Rock* at the *Naquane Park*, you can closely observe the rich engraved surface, discover every detail of its figures and scenes, navigate among the sectors by moving like a bird's eye, approaching and moving away at will.

<sup>1</sup> The *Council of Europe* and the *European Commission* have set this date as a tribute to the anniversary of the "conversion" of Émile Cartailhac, which can be considered as a symbol for the recognition of cave art. The French prehistorian, during the 1880 Lisbon *International Congress of Prehistoric Anthropology and Archaeology*, had denied the authenticity of the Altamira cave paintings. Twenty-two years after, only after having personally visited Altamira in September-October 1902 with Henri Breuil, who recorded the paintings, Cartailhac finally recognized its authenticity. See his letter to M. Gustave Chauvet, October 9th 1902:

Querido amigo: El Abad Breuil y yo deseáramos que estuviera usted aquí, en la cueva de Altamira. Es la más hermosa, la más extraña, la más interesante de todas las cavernas con pinturas. Desde hace ocho días está copiando el abad estos bisontes prehistóricos, estos caballos, estos ciervos, estos jabalíes, todos tan asombrosos. Ya tiene un gran número de espléndidos dibujos y cientos de copias en colores. Vivimos en un mundo nuevo (MADARIAGA DE LA CAMPA 1972: 83).



How-to video 2: panning and zooming  
([http://www.euopreart.net/NAQ1/video/NAQ1\\_02\\_navigate.mp4?\\_=2](http://www.euopreart.net/NAQ1/video/NAQ1_02_navigate.mp4?_=2))



How-to video 3: opening NAQ1 areas and sectors  
([http://www.euopreart.net/NAQ1/video/NAQ1\\_03\\_discover.mp4?\\_=3](http://www.euopreart.net/NAQ1/video/NAQ1_03_discover.mp4?_=3))



How-to video 4: detailed pictures and tracings  
([http://www.euopreart.net/NAQ1/video/NAQ1\\_04\\_sectors.mp4?\\_=4](http://www.euopreart.net/NAQ1/video/NAQ1_04_sectors.mp4?_=4))

The whole surface has recently been traced and studied by the rupestrian archaeologist who is writing this paper, under a research program of Milan and Pisa Universities and the authorization of the Archaeological Superintendence.

Shootings were made in winter, when the grazing light of the sun shows the figures with greater evidence. Contact tracings were made by hand, re-

producing on transparent plastic the texture of the engraved figures and their overlaps.

Therefore, while surfing on the *Great Rock*, you have a choice: you can admire it live, as if you were holding a camera with a powerful zoom, or you can discover all the details of the engraved figures by observing the tracing, which highlights them. There is more: to discover each detail even better, you can activate the sync surfing; on the left half of the screen you will see the photographic view, on the right half the tracing; every movement or zoom action, controlled by the mouse and its wheel, it is synchronized and takes place in a combo double window.

The engraved sectors are twenty-two; the pecked figures over two thousand. This virtual tour model is in the demo version: the photographic close-up view is active for almost all sectors, while tracings and related sync combo windows are available for 5 sectors out of 22. The complete model, which has already been done, will be available to scholars.

The navigation within the virtual tour is controlled by iconic buttons, whose functions are illustrated by the “HELP” window. If you click on the small cube on the left, you will activate the 3D models, whose movement and lighting can be controlled online, thanks to the 3DHOP interface created by ISTI CNR.

The surface of NAQ1 is very regular, almost a flat board; for this reason, the best performing 3D models are the photometric ones, where each pixel of the photographic shots becomes a referenced vertex. Thanks to the help of Paolo Emilio Bagnoli, professor of photonics and optoelectronics at the Pisa University, some photometric 3D models of the most interesting figures and scenes of the *Great Rock* were produced; they are all available and “surfable” interactively within the virtual tour. 3D photogrammetric models (SFM-structure from motion technique) are also included.

You may find more details about the *Great Rock*, its research history, and the virtual tour in the related paper of this TRACCE issue. If you want to learn more about Valcamonica rock art, how to study, and to document it you can join its annual fieldwork: all the information is available in the previous TRACCE issues.



## VALCAMONICA ROCK ART IN 20 MINUTES

You may also take a look over *Valcamonica Rock Art in 20 minutes*<sup>2</sup>, a series of online videos (lessons, conferences, and didactic activities) held online by expert archaeologists, scholars in the field, and teachers.

So, feel comfortable in your home, and start your virtual journey inside Naquane and Valcamonica rock art: <http://www.euopreart.net/NAQ1>

Take advantage of this extraordinary opportunity to know a fascinating prehistoric cultural heritage, the first of Italy included in the UNESCO world heritage list, more than 40 years ago. It will come in handy when you will visit Valcamonica in person, its nature, its monuments, the *Naquane Park*, and its magnificent engraved rocks.

Hopefully soon, very soon!

(English proofreading by Marisa D. GIORGI)

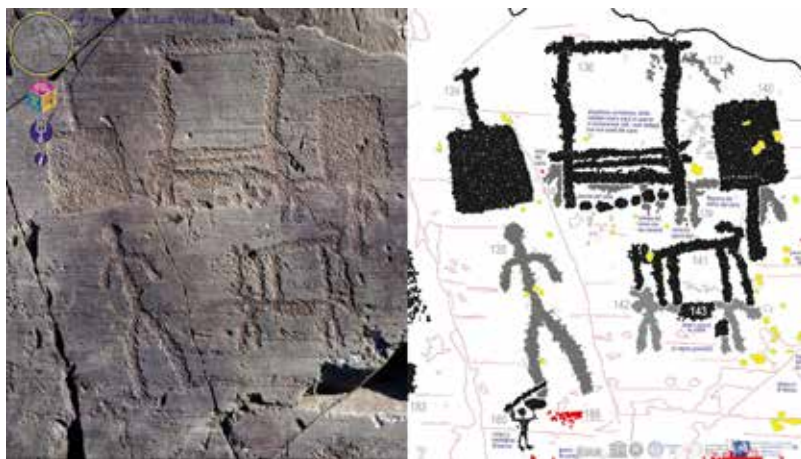
MADARIAGA DE LA CAMPA B. 1972. *Hermilio Alcalde del Río. Una Escuela de Prehistoria en Santander, Santander.*

### MAIN LINKS (last accessed on 18/10/2020)

- Naquane *Great Rock*, virtual tour (spherical pano-photo, hi-res tracing, 3D models) <http://www.euopreart.net/NAQ1>
- Naquane, Valcamonica, the *Great Rock* (TRACCE paper) <http://www.rupestre.net/tracce/?p=13573>
- Naquane *Great Rock*, research history (video presentation) <https://youtu.be/GumlldAOI9E>
- Naquane *Great Rock*, methods of recording (video presentation) <https://youtu.be/YI6WBsynBhI>



Valcamonica Rock Art in 20 minutes (<http://www.rupestre.net/valcamonica20min>)



NAQ1 virtual tour, weaving scene, photo-tracing sync surfing (photo and tracings AA)



*Great Rock*, research history, video presentation (*Valcamonica Rock Art in 20 minutes* series) <https://youtu.be/GumlldAOI9E>



*Great Rock*, the methods of recording, video presentation (*Valcamonica Rock Art in 20 minutes* series) <https://youtu.be/YI6WBsynBhI>

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.rupestre.net/valcamonica20min>

