

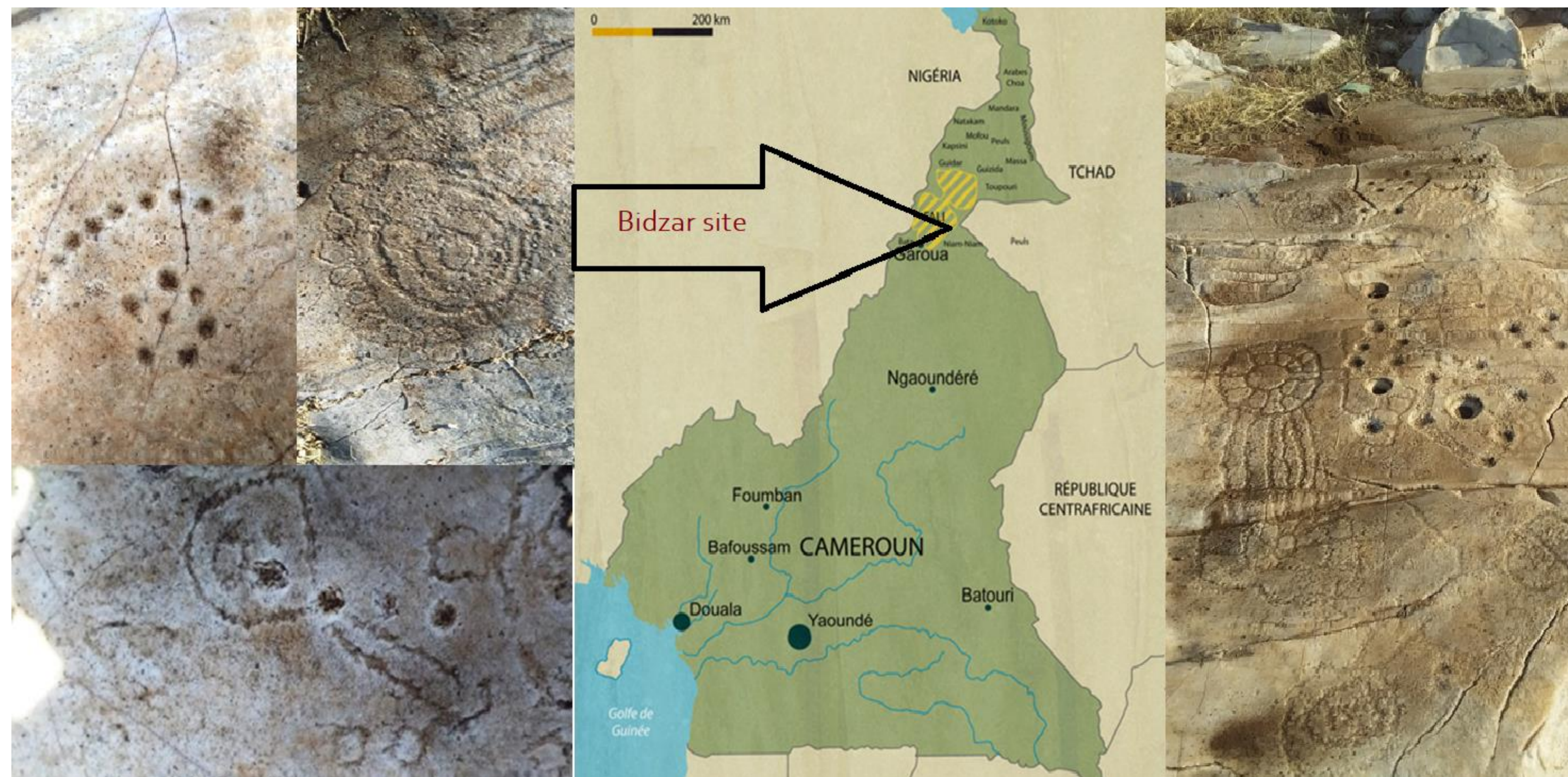
THE ENGRAVINGS OF BIDZAR ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITE

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Discovered in 1933 by E. M. Buisson, Bidzar is the first recognized rock art site in Cameroon. An exceptional major fact characterizes the engravings of Bidzar: The style and the forms of representations are not known anywhere else in Cameroon and even in Africa. The engravings present abstract geometric figures repeated concentrically (MARLIAC, 1981).

An anthropomorphic figure was identified on the site in 2021 after an expanded prospecting. The interest of the site was signaled in 1970 by the team of the Office for Scientific and Technical Research Overseas (ORSTOM).

- Bidzar is situated in the north of Cameroon. The climate of the region is Sudano-Sahelian, it is semi-arid.
- The site covers an area of 2.5km² and has around 500 engravings. Bidzar is today the rock art site which concentrates the greatest number of figures in Cameroon.
- The engravings appear in groups on slab surfaces, ranging from a simple pattern to a superposition or association of patterns. These abstract figures highlight circular combinations.
- Arcuate and circular holes represent rock games called (Dawa) in the local language.
- The classification of the site and its inscription on the UNESCO World Heritage Tentative List were made in 2006 after Cameroon ratified the 1972 UNESCO Convention on World Cultural and Natural Heritage in 1982.



Documentary sources:

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Period of realization

According to the paleogeographic studies, the period of the realization of the Bidzar engravings would be between 300 and 3000 years ago (MARLIAC, 1981).

State of conservation of the engravings

The activities of the mining companies that exploit the raw material on the site and in the surrounding area cause serious damage to the engravings which are already suffering from several other anthropogenic and natural factors of degradation.

Suggestions

The strengthening of site protection measures by the state of Cameroon and by the local communities.

The multiplication of scientific work and publications on the site.