

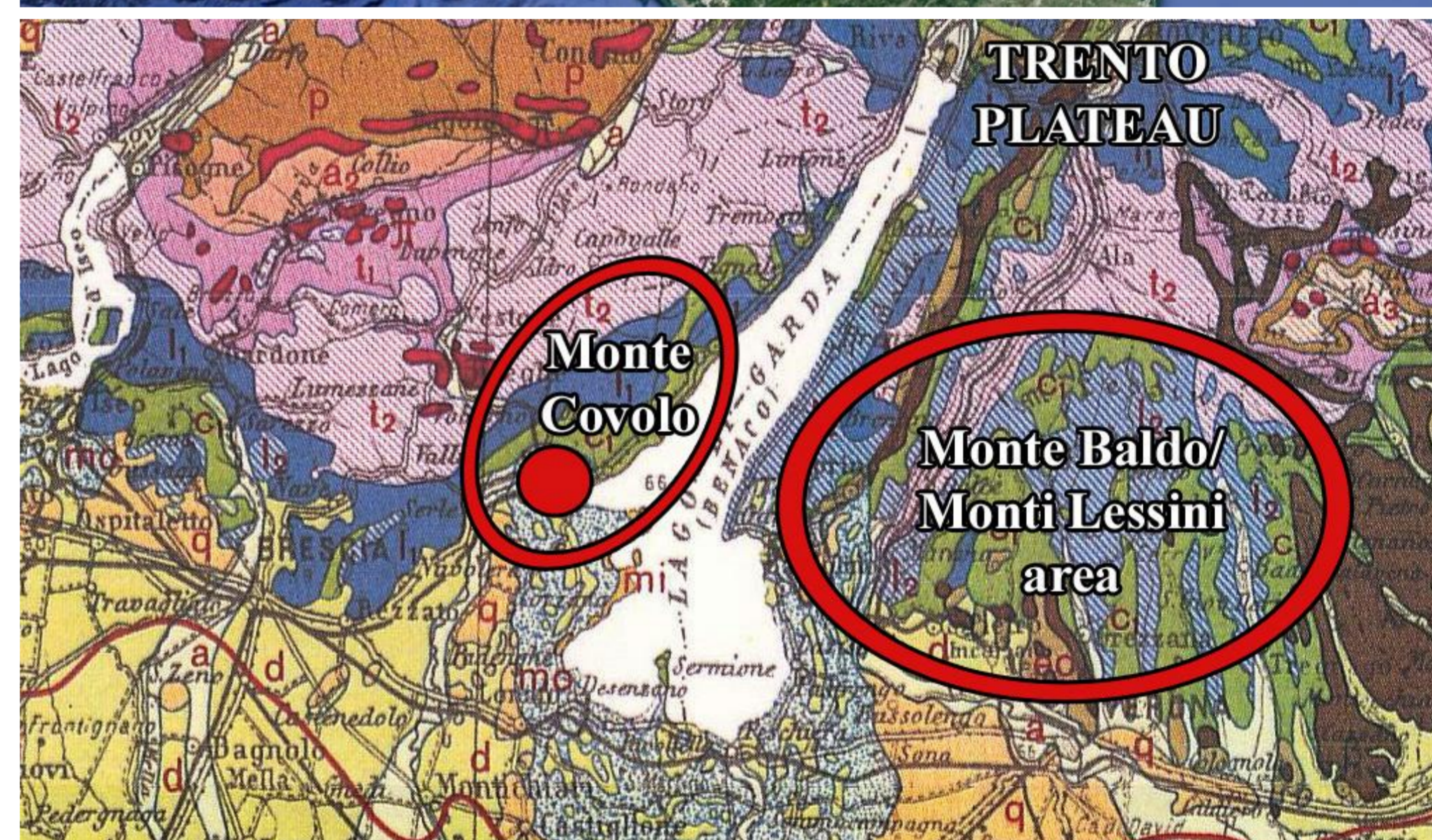
Local tradition and Bell Beaker innovations in lithic production of Monte Covolo (Villanuova sul Clisi, Brescia)

Monte Covolo is located near Lake Garda, in the municipality of Villanuova sul Clisi (Brescia). The site presents a stratigraphic sequence from Late Neolithic until Bronze Age.

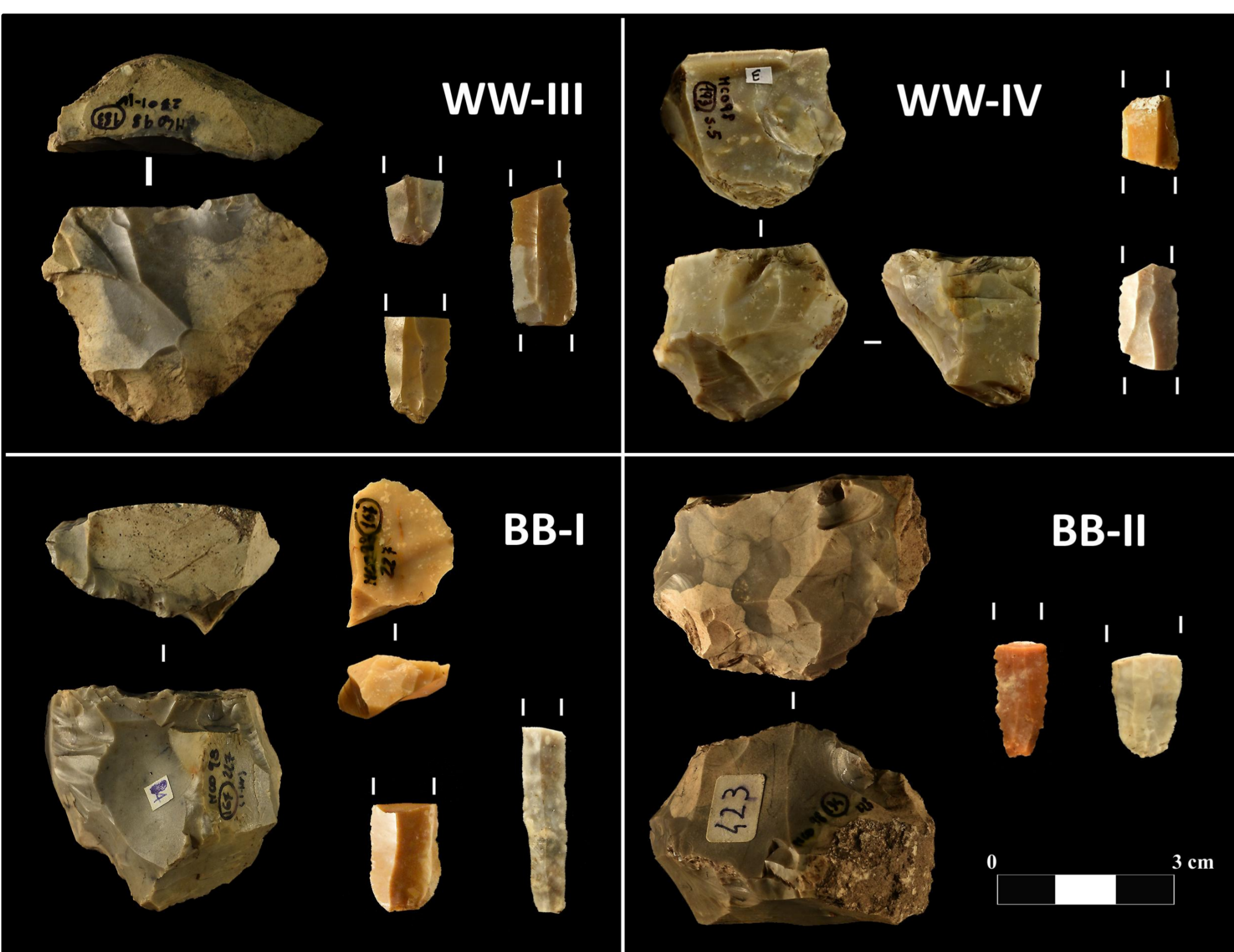
Lithic productions of two phases of local Pre-Bell Beaker (White Ware-phases III and IV) and to two phases of Early Bell Beaker (Bell Beaker-phases I and II) show similar features although a few differences between Pre-Bell Beaker and Bell Beaker lithic productions can be observed.

Supply strategy is based on the exploitation of local raw materials (mostly Concesio cherts). However, the exploitation of high-quality flints from Monte Baldo/Monti Lessini area, distant several tens of kilometres from the site, is also attested; these flints represent more than 20% both in White Ware and Bell Beaker phases. A different management of raw materials is observed: high-quality flints from Baldo/Lessini area are often employed for the production of regular blades and bladelets and for making specialized tools.

Débitage is mostly simple and not organised. The main aim of knapping activities is the production of small flakes, generally ranging in size from 15 to 30 mm, knapped by hard hammer direct percussion (sometimes with anvil) or, more rarely, by soft hammer direct percussion.



Location of the site of Monte Covolo and of supply areas of raw materials

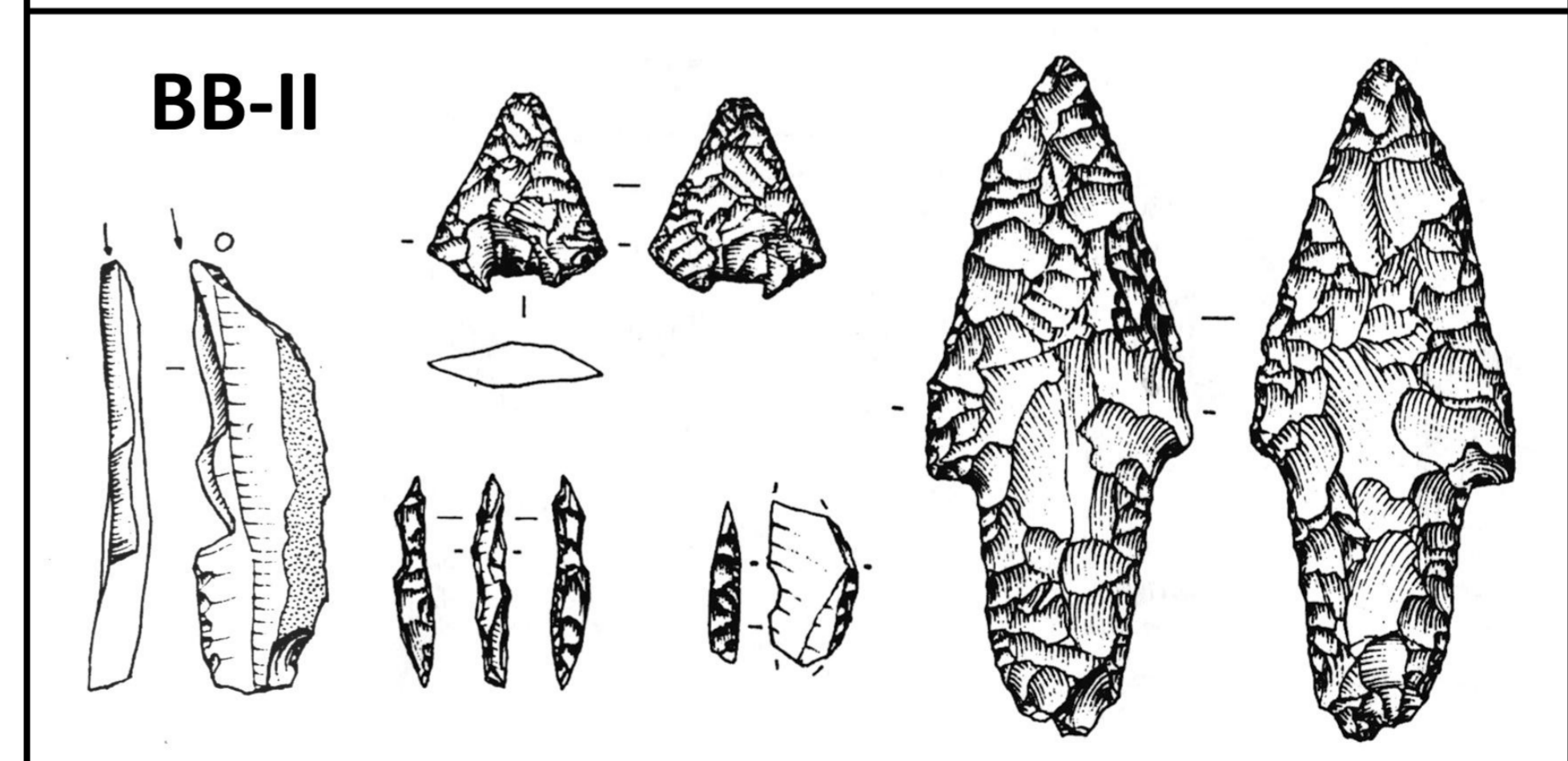
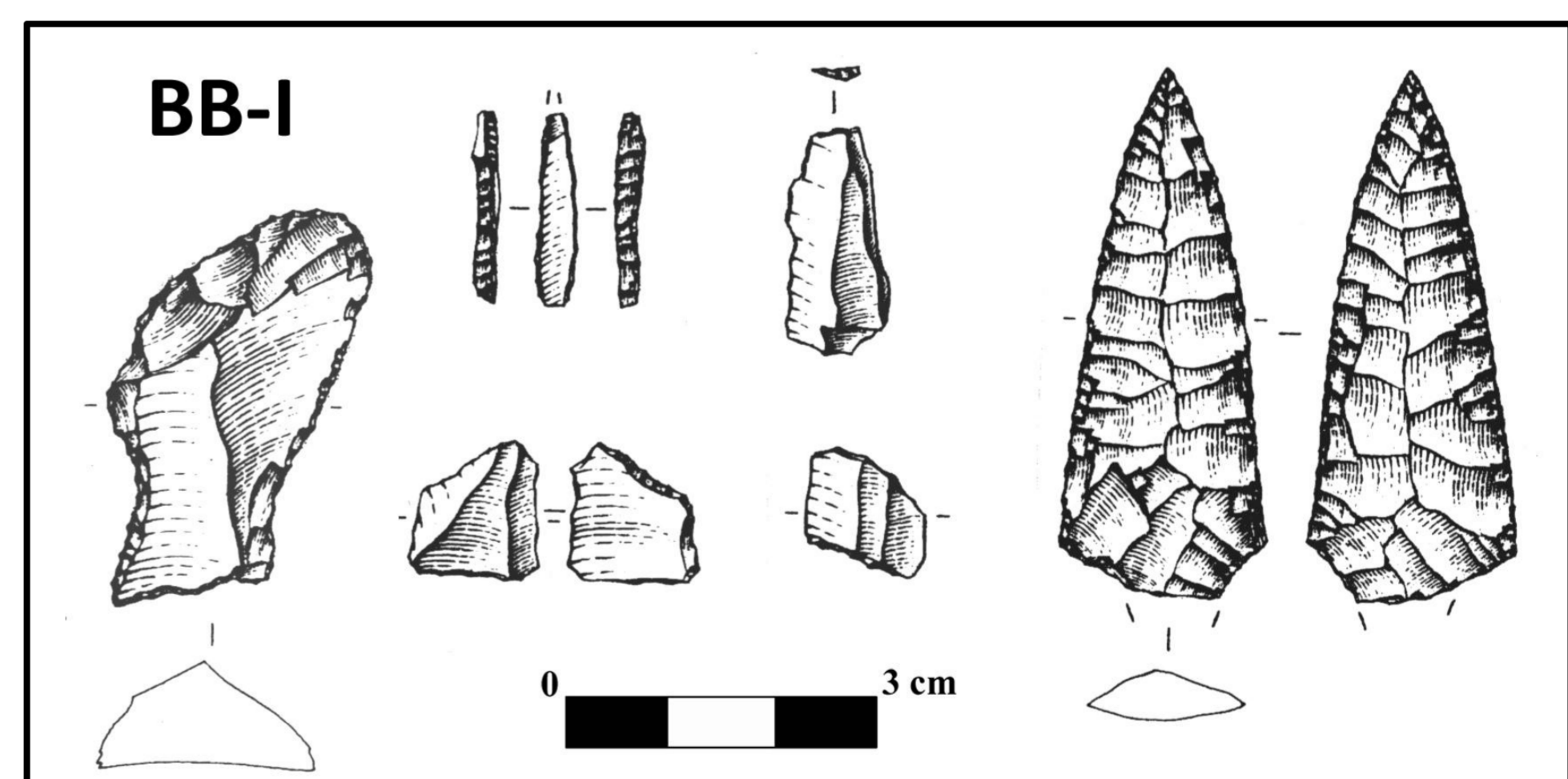


Lithic production of White Ware-phases III and IV and Bell Beaker-phases I and II

The Pre-Bell Beaker and Bell Beaker toolkits show a great variety of tool types (burins, endscrapers, truncations, different types of arrowheads, backed tools, geometrics...). In Bell Beaker-phases I and II there are tools typical of local tradition (e.g. microlithic crescents) but also tools which represent Bell Beaker innovations: hollow-based arrowheads (typical of Eastern Bell Beaker complexes) and bilateral microlithic backed points.

In conclusion, apart from certain elements representing Bell Beaker innovations (specific types of tools and perhaps regular blades and bladelets with faceted butts), that appear especially in Bell Beaker-phase II, Bell Beaker domestic lithic production of Monte Covolo, and more generally of Lombardy, shows strong links with local tradition, both techno-economically and typologically, thus displaying the importance of local component in the emergence and development of Bell Beaker phenomenon in this region.

A bladelets production on site is attested. Except for White Ware-phase IV (where bladelets are about 2%), in the other industries of Monte Covolo these items represent 6-8%. Most of them are regular ones and knapped by pressure and sometimes indirect percussion technique. In White Ware-phases III and IV and in Bell Beaker-phase I regular bladelets have plain butts and overhangs preparation, whereas in Bell Beaker-phase II items with faceted butts are present. Regular bladelets with faceted butts are also attested in other Bell Beaker sites of Northern Italy, such as Brescia-San Polo (more or less contemporary to Bell Beaker-phase II of Monte Covolo).



Bell Beaker toolkit of phases I and II (Lo Vetro 2003)