

Ahlat (Turchia): prime osservazioni sui sistemi idrici rupestri

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Riassunto

Con i pochi dati a disposizione acquisiti nella prima spedizione condotta nel 2007 nel sito archeologico di Ahlat (Turchia orientale) si tenta una ricostruzione preliminare dei sistemi idrici rupestri e sotterranei a servizio, probabilmente, della città storica, di epoca selgiuchide e dei contigui insediamenti rupestri. Si ritiene che tali opere non servissero tanto ad approvvigionare la città, edificata in una conca attraversata dal torrente principale, e dunque con buona disponibilità idrica, quanto a consentire l'irrigazione degli ampi terrazzamenti circostanti, posti a quote più elevate, e/o a fornire di acqua corrente specifici edifici, come i bagni pubblici.

PAROLE CHIAVE: Ahlat, Van, Turchia, Armenia, acquedotti, idraulica, rupestre, sotterraneo.

Abstract

AHLAT (TURKEY): PRELIMINARY REMARKS ON THE ROCKY HYDRIC SYSTEMS

In 2007, following an invitation by the Gazi Universities of Ankara, we performed a preliminary survey on the rocky settlements in the archeological site of Ahlat, Lake Van, Eastern Turkey. The archeological investigations have shown that the area, placed at an average altitude of 2000 m on the sea level, is mostly formed by pyroclastic deposits. The abundant torrent-like waters, with a regressive action, have given origin to many deep valleys with cross sections in the form of terraces. In this ambient many civilizations appeared one after the other, among which the Urartians (IX century b.C.), the Armenians (from 500 b.C. till the beginning of the XX cent.); Persians, Romans, Byzantines, Arabs; the Mongols (XIII/XV cent.); the Seljuk Turks and, afterwards, the Ottoman Turks from the year 1071. The inhabitants of these places have carried out, beside masonry buildings, rocky sites of various type: settlements, cult rooms, hydraulic works.

Even if we have few data at our disposal, in this paper we try a preliminary diachronic description of the construction and abandonment phases of the ancient works, rocky and underground, for water transport; of the reasons for their use, and of their relations with modern canalizations. We believe that these works were not made to supply the ancient Seljuk town, built in a hollow crossed by the main stream and therefore well provided with water, but rather to irrigate the wide nearby terraces, placed at a higher level, and/or to supply with running water specific buildings, like public baths.

KEY WORDS: Ahlat, Van, Turkey, Armenia, waterworks, hydraulics, rocky, underground.