

FACTORS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE LOCATION AND FOR THE STABILITY CONDITIONS OF THE MAN ROCKY SETTLEMENTS IN APULIA (ITALY).

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The need for living in caverns felt since the Middle Ages (VI - VIII century a. C.) in most Mediterranean Countries (Turkey, Greece, Algeria, Spain, etc.) is to be ascribed to particular social - economical conditions as well as policies occurred after the fall of the Roman Empire. Local people, in order to survive, were obliged to hide themselves in places which had to be hard to be detected. Only this way could they escape barbarian invasions, iconoclastic persecution, etc. In Italy said need developed only in Southern regions (Apulia, Sicily, Basilicata). The rocky settlements of man in Apulia, though little known, have a great importance among those of the whole Mediterranean basin. Since Apulia offered a favourable habitat people settled there (35 settlements found till now), thus originating a Rocky Civilisation. All such places are located at the edge of the Mesozoic calcareous platform, that Apulia is made up of, along a narrow but long strip where quaternary calcarenite deposits outcrop. The peculiar character of the Apulian settlements is also because they host a considerable cultural heritage. Many of them have been dwelled from the VI - VII century a. C. up today and some of them have become real troglodytic cities inserted in modern facilities. Researches aimed at: determining the influence of the geological environment on the location and on the space - time development of the rocky sites; finding causes responsible for the actual stability conditions of the rocky structures. The present work will report all results obtained during the investigation.