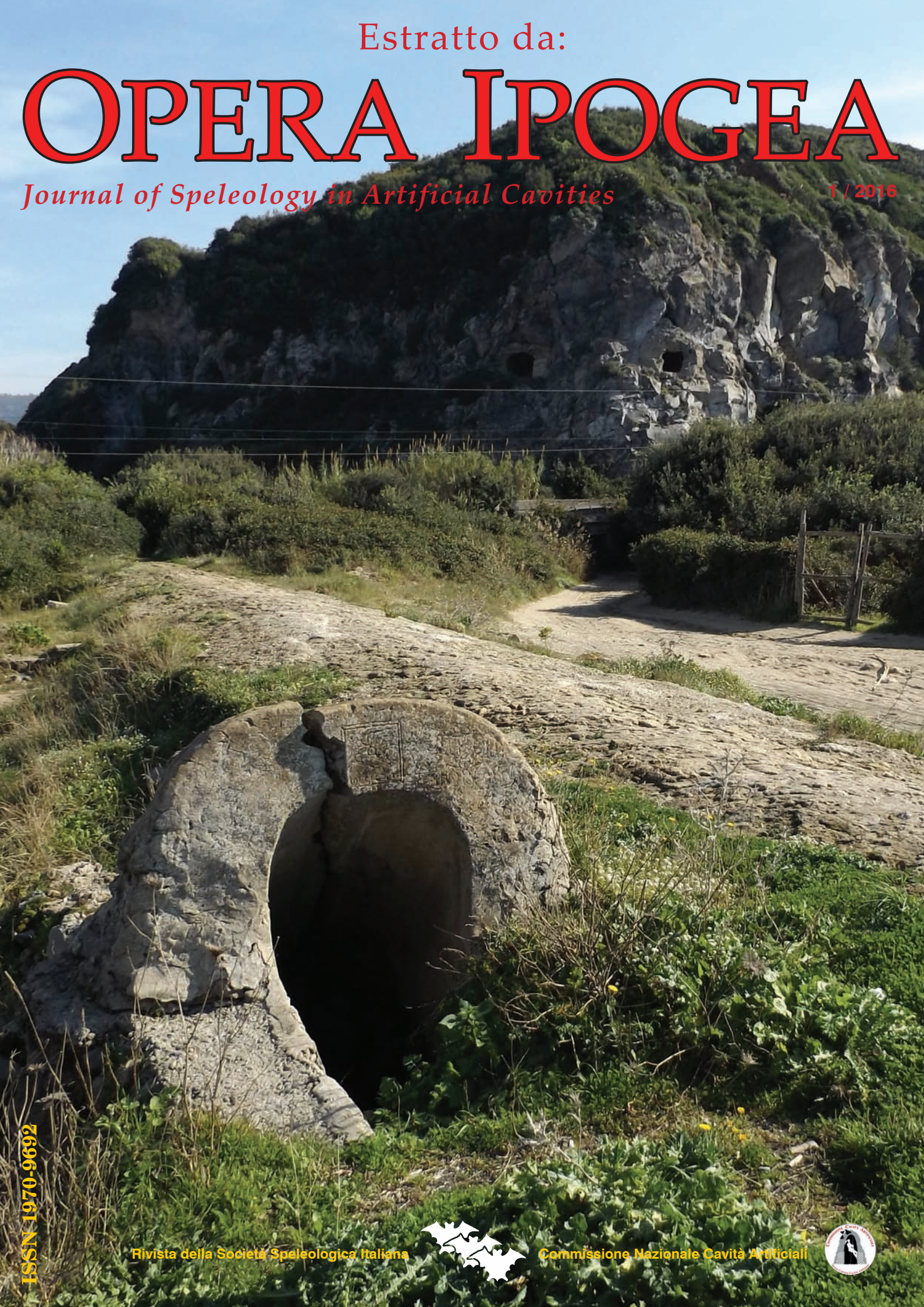


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Underground shelters of Golgoli (Cappadocia - Turkey)

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Abstract

The region known today with its ancient name as “Cappadocia” includes the Turkish provinces of Nevsehir, Aksaray and Kayseri. In this region, different underground structures such as houses, barns and churches were excavated by the locals for centuries in the tuffaceous rocks spewed out of volcanoes active in the late Pliocene and Pleistocene period. However, the most interesting of these structures are, without doubt, the underground shelters. These structures, carved for defensive purposes probably between 7th to 12th centuries, are found in almost every part of Cappadocia. There are more than 200 examples identified to date in the region. Only a small part of those hypogea have been surveyed so far. In this study, we will examine two different unpublished rock-cut shelters at the ancient settlement of Golgoli near Sinasos (Mustafapaşa). Even though it is quite close to touristic Cappadocia, Mustafapaşa is one of the neglected settlements in this region. On the other hand, this settlement shares similar geomorphological formations with the rest of the region and there are countless rock-cut dwellings in its surroundings.

KEY WORDS: cave dwellings, rock-cut shelter, church, Cappadocia, Golgoli.

Riassunto

I RIFUGI SOTTERRANEI DI GOLGOLI (CAPPADOCIA - TURCHIA)

La Cappadocia è una regione storica dell'Anatolia che comprende le provincie di Nevsehir, Aksaray e Kayseri. Le rocce tufacee formatesi per l'azione eruttiva dei vulcani attivi nel tardo Pliocene e nel Pleistocene sono state scavate per secoli dalle popolazioni locali per la realizzazione di abitazioni, chiese e granai. Tra le differenti strutture scavate, i rifugi sotterranei costituiscono l'esempio più interessante. Tali strutture, realizzate a scopo difensivo tra il VII e il XII secolo, sono distribuite in ogni parte della regione. Sebbene siano stati identificati più di duecento rifugi sotterranei all'interno della regione, solo una piccola parte di essi è stata studiata e rilevata. In questo lavoro esamineremo due rifugi sotterranei inediti che si trovano nell'antico insediamento di Golgoli vicino Sinasos (Mustafapaşa). Tale località presenta una struttura morfologica e geologica molto simile agli altri insediamenti dell'area, ed è caratterizzata da un ricco patrimonio rupestre. Nonostante queste caratteristiche, e la sua posizione non distante dai centri turistici della Cappadocia, la città di Mustafapaşa o (Sinasos) è uno degli insediamenti che non hanno ancora ricevuto il giusto rilievo culturale.

PAROLE CHIAVE: città sotterranea, Cappadocia, rifugio sotterraneo, Golgoli.

INTRODUCTION

Mustafapaşa (Sinasos) is a village located 17 km south of Ürgüp (fig. 1) and, although it is part of Cappadocia, it has numerous differences from the other villages of the region. Until the population movements of 1923, Sinasos was a completely Greek village. It still has houses from this period. Even though some of these houses belonged to the Greek villagers who lived in Sinasos, the majority were the summer houses of Greeks who were former residents of this place, and settled in Istanbul in the 18th and 19th centuries.

The houses of Sinasos, most of which date back to 19th century, have a splendor that indicates the wealth of the Greeks living in Istanbul, who visited here seasonally. Academic work on the history of Sinasos, which is different from other settlements of Cappadocia, is very limited.

However these studies have documented that the history of this place goes back to the 16th century (ILBARS & TEMREN, 2003; BALTA, 2007). The churches of Constantine and Helena within Sinasos and the Hagios Nicolaos Monastery, which is 3 km from the village, date back to the 18th century.

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