



ARCHAEOLOGICAL FINDINGS IN THE CAVES OF MT. ETNA

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Abstract

After a short introduction about the importance of caves in studying prehistory, the paper discusses the volcanic caves on Mt. Etna. Their discovering is reported and the course of the different prehistoric cultures in Sicily and in the area of Mt. Etna is examined, studying the evidences inside the caves. So it comes out the great number of peoples who lived in many caves during the Late Copper Age and the Ancient Bronze Age.

Moreover, the paper talks about the different use of the caves for the prehistoric man (i.e. houses, graves, or religion places). On Mt. Etna the caves were chiefly used as graves, but in recent studies it seems that they could be also used as religion places, as in “Petralia cave” which has been explored recently.

At last, a short description of eight caves is reported. These caves are very important for the information they provide about their use during the prehistoric period.