The familiar honeycomb: Byzantine era reuse of Sicily's prehistoric rock-cut tombs

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3 Scopus citations

Abstract

In Sicily one might find, all within a few miles of each other, the castle of some newly-created baron, an Arab village, an ancient Greek or Roman city and a recent Lombard colony... (La Lumia 1867).

Keywords

- Anachronisms
- Byzantine
- Contextual information
- Rock-cut tombs
- Sicily

ASJC Scopus subject areas

- Social Sciences(all)
- Arts and Humanities(all)

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The Cavetta necropolis has tombs and rock-cut houses of the prehistoric and later periods, and can be seen from the road and designated viewing platforms. The North necropolis is a spectacular cemetery of about 1000 tombs covering very steep slopes overlooking the Calcinara river, best seen from the track coming from Sortino and from viewing platforms near the path. Remains of large rock-cut dwellings are on the gentler slopes to the east. Since no other prehistoric houses have been found on the hilltop, which is rather eroded, the location of the original prehistoric residential quarters remains uncertain. There may have been various clusters of habitation associated with each major burial zone. Bibliography[edit]. Necropolis of Pantalica, Sicily, Italy ©Neil Weightman:Flickr. Pantalica was a flourishing settlement over three thousand years ago and lasted for about 600 years, from about 1250 to 650 BC. Thought by historians to be one of the largest communities in eastern Sicily, it was located in what is now the Anapo river valley in the Iblei mountain range. The location was likely chosen because the rocky hills and terrain there were easier to defend than exposed coastal areas. The Italian archeologist Paolo Orsi led the excavation of the site in the early 1900s. In Sicily, for example, the Christians moved away from the coasts and repurposed ancient, pagan catacombs for their homes and chapels. This was a pathetic attempt at incastellamento, forced by desperate, violent circumstances. 7 Blake, Emma (2003), The Familiar Honeycomb: Byzantine Era Reuse Of Sicily's Prehistoric Rock-Cut Tombs', in Archaeologies of Memory (pp. 201-220). Blackwell Publishers Ltd. https://doi.org/10.1002/9780470774304.ch10

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