

Mountains and plains in the Marghine-Planargia insediament

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ABSTRACT - The mountains were occupied by some durable sites, not only for the summer transumanza, since their resources were available all year round, including salutary waters, wood fruits and timber. Further, there was the clear advantage of having a place protected from incidental enemy's raids. The mountain nuraghi do not seem to have characteristic features in the external architecture, while necropolises and cult places are too scarce to be commented upon accurately.

KEY WORDS: Nuraghe, Transumanza, Timber, Water, Society

PAROLE CHIAVE: Nuraghe, Transumanza, Legname, Acqua, Società

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Although we know certainly that in the ancient ages people living in the then known world had relationships and social contacts, distances and mountains undoubtedly appeared to be larger and greater obstacles than they do today. As we recall, Nuragic prehistoric and protohistoric groups preferred to install themselves on hills, near springs and on the courses of rivers, saving the plains for crops and pastures (BASOLI & FOSCHI NIEDDU, 1991; ASOLE *et al.*, 1995).

In the Marghine-Planargia region, Nuoro district, there exist some flat land nuraghi, almost all of which are surrounded by a village made of circular huts and enclosed by a thick wall (TARAMELLI, 1935; MELIS, 1967; MORAVETTI, 1992). Less frequent are the Nuragic sites at high altitudes, most likely because they were partly seasonal and made of wooden huts, which did not endure well the passage of time.

Probably the typical metal tools, also found in this area, were imported from different regions of the island, where firings and moulding tools have been found (FIORELLI, 1982).

The mountains were occupied by some durable sites, not only for the summer transumanza, since their resources were available all year round,

including salutary waters, wood fruits and timber (its importance in the Nuragic economy is evident in some passes of Homer's *Odyssey*). Further, there was the clear advantage of having a place protected from incidental enemy's raids.

The inhabitants of the mountains (Strabone called them *Iolei*) for commercial and market needs did have frequent contacts with people of the plains.

The acquisition of salt was essential in order to preserve food, so that the risk of famine was reduced. The manufacturing process of hide and wool made possible the fashioning of heavy clothes for the winter.

Ancient men were very sensitive to the fascination and spell of the mountains, which they expressed through tales that deal with its implacable nature, lives and events of men and gods, and the fantastical existence of gnomes, ogres and witches.

Diodoro Siculo tells that the oracle in Delphi convinced groups of Hellenes to move into the mountain areas of Sardinia, by promising them freedom and independence (BERARD, 1963).

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The known nuraghi at the highest altitudes on the Marghine mountains are called Su Nou de Pedra Maggiore (Bortigali) and Nodu de Sale (Bolotana), at 1100 and 1106 m a.s.l., respectively.

At that high altitude it was difficult to build megalithic structures, and one could see the hills, and the flat land furrowed with rivers. Through river travel, one could reach the sea, only a few miles away from there, definitely the most important means of communication at the time.

SUMMARY - The mountains were occupied by some durable sites, not only for the summer transumanza, since their resources were available all year round, including salutary waters, wood fruits and timber. Further, there was the clear advantage of having a place protected from incidental enemy's raids. The mountain nuraghi do not seem to have characteristic features in the external architecture, while necropolises and cult places are too scarce to be commented upon accurately.

RIASSUNTO - Le aree montane furono occupate da alcuni siti permanenti, non solo per la transumanza, ma anche per la presenza di risorse utilizzabili tutto l'anno come l'acqua, i frutti di bosco e il legname. Inoltre, c'era il vantaggio di avere un luogo protetto da scorrerie nemiche. I nuraghi montani non presentano caratteristiche architettoniche esterne originali mentre le necropoli e i luoghi di culto sono troppo scarsi per potere essere analizzati accuratamente.

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Fig. 1 - Area geografica del Marghine-Planargia

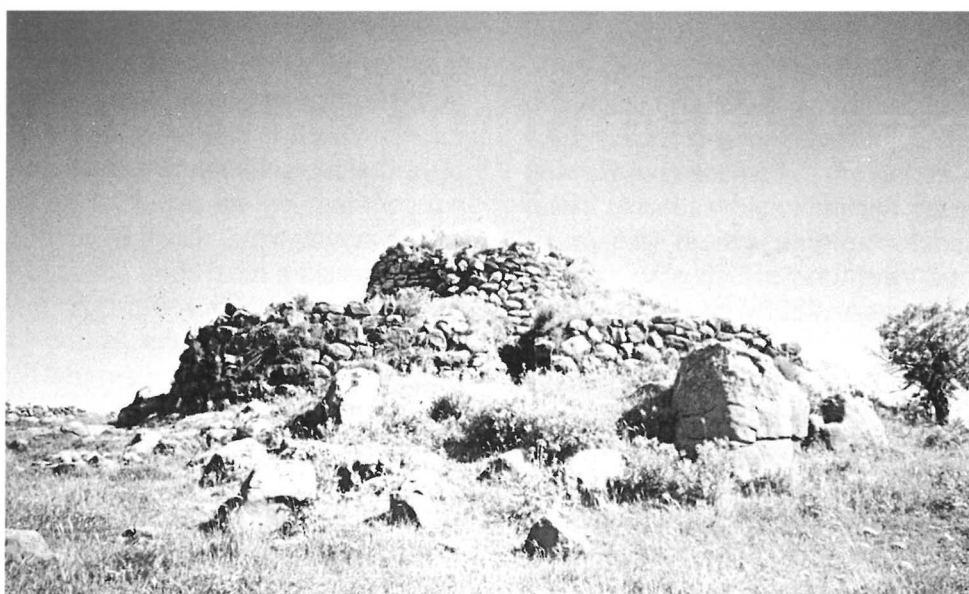


Fig. 2 - Insediamento in montagna, collina e altopiano: 1) i complessi nuragici di Tittirriola, Bolotana; 2) Orolio, Silanus; 3) Serras, Sindia.