

E. BURRI (ED.) – THEMATIC ATLAS OF FUCINO. HYDROGEOLOGICAL MAP OF FUCINO (SHEET 1); GEOMORPHOLOGICAL MAP OF FUCINO (SHEET 2), AGENZIA REGIONALE PER I SERVIZI DI SVILUPPO AGRICOLO – ABRUZZO, 2005

The Fucino Basin is one of the larger in Italy. In prehistoric time, between the bronze age and the Roman republic the local population firstly attracted by the lake itself had to face some floods since the basin had no drain. During heavy rain the lake surface increased too much with problems for the local inhabitants. They tried to discharge the water into a sink hole without a real success. During the 1st Century a.D. the Romans excavated a tunnel to discharge the surplus water. Unfortunately after some centuries the material transported by the water and possibly also a seismic events clogged the tunnel. In the XIX Century a rich person, Prince Alessandro Torlonia, decided the excavation of a new tunnel, partly replacing the Roman one, and the lake was transformed into a very fruitful soil. Obviously also the fishermen had to transform into peasants!

The publications reported above give a full detail of the characteristics of the area with the contribution of many scientists belonging to different organisations dealing with many aspects. Each sheet consists in a map and a booklet in Italian. The maps have also titles and legenda in English.

The Hydrogeological Map of Fucino, 1:50,000, (Sheet 1) gives a very detailed view of the different aspects of the

behaviour of water in the basin. In fact in addition to the hydrogeology, also others issues were considered as the pollution due to phosphates, nitrates, ammonia and the vulnerability of the aquifer including also the distribution of well in the area.

In addition to the map, a booklet of 74 pages includes a full description of waters in the Fucino Basin both at the surface and underground. The use of water for agriculture and the evolution of agriculture after the 2nd World War are described.

The Geomorphological Map of Fucino, 1:50,000, (Sheet 2) in addition to a geomorphological description strictu sensu, includes also a number of historical pieces of information which are very interesting on account of the evolution of the area since a prehistorical time. As before, a booklet of 66 pages supplies data on many aspects as pleistocenic and holocenic deposits, geological details and karst phenomena in the area concerned

This Thematic Atlas will include in the future other maps in addition to those here described and is a very useful tool for anyone interested in the evolution of a karst area where the human action played a relevant role.

*Arrigo A. Cigna*

E. BURRI (ED.) – BREVE STORIA DI UNA BONFICA COMPLESSA. AGENZIA REGIONALE PER I SERVIZI DI SVILUPPO AGRICOLO – ABRUZZO, EDICOLA EDTRICE, CHIETI, 2006: 1-27.

If the publications described before have a scientific interest, this one is fundamental to have full information on the Fucino Basin from antiquity to the present time. A short history of the development of the Fucino Basin is reported in a nice in folio booklet, which includes also a number of interesting drawings taken from old publications in addition to the text. Many of the figures are reproductions of posters which can be seen in the Park of Incile. This is a protected area including the artificial outlet of the basin.

This booklet is a precious guide useful both to local visitors and to person who have not the chance to visit the area. As it is evident the history of the Fucino Basin, i.e. of a lake that is no longer a lake, is extremely interesting because it spans from prehistory to present and it is a record of a number of actions aiming to control the water level and avoid troubles to the farmers.

The most successful intervention by Prince Alessandro Torlonia (who said: "Either I succeed to dry the lake or the lake dries me!") transformed totally the basin and the whole lake area was changed into a rich agricultural plane. The Prince recovered the large amount of money by renting the land to farmers at conditions that modern trade unions would not agree with.

The persons living in this new land had a rather little freedom because they were not allowed to move around outside their own field and had to pay the water of the wells, because the water was still owned by the Prince. Only after the 2nd World War more modern criteria were applied. Today the area is divided into about 9000 farms with an average surface of 1.5 ha.

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