

## The Seven Sleepers Tradition (Ashab-ı Kehf) in Afşin, Tarsus and Lice: Comparative Analysis of their Intangible Heritage

Afşin, Tarsus ve Lice'de Yedi Uyurlar Geleneği (Ashab-ı Kehf): Somut Olmayan Miraslarının Karşılaştırmalı Analizi

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### Abstract

The present article analyses the Ashab al-Kahf tale and sites in Turkey and my analyses intersects the disciplines of the History of Religions and Religious Anthropology. The tale is a shared hagiographic tradition amongst Christians and Muslims which is widespread in many countries. The primordial Christian tale of Seven Sleepers which arose in the mid 5th century CE Asia Minor, flowed later into Islamic religion (Koran, sura al-Kahf: 9-26) but with some relevant differences. It is based on a historical episode occurred in the city of Ephesus during the reign of the Roman emperor Decius (mid 3rd century CE). Seven young Ephesians refused to sacrifice to the Roman gods according to the Decian edict, because of their Christian faith. To avoid the persecution, they escaped in a cave on the mountain Penayir Daghi. According to the Christian tale about two hundred years later God resuscitated them during the kingdom of Teodosius II. This miracle confirms the doctrine of the resurrection and the victory of monotheism upon idolatry. Beyond the Ephesian site which pertains to the Christian lore, we find three other existent caves concerning Ashab al-Kahf, the Islamic tale in Turkey. The ziyaret (visits) to Tarsus, Afşin and Lice caves highlight the Turkish Muslims' popular religiosity since the Ashab-ı Kehf sites encompass a variety of devotional rituals and traditions.

**Keywords:** Seven Sleepers, Ashab al-Kahf, Sura XVIII, Afşin, Tarsus, Lice Caves.

### Özet

Bu makale Ashab-ı Kehf hikâyesini ve Türkiye'deki ilgili mekânları incelemektedir ve dinler tarihi ve din antropolojisine göre değerlendirme yaptım. Hikaye, birçok ülkede yaygın olan Hıristiyanlar ve Müslümanlar arasında paylaşılan bir hayyografik gelenektir. MS 5. yüzyılın ortalarında Küçük Asya'da ortaya çıkan ilk Hıristiyan Yedi Uyuyanlar hikayesi, daha sonra bazı önemli farklılıklarla İslam dinine de aktarıldı (Kuran, el-Khaf suresi: 9-26). Hikaye Roma imparatoru Decius döneminde (MS 3. yüzyılın ortaları) Efes şehrinde yaşanan tarihi bir olaya dayanmaktadır. Yedi genç Efesli, Hıristiyan inançları nedeniyle Decian fermanına göre Roma tanrılarına kurban sunmayı reddettiler. Zulümden kaçtılar ve Penayir Dağı'ndaki bir mağaraya sığındılar. Hıristiyan hikâyesine göre yaklaşık iki yüz yıl sonra II. Teodosius'un krallığı sırasında Tanrı onları yeniden diriltti. Bu mucize, yeniden diriliş öğretisini ve tevhidin putperestliğe karşı kazandığı zaferi tasdik etti. Hıristiyan inancıyla ilgili olan Efes bölgesi yanında Türkiye'de ayrıca İslam hikâyesinin ürettiği üç Ashab-ı Kehf mağarası daha vardır. Bunlar Tarsus, Afşin ve Lice Ashab-ı Kehf mağaralarıdır. Bu mağaralara yapılan geziler (ziyaret=visit), Ashab-ı Kehf mekânlarının çeşitli ibadet ritüellerini ve geleneklerini kuşatması nedeniyle Türk Müslümanlarının popüler dindarlığına ışık tutmaktadır.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Yedi Uyurlar, Ashab-ı Kehf, Kehf Suresi, Tarsus, Lice, Afşin Mağaraları.

## Introduction

This essay highlights the results of the analysis of the qualitative data collected during my ethnographic research - still in progress - about the tangible and intangible heritage concerning the Ashab al-Kahf in Turkey. In particular, in this article the focus is on Afşin, Tarsus and Lice caves.

The fieldworks on these sites started in 2012 and recently also through digital media as research method. The focus of this anthropological analysis is the contemporary popular religiosity at Ashab al-Kahf (Ashab-ı Kehf - sometimes Eshab-ı Kehf - in Turkish language) shrines (Pancaroglu, 2005) as a local experience, lived by individuals and by local communities. Moreover, the different features of the tangible and intangible heritage which pertain these sacred sites, have been compared. Turkey highlights a multiconfessional nature (Orthodox Christians, Catholics, Muslims, Armenian and Syrian Christians, Alevi, Yezidi, Jews etc.), and has many shared sacred sanctuaries (Albera&Couroucli 2009). Unlike the other Islamic countries in Turkey there are six localizations of the Seven Sleepers/Ashab al-Kahf cave. However, their traces in Malatya and Sivas (Gaziler) are not any more visible (Sert, 2009). The sanctuary in Gaziler was attended also by Christian Armenians. Therefore only four of them are still existent: the Ephesian cave, which is part of the wider Yedi Uyuyanlar archaeological site, lost its ancient sacredness and it is predominantly international touristic destination (last fieldwork in 2023); Tarsus cave which is the most visited cave for religious tourism and religious purposes (last fieldwork in 2016); Afşin cave, part of the recently restored complex dating back to Anatolian Seljuk times (2014 last fieldwork); Lice cave which is visited individually by only villagers during the year and by local communities each year at the end of May (2023 last fieldwork). Unlike the Ephesian Yedi Uyuyanlar site which includes the ruins of V century church over the cave, a mosque was built close to Afşin, Tarsus and Lice caves. Nevertheless, it seems that only in Afşin complex the mosque was built on a precedent church. The construction of a mosque close to the Ashab al-Kahf cave is guided by the verse 21 of the sura al-Kahf:

"...when they disputed among themselves about their affair and said, 'Construct over them a structure. Their Lord is the most knowing about them.' Said those who prevailed in the matter, 'We will surely take [for ourselves] over them a masjid'".

In every location mentioned local beliefs and narratives, devotional rituals and practices, are sometimes in a continuity between Christians and Muslims, and other times the authoritative representation of Ashab al-Kahf tale and place are vs personal and collective experience of the sacred (Tozzi Di Marco, 2019). We can consider these holy places from different points of view according to their specific configuration and history.

There are Ashab al-Kahf shrines evolved in heritage touristic destinations (Tozzi Di Marco, 2011; Tozzi Di Marco 2023b) such as Ephesus and Afşin caves and others such as Tarsus and Lice caves which represent unequivocally religious places attended only by nationals and local people. However, this categorization is not so rigid and sometimes we can find both characteristics which are merged in one holy place such as Afşin cave (national secular tourism and religious ziyaret).

### **1. The Historical Event and Its Mythologization**

The Seven Sleepers/Ashab al-Kahf tale is a shared cultural heritage amongst Christians and Muslims, which is widespread in many countries till Chinese Turkestan (Zarcone, 2015). The Christian myth arose in the mid-5th century CE Asia Minor, and later flowed into Islamic religion (Koran, sura al-Khaf: 9-26). In brief, it follows the plot of the Christian tale. At the base of the myth the historical episode occurred in the city of Ephesus during the reign of the Roman emperor Decius (mid 3rd c. CE). According to the Decian edict (250 CE) all Roman citizens of all over the Roman Empire had to make offerings to the Roman gods and to the emperor, at the completion of which the certificate (the libellus) was issued. However, the edict wasn't directed in particular against the Christians. In Ephesus seven young people refused to venerate idols, because of their Christian faith. In order to avoid the persecution, they escaped in a cave on the surrounding mountain Penayir Daghi. The process of mythologization started about two hundred years later during Theodosius II kingdom. The myth narrates that when God resuscitated the seven young people, the emperor was in a state of great despair because of the controversy about the resurrection issue. When he went to Ephesus to attest the miracle, after their death he ordered to build an oratory facing their tombs and to celebrate a yearly feast on the day of their resurrection. This miracle confirmed the doctrine of the resurrection of the body and the soul against the Origenist heresy. This mythological episode which was handed down in a Greek text, firstly spread to both Eastern (Jacob of Sarug's homely, Dionysius of Tell Mahre's Annals) and Western Christianity (Gregory of Tours' *Passio septem dormientium*), at the end to the Islamic religion through Christian Monophysite Arabs (Tozzi Di Marco, 2023a).

### **2. The Topic of Ashab Al- Kahf in Islam**

The Islamic version of the tale is a rielaboration of the Christian Seven Sleepers legend but it presents some different fundamental elements, such as the presence of the dog Kitmir which was placed by God as the guardian of the cave, the different number of the Companions of the cave, the different duration of their sleep, the lackness of the exact location of the cave. The entire sura al- Kahf has a metaphorical and eschatological meanings (Campanini, 1986; Dall'Oglio, 1991) since it reinforces the principle of tawhid (the oneness of God). The Qu'ran doesn't give many references about the Companions of the cave: who

were and where they lived, their story, etc. probably taking for granted that its earliest listeners were already aware of this tale. Indeed, it belongs to the Christian and Jewish oral narratives, the isra'iliyats. However, the first Koranic commentators and traditionists (Ibn Abbas, al-Tha'labi, al-Tabari, al-Damriri, Ibn Ishaq, etc.) gave accounts of the occasion of the sura al-Kahf and many details of the Ashab al-Kahf story (Tozzi Di Marco 2023b).

### 3. The Localization of the Cave in Tafsir and Literature

Despite the symbolic connotation of the cavern (as symbol of both the Revelation and the protection), the sura 18 does not mention the locality of the cave, nor does it indicate its geographical whereabouts. The verse 17 gives just an indication about the direction of the solar light at the dawn and at the sunset regarding the entrance of the grotto as follows:

"And [had you been present], you would see the sun when it rose, inclining away from their cave on the right, and when it set, passing away from them on the left, while they were [laying] within an open space thereof. That was from the signs of Allah".

It means that the cavern is located on north/south axis and each Islamic country bases the authenticity of its grotto only on this reference. Al-Tha'labi (11th c. CE) in his commentary cites Ephesus which with the advent of Islam became Tarsus. In particular, he reported that the caliph 'Ali said Tarsus is the Arab version of the name Ephesus (Afsis). The error between the toponyms of Afsis and Absis<sup>1</sup> caused the institution of a different locations in Anatolia which were mentioned by the seventeenth century Ottoman traveller Evliya Çelebi in his "Book of travels". He wrote he saw the cave of Sleepers in three different places and he concluded he didn't know which was the real one "or should we suppose that each of them fled to a different country from the Takyanos tyranny?" (Dankoff, 2006). Indeed, to attract pilgrims, hence economic benefits, in some peripheral areas the Ashab al-Kahf caves were established as landmarks of a territory. In the late 10th century CE the geographer Al-Muqaddasi and also others such as al-Razi told that Ashab al-Kahf were in Tarsus. On the contrary ibn al-Kathib, al-Tabari, al-Herevi and Zamakşari said the authentic cave was in Efsus (Afşin). Hacı Bektaş in his travel towards Anatolia stopped at Eshâbü'l-Kahf in the Elbistan district (Sümer, 1989).

### 4. "Eshab-ı Kehf" Cave nearby Tarsus

Tarsus city, St Paul's home town, is situated in the region of Cilicia and it has always been a sacred place for Christians and Muslims alike, due to the presence of many martyrs' tombs, the prophet Daniel's tomb and the St Paul's well which is still venerated for its healing water by Sunnis, Alawites and Christians alike. The Eshab-ı Kehf cave is located in

<sup>1</sup> Ebsus or Efsus according the different dialects, during Roman times Arabissos, then Yarpuz with Turks and nowadays Afşin.

the territory of Dedeler village about 15 km far from Tarsus. During the late Ottoman period it was designated as the authentic cave of the tale told in the sura 18. A document which is dated 1861 in the Prime Ministry Ottoman Archives, confirms the process of its acceptance and contains some more information<sup>2</sup> (Elveren, 2022). So that the Tarsus cave is the most popular and visited amongst Seven Sleepers/Ashab al-Kahf caves in Turkey. Before the exchange of population between Turkey and Greece during the last century, it was attended also by Orthodox Christian Greeks (Zarcone, 2015). It is located up to the hill of the Taurus mountains, called Encülüs Mountain (or locally Ziyaret Mountain), and it is accessible through a long stair. Over time the Eshab i-kehf site expanded physically a lot with the adding of other structures. Since 1872 it includes a new mosque which was built next to the entrance of the cave by the order of Ottoman Sultan Abdulaziz's mother (Hasluck, 1929). On the sign hung on the mosque's wall by the General Directorate of Foundations it is written that Eshab-ı Kehf mosque was renovated in 1872 by the city mufti Ahmet Efendi on behalf of Sultan Abdulaziz's mother. In fact, the geographer al- Muqaddasi reported a mosque near the cave, hence at least in 10th century CE there was already a masjid. During the second half of the last century (1967-1975) another taller three balcony minaret was later built by the benefactor Hacı Ali Menekşeoğlu after a dream. Nearby the complex there is a hotel, a restaurant and some souvenir stores and recent built stalls which Tarsus municipality rent to the shopkeepers. To reach the cave a multistory structure increased the boundaries of the sacred space. At the centre of its first floor there is an ablution fountain and at the second floor there is a large panel with the inscription of the Qur'anic story. The grotto is about 200 square metres and high 10 metres<sup>3</sup> and other three small cavities are inside. At the middle of the stair a large rock which pilgrims<sup>4</sup> and visitors identify as a camel, stands on the left side. Some pilgrims kiss the stone, the visitors take only photos. At the end of the stair on the right side there is the burial chamber of Eshab-i Kehf whose tombs are enclosed in a holy enclosure. Their names are engraved in Arabic alphabet on its wooden fence. Moreover, Tarsus municipality put a bench and some warning signs on the walls. Also the Diyanet put a sign with the correct rules of the ziyara in order to direct it in a correct manner (edep) according to the orthodox practice. These two elements can be considered as a sign of new hegemony on this sacred space to prevent the heterodox folk traditions. Despite that, during my periods of fieldwork the spatial practices and the ritual performances, and talks to the pilgrims highlight the local beliefs and narratives.

2 This document explains the salaries of the zawiyyedar and supervisor duties of the Ashab-ı Kehf cave located on the Bencilüs mountain in Tarsus not to be covered by the sufficient income of the foundation. Moreover, it was requested by the relevant authorities that the salaries be paid from the state treasury. The zawiyyedar were the sheikhs to whom the zawiyyas are allocated. They belonged to the Naqshbandis.

3 <https://tarsus.bel.tr/en/tarsus/culture.aspx> (02/04/2023)

4 The terms holy, pilgrim and pilgrimage referred to Islam have an anthropological connotation from emic point of view, which goes beyond the Islamic orthodoxy.

**Figure 1**

*Tarsus Cave, Ashab al-Kahf Graves*



Unlike the Ephesian cave, a small percentage of the visitors are only sightseers and there are no foreign tourists. Groups of pilgrims, coming from countryside or other Anatolian cities by big bus, performed their ziyara (visit to a holy tomb) to the Ashab al-Kahf and spend some hours at the large plain area at the base of the complex. They do picnic, buy fruit and vegetables from local vendors coming from nearby villages, and make shopping in the souvenir stores. Let's now to examine the religiouscape (Appadurai, 1996). The ziyara consists of some stages: at beginning the devotees stop in front of the holy enclosure to recite the Fatiha (the Opening sura), then some of them give gifts to the holy figures which can be coins or candies. Candies occurred only during the religious feasts such as Kurban or Ramazan. According to Elveren they also throw small stones. The second step consists of some devotional practices such as to recite the sura al-Kahf sitting on the bench or on the ground. Ibn Kathir (14th c. CE) said that the sura al-Kahf could invoke protective powers and bring peace. Actually some ahadith reported that the Prophet Mohammad said:

"Whoever memorizes ten verses from the beginning of sura al-Kahf will be safeguarded from the liar or cheat (dajjal)"; "Whoever recites the beginning and the end of sura al-Kahf has light from his feet up to his head"; and finally: "Whoever recites sura al-Kahf on Friday is protected for the week from any trouble and if the liars were to come out during that time he would be safeguarded from him".

Hence, the pilgrims, reading the sura 18 in the cave, express their strong Islamic sense of devotion at the site. This orthopraxy (Turk. edep, the correct code of behaviour) contrasts with the other traditional folk rituals performed in the cave in order to invoke God's grace, the baraka, in Turkish bereket (Sparks, 2011). It is believed that the holy figures such as the Prophet and his family, his Companions, the living or dead awaliya, because of their closeness to God, are endowed with baraka which can give to the ordinary people (Tozzi Di Marco, 2018). This belief system stands at the base of some traditional rituals performed inside the cave. People identify a rock in a small cavity as Kitmir, the divine dog. Here we can observe the physicality of the devotion in some devotional practices. Since Kitmîr embodies God's will, the ritual actions to kiss and to touch the rock are intended to invoke its strong protective power. Another ritual of lithotherapy consists of rubbing the rock in order to receive the baraka. It is believed that the pilgrim must rub the sick part of own body to cure illness. Another litholatric tradition consists of putting small stones as symbols of a vow in a wall of the cave. Not only the rocks are perceived as mediators with God through the baraka but also the water flowing from the ceiling of the grotto. The faithfuls apply this holy water on their face, their hands and on the sick parts of their body. Further they collect this water in a bottle to bring home for the other relatives in the same way of Zam Zam water (Tozzi Di Marco, 2015). An aspect of folk local customs which doesn't pertain to religious field, consists of entering in a small and deep tunnel located at the end side of the cave and coming out backwards. During these space practice both pilgrims and visitors request a blessing and pronounce a vow. The symbolic implication of the performance of passing in this very restricted cavity is evident as a kind of rebirth, regeneration of the spirit. People told different local narratives about the connection of the tunnel with several other places. Some of them said the tunnel arrives till to the city to allow Ashab al-Kahf to escape secretly; others said it joins with another nearby cave, the Taşkuyu Cave; or it arrives to Mecca; or to the sea.

In conclusion, besides the local ziyaret the pilgrimage to the Tarsian cave has been a stop on the route of hajj. From the past centuries until recent years, pilgrims stopped at the cave when going or returning from Mecca.

### **5. Afşin: the Ashab al-kahf cave known as Eshâbü'l-Kahf by locals**

The town Yarpuz (that means perfumed mint) or Efsus for Arabs, or the more ancient Arabissos (Arabsūs) during Bizantine times has been recently renamed Afşin in 1944 (Sümer, 1989). The Eshab-ı Kehf cave is

situated approximately 7 km far from the city on the skirts of a mountain called Enculus Mountain. Here the pilgrimage to the Companions of the cave became popular during the Seljuk period at the beginning of the 13th century.<sup>5</sup> In this period the Anatolian Seljuk bey, Nusrat al-din Hasan ordered to build a complex (Kulliye), consisting of a mosque, a ribat and a han (inn), on the top of the ruins of the pre-existent Byzantine structures such as a church and barracks. Some of these more ancient remains as columns and marble reliefs were reused as decorative parts in the mosque which is called Isa Camii (the mosque of Jesus) and its mihrab as Vaftiz taşı (baptismal stone) (Zarcone, 2015). The entrance of the narrow cave which gives on to northwest, is allowed through the mosque. On the left side of the entrance a bedrock gap is like a tunnel-shaped passageway. The right side of the cave consisting of a ground floor and a flat roof where local tradition identified the place where Eshab-ı Kehf fall asleep.<sup>6</sup> At the end of the cave there is a natural pool which is nowadays enclosed by a fence. However, during the past times pilgrims were allowed to drink this water and to wash their hands. Nowadays outside the cave there is a fountain with seven taps above which the names of the Ashab al-Kahf are engraved: Yemliha, Misliha, Mekseline, Mernuş, Tebernuş, Sazenuş, Kefeşetayuş.

## Figure 2

*Afshin, Fountain of the Ashab al-Kahf*



5 This location of the cave can be linked to the political and territorial expansion of Seljuk state and the consolidation of its eastern frontiers. <http://www.turkishhan.org/esab-i%20kehf.htm> (02/04/2023)

6 <https://whc.unesco.org/en/tentativelists/6037/> (17/10/2023)

During the fieldwork there were not pilgrims, just some Turkish tourists, among which some stopped in the mosque attached to the cave in order to pray. As matter of fact the research in Afşin site is still too short to trace some conclusions. Through the nethnography it is evident that the efforts of Afşin municipality for branding the cave on the social networks have the end to attract more tourism and to be included in the Unesco World Heritage list.

### 6. Ashab al-Kahf Cave in the District of Lice

This cave is situated in a rural isolated environment within the Lice district of Diyarbakır on Rakim Mountain, north of the village Duru. The village had the ancient name of Dêrçam (Dêr meaning church), the abbreviation of Der-ı Raqim. Indeed, nowadays Duru is a settlement of about 25 houses. The first verses of the sura al-Kahf cites the term Raqim as follows: "Do you think the Companions of the Cave and al-Raqim were wonders among Our signs?". Tafsir gave different meanings for Raqim. Some commentators such as Ibn Abbas said that al-Raqim was a valley or a mountain, for others it indicates something written, that is the tablet of stone engraved with the Ashab al-Kahf story and their names which was placed at the entrance to the grotto. According to these interpretations locals claim the authenticity of their cave. Moreover, they believe that the Companions of the cave awake yearly in May, hence this cave is massively visited at the end of this month (Karaođlan, 2016).

#### Figure 3:

*Lice, Ashab al Kahf Cave and Mosque*



Actually the data collected on the field show that it is attended during all the year. Lice site consists of two caves: the first one is enclosed by a wall with a small window and it is used as mosque; and a second smaller cavity is located higher up than the first cave. In this cavity pilgrims put money or small stones in the holes of the walls. Some pilgrims use to sleep in the mosque attached to the cave as the numerous carpets and blankets reveal. This practice of incubation is typical of other sacred maqam (holy sanctuaries). Lice Ashab al-Kahf cave is still vernacular and situated quite in wilderness even if during recent years many efforts have been made to improve the surroundings. Municipality built a structure with toilets and office at the bottom of the mountain, and a road easily accessible to the first step of a long stairs which goes till the caves with some benches and gazebos at every floor. Outside the mosque there is a small basin from which pilgrims drink the water flowing from the rocks. A local narrative tells that there are Kitmir's blood traces (Tozzi Di Marco, 2024) caused by stone blows which were thrown by the Companion of the Cave.

An old villager of Duru told they escaped from Dakyanos who lived in his palace in the nearby city of Fis. When the police came to get them they hid in the innermost part of the cave. However, a hand of one of the seven was left out but then disappeared miraculously. The old men also told that he knows this story from the imam of the village. He also explained the reason of the two caves: "In the higher cave they fall asleep and in the larger cave they disappeared. They awake every year on May 28th. They are alive but they sleep during the year". He remembers that when he was child pilgrims used to sacrifice a lamb at the cave and to eat it with relatives then they gave money to the children of Duru.

### **Conclusion**

During the past the Turkish Ashab al-Kahf caves, especially Tarsus site, were shared sanctuaries among Christians and Muslims like many other shrines in the country. Ashab al-Kahf belief and rituals performed at their shrines do not represent a monolithic narrative. It is mostly a localized religious tradition with common and different features among the religious, social and cultural contexts of the three local holy caves. Moreover the ziyaret to the Companions of the cave are connected to the hajj, the pilgrimage to Mecca, at some levels as shown above (Albera & Eade, 2016).

Among the common aspects of the religiosity performed inside the caves there is the basic belief in baraka, the active divine force, embedded in each local holy cave. It flows to the devotees through their personal and collective experience of the sacred, which consists of the spiritual encounter with the Companions of the cave. Through their agency the devotee transforms and regenerates own life. The complex of vernacular ritual practices, that is spatial, bodily, spiritual, emotional, sensory experience, enacted in every cave represent a less constrained practised Islam, where the counter-narratives are centred especially on

the pilgrim's body. Unlike the ziyaret to the other holy persons' shrine it seems that there is no specific relationship between gender and the ritual practices at Ashab al-Kahf caves, in terms of equality of lived religiosity between men and women. The ziyaret to the Ashab al-Kahf, especially during the religious occasions such as the end of Ramazan and Kurban Bayram when visitors gather together for picnicking in the surrounding area after the visit, reinforce the social ties in the local communities. In Turkey we find a lot of holy places, even interreligious and interritual sites, such as the Ashab al Kahf caves, which can be considered a means of reaffirming the local identity, where the practiced faith based on local narratives represents a processual negotiation of the sacred space vs its various forms of control, and consequently of ordering the individual religious experiences by the normative discourse on Islamic faith. At the end, Afşin cave has underwent a process of heritagization by the Ministry of Religious Affairs and the Ministry of Tourism, so that folk traditions of past times are anymore visible. Tarsus and Lice caves, even if they underwent a renovation programs overtime and a renewal of religious sociability (Lice cave), are still destinations of local pilgrimage visits. Here some folk rituals and beliefs can be observed as above mentioned.

These ending considerations as well as the first results of my ethnographic research need to be deepen more through the next periods of fieldwork.

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