

Martín Casado, Juan Manuel, University of Málaga, *A Possible Earthquake in the Roman phase of Los Castillejos de Teba settlement (Málaga, Spain) : notes on ancient seismicity in the Provincia Baetica (power-point)*

Abstract

The archaeological position of Los Castillejos de Teba (Malaga, Spain) is one of the most prominent archaeological places in the high basin of the Guadalhorce river. Its optimum strategical conditions, with easy control of the regional roads and availability of natural resources, in addition to their defensive capacity, has impelled the human settlement since the Bronze Age to the end of the first century A.D.

Recent archaeological excavations accomplished between April and May 2019 found important signs of destruction in the second half of the century I A.D., such as evidence of a great fire, the partial tumble of a Wall and displacement of others or collapse of roofs, due to an intense, destructive episode wich coincide with the final declination of the settlement. In addition, several signs, such as the reinforcement of structures by using buttress, can be assumed that earthquakes were not unknown by the inhabitants of Los Castillejos.

As a possible elucidation, we appoint, through the archaeological evidence, that a seismic shock was the cause of the final abandonment of the settlement, in connection with the targets of a part of the local oligarchy to reorganize the zone. Despite the lack of studies of historical and instrumental seismology in this area, the possibility that an earthquake had damaged the settlement triggering their abandonment, when his old functions were lost, emerge by now as the main possibility. Such a process would surely be a valuable example of how local communities and their authorities were able to react against a sudden catastrophic event. Furthermore, it would enrich the explanation about the abandonment of the old settlement, in benefit of the recently founded *oppidum ignotum* of Cortijo del Tajo.

This is part of a bigger theoretical framework, for which natural disasters work as external shocks that feedback other political, economic or social factors, increasing declination process.