

# RÉALITÉS BYZANTINES



## Les Villages dans l'Empire byzantin

IV<sup>e</sup>-XV<sup>e</sup> siècle



*édité par Jacques Lefort,  
Cécile Morrison et Jean-Pierre Sodini*

LETHIELLEUX

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## THE BYZANTINE VILLAGE (5th-14th CENTURY)

Angeliki E. LAIOU\*

*l'article présente d'abord les développements bibliographiques récents, en soulignant des centres d'intérêt en partie dû à l'accroissement de la documentation (archéologie, épigraphie, hagiographie). Ensuite, le développement du village est présenté comme un phénomène unique, fondé sur des réseaux de relations. Le village est une forme ancienne d'habitat qui a prospéré du sol dans les territoires byzantins et son importance s'est accrue après le VII<sup>e</sup> siècle. Dans le développement du village les facteurs externes (population, sécurité, rôle des élites) (solidarités villageoises, liens familiaux, Église). Enfin, on suggère quelques pistes de recherche pour l'avenir.*

al presentation of the topic, such as the one undertaken here, one finds something of a loss. **General studies of the Byzantine countryside**, including the **archaeology of the village**, exist.<sup>1</sup> It is clear, at the same time, that although general approaches are primarily because of the centralizing role of the Byzantine state, even in the present research is also based on regional studies (such as those for Eastern Southern Italy), and **in the future the regional approach** must be further **contribution of archaeology is important here; by its very nature it leads** of a local or regional nature. In the approach I have adopted here, I will chiefly the historiographical development of the last few decades. Secondly, the development of the village as a function of the interplay of external and internal factors, placing the emphasis on the middle and late periods. In the following, I will highlight some important ideas that underlie current research, and try to indicate in which further research appears promising.

is of the **Byzantine economy** was agricultural is a truism, applicable to all **economies**. That the great majority of the population lived **in the countryside** is quite as self-evident. The fact that the appropriation of the surplus of the **countryside was for a long time in the hands of the state, and was regulated** in even longer time, is more interesting. **The Byzantine Empire retained, throughout most of its history, a mode of production in which the state extracted the surplus** of taxation, although this co-existed with relationships based on rent.<sup>2</sup>

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## THE BYZANTINE VILLAGE (5th-14th CENTURY)

Angeliki E. LAIOU\*

*Résumé* – Cet article présente d'abord les développements bibliographiques récents, en soulignant le déplacement des centres d'intérêt en partie dû à l'accroissement de la documentation (archéologie, documents d'archive, hagiographie). Ensuite, le développement du village est présenté comme un processus dynamique, fondé sur des réseaux de relations. Le village est une forme ancienne d'habitat et d'exploitation du sol dans les territoires byzantins et son importance s'est accrue après le VI<sup>e</sup> siècle. On examine dans le développement du village les facteurs externes (population, sécurité, rôle de l'État) et internes (solidarités villageoises, liens familiaux, Église). Enfin, on suggère quelques pistes pour la recherche future.

In a general presentation of the topic, such as the one undertaken here, one finds oneself at something of a loss. **General studies of the Byzantine countryside, including the village, already exist.** It is clear, at the same time, that although general approaches are still possible, primarily because of the centralizing role of the Byzantine state, even in the late period, **current research is also based on regional studies (such as those for Eastern Macedonia and Southern Italy),** and in the future the regional approach must be further cultivated. **The contribution of archaeology is important here: by its very nature it leads to conclusions of a local or regional nature.** In the approach I have adopted here, I will first discuss briefly the historiographical development of the last few decades. Secondly, I will discuss the development of the village as a function of the interplay of external and internal structuring factors, placing the emphasis on the middle and late periods. In the process I will highlight some important ideas that underlie current research, and try to identify issues on which further research appears promising.

That **the basis of the Byzantine economy was agricultural** is a truism, applicable to most medieval economies. **That the great majority of the population lived in the countryside** is equally true and quite as self-evident. The fact that **the appropriation of the surplus produced in the countryside was for a long time in the hands of the state,** and was regulated by the state for an even longer time, is more interesting. **The Byzantine Empire retained, through the greatest part of its history, a mode of production in which the state extracted the surplus in the form of taxation, although this co-existed with relationships based on rent.**<sup>2</sup>

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1. See KAPLAN, *Les hommes et la terre* with references to the work of G. Ostrogorsky and P. Lemerle, pp. 1 ff. Also, A. P. Kazhdan's unjustly critical review of this work ("One More Agrarian History of Byzantium," in *BSI*, 55, 1994, 66-88) with references to the work of Soviet Byzantinists; see also Kaplan's reply, *ibid.*, 89-95. Cf. LEMERLE, *Agrarian History*; G. LITAVRIN, *Vizantijskoe obščestvo i gosudarstvo v X-XI vv.*, Moscow, 1977.

2. For a good discussion on the transition from the Ancient to the Feudal mode of production, and the particularities of Byzantium as opposed to western Europe, see Ch. WICKHAM, "The Other Transition: From the Ancient World to Feudalism," *Past and Present*, 103 (1984), 3-36, reprinted, with additions and corrections, in *IDEM, Land and Power*, London, 1994, ch. 1.

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As a result, a considerable part of the historiography has consisted of studies of the relations between the state, the rural population and the landowning aristocracy. At the same time, there have been some studies on the economic organization of the Byzantine rural exploitation, for example, N. Svoronos' seminal article, "Sur quelques formes de la vie rurale à Byzance: Petite et grande exploitation"<sup>3</sup> and Ostrogorsky's studies of the Byzantine peasantry, based on documentary and legal sources.<sup>4</sup> It is not possible, nor is it necessary, to rehearse here the vast historiography on agrarian relations and the elements of agrarian production in the Byzantine Empire. I only wish to point out some of the shifts in the emphasis given by scholars to various types of sources and to various problems. Very schematically, I refer to the last time an international Byzantine congress had adopted agrarian life and the village as an entire theme. This was the Ochrid Congress of 1961, in which the Soviet delegation treated the topic "Gorod i derevnja v Vizantii v IV-XIIvv," and P. Lemerle, D. Angelov and P. Charanis presented complementary reports. The accent at that time was on the development of cities as well as the countryside, and the focus was primarily on the development of relations of production, more specifically on the development of feudal relations in the countryside. In the matter of sources, although archaeological evidence was used<sup>5</sup>, extensively by some scholars like Kazhdan, legal, fiscal and narrative sources held pride of place.

**New Evidence, New Interpretations**

In the intervening years, both the evidentiary base and the problématique have shifted. Not that the question of relations of production and fiscal policy has lost its interest; on the contrary. However, more recent studies examine the question from different viewpoints, and reach conclusions that diverge considerably from those of the past, since now questions of production, productivity, the realities as opposed to the theory of taxation, the structure of power relations are examined together, and lead to a significantly new appreciation of the effects of the expansion of large and privileged private property both on the organization of production and on peasant institutions.<sup>6</sup> The new scholarly approaches which have developed are born of the conjunction between the publication of new sources and a change of focus, a phenomenon which to some extent is general to medieval, not only Byzantine, studies.

First, a word on the development of the evidentiary base. On the one hand, we have the progress of archaeology, and the broadening of the questions posed by archaeology, whether excavations or survey archaeology. It must be said at the outset that the archaeological evidence is not anywhere as extensive as we would wish it to be. It is not available to the same degree for all of the territories of the Byzantine Empire, and certainly it is

3. *Annales ESC* 11, 1956, 325-391 reprinted in his *Études sur l'organisation intérieure, la société et l'économie de l'Empire byzantin*, Variorum Reprints, London, 1973, no. II.

4. G. OSTROGORSKI, *Quelques problèmes d'histoire de la paysannerie byzantine*, Brussels, 1956; *Id., Pour l'histoire de la féodalité byzantine*, Brussels, 1954.

5. See the reports by I.V. PIGULEVSKAJA, E. JE. LIPŠIĆ, N. JA. SJUZIUMOV and A. P. KAZHDAN, in "Gorod i derevnja v Vizantii v IV-XIIvv," *Actes du XI<sup>e</sup> Congrès International d'études byzantines*, Belgrade, 1963, I, 1-44. Individual reports and communications on topics connected to the village do appear in other International Byzantine Congresses. See, primarily, A. P. KAZHDAN, "Macro and Micro Structures in Byzantine Society," in the Moscow Congress, *Major Papers*, I, 1991, 84-101, and J. KARAYANNOPOULOS, "Entwicklungsetappen der agrargesellschaftlichen Verhältnisse in Byzanz," *ibid.*, 102-151.

6. See for example N. OIKONOMIDÈS, *Fiscalité et exemption fiscale à Byzance (IX<sup>e</sup>-XI<sup>e</sup> siècle)*, Athens 1996, passim; J. LEFORT, "The Rural Economy, 7th-12th Centuries," in *EHB*, 231-310.

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distributed differently in terms of chronology as well.<sup>7</sup> Northern Syria in the Late Antique and early Byzantine period, through the Arab conquest, has been a well-favored province, in which archaeological sources proliferate, and have been used to excellent effect by Tchalenko in the past, by scholars such as G. Tate and J.-P. Sodini currently. Thus, for example, G. Tate, on the basis of the study of the structures of 46 villages in northern Syria, has been able to draw important conclusions regarding the demographic and economic development of the region, conclusions which he thinks are expandable to all of Syria.<sup>8</sup> J.-P. Sodini's study of churches in Northern Syria provide precious information both as to the physical aspect of the village, in relation to the location of churches, and as to the community and spiritual aspects of the village, including the patrons who financed the construction of churches.<sup>9</sup> Similarly, excavations in Jordan and Palestine of the Byzantine period have yielded extremely valuable information on villages, farmhouses, manor houses and their demographic and economic capabilities and realities.<sup>10</sup> Excavations in Central Lycia<sup>11</sup>, surveys in Central Anatolia and parts of Cyprus provide us with knowledge about the villages, primarily in the early period.<sup>12</sup>

When we move into the Middle Byzantine period, that is, in the seventh century and after, the pickings become much slimmer. Limiting myself to published material, I note in Greece a survey and excavation in Panakton in Boiotia,<sup>13</sup> surveys in South-West Boiotia,<sup>14</sup> in Messenia (at two different areas, the Pylos region and Nichoria, where excavations have also been undertaken)<sup>15</sup> and in the Southern Argolid.<sup>16</sup> In Byzantine Southern Italy

7. An excellent survey of the archaeological evidence for the early period, with a rich bibliography, may be found in J.-P. SODINI, "La contribution de l'archéologie à la connaissance du monde byzantin (IV<sup>e</sup>-VII<sup>e</sup> siècles)," *DOP*, 47 (1993), 138-84.

8. See G. TATE, *Les campagnes de la Syrie du Nord*, I, Paris, 1992, and the extensive review by C. FOSS, "The Near Eastern Countryside in Late Antiquity: A Review Article," in J. H. Humphrey, ed., *The Roman and Byzantine Near East: Some Recent Archaeological Research*, Ann Arbor, MI, 1995, 218-222; cf. TATE, "Les campagnes de la Syrie du Nord à l'époque proto-byzantine," *Hommes et Richesses*, I, 63-77, and ID., "Archéologie sérielle et histoire rurale: le cas du massif calcaire dans la Syrie du Nord," in Gh. Noyé, ed., *Structures de l'habitat et occupation du sol dans les pays méditerranéens: les méthodes et l'apport de l'archéologie extensive*, (Castrum 2), Rome-Madrid, 1988, 107-114.

9. "Les églises de Syrie du Nord," *Archéologie et histoire de la Syrie II*, 1989, 347-72.

10. Y. HIRSCHFELD, "Farms and Villages in Byzantine Palestine," *DOP*, 51, 33-72. Excellent discussion of houses in TATE, *Campagnes*, and TSAFRIR, *The Palestinian Dwelling*, with bibliography primarily on Palestine, but also on Jordan.

11. See SODINI, "Contribution de l'archéologie," 151 ff, on archaeological information for villages in Lycia, Cilicia and Northern Syria, with bibliography.

12. See the papers, in this book, by BELKE, 425-436, RAUTMAN, 453-464.

13. See Sh. GERSTEL's report in this book. EAD., "An Introduction to Mediaeval Panakton," *Boeotia Antiqua*, 6 (1996), 143-51 and Sh. GERSTEL et al., "A Late Medieval Settlement at Panakton", *Hesperia*, 72 (2003), 147-234.

14. J. BINTLIFF, "Two Transitions: Current Research on the Origins of the Traditional Village in Central Greece", extending into the post-Byzantine period. Cf. BINTLIFF, "Reflections on Nine Years with the Bradford-Cambridge Boiotia Project", in *Boeotia Antiqua*, 1 (1989), 13-21.

15. For Pylos, see J. L. DAVIS et al., "The Pylos Regional Archaeological Project, Part I: Overview and the Archaeological Survey," *Hesperia*, 66 (1997), 413-4, 473-4 (the report on the Byzantine site was written by Sharon Gerstel); for the Nichoria Ridge, 22 km west of Kalamata, see W. A. McDONALD, W. E. COULSON, J. ROSSER, *Excavations at Nichoria in Southwest Greece*, vol. 3: *Dark Ages and Byzantine Occupation*, Minneapolis, 1983, 422-24.

16. M. H. JAMESON, C. N. RUNNELS, T. H. VAN ANDEL, *A Greek Countryside: The Southern Argolid from Prehistory to the Present Day*, Stanford, 1994. See also C. N. RUNNELS, T. H. VAN ANDEL, "The Evolution of Settlement in the Southern Argolid, Greece: An Economic Explanation," *Hesperia*, 56 (1987), 303-334, passim.

there are a few excavations and also archaeological surveys.<sup>17</sup> In southern Asia Minor, there are excavations in Tille and Gritille, while on the north-western coasts of Asia Minor, an archaeological survey carried out since 1987 is already yielding results.<sup>18</sup> By contrast, more southern areas of the western coast, where we have considerable documentary evidence from the 11th century onward, especially for the 13th century, archaeological evidence is lacking. Similarly, the study of the early period of the village in eastern Macedonia, an area best known in later periods because of its rich written documentation, is hampered by the virtual absence of archaeological evidence.<sup>19</sup> In medieval Serbia, too, there is little available archaeological material, while in Bulgaria there is important but spotty information.<sup>20</sup> The publication of the results of other excavations or surveys, as yet unpublished, should increase the data available to scholars.

As things stand now, the great wealth of archaeological information, and the most sophisticated interpretations bear on the early period, down to the late sixth or early seventh century. After that, the archaeological data become more sparse, there is little synthesis, and the interpretations are not always as convincing.<sup>21</sup> We have nothing like the sophisticated study of village dwellings by Tate and Hirschfeld.<sup>22</sup> There are, to be sure, objective difficulties attendant upon the study of Byzantine sites. But it is fair to say that Byzantine sites also frequently suffer from the classical archaeologist's concept of the Byzantine or, sometimes, the late Antique and Byzantine periods as one vast undifferentiated whole; this has unfortunate results in projects where the Byzantine remains are studied as a coda to the main object, whether classical or pre-classical.

17. See J. LEFORT, J.-M. MARTIN, "L'organisation de l'espace rural: Macédoine et Italie du sud (x<sup>e</sup>-xiii<sup>e</sup> siècle)", *Hommes et richesses* II, n. 4., and J.-M. MARTIN and Gh. NOYÉ, "Habitats et systèmes fortifiés en Capitanate; première confrontation des données textuelles et archéologiques," *Castrum* 2, 501-526.

18. J. MOORE, *Tille Höyük 1. The Medieval Period*, Oxford, 1993; S. REDFORD, *The Archaeology of the Frontier in the Medieval Near East: Excavations at Gritille, Turkey*, Boston, 1998; J. LEFORT, "Tableau de la Bithynie au XIII<sup>e</sup> siècle," *The Ottoman Emirate (1300-1389)* ed. E. Zachariadou, Rethymnon, 1993, 101-117, and reference in n. 2; B. GEYER, J. LEFORT, F. PLANET, "Prospection dans la région de Bursa 1990," IX. *Araştırma sonuçları toplantısı* 1991, Ankara, 109-118. See now GEYER, LEFORT, *Bithynie*.

19. Lefort, Martin ("Organisation", 12-13) mention only one village excavation in Macedonia, in Stagira (by A. Guillou.)

20. See A. FOL, R. KATINÇAROV, J. BEST, N. DE VRIES, K. SHOJU, H. SUZUKI, *Djadovo, Bulgarian, Dutch, Japanese Expedition, Vol. 1, Medieval Settlement and Necropolis (11th-12th Century)*, Tokyo, 1992, and MAKSIMOVIĆ-POPOVIĆ, RAŠEV, reports in this book, 329-350, 351-362.

21. See, for example, the conclusion of W. Rudolph that the peasants of 5th and 6th century Halieis were "serfs", on the basis of a pre-conceived notion that all of the area had "farmlords" with "serfs": "Excavations at Porto Cheli and Vicinity. Preliminary Report V: The Early Byzantine Remains," *Hesperia*, 48 (1979), 303-304. This statement has been repeated so many times that it is now treated as Gospel truth: see, in the last instance, A. AVRAMEA, *Le Péloponnèse du IV<sup>e</sup> au VIII<sup>e</sup> siècle, Changements et Persistances*, Paris, 1997, 117. On the other hand, the excavation and survey at Nichoria provides an exceptionally detailed and sensible treatment of the Byzantine period. On the poverty of archaeology for the study of the village in the Middle Byzantine period, see Ch. BOURAS, "City and Village; Urban Design and Architecture," XVI. *Internationaler Byzantinistenkongress, Akten I/2 (JÖB, 31/2)*, 1981, 651-2, who notes the need for excavation, especially of abandoned villages.

22. There are, however, some descriptions of Byzantine houses: See, for example, A. M. SIMATOU and R. CHRISTODOULOPOULOU, "Observations on the Medieval Settlements of Geraki," *DChAE*, 4<sup>e</sup> s., 15 (1989-90), 67-88; GERSTEL, "An Introduction to Mediaeval Panakton," 148 ff.



On the other hand, exceptionally important has been the study of geography and topography, on the basis of both surveys and the written documentation. In some areas, this has been carried out with excellent results. Such is the exemplary work done on eastern and western Macedonia through the use of written documentation, survey, and anthropological and archaeological expertise.<sup>23</sup>

There is a debate, with which archaeologists are more familiar than most historians, as to the respective merits, flaws and limitations of survey archaeology and excavation. The arguments are interesting and instructive, and the warnings as to the pitfalls of survey archaeology in particular, such as the difficulty of dating medieval surface finds and the question of how representative the finds are – but also of the limitations of the more profound but, necessarily, geographically more limited data provided by traditional excavations – should be kept very much in mind.<sup>24</sup> However, as J. Lefort, among others, has pointed out, extensive archaeology has specific uses in the study of the territory of a village, in the Middle Ages, since it allows for the examination of an area larger than that of an excavation site, and can provide valuable information as to the area's resources and its organization.<sup>25</sup> In any case, to return to my original point, both excavation and prospective, survey archaeology have produced a certain quantity of new data on the village, as well as on the structuring of the countryside that belongs to it. We are looking forward to much greater input from archaeology in the future.

It goes without saying, that archaeological data alone can only give part of the answer to the questions that are connected with the rise and function of villages, and archaeology on its own can provide erroneous interpretations, or no interpretations at all of important phenomena (e.g., the organization of production and social relations). Certainly all other sources, documentary, narrative, artistic, epigraphic, numismatic and so on have to be used to create as complete a picture as possible, to approach old questions in new ways, and to pose new problems. Indeed, the importance of documentary evidence remains paramount for historical interpretation.

There has been an explosion in the use of existing information over the last decades. M. Kaplan, in his monumental work, *Les hommes et la terre à Byzance du VI<sup>e</sup> au XI<sup>e</sup> siècle*, made extensive and systematic use of hagiographic sources, thus adducing to the discussion material which has been physically available but not exhaustively used by historians before. The other major development has been the exemplary publication or republication, by our colleagues in Paris, of the archives of the monasteries of Mt. Athos.

23. R.-C. BONDOUX *et al.*, "Recherches sur l'histoire des paysages en Macédoine orientale", *Castrum* 2; P. BELLIER, R.-C. BONDOUX, J.-C. CHEYNET, B. GEYER, J.-P. GRÉLOIS, V. KRAVARI, *Paysages de Macédoine, leurs caractères, leur évolution à travers les documents et les récits des voyageurs*, Paris, 1986; J. LEFORT, *Villages de Macédoine, 1: La Chalcidique occidentale*, Paris, 1982; V. KRAVARI, *Villes et villages de Macédoine occidentale*, Paris, 1989.

24. On the question, see *Castrum* 2, Introduction by J.-M. PESEZ (129-35); J. JOHNS, "Sistemi socio-economici, ricognizione a scala regionale e campionamento ad uso probabilistico," 539-542, and "Du 'bon usage' de l'archéologie extensive : Une réponse en forme de bilan," by A. BAZZANA and GH. NOYÉ, 543-562. See also the interesting article by E. ZADORA-RIO, "Le village des historiens et le village des archéologues," in E. Mornet, éd., *Campagnes médiévales : l'homme et son espace. Études offertes à Robert Fossier*, Paris, 1995, 145-53.

25. "Le territoire : Introduction," in *Castrum*, 2, 393-4.

The changing evidentiary base as, also, the ongoing dialogue between Byzantinists and specialists on western medieval Europe have brought about new orientations in research. The archives of Mt. Athos have provided an unprecedented wealth of information about certain areas of Macedonia, and have permitted scholars to broach subjects that were impossible on unknown before: studies, carried out by J. Lefort and others, on the spatial organization and development of the village over time; the study of demography with quantified data, the study of peasant names, artisanal and market activities in the village, to name only a few.<sup>26</sup> Macedonia is, today, the most closely studied region of the Middle Byzantine period, together with Byzantine Southern Italy. Michel Kaplan has placed a new emphasis on rural society and on the social as well as the economic and physical aspects of the village. Importantly, the collaboration of Byzantinists in the colloquia that have produced the *Castrum* volumes, have helped to integrate the history of the Byzantine village into that of the Mediterranean village in the Middle Ages. P. Toubert's seminal work on the *incastellamento*, the structuring of medieval rural society through the agglomeration of the population and the creation of a protected environment that he has examined in detail in Latium (920-1030),<sup>27</sup> has influenced profoundly the study of medieval agrarian societies, for we now see power relations in the countryside under new light.

### The Development of the Village

The village, somewhat elusive of definition, as in some ways is the medieval town, is a place of habitation of the rural population which has its own territory and therefore its own economic space. As Fossier has written, a village is not merely a habitat, but an organized and ordered settlement, with vertical and horizontal contacts between the inhabitants, and with a "village spirit," that is to say, a community.<sup>28</sup> As a community, it has internal links, those of family, kinship, neighborhood; but also a network of relationships with other groups and economic and political structures: the state, landlords, political power generally, the market.

A Byzantine definition of the village appears in the Fiscal Treatise of the Marciana. The *chorion*, as described in the Fiscal Treatise, is a habitat where the houses of the villagers are all in the same place, neighboring each other, that is, a nucleated settlement, differentiated from the dispersed habitation (*ktesis*).<sup>29</sup> Whereas in the Byzantine Empire the structuring role of the state is reflected in the concept of the *chorion* as a fiscal unit, the basic elements are less fiscal than structural and economic: this is the organized settlement in which peasants live, from which they exercise their economic activities, and through which they relate to outsiders. The social structure of the village is an integral part of its history.

26. See the various studies by J. Lefort and other scholars, mentioned throughout this paper, and cf. LAIOU-THOMADAKIS, *Peasant Society*.

27. *Les structures du Latium médiéval*, Rome, 1973, two volumes. Cf. CH. WICKHAM, "L'incastellamento e i suoi destini, undici anni dopo il Latium di P. Toubert," *Castrum* 2, 411-420, who contests the use of the term *incastellamento* in places outside Italy, claiming that the creation of castles must be distinguished from the creation of a focused habitat, and points out that important variations exist, according to region and chronology.

28. Quoted in ZADORA-RIO, "Le village," 145-6.

29. F. DÖLGER, *Beiträge zur Geschichte der byzantinischen Finanzverwaltung besonders des 10. und 11. Jahrhunderts*, Berlin, 1927, rep. 1960, 114. This text has been dated to the early 12th c. by N. Oikonomidès, *Fiscalité*, 44-45.

A general trait of the Byzantine village is the fact that it is open, not fortified. Indeed, this has sometimes been used as a defining trait that differentiates the unwalled village from the walled town.<sup>30</sup> In Cretan villages, discussed in this book by Ch. Gasparis, as in the villages of Late Antique Syria<sup>31</sup>, the outside walls of houses provided a sort of protection. But this is not the same as fortification, nor does it have the same influence on the village. Gilbert Dagron's study of large villages ("bourgades") fortified against bandits in the 5th and 6th century does not refer to exceptions, but rather points at the continuum between walled city and unwalled village<sup>32</sup>. The fortification of villages against invaders in the 5th to 7th centuries in Bulgaria is a specific case<sup>33</sup>. Exceptions do exist, in 14th century Macedonia as in some villages in Southern Central Anatolia.<sup>34</sup> On the whole, however, the typical middle Byzantine village was unwalled, and in the later period protection was afforded by the towers which dot the countryside in Macedonia.<sup>35</sup>

The village is an ancient form of habitation in the lands of the Byzantine Empire, going back at least to Roman, perhaps to Hellenistic times; this fact differentiates from the very beginning the discussion of Byzantine villages from that of western ones; as Hirschfeld has put it, "the economy of the western Roman empire in late antiquity... was based on large agricultural estates. In the Roman East, however, there is a good deal of evidence for the existence of a small farm-and village-based economy".<sup>36</sup> Isolated farmsteads were common in some areas like Byzantine Judaea and the Negev,<sup>37</sup> and villas can be found in the Late Roman period in Palestine, in the Peloponnese, in Boeotia and in the Balkans; but they are rare, especially so in the Balkans. Thus the balance between villa and village was different from what it was in the Late Antique West, and it makes little sense in the Byzantine Empire to investigate the evolution from villa to village.<sup>38</sup> The Byzantine village as a type of settlement is not a creation of the Middle Ages, but rather the development of a much older form. Villages proliferated in number and became by far the most common form of habitation in the Medieval period. Furthermore, the nucleated (or "introverted") village seems to have been the typical place of habitation. Indeed, there is an interesting theory that in the proto-Byzantine period dispersed villages or hamlets were a transitional phase of settlements on the way to becoming villages<sup>39</sup>. In the medieval period, the function of hamlets was different.

30. J. LEFORT, "Habitats fortifiés en Macédoine orientale au Moyen Âge," *Castrum*, 1, *Habitats fortifiés et organisation de l'espace en Méditerranée médiévale*, Lyon (1993), 100. For a survey of late Roman villages in the eastern and western parts of the Empire, see A. POULTER, "Townships and Villages," in J. Wachter, ed., *The Roman World*, I, London and New York, 1987, 388-411.

31. TATE, *Campagnes*, 213.

32. G. DAGRON, "Bourgade"; ID., "Guérilla, places fortes et villages ouverts à la frontière orientale de Byzance vers 950," *Castrum* 3, *Guerres, fortifications et habitat dans le monde méditerranéen au Moyen Âge*, Madrid-Rome, 1988, 43-48.

33. See Rašev's report in this book. Special is also the case of Panakton, a settlement of the Frankish period. Sh. Gerstel, whom I thank, pointed out me that towers also exist in Euboea, Attica and some islands.

34. See LAIOU-THOMADAKIS, *Peasant Society*, and K. BELKE's report in this book.

35. See BOURAS, "City and Village," 652, on the towers of the Palaiologan period in the Chalkidike.

36. KAPLAN, *Les hommes et la terre*, 89, and BELKE's report in this book; HIRSCHFELD, "Farms," 33.

37. SODINI, "Contribution de l'archéologie," 147.

38. We note, however, with Michel Kaplan, the lexicographical evolution of the word *chorion* from *chora*, a landed property: *Les hommes et la terre*, 95.

39. HIRSCHFELD, "Farms", 60 Examples: Kafr Naffakh in the Golan Heights. Horvat Din'ila in the Golan Heights developed from a single farmhouse. TATE, *Campagnes*, 203, speaks of the village as a quasi-exclusive form of settlement in northern Syria.

A first period of expansion and prosperity of villages is posited for the late Antique and Proto-Byzantine period, in almost all parts of the Byzantine Empire for which we have information, in Palestine and even in the Negev (4th-5th centuries)<sup>40</sup>, in Northern Syria, where Tate has found two periods of expansion, a slow one in the first century and until ca. 250 AD, and a more rapid economic and demographic growth, from ca. 330 to ca. 550, attended by the physical expansion of the villages and the more professional construction of houses,<sup>41</sup> in Southern Syria and Jordan<sup>42</sup>. In Southern Italy and in parts of Greece (Boiotia, Messenia, southern Argolid), there was demographic and economic growth in the period ca. 400-650 or 550.<sup>43</sup> In the continuum between city and village, G. Dagron has pointed out the importance of an intermediary formation, the "bourgades" (*kome, metrokomia*) large villages, settlements which in terms of size<sup>44</sup> and population (1000-5000 people) are larger than the normal village, and in terms of function make up communities of free cultivators/proprietors, with an additional significant involvement in artisanal production and trade. They retain their independence from the cities and sometimes from imperial authority.<sup>45</sup> In these flourishing communities of Late Antiquity, Dagron has seen a restructuring of the countryside, which provides continuity with the subsequent period of ruralisation of the Empire, as well as the antecedents of the independent village communities so well known from the time of their decline, in the 10th century.

One major gain from archaeology has been the firm establishment of the existence, indeed the prevalence, in the eastern provinces of the village as the major form of settlement and economic organization of the countryside. The village, inhabited by free peasants, had at that time a vitality which is hard not to bear in mind as we move into the period that has traditionally been considered the triumph of the free village community, the 7th century and after. Having avoided successfully, for many decades, the question of continuity and change, I do not wish to fall into the temptation now. I merely wish to point out that historians of Byzantium, much more so than those of western medieval Europe, have focused the debate on the fate of towns, for obvious reasons and with the conclusions that we all know. If the argument had taken place with the countryside in the center of the debate, the case for a great divide would have been considerably more nuanced.

With the decline of towns as we move into the seventh century, the village network acquires a greater prominence. Unfortunately, we know rather little about the village, its physical aspect and its organization for the period from the middle of the 7th century until the 9th century, although this ignorance is somewhat less severe for Southern Italy, and although some general statements may be made. J. Lefort has supposed a movement of the peasant population of Macedonia toward the mountains during this period.<sup>46</sup> Similar shifts to hillsides or mountainous areas have been proposed for other threatened parts of

40. HIRSCHFELD, "Farms", 33-72.

41. TATE, "Les campagnes," 74-75; *Campagnes*, 303 ff; Foss, "Syria in Transition," especially pp. 197-204.

42. SODINI, "Contribution de l'archéologie," 151.

43. See, e.g., BINTLIFF, "Two Transitions"; JAMESON *et al.*, *A Greek Countryside*, 403-4; AVRAMEA, *Le Péloponnèse*, 116-17.

44. Ten hectares form the dividing line in Palestine, according to HIRSCHFELD, "Farms," 39.

45. DAGRON, "Bourgade".

46. "Population et peuplement en Macédoine orientale, IX<sup>e</sup>-XV<sup>e</sup> siècle" in *Hommes et Richesses II*, 68-69.

the Balkans.<sup>47</sup> We do know of the existence, in this period, of communities of free peasant proprietors and tenants, living in agglomerations with a territory that included arable, vineyards and fruit trees, as well as woodlands; villages which possessed communal rights not only on uncultivated lands, but also on important resources such as mills that are built on common land.<sup>48</sup> This is clearly deduced from the Farmer's Law, a text that may have been local<sup>49</sup> but certainly came to have general – and long-term – application. Its "local" aspects seem to me not to be terribly evident, unless one were to lend great importance to the absence of the olive tree. The information it provides seems to describe a typical situation which, like the statistical average, does not necessarily apply fully to any specific village. Besides, it is not entirely clear how far back the provisions may date.<sup>50</sup> Manuscript connections with the *Ecloga*, as well as the title and other elements, place it in the late 7th century; it is certainly in harmony with other texts of this period.

In the Farmer's Law, the village (*chorion*) is (or can be) situated near a road (article 73). It is also situated in proximity to a source of water, running water, i.e. a river or a stream (articles 82-84). The village territory is marked by boundaries (7), and there are neighboring villages sufficiently close to dispute the boundaries or fields, which suggests that the fields are outside the village. The village territory includes gardens, in which trees may grow belonging to third persons (31). There are uncultivated lands: forests which are used by the peasants of the village, and where cattle and other animals may be found (39-40), but also wooded lands, capable of being cleared and cultivated, that belong to individuals (17); a man who clears land he does not own has the revenues from it for three years. There are, one assumes, pasture lands to which cattle are taken by special cattle herders (24ff). There are vineyards which are outside the arable lands (38: ἐν ἀμπέλῳ ἢ ἀγρῶ). Fields and vineyards belonging to different people lie in close proximity to each other (78, 79).

Thus we have a village, undoubtedly nucleated, close to a source of water, close also to a road, with its own boundaries, and with its territory, that consists of gardens, vineyards, arable, all in zones, one would think, or in any case in continuous stretches. There is also uncultivated land and woods which are exploited by members of the village.<sup>51</sup> Interestingly, it is envisaged that the private lands of individuals might include uncultivated but cultivable areas. The inhabitants have collective fiscal responsibility (articles 18-19).

This very general and generalized picture works well with what we know of the middle Byzantine village as it emerges in the ninth century, after a period that is certainly dark in terms of documentation. There is considerable longevity in this type of settlement. But there is also development and profound change.

47. T. MOSCHOS, L. MOSCHOU, "Παλατιομανιάτικα. Οἱ Βυζαντινοὶ ἀγροτικοὶ οἰκισμοὶ τῆς Λακωνικῆς Μάνης, Ἀρχαιολογικὰ Ἀνάλεκτα ἐξ Ἀθηνῶν, 14, 1981, 13, 15; Rašev, in his report, mentions the concomitant rise of animal husbandry (5th-7th c.); H. FORBES, "Security and Settlement in the Medieval and Post-Medieval Peloponnese, Greece: 'Hard' History versus Oral History", *Journal of Mediterranean Archaeology*, 13.2 (2000), 215-217. I owe this last reference to Sh. Gerstel.

48. I. P. MEDVEDEV, *Vizantijskij zemledel'českij zakon*, Leningrad, 1984.

49. KAZHDAN, "One More Agrarian History," 70.

50. On the question of date, see LEMERLE, *Agrarian History*, 32-35, and KAPLAN, *Les hommes et la terre*, 387-8.

51. On the "concentric" zones of cultivation (gardens–arable, vineyards–pastures and woodland, see A. GUILLOU, Οἰκισμοὶ στὴν Βυζαντινὴ Ἰταλία (6-11 αἰ.), *Byzantina*, 8 (1976), 178.

## STRUCTURING FACTORS AND PROCESSES

The development of the village, in the period from the 9th through the early or mid-14th century, is governed by a number of factors, which shape it and therefore shape the management of resources as well. Development is the result of the interplay of these factors, which are intimately interconnected. For the purposes of analysis, we can speak of factors which originate from outside the village itself, and those which are internal; they intersect at many points.

*External Structuring Factors*

An important factor is the population rise, which follows an upward curve, starting slowly, at different points in different areas.<sup>52</sup> The slow rise of population is reflected in different ways in the countryside. In the 9th-10th centuries, there is evidence from various areas of the abandonment of lands and/or villages, but also of the formation of new villages as a result of the flight and resettlement of peasants.<sup>53</sup> In the Mani, there is evidence of the reoccupation of coastal zones after 812. In Macedonia and southern Italy, the formation of hamlets outside the village boundaries is witness, since the 10th century, of population expansion.<sup>54</sup> In Bulgaria south of the Haemus, after the annexation of territories by Basil II in 1018, there is a dense reoccupation of the countryside and formation of villages.<sup>55</sup> For the 11th and 12th c., archaeology as well as the study of topography and documentary evidence shows a considerable population rise although some scholars still think there may have been a drop in the late eleventh century.<sup>56</sup> The population increase had profound effects on the habitation and the exploitation of resources, on villages and their territories.

In eastern Macedonia, the region best studied, village territories were very large (15-20 km<sup>2</sup>) in the ninth century, a marker of as yet sparse population.<sup>57</sup> Then there was expansion into previously uncultivated lands: into the plains (the most fertile lands) and eventually onto the hillsides, where lands were less fertile. Much of this expansion resulted in the creation of hamlets, undertaken either by peasants or by large proprietors. The number of households and inhabitants increased in 12th-14th c., the plains were populated, hills and mountainsides became deforested<sup>58</sup>. A similar case of expansion can be deduced from the Land Register of Thebes. In South-West Boiotia, it has been observed by archaeologists that there was an increase in settlements in the 9th-13th centuries, and after the Frankish occupation as well; new areas were brought into cultivation.<sup>59</sup> Similarly,

52. HARVEY, *Economic Expansion*, 35 ff.

53. KAPLAN, *Les hommes et la terre*, 529 ff.

54. J. LEFORT, J.-M. MARTIN, "L'organisation de l'espace rural : Macédoine et Italie du Sud (Xe-XIIIe siècle)," *Hommes et richesses*, II, 15.

55. RAŠEV, report, in this book, 351-362.

56. N. OIKONOMIDÈS, "Terres du fisc et revenus de la terre aux Xe-XIe siècles," *Hommes et richesses*, II, 336-7, going back to Svoronos. Kazhdan, Harvey, Lefort and others have asserted that the population increased and the Byzantine economy flourished in the 10th-12th centuries.

57. According to Lefort's estimates. In the region of Antioch, down to the mid-seventh century, village territories had ranged from less than 3 km<sup>2</sup> to over 10 km<sup>2</sup>, and lay at a distance of 3-5 km from each other: FOSS, "Syria," 199.

58. LEFORT, "Rural Economy and Social Relations in the Countryside," *DOP*, 47 (1993), 106; ID., "Radolibos: Population et paysage," *TM*, 9 (1985), 207.

59. BINTLIFF, "Two Transitions," 113 ff.

in the southern Argolid, new settlements appeared around the year 1000.<sup>60</sup> In the Pylos region, a couple of settlements, datable to the 12th-13th centuries (Kavalaria, Metamorphosi Skarminga) have been identified.<sup>61</sup> In the Nichoria ridge, resettlement began in the late 10th century.

Another external factor is the slow establishment of security and, in the tenth century, the geographic expansion of the Byzantine state. This general fact has regional and chronological variations, as do the effects of the earlier virtually constant state of warfare on the northern and eastern fronts. In the frontier regions of Asia Minor, before the great conquests of Nikephoros II in the 960's, there was a state of warfare, in the form of razzias, which affected production, the wealth of the countryside, and the defensive aspects of the habitat: the inhabitants of undefended villages would find refuge during dangerous times in fortified sites, or, in Cappadocia, in subterranean "villages".<sup>62</sup> In Thrace, the long Bulgarian wars and Symeon's depredations certainly had negative consequences in the early 10th century, perhaps in a more acute form than the "routine" Arab raids. Even in late tenth-century Macedonia, a document shows village inhabitants of the western Chalkidike finding refuge on a domain, as a result of the destruction of their village by Bulgarian raids.<sup>63</sup> Indeed, Mr. Rašev has argued that in Thrace, especially on the Bulgarian side of the frontier, there were barely any villages until the tenth century. The fact of the matter is that agricultural activity was severely hampered, and people found refuge in the fortified towns.<sup>64</sup> The 9th-10th centuries is the period when, in the Balkans, there is a process of strengthening the fortified places to create conditions of greater stability.<sup>65</sup>

Both the rise in population and the reestablishment of security had repercussions on the siting of villages and hamlets. After the end of the sixth century, and until the tenth, the Byzantine Empire was in an almost constant state of defensive war both on its northern front and on the eastern one. The villages of Macedonia and other areas in this period were situated at the foot of hills and mountains, away from insecure points: far from the sea, from the most fertile plains, from the great roads.<sup>66</sup> The need for security appears to have played a significant role in the siting of villages in parts of Asia Minor as well. In the tenth century and after, in the wake of the change in the political fortunes of the state, villages and/or hamlets could be established in the fertile plains, and were so established, as part of the expansion of a rising population. Even so, in some areas apparently dangers lurked: in the part of Messenia covered by the Nichoria survey, medieval settlements, even (possibly) in the 12th century, were sited away from the sea, while in the southern Argolid the new settlements of ca. 1000 were situated inland, in the upper reaches of fertile valleys.<sup>67</sup>

60. JAMESON *et al.*, *A Greek Countryside*, 105-6, 113.

61. DAVIS *et al.*, "The Pylos Regional Archaeological Project," 477-81.

62. DAGRON, "Guérilla, places fortes".

63. *Actes d'Iviron I*, éd. J. Lefort *et al.*, Paris, 1985, no. 10 (996).

64. A. LAIOU, "War, Peace and Economic Development in the Balkans," in *South East Europe in History: The Past, the Present and the Problems of Balkanology*, Ankara, 1999, 67-77.

65. See *infra*.

66. LEFORT, "Population et peuplement," 66-67.

67. *Excavations at Nichoria*, 423; JAMESON *et al.*, *A Greek Countryside*, 405-6. K. Belke, in his report, notes that in Central Anatolia closeness to water is less important than location near cultivable lands, roads, security.

Thus, medieval Byzantine villages were often situated at the foot of mountains: near sources of water (Macedonia) or roads (Asia Minor), in secure areas. As security was reestablished and the population pressure built up, hamlets grew outside the old village boundaries (in Boiotia as well as in Macedonia). They are part of the expansion into less naturally safe but more fertile areas. In Macedonia, at least, some hamlets tend to be established at the initiative of a landlord; they are part and parcel of the expansion of population, territory, and a new type of exploitation and control of the landscape. By the 14th century, hamlets tend to be situated in less fertile lands, presumably because the fertile ones had already been occupied.

The third factor originating outside the village itself is, as always in the Byzantine Empire, the state, which had a much greater structuring effect than in the West – I am speaking of the centralized state specifically, not of political power in general, whose structuring role throughout Europe is well established.

The role of the state in the development of the village in Byzantium is among the best-studied topics of agrarian history. Its fiscal measures influenced very considerably the social composition of the village, but more, they influenced the development of production and productivity, and, in turn, the forms of habitation. Its political and military activities also had far-reaching results. In comparison with western medieval Europe, what is striking is the fact that the state was by far the political power that had the greatest influence on the countryside and the village. Thus, it has been argued that in Byzantium, the countryside was restructured in the 9th-11th centuries, through the efforts of the political power to create secure conditions, favorable to the concentration of manpower. But whereas in western Europe this was undertaken by individuals, in Byzantium it was carried out by the state.<sup>68</sup> The state created not fortified villages as in the west, but rather refuges, and a network of fortified towns; and it retained a certain control over defensive structures almost until the end. According to this view, the combination of a population increase and greater security guaranteed by the network of fortifications, made it possible to put new lands into cultivation, to increase the economic yield from the land, to create new and smaller villages. This economic activity was undertaken by both the state and powerful individuals, and increased the interest of both on the countryside, which came under much firmer control.<sup>69</sup> In other words, a more efficient exploitation of the countryside was now made possible. Thus, the restructuring of the countryside and the proliferation of villages in the first instance worked to the benefit of the state.

Not only did the number of villages increase through this activity, but the economic role of the state originally, and of powerful individuals subsequently, became a more important factor in the organization of the countryside. Villages began to lose their economic as well as part of their social cohesion as deserted (*klasmatic*) lands, which in the past had remained a part of the village community, were sold to outsiders or, starting in a systematic way during the reign of Basil II, became state property, exploited by state *paroikoi*. Eventually, through state donations of immunities or of entire villages, the

68. In Southern Italy, in the 11th century, there was unification of a number of villages, by imperial order: GUILLOU, *op. cit.*, 180.

69. See LEFORT, "Habitats fortifiés," and J. LEFORT, J.-M. MARTIN, "Fortifications et pouvoirs en Méditerranée (X<sup>e</sup>-XII<sup>e</sup> siècles)," both in *Castrum* 1, 99-103 and 197-204 respectively. According to Lefort, most of the walled towns were fortified in the 9th c., some are dated by inscriptions to the 10th century, two out of 15 are datable to the 12th century.



domanial structure became dominant in the village economy.<sup>70</sup> To be sure, it was a specific domanial structure, since the small peasant exploitation remained important. Furthermore, although the state increasingly acted as a landlord, it continued for centuries to function as a tax-gatherer.<sup>71</sup> Still, Basil II's policies paradoxically (if one is wedded to the traditional view of this Emperor's concerns) marked an important change in the relations of production, and in the form of the appropriation of the surplus. The changes had economic implications for the village, as the landlords, including the state, became more involved in the organization of production.

This great shift in the village economy, which was more or less completed by the mid- or late 11th century, is now seen in a much less negative light than before. For scholars have moved their focus from the political and social to the economic causes and effects of this development, and have seen positive economic consequences in the shift to an economy where the large estate predominated. Greater investments, a more rational use of resources and cultivation, increased production and productivity resulted from this development, and accommodated the needs of a society with a rising population.<sup>72</sup> It is even probable that peasants as well as landlords gained from this partnership, at least for a time.<sup>73</sup> As far as the historiography of the relations between state and village is concerned, one of the most important developments in recent scholarship has been the stress on the economic causes of state action, and on the economic changes which they produced. In other words, the role of the state in rural society is seen as economic, not merely as fiscal and political.

#### *The Village as Habitat and as a Unit of Production*

Through the combined effects of these structuring processes, the village as a unit of habitation and production developed over time, changing with fluctuations in population and with the shifting modes of political control. We can now look at some aspects of the village in the middle and late Byzantine period. One quasi-general feature is the predominance of the nucleated village, although Jacques Lefort has documented, in Macedonia, the existence of various kinds of settlements, nucleated villages as well as hamlets and isolated farms.<sup>74</sup> This predominance is to some degree a historiographical tautology, since we tend to not call hamlets "villages", but to a large degree it also reflects reality. The isolated farmstead is not really a major feature of the Byzantine countryside, and hamlets are characterized more by their location and smaller size<sup>75</sup> than by the fact that they are dispersed habitations, for they are not. The size of village territories is highly varied. In 10th century Macedonia, Lefort has estimated an average of 15-20 km<sup>2</sup> per village territory, distant from each other by 4-5 km. The large size of village territories is not, it would seem, a universal phenomenon. In Calabria, where the medieval network of villages

70. On this, see in detail N. OIKONOMIDÈS, *Fiscalité*, and earlier publications by the same author.

71. Chris Wickham has stressed the co-existence of different modes of production in the same economy and society: see "The Other Transition," *passim*, and Id., "The Uniqueness of the East," *Land and Power*, ch. 2.

72. OIKONOMIDÈS, *Fiscalité*, 216-8; HARVEY, *Economic Expansion*, 159 ff; LEFORT, "Rural Economy," 113; Id., "Population et peuplement," 68.

73. E.g., OIKONOMIDÈS, *Fiscalité*, 214 ff.

74. Note that in 8th to 9th century Byzantine Italy the dispersed habitation was very important: GUILLOU, *op. cit.*, 169-70.

75. In Macedonia, they have a territory of ca. 2 km<sup>2</sup> and 10-20 families. LEFORT, "Population et peuplement," 72.

appears in the late 9th c., with the re-establishment of imperial authority, villages were small. On the other hand, in 10th-century Apulia, there were very large villages, with a territory of 50-100 km<sup>2</sup>.<sup>76</sup>

A partial study of village territories in 14th-century Macedonia shows very considerable differences among villages: 11.73 km<sup>2</sup> for Gomatou, 3.2 km<sup>2</sup> for Krya Pegadia, 19.69 km<sup>2</sup> for Sarantarea, 5.5 km<sup>2</sup> for Melintziani, etc.; it is clearly not meaningful to establish an average. It is meaningful, on the other hand, to note that even in the 14th century, at the height, perhaps, of the demographic expansion, much of the village territory is described as hilly, wooded, stony, fallow and uncultivated. In some villages, only a small part of the territory was cultivated.<sup>77</sup> The management of the uncultivated parts of a village territory, whether through wood-cutting or through stock-breeding, has been recognized as part of the rational organization of resources that advanced throughout the medieval period.

The size of the village itself, as a unit of habitation, that is, in terms of the number of households and inhabitants, is also varied, as one may imagine. The *oikoproasteion* of Varis in Asia Minor in the late 11th century had 13-14 households and 27 inhabitants<sup>78</sup>, but there is clearly under-registration of household members. Vare, near Smyrna, had a population of nearly 90 inhabitants. In the Empire of Trebizond, at least in the *bandon* of Matzouka, large villages seem to have been few, and small hamlets much more numerous<sup>79</sup>. In the Southern Argolid, the few medieval villages identified are small<sup>80</sup>. Bulgarian villages that have been excavated show a similarly small number of houses. It should be noted that archaeological evidence on size must be used with caution, because the information is too limited and fragmentary to allow general conclusions. According to written documentation, Radolibos had 122 households (283 inhabitants) in 1103, 226 households (868 inhabitants) in 1316.<sup>81</sup> Gomatou had 162 households (696 inhabitants) in 1300-1301 and Selada had 503 persons in 1300; these are at the high end of the scale. Other villages might have between 25 and 68 households in the 14th century.<sup>82</sup> The figure of 70 households on the average in the 14-15th centuries<sup>83</sup> is somewhat hypothetical. Scholars agree that eastern Macedonia, at least, was well-populated in the early to mid-14th century, while less complete data, whether documentary (as in the case of the Land Register of Thebes) or archaeological give the same impression for the rest of the Balkan territories.<sup>84</sup> The early or mid-14th century is the period of the demographic maximum, which then came to an abrupt end.

76. MARTIN-NOYÉ, "Habitat", report in this book. In the Capitanate, a large number of *castra*, *casalia* and even Byzantine towns grew on or in near proximity to Roman sites: MARTIN - NOYÉ, 515. Cf. GUILLOU, *op.cit.*, on Troia.

77. LAIOU-THOMADAKIS, *Peasant Society*, 38 ff.

78. M. NYSTAZOPOULOU-PELEKIDOU, *Βυζαντινά Έγγραφα τῆς Μονῆς Πάτμου, Β΄. Δημοσίων Λειτουργιών*, Athens, 1980, no. 50.

79. A. BRYER, "Rural Society in the Empire of Trebizond," *Archeion Pontou*, 28 (1966-67), 152-160, esp. p. 158.

80. In the Protobyzantine period (5th -6th c.), sizes vary from two to three hectares; in the medieval period, there are sites of one to 2.4 hectares, but also smaller ones: JAMESON *et al.*, *A Greek Countryside*, 554, 555.

81. LEFORT, "Radolibos", 207.

82. LAIOU-THOMADAKIS, *Peasant Society*, 37 ff.

83. LEFORT, "Population et peuplement", 67.

84. HARVEY, *Economic Expansion*, 63 ff; A. P. Kazhdan speaks of an average of 50 to 150 households in the 11th century, on flimsy grounds: "The Peasantry," in G. Cavallo, ed., *The Byzantines*, Chicago, 1997, 45.

It is evident from what has been said about the size of settlements that there is a continuum, from the hamlet, to the small village, to the village of moderate size, to the large villages that may have been better populated than small towns, and possessed a differentiated economy. One may also note the existence of a hierarchy of settlements. The hamlets are connected in a hierarchical way to the villages, having been formed out of village territory, sometimes inhabited by former village inhabitants, and sometimes being considered by the Fisc as still being an integral part of the village.<sup>85</sup>

The types of cultivation undertaken by Byzantine village inhabitants are too well known to discuss in any detail. The Byzantine Empire, like other parts of the Mediterranean, was a land of polyculture, with the Mediterranean triptych of bread – wine – olive oil dominant in the areas with a Mediterranean climate and proximity to the sea. Animal husbandry is a complementary and sometimes primary activity.<sup>86</sup> Bee-keeping, fishing, the cultivation of industrial crops (flax and silk primarily) and, of course, of garden produce are activities whose importance differs from area to area, although the cultivation of gardens and perhaps bee-keeping were generalized activities.<sup>87</sup> Some of these crops are high-yield, commercial crops: wine, olive oil for coastal Asia Minor and the Peloponnese, silk. It is also important to note that even in the period of the greatest expansion of the large estate, peasant households did own in full property vineyards (sometimes in large parcels), and olive trees, that is, those resources which provided some of the most common cash crops. Some peasants engaged in mining activities (Siderokauseia, settlements in the Nichoria area, villages in Bulgaria). Significantly, and not unexpectedly, specialized economic activity might have an important impact on habitation and settlement. This is clear in the case of transhumant pastoralists and their summer settlements, and it also may be the case in a settlement on the Nichoria ridge, which has been identified as forming part of the territory of a village, and constituting the habitations of peasants whose permanent home was in the village itself, but who lived on this settlement when they carried out the seasonal activities of charcoal production and metallurgy.<sup>88</sup>

The productive organization of the village of the middle and late Byzantine period is well established. The village had high-yield lands (gardens close to the houses and vineyards), fields, and uncultivated lands.<sup>89</sup> In the type of organization that characterizes the Byzantine countryside, most peasant plots consisted of arable (rented, for the most part, after the 11th century) as well as gardens, vineyards and olive trees in the areas of olive cultivation, and fruit trees. There were also, in the villages, silos for storing grain as well as wine presses, olive presses<sup>90</sup>, and mills, water mills for the most part, belonging either to the village, to individual peasants, or to landlords. Uncultivated lands constituted an important economic resource, since they provided not only firewood for the hearths of

85. The Marciana Treatise calls the hamlet a small subdivision of a larger settlement: DÖLGER, *Finanzverwaltung*, 115.

86. *The Book of the Prefect*, (J. KODER, *Das Eparchenbuch Leons des Weisen*, Vienna, 1991, ch. 15) is suggestive regarding animal husbandry in the interior of Asia Minor. Cf., for Paphlagonia, K. BELKE, *Paphlagonien und Honorias*, TIB 9, Vienna, 1996, 143-145.

87. See, on all this, J. LEFORT, "The Rural Economy, 7th-12th Centuries," and A. LAIOU, "The Agrarian Economy, 13th-15th Centuries," in *EHB*.

88. *Excavations at Nichoria*, 376-7, 423.

89. LEFORT, "Rural Economy," 107.

90. On oil vats (λιηνός) see *ODB*, s.v. wine production. Archaeologists have found olive presses in Syria but not in medieval Byzantine villages, as far as I know; there are remnants of olive and wine presses in Corinth.

the villages, but also timber for sale, as well as acorns for tanning, dyes of various kinds, and medicinal plants. The exploitation of wood and forest was an important part of the village economy<sup>91</sup>.

Artisanal activity of some sort always existed in Byzantine villages. In the late 6th to the late 8th c., archaeological evidence has shown that, in the Peloponnese, in settlements that were much reduced in size, there was building activity as well as workshops that produced rough pottery and objects such as buckles<sup>92</sup>. However, artisanal production seems to have been at its highest in the 13th-14th centuries. Artisanal production in the village is indicative of economic and perhaps social differentiation among the village inhabitants. It also shows a connection with the market economy: the local production of some important items, such as horse-shoes and agricultural implements possibly, indeed probably, involves some inter-village trade; and, as we know from a number of sources, a certain specialization resulted in the sale of some products, e.g. items of clothing, over larger areas, even to city inhabitants.<sup>93</sup> One may imagine a higher standard of living for such artisans. Indeed, there is archaeological information from the region of Nichoria, an area associated with metallurgy, for the existence, in this rural area, during the middle Byzantine period, of fine pottery, jewelry and good quality glass.<sup>94</sup>

There was, thus, increasing complexity and differentiation in village society. The village encompassed not only differentiated economic activity, but also a diversified population, with different mixes, over time, of free proprietors, dependent peasants (*paroikoi*), agricultural laborers and artisans.

#### *Internal Structuring Factors and Solidarities*

The village was given its cohesion by internal solidarities that functioned at the level of the village itself and also within the smaller constituent unit, which was the family. Because of the research that has been undertaken in the last few decades, we are now quite well informed about these solidarities. The picture that has emerged is a rather complex and subtle one, matching the complexity of village society at the economic level.

The medieval Byzantine village developed in the context of a relatively strong state and relatively weak aristocratic, seigniorial powers. As a result, the peasants, organized in village communities, structured, to a considerable extent, the agrarian space, always in conjunction with the fiscal interests of the state which intervened in the village community in order to safeguard its own fiscal and later its economic interests; hence the fiscal solidarity of the village community, whose import recent scholarship has questioned.<sup>95</sup> It should be restated and reaffirmed that the village community of the 9th and 10th centuries was much more than a fiscal unit. Its members, mostly landholders and taxpayers, held communal rights over certain resources, such as water and mills, as well as on the *incultum*. They acted as a moral person, initiating judicial action against monastic landlords

91. A. DUNN, "The Exploitation and Control of Woodland and Scrubland in the Byzantine World," *BMGS* 16 (1992), 235-98.

92. A. LAMBROPOULOU, H. ANAGNOSTAKIS, V. KONTI, A. PANOPOULOU, "Συμβολή στην ερμηνεία των αρχαιολογικών τεκμηρίων της Πελοποννήσου κατά τους σκοτεινούς αιώνες in *Οι σκοτεινοί αιώνες του Βυζαντίου (7ος-9ος αι)*, Athens, 2001, 189 ff.

93. LEFORT, "Anthroponymie"; LAIOU-THOMADAKIS, *Peasant Society*, 120-27.

94. *Excavations at Nichoria*, 423.

95. OIKONOMIDES, *Fiscalité*, 54, 63-66, after KAPLAN, *Les hommes et la terre*, 211-215.

or others. They could and did appear en masse before state tribunals, arguing for their ancient rights over their territory which, in the most eloquent case known to us, included, in the late 10th century, new settlements, that is, hamlets, created by monasteries. The term “τὸ κοινόν”, of old usage, introduced in the same document to refer to the community, encapsulates this community of interests, obligations, rights and economic activities.<sup>96</sup>

Things changed in the course of the tenth century, and by the mid-eleventh century the transformation was far advanced.<sup>97</sup> The village community was eroded by the expansion of the estate in the countryside, and the integration of villages among the properties of lay and ecclesiastical landlords. Especially in villages which were shared by more than one landlord, there was loss of economic cohesion. The large landowner now provided the structure in the countryside, and in the case of new settlements created by the landlords (the hamlets) landlord control must have been very extensive. Fiscal solidarity toward the state remained only in vestigial form, and was replaced by individual responsibilities toward landlords.<sup>98</sup> Nevertheless, strong elements of village solidarity remained. In spatial terms, the delimitation of the village could survive as though the village still had its own boundaries and economic space, independently of the landlords, and despite the fact that this coexisted with delimitations that treated the “rights” of landlords as a unit.<sup>99</sup> Economic solidarity might take the form of cooperation among peasants who owned only one ox instead of a full team; villagers might work together to clear lands, or to erect a mill. Villagers could and did make donations as a group.<sup>100</sup> They also could engage in disputes with local landlords, as they did in thirteenth century Asia Minor. The village élites, consisting of peasants of established families, perhaps also the richer ones, the *oikodespotai* of the 10th century, the *proestoi*, *kreittones*, *protogeroi*, or *prokritoi* of a later period, the *eirenopoioi gerontes* of the Empire of Trebizond<sup>101</sup> represented the village in its relations with outsiders, including the state and the landlords, and played a role in the mediation of disputes. In the late period, their significant role hints at the cohesion of the social structure of the village.<sup>102</sup> In other words, because communal organization had been strong, elements of it remained even though the countryside had acquired a new form of organization into a domanial economy.

96. *Iviron* I, no. 9 (995). The strong cohesion and solidarity of the community, though not in fiscal matters, has been stressed by M. KAPLAN, “Les villageois aux premiers siècles byzantins (VI<sup>e</sup>-X<sup>e</sup> siècles) : Une catégorie homogène ?” *BSI* 43 (1982), 201-17.

97. One will read with profit N. OIKONOMIDES, “The Social Structure of the Byzantine Countryside in the First Half of the Xth century,” *Symmeikta*, 10 (1996), 105-25. The village community, with fiscal solidarity, may have survived much longer in the Pontus as Bryer has concluded from the acts of Vazelon: A. BRYER, “Rural Society,” *passim*.

98. See N. OIKONOMIDES, “La fiscalité byzantine et la communauté villageoise au XI<sup>e</sup> siècle,” *Septième Congrès International d'études du sud-est européen, Rapports*, Athens, 1994, 89-102, who argues that the peasant community, at least in the 11th c., could include or consist of *paroikoi* of the state, with its primary characteristic being collective fiscal responsibility for taxes that were not paid, or for the taxation of communal property, for example, mills. It was, thus, an instrument in the service of the Fisc, whereas on the domains of individuals we have the development of personal as opposed to collective responsibilities vis-à-vis the Fisc.

99. On this, see LAIOU-THOMADAKIS, *Peasant Society*, 46 ff, but also the report by KYRITSES and SMYRLIS in this book, who qualify such statements, saying that when the monastery of the Lemviotissa acquired a village, the documents speak of the “*dikaia*” of Lemvos.

100. For example, to restore a church.

101. BRYER, “Rural Society,” 158.

102. LAIOU-THOMADAKIS, *Peasant Society*, 62 ff; JU. JA. VIN, “Evolucija organov samoupravljenija sel'skoj občiny i formirovanie vočinnoj administracii v pozdnej Vizantii,” *VV* 43 (1982), 201-18.

This is a somewhat different interpretation from what is current, especially for the 10th century, the difference being one of stress. If the village community has been presented by some scholars, primarily N. Oikonomides, as having less of a fiscal and social significance than had been argued by scholars earlier, there is still no question that very great changes took place around the year 1000, to become quite clear around the year 1100. With the introduction of outsiders into the community through the sale of klasmatic lands, and with the direct exploitation of klasmatic lands by the state, which occurred heavily under Basil II and after him, and then with the granting of entire villages to individuals, the erosion of the community progressed. But in the current scholarly perception, there was less to erode, and the erosion was not absolute since traces of village solidarity persisted.

The church can be seen as both an external and an internal structuring mechanism. Its role in village society needs to be approached with sensitivity and to be re-examined, especially for the period after the tenth century. The church seems to have been instrumental in structuring the topography of the village, as well as playing an important role in the social, economic and spiritual life of its inhabitants. Already in the early period, the fourth to sixth centuries, the Christian church became a structural element of the villages, and the clergy, although well integrated in village society, formed part of its élite.<sup>103</sup> Most, although not all villages seem to have had a church, whether we assume this from the presence of priests or whether the actual ruins of churches have been found. Indeed, it seems that archaeologists sometimes take the presence of a church to be a marker for the existence of a village.<sup>104</sup> Where village churches have been identified, they seem to occupy the center of, or in any case an important location in the village, thus providing a focus for its physical layout.

Beyond that, the church influenced village life in other ways. It functioned as a landlord, and, especially after the 11th century, the great monasteries had a number of villages under their control, which means not only that they collected the rents and the labor services of the peasants but also that they supervised production, and perhaps gave it a more rational organization. This is part of the role of the church as an external structuring factor. But, as we shall see, the representatives of the church in a village could interfere not only in the collection of rent and the organization of production, but even in the personal life of the inhabitants.

The church acted as a mediator between the peasants and the state authorities. We know this for the Despotate of Epiros in the first half of the 13th century, and it may also have been true later; there is, as far as I know, no study of this topic in late Byzantium. For that period where we have information, and a few studies, it is clear that the church played an important role in some major issues. It did not only act as a patron of the peasants/taxpayers, asking the government for a remission of taxes.<sup>105</sup> Its representatives, certainly in the countryside of Epiros and Macedonia in the 13th century, replaced the

103. M. KAPLAN, "Le village byzantin: Naissance d'une communauté chrétienne," in *Villages et Villageois au Moyen Âge*, Société des historiens médiévistes de l'enseignement supérieur public, Paris, 1992, 15-25.

104. See BELKE, report in this book. E. Patlagean, *Pauvreté économique et pauvreté sociale*, Paris, La Haye, 1977, 311, disapproves of this approach.

105. N. A. BEES, "Unedierte Schriftstücke aus der Kanzlei des Johannes Apokaukos des Metropoliton von Naupaktos (in Aetolien)," *BNJ*, 21 (1971-1974), no. 53; S. PÉTRIDÈS, "Jean Apokaukos, lettres et autres documents inédits," *IRAIK*, XIV, 1909, nos. 9-10.

state in the matter of the punishment of the major crime of murder. Thus, in the areas covered by the acts of Demetrios Chomatianos and John Apokaukos, the church reserved to itself the right to deal with murderers who appealed to it, issuing ecclesiastical punishment and completely forbidding the state to impose its own punishment.<sup>106</sup> This should not be taken as a universal phenomenon, for we find, in the late 13th century, considerable disagreement between the bishop of Kanina and imperial officials on the matter of what was to happen to the property of a man who had committed a murder, and whether the punishment would also fall upon his "neighbors" and fellow-villagers; the bishop, here, by the way, acted as protector of the "neighbors" when they were innocent of the crime.<sup>107</sup> The role of priests as mediators and as petty functionaries, and thus as members of the élite of the village, fully integrated in village society, has been studied by Ferjančić in the 13th and 14th centuries, but more work is necessary and possible given the considerable information extant in archival sources. And the studies of Peter Brown on the role not of priests, to be sure, but of holy men as patrons and protectors in the late Antique period might with profit be re-opened for later periods.<sup>108</sup>

Given the prevalence of the familial exploitation, the peasant family was both an economic and a social unit, the mainstay of social relations and economic activity. As far as family and kinship are concerned, our knowledge of the way they functioned within village society has been greatly increased by a number of studies.<sup>109</sup>

In 14th century Macedonia certainly, in the rest of the Empire most probably, there is a clear prevalence of the nuclear family. In the villages of eastern Macedonia, the proportion of vertically extended households ranges from 14% to 22%, and that of laterally extended households from 9% to 30%, while an important number of households are related to each other.<sup>110</sup> It has been argued that the nuclear family had a much more important position in the tenth century, whereas by the fourteenth, extended kinship relations had become more

106. See, for example, BEES, no. 18; PÉTRIDÈS, "Jean Apokaukos," no. 15; *Demetrii Chomatiani archiepiscopi Bulgariae decisiones*, ed. J. B. Pitra, *Analecta sacra et classica spicilegio Solesmensi parata*, VI, Paris-Rome, 1891, nos. 131, 120 (hereafter, Chomatianos). See, on this issue, M.-Th. FÖGEN, "Ein ganz gewöhnlicher Mord," *Rechtshistorisches Journal*, 3 (1984), 71-81.

107. P. J. ALEXANDER, "A Chrysobull of the Emperor Andronikos II Palaiologos in favor of the See of Kanina in Albania," *Byz.* 15 (1940-41), 167-207; on the question of the *phonikon* in the Palaiologan period, see A. LAIOU, "Le débat sur les droits du fisc et les droits régaliens au début du 14<sup>e</sup> siècle," *REB*, 58 (2000), 97-122.

108. See, for example, P. BROWN, "The Rise and Function of the Holy Man in Late Antiquity," *JRS* 61 (1971), 80-101. For the 10th and 11th centuries, see KAPLAN, *Les hommes et la terre*, 202, 228-30. For the 13th-14th centuries, see B. FERJANČIĆ, "Ogled o parohijskom sveštenstvu u poznoj Vizantiji," *ZRVI* 22 (1983), 59-117.

109. LAIOU-THOMADAKIS, *Peasant Society*, passim; J. LEFORT, "La transmission des biens en milieu paysan dans la première moitié du XIV<sup>e</sup> siècle en Macédoine", in J. Beaucamp and G. Dagron, ed., *La transmission du patrimoine: Byzance et l'aire méditerranéenne*, Paris, 1998, 161-177; V. KRAVARI, "Les actes privés des monastères de l'Athos et l'unité du patrimoine familial," in D. Simon, ed., *Eherecht und Familiengut in Antike und Mittelalter*, Munich, 1992, 77-88; A. LAIOU, "Contribution à l'étude de l'institution familiale en Épire au XIII<sup>e</sup> siècle," *Fontes Minores VI* (1984), 275-323; EAD., "Marriage Prohibitions, Marriage Strategies and the Dowry in Thirteenth-Century Byzantium," *La transmission du patrimoine*, 129-160; EAD., *Mariage, amour et parenté à Byzance aux XI<sup>e</sup>-XIII<sup>e</sup> siècles*, Paris, 1992, esp. ch. V. G. G. LITAVRIN, "Family Relations and Family Law in the Byzantine Countryside of the Eleventh Century: An Analysis of the Praktikon of 1073," *DOP*, 44 (1990), 187-93, draws conclusions that rest on a bed of arbitrary assumptions, and thus has to be read judiciously.

110. LAIOU-THOMADAKIS, *Peasant Society*, Tables III-1, III-2, III-6.

powerful.<sup>111</sup> It remains an open, and fascinating, question whether the development of this strong protection mechanism is connected structurally and not simply chronologically to the weakening of the village community.

The concerns of the peasantry with regard to their family strategy were not dissimilar to those which governed other social strata: the preservation of the family unit and of the integrity of the family holding in the face of the instabilities introduced by factors such as the demographic one, and by the legal system, which favored the fragmentation of property at the moment of the marriage of the children and the death of the parents.

There were external instabilities: the high mortality rates would mean that the nuclear family could be dissolved by the death of one of the partners, and a considerable number of the offspring of each couple would die before reaching maturity.<sup>112</sup> The large number of widows, observable in the records for 14th century Macedonia where they headed between 17% and 22% of households, makes the point. Remarriage was a strategy which other strata of society adopted, partly to counteract this problem; but it was a risky strategy, since it endangered the integrity of the family property.<sup>113</sup> Among the peasantry of Macedonia, we can observe cases of remarriage, although its extent cannot be estimated.<sup>114</sup> An example from a different area and time, a place called Vatrachochori, in the jurisdiction of the metropolitan of Naupaktos, may be somewhat extreme, since the woman involved not only remarried after the death of her first husband, but, after having lost her second husband as well, she lived with a third man, without benefit of matrimony.<sup>115</sup>

The dissolution of a marriage by means of divorce was not as rare as one might imagine in the Byzantine Empire. People from all walks of life used most of the available legal grounds for divorce, and some that were not really legal.<sup>116</sup> One might, equally, suppose that in the closed confines of village society the dissolution of a marriage was extremely unusual. In point of fact, we cannot know how frequent it was, but we do know that it did occur. Much of our information on this issue comes from western Greece and Macedonia, the territories which formed the Despotate of Epiros in the early 13th century. The documentation shows that in the villages of this area divorce was an event that involved not only the two people most concerned, but the community as well. Thus, when a man named Mavros and his wife Anna (note the absence of a second name) from the village Tzernisovista asked Demetrios Chomatianos for a divorce because of Mavros' prolonged impotence, the archbishop of Ochrid sought the testimony of "their neighbors who live in the same village" as to the impotence of the man. A large number of neighbors considered themselves able to give testimony on this rather delicate issue.<sup>117</sup> The community could censure sexual mores by ridiculing a wife's infidelity, or a wife's profound hatred of her husband. The shame thus brought on the husband by the village community provides the background, and some of the unofficial justification, for divorce.<sup>118</sup>

111. LEFORT, "Rural Economy", 113; cf. LAIOU-THOMADAKIS, *Peasant Society*, 106-7.

112. EAD, *ibid.*, especially ch. VII.

113. LAIOU, "Institution familiale," 283 ff.

114. LAIOU-THOMADAKIS, *Peasant Society*, 89-94.

115. BEES, no. 7.

116. LAIOU, *Marriage*, ch. III.

117. CHOMATIANOS, no. 123.

118. *Id.*, no. 143, Nikos and Anna from Prespa; it is not certain that they are villagers but it is likely. See also BEES, no. 7: Constantine and Irene from the village Govlastou.



One may well imagine that in the Byzantine countryside, as in western Europe,<sup>119</sup> there were strategies to safeguard the stability of the matrimonial unit. But it was never an absolute desideratum, and we are left with the impression that strategies to preserve unions (such as the one used by the *epitropoi* of the church of Naupaktos in the village Govlastou, who in vain tried to force a married couple to have intercourse so that the woman, who professed great hatred for her husband, might be tamed),<sup>120</sup> were balanced off by the complicity of the community in the divorce. In one case, a divorce was issued in the countryside outside Prizren by the husband, the wife's parents, "trustworthy" witness and the bishop of Prizren.<sup>121</sup> The principle parties were Slavs.

In the matter of the exploitation and transmission of property, the peasantry followed rules and customs which, while not divergent in principle from those adopted by other segments of society, moved over a gamut of different practices, which served to optimize the viability of the holding. Thus, we observe much more clearly than in the case of the aristocracy that the peasant family held its property in common, whatever its provenance may have been, establishing in this manner a collective family right over it, certainly as a matter of common practice if not in law. Furthermore, we can see in the extant *praktika* the practice of joint ownership and joint exploitation of property, which is observable in other segments of rural society: members of the provincial élite, or people with considerable property, who may have been both producers of and traders in agricultural goods. The joint possession and exploitation of land was a common enough phenomenon that it made its way into a commentary on the law on *protimesis*. It is a natural corrective to a system of inheritance which privileged the equal distribution of the family property among siblings, while leaving considerable discretionary power to those who bothered to establish a testament. As a corrective, it had a different and heavier import in a peasant household, where every square meter of vineyard counted. Thus a general practice had specific implications in the village.

Co-residence and common exploitation of property had its limits. In legal texts, which are normative by nature, that limit, in the middle Byzantine period, tended to be the fourth degree of consanguinity, that is to say, first cousins. This is also the limit that is observable in peasant households. Is this a case of the law following practice? Certainly, it underlines a point which I think can be made on the basis of the existing evidence. Peasant society in the Byzantine Empire was not organized in ways that differed fundamentally from those on which the rest of society ran, despite the contempt that urban inhabitants of the Empire voiced with regard to the peasantry. But peasant families, by necessity or by choice, employed variations on common themes. One such variation may be the virtual assimilation of dowry property into patrimonial property.

Similarly, in the process of the division of property at the moment of the marriage of offspring or the death of the parents, what is observable in the village is a mixture of general practice and individual arrangements. In the Byzantine Empire, equal partible inheritance was the law, in the case of intestate succession. Peasants rarely made testaments

119. LAIOU, "Institution familiale," 317 and n. 157.

120. BEES, no. 7.

121. CHOMATIANOS, no. 103. In Chomatianos, no. 23, it takes the testimony of a number of priests from Prizren, as well as of the landlord of the village Voda to persuade the court to issue a decree of divorce to a couple of *paroikoi*, the wife pleading implacable hatred; possibly the most common grounds for divorce among people of low social status, including the peasants.

and in the village the general pattern was indeed that of equal partible inheritance, which sometimes resulted in the fragmentation of property into tiny segments or shares. At the same time, there were individual strategies that, through joint exploitation or through other, even less formal means, resulted in arrangements which left the property relatively whole, giving a strong voice or even ownership to a single member of the family. Strategies of inheritance and succession were complex and variegated in the Byzantine village, oscillating between the need to keep a holding economically viable, to provide for the offspring of the family, and to make sure that the parents also would receive sustenance.

The interconnection between succession strategies, the exploitation of natural resources and the physical aspect of settlement is made clear by the Fiscal Treatise of the Marciana. In detailing the various ways in which hamlets were formed, the text envisages the following process. The parents of a village family with numerous offspring divide the patrimony among their children as by law and custom they were bound to do. Some of their children inherit the *esothyra*, the possessions inside the cultivated area of the village. The rest of the children inherit the *exothyra*, lands outside the village. These heirs find it difficult to live in the village and exploit far-lying lands, so they move onto this property, improve it, and create an *agridion*.<sup>122</sup> It is quite clear that these had been uncultivated lands. The system of partible inheritance, in a period of rising population, resulted in the structured expansion of cultivation, and the creation of new habitats. A different system, that of primogeniture, for example, might well have meant the emigration of younger siblings, or, if conditions permitted, their employment as paid or unpaid but in any case landless labor.

We are very poorly informed about the marriage strategies of the peasantry. One assumes that these were influenced by, among other things, the size of the village, since the inhabitants of a small settlement would be more likely to seek partners outside their village, with consequences for the integrity of the holding. Patient study may be able to uncover some patterns here. It also should be remembered that after the eleventh century, when a considerable part of the peasantry consisted of people who did not own arable land but rented it, strategies of marriage, co-residence and exploitation of the property had to take into account not only the individual holding but also human resources and animal power.

I think that there is considerably more to be done on the subject of village society, especially in the period after the tenth century. It seems to me that village solidarities and the examination of those mechanisms that kept villages as functioning social units are among the topics that will continue to be of interest to scholars in the future. The Athonite archives can still yield important information. At the same time, other sources, pertaining to Thessaly, the Despotate of Epirus, and the region around Smyrna, which have been used less systematically in this regard, can shed light both on universal practices and, possibly, on regional differences.

122. DÖLGER, *Finanzverwaltung*, 115.

The spiritual and cultural aspects of life in the village need not elude us either. Here, considerable progress is being made. The evidence of archaeology, art history and documentary history can yield valuable results for this topic. The reader is referred to the articles, in this volume, by Sharon Gerstel, Linda Safran, Brigitte Pitarakis and Maria Panayiotidou.<sup>123</sup>

There is one note I wish to make in this connection. Village solidarity, in the later period, is often found in contexts which are connected with the church. Thus, all of the inhabitants of the village Dryanouvaina, "with a common accord", took it upon themselves to assume the tax burden of a piece of land which had been sold by one of their number to Nikolaos Maliasenos so that it could be added to the property of the monastery of Nea Petra.<sup>124</sup> The inhabitants of the village asked for the tax burden of that land to be added to the total of their tax bill, so that every year they would pay it, each participating according to his or her ability. Is this why, also, the "best of the inhabitants" of the village (τῶν κρειττόνων ὄλων ἐποίκων) witnessed the sale of this piece of land?<sup>125</sup> We can recall, also, that it is in dedicatory inscriptions in churches that we find the "κοινὸς λαός" of the villages as well as their *prokritoi* acting together to pay for the decoration or the repair of the churches.<sup>126</sup>

## Conclusion

In the lands of the Byzantine Empire, the great change from the ancient and Late Antique past was the collapse of the urban structures that had for so long dominated the countryside. The differentiation between city and rural settlement had been sharp, despite the existence of intermediary institutions, such as the large village. It was, as we know, an institutional differentiation, and it had important economic components, in the exchange interaction between city and countryside, and in the structuring of exchange relations through urban networks. With the disappearance of this system, the countryside was structured differently. The village as a form of settlement, always strong, perhaps already predominant, became much more important. What is more, it became the basis of the fiscal system, and for a long time it interacted primarily with the state. It is a matter of major importance that for the same length of time the aristocracy derived its prestige and economic power primarily from the distribution of the surplus by the state; and that means from the major city, Constantinople. This created a nexus of relationships that affected the countryside and the village in a way that is quite different from that of western Europe in the same period. The story of the *incastellamento* in the West, contrasted to the shaping of the Byzantine village by the state and the élite resident in Constantinople, is indicative.

The continuum city-town-village assumed a different form from the Late Antique period, as towns outside a few major centers, primarily Constantinople and Thessaloniki, were small, without clear institutional functions that affected the countryside. That is true until the late tenth century, when cities began to experience a revival. After that, there were more numerous outsiders with whom the village interacted: the state, the landlords, the cities. As the economy developed, as the society changed, so did the village.

123. See, now, Sh. GERSTEL, "The Sins of the Farmer: Illustrating Village Life (and Death) in Medieval Byzantium," *Word, Image, Number; Communication in the Middle Ages*, in J. J. CONTRENI, S. CASCIANI edd., Sismel, 2002, 205-17.

124. MM. IV, 391-93.

125. *Ibid.*, 396-99.

126. See, for example, KALOPISSI-VERTI 1992, p. 65, no. 17.

In the history of the village, there are long-term factors and long-term resistances. The climate and the conditions of the soil are long-term, but far from immutable. Over-exploitation, for example, changed the productive resources, and thus the siting and population of villages. Among the long-term realities, one must include the quasi-permanence of the small exploitation. Among the long-term resistances we count the cohesion of village society, both when it included a component of fiscal solidarity and when it acquired other forms of expression. These facts do not constitute an argument for the immutability of the village as an actor in the management of either natural or human resources. The point is, that the village is but one among the actors, and it is the interaction between them that makes for change.

There are, finally, two points I should like to stress. The first is, that the story of the village must be seen as a dynamic one, much dependent on networks of relationships. Internal relationships, complex and delicate, constitute the management of human capital and human life. External relationships, with nature, with other villages and settlements, with economic forces such as the market, with political forces, relationships equally complex, constitute the management of resources, their appropriation and their distribution. The second point is connected with this. The permanences in the organization of production and internal relationships bespeak a certain autonomy. But village society is not a society apart; quite the contrary. It is very much a part of an integrated whole, adapting, manipulating and revising social norms to serve its needs. Integration does not mean harmony; it does mean that social relations in an exploitative system incorporate delicate mechanisms of adjustment. The village as a focus for the management of natural and human resources, that is, the village both as a settlement and as a nexus of social relationships in the countryside, remains profoundly a function of the economic and political relationships which govern the system of production and appropriation. There is no contradiction or dilemma here, between the specificities of the development of village society and the overall system; rather, there is a dynamic, dialectic relationship, which it is our task to comprehend and refine.

# BYZANTINE VILLAGES IN NORTH AFRICA

Simon P. ELLIS\*

*Résumé – En Afrique byzantine, à la différence des provinces orientales le peuplement est caractérisé par la prépondérance des fermes et des domaines. Le témoignage archéologique indique plutôt un déclin général de ce peuplement au VI<sup>e</sup> et au VII<sup>e</sup> siècle, l'accroissement n'étant attesté que dans certaines régions de Proconsulaire (Segermes). On ne trouve pas de traces archéologiques de la prospérité agricole si souvent célébrée. L'absence d'un réseau de villages et de petite propriété pourrait expliquer la fragilité de l'économie lorsque la conquête arabe fit disparaître le groupe de marchands et d'intermédiaires qui jouaient un rôle central dans la province.*

## I. INTRODUCTION\*\*

For the Byzantinist Africa is seen as a province on the margin – a Justinianic 'reconquest' that survived barely 150 years, and a province that maintained a 'western' character in its religious loyalties, and its languages. Yet it was from far off Africa that Heraclius launched his successful bid for the Empire. It was to Africa and Sicily that Constans II looked when matters looked bleak in the East.

There is no doubt that at the root of African influence during the Roman period was a huge agricultural wealth in grain and olive oil. This wealth maintained the African grain fleet that supplied Rome and, perhaps, Constantinople. It also gave the African elite great spending power and political influence. Furthermore the elite of African landowners also included many leading citizens of Rome, if not Constantinople, who would have the direct ear of the emperor. Africa had its own economic systems and power structures, but there were always many leading imperial courtiers who were part of this system, allowing Africans to influence central political and economic policy.

This article is a contribution to a debate on Byzantine villages. As an archaeologist, I have adopted an avowedly archaeological approach. There is however a broader purpose: to suggest how Byzantinists should view North Africa – not as 'Roman' or 'western' but as a land in its own right.

The central historical problem of Byzantine Africa is economic. In the Byzantine period Africa influenced Constantinople, but it is not known whether the undoubted agricultural wealth of Roman Africa was as important in the Byzantine period, and thus whether Africa continued to have an active economic influence.

## II. DEFINING THE VILLAGE

**A village is a rural agglomeration of houses. On the smallest scale a village is clearly more than a single property; it is a grouping that at the very least includes the houses of several different extended families.** In the North African context, it is debatable whether

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an agglomeration of houses on the estate of a rich landowner should be considered a village. To my mind a village should have some autonomy as settlement, and I would tend to consider a group of smaller houses clustering round a large central house as an estate or 'domaine' rather than a village. On the other hand it must be acknowledged that many seemingly isolated groups of 'rural' houses without a central house could still have been owned by a large estate.<sup>1</sup>

At the grandest scale a village is clearly smaller than a town. We could all immediately agree that a grand city like Carthage or Lepcis was not a village, but as we move down the scale in terms of size or organisation this distinction becomes more difficult. The Byzantines themselves described as cities what were in reality little more than forts.

There are two physical dimensions in which it is possible to distinguish what one might call a village from other kinds of agglomeration. Firstly the question of urbanization. A village is normally assumed to have grown in an organic way rather than according to a structured plan. This does not mean that everything without a Hippodamian grid is a village. The famous hilltop town of Dougga has a planned design in which public buildings are set out within a framework of spiral streets leading to the centre.<sup>2</sup> City planners used the topography of the hill as a strategic plan for developing the town. A village might be expected to have grown in a more random fashion, with houses facing in different directions, and irregular polygonal open spaces between them. The more relaxed spatial constraints on village development often lead, for example, to relatives building houses on the edge of the built area, but as close as possible to their parents' house.<sup>3</sup>

The second dimension is public buildings. One would assume that a village had fewer resources than a town, and no formal municipal status. This leads to the conclusion that villages are less likely to have public buildings. No one would object to the term village if the settlement had a church or temple, or even a small baths, but a village with a monumental forum or a civil basilica seems inherently implausible. In late antique and Byzantine times of course the church was ubiquitous while other public buildings were less common. This may cause difficulties when both villages and small towns may have many churches, but no other public buildings.

I would thus maintain that villages are small settlements say 20 to 50 houses, with few public buildings, and with a degree of political autonomy. At the same time I would retain two particular issues:

- a. Are domanian settlements around a single large house villages?
- b. If late antique settlements had few public building other than the ubiquitous church how do we distinguish a village from a small town?

The term 'agglomération rurale' is often used to describe such village settlements in modern surveys of the North African countryside.<sup>4</sup> However it is used somewhat indiscriminately and a finer definition of North African rural settlement is required which reflects both morphology and historical context. Such precision is required if archaeology is to be used to support historical arguments.

1. D. J. MATTINGLY and R. B. HITCHNER, Roman Africa: an archaeological review, *JRS*, 85, 1995, p. 165-213 is an excellent summary of present knowledge [See now A. Leone and D. Mattingly, *Vandal, Byzantine and Arab Rural Landscapes in North Africa*, N. Christie ed., *Landscapes of Change*, Aldershot, 2004, p. 135-62 *Editors' note*].

2. S. ELLIS, Prologue to a study of Roman urban form, *Proceedings of the Second Theoretical Roman Archaeology Conference*, Avebury, 1995, p. 99-104.

3. This form of development is often suggested for the late antique villages of Syria.

4. The term would seem to have originated with the French military surveys the 'Brigades Topographiques' and has since been adopted by modern scholars in both French and English.

### III. THE COUNTRYSIDE IN ROMAN NORTH AFRICA

#### A. Types of settlement

It is not yet possible to give a definitive description of the North African countryside though some information can be gathered from written sources.<sup>5</sup>

For an archaeologist, especially one specialising in housing, there are many very major questions still unresolved.

This discussion is based on field survey. It is generally acknowledged that such surveys can provide a reasonably accurate picture of the number of settlements in the area surveyed, though this will depend on the survey method, and the way the results are analysed. For example the survey area must be walked intensively, combing the whole area for any pottery and structures. Analysis of the finds must also give careful weight to the expected distribution of finds given the length of the periods of occupation, levels of ceramic production in different periods, and the likelihood of loss. Ideally any conclusions should be tested by excavation, and it is the lack of excavation of rural sites in North Africa that is, at present, the major lacuna. Detailed survey is also required in a wider range of physical environments, especially the richer areas of agricultural production during the Roman period.

We may start so to speak at the 'top of the food chain', at least in terms of wealth, architecture, and status. Both Leveau for Caesarea<sup>6</sup> and Mattingly for Tripolitania<sup>7</sup> have stated that true *villae maritimae* comparable to those of the bay of Naples existed only on the coast. I have always harboured doubts over whether our traditional picture of the Roman villa, based on those of Spain, Gaul and Britain ever existed in North Africa away from the coast.<sup>8</sup> Our concept of the African villa is derived mostly on mosaic illustrations, and those images were found in urban contexts. They may have represented the typical Roman idyll rather than reality.

Away from the coast the 'top of the food chain' may have been what can be termed the oil 'factory'.<sup>9</sup> An utilitarian building filled with oil storage and presses that acted as a central place for domaine owners to gather in the crops from their estates and from local independent farmers. These buildings were also houses, as their architecture has domestic characteristics.<sup>10</sup> Some may have been inhabited by the bailiffs of estate owners. Others may have been inhabited by intermediaries in the oil trade.

5. S. LANCEL, *Actes de la conférence de Carthage en 411*, 4 vol., Paris, 1972-1991, especially in vol. 1, where the editor gives very useful indications concerning rural bishoprics and villagers communities.

6. P. LEVEAU, *Caesarea de Maurétanie*, Rome, 1984, p. 247-59.

7. D. MATTINGLY, *Roman Tripolitania*, London (1995), p. 141.

8. I first expressed this idea at the Archaeological Institute of America Christmas meeting of 1988. The precise buildings in which African mosaic depicting villas were found are not known, but an urban context is apparent from their generic find spots. The most thorough discussion of the illustrations remains T. SARNOWSKI, *Les représentations de villas sur les mosaïques africaines tardives*, Warsaw, 1978.

9. L. ANSELMINO *et al.*, *Il Castellum del Nador*, Rome, 1989 is the only such 'factory' to have been excavated. See also MATTINGLY, *op. cit.* n. 6, p. 142-3.

10. Domestic characteristics include the use of a central yard, and the use of the characteristic African *triclinium* flanked on each side by smaller paired square rooms. See for example Kasserine site 225 Henchir El Touil.

The Segermes survey, in the north-east of modern Tunisia has found no evidence of such 'factories' though they have found more dispersed evidence of oil production.<sup>11</sup> This area is an inland zone, near the Zaghouan source of the Carthage aqueduct, it may suggest that the very urbanised 'coastal zone' pattern of settlement was more dominant here than the rural landscape geared towards agricultural production, characteristic of Kasserine some 150 km to the south-west. In Segermes, the absentee landlords of the urban elite may have found that they were close enough to organise agricultural production without resorting to the centralised collection points, or 'factories', needed in more remote areas.

Surveys (Caesarea, Segermes, Kasserine) have discovered the remains of what are commonly termed *domaines*, characterised by a large number of 'rooms' or buildings surrounding a central yard. It would seem that such sites consist of a central large estate building with large numbers of ancillary buildings, or the houses of estate workers. What is not clear, in the absence of excavation is the degree to which such *domaines* represent independent farms or non-residential units of large estates without the fine architecture of a residential 'villa'.

It is also certain that the North African countryside was filled with a large number of individual farmsteads.<sup>12</sup> At both Kasserine and Caesarea there are signs of isolated single room huts, and larger complexes that may have incorporated housing for members of a single extended family, and/or a wide range of agricultural functions. It is likely that the majority of these individual farms owed some sort of allegiance to a larger estate. Mattingly notes how almost all the presses in Tripolitania were near roads, suggesting that roads and presses operated as an integrated infrastructure for the olive trade that was run from the grand cities.<sup>13</sup> In the Kasserine area, between the steppe and the rich agricultural land of northern Proconsularis and Byzacena, Hitchner also thinks that these individual farms were producing a surplus.<sup>14</sup> They needed to channel this surplus through the major oil merchants. They also needed the press facilities that these 'companies' could provide through their 'factories' and smaller outposts.

In the pre-desert wadis of Tripolitania the Libyan Valleys survey of the early 1980s identified a particular form of settlement the *gsur* or fortified farm. Mattingly speaks of a slow growth in the number of fortified *gsur* from the third to the sixth century AD in response to rural unrest. The *gsur* was a well-built brick tower 2-3 storeys high with nine internal rooms in a rough grid fashion, a common late antique design. The heavy walls suggesting fortification are also characteristic of the oil 'factories', and have been associated with representations of towers of mosaics depicting villas.

There is considerable debate as to whether these 'fortifications' were for show, or for defence. It is unlikely they could withstand anything more than a skirmish and the current balance of opinion is to regard them as not being related to any specific defensive strategy or capability. The *gsur* were not a concept unique to Africa in the Roman period. A similar type of 'fortified' farm can be found in southern Portugal.<sup>15</sup> Some of the 'watchtowers' in the villages of southern Turkey, and northern Syria present similar problems of interpretation.<sup>16</sup> It is possible that they represent a common response to similar economic or social conditions.

11. S. DIETZ *et al.*, *Africa Proconsularis; Regional studies in the Segermes Valley of Northern Tunisia*, Copenhagen, 1995, 2 vols, p. 789.

12. Single isolated farms have also been reported north of the Medjerda valley, south-west of modern Bizerte in Tunisia: J. PEYRAS, *Le tell nord-est tunisien dans l'antiquité*, Paris, 1991, p. 399-400.

13. MATTINGLY, *op. cit.* n. 6, p. 142-3.

14. See R. B. HITCHNER, The organisation of rural settlement in the Cillium-Thelepte region, *L'Africa Romana* 6, 1988, p. 387-402, and *Ant. Afr.* 26, 1990, p. 387-402.

15. S. ELLIS, *Roman Housing*, London, 2000, p. 103, and for southern Portugal T. WAHL Castele de Lusa ein Wehrgehoft caesarisch-augustischer Zeit, *Madrid. Mitt.*, 25, 1985, p. 149-76.

16. E.g. Kanlidivane, v. F. HILD-H. HELLENKEMPER, *TIB* 5, p. 285-286.



Villages, as defined earlier, are much less common in North Africa than either individual farms, or small clusters of houses around a large dwelling – either *domaine*, or *gsur*. Villages do not appear, from our limited knowledge, to have been the main settlement form in rural North Africa, in contrast to the eastern provinces. Nevertheless villages did exist, perhaps in areas where the economic geography was propitious. Leveau discovered some 38 ‘*agglomérations rurales*’ in the area south of Caesarea, which were not associated with any villa or *domaine*. He gives particular distinction to Bou Chénoun and Sidi Aissa, which exhibited signs of ‘public buildings’ – a rampart and a church respectively.<sup>17</sup> Hitchner found some irregular agglomerations of small houses in the low hills near Kasserine. In the Libyan Valleys, some villages were discovered, most notably in the Zem Zem wadi.<sup>18</sup>

Two types of village were identified in the Kasserine survey.<sup>19</sup> 084 and 085 represent villages occupied from well before the Roman period. They consist of clusters of adjoining rooms lining the edges of hilltops. It is possible that each house consisted of one or several of these rooms. The rooms seem to be attached one to the other in an organic fashion, as if each room was added to the overall cluster as the need arose. The need may have been either an increased harvest requiring storage, or an increased family requiring accommodation.

Another type of village was more directly associated with the Roman period and can be represented by sites 081 and 082. They were also located on higher ground. Whereas the first type of village had no central open spaces, this second type was organised around a number of polygonal yards. The houses, or buildings, would seem to have consisted of groups of several rooms, perhaps in some cases with central yards. This kind of structure more resembles that which one would expect to find in Syria, though the scarps of the Kasserine examples limited their growth leaving them with a denser form than those on the eastern side of the Mediterranean.

It is very difficult to tell how many houses, let alone how many people, lived in these villages since it is impossible to determine either the boundaries between one house and another, or distinctions between living and storage space. Excavation is required.

It seems likely that these villages grew up in marginal land, which was too far from the main estates and ‘factories’. Local families lived in the area for centuries working together to ensure their economic welfare. Individual farmers could access urban facilities and oil processing in most places, but in these remote hills transport was difficult, and cultivation limited. Pastoralism was perhaps more successful than the cash crops of the plains, and also served to differentiate them from other types of settlement. Mattingly has suggested that, in the Libyan valleys survey area, the pastoral agriculture of the pre-Roman villages was discouraged in favour of agricultural estates. He contrasts the majority of wadis where the elite established estate farms, with the Zem Zem where villages still ‘resisted’ and seem to have been ‘controlled’ by a fortlet.<sup>20</sup> While the suggestion is appealing it seems to reflect more the theories of occupation of the north-west provinces than those of Africa.

17. LEVEAU *op. cit.* n. 5, p. 493.

18. D. MATTINGLY ed., *Farming in the Desert: the UNESCO Libyan Valleys Archaeological Survey Vol 2 Gazetteer and Pottery*, UNESCO, 1996, sites ZZ1-4, Magrusa.

19. R. B. HITCHNER, The Kasserine Archaeological Survey 1982-6, *Ant. Afr.* 24, 1988, p. 7-41.

20. D. MATTINGLY, Landscapes of imperialism in Roman Tripolitania, *L’Africa Romana* 12, 1998, p. 163-79.

In the case of Caesarea Leveau talks<sup>21</sup> about the 'cohérence persistante d'une société indigène', in which the villages were occupied over a longer period than the 'domaines'. He also suggests that the villages in the interior were less affected by development of the domainial system.

Evidence from the Segermes survey in Northern Tunisia is more ambiguous. Several sites were discovered in river valleys, which consisted of a number of independent buildings on different orientations, forming an irregularly spaced 'agglomeration'. These half a dozen settlements are much closer to the villages of Syria in regard to their more random pattern of 'urbanism'. Dietz signals that several rural 'agglomeration' included small independent baths buildings.<sup>22</sup>

### B. Systems of tenure

A variety of different structures, formal and informal, will have been used for land ownership in North Africa.<sup>23</sup> Knowledge of land tenure is limited to inscriptions and literature. Inscriptions have the benefit that they can often be linked to particular land parcels, but questions remain about their applicability outside the immediate find spot. Literary references may well reflect more general contemporary preconceptions about tenure patterns, but doubts are left about whether those preconceptions were justified or amounted to no more than prejudice.

Descriptions of the settlement patterns have been used to suggest ways in which archaeology can identify the organisation of agriculture and rural settlement. For example the remains of olive presses have been used to suggest the need for both tenants and independent farmers to use centralised pressing facilities. It is however much more difficult to find evidence for patterns of land ownership.

Pliny the Elder notoriously suggested that Nero had executed six people who between them owned half of Africa.<sup>24</sup> Elite and state ownership of estates, including villages, was central to African land exploitation.

The vast imperial estates in North Africa were one form of large single landlord. These estates seem to have been run into the Vandal period with a system of sharecropping. This did not prevent local tenants from forming small 'village' communities within them. Such settlements had their own magistrates and included facilities such as shops and markets.<sup>25</sup>

21. LEVEAU, *op. cit.* n. 5, p. 499-501.

22. DIETZ *et al.*, *op. cit.* n. 10, K15-1 (with baths), H17-1, Q12-1, and Q9-1. The last consists of a number of large 'yards' surrounded by long narrow ranges, rather than the more compact 'houses' of other sites.

23. D. VERA, Concentrazione fondiaria e redistribuzione delle ricchezza nell'Africa tardoantica, in M. CHRISTOL *et al.*, *Institutions, société et vie politique dans l'Empire romain*, Rome, 1992, p. 465-490; *id.*, Enfiteusi, colonato e trasformazioni agrarie nell'Africa Proconsolare del tardo imperio, in *L'Africa romana*, IV, 1, Sassari, 1986, p. 267-293. On the same topic, see C. LEPELLEY, *Aspects de l'Afrique romaine. Les cités. La vie rurale. Le christianisme*, Bari, 2001 (collected papers from 1979 to 1999).

24. *Natural History* 18.35.

25. For estates see above all D. KEHOE, *The Economics of Agriculture on Roman Imperial Estates in North Africa*, Göttingen, 1988.

We know a considerable amount about the tenure system of the African estates thanks to the Roman inscriptions from the Bagradas (Medjerda) valley and the late Vandalic Albertini Tablets.<sup>26</sup> Imperial estates were assembled piecemeal after the confiscation of land acquired by Roman senators through inheritance or conquest. By the third century AD the principles of the first century AD *lex Manciana* had been applied throughout the numerous estates of the Bagradas valley, if not across a much wider areas of Africa and Numidia. These principles were that tenants, *coloni*, should provide one third of their crops to the imperial authorities, and seven days of labour, in return for perpetual leases. The rents were collected on behalf of the procurator by *conductores* under short-term contracts. The implications of this arrangement are hotly debated. They created incentives for tenants to increase the area of land devoted to the crops that the imperial authorities required namely grain, oil and vines as opposed to pasture. Several seasons rent-free were allowed to enable vines and olives to become established and profitable. The system also created incentives for the *conductores* to ensure that the rents were maximised.

It is not clear how far such principals of land tenure operated on the major private estates of North Africa. Buildings such as the 'oil factories' suggest that there were central production facilities where tenants living in isolated farms or in tenured villages would come together to press olives and contribute rent to the landlord, but it is uncertain whether sharecropping or fixed rental operated. It is also unclear whether, as on the imperial estates, tenancies were held on a perpetual lease. The role of the nomads in North African agriculture indicates, that temporary labour certainly played a major role in the system as well.

A further point of uncertainty is how long these tenure arrangements continued. It is reasonable to suppose that the Vandals could have continued the tenure system. The Albertini tablets suggest as much for one part of the province during the reign of Gunthamund. As a small elite group it was easier for the Vandals to maintain existing legal arrangements where possible, rather than impose new systems. Lastly, on analogy with Visigothic arrangements in Gaul and Italy,<sup>27</sup> individual Vandals might well have been content to assume control of particular estates, many of which might have been the lost possessions of Italian senators and the state. Mattingly seems to regard the Albertini farmers as wadi farmers of the Tripolitanian type, whereas Hitchner is more circumspect and considers that the tenant had become more 'tied to the land' in an echo of 'tied coloni' of earlier scholarship.<sup>28</sup>

Although Justinian claimed to return all lands to the 'pre-Vandalic' owners there is no evidence to indicate whether or how far this actually happened. Modéran has drawn attention to the sixth century Novels concerning the colonate. It would seem that Justinian legislated in 552 and 558 to restrain landlords' claims on *coloni*, but that later emperors in 579 and 582 favoured the landlords.<sup>29</sup> The precise tenural circumstances behind these laws are unclear, but the change of emphasis can only have served to create confusion in African law courts.

26. The principal discussions of these arrangements are KEHOE, *ibid.*, and J. KOLENDO, *Le colonat en Afrique sous le haut-empire*. Paris, 1976. For the Albertini tablets see C. COURTOIS *et al.*, *Tablettes Albertini: actes privés de l'époque vandale*. Paris, 1952, and more recently D. MATTINGLY, Olive cultivation and the Albertini Tablets, *L'Africa Romana* 6, 1989, p. 403-15 together with R. B. HITCHNER, Historical text and archaeological context in Roman North Africa: the Albertini Tablets and the Kasserine survey, in D. SMALL ed., *Methods in the Mediterranean: historical and archaeological views on text and archaeology*. Leiden, 1995, p. 124-42.

27. As reported by Sidonius Apollinaris for Gaul, and Cassiodorus for Italy among others.

28. MATTINGLY and HITCHNER, *op. cit.* n. 24.

29. Justinian Novels 6 (552) and 9 (558). Justin II Novel 6 (579), and Maurice Novel 13 (582).

There is a suggestion from the archaeology presented earlier, and supported by the Bagradas inscriptions that the imperial government encouraged the formation of the 'domaines' which may have discouraged pastoralism, and encouraged the dissolution of villages which tended to follow this way of life. At the moment this seems to me to be a rather simplistic model, but further work may elucidate it. For the Byzantine period it should be noted that villages nonetheless survived.

### C. Nomads

Another vital characteristic of the North African countryside was nomadism. During the 1980s all of those working in North Africa began to appreciate that nowhere was there a closed frontier. Nomads were a necessary part of African society even in the most Romanised areas of Proconsularis. Still today Berbers and desert peoples come north in the summer out of the heat, to work on the northern farms as seasonal workers.<sup>30</sup> This has two major implications for North African society. Firstly North Africa was never closed to nomads even in the major cities. It was not a frontier like the Rhine or the Danube. Major tribal movements were necessary, or even encouraged, to meet the needs of the African economy. The *limes* and the garrison points in North Africa served to channel tribal movements, encouraging nomads to move faster to where their help was needed, and minimise the potential disruption to districts in the path of their migration.

Secondly onomastics show that to varying degrees, and at varying times, all settlements contained people with Latin, Berber, and Punic names. Ethnically Africa was always a mixed society with a variety of beliefs and religions. The communities were always intertwined. Most farmers had a foot in both camps; resenting when nomads took their crops in a raid, but thankful for their help at harvest time. The distinction between nomad and the inhabitants of the great cities was perhaps stronger and less amenable to reasonable discussion, but outside the town walls it is unlikely that the two classes were poles apart. Mattingly has suggested quite reasonably that many Berber 'tribes' indulged in settled agriculture and that they were often as angry at disruption from raids as city dwellers were.<sup>31</sup>

In many ways this picture does resemble the relationships between Byzantines and Arabs in sixth century Syria, where some Arabs were sedentary while others were nomads, some were allies and some were enemies, and all the time these relations were mutable and did not respect territorial boundaries.

## IV. VILLAGES IN BYZANTINE NORTH AFRICA

### A. Political History

Belisarius' initial conquest of North Africa in AD 534 was exceptionally swift and decisive, but it was followed by a long internal power struggle with rebel military units and Berber tribes, or at least this is how the enemy is characterised by our two sixth century sources Procopius and Corippus.

Mattingly<sup>32</sup> has associated the most significant tribal alliance, the Laguatan, with a loose federation of tribes that migrated, or extended its political control from Egypt and Cyrenaica, through to southern Tunisia during the sixth century. Initially after the Conquest

30. See Y. MODÉLAN, *Les Maures et l'Afrique romaine, IV<sup>e</sup>-VI<sup>e</sup> siècles*, Rome, 2004.

31. MATTINGLY *op. cit.* n. 6, p. 175.

32. *Op. cit.* n. 6, p. 173-5.

an understanding seems to have been reached, but this was upset in AD 543 when as reported by Procopius the Laguatan felt the Byzantine soldiers had seized or destroyed their crops. A meeting at Lepeis, the same year, supposedly to smooth over the difficulties, resulted in an ugly exchange of words, drawn swords, and ultimately the death of the governor Solomon near Theveste in AD 544.<sup>33</sup>

The scene may have been typical of several such encounters after the Conquest in which local groups tried to assert their rights with the incoming power, or when the new regime tried to impose taxation on a group that had successfully evaded it in late Vandalic times. It is interesting to note how Corippus, assumed to be an African, characterises the two sides. The 'Berbers' are associated with the desert, woods, mountains and pastoralism. The 'Romans' are associated with farms, gardens, the sea coast (Byzacena), and olive cultivation.<sup>34</sup> The tribes are very much pagan worshipping amongst others Amon and the God Gurzil to whom they offer animal sacrifice.<sup>35</sup> These extremes did not represent the much subtler distinctions of African society.

From the mid sixth century until the mid seventh century Africa would seem to have been relatively peaceful and prosperous. The economic strength that Africa had achieved by the seventh century is attested by the ability of Heraclius to launch his great expedition to take the Empire from Carthage and later under pressure from the Arabs considered moving back.<sup>36</sup> Constans II period of residence in Syracuse is another sign of prosperity in nearby Proconsularis. Walter Kaegi has reinforced this impression using a reference to Gighthis in the seventh century Pseudo Methodius Apocalypse. He suggests that this might be linked to Arab raids in southern Byzacena in 647/8 or 665/6. He notes that Constans II reacted to the large Arab tribute on Ifriquiya by raising further tax in Byzantine territory. This sounds more like stretching the resources of a wealthy province than further draining an area devastated by Arab raiding.<sup>37</sup>

In the mid seventh century war returned to Africa with the arrival of the Arabs. The exarch Gregory declared independence from Byzantium. He probably hoped to obtain more freedom of action against the invaders, but his decision echoes that of Heraclius, and is another sign of the power base that North Africa could provide. In the event he was soundly defeated at Sbeitla in AD 647. According to the Arab sources, resistance was again led by the Berbers between AD 683 and 693, with their rulers Kusseila, and the queen Kahina. Legends suggest that these 'Berbers' were actively assisted by elements of the Byzantine army and the more settled local population. This campaign of resistance to the Arabs also demonstrates, as in the sixth century narration of Corippus a mixed picture of Byzantines and Berbers working together. Carthage fell, almost as an afterthought, in AD 698.

If it is accepted that the wealth of Africa was the basis for Heraclius bid for the Empire, and was also the reason why Constans II moved his court to Syracuse then we must also accept that the rural economy of Africa only collapsed at the end of the seventh century, following the defeat at Sbeitla. The proliferation of seventh century African gold coinage, and seals of *commercarii*, in the eastern provinces may be a further sign of African wealth

33. PROCOPIUS, *Wars*, 4.21.

34. Such references proliferate through CORIPPUS but see especially *Iohannidos*, 2.50-84 and 2.200-3.

35. *Iohannidos*, 8.300-9

36. NICEPHORUS, *Historia Syntomos*, 12.1.9-10.

37. W. KAEGI, Gighthis and Olbia in the Pseudo Methodius Apocalypse and their significance, *Byz. Forsch.* 26, 2000, p. 161-8.

in the early seventh century.<sup>38</sup> This finds some support from African Red Slip Ware production, which, though no longer a major exporter, continued to supply Carthage until at least the late seventh century. Indeed the issue is more whether pottery production might have continued after the Islamic Conquest.

### B. Village life

The archaeological view of rural settlement in Byzantine North Africa, especially with regard to our three main survey areas, the Libyan Valleys, Kasserine and Caesarea, is consistent. There was an overall fall in the number of settlements, reflective of a troubled countryside. The Libyan Valleys team proposed three explanations:<sup>39</sup>

- a. a decline in pottery production so that Byzantine sites might not be recognised
- b. a gradual decline in pre-desert farming
- c. clustering around gsur

The first suggested reason is something familiar to all Byzantine archaeologists, and it has broadly been accepted by those working in the Near East that the density of rural settlement will inevitably be underestimated. The Libyan team is admirably cautious in addressing this issue.<sup>40</sup> The third explanation is also familiar to those who advocate the 'refuge centre' view of people fleeing unsettled times to city or countryside centres. In a Byzantine context it will be harder to argue for the decline in farming.

Naturally there is little apart from pottery to identify Byzantine villagers. The vast majority are an-epigraphic.

There is thus paucity of evidence and dating material<sup>41</sup> but what evidence we have shows no sign of change in settlement patterns during the sixth century. There would then be sixth century countryside in which individual farms rather than villages remained the norm. The rural villages that did exist were probably on hilltop locations (a possibility here for examining refuge centre hypotheses). Family and clan loyalties remained very strong as indicated by the Byzantine historians of the sixth century.

The Segermes survey suggested that the density of rural sites only reached its peak in the sixth century. River flood plains and valleys, with the richest soil, became more important. However by the end of the sixth century this picture has markedly changed and the number of sites had halved.<sup>42</sup> It is possible that this difference is reflective of an intensification of settlement in the more urbanised parts of North Africa, especially around

38. C. MORRISSON and W. SEIBT, Sceaux de commerciaires byzantins du VII<sup>e</sup> siècle trouvés à Carthage, *RN* 24, 1982, p. 222-41, C. MORRISSON, Sceaux inédits de la Collection Henri Seyrig, *CRAI*, 1986, p. 420-35, as well as A. DUNN, Kommerkiarios, the apotheke, the Dromos, the Varadarios and the west, *BMGS* 17, 1993, p. 3-24; W. BRANDES, *Finanzverwaltung in Krisenzeiten: Untersuchungen zur byzantinischen Administration im 6.-9. Jahrhundert*, Frankfurt, 2002.

39. D. MATTINGLY with J. DORE, Romano-Libyan settlement – typology and chronology, in G. BARKER ed., *Farming the Desert: the UNESCO Libyan Valleys Survey Vol 1 Synthesis*, UNESCO, 1996, p. 180-1.

40. It is interesting to note amongst the field survey evidence that at Nador, mentioned above as the only excavated 'oil factory', Mattingly and Hayes have redated the pottery evidence to suggest a decline in the later fifth century. This is on the one hand later than expected from Leveau's general study of the area, and on the other hand earlier than the sixth century decline proposed by the excavators. For excavations see ANSELMINO *et al.*, *op. cit.* n. 8, and the review by D. MATTINGLY and J. HAYES, Nador and fortified farms in North Africa, *JRA*, 5, 1992, p. 408-18.

41. PROCOPIUS, *Wars*, 8.17.22 says that following the outcome of John Troglita wars in the mid sixth century the country had become depopulated. Normally we would dismiss this as a conventional picture of devastation, but given the archaeological evidence there may be some truth in this.

42. DIETZ *et al.*, *op. cit.* n. 1, p. 781-3.

Carthage, in response to the breakdown of relations between tribal groups and the imperial government.<sup>43</sup> Summary publication of survey in the hinterland of Carthage by Jo Greene, also suggests that the number of settlements reached its peak in the sixth or seventh century AD.<sup>44</sup>

“Ruralisation” and castellation of urban sites is well known throughout North Africa in the Byzantine period. Fora, for example are fortified in cities in the Sahel such as Sbeitla and Haidra, and northern centres such as the area between the river Medjerda and modern Bizerte.<sup>45</sup> Dating is imprecise, but is generally assumed to be Byzantine. Such fortifications reduce defence to certain strong points within the city in contrast to the late antique defensive circuits of, for example, major Asian cities like Ephesus or Pergamon. Such castellation is consistent with ideas of depopulation of Africa, though difficult to prove without extensive excavation. This picture also contrasts with that of southern Syria where ‘rural’ housing typical of villages can be found in major urban centres, such as Bosra and Jerash, by the fifth century AD.<sup>46</sup>

The participation of the rural population in the process of castellation is to be assumed. This is most apparent from the inscription of a castrum at Ain en Ksar north west of Lambaesis dated to between 668 and 685. At least 18 ‘citizens’ banded together to build the structure. Unfortunately little is known about the building itself. A second inscription of uncertain date, from Henchir Bou Sboa south of Theveste, records the fortification of a ‘fundus’, indicating that African estates sometimes took action (independent or sanctioned) to defend themselves.<sup>47</sup>

Africa may thus have seen a concentration on small strongpoints, whereas Asia and Syria saw early influence by ‘village’ architecture on urban settlements of continuing importance.

## V. CONCLUSIONS

Individual farms and estates rather than villages characterized Africa, in contrast to the eastern and Balkan provinces. The most dominant trait of the African countryside in the sixth century may then be one of continuity, with a varying pattern of decline (Kasserine, Libyan Valleys) or intensification (Segermes) of settlement.

There is some evidence for an intensification of settlement in the northern part of Proconsularis in the sixth and seventh centuries. Carthage was a major political force in the Mediterranean in the seventh century, and that it is quite realistic to accept the story that Constans II considered moving the Byzantine capital to Syracuse (in the North African ambit) in the mid seventh century, because of its wealth and influence.

However the reliance on individuals may, in the end have led to Africa’s downfall. In the Balkans and the East villages helped to maintain local economies through the ‘Dark Ages’. In Africa the pivotal role of the individual as trader or middleman may have led to economic hardship when the Arab Conquest led to the disappearance of these groups.

43. I have proposed a similar intensification of occupation at Carthage during the seventh century as people moved to the capital in front of the Arab invaders. S. ELLIS, Carthage in the seventh century; an expanding population?, *Cahiers des Études Anciennes*, 17, 1985, p. 30-42.

44. J. GREENE, Une reconnaissance archéologique dans l’arrière-pays de la Carthage antique, in A. ENNABLI éd., *Pour Sauver Carthage*, UNESCO/INAA, 1992, p. 195-8.

45. PEYRAS, *op. cit.* n. 12, p. 314 for fortified fora at Ureu, Suas, and Tariglach.

46. See S. ELLIS, *op. cit.* n. 14, p. 89-94.

47. J. DURLIAT, *Les dédicaces d’ouvrages de défense dans l’Afrique byzantine*, Rome, 1981, nos. 29 and 32 respectively.

The current view of the place of rural Byzantine Africa in Byzantine history sees agricultural wealth as feeding Constantinople in the sixth and seventh centuries.<sup>48</sup> However it has to be said that there is little in the archaeological record of villages to support such a position. As we have seen rural archaeology suggests, if anything, a decline in rural settlement in Byzantine times, apart from limited evidence for consolidation in the Segermes survey. This evidence may be explained by lack of excavation and difficulties in dating, but there is certainly no sign of a great agricultural prosperity.

This is not to say that an economic revival in Byzantine Africa did not happen. The circumstantial evidence of Heraclius raising a successful expedition against Constantinople is very compelling, but historians should be circumspect until more evidence is forthcoming.

In Africa individual land tenure may have stagnated as cities were reduced to strong-points, whereas in the eastern provinces a fifth century accommodation of town and country enabled the countryside to maintain village life into the early mediaeval period.

48. W. TREADGOLD, *A History of the Byzantine State and Society*, Stanford, 1997. Treadgold sees Africa providing 'large grain shipments' to Constantinople in the late sixth century, but his notes indicate that this assumption is based on Arab sources mentioning excessive Byzantine demands of the seventh century. It was clearly in the interests of Arab historians to stress the excessive nature of Byzantine demands on African agriculture.



# THE BYZANTINE VILLAGE CHURCH: OBSERVATIONS ON ITS LOCATION AND ON AGRICULTURAL ASPECTS OF ITS PROGRAM

Sharon E. J. GERSTEL\*

*Résumé – Cet article étudie la structure du village médiéval et la place de ses sanctuaires d'après les sources archéologiques. Il examine aussi, dans les églises conservées, la présence de certains saints comme marqueurs de la dévotion villageoise. En particulier l'article met l'accent sur la diffusion des portraits de saints ruraux dans les églises desservant les communautés rurales. Ces portraits reflètent les prières des agriculteurs et de leurs familles. Leur présence suggère que l'invocation de saints particuliers et la transcription de leur nom dans une société illettrée exprime des vœux pour des récoltes abondantes, la liberté, et même des notions plus abstraites.*

In her 1974 study, *Portrait of a Greek Mountain Village*, the anthropologist Juliet du Boulay described the physical and spiritual boundaries of the traditional *chorion* as follows:

The village is defined clearly by the ending of the houses and the beginning of open country – the area of the village being 'from threshing-floor to threshing-floor'... At two of the entrances to the village, east and west, are placed little shrines with icons in them, and a sanctuary lamp (καντήλι)... These shrines indicate and invoke the presence in the village of the holy people of the Orthodox world – Christ, the Mother of God, and the Saints – and define the sanctuary of the village where people pass and where the spirits of evil are kept at bay, from the wild world of field and forest and mountain where demons live and where no help is at hand in the event of danger.<sup>1</sup>

In this study I will use **three components** of Du Boulay's description **in order to discuss the Byzantine rural settlement and the devotional practices of its habitants: the shape of the *chorion*, the place of its shrines, and the presence of certain saints.** The material presented strengthens the impression that the late medieval village did not differ substantially in its agricultural components from its modern descendents.<sup>2</sup>

Byzantine inventories of rural settlements record many of the same features that characterize **traditional *choria*.** Medieval texts often **cite threshing floors as boundary markers between land holdings; their prominent shape would have made them distinctive features of the rural landscape.**<sup>3</sup> **Painted inscriptions within village churches** of the late

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1. J. DU BOULAY, *Portrait of a Greek Mountain Village* (Oxford, 1974), 13-14.

2. For a description of the medieval village derived from written sources, see LAIOU-THOMADAKIS, *Peasant Society*, 46.

3. Among the many texts mentioning threshing floors, see Βυζαντινά Έγγραφα τῆς Μονῆς Πάτριου, Β', *Δημοσίων Λειτουργῶν*, ed. M. NYSTAZOPOULOU-PELEKIDOU (Athens, 1980), no. 50, lines 213-214; no. 74 line 18. I thank M. Parani for this reference.

medieval period, like the written sources more conventionally used by historians, occasionally record agricultural features that were donated by villagers for the construction and decoration of local shrines. Within the church of Saint Michael the Archangel in Polemitas, Mani, for example, the names of benefactors are recorded together with their gifts of fields, olive trees, vegetable plots, and small sums of money.<sup>4</sup> Georgios Patzates and Laringas Volevas, two of the villagers, offered fields together with a threshing floor. Both texts and inscriptions suggest that within the rural village labor in the field and prayer to the Lord were closely linked.

Like the traditional *chorion*, the late Byzantine village was placed under the protection of saints, who, housed in small chapels, regulated and protected the extended families that typically comprised the population of the settlement. The church occupied the spiritual and architectural center of the village and it was around the church that liturgical and life cycle rituals revolved. Ethnographers have viewed the place of the church within the traditional Balkan village as "one of the focal points for the community's consciousness of itself as a community."<sup>5</sup> While studies of modern villages are separated by at least four centuries from the sites that form the basis of this study, they offer valuable insights for understanding the location, function, and significance of ecclesiastical buildings within agrarian settlements of medieval Byzantium. Churches and small chapels were found throughout the medieval village: at its proximate center, in the midst of closely built houses, or on its periphery. Based on practices from earlier in this century, we may infer that the location of these structures was often related to function and congregation: communal or parish churches, centrally positioned within the settlement, facilitated the corporate rite; family churches had specific votive intent and were often found within clusters of houses that constituted discrete neighborhoods or within fields belonging to small landowners. These may be likened to the small shrines that demarcate the boundaries of the modern *chorion*. Burial churches intended for perpetual commemorations were often, though not exclusively, located on the fringes of the inhabited land.<sup>6</sup> In many cases, divisions between types of churches were blurred; churches with votive intent could subsequently house burials of donors and members of their extended families.<sup>7</sup>

Although few late medieval villages from Byzantium have been thoroughly investigated or excavated, two sites provide preliminary information about the plan of rural settlements and the position of churches within that plan. Intensive surface survey conducted by the Pylos Regional Archaeological Project in 1993-95 documented through ceramic finds a small settlement near modern-day Metamorphosis (Skarminga) in Messenia.<sup>8</sup>

4. S. KALOPISSI-VERTI, *Dedicatory Inscriptions and Donor Portraits in Thirteenth-Century Churches of Greece* (Vienna, 1992), 71-75.

5. DU BOULAY, *Portrait*, 58-59. For discussions of the role of the church in traditional village life, see also E. FRIEDL, *Vasilika: A Village in Modern Greece* (New York, 1962); J. DUBISCH, "The Ethnography of the Islands: Tinos," in *Regional Variation in Modern Greece and Cyprus: Toward a Perspective on the Ethnography of Greece*, eds. M. DIMEN and E. FRIEDL, *Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences*, 268 (New York, 1976), 322-23.

6. For an anthropological study of the use of specific types of churches in a modern village, see P. S. ALLEN, "Aspida: A Depopulated Maniat Community," in *Regional Variation*, above n. 5, 192-93.

7. This is most likely the case with Hagioi Anargyroi in Kepoula, Mani, which is surrounded by burials and contains an inscription naming multiple donors.

8. S. E. J. GERSTEL, "Metamorfofi Skarminga (POSI A4)," in J. L. DAVIS, S. E. ALCOCK, J. BENNET, Y. G. LOLOS, and C. W. SHELMEARDINE, "The Pylos Regional Archaeological Project, Part I: Overview and the Archaeological Survey," *Hesperia* 66 (1997), 477-80.

What survives of the village is a small church;<sup>9</sup> the domestic structures, long destroyed, are now represented in the surrounding fields by fragments of roof tiles and household pottery. The church is located at the center of tracts containing Byzantine sherds, i.e., in the midst of the medieval village (fig. 1). The ceramic finds include fine ware bowls decorated with sloppy sgraffito patterns and green and brown painted wares. More diagnostic indicators of village life are the many fragments of cooking pots, amphorae, pithoi and lamps. The vessels are made of local clay and there are virtually no imported wares despite the site's close proximity to the Venetian trading post, Modon (Methoni). All of the wares are associated with household use and of a quality appropriate to a peasant village of the size described in contemporary tax registers for the region.<sup>10</sup> The vessels are nearly identical in function and quality to wares recovered from excavated or surveyed villages of the same economic level.

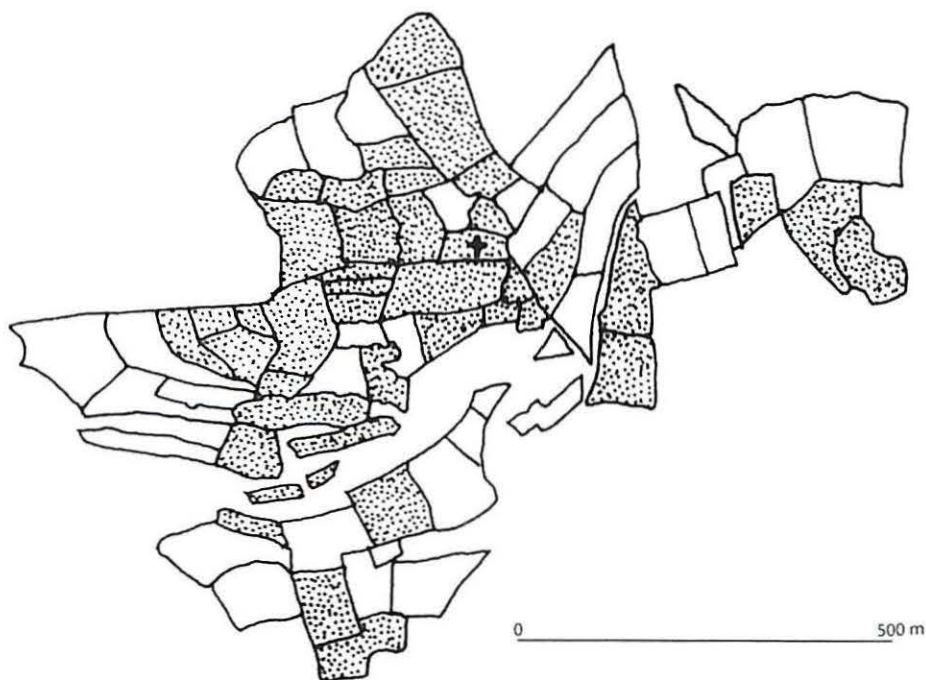


Fig. 1 – Tracts containing Byzantine sherds, Metamorphosis (Skarmingia)

9. A recent study proposes a late 10th or early 11th century date for the church based on architectural typology and brick decoration. See A. KAVVADIA-SPONDYLE and K. TSOURCES, "Δύο βυζαντινές εκκλησίες στη Μεσσηνία," *Arch.Delt.* 47/48 (1992-93), 278-91.

10. J. LONGNON and P. TOPPING, *Documents sur le régime des terres dans la Principauté de Morée au XIV<sup>e</sup> siècle* (Paris, 1969).

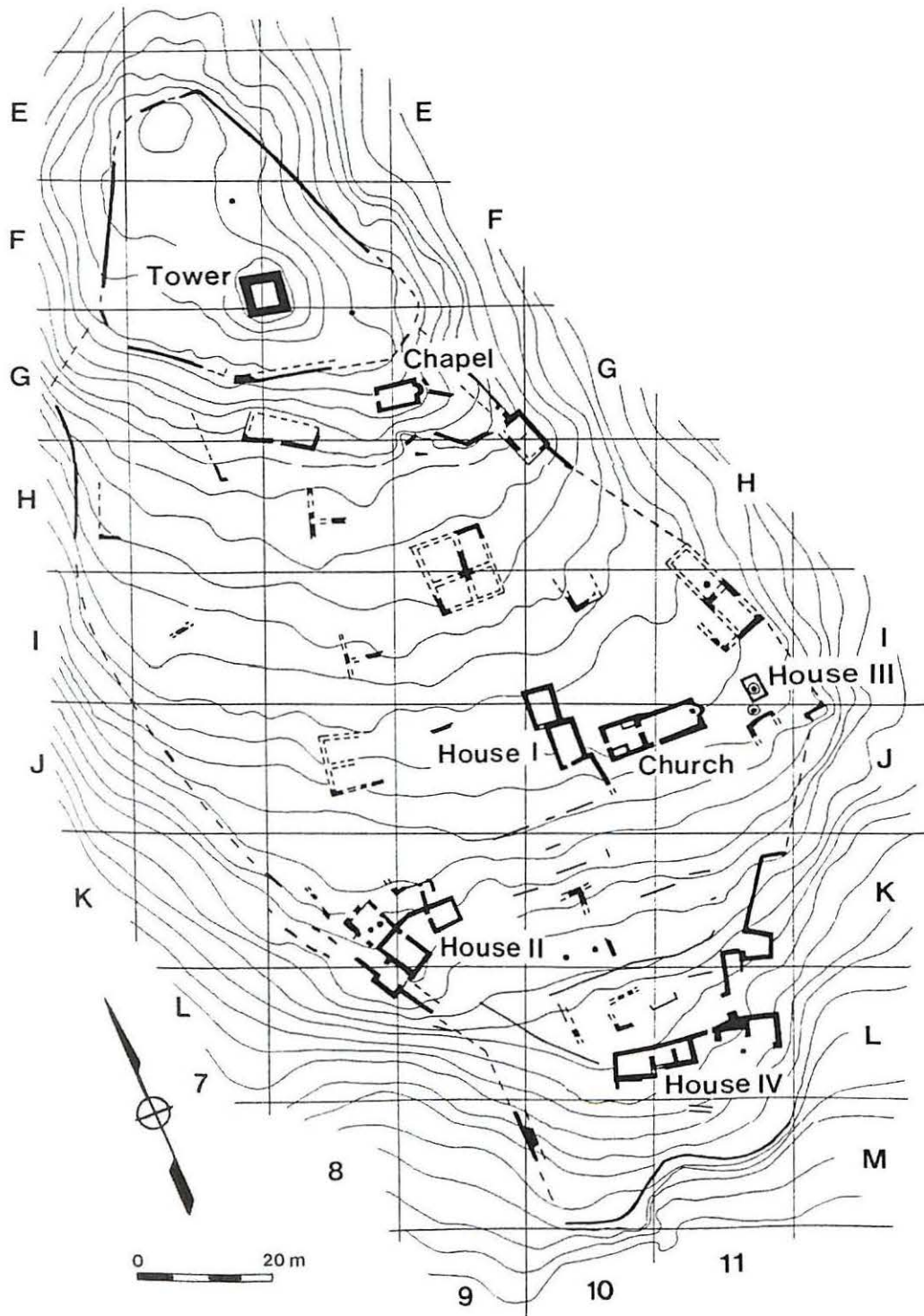


Fig. 2 - Panakton, site plan

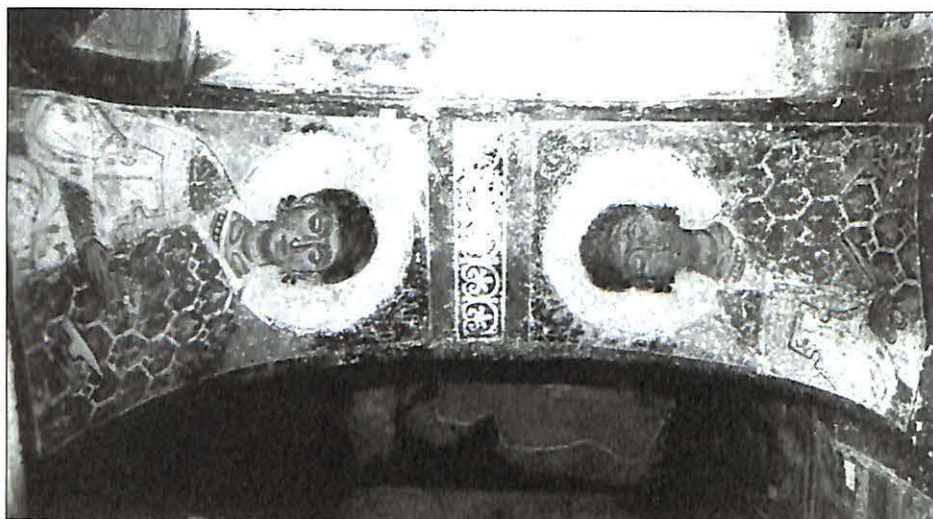
The fourteenth-century village that lies over the site of ancient Panakton was partially excavated in 1991 and 1992 and studied thoroughly in 1999 (fig. 2).<sup>11</sup> Although only four houses and two churches were excavated, stone piles, concentrations of roof tiles, and aligned walls characteristic of fallen medieval houses suggest that approximately fifty families once lived within the site's ancient fortifications. All of the medieval coins found during excavation were minted between 1343-1414, suggesting that the village was constructed and abandoned within three generations. Two chapels are sited outside the walls of the village; these are small, single-aisled structures now in ruins. According to local tradition, one of the chapels is dedicated to St. Kyriake. Its location outside the walls of the village and its dedication to a saint often associated, through her name, with Resurrection suggests that it may have had a burial function.<sup>12</sup> A second church, dedicated to St. Nicholas, is located on the hill below the site and has not yet been investigated. To date, two churches have been revealed within the walls of the village. A church said to be dedicated to the Annunciation is located near the apex of the hill and was probably a votive chapel – it is too small to house a large congregation and there were no traces of a templon screen that might signal its use for the regular performance of the eucharistic liturgy. The religious life of the community was more likely focused on the large, single-aisled church located on the narrow plateau at the center of the village. Furnishings and objects associated with the Orthodox rite were found within excavation of the structure. In addition to housing the village residents for liturgical services and other ritual events, the church was also the resting place for many of the village dead; the numerous glass lamp fragments and wick holders found in association with the graves attest to the importance of commemorative prayers for the village faithful. Shortly after the construction of the church a narthex was added to its west side, an addition that was not unusual in late Byzantium. In the fourteenth century, for example, a narthex with lateral tombs was built on to the church of the Archangel Michael in Ano Boularioi, Mani; an inscription records the name of the villagers that donated fields for its construction and decoration.<sup>13</sup> At Panakton, tombs are also found on the north and south sides of the narthex; that on the north side contained multiple burials, a common practice of the period and one that has continued in recent times. The three adult skeletons within this tomb all showed signs of repetitive loading stress on the back and overuse of the shoulders, elbows, and arms, conditions reflecting the hardships of village life and agricultural toil.<sup>14</sup> The right hand of the female skeleton displayed overuse of the thumb and fingers, bone distress that may be related to sustained spinning. Flanked on its east side by a storage facility for grains and water and on its west side by a house with an added shed for grain storage, the Panakton church formed the spiritual nucleus of a small village supported by farming. The dead, buried within, testify to the harsh daily regimen of the agrarian settlement. Were the church standing today, would its painted program, of which only fragments survive, reveal information about the village's residents that is not found in the archaeological record?

11. S. E. J. GERSTEL, "An Introduction to Medieval Panakton," *Boeotia Antiqua* 6 (1996), 143-51; S. E. J. GERSTEL, "A Late Medieval Settlement at Panakton," *Hesperia* 72 (2003), 147-234.

12. S. E. J. GERSTEL, "Painted Sources for Female Piety in Medieval Byzantium," *DOP* 52 (1998), 98-102.

13. D. FEISSEL and A. PHILIPPIDES-BRAAT, "Inventaires en vue d'un recueil des inscriptions historiques de Byzance, III, Inscriptions du Péloponnèse (à l'exception de Mistra)," *TM* 9 (1985), 322.

Few late Byzantine villages have been systematically excavated. In place of pick and trowel, monumental decoration may help locate settlements that have yet to be revealed and may illuminate our views of village piety. Sherds from late Byzantine household wares fill the fields surrounding Saints Peter and Paul in Kalyvia, Attika (dated 1232). The ceramic fragments, together with the representation of certain saints within the painted program, suggest that the church was intended for the lay faithful of the surrounding settlement.<sup>15</sup> Profession pairs saints. Healers include Hermolaos and Panteleimon, Cosmas and Damian. Sergios and Bakchos represent the holy soldiers. These saints are regularly incorporated into Byzantine church programs, even those intended for monastic communities. But the representation of female saints such as Marina, Kyriake, and the mother of the Virgin, Anna, suggests that this church was intended for a congregation of both women and men.<sup>16</sup> Several saints at Kalyvia may represent village trades. The twin saints Floros and Lauros, rarely depicted together in church decoration, carry the attributes of chisel, cutters, and ruler, pictorial references to their profession as stonemasons (fig. 3).<sup>17</sup> Mamas and Tryphon, saints linked with farming and animal husbandry, also find their place within the nave and were readily identifiable, even to unlettered viewers, by the attributes of the shepherd, the crook and the lamb (fig. 4).<sup>18</sup>



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Fig. 3 – Sts. Peter and Paul, Kalyvia, Sts. Floros and Lauros

14. Ethne Barnes and Arthur Rohn studied the skeletal remains at Panakton. I thank them for providing me with this information.

15. For the program of this church, see N. COUMBARAKI-PANSELINOU, “Ἅγιος Πέτρος Καλυβίων Κουβαρῶ Ἀττικῆς,” *DChAE* 14 (1987-1988), 173-88; EADEM, *Saint-Pierre de Kalyvia-Kouvara et la chapelle de la Vierge de Mérenta. Deux monuments du XIII<sup>e</sup> siècle en Attique* (Thessalonike, 1976). For the inscription, see KALOPISSI-VERTI, *Dedicatory Inscriptions*, 60-62.

16. On reading portraits of female saints as indicators of audience, see Gerstel, “Painted Sources,” 89-111.

17. COUMBARAKI-PANSELINOU, “Hagios Petros”, above n. 15, 184. For the biography of these saints, whose feast is celebrated in August 18, see *Syn.CP* 907; F. HALKIN, “Une passion inédite des saints Florus et Laurus. BHG 662z,” *JÖB* 33 (1983), 37-44. For their representation in other village churches, see M. VARDAVAKE, “Οἱ τοιχογραφίες τοῦ Ἁγίου Νικολάου στήν Κλένια τῆς Κορινθίας,” *Diptycha*, 4 (1986-87), 119-20.

18. COUMBARAKI-PANSELINOU, *Saint-Pierre*, above n. 15, 102-3.

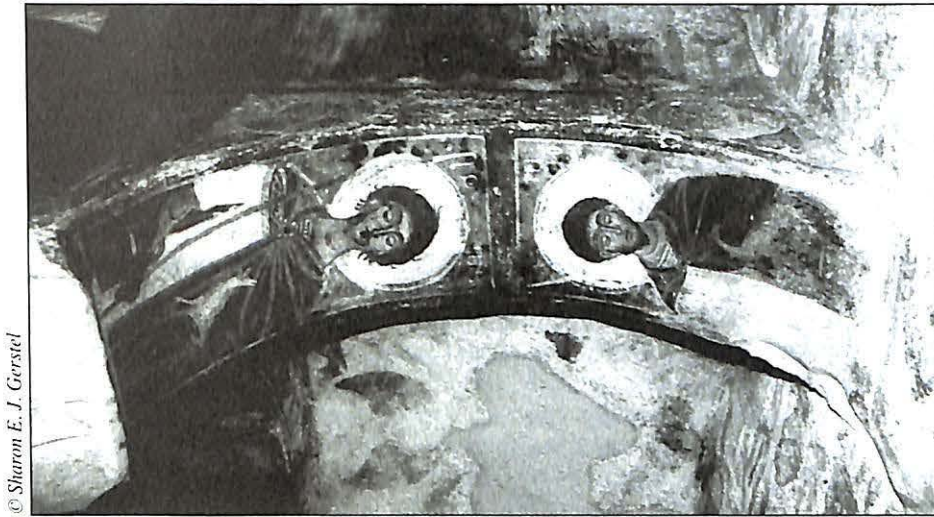


Fig. 4 – Sts. Peter and Paul, Kalyvia, Sts. Mamas and Tryphon

Certain narrative scenes, particularly those in the church narthex, further suggest that the primary audience for the powerful imagery was the lay population of a town or village. The Last Judgment is depicted on the west wall. Included among the damned are two figures related directly to the fiscal concerns of lay parishioners: the usurer (Ο ΤΟΚΟΝΛΑΒΙ[ς]), weighed down by a money pouch suspended from his throat and the money-hungry monk (ΦΙΛΑΡΓΥΡΑΣ ΜΟΝΑΧΟΣ) (fig. 5).<sup>19</sup> These figures, as well as the tax collector, are represented in other churches from demonstrably village settings.<sup>20</sup> The illustration of the damned monk and usurer, together with the rich man, who perpetually drowns in the burning river of hell, reflects the strong dislikes of the parishioners, who were consigned to the lowest levels of the Byzantine economy.

Other scenes in the narthex of this village church are related to themes of judgment and penitence. The scene of Christ's Baptism fills a niche carved into the east wall. Above the conch, the prophet Isaiah extends a scroll inscribed with the text: "Wash yourselves and be clean. Put away the evil of your deeds..." (Isaiah 1:16).<sup>21</sup> On the south wall, adjacent to the niche, is a stone basin for holy water built into the masonry. In all likelihood this font was used for the distribution of holy water, often considered to hold curative powers for men, animals, and even for barren fields. Such water may have had special significance in regions of the empire removed from medical care or where beliefs in folk healing were deeply entrenched.<sup>22</sup> The association of holy water and healing is well established in Byzantine texts: in the *Life* of Elias Speliotes, the saint cures a horse by giving him a drink from a cup over which he has made the sign of the cross and in the *Life* of David, Symeon, and George, a field is rid of locusts when blessed water is sprinkled

19. COUMBARAKI-PANSELINOU, "Hagios Petros", above n. 15, 183.

20. S. E. J. GERSTEL, "The Sins of the Farmer: Illustrating Village Life (and Death) in Medieval Byzantium," in *Word, Image Number: Communication in the Middle Ages*, eds. J. Contreni and S. Casciani (Florence, 2002), 205-17.

21. COUMBARAKI-PANSELINOU, "Hagios Petros", above n. 15, 180.

22. For an analysis of "folk healing" in Early Modern Greece in which saints are invoked for their curative powers, see R. and E. BLUM, *Health and Healing in Rural Greece: A Study of Three Communities* (Stanford, CA, 1965), 166-80; B. MACHIN, "St. George and the Virgin: Cultural Codes, Religion and Attitudes to the Body in a Cretan Mountain Village," *Social Analysis* 14 (1983), 112-14.

over it.<sup>23</sup> At Kalyvia, scenes of judgment and exhortation to spiritual cleansing offered warning and guidance to the parishioners. Grouped with these, the representation of saints renowned as healers, soldiers, religious teachers, and crafts- and herdsman, whose trades mirrored those of villagers, allowed the parishioners to see their lives reflected on the painted walls of their church.

One of the significant features of the Kalyvia program is the inclusion of two agricultural saints, Mamas and Tryphon. These saints, as we shall see, often appear in churches built in regions of the empire involved in farming or pastoralism. Excavations at Panakton uncovered a large number of animal bones from sheep, goats, cow, pigs, and other animals. Medieval inventories attest to the large number of oxen, cows, and sheep owned by villagers. For the small village of Cremidi in Messenia, for example, the estate inventory of Niccolò Acciaiuoli of 1354 lists sixty-one families among which are divided 37 oxen, 19 cows, 2 asses, 8 pack animals, and 119 sheep.<sup>24</sup> The protection of the harvest and care of livestock were ongoing concerns to medieval villagers, whose sustenance depended on the land. For this protection the agricultural saint, armed with his staff and carrying a healthy sheep or goat, must have offered powerful assurance. The invocation of agricultural saints continues to this day in traditional villages. Ethnographers have recorded entreaties to Modestos on behalf of livestock.<sup>25</sup> Traditional villagers associated Mamas with the protection of sheep and goats. According to one village priest that I interviewed on Crete, chips removed from the painted portrait of the saint, mixed with local soil, were once placed in the bell/phylactery of the strongest goat in the herd for protection of the weaker animals.<sup>26</sup> Saint Mamas was the subject of a folk narrative, popular on Crete and in other locations. The story places him in the role of a distressed shepherd in dialogue with an angel, encapsulating the process of sacred mediation:

Saint Mamas cries and laments and complains to God.

<An angel asks him:><sup>27</sup>

'Saint Mamas, what troubles you that you cry and lament and complain to God?

Saint Mamas, know you that which is hidden but not that which is visible?'

[Mamas replies:]

'I had a thousand sheep and two thousand goats and I took them down to the sandy beach.

There they ate two- and three-leaved reeds and their spleens became bloated and infected.

Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy!

No one could be found nearby who was chrismated, baptized, consecrated to God,

who had taken communion on Holy Thursday, who had gone to church on Holy Saturday,

to wield a black-handled knife, a reed with three joints to pierce the spleen,

[and drain] the infection and every evil in the world.'<sup>28</sup>

23. For the *Life* of Elias Speliotes (d. 960), see AASS, September 11, 873A, lines 3-11. For the *Life* of David, Symeon, and George (8th/early 9th century), see "Acta graeca SS. Davidis, Symeon et Georgii, Mitylenae in insula Lesbo," *An. Boll.* 18 (1899), 236, lines 27-35; D. Domingo-Forasté, trans., "Life of Sts. David, Symeon, and George of Lesbos," in *Byzantine Defenders of Images: Eight Saints' Lives in English Translation*, ed. A.-M. TALBOT [Washington, D.C., 1998], 198-99).

24. For a translation of this text from the Latin original, see Sandy Pylos: An Archaeological History from Nestor to Navarino, ed. J. DAVIS (Austin, TX, 1998), 229-33. See also LAIOU-THOMADAKIS, Peasant Society, 66-71, for a discussion of animals belonging to villagers of Gomatou, Chalkidike.

25. R. and E. BLUM, *The Dangerous Hour: The Lore of Crisis and Mystery in Rural Greece* (New York, 1970), 92, 323.

26. Interview with Father Ioannes Thomadakis, Alikampos, Crete, June 2002.

27. The added line is derived from a version of the story from eastern Crete. A. ZERVAKI, "Γηθειές ἐξ Ἐμπόρου," *Laographia* 4 (1913), 517.

28. E. KOUTOULAKE, "Γηθειές ἐκ Κριτσῶς Κρήτης", *Laographia* 20 (1962), 202.



The narrative, rooted in the life of medieval Byzantium,<sup>29</sup> links the ability to heal to pious observance. Indeed, scenes of Last Judgment and church homilies condemned farmers who did not attend church services.<sup>30</sup> Evil, manifested in the bloat, could only be drained by sacred practice. Given the importance of animal herding for the agrarian economy and the sustained importance of saints such as Mamas and Modestos in traditional belief systems, the presence of agricultural saints as mediating forces in rural Byzantine churches might be expected.

A quick analysis of surviving inventories and tax registers reveals that names of popular agricultural saints were not frequently given to Byzantine children. The names Tryphon and Blasios, for example, appear only once each in the fourteenth-century Acciaiuoli estate inventories.<sup>31</sup> Although “Blasios” and “Modestos” are listed in *praktika* for Macedonian villages belonging to Mount Athos, these names are rare in comparison to those derived from other holy men.<sup>32</sup> For the region of the Mani, where numerous villages survive, the altar table in the church of St. Niketas in Kepoula constitutes the sole preserved inscription recording the name Mamas, a village supplicant.<sup>33</sup>



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Fig. 5 – Sts. Peter and Paul, Kalyvia, Last Judgment, Detail

29. Michael Psellos, 'Εξυρκισμὸς τῆς Γιλλοῦς ὑπὸ τοῦ ἀγίου Μάμαντος, in K. Sathas, Μεσαλιονική βιβλιοθήκη, V (Venice, 1876), 577-78.

30. See for example, Gregory Palamas, 'Homily XXVI', PG 151: 333D.

31. LONGNON and TOPPING, *Documents*, 23, 73.

32. LAIOU-THOMADAKIS, *Peasant Society*, 109-10.

33. N. DRANDAKES, *Βυζαντινές τοιχογραφίες τῆς Μέσα Μάνης*, (Athens, 1995), 340; IDEM, "Οἱ τοιχογραφίες τοῦ δευτέρου στρώματος στὸν Ἅγιο Νικήτα Κηπούλας," *DChAE*. 10 (1980-81), 240.

Few late Byzantine churches are dedicated to agricultural saints and this may be related to the patterns of naming discussed above.<sup>34</sup> Located primarily in rural areas, the construction of unpretentious structures invoking farming saints may have been intended to provide patrons and communities with a means of securing healthy crops or protecting flocks. Saint Mamas in Karavas, Mani, dated 1232, is one example of a church with a secure dedication to an agricultural saint.<sup>35</sup> The single-aisled structure stands today adjacent to a farmhouse and stables. Although cultivated fields lie immediately beyond the church it is difficult to determine the building's medieval setting. Several churches dedicated to Mamas are found in areas where his cult had a strong following, such as the islands of Cyprus,<sup>36</sup> Naxos,<sup>37</sup> and Crete.<sup>38</sup> Churches on these islands, too, are primarily sited in cultivated fields or grazing areas.

In the late Byzantine period saints related through their biographies to village life, farming, or to the care of animals are frequently represented singly or paired in churches of southern Greece and the islands.<sup>39</sup> In most cases, they are represented as full- or half-length figures in frontal pose, carrying a sheep or goat and, in some cases a crook, staff, or farming implement. Saints Mamas,<sup>40</sup> Tryphon,<sup>41</sup> and Blasios<sup>42</sup> often appear in churches that were built by extended families as votive offerings. Representations of Mamas, for

34. Small chapels are often dedicated to the name saint of the patron or to the protective saint of a family.

35. Ch. KONSTANTINIDI, "Ο Άγιος Μάμας Καραβά Μέσα Μάνης (1232)," *Lak.Sp.* 10 (1990), 141-65.

36. The dedication of churches to Saint Mamas and his widespread representation on Cyprus is related to the popular belief that the saint's relics landed miraculously at Morphou. The church of St. Mamas in Louvaras, Cyprus, was erected in 1455 and painted in 1495 according to its lengthy donor's inscription. See A. and J. STYLIANOU, *The Painted Churches of Cyprus* (London, 1985), 246.

37. G. Demetrokalles records five churches on the island named for Mamas: two in the region of Αρτίρανθος, two in northern Naxos, and another near Potamies. As he notes, the original dedication of these churches is unknown (*Συμβολαί εις την μελέτην των βυζαντινών μνημείων της Νάξου* [Athens, 1972], 67).

38. St. Mamas, west of Palaiochora (Selinou), dated 1355-56, includes scenes from the life of the saint on the north wall (K. E. LASSITHIOTAKES, "Εκκλησίες της δυτικής Κρήτης [Δ' Έπαρχία Σελίνου]," *Kr. Chron.* 22 (1970), 175-76 and St. Mamas in St. Mamas, Mylopotamos (Rethymnon), dated 1312-1321 (K. KALOKYRES, *Αί Βυζαντιναι τοιχογραφίαι της Κρήτης* [Athens, 1957], 122; SPATHARAKIS, *Dated.*).

39. In the Middle Byzantine period, representations of agricultural saints appear in churches in Cappadocia, including the Elmalı kilise in Göreme (G. DE JERPHANION, *Les églises rupestres de Cappadoce*, I [Paris, 1925], pl. 46,1).

40. For the Life of Saint Mamas and a brief discussion of his representation, see A. MARAVACHATZENIKOLAOU, *Ο Άγιος Μάμας* (Athens, 1953; repr. Athens, 1995); S. GABELIĆ, "Contribution to the Iconography of Saint Mamas and Saints with Attributes (Unpublished Fresco of St. Mamas and St. Vlasios 'Voucolos')." in *Πρακτικά του Δευτέρου Διεθνούς Κυπριολογικού Συνεδρίου II*, eds. Th. Papadopoulou and B. Englezake (Leukosia, 1986), 577-81.

41. Tryphon is represented in several Cretan churches with a sickle in his hand. See, for example, the church of St. Demetrios in St. Demetrios, 14th c. (I. SPATHARAKIS, *Byzantine Wall Paintings of Crete*, Rethymnon Province, I [London, 1999], 43-44, fig. 18, pl. 4a). As shown above, he is also represented in the church of Sts. Peter and Paul in Kalyvia holding a lamb (fig. 4).

42. Blasios "ho Boukolos" is represented in a number of churches in Crete, including the Savior in Spili (M. BORBOUDAKIS, K. GALLAS, K. WESSEL, *Byzantinische Kreta* [Munich, 1983], fig. 245), St. George in Ano Viannos, and St. John. Selli (I. SPATHARAKIS, *Βυζαντινές τοιχογραφίες Νομού Ρεθύμνου* [Rethymnon, 1999], 95, 254). See also GABELIĆ, "Contribution," 577-81.

example, are popular on Crete,<sup>43</sup> Cyprus,<sup>44</sup> Kythera,<sup>45</sup> Naxos, Euboia, and Rhodes. In several cases inscriptions provide a date, patron, and context for the decorative programs, confirming that the churches were built for villagers. In the church of Panagia stes Yiallous on Naxos (1288/9), Mamas, dressed as a shepherd, joins the bishops represented in the apse (fig. 6).<sup>46</sup> His unusual placement is explained by the setting of the church; Panagia stes Yiallous was located in a pastoral region of the island, one marked by sheepfolds.<sup>47</sup> The survival of a large number of local words related to farming and animal husbandry further demonstrates the dominant role that pastoralism once played in the island's economy.<sup>48</sup> In the small,

43. St. Nicholas near Mouri, 12th/13th c. (BORBOUDAKIS, et al., *Byzantinische Kreta*, 198); St. George, Vathi, 1284 (SPATHARAKIS, *Dated*, p. 9, fig. 5); Panagia, Phres, late 13th c. (LASSITHIOTAKES, "Ἐκκλησίαι τῆς δυτικῆς Κρήτης", *Kr.Chron.* 21 [1969], 478, figs. 134, 135); Soter, Meskla (Kydonia), 1303 (SPATHARAKIS, *Dated*, 27); St. Mamas, St. Mamas (Mylopotamos), 1312-20 (SPATHARAKIS, *Dated*, 31, 32, fig. 24); St. George, Komitades (Sfakia), 1313-14 (SPATHARAKIS, *Dated*, 33); Panagia, Alikampos, 1315-16 (SPATHARAKIS, *Dated*, 49); Savior, Kephali (Kissamos), 1319-20 (SPATHARAKIS, *Dated*, 57, fig. 47); St. George, Lytto (Xydas), 1321 (SPATHARAKIS, *Dated*, 61); Panagia, Fodele (Malevesi), 1323 (SPATHARAKIS, *Dated*, 67); St. Nicholas, Maza (Apokoronos), 1325-26 (SPATHARAKIS, *Dated*, 71); St. John (Trachiniakos), Kandanos, 1328-29 (SPATHARAKIS, *Dated*, 76); St. John the Evangelist, Kalogerou (Amari), 1346-47 (SPATHARAKIS, *Dated*, 88); St. John the Evangelist, Kroustas (Merabello), 1347-48 (SPATHARAKIS, *Dated*, 94); St. Constantine, Kritsa (Merabello), 1354-55 (SPATHARAKIS, *Dated*, 97); St. Mamas, near Paleochora (Selino), 1355-56 (SPATHARAKIS, *Dated*, 99-100); Savior, Agia Irini (Selino), 1357-58 (SPATHARAKIS, *Dated*, 103); Savior, Vlethias (Selino), 1358-59 (SPATHARAKIS, *Dated*, 106); Panagia, Palia Roumata (Kissamos), 1359-60 (SPATHARAKIS, *Dated*, 109); St. Pelagia, Ano Viannos, 1360 (SPATHARAKIS, *Dated*, 111); St. Paraskeve, Kitiros (Selino), 1372-73 (SPATHARAKIS, *Dated*, 116); St. John the Evangelist, Margarites (Mylopotamos), 1383 (SPATHARAKIS, *Dated*, 125, fig. 115); Savior, Akomia (Agios Basileios), 1389 (SPATHARAKIS, *Dated*, 129); Savior, Speli, 14th c. (I. SPATHARAKIS, *Βυζαντινές τοιχογραφίες Νομού Ρεθύμνου* [Rethymnon, 1999], 254, fig. 116); St. Marina, Mourne, early 14th c. (J. ALBANI, "Οἱ τοιχογραφίες τοῦ ναοῦ τῆς Ἁγίας Μαρίας στόν Μοῦρνέ τῆς Κρήτης," *Ἐνας ἀγνωστος βιογραφικός κύκλος τῆς ἁγίας Μαρίας*," *DChAE*. 17 [1993-1994], 212); Christ, Kasanon (Pediados), early 14th c. (K. MYLOPOTAMITAKE, "Οἱ τοιχογραφίες τοῦ Χριστοῦ τῶν Κασάνων Πεδιάδος," *Πεπραγμένα τοῦ Ἐθνοῦ Κρητολογικοῦ Συνεδρίου*, II [Heraklion, 1985], 301); Panagia, Rousospito, early 14th c. (SPATHARAKIS, *Byzantine Wall Paintings*, 175); St. Constantine, Boutas, 14th c. (LASSITHIOTAKES, "Ἐκκλησίαι τῆς δυτικῆς Κρήτης [Δ] Ἐπαρχία Σελίνου," 161); St. George, Kavousi, 14th c. (BORBOUDAKIS, et al., *Byzantinische Kreta*, 468-70); St. John, Axos, late 14th/15th (BORBOUDAKIS, et al., *Byzantinische Kreta*, 347); St. Isidore, Kakodiki, 1420/21 (SPATHARAKIS, *Dated*, 174); Archangel Michael, Exo Lakonia (Merabello), 1431-32 (SPATHARAKIS, *Dated*, 181); Holy Fathers, Ano Phloria, 1462 (BISSINGER, *Kreta: Byzantinische Malerei*, 236, fig. 198); St. Michael the Archangel, Aradena, 14th c. (K. E. LASSITHIOTAKES, "Ἐκκλησίαι τῆς δυτικῆς Κρήτης [E] Ἐπαρχία Σφακίων," *Kr.Chron.* 23 [1971], 106, fig. 418); St. Marina, Ravdoucha (LASSITHIOTAKES, "Ἐκκλησίαι τῆς δυτικῆς Κρήτης," *Kr.Chron.* 21 [1969], 198, fig. 40); St. Panteleimon, Apolychnon (KALOKYRES, *Βυζαντινὰ τοιχογραφία*, 122); St. George, Ano Viannos, 1401 (SPATHARAKIS, 149).

44. S. GABELIĆ, "Representations of St. Mamas in the Wall Painting of Cyprus," *Zograf* 15 (1984), 69-75.

45. St. Blasios, Phrillingianika; St. John, Potamos (M. CHATZIDAKIS and I. BITHA, *Corpus de la peinture monumentale byzantine de la Grèce, L'île de Cythère* [Athens, 1997], 114-19, 196).

46. N. DRANDAKES, "Παναγία στῆς Γιαλλοῦς," in *Νάξος*, ed. M. Chatzidakis (Athens, 1989), 100-4; Id., "Αἱ τοιχογραφίαί τοῦ ναοῦ τῆς Νάξου Παναγία στῆς Γιαλλοῦς (1288/9)," *EEBS*. 33 (1964), 259, fig. 4.

47. DRANDAKES, "Παναγία στῆς Γιαλλοῦς" 265; C. STEWART, *Demons and the Devil: Modern Imagination in Modern Greek Culture* (Princeton, 1991), 38-42.

48. G. D. ZEUGOLE, "Ποιμενικά τῆς ὄρεινῆς Νάξου," *Laographia* 15 (1953), 61-110; N. Kephalliniadis, "Ποιμενικά Νάξου. Ἐπιτόπιοι συνήθειαι ἐξ ἀνεκδότων ἐγγράφων," *Ἐπετηρὶς τῆς Ἐταιρείας Κυκλαδικῶν Μελετῶν* 10 (1978), 407-55.



Fig. 6 – Panagia Stes Giallous, Naxos (after: N. Drandakes, “Αἱ τοιχογραφίαι τοῦ ναοῦ τῆς Νάξου Παναγία στῆς Γιαλλοῦς (1288/9),” *EEBS* 33 [1964], fig. 4)

single-aisled church of St. George Bardas on Rhodes, dated by an inscription to 1290, Mamas is represented in half length above a full-length portrait of Tryphon on the north wall of the single-aisled church (fig. 7).<sup>49</sup> Here, it cannot be accidental that Mamas is placed below the Nativity, a scene that, increasingly in the late Byzantine period, features shepherds dressed in contemporary garb. In Euboeia, he appears in the church of St. Demetrios in Makrychori, which was built, according to its donor’s inscription, by a local landholder.<sup>50</sup> The saint is also represented in Attika<sup>51</sup> and the Peloponnesos,<sup>52</sup> areas

49. A. K. ORLANDOS, “Ἅγιος Γεώργιος ὁ Βάρδας,” *Ἀρχεῖον τῶν βυζαντινῶν Μνημείων τῆς Ἑλλάδος* 6 (1948), 132, 135.

50. M. EMMANOUEL, *Οἱ τοιχογραφίες τοῦ Ἁγίου Δημητρίου στὸ Μακρυχώρι καὶ τῆς Κοιμήσεως τῆς Θεοτόκου στὸν Ὁξύλιθο τῆς Εὐβοίας* (Athens, 1991), 31-33, 96, pl. 31.

51. I have already referred to the inclusion of Mamas and Tryphon in Sts. Peter and Paul in Kalyvia, Attika (fig. 4).

52. St. Mamas is represented in St. Demetrios, Mystra, the metropolitan church of a small city that depended on agricultural production in the Eurotos valley and surrounding region. See

that were heavily cultivated and marked by small villages. In the thirteenth-century church of the Dormition at Pentakia (Kouno), Saint Mamas is depicted on the west wall adjacent to the door.

In addition to the representation of farming saints on the walls of the nave, agricultural saints or saints associated by name with animal husbandry or crop fertility are occasionally included in the decoration of the church. Within this sacred space the representation of certain saints within clusters of holy men assumes new meaning when read through the lens of the agrarian settlement. The depiction of Blasios and Polykarpos among the concelebrating hierarchs on the sanctuary walls, for example, may signify more than the artistic rendering of invocatory prayers during the prothesis rite.<sup>53</sup> Polykarpos, literally, "much fruit," may have joined his episcopal colleagues in order to guarantee healthy crops to the rural parishioners through his sustained presence and the power of his name. That villagers would have understood this connection can be assumed; the Byzantines often gave children baptismal names literally associated with physical or moral characteristics.<sup>54</sup> The representation of Blasios, a saint widely associated with cattle and sheep,



Fig. 7 – St. George Bardas, Rhodes, St. Mamas  
(courtesy of the Benaki Museum Photographic Archives)

G. MILLET, *Monuments byzantins de Mistra* (Paris, 1910), pl. 85.2. The Old Monastery at Vrontamas also contains representations of Mamas and Tryphon, who are represented with similar facial features (N. DRANDAKES, "Το Παλιομοναστήριον του Βρονταμά," *ArchDelt.* 43 [1988], 170, pls. 74b, 75b). See also the program of St. Nicholas in Agoriane, Lakonia (M. EMMANOUEL, "Οι τοιχογραφίες του Αγίου Νικολάου στην Αγόριανη της Λακωνίας," *DChAE.* 14 (1987-1988), 130. In the thirteenth-century church of the Dormition at Pentakia (Kouno), Saint Mamas is depicted on the west wall adjacent to the door (unpublished). In the thirteenth-century church of the Dormition at Pentakia (Kouno), Saint Mamas is depicted on the west wall adjacent to the door (unpublished).

53. S. E. J. GERSTEL, *Beholding the Sacred Mysteries* (Seattle and London, 1999), 24.

54. LAIOU-THOMADAKIS, *Peasant Society*, 110-11.

in the sanctuary may have been intended to protect village livestock and sustain its herders and shepherds. An inscription of 1286 attributes the construction and decoration of St. Demetrios in Krokees, Lakonia, to a monk and his lay relatives.<sup>55</sup> Within the sanctuary, Blasios and Polykarpos face each other from the lateral walls.<sup>56</sup> The painting of the thirteenth-century Dormition church (Panagia Kera) in Kritsa expressly for the residents of a nearby village is made manifest by an inscription in the south aisle.<sup>57</sup> Polykarpos is represented within the church's sanctuary along with Eleutherios, a saint whose name would have resonated with the Orthodox inhabitants of Venetian-held Crete. Polykarp also finds a place among the four frontal hierarchs represented within the sanctuary of St. Michael the Archangel at Upper Ano Boularioi in the Mani, dated to the late twelfth century where Blasios is also represented in the *prothesis* niche. An inscription in the later narthex of the church records the fields donated for the renovation of the building.<sup>58</sup>

The churches from late medieval Byzantium provide a glimpse into the way in which villagers viewed themselves, at least through the filter of a commissioned painter. Through the depiction of a wide range of saints that personalized the religious experience of the medieval viewer, Byzantine villagers left a wealth of material that provides insight into their very real concerns for economic security, the health of family and livestock, and the bounty of the land. An analysis of the location of the church within the village helps us to determine audience and ritual purpose. Together with the witness of written sources, both medieval and modern, the image of the agricultural saint within the small village church and his role as an intermediary for the farmer or herdsman contributes to our knowledge of everyday life in rural Byzantium.

55. KALOPISSI-VERTI, *Dedicatory Inscriptions*, 76.

56. N. DRANDAKES, "Ἀπὸ τῆς τοιχογραφίας τοῦ Ἁγίου Δημητρίου Κροκεῶν (1286)," *DChAE* 12 (1784), 210, 220-21.

57. K. KALOKYRES, "Βυζαντινὰ Μνημεῖα τῆς Κρήτης. Ἡ Παναγία τῆς Κριτσᾶς", *Kr. Chron.* 6 (1952), 269.

58. KALOPISSI-VERTI, *Dedicatory Inscriptions*, 70.

# LES VILLAGES DE THESSALIE, DE GRÈCE CENTRALE ET DU PÉLOPONNÈSE (V<sup>e</sup>-XIV<sup>e</sup> SIÈCLE)

Anna AVRAMÉA\*

*Summary – Recent archaeological surveys shed new light on the evolution of population and settlement between the 5th and the 9th century, when written sources are very poor. For the later period they show a dramatic extension of settlement from the late 10th century onward. In the 13th-14th centuries they are partly supplemented by data from cartularies and other archive documents.*

Les rapports du village byzantin avec son territoire, les formes diverses de l'aménagement de l'espace rural ainsi que les rapports des habitants avec l'espace qu'ils occupaient dans les régions que nous étudions sont influencés par des facteurs variés. La dynamique des milieux et leur diversification, les fluctuations climatiques et surtout l'intervention humaine, – la conjoncture politique, économique et sociale –, rendent les résultats de la recherche extrêmement variables. D'autre part, les rares mentions des sources écrites, notamment jusqu'au XI<sup>e</sup>-XII<sup>e</sup> siècles et avant l'apparition des sources documentaires des XIII<sup>e</sup>-XV<sup>e</sup> siècles, ne donnent qu'un simple signalement de la présence nominale ou de l'emplacement des villages. Leur fonction et leur aspect, leur valeur en tant qu'unités économiques, ainsi que la vie des habitants et la réalité rurale, sont rarement signalés.

C'est l'archéologie intensive, archéologie du paysage ou du peuplement, qui apporte des renseignements sur « l'invention du village » (MAIRE-VIGUEUR-NOYÉ 1985, p. VIII). Des recherches entreprises depuis longtemps en Béotie du sud-ouest et dans le Péloponnèse, notamment en Messénie et en Argolide du sud (fig. 1 a-c), ont relevé des changements, – développement ou régression du modèle d'habitat – et des indices sur l'évolution démographique, en constatant des phases d'augmentation ou de diminution de la population rurale. Elles ont mis en évidence certaines similitudes dans l'évolution des habitats ruraux d'autres régions en dépit des spécificités locales, culturelles et environnementales.

## L'ÉVOLUTION DU V<sup>e</sup> AU MILIEU DU VII<sup>e</sup> SIÈCLE

Les longues recherches du « Bœotia Project » par J. Bintliff et J. Snodgrass en Béotie du sud-ouest, depuis vingt ans, signalent pendant cette période une impressionnante augmentation de la population rurale et un grand nombre de sites ruraux, où prédominent les formes tardives de céramique. La plupart de ces sites ont des dimensions moyennes, celles d'une villa plutôt que d'une petite ferme familiale. (BINTLIFF 1995, fig. 4 et Id. 1996, fig. 6, notre fig. 2).

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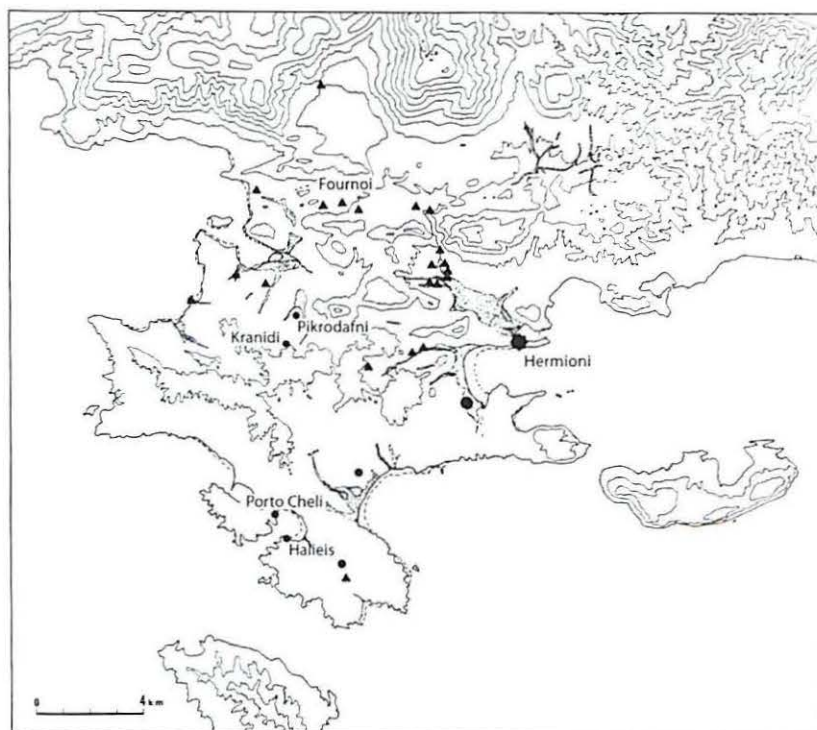


Fig. 1a – Répartition des sites en Argolide du Sud à l'époque romaine  
(JAMESON-RUNNELS-VAN ANDEL 1994, fig. 4.26, p. 241)

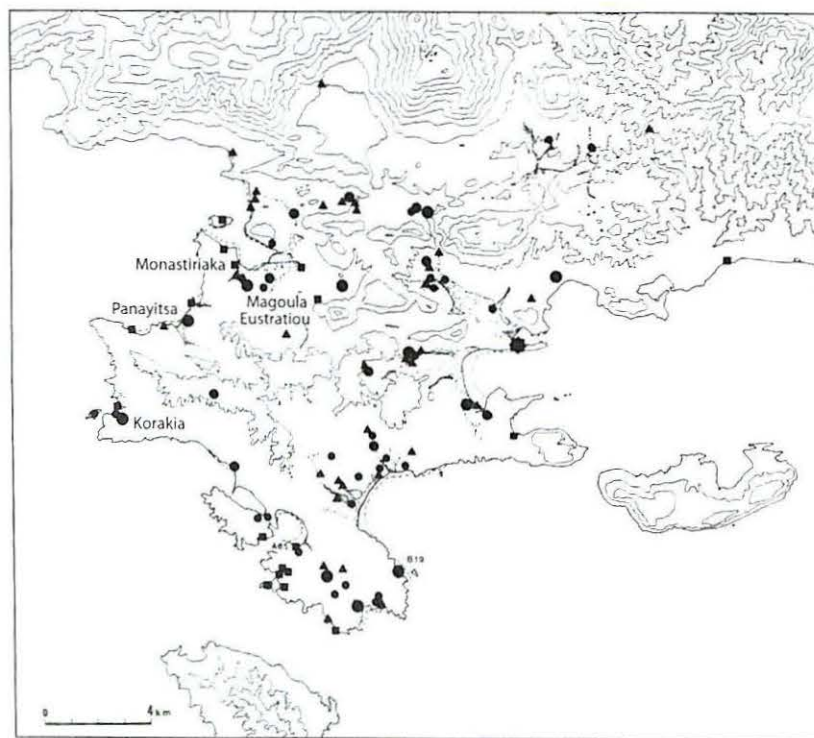


Fig. 1b – Répartition des sites en Argolide du Sud à l'époque romaine tardive  
(JAMESON-RUNNELS-VAN ANDEL 1994, fig. 4.27, p. 241)



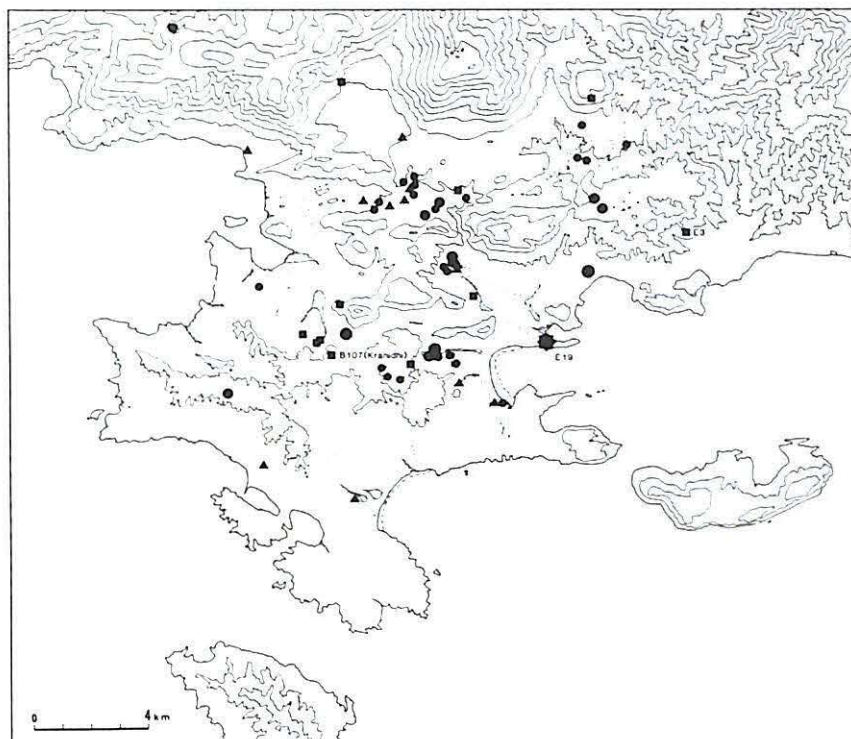


Fig. 1c – Répartition des sites en Argolide du Sud à l'époque médiévale  
(JAMESON-RUNNELS-VAN ANDEL 1994, fig. 4.28, p. 242)

Les prospections intensives en Messénie (*The Minnesota Messenia Expedition*, 1972 ; Nichoria I, 1978 ; Nichoria III, 1983), et les recherches, minutieusement publiées, sur l'Argolide du sud offrent une image similaire. Les sites de taille moyenne (de 1 à 3 ha) repérés en Argolide du sud passent de 66 au Haut-Empire à 99 pour l'Antiquité tardive. Ils représentent des villages composés de ménages peu nombreux ou des *villae* rurales (JAMESON-RUNNELS-VAN ANDEL 1994, p. 554).

1. Magoula Eustratiou (Masès) : 5 ha ; population estimée : 625
2. Panayitsa : 3 ha ; population estimée : 375
3. Korakia : 3 ha ; population estimée : 375
4. Monastiriaka : 3 ha ; population estimée 375<sup>1</sup>.

Les fouilles archéologiques, qui devraient compléter l'archéologie de prospection, ne donnent que rarement l'aspect et la fonction des habitats ruraux. L'habitat paléochrétien de l'ancienne ville d'Halieis a été fouillé plus systématiquement<sup>2</sup>. Au centre de la ville antique, près du port, la communauté chrétienne constituait un ensemble comprenant une résidence importante avec bain, de petites maisons et des tombes pauvres sans offrandes.

1. JAMESON-RUNNELS-VAN ANDEL 1994, App. A et Table B.2.  
2. W. RUDOLPH, Excavations at Porto Cheli and vicinity. Preliminary report V. 2 The early Byzantine remains, *Hesperia* 48, 1979, p. 294-321.

Ce cas paraît révéler une différenciation sociale avec la présence d'un grand propriétaire et de personnes sous sa dépendance. Le grand nombre d'amphores trouvé à proximité peut indiquer une activité artisanale, celle de la fabrication locale de conteneurs pour le transport du vin et surtout de l'huile. Dans le site B 19, deux fours servant à la cuisson d'amphores largement diffusées attestent l'augmentation de la production agricole. De même la découverte de nombreux pressoirs confirme la production d'huile (AVRAMÉA 1997, p. 117, 127-128, 142, 175). Les fouilles de grands centres antiques et spécialement de Némée, étudiée systématiquement, indiquent assez clairement la nature de la réoccupation chrétienne du site. À côté de la basilique, une grande résidence a été découverte pourvue de plusieurs pièces de forme et de dimensions régulières du côté oriental, plus petites et construites sans plan du côté occidental. Les murs étaient liaisonnés au mortier, la toiture formée d'une charpente recouverte de tuiles, les sols pavés de carreaux de terre cuite et de dalles en pierre. Les chrétiens installés dans le sanctuaire de Némée se livraient à l'agriculture : les canaux d'irrigation datés du VI<sup>e</sup> siècle, découverts par St. Miller<sup>3</sup> en

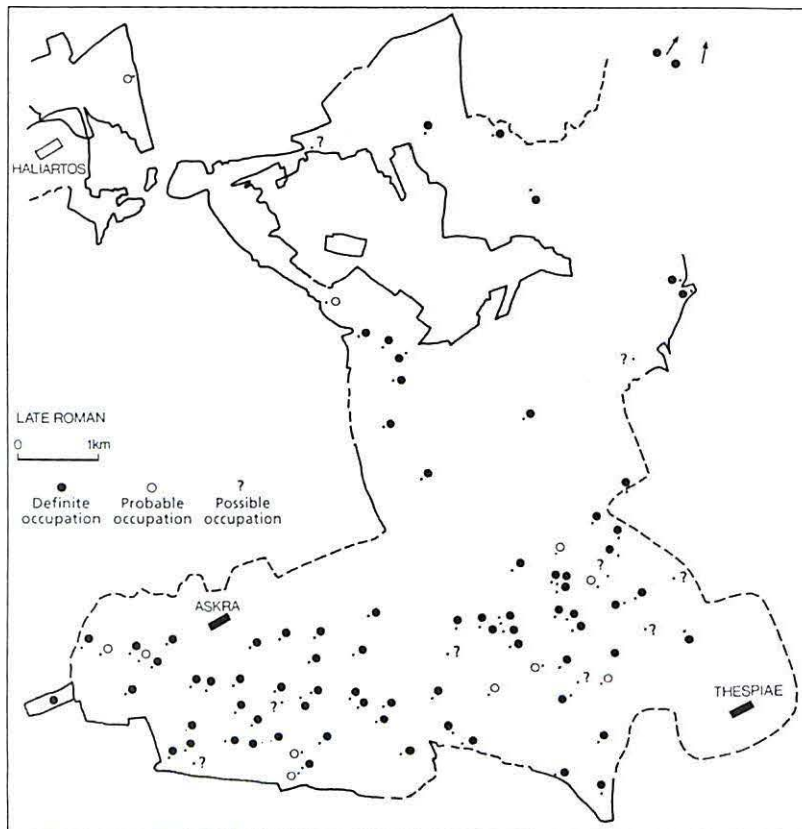


Fig. 2 Boeotia Survey : sites de l'Antiquité tardive (d'après BINTLIFF 1996, fig. 6)

3. St. G. MILLER, Excavations at Nemea 1973-1974, *Hesperia* 44, 1975, p. 143-172 ; IDEM 1975, *Hesperia* 45, 1976, p. 202 ; IDEM 1979, *Hesperia* 49, 1980, p. 181-183 et 191-197 ; IDEM 1980, *Hesperia* 50, 1981, p. 45-67 ; IDEM 1983 *Hesperia* 53, 1984, p. 182-186, IDEM 1984-1986, *Hesperia* 57, 1988, p. 3-8. St. G. MILLER, *Nemea I Excavations at Nemea, Topographical and architectural Studies*, 1992.

plusieurs endroits, le prouvent. Parmi le grand nombre de tombes, dispersées ou formant des cimetières, très pauvres pour la plupart, une seule se distingue par les offrandes qu'elle contenait : la jeune fille enterrée dans cette tombe, bien luxueuse par rapport au niveau du reste de la communauté chrétienne de Némée, devait appartenir à une famille importante.

**Dans le Péloponnèse des villae ont été découvertes en plusieurs endroits** : en Corinthie<sup>4</sup>, à Lacédémone, hors de la ville avec pressoir à vin, en Messénie<sup>5</sup>, ...). Le plan d'une grande maison rurale à Diminio de Corinthe a été présenté par Orlandos<sup>6</sup>. En Thessalie, à Aïdinion, sur les deux pièces fouillées d'un ensemble plus important, l'une était un pressoir à huile et l'autre un pressoir à vin<sup>7</sup> ; de même en Attique (Argyroupolis) une pièce fouillée était un pressoir à huile<sup>8</sup>. Le « village byzantin » d'Olympie, situé à l'ouest de l'Altis, près de la basilique chrétienne, était constitué de maisons comprenant de grandes pièces avec un simple foyer et une cuisine. Après le tremblement de terre de 551, un nouveau village chrétien émergea à l'est du temple, avec des maisons serrées les unes contre les autres et dotées de pièces plus petites. On signale un pressoir à vin à l'Héraïon et un grand nombre de tombes. Les habitants pratiquaient la viticulture, la céréaliculture, la fabrication de la céramique, la production d'ornements en bronze<sup>9</sup>.

#### DU MILIEU DU VI<sup>e</sup> AU DÉBUT DU IX<sup>e</sup> SIÈCLE

**Tant en Béotie du sud-ouest que dans le Péloponnèse, les prospections indiquent un changement important. Le climat est, semble-t-il, plus froid et plus humide et accroît l'érosion des terroirs abandonnés. Dégradation des sols, alluvionnement et inondations s'observent dans la vallée du Pénée au VI<sup>e</sup> siècle en Thessalie<sup>10</sup>** selon un processus déjà analysé en Macédoine par B. Geyer<sup>11</sup>.

Sur les 40 km<sup>2</sup> examinés en Béotie du sud-ouest par le « Bœotia Project », **les petits habitats ruraux de la période précédente disparaissent. La comparaison des cartes de l'habitat de cette région démontre une régression très accentuée de la population et de l'extension des sites (BINTLIFF 1995, fig. 4, 5).** Pendant cette période (VI<sup>e</sup>-début IX<sup>e</sup> siècle)

4. R. M. ROTHBAUS, Urban space, agricultural space and villas in Late Roman Corinth, P. N. Doukellis et L. G. Mendoni éd., *Structures rurales et sociétés antiques*, Besançon, 1994, p. 391-396.

5. J. I. DAVIS, S. E. ALCOCK *et al.*, The Pylos regional archaeological project. Part I: Overview and the archaeological survey, *Hesperia* 66, 1997, p. 391-482 : Dialiskari, cf. p. 469-474 (S. J. Gerstel).

6. K. ORLANDOS, V<sup>e</sup> Congrès International d'Archéologie Chrétienne, 1957, p. 116. Cf. SODINI, L'habitat urbain en Grèce, *Villes et peuplement dans l'Illyricum protobyzantin* (Coll. Éc. fr. de Rome 77), Rome, 1984, p. 365 ; I. BALDINI-LIPPOLIS, *La domus tarso-antica*, Bologne, 2002, p. 189.

7. N. NIKONANOS, *ArchDelt* 26, 1971, B', p. 312-313, fig. 5.

8. A. LIANGOURAS, *ArchDelt* 22, 1967, B', p. 140-141, fig. 7.

9. Cf. Th. VÖLLING, The Last Christian Greeks and the First Pagan Slavs in Olympia, in *Dark Centuries in Byzantium* Athènes, Fondation nationale de la recherche scientifique (International Symposium 9), 2001, p. 303-323 ; IDEM, Early Byzantine Agricultural Implements from Olympia (5th-6th centuries AD), *Πρωτοβυζαντινή Μεσσήνη και Όλυμπία*, P. Themelis et V. Konti éd., Athènes, 2002, p. 195-207 ; IDEM, Ein frühbyzantinischer Hortfund aus Olympia, *Ath. Mitt.* 110, 1995, p. 425-459.

10. N. ATHANASIADÉS, Zur Postglazialen Vegetations Entwicklung von Litochoro Katerinis und Pertouli Trikalon, *Flora* 1975, p. 112, 123, cité par B. Geyer, *EHB*, p. 31-45.

11. B. GEYER in *Paysages de Macédoine*, J. Lefort éd., Paris, 1986, p. 103.

la distribution des sites est très problématique. La céramique est presque inexistante (ce qui contredit l'hypothèse de la présence des Slaves, qui l'utilisent). On signale trois habitats et parmi eux un habitat nouveau, celui de Paleomavrovouni, sur un emplacement à l'écart, à la périphérie des terres cultivées (BINTLIFF 1996, fig. 8). L'occupation de l'antique cité de Hyettos dura jusqu'à la fin de la période romaine tardive. Elle est ensuite abandonnée et, à 500 m de là, surgit un petit habitat qui a livré des tessons de la période VII<sup>e</sup>-IX<sup>e</sup> siècles et qui se développe pendant l'époque mésobyzantine et franque. Dans le Péloponnèse, en Argolide du sud, on signale le même phénomène de régression. La population a dû se replier à l'intérieur des terres, exerçant des activités pastorales sur les hauteurs. On admet généralement que la disparition des cités antiques et des fermes a laissé place au développement de villages éloignés les uns des autres.

#### DU IX<sup>e</sup> AU XIV<sup>e</sup> SIÈCLE

Sources et monuments témoignent d'un renouveau de la population rurale et d'un changement du mode d'habitat en Thessalie, en Grèce centrale et méridionale à partir du IX<sup>e</sup> siècle. La période qui s'étend du IX<sup>e</sup> au XIII<sup>e</sup> siècle paraît avoir connu un fort essor démographique et une extension des cultures. L'habitat groupé semble la règle et l'habitat dispersé, même intercalaire, l'exception<sup>12</sup>.

Cette phase de développement va de pair avec l'arrivée d'un « petit optimum climatique » : le reflux de la pression humaine et des conditions climatiques tempérées favorisent une régénération de la végétation. À Pertouli (Thessalie occidentale), vers la fin du IX<sup>e</sup> siècle, on signale le recul de la forêt et l'augmentation des plantes associées à l'agriculture et aux défrichements<sup>13</sup>. La période qui va du X<sup>e</sup> au XIII<sup>e</sup> siècle semble avoir connu un fort essor démographique et une extension des cultures<sup>14</sup>. Toutefois au XIV<sup>e</sup> siècle les diagrammes polliniques indiquent un renversement de la tendance : expansion des formations arborées et densification de la couverture végétale (GEYER, *EHB*, p. 43).

L'étude ancienne d'H. Antoniadis-Bibicou sur les villages désertés<sup>15</sup> confirme ces données sur le XIV<sup>e</sup> siècle. C'est à partir de ce siècle que le plus grand nombre de villages désertés est attesté, surtout dans la seconde moitié du siècle. Dans le Péloponnèse on signale 49 villages désertés dans la seconde moitié du XIV<sup>e</sup> siècle, contre 15 dans la première moitié ; pour la Thessalie 6 villages dans la première moitié, contre 23 dans la seconde moitié du même siècle. Ces chiffres ne s'appuient pas malheureusement sur des données analytiques. M<sup>me</sup> Antoniadis-Bibicou souligne que plusieurs facteurs (mauvaises conditions économiques, pénurie des moyens de travail, manque de sécurité) ont dû modifier les activités agricoles et favoriser l'élevage. Elle en veut pour preuve que dans les documents du XIV<sup>e</sup> et du XV<sup>e</sup> siècle le droit à l'élevage n'est presque jamais omis (έννόμιον) et qu'il est en plus présenté aussi sous une forme analytique : προβατοέννόμιον, μελισσοέννόμιον, χοιροέννόμιον (ANTONIADIS-BIBICOU, *op. cit.*, p. 378-379).

12. M. KAPLAN, *BSI* 43, 1982, p. 202 sq.

13. N. ATHANASIADES, *Flora* 164, 1975, p. 112.

14. On observe la même évolution en Macédoine (B. GEYER, *Paysages*, p. 104).

15. H. ANTONIADIS-BIBICOU, Villages désertés en Grèce. Un bilan provisoire, *Villages désertés et histoire économique, XI<sup>e</sup>-XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle*, École Pratique des Hautes Études – VI<sup>e</sup> section, Paris 1965, p. 343-417.

La documentation signalant l'existence et le nom des villages s'accroît considérablement. Mis à part les données puisées chez les historiens, chronographes et dans les vies de saints, nous disposons à partir du XII<sup>e</sup> siècle, mais surtout pendant les XIII<sup>e</sup> et XIV<sup>e</sup> siècles, des documents d'archives. Cette dernière source, abondante pour la Thessalie occidentale et orientale ainsi que pour quelques régions du Péloponnèse, ne donne qu'une information partielle. Quelques inscriptions, matériel plus systématiquement exploité dans les dernières années, aident à élucider la constitution de la population des villages. D'autre part, les prospections, comme pour les périodes précédentes, enrichissent nos connaissances sur l'occupation du sol et la population rurale. À cela s'ajoutent les fouilles et études archéologiques sur les sites et monuments.

À partir du IX<sup>e</sup> siècle, les résultats des prospections en Béotie du sud-ouest suggèrent une augmentation de la population pendant la période mésobyzantine. La céramique étudiée provient de la campagne et date des XI<sup>e</sup>-XII<sup>e</sup> siècles. Sur la carte (fig. 3) apparaissent 9 nouveaux habitats ainsi que 4 autres probables. Le caractère de ces habitats est celui de petits hameaux, régulièrement espacés. Ils sont situés aussi bien dans les parties basses et ouvertes que sur les hauteurs, au sommet ou sur le versant des collines. Ces emplacements diversifiés ne permettent pas d'attribuer la localisation des derniers à un souci de sécurité; ils correspondent plutôt à l'expansion de la population. Le site de la ville ancienne de

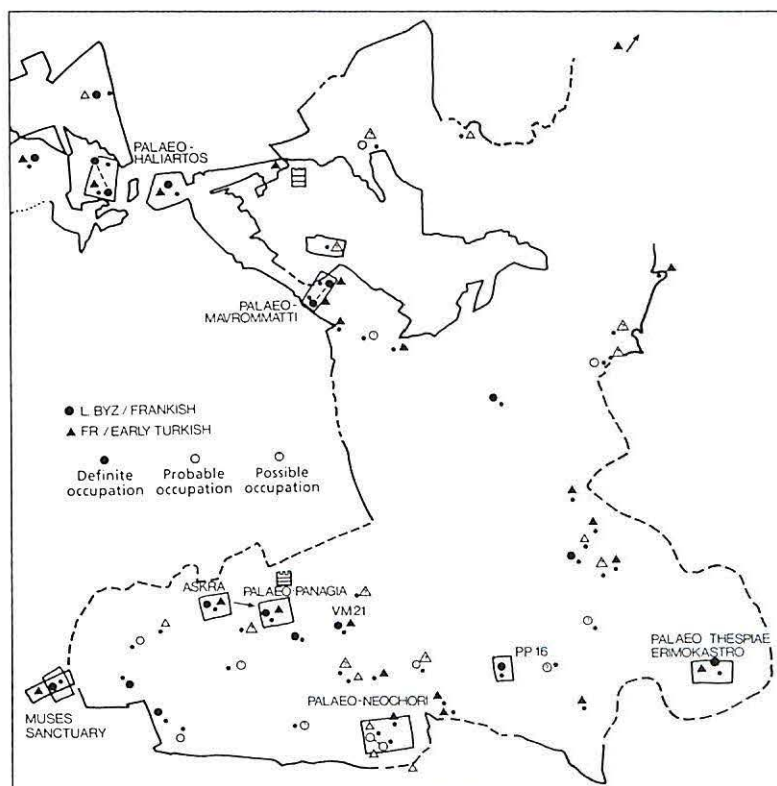


Fig. 3 – Boeotia Survey : distribution de la céramique byzantine tardive, franque et ottomane ancienne (d'après BINTLIFF 1996, fig. 9)

16. Cf. N. STEDMAN, Land-use and settlement in post-medieval Central Greece: An interim discussion, *Archaeology of Medieval Greece*, P. Lock et G. D. R. Sanders éd., Oxford, 1996, p. 179-192.

Hahartos est réoccupé pendant le XII<sup>e</sup> siècle et se développe en un grand village pendant la période franque et turque. La proximité du lac Kopais offrait au village des terres fertiles<sup>16</sup>. Entre Askra et Thespieae, quatre nouveaux sites ont été repérés : c'étaient de petits villages éloignés les uns des autres dans les plaines et sur les versants des collines propices à la céréaliculture.

Le cadastre de Thèbes<sup>17</sup>, dressé peu après le milieu du XI<sup>e</sup> siècle, présente l'intérêt primordial de démontrer que l'agriculture s'est intensifiée pendant cette période et que le nombre des propriétaires avait augmenté. Aux unités de taxe du cadastre s'ajoutent des subdivisions introduites par de brèves indications topographiques. Mais nous ne connaissons pas les *périorismoï* qui seraient nécessaires pour localiser ces unités fiscales autonomes. Le processus de la formation de grands domaines n'est pas définitif et les propriétaires semblent posséder un nombre de tenures dispersées. En même temps, il y a une expansion aux dépens de *l'incultum*. Vingt-quatre habitats sont caractérisés comme villages, entre Thèbes et la côte orientale de la Béotie. Les quelques sites qui peuvent être identifiés sur la carte se trouvent à moins de 200 m d'altitude : Mégala Chalia, Ritsona, Dervenosalessi, Vosselos (A, groupes 1-11-111), Mikro Bathy et Bathy (groupes IV-VI).

Plusieurs mentions du cadastre font allusion à la fertilité et aux pâturages (ruisseaux, fleuves, terre arable, moulins à eau, vignes, chênes et pins, pâturages, barrage de fleuve). L'expansion rurale avait des conséquences importantes sur l'économie de la région et de la ville de Thèbes. En dehors des murailles de la ville de Thèbes, un des villages mentionnés par le cadastre est Pergion (Πέργιον, 1. 75, aujourd'hui Πύρι). Les fouilles archéologiques y ont mis au jour des maisons, ainsi qu'un trésor monétaire du XIII<sup>e</sup> siècle<sup>18</sup>). Des maisons de la période mésobyzantine ont été aussi découvertes à Tachion, mentionné dans le cadastre comme χωρίον τοῦ Ταχῆ, τοῦ Ταχίου, aujourd'hui à 2 km au sud de Thèbes. Le cadastre mentionne aussi l'église de la Panayia de Tachion<sup>19</sup>. En dehors des murailles de la ville il y avait des moulins à eau, deux à Charmenes, au sud-est de Thèbes, et un autre près de l'église Saint-Luc au sud de la ville.

Dans le Péloponnèse, en Argolide du sud, les recherches diachroniques signalent un changement fondamental. De nouveaux habitats sont repérés dans les vallées de Fournoi, Hermioni et Pikrodafni, ainsi que sur le plateau d'Iliokastron, sur des terres arables et alluviales (JAMESON-RUNNELS-VAN ANDEL 1994, fig. 6.24). À l'exception de la place forte de Kastri et du kastron de Thermissi, tous les habitats se trouvent à l'intérieur, invisibles de la mer, sur des hauteurs. Dans la région basse et bien irriguée qui s'étend entre Fournoi et la gorge de Katafiki (JAMESON-RUNNELS-VAN ANDEL 1994, fig. 6.25), 11 habitats de la période mésobyzantine ont été repérés. La prédominance de la céréaliculture est suggérée par la nature des sols mais on continue la pratique de l'élevage. Kranidi, près du port de Koilada, paraît être bien placé pour l'exploitation de larges étendues labourables. Kranidi a été donné en possession à Théodoros Nomikopoulos par un chrysobulle d'Andronic II délivré en 1288. La même personne possédait aussi un vignoble à Gonia (Iria). D'autres sites de plus d'un hectare sont connus dans la région ainsi que 50 petits sites dispersés (JAMESON-RUNNELS-VAN ANDEL 1994, p. 555).

17. N. SVORONOS, Recherches sur le cadastre byzantin et la fiscalité aux XI<sup>e</sup>-XII<sup>e</sup> siècles : le cadastre de Thèbes, *BCH* 83, 1959, p. 1-166, repr. dans IDEM, *Études sur l'organisation intérieure, la société et l'économie de l'empire byzantin*, Londres, 1973, art. III.

18. *ArchDelt* 22, 1967, p. 237; 23. 1968, p. 222; 25, 1970, p. 220.

19. Cf. Ch. BOURAS, Village and City, *XVI. Intern. Congr. Akten* 1/2, Vienne, 1981, p. 624.

Dans le Péloponnèse, les fouilles n'attestent que rarement la trace des villages. Une seule maison rurale du XIII<sup>e</sup> siècle a été découverte à Armatova en Élide, étudiée et présentée par Ch. Bouras<sup>20</sup>. Elle présente un plan assez clair, comprenant trois petites pièces à un étage avec une charpente en bois; elle donne une idée des fermes isolées de cette période. L'exemple reste unique, probablement à cause de la pauvreté de la construction.

La construction d'une tour centrale dans le village pour la défense, qui rappelle les tours monastiques, est un trait caractéristique des villages des XIII<sup>e</sup>-XV<sup>e</sup> s. Dans le Péloponnèse, le village d'Hélikovounon est cédé par le despote Théodore I<sup>er</sup> à la métropole de Monemvasie avec sa tour et sa circonscription, donation confirmée par Manuel II en 1405<sup>21</sup>. Mais la plus fameuse mention d'une tour centrale reste celle de la «κώμης ἔκφρασις» du XV<sup>e</sup> siècle de Jean Eugénikos pour la bourgade laconienne de Pétrina et dont les restes ont été signalés : πύργος ὑψηλὸς ἐν μεσαιωτάτῳ τοῦ λόφου καὶ τῆς κώμης ἐξωκοδόμηται... καὶ πᾶσαν ἀσφάλειαν ἐκ περιωπῆς ὡς ἐξ ἀκροπόλεως τοῖς οἰκῆτορσιν ἐμποιῶν<sup>22</sup>.

Les nombreux villages byzantins mentionnés dans les actes comprenaient bien évidemment des églises mais seule la présence des prêtres parmi la population recensée en suggère l'existence. Bien que dans le Péloponnèse les recensements détaillés manquent, les inscriptions constituent une autre source qui mentionne la construction d'églises. L'inscription de fondation de l'église de Saint Jean Prodrome à Kastania dans le Magne rappelle qu'elle fut construite et décorée aux frais des habitants du village au début du XIII<sup>e</sup> siècle en soulignant la différenciation sociale. Elle déclare en effet la contribution de toute la commune, distinguant dans la population les « prokritoi » du « peuple commun »<sup>23</sup>. À Polémitas du Magne, une longue inscription concernant la fondation de l'église de Saint Michel et des donations de terre en 1278 nous apprend les noms d'habitants du village qui sont « des familiers et héritiers (οἰκείων καὶ κληρονόμων) du village » et dont le nombre s'élève à 29 personnes avec leurs familles. En tête des donateurs se trouve « kyr Georges Patélès, originaire du kastron d'Orient Proussa », qui semble être un membre important de la communauté et la seule personne du village qui vient de loin. À côté de prêtres et d'un *anagnôstès* les autres sont de simples paysans. Leurs donations consistent en oliviers et en terres arables, χωράφια d'une faible superficie, d'1/3 ou 1/2 pinakion, 1/3 ou 1/2 modios. Le total des donations évoque les moyens très limités des membres de la communauté<sup>24</sup>. L'inscription de l'église des Saints Anargyres à Kipoula du Magne (1265) mentionne les donateurs : trois prêtres, un *anagnôstès* et *nomikos* et des villageois avec leurs familles qui offrent des *nomismata*. Leur donation est modeste allant du quart de *nomisma* à un *nomisma* entier; seul le *nomikos* et *anagnôstès* donne 8 *nomismata*. La somme totale pour la construction et la décoration de l'église du village s'élève à 14 *nomismata*. Si les paysans d'un village du XIII<sup>e</sup> siècle de la région du Magne pouvaient offrir en tout une somme de 14 *nomismata* pour leur église, quelle était la taille

20. Ch. BOURAS, Houses in Byzantium, *DChAE*, 1982-1983, p. 13 et 15, fig. 9.

21. Sp. LAMPROS, *Παλαιολογία καὶ Πελοποννησιακά*, Athens, 1926, p. 122-123; cf D. ZAKYTHINOS, *Le Despotat*, II, p. 195.

22. ZAKYTHINOS, *Despotat*, p. 213 n. 4.

23. Ph. DROSSOYANNI, *Σχόλια στις τοιχογραφίες του Ι. Προδρόμου στη Μεγάλη Καστανιά Μάνης*, Athènes, 1982, p. 216 suiv.

24. Cf. A. PHILIPPIDIS-BRAAT, Inscriptions du Péloponnèse, 2<sup>e</sup> Partie, Inscriptions du IX<sup>e</sup> au XV<sup>e</sup> siècle, *TM* 9, 1985, n° 57, p. 314-317; S. KALOPISSI-VERTI, *Dedicatory Inscriptions*, Wien 1992, n° 21.

et le revenu du village ? Nos informations sont presque inexistantes. Un exemple du xv<sup>e</sup> siècle éclaire en partie cette question. À Kalavryta, en Achaïe, Constantin Dimitropoulos a légué en *charistikè* à Michel Kavakès le village de Dylivèna avec tous ses domaines, parèques, vignes, terres et arbres. Dans la même région, le couvent connu sous le vocable de l'Espoir des Désespérés reçoit par un acte du despote Constantin Paléologue confirmé par son frère Thomas, ce même village de Dylivèna. Et le même despote accorde à Michel Kavakès, en échange des terres qui ont été données au monastère, la moitié du village de Vallimoi, appartenant au fisc, avec tous ses droits. Le revenu fiscal de cette concession s'élevait à une somme de 46 hyperpères et six onces par an<sup>25</sup>.

La division de la Thessalie en unités de géographie physique – plaines, bassins, côtes, chaînes de montagnes – peut jusqu'à un certain point expliquer la géographie humaine et l'interdépendance entre plaine et montagne. Pendant les xiii<sup>e</sup> et xiv<sup>e</sup> siècles, les documents d'archives sont riches en données et nous constatons une concentration d'agglomérations-habitats à l'ouest et à l'est. Elle s'explique par des décisions politiques inspirées par le souci de tirer au mieux partie de la géographie. En effet, la partie occidentale est près des voies de communication, tandis que la partie orientale est tournée vers l'Égée. La cité, le monastère et la communauté rurale dépendante sont les trois types d'habitat.

Le cartulaire des monastères de Makrynitissa et de Néa Pétra, fondés par la famille des Maliassènes sur le mont Pèlion (MM IV, p. 330-340) fait état d'une longue liste de possessions comprenant des villages, monastères, métoques, *agridia*, *topoi*, tenures, *hypostaseis*, terre arable, vignes, jardins, moulins, barques etc. Parmi les villages signalons ceux d'Anò et Katò Grèpous (Kripous) avec deux monoxyles et le village de pêcheurs du lac Voivèis (Karla), avec ses champs, ses vignobles et une terre boisée et plate jusqu'à Aeidorachi (MM IV, p. 331, 358). Ce dernier village est situé entre les villages modernes de Chatzimissi et de Pétra sur le lac Voivèis. Le village de Magoula (au lieu dit actuel Magoula Aïdonitiki) possédait des vignes et une église du Christ Sôtèr et passa en 1336 dans les possessions de Lykousada. Le village de Kapraina (sur le site de l'antique Glaphyrai, aujourd'hui nommé Glaphyra) se trouvait à 4 km au sud du lac et rapportait une rente fiscale de 50 hyperpères. Il appartenait aux Tzékones, mais le despote Jean Paléologue ordonna au logothète Basileios Métritopoulos de rendre ce village à Makrynitissa et de leur en donner un autre de valeur égale (MM IV, p. 331, 359, 388-389). La terre du village de Pétra a été partagée entre Makrynitissa et le monastère de la Théotokos (MM IV, p. 420, 421). Le monastère du Prodrome, dénommé Néa Pétra, fut construit sur la tenure de M. Archontizis à Dryanotrvaïna, qui l'a vendue pour 12 hyperpères en 1271 (MM IV, p. 399). L'impôt qui pesait sur cette tenure était de 2 hyperpères et 8 kokkia ; mais il faut tenir compte du fait qu'elle constituait une unité fiscale avec d'autres terres de la région. Les habitants de Dryanouvaina ont déclaré qu'ils allaient payer la somme (MM IV, p. 391-393). Le village de Trinovos était *ιδιοπεριόριστον* et appartenait au protonobellissime Marmaras, qui a voulu accaparer le terrain (*τόπιον*) Vrastos, prétendant que ce dernier appartenait au village de Trinovos. Finalement Marmaras a été obligé de rendre le terrain Vrastos au monastère de Néa Pétra, ainsi que la dîme qu'il avait perçue (MM IV, p. 419-420).

25. Sp. LAMPROS, *Παλαιολόγεια καὶ Πελοποννησιακά*, t. IV, Athens, 1930, p. 239-240 ; D. ZAKYTHINOS, *Despotat*, II, p. 197-8 ; 200 ; 230 ; 240.



Plusieurs documents nous renseignent sur le prix des terres vendues par les paysans et en particulier sur le prix des vignes : en 1271 une vigne dans la région de Vélestinon d'une superficie de 1 holokotinarea almyriotikè (égale à 1 modios) a été vendue pour la somme de 7 hyperpères, bien que l'acte indique que sa valeur se montait à 9 hyperpères. En 1272, des vignes sont vendues pour 8 et 7 moins 1/3 d'hyperpère (MM IV, p. 388-389). Les ventes de parcelles de petites dimensions et la pauvreté des paysans (qui manquaient de blé, de bœufs pour labourer) ont été souvent soulignées (HARVEY, p. 405, éd. grecque).

En Thessalie occidentale, le secteur le plus développé et le plus densément peuplé était la partie nord. Les sources et le cours du Pénée rendaient la région propice à l'agriculture, avec des terres arables, des vignes, des moulins et la production de céréales, cultivées dans les plaines, au pied des montagnes. L'élevage et la pratique de la transhumance y sont attestés donnant des produits laitiers et de la laine ; des arbres aussi sont mentionnés, comme les mûriers de la région de Stagoi et des arbres fruitiers dans les jardins ; on y pratiquait en outre l'apiculture et la pêche.

Le grand nombre de documents d'archives et de cartulaires de grands monastères de Thessalie occidentale (Porta-Panayia, Lykousada, Zavlantia, Météores, évêché de Stagoi), précieux pour leur apport, répondent mal à nos questions sur les villages byzantins, leurs aspect et fonction, malgré le fait que le nombre de villages soit élevé. Nous connaissons la localisation d'un petit nombre d'entre eux. Le monastère de Zavlantia dans le village nommé aujourd'hui Paléopyrgos était situé entre Korbovo et Trikala, à 7 km de Trikala. Sur la colline au dessus du village ont été signalées les ruines d'un petit fort du XIV<sup>e</sup> siècle dont les murs avaient une épaisseur comprise entre 0,75 et 1,70 m (N. NIKONANOS, *ArchDelt* 28, 1973, B Chronique, p. 382). C'est probablement le πύργος que Syméon Uroš en 1366 permit de construire « au-dessus de Zavlantia sur le lieu-dit Mélissa », lieu de refuge pour les moines et les villageois<sup>26</sup>. D'autre part ce village était un bien militaire avant 1271. Le monastère acheta ou occupa le village et transforma le statut des soldats en parèques. Jean I<sup>er</sup> Ange les rétablit dans leur ancien état militaire et finalement Dušan en refit des parèques du monastère de Zavlantia.

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## THE PROBLEM OF THE EARLY BYZANTINE VILLAGE IN EASTERN AND NORTHERN MACEDONIA

Archibald DUNN\*

*Résumé* — Contrairement à certaines assertions récentes, l'archéologie de la Macédoine I contredit les idées reçues sur le déclin de l'économie rurale protobyzantine. Le résultat des recherches archéologiques indiquent en effet adaptation et croissance, soutenues par des structures économiques, culturelles et politiques. De l'est au nord de la Macédoine I, à travers des paysages de terres fertiles, de terroirs marginaux et de pâturages, l'archéologie révèle que de nombreux établissements ruraux partagent un certain nombre de traits urbains avec les civitates, ex-civitates et bourgades, ce qui montre leur statut relativement important.

It is recognized that there is a lack of historical records concerning the Macedonian countryside before the tenth century (LEFORT 1979, p. 251). To test the implications of the historiography of the Early Byzantine village in and for Macedonia therefore requires archaeological fieldwork. It can be argued, contrary to recent statements by some historians, that the archaeology of Macedonia (here the province of *Macedonia Prima*) does not support the inherited pessimistic model of Early Byzantine rural-economic decline. For all their problems, if the results of all kinds of archaeological enquiry are collated, they suggest instead adaptation, stability, and even growth, processes arguably stimulated in part by economic, cultural, and political institutions which modern historians have tended to perceive as agents of economic recession in the period in question. Across eastern and northern Macedonia, *i.e.* in parts of N. Greece and the FYROM (THEOCHARIDÈS 1980, p. 41-59, 91-103; PAPAZOGLU 1988, p. 90-98), several aspects of the complex of associations (topographical, material-cultural, chronological) within which Early Byzantine rural settlements must be studied will be briefly considered: (a) the association of such settlements with Roman *vici*; (b) their associations with the recorded distribution of Early Byzantine churches; (c) their associations in parts of a few civic *territoria* with *civitates* as such; (d) their associations with the distribution of "Late Roman" fortifications; (e) their associations with natural resources; (f) their associations with commodities and coinage.

Varied archaeological recording practices pose questions about the comparability of results of course, and the topographical and chronological associations require more documentation. But our almost complete dependence, across Macedonia, upon the results of Extensive Survey and rescue-archaeology, which in some circumstance can foster the neglect of rural sites, rather than upon Intensive Survey and the results of problem-oriented excavation, does not produce that result here because of the monumental aspects or dimensions of so many Early Byzantine rural sites. The recorded densities of large and/or monumental rural sites relative to Roman rural sites suggest that representative samples of a significant *level* of the Early Byzantine rural settlement pattern have, by conventional means, now been accumulated. The internal chronology of this period in the history of settlement remains problematic however, and neither intensive surveys (those conducted in central and southern Greece for instance), nor the methodologically more

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varied surveys conducted in N. Greece and the S. Balkans, can yet pinpoint sub-phases (which there must have been) within the period *ca.* 300-600 AD (KOUKOULÉ-CHRYSANTHAKÉ, SAMARTZIDOU, DUNN, CATLING 1996, p. 630-631; ROSSER 1999; MIKULČIĆ 1999). Nevertheless most of the complex of associations to be explored inflect in useful ways the apparently straightforward models of Early Byzantine rural growth which are emerging from intensive surveys in central and southern Greece (WRIGHT *et al.* 1985; CHERRY *et al.* 1991; BINTLIFF 1997; AVRAMÉA, *Péloponnèse*, ch.VI), and indicate significant regional variations in the structuring of rural settlement in this period. In particular, extensive surveys, cumulative heritage-management, and rescue-archaeology, all suggest strong associations for Macedonian rural settlements with: basilical churches, fortifications, cisterns, and stone-founded housing, all normally of durable construction, and an association with the petty currency. The "village" in the Early Byzantine S. Balkans was to some extent therefore not entirely "rural", sharing, as in some other eastern provinces, many aspects of a reduced repertoire of urban features with *civitates*, *ex-civitates*, and other "towns" or imperial forts (RAVEGNANI 1982; DUNN 1994; DUNN 1997).

Arguably such settlements (not of course the totality of rural settlements) had attained various kinds of distinction, including official functions, during the period in question. But if archaeological sites are to operate within historical models which deal with Late Antiquity (here Early Byzantium), they also have to start operating within historical models of provincial or regional history. Testing in the archaeology of Macedonia some implications of the historiography of the Early Byzantine village will not be a simple case of finding convenient illustrations for historical generalizations. Precisely for Macedonia this has already been tried with, as will be seen, unfortunate results.

The modern historiography of the Early Byzantine village could be said to be divisible into two phases, an earlier one dominated by A. H. M. Jones and the Marxists, and a current phase by Michel Kaplan, but also, in a not fully integrated discourse, by extensive and intensive surveys. The earlier phase, which was pessimistic about the conditions of the Late Roman (Early Byzantine) peasantry, proposed long-term demographic decline and a cumulative flight from the land (JONES 1964, p. 810-812, 817-820). This pessimistic model was imposed upon the archaeological record for the whole *provincia* of Macedonia (KONSTANTAKOPOULOU 1984, p. 269-280). But this record turns out to be the gazetteer of the *Tabula Imperii Romani* (TIB 1976, K34), essentially data supplied by the Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, with an exiguous scattering of notices for Greek Macedonia. The author asserts that the vast difference in the density of rural sites reported by the 1970s between Yugoslav Macedonia (high) and Greek Macedonia (very low) is meaningful (when of course it was all about the differing priorities of two national archaeological services); that "it does not seem that new settlements were founded" in Late Antiquity; that there were less rural settlements in Late Antiquity; that Early Byzantine fortifications are not settlements, and have no relationship to the land; they are "not units of rural production"; and that there were no Late Roman villas in Greek Macedonia. This imaginary catastrophe is explained in terms of the famous transition from a slave-mode to a feudal, or in this case, "pre-feudal" mode of production (KONSTANTAKOPOULOU 1984, p. 269-280). We can be sure that archaeology will transform historians' views about the history of the village in *Oriens*. What about provinces to the west of Constantinople? A concerted attempt to relate the rural archaeology of a province to Early Byzantine history should not be ignored (though it has been), whether or not one agrees with its premises or methodology. Can the progress achieved in the archaeology of the province of Macedonia (particularly in that of Greek Macedonia), and in the historiography of the Early Byzantine countryside, support an alternative to these visions of long-term rural economic, logically general, economic decline? There are important positions in a "post-Jonesian" history of the countryside which should be tested archaeologically.

Kaplan in his fundamental work *Les hommes et la terre à Byzance* finds ways of moving beyond the pessimism of Jones and others about the condition of the peasantry (p. 375-387), and has much to say about rural estates. At the same time, partly owing to a lack of historical evidence, historians have been unable to offer (unless perhaps it concerns the latest evidence from Egypt) accounts of the nature of these estates' controls over specific resources in specific landscapes, or accounts of specific Early Byzantine villages' *territoria*, and of the degrees and kinds of peasants' controls over a *territorium*. And although pessimism is in general displaced, Kaplan believes that the Balkans (including therefore Macedonia) were experiencing demographic decline by the 530s (p. 382, 387, 450). More generally the author states that lowland plains "forment l'essentiel du terroir agricole byzantin" (p. 22), a statement which has the unintended effect of marginalizing most real Byzantine landscapes and most real archaeological sites in the Balkans (including Macedonia). Meanwhile the pessimism of Jones (who actually contradicted himself) and of the Marxists continues to affect historians when they need to evoke the condition of the countryside. A very recent general history of the Byzantine state and society asserts that by the late 5th century Greece and the S.Balkans were "poor and getting poorer", and "lacking in men and riches" (TREADGOLD 1997, p. 107-108).

Now for no part of Macedonia do we yet have ideal data-sets, but for different eastern and northern districts important aspects of a potential data-set correspond to, or complement, each other in ways which suggest that the material is now representative. Seven overlapping areas of the *provincia* will serve as case-studies: the Khalkidiki, the Plain of Philippi, Mount Pangaion, two overlapping zones in FYROM where recent extensive surveys seem to entirely supersede *Tabula Imperii Romani* K34, the *territorium* of the *civitas* of Pella, and various rural *civitates* (figs. 1-2).

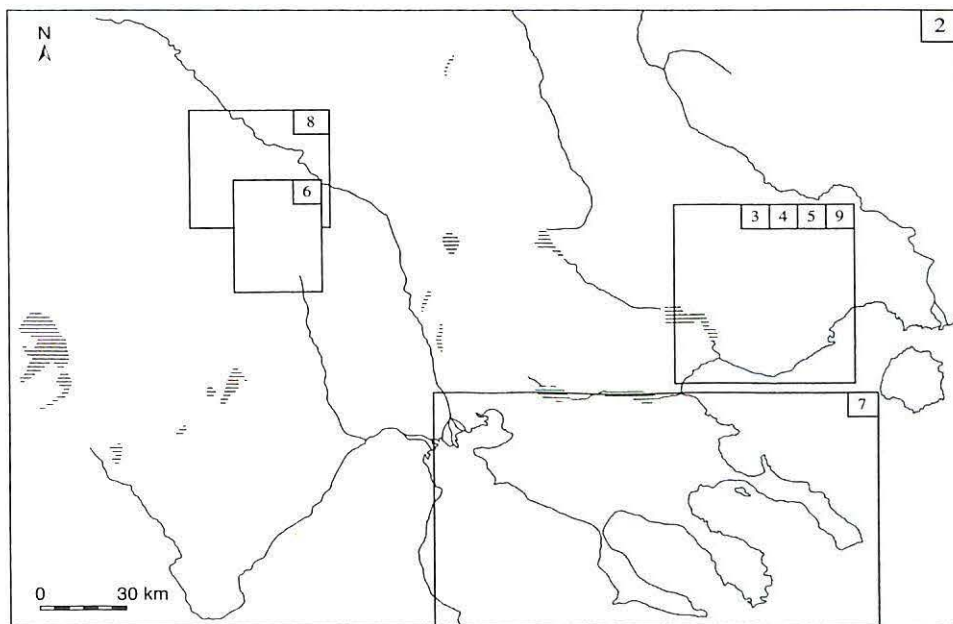


Fig. 1 – Key to maps 2-9

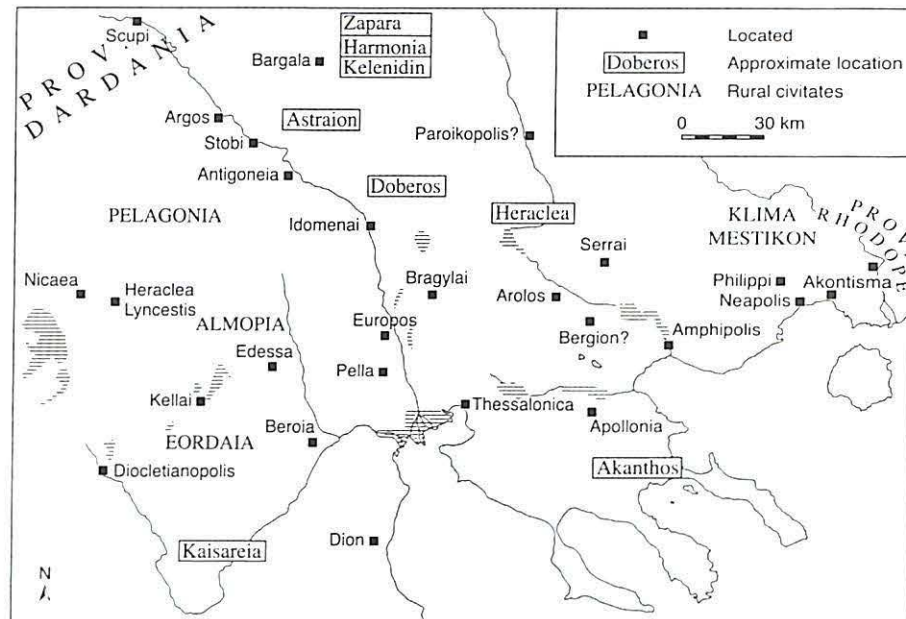


Fig. 2 – The Late Roman civitates of Macedonia

In the case of the Plain of Philippi several facets of the pessimistic model of transition from Roman to Early Byzantine rural settlement patterns can be questioned. Our point of reference is the relationship between the density and distribution of Roman *vici* and of Early Byzantine fortified sites. In N. Macedonia conductors of extensive surveys ascribe the following range of ancient terms to Early Byzantine fortified sites, depending on their size and to some extent their material culture: *vici*, *pagi murati*, *refugia*, or *oppida* (MIKULČIĆ 1974; MIKULČIĆ 1986a; MIKULČIĆ 1986b; LILČIĆ 1988-1989). But there is an arbitrary element in such an exercise in the absence of inscriptions or other references, or the application of more specific archaeological criteria than used so far, and in view of many signs that size is not a clear indicator of status and function (DINTCHEV 2002, p. 65-84). The legal status of such sites will therefore be regarded as conjectural, although not beyond discussion. The Roman epigraphy of the Plain of Philippi indicates that at least 17 *vici* shared it with Philippi itself and with one or two Greco-Roman towns (PAPAZOĞLU 1988, p. 411-413): an area of about 25 by 60 km if one includes the first range of encircling hills (fig. 3). The *vicus* (*kômê*), as is made clear by legal, epigraphic, and other references, continued to function in Early Byzantine times, even if there is as yet no epigraphy for it in Greece (FEISSEL 1983; KIOURTZIAN 2000). The types of small, simply fortified Early Byzantine sites classified by some as *vici*, *pagi*, etc. have gradually been reported in the hills around the Plain of Philippi: so far 18 (fig. 4) (*ArchDelt [Chronika] 1960 et seq.*; DUNN 2004)<sup>1</sup>. The positions of such sites would normally, as elsewhere in the Balkans, be interpreted as a collective response to the invasions of the 3rd to 5th centuries (WHITTAKER 1993). But this should not be deemed evidence of Jones' "flight from the land". The near-equivalence (currently) of the two totals (Roman *vici* and Early Byzantine rural defenses) may have no significance. But the distribution of the latter around the plain ought to be

1. In fact there should be even more Early Byzantine fortified sites, since the southern range of hills that encircle the plain is still archaeologically unreported.

significant of their relationship with the plain. The great majority of the steep surrounding hills can never have lent themselves to agriculture but in fact to grazing, mining, metallurgy, charcoal-making etc. (SAMSARÉS 1976, p. 13-15, 24-42). Meanwhile, although there has been no intensive survey of the plain itself, it clearly remained quite densely settled. Besides Philippi and Macedonian Hadrianopolis there are numerous traces of Early Byzantine rural settlements, including one associated with a *statio* of the Via Egnatia (KOUKOULÉ-CHRYSANTHAKÈ 1998, p. 43-46). If we then set the plain in its immediate context (fig. 5), it is reasonable to infer demographic continuity but within a new settlement pattern, rather than flight from the land and demographic decline. Precisely when or at what rate the new pattern emerged, and within what framework, is not clear however. But probably between 5 and 8 of the 18 reported rural fortified sites have a military origin rather than being "direct" successors of *vici* (DUNN 2004). And the inescapable implication of much fieldwork, and analysis of imperial legislation, is that certain kinds of garrison were directly or indirectly involved in agriculture (UENZE 1992; CARRIÉ 1995; DINTCHEV 1997; POULTER 1999; POULTER 2000).

The second case-study (fig. 6) makes it clearer that the construction of rural fortifications away from those plains which so preoccupy economic historians has nothing to do with economic decline. In an area half the size of our first case-study Viktor Lilčić has identified a slightly larger number of small, inhabited, simply fortified (*e.g.* without towers) Late Roman/Early Byzantine sites (21 to Philippi's current 18), including two strongly fortified "oppida". These do not surround a fertile plain, but occupy high ground rising from 200 to 1000 m. Where they *confront* a valley within these uplands they form a line of 7 simple enceintes, on average less than 4.5 km apart. Including the "oppida", which should probably be classified as settled imperial *castra* of the type discussed by Ravegnani (RAVEGNANI 1982; LILČIĆ 1988-1989), this density suggests that we are dealing with sites in close historical relationship with Roman *vici*. On one stretch of the river

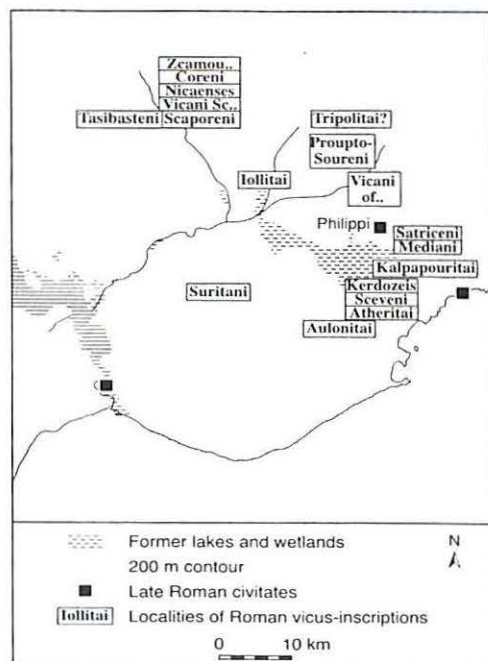


Fig. 3

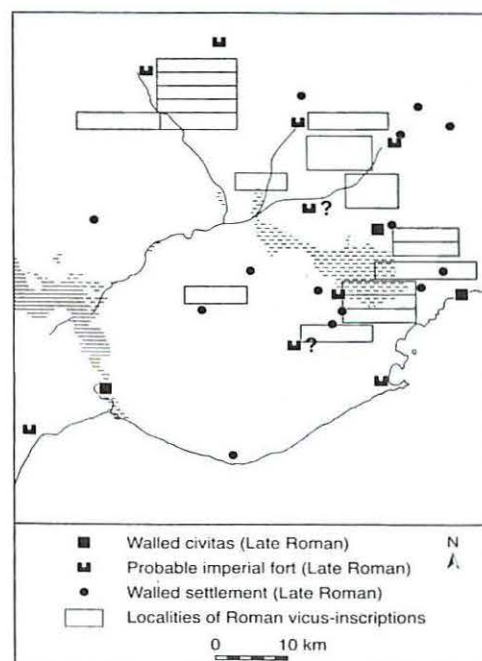


Fig. 4

Erigon, 18 km in length, south of the *civitas* of Stobi, are 6 simply fortified Early Byzantine sites, one of which (indicated with an asterisk) also belongs to the East-to-West alignment just identified (fig. 6). Here too we are probably dealing with the totality of organized rural communities, and in both cases with a respectable density of nucleated settlements (or their refuges), given the hilly nature of the terrain. This is not to suggest a simple equivalence between *vicus* and defenses. Clearly people lived outside these walls. But only an intensive survey, or cumulative heritage-management, reveals the density and distribution of *lowland* villages.

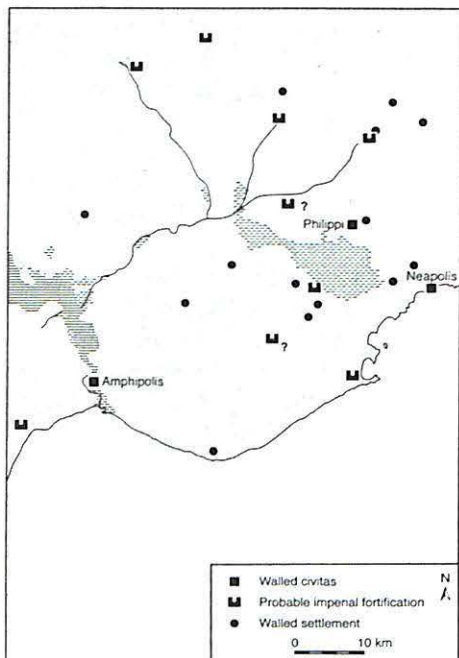


Fig. 5

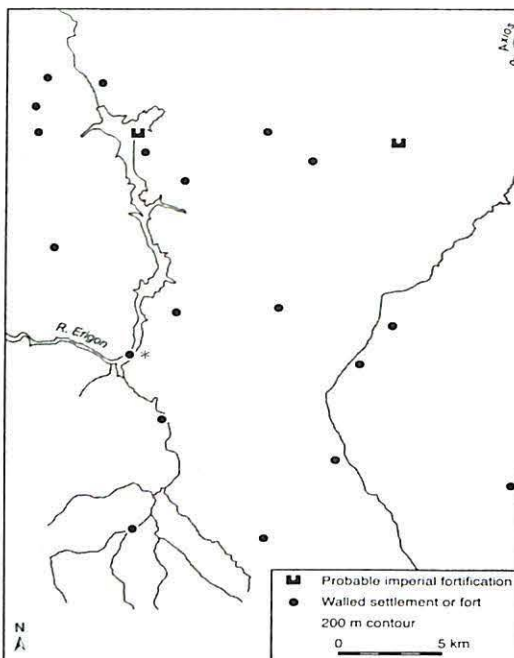


Fig. 6

The third case-study, concerning the *civitas* of Pella (fig. 2) addresses this question. Cumulative heritage-management by Greek Prehistorians and Classical archaeologists in lowlands defined by rivers, hills, and former wetland around the two sites of ancient and Early Byzantine Pella, had, by 1990, identified 19 Early Byzantine rural settlements around the *civitates* of Pella and Europos, mostly large sites on manmade “tombas” (CHRYSOSTOMOU 1990, p. 209-217, 226-230). This total excludes small sites characterized by the archaeologists as “farms” or “hamlets” (*agroikies*), of which they record only a single “palaeochristian” example (CHRYSOSTOMOU 1990, p. 208, n. 27), and excludes two substantially fortified *ex-civitates*, Kyrros and Menêida / “Mediana”, which I would classify, like Lilčić’s *oppida*, as Early Byzantine settled imperial *castra*, and two other fortified settlements (DUNN 2004). Compared to this total of 25 large settlements (including Early Byzantine Pella and Europos themselves) there had been 19 large Roman villages, and as many as four municipalities. So even the lowlands could have been as fully occupied by discrete rural settlements (many of which might, as in the Plain of Roman Philippi, have been *vici*) in Late Antiquity as in the preceding period in the southern Balkans, but with perhaps some appreciable loss of “farms” or “hamlets”.

At the same time fertile plains did not dominate the Byzantine world, and should not dominate our thinking. The possibility emerged that the edges of uplands were occupied by *vici* or *vicus*-successors with interests in the plains or valleys below. The second case-study also indicated a fairly dense occupation of uplands for their own resources. Our fourth, fifth, and sixth case-studies suggest that this was so in the Khalkidiki, in SE. Macedonia, and in another part of N. Macedonia which overlaps with the second case-study, in fact wherever uplands have already benefited from Extensive Survey or cumulative heritage-management.

The distribution of reported Late Roman-to-Early Byzantine fortifications in the Khalkidiki is not yet a good guide to the settlement pattern of its dominant uplands. However, if one superimposes the Greek Archaeological Service's reports of Early Byzantine basilicas (PAPANGELOS 1998, p. 80-82 and fig. 3) onto a mapping of the 200 m contour clear and interesting patterns emerge (fig. 7), although the northern hills, the Khortiatis range, have not yet been effectively reported. The hills of the Khalkidiki, and of most of Macedonia, have traditionally supported combinations of agriculture, viticulture, woodland- and scrubland-management, pastoralism, mining, and metallurgy (STRUCK 1907; BELLIER *et al.* 1986, p. 38-39, 41-48, 70-74, 75-78, 87-97), the gainfulness of which for peasants could help to explain this distribution of rural monuments. The basilicas so far reported are between 5 and 10 km apart along the routes that interconnect them, and thus *may* represent the upland distribution of nucleated settlements. It seems that Lilčić has found a similar distribution *above* the river-valleys of the Erigon and Axios in N.Macedonia (LILČIĆ 1989), several of his churches not being situated at fortified sites (fig. 8). Similarly the rescue-archaeology of Mount Pangaion in SE. Macedonia begins to reveal stone-built Early Byzantine basilicas associated, as in the hills above the Erigon and Axios, with a mixture of fortified and unfortified rural sites. At least 13 are now known at sites between 4.5 and 9 km apart (fig. 9) (DUNN 2004)<sup>2</sup>. These distributions make little sense, even in their incomplete state, other than as distributions in close correspondence with permanently occupied upland rural settlements. More generally the

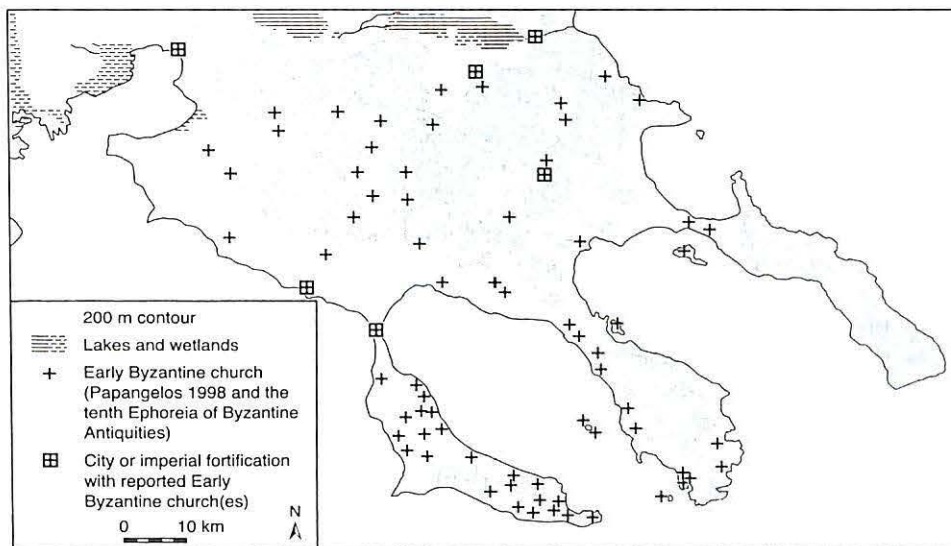


Fig. 7

2. Not all are indicated on fig. 9 owing to their state of publication.



vast majority of Early Byzantine basilicas found in the S. Balkans are rural (MIKULČIĆ 1986a; ALEKSOVA, LILČIĆ 1997). The involvement of wealthy individuals in the construction of a few of these is to be expected (BAKIRTZÉS 1988; BAKIRTZÉS 1992), but a comparative study of a range of features may suggest much “non-elite” patronage, and therefore a successful exploitation of superficially marginal landscapes by rural communities.

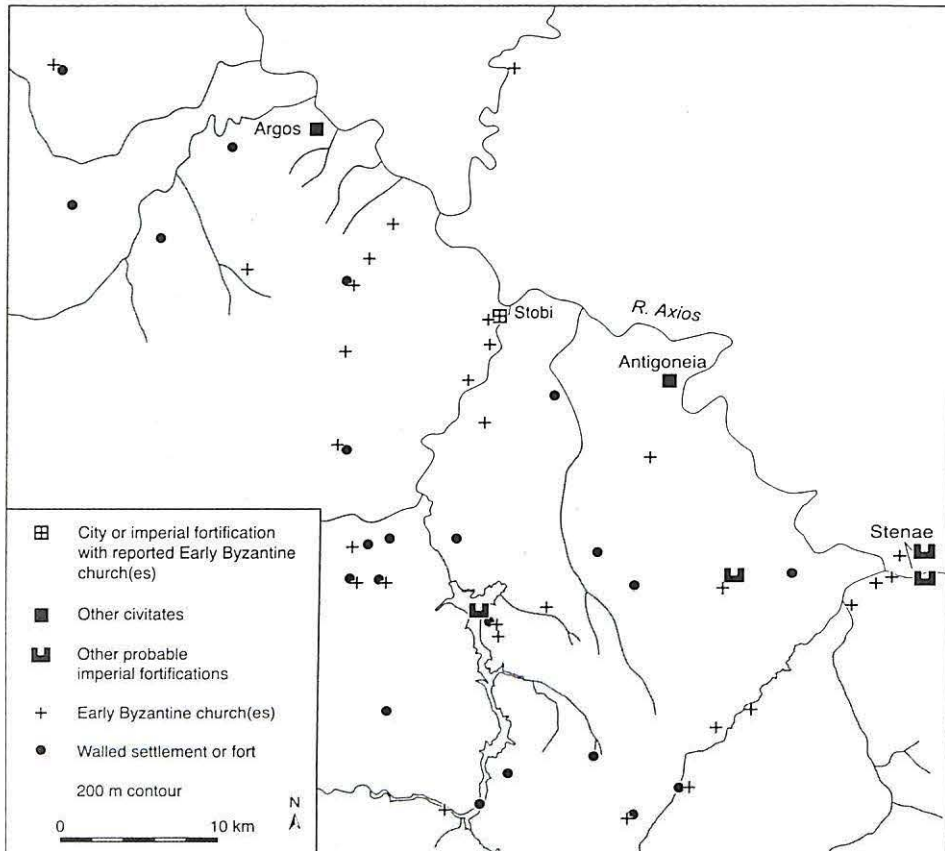


Fig. 8

Finally, by the sixth century such permanent upland settlements, often probably *vici*, often fortified, often furnished with basilicas and cisterns, could, collectively, constitute non-urban *civitates*. Justinian’s creation of *civitates* on public lands in some eastern provinces provides a context (JONES 1940, p. 87-88, 92), but the practice may not have been new. Our seventh case-study concerns, very briefly, a correlation of the *Synekdèmos* of Hierocles’ lists of *civitates* of ca. 530 AD (HONIGMANN, *Synekdèmos* 1939) with the archaeological record and with the physical and historical geography of parts of N. Macedonia. This would show that several of the so-called “cities” of Macedonia have ancient tribal or regional names, and are in upland areas where no ancient urban site, Classical, Hellenistic, Roman, or Late Antique, has ever been found despite archaeologists’ best efforts. This is demonstrably the case for Hierocles’ *poleis* (*civitates*) of Eordaia, Almopia, and Pelagonia (fig. 2) (HONIGMANN, *Synekdèmos* 638.7, 638.10, 641.5). To these could be added the *Klima Mestikon*, although of course not legally a *civitas* (cf. fig. 2). To take just one *civitas*, Pelagonia: much of the extensive surveying by Viktor Lilčić cited

above actually concerns what is understood to have been the *territorium* of 5th-to-6th-c Pelagonia (*within which* some, but not all, scholars continue to imagine that there lies a lost city of that name) (PAPAZOGLU 1988, p.266-267, 283-289; MIKULČIĆ 1999, p.80-81, 340). Relatively dense distributions of Early Byzantine walled rural settlements or refuges, and of rural basilicas, were noted above. At the same time, among these sites, depending where one delimits hypothetically the *territorium*,<sup>3</sup> are at least two larger, more expensively and powerfully fortified, sites with prestigious features (figs. 5 and 8). I have argued elsewhere that such sites represent a settling of soldiers upon inner provinces, typically after the establishment of the Prefecture of Eastern Illyricum in the 370s (whilst some are traceable to the Tetrarchy) (DUNN 2002). The villages of Macedonia, a “Mediterranean” province, could in other words have been integrated administratively and economically by being directly linked to imperial *castra*, as was most probably the case throughout much of Illyricum (MIRKOVIĆ 1996), some parts of Gaul (JONES 1964, p. 713 and nn. 2-3), and sections of the eastern *limes* for instance.

It seems therefore that nucleated or at least collectively organized rural communities large enough to be called villages were spread across Early Byzantine Macedonia, across lowland plains such as the *ager pellaeus*, and the far more extensive hills, at the same or almost the same density as in the Roman era. This pattern probably prevailed until the mid sixth century, there being no meaningful evidence of demographic decline in the countryside before Justinian’s reign. What about other evidence of their economic level? Most surveys and all excavations yield Early Byzantine bronze coins at the walled upland sites, indicating contact with markets. The bronze coinage of Justinian is almost ubiquitous

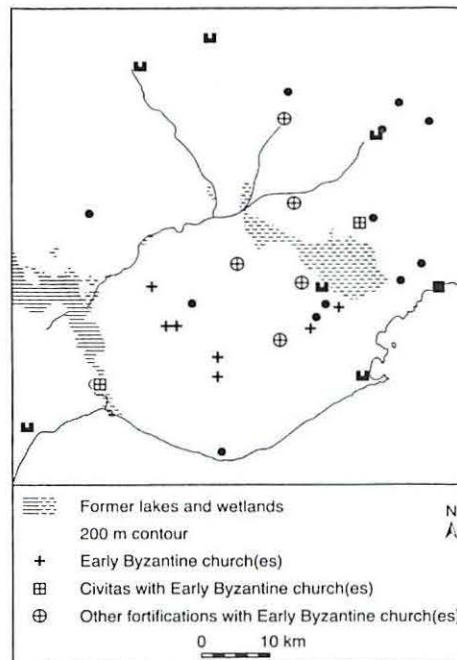


Fig. 9

3. The mapped case-studies at figures 5 and 8 may for instance transgress the territory of Stobi.

(LILČIĆ 1998). Many of these upland sites yield significant quantities of professionally made rooftiles (LILČIĆ 1988-1989). There are regular, if unillustrated, reports of imported Late Roman finewares at rural sites in Greek Macedonia (KARIVIERI 1999, p. 118), although these are not ubiquitous. The Early Byzantine sites found in the vicinity of Amphipolis by intensive survey produced only plain and coarse wares for instance (KOUKOULË-CHRYSANTHAKË, SAMARTZIDOU, DUNN, CATLING 1996, p. 646-647). Although there is no synthesis regarding the material culture of the Roman countryside (at least in N.Greece) with which to contrast these essentially preliminary reports, one significant contrast between the Roman and Early Byzantine countrysides can probably already be accepted. There is nothing in the rural archaeology of *Roman* Macedonia to compare with the remarkable construction of rural basilicas, which, where excavated, are dated to the 5th to 6th centuries (MIKULČIĆ 1986a; *ArchDelt [Chronika]* 1960 *et seq.*). Their particular distributions, as well as other finds, are suggestive of a necessarily diversified rural economy which might have become more successful during late Antiquity than it had been in Roman times.

The basis upon which this successfully diversified economy was integrated should have been advantageous, perhaps increasingly the emphyteutic lease whose rise to prominence in the 6th century has been so well demonstrated (KAPLAN *Les hommes et la terre*, p. 164 *et seq.*). The regular distribution of these walled sites and basilical churches across the uplands of Macedonia also means that many settlers were exploiting public lands, the multi-faceted *saltus* and *tractus*. Conversely the virtual absence of reports of rural basilicas from immensely fertile lowlands such as the western Khalkidiki (fig. 7), and the lower Strymon valley, may not be accidental after so many decades of recording. It may be connected with the low status of villagers there, in areas whose control would have been of great interest to the administration and landowners (as they were also in later centuries), rather than being connected with the spasmodic insecurity of the lowlands.

There are grounds then for rejecting every one of the pessimistic conclusions or assertions cited earlier concerning the condition of the village in much of Early Byzantine Macedonia. And although much remains unclear about the development of the village in the province's predominant uplands, the activities of typical "agents" of the "decline model", the imperial administration, the army, and the new aristocracy, may not have been inimical to growth there. Many villages' most important economic relationships were probably, because of the products of the uplands of Macedonia (DUNN 1992, p. 254 *et seq.*), with the administration and with the army, which had been, in the words of the chronicler Malchus, "scattered among the *poleis [civitates]*" of Macedonia by the fifth century, if not by the fourth (NIEBUHR, *Historia Malchi*, p. 251, 13-16). *Civitates/poleis* that consisted of imperial *castra*, villages, and most probably Velkov's rural *emporion* (VELKOV 1962, p. 35-38) need not be the only examples of this relationship. Working hypotheses notwithstanding, we remain at the beginning of the difficult task of writing a history, or rather histories, of the Early Byzantine countryside, ones for instance in which the variability of inputs and outcomes can be given due weight, and we therefore remain even further from describing and explaining the unraveling of the conditions which had undoubtedly stimulated, rather than militated against, rural settlement until, perhaps, some point in the reign of Justinian, even in an inner province such as Macedonia Prima.

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## DARK AGE SETTLEMENTS IN GREVENA, GREECE (SOUTHWESTERN MACEDONIA)

John ROSSER\*

*Résumé – Les résultats de la prospection archéologique dans le cadre du ‘Grevena Project’ analysés en conjonction avec les toponymes du nomos de Grevena (y compris les noms de villages préservés dans le Codex de Zabordas, 1534-1692, indiquent l’installation d’une population slave assez nombreuse dans cette région de Grèce centrale. Il est tout à fait possible qu’une partie de la population grecque indigène soit aussi restée mais on ne peut qu’émettre des hypothèses sur les origines des groupes spécifiques et leur répartition sur le territoire.*

Archeological research of late-sixth through tenth-century settlements in the southern Balkans has been shaped by the same questions of demographic change that have interested historians and linguists. Promising is the fact that unlike texts, which are limited for this period, archeological remains are mostly untapped as a resource. Nevertheless, the revelations of archeology are bedeviled by three problems: the relative dearth of excavated sites, the need for fine-tuned chronologies for Dark Age ceramic wares, and lingering doubt whether sites with small jars that appear Slavic (referred to in this article as “Slavic” ceramic sites) should be associated with Slavs exclusively.

Excavation has yielded scattered Dark Age remains throughout the southern Balkans. In Greece there have been significant finds at several sites, including Olympia (VRYONIS 1992), Argos (AUPERT 1980), Corinth (WEINBERG 1974), and Isthmia (GREGORY 1993). At Isthmia, a settlement of (non-subterranean) apsidal houses, built partly of stone, was revealed. The inhabitants were, without doubt, agriculturalists who used rotary millstones from hand-mills, and who apparently engaged in trade. Presumably they were Slavs, but the excavator has left open the possibility that they may not have been (GREGORY 1993, p. 159).

Excavation of additional sites is needed in order to understand how Dark Age settlements in the southern Balkans changed over time, and to fine tune pottery chronologies in order to understand those changes. An enormous amount of work still needs to be expended on the establishment of regional typologies that can distinguish between seventh and ninth century “Slavic” pottery. How that work will be done in any systematic fashion, given the fact that up until now excavated finds have come almost entirely through chance discoveries, remains to be seen.

Regional surveys, despite their limitations (KARDULIAS 1994), especially as compared to the results of excavation (e.g., GREGORY 1993 and VROOM 1997) would seem to offer some help in this regard, because they are interdisciplinary and invariably attempt to record remains from all periods. Moreover, they have the potential to provide evidence about how broad settlement patterns and preferred site locations change. Nevertheless, unstratified surface collections have obvious limitations, especially when it comes to establishing closely dated typologies. The Grevena Project (ROSSER 1993, 1994, 1996a, 1996b, 1999), directed by Professor Nancy Wilkie of Carleton College, U.S.A, with the

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support of the 15th Ephoreia of Prehistoric and Classical Archaeology in Larissa, the 11th Ephoreia of Byzantine Antiquities at Veroia, and the American School of Classical Studies in Athens, provides an example of both the limitations and the potential of a regional surface collection, in this case a survey confined to the *nomos* of Grevena, Greece. Because the project has not yet produced a final report, much of the information contained in this article is from unpublished manuscripts by Grevena staff members.

The *nomos* of Grevena (fig. 1) is located south of Kastoria and north of Thessaly. It is one of the most sparsely settled parts of Greece. It includes the slopes of two major mountain ranges: the Pindus to the west and southwest and the Vourinos to the east, as well as the lower Hasia hills to the south. Its main river systems are the Haliakmon and Venetikos Rivers. It possesses distinct ecological niches. There is a rolling upland plain (*kampos*) laced with ridges and adjacent ravines dissected by river valleys. Then upland zones of oak and beech give way to the pine-dominated forests of Pindus. Only 14% of the *nomos*, the entirety of which is some 2500 sq. km, is comprised of arable land, while roughly half consists of woodland. The region's natural geographical barriers, most notably the Pindus range that separates Grevena from Epirus, and the fact that the region lies off the major roads through central and northern Greece, have contributed to its relative isolation into modern times. Historically, it seems to have been something of a fluid frontier zone.

The Grevena Project, which was the first archeological survey of the *nomos*, identified 62 provisional Dark Age sites (thought to date, roughly, from the seventh to tenth centuries) out of a total of over 350 sites from all periods. Nineteen of the Dark Age sites appear to be single-period sites. The basis for identifying such sites was the presence of what is invariably referred to as "Slavic" pottery. This pottery consists of small, coarseware jars decorated with bands of horizontal and wavy incision (fig. 2). Many of the Bulgarian examples in Miatev 1948 closely resemble the Grevena fragments. We found no complete jars, but rather hundreds of fragments, enough to reconstruct what they looked like. They are estimated to have been roughly 22-27 cm high, with rim diameters most often about



Fig. 1 – *Nomos* of Grevena, showing city of Grevena, the villages of Kastro and Spilio, and the Zabordas monastery

12-14 cm (fig. 3). Some fragments appear handmade, but most seem to have been manufactured on a slow potter's wheel. Most fabrics are more refined than those at Argos, which I have personally examined, and would seem to be more refined than those found at Isthmia. Interestingly, we have some sites with jar fragments that have olive-green or brown glaze on the interior. John Hayes, who examined the "Slavic" jar fragments from Grevena, believes that the glaze is similar to early glazed wares from Saraçhane and elsewhere (HAYES 1992, p. 13; BASS and DOORNINCK, p. 165-166), and which appear in Greece in the ninth and tenth centuries (MORGAN 1942, p. 36-42, 347). Glazed ceramic jars are also a feature of ninth and tenth century Bulgarian sites (DONČEVA-PETKOVA 1977, p. 217).

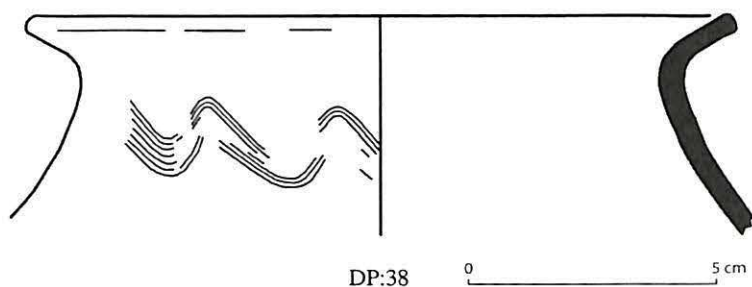


Fig. 2 – Rim fragment with wavy-incision from the site of Paleoga, near the village of Dasaki, Grevena

In our region, these jar fragments are only occasionally in association with tile, pithoi, and other types of ceramics. On the nineteen single-period sites, where only "Slavic" pottery was found, tile fragments were found on four sites, pithoi fragments on two sites, and one site (Paleohori, near Kallithea) produced fragments of jars and cooking pots in association with tile and pithoi fragments, as well as a spindle whorl and a loom weight. Another site produced three fragments of vitrified pottery, suggesting a nearby kiln.

The presence of glazed jar fragments on some of our single-period sites, as well as jar fragments manufactured by a slow potter's wheel, also indicates a date for this pottery that is later than the Slavic pottery from Olympia and Argos. A more direct influence from Bulgaria could also be inferred, since, as mentioned above, Bulgarian glazed jars are present on Bulgarian sites dating from the ninth and tenth centuries (DONČEVA-PETKOVA 1977, p. 217). In any case, it seems apparent that pottery production was local, that agricultural produce was being stored, and that settlements were in some sense permanent. Roughly half of these "Slavic" ceramic sites are located on hilltops and ridge tops, most of which could have been used for both agriculture and pasturage. Most of the rest are located on the slopes of hills or ridges, suitable for both agriculture and stock-raising. Relatively few are located on river terraces, at the bottom of ravines, or in valleys. Each site is near a source of water, typically a spring.

Whether these sites were hamlets, isolated farmsteads, or substantial villages is not known. However, more recent historic processes of Greek village formation resulting from shifts of population in the region suggest that small hamlets may have been the traditional norm, with few, if any, settlements of any size. Certainly in Grevena in modern times village formation has come about by the consolidation of clusters of hamlets. For example, the village of Dotsiko was created ca. 1800 from three small settlements. One characteristic of what we have provisionally referred to as "Slavic" ceramic sites in Grevena is that many appear in clusters of roughly half a dozen sites each. For example, there is a cluster of six sites around the village of Knidhi.



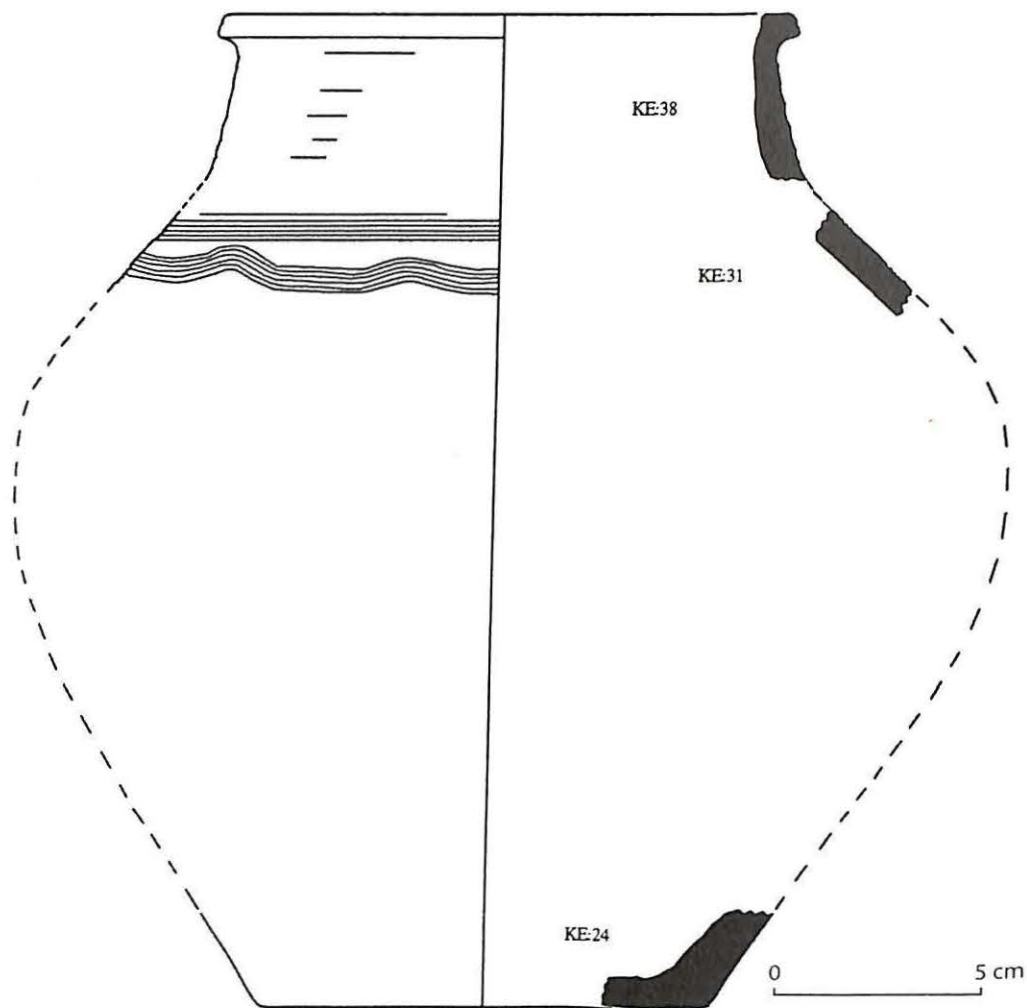


Fig. 3 – “Slavic” jar reconstructed with pottery fragments from the site of Koilia, near the village of Elatos, Grevena

At least some of these “Slavic” ceramic sites must have been inhabited by Slavs in the Dark Age. The reasons supporting this speculation are as follows. First of all, the major toponyms in the region are all Slavic, including major rivers like the Praemoritza, and the Vistritsa (as the Haliakmon was called up to recent times). Major toponyms are usually seen as an indication of influences that are ancient, whereas minor toponyms tend to be more recent. In the *nomos* of Grevena the major toponyms are Slavic, and the minor ones mostly Greek and Vlach. There are very few Turkish toponyms. Of particular interest are old village names, such as are recorded in the codex of The Monastery of Aghios Nikanor (Zaborda) (fig. 1), situated in the southeastern part of Grevena near the village of Panayia (SIGALA 1991). Approximately half of the 121 settlements recorded in the Zaborda Codex (ὁ κώδιξ τῆς Ζαμπόρδας) from 1534-1692 are Slavic. It is to the Zaborda Codex that we now turn.

The Monastery of Aghios Nikanor (Zaborda), founded in 1534, preserves a codex that includes names (and villages) of the numerous Christians from western Macedonia, Thessaly, and Epirus who visited the monastery from 1534. In 1692 a monk recopied the names into a new codex, listing all the individual names along with the villages they came from, grouped by district or *eparchia*. The 1692 codex has been studied by KALINDERIS (1940), SARANTIS (1988), and SPANOS (1990), from whose works the number of settlements and their names from 1534-1692 can be inferred with confidence for the area of the present-day *nomos* of Grevena (which includes the codex's *eparchia* of Grevena and some additional territory). Stan Aschenbrenner, a staff member of the Grevena Project has created such a list of village names included in the present-day *nomos* of Grevena (ASCHENBRENNER 1997). It is his list I have used to draw certain inferences about Dark Age settlements with the present-day *nomos*, which is to say the survey area of the Grevena Project.

The massive Slavic migrations into Greece are known to have begun in the late sixth century during the reign of Maurice and to have extended into the early years of the reign of Heraclius (CHARANIS 1972, II, p. 40), perhaps up to the eighth century, possibly followed by a second wave that was limited to northern Greece, and, based on toponymic analysis, shows Bulgarian influence (BIRNBAUM 1992, p. 10-11). Thus, it seems reasonable to conclude that villages with Slavic names listed in the Zaborda Codex are likely to have originated within this period. It also follows that villages with Vlach toponyms in the Zaborda Codex must date from no earlier than the eleventh century, and the Albanian ones perhaps not until the fourteenth century, when Albanians began to settle in various parts of Epirus (PRITSAK 1991, p. 53). In other words, one sees a fossilized imprint, so to speak, of the ethnic origins of Grevena villages that continues to be reflected in census data from the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, until the late 1920s and 1930s, when villages were renamed with Greek names. All of this evidence, including the fact that the major toponyms of the region are Slavic, seems to me to preserve an important fact: that the Slavs settled in great numbers in Grevena, and that their cultural influence was profound, perhaps made more so by the remoteness of the region.

In the absence of historical texts that deal specifically with Slavic settlements in the region, the evidence of Slavic toponyms is of great importance, providing a yardstick for comparison with the archeological evidence. The Zaborda Codex reflects an older Greece where loyalty to one's ancient village name, not to modern Greek nationalism, was paramount. Moreover, the diversity of ethnic identities revealed in the codex is good evidence that many of the village names we see listed there stretch back into previous centuries, remaining unchanged until the renaming of villages that took place in the later 1920s and 1930s. Thus, each village name in the codex is a kind of fossilized imprint of its original village ethnicity.

As mentioned above, the continuity of village names mentioned in the Zaborda Codex (which by no means represents all possible villages, and certainly not Muslim ones) continues down to the 1920s. This was confirmed by Aschenbrenner (1997), who found that the 94 of the 121 villages listed in the Zaborda Codex continue to be mentioned in census data for nineteenth century Grevena. Another unpublished study by Oliver Rackham of the Grevena Project (RACKHAM 1989) examined 101 village and hamlet names from the 1920 census. Rackham concluded that of these 101 names, 49 are Slavic, with the remainder being Greek, Albanian, and Vlach in origin. In other words, by Rackham's calculations, nearly half of the names are Slavic names, a percentage similar to my own analysis of the Zaborda Codex. Thus, it seems reasonable to conclude that roughly half of the Grevena village names in the Zaborda Codex had a Slavic origin that likely goes back to the Dark Ages, and that these names continued to be used until the renaming of Grevena villages in the later 1920s and 1930s.

Roughly half (39 of 57) ceramic sites with “Slavic” pottery fragments are near (“near” being defined as within three kilometers) villages that have Slavic names on the Zaborda Codex. Of the nineteen sites that seem to be single-period “Slavic” ceramic sites the fraction is even higher: roughly two-thirds (12 of the 19) are near such villages. But a number of “Slavic” ceramic sites are near Greek villages that appear in the Zaborda Codex. How far back, prior to 1534, the Greek village names extend is not known; but there is a strong possibility that Greek villages existed in Dark Age Grevena, and that Greeks used “Slavic” pottery.

Slavic village names are distributed widely over the landscape. However, there are exceptions to this general observation. First, if we exclude the village of Mesolakkos/Zigosti, there is a dearth of Slavic village names in a roughly 5-6 km radius in all directions around the city of Grevena – itself a Slavic toponym derived from the Slavic *greben*, meaning mountain ridge (VASMER 1941: p. 181). Once beyond the roughly 5-6 km radius around Grevena city, Slavic village names are most concentrated in the present woodlands south/southwest of Grevena city (beginning with the villages of Despotis/Sinchova, Melissi/Plesia, and Diakos/Limbinova) to the west and northwest of Grevena city, where the inner boundary of this arc comprises the villages of Elatos/Dovrani, Syndendron/Triveni, Amigdalies/Pikrivinita. North of Grevena the number of Slavic village names thins. Second, the Pindus Mountains in our region are devoid of known Slavic village names, although there are some villages along the edge of Pindus, including (new name followed by old name) Mikrolivado/Labanitsa, Ziani, Ziakas/Tista, Perivolaki/Lepenitsa, Polineri/Vodentsiko. Third, there is almost a complete lack of such village names along the west bank of the Haliakmon River (to a distance of ca. four km westward from the river), from south of the village of Mesolakkos to Karpero. Finally, there are no Slavic village names in the southeast part of the *nomos*, within an arc described by the villages of Palouria/Zimiatzi, Karpero/Diminita, and Trifilli/Sinita.

Does all of this suggest that ethnic zones of occupation existed? This hypothesis finds a parallel in conclusions reached by V. POPOVIĆ (1984: 231-232) for the former Roman provinces of Praevalis and Epirus Nova (comprising today much of Montenegro and Albania), where ethnic groups apparently occupied distinctly different geographical niches. Slav farmers occupied the plains and valleys. The Romanized population fled from open urban centers to fortified refuges in the mountains, where the non-Roman indigenous population (proto-Albanians) subsisted as pastoralists.

This scenario, which for Praevalis and Epirus Nova implies a fundamental separation of ethnic populations during the Early Middle Ages, may have existed in some fashion in Grevena. If so, this may explain why subsequent Byzantine attempts to Hellenize the region lagged behind areas of Macedonia to Grevena’s north and east. Such ethnic separation existed in Grevena even in the early twentieth century (see WACE and THOMPSON 1914, p. 160, Map I), when the Vlachs lived chiefly in Pindus, separated from Kupatshari (Greek-speaking Vlachs), Valakhades (Muslim Greeks, whose Islamization may be as recent as the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries [VRYONIS 1972, p. 168]), Hashiots (Christian Greeks), and Sarakatsani. Thus, information from recent centuries, as well as some aspects of the “Slavic” ceramic sites suggests that ethnic division in Dark Age Grevena was possible, although the evidence is hardly conclusive.

One can further speculate about the Sarakatsani, who are possibly descendents of Greeks who fled to the mountains when the Slavs arrived. While nothing is known for certain about the origins of the Sarakatsani, they seem always to have been Greek (CAMPBELL 1969, p. 27). Hammond calls them “the descendents of the Greek pastoralists who herded their sheep on the central range of Grammus and Pindus in the early Byzantine period...” (HAMMOND 1976, p. 46). Certainly, their migration to Pindus to escape the Slavs would make sense, and would help explain the noticeable absence on our side of the

Pindus of Slavic toponyms and “Slavic” ceramic sites. Our failure to find archeological remains in Pindus could be attributed to the high probability that such Greek pastoralists lived in huts, having little or no pottery, much like the more recent Sarakatsani (HAMMOND 1976: 48). Certainly, the present-day Vlach village names of Perivoli, Avdella, and Smixi are recorded in the Zaborda Codex, which indicates the possibility that these villages were Greek in origin before they were inhabited by Vlachs.

Whatever the origins of the Sarakatsani, the results of our survey, which found no Slavic place-names in the Pindus, contradicts the idea that the Slavs were long-distance pastoralists who pastured their flocks in the high Pindus during the summer months. If they were transhumant, and if they did not inhabit the Pindus, like the later Vlachs, what kind of pastoralists might they have been? Perhaps they were village pastoralists, as are the majority of pastoralists in Greece today, who combined herding with cereal cultivation, as has been the case in recent centuries (KOSTER 1987). Just thirty years ago villagers in Samarina and Smixi were seriously engaged in agriculture (ASCHENBRENNER, p. 27).

According to recent oral tradition Grevena was first settled by indigenous Greeks. Pouqueville refers to this tradition in writing that “Greveno,” or “Grivania,” of the Byzantine writers, was founded by a colony from Castron-Bouchalistas, a place situated on the Rhedias, i.e., Venetikos River (POUQUEVILLE 1820, p. 78). Wace and Thompson speculated that “Castron-Bouchalistas” is to be equated with the fortified acropolis of the village of Kastro (fig. 1), which contains, they believed, “the ruins of a medieval fort” (WACE and THOMPSON 1914, p. 27). The problem with this identification is that Kastro is not situated on the Rhedias, i.e., the Venetikos River. More suitable candidates would be either Spilio (fig. 1) or Paleokastro, near Kalochi. Neither have walls that could be construed as a “Cyclopien rampart,” but this reference could be as fanciful as the rest of the information about the foundation of the site. In any case, there is no clear indication Pouqueville actually saw “Castron-Bouchalistas,” for the site-description is devoid of the usual sense one has, in reading Pouqueville, of first-hand itinerary (e.g., immediately above the reference to Castron-Bouchalistas is a description of his movement toward Grevena, which has every indication of having been based on first-hand experience). Nevertheless, the very name “Castron-Bouchalistas” indicates a fortified site.

The first actual historical reference to the city of Grevena would seem to be the Πριβανά in Constantine Porphyrogenitus’ *De thematibus* (PERTUSI 1952: 88), which is listed as a city in the theme of Macedonia. The bishopric of Grevena is included in a list of ecclesiastical dioceses dating from sometime after 1020-1030 to the first decades of the twelfth century (DARROUZÈS 1981: p. 152, 371-372). Dositheus of Jerusalem (Bk. 3, Ch. 2.4) records John Kopsoscheiros (1071-1100) as Grevena’s first bishop (SIGALA 1986, p. 16; KONIDARI 1970, p. 34). A seal exists in the Dumbarton Oaks collection of Constantine Kabasilas, bishop of Grevena (*Grebenou*) in the twelfth century (LAURENT 1965, p. 337-339; NESBITT and OIKONOMIDES 1994 p. 56, no. 15.1). This bishop is not known from other sources, but the Kabasilas family was a prominent Byzantine family whose founder was a servant of the emperor Basil II (976-1025). The strategic importance of Grevena city must have been due to the fact that the road from Ioaninna passed through Metsovo and thence to Grevena, by way of the villages of Milea, Krania, and Kipourio. From Grevena the road crossed the Haliakmon River and on to Siatista, Kozani, Veroia, and Thessalonica. This seems to have been the most important road across the region in Ottoman times, as it probably was in the Byzantine period. Grevena city may have been created as an administrative post within a region whose importance was defined by its chief road, and by the important cities that lay at either end of that road.

In conclusion, the "Slavic" sherds collected on the surface of the *nomos* of Grevena by the Grevena Project must, of necessity, remain ambiguous. However, when used with the evidence of toponyms, there is every indication that Slavs settled in significant numbers in Grevena, and it is certainly possible that in the Dark Age some portion of the indigenous Greek population remained within the area comprised by the present *nomos* of Grevena. However, at present one can only speculate about the origins of specific groups like the Sarakatsani, and about possible ethnic zones of occupation in the Dark Age Grevena.

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# DAS BYZANTINISCHE DORF IN ZENTRALANATOLIEN

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*Résumé – À partir des enquêtes de terrain réalisées pour la Tabula Imperii Byzantini et des résultats de nouvelles prospections, l'auteur souligne plusieurs caractéristiques du village byzantin dans le centre de l'Anatolie : effacement de la distinction antérieure entre cité et village, diversité des formes de l'habitat (« normal » et « troglodyte ») et des matériaux, continuité de la tradition jusqu'à l'époque contemporaine (maisons souvent en pierre à toit plat de torchis sur charpente de roseaux ou toits de tuile à double pente selon les régions et le climat). Il donne ensuite une série d'exemples décrits plus en détail (Dagören, Lycaonie, Gölören, Mokissos/Viranhehir, Cappadoce, Yılanlı, Paphlagonie, Ad Fines et Tetrapyrgia, à la frontière de la Cilicie). La construction est réalisée sans mortier à la différence du mode adopté dans les régions côtières du sud. Bien des sites sont fortifiés dès l'époque protobyzantine. L'habitat troglodyte cappadocien et phrygien est aussi pourvu de défenses et groupé en hameaux ou villages aux maisons à plusieurs étages, où l'église occupe la place centrale.*

Dörfer waren in Zentralanatolien wie in Kleinasien überhaupt schon in vorrömischer Zeit außerhalb der wenigen Städte die vorherrschende, wengleich nicht einzige Siedlungsform, sei es auf den Territorien von Städten, sei es auf staatlichen, religiösen oder privaten Domänen (MITCHELL 1993, I, S. 176-179)<sup>1</sup>; daran hat sich in römischer, byzantinischer und auch in osmanischer Zeit nicht viel geändert (MITCHELL, 1993, II, S. 126f.).

Im Rahmen dieses Beitrages möchte ich weniger auf die für Zentralkleinasien ohnehin nicht besonders reiche Dokumentation in den schriftlichen Quellen der byzantinischen Zeit eingehen – diese sind hinsichtlich der Realia byzantinischer Dörfer schon vielfach ausgewertet wurden (KAPLAN 1992a, *passim*, mit älterer Literatur)<sup>2</sup>, sondern ich werde vorwiegend einige auf Bereisungen für die Tabula Imperii Byzantini (TIB) im Gelände gemachte Beobachtungen zusammenstellen<sup>3</sup> und durch Ergebnisse neuerer Surveys ergänzen, die zusammen vielleicht unsere Vorstellungen vom Dorf in Zentralanatolien um einige Facetten bereichern können.

Die Einordnung von im Gelände beobachteten Ruinenstätten als Dorf im administrativen Sinn (im Gegensatz zur Stadt, zum Weiler oder Gutshof [vgl. dazu KAPLAN, *Les hommes et la terre*, S. 111-115], aber auch zum Kloster<sup>4</sup> oder, bei befestigten Siedlungen, zur Burg) bereitet bisweilen Schwierigkeiten. Allerdings spielt für viele Fragen ländlichen Wohnens etwa von der justinianischen Zeit an die Unterscheidung zwischen Stadt und Dorf keine so große Rolle mehr, da sich, vor allem in den weniger urbanisierten

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1. Zahlreiche Aspekte antiker dörflicher Siedlungen in Kleinasien wurden erstmalig in einer Monographie behandelt von SCHULER 1998.

2. Speziell zu der für Aspekte des frühbyzantinischen Dorfes besonders ergiebigen Vita des Theodor von Sykeon vgl. KAPLAN 1992; MITCHELL, 1993, II, bes. S. 122-150.

3. Die Dokumentation dieser Teile beruht weitgehend auf den entsprechenden Lemmata in den TIB-Bänden; dort genannte ältere Literatur wird hier in der Regel nicht wieder angeführt.

4. Im Falle von Klöstern kommt hinzu, daß diese oft in großer Nähe zu oder sogar inmitten von Dörfern errichtet wurden (vgl. KAPLAN 1993b, S. 81 mit A. 3; unten S. 10 zur Çanlı Kilise bei Çeltik; zu Göreme und Umgebung THIERRY 1972, S. 137-140).

Gegenden, bereits damals die beiden Siedlungsformen im Erscheinungsbild an einander anzugleichen begonnen haben<sup>5</sup>.

In Zentralanatolien treffen wir zwei verschiedene Möglichkeiten dörflichen Wohnens an, die „normale“, gebaute Siedlung und die Höhlensiedlung, auf die später eingegangen wird. Ruinen gebauter Dorfsiedlungen, deren Erhaltungszustand konkrete Aussagen erlaubt, sind in Zentralanatolien nicht gerade zahlreich; sie stammen fast sämtlich aus der spätrömischen und frühbyzantinischen Zeit. Aus mittelbyzantinischer Zeit sind einige Dorfkirchen, im allgemeinen ohne zugehörige gebaute Siedlungsreste erhalten (z. B. İbrala [TIB 4, S. 175] und Fisandon [TIB 4, S. 165] im südlichen Lykaonien); Sonderfälle stellen etwa die mittelbyzantinischen Kirchen von Çeltikdere in der Honōrias (TIB 9, S. 183) oder die Çanlı Kilise bei Çeltekin in Kappadokien (TIB 2, S. 278; unten S. 7f.) dar, da diese Kirchen zumindest auch zu Höhlensiedlungen gehörten. Reste mittelbyzantinischer Gehöfte wurden im Rahmen der Ausgrabungen der hethitischen Hauptstadt Hattusa (Boğazköy) freigelegt (unten S. 5).

Das hier zu behandelnde Gebiet ist so groß, daß man nicht von vorne herein von einem einheitlichen Aussehen *des* Dorfes und seiner Häuser in diesem Raum ausgehen kann; entscheidend für die Ausprägung lokaler Baustile sind gerade im ländlichen Bereich landschaftliche, geologische und klimatische Gegebenheiten. Wesentliche Unterschiede der Hausformen sind z. B. durch das verfügbare Baumaterial (Stein oder Lehmziegel) und die überwiegend vom Klima abhängige Dachkonstruktion (Flachdach oder Satteldach) bedingt; gerade deshalb sind lokale Bautraditionen sehr beständig. Ruinen byzantinischer Häuser sind nur selten bis zum Dachansatz erhalten (HELLENKEMPER 1986, S. 423f.); aus den genannten Gründen scheint es legitim, von den Dachformen heutiger türkischer Bauernhäuser auf die byzantinischen zurückzuschließen. Das traditionelle inneranatolische Bauernhaus ist in weiten Gegenden aus Stein errichtet und besitzt ein Flachdach aus Lehm über Rohrgeflecht, wie es in ähnlicher Form auch für die byzantinische Zeit vorauszusetzen ist. In den regenreicheren Randgebieten Zentralanatoriens (z. B. im westlichen Phrygien oder im südlichen Paphlagonien) würde hingegen das Lehmdach sehr rasch durchweichen. Hier herrschen heute wie sicher auch in byzantinischer Zeit – mit Ziegeln gedeckte Satteldächer vor. Daß in manchen Gegenden bes. des westlichen und nördlichen Zentralanatoriens Ruinen ländlicher Häuser (mit Ausnahme einiger Fundamente) praktisch nicht vorhanden sind, ist vermutlich durch Lehmziegel als normales Baumaterial zu erklären (KAPLAN, *Les hommes et la terre*, S. 117f. mit Hinweis auf MAKAL 1971, *passim*, bes. S. 71-74, wo der alte Typ des einfachen, einräumigen Bauernhauses aus Stein in Zentralanatolien [Gegend Aksaray] mit Flachdach, ohne Hof beschrieben wird).

Einige Beispiele mögen verschiedene Formen von Dörfern in Zentralanatolien verdeutlichen.

*Dağören*, eine ausgedehnte Siedlung im zentralen Karacadağ im östlichen Lykaonien, breitet sich im wesentlichen auf einem flachen Hochtalgrund auf ca. 1800 m Höhe aus (TIB 4, Abb. 35f.). Nur die unteren Bereiche der Hänge sind teilweise in das Siedlungsareal einbezogen. Ein Vergleich mit den sehr knappen Berichten früherer Forscher (CALLANDER 1906, S. 177f.; RAMSAY-BELL 1909, S. 301, 463, 478, 495; GÜNDÜZ 1980, S. 187-190) ergibt, daß die Ruinen seit Beginn des 20. Jh. unter den Zerstörungen durch Schatzgräber erheblich gelitten haben (TIB 4, S. 155).

5. Vgl. KAPLAN, *Les hommes et la terre*, S. 102, der diesen Sachverhalt am Beispiel von Hierissos auf der Chalkidike darstellt. Bereits in römischer Zeit war der Unterschied zwischen unbedeutenden, oft erst kürzlich erhobenen oder aus irgendeinem Grund vom Niedergang betroffenen Provinzstädten und wohlhabenderen Dörfern kaum sichtbar; vgl. MITCHELL 1993, I, S. 180f.



Die zu einem beträchtlichen Teil verfolgbar sind Straßen und Gassen sind großenteils, aber nicht durchgehend rechtwinklig angelegt. Besonders an den Randgebieten kann man größere, freie Plätze, vielleicht z. T. Höfe beobachten; zum Zentrum hin findet man zunehmend dichte Verbauung.

Die Häuser von Dağören sind, soweit feststellbar, durchgehend rechteckig und vermutlich weitgehend einräumig. Die Mauern sind aus Bruchstein u. Kleinquadern ohne Mörtel im allgemeinen zweischalig aufgeführt, die Ecken meist mit besseren Quadern verstärkt. Nur vereinzelt finden sich Fenster. Die Türstöcke sind oft profiliert, einige Türstürze sind mit Kreuzen verziert (*TIB* 4, Abb. 36). Es wurden keine Anzeichen von Obergeschossen beobachtet. Die Häuser waren vermutlich mit Flachdächern gedeckt, die zumindest in einigen Fällen auf Bögen ruhten.

Die Wasserversorgung scheint vor allem durch z. T. sehr gut gebaute, mit auf Gurtbögen ruhenden Steinplatten gedeckte Zisternen sichergestellt worden zu sein.

Von den zwei Kirchen liegt die größere Kirche, nach den heute sehr zerstörten Resten vermutlich ein Zentralbau, etwa in der Mitte der Siedlung, eine weitere am nördlichen Rand. Beide waren in gutem Quadermauerwerk mit Mörtel errichtet und lassen sich nach der Bauplastik ins 6. Jh. datieren (Abb. CALLANDER 1906, Taf. VIII; RAMSAY–BELL 1909, Abb. 361, 362, 364).

Die Siedlung von Dağören war nicht ummauert. Etwa im SO liegt auf einer Anhöhe unmittelbar oberhalb des Ruinenfeldes ein von einer mörtellosen Mauer umgebenes Areal (*Dağören Kalesi*) mit einer kleinen Kirche. Vermutlich handelt es sich um eine akropolisartige Befestigung mit Fluchtburgfunktion, nicht um ein Kloster.

Große Ähnlichkeiten mit Dağören weist die Nachbarsiedlung Gölören am Nordwestrand des Karaca Dağ auf, die allerdings ummauert war. Auch hier sind sowohl die Ummauerung als auch die Mauern der eher schlecht erhaltenen Häuser in Zweischalenmauerwerk aus Bruchstein und groben Quadern ohne Mörtel errichtet (*TIB* 4, Abb. 50). Vielleicht ist, und damit komme ich auf das eingangs angesprochene Unterscheidungsproblem zurück, *entweder* Dağören *oder* Gölören nicht als Dorf, sondern als Stadt anzusehen. Wegen der Ummauerung und wegen eines Kapitells mit Monogramm, das vielleicht als Θέωνος επισκόπου aufgelöst werden kann (*TIB* 4, Abb. 52), habe ich Gölören mit Hydē gleichgesetzt (*TIB* 4, S. 174f.). Sicher ist diese Lokalisierung nicht; es könnte auch Dağören mit Hydē identifiziert werden, und vielleicht lag Hydē überhaupt weiter südlich in der Ebene, etwa bei Karapınar südlich des Karaca Dağ (RAMSAY 1890, S. 337–341; RAMSAY 1904, S. 82–87)<sup>6</sup>. Jedenfalls liegt hier ein Beispiel dafür vor, daß – damit komme ich auf das eingangs erwähnte Unterscheidungsproblem zurück – die Abgrenzung zwischen Stadt bzw. Bistum und Dorf bereits in frühbyzantinischer Zeit auf rein archäologischer Grundlage oft nicht mehr möglich ist (DAGRON, *Bourgade*, S. 39, mit Hinweis auf DAGRON 1978, S. 112, 356 [Miracle 26], 358 [Miracle 27], wo auf den Niedergang der „Städte“ Dalisandos und Selinus in Isaurien verwiesen wird; s. auch SPIESER 1989, S. 98–101).

Die Einebnung der Unterschiede von Stadt und Dorf erlaubt es, die z. T. besser erhaltene und archäologisch sehr gut untersuchte Ruinenstätte Viranşehir im Bereich des Hasan Dağ im westlichen Kappadokien (BERGER 1988, S. 349–429, mit älterer Literatur) zum Vergleich heranzuziehen, die mit größter Wahrscheinlichkeit der nach dem Bericht Prokops von Kaiser Justinian neu gegründeten Stadt Mokissos entspricht, die auch zur weiteren kirchlichen Metropole der Kappadokia II erhoben wurde (Prokop, *De aedificiis* V 4, 15–18; zur Identifizierung zuletzt BERGER 1988, S. 418–422).

6. LAMINGER-PASCHER 1986, S. 252–256 (vgl. LAMINGER-PASCHER 1992, S. 95f.), sucht u.a. aufgrund eines hethitischen Keilschrifttextes Hydē noch weiter südlich bei Akçaşehir (zur Siedlung bei Akçaşehir vgl. *TIB* 4, S. 119).

Mokissos war mit seinen über 1000 Häusern und mehr als 30 Kirchen auf 45 bis 50 ha eine der größten Städte Kappadokiens, besaß aber offensichtlich ein viel unregelmäßigeres Straßen- und Wegenetz als etwa Dagören; bei der Neugründung verzichtete man von vorne herein auf eine Stadtplanung im antiken Sinn.

Ähnlich wie in Dagören war in Mokissos das Zentrum viel dichter verbaut als die Randlagen; in den äußeren Hanglagen wurden z. T. den einzelnen Häusern als Höfe zuzuordnende, meist aber frei zugängliche Terrassen beobachtet (BERGER 1988, S. 366; vgl. den beigegebenen Stadtplan).

Neben den wie in Dagören vorherrschenden einzeln stehenden Einraumhäusern finden sich in Mokissos auch, besonders bei überwölbten, also besser gebauten Anlagen, mehrräumige Häuser; außer dem wurden bisweilen mehrere einfache Häuser zu kleinen Häuserzeilen oder zu unregelmäßigen, oft nicht mehr rechteckigen Baukomplexen zusammengefaßt. Berger unterscheidet bei den Wohnbauten von Mokissos zwei Typen von Mauerwerk, nämlich ein „Felsbrockenmauerwerk“, das aus ziemlich großen, völlig unbehauenen Steinen meist einschalig aufgemauert wurde, und ein Feld- bzw. Bruchsteinmauerwerk, das besonders bei etwas aufwendigeren, gewölbten Bauten zweischalig verwendet wurde. Vor allem beim Felsbrockenmauerwerk bestanden auch die Tür- u. die (seltenen) Fensterstürze aus z. T. riesigen, sehr unregelmäßigen, monolithen Bruchsteinen. Wie die Stadtanlage als ganzes, so machen also auch die einzelnen Häuser in Mokissos einen im Durchschnitt viel weniger sorgfältigen Eindruck als in Dagören oder Gölören (BERGER 1988, S. 353-362; Taf. 46-51).

Als weitere Parallele zu Dagören besitzt auch die ebenfalls nicht ummauerte Stadt Mokissos am Stadtrand eine separate, aus mörtellosen Bruchsteinen ummauerte Akropolisbefestigung mit Kirche und zusätzlich noch ein kleines Fort im eigentlichen Stadtbereich (BERGER 1988, S. 368f., 364).

Auch die Ruinenstätte von Yılanlı im südwestlichen Paphlagonien war ein, wenn gleich in den Ausmaßen viel bescheideneres, frühbyzantinisches Dorf. Am Nordrand des besiedelten Areals lag eine frühbyzantinische Kirche, die aus gutem Zweischalenmauerwerk (Quadern mit Mörtel u. Ziegelbrocken) errichtet war und reichlich Bauplastik (6. Jh.; *TIB* 9, S. 283, Abb. 127-129) hinterlassen hat. Von den Häusern haben sich nur wenige Spuren von Grundmauern im Boden aus grobem Zweischalenmauerwerk ohne Mörtel u. Steinverstärkungen erhalten (*TIB* 9, S. 283); vielleicht bestand hier das aufgehende Mauerwerk, von dem sich über den Fundamenten keine Spur erhalten hat, aus luftgetrockneten Lehmziegeln.

Von einer anderen Bautradition beeinflusst sind zwei große Dorfsiedlungen, die im Taurus an einer römischen Straße von Lykaonien nach Kilikien liegen und daher in der Tabula Peutingeriana (ed. E. WEBER, Segment IX, 2-3) als Straßenstationen Ad Fines (heute Dedeli Yayla; *TIB* 4, S. 156; zur Identifizierung *TIB* 5, S. 140) und Tetrapyrgia (heute Kemer Yayla; *TIB* 5, S. 440) verzeichnet sind.

Ad Fines, auf der Grenze zwischen Lykaonien und Kilikien auf etwa 2200 m Seehöhe gelegen, erstreckt sich auf einem flachen Hang und einem anschließenden Hügel. Am Rand des Ruinenfeldes standen erhöht zwei kaiserzeitliche, turmförmige Mausoleen. Zwei frühbyzantinische Kirchenruinen etwa in der Mitte des Siedlungsgebietes zeigen bereits in syrisch-kilikischen Einfluß; sie besitzen eine viereckig ummantelte Apsis (Zweischalenmauerwerk aus guten Quadern mit Mörtel). Von den meisten Häusern sind nur Spuren der Grundmauern sowie zahlreiche, oft sorgfältig behauene Mauerquadern vorhanden; die Fundamente zeigen gutes Zweischalenmauerwerk ohne Mörtel. Mehr erhalten ist nur von einem Gebäude (9 × 15 m) aus Großquadern, vermutlich einem Gutshof; eine Längswand ist von zwei großen Fensterbögen durchbrochen, und im Inneren zieht sich an einer Längswand eine Steinbank entlang. Wie die Kirchen, so verweist auch dieses Gebäude auf Baueinflüsse von der Südküste Kleinasiens (JERPHANION-JALABERT 1911, S. 301-303; *TIB* 4, S. 156, Abb. 29).

Ähnlich muß das etwa 10 km ö. von Ad Fines und somit schon in Kilikien gelegene Tetrapyrgia ausgesehen haben. Seine etwa 100 bis 150 Häuser waren nach einem zwanglosen Rechteckraster mit breiten Gassen angeordnet. Die Häuser waren aus Zweischalenmauerwerk aus unterschiedlich großen Hausteinen in pseudoisodomem Verband mit Hinterfüllung aus Steinsplittern u. Lehmerde (kein Mörtel) errichtet. Die einzelnen Häuser waren in meist vier mit einander verbundene Räume aufgeteilt. Das Dach ruhte auf Gurtbögen; über den Türen waren Schutzdachkonsolen eingelassen; ein zweites Stockwerk ist nicht gesichert, aber möglich. Auf eine Kirche kann nur aufgrund der Bauplastik geschlossen werden. Beide Siedlungen waren unbefestigt (HELLENKEMPER-HILD 1986, S. 87-89, Abb. 121-126; *TIB* 5, S. 440f.).

Aufgrund der eben vorgestellten Eigenheiten der ländlichen Bauweise in Zentralanatolien kann ein wesentlicher Unterschied zur dörflichen Bauweise der Südküste festgestellt werden. In Zentralanatolien wurde beim ländlichen Hausbau – im Gegensatz zu Kirchen – im allgemeinen kein Mörtel verwendet; die Bindung und die Abdichtung der Fugen erfolgte durch Lehm, der heute natürlich ausgeschwemmt ist (HELLENKEMPER 1989, S. 1969f.). Im gesamten Bereich der Südküste Kleinasiens wurden auch in der ländlichen Bauweise die Mauern gemörtelt (HELLENKEMPER, a. O.), wobei im Südosten (Kilikien und Isaurien) Quadermauern vorherrschten, im Südwesten (Lykien und Pamphylien) bereits in der Kaiserzeit Bruchsteinmauern.

Auf dem Gebiet der hethitischen Hauptstadt Hattusa (Boğazköy oder Boğazkale) im östlichen Galatien wurden an verschiedenen Stellen, vor allem aber innerhalb der alten Oberstadt, mittelbyzantinische Baureste ausgegraben, die bis ins spätere 11. Jh. benutzt wurden. Hier gruppieren sich um den (vielleicht als Herrensitz?) wieder befestigten Felsen Sarıkaya mehrere einzelne Baukomplexe, darunter kleinere Einzelhäuser, größere Anwesen sowie ein sakraler Komplex. Die größeren Anwesen besaßen Innenhöfe, um die sich die Wohn- und Wirtschaftsräume sowie – dies ist eine neuere Entwicklung – auch Hauskapellen gruppierten. Die Bautechnik der Häuser unterscheidet sich offenbar nicht wesentlich von der frühbyzantinischen. Sie besaßen einen Steinsockel aus Bruchstein mit zahlreichen Spolien; das Mauerwerk des Erdgeschosses war vermutlich ebenfalls in lehmgebundenen Steinmauerwerk aufgeführt; an einigen Stellen gibt es, anders als bei den bisher behandelten frühbyzantinischen Siedlungen, Hinweise auf ein Obergeschoß aus Holzfachwerk und Lehmziegeln. Die Dächer waren wohl wiederum als Flachdächer ausgeführt (zusammenfassend NEVE 1991, S. 93-107 mit Abb. [Plan] 2-4).

Wie sowohl schriftliche Quellen als auch der archäologische Befund bezeugen, konnten nicht nur Städte, sondern auch dörfliche Siedlungen zu ihrem Schutz bereits in frühbyzantinischer Zeit befestigt sein (DAGRON 1979, S. 44). Einige „Burgen“ des südlichen Pisidien etwa *Asar Kale* (MERSICH 1986, S. 195, Abb. 8-10; *TIB* 7, S. 193, Abb. 44-46), die *Sığırtlık Kale* (MERSICH 1986, S. 196-198, Abb. 11-15; *TIB* 7, S. 383) oder die *Bahçeli Kale* (*TIB* 7, S. 203f., Abb. 40f.) enthalten, im Gegensatz zu den meisten anderen Burgen Zentralanatoliens, Hausruinen und Kirchen. Sie sind vermutlich nicht, wie dort angenommen, als mittelbyzantinische Burgen, sondern als kaiserzeitliche, in frühbyzantinischer Zeit befestigte Gutshöfe bzw. Dörfer zu deuten (H. HELLENKEMPER, mündlich; MITCHELL 2000, S. 147) und stellen somit Beispiele für das Vordringen der angesprochenen südwestanatolischen Bauweise (gemörtelte Bruchsteinmauern) an den Rand Zentralanatoliens dar, hier allerdings im „gehobeneren“ ländlichen Bau.

Aus früh- und/oder mittelbyzantinischer Zeit stammen aber auch eine Reihe größerer, ummauerter dörflicher Siedlungen im eigentlichen Zentralanatolien, so etwa die *Ivrin Kalesi* in Pisidien, eine auf die römische Zeit zurückgehende, byzantinisch weiterverwendete Siedlung mit doppeltem Mauerring (*TIB* 7, S. 283f.), oder das wohl mittelbyzantinische *Kurtköy* (heute offiziell Altıntaş) in Phrygien, in dessen Mauerring sich

Spuren vieler kleiner, rechteckiger Häuser finden (Foss 1985, S. 95- 98; *TIB* 7, S. 319)<sup>7</sup>. Zum Schutz in Gefahrenzeiten, etwa während der Araberinvasionen, wurden manche Siedlungen auch von leicht zugänglichen auf bereits natürlich geschützte, im allgemeinen höher gelegene, sei es wie Burgen auf Berge selbst, sei es auf abgeschlossene Gebirgslagen in Talkesseln und dergleichen verlagert, was Städte wie (große) Dörfer (z. B. Akroinos in Phrygien) betreffen konnte (vgl. allgemein noch immer KIRSTEN 1958, S. 28f.; jetzt auch KAPLAN, *Les hommes et la terre*, S. 447); möglicherweise trifft dies auch auf Dağören und/oder Gölören zu, wo keine vorbyzantinischen Reste gefunden wurden, während in der Hochebene im Umkreis des Karaca Dağ zahlreiche antike Siedlungen lagen. Zusätzlich drängt sich auch hier der Vergleich mit Mokissos auf, wo Siedlungsverlagerung in justinianischer Zeit auch literarisch erwiesen ist (oben S. 3f.).

Der zweite im zentralen Kleinasien weit verbreitete Grundtyp ländlichen Wohnens sind die Höhlensiedlungen. Voraussetzung für die Schaffung größerer Höhlenanlagen wie Höhlennekropolen, Höhlenklöster, -kirchen und ganzer Höhlensiedlungen ist weiches, leicht auszuhöhlendes Gestein. Dies sind vor allem die besonders weichen Tuffsteinschichten, die um die erloschenen, aber geologisch sehr jungen Vulkane herum (HÜTTEROTH 1982, S. 44; speziell zu Kappadokien ANDOLFATO U.-ZUCCHI F. 1972, S. 51-62) beträchtliche Gebiete Inneranatoliens überziehen, vor allem weite Teile Kappadokiens, aber auch Gegenden Phrygiens (das sog. Phrygische Hochland), Lykaoniens und des südlichen Paphlagonien.

Unter den genannten Bedingungen wurden größere, zusammenhängende Höhlennekropolen in Zentralanatolien bereits in römischer Zeit angelegt, und spätestens damals (vermutlich aber früher) begann man, Höhlen auch systematisch zu Wohnzwecken zu graben, d. h. man schuf eine extrem an die landschaftlichen und geologischen Gegebenheiten angepaßte Sonderform ländlichen Siedelns, die gegenüber gebauten Siedlungen manche Vorteile bietet, nämlich die einfache Herstellung dauerhafter Wohn- und Nutzräume, die zudem großen Schutz vor Temperaturschwankungen gewähren, d. h. im Sommer kühl und im Winter relativ warm und trocken bleiben (vgl. EYICE 1971, S. 116). Eine der wenigen byzantinischen Quellen, die die Höhlenbewohner Kappadokiens erwähnen, vermerkt, daß diese mit ihren Vorräten die harten Winter in unterirdischen Höhlen überstanden und erst im Frühjahr wieder an die Oberfläche kamen (Th. Skutariotes, ed. K. N. SATHAS, *Μεσαιωνική Βιβλιοθήκη* VII, S. 205). Daneben boten die zerklüfteten, kleinräumig unterteilten Talandschaften von Kappadokien und dem phrygischen Hochland auch Abgeschiedenheit, die besonders monastische Gemeinschaften schätzten, und Schutz vor Überfällen und plündernden Armeen (vgl. HASPELS 1971, I, S. 225). Dem Bedürfnis nach Schutz dienten besondere, oft ausgeklügelte „Bau“arten: Höhlenwohnungen wurden in hochgelegenen Felsen mit kleinen, versteckten, von außen kaum sichtbaren Eingangs- und Fensteröffnungen angelegt; sie waren vielfach nur über Leitern oder Strickleitern erreichbar, oft besaßen sie auch innere Aufgänge zu höheren Stockwerken, die teilweise ebenfalls die Benutzung von Leitern erforderten. Als gegenteiliges Extrem baute man, nach Ausweis von Fundmünzen schon seit römischer Zeit, ganze unterirdische, bis zu 10 Stockwerke tiefe „Städte“, die vielleicht ursprünglich hauptsächlich als Vorratslager verwendet, in byzantinischer Zeit aber ganz auf die Aufnahme und den Schutz einer größeren Bevölkerung hin ausgebaut wurden; sie besitzen ein ausgeklügeltes System von

7. Weitere Beispiele ummauerter dörflicher Siedlungen sind *Ağlı* in Paphlagonien (*TIB* 9, S. 157), *Çetmi* in Pisidien und *Gelinkaya* in Phrygien (*TIB* 7, S. 220, 257) oder Gödelisin Harabesi (vermutlich Kodylessos) in Lykaonien (*TIB* 4, S. 192; m. E. nicht beweiskräftige Einwände gegen die Gleichsetzung bei LAMINGER-PASCHER 1986, S. 250-252).

„Mühlstein-“ (Rollstein-)türen, Belüftungsschächten, Vorratsräumen usw. (vgl. unten S. 9; speziell zu den unterirdischen Städten *TIB* 2, S. 131; GÜRÇAY-AKOK 1965; GIOVANNINI 1972, S. 76f.).

An vielen Stellen können byzantinische Höhlensiedlungen auf eine längere Entwicklung zurückblicken, etwa von einer römischen Nekropole, die bisweilen auch in frühbyzantinischer Zeit noch als solche benutzt wurde, zu mittel- und spätbyzantinischen Siedlungen und/oder Höhlenkirchen und -klöstern (vgl. THIERRY 1972, S. 137f.; *TIB* 2, S. 231f., 304f.; *TIB* 4, S. 121, 169f.; *TIB* 7, S. 200, 213, 232, 301f., 379f., 380f., 419f.). Die Form der erhaltenen Höhlenkirchen (etwa Kreuzkuppelkirchen), besonders in Kappadokien auch die erhaltenen Wandmalereien, erlauben eine Datierung vieler Höhlenkirchen (und so indirekt auch der zugehörigen Siedlungen) in mittel- bis spätbyzantinische Zeit. Wir haben es hier also mit Zeugnissen ländlicher Siedlungen aus wesentlich späterer Zeit zu tun als die oben beschriebenen Ruinen gebauter Dörfer.

Charakteristisch ist, spätestens ab der mittelbyzantinischen Zeit, u. a. die enge räumliche Verflechtung von dörflichen Siedlungen und monastischen Anlagen, so etwa in Kappadokien bei der Çanlı Kilise oder in Göreme. Außerdem kann eine oft große Anzahl von Höhlenkirchen im Verhältnis zu den erhaltenen Wohnhöhlen festgestellt werden<sup>8</sup>. Parallelen dazu finden sich in manchen gebauten Dörfern der Südküste (Beispiele aus Kilikien/Isaurien in *TIB* 5, S. 168f., 223, 249, 285f.), in Zentralkleinasien etwa in Städten wie Mokissos oder Binbirkilise (vermutlich Barata). Schon diese Beobachtungen mahnen zur Vorsicht, Höhlenanlagen mit Kirchen und Kapellen vorschnell als Klöster anzusprechen (so z. B. THIERRY 1972, S. 138-145 zu Zelve, Göreme und Ürgüp).

Neue Anregungen für die Forschung gehen von der Untersuchung der Höhlenanlage um die (gebaute) mittelbyzantinische Çanlı Kilise bei Çeltek durch R. Ousterhout aus (OUSTERHOUT 1996, S. 165-180; OUSTERHOUT 1997, S. 435-452; OUSTERHOUT 1998, S. 45-57). Ausgangspunkt der Besiedlung der Gegend war vermutlich eine frühbyzantinische gebaute Siedlung mit Kirche am Nordende der späteren Höhlensiedlung (OUSTERHOUT 1998, S. 47).

Die Höhlensiedlung selbst wurde in der Literatur als Kloster (bzw. Klöster) bezeichnet, u. a., da in den Höhlen relativ viele Höhlenkirchen gefunden wurden; nach den charakteristischen dreiseitig „umbauten“ Höfen (s. unten) prägte man den Begriff des Hofklosters (RODLEY 1985, S. 11-120, zu Çeltek bes. S. 120). Nach der sehr plausiblen Interpretation des Befundes durch Ousterhout handelt es sich aber um eine ausgedehnte und zumindest im Anfang auch wohlhabende Dorfsiedlung aus dem 10./11. Jh., die bis zum 14. Jh. einen allmählichen Niedergang erlebte und schließlich unterging (OUSTERHOUT 1996, S. 171; OUSTERHOUT 1997, S. 435f.; OUSTERHOUT 1998, S. 45f.). Innerhalb dieser Siedlung gab es allerdings auch mindestens ein wirkliches Höhlenkloster mit Trapeza (OUSTERHOUT 1996, S. 171; OUSTERHOUT 1997, S. 438, Abb. 5-6). Neben zahlreichen einfachen Wohn-, Küchen-, Vorrats- und Stallhöhlen sowie Taubenschlägen wurden über 20 größere Höhlenwohnungskomplexe untersucht, die meist um drei Seiten eines aus dem Hang herausgegrabenen viereckigen Hofes angeordnet waren; die talwärts gelegene Seite blieb offen, die bergwärts gelegene Front besaß einen jetzt meist zerstörten, aus dem Fels herausgearbeiteten Portikus, hinter der der größte, rechteckige Saal lag (OUSTERHOUT 1996, S. 168, Abb. 5-6; OUSTERHOUT 1997, S. 436, Abb. 3-4; OUSTERHOUT 1998, S. 46, Abb. 2). Viele Komplexe weisen auch eine überkuppelte, z. T. kreuzförmige Halle auf, die aber nicht als Kirche

8. Das Vorkommen zahlreicher Kirchen im dörflichen Bereich wird z. B. auch durch die Vita des Theodor von Sykeon bestätigt. So besaß etwa Sykeon selbst bereits vor Theodors Gründungen mehrere Kirchen; vgl. KAPLAN 1993a, S. 65-79.

anzusprechen ist (keine Apsiden) (OUSTERHOUT 1996, S. 168, Abb. 7; OUSTERHOUT 1997, S. 436, Abb. 4, 11). Hingegen besaßen ähnlich den wohlhabenderen Häusern von Boğazköy viele dieser Wohnungen Hauskapellen (OUSTERHOUT 1996, S. 168; OUSTERHOUT 1997, S. 436, Abb. 3; OUSTERHOUT 1998, 46, Abb. 2), die meist an einer der Seiten des Hofes in den Fels gegraben waren und oft auch eigene Grabräume umfaßten; sie bildeten (u. a.) die Grundlage für die Deutung dieser Anlagen als Klöster<sup>9</sup>.

Höhlensiedlungen bieten – im Gegensatz zu gebauten Siedlungen – auch dem Siedlungs-forscher einen wesentlichen Vorteil: In den geeigneten Gebieten sind auch kleinere Anlagen in großer Anzahl und in oft gutem Zustand erhalten, deren Entsprechungen bei gebauten Siedlungen in Zentralkleinasien meist keine Spur hinterlassen haben. Sie können somit vielleicht einen Beitrag zur Frage nach der Häufigkeit und Verteilung von größeren, kompakten Dörfern, kleineren Weilern oder Einzelwohnungen bzw. -gehöften liefern (zur Definition der Begriffe vgl. SCHULER 1998, S. 14, zur Behandlung im einzelnen DENS., *passim*; für die byzantinische Zeit KAPLAN, *Les hommes et la terre*, S. 89-104, 111-117 und *passim*); allerdings sind die auch geologisch bedingten Besonderheiten von Höhlen-siedlungen (manche kleinere Felsformationen erzwingen die Aufteilung eines an sich zusammengehörigen Dorfes) zu berücksichtigen. Gerade in Phrygien sind die Höhlen-siedlungen meist in die Seiten von mehr oder weniger einzeln stehenden Tafelbergen eingegraben. So gibt es etwa, oft in isolierten Felsen, kleine Anlagen (etwa 1-5 Räume), die einem Einzelgehöft entsprechen können (Beispiel: Göçeri Kale in Phrygischen Hochland, ein in einer bereits in phrygischer Zeit genutzten Felsformation liegender byzantinischer Raum mit Wanddekoration, s. HASPELS 1971, I, S. 68, 222, 233; *TIB* 7, S. 199)<sup>10</sup>. Einzeln gelegene, mittelgroße Anlagen mit mehr als 5 Räumen, z. T. auch mit Kirche oder Kapelle (Hauskapelle), können vielleicht als Weiler angesprochen werden (Beispiele: im Phrygischen Hochland Kirk Merdiven Kale [in einem Felsblock byz. Räume auf zwei bis drei Stockwerken mit innerem Treppenaufgang: HASPELS 1971, I, S. 64, 228; *TIB* 7, S. 303f.]; Ayterek [an zwei Stellen byz. Räume und Ställe; kleine Felskirche: HASPELS 1971, I, S. 213, 233f., 249]; Doğanlı Kale [ein isolierter Felsen mit byz. Räumen auf mindestens sieben Stockwerken, einer Kirche und einer Kapelle: HASPELS 1971, I, S. 48, 238-241; *TIB* 7, S. 236]). Große, mehr oder weniger geschlossene Anlagen, oft mit differenzierbaren Räumen (Wohnungen, Ställe, Nekropole) und mit einer oder mehreren Kirchen (teils Höhlenkirchen, teils gebaute Kirchen), etwa die Siedlung um die Çanlı Kilise bei Çeltek (s. oben S. 7f.) bildeten vermutlich ein ganzes Dorf. Schließlich treffen wir bisweilen in einem abgrenzbaren Gebiet, z. B. einer Tallandschaft, mehrere mittelgroße Anlagen an, im allgemeinen mit Kirche(n), die wir wohl ebenfalls zu einem „Dorf“ zusammenfassen können. Dies trifft etwa auf die Höhlensiedlung von *Ayazini* zu, die, verteilt auf mehrere Felsformationen, denen z. T. auch verschiedene Funktionen entsprechen, in einem langgestreckten Flußtal im phrygischen Hochland, liegt, wo sie den größten Höhlensiedlungskomplex darstellt. Mehrere phrygische Höhlengräber (HASPELS 1971, I, S. 123f.) sowie mehr oder weniger aufwendig dekorierte römische Höhlengräber an verschiedenen Stellen des Tales (HASPELS 1971, I, S. 172f.), die z. T. in byzantinischer Zeit erweitert und „umgewidmet“ wurden, bilden den Nukleus der byzantinischen Höhlensiedlung, die aus folgenden Hauptteilen besteht: Mehrere Gruppen meist mehrstöckiger Höhlenwohnungen, sind in die das Tal im Norden

9. OUSTERHOUT 2003, S. 70, hält es jetzt in Einzelfällen für möglich, daß Wohnkomplexe durch späteren Einbau (weiterer) Höhlenkirchen in Klöster umgewandelt wurden.

10. HASPELS 1971 bietet in Band II zu allen erwähnten Anlagen Abbildungen und Pläne, auf die hier generell verwiesen wird.

begrenzenden Felsen eingeschlagen, darunter die *Asma Evleri* als größte Anlage; weitere folgen nach Westen um zwei Höhlenkirchen (HASPELS 1971, I, S. 225). Ein Felsen auf der gegenüberliegenden Seite (*Bedestan*) enthält eine typische Fluchanlage mit verdecktem Eingang, Aufstiegsschächten u. -gängen im Inneren des Felsens über zwei Zwischengeschosse bis zum Wohngeschoß, das von innen verschließbare Fenster aufweist (HASPELS 1971, I, S. 226f.; *TIB* 7, S. 200). In der Siedlung verteilt finden sich sechs Höhlenkirchen, von denen eine mit ihrer auch außen ausgearbeiteten Osthälfte besonders aufwendig gestaltet ist (HASPELS 1971, I, S. 245-247).

Ein weiteres Beispiel einer solchen Tallandschaft, das mit großer Wahrscheinlichkeit zu *einem* Dorf zusammengefaßt werden kann, stellt das Silünkaya bzw. Fındıklı Deresi dar, das aus folgenden Teilen besteht: *Alaca Asma* ist vermutlich als Pilgerstätte mit Wallfahrtskirche zu deuten: In einem Fels hoch über Talgrund finden sich zwei Kirchen mit ungewöhnlich vielen Anrufungsinschriften (Κύριε βοήθει τὸν δοῦλόν σου + Name); südlich der Kirche liegen zwei große Hallen (für Pilger), oberhalb kleine Höhlenwohnung (HASPELS 1971, I, S. 228f., 248, 253, 325-329; *TIB* 7, S. 180). Auch *Nallıkaya* mit seinen zwei Höhlenkirchen und dazwischenliegenden, schwer zugänglichen Räumen war sicher keine eigentliche Wohnung (HASPELS 1971, I, S. 229, 248). Wohnzwecken diente wohl die zweistöckige Höhlenanlage bei der *Yerdağ Yayla* mit Wohn- und Stallräumen (Futtertröge) (*TIB* 7, S. 413 [s. v. Urumkuş]) und *Memiş Kaya*, eine Wohnsiedlung mit einer Doppelkirche und Räumen auf mehreren Stockwerken (HASPELS 1971, I, S. 177, 228, 248; *TIB* 7, S. 337). *Sülin Kayası* ist hingegen eine typische, hoch über dem Talgrund errichtete Fluchanlage. Der eigentliche Wohn- oder Zufluchtsbereich (ein großer, mehrere kleine Räume, darunter Küche) im ersten Stock war nur durch ein Loch in der Decke des einzigen Erdgeschoßraumes und einen anschließenden senkrechten Schacht zu erreichen (HASPELS 1971, I, S. 229-231; *TIB* 7, S. 390). Vielleicht ist auch Urumkuş, nur wenige hundert Meter von Sülin Kayası, aber jenseits eines kleinen Überganges gelegen, dieser „Dorflandschaft“ zuzurechnen. Ein isolierter Fels beherbergt mehrere Räume, eine Kirche und eine kleine Kapelle (HASPELS 1971, I, S. 232, 248).

Einen anderen Typ repräsentiert *Bin İn*, eine Höhlensiedlung an einem alten Paßübergang von Synada in die phrygische Pentapolis, d. h. außerhalb des eigentlichen phrygischen Hochlandes; es ist ein eindrucksvolles Beispiel für eine größere, einheitliche Höhlensiedlung (mit gebautem Anteil). Weit über 100 Höhlen sind an mehreren Stellen in der ein Bachtal im Norden begrenzenden Felswand eingegraben. Den einzelnen Höhlenwohnungen sind ähnlich der Siedlung bei Çeltek teilweise in den Fels gegrabene Höfe vorgelagert. Es lassen sich auch hier Wohnhöhlen (z. T. mit umlaufenden Bänken, viereckigen bzw. halbrunden Schranknischen) und Stallhöhlen (mit Futtertrögen) unterscheiden. Talabwärts liegt eine römische Höhlennekropole, die teilweise zu Stallhöhlen mit Futtertrögen umgebaut ist. Schräg unterhalb des Höhlengebietes (d. h. am Rand des Siedlungsareals) findet sich die Ruine einer gebauten, frühbyz. Kirche; erhalten sind Teile der Grundmauern und Kirchenarchitekturfragmente (GÖNÇER 1971, S. 192; TH. DREW-BEAR, Mitteilungen bzw. Tagebuch; *TIB* 7, S. 213).

Generell läßt sich sagen, daß die mittelbyzantinischen Höhlenwohnungen durchaus Analogien zu den gebauten Häusern derselben Zeit aufweisen; das betrifft vor allem die z. T. dreiseitig „umbauten“ Höfe (wie bei Çeltek und *Bin İn*, aber auch in der Gegend von Göreme) und das Aufkommen von Hauskapellen.

In allen byzantinischen Epochen gehörte zu (nahezu) jedem Dorf, vielfach aber, wie besonders die Höhlenanlagen zeigen, auch zu kleineren Einheiten (Weilern), mindestens eine Kirche, die oft, aber keineswegs immer, mehr oder weniger im Zentrum lag.

Aus den vorangehenden Beobachtungen ergibt sich, daß dort, wo, wie in Zentralanatolien, schriftliche Dokumentation nicht in ausreichendem Maße zur Verfügung steht, die archäologische Untersuchung den Hauptanteil zur Erforschung der Realien byzanti-

nischer Dörfer beitragen muß<sup>11</sup>; systematisch wurden solche Untersuchungen erst in jüngerer Zeit und in noch unzureichendem Ausmaß in Angriff genommen. Sie sind ein dringendes Desiderat, da die besonders kleineren, ungeschützten archäologischen Zeugnisse mit wachsender Geschwindigkeit dem Straßenbau, der Erweiterung der Orte, vor allem aber der Habgier von Schatzsuchern zum Opfer fallen.

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# THE VILLAGES OF BYZANTINE CYPRUS

Marcus RAUTMAN\*

*Résumé – La vie rurale à Chypre reflète historiquement les stratégies traditionnelles d'exploitation du sol adaptées aux intérêts des puissances continentales. Les sources écrites et l'archéologie de l'Antiquité tardive révèlent un paysage productif dont les villages prospères étaient étroitement intégrés dans l'empire. Les habitats côtiers furent pour la plupart abandonnés à la suite des incursions arabes du vi<sup>e</sup> siècle qui firent de Chypre une possession partagée entre Constantinople et Damas jusqu'à la reconquête byzantine de 965. Les villages de l'intérieur et les domaines ruraux formèrent le socle du renouveau économique de l'île aux x<sup>e</sup> et xiv<sup>e</sup> siècles.*

The study of rural settlements in Cyprus has followed a pattern seen elsewhere in the Byzantine empire: contemporary authors focused on the cities of the island province, whose monuments and personalities have dominated modern attention ever since. The gap between town and countryside appears across the scholarly spectrum in discussion of material as well as textual remains. The *chora* has been left largely unspoken; in late antiquity it might be dismissed as wasteland, while parts of the island could later be called "one of the most characteristic no-man's-lands of the Mediterranean, the refuge of the poor, bandits, and outlaws" (BRAUDEL 1972, p. 154; cf. the view presented in the 9th-century *Life of Constantine the Jew* in RYDÉN 1993, p. 201). Yet behind this deprecating veneer lies the very heart of island life, a dynamic landscape that looked to its broad plains, rising valleys, and forested slopes to sustain local inhabitants and meet external demands. This dual orientation of Cypriot society well illustrates Braudel's paradox of insularity, and underlies the nature of its villages in Byzantine – as well as more recent – times.

Mediterranean islands present historically conservative settings in which situational and environmental factors are emphasized and great cultural contrasts can exist over short distance. Cyprus, as the largest and most remote of Byzantine islands, constitutes a special case. It lies less than 100 km from the Anatolian and Syrian coasts, at the nexus of long-standing communication routes across the east Mediterranean. Two great mountain ranges, the Kyrenia and the Troodos, divide the landscape into a series of distinct regions and ecological zones (fig. 1; HILL 1940, p. 1-14; MALAMUT 1988, p. 36-37; GUILLOU 1998, p. 11-14). Contested by mainland powers since the Bronze Age, Cyprus became one of Rome's most stable eastern possessions in the middle of the 1st century B.C. The apostle Paul and Barnabas are said to have introduced Christianity to the island, which received its ecclesiastical independence from Antioch during the reign of the emperor Zeno c. 488 (HILL 1940; MITFORD 1980). Late Roman authors like Ammianus Marcellinus (*Res Gestae* 14.8.14) and John Lydus (*de Mag.* 2.29) speak of its natural abundance and agricultural productivity (CHRYSOS 1993; MICHAELIDES 1996, p. 142-49). This era of general prosperity ended abruptly amid the military conflicts of the mid-7th century, which left Cyprus a shared possession of Constantinople and Damascus (DIKIGOROPOULOS 1940-48; CAMERON

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1992; KYRRIS 1994-98). In 965 Nikephoros Phocas successfully restored Byzantine authority, which lasted until the rise of Crusader states c. 1189. Continued competition among external interests is seen in the island's subsequent control by Venice, Istanbul, and London, before independence was established in 1960.

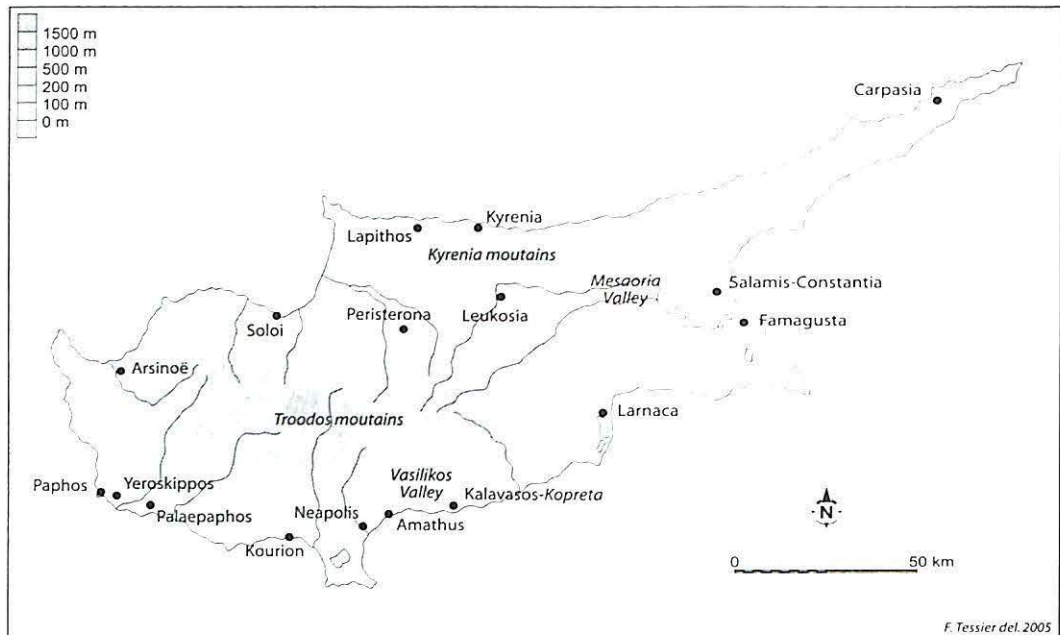


Fig. 1 – Late Roman and Byzantine Cyprus, with major places mentioned in the text

The historical sources for understanding this Byzantine province are relatively few. Early chroniclers provide little useful information about the countryside, and saints' lives from the 7th to 12th centuries offer only glimpses of life outside the coastal cities. Material evidence forms the essential complement to this patchy written record. A century of antiquarian scavenging and systematic archaeological research has recovered a number of buildings, treasures, and other artifacts, dating especially from the 5th through 7th centuries. Like the literary remains, this evidence is mainly urban in nature. The most important information for the *chora* comes from field surveys and salvage excavations conducted in the second half of the 20th century by the Department of Antiquities and various independent expeditions (PAPAGEORGHIOU 1993). Systematic reconnaissance of different parts of the island has sketched a largely consistent picture of rural settlement. The number of farmsteads and villages grew steadily in the 5th and 6th centuries, but declined sharply around the time of Arab campaigns in the east Mediterranean c. 650. The ensuing time of neutrality or dual allegiance, by contrast, is very poorly known in the field and constitutes a 300-year-long 'Dark Age' in the island's history. The countryside returns to focus only in the late 11th and 12th centuries, with the growth of large inland estates and the founding of churches and monasteries in the Kyrenia and Troodos mountains. The wide disparity of available evidence means that our understanding of later Byzantine villages is largely indirect, relying on information drawn from late antiquity, on the one hand, and more recent times on the other.

The settlement pattern of late Roman Cyprus, as revealed by archaeological field survey, was apparently influenced by the need for efficient resource exploitation. About a dozen major cities lying along the coast were linked by water and a circuminsular highway (MITFORD 1980, p. 1332-37). Secondary roads led from these ports and scattered anchorages across the coastal plains and foothills to inland *komai*, with additional tracks continuing on to small upland farmsteads and hamlets. Some of the larger rural sites seem to have functioned as minor central points, facilitating intra-regional exchange within a dendritic settlement network. Field prospection in the north has identified hundreds of minor sites along the coast stretching from the Myrou plain near Kyrenia and Lapithos to Salamis in the lower Mesaoria valley (CATLING 1972, p. 4-5; HADJISAVVAS 1991). Surveys in western Cyprus have recorded scores of small mining camps and agricultural settlements in the Troodos region and around Arsinoë and Paphos (RUPP 1986; FEJFER 1995; GIVEN *et al.* 1999). The wider territories of Kourion and Amathus are known to have been occupied with similar intensity during the 4th through 7th centuries (PETIT *et al.* 1996; SWINY and MAVROMATIS 2000). The most extensively explored part of this region is the Vasilikos valley, where long-term reconnaissance has noted over 40 activity areas, ranging from seasonal encampments to permanent villages (fig. 2; TODD forthcoming). Some of these sites are situated around large copper mines in the upper valley. Many of the rest are scattered at intervals of 0.5-1.0 km among the lower hills and river plain, within easy reach of arable fields and pastures. The greatest concentration appears on a bluff ridge near the middle of the valley, where substantial activity has been identified at Kalavasos-Kopetra, Ayious, and Pamboules. The sustained growth of these neighboring sites during the 6th and 7th centuries reflects the successful land-use practices of local inhabitants as well as their engagement in wider networks of exchange.



Fig. 2 – Vasilikos valley, looking north from Kalavasos-Kopetra

Recent work at *Kopetra* provides a detailed view of Cypriot village life in late antiquity. Survey and excavation have established the extent of an unwalled, 4-ha. community that extended along the east ridge of the Vasilikos river, about 4 km from the sea (fig. 3; McCLELLAN and RAUTMAN 1994). About a hundred families may have lived here while working nearby fields in the 6th and early 7th centuries. Much of the site seems to have been occupied by small houses of varying complexity; at least one large, well-built structure stood near the village center, while smaller, less-substantial buildings with press weights and grinding stones were found along the periphery. Three churches served as physical and social landmarks for local residents. The earliest and largest of these was located at the upper edge of the settlement. The second was built some 200 m to the south, perhaps when the village expanded over time in this direction. A third, slightly later basilica, the center of a small monastery, stood atop a low nearby hill to the east, apart from the settlement. Shared construction methods suggest that local residents built both houses and churches, perhaps with the advice of a visiting mason or *architekton*.

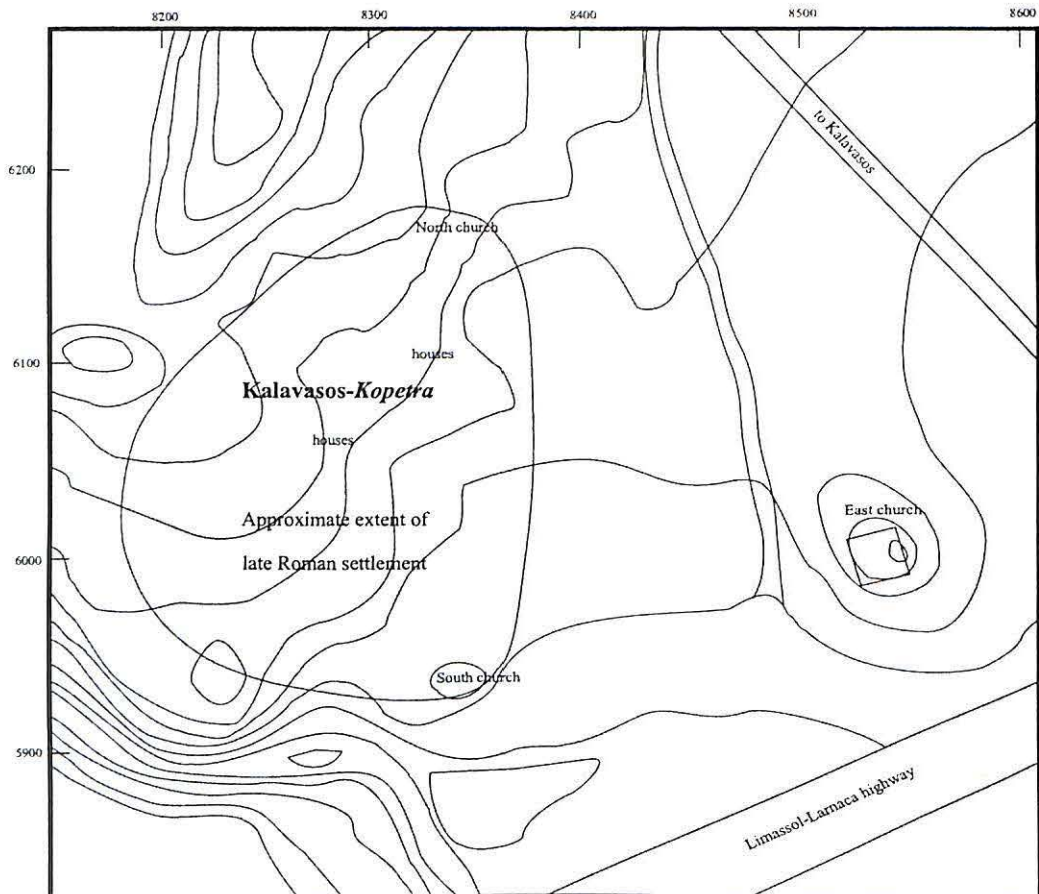


Fig. 3 – Kalavastos-Kopetra, approximate extent of late Roman settlement

These three churches were among the Vasilikos valley's most substantial buildings, and as a group they reflect the synthesis of vernacular traditions and metropolitan ideas (MEGAW 1974). Built over three to four generations in the 6th century, they were similarly oriented, designed, and assembled. Each basilica dominated its immediate environs and marked a primary approach to the village. All were built of locally available materials, primarily fieldstone and gypsum, and used imported marble only for table surfaces. All employed a three-aisled plan and were supported by cylindrical piers with capitals made of mortared rubble in imitation of freestanding columns. The presence of two cruciform nave piers at the east church, an arrangement without known parallel on the island, suggests the influence of builders or liturgical practices from the mainland. The two earlier basilicas were furnished with opus sectile, apse mosaics, and gypsum-plaster moldings, capitals, and decorative elements, which reflect the work of itinerant craftsmen. Opus sectile and floor mosaic patterns appear closely related to contemporary pavements elsewhere on the island. The two apse mosaics, fragmentarily preserved but finely worked of glass tesserae, lack local precedent and presumably were made by urban workshops. Some of the complex stucco moldings, which were cast in place using wooden forms, closely resemble earlier work at Salamis-Constantia. Representational pieces include laden baskets, a columnar shrine, animals, and a small panel of the seated Theotokos with Christ child. Fragments with carefully molded letters came from large inscriptions displayed within the nave of the south church, implying a level of literacy among its congregation. These fragile images, rare survivals of a technique once used across the island, reflect close awareness of the artistic mainstreams of the times (MEGAW 1976).

The churches at *Kopetra* offer clear evidence of the economic success achieved by this Cypriot village. Coins and pottery document the inhabitants' wide-ranging commercial contacts (RAUTMAN 2001, p. 252-54). The relative scarcity of coins suggests that minted currency was little used in daily commerce, even while abundant ceramics attest the central role of the village in local exchange. Large storage jars were made of coarse local clays, but most other wares originated elsewhere on the island: large quantities of Cypriot Red Slip pottery and red-fabric rooftiles arrived from the Paphos region in the west, while yellow-fabric rooftiles came from the lower Mesaoria valley to the east. Other fine wares, including the widely-distributed Phocian and north African red slip wares, were brought by ships from the Aegean. Packaged in amphoras and perishable containers, oil, wine, and varied agricultural commodities came from Cilicia, Syria, Palestine, Egypt, and other parts of Cyprus. The volume of external commerce apparently increased over the 6th century and peaked shortly around 600. During the 7th century locally made ceramics seem to have become more important. Valley products included large rooftiles and a series of handmade cooking pots of simple shape and uneven appearance. These likely were made at the neighborhood or household level, and may have been intended as a hedge against agricultural and market uncertainties (RAUTMAN 1998).

Such material indicators attest the well-being of one representative Cypriot village. Important products of the Vasilikos valley no doubt included grapes and olives, but the main crop probably was grain. The local soils, climate, and dispersed settlement pattern are well suited to the cultivation of cereals, which would have become increasingly important to Constantinople in the later 6th and 7th centuries. A second major project was copper, extracted from large mines in the upper valley. Seasonal herding and household gardens would have completed the village's subsistence economy (IONAS 1993-94; RAUTMAN 2001, p. 254-55). While much of this production would have taken place elsewhere, the residents of *Kopetra* clearly were positioned to control transport and exchange on the sub-regional level. The prominence of the village with its multiple churches suggests that by 600 it had become the religious focus of the valley and may have assumed some administrative functions as well (DAGRON, *Bourgades*; KAPLAN,

*Les hommes et la terre*, p. 89-104; HALDON 1997, p. 132-41). Its sudden and substantial abandonment c. 650, together with much of the surrounding countryside, reflects a period of widespread destruction followed by relocation. The decline of such specialized places – in the Vasilikos valley and across the island – points to the far-reaching impact of both political events of the mid-7th century and the economic disruptions that followed.

The Arab campaigns left Cyprus precariously balanced between east and west, seriously affecting life in the coastal *poleis*. Residents of Paphos and Soloi undertook repairs of their damaged buildings, which they continued to use for a while. Other cities like Kourion and Amathus gradually were eclipsed by new, smaller settlements, often located some distance from the shore. The island's former provincial capital of Salamis-Constantia impressed the 8th-century pilgrim Willibald as little more than a large village, even though its archbishop still resided there (MEGAW 1986, p. 508-9; PAPAGEORGHIOU 1993, p. 50-51). Most coastal cities retained their episcopal status even while losing, together with their surrounding territories, many of their inhabitants. Theophanes writes that up to 170,000 Cypriots were removed as Arab prisoners to the mainland. Justinian II's short-lived relocation of an uncertain number of families to Bithynia around 688 further depleted the local population. Such poorly understood population transfers may have left as few as 75,000 Cypriots on the island (MANGO 1976, p. 5; CAMERON 1992, p. 31-32, 43; GUILLOU 1998, p. 15-17).

Evidence of village life during this period is especially scarce. Surveys across the island have reported a sharp reduction in the occupation of the countryside, with few places clearly inhabited during the 8th and 9th centuries (DIKIGOROPOULOS 1978, p. 9-10; CATLING 1982; PAPAGEORGHIOU 1993). The decline or consolidation of rural activities is especially clear along the coast, no doubt reflecting the diminished fortunes of nearby cities. As elsewhere in the Mediterranean, the related phenomena of deurbanization and rural abandonment may reflect political instability but also other factors, ranging from plague to climatic change and economic reorganization. The magnitude of this shift is emphasized by the demise of traditional exchange networks that had long supplied standard types of glass and pottery to the island. Little Aegean pottery appears to have reached this contested territory on the Byzantine periphery, with the few known examples confined mainly to the coast (HAYES 1981, p. 379-80). Coins and other metropolitan trade goods are no better attested. This implies that a general turn toward self-sufficiency took place across much of the island, with a corresponding shift from permanent settlements to seasonal encampments that depended less on traditional communication networks.

The obscurity of the period is not total. The 9th-century *Life of Demetrianos*, the island's only surviving hagiographic account from this time, describes a variety of settlements, including villages, towns, and cities with churches and monasteries (RYDÉN 1993, p. 197-201). Archaeology has yet to confirm all details of this picture. Cities like Paphos, Amathus, and Salamis continued to be partially inhabited. Regional surveys have found that a few late Roman sites were also occupied in the Middle Byzantine and later medieval periods – and likely during the interim as well. About 10% of late Roman sites in the Lapithos region and the lower Mesaoria valley were inhabited during these later years (CATLING 1972, p. 4-5; DIKIGOROPOULOS 1978; HADJISAVVAS 1991). The inland Yialias valley, which was less densely settled during late antiquity, saw renewed occupation of perhaps 40% of its earlier sites (CATLING 1982). Such patterns imply that a number of places continued to be inhabited despite the depopulation of coastal cities. The absence of familiar artifacts and monuments suggests that these 'Dark Age' villages looked quite different from their late Roman predecessors: new types of tools and containers seem to have been made of less durable materials, agricultural strategies were adjusted for terrain and market, and habitation sites themselves may have shifted on a seasonal or periodic basis. Despite such changes, rural residents continued to raise much of the island's tax

revenues, which were payable to both Constantinople and Damascus. Lacking ready access to inter-regional exchange, many of these Cypriots would have pursued subsistence strategies supplemented by local trade in specialty crops or small-scale crafts to meet household needs, an option already seen at *Kopetra* by the mid-7th century.

It may be questioned how much immediate impact the Byzantine conquest of 965 had on most inhabitants of the countryside. Contemporary authors say little about the island at this time, but imperial interest in the reclaimed province brought important changes. Beginning in the late 11th century an increasing number of governors and churchmen were dispatched from Constantinople to oversee island affairs (MANGO 1976, p. 5-8; GALATORIOTOU 1991, p. 45-48; SAVVIDES 1995). This administrative intervention coincided with the island's economic expansion. Contemporary observers like Kekaumenos, Edrisi, and Mukaddasi speak of the busy ports at Neapolis and Famagusta and the great variety of goods passing through them. Major island products included grain, oil, wine, timber, and copper. Sugar, introduced from India through Egypt in the 10th century, and glazed pottery made in coastal workshops would become important exports in the later Middle Ages (MALAMUT 1988, p. 436-38; GALATORIOTOU 1991, p. 52-53; GOUNARIDIS 1996). The outward orientation of the insular economy appears in the construction of new churches in the larger towns of the coastal lowlands (St Paraskeve in Yeroskoppos, St Lazaros in Larnaca, and St Barnabas near Salamis) as well as near the new capital at Leukosia (Sts Barnabas and Hilarion in Peristerona; PAPAGEORGHIOU 1985, p. 325-27; WHARTON 1988, p. 61-66; HEIN *et al.* 1996; ČURČIĆ 1999).

As elsewhere in the Middle Byzantine empire, this broadly-based economic growth encouraged the foundation of rural churches and monasteries (HARVEY 1989; KAPLAN, *Les hommes et la terre*). A series of new monastic establishments, including the Kykkos, Khrysorroiyatissa, and Makheras monasteries, was established during the 11th and 12th centuries. Several of these benefited from imperial donations and exemptions. At the same time metropolitan and local elites were accumulating large country estates on which they built chapels and churches (MANGO 1976, 7-9; MALAMUT 1988, p. 285-87; GALATORIOTOU 1991: 57-58; GOUNARIDIS 1996, 177-79). Some of these may have belonged to monasteries based elsewhere in Cyprus or on the mainland. Others, like the well-known painted churches at Asinou, Kakopetria, and Lagoudera, were built by secular patrons, perhaps to serve residents of mountain villages in their rural holdings. These celebrated buildings reflect both insular and metropolitan tendencies, with traditional materials, plans, and construction methods apparent in the standing fabric, while their decorative programs betray close ties with Constantinople (MEGAW 1974; PAPAGEORGHIOU 1985, p. 327-35; STYLIANOU 1985; WHARTON 1988, p. 68-87; HEIN *et al.* 1996).

Parts of the Cypriot landscape clearly became more populous and productive in the Middle Byzantine period, yet specific information about individual villages is hard to find. Tenth- through twelfth-century documents preserve the names of at least 20 *choria*, mostly located in the north part of the island. Many of these were located on fragmented monastic estates; the holdings of the Panayia Krina, for example, included the villages of Parameda near Kourion as well as Thrinea and Lithiko near Lapithos (Fig. 4; MALAMUT 1988, p. 245-60, 478). The distribution of recorded toponyms and standing buildings suggests the special importance of the upper hill country, above 300 m in elevation (MALAMUT 1988, p. 284, 642-43 map). Regional surveys have noted the growth of small sites across the island. Over 70 such places assignable to the Byzantine or medieval periods have been found scattered along the coastal plain and foothills around Palaepaphos. Other projects have noted that the number of habitation sites rose gradually along the exposed lowland plains as well as in the central valleys (DIKIGOROPOULOS 1978, p. 10; GREGORY 1993; HADJISAVVAS 1991; TODD forthcoming). Artifacts recovered from these sites underscore the contrast with the cities. In late antiquity fine pottery and amphoras



from the mainland could be found throughout the *chora*, but in later times smaller quantities of these goods reached inland residents. The limited circulation of later Byzantine and medieval pottery implies not only a reduced volume of exchange but also a different kind of rural marketplace, without autonomous sub-regional centers (KAPLAN, *Les hommes et la terre*; LEFORT 2002, p. 236-40). The growth of large estates, especially when managed by non-resident owners, may have discouraged investment in local communities. The accounts of Neophytos the Recluse and Nicholas Mouzalon attest that many rural residents fared poorly during this period. Neophytos spent his childhood tending family vineyards near the village of Lefkara before entering the Koutsoventes monastery in 1152. From his hermitage in the hills above Paphos he witnessed the growing taxation of the countryside under its governors, the revolt of Isaac Komnenos, and the arrival of the Latins in 1191 (GALATORIOTOU 1991, p. 60). As in later times, the need to produce marketable surpluses to meet these demands may well have fostered networks of inter-village exchange that functioned independent of external markets.



Fig. 4 – Troodos mountains, looking north above Lagoudera

Aspects of these rural settlements can be recognized in the organization of traditional Cypriot villages (CHRISTODOULOU 1959, p. 61-66; IONAS 1988, p. 17-39; GRIVAUD 1996; GIVEN 2000, p. 214-17). Rural life remained fundamentally agrarian and most settlements were located inland, with very few situated directly on the sea (GRIVAUD 1996, fig. 1). Many of these were located at intervals of 2-3 km, their siting naturally dependent on concerns of security, the availability of water, and access to arable land. Most were nucleated, cluster-type settlements, unwalled but with a vantage overlooking the main access route. Churches occupied a central place in defining neighborhoods and their clergy figured prominently in village affairs. Houses built of stone and mudbrick served as the locus for domestic routines that included agricultural processing and storage, small-

scale craft production, and stabling of animals. Threshing floors, mills, and presses found near churches and around the inhabited periphery may have been shared by several families. Such arrangements suggest that in many cases villages responded to the demands of church, state, and non-resident landowners by devising complex networks of sub-regional exchange for local surpluses.

Occupation of the Cypriot landscape since prehistory has fluctuated with the island's economic and political relations with mainland states. The time of greatest rural activity can be located in late antiquity, when a complex network of permanent settlements stretched across the island, reaching even some of its most marginal regions. With political upheaval and the interruption of long-standing exchange routes in the mid-7th century, most rural inhabitants left behind established lowland villages for less sedentary lifeways, especially in the higher elevations of the interior. Many of these new habitation foci may have been occupied only intermittently and lacked the physical apparatus of earlier villages, yet they formed the basis for the permanent *choria* that emerged following the return of Byzantine authority. Developed over the span of centuries, this adaptive response by rural residents to economic and political change shaped a continuous cultural tradition on Cyprus extending into post-medieval times.

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# LES VILLAGES DE SYRIE DU NORD DU VII<sup>e</sup> AU XIII<sup>e</sup> SIECLE

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*Summary – A clear-cut distinction between a village and a small town is difficult to draw in the Islamic world. Besides, textual sources relating to early Islamic Northern Syria are rare. Nevertheless, three main stages in the occupation and the function of villages in this time and place can be distinguished. The rural activity declines progressively towards the end of the Byzantine domination and does not pick up by the early 10th century. No evidence is available for the times between the early 10th and the late 12th century, a period of continuous warfare that must have perturbed (?/disrupted) life in the countryside (?). The Limestone Massif becomes then a frontier zone and numerous fortifications are built. Only from the late 12th century (after the Muslim victory over the Franks) to the mid 13th century (prior to the Mongol invasion of Syria in 1260), there are clear signs of an expansion in rural activity, which does not reach however the level attained in Late Antiquity. Christian communities decline as shown by the sharp drop in the number of bishoprics. Scattered Arab tribes also settled in the region as well as minority groups : Armenians, Jews and Muslim “heretics”, Druzes and Assassins.*

## INTRODUCTION

### *Villes, forteresses ou villages ?*

À l'époque protobyzantine, il existe en Syrie du Nord comme ailleurs une différence tranchée entre les villes (Antioche, Apamée, Cyrhus) et les villages (*kômai*), quelle que soit leur taille (al-Bāra atteignant 300 ha, Brād 100 ha). Ces villes jouent un rôle essentiel dans l'administration civile et religieuse des provinces, en particulier Antioche. Les villages en revanche paraissent un peu coupés de cet appareil urbain et en redoutent les interventions : d'où le rôle des intercesseurs, patrons ruraux et saints hommes (BROWN 1982, p. 59-118). En outre, il est possible qu'après l'invasion perse du début du VI<sup>e</sup> siècle, les structures urbaines se soient largement effondrées<sup>1</sup>.

En Islam, les problèmes posés par la définition de la ville et du village sont loin d'être résolus. L'imprécision de la terminologie, l'absence de véritable statut juridique, d'institutions et d'associations spécifiquement urbaines, comme en Occident, ne permettent pas toujours de faire la différence entre un gros village et une petite ville. Il est très rare de trouver des données démographiques précises et fiables et même si les critères religieux (mosquée du vendredi, madrasas) politiques (siège du pouvoir et de l'administration, fortifications) économiques (fabrication de produits manufacturés, marchés) et dans certains cas juridiques<sup>2</sup>, restent importants pour définir une ville, surtout lorsqu'ils s'ajoutent les uns aux autres ; pris un à un, ils ne suffisent pas à différencier villes et villages. Il existait

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1. KENNEDY 1982 et 1985a et b ; FOSS 1997 ; LIEBESCHUETZ 2001, p. 295.

2. Le droit hanafite, par exemple, délimite le territoire urbain au sein duquel les habitants sont tenus d'accomplir la prière du vendredi dans la ville. Cf. JOHANSEN 1981. Pour une mise au point sur la question urbaine en Islam, cf. GARCIN 2000, p. 93-109.

des villages protégés par une forteresse, pourvus de marchés, d'une mosquée du vendredi, d'un cadî et parfois même d'un gouverneur. Les auteurs arabes du Moyen Âge avaient eux-mêmes du mal à s'y reconnaître et une même localité est souvent appelée village (*qarya*) par les uns, petite ville par les autres (*bulayd*, *bulayda*).

### *Problèmes de sources*

Alors que pour les siècles antérieurs, textes<sup>3</sup> et inscriptions<sup>4</sup> ne font pas défaut, la documentation dont nous disposons pour l'étude des villages de Syrie du Nord durant les premiers siècles de l'hégire (VII<sup>e</sup>-XI<sup>e</sup> siècles) est discontinue et lacunaire. Il existe bien quelques sources syriaques qui fournissent des indications intéressantes sur la ruine de villages dans la région de Homs lors de la conquête arabe (PALMER, BROCK et HOYLAND 1993, p. 1-4) ; d'autres informations peuvent être trouvées dans l'œuvre d'auteurs plus tardifs tels que Michel le Syrien (m. 1199) ou Bar Hebraeus (m. 1286). Outre les données qu'elles peuvent fournir sur les populations restées chrétiennes, ces sources sont très utiles dans l'étude de la toponymie, la plupart des villages de Syrie du Nord ayant des noms d'origine syriaque, plus ou moins arabisés. Les listes de couvents reproduites dans quelques lettres syriaques du VI<sup>e</sup> siècle permettent de bien s'en rendre compte : 'RHB devenu Arhāb (act. Erhāb), LYTRYB transformé en al-Aṭārib (act. Terib), KPR en Kafar ou Kafr, Dayr Sita dérivé de DRWSYT', Dayr Turmānīn de TRMN', etc.<sup>5</sup>.

Les textes arabes sur la conquête de la Syrie du Nord sont, pour leur part, assez décevants. Outre le fait qu'ils reproduisent de nombreux *topoi* et développements littéraires stéréotypés, ils ne s'intéressent que très peu au sort des villages et des campagnes. Quelques renseignements peuvent être glanés dans l'histoire d'al-Balādurī (IX<sup>e</sup> siècle) sur les populations arabes installées dans la région d'Alep avant la conquête islamique (Tanūh et Tayy essentiellement) et la mention de la soumission aux armées musulmanes des villages de Sarmīn, Martahwān et Tīzīn (villages situés dans la plaine ou sur les pentes du Gabal Sim'ān, à l'ouest d'Alep) indique, sans doute, que ces localités avaient une certaine importance, indication confirmée par le fait, qu'à l'époque islamique, elles donnèrent leur nom au district dont elles faisaient partie (AL-BALĀDURĪ 1966, p. 223-229). Mais au total, peu de choses peuvent être trouvées dans les sources arabes relatant la conquête, et ce n'est qu'à partir des XII<sup>e</sup> et XIII<sup>e</sup> siècles que se développèrent des histoires régionales, des dictionnaires géographiques et des ouvrages de topographie historique qui fournissent des informations plus détaillées sur les villages du Massif Calcaire.

Dans le domaine épigraphique, les inscriptions grecques sont quasiment toutes antérieures à la conquête islamique et les inscriptions arabes parvenues jusqu'à nous sont rares avant le milieu du XI<sup>e</sup> siècle. L'apport de l'archéologie, en revanche, est très important, en particulier pour les premiers siècles de la domination musulmane peu documentée

3. Le corpus des textes relatifs à la Syrie du Nord est très abondant. Rappelons les écrits de Libanios (notamment l'*Antiochikos*, le texte sur les *Patronages*, la Correspondance), ceux de Théodoret de Cyr (*Histoire des Moines de Syrie*, Correspondance), les *Vies* très détaillées des deux stylites Syméon, la *Chronique* de Jean Malalas et les actes de concile comme celui de 518, les *Homélies*, les *Hymnes* et la Correspondance de Sévère d'Antioche. Procope lui consacre de nombreuses pages dans son *De Bello Persico* et dans le *De Aedificiis*, ainsi qu'Évagre le Scholastique : FLUSIN 1998, p. 454-455, 652-654. Sur les couvents monophysites de Syrie du Nord, cf. n. 5.

4. À côté des volumes I-III des *IGLS*, renvoyons à la partie du *Bulletin Épigraphique* consacrée tous les ans à la Syrie dans la *REG* sous la responsabilité de J.-L. Gatier et D. Feissel.

5. Cf. A. CAQUOT, Les couvents du Massif Calcaire dans quatre lettres monophysites du VI<sup>e</sup> siècle, in TCHALENKO 1953-1958, III, p. 63-85 et dans ce même volume, cf. la liste des couvents antiques, p. 86-106. Cf. aussi FEISSEL 1982 et 1991.

par les textes, **mais pour l'instant, les fouilles sont encore peu nombreuses** (Dehes, Qal'at Sim'an, Serğilla)<sup>6</sup> : quelques travaux sur les temples des hauts-lieux (CALLOT 1997 ; GATIER 1997) ainsi que sur l'architecture de certains villages (Dayr Sunbul : TATE-NACCACHE 1991-92) ont été publiés, et l'on continue d'utiliser les résultats des prospections déjà anciennes menées par Georges Tchalenko, Janine et Dominique Sourdel (TCHALENKO 1953-1958, III, p. 86-127).

Les lacunes actuelles de nos sources sur les campagnes, pour les premiers siècles de l'Islam, nous ont donc conduits à mener une recherche sur une plus longue durée, entre le VII<sup>e</sup> et le XIII<sup>e</sup> siècle, afin de disposer d'une documentation plus abondante. La question de la rupture ou de la continuité entre les périodes byzantine et islamique peut alors être envisagée d'abord du point de vue de l'occupation et de la fonction des sites, puis de la nature et de l'évolution du peuplement.

#### OCCUPATION ET FONCTION DES SITES

Trois grandes périodes dans l'occupation et la fonction des villages étudiés se dégagent. Du début du VII<sup>e</sup> au début du X<sup>e</sup> siècle, une certaine continuité apparaît avec la fin de la période byzantine marquée par un déclin progressif de l'activité rurale. Sur la période du début du X<sup>e</sup> au dernier quart du XII<sup>e</sup> siècle, la documentation fait défaut, mais la fonction rurale des villages semble laisser la place à une fonction beaucoup plus militaire. Enfin, de la fin du XII<sup>e</sup> au milieu du XIII<sup>e</sup> siècle (l'invasion mongole se produit en 1260), on assiste à un renouveau rural, après la reconquête musulmane aux dépens des Francs, sans que cette région, toutefois, retrouve le niveau de développement qui fut le sien à l'époque antique.

#### *Continuité avec la période byzantine*

Les fouilles menées dans le Ġabal Sim'an et le Ġabal Bariša permettent de bien illustrer la première période. Le site de Dehes offre une certaine continuité dans l'occupation après la conquête arabe jusqu'au début du X<sup>e</sup> siècle, période marquée par un déclin progressif. On ne constate pas de nouvelles constructions ou d'agrandissements de bâtiments après le milieu du VI<sup>e</sup> siècle. On continue à habiter ceux qui existent. Le mode d'occupation est qualitativement inférieur aux époques précédentes : on se contente d'occuper les maisons et les églises avec des remaniements très mineurs. La céramique commune montre une certaine continuité, notamment la variété en terre rouge et bien cuite appelée "Brittle Ware", peut-être produite dans les régions de l'Euphrate, au nord de Cyrhus. La qualité de la pâte semble décliner dans le courant du X<sup>e</sup> siècle<sup>7</sup>. Des productions en pâte claire, glaçurées dans un certain nombre de cas, semblent alors prendre le relais. Les monnaies confirment cette impression de continuité en offrant des données claires et chiffrées : Le premier secteur fouillé de Dehes a livré 44 monnaies protobyzantines, 17 omeyyades, 6 byzantines, 4 ayyoubides<sup>8</sup>.

A Qal'at Sim'an, qui est le haut lieu spirituel du Massif Calcaire, la continuité est encore plus marquée. La même céramique se retrouve jusqu'au X<sup>e</sup> siècle. Mais le site constituait aussi un lieu fortifiable, important surtout par son emplacement près d'Alep.

6. Cf. SODINI, TATE *et al.* 1980 ; BAVANT et ORSSAUD 2001 ; G. TATE 1992. Sur Serğilla, voir principalement, CHARPENTIER 1994 et 2001.

7. ORSSAUD-SODINI 2003.

8. Voir la communication de T. VORDERSTRASSE, Coin circulation in some Syrian villages, 5th-11th centuries, dans ce même volume.

Il a donc été davantage soumis aux changements politiques. Les sources syriennes indiquent qu'au moment de la conquête, 'Umar « envoya de Damas Khaled avec une armée en direction d'Alep et d'Antioche. Une grande multitude mourut. Les Arabes se dirigèrent vers le couvent de Mar Sim'an al-'Amudi. Ils surprirent les hommes, les femmes, les jeunes gens et les jeunes filles réunis le jour de la fête et les emmenèrent en captivité »<sup>9</sup>. La prise de Qal'at Sim'ān se placerait entre celle d'Alep et la marche sur Antioche, vers 637. La vie du monastère a pu reprendre peut-être de façon permanente jusqu'aux x<sup>e</sup>-xi<sup>e</sup> siècles mais sur un pied réduit : une seule porte, au lieu de trois, à l'entrée principale. Le baptistère est dépouillé de ses mosaïques murales qui sont jetées par les portes occidentales en contrebas. Dans ce même bâtiment, et nulle part ailleurs, sont trouvées quatre tasses moulées et polylobées dont une, par sa qualité, rappelle une tasse découverte à Antioche et certaines pièces de Raqqa et pourrait être datée de la fin du viii<sup>e</sup> siècle et du début du ix<sup>e</sup> siècle, alors que les deux autres seraient des copies plus tardives (ORSSAUD 2001). Le baptistère est sans doute le point de réception de la céramique la plus luxueuse du complexe au ix<sup>e</sup> siècle. De la même époque date peut-être un tesson inscrit en coufique, trouvé dans la basilique occidentale du grand martyrium cruciforme (fig. 1)<sup>10</sup>. Sans doute un peu plus tardives, deux inhumations islamiques ont été fouillées devant la porte d'entrée du monastère. Une partie de ce monastère a peut-être été occupée par des musulmans. Puis, avec les fortifications successives (966 et 979/980), Qal'at Sim'ān devient un enjeu dans la guerre de position très dure que se livrent les armées byzantine et hamdânide d'Alep (cf. *infra*). Le site déclina probablement dans la première moitié du xi<sup>e</sup> siècle après deux raids au moins des armées arabes ; la céramique glaçurée retrouvée (« Splashed Ware ») devrait permettre d'affiner les dates. Les monnaies découvertes dans les fouilles menées de 1980 à 1994 se répartissent de manière légèrement différente de Dehes : protobyzantines 197 (iv<sup>e</sup> s., 24 ; v<sup>e</sup> s., 116 ; vi<sup>e</sup> s., 39 ; vii<sup>e</sup> s., 18), omeyyades, 148 (dont 4 arabo-byzantines), abbassides, 41, médio-byzantines, 11<sup>11</sup>.

Le cas de Qal'at Sim'ān est un peu exceptionnel. La plupart des villages ont dû avoir un destin comparable à celui de Dehes, et seules de futures fouilles permettront peut-être de généraliser son cas au reste du Massif Calcaire. Mais dès à présent, l'importance des recherches menées sur ces deux sites est de montrer clairement que l'occupation du vil-



Fig. 1 – Qal'at Sim'ān, tesson BW 173-3 inscrit en coufique (P.-M. Blanc)

9. MICHEL LE SYRIEN 1899-1924, livre XI, chap. 7 ; trad., vol. II, p. 422 ; BARHEBRAEUS 1932, I, p. 94 ; NASRALLAH 1970.

10. Nous remercions notre collègue Alastair Northedge pour les indications qu'il a bien voulu nous donner à ce sujet. Sur le Šayḥ Barakāt, CALLOT 1997, p. 738, a également trouvé sur le péribole, près de la chapelle qui a succédé au temple, une inscription arabe en lettres coufiques (« O Dieu, il n'est point de force en nous ; il n'y a de force qu'en Dieu, le très Haut, l'Inaccessible »).

11. Informations communiquées par C. Morrisson que nous remercions.



lage s'est maintenue bien au-delà de la conquête arabe, ce que ni les textes ni l'épigraphie n'avaient permis d'affirmer jusqu'alors. Cette continuité ne peut être vérifiée partout en Syrie du Nord. Ainsi à Chalcis/Qinnasrīn, dans la plaine au sud-ouest d'Alep, des recherches récentes semblent suggérer que la ville islamique, qui allait sur le plan administratif supplanter Antioche à la fin du VII<sup>e</sup> siècle, ne s'est pas développée sur le site même de l'ancienne Chalcis mais plutôt en relation avec le « Campement » (Ḥādir) militaire arabe fondé dans les environs dès l'époque pré-islamique (WHITCOMB 1999).

### *Une fonction militaire plus marquée*

Sur la deuxième période, du début du X<sup>e</sup> au dernier quart du XII<sup>e</sup> siècle, nous sommes assez mal renseignés. L'abandon des villages n'explique pas à lui seul le silence des sources puisque, comme nous venons de le voir, une céramique glaçurée du X<sup>e</sup> et même du début XI<sup>e</sup> siècle est attestée en certains endroits tels que Deḥes et Qal'at Sim'ān.

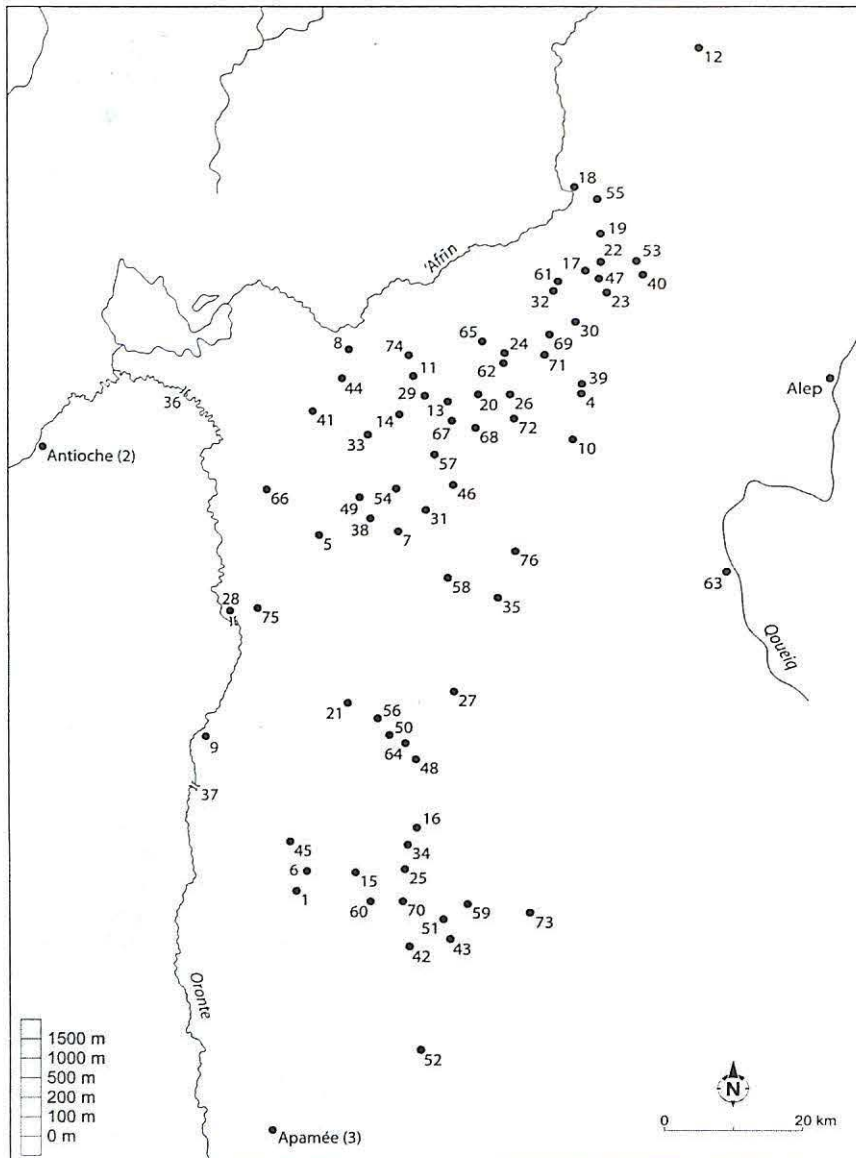
Il n'y a pas lieu de revenir sur les causes du déclin du Massif Calcaire, dès le VI<sup>e</sup> siècle, qui a soulevé de nombreuses questions et entraîne encore de nombreux débats<sup>12</sup>. Contentons-nous d'indiquer que les sources arabes, elles, insistent sur les conséquences des guerres qui se déroulèrent dans la région entre Byzantins et musulmans à la fin du X<sup>e</sup> siècle. En 962, en particulier, lors de la prise d'Anazarbe par les Byzantins, beaucoup d'arbres furent coupés et même si, aux dires des chroniqueurs, Nicéphore aurait interdit tout pillage dans la région d'Alep en disant aux villageois : « Continuez à cultiver vos champs, car ce pays est à nous, nous reviendrons bientôt », il ne fait pas de doute que les pillages entraînèrent la fuite de nombreux habitants à l'image de ceux de Qinnasrīn dont une partie émigra vers la Djéziré tandis que l'autre fut déplacée vers Alep pour repeupler la ville dévastée par les Byzantins<sup>13</sup>.

En 968, peu avant la reconquête d'Antioche, les chroniques rapportent de nouveaux exemples de pillages byzantins dans les villes et les villages situés entre Ma'arrat Mišrīn au nord et Homs au sud, notamment à Ma'arrat al-Nu'mān et Kafar Ṭāb. Ibn al-'Adīm, historien alépin du XIII<sup>e</sup> siècle écrit : « le nombre des villages détruits et brûlés par Nicéphore ne se comptait plus » (IBN AL-'ADĪM 1951-1968, I, p. 15), même s'il est vrai qu'on ne sait pas s'il s'agit là des villages du Massif Calcaire ou de ceux de la plaine, ou plus vraisemblablement des deux à la fois. Dans les années qui suivirent, le Massif Calcaire fut régulièrement le théâtre de violences, comme en 983, lorsque les Alépins, attaqués par les Byzantins, se retournèrent contre eux et détruisirent, sur leur chemin, le couvent de Dayr Sim'ān (IBN AL-'ADĪM 1951-1968, I, p. 175).

Les conflits se poursuivirent dans la première moitié du XI<sup>e</sup> siècle entre, cette fois, les Fatimides, les Byzantins et la dynastie locale des Mirdassides d'Alep, dans la région de l'Oronte. En 1032, une expédition fut menée conjointement par les Mirdassides et les Byzantins d'Antioche pour éliminer les druzes qui venaient de s'installer dans le Ġabal Summāq (la partie nord du Ġabal Zāwiya). Ibn al-'Adīm dit que les paysans de la région d'Alep s'étaient joints aux druzes (IBN AL-'ADĪM 1951-1968, I, p. 248), ce qui est bien le signe que cette région n'était pas alors inoccupée, mais qu'elle apparaissait surtout comme une zone de refuge. Quelque temps plus tard, l'invasion des Turcs seldjoukides puis l'installation des Francs à la fin du XI<sup>e</sup> siècle, entraînèrent de nouveaux conflits et le Massif Calcaire continua de jouer son rôle de zone frontière jusqu'au milieu du XII<sup>e</sup> siècle.

12. Cf. KENNEDY 1985a, p. 141-183 (notamment 157-162) ; TATE 1992 ; GATIER 1994, p. 17-48 (notamment p. 45-46) ; LIEBESCHUETZ 2000, p. 43-75 (notamment p. 50-52).

13. IBN AL-'ADĪM 1951-1968, I, p. 140. Cf. aussi CANARD 1951, p. 816.



- |                |                   |                   |                 |                   |                   |
|----------------|-------------------|-------------------|-----------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| 1. 'Allarüz    | 14. Bâmuqâ        | 27. Dâniṭ         | 40. Ḥarâb Šams  | 53. Kalöta        | 64. Riḥa          |
| 2. Antioche    | 15. Bâra          | 28. Darkūs        | 41. Ḥarîm       | 54. Kaukanâyâ     | 65. Rûhîn         |
| 3. Apamée      | 16. Bâsarfüt      | 29. Darqitâ       | 42. Ḥâs         | 55. Kimâr         | 66. Salqîn        |
| 4. Arḥâb       | 17. Başüfan       | 30. Dart'azze     | 43. Ḥunâk       | 56. Kurîn         | 67. Sarfud        |
| 5. Armanâz     | 18. Bäsüta        | 31. Dayr Sîta     | 44. 'Imm        | 57. Mâ'iz         | 68. Sarmadâ       |
| 6. Arnîba      | 19. Brâd          | 32. Dayr Sim'an   | 45. Innîb       | 58. Ma'arrat      | 69. Šayḥ Barakât  |
| 7. Aršin       | 20. Burdaqli      | 33. Deḥes         | 46. Kafar Arûq  | 59. Mišrîn        | 70. Serğilla      |
| 8. Artâḥ       | 21. Burğ Hâb      | 34. Frikÿâ        | 47. Kafar Lâb   | 60. Muğleyya      | 71. Tall 'Âde     |
| 9. Arzagân     | 22. Burğ Ḥaydar   | 35. Fû'a          | 48. Kafar Lâta  | 61. Qal'at Sim'an | 72. Tall 'Aqibrîn |
| 10. Aṭârîb     | 23. Burğke        | 36. Ğisr al-Ḥadîd | 49. Kafar Mâres | 62. Qaşr al-Banât | 73. Tall Minnis   |
| 11. 'Ayn Delfe | 24. Burğ al-Siba' | 37. Ğisr al-Šuğûr | 50. Kafar Nağd  | 63. Qinnasrîn     | 74. Tîzîn         |
| 12. 'Azâz      | 25. Dallöza       | 38. Ğuwâniye      | 51. Kafar Rûma  |                   | 75. Turîn         |
| 13. Bâbisqâ    | 26. Dänâ          | 39. Ḥân Arḥâb     | 52. Kfar Tâb    |                   | 76. Zardana       |

Fig. 2 – Principaux sites médiévaux du Massif Calcaire (d'après Tchalenko II, 1953, pl. CLV, après révision)

Toutes ces luttes entraînent naturellement l'édification de nombreux ouvrages fortifiés, simples fortins ou véritables forteresses. Cette militarisation de la région du Massif Calcaire apparaît clairement quand on compare les données dont nous disposons sur l'occupation des sites à l'époque antique tardive et celles qui nous sont fournies par les textes arabes du XIII<sup>e</sup> siècle et par les vestiges médiévaux (tableau en appendice). Très souvent, en effet, le couvent est remplacé par une forteresse ou un fortin<sup>14</sup>. Mais de nombreux sites antiques ne sont plus occupés au Moyen Âge<sup>15</sup>, même si les ruines demeurent et frappent plus d'un auteur arabe. Ainsi à propos de Kafar Nabū, dans le Ġabal Sim'ān, dont le nom même évoque l'existence d'un ancien culte à la divinité Nabo, Yāqūt écrit au début du XIII<sup>e</sup> siècle : « Nabū est le nom d'une idole qu'on trouvait en ce lieu qui est proche d'Alep. On y voit des restes anciens dont une grande coupole qui, dit-on, abritait l'idole »<sup>16</sup>. Par ailleurs, les quelques sites nouveaux qui apparaissent au Moyen Âge ont presque toujours une fonction militaire bien marquée.

Il est malheureusement difficile de dater avec précision la construction de ces édifices. Certains ont été construits par les Byzantins dans la seconde moitié du X<sup>e</sup> siècle, après la reconquête de la région d'Antioche, pour défendre les territoires conquis et surveiller les musulmans à l'est. Tel fut le cas de Qal'at Sim'ān, où la citadelle engloba le martyrium et l'ancien couvent ; tel fut aussi le cas du sanctuaire situé au sommet de Šayḥ Barakāt, de Srīr et de Qal'at Kalōta<sup>17</sup>. D'autres édifices plus ou moins fortifiés furent érigés par les Francs et les musulmans, au début du XII<sup>e</sup> siècle, lorsque le Massif Calcaire constitua la frontière entre la principauté d'Antioche et le territoire d'Alep. Le meilleur exemple est sans doute celui des forteresses situées dans le Ġabal Zāwiya, le long de la voie reliant la vallée de l'Oronte aux plaines de l'est : Innib, Arniba et surtout al-Bāra, protégée par deux forteresses avec sur les collines environnantes de nombreux ouvrages secondaires installés dans des constructions antiques.

#### *Une réoccupation des sites aux XII<sup>e</sup> et XIII<sup>e</sup> siècles*

Sur la troisième période qui s'ouvre avec les reconquêtes de Nūr al-Dīn, au milieu du XII<sup>e</sup> siècle, et qui s'achève en 1260 avec l'invasion mongole, les renseignements fournis par les vestiges d'édifices, l'épigraphie et les textes arabes se font plus nombreux. Déjà la liste des vestiges médiévaux publiée dans l'ouvrage de G. Tchalenko (II, 1953, pl. CLIV-CLV ; III, 1958, p. 113-129) faisait apparaître, à partir des vestiges épigraphiques et architecturaux, une assez forte densité d'occupation (fig. 2). La cinquantaine d'inscriptions retrouvée pour l'ensemble des massifs témoigne de cette occupation à partir du milieu du XII<sup>e</sup> siècle et surtout au XIII<sup>e</sup> siècle, c'est-à-dire à l'époque ayyoubide (1174-1260) (SOURDEL-THOMINE 1954). Les textes arabes confirment ce témoignage de l'épigraphie et attestent d'une certaine prospérité de la région qui perd son rôle de zone frontière et retrouve une fonction essentiellement agricole, ce qui explique les nombreuses forteresses en ruines, au XIII<sup>e</sup> siècle (cf. tableau en appendice). Ibn al-'Adīm, en particulier, a consacré plusieurs chapitres, dans le premier volume de son dictionnaire biographique, aux massifs

14. Nombre de ces fortifications sont en ruines au XIII<sup>e</sup> siècle, car la fonction militaire de cette zone disparaît vers la fin du XII<sup>e</sup> siècle (cf. *infra*).

15. Ils n'apparaissent pas dans le tableau où ne sont repris que les sites occupés au Moyen Âge.

16. Cf. YAQŪT 1955-1957, IV, p. 471. Cependant, GATIER 1997, p. 756-758, pense à l'existence, en ce lieu, d'un monument funéraire plutôt que d'un temple.

17. Le Šayḥ Barakāt est au nord de la plaine de Dāna. Srīr est au sud, au-dessus du village moderne de Tall 'Aqibrīn, et Qal'at Kalōta, dans le Ġabal Sim'ān, est à une douzaine de kilomètres à vol d'oiseau du Šayḥ Barakāt. Sur ces trois sites, cf. CALLOT 1997, p. 735-750.

montagneux du territoire alépin. Il nous permet ainsi de connaître avec une assez grande précision les productions agricoles de cette région (IBN AL-'ADĪM 1988, I, p. 411-424). On y retrouve l'olivier, présent dans tous les massifs, la vigne (dans le Ğabal Sim'ān et le Ğabal Zāwiya) et les céréales (Ğabal Zāwiya), trois productions bien attestées dès l'époque pré-islamique, comme en témoignent une inscription grecque d'al-Bāra (IGLS, IV, 1462) et une inscription syriaque de Ĥirbat Ḥasan (507-508), dans le Ğabal Barīša, qui mentionne comme paiement, à côté de *nomismata*, « 430 *modii* de haricots, de froment et de lentilles » (LITTMAN 1934, p. 15, inscr. 6). De nombreux arbres fruitiers figurent également parmi les productions : figuiers, noyers, poiriers, grenadiers, pistachiers, amandiers, pommiers, abricotiers. On récoltait du sumac (condiment et matière tinctoriale) dans le Ğabal du même nom, au nord du Ğabal Zāwiya. Dans ce massif, on cultivait aussi des concombres, des farinacées, du sésame et du coton (EDDÉ 1999, p. 491-495).

La plupart de ces cultures se faisaient sans irrigation, avec la seule eau de pluie. Quelques rares sources irriguaient des vergers et, dans ce cas, leurs arbres attiraient les promeneurs venus d'Alep et des localités environnantes, telle la source d'al-Karsānī, au-dessus du village d'al-Rīha. L'eau de pluie était parfois conservée dans des réservoirs ou des citernes : dans le village de Ştūmak (al-Mastume) dans la partie septentrionale du Ğabal Zāwiya, Ibn al-'Adīm mentionne une magnifique citerne voûtée d'époque byzantine sans préciser si elle était encore utilisée à son époque (IBN AL-'ADĪM 1988, p. 423 et 426).

Sur le régime de la propriété, nous sommes beaucoup moins bien renseignés. Au XIII<sup>e</sup> siècle, les terres pouvaient soit être détenues en pleine propriété (*milk*) soit appartenir au domaine du sultan. Le géographe Yāqūt (m. 1229) nous apprend que la propriété privée prédominait largement sur les terres d'État, et l'historien alépin Ibn Šaddād (m. 1285) nous dit que dans le district de 'Azāz, au nord d'Alep, les quelque 300 villages de ce district appartenaient à des habitants d'Alep, mettant ainsi l'accent sur la propriété non paysane. Nous n'avons pas les moyens d'étendre cette remarque aux villages du Massif Calcaire, mais nous savons que la famille de l'historien Ibn al-'Adīm, par exemple, possédait au moins cinq villages dans la région de Ma'arrat Mişrīn et dans le Ğabal Sim'ān, signe que là aussi la propriété non paysane devait être importante<sup>18</sup>.

Outre leur fonction agricole, certains de ces villages attiraient les visiteurs parce que la tombe d'un saint personnage se trouvait à proximité ou parce qu'un phénomène étrange et merveilleux s'y produisait. À Rūhīn, village du Ğabal Sim'ān, près d'une source, d'un verger et d'un bain, trois tombes de personnages pré-islamiques (dont un Syméon le stylite et l'apôtre saint Pierre) et un petit sanctuaire étaient visités par les pèlerins. L'ensemble fut réhabilité et agrandi au début du XIII<sup>e</sup> siècle avec l'édification d'une citerne, d'une canalisation, d'un deuxième bain et d'une hôtellerie. Rūhīn devint le centre d'une grande fête populaire, célébrée au printemps, à l'époque de Pâques, connue sous le nom de « jeudi du riz », à laquelle se rendait toute la population musulmane et chrétienne de la région (SOURDEL 1953).

D'autres lieux, pour des raisons plus profanes, étaient visités par des curieux. À Ūrim al-Ğawz, dans le Ğabal Zāwiya, à proximité d'un édifice chrétien comprenant trois inscriptions grecques, des phénomènes de feux follets se produisaient la nuit. Le géographe Yāqūt nous a laissé une traduction arabe de ces inscriptions que Pierre-Louis Gatier a rapprochées des textes gravés dans une tombe chrétienne<sup>19</sup>. Ibn al-'Adīm confirme le caractère funéraire de ces inscriptions, car il les situe dans un cimetière, à proximité du village de Naḥla, à quelques km au sud-est d'Ūrim (IBN AL-'ADĪM 1988, I, p. 427).

18. Sur le régime des terres au XIII<sup>e</sup> siècle, cf. EDDÉ 1999, p. 501-502.

19. GATIER 1997, p. 765-767 : dans la traduction du texte de Yāqūt (l. 2) mieux vaut lire « lieu

## NATURE ET ÉVOLUTION DU PEUPEMENT

Les maigres indications que nous possédons sur le peuplement de ces villages à l'époque médiévale ne nous permettent pas de connaître avec précision l'origine et la composition de la population. Tout juste pouvons-nous faire quelques remarques sur l'évolution des communautés non musulmanes dans la région et sur l'implantation de quelques tribus arabes, avant et après la conquête islamique.

*Peuplement non musulman*

L'épigraphie, comme les textes, attestent de la survivance de communautés monastiques en plusieurs endroits : dans la partie nord de la plaine de Dāna, à Burğ al-Siba' (ou Sab') où une inscription syriaque datée de 858-859 a été retrouvée (TCHALENKO 1953-1958, III, p. 90), et à Dayr Tall 'Āde où le couvent est attesté au moins jusqu'en 962 (TCHALENKO 1953-1958, I, p. 132-139, III, p. 93 ; RUGGIERI 1992) ; à Kafar Lāb, dans le Ġabal Sim'ān, une inscription syriaque, datée de 772-773, est peut-être celle d'un couvent antique qui aurait survécu à la conquête arabe (TCHALENKO 1953-1958, III, p. 97), tandis qu'à Qal'at Sim'ān des moines sont encore attestés dans leur monastère au milieu du XII<sup>e</sup> siècle, si du moins il faut entendre Dayr Sim'ān mentionné dans le texte comme se référant à Qal'at Sim'ān et non au village actuel de Dayr Sim'ān<sup>20</sup>. Il est sûr, cependant, que le nombre de couvents occupés a progressivement décliné. Au XII<sup>e</sup> siècle, le patriarche jacobite Michel le Syrien mentionne encore 160 monastères jacobites, mais sur les 75 qu'il est possible de localiser, 8 seulement se trouvaient en Syrie alors qu'un nombre relativement important de monastères se maintenaient dans les régions de l'Euphratésie et de Haute-Mésopotamie (Mésopotamie et Osrohène) (TROUPEAU 1993, p. 415). Au XIII<sup>e</sup> siècle, les noms composés avec Dayr (couvent) ne désignent plus, bien souvent, que des lieux-dits ou des villages. Ainsi les deux couvents Dayr 'Amān et Dayr Turmānīn ou Rummānīn, situés respectivement au sud et au nord du village de Turmānīn, à quelques km à l'est de Dāna, sont décrits par Ibn al-'Adīm et par Yāqūt comme deux beaux et grands couvents en ruines<sup>21</sup>.

Le nombre des évêchés qui se maintinrent dans les anciennes limites du patriarcat d'Antioche, après la conquête arabe, fournit lui aussi quelques indications. Vers 570 la *Notitia Antiochena* dénombreait 158 sièges épiscopaux relevant de l'Église chalcédonienne d'Antioche, répartis en 13 provinces, avec 7 évêchés pour la province de Syrie Première, c'est-à-dire la Syrie du Nord qui avait Antioche pour métropole. Gérard Troupeau estime qu'entre la conquête arabe et le milieu du XI<sup>e</sup> siècle, le nombre des évêchés melkites, dans tous les territoires arabes, devait se situer aux alentours d'une soixantaine, mais on ne connaît pas le nombre d'évêchés à cette époque pour la seule Syrie du Nord (TROUPEAU 1993, p. 385). Al-Bāra, dans le Ġabal Zāwiya, fut le siège d'un évêché grec lors de la reconquête byzantine, dans la seconde moitié du X<sup>e</sup> siècle, et d'un évêché latin lors de l'occupation franque, de la fin du XI<sup>e</sup> au milieu du XII<sup>e</sup> siècle, signe sans doute d'une im-

de culte » au lieu de « temple », traduction plus adéquate, dans ce contexte, de *ma'bad*. Les inscriptions sont incontestablement chrétiennes et un érudit comme Yāqūt ne les aurait jamais attribuées à un temple païen.

20. L'historien IBN AL-FURĀT (m. 1405) rapporte, d'après une source plus ancienne, qu'en 544/1149-50, Nūr al-Dīn s'empara de Dayr Sim'ān par capitulation et qu'il laissa le couvent aux moines (IBN AL-FURĀT, ms. Vienne, AF 117, III, fol. 15 r<sup>o</sup>).

21. Cf. YAQŪT 1955-1957, II, p. 511, 524 ; IBN AL-'ADĪM 1988, VI, p. 2931, X, p. 4578 (quelques vers d'un poète syrien, m. en 1193, qui déplore la ruine du couvent Dayr 'Amān).

portante population chrétienne. Les huit épitaphes hébraïques qui ont été retrouvées sur ce site témoignent aussi de l'existence d'une communauté juive au <sup>x</sup><sup>e</sup> siècle (TCHALENKO 1953-1958, III, p. 114-115).

Du côté jacobite, les listes tirées de Michel le Syrien permettent de penser qu'il subsistait, à la fin du <sup>viii</sup><sup>e</sup> siècle, une cinquantaine d'évêchés jacobites, dont 4 seulement pour l'ancienne province de Syrie Première. Gérard Troupeau note, par ailleurs, qu'entre la fin du <sup>viii</sup><sup>e</sup> siècle et le <sup>xii</sup><sup>e</sup> siècle, 40 évêchés disparurent tandis que 34 nouveaux apparurent, les premiers étant situés dans les régions méridionales et occidentales du patriarcat d'Antioche (c'est-à-dire la région qui nous intéresse) tandis que les seconds se trouvaient dans les régions septentrionales et orientales, confirmant ainsi le caractère de plus en plus mésopotamien de l'Église jacobite durant cette période (TROUPEAU 1993, p. 414). Cet important déclin de la hiérarchie jacobite en Syrie du Nord reflète sans doute aussi une diminution significative de la population chrétienne dans cette région.

La situation ne fit que s'aggraver au <sup>xiii</sup><sup>e</sup> siècle, puisqu'il ne subsistait plus dans ce qui formait la province de Syrie Première que les évêchés d'Alep et d'al-Gūma (district à l'ouest du 'Afrīn, au nord-ouest d'Alep). Ainsi le maphrien et historien Bar Hebraeus (m. 1286) se lamente, en 1283, parce qu'il constate que les régions occidentales du patriarcat jacobite ne sont plus que ruines et dévastations. Il en conclut ne pas souhaiter être patriarche et préférer la tranquillité de sa vie en Orient<sup>22</sup>. Au début du <sup>xii</sup><sup>e</sup> siècle, des Arméniens étaient aussi installés dans les territoires situés entre Alep et Antioche, en particulier dans les environs d'Artāh, 'Imm et Ḥārim au pied du versant occidental du Ġabal Sim'ān (EDDÉ 1999, p. 458)<sup>23</sup>.

Il apparaît enfin que certaines communautés religieuses minoritaires, jugées indésirables par les autorités, trouvèrent refuge dans le Massif Calcaire, en particulier le Ġabal Zāwiya. C'est ainsi qu'au <sup>xi</sup><sup>e</sup> siècle, peu après la naissance de leur religion, des druzes se réfugièrent dans la partie nord du Ġabal Zāwiya (Ġabal Summāq), tandis qu'on trouvait dans cette même région des ismaïliens, c'est-à-dire des « Assassins », au <sup>xiii</sup><sup>e</sup> siècle. Non loin de là, dans la plaine à l'est du Ġabal, les ismaïliens occupaient aussi la petite ville de Sarmīn (BIANQUIS 1986-1989, I, p. 366-369 ; EDDÉ 1999, p. 447).

#### *Des tribus arabes clairsemées*

Sur l'implantation des tribus arabes dans la région qui nous intéresse, nous ne sommes guère mieux renseignés. Les indications que nous avons sur l'installation des Arabes en Syrie du Nord, dès avant la conquête arabe, concernent surtout des villes, comme Alep ou Qinnasrīn, dans les faubourgs desquelles s'installèrent des Arabes essentiellement originaires des tribus Tanūh et Ṭayy (AL-BALĀDURĪ 1966, p. 223-224 ; WHITCOMB 1999, p. 204). D'autres tribus arrivèrent ensuite dans le sillage de l'expansion musulmane, par étapes successives, mais elles s'installèrent surtout dans les plaines et les steppes à l'est et au nord-est d'Alep (jusqu'à l'Euphrate) ainsi qu'au sud d'Alep<sup>24</sup>.

22. Cf. l'introduction de E. A. W. BUDGE dans BAR HEBRAEUS 1932, p. XXVI-XXVII.

23. Cf. IBN AL-'ADĪM 1951-1958, II, p. 132 ; IBN ŠADDĀD 1984, p. 247 ; G. DEDÉYAN, *Les Arméniens entre Grecs, Musulmans et Croisés*, 2, Lisbonne, 2003, p. 853-857. L'hypothèse, avancée par G. Dédéyan, selon laquelle Armanāz tirerait son nom des Arméniens ne peut être retenue, D. Feissel ayant justement souligné que ce toponyme est attesté dans des inscriptions proto-byzantines sous la forme Larmanaza (FEISSEL 1982, p. 235).

24. Sur les tribus en Syrie du Nord jusqu'au <sup>x</sup><sup>e</sup> siècle, cf. CANARD 1951, p. 235-240 et pour le <sup>xiii</sup><sup>e</sup> siècle, cf. EDDÉ 1999, p. 505-508. L'historien alépin Ibn al-'Adīm (m. 1262) consacre un chapitre de l'introduction de son dictionnaire biographique aux tribus arabes en Syrie du Nord (IBN AL-'ADĪM 1988, I, p. 527-568).

Quelques tribus s'installèrent dans les plaines entre Ma'arrat Miṣrīn et Homs. Les Tanūḥ sédentaires se maintinrent surtout dans la région de Ma'arrat al-Nu'mān tandis que de part et d'autre de l'Oronte, on trouvait au x<sup>e</sup> siècle d'autres tribus sédentaires d'origine yéménite à leurs côtés comme les Bahrā'. Parmi les tribus du sud de la péninsule arabique il faut noter aussi l'installation des Kalbites entre Alep et l'ouest du Ġabal Zāwiya, c'est-à-dire le Ġabal Banī 'Ulaym qui portait le nom de l'un des leurs. Parmi les tribus arabes originaires du nord de la péninsule, les Kilabites occupaient une place importante en Syrie du Nord, dès l'époque omeyyade, et donnèrent naissance, au xi<sup>e</sup> siècle, à la dynastie des Mirdassides qui gouverna Alep, à plusieurs reprises, entre 1024 et 1080 (BIANQUIS 1990). Au xiii<sup>e</sup> siècle des Kilabites vivaient encore sur le territoire de Shayzar, tandis que leurs lointains cousins, les Banū Numayr, s'étaient sédentarisés dans la région de Kafar Ṭāb, Ma'arrat al-Nu'mān et Sarmīn. Enfin, des Banū Asad, tribu sœur des Kināna dont fut issue la tribu du Prophète (Qurayš), étaient installés en Syrie du Nord dès le début du ix<sup>e</sup> siècle. Progressivement sédentarisés, certains habitaient, au xiii<sup>e</sup> siècle, dans la région de Ma'arrat Miṣrīn et dans le Ġabal Summāq, au nord du Ġabal Zāwiya (IBN AL-'ADIM 1988, I, p. 549, 559, 537).

De ces quelques informations fragmentaires, il ressort que les Arabes semblent s'être installés davantage dans la plaine, entre Hama et Alep, que dans le Massif Calcaire sans doute moins propice à leur mode de vie d'origine, le nomadisme. Dans le Massif Calcaire, on les trouvait surtout dans les parties ouest et nord du Ġabal Zāwiya.

#### CONCLUSION

À la question « y a-t-il eu rupture ou continuité entre le vi<sup>e</sup> et le xiii<sup>e</sup> siècle dans le Massif Calcaire ? » il est possible de répondre par l'heureuse formule d'Alan Walmsley et de Ahmad Shboull : « a continuity of change »<sup>25</sup>. La période islamique ne fait que prolonger des changements qui ont commencé avant le vi<sup>e</sup> siècle dans le Massif Calcaire. Dire que l'installation d'un pouvoir musulman n'a rien changé à cette évolution serait excessif : les populations s'islamisent progressivement, les monastères et les évêchés diminuent peu à peu, les conflits avec les Byzantins ruinent pour quelque temps les activités agricoles. Mais le problème est de situer les moments de rupture. De nombreuses recherches sur le sujet ont été menées, ces dernières années, et l'étude des villages de Syrie du Nord n'est pas le seul paramètre à prendre en compte. Disons simplement qu'elle confirme l'idée que la rupture véritable fut moins celle de la conquête arabe que celle du vi<sup>e</sup> siècle avec le début du déclin agricole, puis celle de la fin du x<sup>e</sup> avec le développement des conflits militaires qui achevèrent de ruiner la région. Deux siècles plus tard, la région fut repeuplée, sans jamais retrouver le niveau qui avait été le sien avant le vi<sup>e</sup> siècle. Les paysans se réinstallèrent probablement dans les édifices antiques, comme il le faisaient encore jusqu'à une période récente, en apportant quelques aménagements sommaires, de nombreux fortins et petites citadelles furent construits, des petites mosquées et des sanctuaires furent élevés, mais aucun de ces édifices n'était comparable à ceux qui avaient jadis été construits. C'est bien ce qui transparaît du récit des auteurs arabes, d'Ibn al-'Adīm en particulier, qui note avec admiration qu'il subsiste au xiii<sup>e</sup> siècle, dans tout le Massif calcaire, de nombreux et magnifiques édifices byzantins « qui remplissent les yeux d'admiration et réjouissent les esprits »<sup>26</sup>.

25. SHBOULL et WALMSLEY 1998, p. 275.

26. IBN AL-'ADIM 1988, I, p. 422.

**Les villages du Massif Calcaire : occupation et fonction des sites de la fin de l'antiquité au milieu du XIII<sup>e</sup> siècle**

Localités	Localisation	Occup. proto-byzantine	Occup. médiévale	Sources
'Allarūz (al-Qaṣr)	Sur le versant occidental du Ğ. Zāwiya, à 7 km à l'ouest d'al-Bāra		Forteresse ; tombeaux sans doute ayyoubides	TCHALENKO, III, 113
Arhāb (Erhāb)	Dans la partie est du Ğ. Ḥalaqa, à 7 km à l'est de Dānā	Couvent de stylite ('RHB)	Stèles funéraires ayyoubides, et à 1 km au nord, caravansérail (XIV <sup>e</sup> s.)	TCHALENKO, III, 80, 94, 119-120
Armanāz (Armenāz)	Sur le versant occidental du Ğ. al-A'lā	Couvent	Forteresse en ruines au XIII <sup>e</sup> s., bourgade, artisanat (chaudrons et céramique)	TCHALENKO, I, 94, III, 86 ; Yāqūt, I, 158 ; IBN ŠADDĀD 1984, 85, 247
Arnība (Arnabe)	Sur le versant occidental du Ğ. Zāwiya, à 7 km à l'ouest d'al-Bāra		Forteresse en ruines au XIII <sup>e</sup> s. ; reste le village	TCHALENKO, III, 113 ; IBN ŠADDĀD 1984, 84
Aršīn ou Aršīn al-Quṣūr	Sur le versant oriental du Ğ. Barīša	Grand village, église	Village fortifié dépendant d'Alep. Épitaphe de 654/1256	TCHALENKO, I, 286-7, III, 113-114 ; YĀQUT, IV, 101
Artāh	Non localisée, à env. 10 km de 'Imm, au pied du versant occid. du Ğ. Sim'ān	Couvent	Forteresse puissante, bourgade, jardins, sources, moulins, oliviers ; église	TCHALENKO, III, 114 ; IBN ŠADDĀD 1984, 270-73 et 1953, 153 ; YĀQUT, I, 140
Arzagān	Hameau du Ğ. Waṣṭānī sur la rive est de l'Oronte		Forteresse en ruines au XIII <sup>e</sup> s., village	TCHALENKO, III, 114 ; IBN ŠADDĀD 1984, 85
al-Aṭārib (Terib)	Dans la plaine de Qinnasrīn au pied du versant sud du Ğ. Ḥalaqa	Couvent (LYTRYB) Litarba à l'époque romaine	Forteresse en ruines au XIII <sup>e</sup> s. ; reste le village ; oliviers, huile	TCHALENKO, III, 105, 126 ; IBN ŠADDĀD 1953, 153 ; YĀQUT, I, 89
'Ayn Delfe ('Ain Delfī)	A 9 km à l'est de Yeni Šehir ('Imm) sur la route d'Alep à Antioche	Église, caravansérail (?)	caravansérail (?), fortifications, fontaine (1472-1473)	TCHALENKO, I, 23, 248, 391, III, 113
'Ayn Ğāra (ou 'Anġāra)	Dans la partie sud-est du Ğ. Sim'ān		Village donné en concession ( <i>iqṭā'</i> ) à des familles alépine	TCHALENKO, carte 1, G-V-13 ; IBN AL-'ADIM 1988, I, 479 ; YĀQUT, IV, 177 ; IBN ŠADDĀD 1953, 124
Bābisqā (Bābizqā)	Sur le versant septent. du Ğ. Barīša, à 4,5 km au nord-ouest de Sarmadā	Auberge, bains, édifice public, églises	Fortifications ; localité mentionnée en 1119 dans le combat contre les Francs	TCHALENKO, I, 21, 23, 28, 31, 248, III, 114
Bāb'iyān (Ba'yān)	Sur la crête du Ğ. Barīša, à 6 km à l'ouest de Sarmadā		Ruines ; village mentionné dans un acte de waqf de 1466 au profit d'une zāwiya alépine	TCHALENKO, I, 278, III, 114
Bābuṭṭā (Babṭa)	Au sommet du Ğ. Barīša, à 6 km au nord-ouest de Sarmadā	Maisons, tombeaux	Ruines ; village mentionné dans un acte de waqf de 1466 au profit d'une zāwiya alépine.	TCHALENKO, I, 312
Bāmuqā (Bāmuqqa)	Sur le versant nord du Ğ. Barīša, à 8 km au nord-ouest de Sarmadā	Villa, église, tombeau et village	Réoccupation du village à la fin du XII <sup>e</sup> s. ; stèle funéraire (592/1196), petite mosquée ayyoubide	TCHALENKO, I, 300-318, III, 114



al-Bāra	Au cœur du Ġ. Zāwiya	Plusieurs couvents, villas, églises, marché, huileries, agglomérat de plusieurs villages	Bourgade protégée par plusieurs forteresses, mosquée, épitaphes, graffiti (de 1059 à 1130)	TCHALENKO, I, 388-389, III, 87-88, 114-116 et index ; YAQŪT, I, 320
Bāsarfūt (Bserfūd)	Dans le Ġ. Zāwiya	Ruines préislamiques	Citadelle en ruines au XIII <sup>e</sup> s., reste le village ; stèle fun. (580/1184-5)	TCHALENKO, III, 117 ; YAQŪT, I, 420
Bāšūfan	Dans le Ġ. Sim' ān, à 3 km au nord-est de Qal'at Sim' ān	Couvent (Beth Phesion des listes monophysites), églises	Église transformée en fortin ; une inscription arabe	TCHALENKO, I, 231-233, 247, III, 88, 116
Bāsūṭa	sur le 'Afrīn, au pied du Ġ. Sim' ān		Forteresse en ruines au XIII <sup>e</sup> s., reste le village	TCHALENKO, III, 116 ; IBN ŠADDĀD 1984, 84-85
Brād	Dans la partie N. du Ġ. Sim' ān, à 8 km au nord-est de Qal'at Sim' ān	Deux couvents, village, villa, ateliers, huileries, trois églises, tombeaux	Fortin dans l'église nord	TCHALENKO, I, 387, III, 89, 116 et index
al-Burdaqli	Dans la plaine de Dānā à 3 km à l'ouest de Dānā	Demeures, églises, tombeaux	Une mosquée, plusieurs oratoires, stèles de 1164 à 1240-1 ; habitations médiévales	TCHALENKO, III, 117
Burġ Hāb	Sur le versant occid. du Ġ. Zāwiya, à 10 km au sud-ouest d'Idlib		Forteresse, domaines cultivés ; seul le village subsiste au XIII <sup>e</sup> s.	TCHALENKO, III, 117 ; IBN AL-'ADĪM 1951-68, II, 196, 291 ; IBN ŠADDĀD 1984, 84
Burġ Ḥaydar (Burġ Ḥaidar)	Au centre du Ġ. Sim' ān, à 4 km au sud de Brād	Couvent, églises, tour de surveillance, édifice public	Graffiti arabes	TCHALENKO, III, 89, 117, et index
Burġke	Dans le Ġ. Sim' ān, à 4 km à l'est de Q. Sim' ān	Couvent (?)	Tour du couvent fortifiée ; graffiti arabes	TCHALENKO, III, 89, 117
Burġ al-Siba' (al-Sab')	Dans la partie Nord de la plaine de Dānā.	Couvent	Inscription syriaque (858) ; couvent encore occupé au X <sup>e</sup> s.	TCHALENKO, III, 90, 117 ; SOURDEL 1953, 97
Dādīḥ (Dādīḥ)	Sur versant Est du Ġ. Zāwiya à 10 km à l'est d'al-Rīḥa	Couvent ('D'YK)	Village	TCHALENKO, III, 90, 118 ; YAQŪT, III, 3
Dallōza ou Deir Lōze (Dalawza)	Dans le Ġ. Zāwiya, à 4 km au nord-est d'al-Bāra	Villas, église	Graffiti arabes (1165-1235) ; stèle (1213-4)	TCHALENKO, III, 90, 118
Dānā (du Nord)	Au centre de la plaine de Dānā	Église, bain, hypogée, tombeaux, monument tétrastyle	Village, tombeau, fortifications et tour à l'emplacement de l'église ; stèles (de 1172 à 1233).	TCHALENKO, I, 117-119, III, 90, 118, et index ; YAQŪT, II, 434 ; LE STRANGE, 436
Dāniṭ (Dāniṭ)	Au pied du versant Nord du Ġ. Zāwiya, à 6 km au sud-est d'Idlib		Forteresse, bourgade avec revenus.	TCHALENKO, III, 118 ; YAQŪT, II, 434 ; IBN ŠADDĀD 1984, 55
Darkūš (Derkūš)	Bourgade sur l'Oronte	Couvent (?)	Forteresse édifiée par les Francs	TCHALENKO, III, 94, 119 ; IBN ŠADDĀD 1984, 45 ; PEÑA <i>et al.</i> 1999, 181
Darqītā (Dār Qitā)	Sur le versant Nord du Ġ. Bariša, à 6 km au nord-ouest de Sarmadā	Églises	Tour et fortifications ; stèles (1184-1205), graffiti	TCHALENKO, III, 91, 118

Localités	Localisation	Occup. proto-byzantine	Occup. médiévale	Sources
Dārt'azze	Dans le Ğ. Sim' ān, sur le versant Est du Šayḥ Barakāt	Couvent, hypogées, église au nord de la localité	Enceinte, tours, stèles (1244 à 1270) ; mosquée dans la cour de l'église antique	TCHALENKO, III, 91, 118, 123
Dayr 'Amān (Dur' amān)	A 5 km à l'est de Dānā	Couvent (DR'MN), église, villas	Couvent en ruines aux XII <sup>e</sup> -XIII <sup>e</sup> s.	TCHALENKO, III, 91, et index ; IBN AL-'ADIM 1988, VI, 2931, X, 4578
Dayr Sīta (Deir Sēta, Dersitā)	Sur le versant oriental du Ğ. Barisa, à 5 km au nord-ouest de M' āret Ḥwān	Couvent (DRWSYT'), village, villas, églises	Forteresse, mosquée, cimetière (stèles de 1205 à 1246)	TCHALENKO, III, 93, 119 et index
Dayr Sim' ān	Dans le Ğ. Sim' ān	Trois couvents, village, église, hôtelleries	Confondu avec Q. Sim' ān	TCHALENKO, I, 205 sq, III, 92, 119 et index
Dayr Turmānīn ou Rummānīn ou al-Sābān	Dans la partie nord de la plaine de Dānā, à 6 km au nord-est de Dānā	Couvent (TRMN' et peut-être MNYN)	Deux couvents en ruines au XIII <sup>e</sup> s., au nord et au sud du village de Turmānīn	TCHALENKO, III, 93 et index ; IBN AL-'ADIM 1988, VI, 2931 et X, 4745 ; YAQUT, II, 511 et 513
Deḥes	Dans le Ğ. Bariša, entre Sarmadā et Hārim	Village, églises	Céramique et monnaies islamiques (VII <sup>e</sup> -XIII <sup>e</sup> s.)	BAVANT-ORSSAUD 2001 ; SODINI <i>et al.</i> 1980
Frikyā	Dans le Ğ. Zāwiya, 7 km au nord-est d'al-Bāra	Hameau, tombeau	Stèles funéraires ayyoubides	TCHALENKO, III, 94, 119
al-Fū'a	Dans la plaine, à 9 km au nord-est d'Idlib	Couvent (?)	Village, oliviers, figuiers et autres arbres	TCHALENKO, 95 ; YAQUT, IV, 280 ; LE STRANGE, 441
Ġindāris	Sur rive droite du Nahr 'Afrīn à 8 km à l'est d'al-Ḥammām	Couvent (Ġindaros) du début du IX <sup>e</sup> s.	Village très peuplé, sources thermales	TCHALENKO, III, 95 ; IBN AL-'ADIM 1988, I, 478 ; IBN ŠADDAD 1953, 128-9 ; LE STRANGE, 462
al-Ġuwāniye	Dans la vallée qui sépare le Ğ. al-A' lā du Ğ. Bariša	Couvent (?), tombeau	Stèle funéraire de 772/1370-1371	TCHALENKO, I, 298, III, 95, 120
Ḥarāb Šams	Au centre du Ğ. Sim' ān, à 6 km au sud-est de Brād	Église, couvent (?)	Poste de garde installé dans l'église	TCHALENKO, III, 95 ; 120
Hārim	Sur la route d'Antioche à Alep	Couvent	Ville fortifiée et peuplée, vergers	TCHALENKO, III, 96, 120 ; YAQUT, II, 205 ; IBN AL-'ADIM 1988, I, 90 ; IBN ŠADDAD 1984, 33-45
Harrān	Au pied du versant nord du Ğ. Bariša, à 4 km à l'est de ' Imm	Couvent (HRN)	Village	TCHALENKO, 96 ; YAQUT, II, 236
al-Ḥās (Herbet Ḥās ou Šinšarāḥ)	Dans le Ğ. Zāwiya, à 6 km au sud-est d'al-Bāra	Couvent, église	Dédicaces de mosquées (944 et 1064) ; stèles funéraires (1135-45, 1239-40 et 1245-6)	TCHALENKO, III, 104, 120 ; YAQUT, II, 205

Hunāk (Herbet Ḥnāk)	Sur le versant oriental du Ğ. Zāwiya, à 5 km au S.O. de Ma' arrat al-Nu' mām	Couvent	Forteresse détruite en 209/824-825 ; restes de fortifications	TCHALENKO, III, 96 ; YAQŪT, II, 309
Imm (Yeni Šehir)	Au pied du versant septentrional du Ğ. Bariša	Couvent (Beth Mār Faladōs), église, villas	Forteresse ruinée au XIII <sup>e</sup> s. ; village prospère, nombreux chrétiens ; vergers et pêche	TCHALENKO, 96, 121 ; IBN ŠADDĀD 1984, 85 ; YAQŪT, IV, 157 ; LE STRANGE, 457
Innib (Inab)	Sur le versant occidental du Ğ. Zāwiya, au nord-ouest d'al-Bāra		Forteresse en ruines au XIII <sup>e</sup> s.	TCHALENKO, III, 121 ; IBN ŠADDĀD 1984, 85 ; YAQŪT, I, 258
Kafar 'Arūq	Sur le versant oriental du Ğ. Bariša, à 3 km au sud de Me' ezz	Villas, inscription funéraire, église	Mosquée, habitations, cimetière	TCHALENKO, III, 121, index ; PENA <i>et al.</i> 1987, fig. 106
Kafar Daryān	Sur le versant est du Ğ. Bariša, à 5 km à l'ouest de Sarmadā	Couvent (KPR DRYN), villas, église	Village constitué en waqf en 1466 au profit d'une zāwiya alépine	TCHALENKO, I, 278-279, III, 97 ; PENA <i>et al.</i> 1987, 123
Kafar Lāb	Dans le Ğ. Sim' ān, à 4 km à l'est de Qal' at Sim' ān	Couvent (?), villas, église, bornes cadastrales	Inscription syriaque (772-3)	TCHALENKO, III, 97, 121 et index
Kafar Lātā (ou Ktallāta)	Dans le Ğ. Zāwiya, au nord-ouest de Ma' arrat al-Nu' mām	Fontaine	Forteresse détruite en 1151-2 ; village et jardins ; habitants ismaïliens ; oratoires ayyoubides, mosquée mamelouke ; stèles funéraires du XIII <sup>e</sup> s.	TCHALENKO, III, 121 et index ; YAQŪT, IV, 470 ; IBN AL-'ADIM 1988, I, 139, 329, 426-7
Kafar Māres (ou Mahrez)	Sur le versant oriental du Ğ. al-A' lā, à 6 km au sud de Qalblōze	Couvent (KPR MRY ?), tombeau	Constructions médiévales	TCHALENKO, III, 97, 121
Kafar Nabū (Kafr Nābo)	Dans le Ğ. Sim' ān, au sud de Brād	Habitations, église, huileries, bornes cadastrales	Lieu occupé par des ruines antiques	TCHALENKO, III, 168 (index) ; GATIER 1997, 756-758 ; YAQŪT, IV, 471
Kafar Nağd	Dans le Ğ. Zāwiya, à 12 km au sud-ouest d'Idlib	Couvent (KPR NWGH' ?)	Village avec une source aux vertus curatives	TCHALENKO, III, 97 ; YAQŪT, IV, 471 ; IBN AL-'ADIM 1988, I, 477 ; HARAWI, 12
Kafar Rūma	Sur le versant oriental du Ğ. Zāwiya, à 4 km au S.O. de Ma' arrat al-Nu' mām	Église, colonne-frontière (?)	Village, mosquée et forteresse détruite en 1002-3	TCHALENKO, III, 122 et index (Kfer Rūma) ; YAQŪT, IV, 469
Kafar Tāb	Sur le versant méridional du Ğ. Zāwiya, à 4 km au N.O. de l'actuel Ḥān Šayḥūn		Forteresse et bourgade. Citernes pour eau de pluie, tanneries, poterie	TCHALENKO, III, 122 ; IBN AL-'ADIM 1988, I, 141-142 ; YAQŪT, IV, 470
Kafar Yaḥmūl et Yaḥmūl	Dans la plaine, à 3 km environ à l'est de Ma' arrat Mišrīn	Stylite de ḤML'	Villages avec des grottes, refuges des habitants lors des attaques franques	TCHALENKO, III, 98 ; IBN AL-'ADIM 1988, I, 135, 473
Kalōta (Kalūte) et Qal' at Kalōta (à 500 m au-dessus du village)	Dans le Ğ. Sim' ān, à 5 km. au sud-est de Brād	- Kalōta : deux églises - Q. Kalōta : deux temples romains transformés en basilique (v <sup>e</sup> -vi <sup>e</sup> s.)	- Kalōta : poste de garde dans l'église Est - Q. Kalōta : forteresse à double enceinte	TCHALENKO, I, 247, III, 121, 124 ; CALLOT 1997, 742-744 ; GATIER 1997, 756
Kaukanāyā	Sur la crête du Ğ. Bariša à 2 km au sud de Qerqanyā	Église, pressoir et tour de garde, villa, tombeau	Inscription (377/999 ou 379/1001) ; épitaphe (695/1295-96)	TCHALENKO, III, 121 et index ; PEÑA <i>et al.</i> 1980, 322

Localités	Localisation	Occup. proto-byzantine	Occup. médiévale	Sources
Kimār	Sur le versant ouest du Ğ. Sim' ān à 4 km au nord de Brād	Couvent d'un stylite, église, tombeau sous baldaquin	Une stèle funéraire	TCHALENKO, III, 99, 122 et index
Kurīn	Dans la partie nord du Ğ. Zāwiya, à 9 km au sud-ouest d'Idlib		Stèles funéraires (de 1141 à 1183)	TCHALENKO, III, 122
Mā' izz (Me' ez)	Sur le versant oriental du Ğ. Bariša, à 6 km au sud-ouest de Sarmadā	Édifices publics, églises, réservoir, aqueduc et nombreuses ruines ; couvent à 1 km à l'est de l'agglomération antique	Habitations en partie fortifiées, oratoires et stèles funéraires (1210 à 1274 et xv <sup>e</sup> s.) ; mentionné dans un acte de waqf de 1466	TCHALENKO, I, 280-284, III, 100, 123 et index
Ma' arrat al-Nu' mār	Sur le versant oriental du Ğ. Zāwiya, sur la route actuelle de Hama à Alep	Plusieurs églises, couvent, tombeaux	Ville, citadelle, murailles, grande mosquée, madrasa (xii <sup>e</sup> s.), lieux de pèlerinage, colombier ; domaines fertiles, oliviers, figuiers	TCHALENKO, I, 97-98, III, 100, 122-123 ; YAQUT, V, 156 ; <i>Encycl. de l'Islam</i> , V, 927-932 (N. Elisséeff)
Meš' ale	Au nord du Ğ. Sim' ān, à 2 km au sud-est de Qaṭma		Sanctuaire du xiii <sup>e</sup> s.	TCHALENKO, III, 123
al-Muazzara	Sur le versant occidental du Ğ. Zāwiya, à 3 km au sud d'Allarūz		Forteresse	TCHALENKO, III, 123
Muḡleyya	Dans le Ğ. Zāwiya, à 2 km au sud d'al-Bāra	Couvent (?), églises, bain, hypogée, cimetière, pressoir	Village fortifié	TCHALENKO, I, 27, III, 100, 124 et index
Nahla	Dans le Ğ. Zāwiya, à 3 km au sud-ouest d'al-Riḥa	Couvent	Village avec des tombeaux et feux follets ; inscription grecque	TCHALENKO, III, 101 ; IBN AL-'ADIM 1988, I, 427 ; IBN ŠADDAD 1953, 128
Nayrab Sarmin	Sur le versant nord du Ğ. Zāwiya, à quelques km au sud de Sarmin	Un couvent (N'RB)	Lieu de campement des troupes mameloukes en 673/1275	TCHALENKO, III, 101 ; IBN ŠADDAD 1984, 218
Qal'at Sim' ān	Dans le Ğ. Sim' ān près de Dayr Sim' ān	Sanctuaire de Saint-Syméon : église cruciforme, couvent, baptistère, hôtelleries	Couvent et forteresse byz. au X <sup>e</sup> s. Inscription grecque-syriaque (979) ; attaque de l'émir d'Alep en 983, de l'armée égyptienne en 1017 ; moines encore présents en 1149 à « Dayr Sim' ān »	TCHALENKO, I, 223-246, III, 101, 124 et index ; YAQUT, II, 157 ; IBN AL-'ADIM 1951-68, I, 175 ; IBN AL-FURAT, III, 15 r <sup>o</sup> ; IBN AL-'ADIM 1988, I, 417
Qasr al-Banāt	Au pied du versant méridional du Ğ. Ḥalaqa, à 10 km à l'est de ' Imm, sur la route antique d'Antioche à Alep	Couvent, tour de surveillance, domaine agricole	Fortifications, graffiti arabes	TCHALENKO, I, 159-161, III, 102, 124
Qurzāhil (Qurziḥel)	Sur le versant occidental du Ğ. Sim' ān, à 4 km au nord de Bāsūta	Couvent	Couvent de stylite, important centre du monophysisme (Corsehel des Franes)	TCHALENKO, III, 103, 125
al-Riḥa (Eriḥa)	Dans le Ğ. Zāwiya (Ğ. Banī 'Ulaym) entre al-Bāra et Idlib		Bourgade entourée de vergers, lieu de promenade, sources, bains	YAQUT, III, 111 ; IBN AL-'ADIM 1988, I, 427

Rūhīn	Dans le Ġ. Sim' ān à 3 km au nord-ouest de Dānā		Village, sanctuaire de pèlerinage ayyoubide	TCHALENKO, III, 123 ; IBN ŠADDĀD 1953, 53-55 ; IBN AL-'ADIM 1988, I, 466 ; YĀQŪT, III, 76 ; SOURDEL 1953
Salqīn	Au nord du Ġ. Dueili, au sud-ouest de Ḥārīm		Forteresse en ruines au XIII <sup>e</sup> s. ; la même qu'al-Ḥiṣn à 7 km au sud ?	TCHALENKO, III, 120 (al-Ḥoṣn) ; IBN ŠADDĀD 1984, 85
Sarfūd	Sur le versant oriental du Ġ. Barīsa, à 2,5 km de Sarmadā	Villas, tours de surveillance, église	Fortifications sans doute en ruines au XIII <sup>e</sup> s. ; stèle de 706/1306	TCHALENKO, III, 125, index ; IBN ŠADDĀD 1984, 84-85 n. 13 ; PENA <i>et al.</i> 1987, 195
Sarmadā	Dans la plaine à 6 km au sud-ouest de Dānā	Église, nécropole (1 km à l'est) et couvent (SRMD') à 1 km au sud-est	Enceinte autour de Sarmadā, couvent transformé en forteresse par les Francs	TCHALENKO, I, 121-124, III, 104, 125 et index
Šayḥ Barakāt (Bayt Lāhā au Moyen Âge)	Dans le Ġ. Sim' ān, au sommet d'une montagne, au nord de la plaine de Dānā	Sanctuaire romain remplacé par une chapelle au v <sup>e</sup> ou vi <sup>e</sup> siècle	Fortifications et tour de guet	TCHALENKO, III, 125 ; YĀQŪT, I, 521 ; IBN AL-'ADIM 1988, I, 420 ; CALLOT 1997, 736-738
Serġilla	Dans le G. Zāwiya, à 5 km au sud-est d'al-Bāra	Église, villas, nécropole, bains	Mosquée médiévale dans l'annexe sud de l'église	TCHALENKO, III, 125 et index ; CHARPENTIER 1994, 2001
Šumak (el-Mašūme)	Village et tell du Ġ. Summāq (nord du Ġ. Zāwiya), à 6 km au sud d'Idlib	Couvent ('YSTMK)	Village qui possédait une citerne voûtée d'époque byzantine	TCHALENKO, III, 100 ; IBN AL-'ADIM 1988, I, 423
Tall 'Āde	Dans la partie septentrionale de la plaine de Dānā	Église ; un couvent (Dayr T. 'Āde) à 1,5 km au nord-est du village	Couvent jacobite au moins jusqu'en 962 ; enceinte, stèles (1165-1167)	TCHALENKO, III, 93, 119, 126 et index ; RUGGERI 1992
Tall 'Aqibrīn	Dans la partie méridionale de la plaine de Dānā au pied du Ġ. Sīr	Temple romain remplacé par un couvent (TL 'WQBRYN)	Forteresse, stèle funéraire ayyoubide	TCHALENKO, III, 105, 126 ; CALLOT 1997, 738-740
Tall Minnis (Tell Mennis)	A la pointe orientale du Ġ. Zāwiya, à 6 km à l'est de Ma' arrat al-Nu' māt	Fragments antiques	Forteresse	TCHALENKO, III, 126
Tizīn (Tezīn)	Sur le versant occidental du Ġ. Sim' ān, en face de la vallée du 'Afrīn		Bourgade, fortifications en ruines au XIII <sup>e</sup> s. ; production de céramique	TCHALENKO, III, 126 ; IBN ŠADDĀD 1984, 270 ; LE STRANGE, 547
Ṭurīn	Dans le Ġ. Dueili, à 4 km à l'est de Darkūs	Inscription funéraire (351)	Forteresse	TCHALENKO, I, 145, III, 127
Ūrim al-Ġawz	Dans le Ġ. Zāwiya, au sud-ouest d'al-Rīhā	Édifice chrétien, peut-être funéraire	Village et ruines antiques ; phénomène de feux follets	YĀQŪT, I, 278-279 ; GATIER 1997, 765-767

Ce tableau, qui n'est nullement exhaustif, a été établi à partir des listes des couvents proto-byzantins et des vestiges médiévaux, publiés dans G. Tchalenko, et complété à l'aide des informations fournies par les sources arabes. Malgré son caractère dépassé sur certains points, l'ouvrage de Tchalenko est le seul, à ce jour, à fournir une liste aussi complète des sites. N'ont été retenus ni les sites antiques disparus au Moyen Âge (plus de la moitié de la liste des couvents) ni les sites médiévaux où seuls quelques graffites arabes ont été retrouvés ou quelques vestiges peu importants qui ne sont répertoriés ni dans la liste antique ni dans les sources arabes. Lorsqu'un site n'a pas été retrouvé dans les sources arabes, sa graphie moderne, telle qu'elle figure dans les listes de G. Tchalenko, a été conservée. Certains sites ont pu changer de nom entre le Moyen Âge et nos jours, ce qui explique que quelques villages mentionnés dans les sources arabes n'ont pu être identifiés sur le terrain.

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# THE VILLAGE ASCENDANT IN BYZANTINE AND EARLY ISLAMIC JORDAN: SOCIO-ECONOMIC FORCES AND CULTURAL RESPONSES

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*Résumé – La région connaît du v<sup>e</sup> au viii<sup>e</sup> siècle un développement considérable qui n'est pas perturbé par la conquête arabe mais favorisé par un système administratif nouveau. L'archéologie récente s'est tournée vers l'habitat rural en privilégiant la prospection. Cette méthode est limitée par l'opacité de ses procédures et l'imprécision de ses typologies céramiques. Les modèles courants accordent une grande prospérité à l'époque byzantine et un fort déclin à l'époque omeyyade. Si l'on prend en compte les durées relatives (trois siècles de présence byzantine contre 90 ans de pouvoir omeyyade) la proportion des sites omeyyade croît singulièrement. Il est difficile par ailleurs d'appliquer à des habitats tardifs les critères de la polis grecque. De plus le développement de ces habitats se produit sur de courtes périodes. Les inscriptions d'églises sont concentrées sur la fin du v<sup>e</sup> siècle et le début du viii<sup>e</sup> et concernent les villages de la badiyah. Ce développement peut refléter non pas un accroissement de la population mais son redéploiement alors que les villes, prospères dans la première moitié du v<sup>e</sup> siècle tendent à se concentrer. Ce mouvement peut avoir été favorisé par la peste de 542 et ses récurrences qui ont pu faire fuir les habitants des villes vers les villages : il est même possible que la population totale ait baissé. Les différences entre habitat urbain et villageois s'effacent. Il y a peut-être eu également un changement de modèle économique entraîné par l'érosion des sols, elle-même liée à la pression exercée par les villes sur les ressources naturelles. Le modèle urbain impérial de Justinien s'arrête dans les années 560-570 ; les villages offrent alors une alternative attrayante.*

During the socio-cultural continuum of late antique Jordan (roughly sixth to eighth centuries CE), the countryside experienced an unprecedented boom in economic activity and village construction. Archaeological, epigraphic and papyrological evidence would suggest that rural Jordan was densely inhabited by village-based communities at this time, with some of these villages attaining a considerable physical and, seemingly, demographic size. There is, furthermore, now clear evidence that the Islamic conquest of 634-40 CE barely interrupted this development. Rather, in many ways, the outcomes of the conquest encouraged it further, especially as a fractured Byzantine administration – in which geographic Transjordan was divided among the provinces of Arabia, Palaestina Secunda and Palaestina Tertia – was abandoned in favour of just two new and dynamic units, the Jund al-Urdunn and Jund Dimashq (fig. 1). Hence, well into the eighth century, and conceivably beyond, the expansive Jordanian countryside was apparently filled with large villages.

The growing interest in rural settlement patterns in late antique Jordan is a relatively recent development in archaeological studies (cf. the longer tradition in Syria, especially of French work; see recently EDDÉ and SODINI, this volume, and GATIER 1994 and this volume; also Foss 1995). Traditionally, field projects have tended to focus on excavating the large, visually dominant urban sites such as Jarash (Gerasa), Umm Qays (Gadara), Pella and Abila, or the largest of the village sites notably Umm al-Rasas and Umm al-Jimal. There can be no question as to the importance of this work in mapping out a

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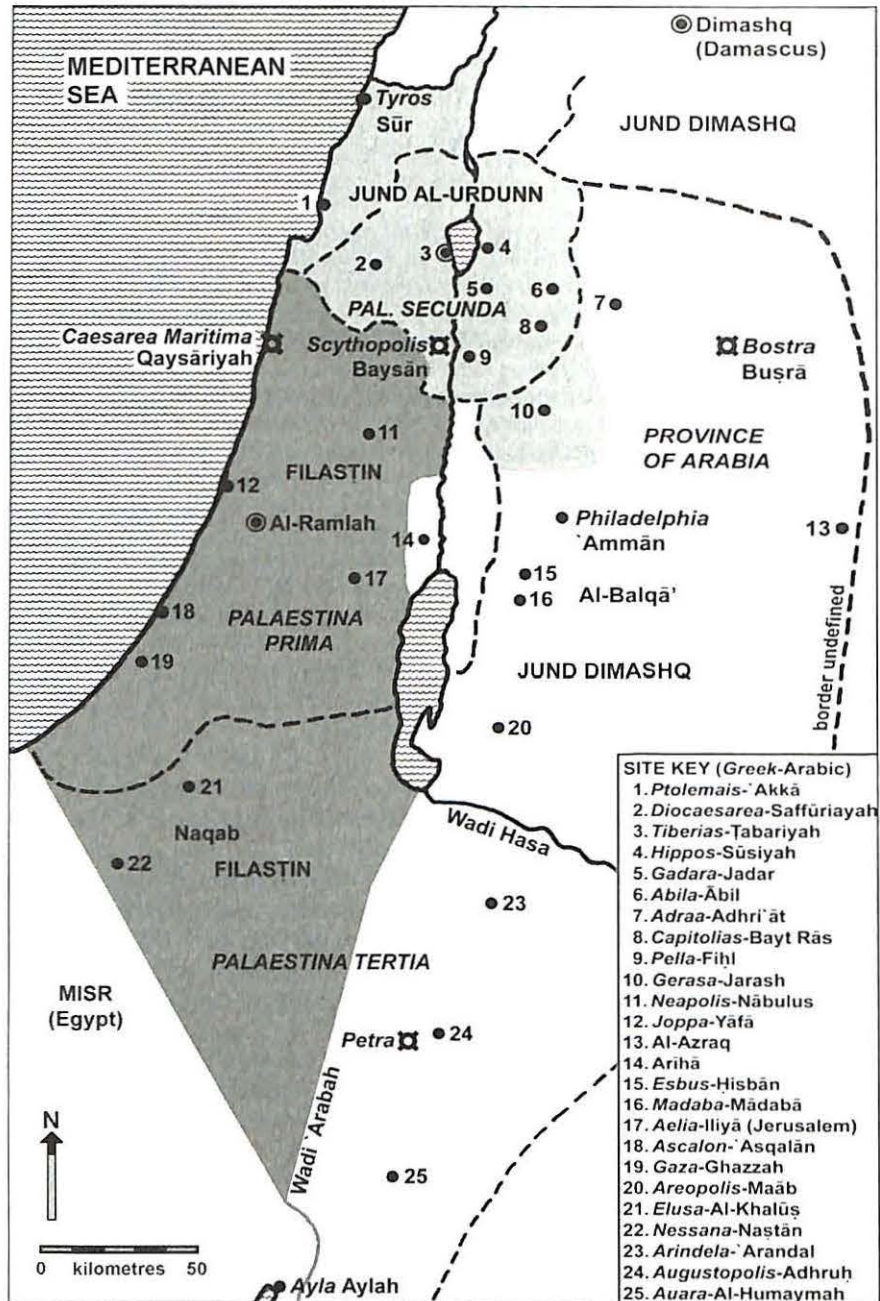


Fig. 1 – A comparison of Byzantine (dashed lines) and early Islamic (shaded) administrative divisions in Palestine and Jordan

detailed picture of cultural and economic life in late antique Jordan, as recent comparative studies have demonstrated. To some extent, up until a couple of decades ago, even this research had been put to one side (unceremoniously at times) in the scramble to expose classical and early Christian remains, with the emphasis on uncovering the major public monuments such as temples, streets and churches. At Jarash, for instance, the critically important late antique domestic quarter that occupied the Oval Piazza was hastily swept away in the late 1940s (HARDING 1949). In recent years, however, the attention of archaeologists has, even more belatedly, shifted to locating, describing and classifying archaeological sites in the rural hinterland of the major urban centres through regional site surveys and, in some instances, excavations. This work, often in the face of rapid modern economic development that characterises contemporary Jordan, has frequently and regrettably been overly general, unsystematic and expansive in the geographical area covered. Accordingly the results, while perhaps permitting gross interpretations of site settlement and land use in the countryside, often lack sufficient precision to allow a more detailed understanding of settlement trends in late antiquity. The outcome has been a somewhat distorted and misleading understanding of the extent and nature of rural occupation during the sixth to eighth centuries CE.

The results of four major regional surveys demonstrate the problems associated with a standard historical, settlement and demographic analysis of survey data that, by its very nature, is as imprecise and only as reliable as the (frequently ill-defined and unexplained) survey procedures and the chronological periodisation methods (*i.e.* almost exclusively by way of generalised pottery identifications) utilised. The high-profile Hesban regional survey, while exhibiting many positives, presents a clear example of an uncritical acceptance of self-generated data, where the information sought by the project objectives neatly conforms to a pre-desired mould due to the methods of data collection applied in the field (McQUITTY 1993). Briefly, of the 148 sites surveyed in the Hesban region, occupation at 93 (or 68%) was attributed to the Roman period (fig. 2), based largely on surface ceramics collected (these are not specified). Then, in the Byzantine period (commonly seen as starting with the reign of Constantine, 324-37 CE, in Jordanian archaeology), occupation was identified at 126 sites (85%; obviously many continue to be occupied from the Roman period), falling to a startling low of 33 identifiable sites (22%) and 7 identifiable sites (5%) in the Umayyad and Abbasid periods respectively. Based on these statistics, a demographic model for the Hesban region tracing the same peaks and troughs has also been proposed (fig. 3) (GERATY and LABIANCA, 1985: 328).

While not true for all surveys – the notable exception being the *Limes Arabicus* survey of Tom Parker (PARKER 1987) – similar results, featuring a pronounced peak in site occupation in the Byzantine period followed by a sharp decline after the Islamic conquest, have been commonly proposed from other survey work in Jordan. These include: the Southern Ghor and North-East Araba survey (MACDONALD 1992), the Wadi Yabis survey (MABRY and PALUMBO 1992), and the Karak Plateau survey (MILLER 1991). Only in the last of these publications did the Islamic ceramicist Robin Brown openly voice caution about the utter unreliability of surface sherding as an accurate reflection of the underground reality, and the very imperfect understanding of ceramic typologies (BROWN 1991). The absence of a reliable ceramic typo-chronology is especially true for the Islamic periods, and doubly so south of the wadi Mujib (JOHNS 1994). These cautionary caveats are now increasingly acknowledged for, as one of Jordan's foremost archaeologists recently noted, survey results "reflecting rises and declines in Byzantine occupation can only be regarded as impressionistic" (GRAF 2001, p. 223). Even this assessment of historical, settlement and demographic interpretations of survey data may be a little too generous.

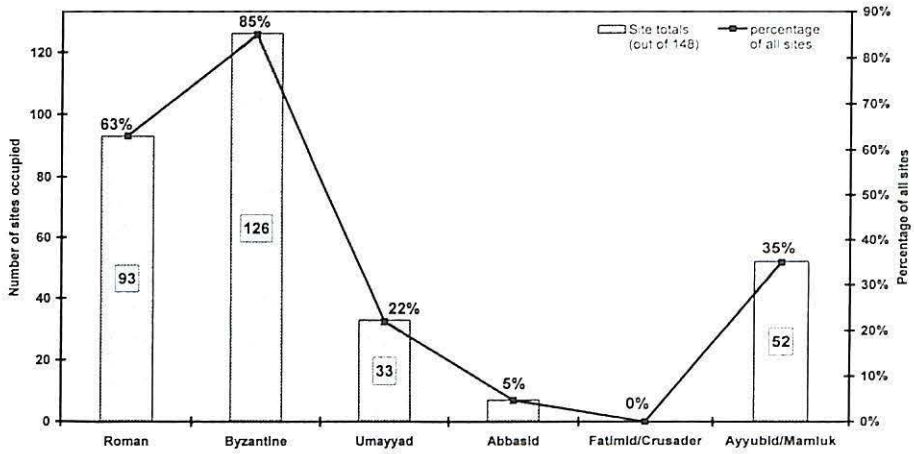


Fig. 2 – Numbers and percentages of sites by historical period identified in the Hesban regional survey (from Ibach 1987, LaBianca 1990)

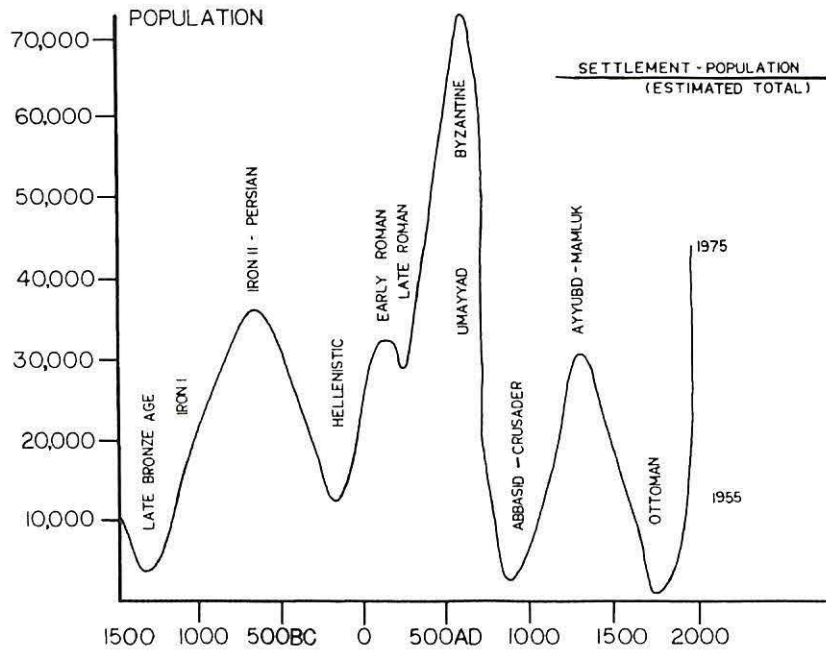


Fig. 3 – Population variation as perceived in the Hesban region (after Geraty and LaBianca 1985: 328)

Another significant and still commonly overlooked problem is the failure to adjust for the relative length of each historical period. Clearly it is incorrect and even disingenuous to compare the almost three centuries of Byzantine occupation with only 90 years of Umayyad settlement, for instance. There is an underlying assumption that sites were continuously occupied to their maximum extent geographically and monumentally for the entire period in question, and this is obviously not true. Indeed, the archaeological evidence is demonstrating otherwise; that many late antique sites witnessed a relatively short burst of growth and building activity based on local social and economic factors, and that the exceptional prosperity of these “boom super-villages” may have passed very quickly (see further below). Looking at the figures from the Hesban survey, if the number of sites identified as being occupied in each broad period (concentrating on the more reliable statistical periods) is averaged out over the length of the period, a very different settlement profile is produced (fig. 4). Noticeably, the proportion of sites occupied in the Roman period is reduced, the Byzantine level considerably lowered, and the proportion of Umayyad sites is increased to a very respectful level. Admittedly, this is simply playing with figures that are, as already noted, of questionable reliability, but the point here is to raise major doubts about simplistic interpretations of survey data that do not take into account the almost overwhelming array of depreciating variables in the data.

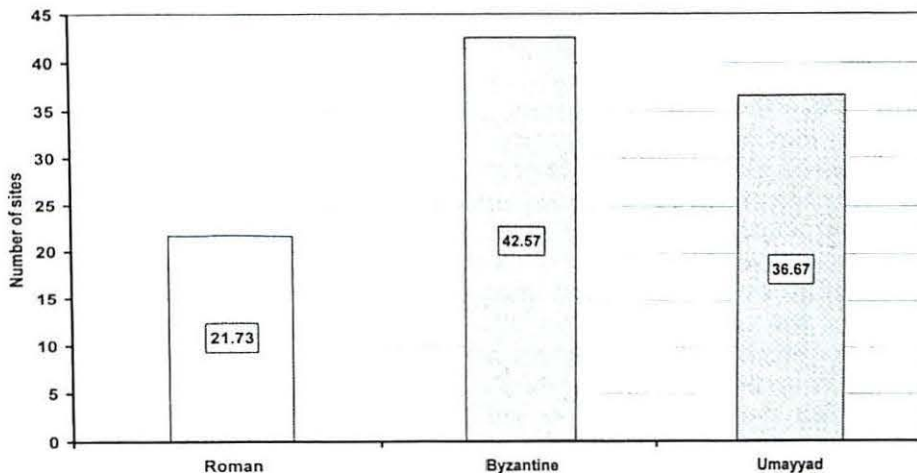


Fig. 4 – Site numbers by historical period at Hesban, averaged per century (from Ibach 1987, LaBianca 1990; compare with figure 2)

Problems of site definition have also hindered progress in recent studies. Some of the village sites in Jordan attained sufficient size in late antiquity that a degree of uncertainty exists in modern scholarship as to their definition as settlements: “towns”, “townships” (which allows for a useful blurring of functionality) or “villages”. To Knauf, the problem is a Eurocentric/Orientalist one: we classify “towns” and “villages” according to traditional, Western definitions of settlement roles based on modern cultural perceptions of the classical past. Hence Umm al-Jimal, an expansive site in the *badiyah* of north Jordan (see further, below), while not near the top of the late antique civic hierarchy (to the extent that the ancient name of the site is uncertain), is unquestionably an “Arab town” when analysed within an Arabian context. This is especially so when factors such as site layout and functionality are considered independent of, and indeed divorced from, modern views of Hellenised ideals (KNAUF 1984).

A final, but critical, caveat on assessing levels of rural settlement in late antique Jordan needs to be considered before it is possible to embark on any reassessment of village life in the region, and this concerns the nature and chronology of site expansion in the Byzantine and early Islamic periods. While overall site size has been recognised as a significant factor in evaluating settlement profiles in Jordan, little consideration has been given to the time spans of site growth and the period for which a village maintained its social, economic and cultural eminence. Growing archaeological evidence suggests many villages in Jordan grew rapidly in a flurry of renewal on a grand scale, as public and private buildings were erected within a particularly favourable cultural, political and religious climate. This seems to be particularly true for the steppe lands of the Jordanian *badiyah*, as is outlined further below. It must be noted, however, that larger "urban" settlements were similarly the products of comparatively brief periods of civic expansion, as is very apparent at Pella in the reigns of Phocas and Heraclius (SHBOUL and WALMSLEY 1998, p. 284; WALMSLEY 1999). This phenomenon of rapid (and eventually unsustainable?) site development appears to be a widespread feature of the late antique landscape in Jordan, and it necessarily alters any understanding of overall settlement density and demographic totals in the Byzantine and early Islamic periods.

The most obvious impact of settlement expansion in rural late antique Jordan can be seen in the Jordanian *badiyah*, a dry but pastorally favourable region immediately east of the agricultural highlands. Today, the imposing architectural remains to be seen at a number of "super-village" sites, such as Umm al-Jimal, Rihab, Khirbat al-Samra and Umm al-Rasas, stand as a stark testament to the expansion of rural settlement in late antiquity. The absolute sizes of these sites are impressive, and conceivably could have accommodated populations into the thousands. Not surprising, then, that the social, political and economic rationale behind this village-colonisation of marginal steppe land (and, concomitantly, an apparent demographic increase in late antiquity) is often presented in the narrowly focused spotlight of "Byzantine prosperity". The current writer, among others, has not been immune from this myopic view (WALMSLEY 1996). A closer look at these sites suggests that the period of expansion and, perhaps, greater prosperity, in late antiquity was quite short.

The clearest indications of growth periods come from dated monuments in these villages, mostly churches (see the comprehensive study by DI SEGNI 1999, also PICCIRILLO 1993). Firstly, in general terms, it should be noted that a substantial leap in building activity took place throughout the towns and villages of Jordan and Palestine (*viz.* the three Palestines and Arabia) in the later sixth and early seventh centuries, notably under Maurice, Phocas and Heraclius (fig. 5). By calculating a rate of building per annum (by dividing the total number of dated buildings by the length of an emperor's reign), Di Segni has shown that the highest rate of construction ("Annual Index", hereafter AI) during late antiquity was reached during the reign of Phocas (AI of 1.625). By comparison, Maurice rated a healthy AI of 1.2 while the disrupted reign of Heraclius was 0.548. By comparison, the AI under Justin I was 1.0 and Justinian's 1.55, with the AI under Justin II falling back to 0.769 (which should be contrasted with coin data from his reign; see WALMSLEY 1999). Not only, as these figures show, was there an increase in building activity under Maurice, Phocas and Heraclius, but also much of this growth was concentrated in the *badiyah* villages of Jordan, according to the epigraphic evidence, with the construction of churches predominating (fig. 5). As Di Segni notes, while there is an almost complete break in building activity in towns; "villages flourish: at least, this is evident in the eastern part of [Jordan]. The first dated church at Rihab was founded in 533 and renovated in 583; then new churches sprout like mushrooms after a rainstorm, 8 of them between 594 and 635 – in 594, 595, 605, 620, 623 (2 churches), and 635 (2 churches)" (DI SEGNI 1999, p. 165).

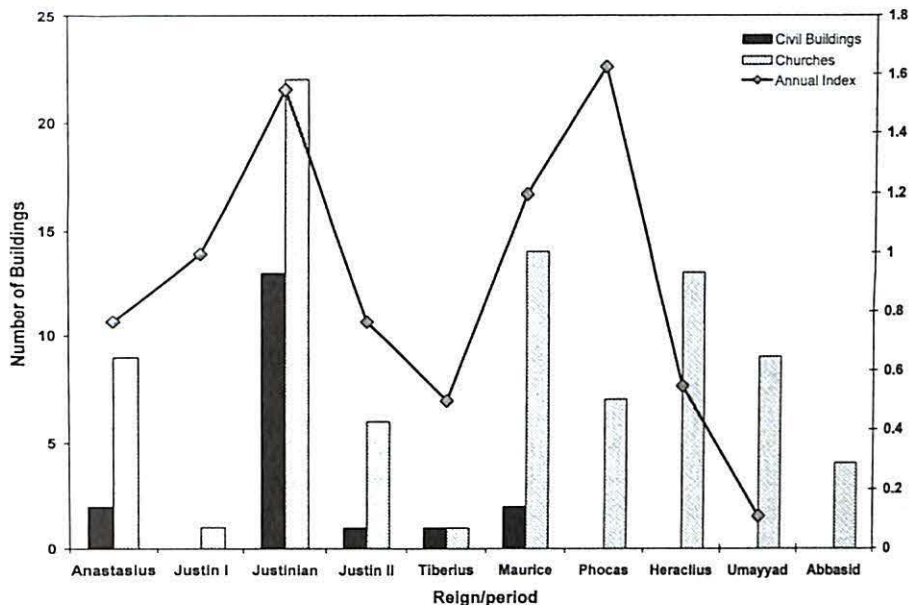


Fig. 5 – Annual building rates for the three Palestines and Arabia (line graph) and building activity in Jordan and the southern Hawran (bar graph) in late antiquity (figures from Di Segni 1999)

The pattern is clearly repeated at Khirbat al-Samra and Umm al-Rasas, showing this concentration of ecclesiastical building activity at Rihab is no isolated event. Samra has three churches dated by inscriptions, one each in 633/35, 634 and 637, all during the period of the Islamic conquest; perhaps not in spite of it but, indirectly, because of it or, at least, as a reflection of the emergent strategic importance of the Jordanian steppe in late antiquity. Probably most, if not all, of Samra's eight churches were built around the 630s, in that five were built under Theodorus of Bostra, within whose see the village of Samra resided. Likewise, at Umm al-Rasas (Kastron Mefa'a) churches were dedicated in a flurry of activity during 586, 587, 589 and 593/94, with a refurbishment of the church of St Stephen twice during early Islamic times in 718 and 756.

At issue is the degree to which this evidence of a rapid and, it would seem, relatively short-term expansion in church construction among these villages can be interpreted as only one part of a more widespread development, both in overall size and architectural features, in the settlement profile of the Jordanian *badiyah*. Furthermore, does any increase in the physical size of a village necessarily require a proportional demographic increase?

To the first question, it is very likely that the flurry of church building corresponded to a period of general village expansion, and the fairly even spread of churches on the site plan of Samra, for instance, would also indicate this. However, any thorough testing of this hypothesis will have to await the appearance of new architectural and archaeological data, especially masonry studies of standing structures (to identify phases of construction) and sub-floor soundings within buildings to establish foundation and occupation dates.

As for a significant population rise in the *badiyah* in late antiquity, it need not follow that an increase in gross site size was matched by an equivalent upsurge in the overall demographic profile of Jordan. Rather, and very likely, the growth of the *badiyah* sites in the later sixth and early seventh centuries was largely fuelled by a significant rearrangement of the existing population. There were probably several interrelated causes for this: cultural, economic and environmental.

Firstly, previously nomadic or semi nomadic groups (and hence generally archaeologically transparent) forged new alliances as they adapted to the rapidly changing cultural, political and religious events in the Jordanian steppe from the time of the emperor Maurice. These groups sought (and found) new ways to express an emergent socio-political presence in the transforming Byzantine polity of the later sixth century. The Monophysite Ghassânids present the most obvious and clearest example of this change.

Next, some of the larger traditional urban sites seem to have experienced a sizeable loss of population to the countryside. At Jarash, just some 30 kilometres to the west-northwest of Samra and 20 kilometres west of Rihab, evidence for a significant contraction in urban size is clearly evident towards the end of the sixth century (WATSON 1986). Although part of this population shift at Jarash may have been internal, involving the relocation of people to more concentrated domestic quarters sandwiched between the South Decumanus and Oval Piazza, the date of this new housing is unclear. It could well be later (seventh – early eighth century?), and accordingly the result of different and subsequent urban trends. The abandonment of outlying areas of Jarash in the later sixth century is indicative of major adjustments in urban life in late antiquity before the Islamic Conquest, which may have boosted population levels in the countryside. Interestingly, the evidence for extensive settlement at sites like Samra in the first half of the sixth century is meagre, whereas archaeological, epigraphic and numismatic evidence argues for considerable expansion in the major towns at the same time. Quite possibly the growth of rural communities towards the end of the sixth century represents a reversal of a move from the countryside to the towns that typified the first half of the century.

Also surely significant, although still seemingly impossible to accurately quantify, was the visitation of the plague during the reign of Justinian beginning in 541-42 CE, and its cyclic return thereafter (ALLEN 1979; CONRAD 1986; DOLS 1977; DURLIAT 1989; PATLAGEAN 1977, p. 84-92; STATHAKOPOULOS 2004). An outbreak in 558 was especially severe, and was followed by another in 573-74. Estimates suggest that the population may have declined by as much as a third, not just the susceptible very young and elderly but also adults, as the periodic reoccurrence of the pandemic meant that weakened survivors of one visitation were quite likely to be struck down in the next. Exposure brought no immunity. Towns were probably especially hard hit due to more cramped living conditions and the greater chance of infection being transmitted, which would have encouraged their inhabitants to escape to the moderately greater safety of the countryside. The higher risks of living in towns during an outbreak of plague were certainly understood by the early seventh century. In the outbreak of 638-39, the Muslim army in *Filastin* (Palestine) apparently decamped from Amawas (Emmaus/Nicopolis, west of Jerusalem) to the pre-Islamic Imperial estates in the Jordan Valley, although the move did not save the commander of the forces, Abu Ubaydah, whose venerated tomb is located there. Similarly in later times the Umayyad elite would take to their *badiyah* estates during outbreaks of the plague.

The expansion of the village settlements in the Jordanian *badiyah* during the later sixth century was, accordingly, a local phenomenon that originated in regionally specific modifications to the cultural, environmental and economic make up of society. Overall, the total population of Jordan may not have increased substantially, if at all, at any time in the sixth century (*cf.* the implausible population chart of the Hesban district in fig. 3). Indeed, one imagines that the visitation of the plague would have depressed population figures in the second half of the century, perhaps progressively and significantly so.

Ongoing political, strategic and economic relevancy in the early Islamic period, especially under the Umayyads, ensured the continued socio-cultural vibrancy of many *badiyah* villages into the eighth century (see the wider encompassing study in WALMSLEY 2000). The architectural and archaeological evidence from Umm al-Rasas and Umm al-Jimal,

for instance, is unequivocal: village life continued uninterrupted and unchanged following the Islamic conquest. Notably churches continued to be maintained, such as the church of St Stephen at Umm al-Rasas, which was embellished with a spectacular mosaic in the nave. More generally the Islamic occupation levels at these sites have produced an impressive range of material culture, some of which had travelled long distances (ALLIATA 1991, DE VRIES 1998, PICCIRILLO and ALLIATA 1994). New estates were also established (most visually the so-called 'Desert Castles', see recently AL-ASAD and BISHEH 2000), and existing rural holdings refurbished (e.g. Hallabat). As pointed out elsewhere, the Umayyad period, especially the first half of the eighth century, was notable for the expansion of rural activities, industrial as well as the expected agricultural (WALMSLEY 2000: 309-17).

It is not impossible to imagine that the success of the *badiyah* experiment – for a condoned, if not orchestrated, trial in the exploitation of marginal lands it must have been, especially under the Umayyads – could well have resulted in the adoption of a typically late antique settlement model of the *badiyah* into more "conventional" urban areas, at least where circumstances suited. The domestic units at Umm al-Jimal and Khirbat al-Samra are, in plan, large, autonomous architectural entities, with inward-looking living areas often two or more storeys in height, flanking a sizeable central courtyard. Public areas are arranged to accommodate the central features of the *badiyah* villages, with open spaces and laneways being fitted in and around the domestic units and public buildings (mostly churches). The initial overall impression is that of a settlement characterised by a disorganised jumble of structures and open space, but this is certainly not the case. These villages were ordered and planned, but in a different way, for access and space were made to fit the buildings, not the other way around. Social life was conducted within buildings – the many churches and the houses – not around open public spaces. The impression is a very different lifestyle from the urban conglomerates of earlier times, which had persisted until the age of Justinian and Justin II in the three Palestines and Arabia (WALMSLEY 1996). Perhaps only in this light should the *polis* to *madinah* process be evaluated: not as deterioration or "decline" from some imagined Hellenised ideal, but rather a change in agreed lifestyle during late antiquity.

Such a transformation of the late antique urban environment is apparent at Jarash and Pella, to cite but two local examples. Naturally, each case is different, and the evidence still limited, but the growing emphasis on discrete and sizeable home units at the expense of an interconnected urban environment can be identified. At Jarash, by the south decumanus, a new building block was erected in the Umayyad period, consisting of a central irregular courtyard flanked by two asymmetrical wings of rooms to the east and west. The decumanus to the south provided access, but not focus. At Pella the process is even more apparent (fig. 6). After an earthquake in 659/660 CE, the domestic quarter on top of the main archaeological mound was fundamentally redesigned, in which the Byzantine street grid was discarded in favour of segregated house units. These two-storeyed houses each centred on a large open courtyard, in which domestic activities such as bread making occurred. The downstairs rooms were used for light industry and animal husbandry (this is particularly apparent in House G), while the well-equipped living quarters were located on the upper floor or floors and reached by internal staircases.

One further point may indicate a second, economic, imperative for the restructuring of living arrangements in the towns of Jordan according to a less intensive rural model. Urban and economic expansion, the latter revealed by a growing emphasis on olive and grape cultivation, might have exerted unsustainable pressures on the natural environment around towns. The identification of wadi infilling, known as "the younger fill", in the east Mediterranean can be associated with a variety of causes: overgrazing, excessive tree felling, the failure (by neglect?) of agricultural terraces, and climate change (VITA-FINZI 1969, p. 83-88, 101-102). Certainly at Pella there is clear evidence for an accelerated



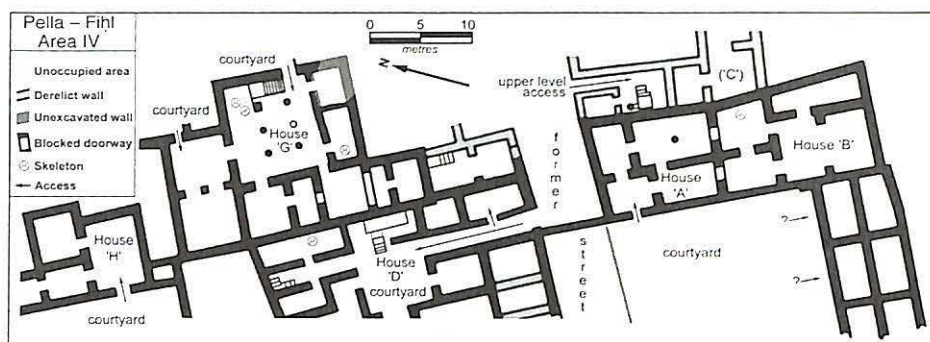


Fig. 6 –The arrangement of housing at Pella in the late antique – early Islamic transitional period (seventh–eighth centuries CE)

infilling of the central Wadi Jirm in late antiquity. Today, wash debris metres deep overlays what may remain of the colonnaded decumanus and forum/markets depicted on the 183/4 CE Roman-period city coin of Commodus (r. 177-92). According to the excavators of the Civic Complex in the wadi, **infilling became a serious problem in the later sixth to early seventh century, ending the useful life of the odeum, baths and lower Roman-period town** (SMITH and DAY 1989, p. 8, 18, 29, 90). **This may have encouraged the relocation of the city markets to another central location north of the Cathedral church in the seventh century** (WALMSLEY 1992, p. 252-54). Similarly, environmental data from the Pella excavations on the main mound reveal overexploitation of resources in the area. There is a perceptible shift from naturally occurring wild wood species to cultivated varieties, specifically willow/poplar and pine, while the lack of accessible forest species in the Umayyad period saw a greater reliance on shrubby plants, specifically oleander and tamarisk (WILLCOX 1992, p. 256). **From this environmental data it can be argued that the natural resources adjacent to the main towns were under acute pressure by the middle of the sixth century.** Quite conceivably the objectives of Justinian's social engineering policy – to expand towns in the three Palestines and Arabia – were unable to be sustained, perhaps even within a few decades after the end of his reign. **In this situation the villages of the *badiyah* (and perhaps other regions, such as south Jordan) may have appeared as an increasingly attractive alternative to life in the towns.**

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