

Europe Between Late Antiquity and the Middle Ages

Recent archaeological and historical research
in Western and Southern Europe



Edited by

John Bintliff and Helena Hamerow



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All enquiries regarding the submission of manuscripts for future publication should be addressed to:

David P Davison MA MPhil DPhil
General Editor BAR
Tempvs Reparatvm
29 Beaumont Street
Oxford OX1 2NP

Tel: 01865 311046
Fax: 01865 311047

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Contributors

John Bintliff, Dept. of Archaeology, University of Durham

Neil Christie, Dept. of Archaeology, University of Leicester

Guy Halsall, Dept. of History, Birkbeck College, London

Helena Hamerow, Dept. of Archaeology, University of Durham

Colin Haselgrove, Dept. of Archaeology, University of Durham

Christopher Loveluck, Dept. of Archaeology, University of Durham

Christopher Scull, English Heritage, London

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EUROPE BETWEEN LATE ANTIQUITY AND THE MIDDLE AGES: Recent Archaeological and Historical Research in Western and Southern Europe

John Bintliff and Helena Hamerow

Foreword

In November 1993, a symposium was organised by the Department of Archaeology at the University of Durham. Its theme was 'The Transition from the Late Roman to the Medieval Periods in Europe', a subject with which the research of several members of the Department is concerned. Since their work formed the focus of the conference, the papers presented did not represent a geographically-even spread across Europe; most significantly, Central and Eastern Europe are not covered here, whilst a paper on the Iberian peninsula was presented at the symposium but could not be included in the publication. A shared body of approaches, themes and conceptual dissatisfactions nevertheless emerged from our discussions. It is the objective of this paper to introduce these issues, and above all to re-examine the concept of a 'transition' from Late Antiquity to the Middle Ages in Western and Southern Europe in the light of current research.

Discussion

The very concept of historical periods of 'transition', it soon became clear, was a vexed issue. The terms 'Late Roman' and 'Medieval' were of course coined after the fact and the periods are in this sense artificial constructs. Guy Halsall (this vol.) would argue further that there was little or no awareness amongst contemporaries of passing from an 'ancient' world to a 'medieval' one, or from a slave-based economy to a feudal economy. Most people at this time were rarely if ever aware of living in a 'transitional' phase and after all, in one sense, nothing really remains the same and 'all points in history are points of transition' (Halsall, this vol.). While this could be true of the majority of the Late Roman population, there may have been a much sharper vision of cataclysm and change, if not exactly transition, amongst the literate elite. It was the appalling news of the Sack of Rome that inspired St. Augustine to compose *The City of God* from North Africa, as both inspiration and prescient forecast of the vast sea-change to come in the guiding forces of human society (Brown, 1967). Again, when in 476 A.D. the Germanic leader Odoacer deposed the last Roman emperor Romulus Augustus, he handed over the imperial regalia to the Byzantine emperor Zenon and gave himself the interesting and also prophetic title 'Rex nationum' (Jehal, 1992), thereby indicating a sharp awareness of a very different world order in Europe.

Another prominent theme in recent research into this period has been the developmental trajectories of

'barbarian' societies living outside of the Roman Empire in the first half of the first millennium A.D. Rather than waiting for the decline of Rome in some passive, unchanging and relatively primitive form of society (e.g. 'Germanic Mode of Production', 'Military Democracy', 'Tribalism' or otherwise), so that the observations of outsiders such as Caesar or Tacitus might apply to any period of the Iron Age, barbarian societies are now recognised to have been dynamic and to have undergone complex transformations in parallel to the rise and fall of Roman imperial power. Various models have been used to explain these changes: purely indigenous development, core-periphery effects involving contacts with the Empire, and finally a combination of these two models (Randsborg, 1985, 1989). Whichever approach is taken, however, the result has been to encourage us to see the Migration Period as potentially the result of a growing convergence between barbarian communities *increasing* in complexity and a Late Roman society that in many or most provinces is *deconstructing* in complexity.

This theme first appears in the paper by Helena Hamerow, who examines how changing social relations were expressed in village layout from the late Roman Iron Age to the Carolingian periods in northwest Europe, on the fringes of and beyond the Roman frontier. By the late Roman Iron Age, many settlements from Scandinavia into the Low Countries displayed a complex, controlled and orderly layout. A disruption and break-down of settlements is apparent in the fifth century in many, though certainly not all, areas. Greater regularity is again apparent in the structure of villages during the Carolingian and Viking Ages (including Middle and Late Saxon England), when certain 'rules' appear to have governed the layout, and perhaps size, of villages, a development which appears to be linked to the emergence of the Carolingian and Scandinavian hegemonies. Early medieval law codes give us further clues to the appearance and socio-legal importance of the farmstead, although identifying 'chiefly' farms or indications of 'lordship' in rural settlements remains problematic.

Amongst the changes in barbarian societies in this period are developments in crop growing, stock-breeding, and internal responses to natural transformations in landscape potential (including climatic deterioration). It is also possible to relate the evidence of increasing settlement organisation and social stratification to these economic and ecological factors (Randsborg, *op.cit.*; Hamerow, this vol. and in press), although exogenous influences might be solely or partially responsible. In closer detail (Hamerow, *op.cit.*) it may be argued that there are two sequent

trajectories of socio-economic elaboration with potentially divergent causes. One develops through the Roman Iron Age and culminates in the migration or 'deconstruction' of many such barbarian communities at the time of the collapse of the Western Empire; one interpretation suggests that this could be the product of a growing 'crisis' in local economies. The second trajectory, in the final centuries of the first millennium A.D., gives rise to more permanent forms of social hierarchy and the rise of states in North-West and Northern Europe. Whilst the latter cycle might also be the result of indigenous processes of socio-economic elaboration, especially of estate formation, it has equally been suggested that exogenous pressures from the Carolingian state which developed out of the former Western Empire, or imperial systems further east (Byzantium, Islam) are a major factor (Hamerow, Randsborg, *op.cit.*).

The popularity of exogenous explanations for the elaboration of more complex barbarian societies during the first millennium A.D. can be linked to a continuing interest in core-periphery/world systems models in archaeological theory. The role of trade with, and military recruitment by, the Roman Empire in bringing greater status and wealth to barbarian societies close to the imperial frontier has been stressed in detailed research by Hedeager (1992). Later, in the eighth-ninth centuries A.D., trade networks linking the Islamic Middle East and Northern Europe as well as core-periphery effects of Frankish state expansion in Northern Europe have been suggested as catalysts for the development of more complex societies and, ultimately, states in that region (Hodges, 1988, Hodges and Whitehouse, 1989, Randsborg, *op.cit.*). Even feudalism has been seen as originating in the successor states within the former Western Empire, before diffusing into barbarian societies which sought to emulate those states during the final centuries of the first millennium (Wickham, 1984).

Not only is greater attention now being paid to the internal dynamics of societies beyond the Empire, but a more subtle understanding of the trajectory, or rather trajectories, of Roman Imperial societies over the first half of the first millennium A.D. is also emerging. Central to this analysis is the growing consensus that the Empire lacked a unified market force, and indeed consisted of a series of regional economies imperfectly connected by interregional trade; much of this interregional trade was dominated by state-administered movement of foodstuffs and raw materials to service the population of Rome and the imperial armies (Fulford, 1987, Bintliff and Snodgrass, 1988, Woolf, 1992). The semi-independent cyclical development of population and economy in separate regions of the Empire is now clear: an early peak and early decline in Italy, followed by the rise and fall of Gaul and Iberia, then the North African provinces, and finally the florescence of the Eastern Roman provinces which peak after the Sack of Rome and only decline in the late sixth century A.D. Yet the implications of these regional cycles for barbarian-Roman interactions are only now receiving interpretations

which are appropriately complex. The Western European provinces, in decline from the second-third centuries A.D. onwards (*cf.* Haselgrove and Scull, this vol.), are increasingly being seen as converging towards barbarian societies as the latter grew more complex, thus preparing the path for integration during the Migration era (Randsborg, *op.cit.*). This integration could be understood either as inevitable between contiguous societies moving on converging agro-demographic trajectories (the power and manpower vacuum of the Western provinces 'sucking-in' an expansive barbarian population), or in world-system terms as the rise of a periphery under core influence until it overshadows the core itself. In contrast the remarkable success of the Eastern Empire in weathering the storm of invading tribes and the aggression of a rival expansive empire (the Persian) during the fourth-sixth centuries A.D. has to be associated with its economic and demographic strength.

The focus on the dynamics of regional growth in both the barbarian and Roman worlds and their role in the wider power-politics of the first millennium A.D. has developed under the strong influence of both regional surveys (especially within the Roman provinces - *cf.* Bintliff, Christie, Haselgrove and Scull, this volume) and large-scale excavations of settlements (especially within the barbarian world - *cf.* Hamerow, Scull, this volume). Although attempts have been made (Hodges, Hodges and Whitehouse, Randsborg, *op.cit.*), to tie together Continental European, Mediterranean and Middle Eastern cycles into causal loops utilizing core-periphery theory, such globalizing lacks conviction when subjected to detailed local analysis, and demands a form of sustained economic dependency which is completely at odds with most contemporary theory as well as the evidence regarding the economics of the Roman and early medieval societies under consideration (*cf.* references *supra*). More promising are attempts to interpret the cyclical phenomenon itself as endemic for most regions of Europe during the millennium, a view echoed in current considerations of the second millennium A.D. (Campbell, 1993, *cf.* Ladurie and Goy, 1982). A different form of interregional interaction is indicated however by an even longer-term wave of development that passes from the Eastern Mediterranean and East-Central Europe during the first millennium B.C. to their Western counterparts, then goes into reverse during the first millennium A.D. with the balance of political, economic and urban complexity becoming focused on the Byzantine and Umayyad/Abbasid empires (symbolised by the progressive displacement of the largest urban centres from Rome to Constantinople, then Samarra, and finally Baghdad - Randsborg, *op.cit.*; *cf.* Bintliff and Snodgrass, 1988). The regionalism of the Mediterranean and Middle Eastern economies leads us nonetheless to reject a core-periphery approach to account for this phenomenon in favour of factors such as the diffusion of technology, of certain crops and forms of land use, and of socio-political and settlement forms, at different times in different regions, and linked to

eco-demographic cycles inherent in pre-Industrial societies (Bintliff, in press).

Turning to the detailed examination of developments within the former Western Empire, the papers by Halsall, Haselgrove and Scull, Loveluck, and Scull, consider the emergence of the successor states and societies in the former Roman provinces of Gaul and Britain. Here, unsurprisingly, a different set of issues comes to the fore, namely interaction between indigenous and immigrant populations, and the process of acculturation; the archaeological invisibility of rural communities in many regions during the early post-Roman centuries; and the role of interregional trade and demographic change in shaping the archaeological record.

In his paper on Merovingian Gaul, Guy Halsall argues that only by tracing the continuum of process and change can we understand the period of the fourth to eighth centuries A.D. Fundamental transformations in many aspects of material life and culture were certainly underway in the Metz region as its material culture lost the typical trappings of Late Roman society in the first half of the fifth century. Similarly, eastern England experienced a period of revolutionary change in this period (Scull, this vol.). But Halsall cautions that it is equally true to say that while early fifth-century society in Metz was dramatically different from its mid fourth-century predecessor, it too was about 'to undergo transformation'.

Colin Haselgrove and Christopher Scull examine the transition from Belgic Frankish Gaul by means of a regional survey in Picardy, the early results of which they present in this volume. They, like Neil Christie (this vol.), stress the importance of redressing the archaeological bias towards the most easily identified sites -- towns, villas, cemeteries -- by examining lower-status rural settlements, and seek to achieve this through systematic field survey and the excavation of selected rural sites. Through this they hope to reveal the topography of settlement in this region and gain an understanding of the local processes of settlement shift and nucleation, as well as the ultimate fission of large, early medieval estates. This will provide a basis for comparisons with such processes in other regions.

The transition from Late Roman Britain to Early Anglo-Saxon England is examined by Christopher Loveluck in his study of transformations in burial practice in the Peak District during the seventh century. His analysis focuses on the rich seventh-century barrow burials in this region, suggesting several models to explain their appearance and the mechanisms by which the region came under 'English' political and cultural domination. He hypothesizes that the barrows, some of which display 'purely' Anglo-Saxon traits while others show features of the indigenous mortuary ritual, are the result of competition in this region between native and immigrant elites for control over regional resources and the wealth needed to obtain the precious metals and exotic 'prestige goods' accompanying their burials. What is more, we can postulate the source of

this wealth: lead. The tradition of lead-mining in this region, the basis of its prosperity in the Roman period, formed the background to the re-emergence of lead-mining in the Peak in response to demand from the early Church, which required lead in some quantity for its stone buildings. Control over lead thus became central to political control, and the granting of lead-producing estates to the Church led to a fundamental change in the structure and expression of power in the Peak District. The over-riding theme in these three papers is on local change and contingency, rather than on a single 'transition'.

Like Loveluck, Christopher Scull sees the concept of a transition from Roman Britain to Anglo-Saxon England as highly problematic. While he doubts whether Germanic migration from Continental Europe to Britain offers in itself an adequate explanation for culture change in the 'Migration Period', he cautions against marginalizing events such as large-scale migrations in deference to processual orthodoxy. Indeed, he argues that the archaeological evidence for the maintenance of links with the Germanic homelands on the other side of the North Sea is consistent with anthropological observations regarding the behaviour of immigrant populations. These two papers suggest various ways in which acculturation may be reflected in the archaeological record, and how people's sense of ethnic identity may change in response to a variety of internal, as well as external, socio-economic factors (cf. Hines, 1990).

Neil Christie's survey of the key trends apparent in the archaeology of Italy during the period A.D. 350-1000 shows how Byzantine Italy suffers from scholarly neglect in comparison to Imperial Rome, a factor which has stunted the development of post-Roman archaeology in Italy. He argues that the narrow focus by art historians and archaeologists on monuments and works of art such as churches and mosaics has led to inadequate research on the question of urban survival into the post-Roman period. Although in Ravenna major buildings showed 'no major rupture in the changeover to Germanic rule,' the debate regarding late and post-Roman urban survival versus urban decline is starved of archaeological data in Italy. In the countryside too there is little distinctively 'Germanic' material culture to indicate Lombardic settlement. The South Etruria survey suggests that here, at least, rural settlements are archaeologically invisible between c. 650 and 800, due in part to the lack of datable imports. With the Carolingian 'Renaissance', material evidence reasserts itself.

Italy is therefore well documented for the Imperial centuries but is still very imperfectly known in the critical seventh-eighth centuries A.D. There is general agreement that the decline of both urban townscapes and rural settlement networks is an inexorable feature of most regions from the Middle Empire; Italy as well as Rome became a parasitical consumer rather than a significant producer for its Empire. The sixth century A.D. plague

and the immense loss of life during the fifth-sixth centuries wars could not of themselves have achieved the chronic depopulation and economic collapse of the succeeding centuries, but rather these short-term factors hastened and deepened the eco-demographic nadir. Only Rome itself, while still at the centre of the Western Empire and through its command economy, could sustain a large population by replacing food surpluses once produced in Italy with imports from economically flourishing provinces across the Mediterranean. Once the flow of food revenues was cut off by Germanic/Arabic conquests from the fifth-seventh centuries A.D., Rome's population shrank accordingly.

Nonetheless, as regards Roman towns in general, the limited data now available support a previously controversial view (Ward-Perkins, 1984) that throughout the peninsula, these frequently survived as political, especially ecclesiastical, foci throughout the troubled centuries of barbarian occupation and settlement; their populations were small but their role significant in the later first millennium revival of genuine urban activity. More surprising is the suggestion that rural life in the open countryside, involving villages and estate centres, continued at a significant (if much reduced) level after the Fall of Rome, despite the poverty of recognisable material culture. The much-discussed phenomenon of '*incastellamento*', the relocation of peasant communities to steep, defensible hills with partial or total fortification of the settlement, is now considered not to be widespread before the late first millennium and associated with the rise of feudal lordship over peasant villages from the eighth-ninth centuries A.D. rather than an immediate reaction to the collapse of Roman power. This later reorganisation of power in the countryside around lordship (secular and ecclesiastical) coincides with a dramatic increase in documentation and durable material culture including ceramics.

Theories regarding the seeds of the eighth-ninth centuries recovery in Italy range from the extreme of world-system stimulus via trade contacts with North Africa, the Middle and Far East (Hodges and Whitehouse, Hodges, op.cit.), via more Europe-focused factors, to local agrarian stimuli. Prominent theories representing the latter two approaches are a model of growth deriving from the expanding Carolingian empire, and another model (of contrasting or complementary character) stressing indigenous economic and demographic recovery as the Germanic successor states fragment into innumerable feudal estate-holders intent on securing a localised surplus. The last-named model is supported by Wickham (1984) who has argued that the failure to sustain central state tax collection mechanisms in most successor-states led inevitably to a 'mode of production' whereby elites sought more profitable and reliable income from direct surplus extraction via estate accumulation. Such themes recur in current discussions of the equivalent era of growth and political stabilisation in North-West Europe.

Turning to the first of the three approaches, Hodges and Whitehouse (1989) concur to a considerable extent with Pirenne, that the Central and West Mediterranean became a relative backwater in the Dark Ages whilst the Islamic East and the rising new states of North-West Europe represent the leading sectors of the emergent medieval world. They differ from Pirenne in locating the decline of the Central and Western Provinces as a phenomenon beginning in the Middle Roman Empire and stemming as much from internal as external processes. In fact, (and this is hard to reconcile with their view) the persistence of an attenuated urban network as a focus of secular and clerical regional administration, chiefly in Italy but to a considerable extent also in South Gaul and Iberia, supported a far more vigorous urban recovery and degree of economic and political development by the late first millennium A.D. than anything observable north of the Alps (cf. Barnish, 1989). As Braudel and Wallerstein pointed out many years ago, it is surely the end of the Renaissance era when the focus of the European 'world system' was displaced from Italy towards the Low Countries, rather than around 800 A.D.

Out of phase by several centuries, Greece (Bintliff, this vol.) nonetheless offers striking parallels in its Dark Age to early medieval periods to developments in the West. During the fifth-sixth centuries A.D., it participates with the other Eastern Roman provinces in a remarkable prosperity. This is manifested primarily in the extraordinary density of rural villages and villae, and in the burgeoning population of Constantinople and other major cities of the East. In Greece however, there is a clear contrast with the landscapes of the Classical to Early Hellenistic period of florescence in the failure of the intermediate level of community - the former city-state/minor market-town - to flourish. This poses unique problems for interpreting the Late Roman phenomenon: it is already clear that the economics and politics of the era are distinctive, yet given the paucity of traditional sources such as inscriptions to illuminate local affairs (itself symptomatic of new circumstances), it remains a challenge to reconstruct how this society functioned at the regional level.

The evidence for large populations in major urban centres and throughout the countryside, for vigorous trade manifested by Eastern transport amphorae (which are ubiquitous throughout the Eastern Empire, across the Western Mediterranean and which even find their way to Dark Age Britain (Fulford, 1989)), and for the survival of Roman imperial ideology, explain both the confidence and temporary success of the Justinianic reconquest of large swathes of the Western Roman provinces in the mid-sixth century A.D. Arguments, which began with contemporaries, concerning the inability of the Eastern eco-demographic 'bubble' to sustain the reconquest of the Roman empire, are currently supported by our growing knowledge of the superficial nature of the Byzantine revival in North Africa and Italy. If Vandal North Africa was less prosperous than during the Middle Empire,

Byzantine reconquest seems to have almost stifled its role in the Mediterranean economy (Fulford, 1980). In Italy, the Byzantine presence exacerbated Roman decline through the crippling effects of warfare, without providing compensatory improvements in the economy or urban structure (see Christie, this vol.).

One could envisage Greek society therefore (as Italian and perhaps free Germanic society, cf. *supra*), as in crisis before the advent of the migration phenomena. In Greece's case, catastrophe when it came was twofold: the impact of the sixth century A.D. Black Death and the appearance of unstoppable columns of barbarian settlers (the Slav tribes) from the late sixth century A.D. onwards. Current fieldwork in Anatolia (Hill, 1995) has identified a virtual cessation of major church construction by the reign of Justinian (mid-sixth century): by the seventh-eighth centuries A.D. tiny chapels were being constructed within Late Roman basilicas for shrunken congregations. Added to the weaknesses in place by the early seventh century A.D. already catalogued, were the demands of the life-and-death struggle for hegemony in the Middle East between Byzantium and Sassanid Persia. The unexpected outburst of a new enemy, the Islamic Arab armies, found both older empires exhausted and unable to prevent a rapid and definitive collapse of their power -- the Sassanid totally, the Byzantine pushed back to the South Balkans and Asia Minor.

As in Italy and the older, more highly urbanised of the Western provinces, namely Southern Gaul and Iberia, some towns in Greece survived, essentially the larger regional centres. This was despite the fact that the surrounding countryside had been infiltrated by Slav farmers who had fought their way to colonize the empty spaces left by dwindling rural populations in the late sixth and seventh centuries A.D. Yet a crucial difference emerges: Eastern Roman power survived the loss of much of the countryside through the strength of these regional cities and through a total reorganisation of the Empire into military provinces or 'themes' (Haldon, 1990). From these two foci 'the Empire strikes back' and recaptures control of the countryside; Slav leaders, like their earlier Germanic counterparts in the West, emulate imperial titles and regional roles, but it is the older power that prevails. In the reunified Middle Byzantine Empire of the ninth to twelfth centuries A.D., Slav villages hellenize and lose their language and ethnicity.

During the seventh-eighth centuries A.D. (Early Byzantine era) the rural peasant class of Slavo-Greek origin had grown freer from state and landowner exactions and control during the contraction of state power to major towns and Constantinople; yet the re-expansion of Imperial control by the ninth century A.D. not only encouraged its reincorporation into surplus extraction by the state to sustain the imperial superstructure and infrastructure, but called forth an opposing pressure on the peasantry from the provincial landowning elite to divert those surpluses into private hands (in land rent or other

dues), and the villagers with them. In Chris Wickham's view (1984), the 'Ancient Mode of Production' in which the land-based tax supporting the state outweighs local landowner surplus extraction, and is collected through a network of cities, survived in the Eastern Empire during the Early Byzantine era, despite the loss of medium-rank towns. Eventually, and in parallel with developments in Western Europe, he would see Eastern peasant villages becoming subordinated to semi-feudal tenancy (shifting the balance to a dominant 'feudal mode of production'), from the final centuries of the first millennium, in Middle Byzantine times. It is certainly likely that in many regions of Greece the role of great landowners was limited between the seventh-tenth centuries A.D., and farming communities had a largely free status. The growing if fragmentary archaeological evidence, however, indicates very low population levels despite the Slavic arrivals until a great expansion in the eleventh-twelfth century A.D. Until the ninth century, large swathes of provincial countryside may well have remained outside the effective tax-gathering abilities of the Byzantine state. A potential hiatus between Wickham's 'ancient mode of production' and 'feudal mode' is more plausible, for Greece at least.

In the Byzantine world, therefore, the dramatic recovery of rural populations in the final centuries of the first millennium A.D. appears to run parallel to the expansion of a landowning elite based in the surviving larger towns of antiquity, where the same families were also beginning to accumulate wealth based on manufacture and trade (Jacoby 1991-2); significantly, this is contemporary with urban revival in Italy. By the time of the Fourth Crusade and its capture of Constantinople in 1204 A.D., the high-feudal military-landowning class from the West found in the Byzantine provinces allotted to it a village peasantry already dominated by estate tenancy.

Wickham's contrast between state-tax dominant and estate-rent dominant forms of surplus extraction (his Ancient and Feudal Modes of Production), as applied to Byzantium, may disguise a hiatus of the seventh-ninth centuries A.D.; yet, in other respects and despite much ethnic intermixing, it is likely that many High Medieval landscapes in Greece bore remarkable signs of continuity with their Roman, if not Classical-Hellenistic, predecessors. Ancient towns survived as towns or villages, some antique peasant communities remained in the open countryside and avoided Slav colonisation or more often had absorbed such incomers. By the early second millennium A.D. all are officially populated by 'Orthodox Greeks'. There may be here a fascinating contrast with ethnogenesis in Anglo-Saxon England (Hines, 1990, Scull, 1993, and Scull and Loveluck, this vol.), where the military and cultural dominance of the invaders successfully obscured their rapid assimilation of Romano-British communities into a new hybrid Anglo-Saxon identity. In Greece, cultural homogenisation and hegemony was achieved by the indigenous population over the successful invaders. What remains at issue in both East and West is the fate of these rural communities in the growing competition for their

surpluses between the resurgent central state and a rapidly-expanding regional landowning elite.

Another potential point of comparison between South-East and Western Europe comes with two contrasted models that can be applied to the development of Western societies as they emerge as states in the former Western Empire and beyond the former frontier in North-West Europe (Halsall, this vol.; Scull, op.cit.). We might colloquially characterize these as the 'top-down' and 'bottom-up' models. To illustrate the former process, one possibility raised with the Anglo-Saxon kingdoms in mind, is that tribal war-leaders called into power by the contingent circumstances of migration, and at the head of tribes far more heterogenous and temporary than previously envisaged (cf. Bassett, 1989, Hedeager, 1993), could through 'top-down' processes of subsequent 'embedding' into village communities, have assumed from *general* claims to territory *specific* rights of estate development. This is comparable to the expansion of wealthy - if often *nouveaux riches* - elites from cities and the imperial capital in Byzantine Greece into the countryside, subordinating hitherto free peasant communities into their estates. In contrast, the 'bottom-up' model envisages a natural process of social stratification occurring in farming and trading societies at 'grass-roots' level; thence, via mechanisms of elite competition and territorial aggrandisement, particular dynasties achieve paramount regional status; creation of an administrative infrastructure allows us to recognize the emergence of the state from the further elaboration of such chiefdoms. The latter model has its supporters in a Western European context, and could be applicable to evidence from the Byzantine world that traditional provincial urban elites were infiltrated by aspiring leaders of the rural communities, including Slavs.

A related debate concerns the growth of the early medieval economy in East and West: the question arises, whether the extraordinary boom of population and land use witnessed in Western Europe from c. 950-1100 A.D. and in eleventh-twelfth centuries A.D. Byzantine lands is the result of peasant initiative under newly secure conditions, the stimulus of a revival of towns and their markets, the new demands made by the state on peasant surpluses, the pressure from landowners for greater productivity, or a combination of some or all of these factors.

Conclusion

A question which recurred in our discussions and in the papers included in this volume is whether the considerable scholarly energies which have been devoted to identifying 'the X which marks the spot' (Halsall, this vol.), when the ancient world ended and the medieval one began, may have been expended in vain. But if this idea of a transitional period in history is conceptually unsatisfactory, so too is the notion of 'continuity'. While certain institutions of the Roman world self-evidently survived into the post-Roman world, for example in Italy,

Gaul and Byzantium, their nature had changed nonetheless. Where, then do we go from here?

Part of the answer lies, as Halsall suggests, in a greater willingness on the part of historians to see culture change as more than a question merely of 'fashion', and of archaeologists to move beyond the descriptive to the analytical in their examination of change in this period. Yet his own observations suggest that there may after all be something to this notion of 'transition': 'When we find transformations occurring in different kinds of evidence at about the same time, we can be fairly sure that something was going on' (Halsall, this vol.). The growing number of regional surveys which examine these transformations and the accompanying recognition of local processes of change and contingency, as well as the increasing interest in the evidence from rural settlements and the determination to trace the fate of indigenous communities through this period of sweeping change, surely point the way forward to a more sophisticated approach to this period which does not seek to 'iron out' this immensely complex series of transformations in Europe by viewing them as a single transition.

A seamless historical development without identifiable eras of relative stability or rapid change would leave the historian and archaeologist with little to do but perfect the art of 'thick description'. In reality it is increasingly clear that the Late Roman to High Medieval period reveals recurrent structures in social, political and economic life, and moreover these are found in both the former Eastern and former Western Roman Empire (though not concurrently) (Wickham, 1984, Bintliff and Snodgrass, 1988, Barnish, 1989). There are also, as we have observed, strong resonances in the developmental paths observable in the lands beyond the Roman frontier, in North-West Europe. History is after all the endlessly-varying dialectic between events, individuals and larger temporal, geographical and social trends (Bintliff, 1991, ed.), so that the art of 'postdiction' will always be a more successful goal than that of prediction when we seek to unravel the trajectories of the post-Roman European world.

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SHAPING SETTLEMENTS: EARLY MEDIEVAL COMMUNITIES IN NORTHWEST EUROPE

Helena Hamerow

Introduction

The longer-term developmental trajectories of Germanic societies beyond the Roman frontier and along its fringes have received increasing attention from archaeologists in the last ten years or so (e.g. Hedeager, 1992; Heidenga, 1987). With this new research has come the recognition that these societies were affected by the collapse of the western Empire and the formation of 'successor societies' to differing degrees and that they responded in different ways. It is the purpose of this paper to consider specifically how the changing nature of their settlements reflects wider changes in Germanic societies from the end of the Roman Iron Age to the Carolingian/early Viking periods.

The way in which a community arranges its living space is only in part due to technical or formal considerations. Anthropologists have demonstrated that shared attitudes and social relations play a major role in determining the layout of settlements. A correlation exists, for example, between increased economic complexity and increased complexity and regularity in settlement structure. So while hunter-gatherer settlements tend to have a fairly flexible structure, societies which emphasise concepts of property and territory are more likely to develop fixed rules regarding settlement layout (Fraser, 1968). Given that the transition from the Late Roman Iron Age to the early Middle Ages in northern Europe saw profound changes in social relations during the transition from tribe to state, as well as major developments in food production strategies, technology, and concepts of territoriality, we should expect to find corresponding changes in the structure of settlements.

It is perhaps self-evident that spatial order in a settlement both reflects social order and helps to regulate social relations; it provides, quite literally, 'a framework for living' (Chapman, 1989, 37). Yet this presents the archaeologist with a daunting prospect, for it is far easier to interpret the domestic organization of early medieval communities in terms of function, geometry or technology than in terms of kinship structure, household composition, exogamy, and so on, factors which we can at best only glimpse through documentary sources and burials. Yet if we are to interpret the significance of, say, an exceptionally large house or farmstead with any accuracy, we need to know whether power was vested in the heads of households or of lineages, in a council of elders, or in some form of paramount chief or leading dynasty. This paper is concerned with how, despite these difficulties, the analysis of spatial order in settlements dating from roughly

the fourth to ninth centuries A.D. can reveal important dimensions of the social and economic structures of early medieval communities.

The 'Shape' of Early Medieval Settlements: A Classification

The individual household was the basic unit of agricultural production in northwest Europe from the Roman Iron Age to the Carolingian period (in contrast to the shared compounds found in the earlier Iron Age in Denmark and the Netherlands, such as Hodde (DK) for example; Hvass, 1985). The economic importance and, to a degree, independence of the household is underscored by the fact that in most cases each had its own food storage facilities (Flannery, 1972). Any typology of settlement structure must therefore have as its fundamental criterion the spatial relationship between household units: were they contiguous, scattered, aligned in rows, and so forth. But how best to define this relationship? The overall 'shape' of a settlement is of course determined by a multiplicity of features, yet certain basic components which are common to nearly all settlements can be defined:

1) **'units'**: discrete features such as buildings, pits, and wells

2) **paths**

3) **boundaries**

And less commonly:

4) **central features or unbuilt areas**

5) **burials** which are integrated within settlements

Simply put, the form or 'shape' of a settlement is determined by the manner in which these components are combined. Components 2-4 in particular provide the underlying structure according to which the 'units' are articulated.

In addition to these components, certain parameters of spatial regularity are particularly useful in classifying the 'shape' of early medieval settlements:

i. the presence/absence of zones (e.g. for storage facilities or industrial activities)

ii. the presence/absence of communal arrangements, e.g. paths, boundaries, a shared water supply, *etc.*

iii. the ratios of longhouses to other buildings, such as sunken huts

iv. the dispersal of households. This is best calculated by measuring the minimum distances between the main residential houses. This suggests a kind of 'texture' of settlement, and reflects the degree of integration and interaction between households as well as attitudes towards the proximity of the sights and sounds of neighbouring households, in short, a community's requirements for 'elbow room' (following Chapman, 1989, 35).

It may appear odd not to take settlement size into account as a criterion for determining settlement type; the only distinction based on size made here is that between settlements which consisted of a single household unit, and larger agglomerations. The reason for this is that we can rarely if ever be certain of the precise number of contemporary buildings or households in a given settlement, or indeed that it has been completely excavated. This further complicates the assessment of the overall dimensions of a settlement, particularly as so few communities of this period constructed well defined boundaries around their settlements. The difficulty of distinguishing between, for example, 'hamlets' and 'villages' is therefore enormous. In any case, the numbers of contemporary households usually ranged fairly narrowly, between five and twenty.

Until recently, it could reasonably be argued that each excavated settlement of the Migration Period and earliest Middle Ages was unique in character, and that any typology of settlement form was therefore spurious. Yet as the number of large-scale excavations grows, certain regularities and recurring features suggest that several main settlement 'shapes' can be identified using the criteria outlined above. The typology which follows is loosely based on that proposed for the Dutch province of Drenthe. There, the main settlement forms of the nineteenth century can be traced back to the early medieval period (Waterbolk, 1991, 56), since the layout of several excavated settlements became fossilized in the boundaries of the fields which overlay them, as revealed by nineteenth-century cadastral maps (e.g. Fig. 7, Gasselte). The main forms are as follows:

1. **The Row Settlement:** a road (or exceptionally a waterway) is the principal organizing element along which farmsteads are aligned.
2. **The Perpendicular Settlement:** perpendicular trackways divide the settlement into a 'chequerboard' layout.
3. **The Poly-focal settlement:** small clusters of buildings lie together without a clear structure.

4. **The Grouped Settlement** (cf. 'le village groupé'; Peytremann, 1992): buildings are grouped around a central space or feature, such as a church or green.

5. The Single farmstead

Deficiencies in the archaeological record inevitably impose serious constraints on classifying and analysing settlements according to such a formal scheme. First, it can only rarely be stated with certainty that most or all of a particular phase of a settlement has been excavated. Second, the uneven state of preservation on some sites makes it difficult to establish with certainty the *absence* of certain elements such as hearths, enclosures and other more superficial features. Finally, nearly all the early medieval settlements excavated so far are multi-period, with occupation extending in some cases over many centuries. This, and the difficulties involved in phasing settlements with few diagnostic artefacts, little surviving stratigraphy and repeated rebuilding, means it is generally not possible to prove the exact contemporaneity of buildings and to produce a 'snapshot' of a settlement at a given moment. Assigning buildings to distinct phases is therefore a tricky business, particularly as only longhouses show any clear typological development. Where phasing has been attempted, it usually follows, explicitly or otherwise, what Heidinga has termed the 'twenty-five year model' which assumes a cycle of rebuilding or 'rejuvenation' of the settlement approximately once every human generation (Heidinga, 1987, 32).

Despite these obstacles, a number of settlements have been excavated on a sufficiently large scale and been phased in enough detail to enable their spatial arrangement to be analysed with a fair degree of confidence (Fig. 1). For the sake of brevity, only one or two examples of each settlement form are presented here. Whether these different settlement forms represent regional traditions or changes in the structure of communities over time, are questions which will be addressed at the end of this paper.

Row Settlements

Vorbasse (C. Jutland, DK) (Figs. 2-5)

Excavations covering approximately one square kilometre north of the medieval village of Vorbasse have revealed the development of settlement here over more than a millennium (c. first century B.C. to eleventh century A.D.) at a scale and level of detail virtually unparalleled in northern Europe (Hvass, 1986 and 1988a). In the fourth century (Fig. 2), some twenty enclosed farmsteads lay in two well-defined north-south running rows separated by a wide trackway onto which each farmyard had an entrance. The largest farmstead in terms of area, number and size of buildings lay at the easternmost edge of the village.

This structure altered somewhat in the fifth century (Fig. 3). The number of farmsteads remained roughly the same, but there were fewer enclosure fences, although this could be due to poor preservation (Hvass, 1986, 534). While

most of the farmsteads were still aligned in a single row, the eastern farmstead and several others were set apart from the rest, forming an open central space. The large eastern farm was rebuilt on the same spot, and again contained the largest longhouse. Each farmstead was accompanied by one or two sunken huts which lay outside the enclosure, in the presumably shared open area. Although not shown on the interim plans published thus far, three individual farms dating to the fourth and fifth centuries were excavated some 100-200 metres to the east of the main settlement (Hvass, 1988a, 119).

By the end of the fifth century, the settlement had shifted some 200m north and the abandoned site of the preceding settlement phase was brought under cultivation (Hvass, 1986, 534). In the sixth/seventh centuries, the village consisted of only about ten farmsteads (Fig. 4). Although the longhouses were still aligned east-west, the village as a whole was now laid out in an east-west row of contiguous farmsteads, with the result that the longhouses were aligned end-to-end.

In the eighth century, the early Viking Age, the settlement again shifted, this time some 400m (Fig. 5). Major changes in both the architecture of the buildings and the layout of individual farmyards developed during the eighth to tenth centuries, although the underlying structure -- that of rows of contiguous enclosed farmsteads (now seven in total) aligned along a trackway -- remained unchanged (Hvass, 1988a, 126-7). The shared boundaries between farmsteads, the regular dimensions of the settlement (c. 240 x 240m) and the road which ran through the centre of the village and from which each farmstead could be entered via a gate, suggest a closely regulated layout. The fact that the fences dividing individual farms were of roughly equal length has led the excavator to suggest that these presage the later medieval system of tofts, 'which regulated common grazing' (Hvass, 1988b, 92).

Gasselte (Prov. of Drenthe, NL) (Figs. 6-7)

The early medieval settlement lies adjacent to the present-day village of Gasselte and was laid out along the western edge of a north-south road leading to Rolde and Drouwen. The buildings date from the ninth-twelfth centuries, although stray finds dating to the sixth and seventh centuries suggest that this represents an expansion or relocation of an earlier community (Waterbolk and Harsema, 1979; Waterbolk, 1991, 96). In the earliest phase, the village consisted of a 450m long row of eight enclosed farmyards separated from one another by narrow pathways; behind these lay a second row of at least two farmsteads. The second phase was laid out in essentially the same way, but consisted of a single, slightly curved, row of nine farmsteads, each roughly 40m wide. The narrow pathways which initially ran between the individual plots became incorporated into the plots, suggesting that the fields which lay behind the farmyards were reached by passing through the individual farmsteads (Waterbolk and Harsema, 1979, 258). The cadastral map of 1813 shows a striking coincidence between the

nineteenth-century field divisions and the boundaries of the early medieval farmsteads (Fig. 7). A growing number of examples like this suggests that such 'fossilization' of the old village layout, after the community shifted to a new location and brought the old settlement area under cultivation, was a relatively widespread phenomenon (see below).

Perpendicular Settlements

Odoorn (Drenthe, NL) (Fig. 8)

Excavations in 1966 established the northern and eastern limits of an early medieval settlement situated on a slightly raised, sandy moraine near a small lake. Seventy-two ground-level buildings and 69 sunken huts were uncovered dating from the seventh to ninth centuries (Waterbolk, 1973). No obvious system of trackways or enclosures was discernible in the first phase. In the second phase, however, a square enclosure was built together with one or more trackways leading through the settlement. During the third and fourth phases, there is clear evidence of fenced farmsteads divided by a system of north-south and east-west running trackways (Fig. 8A). In the course of the fifth phase one of the precincts was subdivided into three or four fenced yards or paddocks of roughly equal size, closing off in the process the main north-south trackway through the village (Fig. 8B). Other trackways were also closed off at this stage. In the following phase, all the old trackways were re-established and new enclosures were built along the *same* boundaries established in Phase 4 (Fig. 8C). These enclosed precincts were no longer residential however, and only contained barns and a few sunken huts. Unlike the longhouses which were invariably oriented east-west, some barns were aligned north-south, and nearly all adjoined an enclosure fence. This phase represents a period after the community had abandoned the old site and brought it under cultivation, erecting only a few agricultural buildings. Belonging to a still later phase are ditches, fences, gullies and plough marks, all indicating the conversion of the old settlement site to arable after the community had shifted north towards the site of the modern village (Fig. 8D). As at Gasselte, there is a remarkable coincidence between the field boundaries shown on the cadastral map of 1831 and those of the early medieval farmyard enclosures, confirming the interpretation of the enclosed precincts, which first emerged in the seventh century, as individual properties (Fig. 9). The reestablishment in Phase 6 of the precincts and trackways of Phase 4 is of crucial importance as an indicator of the continuity of what must have been legally established property boundaries.

A second excavation campaign (as yet unpublished) took place at Odoorn between 1977-1981, extending the site a further 3ha to the south and uncovering at least a further 22 longhouses. In this second area, two zones can be identified: a northern zone with a layout similar to that of the adjacent, originally excavated area -- namely dense occupation with enclosed farmsteads separated by trackways -- and a southern zone which, in contrast, had

few overlapping ground plans and virtually no enclosures. It has been suggested that this southern zone was established about the middle of the sixth century, roughly a century before the more closely structured settlement found to the north (Lanting, 1983; pers. comm. 1993).

Kootwijk (Gelderland, NL) (Figs. 10-14)

Excavations at Kootwijk revealed several phases of early medieval occupation (Heidinga, 1987): two settlements of the Merovingian period (a small scattered settlement and a large, isolated farm, neither extensively excavated) and a Carolingian village established in the early eighth century, which grew rapidly from six or eight farmsteads to about twenty, and was abandoned by the end of the tenth century. The Carolingian settlement could not be completely excavated and an unknown number of apparently scattered farmsteads lay to the south and east of the main village.

The underlying structure was provided by a network of perpendicular trackways running through the village, one branch of which led directly to a shallow pool at the eastern edge of the settlement. Other main roads ran to the north, south and west, connecting Kootwijk with unidentified destinations. In addition to these major roads were several smaller trackways 'of strictly local importance' (Heidinga, 1987, 25). No zoning is apparent apart from a few clusters of pits of uncertain function, and the concentration of wells near the pool. The number of wells in the later phases of the settlement suggests that 'each family probably had one or more wells at their disposal, but only a few of these wells were situated on privately owned land' (Heidinga, 1987, 27).

This network of roads and trackways divided the fifty-two farmhouses, thirty barns, ten granaries or haystacks and at least 180 sunken huts (not all contemporary) into eight precincts, each of which contained at least one, and up to three residential buildings at any one time. The excavator believes that within these precincts each household had its own territory, even though there were no clearly preserved boundaries within them (Heidinga, 1987, 26). Indications that the village consisted of distinct individual properties do nevertheless exist. North of Precinct 1, for example, two farmyards each measuring c. 45 x 25m represent the bisection of an earlier, larger unit. Such subdivision was also identified in several other precincts. The likelihood that rules of inheritance underlie such subdivision is strengthened by the observation that the outline of these Carolingian precincts became fossilized as distinct parcels of land in the field system which overlay the old settlement area, once the village had moved elsewhere. Similar phenomena have been observed at Odoorn, Gasselte and possibly at Vorbasse (see above). In Phase 2a, two new precincts were established, while one of the original precincts was abandoned. This reflects a process which is becoming increasingly well-documented amongst early medieval settlements: that is, as a community expanded onto heath or woodland, demolition took place in those parts of the village which bordered on the fields, in this

case to the north and west of the village. These abandoned settlement plots with their heightened fertility were then incorporated into the fields.

Polyfocal settlements

Flögel-Eekhöltjen (Lower Saxony)

The Migration Period settlement of Flögel-Eekhöltjen was favourably situated between the sandy *Geest* soils and the coastal marshes of the Elbe-Weser triangle. It lay near the main waterway leading to the *Wurten* of the Hadeln marsh, suggesting that its economic life was closely bound up with marsh communities such as Feddersen Wierde (see below). In total 108,456m² (c. 11 ha) were excavated, revealing uninterrupted occupation from the first century B.C. to the sixth century A.D. At the time of writing, only the structural evidence has been published in full; discussion of the phasing and layout is based on interim statements (Schmid and Zimmermann, 1976; Schmid, 1982; Zimmermann, 1992).

During the fourth and fifth centuries, two different settlement forms appear to have existed side by side. To the west lay a row of three enclosed farmsteads, running north-south. The northernmost of these was a large multiple farmstead. In the east and northeast of the excavated area, unenclosed farmsteads lay more widely scattered. The general impression in comparison to the Late Roman Iron Age settlement is of greater dispersal and a less regular layout. Few if any granaries can be assigned to the Migration Period. The ratio of sunken huts to longhouses was 2:1, substantially greater than in the preceding phase. A separate craft working zone, with abundant evidence for iron-working, lay to the west. This apparent increase in emphasis on craft and industry reflected in the rise in the number of buildings which can loosely be described as 'workshops', mirrors contemporary developments at Feddersen Wierde (see below). The site appears to have been abandoned in the first half of the sixth century.

Grouped Settlements

Feddersen Wierde (Lower Saxony) (Fig. 15)

This settlement mound, or *Wurt*, situated on the coastal marshes between the rivers Elbe and Weser, was partly excavated in the 1950's, revealing the remarkably well-preserved remains of a village of the Roman Iron Age and Migration Period, whose development can be traced in considerable detail (Haarnagel, 1979a and 1979b). Although the earliest occupation dates to the first century B.C., only the third to fifth centuries concern us here.

In the third century (Horizont, 5), some sixteen medium-sized farmsteads and ten smaller ones were identified. These were regularly spaced and laid out in a radial fashion to make most efficient use of the space available on the mound. Houses were aligned along several trackways which led to an open central area. To the east of the main area of settlement, a trackway led to a so-called *Herrenhof* (chiefly farmstead), a large, enclosed

complex which emerged in the second century. This comprised a large longhouse and supposed meeting hall, as well as an extensive craft-working zone (with evidence for wood, bone and metalworking) and a storage zone with granaries. These last are interpreted as providing grain for dependent craftworkers, who, the excavator suggests, lived in small houses with little or no stabling for cattle. In the fourth century (Horizont, 7), there were still twenty-seven longhouses, but with only roughly half the number of stalls as in the third century. The *Herrenhof* remained largely unchanged, although the 'meeting hall' had disappeared. The layout of the fifth-century village (Horizont, 8) was dramatically altered, however. It was more scattered and irregular; few of the remaining buildings were enclosed, most were small and are interpreted as the homesteads of craftworkers. This fundamental change in the composition and layout of the settlement is attributed to a shift in economic emphasis from agriculture to craft production as a direct consequence of the increased flooding and salination of the surrounding farmland.

Single Farmsteads

Mørup (C. Jutland, DK) (Fig. 16)

A single fenced yard, comparable in size (2600m²) to the largest yards at Nørre Snede, contained a longhouse 44m in length, two or three smaller houses, and a row of 'lean-to' granaries. Three smaller houses also lay outside this fenced enclosure. The farmyard appears to have been bisected by the longhouse which stretched across the enclosure, dividing it into a northern and southern half; each half could thus only be reached from inside the farmyard by passing through the longhouse. The whole complex dates to the sixth to seventh centuries (Näsman, 1987, 463; Hvass, 1988a, 124).

The Early Medieval Farmyard

From this diverse body of evidence, a general picture of the development of the early medieval farmyard can be painted, albeit with broad strokes. The arrangement of buildings, farmyards, and settlements, suggests that the cardinal points were closely observed in their layout, an observation which finds support in certain lawcodes (see below). Until the eighth and ninth centuries, residential buildings, indeed nearly all buildings, were oriented approximately east-west. From the Carolingian period, however, some buildings, especially barns and sheds, were aligned north-south. The incorporation of buildings into one side of the enclosure fence was a widespread phenomenon, but emerged at different times in different regions. In Denmark, residential as well as other buildings were frequently incorporated into the enclosure fence from the sixth century onwards, and the farmyard could be entered by passing through these buildings. In the Netherlands, on the other hand, only barns were built into the enclosure, and only from the ninth or tenth centuries. From the evidence currently available, the practice seems to have been entirely absent in Germany.

Zones for craft activities, particularly metalworking, often appear to have lain outside the farmyard. At Vorbasse, for example, the iron working pits and sunken huts, while clearly associated with particular farmsteads, lay outside the farmyard. Sunken huts often lay in what may have been 'communal' space, although the distancing of high-temperature or foul-smelling industrial activities from the living area was probably for purely practical considerations. Storage facilities, particularly in the form of lean-to granaries, were often ostentatiously displayed around the edge of the farmyard in Denmark, Germany and the Netherlands, at least until the seventh century. In addition, a single granary often lay adjacent to the hearth room of each individual longhouse, as at Feddersen Wierde.

Documentary Evidence for Settlement Structure

Most of what little documentary evidence exists relating to the layout of early medieval settlements is to be found in lawcodes. This evidence is only indirect, however, for nowhere is a settlement or farmyard described *per se*. There is, furthermore, some ambiguity in terminology, most significantly in the use of the words *curtis* and *villa*; while the former refers specifically to the enclosed yard within which the house and its appurtenances were situated, and *villa* is normally used to refer to a whole village, *villa* can occasionally also refer to an individual farm (an example of this is found in the *Leges Alamannorum*, (LA) Cap. LXXVIII, 5 which refers to a dog whose bark could be heard up to three *villae* away. (Rivers, 1977). While no doubt the Alamannic dog was a robust creature, it was unlikely to have been audible across three villages, so here *villa* presumably refers to a farm). Despite these limitations, a number of conclusions regarding the layout of the *curtis*, the individual farmstead, can be drawn from the laws.

The emphasis in these laws is overwhelmingly on the rights associated with the individual *curtis*, rather than on the settlement as a whole. Intrusion without permission into another's *curtis* was strictly forbidden (LA Pact. V,3; Dölling, 1958, 27) and not surprisingly, the enclosure (most commonly *sepis* or *conclisa*) was central to the legal concept of the *curtis*. The enclosure is described as a timber fence of chest height, substantial enough to impale any unfortunate animal which tried unsuccessfully to break in or out (LA XXX; *Lex Salica* XXXIV, 1). Although a major function of the fence appears to have been to control the movement of farm animals (Dölling, 1958, 21; LA XXX), the enclosure was more than merely a physical barrier. It acted to define the legal extent of the *curtis*, as suggested by the *Lex Baiuvariorum* (LB XII, 9, 10): if the owner of a newly-built house wished to secure the property before the enclosure was built, he was to stand by the house at midday and hurl an axe towards the south east and west, thereby defining the legal extent of the *curtis*. The northernmost limit is precisely defined as lying no further than the shadow cast by the *domus*.

The level of compensation for theft from or damage to a *curtis* was dependent on the status of the owner. In the *LB*, distinctions are made between three types of *curtis*: that of a nobleman (the *curtis ducis* or *curtis nobilium*, described as a *domus publica*, perhaps referring to its role as a public meeting place), a cleric and a freeman (*curtis liberi*) (e.g. *LB* II, 12; *LA* XXX). Nowhere, however, is direct reference made to their relative sizes.

Settlement Structure, Social Structure and Economy

The settlement forms identified at the beginning of this study, not surprisingly, do not correspond in any direct sense to regional traditions or chronological developments; examples of most are found throughout the Migration Period and early Middle Ages, and across most of northwest Europe. That said, some appear to have been predominant in certain regions at certain times, although the number of extensively excavated examples of each type is still too small to provide a statistically valid sample. Perpendicular villages emerge most clearly after the seventh century, and most known examples come from the Netherlands. Row villages such as Gasselte began to develop in the Netherlands in the tenth century, according to Waterbolk and Harsema (1979, 264, following Slicher van Bath) but were already present in the Migration Period in Denmark (e.g. Vorbasse), and in Francia (e.g. Kirchheim) from the seventh and eighth centuries. Polyfocal settlements, on the other hand, were far less common after the seventh century, as more highly structured layouts were adopted.

It thus seems clear that by the eighth century, a less flexible, increasingly normative use of space is apparent in the layout of both individual farmsteads and of whole settlements. We see a striking example of this in the greater dimensional coherence of buildings, boundaries and layout in Viking Age Vorbasse compared to its predecessors. Similarly, by the eighth century in parts of the Netherlands, the mostly small, unstructured hamlets of the fourth and fifth centuries were replaced in many cases by villages in which farmsteads were arranged along perpendicular lanes, or somewhat later, in a row along a road, layouts which persisted into the modern period (Waterbolk, 1991, 104).

A causal link has been construed by some scholars between the emergence of the Carolingian and Scandinavian hegemonies and this trend towards more highly structured village layouts, and certainly the coincidence is striking (Theuvs, 1986). It is clear, however, that a range of different settlement forms was present in most regions at any one time, and this leads us back to the observation made at the beginning of this paper, that village layout is unlikely to relate simply to a linear chronological progression or to regional traditions. Although the material remains of early medieval settlements are unlikely to yield direct evidence of the determinants of settlement structure -- patterns of inheritance or landholding, kinship structures, and so on --

close analysis of village plans can at least suggest some of these causes. It appears, for example, that the distance between residential buildings in row settlements was more regular than that in other forms; this is particularly striking at Gasselte and Dalem. Another remarkable feature of row villages, and to a lesser extent of perpendicular villages, is the apparent stability of the number of households over many generations, even when the village shifted to a new site. The length of the rows and the number of individual plots generally varied little and rarely is there evidence for the subdivision of old plots or the addition of new plots. The main row of buildings at Vorbasse, for example, consisted of approximately eight farmsteads throughout the fourth and fifth centuries; the overall size of the village may have declined somewhat in the sixth and seventh centuries, but the main row still contained nine farmsteads; the eighth to tenth-century village contained seven or eight farmsteads. At Gasselte, the length of the row and the number of farmsteads -- eight or nine -- remained unchanged throughout the ninth to twelfth centuries. At the row settlement of Dalem, near Flögeln in Lower Saxony, it is clear that the four excavated farmstead plots retained a remarkable consistency of alignment and relative position from the seventh/eighth century to the fourteenth century (Zimmermann, 1991).

It would be premature to propose generalities on the basis of such a limited number of examples, yet it does appear that row settlements show the greatest dimensional coherence in terms of the size of yards and residential buildings and the distance between these buildings. The clearest evidence thus far for the addition and subdivision of precincts on the other hand, comes from two perpendicular settlements: Kootwijk and Odoorn. If the patterns tentatively identified here can be substantiated by further excavation, we will have moved significantly closer to understanding the different socio-spatial strategies employed by early medieval communities in village planning.

Apart from poly-focal villages, all settlement forms display clearly defined networks of communally maintained paths and roads which linked different farmsteads. Other communal features, however, are more difficult to identify with certainty. Storage facilities and craft working areas, where these can be identified, were in almost all cases associated with individual farmsteads. Little direct evidence can be adduced for the sharing of resources in order, for example, to support a warband. On the other hand, the grain storage and industrial zones adjacent to the so-called *Herrenhof* at Feddersen Wierde could have been communal, as may the groups of sunken huts which seem to represent special zones for craft activities at Vorbasse and Flögeln.

Developments in settlement structure are also apparent at the level of the individual farmstead. In his study of social structure in early historic Europe, Steuer identifies two key transitions in farmstead structure which took place during

the Late Roman Iron Age and Migration Period (Steuer, 1982). The first is the emergence of the multiple farmstead (*Mehrbetriebsgehöft*). This consisted of several (in exceptional cases up to five or six) contemporary longhouses as well as a number of smaller buildings, all sharing a single enclosure. The largest of these complexes resembled small hamlets in themselves, and could easily have accommodated thirty or more people. Second is the increase in the size and subdivision of longhouses, which often incorporated multiple entrances and hearths, suggesting the presence of more than one resident group. These developments did not, of course, take place everywhere simultaneously or in the same order. Farmsteads with several contemporary and/or highly subdivided longhouses had already emerged on the island of Sylt in the second century. At Vorbasse these developments are not seen until the third or fourth centuries. At Flögel, multiple farmsteads emerged before the subdivision of longhouses; at Vorbasse, the sequence was reversed (Steuer, 1982, 273). Both processes, however, are usually interpreted as responses to the same demographic problem: an increase in population and in population density, symptoms of which may also be seen in the intensification of land use and emigration during this period.

In general terms, the fifth century saw a shortening of longhouses, a proliferation of sunken huts, and a decrease in the number of post-built granaries in large parts of Denmark, Germany and the Netherlands (Hamerow, forthcoming). The pattern of enclosed ancestral farmyards in many cases gave way to unenclosed, loosely structured groups of buildings (Schmid, 1982, 92). The causes of this breaking up in the fifth century of the highly structured layout seen in so many settlements during the second to fourth centuries are unclear. The explanations put forward by archaeologists are inevitably tentative and frequently couched in terms of climatic change and demographic pressures, culminating in an agricultural 'crisis', particularly in Germany and the Netherlands. This resulted, the argument goes, in a shift in emphasis from arable farming to craft production, reflected archaeologically in fewer stalls for cattle, dwindling numbers of granaries and increased numbers of sunken huts-cum-workshops. This hypothesis requires considerable critical revision to take into account the most recent work, but this lies beyond the scope of the present article (Hamerow, forthcoming).

Settlement Structure and Status

Interpretations of excavated early medieval settlements often seek to square the archaeological record with the proto-feudal society evoked by early medieval lawcodes. This society consisted in essence of a class of landowners, either belonging to the military aristocracy or clergy, free and semi-free farmers (who had the right to exploit the parcels of land of which they were the proprietors, but whose status was undermined by the growth of villas in the eighth century), and finally dependents or slaves.

Questions of status and the identification of 'lordship' thus loom large in attempts to explain the structure and development of excavated settlements. Yet, just as the equation drawn between certain 'quality groups' of Merovingian grave assemblages and legally defined ranks is now regarded as overly simplistic (Samson 1987), the assumption that legal status or disparities in wealth found expression in the size of the *domus* or *curtis* must also be questioned. The size of the longhouse for example, and especially of the byre, is frequently seen as a parameter of both status and wealth (e.g. Winkelmann, 1958, 516). Yet it is possible that only a selection of the herd was stabled, for example only dairy cattle, so that the number of stalls is *not* a direct reflection of the size of the herd. More significantly, there is a clear correlation between the length of the byre and the size of the living area (Steuer, 1982, Abb. 19). This suggests that larger longhouses were designed to accommodate larger, non-nuclear households (for example, the 'classic' patriarchal family of husband and wife, two married sons, their wives and children). It need not follow that these households were also wealthier, although arguably only well-to-do families had access to the material goods necessary to support a larger household. Large households, however, are difficult to maintain even if they represent the ideal, due to high mortality and the difficulties of holding them together 'in the face of centrifugal forces' such as conflict between in-laws (Goody, 1972, 103). The proposition that large houses reflect rich or high-status households is thus difficult to test archaeologically, although the excavator of Kootwijk has observed that there was no discernible difference in the proportion of imported pottery (one indicator of wealth) from large houses and small houses (Heidinga, 1987, 39).

A simple equation cannot be drawn therefore between the size of farmsteads and the wealth or social standing of the household. Evidence for ranking has also been sought in the architecture of the longhouse. In the 1930s, the small chamber found at the western end of some longhouses was interpreted by archaeologists as the site of a 'high seat', a '*Germanischer Hochsitz*' (Steuer, 1982, 280). No direct evidence exists to support this interpretation, however, and Steuer's suggestion (sparked by the discovery of a silver pin and other rich objects from such a chamber at Flögel) that only one longhouse per multiple farm possessed such a chamber and that it could therefore indicate a special building, has since been refuted (*ibid.*, 280; Zimmermann, 1992, 103, 133).

The designation of exceptionally large building complexes as *Herrenhöfe*, or 'lordly' farmsteads, carries with it certain assumptions about the nature of relations between the occupants of these complexes and the rest of the community, particularly the postulated dependents. The highly structured layout of these and other settlements has been seen as further evidence of the presence of a preeminent group which coordinated the construction of shared boundaries, pathways, communal areas, and so forth. Similarly, it has been argued that the more orderly

village structure which emerged in the Netherlands in the Carolingian period is related to expanding Frankish political authority (Theuws, 1986). This view is by no means universally accepted, however, and it has reasonably been argued that 'local native farmers must also be considered capable of establishing order in their home environment' (Heidinga, 1987, 44).

The most detailed evidence for a *Herrenhof* comes from Feddersen Wierde (Haarnagel, 1979a and 1979b). Communal arrangements here included paths, bridges, a central unbuilt space and of course the construction of the *Wurt* itself. From the second century until the abandonment of the settlement in the mid-fifth century, a large, enclosed farmstead was set slightly apart from the rest of the settlement, adjacent to the main trackway leading out of the village. During the same period, a number of small, sometimes byre-less houses appeared, interpreted as the homes of craftworkers. Those without granaries were assumed to have been dependent on the *Großbauern* for provisions (Haarnagel, 1979b, 94). In the third century, a large building interpreted as a meeting hall was added to the *Herrenhof*, and craft debris and Roman imports were concentrated in a zone around the *Herrenhof*. On the strength of this combined evidence, a hierarchic social structure comprising a leading family, free farmers, craftworkers and dependents was proposed by the excavator (ibid. 195).

Large farmsteads found in subsequent excavations elsewhere were characterized in a similar vein. At Vorbasse, the largest farmstead lay at the eastern end of the village for at least two hundred years, from the third to fifth centuries. It comprised a farmyard of some 4000m² (the next largest was some 2700m²), containing the largest house of the settlement, as well as several other buildings. The excavator argues that this complex 'must be characterized as the most high-ranking farm of the village' (Hvass, 1988a, 114). The excavator of Wijster believed that the regular layout of the settlement 'suggests a certain amount of central authority', but he found 'no convincing proof of the existence of a *Herrensit*, [although] the different size of the farmhouses probably reflects differences in wealth between their owners' (van Es, 1967, 408).

Most settlements of this period, however, including those which displayed a clearly planned layout, did *not* include a farmstead of outstanding size. Documentary evidence and the burials of the Late Roman Iron Age and Migration Period suggest a further paradox: that power was highly unstable at the time when these supposed *Herrenhöfe* emerged, and was based on personal charisma and the individual's ability to provide for followers, in particular a war band, rather than on dynastic connections (Steuer, 1982, 112, 278ff; Hedeager, 1993). The existence in the Migration Period of 'chiefly' families who maintained their preeminent position (and a *Herrenhof*) over many generations seems increasingly implausible.

The evidence for 'aristocratic' settlement complexes emerging in the seventh and eighth centuries, however, is more convincing. The most striking archaeological evidence for this comes from Lauchheim (Baden Württemberg), where since 1986 a large row cemetery of some 700 graves and an associated settlement dating from the late sixth to eighth centuries have been excavated in tandem (Stork, 1991 and 1992). The village, where some fifty timber structures (at least some of which were arranged in enclosed farmsteads) have been excavated, lay about 200 metres from the cemetery on a lower terrace of the river Jagst. It was defined along its southern edge by a ditch, running 195m east-west. At the eastern edge of the village lay the largest enclosed yard (c. 60 x 50m) (Fig. 17). This complex contained approximately ten structures (not all contemporary), at least one of which was exceptionally large by the standards of the rest of the settlement (c. 14 x 7.2m) as well as four probable granaries. A group of six inhumations, five male and one female, lay along the southern edge of this yard. These were astonishingly richly equipped, the men with weapons and riding gear, the woman with gold jewellery inlaid with precious stones, glass and enamel. Grave 27, the most spectacular of this group, contained weaponry, no fewer than five gold foil crosses (originally sewn onto the shroud), and c. 270 wooden objects and furnishings. Most, perhaps all, of these graves date to the late seventh or early eighth century. Clearly they do not represent a family group. The excavator has suggested that they were representatives of the Frankish king who administered the scattered royal estates on his behalf. This hypothesis is strengthened by the founding close to Lauchheim of the monastery of Ellwangen in 764, testimony to the presence of such an aristocratic group half a century later (ibid.).

Any clear distinction which may have existed in Migration Period and early medieval villages between the residence of the heads of households or lineages and those of their followers and dependents seems to have been lost to the vagaries of the archaeological record. The dilemma of what houses and farmyards of different sizes and different types *do* mean in social terms thus remains essentially unresolved. Yet we should not overlook the possibility that what we see dimly reflected in the different sizes and compositions of farmsteads are distinctions not only between large and small families, but also between economic, legal, and perhaps even religious sub-groups.

Settlement structure in early Anglo-Saxon England

A perpetual quandary of British archaeology is the fact that the rural settlements of the early Anglo-Saxon period seem so decidedly second-rate in comparison to their continental counterparts. This impression is gained not only from the absence in England of the architecturally imposing longhouse, but also from the generally less orderly and coherent layout of settlements as a whole. Indeed, these are frequently so scattered that they scarcely seem to merit the term 'village' and have often been described as a kind of shanty town (Jones, 1979). This

perception has discouraged attempts at synthesis or comparative study of Anglo-Saxon settlements, as has the fact that, of the hundreds of rural Anglo-Saxon settlements so far discovered, only a dozen or so have been excavated on a scale and under conditions conducive to meaningful analysis of their composition and layout. A further complicating factor is the generally smaller-scale, more intensive excavation technique of British archaeology which is unlikely to reveal even half of a shifting settlement on the scale of Vorbasse, for example. Despite these limitations, the apparent contrast in the layout of Anglo-Saxon and continental settlements can be usefully explored here.

I have argued elsewhere that at least some aspects of the contrast between the 'Anglo-Saxon house' and continental longhouses are more apparent than real (Hamerow, 1994, 169ff). We can establish that, although the aisled longhouse (and perhaps the kinship structure it represented) was absent in Anglo-Saxon England, the smaller house found on English settlements, in which the weight of the roof was supported by the walls, *is* found on the continent. A similar case can be made concerning settlement layout. The earliest datable post-Roman settlements in southern and eastern England are indeed a far cry from fifth-century Vorbasse or Wijster. Those about which we know most are West Stow, Suffolk, a settlement consisting of about two to four contemporary ground-level buildings and seventy sunken huts (Fig. 18), and Mucking, Essex, consisting on average of around ten contemporary ground-level buildings and associated sunken huts (Fig. 19; Hamerow, 1993; West, 1985). Both settlements show similar characteristics, if on a different scale, and are often seen as typical examples of settlements established immediately 'post migration'. In essence, these characteristics are as follows: an absence of longhouses, with instead short, byre-less houses; a lack of obvious enclosures, either around the settlement as a whole or around individual buildings (at least until the seventh century); a scattered layout, with little or no perpendicular or parallel arrangement of buildings; few or no obviously communal arrangements such as trackways; few or no obvious grain-storage facilities.

This situation changes in the course of the seventh century, when larger, more architecturally complex and imposing buildings, enclosures, and clearly planned layouts emerge at some, but by no means all, settlements (e.g. Cowdery's Down, Hants.; Millett, 1983). Few if any clear examples of row, perpendicular or grouped settlements emerge prior to the Middle and Late Saxon Periods, possible exceptions being the settlements at Catholme, Staffs. and West Heslerton, Yorks. (Losco-Bradley and Wheeler, 1977; Powlesland, 1987).

An apparent gulf thus appears to exist between the settlements of early Anglo-Saxon England and those of the continental homelands. Yet when we consider the far-reaching changes which affected so many continental settlements during the fifth century, the comparison with

the settlements of early Anglo-Saxon England seems less far-fetched. It may be that what we see in England is a reflection of the generalized changes in settlements which occurred widely in north-west Europe during the fifth century: a decrease in the average length of longhouses and an increase in the number of houses without byres; a decrease in post-built granaries and an increase in the number of sunken huts; and a breakdown of the orderly settlement structure seen in so many second- to fourth-century settlements.

These changes have been interpreted in various ways by Continental scholars. Some German scholars see them as reflecting an agricultural crisis which resulted in a shift in emphasis from arable farming to craft production, and a change from fenced, ancestral *Mehrbetriebsgehöfte* to unenclosed *Großgehöfte* in which several family groups lived together (Schmid, 1982, 92). In Denmark, the large, enclosed yards at Vorbasse rebuilt on the same spot for many generations are interpreted as ancestral farms which signal the emergence of a land-controlling élite (Hedeager, 1992). If so, their absence in small, perhaps mixed communities of indigenes and 'surplus' migrants whose extended household structure would have been fragmented should occasion no surprise; neither should the inability of these communities to command the concentration of labour and resources needed to build longhouses; nor, indeed, should the less orderly layout of the majority of early English communities in comparison to their continental counterparts. It is also instructive to remember that a significant number of continental settlements of Migration Period and later date also had a high ratio of sunken huts to ground-level buildings and scattered layouts which would not look out of place in early Anglo-Saxon England (for example the settlement at Bremen-Grambke; Brandt, 1958).

None of this is to deny the role of the indigenous, British society in shaping the settlements of Migration Period England. The presence of a variable, unknown, percentage of Britons in these communities is beyond question, and they will undoubtedly have affected the socio-spatial strategies adopted by the community as a whole. We will not advance our understanding of the apparent differences between settlements such as Mucking and Vorbasse, however, if we couch our explanations purely, or even primarily, in terms of the ethnic composition of their occupants.

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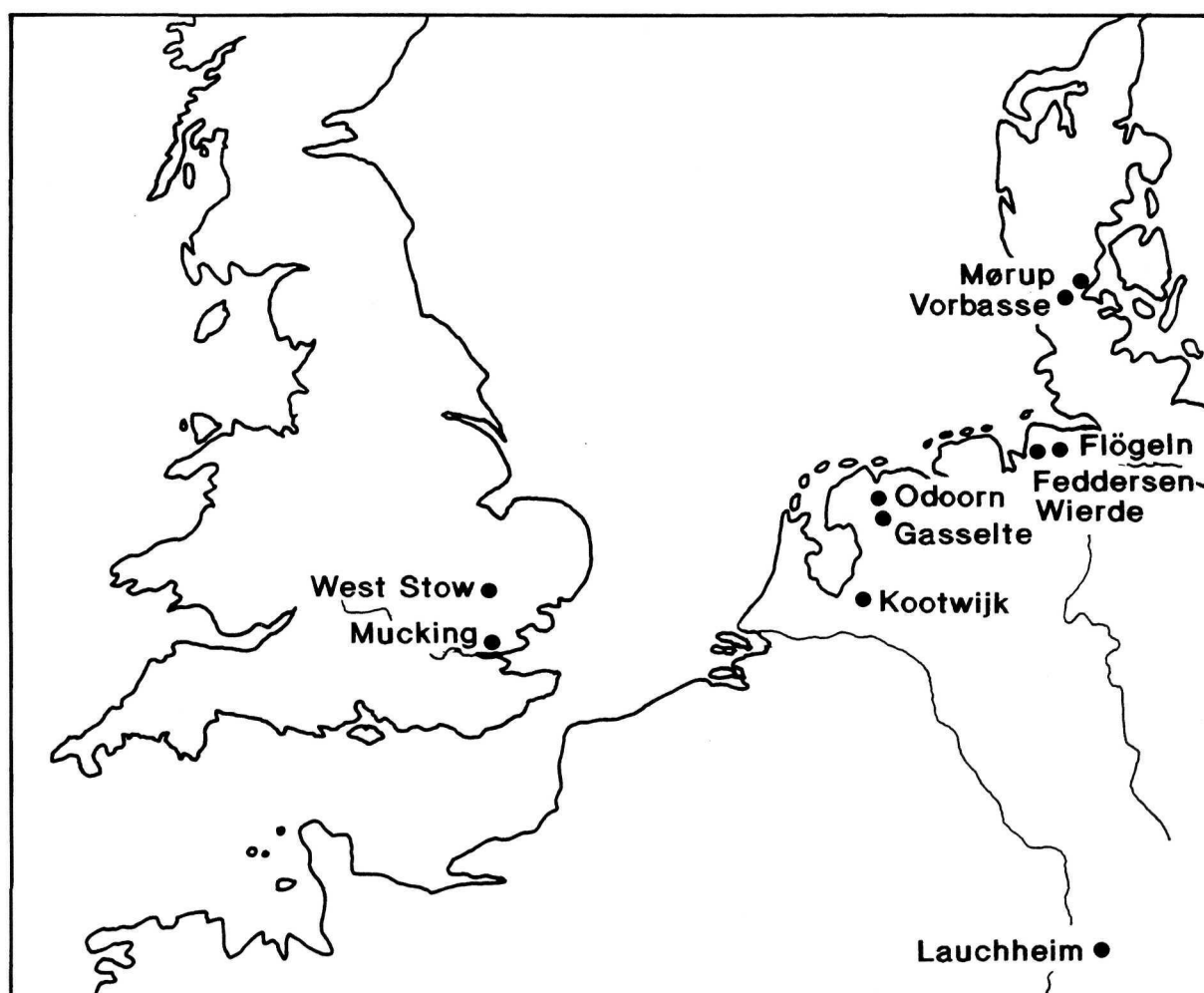


Fig. 1. Location map showing sites mentioned in the text.



Fig. 2. Vorbasse: fourth century A.D. After Hvass 1988.



Fig. 3. Vorbasse: fifth century A.D. After Hvass 1988.



Fig. 4. Vorbasse: sixth and seventh centuries A.D. After Hvass 1988.



Fig. 5. The Viking Age village at Vorbasse. After Hvass 1988.



Fig. 6. Gasselte: A) Phase 1 B) Phase 2



Fig. 7. Gasselte: The excavated village in relation to the nineteenth-century cadastral map. After Waterbolk and Harsema 1979, pl. VI, VII and Waterbolk 1991, Abb. 34.

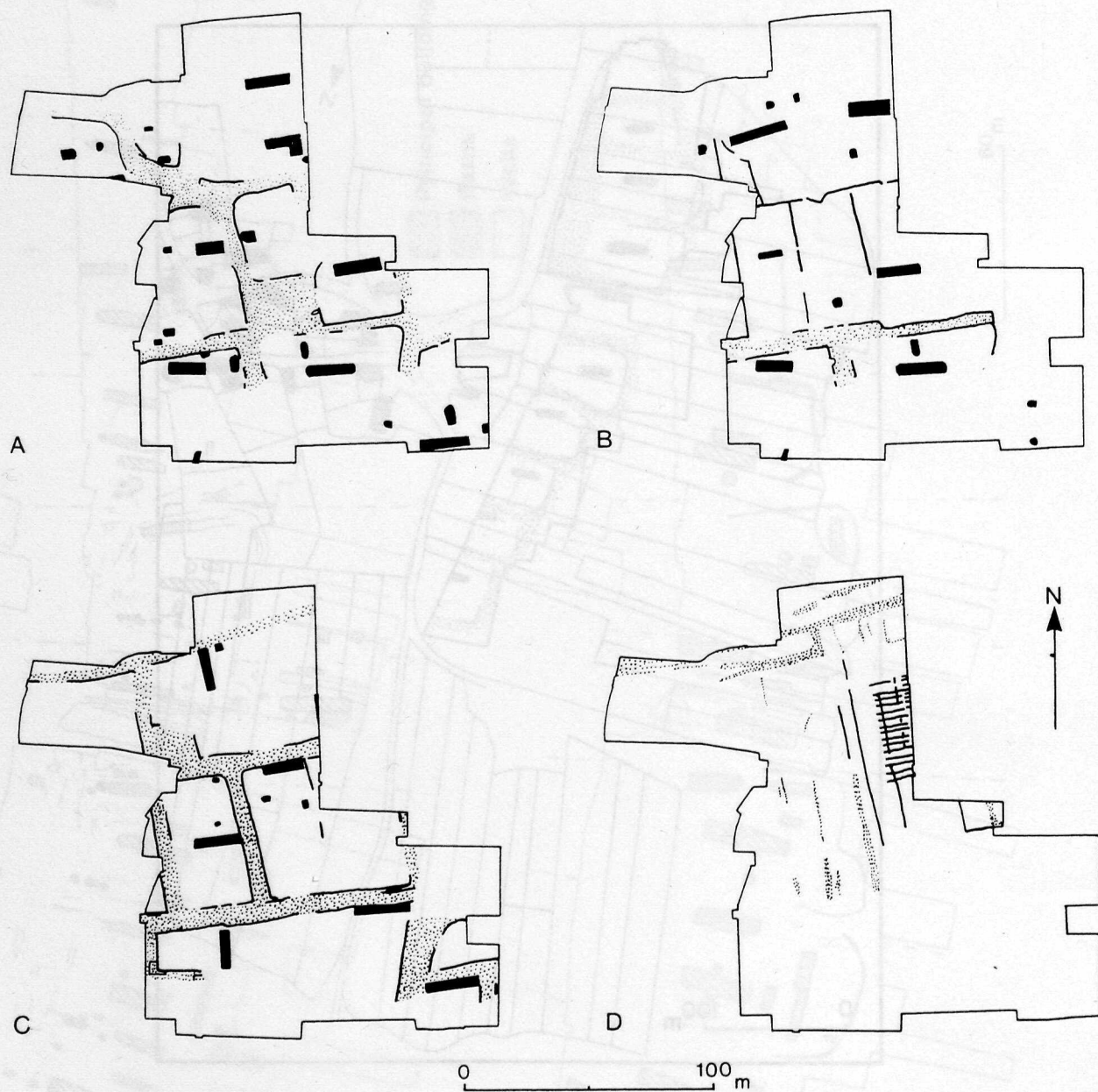


Fig. 8. Odoorn: the main phases. After Waterbolk 1991, Abb. 35-39.

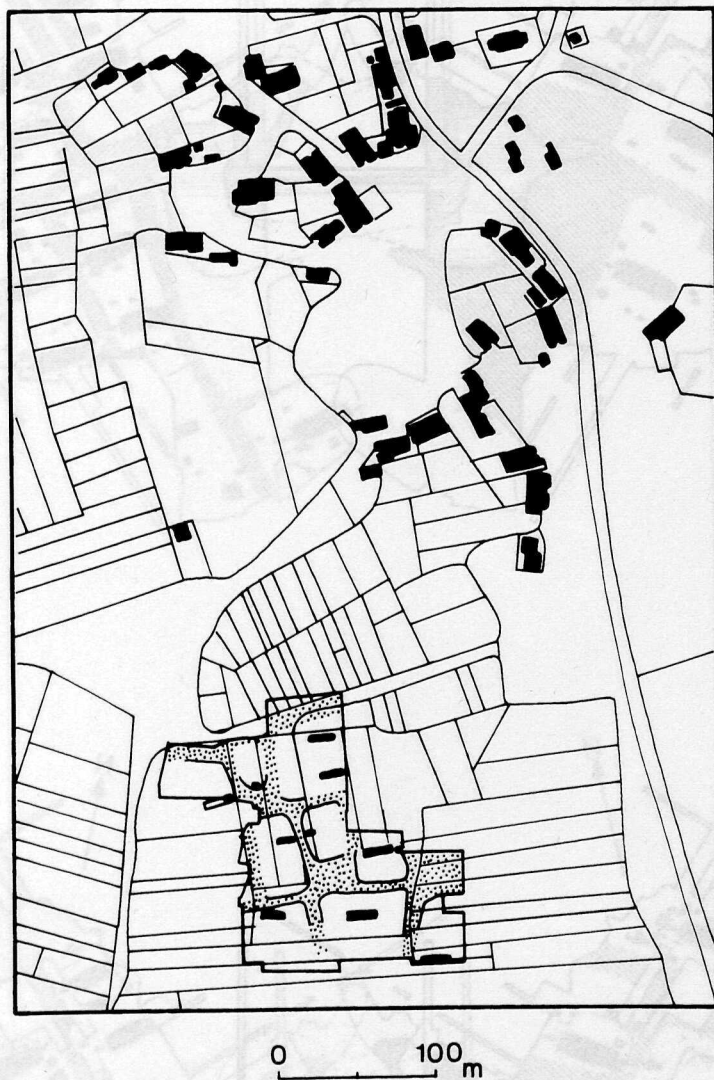


Fig. 9. Odoorn: the excavated village in relation to the nineteenth-century cadastral map. After Waterbolk 1991.

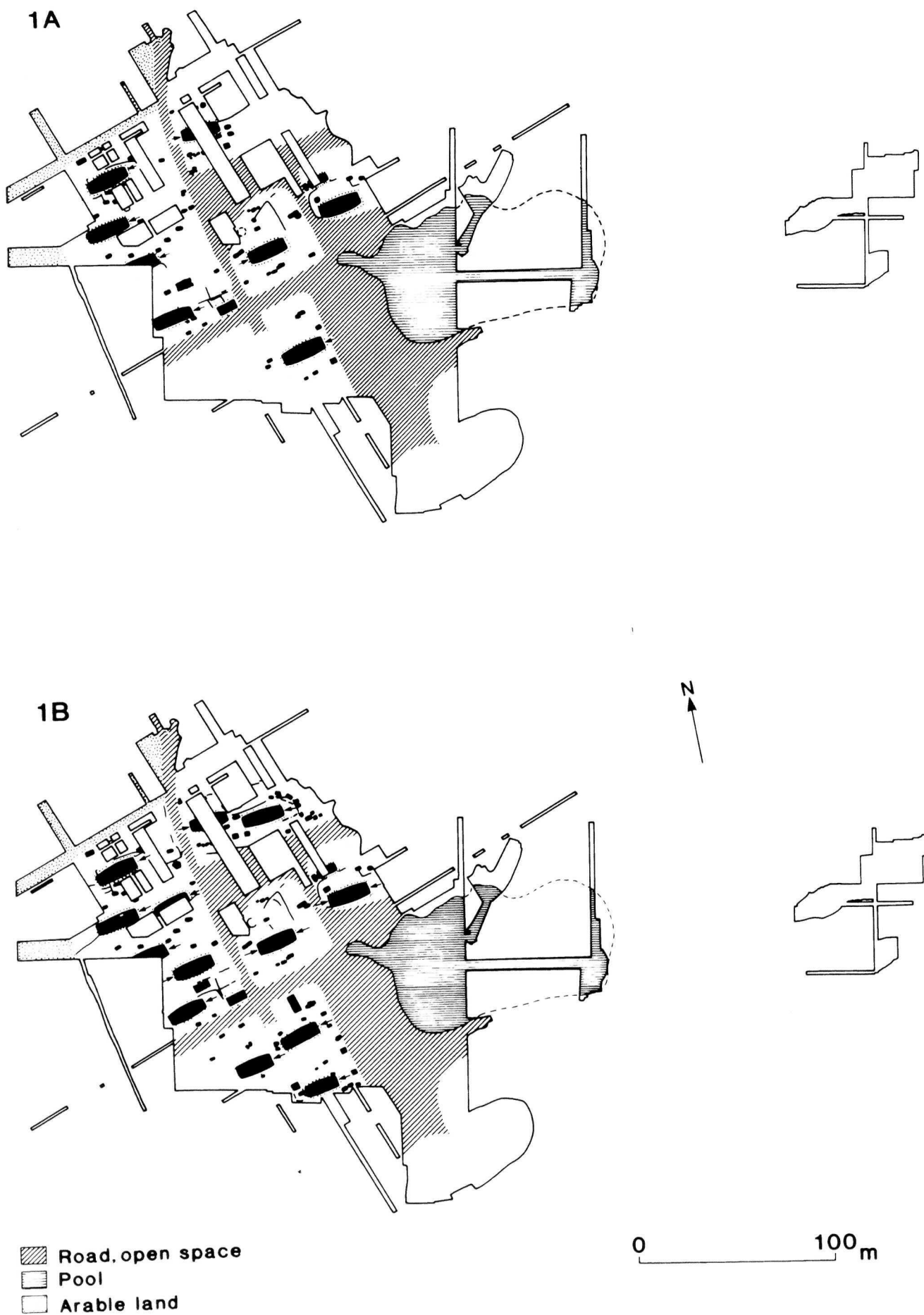


Fig. 10. Kootwijk: Phases 1A and 1B. After Heidinga 1987, Figs. II-X.

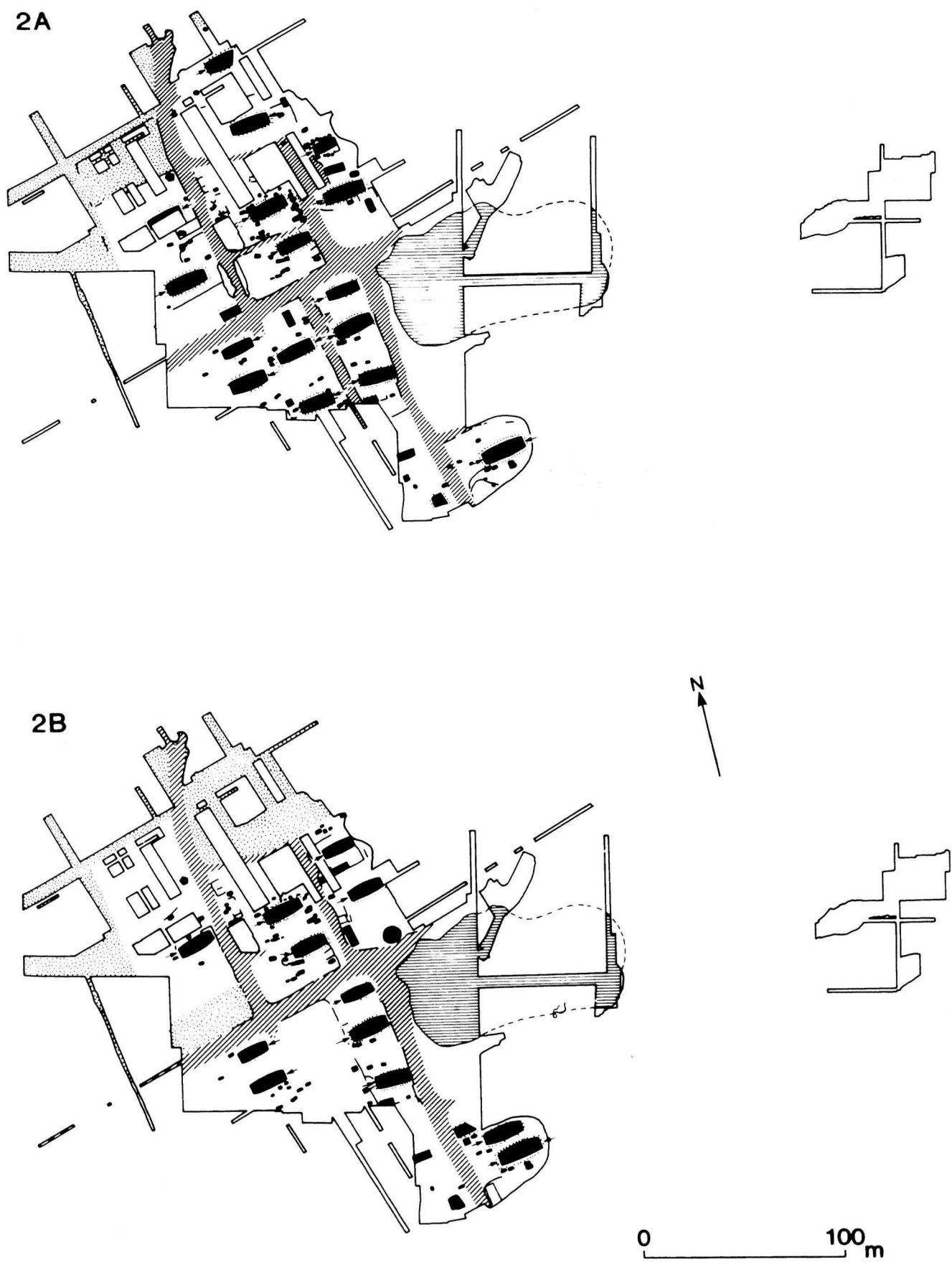


Fig. 11. Kootwijk: Phases 2A and 2B. After Heidinga 1987, Figs. II-X.

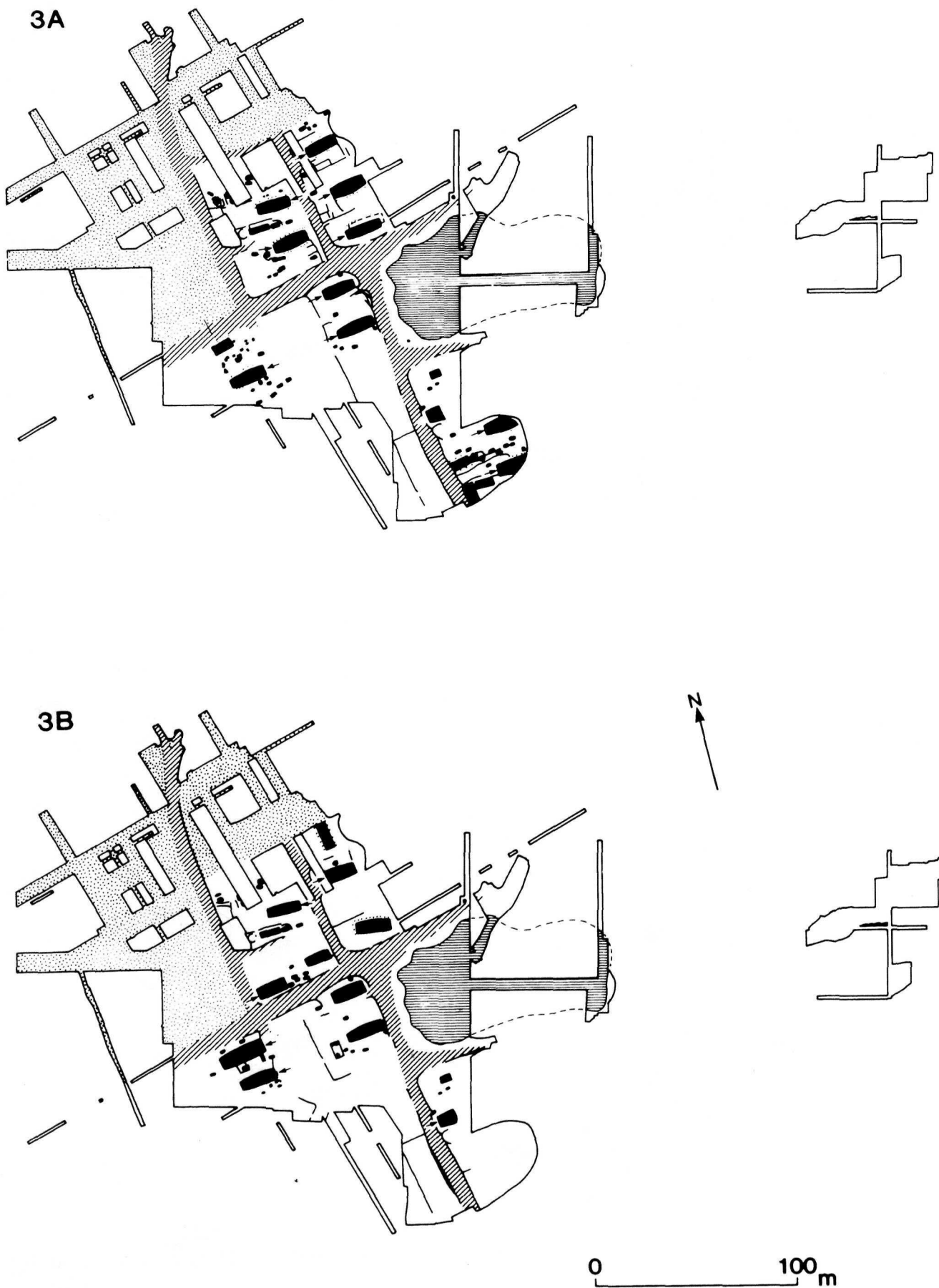


Fig. 12. Kootwijk: Phases 3A and 3B. After Heidinga 1987, Figs. II-X.

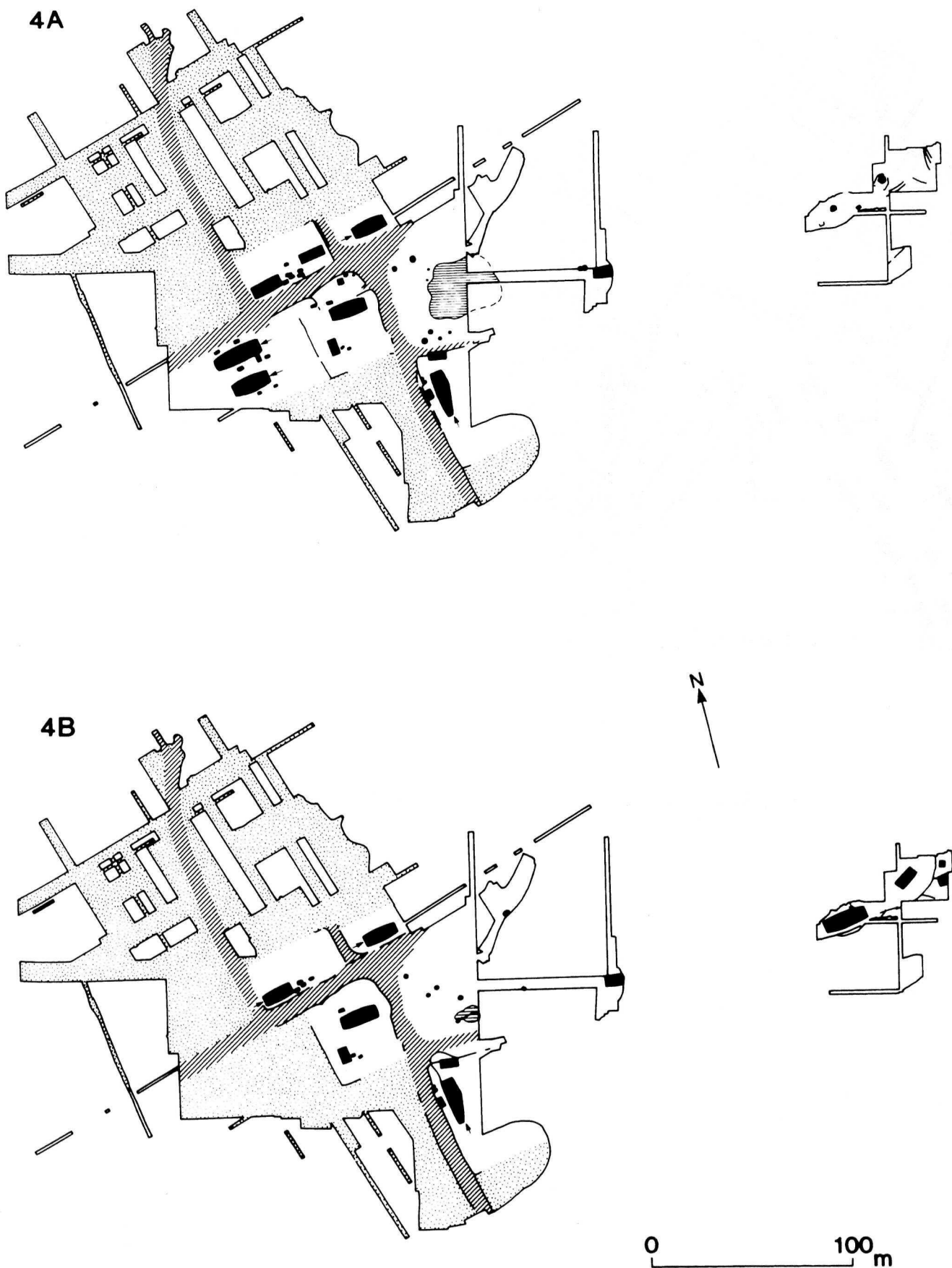


Fig. 13. Kootwijk: Phases 4A and 4B. After Heidinga 1987, Figs. II-X.

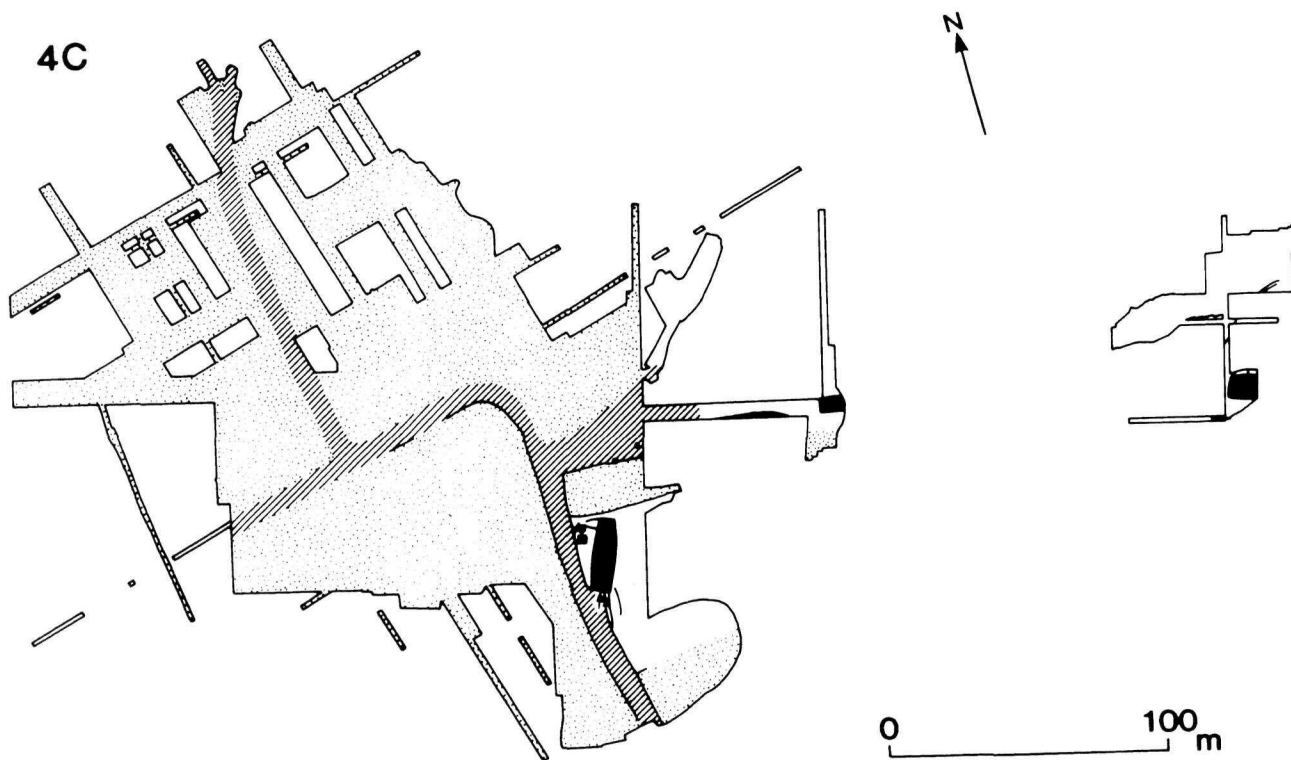


Fig. 14. Kootwijk: Phase 4C. After Heidinga 1987, Figs. II-X.

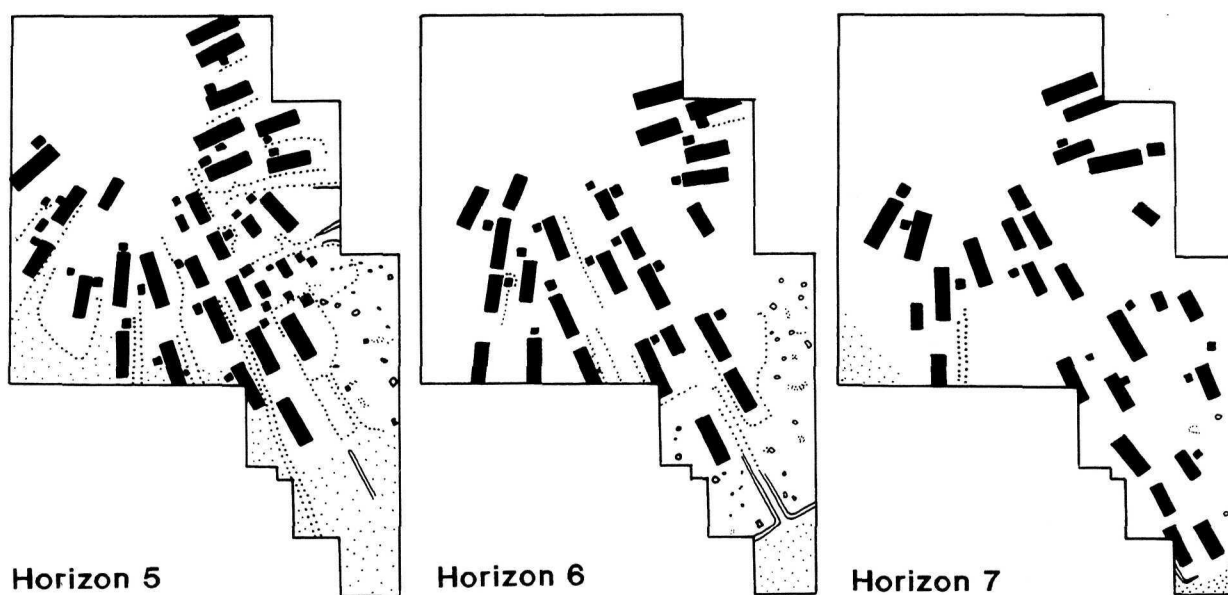


Fig. 15. Feddersen Wierde, Horizons 5-7. After Schmid 1984, Abb. 70.

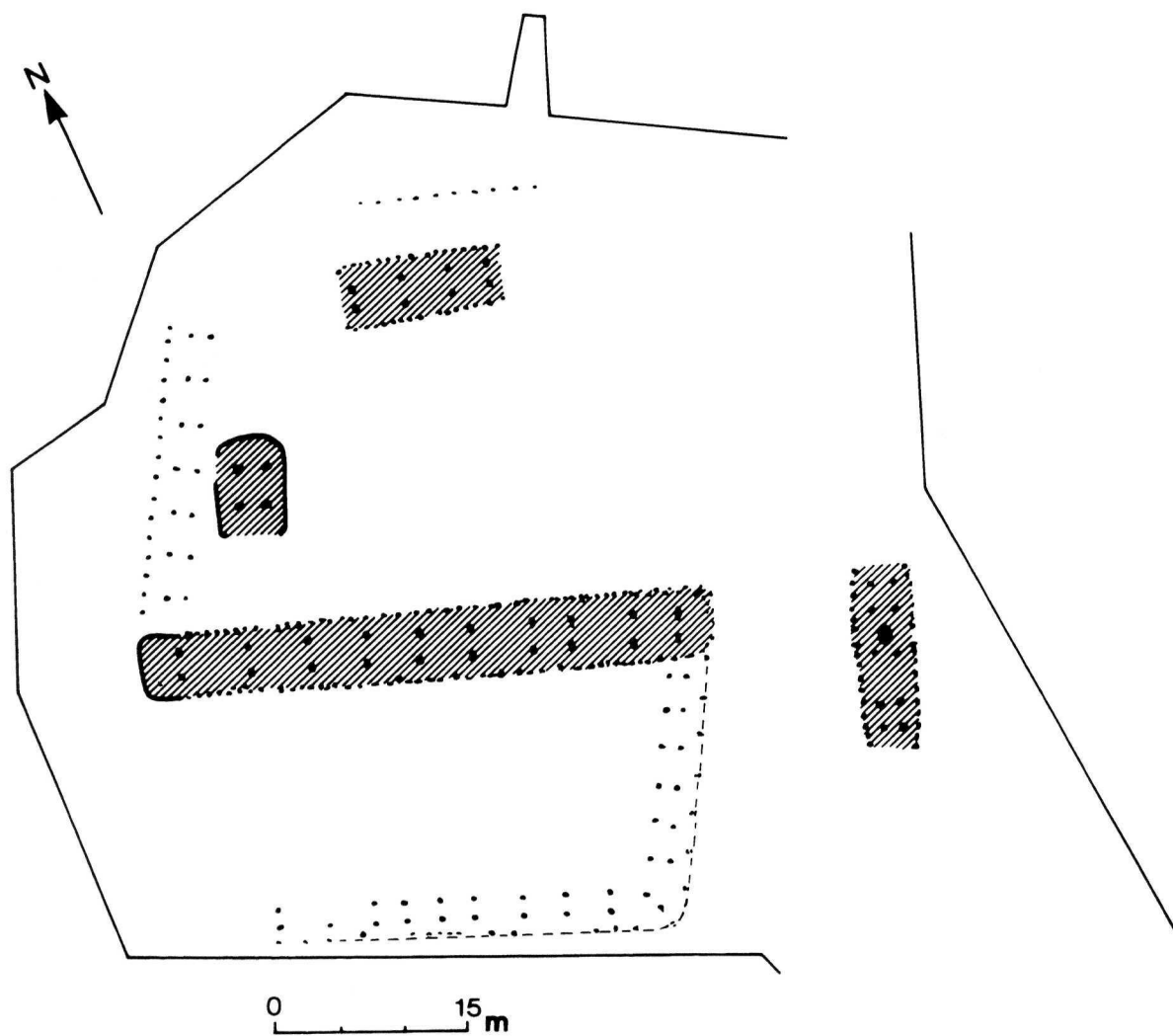


Fig. 16. Mørup. After D. Mikkelsen in Hvass 1988b, Fig. 28.



Fig. 17. Lauchheim: The large farmstead. After Stork 1992, fig. 164.

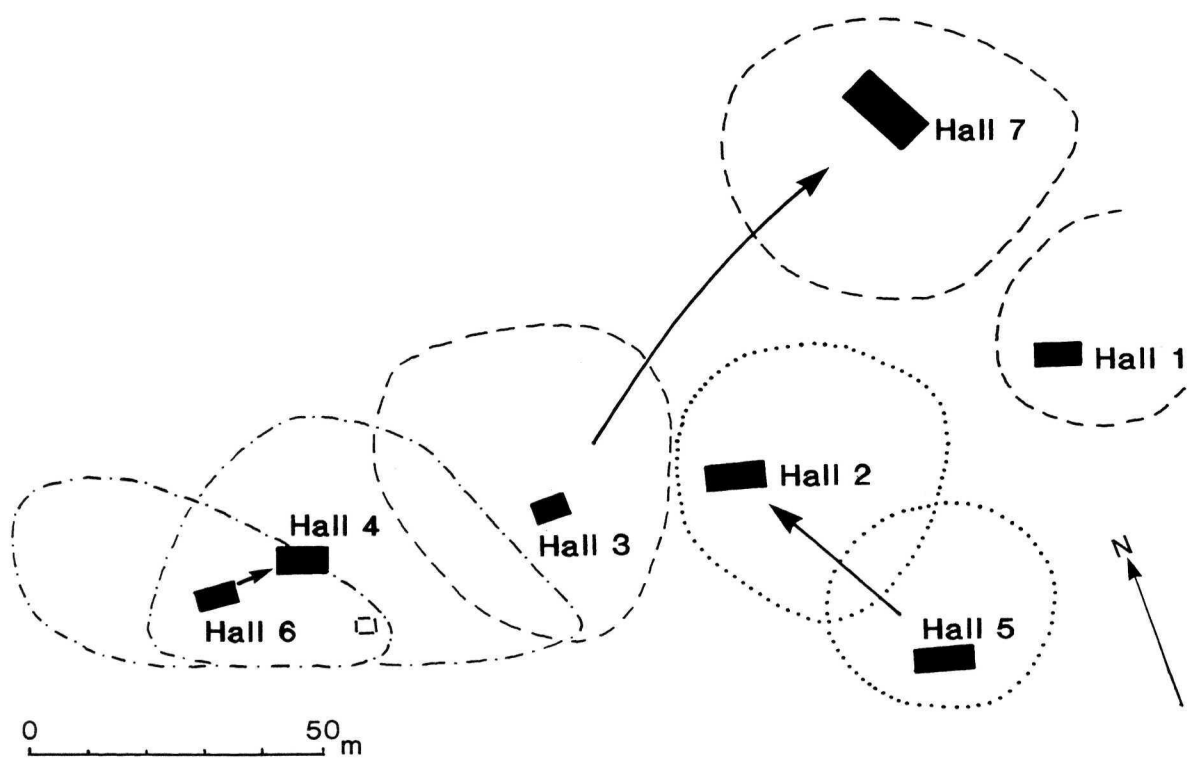


Fig. 18. The development of the Anglo-Saxon settlement at West Stow. After West 1985, vol 2, fig. 301.

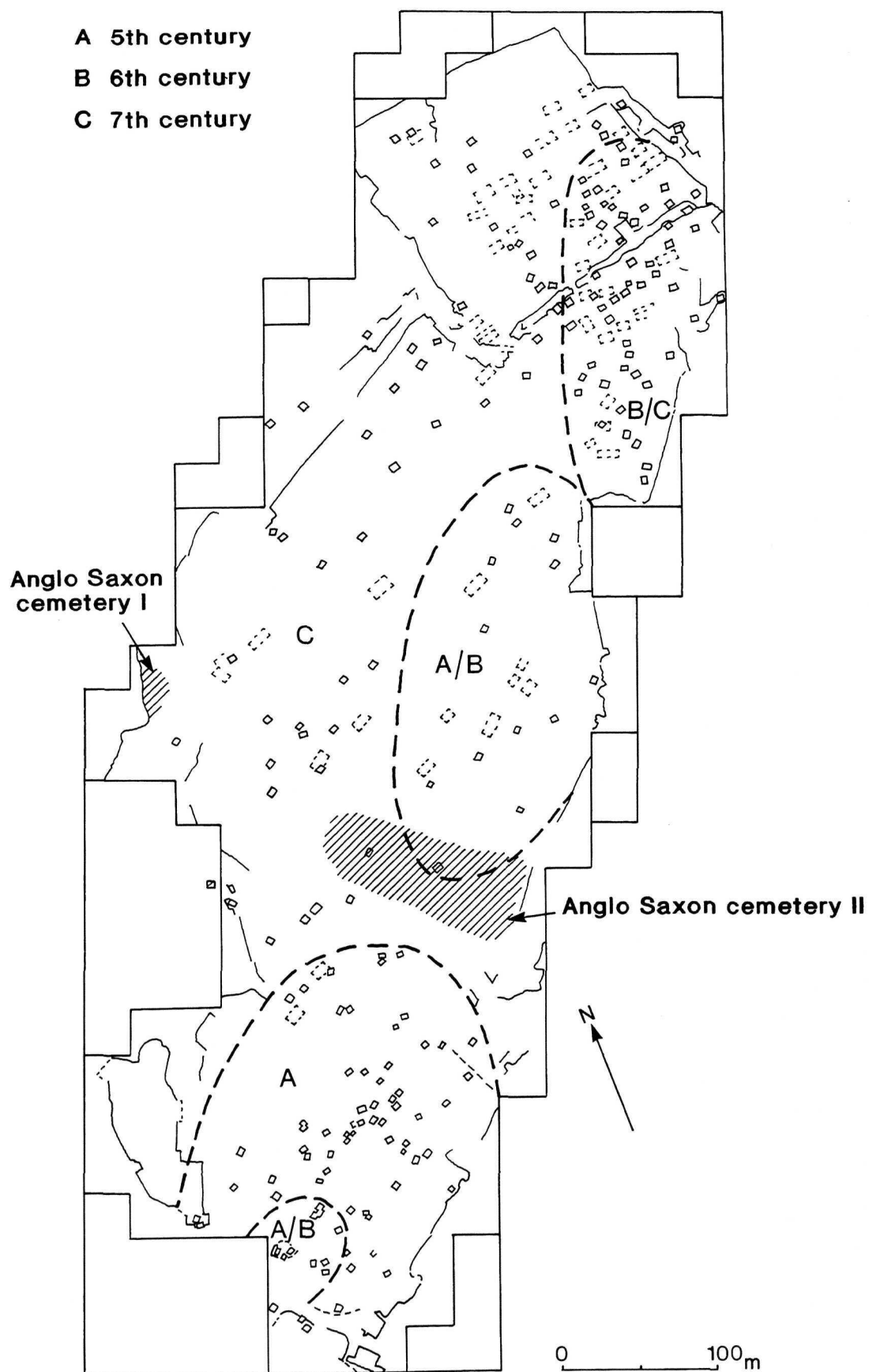


Fig. 19. The development of the Anglo-Saxon settlement at Mucking. After Hamerow 1993, fig. 195.

THE MEROVINGIAN PERIOD IN NORTH-EAST GAUL: TRANSITION OR CHANGE?

Guy Halsall

'Nous qui au regard de nos ancêtres sommes des dieux, puisque nous savons leur avenir...' (Lot, 1933, 581)

To begin a study of late antique northern Gaul in sixteenth-century Yorkshire is perverse but instructive. At the end of the fifteenth century, the Cistercian monks of Fountains Abbey decided to modernize their church. They were not alone; not far away, at Coverham Abbey the Premonstratensian canons were refurbishing their precinct in the latest architectural style. By 1526 the Fountains monks had constructed the lavish north transept tower which is today one of the most impressive features of a generally impressive site: but a ruined one. Within a decade of the tower's completion Henry VIII had begun the dissolution of the monasteries, and in 1539 the monks were expelled from their abbey. Coverham was dissolved three years earlier.

As Ferdinand Lot pointed out, historians and archaeologists, unlike the people they study, know the end of the process as well as the beginning (for a similar point, see Browning, 1975, 224). The only transition that, in c. 1520, the Yorkshire monks and canons thought they were living through was one to a period of prosperity and better management, as manifested by their works of restoration and improvement, certainly not one of 'reformation', let alone one from 'medieval' to 'early modern'; in that respect they had more important things to think about.

The 'Late Antique' period, and especially the Merovingian period (c. 450 - c. 750), has long suffered from being thought of as one of transition (cp. Cameron, 1993, 8): centuries of slow progression from one state of affairs to another. Historical transitions have a beginning and an end, defined, of course, by the historian. That from Roman to medieval begins, necessarily, with a definition of what 'Roman' and 'medieval' actually are (Cameron, 1993, 7, wrestles briefly with the problem). Points on a historical line are found where these definitions are satisfied, and the space in between is declared to be a 'period of transition'.

A number of factors have been used to define the points where this transition begins and ends. The transition from 'Roman' to 'medieval' is, depending upon the researcher, that from slavery to serfdom (Bonnassie, 1991; Goetz, 1993; Verhulst, 1991), from taxation to 'feudalism' (Goffart, 1972; 1982), from *latifundia* to seigneurie (Janssen and Lohrmann (ed.), 1983; Morimoto, 1988; Verhulst (ed.), 1985), perhaps from villa to village (or even from villa to castle; Samson, 1987), from 'parasitic' Roman urbanism to more medieval forms of town life.

These aspects are clearly inter-related and shade into one another in the literature. Concomitant with all this, in Marxist histories, is the progression from a 'slave' or 'ancient mode' to a 'feudal mode' of production (Anderson, 1974; Wickham, 1984). Also entering into the equation is the creation of the 'medieval' Church with its network of parishes, further defining the end of the 'transition'. The debate has not been confined to the Merovingian period. Some have wanted to put the X which marks the spot where medieval society begins rather later, even at the end of the first millennium (Bois, 1992).

All these features raise their own questions of definition. What is a workable definition of a slave, as opposed to a serf, for example (Goetz, 1993, for sensible comments)? What, exactly, is feudalism? This has proved a huge stumbling block, which would be best avoided altogether, were it not a tenet of the Marxist progression of modes of production. So desperate have some historians been to hang on to the notion of a 'feudal mode', in spite of the rapidly disappearing empirical basis for its meaningful existence (Reynolds, 1991, for critique of some cherished ideas), that some have reduced feudalism simply to power based upon land-holding, which hardly helps matters (Hilton, 1992; Wickham, 1984). In the end, the identification of 'medieval society' stands tottering on an enormous cumulative problem of definition.

When such definitions are nevertheless proposed, historical enterprise then reduces to a search backwards for the origins of what have been identified as the key features of this social formation. Here we run into the next problem in the study of 'transition': teleology. We 'know' which features eventually gave rise to, or developed into, elements of later social organization, and study these. At the time, however, there may have been nothing at all to suggest this line of development, so political and social action could have turned on quite different issues (as, obviously, it did for the monks of Fountains Abbey in c. 1520). Moroney (1989) makes valuable comments on this problem, likening the historical study of transition to considering, out of a crop of acorns, only those which later grew into oak trees. This approach obviously sells any historical period short. It leaves unexamined many vitally important aspects, and renders impossible any satisfying 'total picture' of society and social change. To use Moroney's metaphor, why did the other 'acorns', especially those which seemed important at the time, *not* grow into trees?

Not unconnected with this is the search for 'continuity'. Those who wish to play down change focus upon those

features, above all institutions, which can be traced in Roman and post-Roman society (cp. Barnwell, 1992). This approach makes for safe history, by assuming that the continuing existence of institutions means continuity of social organization. More importantly, it is lazy history. Institutional continuity is almost always demonstrated simply by the continued presence of something which has the same name as something which existed long before. Yet there are still in modern England earldoms, duchies, shires, sheriffs, even feudal tenure, all institutions which existed under those names in late medieval England. We still pay income tax, originally an emergency imposition to pay for the war against Revolutionary France. How much continuity over the intervening centuries does that imply? Although demonstrating Roman origins for certain early medieval forms of surplus extraction, Goffart (1972; 1982) nevertheless shows how the working and articulation of these 'institutions' changed in subtle yet vitally important ways. This alone empties the concept of continuity of any analytical meaning.

Similarly, in the debate on the fate of Late Roman urbanism, continuing occupation of Roman towns in whatever form is held to demonstrate continuity (for Italy, Harrison, 1992, 88-94 perceives a mental change in spite of continuous occupation but neglects to tell us what that change was or why it occurred). In these cases the fact that the types of occupation or the public monuments invested in are completely different surely represents profound social change, but in laudable attempts to challenge the notion of 'decline', this is effectively glossed over (Whittow, 1990, 13-20; Kennedy, 1983 is better). Analogous arguments have been deployed for rural settlement, and again the solution is to eschew vapid talk of site continuity, and lay stress on the real elements of change, even where the broad impression of the rural settlement pattern argues for continued occupation of the same general areas (Scull, 1992, 12). Whatever the evidence under consideration, the continuity debate seems rather to miss the point of post-Roman social change.

The length of the transition between Roman and medieval has itself been a matter of some debate. Some (such as Bois, 1992) see medieval society as produced by a few decades of revolutionary change; others prefer to 'spread the evolution of medieval society over seven centuries' (Dunbabin, 1993, 698, who coins the term 'gradualists' for adherents to this, her own view). Both views seem to be equally mistaken, for the simple reason that the imagery of 'transition' assumes a particular, stable state of affairs ('Roman' or 'medieval' society) at the beginning and end of the process. This, again, does an injustice to history; it is the single most important flaw in Bois' stimulating book, which assumes a continuous slave-based 'ancient mode' up to c. A.D. 1000. Definitions of what make 'medieval' and 'Roman' society (or any other kind of society) rest on what might be termed 'unifying features'. Whilst these are useful up to a point, helping to cut history into necessary but artificial units of study, similar problems arise as with the search for continuity. Change is denied. Villas, for

example, existed at the end of the Roman period and at the beginning, but not as exactly the same things. There was much change within the Roman period, as in the medieval. So, we might say that early Merovingian society was very different from that 300 years later, which might (by usual definitions) be called 'medieval'. We should not forget, however, that there was at least as much difference between late Merovingian society (c. 750) and society 300 years later, or between Late Roman (c. 400) and Early Roman society, 300 years earlier. In a sense, all points in history are points of transition.

When change is viewed as a 300-year process from pre-defined A to pre-defined B, it is of necessity viewed as a unilinear, unidirectional process, a 'pathway' (see Murray, 1983, 221) or 'passage' (Anderson, 1974), down which 'progress ... was even and inevitable' (Coward, 1980, 102, discussing views of the 'high road to [the English] civil war'). As Coward says, 'this is a temptation to be resisted' (1980, 102). Like the seventeenth century (in Coward's view), late antique and early medieval society was 'full of political tension'. There was never a single possible outcome of the struggles which created, or arose from, this tension. This paper argues that social change was dynamic, and took place over much shorter time spans than is customarily believed. Three hundred years, after all, is a long time.

When one considers this unbroken succession of social change, the idea of 'transition', or of defined periods of transition, seems rather hollow, so why should historians and archaeologists continue to think like this? The reason is partly the early medievalist's (particularly the early medieval historian's) tendency to aggregate evidence. When data are scarce, it is held to be admissible to take sources from widely varying geographical and chronological contexts. Only thus might we build a pile of evidence large enough to be deemed statistically significant (Abels, 1988, 9 for criticism of the approach, nevertheless acknowledging this 'statistical' justification). To take just one example, Gurevich (1988, 65-70), discussing 'false prophets', deals concurrently with two cases from the 580s-590s, two cases condemned by a Frankish synod of 745, and one recorded in the 840s. Anecdotes spanning 250 years are discussed in the same breath to make a single point. This approach would naturally be ruled out of court in almost any later period of history; imagine trying to get away with treating cases from 1590, 1745 and 1840 as a single entity! (Incidentally, arguments against this analogy, invoking more rapid modern 'rates of change', themselves stem ultimately from medievalists' age-old aggregating approach.) Various justifications have been proposed for it, usually making appeal to common Germanic custom, 'heroic' ethos (Hedeager, 1992a), Roman heritage (Fouracre, 1992), or some combination of these. None stands up to rigorous examination. The aggregation of evidence from a long period of time results, inevitably, in an 'average' view of society which applies across the whole time-span, and across all of the geographical zones from

which the data were trawled. Hence the picture of uniform, static or only slowly changing social formations, and consequently the idea that it took 300 years to transform the Roman world into the medieval. The obvious flaws of this approach will, however, doom such history to being a reasonable image of society at none of the times and in none of the places covered.

In pre-industrial social formations, without rigid institutionalization of social structure, social practice was governed by 'custom', that is to say by the accumulation of known previous interactions between people of different societal groups (men and women, old and young, child and adult, slave and free, lord and tenant). The memory of 'custom' is notoriously short; allegedly 'ancient' custom may date from only fifty years previously (Balzaretti, 1994, 8-10; Bloch, 1962, 113-4; Reynolds, 1991, 214-5). Social structure was therefore open to perpetual renegotiation. 'Peasant', or 'peasant-based' (Wickham, 1992), societies are often assumed by historians to be conservative and somehow static, but, as comparative peasant studies show, such societies have their own dynamics for frequent change (Shanin, 1987, 6; Wolf, 1966, 17). 'It is stability rather than social change that needs explaining' (Shanks and Tilley, 1987, 212).

The corollary of this is that, in customary societies, change must be examined on a regional level. Such societies change over short distances, making attempts to aggregate evidence across broad geographical divides fruitless (Wickham, 1992, for thoughtful treatment of the problem). At least as a first stage of analysis, all pronouncements upon post-Roman social structure should be based upon data rigidly contextualized in time and space (as in this volume).

It must be our duty to try and recover this diversity and dynamism in Late and post-Roman society. Archaeology, obviously, presents the greatest opportunities for doing so, since it offers an ever-increasing volume of regionally specific evidence. Its potential is increased now that we are beginning to move away from the old idea that excavated data serve only descriptive purposes and cannot reveal contemporary thought-processes (however reluctant some historians are to accept this; for one with his head firmly in the sand see Collins, 1991, 94 n1, 313, and, best of all, 323 n47). Vaguely dated material culture and the significance of negative evidence, perennial problems of post-Roman archaeology, are being reconsidered with ever greater subtlety.

To restore to the Merovingian period some of its doubtless diversity and energy requires sophisticated use of written and excavated evidence. The integration of the two has, in Merovingian Gaul as in Anglo-Saxon England, given rise to many problems. In spite of all the (epistemologically fairly vacuous) talk of 'inter-disciplinarity' which courses through Britain's universities, there still seem to be enormous problems facing the reconciliation of history and archaeology, disciplines which ought to be natural allies.

The problem with the 'inter-disciplinary' approach is that it usually results in hopping back and forth between two disciplines, quarrying one to provide 'proofs' or 'illustrations' of concepts drawn from the other. One is usually dominant, either institutionally, or in the mind of the individual researcher. The blanket, uncritical ascription of change in the material record to historically attested events (collapse of 'classic' Roman villa or town life assigned to barbarian invasions; change in burial or settlement styles ascribed to incoming 'Germans'; differences in burial style identified with 'German'/'Roman' or 'Pagan'/'Christian' dichotomies; etc.) has clouded the issue. Much of the problem is that the 'historical' explanations adduced ('invasion'; ethnicity; religious change) take over pre-conceived notions which refined study of the documentary record itself would call into question. The realization of this fact, coupled with archaeology's attempt to rid itself of the 'hand-maiden of history' tag and the refusal of historians to acknowledge archaeology's explanatory value (see above), has ensured that more subtle means of using written and excavated data together have not emerged (Driscoll, 1988, for valuable comments).

The starting point in improving this situation is the recognition that all material traces are meaningful and historically contingent. This means adopting what may be termed a 'multi-disciplinary' approach, studying each evidential form (burials, rural settlement excavations, survey, urban archaeology, narrative sources of the various kinds, charters, laws, etc.) on their own merit, examining the purposes which their creation served, the vagaries of, and reasons for, their survival (or absence), and so on. This approach to the evidence is a key tenet of the 'post-processual' archaeology, in its many forms (cp. Hodder, 1986; Shanks and Tilley, 1987; Tilley, 1991), but historians have recently advocated similar 'contextualizing' approaches to their own data (Fouracre, 1990; Wood, 1992). Only when this is done, and the implications of the different forms independently assessed, can comparisons and contrasts usefully be made between them.

Separating data by date and geographical origin has, in the period under discussion, the inevitable consequence of making the portion of any body of evidence (especially written) which pertains to a given time and place extremely small, and thus often statistically insignificant, as implied above. At the same time, however, it presents us with a new and more exciting view of the fifth to eighth centuries which gives some recognition to the period's variety and energy. Whilst acknowledging that, of course, an argument is more persuasive the more evidence it is based upon, and that of course we need means of determining the risk of chance distorting the picture, the statistics argument is something of a positivist red herring. For one thing, when rigidly applied, it assumes that there is some kind of evidential quantitative threshold, beyond which a historical interpretation somehow becomes less subjective, less contingent upon the researcher in question, and closer to the 'right' answer. Statistics will tell you the

chances of a given impression being brought about by chance, but they will not, and cannot, tell you whether or not it *was* brought about by chance. Surely a subtle interpretation of ten charters is better than a crude interpretation of 1,000. Perhaps mischievously, it is worth remembering that David Clarke (1969, 802) long ago raised the issue of redundant data. Of course pictures which emerge from the contextualizing approach will usually (unless in altogether exceptional areas of intense, high-quality archaeology) represent only very tentative sketches. This ought to be made clear, and due acknowledgement made of statistical weakness. Nevertheless, there are not, and will never be, perfect, value-free data; *all* attempts at social history are tentative sketches. The alternative, generalizing, aggregating approach may be statistically satisfactory but, as argued above, it is historically unacceptable.

The 'multi-disciplinary' approach provides another way around these statistical drawbacks. If all social practice is meaningful, then contemporaneous transformations in diverse forms of evidence should reflect real social change. It is important to recognize that change in the evidence, in its forms as well as the 'message' it conveys, is the result of deliberate thought by the people of the time. Changes in material culture cannot be dismissed as 'fashion'. Fashion is only a description; it explains nothing. When a settlement or a cemetery is abandoned, when forms of the disposal of the dead are changed, when the form and arrangement of buildings change, when the construction of age and gender through material culture, especially dress, undergoes transformation, these must be put down to significant shifts in the mentality of the times. These are not changes lightly or haphazardly made. As noted, explanations which rely upon external stimuli, such as invasions or religious conversion have been found wanting (Halsall, 1992; James, 1979; Young, 1975; 1977). When documents are retained, or are kept in new forms of archive, when the form in which they are presented is altered, when the style of language in which they are written changes, these represent conscious decisions. The choice of language in documents was deliberate and contingent (Campbell, 1979; Costambeys, 1994, 47-54). Assigning such change simply to the introduction of new literary models is also descriptive rather than analytical. Even when the importance of formula and literary genre is acknowledged, the decision to change was active. Therefore, when we find transformations occurring in different kinds of evidence at about the same time, we can be fairly sure that something was going on. Unravelling exactly what requires independent consideration of the nature of each form of evidence, to locate common factors behind the creation of the new forms.

In the remainder of this paper I should like to outline how the methods and preconceptions outlined above have been applied to a study of the region around Metz (Fig. 1; for further detail and references, see Halsall, in press, though some points are developed here). The region, loosely the north-east corner of the Paris basin, is geographically

distinct from its neighbours, and its political history gives the region further particularities. Therefore, whilst there will be many analogies between the development sketched below and features of the post-Roman history of other areas, and possibly similar explanations, there are strong reasons why it should not be seen as applicable to other regions, even within Merovingian Gaul. Above all, northern Gaul was a very different place from southern Gaul. This whistle-stop tour of the history of Lorraine between c. 350 and c. 800 should, like all the papers in this volume, be read only as a statement of 'current perspectives'. There are inevitable areas of 'woolly', and underdeveloped thinking, as well as problems which have not received due attention from any researcher. I have tried to highlight as many of these as possible. To save space I have only cited references to sites not mentioned in my book (Halsall, in press).

The region of Metz in the middle of the fourth century shows most of the typical features of Late 'Roman' society. Stone-built villas, though hard hit in the third century, were still quite numerous; the *civitas* urban centre remained important; material culture of recognizably Roman tradition was still common; the imperial monetary system continued to feed the area; and so on. Two important qualifying points are necessary. There were considerable differences between this society and that 100 years earlier; burial customs, for instance, had changed significantly, from cremation to inhumation and with a dramatic reduction of above-ground funerary monuments. Further, it does not conform to the usually held notions of late imperial society. Archaeology suggests stability, but without the often-supposed huge differences in wealth. Villas, for instance, are predominantly smaller establishments (Burnand, 1990, 233-4). Evidence of huge *latifundia* is absent. If, at a superficial level, the 'defining characteristics' of 'Roman' society are attested, it is worth remembering that this society was in a state of constant mutation, and that this region may well have differed from the better documented Mediterranean and eastern provinces, whence most generalizing views of Late Roman social structure are drawn. The region of Metz differs even from other areas of northern Gaul, where urban and rural prosperity survived neither so long nor so well.

This state of affairs came to a rapid end around 400 A.D. Evidence for occupation in Metz ceases fairly abruptly after c. 350; generous interpretations might push it to the end of the century. The city's coin supply dried up by the end of the 380s. As far as we can tell, villa sites were almost entirely abandoned by the 420s. This picture may result from the end of Roman coinage in the region early in the fifth century. It may well be that ephemeral traces of occupation have been missed in old excavations, or that settlement moved only a few dozen yards and so escaped detection. Whatever the case, the change in material culture, the decision to abandon long-settled sites and the change in building materials and style all represent fundamental changes, implying a massive break-down of industry and manufacture. At the same time, new styles of

burial appeared, making use of more numerous grave-goods of new types, most notably weaponry and jewellery (e.g. Belleray, *dép. Meuse*; Bexbach, *Saar-Palz-Kreis*: *B.D.S.* 1955, 67-71; Dieue-sur-Meuse 101, *dép. Meuse*; Florange, *dép. Moselle*; Scarponne, *dép. Meurthe-et-Moselle*; Sion 38, *dép. Meurthe-et-Moselle*: Salin, 1939). Such graves are as yet rare.

The end of the Roman state in the region must explain this period of profound change between c. 380 and c. 420. Fourth-century stability was surely maintained by the existence of the imperial system of offices and titles, regulating the social hierarchy in the absence of clear graduations of landed wealth. The removal of the Empire's effective presence after Magnus Maximus' revolt (suppressed 388) is manifested in the very swift end of coinage in Metz itself, and the town's equally rapid demise (Fig. 2). Its preeminence in this period was largely due to its administrative functions; when these were removed, the town fell into decline (Esmonde Cleary, 1989 for similar explanation of the end of Romano-British towns). Meanwhile the local élites had to search for new ways of maintaining their local predominance, and this, it seems, led to new types of funerary display, using symbols of power and authority.

The withdrawal of effective Roman administration, knocking away the social order's principal support, initiated a period of social competition. Local authority was now much more insecure, and open to contest. This spelt the end of the stability necessary for specialized industry and manufacture, and hence the rapid end of stone building, which obviously requires an organized quarrying and transport service, and also the end of the mass-produced items of traditional Roman material culture (tiles, fine red wares etc.). Monetary economy ceased, perhaps because, without regular administrative authority, the guarantees necessary to ensure the acceptance of a coin's worth were absent. Perhaps, too, in the increasingly local social arenas which arose in the vacuum created by the Empire's withdrawal, coinage proper was replaced by bullion and barter. Some local authorities minted silver coins in imitation of imperial issues (King, 1992). Such coins can only have circulated within very restricted areas. Without the state's presence any large estates, especially those of absentee landlords, or scattered through different localities, will have sprung apart (Wickham, 1981, 182 for a comparable process in post-Carolingian northern Italy).

'Late Roman' society in the region of Metz came to an abrupt end. All the key features of fourth-century culture were mutated out of recognition in a comparatively short period of revolutionary change (forty years at most). Settlements were abandoned, burial practices transformed, the basis of local aristocracy changed, the economy altered profoundly in form. We should remember, though, that fourth-century society and culture was locally specific and itself represented only a transient moment in the region's history. However one looks at it, early fifth-century society around Metz was radically different from its mid-fourth-

century predecessor, and was itself soon to undergo transformation.

It is difficult to see the fifth century in much detail. If there is a 'Dark Age' in Merovingian Lorraine, this is it. The material culture of the period is only patchily understood. Some late forms of Argonne ware may have continued in use, but this has yet to be demonstrated satisfactorily (some 'proofs' of the theory rest upon ignorance of the nature of archaeological residuality: Wagner, 1988, 31n.). Thanks to the continued, though isolated, burial of grave-goods, there is some check on this, especially for metalwork. That lavish burial went into abeyance in the century's middle decades may represent a restoration of central governmental authority, or at least patronage, in the region. This picture may, however, result from the dating of later fifth-century burials by outmoded interpretations of historical events (James, 1988). Evidence of occupation in Metz is scarce, and there is secure evidence of only a single church foundation, St.-Stephen, the cathedral (at least from 451). Occupation may have drifted to extra-mural areas (Wagner, 1987, 514 suggests a similar conclusion).

Salvian's writings (*The Governance of God*: Halm (ed.), 1877; Sullivan (trans.), 1962) show the continuing search by local aristocrats for new means of cementing their authority. Some wielded power by appropriating local authority; others received, and evidently exploited, imperial recognition; others turned to the barbarian leaders, now beginning to fill the void left by the Empire's retreat; many (like Salvian's family) fled the region altogether. The Empire's disintegration in the fifth century remains the most plausible context for the creation of the *comites civitatum* (counts of the cities, more visible in the sixth century), grouping regional civil and military power into the hands of a single official instead of the previous network of offices, although evidence for this is almost non-existent (Barnwell, 1992, 35-36). The shadowy *comites* found in the fragmentary fifth-century narratives, such as Arbogast in Trier (it is unclear whether Arbogast was technically a *comes civitatis*), look simply like legitimized local warlords.

The mechanics of mid-fifth-century northern Gallic society require more detailed study. Whittaker (1993, 298-300) opens up some promising possibilities, particularly through comparison with late imperial China. It will be interesting to consider the means by which society and politics on the fringes of the shrinking Empire used vestigial imperial patronage and legitimation. This may have been made effective by the imperial armies' increasingly rare sorties into the region from their bases in the south-east. Some forms of power (perhaps especially the counts') may have been maintained by collecting the remnants of imperial revenue ostensibly in the name of Rome.

At the end of the century, the region underwent further important changes. In the last quarter of the fifth century

lavish burial with grave-goods was revived (e.g. Lavoye, 319, dép. Meuse), and some new cemetery sites were founded (like Lavoye). Material cultural forms changed, as has long been known (Böhner-Périn period II: Böhner, 1958; Périn, 1980). In this region furnished burial does not become common, and indeed almost universal for entire communities, until about 525, when there is another long-recognized transformation in artefacts' styles (Böhner-Périn period III). Such cemeteries now become visible across the region, and there is a new phase of lavish 'founder-graves' similar to Lavoye 319 in style (Güdingen 4, Kr. Saarbrücken; Montenach, dép. Moselle). The changes detectable in the cemetery archaeology of the region of Metz are not, alas, yet noticeable in rural and urban settlement archaeology. However, this was the period when the basis of Merovingian law, the *Pactus Legis Salicae* was issued (The 'Sixty-five Title Text': Eckhardt (ed.), 1962, 1-236; Drew (trans.), 1991, 59-128). The promulgation of a law-code is a sure sign of the recognition of social change. It must be noted, though, that the *Pactus*' statements may not have been applicable in this region; its imagined area of jurisdiction was at least initially confined to the lands west of the Ardennes (*Pactus*, 47).

The changes in the decades either side of 500 A.D. must have some relationship to the creation of the Merovingian kingdom in the region, probably at the end of the first decade of the sixth century. The precise nature of the relationship between the archaeological evidence and the creation of the Frankish kingdom requires more work, however. The 'founder graves' of this period are often assumed to represent the imposition of a new Frankish aristocracy, awarded lands by the Merovingian kings in return for their service (Stein, 1992; Young, 1986a). This deserves more thought. The earliest such burials (like Lavoye 319) date from the 470s or 480s, pre-dating the penetration of the Merovingian kingdom into the region by some decades. This was the period when the western Roman Empire finally ceased to exist, and with it the possibility of any imperial legitimation of local authority. Again the local aristocracy needed new means of securing its power; again lavish funerary display was employed. It may be that with the removal of the last vestiges of Roman authority such aristocrats associated themselves with Frankish kings. The more numerous such burials dating to the second quarter of the fifth century may have rather more to do with the establishment of the Merovingian kingdom in the region.

Though the material culture deposited in these graves shows more demonstrably 'German' influence than those of the period 380-420 (from which, it is worth recalling, they differ significantly), the evidence to attribute the act of furnished burial itself to 'Germanic' immigration remains flimsy (James, 1979). It is important to remember, when considering these lavish 'founder burials', that the act of founding a new cemetery requires an exceptional display, and that furnished burial itself is best interpreted as a sign of insecure social preeminence (as above). These are

active symbols of stress, not passive images of local power and privilege.

Furthermore, the grants made by early Merovingian kings to their loyal aristocrats were by no means fixed and permanent gifts of territory. Sixth-century sources make very clear the ease with which the kings took back such grants, and reshuffled their patronage. It may also be that such grants did not bestow ownership of territory but rather the right to collect taxes and other dues from an area. This implies a wholly different relationship between the aristocrat and those over whom he had been set. All these points call into question the usual interpretations of the lavish *Adelsgräber* of the period c. 475 - c. 525. Early within this period some powerful figures may have had their local authority cemented by association with the incoming Frankish kingdoms, including the Merovingian. There is some sketchy and problematic evidence of such alliances between Franks and Gallo-Romans (e.g. Procopius, *Wars* V.12.xii-xix; Dewing (ed. and trans.), 1919). By the second quarter of the sixth century, things seem to have changed.

Mid- and later sixth-century society in the region can be more easily studied, thanks to the existence of numerous furnished cemeteries (e.g. Chaouilley, dép. Meurthe-et-Moselle; Cutry, dép. Meurthe-et-Moselle; Dieue-sur-Meuse, dép. Meuse; Ennery, dép. Moselle; Lavoye). These cemeteries are large and it seems reasonable to suppose that they served more than one settlement. Refined analysis of the patterns of grave-goods association and comparison with physical anthropological study of the skeletal material (though often problematic) has allowed a detailed model to be proposed about the social organization of the period. Put very briefly, it seems that the burial of grave-goods was but one of many public rituals which served to redefine or confirm a family's standing within the community. The grave-goods transmitted a fairly clear message to the audience which demonstrated the family's ability to bury the dead with suitable funerary furnishings. The latter seem to have been governed by established customs which stressed the importance of gender and age. Within these general rules there is nevertheless evidence of competition. Families appear to have demonstrated local prestige in comparatively subtle ways, by exaggeration of these norms. Sixth-century social structure was somewhat fluid, and local power open to competition. Some families may have maintained their preeminence over several generations, but this was achieved only by constant, expensive display, and they nevertheless remained part of the local community in death as in life. Studies which have assumed the separation of the aristocracy from the community after the first generation of the cemetery's use (Stein, 1992; Young, 1986a; 1986b) have ignored the necessarily exceptional nature of founder graves, failed to search for prestige burials in subsequent phases with sufficient subtlety, and made rather uncritical assumptions about the nature of the sixth-century north Gallic aristocracy.

The written evidence stresses the insecurity of the northern aristocracy at this time. Though there were clearly important people, much of their power was based upon royal favour and protection, and this was as easily withdrawn as bestowed. The early sixth century was the period which, in my view, saw the creation of the 'Merovingian mystique'. Clovis I (at the end of his reign at least), his sons and grandsons achieved a complete separation of the Merovingian royal family from the aristocracy of the kingdom, by wiping out rival kingly or noble lineages, by pursuing exclusive marriage policies (either with slave women or foreign princesses) and by trying to ensure that the aristocracy was only involved in the government of the kingdom by virtue of their tenure of royally granted office. Whereas some sources imply that, in the creation of their kingdom, Childeric I and Clovis I had to negotiate and ally with local élites, this need was removed as the kingdom became more established and more powerful. The only aristocracy recognized by sixth-century law (the first statement of which, the *Pactus*, was issued by Clovis at the end, possibly in the last year, of his reign) was that of the king's officers, retainers and companions. According to legal theory at least, all other freemen were equal; the only mediation between them and the king was by the king's officers. As has been pointed out, the local aristocracy had long relied upon patronage and office to underline their predominance within the community. In the comparatively small kingdoms of sixth-century Gaul, the kings held all the aces; the aristocracy needed royal favour, but this could be managed effectively, by reshuffling ducal and comital office (involving frequent killing; Samson, 1987, 288), bestowing and reclaiming the rights to fiscal resources, and so on. This helped to maintain the distance between the Merovingians and their aristocracy, a distance underlined by the manipulation of 'sacral' features of kingship such as the Merovingians' famous long hair. The dominance of the kings over their aristocrats also served to maintain the lack of distinction between the latter and their neighbours within the community. Below the kingly stratum, social structure remained fluid. Thus, according to this interpretation, distinctive Merovingian kingship, like the others of the 'barbarian West' (e.g. the Gothic; Heather, 1992), was the result of short term political developments inside former imperial territory, and not an imported ancient, dynastic, 'Germanic' monarchy.

This lack of stability explains the continuing stagnation of Metz itself. Although there are a few possibly earlier sixth-century churches, these are most probably episcopal or even royal foundations, though some might have been founded by the very highest levels of the palatine aristocracy. Evidence of burial in and around the town remains scanty until the middle of the century. In the rural areas of the *civitas* of Metz, evidence of settlement continues to be extremely nebulous, though one site has recently been located at Amnéville (départ. Moselle). The region's economy was effectively non-monetary. A handful of Byzantine *solidi* have been found, but the Roman coins buried in many graves probably served an

economic purpose as units of bullion. There is little evidence of specialized manufacture or industry. Stone working, manifested in sarcophagi, funeral monuments or new stone building, is entirely absent. These factors probably account for the comparative archaeological invisibility of settlement in this period. Expenditure was invested in competitive funerary and other ritual displays rather than in settlements.

Metz entered upon an up-turn in its fortunes in the later sixth century, presumably the result of the Austrasian kings moving their principal urban residence there from Rheims (probably in the 560s) (Fig. 3). Cemeteries and churches are more numerous from c. 550 onwards. Throughout the region, things began to change towards the end of the century. The decades around 600 A.D. were a period of very profound transformation which, thanks to better evidence, we can see much more clearly than those of around 500 or indeed 400, for here we can see the change other than simply through the abandonment of sites. That change took place between the sixth and seventh centuries is well known, though perhaps still played down (Fontaine and Hillgarth (ed.), 1992).

In this period artefact-forms again changed significantly (Böhner-Périn Period IV). There were changes in burial rite, too. Seventh-century grave-goods are less numerous and more standardized than before, and the emphasis on gender and stage in the life-cycle is reduced. It is easier to locate family groups of local prestige, who demonstrated this by less subtle displays of grave-goods with subjects of all ages and both sexes, breaching the norms which previously governed such activity. When sought within the context of a particular chronological phase of a cemetery rather than simply by looking for graves which match the lavish 'founder burials' of the late fifth and early sixth centuries, prestigious graves are still detectable into the earlier seventh century. Cemeteries appear to have been organized far more clearly by family groups rather than in generally ordered rows; in this, as in the deposition of grave-goods, community norms appear to have broken down.

Also at some point between the late sixth and early seventh centuries the settlement pattern appears to have undergone reorganization. More rural settlement sites are known to us (cp. Frouard phase I, départ. Meurthe-et-Moselle); graves seem to have begun to penetrate *into* the ruins of Roman villas, even where burial was sited around them in the sixth century (e.g. Lavoye). This *may* suggest a final abandonment of some sites around 600, new burials destroying ephemeral traces of sixth-century habitation. The number of cemeteries at least doubled (Fig. 4). These (e.g. in Moselle, Berthelming, Bettborn, Bouzonville, Hayange) are often smaller than sixth-century sites and this probably represents a change in the settlement to cemetery ratio, to one closer to 1:1. Smaller cemeteries, serving smaller communities, witness a decreasing importance in the grave-goods display, which is perhaps not surprising.

Early seventh-century law (*Lex Ribvaria*; Beyerle and Buchner (ed.), 1951; Rivers (trans.), 1986, 167-214) begins to acknowledge a stratum of more powerful freemen, and differs notably from the earlier *Pactus* in many ways. The legal construction of the ethnic distinction between Frank and Roman changed, with the latter becoming a clearly dependent class; there are differences in the treatment of slavery and other degrees of unfreedom; the conception of time is different, with more projection of situations into the future; above all, *Lex Ribvaria* recognizes the legal use of written documents. At the same time, narrative sources (hagiographic and chronicle) acknowledge the existence of a distinct upper stratum of Frankish society, to which they occasionally refer as a nobility. These developments are paralleled by the beginning of the survival of written deeds or charters, which show further the extent of independent aristocratic land-holding from the beginning of the seventh century. This new, more self-assured aristocracy involved itself with the 'Columbanian' monastic movement, probably to help to bolster its position. This was probably not, as Prinz (1965, 496-9; 1969) imagined, to replace lost pagan legitimization of noble birth (Wittern, 1986, 274, 285); such noble status is unlikely to have existed in the sixth century. Instead it was probably a means of achieving better control of landed resources, making a Christian statement of their power, manifested in new saints' lives too (Wittern, 1986), and removing the exclusive control of sanctity away from the episcopally- (and hence often ultimately royally-) controlled urban arena. Nevertheless, though local aristocrats such as Arnulf, Romaric and Berulf were associated with this monastic 'movement', aristocratic *Eigenkloster* were not yet founded in the region of Metz, which may have had important repercussions for the development of aristocratic power here.

Churches were, however, founded in Metz, which underwent a clear revival in the seventh century (Fig. 3). Churches probably dating to this period are numerous, and several cemeteries were certainly in use too, all around the old core of the Roman city. In addition, evidence of settlement, albeit tenuous (occasional pot-sherds) has been located. This presumably has implications for the revival of industry in the region, especially when combined with the reappearance of stone sarcophagi around 600 (Cuvelier and Guillaume, 1989). Gold coinage begins to be minted in the region, at more numerous mints (Stahl, 1982). The number of the mints suggests that the coins were used primarily within small areas, and thus that the economy remained only partly monetized. Artefact forms, especially elaborate plaque-buckles become more intricate and specialist in design. All this argues for profound economic change.

Central to all this must be the developments in the nature of the aristocracy. Now more secure and powerful in the locality (hence the reduced need for lavish grave-goods display), it could sponsor the revival of industry and craft specialization, and even urbanism, occasionally being able to remove itself to dwell in Metz itself. The impetus for

this change in the relationship between king and aristocracy is surely to be sought in the series of royal minorities between the assassination of Sigibert I (575) and the accession of Chlothar II in Austrasia (613). However, there are important reservations to be made. The kings remained powerful in the early seventh century, in the reigns of Chlothar II and Dagobert I. Some aristocrats competed amongst their peers in the region's royally- and episcopally-controlled administrative centres, as witnessed by the upsurge of church-building in Metz and in the old Roman *castra* (eg Tarquimpol, dép. Moselle), but most aristocrats were still an intimate part of their community in matters of burial, and so were not entirely able to separate themselves from their neighbours and former rivals. This might be explained by the absence of aristocratic religious foundations (churches or monasteries) in the countryside. The region's aristocrats as yet missed the opportunities which such foundations presented for the control of land, such as bestowing widespread estates upon a family monastery, only to receive them back as *precaria*, and thus avoiding partible inheritance. Without these possibilities, they would remain dependent upon royal patronage to recoup losses through gift, dower and division.

Also important in explaining these changes will have been the increasing contact between northern and southern Gaul where a more assured and independent nobility existed (in the Gallo-Roman senatorial aristocracy and, perhaps, in the Burgundian *Burgundae-farones*). Northern Gallic aristocrats often served, and received estates in, Aquitaine; there is influence of Burgundian and Roman law in *Lex Ribvaria*; southern Gallic and Burgundian saints' cults spread north to places like Metz, where a number of probably seventh-century churches (e.g. St.-Sigolena, St.-Amantius, St.-Victor and St.-Julian) manifest their popularity; the increasing use of written deeds, and even the seventh-century formularies, may represent southern influence.

More charters survive from the region from the second half of the seventh century, mainly because of the foundation of Wissembourg Abbey in Alsace, which attracted gifts from some of the region's aristocracy (Glöckner and Doll (ed.), 1979). The information contained in these documents allows us to confirm some details of early seventh-century society. Land-owners seem to have held scattered estates in diverse localities called *villae* in the charters. The building block of land-holding was the *mansus* (loosely, 'farm'). This pattern confirms the shifting, kaleidoscopic pattern of aristocratic land-holding, and permits the following tentative reconstruction of the development of the *villae*.

Roman estates called *villae*, once the possession of a single owner, had fragmented, the geographical name surviving because taxation continued to be levied from the defined unit of territory, the rights to such surplus being (probably temporarily) granted to particular aristocrats (in continuation of Late Roman practice). Even when, around

600, this right to surplus became more permanent, and shifted into ownership of the land in question, the levying of formerly royal dues remained the effective means of extracting surplus, using the unit of the *mansus* as its base unit of assessment, especially as *villae* were frequently divided through gift and inheritance. Hence, by the later seventh century, several landlords might own *mansus* within one *villa*; single ownership of a *villa* was rare except where the landlord was the king or a leading palatine official (who had probably recently received the *villa* from the fisc; e.g. Pertz (ed.), 1879, 91-92). This, it seems to me, is why later Merovingian immunities covered only dues descended from the more minor exactions of the Roman state (Goffart, 1982, 5). Rights to the taxation had been granted first, in the sixth century. When, later, this was converted into more secure ownership of the land, as witnessed by the survival of aristocratic charters, all that was left of royal exactions, all that was left to be granted immunity from, were these lesser dues.

The charters suggest that the main means of land transfer was by outright gift, this, as above, contributing to the ever-changing nature of land-holding. Though there is a powerful aristocratic group visible in these charters (centred on the families of Audoin, Chrodoin, Gundoin and Wulfoald), this group looks more like a fairly loose faction than a group of powerful lords with their retainers and dependents (following Sprandel, 1961, 54-55).

There are developments in the later seventh century. As the century progressed, grave-goods became ever fewer and ever more standardized. In tandem with this move away from temporary grave-goods display, there was an increased tendency towards more permanent, more visible funerary monuments, such as surface-level sarcophagus lids, walls around graves, reused Roman sculpture serving as grave-markers and so on (clearest at Audun-le-Tiche, dép. Moselle), and, ultimately, churches. Though earlier aristocratic churches seem to have focused upon existing centres, the *civitas*-capital and the *castra*, the later seventh century seems to be when rural churches began to be founded. The Wissembourg charters refer to family *Eigenkirchen* founded at about this time (Glöckner and Doll (ed.), 1979, 463-65 and 468-69) and there is archaeological evidence of this at the church of Mousson (dép. Meurthe-et-Moselle), built in the mid-seventh century (*pace* Cuvelier, 1990). This may thus be the time when aristocrats finally removed themselves from their local communities in burial. As an example, Audun-le-Tiche grave 103 is suggestive. Here two adolescent males were buried with linked arms and, for the period, an exceptional display of grave-goods, in a large, carefully mortared stone tomb surrounded, at surface-level, by a wall. However, their heads had been removed before burial, I would suggest for burial in a church. If this interpretation is correct, it would illuminate the tensions involved in the process of aristocratic *Separierung*.

Economic change is suggested by changes in coinage. After the middle of the century the network of mints were

replaced by a single mint at Metz, striking silver coinage instead of gold. The facts that this one mint served a wider region than the earlier more local mints, and that the coinage was of lower denomination, suggest that the economy was increasingly monetary. Though problematic, some confirmation of this might be suggested by the Wissembourg charters' references to the sale of land (cp. Glöckner and Doll (ed.), 1979, 427-29).

If there was an increase in aristocratic power in the later seventh century, this is probably to be attributed, again, to the minorities and civil wars which overtook the *regnum francorum* after the death of Sigibert III (651). The aristocracy, which emerged from the troubled decades around 600 as a more formidable group, vis-à-vis the kings, than its sixth-century predecessors, was able to take a firm grip on politics. Nevertheless, as is now well-known amongst historians, the later seventh-century Merovingians, or at least their court, remained the focus of political activity (Fouracre, 1986; Gerberding, 1987; Wood, 1994). This must be because political power was still best legitimized through royally-bestowed office, and disputes still best settled at the royal court. Furthermore, alongside the purchase of new estates or the modification of custom through written deeds, royal patronage, or its control, represented the best way of recouping losses of land through gift or partition. The aristocracy of the region of Metz may have been slightly slower to develop its local power than that of other regions, especially to the north and west, perhaps because the see of Metz (over which the kings apparently kept firm control) seems to have retained control of religious foundation in the region, and to have remained, quite possibly with the royal fisc itself, the most important land-holder.

Around the end of the century there appears to take place another series of developments. Firstly, the old cemetery sites, used for the past century at least, fell into disuse. Burial probably moved to the grave-yards of the rural churches mentioned above, completing a process of aristocratic domination of mortuary practice. Around 600, local élites had demonstrated their more assured prestige by clear displays of grave-goods, often breaking old community norms. In the later seventh century they removed themselves from the local community grave-yard, to be buried in private churches. Finally, around 700, they allowed the removal of the community cemetery to their church. At the end of the seventh century, there was another change in material culture (Böhner-Périn Period V), and more settlement sites become visible (Eply-Raucourt 'Le Haut de Villers', dép. Meurthe-et-Moselle; Frouard, phase II; Nomeny, dép. Meurthe-et-Moselle). The town of Metz continued to flourish. By the middle of the century there were over forty churches there (Gauthier, 1986).

In the Wissembourg charters, of which there is a rash in the second decade of the eighth century, new terms appear, most notably *beneficium*. This tallies with the appearance of the word in other cartularies at about the same time,

and, though the term itself is Roman, the way it is used appears to denote a new form of land-holding. Land was given by a magnate, lay or ecclesiastical, to a follower. The latter held the land and enjoyed its fruits, but ultimately the land remained the property of the magnate. *Precaria* also appear in the Wissembourg documents at this time. These were grants made to the abbey, which then returned the usufruct of the bestowed lands to the grantor for his or her lifetime. This practice, which, as mentioned above, enabled a landowner to by-pass divided inheritance customs, was known in other regions of northern Gaul in the later seventh century; its sudden appearance in the Wissembourg charters is dependent upon the political history of the time.

Changes at this time are presumably bound up with the wars which followed the death of Childebert III, probably the last significant Merovingian, in 695. These wars eventually brought Charles Martel to power as Mayor of the Palace. The aristocratic faction centred on the families of Audoin, Chrodoin, Gundoin and Wulfoald can plausibly be associated with the chief enemies of Charles Martel, and indeed of his father, Pippin 'II'. Their defeat in the second decade of the eighth century may have led to an attempt to secure their estates by granting them to Wissembourg, and receiving them back as *precaria*. The introduction of the *beneficium* was more important. For the first time, land could be given as a reward without, technically at least, reducing the extent of a magnate's lands in the long term. This obviously reduced the central importance of the royal court, hitherto vital to the legitimization of power and as a source of resources and gifts. With this in mind, it is perhaps not surprising that when his 'puppet' king Theuderic IV died in 736, Charles Martel did not bother with a king for the remainder of his life. Charters are dated, for example, 'in the first year after the death of king Theuderic, Charles being Mayor of the Palace' (Glöckner and Doll (ed.), 1979, 476). This is otherwise unparalleled in Frankish history.

The change of dynasty from the Merovingians to the Carolingians in 751 was perhaps now only to be expected, but we should remember that the so-called 'rois fainéants' had only been 'obsolete' for a generation or so, not for over a century, as older generations of historians supposed. It is also worth stating that the change of dynasty caused a good deal of social stress. There was ideological change, in Archbishop Chrodegang of Metz's reforms of the church, and foundation of Gorze Abbey (départ. Moselle). The usurpation required a significant outpouring of literary justifications, dwelling upon the Merovingians' uselessness and the Carolingians' powerful pedigree, especially drawing attention to their descent from Bishop Arnulf of Metz (recent attempts to call this genealogy into question seem unconvincing). Arnulf and his descendants, though, may not have been popular in Metz; his cult does not appear to have become established until the very end of the seventh century (Parisse, 1987), and Metz was one of the last places to come over to Charles Martel (Gerberding, 1987, 139, n39). Chrodegang's predecessor, Sigibald can

be postulated to have been anti-Carolingian. Certainly, after his (and Charles') death, Chrodegang felt the need to refound Sigibald's monastery of St.-Paul, as St.-Nabor (now St.-Avold, départ. Moselle).

In the early decades of Charlemagne's reign, the region underwent profound reorganization. The charters of Gorze (D'Herbomez (ed.), 1898) and of Wissembourg show, albeit in different ways, a contemporary change in the ways in which lands were described, which appear to distinguish a core settlement from associated lands. They also make more reference to measured lands, either with detailed bounds (in the Gorze charters) or through references to lands which could either be ploughed within a day or could yield a cart-load of produce (in the Wissembourg documents). This appears to have taken place quite suddenly in the 780s. This reorganization of lands eventually gave rise to the great Carolingian polyptychs, around 800 A.D. There seems to have been a change in the ways in which surplus was extracted, with more organized use of labour services. As might be expected, at about the same time, diverse classifications of unfree person in the charters were replaced by simple, uniform references to *mancipia*. Technical differences in legal treatment were replaced by common status as a dependent labourer of a landlord. It may be only at this late stage that we see the final appearance of the 'classic' bipartite 'Grand Domaine', with demesne and dependent tenements (for example, Quincy, départ. Meuse; d'Herbomez (ed.), 1898, 43-44), even if certain elements can be traced to the seventh century.

Archaeologically, at this time, the small settlement at Nomeny was replaced by a larger, perhaps more nucleated settlement a few metres to the east. At Frouard, the third phase of that site sees the construction of a square, stone building. Excavated data, therefore, also suggest some reorganization of the countryside and the control of its surplus. This is probably behind an important phase of rebuilding at sites across Metz itself, some of which seem to have stood empty since the fourth century. Roman buildings were levelled for new constructions. One site (Rue Boucherie-St.-Georges) has yielded the same kind of pottery as found at Frouard phase III. Also at this time, Charlemagne undertook reforms of currency and markets.

Around 800 A.D. society in the region of Metz looks recognizably 'medieval'. However, the creation of this social organization took place over only a generation or so, and is largely to be seen as resulting directly from the expansion of the early years of Charlemagne's reign. It was not the result of a slow, 300-year 'process' from Roman to medieval. It is also absurd to suppose that the social structure existing around 800 remained somehow immutable. A great deal happened in the ninth century, and after.

It is not helpful, then, to think of the Merovingian period as a period of transition from 'Roman' to 'medieval'. Recognizably 'Roman' and 'medieval' (or at least 'Late

Roman' and 'Carolingian') features existed at its beginning and end, but it is a grave mistake to link the similarities between them (and there are some, as has long been known, cp. Percival, 1969) by a single line of development, and to assume that Merovingian society existed as some kind of 'halfway house' between them. Merovingian society was dynamic. The 'Roman' society of c. 350 collapsed within a generation or so around 400, and the 'medieval' society of c. 800 was similarly the product of a short period of change in the late eighth century. The intervening centuries were not a time of unilinear, unidirectional 'progress', but a period of constant social and political struggle and change. This change took place at a much greater rate than is usually believed. The frequent changes in burial practice and the repeated change and movement of settlement (perhaps best demonstrated at Nomeny; Cuvelier and Delestre, 1986) are clear testimony to this. In the periods when evidence is more plentiful, especially the seventh century, change seems to have been more or less constant. At any point during the Merovingian period a seventy-year-old man would look back upon his childhood as upon another world.

It is worth dwelling briefly on the dynamics for social change, as sketched in this model. They revolve upon the 'two-edged struggle' waged by aristocrats with, on the one hand, their neighbours and rivals within the local community, and, on the other, the kings. The relationships between the 'state' (Roman Empire, or Frankish monarchy) and the aristocracy is thus paramount and hinges upon ideology. At one level this was manifested in the need for patronage to regulate the social hierarchy at the local level, and the ability of the 'state' to manage such patronage effectively (as achieved by the sixth-century Merovingian kings). At the same time, though, it required the willingness of the local population to accept the legitimization of social hierarchy by these offices, and thus the readiness of rivals for local power to subscribe to central arbitration of disputes. This willingness was greatly reduced when there were alternative means of securing predominance. Therefore, in the early years of the eighth century, when the Merovingian kings had lost the ability to influence local politics actively, and when new forms of land holding eliminated the necessity of legitimization by the royal court, Merovingian kingship collapsed, to be replaced by a new social structure, and a new set of relationships between kings, aristocrats and their followers. Wickham (1981, 131) similarly identifies the dynamic in Lombard politics as the relationship between aristocracy and king, and the conflict between private and public power and duty amongst the former.

This paper has concentrated upon the social hierarchy and especially the nature of the aristocracy and its interaction with the 'state'. It should be pointed out, though, that there were many other aspects of this fluctuating society which could have been investigated with equal profit. At the opposite end of the social hierarchy, the nature of slavery

and of the other 'unfree' classes was perpetually renegotiated. The social construction of gender and age was equally diverse and dynamic. The ways in which these different aspects of social organization related to each other, and the ways in which the dynamic described above was affected by the inter-relationship of class or rank with gender, age or ethnicity deserve more thought. Social change can only really be understood and comprehended by rounded 'total history', ignoring history's artificial thematic divisions.

Other features enter into the equation. Regional geography has some influence upon the nature of social organization. The distribution of lavishly furnished burials (primarily of sixth-century date) shows a fairly clear distribution pattern (Fig. 5). Outside Metz itself, such burials are uncommon until twenty or thirty kilometres from the town. This distribution is best explained by seeing, as throughout this paper, furnished burial as a sign of competition for local power. Close to Metz itself, disputes might be resolved by appeal to the king, bishops, dukes and counts in frequent residence there. Further away, this was less easy and so more open displays of access to power and resources were necessary. This zone without such burials extends further to the east of the town than the west, which is explicable if we consider the area's physical geography. To the west of Metz, communication across the Côte de Moselle is more difficult than to the east where the ascent to the Plateau Lorrain is much gentler. Communication with the powers present in Metz might therefore have been easier for communities on the rolling plateau than for those on the other side of the steep and wooded Côte de Moselle.

'High' politics also contribute to the region's distinctiveness, as has been outlined above. Metz's place on the Moselle, part of the line connecting Trier with the Mediterranean, might explain why 'Late Roman' prosperity lasted rather longer in this region than in areas further west; the fact that Metz was the principal urban base of the Austrasian kings probably accounts for the town's comparatively early resurgence, as well as the region's relative lack of lavish burials (as above). As has been suggested above, the aristocracy may have been slower to develop its power here than elsewhere because the royal fisc and the see of Metz retained control of much of the region's land.

There was no inevitability about the changes which we can perceive in the material and written record from the Merovingian period. Returning to Moroney's metaphor, it is worth remembering those 'acorns' which did not develop, such as the heavily age-based social organization of the sixth century. When examining why such features of society did not survive and develop, we can isolate the tensions involved, between aristocracy and monarchy (as above), between family and community, and so on. In the end, however, we have to turn to political, and even military events, which determined the outcome of social struggles and its timing. 'High' politics can govern the

precise nature of the identities adopted in competition for local authority, and thus, in detail, the nature of conflicts for such power.

It should be stressed that the material record, and its changes, have not simply been pinned to historically attested groups or circumstances. 'Multi-disciplinary' study of various forms of evidence has suggested social forces at work, and periods of change, and, whilst *'histoire événementielle'* has been adduced to help explain the timing of the observed changes, this has only been done where the events seem to have some bearing on the factors perceived to be at play; the latter in turn help to explain the political and military happenings. When change can be observed in diverse evidential forms at about the same time, and explained by reference to a single model, and when this change coincides chronologically with recorded politico-military episodes involving elements of that model, it is surely mistaken to refuse to incorporate the political circumstances into it. Crude previous attempts to explain change simply by adducing historical events, without looking at the evidence and the reasons for its formation (see above for 'ethnicity' and 'invasion'), must not tarnish the essentially sound proposition that 'high' political circumstances can affect local society and material culture.

The model outlined above has implications for the discussion of 'state-formation' in the Late and post-Roman worlds. It shows that the creation of the Merovingian kingdom was not the result of unilinear 'processes' stretching over centuries, but contingent upon quite short-term political events (see above). Large kingdoms (like Clovis') could be divided within a dynasty and be put back together; kingdoms could fragment (as did the Merovingian Kingdom between the late seventh and early eighth centuries) and be reconstituted. It is too often supposed that state-formation, or even simple kingdom-formation, is a long, unilinear development from tribe to state (Hedeager, 1992b), or from small kingdom to large (e.g. Bassett, 1989). Merovingian history casts serious doubt upon both ideas.

Other assumptions in the 'state-formation' debate are similarly questioned. What is the connection between kinship and state? The development of a more stable social hierarchy of ranks or classes has as a necessary correlate the increase in the importance of family and blood ties, as descent, and particularly patrilineal descent, becomes more important. The oft-supposed opposition between 'kinship-based' and 'hierarchical' societies (Hedeager, 1992b, 28-29, 84-87) needs refinement when used in a historical sense. Similarly, as north Gallic society became more rigidly hierarchical, a development often supposed to be necessary for the creation of the state (cp. Hedeager, 1992b, 83), the power of the central government began to be eroded. Conversely, the Merovingian kingdom was much more powerful in the sixth-century, when north Gallic society was less hierarchical, the local community evidently more powerful

than individual families, and society organized around gender and age more than around vertical hierarchies of inherited position.

This brings us back to the importance of the dynamic discussed above. In this period, large territories could only be held together when there was sufficient need for, and thus acceptance of, central governmental legitimation of local power. The idea of 'integration', discussed by Harrison (1992) for Lombard Italy, has its advantages, but, given the very similar relationships between local aristocracy and central monarchy in sixth-century rural northern Gaul and in later, more urbanized Italy, Harrison's argument that the towns were crucial to the development of the state must be wide of the mark (even without the self-contradictions within his argument). In both cases the competitors for local power lacked independent means of establishing and cementing authority over their rivals. Central governmental legitimation was thus used to assure local dominance. This shared need for external arbitration and sanction, and subsequent involvement in a system of administration bound wide areas together in single political entities; strong monarchies used this position of power to ensure that independent sources of power, and established local hierarchies, were restricted or prevented. The Merovingian kings themselves began to lose this power after the minorities around 600, but the importance of the central court was not finally lost until 100 years later. The Lombard kings managed to hold on to their position of strength for rather longer. The Merovingian experience shows that, when necessary (when central maintenance of local order was still needed), ideological acceptance of a central authority could be transferred from the holder of the royal title to the office itself, and even to the royal court.

This paper has attempted to present a new way of looking at the period from the late fourth to the late eighth century, one which bypasses talk of decline, transition or continuity. Instead we see a society much like that at any other period of history, full of tensions and constantly developing in response to them. The evidence upon which this model is based is admittedly far from perfect (see Halsall, in press, for discussion of the many problems), but it is reasonably plentiful and seems to present a constant picture, which can be tested and refined in future. Surely the time has come for a new paradigm of late antique or early medieval history, which pays attention to context and thus to regional and chronological difference, rather than ironing this out by aggregation and teleology. These traditional approaches to the history and archaeology of this period have been found wanting. The approach suggested here is problematic, but, instead of concentrating on a slow process from one pre-defined state of affairs to another, acknowledges the period's diversity and dynamism. There is a 'brave new' world of late antiquity out there, and in Miranda's sense rather than Huxley's.

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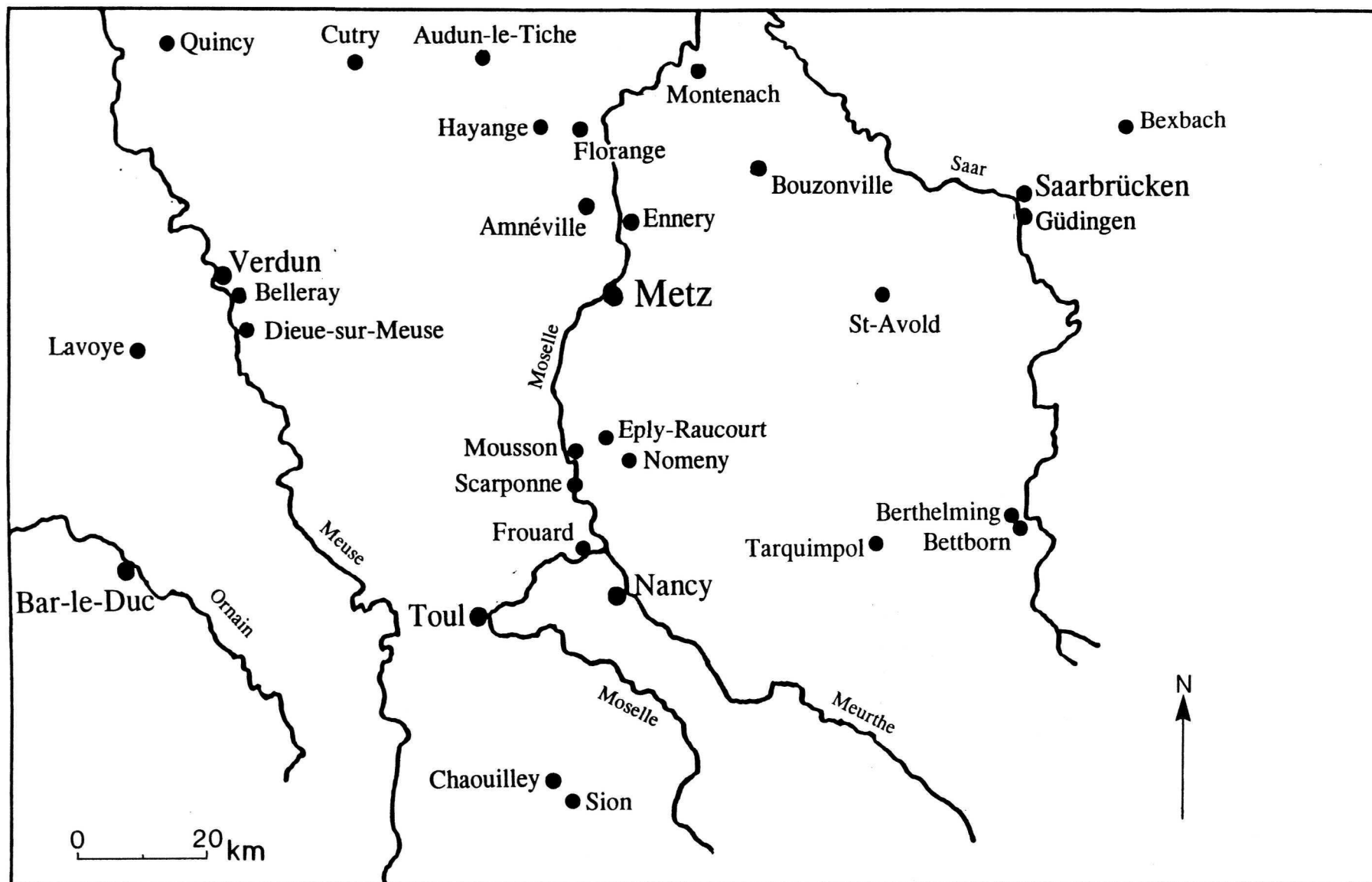


Fig. 1. The region of Metz, and sites mentioned in the text.

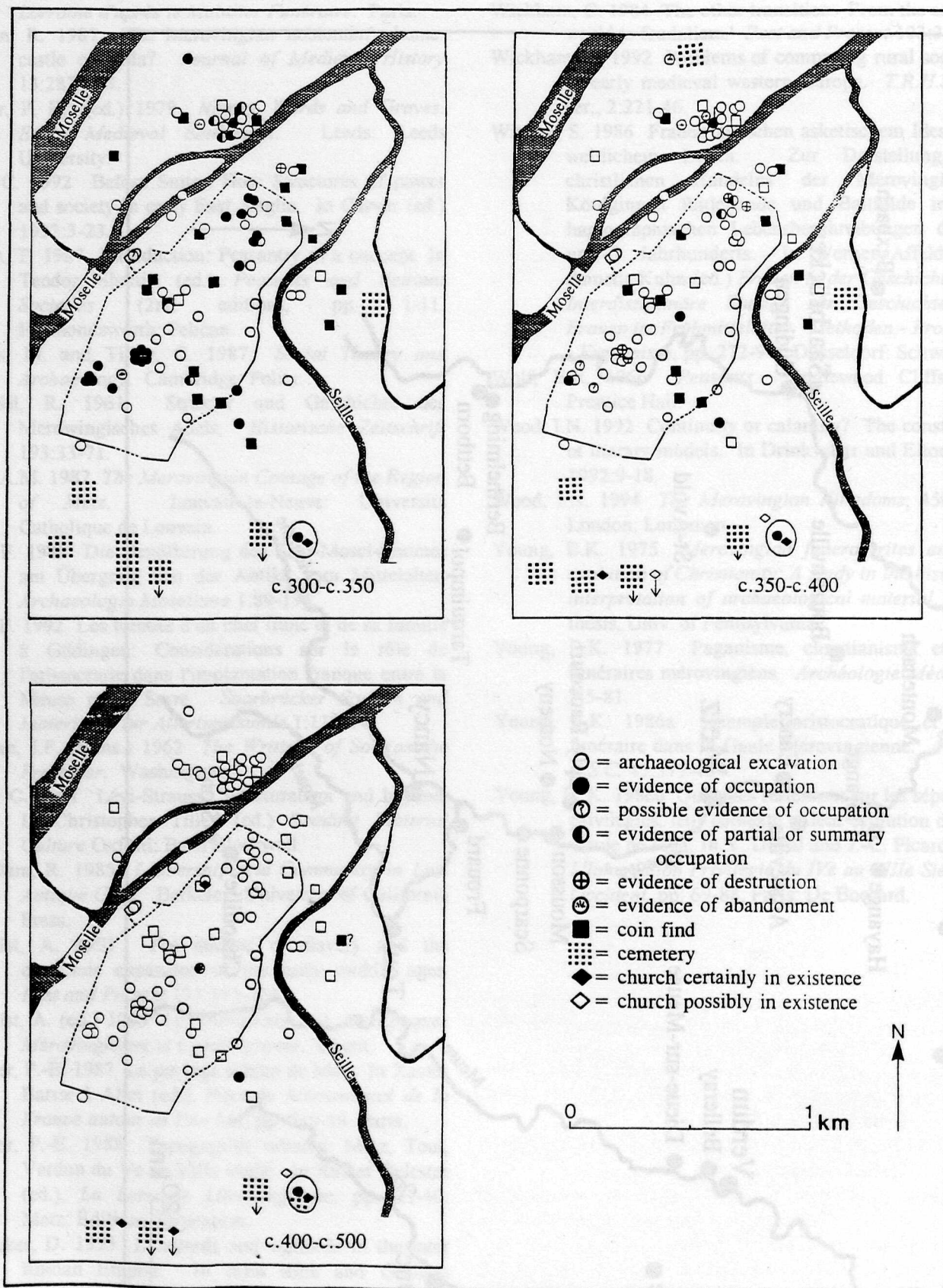


Fig. 2. Urbanism in Metz (1): c.300-c.500.

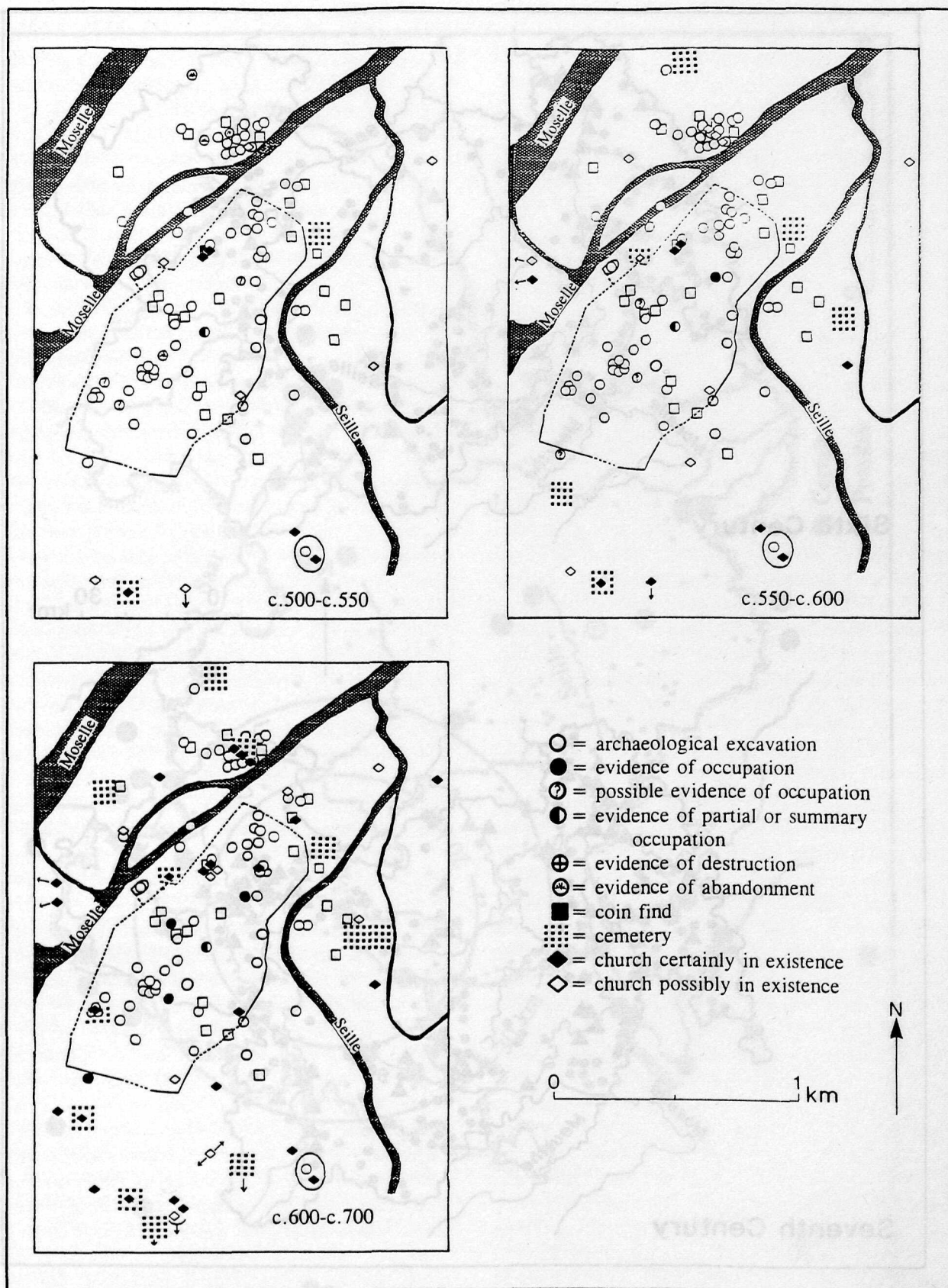


Fig. 3. Urbanism in Metz (2): c.500-c.700.

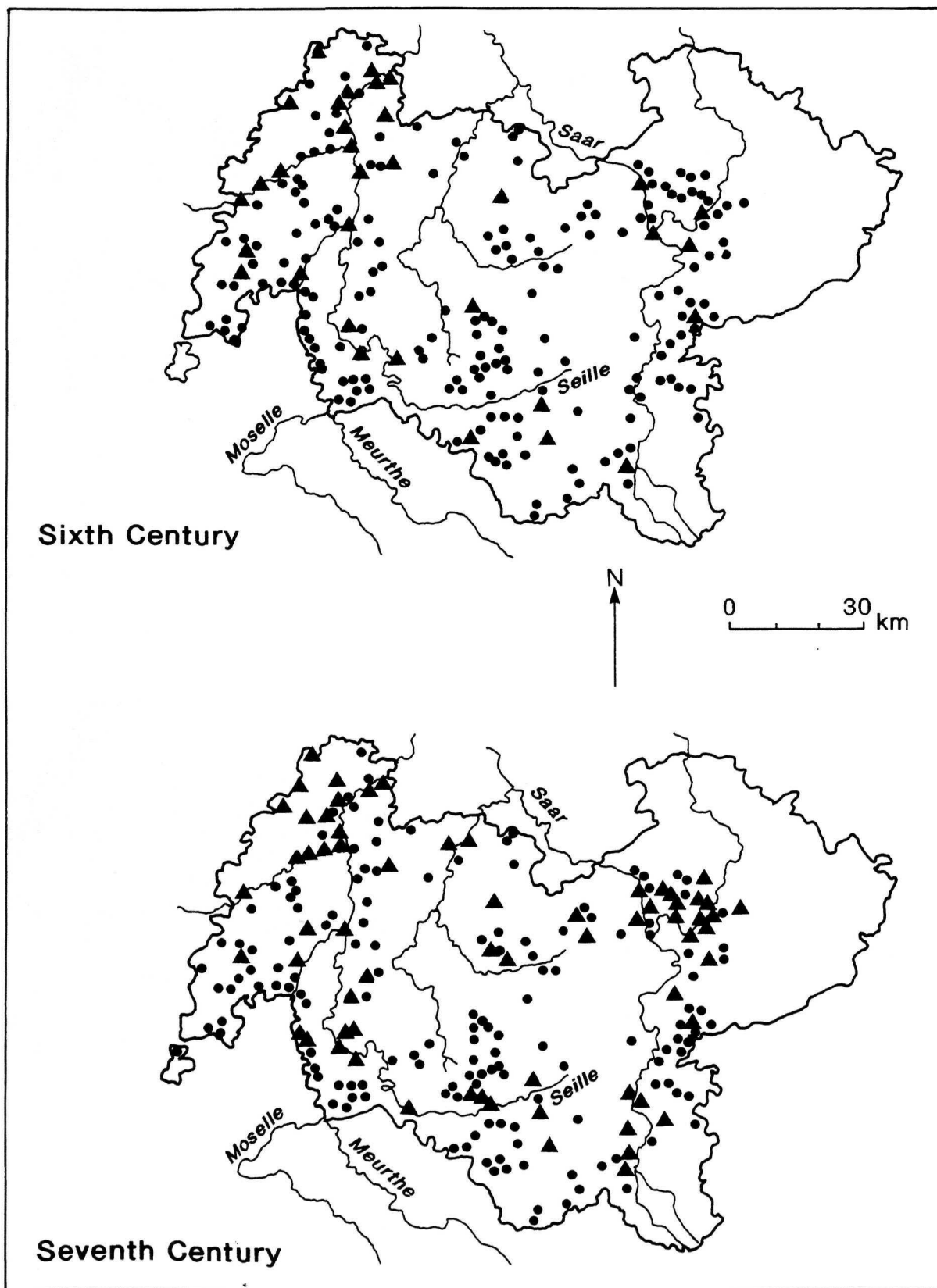


Fig. 4. Datable cemeteries in the *civitas* of Metz.

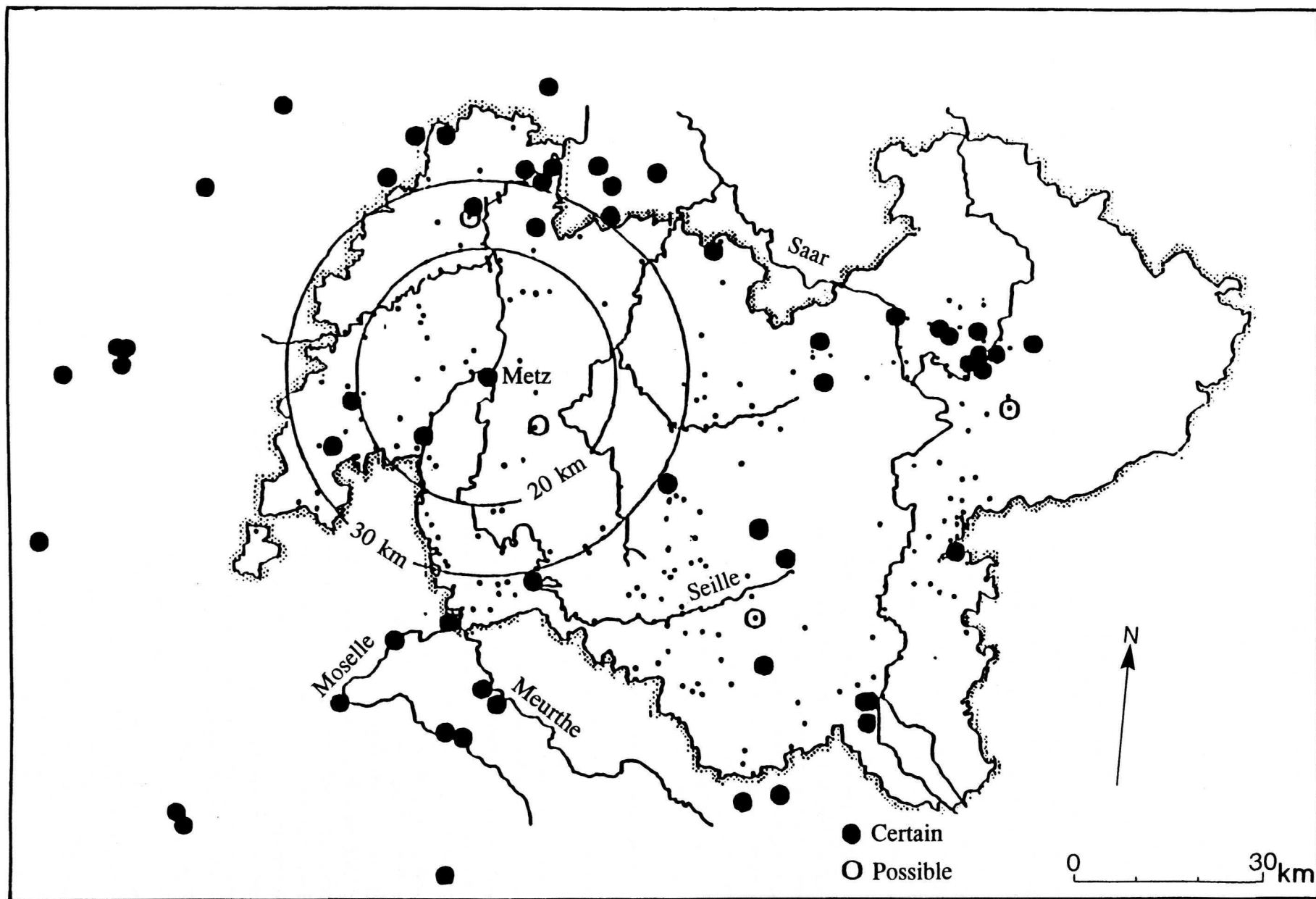


Fig. 5. Distribution of 'prestige graves' (containing shield-boss, *ango*, horse-harness, spur, bronze bowl, bucket or balances) around the *civitas* of Metz.

THE CHANGING STRUCTURE OF RURAL SETTLEMENT IN SOUTHERN PICARDY DURING THE FIRST MILLENNIUM A.D.

Colin Haselgrove and Christopher Scull

Introduction

This paper examines the development of rural settlement in the Picardy region of north-east France during the first millennium A.D., based on the preliminary results of a five-year programme of field survey and trial excavation undertaken by Durham University between 1988 and 1992 in the Aisne Valley area. This study continued a longer-term research project in the region begun in 1983 under the direction of the first author, in association with E.R.A. 12 du C.N.R.S. and the Service Régional de l'Archéologie. The primary objectives of the recent survey were to investigate changes in the density and character of rural settlement during the 1st millennia B.C. and A.D. Since definitive analysis of the data will take some time to complete, it is felt that some of the provisional conclusions are worth presenting here, both as a contribution to the settlement archaeology of the period and for their methodological interest. The term 'Gallo-Roman' is used to denote the first - early fifth centuries A.D., 'early medieval' the later fifth - tenth centuries A.D. and 'high medieval' the eleventh - fifteenth centuries.

The Aisne Valley Project

The area chosen for study is a 50 km transect along the river Aisne between Reims and Soissons. As the civitas capitals of the Remi and the Suessiones respectively, both places were important public towns during the Roman period, and were also major centres under the Merovingian and Carolingian monarchs. The study area also spans the geological transition between the open chalkland of Champagne and the limestone plateaux and river valleys of the Paris Basin, which should eventually allow a comparison of settlement developments and rural economy in contrasting environments as well as in different political or administrative territories. The chronological scope of the project allows the settlement picture for any period to be set against the longer-term rhythms of continuity and change. In keeping with other areas in the Paris Basin, the menace of gravel extraction along the river Aisne has necessitated an intense programme of rescue excavation, during which dozens of sites of all periods have been investigated by teams of archaeologists from Paris 1 University and from the Service Régional de l'Archéologie at Amiens (e.g. Demoule and Ilett, 1985). As a result, the actual valley bottom is now one of the most intensively studied archaeological landscapes in Europe, although once away from the river itself, relatively little work had been done before the start of the Durham project.

The importance of Belgic Gaul as an area of accelerated social change and cultural interaction both at the start and at the end of the Roman period is well known, and is reflected in the weight of scholarship devoted to the region, but there remains a need for systematic archaeological survey. As already indicated, excavation has tended to follow the major threats - the river terraces, the autoroutes, and the TGV - and there has also been a disproportionate concentration of effort on particular site types - as analysis of excavated sites recorded in *Gallia* since 1970 reveals (Haselgrove, 1990; Haselgrove and Scull, 1992). Thus, for instance, the number of Merovingian cemeteries investigated since 1970 far outweighs the number of early medieval settlements, even though the latter are hugely under-represented in the archaeological record. Similarly, although Roger Agache's aerial surveys in Somme have transformed understanding of Gallo-Roman settlement on the Picardy chalklands (Agache, 1978), and Michel Boureux's work in Aisne has had similar results, especially on the gravel terraces of the Aisne itself (e.g. Boureux, 1974, 1982), depth of coverage is lacking outside these areas (Fig. 1). In any case, aerial survey requires follow-up fieldwork and excavation if its full potential is to be realised. Until recently there had been virtually no systematic ground survey in southern Picardy, an exception being Parent's fieldwalking around Fère-en-Tardenois (Parent, 1972). This tripled the number of known Gallo-Roman sites in his survey area, emphasizing the inadequacies of older information.

We have recently considered the regional settlement background elsewhere (Haselgrove and Scull, 1992) and it is not necessary to reiterate this discussion here. However, it is important to emphasize the constraints imposed on our understanding of settlement history by the gaps in existing knowledge, especially for the Roman and early Medieval periods. Up until the last few years, archaeological generalizations about settlement development during the first millennium A.D. have depended heavily on the richest and most readily recognizable obvious categories of site, such as towns, villas and cemeteries, simply because these were the sites about which something was known. The early medieval cemetery record, for instance, is frequently invoked as a proxy for the presence of a settlement, but models of settlement development based on this evidence have commonly rested on two largely untested assumptions; first, that there is a simple one-to-one relationship between settlement and burial community, and second, that there has been a long-term stability of settlement pattern, with medieval and modern villages having Merovingian or even Gallo-Roman origins (Haselgrove and Scull, 1992, 11; cf.

Durand 1988). Neither assumption can be taken for granted, and even if they are justifiable in some cases it is clear that they are not universally applicable. For instance, the recently-excavated Merovingian cemetery at Goudelancourt-lès-Pierrepont (Aisne) appears to have served two distinct concentrations of settlement c. 500 m apart (A.D.M.S. 1991, 134); and in the Aisne Valley our survey results show conclusively that the pattern of rural settlement has not been wholly static since the pre-Roman period.

A good example of the dangers of approaching rural settlement through the cemetery record at even a superficial level is provided by an analysis of excavated Gallo-Roman and early medieval sites recorded in *Gallia* since 1970 (Haselgrove and Scull, 1992). This shows that very different conclusions about continuity and change in the settlement record might be drawn from the available cemetery and settlement data, used independently of one another. Models of rural settlement patterning and settlement change derived from the cemetery record, although useful, remain a starting point, to be tested in detail against good quality settlement data. We are fortunate in the Aisne Valley in that the recent work of French colleagues has included excavation on several late Roman and early medieval settlement sites, notably Merovingian-period settlements at Condé-sur-Aisne, Juvincourt-et-Damary (Bayard, 1989a) and now Pontavert; and both Merovingian and late Merovingian-Carolingian settlements at Berry-au-Bac. These have provided extremely valuable information, especially about structures, against which our survey data can be set. However, all five excavated sites are on the terrace gravels, and our fieldwork should therefore help set them in their wider context.

Our research therefore aimed to offset some of the *lacunae* and biases in the archaeological record as it stands, through excavation on rural settlement sites and by undertaking a programme of intensive field survey sampling all the different components of the landscape. This will enable us to address with greater confidence such fundamental questions as (1) were the same sites occupied throughout the first millennium A.D.?; (2) do the settlement types change, physically or economically?; (3) does the overall pattern of siting and exploitation change significantly, and if so, how suddenly?; and (4) when do the major changes, if any, occur? The data obtained should also provide a much sounder basis from which to undertake inter-regional comparisons, potentially one of the most useful ways forward if we wish to understand the largely undocumented rural communities who up until our own century comprised the vast majority of Europe's population (Braudel, 1991).

Survey strategy and procedure

The 1988-92 fieldwalking programme was centred on four 2 x 10 km transects orientated north - south across the valley across the grain of the landscape, sampling the

principal geological and topographical zones (Fig. 2; Haselgrove, 1989). The total area selected for investigation within the transects was thus 80 sq km and the aim of the project was to fieldwalk at least half of this, with a minimum coverage of 40% in any one transect. This amounts to just over two-thirds of the available (arable) land in the four transects. The north and south halves of each transect were staggered by 2 km to maximize the east - west coverage of the river valley, enabling a more comprehensive assessment of how the settlement pattern varies with distance from the major Roman centres at either end of the study area, and from the major late La Tène fortified sites in the vicinity of each town - Villeneuve-St-Germain and Pommiers outside Soissons, Condé-sur-Suippe and beneath the Roman levels at Reims - which must represent some kind of Iron Age predecessors (cf. Audouze and Büchsenschütz, 1989).

Each field was linewalked at 20 m intervals, preferably after they had been ploughed and had had the chance to weather over the winter, although to gain access to some areas, some walking after the harvest has also been necessary. Wherever possible, linewalking on sites located during the initial phase was followed by additional surface collection, including intensive gridded collection and trial excavation where appropriate. Data from one such an exercise undertaken by the second author on the early medieval settlement site at Braye-en-Laonnois, Renge Noyer, suggest that sherds recovered from the surface represent 1.2 - 4.9% by number (1.6 - 7.6% by weight) of the total in the ploughsoil. On another, Iron Age site at Juvincourt-et-Damary, le Ruisseau de Fayau, where a significant amount of the assemblage is handmade, the surface finds represent between 0.8 - 2.3% by number. Since walking at 20 m intervals gives a visual scan of only about 10% of the field surface, this implies that our initial linewalking generates at best a 0.5% sample of the total ploughsoil assemblage in the areas searched, although boosted by subsequent intensive collections. Recent experiments under controlled conditions in England and Greece have recorded c. 16% of the pottery assemblage in the ploughsoil being present on the surface (Bintliff, 1992, 28), but in the Aisne Valley at least this estimate appears on the high side (although both the exercises referred to here in France were undertaken in far from ideal conditions).

Interpreting material in the ploughsoil is not necessarily straightforward. A concentration of artefacts might be the result of one or more of a number of past activities and a variety of more recent post-depositional processes including, in this area, disturbance during the First World War and land reclamation during the immediate post-war years. It is important to recognize the impact of this conflict on the present landscape: a number of pre-war villages and hamlets destroyed during the fighting have been rebuilt on new locations, and some were not rebuilt at all. There are also problems specific to the early medieval period which constrain the interpretation of surface collection data. There is growing evidence from excavated

sites that some Merovingian-period settlement pottery, distinct from the characteristic funerary wares, represents a continuation of Gallo-Roman traditions and might be mistaken for Gallo-Roman in fieldwalking assemblages, and the same problem affects the transition from the late Iron Age. On our initial assessment, the relative proportion of pottery classified as Roman or early medieval is higher than that which can be positively identified as Gallo-Roman (39% as against 30%), but for diagnostic early medieval sherds the position is reversed. This problem of recognition means that sites with early medieval activity may well be significantly under-represented in our provisional figures; until proper calibration has been undertaken, diachronic comparison will be problematic (Millett, 1985). More refined dating of early medieval material can also be difficult, but this will improve as work in progress establishes a secure ceramic chronology for this period in the Valley (Bayard and Thouvenot, 1993); stratified pottery assemblages from Braye-en-Laonnois will also help in classifying the fieldwalking material. We also have to bear in mind the possibility that high medieval and modern villages do fossilize elements of a late Gallo-Roman and early medieval settlement pattern, as has been suggested for the Somme. If so, such sites will be masked by modern villages, and so may not be detected by our survey methods. All these considerations must be borne in mind when assessing our results and conclusions.

Eventually, the data should allow us to discriminate objectively between concentrations likely to indicate settlement sites on the one hand and background 'noise' resulting from off-site activities such as manuring on the other. This might also allow some insight into broader land-use patterns: not only might cultivated areas be identified, but the absence of material over fairly large areas might identify territory not cultivated such as pasture, wood or waste. For the moment, however, we distinguish more subjectively between extensive dense concentrations of material which can only be explained by the disturbance of archaeological layers or features, and which we take to represent sites, and more nebulous scatters of material. Trial excavation by the first author at Beaurieux in 1983 (Haselgrove, forthcoming, a), and on two sites at Soupir in 1989 (Haselgrove *et al.*, 1990) confirmed that Iron Age and Gallo-Roman settlements can be located and identified by systematic surface collection. A similar exercise at Braye-en-Laonnois in 1991 demonstrated that this is also true of early medieval settlements (Scull, 1992), while in 1990, we undertook a surface collection and geophysical survey over the Merovingian settlement at Pontavert, now being excavated by the Service Régional de l'Archéologie, providing further data for calibrating the relationship between surface finds and the material in earthbound archaeological contexts. These cases, and trial excavation in 1992 of another later Iron Age site at Damary, Le Ruisseau de Fayau (Haselgrove and Lowther, 1992), appear to confirm a strong correlation between high sherd densities in the

ploughsoil and buried archaeological deposits or subsurface features.

Survey results

Between 1988 and 1992, very nearly 650 fields amounting to 40.4 sq km were line-walked, representing 70% of the available land and 51% of the total survey area. Preliminary assessment indicates an overall density of 1.7 sites and 2.2 less intense scatters of pottery per sq km. The breakdown by period is as follows: 29 prehistoric sites ranging in date from Neolithic to early Iron Age; up to 20 late Iron Age or Gallo-Roman *precoce* sites; 29 Gallo-Roman sites; and 26 early medieval sites. This amounts to 69 discrete sites in all. Since several sites extend over more than one field, we had expected a law of diminishing returns to come into play, with more sites being 'rediscovered' in subsequent years than new ones found, but this does not appear to be the case. The recovery rate has remained remarkably close to 1.5 sites discovered per sq km walked, rising exceptionally to 2.6 sites per sq km in 1991 when fieldwalking conditions were particularly propitious. The high medieval period is represented by 9 sites (bringing the total of discrete sites to 71), as well as intense spreads around 9 of the 17 existing villages in the survey area. These latter zones are difficult to interpret at present; they could represent intensive manuring of the village infield, the presence of now vanished farmsteads on the periphery or a shift in the focus of the village.

There is a clear contrast between the river valley proper and the chalkland where, as might be expected, proximity to a watercourse appears to have been the over-riding factor affecting settlement location since the Iron Age. Elsewhere, it is apparent that settlement has not been wholly or largely confined to the terrace gravels or flood plain at least since late prehistory. Sites of all periods have been identified on the valley slopes, and the fieldwalking evidence also suggests that the relatively intractable, albeit highly fertile, soils of the plateaux were being extensively and increasingly utilized from the later Iron Age, although then as now settlement generally avoided the exposed plateau top in favour of more sheltered slope and edge locations.

Several locations display significant multi-period activity, and in some cases the density is such as to suggest both shifts from one location to another nearby and the co-existence of sites of different function and status. Concentrations representing activity from late prehistory to the high Middle Ages have been identified around several of the modern villages, e.g. Beaurieux, Braye-en-Laonnois (Fig. 3) Jumigny, Soupir (Fig. 4) and Vieil-Arcy (Fig. 5). This evidence for long-term settlement mobility within a circumscribed area is similar to patterns recognized elsewhere in north-west Europe (Waterbolck, 1982; Heidinga, 1987), and may represent preferred zones of settlement or, perhaps, long-lived territorial interests.

Overall, site density rises consistently moving westwards out of the open chalkland (1.2 sites per sq km) towards the Soissons area (2.4 sites per sq km). If only sites of the first millennium A.D. are counted, the trend is even more marked, the site density on the chalk (0.5 per sq km) being less than one third that in the most westerly transect (1.7 per sq km). By and large this mirrors the contemporary settlement pattern, villages on the chalk being fewer and further between than within the limestone country of the Paris basin. After the Iron Age, it is virtually unknown to find significant concentrations of material on the open chalkland away from a water course.

The Gallo-Roman settlement pattern

It must be stressed again that our analysis is provisional, and that the crude figures for settlement survival and continuity discussed here may sometimes be misleading in that they cloak smaller-scale or shorter-term shifts in settlement focus, or changes in function or intensity of activity. Nonetheless, even before detailed quantification and analysis, and with only the crudest chronological discrimination, interesting conclusions can be drawn from the fieldwalking results, especially when the data for the first and second halves of the first millennium A.D. are compared with those for the late Iron Age and high Middle Ages.

Although conventional wisdom is that the more fertile but less tractable *limon* soils of the adjacent slopes and plateau overlooking the river valley were not fully exploited before the Gallo-Roman period, the field-walking evidence demonstrates that this is simply not so. It is not yet always possible to differentiate between sites of La Tène D2 date (c. 80-30 B.C.) and those which were founded only in the Augustan period, but of twenty sites which were certainly occupied in the first century B.C., as many as seven are on the plateau, although as today, settlement avoided the exposed areas right on top in favour of more sheltered locations at the edge. This accords with other indications that the Paris Basin was an area of above-average population density at this period (Caesar, *de Bello Gallico*, II, 4; Haselgrove, 1990). One of these plateau sites was probably a promontary fort, at the Fort de Condé, while the others all underlie major Gallo-Roman settlement complexes at Condé-sur-Aisne, Longueval-Barbonval, and Paissy, which may imply that the character of plateau edge settlement was relatively nucleated from the first.

The fieldwalking results from the Aisne Valley accord with evidence from other areas of north-eastern France which suggests that the first century B.C. was a period of considerable discontinuity in the settlement record (Haselgrove, forthcoming, b). So far, all the known rural sites occupied in La Tène C2 (c. 190-150 B.C.) or La Tène D1 (c. 150-80 B.C.) appear to have been abandoned no later than the early first century B.C. This is supported by excavations on three sites investigated by the Durham project: Beaurieux, Les Grèves; Damary, Le Ruisseau de Fayau; and Soupir, Le Parc; and also at two other sites

examined by the French teams: Juvincourt, Le Gué de Mauchamp I, and Berry-au-Bac, Le Chemin de la Pêcherie. These developments are thus too early to be related to the Roman invasion of 57 B.C. led by Julius Caesar. Instead, they seem much more likely to be linked to another phenomenon altogether: the foundation, one after another, during this period of a whole series of enormous fortified settlements, including Condé-sur-Suippe, Pommiers, Reims and Villeneuve-St-Germain, which all seem to share a strict orthogonal layout, suggesting that their creation resulted not from a gradual concentration of people, but rather from an individual or collective decision to regroup there (Haselgrove, 1990). Apart from Reims, these settlements were all short-lived, while at Pommiers, the intensive early Augustan occupation is most likely to reflect the garrisoning of the native predecessor of *Augusta Suessionum* by the Roman army. The one definite Roman fort within the survey transects, at Mauchamps, near Berry-au-Bac, is undated, but seems likely to be of later date. The second half of the first century B.C. saw the foundation of a significant number of new rural settlements - or in some cases their reoccupation, as at Beaurieux, or 200 m to the south as at Soupir - which presumably reflects a gradual return to the countryside in the more peaceful conditions prevailing after the Roman conquest. At least nine rural sites in the survey transects appear to be newly established at this period - perhaps as many as thirteen - as opposed to only two or three sites which might display continuity - and two of these were rapidly abandoned. In contrast to the rural sites occupied early in the first century B.C., which were primarily small, open farmsteads, their replacements were often larger and enclosed, typified by the excavated examples at Beaurieux; Juvincourt, Le Gué de Mauchamp II; and Bucy-Le-Long, Le Fond du Petit Marais; or the cropmarks at Soupir, Le Parc. At both Beaurieux and Juvincourt, these ditched enclosures evidently comprised several separate farmsteads, presumably those of the local landowner and their dependents. The layout of these sites strikingly anticipates later Gallo-Roman courtyard villas, into which Beaurieux developed, as did Soupir, although other sites probably continued as *fermes indigènes* of lower standing. Initially, however, signs of Romanization outside the towns are restricted to the presence of Mediterranean forms of eating and drinking wares, and the greater quantities and variety of other imports, especially wine amphorae.

It was not until the later first and second centuries A.D. that stone buildings in Roman fashion started to be erected in the countryside in any numbers. An important point to emerge from the survey programme is that stone buildings are much more common at Roman sites in the Aisne Valley than aerial survey alone would imply (e.g. Boureux, 1974) - as indeed might be expected of a rich agricultural area at the heart of the *civitas* territories of the *Remi* and the *Suessiones*. At Beaurieux and Soupir, trial excavations confirmed the existence of well-preserved Roman structures which could be predicted from the surface remains, but unlike the earlier ditched enclosure do not

show up at all on the aerial photographs. This is reminiscent of the phenomenon noted in the Somme by Agache (1978), whereby the same site can under different crops and conditions yield cropmarks either of stone buildings or of negative features such as ditches and pits, but never the two together. By implication, the soils and cultivation regime of the Aisne valley mitigate strongly against stone buildings forming cropmarks, so that ground survey provides an important corrective to this particular bias. At a third site, at Longueval-Barbonval on the edge of the Mont de Dhuizel, the farmer has himself plotted the outline of several stone buildings from walling brought to the surface by ploughing, while a trial magnetometer survey in 1990 in another part of the site succeeded in pinpointing a further stone building. Many of the Gallo-Roman sites with stone building remains are of a size which would be classified elsewhere as villas without hesitation. In a few cases, such as Couvrelles, Le Chateau, or the Chapelle de St Pierre at Soupir, the remains suggest courtyard villa establishments to compare with the largest and richest so far found in the area, such as Blanzly-Les-Fismes or the Villa d'Ancy at Limé.

The High Empire saw a marked increase in the number of sites, a phenomenon which can be paralleled in the rest of Belgic Gaul (Haselgrove and Scull, 1992), as well as in many other areas of the Roman world. Settlement numbers were at their highest during the second century A.D., with twenty six sites occupied - double the number in the early first century A.D. - but apparently declined thereafter, although the survey evidence does not support the hypothesis of wholesale abandonment of villas in the late third century A.D. in particular, which is sometimes suggested as happening throughout Belgic Gaul (Wightman, 1985). The sites still occupied in the late Empire do on average, however, seem to be larger in size than before, providing some support for the idea of increasing nucleation in the face of the renewed crises of the time (Wightman, 1978, 1985). The most important sites, too, are increasingly located away from the valley bottom, in the side valleys and on the slopes above, although this may have more to do with the distribution of the richest and most fertile soils. However, until detailed analysis of the ceramic assemblages from the various sites is complete, there is little more to be said concerning changes in population levels during the Gallo-Roman period, or about the social and economic links between different types and sizes of settlement, and their relationship to the landscape as a whole.

Late Roman and early medieval settlement developments.

Only five of twenty-six Gallo-Roman sites occupied during the High Empire have evidence for significant early medieval activity. At four there is evidence to suggest continuous occupation; in the remaining case this is possible, but diagnostic material is lacking. Only two Gallo-Roman sites appear to have survived uninterrupted to the end of the first millennium A.D. Twenty of twenty-

six early medieval sites have no evidence for Gallo-Roman occupation and three of the four excavated early Merovingian settlements in the valley appear to have had no direct Gallo-Roman predecessor. Fewer than two in three early medieval sites appear to have survived into the high Middle Ages, while at least six high medieval sites appear to be new foundations or have yielded no more early medieval material than might be expected of settlements whose origins lie wholly within the eleventh to twelfth centuries A.D. Even if all the modern villages and hamlets within the survey area have been occupied continuously since the Late Roman period (which may be considered unlikely), it follows none the less that configurations of rural settlement were not wholly static during the second half of the first millennium A.D.

Rather fewer early medieval sites are known than Gallo-Roman. The overall number of sites occupied at some point in time between c. 50 B.C. and A.D. 450 is 36, as opposed to 26 sites for the somewhat longer period between the fifth and the eleventh centuries A.D. Even allowing for the possible under-representation of early medieval sites in our figures, this argues some reduction in the number of settlements in the post-Roman period, although exactly when is still unclear. The possibility that the lower density of early medieval sites might be explained by a nucleation of settlement is not supported by the fieldwalking data, nor by the excavated evidence. The drop in the number of sites is most marked on the plateaux, where only one significant concentration of early medieval material is known, against nine Gallo-Roman. If exploitation of the plateau top from the later Iron Age genuinely reflects a relatively high population density in the region (and we would argue that it does), then the disproportionate scarcity of early medieval sites on the plateau may corroborate a post-Roman population decline, although we should not overlook a number of early medieval sites which occupy sheltered locations high on the slopes similar to those favoured by many present-day farms.

Evidence from the Aisne valley thus appears to confirm two trends in rural settlement which have been observed more widely across Belgic Gaul: an apparent decrease in the number of settlements during the late Empire (Wightman, 1985; Van Ossel, 1992); and a marked discontinuity between the latest recognisable Gallo-Roman on the one hand and the early medieval on the other (Van Ossel, 1992; Percival, 1992). Wightman's reading - that a fall in the overall number of settlements may be explained in part by increasing nucleation of settlement, attributed to the increasing power of great magnates and their ability to re-organize population and landscape, and to political and military insecurity (Wightman, 1978, 1985) - has been challenged by Van Ossel, who envisages *declin progressif et continu* in the Late Roman countryside, and sees longer-term transformations in the cultural and physical landscape from a classical model to one which foreshadows the early Middle Ages (Van Ossel, 1992, 177-84). As noted above, aspects of our fieldwalking evidence

do seem to support a nucleation of settlement during the later Empire, but both fieldwalking data and excavated sites such as the small Gallo-Roman farmstead at Juvincourt-et-Damary (Bayard, 1989b) indicate that the scale of this should not be exaggerated. Similarly, although the great majority of Gallo-Roman settlements known from fieldwalking fail to survive into the early medieval period, some do. We have suggested that one such site, the Chapelle de Saint Pierre near Soupir, may have been a higher-status Gallo-Roman establishment which subsequently retained its importance as a magnate farm (Haselgrove and Scull, 1992).

The available evidence strongly suggests that dispersed hamlets or groups of farmsteads were a significant feature of the Merovingian-period landscape. Fieldwalking evidence from Juvincourt-et-Damary, and from the environs of Braye-en-Laonnois, where two early Medieval sites are known within one km of each other and the modern village (Fig. 4), suggest both fluidity and mobility of settlement in the early medieval period. Transition to a more dispersed pattern of smaller agricultural settlements from the fifth century (if this inference is legitimate) can be explained in several ways. Initially, it might suggest a rural society based more on self-sufficient kin or family units rather than village or estate communities, and the discontinuity and change apparent in the settlement record might be explained by invoking the havoc of the barbarian invasions and the appearance of free Germanic settlers with rights denied the tied Gallo-Roman peasantry. Both the cemetery evidence and the appearance of new structural types, including *Grubenhäuser*, in the settlement record would be consistent with new Germanic elements in the rural population. But there is no evidence that change can be attributed solely to military catastrophe and an immigrant population, and therefore complementary explanations must also be sought. Developments precipitated by the specific military and political circumstances of the late Empire need not have survived their passing, and so may have been short-lived. Altered economic conditions, especially any contraction of the market for agricultural surplus, would reduce the incentive for organized production of a profitable surplus on rural estates. Changes in the character and purpose of surplus extraction, with increasing emphasis upon direct consumption or redistribution by élites (Wickham, 1984; Wightman, 1985, 310), and corresponding shifts in social and economic relationships, might therefore be a plausible context for the establishment of more dispersed, self-sufficient settlements where previously a tied population had been concentrated in fewer larger settlements. A dispersed pattern of agricultural settlements, lacking the essential elements of the feudal village, and each looking towards the *caput* of an extensive estate, would also be consistent with what is known of land-tenure and the landscape in the Carolingian period. A shift towards more subsistence-orientated farming might also be accompanied by a natural drop in population over several generations (perhaps involving cultural changes or adaptations such as higher ages of marriage) without precipitating the long-

term demographic and economic stress which is sometimes held to characterize the early Middle Ages.

Fewer high medieval sites are known from fieldwalking than early medieval, and the amount of high medieval pottery recovered, as a proportion of the total fieldwalking assemblage, is also rather low (25%). For a number of reasons, it is unlikely that this reflects any real decline in population size or settlement activity. As already noted, a significant number of the high medieval sites take the form of intense scatters around the modern villages, implying that there was by then a significant degree of nucleation. Several of the other present day villages and farms probably mask further high medieval settlements or their associated pottery spreads. On the whole, the evidence points to a change in settlement pattern, or a re-organization of the landscape, around the end of the first millennium A.D. There is further support for this where fieldwalking has identified significant multi-period activity in the environs of modern villages. At Braye-en-Laonnois, Soupir and Vieil-Arcy the evidence suggests complex and apparently continuous sequences of settlement shift and mutation from late prehistory until well into the second half of the first millennium A.D., culminating in each case in the establishment of settlement on the site of the modern village. At Soupir and Vieil-Arcy the surviving churches are twelfth century, perhaps giving a *terminus ante quem* for the establishment of the village. Thus, although the earlier existence of some extensive settlement aggregations which survived as high medieval villages cannot be ruled out, our fieldwalking evidence appears to support the thesis that the widespread emergence of nucleated villages occurred in the two centuries around the turn of the first millennium A.D. This has been linked to the development of the seigneurial 'cell' as the great estates of the Carolingian period were broken up and alienated piecemeal, which the establishment of local churches as the centres of rural parishes is credited with having helped to stabilize and crystallize the new pattern of settlement (Fossier, 1968; Chapelot and Fossier, 1980). A very similar process of development has been proposed for contemporary lowland England (Blair, 1988).

Conclusions

Our work has shown that in this area of north-east France a range of rural settlement types of first millennium A.D. date can be located and identified successfully by fieldwalking. Survey and selective excavation therefore offers a powerful tool with which to address questions of rural settlement development and rural economy during the period, although similar programmes are required in other regions to offset the over-reliance on old excavations and chance discoveries. It is clear that the structure of settlement during the millennium has not been static, and that processes of settlement shift and abandonment, and of nucleation and dispersion, must be accounted for in explaining the development of the pre-Feudal and Feudal landscape.

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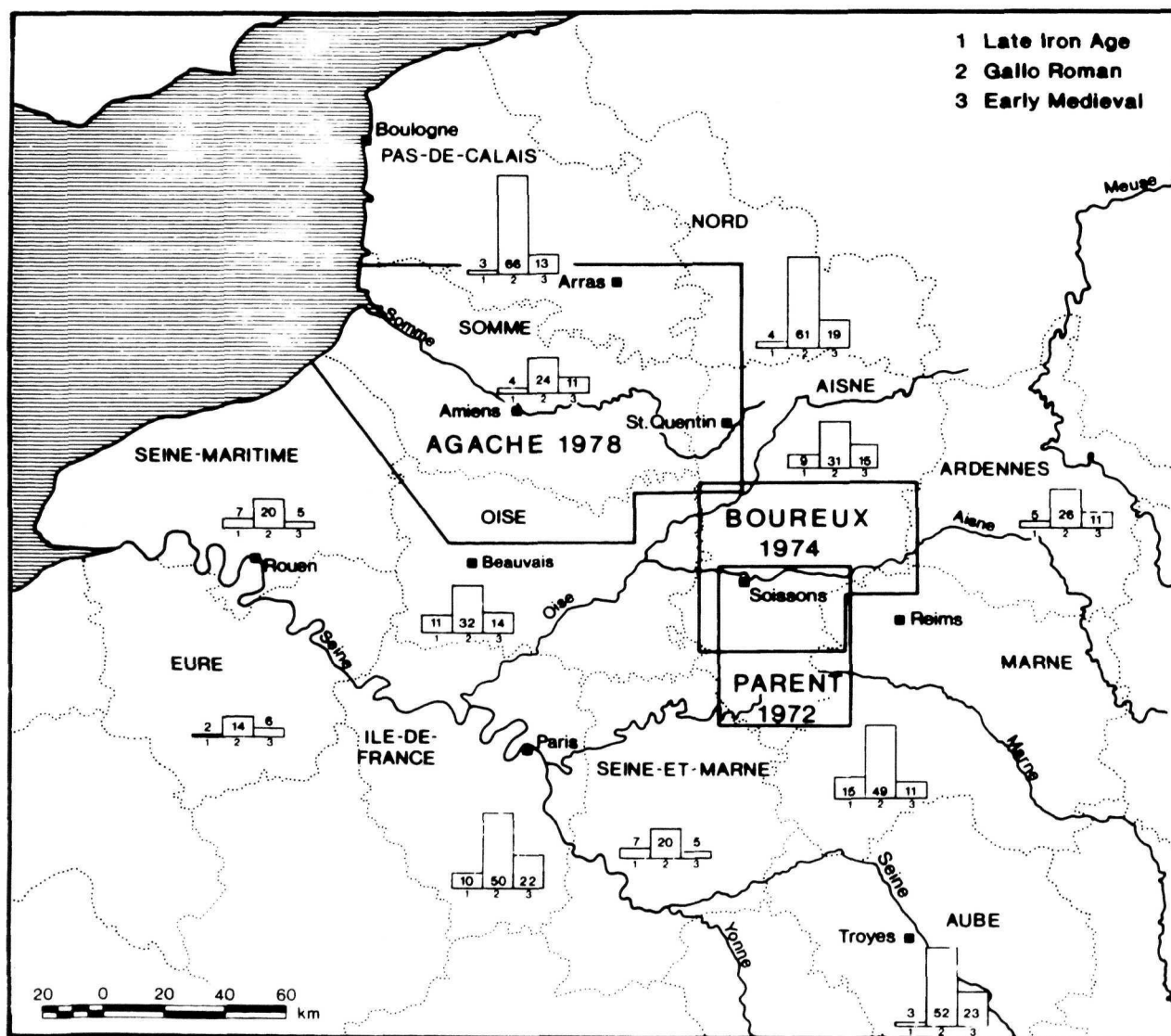


Fig. 1. Map of northern France showing major survey areas.

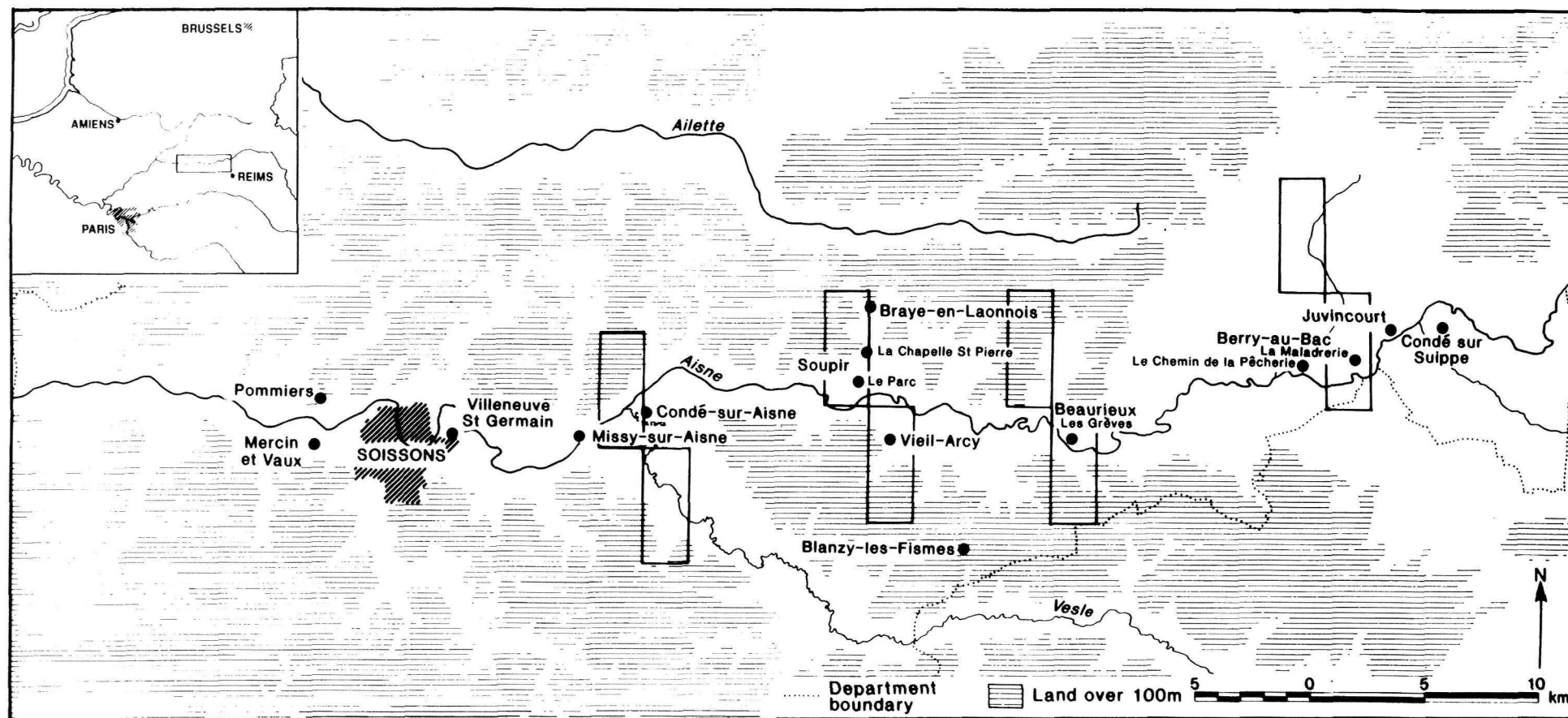


Fig. 2. The Aisne Valley Project. Study area and survey areas, showing sites mentioned in the text.

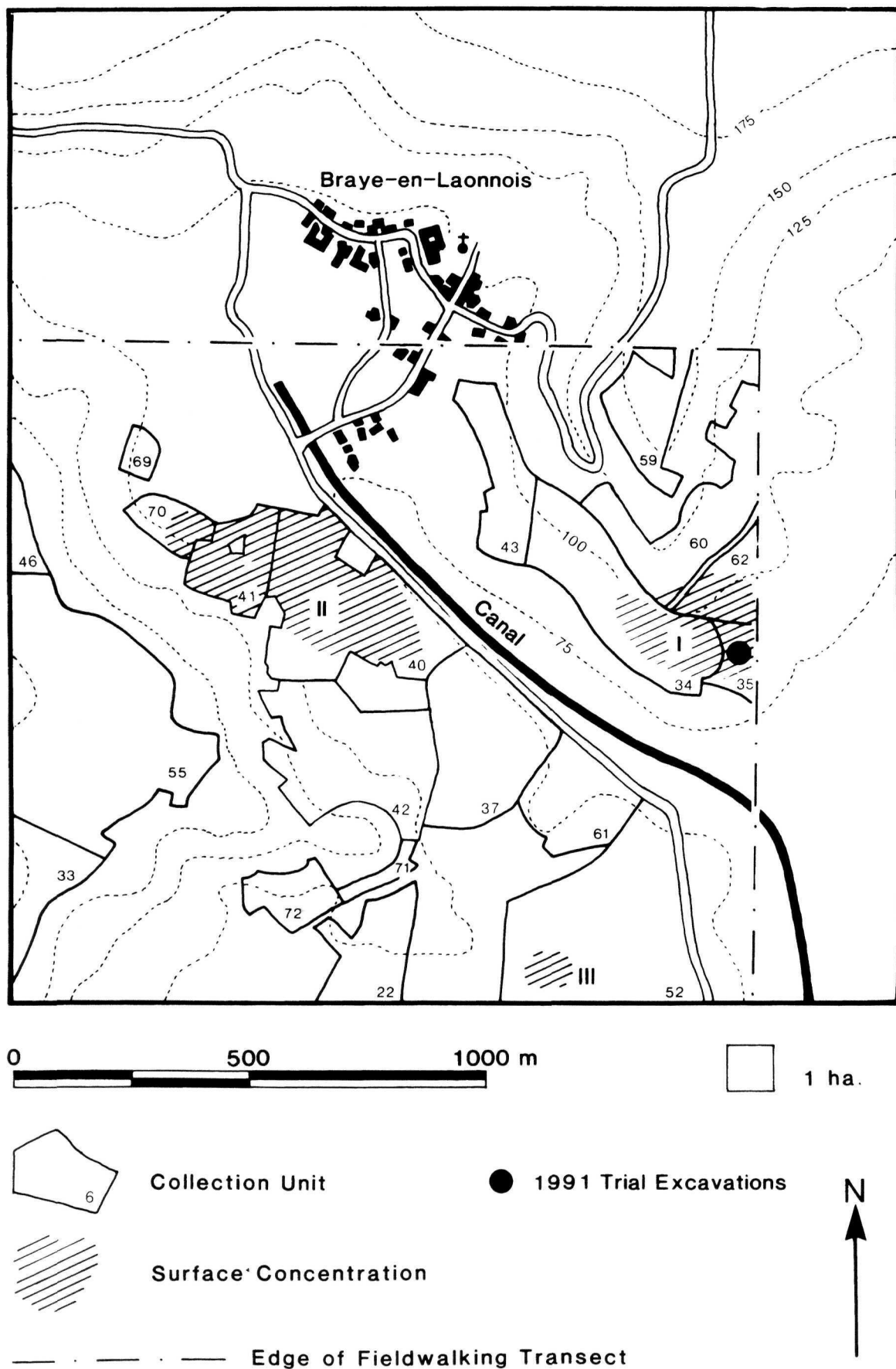


Fig. 3.

Major surface concentrations of archaeological material around Braye-en-Laonnois: I Iron Age - Early Medieval; II Early Medieval - High Medieval; III Iron Age.

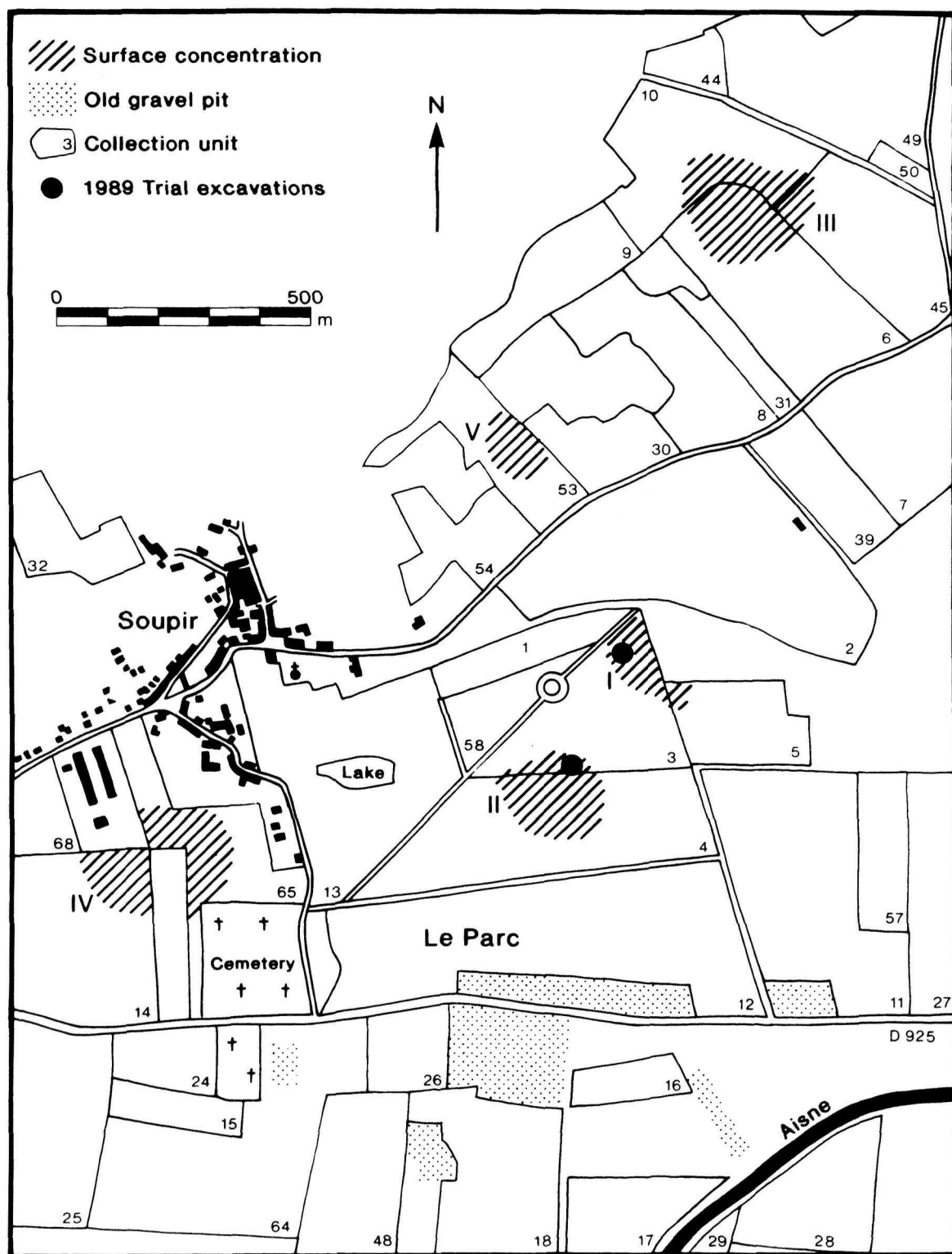


Fig. 4. Major surface concentrations of archaeological material around Soupir: I Iron Age; II Gallo-Roman; III Gallo-Roman - Early Medieval; IV Late Iron Age - Early Roman; V Early Medieval.

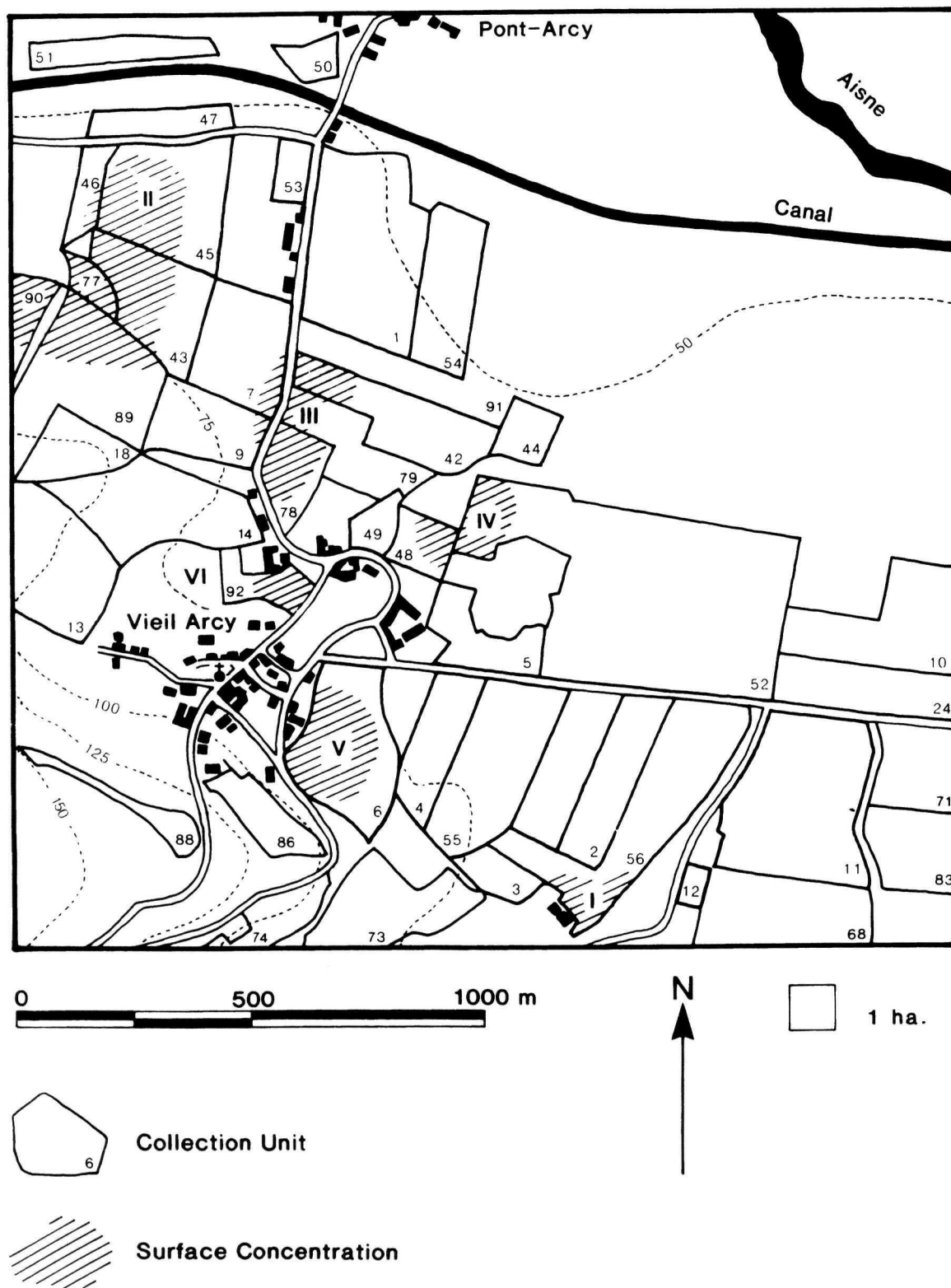


Fig. 5.

Major surface concentrations of archaeological material around Vieil Arcy: I Iron Age - Early Medieval; II Gallo-Roman - Early Medieval; III and IV Gallo-Roman and High Medieval; V High Medieval; VI Gallo-Roman - Early Medieval.

APPROACHES TO MATERIAL CULTURE AND SOCIAL DYNAMICS OF THE MIGRATION PERIOD IN EASTERN ENGLAND

Christopher Scull

Introduction

The scope of the Durham seminar from which this volume derives was wide: the transition from Roman to Medieval in Europe. In the case of migration-period England (broadly speaking from the mid fifth century to the late sixth century) this raises many involved issues of approach and of interpretation which cannot be addressed adequately in a single paper. This contribution is therefore intended to summarize a view of some current debates and their context, and some issues arising from them. Like the initial seminar presentation, it draws heavily on - and to some extent repeats - work which has been published elsewhere (Scull, 1992, 1993).

Perspectives and Problematics

The characteristic archaeology of Late Roman Britain disappears from the physical record early in the fifth century. It is superseded in southern and eastern England by new structural types and settlement configurations, new cultural practices, and new material culture types. Our evidence is that this radical transformation of the material record is accompanied by language change. It is also clear that by the end of the seventh century, when there is good evidence for kingdoms ruled by monarchs who claimed descent from continental Germanic ancestors, neither political geography nor social and political institutions resembled those of latest Roman Britain.

The traditional explanation for this transformation is that Britain was settled by Germanic folk from the Continent: the Anglo-Saxons, who established their own culture and their own kingdoms in the former Roman provinces of *Britannia*. This view is founded primarily, though not exclusively, on two written sources: the *Historia Ecclesiastica* of Bede and the *De Excidio Britonum* of Gildas. Gildas is our source for the story of federate settlement and revolt. Bede, in a famous passage reflecting the traditions of his own day, identified the incomers, their continental homelands, and the territorial interests of their eighth century descendants:

They came from three very powerful Germanic tribes, the Saxons, the Angles and the Jutes. The people of Kent and the inhabitants of the Isle of Wight are of Jutish origin... From the Saxon country, that is, the district now known as Old Saxony, came the East Saxons, the South Saxons and the West Saxons... From the country of the Angles, that is the land between the territories of the Jutes and the Saxons,

which is called Angeln, came the East Angles, the Middle Angles, the Mercians and all the Northumbrian people...as well as the other Anglian tribes (*H.E.* i, 15).

It is notorious that archaeological approaches to migration-period England have been conditioned by these sources. The culture-historical approaches of scholars such as Leeds and Myres have been criticised by recent commentators, perhaps unfairly given that they worked within the major archaeological paradigm of their time, but it is undeniable that fairly simple archaeological models, conditioned by the historical narrative or by inferences drawn from it, have remained influential and that there are scholars for whom an approach to the material evidence which is rooted in the historical sources remains the favoured option.

However, current responses to this narrative vary widely. Historians who take a purist view would now increasingly question the narrative validity of the handful of relevant sources (e.g. Sims-Williams, 1983a, b; Dumville, 1989; Yorke, 1993), a position which undermines the consensus in some quarters that the fifth and sixth centuries in England should be seen as an historic period (cf. Bradley, 1980; Richards, 1987, 201-02). This position also brings into question whether Bede's account reflects the political or ethnic identities of the fifth century rather than of his own day, and it may be argued that the account in *H.E.* v, 9 implies the presence in fifth century Britain of a much wider range of Germanic identities than his main narrative would allow (Campbell, 1982, 31). Even among archaeologists who would subscribe wholeheartedly to the view that this culture-change can be attributed to a migration and settlement, most would concede that this alone is not a complete answer, and that both the complexity of the archaeological data and the apparent scale of social and political change in the two centuries after the migrations demand further and more detailed explanations. On the other hand, there are those who seriously question whether a migration and settlement can adequately explain the changes which occurred in fifth and sixth century England, and who would minimize the scale and impact of any population movements, invoking instead a balance of acculturation and endogenous development (Arnold, 1982, 1988; Hodges, 1988; Higham, 1992).

These issues go to the heart of the agenda which contributors to the Durham seminar were asked to address, but they also have a theoretical and ideological dimension in the here and now. It is possible to discern in some of

the positions which have been adopted over the past decade an attempt to re-fight the culture history vs. culture process debate of the 1960s in the arena of early medieval studies rather than prehistory. There is an irony here given the synchronicities emerging between the concerns of traditional culture history and the agenda of post-processual archaeology, and the extent to which processual analysis has been dependent on the infrastructure of classification and dating work undertaken as part of a more traditional approach (Scull, 1993, 65-66). In England, it may be argued that reactions amongst archaeologists against the use of simple migration or invasion models to explain the end of Roman Britain, reflected in the concern with 'continuity' which characterizes many papers of the 1970s, and articulated by Haselgrove (1979), have combined with a wider appreciation of the complex historical processes governing change in the Late Roman world (e.g. Brown, 1971; Wickham, 1984) and the hegemony of culture process as an explanatory framework in archaeology to induce an expectation that culture change within the former provinces of the western empire is best explained in terms of internal dynamics and as a process of transition. Indeed, the use of this term in the original seminar title ('Transitions from the Ancient to the Medieval Eras in Europe') appears to reflect an expectation that contributors would address the issues from just such a neo-evolutionist processual perspective.

Processual orthodoxy marginalized migration as an archaeological explanation, and this position has been adopted uncritically in some recent critiques of traditional Anglo-Saxon archaeology (Arnold, 1984, 10-11; 1988, 10-11; Hodges, 1988, 11-12). None the less, population movement is a reliably recorded phenomenon, and has generated a substantial body of theory (Rouse, 1986; Anthony, 1990; Champion, 1990). There is therefore no sound prior reason to reject the possibility that population movements occurred within the time frames studied by archaeologists, nor to dismiss fifth-century migrations to Britain out of hand. It is important to emphasize, too, that there need be no contradiction between migration theory and the perspectives offered by processual or post-processual archaeologies. At one level population movement may be studied as a process; at another it may provide a compelling context for the discourses of social actors. Integrating migration theory should thus strengthen the repertoire of explanation available to archaeologists. Further, it may be argued legitimately that any theoretical position unable to accommodate an observed social and demographic phenomenon is not sufficiently robust to be useful.

This paper will review briefly current views of the end of Roman Britain and some broader issues concerning the study of post-Roman Britain, and then evaluate the evidence for the movement of people or populations against some alternative explanations for the appearance of a new material culture in fifth-century Britain, and the extent to which subsequent developments may be

attributed simply to the presence of newcomers or to the interplay of more complex factors. It will be argued that there is powerful evidence for migration to Britain from the Continent in the fifth century. Thus, as much at issue as whether migration occurred is how theories of migration may contribute to a more sophisticated understanding of social and political change in post-Roman Britain, and this raises questions about the social and physical dynamics of population movement, and the construction, reproduction and transmission of cultural and political identities - complex issues which can only be touched on here. This is not an attempt to construct a general theory accounting for change in Britain in the second half of the first millennium A.D., nor to rehabilitate migration as a simple monocausal explanation, but to examine in outline specific issues of cultural identity and social process through dimensions of the archaeological record which have an appropriate resonance. Although a wider range of data will be drawn on as necessary, the detailed arguments are based largely on the evidence of one particular cultural practice - burial (in this case furnished inhumation and cremation) - and on the range of material culture items found with such burials. This may seem restrictive, but burials are the main component of the archaeological record for migration-period England, and it is widely agreed that at this time both burial practice and the material culture types buried with the dead were media for social expression (Fisher, 1988; Dickinson, 1991; Shephard, 1979; Pader, 1982; Härke, 1989, 1990). The mortuary record thus offers much sensitive data bearing on constructions of cultural and social identity. Much of what follows is widely applicable to eastern England in the Migration Period, but the specifics are based on study of the area of the historically-attested East Anglian kingdom and it should be cautioned that regional differences in the patterns of evidence and in the trajectories of change or development are to be expected.

Approaches to post-Roman Britain

All other considerations apart, archaeological chronology does not allow the end of Roman Britain as apparent in the material record to be attributed to an invasion and settlement of Anglo-Saxons: the material expressions of a Romanized society disappear from the archaeological record at least a generation before there is any evidence for a widespread Germanic presence in Britain. The current consensus would hold rather that the material expressions of Romanized Britain, like the social, economic and political structures which they reflect, were victims of economic trauma and political fragmentation following the military and administrative break with the Western Empire, and subsequent social and economic realignments. The subsistence economy need not have suffered major disruption, but the Romanized superstructure which it supported, and which served the needs of elites and the state, collapsed (Esmond-Cleary, 1989; Evans, 1990; Millett, 1990).

It is important to remember that Late Roman society was dynamic, and that the collapse of Romanized Britain may have accelerated or transformed rather than precipitated some longer-term trends. A case in point is the changing social basis and the changing social and economic geography of elite power which has been widely discerned in the fourth century. Events of the early fifth century may have deprived elites in Britain of the established material vocabulary of power, but it seems likely that structures of authority based on rural landholding and a personal relationship between patron and client persisted (cf. Evans, 1990, 98-102). It is therefore plausible that in the wake of the disintegration or withdrawal of the Imperial administration power devolved to local aristocracies: the magnate families who would have held real local power in Late Roman Britain. In the scale of its political structures and its capacity for political integration, and in its economic sophistication, post-Roman British society may therefore have more closely resembled the continental societies from which the Anglo-Saxons came than that of the Late Roman provinces of Britain. A politically-fragmented indigenous society would offer a plausible context both for the permanent settlement of incoming groups, and for their subsequent establishment of a political ascendancy.

This example suggests that culture change in post-Roman Britain was governed by a range of conditions and circumstances operating at different levels. At the inter-regional level migration from the Continent was only one of these factors and its impact on the archaeological record, although apparently profound, was circumscribed both spatially and chronologically. Developments from the sixth century in eastern England cannot be ascribed convincingly to continuing migration, and although interaction with Anglo-Saxon polities and societies must have had some effect, post-Roman developments in those areas of Britain where there is no evidence for Anglo-Saxon settlement must be understood primarily in terms of mutations within indigenous societies. However, although it may be argued legitimately that a better understanding of Late and immediately post-Roman society is necessary to define the insular context of Anglo-Saxon settlement, to over-emphasize endogenous factors risks failing to account convincingly for the very considerable regional differences within the former provinces of Roman Britain from the middle of the fifth century: differences which become progressively more marked between the east and west until the second half of the sixth century. No detailed unilinear processual model has yet accommodated these regional variations convincingly. This is not to argue that processual approaches are inappropriate - on the contrary, this paper is written from a broadly processual perspective, and in the conviction that the generalizing and comparative framework of the processual paradigm remains the keystone of an effective social archaeology - but rather that in order to be successful processual analysis has to be undertaken at the appropriate scale, and cannot afford to be dogmatic or simplistic. In the case of post-Roman Britain both the trajectories of endogenous change

in indigenous societies, and the nature and impact of external cultural traditions, their continental context, and the dynamics of their transmission need to be understood before any successful synthesis of developments in post-Roman Britain as a whole can be expected. To argue that this view merely perpetuates a simplifying ethnic divide between traditional 'Anglo-Saxon' and 'British' archaeologies, or that it is conditioned by modern English imperialism, would be disingenuous. The regional differentiation in the material record is genuine; seeking to explain different phenomena and different trajectories of development is valid; and to do so does not deny either that there may be broader processes at work which transcend regional differences in material culture or that there is potential for integration on a broader geographical scale. However, this does serve to emphasize that the geographical scope of traditional Anglo-Saxon archaeology has a fundamental legitimacy which is rooted in the spatial patterning of material culture and the research questions this raises.

Migration: the archaeological and contextual evidence

There can be no reasonable doubt that people from north Germany and south Scandinavia were present in Britain from the second quarter of the fifth century. The historical and linguistic evidence is strong, and is corroborated by archaeology. Similarities in mortuary practice and material culture satisfactorily establish the continental affinities and antecedents of the incomers, and the later fifth- and sixth-century material culture of early Anglo-Saxon England is clearly derived from these and from other continental exemplars (Böhme, 1974, 1986; Evison, 1981; Hines, 1984, 1990; Myres, 1969, 1972). It should however be emphasized that the archaeological evidence may now be taken to favour a complex picture of population movement over several generations, varying in intensity and character with time and place, over the traditional model of an *adventus saxonum* which implies a short period of migration and settlement, if not a single event, in the mid-fifth century. There is also archaeological evidence for an otherwise unrecorded migration from west Scandinavia to eastern England in the late fifth or early sixth century (Hines, 1984, 1992), and it is clear that an extensive network of relationships across the North Sea between eastern England and the Continent was established and maintained in the Migration Period (Hawkes and Pollard, 1981; Vierck, 1970; Welch, 1991).

Any attempt to assign precise ethnic identities to specific groups on the basis of the material culture evidence is likely to be problematic at best: the cultural geography of continental Europe during the Migration Period is extremely complex, with no absolutely clear-cut material culture boundaries, and this situation is reflected in the fifth-century archaeology of eastern England. It also seems clear that Bede's tripartite division of Angle, Saxon and Jute masked a complex nested hierarchy of regional and local identities. None the less, material culture links between Britain and the Continent in the fifth century can

be taken broadly to confirm Bede's specific identification of the fifth-century settlers' homelands, and in some aspects appear to foreshadow his identification of the territorial interests of their eighth-century descendants. Nationally, this can be seen most clearly in the distribution of some characteristic brooch forms, items which in some cases may have been exclusive to higher-status individuals and which, as components of women's costume, may have had a function in signalling social or ethnic identity. The complementary distributions of cruciform brooches of Reichstein's types Dorchester, Pritzier and Witmarsum on the one hand and composite saucer brooches of Böhme's types Krefeld-Gellep, Jouswier and Westerwanna on the other are particularly striking (Böhme, 1974, Karte, 7; 1986, Abb. 56). There are no absolutely mutually exclusive regional distributions in fifth-century England of types which might conventionally be considered Saxon or Anglian on the Continent, and it would be wrong to draw firm conclusions from so few examples, but this instance does suggest that among higher-status individuals, from whom later tribal groups and kingdoms may have derived their identities, the regional distinction between the Anglian and Saxon provinces of material culture evident in the archaeology of the sixth century may have had its roots in the circumstances of the fifth-century migrations. This point will be developed in more detail below.

It is extremely difficult to explain convincingly this widespread stratum of new material culture types and cultural practices in eastern England in the mid-fifth century other than as representing the establishment of new communities by groups from the Continent. Acquisition of the material culture items through trade seems unlikely. The most common and characteristic types - dress accessories and hand-made pottery fired in clamp kilns - are relatively low-cost items whose production was well within the limits of the technical expertise available to post-Roman British societies. It is implausible that the economic value of such items could have justified exchange in their own right across the North Sea or the Channel; if an interpretation as trade goods were to be accepted, their movement would therefore have to be explained as part of a larger-scale pattern of exchange, for which there is no evidence in the mid-fifth century. In any case trade, although it would account for the presence of new material culture types, would not in itself explain the rapid or wholesale adoption of new cultural practices. Burial practice is one example; the material expression of identity through dress is another. It has been argued convincingly that the characteristic female dress accessories of the Migration Period were actively-constructed media for social expression not only in their own right, but also *en suite* as components of costume (Vierck, 1978; Dickinson, 1991, 1993). Invested with this significance, their occurrence in Britain implies the presence of complex and culturally-specific cognitive structures, a factor which Hines has stressed as supporting their initial introduction on the persons of immigrants rather than through some less direct process of transmission (Hines, 1984, 108-09).

Perhaps the most explicit rejection of migration theories is that advanced by Richard Hodges (1988, 29-31, 41-42), who appears to argue that a centre-periphery relationship with Merovingian Gaul explains the widespread adoption of Germanic material culture types apparent in sixth century England. In some ways this is a powerful model. Ian Wood has indeed argued that parts of southern England were subject to Merovingian hegemony in the sixth century (Wood, 1983, 1992), and there are some aspects of material culture in Kent and the Upper Thames Valley in the sixth century which strongly suggest links with Merovingian Gaul (Hawkes, 1956; Evison, 1965; Dickinson, 1976; Hawkes, 1982; Scull, 1990). The unequal power relationship between societies of the centre and the periphery would establish, in emulation, a plausible context for the appropriation or construction of new identities, and the transmission of new cultural constructs and a new material vocabulary. However, although the mechanisms of transmission and interaction are appropriate and useful if applied more sensitively to aspects of migration-period England, Hodges' specific hypothesis falls on three grounds: that the earliest evidence for very close cultural contact between Britain and the Continent in the fifth century antedates Merovingian hegemony over Gaul, let alone over parts of England; that these earliest links appear to be with north Germany, Denmark and the North Sea coastal region north of the Rhine rather than with Gaul; and that outside of Kent the wider affinities of sixth-century Anglo-Saxon material culture are with areas other than Merovingian Gaul - in the case of most of eastern England with Denmark and Scandinavia (Hines, 1984, 1992, 1993).

Another factor which may perhaps be taken to privilege migration over other explanations for the mid-fifth century culture change in eastern England is its geographical circumscription. If it is accepted that post-Roman British societies were so open to cultural influence that they appropriated at a distance the material culture and cultural practices of continental societies outside the former Western Empire, it is difficult to explain why these were not adopted more widely in fifth-century Britain. Simple proximity to the continental North Sea coast cannot be an answer. There is no reason to suppose that traits which could be transmitted across the North Sea should encounter profound cultural barriers within the indigenous societies of lowland Britain, and in any case there is no simple fall-off in occurrence with distance from the east coast or major natural routeways. Thus, mid fifth-century material with close continental parallels is present in the upper Thames, but is absent from some areas further east along the Thames valley. However, factors of proximity and accessibility become far more significant if the archaeology is interpreted as representing the permanent movement of people, and the initial cultural and linguistic barriers between immigrants and existing population would be more broadly reflected in the differential distribution of cultural variables between those areas which saw Germanic settlement and those which did not. The balance of linguistic, archaeological and historical

evidence thus favours the fact of migration, and supports the view that a pivotal reason governing why a recognisable Germanic material culture dominates the archaeological record over large areas of eastern Britain from the mid fifth century, but is largely absent from western Britain, is that the former saw migration and settlement from the Continent and the latter did not.

Some contexts and dynamics of migration

Traditionally, there are two pervasive and influential models of the Anglo-Saxon settlement. One proposes a federate settlement and revolt according to the framework derived from Gildas' *De Excidio*, the other a more prolonged free settlement. This corresponds to the wider distinction commonly drawn between 'elite-dominance' processes on the one hand and population replacement models on the other (Renfrew, 1987, 124-33), and has been given a geographical dimension, with suggestions of an explicit contrast between a takeover by aristocratic war-leaders south of the Thames, and a more gradual settlement by humbler folk in, for instance, East Anglia (Böhme, 1986; Hawkes, 1982). A further coherence may be discerned between these distinctions and two major factors commonly evoked to explain migration in the continental context: environmental or agricultural crisis which forced population displacement; and a fissile political structure in which military adventure was a common strategy of endemic peer-competition.

In reality, none of these simple alternatives is likely to have operated exclusively. No single uniform factor can be identified as precipitating population movement or political fission in continental societies around the North Sea coast. The marine transgression which forced the abandonment of coastal settlements such as that at Feddersen Wierde, and which may therefore have contributed to population displacement, is unlikely to have affected inland sites directly. Environmental pressure on subsistence need not have been the only cause of economic crisis. In a study of the Danish island of Fyn, Gebühr has argued that the collapse of the Western Empire fatally weakened a social economy geared to exchange with the western provinces, and that the resulting stress precipitated elite-led raiding and migration (Gebühr, in press). Simple exclusive models are equally inappropriate for Britain, and as noted above archaeological data may be taken to favour more complex and longer processes than traditional narratives would allow. Whatever the integrity of archaeological evidence for Saxon federates from other parts of the country (Hawkes and Dunning, 1961; Böhme, 1986; Welch, 1993) there is no evidence from East Anglia that Germanic mercenaries were settled officially under Late Roman or post-Roman British authority. Here, the scale of the evidence suggests a substantial Germanic settlement, and this interpretation is now supported by the preliminary results of analysis of the earliest material from the cremation cemetery at Spong Hill, North Elmham (Norfolk) which appears to suggest that a high proportion of individuals of the original community or communities

burying here hailed from the same specific locality in Schleswig-Holstein (Hills, 1993). This accords with the empirical observation that long-distance migrations are often narrowly focused both at the homeland and at the point of destination, migration-streams frequently being structured by the information links embodied in kinship and co-residence structures (Anthony, 1990, 903-04).

As well as further supporting the archaeological evidence for migration, this may offer some insight into its scale and dynamics. Unless the evidence from Spong Hill is to be interpreted as representing a single event, it would imply the maintenance of focused links across the North Sea which - if this pattern is more widely typical - would be replicated across eastern England and the continental North Sea coast. The resources required for migration argue that it must have been a group or communal rather than an individual undertaking, and the structured social context implied by the Spong Hill evidence would support this. In the small-scale pre-state societies of migration-period Europe, the primary *loci* of such communal effort would have been kin and residence groups, hence the local focus predicted by migration theory and apparently observed in this case. However, it should be emphasized that the fifth century archaeology of East Anglia includes a substantial stratum of material culture types which would not be considered typically Anglian on the Continent. A few such pieces - such as supporting-arm brooches and Saxon equal-arm brooches - occur amongst the earliest burials at Spong Hill (Hills, 1993, 1994; Evison, 1977). A similar juxtaposition may be seen on a regional scale over much of south-east England. As has been noted above, although some material culture types have complementary distributions, there are no absolutely mutually exclusive regional distributions in fifth-century England of types which would be considered typical of specific regions of the Continent. The evidence from Spong Hill (where the cemetery appears to have served several settlements or communities) may suggest focused links between more than one region of the Continent and an area of what is now Norfolk, and the regional pattern may be similarly interpreted as representing the aggregate of many such individual migration-streams from different areas of the Continent. The pattern of evidence for the earliest Germanic presence in fifth-century East Anglia, and more widely in south-east England, may therefore be more plausibly interpreted as representing a diversity of identities and origins rather than a 'culturally-mixed' or undifferentiated population in the sense of the *Mischgruppen* proposed for areas of continental Europe in the Migration Period (Myres, 1986, 55, 107).

How were the initial contacts made? Military adventure is a plausible explanation which not only chimes sweetly with the broad outlines of Gildas' narrative but also accords well both with the assumed character of migration-period Germanic societies and with other observed phenomena characteristic of long-distance migrations: scouting, and the disproportionate involvement of young males in the initial stages of a

population movement (Anthony, 1990, 902-03). It has been noted, too, that the motives, composition and structure of groups making such initial contacts may be very different from those who follow (Anthony, 1990, 903). In this context it may be relevant that the institution of the Germanic warband or *comitatus*, as it is understood, cut across the constraints of kin group and other local ties. In theory, therefore, such a group might establish close links between a specific locale in Britain and a number of more widely-distributed communities on the Continent.

In East Anglia, as elsewhere in eastern Britain, the virtual absence from the region of any material evidence which might suggest the survival or re-emergence of native elites in the fifth and sixth centuries, in marked contrast to western Britain, suggests that any native dynasties faced too much competition too soon for them to be able to establish any stable or widespread authority, and this in turn argues for some organization and leadership among the incomers. The continental societies from which the earliest settlers buried at Spong Hill and other fifth-century cemeteries in East Anglia came had complex hierarchical structures, and in some cases demonstrably had the capacity to impose and maintain some authority, however impermanent, over considerable areas (Ilkjaer and Lønstrup, 1982; Hedeager, 1992). It is unlikely that these structures - especially those directly-rooted in kinship relations - would have been forgotten, especially if it is accepted that migration was constrained by the information links embodied in kinship and co-residence structures. Migration may also have established imbalances within Germanic communities in Britain at a very early stage if individuals or lineages established, or sought to establish, a 'first-comer' status. Indeed, in politically fissile societies this may be viewed as a powerful motive to migration.

The polities which have been identified in the Migration Period of southern Scandinavia developed as the result of long-term social and economic dynamics. One would not therefore expect settlers from these societies to establish immediate hegemony or political integration on a comparable scale in eastern England, but it is reasonable to expect in the earliest Germanic communities in England the social units and institutions of the parent societies. Evidence from East Anglia for marked social differentiation before the late fifth century is confined to material from a handful of mid fifth-century cremations which may imply that the deceased had a special status, and to a handful of heirloom items in later graves which may point to the presence of individuals or lineages of higher status among the earliest settlers (Scull, 1992, 9, 19). When it becomes possible to read the archaeological record in more detail, the evidence suggests a pattern of small communities belonging to broadly equal but internally ranked descent groups, from which higher levels of social differentiation and political integration had been established by processes of peer competition and competitive exclusion by the beginning of the seventh

century (Basset, 1989; Scull, 1993). Thus, although it may be tempting to assign military elites a lead role in the fifth century migrations, we should be wary of drawing rigorous social distinctions where none existed, and of divorcing military activity from its broader social context. Later sources indicate that the right to bear arms was widespread in Germanic societies, and Härke's work suggests that warrior status in migration-period England was a widely-shared ideological construct for which one qualified by age and descent rather than by necessary participation in combat (Härke, 1990, 1992a, b). Taken with the absence of evidence for any high degree of permanent social stratification in eastern England before the late sixth century, this suggests that the right or expectation of recourse to violence was not restricted to a narrow elite. Thus it is reasonable to propose that the societies from which the Anglo-Saxon settlers came had internal structures of power and authority below the level of regional lordship, and the capacity to deliver organised violence at a level below that of the war-leader and *comitatus*.

Migration offered - and offers - individuals the opportunity to change their circumstances, and to renegotiate or redefine roles or identities. However, such opportunities are - and were - constrained by dependence on the cultural constructs controlling access to support and recognition, and ultimately the means of subsistence and reproduction - both social and biological. Thus, it may be argued that the success of migration as a social strategy depended on the retention of the cultural framework within which roles and identities were negotiated, and that both the act of migration and its social context would therefore act to reinforce structures of social and cultural identity. The precise synchronisms in some cognitive structures which may be inferred from the similarities in material culture and burial practice argue that in general very little social distance existed between Germanic communities in Britain and their parent societies for two or three generations from the second quarter or middle of the fifth century. (Whether this similarity extends to other components of the archaeological record, which may reflect different dimensions of social practice, is unclear: for example, two areas which might bear investigation should sufficient data become available are whether the sexual segregation apparent in some migration-period cemeteries on the Continent is replicated in England, and whether there are coherences in the construction and use of settlement space.) However, from the later fifth century, despite the fact that there is good evidence for the maintenance of contacts across the North Sea, many items in the repertoire of Germanic material culture types introduced earlier in the century take on distinctive insular forms. This is also true of new material culture types and material culture traditions introduced from the Continent during the later fifth and sixth centuries. A good example is the great square-headed brooch. Derived from Scandinavian relief brooches of the later fifth century, more than twenty distinct groups can be identified in the corpus of examples manufactured in England over the next 75 years or so,

showing both regional variation and the complex transmission of templates and motifs (Hines, 1984, 110-98). Style I and Style II animal ornament, which first appear on Anglo-Saxon metalwork in the late fifth century and the second half of the sixth century respectively, also take on distinctively insular characteristics (Haseloff, 1981; Speake, 1980). By contrast with the archaeology of the mid fifth century, this suggests a developing social distance between insular groups and continental parent societies, despite the maintenance of contacts. This is broadly contemporary with the development of regional variations in material culture within Anglo-Saxon England, and it is likely that both are expressions of the same phenomenon: the emergence or construction of insular identities.

After the migrations: acculturation and the construction of political identities

By the later fifth century, characteristic Anglo-Saxon material culture and burial practices dominate the archaeological record in East Anglia. The probability must be, however, that they disguise a substantial proportion of the population which was British by descent. Most migration-period sites known in East Anglia were in use by *c.* A.D. 520, but only a minority can be shown to have been established by *c.* A.D. 475, a pattern which holds more widely over much of central and eastern England (Hines, 1990, 26-28). This trend might in part be a product of our incomplete understanding of most known sites, but if genuine it suggests that a very significant proportion of known Anglo-Saxon cemeteries was established two or three generations after the initial migrations. There is no evidence that the great expansion in the number of new cemeteries from the last quarter of the fifth century can be attributed solely to a new episode of migration, or to population growth amongst Germanic communities, and so it is tempting to propose that it also represents the culmination of a process of acculturation which tipped segments of the indigenous population over the threshold of archaeological visibility; the adoption by indigenous groups of new material culture types and cultural practices, expressing new affinities and identities, and rooted in new social and political configurations.

Testing and refining this proposition is fraught with difficulty. In eastern England no distinctive material culture element nor cultural practice is known which might securely identify the post-Roman indigenous population, and the absence of any distinctive cultural markers also makes it nearly impossible to assess the contribution of indigenous traditions to the archaeology of the later fifth and sixth centuries; thus discussion too often falls back on the hopeful identification of isolated material culture types or material characteristics which may be considered native rather than Germanic (e.g. Scull, 1985). There is, nonetheless, some indirect evidence for an indigenous post-Roman population in fifth-century East Anglia. Late Roman and Migration Period settlement patterns are similar on a regional scale, suggesting that the

former structured the latter; there is also a consistent pattern of early Anglo-Saxon activity on or immediately adjacent to the sites of Romano-British small towns, suggesting that they still existed as settlements when Anglo-Saxon migration was under way from the second quarter of the fifth century (Scull, 1992, 10-12). Biological studies have potential, and have been cited to support acculturation in Hampshire and Kent (Arnold, 1984, 129-30), but human bone does not survive from migration-period inhumations over most of East Anglia. Aspects of burial practice have also been considered as an index of native survival in north and west Britain (e.g. Faull, 1977). Inhumation was the main burial practice of fourth century Roman Britain (Philpott, 1991), and inhumation with few or no grave goods is an important feature of known latest Roman and post-Roman cemeteries (Esmond-Cleary, 1989, 184-95; Woodward, 1993). At Dorchester-on-Thames (Oxfordshire) radiocarbon dates indicate that the Late Roman cemetery at Queenford Farm was in use until the sixth century, and possibly into the seventh (Chambers, 1987, 58, 69). The burial practice here was unfurnished inhumation, but from the early fifth century other communities in and around Dorchester had been burying their dead with grave goods according to the characteristic early Anglo-Saxon practice (Dickinson, 1976; Hawkes, 1986, Fig. 7). At Icklingham (Suffolk) unfurnished inhumation was the majority practice in a cemetery established in the second half of the fourth century (West and Plouviez, 1976). It is possible, therefore, that the burial practice of fifth century indigenous communities in East Anglia was unfurnished inhumation. This would leave little trace other than the grave pit in the acid soils of much of East Anglia, and would require radiometric dating to identify, even supposing the bone survived to be recovered. It may also be relevant that in East Anglia the earliest known Germanic burials are cremations, but that inhumation becomes more common at the same time as the number of known cemeteries increases after *c.* A.D. 475. Inhumation with grave goods was practised on the Continent and elsewhere in Anglo-Saxon England by this time, and a number of factors might be invoked to explain the wider adoption of the practice in East Anglia, but it would be foolish to overlook the possibility that in some cases it represents the continuation of a native tradition of inhumation rendered visible by the adoption of Germanic material culture types and the practice of burying them with the dead. Even if this was the case, however, the native tradition was expressed within a wholly new cultural and social landscape: in no case in East Anglia can a migration-period cemetery be shown to have been in use from the Late Roman period.

It is by no means a universal phenomenon that host societies adopt the language and culture of immigrant groups. That this does appear to have been the case in migration-period England suggests a power relationship, and leads to the question of how Germanic incomers established political ascendancy and cultural dominance. Weight of numbers may have been a contributory factor in

some areas, but there is no reliable data from which to estimate usefully either the size of the post-Roman indigenous population or the numbers of incomers. (Calibrating the archaeological record is a major problem. It is widely agreed that there was a significant drop in population in the immediate post-Roman period, but whereas a numerical comparison of known Late Roman and migration-period settlements in East Anglia would support this, a similar comparison of cemeteries would suggest a massive population increase.) The traditional narrative of federate settlement and revolt would establish Germanic military elites in an initial official or quasi-official authority over the indigenous population, subsequently to be expanded and consolidated by conquest. Relevant to this, and to the dynamics of migration discussed above, are the two possibilities that post-Roman British society was politically fragmented, and that continental Germanic societies were better-organized for conflict at the level of the lineage or clan than were the fifth century communities which they encountered in eastern Britain. In this context it is worth re-emphasizing the view that endemic competition and conflict in continental societies was one of the factors precipitating migration, and the interpretation of Anglo-Saxon weapon-burials as symbolic of the right or duty of recourse to violence. I have argued elsewhere that peer-competition in migration-period England centred on the lineage, and that conflict and competition should not necessarily be narrowly characterized as Briton vs. Saxon (Scull, 1992, 14; 1993); however, it is possible that these factors may have put indigenous groups in eastern Britain at a decisive disadvantage, a view recently expressed by Woolf (1994). In the longer term, access to and maintenance of links with the Continent may also have been significant. Throughout the Migration Period, Germanic societies belonged to a wider cultural and ideological province, whereas post-Roman British society would increasingly have been cut off both from the inspiration of the elite value systems of Late Roman Britain and the means to express and articulate them. New formulations of ideology and material expression emerge in western Britain (Evans, 1990), but the ideology and symbolism of a system which had failed may have held little attraction for native populations in eastern Britain.

The scale and depth of acculturation would have depended on a variety of factors, and it cannot be assumed that it was uniform or monolithic. Just as the earliest Germanic settlers were from complex societies with hierarchical structures, so it should be assumed that indigenous British societies were complex, diverse and dynamic (cf. Evans, 1990, 100-02): contact and responses to contact may therefore have differed profoundly with rank or social identity. Higham (1992) has argued that the characteristic Anglo-Saxon archaeology of the sixth century represents a Germanic elite, and that the majority of the population - subordinate indigenous communities - remains archaeologically anonymous. This model raises interesting questions, but is difficult to accept when presented so starkly. In East Anglia, and over much of

south-east England, the sheer number of sixth century sites renders it implausible that these are all elite communities (and if they were all to be considered to represent a population Germanic by descent it would contradict Higham's minimizing view of the numbers of individuals involved in fifth century migrations from the Continent). In any case the archaeological evidence does not support this simple interpretation. It is not until the seventh century that the material record is consistent with the emergence of permanent elites or with surplus extraction and territorial organisation on a scale which suggests formal territorial lordship (Scull, 1992, 20-22; 1993, 75-80). Unlike later sites such as Yeavinger or Cowage Farm, which appear to represent the apex of a settlement hierarchy (James *et al.*, 1984; Hamerow, 1991), migration-period sites such as West Stow and Mucking cannot be interpreted plausibly as elite settlements. Rather, they appear to be farming communities composed of a small number of households, with no obvious indication in the structural or spatial evidence for any marked differentiation between establishments (Hamerow, 1993, 89; Scull, 1993, 72). This contrasts with the contemporary cemetery evidence, which suggests social differentiation within such communities, but little or none between them (Scull, 1993, 72-75). The evidence for ranking or inequality, and for a range of social identities, within such communities may be explained by kinship structures, age and gender. Equally, in a community structured around households, subordinate, semi-servile or servile segments of the population might also be represented. Throughout eastern England a considerable proportion of the individuals buried in Anglo-Saxon cemeteries have few or no grave goods. Härke (1992a, b) has argued that the 53 per-cent of adult males buried without weapons in his sample might represent subordinate groups to whom warrior status - in its broadest sense - was denied, and that these might be overwhelmingly British by descent. A similar formula might be proposed for female burials. If such propositions are accepted, it may be argued that both dominant and subordinate ethnic groups may already be discerned in the archaeological record of the sixth century, and that there is no need to postulate an invisible minority. However, it need not follow that individuals buried with grave goods in an Anglo-Saxon manner were necessarily Germanic by descent. Among the indigenous population those with the most compelling motivation to signal affiliation with a new ascendancy, and those with the position and resources to do so most effectively, would be those with some status or authority; acculturation may therefore have been more rapid and more comprehensive among any surviving higher-status segments of the population than among their peasants or clients. If a claim to cultural identity is to be considered one of the dimensions of social differentiation which may be read in the mortuary record, it may be more realistic to consider this a distinction between Germanic and Germanized or Germanizing on the one hand and indigenous on the other, rather than simply a matter of direct Germanic descent.

It is argued that the regional - East Anglian - hegemony of the seventh century was established as a result of competition and conflict between local chieftains during the fifth and sixth centuries, and it is therefore likely that any regional political identity subsumed a variety of more local affiliations, and ethnic and ancestral identities, both indigenous and Germanic (Scull, 1992, 14-15; 1993, 69). Such local political identities must have been constructs of their time, but it is a feature of many of the major political groupings recorded by Bede that they are identified by both ethnic and geographical terms (thus East Angles, West Saxons). As noted above, it may be argued that both the social context of migration and the act of migration as a social strategy would reinforce structures of social and cultural identity, and that claims to 'first-comer' status may have introduced an element of social or political differentiation from an early stage. The self-perception of a small number of key individuals or lineages - apex families - may therefore have been critical in the construction of local and regional identities, acting as the 'kernel of tradition' around which a wider consciousness of identity was constructed, and from which, ultimately, a regional political identity would develop (cf. Wenskus, 1977; Wolfram, 1994).

Later royal genealogies indicate that continental (and preferably supernatural) ancestry was an important legitimizing claim among Anglo-Saxon elites, and if it is accepted that material culture was actively constituted it may be possible to detect similar concerns in the material culture patterning of the Migration Period. Although the insular character of Anglo-Saxon material culture from the late fifth century suggests the development of social distance between Anglo-Saxon and continental Germanic societies, and between different areas of England, the overall similarity of material culture and cultural practice argues that differentiation was expressed within a broader framework of similarity and affiliation. The example of the great square-headed brooch may be used to illustrate this further. Relief brooches were high-status types in Scandinavia, and great square-headed brooches appear to have been so in England. It could be argued that their adoption in England represents the attempts of higher-status groups to signal descent from or affiliation with particular continental elites, but that the subsequent manipulation and mutation of the form served to signal, and to aid in the construction and reproduction of, aspects of local and regional identity. Such a case has been argued in greater detail and sophistication for early Saxon saucer brooches by Dickinson (1991; 1993), and similar dynamics may explain the adoption and transmission of Style I and Style II animal ornament. An analogous relationship would also provide a plausible context for the adoption of Germanic material culture types and cultural practices by segments of the indigenous population.

If it genuinely reflects social distance, the appearance of distinctively insular material culture types and cultural practices in the archaeological record may be taken to indicate a widespread perception of new insular identities

among Germanic lineages from the later fifth century. This change in the archaeological record occurs between a quarter and half a century after the earliest migrations for which there is archaeological evidence, and so to some extent may be explained by the dynamics of reproduction and marriage. Within two generations of the initial migration an individual's kin and affines might all have been in Britain, and the structures of support and identity which linked the first generation migrant to the parent society would have been superseded. The point at which lineage segmentation became cemented might therefore be identified as the point at which there would be a strong motive to express social distance rather than affinity. From this time ancestral links with the parent society might be exploited or renewed for the purposes of exchange or alliance, and claims to continental ancestry might remain crucial to the construction of group identity or the legitimation of status, but the descent group to which the individual belonged would be reckoned from a post-migration founder. In this context it should be noted that exogamous marriage between members of Germanic and indigenous lineages would act to construct an insular kin group for Germanic individuals, and would establish a social relationship which may have acted as a powerful axis of acculturation.

Conclusions

Migration from the Continent cannot be evoked to explain all aspects of change in the material record of immediate post-Roman Britain. It is not relevant to western and northern Britain, and even within the areas where there is good evidence for fifth-century Germanic settlement it is not clear that it can be invoked directly to explain broader trends of continuity or change in - for instance - patterns of subsistence or land use (Hamerow, 1994). However, the radical change in material culture and cultural practice in eastern Britain in the mid fifth century is most apparent in aspects of the material record intrinsic to the construction and reproduction of social, cultural and political identities, and so directly structured by social practice rather than subsistence constraints. Migration offers a powerful explanation for this culture change, and may be invoked to help establish a plausible social context for the subsequent transmission, appropriation and transformation of cultural traditions and practices. Thus migration theory can contribute usefully to an understanding of the social dynamics of the Migration Period.

Migration may be characterized and studied as a social process, but migrations are aggregates of human actions: dynamic, contingent, and representing choice as well as compulsion. As noted above, the original title of the Durham seminar stressed transition, and by implication privileged a framework of explanation which has emphasized long-term endogenous change. Discussing migration in this context raised some broader issues.

The notion of transition as it is applied to archaeological explanations of change in human societies is dependent on

periodization, and is therefore both arbitrary and artificial. By focusing on a particular time-span (which in this case is punctuated by the end of the Western Empire) and defining it as an 'age of transition' we are by implication defining what went before and what came afterwards as periods of equilibrium, and we are therefore in danger of losing sight of continuous and dynamic processes of change (see Halsall, this volume). Moreover, this usage of 'transition' has been formulated within an intellectual tradition which would emphasize a gradualist and materialist view of internal dynamics, and embodies a resistance to allowing the impact of short-term external dynamics - such as episodes of migration - a useful place in archaeological explanation. Following from this, it may be argued that the certainties implied by the use of the term 'transition' carry a seductive invitation to an over-general and deterministic perspective on social, economic and political development. One example of this, highly-relevant to post-Roman Britain, is Colin Renfrew's post-collapse resurgence model, which identifies the re-emergence of the state as the historical goal of the first millennium A.D. regardless of human action (Renfrew, 1982). It is always possible to characterize periods of human history in this way, but I contend that much more rarely is it meaningful to do so, however tempting the short-cut may appear to the archaeologist, dealing with the broad sweep and perhaps lacking the detailed data and conceptual framework necessary to address smaller-scale dynamics.

This paper has addressed one aspect of one set of changes in the material record, and has focused on only one dimension of this: cultural identity and its material expression. As has already been emphasized, the immediate relevance of much of this is geographically circumscribed. The balance of factors governing change would have been different in areas further north and west, where there is no evidence for large-scale or early Anglo-Saxon settlement, and where one might legitimately expect a much greater indigenous contribution to any sixth- or seventh-century cultural or political identity. Circumstances in western Britain would have been different again, and a similar diversity might be expected in other spheres of activity. Generalizing approaches must recognise and accommodate such diversity. The term 'transition' in archaeological explanation is in danger of becoming a platitude, and if it cannot be used more rigorously it should be abandoned in favour of a conceptual terminology more attuned to the complexities and contingencies of change in human societies.

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Abbreviation

H.E. = Colgrave and Mynors 1969.

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ACCULTURATION, MIGRATION AND EXCHANGE: THE FORMATION OF AN ANGLO-SAXON SOCIETY IN THE ENGLISH PEAK DISTRICT, 400 - 700 A.D.

Chris Loveluck

Introduction

The richly accompanied Anglo-Saxon barrow burials of the Peak District, in the north-west Midlands of England, have long been viewed as unusual in Early Anglo-Saxon England. The majority of Anglo-Saxon barrows in southern England have been dated to the first half of the seventh century (Scull, 1992, 20; Dickinson and Speake, 1992, 106-107). In the Peak District, however, the barrows containing datable Anglo-Saxon artefacts belong to the middle and later decades of the seventh century. They constitute one of the major concentrations of Anglo-Saxon barrows, with a large quantity of precious metal objects and imported luxuries as grave-goods, and provide the only evidence for the presence of an Anglo-Saxon population in the Peak District before the eighth century A.D. Yet, indications of a native British presence in the Peak have also proved difficult to identify for the period between the fifth - seventh centuries, whether from settlement or funerary remains (Hodges, 1991, 114). Only one artefact of a clearly identifiable Post-Roman native type has been recovered, a penannular brooch found as an isolated find at Pikehall (Ozanne, 1964, 39). The sudden appearance of individuals buried with rich Anglo-Saxon artefacts in barrows has led scholars to suggest that these people represent a new Anglo-Saxon colonist elite, who established control over the native British population of the Peak District during the seventh century (Fowler, 1955, 138). Such an explanation sees the use of barrows and imported luxuries in mortuary ritual as a means of marking out members of newly founded ruling lineages. Conspicuous display in burial practice is seen as an attempt to reinforce and legitimize the new social position of the Anglo-Saxon immigrants (Hodges, 1991, 113).

This interpretation is based on ethnographic observation of the way ritual and rare items are used to mark out elites in contemporary pre-industrial societies and on analogy with the early medieval barrows and their grave-goods from southern England and parts of Germany and Scandinavia. (Gregory, 1982, 48-50; Müller-Wille, 1983, 112-115; Carver, 1989, 149-152; Scull, 1993, 75-76). There appear to be similarities in purpose behind the use of barrows, in that they set the funerary remains of a certain person or group of people apart from the rest of society; there was, however, variation in the fashion of barrow-burial in different parts of Anglo-Saxon England. During the seventh century, Anglo-Saxon graves with a very similar quantity and quality of accoutrements were placed near or within Bronze Age barrows, as well as in newly constructed barrows (Bateman, 1848; Smith, 1912, 146-

147; Brown, 1973, 233-236). In East Yorkshire, Bronze Age barrows were used as foci for Anglo-Saxon cemeteries from the sixth century (Mortimer, 1905). The general concept of using barrows to indicate the high status of dead individuals, or lineages, must therefore be tempered by an appreciation of the varying social, cultural and regional contexts within which barrows were constructed or re-used.

The generally accepted interpretation of the reasons behind the provision of display artefacts in Anglo-Saxon graves equates material wealth with social rank. Increasing differentiation in the quantity of imports and precious metals in graves through the sixth and seventh centuries, has led to their use as indicators of increased social ranking and stratification as a prelude to the formation of kingdoms (Arnold, 1984, 280; Arnold, 1988, 153-16; Hodges, 1989, 39-41). The practice of correlating grave wealth with social-status has a number of flaws, however, when specific circumstances behind artefact deposition in Anglo-Saxon graves are considered. These shortcomings were recognised even while the equation of wealth with rank reached its height in the 1980s (Arnold, 1988, 143). A homogeneity was assumed in the way Anglo-Saxon groups expressed 'status' at death, even though it was generally accepted that different Germanic ethnic groups were represented during the sixth - early seventh centuries (Leeds, 1933, 239-251; Leeds, 1945, 1-106; Hines, 1984). Variation in values and beliefs between different Germanic groups within the 'Anglo-Saxon' population could have resulted in diverse ritual practices governing accompaniment of graves. At the same time, diversity may also have been caused by the influence of the native population in different areas settled by Germanic newcomers. This could have manifested itself in different ways, depending on factors such as the density and circumstances of the Germanic settlement.

A study of barrow burial in the Peak District from the Roman - Early Medieval periods, suggests that native British burial practice had a powerful impact on the barrows which have previously been seen as 'Anglo-Saxon'. These include identical features in grave construction and ritual accompaniment. The native traditions raise fundamental questions with regard to the nature of seventh-century Anglo-Saxon society in the Peak. The barrows from the region may only represent the remains of a single social stratum, but as the only form of archaeological remains with Anglo-Saxon artefacts prior to the eighth century, they nevertheless

provide clues to the influences at work in the formation of an Anglo-Saxon population in the area.

Situated in the north-west Midlands, the Peak District was not a region with a high agricultural potential (Higham, 1987, 37-43). The limestone 'White Peak', where nearly all the barrows are situated, was bordered by forest and the rivers Dove and Derwent to the west and east, by the inhospitable 'Dark Peak' to the north and by the Trent valley to the south (Davies and Vierck, 1974, 270; Hill, 1981, 16; Fig. 1). The appearance of Anglo-Saxon artefacts in the seventh century could be explained by the northward movement of Anglo-Saxon settlers from the Trent valley, but the provision of large quantities of imported luxuries are less easy to explain, bearing in mind the low agricultural capacity of the Peak. An alternative hypothesis can be offered, however. Anglo-Saxon luxury goods may have been used by the native population in their burial ritual as an attempt to maintain a regional elite status in the face of threat from external Anglo-Saxon pressure and immigration. What has been seen as evidence of an Anglo-Saxon influx could therefore reflect a native adoption of Anglo-Saxon cultural expression to indicate social position in the seventh-century Peak District. A certain level of immigration is indicated, however, by the occurrence of certain Germanic forms of burial and by Old English place-names, though when Old English was adopted as the main language of the region is uncertain.

The following discussion attempts to evaluate these hypotheses, by considering the burial evidence, together with the social relations and potential basis of production which would have enabled the procurement of imported luxuries. This regional case-study is unlikely to be generally applicable to the transition from the Late Roman to Early Anglo-Saxon period in much of southern and eastern England, but it may have relevance for the development of Anglo-Saxon societies in the western parts of England, especially in areas which bordered native British principalities or kingdoms.

The history and characteristics of barrow-burial in the Peak District from the Late Roman to the Early Medieval period

The practice of interring some individuals in barrows re-emerged in the Peak District during the third or fourth century A.D. Barrow-burial was present in the region during the Neolithic, Bronze Age and possibly Iron Age (Bateman, 1848; Bateman, 1861; Howarth, 1899). The circumstances behind the re-emergence of barrow-burial in the Late Roman period are unclear. If one accepts Branigan's theory that the Peak District was the recipient of a large number of Romano-British immigrants during the Hadrianic era, the use of barrows could be explained as a method of marking out territorial claims, whether by the original inhabitants or newly arrived groups (Branigan, 1991, 62). During this initial period of the re-emergence of barrow-burial, most of the graves were cut as secondary

interments in earlier barrows, such as those from Kenslow Knoll (Bateman, 1861, 20-22); Blore (Bateman, 1861, 142); Rusden Low (Bateman, 1861, 43); Thor's Cave-Wetton (Bateman, 1861, 172-173) and Castern (Bateman, 1861, 166-167). Previous studies have characterised some of these burials as Anglo-Saxon, yet there is nothing identifiably 'Anglo-Saxon' about them. Ozanne believed some of those graves listed above to be Anglo-Saxon simply because they were placed in barrows. Meaney was more sceptical about the nature and date of the barrows with exclusively Romano-British artefacts, questioning their identification as Anglo-Saxon graves and concluding that some were Romano-British (Meaney, 1964, 73-80 and 220-223).

Particular aspects of the burial ritual seen in Late Roman barrow-burials have great significance in assessing the origin of early medieval barrow burial in the Peak District. Similarities between the two can be seen in the way in which the dead were interred, in grave alignment and in grave accompaniment as the following discussion shows (Loveluck, 1994, Volume 1, 272-273).

At Kenslow Knoll, near Middleton, a crouched inhumation burial was accompanied with a third- or fourth-century penannular brooch and a wheel-made ceramic vessel. A quartz pebble had been placed in the hand of the dead person. The seventh-century barrow burials containing Anglo-Saxon artefacts from Alsop-in-the-Dale, Musden 4 and Wredon Hill were also accompanied by quartz pebbles. All of these burials were secondary inhumation interments in earlier barrows, like the Romano-British grave in the Kenslow Knoll barrow. Two of the seventh-century graves had quartz pebbles placed in one of the hands of each skeleton, while the third pebble lay to one side of a skull (Bateman, 1861, 21-22; Bateman, 1848, 67; Bateman, 1861, 148; Bateman, 1861, 123). Continuity of native ritual practices in grave accompaniment can also be seen in the provision of red deer antler tines with burials from the Late Roman to Anglo-Saxon periods (Fig. 2). The antler tines were not always placed in the graves. Sometimes they were placed beneath the burials or near the surface of the barrows. The inclusion of antler tines in Peak District graves was not an innovation of the Late Roman period. Antlers had sometimes accompanied Bronze Age barrow-burials; therefore, when looking for evidence of the presence of antlers in Romano-British and Anglo-Saxon graves cut into earlier barrows, the potential for residual contamination have to be considered. The red deer antlers found in close proximity to the Romano-British barrow-burial at Rusden Low, for example, appear to have derived from a disturbed grave from an earlier period (Bateman, 1861, 43).

At Thor's cave, near Wetton, burnt bone and red deer antler tines were found near the summit of a barrow, close to the surface. The area below this deposit had been used for a secondary inhumation burial accompanied by a copper-alloy vessel with an iron handle. The date of this vessel is open to debate. It could be Romano-British or

early medieval and it bears some resemblance to a 'Coptic bucket' from the Anglo-Saxon cemetery at Chessel Down in the Isle of Wight and with a 'bucket' from Bromeswell in Suffolk (Arnold, 1982, 59-60; Mango, Evans and Hughes, 1989, 295). The Thor's cave example, however, need not have been imported via Anglo-Saxon areas. Fowler saw the vessel as a sign of a 'Romanizing' or Celtic influence (Fowler, 1955, 135). The Thor's cave vessel could have been obtained via exchange links between the Celtic West and the Mediterranean in the same way as the 'Coptic' vessel from Glastonbury (Webster, 1991, 94). At Borough Fields, near Wetton, antlers were found in association with Romano-British and later graves (Bateman, 1861, 194-203). Some of these deposits were disturbed but there are no indications of Bronze Age burials. Stag's antlers were found in association with fourth-century coins of the House of Constantine, in what may have been a disturbed grave, and with an inhumation burial placed in a small barrow, accompanied with a copper-alloy hairpin or 'skewer'. Carrington also found antler tines scattered around the body of a seventh-century female burial with Anglo-Saxon artefacts at Borough Fields (Bateman, 1861, 201-202). This burial had been placed in a limestone cist, not far from the earlier Romano-British burials, and had cut through Romano-British settlement remains. It is hard to tell if it had ever been associated with a barrow. Other burials with Anglo-Saxon artefacts and antlers include the seventh-century grave in the barrow from Brundcliff and the barrow burial at Cow Low (although the antler tines from the latter may have been associated with either the Anglo-Saxon grave or the earlier Bronze Age interment) (Bateman, 1848, 101-102; Bateman, 1848, 91-95).

The provision of antlers and quartz pebbles with Peak District barrow burials containing seventh-century Anglo-Saxon artefacts can be interpreted in two ways. They either represent the adoption of native funerary rituals by Anglo-Saxon settlers or the use of contemporary Anglo-Saxon methods of display by members of the native population. Native British influence on early medieval barrow burial in the Peak District has also been inferred from some of the artefacts accompanying the graves, particularly 'hanging-bowls' (Fowler, 1955, 135). Four hanging-bowls have come from the region: three from barrows in the White Peak, at Benty Grange, Grind Low and Garratt's Piece and one from a rock-cut flat grave on the periphery of the Peak District, at Barlaston (Ozanne, 1964, 20-23; Romille Allen, 1898, 44-46). There has been much debate over who made these hanging-bowls. When hanging-bowl escutcheons are decorated, they exhibit Post-Roman Celtic motifs and decorative techniques, for example, the use of 'pelta-scroll' designs in champlevé enamel and millefiori glass rods (Kendrick, 1932, 169-180; Bruce-Mitford, 1993, 45-47). The majority of hanging-bowls, however, have been found in Anglo-Saxon graves in different parts of England. A number of theories have been put forward to explain this anomaly. It has been suggested that they were the products of Celtic craftsmen which reached Anglo-Saxon

areas as a result of exchange, or that they were made by Celtic craftsmen working under the patronage of Anglo-Saxon elites (Kendrick, 1932, 181). They may also have been manufactured by Anglo-Saxon craftsmen who had adopted certain Celtic decorative techniques as a consequence of prolonged interaction with the native British population (Scull, 1985, 119-122). Enough uncertainty exists therefore to question whether hanging-bowls indicate a native presence in the Peak District. The only certainly Post-Roman Celtic artefact to have been recovered is the penannular brooch already mentioned from Pikehall in the White Peak. We must accept that native burial practice did not involve extravagant disposal of artefacts until the seventh century.

Late Roman and seventh-century barrow burials also show close similarities in the method of grave construction and in interment. All the Late Roman burials in the Peak District are inhumations. Some were placed in a crouched position, as at Kenslow Knoll, while others were interred in an extended supine position, as at Castern. Both these graves could date from the third or fourth century A.D. The Castern skeleton was placed with the head facing west. In the past, such a grave alignment has been seen as evidence of Christian influence and may have led Ozanne to identify some of the barrow-burials as Anglo-Saxon in the absence of diagnostic artefacts (Ozanne, 1964, 33). The occurrence of east-west burial alignment in the Late Roman period, however, casts doubt on this interpretation. East-west alignment of inhumations in the Late Roman period may or may not have been the result of Christian burial practice. There is certainly no need to see Christian influence on Anglo-Saxon burial in this region. The presence of P-Celtic 'Eccles' place-names, denoting church or chapel sites, suggests that at least a proportion of the native fifth to seventh-century population were Christian before the arrival of Anglo-Saxon settlers (Hart, 1981, 118; Fig. 3). Inhumations placed in barrows with their heads facing west could therefore represent continuity of a native tradition.

There are a large number of barrow burials with orientated graves which contain neither Romano-British nor Anglo-Saxon artefacts. Indeed, most contain only one or two small knives. Ozanne saw these as Anglian, but the forms of the knives are, in fact, indistinguishable from Romano-British knives (Ozanne, 1964, 42-43; Davies and Vierck, 1974, 270). Examples of barrow-burials aligned east-west, containing one or two knives include two from Chelmorton, one from Carder Low, three from Hurd Low, one from Pilsbury, one from Rusden Low and one from Calton. Other extended inhumations buried on this alignment include the Garratt's Piece and Brundcliff barrow-burials. Garratt's Piece contained a hanging-bowl and the grave from Brundcliff contained an Anglo-Saxon silver and garnet ornament. The latter also contained antler tines (Bateman, 1848, 101-102). The vast majority of barrow burials with east-west aligned inhumations were primary interments in barrows specifically constructed to house them. The bodies tended to be laid in rock-cut

graves, usually two feet deep into the bedrock, for example Rusden Low, Hurd Low, Cauldon Hills and Brundcliff (Bateman, 1861, 52-54; Bateman, 1861, 153; Bateman, 1848, 102).

The construction of rock-cut graves, the interment of bodies on east-west alignments and accompaniment with quartz pebbles and antler tines all appear to reflect native influence on barrow burial in the Peak District. These traditions had their origin in the Late Roman period or possibly earlier, and there is no reason to suppose that barrow burial ended in the early fifth century only to re-emerge two centuries later. Seventh-century barrows displaying both native burial practices and Anglo-Saxon artefacts should be viewed as the combination of native burial traditions with a new medium of expression.

Not all seventh-century barrows with Anglo-Saxon artefacts show signs of indigenous influence, however. The barrow-burials at Benty Grange, Stand Low, Cold Eaton and White Low were all primary graves in barrows, constructed only from earth, rather than a combination of stone and earth like the barrows exhibiting native traits. All contained exclusively Anglo-Saxon artefacts. Other graves with purely Anglo-Saxon artefacts were placed in barrows of both stone and a mixture of stone and earth. Many of these burials were secondary interments in earlier barrows. The Anglo-Saxon burial practice of cremation also appears in this group of barrows. Carrington uncovered a primary cremation deposit of burnt bone, fragments of iron, bone combs and twenty-eight hemispherical bone gaming-pieces believed to date from the seventh century at Cold Eaton (Bateman, 1861, 179-180). Dickinson and Speake have noted its similarities to Anglo-Saxon barrow-cremations in the upper Thames valley and East Anglia (Dickinson and Speake, 1992, 119). The gaming-pieces are paralleled in the seventh-century cremation in Asthall barrow, Oxfordshire (Leeds, 1924, 118). Fragments of two Anglo-Saxon cremation urns were also recovered as secondary interments from a Bronze Age barrow at Musden in the Peak District (Bateman, 1861, 119-120).

Small groups of Anglo-Saxon inhumations without any native funerary traits have also been discovered within earlier barrows and in their immediate environs. A small number of inhumation graves containing Anglo-Saxon artefacts were recovered from the Wigber Low barrow by J. Lucas in the 1860s, mid-way between Bradbourne and Kniverton in the White Peak. He found the remains of a richly accompanied female grave of the mid-late seventh century, and a spearhead, presumably from a male burial. In the 1970s, Collis found a further six graves cut into the same Neolithic/Bronze Age barrow (Ozanne, 1964, 29-30; Collis, 1985, 25-30). The extent to which other barrows were used as foci for early medieval cemeteries is a matter for speculation. The main 'barrow diggers' of the Peak District, Thomas and William Bateman and Samuel Carrington, tended to concentrate on the barrows to the exclusion of surrounding areas.

The vast majority of datable barrow-burials in the Peak District belong to the second half of the seventh century (Fig. 4). During this period, the two groups of barrows distinguished above provide clues to the forces at work behind the development of Anglo-Saxon society in the Peak. They act as important indicators of the extent of Anglo-Saxon immigration into the region, and of the level of acculturation between the native British population and Anglo-Saxon settlers.

Indications of migration and acculturation in seventh-century barrow burials

In the past fifty years, several attempts have been made to explain the presence of rich seventh century barrows in the Peak District. In the 1950s, Margaret Fowler tentatively identified both native and Anglo-Saxon characteristics in the artefacts from some of the barrow burials (Fowler, 1955, 135). Her identification of native British influence was based on the belief that artefacts such as hanging-bowls were native products. More recent research on these artefacts has cast doubt on whether they are indicators of a British as opposed to Anglo-Saxon origin (Scull, 1985, 119-121). Fowler's criteria for suggesting native characteristics in the seventh century barrow burial tradition in the Peak District are therefore questionable. Structural and ritual affinities between seventh century barrows and Late Roman or post-Roman antecedents were not identified. As a consequence, other scholars have interpreted the seventh century barrows as the result of an Anglo-Saxon migration into the Peak District (Ozanne, 1964, 47; Hodges, 1991, 113-114).

Ozanne saw the Peak District barrows as the result of Anglo-Saxon settlement expansion from good agricultural soils in the Trent valley, to an area of more marginal soils. She saw the survival of barrow burial into the late seventh century as a reflection of the isolated nature of the Anglo-Saxon communities which settled in the Peak. This explanation, however, did not consider the fate of native funerary traditions, nor did it explain the exceptional quantities of imported precious metal and other luxury artefacts in such an isolated area. Richard Hodges interpreted the barrows with Anglo-Saxon artefacts as the remains of Anglo-Saxon immigrants who formed a new ruling elite in the seventh century. He accounted for the ostentatious display by suggesting that it was a method of emphasising the power and social position of an Anglo-Saxon aristocracy *vis à vis* the native population (Hodges, 1991, 114). This kind of funerary display on the part of immigrant elites in newly subjugated regions has been suggested for other areas of north-western Europe in the Migration Period, notably in Post-Roman Gaul (James, 1979, 77-85). The imported luxuries were seen as a consequence of long-distance exchange links which had been stimulated by the new elite's need to demonstrate its ability to obtain rare resources and so emphasise and enhance its position (Malinowski, 1922, 84-85; Smith, 1976, 312-313; Arnold, 1982, 125-127; Hodges and Whitehouse, 1983, 92). Hodges' analysis, however, did

not explain how the resources of the Peak District were organised to enable luxuries to be procured via exchange. Like Ozanne before him, he also failed to identify the native traditions evident in many of the barrow graves.

The native traits in seventh-century barrows recognised in this study make it necessary to return to Margaret Fowler's interpretation of the Peak District barrows. Based on a study of the artefacts alone, she put forward four possible explanations for the existence of seventh-century barrows. The first of these suggested that the barrows were the graves of native Britons (Fowler, 1955, 136-137). The artefacts which could only have been derived from Anglo-Saxon areas were seen as the result of exchange or warfare. This interpretation is unacceptable, however, in view of the fact that some of the seventh-century barrows were of an alien type, for example, the earthen barrows. The second theory examined the possibility that the barrows represented an isolated Anglian community which had conquered part of the more habitable area of the White Peak. Items of native origin were seen as loot taken from the Britons. This explanation did not account for artefacts indicating a 'Romanizing' or Celtic influence on pre-seventh-century barrows (Fowler, 1955, 137). Fowler's third idea was that the seventh-century barrows were the product of a small group of 'Anglian' settlers who migrated to the Peak District during the seventh century. She suggested that this group inter-married with some of the local British population, producing a community with hybrid characteristics. A fourth attempt at explaining the seventh-century barrows was based largely on historical evidence. The richly accompanied barrows were seen as evidence of 'Anglian' overlords who had established themselves over a British population during the middle of the seventh century. This event was linked to textual evidence for the expansion of the Anglo-Saxon kingdom of Mercia in the same period, based on selective and archaeologically unsupported use of the Tribal Hidage, Bede's *Ecclesiastical History* and the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* (Fowler, 1955, 138-140).

Of all Fowler's explanations, the most appropriate in the light of the current study was the suggestion that the Peak barrows indicate a mixed society of native British and immigrant Anglo-Saxon origin. This interpretation, however, does not explain why it suddenly became necessary to obtain and display large quantities of Anglo-Saxon luxury items in barrows dating from the mid-late seventh century; nor does it account for the eventual adoption of Old English as the main language of the region. The sudden appearance of precious metal and other exotic commodities in both barrows with native characteristics and those following an exclusively Germanic tradition, suggests that there were specific reasons for their use and that regional resources were being exchanged to enable their procurement.

Bearing in mind that only approximately fifty barrows are known from this region from the Late Roman period to the end of the seventh century, and that burial under a barrow

marked out an individual or group of individuals as extraordinary, it seems likely that interment in a barrow was reserved for members of elite groups in the Peak District. It also seems reasonable to assume that the seventh-century barrow burials which exhibit signs of native rituals and contain Anglo-Saxon artefacts were those of a native elite. Equally, there is no reason to doubt the immigrant Anglo-Saxon character of the earthen barrows with their furnished interments and lack of native traits. The luxuries in the latter group of barrows also suggest an elite status for the individuals buried in them. All the datable Anglo-Saxon artefacts in both sets of barrow burials are products of the mid to late seventh century; the two groups cannot therefore be differentiated by date.

Two sets of circumstances could account for the sudden desire to use Anglo-Saxon artefacts to accompany elite graves at this time. First, following the arguments of both Fowler and Hodges, there certainly appears to have been an Anglo-Saxon migration into the White Peak during the middle of the seventh century. The evidence for this migration comes from the barrow burials with exclusively Anglo-Saxon characteristics. It is difficult to assess the scale of immigration into the Peak or its social composition, i.e. whether it contained a broad cross-section of social ranks, or whether it comprised a cohesive elite group such as a warband. The barrows may represent only a small proportion of the immigrants. If this is the case, however, it still remains to discover the mortuary remains of the majority of settlers. The inability to identify the latter may be influenced by the development of unfurnished inhumation as the dominant burial practice for the majority of the Anglo-Saxon population in the late seventh century (Mortimer, 1905, 254-257; Boddington, 1989, 184-190). Alternatively, the barrows of Anglo-Saxon immigrants could reflect an elite migration only. It is also clear that the seventh-century Anglo-Saxon settlers did not replace native elites to the extent that they became archaeologically invisible. A large proportion of the seventh-century barrows exhibit native characteristics. The appearance of Anglo-Saxon display artefacts in these graves suggests that it had become desirable to adopt certain elements of Anglo-Saxon culture. After several generations, native ancestry among regional elites may have been indistinguishable in media such as dress. Linguistic change, however, may have taken much longer (Loveluck, 1994, 273-277).

If both native and immigrant elites lived alongside each other in the mid to late seventh century, this could provide the background to the sudden need for conspicuous display of wealth in burial ritual. When incoming Anglo-Saxon elites took control of all or part of the Peak, the presence of a second regional elite may have resulted in competition between the two factions. If an immigrant Anglo-Saxon group established a hegemony over the native ruling lineages, forcing a client relationship, the appearance of Anglo-Saxon display artefacts in barrows with native funerary traditions could be explained as an attempt by the

native elite to maintain their status, in relation to the rest of the native population, by adopting the methods of display of their new overlords. A second possibility is that Anglo-Saxon immigrants only took direct control of part of the Peak District. Their use of barrow burial at a later period than other Anglo-Saxon groups could reflect a need to emphasise elite status in a medium understood by their native British neighbours. The additional use of large quantities of imported luxuries for display could indicate a relatively vulnerable position within a largely native population. Their use would have been a statement indicating control of resources in a newly acquired social position. The latter explanation however does not account for the use of Anglo-Saxon artefacts in native barrow graves. If Anglo-Saxon elites only took direct control of part of the White Peak and a strong native elite survived, it is difficult to argue that the immigrants alone provided the impetus for the native adoption of Anglo-Saxon cultural traits.

The second set of circumstances, in addition to internal elite competition, which would explain the use of large quantities of imported luxuries, would be the existence of significant external social pressures on Peak District ruling lineages. Such external pressure could have come from the further expansion and internal development of the Anglo-Saxon kingdom of Mercia, which was evolving from a confederation of social and political units during the second half of the seventh century (Stenton, 1971, 202; Dumville, 1989, 126; Brooks, 1989, 169-170). The Anglo-Saxon movement into the Peak District could well have been carried out by Mercian warbands, but once an Anglo-Saxon elite had been established in part or all of the region, direct control from the Mercian heartlands may have been sporadic or even nominal. Native rulers could also have accepted a client relationship with the Mercian kings without actual Anglo-Saxon settlement. Mercian overlordship probably manifested itself only in occasional tribute from the Peak and by the obligation of regional elites to act as Mercian allies in time of war (Fowler, 1955, 138-139; Reuter, 1985, 75-76; Charles-Edwards, 1989, 30-31). The maintenance of 'good faith' with the Mercians by serving as military allies would have brought both native and immigrant elites into direct contact with other regional Anglo-Saxon aristocracies, the majority of whom would have worn Anglo-Saxon dress and spoken Old English.

Both internal and external influences may therefore explain the character of the barrow burials in the seventh-century Peak District. The late use of barrows in this region represents the continuity and further development of both a native and Anglo-Saxon method of high status funerary display. The use of conspicuous quantities of imported luxuries as grave-goods in the barrows of Anglo-Saxon settlers, could either reflect an attempt to emphasise a superior rank to native elites, or it could represent an attempt to enhance a relatively vulnerable ruling position by indicating an ability to acquire rare resources in the face of native competition. The adoption of Anglo-Saxon

forms of funerary display by native elites can be seen as an attempt to hold onto a leading position within society, albeit under the control of new Anglo-Saxon rulers. Alternatively, adoption of Anglo-Saxon cultural traits by indigenous elites could have been the result of a need to gain acceptance among the elite of the Mercian confederation. Competition for the acquisition of rare exotica was generated by the aim of meeting external Mercian perceptions of elite expression as much as by indigenous concepts. It is not known whether Mercian rulers distinguished between the native and immigrant elements among the rulers of the Peak District. It may not have been important for them to do so. By the time the Tribal Hidage was compiled as a tribute assessment in the late seventh century, whether by a Mercian or Northumbrian authority, the inhabitants of the Peak District were certainly perceived as a single social entity (Davies and Vierck, 1974, 225-226; Brooks, 1989, 160-162).

Resources and mechanisms fuelling social competition

This suggested interpretation of the seventh-century barrows of the Peak District only explains the reasons behind the change in methods of display on the part of the rulers of the region. It does not identify the resources which were exploited in order to procure foreign luxuries, nor does it allow conclusions to be drawn regarding the extent of social change while adoption of Anglo-Saxon fashions took place. The ultimate origins of the majority of imported artefacts in the barrows are relatively easy to identify. An analysis of these origins suggests the exchange relationships which underpinned procurement of these luxuries. The commodity or commodities exchanged in return for the imports must be inferred, since whatever was exchanged was not interred in the barrows.

The gold and garnet jewellery from barrows such as Galley Low-Brassington Moor, White Low and Cow Low is analogous to mid to late-seventh-century jewellery from rich graves in other parts of Anglo-Saxon England (Mander, 1786, 274-275; Baker, 1880, 469-470; Leeds, 1936, 108-109; Hawkes and Grove, 1963, 26-32). The gold and garnets were imported from the Merovingian kingdoms (Arrhenius, 1985, 157-158; James, 1988, 204-209; Ager and Gilmour, 1988, 19-20). They could have been worked into jewellery in either Francia or in England. A crystal ball from Wigber Low and the glass palm cups from Cow Low, White Low and Stand Low were also ultimately derived from the Merovingian kingdoms or Kent (Harden, 1956, 147; Meaney, 1981, 82-88; Huggett, 1988, 70-72). Other grave-goods such as the hanging-bowls could have been native products or imports. The use of yellow as well as red enamel on the escutcheons from Benty Grange and Garratt's Piece, Middleton Moor, also suggests a direct influence on decorative styles from the Celtic principalities bordering the Irish Sea. Yellow and white enamels were first used in Ireland and the western coast of Britain in the seventh century. Their use was adopted in Anglo-Saxon England in the eighth

century (Bradley and Youngs, 1989, 201; Peers and Radford, 1943, 49). The escutcheon decoration on the two Peak District bowls either reflects the earliest diffusion of the fashion to a new 'Anglo-Saxon' area, or an Irish Sea origin for the escutcheons or the craftsmen who made them.

These imports indicate exchange links with areas to the west, south and east of the Peak District. The artefacts originating from the Frankish kingdoms or the south-east of England, however, need not indicate direct contact with those areas. The inhabitants of the Peak could have obtained them through exchange, only with immediately adjacent regions. Luxuries from the south probably travelled up the east coast of England to the Humber estuary, then up the Trent valley. They could have passed through different Anglo-Saxon groups via a series of exchange relationships, designed to maintain social alliances or the status of parties involved in the transactions. An often cited mechanism for the maintenance of the latter type of relationships is gift-exchange (Grierson, 1959, 137-138; Charles-Edwards, 1976, 180-181; Samson, 1991, 88-91). Unfortunately, the need for the maintenance of these relationships does not explain the centrifugal pull of imports into the Peak District. The region does not provide evidence of a large population in the seventh century and it is not an area of high agricultural productivity; agricultural resources are therefore unlikely to have been commodities for exchange. In order to acquire large quantities of imports, Peak District elites must have had control over a non-agricultural resource for which there was significant demand. That resource is likely to have been lead.

Galena lead ore was mined and smelted in the Peak District to produce lead until the end of the Roman period (Branigan, 1991, 60). The external demand for lead disappeared with the collapse of the Late Roman state infrastructure. The long tradition of lead working in the region could have survived however, through the use of lead as a template metal for copper-alloy brooches. On the re-emergence of a demand for lead, the Peak District elites may still have controlled the skills needed for lead working, in addition to controlling access to galena sources. Only one institution would have demanded lead in any quantity in mid to late seventh-century England - the nascent Church. The early advocates of the Roman Church in Anglo-Saxon England, such as Benedict Biscop and Wilfrid, promoted the construction of churches and monastic buildings in the 'Roman' style, i.e. in stone (Farmer, 1983, 189; Webb, 1965, 128-129). Along with the use of stone came innovations in the exploitation of other materials for structural purposes, including stained glass for windows and lead for roofing and other uses (Cramp, 1969, 37; Cramp, 1976, 233 and 237). The construction of these buildings can be viewed as a physical demonstration of the superior nature of Roman Christianity against the alternatives of Celtic Christianity and 'pagan' religions. For their time, they were monumental in scale. The new form of architecture was

an alternative medium of status display to the artefacts used by secular elites. As a commodity associated with monumental display, lead was a highly prized raw material from the viewpoint of the Roman church. This is illustrated by its presentation as a special gift to a monastic foundation by the Northumbrian cleric Alcuin in the late eighth century (Grierson, 1959, 139).

The monasteries of Biscop and Wilfrid in Northumbria and others in the southern Anglo-Saxon kingdoms were built in the second half of the seventh century, contemporary with the richest barrow burials in the Peak District (Cherry, 1976, 158-173). The first recorded export of lead from the region, however, occurred in 714 A.D., when the monks of the Mercian royal abbey of Wirksworth sent a lead coffin for Saint Guthlac (Colgrave, 1956). This reference is significant because it indicates that the institution which provided the demand for lead also controlled its supply by the early eighth century. The earliest indication of who was involved in lead production comes from a charter of the abbess Cynewara of Repton, the parent monastery of Wirksworth in the Peak District. The charter dates to 835 A.D. and describes the donation of land from the monastic estate at Wirksworth to a local ealdorman, Humberht, in return for three hundred solidi weight of lead in rent. Humberht was instructed to send his annual lead render directly to Canterbury (Hart, 1981, 111; Wormald, 1982, 143). This charter suggests that the lay population produced the majority of the lead and it shows the importance of the Peak District in lead production. From the turn of the eighth century, it was the chief lead-supplying region of England, remaining the largest producer even after other sources began to be exploited in the late ninth century (Hill, 1981, 111).

Since lead seems already to have been utilised in ecclesiastical buildings in the second half of the seventh century, and the Peak District contained both a major ore source and a population with a knowledge of leadworking, it seems reasonable to suggest that the raw material was being produced for exchange by that time. A residual tradition of leadworking from the Roman period may have been a more important factor in the region's monopoly on lead-production than its proximity to a galena source. Other parts of Britain contain galena sources, yet they do not seem to have been worked as early or as intensively as those from the Peak. It would also be a mistake to assume that lead production was put under ecclesiastical control as soon as a demand for the commodity developed. The first indication of direct Mercian control of land in the Peak District comes from the reference to the monks from Wirksworth providing a lead coffin for Saint Guthlac. In the mid-late seventh century, there is no evidence that Mercian overlordship of the region was more than nominal. The elites of the area would therefore have been able to benefit from control of lead exchange with Church prelates, who themselves tended to come from the secular elite, for example Wilfrid, Biscop and Guthlac. At present, the generation of wealth *via* the exchange of lead is the only explanation which could account for the ability

of the region's rulers to provide themselves with the quantity of imports and precious metals seen in their barrows. Lead could have been exchanged *via* reciprocal gift transactions or by direct barter. With extensive lands and regular long-distance contacts with the Frankish kingdoms through ecclesiastical networks, monastic founders would have had relatively ready access to luxury items (Crawford, 1933, 38; Farmer, 1983, 189). The church thereby acquired a commodity used in its favoured method of status display, while the native and immigrant elites of the Peak District acquired imported luxuries which were used to maintain their leading roles in the region.

This ability to benefit from control over lead seems to have been short-lived, however, since by the turn of the eighth century, lead production was under the control of ecclesiastical estates donated by the Mercian ruling family. The reason behind this change in the control of lead production probably lies in the internal development of the Mercian confederation. From the second half of the seventh century, the ruling lineage of Mercia began to be converted to Christianity by the Roman faction. Prior to this, they could have been Pagan or Celtic Christian. The pattern of conversion to Roman style Christianity proceeded from the top echelons of society downwards. By the end of the seventh century, there seems to have been a close relationship between the Church and secular kingship in Mercia, as in other Anglo-Saxon kingdoms. This is amply illustrated by Bede and Eddius Stephanus (Colgrave and Mynors, 1969; Crawford, 1933, 38; Webb, 1965, 120; Wallace-Hadrill, 1971, 47). It is possible that the Church had a role in formalising the Mercian confederation, helping to enforce the power of the Mercian ruling lineages outside their heartlands as a matter of political self-interest. The close association of the Church hierarchy with Mercian kingship certainly reaped the reward of the donation of lands controlling lead production.

The transfer of land to the control of the Church suggests direct Mercian power over the Peak District by the late seventh century. This could have been achieved by persuading the leading groups of the Peak District to relinquish control of land in return for their survival. The physical consequence of the change to ecclesiastical control may initially have been minimal, involving a transition from the payment of tribute renders to the Mercian Kings to the payment of renders as rent to the Church. The effect of direct rule and organisation by ecclesiastical institutions, however, resulted in the adoption of their methods of display in the eighth-century Peak District. This can be seen in the stone churches from this period at Bakewell (Bateman, 1848, 183-190); Wirksworth (Bateman, 1848, 238-240); Eyam (Bateman, 1848, 208-209) and Hucknall (Hart, 1981, 124-125). With the emergence of the Church as the new elite in the region, the reason for competition among ex-secular rulers was removed, as was the wealth-base on which it had been founded. By the eighth century, the influence of

Christianity on burial practice had also rendered the old secular elite invisible to the modern archaeologist.

Conclusions

The barrow-burials of the seventh-century Peak District indicate two components to the region's ruling lineages in the second half of that century. Some of the barrows exhibit clear traits in common with the native practice of barrow burial going back to the Late Roman period, although they also contain imported luxury items as found in Anglo-Saxon burials of the mid-late seventh century. A second, smaller group of barrow burials also containing imported luxury goods shows exclusively Anglo-Saxon characteristics. These two types of barrow appear to represent a native elite and an immigrant Anglo-Saxon elite, living alongside each other in the second half of the seventh century. The use of barrow-burial, at a later period than in most Anglo-Saxon areas, reflects an attempt by a new Anglo-Saxon elite to indicate ruling status in a fashion comprehensible to the native population. The incomers may not, however, have directly controlled all of the Peak District. The two elites could have been in direct competition for domination within the region. The background for an Anglo-Saxon movement into the Peak District can be suggested by the expansion of the Mercian confederation in the middle of the seventh century. Incorporation under this hegemony could have involved acceptance of Mercian overlordship by the native British elite, with only limited replacement by Anglo-Saxon immigrants. The terms of overlordship for the Peak District may have entailed payment of periodic tribute and an obligation of military support for the Mercian kings. These obligations would have brought both native and immigrant elites into contact with the wider aristocracies of the Mercian confederation. Since most of the latter expressed their status through Anglo-Saxon material culture, it may have become necessary for the native element of the Peak's rulers to adopt Anglo-Saxon fashions. The desire to be accepted by the wider Mercian elite as members of a high social rank would account for the adoption of Anglo-Saxon funerary display rites.

The need to achieve and express dominance on the part of the native and immigrant ruling elements within the Peak District could account for the relatively large quantities of imports in the barrow burials. As a result of this competition between the two elites, the native ruling lineages adopted Anglo-Saxon forms of cultural expression. To survive among an Anglo-Saxon aristocracy, it would also have been necessary to speak Old English; the desire to maintain social position could thus have led to linguistic change. The rate of adoption of these new fashions and a new language may have varied depending on individual or clan rank within native society. Elites adopted Anglo-Saxon fashions quickly and probably became fluent in English faster than the majority of the indigenous population. A period of bi-lingualism can also be envisaged. Cultural and linguistic change among the remainder of native society may have occurred over an

extended period. Distinctive British elements in the population certainly survived into the era when English replaced P-Celtic place-names in the region.

The competition indicated by the ostentatious display of imported luxury goods must have been fuelled by exchange. The low agricultural potential of the Peak District and the likelihood of a low population density suggest that the quantity of imports in barrows is best explained as a result of the exchange of a commodity not related to agricultural production. That commodity was probably lead. The Peak District had been a major lead-producing area until the end of the Roman period. The tradition of lead working and knowledge of its sources probably survived on a small scale into the Post-Roman period. A renewed demand for larger quantities of lead came from the Church which used the metal in its buildings. Ruling factions in the Peak District were therefore able to exchange lead for luxuries which they used in social display. Their ability to benefit from lead exchange, however, was short-lived. By the turn of the eighth century, much of the lead-producing area of the Peak District had been granted to the Church by the Mercian Kings. The main consumers of lead thereby also controlled its production and distribution. The wealth generated from this control was put into a new medium of ecclesiastical display - monumental stone architecture, whether in the form of crosses or monastic churches.

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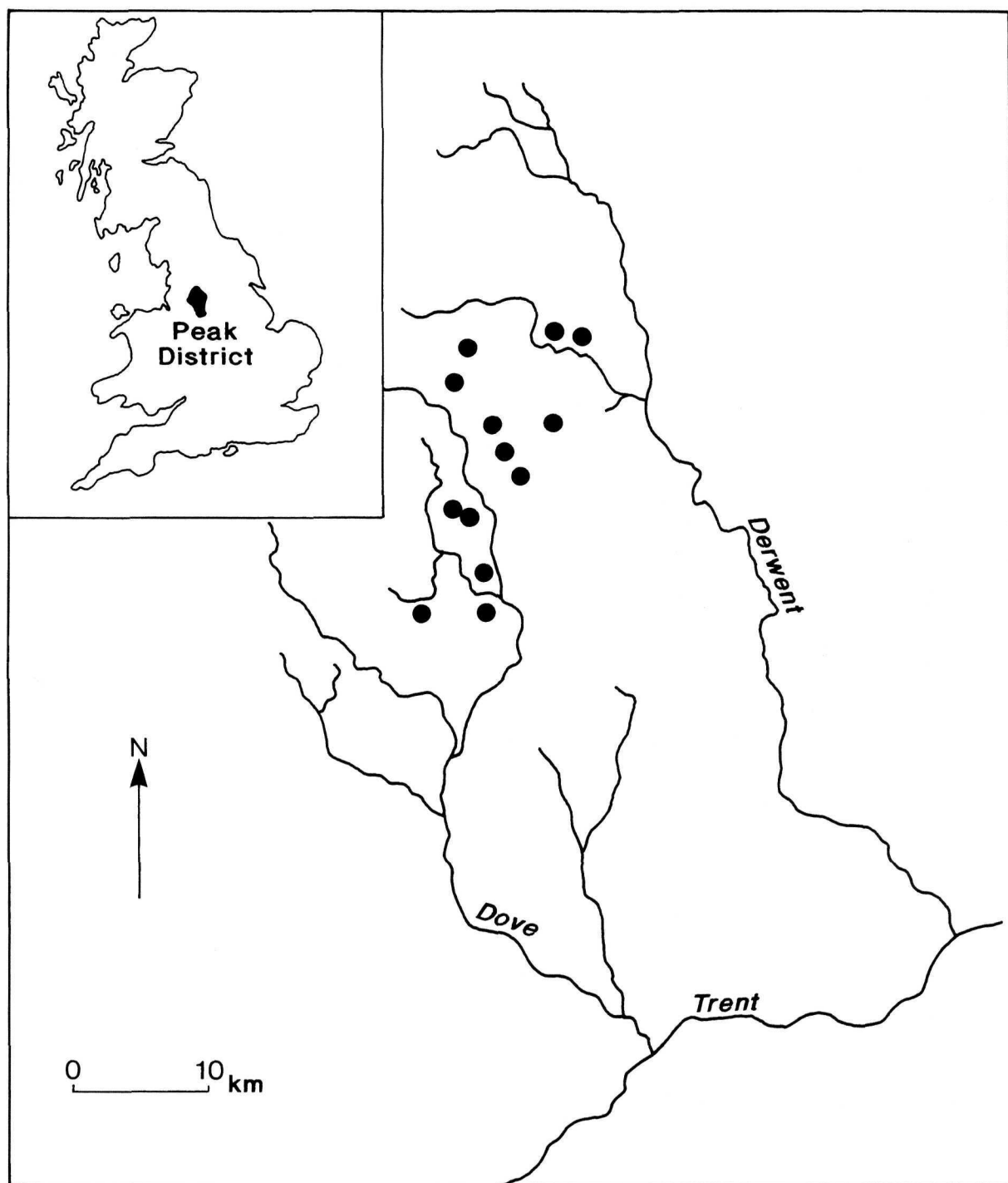


Fig. 1. Location of Late Roman and Probable Post-Roman native barrow-burials in the Peak District (Pre-seventh century).

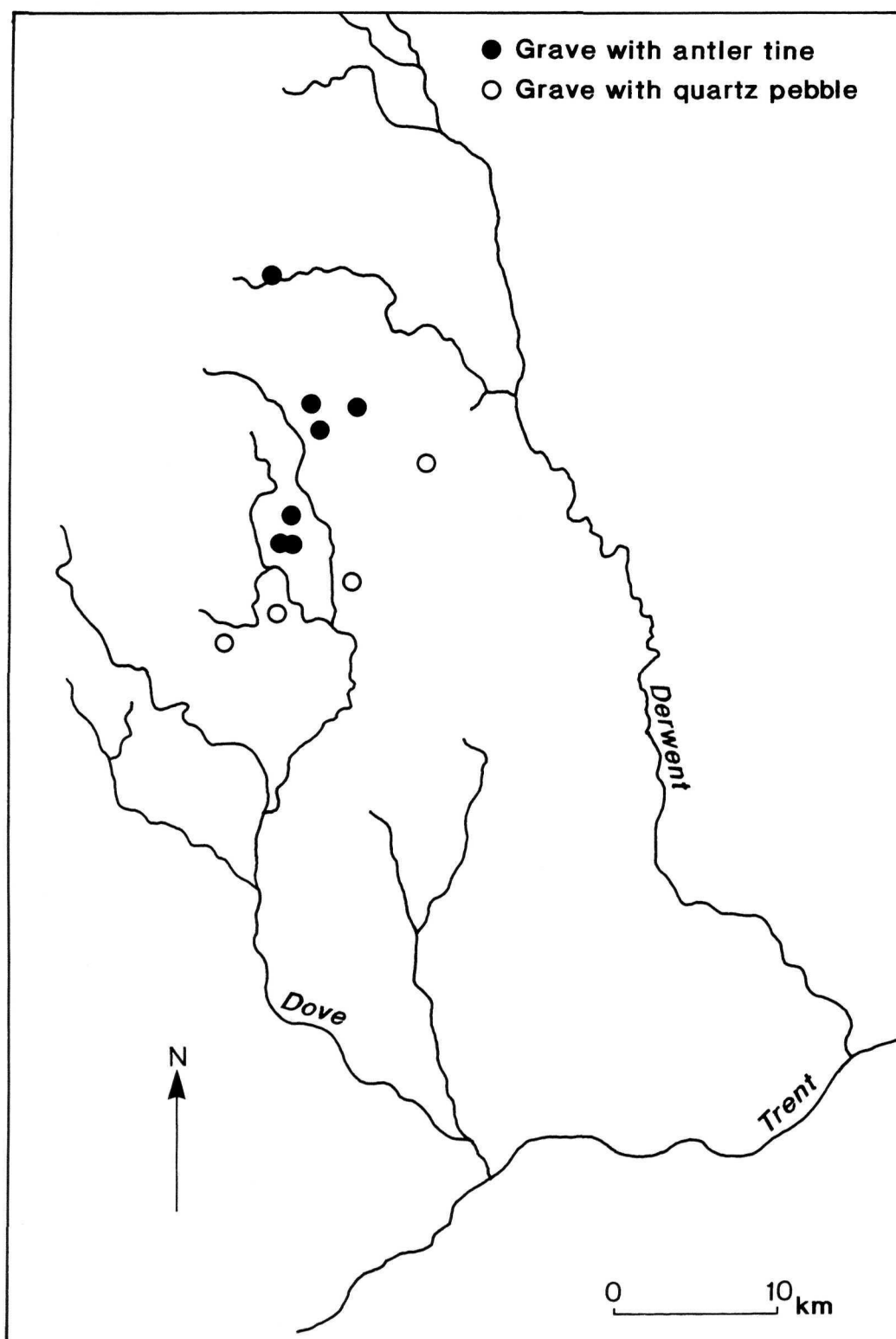


Fig. 2. Distribution of barrow-burials accompanied with Red Deer Antlers and Quartz pebbles from the fourth-seventh centuries A.D.

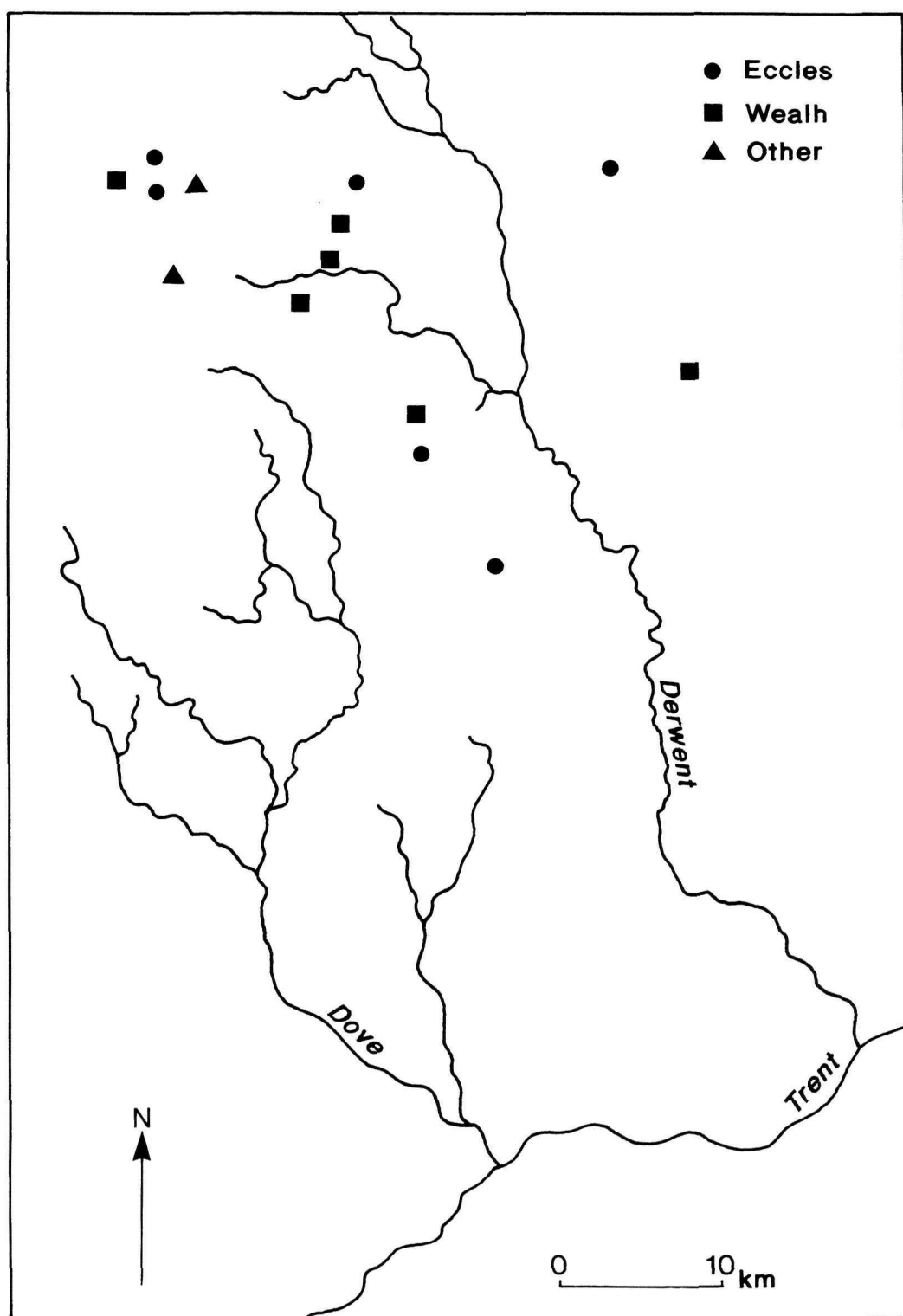


Fig. 3. Place-names of 'P'-Celtic derivation and Old English names indicating the survival of a distinctive British population in the Peak District into the Anglo-Saxon period. ('Eccles' place-names after Hart 1981)

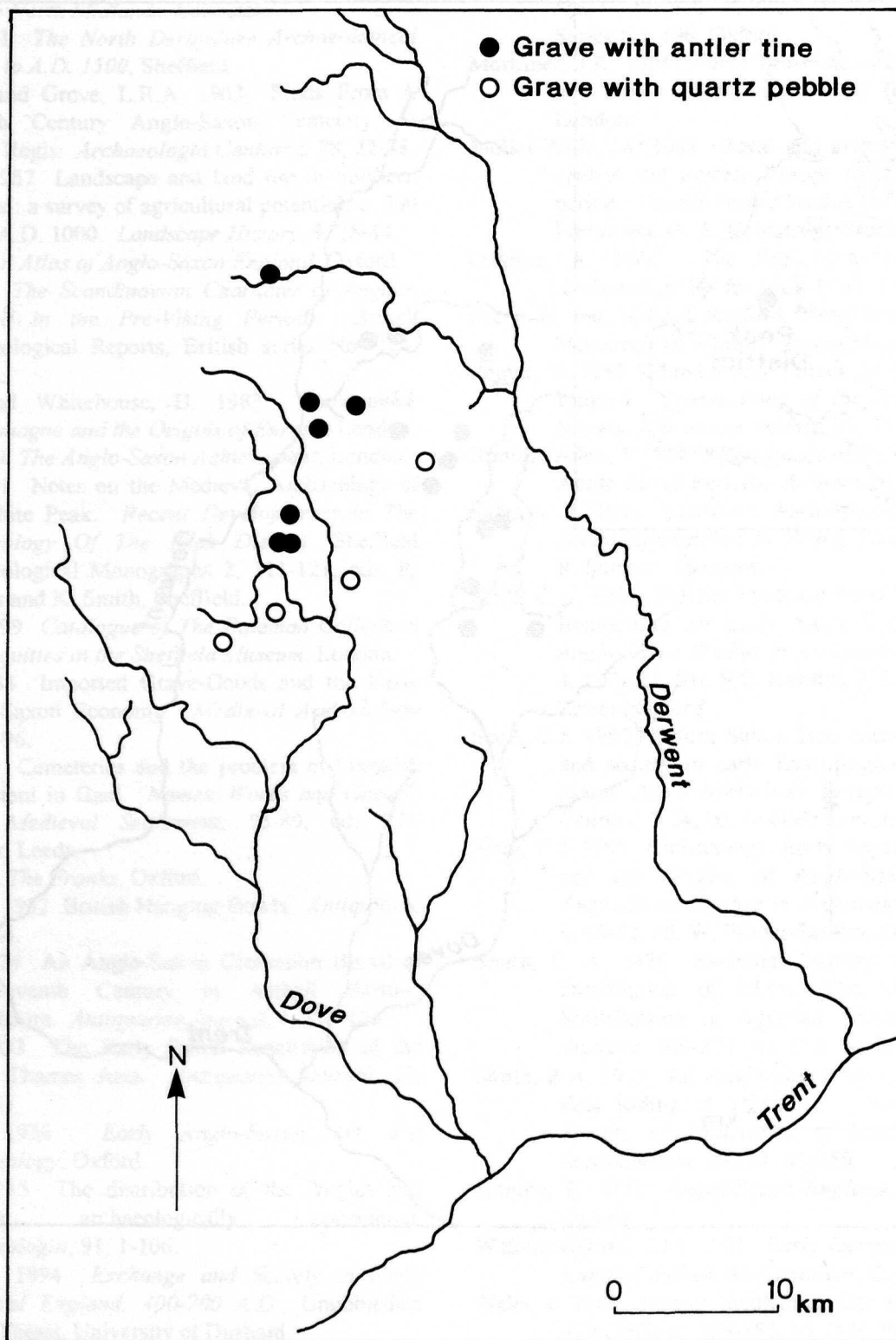


Fig. 2. Distribution of barrow-burials accompanied with Red Deer Antlers and Quartz pebbles from the fourth-seventh centuries A.D.

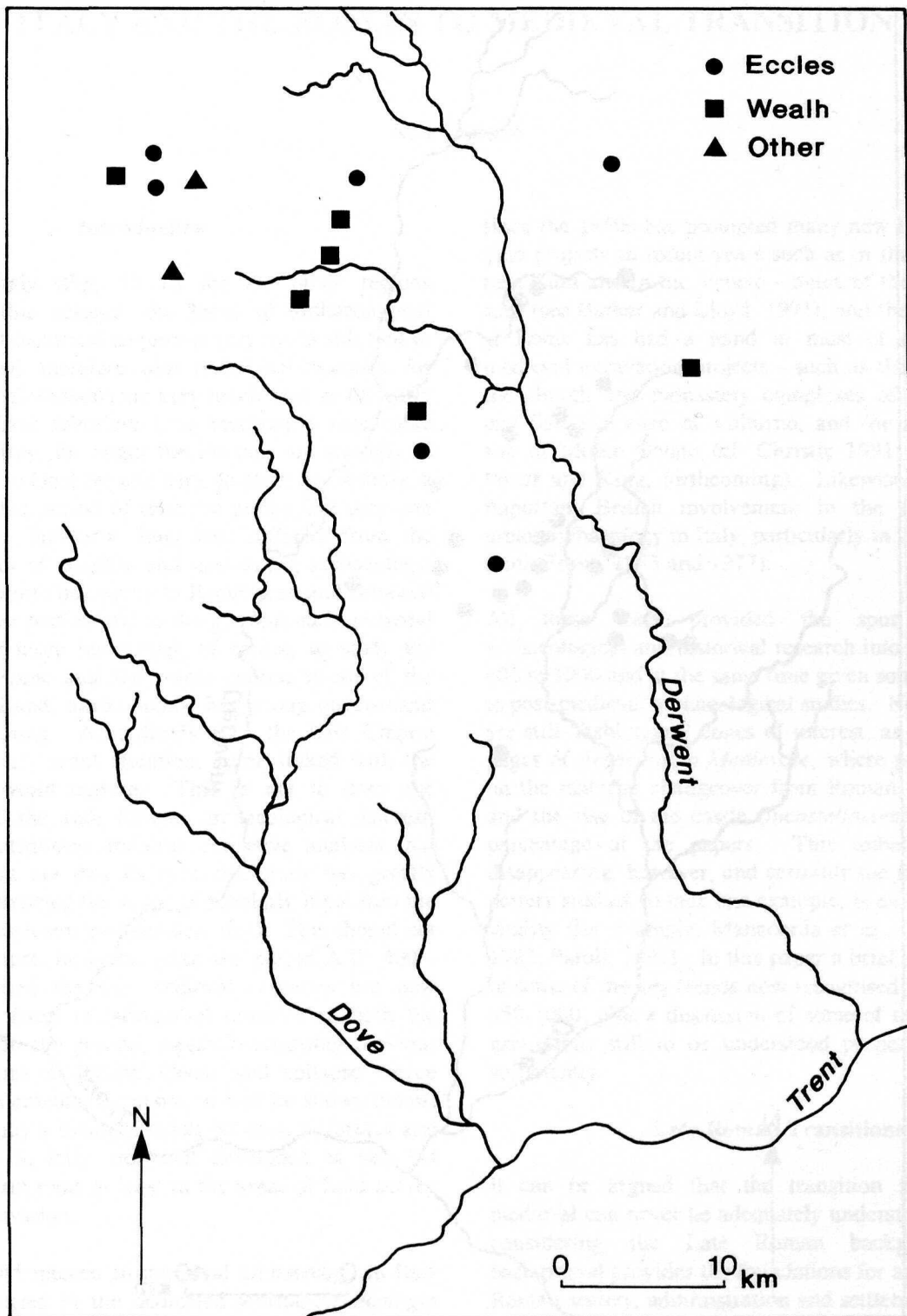


Fig. 3. Place-names of 'P'-Celtic derivation and Old English names indicating the survival of a distinctive British population in the Peak District into the Anglo-Saxon period. ('Eccles' place-names after Hart 1981)

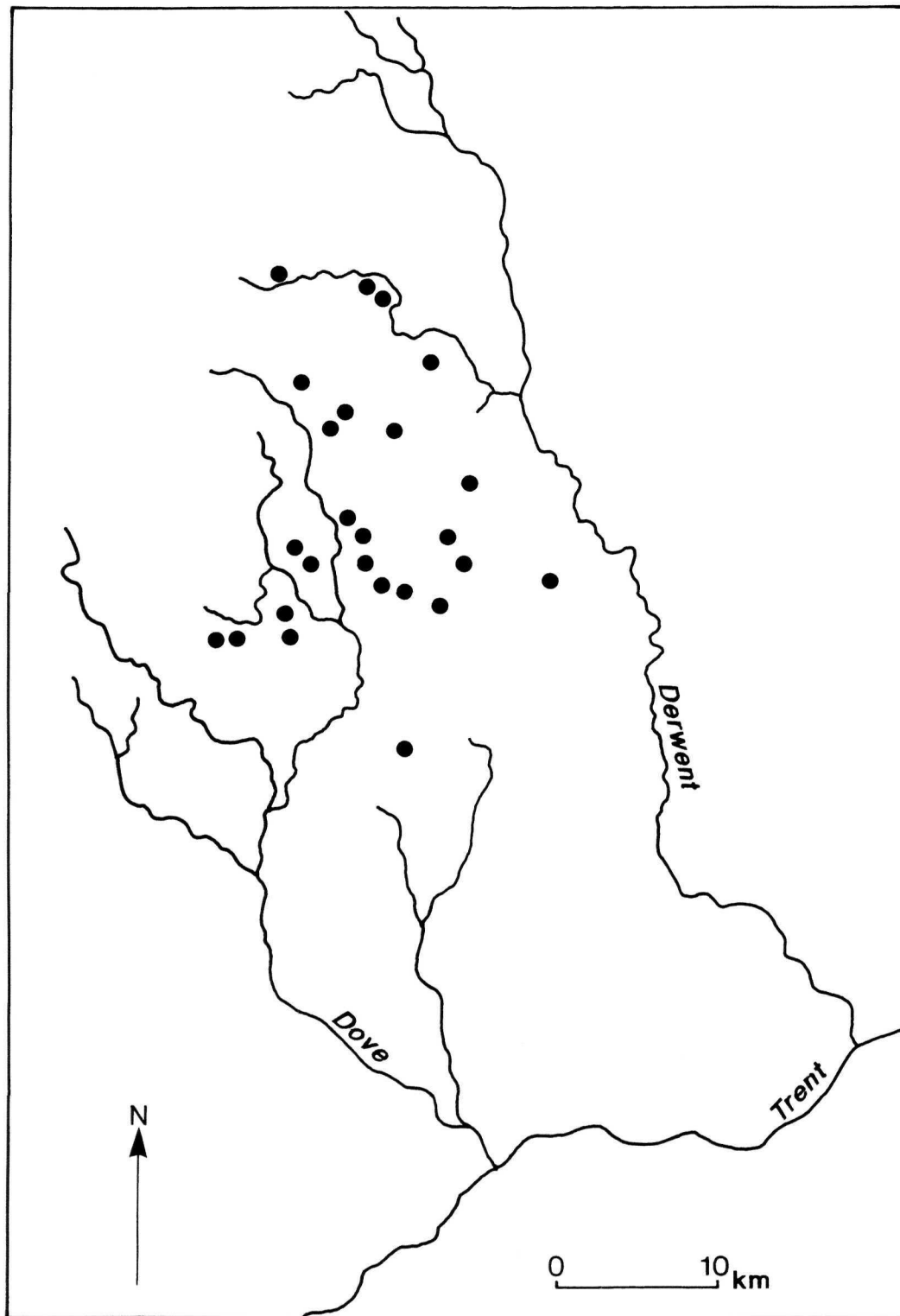


Fig. 4. Location of seventh-century barrow-burials in the Peak District.

ITALY AND THE ROMAN TO MEDIEVAL TRANSITION

Neil Christie

Introduction

For Italy (Fig. 1), as for the other regions examined in this volume, the focus of archaeological research and of historical enquiry is very much still tied to nationalistic and, therefore, also traditional interests: for Britain, the Anglo-Saxons are very much seen as the early English and have therefore long received a reasonable degree of scrutiny; for Spain the Iberians are strongly to the fore; while in Gaul the cult cartoon character Asterix is symbolic of what period of time the public feel they can relate best to. Similarly, Italy has 'suffered' from the veritable wealth of tangible and upstanding archaeology, art and architecture belonging to Republican and Imperial Rome, and most particularly to the glorious early imperial centuries - far more interesting, of course, to study the period when Rome and Italy were central to all of the civilised world and, unlike today, her strong government dictated everything. Accordingly even the Late Empire receives relatively scant attention, being linked with the demise of a world culture. This is not to deny the importance of the rich Roman archaeological harvest, since its bountifulness requires extensive analysis, but merely to point out that its excessive study has greatly delayed and restricted the scope of scholarly input into the historically lack-lustre 'post-Roman' days. This should not be a bleak picture, however, since the period A.D. 400 - 1000 and indeed the full medieval centuries are now becoming the focus of substantial research in both the archives and on the ground, totally overturning previous hazy conceptions of 'decline', 'decay' and 'collapse' - even if some such elements do persist, as will be shown below. Most importantly a dialogue exists between historians and archaeologists in Italy, not well developed as yet, but establishing firm roots at least in the areas of field survey and urban excavation.

The growth and interest in medieval archaeology in Italy is clearly reflected in the dedicated journal *Archeologia Medievale*, set up in the mid-1970s, and in the periodic and popular conferences on both early medieval and medieval Italy, held mainly in Siena and Spoleto. Large-scale, systematic urban excavations have been undertaken in recent years in towns like Milan, Brescia and Pescara, which give equal weight to all periods of the urban past and which accordingly are presenting a wealth of new data yet to be fully digested. A significant input has been from British archaeologists and historians, with notable publications since 1980 (e.g. Wickham, 1981; Brown, 1984; Ward-Perkins, 1984; Hodges and Mitchell, 1985). The British School at Rome's commitment to field survey

since the 1950s has prompted many new interdisciplinary field projects in recent years such as in the Ager Cosanus near Luni and in the Veneto - many of these with British staff (see Barker and Lloyd, 1991); and the British School at Rome has had a hand in most of the main early medieval excavation projects - such as the excavations of the church and monastery complexes of Santa Cornelia and San Vincenzo al Volturno, and the intriguing rural site of Monte Gelato (cf. Christie 1991; Hodges, 1993; Potter and King, forthcoming). Likewise there has been important British involvement in the development of urban archaeology in Italy, particularly in the north (e.g. at Luni: Frova, 1973 and 1977).

All these have provided the spur to increased archaeological and historical research into the period A.D. 400 to 1000 and at the same time given some impetus even to post-medieval archaeological studies. Nonetheless there are still 'fashionable' zones of interest, as reflected in the pages of *Archeologia Medievale*, where projects focussed on the material changeover from Roman to German rule and the rise of the castle (*incastellamento*) form a high percentage of the papers. This imbalance is slowly disappearing, however, and certainly the field of medieval pottery studies, to take one example, is exhibiting growing vitality (for example, Manacorda *et al.*, 1986; Mannoni, 1987; Paroli, 1993). In this paper a brief survey is offered of some of the key trends now recognised for the period c. 350-1000, plus a discussion of some of the problems and grey areas still to be understood properly or examined sufficiently.

Late Roman Transitions

It can be argued that the transition from Roman to medieval can never be adequately understood without first considering the Late Roman background. This background provides the foundations for analysing how far Roman society, administration and settlement survived the transition or indeed how far they were transformed even before the break-up of Roman rule. In this regard Italy should in many ways be special: it was, for much of the time, the central province of the Empire and for all of the time and beyond, the religious focus of the West; plenty of early Christian churches are visible, as are numerous Late Roman town walls, and enough indications of town survival to suggest a healthy enough transition. And yet too few of these essential structural features have so far received satisfactory attention, or if they have been examined, it has often been with virtual tunnel vision: churches and mosaics have been studied by architects and

art historians in isolation; town walls are overlooked as social monuments and too readily are assigned dates on purely historical grounds; and the ordinary folk are left out as merely incidental characters.

A striking example of this state of play until recently is the town of Ravenna in north-east Italy, which was adopted as the new capital of Italy in 402 by the emperor Honorius at a time when the Visigoths under Alaric were commencing their shopping spree of the peninsula. Its choice by the emperors entailed an enormous building programme - in complete contrast with other towns of the day which were busy shrinking within their circuit walls - and from this programme an array of splendid and influential ecclesiastical structures survive. These churches and their stunning mosaics have long had the attention of architects and art historians (e.g. Deichmann, 1974; 1989; plus numerous contributions in the annual conference series *Corsi di Cultura sull'Arte Ravennate e Bizantina*) to the virtual neglect of other contemporary elements, most notably the city walls. Ravenna had of course been selected as capital because of its defensive character set within virtually inaccessible marshland: these natural defences were reinforced by man-made walls and in fact a huge chunk of these brick-built city walls survives (Christie and Gibson, 1988; Pl.1). And yet this powerful defensive cordon remained largely unstudied until very recently, with historians and archaeologists alike vaguely attributing to the walls early fifth, mid-fifth, early sixth and then later sixth century building phases, each tied very neatly to historical personages but without any attempt to analyse the walls themselves as an historico-archaeological document. Indeed, close scrutiny of the walls instead showed a largely single-phase build probably of the mid-fifth century, unusual for its lack of towers and mass of little gateways and thus totally diverse from the walls of Rome herself, refortified in the early fifth century.

This academic neglect of such an important monument is not unusual, but is baffling. Town walls are of course vital elements for study: they defined urban space both under Rome and beyond; they symbolised authority; their upkeep and defence was an essential public duty; and they provided the means for urban survival. They may not be easy things to work with, usually having been mutilated over centuries of maintenance and modification, but they are still vital ingredients of Late and post-Roman life (Christie, 1991). A number of Italian towns possess parts of their Late Roman defences: each needs to be examined individually in order to aid in the assessment of urban transitions.

Easier to analyse, of course, are the structures that the walls protected. Within the town defences of Ravenna, for example, a number of late antique churches survive adorned with stunning mosaics, not swamped (as is the case in so many late antique churches in Rome, Milan and elsewhere) by later embellishments, restorations and rebuildings. These are wonderful survivals, in both art historical and archaeological terms: relating to both Late

Roman and Ostrogothic rule, these imposing buildings combine to signify no major rupture in the changeover to German rule. Indeed, they show how the quality of the Ostrogothic edifices exceeds that of the fifth-century Roman structures.

Ravenna is almost unique in preserving tangible traces of the subsequent reconquest of Italy by the Eastern (Byzantine) Empire from the 530s A.D. The church of San Vitale contains the two fine mosaics depicting the court of the Byzantine emperor Justinian and his empress Theodora and reflecting the adoption of Ravenna as the seat of the imperial administration in the peninsula. Yet these mosaics alone have created surprising tunnel vision on the part of historians and art historians alike: the mosaics are elevated to denote how Byzantine rule was one of cultural revival and renewal as part of the old Roman West was reunited with the wealthy Eastern Roman Empire. This is a dangerous reconstruction, based on precious few solid archaeological or other data. Hence it is the case that merely the mosaics are Byzantine; elsewhere within Ravenna little or no building work, even of churches, extends beyond about 570 even though the city remained the Byzantine capital of Italy until the mid-eighth century (cf. Ward-Perkins, 1984, 241-244). And yet somehow this fact is rarely commented upon. Recent archaeological studies have been able to add more to this picture: detailed excavations (still largely unpublished unfortunately) in the commercial centre of Classe, the port base of the capital, back up this picture of decline and crisis, with a startling collapse of the economy apparent after about 600 and with trade virtually non-existent after around 650 - and this to an imperial capital. If it was bad here one can easily imagine what the rest of Italy was like in this period (cf. contributions to *Ravenna e il porto*; Maioli and Stoppioni, 1987 provide an interim summary).

This is where the real problem with studying the transition from Roman to medieval in Italy comes into focus, namely a major breakdown in traded and therefore dateable goods from the sixth century, leading to a virtual invisibility of the Italian urban and rural population from the seventh century until the ninth. It was no sudden rupture: the Mediterranean still functioned as an interactive trading economy into this period despite the dismemberment of the old Roman Empire, but on an ever downward spiral once Roman control had fallen away (see various papers in Giardina, 1986). Rome, and indeed much of Italy, had long been a consumer rather than a producer and seems to have had little to fall back on after c. 550: brief attempts at copying North African and Eastern imports occur followed either by a disappearance of pottery manufacture or a decline to basic, often hand-made wares only broadly classifiable as 'sub-Roman' or 'early medieval'; some areas are even deemed to have been fully aceramic between about A.D. 600 and 900, and to have used wooden vessels instead. Whilst the decline may have meant little to contemporaries in that they will have adapted to changed circumstances without too much grief, greater grief awaits the archaeologist attempting to trace the physical changes

and presences in post-Roman Italy. How do we know where people were, if indeed they were there at all?

Early Medieval Landscapes

The most striking effect of this economic and material decay comes in the analysis of rural settlement. One of the best known studies is the South Etruria Field Survey Project which was carried out by the British School at Rome between 1950 and 1975 and covered an area of roughly 1000 km sq. immediately north of Rome (Potter, 1979). This was the first multi-period survey in Italy and a real trendsetter - field survey is now very much an integral part of archaeological research in Italy (cf. Barker and Lloyd, 1991). The South Etruria Survey was important for highlighting a decline in the number of farms and villas even from the mid-third century A.D.; more strikingly it showed that by the mid-sixth century 80% of those sites occupied in the first century were abandoned and that *no* sites were identifiable archaeologically for the period between 650 and 775. A shift of site was assumed, from open countryside to defended hilltop, but the earliest identifiable pottery from these proto-castles (a rather unattractive lead-glazed ware - 'Forum Ware' or '*ceramica a vetrina pesante*') commences only from the ninth century. The frustration was such that archaeologists even tried antedating this pottery by two centuries to help fill the gap - but this rather bold attempt has now been totally invalidated (compare Whitehouse and Potter, 1986; Christie, 1987; Patterson, 1991). Even the very detailed excavations directed by Timothy Potter of the British Museum at the site of Mola di Monte Gelato in the central survey zone failed to find adequate ceramic evidence to fit the period of the mid-sixth to ninth century, even though the stratigraphy seemed to show some hint of activity extending into this period and predating construction of an early medieval chapel. From the ninth century, in contrast, good quantities of pottery re-emerge here, with production identified as being close to the chapel itself (Marazzi, Potter and King, 1989; Potter, 1992; Potter and King, forthcoming). Here, as elsewhere in Italy, it is only with the late eighth century and the so-called 'Carolingian Renaissance' that the physical picture begins to re-impose itself, manifested architecturally through an array of fairly small churches with distinctive carved stone sculpture; archaeologically through identifiable pottery types; and of course historically through the sizeable upturn in documentary sources of all types (cf. papers in Hodges and Hopley, 1988). That this marks a visible 'Renaissance' indicates clearly enough how invisible the previous centuries had been (see below).

Yet it is worth pointing out that the South Etruria Survey data have certainly been over-exploited. Too often it is simply stated for Italy that the post-Roman period saw massive decline and even desertion of the countryside, with people fleeing to the towns or more often onto hilltops, mainly because of constant warfare between Byzantines and Lombards from the sixth to the eighth

century. Some surveys - such as the British School's San Vincenzo project directed by Richard Hodges (Hodges and Mitchell, 1985; Hodges, 1993) - back this up or at least claim to recognise early beginnings to many hill villages or castles, but nowhere yet with any real archaeological certainty (cf. likewise papers within Barker and Lloyd, 1991). To a degree they are probably all greatly overstating the case: no one is giving enough thought to the resilience of the peasants or farmers themselves in this so-called 'transition period'. Warfare had affected Italy since the third century and there was plenty of devastation in the fifth century in particular: the Roman lawcodes, assembled in the *Codex Theodosianus*, do indeed record sizeable instances of land lying uncultivated and yet the accumulating field survey data show that whilst there was decline there was nonetheless still adequate farming going on - people were still out there growing crops for both army and towns. Towns persisted beyond Rome's fall, in some cases at a low ebb; but they nonetheless remained population foci needing food, and so, therefore, needing farmers on the land (cf. Christie, forthcoming). These farmers become archaeologically invisible merely because our dating evidence becomes invisible not because they no longer exist: as trade slipped and as 'industrial' production fell away, imports would have become ever more expensive and therefore unaffordable to most farmers; imports anyway rarely made it beyond the coastal towns and so people could not have easily got hold of them even if they wanted them. At the same time, the Roman stone building industry and tradition slipped into the shadows and people reverted to timber - even within the urban context - for their homes. As work at Monte Gelato showed, rural complexes perhaps shrank and decayed in the late or post-Roman period and their crumbling stone or brick walls needed to be shored up with timber. As in the Roman-Saxon transition in England, the stone buildings perhaps continued to serve some purpose but the farmers themselves now preferred to live in timber huts instead. Of course, only detailed excavation, not field survey, can really hope to show transition, but as yet too little attention has been placed on this aspect of rural change.

These were the native farmers. What of the incoming 'barbarians'? How different is their archaeology from that of the indigenous Roman population? The key German tribe is the Lombards who invaded Italy in the late 560s and successfully established a kingdom based largely on the fertile northern plains (Wickham, 1981; Melucco Vaccaro, 1982; Christie, 1995). They may have been disruptive and destructive at the start of their annexation (and continued to be so in the time of Pope Gregory the Great in the 590s), but they too occupied towns and colonised the countryside: placenames and loanwords indicate fairly widespread rural activity across northern Italy. They even produced lawcodes from the mid-seventh century and these refer to many aspects of rural life, demonstrating a strong agricultural base to both their society and economy. Yet archaeologically, whilst enough evidence exists for their cemeteries and weaponry, almost nothing is known about their houses or villages: not one

securely dated Lombard sunken-hut or storage pit can be claimed for the countryside of northern and central Lombard Italy. The cemeteries offer some guide, of course, to the location and prosperity of associated settlements, but without the actual houses the picture is far from complete (see Hudson and La Rocca, 1985). The process of 'Romanisation' or acculturation does not help matters: whereas up until around A.D. 600-625 the Lombards produced their own distinctive hand-made stamped pottery and inserted this into their burials, after this time they reverted to the native Italian-style aceramic culture, presumably due to a modification in the burial rite. A case clearly for an archaeologically negative effect of cross-cultural fusion between Romans and Germans!

One important area of rural settlement change currently under scrutiny comes in the form of early medieval monasteries. The monastic presence in the late Roman and early post-Roman period is rather ephemeral, although excavations at sites like Farfa, San Vincenzo and Monte Cassino interestingly testify to the revamping or at least reuse of ruinous or semi-abandoned villa sites as the seats for early monastic foundations. With the late eighth and certainly the ninth century, the monastic impact is far more tangible and far-reaching. This was due in many cases to royal patronage first from Charlemagne and subsequently from other Frankish emperors, who offered grants, immunities and lands to seats like Farfa and San Vincenzo, thereby allowing these centres to establish powerful landed bases. The extensive and largely untapped Farfa archives readily demonstrate the accumulation of wealth and authority from this period, while the detailed excavations at San Vincenzo provide insights into the economic vitality of these 'imperial' abbeys, revealing them to be major production centres and distribution points for traded items such as metalwork, glass and pottery (Whitehouse, 1985; Hodges and Mitchell, 1985; Hodges, 1993). Even here, however, the pre-ninth century monastic phases remain frustratingly vague, reflecting in effect the economic poverty of the earlier centuries.

Early Medieval Towns

Warfare, it is claimed, had a drastic effect on the urban and rural populations of Late and post-Roman Italy: towns were decimated, plague was rife and food lacking. Our sources for the Byzantine-Gothic War of the 530s to the 550s report that over 50,000 farmers died in Picenum in central east Italy as a result of plague; the male population of Milan was massacred; and the population of Rome was at one point reduced to a mere 500 persons through continuous sieges. The present war in what survives of Yugoslavia easily lets us gauge the potential accuracy of this sort of documentary information. But the coverage of the war in Bosnia has also revealed other things: human resilience, people clinging to their old houses and towns, surviving on limited resources and hoping for better days. While it is perhaps unwise to compare too closely modern weaponry and devastation with events in Late and post-

Roman Italy, nevertheless the overall effects cannot have been too dissimilar.

An important factor to note, however, with regard to the decline and collapse of the Roman world is that Rome's Germanic successors, whether Visigoths, Franks, Ostrogoths or Lombards, all wanted to share in the decaying Empire, not destroy it. Militarily they were stronger but numerically much weaker, and so needed native Roman support. Ostrogothic Italy was seen in fact as a virtual Golden Age - a return to stability, with Roman administrators and farmers but Gothic soldiers. The Lombards too needed a force of arms to impose themselves on northern and central Italy, but they moved into the towns, while the natives continued farming the land - ethnic cleansing was *not* part of their agenda (cf. Wickham, 1981).

Consultation of the documentary sources indeed suggests that many towns continued to be heaving centres full of the cut-and-thrust of religious doings, with the urban-based Church and the Court owning vast tracts of cultivated land - there is little to denote a breakdown, save that the documentation becomes briefer and the named characters fewer. Yet there are signs here of changes taking place, still not properly picked up by historians or archaeologists. The letters of Pope Gregory the Great, for instance, at the end of the sixth century, contain references to transfers of bishoprics from depopulated sees to fortified towns. On inspection, some of these fortified seats, such as Civita di Bagnoregio (*Balneum Regis*) in Central Italy, bear little relation to what would be expected of a town, with a potential community probably of just 500 persons (cf. Christie, 1989).

Other examples of urban shift and population transfer can be identified, for example in Trento in the central Alps, where, even during the relative stability of Ostrogothic rule in the early sixth century, the local population of Roman *Tridentum* was being recommended to move up to the hill called Doss Trento, ancient *Verruca* (the Wart) (Pl.2). Instances such as this highlight signs of change prompted by defensive needs and depopulation. Problematic, however, is the fact that too few of these sites have seen archaeological investigation: in the case of Bagnoregio occupation has been continuous since the first references to the site, thereby leaving little scope for informative excavation (van der Noort, 1992); at Verruca in contrast, despite the fact that the hill is unoccupied, only a single small-scale excavation has taken place at the end of the nineteenth century, revealing part of a largely undisturbed Ostrogothic period basilica - presumably here research priorities do not include post-Roman settlement.

Only fairly recently in fact has the question of Late and post-Roman urban settlement properly begun to be examined archaeologically, leading to two main schools of thought. The first argues for a high level of survival and continuity of towns, structures and populations; the second seeks to identify significant urban decline. In each case,

regeneration occurs from the ninth and tenth centuries when documents and churches once more fill out the townscapes (Ward-Perkins, 1988; cf. Balzaretti, 1991). The respective arguments are inadequately fuelled by the present level of excavation, preventing a full enough assessment of the question of continuity. As with landscape studies where the South Etruria Survey dominates, so when it comes to looking at urban change in Italy, one site is often viewed as of paramount importance, namely Luni on the Ligurian coast.

Large-scale excavations were carried out in the centre of Roman *Luna* from the 1960s and these have continued periodically up until recently (Frova, 1973; 1977; Ward-Perkins, 1981; 1986). Accessibility is due to the fact that only a scatter of farms now occupy the site of the former colony, offering scope for long-term research. Only from the 1970s, however, did the quality of the excavation allow for proper identification and analysis of post-Roman activity in the form of rubbish pits, graves, timber and rubble housing over robbed-out public zones - suddenly transforming the value of the excavations (Fig. 2). In particular the finds pointed to Byzantine period settlement activity of the mid-sixth to mid-seventh century which coincided with the embellishment in stone and mosaic of the church of Santa Maria. Overall the excavations showed that Luni was in a bad way from about A.D. 300, its forum stripped and many of its houses and public buildings redundant by 400, and its port silted up. The picture is a fascinating one, but, as noted earlier, the results have been over used and abused, with Luni being set up as *the* model for following urban change. There are in fact some oddities about Luni which are not always noted: firstly, it owed its prosperity to the nearby marble quarries, but exploitation on a large scale of these ceased by A.D. 250 and never picked up - thus Luni's economic *raison d'être* fell away. Secondly, survey showed it had a minimal agricultural hinterland to fall back on. Thirdly, it was a *failed* town - one of the few Italian centres that did not revive in the Middle Ages. Finally, its revival under the Byzantines should not be seen as typical of the rest of Italy: Luni occupied a strategic position on a provincial frontier against the Lombards - once Liguria fell to the Lombards so Luni's rôle declined again.

Luni is, nonetheless, vitally important archaeologically: the excavations have helped identify late antique pottery types, allowing for statements regarding the level of trade after Rome; equally significant is the recognition of post-Roman domestic structures, clearly highlighting the fragility of the early medieval layers and the need for systematic archaeological scrutiny.

As an abandoned, open site, the work at Luni should probably not count as actual 'urban excavation', meaning excavation within a modern urban nucleus. Urban archaeology proper is still a fairly new phenomenon in Italy, and has not reached all the parts of the peninsula it should. By far and away the most active region in terms of urban exploration is that of Lombardy in north central

Italy: urban redevelopment is continuous in the rich industrial towns of the zone, such as in Milan where a major project was set up when the underground system was extended, and in Verona and Brescia. These have all produced our first intensive data regarding the question of Roman to medieval urban transition and at the same time provided some suitably conflicting results (Brogiolo, 1985). For Verona, excavations near the old Roman Forum produced different scenarios, one on Via Dante where from the fifth century housing spilled over onto the road area, reducing the road width down by half but then being followed by the continuous heightening of the house facade and the street level until the twelfth century (Fig. 3). Despite a fairly crude stone frontage and signs of timber-built sides to the buildings, the Via Dante houses denote a fairly active urban scene. A similar sequence occurred at Palazzo Maffei on the north end of the Roman Forum area. In contrast, the excavations within the nearby Cortile del Tribunale site showed a fine town house with fourth century mosaics in serious decay by the late fifth century, with earth floors set over the Roman tesserae and many rooms lying redundant; the house was finally abandoned by c. 600 following a fire and the site remained out of use until the early ninth century. In between times comes a deposit of so-called Dark Earth, assumed to indicate imported soil for vegetable gardens (Hudson, 1985; Hudson and La Rocca, 1985; La Rocca Hudson, 1986).

The important thing to note is that the Cortile excavations covered the *interior* zone of an *insula* block, unlike the Via Dante and Palazzo Maffei excavations set at the fronts of *insulae*. As a result it is possible to claim that urban vitality lay only on the facade and that houses were small affairs congregating on the streets while to the rear lay gardens or ruinous/uncultivated areas. Significantly it has been shown that early medieval churches and stray finds of burials in Verona, Pavia as elsewhere generally tend to lie within the areas of what can be assumed to have been ruinous, abandoned or cleared *insulae* (La Rocca Hudson, 1986).

The urban data are fairly fragile archaeologically, with rather crude stone and timber and stone buildings, clay bonded or dry set - not easily identifiable as housing unless a big enough area is excavated, and indeed sometimes, difficult to recognise as houses even with plans in front of you (as at Luni - cf. Ward-Perkins, 1981) (Fig. 2). Accordingly it is not so incredible really that early medieval houses are only now coming to be recognised: in Brescia, for example, the relatively recent excavations in the S. Giulia district have revealed the remains of a series of Lombard-period houses, including a sunken-featured hut, presumed to be so typical of Germanic tribes and indeed well-recognised in Anglo-Saxon England and Frankish Gaul and yet almost totally unknown in Lombard Italy (as with any Lombard settlement structures) (Brogiolo, 1989; cf. Staffa, 1991, 287-301 for late antique-early medieval Pescara). For Brescia, furthermore, the excavated eighth century monastic site of Santa Giulia/San

Salvatore signifies a notable urban revitalisation which is absent from Byzantine or papal regions until the end of the century: it has architectural pretensions too, with well-built arcaded cloisters, a cistern, a hypocaust and even piped water - revivals in effect of elements deemed typical of a proper Roman town.

Problematic, however, remains the currently restricted range of data on which to base any meaningful discussion related to urban change and/or continuity in Late and post-Roman Italy (Balzaretti, 1991). Equally problematic, moreover, is the fact that unless large-scale excavation can occur over many parts of one town the results from any given sector cannot be counted as typical of that town - a fairly obvious point, perhaps, but one that is important to stress nonetheless. What can be stated meanwhile is that in the case of Italy a first glimpse is at last beginning to emerge of post-Roman and early medieval town life. Only once this picture becomes better defined will it be possible to look more constructively at what went on in the post-Roman countryside too.

Discussion

In sum, no definitive statements can be made at present regarding the various elements of transition from Roman to post-Roman or, less accurately, from ancient to medieval. Certain trends can perhaps be identified, but in every case these require enhanced archaeological and historical clarification. Nonetheless these trends will provide the framework for more detailed research:

1. There are strong indications of decay within Late Roman towns, indicative of a withdrawal of patronage, in part coinciding with a transfer of wealth into the countryside. Churches alone signify urban vitality but these too become restricted in size and quality after the early fifth century (Ward-Perkins, 1984, 51-84);

2. Some indications exist of rural shift and a focus around defended sites, but with regional variations throughout Italy, linked in part to insecurity and to the presence/lack of sizeable urban centres (cf. Bierbrauer, 1987 and papers in *Archeologia Medievale*, XVI, 1989);

3. There appears to be a generally successful transition to German rule through which urban and rural settlement patterns were favourably maintained (cf. the Monte Barro establishment: Brogiolo and Castelletti, 1991). Fragmented rule, however, as in the context of the Gothic War (535-554) or the early period of Lombard expansion (568-605), weakens the fabric of these patterns;

4. A general decline in the character of urban life can be claimed for Italy from A.D. 600 to 700 at least, but subsequent economic growth sees a resumption in art and architecture. This decline is, however, not new: as noted, much decay is already evident during fifth century Roman rule;

5. A decline in the central authority prompts in time the steady localisation of power, creating a semi-feudalisation of society - seemingly evident by the eighth century and with small private castles starting to emerge from the ninth century (see Wickham, 1987).

These are the basic trends that can tentatively be reconstructed so far. As shown, many problems in data accumulation need to be overcome before these trends can properly be assessed archaeologically. But while the level and quality of investigation are improving all the time, the lack of closely-datable domestic pottery types and the generally reduced level of material culture continue to deprive the archaeologist of a sound chronological and physical framework. Urban excavation may well provide new clues but it is doubtful that field survey work on its own will tell a comprehensive story. Equally archaeology itself cannot stand alone and the transitional centuries must be studied hand-in-hand with the historian. The respective sources may not speak the same language all the time but they do each form part of the same story.

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Fig. 1. Map of Italy showing main sites referred to in text.

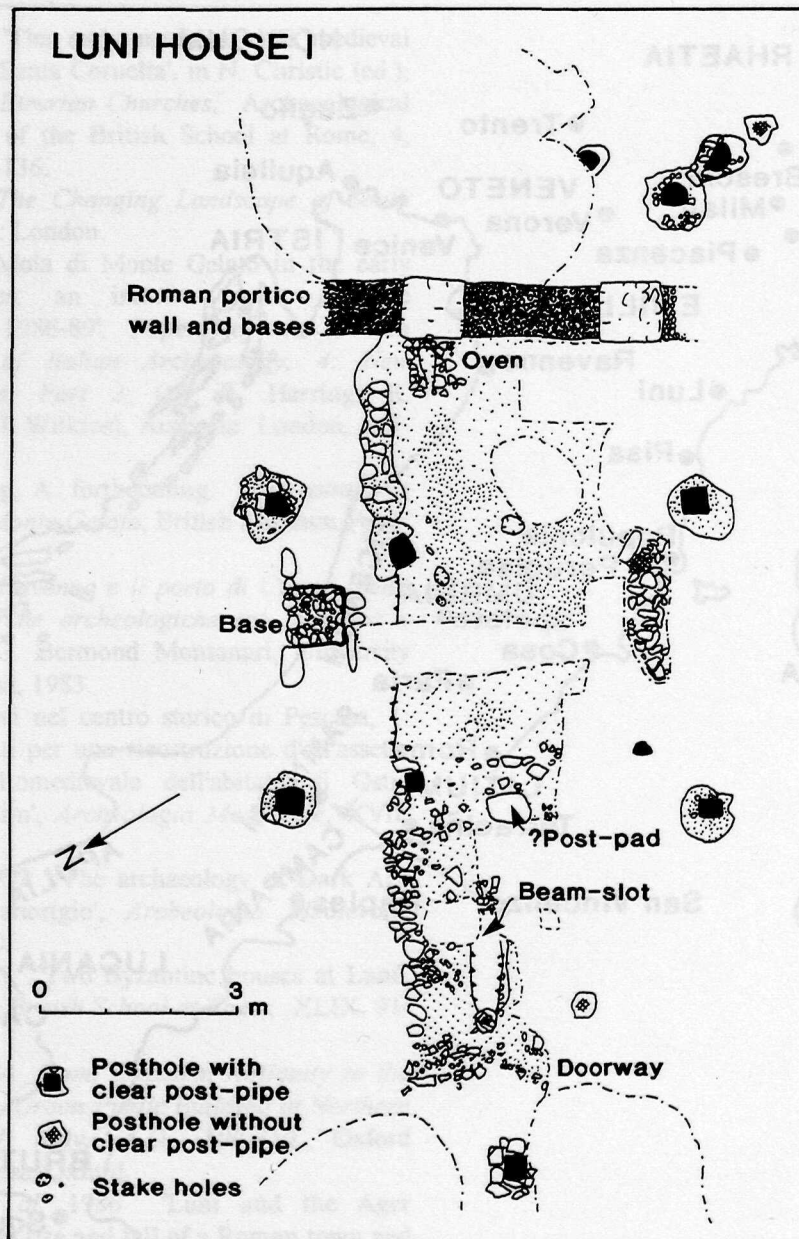


Fig. 2. Luni, Byzantine House I (after Ward-Perkins, 1981, fig. 1).

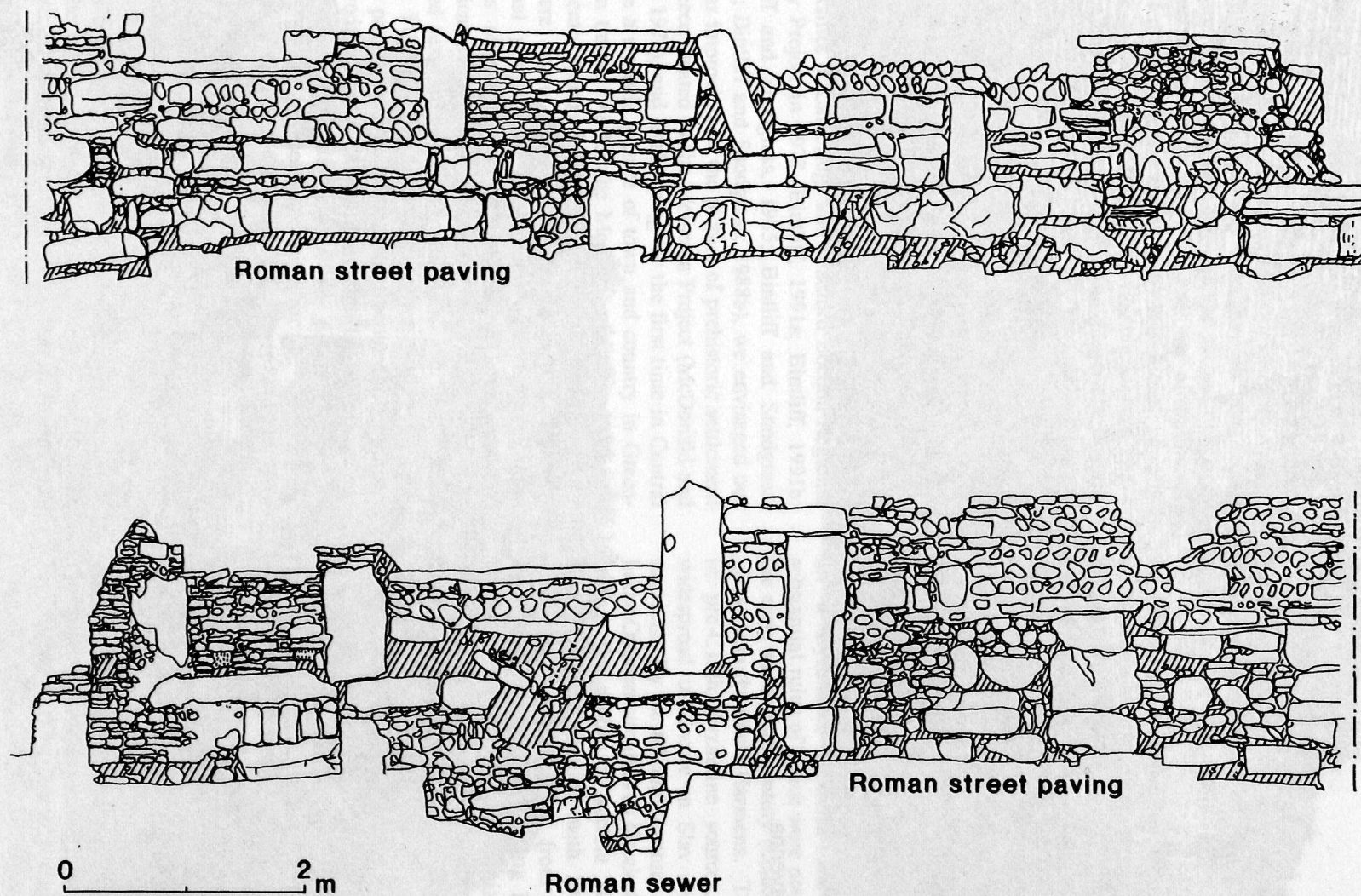


Fig. 3. Via Dante, Verona. Late fifth - late twelfth century street frontage (after Hudson and La Rocca, 1985, fig. 15.8).

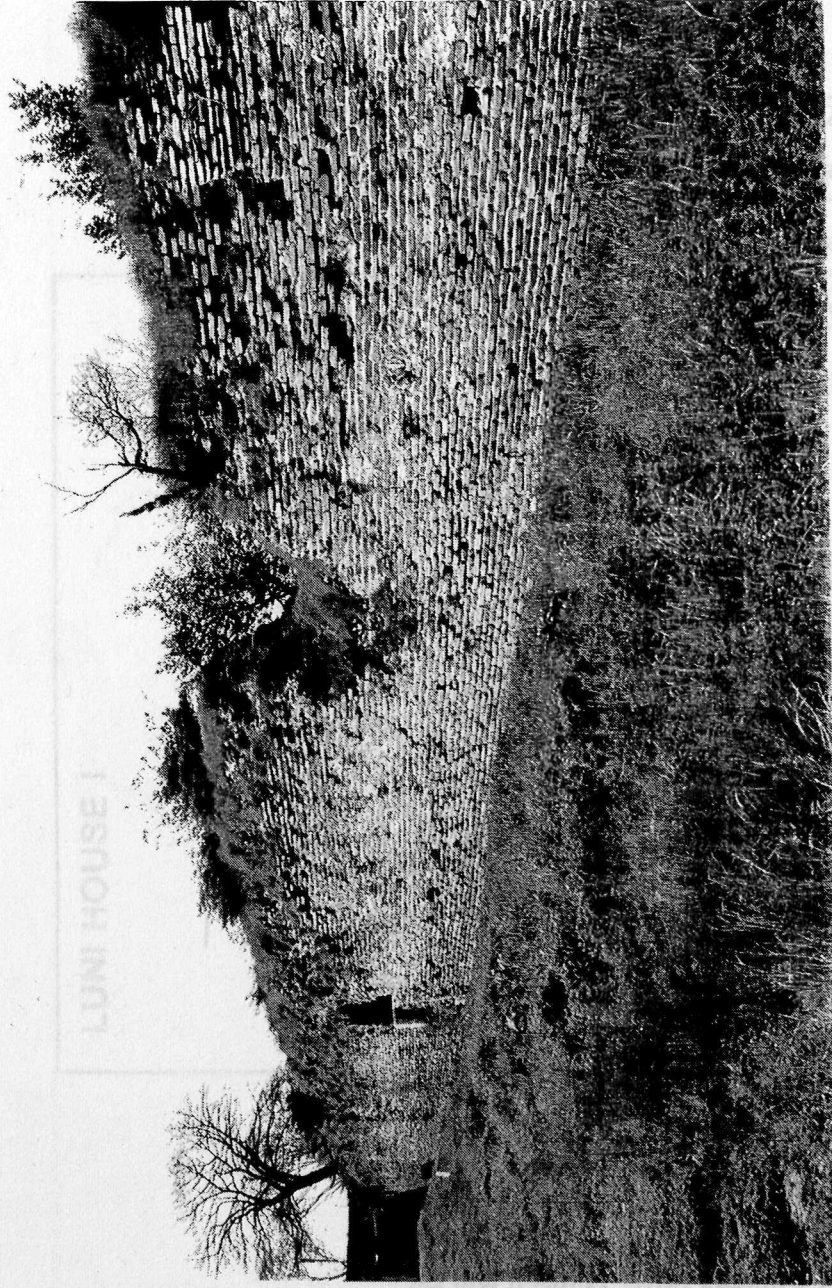


Plate 1. Ravenna.

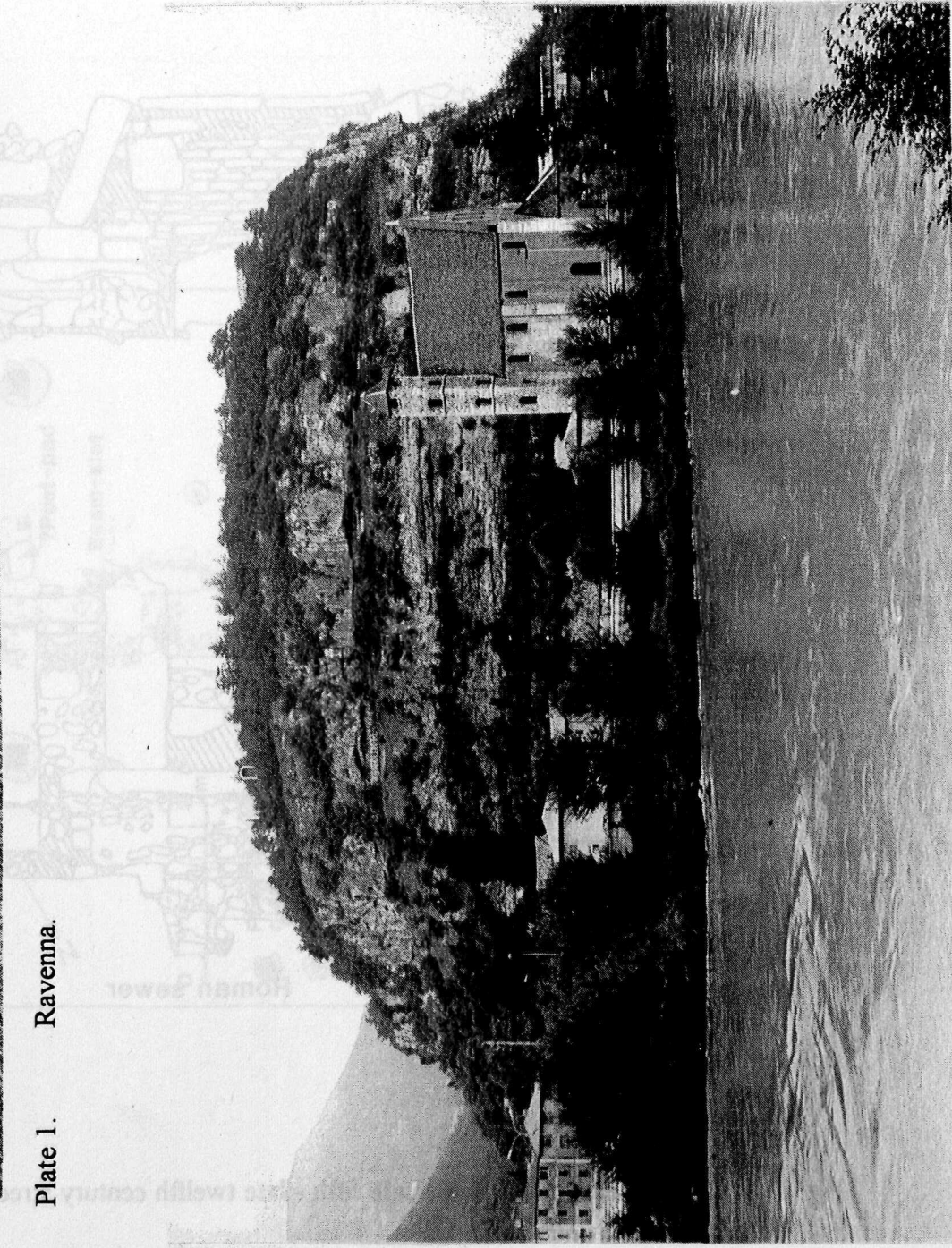


Plate 2. Trento.

THE TWO TRANSITIONS: CURRENT RESEARCH ON THE ORIGINS OF THE TRADITIONAL VILLAGE IN CENTRAL GREECE

John Bintliff

The subject of this chapter is the Two Transitions in Central Greece, the first being that from the city, village and villa landscape of late Antiquity to the feudal landscape of the Middle Ages, and the second that from medieval times to the Early Modern era of traditional nucleated villages. These two transitions can be graphically illustrated: the first by viewing Edward Lear's 1862 painting (Fig. 1) of Lake Copais in Western Boeotia, showing the great citadel rock of the ancient city of Haliartos, and to its left an imposing Frankish tower seemingly guarding but physically disconnected from the ancient site; and the second, by visiting modern Haliartos, which does not appear on Lear's painting as it is a twentieth century refounding following the British drainage of Copais from the late nineteenth century.

When Anthony Snodgrass and I inaugurated the Universities of Cambridge and Bradford Boeotia Regional Survey Project in 1978 (Bintliff, 1991a; Bintliff, 1991b; Bintliff and Snodgrass, 1985; Bintliff and Snodgrass, 1988a; Bintliff and Snodgrass, 1988b), we envisaged our aims as improving on the picture of prehistoric settlement in Greece created by the Messenia Project (McDonald and Rapp, 1972), and establishing for the first time in Central Greece a realistic picture of town and country in Greco-Roman times. As for the Medieval period and the pre-nineteenth century history of the modern village system, we were aware that nothing substantial was known of regional post-Roman archaeology beyond architectural studies of the major churches, whilst the published historical sources were essentially general chronicles or isolated texts of limited chronological and geographical scope. I think we would both now agree that it is precisely in the post-Roman period that the Boeotia Survey Project has produced the biggest surprises and the largest amount of unexpectedly detailed information. Our archaeological surface survey has been operating for the last 16 years primarily in South-West Boeotia (Fig. 2), in the territory of the ancient cities of Haliartos and Thespieae, and in addition since the late 1980's on and around the ancient city of Hyettos (Fig. 3), near the village of Pavlo in northern Boeotia.

Let us begin with what E. Mediterranean archaeologists call the Late Roman era, approximately 400-650 A.D. Most recent archaeological surface surveys in Greece have shown a similar picture to our own (Fig. 4), of a most flourishing and populous period in the countryside, perhaps at as high a level as Classical Greek times; however, in our area at least, urban sites though prosperous do not usually recover their Classical extent. We are beginning to understand the economic context of

this florescence (Abadie-Reynal, 1989), with a well-documented shift in the scale and direction of the trade in finewares and transport amphorae throughout the Aegean between c. 350 A.D. and the mid-sixth century.

On the ground the story in Boeotia after this highpoint seemed to us at first to become complicated or even lost to history and archaeology, but archaeological detective work and a wide-ranging search for new sources of information finally provided a series of breakthroughs. Thus at ancient HALIARTOS our urban surface survey showed that the second century B.C. sack by the Romans left the acropolis uninhabited except for the occasional farm up till the present day. The survivors probably moved to a far smaller settlement nearby at Onchestos, only 5 ha in size, occupied till Late Roman times. However, fieldwalking between the houses of modern Haliartos revealed evidence for a Byzantine, Frankish and Turkish village, the substantial ruins of which were noted by Colonel Leake in the early nineteenth century (Leake, 1835), who helpfully gives them the name Harmena. This community appears in pre-C13th Byzantine sources, whilst the name is widespread in Greece in Slav and Albanian settlement contexts. By the fifteenth century the village is described in the Ottoman archives as Greek. Our working hypothesis is that the people of ancient Haliartos returned from Onchestos and together with Slav settlers, who were forcibly colonising Greece from the end of the C6th, resettled the lower town during Byzantine times. This community of Greeks and hellenized Slavs was doubtless assigned after the Frankish (Fourth Crusade) conquest of Greece in 1204 A.D. to a fief controlled by the adjacent Frankish tower; after the fifteenth century Ottoman conquest this Greek village continued and indeed grew, with numerous churches and at some stage a mosque being constructed; abandonment seems to occur in the eighteenth century. The Greek population probably merged with that of surrounding Albanian and Greek hill villages.

At ancient THESPIAE city our intensive surface survey across the ancient town below the modern village demonstrates a potential on-site continuity from Antiquity to the Middle Ages. The Late Roman city is a shrunken community in the eastern half of the far larger Classical Greek town, partly enclosed by a wall of spolia probably constructed in the troubled period around 400 A.D. (see Gregory, 1982, for similar urban refortifications at this general era). The succeeding Byzantine and Frankish village is smaller and overlies that part of the Late Roman town which lay immediately outside and to the east of the Roman fortification. In 1204 A.D. a helpful Papal letter records the award of this village, already known by its

Early Modern name of Erimokastro (appropriately the village of the (now) 'deserted fort') as a fief to a Frankish monastic order. Our surface ceramic evidence suggests that the village grew to its maximum in Frankish times, and perhaps then its several impressive ruined churches were constructed. It was then abandoned, probably in the troubled fourteenth century, to judge by the 15th-16th Ottoman villages censuses, and its population most likely fled to the adjacent Greek villages of Askra/Panayia and Neochori. During another century of troubles, the seventeenth, those same village records show us that Neochori in turn was abandoned and its people must have been responsible for resettling Thespieae/Erimokastro, which suddenly reappears. In the meantime, the abandoned Erimokastro location had seen new arrivals: the last Frankish Dukes of Athens and Thebes had invited Albanian immigrant farmers and herders to occupy empty villages, and a small community was settled by the first Ottoman census of 1466 on a hilltop immediately overlooking the ancient city and medieval village, under the name of Zogra Kobili. To complicate matters further, the returning Greek villagers of the seventeenth century split into two close settlements, a smaller one on the ancient plain location, and a larger one on another hill above, very close to the Albanian hill village of Kobili. When the English traveller George Wheeler stayed at 'Erimokastro' during his travels in the late seventeenth century (Wheeler, 1682), he merges all three settlements into one, describing the community as Greek and Albanian with a few Turks, and composed of two settlements on high and one on the plain. The rare finds of Turkish era ceramic from the ancient city site confirm the limited scale of that sector of the resettled Greek community, and both local oral tradition and the accounts of the later West European Travellers, such as Leake, record the gradual removal of its population to the adjacent plateau edge villages, where today we can still see the modern paired villages of Thespieae (the ancient name revived for the Greek hill village) and Leondari (Zogra Kobili has been renamed after an ancient Greek toponym in preference to the name which recalls its Albanian origin - a process universal throughout modern Greece).

At the ancient site of ASKRA, a village satellite of ancient Thespieae city, contraction in Early Roman times is followed by a much clearer recovery of settlement size than at Thespieae, almost to Classical Greek levels, in Late Roman times. The succeeding Byzantine village overlies the main Late Roman focus in the south of the site, and occupation continued here into Frankish times. This medieval village focuses on an impressive ruined church, probably Byzantine or Frankish in date, in a locality called 'Episkopi'; Peter Lock (our Project Frankish specialist) has suggested this was the see of a dependent Latin bishop of the diocese of Thebes, that of Zaratoba. Whilst a small community remained associated with this church throughout Frankish and Early Turkish times, relying on our ceramic evidence and Frankish sources it is clear that after the Latin conquest of 1204 the bulk of the Greek community were given as a fief to a secular lord, who had

them move home a kilometre uphill to the sloping ground below his new tower (our site VM4, former Paleo-Panagia). The seventeenth century of the Ottoman era was a time of radical change in the Greek countryside, and like many independent villages our Ottoman sources show that the tower village was split up into a series of serf-estates, whilst its population shrank to a third of its sixteenth century peak. The Greek community moved, almost certainly as a result of its drastic reorganisation, to a new lower elevation where it was visited by Wheeler soon after, and where it exists today as modern Panagia village. As a result of this particular history, the deserted village of VM4 offers one of several excellent case-study examples where a large surface collection of distinctive ceramics can be confidently confined to the early thirteenth to mid sixteenth centuries, Frankish to early Turkish times. Previous study by Dr. J.W. Hayes of that collection has independently pointed to that time range, but exact archival confirmation opens up an important opportunity to establish reliable phase assemblages for post-Roman Central Greece.

Two of these examples - Askra and Thespieae - suggest continuity of Greek nucleated communities across both our 'transitions' till the present-day (but with localised resiting of the village at crisis periods), whilst the third Greek community at Haliartos survives till the eighteenth century A.D. Evidence for an alternative pathway to the modern village, to that shown by these three examples from south-west Boeotia, comes from our recent work at ancient HYETTOS city in the northern border hills of Boeotia: our recently completed total urban surface survey across the extensive Lower Town and the Acropolis shows that there is a permanent contraction in Roman to Late Roman times in the extent of the settled area from a Classical Greek peak, although surface finds of trade ceramics seem to be unusually abundant in Roman Hyettos. The city is certainly flourishing till the sixth A.D., and the arrival of Slav settlers in Central Greece from the final decades of that century or early in the next could be tantalisingly linked to the identification of one piece of handmade Slav Ware from the Lower Town. Medieval surface finds from Hyettos however indicate a general hiatus of occupation in post-Roman times until the late Frankish or early Turkish era. Our regional field survey around the city was fortunate to discover a mere 500 metres north of the ancient town, a cluster of medieval occupation sites which together seem to span most if not all of the post-Roman to modern period. The surface ceramics from these neighbouring sites appear to represent a series of overlapping assemblages, as the hamlet-village they indicate changed focus and size and even ethnicity over 1000 or more years. The earliest locality in the cluster, CN15, is characterized by a unique plainware assemblage of gently ribbed sandy texture, predating the development of early glazed wares such as occur on other locations in the group; if the latter are developing from the ninth century (marking the transition from Early to Middle Byzantine eras), then locality CN15 should cover some part of the seventh-eighth that immediately follows the

last-recognized activity in the nearby city. The monochrome, speckly glazes of the CN8 locality, accompanied by strange incised and sometimes grass-tempered plainwares, and provisionally assigned to the ninth-tenth centuries, gradually yield to a brilliant burst of polychrome painted and glazed wares of eleventh-twelfth century, late Middle Byzantine date in the richest focus of the village - CN3. The latter focus continues into Frankish times, but its population would seem to have been another victim of the troubles of the final Frankish era of late C14th to early C15th century times, since the earliest Ottoman village census for this area records a recently-completed resettlement of this locality by a small Albanian community called after its clan leader Gjin Vendre ('John the Fat-Belly?'). At the same time small Albanian hamlets have been established a few kilometres south and west of Hyettos, at Pavlo and Andrea Lutsi. No Greek community survives in the area. Whereas eventually the more distant hamlets grow and survive till the present-day, Gjin Vendre was either abandoned in late Turkish times or its small population was absorbed into the dependent labour force of a Greek monastic grange set up here by a distant monastery, the only inhabited site by the nineteenth century in and around Hyettos (site CN4). As a cautionary-tale we might note that although the Albanian village name clung to the locality, the monks transformed it into 'Sta Dendra', modern Greek for 'the place with the trees'; quite appropriate for the landscape of CN4 but obscuring the very different earlier significance of the name. That grange is finally abandoned in its turn by the beginning of the twentieth century, at a time when almost all smaller rural settlements in Boeotia die out in favour of large nucleated villages; rural insecurity and economic changes are leading causes of this trend.

The apparent survival as villages, of Greco-Roman urban and semi-urban sites across the First Transition, that from Antiquity to the Middle Ages, even in open and easily accessible locations (in and around Askra, Thespieae, Hyettos and perhaps Haliartos), suggests a conversion of the polis-kome (ancient city-village) network into village-hamlets of the Byzantine era. Significantly in the 40 square kilometres of South-West Boeotia that we have intensively surveyed, Roman villa sites almost all disappear, a phenomenon which, as Timothy Gregory recently observed (at the Corfu Conference on Agrarian Structures, in 1992), offers a different picture to Western Europe in the Dark Ages. Nonetheless, careful study of our settlement maps for Medieval South-West Boeotia, (Figs. 5-6) compared to the Late Roman map, appear to show a dramatic drop in scale of population and settlement size; I cannot claim unambiguous evidence for this from the seventh-ninth centuries A.D. (or Early Byzantine era), when our ceramic data are thin (merely one or two small Early Byzantine open settlements confirmed hitherto), but rather would stress the growing size of settlements across Middle Byzantine and Frankish times, between the tenth and thirteenth centuries A.D. Also mysterious is the exact nature of the Slav settlement which certainly affected our region from the sixth-seventh century; research by Archie

Dunn (our Project Byzantinist) has highlighted the significance of a lead seal of this early date recording the existence of a local Slav leader, one Dargaskavos, 'archon of Hellas'. By the high medieval period this Slav population has vanished from official history, but our current work on medieval villages shows that many have Slav names; the early Medieval Slav occupiers probably merged into the Greek population, or moved elsewhere (some villages with suspected Slav names are known to have been occupied or recolonised by Greek or Albanian populations in the later Middle Ages). Machiel Kiel (our Project Ottomanist) has noted the existence of Slav personal names in 'Greek' villages listed in early Ottoman censuses.

The period from the seventh-ninth centuries A.D., the Early Byzantine era, was one when Byzantine Imperial authority managed to survive in many of the major provincial towns, but was weak to non-existent in the countryside, whilst in both settlement contexts populations must have been very low. Not surprisingly, Byzantine historians have found that their sources characterize this period as one typified by the development of strong communities of independent villagers; one wonders if the Slav migrations, dramatic and warlike as regards the Byzantine state and its towns, were a more peaceable process in the provincial countryside, of landscape infilling and gradual intermarriage, a scenario for which we can find a good parallel at the end of the medieval period with the arrival of the Albanian clans.

Our survey results from the South-West Boeotian countryside suggest increasing populations during Middle Byzantine times, a situation associated with the regaining of complete control over the provinces by the central Byzantine authorities. The Imperial reconquest of Central and Southern Greece began in the final decades of the eighth century and was completed by the mid-ninth century (Megaw, 1961). However Arab raids from Crete and the rise of an aggressive Bulgarian state continued to threaten the prosperity of the South Balkans into the tenth century, and it may not be coincidental that most Byzantine settlement activity in the Boeotian countryside is associated with eleventh-twelfth century ceramics.

In addition to continuity of occupation at ancient settlements, new Greek villages were founded. One such was in a secluded valley between Thespieae and Askra - Palaeoneochori (NEO 1-2). Flourishing in later Middle Byzantine times, it continues into the Frankish and Early Turkish period, when it may have formed (along with Panagia village) a refuge for the Greek villagers who abandoned the ancient community of Thespieae/Erimokastro in the fourteenth century. As noted above, in a later time of disruption, the seventeenth century, Neochori was itself abandoned with the refounding of Erimokastro. The modern village of Neochori, downhill from the deserted settlement, is an Early Modern refoundation. This reoccupation seems to correspond to a final phase of village relocations in

Boeotia during the mid- to late- nineteenth century, when economic problems and brigandage beset the region. It is noteworthy that these village moves, both from one sector to another across particular deserted village sites, and from one geographical location to another, have provided the Boeotia Project with multiple opportunities for isolating discrete surface ceramic assemblages of limited chronological duration. It is anticipated that detailed analysis and seriation will produce characteristic ceramic groups for the entire post-Roman period in overlapping phases of as little as 150-200 years each, with the prospect of creating a medieval and post-medieval archaeology independent of the historic sources for provincial Greece and the idiosyncratic sequences from urban excavation.

The rise of more numerous rural populations during the final centuries of the Middle Byzantine era (mid-ninth to early thirteenth centuries) is a phenomenon intimately linked to the parallel development throughout Greece of a class of major landowners, progressively absorbing free villages into quasi-feudal relationships. The growing security and prosperity of this region of Central Greece is also symbolised by the construction of monumental churches in the ninth and tenth centuries at Skripou and Holy Luke, whilst the Cadaster of Thebes gives a striking picture of a rapidly developing land magnate class in tenth century Boeotia, as Alan Harvey has shown (Harvey, 1983).

With the general loss of economic independence of rural communities and the dominance of secular and clerical landlordism, tied closely to the political establishment, the fate of the Byzantine peasantry converged closely on that of its equivalent in Western Europe. In these important respects the extraordinary political events which saw the Fourth Crusade conquer Greece in 1204 and establish a Frankish feudal nobility across the Mainland and Islands, created far less change in the countryside, where Greek villages would frequently have passed from one semi-feudal, Byzantine secular or clerical landowner to a Latin, feudal secular or clerical landowner.

Peter Lock, in his ongoing research on Frankish Central Greece, has pointed out (Lock, 1986) that apart from the powerful Dukes of Athens at the top of the regional Frankish hierarchy and with castles at Athens, Thebes and Levadia, Central Greece differs from the Peloponnese in lacking an intermediate level of lesser but named lords; below the Dukes in Boeotia came a large number of usually nameless minor knights whose fiefs, one to several Greek villages, were frequently dominated by a high tower, the residence of the knight himself or possibly his bailiff, and some men at arms. In interesting contrast to the fourth century B.C. watchtowers in the same landscape, on peaks and intervisible for strategic signalling (Fossey, 1988), these Frankish residential towers are very rarely intervisible and can be in low relief, and are usually positioned primarily to control adjacent villages. As we saw with Askra/Panagia, however, some Latin lords forced minor displacements of villages, in order to be closer to the

control of the tower; another example of this seems to be the giant tower at Ipsilanti (formerly Vrastamites), not far west of Haliartos, where we have reason to suggest that the holder of the Frankish lordship of several villages around Copais concentrated Greek population around the tower, possibly causing the desertion of a medieval village at the ancient town site of Akraiphnon. A different form of Frankish settlement was identified by us in a rescue survey we carried out in the Central Lakes district of Boeotia in 1989-1990 in collaboration with Miss Andreiomenou and the Greek Antiquities Service: a discrete planned community at Klimmataria lying between but not immediately adjacent to several villages which we may assume formed its fief. Severe drought in two consecutive summers led us to rediscover a submerged feudal estate centre on a peninsula jutting out into Lake Hylike. Abundant Frankish ceramics littered a groundplan clearly revealed by the washing action of the retreating lake; it is a plan now becoming characteristic for Latin feudal settlements in the Aegean and the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem (Pringle, 1989; Guy Sanders, pers.comm.), with rectilinear room blocks arranged around a courtyard in the centre of which, or as in this case, on one side of which, is a typical multi-storey tower.

Archaeological survey in South-West Boeotia suggests a further population increase in the Frankish thirteenth-fourteenth centuries, and although the emphasis remained the nucleated village-hamlet system developed from Antiquity, new hamlets and some farm sites can be found. Now if we compare the distribution of known town and village sites of Classical Boeotia (Fig. 7), with the preliminary distribution of Medieval monuments and settlements known from archaeology (Fig. 8), one is firstly struck by the wide cover of the medieval built landscape, even with our far more patchy archaeological database; and secondly, by the particularly close relation between the Frankish tower sites and Greco-Roman nucleated settlements throughout the whole region. At this stage it is not unreasonable to hypothesize, remarkable though this may seem, that Frankish fiefs adapted themselves to a village and hamlet system that reflected to a considerable measure the settlement system of Late Antiquity.

But although that continuity, as we have seen, can be pursued up to today across the Second Transition, from Medieval to Modern times, in certain localities such as Askra-Panagia, at other localities such as Thespieae and Hyettos, and at the province level, we now have evidence for a dramatic contrast between Medieval and post-Medieval village trajectories in West and East Boeotia. As a result of primary research since 1985 in the Ottoman Imperial archives by our Project specialist, Machiel Kiel, we have gradually obtained access to detailed village census information for Boeotia spanning the period 1466 to the mid eighteenth century. Of some 200 villages listed in these archives, over 160 have been located in the landscape (Fig. 9); half of these latter still exist today, but usually under a new name. Fortunately old maps and the Western Travellers provide invaluable evidence for name

changes, and the same sources offer a remarkable database for plotting deserted villages, making up the other half of our 160 located Ottoman era settlements. Of the 40 or so unlocated communities, most are very small and seem not to survive the seventeenth century demographic crisis, whilst the larger lost villages are slowly being picked up as new maps are discovered (such as a Central Greek equivalent to the French Morea Expedition of the early nineteenth century existing in manuscript form).

It is a striking fact that if one plots onto a map (Fig. 10) the ethnic Greek villages in the Ottoman archives from the fifteenth century A.D. onwards, and compares their distribution to that of the Classical Greek settlement foci, we see that not a single Greek village is known to have survived into Early Ottoman times in Eastern Boeotia; in contrast in West Boeotia in Early Ottoman times the density of Greek villages is striking, and these still cluster on or beside ancient settlement foci: at Chaeronea, for example (hence the village name Kaprena), Chorsiae (which becomes Chostia), Thisbe, Koroneia, Copai, Haliartos and Askra. The map I discussed earlier, showing the distribution of Medieval monuments and known settlements in Boeotia, makes it clear that this dramatic loss of traditional Greek village populations in East Boeotia should have occurred only at the end of the Frankish era, in the fourteenth-fifteenth centuries.

What exactly occurred we know in general terms from political history (Jochalas, 1971; Koder and Hild, 1976), and now more fully from the very first recorded Ottoman census of 1466 (Fig. 11). The final Frankish period was characterised by perpetual warfare between the Byzantine, Latin and Turkish powers; the Venetians on Evvoia for example are believed to have applied a scorched earth policy to the opposing Mainland for several kilometres inland. Eastern Boeotia was in any case much more exposed to attack than the West, especially from Turkish raids across the Aegean Sea. The Black Death is also known to have devastated Greece, as the rest of Europe, in the fourteenth century (although this factor is likely to have been as virulent in West as East Boeotia). Traditional Greek village populations in Eastern Boeotia fled, and the Dukes of Athens are recorded as having invited considerable numbers of Albanian settlers as a planned repopulation of this landscape, (an invitation repeated by the early Ottoman administration). As can be seen from village sizes in the earliest Ottoman census records, these new Albanian settlements were uniformly small compared with the surviving West Boeotian Greek villages, and their even distribution reflects a planned resettlement of earlier, abandoned village sites. In some cases, e.g. Archondiki village a few kilometres east of Thespieae, a relocation of a couple of hundred metres allows us to distinguish from surface archaeology between the abandoned Byzantine-Frankish village and the new Albanian settlement, with a date around 1400 A.D. separating the two assemblages.

Economically the Albanians differed a great deal from the Greek communities; they had a strong pastoralist base supplemented by cereal cultivation, and for some generations they continued to migrate around their chosen districts using several seasonal bases or 'katuns'. However by the mid sixteenth century under the security of the Pax Ottomanica and a burgeoning prosperity typical for the Golden Age of the Early Ottoman Empire, the Albanian villages began to grow rapidly, stabilising their residences, whilst their economy now followed Greek patterns with the development of tree crops. Archaeologically this story is rather intriguing; we cannot as yet detect from the styles of ceramic alone the ethnic replacement at many Medieval settlement sites, since Albanian village ceramics are identical to those of surviving Greek villages. Without the combination of highly detailed Ottoman village archives and the evidence of relocation within deserted village sites, we might otherwise have been led to argue for uninterrupted occupation from Byzantine or even ancient times at many Early Modern village locations. Ancient Akraiphnion city provides a good example of the problem - its church suggests that it was an important Frankish site, and one may suspect a Greek village survived here from Roman times, but in the troubled final Latin era its Greek population seems to have fled and we find the community under the name Karditsa having been resettled by some 75 Albanian herders in 1466, whose numbers grow to some 200 by the end of the sixteenth century. Elsewhere surviving Greek villages that were rather low in population seem to have been deliberately boosted by the settling of Albanian hamlets alongside them, as at ancient Thisbe.

By 1570 (Fig. 12) the rural (but not urban) population of Boeotia is predominantly Albanian and the region's flourishing reaches its Ottoman-era peak. During the seventeenth century however all this falls apart, and the well-known Ottoman political and economic crisis of this century (Inalcik, 1972) finds a characteristic reflection in a marked downswing (Fig. 13) of regional population and widespread village abandonments, especially in Albanian Eastern Boeotia. The Greek villages of the West are much less affected, although as we have seen, their populations shrank drastically and some underwent relocation at no great distance. Contemporary accounts make it clear that once again warfare and piracy are concentrated in the East.

Scanty Ottoman records for eighteenth century Boeotia suggest, as elsewhere in the Empire, a slight recovery of population and economy, and we may recall the high proportion of villages recorded in the Ottoman archives, even from 1466, which still are occupied and even flourishing today. But the War of Independence, and the prolonged regional slump which followed and that lasted into the beginning of this century in Boeotia (Slaughter and Kasimis, 1986), certainly took its toll of surviving villages from the final Turkish era, resulting in plentiful recently deserted villages on nineteenth century maps.

A final feature worth mentioning is the ethnoarchaeological dimension of the Albanian settlement. In ceramic terms, as noted earlier, we cannot recognise a Greek or Albanian 15th village from each other, and to the modern eye their descendant villages look typically Greek, as are all apparent customs of life (for example our current research on vernacular architecture identifies the single-storey longhouse as the universal traditional house in both ethnic communities since at least the seventeenth century). Nonetheless the older inhabitants of the Albanian villages still talk a thick mixture of Albanian and Greek to each other, or even pure Albanian in the remoter communities, despite interethnic intermarriage between villages that probably began with village pairings initiated in the fourteenth-fifteenth centuries. The Albanian settlement is a strong memory in village oral history, but probably the strongest reason for the survival of the Albanian language when all other material aspects of life are identical to Greek culture, as a Greek colleague suggested to me, is the Ottoman practice of giving a significant degree of local self-government to ethnic communities. It is only with the formation of the Modern Greek state that radical pressure has been exerted to homogenize the nation, especially through nationalistic education syllabuses.

In concluding this paper, although one is tempted to show an appropriate view of sunset over a traditional Boeotian village, what we are actually seeing is rather the dawn of a highly exciting period in our understanding of its evolution across the two Great Transitions.

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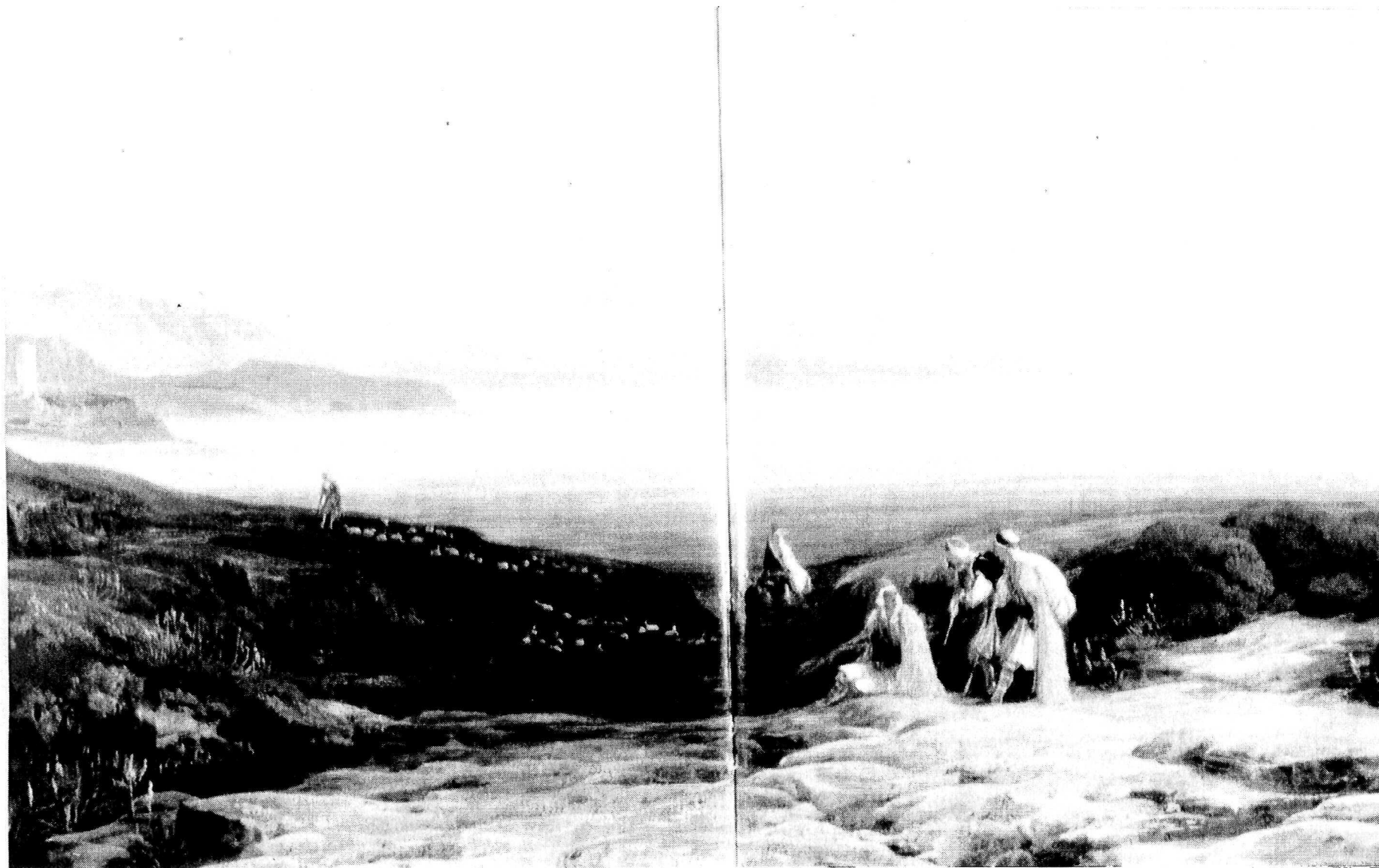
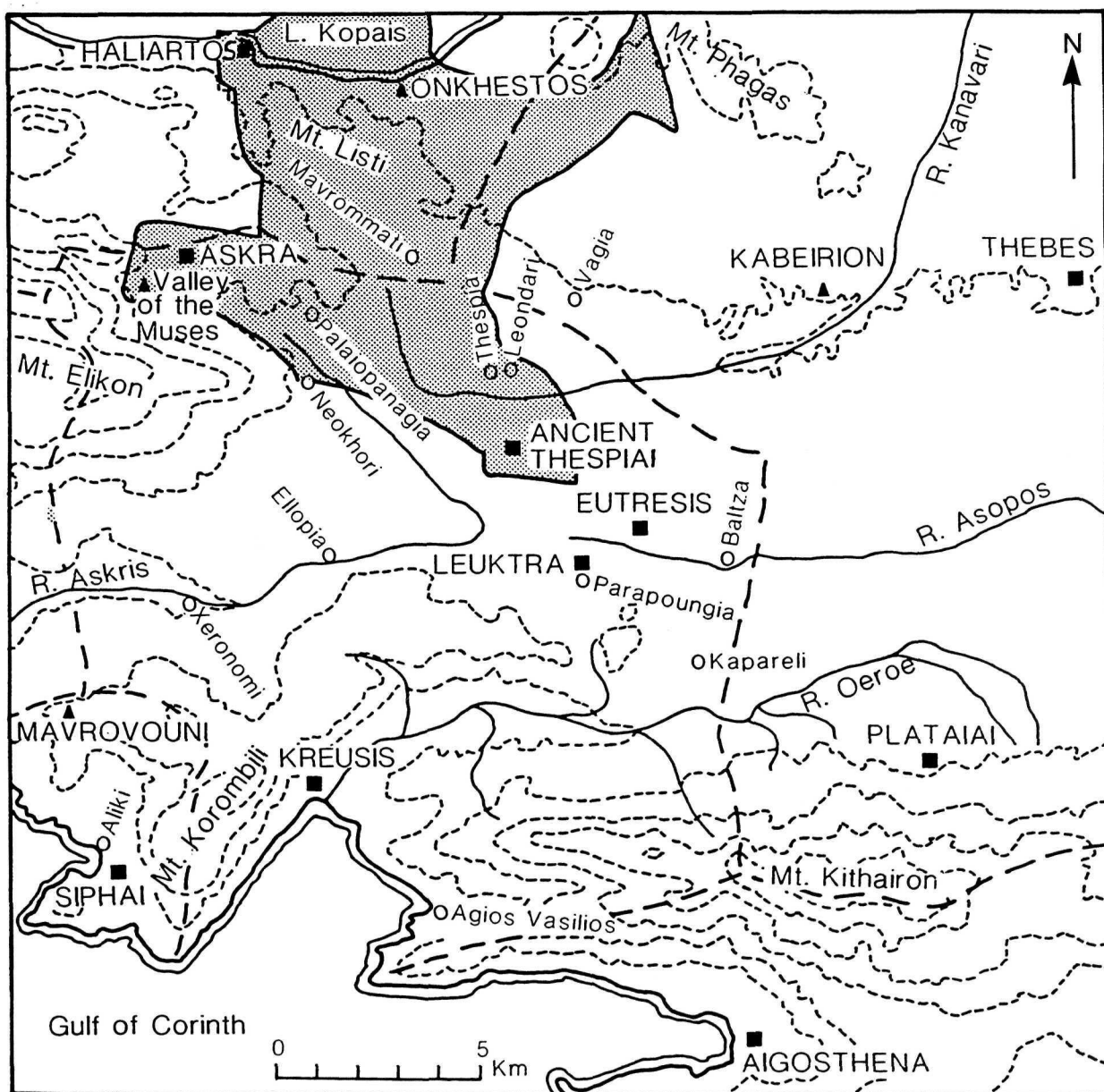


Fig. 1. The south-east corner of Lake Copais, Boeotia, by Edward Lear (1862). In the left middle distance the Frankish tower, to its right the projecting rock of ancient Haliartos a kilometre further away from the viewer.



ANCIENT SITES

- Settlements
- ▲ Sanctuaries

Fig. 2. The Boeotia Project survey block in South-West Boeotia, with the locations of the ancient cities of Thespieae, Haliartos and the ancient village of Askra.

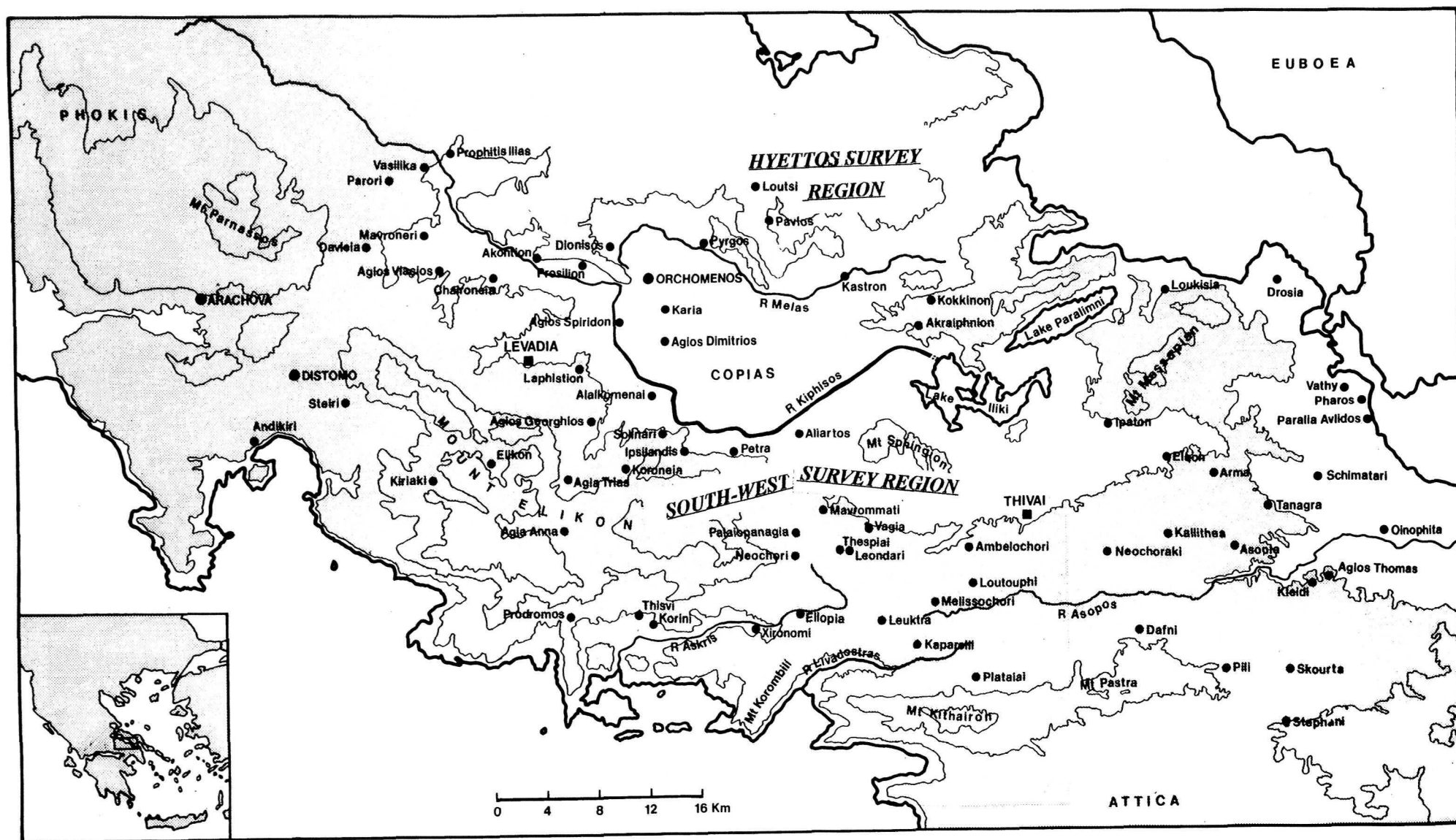


Fig. 3. The region of Boeotia showing the location of the South-West survey block and that around ancient Hyettos city.

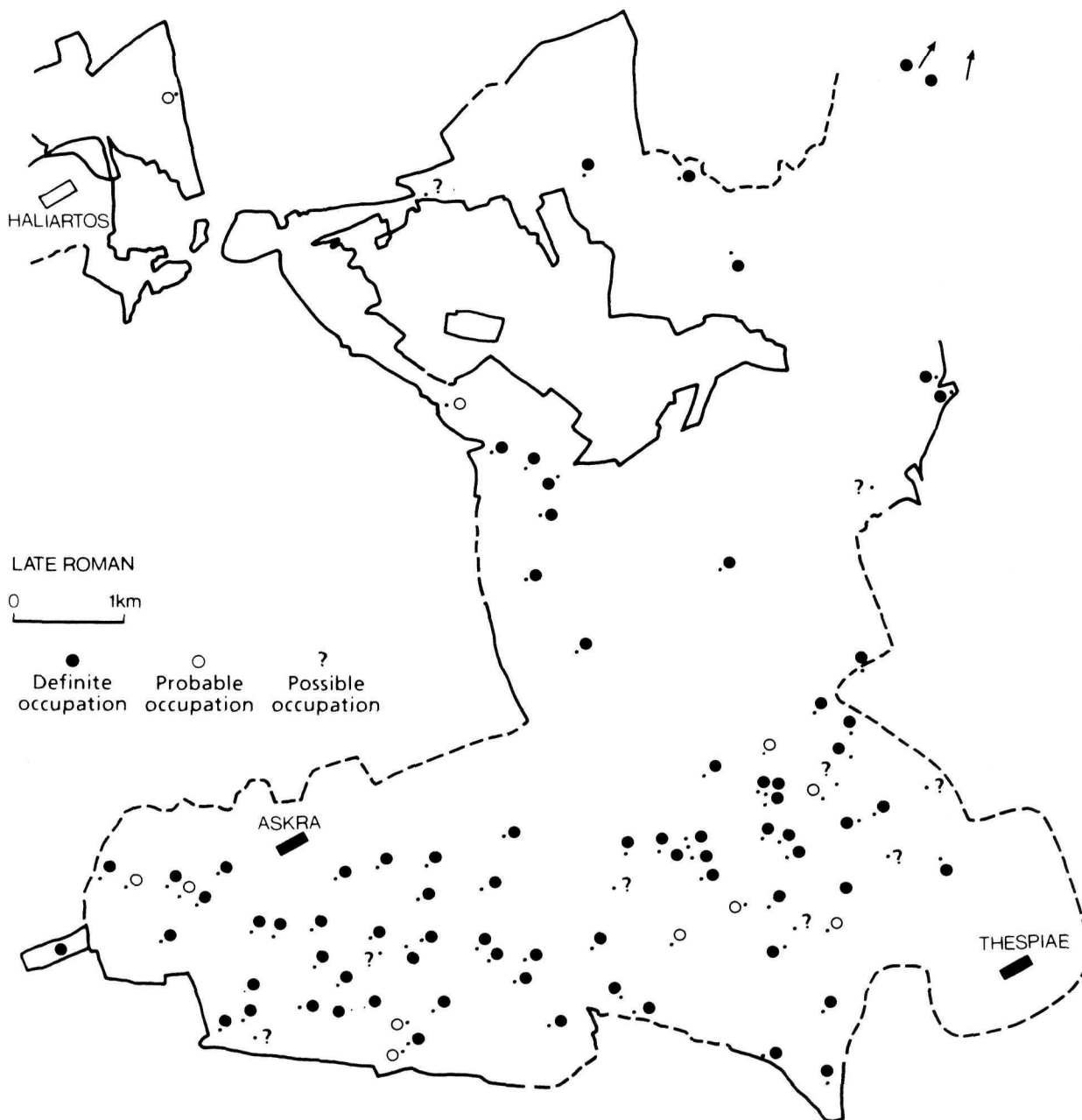


Fig. 4. Distribution of Late Roman sites in the South-West survey block; data up to 1986 only. Urban sites shown as rectangles.

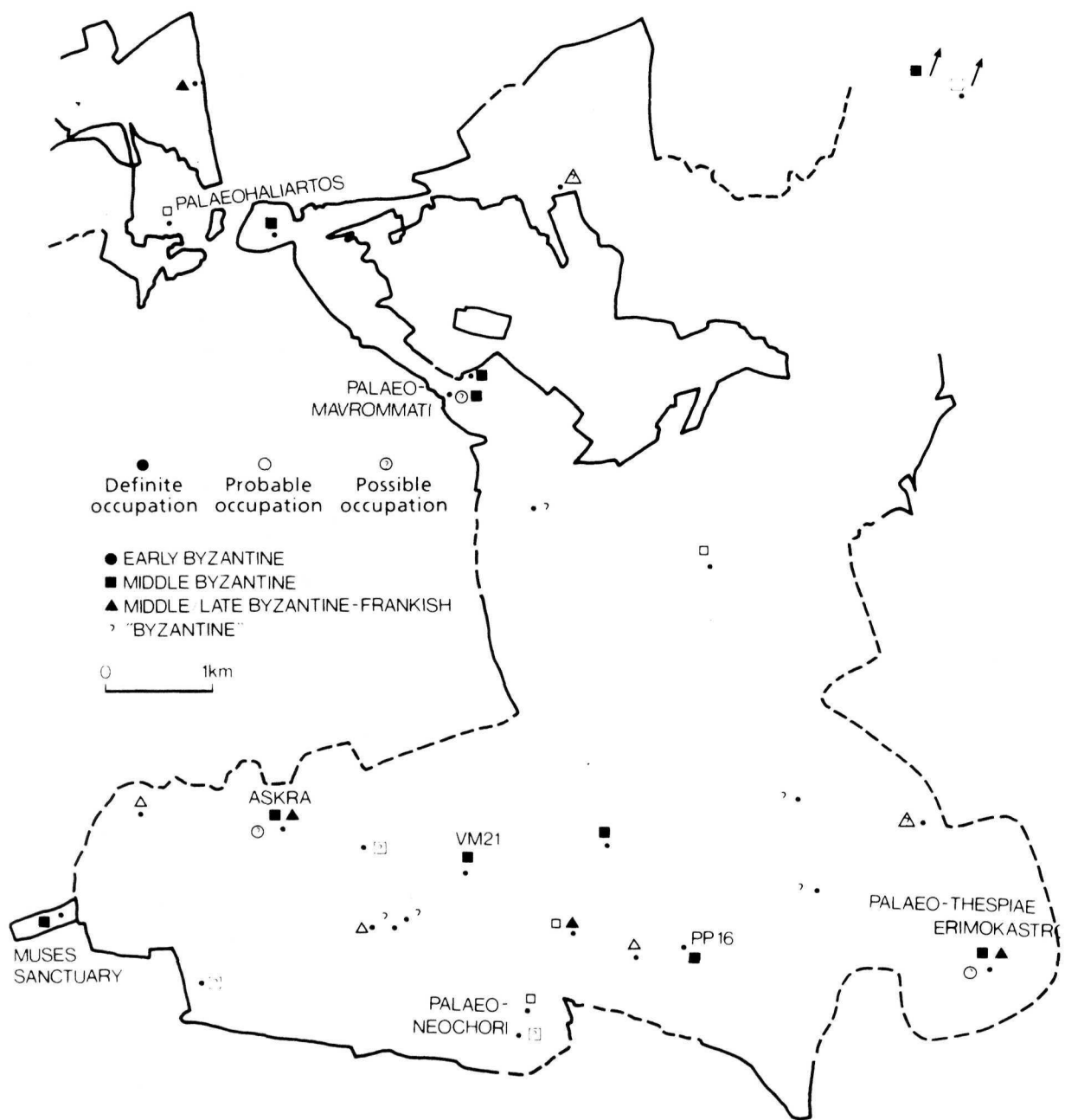


Fig. 5. Distribution of early Medieval sites in the South-West survey block; data up to 1986 only.

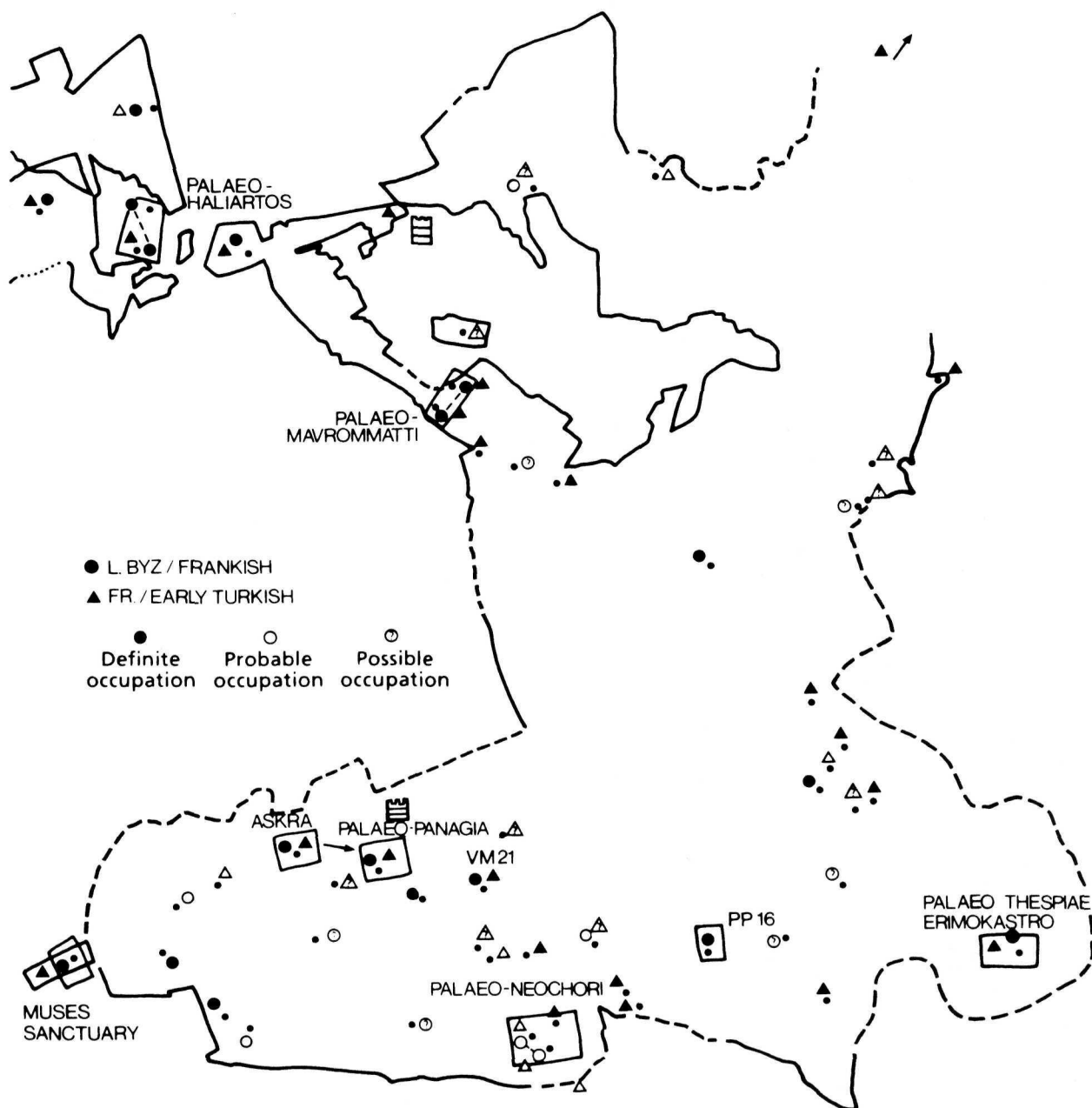


Fig. 6. Distribution of later Medieval (Frankish) sites in the South-West survey block; data up to 1986 only. Tower sites indicated by appropriate symbol, village/hamlets by enclosing boxes.

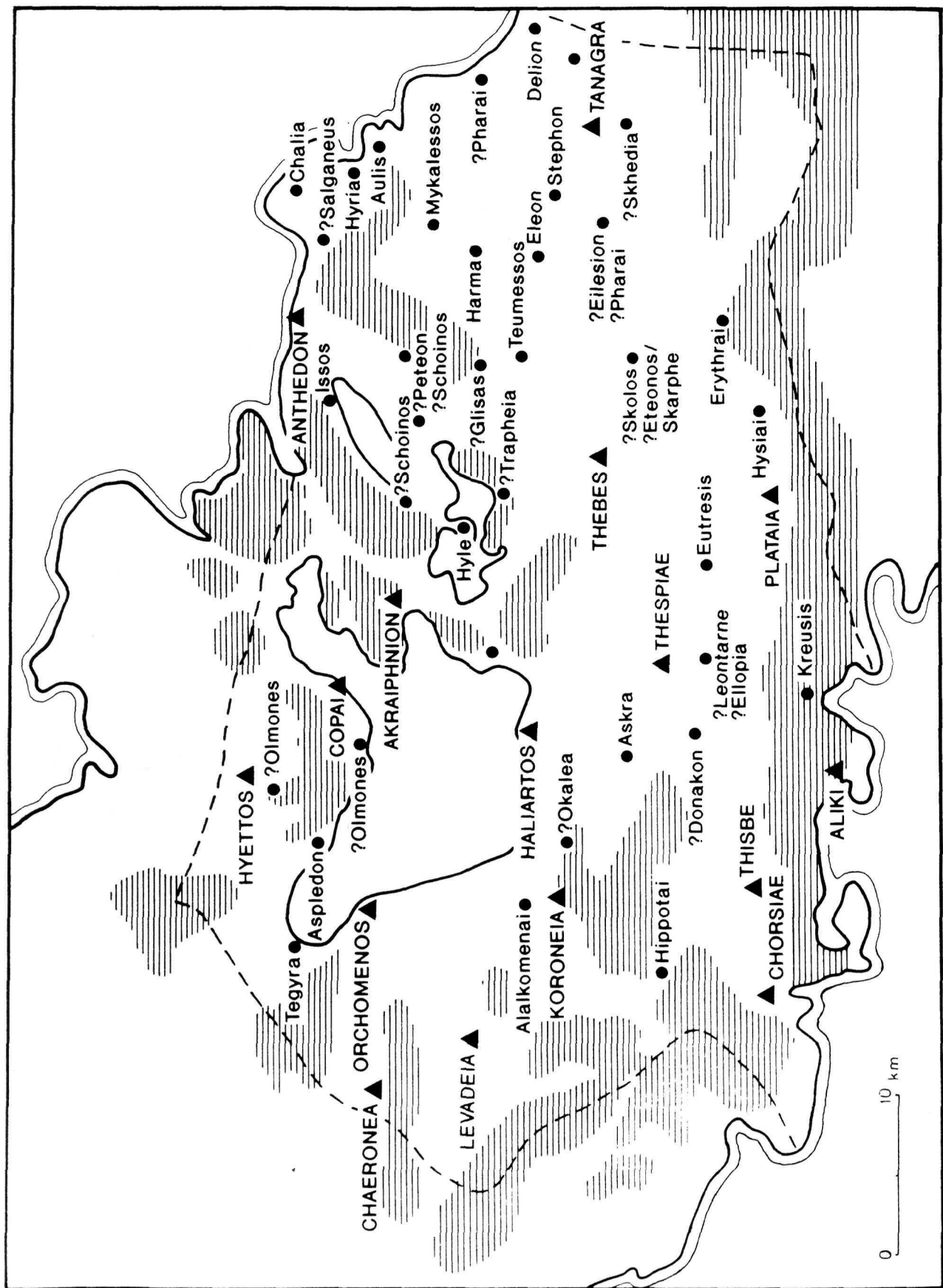


Fig. 7. Ancient Boeotia. Cities shown as triangles, villages as circles.

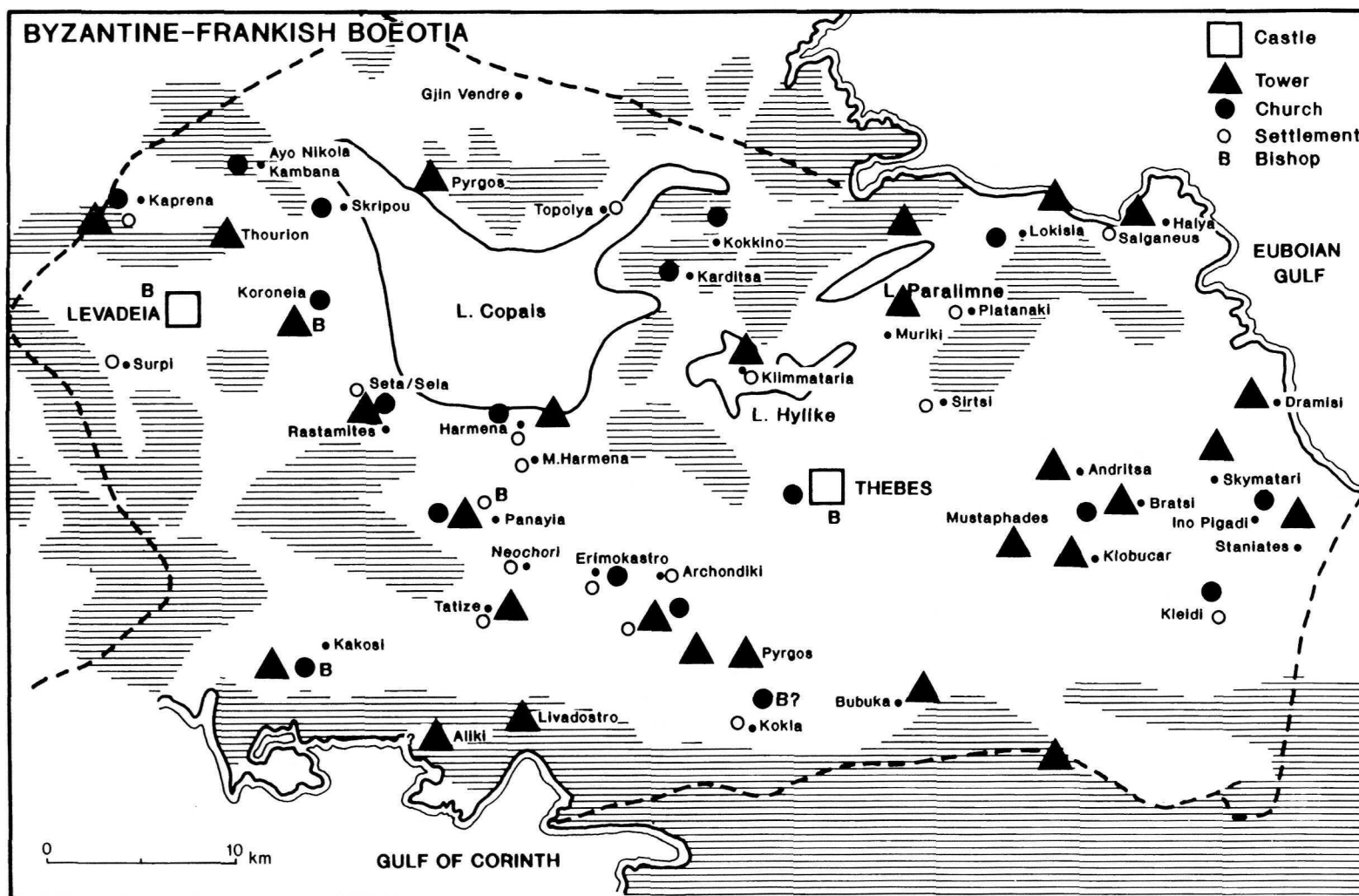


Fig. 8. Byzantine-Frankish Boeotia. Monuments and recorded village settlements from extensive research. Minor rural sites from Boeotia Project fieldwork zones omitted.

Fig. 9. Locatable villages from the Ottoman imperial archives for Boeotia (15th-17th centuries A.D.). Boxes show approximate location for named villages, circles denote closely-located villages.

Fig. 10. Ottoman archive villages in Boeotia, 15th-17th century, with recorded ethnicity and presentday status (occupied/deserted).

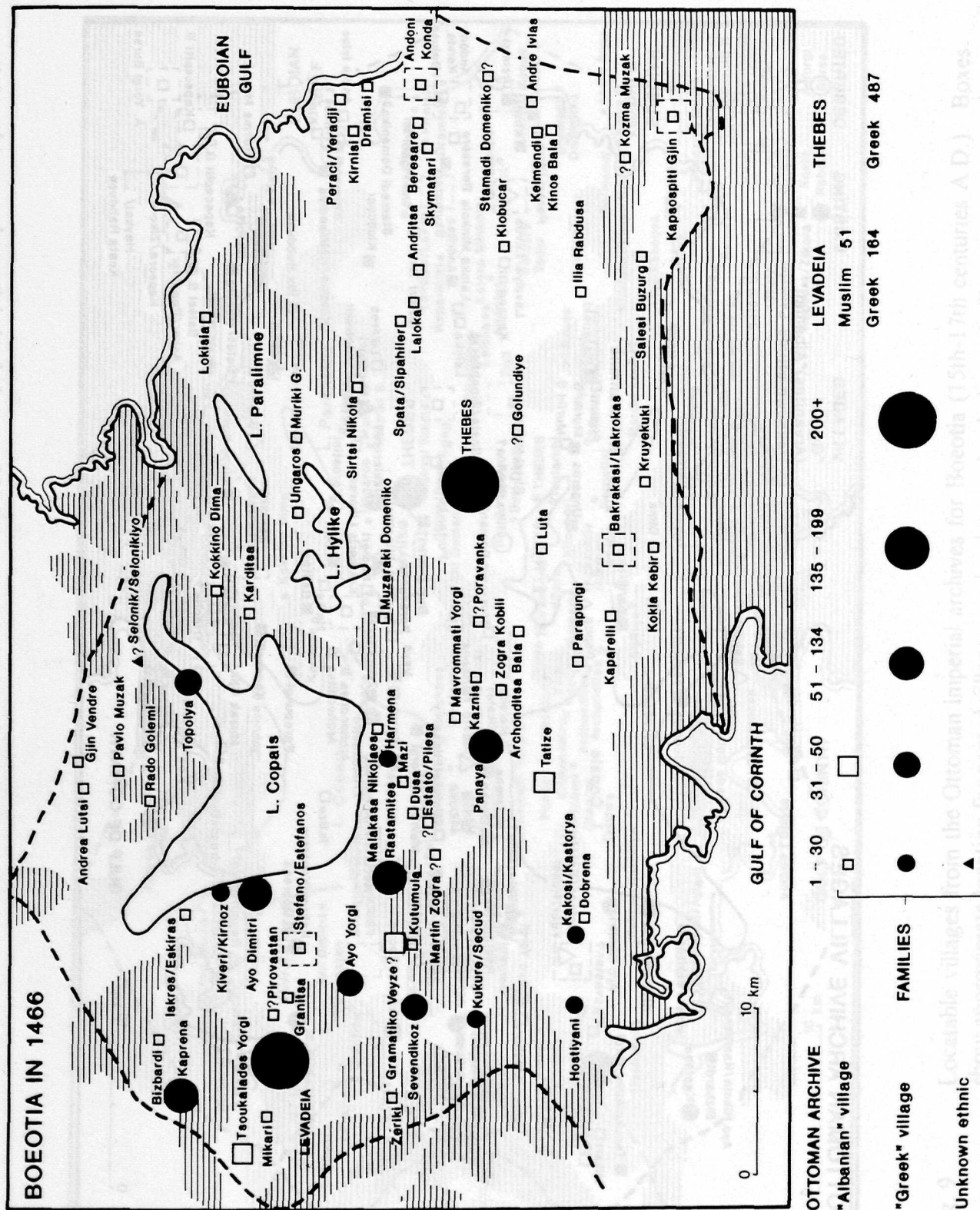


Fig. 11. Ottoman archive villages in Boeotia, 1466 census.

Fig. 12.

Ottoman archive villages in Boeotia, 1570 census.

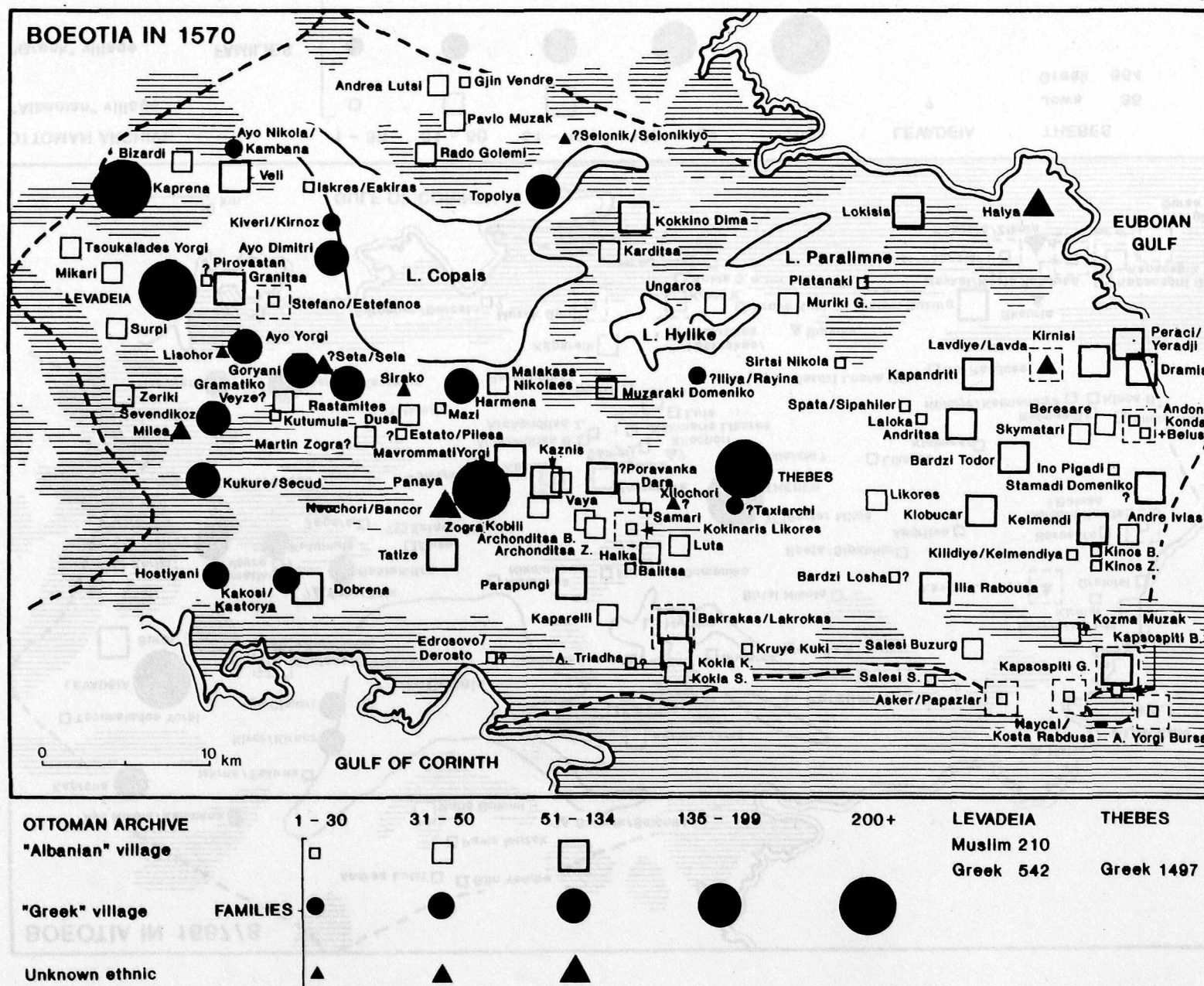
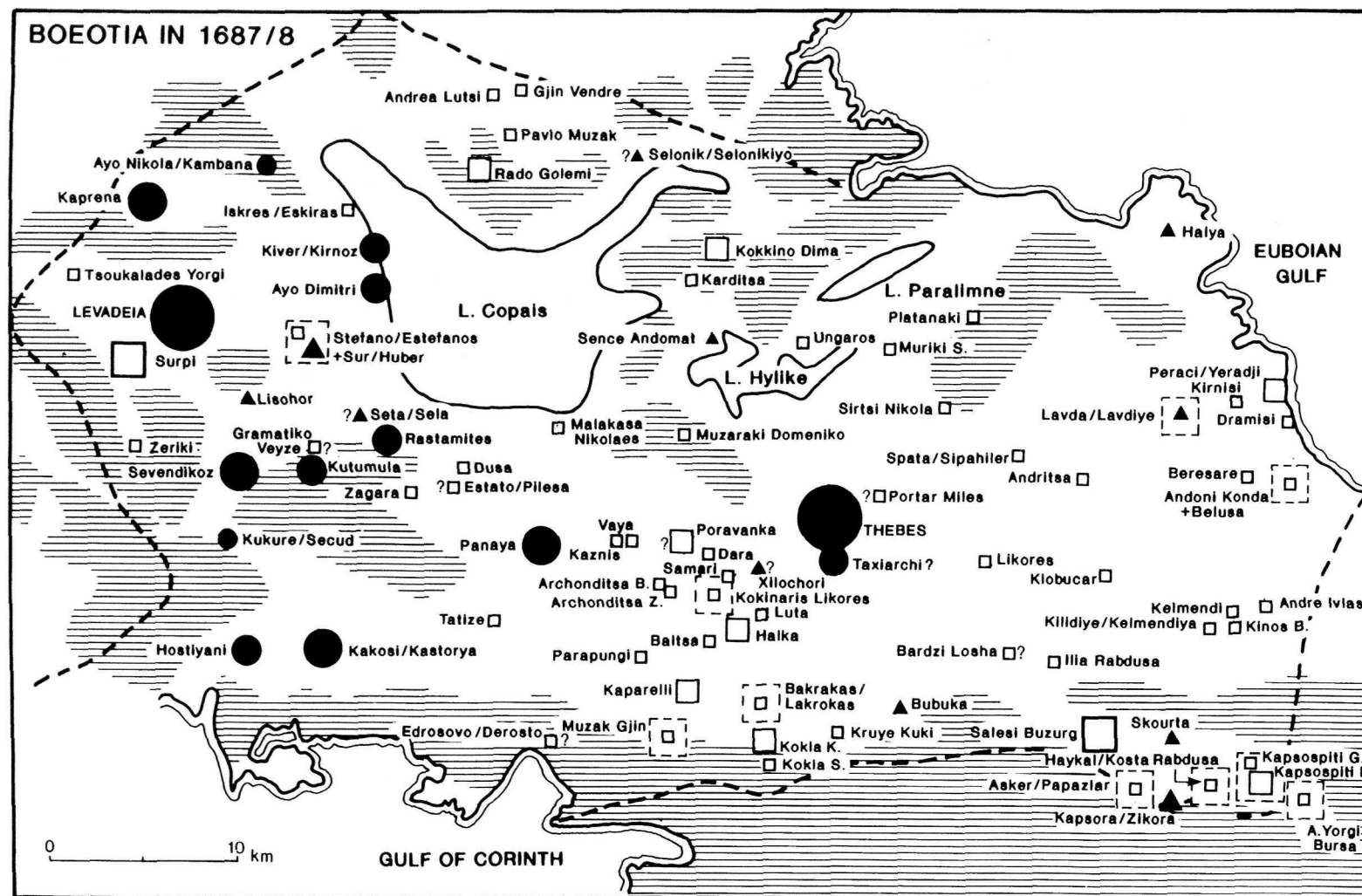


Fig. 13. Ottoman archive villages in Boeotia, 1687/8 census.



OTTOMAN ARCHIVE

"Albanian" village

"Greek" village

Unknown ethnic

FAMILIES

1 - 30

31 - 50

51 - 134

135 - 199

200+

LEVADEIA

THEBES

Jews 35

Greek 654