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Boeotian landscapes. A GIS-based study for the reconstruction and interpretation of the archaeological datasets of ancient Boeotia.

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II.3.6

The Copais area: Copai and the North-East bay

TOPOGRAPHICAL SETTING

The North East Copais area is constituted mainly by the NE bay of the Copais basin and the surrounding elevated areas, namely the central and Eastern part of the Copais' North fringe (Fossey 1988: 277), as well as the limestone Megalovouno ridge, towards the E.

The landscape of the bay today is marked by the presence of the partially canalised and meandering Melas river, visible from afar also within the plain because of the high and thick reeds than grow all along its course. The Melas runs along the N edge of the basin and afterwards, after Kastro, and especially after the promontory of Pyrgos-Agia Marina, crosses the plain transversally. It used to flow into the *Megali Katavothra*¹ at its far E end until 1893, when the river was diverted elsewhere with the drainage of the lake.

The main settlement of the area today, as in the past, is Topolia/Kastro. It is situated on a hill/islet, isolated from the edge of the basin, which, when the water is low, is connected to the land by an isthmus. In the modern period it was, together with Pyrgos, the large settlement by the lake, and gave the lake its name (*Topolia limni*), as it did in ancient times (*Copais* after Copai, the ancient town on the site of the modern settlement). Topolia/Kastro is situated at the entrance to the North-Easternmost bay of Copais, which, immediately after Topolia/Kastro, opens up towards the N into a flat inner area, through which runs the road towards Martinon, whose E side is constituted by a flat area with vineyards (called *Ampelia*)², which opens towards Martinon and is overlooked from the E by the Proph.Ilias mountain. To the E of this opening, the *Topolia* bay forms a tongue-shaped feature whose edge is marked by promontories

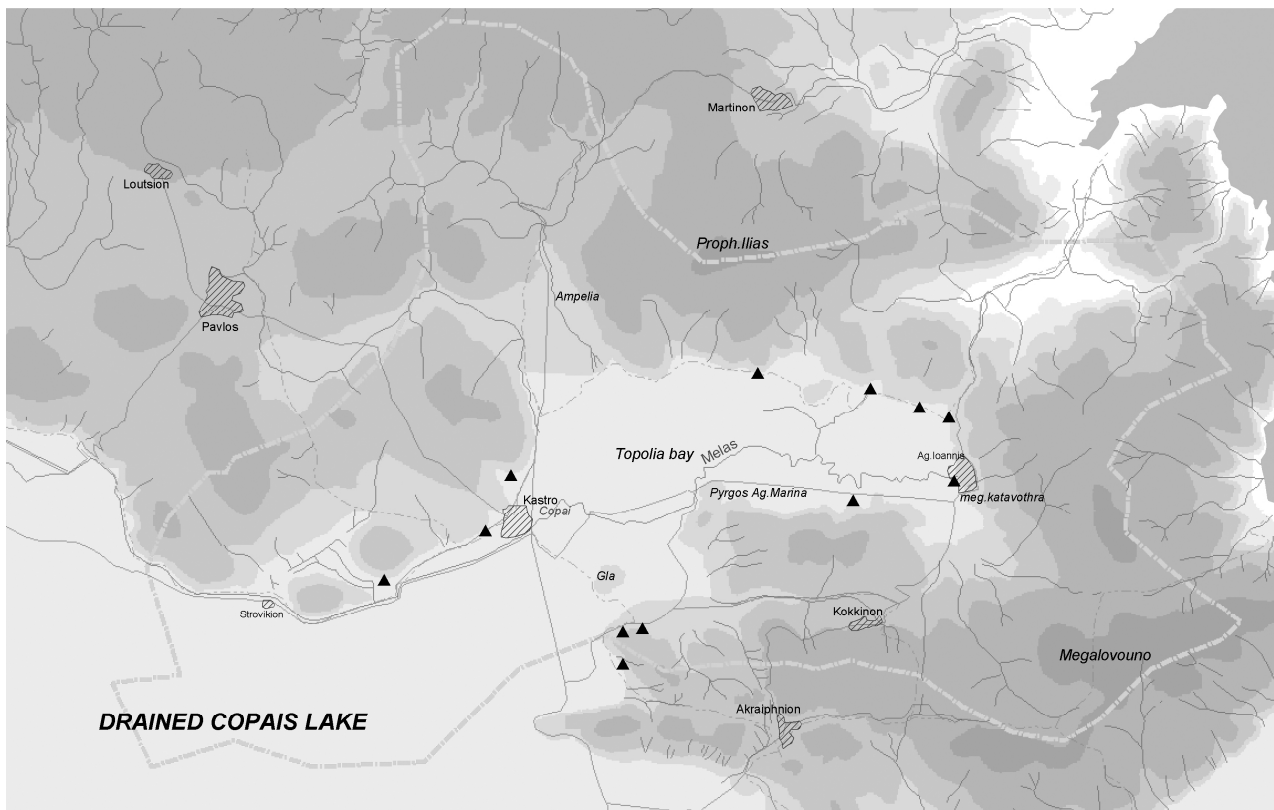


Fig.1. Topographical setting of the chora. Triangles mark the katavothrai.

¹ A *katavothra* is a karstic swallow-hole (see chapter III.1).

² Philippson 1951: 486. The area is crossed today by the Athens-Lamia highway.

and small gulfs, where many *katavothrai*³ (marked in fig.1) open up.

The land of the Topolia bay is partially cultivated, though the majority of the area is covered with meadows and reeds, especially on the E edge. On the other hand, in the area of Kokkino, to the NW slopes of the Megalovouno ridge, as well as in the valley running E-W down to the Copais, vine cultivation marks the landscape (as at the time of Lauffer's visit, around the mid 20th century).

Boundaries

The boundaries are defined by the shape of the NE bay itself, and the mountain fringe around it. The border between Copai and Akraiphnon is still uncertain and, as Fossey points out (1988: 277), the inclusion of the Eastern end of the NE Copais bay in the territory of ancient Copai is considerably less than certain, though, in considering the boundary stone (*horos* - IG VII 2792), found at Phtelio point, it seems reasonable to see the land N of the Megalovouno ridge, at whose end it lies, as that of Copai, and to the S as belonging to Akraiphia⁴. Another inscription was interpreted as boundary stone, once again between Copai and Akraiphia, datable to the 6th - 5th C BC. The text suggested by Lauffer reads: [hóρος A]κραί[φιέον] [κ]αί Κοπ[αίον]⁵.

PHYSICAL LAND UNITS

As one might expect from looking at the landscape, the greater part of the area is comprised of a flat landscape, partially covered by the Copais (lake or marshes) – table 1. On the other hand, the mountainous segment (>600m) is almost completely absent, since heights are not characterised by high elevation (see the Hyettos *chora*, belonging to the same North Copais upland landscape, and quite different from the South Copais upland landscape), while the hilly segment is marked by a significant presence of rough morphologies (high slope values, for instance) - see fig.2 in chapter II.1.

RESOURCES

With the exception of some lower areas in the NE bay itself, which with drainage could be exploited for agriculture (still probably always with a permanent marshy character), some areas are suitable for vineyards (the bay to the N of Topolia/Kastro and upland areas of Kokkino). Mostly, though, the carbonate rocks of the elevated areas around the bay are suitable for husbandry activities, while the slopes of Megalovouno were

probably covered by forest⁶. Land capability values for the area are visible in fig.6. Fishing could also take place⁷, and a resource, part of the parallel economy offered by the lake (see appendix III), was also the eels of Copais⁸. Iron and nickel deposits are known around the E and S edges of the NE Copais bay. They are mined today (crossing the area of Ag.Ioannis, it appears as a 'red landscape', though no evidence for exploration in antiquity seems to be attested⁹).

| | |
|------------------------------|-----|
| <i>Hilly landscape</i> | 37% |
| <i>Mountainous landscape</i> | 2% |
| <i>Plain</i> | 61% |

| | | | |
|----|-------|--------------------------|-------|
| 1 | P1_P2 | lacustrine basin, valley | 39% |
| 2 | P3 | gentle slope | 3.8% |
| 3 | P4 | foothill | 17.5% |
| 4 | H1 | plateau | 7% |
| 5 | H2 | gentle slope | 1% |
| 6 | H3 | moderate slope | 7.3% |
| 7 | H4 | severe slope | 13.4% |
| 8 | H5 | very severe slope | 8.5% |
| 9 | M1 | plateau | 0.8% |
| 10 | M2 | plateau/gentle slope | 0.6% |
| 11 | M3 | moderate slope | 0.7% |
| 12 | M4 | very severe slope | 0.2% |

Table 1. Percentage of the different physiographical classes present in the NE Copais area (P=plain; H=hill; M=mountain).

³ Among others, Spitia Katavothra, Binia Katavothra, which is divided into two parts and might be artificial, and to the S of it the Megali Katavothra.

⁴ Traces of a necropolis found at the NW and N foot of the ridge (*components NC_84 to NC_86* - see appendix I.6) could be burial areas connected with the town of Akraiphia, but could also be interpreted as rural burials.

⁵ SEG XXX 440; Teiresias, 10 [1980] AE/2. Lauffer *Chiron* 10 (1980: 161-2) has no doubt that the inscription (dated to the 6th C BC) was found *in situ* in the plain, 500m NW of Phtelio cape and 500m SW of Gla.

⁶ In the whole of the valley from Karditsa, the W slope of Megalovouno to the Copais basin, a process of deforestation has taken place. Nowadays the area is full of undergrowth and brambles (Lauffer *Kopais* I: 254).

⁷ Topolia = τόπος ἀλεῖα, as reported in Fossey 1988: 288.

⁸ The NE bay produced the best eels, see Frazer 1913: 132-3, quoted by Fossey 1988: 288. Schliemann (1882: 162) reports on the eels of the bay as a resource for the village of Topolia/Kastro, already renowned for their bulk and fatness in antiquity, and which Pausanias commends.

⁹ Bakhuizen 1976: 51-7, reported by Fossey 1988: 288.

THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL RECORD

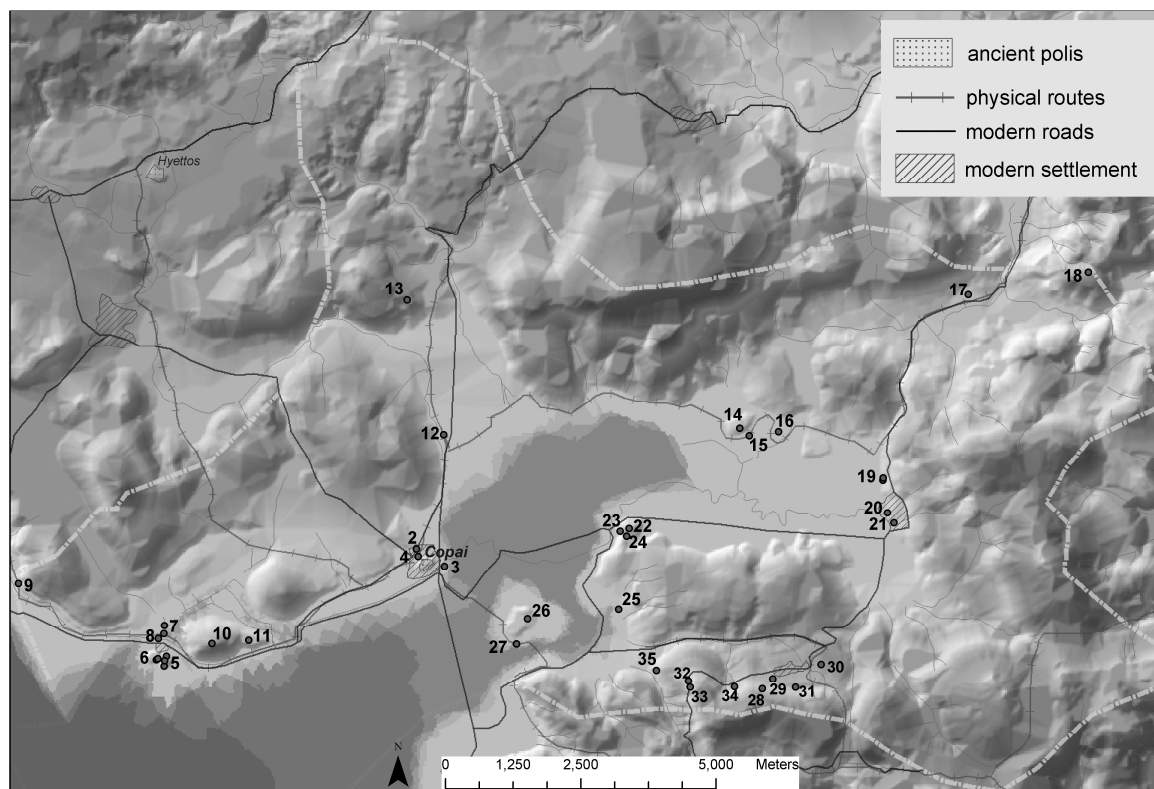


Fig.2. Archaeological map of the region.

| | | |
|-------|---------------------------------|--|
| 1 | Topolia/Kastro | Components NC_15 to NC_24 (ancient Copai) |
| 2/3/4 | Topolia/Kastro | Topolia/Kastro NW (2): Component NC_25; Topolia/Kastro East (3): Components NC_26 to NC_28 and Topolia/Kastro village (4): Component NC_29 |
| 5/6 | Stroviki-Nisi | E hill (5) Components NC_1 to NC_4 and NC_7 to NC_10, NC_5 (South), NC_6 (North); W hill (6) Components NC_11 and NC_87 |
| 7 | Stroviki-Ag.Georgios | Components NC_88 and NC_89 |
| 8 | Stroviki-Ag.Georgios | Component NC_90 |
| 9 | Baroutospilia | Component NC_14 |
| 10/11 | Tourlogianni | Tourlogianni (10) Component NC_12 and Tourlogianni-Bazaraki (11): Component NC_13 |
| 12 | Magoula Kavkala | Components NC_30 and NC_31 |
| 13 | Alogopatisia-Kaphkala | Component NC_32 |
| 14/15 | Chantza | Chantza (14) and Chantza nearby (15): Components NC_33 to NC_37 |
| 16 | Agios Ioannis-Spitia Katavothra | Components NC_38 to NC_47 |

| | | |
|-------------|---------------------------------|---|
| 17 | Souvliki | Component NC_80 |
| 18 | Bazaraki | Component NC_81 |
| 19 | Spilia Tsoutso | Components NC_48 to NC_50 |
| 20 | Agios Ioannis-Megali Katavothra | Components NC_51 to NC_56 |
| 21 | Megali Katavothra SE | Components NC_57 to NC_58 |
| 22/23/24 | Pyrgos-Agia Marina | Pyrgos-Agia Marina Components NC_59 to NC_66 (22), NC_67 (23) and Pyrgos-Agia Marina-Chuntiklissa: Component NC_68 (24) |
| 25 | Agia Marina SE | Component NC_69 |
| 26 | Gla | Components NC_70 to NC_74 |
| 27 | Gla-Talantouseza | Component NC_75 |
| 28/29/30/31 | Kokkino | Kokkino near (28): Component NC_76 – Kokkino W (29): Component NC_77 – Kokkino NE (30): Component NC_78 – Kokkino S (31): Component NC_79 |
| 32 | Megalovouno NE | Component NC_84 |
| 33/34 | Megalovouno NE | Components NC_85 and NC_86 |
| 35 | Megalovouno-Blaitesa | Components NC_82 and NC_83 |

Table 2. List of archaeological components and activity loci mapped in fig.2.

Knowledge of the archaeological record concerning the area is largely comprised of the personal interest-oriented research on Prehistoric settlement in the area, and Prehistoric sites constitute the majority of known components in the area (58%). Lauffer has intensively investigated the landscape around the gulf, also providing useful information on periods of occupation other than the main Prehistoric foci. In this way, many historical settlement or small activity foci are known because of their location on top of or close to Prehistoric foci (they are represented by the discovery type entry 'other'— see pie chart below).

The graph (fig.3) illustrates the proportion of components discovered within different research frameworks. For the North East Copais area, discovery frameworks are almost equally represented, with the exception of rescue excavation, with only slight representation, and accidental discovery (no robbery activities taking place; no presence of a large *polis* centre). The significant number of entries discovered through 'Int. topographical surveys' is due to the very good research work in the area carried out by Lauffer (and mainly published in *Kopais I*, 1986). A large number of the entries for 'Personal or group interest' are due, as in other *chorai* bordering Copais, to the interest, by groups and people compiling gazetteers, in Prehistoric settlement around the lake. The entry/value 'Other' represents, in the NE Copais case, especially components of historical periods known mainly from research carried out on sites displaying Prehistoric occupation (see chapter II.2).

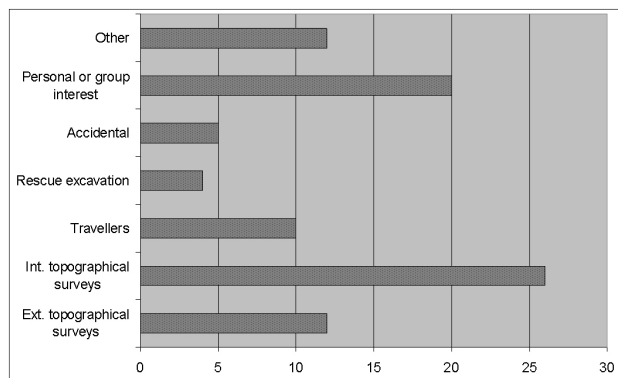


Fig.3. Graph illustrating the proportion of components discovered within different research frameworks.

In fig.4 the relationship between known archaeological sites and the distance from the modern road network can be seen. A strict correlation between the discovery of sites and the presence of a road (which makes discovery easier and archaeological remains more accessible) is clearly visible in the case of the components around Kokkino and in the Megalovouno area, while the apparent correlation in the case of Copai and of Stroviki-Tourloiani is mainly due to the position of the road running along the edge of the basin, where the ancient settlement was.

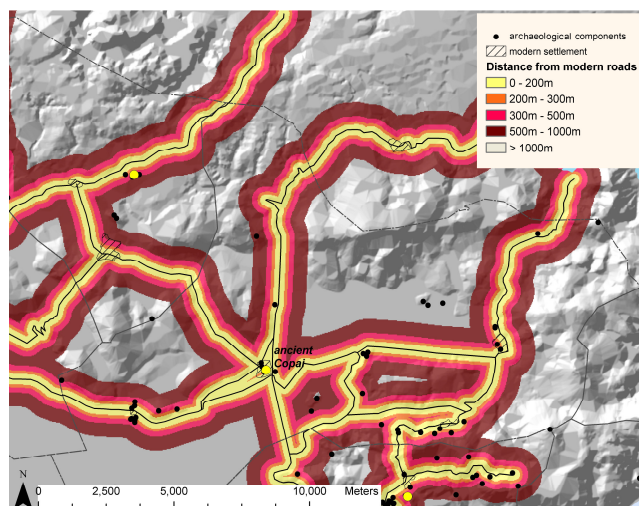


Fig.4. Relationship between components and modern road network.

The ratio of known Prehistoric to Greco-Roman components is 48 to 36 (4:3), with an unusual preponderance of known Prehistoric sites for the reasons discussed above, while among the historical periods, 64% are dated Archaic to Hellenistic, 18% Roman-Late Roman, and 18% are attributed to the general Greco-Roman period.

ANALYSIS OF THE CHORA LANDSCAPE

PREHISTORIC PERIOD

The picture of the Prehistoric landscape of the NE Copais bay is quite rich (see figs. 6 to 9 in chapter II.3.1).

With regards to the Neolithic, a lot of sites are known for the area, sometimes clearly datable to the Neolithic period (fig.6 in chapter II.3.1). This is due to the special interest in Prehistoric periods which led people working on the Copais and its surroundings, as well as to the probable strong Neolithic occupation in the areas bordering the lake, either in caves or in open settlement. Some of the known Neolithic activity foci correspond to sites occupied in later periods, and are therefore known due to the more or less intensive research carried out on them.

The Neolithic landscape of the area is also characterised by cave sites. The Baroutospilia cave has been entered into the database (*component NC_14*), but others have also been reported with Prehistoric finds (Bouka, Ag.Nikolaos, and other caves by the connection between Copais and the Yliki lake, in the area of Vourka, and on both sides of the Athens-Lamia National Road: Saracino, Baroutospilia itself, and others. For a brief summary see AD 71: 219-220¹⁰).

¹⁰ Spyropoulos reports on a visit to all the caves around Copais (AD 71: 219-220).

The Early Helladic period is also quite well represented in the available picture of the Prehistoric landscape (fig.7 in chapter II.3.1). There are a few clear activity foci, probably settlement sites, such as Magoula Kavkala, north of Copai (where Neolithic was also found) – *component NC_31*, or the site at Agios Ioannis above the Megali Katavothra – *component NC_52*, or at Megali Katavothra SE – *component NC_58*, and probably at Topolia-Kastro and Stroviki-Nisi (*components NC_16 and NC_2*). They are all situated along the edge of the lake, in fairly elevated positions, with the exception of the site at Magoula Kavkala, which is on a low mound and occupies an area back from the lake, overlooking an inner bay. In the case of the area around the Megali Katavothra, foci of apparently EH date have been found in several places (Spilia Tsoutso, a spur above Megali Katavothra, and a depression to the SE).

For the Middle Helladic, a number of major sites of the period are known, as in other areas surrounding Copais (see, for instance, Koroneiake to the S) – fig.8 in chapter II.3.1. Clear MH occupation of a certain extent is known at Stroviki-Nisi – *component NC_3* with cist graves associated, on the peninsula of Agios Ioannis at Spitia Katavothra – *component NC_40* with cist graves associated, and on the spur above the Megali Katavothra – *component NC_53*. They can all be considered settlement sites. Pyrgos-Agia Marina (*component NC_61*) was probably also a settlement site in the MH period (though the principal occupation is later – LH), as well as Topolia-Kastro (while Gla probably was not). As for Chantza, see discussion under the site. As noted earlier, several burial places can be associated with settlement sites in the MH period. According to Lauffer (Kopais I: 36 and 233), in the Eastern part of Copais, we see the recurrent situation of MH necropoleis situated slightly away from the settlements, quite often facing it, such as at Agios Ioannis-Megali Katavothra and Spilia Tsoutso (see above – *component NC_50*), Topolia-Kastro, Pyrgos-Agia Marina (but see above – *component NC_67*), as well as, in another *chora*, at Medeon (Haliartia).

The NE bay of Copais is quite well known for the presence of Late Helladic / Mycenaean forts and fortified sites, examined in relation to each other by Fossey (1980)¹¹, and many scholars link them to the drainage of the Copais in the Late MH?/LH period¹².

Generally speaking, light can be thrown on the Prehistoric landscape of the NE Copais area if considered in connection with the drainage works and dams throughout the area in the Late MH?/LH period. See, for instance, the case of Pyrgos-Agia Marina and possible relationships with Gla (see above, under the site), Stroviki with dams below the fortified acropolis, and the Agios Ioannis peninsula at Spitia Katavothra, also by a Prehistoric dam (fig.9 in chapter II.3.1).

LH forts have been found at Tourlogianni and probably at Bazaraki, while most of them were probably fortified sites (settled even if only for short periods or for specific defence and/or control purposes): Stroviki-Nisi, Agios Ioannis-Spitia Katavothra, Pyrgos-Agia Marina as well as the most widely known Gla. Also, a LH settlement site with no traces of fortification has been noticed at Agios Ioannis-Megali Katavothra (the absence of fortification, if real, would give the settlement a peculiar character within the *panorama* of the region). As for other activity foci known for the LH period, a circuit wall has been noted by travellers at the site of Topolia/Kastro, but no indication of date is available, nor of the kind of occupation of the site in the LH period. Contradictory, also, is the LH occupation at Chantza (see above, under the site).

The NE bay of Copais is the area where the edges of the basin are closer to the border of the lake (flooding area), and it may be seen also as more isolated (Lauffer Kopais I: 211). On the other hand, since the palatial powers of the LH period, the area was probably under the influence of a strong central power, probably Orchomenos, which might have also controlled Gla (Lauffer Kopais I: 211¹³ and Iakovidis 2003).

The question is whether those fortified sites were actual settlement sites or only inhabited either for short periods or for specific purposes (control or defence). For Gla, Stroviki-Nisi, as well as Agios Ioannis-Spitia Katavothra, the hypothesis has been advanced that they were proper settlement sites. The same can be said for apparently unfortified sites (Agios Ioannis-Megali Katavothra). No burials have been found from this period though, according to the available archaeological record.

According to Lauffer (Kopais I: 233), the Bronze Age settlement in the area is characterised by settlement sites situated on the mountain spur into the Copais basin in positions quite well protected from the rear by high mountain ridges and peaks. For cultivation, they would also have used the immediate area of the basin itself. Lauffer proves this theory, noting the absence of any evidence for the period in locations less well protected from behind (such as at Nisi Ridge to the E of Ag. Ioannis/Spitia Katavothra, and the Magoula S of the Megali Katavothra (Lauffer Kopais I: sketch 217).

When considering settlement patterns in the area, one should always bear in mind that in the late MH? / LH period the bay was drained in its entirety, so the lower areas were also dry and available for agriculture, presenting a situation probably very similar to that of today.

¹¹ On the fortifications of the Mycenaean Copais, see Loader 1998.

¹² See Spyropoulos AAA 1973: 201-210 (for the date of the drainage); Lauffer Kopais I: 131ff ; Knauss et al. Kopais 1; Knauss 1995: 83-95. See also Iakovidis 2003.

¹³ Lauffer (Kopais I: 208) notes that the LH forts in the NE bay are missing a settlement site controlling it, and he locates this settlement at the site of Stroviki-Nisi, which he identifies with the Homeric *Mideia*. This, however, probably does not correspond to the real situation.

GRECO-ROMAN ANTIQUITY¹⁴**Town level**

The main centre of the area in Greco-Roman times, Copai, was never a large city site. Therefore, we might suppose a quite peculiar settlement situation in this remote NE area of Copais, also considering its peculiar landscape character, marked by the presence of the lake marshes. The development of Copai as the main centre, even if small, in historical times (it participated in the 1st Confederation with one beotarch - Larsen 1968), can be due to its position at the entrance of the bay, along the route at the edge of the Copais (coming from Skripou and running along the right side of the Melas river, fig.1), and from there upland to Lokris and the sea. A Frankish bridge over the Melas¹⁵ at Topolia constitutes a clue to an ancient road from Atalanti which would cross the lake towards the S and would be in use only in the spring and summer (Pilipsson 1951: 485).

Village level

By comparison with other micro-regions around the Copais (along the S edge, for instance), the landscape of this area is peculiar in terms of environmental character due to the behaviour of the water, and also with regards to topography, since it is composed of a series of small geographical units of differing character all around the Copais, both immediately at the edge of the bay and in more upland areas, rather than of a single valley. Considering the archaeological record available, there is little evidence that may represent small villages/hamlets of the historical period, although there was room for them in several micro-landscapes, as the structure of the Prehistoric landscape seems to show (see above – PREHISTORIC PERIOD and below – LONG TERM SETTLEMENT TRENDS).

Two settlement areas can perhaps be archaeologically recognised: the presence of a settlement area on the N and W hangs of Megalovouno can be traced through burials and other archaeological evidence (*components NC_84 to NC_86* and *component NC_78*, by the modern village of Kokkino), while traces of habitation noted at Stroviki-Nisi (*component NC_7*) may indicate the presence of a settlement chamber in that area.

Rural segment

The site above Megali Katavothra (*component NC_56* – activity focus) can be interpreted as a rural activity focus or a farmstead, linked to agricultural activities in the area on top of the spur jutting into the Copais. The evidence known from Agios Ioannis-Spitia Katavothra (*components NC_43 to NC_45*) could represent a small hamlet linked to a cult place, but most probably it was just a long-lived (Geometric to Classical) small group of houses. Rural occupation can also be traced at Alogopatisia-Kaphkala (*component NC_32*), linked to the farming of the flat area of Ampelia nearby.

Burial areas

A few burial areas are known for the period. Some are near and related to the *polis* of Copai (*components NC_25 to NC_28*), with the bulk of the evidence being represented by the extensive cemetery area discovered in the vicinity of Gla through rescue excavation (*components NC_26 to NC_28*). Others could be linked to hamlets/villages further from the *polis* site, though the attribution is not clear (*components NC_84 to NC_86*, for instance).

Cult places/Religious areas

There are several component entries characterised generally as ‘activity focus’ that have been interpreted as cult place by some scholars (e.g. *components NC_32, NC_7, NC_43 to NC_45*). The interpretation, however, is usually based on evidence too vague to allow a secure assignment of ‘cult place’ character.

In presenting the site at Alogopatisia-Kaphkala (*component NC_32* - along a long-distance road) as a possible location of a cult place, Lauffer (Kopais I: 248) discusses the pattern of cult places around the Copais, noting how, in the Copais area, they are either in a significant location in the mountains, close to a fresh water spring, on a terrace above a plain or plateau, or along roads at points of a certain importance (Onchestos, Petra, Alogopatisia).

Apart from these hypothesised locations suggested by Lauffer (supported by too little archaeological evidence), there are no cult places known for the NE Copais area.

Other activities / unspecified activity areas

Undetermined activity foci were noted which cannot be assigned any particular character at the present stage of research. Some of the entries with a generic ‘activity focus’ character might be interpreted as rural site/activities. Furthermore, as noted above, there are several component entries characterised generally as ‘activity focus’ that have been interpreted as a cult place.

LONG TERM SETTLEMENT TRENDS IN THE CHORA LANDSCAPE

The landscape of the NE bay can certainly be considered as a ‘lake landscape’ since, in this area, the water level was always higher and settlement is really marked by a peri-lacustrine character (see digital reconstruction of the lake fluctuations in fig.2, chapter II.3.1 and appendix III). The landscape of the area is characterised by a series of small geographical units of differing character all around Copais, both at the immediate edge of the bay and in more upland areas. These were occupied by different settlement sites in the Late Prehistoric period, within which shifting of settlement and activities within these small areas (settlement chambers, as we would define them) can be noted. The same holds for historical times also, though differently. Small settlement chambers are recognisable as such mainly in Prehistory: Meg.Katavothra-Spilia Tsoutso and Meg.Katavothra S, Ag.Ioannis-Chantza, Copai, Pyrgos-Agia Marina, Gla.

¹⁴ Period maps are included in chapter II.4, figs.17-19-21-23-25-27.

¹⁵ Ruins of an ancient bridge – Miller 1921: 132-3

II.3.6 NORTH-EAST COPAIS

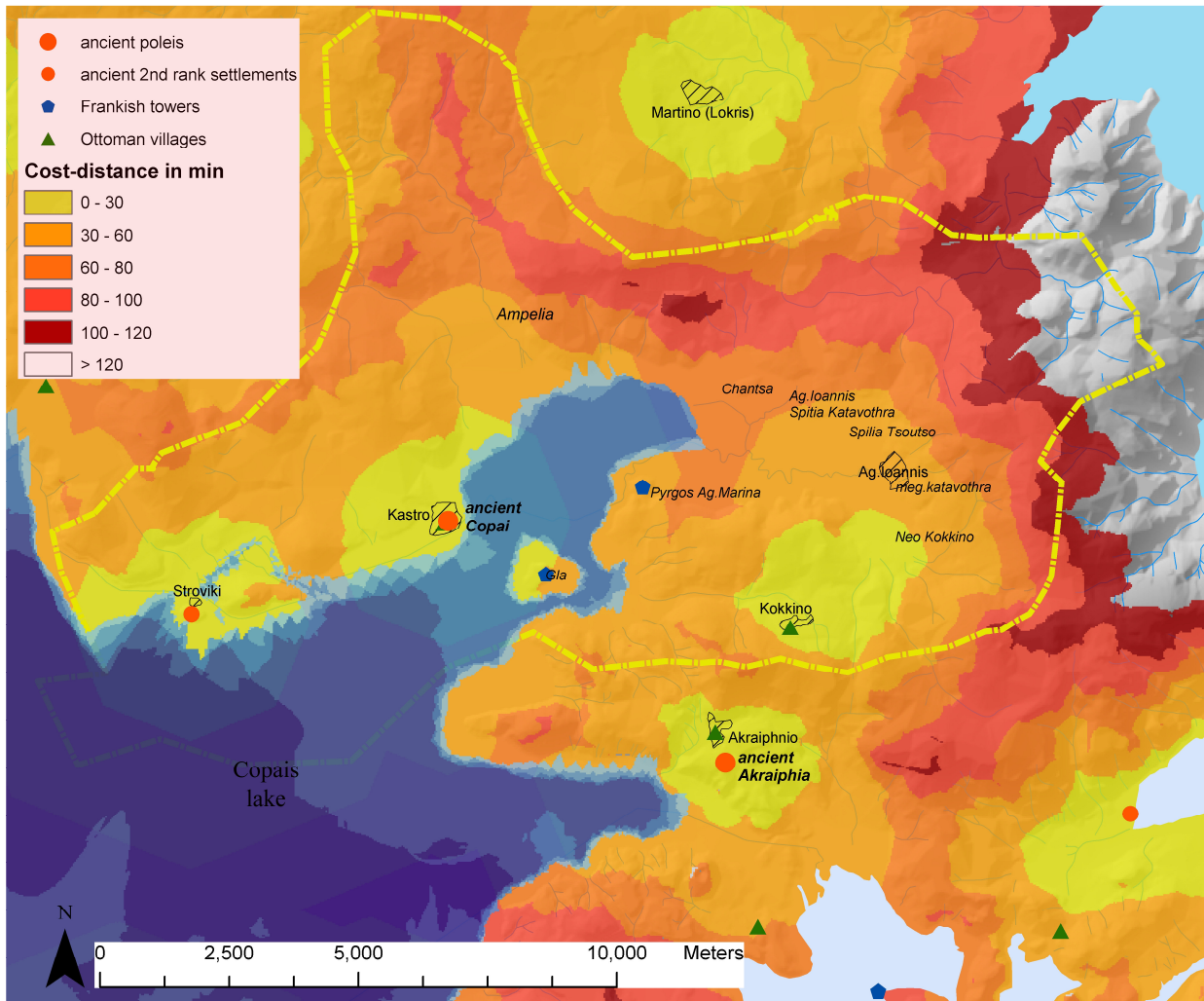


Fig.5. Classified surface representing the cost-weighted distance (1/2 h walking and further ranges) from recognised 1st and 2nd rank ancient settlements (represented by larger and smaller dots). Areas without dots indicate potential settlement chambers. Ottoman villages and Frankish towers have also been added to the map to show their spatial relationship with the Greco-Roman settlement network and to appreciate potential settlement chambers.

Examining, for instance, the relationship between Ag.Ioannis-Megali Katavothra and the Tsoutso cave site, in the Prehistoric period, the small settlement chamber presents a settlement site by the Tsoutso cave (in the N and EH periods – components NC_48 and NC_49), and a contemporary settlement site (or at least a clear activity focus – components NC_57 and NC_58) by the depression to the S of Megali Katavothra. Traces of EH were also found above Megali Katavothra itself. Afterwards, in the MH period, occupation is recognised at the Megali Katavothra site, with a cemetery site above the Tsoutso cave (components NC_53 and NC_50), while in the LH period the settlement site (apparently unfortified – component NC_54) is at the spur above Megali Katavothra. According to Lauffer (Kopais I: 232), the site above Megali Katavothra replaced in importance the earlier settlement in the depression to the SE (components NC_57 and NC_58) because its position was exposed and it was therefore smaller in extension. The Megali Katavothra settlement is bigger, better protected and has a larger area available for cultivation (on the flat slopes at the site and behind). When the

draining of the lake took place, the site on the spur above the Katavothra would have increased its importance.

On the peninsulas by Spitia Katavothra (Agios Ioannis and Chantza), as well as at Topolia/Kastro, there is also occupation from Neolithic to LH, and at Pyrgos-Agia Marina, certainly from MH to LH. The inner bay beyond Topolia-Kastro, called Ampelia, where Magoula Kavkala is located (components NC_30 (Neolithic) and NC_31 (EH)), may also constitute a settlement chamber.

The consideration of the Prehistoric settlement pattern can help us infer useful information for the understanding of settlement strategies in the Greco-Roman period. In historical times, with the development of the town of Copai (located at Topolia/Kastro) as a nucleated settlement in the area, the landscape changed. The presence in Greco-Roman times of the larger settlement of Copai and of other satellite settlements (see below) would incorporate most of the small settlement chambers functioning as such in the Prehistoric period, especially those at the immediate edge of the bay. There, the archaeological evidence represents rural activities or

farmsteads (*components NC_43 to NC_45, NC_56*) which, in areas with not much cultivable land available, were probably related to activities in the marshy¹⁶ plain below or to pasturage/husbandry. The flat inner area called Ampelia (cultivated as vineyards) to the N of Topolia/Kastro (a half to one hour walking distance¹⁷), occupied in the Prehistoric period (see above), and where traces of Greco-Roman occupation have also been found (Alogopatisia-Kaphkala - *component NC_32*), can probably also be placed under the direct control of Copai in Greco-Roman times (with one or more small hamlets to exploit the land), as the absence of a settlement in more recent periods also might confirm¹⁸.

Thus, during the Greco-Roman period, Copai was probably the main settlement in the area. The central character of this location is also visible in the Medieval/Post Medieval and traditional settlement pattern. As in the past, the main settlement of the area today is Topolia/Kastro. The village is recorded in the Ottoman archives from 1466 onwards with the name Topolya, and occupies the location of the ancient city of Copai, controlling parts of the lake. It is possibly also a pre-Ottoman community as the Byzantine sherds on the hill indicate (Koder - Hild 1976). The Ottoman archives refer to it as a Greek village, indicating a probable survival of the Greek population.

Despite this, due to the peculiar character of the

topography and environment in the area (see above), small settlement chambers can still be identified (as actual or potential ones), and the town of Copai probably never become more than a large village. The traditional settlement pattern helps us recognise these potential settlement areas.

Located in the Eastern part of the *chora* today is one more village, Kokkino, which is identified as the Albanian village of Dima Kokkino, which appears in the archives from 1466 onwards and holds up well in the 17th century. It is located in the inland mountainous country associated with MF and LF soils, suitable for grazing, but also with the alluvial bed of the streams to the N. Also included in this area is the area of Neo Kokkino, closer to Meg.Katavothra, which clearly exploits the MF (mid fertile flysch) upland area (see map in fig.6) nearby, and also had the river valley below (see figs.1 and 2). A potential settlement chamber is drawn to include both these areas, as well as the modern second rank settlement of Ag. Ioannis further N, as the results of a cost-distance analysis¹⁹ show in fig.5. The cost-distance analysis shows enough room for a settlement in this far Eastern edge of the bay, as also suggested by Bintliff (Thiessen polygons analysis in Bintliff 1994b: 219 and fig.20), although large parts of the lower areas are potential marshes. The settlement could either be located in the upland country

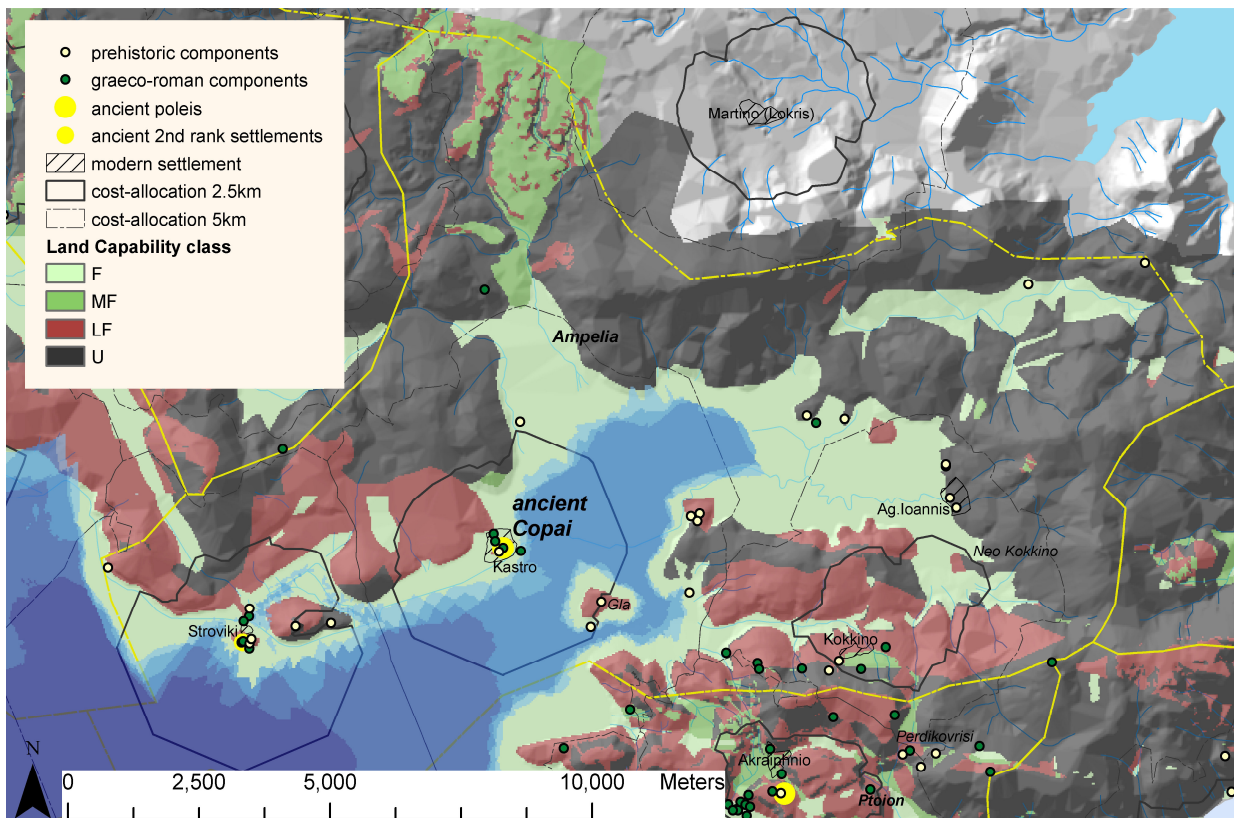


Fig.6. Map showing the Greco-Roman settlement network, the polygons resulting from the cost-distance analysis (marking half an hour and one hour walking time distance) and dots representing the known archaeological components (same as in fig.2), with land capability information underlain.

¹⁶ Marshy only in certain periods and to a certain degree (see appendix III).

¹⁷ See the cost-distance analysis in fig.5.

¹⁸ The area is included in the modern *koinotita* of Kastro.

¹⁹ For the application of this analysis see chapter II.3.1 – LONG TERM SETTLEMENT TRENDS.

by the modern village of Kokkino (see above), or in a lower location by Neo Kokkino. The existing archaeological evidence comes from the upland zone (*components NC_84 to NC_86* and *component NC_78*, by the modern village of Kokkino). The fact that this evidence dates back both to the Classical and Roman periods strengthens the possibility that this area was exploited in antiquity²⁰. Even today the area is rich in vineyards, and includes the valley running E-W down to the Copais basin. With regards to the area of the modern second rank settlement of Ag. Ioannis, the available archaeological record does not provide enough evidence for interpretation as a settlement site.

Another modern 2nd rank village, Stroviki, is situated in the far Eastern part of the *chora*, indicating a possible area for settlement activities. In fact, at the higher eastern hill at Stroviki-Nisi the signs of occupation for the Classical period (*component NC_7*) might represent a rural hamlet of considerable relevance (with corresponding cemetery site on the smaller western hill – *component NC_11*)²¹.

²⁰ Lauffer Kopais I: 225 also suggested that those traces of a necropolis found to the NW and N foot of the Megalovouno ridge could indicate burial areas connected to a village settlement there.

²¹ The evidence is obviously known because of the heavy presence of Prehistoric signs of occupation, representing a large Prehistoric settlement (*components NC_1 to NC_6*).

