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RECENT RESEARCH ON THE LATE ANTIQUE COUNTRYSIDE

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ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESEARCH
ON THE LATE ANTIQUE COUNTRYSIDE:
A BIBLIOGRAPHIC ESSAY¹

Alexandra Chavarría and Tamara Lewit

INTRODUCTION

During the last twenty years, our understanding of the late antique countryside has been completely transformed. The traditional picture of a countryside devastated by crippling taxation, rural depopulation, widespread abandonment of farmland, destructive invasions, general economic crisis, and the growth of huge *latifundia*, has been systematically re-examined and brought into question. The increasing tendency to reject the concept of decline in Late Antiquity has been reflected in a substantial re-evaluation of rural developments.²

In the East of the Roman empire, the major development of Late Antiquity was an explosion of rural settlement, with many regions

¹ The authors gratefully acknowledge the kind assistance with bibliographic information of K. Bowes, N. Christie, S. Dar, H. Elton, L. Lavan, Y. Marano, M. Rautman, R. Reece, L. Schneider, P. Vergain, G. Volpe and the referees, and the support of Trinity College, The University of Melbourne.

² *Overviews of the late antique countryside*: The classic exposition of the traditional view, which provides the starting point of all re-evaluations was Jones A. H. M. (1964) "The land", in *The Later Roman Empire*, II (Oxford 1964) 767-823. Comprehensive re-evaluations of many aspects, including production, effect of invasions, taxation, depopulation, technology, settlement patterns, ownership of land and forms of labour, and review of current historiography in Whittaker C. R. and Garnsey P. (1998) "Rural life in the later Roman empire", in *Cambridge Ancient History*, XIII, edd. A. Cameron and P. Garnsey (Cambridge 1998) 277-311; Ward-Perkins B. (2000) "Land, labour and settlement", in *Cambridge Ancient History*, XIV, edd. A. Cameron, B. Ward-Perkins and M. Whitby (Cambridge 2000) 315-45. A survey of archaeological discoveries throughout the Empire and re-evaluation of the traditional picture of rural decline in the light of this data in Lewit T. (1991) *Agricultural Production in the Roman Economy, A.D. 200-400* (BAR I.S. 568) (Oxford 1991), reprinted as *Villas, Farms and the Late Roman Rural Economy 3rd to 5th c. A.D.*, with new introductory section (forthcoming). Summary of evidence for rural life, including prosperity in the West in the 3rd to 5th centuries, and in the East from the 3rd to 8th centuries in Hirschfeld Y. (2001) "Habitat", in *Interpreting Late Antiquity. Essays on the Postclassical World*, edd. G. W. Bowersock, P. Brown and O. Grabar (Harvard 2001) 258-72; Randsborg K. (1991) *The First Millennium AD in Europe and the Mediterranean: an Archaeological Essay* (Cambridge 1991), for summary of patterns of change and archaeological evidence, particularly in the North-West.

witnessing a peak in density of occupation, levels of production, and rural prosperity. In the West, recent archaeological surveys and excavations of rural settlements, cemeteries, churches, and monasteries, have shown that the countryside experienced considerable change during Late Antiquity, the interpretation of which is still much debated.

This paper presents a bibliographic survey of recent archaeological research on the Late Roman countryside with key references to some related historical topics. The aim of the essay is to provide a guide to the literature of the last two decades, outlining the main current debates and trends of thought, and pointing to problems and areas of study which still remain to be explored. It is not intended as a comprehensive history of the countryside, or as an exhaustive list of every publication, but rather to serve as a pointer to key issues and key works, in which further bibliography may be found. While the survey is divided into broad regional categories, this is not intended to imply that these regions were homogenous, and the more detailed studies referred to often identify local and micro-regional variations, which it is beyond the scope of this outline to explore.

SOURCES

Thanks to a mass of new archaeological data brought to light in recent decades and an improvement in excavation and dating methods, there has been an extraordinary advance in the study of Late Roman land use and rural settlement patterns. However, we are still faced with many methodological limitations and problems of interpretation.

Currently, the most important source of information on the late antique countryside is the remains of settlement sites. Until very recently, exploration and research tended to focus on the residences of the socio-economic elite, rather than on buildings used by the working population. In the West, for many decades, most intensive excavation and specialist study has been devoted to villa sites. Thus, this stratum of antique settlement has overwhelmingly dominated discussion of the western countryside. It is therefore almost impossible at present to formulate an equally detailed picture of the lives of the lower classes of society in this region. We also have far more information on residential rather than productive aspects of the western countryside, and it is unclear to what extent residential features reflect patterns of economic life (see discussion below).

Poorer housing and functional buildings used by the lower classes

are often far more difficult to find, identify or to date archaeologically. Most lower class and utilitarian buildings in the West were built at least partly of wood, and contain little or no accurately dated finds, such as fine pottery. Even stone-built village structures in the East are often difficult to date.

A further problem presented by late antique settlement in the West is its relative invisibility.³ It is becoming apparent that more ephemeral building styles, in particular building at least partially in wood, rather than stone, became dominant by the 6th c. (see below). Interest in these structures is comparatively new and excavation techniques attuned to them have only recently been developed. In addition, coin finds are notoriously lacking for the post-4th c. period. Many late antique ceramics are less well-identified and therefore less precisely dated than earlier pottery, although huge progress has also been made in the last ten years in the identification and dating of late antique wares.⁴

In many regions of Africa, the East and the West, aerial, architectural or surface surveys have been carried out. Such surveys have the potential to offer a fuller picture of the whole population and of productive and utilitarian activities. These methods are more likely to garner information about a range of social strata, since they encounter and record not only rich homes and tombs, but poorer dwellings and graves, utilitarian structures such as presses, wells, and cisterns, and agricultural systems, such as terraces and enclosure walls.

Unfortunately, surveys still present various methodological problems.

³ *Methodological issues in late antique archaeology*: Reece R. (1989) "Models of continuity", *OJA* 8.2 (1989) 236; Lewit (1991) (supra note 2) 38–41; Randsborg (1991) (supra note 2) 62–63; Van Ossel P. and Ouzoulias P. (2000) "Rural settlement economy in northern Gaul in the late empire: an overview and assessment", *JRA* 13 (2000) 133–60; James E. (1977) *The Merovingian Archaeology of South-West Gaul* (BAR I.S. 25) (Oxford 1977) 271–90; Hamerow H. (2002) *Early Medieval Settlements: the Archaeology of Rural Communities in North-West Europe 400–900* (Oxford 2002) 106–114; Halsall G. (1995) "The Merovingian period in North-East Gaul: transition or change?", in *Europe Between Late Antiquity and the Middle Ages: Recent Archaeological and Historical Research in Western and Southern Europe*, edd. J. Bintliff and H. Hamerow (BAR I.S. 617) (Oxford 1995) 38–57.

⁴ *Recent ceramic studies*: See bibliographic appendix 1, below. For continuing gaps in our knowledge, see, for example, Kennedy H. (1994) "Concluding remarks", in *The Byzantine and Early Islamic Near East*, vol. 2, *Land Use and Settlement Patterns*, edd. G. R. D. King and A. Cameron (Princeton 1994) 267 and other contributions in the same volume; Lloyd J. (1995) "Roman towns and territories (c. 80 B.C.–A.D. 600)", in *A Mediterranean Valley*, ed. G. Barker (London 1995) 213–53, esp. 215–17. For coins on rural sites and interpretation of coin finds, with bibliography, see Reece R. (2003) *Roman Coins and Archaeology, reprinted papers* (Wetteren 2003) forthcoming.

In particular, the dating of sites discovered in this way is dependent on the precise dating of all types of pottery; the difficulty of dating many late antique wares (mentioned above) can create a dangerous imbalance in our interpretation. Moreover, surveys cannot produce the same level of precise and accurately dated information for individual sites as that produced by excavation. Their results thus give a broader, but not necessarily fuller, picture.⁵

Rural churches and monasteries are a potential source of information for Late Antiquity, since they present a variety of architectural, burial, written and artistic data. However, very little work has been done on the socio-economic context and implications of early church and chapel building. Do they reflect the lives of a broad spectrum of the population, representing the concerns and economic situation of society as a whole? Or do they rather reflect merely the choices of a controlling elite? Does decorative church/chapel building indicate wealth, or merely a shift in the allocation of funds formerly devoted to other kinds of display, or even simply the need for repairs?⁶

Cemetery sites have sometimes been analysed to reconstruct socio-economic history and settlement patterns in the countryside. In the West, many late antique cemeteries have been found without the discovery of a corresponding settlement, a phenomenon yet to be fully explored.⁷

⁵ *Methodological issues in archaeological survey*: For comprehensive discussion of methods and methodological issues of field survey, with bibliography, see G. Barker and D. Mattingly (1999, 2000) edd. *The Archaeology of Mediterranean Landscapes* (Oxford 1999, 2000), comprising: 1, Bintliff J. and Sbonias K. (1999) edd. *Reconstructing Past Population Trends in Mediterranean Europe*; 2, Leveau P. et al. (1999) edd. *Environmental Reconstruction in Mediterranean Landscape Archaeology*; 3, Gillings M., Mattingly D. and Van Dalen J. (1999) edd. *Geographical Information Systems and Landscape Archaeology*; 4, Pasquinucci M. and Trément F. (2000) edd. *Non-destructive Techniques Applied to Landscape Archaeology*; 5, Francovich R. and Patterson H. (2000) edd. *Extracting Meaning from Ploughsoil Assemblages*. For a review of this series: Cherry J. F. (2002) "Vox POPULI: landscape archaeology in Mediterranean Europe", *JRA* 15 (2002) 561-73, also with bibliography. Attema P. et al. (2002) edd. *New Developments in Italian Landscape Archaeology* (BAR I.S. 1091) (Oxford 2002).

⁶ *Significance of church building*: Kennedy (1994) (supra note 4) 267-68; some valuable insights regarding the records of church donors are offered in Gatier P.-L. (1994) "Villages du Proche-Orient protobyzantin (4^{ème}-7^{ème} siècles): étude régionale", in King and Cameron (1994) (supra note 4) 17-48. For a recent analyses on western churches and settlements see: G. P. Brogiolo and A. Chavarría, "Chiese e insediamenti tra V e VI secolo in Italia settentrionale, Gallia meridionale e Hispania", in G. P. Brogiolo (ed.), *Chiese e insediamenti tra V e VI secolo, 9 seminario sul tardo antico e l'alto medioevo*, Hantova, 2003, pp. 7-38.

⁷ *Studies of cemetery evidence: Northern Gaul* (for which discussion has been extensive): Wightman E. (1978) "North-eastern Gaul in Late Antiquity: the testimony of

Another important body of archaeological evidence for rural life is the remains of amphorae used to transport agricultural products. Recent studies of amphorae have added to our understanding of the nature and levels of production on rural estates in various regions. These valuable studies have led to new conclusions about late antique production and trade (outlined below).

However, while amphorae provide an excellent record of production and trade in certain products—most notably oil, wine and *garum*—we have very little record at all of other types of production and trade, doubtless of equal importance, such as cloth and grain. This is particularly problematic when attempting to define trade patterns and changes across regions and over time. An examination of this body of data can lead to an incomplete picture: whereas production and trade of one region or one kind may have dropped off, there may have been a corresponding increase in a different kind of production and trade which remains invisible to us.⁸

When considering rural life in Late Antiquity as a whole, it is critically important to be aware of the unevenness of the survival, collection and analysis of data in different regions: while villas have received detailed stratigraphic excavation and study in the West,

settlement patterns in an age of transition", *Berichten van de Rijksdienst voor het Oudheidkundig Bodemonderzoek* 28 (1978) 241-50; Van Ossel P. (1993) "L'occupation des campagnes dans le nord de la Gaule durant l'Antiquité tardive: l'apport des cimetières", in *Monde des morts, monde des vivants en Gaule rurale (I^{er} s. av. J.-C.-V^e s. ap. J.-C.)*, *Actes du Colloque Archeol/Ager (Orléans 7/9 février, 1992)*, ed. A. Ferdière (Tours 1993) 185-94; Halsall G. (1995) *Settlement and Social Organisation. The Merovingian Region of Metz* (Cambridge 1995) 184-88 and Halsall G. (1998) "Burial, ritual and Merovingian society", in *The Community, the Family and the Saint: Patterns of Power in Early Medieval Europe*, edd. J. Hill and M. Swan (Turnhout 1998) 325-38; Italy: La Rocca C. (1992) "Le necropoli altomedievali. Continuità e discontinuità", in *Il territorio tra tardoantico e altomedioevo. Metodi di indagine e risultati*, edd. G. P. Brogiolo and L. Castelletti (Biblioteca di Archeologia Medievale 9) (Florence 1992) 15-29; Germany: Damminger F. (1998) "Dwellings, settlements and settlement patterns in Merovingian south-west Germany", in *Franks and Alamanni in the Merovingian Period: an Ethnographic Perspective*, ed. I. Wood (Woodbridge 1998) 62-63; Hispania: Chavarría A. (2001) "Villae y necrópolis en Hispania durante la antigüedad tardía", *AnTard* 10 (2001) 44-57; Britain: Scull C. (1995) "Approaches to material culture and social dynamics of the migration period of eastern England", and Loveluck C. (1995) "Acculturation, migration and exchange: the formation of Anglo-Saxon society in the English Peak District, 400-700 A.D.", both in Bintliff J. and Hamerow H. (1995) (supra note 3) 71-83 and 84-98; Arnold C. J. (1988/1997) *An Archaeology of the Early Anglo-Saxon Kingdoms* (London 1988/1997).

⁸ *Recent amphora studies*: See discussions and bibliographies in Kingsley S. and Decker M. (2001) edd. *Economy and Exchange in the East Mediterranean during Late Antiquity. Proceedings of a Conference at Somerville College, Oxford, 29th May, 1999* (Oxford 2001).

more attention has been paid to architectural and field surveys of villages and small farm sites in Africa and the East. While some regions such as Syria and Italy have been extensively surveyed over several decades, few surveys exist for Asia Minor or Egypt. Thus the heterogeneity of available information makes it impossible to give a complete or fully balanced picture of the state of the countryside in every region during Late Antiquity. It is to be hoped that future research will gradually fill many of the gaps apparent in this survey.

LAND-OWNERSHIP, PRODUCTION AND LAND-USE, TECHNOLOGY

Land-ownership and Labour

Literary texts reveal that the pre-eminent landowners of Late Antiquity were the emperor, the Church, and aristocratic families, with large properties usually spread over several regions of the empire. It is difficult to identify patterns of land-ownership archaeologically. Attempts have been made to link particularly rich villas, such as Piazza Armerina, Cercadilla and Centcelles, with the estates of members of the imperial court. However, J. Arce and others have demonstrated that the evidence for such identifications is tenuous.⁹

In order to examine management structures, the economic and social relations between land-owner and rural estate workers or tenants, or the socio-legal status of the inhabitants of villages and small farms, we must also rely heavily on literary, legal,¹⁰ agrono-

⁹ *Identification of property-owners*: See critiques in Arce J. (1992) "Las villas romanas no son monasterios", *Archivo Español de Arqueología* 65 (1992) 323–30 (on La Malena and other Spanish villas); Arce J. (1997) "Emperadores, palacios y villas. (A propósito de la villa romana de Cercadilla, Córdoba)", *AnTard* 5 (1997) 293–302; Arce J. (2001) ed. *Centcelles. El monumento tardorromano. Iconografía y Arquitectura* (Rome 2001); Arce J. (forthcoming) "Materno Cinegio y la villa de Carranque (Toledo)", *Gerion* (forthcoming); Carandini A., Ricci A. and De Vos M. (1982) *Filosofiana. The Villa of Piazza Armerina* (Palermo 1982); Wilson R. J. A. (1995) *Sicily under the Roman Empire. The Archaeology of a Roman Province, 36 B.C.–A.D. 535* (Warminster 1995); Duval N. (1987) "Existe-t-il une 'structure palatiale' propre à l'Antiquité tardive?", in *Le système palatial en Orient, en Grèce et à Rome. Actes du colloque de Strasbourg 19–22 juin 1985*, ed. E. Lévy (Strasbourg 1987) 463–90.

¹⁰ *Textual sources*: for discussions and bibliography, see Vera D. (1995) "Dalla 'villa perfecta' alla villa di Palladio: sulle trasformazioni del sistema agrario in Italia fra principato e dominato", *Athenaeum* 83.1 (1995) 189–212 and *Athenaeum* 83.2 (1995) 331–56; Vera D. (1997) "Le forme del lavoro rurale: aspetti della trasformazione dell'Europa romana fra tarda antichità e alto medioevo", *LIV Sett. St. CISAM* (Spoleto

mistic¹¹ and papyrological texts.¹² Archaeological evidence is more ambiguous. While it is usually assumed that the villas were inhabited by land-owners, it has been suggested that smaller examples may be the residences of tenants or bailiffs. Theories regarding absentee landholding in Africa and concentration of land-ownership in the West, based on archaeological evidence, are discussed in the regional surveys below.¹³

1997) 293–342; Marccone A. (1993) "Il lavoro nelle campagne", in *Storia di Roma. L'Età tardoantica I. Crisi e trasformazioni*, ed. A. Schiavone (Turin 1993) 823–43; Scheidel W. (1994) *Grundpacht und Lohnarbeit in der Landwirtschaft des römischen Italien* (Frankfurt 1994); For a general overview of the issues and bibliography on the colonate, see Lo Cascio E. (1997) ed. *Terre, proprietari e contadini dell'impero romano. Dall'affitto agrario al colonato tardoantico* (Rome 1997), where the main theses are summarised by their authors.

¹¹ *Palladius' account of estate management*: Frézouls E. (1980) "La vic rurale au Bas-Empire d'après l'œuvre de Palladius", *Ktema* 5 (1980) 193–210; Giardina A. (1986) "Palladio, il latifondo italico e l'occultamento della società rurale", in *Società romana e impero tardoantico*, vol. I, ed. A. Giardina (Rome 1986) 31–36; Morgenstern F. (1989) "Die Auswertung des *opus agriculturae* des Palladius zu einigen Fragen der spätantiken Wirtschaftsgeschichte", *Klio* 71.1 (1989) 179–92; Vera D. (1999) "I silenzi di Palladio e l'Italia: osservazioni sull'ultimo agronomo romano", *AnTard* 7 (1999) 283–97.

¹² *Papyrological evidence*: Gascou J. (1983) *Les grands domaines, la cité et l'État dans l'Égypte byzantine. Recherches d'histoire agraire, fiscale et administrative* (Travaux et Mémoires X) (1983) 1–89; Rathbone D. (1991) *Economic Rationalism and Rural Society in 3rd c. A.D. Egypt. The Heroninos Archive and the Appianus Estate* (Cambridge 1991); Mazza R. (2002) *L'archivio degli Apioni. Terra, lavoro e proprietà senatoria nell'Egitto tardoantico* (Munera 17) (Bari 2002); Rowlandson J. (1996) *Landowners and Tenants in Roman Egypt. The Social Relations of Agriculture in the Oxyrhynchite Nome* (Oxford 1996); Koenen L. (1996) "The carbonized archive from Petra", *JRA* 9 (1996) 177–88; Bowman A. (1985) "Landholding in the Hermopolite nome in the fourth century A.D.", *JRS* 75 (1985) 137–63; Bagnall R. (1992) "Landholding in late Roman Egypt: the distribution of wealth", *JRS* 82 (1992) 128–49; Gagos T. and Van Minnen P. (1992) "Documenting the rural economy of Byzantine Egypt. Three papyri from Alabastrine", *JRA* 5 (1992) 186–202, with comments on historiography and interpretation of such material; Mayerson P. (1962) "The ancient agricultural regime of Nessana and the Central Negeb", in *Excavations at Nessana I*, ed. H. Dunscombe Colt (London 1962) 211–69.

¹³ *Estate management and labour relations*: For the inhabitants of villas, see Perring D. (2002) *The Roman House in Britain* (London 2002) 207; comments in Mulvin L., "Late Roman villa plans: the Danube-Balkan region", in this volume; Gatier (1994) (supra note 6) 28–30 for discussion of small peasant farming and the status of residents in villages, with bibliography. On large estates, see Banaji J. (2002) *Agrarian Change in Late Antiquity—Gold, Labour, and Aristocratic Dominance* (Oxford 2002); Sarris P., "Rehabilitating the great estate: aristocratic property and economic growth in the late antique East", in this volume. *Byzantine Empire 6th–7th c.*: Haldon J. F. (1990) *Byzantium in the Seventh Century. The Transformation of a Culture* (Cambridge 1990) 132–172; Morrison C. and Sodini J.-P. (2002) "The Sixth-Century Economy", in *The Economic History of Byzantium*, ed. A. E. Laiou (Dumbarton Oaks Studies 39) (Washington 2002 and www.doaks.org/etexts.html) 181–83.

Production and Land-Use^{13a}

In recent years, far more attention has begun to be paid to archaeological remains relating to farming. Studies of late antique agricultural buildings,¹⁴ field structures, cisterns and terraces,¹⁵ agricultural tools,¹⁶ and productive installations¹⁷ have become more common.

Some recent excavations and surveys have produced detailed analyses of archaeozoological remains, pollen, and other environmental

^{13a} *General surveys of land-use and types of production*, although not specifically focussed on Late Antiquity, in Horden P. and Purcell N. (2000) *The Corrupting Sea. A Study of Mediterranean History* (Oxford 2000); Barker G. and Gilbertson D. (2000) edd. *The Archaeology of Drylands* (London 2000), with bibliography, for the Near East.

¹⁴ *Agricultural buildings*: See, for example, Rickman G. (1971) *Roman Granaries and Store Buildings* (Cambridge 1971); Rossiter J. J. (1978) *Roman Farm Buildings in Italy* (BAR I.S. 52) (Oxford 1978); Morris P. (1979) *Agricultural Buildings in Roman Britain* (BAR B.S. 70) (Oxford 1979); Aguilar Sáenz A. (1991) "Dependencias con funcionalidad agrícola en la villas romanas de la Península Ibérica", in *Alimenta. Estudios en homenaje al Dr. Michel Ponsich*, 3, Gerion (1991) 261–79.

¹⁵ *Field structures*: Hitchner R. B. (1995) "Irrigation, terraces, dams and aqueducts in the region of Cillium (mod. Kasserine). The role of water works in the development of a Roman-African town", in *Actes du VI^e colloque international sur l'histoire et l'archéologie de l'Afrique du Nord antique et médiévale* (Pau, 1993) (Paris 1995) 143–58; Gilbertson D. D. and Chisholm N. W. T. (1996) "ULVS XXVIII: manipulating the desert environment: ancient walls, floodwater farming and territoriality in the Tripolitanian pre-desert of Libya", *Libyan Studies* 27 (1996) 17–52 and Gilbertson D. D. and Hunt C. O. (1996) "Romano-Libyan agriculture: walls and floodwater farming", in *Farming the Desert. The UNESCO Libyan Valley Archaeological Survey*, edd. G. Barker et al. (Tripoli 1996) 191–225; Barker G. W. et al. (1999) "Environment and land use in the Wadi Faynan, Southern Jordan: the 3rd season of geoarchaeology and landscape archaeology (1998)", *Levant* 31 (1999) 255–92; Thomas R. and Wilson A. (1994) "Water supply for Roman farms in Latium and South Etruria", *PBSR* 62 (1994) 139–96; Berger J.-F. and Jung C. (1999) "Developing a methodological approach to the evolution of field systems in the middle Rhône valley" and Leveau P. (1999) "The integration of archaeological, historical and palaeoenvironmental data at the regional scale: the Vallée de Baux, Southern France", both in Leveau et al. (1999) (supra note 5) 155–67 and 181–91.

¹⁶ *Tools and technology*. Classic works: White L. (1962) *Medieval Technology and Social Change* (Oxford 1962); White K. D. (1975) *Farm Equipment of the Roman World* (Cambridge 1975); Rees S. E. (1981) *Ancient Agricultural Implements* (Aylesbury 1981); Ferdière A. (1988) *Les campagnes en Gaule romaine, II, Les techniques et les productions rurales en Gaule* (Paris 1988) 23–60. *Bibliography including literary and artistic sources*: see Bryer A. (2002) "The means of agricultural production: muscle and tools", in Laiou (2002) (supra note 13) 101–13. Aguado Molina M., Cañizos Jiménez O. and Recio Marín R. (2000) "Las actividades económicas en la villa de El Saucedo. Estudio de los materiales de hierro", in *XXIV Congreso Nacional de Arqueología* (Cartagena) (Cartagena 2000) 417–33.

¹⁷ *Presses*: Callot O. (1984) *Huileries antiques du Syrie du Nord* (Paris 1984); Morrison and Sodini (2002) (supra note 13) 198, with bibliography; Frankel R. (1999) *Wine and Oil Production in Antiquity in Israel and other Mediterranean Countries* (Sheffield 1999). For a catalogue of presses in Palestine, see Kingsley S. A. (2002) *A 6th c. A.D. Shipwreck off the Carmel Coast, Israel. Dor D and Holy Land Wine Trade* (BAR I.S. 1065) (Oxford 2002).

evidence. At western sites, such studies have frequently revealed a diversified economy which combined cereal and stock raising (pigs, sheep, goats and/or cows), poultry farming (hens and geese), and hunting (often of deer and, to a lesser extent, roe deer). In Mediterranean regions, grapes and olives were usually cultivated, in conjunction with grain.¹⁸ It has been suggested that there may have been an increase in pastoralism and cattle numbers in some western regions in Late Antiquity.¹⁹

The UNESCO surveys of the pre-desert landscape of North Africa included detailed studies of plant and faunal remains from three sites, giving evidence of rearing of both sheep and goat, gazelle hunting, cereal and grape production, all continuing with little change from the 2nd to the 7th centuries.²⁰ Unfortunately, however, such studies are still rare in the Mediterranean.

There is also evidence for specialised agricultural production for

¹⁸ *Ecofactual/environmental evidence (the West)*: Hamerow (2002) (supra note 3) 125–55; bibliography of such studies in Britain in Dark K. and Dark P. (1997) *The Landscape of Roman Britain* (Stroud 1997); Luff R.-M. (1982) *A Zooarchaeological Study of the Roman North-Western Provinces* (BAR I.S. 137) (Oxford 1982); various articles in Jones M. and Dimbleby G. (1981) edd. *The Environment of Man: the Iron Age to Anglo-Saxon Period* (BAR B.S. 87) (Oxford 1981); Kooistra L. L. (1996) *Borderland Farming. Possibilities and Limitations of Farming in the Roman Period and Early Middle Ages Between the Rhine and Meuse* (Amersfoort 1996); Lequilloux M. (1989) "La faune des villae gallo-romaines dans le Var: aspects économiques et sociaux", *RANarb* 22 (1989) 311–22; Barnish S. J. (1987) "Pigs, plebeians and potentes. Rome's economic hinterland, c. 350–600 A.D.", *PBSR* 55 (1987), 170–95; various articles in Leveau et al. (1999) (supra note 5). *Excavation reports*, see for example: Blasco Bosqued M^e. C. and Lucas Pellicer M^e. R. (2000) edd. *El yacimiento romano de La Torrecilla: de uilla a Tugurium* (Madrid 2000) 181–232; MacKinnon M. R. (2002) *The Excavations of San Giovanni di Ruoti III: the Faunal and Plant Remains* (Toronto 2002); Hostetter E. and Howe T. N. (1997) edd. *The Romano-British Villa at Castle Copse, Great Bedwyn* (Bloomington 1997) 322–58 and 373–4; Price E. (2000) *Frocester: A Romano-British Settlement, its Antecedents and Successors* (Gloucester 2000).

¹⁹ *Pastoralism*: Whittaker C. R. (1988) ed. *Pastoral Economies in Classical Antiquity* (Cambridge 1988); Gabba E. (1985) "La transumanza nell'Italia romana. Evidenze e problemi. Qualche prospettiva per l'età altomedievale", and Wickham C. (1985) "Pastoralism and underdevelopment in the early Middle Ages", in *XXXI Sett. St. CISAM* (Spoleto 1985) 373–89 and 401–455; Leveau P. (1988) "Le pastoralisme dans l'Afrique antique", in Whittaker (1988) (above) 177–95; Hitchner R. B. (1994) "Image and reality. Pastoralism in the Tunisian high steppe in the Roman and late antique period", in *Landuse in the Roman Empire*, edd. Carlsen J., Ørsted, P. and Skydsgaard J. E. (Rome 1994) 27–43; Palet J. M. (1997) *Estudi territorial del pla de Barcelona. Estructuració i evolució del territori entre l'època iberoromana i l'altmedieval. Segles II-I aC-XI dC* (Barcelona 1997).

²⁰ *Ecofactual evidence (Africa/East)*: van der Veen M., Grant A. and Barker G. (1996) "Romano-Libyan agriculture: crops and animals", in Barker et al. (1996) (supra note 15) 227–63.

commercial markets in several regions. The traditional view of a simple decline in export production and trade in Late Antiquity has been partly replaced by a more complex picture of significant changes in production centres and trade routes for rural products, with possibly an increased regionalisation in the West from the 5th c. onwards. From the 3rd c., there was undoubtedly a significant growth in the importance of North African products throughout the Mediterranean, and beyond. From the 5th c. eastern Mediterranean products became dominant. Earlier production centres, such as Baetica, had decreased in significance by the 4th c.²¹

In Egypt, a recent study of the hinterland of Alexandria highlights a rich commercial viticulture, with produce exported in Late Antiquity, as far as the western Mediterranean and the Rhone valley, while we know from textual evidence that Egypt was also a major source of surplus grain production.²²

In northern Syria, Tchalenko's assertion that late antique agriculture was based on the monoculture and massive production of olive oil for export has now been modified: recent research shows that grain cultivation and pastoralism were also important, and that wine production too may have been of major significance. Production does seem to have increased during the 5th and 6th centuries. Nevertheless, there is some debate about whether this was mostly destined for the local Syrian market or for wider export, as argued by G. Tchalenko and, more recently, M. Decker.²³

²¹ *Late antique export production*: Amouretti M.-C. and Brun J. P. (1993) edd. *La production du vin et de l'huile en Méditerranée*, (BCH supp) (Paris 1993); Mattingly D. J. (1988) "Oil for export? A comparison of Libyan, Spanish and Tunisian olive oil production in the Roman empire", *JRA* 1 (1988) 33–56. For detailed evidence of production centres and trade patterns see Reynolds P. (1995) *Trade in the Western Mediterranean, A.D. 400–700: the Ceramic Evidence* (BAR I.S. 604) (Oxford 1995); Ward-Perkins B. (2000) "Specialized production and exchange", in Cameron, Ward-Perkins and Whitby (2000) (supra note 2) 346–91; various articles in Kingsley and Decker (2001) (supra note 8). For exports of Mediterranean products to north-west Europe, see Wooding J. M. (1996) "Cargoes in trade along the western seaboard", and Campbell E. (1996) "The archaeological evidence for external contacts: imports, trade and economy in Celtic Britain A.D. 400–800", in *External Contacts and the Economy of Late Roman and Post-Roman Britain*, ed. K. R. Dark (Woodbridge 1996) 67–82 and 83–96, with detailed bibliography.

²² *Production in Egypt*: Haas C. (2001) "Alexandria and the Mareotis Region", in *Urban Centers and Rural Contexts in Late Antiquity*, edd. T. S. Burns and J. W. Eadie (East Lansing 2001) 47–62.

²³ *Production in Syria*: Tchalenko G. (1953–58) *Villages antiques de la Syrie du Nord. Le massif du Belus à l'époque romaine* (Paris 1953–58); Tate G. (1992) *Les campagnes de la Syrie du Nord du II^e au VII^e siècle: un exemple d'expansion démographique et économique*

A substantial body of amphora finds provides an excellent and datable record of rural export production in late antique North Africa. The quantity of African amphorae found throughout the empire reveals the fundamental role of African olive oil, wine and *garum* production in the late antique economy. The scale and number of presses found at some sites also show that they were probably the centres of large estates with a high level of surplus production. Epigraphic and literary data also attest the importance of North African cereal cultivation.

The researchers of the Segermes project postulate a change in production, from olives to perhaps cereals, shown by the reuse of press counterweights as building materials. P. Leveau and R. B. Hitchner point to the significance of pastoralism in the North African economy; both archaeological and historical data suggest that there was a trend towards specialised pastoralism in this region during the Roman period. Pottery production was also a major rural export industry. G. Barker *et al.* suggest that there may have been a decrease in Tripolitanian oil production after the 4th c., but P. Reynolds argues that exports of fine pottery (and therefore presumably other rural products) from Northern Tunisia continued until the late 5th c.²⁴

In the Negev, excavations and surveys have revealed a sizable number of agricultural centres, apparently for export production, with large oil and wine presses and kilns for the production of storage jars, elaborate dams, drainage channels and agricultural walls, all signs of highly intensive land-use. The quantity of wine presses found in the Dor hinterland survey and the evidence of shipwrecks also suggests viticulture on an industrial scale in this region of Palestine. Surveys in the Golan provide evidence of intensive olive oil production, combined with fruit, vine, nut and cereal cultivation, and

dans les campagnes à la fin de l'Antiquité (Paris 1992); Tate G. (1997) "The Syrian countryside during the Roman era", in *The Early Roman Empire in the East*, ed. S. Alcock (Oxford 1997) 55–71; Callot (1984) (supra note 17); Decker M. (2001) "Food for an empire: wine and oil production in North Syria", in Kingsley and Decker (2001) (supra note 8) 69–86.

²⁴ *Production in Africa*: Mattingly (1988) (supra note 21) 37; Mattingly D. with Flower C. (1996) "Romano-Libyan settlement: site distributions and trends", in Barker *et al.* (1996) (supra note 15) 167–69, for oil presses at Libyan farms; Barker G., Gilbertson D. D. with Hunt C. O. and Mattingly D. (1996) "Romano-Libyan agriculture: integrated models", in Barker *et al.* (1996) supra note 15, 265–90, for export production; Ørsted P. *et al.* (1992) "Town and countryside in Roman Tunisia: a preliminary report on the Tuniso-Danish survey project in the Oued R'mel basin in and around ancient Segermes", *JRA* 5 (1992) 83. Reynolds (1995) (supra note 21).

both large and small cattle farming.²⁵ From the 6th c., the Argolid was similarly an important region for the production of oil and probably wine, perhaps for eastern export.²⁶

In North East Gaul, grain production appears to have developed during Late Antiquity, as evidenced by an increasing number of silos and installations for drying grain at many sites.²⁷

Other forms of production carried out in the countryside included pottery production (table-ware, coarse-ware, and amphorae and other containers), mining and metallurgy. K. R. Dark argues that pottery production had an important place in the rural economy, and that this reached proto-industrial levels in Late Antiquity. This viewpoint is certainly supported by the evidence for commercial scale rural pottery production in Africa and the East from the 3rd to 6th centuries. G. Barker *et al.* highlight the intensive nature of mining and smelting activity during the Roman period. It is possible that there were still small-scale but specialised craft-oriented rural settlements in Europe in the Early Middle Ages.²⁸

²⁵ *Production in Palestine*: See Mayerson P. (1985) "The wine and vineyards of Gaza in the Byzantine period", *BASOR* 257 (1985) 75–80; Glucker C. (1987) *The City of Gaza in the Roman and Byzantine Periods* (BAR I.S. 325) (Oxford 1987) 93–94; Rosen S. (2000) "The decline of desert agriculture: a view from the classical period Negev", in Barker and Gilbertson (2000) (supra note 13.a) 45–62; Gibson S., Kingsley S. and Clarke J. (1999) "Town and country in the southern Carmel: report on the Landscape Archaeology Project at Dor (LAPD)", *Levant* 31 (1999) 71–121; Kingsley S. (2001) "The economic impact of the Palestinian wine trade in Late Antiquity", in Kingsley and Decker (2001) (supra note 8) 44–68; Kingsley (2002) (supra note 17); Urman D. (1985) *The Golan* (BAR I.S. 269) (Oxford 1985) 141–69.

²⁶ *Production in Greece*: Rizakis D. (1995) "Grands domaines et petites propriétés dans le Péloponnèse sous l'Empire", in *Actes de la table ronde 'Du Latifundium au Latifondo. Un héritage de Rome, une création médiévale ou moderne?' (Bordeaux 1992)* (Paris 1995) 226–27, 233; Abadie-Reynal C. (1989) "Les amphores protobyzantines d'Argos", in *Recherches sur la céramique byzantine: actes du colloque organisé par l'École Française d'Athènes et l'Université de Strasbourg II (Centre de recherches sur l'Europe centrale et sud-orientale), Athènes, 8–10 avril 1987*, edd. V. Droche and J.-M. Spieser (Bulletin de Correspondance Hellénique Supp. 18) (Paris 1989) 47–56.

²⁷ *Production in North-West Europe: Gaul*: Van Ossel P. (1992) *Établissements ruraux de l'Antiquité tardive dans le nord de la Gaule (Gallia Supp. 51)* (Paris 1992) 144 and Leveau P. (1995) "De la céréaliculture et de l'élevage à la production de grain et de viande (l'apport de l'archéologie)", in *Actes de la table ronde Du Latifundium au Latifondo* (1995) (supra note 26) 357–381, esp. 376–77. For comments on Britain: Whittaker and Garnsey (1998) (supra note 2) 285; Branigan K. and Miles D. (1989) edd. *The Economies of Romano-British Villas* (Sheffield 1989).

²⁸ *Artisanal production, mining, metallurgy*: Dark K. R. (1996) "Proto-industrialisation and the end of the Roman economy", in Dark (1996) (supra note 21) 1–22; Mackensen M. (1993) *Die spätantiken Sigillata- und Lampentöpfereien von El Mahrine (Nordtunesien)* (Munich 1993); Peacock D. P. S., Bejaoui F. and Ben Lazreg A. (1993)

Rural markets existed for the local exchange of everyday goods, alongside larger, periodic fairs. D. F. Graf outlines the location of such markets at crossroads, villages, and even on landowners' estates. In some cases, the sites of markets may be traceable archaeologically: in Spain, J. Arce has suggested that the building of Valdetorres del Jarama, traditionally interpreted as a villa, could in fact have been a rural market, a conclusion based on its architectural form, the absence of residential rooms, and the nature of the finds.²⁹

Technology

There has been some debate about whether Late Antiquity was a period of innovation in agricultural technology. According to M. Jones, innovation is apparent in the sphere of arable production, especially in the extensive use of metal for ploughs and harvesting equipment. Other late antique innovations were the vertical coulter for the plough and the scythe. Scholars have identified both technological improvements to wine and oil presses, and a spread of earlier innovations, in Late Antiquity.³⁰

"Roman pottery production in central Tunisia", *JRA* 3 (1993) 58–84; Morrison and Sodini (2002) (supra note 13) 202–203, for survey of rural pottery production in Africa and the East, with bibliography; Barker G. W. *et al.* (1999) (supra note 15), for mining and metallurgy. For Early Medieval craft settlements, see Damminger F. (1998) (supra note 7) 65–68 and Hamerow (2002) (supra note 3) 157–69, with bibliography.

²⁹ *Rural markets*: De Ligt L. (1993) *Fairs and Markets in the Roman Empire. Economic and Social Aspects of Periodic Trade in a Pre-industrial Society* (Amsterdam 1993); Lo Cascio E. (2000) ed. *Mercati permanenti e mercati periodici nel mondo romano, Atti del II Incontro Caprese di Storia dell'economia antica (Capri 1997)* (Bari 2000); Arthur P. (2000) "Medieval fairs: an archaeologist's approach", in *Archeologia w teorii i w praktyce*, edd. A. Buko and P. Urbanczyk (Warsaw 2000) 419–36; Shaw B. D. (1981) "Rural markets in North Africa and the political economy of the Roman Empire", *AntAfr* 17 (1981) 37–83; Graf D. F. (2001) "Town and countryside in Roman Arabia during Late Antiquity", in Burns and Eadie (2001) (supra note 22) 230–32; Arce J. (1993) "Mercados rurales (*nundinae*) en la Hispania tardorromana", in *Homenaje a M. Tarradell* (Barcelona 1993) 867–871 and Arce J., Caballero L. and Elvira M. A. (1997) "El edificio octogonal de Valdetorres de Jarama (Madrid)", *La Hispania de Teodosio*, vol. 2 (Segovia 1997) 321–37; Horden and Purcell (2000) (supra note 13.5) for discussion of markets and exchange networks, although without particular reference to Late Antiquity.

³⁰ *Technological innovation*: Jones M. "The development of crop husbandry", in Jones and Dimbleby (1981) (supra note 18) 95–127; Henning J. (1987) *Südosteuropa zwischen Antike und Mittelalter. Archäologische Beiträge zur Landwirtschaft des 1. Jahrtausends* (Schriften zur Ur- und Frühgeschichte. Akademie der Wissenschaften der DDR, 42) (Berlin

On the other hand, Whittaker and Garnsey are more cautious about technological advances in Late Antiquity. They argue that there is no evidence of any technical improvement of the plough until the 11th c., and that the water-mills and the Gallic reaper described by Palladius were inventions of the early empire.³¹ Recent excavations of the Barbegal water-mill now place its construction in the early 2nd c. However, there is some evidence that the use of water-mills may have become more widespread in Late Antiquity, and the earliest water-mill north of the Alps appeared in Bavaria in the 7th c.³²

SETTLEMENT PATTERNS AND RURAL EVOLUTION IN THE EAST

In Late Antiquity, the East experienced a new phase of development, particularly from the 5th c. onwards. Settlement intensified and agricultural settlements flourished. Many regions show an expansion into marginal land, a greatly increased density of settlement, and evidence for highly intensive commercial farming. In this region, dispersed estate centres were comparatively rare, and villages appear to have been far more dominant than in the West, especially in the late antique period. A very small number have been excavated, and a considerable number of rural surface surveys have been carried

1987); Sigaut F. (1988) "L'évolution technique des agriculteurs européens avant l'époque industrielle", *RACF* 27.1 (1988) 7-41; Watson A. M. (1989) *Agricultural Innovation in the Early Islamic World: the Diffusion of Crops and Farming Techniques, 700-1100* (Cambridge 1989); Amouretti M. Cl. and Comet G. (1993) *Hommes et techniques de l'Antiquité à la Renaissance* (Paris 1993); Greene K. (1994) "Technology and innovation in context: the Roman background to Medieval and later Medieval developments", *JRA* 7 (1994) 22-33. For scythes and ploughs see Randsborg (1991) (supra note 2) 62.

³¹ *Lack of innovation*: Whittaker and Garnsey (1998) (supra note 2) 285.

³² *Water-mills*: Wikander O. (1984) *Exploitation of Water-Power or Technological Stagnation? A Reappraisal of the Productive Forces in the Roman Empire* (Lund 1984); Leveau P. (1996) "The Barbegal water mill in its environment: archaeology and the economic and social history of antiquity", *JRA* 9 (1996) 137-53; Wilson A. (1995) "Water-power in North Africa and the development of the horizontal water-wheel", *JRA* 8 (1995) 499-510; Roos P. (1992) "A water-mill at the Lamas river", *Arasturma Sonuçları Toplantısı* 9 (1992) 1-8; Spain R. J. (1985) "Romano-British watermills", *Archaeologia Cantiana* 100 (1985) 101-128; Morrison and Sodini (2002) (supra note 13) 197-98, for 6th c. East; Czysz W. (1994) "Eine bajuwarische Wassermühle im Paartal bei Dasing", *Antike Welt* 25 (1994) 152, for Bavaria.

out. In contrast to the West, the remains of small dwellings and quite simple farms have been extremely well-preserved in the East due to the later history of these areas.³³

With the exception of monastic properties, the characteristic settlement pattern in the East seems to have been of villages. With regional variations, these range in size from very small hamlets to larger settlements with industrial and possibly commercial buildings, and sometimes bathhouses, but seldom have any formal street plan. Few or no monumental public buildings are found, with the exception, from the 4th c., of at least one church in most villages. Villages are surrounded by cemeteries and agricultural areas, and sometimes enclosed by walls, although not necessarily for defense. The most intensive surveys have been carried out on villages in Syria, which were characterised by many small stone houses, with associated presses, and stalls for animals on the ground floor. Along with productive features, some of these houses had fine architectural decoration, suggesting to archaeologists that they belonged to free peasant owners, although there is little distinction between richer and poorer homes.³⁴

In Syria, a number of surveys have been carried out since the classic study of Tchalenko, which first showed the great development in rural settlement during Late Antiquity. Later surveys have confirmed a major upswing during the 4th to 6th centuries both on the plains and in the mountain region. Surveys have also been carried out in both Jordan and Palestine, revealing a significant increase in numbers of rural sites in the late antique period. Surveys carried out in the 1970s and 1980s have shown a different pattern for late antique

³³ *Settlement patterns in the East*: For analysis and bibliography see Kennedy H. and Liebeschuetz J. W. (1988) "Antioch and the villages of northern Syria in the 5th and 7th centuries: trends and problems", *Nottingham Medieval Studies* 32 (1988) 65-90; Gatier (1994) (supra note 6) 17-48; Ward-Perkins B. (2000) "Land, labour and settlement" (supra note 2) 315-45; Safrai Z. (1994) *The Economy of Roman Palestine* (London 1994) 85-103, for Palestine, based on a variety of evidence. For surveys, see bibliographic appendix 2.

³⁴ *Eastern villages, characteristics*: Summary and bibliography in Foss C. (1995) "The Near Eastern countryside in Late Antiquity, a review article", in *The Roman and Byzantine Near East*, ed. J. Humphrey (JRA supp. 14) (Ann Arbor 1995) 213-34, esp. 218-20; Hirshfeld Y. (1995) *The Palestinian Dwelling in the Roman-Byzantine Period* (Jerusalem 1995) and works cited in footnotes above and below. For a comparison between regions, see Dagron G. and Callot O. (1988) "Les bâtisseurs Isauriens chez eux: notes sur trois sites des environs de Silifke", in *Aetos. Studies in Honour of Cyril Mango*, edd. I. Şevşenko and I. Hutter (Stuttgart 1988) 67-68.

Arabia, with a dramatic decline of settlement in some regions. The interpretation of these sub-regional differences remains uncertain.³⁵

Surveys conducted in the central region of Lycia show a late antique expansion in the number of villages, farms and agricultural terraces, probably in the 5th–6th centuries, although dating is uncertain. In Cilicia and Isauria, new villages composed of prosperous houses, with agricultural installations, and churches arose in the 4th c. Pisidia shows a pattern of both increased settlement and increased nucleation of settlement into villages.³⁶ Excavations and survey projects in Cyprus also demonstrate an increase in the number of rural sites during Late Antiquity, especially the 6th to mid 7th centuries.³⁷

Research in Greece has produced a picture of a widespread and significant 4th c. recovery, with repopulation of the countryside after a phase of post-Hellenistic abandonment. Many new sites through-

³⁵ *Settlement patterns in Syria, Palestine & Arabia*: Tchalenko (1953–58) (supra note 23); Sodini J.-P. and Tate G. (1984) “Maisons d’époque romaine et byzantine (II^e–VI^e siècles) du massif calcaire de Syrie du nord. Étude typologique”, in *Actes du colloque Apamée de Syrie. Bilan des recherches archéologiques 1973–1979* (Brussels 1984) 377–430; Tate (1992) (supra note 23), Gatier (1994) (supra note 6) 45; Kidner F. L. (2001) “Christianizing the Syrian countryside: an archaeological and architectural approach”, in Burns and Eadie (2001) (supra note 22) 349–79; Palestine: Dauphin C. (1987) “Les kômâi de Palestine”, *Proche Orient Chrétien* 3 (1987) 251–67; Dar S. (1999) *Sumaqa. A Roman and Byzantine Jewish Village on Mount Carmel, Israel* (BAR I.S. 815) (Oxford 1999); Bar D. (2002) “Was there a 3rd-c. economic crisis in Palestine?”, in *The Roman and Byzantine Near East* 3, ed. J. H. Humphrey (JRA Supp. 49) (Portsmouth 2002) 43–54; Gibson, Kingsley and Clarke (1999) (supra note 25) 108; Meshel Z. (2000) *Sinai: Excavations and Studies* (BAR I.S. 876) (Oxford 2000). Summaries of archaeological evidence with bibliography in Hirschfeld Y. (1997) “Farms and villages in Byzantine Palestine”, *DOP* 51 (1997) 44–59 and Patrich J. (1995) “Church, state and the transformation of Palestine—the Byzantine period (324–640 C.E.)”, in *The Archaeology of Society in the Holy Land*, ed. T. E. Levy (London 1995) 470–87; MacAdam H. I. (1994) “Settlements and settlement patterns in northern and central Transjordan, c. 550–c. 750”, in King and Cameron (1994) (supra note 4) 49–94 with bibliography. *Arabia*: Graf (2001) (supra note 29) 219–40.

³⁶ *Settlement Patterns in Asia Minor*: Foss C. (1994) “The Lycian coast in the Byzantine age”, *DOP* 48 (1994) 1–52; Mitchell S. (1993) *Anatolia. Land, Men and Gods in Asia Minor. I: the Celts and the Impact of Roman Rule. II: the Rise of the Church* (Oxford 1993); Vanhaverbeke H. et al. in this volume, with bibliography.

³⁷ *Settlement Patterns in Cyprus*: Manning S. W. et al. (2002) *The Late Roman Church at Maroni-Petruva. Survey and Salvage Excavations 1990–1997, and Other Traces of Roman Remains in the Lower Maroni Valley, Cyprus* (Nicosia 2002); Rautman M. (2000) “The busy countryside of Late Roman Cyprus”, in *Report of the Department of Antiquities of Cyprus* (2000) 317–31; Rautman M. (2001) “Rural society and economy in Late Roman Cyprus”, in Burns and Eadie (2001) (supra note 22) 241–62; Rautman M. (2003) *A Cypriot Village of Late Antiquity: Kalavastos-Kopetra in the Upper Vasilikos Valley* (JRA Supp. 52) (Portsmouth 2003).

out Greece can be dated to the end of the 3rd c. onwards: abandoned pre-Roman sites were reoccupied, suggesting a reoccupation of marginal land. Crete appears to have experienced an intensification of rural occupation, possibly exceeding that of earlier periods. In the territorium of Corinth a large late antique villa related to smaller sites has been found, with intensive occupation from the 4th to the 7th centuries.³⁸

It is unclear whether late antique settlement in Greece was similar to the West (dispersed settlement dominated by villas) or to the East (dominated by villages). The epigraphic data points to the existence of big landowning families, but few well-dated late villas have been identified.³⁹

Apart from Greece, comparatively few remains of rural villas have yet been found anywhere in the East. Some 4th to 5th c. examples with rich decoration have been found in Syria and Egypt. A late antique rural villa or farmstead with bathhouse was surveyed in Jordan. Archaeology has detected the presence of luxury villas in the suburbs of some cities in Lebanon and in Palestine. These villas were endowed with a *pars urbana*, porticoes, baths and reception facilities, and sometimes a fortified structure with towers, and were associated with industrial, horticultural and agricultural estates which supplied food for the owner.⁴⁰ A number of large rural farmsteads have been

³⁸ *Settlement Patterns in Greece*: For regional syntheses with results of survey projects in different regions, see Alcock S. (1993) *Graecia Capta. The Landscapes of Roman Greece* (Cambridge 1993); Bintliff J. L. (1997) “Regional survey, demography and the rise of complex societies in the Aegean”, *JFA* 24 (1997), 8, 13–14; Avraméa A. (1997) *Le Péloponnèse du IV^e au VIII^e siècle. Changements et persistances* (Paris 1997); Sanders G. (forthcoming) “Looking for the late antique in Greece”, in *Landscapes of Change: Rural Evolutions in Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages*, ed. N. Christie (forthcoming).

³⁹ *Villas in Greece*: see Alcock (1993) (supra note 38), and Rizakis (1995) (supra note 26), especially p. 230; Akerström-Hougen G. (1974) *The Calendar and Hunting Mosaics of the Villa of the Falconer in Argos. A Study in Early Byzantine Iconography* (Stockholm 1974); Rothaus R. M. (1994) “Urban space, agricultural space and villas in late Roman Corinth”, in *Structures rurales et sociétés antiques*, edd. P. N. Doukellis and L. G. Mendoni (Paris 1994) 123–34. For the preponderance of small sites in northern Greece, see Andreu S. and Kotsakis K. (1999) “Counting people in an artefact-poor landscape: the Langadas case, Macedonia, Greece”, in Bintliff and Sbonias (1999) (supra note 5) 35–43, with bibliography.

⁴⁰ *Eastern villas*: Gatier (1994) (supra note 6) 28 with bibliography; Sodini J. P. (1997) “Habitat de l’Antiquité tardive (2)”, *Topoi Orient-Occident* 7 (1997) 435–577, esp. 506–14 with bibliography; see note 95 for late antique literary description of villa in Galatia; for villa of Ilus at Akkale see Eyice S. (1981) “Silifke ve şevresinde incememler: Elaiussa-Sebaste Yakınında Akkale” in *VIII Türk Tarih Kongresi* vol. 2.

discovered in Palestine, but, as in Africa (see below), they are characterised by an absence of luxury features, although they do seem to have been built as residences.⁴¹

Rural fortification does not seem to have been a very widespread phenomenon in the late antique East. However, in Asia Minor, there is some evidence for the existence of small fortified villas, and for rural sites with towers and walls, although in some cases it is uncertain whether these were farmsteads, monasteries or military sites. Large villages with a central fortified area and fortified rural monasteries appear in regions of Palestine, the latter in the 6th c. A.D. Farmhouses with massive towers have also been discovered in Palestine. It has also been suggested that closely-built rows of houses in Near Eastern villages could have served a defensive purpose. In Macedonia, there seems to have been a definite movement away from open rural settlements to walled villages from the 6th c.⁴²

In earlier historiography, the countryside in the Near East was seen as suffering from decline from the 6th c. onwards, as a result of first plagues and then the Arab conquest. While the impact of disease was probably great in the cities, especially big urban centres like Constantinople or Antioch, the effect of these plagues on the countryside is uncertain. There has also been some debate regarding the possibility that climatic change affected settlement.⁴³

(Ankara 1981), 865–86 and pl. 385–400; Edwards R. (1989) “The Domed Mausoleum at Akkale in Cilicia”, *Byzantinoslavica* 50 (1989) 46–56; Hirschfeld Y. and Birger R. (1991) “Early Roman and Byzantine estates near Caesarea”, *IEJ* 41 (1991) 81–111 for an excavated rural villa in Palestine; Tsafirir Y. (1996) “Some notes on the settlement and demography of Palestine in the Byzantine period: the archaeological evidence”, in *Retrieving the Past: Essays on Archaeological Research and Methodology in Honor of Gus W. Van Beck*, ed. J. D. Seger (Winona Lake 1996) 269–83; Donceel-Voûte P. (1994) “La villa rustica de Qumram dans la vallée du Jourdan et le *coenaculum* méditerranéen”, in *XIV International Congress of Classical Archaeology (Tarragona, 1993)* (Tarragona 1994) 126–27; Hirschfeld Y. (1998) “Early Roman manor houses in Judea and the site of Khirbet Qumram”, *JNES* 57 (1998) 161–68; Haas (2001) (supra note 22) 52–53. A rural villa has recently been excavated at Raqit in Palestine: S. Dar (2003) *Raqit: Marinius' Estate on the Carmel, Israel* (Jerusalem 2003), in Hebrew.

⁴¹ *Farmsteads*: Hirschfeld (1997) (supra note 35) 52–56.

⁴² *Eastern fortified sites*: Sodini (1997) (supra note 40) 479–82; Edwards D. R. (2002) “Khirbet Qana: from Jewish village to Christian pilgrim site” and Hirschfeld Y. (2002) “Deir Qal’a and the monasteries of western Samaria”, in Humphrey (2002) (supra note 35) 110 and 155–89; Hirschfeld (1997) (supra note 35) 48–60, 110; Dunn A., “Continuity and change in the Macedonian countryside from Gallienus to Justinian”, in this volume.

⁴³ *Decline: Plague*, see Gatiar (1994) (supra note 6) 45–47; Dauphin C. (1998) *La*

The impact of the Arab conquests on the Near Eastern countryside in Late Antiquity has been questioned. Recent research seems to suggest a much greater degree of continuity than was traditionally thought. A number of scholars now argue that there was continued prosperity and settlement into the Islamic period. Excavation at Dehes in Syria has shown that here, although patterns of building changed, occupation and population levels continued well beyond the 7th c., as evidenced by pottery and coin finds. J. Haldon suggests a great degree of continuity, rather than crisis, in 7th c. Byzantine rural society, based on later textual evidence. He envisages increasingly important and independent rural villages replacing the landlord and the city as the key element of society and state administration.⁴⁴

SETTLEMENT PATTERNS AND RURAL EVOLUTION IN AFRICA

In Africa, very few rural sites have been subject to detailed excavation, but a number of important surveys have been carried out. These surveys reveal that Late Antiquity was a boom period for rural production. There was an expansion in the number of agricultural sites, and irrigation and terracing works, from the 3rd c. onwards, reflecting great rural prosperity and increased surplus production. Although Mattingly argues that in the 4th c. the region of Tripolitania saw an abandonment of farms and the collapse of market production, during this period the oil industry of Tunisia became more dominant: in the Segermes region, for example, settlement and

Palestine Byzantine. Peuplement et populations I–III (BAR I.S. 726) (Oxford 1998). *Climate*: see discussion and bibliography in Fiema Z. T. (2002) “Late-antique Petra and its hinterland: recent research and new interpretations”, in Humphrey (2002) (supra note 35) 191–252, esp. 236.

⁴⁴ *Continuity in Islamic/Byzantine period*: Sodini J.-P. et al. “Déhès (Syrie du Nord), Campagnes I–III (1976–1978): Recherches sur ‘habitat rural’”, *Syria* 57 (1980), 1–308; MacAdam (1994) (supra note 35) 49–94 (esp. 64) and Zeyadeh A. (1994) “Settlement patterns, an archaeological perspective: case studies from northern Palestine and Jordan”, in King and Cameron (1994) (supra note 4) and 117–31; Foss C. (1997) “Syria in transition, A.D. 550–750: an archaeological approach”, *DOP* 51 (1997) 189–269; Rosen (2000) (supra note 25) 45–62 (for early Islamic “rural renaissance”); Graf (2001) (supra note 29). Haldon (1990) (supra note 13) especially 125–72. For contrary views, see Gibson, Kingsley and Clarke (1999) (supra note 25); Rautman (2000) (supra note 37) 328.

production seems to have continued up to the Vandal period, with a high level of settlement in the 3rd to 5th centuries A.D.⁴⁵

In Africa, there is little evidence for the existence of many luxurious rural villa residences, such as were common in Mediterranean Europe, although the iconography of some urban mosaics suggests the existence of luxury buildings similar to many western villas. Surveys have revealed rather a network of settlements ranging from villages to farms and large estate centres, mostly with quite simple structures built with rough dry-stone techniques. This variety of sites has been interpreted as the remains of, on the one hand, the central farms and residences of landowners, and, on the other, the farms or villages of peasants and of *coloni* linked to the estates.⁴⁶

A common characteristic of most of the rural sites which have been explored is the lack of a significant *pars urbana* or residential area. This suggests a pre-eminence of productive centres with absentee landowners. The most characteristic example is that of Nador, an imposing 4th c. building (which replaced an earlier villa) organised around a large courtyard, at which there is no clear *pars urbana*, but only 'modest' accommodation rooms including an oven and cistern. However, there is a plethora of installations associated with the pro-

⁴⁵ *Africa*: for surveys, see bibliographic appendix 3. *Regional syntheses*: Mattingly D. J. (1995) *Tripolitania* (London 1995), incorporating evidence for rural settlement and production; Lepelley C. (1989) "Peuplement et richesses de l'Afrique romaine tardive," in *Hommes et richesse dans l'Empire byzantin*, vol. I, IV^e-VII^e siècle (Paris 1989) 17-30, with epigraphic, literary and archaeological evidence for economic developments; *Segermes region*: Ørsted *et al.* (1992) (supra note 24) 83. *Continuity of production and export during Vandal occupation*: Freed. J. (1995) "The last series of Tunisian cylindrical amphoras at Carthage", *JRA* 7 (1995) 155-91.

⁴⁶ *Settlement patterns in Africa*: synthesis of field projects in Mattingly D. and Hitchner R. B. (1995) "Roman Africa: an archaeological review", *JRS* 85 (1995) 165-213 (for rural settlement see 189-98) and now Mattingly D. (forthcoming) "Vandals, Byzantines, Berbers and Arabs in Tripolitania", in Christie and Scott (forthcoming) (supra note 38); Ørsted *et al.* (1992) (supra note 24) 81; but see Compatangelo R. (1995) "Prospection archéologique et domaine: modèles historiques et réalités du terrain", in *Du latifundium au latifondo* (supra note 26) 45-65; "L'établissement de liens de hiérarchie et de dépendance fondés uniquement sur la taille et la nature des sites définis à partir des données de surface peut être subjectif" 48-49. See also site types examined in Mattingly D. with Dore J. (1996) "Romano-Libyan settlement: typology and chronology", in Barker *et al.* (1996) (supra note 15) 111-58. Duval N. (1986) "L'iconographie des 'villas africaines' et la vie rurale dans l'Afrique romaine de l'Antiquité tardive (résumé)", in *III^e colloque sur l'histoire et l'archéologie de l'Afrique du Nord (Montpellier 1985)*, ed. L. Galand (Paris 1986) 163-76, for the interpretation of villa images in mosaics.

cessing of agricultural products, revealing flourishing agricultural activity. In both the Tripolitanian Gebel and the pre-desert, even the larger ashlar-built farms (apparently associated with high-ranking tombs) have yielded little in the way of decorative elements, apart from a few plain tesserae. The villas identified as estate centres in the Segermes region were relatively simple, with modest decoration, although bath-houses were added at many small farm sites in the 4th-5th centuries.⁴⁷

Some residential *villae maritimae* have also been documented in Africa, and architectural features similar to those villas in the NW Mediterranean (including rich mosaic decoration of baths) have been found at some 4th c. suburban villas, like that of Sidi Ghrib in Tunisia.⁴⁸

In Tripolitania, excavations and surveys have revealed the development from the 3rd c. onwards of fortified farms (*gsur*, singular *gasr*) which may have been built in response to desert raiders. They were a kind of tower-like structure rising to a height of two or three stories, with associated courtyards, annexes and agricultural installations. Mattingly suggests that from the 4th c. the *gsur* became

⁴⁷ *Large estate centres*: Anselmino L. *et al.* (1989) *Il castellum de Nador. Storia di una fattoria tra Tipasa e Caesarea (I-VI sec.)* (Rome 1989); Mattingly D. J. and Hayes J. W. (1992) "Nador and fortified farms in North Africa", *JRA* 5 (1992) 408-18. For the pre-desert see Mattingly with Dore (1996) (supra note 46) 118-19; For the Tripolitanian Gebel see Mattingly D. J. (1985) "Olive oil production in Roman Tripolitania", in *Cyrenaica in Antiquity*, edd. G. Barker, J. Lloyd and J. Reynolds (BAR I.S. 274) (Oxford 1985) 27-46, esp. 32-37; Segermes: Ørsted *et al.* (1992) (supra note 24) 79, 96; Dietz S., Sebai L. L. and Ben Hassen H. H. (1995) edd. *Africa Proconsularis: Regional Studies in the Segermes Valley of Northern Tunisia* (Copenhagen 1995).

⁴⁸ *Villa residences in Africa*: for example, in the territory of Caesarea, sites such as Telefsa, Tros-Îlots, Cave Hardy, Cap-Blanc or Tirmilit: Leveau P. (1984) *Caesarea de Maurétanie, une ville romaine et ses campagnes* (Rome 1984) 406. See also Leveau P. (1989) "L'organisation de l'espace rural en Maurétanie Césarienne", in *Hommes et richesses* (1989) (supra note 45) 35-52, for types of settlements, including villas and villages. For residential villas see also Rossiter J. (1990) "Villas vandales: le suburbium de Carthage au début du VI^e siècle de notre ère", in *Carthage et son territoire dans l'Antiquité (Actes du IV^e colloque international d'histoire et archéologie de l'Afrique du Nord, Strasbourg 5-9 avril 1988)* (Paris 1990) 221-27; Sodini J.-P. (1995) "Habitat de l'Antiquité tardive (1)", *Topoi Orient-Occident* 5 (1995) 184; Ben Abed A. and Duval N. (2000) "Carthage, la capitale du royaume et les villes de Tunisie à l'époque vandale", in *Sedes regiae (ann. 400-800)* edd. G. Ripoll and J. M. Gurt (Barcelona 2000) 163-218; Barraud D., Golvin J. C. and Maurin L. (1998) "Les environs immédiats d'Oudhna. La périphérie de la ville, les établissements ruraux, le réseau des aqueducs", in *Oudhna (Uthina). La redécouverte d'une ville antique de Tunisie*, edd. H. Ben Hassen and L. Maurin (Bordeaux-Paris-Tunis 1998) 171-207.

increasingly important, replacing unfortified sites as the dominant form of settlement.⁴⁹

SETTLEMENT PATTERNS AND RURAL EVOLUTION IN THE WEST

In the West, the typical pattern was of dispersed settlement dominated by villa estates. Archaeology has mainly focused on the study of these villas,⁵⁰ while the history of workers' homes and smaller farms remains more obscure. Small villages housing an agricultural population also undoubtedly existed, at least in some regions, either as dependent settlements of villa workers or as independent farming communities, but they have attracted far less excavation and study than the more durable and spectacular remains of villas.⁵¹

The 3rd Century

During the 3rd c., many western regions suffered from raids and invasions. However, it is unclear what effect these invasions had on the countryside, and how widespread or long-lasting any effects might have been. It was traditionally assumed that the invasions caused

⁴⁹ *Fortified farms*: Mattingly D. with Flower C. (1996) "Romano-Libyan settlement: site distributions and trends", in Barker *et al.* (1996) (supra note 15) 179-82; Welsby D. A. (1992) "ULVS XXV: the gsr and associated settlements in the Wadi Umm el Kharab. An architectural survey", *Libyan Studies* 23 (1992) 73-99; Mattingly with Dore (1996) (supra note 46) 154-55.

⁵⁰ *Western villas*: for a recent complete study of the villa phenomenon, with definition, typologies, and bibliography of earlier work, see Smith J. T. (1997) *Roman Villas. A Study in Social Structure* (London 1997). The classic and still invaluable work is Percival J. (1976) *The Roman Villa* (London 1976). Quantitative comparison of settlement types in West and East: Blanton R. E. (2000) *Hellenistic, Roman and Byzantine Settlement Patterns of the Coast Lands of Western Rough Cilicia* (BAR I.S. 879) (Oxford 2000) 67 and figs 4-12 to 4-14.

⁵¹ *Non-villa sites in the West: Gaul*: for recent work on such sites in Northern Gaul, see Louis E. "A de-Romanised landscape in northern Gaul: the Scarpe Valley from the 4th to 9th centuries A.D.", in this volume; Salé Ph. (1999) "La pars rustica de la villa du Vieux Domaine à Vierzon (Cher): un exemple de logements pour ouvriers agricoles", *Revue Archéologique du Centre de la France* 38 (1999) 207-22. *Britain*: see Millett M. (1990) *The Romanization of Britain. An Essay in Archaeological Interpretation* (Cambridge 1990) 205-11; Dark K. and Dark P. (1997) (supra note 18). *Hispania*: Nozal Calvo M. (1995) "El yacimiento de La Olmeda. La villa y el territorio", in *Actas del III Congreso de Historia de Palencia* 1 (Palencia 1995) 315-39; Mañanes T. (2002) *Arqueología del área central del río Duero: de Simancas a Coca* (Valladolid 2002). *Italy*: Wilson (1995) (supra note 9) 194-97, 224-31.

widespread destruction and were devastating to rural life and production. More recently, however, it has been suggested that the influx of some new groups from outside the empire may have been quite peaceful, and that the arrival of these groups might even have brought positive benefits to agricultural production. Further, it has been suggested that the destructive effects of even violent invasions may have been highly localised and short-term.⁵²

It has also been suggested that the archaeological evidence for destruction of rural sites is scanty, and has been exaggerated due to the assumptions of historians and archaeologists. Many archaeologists in the past simply assumed that buildings must have been destroyed by barbarian raids and thus interpreted burned material, sometimes in insignificant quantities, as evidence for total destruction. Destruction layers are very difficult to date precisely and it is often unclear whether such a layer has been dated by the archaeologist on the basis of finds or merely because s/he assumed that the layer was related to destruction of a historically-attested date.⁵³

A number of surface surveys carried out in the western provinces have indicated that there was a decline in the number of settlements occupied in certain regions during and following the 3rd c., although there is no consensus as to the magnitude of this phenomenon. In particular, surveys have revealed an apparent decline in occupation in northern and central Italy from the 2nd c. onwards and in north-eastern Gaul in the 3rd c. Similar results have been suggested by some surveys in regions of south-eastern Gaul.⁵⁴

⁵² *Effects of invasions*: for traditional view, see for example, Gorges J. G. (1979) *Les villas hispano-romaines. Inventaire et problématique archéologiques* (Paris 1979); Re-evaluations in Barnish S. (1986) "Taxation, land and barbarian settlement in the western empire", *PBSR* 54 (1986) 170-95; Arce J. (1978) "La crisis del siglo III d.C. en Hispania y las invasiones bárbaras", *Hispania Antiqua* 8 (1978) 257-69; Wightman E. (1985) *Gallia Belgica* (London 1985) 243-44; Whittaker and Garnsey (1998) (supra note 2) 278-79.

⁵³ *Destruction layers*: For revised interpretation of sites in north-eastern Hispania see Chavarría A. (1996) "Transformaciones arquitectónicas de los establecimientos rurales en el nordeste de la Tarraconensis durante la antigüedad tardía", *Butlletí de la Reial Acadèmia Catalana de Belles Arts de Sant Jordi* (1996) 165-202 esp. 169-71. See also Esmonde Cleary S. (1989) *The Ending of Roman Britain* (London 1989) 17.

⁵⁴ *Field survey evidence for settlement density*: for data, see bibliographic appendix 4. Comments on *North East Gaul* in Wightman (1985) (supra note 52) esp. 244-50; Van Ossel and Ouzoulias (2000) (supra note 3), and Van Ossel P. and Ouzoulias P. (2001) "La mutation des campagnes de la Gaule du Nord entre le milieu du III^e siècle et le milieu du V^e siècle. Où en est-on?", in *Belgian Archaeology in a European Setting II*, ed. M. Lodewijckx (Leuven 2001) 231-45; Halsall (1995) (supra note 7)

It is unclear how we should interpret the results of these field surveys: do they indicate a thinning of settlement, and possibly a lower level of population with decreased production and exploitation of land? A retreat from marginal land? A nucleation of settlement around more secure sites? Or, alternatively, a concentration of land-ownership, with the abandonment of smaller farm centres? It has also been suggested that the reduced occupation may be apparent, rather than real, and that many sites occupied during the 3rd and later centuries are either hidden beneath more recent settlements, or are 'archaeologically invisible', due to the late antique use of more ephemeral building styles and ceramics which were not accurately dated at the time of survey (see discussion below). A number of scholars have raised doubts regarding the validity of statistics derived from survey results as evidence for a generalised decline in farming or broad demographic decline in the 3rd c., due to invasions and economic crisis. Many researchers also emphasise the regional differences shown by field survey results.⁵⁵

The 4th Century Villa Boom

It is now recognised that during the 4th c. the villas underwent an important renaissance in the West.⁵⁶ Many complexes built during

175–98; Randsborg (1991) (supra note 2) 53–57; Haselgrove C. and Scull C. (1995) "The changing structure of rural settlement in southern Picardy during the first millennium A.D.", in Bintliff and Hamerow (1995) (supra note 3) 58–70. Comments on *South Gaul*: Trément F. (1999) "Prospection archéologique et démographique en Provence: approche paléodémographique de la rive occidentale de l'étang de Berre sur la longue durée", in Bintliff and Sbonias (1999) (supra note 5) 93–113.

⁵⁵ *The 3rd c. "crisis"*: analysis of the characteristics and consequences of the "crisis" for Western Europe and Africa in Witschel C. (1999) *Krise—Rezession—Stagnation? Der Westen des römischen Reiches im 3. Jh. n. Chr.* (Frankfurt 1999). For evidence against a 3rd c. crisis see discussion and graphs in Lewit (1991) (supra note 2) 27–30, 178, 183. See also variety of viewpoints found in King A. and Henig M. (1981) edd. *The Roman West in the 3rd c. Contributions from Archaeology and History* (BAR I.S. 109) (Oxford 1981); Fiches J.-L. (1996) ed. *Le III^{ème} siècle en Gaule Narbonnaise. Données régionales sur la crise de l'Empire, Actes de la Table Ronde GDR 954 "Archéologie de l'espace rural méditerranéen dans l'Antiquité et le haut Moyen Âge" (Aix-en-Provence, La Baume, 15–16 septembre 1995)* (Antibes 1996). For a complete recent revision of views on different regions, see Ouzoulias P. et al. (2001) *Les campagnes de la Gaule à la fin de l'Antiquité* (Antibes 2001). For methodological issues in interpreting survey evidence, see 2. Sources, supra.

⁵⁶ *Villa renaissance*: for *North Italy* see contributions in Brogiolo and Castelletti (1992) (supra note 7) and Ortalli J. (1994) "Insediamento rurale in Emilia centrale", in *Il tesoro nel pozzo. Pozzi-deposito e tesaurizzazioni nell'antica Emilia*, edd. S. Gelichi and

the 1st and 2nd centuries were partly or completely rebuilt with considerably increased luxury or more elaborate plans. Many were endowed with monumental architectural forms and rich decoration. Common features of many of these late villas, especially those in the Mediterranean region, are central peristyle courtyards, reception halls, *triclinia* endowed with apsidal forms, and elaborate private baths.⁵⁷

A large number of villas in South Gaul⁵⁸ and *Hispania*,⁵⁹ mainland

N. Giordani (Modena 1994) 169–222. The evolution of *South Italian* territory in Late Antiquity was analysed in the XXXVIII *Convegno di Studi sulla Magna Grecia (Taranto 2–6 ottobre 1998)* (Taranto 1999). For late antique Puglia see Volpe G. (1996) *Contadini, pastori e mercanti nell'Apulia tardoantica* (Bari 1996). For *southern Gaul*, with discussion of the main problems of late antique rural evolution, see Maune S. (1998) *Les campagnes de la cité de Béziers dans l'Antiquité (partie nord-orientale) (II^e s. av. J.-C.–VI^{ème} s. ap. J.-C.)* (Montagnac 1998).

⁵⁷ *Villa architecture, 4th c.*: comprehensive bibliography and site-by-site survey throughout the western empire in Sodini (1995) (supra note 48); Gazda E. K. (1991) ed. *Roman Art in the Private Sphere. New Perspectives on the Architecture and Decor of the Domus, Villa and Insula* (Ann Arbor 1991); Brenk B. (1997) "Innovation im Residenzbau der Spätantike", in *Innovation in der Spätantike*, ed. B. Brenk (Wiesbaden 1997) 67–114; Ellis S. P. (1997) "Late-antique dining: architecture, furnishings and behaviour", in *Domestic Space in the Roman World: Pompeii and Beyond*, edd. R. Laurence and A. Wallace-Hadrill (JRA supp. 22) (Portsmouth 1997) 41–51; Morvillez É. (1995) "Les salles de réception triconques dans l'architecture domestique de l'antiquité tardive en Occident", *Histoire de l'Art* 31 (1995) 15–26; Morvillez É. (1996) "Sur les installations des lits de table en sigma dans l'architecture domestique du Haut-Empire et Bas-Empire", *Pallas* 44 (1996) 119–58; Dunbabin K. M. D. (1996) "Convivial spaces: dining and entertainment in the Roman villa", *JRA* 9 (1996) 66–88; Scott S. and Christie N. (forthcoming) "Elites, exhibitionism and the late Roman villa", in Christie (forthcoming) (supra note 38).

⁵⁸ *Villas in southern Gaul*: comprehensive survey and bibliography in Balmelle C. (2001) *Les demeures aristocratiques d'Aquitaine. Société et culture de l'Antiquité tardive dans le Sud-Ouest de la Gaule (Aquitania, supp. 10)* (Bordeaux 2001); cfr. Lugand M. and Pellecuer Ch. (1994) "La région de Mèze et la villa des Prés-Bas à Loupian (Hérault): contribution à l'étude du littoral languedocien", in *Les campagnes de la France méditerranéenne dans l'antiquité et le haut moyen âge: études microrégionales*, edd. J. L. Fiches and F. Favory (Paris 1994) 246–78; Bermond I. and Pellecuer Ch. (1997) "Recherches sur l'occupation du sol dans la région de l'Étang de Thau (Hérault): apport à l'étude des villae et des campagnes de Narbonnaise", *RANarb* 30 (1997) 63–84.

⁵⁹ *Spanish villas*: the two classic works are Gorges (1979) (supra note 52) and Fernández Castro M^a C. (1982) *Villas romanas en España* (Madrid 1982); For bibliography up to 2000 see Chavarría A. (1999) "Novedades bibliográficas sobre villae romanas en Hispania durante la antigüedad tardía (1990–1999)", *AnTard* 8 (1999) 57–67; Chavarría A. (forthcoming) "... unam uillam colere et ornare alteram tantum tueri. Villas in Hispania during the 4th and 5th centuries", in *Hispania in the Late Antique World: Twenty-First Century Approaches*, edd. K. Bowes and M. Kulikowski (Leiden-Boston-Cologne, forthcoming) and Ariño Gil E. and Díaz P. C. (2002) "El campo: propiedad y explotación de la tierra", in *La Hispania del siglo IV. Administración, economía, sociedad, cristianización*, ed. R. Teja (Bari 2002) 59–96.

Italy and Sicily⁶⁰ were substantially extended with very high levels of luxury decoration. In Britain, many villas and farmhouses were rebuilt in the 3rd and 4th centuries with extensions and more complex designs.⁶¹

Many villas in the territories of cities in Roman Germany, as at *Colonia*, *Maguncia* and especially the imperial capital *Treveris*, were rebuilt in monumental style, such as the huge and richly decorated complexes at Konz, Echternach, Nenning, Pfalz, and Welschbillig. A similar process of intensive building at villa sites in the 4th c., and increased monumentalisation of their architectural forms, has been discerned in the Danube/Balkan region. The 4th c. was also a time of villa development in Istria.⁶²

The fortification of villas during Late Antiquity and the function of these defensive arrangements have been the subject of discussion. A number of late antique villas in the Danube region seem to have

⁶⁰ *Italian villas*: Roffia E. (1997) ed. *Ville romane sul lago di Garda* (Brescia 1997) and Roffia E. (2001) "Nuove indagini nelle ville romane del lago di Garda", in *Abitare in Cisalpina. L'edilizia privata nelle città e nel territorio in età romana* (Trieste 2001) 447–78; Scarliarini D. et al. (1992) *Villa romana di Desenzano. Itinerari dei musei, gallerie, scavi e monumenti d'Italia* (Como 1992); Carandini, Ricci and De Vos (1982) (supra note 9); Wilson (1995) (supra note 9).

⁶¹ *British villas*: Miles D. (1982) ed. *The Romano-British countryside. Studies in Rural Settlement and Economy* (BAR B.S. 103) (Oxford 1982); Higham N. (1992) *Rome, Britain and the Anglo-Saxons* (London 1992); Esmonde Cleary (1989) (supra note 53); Esmonde Cleary S. (2001) "The countryside of Britain in the 4th and 5th centuries—an archaeology", in Ouzoulias et al. (2001) (supra note 55) 23–43; on British domestic architecture (mainly villas) see Ellis S. (1995) "Classical reception rooms in Romano-British houses", *Britannia* 26 (1995) 163–78; Witts P. A. (2000) "Mosaics and room function: the evidence from some fourth-century Romano-British villas", *Britannia* 31 (2000) 291–324; Cosh S. R. (2000) "Seasonal dining rooms in Romano-British houses", *Britannia* 32 (2001) 219–42; Scott S. (2000) ed. *Art and Society in 4th c. Britain: Villa Mosaics in Context* (Oxford 2000); Perring (2002) (supra note 13).

⁶² *Villas in Roman Germany*: Cüppers H. (1990) *Trier Kaiserresidenz und Bischofsitz* (Mainz 1984); *Die Römer in Rheinland Pfalz* (Stuttgart 1990); Polfer M. (2001) "Occupation du sol et évolution de l'habitat rural dans la partie occidentale de la cité des Trévires au Bas-Empire (IV^e–V^e siècles)", in Ouzoulias et al. (2001) (supra note 55) 69–112; Metzler J., Zimmer J. and Bakker L. (1981) *Die römische Villa von Echternach* (Luxembourg 1981). *Villas on the Danube*: Mulvin L. (2002) *Late Roman Villas in the Danube-Balkan Region* (BAR I.S. 1064) (Oxford 2002) and Mulvin L., "Late Roman villa plans: the Danube-Balkan region", in this volume, both with bibliography; Poulter A. (forthcoming) "Villas, farms and forts: the landscape of the Lower Danube in Late Antiquity and beyond", in Christie and Scott (forthcoming) (supra note 38); *Istria*: Matijačić R. (1982) "Roman rural architecture in the territory of Colonia Iulia Pola", *AJA* 86.1 (1982) 54–64; Matijačić R. (1997) "L'Istria tra l'antichità classica e la tarda antichità", *Archeoloski vestnik* 48 (1997) 203–218; Schrunk I. and Begović V. (2000) "Roman estates on the island of Brioni, Istria", *JRA* 13 (2000) 253–75.

been fortified from the 3rd c. onwards, with defense as the probable motivation for this trend. In Britain and the Mediterranean regions, fortified villas are more rare and their interpretation is less clear. In some parts of Italy and Spain there are some examples of very compact villa buildings endowed with angular towers. Van Ossel and Ouzoulias point out that in northern Gaul, defensive structures in villas are limited to a small area of the complex, often only the food storage facilities (the 'tower-silos').⁶³ The extent, function and significance of possibly defensive arrangements at villa and farm sites in different regions remains to be investigated more fully.

In summary, the 4th c. was a time of considerable rural building at western villa sites. As the evidence of the 4th c. expansion of villa life has only been fully recognised during the last two decades, much more investigation of its causes still remains to be undertaken. The traditional hypothesis was one of a generalised ruralisation of the aristocracy, who, it was argued, retreated to their country villas at the expense of their urban duties during Late Antiquity. However, many villas were in fact situated near urban centres such as *Burdigalia*, *Tarraco* or *Augusta Emerita*, while the recent development of urban archaeology has also forced a revision of older theories of simple urban decline. There is no consistent evidence of an elite desertion of the towns during the 4th and 5th centuries, and scholars have now questioned whether the villa boom of the 4th c. can be attributed to such a 'ruralisation'.⁶⁴

⁶³ *Fortification of villas*: Thomas E. (1980) "Villa settlements", in *The Archaeology of Roman Pannonia*, edd. A. Lengyel and G. T. B. Radan (Budapest 1980) 312–17; See now Mulvin in this volume. For a unique British example, see Branigan K. (1977) *Gatcombe: the Excavation and Study of a Romano-British Villa Estate 1967–1976* (BAR B.S. 44) (Oxford 1977); Small A. M. and Buck R. J. (1994) edd. *The Excavations of San Giovanni di Ruoti. Vol. I. The Villas and their Environment* (Toronto 1994); de Palol P. (1986) *La villa romana de La Olmeda de Pedrosa de la Vega (Palencia)* (Palencia 1986). For Northern Gaul, see now the site of Habaye Magueroy in Polfer (2001) (supra note 62) 96–97; Van Ossel and Ouzoulias (2000) (supra note 3) 143–45.

⁶⁴ *'Ruralisation' of the aristocracy*: see chiefly Roda S. (1985) "Fuga nel privato e nostalgia del potere nel IV secolo d. C.: nuovi accenti di un'antica ideologia", *Le trasformazioni della cultura nella Tardoantichità, Atti del Convegno di Catania (27 sett.–2 ott. 1982)* (Rome 1985) 95–110 and Colombi E. (1996) "Rusticitas e vita in villa nella Gallia Tardoantica: tra realtà e letteratura", *Athenaeum* 84 (1996) 405–431 both analyzing contemporary epistolary evidence. For recent re-evaluations, see Arce J. (1997) "Orium et negotium: the great estates, 4th–7th century", in *The Transformation of the Roman World A.D. 400–900*, edd. L. Webster and M. Brown (London 1997) 19–32; Diaz P. C. (2000) "City and territory in Hispania in Late Antiquity", in *Towns and their Territories between Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages*, edd. G. P. Brogiolo,

A key question is whether the villa boom reflects general economic prosperity across the countryside, or rather indicates the increasing wealth and power of a few at the expense of other parts of rural society, reflecting both a tendency towards the concentration of property ownership and the socio-political power of the *possessores*; or indeed, whether it reflects economic change at all, or simply elite choice and fashion.

The Transformation of Rural Settlement

It is clear that in Late Antiquity there was a process of profound change throughout the western countryside, beginning as early as the 3rd c. at some sites, and becoming widespread by the late 5th c.; the classical rural villa and possibly other dispersed farms gave way to new types of settlement. There are only a few cases of villas at which continuous residential occupation is definitely known to extend beyond the 5th c., such as Sorde l'Abbaye and Mienne Marboué, in Gaul; and S. Giovanni di Ruoti, in southern Italy.

At S. Giovanni di Ruoti, the characteristics of the new building have led to its later phase being attributed to barbarian occupants, although this interpretation has been disputed. These so-called barbarian features include a very compact structure, with a kind of tower in the northeast angle, absence of a *stibadium* or other typical Roman dining structures, and the presence of a hypothetical upper floor where the residential and reception rooms would be located. A late building has been excavated at Pla de Nadal, on the East coast of Spain, although the exact function and especially chronology of the building are still the subject of discussion.⁶⁵

N. Gauthier and N. Christie (*TRW* 9) (Leiden-Boston-Cologne 2000) 3–35; Kulikowski M. (2001) "The interdependence of town and country in late antique Spain", in Burns and Eadie (2001) (supra note 22) 147–62.

⁶⁵ *6th c. occupation at villas*: for Gaul, see Blanchard-Lemée M. (1982) "Mosaïques tardives et survie des villas en Gaule moyenne à l'époque mérovingienne", *Mosaïque. Recueil d'hommages à Henri Stern* (Paris 1982) 75–80; Italy: Small and Buck (1994) (supra note 63). Comments in Hodges R. (1998) "Henri Pirenne and the question of demand in the sixth century", in *The Sixth Century. Production, Distribution and Demand*, edd. R. Hodges and W. Bowden (*TRW* 3) (Boston-Leiden-Cologne 1998) 3–14, esp. 8–9. *Hispania*: Juan E. and Lerma J. V. (2000) "La villa áulica del 'Pla de Nadal' (Riba-roja de Turia)", in *Los orígenes del Cristianismo en Valencia y su entorno*, ed. A. Ribera (Valencia 2000) 135–42; articles by L. Caballero and S. Gutiérrez in *Visigodos y Omeyas* edd. L. Caballero and P. Mateos (2000) (Madrid 2000).

Nearly all former Roman villas experienced drastic changes in organisation and function during Late Antiquity. The process of change began at some sites as early as the 3rd c., and was widespread by the end of the 5th. Four categories of transformation have been established by Chavarría for the villas in *Hispania*.

Productive transformation: the installation of agricultural or industrial elements such as *dolia*, tanks, presses, hearths and ovens in formerly residential rooms, often destroying decorative features such as mosaics.

Habitational transformation: changes in building style, with subdivision of rooms, poorly built or timber walls, the construction of huts, renovations which ignore classical decorative/architectural principles, and the abandonment of classical lifestyle elements such as baths.

Funerary transformation: the reuse of some or all of the buildings as burial sites.

Cultic transformation: the installation of Christian buildings.

T. Lewit suggests that these patterns are typical throughout the West.

The interpretation of these changes is much debated.⁶⁶ Most authors now agree that the transformation of the countryside does not necessarily indicate a depopulation and abandonment of cultivated land, and that, while villa residences may have been disused, in general the existence of a local population and the cultivation of land continued, as evidenced by the use of villa buildings for either utilitarian

⁶⁶ *Transformation of villas. Categories of transformation*: Chavarría (1996) (supra note 53); Chavarría A. (2003) "El final de las villas romanas en Hispania", *Archivo Español de Arqueología* (2003) and Chavarría A. (forthcoming) "Interpreting the transformation of late Roman villas: the case of Hispania", in Christie (forthcoming) (supra note 38). *Transformation throughout the West*: Lewit T. (2003–forthcoming) "Vanishing villas: what happened to elite rural habitation in the West in the 5th and 6th centuries A.D.?", *JRA* 16 (2003–forthcoming); *Synthesis of lit. and arch. evidence*: Ripoll G. and Arce J. (2000) "The transformation and end of Roman villas in the West (4th–7th c.). Problems and perspectives", in Brogiolo, Gauthier and Christie (2000) (supra note 64) 63–114. *Hispania*: see works by Chavarría above. *Gaul*: Van Ossel (1992) (supra note 27); Pellecuer Ch. and Pomarède H. (2001) "Crise, survie ou adaptation de la villa romaine en Narbonnaise première? Contribution des récentes recherches de terrain en Languedoc-Roussillon", in Ouzoulias *et al.* (2001) (supra note 55) 503–532; *Italy*: Augenti A. (1992) "Roman villas in the Middle Ages: the Italian evidence", in *A Conference on Medieval Archaeology in Europe 21st–24th September 1992 at the University of York. Pre-printed papers* (York 1992) 69–77; Brogiolo G. P. (1996) ed. *La fine delle ville romane: trasformazioni nelle campagne tra tarda antichità e alto medioevo* (Mantua 1996); Sfamenci C., "Residential villas in late antique Italy: continuity and change" and Saggioro F., "Late antique settlement on the Po plain: reflections on recent research", in this volume. *Britain*: Dark and Dark (1997) (supra note 18) 136–39.

or cult purposes.⁶⁷ There is no evidence of increased urban development in the West during the 5th and 6th centuries which might suggest a movement from the villas to the cities.

It has been suggested that alterations to villas may reflect new patterns of ownership. Ripoll and Arce suggest that they reflect the transfer of land to the Church through donations. Chavarría distinguishes two distinct phases of change in *Hispania*; she attributes the first phase (3rd to 5th centuries) to a tendency towards a concentration of rural property ownership during Late Antiquity, but the second (from the 5th to 7th c.) to broad political, social, and ideological transformations as well as the replacement of aristocrats of the imperial court with a new Visigothic elite.⁶⁸ Lewit suggests that many changes reflect not the disuse of villas, but a widespread change in socio-cultural priorities and lifestyle, which can be discerned in many aspects of both town and rural settlement. Other scholars have also proposed that there was a change in mentality within a (perhaps changed) landowning class, who may have marked their status in different ways, such as through funerary practices, and may have lived in a completely different form of high-status residence.⁶⁹

A general shift in the location of rural settlement is another interpretation which has been suggested. Wightman and Randsborg suggest that there may have been an emergence or reoccupation of hill-top sites in various regions of the West, perhaps because these were more defensible, or due to new environmental and economic

⁶⁷ *Continued population of countryside*: Van Ossel and Ouzoulias (2000) (supra note 3) 156–157. See also Esmonde Cleary (2001) (supra note 61) 40–41.

⁶⁸ *Changes in land-ownership*: Ripoll and Arce (2000) (supra note 66); Percival J. (1997) "Villas and Monasteries in Late Roman Gaul", *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 48.1 (1997) 1–21; Chavarría (1996) (supra note 53) 199–202; Chavarría (2003) (supra note 66); Chavarría (forthcoming) (supra note 59); Brogiolo G. P. (1997) "Continuità tra tarda antichità e altomedioevo attraverso le vicende delle villae", in Roffia (1997) (supra note 68) 257–59. Vera (1995) (supra note 10) has established the text-based analysis which is the foundation of this interpretation.

⁶⁹ *Changes in mentality and elite display*: Lewit (1991) (supra note 2) 38–40 and (2003) (supra note 66). Augenti (1992) (supra note 67). La Rocca C. (1998) "Donare, distribuire, spezzare. Pratiche di conservazione della memoria e dello status in Italia tra VIII e IX secolo", in *Sepulture tra IV e VIII secolo*, edd. G. P. Brogiolo and G. Cantino Wataghin (Mantua 1998), 77–87. See C. Wickham on different forms of display used by the Frankish and Lombard landowning aristocracy in "Aristocratic power in eighth-century Lombard Italy", in *After Rome's Fall. Narrators and Sources of Early Medieval History. Essays presented to Walter Goffart*, ed. A. C. Murray (Toronto 1998) 153–70, esp. 161; Dark K. (1994) *Discovery by Design. The Identification of Secular Elite Settlements in Western Britain A.D. 400–700* (BAR B.S. 237) (Oxford 1994).

conditions. A relocation to upland, often defended, village sites seems to have been particularly marked in the Danube-Balkan region.⁷⁰ In North Italy also, many fortified villages or 'small town' settlements have been discovered and studied in recent years. They tend to have been founded in the 5th–6th centuries, although some have earlier roots.⁷¹ In Gaul, hill-top sites seem to be concentrated in the south-eastern regions, where a significant number of these *habitats perchés* dating from the end of 5th c. onwards have been found.⁷² Some settlements of this kind have also been identified in northern Spain.⁷³ In contrast, S. P. Dark argues from the evidence of pollen samples

⁷⁰ *Shift to hill-top sites*: Wightman (1985) (supra note 52) 246–50; Randsborg (1991) (supra note 2) 56–64, 71–72, with bibliography; Bender H. (2001) "Archaeological perspectives on rural settlement in Late Antiquity in the Rhine Danube area", in Burns and Eadie (2001) (supra note 22) 185–198, with bibliography; Poulter A. G. (1983) *Moesia Inferior and the Lower Danube, Domitian to Heraclius*, Ph.D. diss., Univ. of London 1983. See also *Macedonia*, supra note 42.

⁷¹ *Hill-top sites in Italy*: Brogiolo G. P. and Gelichi S. (1996) *Nuove ricerche sui castelli altomedievali in Italia settentrionale* (Florence 1996); Brogiolo G. P. (1999) ed. *Le fortificazioni del Garda e i sistemi di difesa dell'Italia settentrionale tra tardo antico e alto medioevo* (Mantua 1999); for Monselice (Veneto): Rigon A. (1994) ed. *Monselice. Storia, cultura e arte in un centro 'minore' del Veneto* (Treviso 1994) (although new campaigns have been carried out in recent years); for Rocca di Garda (Verona): Brogiolo G. P. (1999) *Progetto archeologico Garda I. 1998* (Mantua 1999) and *Progetto archeologico Garda II. 1999–2000* (Mantua 2001); for Monte Barro (Lecco): Brogiolo G. P. and Castelletti L. (1991) *Archeologia a Monte Barro I. Il grande edificio e le torri* (Lecco 1991) and (2001) *Archeologia a Monte Barro II. Gli scavi 1990–97 e le ricerche al S. Martino di Lecco* (Oggiono 2001); for S. Antonio de Perù (Liguria): Murialdo G. and Mannoni T. (2001) edd. S. Antonino. *Un insediamento fortificato nella Liguria bizantina* (Bordighera 2001).

⁷² *Hill-top sites in Gaul*: Schneider L. (2001) "Oppida et castra tardo-antiques. À propos des établissements de hauteur de Gaule méditerranéenne", in Ouzoulias et al. (2001) (supra note 55) 433–48 and Trément F. (2001) "Habitat et peuplement en Provence à la fin de l'Antiquité", in Ouzoulias et al. (2001) (supra note 55) 275–302. Sites such as Saint Blaise and Constantine (both in the area of l'Etang de Berre), or the site of Pampelune (20 km north-west of Montpellier) have been object of archaeological work and study. For a recent synthesis see Verdin F. (2001) "L'oppidum de Constantine (Lançon-de-Provence, B.-du-Rh.): un exemple d'établissement de hauteur réoccupé durant l'antiquité tardive", *RANarb* 34 (2001) 105–21; Schneider L. (forthcoming) "Nouvelles recherches sur les habitats de hauteur de la fin de l'Antiquité et du haut Moyen Âge dans le sud-est de la France. Le cas du Roc de Pampelune à Argelliers", *Les nouvelles de l'Archéologie* (forthcoming). For Saint Blaise see Démians d'Archimbaud G. (1994) *L'Oppidum de Saint-Blaise du V^e au VII^e s.*, (DAF 45) (Paris 1994).

⁷³ *Hill-top sites in Hispania*: de Palol P. (1989) *El Bovalar Seròs, Segrià. Conjunt d'època paleocristiana i visigòtica* (Barcelona 1989) or El Roc d'Enclar (Andorra): Llovera Masana X. et al. (1997) *Roc d'Enclar. Transformacions d'un espai dominant. Segles IV–XIX* (Andorra 1997). Many others exist, in the province of Burgos, for example, but have not been subject of recent research. Dark S. P. (1996) "Palaeoecological evidence for landscape continuity and change in Britain c. A.D. 400–800", in Dark (1996) (supra note 18) 23–52.

that agricultural activity in Britain remained more constant at lower altitudes than at sites higher than 150 m, and that it is the higher altitude sites which show a greater tendency to revert to woodland in the 5th to 9th centuries.⁷⁴

All these sites, with late antique occupation or sometimes re-occupation, dating generally between the 5th and 7th centuries, are characterised by fortifications (sometimes completing or reinforcing earlier pre-Roman walls), the presence of a religious building, and by quite simple rectangular habitation structures. Interesting work is currently being done regarding the foundation of these sites (public or private?), their function, and the relationship between the religious buildings and the habitations which surrounded them. It must be noted that this is a quite different phenomenon (chronologically, economically and politically) from *incastellamento*, the later development of fortified hill-top towns.⁷⁵

Based on the examination of environmental data, some scholars have proposed that climatic change caused changes in the patterns of production and settlement in Late Antiquity. However, there is no consensus on this topic: some researchers have suggested that there was a slow but significant reversion to a wetland environment in south-eastern France. Such a change in environmental conditions could have been a factor in the transformation and disintegration of a villa economy in favour of a new productive system more suited to wetland, with an increased preference for hill-top settlements and a greater emphasis on hunting, fishing and small-scale subsistence-level agriculture. On the other hand, other scholars argue that there was a world-wide increase in *aridity* in Late Antiquity, reaching a peak at the end of the 7th c., and that this may have adversely affected dispersed settlement.⁷⁶

⁷⁴ *Hill-top sites in Britain*: Dark (1996) (supra note 73) 23–52.

⁷⁵ *Incastellamento*: Recent contributions in Barceló M. and Toubert P. (1998) edd. *L'incastellamento. Actes des rencontres de Gerone (26–27 Novembre 1992) et de Rome (5–7 Mai 1994)* (Rome 1998) and Hubert E. (2002) *L'incastellamento en Italie centrale. Pouvoirs, territoire et peuplement dans la Vallée du Turano au Moyen Âge* (Bibliothèque des Écoles françaises d'Athènes et de Rome, 309) (Rome 2002).

⁷⁶ *Climatic change*: cf. André J., Chabal L. Bui Thi Mai, and Raynaud C. (1997) "Habitat et environnement autour de l'étang de l'Or au premier millénaire. Approches pluridisciplinaires", *RANarb* 30 (1997) 85–121; Leveau P. (1994) "Dal paesaggio naturale al paesaggio coltivato. Dati archeologici relativi ai grandi lavori in età romana: il drenaggio delle paludi nella Bassa Provenza", in Carlsen *et al.* (1994) (supra note 19) 73–78; Traina G. (1994) "Paesaggi tardoantichi: alcuni problemi", in *La storia*

There is a growing recognition among archaeologists that from the 5th c., or even earlier, new types of rural habitation and settlements began to appear. Small villages or hamlets, in contrast to the villa estate, seem to have become the characteristic settlement type of the late antique to Early Medieval period. Hamlets consisting of several wooden houses, with associated agricultural and work buildings (often including sunken huts), and usually an enclosing fence, appear from the 3rd c. onwards in Britain, Gaul, and Germany, and in 6th to 7th c. Italy. Sometimes such buildings appear on or very close to former Roman villa sites. Other settlements are located on sites without evidence of earlier occupation. Often hamlets were 'wandering settlements', shifting location within a small area. The phenomenon of shifting settlement seems to have been a feature of the 5th to 7th c. western countryside. A well-published example is the site of Mucking, in Britain, which shifted three times between the 5th and 7th centuries.⁷⁷

In some regions there may have been a nucleation of settlement into larger villages, as was suggested by Percival. However, most evidence suggests that in many regions of Europe rural settlement

dell'Alto Medioevo italiano (VI–X secolo) alla luce della Archeologia, edd. R. Francovich and G. Noyé (*Biblioteca di Archeologia Medievale* 11) (Florence 1994) 85–98; see now the contributions in Ouzoulias *et al.* (2001) (supra note 55) of M. Magny, "Les variations du niveau des lacs du Jura et des Alpes du nord et leur signification pour une histoire du climat aux IV^e et V^e siècles de notre ère", 357–68; J.-F. Berger, "Évolution des agro- et des hydrosystèmes dans la région médio-rhodanienne", 369–404; J. M. Séguier, "L'habitat rural du secteur de confluence entre Seine et Yonne aux IV^e et V^e siècles", 405–430; Gurt Esparraguera J. M. and Palet Martínez J. M., "Structuration du territoire dans le nord-est de l'Hispanie pendant l'Antiquité tardive: transformation du paysage et dynamique du peuplement", 304–29. Gunn J. D. (2000) ed. *The Years without Summer. Tracing A.D. 536 and its Aftermath* (BAR I.S. 872) (Oxford 2000). Increased aridity: see Vanhaverbeke *et al.*, in this volume, with bibliography.

⁷⁷ *Early Medieval hamlets*: Clark A. (1993) *Excavations at Mucking, 1, the site atlas* (London 1993); Dark K. (forthcoming) "The late antique landscapes of Britain, A.D. 300–600", in Christie (forthcoming) (supra note 38). For detailed typology of early Medieval building and settlement types, see Hamerow (2002) (supra note 3) 12–124; P. Van Ossel, "La part du Bas-Empire dans la formation de l'habitat rural du VI^e siècle", in *Gregoire de Tours et l'espace gaulois. Actes du congrès international (Tours 3–5 Novembre, 1994)*, edd. N. Gauthier and H. Galinié (Tours 1997) 82–109; Van Ossel and Ouzoulias (2000) (supra note 3) 148–49; Halsall (1998) (supra note 7) 147 and Dammingier (1998) (supra note 7) 33–106; E. Louis, in this volume; Perin P. (forthcoming) "The origin of the village in Frankish Gaul", and Arthur P. (forthcoming) "From vicus to village: Italian landscapes, A.D. 400–1000", both in Christie (forthcoming) (supra note 38).

remained quite dispersed, in farms or small hamlets, during Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages.⁷⁸

Until recently, these kinds of wooden buildings and settlements were often ignored altogether by archaeologists, or were interpreted as poor huts, reflecting a decline in economic prosperity. However, recent excavation has paid far more attention to such structures, and a number of writers have now also questioned the equation between changed building styles and impoverishment, suggesting that wooden houses were able to provide as much comfort as buildings of stone, and that buildings of ephemeral materials could still be richly decorated and well-constructed. The contemporaneous building of stone churches, and evidence of tombs suggests that changes were not necessarily the outcome of poverty.⁷⁹

The analysis of the terminology used for different kinds of settlements and the evolution in meaning of these words during Late Antiquity is of great importance because it probably reflects real changes in settlement patterns and the organisation of estates.⁸⁰

⁷⁸ *Nucleated and dispersed settlement in the West*: Percival (1976) (supra note 50) 172–99. *Italy*: Arthur (forthcoming) (supra note 77). A good example of nucleation has been detected in the Garda lake area, where the disappearance of the villas is accompanied by a development of nucleated sites like Garda, cfr. Brogiolo (1997) (supra note 68); Mancassola N. and Saggiolo F. (2000) “La fine delle ville romane. Il territorio tra Adda e Adige”, *Archeologia Medievale* 27 (2000) 315–31. *Gaul*: E. Louis, in this volume; Halsall (1995) (supra note 7) 212 for the territory of Metz where, he argues, nucleated settlements were in fact either abandoned or reduced to the status of homesteads or hamlets; Haselgrove C. and Scull C. (1995) “The changing structure of rural settlement in southern Picardy during the first millennium A.D.”, in Bintliff and Hamerow (1995) (supra note 3) 58–70. Hamerow (2002) (supra note 3) argues that small, dispersed hamlets were dominant in North-West Europe.

⁷⁹ *Interpretation of wooden building*: historiographic review in Ward-Perkins B. (1997) “Continuists, catastrophists, and the towns of Post-Roman northern Italy”, *PBSR* 65 (1997) 157–76. *North Italy*: see many of the contributions in Brogiolo G. P. (1994) ed. *Edilizia residenziale tra V e VIII secolo* (Mantua 1994) especially M. Valenti, “La Toscana tra VI e IX secolo. Città e campagna tra fine dell’età tardoantica ed altomedioevo”, 81–106. *Hispania*: see the review of evidence in Azkarate A. and Quirós J. A. (2001) “Arquitectura doméstica altomedieval en la Península Ibérica. Reflexiones a partir de las excavaciones arqueológicas de la catedral de Santa María de Vitoria-Gasteiz (País Vasco)”, *Archeologia Medievale* 28 (2001) 25–60. *Northern Gaul*: see Van Ossel (1997) (supra note 77) and various contributions to Lorren C. and Périn P. (1995) edd. *L’habitat rural du haut Moyen Âge (France, Pays-Bas, Danemark et Grande-Bretagne). Actes des XIV journées internationales d’archéologie mérovingienne, Guiry-en-Vexin et Paris 4–8 février 1993* (Rouen 1995).

⁸⁰ *Terminology*: Samson R. (1987) “The Merovingian nobleman’s house. Castle or villa?”, *Journal of Medieval History* 13 (1987) 287–315; Leveau P. (1993) “*Territorium urbis*. Le territoire de la cité romaine et ses divisions: du vocabulaire aux réalités

These kinds of settlements have sometimes been linked to the immigration of new ethnic groups, who, it was argued, lived at different locations and in a very different style of habitation. However, the ‘barbarian’ character of these settlements is difficult to demonstrate. Although the changes in settlement sometimes coincide chronologically with the influx of ‘barbarian’ settlers recorded in literary sources, the automatic equation of changes in lifestyle with the physical influx of a new ethnic group is increasingly being called into question.⁸¹ Wood-built settlements and structures appear rather to have become almost universal in the Early Middle Ages. Nevertheless, certain settlements have been connected with specific ethnic groups in the North of *Germania Inferior*, in North-West Gaul, and in Britain. The presence of Goths, Lombards and Visigoths in villas of North Italy and *Hispania* has been suggested.⁸²

administratives”, *REA* 95 (1993) 1–13; Heinzelmann M. (1993) “Villa d’après les oeuvres de Grégoire de Tours”, in *Aux sources de la gestion publique. I. Enquête lexicographique sur fundus, villa, domus, mansus*, ed. E. Magnou-Nortier (Lille 1993) 45–70; Revuelta R. (1997) *La ordenación del territorio en Hispania durante la Antigüedad tardía. Estudio y selección de textos*, Colección Castillos y Vida Histórica 2 (Madrid 1997); Isla Frez A. (2001) “Villa, villula, castellum. Problemas de terminología rural en época visigoda”, *Arqueología y territorio Medieval* 8 (2001) 9–19.

⁸¹ *Identification of “Barbarian” settlement*: debate was begun by Chapelot J. (1980) “Le fond de cabane dans l’habitat rural ouest-européen: état des questions”, *Archéologie Médiévale* 10 (1980) 5–57; an up-to-date summary of the state of historical research on this issue can be found in Pohl W. and Reimitz H. (1998) edd. *Strategies of Distinction: the Construction of Ethnic Communities, 300–800* (TRW 2) (Leiden-Boston-Cologne 1998) and Gillett A. (2002) *On Barbarian Identity: Critical Approaches to Ethnicity in the Early Middle Ages* (Turnhout 2002). For problems in archaeological identification of Visigoths and their settlements see Ripoll G. (2000) “Romani e Visigoti in Hispania: problemi di interpretazione del materiale archeologico”, in *Le invasioni barbariche nel meridione dell’impero: Visigoti, Vandali, Ostrogoti*, ed. P. Delogu (Cosenza 2000) 99–117. For insights on the historiography of attempts to identify Germanic groups in the archaeological record, see Barlow J. (1998) “Race theory, historical geography, and the transition from ancient to medieval”, in *Ancient History in a Modern University 2. Early Christianity, Late Antiquity and Beyond*, edd. T. W. Hillard et al. (Grand Rapids 1998) 406–16.

⁸² *Probable barbarian settlements: Germany*: Theuvs F. and Hiddink H. A. (1996) “Der Kontakt zu Rom”, in *Die Franken. Wegbereiter Europas. Vor 1500 Jahren. König Chlodwig und seine Erbe* (Mainz 1996) 66–80. *Gaul*: Gonzalez V., Ouzoulias P. and Van Ossel P., (2001) “Saint Ouen-du-Breuil (Haute-Normandie, Frankreich). Eine germanische Siedlung aus der Mitte des vierten Jahrhunderts in der Lugdunensis Secunda. Neue Ergebnisse zur Eingliederung von Germanen in der nordwestlichen Provinzen des römischen Reiches”, *Germania* 79.1 (2001) 43–61. *Britain*: Higham (1992) (supra note 61); Hooke D. (1998) *The Landscape of Anglo-Saxon England* (London 1998) 107–11; Hamerow H. (1993) *Excavations at Mucking, 2, The Anglo-Saxon Settlement* (London 1993). For detailed discussion and bibliography on the identification of

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Christian buildings, in the form of rural chapels (sometimes linked to residential buildings), shrines, monasteries or village churches, were built in all regions of the Roman Empire from the 4th c. onwards. In some cases, the presence of shrines (especially those of martyrs) or churches attracted significant activity and the development of new settlements, thanks to the presence of worshippers and pilgrims, especially in the East.⁸⁴

Many rural churches and monasteries were built, sometimes profiting from previous structures, which could have been donated to the church by pious landowners. Archaeological research shows that many Medieval rural churches in Europe reused parts of former Roman buildings, usually villas and their annexes, but in most cases it is difficult to establish whether the villa was still in use, whether it had been abandoned, or whether it was in ruins when the first cult building was constructed.⁸⁵

Anglo-Saxons in Britain, see Scull (1995) (supra note 7) 71–83. Italy: Casteldebole in Ortalli (1994) (supra note 56) 194; Mombello in Pantò G. and Pejrani Baricco L. (2001) “Chiese nella campagne del Piemonte in età tardolombarda”, in *Le chiese rurali tra VII e VIII secolo in Italia settentrionale*, ed. G. P. Brogiolo (Mantua 2001) 17–54. For Gothic settlement in the Italian countryside see Brogiolo G. P. and Posenti E. (2000) “L’età gota in Italia settentrionale, nella transizione tra tarda antichità e alto medioevo”, in Delogu (2000) (supra note 81) 257–85. Hispania: On Visigoths and villas in Hispania, see Chavarría (2003) (supra note 66) and Chavarría (forthcoming) (supra note 66).

⁸³ *Christianisation*: It is beyond the scope of this review to list works on the progress and processes of Christianisation *per se*. For recent bibliography on this topic see, for example, Trombley F. R. (1994) *Hellenic Religion and Christianization: c. 370–529* (Leiden and New York 1994); Part V (Religion) of Cameron and Garnsey (1998) (supra note 2); Cameron, Ward-Perkins and Whitby (2000) (supra note 2); Garnsey P. and Humfress C. (2001) *The Evolution of the Late Antique World* (Cambridge 2001); and Caseau B. (2001) “Sacred landscapes”, in Bowersock, Brown and Grabar (2001) (supra note 2) 21–59 (including comments on interaction with Islam). Only the influence of Christianisation on the physical landscape—through building and settlement patterns—will be considered here.

⁸⁴ *Pilgrim settlement*: One example among many others is that of *Martyropolis*, which grew up around the 4th c. *martyrium* of Saint Menas in the Egyptian desert: Haas (2001) (supra note 22) 54–55.

⁸⁵ *Roman remains used in church building*: The close relationship between villas and later churches and monasteries was examined in detail, with many examples, by Percival (1976) (supra note 50) 183–99. More recently, see Morris R. and Roxan J. (1980) “Churches on Roman buildings”, in *Temples, Churches and Religion in Roman Britain*, ed. R. Rodwell (BAR B.S. 77) (Oxford 1980) 175–92; Audin P. (1984) “La réutilisation des sites antiques par les églises”, *Caesarodunum* 19 (1984) 63–107; Bell T. (1998) “Churches on Roman buildings: Christian associations and Roman masonry

Textual data reveals the multiplication of rural monasteries in the *territoria* of the most important cities from the 4th c. onwards, especially in the East.⁸⁶ In the West, monastic structures began to appear in the countryside during Late Antiquity. The evidence of texts and archaeology suggests that, as with churches, their construction also probably profited from earlier buildings. Monasteries which had a short existence are practically invisible to us, probably because most did not have any special architectural characteristics which differentiated them from other rural buildings.⁸⁷

The impact of Christianisation on the eastern countryside is marked by an explosion of church building in villages from the 4th to the 7th centuries. Churches appear in virtually every locality, while in some Near Eastern villages the number of churches seems extraordinary in relation to the size of the settlement. Church building even continued after other forms of building had declined.⁸⁸

in Anglo-Saxon Britain”, *Medieval Archaeology* 42 (1998) 1–18; Cantino Wataghin G. (1999) “. . . ut haec aedes Christo Domino in Ecclesiam consecratur. Il riuso cristiano di edifici antichi tra tarda antichità e alto medioevo”, *XLVI Sett. St. CISAM*, t. 2 (Spoleto 1999) 673–749. On the construction of churches on Roman ruins see Effros B. (2001) “Monuments and memory: repossessing ancient remains in Early Medieval Gaul”, in *Topography of Power in the Early Medieval West*, edd. M. De Jong and F. Theuvs with C. Van Rhijn (TRW 6) (Leiden-Boston-Cologne 2001) 93–118.

⁸⁶ *Near Eastern Monasteries*: Hirschfeld Y. (1992) *The Judean Desert Monasteries in the Byzantine period* (New Haven and London 1992); Hirschfeld (2002) (supra note 42) and Patrich J. (1994) *Sabas, Leader of Palestinian Monasticism. A Comparative Study in Eastern Monasticism. 4th to 7th c.* (Dumbarton Oaks Studies 32) (Washington 1994); Dahari U. (2000) *Monastic Settlements in South Sinai in the Byzantine Period. The Archaeological Remains* (Jerusalem 2000). See also summary of the main characteristics of these monasteries in Patrich (1995) (supra note 35) 477–82, 487 (for Christian architecture in Palestine). Small monasteries in Syria: Fourdrin J.-P. (1989) *Contribution française à l'archéologie syrienne 1969–1989* (Damascus 1989) 198–201.

⁸⁷ *Western monasteries*: Percival (1997) (supra note 68) 1–21; Cantino Wataghin G. (1989) “Monasteri di età longobarda: spunti per una ricerca”, *Corso di cultura sull'arte ravennate e bizantina* 36 (Ravenna 1989) 73–100; Chavarría A. (forthcoming) “Villas, monasterios y campesinos: la trágica historia del abad Nancto (VSPE, III)”, in *Studiola Infimae Antiquitatis. Melanges N. Duval II*, edd. G. Ripoll, P. Chevallier and C. Balmelle (*Bibliothèque de l'Antiquité Tardive* 9) (Paris forthcoming); Hodges R. (1990) ed. *San Vincenzo al Volturno* (London 1990) and now Bowes K., Francis K. and Hodges R. (forthcoming) *Between Text and Territory: Survey and Excavations in the Terra of San Vincenzo al Volturno* (forthcoming); Olson L. (1989) *Early Monasteries in Cornwall* (Woodbridge 1989).

⁸⁸ *Village churches in the East*: for example, at Khirbet Samra in Arabia, a village of only about 200 × 220 m contained eight churches: Gatié (1994) (supra note 6) 26 and see 24 for continued building. *Jordan, Arabia and Palestine*: MacAdam (1994) (supra note 35) 59, with bibliography; Piccirillo M. (1993) *The Mosaics of Jordan* (Amman 1993); Hirschfeld (2002) (supra note 42); Sodini J.-P. (1995) “L'organisation

Extensive survey in North Macedonia shows that here monumental church building was overwhelmingly rural in Late Antiquity, with the majority of early churches located in rural villages. In contrast, rural church building and possibly Christianisation in the countryside in Pisidia may have been more limited; 5th to 6th c. churches can so far be identified in only about half the villages in this region. In Palestine, the centre of late antique villages was the synagogue, and a large number of archaeological and architectural studies of these buildings have been carried out.⁸⁹

Mattingly argued that Christianisation had an uneven impact on the North African countryside. He suggested that whereas Christian sites and symbols appear at farms in the northern Gebel region, by contrast there are fewer Christian remains in the pre-desert, and that local pagan cults continued to dominate in this region. However, in recent years many more rural churches have been documented in

liturgique des églises en Palestine et Judée”, in Humphrey (1995) (supra note 34) 304–311; Tsafir Y. (1993) ed. *Ancient Churches Revealed* (Jerusalem 1993); Ben Pechat M. (1989) “The Paleochristian baptismal fonts in the Holy Land: formal and functional study”, *Liber Annus* 39 (1989) 165–88; Di Segni L. “Epigraphic documentation on building in the provinces of Palaestina and Arabia, 4th–7th c.”, in Humphrey J. (ed.) (1999) *The Roman and Byzantine Near East 2*, (JRA Supp. 31) (Portsmouth 1999), 149–178. New discoveries in Bottini G. C., Di Segni L. and Alliata E. (1990) *Christian Archaeology in the Holy Land. New Discoveries. Essays in Honour of Virgilio C. Corbo* (Jerusalem 1990). Syria: Tchalenko G. (1979–1980) *Eglises de village de la Syrie du nord*, 2 vols. (Paris 1979–80); Tchalenko G. (1990) *Eglises syriennes à bēma* (Paris 1990); Donceel-Voûte P. (1998) *Les pavements des églises byzantines de Syrie et du Liban. I: décor, archéologie et liturgie* (Louvain-la-Neuve 1988); Dufay B. (1988) “Les baptistères paléochrétiens ruraux de Syrie du Nord”, in *Géographie historique du monde Méditerranéen*, ed. H. Ahrweiler (Paris 1988) 67–98; Sodini J.-P. (1989) “Les églises de Syrie du Nord”, in *Archéologie et histoire de la Syrie II: la Syrie de l'époque achéménide à l'avènement de l'Islam*, edd. J. M. Dentzer and W. Orthmann (Saarbrücken 1989) 347–72; Kidner (2001) (supra note 35). Mesopotamia: Bell G. (1982) *The Churches and Monasteries of the Tur Abdin* (with an introduction and notes by M. Mundell Mango) (London 1982); Egypt: Grossmann P. (2002) *Christliche Architektur in Ägypten* (Leiden 2002). Cyprus: Rautman M. L. and McClellan M. C. (1992) “Excavations at late Roman Kopetra (Cyprus)”, *JRA* 5 (1992) 265–271. Turkey: Harrison M. (1963) “Churches and chapels in central Lycia”, *Anatolian Studies* 13 (1963) 117–51; Harrison M. (2001) *Mountain and Plain: from the Lycian Coast to the Phrygian Plateau in the Late Roman and Early Byzantine Period*, ed. W. Young (Ann Arbor 2001), with note on continued building p. 24; Hill S. (1996) *Early Byzantine Churches of Cilicia and Isauria* (Aldershot 1996); Fowden G. (1990) “Religious developments in late Roman Lycia: topographical preliminaries”, *Meletemata* (Athens 1990). Cyrenaica: Stucchi S. (1975) *Architettura Cirenaica* (Rome 1975).

⁸⁹ Regional variation in Christianisation: Dunn A., “Continuity and change in the Macedonian countryside from Gallienus to Justinian”, in this volume, with bibliography. Vanderhaverbeke H. et al., “Late Antiquity in the territory of Sagalassos”, in this volume, with bibliography. Synagogues: Patrich (1995) (supra note 35) 479–81 with bibliography.

North Africa, although they are rarely studied in relation to the areas that they probably served.⁹⁰

Archaeological research and references in literary, juridical and conciliar documents reveal that the spread of Christianity in the western countryside was, at least during the 4th and 5th centuries, closely linked to the land-owning elites. The earliest vestiges of Christian symbols in the western countryside are found on aristocratic objects (treasures and mosaics) and the earliest identified Christian spaces were built in villas, probably as private chapels (*oratoria*).⁹¹

Because many of these early Christian structures continued to be used as rural churches, sometimes even through the Middle Ages, it is usually very difficult to establish the early history of these first *oratoria*, or when they were founded. It must also be stressed that the appearance of Christian symbols on objects or mosaics found in a domestic context does not necessarily imply the existence of a Christian building, but probably just the religious affiliation of the villa owner.⁹²

There are some examples of villas in which it is most probable that cultic spaces were arranged when the villa was still in use, such as Lullingstone in Britain, and the villa of Fortunatus in north-eastern Hispania. Similar churches have been also identified in other villas in the province of Lusitania, as well as very early Christian buildings in the vicinity of the residential buildings at Torre de Palma, although the chronology of some of these sites has been debated or requires further research. This type of early Christian arrangement is also attested in Gaul. Examples of churches with baptismal structures within villas include the 5th c. churches of Palazzo Pignano or the

⁹⁰ *Pagan & Christian sites in Africa*: Mattingly D. (1996) “Explanations: people as agency”, in Barker et al. (1996) (supra note 15) 337–38, with bibliography; see also Riggs D. (2001) “The continuity of paganism between the cities and countryside of Late Roman Africa”, in Burns and Eadie (2001) (supra note 22). Béjaoui F. (2002) “L'état des découvertes d'époque chrétienne des dix dernières années en Tunisie”, *AnTard* 10 (2002) 197–211.

⁹¹ *Spread of Christianity in the West*: A good overview in Monfrin F. (1998) “L'établissement matériel de l'église aux V et VI siècles”, in *Histoire du Christianisme des origines à nos jours*, III, *Les Églises d'Orient et d'Occident* (Paris 1998) 959–1014. A fundamental volume on this subject is that of the *XXVIII Sett. St. CISAM 1980* (Spoleto 1982) with seminal contributions. Important contributions are also found in Fixot M. and Zadora-Rio E. (1991) *L'environnement des églises et la topographie religieuse des campagnes médiévales: actes du IIIe congrès international d'archéologie médiévale (Aix-en-Provence, 1989)* (Paris 1991).

⁹² *Christian symbols in villas*: see the discussion in Rossiter J. (2002) “Houses in Roman Britain”, *JRA* 15 (2002) 625–29, esp. 628–29 review of Perring (2002) (supra note 13).

villa of San Giusto (Puglia), endowed with two churches and a baptistery building and identified by G. Volpe as a rural episcopal centre.⁹³

For the East, J. J. Rossiter notes textual references to a chapel in St. Basil's villa (Pontus), a mausoleum and a chapel at Rufinus' villa in the vicinity of Chalcedon as well as the private chapel of Adelphius' villa at Vanota (Galatia), described by Gregory of Nyssa, whose family also owned a estate at Anissa (Pontus) with a chapel.⁹⁴ Other churches, often endowed with a baptistery, are to be dated later in the 6th and 7th centuries, when the villas had probably already lost their residential character. Little work has been done to establish whether these buildings were built by private or ecclesiastical initiative, their exact function, or to relate them to the habitat they served.⁹⁵

⁹³ *Cultic spaces in villas (West): Britain:* Meates G. W. (1979) *The Roman Villa at Lullingstone, Kent* (Kent 1979). A good synthesis on the Christianisation of British villas is still Painter K. S. (1971) "Villas and Christianity in Roman Britain", in *Prehistoric and Roman Studies Commemorating the Opening of the Department of Prehistoric and Romano-British Antiquities*, ed. G. de G. Sieveking (London 1971) 156-77. *Hispania:* Bowes K. (2001) "... *Nec sedere in villam?*": villa churches, rural piety and the Priscillianist controversy", in Burns and Eadie (2001) (supra note 22) 323-48, although the relationship between these villas and Priscillianism is debatable; Alfenim R. A. E. and Lopes M. Da C. (1995) "A basílica paleocristã/visigótica do Monte da Cegonha (Vidigueira)", *IV Reunião de arqueologia cristã hispânica (Lisboa, 1992)* (Barcelona 1995) 389-99; Maciel M. J. (1996) *Antiguidade tarda e paleocristianismo em Portugal* (Lisboa 1996); Maloney S. J. (1995) "The early Christian basilica complex of Torre de Palma (Monforte, Alto Alentejo, Portugal)", *IV Reunião de arqueologia cristã hispânica (Lisboa, 1992)* (Barcelona 1995) 449-61. *Gaul:* cf. *Naissance des arts chrétiens*, p. 190. The main sites of south Gaul have been analyzed in *Premiers monuments chrétiens de la France*, vol. 1, *Midi Méditerranéen* (Paris 1995) and *Premiers monuments chrétiens de la France*, vol. 2, *Midi Atlantique* (Paris 1996). *Italy:* Fiochi Nicolai V. and Gelichi S. (2001) "Battisteri e chiese rurali", in *L'edificio battesimale in Italia. Aspetti e problemi. Atti dell'VIII Congresso Nazionale di Archeologia Cristiana Genova, Sarzana, Albenga, Finale Ligure, Ventimiglia 21-16 settembre 1998* (Bordighera 2001) 335-36 and 322-24 with bibliography; Cantino Wataghin G. (2000) "Christianisation et organisation ecclésiastique des campagnes: l'Italie du nord aux IV^e-VIII^e siècles", in Brogiolo, Gauthier and Christie (2000) (supra note 64) 209-234; Volpe G. (1998) ed. *San Giusto, la villa, le ecclesiae* (Bari 1998) and now Volpe G. (2001) "San Giusto: un insediamento apulo nel quadro dell'Adriatico", in *Lo Adriatico. Civiltà di mare tra frontiere e confine*, ed. F. Motta (Mailand 2001) 139-45.

⁹⁴ *Cultic spaces in villas (East):* Rossiter J. (1989) "Roman villas of the Greek East and the villa in Gregory of Nyssa Ep. 20", *JRA* 2 (1989) 101-10. On the description of Adelphius' villa see also Stupperich R. (1994) "Zur Beschreibung einer Galatischen Villa im 20. Brief Gregors von Nyssa", *Asia Minor Studien* 12 (1994) 157-69.

⁹⁵ *Churches and settlements:* A preliminary analysis on this topic has been formulated by Brogiolo G. P. and Chavarría A. "Chiese e insediamenti tra V e VI secolo in Italia settentrionale, Gallia meridionale e Hispania", in G. P. Brogiolo (ed.) *Chiese e insediamenti tra V e VI secolo*, 9 seminario sul hardo antico e l'alto medioevo,

Christianisation and gifts of land to the church and monasteries were an important component of the evolution of the late antique western countryside. Texts and archaeology show that from the end of the 4th c. onwards, many *vici*, *castella* and *villas* were already endowed with Christian buildings. There has also been some discussion in recent years concerning the origins of the parishes.⁹⁶ However, it would be erroneous to picture a completely Christianised rural landscape in the West by the 4th c. The persistence of paganism in the countryside until a much later date is attested both by textual sources, such as Gregory of Tours and Martin de Bracara, and archaeological evidence that 4th c. landowners continued to build pagan temples in their villas.⁹⁷

CONCLUSIONS

Late Antiquity appears to have been a time of great change in the countryside. Major transformations which are apparent are: the radical changes to the style and possibly location of settlement throughout the West; the impact of Christianisation, not only on social life but possibly on settlement; a shift in centres of export production and routes of trade in rural products; and the economic boom of Africa and the East, with increased settlement, exploitation of land, and export production in many regions.

Mantua, 2003, 7-38. At Monte Gelato (Italy), the villa, reoccupied—possibly as a settlement of *coloni*—in the 4th c., was endowed with a church by A.D. 400, and its later history indicates that it may have been Church property: Potter T. W. and King A. C. (1997) *Excavations at the Mola di Monte Gelato. A Roman and Medieval Settlement in South Etruria* (London 1997) and discussion in Bowes K. (2002) *Possessing the Holy: Private Churches and Private Piety in Late Antiquity* (Ph.D. diss., Princeton University 2002).

⁹⁶ *Church land-ownership & parishes:* Ripoll and Arce (2000) (supra note 66) 63-114; Blair J. and Sharpe R. (1992) *Pastoral Care Before the Parish* (Leicester 1992) and Pergola P. (1999) ed. *Alle origini della parrocchia rurale (IV-VII sec.)*. *Atti della giornata tematica dei Seminari di Archeologia Cristiana (École Française de Rome—19 marzo 1998)* (Sussidi allo Studio delle antichità cristiane pubblicati a cura del Pontificio Istituto di Archeologia Cristiana 12) (Vatican City 1999).

⁹⁷ *Pagan temples in villas:* Le Maho J. (1994) "La réutilisation funéraire des édifices antiques en Normandie au cours du haut Moyen Age", in *L'environnement des églises et la topographie religieuse des campagnes médiévales, Actes du IIIe congrès international d'archéologie médiévale, Aix-en-Provence, 28-30 septembre 1989*, edd. M. Fixot and E. Zadora-Rio (Documents d'Archéologie Française 46) (Paris 1994) 10-21; Chavarría in Bowes and Kulikowski (forthcoming) (supra note 59) on *Hispania*.

Some patterns are beginning to emerge in different periods of Late Antiquity. The 3rd c. appears to have seen some decline in regions of both West and East, but an intense flourish of rural production and occupation in Africa. The 4th c. saw the apogee of the villa estates in the West, while the rural boom in villages of the eastern provinces seems to have begun in the 5th c.

One of the most vital areas for future research to pursue is the study of more ephemeral forms of settlement, both in order to enhance our understanding of the lives of the mass of the population, and to reach a greater understanding of a period in which ephemeral styles of building became more dominant. More work is also still needed on regional coarse wares of Late Antiquity, although tremendous advances have been made.

Another avenue for future research is the productive aspects of rural life. The examination of utilitarian features of the ancient countryside, such as agricultural buildings, walls, cisterns and terraces, as well as tools and botanical and zoological data, offers enormous potential for landscape reconstruction in future. The collection and analysis of palaeoecological evidence and consideration of the effects of climatic change also warrant more detailed investigation.

A final goal for future research will be to redress the balance between the types and intensity of investigation which have been carried out in different regions. It is to be hoped that the next decades will see, for example, the thorough investigation of 5th to 7th c. hamlets in western regions, and more complete stratigraphic excavations of rural sites in the East.

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Gaul & Rhine

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