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Oria Kastro, an insular medieval settlement and fortress on Kythnos

An architectural, archaeological and historical investigation

Chrysanthi Anna Veloudaki



The University of Edinburgh

2020

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Lay Summary

The thesis concerns Oria *Kastro* (Greek for castle) a ruined fortified settlement on the island of Kythnos in the western Cyclades, in the Aegean Sea. Oria has traditionally been considered the main medieval settlement of the island founded in the Early Byzantine period. After the Fourth Crusade, in c.1207, it was occupied by the Latins until the 1570s when it was captured and destroyed by the Ottomans. Since then it remains uninhabited and unlike many similar sites, it retains its original form with very little modern intervention.

Given that research on the medieval *kastra* of the Cyclades is still quite limited, the well-preserved and not previously studied Oria *Kastro* is used as a case study to examine the role, use and main features of these Cycladic fortified settlements. A detailed survey of the settlement and its environs is conducted to record the urban fabric, the buildings' uses, the typology as well as the construction methods and materials. The largely unattested medieval history of Kythnos is also discussed. Finally, a comparative study with other Byzantine and Latin *kastra* attempts to establish possible connections with other sites and examine the role of Oria in the wider Aegean area during both periods.

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Abstract

The thesis concerns Oria *Kastro* a medieval fortified settlement on the island of Kythnos in the western Cyclades. Nested on top of a remote cliff on the north-western coast the *Kastro* (*kastro* meaning castle in Greek) has traditionally been considered Kythnos' medieval capital founded sometime in the Early Byzantine period (6th-7th century AD). However, what we see today is predominantly the Latin phase as following the Fourth Crusade, the island was incorporated to the Aegean Duchy in c. 1207. Oria was occupied by the Latins until the 1570s when it was violently captured and destroyed by the Ottomans. The site was never inhabited again, becoming thus a rare and valuable fossil of the original layout of such settlements. Today, despite its long-term abandonment, it is exceptionally well-preserved, and unlike many similar *kastra* on other islands, there is very little modern intervention.

With few notable exceptions, research on the medieval fortresses of the Cyclades is still quite limited therefore the main goal of the thesis is to provide a synthetic analysis of the role, use and main features of these insular fortified settlements using Oria *Kastro* as a case study. The site has not been subject to systematic research before, which means that there is no established evidence for its history nor any documentation of the built remains. Also, the overall knowledge of the island's medieval history is very limited and fragmented.

The main body of the study is structured in three parts: Section 1 gives basic information about Kythnos' history with an emphasis on the Byzantine and Latin periods to provide a context for Oria. In addition, an attempt is made to document the landscape and built environment of medieval Kythnos by combining data from field observations and written sources. The demographic data of the island during that period as well as the relations and interactions of the different religious and ethnical groups are also discussed.

Section 2 focuses on the study and analysis of the Oria *Kastro* ruins. The site covers an area of 1.32 ha and includes buildings of many different uses, i.e. houses, administrative and public buildings, churches, cisterns, etc. A detailed survey of the settlement and its environs was conducted to record the urban fabric and the defence

system as well as the buildings' uses, the typology and the construction methods and materials. Furthermore, 18 of the best-preserved and characteristic buildings were surveyed and studied in greater detail.

Finally, Section 3 aims to place Oria in a wider Cyclades and Aegean setting. A comparative study with other Byzantine and Latin *kastra* attempts to draw parallels between their choice of location, use and layout. By establishing possible connections with other sites this section discusses the reasons for the foundation of Oria and examines its role in the wider Aegean area during both periods.

Preface

The idea for my involvement with Oria *Kastro*¹ on Kythnos was born several years ago when I chose this ruined fortified settlement as the subject for my MSc dissertation at the NTUA School of Architecture. The study of the *Kastro* proved more challenging and at the same time more fascinating than initially expected; situated on an inaccessible rock by the sea, shrouded with frightful myths and stories Oria was captivating, yet largely unknown to the public and the academic community alike. The need for the research to expand beyond a short-term postgraduate project manifested itself right from the beginning. The three-year scholarship I was kindly awarded by the Wolfson Foundation (Wolfson Postgraduate Scholarship in the Humanities) allowed me to undertake a PhD on this specific subject.

The completion of the thesis would not have been possible without the generous assistance of many people. First and foremost, I owe warm thanks to my supervisors Prof Jim Crow (University of Edinburgh, HCA) and Dr Dimitris Theodossopoulos (University of Edinburgh, ESALA) for the continuous help, support, and encouragement they offered me throughout my research. Their guidance and advice helped shape the contents of this study and provided me with valuable insights into the research tools and methods used by different disciplines. I am also very grateful to my examiners Prof Sharon Gerstel (UCLA) and Dr Mike Carr (University of Edinburgh) for their insightful comments and helpful suggestions.

I would also like to express my gratitude to Eirini Karageorgi (PhD candidate - NTUA School of Architecture) and Matteo Randazzo (PhD candidate - University of Edinburgh) who assisted me with the fieldwork (survey of buildings and observations on the pottery respectively) and discussed my ideas and concerns always offering much appreciated advice. Moreover, I am most grateful to Dr Mike Carr (University of Edinburgh), Cristian Caselli, Dr Lucinda Byatt (University of Edinburgh) and Gianluca Foschi (University of Newcastle) for their help with the translation of Latin

¹ The word *kastro* that derives from the Latin *castrum* is used here to define fortified settlements and towns established during the Medieval and Late Medieval periods on the Cycladic islands. The term can be found in Byzantine texts mainly since the 7th century. Although in the strict sense, *kastron* designated a fortified settlement, usually on a hilltop, distinct from the open lower town it was used interchangeably to describe both major urban fortifications as well as forts and rural defences, Kazhdan (1991), p. 140; Kriara (1980), p. 385; Crow (2017), p. 98.

and Italian texts and manuscripts. I also own thanks to Prof Sam Turner (University of Newcastle) for lending me a GPS device for the survey of Oria and Alex Turner (University of Newcastle) for teaching me how to use it.

Dr Dimitris Dimitropoulos (National Hellenic Research Foundation) kindly assisted me with bibliography suggestions, Dimitris Falakis and Nikos Korres offered me useful information and a local's insight on several sites of the island, while Kostas Efthimiou generously granted me access to rare books from his library. I would also like to thank Father Markos Foskolos for his advice and information on the contents of the archives of the Catholic Bishopric of Tenos. Finally, I owe very special thanks to my family and especially to my mother Vaso who has been my constant companion in all the field trips to the *Kastro* and the other medieval sites of Kythnos and has patiently supported me every step along the way.



Fig. 01. Oria *Kastro* from the southeast

Introduction

The occupation of the Greek islands by the Latins was unnatural, and, like most unnatural things, it was destined not to endure. But this strange meeting of two deeply interesting races in the classic seats of Greek lyric poetry can scarcely fail to strike the imagination. And today, [...] it is curious to go back to the times when Venetian and Lombard families held sway among the islands of the Aegean, and the Latin galleys, flying the pennons of those petty princes, glided in and out of the harbours of that classic sea...

William Miller (1921, p. 175)

As William Miller, the illustrious medievalist, eloquently notes in his book *Essays on the Latin Orient*, the turbulent history of the Aegean Sea has diachronically attracted the interest of foreign and local scholars; the Greek Archipelago has always been a field of conflict but at the same time a crucible of civilisation and meeting point of cultures. From the 7th century AD and throughout the Middle Ages the friction between the Byzantines and the Arabs at first, then the Latins, the Franks and the Ottoman Turks – along with the ever-present threat of piracy² – led to the creation of an extended network of *kastra* on the islands of the Cyclades in the central Aegean.

Although they were called castles, their form and structure bore few similarities to the contemporary Western European castles or the fortresses of mainland Greece and Asia Minor. The Cycladic *kastra* were small fortified settlements intended to meet primary needs of safety and defence. Quite often, their defence relied more on their natural strength rather than extensive fortifications and while they provided security against low-level threats e.g. random pirate attacks, seldom only were they able to withstand organised assaults (e.g. the Latin conquest after 1204 or the Ottoman campaigns of the 16th century). Over the centuries they have undergone

² On piracy in the Aegean, see ind. Christidis (1981); Krantonelli (2015 a, b); Angold (2012), pp. 27-44 and Carr (2015), pp. 17-31. For more on the subject of piracy in the Mediterranean, see Backman (2014), pp. 172-183.

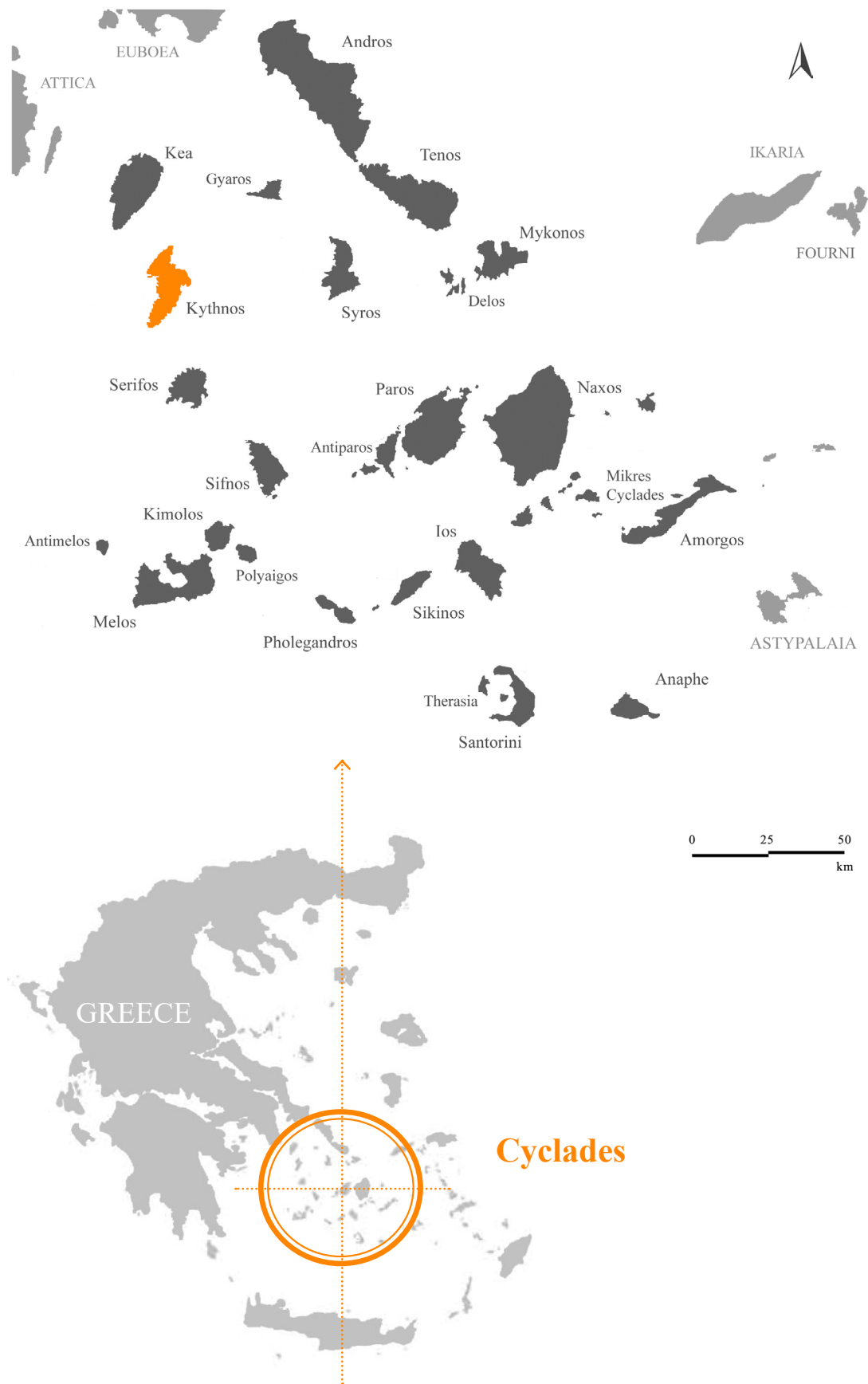


Fig. 02. Maps of Greece and the Cyclades islands

many changes, growing dynamically as they suffered and recovered from violent captures and fluctuations in population. The cohabitation of the locals and the various conquerors (mostly of Latin origin in the Cyclades) resulted in cultural interactions that have shaped the identity of the insular societies to the present day.

The use of the *kastra* gradually declined when the Ottomans conquered almost all the Aegean in the late 16th century and introduced a long period of relative peace (*Pax Ottomana*). As the security requirements changed, some of these sites were abandoned, but most of them progressively transformed into modern settlements by losing their defensive character and expanding to accommodate the islanders' new needs. Sites like Kato *Kastro* of Naxos, Paroikia on Paros or the *kastro* on Mykonos formed the basis of the contemporary urban settlements, i.e. the present-day *chores* (*χώρες*) of the islands. As a result, our knowledge of their original form and structure is limited. The exact chronology of these fortified settlements is also unclear due to the scarcity of written records and relevant archaeological studies. With few notable exceptions research on the Byzantine and Latin forts of the Cyclades is still quite limited.

Oria *Kastro* on Kythnos in the western Cyclades which is the focus of the present study belonged to this type of insular strongholds. Nested on top of a remote cliff on the north-western coast of the island it has traditionally been considered Kythnos' medieval capital founded sometime in the Early Byzantine period. After the establishment of the Aegean Duchy in c.1207, it was occupied by the Latins until the 1570s when it was violently captured by the Ottomans. According to local tradition, the dreadful slaughter that took place then forced the inhabitants to abandon the site and relocate to inland Messaria, the island's current main settlement. The *Kastro* was never inhabited again, becoming thus a rare and valuable fossil of the original layout of such settlements. Today, despite its long-term abandonment, it is exceptionally well-preserved, with very little modern intervention.

Despite its importance for the study of the medieval Cyclades and Kythnos in particular and although it has been listed since 1972,³ the site has not been subject to systematic research before, which means that there is no established evidence

³ YA 6419/19-5-1972 - ΦΕΚ 399/Β/5-6-1972.

for its historical course nor any documentation of the built remains. Moreover, our overall knowledge of the island's medieval history and built environment is also very limited and fragmented. In the year 2012-2013 Oria was the subject of my MSc dissertation at the NTUA School of Architecture. Although this preliminary research provided a good primary basis for the study of the settlement, it became apparent that the subject was more complicated and multifaceted than initially anticipated; more in-depth study and expansion of the research field were required to discover the unknown yet intriguing *Oria Kastro*. That realisation prompted and inspired the undertaking of the current thesis.

Thesis objectives and structure

The main goal of the thesis is to provide a synthetic analysis of the role, use and main features of the fortified settlements of the Cyclades using *Oria Kastro* on Kythnos as a case study. The fact that Oria remained 'frozen in time' makes it ideal for the identification and characterisation of the main features of a medieval stronghold. It also bears witness to the ways these tight, yet multicultural island communities managed to negotiate the ebb and flow of political and cultural change and adapt to an unstable and rather hostile environment.

Given that until recently most studies of the Medieval period have focused on ecclesiastic architecture, architecture of fortifications and other great public works of major urban centres (Constantinople, Thessaloniki, Mystras, etc.), this thesis aims to contribute to the study of humbler, anonymous constructions and the societies that created them and supplement our insufficient knowledge on secular architecture in Greece and the wider Byzantine and Frankish world. Finally, it also seeks to shed light and draw attention to an important yet currently overlooked period of the history of Kythnos.

In order to focus the discussion and provide a clear overview of the main objectives and outcomes of the research, the main body of the study is structured in three parts:

Section 1 gives basic information about Kythnos and presents an outline of its diachronic history with an emphasis on the Byzantine and Latin periods to provide a context for the study and interpretation of Oria. In addition, an attempt is made to

document the landscape and built environment of medieval Kythnos (settlements and forts, churches, anchorages and port installations etc.) by combining data from written sources and field observations. This section discusses also the demographic data of the island during that period as well as the relations and interactions of the different religious/ethnic groups (Orthodox locals - Catholic ruling minority).

Section 2 relates to the study and analysis of the Oria *Kastro* ruins. Based on an extensive survey of the settlement and its environs, this part discusses the site's chronology, location and connectivity, the urban fabric and the defence system as well as the buildings' uses, the typology and the construction methods and materials. The form and structure of 18 well-preserved buildings are presented in greater detail.

Finally, **Section 3** aims to situate Oria in a wider Cyclades and Aegean setting. A comparative study with other Byzantine and Latin *kastra* attempts to draw parallels between their choice of location, use and layout. By establishing possible connections with other sites this section discusses the reasons for the foundation of Oria and examines its role in the Archipelago during both periods.

Methodology

To cover all aspects of this multifaceted subject the study draws from many different disciplines (History, Architecture, Archaeology and Social Anthropology) and combines different research methods and tools. First, a review of the literary sources regarding the Byzantine and Latin period of the Cyclades was carried out. That allowed an overview of the most recent archaeological evidence and my familiarisation with the prevailing views of the academic community on the history of the period. After setting up the general historical framework, more focused study of sources concerning Kythnos and Oria in particular was undertaken (maps and manuscripts of Late Medieval travellers and cartographers, contemporary acts and treaties, works of local and foreign scholars etc.). It should be noted here that the available information on the island is limited; Kythnos remained out of the focus of major historical events, so it is not surprising that it was either absent from most literary sources or referred to collectively with the rest of the Cyclades.

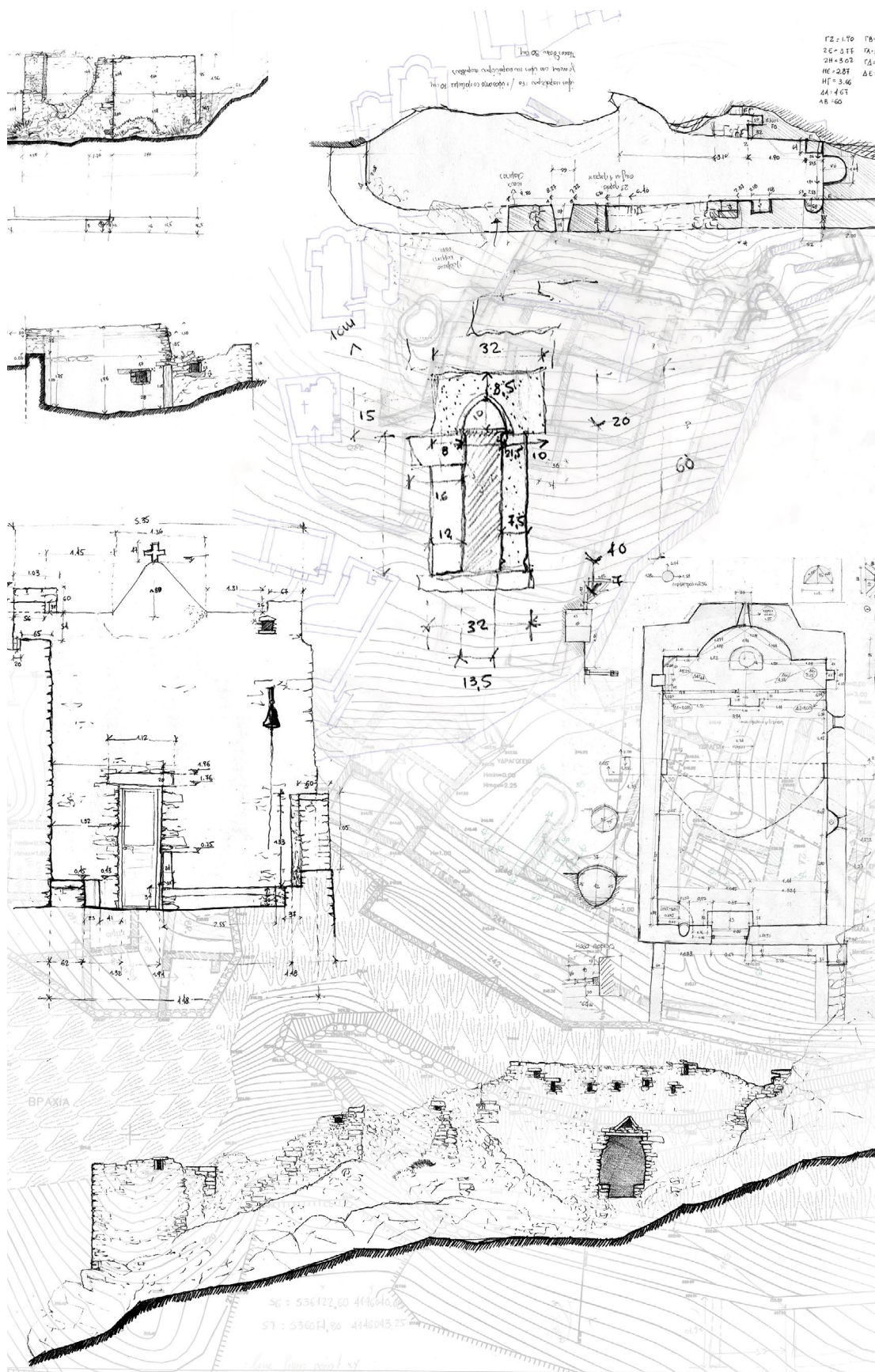


Fig. 03. Field sketches of the surveyed buildings in Oria Kastro

The information from the sources was then studied in comparison to data gathered from a field research that was carried out at different sites across the island. The survey and characterisation of buildings and structures was combined with some preliminary pottery observations.⁴ Although more in-depth study is needed for the reconstruction of medieval Kythnos, the locations of existing and lost medieval forts, settlements, churches and ports were recorded and placed on the map and their possible chronological and spatial relations were examined. At the same time a topographical and architectural survey of the *Kastro* and its immediate environs was carried out.

Oria Kastro survey

Oria *Kastro* covers an area of approximately 1.32 ha. Because it has not been subject to systematic research before, a detailed survey of the settlement and its environs was undertaken to record its form and layout and establish its relation to the outlying elements of defence, communication and provision. Additionally, measured drawings of the best preserved and characteristic buildings were conducted to study the typology, architectural features and construction phases of the structures and document the building materials and techniques. A wide range of drawing scales (1:4000 to 1:5) was used to cover different spatial and structural aspects of the settlement.

To correct and complement the original site plan that was drawn up during my MSc thesis⁵ and overcome the challenges presented by the remote location, rugged topography and ruinous state of the *Kastro* the conventional surveying methods

⁴Only non-systematic *in situ* observations on the scattered potsherds were made to be used as a reference for the research. Pottery profiles and photographs were not included in this study. Given my architectural background, the preliminary surface observations were made possible thanks to the expertise of Matteo Randazzo, archaeologist and fellow PhD candidate at the University of Edinburgh who is specialised in medieval pottery of the central and eastern Mediterranean. Future systematic surveys would certainly enrich these preliminary results or even change them.

⁵The MSc site plan was based on an old topographical survey at the scales of 1:1000 and 1:200 that was carried out in the year 2000 on behalf of the local council. Although the topographical plan included less than half of the buildings (50 out of 161), it provided the basic outline and the land contours of the *Kastro* rock. That allowed the gradual addition of more structures and the creation of a new site plan (113 out of 161 structures). Given, however, that this new plan was built up using only conventional survey techniques it too needed to be revised and completed.



Fig. 04. ‘Orthomosaic’ of the *Kastro*’s upper level created with Agisoft PhotoScan

(measured drawings and GPS survey) were complemented by a drone-based aerial survey.⁶ Specialised software was used to create a plan (**Fig. 04**) that was then overlain with the GPS points and the measured drawings.

That allowed the filling in of certain blind spots and the creation of a new accurate topographical plan.⁷ Aerial pictures were also used to implement the measured drawings of the individual buildings. A total of 161 buildings were recorded in Oria's intramural area and immediate environs. This number represents the buildings whose outline could be identified with certainty. They were numbered on the 1:500 site plan and their walls were depicted with a solid line. The same way of depiction was chosen for the well-preserved individual walls even if the rest of the structure was not. These walls, however, did not receive a number. Finally, walls or structures that were either very poorly preserved or could not be physically accessed were depicted with a lighter, dashed line and were not numbered. Undoubtedly, more structures would come to light if systematic cleanings and excavations were to take place.

⁶ A DJI Phantom 3 Standard drone model was used for the survey.

⁷ The contours of the land were traced from the maps of the Greek Military Service.

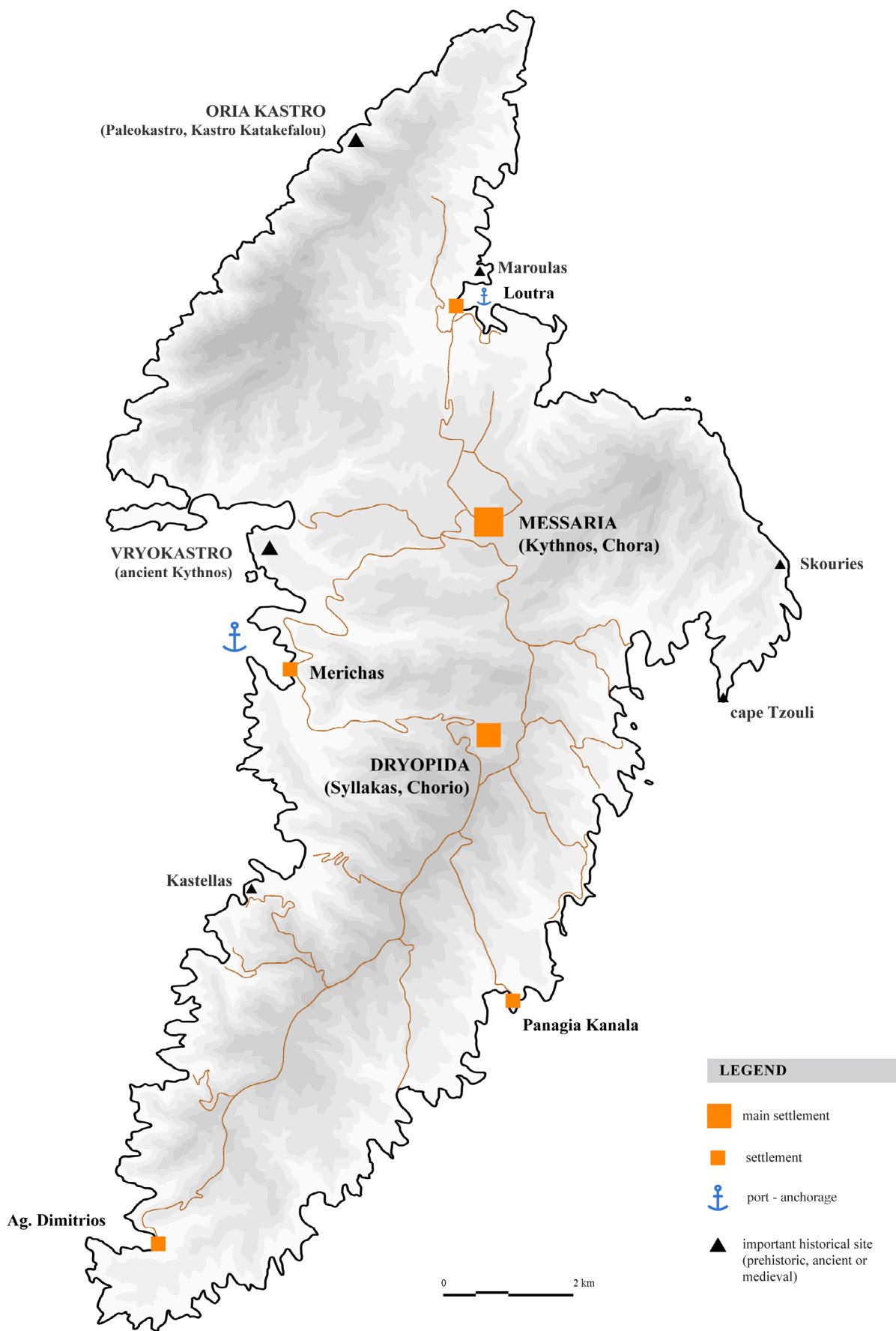


Fig. 05. Contemporary map of Kythnos with *Oria Kastro* on the west coast

SECTION 1

Historical and Regional Setting

1 The island of Kythnos

Located in the Southern Aegean Sea or Archipelago, Kythnos (*Κύθνος*), known also as Thermia (*Θερμιά*), is part of the island group of the Western Cyclades. It lies between Kea and Serifos, 52 and 26 nautical miles away from the main ports of Attica, i.e. Piraeus and Lavrio port respectively. It is one of the middle-sized islands, measuring 99.3 km² with a coastline of about 100 km. Kythnos' landscape is typical of most Cycladic islands with terraced fields, low hills, a few plains and almost bare of vegetation, as the land is rocky and very dry. The average altitude of the island is 200 m from sea level and the highest pick, Prophetis Elias to the northeast, rises to 365 m. The coastline of Kythnos is quite jagged, forming more than 90 leeward inlets and beaches.⁸

Kythnos has two inland villages, Chora and Dryopida; Chora, also known as Messaria, Thermia and Kythnos, is in the centre of the island and is Kythnos' capital with 561 inhabitants. Dryopida lies in the southern hinterland and has a population of 325.⁹ In addition, there are three main coastal settlements Merichas to the west, Loutra and Panagia Kanala on the eastern shore. Merichas has about 350 inhabitants and is the island's main port where the ferryboats from Piraeus and Lavrio land. The settlement of Loutra is located near Kythnos' famous thermal springs. It takes its name from the spa facilities that have been in use since the Roman times (*λουτρά* means baths in Greek).¹⁰ In Panagia Kanala a small settlement has formed around

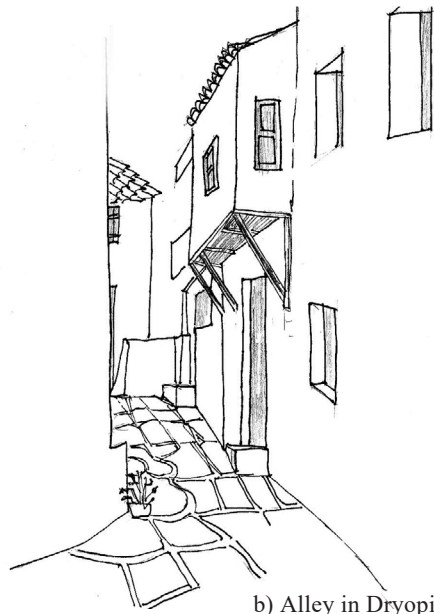
⁸ <https://www.kythnos.gr>

⁹ 2011 census, see Gialantzi (2007).

¹⁰ Landerer (1835), p. 22; Mazarakis (1998), p. 378.



a) Alley in Chora (Messatia)



b) Alley in Dryopida



c) Chora (Messaria) from the south



d) Dryopida from the southwest



e) country-church near Dryopida

Fig. 06. General views of the settlements and the countryside of Kythnos (a-e)

the monastery of the Virgin where a 16th-century miraculous icon is kept, making it one of the most important places of pilgrimage in the Cyclades. Apart from the above, there are also several smaller seasonal settlements such as Agios Dimitrios, Episkopi, Agios Stefanos, Flampouria etc. which are inhabited mostly during the summer months by visitors and tourists (**Figs 05, 06**).

The island's overall population, according to the census of the year 2011, amounts to 1,310 people. The residents of Kythnos are mainly engaged in fishing, farming and during the recent years in tourism as well. Unlike other Cycladic islands, Kythnos still maintains part of its rural economy, with cattle and sheep breeding as well as cheese and honey production. Some of the locals are active in trade, services, and the construction industry where they are renowned for being skilled stonemasons. Parallel to their regular employment, several Kythniotes work in tourism services, especially during the recent years. However as yet, the island is not very developed.

Antiquity

10th c. BC - 4th c. AD



ancient Kythnos, Vryokastro (Mazarakis 2019, p. 74, fig. 111)

10th c. BC - 6th

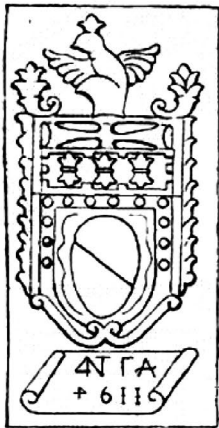
Middle Ages

4th - 17th c. AD



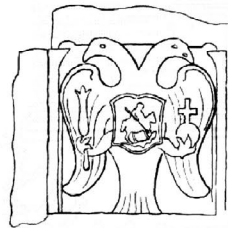
Oria Kastro, main (?) medieval settlement

7th c. (?) -



LO STEMMA GOZZADINI NELLA CUBERA DI S. SABA.

the Gozzadini coat of arms (Gerola 1926, p. 12 [54], fig. 1)



engraving on the door lintel of the Panagia Nikous church in Messaria (Gerola 1926, p. 22 [64], fig. 5)

11th (?)

AD

Early Modern times

17th - 20th c. AD



mining installations in the bay of Loutra

ΘΕΛΕΤΕ ΥΠΕΛΑΝ ΜΕΤΑΒΗΤΕ :
ΕΙΣ ΤΑ ΛΟΥΤΡΑ ΚΥΘΝΟΥ
 ΤΟ ΜΟΝΟΝ ΕΝ ΒΑΡΒΑΙ ΗΕΡΓΑ ΚΑΙ ΟΥΤΑΥΟΤΤΕΡΟΝ
ΤΑΡΟΣΕΡΑ ΠΕΤΤΗΡΙΟΝ
 ΠΡΟΤΗ ΑΓΙΟΝ ΑΝΑΡΤΥΡΟΝ ΑΛΑΤΥΡΑΟΣ

Επισημασθέντες 288 ο έτε. κήρυξη εις εθνομωσαί 25.
 288 2000 πληρ. εθνομωσαί 21.2018 εθνομωσαί.
 ΠΡΩΤΗ ΣΙΑΦΟΥΧΟΣ ΚΑΚΑΑΒΟΥ

Επισημασθέντες 288 ο έτε. κήρυξη εις εθνομωσαί 25.
 288 2000 πληρ. εθνομωσαί 21.2018 εθνομωσαί.
 ΠΡΩΤΗ ΣΙΑΦΟΥΧΟΣ ΚΑΚΑΑΒΟΥ

Επισημασθέντες 288 ο έτε. κήρυξη εις εθνομωσαί 25.
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advertisement for the hot baths in Loutra in the newspaper 'Εμπρός', 17/6/1901

19th - early

today

Fig. 07. History of Kythnos timeline

2 History of Kythnos

Despite its modest size, Kythnos has always had a strong presence throughout history, as it can be testified by the archaeological evidence and the built remains of different eras that are scattered around the island. The present study focuses on the history of the periods more relevant to *Oria Kastro*, i.e. the Byzantine era (4th-12th century) and the period of the Latin rule (13th-17th century). However, in order to put *Oria* in a historical and regional context, an overview of the island's diachronic historical course was deemed necessary. Consequently, the Prehistory, the Antiquity, the Ottoman period and the Early Modern history of Kythnos are also briefly discussed.

2.1 Historiography

The Medieval period of Kythnos is most notably the one we have less information about. For the Byzantine era our knowledge regarding the Cyclades in general is quite limited. There are but a few written sources, and while recent archaeological studies on some of the larger islands (e.g. Naxos, Paros, Melos) have shed some light on that time causing scholars to revisit the longstanding narratives of devastation during the Early Byzantine period (7th-9th century)¹¹ and leading to a better understanding of the settlement patterns, the organisation of new fortified centres¹² as well as the use of the landscape,¹³ the Byzantine past of Kythnos remains mostly unexplored. The island is only fleetingly mentioned in the ground-breaking study of Elisabeth Malamut on the Byzantine islands¹⁴ and except for the ongoing excavations at ancient Kythnos (see below), systematic studies have not yet been conducted at *Oria Kastro*

¹¹ Archaeological evidence suggests continuing settlement in places across the coasts, commercial activity, ceramics production and coinage circulation, see esp. Sanders (1996); Vionis (2017), pp. 174-175; Roussos (2017), p. 160; Poulou-Papadimitriou (2018), pp. 29-50; Poulou (2019), pp. 235-257; Penna (2018), pp. 51-60.

¹² The ongoing collaborative research project on *Apalirou Kastro* on Naxos (Norwegian Institute, Universities of Edinburgh, and Newcastle and the Ephorate of Antiquities of the Cyclades) studies the intramural town as well as the extended unfortified settlement at the foot of the *kastro* hill, see Crow and Hill (2018); Roland (2019).

¹³ See esp. Cherry et al. (1991), pp. 355-357; Crow, Turner, and Vionis (2011); Turner and Crow (2019).

¹⁴ Malamut (1988).

nor at any other medieval site. Therefore, our knowledge of the history of Kythnos from Late Antiquity until the Latin conquest is mainly based on information relating to the neighbouring islands.

Although fragmentary, compared to the previous era the information on the Cycladic islands during the period of the Latin conquest is considerably more. The 19th-century works of Karl Hopf where he compiled, translated and occasionally transcribed an enormous amount of documents from archives in Italy, Greece and Austria give detailed information on the genealogy of the families that ruled the islands from the 13th to the 17th century untangling their complicated relations and interconnections.¹⁵ In the early 20th century, the fundamental works of William Miller, *Latins in the Levant* (1908) and *Essays on the Latin Orient* (1921), provided an overview of the political and military history of the Aegean and a substantial basis for researchers of that era, while Peter Lock's more recent *The Franks in the Aegean* (1995) offered a more interpretative view of events placing them in a social and economic context. Finally, Ben Slot's *Archipelagus Turbatus* (1982) contains an abundance of fiscal and demographic data for most of the Cycladic islands focusing mainly on the later Latin and early Ottoman periods.

In addition to the above sources, the built remains and material culture of several sites of the Latin Cyclades have been thoroughly discussed by Athanasios Vionis in his comprehensive work *A Crusader, Ottoman and Early Medieval Archaeology* (2012). There is also a number of architectural studies, which following Maria Philippa-Apostolou's detailed work on the *Kastro* of Antiparos (1978), consider certain Cycladic *kastra* and provide useful information on their form and structural elements.¹⁶

Yet, as is also the case for the previous period, most sources refer mainly to the larger and more important islands, and consequently it is these places that have always attracted the interest of researchers. Both the literary and the archaeological evidence for the smaller Cycladic islands is therefore still very limited – if non-existent – and conclusions regarding their history are again drawn by comparison. Nevertheless,

¹⁵ Hopf (1856), (1873) and (1964); Ersch and Grüber (1863).

¹⁶ See esp. Eberhard (1977); Philippa-Apostolou (1978, 2000); Höpfner and Schmidt (1978); Vavatsioulas (2007); Ritzouli (2016).

Kythnos is not entirely absent from the literary sources; there are a few original documents (Venetian acts, Latin lords' family records, traveller's accounts etc.) as well as some brief mentions of the island in some of the key works mentioned above. Moreover, the works of the 19th-century Kythnian scholar Antonios Vallindas on the local history offer a sound overview of the island's Late Medieval topography and tradition and despite the inherent flaws of their genre (i.e. local and national bias) they are quite reliable and can be used as a basis for further research.¹⁷ His works were, and remain still, one of the main sources for Greek and non-Greek writers concerned with the history of Kythnos.¹⁸

The *Kastro* itself features rarely ever in most of the sources and only in passing. In general, the short and sometimes vague descriptions of the site that can be found in some older and modern works rest once again mainly on the authority of Vallindas.¹⁹ In conclusion it should be noted, that overall the information we have at our disposal on the period of the Latin occupation of the Cyclades is often contradictory and to complicate matters even further, some arbitrary assumptions of local scholars and early historiographers continue to be repeated in the historiography as historical facts. In any case, based on all the above an approximate time sequence of the island's historical course can be created.

2.2 Historical names

During Antiquity, the island was known by three different names: Ophioussa (*Οφιούσα*), Dryopis (*Δρυοπίς*), and Kythnos (*Κύθνος*).²⁰ The name Ophioussa refers probably to the large number of snakes endemic to its dry soils (*ὄφις* or *φίδι* being the Greek word for snake), the name Dryopis comes from the island's first mythical inhabitants called Dryopes, while Kythnos is related to the name of their king Kythnos.²¹ According to another etymological version, given that the historical existence of Kythnos is highly questionable, the name Kythnos rests on the word

¹⁷ Vallindas (1882) and (1896).

¹⁸ Gerola (1926); Gounaris (1938) and Filippaios (1998).

¹⁹ E.g. Eberhard (1977), pp. 529-531; Vionis (2012), p. 87.

²⁰ Stephanus Byzantinus: Meineke (1849), p. 392.

²¹ Stephanus Byzantinus: Meineke (1849), p. 392.

root ‘κνθ’, which derives from the ancient Greek verb ‘κέθω’ that means to hide (κέθμων: a dark, deep place where someone disappears). Quite possibly, this interpretation of the island’s name refers to a certain natural quality of Kythnos during Early Antiquity (shady forests, deep valleys, caves, or mines).²² In the Byzantine era, the ancient name Kythnos was at some point forgotten and the island was instead called Thermia (Θερμιά deriving from the word θερμός that means hot in Greek) after the famous hot springs at Loutra in the north-eastern part.²³ The earliest written mention of Thermia comes from the work of the Byzantine scholar and cleric Neilos Doxapatri in 1143 who lists the See of Kea and Thermia under the episcopates belonging to the Metropolis of Athens.²⁴

Since the early 13th century, after the island was occupied by the Latins, the original Greek name Thermia suffered numerous corruptions. Fermentia is the most frequent one, however, in various documents of that period Kythnos is also mentioned as Fermentie, Formenie, Formane, Fermia, Fermene, Termentie, Fermine, Firminia, etc.²⁵ The Ottomans called it Terme, Fermiyene²⁶ and *Hammam adasi* (island of the baths) again due to its famous thermal baths. Finally, in the 17th century, the island was also known as Theramnia.²⁷ The ancient name Kythnos was established anew in 1832 after the founding of the new Greek state. Today, both names Kythnos and Thermia are used equally by the locals and the visitors of the island.

2.3 Kythnos in Prehistory and Antiquity

According to mythology, the earliest settlers of the island were Dryopes,²⁸ who emigrated to Kythnos from Euboea along with their leader Kythnos.²⁹ Later, new

²² Filippaios (1998), p. 6.

²³ According to Vallindas the name Kythnos was gradually forgotten after the homonymous ancient town was destroyed. Given that the new Byzantine settlement was located not far away from the thermal springs in the north, the name Thermia was used for both the town and the island, Vallindas (1882), pp. 4-5.

²⁴ Parthey (1866), p. 300.

²⁵ Gerola (1926), p. 3 [45].

²⁶ Loupis (1999), p. 368.

²⁷ Filippaios (1998), p. 6.

²⁸ Herodotus, 8. 46: Skalidis (1875), p. 312.

²⁹ Stephanus Byzantinus: Meineke (1849), p. 392.

Ionian settlers arrived from Athens. Recent archaeological studies have shown that Kythnos was already inhabited by the Mesolithic period. The excavated settlement of Maroulas on the north-eastern coast is believed to be the earliest installation in the Cyclades (9th and 8th millennium BC).³⁰ In addition, about twenty circular structures of schist slabs that include kilns dating from the Early Cycladic period (2800-2300 BC) have been discovered in the area of Skouries, on the east coast. A copper mine located on the nearby cape of Tzouli as well as several other smaller sites related to prehistoric metallurgy (mining and smelting) have been recorded in the north-west and south-east parts of the island (**Fig. 05**).³¹

The settlement of Kythnos during the Mycenaean times is confirmed by surface ceramic finds on the hill slopes of *Oria Kastro*. It seems that this naturally fortified place was inhabited much earlier than the Middle Ages, however, it is not yet clear if the inhabitation there was continuous, albeit on an occasional or very limited scale.³² The same is true for *Kastellas*, a fortified acropolis on the west coast of the island, which was inhabited from the early historical times until the end of the Archaic period.³³ In addition, there are more than thirty circular and rectangular towers that date mostly from the Classical and Hellenistic times. Two of them, the so-called *Pyrgos* near *Chora* and the *Paleopyrgos* in the far north-west part, are preserved in a better condition.³⁴ The most important site of the historical times, however, was undoubtedly *Vryokastro* on the west coast (**Figs 08-11**). *Vryokastro* or *Rigokastro*, as it is today also known, was the ancient homonymous capital of Kythnos. The archaeological studies and excavations that are being carried out in the area for the past 20 years have brought to light rich finds which prove that the town was continuously inhabited from the 10th century BC until at least the 7th century AD.³⁵

Kythnos participated in the Persian Wars, contributing two ships,³⁶ a trireme and a penteconter, in the naval battle of Salamis (480 BC). Subsequently, the island became

³⁰ Sampson (2008), pp.13-18. For Maroulas see also Kenneth, (1975), pp. 277-279 and Sampson, Kaczanowska and Kozłowski (2010).

³¹ Chatzianastasiou (2000), pp. 206-208; Chatzianastasiou (1998), pp. 259-261.

³² Chatzianastasiou (1998), p. 261; Mazarakis (2019), p. 28.

³³ Chatzianastasiou (1998), p. 261.

³⁴ Mazarakis (2005), p. 246.

³⁵ Mazarakis (2019), p. 37; Mazarakis (2005), p. 246.

³⁶ Herodotus 8. 46: Skalidis (1875), p. 312.

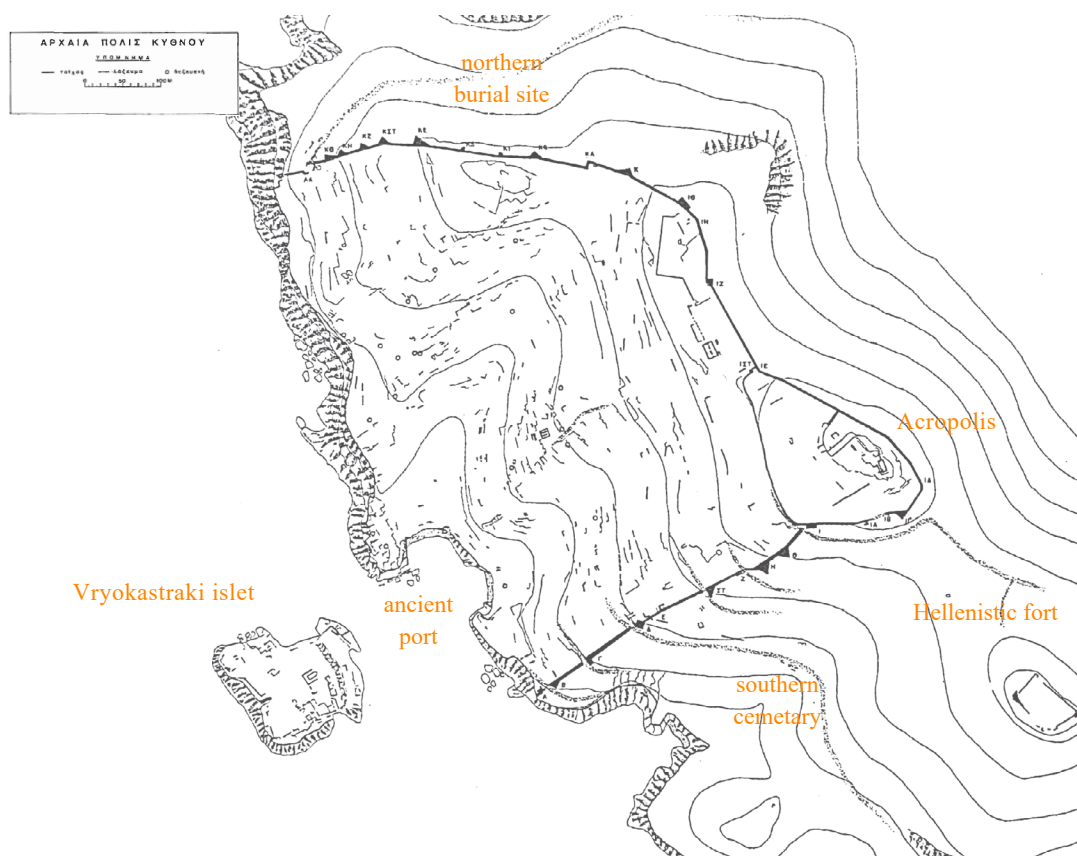


Fig. 08. Site plan of Vryokastro (Mazarakis 2019, p. 18, fig. 9)



Fig. 09. Vryokastro, the upper town from the north (C. Xenikakis, 2015, <https://www.archaiologia.gr>)

a member of the First Athenian League and maintained its close ties to Athens until the rise of the Macedonians when it allied with Philip II. Roughly at the same period Aristotle wrote his *Κυθναίων Πολιτεία* where he praised the exemplary autonomous administration of Kythnos as well as the well-being and wealth of its inhabitants.³⁷ It seems that the island remained under Macedonian rule until 288 BC, when it was incorporated in the kingdom of the Ptolemies of Egypt, along with the rest of the Cyclades. During the Roman period Kythnos is said to have declined; according to some sources it became a place of exile³⁸ or served as a base for pirates.³⁹

2.3.1 The Kythnos (Vryokastro) archaeological project

The location of ancient Kythnos has always been known as the site was mentioned by various travellers already since the early 15th century.⁴⁰ Systematic archaeological studies and excavations are being carried there since the 1990s by the University of Thessaly in collaboration with the Ephorate of Antiquities of the Cyclades.⁴¹ The project is led by A. Mazarakis Ainian, Professor of Classical Archaeology.

The ancient town lies on the north-western coast, between the bays of Apokrousi, to the north and Episkopi, to the south. Its western limit follows the coastline, which for the most part consists of cliffs that provide natural defence. The town covers an area of about 2.85 ha and was surrounded by strong defensive walls that date mostly to the Classical and Hellenistic era. The south-east corner of the city was occupied by an acropolis that was protected by a second circuit wall. The fortified area included also the small islet of Vryokastraki which was once linked to the opposite shore but is today cut-off from the main island due to the rise of sea level. Out of the circuit wall, to the south there was a small autonomous fortress, as well as the town cemetery (**Fig. 08**).

³⁷ Mazarakis (1998), p. 365.

³⁸ Tacitus: Annal. III, 66-69.

³⁹ Tacitus: Hist. II, 8, 9; see also Mazarakis (2019), p. 24.

⁴⁰ Buondelmonti: Sinner (1824), p. 84.

⁴¹ Mazarakis (1998), pp. 363-378; Mazarakis (2005), pp. 246-249; Mazarakis (2009), pp. 278-318; Mazarakis (2019). See also the website of the Kythnos project: <http://extras.ha.uth.gr/kythnos/index.php?page=home>.



Fig. 10. Vryokastraki from the west (C. Xenikakis, 2018, <https://www.archaiologia.gr>)



Fig. 11. The basilica and the coastal wall (C. Xenikakis, 2018, <https://www.archaiologia.gr>)

The land and underwater excavations conducted so far, have yielded particularly significant findings and have helped reconstruct the city-planning of Kythnos and understand the functions of the different buildings and areas (houses, public buildings, temples and sanctuaries, port facilities and fortifications, the town aqueduct, cisterns etc.). It seems that the site was inhabited continuously from the Geometric times until at least Late Antiquity (6th-7th century AD). It is not yet clear when and why ancient Kythnos was abandoned and the finds from the latest research period (2019) suggest that the city, or parts of it, might have survived until the Early Byzantine times (see also section 2.4).

The relation of Kythnos to *Oria Kastro* is also obscure. Mazarakis expresses the view that the new capital was established sometime in the 7th century after the abandonment of the ancient city.⁴² Given the existence of a paved path leading straight from Vryokastro to Oria, Vallindas in the 1880s assumed that the two settlements coexisted for certain periods of time.⁴³

2.4 The Byzantine era (4th-12th century)

2.4.1 Historical outline

During the first three centuries after the establishment of Constantinople, there was no serious maritime threat to the Aegean coasts and islands. It seems that until the mid-7th century Kythnos, like the rest of the Cyclades, knew a period of calm⁴⁴ that left us with hardly any written records. Constantinople was the centre of secular authority and as P. Magdalino notes ‘the Aegean was literally a political and military backwater that did not make the news’.⁴⁵ According to W. Miller at that time most islands were still used as places of detention for prisoners of position.⁴⁶ Modern researchers, however, argue that the Cyclades had a more active role acting as island

⁴² Mazarakis (2019), p. 24; Mazarakis (2005), p. 249.

⁴³ Vallindas (1882), p. 49.

⁴⁴ The Slav raids that desolated whole regions of the mainland Greece did not reach the islands. An alleged Slav raid against the Cyclades that took place in 675 is mentioned in *The Life of Agios Demetrios*, however, its historical accuracy is highly doubted, Miliarakis (1874), p. 346.

⁴⁵ Magdalino (2018), p. 20.

⁴⁶ Miller (1921), p. 37.

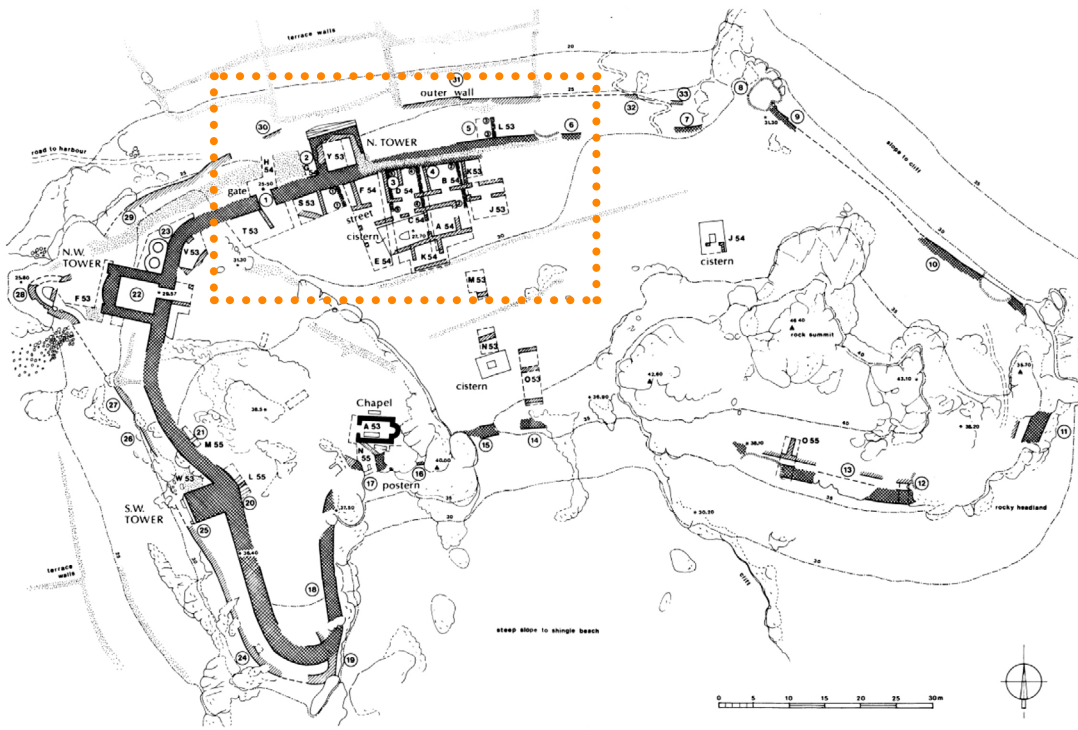


Fig. 12. Site plan of the early Byzantine fortress of Emporio, Chios (Balance, Boardman, Corbett and Hood 1989, Drawing IV)

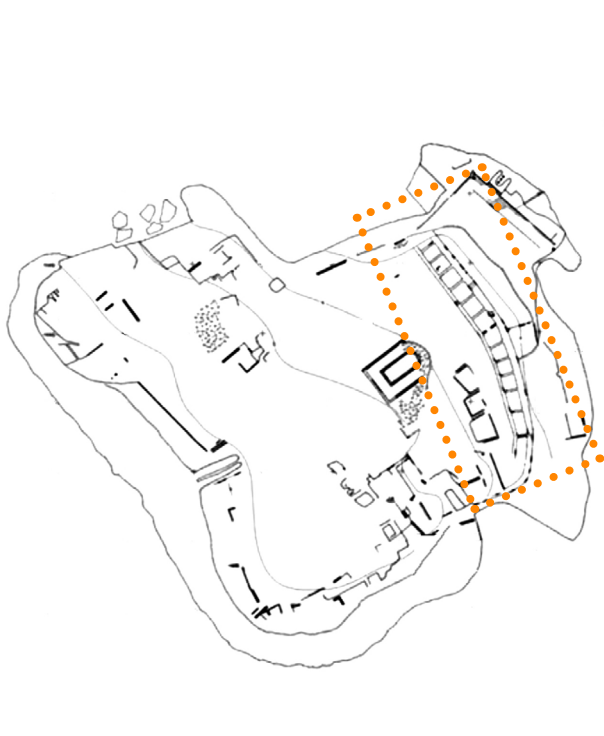


Fig. 13. Site plan of the Vryokastraki islet, Kythnos (Mazarakis 2019, p. 18, fig. 9)

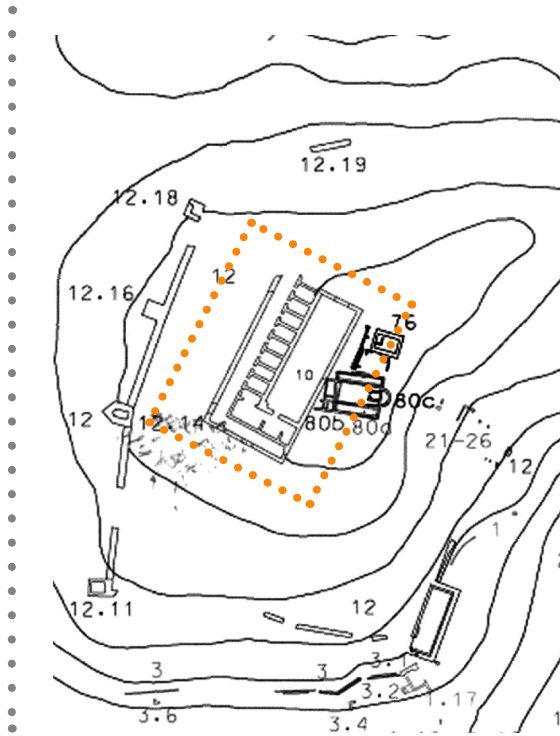


Fig. 14. Site plan of the Late Antique acropolis of Gortyna, Crete (Di Vita 2010, p. 341, fig. 508)

supplier stations of commercial importance for vessels following the route from Spain and Italy to Constantinople and the Levantine coast, through Sicily, the Ionian Sea, the Cyclades and finally Cyprus. In addition, many islands that were rich in natural mineral resources, like Melos or Paros, were relatively prosperous with flourishing maritime market towns that gave them access to regional and international trade.⁴⁷

Kythnos, the ancient coastal city of the island was, as mentioned above, still in use until the 7th century AD. The recent excavations (2018-2019) that were conducted on the islet of Vryokastraki, by the ancient port, brought to light new evidence which suggests that the site may have been inhabited until the Early Byzantine period.⁴⁸ A three-aisled basilica as well as an Early Byzantine settlement with part of the coastal wall and gate were discovered and partially excavated (**Figs 10, 11**). The basilica that occupied the central space on the islet had at least two main construction phases, an Early Christian and a later one (6th-7th century) with evidence for later construction, including a possible later reduction in size as is known from nearby Naxos (eg. Chimarou, Gyroulas).⁴⁹

The barrier wall possibly on the line of an Archaic enclosure, protected the more vulnerable east side of the site. Behind the wall a series of small rectangular chambers has been identified which according to the researchers could have had a defensive use. This arrangement is comparable to the 7th-8th fortress at Emporio on Chios, where there is a clear destruction deposit in the late 7th century (**Fig. 12**).⁵⁰ There are also parallels with the so-called *kastro* on the Late Antique acropolis at Gortyna on Crete (**Fig. 14**).⁵¹ Whilst there is plenty of evidence that the community at Emporio were involved in agriculture and especially fishing, the fortified character of the settlement indicates a military role with a garrison⁵² which could possibly have been the case for Vryokastraki too (**Fig. 13**).

⁴⁷ Vionis (2012), p. 31; Sanders (1996), p. 148.

⁴⁸ Kythnos (Vryokastro) excavation website: <http://extras.ha.uth.gr/kythnos/index.php?page=report-2019>.

⁴⁹ Aslanidis (2014), pp. 24-26.

⁵⁰ Balance, Boardman, Corbett and Hood (1989), pp. 50, 80-81, Drawing IV.

⁵¹ Giourtakis (2014), pp. 163-164; Di Vita (2010), p. 341. See also Tsigonaki (2019), pp. 168-172.

⁵² Balance, Boardman, Corbett and Hood (1989), pp. 4, 131.

The results of the excavation are not published in detail as yet; however, according to the preliminary report, it seems that during Late Antiquity and the Early Byzantine period the ancient town gradually reduced in size and was eventually confined in the area of the islet, which at the time was connected to the mainland by a thin land strip. The continuation of the excavation project in the coming years will undoubtedly yield more information on Kythnos' Byzantine past and the possible transition of the capital from the seaside Vryokastro to the remote Oria. At any rate, the existence of the church and the archaeological finds from the town challenge the local tradition that Christianity was introduced on the island only after the inhabitants relocated to Oria *Kastro*.⁵³ It is evident that Kythnos followed the settlement model of many other Late Antiquity towns that were located near the coast with their centre focused on a nearby basilica.⁵⁴

In the second half of the 7th century, the Aegean became the invasion route for the Arab expeditions aimed at the conquest of Constantinople⁵⁵ and the period of relative economic and social stability came to an end giving place to the so-called 'Dark Ages' of Byzantium. It all started in 648/9 AD with the Arab raid against Cyprus that was followed by attacks against Rhodes, Kos, Crete, and the coasts of Lycia. How 'dark' that era actually was is still a matter of lively debate amongst historians and archaeologists. Studies that are based on recent archaeological evidence dispute the longstanding theories of total devastation and destruction (see also chapter 9).⁵⁶

In any case, all scholars agree that these were turbulent times for the Byzantines who had to defend themselves from a combined land and sea Arab offensive. As N. Poulou puts it, the Arab presence in the Aegean created conditions which imposed major changes in important sectors of administration, defence, the character of commerce and the security of communications.⁵⁷ Even Constantinople was besieged in 669.⁵⁸ The islands, especially those of the eastern Aegean that lay along the invasion route,

⁵³ Vallindas (1882), p. 70.

⁵⁴ Vionis (2012), p. 31.

⁵⁵ Magdalino (2018), p. 20.

⁵⁶ Vionis (2012), p. 32.

⁵⁷ Poulou (2019), p. 250.

⁵⁸ 'The first Arab siege of Constantinople is traditionally dated to 674-678, but earlier dates have been proposed, and the most recent proposal argues in great detail, on the basis of Arab sources, for 669.', Magdalino (2018), p. 21.

are said to have suffered great losses that led to the abandonment of the Late Antiquity littoral cities and the relocation of the inhabitants in defensive cores in the hinterland. Some of them are even thought to have been left completely uninhabited.⁵⁹

In the century following the failed Arab siege of Constantinople in 717-718, that was famously a turning-point in the confrontation between Christendom and Islam, there is little record of Arab naval activity in the Aegean. It seems that after the fall of the Umayyads (750) the frontier was transferred to Asia Minor and the Arab threat at sea was limited until the conquest of Crete in the 9th century. Nevertheless, the 8th century marked a new period of unrest and civil conflicts of religious and political nature within the Byzantine Empire known as Iconoclasm. According to the Byzantine historian Theophanes,⁶⁰ the great eruption of the submarine volcano of Santorini in 726 was interpreted by Emperor Leo III as a sign of divine displeasure at the pagan veneration of icons and started to have them removed.⁶¹ That caused strong reactions among both the clergy and the population.⁶²

In 727 the Cyclades joined forces with the Greek mainland and rose in revolt against the Emperor. They proclaimed a new emperor and set out against Constantinople with a great fleet. However, the rebellion failed as they were easily repelled by the imperial forces with the use of Greek fire. Those who were not drowned surrendered to the Emperor.⁶³ Even though Theophanes regards the revolt to be driven purely by divine zeal, the real reasons were likely pre-existing grievances, probably of a fiscal nature, that were further accentuated by the consequences of the natural disaster and the Emperor's blasphemous actions.⁶⁴ In any case, the Iconoclasm that was accompanied by widespread destruction of images and persecution of the supporters of their veneration continued to disrupt the empire for several years.

⁵⁹ Sanders (1996), p.148; Bouras (1981), pp. 611-653.

⁶⁰ Agios Theophanes the Confessor (c. 758/760-817/818) was a member of the Byzantine aristocracy, who became a monk and chronicler. He favoured the veneration of icons and his work reflects his views.

⁶¹ Theophanes: de Boor (1883), p. 404.

⁶² The participation of Emperor Leo has been disputed lately, Brubaker and Haldon (2011), pp. 128-135.

⁶³ Theophanes: de Boor (1883), p. 405.

⁶⁴ Magdalino (2018), p. 23.

In 827 the island of Crete was seized by a war-band of Arab exiles from Spain and that overturned the equilibrium which existed until then between the Byzantines and the Moslems. The Byzantines lost their supremacy at sea and subsequently, the conditions in the Aegean world changed drastically. The coastal regions and the islands, including the Cyclades, were now exposed to regular attacks. Their severity is described vividly, yet with a certain exaggeration, in contemporary hagiographical works; from *The Life of Agia Theoktiste of Lesbos* we learn that Paros was heavily raided by the Moslems of Crete, while Aegina and the coastal regions of the Corinthian gulf suffered the same fate according to *The Life of Agios Loukas the Younger*.⁶⁵

Equally interesting is the testimony of Ioannis Cameniates⁶⁶ who informs us that by 904, Naxos was paying tribute to the Arabs of Crete.⁶⁷ According to Christides this could also be true for other Cycladic islands i.e. Paros and Ios.⁶⁸ His suggestion that the Arabs have permanently occupied several Aegean islands may be exaggerated, at least based on the evidence we have so far. Nonetheless, the 9th and the first half of the 10th century was undoubtedly a period of great insecurity that left the islanders with only two options: either passively defend themselves behind inland, hilltop fortifications, or pay protection money.⁶⁹

The threat of the Arabs in the Aegean came to an end in 961 when Nikophoros Phokas recaptured Crete for the Byzantines. The second half of the 10th century marked the beginning of a period of recovery and prosperity for all the regions that had previously suffered from Arab hostility. It is quite reasonable to assume that this period of relative peace, that lasted until the Latin conquest in the early 13th century, resulted in gradual recovery, population rise and financial growth of the islands. Al Idrisi, the Arab geographer who travelled in the Aegean in c.1153 found most of

⁶⁵ Christides (1984), p. 166.

⁶⁶ Ioannes Cameniates was a Greek clergyman from Thessaloniki. In 904, after the Arabs led by Leo of Tripoli sacked the city, Cameniates was taken captive. On the way to Crete the ship he was on stopped at Naxos. In his account of Thessaloniki's fall he characteristically relates that: '...κατήχθημεν εἰς τινά νῆσον καλουμένην Ναξίαν, ἐξ ἧς οἱ τῆς Κρήτης οἰκοῦντες φόρους λαμβάνουσιν', i.e. '...we arrived on an island called Naxos from which those who live in Crete (the Arabs) levy taxes'. His work survives in four manuscripts; however, all copies were written after the 14th century causing some concern over the text's authenticity.

⁶⁷ Kaminiates: Frenzo and Fotiou (2000), p. 114.

⁶⁸ Christides (1981), p. 95.

⁶⁹ Magdalino (2018), p. 24.

them inhabited.⁷⁰ Again, there are no records referring to Kythnos in this period nor any archaeological evidence, however, the conditions there were presumably similar to those on the neighbouring islands.

2.4.2 Administration

According to the Synecdemus of Hierocles which was compiled between the years 533-535, during the 6th century the Aegean islands were under four different imperial provinces. Most of them, including the majority of the Cyclades, belonged to the Province of the Islands. Kythnos, however, along with Kea, Kimolos, Mykonos, Delos, Euboea, Skyros, Kythera and a couple of other islands fell under the Province of Greece. In the later 7th century, the Empire's system of administration was reformed, with the gradual introduction of the new administrative division of themata. For the islands, the transition period lasted about two centuries. During that time, although there is no direct mention of the island, it is possible that Kythnos, like the rest of the Cyclades, belonged to the southern part of the Cibyrrhaeot theme⁷¹ that was under the command of the Drungarios of the Dodecanese.⁷²

From the mid-9th century (842/3), that southern part evolved into the independent theme of the Aegean Sea, where Kythnos has been traditionally allotted by most local scholars.⁷³ Nevertheless, it is not yet clear whether all the Cyclades fell under that particular theme. The Emperor Constantine VII Porphyrogenitus when referring to the administrative division of the Empire in the 10th century, mentions that the Cyclades were included in the theme of the Aegean Sea. However, at another point, he notes that they came under the theme of Hellas along with the islands of Euboea,

⁷⁰ Jaubert (1840), pp. 126-128.

⁷¹ Kallibretakis (forthcoming), pp. 10-11; Zakythinis (1941), pp. 254-255.

⁷² The first mention of the term 'Dodecanese' comes from Theophanes' Chronographia (8th century), where he refers to the 'δρουγγάριος Δωδεκανήσου', Theophanes: ed. de Boor (1883), p. 454. Today, the term is used to describe the islands of the south-eastern Aegean Sea i.e. Rhodes, Kos, Patmos, Agathonisi, Astypalaia, Kalymnos, Karpathos, Kasos, Leipsoi, Leros, Nisyros, Symi, Tilos, and Kastellorizo. During the early Byzantine times, however, the name Dodecanese was used for the twelve islands surrounding Delos, i.e. Kea, Kythnos, Serifos, Sifnos, Melos, Kimolos, Paros, Naxos, Syros, Mykonos, Tenos and Andros. In the middle Byzantine era except for the Cyclades it ended up including most of the islands of the Aegean Sea, Zakythinis, (1941), p. 255.

⁷³ Vallindas (1882), p. 73; Μεγάλη Ελληνική Εγκυκλοπαίδεια 15 (1931), p. 345; Filippaios (1998), p. 21.

Skyros, Aegina and Salamina.⁷⁴

Consequently, if we presume that this discrepancy is not due to a simple mistake, one could argue that not all Cyclades belonged to the same administrative unit. Indeed, P. Zerlentis, when interpreting Porphyrogenitus' writings goes as far as stating that the theme of the Aegean Sea included only the islands of Melos, Amorgos, Santorini, Therasia, Rhenia, the Sporades, Mytilene and Chios. All other Cyclades he allocates in the theme of Hellas.⁷⁵ This reading of the Emperor's work may be a bit arbitrary,⁷⁶ however, it is quite possible that the western Cyclades that were closer to the mainland fell under the theme of Hellas. This case is further reinforced by a chrysobull issued by Emperor Alexios III Angelos in 1199. According to that document, the islands Andros, Karystos, Kea and Melos and 'all other islands that fall under Andros and Karystos' belonged to a region known as '*Όριον Θηβών και Ευρίπου*' that was governed by the praetor of Hellas.⁷⁷ Again, Kythnos is not explicitly mentioned in either source. However, if we consider the island's geographical position and the fact that such an administrative differentiation was not unprecedented in earlier times, it would not be unreasonable to assume that, at least from the 10th century on, Kythnos came under the theme of Hellas and not that of the Aegean.

2.4.3 Ecclesiastical administration

As is the case with the secular administration, the information we have about the ecclesiastical matters of the Cyclades, and Kythnos more specifically, is scarce during the Byzantine period. Vallindas mentions that Kythnos did not have a

⁷⁴ Kallibretakis (forthcoming), pp. 181-182.

⁷⁵ Zerlentis (1913), p. 4.

⁷⁶ Constantine VII Porphyrogenitus in his work *Περί Θεμάτων* when listing the islands that fall under the theme of the Aegean, he only mentions Mytilene, Chios and Lemnos by name. The Cyclades island complex he refers to collectively: '*...Προσωκείωνται δε τω στρατηγώ του Αγίου Πελάγουσ αι τε Κυκλάδες νήσοι καλούμεναι, και των Σποράδων, ων προέχουσιν, η τε Μυτιλήνη και Χίος και αυτή η Λήμνος.*' He then goes on clarifying that the Cyclades are located around Delos and notes that they come by different names mentioning indicatively some of them: '*...αι γαρ Κυκλάδες Δήλον την νήσον εκλύκλωσαν, ..., καλούνται δε διαφόροις ονόμασι, Λήμνος, Σκύρος, Μήλος, Αμολγός, Θήρα Θηρασιά και Ρήνεια.*', Constantine Porphyrogenitus: Bekker (1840), p. 43. Further on when describing the theme of Hellas, he just mentions the islands of Euboea and Aegina by name. To the Cyclades Porphyrogenitus again refers collectively, writing: '*έχει δε μεθ' εαυτής και τα καλούμενας νήσους Κυκλάδας*', Constantine Porphyrogenitus: Bekker (1840), p. 51.

⁷⁷ Zakythinos (1941), p. 252.

bishopric of its own during the Early Christian times and that it fell alternately under the Metropolises of Rhodes and Athens.⁷⁸ He adds that in the 9th century during the reign of Emperor Leo the Wise (877-88) Kythnos along with Kea were under the Metropolis of Athens. In either case though, he does not present any references.⁷⁹

From the sources,⁸⁰ we know that since the 9th century Rhodes was the seat of the ecclesiastical province of the Cyclades having twelve subordinate episcopates: Rhodes, Cos, Leros, Samos, Chios, Naxos, Santorini, Paros, Andros, Tenos, Melos and Picine (in Asia Minor). The Diocese of Andros became later subordinate to the Metropolis of Athens and the Episcopates of Paros and Naxos were also detached in 1083 to establish the new independent Metropolis of Paronaxia.⁸¹ Kythnos is not mentioned in these documents, so it is equally possible that it fell under the Metropolis of Athens or Rhodes as did most of the other Cyclades. The first explicit mention of the island comes from the work of Neilos Doxapatri *Σύνταγμα περί των πέντε πατριαρχικών θρόνων*, which informs us that in the 12th century the joint Bishopric of Kea and Thermia was among the eleven episcopates belonging to the Metropolis of Athens.⁸²

2.5 The period of the Latin occupation - *Latinokratia* (13th-17th century)

2.5.1 Historical outline

Of all the strange and romantic creations of the Middle Ages none is so curious as the capture of the poetic ‘Isles of Greece’ by a handful of Venetian adventurers, and their organization as a Latin Duchy for upwards of three centuries. Even to-day the traces of the ducal times may be found in many of the Cyclades, where the Latin families, descendants of the conquerors, still

⁷⁸ Vallindas (1882), p. 71.

⁷⁹ Vallindas (1896), p. 25.

⁸⁰ An ecclesiastical report written by Epifanios, Archbishop of Cyprus, during the reign of the Emperor Leo the Wise (886-911), Parthey (1866), p. 160; Zerlenti (1913), p. 13.

⁸¹ Zerlenti (1913), p. 13.

⁸² Parthey (1866), p. 300. It has been argued, however, that this whole passage was added at a later date, see Panselinou (1989), pp. 176, 178, n. 20.

preserve the high-sounding names and the Catholic religion of their Latin ancestors, in the midst of ruined palaces and castles, built by the medieval lords of the Archipelago out of ancient Hellenic temples.

These words are used by Miller as an opening to his relation of the history of the Aegean Duchy in his work *Essays on the Latin Orient*.⁸³ Although the reality was most likely less poetic than Miller's romantic perception, it is true that the Latin conquest, known also as *Frankokratia* or *Latinokratia*, was a turning point in the history of the Cyclades leaving an abundance of monuments and shaping the identities of the insular societies to the present day.

The events that led to the Fourth Crusade and the fall of Constantinople to the Latins in 1204 are widely known and have often been analysed by scholars, so they will not be discussed here. What is important for the present study and relevant to the history of Kythnos is the creation of the Aegean Duchy, also known as Duchy of the Archipelago or Duchy of Naxos. The details of the conquest of the islands in c.1207, as well as the exact time sequence of the main events remain still unclear. As Slot characteristically states: 'our knowledge of the founding of the Duchy can be concentrated in 14 words: sometime at the beginning of the 13th century Marco Sanudo conquered many islands in the Cyclades'.⁸⁴ The sources upon which most 19th and early 20th-century historians based their works date from much later; the Venetian chronicles describing the campaign were written at least a hundred years later (e.g. Andrea Dandolo's chronicle of c.1350) while the 17th-century work of the Jesuit Father Robert Saulger on the Dukes of the Archipelago is today thought to belong more to the genre of fiction than historiography. So, the lack of original 13th-century records⁸⁵ has lately led modern researchers to question and revise the traditional narratives, which nevertheless have been widely adopted both in international and Greek bibliography.

⁸³ Miller (1921), p. 161.

⁸⁴ 'Το μόνο σίγουρο (σχετικά με την ίδρυση του Δουκάτου) μπορεί να συμπυκνωθεί σε 14 λέξεις: κάπου στην αρχή του 13ου αιώνα ο Μάρκος Σανούδος κατέκτησε πολλά νησιά στις Κυκλάδες', Slot (2012), p. 6.

⁸⁵ Scarcely any records from the time of the conquest or the reign of the first Duke have come down to us. The earliest original document regarding the Aegean Duchy is an act of 1227 signed by Marco I Sanudo, where he granted the revenues from the convent of Salvatoris on Naxos to a Benedictine monastery in Venice. Slot (2005), p. 6. It is interesting that in this document Marco I is mentioned as Lord of the Duchy of Naxos and Andros (*ducatus Niksie et Androu dominator*) and not as Duke. His son Angelo, his grandson Marco II and his great grandson Guglielmo I bore the same title. Only from the 14th century on is the title Duke used by the Sanudi, Slot, (2009), p. 6.

The *Partitio terrarum imperii Romaniae*,⁸⁶ the treaty that was signed amongst the Crusaders and the Venetians after the sack of the Byzantine capital and arranged the nominal partition of the Byzantine territory, granted the Latin Emperor direct control of one fourth of the Byzantine territory, to Venice three-eighths while the remaining three-eighths were apportioned among the other Crusader chiefs.⁸⁷ The ‘Dodecanese’, i.e. the modern-day Cyclades, possibly along with the Northern Sporades, were allotted to the Crusaders except for Tenos, Skyros and Andros which were given to Venice.⁸⁸ There has been much debate over the years concerning the correct reading and the interpretation of the surviving treaty manuscripts.

According to many scholars, including Tafel, Thomas, Finlay, Hopf and Miller among them, it was Venice and not the Crusaders that the Cyclades were allotted to.⁸⁹ K. Fotheringham, on the other hand, after analysing in length all different opinions and conjectures, reached the conclusion that ‘the islands of the Archipelago, with the exception of the groups specifically assigned either to Venice or to the emperor, were included in the Dodecanisos allotted to the Crusaders.’⁹⁰ Today, several contemporary scholars support the latter interpretation.⁹¹

The Latin conquest and the establishment of the Aegean Duchy

Regardless of whom the islands might originally have been given to in 1204, most of them remained still unconquered two years later. Venice, with the consent of the Latin Emperor, issued therefore a decree authorizing private conquests in the

⁸⁶ The *Partitio terrarum imperii Romaniae* (Latin for Partition of the lands of the empire of Romania) also known as *Partitio Romaniae* or *Regni Graeci* was promulgated either in late September/early October 1204 or (according to N. Oikonomides) immediately after the sack of Constantinople in April-May 1204. It was drafted by a 24-man committee consisting of 12 Venetians and 12 representatives of the other Crusader leaders and arranged the partition of the Byzantine territory between the Latin Emperor, Venice and the Crusaders, Kallibretakis (forthcoming). The provisions of the *Partitio Romaniae* were never fully carried out as much of the Byzantine realm fell into the hands of the local Byzantine Greek nobles, who established the Byzantine successor states of the Despotate of Epirus, the Empire of Nicaea and the Empire of Trebizond.

⁸⁷ Tafel and Thomas (1856), pp. 444-501.

⁸⁸ Fotheringham (1915) p. 38; Kallibretakis (forthcoming).

⁸⁹ Finlay (1851), p. 321; Miller (1921), p. 162.

⁹⁰ Fotheringham (1915), pp. 35-38.

⁹¹ Kallibretakis (forthcoming).

Aegean.⁹² Venetian citizens and allies were allowed under their own auspices to retain for themselves whatever they might capture, except for certain specified territories which were reserved for the Republic.⁹³ In accordance to that the year 1206-1207 a small Venetian fleet led by Marco Sanudo, nephew of the Doge of Venice, captured several Cycladic islands and the northern Sporades.⁹⁴

Which island was captured when and by whom is not yet entirely clear. Traditionally, it was thought that Sanudo conquered in total 17 islands in the Aegean and founded there a duchy keeping Naxos, Paros, Antiparos, Melos, Kythnos, Sifnos, Syros, Sikinos, Kimolos, Amorgos, Ios and Folegandros for himself while the remaining islands were given to his companions as sub-fiefs.⁹⁵ In the absence of relevant documentation, however, that view is being doubted by some scholars.

Based on the oldest chronicles, L. Kallibretakis accepts that Sanudo and his comrades took Naxos first, possibly by 1205,⁹⁶ and then Paros, Antiparos, Melos, and Santorini. Marino Dandolo captured Andros, while Andrea and Jeremiah Ghisi conquered Tenos, Mykonos, Skyros, Skopelos and Skiathos. The fate of some other islands such as Kythnos, Syros, Sifnos, Kimolos, Ios, Therasia, Sikinos, Pholegandros, Anaphe and Amorgos, is not mentioned explicitly in the chronicles. However, Kallibretakis claims that their conquest at that time cannot be excluded, as later documents prove that shortly after these islands were under the control of the Dukes of the Aegean. There are no documents that can prove the capture of Kea or Serifos, at least during that campaign. In contrast to that, there are other sources that doubt whether Naxos itself and consequently the rest of the Cyclades were conquered before 1210 or even 1212.⁹⁷

⁹² This agreement is only mentioned in the chronicle of Daniele Barbaro (1511-1570) and by the genealogist Marco Barbaro. All other chroniclers refer to a unilateral decision of Venice, Kallibretakis (forthcoming), p. 19.

⁹³ Lock (1995), p. 245; Miller (1921), p. 162; Fotheringham (1915), p. 49.

⁹⁴ Kallibretakis (forthcoming); Lock (1998), p. 250.

⁹⁵ Miller (1908), p. 44; Fotheringham (1915), p. 59.

⁹⁶ According to the chronicle of Daniele Barbaro, Naxos the largest of the Cyclades and later capital of the Duchy, was captured by Sanudo in a different campaign a couple of years earlier, namely in 1204-1205 when the Doge Enrico Dandolo was still alive, Lock (1998), p. 250; Fotheringham (1915), p. 41.

⁹⁷ Katsouros (2006), p. 15; Slot (2012 a), p. 6.



Fig. 15. The Aegean Duchy under Marco I Sanudo



Fig. 16. The Sanudo family coat of arms (Simeonidis 2014, p. 144)

At any rate, after the whole campaign was completed⁹⁸ its leader was invested with the Duchy of the Aegean Sea by Emperor Henry, as Sanudo despite being a Venetian citizen, recognised the Latin Emperor and not Venice as his suzerain lord. The exact date of the investiture is not known; 1210 is more commonly accepted by most scholars, however, depending on the source it may range from 1207 to 1212.⁹⁹ Thus, began the life of the Duchy of the Archipelago, which was destined to be the most long-lived of all the Frankish baronies that were founded on the territories of the former Byzantine Empire.

Whether it was captured in the first campaign or some years later, it appears that Kythnos was among the islands that formed the first core of the Aegean Duchy in the early 13th century (**Fig. 15**). We do not know if the island was incorporated peacefully into Sanudo's acquisitions or not. Naxos is said to have been the only place where Sanudo met with any real resistance and according to Saulger's writings, he

⁹⁸ It is said in the chronicles that the conquest of all islands lasted about a year, Fotheringham (1915), p. 60.

⁹⁹ Fotheringham (1915), p. 61.

had to besiege the Byzantine fortress of Apalirou¹⁰⁰ for five weeks before the island submitted to him.¹⁰¹ The Kythnian tradition does not offer any relevant information and in any case, the resistance, if indeed there was any, would have been so feeble that it was not worth mentioning by later chroniclers.

In 1261 Michael VIII Palaiologos recovered Constantinople from the Latins and restored the Byzantine Empire. The Duchy was strongly undermined when by virtue of the Venetian-Byzantine treaty of 1265 Venice waived its right to the islands that belonged to the Latin Emperor and allowed the Greeks to reclaim them ‘*ἵνα Θεοῦ εὐδοκούντο*’, i.e. by the will of God.¹⁰² Some years later, around 1278, the Byzantine fleet led by the Frankish knight Likarios recaptured Euboea, Lemnos, the Sporades, and several of the Aegean Duchy’s islands.¹⁰³ Serifos and Sifnos are explicitly mentioned by Hopf, while other sources add Kea, Santorini, Amorgos, Ios, Sikinos, Polyaiagos and Astypalaia to the list.¹⁰⁴ The islands remained in Byzantine hands for almost 20 years, however, they were all gradually reinstated to the Latins in the first decade of the 14th century.

Although all its neighbouring islands were reclaimed by the Byzantines, there is no mention of Kythnos. Quite possibly it was taken too. The first written record we have on the island comes from the Venetian archives and it dates from that turbulent period. Kythnos or rather Fermentia as the Latins called it, is mentioned in 1278 in two acts of the Jury of the Republic granting reimbursement to victims of piracy: *Judicum Venetorum in causis piraticis contra Graecos decisiones*.¹⁰⁵ Both incidents described in these acts took place in the port of Fermentia. In the first case, it is clearly mentioned that the victim, a Matheo Signolo citizen of Euboea, was robbed by men of the Emperor (presumably Michael VIII Palaiologos), while in the second case which involved also the Baili of Constantinople and Negroponte it is noted that the corsair ships were armed in Constantinople. Even if the Byzantines did not

¹⁰⁰ The castle was defended by a Genoese force that was established there, unknown for how long. They were either mercenaries nominally in the service of the Emperor or the Byzantine local elite or pirates, Fotheringham (1915), p. 19; Miller (1908), p. 43.

¹⁰¹ Saulger (1878), p. 6.

¹⁰² Tafel and Thomas (1857), pp. 68-69.

¹⁰³ Miller (1908), p. 141; Bury (1886), pp. 340-341.

¹⁰⁴ Miller (1908), pp. 577-578.

¹⁰⁵ Tafel and Thomas (1857), pp. 173, 240-241.

directly hold Kythnos at the time, these documents illustrate the insecurity in the area and the struggle between them and the Latins.

Around the same time (late 13th century) Kythnos appears also in an official catalogue of the islands of the Archipelago that was published by Hopf in 1873. Although the author and the purpose of this catalogue are not clarified, it is noted that like its neighbouring islands, Fermene has a *kastro*.¹⁰⁶ In 1292, either in the hands of the Greeks or the Franks at the time, we know that Kythnos, along with Andros, Tenos, Mykonos, and other islands was captured and pillaged by the Aragonese admiral Roger de Luria.¹⁰⁷ By 1322 however, the island was certainly reinstated to the Duchy because according to Hopf Duke Niccolo I ceded it to Gherardo dei Castelli, a nobleman from Negroponte.¹⁰⁸ The Castelli family had recently settled in Euboea after leaving their home-city of Treviso in northern Italy due to internal conflicts. Hopf does not present a source, so the exact date and the reason of this investiture are not known. To my knowledge, 1322 has been adopted by all historians, however, some concerns could be raised by the fact that at this time the Duke of Naxos was still Guglielmo I (1303-1323) and not his son Niccolo I (1323-1341).

But regardless of the year of the investiture, the Castelli's lordship over Kythnos was a very ephemeral one. Merely 14 years later, Gherardo lost his island to Francesco Gozzadini of Bologna who in 1336 seized it, based on some old kinship rights that were promptly confirmed by the Duke of Naxos.¹⁰⁹ Gherardo returned to Euboea and from there he went on to Venice where he was granted citizenship for himself and his descendants. The family soon gave up their rights on Kythnos or forgot about them completely. Maybe it was the Castelli's close ties with the Republic that prompted the Duke to deprive them of their possession.

Few records from their time as rulers of Kythnos have survived. Hopf in his *Veneto-Byzantinische Analekten* mentions just two documents dating to 1335 and 1336 respectively. With the first one, Venice permitted Gherardo Castelli to send two of his servants who were intended for Kythnos to Euboea, while with the second the

¹⁰⁶ Hopf (1873), pp. xxiii, 175-176.

¹⁰⁷ Muntaner (2000), p. 244.

¹⁰⁸ Hopf (1964), p. 143.

¹⁰⁹ Hopf (1964), p. 143.

Republic allowed Gherardo himself ‘*dominatori insularum Formen*’ (lord of the island Formen) to travel there.¹¹⁰ The last document hints that Gherardo was not an absentee lord, yet nothing more is known of his dominion over the island. Judging from its brief duration it is rather unlikely that the Castelli invested greatly in any public or private works, which would have seriously affected the form of Oria *Kastro*.

It was the house of Gozzadini that Kythnos’ medieval fate was tied to. The Gozzadini held the island, as vassals of the Dukes of Naxos, for almost three centuries, from 1366 to 1617. Gradually they expanded their rule over several more islands (Anaphe, Sifnos, part of Kea etc.) and although neglected by the historians of the Archipelago it appears that they became one of the most influential families in the Aegean world. Under the Gozzadini rule, Kythnos followed, for the most part, the historical course of the other Aegean Duchy islands.

Although the Dukes of Naxos held the Duchy successively as vassals of the Latin Emperor, the Princes of Achaia (1248) and the Angevins of Naples (1278), the influence of Venice over it grew stronger over the years. From the 14th century on, the balance of power in the wider Aegean area changed drastically with the advance of the Ottomans. The continuous interventions of Venice which was then at the peak of its power in the matters of the south-west Aegean led to a *de facto*, even if not always *de jure*, subjection of the Duchy to the Serenissima.¹¹¹ Several serious Ottoman raids against the Duchy islands are mentioned during the 14th century. Especially the campaign of Umur of Aydin in 1341 forced the islands for the first time to pay an annual tribute.¹¹² So, it gradually became clear that the support of Venice was essential for the survival of the Aegean Duchy.

In 1383 the Duke Niccolo III dalle Carceri was overthrown by Francesco I Crispo who – with the blessings of Venice – took over the rule of the Duchy. Crispo was lord of Melos and cousin of the Duke. Saulger gives a colourful description of how Niccolo was secretly murdered by his kinsman during a hunt in the island’s hinterland. Then Crispo driven by personal ambition and with the pretence of quenching any

¹¹⁰ Hopf (1964), p. 143.

¹¹¹ Kallibretakis (forthcoming).

¹¹² Zacharidou (1983), pp. 41-43; Miller (1908), p. 589 citing Gregoras.

revolt assumed power, thus ending the Sanudi dynasty in the Aegean.¹¹³ According to other reports, Crispo did not act on his own accord but represented also many of the Duke's discontented subjects as well as Venice which was concerned that Niccolo III was unable to withstand the growing Turkish threat.¹¹⁴

Compared to the Sanudi, the new ducal dynasty was, for the most part, on much friendlier terms with the Republic, who assisted the Duchy with vessels against the Ottoman privateers and henceforth included the islands in her treaties with the sultans and the other Levantine powers.¹¹⁵ Still, the Turkish expeditions against the Aegean Duchy's islands were not prevented. A particularly severe one, that left most of the islands heavily depopulated, took place in 1416. Christoforo Buondelmonti, who travelled around the Aegean during these years drawing up his *Liber Insularum Achipelagi* describes the situation on most islands with dark colours.¹¹⁶ Yet for Kythnos, which the Florentine monk visited around 1419, he says that its main city which was once desolated by the Turks is now repopulated.¹¹⁷



Fig. 17. The lion of Saint Mark and the coat of arms of the Crispi family, Archaeological Museum, Rhodes (<https://commons.wikimedia.org/>)

¹¹³ Saulger (1698), pp. 118-122.

¹¹⁴ Miller (1908), p. 593.

¹¹⁵ Miller (1908), p. 596.

¹¹⁶ Miller (1908), p. 605.

¹¹⁷ Legrand (1897), p. 42; Sinner (1824), p 84.

During the 15th and early 16th century, Venice continued her interference in the affairs of the Duchy as well as her protective policy including the islands in her treaties with the Ottomans¹¹⁸ and giving ‘the Duke of Naxos, his nobles and their men with their places and all they have the status of Venetians, exempting them from tribute or any other service, with the right to hoist the lion banner of St Mark from their castles’ as it is clearly stated in the treaty of 1454 with sultan Mohammed II (Fig. 17).¹¹⁹

The Ottoman-Venetian wars¹²⁰ that followed the successive falls of Constantinople, Morea and the Florentine Duchy of Athens led to greater insecurity in the wider area. Of course, the Aegean was granted periods of peace and prosperity, nevertheless, it appears that even during these intervals random raids against the islands were not uncommon. As we learn from the diaries of Marino Sanudo, in 1510 the Turkish commander Kurt Oglu deported 80 people from Kythnos and five from Kea.¹²¹

The fate of the Aegean Duchy was decided in the third Ottoman-Venetian war during the reign of Suleyman the Magnificent with the two campaigns of the infamous Admiral Hayrettin Barbarossa. Many things have been written over the years of these campaigns which resulted in the surrender of the Cyclades. The main sources as presented by Slot in an article in 1978 are the following: a) a letter to the Christian kings of Western Europe allegedly written in the hand of Duke Giovanni IV right after the surrender of Naxos, b) the treaty that concluded the war between Venice and the sultan in 1540, c) Andrea Cornaro’s lengthy description of the events in his manuscript on the history of Crete (*Historia Candiana*), d) a brief account by the Venetian historiographer Paolo Peruda (*Historia Venetiana*, 1605), e) a relation of the two Turkish campaigns by the Turkish historian Haji Khalifeh first published in 1728, f) the 17th-century report of the events in Naxos, Paros and Andros by Saulger

¹¹⁸ E.g. in the treaty of 1419 all Cyclades and Kythnos among them are recognised as Venetian not to be claimed, asked for tribute or molested in any way by the sultan, Thomas and Predelli (1899), pp. 318-319. See also Predelli (1896), p. 16.

¹¹⁹ Miller (1908), p. 610.

¹²⁰ The 1st Ottoman-Venetian war (1463-1479) resulted in the capture of Negroponte, Lemnos and Albania Veneta by the Ottomans. The 2nd Ottoman-Venetian war (1499-1503) resulted in the capture of the Venetian strongholds in the Morea (Peloponnese) by the Ottomans, while the 3rd (1537-1540) and 4th (1566-1570) Ottoman-Venetian wars decided the fate of the Cyclades, that were finally annexed to the Ottoman Empire in 1570.

¹²¹ Sanudo (1904), p. 210.

and g) a relation of the local tradition on the temporary occupation of Tenos by the French traveller Joseph Pitton de Tournefort.¹²²

Although there are some slight discrepancies between the sources regarding mostly the exact time sequence of the individual events and the numbers of vessels and prisoners, the essence of all accounts is the same: The 1537 Ottoman-Venetian war started with a Turkish attack against Corfu led by the sultan himself, however, the Ottomans failed to breach the island's defences.¹²³ The fleet returned to Constantinople but Barbarossa, evidently not wanting to go home empty-handed, kept with him a force of 70 galleys and 30 smaller vessels¹²⁴ and set his sights on easier targets than the well-fortified Corfu.

Sailing near the coast of Peloponnese he first came upon the Venetian-held islands of Kythera and Aegina both of which he laid to waste, famously taking 7,000 prisoners from the former¹²⁵ and 6,000 from the latter.¹²⁶ Then, in early autumn, the *Kapudan Pasha* descended upon the Cyclades. Here, the sources disagree on whether his first attack was directed to Naxos (Saulger), Paros (Cornaro) or Kea (Khalifeh). Slot considers Cornaro's version as being more reliable. At any rate, all sources report that in Paros Barbarossa encountered strong resistance which, nevertheless, was defeated after a while. In Naxos hearing of the approach of the Ottoman fleet, the Duke with his court and the island's population had all found refuge in Apano *Kastro*. When presented with the dilemma by a Turkish messenger, Giovanni IV Crispo decided to surrender and spare himself and his people the slaughter if not the looting. So, on 11 November 1537 he agreed to become tributary to the sultan, paying an annual amount of 5,000 ducats for the islands of Naxos, Melos, Syros, and Santorini.

After submitting Naxos without bloodshed, Barbarossa divided his fleet into two parts; one captured and looted Kythnos and Kea, taking 2,000 prisoners from both

¹²² Slot (1978), pp. 61-88.

¹²³ Khalifeh (1831), p. 55.

¹²⁴ Saulger claims that Barbarossa's force amounted to 70 galleys, Saulger (1698), p. 184, a number accepted by both Miller and Slot. In Khalifeh's account the fleet counted 60 galleys, Khalifeh (1831), p. 58, as did in Peruda's, who adds 30 more smaller vessels to the admiral's fleet, Slot (1978), p. 80.

¹²⁵ An account of the sack of Kythera by Barbarossa and its disastrous aftermath is given in two almost contemporaneous Venetian documents of 1543 and 1563, see Gregory (2008), pp. 259-268.

¹²⁶ 6,000 according to the account of Peruda or 4,800 according to that of Khalifeh.

islands,¹²⁷ while the other fell upon Mykonos. At this point, Barbarossa received a message calling him back to the capital. On his way back to Constantinople, he plundered Chios. Upon reaching the Dardanelles, the *Kapudan Pasha* sent back to the Cyclades several smaller pirate vessels that were attached to his fleet. Amorgos, Anaphe and Serifos (according to Cornaro) were taken by these privateers and Mykonos was sacked for a second time.

In the summer of 1538, the Turkish armada sailed once more to the Aegean led again by Barbarossa himself. After capturing the Northern Sporades, he arrived at Tenos which, according to most sources, surrendered without a fight. However, shortly after his departure, the inhabitants called the Venetians back and the island remained in their hands until 1715. Leaving the Cyclades for Crete, Barbarossa collected the agreed sum from the Duke of Naxos. Following his example, the lord of Andros Crusino Sommaripa became tributary to the Porte, as did Niccolo III Gozzadini who agreed to pay 300 ducats for his islands.¹²⁸

With the treaty of 1540 that concluded the third Ottoman-Venetian war Venice gave up her rights on the Aegean Duchy islands leaving all but Tenos to the sultan: *'Apparterranno al sultano, che giura mantenere pace colla republica finche questa gli si conservi amica, Nadin e Vrana sui confini del sangiacato di Bosnia coi loro territori, le isole di Skyatos, Skyros, Andros, Sifnos, Serifos, Naxos, Santorino, Masso, Antiparo, Egina, Murit (Kea), Thermia, Paros, Mykono, Papasluch, L'isola de Piegoreri, Morgor (Amorgos), Mali Clissa Chiesa.'*¹²⁹ The Duke of Naxos and some non-Venetian lords like the Sommaripa, the Crispi and the Gozzadini were restored to their possessions as tributaries to the Ottomans, however, as Miller puts it, they knew that they existed on sufferance. The slow process of the Duchy's fall had begun.

The Latin rule of the islands of the Archipelago continued for almost another 30 years, however, the Duke's and the other lords' power had seriously waned. Since 1564

¹²⁷ Khalifeh does not explicitly mention Kythnos. According to his account Khair-ad-din first attacked Merted (probably Kea) taking 1,200 prisoners and then proceeded to Paros and Naxos. He also reports the capture of two more islands in the neighbourhood but does not name them, Khalifeh, (1831), p. 58.

¹²⁸ Slot (1978), p. 78.

¹²⁹ Predelli (1903), p. 236.

the title of the duke ceased being hereditary and was appointed to by the sultan.¹³⁰ Saulger describes this last period – especially the years of the reign of the last duke Giacomo IV – as a time of financial and moral decline and social unrest. The Latins had practically lost their authority and the discontent among their subjects grew stronger every year as they tried to raise funds for their annual tribute and for bribing the Turkish officials by levying more money from the Greek population.

Finally, in 1566, the fiscal oppression and the religious rivalries led the inhabitants of Naxos to send to the Porte asking for a fitter governor.¹³¹ The Ottomans responded promptly to that opportunity; Giacomo IV was imprisoned in Constantinople and the fleet of Piali *Pasha* seized Naxos and the rest of the Cyclades (except for Tenos), officially annexing them to the Empire. The Jew Joseph Nasi was appointed by Selim II as the new duke. Nasi's rule (1566-1579) was very unpopular with the Orthodox population and he himself never visited the islands that were governed instead by his representative Francesco Coronello.

In the fourth Ottoman-Venetian war that broke shortly after (1570-1573) the Cyclades were briefly retrieved by Venice in 1571 to be lost again almost immediately to Mehmet *Pasha*.¹³² At the same time, however, Niccolo III Gozzadini recovered his dominions and he managed not only to keep them but, according to G. Gerola, it was then that he added another five islands (Folegandros, Sikinos, Kimolos, Gyaros, Poliegos) to the family's possessions.¹³³ Of course, the Gozzadini lord remained tributary to the sultan and was paying him an even larger sum than before.¹³⁴

Thus, alone of all the other Latin lords, the Gozzadini retained their island state for another 46 years. In 1617 though, even their rule came to an end. As a countermeasure to the growing western hostility in the Aegean and the preparations for a new Crusade, the fleet of the *Kapudan Pasha* Celebi Ali sailed to the Cyclades.¹³⁵ Angelo V, lord of Sifnos and Thermia, was expelled by the Turks and Kythnos along with all

¹³⁰ Slot (2008), p. 28.

¹³¹ Miller (1908), pp. 635-636; Saulger (1878), p. 191.

¹³² Miller (1908), p. 641.

¹³³ Gerola (1926), p. 10 [52].

¹³⁴ Ersch and Grüber (1863), p. 423.

¹³⁵ Slot (1982), p. 134.

THE GOZZADINI OF THERMIA (Kythnos)

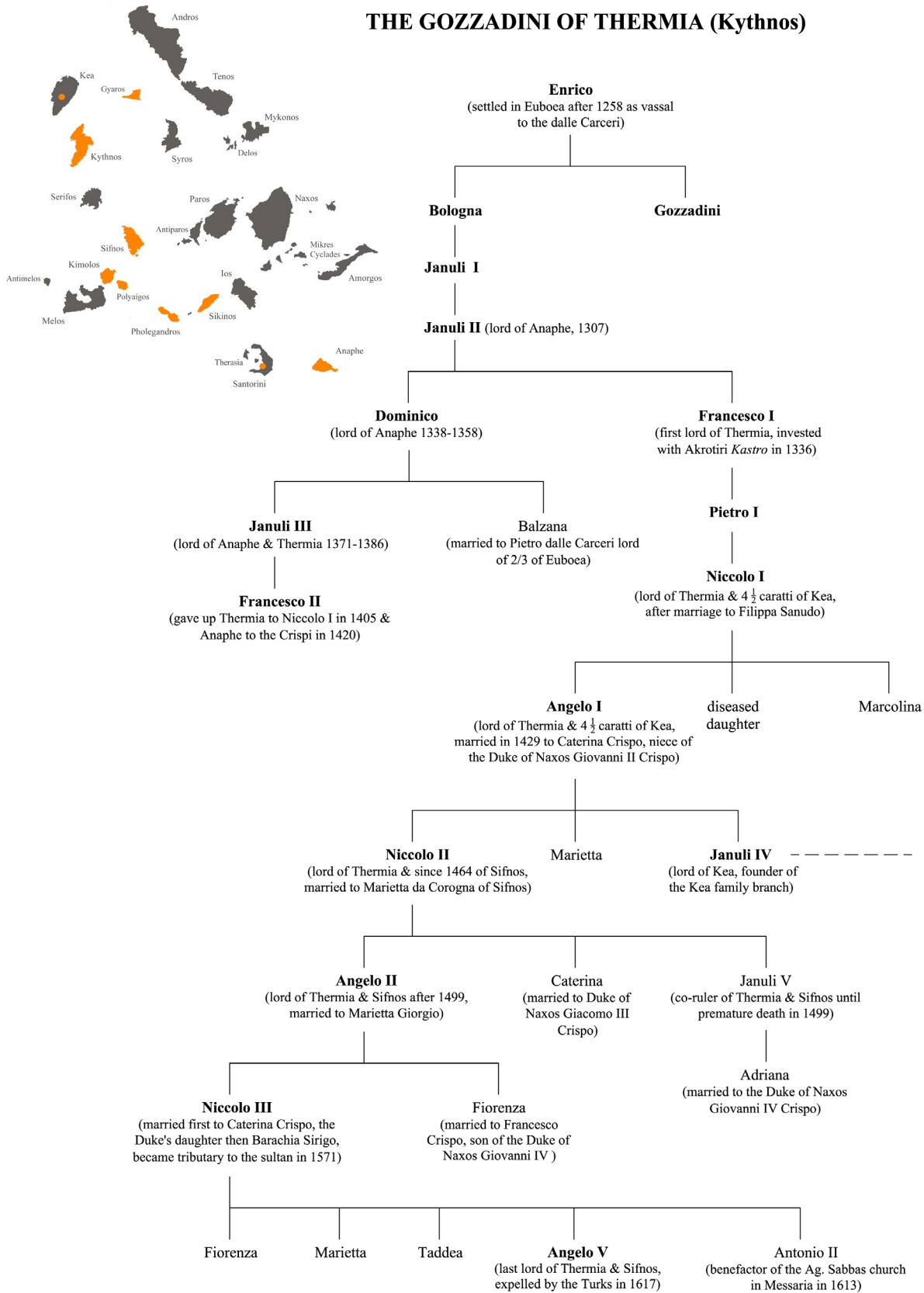


Fig. 18. Simplified family tree of the Greek branch of the Gozzadini family (13th-17th c.)

other Gozzadini islands became officially part of the Ottoman Empire.¹³⁶ We have no information about the manner of the annexation of the islands and whether it was peaceful with the consent of the local population or violent. Slot writes that the Turks indulged unscrupulously to all kinds of violence, without however providing a source.¹³⁷ In a report of 1629 written by the Venetian Governor of Crete Francesco Morosini, it is just mentioned that Angelo V Gozzadini along with his wife and children had to flee Sifnos to escape the Ottomans who wanted to enslave them.¹³⁸ Despite losing their islands, many members of the Gozzadini family lingered in the Archipelago for several years thereafter and some of them tried, unsuccessfully, to regain parts of their ancestral possessions.

2.5.2 The Greek branch of the Gozzadini family

As mentioned, the Gozzadini were an old and noble family from Bologna in northern Italy. In the mid-13th century, a branch of that family settled in the Aegean Archipelago, where they gradually established themselves. Over time they acquired significant assets in Euboea, Naxos, and Santorini, and became lords of the islands of Kythnos, Anaphe, Sifnos, a part of Kea, Folegandros, Sikinos, Gyaros, Kimolos and Poliegos, that remained in the property of the Gozzadini family until the beginning of the 17th century.

According to Hopf whose comprehensive work on the Gozzadini family was published in the *Allgemeine Encyclopädie der Wissenschaften und Künste*,¹³⁹ information about the Greek branch of the family is to be found mainly in the archives of the city of Bologna,¹⁴⁰ but also in the archives of Venice and the Catholic church of Naxos. Hopf transcribed and translated into German various family records (wedding contracts, testaments, deeds, letters etc.) that range chronologically from the 13th to

¹³⁶ Miller (1908), p. 644.

¹³⁷ Slot (1982), p. 134.

¹³⁸ Spanakis (1950), p. 102.

¹³⁹ Ersch and Grüber (1863), pp. 415-426.

¹⁴⁰ Today the original documents that Hopf studied in the 19th century can be only partially found in the archives of Bologna (*Biblioteca dell'Archiginnasio, Archivio Gozzadini*). Unfortunately, as the librarians informed me, quite a few were lost during the archive's relocation to its present place. The remaining documents have a different encoding than the one cited by Hopf (e.g. *Archivio Gozzadini*. Fasc. 33 no7 can now be found under *Archivio Gozzadini*, b. 138, n. 7).

Urkunden.

I.

Archivio Gozzadini in Bologna. Cartone di diverse cose.

Copia extrata dall' Autentico per me Michaelae Coriolano Nodaro et Cancelliere dell' Isola de Sifanto de verbo ad verbum ut iacet.

In Christi nomine amen. Manifesto sia che Noi Nicolò Sanudo Duca dell' Arcipelago per noi come per li nostri heredi de gratia speciale femo et donemo al Nobile Cavalier Mr. Francesco Gozzadini da Bologna nostro feudato e Signor della Fermia si a lui et alli suoi eredi de suo corpo discendenti una Contrà dell' Isola nostra de Santorini la quale Contrà se chiama la punta con tutte le sue pertinentie dentro et de fuora la quale punta guarda in ver Cristiana et etiam la predita donation volemo che sia con questi infrascritti homini con le famiglie et primo Nicola de Moscona con sua moglie et una sua figlia, Item Costa de Vassili Corado. Item Zorzi Sulan. Item Nicola poli Candriti ¹⁾ con sua moglie et uno suo figliolo. Item papa Zani poli Candriti et suo figlio Bartolomeo. Item Anastasia Picea. Item Pliti de Condu vedova. Item Anna de Costantia Borseta con sua figlia. Item Calogria ²⁾ Sacharuden et con tutti li figlioli che farano li soprascritti omini et femine che fosse della detta Contrà. ancora dagamo et volemo che tutti li homini et femine che fosse della detta Contrà de ditta punta che fosse di fuga o per Turchi o per altra maniera e lui li ricovrasse in la detta terra tutte siano alla Signoria del soprascritto Cavalier secondo se contien la predetta donation. ancora digamo che quanti huomini et femine menasse lo soprascritto Cavalier over altri per lui alla predetta Isola de Santorini tutti siano suoi et sotto sua Signoria. per recognition della soprascritta donation volemo che lo soprascritto Cavalier et suoi heredi secondo se contien de soprascritto che elli ne sian tenuti a noi et alli nostri eredi ogn' anno garzon uno de Smirne de anni VIII a nostra richiesta et per via de fermezza de veritade havemo messo la nostra bolla pendente allo predetto privilegio a nome de verità scritto in Andre MCCCLVI ³⁾ Die Domenega I^o di Mazzo indictione IX^a

1) Polycandriti, von der den Gozzadini gehörigen Insel Polykandros.

2) Καλογέρως.

3) Das Datum ist falsch; es ist dafür MCCCXXXVI zu lesen; Herzog Nicolò I. starb 1341; ihm folgte von 1341 — 1362 sein Bruder Giovanni I. Tag und Indiction stimmen freilich zu 1356; es ist daher statt I^o wohl V^o und statt IX. hier IV, was ja leicht verwechselt werden konnte; zu lesen. Man muss dabei bedenken, dass die Urkunde nur in einer späteren Copie auf uns gekommen ist.

Fig. 19. The investiture act of the *La Ponta* castle in Santorini to Francesco Gozzadini as it was transcribed by Hopf from the *Archivio Gozzadini* in Bologna (Hopf 1964, p. 153)

the late 17th century in an attempt to reconstruct the family's history and determine their complicated genealogy. He also comprised (or quite possibly copied) a family tree of the Greek branch of the Gozzadini family, that was published in his work *Chroniques gréco-romanes*.¹⁴¹ Here, we shall only shortly review the family lineage that had a direct connection to the island of Kythnos (**Fig. 18**).¹⁴²

Although the records may not cover all the years of the long Gozzadini dominion on Kythnos, Hopf's detailed work provides us with an overall account of the most important facts as well as the succession line of the island's rulers. The transcribed records may at first seem too detailed and confusing, however, their study proves to be of great interest; they outline the important role of the family in the Aegean Duchy as well as their relations with other noble Latin houses and the locals. Additionally, some of the deeds contain scarce yet valuable information about the built environment of the island at that time. In the absence of other sources, the ruling family's history can complement the fragmentary information we have about the medieval history of Kythnos.

The forefather of the Greek branch of the Gozzadini family was Enrico Gozzadini who in 1258 fled from Bologna to Greece, being chased away by the political parties that ruled his native city at that time. He settled first on Naxos and then went over to Euboea, where he acquired some land as a vassal of the dalle Carceri who were another noble north Italian family from Verona. Enrico had two sons, named Bologna and Gozzadini respectively. Bologna's son **Januli** or **Giovanni I** was the progenitor of all the Gozzadini of the Aegean. He and his descendants called themselves alternately either de Bologna (de Bononia) or Gozzadini.

Januli I remained under the dalle Carceri of Euboea gaining the title of *Magister*. His son, however, **Januli II** was the first of his house who founded an independent *signorie* i.e. lordship of his own. In 1307, along with the knight of the order of Saint John Januli da Corogna, he led a successful campaign against the Aegean islands

¹⁴¹ Hopf (1873), p. 490.

¹⁴² The relationship the Gozzadini of Kythnos maintained with their city of origin is obscure. The existence of their archive in Bologna clearly suggests some sort of contact, however, there is no more evidence on the exact nature of that relationship. Indicative of the lack of information is the fact that the staff of the *Biblioteca dell'Archiginnasio* were unaware of the Aegean branch of the family when I first contacted them. Further research that falls out of the scope of this study might be able to identify currently unknown family, commercial and religious ties.

that were recaptured some years earlier by the Byzantines.¹⁴³ **Januli II** took Anaphe to his possession and founded there a small independent state¹⁴⁴ becoming as Miller writes ‘the island’s petty sovereign’.¹⁴⁵ From his two sons, the eldest **Dominico** inherited Anaphe while the youngest, **Francesco I**, became the first ruler of Thermia (Kythnos).

As mentioned before, in 1336 Francesco Gozzadini took Kythnos from **Gherardo Castelli** using some old kinship rights as an excuse and Duke Niccolo I Sanudo confirmed his claim.¹⁴⁶ Hopf assumes that the previous year Francesco I had helped the Duke take the island of Santorini by force from its former lord Marino Barozzi. As a reward for his service in addition to Kythnos, in May of that same year, Francesco was also given the mighty castle of Akrotiri on Santorini, also known as *La Ponta*, along with all its serfs. His only obligation towards the Duke of Naxos was to bring him an eight-year-old slave from Smyrna every year (**Fig. 19**).¹⁴⁷

The actual act of the investiture of Kythnos to Francesco has not survived or been found to the present day. Judging from the documents presented by Hopf it must have taken place some time between February and May 1336. In a document dated on the 29 February, Gherardo Castelli is still mentioned as lord of Kythnos, while in the act of the castle grant of Santorini that took place in May that title is borne by Francesco Gozzadini.¹⁴⁸ At any rate, thereafter the Gozzadini established themselves in the Aegean and they were challenged only by their own relatives.

Francesco’s older brother, **Dominico Gozzadini** had two offspring, a son named **Januli III** and a daughter called Balzana. His social status rose considerably when

¹⁴³ The Frankish knight Likarios, after entering the services of the Byzantine emperor, as head of the Byzantine fleet, recaptured the Sporades and most of the islands of the Aegean Duchy. The islands remained under Byzantine rule for almost 20 years.

¹⁴⁴ The Anaphe branch of the Gozzadini family and the da Corogna of Sifnos, contrary to all other Aegean island lords, asserted their independence, alike of Venice and the Duke, Miller (1908), p. 588.

¹⁴⁵ Miller (1908), p. 584.

¹⁴⁶ Hopf (1964), p. 143.

¹⁴⁷ Ersch and Grüber (1863), p. 418

¹⁴⁸ The date that stands on the Santorini document is 1356 (MCCCLVI). Hopf claims that this date is wrong, given that Duke Niccolo was already dead since 1341. Instead he proposes 1336 (MCCCXXXVI) and believes that the act is not original, attributing the date discrepancy to the copyist’s mistake, Hopf (1964), pp. 143, 153.

he married off his daughter to Pietro dalle Carceri who owned 2/3 of the rich and prosperous island of Euboea. After the latter's premature death in 1340, Dominico took over the guardianship of his young grandson Giovanni dalle Carceri and was referred to as '*tutor Negropontis*'.¹⁴⁹ Giovanni dalle Carceri married the heir of the Duchy of Naxos Fiorenza Sanudo. After his and his wife's death in 1359 and 1371 respectively, his underage only son Niccolo dalle Carceri who was both lord of Euboea and the 8th heir of the Aegean Duchy came under the guardianship of his uncle **Januli III Gozzadini**.

On 15 May 1377 the underage Duke Niccolo II granted 'Januli Gozzadini de Bologna our uncle and regent of the Archipelago due to his faithful and committed service' the taxes of Santorini to 'manage them as if they came from his own serfs'. He was also given tax exemption from the export duties on all luxury goods (cotton, honey, wax, cattle, cheese, grain etc.).¹⁵⁰ As a result, **Januli's III** power rose and he was the only one that tried to defend the Sanudi family when in March 1383 Niccolo II was murdered by Francesco I Crispo who usurped the title of the Duke for himself. Januli III failed in his attempt to restore the late Duke's half-sister Maria Sanudo to the rule of Andros after Crispo gave both the island and the hand of his daughter to Pietro Zeno. However, during these negotiations, he is referred to as 'lord of Thermia'. It seems that this Cousin **Pietro I Gozzadini** (Francesco's I son and heir) had to share the sovereignty of the island with his more prominent relative.

Soon after, Kythnos was returned to Francesco's I lineage. **Januli III** left at the beginning of the 15th century his share of Kythnos and the island of Anaphe to his son **Francesco II**. Nevertheless, in 1405 **Francesco II** gave up his Kythnos rights to Pietro's I son **Niccolo I** and some years later, namely in 1420 he also forwent Anaphe to the Crispi of Naxos. His son **Pietro II** was the last descendant of that branch of the family as he died childless in the mid-15th century. In 1405, the same year that **Niccolo I Gozzadini** gained full control of Kythnos he also married Filippa Sanudo, who brought him as part of her dowry 4 ½ *caratti* (meaning 4 ½ parts out of 24) of the island of Kea (Zia). Since then, **Niccolo I** was referred to as Lord of Kea and Thermia. Moreover, he also inherited the castle of Akrotiri on Santorini.

¹⁴⁹ Ersch and Grüber (1863), p. 417.

¹⁵⁰ Ersch and Grüber (1863), p. 417.

1499. 23. Feb
In Xpi nomine Amen Anno eiusdem Nativitatis 1499 die 23 men-
stris februario in insula Lemnina in Castro ped. loci in
domo et habitacione magis et potentis An. Nicolai de Gozzadini Lemni-
nari et filiar. eius dñi. Et tutti ei singuli. Univer. salm. de lo
pate. In ho. penegniva on an. fello. habalo. z. femo. rati. et. grato
et. fructuabile. parente. Id. circo. nos. Nicolaus. Gozzadini. Lemnari.
et. filiar. eius. dñi. femo. notis. et. manifesto. conuicta. de. considerando
l'amor. fede. et. obediencia. m. Angelero. de. Gozzadini. uno. dilecto. fello.
el. qual. continuam. te. ha. dimon. strauero. noi. come. fano. buoni.
fideles. et. obediencia. el. qual. de. iure. da. publico. uita. nra. de. succedere
et. hereditar. tutti. i. nra. fide. d. dominij. Baronie. et. felle. Univer-
salmente. doue. te. a. trouano. et. trouar. se. potuer. cussi. Isola
delle. Lemnie. come. etiam. d. Isola. d. Sifano. et. tutti. castamenti.
et. beni. a. trouano. alle. felle. et. fide. d. nra. etiam. d. Latone
uel. castello. posto. all'isola. de. Lemnina. In. pnta. con. tutti. Lemnari.
Villani. et. Villane. eius. et. con. tutte. nra. ragon. et. Jurisdiction. Ad. onda
considerando. nra. de. iudicamento. appartiene. h. d. dominij.
vni. feudali. et. felle. ped. al. d. m. Angelero. come. uero. et. legmo.
herede. et. possessore. Et. sendo. nra. enel. Balaso. deputado. nro.
dele. Lemnie. da. poi. messa. in. uocato. el. nome. del. go. tanto.
et. della. gloria. uergine. Maria. et. con. la. benedictione. nra. interuier.

Fig. 20. The first page of the 1499's act where Niccolo II recognised Angelo II as his sole heir (Bologna, Biblioteca dell'Archiginnasio, Archivio Gozzadini b. 138, n. 7.)

His position was strengthened even further when on 6 February 1429 he married his son **Angelo I** (Angeletto) to Caterina Crispo, the niece of the Duke of Naxos Giovanni II Crispo. From the wedding contract that is quoted by Hopf we learn the specifics of the wedding arrangement: The nuptials took place in Naxos and the contract was signed by various witnesses. The bride's dowry was 8,500 ducats, 4,000 of which was given in cash and the rest in gold, silver, pearls, gemstones, and fabrics. It was also agreed that, if Caterina was to die childless before her husband, the groom would be free to spend half of the cash in any way he pleased. On the other hand, **Niccolo I** returned all his possessions to the Duke, so he could cede them again to **Angelo I** this time. Angeletto, in accordance with the Assizes of Romania, gave the usufruct of all his assets on Naxos and Santorini to his father but reserved full authority over Kythnos and the share of Kea with all their castles and serfs. He also kept as his residence half of the manor in Kea. He was obliged, however, to give half of his yearly revenue from both islands to his father for as long as the latter was alive. After Niccolo's I death, Angelo was to inherit all his father's assets on Naxos and Santorini.¹⁵¹ **Niccolo I** died eventually in 1440 in his manor on Naxos. From his will, drawn up on 29 November 1440, we gather that except for Angeletto he also had two daughters, one deceased before him and another named Marcolina.

A few years later, in 1456, another lucky marriage increased the Gozzadini lords' fortunes and social status even more. **Angelo's I** son **Niccolo II** was married to Marietta da Corogna.¹⁵² Her brother, Guglielmo da Corogna who was the lord of Sifnos and owner of 6 caratti of the island of Kea, died childless 7 years later (December 1463), leaving **Niccolo II** as his only heir. The Duke acknowledged these new acquisitions with an act signed in the ducal palace of Naxos on 29 January 1464.¹⁵³ Thus, Niccolo II became lord of Sifnos and after the death of his father, lord of Kythnos too. He also inherited the castle of Santorini and the family's properties on Naxos. The parts of Kea were given to Angelo's younger son **Januli IV**, who was the founder of the Gozzadini family branch of Kea.

¹⁵¹ Ersch and Grüber (1863), p. 418.

¹⁵² See Simeonidis (2014), pp. 144-145 for a copy of the marriage act.

¹⁵³ Simeonidis (2014), pp. 144-145.

It seems that during the second half of the 15th century **Niccolo's II** branch of the Gozzadini family reached the peak of its power and influence in the Aegean Duchy. The records indicate that they were, and remained until the end, the Duke's trusted allies and they even managed to relate closely to the Ducal family through multiple marriages. In 1476 **Niccolo II** received a renewal of his island possessions from Duke Jacopo III. Furthermore, the Duke granted 'the exquisite monsignor Niccolo Gozzadini, Lord of Thermia and Sifnos, our beloved kinsman' due to 'his love, dedication and good behaviour towards our person and our state' with fiefs and pastures on Naxos. He also gave him a manor beside the ducal palace within the Kato *Kastro* of Naxos. In return, all Niccolo and his heirs had to do was present the feudal lord with an orange every Christmas.¹⁵⁴ **Niccolo II** and his wife Marietta da Corogna had three children: **Januli V**, who was his father's heir and co-ruler until his premature death in 1499, Caterina, who married the Duke of Naxos Giacomo III Crispo and another son named **Angelo II**.

After the death of his firstborn, and on the occasion of his second son **Angelo II's** marriage to the Venetian noblewoman Marietta Giorgio, **Niccolo II** ceded him all his possessions (i.e. the islands Thermia, Sifnos, the castle of Akrotiri on Santorini and the estates on Naxos). On 23 September 1499, **Niccolo II** declared in public in his manor on Kythnos that 'considering the love, the fealty, and the obedience of his beloved son Angelo II, who according to the law would be his sole heir after his death, he was granting him all his fortune while he was still alive'. During the usual festivities and in the presence of all the citizens and serfs of Kythnos he bequeathed the dominion of the island to **Angelo II** and had them all swear him fealty under the condition that after 40 days Angelo would return all the islands and feuds to his father, who would keep them until his death (**Fig. 20**).¹⁵⁵ **Niccolo II** did not live long after this declaration and in 1504 **Angelo II** became lord of Sifnos and Thermia.

In 1517 his niece Adriana (daughter of his deceased older brother Januli V) was married to the Duke of Naxos Giovanni IV Crispo. Soon, two more marriages would bring the Gozzadini even closer to the ducal family; Angelo's II son **Niccolo III** took Caterina Crispo, the Duke's daughter as his wife on 27 April 1534 and around the

¹⁵⁴ Ersch and Grüber (1863), pp. 420-421.

¹⁵⁵ Archiv. Gozzadini. Fasc. 33 no7; Ersch and Grüber (1863), p. 421.

same time, Angelo's II daughter Fiorenza was married to Giovanni IV Crispo's son, Francesco. The beginning of the end for the times of prosperity for both families was 1537 when, after Barbarossa's campaign, the islands of the Aegean Duchy became tributaries to the Ottomans. In 1566, when the Duchy was annexed to the Ottoman Empire and the last Duke Giacomo IV was replaced by the sultan with the Jew Joseph Nasi, **Niccolo III** was also forced to give up his islands. However, he managed to gain them all back after the victory of the Venetian fleet against the Turks in 1571, remaining tributary to the sultan.

Caterina Crispo, the first wife of **Niccolo III** died young and her widower remarried with Barachia Sirigo, who in the records is referred to as lady of Santorini. In total, **Niccolo III** had five children: two daughters, Fiorenza and Marietta from his first marriage and two sons Angelo V and Antonio II and one more daughter Taddea from the second. **Angelo V** succeeded his father as lord of Thermia, Sifnos and the other lesser islands, however, he was the last Gozzadini to rule in the Aegean Sea. It is apparent from the transcribed records that he was struggling to keep his small island state from the Turks looking to Rome and Venice for support. In 1607, in fear of an imminent attack, he sent two of his younger sons, Niccolo IV and Giacomo IV to be educated at the *Collegio Greco* in Rome. The same year, Pope Paul V issued an appeal on Angelo's behalf to all Christendom, with special reference to the forthcoming campaign of the Venetian fleet in the Aegean. 'I have heard,' wrote the pope 'that my beloved son, Angeletto Gozzadini of the noble Bolognese family rules the seven islands of Sifanto, Thermia, Kimolos, Polinos, Pholegandros, Gyaros, and Sikinos, truly adhering to the Catholic faith and the papal throne. All Christians who arrive in his islands should, therefore, treat him and his subjects with kindness and not harm them in any way.'¹⁵⁶ In the following year, the Venetian fleet admiral Francesco Morosini confirmed that he and his comrades were received with great hospitality from **Angelo V** when they passed by his island of Sifnos.

Although he professed himself a loyal vassal of the Republic, Venice could not save him. Less than ten years later, in 1617, he lost all his islands to the Turks and it is said that he eventually escaped to Rome. Before going to Italy though, it seems that Angelo tried to avenge the loss of his fortunes. As is stated in the 1629 report to

¹⁵⁶ Ersch and Grüber (1863), p. 423.

Venice written by the Francesco Morosini, (Governor of Crete at the time), Angelo V Gozzadini had turned to piracy (!). After being ousted in 1617, the Gozzadini fled to Tenos that was under Venetian rule to escape capture. The female members of the family were left there to the care of the Republic, while **Angelo V** and his bastard son manned two ships with 35 men each and dressed up as Turks they kept harassing the Ottomans. Morosini describes how they tried to flee to Tenos but were chased away by the Venetian rector of the island. Then the Republic in order to avoid a scandal ordered Morosini to see to it that the Gozzadini women were escorted first to Crete and then to Venice because there was no other way to protect Tenos from the Turks.¹⁵⁷

The report does not offer further information on the fortunes of the Gozzadini family members. It seems, however, that toward the end of his life **Angelo V** returned to Naxos where he reached a very old age, as we gather from a document of 1649 that mentions him as '*Eccellentissimo Signor Duca Angeletto Greco*'.¹⁵⁸ The last Gozzadini lord and his della Grammatica wife had six children: two daughters Margherita and Marietta and four sons, Niccolo IV, Giacomo IV, Marcantonio and Francesco III. Almost all of Angelo's V children returned to Greece at some point in their lives; Niccolo IV and Marcantonio settled in Naxos, while Francesco became bishop of Zante and Cephalonia. Giacomo IV was imprisoned by the Turks and lived as a slave in Albania for some time. At a rather old age, he went to Monemvasia in Peloponnese and fought alongside the Venetians in the war of Crete in hopes of gaining back the island of Sifnos. Eventually, he returned to Rome as did his brother Niccolo.¹⁵⁹

Over the years that followed, the Greek branch of the Gozzadini family gradually disappeared. Hopf mentions that in his time (mid-19th century) he managed to locate only one undisputed descendant of that noble house, namely an Antonio Gozzadini, who lived with his family in Syros. However, as Hopf himself notes, there are many in the Aegean who bear the name Gozzadini, or rather *Koζαδίνοϋς* as is the Hellenised version of it. It seems that it was a custom for the vassals and serfs of the lord to take

¹⁵⁷ Spanakis (1950), pp. 102-103.

¹⁵⁸ Ersch and Grüber (1863), p. 423.

¹⁵⁹ Ersch and Grüber (1863), p. 423.

up the name of his house. Indeed, even today there many families on Kythnos and the neighbouring islands with that surname.¹⁶⁰ They are most likely descendants of these serfs' families.

Social status and power

Reading the records, it becomes clear that the Gozzadini were an influential house with close ties to the island of Naxos and both Ducal families (the Sanudi and the Crispi) even from the very beginning of their establishment in the Aegean (mid-14th century).¹⁶¹ Furthermore, they kept on good terms with Venice and Rome even having a papal appeal issued in their favour. Next to the Duke himself, they eventually acquired more islands under their rule than any other Latin lords in the Aegean Duchy. Although their islands were not as important or prosperous compared to Naxos or Andros, the Gozzadini should not be regarded as petty, insignificant, and destitute as Miller and Gerola portray them.¹⁶² If nothing else, their dynasty held on to its small island state for nearly 50 years after the Duchy was lost to the Turks.

But how did they manage to survive when, as Miller so poetically puts it, 'the Turkish wave swept all else away'? Miller himself attributes it either to their insignificance or to their great subservience to the sultan. Perhaps he concludes, it was the fact that they sprang from Bologna and not from Venice that saved them. Hopf on the other hand, claims that the Gozzadini retained their lands by paying more taxes than before to the Ottomans.¹⁶³ The fact itself indicates a certain financial capacity that is also noted by Slot.¹⁶⁴ In the absence of historical documents that could give us a definite answer, we can assume that the Gozzadini's diplomatic success in these desperate times was the result of all the above.

¹⁶⁰ Simeonidis (2003), pp. 168-167.

¹⁶¹ At least five members of the Gozzadini house were married into the ducal family of Naxos; 1405: Niccolo I Gozzadini to Filippa Sanudo, 1429: Angelo Gozzadini to Caterina Crispo (niece of the Duke Giovanni II Crispo), end of 15th century: Caterina Gozzadini to Duke Giacomo III Crispo, 1517: Adrianna Gozzadini to Duke Giovanni IV, 1534: Niccolo III Gozzadini to Caterina Crispo (daughter of Duke Giovanni IV), 1530s: Fiorenza Gozzadini to Francesco Crispo (son of Duke Giovanni IV).

¹⁶² Miller (1908), p. 644; Gerola (1926), p. 11 [53].

¹⁶³ Ersch and Grüber (1863), p. 423.

¹⁶⁴ Slot (1982), p. 85.

Estates and place of residence

What can also be documented through the records is that except for the various islands that were in their possession, the Gozzadini lords had assets also on Naxos. Januli III, who from 1371 served as guardian of the young Duke Niccolo dalle Carceri, must have obviously resided there, even temporarily. Niccolo I Gozzadini, husband of Filippa Sanudo, bequeathed in 1429 his possessions on Naxos to his son Angelo I. The nature of these possessions is not specified (at least not in Hopf's transcription), however, when in 1468 it was Angelo's I turn to bequeath part of his fortune to his son Niccolo II, we learn that he gave him both the upper and lower house on Naxos, except for the apartment of his sister Marcolina. The deed itself was signed in this manor which was most likely a big two-storey house with multiple apartments.

In the late 15th century (1476), the Gozzadini holdings on Naxos increased when the Duke Giacomo III Crispo ceded Niccolo II land and pastures on the island as well as a house in Kato *Kastro*. In the relevant document, it is specified that the house, which previously belonged to the Duke's late uncle Antonio lord of Syros, was located by the ducal palace. What is more, many of the documents that are kept in the Bologna archives (wills, marriage contracts, ceding acts etc.) were drawn and signed on Naxos. J. G. Grimaldi in his 19th-century work on the history of Naxos lists the Gozzadini among the island's noble Latin families.¹⁶⁵

Nevertheless, the Gozzadini were not absentee lords,¹⁶⁶ ruling their islands from the Duchy's capital, as the Kythnian scholar Vallindas presumes.¹⁶⁷ It was indeed common for many Latin lords who were only interested in the revenues they extracted, to appoint captains and castellans as their representatives.¹⁶⁸ The Gozzadini, however, must have actually lived on the islands they administrated for a considerable length of time. The records show that they resided alternately both in Naxos and in the so-called *palazzi*, the manors they had on the larger of their islands i.e. Kythnos, Kea and Sifnos.

¹⁶⁵ Fotheringham (1915), p. 76.

¹⁶⁶ As Miller characteristically mentions, Marino Dandolo of Andros usually governed the island from his palace in Venice, while the Barozzi of Santorini spent less time in their castle of Skaros than on their Cretan estates, Miller (1908), p. 576.

¹⁶⁷ Vallindas (1896), p. 32.

¹⁶⁸ Miller (1908), pp. 575-576; Vionis (2006), p. 487.

Kythnos presence and residence

The first account of the Gozzadini residing in Kythnos and more specifically in Oria *Kastro* comes from the diary of the Italian Nicola de Martoni in 1395.¹⁶⁹ On the way back from his pilgrimage to Jerusalem, his ship was confined for several days at the port of Kythnos due to bad weather. After being chased by Catalan pirates, Martoni and his companions were forced to abandon their vessel and find refuge in the fortified settlement of Termia (i.e. Oria), where they stayed for about two weeks. According to the pilgrim's writings the island's lord Giovanni Gozzadini (i.e. Januli III), had just left Termia on a galley to visit the Duke of the Archipelago in Naxos. However, the lord's uncle (maybe the elderly Francesco I?), his son (Francesco II) and 'other men of this good land' (*et alii boni viri ipsius terre*) as Martoni calls them, treated the unexpected guests very kindly and presented them with gifts. Unfortunately, Martoni does not give us any more information on the ruling family or their residence.

Almost 100 years later, in 1499, the act where Niccolo II Gozzadini acknowledged his second son Angelo II as his sole heir was signed in the family's manor on Kythnos during a public ceremony where all the islanders came to pay homage to their new lord.¹⁷⁰ More specifically the document was signed '*in insula Ferminiani, in castro predicti loci, in domo et habitationi magnifici et potenti domini Nicolai de Gozzadini Ferminiani et Siphani domini [...]*', i.e. 'in the castle of Ferminia, in the house and dwellings of the great and powerful lord Niccolo Gozzadini, lord of Fermenia and Sifnos' (**Fig. 19**). This sentence may not offer much information on the Gozzadini residence on Kythnos, nevertheless it proves its existence, which can be further corroborated by the built remains in Oria (section 6.2.1). Januli V, Niccolo's II elder son, who ruled Kythnos in his father's name until his death in 1499 presumably resided there too.

Judging from these two records we can assume that various members of the Gozzadini family lived in Kythnos on a fairly permanent basis, at least at the beginning of their dominion. From the late 15th century on, after they acquired part of Kea and Sifnos

¹⁶⁹ Piccirilo (2003), pp. 133-135.

¹⁷⁰ Former Archivio Gozzadini. Fasc. 33 no7, now Archivio Gozzadini, b. 138, n. 7; Ersch and Grüber (1863), p. 420.



Fig. 21. Simplified copy of the Gozzadini emblem from the *Kastro* of Sifnos (Kigalas 1858, p. 196)

:m:ccc:
 lxxiii:st
 :yandilv
 se:corou



Fig. 22. More accurate copy of the engravings on the marble pillar of the *Kastro* of Sifnos, left: older inscription of Januli II da Corogna, right: the Gozzadini coat of arms (Simeonidis 2014, pp. 144-145)



Fig. 23. The Gozzadini coat of arms in the church of Agios Sabbas in Messaria, Kythnos

it is more likely that they shared their time between these three islands and Naxos. A manor house in Kea is mentioned in the 1429 wedding contract of Angelo I Gozzadini and Caterina Crispo.¹⁷¹ Respectively, the 1534 marriage contract of Niccolo III to the Duke's daughter Caterina was signed in the *palazzo* of the groom's father on Sifnos.

The Gozzadini coat of arms

The coat of arms of the Greek branch of the Gozzadini family can still be found in the Aegean. Although at the time of the family's dominion it would most likely adorn all their possessions on the islands, today it has survived only in limited copies. In the castle of Sifnos two copies of the Gozzadini escutcheon were preserved *in situ*, at least until the 1850s. At the beginning of the 20th century, they were both transferred to Syros.¹⁷²

The first one, that is most likely the oldest surviving copy, was carved on an octagonal marble pillar once located at the castle's gate (**Figs 21, 22**). It consists of an oval-shaped shield that has a thin bordure running around it and is bisected diagonally from left to right by a line (bend). The shield rests on a cushion bearing three tassels, while its upper part supports a helmet.¹⁷³ All around the shield-helmet complex grows a thick layer of intricate leaf-carvings from where a human figure (possibly a woman) rises holding a veil above its head. On either side of the figure are the initials of Niccolo II Gozzadini, the first of the family who ruled Sifnos. Above the emblem is carved the date M. CCCC (1400). This date, however, cannot possibly be accurate given that the Gozzadini were not lords of Sifnos before 1464. The last part of the carving is worn out, therefore Hopf suggests that it should instead read MCCCCLXV, i.e. 1465, presuming that it was crafted a year after the Gozzadini officially added

¹⁷¹ After Angelo's I death, however, when the Gozzadini lineage was broken into two new branches in 1476, the younger son Januli IV, founder of the Gozzadini family branch of Kea, inherited all rights and property on that island. The remaining assets on Kythnos, Sifnos, Santorini and Naxos went to the older son, Niccolo II lord of Sifnos and Thermia.

¹⁷² Miller (1908), p. 645; Gerola (1926), p. 12 [54].

¹⁷³ Hopf, who quite possibly did not see the escutcheon himself, describes it based on a publication made in a Greek journal in 1858, Kigalas (1858), p. 196. It seems however, that this drawing was a simplified, artistic reproduction of the original that was later published more accurately, Simeonidis (2014), pp. 144-145. In the 1858 version the helmet, that can also be seen in examples of the family's escutcheon in Bologna, was omitted (**Fig. 21**). In any case, given the bad condition of the marble-carving both interpretations could be equally right.

Sifnos to their island state.¹⁷⁴ What is interesting is that the Gozzadini coat of arms was placed above an older inscription on the same pillar commemorating Januli II da Corogna.¹⁷⁵ The da Corogna family ruled Sifnos since 1307, so when Niccolo II Gozzadini inherited the island in 1464, he placed his emblem right above the inscription of his predecessor to symbolise his legitimate succession to power.

The Gozzadini escutcheon also ornamented an old convent to the southwest of the *kastró* of Sifnos.¹⁷⁶ According to Hopf, there were two copies there; a small one by the convent's gate and another on its façade that was completely worn out since the 1860s. Furthermore, until Hopf's time, the Gozzadini coat of arms could also be seen on a ruined church in Palaiochora of Melos that was, however, remodelled at the beginning of the 20th century.¹⁷⁷

What most sources seem to ignore though, is that a copy of the Gozzadini coat of arms has survived on Kythnos too, though not in Oria *Kastro* as one might have expected. At the entrance of the island's current main settlement Messaria stands a church dedicated to Agios Sabbas. On the western façade, engraved on the lintel of the door is an inscription that attributes its erection to Antonio Gozzadini in the year 1613 (**Fig. 18**). Antonio was the brother of the last Gozzadini lord Angelo V. Surprisingly, the inscription is written in Greek rather than Latin and is full of syntax and spelling mistakes. It reads as follows: 'Ω κτιτωρ καλιστος εσιονεον του οσιου πατρος ιμων Σαβα του ιγιασμενου πεφυκε παντεβλογου την κλισι Αντωνιου Γοζαδινου του πικλι εκκλίσια υγηρε' εκ των κριπιδος εν μεσι γαρ εστισεν τη τοποθεσια' κοπησ μοχλης τε ομου τε αναλωματων. ον η ανω προνοια ορησε κτισι και υσαγαγη εις χηρω τοπο χλοης ετους ΑΧΙΓ. ', which can be roughly translated into 'The good benefactor Antonio Gozzadini built this church dedicated to our holy and much blessed father Saint Sabbas from the ground up with great effort and toil and expences. He, whom the heavenly providence bid to build this church, let enter in a place of green pasture. In the year 1613'. (**Fig. 24**).

¹⁷⁴ Ersch and Grüber (1863), p. 426.

¹⁷⁵ The inscription reads 'm: ccc: lxxv: yanulu de: coron', i.e. 1365 Januli da Corogna. Januli II ruled Sifnos between the years 1364 and 1387 and was most likely the one who gave the castle its final form.

¹⁷⁶ The building was later turned into a school. Today it is periodically used for events and exhibitions.

¹⁷⁷ Miller (1908), p. 645.

ΩΚΤΗΡΟΝΚΑΛΙΣΕΣΕΙΟΝΕΘΝΩΝΟΙΟΥΠΑΨΟΙΜΟΝΣΑΒΑΘΥΙΡΑΣΜΕΝΟΥ
 ΠΕΦΙΞΚΠΑΝΤΕΒΛΟΓΟΥΤΗΚΛΙΣΙΑΝΩΝΙΟΥΓΩΖΑΔΙΝΟΥΤΟΥΓΗΚΛΙΕΚΛΙΣΙΑ
 ΥΨΡΕΕΚΩΝΦΙΠΔΟΕΜΕΣΙΓΡΕΣΤΗΕΝΤΩΠΟΘΕΣΙΑΚΟΠΗΣΜΟΧΛΙΣΕΟΜΟΥΕΚΑΝΑΛΑ
 ΓΜΑΤΟΝΟΗΑΝΟΓΡΟΗΑΔΟΡΗΣΕΚΤΙΣΙΚΥΣΑΓΓΑΡΕΙΣΧΗΡΩΠΟΧΛΟΗΣΕΤΟΥΣΑΧΙΓ.

Fig. 24. Gerola's copy of the dedicatory inscription of Ag. Sabbas (Gerola 1926, p. 12 [54])

Above the entrance, there is an orthogonal marble plate that bears the family's arms. At its base, there is a scroll with the initials of the founder *ANT. ΓΝ*, written in Greek again, and the year 1611. It seems that the emblem was crafted two years before the church was finished. The family crest itself consists of three zones. An oval-shaped shield, bisected again diagonally from left to right, occupies the lower zone. The shield is surrounded by two wide orthogonal bordures; one decorated with a curvy line and the other with 12 round knobs. The middle zone has two distinct parts; the lower part has three *fleurs de lys*, while the upper bears a Latin cross. On top of all is a heraldic bird, possibly a rooster, with its wings spread wide (Figs 23, 25).

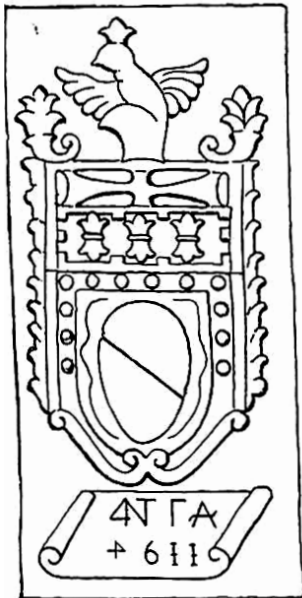


Fig. 25. The Gozzadini emblem in Ag. Sabbas (Gerola 1926, p. 12 [54], fig. 1)

Vallindas was the first to mention the copy of the Gozzadini coat of arms on Kythnos in his work *Κυθνιακά* in 1882.¹⁷⁸ Gerola, who visited Kythnos in 1910 to record the remains of the Latin rule on the island, saw the *stemma Gozzadini* of Agios Sabbas and drew a very accurate copy of it (Fig. 25). However, he disapproved greatly of the Latin lord's preference for Greek writing instead of Latin. Even worse, he was aghast that the church was dedicated to a celebrated Orthodox saint. Gerola also criticized the quality of the engraving that according to him, completely distorted the Gozzadini emblem.¹⁷⁹ Maybe it was because they strayed from the Catholic church obviously integrating with the locals that he portrayed the Gozzadini of Kythnos in such a negative light.

¹⁷⁸ Vallindas (1882), p. 34 and (1896), p. 34 with some slight discrepancies in the transliteration of the inscription.

¹⁷⁹ Gerola (1926), p. 12 [54].

2.5.3 Economic and social structure

Much has been written about the administrative and economic system of the Cyclades during the *Latinokratia*. The exact nature and origin of their peculiar ‘feudal system’ has been discussed and debated for years amongst the historians of that period and as D. Dimitropoulos remarks, there are still issues that remain open to modern research.¹⁸⁰ While for certain islands there is some information on the division of the land and the social stratification, for Kythnos there are barely any surviving documents. The only relevant information can be drawn from the work of Vallindas which, however, is most likely based on local tradition.¹⁸¹

Social stratification

Vallindas says that upon their arrival, the Latins took all the island’s lands from their former owners, who were subsequently forced to become ‘*μάρροικοι*’ as is the Kythnian corruption for *paroikoi*, i.e. dependent peasants in this context equivalent to serfs.¹⁸² The serfs, known also as *villani*, belonged to the lower class and were dependent on their masters and bound to the land itself.¹⁸³ In Kythnos they received ½ of the produce in return for their work, but they were also obliged to provide the lords annually with certain amounts of lamb meat, milk, cheese and firewood and perform several other chores. Filippaios claims that before the conquest the Kythnians were all free farmers and stockbreeders,¹⁸⁴ however, we cannot exclude the existence of Byzantine *πάρροικοι*¹⁸⁵ (who had a status analogous but not identical to that of the serfs).¹⁸⁶ In the 1499 Gozzadini document it is mentioned that all ‘*Villani et Villane*’ were called to pay homage to the new lord Angelo II.¹⁸⁷ Although according to A. Vionis the class of the serfs did not survive after the end of the

¹⁸⁰ Dimitropoulos (1997) pp. 21-22; Vionis (2012), pp. 39-41.

¹⁸¹ Vallindas (1896), pp. 39-42.

¹⁸² Vallindas (1896), p. 39.

¹⁸³ On the social stratification in the Duchy see Slot (1982), pp. 48-50.

¹⁸⁴ Filippaios (1999), p. 25.

¹⁸⁵ Slot (1982), pp. 45, 49.

¹⁸⁶ On the definition of both terms see Kazhdan (1991), pp. 206, 246.

¹⁸⁷ Former Archivio Gozzadini. Fasc. 33 no7, now Archivio Gozzadini, b. 138, n. 7; Ersch and Grüber (1863), p. 421.

15th century,¹⁸⁸ Vallindas claims that on Kythnos serfdom was abolished only at the beginning of the Turkish occupation.

The Kythnian scholar does not write anything about the *contadini*, the people of Latin or Greek origin who enjoyed a free status, nor does he mention the class of *gasmouli*, that included those who were born to mixed marriages (Italian fathers and Greek mothers).¹⁸⁹ We can assume, however, that as was the case on other islands, these classes existed on Kythnos too. The upper, landholding class, the so-called *cittadini*,¹⁹⁰ were known as *άρχοντες* in Kythnos and they resided first in *Oria Kastro* and later in Messaria. Vallindas gives a list of the noble houses that lived on the island holding fiefs as vassals of the Gozzadini and judging by the etymology of the names it seems at least one of these aristocrat families were of Greek origin.¹⁹¹ Other than the names given by Vallindas, from the 1499 document we gather two more names of the local gentry: Niccolo de Cavalli, vassal to the Gozzadini and Auro Deto, ‘*capitan delle Fermenie*’.¹⁹²

‘Feudal’ lands and fiefs

According to Vallindas the Latin lords (first the Sanudi and then the Castelli and the Gozzadini) claimed for themselves the fertile and leeward area in the middle of the island.¹⁹³ The fields there were well-watered by natural springs and wells and were ideal for the cultivation of trees and vines. More specifically, the areas of Kamboi (*Κάμποι*), Tsigoures (*Τσιγκούραι*), Voudomadres (*Βουδόμανδραι*), Kalogeros (*Καλόγερος*), Galatas (*Γαλατάς*), Chodrakia (*Χωρδάκια*), Natalos (*Νάταλος*), Pyrgos (*Πύργος*), Kabalos (*Κάβαλλος*), Apokrousis (*Απόκρουσις*) and Neris (*Νέρης*)

¹⁸⁸ Vionis (2012), p. 40. In Tenos towards the end of the 15th century the *villani* were replaced by the *contadini* who had the same obligations but were considered free from a legal point of view, Slot (1982), p. 49.

¹⁸⁹ Vionis (2012), p. 40.

¹⁹⁰ Slot (1982), p. 49.

¹⁹¹ ‘ (...) αλλά και άλλοι οίκοι ξένων τιμαριούχων εν τη νήσω διαμένοντες κατείχον ίδια τιμάρια και ανεγνώριζον την επικυριαρχίαν, υποτελείας σκιάν τινα ομολογούντες τω χωροδεσπότη. Τοιούτοι ήσαν οι οίκοι *Δα Κορόνια, Δεάγγελι, Δελαγραμμάτικα, Δε Πάστα, Κολλωνέλου, Ρόττα, Παγκάλου, Μωρώνη, Γαητάνη.*’, Vallindas (1896), p. 40.

¹⁹² Former Archivio Gozzadini. Fasc. 33 no7, now Archivio Gozzadini, b. 138, n. 7; Ersch and Grüber (1863), p. 421.

¹⁹³ Vallindas (1896), pp. 41- 42.

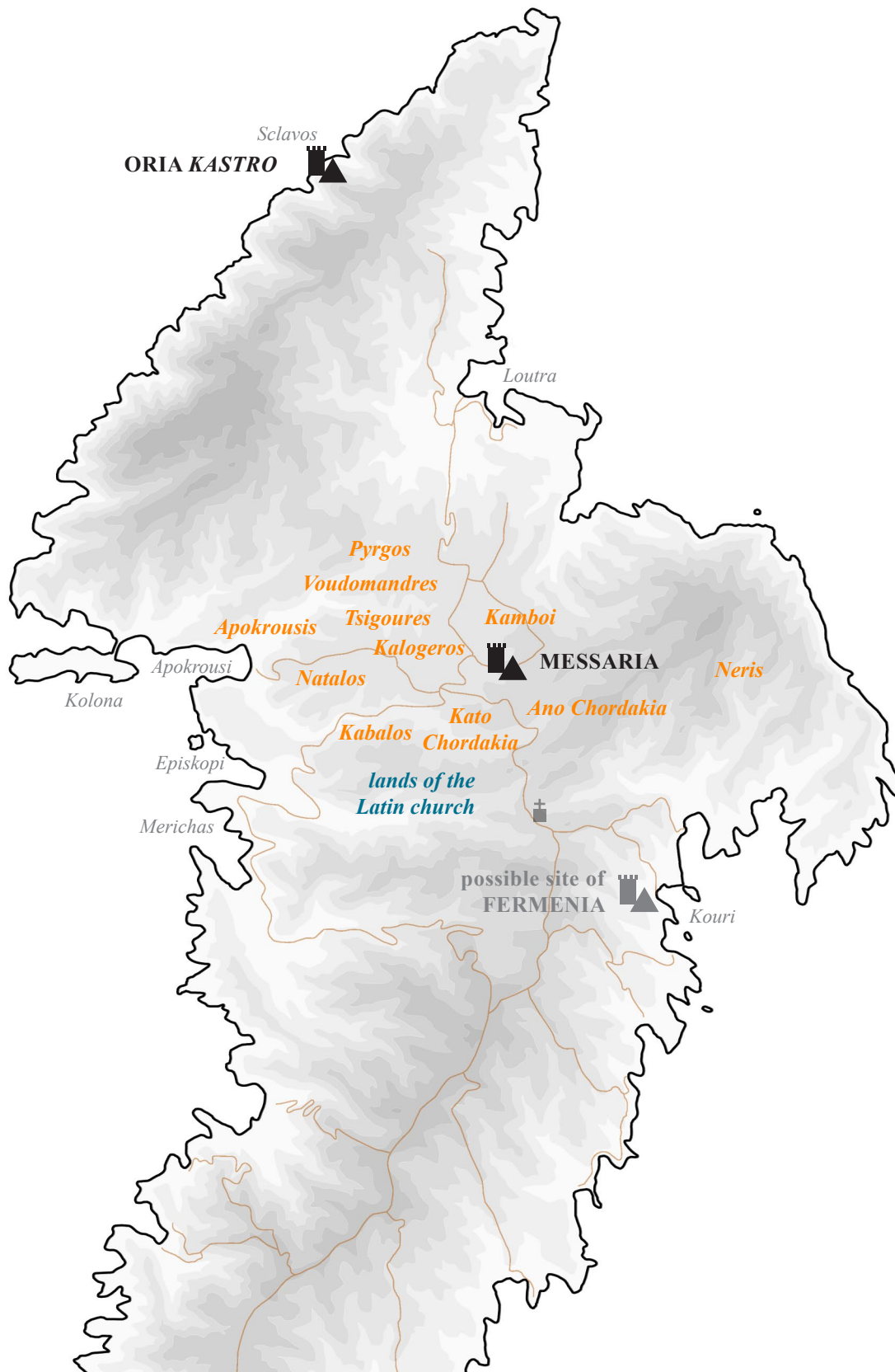


Fig. 26. The lands of the Gozzadini lords and the Latin church in the wider area of Messaria according to A. Vallindas

comprised the Gozzadini fief and were all located in a circumference of about three hours from present-day Chora (Messaria) (**Fig. 26**). He adds that this feudal land was called *massaria* or *messaria* in medieval Latin which is where the current settlement took its name from. The Gozzadini and the rest of the Latin aristocracy had fiefs also in the south part of the island, however, Vallindas does not specify the exact areas of these fiefs. Lands were also given to the Latin church of Kythnos (see next section).

2.5.4 Ecclesiastical affairs during the Latin occupation of Kythnos

Our knowledge of the ecclesiastical administration of the south-western Cyclades, during the period of the Latin occupation, is quite vague.¹⁹⁴ Very few relevant documents, dating mostly from the last years of the Latin occupation, have come down to us and they do not offer sufficient information on the ecclesiastical affairs of either the Orthodox or the Catholic church of the islands. Additionally, given that religion has always been a particularly sensitive matter, most later sources seem to be prejudiced against the one or the other dogma according to their nationality. Therefore, their views are often biased and subjective and cannot be fully trusted.

Nevertheless, the religious affairs of Kythnos are worth a closer examination. The island may have always been administratively unimportant for the Orthodox church; however, at some point in the 15th century it became the seat of a Latin diocese. What is more, religion was always one of the main points of friction between the Latin lords of the islands and their Orthodox subjects. The way the Gozzadini managed this delicate matter would surely have determined their relations with the local population and it can indicate a lot about the nature and the course of their rule.

The Orthodox church

According to Saulger and Miller, the first Duke of Naxos Marco I Sanudo showed a spirit of tolerance for his Orthodox subjects. Married to an Orthodox himself,¹⁹⁵

¹⁹⁴ Slot (1974), p. 53.

¹⁹⁵ Sanudo was married to a relative (quite possibly the sister) of Theodore Laskaris, Emperor of Nice, Miller (1908), pp. 572-573.

Sanudo refrained from banishing the Metropolitan or taxing the Greek monasteries. This view coincides with what N. Tomadakis writes, i.e. that the high-ranking clergy of the Cyclades never ceased being elected and appointed by the Ecumenical Patriarchate. The only exception was Tenos that was directly under the rule of Venice and thus under the see of the Latin Metropolis of Crete. There a stricter policy was followed and the appointment of an Orthodox bishop by the Patriarch was forbidden. However, Tomadakis adds that it is extremely difficult to determine the ecclesiastical administration of the islands at any particular time given that the Ecumenical Patriarchate would, according to the circumstances, merge or divide different bishoprics.¹⁹⁶

According to another point of view, quite popular amongst several Greek historians, the Dukes of Naxos and their vassal lords followed the standard Venetian colonial policy of ousting all Orthodox prelates¹⁹⁷ and discouraging all links between the locals and the Catholic church.¹⁹⁸ Zerlenti claims that after 1207 the episcopates of Santorini, Tenos and Melos, suffragans to the Orthodox Metropolis of Rhodes as well as the Metropolis of Paronaxia were all occupied by Catholic clergymen. He also rejects the claims of Saulger as completely inaccurate and portrays the relations between the two rites as particularly strained.¹⁹⁹

Vallindas describes the situation in a less rigid way; he says that at the beginning of the *Latinokratia* (1207-1261), while the Latins held Constantinople, the Orthodox church was strictly under the authority of the Pope and the Latin patriarch. That view coincides with what can be gathered from the papal letter of 1209 where Pope Innocent III confirms the jurisdiction of the Latin Archbishop over the various sees that fell under the Metropolis of Athens, the See of Kea and presumably that of Kythnos among them.²⁰⁰ The Orthodox prelates, however, who acknowledged the Catholic church could retain their posts. Apparently, that was the case with Ignatios, a Greek monk who in a benefactory inscription in a church in Attica that dates from

¹⁹⁶ Tomadakis (1977), pp. 3-4.

¹⁹⁷ Simeonidis (2003), p. 5.

¹⁹⁸ Kasdagli (2017), p. 53.

¹⁹⁹ Zerlenti (1913), pp. 15, 43; see also Simeonidis (2003), p. 5.

²⁰⁰ Panselinou (1989), pp. 176,178.

1232 is mentioned as '*proedros*', i.e. head of the see of Thermia and Kea.²⁰¹

According to the Kythnian scholar, after the Byzantine Empire was reinstated in 1261 the Ecumenical Patriarchate was restored, and an Orthodox bishop was sent to Naxos. However, this policy was short-lived as after a while the various island lords decided not to admit high-ranking Orthodox priests. As was the practice before, a Greek priest, the so-called *protopapas*, was appointed by the Catholic bishop to exercise the secular administration of the Orthodox church, while the religious functions were taken care by Greek bishops outside the Cyclades. Only after 1537, when the Aegean Duchy became tributary to the Ottomans, did the Duke admit Greek clergymen from Constantinople again. Overall, Vallindas notes that the Latins never prevented the local population from exercising their Orthodox rites nor did they ever attempt to convert them.²⁰² What they did was build new elaborate churches and/or occupy the most prominent pre-existing ones, installing Catholic priests and bishops.²⁰³

Although the majority of the population followed the Greek rite, there is not much information about the Orthodox church of Kythnos during that time. The next relevant record dates from the late 15th century and confirms that the situation then was more or less as Vallindas describes it. The act of 1499 by which Niccolo II Gozzadini acknowledged Angelo II as his heir was signed by several witnesses among whom were the vicar of the Latin diocese of Thermia Vincenzo and the *protopapas* Nicolas.²⁰⁴ If there were an Orthodox diocese on Kythnos or on any neighbouring island its representative would certainly have been mentioned in such an important official document. So, it appears that, at least at that time, the Orthodox community was indeed represented by a *protopapas*, as Vallindas and Slot claim.²⁰⁵

²⁰¹ Panselinou (1989), pp. 173-178. According to the 13th and 14th century ecclesiastical acts, when a bishop held simultaneously two or more sees then he was bishop of the first see and '*proedros*' of the other(s), see Panselinou (1989), p. 175, n.8.

²⁰² However, in his 1882 work Vallindas contradicts himself by saying that at the peak of their power the Latins did try to convert the islanders by granting them privileges, Vallindas (1882), p. 75.

²⁰³ Vallindas (1896), pp. 45-46.

²⁰⁴ Ersch and Grüber (1863), p. 420.

²⁰⁵ Slot (1974), p. 53.



Fig. 27. Greek priest and Greek woman in traditional costumes of the Aegean islands in the late 17th century (Randolph, 1687)

Later on, however, after the Duchy was lost to the Ottomans and the Gozzadini islands became tributaries to the Porte, the Orthodox Sees in the Cyclades were reinstated. From an inscription on Andros that commemorates the Orthodox bishop Simon, we know that in 1594 Kythnos had come under the Diocese of Syros, Kea and Thermia. By the end of the 17th century, when Kythnos was annexed too, this diocese was divided and a separate Bishopric of Kea and Thermia was formed. Francesco Lupazzolo in his 1638 work says that the bishop stayed six months on Kythnos and another six on Kea.²⁰⁶ He adds that there were 40 priests and 15 well-

²⁰⁶ In the *Isolario* (MS 792, fo 74) Lupazzolo writes that ‘[...] sono tutti greci con il loro Vescovo quale fa residenza sei mesi del anno in Termia per essere poco discosta, et altri sei quivi [...]’, i.e. ‘everyone is Greek with their bishop who for six months of the year resides in Termia because it is not distant, and another six months [he resides] here’. Given that this sentence does not make sense, it seems that he meant to write that the bishop resides six months in Zia and another six here (meaning Termia). Zia, i.e. Kea is also mentioned in Lupazzolo’s *Breve Discorso* (MS 577, fo 93) where, on the same subject, he says that ‘their bishop resides in Zia, but here [in Thermia] he has a Vicar, which is quite convenient’ (‘[...] il loro vescovo fa residenza in Zia, ma quivi ha un vicario, quale e’ assai comodo [...]’). The same information is given by Thevenot too, who uses Lupazzolo as a source, Thevenot (1668), p. 109.

built churches and makes a special mention of the church of Sotira in Chora that was built in 1638 at the Bishop's Vicar expenses.²⁰⁷ Vallindas also gives the names of the successive bishops who occupied the episcopal seat until his time, i.e. the late 19th century.²⁰⁸

The Catholic church

For the welfare of the Latin elite, soon after the occupation of the Cyclades in the first half of the 13th century, a Catholic archbishopric was established at Naxos with four suffragans at Melos, Santorini, Tenos, and Syros.²⁰⁹ Again, there is little information about the early years of the Latin church, especially in the south western Cyclades. We do not know under which see Kythnos was then, although Syros seems the most likely. For the affairs of the Catholic church, especially during the last years of the Latin rule, Slot's work *Καθολικαί Εκκλησίαι Κιμώλου και των πέριξ νήσων* is of great value. Slot focuses mainly on the Latin church and community of Kimolos during the *Turkokratia* (1600-1893), however, he also gives an insight on the complicated ecclesiastical matters of the neighbouring islands (Melos, Sifnos, Kea and Kythnos). His information derives mainly from the archives of Rome and the reports of the apostolic envoys and the missionaries of the Sacred Congregation of Propaganda who visited the Aegean islands during that period.²¹⁰

According to Slot, at least from the mid-14th century, there were two bishoprics in the south-western Cyclades, one on the island of Melos and one on Kea that was later transferred subsequently first to Kythnos and then to Sifnos.²¹¹ The exact time of the founding of the diocese of Kea and Thermia is unknown. I. Eubel in his comprehensive reference work *Hierarchia Catholica Medii et Recentioris Aevi*, presents a list of the names of the Catholic bishops and vicars of that see since 1350

²⁰⁷ Lupazzolo, British Library, Lansdowne MS 792, fo 74 and MS 557, fo 93

²⁰⁸ Vallindas (1882), p. 71.

²⁰⁹ Miller (1908), p. 573.

²¹⁰ The Sacred Congregation of Propaganda (*Sacra Congregazione de Propaganda Fide* or *Propaganda Fide*) is the department of the pontifical administration charged with the spread of the Catholicism and the regulation of ecclesiastical affairs in non-Catholic countries. It was founded by Pope Gregory XV in 1622.

²¹¹ Slot (1974), p. 53.

thus providing us with a *terminus ante quem*. Given that the Gozzadini were ceded Kythnos in 1336 it is possible that the diocese was established shortly after. Sifnos came under it most likely around 1463 when the Gozzadini inherited the island from the da Corogna, as the apostolic vicar, Marco Polla writes in his 17th-century report to the Propaganda.²¹²

In general, it is not clear when exactly Kythnos was the seat of the bishopric of Kea and Thermia. Judging from Eubel's catalogues it seems that from 1350 to the mid-16th century the seat of the see was Kea and then it was transferred to Kythnos until 1644 when due to lack of Catholic population it was divided into two individual vicarages, that of Sifnos and that of Kea and Kythnos. In contrast to that, a Latin diocese of Thermia is already mentioned in the 1499 deed of Niccolo II Gozzadini. At any rate, the fact alone indicates that the island was of some significance and that it had a sufficient number of Catholic inhabitants.

On the west side of the island, there is a bay that even today bears the name Episkopi, meaning diocese in Greek. That is most likely where the lands of the Latin bishopric were, as is stated by the bishop of Melos J. Camilli, in his 1693 report to the Propaganda.²¹³ Vallindas too writes that the monastery of Taxiarchis of Velidi²¹⁴ in the central hinterland and all the lands leading up to Episkopi bay belonged to the Latin bishop. He also mentions that to the north of the bay the local farmers used to find ruins of old buildings which he thinks could have been related to the bishop's residence.²¹⁵ The area is also mentioned as *Piscopie* by Buondelmonti in his 1420s map.²¹⁶ So, regardless of when the island became the bishop's seat, this area apparently belonged to the Latin diocese of Kea and Thermia at least since the early 15th century.

After 1566 however, when the Latin lords of the islands were either ousted or became tributaries to the Ottomans, the Catholic church of the south-western Cyclades fell gradually into decline. Slot attributes it to the shortage of priests but also to the fact

²¹² Slot (1974), p. 115.

²¹³ Slot (1974), p. 181.

²¹⁴ According to Gerola, the church of the convent could date to the 15th century, Gerola (1926), p. 28 [70].

²¹⁵ Vallindas (1882), p. 71; Vallindas (1896), p. 47.

²¹⁶ National Maritime Museums' copy P/13, 14V.

that the Latin church failed to become legally recognised by the Turkish state. A so-called *berat*, an official document issued by the sultan was required to maintain the functions and properties of both rites. It seems that the Ottomans tended to favour the Orthodox over the Catholic church because most Catholic prelates did not manage to acquire this document in contrast to their Orthodox counterparts who did. As a result, the Latin ecclesiastical lands were soon taken over by the locals and the recently reinstated Orthodox bishops. The emissaries of the Propaganda characteristically mention the case of the rich lands and vineyards of the bishopric of Kythnos at the area of Episkopi that were all ‘embezzled by the schismatics’.²¹⁷ The Vatican was unable to find priests who would accept a seat with scarce or no revenues and gradually the remaining Catholics joined the Orthodox dogma that had an abundance of churches and priests.²¹⁸

Just one Catholic remained on Kythnos around 1650 according to Polla’s account, while almost 50 years later Saulger reported that all inhabitants of Kea and Kythnos were Orthodox. The Jesuit Father may have exaggerated as Tournefort found 10-12 Latin families on Kythnos in 1700. Nevertheless, at the beginning of the 18th century Rome was unable to find a priest willing to be posted in Kythnos and so the Latin church of the island came officially to an end in 1716.²¹⁹

Relations between Orthodox and Catholics

Traditionally, the relations of the Latin lords with their Greek subjects have been described as strained mainly on the grounds of religious differences.²²⁰ While there is no denying that religion was one of the main factors that shaped the dynamic between the conquerors and the conquered, there seems to be evidence that at least

²¹⁷ M. Polla in his mid-17th century report specifically states that the ecclesiastical lands were occupied by Albanians brought by the Gozzadini to re-people the island after the 1537 and 1566 campaigns. The same is mentioned by F. Lupazzolo, in 1638, who adds that after the Albanians usurped authority over all the bishopric’s jurisdictions, no one belonging to the Latin confession was left (British Library, Lansdowne MS 792 and MS 557). Thevenot’s analogous account rests on Lupazzolo’s authority, Thevenot (1686), p. 109.

²¹⁸ Slot (1974), pp. 57-59, 110, 120, 181.

²¹⁹ Slot (1974), p. 89.

²²⁰ Some older Greek scholars have even gone as far as suggesting that Greeks were prohibited from building new Orthodox churches during the *Latinokratia*, Dimitrokallis (2002), p. 33.

on Kythnos and the other Gozzadini-held islands things were not as tense. Even though we have no information on how religious matters were managed on Kythnos during the first years of the *Latinokratia*, – when the island was successively under the Dukes of Naxos and the Castelli – it would be safe to assume that the Gozzadini religious policy was quite tolerant. Slot characteristically remarks that they lived ‘*alla greca*’, favouring the Orthodox church to ensure the support of the Greek population and maintain the internal stability of their island state.²²¹

Indeed, whether by political choice or by inevitability, during the last years of their rule the Gozzadini were to some extent assimilated to the local element. It is known that around 1600, in the absence of a Catholic priest on the island, Antonio Gozzadini of Sifnos and his family attended the Orthodox services,²²² while the last Gozzadini lord Angelo V and his brother Antonio are mentioned as patrons in two Greek inscriptions in churches on Kimolos and Kythnos²²³ respectively. The fact that in 1607 Angelo V sent his sons to be educated at the *Collegio Greco* in Rome further supports that view.

It would appear, however, that the conciliatory policy of the Gozzadini was not just a product of their precarious position in the Turkish-held Archipelago, assumed hastily after 1537. The previously mentioned 1499 document which was not only signed by the Catholic vicar but also by the Greek *protopapas* of the island shows that the Latin lords held the Orthodox representative in high regard. Apparently, *Papa Nicolas*’ signature would have made the claim of young Angelo II Gozzadini over Kythnos legitimate and undisputable in the eyes of his Orthodox subjects.

So, despite the occasional grievances that surely existed, overall, there are no signs of serious religious oppression or rivalry. Vallindas repeats in his writings some of the usual complaints i.e. that the Orthodox priests of the island were forced to follow behind their Catholic counterparts at the litanies and perform the liturgy in Greek after the Catholic clergymen had said mass in Latin first. Moreover, the Orthodox *papades* had to take off their hats, according to the Catholic habit, when they entered

²²¹ Slot (1982), p. 115.

²²² Slot (1974), p. 105.

²²³ Agios Sabbas’ double-apsed church in Messaria (Figs 23-24, 27-28).

a Latin church.²²⁴ This information most likely refers to the last years of the Latin rule, the memory of which would have still been alive in the local tradition at Vallindas' times. Nevertheless, contrary to the writer's intent, it proves the relatively good relations between the two dogmas: mixed ceremonies and litanies did take place in Kythnos and the representatives of the two rites obviously coexisted, sharing their congregation and their religious buildings.

Regarding the latter, Vallindas notes that on Kythnos there were several double-apsed churches, i.e. single-naved churches with two high altars, that were designed that way to enable the celebration of both Orthodox and Catholic rituals (**Figs 28, 29**). The left altar belonged to the Catholics and the right to the Orthodox. If the church was big enough, one or two arches were placed along the long axis of the building to divide it into two parts, the Latin and the Greek, that had two separate and different altar screens, two *matronea* etc.²²⁵ Orthodox services and mass alike were held there but not simultaneously. He adds also that some of the churches were even equipped with bilingual icons that were equally venerated by both rites.²²⁶

The notion of a single building shared by both Catholic and Orthodox may seem highly improbable by modern standards, however, there are similar accounts to that of the Kythnian scholar from many Latin-held areas. In general, despite the seemingly insurmountable differences between the two churches, there is evidence for cross-religious symbiosis from many places across Greece and the Eastern Mediterranean that had a mixed population.²²⁷ For the Cyclades we have literary and material evidence coming mostly from the island of Tenos (see below). The shared churches constitute the most obvious manifestation of this, often unwilling, rapprochement of the two rites and are therefore worth a closer look.

²²⁴ Vallindas (1896), p. 45.

²²⁵ Vallindas (1896), pp. 52-53. The Kythnian scholar gives a list of eight double-apsed churches and adds about eight more where mixed liturgies were held although they belonged to different typologies.

²²⁶ Only one icon of Virgin Mary that bore a bilingual inscription (MHP-ΘΥ ΙΗ. ΧΡΙ. ΖΩΟΔΟΧΟΣ ΠΗΓΗ and MATER DEI CHRISTUS AQUA RU...) was still preserved in Vallindas' time in the church of Agios Panteleimonas in Messaria, Vallindas (1896), p. 53. Although its whereabouts are now unknown, the icon was seen in the same church by Gerola in the 1910s and Gounaris about 30 year later, Gerola (1926), p. 32 [74]; Gounaris (1938), p. 124.

²²⁷ E.g. see Mersch (2015), pp. 461-484 for 14th and 15th-century evidence from Euboea, the Morea, Cyprus and Crete; Gratziou (2010), pp. 127-183 for textual and material evidence from 14th to 17th-century Crete; Sarou (1949), pp. 200-208 for archival evidence from Chios; Cruikshank Dodd (2004) for 12th and 13th-century examples from Lebanon, Palestine and Syria.

The double-apsed churches

Although that typology is very rare across the Christian world,²²⁸ there are several double-apsed churches in the Aegean and especially the Cycladic islands. Most importantly there are at least 12 such churches on Kythnos: eight in and around Messaria that were previously mentioned by Vallindas and recorded by D. Vasiliadis and G. Dimitrokallis, three in the ruins of the *Kastro* first recorded in the present study (see sections 7.6, 7.9 and 8.1) and one more in the southern hinterland of the island. Further research could identify more, but even so Kythnos despite its modest size appears to have more double-apsed churches than most of the other Cyclades.²²⁹ Their possible use and origins could offer further evidence for the relations of the Latins with the locals but also for the diversity of Oria's population.

Overall, the reason and the origins of this uncommon configuration are not entirely clear. Except for the extensive study of G. Dimitrokallis in the 1970s, the bibliography on the subject is quite limited given that most of the double-apsed churches have not yet been subject to detailed study.²³⁰ According to local tradition, double-apsed (and double-naved)²³¹ churches on the Latin-occupied islands were specifically built for the celebration of both Orthodox and Catholic rites.²³²

Although this view was supported or accepted as an alternative by some scholars,²³³ there are also those who claim that they were intended for the veneration of two different saints.²³⁴ P. Vocotopoulos notes the existence of double-apsed churches whose chronology can be traced back to the middle Byzantine period or even

²²⁸ There are no more than 200 double-apsed churches recorded in the global bibliography, Dimitrokallis (2004), p. 47.

²²⁹ According to Dimitrokallis, Tenos has about 20, Santorini five, Sifnos three while Paros, Andros and Serifos only one. Naxos according to a more recent study has ten, Aslanidis (2014), p. 312.

²³⁰ For an overview of earlier and contemporary bibliography on this subject see also Dimitrokallis (2004), p. 47, n. 2 and Cruikshank Dodd (2004), pp. 23-25.

²³¹ The double-naved churches with two sanctuaries, which are also very common in the Cyclades, constitute a separate typology. Despite having close affinity to the double-apsed ones, they will not be discussed here.

²³² See Vallindas (1896), pp. 51-52 and Gouranis (1938), pp. 122-124 for Kythnos; Sarou (1949), pp. 200-208 for Chios; Moutsopoulos (1962), pp. 216-218 for Aegina, etc.

²³³ Enlart (1899), p. 407; Moutsopoulos (1962), pp. 216, 224-228; Vasiliadis (1962a), pp. 69-73; Vasiliadis (1962b), pp. 107-108.

²³⁴ Some less probable explanations have been also suggested, e.g. use of the two apses as *prothesis* and *diakonikon* on either side of a free-standing altar table, Koumanoudis (1959), p. 500. For an overview see also Dimitrokallis (1976), pp. 371-383 and (2004), pp. 47-48.

earlier.²³⁵ The dedicatory inscriptions of some examples leave no doubt that their form was dictated by a double dedication (e.g. a double-apsed church of 1074 in Corfu dedicated to Agios Ilias and Agios Merkourios). He adds, however, that there is evidence of double-apsed churches being used for mixed rituals during the *Latinokratia*, especially on the Aegean islands (e.g. the church of Flouria on Paros).²³⁶

Dimitrokallis on the other hand, says that only few of these churches were associated with two different saints. He accepts co-veneration as the reason for this peculiar plan only in certain cases in the Cyclades, (e.g. Flouria on Paros, Agios Ioannis Prodromos in Messaria on Kythnos, Agios Michael Spiliotis in Kardiani on Tenos)²³⁷ but claims that most of the double-apsed churches had funerary character.²³⁸ According to him this typology belongs to the so-called 'School of the East' and pertains mostly to churches of small size. It appeared first in the Early Christian period in Asia Minor and then spread both towards the East and the West. After an approximately three-hundred-year gap the double-apsed churches occurred again in the 9th century and continued through the 10th to the 13th century. After the 14th century, he says that this plan fell mostly out of practice, except for the area of the Aegean and more specifically the Cyclades.²³⁹

More recently E. Cruishank Dodd in her study of the churches in Lebanon arguing from Dimitrokallis' views concluded that the purpose of both the double-apsed and double-naved churches, which are particularly characteristic of Lebanese architecture, was to serve two different rites. However, she offered another explanation for the origins of the typology, i.e. the custom of presenting the liturgy for the same rite in two different languages, Syriac, and Greek in the early years, as well as Latin after the Crusades. The fluid relationships between the different religious communities in the area that were further exacerbated by the presence of the Crusaders would call

²³⁵ Vokotopoulos (1968), pp. 70-74.

²³⁶ The church is located near the *kastro* of Kephalos (see also section 9.3) and was first recorded by A. Orlandos. The ribbed vault that covers the bigger northern apse leaves no doubt about its Latin dedication while the uniformity in the construction and the materials show that both apses are contemporary, Orlandos (1961), pp. 137-138. Dimitrokallis dates it to the 15th century, Dimitrokallis (1976), pp. 124-125.

²³⁷ Dimitrokallis (2004), p. 47.

²³⁸ Dimitrokallis (2002), pp. 39-40; Dimitrokallis (1976), pp. 477-480.

²³⁹ Dimitrokallis (1976), pp. 321-323, 365, 367.

for a building of this kind and a precedent of holding different rites and languages in one church was certainly offered by the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem.²⁴⁰

All the above factors might explain the evolution of this particular typology, yet further in-depth and comparative studies would be needed in order to reach a secure conclusion for its exact origins and subsequent development. Wherever its roots may lay however (spatially and chronologically), there is no doubt that many double-apsed churches were used for co-veneration in the Late Medieval Aegean. According to the 1700's account of Tournefort a Catholic altar existed in all Orthodox churches of Tenos. When the liturgy was attended by prelates of both rites, the Catholic deacon would first sing the Epistle that was then sang again in Greek by the Orthodox priest; the same was repeated with the Gospel. As was noted by Vallindas for the case of Kythnos, the Latin clergy in Tenos had the same precedence in all processions and ecclesiastic functions, and the Greek priests had to uncover their heads when entering a Latin church.²⁴¹

Although Tournefort's claims of a Latin altar in all churches is clearly an exaggeration, the existence of shared churches with two apses (Orthodox churches with Latin altars and *vice versa*) is evidenced through several 18th-century documents from the archives of the Latin bishopric of Tenos (*Αρχείο Καθολικής Εκκλησίας της Τήνου*).²⁴² After 1715 when Tenos was finally annexed by the Ottomans, the Orthodox See of the island was reinstated. Among other problems that arose, the use and management of the mixed churches along with their estates and revenues was the most acute. Surviving correspondence between the Orthodox bishop and his Catholic counterpart but also two official agreements between the churches (in 1749 and 1785)²⁴³ show how both sides tried to resolve this complicated issue in a conciliatory way. Apparently, neither side wanted to go against the old custom, the *'παλαιά συνήθεια'* as they called it,²⁴⁴ so for a time many disputed churches continued to serve both rites.

²⁴⁰ Cruikshank Dodd (2004), pp. 23-28.

²⁴¹ Tournefort (1718), p. 275.

²⁴² Several of these documents were transcribed, studied, and published by Father M. Foskolos, archivist of the Catholic Bishopric of Naxos and Tenos, Foskolos (2000).

²⁴³ Foskolos (2000), pp. 226, 246, 254-255.

²⁴⁴ Foskolos (2000), pp. 257, 259, 277.

In the mid-18th century, however, the official stance of both the Vatican and the Ecumenical Patriarchate on the matter of co-veneration had hardened. With two acts published in 1753²⁴⁵ and 1756²⁴⁶ respectively, they each denounced the other rite and forbade all form of contact between their followers. However, even in later writings of the bishops (e.g. letters of the years 1758, 1764, and even 1798) as well as in contemporary Propaganda reports there are still mentions of incidents where devotees of the one or the other rite continued to perform liturgies in previously mixed churches which since the agreement of 1749 were exclusively allotted either to the Catholics or the Orthodox. This practice faded gradually, yet according to Father M. Foskolos certain country churches were disputed up until the late 19th century.²⁴⁷ For some of the shared churches mentioned in the above sources there are also published plans confirming their double nature (e.g. Panagia Spiliotisa in Ktikado, Panagia Myrsinis, Agios Georgios Kremastou in Ktikado, etc.).²⁴⁸

So, given Vallindas' account on mixed rituals, the Gozzadini conciliatory policy, and the existence of numerous double-apsed churches, it would be safe to assume that the situation on Kythnos was quite similar to that of Tenos. The fact that the church of Agios Sabbas which was a Gozzadini establishment dedicated to a single Orthodox saint is of the double-apsed plan is highly indicative (**Figs 28, 29**). Despite having no written evidence for the double-apsed churches in the *Kastro*, it is very likely that the practice of co-veneration was transferred to the new capital from there. Whether it was already in act since the previous Latin administrations is unknown; individual study of each case and archaeological excavation mainly at the churches of Oria could offer a more secure dating and a potential *terminus post quem* for its beginnings. According to O. Gratziou who studied the ecclesiastical architecture of Late Medieval Crete, the double-naved and double-apsed typologies appeared on the island in the late 14th century and became more widespread after the Council of Florence in 1439 presumably to promote the union of the two churches.²⁴⁹

²⁴⁵ Foskolos (2000), p. 230.

²⁴⁶ Gedeon (1888), pp. 252-254; Foskolos (2000), pp. 231-232, 285-288.

²⁴⁷ Foskolos (2000), pp. 237, 246, 256-257, 265-266, 274-277.

²⁴⁸ Mentioned in that order in Foskolos (2000), pp. 257-258, 265-266 and in Dimitrokallis (2004), pp. 56, 33, 45.

²⁴⁹ Gratziou (2010), p. 178-179.

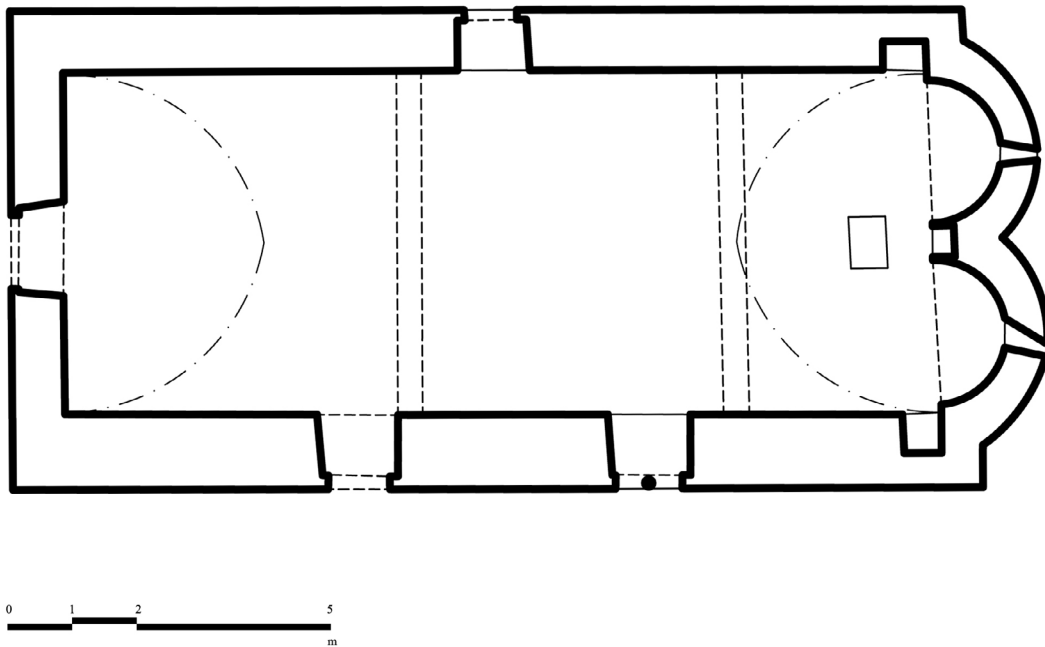


Fig. 28. Floor plan of the double-apsed church of Agios Sabbas in Messaria (redrawn after Dimitrokallis 1976, p. 174, fig. 248)



Fig. 29. The double-apsed church of Agios Sabbas in Messaria from the southeast

On Kythnos the tolerant relations between the churches continued even after the end of the Latin rule in 1617 when the situation was reversed to the favour of the Orthodox. Despite the problems that arose with the occupation of the ecclesiastical lands by the locals Polla in his 1650's report to the Propaganda says that all Kythnian Orthodox priests and monks are favourably disposed towards Catholicism and that the islanders who occupied the lands of the Latin bishopric acknowledge it and would gladly pay the Catholic church to legally acquire the land. He also reports that whenever he visits Kythnos he says mass in the old Catholic cathedral in the castle, where the devout inhabitants bring him oil and candles for the liturgy and confess to him despite following the Orthodox dogma. What is more, the island's representatives even offered to build a Catholic church in the new capital.²⁵⁰ The same positive behaviour is noted by G. Sebastiani in 1667, who says that the Latin vicar from Kea would come to Kythnos and say mass in any Orthodox church.²⁵¹ The Jesuit fathers that came to the island on the so-called *missions volantes* seem to have been equally welcome.²⁵²

In that light, the practice of co-veneration does not seem to have been forcefully imposed to the local population (as a means of political and religious assimilation) as it has been claimed by some.²⁵³ Had the inhabitants felt seriously oppressed by the Catholics before the annexation, they would not have maintained such a friendly attitude towards them thereafter. Apparently, the religious differences did not play such a major role in the everyday life of the Kythniots. Some problems would certainly have occurred in times of change, e.g. when the Latin church was first established on the islands or after the Turkish annexation when the Latin ecclesiastical lands were taken by the locals. Overall, however, it appears that there was little religious fanaticism from both sides and the inhabitants of Kythnos were equally respectful towards both dogmas.²⁵⁴ That should perhaps be attributed to the Gozzadini tolerant policy that promoted social cohesion in the unstable environment of the Late Medieval Aegean. Maybe it was also the support of the islanders that helped them maintain their possessions when all other Latin lords lost theirs to the

²⁵⁰ Slot (1974), p. 120.

²⁵¹ Sebastiani (1687), p. 120.

²⁵² Roussos-Milidonis (1989), p. 85 and (2002), pp. 28-33.

²⁵³ E.g. Gratiou (2010), p. 178 n. 143.

²⁵⁴ Slot (1974), pp. 117-121.

Turks. Incidents like on Tenos in 1537 or on Naxos in 1566,²⁵⁵ where the locals either cooperated with the Turks or even invited them in, are not recorded for any of the Gozzadini-held islands. So, although the conqueror-conquered relations would have been complicated and far from ideal, it seems that coexistence and collaboration were largely achieved, the double-apsed churches of the island being a material representation of both sides' will for social and religious accommodation.

2.6 The Ottoman conquest - *Turkokratia* (1617-1830)

After Angelo V, the last Gozzadini lord, was expelled by the Turks in 1617 Kythnos and the other islands of the Gozzadini barony were officially annexed to the Ottoman empire. They became part of the *Eyalet* of the Archipelago (*Eyālet-i Cezāyir-i Bahır-i Sefid*), which was under the chief admiral of the Ottoman Navy, the *Kapudan Pasha*. The Ottoman rule was relatively tolerant as the Cyclades were never occupied by the Turks. Furthermore, the islanders had received from Suleiman I certain privileges i.e. freedom of religion, reduced taxation and a degree of self-government, that were later renewed by his successors. That arrangement granted them some freedom, however at the same time, it left them at the mercy of government officials over which the Porte exercised only remote control.

From Thevenot we learn that in the 1650s Kythnos was ruled by a *kadi* and four procurators, known also as *prokritoi* (*πρόκριτοι*), who were chosen among the locals.²⁵⁶ According to Vallindas, however, Constantinople gradually stopped sending Turkish administrators to the lesser islands. Instead, a local was appointed as representative and along with the *prokritoi* he was responsible for the administration of the island and the tax collection. He also had a certain judicial authority but could not pass the death penalty.²⁵⁷ Every summer the Turkish fleet led by the *Kapudan Pasha* would sail to the islands to collect the taxes. During the Russo-Turkish war of 1768-1774 Kythnos and some of the other Cycladic islands were briefly occupied by the Russian fleet, however, they were recovered by the Ottomans with the signing of the treaty of Küçük Kaynarca (1774).²⁵⁸

²⁵⁵ Miller (1908), p. 628, 635-636; Saulger (1878), p. 191.

²⁵⁶ Thevenot (1686), p. 109.

²⁵⁷ Vallindas (1882), pp. 82-83.

²⁵⁸ Kordatos (1957), p. 222.

2.7 Early modern times (1821-present day)

During the Early Modern times Kythnos took part in the Greek War of Independence of 1821 and it was incorporated, along with the other Cyclades, to the independent Greek state, right after its founding in 1830. The most important event of the island's recent history is a rebellion known as the *Kythniaka*. In 1862, rebels from Syros unsuccessfully tried to free political prisoners who were exiled on Kythnos after their failed movement against King Otto in Nafplion. The revolutionaries clashed with the royal troops in the bay of Agia Eirini and were bitterly defeated.²⁵⁹

During the 19th century Kythnos became quite popular thanks to the reputation of the thermal springs of Loutra that were frequented by many who sought relief from various diseases. Besides a considerable income, the visitors gave a cosmopolitan touch to the island. In addition, at that time there has been remarkable growth in shipping. In the late 19th century, during the so-called 'mining fever' of the Aegean, began a systematic exploitation of the iron deposits of the island.²⁶⁰ After the Second World War the mining operations stopped and Kythnos faced a period of economic recession and seclusion that lasted until the touristic development of the last decades.

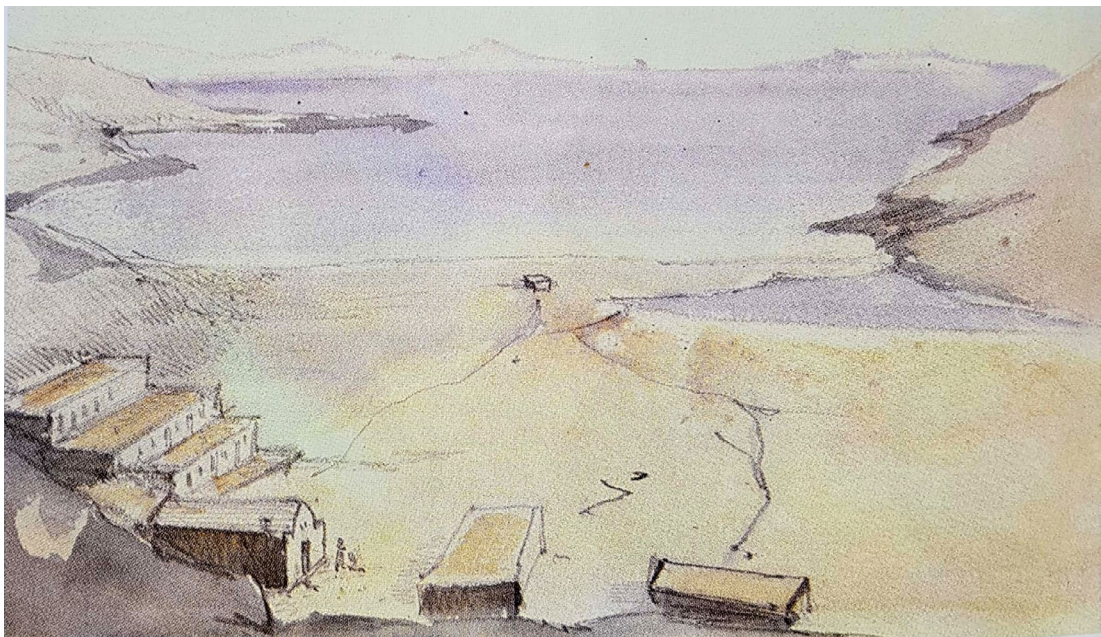


Fig. 30. The bay of Loutra. Drawing by C. Hansen, 1836 (Papanicolaou-Christiansen, 1993, p. 97, fig. 140)

²⁵⁹ Filippaios (1998), p. 37; Μεγάλη Ελληνική Εγκυκλοπαίδεια (1931), pp. 343-344.

²⁶⁰ Belavilas and Papastefanaki (2009), pp. 86-91; Veloudaki, Voutsinas and Bousoula (2011).



Fig. 31. Map of the Aegean Sea after Ptolemy's Geographia (British Library, Burney MS 111, f.43v)

3 Medieval Kythnos through the sources

As mentioned before, the research and the established archaeological evidence on medieval Kythnos is extremely limited. Although the island's general historical course may be deduced by comparing it to that of the rest of the Cyclades, the details of Kythnos' medieval built environment and landscape remain obscure. The study of the medieval locations and sites, although not being directly the subject of the thesis, is necessary in order to better document *Oria Kastro* and put it in a chronological and spatial context that would help determine its role on the island.

To that end the accounts of Late Medieval travellers and cartographers (14th-17th century) are an important source of information. Even though they should be used with caution, their study can shed some light into Kythnos' past landscape. Finally, the old and current place names can reveal the existence of forts and settlements that were long lost, and the careful study of local myths and stories has sometimes the potential to yield quite reliable information. In the present study, all information from the sources was gathered, organised and studied in comparison with preliminary observations from an extensive field research that was carried out at different sites all around the island.

3.1 Kythnos in traveller's and cartographer's accounts

During the centuries following the Fourth Crusade in 1204, due to its geostrategic location, the Aegean Archipelago was at the focal point of the great powers of the time. After the founding of the Latin states in the Eastern Mediterranean and especially the Aegean Duchy, numerous travellers of different nationalities and backgrounds started visiting the Cyclades and the other Aegean regions. The reasons that provided them with the impetus for exploration varied. Geographers and cartographers, seamen, noblemen, antiquities collectors and monks left accounts (both textual and pictorial) that are of great importance for the study of the Late and Post-Medieval Cyclades. They recorded the current state of the islands; ports and towns, population figures, local customs and myths and were even eyewitnesses to historical events.

Their travel books as well as the portolans and *isolarii* (Books of Islands) with the maps and the navigational narratives that accompany them provide extremely useful information about the state of the Aegean islands of that period.²⁶¹ But however precious they may be, these accounts cannot always be trusted. Misinterpretations, deliberate exaggerations, and a blend of mythical and real elements are quite common. In addition, many travellers in order to complete their overambitious all-inclusive works would just copy and recount information from earlier sources without ever visiting the places they were describing themselves. Therefore, evidence from their works needs to be used with caution. Furthermore, it is important to be aware that we rarely have access to the original manuscript. Many of the earlier works that were handwritten have reached us today through multiple copying. Consequently, reproduction related mistakes and differences should also be taken into account. In any case, quite often these accounts are the only available sources for the study of the Aegean islands, especially the smaller ones.

Kythnos being a rather poor island, lacked the resources and the attractions of some of the other Cyclades like Naxos, Paros, or Santorini, therefore, it was never a famous or preferred destination for the travellers that sailed across the Aegean Sea from the 14th to the late 17th century. It seems that anchoring there was mostly the result of bad weather or other random events (replenishing the ship's food or water supplies etc.). Some of the travellers did not even land on the island. They sailed around it or stayed on board while at the port, gathering information from local sailors or the ship's pilots. Others just copied older travel books and nautical maps. However, there were also those who did spend some time there and their accounts give us unique and valuable information about the state of medieval Kythnos.

²⁶¹ Vionis (2012), p. 29.

3.1.1 Early accounts: 14th-15th century

The first traveller to leave us an account of the built environment of Kythnos was the notary and pilgrim **Nicola de Martoni** in 1395.²⁶² Martoni kept a diary of his journey to Jerusalem where he eloquently described his adventures and experiences.²⁶³ As mentioned, on the way back to Italy he and his companions spent about two weeks on Termia, as he calls it, due to bad weather. From his description it seems that their boat was anchored at the bay of Kolona in the midway along the west coast (**Fig. 32**).²⁶⁴ Being chased by pirates they left their ship in the cover of night and following for 8 miles²⁶⁵ a steep and stony path through the mountains they found refuge in the fortified settlement of Termia.

The ‘*borgo*’, as the notary calls it, was located up in the mountains on top of a mighty rock and Martoni clearly states that it was the island’s capital and the seat of the Latin lord Giovanni Gozzadini. When the weather finally permitted them, the pilgrims descended to the port of the town (most likely Sclavos bay to the north of the *Kastro* and not Kolona) and departed for Athens. Martoni’s journal is the first direct mention of *Oria Kastro* and it documents that in the late 14th century *Oria* was the island’s main settlement. In addition, it proves the existence of a path that connected *Oria* to the leeward bay of Kolona, which was an excellent anchoring place for big vessels.



Fig. 32. Martoni’s possible itinerary

²⁶² Piccirilo (2003), pp. 133-135.

²⁶³ Martoni’s journal was not meant to be used as a handbook by future travellers, so his notes have a more personal tone, Chareyron (2005), p. ix.

²⁶⁴ Martoni says that the corsairs were anchored at another bay ‘*e separato dal nostro dalla spiaggia sabbiosa*’, i.e. ‘separated from that of the pilgrims by a sandy beach’, Piccirilo (2003), p. 133. Most likely he refers to the area of Kolona where a strand of beach connects the main island to the islet of Agios Loukas forming two deep and protected bays.

²⁶⁵ The distance between Kolona and *Oria* is almost 7 Venetian miles in a straight line, which is not far from the pilgrim’s estimate of 8 miles.

1420: Christoforo Buondelmonti, 'Liber Insularum Achipelagi'

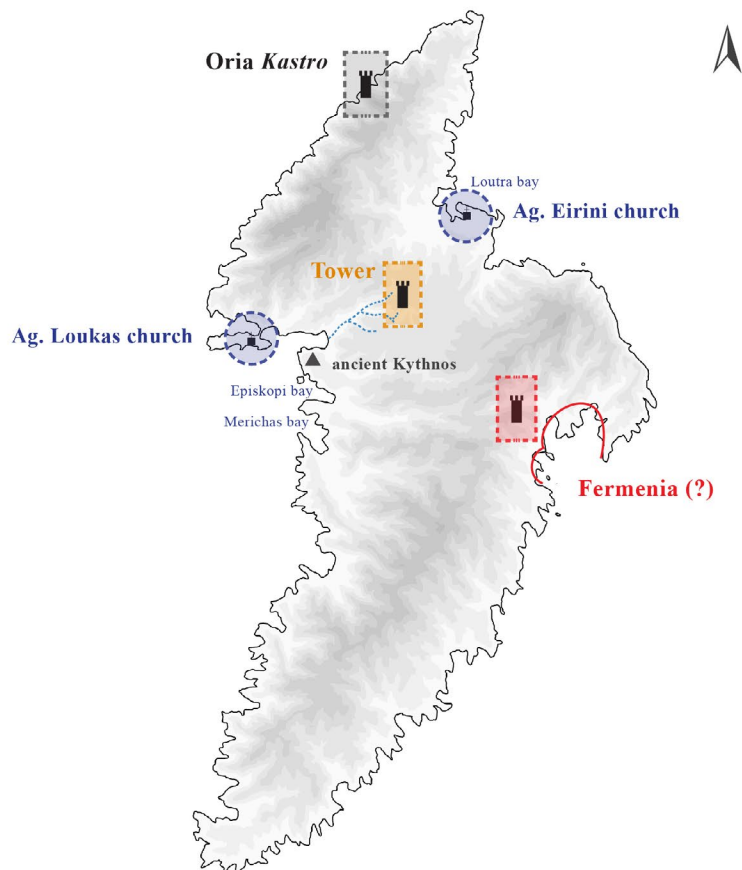
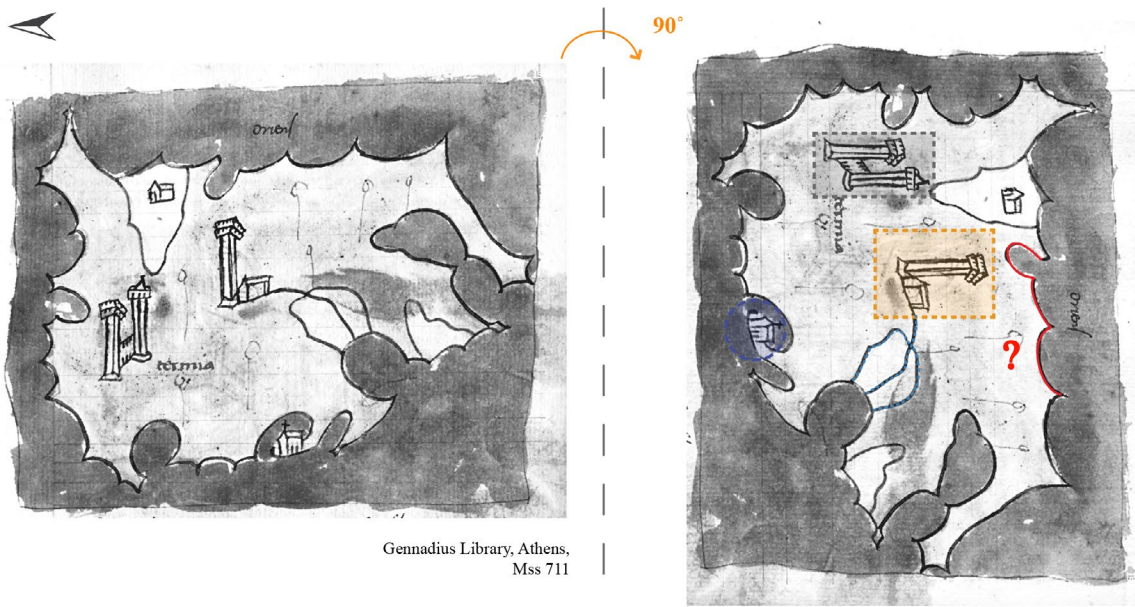


Fig. 33. Buondelmonti's map in comparison to the actual map of Kythnos

The next description and the first depiction of medieval Kythnos comes from the famous Florentine monk and geographer **Christoforo Buondelmonti** (c.1386-c.1430). Buondelmonti travelled in the Aegean Sea in the first half of the 15th century and he was a pioneer in promoting first-hand knowledge of Greece throughout the Western world. In 1420,²⁶⁶ he drew up *Liber Insularum Achipelagi* the first book of islands, the so-called *isolario* in Italian. It included 85 coloured maps of islands and other important littoral regions of the Aegean together with historical and geographical texts.

Liber Insularum Achipelagi had a huge impact on travel literature and it was copied and used as a reference by numerous other travellers. No original version of the *isolario* has survived to the present day, yet there are several later copies held in Libraries around the world,²⁶⁷ as well as two 19th-century print versions, that made Buondelmonti's work broadly known. The first one was published in 1824 by L. De Sinner and was based on a Latin copy of the manuscript. A few years later, in 1897, E. Legrand published a second version of the *isolario* based on a Greek translation of the original manuscript. The manuscripts used for the present thesis come from the National Maritime Museum in London,²⁶⁸ the *Universitäts-und Landesbibliothek* of Düsseldorf,²⁶⁹ the Gennadius Library in Athens²⁷⁰ and the *Bibliothèque Nationale De France* (BnF) in Paris.²⁷¹

Buondelmonti visited Kythnos sometime between 1416 and 1420 and his account on the island's main settlement is rather puzzling: '*Ad orientem vero Sancta Helena cernitur, ubi planus extat, quo in capite Thermia civitas erigitur, quam Turci iam, ibi mancipii, proditorie, innocte, captis civibus, desolavere; sed nunc repopulata est.*'²⁷² Although Oria Kastro, in the northwest, is the only extant medieval town,

²⁶⁶ An earlier version of the *isolario* that is now lost may have existed, Tolia (2002), p. 30.

²⁶⁷ Tsougarakis (1985), pp. 95-97.

²⁶⁸ P/13, 14V.

²⁶⁹ Ms. G 13.

²⁷⁰ MS 711.

²⁷¹ Lat. Nouv. Acq. 2383.

²⁷² Sinner (1824), p. 84. Both Sinner's transcription of the Latin manuscript and the Greek version published by Legrand translate into 'Towards the east there is the church of St Elena, where there is also a plain and at the end of that plain lies the town that is homonymous to the island, it (the town) was desolated by the Turks when they captured it one night after it was betrayed by a slave; now it is repopulated.'



Fig. 34. The National Maritime Museum copy of the Buondelmonti's *isolario* (P/13, 14V)

the Florentine monk writes about a city that has the same name as the island and lies to the east, at the end of a plain. He also gives information about the town's former capture, desolation, and recent repopulation, probably referring to the 1416 Turkish campaign against the Cyclades.²⁷³ The text goes on by accurately describing the rest of the island; the church of Agios Loukas and the ruins of the ancient capital of Kythnos on the western shore, the Hellenistic tower in the inland and the rivulet that runs by it as well as the fertile plains of Episkopi and Merichas. However, the location of Oria up the north-western mountains is not mentioned at all.

On the contrary, on the map of all manuscripts the city Thermia is depicted correctly in the north-west side.²⁷⁴ So, there seems to be a discrepancy between Buondelmonti's text and map (**Figs 33, 34**). The outline of the map is completely inaccurate; however, the points of the horizon are clearly indicated in all cases. Even if we assume that there was an orientation error and the famous cartographer actually meant to write west instead of east in the text, Oria *Kastro* that is located on a steep cliff at an altitude of more than 200 m from sea level cannot be described as lowland. Consequently, the question that arises is the following: Is this discrepancy simply caused by a poor understanding of the text and/or its inaccurate translation or is it possible that the account of Buondelmonti could hint at the existence of another, currently unknown, town on the island?

Almost the same information is found around 1480 in *Insularium Illustratum* the work of the German cartographer **Henricus Martellus Germanus**.²⁷⁵ It is highly unlikely that he ever visited the island himself, so it seems that Germanus only copied Buondelmonti's text and map without adding any new observations. According to his text, the town of Thermia is located in the east on top of a plateau. On the map, the fortified town is again placed in the north, at the end of a plain that stretches from east to west. Germanus also shows the churches of *St. Elini* (Agia Eirini?) on the north-eastern shore and *St. Luca* (Agios Loukas) to the west, as well as the tower and the nearby spring in the middle of the island.

²⁷³ Miller (1908), pp. 598-599.

²⁷⁴ On the map of the National Maritime Museum manuscript Thermia is not only depicted at the right place but it is also shown crowning a steep mountain (**Fig. 34**).

²⁷⁵ British Library, Add. MS 15760.

1485: Bartolomeo dalli Sonetti, 'Periplus Nisnon'

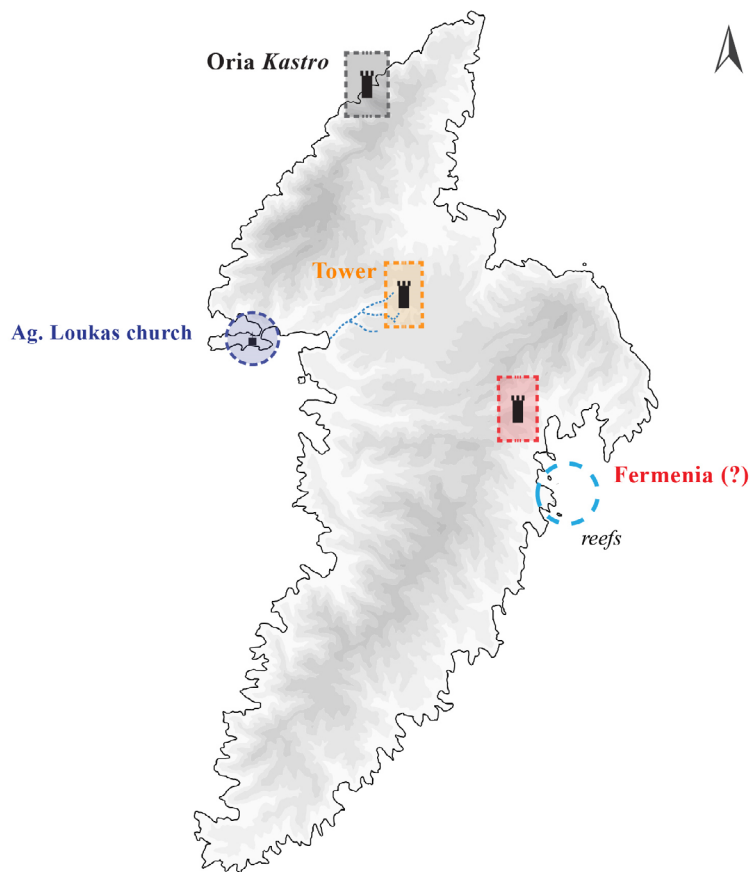
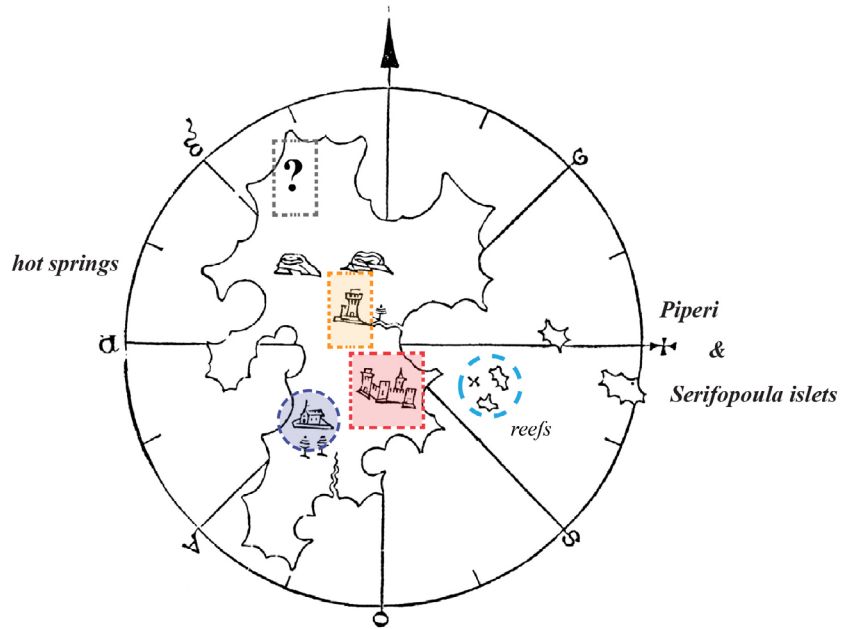


Fig. 35. Sonetti's map (Brown University copy) in comparison to the actual map of Kythnos

The third depiction of Kythnos comes from the work of the Venetian seaman **Bartolomeo dalli Sonetti**. Sonetti's *isolario*, known also as *Periplous Nisson*, was published in print in 1485 and it was written in verse. Even though he essentially copies Buodelmonti's text, the outline of Sonetti's maps is much more accurate and he even indicates the islets and the dangerous reefs. The *isolario* copies used here come from the National Maritime Museum in London,²⁷⁶ the Public Library of Boston,²⁷⁷ Brown University in Providence and the *Bibliothèque Nationale* in Paris.

About Kythnos Sonetti writes: 'The island is mountainous, and, on the east, there is a plateau with Sancto Clini and at the head of said island [i.e. its main city] is Termia, the name by which both are known. It was previously defeated and taken by the Turks and was in great trouble from which it has since recovered, and on the west, the place is well provided with harbours.'²⁷⁸ The outline of the map that accompanies the text is close to Kythnos' actual shape. This time the map agrees with the text and Termia castle is depicted on the south-eastern coast (**Fig. 35**). On the map, there are also a church on the south-western coast (with the inscription *St. Lucha* in the National Maritime Museum copy) and the Hellenistic tower in the hinterland. Oria is neither shown on the map nor mentioned in the text. Sonetti also adds the two hot springs that lie in the northern part of the island as well as four islets on the east side. These details along with the accuracy of the map's outline are proof that the Venetian visited the place himself, having first-hand experience of its environs. So, the depiction of the island's main settlement on the east coast cannot be ignored or considered a mere reproduction mistake.

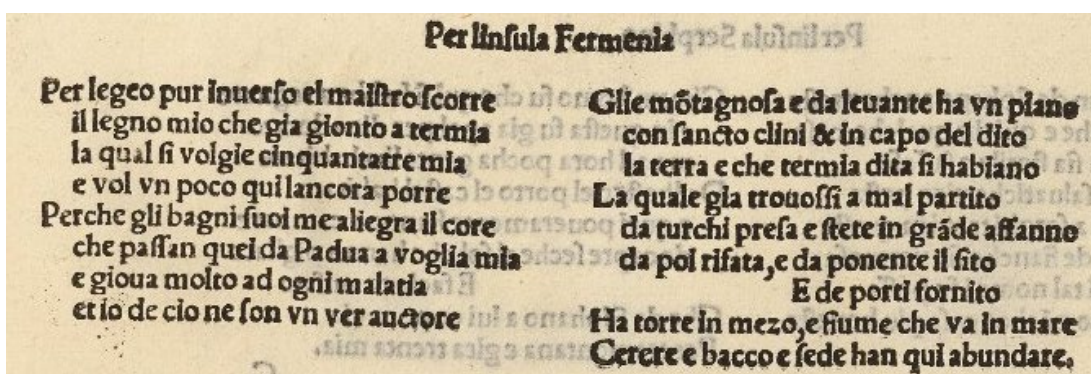


Fig. 36. Sonetti's text (written in verse) about Kythnos (Brown University copy)

²⁷⁶ Sonetti (1485), p. 19.

²⁷⁷ Sonetti (1485), pp. 19-20.

²⁷⁸ 'Glie montagnosa e da levante ha un piano/ con sancto clini & in capo del dito/ la terra e che termia dita si habiano/ La quale gia trouosi a mal partito/ da turchi presa e stete in grade assano/ da poi risata.', P/21(22).

1520: Piri Reis, 'Kitab-i Bahriye'

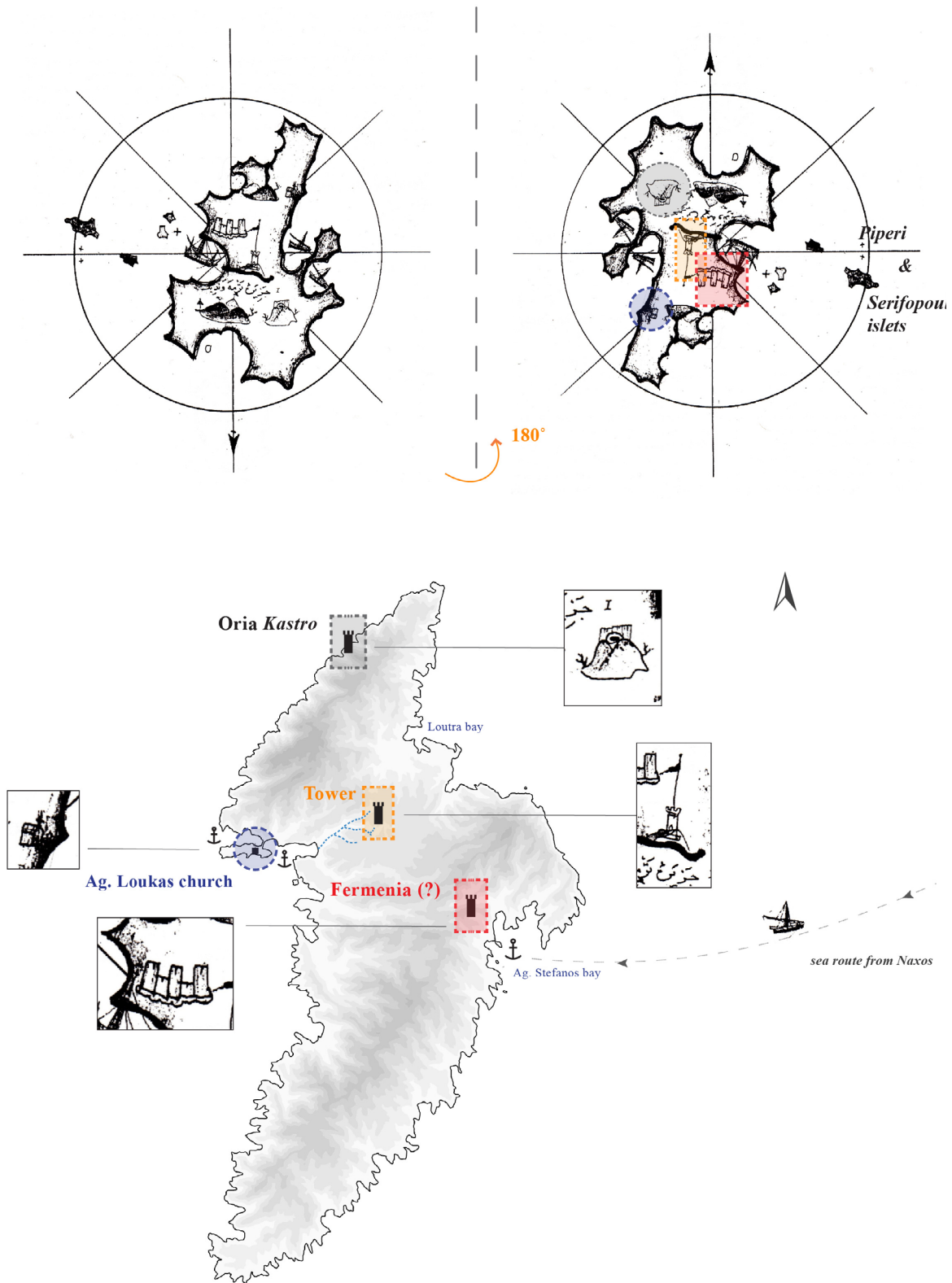


Fig. 37. Piri Reis' map (Süleymaniye copy, 2612) in comparison to the actual map of Kythnos

3.1.2 16th-century accounts

The most certain indication that another town might indeed have existed comes from the famous book of navigation of the Ottoman-Turkish admiral, geographer and cartographer **Piri Reis** (c.1465-1553). In the early 16th century Piri Reis sailed across the Aegean drawing maps on behalf of the Ottoman navy. First published in 1520 his work, *Kitab-ı Bahriye* was the most accurate *isolario* of the Mediterranean of the time. Copies are now found in many libraries and museums around the world. One of the manuscripts held in the *Bibliothèque Nationale De France* in Paris, the copy of the Walters Art Museum in Baltimore²⁷⁹ as well as the copy published in the work of D. Loupis from the Süleymaniye Library in Istanbul²⁸⁰ are used for this study (**Fig. 37**).

The translation of Piri Reis' text about Kythnos is as follows: '...The place around the castle that was built to the southeast is flat. There is another in the northwest. If one wants to sail from Naxos to Kythnos, he must have the island on his left hand. While approaching the coast the castle becomes visible. Then at six miles' distance, there is an inlet. While entering the inlet, to the left there is a round cape and to the right a rock that looks like an island. Opposite here there is a church. (...) and also, the two small islets that are characteristic of the island of Terme (Kythnos)...'.²⁸¹

Piri Reis is the first to mention not one but two castles on Kythnos. Although his map must be turned by 180° in order to be oriented properly, it correlates fully with the text with both castles being depicted in their relative places. The other castle is again placed on the south-eastern coast as on Sonetti's map and it appears considerably bigger than that of Oria. In the Süleymaniye copy of the manuscript, Piri Reis also adds three drawings of ships marking thus the island's good ports. The biggest ship is placed on the eastern shore by the castle, possibly indicating Kythnos' main harbour.

The great similarity of the outline between Sonetti's and Reis's maps most likely suggests some mutual influences, however, the work of the Turkish cartographer is certainly original. Except for the fact that he gives detailed mooring guidelines that

²⁷⁹ W. 658

²⁸⁰ 2612

²⁸¹ Loupis (1999), p. 368.

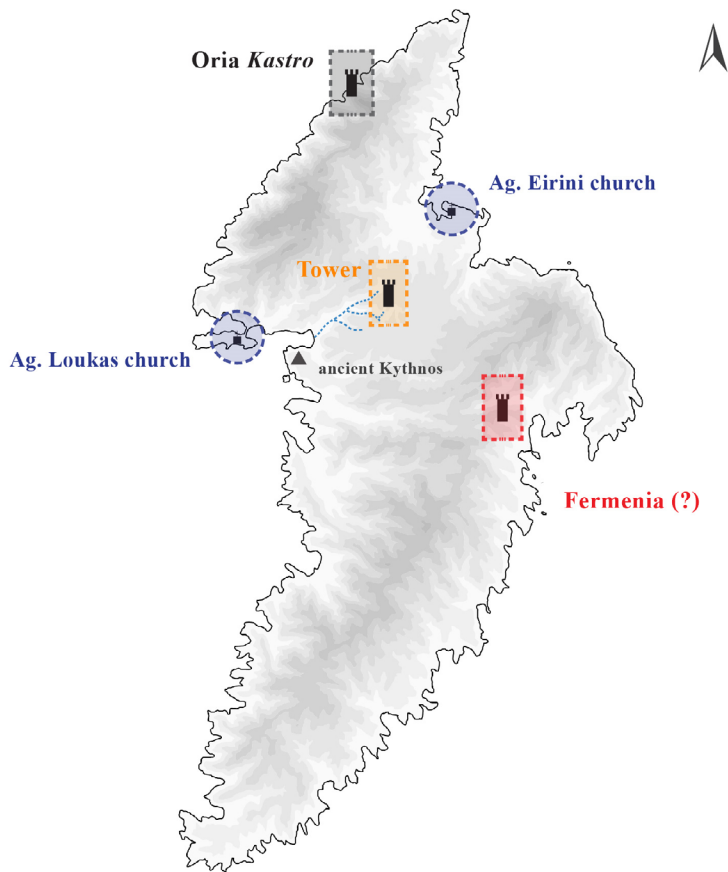
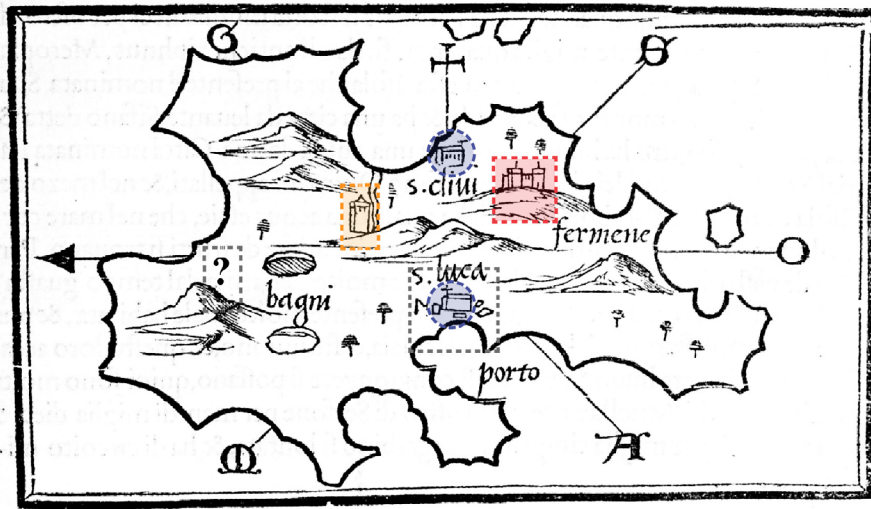


Fig. 38. Bordone's map in comparison to the actual map of Kythnos

indicate personal experience, his work was done on behalf of the Ottoman Navy to be presented to the Sultan himself.²⁸² That was just a few years before the Turkish fleet under the command of Barbarossa set out to conquer the Aegean Sea (1537-38). Consequently, *Kitab-ı Bahriye* was not simply another *isolario*. Its ‘military’ use that required accuracy and precision makes it a reliable source of information. Haji Khalifeh (1609-1657), the Turkish scholar who in the 17th century wrote the history of the maritime wars of the Turks characteristically states that Piri Reis’ island book is the only work of the kind with any authority amongst the Moslems.²⁸³

Another *isolario* to mention Kythnos is that of **Benedetto Bordone** (1460-1531), an Italian manuscript editor, miniaturist, and cartographer. From his *isolario* that was published in 1528 in Venice, we gather the same information about Kythnos’ other town as we did from the previous authors: ‘... and to the east it has Santo Clini with a good plain, at the end of which is located the very well populated city Termi, to the west is Santo Luca ...’.²⁸⁴ His map, which bears many similarities to that of Piri Reis,²⁸⁵ shows the fortified town on top of a small hill on the south-east coast marked with the name *Fermene*. Bordone also marks the name of two churches, *St. Clini* in the east, and *St. Luca* on the western coast near the ruins of the ancient capital, the tower in the hinterland as well as the hot springs in the island’s northern part. The mountainous north-west region is also depicted but there is no indication of Oria castle there (**Fig. 38**).

The next description of Kythnos comes from a collection of 16th century Greek portolan manuscripts that were first published in 1947 by A. Delatte. The oldest was safely dated in 1534, although its writer is still **unknown**. Unlike the other kind of contemporary portolans, i.e. the nautical maps that were widespread in the Mediterranean in the 16th century, these Greek portolans included only textual navigation and mooring guidelines. They were purely practical aids, intended to be used by seafarers onboard. Therefore, the information they related was sparing but reliable.

²⁸² Loupis (1999), p. 87.

²⁸³ Khalifeh (1831), p. 72.

²⁸⁴ ‘... & a levante ha santo Clini co bonissimo piano, al capo del quale la citta di Termici siede, ottima mente habitata, a ponente e santo Luca...’, Bordone (1528), p. 42.

²⁸⁵ Wilson (2012), p. 188.

1580s: Andre Thevet, 'Le Grand Insulaire et Pilotage'

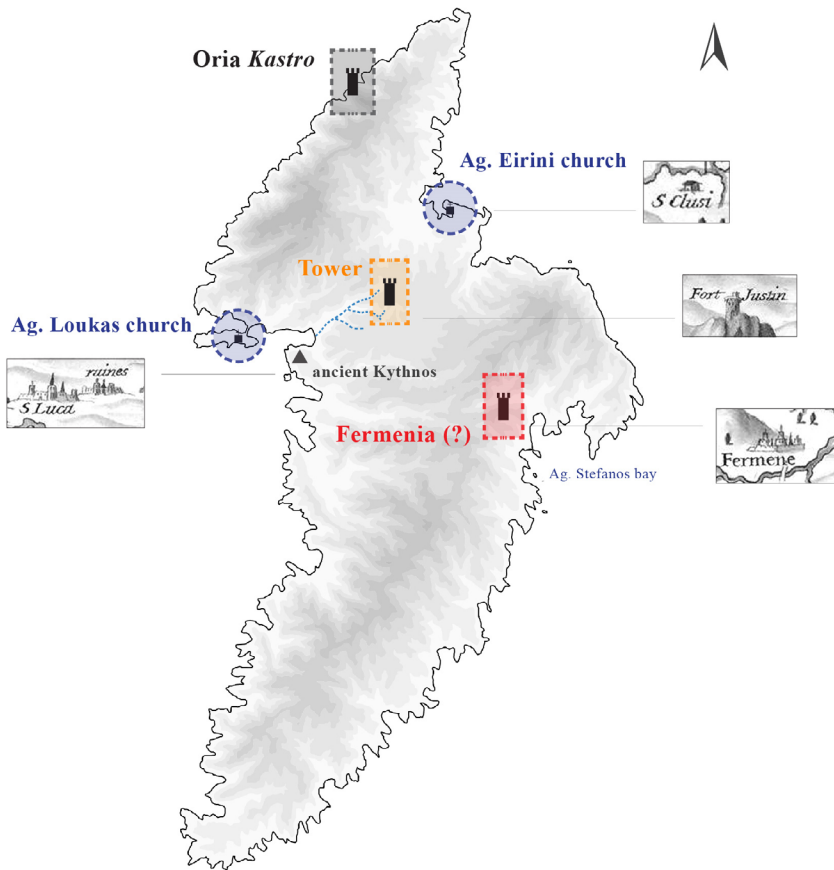
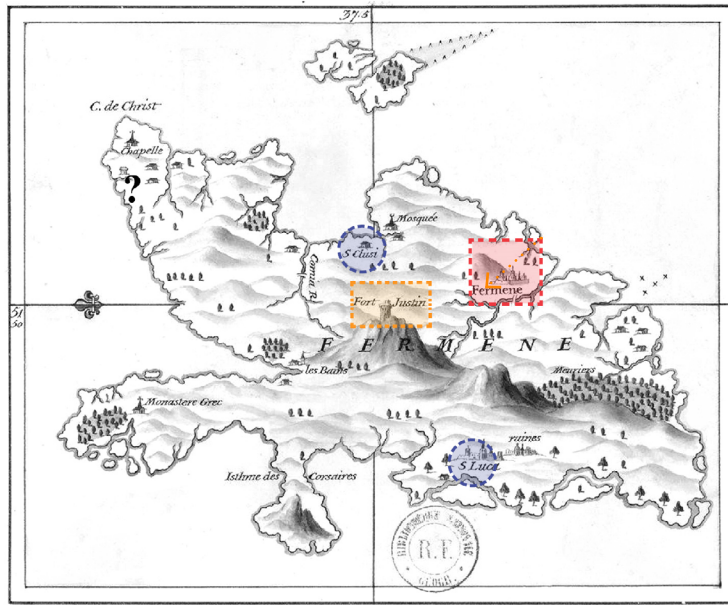


Fig. 39. Thevet's map (BnF copy) in comparison to the actual map of Kythnos

The translation of the text that is written using a lot of Hellenised Italian words, (Italian being the *lingua franca* of the time) is as follows: ‘If you see Thermia island from afar it looks long and mountainous and the mountains are all about the same height. And towards the castle it is lowland and there is the port towards the east and another one to the west.’²⁸⁶ Although that Greek portolan is not accompanied by a map, it seems that the castle mentioned by the unknown writer is the one mentioned by the other travellers, located in a lowland area by the port on the eastern shore. The text goes on giving detailed mooring guidelines that show great similarities to those written by Piri Reis more than one decade before. That led some scholars to believe that both texts could have been based on earlier (possibly 15th-century) lost Greek or Italian manuscripts.²⁸⁷

The *isolario* of the Spanish cartographer, instrument maker and historian **Alonso de Santa Cruz** (1505-1567), that was compiled around 1542, does not offer any new information on medieval Kythnos. Both the map and the text that goes with it are mere copies of earlier works (most likely the *isolaria* of Buondelmonti and Sonetti).²⁸⁸

Around the same time, the mysterious castle in the southeast is also mentioned by the French geographer and author **André Thevet** (1516-1590) in his works *Cosmographie du Universelle* (1575) and *Le Grand Insulaire et Pilotage* (unfinished). Although the outline of his map is completely inaccurate (**Fig. 39**), Thevet clearly places *La ville de Termici* as he calls it, on the south-east coast. In the text, he also states that the city is in the east at the foot of a mountain. Other than *Oria Kastro* which is again not pictured, the French geographer illustrates all other sites that were already mentioned by the previous travellers; In the middle of the island, on a land outcrop, there is a tower marked with the name *Tore Justin* and to its west there is an inscription marking the site of the hot springs. The churches of *St. Clini* and *St. Luca*, in the east and west respectively, are pictured too as is the old capital of Vryokastro which is marked with the word *Ruynes* (ruins).

²⁸⁶ ‘*Τα Θερμιά από μακρέα ωσάν ιδής είναι διχαλά και μακρουλά και τα βουνά αυτού όλα ίσα, και προς το κάστρον κάμνει χαμηλάδαν και εκεί είναι ο λιμνιόνας εις τον λεβάντε και άλλος εις τον μάστοραν.*’, Delatte (1947), pp. 101-102.

²⁸⁷ Loupis (1999), p. 402.

²⁸⁸ Blázquez (1918), pp. 268-269.

1590: Antonio di Millo, 'Isolario'

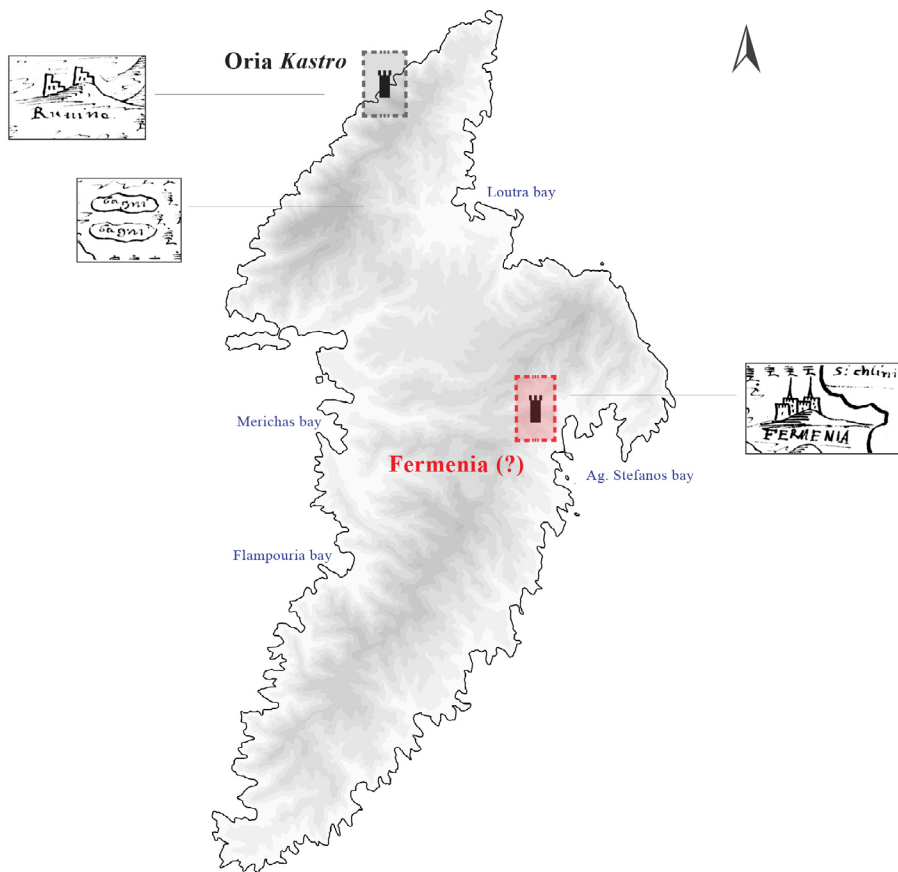
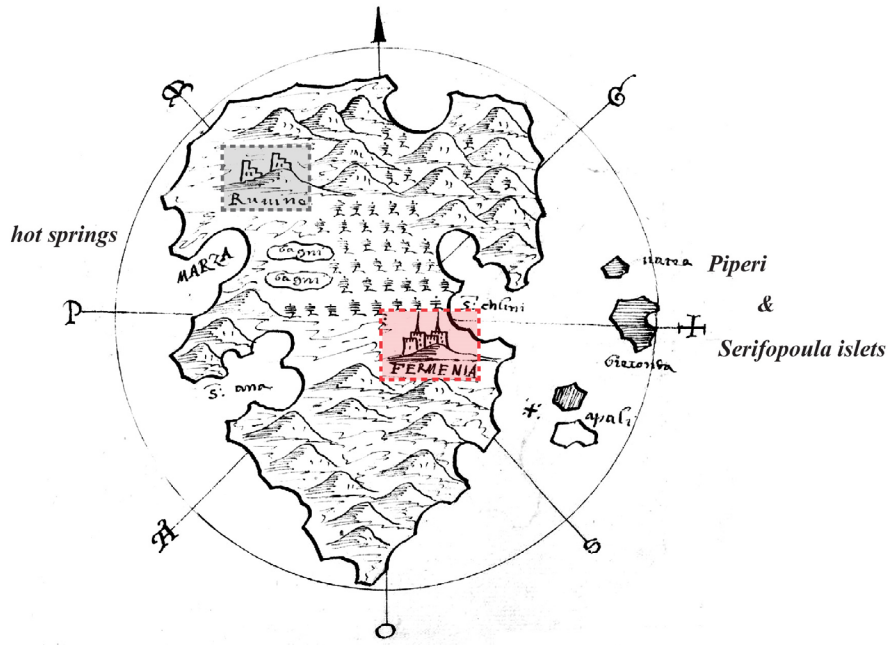


Fig. 40. Millo's map (National Maritime Museum copy) in comparison to the actual map of Kythnos

Thevet, however, adds some new information too. To the north of the tower, he shows a stream that flows to the east coast and marks it as *Comia fl[euve]*. The place name Comia or rather Komi is mentioned by Vallindas as one of the now lost villages to the northwest of Chora.²⁸⁹ Today, the name Komi is used for that same area, however, according to some initial observations, there are no obvious settlement remains left. Furthermore, in the text of *Cosmographie* Thevet claims that there was a hospital built by the hot springs that was under the patronage of the Ottomans. In addition to that, on the map of the *Insulaire*, he shows a mosque (!) on the north-east coast near the church of *St. Clusi*. Despite their detail Thevet's accounts are not reliable. Given the historical circumstances,²⁹⁰ the existence of Ottoman establishments on the island is highly doubtful. Even since his own time, his work was known to contain a blend of information from earlier sources and imaginary elements.²⁹¹ In any case, Thevet's writings add another testimony to the lost town's existence.

The next reliable account regarding Kythnos comes from the *isolario* of the Greek captain and cartographer **Antonio di Millo** (active 1567-1591). Being a native of the Cyclades²⁹² and an experienced seafarer himself, Millo is mainly interested in giving detailed sailing and mooring instructions. Nevertheless, he also recounts other information (settlements, population, local product etc.) that documents the situation in the Cyclades after 1566 when the Duchy islands were annexed to the Ottoman Empire. Today, manuscripts of at least nine *isolaria* drawn by Millo from 1582 to 1591 can be found in libraries in Venice, London, Rome etc. but also in private collections. Here are used copies from the National Maritime Museum in London,²⁹³ the *Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana* in Venice and as well as the copy of the Sylvia Ioannou Foundation published by A.Tselikas.²⁹⁴

The text of all manuscripts focuses mainly on mooring instructions and lists the good anchoring points of the island. In the London copy, however, it is stated that there is

²⁸⁹ Vallindas (1882), p. 50.

²⁹⁰ At the time of Thevet's alleged visit, i.e. sometime in the first half of the 16th century, Kythnos was still in Latin hands and the relations with the Ottomans were particularly strained. Even after 1617, when Kythnos was annexed, there were scarcely any Muslims on the island.

²⁹¹ <http://el.travelogues.gr/travelogue.php?view=63&creator=978920&tag=3>

²⁹² Antonio di Millo was born on the island of Melos in the first half of the 16th century.

²⁹³ P/17 (78V)

²⁹⁴ Tselikas (2006), pp. 154-155.

FERMENIA è un'isola stata per molto tempo desabitata, ma al presente è da Albanesi habitata con tre buonissimi porti grandi. Dal levante è S. Climi, dal ponente la Marza, et da garbin Sant'Anna. A porto Climi si da le ancore al'ostro e provesi a tramontana con passa XXV di acqua et si sta sicuri. Et andando al porto Marza come voltate la punta de maestro a man sinistra date le ancore al sirocco et provesi al maestro dentro della punta et non state li senza provesi né solo qui ma in tutti gli porti del Arcipelago per la bora. Et nel porto di S. Anna è buon porto et si può entrar quanto vi piace con provesi al maestro et le ancore al sirocco.

Da questa all'isola Zia per ponente miglia _____ n° 10.
 Dal levante sono alcuni scoglietti di valor niun con buonissimi bagni caldi et abbondantissimi di carne et sono di circoito miglia _____ n° 40.

FERMENIA. BAGNI. Marza.
 San Chlimi. Vatea.
 Apalli. Santa Anna.
 Gieronda.



Fig. 41. Kythnos in the *isolario* of A. Millo (Sylvia Ioannou Foundation copy, Tselikas 2006, p. 155)

a castle in the eastern part. Millo mentions also that the island used to be uninhabited for a long time but is now inhabited by Albanians. The maps of all three manuscripts are almost the same; a big fortified town with the name Fermentia is depicted by a bay on the south-east coast. There are also two churches, one by the bay of *St. Clini* to the east and one by *St. Ana* to the west. In addition, Millo shows the hot springs in the north and marks the bay of *Merza*, (present-day port of Merichas) as well as the three small islets, *Vatea*, *Apalli* and *Gieronda*, that lie between Kythnos and the neighbouring Serifos (Figs 40, 41).

However, the manuscript of the National Maritime Museum, which is dated in 1590, has one more very important piece of information; although nothing relevant is mentioned in the text, a ruined town is depicted on top of a hill in the northern part of the island and is marked with the word *ruina* (ruins) (Fig. 40). This town is surely Oria and this depiction on Millo's *isolario* offers a *terminus post quem* for its abandonment. It also proves that the Melian captain was aware of the existence and the location of both *kastra*, the ruined Oria and the now lost (?) Fermentia. So, if Fermentia existed, it seems that it outlived Oria for at least 20 years. Its demise must have occurred some sometime in the next century, although the existing reports are not very enlightening on the matter.

Finally, what should be noted is that neither of Kythnos' castles are mentioned in the work of the German scholar and humanist **Martin Crusius**. Whilst most other Cycladic *kastra* and settlements feature in detail in his famous 1584s *Turcogreacia*, Kythnos does not.²⁹⁵

²⁹⁵ Crusius (1584), p. 207; see also Miller (1908), p. 642.

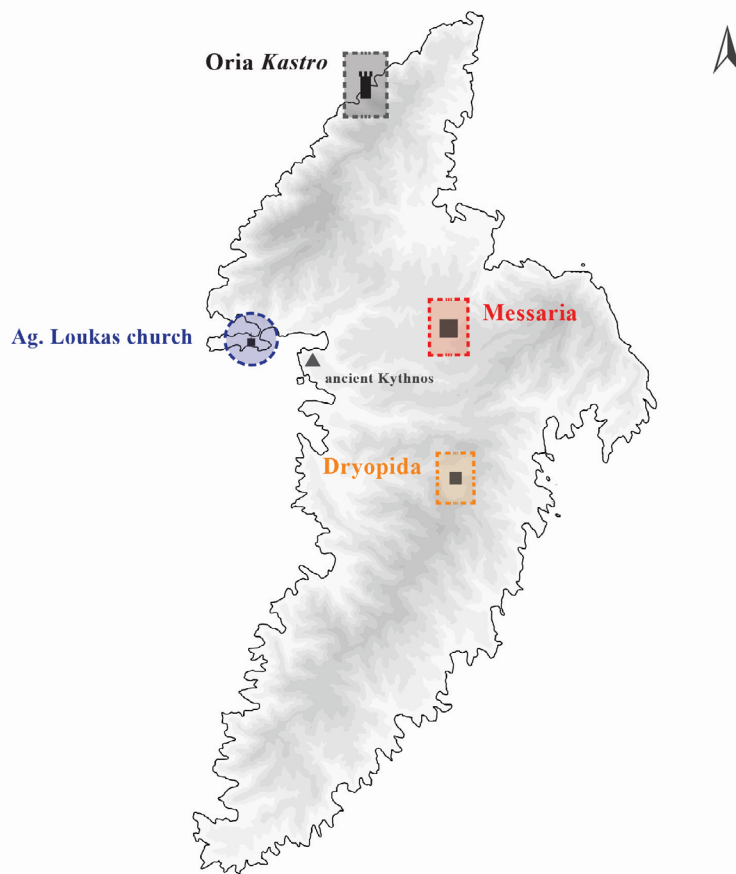


Fig. 42. Lupazzolo's map (British Library, MS 792, fo 74) in comparison to the actual map of Kythnos

3.1.3 17th-century accounts

The most important information on Kythnos in the early 17th century comes from the work of **Francesco Lupazzolo** (1587-1702). Originally from Piedmont, Lupazzolo spent most of his long life in the Aegean; he lived for many years on the island of Chios, worked for the Propaganda, served as the Venetian consul in Smyrna and was a spy for Venice during the Cretan war.²⁹⁶ Even though he obviously draws information from Bordone's travel book as well as other works, it is evident that Lupazzolo had first-hand experience of the insular environment.

He is the author of three manuscripts; the *Breve discorso e ipografia dell'isole del archipelago composto da Francesco Lupazzolo da Casale Monferato habitante in Scio l'anno 1632*, which is kept in the Public Library of Chios,²⁹⁷ the *Isolario dell'arcipelago et altri luoghi particolari*, dated 1638, now in the British Library²⁹⁸ and the *Relatione mandata alla Sac[ra] Congr[egatione] della Propaganda Fede nell'anno 1639. sopra la Visita dell'Arcipelago*, which was once seen in Chios but its whereabouts are now unknown.²⁹⁹ None of the above have ever been fully transcribed or published. Here, the *Isolario* and a copy of the *Breve Discorso* in the British Library are used. The two scripts are similar, yet each contains information not in the other.

Kythnos was officially under Ottoman rule when Lupazzolo visited it, c. 1638. Oria *Kastro* was long abandoned and the population was most likely gathered in Messaria which became the new capital and is still today the main settlement of the island. In the *Isolario* but also in the *Breve Discorso* text Lupazzolo discusses three sites: an old, abandoned city with very nice palaces and a Latin bishopric, the island's main town that has 300 houses and 15 well-built churches (the church of Sotira among them) and a settlement of several souls called Mesi, which as he informs us means '(in the) middle' (*mezzo*) in Greek.³⁰⁰ Although Lupazzolo's remarks on each place are correct, there is clearly some confusion about their exact location on the island, evident in the illustration of the *Isolario* map (**Fig. 42**).

²⁹⁶ Wilson (2012), pp. 189-190.

²⁹⁷ 73497, B2.

²⁹⁸ Lansdowne MS 792.

²⁹⁹ Wilson (2012), pp. 188.

³⁰⁰ British Library, MS 792, fo74-75 and MS 557 fo92-94.

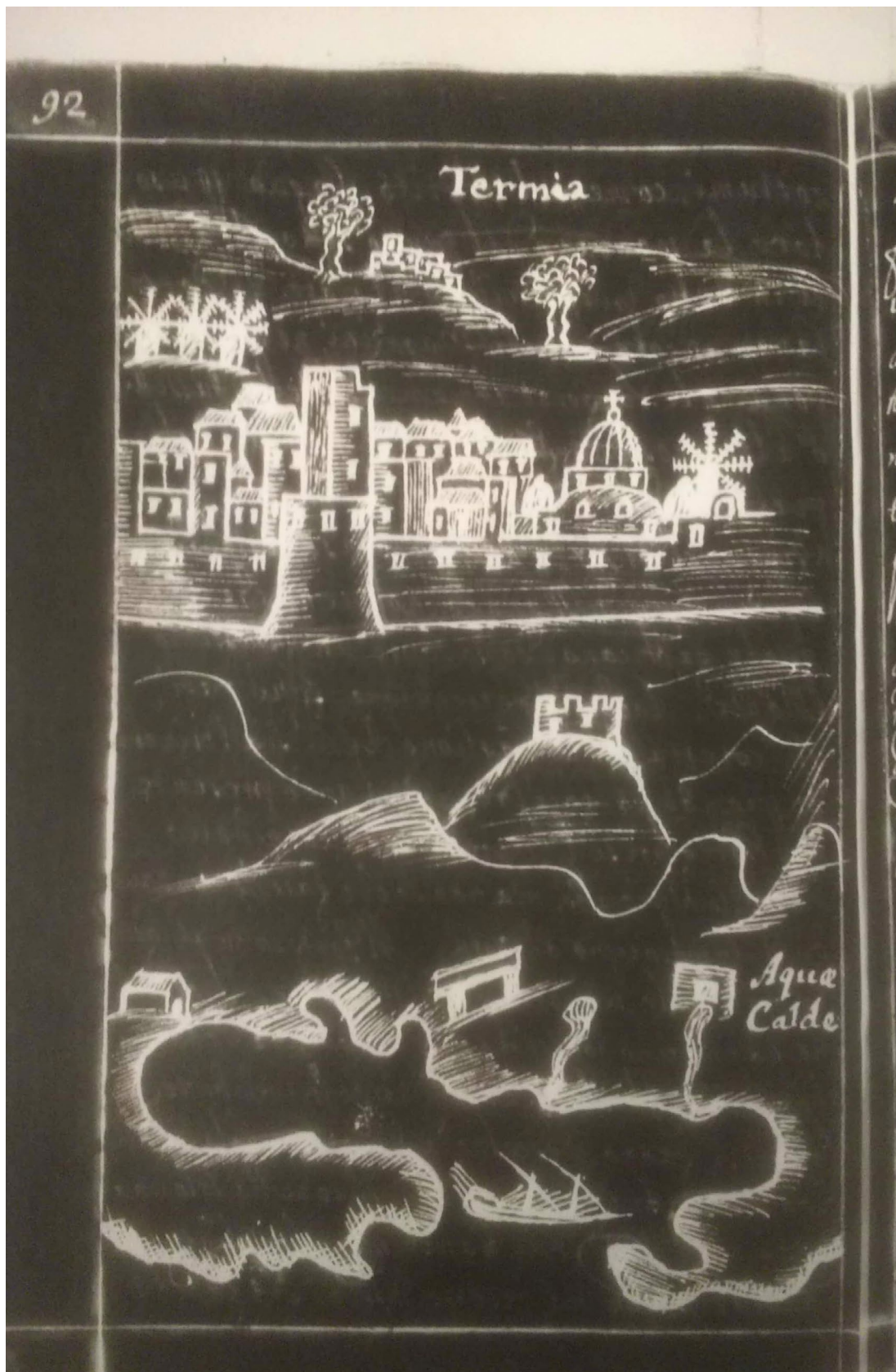


Fig. 43. Depiction of Messaria (Chora) in Lupazzolo's *Breve Discorso* (British Library, MS 557, fo 92)

The map does not have a north pointer but given that its outline is obviously traced from Bordone's charts we could assume that the orientation is the same. A ruined castle that apparently corresponds to the abandoned city of the text is pictured on top of a steep mountain. However, this mountain town, which is apparently Oria, is drawn at the southern tip of the island and not in the north as expected. The main town is also clearly misplaced on the south-east coast. But the drawing itself is so detailed and accurate that, despite its wrong position on the map, the site can easily be identified with present-day Chora (Messaria). The church of Sotira with its big dome still dominates the town's skyline and the four windmills, three on a hill to the east of the settlement and one in the west, opposite to the Sotira church, are also extant today.

Finally, the smaller settlement to the northeast of Messaria is presumably the one Lupazzolo mentions as '*Mesi*' in the text. This place name cannot be attributed to any contemporary site nor is it among the names of the now-lost villages that are mentioned by Vallindas.³⁰¹ The settlement's position on the map is not a safe indicator either given the map's inaccuracy.³⁰² It is possible that there was once a settlement with that name that is now forgotten or else Mesi could have been an abbreviation of Messaria that confused Lupazzolo who actually meant to describe another village.³⁰³ The hot springs and a church, presumably Agios Loukas, are again shown by the west coast.

Almost the same information can be gathered from the drawing in the *Breve Discorso* which seems to be a zoomed in version of the *Isolario* map (**Fig. 43**). The spatial proportions here are completely distorted, however, Messaria is pictured in even greater detail.³⁰⁴ The tower on the mountain on the foreground, can either be Pyrgos, the Hellenistic tower to the north of Chora or an abstract representation of Oria. The village Mesi features also in the background. A building (a church?), the hot springs

³⁰¹ Vallindas (1882), p. 50.

³⁰² A few years later, the name Mesi appears also in J. Thevenot's writings who directly copies Lupazzolo and in one of F. Piacenza's maps who is known to combine information from previous sources with imaginary elements. Both accounts cannot be trusted.

³⁰³ Kythnos' other settlement is Syllakas or Dryopida and it is built in a protected valley to the south. The foundation date of the village is not known, however, in the sources it is first mentioned by Tournefort in 1700, Tournefort (2003), p. 362; see also the Appendix.

³⁰⁴ For Messaria see section 3.2.2.

1694: Jacobus Robijn, portolan chart

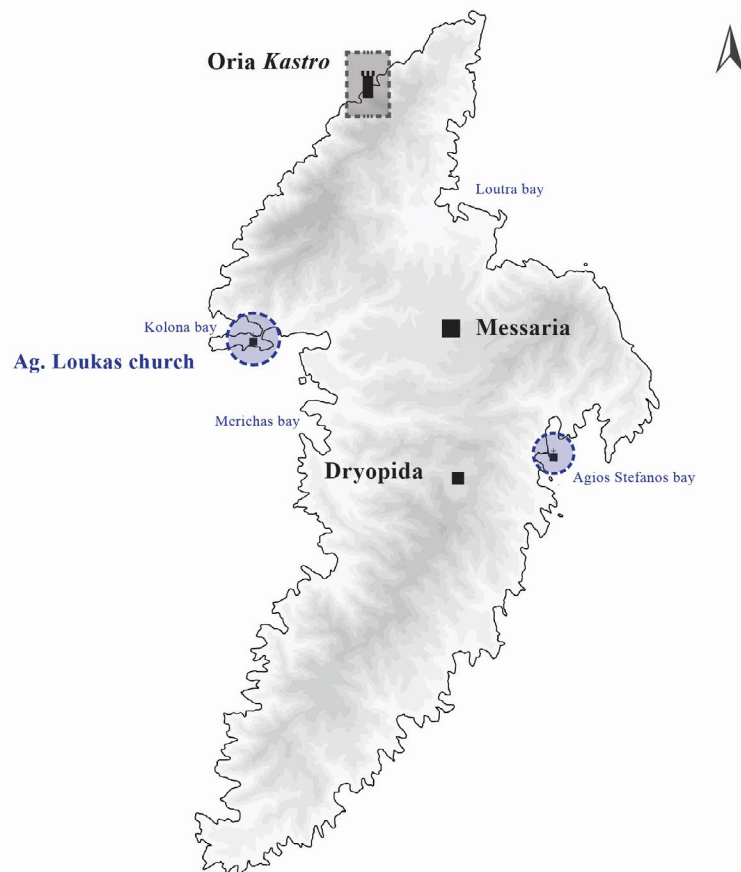
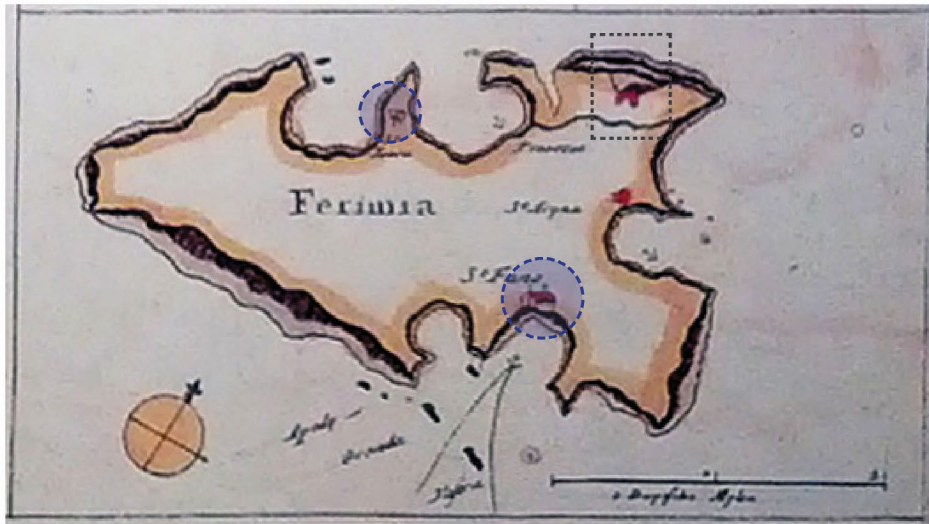


Fig. 44. Robijn's map (Sfyroeras, Abramea and Asdraxas 1985, p. 146) in comparison to the actual map of Kythnos

and the antiquities of Vryokastro³⁰⁵ are shown by a big bay, probably Kolona or Apokrousi. The ship at the entrance of the bay most likely indicates it as a port or a good anchoring spot.

Lupazzolo's unusually detailed account is followed by the generic work of **Marco Boschini** (1602-1681) that was published in 1658 in Venice. Although in the text Boschini does not clarify the capital's location, on the map Termia is placed on the south-east coast as usual.³⁰⁶ However, it seems that Boschini was based on Sonetti's work published almost a century before. Other than Boschini's vague account there are a few reports from the end of the 17th and the beginning of the 18th century that do not offer any new information. Some are mere copies of earlier narratives, while others combine knowledge drawn from earlier sources with completely imaginary elements. At any rate, they deviate from our period of study and will not be discussed in length (see Appendix).

An exception, however, should be made for the portolan chart of the Dutch Jacobus Robijn, that was published in 1694.³⁰⁷ Kythnos is referred to as Ferimia and unlike other islands, it is depicted whole (**Fig. 44**). Robijn marks a total of three anchorages, the bay of Agios Stefanos being the most notable. Apart from the harbours, four buildings are depicted on the map: a church under the name *St. Fano* at the bay of Agios Stefanos, another church at the bay of Kolona, a building at Loutra and finally, despite being abandoned for more than a century, *Oria Kastro* is shown on top of a hill on the north-west coast of the island. Unfortunately, the place names that accompany the sites are illegible. Whether the Dutch mapmaker refers to the ruins of the *Kastro* or simply copies earlier sources remains unknown.

³⁰⁵ The table-shaped drawing to the left of the hot springs probably represents an ancient, marble sarcophagus that was found in the area of Vryokastro.

³⁰⁶ Boschini (1658), pp. 34-35.

³⁰⁷ Jacobus Robijn was a Dutch hydrographer, painter and publisher, who lived and worked in Amsterdam. His works include the *Zee Atlas* that was first published in 1683 and the *Atlas de la Mer* (1696), Sfyroeras, Abracea and Asdraxas (1985), p. 146.

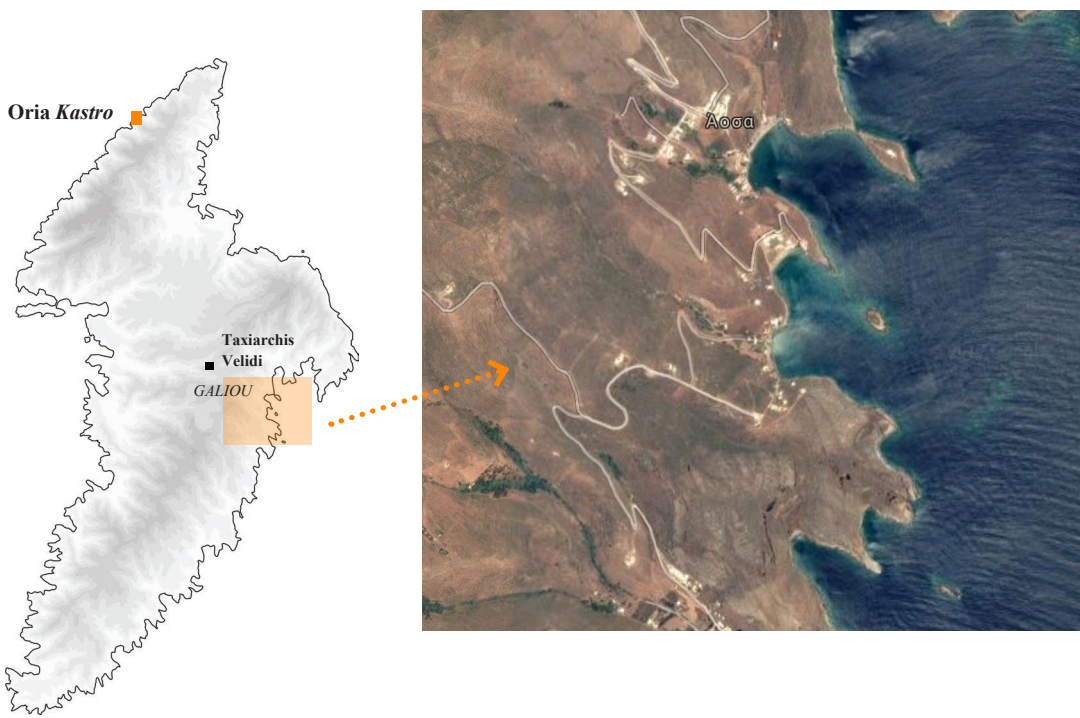


Fig. 45. Kouri and Ag. Stefanos bay on the south-east coast, possible location of Fermentia

3.2 The landscape of medieval Kythnos

Despite the chronological gaps and the conflicting information, the existence and demise of Oria *Kastro* can be sufficiently documented from the travellers' accounts. However, their reports show that the landscape of medieval Kythnos may have been more complicated than the straight narrative of the traditional sources that want Oria to be the island's main and only settlement, replaced in the late 16th century by Messaria. Apparently, Kythnos had a network of settlements and hamlets, churches, monasteries and anchorages that changed depending on the historical circumstances and the needs of the inhabitants (Fig. 54). In the context of this study it is not possible to determine each site's foundation or abandonment date, however, an attempt will be made to document their existence and determine their chronological sequence in relation to Oria.

3.2.1 Fermentia *Kastro*

The sources

Oria was Kythnos' main settlement until the end of the 14th century,³⁰⁸ however, the accounts of the 15th and 16th-century travellers suggest the existence of another castle located near the south-east coast. That fortified town was the namesake of the island (Thermia, Fermentia, or Fermina) and it was referred to as its capital. If we set aside the possibility of an unfortunate error found in Buondelmonti's map that was then copied by his successors, we could be positive that this *kastro* existed sometime between the 15th and late 16th or early 17th century. Amongst the travellers' accounts those of Buondelmonti, Sonetti, Piri Reis and Antonio di Millo are widely regarded as relatively trustworthy. Piri Reis's account, in particular, is thought to be the most accurate and reliable one. According to his writings in the early 16th century, there were two castles on Kythnos with Oria possibly predating that of Fermentia, as he specifically states the latter was: '...the castle that was built to the southeast...' suggesting that it could have been relatively new founded at the time of his visit.

³⁰⁸ Judging from Martoni's 1395's account, see Piccirilo (2003), pp. 133-135.

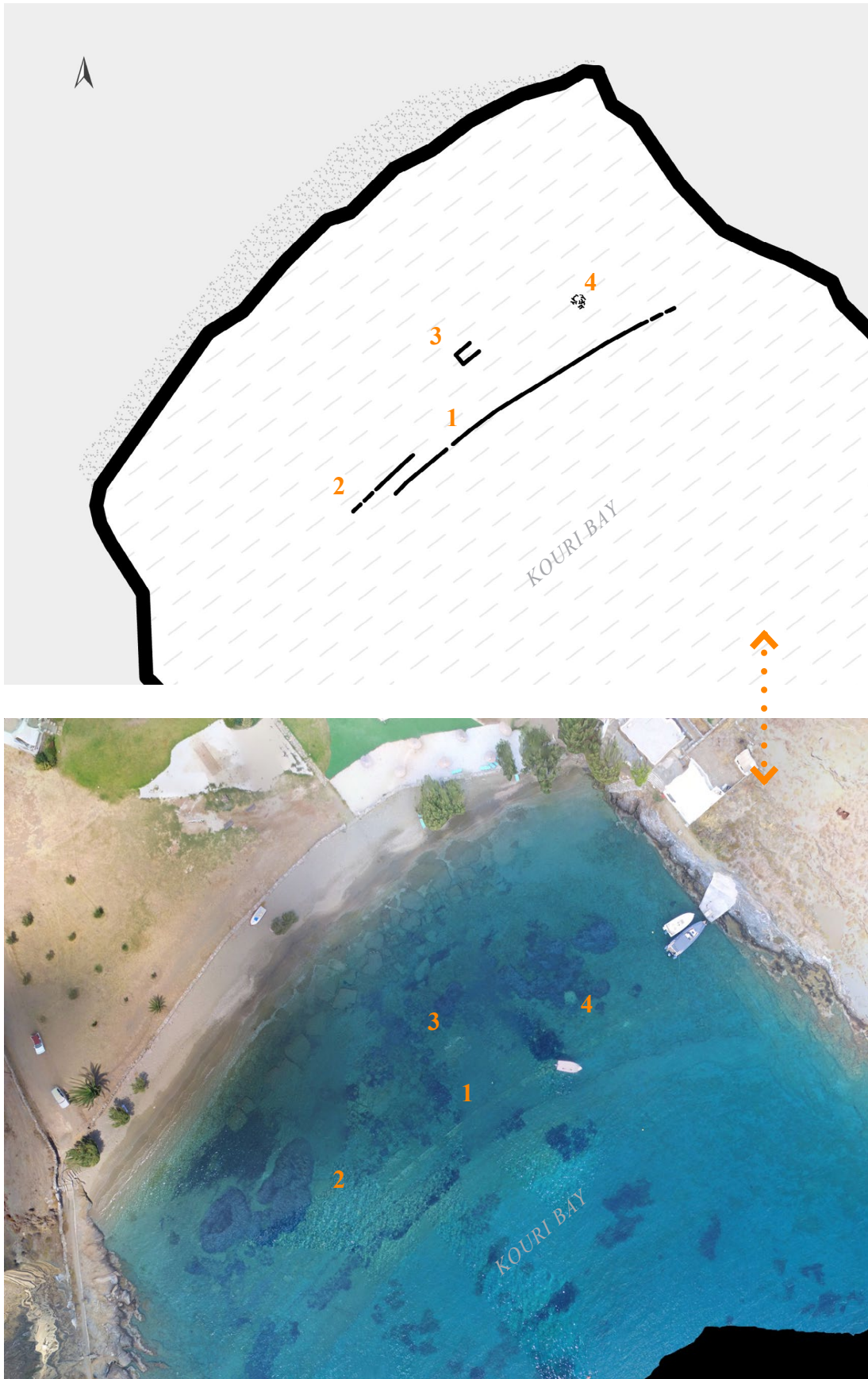


Fig. 46. Aerial view and sketch of the sunken ruins in Kouri bay on the south-east coast

The 17th century accounts are ambiguous, and most likely they refer to Kythnos' current capital Messaria. From the 18th century on Fermentia officially disappears from all written sources. On the contrary, reports of the Oria *Kastro* ruins are to be found in all travellers' accounts, starting with that of the famous French botanist J.P. Tournefort in 1700. Tournefort also drew a remarkably accurate map of the island, sadly without marking its settlements or any place names (**Fig. 55**). In the 19th and early 20th century, Tournefort was followed by many others like J. X. Portier, M. Lacroix, L. Ross, A. Buchon etc. who visited Kythnos for various reasons. Some of them left us lengthy descriptions of Oria (section 4.1), however, there is not a single indication of Fermentia. Vallindas is also silent on this issue and even Gerola who meticulously recorded the island's Latin past, fails to mention the possibility of the city's existence. The only modern hint that Fermentia might have actually existed comes from a book of folk tales, where some of the older locals tell stories of a sunken Venetian city and port located in a bay on the south-east coast, i.e. the area where Fermentia was depicted centuries ago. They add that some of the city's ruins can still be seen at the bottom of the sea.³⁰⁹ So, did the town of Fermentia ever exist and if so, what happened to it and when?

The field investigation

On all the maps Fermentia is depicted more or less at the same place, i.e. on the south-east coast, at the end of a big bay and is visible from the sea. Taking into account the mooring instructions of Piri Reis and the Greek portolan and comparing them to the geophysical characteristics of the area, the location of the town can be narrowed down to the area around the bay of Agios Stefanos. Fermentia should have been in a radius around this area, in order to be considered lowland, as noted

³⁰⁹ *‘Ηρχανε λέει κατακτητές από τη Βενετιά να χτίσουνε την πολιτεία τους στο νησί μας. Διαλέξανε ένα αμμονδάκι, του Κουρή, κι εκεί χτίζανε τείχη και σπίτια. Όμως οι ντόπιοι επαναστατήσανε, δε τσε θέλανε και τσε διώξανε. Αυτοί μετά πήανε και χτίσανε την πολιτεία τους απέναντι, στη Σύρα, και την είπανε Ντελαγκράτσα. Αφού φύανε από τα Θερμιά, περάσανε κάτι χρόνια και η πόλη που ‘χανε αρχινήσει να χτίζουν εδώ, βούλιαξε. Για αυτό, άμα πας στον Κουρή, θα δεις τα ντουβάρια που είναι στον πάτο της θάλασσας.’*, i.e. ‘There came conquerors from Venice to build their town on our island. They chose a small bay at Kouri and there they built walls and houses. But the locals rose against them and send them away. They (the Venetians) went to Syros and they built their town there and called it Dellagrazia. Years passed after them leaving Thermia, and the town they have started building sunk. Therefore, if you go to Kouri you will see walls on the bottom of the sea.’, Venetoulas (2007), p. 23.

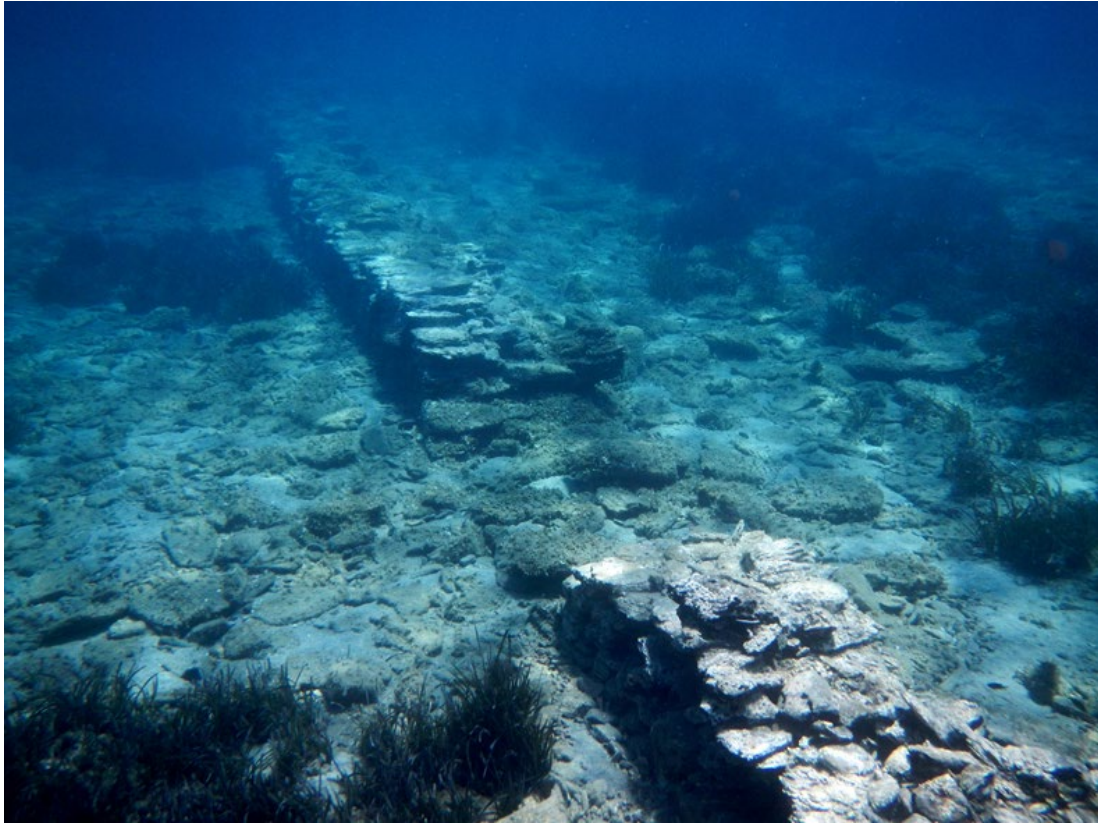


Fig. 47. The possible gate in the middle of the sunken wall



Fig. 48. The small building (church?) to the northeast of the gate

in the sources, and remain visible to the ships approaching the island (**Fig. 45**). Yet, initial observations did not reveal any obvious built remains. Considering the local stories of the sunken ruins, however, a second underwater investigation was undertaken at the bay of Agios Stefanos and the nearby bay of Kouri. In Kouri remains of buildings were located close to the shore, in an average depth of 2.50 to 3.00 m, and a photographic survey was carried out.

As shown in **Fig. 46**, the entrance of the bay was once blocked by a thick wall that ran with direction from northeast to southwest (**1**). The wall protrudes now less than one meter from the bottom surface. Its upper part is flat with no signs of crenellation, while an opening, presumably a gate, is still visible in its middle (**Fig. 47**). The area between the wall and the shore is full of indistinguishable heaps of stones and seaweed that has grown in-between the rubble (**4**). To the northeast of the gate parallel to the wall, however, there is a small building that is preserved in a relatively better condition (**3**). The building has collapsed in on itself, but what seems to be an apse to the east could possibly identify it as a church. It was a single-*na*ve, seemingly vaulted chapel with dimensions approximately 5.00 x 3.00 m (**Fig. 48**). To the southwest of the gate, there is a segment of another wall that runs parallel to the outer enceinte for some meters before disappearing into the sand (**2**).

On the other side of the wall, towards the open sea, there are no obvious manmade structures. The opening though suggests that the water did not reach the wall. The gate would have led to a beach and some sort of port facilities. When the sea level rose, the wall and the area behind it were covered by water. However, what we can see nowadays is only the upper part of the walls as the rest is covered by sand. The level where the ground would once have been lies at least 1.00-1.50 m lower. That would mean that the water level rose a minimum of 4.50 m. Such an increase though cannot be interpreted by the regular rise-rate of the sea since the Late Middle Ages.³¹⁰ It seems that the land there submerged and the reasons behind it should be sought to a more localised phenomenon, e.g. a strong earthquake in the Cyclades region. There are no clear traces of the wall continuing on the land on either side of the bay. Nevertheless, it is possible that any remains were destroyed or covered by

³¹⁰ According to geological studies, the sea level in the area of the ancient port on the west coast of Kythnos has risen 2.00 m since Antiquity, Mazarakis (1998), p.374.

modern structures. The beach itself was recently occupied by a hotel and has been radically remodelled, so any material evidence and ruins of buildings would have been swept away.

Conclusions and speculations

The surviving built remains in the bay of Kouri are not sufficient to justify beyond doubt the existence of a fortified town that according to the descriptions was at least the size of Oria. But their discovery is very important because it proves that there was indeed a fortified settlement or a port there that was overlooked by modern historiography. It confirms the travellers' claims as well as the truth of the old stories. Whether Kouri was the location of Fermentia *Kastro* or just its outlet to the sea is not clear yet. It is certainly not unusual for *kastra* of the Latin period to be built so close to the sea level, e.g. Paroikia (5 m) and Naoussa (7 m) on Paros or the *kastra* of Andros (5 m) and Mykonos (10 m).³¹¹ However, in the same book of folktale, there are testimonies of a place on the hills behind the bay of Agios Stefanos, called Galiou. The locals claim that there were once walls there equipped with gun holes and ruins of houses that have all disappeared now.³¹²

Galiou is not far from the area where Fermentia supposedly was. A quick investigation on the hill slopes overlooking the sea has revealed piles of stones and scree and some remains of buildings incorporated in post-medieval terraces and drystone pasture boundary walls. There are also two old, though recently refurbished, churches whose form and floor plan are very similar to those of Oria (single-aisled and barrel vaulted built with the corbelling technique). On the basis of some preliminary observations of the scattered potsherds, however, the occupation of this particular area does not appear to continue after the 8th century AD, although there is also some evidence for the 13th century. In any case, firm conclusions cannot be drawn without further

³¹¹ For the location of the Latin *kastra* see also section 9.3.1 (Table 05).

³¹² 'Πολεμιστρες είχε κι ένας τοίχος σ' ένα χωράφι κοντά στα δικά μας, στον Γαλειού. Έλλε ο παππούς μου ότι άμα βγαίνανε πειρατές στον Αι-Στέφανο, προχωρούσανε ρέμα ρέμα να βγούνε τα χωριά και να τα κυριέψουνε. Μόλις όμως φτάνανε στον Γαλειού, τους βαρούσανε με γκράδες οι δικοί μας πίσω απ' τις πολεμιστρες.', i.e. 'There was a wall with gun holes in a field in Galiou. My grandfather used to say that pirates landing at Agios Stefanos bay would go up the ravine in search of the island's villages. When they reached Galiou, however, the locals would fire against them from this defensive wall.' Venetoulis (2007), p. 59.

investigation. It is quite possible that a settlement was located in the wider area having the fortified bay of Kouri as its port.³¹³ The once Catholic (?) monastery of Taxiarchis of Velidi and the lands of the Latin bishopric are also close by (**Fig. 26**).³¹⁴

The dating of Fermentia is also problematic. The chronology and the reasons for its founding and subsequent abandonment remain obscure, as the evidence at hand is not enough to form a solid argument. However, if we combine the data from the sources with known historical events and consider what was happening around the same time on the neighbouring islands³¹⁵ we could come up with the following scenario: Oria was the principal settlement of Kythnos, at least until the late 14th century, as the sources claim. However, whether due to its remote location or its lack of a proper port the Gozzadini decided to build another fortified town on the easily accessible south-eastern coast. Other than being close to the hinterland and the island's agricultural production base this new location offered an excellent and protected port. So, sometime in the 15th century Fermentia became the new capital and thrived for about 100 years.

The successive captures of the island by the Ottomans in the 16th century, first in 1537 and then again in 1566 and 1571 would have put an end to the town's prosperity. The eruption of the powerful Santorini volcano and the earthquake that took place in 1570-73 could have been the reason for Fermentia's further demise and final abandonment. A natural catastrophe could also account for the submerged ruins. Especially, the 1650 eruption of the volcano is known to have caused great damage and a tsunami that affected all Cycladic islands.³¹⁶ Kythnos' east coast would surely have been susceptible to a tidal wave coming in from Santorini.

³¹³ The possibility for Fermentia to coincide with Messaria, the present-day Chora of Kythnos was also examined. According to Vallindas, Messaria was a small peasant settlement fortified in the late 16th century after the fall of Oria (see section 3.2.2). Although it is not impossible for the fortifications to have been built about a century earlier, the settlement of Messaria is located on an inland plateau that is not visible from the sea level, which is a trait of Fermentia that all accounts seem to agree on.

³¹⁴ Vallindas (1896), p. 47.

³¹⁵ *Kastra* were erected or expanded in the 15th and 16th centuries in several Cycladic islands, see **Table 05**.

³¹⁶ Thanks to the accounts of several travellers of the time we know that the volcano eruption and the earthquake of Santorini in 1650 was felt all over the Aegean region: 'The volcanic ash reached Asia Minor covering the leaves of the trees. [...] The tidal wave that was created reached a height of 30 m at the west coast of Patmos and 27 m at the east coast. In Sikinos the sea moved 180 m ashore. In Kea the ships that were sailing by were driven ashore and in Crete many ships were cut off from their anchorages. In Santorini itself, a lot of houses were destroyed, and the vaulted roofs collapsed in more than 200. The vibration was felt all the way to Constantinople.', Papazachos and Papazachou (1999), pp. 249-250.

Although a town in the southeast continues to be depicted on some 17th-century maps, the last reliable mention of Fermentia is that of Antonio Millo in 1590. In Lupazzolo's 1638 account the main settlement of the island is undoubtedly Messaria. As mentioned above, it is unclear which site the peculiar village of Mesi corresponds to, but the fact that it lies at the spot where Fermentia is usually depicted could be a coincidence given the map's inaccuracy. So, Kythnos' second castle most likely ceased to exist around the 1600s. After its abandonment, the town's easily accessible location would have enabled the reuse of the building material by the inhabitants, a fact that could potentially explain why Fermentia is not mentioned by the later travellers or by any of the scholars that studied the history of the island. In any case, this scenario cannot be anything more than just a hypothesis until proper archaeological excavations and field surveys are conducted or a historical document that concretely confirms the town's existence and location is found.

3.2.2 Other lost or undocumented medieval sites

Messaria

Messaria, also known as Chora, Thermia or Kythnos is the modern-day main settlement and administrative centre of the island. It is located on a plateau in the northern hinterland surrounded by fertile fields and pastures. Its history and evolution remain largely unknown as the site has not been studied yet. An in-depth study falls out of the scope of this thesis; however, a brief overview of the settlement's historical course is deemed necessary because of its relation to Oria *Kastro* and its importance for medieval Kythnos. There are barely any sources regarding Messaria, so the founding date of the settlement is unknown. In *Kythniaka*,³¹⁷ Vallindas says that it was probably founded sometime in the Early Byzantine times, but in the *History of Kythnos*, he claims that the settlement was created during the *Latinokratia* to house

³¹⁷ The Kythnian scholar bases this dating hypothesis on an inscription found on a marble plate in an old church (Panagia tou Dedazou), in Chora, Vallindas (1882), pp. 31-32. The plate bearing a cross and the date 1075 has since been moved from its original place and is nowadays kept along with other *spolia* in the ruins of Catholicos church. Gerola saw that inscription too and although he gives a nice drawing of it, he questions its authenticity, attributing it to the 17th century or even later, Gerola (1926), p. 16 [58].

the serfs who worked the Latin lords' lands in this area.³¹⁸ In any case, Messaria was a small rural settlement until the late 16th century, when the capital was moved there after the fall of Oria. According to the local tradition, the survivors from Oria erected first a small *kastro* and a church dedicated to Agia Triada (the current metropolis). Gradually, the town expanded outside the *kastro* walls towards the east and west.³¹⁹

Before the first half of the 17th century, Messaria is absent from all written sources. Gerola only mentions the bell of the Taxiarchis church that bears an inscription of 1516 and offers thus a possible *terminus ante quem* for its erection.³²⁰ Lupazzolo in 1638 is the first to give a brief description and a depiction of the settlement.³²¹ It seems that by the time of his visit the town had already a respectable size with about 300 houses and 15 well-built churches (**Figs 50, 51**). The illustrations, although a bit crude, offer a unique glimpse of the Late Medieval Messaria. Especially, the drawing in the *Breve Discorso* offers a detailed panoramic view of the settlement from the north. Although there are no obvious signs of fortifications nowadays, it appears that the 17th-century Messaria was protected by a curtain wall with loopholes that was reinforced by a circular tower or bastion. Right behind the bastion there was a tall rectangular tower (**1**). The tower seems to have had at least three storeys. The last two had big rectangular openings, which indicates that they were used as a residence.

It is possible that this tower was the residence of the Gozzadini that according to Vallindas was built in the centre of the settlement by the church of the Panagia of the *Kastro*.³²² This building was demolished in the 1850s to be replaced by a house of the neoclassical plan. On the other hand, the tower could also be the only depiction of the so-called tower of the Frenchman Bonet which was also demolished in 1847.³²³ This second tower is mentioned by Vallindas as a possible Gozzadini establishment erected in the east part of Messaria. He adds, however, that the local tradition

³¹⁸ Vallindas (1896), pp. 41-42.

³¹⁹ Vallindas (1882), pp. 30-31; Venetoulas (2007), p. 41.

³²⁰ Gerola (1926), pp. 33 [75]-34 [76].

³²¹ British Library, Lansdowne MS 792, fo74-75 and MS 577, fo92-94.

³²² Vallindas (1896), pp. 31-32. It is worth noticing that the first two churches that were allegedly built after the relocation of the population to Messaria are dedicated to the Virgin and the Holy Trinity same as the two main churches of Oria *Kastro*, Panagia Eleousa and Agia Triada (see also section 6.2.2). Possibly it was deliberately done to offer the people a sense of connection and continuity.

³²³ Gerola (1926), p. 39 [81].



Fig. 49. Current view of Messaria from the southwest



Fig. 50. Messaria in Lupazzolo's *'Breve Discorso'* (British Library, MS 577, fo 33)



Fig. 51. Messaria in Lupazzolo's *'Isolario'* (British Library, MS 792, fo 74)

attributes its erection to a French pirate named Bonet, around 1700. In either case, Lupazzolo's depiction proves that the fortified residence was already extant by the early 17th century which means that it could have been built by the Gozzadini.

At the west end of the town, Lupazzolo accurately pictures the big, domed church of Sotira (2).³²⁴ At least another two smaller domed churches are depicted on either side of Sotira. The one to the left could be Agia Triada, but the other cannot be safely identified with a specific contemporary building.³²⁵ The windmill opposite to the church still exists today (3). Finally, most houses appear to have had two storeys and were covered either by pitched or flat roofs. Messaria is also mentioned by several travellers at the end of the 17th century (e.g. Thevenot, Sebastiani, Tournefort), but their accounts do not offer any new information. At any rate, Lupazzolo's description shows that by 1638 it was a fully evolved, fortified town and the island's capital for a considerable amount of time, presumably since the 1570s.

The lost villages

Some more information on the form of medieval Kythnos can be drawn from the 19th-century work of Vallindas. Based mostly on oral tradition and old place names the local historian states that there were several medieval settlements on the island that are lost nowadays. To the village of Komi that is also depicted on the 1550's map of Thevet, Vallindas adds the settlements of Koukounas, Theotokos, Megalo Chorio, Chordakia, as well as a small hamlet called Hellinika, in the area of Agios Ioannis on the east coast that was probably related to the exploitation of iron mines in the region.³²⁶ The village of Koukounas (Apano and Kato) was in the north-eastern part of Kythnos, not far from Oria *Kastro* (Fig. 54). Vallindas assumes that it was a Byzantine settlement that was deserted after the fall of Oria when all inhabitants

³²⁴ According to Lupazzolo, Sotira was built in 1638 at the expenses of the Bishop's Vicar. However, the church bears an inscription commemorating the name of said Vicar, Ioannis Vallindas, and the year 1633. Vallindas too says that it was built in 1633 on top an older church of Agioi Anargiri, Vallindas (1882), p. 34.

³²⁵ The church of Agios Sabbas was already extant by 1638, however, it too lies to the east of Sotira and, contrary to the depicted churches that seem to have domes, it is barrel-vaulted.

³²⁶ Vallindas (1882), pp. 50-51.



Fig. 52. Thetokos church



Fig. 53. Panagia Stratolatissa church

gathered in Messaria.³²⁷ At least until the mid-19th century, he adds, the remains of about 100 structures were still visible there.

Theotokos is mentioned as one of the villages that were destroyed by pirate raids during the 15th century.³²⁸ Today there is an area to the southwest of Messaria in the valley leading to the bay of Episkopi that bears that name. At this location Vallindas notes the recent discovery of the ruins of an anonymous hamlet. Although there are currently no obvious remains of structures, there is a ruined church described as a Byzantine basilica by Mazarakis (**Fig. 52**).³²⁹ The building is listed due to the incorporation of a large number of *spolia* (possibly Early Christian) to its body.³³⁰ Although there are no clear indications of the church's erection date (to my knowledge it has not yet been studied or published) it is possible that it was once part of the now-lost settlement.

Megalo Chorio lay in the southern part of the island, about one hour away from the contemporary village of Dryopida (Syllakas). The place name still remains, and there are stories of how the people ploughing their fields there would come upon 'ancient marble stones'.³³¹ However, even since Vallindas' time most built remains were gone.³³² The only clue that may confirm the approximate location of the village is the church of Panagia Stratolatissa (**Fig. 53**). The church, a double-naved, domed basilica, is part of a bigger complex that was once a monastery.³³³ The monastery is not dated but judging from the marble columns and other *spolia* that are incorporated in the walls and scattered all around, it could have been built on top of an Early Christian church. Some preliminary observations on the scattered potsherds in the church's environs that date to 6th, 7th and early 8th century AD seem to corroborate the hypothesis of an early Byzantine settlement in this area. Whether that site was indeed Megalo Chorio is not yet clear.

³²⁷ He does not present any dating references.

³²⁸ Vallindas (1896), p. 60.

³²⁹ Mazarakis (2019), p. 35, Mazarakis (1998), p. 50, n.9.

³³⁰ YA ΥΠΠΙΟ/ΑΡΧ/Β1/Φ27/37962/993/8-8-1995 - ΦΕΚ 768/Β/6-9-1995

³³¹ Ventoulias (2007), p. 34.

³³² Vallindas (1896), pp. 43-44. A quick field investigation at the wider area did not reveal any structure ruins.

³³³ Vallindas (1882), p. 39.

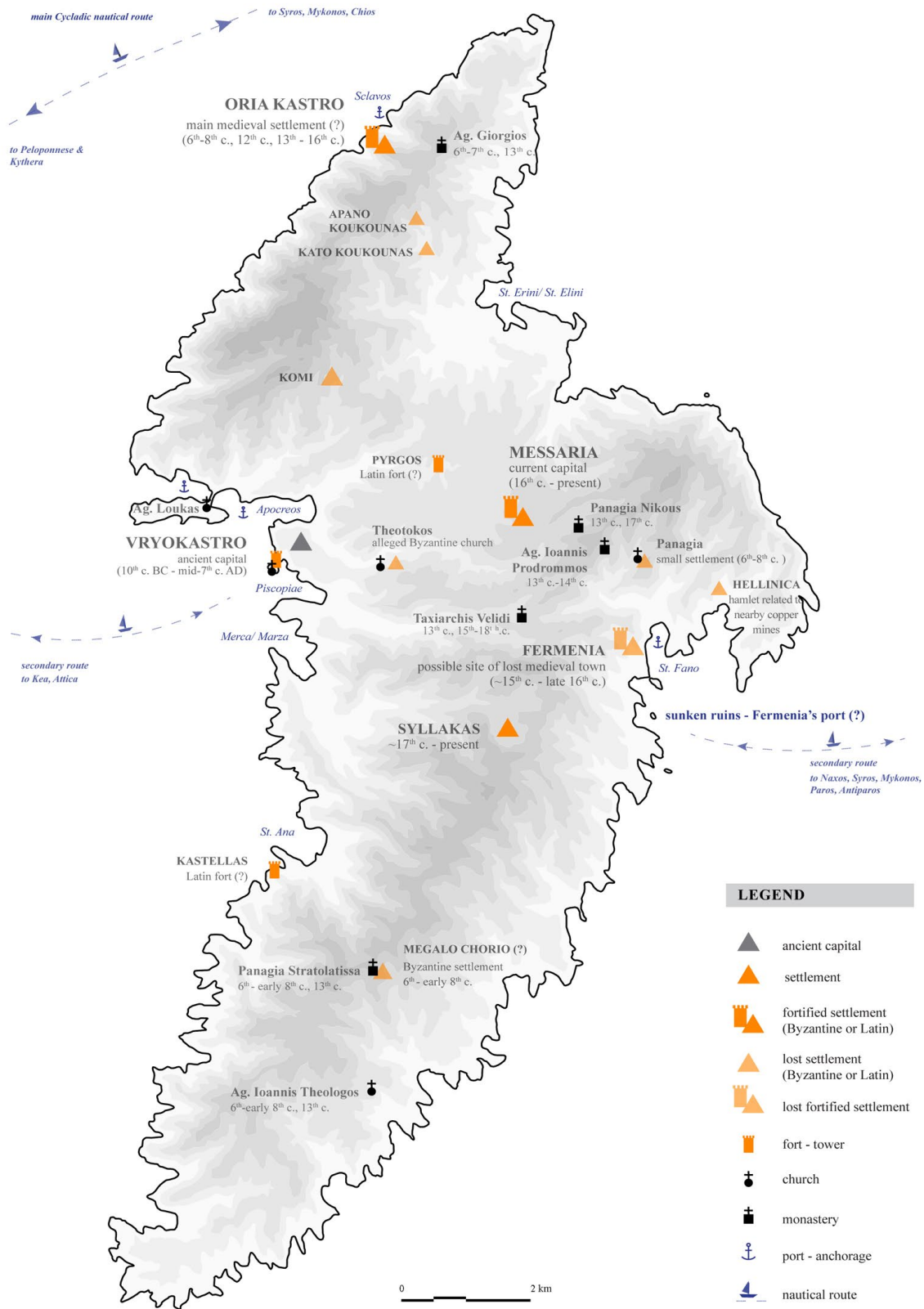


Fig. 54. Medieval Kythnos (6th-17th century) according to the sources and preliminary surface observations

Finally, on the south-west coast by the bay that Millo mentions as *St. Ana*, there is a cape called Kastellas. According to Vallindas, it was named after a small fort that was built there during the *Latinokratia* to protect the south parts of Kythnos.³³⁴ A field survey carried out by the Byzantine Ephorate identified there remains that belonged to an early Archaic acropolis.³³⁵ It is possible that the ancient fortifications were also used during the Middle Ages. At any rate, the locals used the walls by the sea until the late 18th century to fight off pirate boats that attempted to come ashore there.³³⁶

3.2.3 Medieval place-names

The various names of Kythnos during different historical periods were discussed in section 2.2. Equally interesting, however, are the medieval place names of the island which can be a valuable source of information, as their study can often reveal or confirm the existence of lost settlements. Whether or not they were preserved until the present day can also attest to each site's history and its impact on the local memory and tradition.

Oria Kastro

The medieval fortified town of Kythnos is today known by many different names i.e. *Oria Kastro*, *Kastro Katakefalou*, *Paleokastro* or just *Kastro*. Most Early Modern travellers, starting with Tournefort in 1700, would call the site **Paleokastro**, which means old castle in Greek. This name is very commonly used all over Greece for old fortresses and as Buondelmonti's work proves the term was in use in the Archipelago already since the early 15th century (see section 9.1.3). So, it is possible that after its abandonment in the late 16th century or maybe even earlier, after the founding of Fermentia in the southeast, the old castle of Kythnos acquired the name *Paleokastro*. The name **Katakefalou** derives from the nearby cape at the northern tip of the island that goes by the same name. Vallindas was the first to call the castle by that name

³³⁴ Vallindas (1882), p. 51.

³³⁵ Chatzianastasiou (1998), p. 261; Mazarakis (2019), p. 28.

³³⁶ Venetoulas (2007), p. 59.

in his 19th-century work *Κυθνιακά*. **Oria Kastro** which is the name most frequently used, means the Maiden's castle in Greek (*Κάστρο της Ωραίας* or *της Ωριάς*). It is a name quite common for medieval castles in Greece but also in Turkey (*Kiz Kalesi*) and in Albania. There are at least 18 more castles or fortified settlements in Greece that go by that name; four on the islands³³⁷ and 14 in the mainland.³³⁸ Nevertheless, there is no other *Oria Kastro* in the Cyclades.

To my knowledge, other than the mere recording of the stories, there is no comprehensive study on the *Oria kastro* of Greece concerning their history, their form or the reasons of their association with the fair maiden myth. However, it seems that most *Oria* castles, especially those of the mainland, have certain characteristics in common: they were built (anew or on top of Middle Byzantine fortifications) in the 13th century by the Crusaders on naturally fortified locations and they all had a troubled history, changing hands many times, until finally they were captured violently by the Ottoman Turks in the second half of the 15th century. Although originally known by a different name, this was gradually forgotten during the time of the Turkish occupation when these fortresses became related to the myth of the fair maiden and were renamed after her. That myth was then embedded in the local tradition of each region in the form of oral stories and traditional songs. In the late 19th century many of these stories were collected and put in writing by local and foreign historians and folklorists, who saved them from the oblivion of time.³³⁹

All over Greece there are several local variations of the *Oria* story and ballad that all have certain features in common: Usually, the mighty *Oria Kastro* is held by a noblewoman, either a princess or a queen, despite the best efforts of the Turks who besiege it for years. Then a Turk disguised either as a pregnant woman or as a monk pleads to be let in, the princess believes him and opens the gates. The castle is then at last overrun and the princess usually kills herself to avoid capture.³⁴⁰ According to the folklorist N. Politis,³⁴¹ the spatial dispersion of the *Oria* myth is evidence

³³⁷ *Oria kastro* are found on the islands of Thasos, Cephalonia, Kythnos, Lemnos and Chios.

³³⁸ *Oria kastro* are found in the regions of Thrace, Macedonia, Thessaly, Sterea Ellada and Peloponnese.

³³⁹ E.g. Politis (1904), pp. 17, 50, 51; Ross (1840), pp. 111-113.

³⁴⁰ Politis (1914), pp. 88-89.

³⁴¹ Nikolaos Politis (1852-1921) was a Greek scholar and professor at the University of Athens, who is considered to be the forefather of the discipline of folklore in Greece.

that it derives from a much earlier prototype. He adds, however, that identifying the fortress the original story refers to is very difficult, given that the relation of the myth to true historical events is highly doubtful.³⁴² According, however, to another point of view the story may originally have been based on the sack of Amorium (near modern Emirdağ, Turkey) that took place in 838 AD. The characteristics of the citadel of Amorium seem to be described in a version of the ballad called ‘To *Kastro tis Marous*’.³⁴³

Regardless of the origins and the historical credibility of the myths, *Oria Kastro* of Kythnos, has its own traditional song that relates its tragic fall to the Turks and runs as follows:

Twelve years they fought and fourteen more delayed
Before the walls of Thermia’s tower
One day a Turk, a little Turkish maid,
Dressed as a widow, all in garments black,
Dragged up the hill her weary steps,
And made as though her time was nigh,
That she should be delivered of a child,
‘Open the gate’, she cried; ‘open in haste!’
And the watchman’s daughter, conscious of her plight,
Threw open the portal, and, behold,
A thousand men rushed in, ready for blood!

The translation into English was made by Theodore Bent in his work *The Cyclades: or Life among the Insular Greeks*, when he visited the ruins of the castle in the late 19th century.³⁴⁴ However, Kythnos’ local stories regarding the castle were first

³⁴² In the case of *Oria Kastro* of Kalavrita in Peloponnese, which was one of the most important castles in the region founded by Othon de Tournay in 1208, the story is allegedly related to actual events. Kalavrita castle fell to the Ottomans in 1460 and tradition has it that Catherine Zaccaria, daughter of the last prince of Achaea and wife of the last Despot of Morea Thomas Palaiologos, threw herself from the ramparts when the Turks breached the castle’s defences. Nevertheless, given that in reality after the fall of the Despotate of Morea Catherine fled to Venetian-held Corfu, where she died in 1462, the *Oria* story of Kalavrita is not likely to be the prototype.

³⁴³ Christophilopoulou (1993), p. 249.

³⁴⁴ See also section 4.1

recorded by the German archaeologist Ludwig Ross, who visited the site in 1836. Ross was impressed to find out that there was a long epic poem about Oria, however, as the locals informed him most of the island's eldest inhabitants who knew it by heart had died. Asking around he eventually found an old lady who still remembered the last part of the poem that described the town's fall. Ross recorded these few verses in his diary in Greek, maintaining the local dialect:³⁴⁵

*Σαν της Ωργιάς το κάστρο κάστρο δεν είδα
που 'χει ασημένιες πόρτες κι αργυρά κλειδιά.
Τούρκοι χρόνους δώδεκα το πολεύσανε
και άλλους δεκατέσσαρους δεν εμπορούσανε.
Ένα Τουρκί Τουρκάκι χήρα εγίνηνε, μαύρα φορέθηνε,
ανοίζτε μου και μένα της βαρειόμοιρης,
που 'μαι εγγαστρωμένη και στον μήνα μου.
Της πορταριάς η κόρη εδελεάσθηνε.
Σαν άνοιζ' η πόρτα, χίλιοι εμβήκανε,
κ' όσον να καλανοίξει, δεν εμετριούντανε.*

The version from Kythnos, despite its generic elements, is simpler and more concise compared to those of other castles, maybe because it was part of a much longer epic poem, that according to Ross, related more than just the castle's fall. In addition, in this case, it is not a princess that opens the gates but the daughter of the gate guard. Nevertheless, the critical flaw is once again the defenders' compassion that gives the Turks the opportunity to capture the fortress. The reason why Kythnos' *kastro* was among the castles related to the maiden myth is not known. Was there maybe something in the circumstances of their fall that inspired the local imagination or is the naming of all these fortresses in Greece, Turkey and Albania just a coincidental repetition of a myth with much older origins than the Late Middle Ages? The answer to that would certainly require an in-depth research that falls out of the scope of the present study.

³⁴⁵ Ross (1840), pp. 111-113.

At any rate, what seems certain is that the castle of Kythnos was not known as *Oria Kastro* originally. Only after its capture in the late 16th century was it associated with the fair maiden myth. The first literary source to mention the castle by that name was Ross in the 1840s, followed by I. Ragavis and Bent in the second half of the 19th century. Vallindas, despite basing much of his comprehensive work on local traditions, does not mention this name nor does he relate the respective ballad. Summing up, it seems that all the castle's contemporary names, except maybe from that of Paleokastro, are quite recent. So, what was *Oria Kastro* called when it was a live town and why did its original name get lost to the collective memory of the locals?

The absence of written sources regarding the site during Antiquity and the Byzantine times means that there is no way to know its original name with certainty. It is possible, however, that the settlement was homonymous to the island known as Thermia at least from the 12th century on.³⁴⁶ That was also the case with the ancient capital of Kythnos and judging from the information we have about the time of the Latin occupation, the same might have happened then too. As mentioned, the earliest written records about medieval Kythnos date back to 1278 and come from the Venetian archives. More specifically, there are two acts of the Venetian Republic granting reimbursement to victims of piracy in Greek territory.³⁴⁷ In both cases, it is stated that the incidents in question took place *in portu de Fermeniis*, i.e. in the port of Fermenia. Nonetheless, it is not specified whether the writer refers to the island or the town. It is interesting, however, that the second act gives the name of the harbour, *Sclavus*, which is exactly how the inlet to the north of *Oria Kastro* is still called today. Vallindas mentions **Sclavos** as the town's port too³⁴⁸ and the ruins of a shipshed and other structures on the beach confirm it (section 8.3).

The Jesuit Brother G. Sebastiani who in the years 1666-1667 visited the Cyclades as an emissary of the Pope (*visitatore apostolico*) when describing the present state of Kythnos says that the Latins had only one church dedicated to St. Antonio Abbate in the old town that was called Sclavo.³⁴⁹ Slot in his work about the Catholic church

³⁴⁶ Parthey (1866), p. 300.

³⁴⁷ Tafel and Thomas (1857), pp. 173, 240-241.

³⁴⁸ Vallindas (1882), p. 47.

³⁴⁹ Sebastiani (1687), p. 97.

of Kimolos and the surrounding islands adopts that name when referring to the old town of Kythnos.³⁵⁰ He cites a document of 1667 which I was unable to locate.³⁵¹ In all likelihood, it is Sebastiani's report to the Propaganda.

Nevertheless, it does not seem very likely that the castle was called so. The 1278 document and the modern-day name of the inlet to the north of Oria suggest that, at least from the 13th century on, Sclavos was the name of the harbour and not the town itself. Other than being an inappropriate name for the island's capital (Sclavos meaning slave in Greek), it is not mentioned by any of the other sources. Sebastiani could easily have misunderstood the information of the locals. On the other hand, there is always a possibility that after its destruction the castle acquired, among others, the name of its port Sclavo in contrast to the new capital that was named after the island.

The second older testimony about medieval Kythnos is that of the pilgrim Nicola de Martoni in 1395. In his diary notes Martoni describes his efforts to reach *l'abitato di Termia*, i.e. the settlement of Thermia. Yet again, in this case, it is not quite clear whether the term Termia refers to the island or the fortified settlement.³⁵² The various copies of Buondelmonti's *isolario*³⁵³ that was originally written in the 1420s, all mention in the text a town named Thermia, Termia or Termie that is homonymous to the island. The same inscription accompanies the castle symbol on the map. In the copy of Düsseldorf – which is surely one of the latest as its map of Constantinople shows the city after the Ottoman conquest (minarets added to Agia Sofia church etc.) – a distinction is made between the names of the island and the main town. The island is mentioned as Fermentia while the settlement as Termia. Of course, the question whether or not that town is Oria or the newbuilt Fermentia in the south-east coast still remains unanswered. The same applies to the *isolario* of Germanus (1480), who apparently copies Buondelmonti.

The travellers that came after Buondelmonti and Germanus i.e. Sonetti (1485), Bordone (1528), Millo (1585) etc. all tell of a town that is again called Fermentia,

³⁵⁰ Slot (1974), p. 290.

³⁵¹ PF. Visite e Collegi 32, φ. 122

³⁵² Piccirilo (2003), pp. 133-134.

³⁵³ See section 3.2.1.

Fermene or Termia but is located on the south-east coast and not in the north-west as Oria is. Piri Reis on the other hand, despite mentioning both castles, the one in the southeast and the one in the northwest, does not give their respective names. He only gives the name of the island, Terme or ‘as the infidels call it Fermiyene’.³⁵⁴ The documents from the archives of the Gozzadini family do not give much information on the subject either. Fermentia is often mentioned, but again it is unclear whether the island or its main town is implied.

The information in our possession may be fragmentary, however, a pattern can be recognised. Unlike what was happening in other neighbouring islands, it seems that on Kythnos in every historical period the main town bore the same name as the island (Kythnos, Thermia or Fermentia) for as long as it was in use. After the abandonment of ancient Kythnos and the assumed relocation of the population to the north, the new capital could again have been called Kythnos for a certain time or even directly Thermia after the thermal springs that are nearby. When sometime between the end of the 15th century and the beginning of the 16th century, the new town to the southeast was erected it acquired, in turn, the name of the island which was Fermentia at that time. Finally, after that town’s demise, the contemporary Chora took its place as the island’s main settlement. It was formerly called Messaria, however as Tournefort informs us, at least since the late 17th century it was known as Thermia too.³⁵⁵ Today, the village is accounted for by all four different names: Chora, Messaria, Thermia and Kythnos.

Messaria

The place-name **Messaria** (*Μεσσαριά* or *Μισσαριά*) is very common in the Cyclades but also on other islands and mainland Greece. Its meaning had long been debated among scholars, however, A. Miliarakis proved that it derives from the medieval Latin word *messaria*, *masseria* and *massaria* that means land used for agriculture and the ownership of said land. Therefore, it refers to places that were once fiefs

³⁵⁴ Loupis (1999), p. 368.

³⁵⁵ Tournefort (2003), p. 362.

and feudal lands under the Latin lords.³⁵⁶ Messaria on Kythnos fits perfectly that explanation; present-day Chora lies in the inland surrounded by the island's most fertile lands and fields (**Fig. 26**). Vallindas too accepts Miliarakis' etymology and adds that the lands around Messaria belonged successively to the Sanudi, the Castelli and the Gozzadini. The settlement itself, he argues, was created to house the numerous serfs who worked the lords' lands.³⁵⁷ So, the place-name Messaria could date from the early 13th century when Kythnos was taken by the Latins. Whether there was an earlier settlement there that bore a different name is unknown.

Other medieval place names

This conscious name-transfer from one place to another applies only to Kythnos' main settlements as the names of other sites apparently remain the same at least since the late 13th or 15th century. The bay Sclavos to the north of Oria is the most characteristic example, while other places on Kythnos that have retained their medieval names are the bay of **Agia Eirini** to the northeast and the church of **Agios Loukas** to the west; on the maps of all the cartographers that mention them, they both appear in their respective places.

Merichas or Merchas, the contemporary port of Kythnos, is noted on Buondelmonti's and Bordone's maps as *Merca/Mercha* and on Millo's as *Marza*. It is possible that these variations are abbreviations and later corruptions of the Latin *mercatus* or the Italian *mercato/marcatò* which all translate as market. That could suggest that the deep and leeward bay of Merichas had since then a port installation and was used as a place of produce exchange. Further on-site research would be needed to confirm that hypothesis, however, the date 1543 inscribed on the bell of the small seaside church of Agioi Akindini shows some sort of activity in the area in the early 16th century.³⁵⁸ Moreover, the nearby bay of **Episkopi** is mentioned by Buondelmonti as *Piscopie* and the bay of **Apokrousi** as *Apocreos*. The area around the Hellenistic tower in the centre of the island that is still known as **Pyrgos** (meaning tower in

³⁵⁶ Kallibretakis (1998), p. 318.

³⁵⁷ Vallindas (1896), pp. 41-42; see also section 3.2.2

³⁵⁸ Gerola (1926), p. 34 [76].

Greek) is mentioned as *Torre* (meaning tower in Italian) in Boschini's *isolario* and as *Fort Justin* in Thevet's map (**Fig. 39**), which however, includes lots of imaginary elements and is not considered trustworthy.

The only place names that keep reoccurring on the travellers' maps but cannot be identified with any contemporary places are that of *St. Clini* and *St. Ana*. *St. Clini* is first mentioned in Sonetti's poem, '*e da levante ha un piano con sancto clini*' (and to the east it has a plain with *St. Clini*) (**Fig. 36**). On the 1528's map of Bordone the name *S. Clini*, it is noted beside a church on the eastern coast near the town of Fermenie (**Fig. 38**). In Thevet's map, *S. Clusi* is placed in the same relative place without any indication of a church, while on Millo's maps the name *St. Clini* is used for the big bay to the north of Fermentia (**Fig. 40**). Almost a hundred years later, in Boschini's *isolario* the name *St. Clini* is attributed to a church on the south-western coast. *St. Ana* appears only on Millo's texts and maps as the name of a bay to the southwest. Judging by the bay's size and location it could be identified with the contemporary Flampouria bay. It is quite possible that initially, both *St. Clini* and *St. Ana* were names of churches dedicated to Latin saints that were later on renamed after they were turned into Orthodox. *St. Clini*, nevertheless, could also be Sonetti's corruption of Buondelmonti's *St. Eirini* – or *St. Elini* in some later copies – that was subsequently reproduced by all following travellers (**Fig. 34**).

In conclusion, it seems that the variety of different names and the repetition of the island's name make it difficult to distinguish between Kythnos' main medieval settlements and attribute them to different historical periods. To that inherent difficulty/local peculiarity one should also add the human factor; all these names were corruptions of Greek words that were recorded and reproduced by non-Greeks or corruptions of Latin words used by Greek-speaking populations. A simple mistake, an anagram, or a misunderstanding of the local dialect on the part of the travellers or the foreign envoys can easily puzzle and misguide the modern researcher.

Kythnos population figures 13th -18th century

Date	Population data	Source	References & Notes
1278	inhabited	Venetian Juridical acts: <i>Judicium Venetorum in causis piraticis contra Graecos decisiones</i>	Description of two pirate incidents that took place at the port of Fermeria (Tafel and Thomas 1857, pp. 173, 240-241)
1292	inhabited	R. Muntaner	Kythnos captured & pillaged by the Aragonese admiral Roger de Luria (Muntaner 2000, p. 244)
1335/36	inhabited	Venetian documents	two documents regarding G. Castelli, lord of Kythnos (Hopf 1964, p. 143)
1395	inhabited	N. de Martoni	Piccirilo 2003, pp. 133-135
1420	recovered and well inhabited	C. Buondelmonti	Sinner 1824, p. 84
1470	200 people	G. Rizzardo	Rizzardo 1843, p. 24
1480	inhabited	H. M. Germanus	<i>Insularium Illustratum</i> (BL, Add. MS 15760)
1485	uninhabited	J. Van Chistele	Zeebout 1998, p. 384
1485	recovered and well inhabited	B. dalli Sonetti	Sonneti 1485, pp. 44-45. (BnF, Gallica, Registry C 05590)
1499	inhabited	Gozzadini family records, Arch. Gozzadini, b. 138, n. 7.	Angelo II is declared heir of Nicolo II, festivities held at the <i>Kastro</i> , inhabitants come to pay homage to the new lord
1510	inhabited	M. Sanudo	The Turkish commander Kurt Oglu deported 80 inhabitants from Kythnos (Sanudo 1904, p. 210)
1520	inhabited	Piri Peis	Loupis 1999, p. 368
1528	well inhabited	B. Bordone	Bordone 1528, p. 42
1534	inhabited	anonymous Greek portuan	Délatte 1947, pp. 101-103
1540	destroyed and uninhabited	Ottoman-Venetian treaty of 1540	Predelli 1903, p. 236; Slot 1978, p. 74
1542/50	well inhabited	A. de Santa Cruz	Blázquez 1918, p. 269
1570	250 people	1570 <i>tahrir defter</i>	Kiel 2007, p. 42 (BBOA, T.D. 484)
1572	inhabited	T. Porcacchi	Porcacchi 1580, p.101

3.3 Population data

The study of the population of the Cyclades during the Late Medieval times is a complicated subject. Before the 15th century, there is scarcely any information on the population of the islands. The few existing mentions do not give quantitative data and as a result, we can merely ascertain whether an island was inhabited or not at a particular time. From the 15th century on, there is a gradual increase in the available sources. The accounts of the various western travellers who sailed through the Aegean Sea, the reports of the emissaries of the Propaganda, as well as the Ottoman tax registers (*tapu tahrir defter*) offer an insight into the islands' demographics.

However, the quantity of the information is still limited while the quality is often questionable. Some sources are completely unreliable or, in some cases, deliberately misleading and it is not unusual for contemporary accounts to contradict one another. In addition, the big chronological gaps do not allow for observations on the population evolution.³⁵⁹ Nevertheless, the study of these accounts is of great interest as they provide a rough estimate of the number of inhabitants and mirror the effect of the contemporary historical events on the island population. The population data of Kythnos during the *Latinokratia* (13th century-1617) and the early years of the Ottoman rule (1617-1700) as shown in **Table 01** were gathered mostly from the sources mentioned above. Moreover, other sources and documents which do not directly refer to the island's inhabitants were included.

3.3.1 *Latinokratia*

For the 13th and 14th century we only have vague and indirect information about the island's demographical situation. The 1278 act of the Venetian archives, the 1292 report of Kythnos' capture and pillaging by the Aragonese as well as the Castelli documents and the vivid descriptions of Nicola de Martoni do not mention a word about the population, yet they suggest that the place was fairly well inhabited at that time. Maintaining a port, having goods worth pillaging, sustaining a lord and his servants, and offering hospitality to unfortunate travellers indicates a sufficient population. There are no mentions of the plague that depopulated the Archipelago

³⁵⁹ Dimitropoulos (2004), p. 9.

1575	inhabited 'all males were massacred by the Turks about 50 years ago, island re-peopled by neighbouring Greeks'	A. Thevet	<i>Cosmographie Universelle</i> , Thevet 1575, p. 235 & <i>Le Grand insulaire et pilotage</i> (BnF, fr. 17174) - unfinished
1579	uninhabited	C. de Pinon	Dimitropoulos 2004, p. 198
1582	abandoned for a long time, repopulated by Albanians	A. di Millo	Tselikas 200, pp. 154-155
1637	2,000 people	L.C. Tubino	Dimitropoulos 2004, p. 198
1638	2,200 people	Fr. Lupazzolo	BL, Lansdowne MS 792, fo74
1650	2,000 people 'after numbers deminished by wars, the famine and the plague'	M.Polla	Slot 1982, p. 286; Slot, 1975, p. 119
1655	2,000 people	J. Thevenot	Thevenot 1668, p.109
1658	inhabited	M. Boschini	Boschini 1658
1667	4,000 people	G. Sebastiani	Sebastiani 1687, pp. 96-97
1670	296 tax units/ 1.420 people	1670 <i>tahrir defter</i>	Dimitropoulos 2004, p. 198; Vionis 2012, p. 51 (BBOA, T.D. 800)
1675	3,000 people	P. Ricaut	Ricaut 1679, p. 364
1678	3,000 people	A. Venier	Dimitropoulos 2004, p. 199
1682	inhabited	G. Wheler	Wheler 1682, p. 51
1688	inhabited	F. Piacenza	Piacenza 1688, pp. 302-305
1688	inhabited	O. Dapper	Dapper 1688, pp. 136-137
1696	inhabited	Mr Roberts	Hacke 1699, p. 28
1696	2,000 people	V. Coronelli	Dimitropoulos 2004, p. 199
1698	inhabited	P. Sauger	Sauger 1699, p. 353
1700	~ 6,000 people	J.Pitton de Tournefort	Tournefort 1718, p. 327
1700	3,000 people	A. Giustiniani	Zerlentis and Katsouros 1918, p. 67

Table 01. The population figures of Kythnos (13th-18th century) according to the sources

in 1346-47,³⁶⁰ so it is unknown whether Kythnos was affected by the ‘Black Death’ or not.

At the beginning of the 15th century, several Aegean islands were left heavily depopulated after a severe Turkish raid in 1416.³⁶¹ According to Buondelmonti, however, Kythnos had recovered by 1420 and was well inhabited.³⁶² Unfortunately, he as well as his successors, makes only short comments on the islands’ population – or lack thereof – without presenting actual figures. The only exception to that rule is the 1470 chronicle of Giacomo Rizzardo on the fall of Negroponte to the Ottomans where a table with population figures of several Aegean islands is given (**Table 02**). The numbers of Rizzardo are obviously rounded up, presenting an order of magnitude rather than an actual count of the inhabitants of each place. Yet, the numbers are very low, as most of the lesser islands along with Kythnos are noted to have only 200 people, while the larger or more important ones like Naxos or Tenos have 5,000 and 3,000 respectively.

Negroponte (<i>Euboea</i>)	anime	2,500
Andra (<i>Andros</i>)	„	2,000
Tina (<i>Tenos</i>)	„	3,000
Michole (<i>Mykonos</i>)	„	3,000
Nichosia (<i>Naxos</i>)	„	5,000
Morgo (<i>Amorgos</i>)	„	200
Nio (<i>Ios</i>)	„	200
Antipario (<i>Antiparos</i>)	„	100
Pario (<i>Paros</i>)	„	3,000
Sifano (<i>Sifnos</i>)	„	1000
Milo (<i>Melos</i>)	„	2,500
Sife (<i>Syros ?</i>)	„	200
Serfino (<i>Serifos</i>)	„	200
Lepida (?)	„	300
Fermentia (<i>Kythnos</i>)	„	200
Zia (<i>Kea</i>)	„	300

³⁶⁰ Miller (1908), p. 598; Lock (1998), p. 191. On the origins and the transmission routes of the Black Death and how it was witnessed by Latin and Arabic sources, see Dols (2019), pp. 35-67, on the Byzantine sources see Bartsocas (1966), pp. 394-400.

³⁶¹ Miller (1908), p. 600.

³⁶² Sinner (1824), p. 84.

Lerina (?)	„	1,000
El Damala (?)	„	500
Zerigo (<i>Kythera</i>)	„	500
Santo Herinnj (<i>Santorini</i>)	„	300
Scharpanto (<i>Karpathos</i>)	„	300
Lero (<i>Leros</i>)	„	200
Stanpalia (<i>Astypalaia</i>)	„	400
Chalamo (<i>Kalamos</i>)	„	400
Pathmus (<i>Patmos</i>)	„	400
Schiro (<i>Skyros</i>)	„	1200

Table 02. Population figures of 26 Aegean islands in 1470 (source Rizzardo 1843, p. 24)

Germanus and dalli Sonetti in their 1480s accounts mention Kythnos as resettled and inhabited. Although they are both copying Buondelmonti, Sonetti clearly visited the place himself.³⁶³ So, his comment on the resettlement is in sharp contrast to van Ghistele's account, who sailing by the exact same year describes the island as uninhabited.³⁶⁴ Almost 15 years later, the 1499 document where Niccolo II Gozzadini bequeathed all his possessions to his son is proof that at the end of the 15th century Kythnos was well inhabited and relatively prosperous. The same can be argued for the first half of the succeeding century. The Turkish commander Kurt Oglu deported 80 inhabitants from Kythnos in 1510³⁶⁵ and a decade later when Piri Reis visited the island it was certainly populated.³⁶⁶ The famous cartographer does not comment on the population; however, he mentions a second castle that was built to the southeast (Fermentia?). The construction date of the southern castle is not known, but regardless of whether it was built in Riri Reis' time or earlier, its founding suggests a degree of prosperity and population rise. Bordone too says that Kythnos was well inhabited in 1528 and the same can be deduced from the anonymous Greek portolan published a few years later (1534).

In 1537 the Turkish fleet led by the dreaded Barbarossa attacked the Cyclades. Kythnos was among the islands that suffered a violent conquest and its population

³⁶³ See section 3.1.1.

³⁶⁴ Zeebout (2006), p. 384.

³⁶⁵ Sanudo (1904), p. 210.

³⁶⁶ Loupis (1999), p. 368.

was said to have been either slaughtered or carried off into captivity. According to Cornaro's chronicle, 2,000 prisoners were taken from Kythnos and its neighbouring Kea.³⁶⁷ The same year, as stated in *Ἐκθεσις Χρονική*, the anonymous mid-16th-century chronicle which among others reports on the capture of the Cyclades, there was an outbreak of an infectious disease in the islands. The situation was said to have been so bad that the living could not even bury the dead and the bodies were thrown into the sea.³⁶⁸ There is no evidence that Kythnos was hit by the plague, nevertheless, it cannot be excluded. At any rate in the 1540 Ottoman-Venetian treaty, the island is mentioned among those places destroyed or uninhabited along with Aegina, Kea, Paros, Mykonos, Amorgos, etc.³⁶⁹

The only report between the two Turkish campaigns against the Cyclades is that of the Spaniard Alonso del Santa Cruz (1542/50) who describes Kythnos as well inhabited. However, Santa Cruz is known to copy older works and cannot be regarded as a reliable source. Equally untrustworthy are Andre Thevet's accounts who in his *Cosmographie Universelle* (1575) says that all males of Thermia were massacred by the Turks 'about 50 years ago'. Quite possibly he refers to Barbarossa's campaign, even though his dates are off by a decade. At his time, he claims that the island has been re-peopled by neighbouring Greeks.³⁷⁰ Most interesting though, and more reliable than the travellers' accounts, is the Ottoman 1569/70 *tahrir* of the *sancak* of *Egriboz* that was first published by M. Kiel in 2007.³⁷¹ There Kythnos is noted to

³⁶⁷ Slot (1978), p. 77.

³⁶⁸ 'Ὁ δε Χαϊρατίνης ελθὼν μετὰ τῆς ἀρμάδας, ἔδωκεν ὁ αὐθέντης αὐτὸν θέλημα, ὅπως κρουσεύη τοὺς τόπους οὓς εἰσὶν ἐν τῇ ἐπικρατείᾳ τῶν Βενετῶν. Ὁ και ἐποίησε' πορευθεὶς γὰρ ἠχμαλώτισε πάσας τὰς Κυκλάδας νήσους ἀνεὺ τῆς Ἀξιάς' αὐτὴ γὰρ υπέσχετο δοῦναι χαράτζιον, και οὕτως οὐκ ἐκούρσευσεν αὐτήν, τὰς δε ετέρας νήσους ἠρήμωσεν παντελῶς' ἀράς πλήθη ἀνδρῶν τε και γυναικῶν ἔφερεν ἐν τῇ Πόλει μετὰ κατέργων. Γέγονε δε ἐν αὐτοῖς νόσος λοιμικὴ τοσαύτη, ὡς μη δύνασαι τοὺς ζώντας θάπτειν τοὺς θνήσκοντας. Ἐρριπτον γὰρ αὐτοὺς ἐν τῇ θαλάσῃ, και ἦν ἰδεῖν τὰς ἀκτὰς τῶν αἰγιαλῶν νεκρῶν σωμάτων πεπληρωμένας. Και τις ἀν φράσειε τὴν γεναμένην εἰς αὐτοὺς συμφορὰν και θεήλατον οργὴν ἐν ἔτει ζμδ.', Lambros (1902), pp. 80-81; see also Zerlentis (1924), p. 16.

³⁶⁹ Slot (1978), p. 74.

³⁷⁰ Thevet (1575), p. 235; Hasluck (1909), p. 225.

³⁷¹ This document contains among others information on four western islands of the Cyclades, i.e. Kea, Kythnos, Serifos and Sifnos. Kiel presents in detail and discusses data pertaining to the population and economy (number of settlements, agricultural produce, taxation etc.) of Kea, Serifos and Sifnos. Kythnos is only mentioned briefly in a comparative table. From there we learn that the number of the island households for 1579/70 was 50, with 10 unmarried young men and 2 widows and that the poll tax was 5,000 *akce*, Kiel (2007), p. 42, Table 2.4. The detailed reading of the document, provided it contains the same amount of data about Kythnos as it does for the other three islands, would be of great interest for the island's medieval history.

have a total of 250 people (50 households), which is not a lot especially compared to its neighbouring islands (**Table 03**). Still, the island was certainly not deserted after the 1566-1570 campaign of Piali *Pasha* as it is claimed by some travellers.

	Households (1470)	Households (1569/70)	Bachelors (1569/70)	Widows (1569/70)	Poll Tax (1569/70)	Households (1670/1)	Poll Tax (1670/71)	Individuals (1734/5)	Households (1734/5)
Kea	60-70	86	-	10	15.000	220	179.783	550	440*
Kythnos	40*	50	10	2	5.000	296	186.245	335	268*
Serifos	40-45	46	9	2	6.666	101	52.833	230	184*
Sifnos	200-220	350*	-	-	12.000	414	138.971	510	408*
Total	340-375	532			38.666	1.031	557.832	1.625	1.300*

Note: A dash signifies illegible data in the original document.

Bachelors are *mücerred*, unmarried young men; individuals (*nefer*) represent the total number of heads of household and unmarried young men. In the original document, Kea is called *Mürted* and Kythnos *Thermi*.

Taxes are in *akce*

*Figures represent reconstructed household numbers.

Table 03. Populations and taxation in the Western Cyclades, 1470-1734/5 (source Kiel 2007, p. 42, Table 2.4)

T. Porcacchi in 1572 describes it as populated, yet a couple of years later C. de Pinon regards it as uninhabited (1579). His view concurs with Millo's who in 1585 characteristically says that Kythnos was abandoned for a long time, '*per molto tempo*', and has recently been repopulated by Albanians.³⁷² The local tradition too relates of a period of desolation where the whole island, empty of inhabitants, was covered with woods. The new settlers allegedly cut the trees and used the beams to roof their houses.³⁷³ The exact period of the abandonment is not determined, however, Vallindas assumes it was during the last years of the *Latinokratia* after Barbarossa's campaign. Hasluck too, in his work on the depopulation of the Aegean islands and the Turkish conquest, assigns it to the years 1538-72 on the analogy of other islands.³⁷⁴

³⁷² Hasluck (1909), p. 225; Tselikas (2006), p. 155.

³⁷³ Vallindas (1896), p. 61.

³⁷⁴ Hasluck (1911), p. 160.

3.3.2 Early years of the *Turkokratia*

The next report on the population of Kythnos comes two decades after the island was annexed to the Ottoman Empire. In 1637 the apostolic emissary L.C. Tubino assesses the inhabitants at 2,000³⁷⁵ and so does Lupazzolo, who notes 2,200 people in 1638.³⁷⁶ The same numbers are recorded by other sources for the first half of the 17th century, documenting thus a serious recovery from the ordeals of the previous century. Sebastiani in 1667 goes as far as estimating Kythnos' populace to 4,000 people.³⁷⁷

Another valuable document, first published by Slot in 1982, is the 1670/1 *tahrir defter*.³⁷⁸ The register contains data for several Aegean islands, including the Western Cyclades. Kythnos is noted to have 296 households or tax units, i.e. 1,420 people (see **Table 03**) and although that figure does not match the numbers reported by the emissaries of the Propaganda, it certainly shows a significant population growth.³⁷⁹ The numerous accounts from the second half of the 17th century all ascertain that view. Kythnos counted 3,000 souls in the 1675's according to P. Ricaut³⁸⁰ and A. Venier,³⁸¹ while in the turn of the century it reached a maximum of 6,000 people according to Tournefort.³⁸² A. Giustiniani's³⁸³ and J.X. Portier's³⁸⁴ contemporary accounts assess more conservatively the island population at 3,000 and 4,000 people respectively. The population data of Kythnos from the 18th century on, although much fuller documented, will not be studied here as they fall out of the scope of the present study.

³⁷⁵ Slot (1982), p. 290.

³⁷⁶ British Library, Lansdowne MS 792, fo74

³⁷⁷ Sebastiani (1687), p. 97.

³⁷⁸ BBOA, T.D. 800

³⁷⁹ Kiel (2007), p. 42; Vionis (2012), p. 51.

³⁸⁰ Ricaut (1679), p. 364.

³⁸¹ Dimitropoulos (2004), p. 199.

³⁸² Tournefort (2003), p. 362.

³⁸³ Zerlentis and Katsouros (1918), p. 67.

³⁸⁴ Roussos- Milidonis (1989), p. 84.

3.3.3 Comments and conclusions

Reading through the population data of Kythnos it becomes obvious that the available information is insufficient to draw accurate conclusions on the island's demographics during the *Latinokratia*. Also, the lack of knowledge of what was happening in the previous era allows only for limited observations and interpretations, e.g. population figures that may seem extremely low compared to later or modern standards could have been normal for that time. On the contrary, there are ample and quite reliable sources with quantitative data that show the population evolution during the transitional period of the late 16th and early 17th century and the years of the Ottoman occupation.

Depopulation and resettlement

One of the questions that arise is whether Kythnos was indeed abandoned in the 16th century. That question concerns also several other islands of the Archipelago and has been discussed among scholars since the beginning of the 20th century.³⁸⁵ Lately, the traditional theory of the abandonment of the Aegean islands has been questioned and is gradually being revised, especially as more documents from the Ottoman archives come to light.³⁸⁶ Compared to some of the larger Cyclades, Kythnos was never a very populous or prosperous island and that made it susceptible to population fluctuations. The various Turkish raids, the insecurity caused in the area by the Ottoman-Venetian wars and the outbreaks of infectious diseases would certainly have taken their toll on the population of the island.

On the other hand, Kythnos is not that small or close to a much bigger island where the inhabitants would flee in case of danger or after a destruction (e.g. the people of Mykonos found refuge in Tenos in 1537 and the Kimolians would often flee to Melos etc.). Its size enabled the island to keep and sustain its population. Therefore, the reports and the local stories that claim that the place was completely depopulated in either the 15th or the 16th century should be regarded with caution. In addition, as N. Belavilas points out the terms 'desolated' and 'uninhabited' were often subjective

³⁸⁵ Hasluck (1910/11).

³⁸⁶ Kiel (2007), p. 42.

depending on the time and the reason of the recording as well as the person who reported it.³⁸⁷

For the case of Kythnos, the careful reading of the sources gives the impression of a continuous habitation, although at certain times the numbers of the inhabitants must have been very low. The 1470 estimate of 200 people by Rizzardo which is considered reliable by most scholars³⁸⁸ shows exactly that. At the same time, a population of 200 may be considered too few for an island of Kythnos' area and could go unnoticed by travellers like J. Van Chistele who just sailed past.³⁸⁹ So, in the presence of more reliable contemporary sources, his assessment can easily be ignored.

After Barbarossa's 'visit' though, in 1537, the island was certainly left heavily depopulated and quite possibly it suffered many material losses too. According to Cornaro, Niccolo III Gozzadini paid just 300 ducats as tribute for his islands.³⁹⁰ The sum is considerably smaller than that levied from the other Latin lords (1,500 ducats for Andros, 5,000 for Tenos and 5,000 Naxos and its dependent islands),³⁹¹ so maybe it is indicative of the poor state of the destructed Gozzadini islands that were not expected to yield more income any time soon. Consequently, the 1540 treaty that counts Kythnos among the 'destructed and not yet repopulated' islands could be seen from a tax collector's point of view and should not be taken quite literally.

The same can be argued for some traveller's statements and other exaggerated accounts like that of a Venetian report of 1563 that claims that of the 16 islands belonging to the Duchy of Naxos only five (Naxos, Santorini, Melos, Syra, and Paros) were inhabited. Andros, Kea and Sifnos are mentioned separately, nevertheless, it is implied that all other islands were deserted at the time.³⁹² Contemporary scholars, like Slot³⁹³ and Kiel³⁹⁴ question the abandonment view and even Vallindas leaves open the possibility of Kythnos not ever being completely uninhabited.³⁹⁵

³⁸⁷ Belavilas (2014), p. 4.

³⁸⁸ Kiel (2007), p. 36; Vionis (2012), p. 37.

³⁸⁹ Zeebout (2006), pp. 384-385.

³⁹⁰ Sifnos, Kythnos, Kimolos and some lesser islands at the time.

³⁹¹ Slot (1978), p. 74.

³⁹² Miller (1908), p. 633; Hasluck (1910), p. 158.

³⁹³ Slot (1982), p. 114.

³⁹⁴ Kiel (2007), p. 42.

³⁹⁵ Vallindas (1896), p. 61.

Surely at some point, either before or after the second great Turkish campaign against the Cyclades in 1566-1570, the Gozzadini invited Albanians and poor Greeks³⁹⁶ to settle the sparsely peopled Kythnos. There are no documents that can attest to the exact date of the colonisation, however, the 1581 version of Millo's account gives us a *terminus ante quem*.³⁹⁷ The 1570 *tahrir defter* records the island's population at merely 250 people, so presumably, the settlers arrived later than that, perhaps shortly after 1571 when Niccolo III Gozzadini managed to recover his island possessions and add another five islands to his barony.³⁹⁸ In any case, the figures from the 17th century show that Kythnos had recovered vigorously from the calamities of the previous years. Following the trend of the rest of the Cyclades, the island's population had increased tenfold in less than 70 years, reaching 2,200 people in 1638. The growth continued till the end of that century and into the next.

Population diversity: Greeks, Latins and Albanians

We have almost no information on the character and diversity of the population of Kythnos during the *Latinokratia*. Even when the sources mention the demographics of the island they do not comment on the ethnicity of the islanders. Certainly, as was the case in all other Aegean Duchy islands, the majority of the population would have been Greeks, while the Latins were just a ruling minority. At the turn of the 16th century, Millo is the first to mention the Albanian settlers. From the 17th century on, the sources not only give quantitative data, but they also offer information on the different nationalities and creeds.

All comments on the Latin minority of Kythnos are dated after 1617 when the island became officially part of the Ottoman Empire. Lupazzolo in his 1638s *Isolario* claims that no one of the Latin rite was left on Kythnos. Polla found only one Latin about 1650, because all others he says, had perished either in the wars of the previous years or due to other calamities.³⁹⁹ Some years later, however, Sebastiani (1667)

³⁹⁶ Greek settlers are mentioned in the earliest version of Millo's *isolario* held in the British Library and by Thevet in his *Cosmographie Universalle*, Thevet (1575), p. 235.

³⁹⁷ British Library, Add. 10, 365, ff. 36-96; Hasluck (1906), p. 99.

³⁹⁸ Gerola (1926), p. 10 [52].

³⁹⁹ Slot (1978), p. 120.

mentions the existence of a few Latins, while Tournefort and Portier both write about 10-12 Latin families in 1700.⁴⁰⁰ According to the bishop of Syros A. Gustiniani who visited Kythnos that same year, that small Catholic community (20 people) was not a remnant of the Gozzadini times. They were mostly French corsairs who in the second half of the 17th century had married local women and settled on the island. One of those privateers, named Giovanni Maria Cardi, was also the founder of the Catholic double-apsed church of Agios Ioannis in Chora about 1676.⁴⁰¹ The Catholic community of Kythnos was nevertheless short-lived after the ousting of the Gozzadini and soon all Latins were Hellenised.

Other than Millo's brief remarks, mentions of the Albanians can be found in Lupazzolo who says that they seized the lands of the Catholic Bishopric of Thermia.⁴⁰² In the 1650s report of Polla it is noted that the island was inhabited by Albanians brought there by the Gozzadini after the Turks had desolated it some 90 years ago. His remark supports the view that the resettlement took place after the second attack. Polla goes on adding that the new inhabitants had indeed taken possession of these lands.⁴⁰³ Thevenot's comments on the same subject rest on the authority of Lupazzolo,⁴⁰⁴ while at the end of the 17th century also Saulger notes that most of Thermia's and Kea's inhabitants were Albanians.⁴⁰⁵ Finally, the Albanian farmers' colonisation is acknowledged by Vallindas too, who adds that there are still some Kythnian surnames that seem to have Albanian roots.⁴⁰⁶ At any rate, the new settlers were quickly incorporated into the local element.

⁴⁰⁰ Tournefort (2003), p. 362 ; Roussos-Milidonis (1989), p. 85.

⁴⁰¹ Marcopoli (1895), p. 126; Vallindas (1896), p. 49.

⁴⁰² British Library, MS 792, fo74

⁴⁰³ Slot (1974), pp. 119-120.

⁴⁰⁴ Thevenot (1686), p. 109.

⁴⁰⁵ Saulger (1878), p. 220.

⁴⁰⁶ Vallindas (1882), p. 78.



Fig. 55. Map of Kythnos (Tournefort 1718, pp. 248-249)

The study of Oria *Kastro*

4 Oria *Kastro*

4.1 Oria *Kastro* through the descriptions of Early Modern travellers (18th-20th century)

Kythnos was not a preferred destination for the travellers who journeyed around Greece during the 18th and 19th century. Nevertheless, it was visited by several prominent travellers of various nationalities, some of whom showed interest in the antiquities of the island and left us valuable descriptions of the *Kastro*. The French doctor and botanist J.P. Tournefort came to Kythnos at the turn of the 17th century. His work *Relation d'un voyage au Levant II*, that was published in 1717, has a four-page description of the island and a map, that despite its accurate outline, bears no place names or other markings (**Fig. 55**). He mentions the site as 'Paliokastro' and notes that 'tho 'tis quite empty; yet is not so ruinous as the other [Vryokastro]; but it affords no remains of anything grand'.⁴⁰⁷

As mentioned, at the beginning of the 19th century in 1836, the German archaeologist Ludwig Ross visited the island. Ross accompanied the architect Christian Hansen, who came to Kythnos on the government's mandate to design the building of the thermal spa facilities. They visited the antiquities of Kythnos, and Ross kept notes in his diary, which was published in 1840. Impressed by the castle's position and way of capture, he devoted an eloquent three-page description to Oria.⁴⁰⁸ More specifically, he says: 'There are the ruins of a well-fortified city dating to the last years of the Middle Ages that seems to have been the capital of the island. The walls, those

⁴⁰⁷ Tournefort (1718), p. 252.

⁴⁰⁸ Ross (1840), pp. 111-113.

that are still standing on the rock, are of Frankish construction and have loopholes. Within the walls, there are only amorphous piles of ruins. One can have a panoramic view from the top of the rock; one can see the Peloponnese, Hydra, Aegina, Gerania near Megara, Belvina, Sounio, Kea, Karystos, Andros, Gyaros, Tenos and Syros. The circumference of the castle is small, and it could have included a maximum of 1,500 to 2,000 souls.⁴⁰⁹ Ross gives also the local myths regarding the *Kastro*'s fall, which according to him took place in the fourth decade of the 16th century.⁴¹⁰ The Turks, he says, slaughtered all inhabitants and set the town on fire turning it into ashes. Hansen drew an oil painting of Oria which is the earliest accurate depiction of the site (**Fig. 56**).

Shortly after Ross, in 1841, the French Alexandre Buchon arrived on the island and visited the *Kastro*. Buchon was also impressed by Oria's location and views, as well as by the amounts of rubble and the number of churches: 'The view from the rock is amazing, very picturesque, because among the gaps of the cliffs you can see remnants of Gothic walls that have been preserved and rise up to the highest parts. Arriving at the top, I spotted the ruins of a true city, with many churches. In one of them, which has a Gothic vault and a table-cippus, there is still a holy water font built in the wall to the right of the door. It is a large marble trough. The shape of the vault and this still-preserved font give a Latin character to this church. I see also a Greek church built with bricks, which seems even older.'⁴¹¹

⁴⁰⁹ 'Es ist die Ruine eines wohnbefestigten Städtchens aus den letzten Jahrhunderten des Mittelalters, und scheint damals der Hauptort der Insel gewesen zu sein. Die Mauern, so viel von ihnen noch an den Felsen klebt, find von fränkischer Bauart und haben Schießscharten; im Inneren find nur unförmliche Trümmerhaufen. Von dem Gipfel des Felsens hat man eine weite Aussicht; man entdeckt den Peloponnes, Hydra, Aegina, die Gerania bei Megara, Belbina, Sunion, Keos, Karystos, Andros, Gyaros, Tenos und Syros. Der Umfang der Festung ist gering, und sie kann höchstens 1,500 bis 2,000 Seelen enthalten haben.', Ross (1840), pp. 111-112.

⁴¹⁰ Apparently, he refers to the 1537 Barbarossa campaign.

⁴¹¹ 'La vue du rocher, vue de ce point, est fort pittoresque ; car, entre tous les vides du rocher, on aperçoit les restes des murs gothiques conservés jusqu'en haut. Parvenue au sommet, j'aperçus les débris d'une véritable ville, avec plusieurs églises. Dans l'une d'elles, qui a une voute gothique et un seul autel, est encore le bénitier encadré dans mur, à gauche de la porte. C'est un vaste mortier en marbre commun. La forme de l'église et ce bénitier encore subsistant à sa place, signalent cette église comme une église latine. Il me paraît toutefois que les ruines delà ville appartiennent à une époque plus ancienne que l'époque de la domination latine. J'y vois une église grecque, bâtie en briques, qui me semble bien plus ancienne.', Buchon (1911), p. 243.



Fig. 56. Oria Kastro by C. Hansen (Papanicolaou-Christiansen 1993, p. 100, fig. 150)

In 1883 the Englishman Theodore Bent visited Kythnos. In his work *The Cyclades or Life among the Insular Greeks* he refers mainly to the local myths about the destruction of the castle by the Turks and quotes most of the folk song that relates its fall.⁴¹² Bent also admires Oria's imposing location: 'They now call the spot "the fortress of beauty" and a more splendid situation for a fortress it is impossible to find. It crowns a rock rising 500 feet out of the sea, and is approached from the land side only by a narrow tongue of land. There is still the wall standing, which is entered by a low doorway, and inside the old churches and houses are in many cases in good preservation; but it is a desolate weird place, full of terror to the inhabitants.'⁴¹³

Finally, at the beginning of the 20th century in 1910, the Italian archaeologist Giuseppe Gerola came to Kythnos. Gerola visited almost all the island's monuments, although he was mainly interested in the period of the Latin domination. In 1923 he published a forty-page description of Kythnos, with extensive references to the Gozzadini house and the remains of the Latin rule.⁴¹⁴ Gerola believed that Oria was

⁴¹² Bent (1885), p. 433. See also section 3.2.3.

⁴¹³ Bent (1885), p. 442.

⁴¹⁴ Gerola (1926).



Fig. 57. Oria *Kastro* today from the southeast

the island's medieval capital and was particularly interested in identifying the date of the town's establishment. He also gave a lengthy description of the ruins which, however, is largely based on the work of Vallindas. He described the best-preserved churches, the walls and the southern gateway, and remarked also on the building materials and techniques. Of great importance are four pictures of the castle that accompany the text and document the site's form and state of preservation in the 1910s (**Figs 58-61**).

Obviously, despite the Fermentia hypothesis, Oria *Kastro* was firmly established as the island's medieval capital in the local tradition already since the late 17th century. That is reflected in the accounts of the 18th, 19th and 20th-century travellers and the work of the Kythnian historian Vallindas, whom all the later Greek and non-Greek scholars borrow evidence from. In any case, reading their descriptions, one realises that the general form of the *Kastro* and the state of preservation of its ruins have not changed much today (**Fig. 57**).

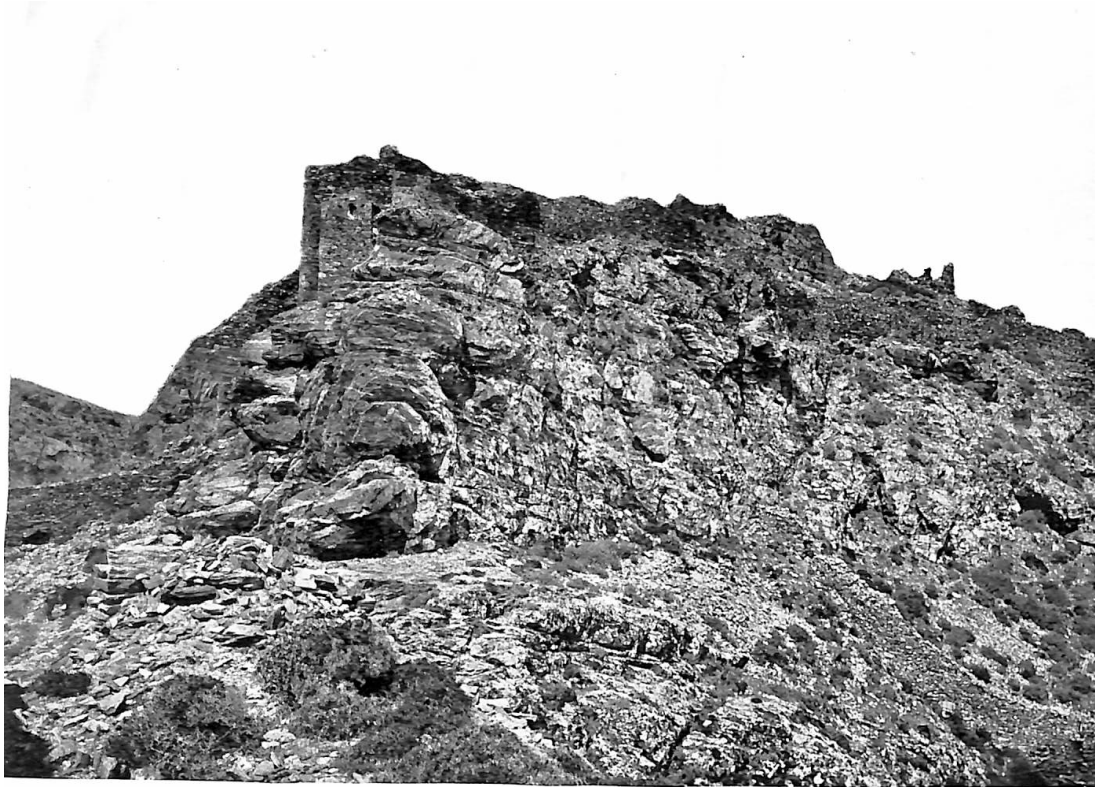


Fig. 58. Oria *Kastro* from the east (Gerola 1926, p. 36 [78], fig. 15)



Fig. 59. Oria *Kastro*, view of the Panagia Eleousa church from the southwest (Gerola 1926, p. 37 [79], fig. 16)



Fig. 60. *Oria Kastro*, the south-east gate and the flanking tower (Gerola 1926, p. 37 [79], fig. 17)



Fig. 61. *Oria Kastro*, the interior of the south-east gate (Gerola 1926, p. 38 [80], fig. 18)



Fig. 62. Gialoudi bay



Fig. 63. Sclavos bay

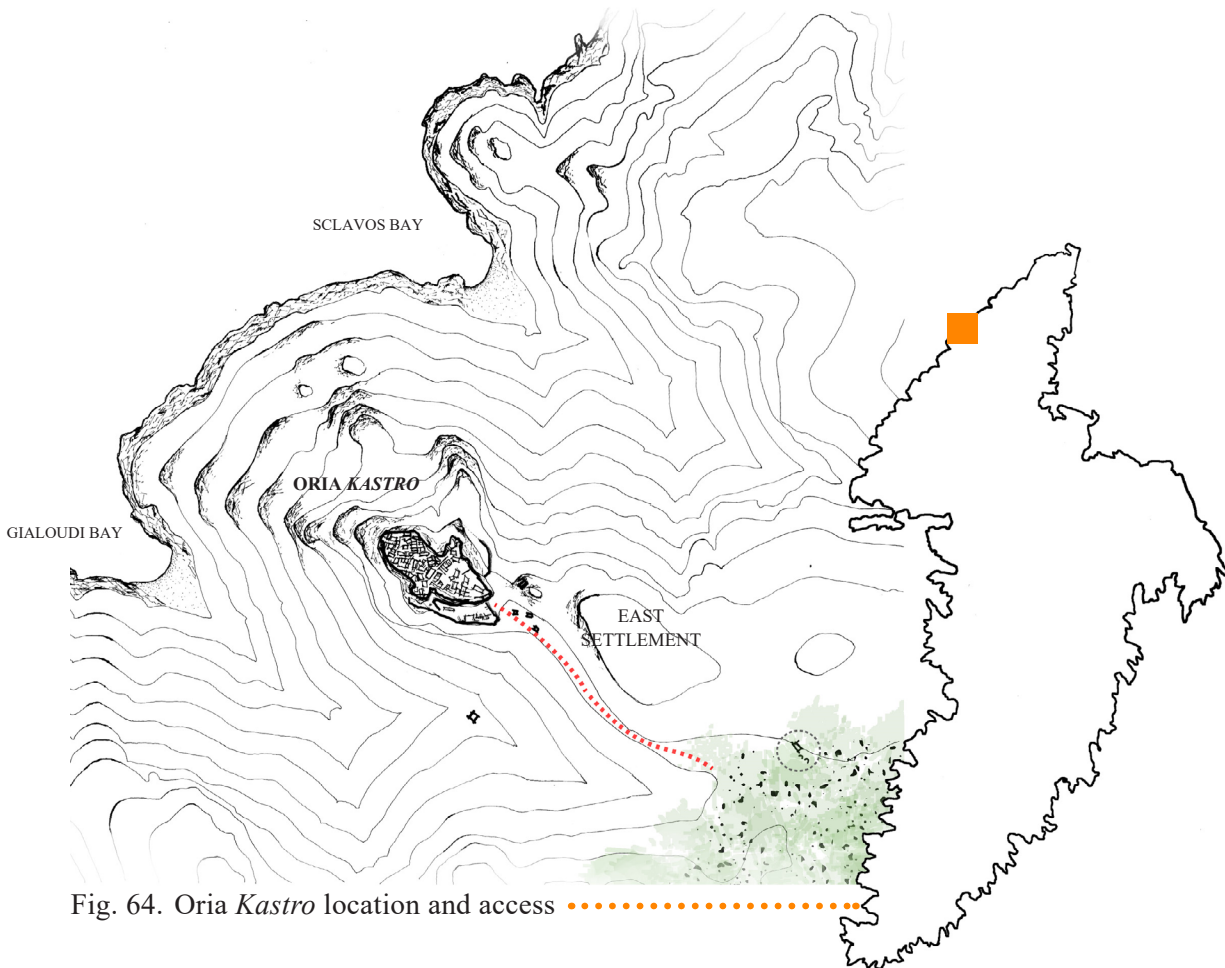


Fig. 64. Oria Kastro location and access

4.2 Oria *Kastro* today |plan A01|

4.2.1 Location and access

Oria *Kastro* is situated in a rugged, hardly accessible location in the north-west tip of the island. It was built on a naturally fortified peninsula between two bays (Gialoudi to the south and Sclavos to the north), at an altitude of about 250 m from sea level. This position offers unobstructed views of the sea passage between Kythnos and Kea as well as all the surrounding islands. The landscape in the wider area of the castle is wild and almost bare of vegetation and except for a couple of modern farmsteads, it remains uninhabited.

Nevertheless, the numerous boundary walls separating the fields and the dense terrace systems around the *Kastro* that expand all the way to the east coast, although mostly inactive today, clearly indicate that this whole area was once intensely cultivated (see also the 1940s RAF aerial photo on plan A01). The chronology of the terraces and their relationship to the settlement are unknown; the study and characterisation of the agricultural landscape⁴¹⁵ is beyond the scope of this study, however, there is a strong likelihood that many of the terraces near Oria have early origins, dating at least to the medieval period and quite possibly even earlier in correspondence to the settlement itself (section 4.2.2).

Even though Oria is about 8 km far from Messaria and just 4 km away from the settlement of Loutra, accessing it is relatively difficult. The asphalt road leading from Loutra to the *Kastro* stops after a while and the course continues on a poor-quality dirt road. The last 700 m one must walk on foot, following a narrow path at the foot of the hill (presumably on the same line as the medieval one) that approaches the site from the southeast. For the most part, the route is relatively even, and only at the end, it becomes very steep and one has to climb the last 40 m towards the gate.

Besides the modern road, there is a two-hours long path leading from Chora to the *Kastro*. This is the old path that connected the medieval capital with the rural settlement of Messaria. In some places today the path and the dirt road overlay one another. Whichever way one chooses to follow, however, there is no visual contact

⁴¹⁵ For the historic landscape of Naxos see Turner and Crow (2010); Crow, Turner and Vionis (2011); Turner and Crow (2019).



Fig. 65. The end of the dirt road



Fig. 66. The path at the foot of the hill



Fig. 67. The path to the *Kastro*



Fig. 68. The final ascend towards the gate

with the castle, which appears suddenly after the last turn, impressing the visitors. Except for that path, in the area there is a network of pathways and old paved tracks, the so-called *kalderimia*, that lead to the sea or to neighbouring country-churches, such as the old monastery of Agios Georgios to the north of the castle. There is also a *kalderimi* connecting Oria to Vryokastro.⁴¹⁶

4.2.2 Present-day dating data and possible evolution of the settlement

As mentioned, the exact foundation date of the fortified settlement of Oria is not known, given that the area has not yet been systematically studied or excavated. The local tradition places its founding in the 4th or 5th century AD.⁴¹⁷ Mazarakis, on the other hand, assumes that the capital was transferred there sometime in the mid-7th century AD, but this assumption is based mainly on findings from Vryokastro (or rather the absence of them) and not Oria itself.⁴¹⁸ The published 1990s report of the Ephorate mentions only some Mycenaean sherds found during a brief field survey on the hill slopes of the *Kastro* and leaves open the possibility of a smaller settlement existing there long before the Early Christian era.⁴¹⁹

A detailed pottery survey has not been feasible in the context of the present study. On the basis of some preliminary observations, however, it is possible to suggest that the hill of the *Kastro* was inhabited though the Prehistoric, Late Geometric, Classical and Hellenistic times.⁴²⁰ Byzantine presence from the 6th-7th and possibly the early 8th century AD can also be documented.⁴²¹ It has not yet been possible to identify any ceramics dating between the 9th and 11th century, however, there is some sporadic evidence for the 12th century.⁴²² From the 13th century on there is an abundance of material evidence that covers all the years of the Latin occupation

⁴¹⁶ Vallindas (1882), p. 49.

⁴¹⁷ Vallindas (1882), pp. 48-49.

⁴¹⁸ Mazarakis (2019), pp. 28, 147.

⁴¹⁹ Chatzianastasiou (1998), p. 261; see also Mazarakis (2019), p. 28.

⁴²⁰ See also Mazarakis (2019), p. 28.

⁴²¹ Late Roman Amphorae (LRA1, LRA2, LRA5), Phocaeen Red Slip ware H3 and a few body sherds with incised decorative patterns resembling some late variations of the LRA2 of the 8th century.

⁴²² Sgraffito ware sherds.



Fig. 69. Aerial view of Oria *Kastro* from the southeast

up to the late 16th and 17th century.⁴²³ So, the Latin presence on the site can be documented beyond doubt as the material evidence corroborates fully with the written sources. In addition, the presence of iron slag on the ground suggests the existence of some small-scale metal working industries in the *Kastro* area.

Although a more in-depth study is certainly needed, the quantity and diversity of the ceramics imply that Oria was a vibrant and prosperous town during the *Latinokratia* with commercial ties (either direct or via Naxos, the capital of the Duchy) to various places all around the Mediterranean, from the western coast of Asia Minor to mainland Greece and the northern Aegean and from Constantinople to the Adriatic and Tyrrhenian Sea. On the other hand, the traditional view that wants the *Kastro* to have been the capital of the island throughout the Byzantine times cannot be strongly supported, at least with the data presently at hand. At any rate, safe conclusions on the founding date and possible evolution of the settlement cannot be drawn unless systematic and extensive studies are conducted, not only at Oria but also at other sites on Kythnos.

The east settlement |plan A02|

The hypothesis of extended earlier occupation of the site is further supported by what seems to be the remains of another settlement on the hill to the east of the *Kastro*. On the top of the hill, lie the ruins of a double-apsed church (**ch19**).⁴²⁴ The whole area around the church (about 2.5 ha) is covered with piles of stones and scree. At many places, it seems that the bedrock was cut off to create rectangular, level platforms suitable for buildings (**Figs 72-73**). Ceramics scattered amongst the rubble dating mainly to the Classical and Hellenistic period suggest the existence of an extended Ancient Greek settlement at this spot. Surprisingly, this site is not mentioned in any of the sources. Only Gerola notes that on the mountain to the east of the *Kastro*

⁴²³ Identified 13th-14th century pottery types: Zeuxippus ware IA, Zeuxippus II, Zeuxippus ware imitations/variants, Apoulian RMR (Rosso-Manganese-Ramino), Constantinopolitan glazed white ware IV, V (Polychrome ware), Champlevé, Salonico ware and variants, and Venetian green monochrome ware. Identified 15th-16th century pottery types: Graffita Adriatica and Tyrrhenica, Italian maiolica blue and white and Montelupo maiolica.

⁴²⁴ See section 8.1.



Fig. 70. Remains of the settlement to the east of the *Kastro*, view from the southeast



Fig. 71. Piles of rubble and scree extending down the southern slopes of the hill

one could see the remains of a church, cisterns, wells and other buildings.⁴²⁵ Today, there are no obvious traces of buildings or even wall foundations and the remaining stones, although numerous, are all quite small; big quoins or slabs are nowhere to be found. So, it is more likely that Gerola was referring to the extramural buildings that lie along the path leading to the castle gate at the foot of the hill and not on top of it (see chapter 5).

Without further study it is impossible to draw safe conclusions on the dating and size of the eastern settlement, however, the amount of rubble and pottery indicates that it was quite big. Presumably, it extended all the way to the west, covering the *Kastro* intramural area and maybe part of the southern slopes. It is not clear whether it continued to be in use during the Byzantine and Latin era, however, the existence of the church (**ch19**) shows that the area was not completely abandoned. Perhaps its lower parts were used as Oria's *borgo*, i.e. an unwalled settlement built at the foot of the castle, while the rest of its building material could potentially have been reused for the expansion and/or fortification of the *Kastro*. That could explain the absence of bigger stone blocks all across this area.

In any case, the present form of Oria is undeniably the result of improvements and alterations made by the Latins, when sometime after 1207 they established there the seat of the island lord. It is also said that during the Greek Revolution of 1821, the inhabitants fearing an imminent attack from the Turks, resorted to the long-abandoned *Kastro*, hastily raising some drystone walls for protection.⁴²⁶ The area of Oria was apparently occupied – possibly continuously – since the Prehistoric times, so even though it might not be evident at first glance, the *Kastro* has a palimpsest of different construction phases. However, the built remains do not have sufficient diagnostic characteristics to provide a secure date due to their ruinous state but also because all structures were built using local roughly hewn rubble stones.⁴²⁷ There were no elaborate buildings with indicative floorplans or masonry styles⁴²⁸ and

⁴²⁵ Gerola (1926), p. 39 [81].

⁴²⁶ Vallindas (1882), p. 47.

⁴²⁷ The old brick church that was mentioned by Buchon (see section 4.1) is nowhere to be found today nor are there any serious amounts of scattered bricks that could suggest its approximate location. So, given the absence of physical remains and other relevant accounts its existence is rather doubtful.

⁴²⁸ The inability to date the buildings based solely on their masonry has also been noted for the Kato *Kastro* of Naxos, Vavatsioulas (2007), p. 486.



Fig. 72. The man-made bedrock cuts for the creation of building platforms



Fig. 73. Aerial view of the east settlement area and the double-apsed church (ch19)

although different construction phases can be recognised in many individual cases (construction joints, use of a different kind of mortar etc.) indicating a longevity of activity, safe conclusions about the evolution of the whole settlement cannot be drawn unless excavations are conducted.

4.2.3 Population data

The capacity of the *Kastro* could not easily have exceeded a total of 500 people despite what local tradition says that there lived once ‘*πεντακισμύριοι τίνες*’, i.e. 50,000 people,⁴²⁹ or the accounts of the 19th-century travellers who estimate 1,500 to 2,000 souls.⁴³⁰ This calculation is based on the number of the surveyed buildings (see [plan A03](#)) as well as the population data of Kythnos during that period, as shown in **Table 01**. The east settlement, if indeed parts of it existed till the medieval period serving as the castle’s *borgo*, could possibly have housed another 300 to 400 people.

As far as the population diversity is concerned, during the Latin era the intramural area of the *Kastro* would presumably have been occupied by the Latin nobility, the *cittadini*, as was the custom in all other Aegean Duchy islands and the local garrison. Whether some prominent Greek families were allowed to stay as well is unknown. Perhaps the population was indeed mixed, composed of both Orthodox and Catholics as Vallindas claims.⁴³¹ After all, the most important churches in Oria bear construction phases of both doctrines⁴³² while the existence of the three double-apsed ones that were most likely used for the celebration of both Orthodox and Catholic rites (see also section 2.5.4) further supports that view.

⁴²⁹ Vallindas (1882), p. 47.

⁴³⁰ Ross (1840), p. 112; Ragavis (1854), p. 145

⁴³¹ Vallindas (1882), p. 49.

⁴³² Even in the Kato *Kastro* of Naxos there was the Orthodox church of Theoskepasti situated at the centre of the town right by the ducal tower and the Catholic cathedral, Slot (1982), p. 59; Vavatsioulas (2007), pp. 112, 243.



Fig. 74. The cemetery church (**ch1**)



Fig. 75. **Ch1** construction details: the waterspout (a) and the collapsed vault (b)

5 Description

5.1 The route to Oria *Kastro*

The cemetery church (ch1) |plans B01, B02|

Starting from where the dirt road ends, on the way to the *Kastro* one comes first upon the ruins of a single-aisled church located in the west side of a terraced field. Today only the north wall and part of the semi-circular apse are still standing, both incorporated in a later field enclosure. There is no indication of whether the church was Catholic or Orthodox,⁴³³ nor is the building mentioned in the sources. Its form and building technique, however, are almost identical to some of the *Kastro* churches (e.g. **ch5**, **ch9**). According to the oral testimony of the field owner,⁴³⁴ it was a funerary church as the area around it was once a cemetery. Based on its proximity to the *Kastro*, and because this is the nearest area with any depth of soil, it is highly possible that this was the burial ground of Oria, however, this has yet to be confirmed.⁴³⁵ At any rate, the church was considered important for the *Kastro* environs and was thus surveyed at the scale of 1:50.

The external dimensions of the building are 9.45 x 5.16 m and the entrance was most likely on the west side. The walls, that have a maximum thickness of 0.70 m, were built with local undressed stones using a mix of an off-white lime and earth mortar. Smaller flat stones and pottery sherds were used as pinnings between the stone blocks. The church was covered by a vault that has now collapsed. Although its springing is still visible by the altar and there are also big solid blocks of the vault in the building interior, its form, i.e. whether it was semi-circular or pointed, cannot be determined. A buttressing arch that was carried on a stone console, was placed in

⁴³³ The church's state of disrepair, however, suggests that it was – or was considered to be – a Catholic establishment, otherwise it would probably have been looked after by the devoted Kythnians.

⁴³⁴ Mr K. Vlastaris (Koutsikos).

⁴³⁵ In Kythera Church 1 (Agia Barbara) which is thought to have been the burial church of Paliochora is likewise located a short distance off the settlement. Preliminary research has identified four graves built against the walls of the church, Ince, Koukoulis et al. (1989), p. 416; Ince and Ballantyne (2007), p. 58, fig. 14. A similar pattern i.e. siting of cemetery churches on the outskirts of settlements was noted for many medieval villages all across Greece, e.g. see Gerstel (2015), pp. 25, 33, 47, 75. For a general discussion of outlying churches and their role in the landscape see also Nixon (2006) and Dimitrokallis (2004), pp. 9-10.



Fig. 76. The arches, view from the south



Fig. 77. Aerial view of the cemetery church (**ch1**) and the arches

the middle of the long side to strengthen the vault.⁴³⁶ Two successive rows of beam sockets on the north wall show the spots where the centring was placed.

For the voussoirs was used the same lime mortar as for the upper parts of the walls. On the vault's outer surface, a thick layer (2.5 cm) of coarse crushed-tile mortar was applied on top of a thinner layer of lime mortar (1.5 cm). Although there are barely any traces left today, the vault was most likely covered by thin slabs in accordance with the churches in the *Kastro*. Traces of mortar suggest that the building was rendered both internally and externally. There are no decorative features preserved in the church, except for a course of cut stones in the apse. Another interesting detail is a waterspout made of slabs that is still intact in the north-eastern corner of the roof.

Finally, about 12.00 m to the southeast of the church, right in the middle of the alleged cemetery, stand two wide, semi-circular arches (1.60 x 1.70 m). The arches are now part of a later dry-stone terrace wall, but it is obvious that they once belonged to another structure (**Figs 76, 77**). The stones are bonded with the same white lime mortar used for the church, while both the interior and the exterior of the arches were rendered. It is possible that they were arcossolium tombs either free-standing or related to an earlier, now lost, church.⁴³⁷ Similar arch-shaped structures built against the southern wall of the church were recorded in Agios Ioannis Prodromos near Messaria. The same feature was also found in several Late-Medieval churches in Paros by A. Orlandos⁴³⁸ and Vionis, who notes that human remains could still be seen in such an arcossolium structure in Kephalos *Kastro*.⁴³⁹ Unmarked arcossolium tombs built against the church or like in this case very close to it, have also been observed in Crete.⁴⁴⁰

⁴³⁶ The buttressing arch may be a further indication that the church was Catholic (see sections 7.2 and 7.7).

⁴³⁷ See also church 6 in the *Kastro*.

⁴³⁸ Orlandos (1961), pp. 121-122, figs 5, 6.

⁴³⁹ Vionis (2012), p. 145, 190.

⁴⁴⁰ Nixon (2006), pp. 15-16, fig. 2.



Fig. 78. The wine press base



Fig. 79. The collapsed apse of **ch2**



Fig. 80. The semi-circular building (6)

The extramural buildings |plans A02, A03|

Further down the path leading up to the *Kastro* and mainly as one approaches the main entrance, there are several single-room buildings built parallel to the contours of the land. Their average size is 3.50 x 6.00 m and most of them lie in ruins, except for one that is now used by the local shepherds as a sheep pen. It is unclear whether they are contemporary to the *Kastro* structures, however, their form and building technique are almost identical. The walls were 0.60 m wide on average, built with medium-sized rubble stones using either drystone techniques or earth bonding. Amongst the buildings, there are at least⁴⁴¹ two small, single-naved churches (**ch2**, **ch3**). Compared to the other structures, the churches were better built using bigger semi-dressed stones. Hewn poros blocks were used to form the openings of the doors. Traces of mortar by the apse of church **2** show that its interior was rendered and possibly embellished with frescos (**Fig. 79**). The ruinous state of both buildings does not allow for conclusions regarding their roofing.

Between the two churches lies a small, semi-circular building (**6**), which was partly built into the natural bedrock (**Fig. 80**). Strong white lime mortar has been used for its masonry, and it was rendered externally. It was built on two levels, with the solid 1.00 m wide base being better preserved today. The upper part is approximately 0.80 m wide and on its west side there is a small opening, probably a loophole, oriented so to cover the path to the gate. Perhaps this building was a small tower or, in any case, a defensive structure. A few meters to the west, just below building **7**, lie the remains of a low wall that extends all the way to the *Kastro* hill and runs parallel to the enceinte wall. The part to the east of the pathway has obviously been rebuilt quite recently, however, the west section could potentially belong to the original phase of the *Kastro* serving as a *proteichisma* i.e. an outwork meant to provide a first line of defence possibly in collaboration with the small tower (**6**).

The use of the rest of the buildings is unknown; probably they were houses or workshops built outside the castle walls. The stone base of a wine press, that is now incorporated in the east section of the above-mentioned drystone wall, suggests as such (**Fig. 78**). Piles of rubble and remains of structures have also been spotted

⁴⁴¹ Building **2** could potentially be a church too



Fig. 81. The south-east gate as seen from the watchtower (9)



Fig. 82. The north-east flank of the outer wall, where the postern gate possibly once was

further down the south slope of the *Kastro* hill. So, it is possible that this area was Oria's *borgo*, i.e. a settlement expansion outside the castle walls populated mainly by locals as was the case in other islands (e.g. Naxos).⁴⁴²

5.2 Fortifications |plan A04|

The path that connects the *Kastro* to the hinterland leads to a plateau to the west of which lies the castle gate. Oria was built in a naturally fortified location, however, at its more vulnerable parts (i.e. on the south and east side, where the cliffs are not as steep), it was protected by double walls at different levels. According to Vallindas, the outer wall had two gates, one to the southeast and one to the north.⁴⁴³ The south-eastern gate connected Oria to the hinterland, where the arable lands and the other medieval settlements were, while the northern postern gate would presumably have led to Oria's port Sclavos.⁴⁴⁴ Today, the location of the postern cannot be securely determined. It was probably somewhere in the north-eastern flank, however, the section where the opening was, had collapsed already by the 1910s, as Gerola notes: 'The same is repeated on the north side. Here, however, a small fold allowed entrance to the castle and where the door probably once was, there is another fortification wall.'⁴⁴⁵

On the other hand, the **south-east gate** which was the castle's main entrance is kept almost intact.⁴⁴⁶ The walls on either side of the gate, even though they have suffered serious damage, are still preserved at a height of about 5.00 m. They were built with medium-sized stones, bonded with a mix of clay and lime mortar. Their thickness

⁴⁴² Vavatsioulas (2007), pp. 100-101.

⁴⁴³ Vallindas (1882), p. 47.

⁴⁴⁴ The Kato *Kastro* of Naxos had originally also two gates connecting the town with the port and the hinterland respectively, Vavatsioulas (2007), p. 448. Two entrances have been recorded in many other *kastra* e.g. *La Ponta* and Emporio on Santorini, Kephalos on Paros etc. Agios Nicolaos in Santorini and Naoussa in Paros had three, Ritzouli (2016), p. 62; Vionis (2012), p. 84.

⁴⁴⁵ 'E lo stesso ripetasi per il lato di tramontana. Quivi, tuttavia, una piccola insenatura offriva accesso al castello; e, dove era probabilmente la porta, resta ancora un muro di fortificazione.', Gerola (1926), p. 38 [80].

⁴⁴⁶ Hetherington assumes that the gateway has been re-built, Hetherington (2001), p. 188. Given that both in Hansen's drawing (1836) and Gerola's pictures (1910) it looks ruinous, the reconstruction – if it indeed happened – would have taken place around 1821 when the islanders took refuge there from the Turks. Nothing relevant, however, is mentioned by the sources.

ranges from 0.80 to 1.15 m. At the corners, the construction is more elaborate using slightly bigger, roughly dressed quoins. To the left of the gate, there was a rectangular, 6.00 m long tower (**I**), that protruded at least 1.60 m from the solid front of the walls. Its original form is best documented by one of the photos taken by Gerola during his visit to Oria in 1910 (**Fig. 60**). In the photo, it is obvious that although the collapse has already begun, the right corner of the tower is maintained at a height well above the current one. To the right of the gate, towards the north, the walls continued following the outline of the rock up to the second enclosure, to the Panagia Eleousa church (**ch5**) that was part of the second defensive wall. This section has now collapsed almost entirely, but its existence is confirmed by a few remains on the rocks and the south wall of the church as well as by Gerola's pictures (**Fig. 58**). The foundations of another, much smaller, horseshoe-shaped tower (**II**) with an open back can still be seen in the middle of the south section of the outer wall.

As far as the **entrance** itself is concerned, it is a 1.30 m wide opening on the solid front of the walls, built with the corbelling technique.⁴⁴⁷ The height of the entrance is now just 1.80 m, due to the build-up of soil, however, initially it would probably have been at least 0.50 m higher, very similar to the dimensions of the gates of Naxos.⁴⁴⁸ The opening is bridged by four elongated slabs, while on the outer face of the wall there is a relieving triangle. Even though it does not survive today, Gerola's photographs show that there was a second lintel, about 0.70 m below the first one (**Fig. 61**). That created a shallow, rectangular space above the entrance, where perhaps the Gozzadini coat of arms once was. |plans B03, B04, B05|

Above the gate, there are two successive rows of loopholes as well as a 0.50-0.70 m wide walkway. The loopholes of the first row are better maintained. The average size of their opening in the inner face of the wall is 0.40 x 0.30 m narrowing down to 0.05 x 0.25 m in the outer. All of them have an almost horizontal sill and are facing to the southeast to effectively cover the path that led to the gate. Only one loophole

⁴⁴⁷ The last three stone courses project a little inward so that the width of the opening gradually decreases to reach 1.05 m at the very top which could be easily spanned by stone slabs.

⁴⁴⁸ The main gate, the so-called *Τρανή πόλη* was 1.38 m wide and 2.40 m high, while the postern gate that was intended also for carriages and horsemen reached 1.48 m and 3.50 m respectively, Vavatsioulas (2007), pp. 449-450.

from the second row has survived. It is slightly smaller than those of the lower row (0.15 x 0.25 m) and is also facing to the southeast. Judging from the position of the loopholes, we can assume that the original height of the wall would have been at least 0.50 m taller than it is today, in order to offer complete coverage to the castle's defenders. The wall section to the south of the gate was also equipped with densely arranged loopholes of similar form and dimensions. It is unclear whether it was crenelated or not.

From the size and form of the loopholes it would be safe to assume that they were intended for firearms. That would mean that this part of the walls and also the northern outer and inner sections that have loopholes of the same type were heavily remodelled (or even constructed) sometime in the late 15th or early 16th century, when firearms were widely introduced.⁴⁴⁹ Similar loopholes can be found in other contemporary Venetian fortifications e.g. the *Apano Kastro* on Naxos or the *Fortezza* of Rethymno in Crete and are also depicted in Lupazzolo's early-17th century drawing of Messaria (**Figs 84, 50**).

Finally, to the right of the entrance, adjacent to the walls, are the ruins of a **gatehouse (10)**. Its floor plan is trapezoidal with dimensions approximately 3.00 x 4.00 m. There is still a small window, measuring 0.46 x 0.60 m in the southern wall. In general, the form of Oria's gate is relatively simple compared to the gates of other contemporary *kastra* in the Cyclades e.g. Naxos, Santorini, Paros etc. which except for the protruding towers on one or both sides of the main entrance had also a vaulted passageway, the through-corridor or *sottoportego*, attached to it (**Fig. 85**). The building above the gate could expand over one or two storeys in the form of a tower.⁴⁵⁰

The castle's first⁴⁵¹ line of defence was completed by a **watchtower (9)** built on a land outcrop just across the south-east gate (**Fig. 86**). Other than offering commanding views of the area the tower protected the way to both gates leading into the *Kastro*. It is a rectangular building of large dimensions (5.80 x 10.00 m), that was most

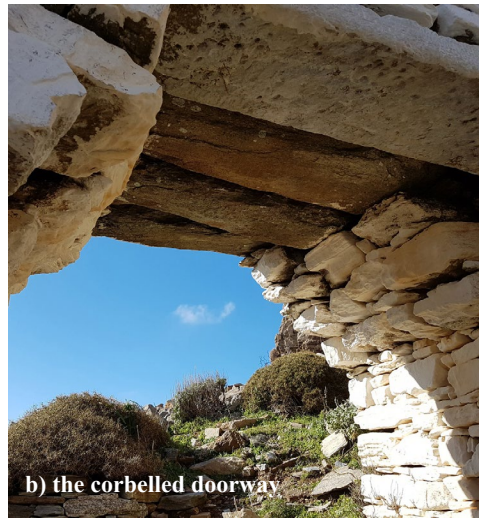
⁴⁴⁹ Poziopoulos (1984), p. 196.

⁴⁵⁰ On the gates of the Kato *Kastro* of Naxos and the *kastra* of Santorini see Vavatsioulas (2007), pp. 449-451 and Ritzouli (2016), pp. 130-134.

⁴⁵¹ Or second defence line if there was indeed a *proteichisma*.



a) external view of the gate



b) the corbelled doorway



a) internal view of the gate



d) the gatehouse and the walkway

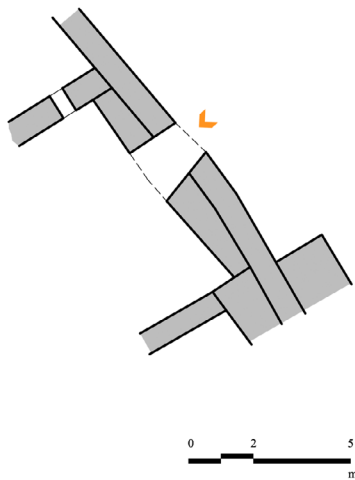


d) aerial view of the outer wall and gate from the east

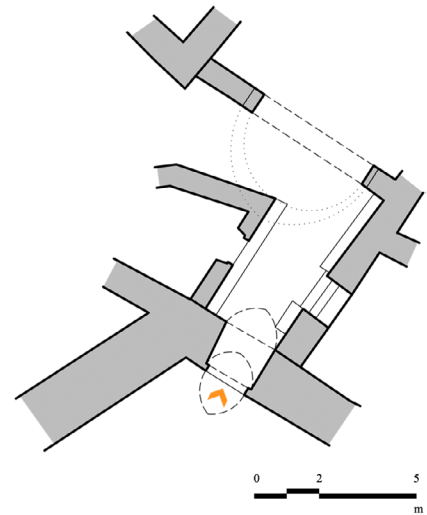
Fig. 83. The south-east gate (a-d)



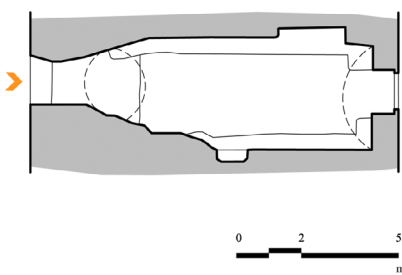
Fig. 84. Loopholes in Oria (a), the Apano *Kastro* in Naxos (b) and the *Fortezza* in Rethymno (c)



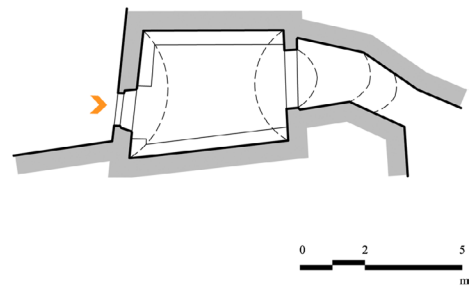
Oria *Kastro*, Kythnos



Kato *Kastro*, Naxos
(redrawn after Vavatsioulas 2007, plan 85)



Emporio, Santorini
(redrawn after Ritsouli 2016, p. 131)



Pyrgos, Santorini
(redrawn after Ritsouli 2016, p. 131)

Fig. 85. The main gate of Oria in comparison to the gates of other Cycladic *kastra*



Fig. 86. The watchtower (9), view from the west

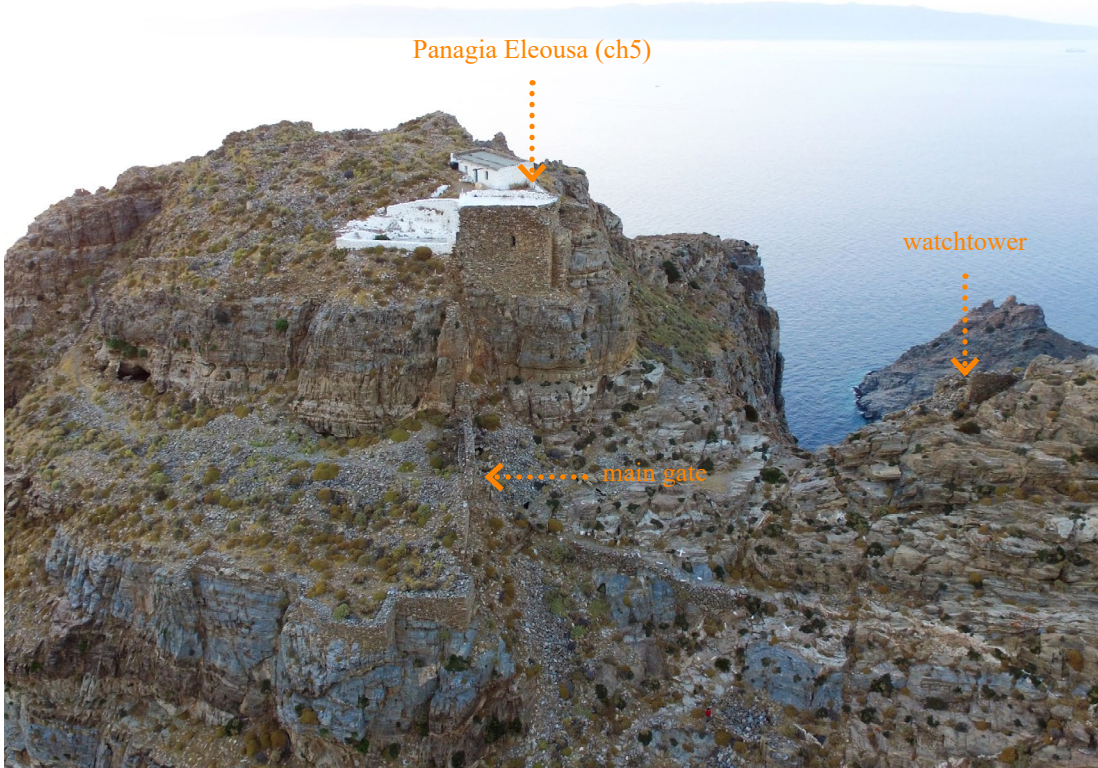


Fig. 87. Aerial view of the *Kastro* from the south

likely covered by a vault.⁴⁵² Its prominent location but also the general quality of the construction, indicate the structure's defensive use. The (outer) walls are approximately 1.00 m thick and were built with carefully selected or roughly cut large stones using earth and lime bonding. The tower was entered through a 0.90 m wide opening on the south side that is very close to the rock leaving only a narrow, protected passage.

The overall condition of the building is so poor that we cannot know whether it had one or more levels. However, it is obvious that it had at least two distinct construction phases. The construction joints in the masonry indicate that originally the tower had smaller dimensions (approx. 4.80 x 9.00 m) with a talus around the base. Then, at some point, the core building was encompassed on two sides by a new structure with thick vertical walls. A stone apron of unknown use that lies in front of the south-western wall could also belong to that second phase. The existence of a similar freestanding watchtower opposite to the gate has not been noted in any other Cycladic *kastro*.⁴⁵³

5.3 Lower level

Passing through the gate, one enters the first, lower precinct, which covers an area of approximately 0.35 ha on the south side of the rock. The original, presumably more protected, route into the settlement cannot be determined as this level is nowadays covered, almost entirely, by rubble piles that originate from collapses of the upper level, but also from a row of buildings built parallel and against the outer wall. The buildings' state of preservation is very poor; however, it seems that there were at least 20 adjacent structures with an area that ranges from 11 to 35 m². Although safe conclusions regarding their use cannot be drawn without removing the rubble, it is possible that they were domestic or ancillary buildings (e.g. storerooms, stables⁴⁵⁴ etc.).

⁴⁵² Remains of an arch carried on a stone console in the southern wall suggest that the vault was strengthened by a buttressing arch.

⁴⁵³ The so-called *Tour de l'Aga*, a tower house that is noted at a similar place in Tournefort's depiction of the Kato *Kastro* of Andros (**Fig. 177**) apparently dates from much later (late 17th century), Tournefort (1718), pp. 265, 267.

⁴⁵⁴ The stabling by the gates of pack animals (usually mules) assisting with the defence is known from Naxos and Crete, Vavatsioulas (2007), p. 462.



Fig. 88. The 'cave church' (ch4) (a-d)

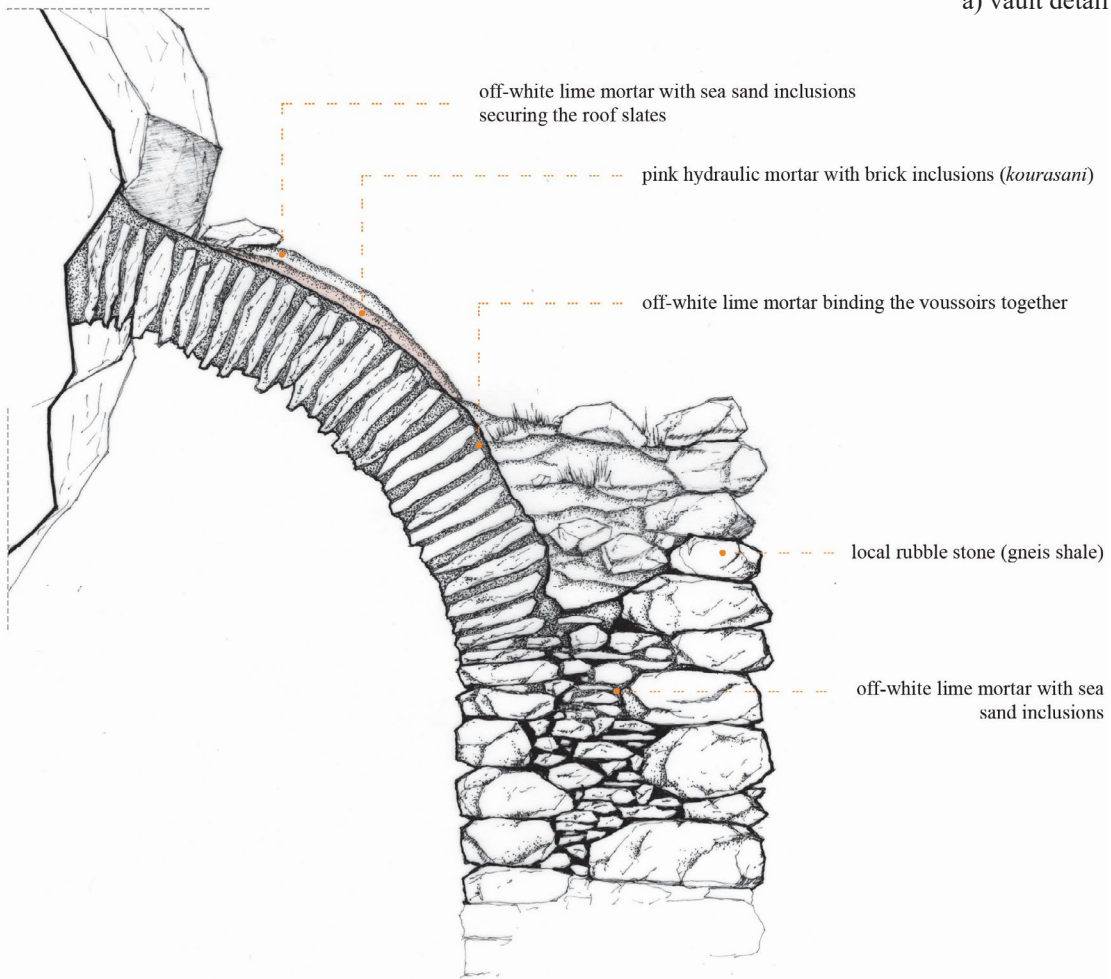
Almost in an equally poor condition, on the north-west side of the first level, lies a church (**ch4**). It is an elongated, barrel-vaulted structure that is partly built into the bedrock. The church's name is not known nor is there any indication on whether it was Catholic or Orthodox. Gerola, rather arbitrarily, regards it as Latin.⁴⁵⁵ At any rate, the 'cave church' is an interesting building and was thus surveyed at the scales of 1:100 and 1:10. Its dimensions are approximately 15.00 x 4.00 m. The apse of the sanctuary and parts of the north and south wall along with the overlaying barrel vault are preserved in a better condition. Both the walls and the vault, 0.70 m and 0.25 m thick respectively, were built of rubble stones bonded with strong white lime mortar. The interior is now filled with large amounts of manure, as goats and sheep regularly occupy the building, therefore, the original floor must lie at least 0.50 m below today's ground level. [|plans B06, B07|](#)

The entrance was probably on the south-west side. In the south wall, there are two niches as well as a small window (0.37 x 0.58 m) with an arched lintel carved into a soft poros block. To its right, there must have been a second, identical opening, from which now only the inner stone lintel remains. Right above the first window, there are two acoustic vessels (about 10 cm in diameter and 8 cm in depth) embedded in the inner face of the wall (**Fig. 88b**).⁴⁵⁶ In the north wall, the space between its two faces (approx. 0.50 m) was kept void and was covered by thin stone slabs. The springing of an arch can still be seen on the inner face of the masonry. The use of this space is not clear; perhaps it was used as a safe place for valuables or as a tomb (arcosolium?). The interior was rendered and faint traces of red paint in the sanctuary apse show that the church was once decorated with frescoes. What should also be

⁴⁵⁵ Gerola (1926), p. 16 [58].

⁴⁵⁶ Acoustic vessels known as 'resonators' were ceramic pipes or amphorae that were embedded in the walls and domes of churches supposedly to enhance the acoustics in the building. They occur in many medieval churches across Greece (e.g. in Paliochora in Aegina, Moutsopoulos (1962), pp. 178-180, the Apano *Kastro* in Naxos, as well as in Paliochora in Kythera, Ince and Ballantyne (2007), p. 11), Western and Eastern Europe as well as the Islamic world, Zakinthinos and Skarlatos (2007). Their acoustic function has been questioned by some modern scholars like R. Ousterhout who suggested that they played a role in construction instead, as weep holes or in lightening the weight of the dome, Ousterhout (2008), pp. 227-229. According to another point of view, resonators despite their limited effectiveness in actually amplifying sound were empirically incorporated into churches as part of an orally transmitted building tradition. Rare examples of ceramic vessels intentionally produced for acoustic purposes were found in three churches in Serbia (Stara Pavlica Monastery and St Nicholas church near Kuršumlija and in a church in Komarane), Đorđević Penezić and Dimitrijević (2017), pp. 105-132.

a) vault detail



b) sanctuary apse detail

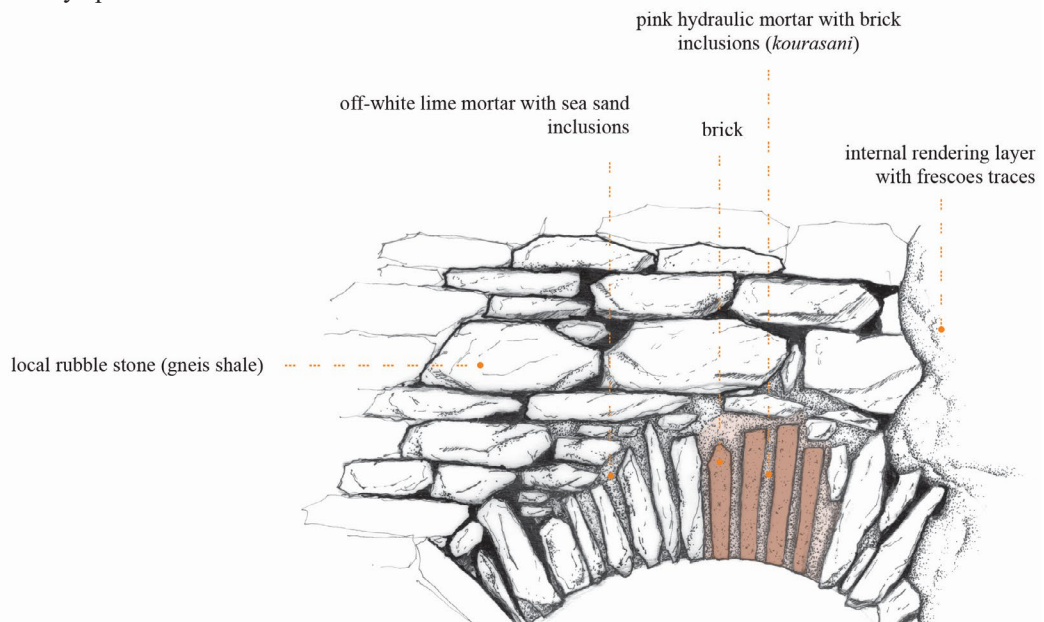


Fig. 89. 'Cave church' (ch4) construction details

noted is a small part at the face of the apse arch that is built with bricks instead of stones, bonded with pink crushed-tile mortar (**Fig. 88d, 89b**).

The far west half of the lower level is today cut off from the rest the *Kastro* by a steep gorge. The ruins of several walls that run vertical to the gorge, however, are proof that in the past the gap was bridged. This area is almost as big as the east part and apparently it was densely built and walled. It is now covered with piles of rubble mainly due to collapse of the upper level. Although physical access there is difficult, the west part was surveyed with the help of the drone and an approximate plan of the most well-preserved structures was created. The use of the buildings cannot be determined with certainty; they were probably domestic structures, while building **25** that has an inscribed apse facing to the east could have been a church. [|plan A03|](#) In contrast to the south, the north-east lower precinct was kept almost empty of buildings presumably for safety reasons as it was more easily accessible from the port. Its perimeter wall that reached a width of 1.40 m was also equipped with loopholes of similar size and form to those of the main gate.

5.4 Upper level

A few metres to the southwest of the ‘cave church’ there is a staircase which, running parallel to the inner wall, leads up to the second level. Its width ranges from 0.60 to 1.85 m and consists of about 200 steps, most of which are in relatively good condition (**Figs 90, 91**). The retaining wall of the stairs seems to be relatively newbuilt; some sections are built on top of the inner wall foundations, while others deviate from the outline of the original enceinte that was built at the very edge of the cliff. Climbing up the stairs today, one ends up on a small plateau on the south-east side of the rock. Two small staircases start from there, one leading down to the yard of the Panagia Eleousa church (**ch5**) and the other up to the main settlement. The initial entry path would presumably have been somewhat different and more complex, judging from the arrangement of the buildings’ walls (parallel to the inner wall) and their openings. The goal would obviously have been to prevent direct crossing into the main settlement by creating multiple lines of defence. Moreover, the remains of at least four walls vertical to the stairway suggest some kind of partitioning within the enceinte wall. [|plan A04|](#)

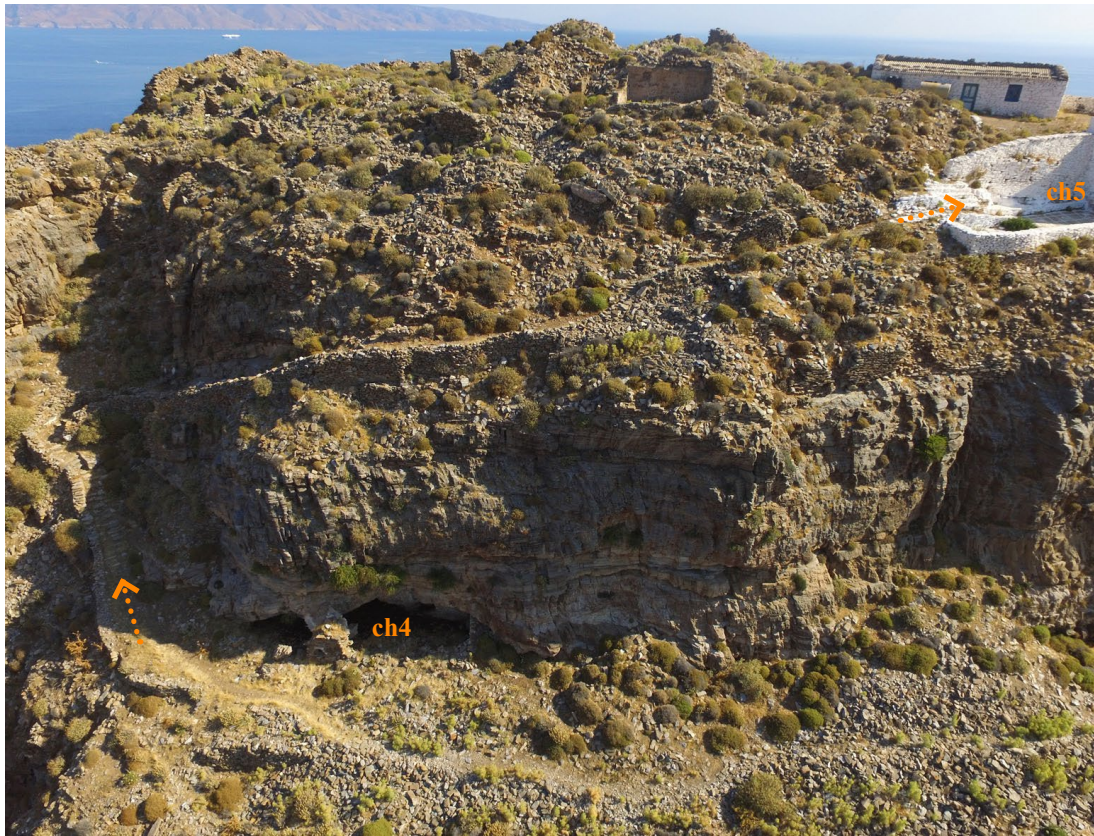


Fig. 90. Aerial view of the *Kastro* from the south



Fig. 91. The staircase to the upper level



Fig. 92. The northern flank of the inner wall

The exact location of the entry point has not been identified so far, as the remains of the upper gate – if indeed there was one like in other contemporary *kastra* e.g. Apano *Kastro* in Naxos or Kephalos in Paros⁴⁵⁷ – are now buried under piles of rubble. It seems, nevertheless, that after several turns and changes of course, the path from the main doorway would lead to a small plateau in the settlement's centre, the so-called 'piazza'.⁴⁵⁸ Presumably, the path from the northern gate would lead to the same point as was the case in other similar sites, making thus the *piazza* the heart of the *Kastro*. In accordance to the southern part, the area by the northern flank of the wall, where the entrance from the postern gate supposedly was, is kept mostly empty and is divided into two separate sections by a vertical wall. The exact entry point, however, has not yet been identified.

The upper level includes about 120 buildings⁴⁵⁹ and is surrounded by an approximately 0.80 m wide defensive wall, which on some occasions differs from the outer walls of the buildings, while on others identifies with them. The state of preservation of the inner curtain wall is rather poor. There are only few parts that survive at a height of more than 1.00 to 2.00 m, while whole sections are now completely lost due to landslides. Like the lower, the upper wall followed the contours of the terrain, effectively incorporating natural features, e.g. crags and cliffs to the defences (**Fig. 92**). On the north-east and south-east flanks there are four structures that could potentially correspond to peripheral towers (**plan A04: III, IV, V and VI**).⁴⁶⁰ Given, however, their ruinous state and the fact that these areas are impossible or unsafe to access, no further conclusions can be drawn for the time being. The inner wall was also equipped with loopholes, many of which still exist, mainly on the north-eastern side. The upper part of the wall was most likely flat, as there are no signs of crenellation (**Fig. 93**).

⁴⁵⁷ Vionis (2012), pp. 134, 143.

⁴⁵⁸ Vallindas (1882), p.48; Gerola (1926), p. 38 [80]: '*...miseri resti della miserabile antica citta, della quale il piccolo piazzale tuttora denominato Piazza doveva costituire il centro.*', i.e. 'Poor remains of a miserable ancient city, whose centre must have been a small plateau that is still today called *piazza*'.

⁴⁵⁹ 119 is the total number of buildings that could be identified and recorded in the site plan.

⁴⁶⁰ On the south side, right above the 'cave church', there is an indication of a rectangular structure (**III**) projecting from the face of the wall. It could possibly be a tower overlooking the lower level and guarding the ascend to the main settlement. The same can be noted on the north-eastern flank; structures **V** and **VI** could correspond to towers covering the access from the north-eastern lower level and the port. Finally, structure **IV** could be a small freestanding tower intended to protect the western lower level.



Fig. 93. The loopholes of the inner wall (northern flank)

In general, both the outer and the inner circuit walls are quite uniformly built with medium-sized roughly coursed rubble stones. At certain points, though, there are some construction joints (vertical and horizontal) and slight changes in the size and quality of the stones that indicate the existence of different construction phases and/or repairs. This is more obvious in the north-eastern flank of both levels, where some big square-shaped blocks are used sporadically in the lower courses of the masonry. It is possible that these stones belonged to an earlier phase (Classical or Hellenistic?) of the perimeter wall or they could be *spolia* derived from earlier buildings. Nevertheless, until a closer inspection of the walls is made possible, conclusions regarding their dating and evolution cannot be drawn.



Fig. 94. The upper level, view from the east



Fig. 95. The upper level, view from the north

6 Settlement analysis

6.1 Urban tissue

The upper level measures 167 m from northwest to southeast and about 96.6 m northeast to southwest. The area enclosed by the inner walls is approximately 0.80 ha. The lowest point of the site is 217.2 m and the highest 251.6 m in elevation. The intra-site terrain is quite uneven and rocky, especially towards the west, therefore terracing was occasionally used to create level areas suitable for building. Almost the whole area within the inner wall is covered with buildings with an average size of about 30 m² arranged both along and at right angles to the contours of the slope. It appears that the settlement evolved dynamically over the years, according to the needs of the inhabitants and was not based on strict, initial planning. The result was a tight residential complex, with a grid of horizontal and vertical streets and only few open spaces.

Recording the network of the **roads** was a challenging task because most of them are now buried under heaps of stones and low vegetation. Systematic cleanings may define them more accurately, however, an approximate representation that has also taken into account the buildings' entrances is given on [plan A05](#). In general, the streets follow the slope of the terrain and where it becomes too steep, they have stairs. Their width ranges from 1.00 to 4.00 m. Although their surface could not be determined, it is possible that the main streets were paved with slabs and/or had stones set into the earth, like the *kalderimia*, to enable the descent and ascent of pack animals.⁴⁶¹ Given the steepness of the site, no wheeled transport would have been possible. Judging from their width, the settlement must have had two main streets, one that ran through it with direction from east to west and one that connected the two gateways of the upper level (**Figs 96, 97**).

⁴⁶¹ Although they cannot be safely dated to the medieval period, traces of cobbled roads were found in the Kato *Kastro* of Naxos and are still preserved in the *kastra* of Pyrgos and Emporio in Santorini, Vavatsioulas (2007), p. 499; Ritzouli (2016), p. 174.



Fig. 96. Aerial view of the main road

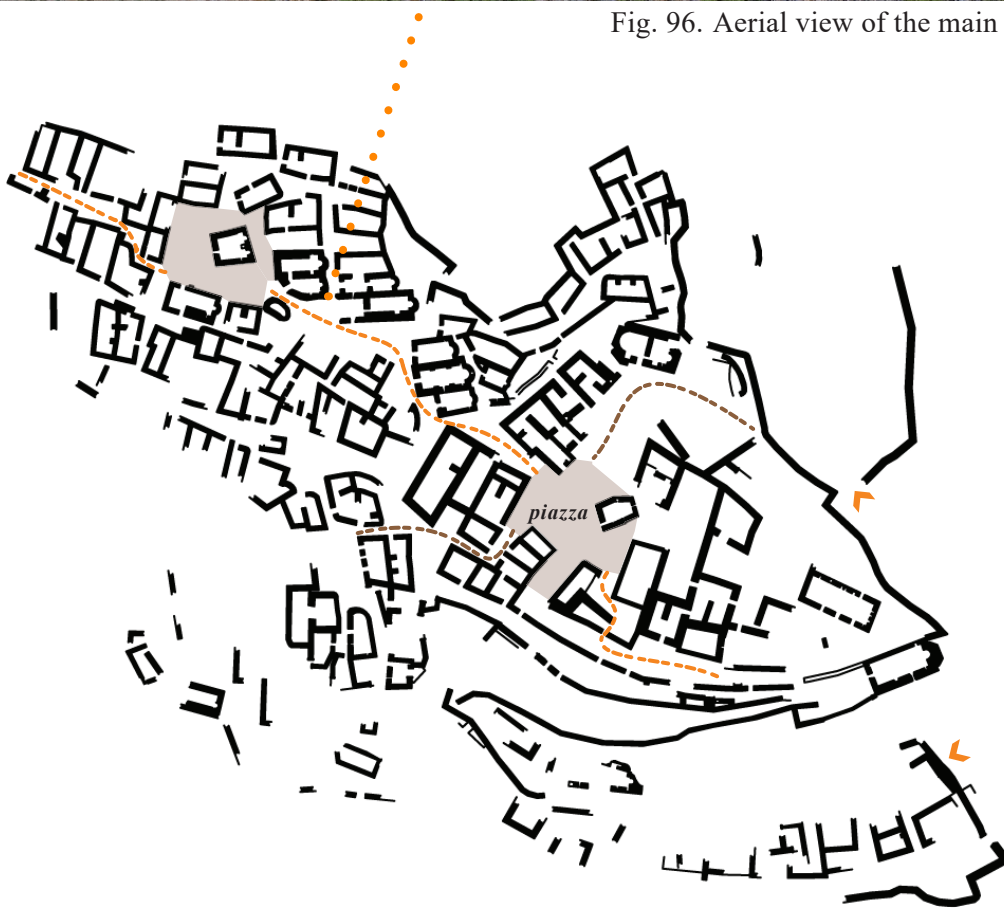


Fig. 97. The main routes of the *Kastro*

The two routes met in the middle of the *Kastro*, at the *piazza*,⁴⁶² which was the settlement's main and biggest open space where most public buildings would face, and all public gatherings and possibly an outdoors market would take place.

The available space within Oria was very limited and as a result, there were but few **open spaces**. Except for some small widenings formed at the meeting point of two or more streets or in front of the *Kastro*'s main churches, there are only two open areas in the upper-level settlement: the *piazza* in the middle (**Fig. 98**) and a smaller one in the north-western part which is evidently related to the nearby churches (**ch13, 14, 15, 16**). Finally, the large open space by the north-eastern flank of the upper wall could have been kept empty for defence purposes.⁴⁶³ In any case, this area has been recently disturbed by the erection of building **27** (see section 7.2), so its initial form and use cannot be determined.

6.2 Use and typology |plan A06|

The poor state of preservation, the dense bush cover and the absence of archaeological investigation in the form of clearance or excavation do not allow the drawing of firm conclusions regarding the exact use and typology of the buildings. Although in certain cases the use of the building is obvious (e.g. churches or cisterns) without such intervention we can only speculate judging from the shape and size of each structure, the quality of construction and their relative location in the settlement. On the other hand, the research was aided by the fact that all collapse lies still *in situ*, as Oria's inaccessible location prevented it from falling prey to a great deal of stone robbing. That allowed the recording and study of the remains and led to some preliminary observations regarding their form and basic features. So, apart from houses, Oria *Kastro* would have had public/administrative buildings, churches,

⁴⁶² The main open space of the Latin *kastra* was called *piazza* according to the Venetian model. In several contemporary documents it is noted also as *loggia* or *lozzia*, Zerlentis (1924), p. 11, n.3; Vavatsioulas (2007), pp. 485, 531. The *loggia* could also constitute a separate building at the *piazza* like in Skaros of Santorini, Ritzouli, (2016), p. 52.

⁴⁶³ 'Fortress cities (*kastra*) had to possess a certain amount of empty land, on which villagers from the surrounding countryside could be accommodated when, in the event of enemy attack, they sought refuge in the castle. There are references in other cases to empty spaces – where crops were cultivated – inside the castle, and at least a rudimentary *pomoerium* had to be left around the inside of the walls.', Bouras (2002), p. 508.



Fig. 98. The *piazza*, view from the west

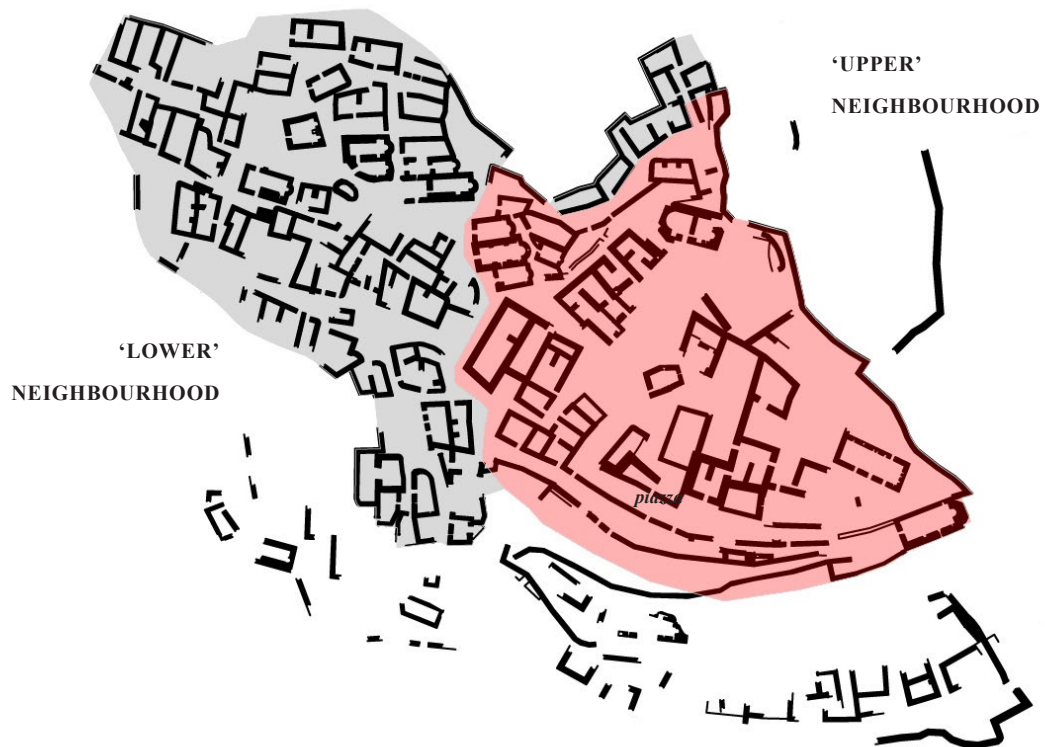


Fig. 99. The settlement's 'upper' and 'lower' neighbourhood

water tanks, ancillary (storerooms, stables etc.) and military buildings. Due to lack of space, there were no buildings associated with agricultural production processing within the walls. The relative needs of the inhabitants would most likely have been covered either by the *borgo* or by the neighbouring rural settlements of Koukounas and Messaria.

Considering the above, the upper level seems to be divided into two distinct parts,⁴⁶⁴ the ‘upper’ and the ‘lower’ neighbourhood (**Fig. 99**). These neighbourhoods are made up of individual building groups and are centred around the castle’s two main open areas. The ‘**upper**’ neighbourhood is centred around the *piazza* and consists of buildings that are on average larger and better built compared to those of the ‘lower’. This area most likely housed administrative or public functions as well as the residences of the local notables and the upper class. It contains also the settlement’s biggest churches and most of the cisterns. Furthermore, on either side of the *piazza*, built at key positions, i.e. either on rocky outcrops or in contact with cisterns, are two buildings whose structure, floor plan and the amount of material around their ruins, refer to towers (**33** and **35**).

The ‘**lower**’ neighbourhood was clustered around the settlement’s second open space in the northwest. Compared to the ‘upper’ neighbourhood, the structures here are more densely arranged in rows on either side of the streets. Most of them must have been of domestic character. The rows on the far south-west side were built against the upper-level curtain wall and can today be traced only at foundation level as large sections of the wall have collapsed down the crag. The buildings that are located on the two protrusions of the rock that look like natural bastions (on the north and south side) are arranged more freely, possibly due to the limitations of the topography. In many cases, their back walls identify with the curtain wall. It is possible that some of them were of non-domestic character, used for defensive or storage purposes (ammunition depots etc.).

⁴⁶⁴ A similar spatial organisation has been noted in other cases, e.g. the Byzantine Apalirou *Kastro* on Naxos, Hill (2018), p. 107.



Fig. 100. Building 35 from the south



Fig. 101. Building 35, the arched niche



Fig. 102. Building 33 from the west



Fig. 103. Building 33, the interior



Fig. 104. The Kato *Kastro* of Naxos by Choiseul-Gouffier, 1782, p. 39

6.2.1 Defensive and public buildings

Towers

The first building that could probably be identified as a tower is **35**. It stands at the *Kastro*'s highest point, on a rock outcrop to the north of the *piazza*. Its prominent location offered an overview of the whole area and was suitable for guarding the northern gate too. Building **35** is almost rectangular in plan with dimensions 8.00 x 6.65 m. Its walls are 0.85 to 1.00 m wide and are currently preserved about 0.50 to 1.00 m above ground level. The interior of the structure is currently filled with rubble and vegetation, but it seems to have been divided by three bizarrely arranged adjacent walls. The southern wall has an arched, 0.60 m deep niche of unknown use. In touch with the north-east corner are the remains of another 1.00 m wall that has different alignment than building **35**. It could possibly belong to an earlier phase. The state of preservation the whole is so poor that does not allow for more conclusions (**Figs 100, 101**).

The second tower-like structure (**33**) belongs to a complex of buildings on the south-east side of the square and lies between two cisterns (**c2, c3**). Its ground plan is nearly square with dimensions 7.50 x 7.60 m. The walls reach a maximum width of 1.70 m and are built with large semi-finished quoins. It is obvious that building **33** had at least two storeys. The ground floor was accessed through an opening to the south and was divided into two compartments by an 0.80 m thick wall. Another entrance to the northeast connected the tower to building **30** leading directly into its upper floor(s). Traces of mortar suggest that the interior was rendered. Most likely, this was the so-called keep or *donjon*, the central tower that since the Late Byzantine era formed the castle's last line of defence, to which the defenders would resort when all else failed and the enemies entered the town.⁴⁶⁵ Its position to the south of the *piazza* allowed it also to guard the path leading into the settlement and presumably the southern entry point (**Figs 102, 103**).

In the Latin *kastra* of the Cyclades the *donjon* was also used as the residence of the local lord, and it was one of the first buildings erected in any fortress, if not the first. Most characteristic and obviously the model for all others is Sanudo's tower in the

⁴⁶⁵ Philippa-Apostolou (2000), p. 29.



Fig. 105. The *cancelleria*, building 30



Fig. 106. The *cancelleria*, building 32



Fig. 107. The *cancelleria*, building 28



Fig. 108. The stone 'balcony'



Fig. 109. The layout of the administrative buildings of the *Kastro* around the *piazza*

Kato *Kastro* of Naxos. Although much bigger (dimensions 17.60 x 17.60 m, wall width 2.64 m) the now ruined *donjon* of Naxos was built by Marco I Sanudo on the *piazza* in the centre of the settlement. According to the sources its multiple storeys (height approx. 30 m) included a cistern in the basement, various reception rooms, offices as well as the quarters of the ducal family and their guards. The form of the tower is better documented from a lithograph by Choiseul-Gouffier in the 1780s that shows also the perimetric machicolation that existed in the second to last floor (**Fig. 104**).⁴⁶⁶ *Donjons* of more modest dimensions yet on average bigger than building **33** have survived in some of the *kastra* of Santorini and the *Kastro* of Antiparos.⁴⁶⁷ Due to its small size (inner area: approx. 24 m²) tower **33** is more likely to have had a predominantly defensive use at least during the last years of the *Latinokratia*.

The chancellery and the Gozzadini residence

The rest of the south-east building group comprises of three adjacent spaces (**30-32**) that each has an inner area of about 30 m² (**Figs 105, 106**). Their walls are about 1.00 m wide, built with big, roughly cut stone blocks bonded with clay. Building **30** communicated directly both with the tower (**33**) and the cistern (**c2**) on its south-west side (see section 7.3). In addition, an opening on its eastern side suggests that rooms **28** and **29** could have also belonged to the same complex. However, the state of preservation of all structures is very poor given that they lie at the modern entrance of the settlement which is one of the most disturbed areas of the *Kastro* (**Fig. 107**). Their outline is mostly covered by soil build-up, rubble and vegetation therefore their relationship cannot be safely determined. Nevertheless, their substantial dimensions and good building quality along with their prominent position on the *piazza* suggests that they were public, administrative buildings. They could possibly identify with the chancellery building, the so-called *cancelleria* which according to O.Vavatsioulas included the lord's council chambers, the archives, and other ceremonial halls and represented the town's secular authorities. Following Venice's model, chancellery buildings existed in Naxos and in other contemporary Latin *kastra*.⁴⁶⁸ That of Kato

⁴⁶⁶ Vavatsioulas (2007), pp. 186-189, 451-455.

⁴⁶⁷ Ritzouli (2016), pp. 67, 75, 135; Philippa-Apostolou (1978), pp. 38-45.

⁴⁶⁸ Vavatsioulas (2007), pp. 472-475, 531; Ritzouli (2016), p. 53.



Fig. 110. The Gozzadini manor (45-47), view from the east



Fig. 111. The interior of building 46

Kastro was a two-storey L-shaped building that was later connected to the *donjon*.⁴⁶⁹

The situation of rooms **28-33** greatly resembles that configuration (**Fig. 109**). Although traces of staircases were not found *in situ*, judging by the width of the walls, it is possible that these buildings had more than one floor too. Remains of mortar on the walls of buildings **30** and **32** show that their interior was rendered. Judging from the traveller's descriptions of the *cancellaria* of Naxos,⁴⁷⁰ this would have been one of the most elaborate buildings of the *Kastro*. Finally, it is worth noting that on the north-west corner of this building group, between buildings **32** and **35** there is a small stone 'balcony' of unknown use that projects about 1.00 m from the face of the wall (**Fig. 108**). Whether the area behind the 'balcony' belonged to an indoor or semi-outdoor space is not clear.

On a small mound to the west of the *piazza*, at the spatial and notional centre of the settlement, lies a second building group (**45-47**) that seems to have had a special use (**Figs 110, 111**). It consists of three elongated, adjacent structures aligned north to south with average dimensions 14.00 x 6.00 m. The walls are built with big, semi-dressed quoins bonded with clay and are about 1.00 m wide (**46, 47**). The overall state of preservation is again very poor, however, based on their central location,⁴⁷¹ dimensions and building quality these buildings could potentially be identified with the Gozzadini palaces mentioned in the sources.⁴⁷² Although it has a separate entrance from the street, building **44** could have also belonged to the same building group raising its overall ground floor area to about 200 m². Signs of staircases were once more not found *in situ*, but the width of the walls and the amount of rubble around the ruins suggest the existence of at least another storey. Judging from the construction joints in the masonry it seems that the central building **46** was built first while buildings **44, 45** and **47** were added later. One more cistern (**c4**) lies to the southeast in close proximity to the complex.

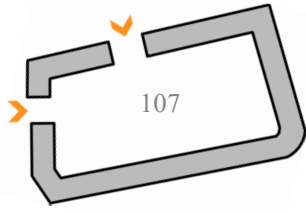
The situation of the lord's residence outside the central keep has also been noted in Naxos in the late 14th century, when the Crispi took over the rule from the Sanudi

⁴⁶⁹ Vavatsioulas (2007), p. 190.

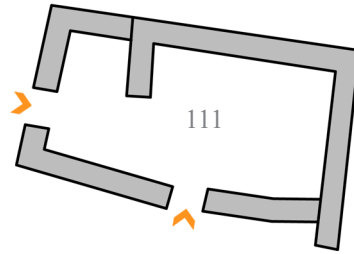
⁴⁷⁰ Coronelli (1690), p. 232; Curtius (1846), p. 32.

⁴⁷¹ Vionis (2006), p. 487.

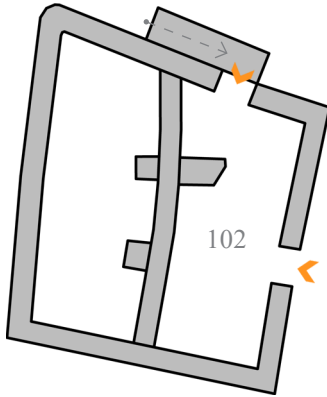
⁴⁷² Former Archivio Gozzadini. Fasc. 33 no7, now Archivio Gozzadini, b.138, n.7; Ersch and Grüber (1863), p. 420.



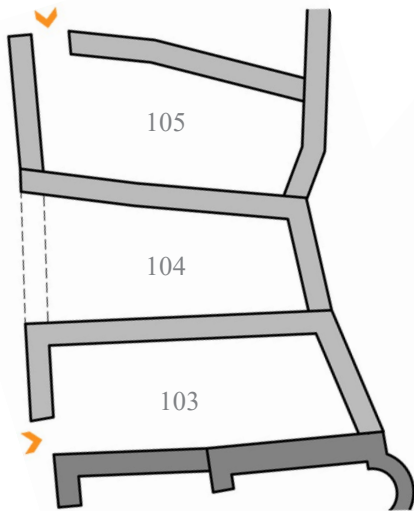
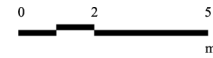
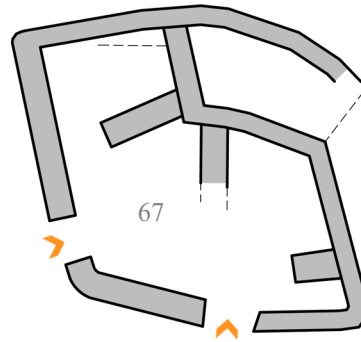
1a. free-standing, single-cell house



1b. free-standing house with partition wall



3. 'block house'



2. linear terraced house

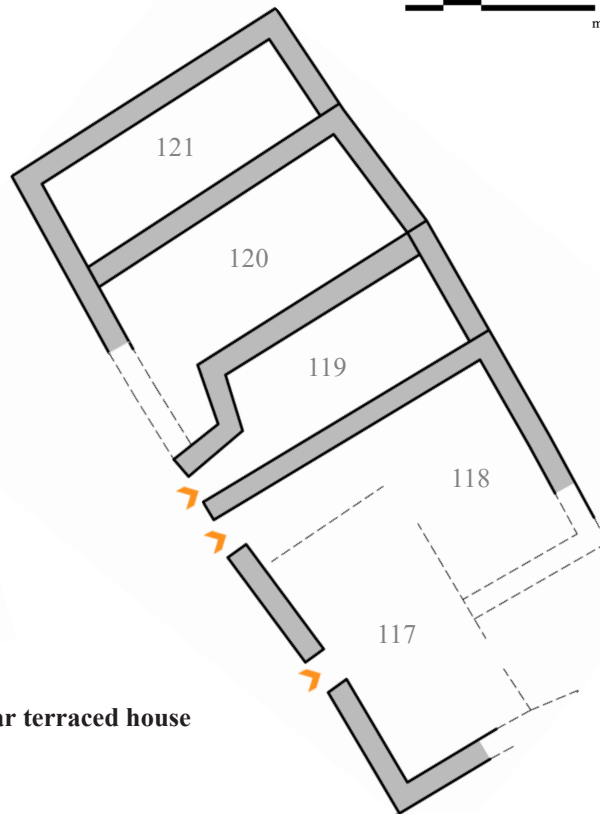


Fig. 112. Different house types recorded in *Oria Kastro*

and moved the ducal household to a grand residence by the *kastro*'s main gate.⁴⁷³ Something relevant could have happened in Oria too when the island was passed on from the Castelli to the Gozzadini in 1336. It is always possible, however, that the *palazzo* of the Gozzadini identified with buildings **28-32** by the *donjon* and the *cancelleria* with **45-47**. The use of the other buildings on the *piazza* is yet to be identified.

6.2.2 Domestic buildings

About 90 structures of – potentially – domestic use have been identified in the *Kastro*. [|plan A06|](#) A single number was given on the site plan to two or more rooms which obviously belonged to the same domestic unit, however, in many cases where a clear connection was not apparent, the different adjacent structures were individually numbered. That may have resulted in a slight increase of the number of houses, however, bearing in mind that there are still several structures in Oria that due to their poor state of preservation remain either unnumbered or unrecorded (e.g. in the western lower level) the total counting should not be too far off the mark.

Overall, three main house types were recorded: free-standing oblong structures either single-cell or with partition walls (e.g. **107, 111**), linear terraced structures (e.g. **103-105**) and ‘block houses’, i.e. quadrilateral self-contained domestic units that probably belonged to owners of a higher social stratum (e.g. **102**) (**Fig. 112**). The average surface area of the first two was about 30 m², while the ‘block houses’ reached more than twice that size (external area: 60-80 m²). Situated mostly in the *Kastro*'s southern, most protected side, these bigger houses do not seem to cluster right next to another creating a distinct ‘upper class’ neighbourhood nor are they associated with the peripheral towers of the wall like the *palazzi* of the nobles did in the Kato *Kastro* of Naxos.⁴⁷⁴

⁴⁷³ Vavatsioulas (2007), p. 490.

⁴⁷⁴ Vavatsioulas (2007), pp. 488-490.

It is not clear whether the houses in the *Kastro* had one or more storeys. No staircases were found in the ‘upper’ neighbourhood, but the existence of rooms with no obvious openings (e.g. **42**) suggests that at least some of the buildings were two-storeyed. In that case, the main door would have been located on the upper floor while the ground floor would have been accessed through a trapdoor in the upper storey. Remains of staircases were found only in some cases in the western area of the settlement where the slope of the terrain is considerably steeper, and the structures had to compensate for it within their basements (**98**, **102**, **113**, **123** and **126**). They were external stone staircases about 1.00-1.50 m wide that led from the street level to the elevated entrance of the building. Internal staircases, either wooden or stone, connecting the buildings’ different levels, although not documented, would certainly have existed. Similar configurations are found in most other contemporary Cycladic *kastra* (e.g. Kato and Apano *Kastro* of Naxos, Antiparos, Kimolos, the *kastra* of Santorini etc.).⁴⁷⁵

Most buildings were accessed through a single doorway placed either in their long or narrow side, however, there are several cases with two or even three entrances (e.g. **107**, **92**). In general, the structures follow a mostly rectangular shape but some curved or at an angle walls have also been recorded especially in the ‘lower’ neighbourhood. Currently there is no information on the function or context of rooms within the houses with the exception of two rooms in buildings **48** and **92** which had fireplaces and obviously corresponded to kitchens/living quarters. In the single-cell units the space would have been multifunctional while in the bigger, two-storeyed houses it is possible that the upper storey was used as living quarters and the ground floor as a cellar (storing of foodstuffs and/or agricultural produce).

In conclusion, counting an average of five persons in every household Oria seems to have housed approximately 450 people. However, the capacity of the *Kastro* is possible to have been bigger if we assume that a portion of the dwellings had two or even three storeys belonging to different households (horizontal property) as was the case in the *kastra* of Antiparos and Kimolos⁴⁷⁶ and possibly in Naxos too.⁴⁷⁷

⁴⁷⁵ Vavatsioulas (2007); Vionis (2012); Philippa-Apostolou (1978); Ritzouli (2016).

⁴⁷⁶ Philippa-Apostolou (1978), pp. 310-339.

⁴⁷⁷ Vavatsioulas (2007), pp. 492-493.

6.2.3 Churches

There were at least⁴⁷⁸ 19 churches and chapels at Oria; 12 in the upper level, one in lower and five more which were not built within the *Kastro* walls but were clearly associated with it. They are numbered **ch1** to **ch19** on the site plan as in most cases there is no evidence of their names. Compared to the dwellings the churches were better built and therefore better preserved today, being the settlement's most recognisable buildings. The local tradition claims that the *Kastro* had 100 churches,⁴⁷⁹ while according to another version they were 365 in total, one for each day of the year.⁴⁸⁰ Similar traditions are common for other medieval settlements on the Aegean islands, e.g. Paliochora on Kythera.

For Paliochora, however, there is also another tradition that states that each family had its own church, which according to G. Ince and A. Ballantyne who studied the settlement, may not be too far off the mark. Prominent families on Kythera would traditionally build numerous churches and as subsequent generations would add new churches either alongside their family chapel or even on top of it, the three or four-church groups we see today in Paliochora and elsewhere on the island were created.⁴⁸¹ According to Orlandos, most of the Post-Byzantine churches of Paros were likewise privately owned as can be attested by their small dimensions, their nearby siting and most importantly the surviving dedicatory inscriptions. Quite often, they served also as the benefactor's and his family's final resting place.⁴⁸²

Oria's churches do not appear to refer to individual neighbourhoods,⁴⁸³ as most of them (10 out of 13) are clustered in the north-western part of the settlement facing towards the main road that run through it with direction east to west. Some are free-standing and some are located at the end of bigger linear terraced complexes.

⁴⁷⁸ Buildings **2**, **25** and **84** which have inscribed apses oriented to the east could also have been churches.

⁴⁷⁹ Vallindas (1882), pp. 47-48.

⁴⁸⁰ Gerola (1926), p. 16 [58]. The same is traditionally claimed for most Cycladic islands, Dimitrokallis (2004), p. 9.

⁴⁸¹ Ince and Ballantyne (2007), pp. 10, 20-21.

⁴⁸² Orlandos (1961), pp. 119-121.

⁴⁸³ In the contemporary Kephalos *Kastro* in Paros Vionis identified six 'neighbourhoods' that were centred around the site's six churches, Vionis (2012), pp. 145-146.



a) Panagia Eleousa (ch5)



b) ch12



c) ch15



d) Agia Triada (ch9)

Fig. 113. Churches in Oria *Kastro* (a-d)

Although rather unusual,⁴⁸⁴ a similar clustering occurs also in the contemporary *kastro* of Paroikia on Paros.⁴⁸⁵ In all likelihood several of Oria's churches, especially the smaller ones, were tributes of prominent residents, built on their own plots or wherever there was room available.⁴⁸⁶ Dedicatory inscriptions and grave plaques⁴⁸⁷ that would confirm the churches' private nature have not survived in the *Kastro*, however, in that context, the situation of many of them along the sites' main street where they would have been visible to everyone may be far from incidental.⁴⁸⁸ Vallindas points out the existence of approximately 20 private churches in Messaria in the 1880s, which could reflect the continuation of this church-building tradition on the island.⁴⁸⁹ Even nowadays the care of these buildings is considered by the Kythnians a manifestation of both devotion and social status.

Most of them are in such a bad condition that it is impossible to identify whether they were Catholic or Orthodox, or which saint they were dedicated to. Only two are currently known by name, Panagia Eleousa (**ch5**) and Agia Triada (**ch9**). Except for **ch19**, all churches of the *Kastro* belong to the single-cell barrel-vaulted type, with and without narthexes. They have modest dimensions (average area of 40 m², spans 2.20-4.00 m), while some are accompanied by one or more chapels. The superstructure is preserved intact only in the churches of Panagia Eleousa and Agia Triada, which were both covered with slightly pointed barrel-vaults supported by strainer arches. Judging from the remains on the roof of Agia Triada it seems that the barrel-vaults were covered with a symmetrical pitched slate-covered roof, its ridge running along the church's axis.⁴⁹⁰ The rest were covered either with semi-circular vaults or with vaults constructed with the corbelling technique. Finally, a few remaining beam sockets suggest that at least a couple of chapels were covered with flat roofs.

⁴⁸⁴ On the location and function of churches see Gerstel (2015), pp. 29-31.

⁴⁸⁵ Orlandos (1961), pp. 118-119, fig. 2.

⁴⁸⁶ The location of churches **11-16** in the 'lower' neighbourhood may suggest a later expansion of the settlement towards the west (see also section 9.3.2).

⁴⁸⁷ Arched niches, however, that most likely correspond to arcosolia were found in **ch4**, **ch6**, **ch12** and **ch13**.

⁴⁸⁸ On the siting of churches along roads either within the settlement or in its immediate environs see Gerstel (2015), pp. 23-25 and Nixon (2006), p. 22.

⁴⁸⁹ Vallindas (1882), p. 35.

⁴⁹⁰ Slate or tile-covered roofs on barrel-vaults can be found in churches on Aegina, Naxos, Kythera and elsewhere, Ince and Ballantyne (2007), p. 10.



Fig. 114. Cisterns in Oria *Kastro* (a-e)

In most cases, the apse of the sanctuary protrudes from the main body of the church and is either semi-circular, stilted or segmental. Only the apse of Eleousa church is five-sided. There are also two double-apsed churches in the settlement that had their apses inscribed in the width of the east wall (**ch6**, **ch15**). Today, Agia Triada is the only church that preserves part of its painted decoration, however, until the beginning of the 20th century remains of frescoes were still visible on the vault of Eleousa.⁴⁹¹ Faint traces of red pigment in **ch2** and **ch4** suggest that they were also painted and most likely that was the case for the rest of the churches too. The most important and better-preserved churches and chapels are described in detail in chapter 7.

6.2.4 Cisterns

A total of seven cisterns has been documented in the *Kastro*. They are all distributed across the upper level (six in the ‘upper’ and one in the ‘lower’ neighbourhood),⁴⁹² however, traces of pink hydraulic mortar left on the rocks to the west of the main gate suggest that the lower level had at least one cistern too. Although the size and form of the upper-level cisterns vary, most of them are in a relatively good condition, still preserving their superstructure and holding rainwater. Four are built below ground, two abut other buildings, and there is also a very small one (**c6**) that was inserted into a gap within the wall of a chapel (**Fig. 114**).

The masonry of the cisterns was solid, bound with strong lime mortar, while their interior was rendered with a heavy layer of *kourasani*, i.e. pink, hydraulic mortar made from crushed tiles and ceramics, that rendered them watertight. Cisterns **1**, **3**, **4** and **5** that are almost intact, have vaulted roofs with a small rectangular opening (approx. 0.35 x 0.60 m) at the top presumably for lowering a bucket as well as for inspection and cleaning of the interior. The superstructure of cisterns **2** and **7** has collapsed, but it seems that at least **c2** was covered with a barrel-vault too. Although they are mostly collapsed today, cisterns **4**, **5** and **7** had narrow stairs, i.e. stone slabs projecting from the face of the wall, to enable descent to their interior.

⁴⁹¹ Gerola (1926), p. 17 [59].

⁴⁹² Despite being more densely built, only one cistern was found in the ‘lower’ neighbourhood. **C7** is a relatively small, bean-shaped structure situated on the axis of the central road, apparently to harvest and store the water running down the slope (**Fig. 114e**).

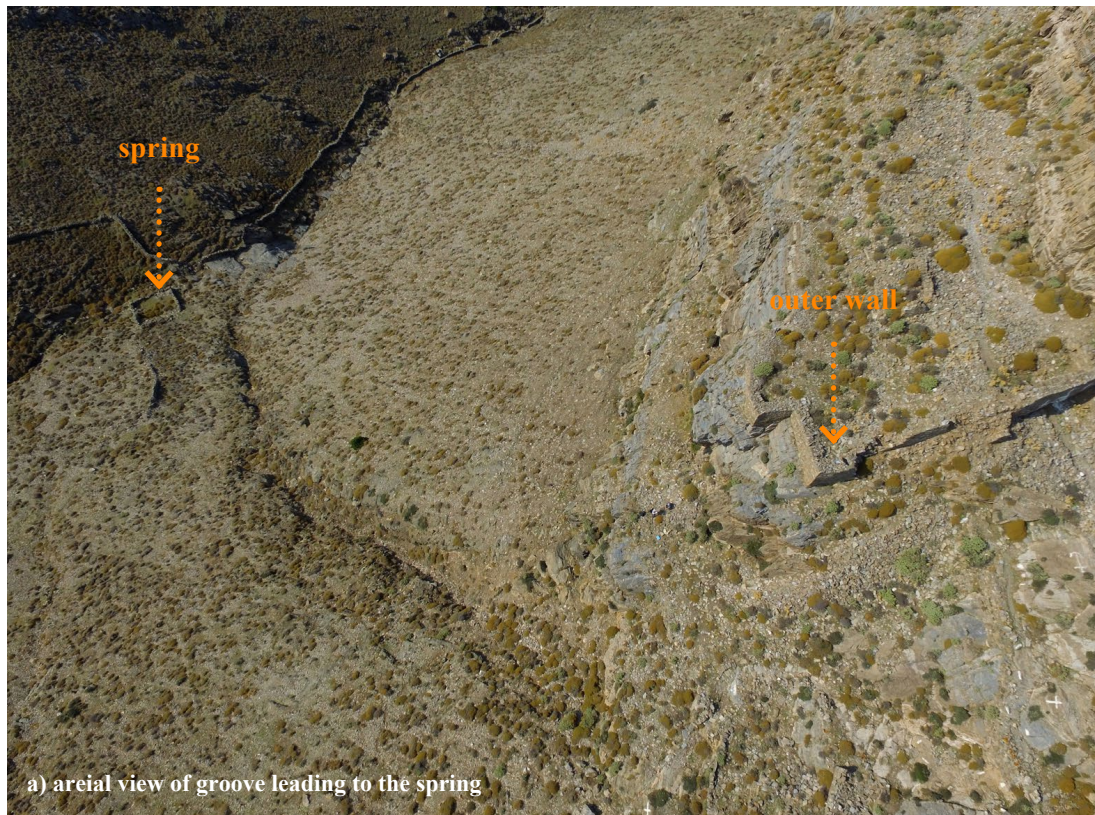


Fig. 115. The spring at Gialoudi (a-d)

All cisterns in Oria were most likely public as they do not appear to be connected to specific domestic buildings. Nevertheless, the existence of some private ones incorporated into the basements of larger buildings, currently covered by the rubble, cannot be ruled out.⁴⁹³ How the runoff water was channelled into the cisterns is unclear. The gutters and channels that would certainly have existed have either collapsed along with the upper floors of the buildings or are today covered by rubble and soil build-up. At any rate, the channel system of Oria would not have been very extended considering that the total number of cisterns is rather small, especially compared to other contemporary cases e.g. Apalirou *Kastro* on Naxos.⁴⁹⁴ Their limited number suggests that the inhabitants of the *Kastro* did not have to rely heavily on this water harvesting and storage system because they had access to extra-mural water.

Indeed, in Gialoudi bay to the south, there is a ravine with a spring and according to Vallindas, there was a covered tunnel, still visible at his time, that connected it to Oria so that the inhabitants could have access to water even during a siege situation.⁴⁹⁵ Today, there are no obvious traces of a built tunnel leading out of the walls to the spring. There is, however, a deep groove dug on the south side of the castle rock, right below the outer wall (**Fig. 115a, b**). This groove is about 2.50 m wide and more than 2.00 m deep and appears to be manmade with remains of walls in its interior. It leads about 130 m downslope to the ravine, to a large structure with external dimensions approximately 10.45 x 9.80 m. The interior of the structure is today filled up with soil; however, its south-west corner is occupied by a cistern full of water (**Fig. 115c, d**). The cistern is accessed through a 1.54 m wide pointed arch that is built with white lime mortar and rendered with *kourasani*. It seems that the arch belongs to the original phase of the spring building while the rest of the structure was rebuilt later by the local shepherds and farmers who reused the stones of the initial building. Its original form and dimensions cannot be determined without clearing of vegetation and excavation.

⁴⁹³ A large number of private cisterns attached to houses or built into their basements has been documented in the Byzantine Apalirou *Kastro* on Naxos, Hill (2018), p. 112. The same has been noted in the Kato *Kastro* of Naxos, Vavatsioulas (2007), pp. 458-459 and in the *kastra* of Santorini, Ritzouli (2016), p. 179. Due to the continuous use of the latter, however, their dating is not secure.

⁴⁹⁴ More than 50 cisterns, both private and public, have been documented at Apalirou, see Hill (2018), pp. 112-114. In contrast to that, only one cistern was found at Paliochora in Kythera, see Ince et al. (1987), p. 106. Apano *Kastro* on Naxos had 14 and Kephalos on Paros just three, see Vionis (2012), pp. 137, 146.

⁴⁹⁵ Vallindas (1882), p. 47.

Further up the ravine, there are the remains of yet another cistern (plan A02). According to the locals, the area around the spring was used until very recently, nevertheless, it is obvious that the people of the *Kastro* had created a water harvesting system there to cover their needs. Finally, a spring and the ruins of at least one cistern were found at Sclavos bay, to the north (see section 8.3). However, given that the distance between the *Kastro* and Sclavos is considerably longer, we can assume that the water collected and stored there, covered the needs of the port and was not intended for the inhabitants of Oria.

6.3 Form and architectural features

6.3.1 Roofing

The buildings of the *Kastro* were covered either with flat roofs or with vaults. Although no upper floors have survived, it is possible that in the case of two-storeyed buildings the ground floor was vaulted while the upper floor was covered with a roof. A few surviving beam sockets suggest that the roofs were most likely flat, supported by transverse beams that were bedded in the walls. Smaller rafters, schist plaques, and/or layers of reeds and seaweeds were probably placed upon the beams and the whole was then covered by a thick layer of rammed earth.⁴⁹⁶ Nevertheless, the existence of some pitched roofs that were covered with tiles, cannot be excluded. This hypothesis is based on some beam socket traces in certain walls and tile sherds found in the area. Overall, three types of barrel-vaults were recorded in Oria: pointed (**ch5**, **ch9**), semi-circular (**36**) and segmental (**c2**). Moreover, even though they are collapsed now, some churches seem to have been covered with vaults constructed with the corbelling technique.⁴⁹⁷

⁴⁹⁶ This construction was still in use in Kythnos until very recently. The flat roofs of the so-called ‘*kelia*’, the small rural buildings that are scattered around the island, were built in that way before the introduction of cement. It was also common for most other Cycladic islands, see Filippidis (2001), pp. 226-227, 234-235.

⁴⁹⁷ The vault of the church of Panagia at the area of Galiou (possible site of Fermentia) is also corbelled. Vasiliadis noted the same construction technique in the church of Taxiarchis in Dryopida, Vasiliadis (1962), p. 121.

6.3.2 Openings, niches and fireplaces

Regardless of the size or use of the building, the openings of the entrances across the settlement range between 0.90-1.00 m with only few exceptions.⁴⁹⁸ Most of the door lintels have now collapsed and only in two churches (**ch5** and **ch15**) is the door opening completely preserved. The dimensions of the windows, where they survive, vary (width: 0.15-0.90 m). Many buildings had niches of various dimensions built into the walls for storage purposes. Irrespective of their size, all preserved openings (doors, windows, niches and cabinets, cistern openings etc.) are made entirely out of stone, perhaps due to lack of timber. Presumably, their size was determined not only by the use of each building but also by the availability of suitable stone slabs.

Fireplaces were recorded only in two domestic units,⁴⁹⁹ which most likely correspond to residences of affluent owners (**48**, **92**). Nevertheless, the existence of more hearths located in the now collapsed upper floors of the buildings or currently buried under the rubble cannot be excluded.⁵⁰⁰ The fireplaces and their chimneys were formed with stones at the corners of the rooms. An interesting feature are the thin slabs, that protrude slightly above the firebox forming a mantel. In both surviving cases, there is also a small niche in the wall next to the hearth. [|plan B08|](#)

6.3.3 Decorative features

Unfortunately, Oria does not preserve many decorative features. As Tournefort characteristically said comparing the site to Vryokastro, '(Oria) affords no remains of anything grand'.⁵⁰¹ Except for a few marble *spolia* which were incorporated into some – presumably important – buildings, there are barely any dressed stones bearing engravings or decorations. The absence of decorated stonework as found at Chora on Naxos could suggest that the castle housed a rather modest community, with limited

⁴⁹⁸ E.g. the entrance of building **36** is 0.70 m wide while the door of **ch15** is just 0.60 m. On the other hand, in the administration complex (**32**) one opening reaches 2.00 m and in building **76** the door is 1.80 m wide.

⁴⁹⁹ Just one fireplace has been recorded in Paliochora on Kythera, Ince and Ballantyne (2007), p. 17.

⁵⁰⁰ Fireplaces were found even in the single-cell houses of the Kato *Kastro* of Naxos, Vavatsioulas (2007), p. 492.

⁵⁰¹ Tournefort (1718), p. 252.

resources, whose main concern was safety and survival. The only buildings that received some extra care were the religious ones. Therefore today, the only samples of stone-made cornices with mouldings or other kinds of decorative elements are found in the churches.

On the other hand, it is always possible that there were more, but they were removed by the locals after the abandonment of the *Kastro*. The soft poros stone they were made of enabled their easy transport. Given the long-term abandonment of the site, the removal of usable building material could have continued for several centuries. A consistent removal of dressed stones and other material has been noted in Apalirou *Kastro* too.⁵⁰² Overall, we are left with the impression of a modest display of material culture in the decoration and appearance of the domestic and the religious buildings in Oria. Nevertheless, that does not necessarily reflect lack of ambition and means on the part of the Gozzadini lords specifically, as the same scarcity can be observed in other contemporary abandoned *kastra*, e.g. Apano *Kastro* on Naxos or Kephalos on Paros.

6.4 Building materials and techniques

Kythnos is rocky and barren with barely any woodland; the only material found in abundance on the island is stone. Its ground is composed of various types of crystalline slates (metamorphic rock) with intervening marble horizons.⁵⁰³ Although there is only limited information about the island's natural landscape during the Middle Ages,⁵⁰⁴ it would be safe to assume that the situation was not much different; '(...) as for wood, they have none to speak of, so they burn nothing but stubble.' says Tournefort in the 1700s.⁵⁰⁵ Oria *Kastro* was therefore built almost exclusively with local rubble stones. Timber was used sparingly, and mortar was reserved only for important public buildings and the circuit walls. Apparently, imported building materials were a rare luxury, so building methods and techniques were very local with only few exceptions.

⁵⁰² Hill (2018), pp. 110-111.

⁵⁰³ Mazarakis (2019), p.11.

⁵⁰⁴ As mentioned, according to the local tradition there was a time when the island desolate from inhabitants was covered with woods, Vallindas (1896), p. 61.

⁵⁰⁵ Tournefort (1718), p. 250.

6.4.1 Masonry

For the building of Oria were used local gneiss shale, poros, and a few marble *spolia*, incorporated into some buildings as decorative features. The gneiss shale is a hard and durable rock that is difficult to dress.⁵⁰⁶ It exists in abundance in the *Kastro* area and so it was used for all masonries and vaults. As a result, the settlement is today fully integrated into the landscape and the ruins can barely be distinguished from their environs. Originally, however, Oria would have looked very different as the exterior of many buildings was rendered making them visible from afar. Poros (coquina) is a porous and soft stone, that can be very easily dressed, becoming suitable for decorative details. It was brought to the *Kastro* from a small quarry about 4.5 km away.⁵⁰⁷ Nevertheless, it is not very durable therefore it was used only in specific cases, mainly in churches. Architectural features such as cornices, lintels or the voussoirs of the arch of the sanctuary, which were intended to be dressed or carved, were made of poros blocks and remained uncoated.

There are several marble pieces in the settlement, embedded mainly in public buildings. They are ancient or Early Christian *spolia*, parts of columns or other architectural fragments, that were either found *in situ* (it is possible that they belonged to an earlier settlement at the same spot) or were brought to the *Kastro* from another site. The incorporation of *spolia* into new buildings was common practice in the Middle Ages and can also be observed in other contemporary *kastra* in the Cyclades (e.g. the castle of Paroikia on Paros), presumably both for utilitarian and symbolic reasons i.e. attempting to add prestige to the new structure.⁵⁰⁸

All walls in the *Kastro* were constructed with naturally occurring or roughly hewn rubble stones and their width ranges from 0.45 to 2.40 m. They were roughly coursed and although throughstones connecting the two faces of the walls were scarce, more regularly hewn headers and stretchers were usually used at the corners. Small, flat stones and occasionally pottery sherds were used as pinnings for coursing and stability. Wooden reinforcements were not found in Oria.⁵⁰⁹ In many cases, the

⁵⁰⁶ Although it can be extracted as flat beds, it is difficult to dress the vertical joints.

⁵⁰⁷ Vallindas (1882), p. 13.

⁵⁰⁸ Philippa-Apostolou (2000), p. 33.

⁵⁰⁹ Contrary to Kato *Kastro* of Naxos where wooden reinforcements were found in the walls of houses that were thicker than 0.60 m, Vavatsioulas (2007), p. 494.

buildings' walls that faced downslope were considerably thicker than the rest in order to retain the structure and bear effectively the thrusts of the vaults. Occasionally, some particular buttressing walls were added in the interior of the buildings in the western part of the settlement. Their form and sizes vary, however, in most cases they seem to be of lesser building quality. Presumably they were added to reinforce failing or problematic areas (e.g. bulging or out of plumb walls and cracked vaults). In two churches (**ch6**, **ch12**), not just piers but a whole second masonry skin was added. Perhaps all these additions were made after an earthquake that caused extended structural failures.

6.4.2 Vaults

All barrel vaults, regardless of their form, were built with roughly hewn rubble stones bonded with lime mortar. Their thickness ranged from 0.30 to 0.38 m. The surviving beam sockets in the walls indicate that they were constructed using wooden forms. In the case of pointed barrel vaults, a certain sophistication in their strengthening has been noted with the use of buttressing arches. These arches were carried either on pilasters or consoles that projected slightly from the inner face of the long walls. The buttressing function they provided was to increase the width of the wall to better contain the thrust from the roof; a minor expression of hierarchy and sophistication in the structural performance of the wall and vault system often found in Western churches of the period. The extrados of the vault was covered with a symmetrical pitched slate-covered roof, its ridge running along the building's axis. [|plan B09|](#)

Although mostly collapsed nowadays, it seems that several vaults in Oria were constructed with the corbelling technique, i.e. each course of stone would project a little inwards from the course below, gradually diverging from the vertical, resulting in a narrow opening at the top, easily spanned with a slab.⁵¹⁰ The width of the opening was determined by the length of the available slabs, yet in this case it would not easily have exceeded a total of 1.50 m. A thick layer of rammed earth was applied on top and the whole provided the necessary load to stabilise the corbelling, without

⁵¹⁰ The local name on Kythnos for this construction technique was '*kremasi*' or '*nichi*', Vasiliadis (1962), p. 121, n.37.

the need to strengthen the spandrels of the vault. [|plan B10|](#) This roofing method was less durable compared to the one using centring, however, it saved greatly on the use of timber and mortar. It was widespread in the Aegean area during the Middle Ages not only for religious but also for domestic and rural buildings.⁵¹¹

6.4.3 Timber

Timber beams were used for the roofing of the buildings that were not vaulted. For smaller and humbler structures local timber, the so-called '*fides*' (local name for *Juniperus turbinata*), would most likely have been used. According to tradition, *fides* grew in abundance on Kythnos in the Middle Ages and even today there is a small area overgrown with that small tree near the *Kastro*. Although quite hard and durable, *fides* hardly ever grow more than 5.00 m high and their trunk is thin (about 0.20 m) and twisty. Maybe this is the reason why the span of most rooms in the *Kastro* ranges between 1.50 and 4.00 m. Imported timber, most likely cypress,⁵¹² suitable for bridging larger openings, would have been used for larger and more prominent buildings, e.g. the Gozzadini residence (45-47) or the *cancelleria* (28-32). No wooden parts are preserved today in Oria, possibly due to the fire that according to the local tradition followed the castle's fall.⁵¹³ It is equally possible, however, that all useable and valuable building materials was gradually taken away by the inhabitants when they relocated to Messaria.

6.4.4 Bonding materials

Most of the structures on the *Kastro* were built using either drystone techniques or earth and possibly clay as a bonding material. [|plan B11|](#) Lime mortar was reserved for special buildings such as churches, cisterns and the perimeter walls. In some

⁵¹¹ For contemporary examples in other islands see Sigala in Crow and Hill (2018), pp. 355-370 and Vasiliadis (1962), pp. 121-122.

⁵¹² Duke Giacomo I Crispo is known to have imported cypress wood from Crete, Miller (1908), p. 598. Cypress beams were also found *in situ* in the Kato *Kastro* of Naxos covering the great halls of the most prominent houses and are also mentioned by various travellers' descriptions of the roof of the *cancelleria*, Vavatsioulas (2007), pp. 474, 495.

⁵¹³ Ross (1840), p. 113.



Fig. 116. Hydraulic mortar (*kourasani*) applied to the interior of c4

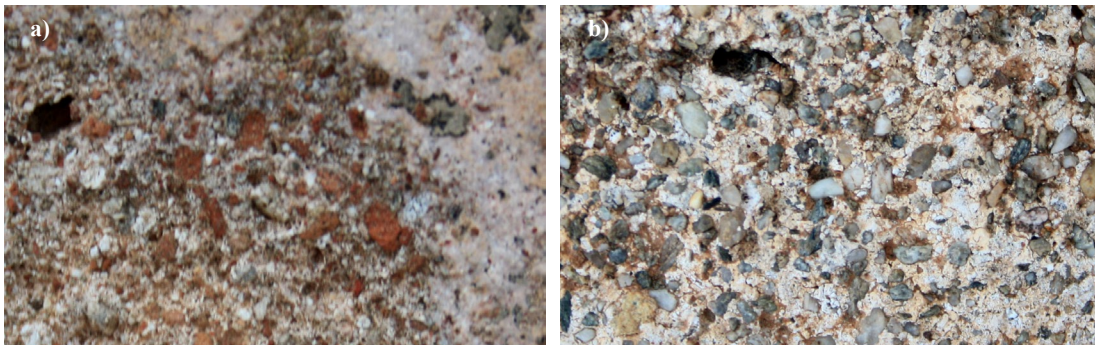


Fig. 117. Lime mortar with brick inclusions (a) and with sea sand inclusions (b)



Fig. 118. Rendering remains at building 30

cases, clay was mixed with lime mortar while in others mortar was applied only on the external face of a wall to seal the earth and clay bonding within.⁵¹⁴ White lime mortar was also used in the vault construction for binding the voussoirs together. Insulation was achieved by a layer of lime mortar on the vault extrados, followed by a thick layer of pink hydraulic mortar (approx. 1.5-2.5 cm). [|plan B09|](#) Finally, another layer of white mortar (approx. 1.5 cm) was applied to secure the roof slates. Hydraulic mortar with brick inclusions (*kourasani*) was also used in the interior of the cisterns. [|plan B12|](#)

Although there is only sporadic evidence today, it would be safe to assume that the interior of the living quarters of most buildings was rendered (**Fig. 118**). The ancillary rooms of the lower levels on the other hand could have been left bare as was the case in other *kastra*.⁵¹⁵ The exterior of the buildings was rendered with layers of off-white lime mortar. Except for being aesthetically more pleasing, this external layer of mortar would prevent the clay and earth bonding from being washed out.

⁵¹⁴ See also Hill (2018), pp. 106-107.

⁵¹⁵ Vavatsioulas (2007), p. 495.



Fig. 119. Panagia Eleousa (ch5), west elevation

7 Study of individual buildings

Some of the most characteristic and better-preserved buildings of the settlement were chosen to be studied in more detail and were therefore surveyed at the scales of 1:50, 1:10 and 1:5 (architectural details). Most of them are situated in the ‘upper’ neighbourhood as this area offers a greater variety of uses and forms. It was attempted to include at least one example from all different building types i.e. dwellings, public buildings, churches and cisterns, however, the churches form the majority of the surveyed buildings due to their better state of preservation. Overall, despite the building debris and vegetation that hampered the survey, the detailed measured drawings allowed the understanding of the form and structure of the Oria buildings and in certain cases led to some preliminary conclusions regarding their function and approximate chronology.

7.1 Panagia Eleousa (ch5) |plans B13, B14, B15|

The most dominant structure one sees today when ascending the *Kastro* hill is the church of Panagia Eleousa (Our Lady of Mercy), also known as Keraleousa or Kyraleousa to the locals. Eleousa is the best-preserved building of Oria and the only one we have some written records about. In addition, it is the only building that is still in use today.⁵¹⁶ Although it is now Orthodox, the church was originally Catholic and it can almost certainly be identified with the church of *S. Marie de Leusa* which is first mentioned in 1617 as the cathedral of the Latin see of Kea, Thermia and Sifnos.⁵¹⁷

Its foundation date is unknown, however, Eleousa could possibly have been the first Latin church of the *Kastro*, erected shortly after Kythnos was incorporated to the Aegean Duchy to establish the new order and cater the needs of the first Catholic inhabitants. Its prominent location at the upper level walls, clear geometry and good

⁵¹⁶ Panagia Eleousa is celebrated annually on 23 August. The liturgy is followed by a feast, the so-called ‘*panigiri*’.

⁵¹⁷ Eubel (1913), p. 333.

building quality indicate as much.⁵¹⁸ In the Kato *Kastro* of Naxos the so-called *Capella Casazza* the first Catholic establishment and the Duke's personal chapel (*capella gentilizia*) was also built at the highest level of one of the fortification's towers. Until the erection of the Catholic cathedral on the *piazza* in the late 13th century the chapel is thought to have had a more public use.⁵¹⁹ A similar configuration is noted also in Skaros and Pyrgos in Santorini; in both cases the lord's family chapel was the first Catholic nucleus until the erection of the bigger central cathedral and was situated at some distance from the *donjon* (40-50 m) by the inner enceinte wall.⁵²⁰ In that light the church of Eleousa could have also served as the chapel of the lord's family.

After the ousting of the Gozzadini, the church remained in Catholic hands at least until the early 1700s. According to the Propaganda reports mass was performed there throughout the 17th century, although from 1650 on the cathedral was apparently renamed to *St. Antonio Abbate*.⁵²¹ However, as the Latin population of Kythnos dwindled, the church fell into neglect and in the early 18th century the Jesuit Father I.X. Portier noted the ruinous state of Oria's Latin churches.⁵²² On the contrary, in the mid-19th century, Vallindas observed the good condition of the building and its function as an Orthodox church dedicated to Panagia Eleousa: '(...) the Keraleousa church preserves both its walls and vaulted roof in a good condition, so that liturgies are performed here in honour of the image of Panagia Eleousa which is held in high regard amongst the locals. Noteworthy is a white marble plaque placed above the

⁵¹⁸ The dedication of a Latin church to Panagia Eleousa, an Orthodox epithet, may seem rather unusual, yet a contemporary Panagia Eleousa can be found in the Anokastro of Melos. Although that chapel is today incorporated to the later (17th/18th century) Panagia Thalassitra church, it was built initially as a church of the Catholic rite dating most likely to the Late Medieval period. The door lintel bears the arms of the Crispi family and the church's renovation date of 1552, Sanders (1996), p. 150; Vionis (2012), p. 152. The dedication of Catholic churches to Orthodox saints was customary in Tenos too as can be deduced from a church catalogue of 1642. Even though there is no listing of an Eleousa there, the epithets of several Latin churches dedicated to the Virgin were apparently Orthodox, Dimitrokallis (2004), pp. 106-107.

⁵¹⁹ Vavatsioulas (2007), pp. 462-463.

⁵²⁰ Ritzouli (2016), pp. 51, 139.

⁵²¹ The apostolic vicar Polla writes that when visiting the island, he would say mass in the Latin cathedral of the *Kastro* that was dedicated to St. Antonio Abbate, Slot (1974), p. 119-120. The same is mentioned by Sebastiani in 1667, Sebastiani (1687), p. 97, and Gustiniani in 1700 who adds that the church was used rarely due its distance from the new capital, Markopoli (1895), p. 126. The existence of another cathedral within the *Kastro* seems very unlikely, so a double dedication could be a possible explanation.

⁵²² Roussos-Milidonis (1989), p. 84.

lintel of the door that bears the faint inscription “ΝΓΔΝΟΥ 1738”, which I think reads “Ν. Γοζαδίνου 1738”, who being a descendant of the noble Gozzadini house, was probably the one who repaired the church that was built by his forebearers when they held the island.⁵²³ Quite possibly Eleousa was also turned into Orthodox in 1738 given that the Latin church of Kythnos had long since come to an end (1716). The marble plaque mentioned by Vallindas is lost today, however, in 1910 it was seen by Gerola fallen on the ground, coarsely engraved with the initials of many visitors.⁵²⁴

So Eleousa has at least three known construction phases; the original (?) Latin cathedral was turned to the Orthodox rite undergoing repairs of unknown extent in 1738, while in the 1960s the church was renovated again by the inhabitants of Messaria.⁵²⁵ Given the monument’s long life and continuous use, further small – or large-scale – interventions and alterations would certainly have taken place. The modern interventions include the coating of the church interior with cement-based mortar, the covering of the vaulted roof with cement⁵²⁶ and the filling of one of the southern wall windows.⁵²⁷ The tiling of the floor and the additions of the iconostasis⁵²⁸ and a small concrete pedestal along the northern wall also belong to that last phase. The whitewashing of the western façade prevents us from identifying possible construction joints, but the 1910’s pictures of Gerola show that the two rectangular ends on either side of the gable are also modern additions (**Fig. 59**).

⁵²³ ‘(...) ο δε της Κεραλεούσης τους τε τοίχους και τον θόλον διατηρεί εν καλή καταστάσει, ώστε και λειτουργία τελούνται χάριν του εν αυτώ εικονίου της Κυρίας Ελεούσης εν πολλή όντος τιμή παρά τοις εργατοίσις. Προσοχής δ’ άξιον είναι ότι επί του ανωφλίου της θύρας αυτού διασώζεται πλάξ μαρμάρινη λευκή λίαν αμυδράν επιγραφήν φέρουσα «ΝΓΔΝΟΥ 1738», ήτοι κατ’ εμήν εικασίαν «Ν. Γοζαδίνου 1738», ός ανήκων εις το επί φραγκικής κυριαρχίας ένδοξον των Γοζαδίνων οίκον είναι πιθανώς ο επισκευαστής του ναού τούτου, όν οι πρόγονοι αυτού είχαν ίσως ανεγείρη κυριαρχούντες της νήσου.’, Vallindas (1882), p. 48; Vallindas (1896), p. 34.

⁵²⁴ Gerola (1926), p. 17 [59].

⁵²⁵ In the nave there is a marble plaque mentioning the date and the name of the local benefactor (*Δημόκωστας ο 2ος Νάνος*).

⁵²⁶ Vasiliadis in his 1962 paper on the flat-roofed Late Medieval basilicas of the Cyclades mentions that the vault extrados of Eleousa was covered with a layer of rammed earth, Vasiliadis (1962), p. 123, n.39.

⁵²⁷ Both in Hansen’s 1836’s painting (**Fig. 56**) and Gerola’s 1910’s photo (**Fig. 59**) Eleousa appears to have two windows.

⁵²⁸ An even newer iconostasis was added in 2000.

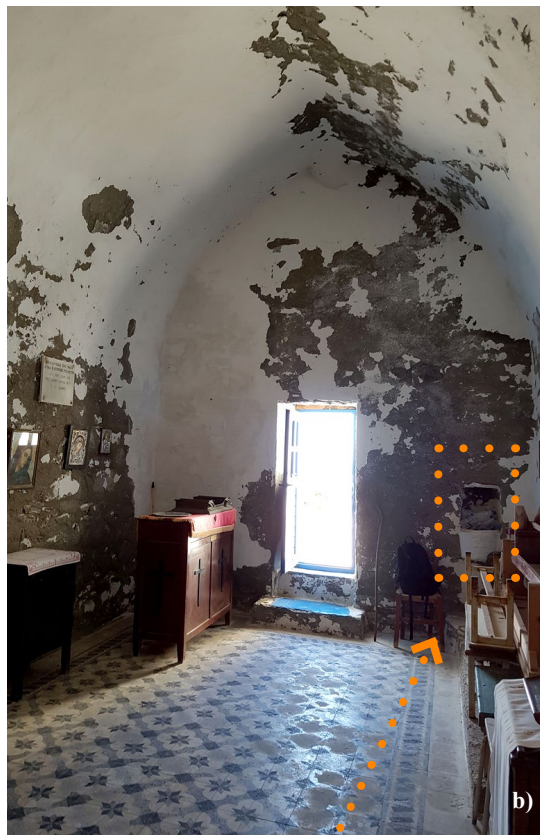


Fig. 120. The interior of the Panagia Eloussa church (a-e)

Alterations were also made at the area west of the church, in order to create a reception space for the congregation (**Fig. 119**). The floor has been laid with cement, while a low wall has been added perimetrically to serve as seating. Large stone slabs and solid marble pieces of unknown origin – *spolia* – were used for the wall construction. To the west of the churchyard, there is a stone opening in the ground, currently covered with a large slate, which suggests the existence of an underground cistern (**c1**). The original form and use of this area are not known, however, given that this was the very point where the lower and the upper-level curtain walls met, it would certainly have been more enclosed and protected. The existence of a tower either in its direct vicinity or even on top of the church cannot be excluded. The northern, 1.00 m thick wall that projects more than 0.50 m from the level of the Eleousa's roof may indicate the existence of at least another storey.⁵²⁹ In addition, given that this same wall is built partly on top of the adjacent inner perimeter wall, indicates that at this specific point the wall predated the church. (**Fig. 113a**). The recent disturbance of the wider church area, however, does not allow for more conclusions.

In any case, despite any arbitrariness and mistakes, it appears that the modern interventions respected the basic features of the church itself, as its present form agrees largely with the descriptions of Vallindas in 1882 and Gerola in 1910. Eleousa is a rectangular, single-aisled, building with internal dimensions of 9.00 x 4.00 m, which correspond approximately to 26 x 11.5 Venetian feet (1 *piede* = 0.348 m). Its walls, built with rubble stones of various sizes, are of different thickness. The west wall is 0.70 m wide while the south and the east, given that the church is a key part of the upper-level fortifications, reach 1.20 m and 2.40 m, respectively. The construction, especially on these sides, is more elaborate using bigger, roughly hewn quoins. Off-white lime mortar was used for the bonding of the stones, while remains of mortar on the east and west wall, show that the exterior of the building was rendered.

The entrance is on the west side through a low and narrow (0.66 m) opening. Originally, the opening was probably wider, as on either side it has rectangular marble pieces with a glyph at one end – probably ancient *spolia* – that most likely

⁵²⁹ As mentioned a similar configuration has also been noted in the case of the *Capella Casaza* in the Kato *Kastro* of Naxos, Vavatsioulas (2007), p. 328.

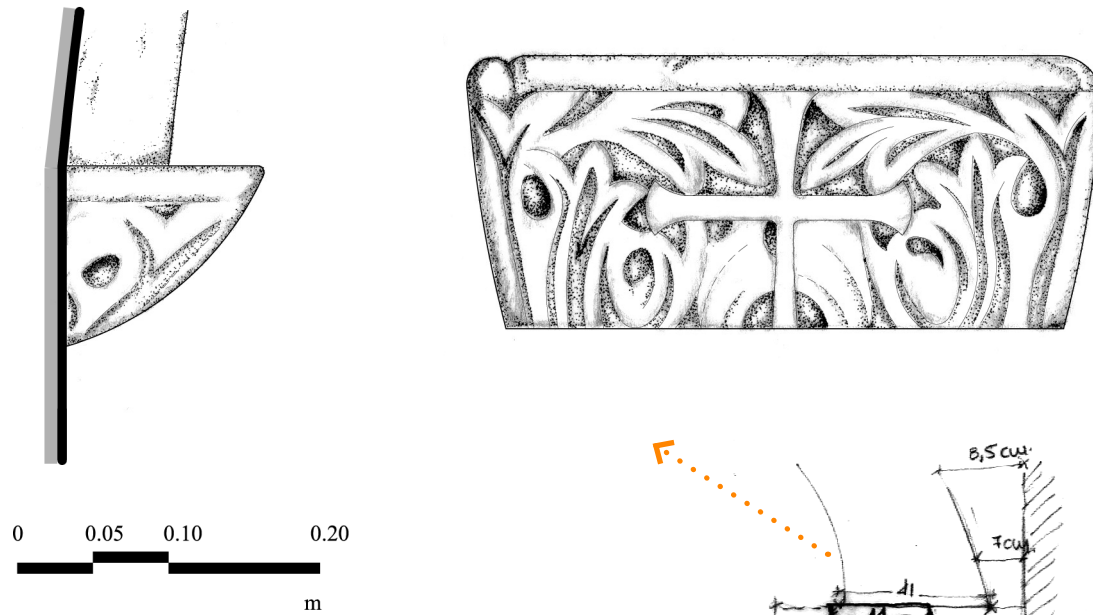


Fig. 121. The southern console (reused impost or pilaster capital), frontal and side elevation _ scale 1:5

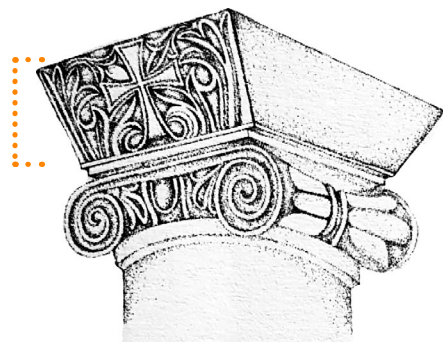
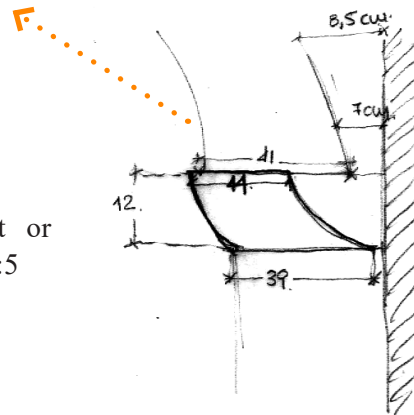


Fig. 122. Impost of Ionic capital, 5th c., Basilica of Sikyon, (Kalopissi - Verti, Panagyotidi -Kesisoglou 2010, p. 79, fig. 166)



Fig. 123. Impost of Ionic capital, early 6th c., Basilica of Ag. Leonidis in Lechaion (Kalopissi - Verti, Panagyotidi - Kesisoglou 2010, p. 79, fig. 168)

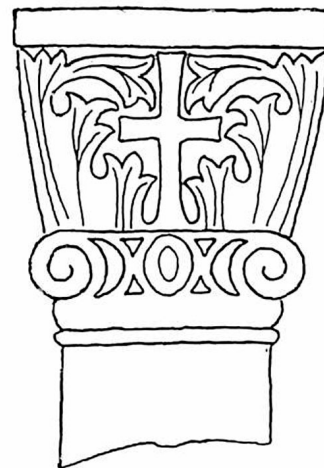


Fig. 124. Capital (*spolio*) incorporated in the church of Panagia Nikous near Messaria (Gerola 1926, p. 23 [65], fig. 6)

correspond to door pilasters. In that case, the opening would have been 1.00 m wide, a dimension that is used for almost all doorways in the castle. The change of the entrance width could have occurred during one of the latest renovations. Despite the new tile coating, the floor of the church lies 0.40 m below the external ground level. The original floor coating is not known, possibly it was made of stone slabs. To the left of the entrance, there is a holy water font embedded in the wall (**Figs 120b, d**). It is a small marble basin, about 0.40 m in diameter. Gerola, who saw it at the same place in the 1910s considers it to be a repurposed conical ossuary.⁵³⁰ The southern wall had two identical, symmetrically placed, arched windows. They were double splayed (widening both towards the interior and the exterior) and unique for the *Kastro* which shows some degree of refinement. As mentioned, the western window is today closed off and is used as a niche.

The area of the sanctuary is elevated by about 0.15 m and is separated from the nave by a modern, disproportionately large altarscreen. The sanctuary apse is semi-circular with a poros stone cornice and a small window (0.60 x 0.24 m). The voussoirs on the face of the apse are also made from dressed poros blocks. Although currently covered with a coarse cement layer, all hewn poros features would originally have remained uncoated in contrast to the rest of the interior. On the walls on either side of the apse there are small rectangular niches and on the north-east corner a diagonally placed slate, the so-called '*thalassa*' is still preserved. Most likely it was added in the 1738's refurbishment when the building was turned into Orthodox. The table-cippus is also intact; it consists of a cylindrical base and a large horseshoe-shaped stone slab. On the outside, the apse has a rather irregular form. Its base is rectangular, as in other contemporary Catholic churches (e.g. the cathedral of Apano *Kastro* on Naxos),⁵³¹ while the upper part is five-sided.

The most prominent western element of the church is its pointed barrel vault. A buttressing arch carried on consoles was placed in the middle of the building's long side to strengthen the vault. The northern console is completely covered with cement but the one on the southern wall bears relief decorations of a cross surrounded by plant motifs (**Figs 120e, 121**). According to Gerola, the style of these decorations is

⁵³⁰ Gerola (1926), p. 17 [59].

⁵³¹ Vionis (2012), p. 136.



Fig. 125. Panagia Eleousa, the sanctuary

the only indication of the erection date of the building, which he places to the 13th century.⁵³² On closer inspection, however, the console seems to be a reused impost of a now lost capital or even a pilaster capital embedded in the wall. The decoration motif, although a bit crude, is very similar to motifs found on imposts of 5th and 6th-century AD monuments all across Greece (**Figs 122, 123**). Given the use of *spolia* elsewhere in Eleousa, this impost could originally have come from a now lost Early Christian church.⁵³³

Another marble fragment (approx. 0.40 x 0.30 x 0.14 m) with relief decorations that could potentially originate from an earlier building was found in the sanctuary (**Figs 125, 126**). The content of the decorative motif (perhaps the lower part of an anthemion) and the origin of the fragment are still unclear. It is possible that it was part of a panel of a marble altarscreen or even an ancient (c. 4th century BC) funerary stele. Finally, although the interior of the church is today completely rendered with cement, according to Gerola, in the early 20th century there were still traces of frescoes on the vault.⁵³⁴

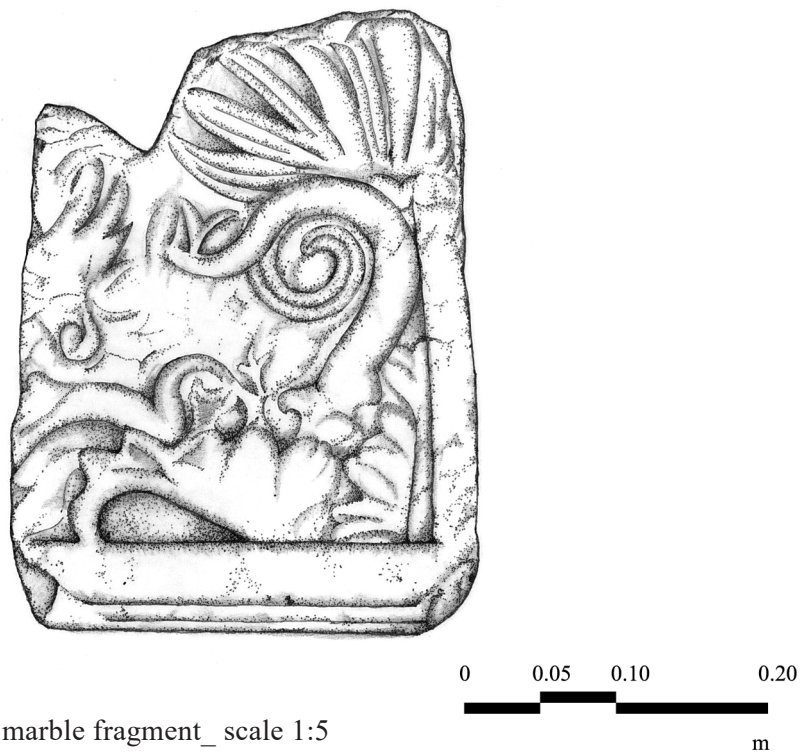


Fig. 126. The decorated marble fragment_ scale 1:5

⁵³² Gerola (1926), p. 17 [59].

⁵³³ Amongst other architectural members, identical imposts and capitals can be found incorporated in the medieval (Byzantine, possibly of the 11th century according to Vallindas) church of Panagia Nikous near Chora (**Fig. 124**). Their origin has not yet been determined.

⁵³⁴ Gerola (1926), p. 17 [59].



Fig. 127. The ancillary building of Panagia Eleousa (a-d)

7.2 Panagia Eleousa's ancillary building (27) |plans B16, B17, B18|

To the north of the Eleousa church lies a one-storey, elongated building that has undergone large-scale interventions or was even built anew in the 1960s in order to be used as the church's '*keli*'.⁵³⁵ On Kythnos the so-called '*kelia*' are ancillary structures built near the churches that accommodate the annual feast that takes place after the liturgy on the day of the saint's celebration. The form, layout and use of the original building – if indeed there was one – are unknown. Perhaps it was related to the administrative complex (28-32).

The internal dimensions are 11.00 x 3.90 m and the walls are 0.65 m thick. The entrance is on the south side, through a central opening located between two newer windows with wooden frames. Both the building's exterior and interior are whitewashed. There are nine large niches (0.40 x 0.60 m) in the north and west wall that are used for storage (Fig. 127b). Whether some of them belong to the original phase is not clear. In the western wall, there is one more window, as well as a blocked entrance that corresponds internally to a niche. All around the room, there is a low stone wall that serves as seating. The floor is covered with a thin layer of cement. The '*keli*' is today covered with a lean-to, sheet metal roof supported on rough wooden and metal (I section) beams and planks.

What makes this building special, however, are the numerous ancient marble members that are randomly embedded in the inner and outer face of the walls. Their existence suggests that the original building must have had some special, perhaps public use. When in the 1960s the ruins were rebuilt to serve as a '*keli*', the *spolia* were treated as simple building material and were placed randomly. Most noteworthy are four fluted semi-columns with average dimensions 0.25 x 0.50 x 0.25 m (Fig. 127c, d). The great number of *spolia* incorporated in the '*keli*' and the neighbouring Panagia Eleousa could suggest the existence of an earlier building nearby while it is probably an indication of their early erection date (13th century).⁵³⁶

⁵³⁵ Like in Eleousa, in the interior of the '*keli*' there is a marble plaque commemorating the same benefactor.

⁵³⁶ Extended use of *spolia* was also noted in the cathedral and the *donjon* of Naxos which according to Vavatsioulas is indicative of them being amongst the first, 13th-century buildings of the *Kastro*, Vavatsioulas (2007), p. 470.



Fig. 128. Cistern 2, interior south-west view



Fig. 129. Cistern 2, interior south-east view

7.3 Cistern (c2) |plans B19, B20|

On the way to the *piazza*, the next building whose use can be identified with certainty is a cistern. This cistern is built above ground; to the west, it is adjacent to the building that probably corresponds to the central keep (33) while to the north it abuts building 30 that most likely had a public/administrative use (*cancelleria*).⁵³⁷ According to the writings of Vallindas, the cistern was still intact in the 1880s: ‘Noteworthy is a big vaulted structure built with lime mortar that is still in a good condition. The locals call it gallows and a prison, but I looked through the opening at the top of the vault and saw a water pipe made of potsherds going down on the one edge, so I think that it is a water tank built above ground (...)’.⁵³⁸

Today the vault has collapsed entirely and only its springing on the north wall is preserved. Some pieces of the vaulting lie inside the building, but most of them have rolled down the southern slope. The same is true for much of the eastern and western wall. Nevertheless, the structure can be easily identified with the description of Vallindas. The cistern must have had a capacity of at least 50 m³ of water, given that its area is 21.25 m² and the vaulted roof stood at a height of about 2.90 m. The thickness of the walls, that are indeed bonded with lime mortar, differs on each side. The south wall is 0.50 m wide, the east is 0.90 m and the wall adjacent to the tower to the west is 1.20 m. The north wall consists of two separate sections: a 0.75 m outer face and a 0.50 m inner face that bore the thrusts of the vault.

The interior of the cistern is rendered with two layers of mortar. The first layer (2 cm) is white lime mortar with larger aggregates (sea sand) and the second (3 cm) is hydraulic mortar with brick inclusions. Large potsherds were placed diagonally all across the building’s inner corners, in an attempt to reduce the risk of water leakage through the wall joints (Fig. 131). On the inner face of the south wall, there is a small step 0.25 m wide and 0.30 m high. Most likely it was used as a space to stand when

⁵³⁷ Large cisterns situated in the basement or right by the towers/main halls have also been recorded in *Apano Kastro* on Naxos, *Kephalos* on Paros as well as the *Mesa Kastro* of Andros, Vionis (2012), pp. 137, 146; Kontogiannis and Arvaniti (2008), p. 353. Although not documented, the same is thought for the *donjon* of Naxos’ *Kato Kastro*, Vavatsioulas (2007), p. 459.

⁵³⁸ ‘Ἐτι δε προσοχῆς ἀξία και οικοδομῆ ευμεγέθης ασβεστόκτιστος και θολοσκεπῆς ως οἶον τε καλῶς διατηρουμένη, ην οι μεν εγκώριοι κρεμάλαν και φυλακήν αποκαλοῦσιν, εγώ δε κατιδόν το επί του θόλου στόμιον και τον εν μία των γωνιῶν ἀνωθεν κατιόντα οστράκινον υδραγωγόν υπέλαβον, ὅτι εἶναι δεξαμενή ὕδατος ἀνωθεν της επιφάνειας της γης ωκοδομημένη (...)’, Vallindas (1882), p. 48.

cleaning the bottom of the tank.⁵³⁹

Finally, the most interesting feature of this building is a small bronze pipe with a diameter of 3 cm that lies in the northern wall (Fig. 130a, b). Although the copper is completely oxidized today, it seems that the pipe connected the cistern to the adjacent administrative building (30). Whether it was used to pipe water in or out is still unclear.



Fig. 130. The small bronze pipe in the northern wall (a-b)



Fig. 131. Potsherds placed at the cistern's inner corners to reduce the risk of water leakage

⁵³⁹ Similar 'steps' can be found in many of the cisterns in Apalirou *Kastro* on Naxos. Their upper surface was covered with carefully placed slates.

7.4 Building with columns (36) |plans B21, B22, B23|

In a prominent position at the north-east part of the *piazza* lies a peculiar free-standing building. Neither Vallindas nor Gerola mention anything about this building and although it is preserved in a relatively good condition, its original use remains unknown. Its location and floorplan suggest that it was neither a religious nor a domestic structure. Probably it was a public building of some importance as can be deduced from the *spolia* that were incorporated in its interior.

More specifically, it is a one-storey vaulted building with an irregular floor plan and an inner area of just 13.50 m². The walls are 0.70 m thick except for the eastern which is 0.50 m. The roof has collapsed; however, its form can be graphically reconstructed as the springings and parts of the vault are still standing. The entrance to the building is on the south side, through the *piazza*. The opening is just 0.70 m wide. The only other opening of the building was a window (0.43 m wide) in the northern wall, from which today only the sill survives. In the middle of the eastern and western wall, there are two marble non-fluted colonettes embedded in the masonry (**Fig. 132c, d**). The colonettes have a diameter of 0.24 m and are at least 0.80 m high.⁵⁴⁰ On the right side of each column, there is a rectangular niche. In addition to the two columns, there are other smaller fragments of ancient architectural members incorporated in the walls. One of the *spolia* bears engraved decorations.

Despite its ruinous state, it is obvious that the building had at least two construction phases. Construction joints on the outer face of the northern and southern walls suggest that the building was originally almost half in length, i.e. about 6 m² smaller. At some point, it was extended, acquiring its current dimensions. The connection of the two walls on both sides was made exactly at the point of the columns. Possibly, the colonettes were originally not incorporated into the stonework but placed at the façade of the building instead, perhaps in an attempt to add prominence to the structure. Medium-sized rubble stones were used for the masonry of both phases, but the masonry of the first phase seems more elaborate, using slightly bigger stones bonded with lime mortar. In contrast to that, the stones of the second phase were bonded with just earth. Traces of mortar on the intrados of the vault show that the

⁵⁴⁰ There is rubble and soil build-up in the interior of the building.



Fig. 132. Building 36 (a-d)

interior was rendered. Finally, along the north side of the building abutting the outer face of the masonry, there is a low wall of unknown use, which continues under the rubble heaps in both directions. Perhaps it was a terrace forming a reception area in front of the building, a bench indented for the public gatherings taking place at the *piazza* or even the foundation of an earlier larger structure.

7.5 ‘Block house’ with fireplace (48) |plans B24, B25|

Just opposite the building with the columns, to the north, there is a set of rooms, which could correspond to a ‘block house’. Its boundaries are not clear; some neighbouring structures to the north could also belong to the same housing complex (49). Due to the thick vegetation and the poor condition of the ruins, however, only the four consecutive rooms (rooms *a*, *b*, *c* and *d* on plan B24) that form a quadrilateral unit were studied here in more detail. In any case, even if the house was indeed comprised of those four rooms, it is large in size compared to the rest of the *Kastro* dwellings (inner area: 52.80 m²). Most likely, it was the residence of a wealthy owner or a high ranking official.

The layout of the individual rooms of the house gives the impression of irregular extensions around an original core (possibly room *c*). This hypothesis is further supported by the variety in the wall widths ranging from 0.45 to 0.90 m. The house was accessed through two 1.00 m wide entrances on the eastern side, while all four rooms were connected with one another via 1.20 m wide openings. Traces of a staircase were not found *in situ*, so maybe the building had just one storey. In addition to that, the width of the inner wall between rooms *a* and *d* is just 0.45 m so it could hardly support a second floor. Only in a few places, the walls stand at a height of more than 1.00 m, therefore the type of the roof cannot be determined. There is no evidence of a collapsed vault, so the house was most likely covered with a flat roof made of wooden beams, reeds and seaweeds, all overlaid by a thick layer of rammed earth.



Fig. 133. 'Block house' with fireplace (a-c)

Without cleaning and excavation, the building's dating and the identification of each room's exact use are not possible.⁵⁴¹ The only exception is room *a* that was presumably the kitchen/living quarters as there lies the most interesting feature of this building, i.e. one of the just two hearths recorded in the settlement (**Fig. 133b, c**). The fireplace is located at the corner of the wall to the right of the southern entrance. It has a semi-circular form and is built mostly with small-sized stones. The hearth is 0.74 m wide and 0.65 m deep standing 0.50 m above the current ground level. As mentioned in section 6.3.2, a thin slab protrudes slightly (0.12 m) above the firebox forming a mantel. A construction joint on the wall suggests that the fireplace was a later addition to the house. Finally, in room *d* there is a small semi-circular recess in the south-eastern wall (0.33 m) of unknown use (another hearth perhaps?) (**Fig. 134**).



Fig. 134. The semi-circular recess in room *d*

⁵⁴¹ For 11th -14th century Byzantine houses see Rheidt (1990) and Gerstel (2003), pp. 147-234.



Fig. 135. The interior of ch6



Fig. 136. The western arcosolium and the south end of the big inscribed apse

7.6 Double-apsed church with arcosolia (ch6) |plans B26, B27|

To the northeast of the house with the fireplace, abutting the *Kastro*'s inner defensive wall, lies a building with a rather unusual floor plan. Its state of preservation is very poor, as the roof and large parts of the north-eastern and western wall have collapsed filling the interior with rubble. Nonetheless, the existence of two semi-circular apses in the thickness of the eastern wall identifies it as a church, of the double-apsed typology more specifically. Despite its poor condition, it is obvious that the building has had more than one construction phases. The precise identification of the different phases is not possible without moving the rubble; however, it is apparent that this church's floor plan differs from that of all the others recorded in Oria.

The building has an inner area of approximately 33 m² and is surrounded on nearly all sides by a second masonry skin (**Fig. 137**). Given that the slope is very steep at that part of the *Kastro* it is possible that the structure was at some point reinforced for stability reasons. Both the inner and outer walls were built with medium-sized rubble stones bonded with earth, while lime mortar was applied only on the external face of the outer wall. The walls vary in width, ranging from 0.50 m to 0.95 m. The building was entered through a central opening on the south side. A dressed stone block that lies by the entrance was presumably part of the arched stone frame of the door (**Fig. 139**). On either side of the doorway, there are two identical arched niches (1.20 x 0.65 m) that most likely corresponded to arcosolia (**Figs 135, 136, plan B27**). Remains of a small window have been found above the east arcosolium. The interior is now divided into two equal sections by a wall that seems to be a later addition to the building. A 0.70 m doorway connects the two sections.

In the west side of the west section, there is a big apse inscribed in the width of the inner wall that also appears to be a later addition to the original plan (**Fig. 136**). Maybe after the initial single-cell church was divided into two smaller chapels, the apse of the west chapel was placed on the west side for practical reasons. This configuration, although uncommon, can be also found in other cases where it was not feasible to place the apse to the east (e.g. Paliochora on Kythera, churches 11, 12, 13).⁵⁴² It is equally possible, however, that the west section acquired a completely different, yet

⁵⁴² Ince and Ballantyne (2007), pp. 66, 74.



Fig. 137. Church 6, east elevation



Fig. 138. Church 6, the two apses

currently unknown, use. The east section, on the other hand, retained its original use. The eastern wall ends in two almost semi-circular apses that are separated by a narrow wall bearing a niche (Figs 135, 138). The apses are architecturally equivalent, i.e. they have the same size (1.48 m) and are placed symmetrically along the long axis of the church. The south one is better preserved compared to the north that has collapsed almost entirely. The remains of the table-cippus which was placed axially between the two apses can still be seen half-buried under the rubble.



Fig. 139. Possible form of the doorway, graphic reconstruction

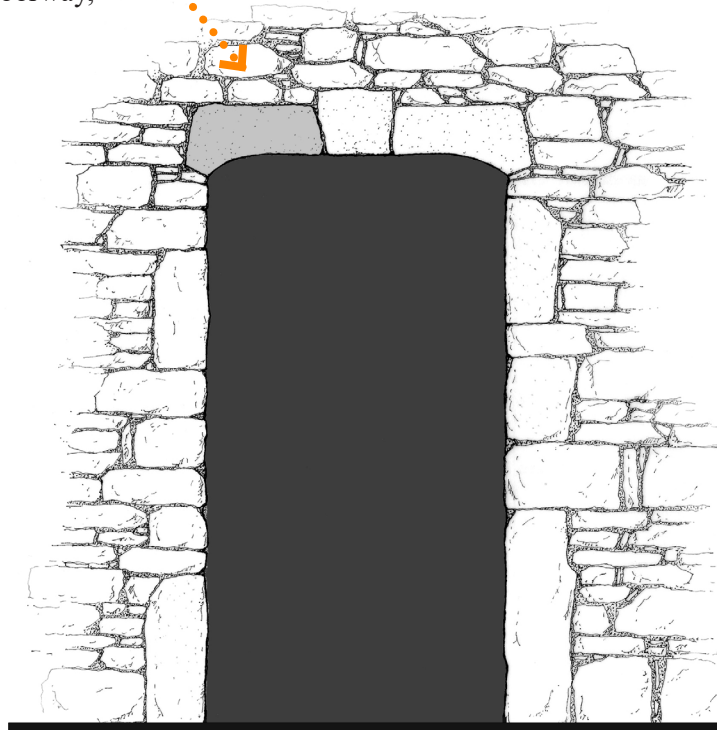




Fig. 140. Agia Triada (ch9), east elevation

7.7 Agia Triada church and chapels (ch7-10) |plans B28, B29, B30|

The church of Agia Triada (ch9) along with its three chapels and a couple of outbuildings on its north-east side form a group on the northern edge of the ‘upper’ neighbourhood. According to the writings of Father Portier⁵⁴³ and Gerola,⁵⁴⁴ the church was initially Catholic. Vallindas too says that it was built in the ancient Frankish style dedicated to the Holy Trinity (*Αγία Τριάδα*). He also adds that it could have been the cathedral of the *Kastro*.⁵⁴⁵ Although this hypothesis is probably invalid (see section 7.1), the church of Agia Triada is undoubtedly one of the most important and well-preserved buildings of Oria. Its proximity to what is thought to have been the lord’s manor (45-47) could also identify it with the ruling family’s chapel (*capella gentilizia*).⁵⁴⁶

The exact building chronology of the main church is unknown, yet the remains of some possibly late-13th or early 14th-century frescoes in its interior that belong to a second building phase give us a *terminus ante quem* for its erection. Its plan is very similar to that of Panagia Eleousa; it is single-aisled with internal dimensions 7.12 x 3.20 m (approx. 20.5 x 9 Venetian feet). The walls, built with medium-sized rubble stones, are 0.90 m wide except for the east which is 0.65 m. The west elevation of the building is almost gone; however, the remains of the entrance are still visible in the middle of the west wall. In addition, two poros stones found among the rubble could have belonged to the stone doorframe. In the south wall, there is an opening, 0.66 m wide and 0.90 m high, that narrows outwards. Today it is partly closed off, most likely due to the addition of the southern chapel (Fig. 141b).

The area of the sanctuary is separated from the rest of the nave by a coarse-built drywall that seems to be a recent addition. However, the lower course of stones probably belonged to the original phase, which means that much like in Eleousa the sanctuary here was elevated by about 0.15 m.⁵⁴⁷ The sanctuary apse is semi-circular

⁵⁴³ Roussos-Milidonis (1989), p. 84.

⁵⁴⁴ Gerola (1926), p. 16 [58].

⁵⁴⁵ Vallindas (1882), p. 48.

⁵⁴⁶ Ritzouli (2016), p. 25.

⁵⁴⁷ A similar configuration has been recorded in most churches of Paliochora on Aegina, Moutsopoulos (1962), pp. 60-92 and in some churches in Paliochora on Kythera, Ince and Ballantyne (2007), pp. 56-57.

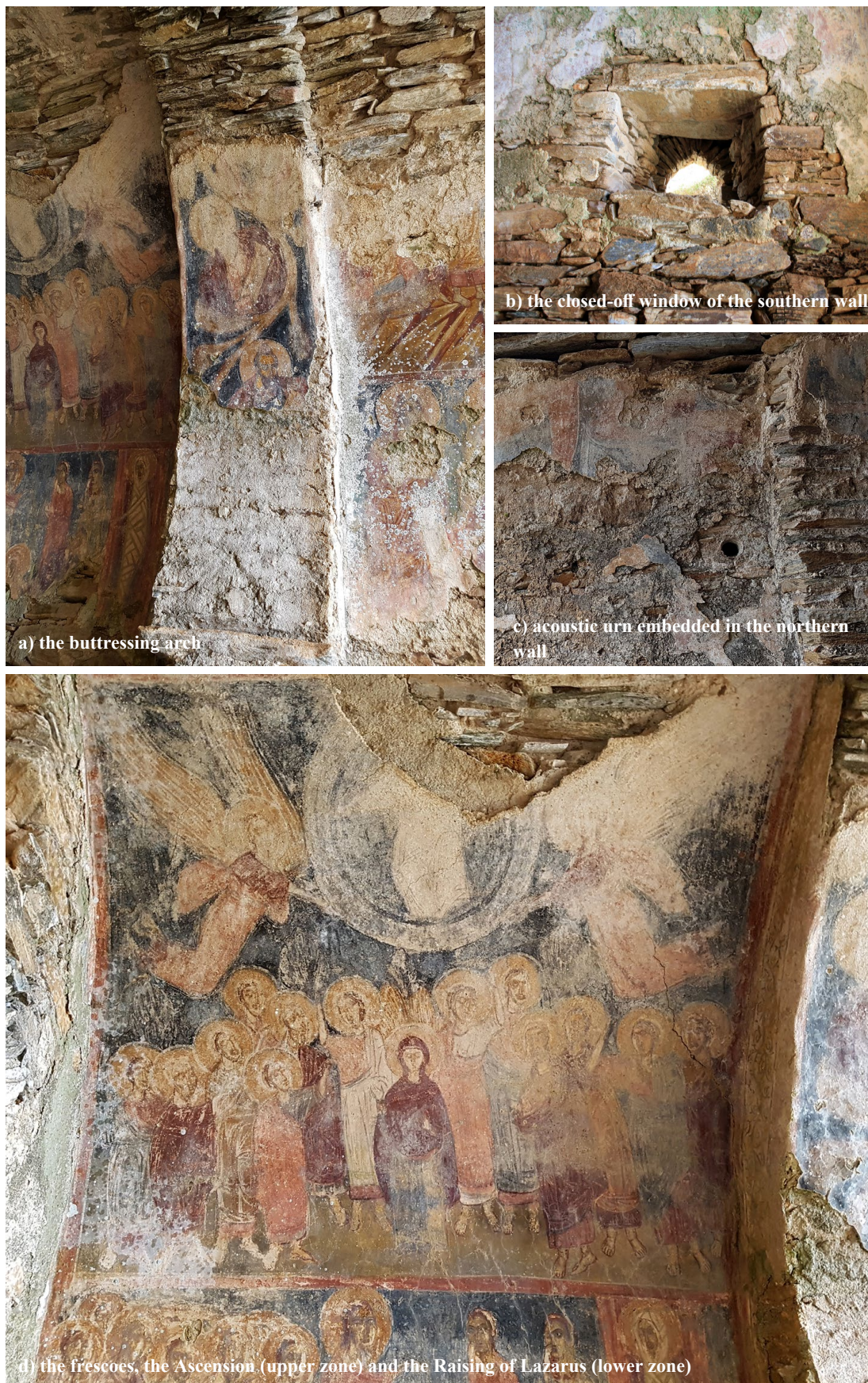


Fig. 141. Agia Triada (ch9), the interior (a-d)

measuring 1.97 m in diameter. At its centre, even though it is now closed off, there was a small opening. Two rectangular niches were built into the walls on either side of the apse. Finally, the table-cippus, which comprised of a large rectangular slab on a semi-circular base, still stands in place. Externally the conch of the sanctuary protrudes as a semicircle. Most interesting is the external configuration of the small window (0.14 x 0.42 m) as it is one of the few intact openings of the settlement that also preserves its decorative features. The opening is formed with dressed stones while its marble lintel is decorated with a carved pointed arch (**Fig. 140**).

Agia Triada was covered with a pointed barrel-vault that was supported by two buttressing arches. The buttressing arches stand on four pilasters that project slightly from the face of the walls. Strong white lime mortar was used for both the walls and the vault. Moreover, a layer of crushed-tile mortar was applied on the vault extrados for insulation; subsequently, the vault was covered with a symmetrical sloping slate-covered roof (see also **plan B09**). Three acoustic urns were found embedded in the base of the vault (**Fig. 141c**). Possibly there were more that are currently not visible. The church was rendered externally with a heavy layer of off-white mortar. Pottery sherds were used as pinnings and some of them were also mixed into the mortar, especially at the northern wall.

The most interesting feature of Agia Triada, however, is its frescoes. Although they have become detached for the most part,⁵⁴⁸ it seems that the church was once decorated with frescoes in the Byzantine style. The surviving images are now badly weathered, however, Vallindas at the end of the 19th century described them as ‘frescoes of low artistic quality but of vivid colours’.⁵⁴⁹ The ones on the south wall are better preserved and one can still recognise scenes from the life of Christ: to the east of the buttressing arch is the Ascension on the upper zone (**Fig. 141d**) divided with a red and white band from the Raising of Lazarus on the lower (**Figs 141d, 142**), while to the west there are remains of the Entry into Jerusalem on the upper

⁵⁴⁸ The collapse of the west wall allowed the natural elements to enter the building. Also, the church is currently used as a pen by the local shepherds, so the frescoes of the lower zone are completely destroyed.

⁵⁴⁹ ‘...τοιχογραφίας προστύχους μεν αλλά ζωηρού χρωματισμού, διατηρουμένας επί του της Αγίας Τριάδας (ναού)...’, Vallindas (1882), p. 48.



Fig. 142. South wall frescoes, Raising of Lazarus (east lower zone)



Fig. 143. South wall frescoes, Entry into Jerusalem (west upper zone)

zone (**Fig. 143**) and possibly the Baptism (?) on the lower.⁵⁵⁰

The paintings on the north wall are mostly gone, it seems however, that it was painted with scenes from the life of the Virgin. On the upper zone of the east part opposite to the Ascension scene, there are remains of the Presentation of the Virgin at the Temple.⁵⁵¹ On the face of the eastern buttressing arch were depicted figures of prophets or saints surrounded by vine scrolls (**Fig. 141a**), while the sides of the arch were decorated with plant motifs. That was probably the case on the western arch too, although today survive only some geometrical patterns in its southeast corner. The images on the sanctuary apse are now worn out beyond recognition, however, according to P. Hetherington in the 2000s one could still see ‘two impressive feast scenes in the southern bema and in the apse a damaged image of the Virgin surrounded by a patterned circle.’⁵⁵²

Overall, as Vallindas has noted, the style of the paintings is very provincial. The unknown painter followed the traditional patterns, but in a very schematic and clumsy way. As far as their chronology is concerned, both Gerola and Hetherington place them to the 14th century, the latter adding that their style is reminiscent of the less sophisticated Cretan painting.⁵⁵³ According to a brief mention in the *Atlas of the Christian Monuments of the Aegean* the frescoes of Agia Triada could date to the second half of the 13th century.⁵⁵⁴ In the absence of other similar examples on the island⁵⁵⁵ their dating remains obscure, nevertheless, a wide time frame from the late 13th to the early 15th century could be suggested.⁵⁵⁶ If Agia Triada was indeed the *capella gentilizia* then it is possible that its painted decoration was commissioned shortly after 1336 when the Gozzadini took over the island. Irrespective of their

⁵⁵⁰ When describing the church in the 1910s Gerola wrote that among others, he could identify the scenes of the Baptism, the Resurrection of Lazarus, and the Ascension, Gerola (1926), p. 17 [59]. It is possible that the now worn out image below the Entry into Jerusalem identifies with the Baptism which in the time of Gerola would have been better preserved.

⁵⁵¹ I thank Prof S. Gerstel for the identification of this scene.

⁵⁵² Hetherington (2001), p. 188.

⁵⁵³ Gerola (1926), p. 17 [59]; Hetherington (2001), p. 188.

⁵⁵⁴ Pennas (2014), p. 355.

⁵⁵⁵ According to Gerola paintings similar to those of Agia Triada could be found in the homonymous church in Chora but they were removed or covered already since the early 20th century, Gerola (1926), p. 29 [71].

⁵⁵⁶ I thank Prof M. Panagiotidou for this information.



Fig. 144. The Agia Triada church complex (a-d)

construction date, the frescoes obviously belong to a later phase, given they were painted over both closed-off openings of the church. Their Byzantine style may suggest that, at some point, Agia Triada was converted from Catholic to Orthodox or perhaps the existence of Byzantine frescoes in a Latin church is further proof of the two dogmas' peaceful coexistence in the *Kastro*.

As far as the chapels are concerned, it is obvious that they are later additions, although it is not clear whether they were built simultaneously or not. They are less sophisticated structures that just rest on the main church without being connected to it. Perhaps this is the reason for their poor state of preservation. Because the building group of Agia Triada respects the contours of the ground, the south chapel (**ch10**) stands 1.50 m to 2.00 m higher than the main church. Compared to the north chapel it is better preserved (the southern wall stands at least 2.50 m from the ground level) and has internal dimensions 5.10 x 3.17 m. The walls were bonded with clay mortar and are 0.60 m wide. Remains of mortar show that the building was rendered both internally and externally.

The chapel was entered through a 0.90 m wide, central door on the west wall. Traces of the springing of an arch on the southern jamb suggest that the opening was arched. At the corner to the right of the entrance, there is a compact wall section, measuring 0.70 x 0.70 m, of unknown use (structural support perhaps). Above that, on the south wall, the sill of a small opening is still preserved. The east wall has suffered the most damage and today the segmental apse of the sanctuary stands only a few centimetres above ground. The roof of the building is entirely gone, so it is unclear whether the chapel was covered with a flat roof or a vault. However, the absence of solid vault blocks in the interior and the surrounding area and the existence of beam sockets on the south wall of the main church, probably suggest the former (**Figs 144a, b**).

The northern chapel (**ch8**) is in an even poorer state, as most of its walls have fallen away. It is of similar size and built as the southern chapel, with internal dimensions 5.50 x 3.20 m. The walls are 0.65m wide, except for the east which is 0.60 m. The entrance was through a central doorway on the west side. To the right of the door, there are traces of a small window. The apse of the sanctuary is also segmental and has a small niche built into the wall on its left side. The two large holes on the outer face of the north wall of the main church could potentially correspond to beam



Fig. 145. The Agia Triada church complex (ch7, 8, 9), view from the south



Fig. 146. The sanctuary apse of the third chapel (ch7)

sockets, so in the absence of other evidence, we can assume that the north chapel was also covered with a flat roof (**Fig. 144d**).

Except for the two chapels on either side of Agia Triada, the church complex seems to have included three more buildings to the northeast. These buildings are separated from the church by a narrow alley (1.00-1.60 m). This alley is one of the narrowest in the *Kastro* and possibly the only one where the buildings around it are preserved at a sufficient height to define it clearly. The middle building (**ch7**) has an apse on the east side, so it was most likely another chapel. The use of the other two rooms is unknown, however, they could also have been related to the church (e.g. priest's accommodation).

The third chapel (**ch7**), that has inner dimensions 3.40 x 2.42 m, stands right behind the sanctuary of Agia Triada (**Fig. 145**). The walls are bonded with clay and their width varies, ranging from 0.50 m to 0.80 m. The entrance is on the west side, through a doorway built with large, carefully hewn stones. The holes where the hinges of the door would go are still visible. The apse of the sanctuary is stilted, protruding only slightly from the main body of the chapel. The roof has collapsed entirely; however, it seems that the chapel was covered with a vault built in the corbelling technique as the stones on the upper part of the wall project a little inward from the courses below (**Fig. 146**). Finally, on the north-west side of the nave, there is a small room of triangular shape that judging by the construction joints with the north wall and the difference in the masonry quality seems to be a later addition to the main body of the chapel. The traces of pink hydraulic mortar on its outer wall, indicate that most likely it corresponded to a cistern (**c6**).



Fig. 147. The interior of church 12



Fig. 148. Church 11, view from the west

7.8 Church and chapel (ch11, ch12) |plan B31|

To the southwest of the Agia Triada complex, facing on the *Kastro*'s main roadway lies another church accompanied by a chapel on its north side. Both buildings are very poorly preserved as the roofs and large parts of the walls have collapsed filling their interior with rubble heaps (**Fig. 147**). Nonetheless, it is obvious that the complex has had at least three construction phases. Despite their ruinous state, the church and chapel were recorded at the scale of 1:50. The main church (**ch12**) is a single-aisled elongated building with a spacious narthex on its west side. The west wall of the narthex, as well as parts of the north and south wall have collapsed entirely, however, it appears to be contemporary to the nave. Both were built with medium-sized rubble stones bonded with a mix of clay and lime mortar. Although there are no traces of a springing, the thickness of the walls (0.65-0.80 m) suggests that the structure was probably covered with a vault.

The narthex was entered through a 0.85 m opening on the south side. Opposite the doorway in the northern wall, there was a small window. Originally, a 1.40 m opening led from the narthex to the nave. The long slab that formed the door's lintel still lies among the rubble. At some point, however, an extra wall -presumably to support the weight of the vault- was added along the south side of the nave limiting the doorway to just 0.65 m. The second wall bears two niches; the big one (0.55 x 1.15 m) could potentially correspond to an arcosolium. The apse of the sanctuary was stilted and protruded strongly from the main body of the building. It is noteworthy that its width varied, ranging from 0.47 m on the north side to 0.72 m on the south. Traces of mortar on the face of the church's northern wall suggest that the exterior was rendered.

The chapel (**ch11**) is obviously a later addition as it merely abuts the northern wall of the church without being connected to it. Originally it had very small dimensions (inner area: 8.40 m²) but the construction joint on its north wall suggests that it was later extended towards the west with the addition of a narthex. The chapel's walls have a maximum thickness of 0.75 m and were built with local undressed stones bonded with clay. The entrance was through a 0.90 m central opening on the west side of the narthex. The apse of the sanctuary was semi-circular and is today the better-preserved part of the building, standing more than 2.00 m above the ground



Fig. 149. Double-apsed church (**ch15**), the doorway

level (**Fig. 148**). As is the case with the chapels of Agia Triada, the roof has collapsed entirely, so it is not clear whether the chapel was covered with a flat roof or a vault. Again, the absence of solid vault blocks in the interior and the existence of beam sockets on the church's north wall, advocate in favour of the former.

7.9 Double-apsed church (ch15) |plans B32, B33, B34, B35|

Further down the slope lies the second double-apsed church of the *Kastro*. Although it is one of the best-preserved buildings of the 'lower' neighbourhood, the church is not mentioned by the travellers or in the local tradition. Its name and dedication are therefore unknown; however, it has many interesting features and was thus surveyed at the scales of 1:50, 1:10 and 1:5. Although the church itself had modest dimensions (inner area: 17.40 m²), a coarse-built retaining wall formed a spacious reception area in front of the building's west façade. This configuration is rather unusual for Oria where every piece of available space was utilized for building and could potentially indicate the building's importance.

The church is single-cell and barrel-vaulted,⁵⁵⁷ but contrary to the other *Kastro* churches that have elongated proportions, its floorplan is trapezoidal. The walls, that have a maximum thickness of 0.85 m,⁵⁵⁸ were built with roughly hewn stones using a mix of off-white lime mortar and earth. Smaller flat stones were used as pinnings. The entrance is on the west side through an exceptionally well-preserved opening. With a width of just 0.60 m on the outer side and reaching just 0.75 m on the inner, it is the narrowest doorway recorded in the whole settlement. Its height, due to soil build-up, is today only 1.35 m (**Fig. 149**).

⁵⁵⁷ The superstructure has collapsed entirely and there are no indications of the vault's springing. However, there are some solid blocks of the vault still visible amidst the ruins in the church's interior.

⁵⁵⁸ As is the case with several other buildings (e.g. **ch11**, **ch12**) the church's walls that faced downslope were thicker than the rest in order to bear the thrust of the vault. However, in this case there is also a difference in the thickness along the eastern wall. At the northern apse it is 0.65 m, while by the southern it reaches 0.85 m. Although there are no obvious joints, this difference could indicate a second construction phase.



Fig. 150. Church 15, view from the southwest



Fig. 151. The interior of ch15

Right below the big monolithic lintel (1.25 x 0.25 m), the opening is framed by two identically moulded poros blocks that are decorated with two circles and a Maltese cross (cross *pattée*).⁵⁵⁹ Although both the mouldings and the carvings are worn out – especially those of the right block – their original form can still be determined (Figs 149, 152). It is worth noting that the same inscribed cross has been engraved on the lintels of most churches in the *kastra* of Santorini,⁵⁶⁰ while the design of the mouldings is commonly met in entrances in the Kato *Kastro* of Naxos (e.g. in the Glezos tower, the present-day Byzantine museum). A slab protruding about 0.15 m from the face of the wall formed a narrow shelf above the doorway, either for placing objects like oil lamps or lanterns or for decorative purposes. Quite possibly it was just a poorer rendition of the most elaborate marble door crowns of Naxos. About 0.70 m above the lintel there was a small light-hole (0.25 x 0.27 m).

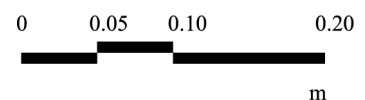
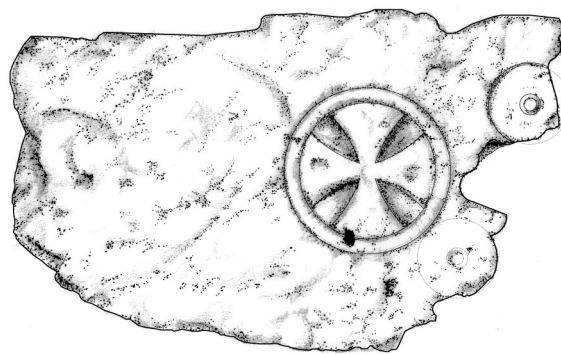


Fig. 152. The moulded poros block with the cross *pattée* engraving_ scale 1:5

⁵⁵⁹ They could potentially be consecration crosses, i.e. crosses carved or drawn on the interior and exterior walls of a church showing where the bishop has anointed the building with chrism or holy water to consecrate it. The most common and ancient form of consecration cross had four curved arms of equal length within concentric circles and could easily be constructed by a stonemason using a compass. It looked very similar to a cross *pattée*, see Spicer (2013).

⁵⁶⁰ Ritzouli (2016), pp. 166-167.



Fig. 153. The longhouse (114-115), view from the east



Fig. 154. The window in room *a* (a-b)

The interior of the church is today filled with rubble and vegetation. The south wall that was built on the bedrock is better preserved compared to rest. On its west side the remains of a window are still visible, while on the east there is a niche. Like in the other double-apsed church (**ch6**), the apses of the sanctuary were inscribed in the width of the east wall. They were separated by a narrow wall with two niches. The south apse is almost intact; it was stilted, and its arch was made of dressed poros blocks (**Fig. 151**). A stone apron, about 0.50 m wide was added in front of the apse. The stone slab of the table-cippus still rests on that apron. The north apse, on the other hand, has collapsed almost entirely so its form can be deduced with difficulty. It had the same diameter as the south but was semi-circular instead. A big slab that could have belonged to its table-cippus is still visible amongst the ruins. Apparently, in this case, each apse had its own table-cippus. Finally, traces of mortar on the east wall and the interior of the south apse suggest that the church was rendered.

7.10 Longhouse (114-115) |plans B36, B37|

A few meters to the west of **ch15** lie the remains of a linear structure that can most likely be identified as a house. It consists of two elongated rooms (*a* and *b*) built parallel to the contours of the slope with direction north to south. The external dimensions of the whole are approximately 10.60 x 3.60 m. Although the two rooms do not communicate internally with one another, it seems that they were built simultaneously as there are no construction joints on the external walls. The masonry is uniform too, using medium-sized roughly hewn stones bonded with earth. Smaller stones were used as pinnings to provide rudimentary coursing. The width of the walls ranges from 0.50 to 0.60 m.

Room *a*, which is the smallest of the two (inner area: 9.50 m²), was entered through a 0.75 m opening on the south side. Its west wall still preserves two almost intact windows that overlook the sea. The south window which appears to be more elaborate and carefully built was surveyed at the scale of 1:10 (**Fig. 154**). In between the windows, there are two small niches. Room *b* is slightly bigger (inner area: 11.70 m²) and less well-preserved compared to room *a*. The back wall has largely collapsed filling the interior with rubble. As there are no openings on all four sides it is likely that room *b* had an upper floor and was accessed through it. The remains of a wide



Fig. 155. Theotokos church, east elevation



Fig. 156. Theotokos church, interior



Fig. 157. Possible remains of dentil course

staircase on its north side could suggest as much. The upper floor would probably not have extended above room *a* given that its interior is mostly free of collapse rubble. In the absence of vault remains, it appears that both rooms were covered with flat roofs. Although the use of each room cannot be precisely determined without cleanings and excavation, it would be safe to assume that well-lit room *a* was a living area whereas room *b* was most likely a cellar or a storeroom of some sort. Finally, structure **116** which abuts the longhouse's west wall is obviously a later addition, but it is not clear whether it belonged to the same domestic unit or not.

7.11 Concluding remarks

As shown from the analysis above, the structures of Oria are all rather basic. There were no elaborate buildings nor great variations in the structures' forms and sizes. But should this scarcity be attributed to the lack of ambition and means on the part of the Latins, the inherent limitations of the site itself or the difficult circumstances of the island in general? Our knowledge on the building tradition of the previous era on Kythnos is admittedly very limited. Except for the remains of the three-aisled Early Christian basilica in Vryokastro which has recently been excavated but not yet published in detail⁵⁶¹ and the ruined countryside church of Theotokos that is presumed to be Byzantine⁵⁶² (see also section 3.2.2) there are hardly any buildings securely dated to that era. The latter appears to have been Orthodox (no signs of a holy water font) and although there is no indication of its erection date, it is very similar to the *Kastro* churches.

Theotokos is single-aisled with modest dimensions (inner area: approx. 20 m²). The sanctuary apse is semi-circular and protrudes from the main body of the church. The walls were built with roughly worked rubble stones bonded with earth and lime mortar. Bigger quoins were placed at the corners and big ceramic tiles (4-5 cm thick) were used as pinnings. Although collapsed today, it seems that the building was covered with a corbelled vault; the large slabs (about 1.67 m long) that bridged the gap at the top can still be seen in the church's interior. The entrance was on the west

⁵⁶¹ See section 2.3.1

⁵⁶² Mazarakis (2019), pp. 33, 35.

side through a 0.76 m opening. The only difference from the Oria churches lies in the extended use of *spolia*⁵⁶³ and the possible existence of some typically Byzantine decorative features as in and around the church are scattered triangularly shaped ceramic tiles of equal size that could have formed a dentil course (**Figs 155-157**). All around the island there are also many rural buildings, the so-called *kelia* that were constructed with the same building methods as the *Kastro* structures, i.e. drystone or earth-bonded rubble masonries, narrow spans bridged by corbelled or flat roofs covered with slates and/or sea weeds and reeds and a layer of rammed earth etc. It is very likely that some of them predate the Latin era, however, their dating has never been attempted (**Fig. 158**).

So, the continuation of an austere local building tradition dictated by the island's limited resources is obvious in Oria. The introduction by the new rulers of certain western forms and buildings techniques (e.g. pointed barrel-vaults and arches) as well as an attempt for sophistication in the construction (clear geometry, consistent use of headers and stretchers etc.) are also evident mainly in the religious buildings i.e. the churches of Eleousa (**ch5**) and Agia Triada (**ch9**). Still, the new designs were realised using local materials and quite possibly a local work force, perhaps under the guidance of a Latin master mason brought in either from Naxos or even Venice. The limited availability of materials and possibly of skilled masons obviously restricted the Latin lord's options regarding the complexity and variety of the implemented architectural forms (e.g. cross or rib vaults are nowhere to be seen in Oria). The limitations of the topography i.e. the site's inaccessible location and restricted building space could also have played a crucial role.

What is more, it would be reasonable to assume that this attempt for refinement in the construction was made predominantly at the beginning of the Latin rule (**ch5** and **ch9** date most likely to the 13th century). As the years passed by, the western designs most likely weakened in favour of the local building traditions. It is noteworthy that the rest of the intermural churches are of lesser building quality (smaller dimensions, thinner uncoursed and poorly bonded walls etc.) while many are covered either with vaults built with the corbelling technique like Theotokos' church or with flat roofs.

⁵⁶³ The *spolia* were the reason the building was also noted by Ross (1840), pp. 113-114 and Gerola (1926), pp. 15-16 [57-58], n.1.

Nevertheless, this assimilation to the local vernacular standards is not unique for Oria. The same can be noted in most contemporary Cycladic sites and even the Kato *Kastro* of Naxos, the capital of the Duchy, is characterised by the use of local forms and materials. Although the general layout of the fortress followed the Venetian standards, the purely western influences in the architectural forms faded away after the first years of the Latin rule.⁵⁶⁴ According to R. Ousterhout the continuation of well-established local building practices was very common not only in the Aegean but also in other places in the Eastern Mediterranean that witnessed periods of interchange and movements of population that resulted in cultural interactions.⁵⁶⁵



Fig. 158. Local building practices applied in the settlements and the countryside of Kythnos

⁵⁶⁴ Vavatsioulas (2007), pp. 500, 530.

⁵⁶⁵ Ousterhout (2010), pp. 261-275.



Fig. 159. The double-apsed church (ch19) of the east settlement, east elevation

8 The *Kastro* environs

As mentioned, except for some modern farmsteads, the wider area of Oria *Kastro* remains mostly uninhabited today. As a result, the settlement itself but also most of its peripheral elements of defence, communication and provision which make up the form and complete the function of an island *kastro*, are still in place, free from modern interventions. The surrounding landscape with the terraced fields, the ‘*kelia*’ and the rural churches has not changed much since the settlement was abandoned, so the views from the *Kastro* rock towards both the seascape and the island’s hinterland remain unobstructed and untouched. The port installations in Sclavos bay to the north, the spring to the south, the possible site of the town’s cemetery to the east and all extramural buildings were recorded and studied not only because they highlight the function and complete the picture of the settlement, but because they also help trace the routes that connected Oria to its immediate environs and reconstruct the area’s medieval landscape (see plans [A01](#), [A02](#)). The best-preserved structures were surveyed at the scales of 1:50 and 1:10.

8.1 Double-apsed church of the east settlement (ch19) |[plan B38](#)|

On the hill to the east of Oria, about 160 m from the southern gate, lie the ruins of a small double-apsed church (inner dimensions: 5.60 x 4.40 m). Although it is now the only standing building of the east settlement (see section 4.2.2), the church’s name and dedication are unknown. Its floorplan is very unusual;⁵⁶⁶ the entrance is on the west side through a 1.20 m wide doorway that leads to a narrow narthex. A wall placed on the building’s axis separates the nave into two ‘aisles’ that end in two apses on the east side. Both ‘aisles’ have the same dimensions and are architecturally equivalent. The apses bear one window each and externally they are inscribed in a bigger polygonal apse that projects slightly from the main body of the church (**Fig.**

⁵⁶⁶ According to Dimitrokallis’ categorisation of the double-apsed churches, this church is a mix of type A, i.e. churches with two complete sanctuaries that share a narthex, and type B2, i.e. churches that have both sanctuary apses inscribed in a much bigger apse, so that externally they give the impression of being single-apsed, Dimitrokallis (1976), p. 11. Both types are very rare and apparently a combination of the two has not previously been recorded.



Fig. 160. Aerial view of the twin church (ch17-18)



Fig. 161. The sanctuary apse of ch17

159). There are also two small openings (approx. 0.15 x 0.20 m) in the north wall that could correspond either to beam sockets or light holes. Today, the roof and most parts of the west, south and east walls have collapsed. The roofing cannot be determined with certainty, however, judging by the width of the inner wall (0.60 m) it is possible that each section was covered with a barrel-vault. In the south section, there is a big rectangular slab amongst the rubble that could have belonged to a table-cippus.

The building's bad state of preservation can potentially be attributed to its poor construction quality. Local rubble stones bonded with earth were used for the masonry, and although there are some big blocks in the lower courses, the walls were built mostly with small stones that were not properly interlocked with one another. Given that there are no obvious construction joints, it seems that the church was planned like that from the beginning and is not the result of later alterations. Perhaps it was intended for mixed Catholic-Orthodox rituals. If that is the case, then it was erected post 1207.

8.2 Twin church towards the port (ch17-18) |plans B39, B40|

Down the slope to the northeast of the settlement, most likely on the path that led from Oria to Sclavos port, stand the remains of a twin-church.⁵⁶⁷ Its state of preservation is very poor as the west side of both chapels has been crushed down by large rocks that fell from the mountainside above. What is more, the interior is overgrown with thick bushes that hinder the recoding of the structure. It seems, however, that these churches were of similar built and dimensions to the intramural ones. The southern chapel (ch18), which has sustained the most damage, appears to have been relatively well-built with medium-sized rubble stones bonded with a mix of clay and lime mortar. Its inner dimensions were approximately 2.70 x 7.00 m, while the walls reached a maximum width of 0.70 m. The sanctuary apse, which now stands only a few centimetres from the ground, was semi-circular. In the south wall, the remains of a 0.80 m wide window are still visible.

⁵⁶⁷ This church typology is quite common in the Cyclades in the Late Middle Ages, e.g. Agios Georgios and Agios Nicolas in Lathrino, Naxos last phase dated to the mid-13th century, Aslanidis (2014), pp. 218-221 or Agioi Apostoli in Agios Artemios, Paros dated between the 14th and 16th centuries and three more in Kephalos *Kastro*, Vionis (2012), pp. 145, 189.

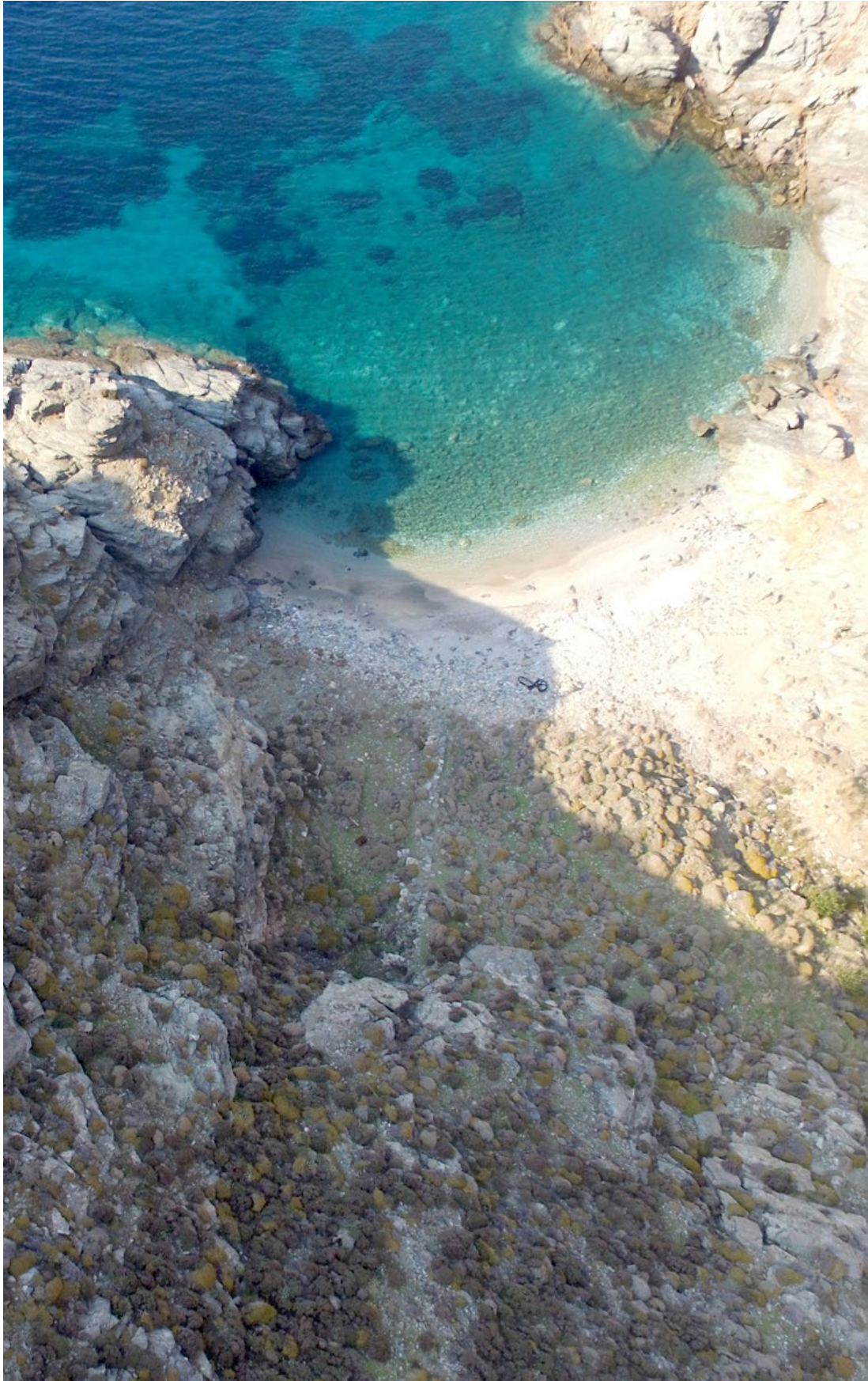


Fig. 162. Sclavos bay from the southeast

The north chapel (**ch17**) had analogous proportions (inner dimensions: approx. 2.80 x 7.00 m) and despite being of a slightly lower building quality (roughly coursed masonry bonded with just clay) it is better preserved compared to the south. The sanctuary apse is almost intact; it was stilted and inscribed in the width of the wall. The upper part of its arch was formed with three dressed poros blocks, while a large marble slab (1.07 x 0.52 m) served as the altar table. In the wall to the right of the apse, there is a small niche. The entrance of the north chapel was presumably on the west side. Some vaulting blocks that lie amongst the rubble show that both buildings were covered with barrel-vaults. Moreover, the remains of a pilaster on the south wall of the northern chapel could suggest the existence of a buttressing arch similar to those of **ch1**, **5** and **9**. Finally, judging from the construction joints in the masonry, it seems that the two churches were not built simultaneously; the south chapel was built first, and the north one was added sometime later. The buildings' bad condition does not allow for further conclusions.

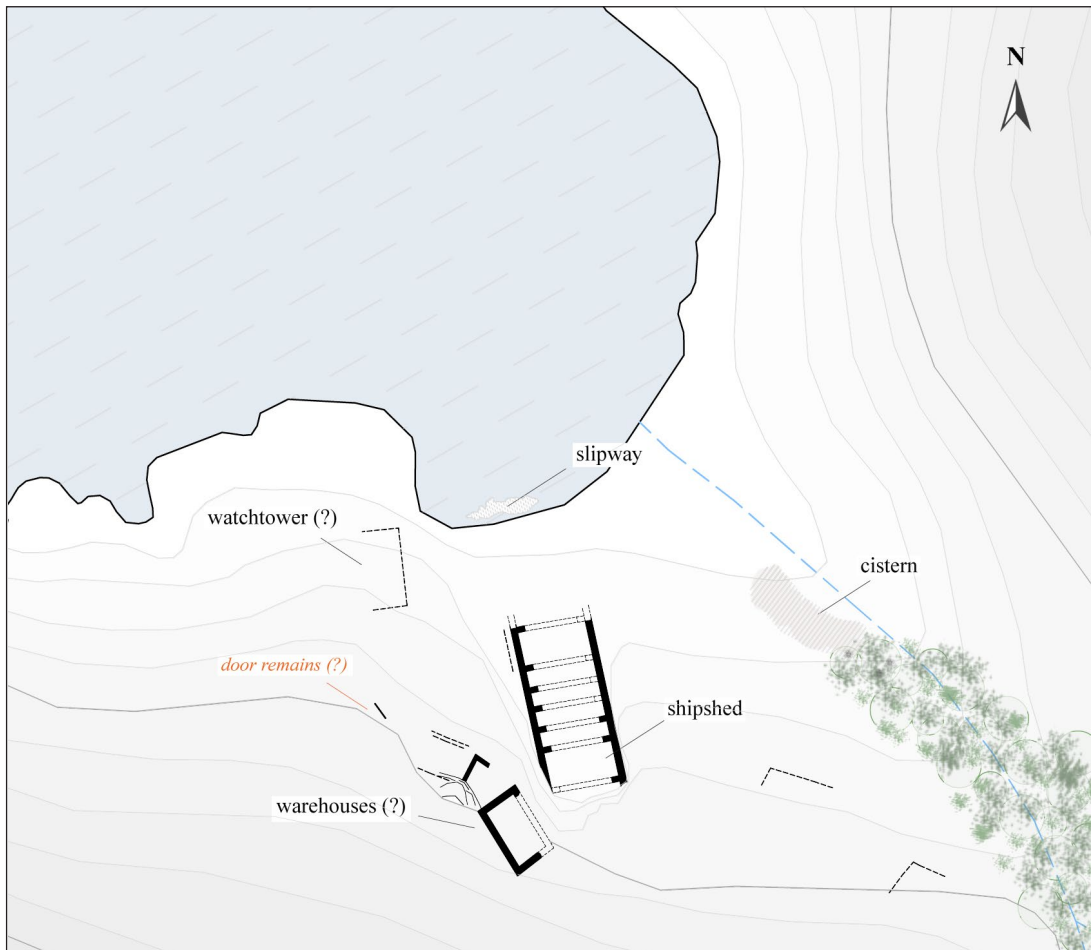
A few meters to the south of the church complex, lie the ruins of a smaller structure built partly into the bedrock (**127**). It has also been heavily damaged by the landslide, however, the very good quality of its masonry that was bonded with strong off-white lime mortar and some faint traces of *kourasani* on the rocks could potentially identify it as a cistern.⁵⁶⁸ Perhaps the church-cistern (?) complex served also as a resting point for those ascending to the *Kastro* from the port and vice versa.

8.3 Sclavos port |plans A07, A08|

As mentioned, Sclavos bay to the north of the *Kastro* hill was Oria's outlet to the sea. The peculiar place name of the bay (Sclavos meaning slave in Greek) and its use as a port by the Latins already since the late 13th century is attested to by the sources. The 1278s Venetian acts show that despite its modest size, Sclavos was considered the island's main port acting as an intermediate landing for ships (merchant as well as privateers) sailing to and from Constantinople, Euboea, Peloponnese and the Aegean islands.⁵⁶⁹ Although not by name, the port is also mentioned by Martoni in

⁵⁶⁸ Alternatively, the good building quality could suggest a defensive use, e.g. a small tower or outpost guarding the ascend from the port.

⁵⁶⁹ Tafel and Thomas (1857), pp. 173, 240-241. See also sections 2.4.1 and 3.2.3.



PLAN NUMBER
A08

SCLAVOS PORT
SCALE 1:1000



Fig. 163. Remains of the port installation (a-c)

1395 who notes that he and his companions descended to the port of Oria to board a small *barca* that would take them to Athens.⁵⁷⁰ There are no later mentions of Sclavos, however, it would be safe to assume that it continued to act as Oria's port for as long as the town itself was in use. At the same time, some of the bigger and more protected bays, like Kolona, Apokrousi or Agios Stefanos that were marked on the maps of some later travellers⁵⁷¹ would also have been used as ports and anchoring places.⁵⁷²

Some sort of port installation might have existed at Sclavos since the Byzantine era as, in analogy to the *Kastro*, there seems to be evidence of occupation during the 6th-7th century AD.⁵⁷³ Further research is needed, however, in order to draw safe conclusions on the dating of the port's remains and their relation to the main settlement. The path that connected Sclavos to the *Kastro* is no longer visible, due to landslides and dense bush cover. As a result, the area is today more easily accessible by sea. On the beach and the slopes on either side of it, there are remains of what would once have been the port installations. Despite the site's remote location, all structures are in a very bad state of preservation, presumably due to the corrosive sea environment. Their recording, therefore, was particularly challenging and was partly achieved with the help of the drone.

On the south-west side of the beach lie the ruins of a big elongated structure that can most likely be identified with a shipshed.⁵⁷⁴ It was partly built into the bedrock, with its narrow side facing towards the sea (**Figs 162, 163a, b, 164**). The building's external dimensions are currently approximately 23.50 x 10.60 m, however, the outline of the northern side (which would have been open towards the water to haul the boats in) cannot be safely traced. It is possible that the structure was initially longer but the ends of the walls closer to the sea were eroded. The interior was subdivided width-wise into seven sections by an equal number of arches that were supported by pilasters protruding about 1.00 m from the inner face of the wall. Both the outer

⁵⁷⁰ Piccirilo (2003), p. 135.

⁵⁷¹ Sonetti (1485), pp. 19-20 (Boston Library copy); Loupis (1999), pp. 368-369; Bordone (1528), p. 42.

⁵⁷² A similar configuration was also noted in Naxos where the small and unprotected port of the Kato *Kastro* was complemented by deeper nearby bays, Vavatsioulas (2007), p. 109-110.

⁵⁷³ Late Roman Amphorae (LRA5).

⁵⁷⁴ See also Vallindas (1882), pp. 10, 47.



Fig. 164. View of the shipshed from the north



Fig. 165. Building remains on the south-western slopes

walls and the arches were built with medium-sized schist stones bonded with coarse lime mortar with sea sand inclusions. Small stones and occasionally potsherds were used as pinnings. Today, only the springing of the arch in the far south-east corner is preserved. The form of the arches, i.e. whether they were pointed or semi-circular cannot be deduced. The roof type is also not clear, however, a number of stones bonded with strong lime mortar that is still clinging about 5.00 m up the south rock surface, suggests that the structure was most likely covered with a big approximately 9.00 m wide vault.⁵⁷⁵ Remains of what could have been a rock-cut slipway are still visible in the shallows in front of the shipshed (plan A08).

The chronology of the shipshed cannot be determined without further research. Its construction would seem sensible in the context of the sea-oriented Aegean Duchy; according to Saulger, the first Duke Marco I Sanudo among other port installations built shipsheds for his galleys in Naxos right after his establishment on the island.⁵⁷⁶ So, something similar could have also happened in Oria. On the other hand, the pre-existence of a Byzantine *neosoikos* cannot be excluded. In any case, it seems that in either period it would have been used for repairing and/or sheltering Oria's fleet.⁵⁷⁷ According to Martoni's notes in the late 14th century Giovanni III Gozzadini had at least one galley.⁵⁷⁸ Furthermore, the 1499 wedding act of Niccolo II was signed among others by two individuals bearing the title '*Capitan de la Ferminie*', i.e. captain of Fermenia,⁵⁷⁹ however, the term could also refer to the commanders of Kythnos' land forces or coincide with the office of *kapetanio*s who according to Slot was the head of a local commune.⁵⁸⁰

⁵⁷⁵ The Venetian shipsheds in Chania, Crete which were double as long but had comparable width to that of Selavos (50.00 x 9.00 m) were also covered with vaults.

⁵⁷⁶ Saulger (1698), p. 11. Their existence, however, is yet to be documented, Vavatsioulas (2007), p. 460.

⁵⁷⁷ Its dimensions would have allowed it to fit a small warship (a *dromon* or a Venetian galley). On Byzantine *dromones* see Pryor and Jeffreys (2006).

⁵⁷⁸ Piccirilo (2003), p. 135.

⁵⁷⁹ Archiv. Gozzadini. Fasc. 33 no7; Ersch and Grüber (1863), p. 421

⁵⁸⁰ The *kapetanio*s office (of Byzantine origin) can also be found in 15th and 16th-century documents of other Cycladic islands, Slot (1982), p. 51. Also Grimaldi when discussing the administration of the Duchy mentions the office of the *Grand capitan* who was second only to the Duke and along with another two counsellors constituted his council chamber, Fotheringham (1915), p. 80.

On the south-western slope, on the rocks just above the shipshed lie the ruins of a three-building complex (**Fig. 165**). The walls stand less than 1.00 m from the ground, so the use of these structures cannot be determined; presumably, they were warehouses, custom offices or some sort of lodges for the local garrison and the port visitors. The biggest and most well-preserved building had external dimensions about 10.00 x 6.00 m and its walls were bonded with clay. Finally, a few meters to the west of the complex, half-cached under a rock are the remains of an approximately 2.50 m long wooden structure (door?). Although we cannot know whether it is contemporary to the buildings, the cast iron nails that held the panels together are proof that it was made before the 19th century (**Fig. 164c**).

On top of the rock on the west edge of the bay, are the foundations of another building with similar dimensions (10.00 x 4.50 m). Maybe this was a watchtower guarding the port entrance and/or a lighthouse (**Fig. 162, plan A08**). Remains of walls are also to be found further up the slope that leads to the *Kastro* and along the ravine to the east. Finally, at the centre of the beach by the ravine's mouth are remains of what was probably a cistern used to cater the water needs of the port.

8.4 Oria's demise and abandonment

Due to the absence of relevant historical sources, our knowledge of the *Kastro's* demise and final abandonment remains as unclear as that of its foundation. The local tradition, as recorded in the 1880s by Vallindas, says that 'On Easter day, three hundred years ago, the Turks took it from the Franks and a great slaughter took place so that the sea was red, and the redness there of reached even to Zea (Kea)'. The islanders used also to point out a red spot on the rocks allegedly made by this dread slaughter.⁵⁸¹ The survivors moved then the capital from Oria to Messaria and the area around the castle was never inhabited again, becoming a haunted place full of terror to the superstitious Kythniotes.⁵⁸²

Despite the exaggerations of the oral stories, it would be safe to assume that they refer to island's capture either by Piali *Pasha* in 1566 or Mehmet *Pasha* a few years later (1571) when the Cyclades were officially annexed to the Ottoman Empire.⁵⁸³ Yet in both cases there are no specific mentions of Kythnos in the sources. The destruction of the *Kastro* is also often attributed to Barbarossa⁵⁸⁴ and although it is almost certain that the town had already suffered a first destruction in 1537, as was the case with many other Aegean island settlements whose inhabitants resisted the Ottoman advance,⁵⁸⁵ the time frame given by the local tradition seems to fit better the second half of the 16th century. That assumption is further supported by a report written in 1700 by the Latin bishop of Syros, Gustiniani, who claims that the old capital of Kythnos was destroyed 130 years ago, i.e. in 1570.⁵⁸⁶

It is not clear whether the population deserted the castle right after its violent capture due to its disrepair – as was the case with Paliochora on Kythera after 1537 –⁵⁸⁷ or whether it was repaired and then gradually abandoned because it became obsolete

⁵⁸¹ 'Ανήμερα τη Λαμπρή το πήραν οι Τούρκοι από τους Φράγκους πριν τρακόσια χρόνια, και μεγάλη σφαγή εγίνηκε, που η θάλασσα εκοκκίνησε και η κοκκινάδα έφθασεν μέχρι τη Τζειά.', Vallindas (1882), pp. 49-50; Bent (1885), p. 433.

⁵⁸² 'It is a desolate, weird place, and full of terror to the inhabitants. (...) fearful demons haunt it – giants with black faces, evil doing spirits, man-eating like the Homeric Cyclops, who guard hidden treasures of Venetian florins which have been buried in the ruins.', Bent (1885), pp. 442-443.

⁵⁸³ Miller (1908), p. 641, see also section 2.5.1.

⁵⁸⁴ Mazarakis (2019), p. 24.

⁵⁸⁵ Miller (1908), pp. 624-627, see also Khalifeh (1831), pp. 58-60.

⁵⁸⁶ Markopoli (1895), pp. 126-127.

⁵⁸⁷ Ince and Ballantyne (2007), pp. 24-25.



Fig. 166. Oria *Kastro* from the southwest

when Kythnos and the rest of the Cyclades became part of the Ottoman Empire. Lowland Messaria undoubtedly offered more expansion potential and better living conditions compared to remote Oria. Vallindas claims that the state of the *Kastro*'s ruins clearly suggests that the destruction was caused by a violent capture, however, he does not elaborate further.⁵⁸⁸ Perhaps it was the exceptionally poor condition of the defensive buildings that lead him to that conclusion. The lord's residence (45-47), the keep (33) as well as all other towers are almost levelled, but whether that was done deliberately by the conquerors⁵⁸⁹ or just by chance and the natural elements, we may never know. There is an indication, however, that Oria was deserted before the turn of the 16th century. The 1590's map of Millo shows a ruined town on top of a hill in the northern part of the island marked with the word *ruina* (ruins).⁵⁹⁰

In any case, according to the Propaganda reports, the Latin cathedral was used long after the abandonment of the *Kastro*. Even after 1700, when there were no more Latins on Kythnos, the church was turned to Orthodox and liturgies continue to be held there even today (see section 7.1). The late 16th, 17th century and early modern pottery sherds that can be found in the area corroborate that.

⁵⁸⁸ Vallindas (1882), p. 50.

⁵⁸⁹ A similar practice seems to have been applied by the Venetians after they captured Apalirou *Kastro* on Naxos to prevent re-settlement; all above-ground cisterns were systematically destroyed, and the tower was lowered in height. Hill, Roland and Ødegård (2018), p. 86.

⁵⁹⁰ See section 3.1.2.

The medieval *kastra* of the Cyclades

9 Oria *Kastro* in a regional context

Although the preceding analysis offers some insight into the built environment of Kythnos during the Middle Ages, the outstanding questions regarding the foundation (date and reasons), initial form and evolution of the *Kastro* cannot be fully answered yet. Given, however, that Kythnos followed the historical course of the rest of the Cyclades, a comparison to similar sites on the neighbouring islands was considered essential in order to draw comparative information from the contemporary situation in the Aegean and put Oria into a wider context.

There are several fortified settlements and *kastra* on the Cycladic islands dating to the Byzantine and/or the Latin era. Although few of them have been subject to systematic research, there are some cases that have been fully or preliminary studied and published.⁵⁹¹ Since there are indications that the site was occupied during both periods, a comparative study between Oria and examples of Byzantine and Latin *kastra* will attempt to draw parallels between the choice of location, the use and their form and layout. The goal is to establish a potential reasoning and chronology for the foundation of Oria *Kastro* and understand its use and role in the Aegean area in these periods.

9.1 The Byzantine *kastra* of the Cyclades

As mentioned, during the first three centuries after the founding of the Eastern Empire, the Cyclades knew a period of relative calm and prosperity, acting as supply

⁵⁹¹ For an overview see Vionis (2012).

stations for vessels following the sea routes to and from Constantinople.⁵⁹² Most of the islands had maritime market towns that functioned as processing and exporting centres.⁵⁹³ From the 7th century onwards, however, it can be observed that many of these ancient coastal cities either shrank dramatically in size or were gradually abandoned to be replaced by *kastra* built on top of crags and remote hilltops.⁵⁹⁴ Little is known about this transitional period (7th-9th century AD) in the Aegean world as there are barely any written sources and most of the ancient cities and the Byzantine *kastra* in the Cyclades remain undocumented.⁵⁹⁵ Consequently, the beginning of the transition process and the exact causes behind it remain unclear. Pirate raids and the Arab threat after the 640s are the reasons traditionally put forward by Greek and non-Greek scholars,⁵⁹⁶ however, recent studies suggest that the Arab fleets are unlikely to have been a serious threat to the islands before the occupation of Crete by the Andalus Muslims in 827.⁵⁹⁷

So, when exactly were these new fortified settlements created and to what purpose? Were they part of an official plan to safeguard the sea trade routes connecting Constantinople to its western territories, imperative for the survival of the capital or were they an incidental response of the islanders to a seaborne enemy? To complicate things further, the very identification of the Byzantine *kastra* in the Cyclades is challenging given that most sites remain unexplored to the present day. As a result, they are often not distinguished from the *kastra* built during the Latin occupation and are simply classified as medieval.

Few *kastra* on the Cycladic islands have been systematically studied and even fewer can be securely dated to the early Byzantine period. There are also certain sites that have not been subject to research – at least not systematic –⁵⁹⁸ but are nevertheless thought by some scholars to be of Byzantine origin. This assumption is sometimes

⁵⁹² Vionis (2012), p. 31.

⁵⁹³ Cosentino (2019), pp. 85-86; Roussos (2017a), p. 36; Vionis (2012), p.31; Sanders (1996), p. 148.

⁵⁹⁴ Roussos (2017a), pp. 292-293.

⁵⁹⁵ Magdalino (2018), p. 20.

⁵⁹⁶ Petrochilos 2(016), pp. 173-174.

⁵⁹⁷ Magdalino (2018), pp. 21-22.

⁵⁹⁸ It seems that some poorly published and selective surface surveys were carried out either by the Greek Ministry of Culture or by independent researchers, however, most of them were focused on the Prehistory and Antiquity and not on the Byzantine era.

based on early historians' writings that were fuelled by local traditions, on *in situ* observations and more rarely on some scarce historical evidence (place names etc.). Despite the lack of archaeological evidence, in order to provide a framework for the discussion, an attempt will be made to list and map both the Byzantine and 'possibly Byzantine' *kastra* and identify their relations and common characteristics and see how they compare to Oria. Recent studies that have provided an overview of the ceramic, numismatic and other evidence in the Cyclades during that period will also be considered.⁵⁹⁹

9.1.1 Documented cases

The most prominent and well-documented Byzantine *kastro* of the Cycladic island-group is beyond doubt Apalirou *Kastro* on Naxos (**Fig. 167**). Covering an area of 2.10 ha, it was built on top of a steep mountain in the southwest that offers commanding views of the inland territories and the neighbouring islands. Apalirou is the only Byzantine *kastro* whose existence and demise are documented in textual sources (though non-contemporary). The history of the establishment of the Aegean Duchy, written in the 17th century by Saulger, relates that Marco I Sanudo besieged the *Kastro* in the wake of the Fourth Crusade.⁶⁰⁰ After its capture, around 1207, the site was not re-settled, as the Venetians favoured the coastal site of Chora (once the site of the ancient city of Naxos) which became the seat of their administration. Indeed, the findings from the on-going research project that is carried out in the area by the Norwegian Institute have shown that the *Kastro* was established in the mid-7th century and remained in use until the early 13th century.⁶⁰¹ The numerous dwellings, churches and cisterns that have already been recorded suggest that Apalirou was not merely a refuge fortress but an evolved fortified town and the island's administrative and political centre.⁶⁰²

⁵⁹⁹ See esp. Poulou-Papadimitriou (2018), pp. 29-50; Poulou (2019), pp. 235-257; Penna (2018), pp. 51-60.

⁶⁰⁰ Saulger (1698), pp. 8-9.

⁶⁰¹ Roland (2019), p. 104.

⁶⁰² Hill, Roland and Ødegård (2018), p. 85; Hill (2018), p. 115.



Fig. 167. Apalirou *Kastro* on Naxos, view from the west (courtesy of J. Crow)

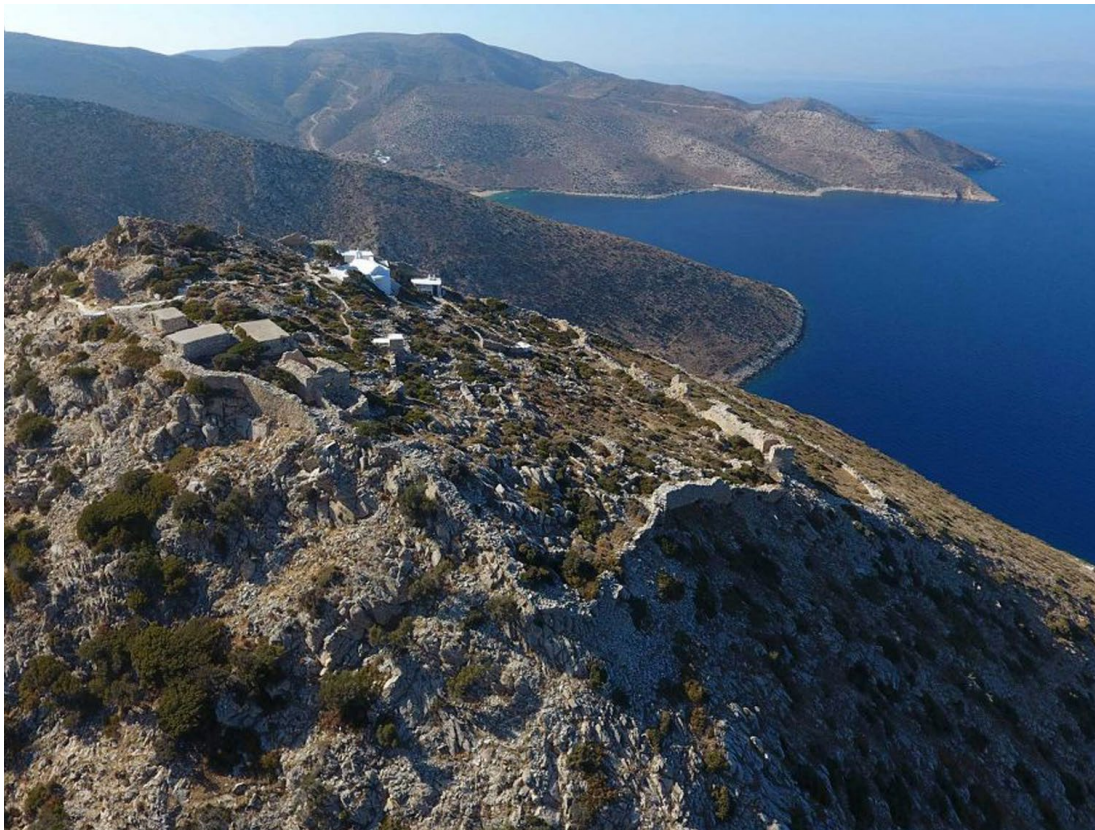


Fig. 168. Paleokastro on Ios, view from the southwest (<https://www.kastra.eu/castleen.php?kastro=ios>)

On the island of Ios, in visual contact with Apalirou lies another *kastró* that is also dated to the ‘Dark Ages’.⁶⁰³ The so-called Paleokastro is located on a hilltop on the east coast of Ios and was until recently regarded as a Venetian establishment of the late 14th century because – contrary to Apalirou – it was in use during the Latin era too (**Fig. 168**). H. Eberhard in her work on the Byzantine castles of the Cyclades first suggested that it may be of Byzantine origin.⁶⁰⁴ Paleokastro is considerably smaller than Apalirou and its intramural area was not as densely built. Therefore, Eberhard considers it a military establishment and not a fortified settlement. If that should be the case, the main Byzantine nucleus of the island remains unknown.

On the neighbouring Paros, a main Byzantine installation is yet to be identified, nevertheless, potsherds from the underwater remains of the harbour at Paroikia that date to the 7th/8th century suggest continuous, if limited, habitation of the ancient city.⁶⁰⁵ In addition, recent excavations to the northeast of Naoussa identified a pottery workshop dating to the same period.⁶⁰⁶ Most importantly though, on the small islet of Viokastro, about a kilometre off the north-east coast of the island, lies an early Byzantine fort. The site has not yet been excavated, however, according to a preliminary survey it dates between the middle 7th and 8th century. Its location, form and size imply that it was a purely military establishment that was dependant on the main island and was not occupied on a permanent basis.⁶⁰⁷

Yet another Paleokastro can be found on Mykonos, located on top of a low hill in the middle of the island. The site is also known as Ghisi *Kastro* and was widely considered Venetian, however, the hill of Paleokastro seems to have been inhabited continuously from Antiquity to the Latin era.⁶⁰⁸ According to K. Tsakos, most of the

⁶⁰³ Poulou-Papadimitriou (2018), p. 35; Pennas (2014), pp. 380-381; Penna (2001), p. 403. In all cases, Paleokastro is mentioned as an early Byzantine establishment, however, no further details are given regarding the findings this dating is based on. Most likely the information derives from a surface survey, given that – to my knowledge – no systematic study has been carried out as yet.

⁶⁰⁴ Eberhard (1986), p. 166. Eberhard rather arbitrarily bases the earlier dating on the masonry quality that differs from that of the Latin *kastra* of the Cyclades and on Paleokastro’s remote location.

⁶⁰⁵ Roussos (2017a), p. 84.

⁶⁰⁶ Diamanti (2016), pp. 691-697.

⁶⁰⁷ Vionis (2012), pp. 125-131. According to a more recent study the use of the site continued well into the Late Medieval, Ottoman, and Early Modern periods, Knodell et al. (2020).

⁶⁰⁸ Pennas (2014), p. 356; Tsakos (1997), p. 8.



Fig. 169. Paleokastro on Andros, view from the west (<https://andros.travel>)



Fig. 170. Gibitroli fortress from an 18th-century map of Anaphe (Savonarola 1713, p. 50, James Ford Bell Library, Minnesota)

ruins belong to a Byzantine *kastro*, dating probably to the 7th century.⁶⁰⁹ Eberhard too, based on the form of the masonry, suggests that this small-sized fort could date to the Byzantine era.⁶¹⁰ In addition, remains of fortifications contemporary to Paleokastro were found on top of Ai-Lias Vorniotis hill, in the north-west part of the island.⁶¹¹

9.1.2 Alleged cases

Other than the above, there are also several fortified sites that, for one reason or another, are considered to be Byzantine. On Naxos, there is another *kastro* that could belong to the category of the Byzantine military outposts. Kalogeros *Kastro* is located on the far north-east edge of the island, on top of a barely accessible peak and it is thought to date from the same period as Apalirou⁶¹² or even earlier, as Eberhard suggests, judging from the big size of the fortification walls and their rough building quality.⁶¹³ The site has not yet been studied in detail, however, its dating (based mostly on local tradition rather than actual evidence) is accepted by some scholars.⁶¹⁴ Kalogeros has commanding views to the north and east, towards Ikaria, Patmos and the small island of Fourni which is mentioned also in the *Stadiodromikon* of Constantine Porphyrogenetus as a stop on the sea route followed by the naval expedition for the attempted recapture of Crete in 949.⁶¹⁵

Paleokastro on Andros has also been considered Byzantine⁶¹⁶ and Eberhard strongly supported that view.⁶¹⁷ Paleokastro or Epano *Kastro*, as it is also known, is situated on a mountain peak close to the south-eastern coast of the island that offers unobstructed views of the surrounding seascape (**Fig. 169**). The size of the fortress is comparable to that of Apalirou and its walls enclosed several houses, churches

⁶⁰⁹ Tsakos (1998), p. 126.

⁶¹⁰ Eberhard (1986), p. 177.

⁶¹¹ Pennas (2014), p. 356; Tsakos (1997), p. 8.

⁶¹² Zerlenti (1902), p. 496.

⁶¹³ Eberhard (1986), p. 178.

⁶¹⁴ Roussos (2017a), p. 268-269.

⁶¹⁵ Malamut (1988), pp. 544-545.

⁶¹⁶ Polemis (1981), pp. 65-66.

⁶¹⁷ Eberhard (1986), p. 177.

and cisterns. Epano *Kastro* was certainly in use during the Venetian period as can be attested by various contemporary documents,⁶¹⁸ however, Eberhard based mainly on *in situ* observations presumed it to have an earlier Byzantine phase.⁶¹⁹ Nevertheless, the initial report from recent studies that were carried out in the *Kastro* area does not confirm that hypothesis. All intramural structures seem to date to the first half of the 13th century, i.e. the period of the Venetian occupation of Andros.⁶²⁰ But, even though a Byzantine phase of Epano *Kastro* has not yet been documented, it is not entirely ruled out by the researchers, especially considering the absence of any other major Byzantine installations on the island which is known to have been an official customs station in the 8th century.⁶²¹ In addition, the 7th-century coin finds from Paleokastro,⁶²² despite not offering a secure chronology for the whole site, can further support Eberhard's assumption.

On neighbouring Tenos, the main Byzantine settlement is considered to have been in the southern hinterland, either on top of the imposing summit of Exombourgo, which later became the long-lasting seat of the Venetian administration or near Xinara, a village at the foot of the same mountain.⁶²³ Again, systematic studies to uncover the Byzantine past of the site have not been carried out. The main early medieval settlement of Pholegandros was most likely situated on a hilltop a small distance to the northeast of the later Latin *kastro* that lies on the island's east coast. The area is again known by the name Paleokastro and was first surveyed by Ross in the 1840s who noted the existence of ancient walls and ruins of a medieval tower on the peak of the mountain.⁶²⁴ Eberhard too attributes Paleokastro to the Byzantine times based on the floor plan and building quality of the ruins.⁶²⁵ A more recent surface survey identified potsherds dating from the Classical up to the post-Byzantine era.⁶²⁶

⁶¹⁸ Eberhard (1986), p. 167; Hopf (1856), p. 35 [253].

⁶¹⁹ Judging from the site's inaccessible location and the fortifications' size and structural features, Eberhard (1986), p. 173.

⁶²⁰ Deligianni-Dori (2006), pp. 471-480; Pallis (2009), pp. 251-252.

⁶²¹ Eberhard (1986), p. 187, see also Veikou (2015), pp. 369-373; Petrochilos (2016), pp. 193-194 and Magdalino (2018), p. 24.

⁶²² Penna (2018), p. 54; Veikou (2015), p. 371, n.75.

⁶²³ Lagouros (1965), p. 42.

⁶²⁴ Ross (1840), pp. 147-148.

⁶²⁵ Eberhard (1986), p. 178.

⁶²⁶ Bechraki and Vavilopoulou-Charitonidou (1997), p. 147.

The situation on the neighbouring Sikinos is not clear. Eberhard notes that according to the local tradition the inhabitants lived scattered in various places of the island during the Byzantine period.⁶²⁷ Finds of the 7th/ 8th century from Episkopi in central Sikinos, as well as the 7th-century coins from Malta cape on the eastern tip of the island attest some activity during that period.⁶²⁸ Moreover, similar to Pholegandros, on the mountain peak above the Latin *kastró*, there is a fortified Late Medieval monastery, that could have been built on top of an earlier (Byzantine?) fortification. Finally, the so-called Gibitroli fort that was built on the formidable rock of Kalamos mountain in the far eastern tip of Anaphe could, according to Eberhard, predate the Latin era and be of Byzantine origin (**Fig. 170**). She bases that assumption mainly on the remote and barely accessible location of the fort.⁶²⁹ Once more there are no studies that could support or discard that hypothesis.

9.1.3 Evidence of Byzantine presence

Proof of Byzantine presence (built remains and/or other material evidence) has been found on several Cycladic islands and although it cannot offer secure evidence for the existence of fortified sites, it provides valuable information for the study of the wider area. Findings from the ancient fortified settlement at Mesa Vouno in Santorini that date to the transitional era indicate activity during that period.⁶³⁰ Amorgos seems to have housed a regular naval station, as is attested by hoards of Byzantine coins found in the ancient acropolis of Arkesini and elsewhere.⁶³¹ Kea too was a naval station in 680⁶³² and lead seals of the 8th century mention Melos amongst the *vasilika kommerkia*. Also, in the south-east hinterland of Sifnos, at the locality of Pothitos there is a church with an inscription that bears the names of the donors and the date 787,⁶³³ while evidence of a Byzantine settlement has also been found nearby.⁶³⁴

⁶²⁷ Eberhard (1986), p. 184.

⁶²⁸ Penna (2018), pp. 55-56.

⁶²⁹ Eberhard (1986), p. 178.

⁶³⁰ Penna (2001), pp. 404-405.

⁶³¹ Touratsoglou (1999), pp. 351-352; Poulou-Papadimitriou (2018), p. 37.

⁶³² Malamut (1988), pp. 105, 539.

⁶³³ Poulou-Papadimitriou (2018), p. 37; Kiourtzian (1998), pp. 15-16.

⁶³⁴ Pennas (2014), p. 358.

Finally, the inscriptions on the rocks of the Grammata area in north-west Syros show that the island was a safe haven for sailors from the Early Christian period to the first half of the 8th century.⁶³⁵ The main Byzantine installations – if there were any – of these islands, however, remain obscure. It is thought that inland Ioulida remained Kea's main settlement during the Byzantine era,⁶³⁶ while the population of Melos could have gathered on the summit at the area of Plaka, where there are today remains of the later Latin *kaastro* (Anokastro). The rest of the Cyclades (i.e. Serifos, Kimolos etc.) yield little or no information at all regarding their Byzantine past. Of course, that does not mean that these islands were uninhabited or completely desolated during the Early Middle Ages as it has been quite often suggested by some earlier scholars.⁶³⁷ Overall, it is true that with very few exceptions such as Apalirou on Naxos, there is little incontrovertible material evidence confirming a Byzantine presence on most of the islands. By contrast there is plenty of historical evidence from sources such as Theophanes for the active role the islanders played in the events of the 8th and 9th centuries (see also section 2.4.1).⁶³⁸

Before considering the possible relations of these island fortresses, it should be noted that although they are nowadays collectively known as *kastra*, they are not all same. The term was already in use since the medieval times,⁶³⁹ however, there is a clear distinction between the fortified towns, like Apalirou, that constituted the island's administrative centre and the military strongholds like Viokastro off Paros and maybe Paleokastro on Ios and Kalogeros on Naxos. These latter sites, also known as *phrouria* in the Byzantine times, were usually smaller and less densely occupied as they were only meant to hold a garrison, sometimes even on a temporary basis. Some of them could also have served as refuge for local populations in times of need.⁶⁴⁰

Regardless of their use (urban or military), it seems that all documented Byzantine *kastra* have some common characteristics:

⁶³⁵ Kiourtzian (2001), pp. 11, 13-14.

⁶³⁶ Belavilas (2014), p. 12.

⁶³⁷ Caraher (2010), p. 242.

⁶³⁸ E.g. Theophanes: de Boor (1883), p. 404-405.

⁶³⁹ Crow (2017), pp. 98, 105.

⁶⁴⁰ See Crow (2017), pp. 105-106.

- a) they were founded between the 7th and 8th centuries
- b) they were built on top of naturally fortified, remote hills and crags
- c) they held strategic locations that offered unobstructed views to the sea routes and at the same time allowed surveillance of the island hinterland
- d) they had visual contact with one another
- e) they had substantial fortifications (walls reaching an average of 2.00 m) strengthened by peripheral towers

Some of these points (b, c and d) are true for most, if not all, the alleged cases. The ‘possibly Byzantine’ *kastra* are likewise set back from the sea situated on steep-sided mountains commanding wide views.

The Paleokastro theory

Another feature that should be noted, although it is not common to all mentioned cases, is the reoccurring place name of ‘Paleokastro’. Two of the documented (Ios and Mykonos) and two of the alleged cases (Andros and Pholegandros) bear that name which translates into old castle in Greek. Oria *Kastro* is also known as Paleokastro. Presumably the prefix *paleo* (old) was added when these *kastra* fell out of use and/or to differentiate them from other, newer ones, that were built later. The exact timing of the naming, however, remains unclear.

The term Paleokastro was already in use at least since the early 15th century as can be attested by the *isolario* of Buondelmonti. Belavilas points out that on the maps of the Gennadius copy the note ‘*paleo castro*’ sometimes accompanies the symbol used to depict deserted forts and fortified settlements (a circle with parallel lines drawn vertically to its circumference).⁶⁴¹ This symbol clearly differs from those used for ancient towns or live, inhabited sites (**Fig. 171**). Apparently, the cartographer did not intend to comment on the oldness of these sites but merely noted the place name that was in use by the islanders at the time. In some other cases, he offers further clarification in Latin describing them as ‘possible former town’ or ‘ruined town’.⁶⁴²

⁶⁴¹ According to Belavilas the circle represents the circuit wall and the lines the towers, Belavilas (2014), p. 17.

⁶⁴² Belavilas (2014), pp. 15-18.

a) ancient towns



antiquities in Delos



antiquities in Paros

b) deserted settlements & fortresses



Tenos



Santorini



Polyaiagos



Anaphe

c) active settlements & fortresses



Paroikia, Paros



Kato *Kastro*, Naxos



Kastro, Mykonos



Kastro, Serifos



Oria Kastro (?), Kythnos



Kastro, Ios

Fig. 171. Examples of Buondelmonti's symbols on the Cyclades maps for the ancient (a), the deserted (b) and the active settlements and fortresses (c) (Gennadius Library, MS 711)

Belavilas suggests that these *kastra* which by the time of Buondelmonti's mapping were already old and deserted, represent a fortress network of a median period between Late Antiquity and the Crusades that from the 13th century on was either replaced or overlaid by the Latin fortifications. The chronological and spatial boundaries between these three 'settlement networks' as he calls them, are not always clear as in some cases they overlap or even identify with each other.⁶⁴³ In total Buondelmonti recorded 36 ruined settlements in 24 Aegean islands, nine of which he inscribed as *paleo castro*. In the Cyclades he noted nine abandoned sites but the toponym Paleokastro was only ascribed to two cases, Sifnos and Tenos (see **Table 04**).

Although this theory is based only on fragmented historical evidence, it could potentially support the case of some of the alleged cases and even suggest the existence of some other 'possibly Byzantine *kastra*' in the Cyclades area. More specifically, in Pholegandros Buondelmonti drew a ruined settlement at the site of modern-day Paleokastro, in Santorini he clearly noted the settlement of Mesa Vouno, while in Anaphe the same symbol was placed exactly where the so-called Gibitroli fort now lies. Moreover, the Paleokastro of Sifnos was depicted close to the area of the 8th-century inscription and the Byzantine settlement and that of Tenos could possibly have been placed at the site of modern-day Chora where remains of two Byzantine churches have been identified.⁶⁴⁴ The ruined settlements shown in Sikinos, Polyaios and Koufonisi⁶⁴⁵ cannot yet be identified with any known or alleged Byzantine sites, but the existence of some long-lost installations there is not impossible.

It is not known why Buondelmonti failed to mention any deserted settlements in some of the larger islands like Naxos or Andros, where ruins of Byzantine fortresses like Apalirou or Kalogeros certainly existed or why none of the sites presently called Paleokastro were indicated. Although his *isolario* is considered a reliable source of information, further research and comparative data from the whole Aegean area⁶⁴⁶ would be needed in order to validate the Paleokastro hypothesis and draw safe conclusions.

⁶⁴³ Belavilas (2014), p. 12.

⁶⁴⁴ Pennas (2014), p. 356.

⁶⁴⁵ Remains of an Early Christian church have been found at Profitis Ilias on Ano Koufonisi, Pennas (2014), p. 377.

⁶⁴⁶ Relevant parallels can also be drawn for the rest of the Aegean islands.

	Island name and manuscript number (Gennadius copy)	Abandoned settlements	Paleokastra
1	14 I. SCARPANTHOS (Karpathos)	3	1
2	16 I. SIMIE (Symi)	1	
3	20 I. ASTIMPHALEA (Astypalaia)	3	2
4	21 I. SANTE IRINI (Santorini)	1	
5	(23) I. SICANDROS (Sikinos)	1	
6	24 I. POLICANDROS (Pholegandros)	1	
7	25 I. POLIMIO (Polyaigos?)	2	
8	27 I. SIFARI (Sifnos)	1	1
9	33 I. TINO (Tenos)	1	1
10	42 I. PODIA (Koufonisi?)	1	
11	47 (I.) ANAPHIOS (Anaphe)	1	
12	49 I. CHINERA (Kinaros)	1	
14	50 I. LEVATA (Lebitha)	1	
14	52 I. CHOA/LANGO (Kos)	4	
15	53 I. CALAMOS (Kalymnos)	1	
16	54 I. HERO (Leros)	2	1
17	56 I. DIPSI (Lipsi)	1	
18	63 I. SAMOS (Samos)	2	
19	64 I. TENOSA (Oinousses)	1	
20	64 * I. PSARA (Psara)	1	
21	66 I. CHIOS (Chios)	2	
22	67 I. LESBOS/METELINO (Lesbos)	2	2
25	68 I. TENEDOS (Tenedos)	1	
24	75 I. LIMNOS/SCALIMENI (Lemnos)	1	1
		Total: 36	Total: 9

Table 04. The Paleokastra of Buodelmonti (Belavilas 2014, p. 11, table 1)

9.2 The *kastra* network (?) and possible reasons for its establishment

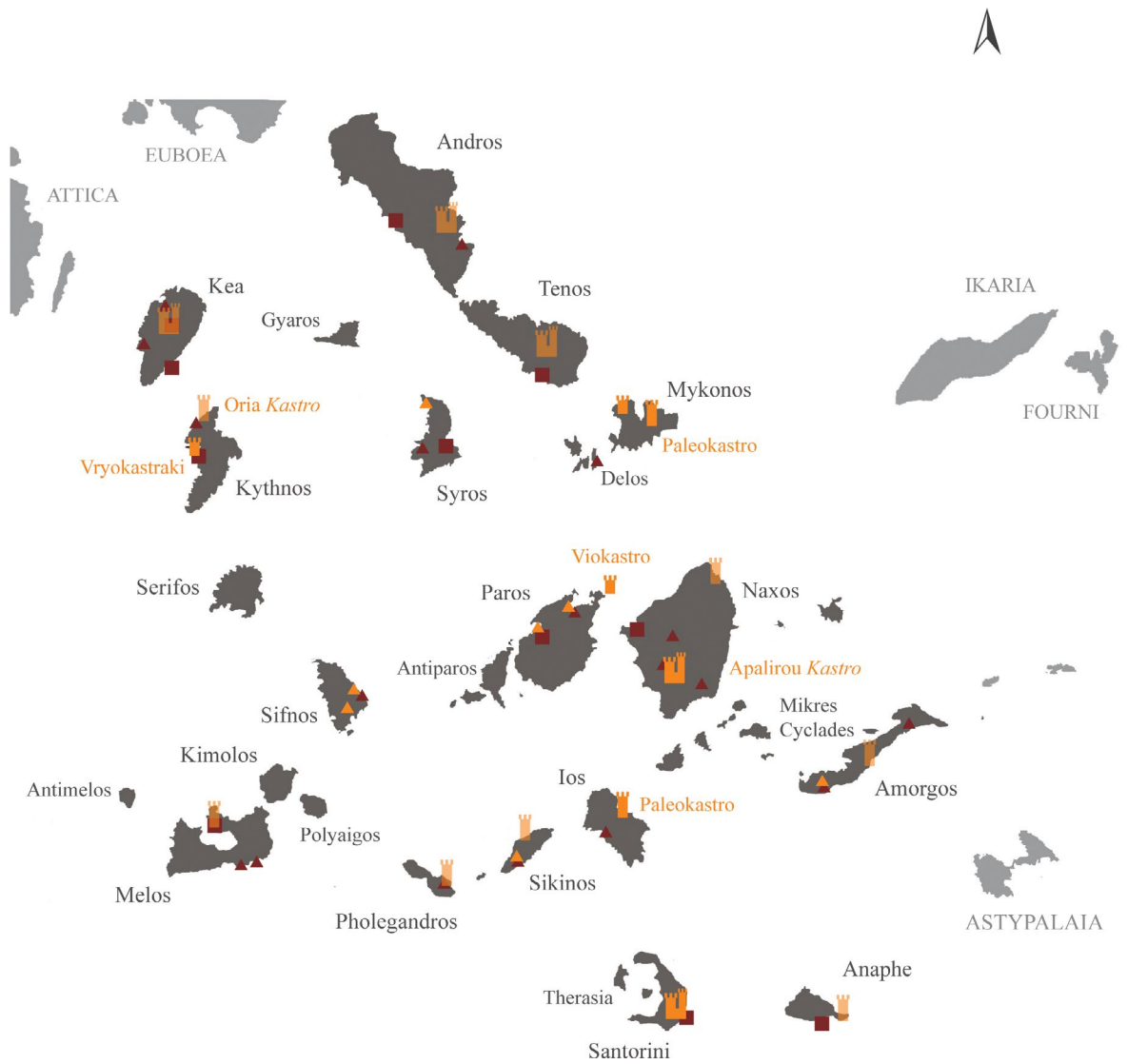
If we place all documented and alleged Byzantine *kastra* and *phouria* on a map, then the early medieval Aegean could potentially have looked as shown on **Figure 172**. The continuity and the intersection of the three ‘settlement networks’ mentioned by Belavilas becomes more evident once we overlay them with the ancient littoral cities and the Latin forts: while some Byzantine *kastra* were founded at new locations (e.g. Apalirou on Naxos), there are also several others that were established on top of ancient structures, presumably those that were not in lowland areas with direct contact to the sea (**Fig. 173**). Finally, numerous fortresses continued to be in use during the Latin period (e.g. Ioulida on Kea or Exombourgo on Tenos).

Looking at the map it becomes obvious that the area in the central Aegean is the one we have the most information about. It is also the most heavily fortified one. K. Roussos argues quite convincingly that the placement of the three contemporary forts, Apalirou (Naxos), Viokastro (Paros) and Palaeokastro (Ios), is far from accidental. Applying viewshed analysis, he showed that the sites held strategic positions that enabled them to act complementary by being mutually visible and covering each other’s blind spots.⁶⁴⁷ He is therefore of the opinion that they formed a regional maritime communication network that was intended to safeguard the entrances to the naval channel of Paronaxia for both administrative and protection purposes. The fortified town of Apalirou had a key role in that scenario while the other two non-urban forts – or three if we also include Kalogeros – held auxiliary, yet crucial posts.

In other words, Roussos proposes the existence of a network of early Byzantine fortified settlements that were supported by smaller, satellite *phouria*. If such a network was indeed in place, then it is safe to assume that it would not have been restricted to the area of the central Cyclades. We know that the itineraries of the ships were not fixed, they varied according to weather conditions and destination,⁶⁴⁸ and therefore the maritime routes to and from Constantinople went through the whole

⁶⁴⁷ Roussos (2017a), pp. 222-224, fig. 5.62

⁶⁴⁸ Vionis (2017), p. 167; Christides (1984), p. 223. On the sea journeys in the Aegean in the Early Middle Ages see also Koder (1993), pp. 445-455.



LEGEND

- ancient town
- ▲ ancient settlement or site
- 🏰 documented fortified town - *kastro*
- 🏰 documented military stronghold - *phourio*
- ▲ site with documented Byzantine presence
- 🏰 alleged *kastro* or *phourio*

Fig. 173. Map of the ancient towns and the Byzantine *kastro* of the Cyclades

island group.⁶⁴⁹ So, it is only logical that the remainder of the islands would also have been included, each one playing a special role in its regional defensive system. Looking at the location of the proposed Byzantine *kastra* one could claim that such a notion may not be too far from reality. All of them occupy prominent positions with panoramic views to the surrounding seascape, as well as each other. Certainly, surveillance and signalling must have been a priority for whoever built them. But can we actually speak of a network and if so, who created it and when?

As mentioned, there are no written sources that can attest to the existence of a *kastra* network in the Cyclades. Any conclusions on the matter can only be drawn by studying the history of the period and the built remains.⁶⁵⁰ Until recently, the reason for the change in the islands' settlement pattern was thought to be pirate raids that made life on the coast unbearable for the islanders. Although that might be true for the years after 827 when Crete was taken by the Andalus Arabs,⁶⁵¹ there is little or no evidence for systematic attacks, destructions or occupation before that. The Cyclades lay off the invasion route of the Umayyad Arabs who made their way to Constantinople sailing close to the coasts and islands of the eastern Aegean.⁶⁵² Occasional diversions cannot be ruled out; however, incidental,⁶⁵³ small scale raids and the fear of an Arab attack would probably not have been enough for major and simultaneous settlement dislocations to such remote and inhospitable sites. Additionally, a recent study on Naxos has shown that even after 827 the coastal areas of the island continued to be inhabited.⁶⁵⁴

Some modern scholars see the erection of the Cycladic *kastra* as part of an organised naval defence system in response to a security crisis, i.e. the loss of the eastern provinces and the Arab expansion in the Aegean during the 7th century.⁶⁵⁵ The islands acquired then great strategic and commercial importance and the central

⁶⁴⁹ Magdalino (2018), p. 21.

⁶⁵⁰ Ousterhout (2017), pp. 341-342.

⁶⁵¹ On the attacks against the Aegean islands and coasts in the 9th and 10th centuries see Christides (1981), pp. 87-97.

⁶⁵² Arabic graffiti and inscriptions can be found on the east Aegean islands and the coasts of Asia Minor, see Poulou-Papadimitriou (2018), pp. 29-50; Poulou (2019), pp. 248-249.

⁶⁵³ Randall (2019), p. 90.

⁶⁵⁴ Vionis (2017), pp. 174-175.

⁶⁵⁵ Poulou-Papadimitriou (2018), pp. 38-40; Magdalino (2018), p. 20; Roussos (2017a), p. 222.

administration tried to exert control over the region and ensure safe passage for goods and people through the Archipelago.⁶⁵⁶ *Kastra* and *phouria* were thus built even on the smaller Cycladic islands. These efforts were further intensified in the 8th century after the second siege of Constantinople as the Byzantines realised that the Aegean was vital for the defence of the capital.⁶⁵⁷ One of the main arguments for that view is that the degree of planning and investment that was required for the creation of sites like Apalirou, could only have come from the highest level of government.

9.2.1 Oria in a Byzantine context

As mentioned, what we see today in Oria is predominantly the Latin phase; the *Kastro*'s initial form and extent remain unknown. Therefore, a direct comparison of its built remains to that of Apalirou, the only documented and published Byzantine *kaastro* of the Cyclades, cannot be straightforward and could even be misleading given the very local building methods and materials that were used during both periods. For example, the general form and building materials of the cisterns in both sites are almost identical (well-built barrel-vaulted rooms rendered with a heavy layer of *kourasani*). Nevertheless, that does not necessarily mean that the cisterns in Oria date to the Byzantine times as very similar cisterns can be found in many Latin-built *kastra*, e.g. Apano *Kastro* in Naxos. According to some general observations, however, Oria seems to possess most of the common characteristics of the Byzantine *kastra* listed above (a-d), except maybe for the last one; the fortifications, although certainly not negligible, appear to be less massive construction-wise and could potentially be dated to a later phase.⁶⁵⁸

Despite what is related in the local tradition about the population's relocation from Vryokastro to Oria, we cannot know whether the latter evolved into a settlement before the arrival of the Venetians. It is possible, that in the Early Byzantine times

⁶⁵⁶ Leontsini (2017), pp. 178-179.

⁶⁵⁷ Poulou-Papadimitriou (2018), pp. 38-40.

⁶⁵⁸ The circuit wall was indeed strengthened with peripheral towers at certain points (section 5.2), but its width does not exceed a maximum of 1.40 m (northern lower wall), at least at the top level where it can be measured. These slender proportions could be indicative of a later chronology, but they could also be attributed to the local stone variety (schist slabs that come with flat beds and rough vertical edges) that allowed more efficient interlocking of the blocks.

there was a *phourio* there that covered a smaller area than the current Latin *kastro*. The *phourio* could have functioned in a complementary way to its contemporary fortified site on the Vryokastraki islet.⁶⁵⁹ In case that military use of Oria was retained throughout the Byzantine era, then the main installation of Kythnos at the time remains unknown. So, it is equally possible, that the *Kastro* was established right from the beginning as a fortified town intended to act as the islands' social and political centre after the demise of the ancient city. In either case, the two sites most likely coexisted for some time as it appears to be the case on Naxos.⁶⁶⁰

Regardless of its original form and role on the island (*kastro* or *phourio*), if we accept the hypothesis of a state-sponsored defensive network, then Oria too could be seen as part of the western Cyclades frontier fortresses system, established around the mid-7th century. In that scenario its situation on the remote far north edge of the island is certainly not incidental. Other than offering protection to the islanders, the *Kastro* would guard the channel between Kythnos and Kea and oversee the sea routes that led from the eastern coasts of Peloponnese through Euboea and Andros to Thessaloniki and Constantinople. What is more, the area of the western Cyclades is known to have been frequented by the Byzantine fleet in the 7th and 8th centuries, with Kea being a naval base for the *Karavisianoi* (the war fleet that had been set up to defend the Aegean against the Arabs) in 680⁶⁶¹ and a safe harbour for official meetings in the 8th century.⁶⁶² Despite its modest size (almost half the size of Apalirou), Oria could have played a role in offering supplies for the ships' crews⁶⁶³ and a safe anchorage for the night⁶⁶⁴ or in case of need. Although we have no evidence of other *kastra* on the islands in Kythnos' immediate surroundings (e.g. Syros or Serifos) one could presume that if they existed, they would have had visual contact to Oria to convey warning signals.

⁶⁵⁹ <http://extras.ha.uth.gr/kythnos/index.php?page=home>.

⁶⁶⁰ Lambrinouidakis (2018), p. 9; Penna (2018), p. 56.

⁶⁶¹ Ahrweiler (1966), pp. 19-31. For the *Karavisianoi* see also Cosentino (2007), pp. 602-603 who suggests an earlier date between 654 and 663 for the creation of this naval command.

⁶⁶² Pope Constantine mentions Kea as the place where he was met in 710/711 by Theophilos, *strategos* of the *Karavisianoi*. Magdalino (2018), p. 21.

⁶⁶³ A similar incident is noted in later times, when in 1671 the Ottoman fleet retreated to Kythnos for replenishment after a long battle against a Maltese pirate fleet, Krantonelli (2015b), p. 123 citing Chardin (1830), pp. 3-5.

⁶⁶⁴ The Byzantine ships were known for traveling only during the day, while at night they sought a small port to lay anchor to, Eberhard (1986), p. 184.

If, on the other hand, the *Kastro* was a local initiative created by the islanders (presumably in collaboration with the local authorities)⁶⁶⁵ in an attempt to flee the dangerous coasts, then its location was possibly chosen because of the existence of a previous settlement at the same spot. The site offered some degree of security due to its inaccessible nature and wide views that would give the inhabitants an early warning of a seaborne threat. However, in that case, the 7th century presents a less convincing date for its foundation, given that the Cyclades were not yet the focus of the Arab offensive. Although times were less secure than in the time of the Mediterranean empire of Justinian I, in the absence of a major threat, random raids cannot be considered reason enough for the abandonment of coastal Kythnos and the relocation to a waterless hilltop. Other possible motives should be sought, or the 9th century would be a more suitable date for Oria's foundation. A later date, however, would not be in accordance with the evidence for the abandonment of Vryokastro after the 7th century⁶⁶⁶ and the preliminary observations that document material evidence from the 6th-7th to the early 8th century in Oria (see section 4.2.2).

To conclude, the existing data may point towards the network scenario, nevertheless more hard evidence is required to establish the *Kastro*'s exact foundation date and the reasons behind it. In general, despite the lack of direct written evidence, the hypothesis of a defence network on the Cycladic islands is certainly not unfounded, as similar patterns of defence can be found in Anatolia⁶⁶⁷ and were also noted for the islands of the Gulf of Argolis⁶⁶⁸ and the islands of the Dodecanese (during both the Byzantine and the Hospitaller period).⁶⁶⁹ Nevertheless, the circumstances in the central Aegean were quite different so direct parallels to these regions cannot be drawn. In the Cyclades there are several aspects of the '*polis* to *kastron*' transition that remain obscure; e.g. the exact moment in time when the fortification plans were set in motion is not identified and we do not have enough comparative data to document whether it was applied to all islands around the same time or not. The degree of the state intervention as well as the role of the islanders' communities and the local authorities is also unclear.

⁶⁶⁵ Leontsini (2017), pp. 209-210.

⁶⁶⁶ Mazarakis (2019), p. 24.

⁶⁶⁷ Crow forthcoming; For Amorium in Anatolia see also Roussos (2017a), p. 226, fig. 5.63.

⁶⁶⁸ Kyrou (1999), pp. 59-60; Leontsini (2017), p. 202.

⁶⁶⁹ Heslop (2008), pp. 69-81; Heslop (2011), pp. 139-165; Heslop (2014), pp. 29-68.



LEGEND



Latin fortified town - *kastro*
13th -16th c.

Fig. 174. Map of the Latin *kastro* of the Cyclades

9.3 The Latin *kastra* of the Cyclades

After the establishment of the Aegean Duchy, a new network of *kastra* and fortified settlements came gradually into being. Starting with the Ducal Kato *Kastro* on Naxos founded by Marco I Sanudo allegedly right after the capture of the island in c.1207, all Cyclades were eventually equipped with fortified sites (**Fig. 174**). Some of them were founded at new locations, while others were established on top of pre-existing ancient or Byzantine sites (**Fig. 175**). At the end of the *Latinokratia* these *kastra* were either abandoned or they evolved into the present-day *chores*, i.e. the islands' main settlements.

Compared to the Byzantine, the information we have on the Latin *kastra* is considerably more. Several contemporary sources offer not only proof of their existence but sometimes also brief descriptions and even depictions of their basic outline and defences. In addition to that, a good number of *kastra* have been subject to modern studies, albeit mostly from an architectural or historical point of view.⁶⁷⁰ Nevertheless, the lack of systematic interdisciplinary studies on the abandoned ones combined with the fact that many are still inhabited means that our knowledge of their original form and evolution remains quite limited.

The earliest account regarding the fortification of the Cyclades is the late-13th century catalogue of the Aegean islands that Hopf transcribed from the archives of Vienna. According to that almost all islands were equipped with *kastra* from the first period of the Latin occupation. Andros, Tenos, Mykonos, Rhenia, Kea, Syros, Paros, Antiparos, Naxos, Amorgos, Serifos, Kythnos, Sifnos and Melos were all reported to have one *kastro*.⁶⁷¹ The particulars of this great and widespread construction programme are not known, except maybe for Kato *Kastro* on Naxos, the capital of the Duchy, that was also known as *Castello da Basso* or *Castello Inferiore*. Fotheringham, citing Grimaldi, relates how Sanudo 'planned and built a strong tower near the island of Bacchus, on a hill which they surrounded with 12 towers, and proclaimed that one might built a house in that place according to an appointed plan; accordingly, the Venetian nobles and officers erected houses near the

⁶⁷⁰ E.g. Eberhard (1977); Philippa-Apostolou (1978, 2000); Höpfner and Schmidt (1978); Vavatsioulas (2007); Ritzouli (2016).

⁶⁷¹ Hopf (1873), pp. xxiii, 175-176.

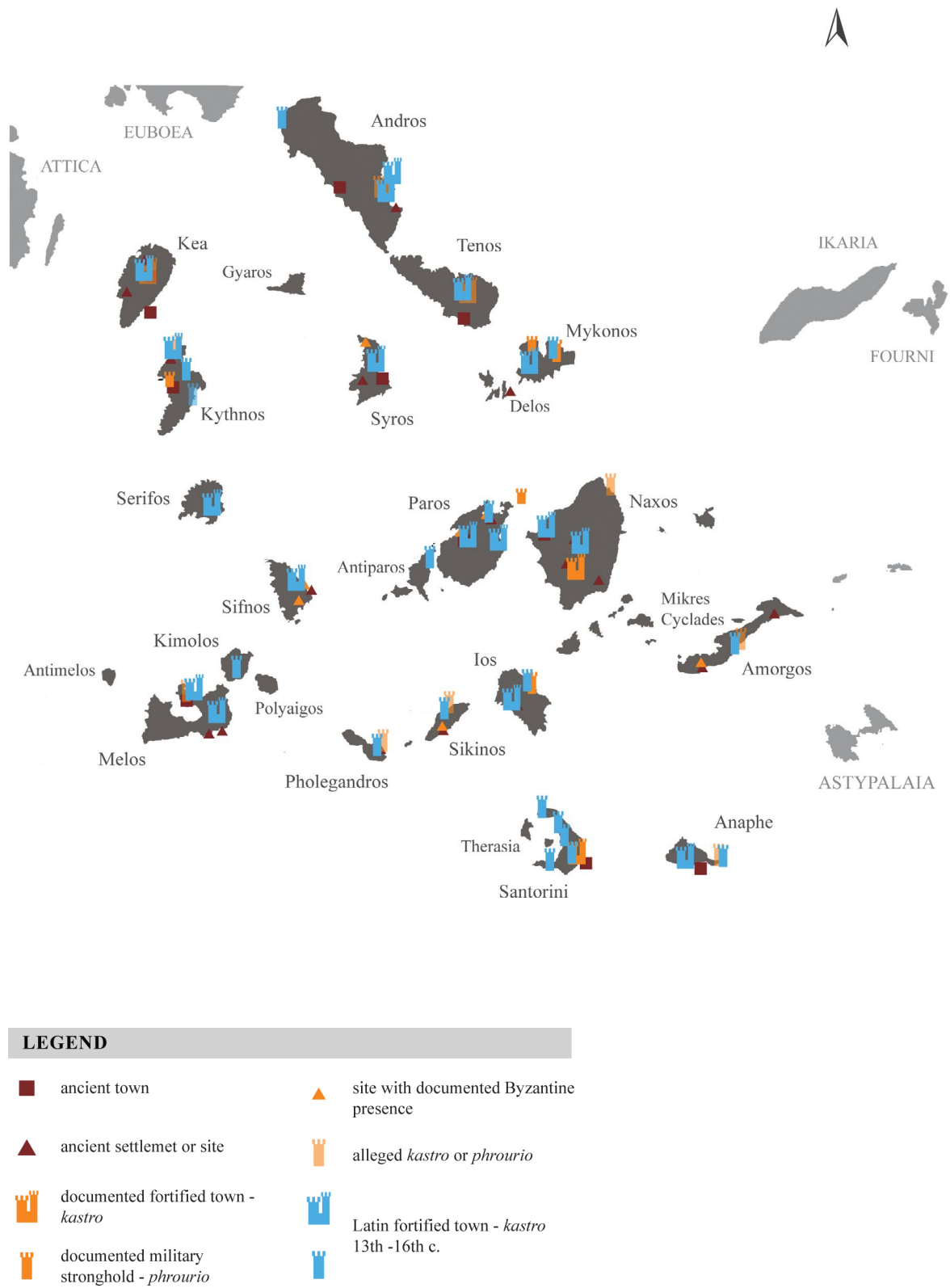


Fig. 175. Map of the ancient towns, the Byzantine and the Latin *kastro* of the Cyclades

ducal tower in the manner of a castle. (...) Near Sanudo's tower they built a church for the Catholics'.⁶⁷² Even though we have no relevant mentions for the rest of the islands, one could assume that the same measures, in proportion of course to each place's means and resources, were taken to ensure the protection and spiritual well-being of the new settlers.

In the early 15th century, soon after his family had assumed control of the Duchy from the Sanudi, we know that Duke Giacomo I Crispo imported cypress wood from Crete 'for the fortification of his islands'.⁶⁷³ It is not specified whether Giacomo intended to build new fortifications or restore the existing ones, however, the early 15th-century phases of some *kastra* could coincide with that information. In any case, Buondelmonti's account a few years later proves that most Cycladic fortifications, even those that were not mentioned in Hopf's catalogue, were already extant by the 1420s. The descriptions of the Florentine cartographer are usually sparing but the illustrations of his maps, although schematic, can be seen to be relatively accurate showing the basic outline of the towns and the defences, e.g. the acropolis of the Mesa *Kastro* peninsula of Andros, the extension of the *borgo* to the north of Kato *Kastro* on Naxos etc. The depicted fortifications usually consist of a vertical crenelated perimeter wall strengthened by two to four multi-storeyed towers depending on each site's size (**Fig. 171**).

From the mid- but especially from the late 15th and throughout the 16th century the defensive installations gradually transformed in response to the introduction of firearms that changed the way of warfare.⁶⁷⁴ In the Cycladic *kastra*, however, these changes were small and very restricted and did not change the overall character of the fortifications. Most cases retained their high vertical walls without the addition of bastions and outworks.⁶⁷⁵ A couple of round towers with thick walls and apertures for cannons were added only in some of the bigger and more important forts like Apano *Kastro* on Naxos, Kephalos on Paros or Exombourgo on Tenos. Overall, it

⁶⁷² Fotheringham (1915), p. 79. The existence of an organised urban plan that would also imply the involvement of an engineer in the *Kastro*'s design although often repeated in later sources (e.g. Philippa-Apostolou, 1978, p. 94) has recently been disputed by Vavatsioulas (2007), pp. 82, 91, 100.

⁶⁷³ Miller (1908), p. 598.

⁶⁷⁴ Poziopoulos (1984), p. 196.

⁶⁷⁵ Philippa-Apostolou (2000), p. 36 ; Vavatsioulas (2007), pp. 535-536.

seems that the *kastra* of the Cyclades (apart maybe from Tenos)⁶⁷⁶ were not equipped for serious warfare.⁶⁷⁷ Presumably the dukes of the Archipelago relied more on their galleys and Venice's fleet for protection than their castles' walls.

Some scholars attribute the creation of the Latin *kastra* solely to the defence against piracy,⁶⁷⁸ however, others argue that the reasons for their establishment were not military.⁶⁷⁹ Most of them agree that their main purpose was to reinforce seigneurial authority over the peasant local population by creating an administrative seat of the new Latin lords and a storage centre for the agricultural produce. In addition, given the state of the political and naval affairs in the Aegean after 1204, the Cyclades were important for the control of the maritime routes from Crete to Euboea and the Dardanelles. As a result, the fortified settlements and harbours of the Duchy that kept good relations and eventually became dependant to Venice were used not only as victualing stations but also as markers of the Republic's colonial and commercial authority.

But even though there is no denying that Sanudo and his vassal lords used the erection of fortified sites as a means to establish their rule, one cannot overlook the – admittedly passive – defence these sites offered against seaborne threats. Although they were not able to withstand organised military offensives or serious pirate attacks that took the form of organised warfare,⁶⁸⁰ their defences were usually enough to fend off low-level threats like random corsair raids⁶⁸¹ or internal feuds.⁶⁸²

⁶⁷⁶ Miller (1908), p. 630.

⁶⁷⁷ A Venetian ambassador at the turn of the 15th century notably mentions the dire need of strengthening the fortifications of the Kato *Kastro* in Naxos, Miller (1908), p. 618.

⁶⁷⁸ Krantonelli (2015a), pp. 436-449; see also Ince and Balantyne (2007), p. 39 for the contemporary Paliochora on Kythera.

⁶⁷⁹ Philippa-Apostolou (1978), p. 94; Lock (1998), pp. 142-143; Vavatsioulas (2007), p. 448; Vionis (2012), pp. 206-207.

⁶⁸⁰ E.g. many islands, including Thermia, were ravaged by Roger de Luria in the 1292s, Muntaner (2000), p. 244. The same happened in 1354 when even Naxos fell prey to the Genoese (Miller (1908), p. 590), while in the 1537 campaign of Barbarossa despite the attempted resistance of some islands, eventually all *kastra* fell to the Ottomans (see section 2.5.1).

⁶⁸¹ According to Buondelmonti in the early 15th century the inhabitants of Ios would seek refuge within the *kastra* walls every night for the fear of pirates, Legrand (1879), p. 59, while the Sifnians managed to hold the *kastra* and fend off a pirate attack in the 1609s, Slot (1982), p. 115.

⁶⁸² E.g. the Ghisi of Tenos famously laid siege to the *kastra* of Syros in 1286 during the so-called 'War of the Ass', Miller (1908), pp. 580-581.

9.3.1 Form and basic characteristics

The detailed analysis of all sites falls out of the scope of this study, however, based on the data presently at hand an attempt is made to define and list their basic characteristics and determine the cases that are more relevant and comparable to Oria. Gathering information from individual studies but also from the comprehensive 1978's work of Philippa-Apostolou and the more recent *A Crusader, Ottoman and Early Modern Aegean Archaeology* of Vionis, the following table was created (**Table 05**). Looking at the data of the table we can make some general observations regarding the chronology, use and general layout of these sites.

Chronology

Although the dates are not conclusive for many cases, it seems that the main core of most *kastra* was founded in the first period of the Latin occupation (13th-14th century). During the second period of the *Latinokratia*, i.e. in the 15th and 16th century, only a few new *kastra* were built in some of the smaller Cycladic islands (Antiparos, Kimolos etc.), however, reinforcement works and extensions that sometimes doubled or even tripled the defended area of the existing ones are noted in several of the better-studied cases (Naxos, Paros, Anaphe, etc.).

Location

Contrary to the trend of the previous era, the Latins favoured more accessible locations that had visual but most times also direct contact to the sea. Important sites like the Kato *Kastro* of Naxos,⁶⁸³ Paroikia and Naousa on Paros or the *Kastro* of Andros were built at lowland areas right on the coast. Despite making them vulnerable to seaborne threats, this location enabled direct access to the port installations that were crucial for the sea-oriented economy of the Duchy which enjoyed the protection and economic privileges of the naval state of Venice. As can be attested by the 15th and 16th-century maps and portolans, the *kastra* that were placed at strategic positions visible from the sea, functioned also as landmarks that helped the seafarers with navigation.

⁶⁸³ Vavatsioulas (2007), p. 100.

1 The Latin *kastra* of the Cyclades according to the published sources

* sites with an earlier Byzantine phase (documented or alleged)

Island	Site	Foundation date	Founder	Location			Plan			Use			Now	
				seaside	inland	altitude	orthogonal	irregular	area	lord's seat	defense & housing	military	inhabited	abandoned
Amorgos (<i>Αμοργός</i>)	Chora*	late 13th c. (~1290)	Andrea & Geremiah Ghisi		+	~330 m		+	inner fortress: ~0.03 ha	+	+		+	
Anaphe (<i>Ανάφη</i>)	Kastro	1 st phase: early 13th c. 2 nd phase: mid 15th c.	Guglielmo Crispi (2 nd ph.)	+		200 m		+	inner fortress: 0.05 ha		+		+	
	Gibitroli Kastro*	possibly mid 15th c.	Guglielmo Crispi	+		~390 m								+
Andros (<i>Ανδρος</i>)	Mesa Kastro	1 st phase: early 13th c. 2 nd phase: early 14th c.	Marino Dandolo	+		~5 m		+	~0.2 ha	+				+
	Kato Kastro	possibly 13th c.		+		~15 m	+		~3 ha		+		+	
	Makrotandalo	early 13th c.	Marino Dandolo	+		~20 m			~1,2 ha		+	before 17th c.	+	+
	Epano Kastro/ Paleokastro*	~ 13th c. (certainly before 1385)			+	560 m		+	~2 ha		+	+		+
Antiparos (<i>Αντίπαρος</i>)	Kastro	15th c. (~1440)	Giovanni Loredano	+		~40 m	+		0.28 ha 24 houses	+	+		+	
Ios (<i>Ιος</i>)	Chora	13th c.	Marco I Sanoudo (?)	+		~125 m		+			+		+	
	Paleokastro*	late 14th c. (1397)	Marco Crispo	+		~230 m		+	~0.45 ha			+		+
Kea (<i>Κέα</i>)	Chora/ Ioulis*	early 13th c. (1210)	Domenico Michieli		+	~360 m		+		+	+		+	
Kimolos (<i>Κίμωλος</i>)	Kastro	late 16th c.	Nicolo III Gozzadini (?)		+	70 m	+		~0.52 ha 246 houses		+		+	

Table 05. The Latin *kastra* of the Cyclades according to the published sources (1-3)

2 The Latin *kastra* of the Cyclades according to the published sources

* sites with an earlier Byzantine phase (documented or alleged)

Island	Site	Foundation date	Founder	Location			Plan			Use			Now	
				seaside	inland	altitude	orthogonal	irregular	area	lord's seat	defense & housing	military	inhabited	abandoned
Kythnos (Κύθνος)	Oria <i>Kastro</i> / Paleokastro*	13th c. before 1278	Marco I Sanudo (?)	+		250 m		+	1.32 ha	+	+			+
	Fermenia	15th c. (?)	Gozzadini family	+		lowland				+	+			+
	Messaria/ Chora	16th c. after 1570	Niccolo III Gozzadini		+	~155 m	?			+	+		+	
Melos (Μήλος)	Apanokastro/ Plaka*	possibly early 13th c.	Marco I Sanudo (?)	+		250 m		+	~1.2 ha	+	+		+	
	Chora/ Zephyria/ Paleochora	early 13th c. before 1283			+	~14 m	+		400 houses in 1638		+			+
Mykonos (Μύκονος)	Kastro	13th c. (?) before early 15th c.	Ghisi family (?)	+		~10 m	+		~0.75 ha		+		+	
	<i>Kastro Ghisi</i> / Paleokastro*	early 13th c.	Ghisi family		+	~140 m		+				+		+
Naxos (Νάξος)	Kato <i>Kastro</i> / Chora	13th c. (~1207) <i>borgo</i> : late 14th c.	Marco I Sanudo	+		42 m		+	inner fortress: ~1.5 ha	+	+		+	
	Apano <i>Kastro</i>	13th c.	Angelo I or Marco II Sanudo		+	~405 m		+	1.5 ha	+	+			+
Paros (Πάρος)	<i>Kastro</i> (Parioikia)	13th c. (~1260)	Sanoudi family (?)	+		~5 m			~1.4 ha 1 st ph. ~0.3 ha	+	+		+	
	Naousa <i>Kastro</i>	late 13th c. - early 14th c.	Sanoudi family (?)	+		~7 m	+		~1.15 ha		+		+	
	Kephalos <i>Kastro</i>	1 st phase: late 13th c. 2 nd phase: mid 15th c.	Nicolo I Sommaripa (2 nd ph.)		+	~229 m		+	3.5 ha	+				+

3 The Latin *kastro* of the Cyclades according to the published sources

* sites with an earlier Byzantine phase (documented or alleged)

Island	Site	Foundation date	Founder	Location			Plan			Use			Now	
				seaside	inland	altitude	orthogonal	irregular	area	lord's seat	defense & housing	military	inhabited	abandoned
Santorini (Σαντορίνη)	Skaros/ La Roka	possibly 13th c.	Marco I Sanudo (?)	+		~210 m		+	~1.24 ha	+	+			+
	Agios Nicolaos	13th-14th c.		+		~110 m		+	~0.4 ha		+		+	
	Akrotiri/ La Ponta	possibly 13th c. before 1335	Barozzi family	+		~100 m		+	~0.27 ha	+	+		+	
	Pyrgos*	late 14th c.			+	~340 m		+	~0.73 ha		+		+	
	Emporio	mid 15th c.			+	~93 m		+	~0.38 ha		+		+	
Serifos (Σέριφος)	Kastro	possibly 13th c.	Marco I Sanudo (?)	+		230 m		+			+		+	
Siphnos (Σίφνος)	Kastro	early 14th c. ~1364 2 nd phase: 16th c.	Januli II da Corogna	+		~65 m		+	~1.2 ha 1 st ph. ~0.4 ha	+	+		+	
Sikinos (Σίκινος)	Kastro	early 13th c. (~1212)		+		~280 m	+		~0.42 ha		+		+	
Syros (Σύρος)	Ano Syros	possibly 13th c.	Marco I Sanoudo (?)	+		~175 m		+	~1.5 ha	+	+		+	
Tenos (Τήνος)	Exombourgo*	1 st phase: early 13th c. 2 nd phase: before 1390	Andrea Ghisi		+	~640 m		+	~1 ha (<i>borgo</i>)	+	+			+
Pholegandros (Φολέγανδρος)	Kastro	1 st phase: early 13th c. 2 nd phase: late 15th c.		+		~290 m		+	~0.66 ha		+		+	
Total:	19	35		23	12		8	23					22	13

General form and size

According to their layout, Vionis divided the Cycladic *kastra* into two types: the fortified settlements of the orthogonal plan that are based on a high degree of organisation and the fortified settlements of the irregular plan that developed freely on hilltops.⁶⁸⁴ Philippa-Apostolou, on the other hand, has noted three types of defended settlements according to the relation between the perimeter wall and the houses: (a) *kastra* that developed within a pre-existing defensive wall, (b) the ones that developed out of an unfortified settlement and (c) those where the circuit wall and the houses were built all in one phase.⁶⁸⁵ Given that more studies would be needed to safely allot all included sites to one of those three types, only the first more general categorisation was used for **Table 05**. Where possible, the total area of the intramural surface was added. Apparently, most *kastra* fall into the irregular plan category as the topography of the islands did not favour clear geometrical designs. The continuous use or the eventual reuse of earlier Byzantine sites (e.g. Paleokastro on Ios) would also impede organised settlement planning. A purely orthogonal plan with same-sized plots can be observed today only in the two later cases of Antiparos and Kimolos that belong also to the all- in-one phase category (type c).

In general, the determination of the size of the original intramural area is difficult especially for the sites that are still inhabited and have long lost their defensive circuits. However, in most cases an approximate figure based on older studies' plans and estimates as well as Google Earth measurements (noted with lighter colour in the table) can be given. Exact dimensions can be provided only for the few studied *kastra* but even then, the numbers may not be indicative given that we do not know the exact area covered by their fortified *borgi*. Finally, there are also some cases that we have absolutely no information about (e.g. Gibitroli fort on Anaphe). At any rate, it seems that the main fortified towns of the bigger islands like Naxos, Andros, Tenos and Paros covered an area between 1.5 and 3.5 ha. The secondary *kastra* of those islands and most of the sites of the other Cyclades were almost half as big (0.7-1.5 ha), while there are also some – mostly later – examples, whose area did not exceed half a hectare.

⁶⁸⁴ Vionis (2012), pp. 78-95.

⁶⁸⁵ Philippa-Apostolou (1978), pp. 86-90.

Regardless of their current state (abandoned or inhabited) the estimation of most sites' exact capacity is also quite problematic due to the absence of sufficient quantitative data, i.e. exact number of residences. In the abandoned sites the use but also the layout of most structures remains obscure, while in the inhabited settlements later interventions have altered the initial form of the dwellings. The area of each *kastró* can barely be a reliable factor as bigger sites like the Chora of Naxos are estimated to have housed merely 225-375 people (not counting the population of the *borgo*)⁶⁸⁶ while *kastra* like that of Kimolos had about 1,000 residents.⁶⁸⁷ With the data presently at hand it seems that Kephalos on Paros was the most populous one; Vionis (despite being able to record less than 50 houses) based on the site's size and some surviving traces of buildings estimates that it was occupied by 1,000-1,500 people.⁶⁸⁸

Use and layout

As noted earlier, most of the Cycladic *kastra* were used as administrative centres and residences of the local lords and notables. In the smaller islands they could have housed a good percentage of the overall population while in the bigger islands they provided the foci for the settlements and hamlets that already existed or would develop around them. The *kastra* would exercise control over these settlements' population, extract revenues and at the same time they would function as refuge for the peasants in a time of need.⁶⁸⁹ There were also some few sites that had more of a military character; presumably they held just a small garrison and acted as signal-contacts between the islands (e.g. possibly Paleokastro on Ios,⁶⁹⁰ or since the 17th century Makrotandalo *Kastro* on Andros⁶⁹¹).

⁶⁸⁶ Vavatsioulas (2016), pp. 480-481, 502.

⁶⁸⁷ Höpfner and Schmidt (1978), p. 30.

⁶⁸⁸ Vionis (2012), p. 150.

⁶⁸⁹ In the letter of the Duke of Naxos Giovanni IV Crispo to the western leaders it is characteristically described how in anticipation of Barbarossa's attack the inhabitants from all around the island had taken refuge in Apano *Kastro*, Miller (1908), p. 626.

⁶⁹⁰ Vionis (2012), p. 87.

⁶⁹¹ Boschini in the 1658s mentions the *kastró* of Makrotandalo on Andros as '*guardia*', i.e. guarding post, Boschini (1658), p. 41.

The layout of the majority of the Latin *kastra* was quite similar consisting of two walled areas that formed an ‘inner’ and an ‘outer’ part which as Pasch von Krienen characteristically noted for the *kaastro* of Sifnos looked like ‘*un castello dentro l’altro*’, i.e. ‘one castle inside another’.⁶⁹² The ‘inner’ part covered usually a smaller but better protected area than the ‘outer’ and it accommodated the *kaastro*’s most important buildings i.e. the lord’s fortified residence/central keep, the *cancellaria* and the Catholic cathedral along with some ancillary buildings (cisterns, storerooms) and possibly the houses of local notables. This inner core that usually occupied the site’s highest and most focal point⁶⁹³ would presumably constitute the earliest part of each site (Fig. 178 a-e).

The typically bigger ‘outer’ part included houses and other private and public structures like churches, cisterns etc. It could be contemporary to the inner part, like the Kato *Kastro* of Andros or added at a later phase, to accommodate more residents or to incorporate to the defences a previously unwalled settlement extension. According to Vionis the layout of the *kastra* with the symbols of the secular and religious authority placed at their centre reflected the Western political and economic system that was imposed in the region.⁶⁹⁴ So, apparently a certain degree of planning was implemented even in the settlements of the irregular plan.

The enclosures of the *kastra* were usually simple freestanding curtain walls reinforced at certain points by circular or rectangular towers. Their width ranged normally between 0.80-1.50 m.⁶⁹⁵ Sometimes the back walls of the houses that were built the one right next to the other would form the defensive wall, while in some other cases, e.g. in Akrotiri on Santorini, an extra, separate wall was built against them, effectively doubling the defences.⁶⁹⁶ The urban fabric within the walled area was very tight with relatively small plots, narrow streets that had the gate(s) as their

⁶⁹² Krienen (1773), p. 112.

⁶⁹³ In two cases in Andros (Kato *Kastro* and Makrotandalos) this acropolis was located on an islet that was connected to the mainland town with a bridge, Kontogiannis and Arvaniti (2008), pp. 350-353.

⁶⁹⁴ Vionis (2006), p. 486; Vionis (2012), p. 209.

⁶⁹⁵ E.g. the walls of the Kato *Kastro* of Naxos ranged between 1.20 m and 1.80 m, Vavatsioulas (2007), p. 443. Occasionally, the foundations of the outer circuit could reach a maximum of 2.50 m (Apano *Kastro* of Naxos), Vionis (2012), p. 134.

⁶⁹⁶ Eberhart (1977), pp. 572, 574



Fig. 176. Sketch of Skaros *Kastro* in Santorini by Th. Hope, 1790s (Tsigakou 1985, p. 193, fig. 88)

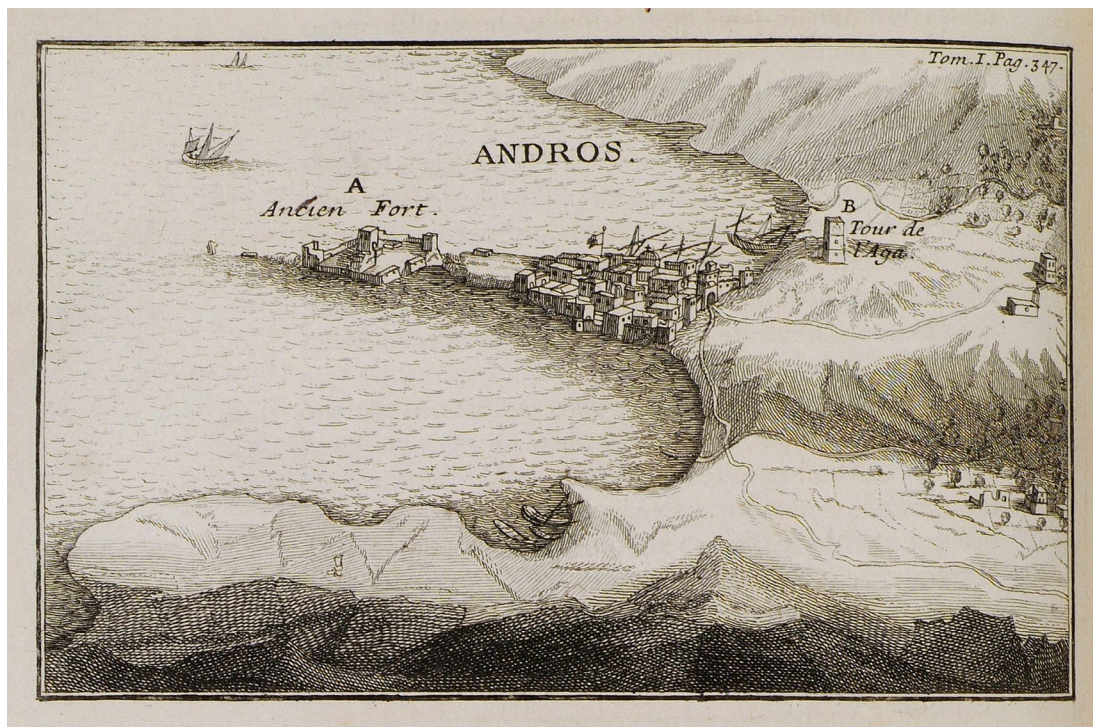


Fig. 177. The *Kastro* of Andros by Tournefort, 1717

starting point and only few open spaces. Following the Venetian standards, the heart of the whole was the *piazza* i.e. the central square where the buildings of the secular and religious authority would face to.⁶⁹⁷

The main building of the *piazza*, the central keep/ lord's residence is preserved only in some cases (Naxos, Santorini, Antiparos, Kimolos). Although quite different in floor plan (square, trapezoidal or round) it is obvious that all surviving examples stood out from the rest of the settlements' buildings for their big size and sturdy structure. As can be documented by Choiseul-Gouffier's lithograph (**Fig. 104**), the *donjons* expanded over several storeys dominating the *kastra*'s skylines.⁶⁹⁸ The houses, either narrow-fronted, square or broad-fronted in floor plan, usually extended over two and sometimes even three storeys (e.g. Antiparos, Naxos).⁶⁹⁹ The average size of each storey ranged between 27 m² and 30 m² (e.g. Sifnos, Kephalos etc.),⁷⁰⁰ however, the most prominent residences could even reach an area of 170 m².⁷⁰¹

⁶⁹⁷ See also Vavatsioulas (2007), p. 99.

⁶⁹⁸ For an overview of Santorini's central towers see Ritzouli (2016), pp. 135-138.

⁶⁹⁹ Philippa-Apostolou (1978), p. 16; Vavatsioulas (2007), p. 492.

⁷⁰⁰ Vionis (2012), p. 150.

⁷⁰¹ Vavatsioulas (2007), p. 488.

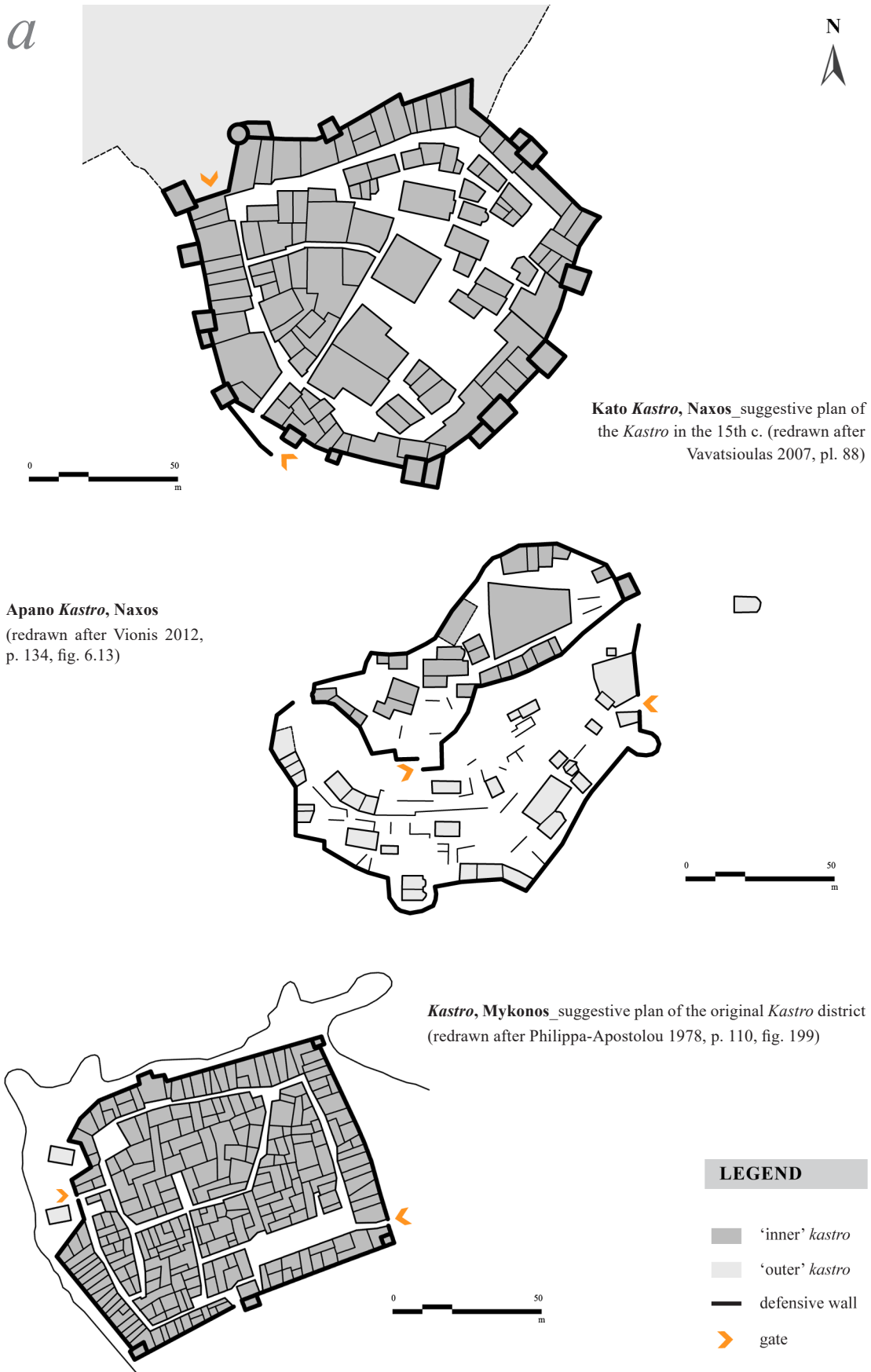
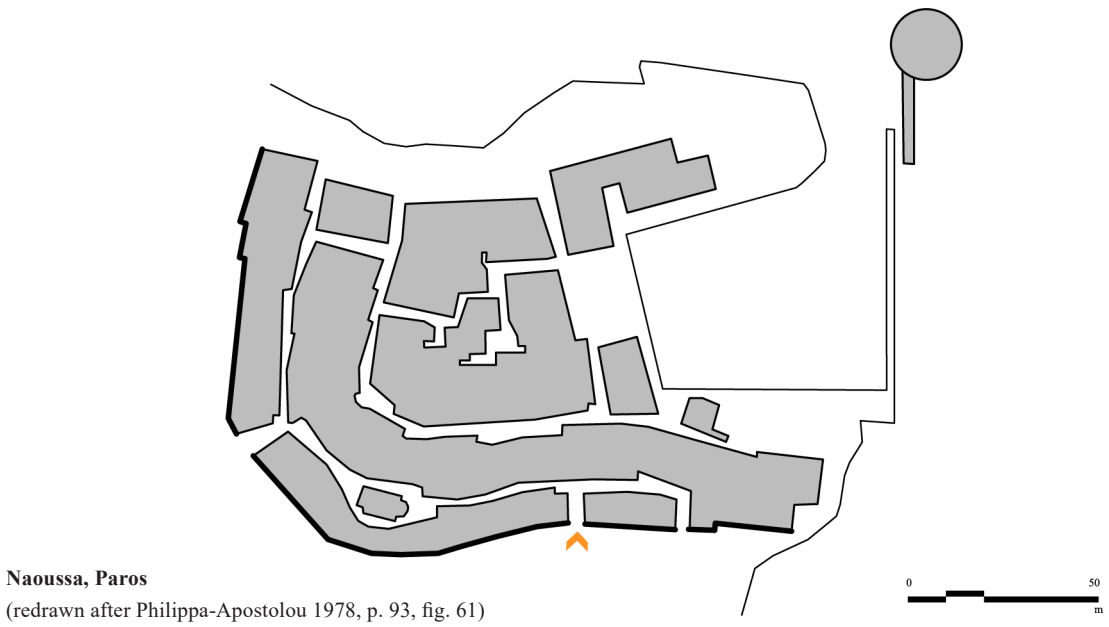
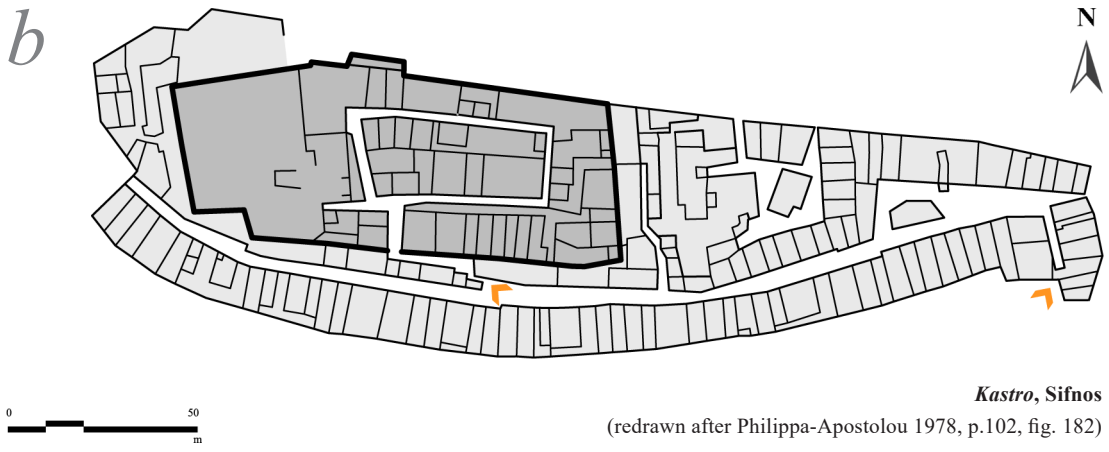
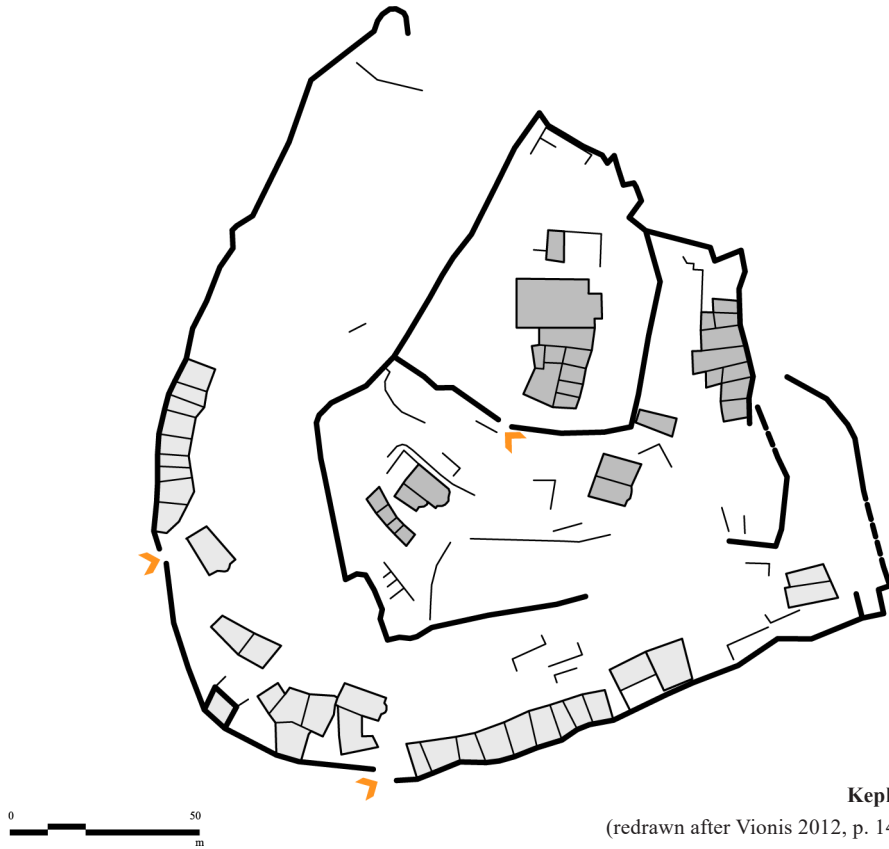


Fig. 178. Form and layout of the Cycladic *kastro* (a-e)



C



Kephalos, Paros
(redrawn after Vionis 2012, p. 144, fig. 6.34)

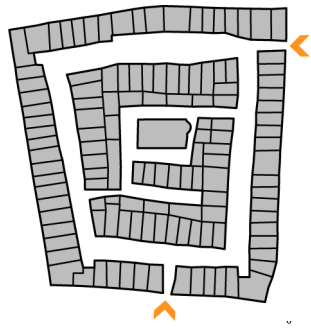


Oria Kastro, Kythnos

LEGEND

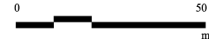
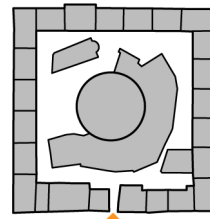
-  'inner' *kastro*
-  'outer' *kastro*
-  defensive wall
-  gate

d



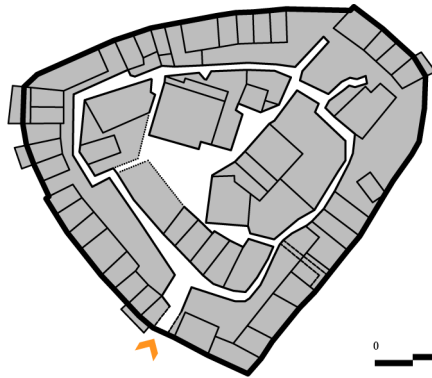
Kastro, Kimolos

(redrawn after Hoepfner and Schidt 1978, p. 57, fig. 23)



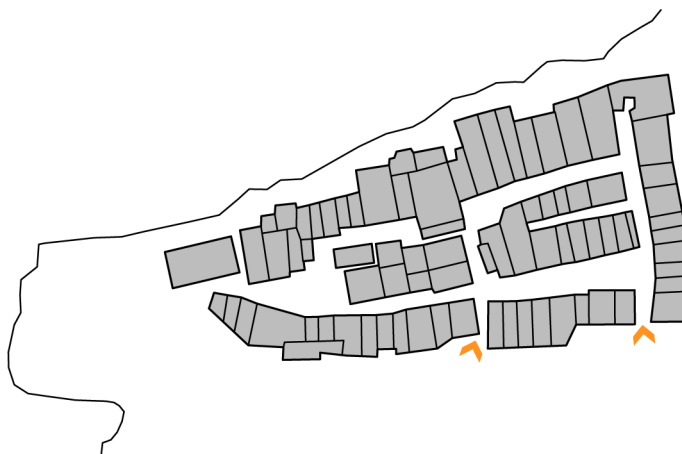
Kastro, Antiparos

(redrawn after Philippa-Apostolou 1978, p.50, fig. 90)



Pyrgos Santorini

(redrawn after Philippa-Apostolou 1978, p. 100, fig. 178)

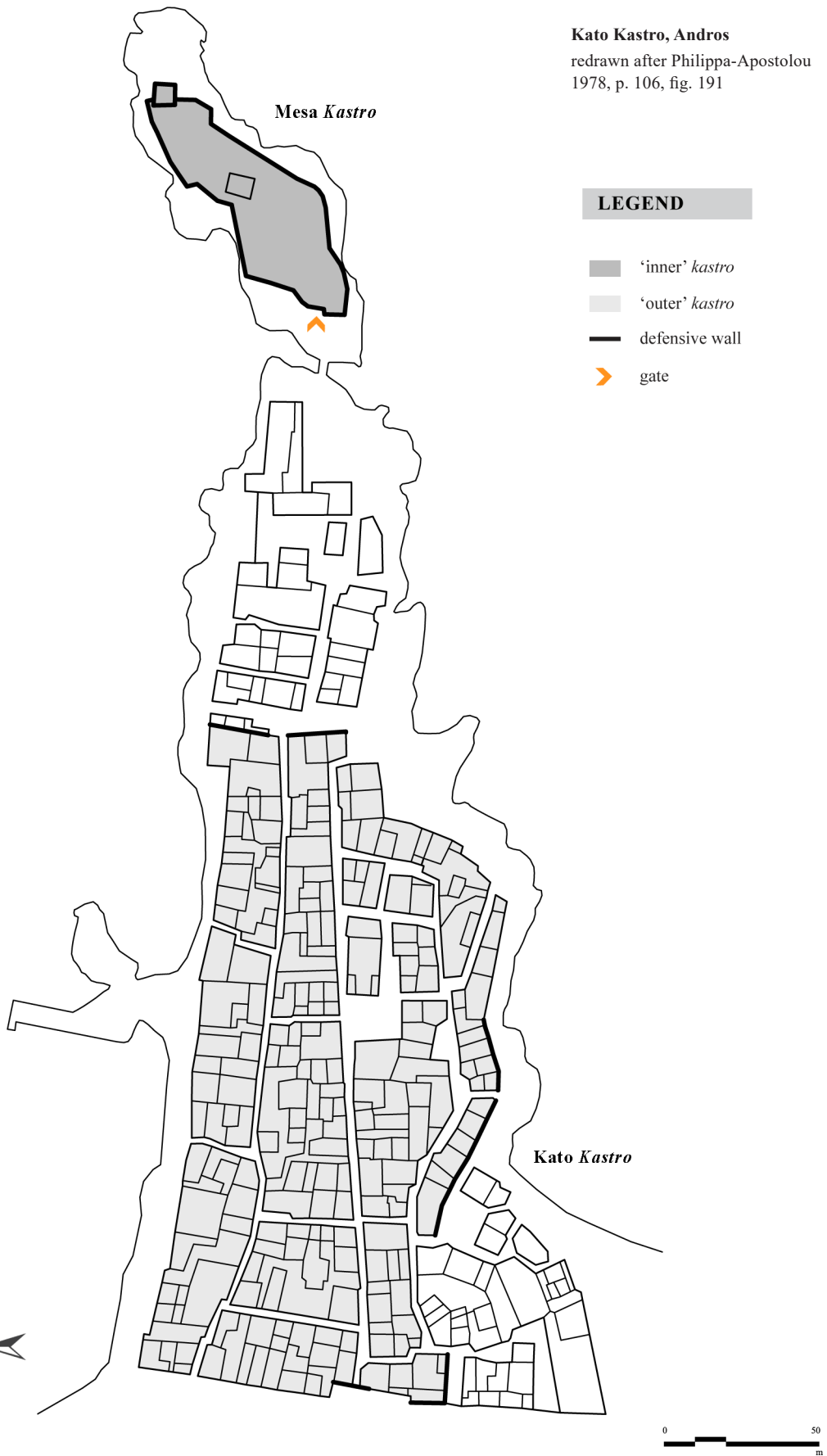


Kastro, Folegandros
(redrawn after Dematha 1997, p. 155)

LEGEND

-  'inner' kastro
-  'outer' kastro
-  defensive wall
-  gate

e



9.3.2 Oria in a Latin context

Although there is no question about the Latin presence in Oria, comparing it to the rest of the sites proves beyond doubt that its current form fits almost perfectly the typical form and layout of a Latin *kastro*. Like many other sites the *Kastro* of Kythnos was established during the first period of the *Latinokratia* in the 13th century (certainly before 1278), presumably on top of an earlier Byzantine installation. Since the island stayed under the Duke's authority until the 1320s, it would be safe to assume that the initiative for its foundation belonged to Marco I Sanudo. Most likely the site was governed by a representative of the Duke or a castellan until the 14th century when the island was ceded first to the Castelli and then the Gozzadini (see section 2.5.1). The situation of Oria is by no means a lowland one as is frequently the case for many of the other Latin sites, however, it apparently met most of the standards of the new installations; its position offered ample views to the seascape while the bay of Sclavos, despite its modest size, provided the *Kastro* with an adequate outlet to the sea.

The settlement belongs clearly to those of the irregular plan and its 1.32 ha area is right on the average of most medium-sized sites. Like most other Latin *kastra* it consisted of an inner and an outer part that were each protected by a separate perimeter wall (**Fig. 178c**). However, in this case, due to the morphology of the hill the inner part ended up being considerably larger than the outer (0.82 ha and 0.50 ha respectively). Still the structures representing the secular and religious authority, i.e. the lord's residence (**45-47**), the building of the chancellery (**30-32**), the two towers (**33** and **35**) and the Catholic cathedral (**ch5**) were situated at the site's highest and most focal area (**Fig. 181**). Along with most of the cisterns and some other presumably public buildings and prominent residences they formed the so-called 'upper' neighbourhood that was centred around the *piazza* and constituted the *Kastro*'s administrative centre.

The exact area covered by the initial, 13th-century fortress is not known, so in theory it could have coincided with that 'upper' neighbourhood (area A in **Fig. 179**). The construction joints of the inner curtain wall prove the existence of different construction phases and could potentially suggest as much. In addition, the different ways in which the wall relates to the back of the buildings at different parts of the

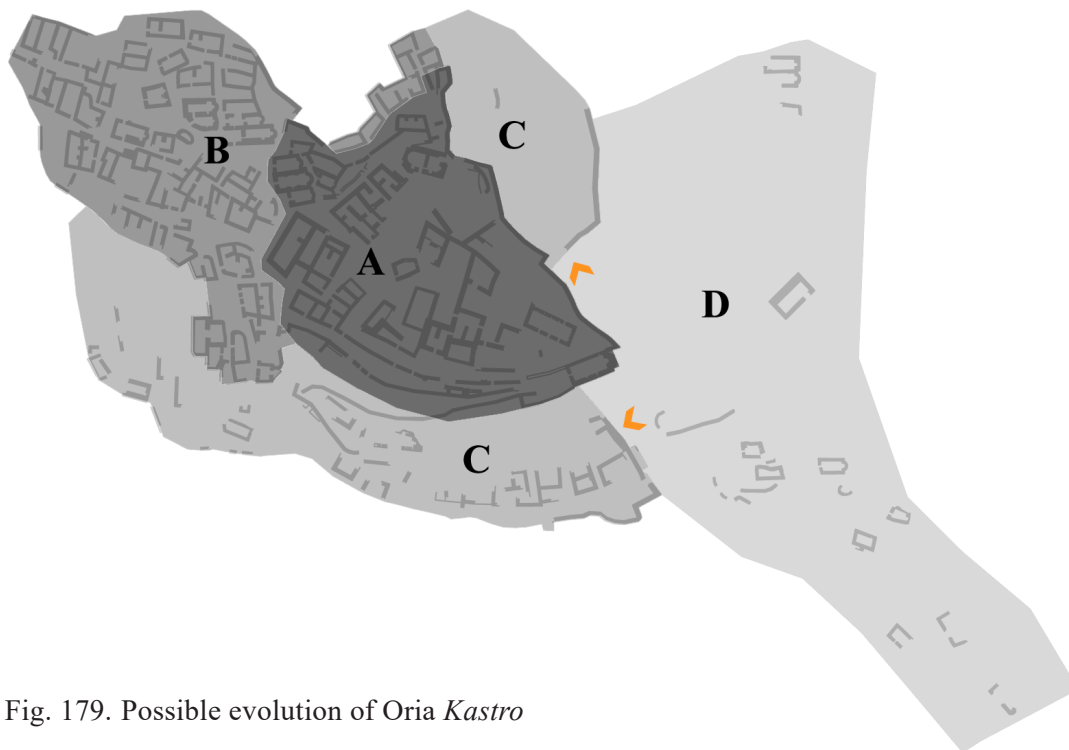


Fig. 179. Possible evolution of Oria Kastro

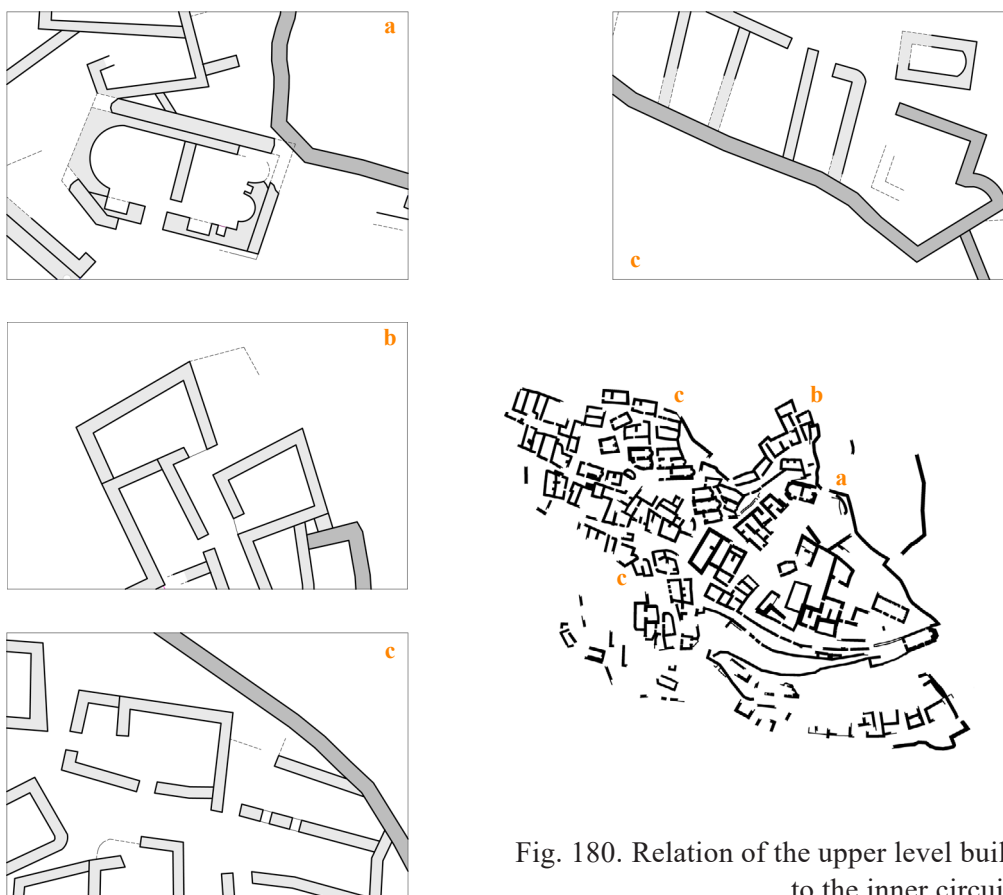


Fig. 180. Relation of the upper level buildings to the inner circuit wall

settlement could further support that hypothesis (Fig. 180). In that case, the western area of the settlement (area B) that was described as ‘lower’ neighbourhood in the settlement analysis could have been built and walled at a later date, possibly even in more than just one phase. The outer enclosure (area C) could also belong to a later time when need arose for the habitable area to expand on the southern slopes of the *Kastro* hill (possibly in the 15th century in accordance to what was happening to other contemporary sites e.g. Kato *Kastro* on Naxos,⁷⁰² Apanokastro on Melos or Kephalos on Paros⁷⁰³). The extramural buildings of the *borgo* (area D) could be either contemporary to those of the lower level or slightly later.

For the time being safe conclusions on the evolution of the settlement cannot be drawn as the bad state of preservation and inaccessibility of most parts of both the inner and outer perimeter wall prevented the close inspection of the masonry that would be necessary to verify these hypotheses. Undoubtedly, future pottery surveys and excavations would greatly help with the dating of each part. In any case it is obvious that, regardless of the original plan, in its long lifespan of well over four centuries Oria developed organically in all available directions.

The general form of the *Kastro*’s urban fabric appears to be similar to that of the other sites. Both the upper and the lower level were densely built with the structures forming a mostly continuous line on either side of the streets. Vionis arguing from Kouroupaki et al.’s note on the structure of Kato *Kastro* of Naxos, says that in every plan of a *kastro* all roads led to the two major poles of attraction, i.e. the lord’s residence and the Catholic cathedral which is also where all domestic structures were facing towards.⁷⁰⁴ Although that might have been the case in some other sites, in Oria the structures were arranged more freely. The lord’s manor and the cathedral were indeed located at the central part of the settlement (yet situated relatively far away from each another if the manor identifies with buildings 45-47), but the rest of the buildings faced towards many different directions.⁷⁰⁵ Still their size and form are comparable to that of other *kastra*. The average size of dwellings in Oria at about

⁷⁰² Vavatsioulas (2007), p. 101.

⁷⁰³ Vionis (2012), pp. 143, 156.

⁷⁰⁴ Kouroupaki et al. (2001), p. 84; Vionis (2012), p. 209.

⁷⁰⁵ Perhaps that could be attributed to the previous occupation of the site, the dynamic evolution of the settlement or to the morphology of the plateau the *Kastro* was built on.

Kato Kastro, Naxos_suggestive plan of the *Kastro* in the 15th c.
(redrawn after Vavatsioulas 2007, pl. 88)



Oria Kastro, Kythnos

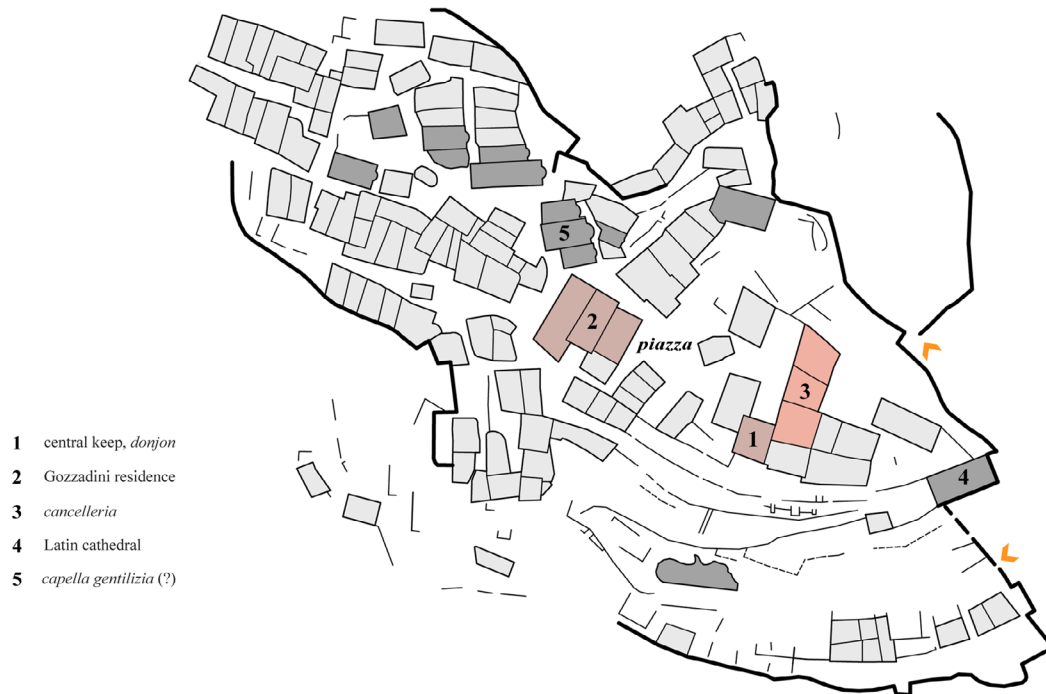


Fig. 181. The typical layout of a Latin *kastro*

30 m² conforms with the standard size of the domestic structures in other Cycladic *kastra* and the same can be argued for the Gozzadini residence.

What is unusual in the *Kastro* and has not been observed in most other Cycladic *kastra* is the great number of churches. As mentioned above, despite the restricted building space a total of at least 13 churches has been recorded in the intramural area (see section 6.2.2). Sites with a similar or much bigger size than Oria like Apano *Kastro* on Naxos, Apanokastro on Melos or Kephalos on Paros had a maximum of five, four and nine churches respectively.⁷⁰⁶ A comparable church density in the Cyclades can only be found in the *kaastro* of Paroikia on Paros and in the *Kastro* of Mykonos (11 churches and chapels) but this number refers in both cases to a later date (17th-18th century).⁷⁰⁷ So, in that respect Oria can only be compared to the Paliochores of Kythera and Aegina which at the time of their abandonment in the 16th century had a striking total of 22 and 23 churches respectively.⁷⁰⁸ Apparently, the same tradition that is indicative of the Kythniotes' devout nature was followed also in Messaria which had 15 churches already since the 1638s.⁷⁰⁹ Overall, although some western stylistic elements have been superimposed, all structures in Oria were built mainly with local materials and practices, as seems to have been the case in the other Cyclades too.

9.4 Concluding remarks

In conclusion it would seem that as was probably the case with the Byzantine *kastra*, the establishment of the Latin fortresses was neither incidental nor the result of a local initiative on behalf of the islanders; the decision, the means and quite possibly the plans for their building came clearly from an external authority. The initial goal this time was not to create a naval frontier against an outer offensive but to establish and maintain a new regime over a foreign and not always well-disposed population. However, the Cyclades came to play an important role again in the unstable and oftentimes hostile environment of the Late-Medieval Aegean. Lying between the

⁷⁰⁶ Vionis (2012), pp. 135-136, 144-145; Sanders (1996), p. 149-150.

⁷⁰⁷ Orlandos (1961), p. 118; Kyriazopoulos (1981), p. 199.

⁷⁰⁸ Ince and Ballantyne (2007), p. 10; Moutsopoulos (1962), p. 59.

⁷⁰⁹ Lupazzolo, British Library, Lansdowne MS 792, fo 74-75 and MS 577, fo 92-94.

two prized Venetian outposts of Euboea and Crete, the Duchy provided Venice with a military and commercial ally; it helped ensure safe passage and provisions for the Republic's mercantile and war ships⁷¹⁰ and actively promoted its political interests against the Byzantines and the Genoese at first and then the Ottomans. The network of the Latin *kastra* with their ports and harbours were the spatial manifestation of that policy. That rendered them symbolically and practically important on both a local and Aegean-wide scale.

The criteria according to which the Latins choose to continue to use the Byzantine sites or not are not clear yet; direct access to the sea seems to have been a prerequisite for most but not all of their *kastra*. Marko I Sanudo noticeably set an example by choosing to build a brand-new (?)⁷¹¹ seaside *kastro* on Naxos (*Kato Kastro*), but there were sites like Exombourgo on Tenos or Ioulida on Kea that were located about two miles away from the nearest coast. Quite possibly, the decision depended each time on local factors like the morphology and individual needs of each island and/or the financial means of the local lord.

Apparently, Oria's location that was ideal for the surveillance of the channel between Kythnos and Kea in the Early Byzantine times was deemed advantageous during the Latin era too. It is possible, however, that at some point in the 15th century it was replaced by the mysteriously lost Fermenia as the island's capital. Lowland Fermenia was close to the big and leeward bays of the eastern coast that were oriented towards Naxos and the other central Cyclades and the sea routes that connected them. Given the close ties of the Gozzadini to both ducal families it would be logical for the island to gravitate towards the Duchy's centre.⁷¹² At any rate, remote Oria remained in use until the late 16th century, so if Fermenia indeed existed, Kythnos could have followed for a short period of time the settlement pattern of some of the larger islands, like Naxos or Andros, which had at least two fortified sites, one coastal

⁷¹⁰ E.g. as can be attested by a letter of admiral Morosini in 1608, the Venetian fleet that was then on an expedition against the Turks was received by Angelo V Gozzadini in Sifnos who offered them hospitality and provisions, Ersch and Grüber (1863), p. 423.

⁷¹¹ *Kato Kastro* is widely thought to have been built on the ruins of ancient Naxos, however, based on the lack of uniformity in the plan and masonry of the *Kastro*'s walls and towers Vavatsioulas mentions the possibility of a Byzantine fortification existing at this very spot that was reinforced and expanded by the Latins, Vavatsioulas (2007), pp. 447-448.

⁷¹² On the relocation of other islands' capitals according to the sea routes (e.g. Andros) see Veikou (2015), pp. 369-373.

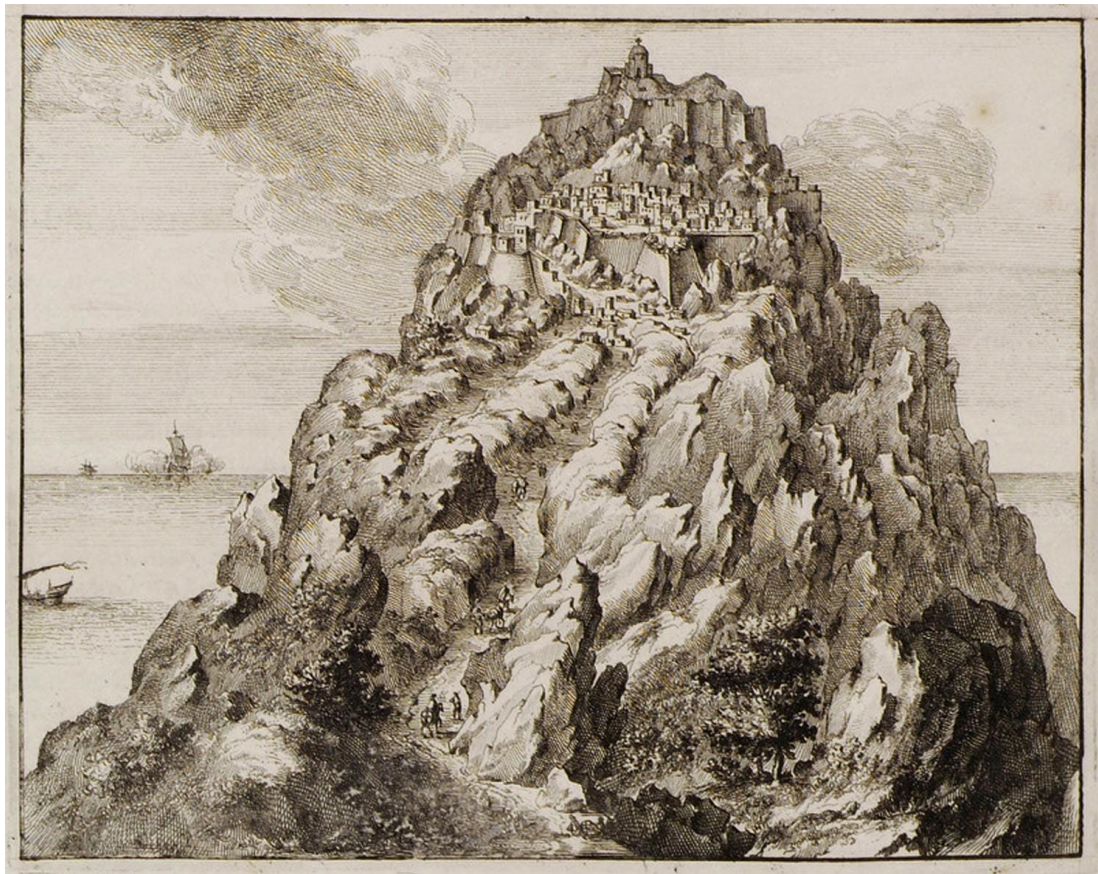


Fig. 182. Exombourgo in Tenos by O. Dapper, 1688, p. 130



Fig. 183. The *Kastro* of Sifnos by Choiseul-Gouffier, 1782, p. 14

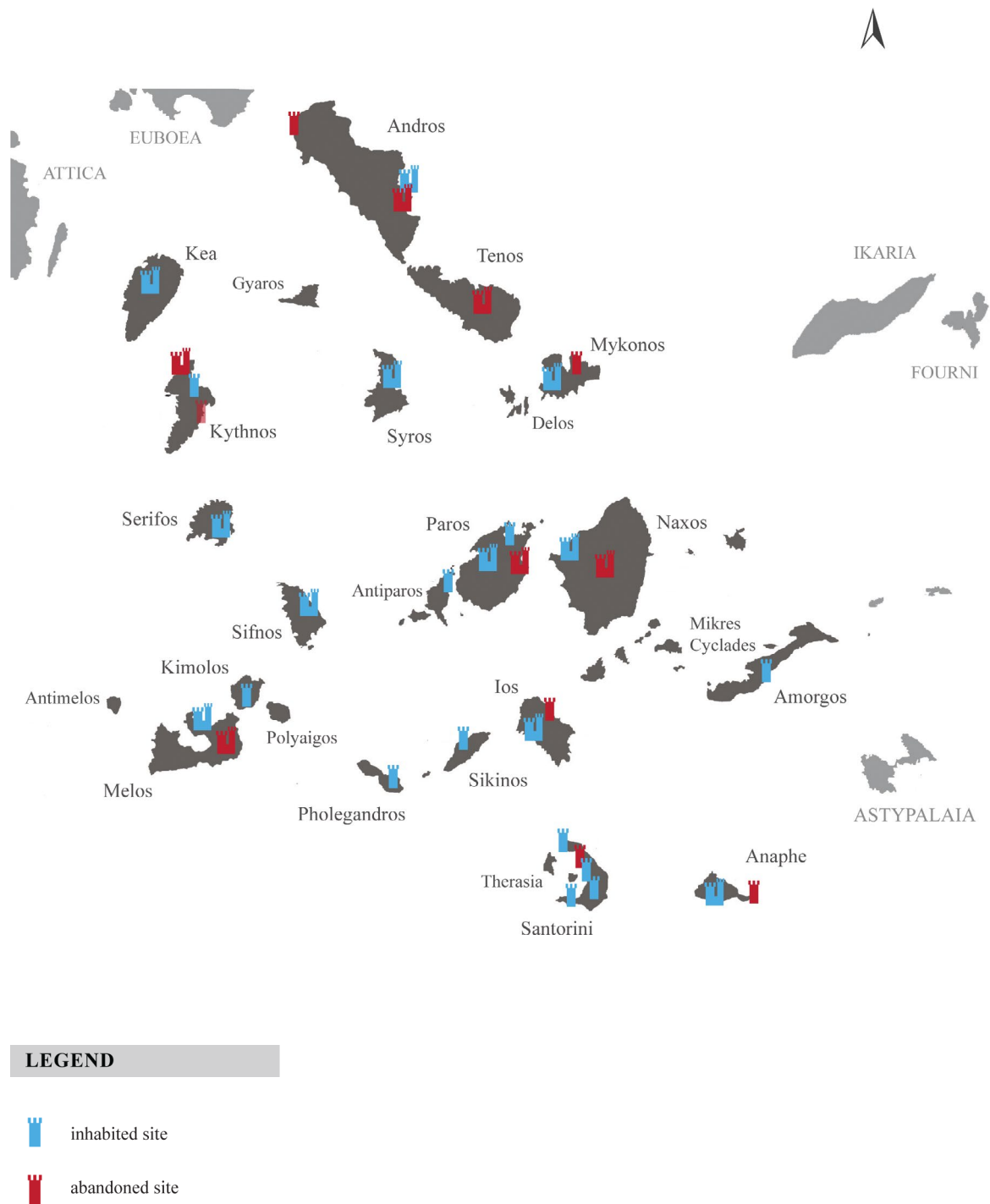


Fig. 184. Inhabited and abandoned *kastra* of the Cyclades

and one inland. In that scenario, Fermenia and Oria would have functioned in a complementary way; the first could have been the island's administrative centre and main port, while the latter could have played more the role of a defended residence and refuge.

Eventually, however, both were abandoned in favour of inland Messaria. Although there is no sign of the fortifications today, Messaria should also be included in the Cycladic *kastra*. As mentioned in section 3.2.2, further research is needed to determine the outline of the initial core, but if Lupazzolo's sketch in the *Breve Discorso* manuscript is to be trusted, the walled area in the early 17th century covered a relatively large area which apparently coincides with the western part of the current settlement (including the church of Sotira in the far west side). According to the same sketch the enclosure, or at least its north-west side, was not formed by the back walls of the houses as was the case in other later examples (Antiparos, Kimolos). The town was instead surrounded by a vertical curtain wall with towers and gun holes (**Figs 50, 51**). When exactly this wall was taken down remains unknown, however, in Vallindas' time there were no fortification traces left. Most likely the town had long outgrown it.

Out of the 35 currently recorded *kastra* and fortified settlements in the Cyclades, 60% of them remain inhabited (**Fig. 184** and **Table 05**). The reasons why some sites provided a focus for the developing of the islands' modern settlements while others were abandoned may again vary according to the historical circumstances and other local factors. For example, Exombourgo on Tenos (**Fig. 182**) was allegedly torn down by the Ottomans in the early 18th century when they finally took the island from the Venetians, while Skaros of Santorini (**Fig. 176**) was abandoned only in the mid-19th century after the houses started crumbling into the sea. Although more research would be needed in order to identify certain trends behind the population relocations, it seems that most lowland coastal sites that offered potential for expansion were preserved.



Fig. 185. Oria *Kastro*, view from the southeast

10 Research summary and concluding remarks

The present thesis does not aim to fully cover a subject so complex and multifaceted as is the study of the medieval *kastra* of the Cyclades. Nor does it claim to have exhaustingly studied the history and the remains of Oria *Kastro* on Kythnos. What was attempted and hopefully achieved was to collect, combine, analyse, critically appraise and coherently present all the available evidence that was obtained from the study of the literary sources (primary and secondary) and the field survey. The goal set at the beginning of the research was to gather information on a largely unknown chapter of the history of Kythnos, understand how it shaped the island's landscape and fill the gaps in our knowledge about the form, use and role of the medieval fortified sites of the Cyclades using Oria as a case study.

The main research questions could be summarised in the three words that are usually the starting points of every research project 'when, why and by whom?', i.e. when was the *Kastro* first founded and when was it finally deserted, why was this inaccessible and remote location chosen, who was behind that decision and who were its inhabitants? The question of when was and remains the most tantalising one as hard evidence cannot be produced without systematic archaeological studies at the site. Setting out to answer these questions, the study has led to the following conclusions:

- a) First of all, the site was occupied long before the Middle Ages. The existence of a prehistoric and ancient Greek installation on the same spot has been documented. In particular the ancient settlement that extended over the hills to the east of Oria has not been previously mentioned by any source. The exact area, name and function of this settlement remain unknown.
- b) From the 7th until the 16th century AD the historical circumstances in the Aegean led to the creation of *kastra* and fortified settlements on the much-contested Cyclades. The fortification activity was more intense between the 7th and 9th century in response to the Arab threat and then again in the 13th century when the Cyclades first came under Latin authority. Kythnos followed the historical course and presumably the settlement patterns of the rest of the Cyclades during both

eras. Although the main objectives may have differed in each period (the need of the inhabitants for protection remaining the only constant), in both cases it seems that the erection of *kastra* was the result of an organised policy and a wider geostrategic planning.

c) The naval defence system that according to some modern scholars was implemented by the state in the Early Byzantine times in the central Cyclades (Naxos, Paros) is proposed here to have also included Kythnos and the rest of the islands. The traces of Early Byzantine presence in Oria verify (partially) the local tradition and suggest that the site existed in the 6th-7th and early 8th century either as a *kastro* or as a *phourio*. So, most likely modest-sized Kythnos played a role in the defence of the Cyclades area and by extension Constantinople.

d) Currently there is no evidence about what was happening in the *Kastro* in the intermediate period between the 8th century and the Latin conquest. The continuous habitation of the site during the Middle Ages that is claimed by some sources is yet to be confirmed. Although there is nothing from the surviving structures (e.g. churches with indicative floor plans etc.) to support extensive settlement at this time, future studies and excavations could prove otherwise. There is no doubt, however, that Kythnos was among the islands that constituted the first core of the Aegean Duchy under Marco I Sanudo and the fact that it was equipped with a *kastro* at least since the mid-13th century is corroborated by both textual and material evidence.

e) The current form of the *Kastro* conforms with the typical form and layout of the other Latin *kastra* of the Cyclades. Apparently, it was the seat of the local lords and the administrative centre of the island while at the same time it offered protected housing to a good portion of the population (about 450 people). It consisted of an upper and a lower level that was possibly added at a later phase. The intramural area included domestic, public and military structures as well as churches and cisterns. The existence of churches that bear phases of both rites and others of the double-apsed typology intended for Orthodox-Catholic co-veneration indicate that the *Kastro* population consisted of both Latins and Greeks (at least during its last phase). Despite the restricted space the living conditions in the *Kastro* appear to not have been too bad. The existence of several domestic structures whose

ground level area exceeded 60 m² combined with the fine ware pottery sherds that can be observed among the ruins suggest that a part of the community of Oria represented the wider insular Latin ruling class.

f) The detailed analysis of the built remains showed that local materials and techniques were used for the construction of all structures, while the presence of western structural and stylistic elements is very limited. Today, the remains of Oria give a rather poor impression, however, the Gozzadini whose family the Late Medieval fate of Kythnos was tied to, were not as petty and unimportant as previously thought. On the contrary, they were astute politicians who rose in rank quickly after their arrival in the Aegean and even managed to intermarry with both ducal families of Naxos. They ruled over several islands and as the documents from the archives in Bologna show, they also maintained good relations (political, religious and cultural) with both Venice and Rome until the very end.

g) The Gozzadini's tolerant policy towards their Orthodox subjects that is manifested through contemporary documents and the erection of double-apsed churches within Oria's walls shows that they made an effort to promote social cohesion. Presumably that helped them maintain their island state for half a century after all other Latin lords had lost theirs to the Turks.

h) From the 13th century on, Oria was the main settlement of Kythnos. Nevertheless, the study of the 15th and 16th-century travellers' and cartographers' accounts pointed at the existence of another, currently unattested town, the so-called Fermentia. Fermentia was located on the east coast and was referred to as the island's capital from the late 15th to the late 16th century. Observations in the area identified the underwater ruins of what seems to have been a port or a sea-side installation. Although that does not conclusively prove the existence of Fermentia, it indicates that the Late Medieval landscape of Kythnos might have been more diverse than previously thought.

i) The *Kastro* suffered most likely at least two violent captures in the 16th century (Barbarossa in 1537, Piali *Pasha* in 1566 and/or Mehmet *Pasha* in 1571) and was eventually abandoned in favour of Messaria. The exact timeframe and reasons for the relocation are not clear yet. At any rate, Messaria the current main settlement of Kythnos, was the island's capital by the turn of the 16th century. The 1638's

unpublished manuscript of Lupazzolo proved that it was fortified and should therefore also be allotted to the *kastra* of the Cyclades.

In conclusion, it is obvious that there are still many questions that remain unanswered along with several hypotheses that are in need of either confirmation or refutation. The answer to most of them lies probably among the ruins of the *Kastro*, the sunken walls of Fermentia and the other medieval sites of the island. As Bent has put it ‘Thermia’s history is chiefly written in her ruins and her sagas.’⁷¹³ The present study has tried to extract from these sites as much information as possible, using only non-intrusive methods (photography and measured drawings) and surface observations. Where the existing data were not enough, comparison to other similar sites was used to form viable hypotheses. A framework was set which in the future can be used as basis for further, systematic studies that will provide enough original and comparative data for the foundation and evolution of Oria and the other medieval sites of Kythnos.

As shown from the analysis above Oria *Kastro* is a representative example of an average – both in size and importance – Cycladic fortified settlement. Despite its rather poor appearance, vernacular character and long-term abandonment it is of great value for the study of the Latin *kastra* in the sense that the settlement retains its original form along with all the peripheral elements of defence, communication and provision with either very little or no modern intervention at all. Time stopped for Oria in the late 16th century. That enabled the identification and survey of various types of domestic and public buildings that still preserve morphological and structural features characteristic of the era and the place that created them.

In addition, the fact that the castle’s wider environs remain uninhabited allowed the recording of its supportive elements and the mapping of their interconnections. As a result, we can get a rather clear idea of the *Kastro*’s use, dynamic and capacity and also have an insight on the prevailing building typologies and construction techniques of the period. This knowledge can be used as a reference for the study and understanding of other less well-preserved sites.⁷¹⁴ Especially, the documentation of

⁷¹³ Bent (1885), p. 433.

⁷¹⁴ E.g. several areas in the large *kastra* of Kephalos on Paros are so disturbed that even though its population is estimated to have been at least double to that of Oria no more than 45 domestic units could be recorded, Vionis (2012), pp. 147-150.

the port installations which were integral for the communication of the island with the Duchy and the outer world may be unique for the Latin *kastra* of the Cyclades.

Finally, the documentation of the present state of the ruins could prove extremely useful in the future as, unfortunately, like most other similar sites in the Aegean, Oria remains exposed to the ravages of time, nature, and inconsiderate visitors. With every passing year precious evidence disappears from the *Kastro* rock; substantial changes have been recorded even in the course of this study. So, the thesis aspires also to draw attention and recognition to a previously overlooked site in hopes of its protection. Furthermore, the measured drawings of the buildings could be used as a reference for future conservation projects. The same applies to the other medieval sites of Kythnos; for example, although the exact position of Fermentia could not be indisputably determined during the current project, the existence of a previously unknown port installation was documented. The multifaceted medieval past of the island and its surviving ruins deserve to be first of all acknowledged and then hopefully protected and studied in more detail.

The archaeology of the medieval Aegean is relatively poor as there is not enough historical or archaeological evidence, especially for the Byzantine period. This situation is gradually changing, as old narratives are being revisited and findings from new research projects appear (e.g. the Apalirou project on Naxos),⁷¹⁵ however, things are still far from clear. Studies on sites such as Oria *Kastro* on Kythnos are therefore important not only because they bring new evidence for the historical course of one small island but because they enrich the history of the whole region. After all, according to the traditional aphorism, the absence of evidence is not evidence of absence and apparently in the Cyclades, there are many sites that are still waiting to be discovered.

⁷¹⁵ Roland (2019), pp. 103-118.

Appendix (to chapter 3)

Mentions and depictions of the *kastra* and settlements of Kythnos in the accounts and maps of the 14th to 18th-century travellers in relation to contemporary historical events and known natural catastrophes (earthquakes and eruptions of the volcano of Santorini)

Date	Creator/ Author	Published in	Original text language	NW <i>kastro</i> (Oria)		SE <i>kastro</i> (Fermenia)		Messaria (Chora)		Syllakas (Dryopida)	
				map	text	map	text	map	text	map	text
1395	Nicola de Martoni	<i>Io notaio Nicola de Martoni [...]</i>	Latin		+						
1416 Turkish campaign against the Aegean Duchy's islands > island destruction & depopulation											
1420	Christoforo Buondelmonti	<i>Liber Insularum Achipelagi</i>	Latin	+	?		+	?			
1457 Santorini volcano eruption & earthquake											
1463 - 1479 1st Ottoman - Venetian war > raids and island destructions											
1480	Henricus Martellus Germanus	<i>Insularium Illustratum</i>	Latin	+	?		+	?			
1485	Bartolomeo dalli Sonetti	<i>Isolario, Periplous Nisson</i>	Latin			+	+				
1485	Joos van Ghistele	Tvoyage van Mher Joos van Ghistele	Dutch								
1499-1503 2nd Ottoman-Venetian war > raids against the Aegean islands, destructions and depopulation											
1520	Piri Pei's	<i>Kitab-ı Bahriye, (Book of Navigation)</i>	Turkish	+	+	+	+				
1528	Benedetto Bordone	<i>Isolario di Benedetto Bordone</i>	Latin			+	+				
1534	anonymous author of Greek portolan		Greek		?						
1537-1540 3rd Ottoman-Venetian war											
1537 Barbarossa campaign > capture and 1st possible destruction of Oria <i>Kastro</i>											
~ 1542	Alonso del Santa Cruz	<i>Islario general de todas las islas del mundo [...]</i>	Spanish			+	+				
1566-1570 4th Ottoman-Venetian war > Cyclades annexed to the Ottoman Empire											
1566 Peali Pasha campaign > capture and 2nd possible destruction of Oria <i>Kastro</i>											

Date	Creator	Published in	Original text language	NW kastro (Oria) mention		SE kastro (Fermentia) mention		Messaria (Chora)		Syllakas (Dryopida)	
				map	text	map	text	map	text	map	text
1570 - 1573 Santorini volcano eruption > creation of a new island (Mikri Kammeni)											
1572	Tommaso Porcacchi	<i>L'isole più famose del mondo</i>	Latin		+						
~ 1575	Andre Thevet	<i>La cosmographie universelle & Le Grand Insulaire et Pilotage</i>	French			+					
1582	Antonio di Millo	<i>Isulario de Antonio Millo. Anno Domini MDLXXXVII.</i>	Italian	+ ruins		+	+				
1617 > Kythnos and the other Gozzadini islands annexed to the Ottoman Empire											
1638	Francesco Lupazzolo	<i>Breve discorso & Isolario dell'arcipelago et altri luoghi particolari</i>	Italian	+ ruins	?	?		+	+		?
1650 Santorini volcano eruption & earthquake > creation of Columbo islet											
1658	Marco Boschini	<i>Archipelago con tutte Isole, scoglio secche, e bassi fondi, con i mar.</i>	Italian			+	+				
1664	Jean de Thevenot	<i>The travels of Monsiour de Thevenot into the Levant</i>	French		+				+		?
1667	Giuseppe di Santa Maria Sebastiani	<i>Sebastiani, Viaggio, e navigazione di Monsignor Sebastiani</i>	Italian		+ ruins				+		
1682	George Wheler	<i>A Journey into Greece</i>	English						+		+
1683	Alain Manesson Mallet	<i>Description de L'Univers</i>	French			+	+				

Date	Creator	Published in	Original text language	NW kastro (Oria) mention		SE kastro (Fermentia) mention		Messaria (Chora)		Syllakas (Dryopida)	
				map	text	map	text	map	text	map	text
1688	Francesco Piaccenza	<i>L' Egeo redivivo, o'sia chorographia dell' Arcipelago, e dello stato primiero, & attuale di quellisole [...]</i>	Latin			+	?				
1688	Olfert Dapper	<i>Naukeurige beschryving der eilanden, in de archipel der Middelantsche zee</i>	Dutch						?		
1694	Jacobus Robinj	<i>Zee Atlas (1683)/ Atlas de la Mer (1696)</i>	Dutch	+							
1696	<i>Mr Roberts Voyage in the Levant [...]</i> by W. Hacke	A collection of original voyages	English								
1700	Joseph Pitton de Tournefort	Relation d'un voyage du Levant	French		+ ruins				+		+
1700	Jacob Xavier Portier	Relation de ce qui s'est passe aux missions volantes	French		+ ruins				+		+
1707-1711 Santorini volcano eruption & earthquake											

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