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PROCEEDINGS OF THE
23RD INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS OF BYZANTINE STUDIES
BELGRADE, 22 – 27 AUGUST 2016
ROUND TABLES

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Cover illustration: *Personification of Truth*, Church of the Holy Virgin of Ljeviša in Prizren, beginning of the 14th century, fresco.

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Belgrade, 22 – 27 August 2016



ROUND TABLES

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FOREWORD

Following the 23rd International Congress of Byzantine Studies, the Organizing Committee decided to produce an online publication of Proceedings from the Round Tables. According to the official title of the congress, *Byzantium - a World of Changes*, AIEB together with the Organizing Committee, have decided to implement some changes to the concept of the Round Tables. The aim of these changes were to encourage discussion at the Round Tables by presenting preliminary papers at the website in advance. The idea was to introduce the topic and papers of the individual Round Tables that would be discussed, first between the participants, and then with the public present. Therefore, the conveners of the Round Tables were asked to create Round Tables with no more than 10 participants. They collected the papers, which were to be no longer than 18,000 characters in one of the official languages of the Congress and without footnotes or endnotes. Conveners provided a general statement on the goal of each roundtable and on the content of the papers.

The present volume contains papers from 49 Round Tables carefully selected to cover a wide range of topics, developed over the last five years since the previous Congress. The topics show diversity within fields and subfields, ranging from history to art history, archeology, philosophy, literature, hagiography, and sigillography. The Round Tables displayed current advances in research, scholarly debates, as well as new methodologies and concerns germane to all aspects of international Byzantine studies.

The papers presented in this volume were last sent to the congress organizers in the second week of August 2016 and represent the material that was on hand at that time and had been posted on the official website; no post-congress revisions have occurred. We present this volume in hope that it will be an initial step for further development of Round Tables into collections of articles and thematic books compiled and published following the Congress, in collaboration with other interested institutions and editors. With this volume, the organizers signal their appreciation of the efforts of more than 1600 participants who contributed, both to the Round Tables and to the Congress in general.

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Landscape and Settlement on Byzantine Naxos

Naxos is the largest of the Cyclades and its distinctive landscape character has long been recognised by islanders and visitors, who frequently describe it as one of the most beautiful Greek islands. Topography, geology and climate have combined to create a series of markedly different environment zones. A high spine of limestone mountains runs from north to south, separating the steep valleys of the island's eastern third from the alluvial plains and low granite hills of the west. Today most people live in these low-lying western areas and in the fertile upland plain of Traghea/Dhrymalia, which nestles below the highest peak in the Cyclades, Mount Zas.

Whilst the special qualities of the island's landscape are well-known to geologists and ecologists, its historic character is not so well understood. Historical sources provide some information about the historic landscape. An Ottoman tax register of 1670 shows that the island was divided into 56 estates (called *topoi* in Greek). They seem likely to have been the same 56 estates established by the Venetian conqueror Marco I Sanudo when he had established Venetian supremacy in 1207 (Slot 1991, 197-98). In the seventeenth century much of the agricultural land on Naxos comprised large fields subdivided into small plots that were cultivated side-by-side by different farmers. The outer boundaries of the fields were sometimes stone walls, but also irrigation channels, trees, boulders and other natural features (Kasdagli 1999, 90). In mountainous areas, it seems likely that the steep hillsides were terraced to create blocks known as *louroi* in the written sources (Kasdagli 1999: 88).

As in many Mediterranean countries, the origins and evolution of the cultural landscape of settlements, roads, fields and terraces, remains poorly understood. Whilst these elements are valued by local people and tourists for their contribution to the island scene, their medieval and earlier histories remain largely unappreciated. The many archaeological interventions on the island have usually focussed on specific monuments. Major excavation and survey projects have focused on important classical sites like the temples of Giroulas and Iria, or the aqueducts which brought the waters of Flerio to the island's classical and late Antique centre at Chora (Sfyroera and Lambrinouidakis 2010). Relatively little archaeological research has considered the landscape context for these monuments. In the 1980s a French team undertook extensive field survey in the north-west of the island. Their work identified a number of prehistoric and classical sites, but did not consider the post-classical landscape in any detail (Dalongueville and Renault-Miskovsky 1993). In 2015 a new field survey in the south-eastern part of Naxos began under the aegis of the University of Cambridge. Although this research will greatly improve our knowledge of that area and its maritime relationships, its focus is mainly on the settlement systems of the early Bronze Age.

The heritage of Naxos is best known to Byzantinists for its dense scatter of small rural churches dating to the Middle Ages, which has long been recognised as exceptional not only in the Aegean but also in the wider context of the eastern Mediterranean (Dimitrokallis 1968; 2000; Chatzidakis 1989; Mastoropoulos 2006; Aslanidis 2014). Naxos is particularly unusual because a relatively high proportion of these buildings appear to date to the early Middle Ages (AD c. 600-1000). Out of a total of around 150 Byzantine churches, perhaps as many as 50 should be dated to the early medieval period. Of these early examples, more than 20 preserve the distinctive geometric decoration known to art historians as ‘aniconic’ (Crow and Turner 2015,202). This means that Naxos preserves a greater density of Byzantine churches with significant surviving early medieval fabric than anywhere else in Greece.

Characterising the historic landscape

The possibility of researching a relatively unexplored historic landscape with many surviving Byzantine churches led us to initiate our research programme using Naxos as a case study in 2006-7. Our initial work took the form of a desk-based assessment using GIS (Geographical Information Systems) to analyse the historic landscape using data from aerial photography and satellite remote sensing. The research was part of a project designed to investigate the applicability in Mediterranean contexts of a method developed in the UK which is known as ‘historic landscape characterisation’ (HLC) (Turner 2006). Through case-studies on Naxos and around Silivri (Thrace, Turkey: Crow and Turner 2009), we were able to show that distinctive historic landscape types could be recognised and used to map patterns of historic landscape character (Turner and Crow 2010). During this initial phase we were fortunate to establish a collaboration with Dr Athanasios Vionis, who had recently undertaken fieldwork on behalf of the 2nd Ephorate of Byzantine Archaeology and its then Ephor, Dr Charalambos Pennas. Together we used the GIS analysis and the historic characterisation to help understand some aspects of the location of the churches, for example their relationships to areas of cultivated land (Crow *et al.* 2011). We were also able to indicate the strong likelihood that many of the terrace systems on Naxos have early origins, dating at least to the medieval period and in some cases earlier. Nevertheless, because our early work did not involve fieldwork, our conclusions about the chronological relationships between churches and landscape types were only tentative. Vionis’ recent fieldwork had included rapid ceramic survey around a selection of the known early medieval churches which suggested that early Byzantine settlement was often located in their vicinity. The potential for renewed fieldwork to inform the landscape analysis was clear.

Apalirou Environs Project

Since 2009 a team led by Prof. Knut Odegard from the University of Oslo (Norway) has been carrying out detailed survey of site at Kastro Apalirou, which occupies a mountainous spur rising to 474 m above sea level on the south-western approach to Mount Zas. The Norwegian survey has been able to document and plan the houses, streets, churches and other structures within and around the walled area of this mountain-top *kastro*. Our team has had the opportunity to collaborate with the Oslo group and the Cyclades Ephorate to develop a field survey of the wider region in the form of the Apalirou Environs Project. This began in 2015 with systematic ceramic survey in the immediate vicinity of the *kastro* combined with detailed survey of remains of an extensive village which has been discovered on the west flank of the mountainside, and which we call ‘Kato Apalirou’. In addition we commenced a detailed documentation of some of the important early churches in the survey area, including Ag Ioannis at Adissarou with its distinctive aniconic decoration, and the several ruined churches associated with the Kato Apalirou settlement.

The mountainside immediately to the west of the *kastro* drops steeply into a shallow bowl before sloping down sharply towards the fertile plain of Lathrina. In July 2015 we carried out an intensive pick-up survey using systematic line field-walking with participants spaced at 10m intervals on 100 x 100m transects (using the method based on that described by Bevan and Connolly 2013). Having established a grid with a Leica dGPS we were able to collect approximately 20,000 sherds which are now stored in the Byzantine Museum at Chora Naxou. The method employed quantities of ceramics which were collected represented a total sample approximating to around 10% of the material from the western slope, which was surveyed from the outer face of the west curtain wall of the *kastro*, down to the lower field wall of Kato Apalirou (a total area of around 11 hectares in 2015).

Processing of the finds was begun during the field season at the Byzantine Museum in Chora by Mark Jackson, Maria Duggan and Hallvard Indgjerd. At the first level body and feature sherds (handles, rims etc.) were split with initial quantification by count and (more usefully) weight. At this stage the team began construction of a working ceramic type series for the project. A second level of detailed quantification by type and estimated vessel equivalent was begun but will be completed during future museum study of the finds.

From preliminary observations by the ceramics team it was possible to suggest that the main period of occupation on the *kastro* itself extended from the later-sixth to the eleventh century AD. On the steepest scree slopes immediately below the *kastro* walls the evidence suggests the main period of occupation extended from the later sixth to the eleventh century. Although there are the remains of structures in this area including terraces and some buildings, the majority of this material is assumed to derive largely from the *kastro* above (this theory will be tested using spatial analysis to establish the likely movement of objects downslope when the ceramic analysis has been completed). Lower down the mountainside, the initial evaluation of ceramics collected from the area of Kato Apalirou suggests a more restricted period of occupation, perhaps from the late-sixth to the ninth century AD.

Kato Apalirou

Below the steep, sherd-covered flanks of the *kastro* is an extensive walled enclosure measuring 200m N-S and 250m W-E, today partly covered with dense juniper wood which obscures traces of old terraces and stone buildings. Further down the slope to the west the ground becomes more open and level and there are the remains of a later farmstead and other buildings probably contemporary with the enclosure wall. The area of Kato Apalirou is limited and screened from the plains of Lathrinou and Marathos to the west and south by a series of rocky knolls. The enclosure wall is clearly secondary to the terraces and buildings which extend across the upper slope for over 200 m from N-S. Survey with a total station has been able to define dense groups of buildings, many of them set on stepped and braided terraces. In the south part of the site some of the houses are seen to be approximately square and laid out in rows. Further north and beyond the north side of the enclosure wall there are traces of long houses, with clear internal subdivisions. All appear to be dry-stone built or clay/soil bonded with no evidence for lime mortar. Unlike the structures of the *kastro* there is no evidence for cisterns either associated with or below the houses. It is still not possible to discern the density of the settlement, although in places there are rows of four or more buildings, with lower rows down the slope. Altogether we have been able to identify at least 50 individual structures and we are confident that further survey will be able to document many more.

The ceramic survey noted from the slopes towards the *kastro* has not yet completed the area of Kato Apalirou, however a preliminary assessment suggests that it dated between the later-sixth and tenth centuries, with a terminal date significantly earlier than from the *kastro* itself. Four churches are known, the church dedicated to the Theoskepasti situated on the boundary wall on the east side is discussed in the next section. Towards the centre of the settlement is a ruined single-apsed church with a secondary side aisle on the south side. It is located on a distinctive knoll and provides a central focus for the settlement. Below the south enclosure wall traces of an apse indicate another chapel. Villages of later medieval date are known from the Peloponnese and elsewhere (Kourelis 2005; Gregory 2013) but what is significant about Kato Apalirou is the early date in the Transitional period and its association with the *kastro* above.

Building Survey

In 2015 our team also began to record selected buildings using detailed methods, including photography and terrestrial laser scanning. These monuments included the archaeological remains of two churches in the deserted settlement of Kato Apalirou, along with two standing monuments: the small churches of Ag. Ioannis Adissarou to the north-west of Apalirou and the church of (?) Theoskepasti in Kato Apalirou. Although the island's Byzantine churches have been subject to relatively sustained research, many questions remain about their foundation and context. Our aim is to produce detailed analyses of these structures using the methods of digital buildings archaeology and try to understand how the histories of the buildings may be related to the long-term histories of their surrounding landscapes.

In the field conventional survey using photography and record sheets was complemented by digital survey undertaken by Alex Turner and Sam Turner with a Faro Focus x330 laser scanner. The resulting data was processed using Faro SCENE software to create 3D point clouds. These point clouds provide a detailed survey of the buildings that can be used directly for analysis, or exported to provide the basis for 3D solid models of the buildings. All the buildings we studied were shown to have long histories of development and change, including the ruined or part-ruined churches of Kato Apalirou.

The church of Theoskepasti in Kato Apalirou provides an example of a surprisingly complex building. This deceptively tiny structure today measures just 3.32 m long x 2.29 m from the west wall to the springing of its apse, which is set without windows directly against the rocky mountainside. The church has the appearance today of a post-medieval chapel but detailed survey showed that this is certainly due to a renovation which took place sometime before the late nineteenth century. Careful analysis showed that this work effectively remodelled the second of two medieval phases, whose stone roof is preserved in the current vault. The survey also showed that in the earliest phase the church was at least twice its present size, extending a further 3.6 m to the west. The building is surrounded by the archaeological remains of domestic structures and it seems most likely that it was one of at least four churches we have identified so far in Kato Apalirou. Our detailed survey of the site is enabling us to understand how the space of an early Byzantine village was articulated, including the relationships between streets, houses and churches.

Conclusion

Our programme of research on Naxos aims to take a multi-scale assessment of the landscapes of the island and focuses particularly on the periods from the end of the classical world to recent times. Through HLC assessment we have been able to demonstrate the potential for future landscape research which will be combined with intensive surface survey in the Apalirou Environs Project. Analysis of the detailed survey data from the flanks of Apalirou Kastro can contribute to a better understanding of the chronology of the occupation of the *kastro* and its settlement. In addition the large sample of ceramic material collected so far will also contribute to a better awareness of the economic and cultural connections of the community through trade and exchange in the Aegean and beyond and potentially help to define the character of the defended settlement. Study of the lower Kato Apalirou has been able to discern an extensive open settlement contemporary with the *kastro*. Settlements of this period (better termed Transitional rather than Dark Age) are extremely rare in Byzantine Greece and Asia Minor and the juxtaposition of a defended settlement with possible elite structures, cisterns etc and the lower, more uniform dwellings below, helps to define a service/agricultural function for the latter, with a more public/state administrative role for the *kastro*. Further survey and study will ensure greater granularity to the chronological range of the ceramic material which can assist in assessing the historical context of the settlements. The transitional age in the Aegean was a period of new challenges by land and sea and the combined settlements of Apalirou show how the state and the island communities could reconfigure and demonstrate both resistance and resilience to external threats. Within the settlements of the transitional period and in the adjacent countryside the rich heritage of Byzantine churches reveals both patronage and a distinctive creativity defined by their aniconic decoration. Our documentation of the churches in the study area will enable a greater recognition of their structural complexity, as demonstrated at the Theoskepasti, and can ensure they are better contextualised as part of a wider diachronic landscape.

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Ag. Ioannis Adissarou, north-west of Kastro Apalirou, Naxos.
Profile showing north internal elevation based on laser scan data, July 2015.