

Chios dicta est... et in Aegæo sita mari

**Historical Archaeology and
Heraldry on Chios**

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TO THE REVERED MEMORY OF
MY FATHER
AND
OF MY GRANDPARENTS,
AND ALL OUR NORTH-CHIOT ANCESTORS
FOR THEY PLOUGHED THIS LAND
WITH THE TEARS OF THEIR TOIL.

I PAY THIS TRIBUTE

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Abbreviations

ABME: Archeion Byzantinon Mneneion Ellados.	EEBS: Epeteris Etaireias Byzantinon Spoudon/ Επετηρίς Εταιρείας Βυζαντινών Σπουδών
AD: Archaialogikon Deltion.	EHB: Economic History of Byzantium.
AE: Archaialogike Ephemeris.	EMME: Ευρετήριο των Μεσαιωνικών Μνημείων της Ελλάδος.
ABSA: Annual of the British School at Athens.	JHS: Journal of Hellenic Studies.
BCH: Bulletin de Correspondence Hellenique.	JÖB: Jahrbuch der Österreichischen Byzantinistik.
ByzForsch: Byzantinische Forschungen.	NC / NX: Numismatic Chronicles / Νομισματικά Χρονικά.
BMGS: Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies	NE: Νέος Ελληνομνήμων (Neos Ellenommenon).
BSI: Byzantinoslavica.	ODB: Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium, 3 vols, ed. Al. Kazdhan, Oxford U.P., 1991
Byz: Byzantina.	PLP: Prosopographisches Lexikon der Palaiologenzeit
BZ: Byzantinische Zeitschrift.	RE: Realencyclopädie der classischen Alttertumswissenschaft.
CBC: Codex Berianus Chiensis.	REB: Revue des Études Byzantines.
CFHB: Corpus Fontium Historiae Byzantinae.	RH: Revue Historique.
CSHB: Corpus Scriptorum Historiae Byzantinae.	TM: Travaux et Mémoires du Centre de Recherche d'Histoire et Civilisation Byzantines.
DHAE -ΔΧΑΕ: Deltion Christianikes Archaeologikes Etaireias (Δελτίον Χριστιανικής Αρχαιολογικής Εταιρείας).	XX: Χιακά Χρονικά (Chiaka Chronika).
DIEE: Δελτίον Ιστορικής και Εθνολογικής Εταιρείας Ελλάδος.	XE: Χιακή Επιθεώρησις (Chiake Epitheorisis).
DOP: Dumbarton Oaks Papers.	

Introduction

PART A. HISTORICAL ARCHAEOLOGY OF MOUNT AMANI

The Geographical Region

The island of Chios, situated in the eastern Aegean, is the fifth largest Greek island. The Regional Unit of Chios, comprised of the islands of Chios, Psara and Oinoussai, belongs to the Administrative Region of the North Aegean. The government reform of 2011 'Kallikrates' merged local units within the municipality of Chios. Psara islet is situated 12 miles from Chios' most northwesterly point, while the Oinoussai cluster of islets lie 2 miles to its north-east. Chios herself is situated at a longitude of 38°24'N and a latitude of 26°01'E, between Lesbos to the north and Samos to the south. To the east it faces the peninsula of Erythraea in Asia Minor (modern Turkey), from which it is separated by the Chios Strait, a narrow channel broken up by rocks, measuring 4.5 miles in width in the south and 11 miles in the north.¹

The first part of this book explores northwest part of the island, Mount Amani, (Map IV). Natural boundaries delimit the region: to the east, it is bordered by Mount Pelinnaion (h: 1267m/4157 ft), Chios' highest mountain, which splits the north section of the island into two administrative districts, the northwest district of Mount Amani and the northeast region of Mount Pelinnaion. To both its north and its west our region faces the Aegean Sea. The southern boundary line of Amani coincides with the narrowest point of the island, where the deserted settlement of Anavatos is located. The present-day administrative area of Mount Amani consists of a number of settlements and hamlets, among which Volissos is the focal point: it is the largest centre of occupation and, until the reform of 2011, was the seat of the modern municipality. Setting out from Volissos towards the northwest we pass the following small hamlets: Pyrama, Parparia, Trypes, Melanios, Aghion Galas, Nenitouria, Kourounia, Egrigoros, Aphrodisia, Leptopoda, Chalandra, Keramos, Potamia, Pispilounta, Fyta, Kipouries, Diefcha and Katavasis. The entire area is covered by legislation for the protection of the traditional (vernacular) settlements of Greece.² It is also an area of special importance for rare and vulnerable birds, and was therefore listed from very early on in the Natura 2000 network for the protection of European natural habitats of special interest.

¹ British Naval Intelligence Division, *Greece*, vol. I, p. 33, vol. III, p. 514, (henceforth, *Greece*).

² Act for the Protection of the Vernacular Architecture of Greece (*Official Government Gazette* 140/a/13.06.2000); <http://www.yppo.gr/5/51/neot/n1577.js>

Why North Chios?

The research for this book was inspired by the neglected series of defensive works that are dispersed around the mountain ranges of Chios. It investigates the settlement patterns, defensive works, historical topography, material culture and the society and economy of rural northwest of Chios, over a period of eight centuries: from approximately the ninth century AD until the end of the Genoese period (mid-sixteenth century). More specifically, it maps the Byzantine and Genoese sites and fortifications in the province of Mount Amani, also taking into consideration those that survive only in the oral tradition.

The early and middle Byzantine periods on Chios are rather obscure in the historical and archaeological record. We have sporadic information for the period prior to the eleventh century and very good documentation from the early fourteenth century onwards. A good deal of information can be obtained from the archaeological record. In this respect, the south of the island has been privileged, having received systematic scholarly attention: the British archaeological excavations at Emporio took place in the early-mid 1950s (1952-1955), to be followed some time later by new systematic fieldwork at Kato Phana (1997-2005). Rescue excavations by the Ephorate of Antiquities in Chios town have supplemented our knowledge, as have the ongoing rescue excavations and restoration works in the abandoned settlement of Anavatos. The great research lacuna, though, remains the north part of the island, which is still practically unexplored, despite the fact that the area has its own share of interest in the historical record.

The historians of the early twentieth century believed that the earliest records for the medieval period in Chios begin in the eleventh century, as this was when the Nea Moni monastery was founded. The subsequent historical and archaeological research has, however, changed this image, providing us with a remarkably rich variety of information that reveals an uninterrupted sequence in the history of Chios. The goal of the present study, therefore, is to collect the material that has been examined thus far, and to interpret it within the context of the island's history and historical geography.

The core of the investigation is the chief military and administrative centre, the settlement of Volissos, and its wider vicinity. Volissos, which preserves the name it has had since ancient times, specifically the fifth century BC, is the largest settlement under examination. A remarkable remnant of its hidden past is the castle

on a hilltop, overlooking the sea. Notwithstanding its strategic location, this castle is seldom mentioned in the historical primary sources of the Middle Ages. It certainly served as a bulwark against enemy attack. Yet, despite its importance, it has attracted little scholarly attention – if at all. The town appears to have had a diachronic, uninterrupted occupation and is still inhabited today. According to G. Zolotas, Volissos never suffered enemy attacks, hence it was never abandoned. Furthermore, it still dominates the entire area – as the largest settlement, it was chosen as the seat of the modern administrative district³ – and there are reasons to believe that it has been a peripheral seat since the Byzantine era. Primary sources and analysis drawn from the secondary literature testify to the dynamism of the area in terms of social activity, economic development, demography, and other aspects. Therefore, even though this is a regional study, a variety of information can still be extracted from rural northern Chios, thus enhancing the historical and archaeological record of the island as a whole. A regional study cannot be done without the simultaneous study of the rural aspect.

Past Historiography

The first pioneers: historical research in the second half of the 19th century.

The first attempts at documenting the antiquities of Chios can be traced back to the first half of the fifteenth century, with the travels of the antiquarians Cyriacus Anconensis (1391-1452)⁴ and Christoforo Buondelmonti (1386- ca. 1430).⁵ The bulk of information on ancient as well as medieval Chios comes from their accounts of their travels,⁶ first-hand testimony on the late- and post-medieval periods on the island. In the early nineteenth century, the scholar Adamantios Korais (1748-1833) dedicated the third volume of his *Atakta* to Chiot folklore, emphasising the linguistic analysis of the local dialect. He concentrated his efforts on the etymology of toponyms, associating them with similar or related words with a medieval and even classical Greek origin. This volume, published in Paris in 1830, was entitled *Χιακῆς Ἀρχαιολογίας* ‘*Υλη (Material on Chiot Archaeology)*’.⁷ Ten years later, in 1840, the physician Alexander Vlasto (1813-1844), scion of a Chiot aristocratic family, published the first history of Chios,⁸ in a chronicle of events from the prehistory of the island to the massacres of the population by the Ottomans in 1822, the most recent event in the history of the island at that time. In this same period, the first

archaeological exploration was conducted in Chios town by Fustel de Coulanges (1830-1889), a French historian and archaeologist at the Sorbonne.⁹ The results of his research were published in 1856.¹⁰ Even though it was delimited to a small investigation of the castle, this study was the first of its kind on Chios.

Other nineteenth-century scholars of Chios focused primarily on the prehistoric and ancient periods.¹¹ Even so, some included brief information on certain important medieval monuments that were still standing at that time and in a good state of preservation. Even though this information is general and irrespective of the fact that these studies almost exclusively concern the island’s capital, these works were the first to treat several aspects of the regional culture in a scholarly manner. They paved the way for the more systematic scholarly research that was to come. These works could be best described as ‘contemporary chronicles’ or ‘guides’ to the island.¹²

From the end of the 19th to the 20th century: Systematic scholarly work.

Not until the late nineteenth century did systematic historical and archaeological research begin on Chios. The last third of the nineteenth century is marked by the figures of Konstantinos Kanellakis and George Zolotas, whose historical and archaeological research sowed the seeds for the foundation of Chiot studies. Konstantinos Kanellakis (1846-1917) was ‘an empirical ethnographer, historian and archaeologist’.¹³ As a

⁹ Fustel de Coulanges arrived on Chios in 1854-55 as the head of a scientific mission sponsored by the University of the Sorbonne. The mission aimed to enquire into the history, archaeology and ethnography of Chios. It included a brief excavation that was conducted at the site of Palaiokastron in Chios town. Palaiokastron is allegedly the precursor to the Byzantine castle of Chios. There has been a lengthy debate on this issue. See the more recent views in: A. Zacharou-Loutrari, ‘Αναζητώντας στο Παλαιόκαστρο της Χίου τό βυζαντινό οχυρό και την αρχαία ακρόπολη’, *Proceedings of the International Congress on the Architecture of Fortifications in the Aegean and the Medieval Settlement of Anavatos of Chios*, 26-28 September 2008, Chios 2012, pp. 205-216.

¹⁰ F. de Coulanges, *Mémoire sur l’île de Chio. Missions scientifiques et littéraires*, Paris 1856. An interest in the antiquities of Chios can be documented from as early as the eighteenth century. We learn from the French diplomatic dispatches (Ph.P. Argenti, *Diplomatic Archive of Chios (1577-1841)*, CUP 1954, *passim.*) that the French missions that visited the island had been specially entrusted to enrich the French Royal Collections.

¹¹ Ar. Karavas, *Τοπογραφία της Χίου*, Chios, 1866. Char. Alimonakis, *Ἡ νῆσος Χίος ἐν τῇ Ἀρχαιότητι*, Erlangen, 1882.

¹² It must be borne in mind that these early works – with the exception of the travellers’ accounts – were compiled during the last seventy years of the Ottoman occupation of Chios (liberated in 1912). Therefore, the primary concern of early scholars was to rescue every relic related to the glorious historical past. In this respect, the testimonies of K. Kanellakis and F. de Coulanges that ‘the Turkish Bey (lieutenant) had in his garden a marble block with a carved inscription, where he used to tie his horse’ are illuminating. Instances like this were also documented by Hubert Pernot, *En pays Turc*, Paris, 1903, during his travels in Chios in the late nineteenth century. Kanellakis, Zolotas and other of their contemporaries had in many cases purchased antiquities from the Turkish authorities.

¹³ Recently, Dr Athena Zaharou-Loutrari published the archive of K.

³ Until 2011, *cf.* p. 1.

⁴ E.W. Bodnar and C. Foss (eds), *Cyriac of Ancona, Later Travels*. Cambridge Mass., 2003.

⁵ Ph. Argenti and S. Kyriakides, *Ἡ Χίος παρά τοῖς Γεωγράφοις καί Περιηγηταῖς*, vol. I, Athens 1946, pp. 11-15.

⁶ Ph. Argenti and S. Kyriakides, *op.cit.* 3 vols.

⁷ A. Korais, *Ἄτακτα*, vol. III, Paris, 1830. Reprinted by the ‘Korais’ Public Library of Chios, 3 vols, Chios 2008, also available online at <http://anemi.lib.uoc.gr>

⁸ A. Vlasto, *Χιακὰ ἡῶτα Ἱστορία τῆς νήσου Χίου*, Hermoupolis, 1840.

result of his personal endeavours, he was able to collect, systematically document and preserve a large number of Byzantine sources, including inscriptions, imperial documents, and post-medieval notarial documents, especially village cartularies, from every part of the island. These he published in a monograph entitled *Chian Miscellanea*.¹⁴ He also published the *Topography of the Island of Chios*.

George Zolotas (1845-1906), the renowned Chiot scholar, lived and worked during this same period. He was the first to compile the history of Chios as a whole, from prehistoric times down to his own era, based on the written primary sources and documented by visible archaeological evidence. Zolotas devoted his life to an effort to put together an entire series of records for Chios alone.¹⁵ At the initial stage, which, unfortunately, was to be the only stage,¹⁶ Zolotas conducted a one-man survey over the whole island. From this, he was able to present an accurate and detailed report on the geophysical structure of the island, which provided an analysis of the physical relief. Based on an exhaustive study of the primary sources that had been preserved on Chios and in Italian libraries, in conjunction with his personal observations from all over the island, he was able to locate, identify and document a number of prehistoric, ancient and medieval sites and also created the first historical and archaeological map of Chios. Zolotas was also the first scholar to study the archives of the Catholic bishopric of Chios. He conducted meticulous surveys and his research tackled every sphere of the regional culture, extending from ancient and medieval prosopography to epigraphy and even landscape archaeology. Chios was formally introduced to the scholarly community thanks to his seminal historical and archaeological research. It was Zolotas who planted the seeds for Chiot studies, achieving a successful visualisation of the diachronic Chiot landscape.

Equally important is the work of his daughter, Aimilia Sarou-Zolota (1882-1963), who devoted herself to the editing and publication of her father's scholarly work after his sudden death in 1906. Her contribution to the promotion of Chiot studies was significant. The aims of her research, based on unpublished archival material,¹⁷ revolved mainly around the diachronic evolution of the

castle of Chios from the Byzantine and Genoese periods, to the short-term Venetian and Florentine occupations. The value of the work done by both Zolotas and Sarou-Zolota, in respect to the subject that will be developed, is obvious. They were the first to turn their attention to the medieval and post-medieval period, with an exhaustive study of the historical sources, access to foreign archives and the first publications.¹⁸ Zolotas produced the first well-documented skeletal regional history, upon which all future work on Chios would be based.

The first half of the twentieth century was marked by the figure of another renowned Chiot medievalist, Professor Konstantinos Amantos (1874-1960). Amantos was a prolific historian who, to a great extent, filled in the gaps in Chiot medieval studies. A large part of his work on Medieval Hellenism concerned the ecclesiastical history of Chios, for the compilation of which he used the archives of Moundon Monastery – a deserted, ecclesiastical complex in northern Chios of unknown date – and published its cartulary. The material had up until his time been scattered and untouched.¹⁹ Prof. Amantos' contribution is further highlighted by the publication of his monograph on the notable seventeenth-century theologian and intellectual, Leo Allatius or Vestarches (ca. 1586-1669).²⁰ It must also be pointed out that Prof. Amantos was perhaps the first scholar who shifted his attention to another aspect of regional history, namely the rural economy, a topic that will be dealt with in this study.

The second third of the twentieth century is marked by the work of the prolific historian and great patron of Chios, Philip Pandely Argenti (1891-1974). His monographs are based on primary material derived mainly from foreign archives, with a view to documenting the history of the island throughout its different periods of occupation, from the late medieval (Palaeologan and Genoese periods) until the Second World War, pinpointing the limitations posed by the lack of Turkish and Greek primary sources in compiling a complete history of Chios. Argenti thus turned his attention to the diplomatic dispatches held in several European state archives. He was the first to publish the *Codex Berianus Chiensis*, the most important cartulary we possess for the Genoese occupation of Chios. The key aspects of his investigation focus on political, administrative, and fiscal issues. Other aspects include ecclesiastical relations, minorities and social history. Regarding the publication of the Genoese archives, the limitations posed by the selection of exclusively

Kanellakis in seven volumes (Alpha Pi Editions, Chios 2018). St. Fassoulakis, 'Ένα άγνωστο έργο του Κ.Ν. Κανελλάκη για τόν Κ.Σ. Χωρέμη', XX, vol. XII, Athens 1980, pp. 52-53.

¹⁴ K. Kanellakis, *Χιακά Ανάλεκτα*, Chios 1890. The first part of this volume treats the Chiot folklore: customs, traditions, songs, proverbs, myths and the like.

¹⁵ G. Zolotas, *Ιστορία της Χίου*, 5 vols, Athens 1922-1928. Pavlos Stefanovic Schilizzi, a merchant of the Chiot diaspora, was the patron of this research.

¹⁶ G. Zolotas died in 1906, not having been able to see the publication of his life's work published. This was done by his daughter, Aimilia Zolota-Sarou, in his memory.

¹⁷ The records of the Chiot Catholic Bishopric as well as private archives and individual testimonies were inaccessible by the first quarter of the twentieth century.

¹⁸ A large part of the Byzantine documents of Chios disappeared during the arson attack, which followed the massacres of 1822.

¹⁹ For example, K. Amantos, *Η Μονή τών Μουνδών έν Χίω*, offprint, Athens 1931. Idem, 'Άπό τήν Έκκλησιαστικήν Ιστορίαν της Χίου', *Hellenika* vol. 4 (1931), 47-68. Idem, 'Συμβολή εις τήν Μεσαιωνικήν Ιστορίαν της Έκκλησίας της Χίου', *Studi Bizantini e Neellenici*, (Silloge Bizantina in onore di Silvio Giuseppe Mercati), Rome 1957, 9-13.

²⁰ Amantos, 'Άέων Άλλάτιος', in *Εις Μνήμην Σπ. Λάμπρου*, Athens 1935, pp. 557-66.

official documents should be noted.²¹ Even though Argenti's work is in every aspect seminal, notarial deeds concerning acts between individuals of the lower social classes are absent. The majority of deeds were of no interest to him, because 'they deal with transactions of everyday people who have left no mark on the Chian history'.²² Other limitations concern to a large extent the historical topography – he deals almost exclusively with the capital and the Kampos, leaving aside the countryside. No mention is made of the northern regions, for instance. Furthermore, he does not even touch upon archaeological evidence and monumental architecture. There is also a lack of personal observation. But one should not understate the great value of these works, which comply fully with the scientific demands of historical scholarship and are fundamental for the study of the regional history. The lower social classes are treated separately by Argenti in a monograph on Chiot folklore.²³

Argenti's fundamental research on the Genoese archives, well documented but not exhaustively, was to be supplemented in 1969 by the research of Geo Pitarino (1917-2008),²⁴ and by the publication, in 1979, of even more archival material by Antonella della Rovere.²⁵ The latter published two important Genoese cartularies, which contain the conventions signed between the Republic of Genoa and the Giustiniani overlords of Chios. These documents complement the *Codex Berianus Chiensis* and offer the student precious archival material that can be used as a historical reference tool; furthermore, they shed light on the socio-economic and material-cultural organisation of Chios.

In the 1930s two studies on Chiot early modern and vernacular architecture and material culture were undertaken by two prominent architects, Demetrios Pikionis (1887-1968) and Arnold Smith (1912-before 1962). Of the two, that of Pikionis fell into oblivion for decades and it was not until 2000 that it was finally published. Arnold Smith's work saw the light of publication in 1962, after the writer's premature death. In terms of chronology, this was the first study

dedicated to the subject of Chiot urban and peasant architecture and material culture.²⁶

In 1982, Charalambos Bouras published a monograph about the history and architecture of the Nea Moni.²⁷ Irrespective of the topic itself, the emphasis of which is on the architectural and artistic material of a monastic complex, the introductory section offers a meticulous and well-documented survey of the monastery's historical background in the eleventh century. The writer does not fail to evaluate the surviving source material relating to the monastic foundation. A multi-faceted picture of the island emerges, by tying together the different kinds of evidence, which spreads chronologically from the Byzantine through to the early modern period.

Michel Balard contributed to the Chiot medieval history with his study of unpublished archival material relating to the Genoese in the Levant. His work extends chronologically from 1204 to 1566, covering the entire period of the Genoese presence in the East. Chios is placed within the broader geographical context, and its evolving role as the mainstream commercial and maritime post is thus better understood. A great part of the documents covers the everyday transactions of ordinary people,²⁸ an important aspect that is neglected by Argenti.

A special mention must also be made of the State Archives of Genoa (Archivio di Stato di Genova), the largest archives in the world, which has an on-going project for the publication of the archival notarial documents about Chios.

In 1988 and 1998 two works written by Elisabeth Malamut and Johannes Koder respectively placed Chios within the broader context of the Aegean Archipelago. Malamut²⁹ makes use of published archaeological evidence to raise interesting questions about the administrative role of the island in the context of the Archipelago during the Middle Ages, spanning the eighth to the twelfth centuries. By the time of her publication, the excavations of the British School at Athens (BSA) at Emporio – the only large-scale project to have been carried out on Chios up until then – had already been published. At the time, no other project was under way aside from minor rescue excavations

²¹ Argenti, *The Occupation of Chios by the Genoese and their Administration of the Island*. 3 vols, Cambridge U.P., 1958.

²² Argenti, 'Chief primary sources for the medieval and modern history of Chios', *Εἰς μνήμην Κων. Ἀμάντου*, Athens 1960, p. 239. See the counter-argument to this issue, in A. Kazhdan, *People and Power in Byzantium*, Washington, 1982, p. 21. Argenti, however, simply considered it more useful to publish notarial deeds containing information about property and construction, arguing that they illuminate social life better. See also Antonella della Rovere, *Documenti della Maona di Chio*, (secc. XIV-XVI), Genova 1979, pp. 8-9, n. 9.

²³ Ph. Argenti and H.M. Rose, *The Folk-lore of Chios*, 2 vols, Cambridge, 1949.

²⁴ G. Pitarino, 'Chio dei Genovesi', in: *Studi Medievali*, n.s. X, 1969, pp. 3-69. Also, more recently, *Id.*, *Chio dei Genovesi nel tempo di Cristoforo Colombo*, Rome 1995.

²⁵ Rovere, *op.cit.* For the most recent bibliography on the Genoese period of Chios see L. Balletto, 'Tra Genova e Chios nel tempo di Cristoforo Colombo', *Chemins d'outre-mer. Études d'histoire sur la Méditerranée médiévale offertes à Michel Balard*. Paris, 2004, I, 51-61.

²⁶ See section 2.5.1, n. 1.

²⁷ Ch. Bouras, *Nea Moni on Chios: History and Architecture*, Athens, 1982.

²⁸ M. Balard, 'Escalaes génoises sur la route de l' Orient Méditerranéen au XIVe siècle', *Les Grandes Escalaes, Société Jean Bodin* 32, I, (1974), 243-264. *Idem*, 'Les Grecs de Chio sous la Domination Génoise au XIVe siècle', *Byz.Forsch* 5 (1977), 5-15. *Idem*, *La Romanie Génoise (XIIe-début du XVe siècle)*, 2 vols, Rome 1978. *Idem*, 'The Genoese in the Aegean (1204-1566)', in: B. Arbel et al., *Latins and Greeks in the Eastern Mediterranean After 1204*, London, 1989, 158-174.

Idem, 'Le mastic de Chio, monopole génois (XIV-XVI)', in: *Itinéraires d'Orient. Hommage à Claude Cahen. Res Orientales* 6 (1994), 223-228.

²⁹ E. Malamut, *Les îles de l'Empire byzantin (VIIIe-XIIe siècles)*, 2 vols, Paris, 1988.

by the local Ephorate. Malamut's work is characterised by certain limitations: firstly, the broad topic and the chronological frame, which – in reference to Chios – starts in the eleventh century; secondly, the failure to consider significant information from other parts of the island. Despite that, in a brief catalogue of monuments³⁰ she includes two sites on Mount Amani, the castle at Volissos and the cave at Aghion Galas. The broadness of the subject matter in conjunction with the scarcity of written sources and, consequently, a lack of knowledge of the local conditions on individual islands account for these limitations. The main picture that the reader draws from this study is one in which northern Chios remained uninhabited during the period under examination, while life and activities were concentrated in the harbour town, the outskirts and the south.³¹ These observations give a false image of the demography and socio-economic conditions.

Johannes Koder created a *tabula* of the historical and archaeological sites of the islands of the northern Aegean. The entries are categorised according to their functions as fortifications, settlements, monasteries and *metochia*, *naydria* and toponyms, spanning the Middle and Late Byzantine period down to the Turkish occupation of the Aegean.³² In reference to Chios, the volume covers the island's entire territory. In comparison with the objectives of the present study, the *TIB* of the Northern Aegean lists the sites in alphabetical order with a brief commentary and the relevant bibliography. However, the information provided is drawn only from the secondary bibliography, which, in many instances, is out-of-date and sometimes erroneous. Nonetheless, its value is not to be underestimated, given that sites in northern Chios figure for the first time in the *tabula*, nearly a century or so after Zolotas' *History*.

Last but not least, the recent study by Piero Spagnesi on medieval Chios fills a gap in many respects.³³ This work adds a new stimulus to the study of the island in its own right. It is not merely a monograph on the history of the medieval architecture of Chios from the seventh to the mid-sixteenth centuries, but it also examines the historical framework and incorporates the role of natural factors on the built environment. Moreover, Spagnesi raises the problem of the lack of archaeological research in the north.

The value of the aforementioned works is evident, for they make clear a variety of the aspects of Chiot civilisation: its social and administrative structure; the economy and culture; and, the military history of the period that they cover. The present study is thus founded on an analysis of the Genoese period, in order to speculate and trace what was happening,

particularly in the north, in the preceding period, when Chios was a Byzantine territory. The present study will examine: a) the settlement and military pattern and the extent to which this system had been retained from the period of Byzantine rule until after the Ottoman conquest; b) the society and economy of the island under the Byzantines and the Genoese and the legacy of the Genoese occupation in social and economic terms; and, c) the material culture of the actors in the island's economy, namely the peasant population.

The history of archaeological exploration on Chios

The dawn of the twentieth century witnessed the first systematic scholarly expedition on Chios that was purely archaeological in nature; this was the excavation conducted by Konstantinos Kourouniotes on behalf of the Greek Archaeological Society, between 1913–1915, at the site *Kato Phana*, a natural harbour in southwest Chios. Twenty years later, new excavations were carried out at the same site by W. Lamb under the auspices of the British School at Athens (1934).³⁴ These surveys aimed at identifying the temple of Apollo Phanaios, a sanctuary recorded by Thucydides, Livy, and Strabo. Though both the Greek and the British expeditions focused on the investigation of the sanctuary and its use during the early historical periods, i.e. from the ninth century B.C. until the Archaic period, the finds revealed a broad diachronic occupation of the site, spanning the Geometric to Early Christian periods. During the Early Christian period, the site acquired a Christian basilica and an adjacent complex, comprised of a settlement and a cemetery. Stones taken from the temple were used for the construction of the Early Christian basilica, which was dated by the excavators to the early sixth century AD. According to the excavator's report 'we have a long tradition of worship on the site, first pagan then Christian'.³⁵

In the late 1930s the British School at Athens conducted another archaeological excavation in the cave of Aghion Galas, a settlement in the northwest of the island, built on a ridge along Mount Amani.³⁶ Inside the cave are two thirteenth-century churches, but traces of prehistoric occupation have also been revealed. Unfortunately, the journals kept during that survey were lost during the Second World War, and it was not until the early 1980s that the results were published by Sinclair Hood.³⁷

³⁴ K. Kourouniotes, "Ανασκαφαί καί ἔρευναι ἐν Χίῳ", *AD* 1 (1915), 72–85. *Idem*, "Ανασκαφαί καί ἔρευναι ἐν Χίῳ 2", *AD* 2 (1916), 190–212. W. Lamb, 'Excavations at Kato Phana in Chios', *BSA* 35, (1934–35), 138–164.

³⁵ Lamb, *op.cit.*, p. 139.

³⁶ The director was Edith Eccles.

³⁷ S. Hood, *Excavations in Chios, 1938–1955: Prehistoric Emporio and Ayio Gala*, 2 vols., London, 1981–82. See also D.W.S. Hunt, 'An archaeological survey of the classical antiquities of the island of Chios' *ABSA* XLI (1939–1945), 29–52.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, vol. I, pp. 236–237.

³¹ *Ibid.*, vol. I, p. 278.

³² J. Koder, *Tabula Imperii Byzantini*, 10: *Aigaion Pelagos*, Vienna, 1998.

³³ P. Spagnesi, *Chios Medioevale*, Rome, 2008.

The project at Kato Phana was recommenced by the British School at Athens in the late twentieth century, specifically in 1997.³⁸ The expedition applied new methodologies by means of modern archaeological techniques. The project consisted of an intensive survey followed by new excavations, the objectives of which were: (i) a knowledge of the wider topographical and historical context of the cult centre of Apollo Phanaios and the construction of the stratigraphic site profile of the sanctuary; (ii) the relationship between the sanctuary, the settlement, and the rural territory; (iii) the location of the ancient harbour facilities and the ancient coastline; (iv) the relationship of the site at Kato Phana to the opposite southeast bay of Emporio, which had been fully excavated. The results of the resumed expedition confirmed a diachronic occupation of the coastal site from the Classical through to the Early Byzantine periods by means of the coin finds, which spanned the sixth and seventh centuries AD.³⁹ The material found in the coastal area testified to the conversion of the sanctuary of Apollo into an Early Christian basilica.⁴⁰

In the first half of the 1950s the third mission of the BSA conducted systematic excavations at Emporio, a natural harbour in the south-eastern coast of Chios.⁴¹ Although the project focused mainly on the Prehistoric and Archaic periods, the investigation bore witness to continuous occupation of the site throughout the entire Byzantine period. The excavators concentrated their efforts on a fortified acropolis hill, a settlement by the harbour, an Early Christian basilica complex, and a cemetery.⁴² The finds were dated to the sixth and seventh centuries AD. The coin finds from the area of the church complex assigned the construction of the basilica to the second half of the sixth century.⁴³ Occupation assignable to the sixth and seventh centuries AD, namely the period of the construction of the church complex, was also identified in the surrounding area.⁴⁴ All the coins unearthed in the fortress belong to the seventh century,⁴⁵ as does the pottery, given that it comes from the destruction level. This evidence, in conjunction with the architecture and the historical record, enabled the excavators to propose a date for the construction of the fortress from the reign of Constans II (641-668).

The excavators concluded that the church complex pre-existed the fortress. The reason for the construction of the fort was, in all probability, the Arab raids by sea. Arab invasions accounted for its destruction, as well, in ca. AD 670.⁴⁶ Evidence for a subsequent re-occupation period of short duration was found in both the fortress and the basilica area, which ended around the ninth century, again as a result of Arab attacks.⁴⁷ The reoccupation period was identified by coins and ceramic finds on the floors of the fortress and the basilica complex.⁴⁸ The later medieval settlement, dated between the eleventh and the fifteenth centuries, was located in the neighbouring hinterland, the site of Dotia, where there is a defensive tower with a surrounding wall.⁴⁹

The Anavatos Project (Plates 30-31)

Since 1997 the 'Anavatos Project', a systematic research project on the settlement of Anavatos, has been carried out by the Byzantine Ephorate of Chios.⁵⁰ Anavatos is a settlement in central Chios, situated in one of the most strategic points and built on top of a steep conical cliff, 450 m above sea level, naturally defensible from its three sides.⁵¹ Its harbour, the bay of Elinda, falls into the southern boundary of the survey area, which will be described in the following chapters. The settlement has a tripartite arrangement, divided into the upper, middle and lower town. The oldest settlement – called the *acropolis* or *kastron* – is situated on the top of the escarpment forming an outer circular fortalice, with the outer thick walls of the houses accessible only from the northeast slope by means of a narrow path. The first expedition of the Anavatos Project, in 1997-2001, concentrated its efforts on repair works on the inner acropolis.⁵² In 2006, restoration works began on the middle settlement, the *Mesochori*, conducted and supervised by the local Ephorate of Byzantine Antiquities, and funded by the Third Community Support Framework. The works combined archaeological surveys and rescue excavations, the conservation of buildings and the restoration of units and groups and the promotion and designation of the archaeological site. The numismatic evidence from the rescue excavations on the upper acropolis shows that the earliest occupation phase of the acropolis to have been uncovered thus far dates back to the fifth and

³⁸ L. Beaumont, 'New work at Kato Phana, Chios: The Kato Phana Archaeological Project'. *ABSA* 94 (1999), 265-287. *Ead.*, 'Excavations at Kato Phana, Chios: 1999, 2000 and 2001', *ABSA* 99 (2004), 201-255.

³⁹ *Ead.*, *op.cit.*, (2004), p. 251.

⁴⁰ The dating of the basilica to the sixth century AD was based on stylistic considerations, although Lamb believed that it dates to earlier than the sixth century: 'Excavations at Kato Phana in Chios', *ABSA* 35 (1934-35), pp. 146-7. Beaumont, *op.cit.*, (2004), p. 254.

⁴¹ The project was conducted by S. Hood and J. Boardman. J. Boardman, *Excavations in Chios 1952-1955: Greek Emporio*, BSA Suppl. Vol. No 6, London, 1967. Hood, *op.cit.*

⁴² M. Ballance et al., *Excavations in Chios, 1952-1955: Byzantine Emporio*. BSA, suppl. vol.20. London 1989, p. 11ff.

⁴³ Probably not earlier than the reign of Justin II (565-78). *Byzantine Emporio*, pp. 30, 33-4.

⁴⁴ *Op.cit.*, p. 2.

⁴⁵ *Op.cit.*, p. 89.

⁴⁶ *Op.cit.*, pp. 3, 28-31.

⁴⁷ Boardman, *op.cit.*, p. xiv. *Byzantine Emporio*, p. 7. According to the excavators, the protection of the mastic crop was the reason for the building of the fortress at the harbour of Emporio (barbarian invasions in the Balkans, invasions in the eastern frontier of the Empire by the Persians and the Arabs).

⁴⁸ *Byzantine Emporio*, pp. 8, 32, 34, 114.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 10.

⁵⁰ The Anavatos Project stopped in 2001 and was resumed a few years later.

⁵¹ A. Axiotakis, *Ο Ανάβατος της Χίου*, Chios, 1994.

⁵² The programme was funded by the Second Community Support Framework and supervised by the Ministry of the Aegean, the Greek Ministry of Culture, the Archaeological Receipts Fund, the North Aegean Region, the Prefecture of Chios, and the former Municipality of Homeroupolis on Chios.

sixth centuries AD,⁵³ which is paralleled in similar finds from the excavated southern sites of the island, Phana and Emporio.

Assessment

The importance of the early Greek and British archaeological campaigns at Emporio and Kato Phana is obvious, as they laid the foundations whereby scholarly research turned also to an island at the extreme eastern margins of the Greek state. At that time, the island was a newly annexed territory of Greece.⁵⁴ The first excavations revealed a significant centre of the ancient world with an uninterrupted sequence of occupation from the early historic periods onwards. The British expedition at Kato Phana, resumed in the late twentieth century and is now conducted with the employment of a range of modern archaeological survey techniques, such as geophysics and site mapping, affording a better understanding of the human occupation and activity at this site. It fills a gap in our knowledge, given the overall fragmentary state of field research on the island.

On the other hand, official archaeological and architectural research by the regional Ephorate of Antiquities or individual scholarly interests focus unilaterally on individual settlements in southern Chios, disaggregating them from their surroundings, the natural landscape and their relation with other contexts. Some interest in the castle of Chios town arises from time to time, and rescue excavations take place occasionally. Because of the nature of the habitation pattern – the area of the castle of Chios has been inhabited without interruption until today – systematic excavation cannot take place. In recent years however, there has been an effort to alert the authorities to the need for the conservation and restoration of the land and the sea walls. This initiative has been undertaken primarily by the ‘Volunteer Group for the Salvation of Chios Castle: A Lost Paradise’, one of whose members is also the author of this book.

The contextualisation of the three neighbouring places (Emporio, Phana and Anavatos) and a parallel assessment of their objectives and results has undoubtedly shed light on the military, ecclesiastical and secular architecture of the early Christian and early Byzantine periods and on occupation of the site in the Dark Ages, a major desideratum of current scholarly research. The value of the ceramic finds at both Emporio and Phana is evident. The Roman and Byzantine pottery finds from both sites correspond stylistically and chronologically.⁵⁵

The quantities unearthed at Emporio included a number of complete vases from the destruction level of the fortress, which are consistent in date and permitted a stylistic arrangement.⁵⁶ The earliest pieces have been assigned to the Late Roman period, ranging from the fourth to the early fifth centuries AD.⁵⁷ The vases from the destruction level were in use in the mid-seventh century AD, at the time of the destruction. The material evidence of the two southern sites is now supported by archaeological evidence from the central part of the island, the citadel of Anavatos, as the recent discoveries reveal, including, of course, the harbour town of Chios and the area of its castle. The uninterrupted habitation sequence of Chios town until today imposes a limitation, prohibiting systematic excavation. Be that as it may, rescue excavations in land plots within the medieval circuit of Chios have revealed coin hoards that were concealed in the seventh century and perhaps earlier.⁵⁸ The conclusive archaeological and numismatic evidence from all the investigated sites shows prosperous societies throughout the fifth, sixth and seventh centuries AD. Indeed, the Chiot evidence corroborates correlated contexts from the Aegean coastlands, which show a flourish resulting from the commercial importance of these regions, in contrast to the picture in mainland Greece, which did not seem to enjoy such prosperity.⁵⁹ On the other hand, we do not yet have enough archaeological evidence to speculate what the circumstances were in this same period in upland Chios, as not even its very few known sites are recorded on the official archaeological map. If the material evidence from the aforementioned investigated sites were to be set alongside the relevant material from the sites in the north, it would most likely show the same picture in the northern regions as well. For this reason, the contribution of the present study is particularly valuable.

Although the focus of the two British expeditions was the archaic and classical phases, an uninterrupted sequence of occupation appears, which continued in the Late Roman and Early Byzantine periods (from the late fourth to the seventh centuries AD) and beyond.⁶⁰ The Mount Amani Research Project relies on the evidence provided by these two well-excavated sites.

Aims

The overall aim of the present study, named henceforth the Mount Amani Research Project, is to investigate, record, describe and interpret as accurately as possible the archaeological, historical and topographical

disturbed.

⁵⁶ *Byzantine Emporio*, p. 88 ff.

⁵⁷ Beaumont, *ABSA* 99 (2004), p. 235.

⁵⁸ For Chios town see the most recent paper: O. Vassi, ‘Απόκρυψη θησαυρού στη Χίο στα μέσα του εβδόμου αιώνα μ.Χ.’, in: *Τό νόμισμα στά νησιά του Αιγαίου*, Mytilene, 2006, Athens 2010, 61-75.

⁵⁹ D.M. Metcalf, ‘The Aegean coastlands under threat: Some coins and coin hoards from the reign of Heraclius’, *ABSA* 57 (1962), 14-23. Ballance, *op.cit.*, p. 100.

⁶⁰ Beaumont, *ABSA* 99 (2004), p. 206.

⁵³ A. Kavvadia, ‘Ο μεσαιωνικός οικισμός του Αναβάτου υπό το φως της νεώτερης αρχαιολογικής έρευνας και τό εκτελούμενο έργο σε αυτόν στό πλαίσιο του Γ’ Κ.Π.Σ.», *Proceedings of the International conference ‘The Architecture of Fortifications in the Aegean and the Medieval Settlement of Anavatos Chios, 26-28 September 2008’*, Chios 2012, pp. 239-248.

⁵⁴ Chios was liberated from the Ottomans with the Balkan wars in December 1912.

⁵⁵ Beaumont, *ABSA* 99 (2004), p. 231 ff. The contexts had been

landscape of Mount Amani and its features. It takes into consideration and tries to understand the component parts of the landscape and how they relate to one another. Finally, it assesses how the area under investigation relates to the local and regional context. To achieve this, the study focuses on two objectives:

i) Firstly, tabulation: I have attempted to tabulate the sites and their component features (standing monuments, human activity on the land, use of buildings), and place them alongside the toponymy. Rather than tabulating the sites in alphabetical order, I considered it more convenient to list the entries according to their topographical order. Combination with and comparison between the more modern features and the data of the older records aim: firstly, to define the historical topography in terms of the understanding of the landscape and the site distribution; and, secondly, to define the settlement pattern and any changes which the environment underwent over time. This definition will enable the identification of the sites, their nature, and land use in the period under examination. The simultaneous study of the modern settlement location aids in the understanding of the gradual evolution of the landscape, in terms of the abandonment of coastal sites and settlement relocations. A brief description of the natural geography aims to show the advantages and limitations of the landscape and how it impacted on the formation, development and communication of the sites. The contrasting physical environment aims also to raise for the reader questions relating to the interaction between the different areas of the island and, in general, to the particularities of north Chiot physical and settlement patterning and organisation.

ii) Secondly, an attempt will be made to establish the problems of defence in northern Chios during the Middle Ages. For this reason, the primary aim of the Mount Amani Research Project revolves around an investigation and – as far as possible – an in-depth study of the defensive works of the area. The surviving monuments are the most eloquent witnesses of the military network created in this area during the period under consideration. The defensive works include castles, towers, watch-towers (*vigles*, *vigilie*) and *castelli*. The latter are referred to in the text either as *castelli* or as ‘dependent settlements’. Essential questions involve site location and its advantages or limitations, the chronology of the foundation of the castles, the chronological relationship between different military works, and construction phases. In particular, the examination of the large castles addresses questions about the regional military jurisdiction of our district (in terms of functional and spatial relationship between castles), links between castle sites and the hierarchy of sites.

The contextualisation of the castles and the other elements of the defensive network, in addition to the examination of the relationship between settlement

and rural space, will supplement the meagre historical record by providing evidence of the strategic points and areas, which were considered worthy of protection. Furthermore, it will cast light on the diachronic evolution of the settlement pattern, its architectural arrangement, and the socio-economic, political, and military organisation of the area of Amani.

Thus, it becomes possible to outline the development and evolution of the settlement pattern of Mount Amani and to envisage its physical, historical and topographical environment. Moreover, a sensible answer will be given to the question of how the particularity of this physical relief has impeded a proper scholarly study of such a significant region. Therefore, the contribution of this regional centre will take its proper place to the historical and archaeological record of Chios and will finally be appreciated.

Methodology

The problems

Until the time of Philip Argenti, the historical material had very little to add in respect to northern Chios and its place in regional history. The archaeology of the ‘Upper Area’ did not fare much better. From a broader perspective, the study of Chiot Byzantine archaeology has been neglected with the exception of the large-scale British expeditions in the southern part and, only very recently, the Greek Anavatos project.⁶¹ Until today, official interest has concentrated efforts on conservation works on the monastic church of Nea Moni and the church of Panaghia Krina, and rescue excavations in select land plots of the Kastron of Chios town.⁶²

Another problem is posed by the ambiguity of the term ‘medieval period’, which, in respect to Chios, is used misleadingly to define the long Genoese period, particularly its second phase (1346-1566).⁶³ To a great extent, the term ‘medieval period’ or ‘medieval Chios’ applies to the period of the economic boom on Chios, renowned for its commercial activities

⁶¹ The settlement of Anavatos was abandoned in 1822, in the aftermath of the massacres of the Chiois by the Turks, and has very recently attracted attention. It is situated on the narrowest point of the island of Chios, in a very strategic location. Scholarly interest in Anavatos was resumed with the large-scale conservation programme of the acropolis and the middle settlement, funded by the EU (1997 onwards). In fact, this is the first large-scale project covering an entire settlement, which comes under the direct control of and is carried out by the archaeological authorities on Chios. The excavations and the numismatic evidence on the upper acropolis have revealed an occupation date to the Early Christian period, ca. the sixth century AD.

⁶² Restoration works on the sea wall of the citadel of Chios and the parochial church of Saint George in the Kastron are the two most recent works conducted by the Greek Ministry of Culture.

⁶³ A. Kavvadia (ed.), *Proceedings of the International Conference on the Architecture of Fortifications in the Aegean and the Medieval settlement of Anavatos, at Homereion*, Chios, 26-28 September 2008, Chios 2012.

and especially mastic culture, over which the island always had a monopoly. The transformation of the village architecture and the change in the layout of the southern Chiot settlements – where the mastic tree grows – into compact fortified unities are attributed to the commercial management of the Genoese. In order to protect the mastic output from theft and illicit trade, the Genoese organised the architectural layout of the villages into an enclosed, nucleated plan, so that they could ensure their monopoly and the profits deriving from it. It is these villages, which are mentioned in the bibliography as ‘medieval’. And yet, the south is the most surveyed area, where significant Byzantine presence has been revealed. Archaeologists as well as scholars of other disciplines have praised the Genoese unconditionally for the transformation of these settlements, overlooking the fact that what we actually see in the layout of the settlements are reconstructions, and the rebuilding and reinforcement of earlier establishments and networks, and their chronology should therefore be reconsidered. G. Zolotas was the first to point out this inaccuracy, arguing that: ‘In the majority of cases, the medieval Byzantine monuments are hardly discernible from the Genoese; the latter have covered and completely transformed the former down to their substructure’. And furthermore: ‘The erection of a series of watch towers along the whole coastline is explained by the danger of pirate attacks. The towers were built at high peaks [...] at regular intervals [...] in order to protect the mastic produce as well as for the defence of the inhabitants’.⁶⁴ The attribution to the Genoese of all these changes in architecture and town planning can be explained by their intense activity in the reconstruction and rebuilding of the older defences of the villages at around the dawn of the sixteenth century. This was the period when the Turkish menace increasingly threatened Chios, and the lords of the island provided for its defence by taking military precautions against the Turks.⁶⁵ This period is fully documented and the Genoese archives provide a wealth of material for study. It is this fact, in conjunction with the absence of archaeological research, which has given rise to such views.

It appears that these generalised views are gradually being reconsidered, as the more recent publications of the Genoese state and private archives and the eloquent finds of the ongoing Anavatos project are being taken into account. All provide considerable proof of the Byzantine presence, confirming the self-evident, namely that the Genoese organisation was based on earlier Byzantine substructures.

Nonetheless, in respect to the rest of the island, the ‘Upper Area’ of Chios – the *Pars superiore* or *Apanomorea*, as it is described in travellers’ accounts – is ignored by modern scholarship. The importance of this

mountainous and harsh region was first recognised in the late nineteenth century by Zolotas, who conducted meticulous surveys on the whole of the Chiot countryside. His field observations were part of a project to document the historical sources on Chios through the archaeological evidence, to the fullest possible extent. As regards the northern province, his observations provided significant evidence of the uninterrupted occupation of Mount Amani from the Prehistoric period down to the post-medieval to the early modern period. Zolotas reported that the western coastal zone has an abundant concentration of pottery, marble *spolia*, inscriptions, and other material remains. He was able to identify the classical period of occupation along the littoral and to claim with certainty that the medieval withdrawal of the population to the hinterland led to the occupation of sites not previously inhabited. Unfortunately, his premature death resulted in an abrupt end to this endeavour. Yet, Zolotas was the first to shed light to the historical and archaeological potential of the area of Amani.

In the twentieth century – with the exception of two small-scale investigations, at the cave of Aghion Galas (to the northwest) in 1938,⁶⁶ and at Porto Delphini (northeast Chios) in the 1950s, both led by British missions⁶⁷ – there have been no attempts to carry out any large-scale investigation in the north in the hundred years or so since Zolotas’ death.⁶⁸ The project in the cave of Aghion Galas was never to be published properly; with the outbreak of the Second World War, the finds from the excavation were kept for protection in the storerooms of the Museum of Chios (Mosque). Unfortunately, the majority disappeared after the end of the war, along with the records of that excavation.

The project at Porto Delphini, a bight in northeast Chios, was described by the excavator as a *parergon* of the excavations conducted during the expedition of 1952-1955 in southern Chios. The investigation focused on the classical acropolis of the harbour of Delphini and included a small excavation of the fifth-century BC fort, in order to determine measurements and clarify certain features. The project also involved the excavation of a ‘farmhouse’ and a complex of ‘outbuildings’.

It is evident from the above that the bulk of the studies emphasise and focus mainly on Chios town and the south of the island, cutting off the hinterland, namely 50% of the territory. The neglect of this area blurs the picture for the history of the entire island. Already in the late 1930s, D.W.S. Hunt remarked that ‘the north-

⁶⁴ Zolotas, *Ἱστορία τῆς Χίου*, vol. II, p. 432-33.

⁶⁵ Argenti, *Chius Vincita*, pp. xcii ff.

⁶⁶ The expedition at Aghion Galas was conducted by Edith Eccles of the British School at Athens in 1938, but it was only published fifty years later by Sinclair Hood.

⁶⁷ J. Boardman, ‘Delphinion in Chios’, *ABSA* 51 (1956), 41-54. S. Hood, *op.cit.*

⁶⁸ In the late twentieth century the BSA, under L. Beaumont, conducted a brief excavation at Aghion Galas; however, I am not aware of the particulars and the publication of this report.

western corner of the island is its most primitive part'.⁶⁹ Its physical structure makes it less attractive; access to it is not easy even today, with the relative improvement of the road network.

Despite these limitations, the present study focuses on the north Chiot hinterland, aiming to create an awareness of its position and its role. The only method available for circumventing the limitations of the paucity of research is the synthesis and examination of all the available documentary and factual evidence: epigraphic, numismatic, and sigillographic discoveries; primary sources; and descriptive and pictorial material from churches, monasteries, defensive works, toponyms, settlements, and hamlets. The analysed and published data from previous and ongoing surveys from Chios itself and from other Aegean lands will also be integrated, in order to advance the study of the area and to place it within its context.

Methods

The core of the research area is the chief settlement of Volissos. The survey area was divided into three zones, and in each zone I attempted to study fortification works dating from the Byzantine and the Genoese periods, a time span which extends roughly from the ninth (?) to the sixteenth centuries. The majority of these monuments date from the late Genoese period, but there are grounds to believe that they overlie the Byzantine substructures. More specifically:

- The first zone starts at Volissos, running north-westwards to Pyrama, Parparia, Melanios and Aghion Galas. Regrettably, it was not possible to cover Aghion Galas as well, even though it was a significant medieval administrative area during the Genoese period.
- The second zone runs from Volissos to the eastern slopes of Amani, in the direction of the settlements and sites of Diefcha, Moundon Monastery, Angelos, Ta Markou and Pispilounta.
- The third zone runs from Volissos southwards to the hamlet of Siderounta and its territory, including a large part of the coastline.

In each case, the research will present a historical and geographical outline, along with a detailed account of the surviving archaeological evidence, an analysis of the types of construction and methods of defence and a discussion of chronology. These will be accompanied by maps and photographs. The castles will be presented in geographical order, beginning with the provincial capital. Of all the settlements investigated, the majority are still inhabited.

At a first stage, the approach to the subject has been based on the primary sources. We have a relatively large body of information at our disposal for the medieval period in Chios, which includes: Byzantine imperial documents; coins and lead seals of officials; and the works of Byzantine historians and the Lives of the Saints, which range in date from the sixth to the early fourteenth century. The sources for the later medieval and post-medieval eras also include the monastic archives, travellers' accounts, portulans and maps, and the published Genoese archives. These archives cover the entire period of the Genoese occupation of the island, i.e. 1304-1329, 1346-1566. The travellers' accounts date from the early fifteenth century onwards, with the exception of one that is dated from the twelfth century. All these sources furnish us with important documentation not only for the significant position of the island itself, but also for its historical topography, an examination of its society (urban and rural), the economy, topography and demography, as well as the ecclesiastical administration. Some diplomatic dispatches from the Ottoman period of Chios are also considered, as they reflect older administrative realities.

Information from imperial documents and lead seals has been particularly useful in my endeavour to find the slightest sign that could help me illuminate the role of the island during the period prior to the eleventh century, when the imperial monastery of Nea Moni was founded. More than any other type of archaeological evidence, the surviving imperial documents form a valuable source of information for the history of Chios, its social geography and its topography. Unfortunately, the destruction of the island by the Ottomans in 1822 resulted in the loss of a large number of primary sources and private archives related to the history of the island. Those documents, codices and cartularies had been kept in the archives of Nea Moni. Additionally, family archives, which could have counterbalanced the loss of imperial documents, were the private possessions of the Chiot aristocrats, who were executed in the Ottoman onslaught and whose possessions and estates were burned down. Notwithstanding this misfortune, a small number of extracts from imperial documents is preserved in the secondary literature, (see, for example, G. Photeinos). A small number of them survives in a *metochi* of Nea Moni on Samos and they are included in a book published in the mid-nineteenth century.⁷⁰ Other extracts were copied by a deacon of Nea Moni, Nicephoros of Chios, in the late nineteenth century and were published in a volume entitled: 'Ἡ θεία καὶ ἱερά ἀκολουθία τῶν Ὁσίων καὶ Θεοφόρων Πατέρων ἡμῶν, Νικήτα, Ἰωάννου καὶ Ἰωσήφ, edited by Nicolaos Glykys of Ioannina. This book is fairly easily accessible and one can find it either in the Gennadeion Library in Athens, the Library of the British School at Athens or the Korais Public Library of Chios as well as on Google Books.

⁶⁹ Hunt, *op.cit.*, pp. 39-40.

⁷⁰ E. Kritikides, *Περίβασις εἰς τὰς Μονὰς καὶ τὰ μετόχια τῆς Σάμου κατὰ τὸ 1854*. 1st ed. 1866, 2nd ed. Hermoupolis, 1873.

Related to the imperial documents is a series of lead seals that belonged to civil, military, and ecclesiastical officials, ranging from high ranking dignitaries to local servants. These seals eloquently document the political, ecclesiastical, military, and naval importance of the island from as early as the sixth/seventh century until the fourteenth century, when the Genoese took Chios. The names and titles of officials and servants, whose residence was Chios figure in both groups of sources. There is a series of lead seals belonging to various collections. For reasons of convenience, this study makes use solely of edited material, specifically the publications of Schlumberger, Zacos-Veglery, V. Laurent, J. Nesbitt and N. Oikonomides and I. Koltsida-Makri. The volume of this material is large enough to give a clear picture; however, given the chronological gaps between the various kinds of sources, there has been a scholarly debate about the political and military role of Chios within the Byzantine empire, an issue that will be examined in this book.⁷¹

The maps of travellers and old portulans are decisive sources for the study of the historical, geographical and topographical framework. They can be used as historical evidence, even though the topographic accuracy of the maps is sometimes questionable. Nonetheless, they are of prime importance as they indicate a large number of medieval sites, early town plans and many other features, such as defensive works or other installations, ports and place names. The visualisation and interpretation of the medieval landscape can be achieved through the reading of early maps. A large number of early maps of Chios has been published and is easily accessible. The most recent publication includes a fairly large number that belong to a private collector and were reproduced in 1992.⁷² Other maps belong to collections of public libraries – for example, the British Library and the Library of Chios – and are easily accessible. Another publication, which includes maps, is the renowned work of Ph. Argenti and St. Kyriakides, *Ἡ Χίος παρά τοῖς Γεωγράφοις καί Περιηγηταῖς*, published in 1946. Portulans are equally valuable by their very nature for the information they provide on historical topography and toponyms.⁷³ They record the names of sites, ports and bays, and indicate details of coastlines, offering us a vivid idea of the landscape and seascape of the island.

Another valuable source of information is the *History of Chios* by Hieronymo Giustiniano, edited by Ph. Argenti in 1943. It is the earliest surviving post-Byzantine literary source we possess about a Greek land. Hieronymo is a first-hand source for many aspects of

post-medieval Chios. As a member of the ruling clan of the island, his narrative gives us insights into the life, folklore and customs of the Chiot peasantry, but also provides first-hand testimony about the topography of the island in his day, the sixteenth century. Two of the thirteen chapters of this book are devoted to the description of rural Chios and the peasantry. Valuable details are also given by the abbot Michele Giustiniani, another member of the ruling clan (1658).⁷⁴ In addition to those sources, there is the unpublished Anonymous Manuscript of Chios, now in the possession of the Korais Public Library, and the rich Genoese archives, which provide the lion's share of information in reference to the economy, military organisation and administration of Chios. The Genoese period in Chios was one of a long and uninterrupted sequence and, luckily, is richly documented. Only by means of this group of sources are we able to retrieve indispensable information on several aspects of life, for many Genoese arrangements reflect Byzantine origins; in this respect, the Genoese archives complement to a large extent the historical record for Byzantine Chios.

The study has utilised the evidence provided by the archaeological record. Apart from the standing monuments, which are examined in their own right, there is the testimony from coin finds. For the Byzantine period, the numismatic evidence comes from the large-scale projects at Emporio and Kato Phana and, more recently, the cliff of Anavatos. There are also chance finds from the rescue excavations in the Kastron area of Chios, which have gradually come to light. These contexts attest a floruit, as indicated by the numismatic circulation, which stretches back as far as the early fourth and fifth centuries AD and continues uninterrupted throughout the seventh century, a period during which the first Arab attacks occurred on the island.⁷⁵ Emporio offers more valuable documentation for the late Dark Ages, as a number of coins that date to the layer of the re-occupation period in the ninth century AD.

In Chios town and its castle area incessant modern building activity impedes the possibility of systematic research. No study exists on the numismatic evidence from Anavatos, but there has been at least one presentation at a conference, and the preliminary study and publication are awaited with great interest.⁷⁶ Thus, Chios is a place where coin circulation is attested to

⁷¹ Recently, two new lead seals mentioning officials of Chios were discovered on the island. Forthcoming publication from the author of this book.

⁷² K. Koutsikas, *The Engravings of Chios*, Vol. B: *The Maps*, Athens, 1995.

⁷³ P. Gaultier-Dalché, 'Portulans and the Byzantine World' in: R. Macrides (ed.), *Travel in the Byzantine World*, Variorum, London 2002, 59-71.

⁷⁴ Hieronymo Giustiniani, *History of Chios*, Ph.P. Argenti (ed.), Cambridge, 1943. Michele Giustiniani, *Scio Sacra del Rito Latino*, Avellino 1658.

⁷⁵ V. Penna, 'Μικρός θησαυρός σολίδων Θεοδοσίου Β' από την πόλη της Χίου: Μελέτη για τη νομισματική κυκλοφορία στην περιοχή κατά τον 4^ο και 5^ο αιώνα μ.Χ.', in: *Τό νόμισμα στά νησιά του Αιγαίου*, Mytilene 2006, Athens 2010, 43-59. Vassi, 'Απόκρυψη θησαυρού' in *ibid.*, 61-75. Y. Nicolaou, 'Ο θησαυρός Χίου/1998: Συμβολή στη μελέτη της νομισματικής κυκλοφορίας στον Αιγαϊακό χώρο κατά τον 7^ο αιώνα μ.Χ.', in: *ibid.*, 77-93.

⁷⁶ Kavvadia (ed.), *Fortifications in the Aegean and the Medieval Settlement of Anavatos, Chios*, 26-28 September 2008', Chios 2012.

even during the so-called 'Dark Ages'. In contrast, the numismatic record for the Genoese period is extremely rich. It is well known that Chios possessed a mint in this period, where local denominations were issued.

As regards the pottery evidence, before I began the survey I had hoped to use the published contexts from Emporio and Phana, which parallel each other typologically and chronologically, and to compare them with my material from the north. A brief study of the collected material from the surface survey at Kato Phana was made possible thanks to the kind permission of Dr L. Beaumont. I also made enquiries regarding the material from the British excavations at Emporio; however, my enquiry to the responsible officer at the local Division of Byzantine Antiquities remained unanswered. The study of the relevant material from the rescue excavations by the local Ephorate was not possible, either.⁷⁷ Unfortunately, due to all those adverse conditions, this study is limited to a mere documenting of the surface pottery and an observation of the pottery concentrations in the survey zones of the Mount Amani Research Project, to the extent that this is possible. Surface pottery can contribute to the identification of sites, the distribution of the settlement patterns and, by and large, human activity, especially for deserted sites, because it is largely undisturbed. However, during two field seasons in the middle of the summer, I was unable to accomplish this goal, mainly due to heavy vegetation in the abandoned areas that were being surveyed. Other inhabited sites produced very few pieces. To a certain extent this limitation has been overcome by other indicators of human activity, described in the following chapters. For the area of Amani the only testimony for pottery concentrations is recorded by Zolotas; but those are general remarks, with no mention of diagnostic pieces (sherds), and therefore of no value for the purpose of this book.⁷⁸

Time span and focus

While the present research focuses on the ninth/tenth to the sixteenth centuries, in practical terms it extends until the early nineteenth century (1822), examining by analogy early modern patterns and features of the historic landscape. This is deliberate, in order to fill in gaps and reconstruct by analogy the physical and built environment of the medieval countryside. The surroundings did not change dramatically – if at all – after 1566 (this, however, is a subject to be treated in its own right). The era during which rural activity reached its peak can be placed securely

in the Genoese period, extending into the Ottoman period, to end abruptly in 1822.⁷⁹

For the tabulation of the sites, the field survey was based largely on Zolotas' information and database.⁸⁰ The entries included here have not changed at all since the nineteenth century. The description in the relevant chapter assists in elucidating the historical topography of Mount Amani. My aim is to continue this exploration to its fullest possible extent and thus be able to document the existence of a strong north Chiot Byzantine and Genoese stronghold, confirming the area's diachronic floruit. The information used in the database is drawn from the following categories:⁸¹

- I. Toponyms surviving in the written record and in oral tradition. These two categories encompass the names of settlements, the districts in the settlements and entire sites, as well as family names.
- II. The standing monuments (fortifications, rural infrastructural installations).
- III. Abandoned and still inhabited settlements.⁸²
- IV. Isolated shrines.⁸³
- V. Rural estates and properties of the local magnates (aristocrats and/or imperial monasteries).⁸⁴

The lack of archaeological research in the northwest region, and, consequently, the absence of any mention of north Chios in the annual reports of the Greek Department of Antiquities proved a limitation for the construction of my database. The bulk of the work of the local Ephorate is restricted primarily to rescue excavations – whenever needs arise – on small land allotments in Chios town and its suburbs. Moreover, a great deal of the Ephorate's budget goes to restoration works on renowned ecclesiastical and monastic foundations, such as Nea Moni and Panaghia Krina. Thus, my work endeavours to provide a framework for the evaluation of architectural and artifactual data, unknown until now.

On the basis of the above, other questions arose in reference to the people who organised and inhabited this area and interacted with each other in it. Consequently, an entire chapter examines Chiot society and economy, that is, the props in the development of

⁷⁷ The response to my enquiry to the 3rd Byzantine Ephorate was that the Museum was under refurbishment and access was prohibited.

⁷⁸ As has been mentioned, the publication of the *History of Chios* was done by A. Sarou-Zolota, 'according to her father's drafts'. But if one were to consider Zolotas' scrupulous research, it would be plausible to assume that he may have included in his drafts information on diagnostic ceramics, which were not included in the eventual publication.

⁷⁹ The massacres led to a sudden demographic drop of an average of 50% of the population with the subsequent abandonment of the land. G. Zolotas, *History of Chios*, vol. III, Athens 1921-28. Ph. Argenti, *The massacres of Chios*, London, 1932.

⁸⁰ The methodology used in the *History of Chios* (A. Sarou-Zolota, ed.) is not described in a separate section. But, we can see that Zolotas' methodology consisted of a one-man survey throughout the island and a meticulous database of various features: toponyms, surface finds, standing monuments, epigraphy, genealogy, numismatics, and so on.

⁸¹ Zolotas, I, pp. 283ff.

⁸² Zolotas, *op.cit.*, pp. 436-40.

⁸³ *Ibid.*

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*

the countryside. The analysis of the economy brings together information from travellers' accounts and ethnographic and folklore studies of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, supplemented by the records of the British Naval Intelligence Division. These were compiled in the 1930s, before the outbreak of the Second World War.⁸⁵ The available published diplomatic archives cover the period from ca. 1700 to the early twentieth century.⁸⁶ The use of various documentary evidence extending over a long timespan, shows that the same agricultural practices continued uninterrupted until the 1960s. For this reason, I enhanced my research with information from my family and interviews I conducted with villagers.

The analysis of the local society revolves around the structure of the Chiot social pyramid, with an emphasis on those behind the scenes, the productive forces of the countryside, whose role in the prominent commercial position of Chios must not have been negligible. Here again, the contribution of my family has been paramount, for they were my primary source in providing first-hand testimony of peasant life and daily routines. The second most valuable contribution is the monograph *The Folk-Lore of Chios*, compiled by Ph.P. Argenti and H.J. Rose (Cambridge 1949), for it provided the aid I needed in order to support my oral testimonies with an accurate bibliographical reference. The aforementioned sources and studies extend chronologically over a broad span and are therefore intended to assist in a discussion of the subject.

The study of the settlement pattern inevitably involves a consideration of the regional architecture. A discussion of rural society would not be complete without a glimpse into the village layout, domestic architecture and material culture. The value of this examination lies in the fact that in Chios (and undoubtedly in other Hellenic rural lands) there had been a diachronic continuity that survived almost unchanged well into the twentieth century. Its examination advances the study of medieval housing, for the regional context is considered in reference to the more general context of the Byzantine household described in the renowned book of Phaidon Koukoules.⁸⁷ This is the main study of the private life of the Byzantines, according to which folk traditions and material culture are an indispensable part of the Byzantine legacy, a view with which I agree.

The description of the surveyed areas is accompanied by a wide range of illustrations: the photographic and cartographic documentation utilises the maps

of the Greek Army Geographical Service and aerial photographs (see, for example, pl. 1), which have wide coverage and are very accurate. The latter clearly present the traces of past human activity and soil erosion, something which was very difficult for me to distinguish during field walks. Illustrations of individual monuments, the settlements and the landscape, and plans of the archaeological features are used to supplement the description of the survey area and help the reader form a coherent idea of the subject.

The field survey demanded long walks, for the area was very large and craggy and – apart from the features scattered over the landscape – different areas of activity had to be distinguished, accessed and, subsequently, recorded. In a few instances access was particularly difficult.

Surface artefact collection was intentionally not done, given that the Mount Amani Research Project was designed as one-person survey, to cover the needs of my small-scale topic.⁸⁸ My contribution will be to reveal the medieval historical and archaeological profile of the rural communities of North Chios and highlight their role in the context of the rest of the island.

Primary Sources

Provincial administration: the testimony of the lead seals (Figs 8, 10)

Of all the sources the most important are the lead seals, for they offer the most eloquent testimony for the provincial administration. Nonetheless, they have given rise to an extensive scholarly debate as to the precise position of Chios within the provincial administration of the Byzantine Empire. For the needs of the present research, many of the bibliographical references that I consulted were specialised studies on lead seals. From the bulk of the published seals, I singled out ninety items that were relevant to my research, and divided these into three groups, according to their relation, direct or indirect, to my case study. These lead seals were classified according to the geographical / administrative organisation of the Byzantine Empire, to which they belong and their chronological order, as follows:

- I. Nesoi (Islands)
- II. Aigaion Pelagos
- III. Chios

Seven of the seals relate to the ecclesiastical administration, while all the rest are connected with the civil and military administration. The reader may find the list in Appendices I (the Nesoi), II (Aigaion Pelagos) and III (Chios).

⁸⁵ British Naval Intelligence Division, *GREECE*, 3 vols, 1944-1945.

⁸⁶ The reason is that scholars publish mainly Genoese official documents and diplomatic archives, which contain acts between ruling bodies. Such a work is the two volume *Diplomatic Archive of Chios* edited by Philip Argenti, which classifies the different topics in different chapters, but concerns only acts of official diplomacy.

⁸⁷ Ph. Koukoules, *Βυζαντινῶν βίος καὶ πολιτισμός*, vol. II, *Household and furniture*, pp. 60ff.

⁸⁸ Greek legislation about Cultural Heritage in : http://www.yppo.gr/files/g_1950.pdf

I. The geographical and administrative unit of the Nesoi: Seals of the Nesoi

During the Early Christian period, in the sixth century, the province of the *Nesoi – Insulae* was noted in the *Synekdemos* of Hierokles.⁸⁹ The name *Nesoi* designated the Cyclades, a name applied by and large collectively to describe the Aegean islands.⁹⁰ Nesbitt and Oikonomides observe that the term *Nesoi* replaced that of the geographical/administrative unit of Cyclades.⁹¹ The administrative province of *Nesoi* comprised the region from Rhodes to Tenedos.⁹² This province is practically identical to the ecclesiastical province of Cyclades – the metropolitan seat of which was Rhodes – with the main difference that some of the islands were not bishoprics, because no bishop figures in the Conciliar lists. Only one island, Mytilene, was an archbishopric and for this reason it does not figure as a suffragan of the metropolitan of Rhodes.⁹³

In the late seventh century appear seals bearing the legend ‘kommerkiarioi of the Cyclades’. Other seals attributed to the early eighth century bear the legend ‘of the Nesoi’, which appears to be a different name for the Cyclades, according to Nesbitt and Oikonomides, who published the seals. From 721/722, we have a seal of a ‘kommerkiarios of Asia, Karia, and of all the islands of the land of the Hellenes’, obviously indicating that the authority of this official extended beyond the province of the ‘Nesoi’ and comprised all the Aegean islands, including those of the western Aegean. During the same period the term ‘Aigaion Pelagos’ makes its appearance in the administrative terminology to cover the islands of the Archipelago.⁹⁴ Nesbitt and Oikonomides mention that the islands disappear as an administrative unit until the second half of the tenth century, on account of the turbulent period of the Arab raids. The theme of Cyclades then reappears, as is indicated by a number of eleventh-century seals with the legend ‘of Nesoi’.⁹⁵ This group numbers eight seals, the earliest of which dates from the sixth century, and the latest from the eleventh. They are presented in Appendix I.

II. Geographical – administrative unit of the Aigaion Pelagos: Seals of the Aigaion Pelagos

In the eighth century the term *Aigaion Pelagos* appears for the first time: in 734/5, the seal of the ‘kommerkiarios of the islands of the Aigaion Pelagos’⁹⁶ shows that by

that century the islands of the Archipelago were a separate entity attached to the new administrative unit for the *kommerkia*, called the *Aigaion Pelagos*. Later in the eighth century, in 784 (or in 780/1, according to Zakythinios and Nesbitt and Oikonomides), we have the naval commands of the *droungarioi*, and we encounter a ‘droungarios of the Dodekanese’; the term ‘Dodekanese’ designates the former province of Nesoi or Cyclades.⁹⁷

The early form of the administrative district of *Aigaion Pelagos* was the *droungos*, which was placed under the orders of a *droungarios*. The division of the *droungos* provided the seamen.⁹⁸ The *droungarios* is the head of the fleet, which supervises the territorial waters. He was responsible for the defence of the islands and the coastlands of the empire, after the disbandment of the maritime command of the *Karabisianoi* in around the early eighth century. The office of the *droungarios* of the *Aigaion Pelagos* is attested for the first time in the ninth century, in the *Taktikon Uspenskij* (842-843) and it also appears on seals of the late eighth to the ninth century.⁹⁹ The administrative unit of the *Aigaion Pelagos* covered the southern part of the Propontis and the extreme north of the Aegean Sea, including the islands of Tenedos, Lemnos, Imbros, Samothrace, and Mytilene (and perhaps Thasos, Skopelos, Skiathos). Over time, it came to include other islands as well, thus increasing its territory.¹⁰⁰

In around the second half of the ninth century, with the reorganisation of the Byzantine army and marine forces, the islands of the Aegean were incorporated in the new administrative and military districts, the themes (*themata*), placed under the command of a *strategos*. The *strategos* of the *Aigaion Pelagos* appears for the first time in 843. His authority extended over the northern part of the Aegean and over the littoral of the Propontis.¹⁰¹ The characteristic feature of the new maritime divisions is that they included the islands along with a part of the littoral of the opposite continent.¹⁰² The war fleet was stationed on either coastland. The prevalent scholarly view is that Chios formed part of the district of the *Aigaion Pelagos* when the first *themata* appeared.¹⁰³ Fifty-eight examples of lead seals from the *Aigaion Pelagos* are presented in Appendix II.

⁸⁹ E. Honigmann, *Le synekdomos d'Hiéróklos, et l'opuscule géographique de Georges de Chypre*, Brussels 1939, p. 32, no. 29.

⁹⁰ D. Zakythinios, ‘Περὶ τῆς Διοικητικῆς Διαρρέσεως ἐν τῷ Βυζαντινῷ Κράτει’, *EEBS*, 17, 1941, pp. 254-256.

⁹¹ Nesbitt and Oikonomides, *Catalogue of Byzantine Seals at Dumbarton Oaks and in the Fogg Art Museum*, vol. 2, p. 126.

⁹² Nesbitt and Oikonomides, *op.cit.*, 2, p. 110, 128.

⁹³ *Op.cit.*, p. 110.

⁹⁴ *Op.cit.*, p. 110.

⁹⁵ *Op.cit.*, p. 129.

⁹⁶ G. Schlumberger, *Sigillographie de l'empire byzantin*, Paris, 1884, pp.

195-6. Zacos-Veglery, *Byzantine Lead Seals*, I / 1, Basel, 1972, no 249, p. 328. Nesbitt and Oikonomides, p. 110.

⁹⁷ Zakythinios, *Meletai*, 17, p. 254-57 and n. 1 on p. 254. Nesbitt and Oikonomides, p. 110.

⁹⁸ Oikonomides, *Les listes de préséance*, 1972, pp. 342, 353; Ahrweiler, *Byzance et la Mer*, pp. 62, 76 ff.

⁹⁹ Nesbitt and Oikonomides, p. 112. Oikonomides, *Listes*, p. 53-18, 57-10, 46, 342, 353. Malamut, *Les îles*, I, pp. 304-6. Zakythinios, *Meletai*, 17, p. 256. Ahrweiler, *Mer*, 76ff.

¹⁰⁰ Zakythinios, *op.cit.*, p. 255. Malamut, *op.cit.*, p. 304.

¹⁰¹ Oikonomides, *Listes*, p. 47, 353. Malamut, *op.cit.* pp. 305-6. Nesbitt and Oikonomides, p. 110, 112.

¹⁰² Malamut, *op.cit.*, p. 306.

¹⁰³ Ahrweiler, *Mer*, p. 86, questions whether Chios was at all part of the theme of Aigaion Pelagos.

III. Chios

The last group of seals is comprised of twenty-eight specimens connected to the island and bear the name of 'Chios' and 'Nea Moni'. Of those, ten items belong to ecclesiastical and monastic officials (50%, or five seals, belonged to ecclesiastical officials and another 50%, or five seals, were from Nea Moni alone), and the rest belong to military and civil officials. Their presentation here enables us to provide an answer to the scholarly debate as to where Chios belonged administratively. Apart from the bibliography on the large collections, to which this section owes the bulk of the information analysed, a recent article by I. Koltsida-Makri was also consulted. Koltsida-Makri has assembled and studied the twenty-nine known published seals, dividing them into those belonging to ecclesiastical and those belonging to civil officials.¹⁰⁴ Her intention was to shed light on the ecclesiastical and administrative status of Byzantine Chios between the sixth and the twelfth centuries. The result, however, is rather unsuccessful, since the article merely repeats the views of Zolotas, Zakythinos and Nesbitt and Oikonomides, adding nothing new. Its only value lies in the fact that it is the only study to present together the known published Chiot seals. The seals of Chios are presented in Appendix III.

Geographical definition of the insular complexes

a. Aigaion Pelagos

Before we examine the position of Chios in the Byzantine provincial administration, the geographical and administrative divisions referred to herein under the names Aigaion Pelagos, Nesoi, Cyclades, Dodecanese and Sporades must be clarified. The problem of the geographical definition of some districts can be simplified by bearing in mind that the regions should be distinguished: firstly, in respect to their administrative position; and, secondly, in respect to their military status. The islands of the Aegean had been divided since antiquity into groups, namely the Cyclades, Sporades, Dodecanese.¹⁰⁵

The district 'Aigaion Pelagos'¹⁰⁶ of the Byzantine sources was an independent maritime unit of the provincial administration, which provided the seamen. In its early appearance, during the seventh and eighth centuries, the division was known as a *droungos*, commanded by the *droungarios*, a high-ranking official of the provincial army, as I mentioned earlier.¹⁰⁷ The *droungarios* had full

authority within his base.¹⁰⁸ According to the scholarly research, the precise date of the creation of this dignity is not known.

In the second half of the ninth century, during the reign of Leo VI, the Byzantine naval forces were reorganised and the *droungos* of the *Aigaion Pelagos* was elevated into a maritime theme commanded by a *strategos*.¹⁰⁹ The creation of the office of the *strategos* is precisely dated by the Taktikon Uspenski, which mentions both the *droungarios* of *Aigaion Pelagos* and the *strategos* of Mytilene.¹¹⁰ The *strategos* of the *Aigaion Pelagos* is first attested in 899 in the Treaty of Philotheos.¹¹¹ The theme of the *Aigaion Pelagos* retained its *strategos* until the end of the tenth century. It had a full civil and fiscal administration, as the surviving seals of its civil officials show. The limits of the district are hard to define.¹¹² The tenth century testimony of Porphyrogennitus mentions that:

προσωκείονται δέ τῷ στρατηγῷ τοῦ Αἰγαίου Πελάγους ἢ τε Μιτυλήνη καὶ Χίος καὶ αὐτῆ ἡ Λήμνος... ἀπὸ δέ τοῦ Λεκτοῦ καὶ ἕως τῆς Προποντίδος, τῆς τε Κυζίκου καὶ τοῦ Παρίου καὶ αὐτός ὁ καλούμενος Ἑλλησποντος ἢ τε Προικόννησος καὶ μέχρι τοῦ Ρυνδακοῦ ποταμοῦ καὶ ἕως τοῦ Δασκυλίου καὶ τοῦ Κυανοῦ κόλπου τῷ τοῦ Αἰγαίου Πελάγους κρατοῦντι προσεκεκέρωντο.¹¹³

A. Sarou-Zolota, commenting on this paragraph believes that the theme included 'apart from the entire complex of the (modern) Cyclades',¹¹⁴ the islands of Chios, Mytilene, Tenedos, Skyros, Lemnos, Imbros, the Hellespont, the littoral of Thrace called Chersonesos, the Troad, and the Asian (southern) littoral of the Propontis, including Cyzicus.¹¹⁵ According to H. Ahrweiler, we should not take Porphyrogennitus' description at face value, for the study of other sources reveals that the Aigaion Pelagos comprised the southern littoral of the Propontis, and the northern littoral of Asia Minor along with the adjacent islands of Lesvos, Lemnos and Chios.¹¹⁶ The mouth of the Hellespont with the customs port was also part of this administrative unit. Malamut also believes that the testimony of Porphyrogennitus is

pp. 63-65.

¹⁰⁸ Antoniadis-Bibicou, *Histoire maritime de Byzance*, p. 115. Ahrweiler, *Mer*, p. 50, 65, 76.

¹⁰⁹ Zakythinos, *Meletai*, 17, pp. 256-258. Antoniadis-Bibicou, *op.cit.*, p. 97. Oikonomides, *Listes*, pp. 46-47, 101ff. Ahrweiler, *Mer*, p. 69.

¹¹⁰ Oikonomides, *Listes*, pp. 46-47, 53(18), 57(10), 101-30, (29th in hierarchy), 105-22, 342, 353. Zakythinos, *Meletai*, 17, p. 256-8. Malamut, *Les îles*, pp. 311-12. The *strategos* of Mitylene - an island which belonged to the region of the Aigaion Pelagos - appears in 843 and is included in all the Taktika.

¹¹¹ Oikonomides, *Listes*, p. 101-30 (29th in the hierarchy), 105-22.

¹¹² Ahrweiler, *Mer*, p. 76.

¹¹³ *De Thematisibus*, p. 83.

¹¹⁴ The use of the term 'Cyclades' by Sarou-Zolota is not very clear. Does she mean the modern region of the 'Cyclades' or, on the contrary, does she use it to denote the Byzantine region of the Cyclades?

¹¹⁵ Sarou-Zolota, *To Κάστρον της Χίου*, p. 40.

¹¹⁶ Ahrweiler, *Mer*, pp. 77-9. Zakythinos, *Meletai*, 17, p. 259.

¹⁰⁴ Koltsida-Makri, 'Η συμβολή της σιγιλλογραφικής μαρτυρίας στη μελέτη της διοικητικής και εκκλησιαστικής οργάνωσης της Χίου (7th - 12th c)', in: *Το νόμισμα στά νησιά του Αιγαίου*, Vol. 2, pp 95-107.

¹⁰⁵ Amantos, 'Δωδεκάνησος', in: *BZ* 30 (1929-30), pp. 244-246. P. Yannopoulos, 'Η οργάνωση του Αιγαίου', *Parnassos* 32, (1990), pp. 212-3, 215, n. 74.

¹⁰⁶ Oikonomides, *Listes*, p. 353.

¹⁰⁷ The independent *droungarioi* of this period were designated with their geographical name: the *droungarios* of the Aigaion Pelagos, of the Kolpos, of the Cyclades or the Dodecanese etc. See Ahrweiler, *Mer*,

ambiguous and mentions that in the mid-tenth century the theme of Aigaion Pelagos comprised the southern Cyclades,¹¹⁷ Skyros, Milos, Amorgos, Thera, Therasia, Rheneia, and the 'Sporades', that is, Mitylene, Chios and Lemnos.¹¹⁸ The last three islands are considered as belonging to the group of islands known in the Byzantine sources under the term 'Sporades'.

b. Cyclades and Dodecanese

There is another ambiguity in the Byzantine sources in respect to the definition of the geographical term 'Cyclades': two terms are used to designate the Aegean islands, namely 'Cyclades' and 'Dodecanese'. The most representative example is given by Porphyrogennitus.¹¹⁹ The Byzantine definition of Cyclades – a term that has been known since antiquity – does not correspond to the ancient geography, but was applied to an administrative unit.¹²⁰

In the sixth century, the islands of the Archipelago belonged to the province of the *Nesoi*, a district which coincided with the ecclesiastical province of the Cycladic islands. In the late seventh century the district was renamed 'the province of Cyclades' and in the early eighth century it is encountered as 'the province of *Nesoi*'.¹²¹ Professors Amantos and Zakythinios have shown that the term 'Dodecanese' in the Byzantine sources designates the island group known nowadays as the Cyclades.¹²² During the Byzantine period, the modern Dodecanese islands formed the theme of the Kibyrraiotai.¹²³ The islands of the northeast Aegean were called the Sporades.¹²⁴ In addition, from the seventh century onwards the two terms, 'Sporades' and 'Cyclades', are equally used to denote both a geographical and an administrative unit.¹²⁵ From as early as the eighth century, the popular term 'Dodecanese' came to be substituted in the administrative terminology by the term 'Aigaion Pelagos', designating the islands of the Archipelago, which had formerly belonged to the province of *Nesoi*

(*Insulae*).¹²⁶ Malamut compares the tenth-century text of Porphyrogennitus with that of Eustathios, the twelfth-century archbishop of Thessaloniki, in order to set the geographical position of the Aegean islands in the Byzantine sources:¹²⁷ both writers mention two island groups in the Aegean, the Sporades and the Cyclades. She concludes that Eustathios' information is drawn from Strabo, without explaining why. Eustathios counts Chios among the islands of the Ionian coast of Asia Minor,¹²⁸ and Lesbos among the islands of Aeolis. Porphyrogennitus and other Byzantine sources mention Chios as part of the 'Sporades'.¹²⁹ Oikonomides¹³⁰ admits that the term Cyclades in the sources is not always clear, while Nesbitt and Oikonomides claim that: 'Before that (the twelfth century), in all cases where the term is used in an administrative context, Cyclades seem to mean *grosso modo* the ancient province of the *Nesoi*, centered in today's Dodecanese and all the way to Lesbos'.¹³¹ This means that the western Aegean islands were not included in this entity. This view creates further confusion if we take into account the fact that the same writers had previously mentioned that the administrative unit Cyclades, which practically included all the Aegean islands, was identical with the ecclesiastical province of Cyclades, of which Chios was a part (see above paragraph).

In the late tenth to early eleventh century, there was a new reorganisation of the administrative system, whereby the old, large themes were broken up and replaced by smaller themes. During this process, the theme of *Aigaion Pelagos* disappeared from the sources and was broken up into smaller maritime divisions.¹³² The Taktikon Escorial mentions both the *strategos* of the *Aigaion Pelagos* and the *strategos* of the Cyclades,¹³³ whereas other sources mention the *strategos* of Abydos and the *strategos* of Chios. It can therefore be surmised that among the newly created small themes, the theme of Chios emerges, even though Chios does not figure in any list of the Byzantine themes. Thus, in the eleventh century the maritime district of the *Aigaion Pelagos* seems to have been limited to the littoral of Propontis and the surroundings of Constantinople. The commanders of the smaller themes are again the *strategoi*, whose importance diminishes in comparison

¹¹⁷ Ahrweiler, *Mer*, p. 79, is against the view that the Cyclades ever formed part of the theme of Aigaion Pelagos before the Macedonian dynasty. On p. 108, she adds that the Cyclades were probably included in the Aigaion Pelagos during the first half of the tenth century. In contrast, Schlumberger, *Sigillographie*, p. 190 believes that the Cyclades were indeed part of the Aigaion.

¹¹⁸ Malamut, *op.cit.*, I, p. 311.

¹¹⁹ *De Thematibus*, p. 83.

¹²⁰ Ahrweiler, *Mer*, p. 402. *Ead.*, 'Recherches sur l'administration de l'empire byzantin aux IX – IX siècles' *BCH LXXXIV* (1960), pp. 78-79. Malamut, *op.cit.*, I, pp. 311-12. Nesbitt and Oikonomides, *Catalogue*, 2, pp. 109-110.

¹²¹ Nesbitt and Oikonomides, *op.cit.*, p. 110.

¹²² The term 'Dodecanese' in the Byzantine texts by no means applies to the modern use of the term. Amantos, *BZ* 30 (1929/30), 244-46. Zakythinios, *Meletai*, 17, pp. 254-56. Ahrweiler, *Mer*, p. 80. Malamut, *op.cit.*, I, p. 47ff.

¹²³ Ahrweiler, *Mer*, p. 80.

¹²⁴ Zakythinios, *Meletai*, 25, pp. 146-7.

¹²⁵ Malamut, *op.cit.*, I, pp. 34, 47ff., 311-12.

¹²⁶ Nesbitt and Oikonomides, *Catalogue*, vol. 2, p. 110. Ahrweiler, *Mer*, 81, states that 'Les *Nesoi*, circonscription différent de celle de la mer Egée, désigne l'ensemble des îles connues sous le nom de Douze Iles, englobant les Cyclades actuelles, souvent appelées dans les sources byzantines sous l'appellation Cyclades'.

¹²⁷ Malamut, *op.cit.*, I, pp. 34-48.

¹²⁸ *Op. cit.*, I, p. 36, 50, n. 135.

¹²⁹ *Op. cit.*, p. 48.

¹³⁰ Oikonomides, *Listes*, p. 361, n. 404.

¹³¹ Nesbitt and Oikonomides, *op.cit.*, p. 126.

¹³² Ahrweiler, *Mer*, pp. 79, 132-33. *Eadem*, *Recherches*, pp. 82ff. 89-90.

¹³³ Oikonomides, *Listes*, p. 267. This is when the new theme of the Cyclades appears, created after 949 and before 971.

to that formerly enjoyed by the *strategoï* of the older large maritime themes.¹³⁴

What do the sources reveal about the status of Chios?

Of all the sources, the seals¹³⁵ of civil and ecclesiastical officials and a number of imperial chrysobulls – the latter dating from the eleventh century onwards – contribute the most to the early history of Chios, making it clear that a number of military and civil officials were associated with an island of significant importance for the Empire. The earliest seals connected to Chios date from the late sixth and early seventh centuries and are related to ecclesiastical affairs: they belong to bishops and other officials of the clergy. In respect to the civil and military officials, the earliest seals date from the seventh century, as well. Chronologically, all the published seals which I have used for the needs of this study cover the period from the seventh to the twelfth centuries. The earliest datable item mentions a ‘George, scribon and *genikos kommerkiarios* of the Apotheke of Asia, Chios and Lesvos’ and is dated from the seventh century. Next come five seals bearing the title ‘archon of Chios’,¹³⁶ with dates ranging from the ninth to the tenth centuries. Another seal of the ninth century mentions a ‘Nikolaos *dioiketes* of Chios and Samos’. In the eleventh century, the first seals bearing the legend ‘*strategos* of Chios’ appear. At the same time, the historical record confirms the sigillographic evidence: we find the ‘*strategos* of Chios’ along with a number of other officials being mentioned by Byzantine historians and in imperial chrysobulls. The majority of the civil officials mentioned in the imperial documents had fiscal responsibilities related to the taxes imposed on the subjects, the exemptions granted, and tax control of the land. The tax exemptions mainly concern grants to the pious institution of Nea Moni,¹³⁷ which was renowned for having been under the imperial patronage of the empresses Zoe and Theodora and the emperor Constantine Monomachos.

Historians have observed that Chios probably formed part of a maritime unit; more specifically, views converge around the assumption that the island belonged to the maritime theme of Aigaion Pelagos. In addition, the hypothesis that Chios should be identified as the capital of Aigaion Pelagos was proposed by scholars from as early as the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.¹³⁸ The only written source indirectly to confirm this theory is Constantine Porphyrogenitus,

who clearly states that the islands of Mytilene, Chios and Lemnos belonged to the theme of Aigaion Pelagos.¹³⁹ His testimony, however, dates from the tenth century. Which district did Chios truly belong to? Was it indeed the Aigaion Pelagos? What do the sources tell us for the period prior to and during the tenth century? The evidence in the sigillographic record and the written sources for the ‘archon of Chios’ in the period of the ninth and the tenth centuries raises questions regarding the military organisation of the island during that period: the office of the *archon* of Chios is not mentioned in the earliest of the *Taktika*, the so-called Uspenski (842-843).¹⁴⁰ Nesbitt and Oikonomides believe that there may have been a lacuna of two or three lines on the part of the *Taktikon* where the *archontes* are listed. On this basis, Ahrweiler has attempted to interpret the office of the archon of Chios as follows: the island was one of the naval bases of the Byzantine fleet and had its own fleet stationed there, whose commander was the *archon*, an officer dependent on Constantinople. The archon also had administrative jurisdiction over the district.¹⁴¹ In addition, she wonders whether Chios formed in reality part of the theme of the Aigaion Pelagos and, further, what its administrative status was during the ninth century, when the administrative and military entity of Aigaion Pelagos was still a *droungos*. According to Ahrweiler’s argument, we can infer from the information in the Life of Saint Paul of Latros that, between the late ninth and the early tenth century, Chios formed an independent maritime unit, an *archontia*, placed under the jurisdiction of an archon. The presence on the island of a high-ranking official, namely the *komes tou ploimou stratou*¹⁴² – an official directly dependent on Constantinople – supports the view that in the ninth century, and especially after the date of the redaction of the *Taktikon* Uspenski, the island must have been given a special status.¹⁴³ During this period, Chios was considered a frontier due to the presence of the Cretan Arabs in the Aegean. Ahrweiler therefore concludes that in the ninth century Chios was ruled by an archon, an official whose office was then abolished some time in the tenth century, when the island’s status was elevated. Malamut also supports this view, plausibly suggesting that the island could have been detached either from the *droungarios* of the Dodecanese or from the Aigaion Pelagos in order to constitute an autonomous administrative area attached directly to Constantinople. She argues that this status did not last long, and was abolished before or around 842/3, that is, before the compilation of the earliest *Taktikon* Uspenski.¹⁴⁴

¹³⁴ Ahrweiler, *Recherches*, p. 46.

¹³⁵ For the relevant references, see the Appendices.

¹³⁶ Oikonomides, *Listes*, pp. 342-43, n. 317 on p. 343. *Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium*, I, p. 160.

¹³⁷ Oikonomides, ‘L’ évolution de l’ organisation administrative de l’ empire byzantin au XI siècle’, *TM* 6 (1976), pp. 138-140. *O.D.B.*, 2, p. 736.

¹³⁸ Schlumberger, *Sigillographie*, p. 196. Zolotas, *passim*. Sarou-Zolota, *To Κάστρον της Χίου*, pp. 34-35. Zakythinis, *Meletai*, 17, pp. 259ff.

¹³⁹ *De Thematisibus*, p. 83.

¹⁴⁰ Ahrweiler, *Mer*, p. 86. Nesbitt-Oikonomides, p. 124.

¹⁴¹ Ahrweiler, *Mer*, p. 90.

¹⁴² *Op.cit.*, p. 86, n. 2.

¹⁴³ *Op.cit.*, p. 86.

¹⁴⁴ Malamut, *op. cit.*, I, pp. 300-303.

Ahrweiler argues persuasively for a special or elevated position for Chios in the early period, namely between the seventh and the ninth centuries. For this reason, and taken the data discussed above into consideration, I fully concur with her position. Besides, since antiquity and throughout the ages the history of Chios has shown how highly valued its geostrategic position has been.

The seals of the *kommerkiarioi*

Two of the seals listed in Appendix II date from the seventh to eighth centuries: the first bears the legend ‘*kommerkiarios of the Apotheke of Asia, Chios and Lesvos*’ and the second, the ‘imperial *kommerkia of the Aigaion*’. During the early Byzantine Empire, the port towns had customs houses for which the responsible functionaries were the *kommerkiarioi*, subaltern officers to the *Logothetes of the Genikon*. The earlier of the two *kommerkiarioi* seals dates from the seventh century (reign of Justinian II) and bears the name of Chios. It stands alone as an eloquent testimony of the state’s interest in the island.¹⁴⁵ It is not surprising that Chios is incorporated into a single context along with Lesvos and Asia. The proximity of both islands to the opposite littoral – particularly Chios – and the fact that their port towns are on the eastern coast facilitated commercial exchange with the neighbouring mainland of Asia Minor. The hinterland of Asia Minor had practically always been considered as the hinterland of the islands. Significant commercial reasons obviously account for the setting up of a customs house in that area, linking the three neighbouring coasts into one entity. This fact itself is eloquent testimony to state and private activities in that part of the Aegean. We can conclude that already by the seventh century – and probably even earlier – convincing signs of commercial interests with a state involvement can be seen along the coasts of this region, as the existing sources also reveal. It is important to note that during this period the Aegean was suffering from Arab raids. The historical record enhances the information provided by the seals in respect to Chios’s commercial importance for the empire: the eighth and ninth Miracles of Saint Demetrius narrate the important role of Chios as a port of call along the north-south trade route in the Aegean, from the granaries of Alexandria to Constantinople.¹⁴⁶

Further valuable evidence from an early seal sheds light on an important aspect of the early history of Chios: in the ninth century the two islands of Chios and Samos constituted a joint fiscal entity and came under the jurisdiction of the same tax collector, Nicolaos the *dioiketes*. Zakythinios was the first to show that the *dioiketes* was a fiscal official, whose jurisdiction was to

supervise the tax collection. As he explained, the fiscal administration was distinct from the provincial civil and military administration.¹⁴⁷ Therefore, the seal does not necessarily mean that the two islands belonged to the same administrative unit.

Chios: Capital of the theme of Aigaion Pelagos or a theme in its own right?

The question thus arises as to whether Chios ever belonged to the territory of the Aigaion Pelagos and, if it did, what its position was. Despite the comparatively large number of seals, along with the few lines dedicated by the Byzantine historians to Chios, the status of its administrative position is not clear. The obscure historical and archaeological record has resulted in a long scholarly debate, which started as early as the nineteenth century. Opinions vary. Below, I present the views of some eminent scholars, in chronological order of publication.

Gustave Schlumberger was the first to study and publish the then few examples of lead seals belonging to dignitaries connected to the island. He believed that the assembled evidence suggests that Chios should, with all probability, be considered the capital of the maritime theme of the Aigaion Pelagos.¹⁴⁸

G. Zolotas, as well as A. Sarou-Zolota, reviewed the problem in the light of other historical evidence and agreed with Schlumberger’s suggestions. Both scholars based their assumptions on the study of the Byzantine historians and the surviving chrysobulls of Nea Moni as well as on research in the Vallicelliana Library of Rome.¹⁴⁹ Their impression was that the testimony of Leo the Deacon, who mentions that the general Bardas Phocas was exiled on Chios for seven years (from 921), is indicative of the island’s military organisation.¹⁵⁰ Sarou-Zolota argued that the appearance of the place name of ‘Chios’ on the lead seals is in itself a strong indication in favour of the hypothesis that the island formed an independent theme.

This view was, however, rejected by Professor D. Zakythinios, who considered the possibility that Chios may have been the capital of the theme of Aigaion Pelagos.¹⁵¹ He did, however, acknowledge a special status for Chios.

¹⁴⁷ Zakythinios, *Meletai*, 17, p. 260. Some scholars raise the question as to whether the *dioikesis* of Samos and Chios was part of the theme of Aigaion Pelagos or of Samos, when the latter became a theme in its own right in the late ninth century.

¹⁴⁸ Schlumberger, *Sigillographie*, p. 196. *De Thematis*, p. 154. Zakythinios, *Meletai* 17, pp. 260-1.

¹⁴⁹ Zolotas, II, 246-7, 250. Sarou-Zolota, *Τό Κάστρον*, pp. 34-35, 40-41.

¹⁵⁰ Leo the Deacon, *Historiae* VII.9, 126.4.

¹⁵¹ Zakythinios, *Meletai*, 17, pp. 259-261. *Idem*, *Meletai*, 25, p. 147.

¹⁴⁵ Koltsida-Makri, *Συμβολή*.

¹⁴⁶ P. Lemerle, *Les plus anciens recueils des miracles de Saint Démétrius e la pénétration des Slaves dans les Balkans*, vol. I, Paris, 1979, p. 102,8 [70], 107,19 [76], 108,9 [77], 108,21 [79], and n. 2 on p. 104,5 [76].

A. Pertusi, commenting on *De Thematibus*, also makes the supposition that Porphyrogennitus' text, in conjunction with the Chiot seals, suggests that the seat of the Aigaion Pelagos was probably Chios.¹⁵²

Ahrweiler's views are interesting, but contradictory. She rejects Schlumberger's view that Chios was the capital of the Aigaion Pelagos, because this cannot be confirmed in the historical record. She also notes that the historical record provides evidence for the argument that Chios formed a separate, independent theme: two *strategoï*, one of Chios and one of Samos, are mentioned.¹⁵³ She adds that it is not at all certain if Chios ever formed part of the Aigaion Pelagos.¹⁵⁴ If it did, she wonders, then what was its position when the Aigaion Pelagos was still a *droungos*? On the other hand, she advances the view that Chios might, after all, have belonged to the Aigaion Pelagos after the abolition of the office of its archon and before the nomination of the *strategos* in the late tenth century.¹⁵⁵ Finally, she proposes that Chios did indeed belong to the maritime theme of Aigaion Pelagos, from which it was detached at a later date in order to become an independent maritime unit.¹⁵⁶ Ahrweiler maintains that a special status for Chios should be recognised for the early periods: in the eighth and ninth centuries it was an *archontia* directly connected to Constantinople.

Antoniadis-Bibicou believes that Chios remained for good under the jurisdiction of the *strategos* of the Aigaion Pelagos.¹⁵⁷ Nesbitt and Oikonomides follow Ahrweiler, agreeing that the status of Chios between the eighth and tenth centuries is not very clear. They support the view that Chios initially formed part of the theme of Aigaion Pelagos, from which it was subsequently detached to become part of the theme of Samos.¹⁵⁸ Later, a supreme leader appeared on the island, namely the 'archon of Chios'. Samos became a separate theme known as the 'theme of the sailors' (*πλωιζομένων*) in the mid-eighth century, with its own *strategos* – information that is confirmed by Porphyrogennitus.¹⁵⁹ But Nesbitt and Oikonomides also claim that there was an administrative connection between Chios and Samos, basing their hypothesis on the evidence of the early seal of the *dioiketes*, 'who ensured the local administration'. Later, however, they again change their position and do not claim administrative authority for the *dioiketes* of Samos and Chios nor do they recognise such a mandate for Arsavir,

the ninth-century *dioiketes* of Mytilene.¹⁶⁰ Zakythinos, as we have seen, clearly demonstrated that the testimony of the seal of the *dioiketes* is unquestionable: he is a tax collector and his jurisdiction over an entity is only financial; he did not have administrative jurisdiction, or at least the sources do not imply that he did. Finally, Nesbitt and Oikonomides add that some time between 971 and 1027 Chios formed a separate maritime theme. In reference to its early position in the provincial administration, they recognise that the existing sources imply that the island appears to have had a distinct position from as early as the eighth century,¹⁶¹ observing that 'it becomes clear that we have an insular administration, which is not called a *strategeia*'.¹⁶² As for the issue of the capital of the theme of Aigaion Pelagos, their views diverge from those of other scholars, proposing that Mytilene and Abydos were the two most likely seats of the *strategos* of the Aigaion.¹⁶³ This view is rejected by Malamut, who believes that we can claim that Chios or Lemnos were equally likely candidates for the seat of the theme.¹⁶⁴

To sum up, much of the scholarly debate converges around the view that Chios held a special status during the early period, for which our sources are fragmentary. Scholars agree that it is very likely that in the late tenth or certainly the early eleventh century the island was elevated to a theme in its own right. The reason for this is to be found in the historical record: this was the period of Byzantine victories against the Arabs, when the old, large themes were broken up to be replaced by many smaller themes. The initial hold on power by an *archon* of Chios fits with the historical data. When the *archon* disappears from the scene, he is replaced by a *strategos*.¹⁶⁵ Again, we can rely on the sigillographic evidence and the literary sources to provide support for this view: lead seals dating from the early eleventh century mention the *strategos* of Chios, whereas in the texts the first official information for the elevation of Chios is to be found in the historians Zonaras, Skylitzes and Kedrenos, who mention the *strategos* of Chios.¹⁶⁶ The chrysobulls of Monomachos and Nicephoros Botaneiates lend further support to this view.¹⁶⁷

Considering the above evidence collectively, I do not believe that we are able to give a definitive answer to the question of Chios' position in the provincial administration before and after the thematic system.

¹⁵² *De Thematibus*, pp. 154-5.

¹⁵³ Ahrweiler, *Recherches*, p. 51, and n. 6.

¹⁵⁴ Ahrweiler, *Mer*, p. 86.

¹⁵⁵ *Op.cit.*, p. 108.

¹⁵⁶ *Op.cit.*, p. 133.

¹⁵⁷ Antoniadis-Bibicou, *Études d'histoire maritime de Byzance*, p. 98.

¹⁵⁸ Nesbitt and Oikonomides, *Catalogue*, 2, p. 111, 123, However, Zakythinos, *Meletai*, 17, p. 259 ff.

¹⁵⁹ Porphyrogennitus, vol. III, *De Thematibus*, p. 41. Zakythinos, *op.cit.*, pp. 261-2. Nesbitt and Oikonomides, pp. 110-11, 123, 130-131.

¹⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 124, 141.

¹⁶¹ Nesbitt and Oikonomides, *op.cit.*, p. 112.

¹⁶² *Ibid.*

¹⁶³ Oikonomides, 'On Sigillographic Epigraphy', *SBS* 6, 1999, p. 38. Nesbitt-Oikonomides, p. 141.

¹⁶⁴ Malamut, *op.cit.*, I, p. 311.

¹⁶⁵ Kedrenos, 484. Ahrweiler, *Mer*, pp. 100-101. Eadem, *Recherches*, p. 51, and n. 6.

¹⁶⁶ Zonaras, III, p. 572, 582. Skylitzes and Kedrenos, II, p. 479, 484, 514.

¹⁶⁷ Sakellion, *op.cit.*, 1867, pp. 558-9; Miklosič and Müller, *Acta et Diplomata*, IV, pp. 8-10.

Until the research makes further advances, we can only speculate. The views of Nesbitt and Oikonomides have many weaknesses, are often ambiguous and other times contradictory; therefore, they cannot be fully accepted. To my mind, the most plausible arguments on this topic are those of Zakythinos and Ahrweiler. Their views are for certain more constructive in helping us to form a more coherent theory. Zakythinos argues that, until the late tenth or the eleventh century, Chios was the capital of the theme of Aigaion Pelagos and it was never elevated to the status of a theme in its own right. The evidence provided by Skylitzes and Kedrenos, who mention the *strategos* of Chios, lead to the conclusion that Chios, as the most important island of the theme of Aigaion Pelagos, was the location of its headquarters.¹⁶⁸ Be that as it may, how are we to explain the simultaneous presence of a 'strategos of the Aigaion Pelagos' and a 'strategos of Chios' in the sources? Ahrweiler's argument on the island's early status as an *archontia* seems plausible. She has, however, proposed another line of argument, in which she attempts to connect Chios with the Cyclades, hypothesising that Chios at that time was part of the theme of Cyclades, and served as its military base. As the office of a *strategos* of the Cyclades is not mentioned in the sources, then 'we surmise that the theme of the Cyclades, administered during this time by a *krites* (judge), was defended militarily by the *strategos* of Chios', whose headquarters were on the island itself.¹⁶⁹

Later, in the mid-twelfth century, we find an independent administrative district of Chios¹⁷⁰ headed by a *doux*, who succeeded the *strategos*. The *doux* is mentioned around 1160-1170, when it is recorded that he took part in a battle against the Genoese and

on the side of the Venetians.¹⁷¹ He was responsible for both the fiscal and civil administration of his territory (*anagrapheus/praktor*). Finally, the early historical testimony in the Miracles of St Demetrius, according to which the island was a port of call for the provisioning of Constantinople, is in itself evidence of its significant position within the provincial division.

The island's important geographical position has been acknowledged since antiquity. Its proximity to the opposite peninsula of Erythraea and its equal distance to the neighbouring islands along its north-south axis, namely Lesbos and Samos, cannot be ignored, making Chios the most suitable place for housing a district capital. Even though the surviving sources do not form a continuous, datable series, there are still grounds to believe that Chios could have been the seat of the theme. It would not make sense to argue that only in the eleventh or even later, in the fourteenth century, was its importance acknowledged. The sigillographic record, which gives dates for the ninth and the tenth centuries, offers one more piece of evidence from the history of the castle of Chios town: according to the historical and archaeological traces, the Byzantine castle of Chios may date back to the ninth century, or even earlier, in which case it would certainly have housed the headquarters of the administrative and military commander, the *archon* or the *strategos*. Undoubtedly, the archaeological, historical and topographical data from Chios town should be considered with, and in parallel to that of the historical, numismatic and sigillographic record. Advanced archaeological research would also supplement the information given by the literary and the other primary sources.

¹⁶⁸ Zakythinos, *Meletai*, 17, pp. 260-261.

¹⁶⁹ Ahrweiler, *Mer*, p. 402.

¹⁷⁰ Malamut, *op.cit.*, believed it was an independent theme of Chios.

¹⁷¹ In the mid-twelfth century the commanders of the provinces of the islands were the *doukes-praitores*, who wielded all the power.