

# ANCIENT CYNOURIA: HUMAN ACTIVITY AND ENVIRONMENT

## INTRODUCTION

The region of ancient Cynuria coincides for the most part with the modern eparchy of Kynouria, which belongs to the Nomos of Arkadia. In trying to define the borders of ancient Cynuria with greater accuracy, account has been taken of the natural boundaries, especially the dividing lines of the rivers, in addition to the ancient literary evidence.

Cynuria is dominated by the Parnon mountain range (alt. 1934 m), which runs in a NW-SE direction. Like a great wall, it closes off Cynuria along the whole of its western side and acts as a barrier between the region of Cynuria and the neighbouring states of Sparta and Tegea. On the north the ridges of Mt Parthenion, commanded by the Zavitsa spur (alt. 974 m), separate Cynuria from the states of Argos and Tegea. The eastern side of Cynuria is washed by the waters of the Argolic gulf. Most of the coastline is made up of numerous bays and headlands. The bay of Thyrea can be identified as the modern bay of Astros. The geographical formation makes it possible to divide the district into two large units: the northern, comprising the districts of Astros, Ay. Andreas, Ay. Petros, Kastri, etc., corresponding to Thyreatis in ancient times, and the southern, including the districts of Tsakonia, Kounoupia, Kosmas, etc., corresponding to the region around Prasiai or Brasiai.

Three mountain torrents have their origins on the slopes of Parnon and run down to the Argolic gulf. They are the Tanos in the north, the Vrsiatis further south, and the Daphnon to the south in the district of Leonidion. The Tanos is identified with the river of the same name mentioned by Pausanias. Most of the year these riverbeds contain no water, but at times they become raging torrents and flood the plains below, depositing a layer of silt that enriches the soil and makes it fertile.

The whole of Cynuria is mountainous, and it has just two small plains, those of Astros Ay. Andreas and Leonidion. The first is divided into two parts and is identified with the plain of Thyreatis. Inland are the plateaux of Paliochora (alt. 764 m), Xerokampi (alt. 800 m) and Peleta (alt. 662 m). The principal feature of the agricultural coastal zone is arboriculture, with olive cultivation predominating. Pausanias mentions that the plain of Thyreatis was suitable for the cultivation of trees, especially olive trees. The basis of farming in the hinterland is cereal cultivation combined with stock-breeding.

There are few freshwater springs in the coastal belt, that of Loukous being the most important, but there are abundant springs and forest lands in the mountains. In the coastal districts and the uplands of Paliochora there are many wells, which are used both for supplying water and for irrigation. The most important lake is that of Moustos, between Astros and Ay. Andreas.

Because of its geographical formation the climate of Cynuria is varied. The coastal area is sunny and dry, while the mountains inland have a harsh climate with low temperatures. There are marked differences in rainfall, as we proceed from the coast to the mountainous region inland. Parnon has a rich flora, including rare medicinal plants, and the fauna, too, is generally abundant. Sheep and goats thrive on the mountain slopes in summer and in the warm winter pastures, and there would thus have been numerous flocks and herds everywhere in Cynuria.

#### **THE FIRST INHABITANTS. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND**

It is not known exactly when the first inhabitants of Cynuria appeared, but certainly pre-Greek tribes must have been living there from the Neolithic period. There are indications of this in place names like Anthene, Gonasos, Misonasos, Koilasos and Pregasos. Archaeological finds of stone tools of palaeolithic type indicate that men probably lived on Parnon in the Late Palaeolithic period.

Mythological tradition has it that the Danaans appeared in the region of Thyreatis towards the end of the Early Helladic period, in about 2100 BC. Plutarch relates how Danaus landed at Pyramia in Thyreatis and subsequently made his way to Argos. The name of the river Tanos may be an indication that the Danaans had been present in the area.

The Cynurians, who were probably a Ionian people, settled in the region during the Middle Helladic period, from 1900 BC onwards; this seems likely from the cult evidence (worship of Achilles and Ino) and the presence of Minyans in the southern part of Cynuria. Herodotus describes the Cynurians as autochthonous but also as Ionians. It might be supposed that the pre-Hellenic element also remained strong after the appearance of the Ionians or even the Minyans, which would be why the Cynurians maintained that they were autochthonous. This is supported by the anthropological evidence, according to which an analysis of the physical characteristics of the modern inhabitants of central Cynuria, or in other words the Tsakonians, has shown that they constitute a population group going back

long before the period of the Dorians. After the Dorian invasion the Cynurians merged with the Dorians of Argos and Laconia and lived as perioikoi.

In the Mycenaean period Cynuria probably formed part of the state of Mycenae. Because of its geographical position, after the Dorians settled in the Peloponnese, it formed a frontier region between the two most powerful states, Argos and Sparta, and became the apple of discord between them for about one thousand years. Very early the Argives and the Laonians tried to bring Cynuria under their sway. In the 7th century BC the Argives controlled all of Cynuria, but after the middle of the 6th century, when the battle of the Six Hundred Champions took place (546 BC), the whole of Cynuria passed into the hands of the Spartans and remained under them until 338 BC. The inhabitants acquired the status of perioikoi with a certain degree of autonomy. The settlements in Cynuria must have comprised two large groups that were subject to two centres (πόλεις) which together formed the political seat of the central administration. These poleis were Prasiai in the south and Thyrea in the north.

In 494 BC Cleomenes I used Thyreatis as a base for his campaign against the Argolid. In 431 the Laonians settled the Aiginetans, exiled by the Athenians, in Thyreatis. During the course of the Peloponnesian War Cynuria was subject to strong attacks by the Athenians and their allies. In 430 a squadron of 100 Athenian triremes carrying 4000 hoplites and 300 cavalry under the command of Pericles arrived at Prasiai, laid waste to the land and then captured and plundered the town. In the summer of 424 the Athenian fleet under Nicias appeared off the coast of Thyreatis. The Athenians landed and marched inland to besiege Thyrea, which was inhabited by the Aiginetans. The Spartan garrison abandoned the town, which the Athenians captured, plundered and fired, taking the surviving Aiginetans as prisoners back to Athens. In the spring of 414 the Argives raided and sacked Thyreatis, and in the summer of the same year the Athenians, together with the Argives, plundered the district of Prasiai.

In 338 BC after the Battle of Chaironeia and under the mediation of Philip II the territory of Cynuria, long disputed by the Spartans and Argives, passed into the hands of the Argives. In 195 Prasiai along with 23 other Laconian cities seems to have joined the Koinon ton Lakedaimonion. Perhaps in the time of Augustus the Koinon ton Lakedaimonion was reorganized and renamed the Koinon ton Eleutherolakonon. Pausanias, writing about the region in the mid-2nd century AD, mentions that the Koinon ton Eleutherolakonon had 18 cities, Prasiai being the most northerly. At this time the district of Thyreatis belonged to the Argives.

## SETTLEMENTS

Thyreatis in the north and Prasiai in the south formed the two large geographical units that constituted Cynuria. Thyreatis was also known as Thyrea, after the principal town in the region; similarly the region around Prasiai took its name from the principal town, Prasiai.

24 settlements and habitations have so far been located in the region of **Thyreatis**, representing every period from the prehistoric to late antiquity. The most important settlements, whose names are known from the literature, were Thyrea, Anthene, Eua, Neris and Astron. Although the epigraphic evidence is wanting and opinions among scholars have hitherto been widely divergent, we can identify four of the above settlements with known sites in the area on the basis of the archaeological evidence and the ancient references.

### **Thyrea**

This can be identified with the important remains at Elliniko Astrous. The site is in a conspicuous place on the smooth crest of a foothill of Parnon at an altitude of 635 m and a distance of some 8 km from Astros. The locality occupied by the ancient town is known as Teichio, meaning the place within the fortification wall; the term Elliniko refers to the district around Teichio, which contains the cemeteries of the settlement, etc.

The archaeological finds reveal the long duration of the town's existence, which began at least in Mycenaean times and continued without a break until the 3rd century AD. In addition to the carefully built wall, which belongs to the 5th or 4th century BC, the foundations of buildings, well-shaped water cisterns, graves outside of Teichio and the remains of a temple in the locality of Anemomylos are visible. The finds from the last quarter of the 4th century and from the 3rd century BC, particularly the pottery, show the close connection of the town with Argos, thus confirming the literary evidence that in 338 BC the region passed under the control of that city.

The large area occupied by the ruins, the carefully built fortifications and the geographical position of the town, together with the archaeological finds, enable us to identify this site as Thyrea (Thucydides' "upper city"), the most important town in Thyreatis. From its position Thyrea was able to control the hinterland and exploit the plain of Thyreatis, which it dominated. The main road linking Thyrea with Sparta and Tegea, which was usable by wheeled vehicles, also passed through here.

In Roman times the gradual abandonment of Thyrea began. The inhabitants must have moved down to the plain and settled in different places (Sykia, Kastraki, etc.). The old town was not completely deserted, however, and part of the population remained there until the 3rd century AD.

### **Anthene**

On Cherronisi, a small rocky hill beside the sea, 4 km from Ay. Andreas, are the remains of a prehistoric settlement that existed from the Early Helladic to the Geometric period. We can with great probability locate the prehistoric site of Anthene here. The toponym indicates the existence of a pre-Hellenic tribe, whose presence on Cherronisi may be assumed on the basis of the archaeological finds. The antiquity of the site is also indicated by tradition, according to which Anthene was one of the oldest villages in Cynuria inherited by Elatus from his father; the mythical Arcadas. When the settlement was abandoned, the toponym survived in the area and has been preserved in the village that grew up in historical times 1.5 km to the south at Nisi, Ay. Andreas.

The remains of the historical town are on the hill of Nisi on the coast at Ay. Andreas, at the southern end of the Thyreatic plain. The town had strong fortification walls. There was a second wall on the north side, and on the summit, where the chapel of Ay. Andreas stands, was the acropolis. In the Early Byzantine period the north wall was extended further to the north. The fortifications of the town must have been built in the 2nd half of the 5th century and the 4th century BC.

Within the walls the remains can be seen of building foundations, retaining walls, water cisterns and the wheel ruts of a wagon road. The surviving architectural remains together with the archaeological finds to date suggest that there was an important town on Nisi at least from the 5th century BC, and that it continued in existence until the Early Byzantine period. There must also have been a harbour in about the same position as the present one. Anthene together with Thyrea formed the most important urban group in Thyreatis, with a long existence. The carefully constructed fortifications safeguarded it from enemy attacks and pirates.

### **Eua**

In the area of Moni Loukous, 4 km NW of Astros, are numerous remains of an ancient village that may be identified as Eua. There are springs with abundant water a short distance to the SW. There was a temple of Asclepius Polemocrates at Eua and at different times votive

sculptures from it have been found. Eua flourished in the Roman period and in the 2nd century AD was the most important settlement in Thyreatis. Its prosperity must have been largely due to Herodus Atticus, who built one of his most luxurious villas there and adorned the village with aqueducts, baths, parks, etc. Herodus Atticus' activities at Eua are confirmed by the rich archaeological finds. The life of the village continued at least into the 7th century AD.

### **Astron**

Astron was a small town with a harbour in Roman times on the peninsula of the modern Paralion Astros at Nisi. Its development was connected with the prosperity of Eua in this same period and with the trade in local produce, particularly oil and wine, from its harbour. The name of the town survived in the Middle Ages and is preserved today in the close toponym, Astra.

At Nisi at Paralion Astros there are remains of habitation in the Early Helladic period. Very probably this is where the Pyramia and Apobathmoi associated with the Danaans were located, if in fact there is any historical truth in the mythical tradition. The settlement here was also occupied in the Middle Helladic period, flourished in the Mycenaean period and continued into geometric times. Its existence was interrupted at the end of the Geometric period, perhaps as a result of an incursion by the Argives. In the same period something similar had befallen the pre-Dorian towns at Asine and Nafplion on the opposite shore of the Gulf of Argos.

Along the west side of the peninsula the remains can be seen for a distance of 500 m of a 5th century BC wall. This must have been the "sea wall" of the Aiginetans mentioned by Thucydides, which was never completed.

### **Neris**

The site of Neris cannot be identified with certainty. It was probably in the locality of Kourmeki at Kato Doliana, where there are remains of a settlement of the Late Hellenistic and Roman period. The settlement at Kourmeki continued into the 7th century AD and perhaps later. There is, however, another site in the area of Alonaki Griass, near modern Astros, that could claim to be the ancient Neris.

### **Unidentified settlements**

On the southern flank of Zavitsa, in the locality of Tsiorovos at Kato Doliana, are the ruins of a fortified classical settlement that continued in existence during the Hellenistic, Roman and Early Christian periods. The fortifications may have been built during the Peloponnesian War. The settlement occupied an important strategic position for Thyreatis, for it was near the Zavitsa pass on the boundary between Argos and Sparta and controlled one of the two roads leading from Argos to Thyreatis. In Roman times the settlement was apparently gradually abandoned and its inhabitants moved lower down towards the plain.

There are remains on the hill of Kastraki, close to Kato Meligou, of a small Hellenistic establishment which continued into the Roman and Early Christian periods. There are also traces there of human habitation dating back to the Bronze Age.

There was a stock-raising station at Kato Vervena on the smooth south slope of Zavitsa. The remains that have been found (stone tools, pottery) belong to the Early Helladic, Middle Helladic, Mycenaean and Classical periods. The situation of Kato Vervena with its warm climate (lush grazing grounds and abundant water during the winter period) would have made it a seasonal station for pasturing animals.

At a number of places in the regions of Astros and Kato Meligou (Ay. Stephanos, Alonaki Grias, Bostanochorapha, Ay. Anastasia, Sykia, Ay. Yeoryios) there are remains of establishments chiefly of the Roman and Early Christian periods. These establishments must have grown up after the decline and abandonment of the most important town in the region, Thyrea, when the socio-political circumstances had changed.

In the interior of Thyreatis, in the area of Xerokampi, there are remains of settlements and stations of every period. There are springs in different places, the most important being those of Lepis and Tarmiris. The region is an ideal grazing land from spring to autumn.

On a smooth hill (alt. 868 m) in the locality of Marmaralona at the eastern edge of Xerokampi, there was an important Late Neolithic seasonal settlement which continued to exist right into the Classical period. From the surface finds to date the settlement appears to have flourished chiefly in the Early Helladic and Mycenaean periods.

In the locality of Lepis near the spring of that name, and particularly at Armakades, are the remains of a Classical settlement. The surface pottery collected comes from a provincial workshop, perhaps in the vicinity. The settlement was abandoned after the middle of the 4th century BC.

At Tarmiri, Gariza, Atzineika, Kato Lepis and Agios Nikolaos remains of small establishments of the Classical, Roman and Early Christian periods have been found.

According to the finds to date, Xerokampi seems to have been inhabited from the Neolithic period until the Middle Ages and again from the time of the Turkish domination until the present. The nature and formation of the terrain and the type of vegetation suggest that all these settlements and stations were solely connected with stockraising. At the beginning of winter the inhabitants abandoned the area and descended to the winter pastures.

At the locality of Koutri, Ano Meligou, there was a settlement in the Chalcolithic and later in the Archaic and Classical periods. The inhabitants must have been stock-farmers and lived in stone-built huts. The Meligou head, well-known to scholars, was found at this site in the last century.

The southern part of Cynuria constituted the second geographical unit, in which the central town was **Prasiai or Brasiai**. Ancient literary sources mention, in addition to Prasiai, the towns of Polichne, Tyros and Glyppia. The inhabitants of part of the hinterland belonged to a peripheral settlement of Prasiai known by the general name of Oreiatai. Altogether 13 settlements and stations have so far been located in the region of Prasiai. This is a smaller number of sites than in Thyreatis, but it is only an indication and chiefly due to the lack of extensive surveying in the Prasiai area.

### **Prasiai**

On the coast at Leonidion, and more particularly in the localities of Plaka and Evria, are the remains of a considerable fortified habitation that has been identified as the most important town in southern Cynuria, Prasiai. The town had a long life, starting in the Bronze Age and continuing into the Early Christian period; in Byzantine times it moved higher up to the top of the hill of Ay. Athanasios.

Because of its geographical position and the fertile plain it exploited Prasiai was prosperous in nearly every period. Sea communications offered great opportunities for commercial trade between Prasiai and the towns on the Argolic and Saronic gulfs as well as with more distant regions. Its participation in the Amphictyony of Kalaureia is an indication of the prosperity and importance of the town. Prasiai was fortified in the 5th century BC, and in 430 and 414 suffered destruction by the Athenians and Argives.

### **Polichne**

4 km south of Prasiai on the hill of Vigla, rising above the sea, was a fortified settlement that has been identified as Polichne. It existed in the Classical and Hellenistic periods.

### **Tyros**

On the hill of Kastro, above the Tyros-Sapounakeika coast, are the remains of a fortified habitation of the Hellenistic and Roman periods that can be identified as the small town of Tyros. The name of the ancient village has survived in the modern village of Tyros. The existence of the sanctuary of Tyritas on Prophitis Ilias, not far from Kastro, supports the identification of the remains on Kastro as those of the ancient town.

### **Glyppia**

Between the villages of Ay. Basileios and Platanaki, in the locality of Kastro, are the remains of a town of the Hellenistic and Roman periods that has been identified as Glyppia. The geographical position of Glyppia had great strategic importance for Argos, for it was close to the Laconian border and controlled the natural pass over Parnon from Cynuria to Sparta. From 338 BC until the Roman conquest of Greece Glyppia was a garrison outpost of Argos on the Spartan border. The Argives must have fortified the hill at the beginning of the 3rd century BC. In Byzantine times there was a settlement on the hill.

### **Unidentified settlements**

In the interior of Prasiai remains have been found of settlements of the prehistoric and historical periods. Their names are unknown, but they were certainly inhabited by stock-farmers who abandoned them during the winter months. There was one at Sovala Prastou belonging to the Bronze Age. A mound some 20 m in diameter and 1-2 m high was the cemetery of the settlement. The dwellings were scattered over the sides of the mound and it is interesting that some of them occupied the same sites as the huts and sheepfolds of the modern herdsmen of the region.

At Paliochori, in the locality of Kotroni, there must also have been a Bronze Age settlement. In the locality of Little Tourla, as well as at other places, Mycenaean tombs with important vases have been found.

At the locality of Kornitsa at Vaskina there are remains of a small Bronze Age establishment. Above Kornitsa, in the locality of Kotroni, Mycenaean tombs containing notable vases have been found in the past.

At Pigadi Kosma, on the hill of Viglitsa, there was an Early Helladic settlement.

## **CAVES**

The terrain and rock types of Cynuria were conducive to the formation of caves. Some were used as refuges or habitations in antiquity; two large ones were in use over a long period of time and three other smaller ones for shorter periods. A large number of small caves were used in antiquity by herdsmen as habitations and for penning their flocks, particularly in the winter pastures on the coastal belt of Cynuria.

### **Cave of Sintza, Leonidion**

This is near the monastery of Ay. Nikolaos Sintzas and was used at times as a refuge and habitation from the Neolithic to the Byzantine periods. There is a massive retaining wall of large stones at the mouth of the cave, which creates a flat terrace leading to the entrance.

The cave is 90 m long and the width varies from 6 to 19 m; at the point where the central chamber joins a large hall the width reaches 30 m. The total area is 740 m<sup>2</sup>. The whole central chamber is generally accessible and slopes gently down some 3 m from the entrance; over a large part of it there are fine stalactites and stalagmites. Pottery coated with a stalagmitic deposit is scattered along most of the length of the cave.

The difficult approach and the existence of other caves in the neighbourhood made it an ideal refuge for the inhabitants of Prasiai. Pausanias writes that at Prasiai he was shown the cave where according to tradition Ino nurtured Dionysus. The archaeological finds have not so far produced any positive evidence for the identification of the cave of Sintza as the cult cave mentioned by Pausanias, which perhaps should be sought for at some other point in the Sintza ravine.

### **Cave of Asoula**

The cave of Asoula is near the village of Charadros. At its mouth there is a retaining wall, as at the cave of Sintza, which holds back the earth and forms a level terrace 10.50 m long and 1-2 m wide in front of the entrance. The cave is at least 52 m long and the width is 2.10-3 m wide. 5.40 m from the entrance is a square water cistern with sides 2.36 m long belonging to the Roman or Early Christian period. From the pottery that has so far been found, the cave

was apparently used at intervals as a refuge or habitation from the Neolithic to the Early Christian period.

### **Cave of Prosilia**

Near the village of Prosilia, Kato Doliana, is a small cave called the Trypa tou Karzi. From the few examples of pottery found there it seems to have been used in the Late Roman period by the inhabitants of the small settlement that existed at the locality of Leveti.

### **Cave of Karakovouni**

There are two shallow caves at the locality of Skylochori of Karakovouni. The little pottery found in them indicates that it was used in antiquity chiefly as a habitation by herdsmen with their flocks.

## **CULTS AND SANCTUARIES**

In Cynuria we know that there existed cults of Maleatas, Tyritas, Asclepius Polemocrates, the Cynegetes, Dionysus, Athena, Achilles, Ino, the Dioscuri, Poseidon and Hermes. These deities had sanctuaries, some of which have been located. The cults of Maleatas and Tyritas (sanctuaries at Kosmas and Tyros) were connected with the pre-Dorian strata of the population. When the official cult of the Twelve Gods prevailed, Maleatas and Tyritas were identified with Apollo and retained their original names as epithets. A sanctuary dedicated to the pre-Dorian god Parparo, who was also identified in historical times with Apollo, was found at Xerokampi.

The cult of Asclepius (sanctuary at Eua and Prasiai) was widespread in Cynuria, particularly at Eua, where there was the important Asclepieion of Polemocrates. The Cynegetes (cult at Eua) were visionary beings connected with Asclepius and Maleatas.

Dionysus was worshipped at Prasiai, where according to a local tradition he was cast up by the waves with his mother Semele. Dionysus was nurtured in a cave at Prasiai by Ino. The plain with the vines at Prasiai was known as the "garden of Dionysus".

The cults of Achilles (sanctuary and annual festival at Prasiai) and Ino (cave sanctuary at Prasiai) were also ancient. The Dioscuri were worshipped at Prasiai, and Athena must also have been worshipped there and perhaps even at Eua, where a seated, probably cult statue of the goddess has been found.

Poseidon was worshipped at Genethlion, while at Dine, a fresh-water spring in the sea, the Argives sacrificed horses wearing bridles. At the locality of Phonemeni there were three stone piles, roadside shrines of Hermes.

In the district of Elliniko Astrous at the locality of Anemomylos, some 400 m from Teichio, are preserved the crepis and orthostat of a temple of the 2nd half of the 4th century BC belonging to a deity whose identity is at present unknown. From this temple comes a tile with a stamp, perhaps Late Hellenistic in date, bearing the words *EYATAN ΔΑΜΟΣΙΟΙ*, meaning public tiles from Eua. This inscription has caused some confusion among scholars, because they identified the settlement at Teichio as Eua, on the basis of misleading information given by the first person to study the inscription, who mentioned Teichio as the place where it was found.

#### **WATCHTOWERS AND ISOLATED FORTIFICATION WORKS**

Watchtowers have been found at six places in Cynuria to date. They were fortified towers whose purpose was to control the passes and signal messages by beacon fires. Some of them are on the Cynurian border, others in the interior. The garrisons used these towers as living quarters or as refuges in times of need, and were thus able to control the surrounding countryside and even to exact dues from whoever came over the passes they controlled.

The towers so far located are square or round and date to the 5th and 4th century or the beginning of the 3rd century BC. Some must have been built by the Spartans (Xeropigado 1, Xylopyrgos, Anemomylos), and others by the Argives (Xeropigado 2, Elliniko Charadrou, Tserpho). The guardpost at Spathokommeno was also probably built by the Argives.

Near Elaiochori is a wall of unworked stones, 1.80 m wide, running some 500 m to the slopes of the height of Roina at Parthenion. This wall seems in antiquity to have acted as a convenient but stable demarcation wall marking the boundary between the states of Argos and Tegea.

Remains of a similar wall, 50 m long, also exist in the locality of Panitsa at Ay. Andreas. This wall might have been a boundary wall between Thyreatis and Prasiai in those times, when Thyreatis and Prasiai belonged to different states.

## ROAD NETWORK

Ancient Cynuria had easy sea communications with the coast of the Gulf of Argolid, the Cyclades and the other islands of the Aegean. Its shores were accessible to the Minoans and Phoenicians. In the interior as well, in spite of the many mountains with deep narrow gorges, there was a well developed road network that was in many cases suitable for carts.

Cynuria was linked to Argos by two roads, one of which, along the coast, coincided for the most part with the present motorway. It was also connected with Tegea by two roads coincided, at least where they came out, with the two modern motorways. There were three roads to Sparta.

In addition to the mule tracks there were also wagon roads, the most important of which came from Tsiorovo and followed the route: Kourmeki – Loukou (Eua) – Elliniko Astrous (Thyrea) – Xerokampi – Moni Malevis – Phonemeni (Ermai) – Karyes – Sparta. From Tsiorovo the road continued on to Argos as a mule track, according to present evidence. A road forking off at Phonemeni followed the Zygo and ended at Tegea. The cart roads can be traced chiefly from the wheel ruts, which were called *αρματοτροχιαί* or *αμαξοτροχιαί*.

The choice of routes for the road network was influenced as much by the existence of springs of water along the way as by the suitability of the terrain. We found that there were plenty of springs along the ancient roads, and that where they were lacking, the need of water was met by wells or even rainwater cisterns.

## GENERAL CONCLUSIONS

In conclusion, we found that the principal settlements in Cynuria, with the exception of Thyrea, grew up along the coast (Astron, Anthene, Tyros, Prasiai, Polichne) and were fortified in historical times, and that some of them had harbours. There were three fortified places in the interior: Thyrea, Tsiorovos on Zavitsa and Glyppia. The fortification of Glyppia and the station at Tsiorovo must have been due to the important strategic positions they occupied. The settlement at Tsiorovo was fortified by the Spartans in the 5th century BC, because it was the most advanced outpost on the Argolid side, and Glyppia was fortified later by the Argives for the same reason.

At least some of the mountain settlements and stations were abandoned in the winter, when their nomadic inhabitants went down to the winter pastures on the coastal

belt of Cynuria and even Laconia. We do not know for certain whether there were similar stations on the winter pastures, but most probably the greater part of the nomadic population scattered to different places. Some would have remained close to the permanent coastal settlements, while others separately or in groups moved to the pastures on the lower slopes of the mountains, and to caves, etc.

The economy was based on the different primary sectors of production: stock-rearing, agriculture and fishing. In the secondary sector there was also craft production (bronze-smiths, potters, etc.), and in the tertiary there were commercial trade and piracy. Such manufacturing as there was satisfied the needs of the local population. From the archaeological finds we know that there were pottery workshops at Eua, Thyrea and Marmaralona at Ay. Petros, and a workshop for making bronze and iron artifacts in the sanctuary of Tyritas. The olive presses and flour mills processed the natural products into food. There is archaeological evidence for commercial trade with Crete and the Cyclades in prehistoric times, and in subsequent periods with Corinth, Sparta, Argos, Athens and Cnidus in Asia Minor.

Until the 7th century Cynuria was apparently autonomous, but from the Archaic to the Roman period it followed either Argos or Sparta culturally and politically, depending on which of these two cities it was subject to at the time. Nevertheless it retained certain individual peculiarities in its way of life, cults and customs, due to the nature of its terrain. This factor also played a decisive role in the preservation of the identity of the region in later times, as can be seen in the survival of a corrupt form of the Dorian dialect in Tsakonia, the central part of Cynuria, up to the present day.