

II. ABTEILUNG

Adam Izdebski, *A rural economy in transition: Asia Minor from Late Antiquity into the early Middle Ages*. *Journal of Juristic Papyrology, Supplement 18*. Warsaw, 2013. 261 p. 9 colour maps, 21 figures. ISBN 978–83–925919–8–6.

At the end of the fifth century, Anatolia was a prosperous region at the heart of the Roman Empire with numerous cities supported by the rural economy. By the end of the ninth century, it was a frontier zone regularly devastated by Arab raiders and the world of classical cities had been destroyed. Izdebski's book, a revised version of his 2011 PhD from the University of Warsaw, examines the archaeological and palynological evidence for this period of transition. The focus is firmly on western and central Anatolia, so areas to the east of Cilicia, Cappadocia, and Pontus are rarely mentioned.

The first part of the book, in four chapters, describes the archaeological evidence, looking first at ceramics, then at examples of rural church building and rural fortifications before a concluding chapter. The chapter on the ceramics is very up to date, covering the transformations of our knowledge in the past two decades in which we have started to acquire some understanding of ceramic types from the middle of the seventh century onwards. This varies by region, and central Anatolia is still particularly poorly known, though as Izdebski shows the south coast is much better understood. The next chapter, on rural fortifications, deftly demonstrates the near absence of evidence (without excavation) for dating the majority of the 'hilltop refuges', though concluding that they certainly fit the historical context. A solid set of arguments are marshaled for the rejection of Foss and Winfield's suggestions of dating walls by facing materials (48–50). Good use is made of the *Tabula Imperii Byzantini* data here, though with a full awareness of the strengths and limitations of this project. The next chapter, on rural churches, is rather short since there are very few excavated or standing examples beyond Dereağzı. These two chapters provide useful summaries, though the temporal and spatial coverage is so great that they are best thought of as guidelines to the evidence rather than as regional summaries. Much of our ignorance comes from the lack of excavated rural sites (a distinct contrast to the Balkans), a direct result of the Turkish archaeological permit system's preference for long-term excavations at large sites, especially cities.

The second part of the book focuses on palynological evidence. The first chapter in this part describes in detail how pollen analysis works. This is a very good introduction, clearly written and highly recommended, though it is un-

fortunate that some of the references to process of pollen analysis are to works in Polish, probably inaccessible to most readers. After this introduction, in a second chapter Izdebski works his way through a number of pollen cores, reanalyzing some of the Dutch work from the 1960s onwards to make the results directly comparable with other more recent projects; although the datasets can be compared, dating the earlier works is sometimes difficult since, as Izdebski points out, these cores generally have fewer radiocarbon dates than is now considered ideal. Many of these cores document the characteristic Beyşehir Occupation Phase, an assemblage of agricultural types associated with classical farming including cereals, vines, olives, and nuts. This phase ends at different dates in the different sites discussed, i. e. it is not a single contemporary horizon found across many sites like the Santorini tephra layer. However, at some sites, like Köyceğiz, Bafa, and Bereket, it ends as early as the third or fourth century. Izdebski's summary of the pollen analysis in the third chapter in this part thus shows that there were great changes in Anatolia agriculture during the fifth to ninth centuries, but also that it is difficult to extract a simple spatial or chronological pattern from this data.

As a statement of our current understanding of both the archaeological and the palynological evidence for this region in late antiquity, Izdebski's work is excellent. Unfortunately, it is not as strong when it comes to answering the questions raised by the book's title. The approach taken results in two related questions being tackled simultaneously, one being the relationship of changes in agriculture to the collapse of the Roman Empire in the seventh century, the other being the impact of climate change on the agricultural practices of late antiquity. Despite the title Izdebski pays very little attention to 'the rural economy' so the pollen cores are used mainly to show change in climate and in pollen signatures over the time period studied. There are many useful observations such as the suggestion at Lake Abant between Paphlagonia and Bithynia that the pastoral economy might have been quite important in the fourth and fifth centuries (186–190). Few of these observations are followed up in great detail, and in particular, it is difficult to interpret how a hotter, wetter, or drier climate might have affected agriculture. Many of the pollen cores collected come from upland areas, a necessary consequence of the mechanics of deposition and recovery. However, they need to be considered in conjunction with the fact that both the rural economy and agriculture at higher elevations can vary greatly from practices at lower elevations, since temperatures drop by 6 degrees Celsius for every 1000 m. Both variations of altitude and annual variations of weather may be far more significant to agricultural patterns in the *longue durée* than changes in average annual temperatures, though instability of weather patterns is also of great significance (cf. McCormick et al., *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 2012). Thus, to assess

the impact of these changes on the rural economy, a far more detailed picture is needed examining regional agricultural patterns over several centuries. The late Roman and early medieval rural economy was not static, but changed continuously, not just in response to climate and military events, but also in terms of changes in tastes and in markets. Izdebski's work does not answer these sorts of questions, but proves a much firmer foundation for those who wish to do so.

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Angeliki Laiou (†) / Cécile Morisson (éd.), *Le Monde byzantin, tome 3: Byzance et ses voisins 1204–1453*. Avec la collaboration de Michel Ballard, Ivan Božilov, Marie-Hélène Congourdeau, Sergei Karпов, Ivana Jevtić, Jacques Lefort, Ljubomir Maksimović, Brigitte Mondrain, Jean-Michel Spieser, Élisabeth Zachariadou. Nouvelle Clio. Paris, Presses Universitaires de France 2011. LXX, 449 S. 11 Karten. ISBN 978–2–13–052008–5.

Dieser Band schließt das in der Reihe Nouvelle Clio seit 2004 erschienene, doch bereits 1990 konzipierte Geschichtswerk (mit Handbuchcharakter) „Die byzantinische Welt“ ab. Es zielt darauf ab, wie schon Hartmut Leppin in seiner Besprechung¹ der beiden ersten, in den Jahren 2004 und 2006 erschienenen und von C. Morisson bzw. J.-C. Cheynet² herausgegebenen Bände betont hat, „den Stand der Forschung zu vermitteln und auf dieser Grundlage fortgeschrittenen Studierenden und Gelehrten eine breit angelegte, den aktuellen Forschungsproblemen angemessene Orientierung zu vermitteln“ (253). Dabei fügte er mit Recht hinzu: „Das ist im Falle der byzantinischen Geschichte angesichts des sich rapide beschleunigenden Prozesses der Spezialisierung in der Forschung besonders wichtig“ (253). Schon sei festgehalten: Mit Erscheinen des dritten Bandes liegt immerhin das – nach Ostrogorsky – weit und breit erste, neu konzipierte historische Handbuch zu „Byzanz“ bzw. zur „byzantinischen Welt“ vor, das, bezeichnender Weise von einem ganzen Expertenteam verfasst, erfolgreich abgeschlossen wurde. Dieses Ereignis sollte man vielleicht auch einmal erfreut registrieren, ehe man, wie kürzlich geschehen, den Schlussband nur verhalten

     

 ihm war die Herausgeberschaft des zweiten Bandes in Nachfolge des plötzlich im Jahr  verstorbenen Nikos Oikonomides übertragen worden.