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SETTLEMENT AND DEFENCE
OF BYZANTINE AND LONGOBARD
NORTHERN AND CENTRAL ITALY

by

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Vol I

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"They are ill discoverers that think there is
no land, when they can see nothing but sea."

(Francis Bacon, 1561-1626)

ABSTRACT

This thesis considers the patterns of settlement in Northern and Central Italy during the Byzantine and Longobard epochs, with close attention to the form of military occupation along the various provincial borders.

Chapter One considers aspects of both Byzantine and Longobard military organisation, in particular the question of Byzantine mobility and military landholding, and the origin of the Longobard arimanni.

Chapter Two is divided into three sections: the first concerns the function and strategy of the fortifications and defensive systems of early medieval Italy and compares this to the pattern in Byzantine Africa; the second discusses the evidence for 'unofficial', non-military or refuge sites in the Alpine lands and throughout Italy; and the third describes the form of various defended settlements, considering their circuits and internal structurings.

In Chapter Three the evolution of the defensive systems in the Alps is traced from those erected by Rome and then the Ostrogoths, to those of Byzantium and the Longobards.

Chapter Four expands the framework of Chapter Three, by discussing in detail the historical and archaeological evidence for the various regions of the Italian Alps in late antiquity, and also considers the data for Noricum, Pannonia and Istria.

The fifth chapter investigates the defensive lines and settlement changes that developed in the patchwork of territories that arose within Italy as a result of the Byzantine-Longobard wars, again combining the

historical and archaeological data. It also contains an introductory discussion on the effects of the Longobard invasion and expansion on the administration of the imperial possessions.

The Conclusion briefly summarises the study.

PREFACE AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Throughout this thesis the term Longobard - as opposed to Lombard - has been employed in order to correspond more accurately with the ancient name for this tribe, and to avoid confusion with inhabitants of modern Lombardy (cf. Blake 1981). Much of my source material (where not Latin sources) was written in Italian, and some names may therefore appear in their Italian form - this is certainly the case for the names of churches and buildings. Place names are, however, anglicised, and when in their Latin or Greek forms are underlined. Latin references are also underlined, except when extensive quotes are used, and some Greek names appear in transliterated form, in particular in the notes. In the text the terms castra, castella, castelli are used: the first two appear when sites are named as such in the ancient sources, while castello and castelli are used for medieval castles and forts or sites lacking ancient documentation, or when these form part of a site's modern name. Quotes from modern authors are in English or translated into English.

The source of all maps, figures plans and photographs are given where appropriate. In the notes pers. obs. indicates personal observations and pers. comm. indicates information not directly collated by the author.

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INTRODUCTION

Italy formed a relative backwater to the Byzantine Empire after its eventual conquest from the Ostrogoths in 554 and gradually was further distanced from Constantinople with the advent of the Longobard hordes and their rapid expansion in the peninsula. As Byzantine interest waned the remaining imperial territories adapted to the chronic insecurity, coming to counteract Longobard encroachments through a consistent process of militarisation whereby military concerns and defensive needs became priorities for Byzantine survival. It is the physical and structural responses to this insecurity by the Byzantine Italian administration, and indeed by the Longobard kingdom, in the Alps and in their opposing provinces that are considered in this study.

The period discussed covers the epochs of full Byzantine and Longobard occupation in Italy, beginning from the close of Procopius' narrative of the Gothic War in 554 and ending with the fall of the Longobard kingdom in 774. However, in order to make use of the documentary evidence of Cassiodorus and Procopius in connection with the defence and settlement of post-Roman Italy, discussion extends back to the period of Ostrogothic domination, and also, in connection with the Alpine frontier zones, back to the defensive measures of Rome.

Despite the adequate historical framework the limited early medieval archaeology of the peninsula has been unsatisfactorily used to expand and enhance the available picture, a situation which this present study will hopefully go some way to correcting.

Geographically the research centres on Upper Italy, that is the regions north of Rome up to the Alpine ridges, although occasionally

drawing upon evidence from the south when results of surveys or excavations merit attention. The area chosen is partially dictated by the sources: while Procopius chiefly considers the southern half of the peninsula and the area of Rome in particular in his De Bello Gothico, both Cassiodorus, and, more importantly, Paul the Deacon - our main source of Longobard history - dwell predominantly on Northern Italy. Similarly the archaeological evidence, composed principally of Longobard tombs (stray or in cemeteries) - which at present form our principal source of closely datable material - has been best collated and investigated in areas north of the Po plain, notably Lombardy and Friuli: southwards such evidence is greatly restricted and allows little chronological determination of settlement changes. Likewise the few excavations which have concerned late antique urban and fortification sites have chiefly occurred in the sub-Alpine zone.

The period was one of great military disruption, with the Longobard expansion rapidly following on from the devastation of the Gothic War in a land barely capable of supporting continued warfare. These struggles were such that society itself became militarised, to the extent that the study of the settlement coincides with the study of the defences.

Early investigation regarding Byzantine and Longobard settlement and defence were based heavily on the documentary sources, and contained two basic flaws: firstly, through the absence of standing remains of this epoch, Italy was considered in the light of evidence from Africa; and secondly, historians like Hartmann and Schneider sought Byzantine origins to fortifications attested as held by the Longobard, and rarely considered earlier origins except where documentation allowed. This view has largely persisted, despite the fact that Italy patently lacks the evidence of the

reconquered Byzantine province of Africa as described in Procopius' De Aedificiis, and as scrutinised by scholars like Diehl and lately Pringle.

Recent studies, however, in particular that of Brown, have reacted against this accepted picture: these, stressing the economic poverty of Byzantine Italy, have rejected the view of Byzantine activities in erecting new forts, demonstrating that the evidence of Procopius documents the earlier presence of numerous fortified sites and towns.

Clarification of this situation comes from the integration of varied sources: i) ancient and medieval historical and geographical sources, to which one can perhaps tie ii) the study of the toponymy of the relevant zones which can yield occasional but significant traces of both Longobard and Byzantine presence; iii) archaeological data, principally derived from the excavation of tombs and cemeteries, which provide tentative indications regarding the location and mode of related settlements. Too often, however, firm conclusions are drawn from the tomb evidence, in particular the equation of Longobard tombs with Longobard fortifications, even if the burials are distinctly non-military in character and unassociated with attested defensive locations. Settlement excavations as yet remain limited, although the detailed investigations at Luni, Castelseprio, Verona and Torcello for instance have furnished significant details regarding both military and civil settlement in the 5th-7th centuries. Simultaneously regional field surveys, which formerly concentrated heavily on the Roman occupation patterns, now more extensively consider the problems of late Roman-early medieval settlement transition in Italy, although such surveys at present have a Central-Southern Italian bias; iv)

iv) Published works: as noted, early studies on this period of Italian history drew their evidence from the ancient and medieval documentation and often consisted of arguments based on place name evidence; however, with the notable exception of Bognetti, it is only recently that historians have begun to integrate many fields of study to provide detailed works on social (Wickham 1981), urban (Ward-Perkins 1984) and military (Brown 1978, 1984) history; v) Personal observation of sites and museums.

One of the major problems in early medieval Italian archaeology is the absence of a dated ceramic sequence between the disappearance of the supply of African red-slip ware (ARS) to Italy by c.600/625 and the advent of sparse-glazed ware in the 9th century. Even the fine, glazed ceramic known as Forum Ware may not pre-date the 8th century (see Appendix 1). Likewise in Longobard contexts, after their distinct Pannonian stamped wares disappear from grave assemblages in c.600, we possess only coarse wares broadly datable to the 'late antique era' - although their metal-work allows a close chronology for their tombs (Appendix 3). The absence of grave goods in Byzantine and Christian Italian tombs further hampers dating of non-Longobard deposits, which in many cases rely on chance finds like coins.

The final, notable problem lies in the lack of survival of structures of this period beyond the religious buildings which have persisted in many Italian towns and cities. Most sites have witnessed a continuous occupation and in the case of many fortresses and upland settlements considered here, this post-Roman phase of occupation often marked only the initial step in a long line of site evolution. For the most part therefore Byzantine-Longobard structures lie deeply buried below centuries of reconstruction and growth. It is only in the few cases where this process did

not materialise for one reason or another (destruction, abandonment, gradual decay, loss of role, replacement, etc.) that detailed excavations have occurred (Castelseprio, Invillino, Luni, Torcello, Zignago).

Due to the disparate nature of the evidence the two main chapters which consider the defence and settlement of the Alps, and of the provinces within Italy respectively, are divided into separate sections which discuss the history and archaeology of each individual region. This allows greater opportunity to understand the politico-military significance of each zone and to recognise their responses in terms of settlement throughout this period.

Brown (1984, p.42) has recently stated that 'No detailed survey has attempted to relate research on settlements and fortified sites to Byzantine military policy as a whole.' This study, also considering the pattern of Longobard occupation, hopefully goes some way towards filling that gap.

VOLUME I

CHAPTER ONE

ASPECTS OF THE BYZANTINE AND LONGOBARD MILITARY ORGANISATION IN ITALY

It is not necessary to discuss here the composition of the Byzantine and Longobard armies in Italy: the former has been concisely discussed by late 19th century scholars like Diehl and Hartmann, and more recently scrutinised by Pertusi and Brown in particular, while the latter has received attention from Schneider and Bertolini. Nonetheless considerations must be made in those areas which chiefly interest our topic, most notably the form of the military presence or garrisons to be expected within those castra and castella involved in the active defence of the frontiers on the respective sides. In the first section, centering on the Byzantine forces, the discussion focusses principally on the question of limitanei and of the localisation of troops in Italy, basically developing ideas expounded by Brown; the second part concerns the evidence for Longobard arimanni, and the extent of the romanisation of the Longobard army.

(a) Aspects of Byzantine Defence

Brown has neatly summarised the strategy of the Italian Wars of the 6th century: 'To a large extent the Gothic War was dominated by sieges and the defence of strongholds, and a misleading impression is conveyed by the elaborate descriptions of set-piece battles in the Histories of Procopius and Agathias ... The nature of warfare was generally similar in the next onslaught to befall Italy, the Longobard invasions. There were few field campaigns and the emphasis lay in the capture of strongholds'.¹ Significantly, two official military treatises of the latter 6th-early 7th century, the anonymous de re strategica, and the Strategicon or

Ars militaris of Mauricius or pseudo-Maurice, recommend against the use of large forces in open battle, preferring their setting in defence of trenches and fortifications; additionally they describe the flight of the people of the land into the strong towns and fortresses when the alarm of enemy approach was given.² The reference in the Strategicon to ξανθοι or 'fair-haired barbarians' undoubtedly shows its preoccupation with Italy and the Longobards.³

No mention is made concerning garrison forces and sizes, but some authors consider the numerus or bandon (c.200-400/500 men) as the basic garrison unit, extrapolated from the various numeri recorded in the Byzantine centres of Rome, Ravenna and Grado (suggesting garrisons of c.1,200-1,500, 4,200-5,600 and 900-1,200 respectively). Each numerus and its garrison point lay under a tribunus, who was subordinate to the dux or magister militum stationed at the focus of each territorial sector; a dux commanded the garrison at the larger castra.⁴

However, the assumption of one numerus per stronghold as a garrison yields, if we use the figures in George of Cyprus' Italian lists - themselves incomplete - of 40 castra and 33 other centres, a total army figure far in excess of the peninsula's economic capacity. Brown summarises the problem thus: 'This approach has its drawbacks, however, particularly the absence of a systematic collection of references to numeri and their distribution over a wide timespan and over unrepresentative areas; the garrison of Rome is hardly likely to have been less than a third of that of Ravenna, and it can give no indication of garrison sizes in poorly-documented country areas, where in any case the division between regular troops and the ordinary inhabitants may have been less pronounced ...'⁵ Indeed, recorded numeri relate primarily to imperial castra or

civitates (numeri Centumcellensium, Argentensium, Ariminensium) and offer figures comparable to those recorded by Procopius for the Gothic War.⁶

In contrast, lesser fortifications or castella of a purely military function perhaps possessed only minimal or even nominal garrisons, sometimes as few as the 60 soldiers recorded by Cassiodorus defending the Augustanis Clusuris.⁷ In the case of castra responsible for significant sectors of defence, such as island sites like Comacina and San Giulio, or landed positions as Castelseprio and Surianum, however, full numeri should be expected, although the evidence for these is absent - instead, toponymic traces recording bandi are known from the vicinity of lesser forts, such as M.Castello, Varazze and San Nicolo in Liguria.⁸

We have no figures relating to garrisons in Longobard fortifications in Italy, though we should presume a close correlation with the Byzantine numbers in how the invaders appear to have generally adopted wholesale the existing fortifications, replacing the old garrison troops with their own. We shall discuss Longobard military structurings shortly.

Much discussion has concerned the composition of the imperial troops which formed these garrisons, and in particular the extent to which they were based on late Roman models of frontier guards. The recent detailed study by Brown has clarified many relevant problems, but it is worth repeating here some of his conclusions in order to draw a picture of the form of military settlement in Byzantine Italy, before attempting to relate this with the pattern in the Longobard provinces.

The great scholars of the late 19th and early 20th centuries (Hartmann, Diehl, Schneider) postulated, chiefly on the basis of the documentary evidence for Byzantine Africa, the stationing along the Alpine frontiers of Byzantine Italy post-553 of farmer-soldiers, following the

model of the late Roman limitanei, and organised within a framework of four Alpine duchies. The Longobard invasion of 568 cut short this frontier arrangement, but the pattern was supposedly extended as the Byzantine-Longobard borders grew more rigid: troops were thus posted in forts as garrisons, and for their maintenance were allocated plots of land to cultivate themselves, donated either from the properties of the state or from the patrimonies of the Church. In effect these scholars considered that the constitutions sent to Belisarius by Justinian at the conquest of Africa were transplanted wholesale to Italy.⁹ The garrisons subsequently were seen as merging with the local civilian inhabitants, who had inherited certain obligations of self-defence from the later Roman period, and gradually each town came to be dominated by an all-embracing exercitus of garrison troops. In time these troops also combined with the landowning class, the possessores, who had formed the backbone of the local municipal councils. Finally, the State set the seal on this process by attaching an obligation of military service to the possession of land.¹⁰

However, documentation ill-supports the claims of Hartmann and Schneider for Italy, and a different explanation for the extensive military land-owning is possible. Brown indeed notes the total absence of references to limitanei in Italy, and the fact that the 5th century legal texts show them solely in the East. As he points out, 'Justinian's introduction of troops in Africa whose duties were "to defend the strongholds and cities of the frontier and to cultivate the lands" is a dangerous analogy, since he also provided for regular troops (comitatenses). The archaeological and epigraphic evidence from Cyrenaica to the East suggests that the policy may have been to use fortified farm-houses manned by kastresiano (limitanei) along the frontier with the desert tribes but to

use comitatenses or regulars as garrisons for the major centres and as a mobile striking force. Whether the African frontier troops were closer to the tribal auxiliaries (gentiles) used earlier in Roman Africa or to the low-grade troops found in contemporary Egypt and Syria is unclear, but their chief functions were clearly the maintenance of internal order and the repelling of small-scale incursions. For defence-in-depth and for guarding strategic passes against a determined invader, garrisons of regular troops were deployed. Here the closest analogy to the Alpine passes may be the Armenian frontier with Persia, where Justinian garrisoned strongholds with regular troops. What is certainly clear is that frontier troops were unlikely to have been limitanei in the strict sense, especially since Justinian seems to have restricted the use of this type of force'.¹¹ Indeed, in the case of the Alpine frontier, the revolt of Sindual and his Heruls in 565 should register a defence based on regulars supported by federates or symmachoi, with the magister militum Sindual the commander of a duchy.¹²

The Longobard invasion certainly curtailed any possible limitanean operation, and the Byzantines, pushed back from their recent conquests, once more found themselves on a war-footing and facing a struggle comparable to the Gothic War but for which their resources were no longer adequate. Once again the resistance of fixed garrisons became paramount, and the persistence of the insecurity heightened their importance. The defensive systems instituted in the years after 568 grew fixed and were strengthened: the Longobard threat partly dissipated through their Frankish policy, and the vastness of their new borders, and also through the fickleness of the numerous dukes. At the same time, however, Byzantine strength, ill-supported by the East, had been totally exhausted through the Gothic-Frankish

struggles, hence leading to the drive 'to win over Longobard renegades and to secure Frankish intervention by diplomatic means' in the hope of maintaining an offensive.¹³

It was with 'the abandonment of these policies (that) a reduction in the scale of hostilities and an increased concentration on defensive garrison duties by the imperial forces in the 7th century produced conditions in which troops became closely identified with the towns in which they were stationed and developed an interest in acquiring land'.¹⁴ From the numerous contracts from Ravenna and Rome noting land-owning milites, nothing shows a compulsion 'applied by the State on the church to rent out lands, or for any obligation of military service'. Indeed the fact that the army began to take a growing share in land ownership stems principally from their being in receipt of 'fairly regular pay and perquisites and were exempted from poll-tax, and were thus able to purchase land' easily at a time when 'increasing insecurity, falling prices and the high incidence of taxation forced many civilian land-owners to sell their lands, often simply to pay their taxes'.¹⁵

Military landholding therefore 'derived from a haphazard process in which soldiers were able to exploit their official position in order to gratify their social and economic ambitions'. This gradual accumulation of landed wealth among the military naturally meant the increasing dominance and influence of this class over the population in the imperial territories. Simultaneously this portrays a patchy but persistent growth of militarisation and denies a sudden imposition of a thematic organisation of the land of Italy based on limitanei, as visualised by Hartmann.¹⁶

Furthermore, the evaporation of supplies and reinforcements from the East, added to the greatly reduced employment of mercenaries (of Longobard

stock) in the 7th century, led naturally to a greater reliance on local manpower to bolster remaining imperial forces within Italy: locals were undoubtedly recruited for garrisons within their home territories, and the preservation of lands purchased by them there was clearly an incentive for good service. By the late 7th century we should imagine that 'most soldiers could have lived off the produce and rents of their lands, as the settled troops of Egypt and Syria had done a century earlier', but here as regulars and not limitanei.¹⁷ Pertusi summarises this pattern of localisation of the army thus: 'With the progressive reduction of the financial resources of the Byzantine emperors ... the troops stationed in Italy assumed an increasingly local character both in their recruitment and their hierarchy, remaining only in appearance organic units of the imperial army ...'.¹⁸

Uncertain is the extent to which this localisation affected the performance of the Byzantine forces in Italy. Brown has argued the case for continued mobility of the widely scattered imperial troops, going against the view of Stein that only part of the Exarchal troops at Ravenna constituted an expeditionary force which no longer operated after the peace treaty of 680.¹⁹

Certainly the campaigns into occupied territory, most notably those undertaken by the exarchs Romanus and Callinicus along the Amerina and in the Po valley respectively, the struggles against Ariulf duke of Spoleto, and Callinicus' conflict with the Slav invaders of Istria in 599, demonstrate an active offensive policy on the part of the imperials into the late 6th century.²⁰ Yet these instances mark the final phase of Byzantine offensives against the Longobards, and indeed were determined for the most part by a need to consolidate their remaining possessions, and in the case

of the 593 campaign against Ariulf Romanus was charged with the reestablishment of the vital Rome-Ravenna land-corridor. No additional advantages were gained as a result.²¹ Similarly the campaigns by Callinicus in the Po valley appear to have been temporary gains which, combined with the evidence for a push into Picenum Suburbicarium, may have been no more than the acquisition of territorial bargaining blocks in preparation for peace negotiations.²² We have in addition noted already Byzantine strategy between 576 and 591 which sought both Frankish armed support from over the Alps, and defections among the Longobard dukes, both prompted by weighty tributes in gold: both methods yielded insubstantial results, whether short-term gains or successes which could not be maintained through the subsequent evaporation of the support. Once the Longobards - considered initially as merely a passing threat - had shown themselves resolute in their occupation of Italy, and barely disrupted by Byzantine gold or arms, the imperial authorities necessarily shifted to a primarily defensive policy: treaties were sought, and frontiers and defensive lines were drawn up and tightened.²³

Although Brown shows some continued troop mobility, subsequent offensive campaigns are not apparent.²⁴ Indeed the majority of references concern internal 'campaigns', with marches between Rome and Ravenna to settle internal wrangles, although a few 8th century instances show a recovery of lands lost to the Longobards.²⁵ The expedition of Constans in 663 is a notable exception, however, being an external attack force from the East, although Italian troops were no doubt included.

On occasions of major Longobard penetration, however, the imperial troops appear slow in responding to the threat: in 643 Rothari and his army was checked in a pitched battle on the Panaro (Scultenna) on the

western border of the Exarchate, but perhaps only after the Byzantines had lost Oderzo, the maritime province of Liguria (whose resistance is undocumented), and even part of Emilia.²⁶ Similarly, Liutprand's forces were attacked only within the Pentapolis subsequent to his conquests in the 720s.²⁷

Nonetheless, as Brown rightly notes, 'there was no sharp distinction between "static" and "expeditionary" units at any time, and all forces could, and did, go out on campaign'. Troops were mustered, with 'the garrisons of local strongholds in each area assembling in a central rallying point before going off to war': this is best visible in 711 when the forces of the forts around Ravenna, namely Sarsina, Cervia, Forlimpopoli, Forli and Bologna were ordered to take up positions against an expected attack.²⁸ Rome formed an analogous rallying-point for Tuscia Romana and the Campagna.²⁹ He thus shows that contrary to the traditional picture, the 'local army units ... still constituted a distinct imperial body, with its own traditions and discipline. This together with their mobility, their responsiveness to commands from superiors and their adherence to accepted military procedure refute the view that the Byzantine army had degenerated to a mere social stratum composed of landowners who only fought part-time'.³⁰

Finally, comment can be made briefly on the reference by Brown to the 'Byzantine superiority in weaponry and discipline ... as a major explanation of their relative success in resisting the Longobards'.³¹ As noted, we are adequately informed on the army's strategy by the military treatises which register deficiencies in the Longobard temperament and mode of fighting and list strategical ploys with which to gain the upper hand; in doing so they suggest that the army remained disciplined enough to carry

out such tactics successfully. Unfortunately, however, the Strategicon considers solely the expeditionary troops, and, as shown, the degree of offensive mobility after the early 7th century, and thus after the compilation of the treatise, remains uncertain. Yet, by the time of the Rotharian conquests, after the prolonged peace should have enabled the erection of a suitably efficient defensive network of border defence on the part of the Byzantines, the Longobards could not be adequately matched, and clearly Byzantine resources were too limited to effect sufficiently measures advocated by the Strategists. Indeed, even when in 663 there arrived in Italy the Eastern invasion force under Constans, presumably a well-drilled, disciplined and practised army aware of Longobard tactics, Byzantine superiority failed to win through against a determined foe firmly settled in their new home.³²

The military treatises verify that the Byzantines still relied heavily on the cavalry which had served them well in Persia, Africa, and indeed against the Goths in Italy - a reliance further attested by the mobility of units.³³ The Longobards appear, from tomb finds, to have adopted cavalry more widely at a later date (early-mid. 7th century), when spurs and horse trappings are evident gravegoods, although the nobility in Pannonia possessed horse equipment from an early date; in fact 8th century legislation shows certain social categories as compelled to own and equip one or more horses, but the cessation of the custom of burial with gravegoods precludes archaeological verification of these late rankings. For the most part the Longobards showed typical Germanic preference for foot-soldiers heavily-armed with sword, lance and shield, lance alone, or just bows: Maurice's Strategicon refers to Longobard armament being solid, though poorer than that of the Byzantines, and notes

their skill with the lance, commenting that what they lacked in terms of organisation they made up for in audacity and numbers. All these weapon types are well attested in graves in both Italy and Pannonia, and clearly reflect the Longobard warrior aspect.³⁴ The Byzantine faith of course forbade the association of funerary gifts, thus depriving us of comparative artifactual evidence of imperial weaponry; however, a letter of pope Martin I records troops with lance, sword, bow and shield, arms in accord with the treatises.³⁵

Analysis of decorative styles in Longobard metalwork, in particular the buckles and brooches, has revealed the gradual assimilation of Byzantine-Mediterranean fashions beginning soon after their arrival and expansion in Italy. In terms of weapons and their accessories there is an evidently swift adoption of Italian styles to the detriment of the older forms: hence we see modifications to shields and lances, and in particular to belts, which adopt the style of the eastern multiple-belts. 'These innovations initially were owned chiefly by the nobles, being produced in the more precious metals, but rapidly they were disseminated in cheaper versions to lower strata of the Longobard population'.³⁶

In effect the superiority of Byzantine weaponry would have gradually declined as the Longobards quickly assimilated Italian fashions: the initial speed of this process is unclear, but appears relatively swift by the close of the 6th century. The Longobards were certainly not slow to learn, and the years of fighting both with and against the Byzantines in Italy should undoubtedly have levelled out any early imperial military superiority. Indeed, once the Byzantines ceased to be able to buy up the Franks, buy off the Longobards, pay off their dukes and hire up their mercenaries, and once the Longobards terminated their conflict with Francia

to the west and the Avars and Slavs to the east and could fully attend to Italian affairs, then the Greeks were always necessarily on the defensive, and any superiority they held in terms of weaponry and discipline would have soon been undermined.

(b) Aspects of the Longobard army

Under Justinian the regular Roman troops were reinforced by large numbers of barbarians who served as either foederati in regular formations, or symmachoi in their own ethnic units under their own leaders.³⁷ Among the latter were the Heruls, who fought against both the Ostrogoths and Franks in Italy, as well as in the East against Persia, and who appear, with their commander Sindual, magister militum, well-favoured by Narses.³⁸ The Longobards were likewise much used by Byzantine generals as a source of troops, but in Italy, their poor conduct and eagerness to plunder after the battle of Busta Gallorum forced Narses to send them home.³⁹ Nonetheless their fighting ability made up for their unruliness, for even after 568 they were still sought as mercenaries in both the East as also in Italy against their fellows. This source of manpower seems to have dried up in the early 7th century once the position of the Longobard kingdom was secured.⁴⁰

Widely recognised is the degree to which the Longobards took over those Roman administrative structures which survived in their newly-conquered territories. Their years of war-service with the imperial army undoubtedly accustomed them quickly to the tactics, techniques and overall military organisation of the Byzantines, and indeed with their arrival in Italy even the designations of their military gerarchy are Roman, with duces and comites most apparent.⁴¹ Similarly their 20 year occupation of the 'towns of Noricum and the strongholds of Pannonia' given them by

Justinian in 547-8 had already contributed much to the growing 'romanisation' of this warrior nation.⁴²

The old nomadic and warrior nature of the Longobards nonetheless was strongly dominant when king Alboin uprooted the whole population from their homes to march on Italy: hence we hear in the Prologue to the Edict of Rothari that Alboin 'exercitum ... in Italia adduxit'. As many authors have observed, 'the whole documentation related to the Longobard era confirms this constant qualification of exercitus with the gens Langobardorum'.⁴³

The basic element of the exercitus was the fara, and early Longobard settlement appears based on this unit. A contemporary of the invasion, Marius of Avenches, wrote that 'Alboenus ... cum omni exercitu ... in fara Italiam occupavit', while Paul the Deacon states that on entry into Venetia the king appointed his nephew Gisulf duke of Friuli and that as a condition the latter requested the choice of the best farae to aid him in establishing his duchy.⁴⁴ Paul, writing two centuries after the event, here recognises the word as somewhat outdated by qualifying it as 'generatio vel linea'. This same meaning is also apparent in the sole legal reference to this unit, Rothari 177 - De homine libero ut liceat eum migrare, which allowed a free man to move with royal license elsewhere in the Kingdom cum fara sua. These farae appear to have taken their name from the person acting as head of the clan or linea, or from one of its ancestors: by the time of Rothari the Latin genus may have replaced it: Bona records the farae Aldemari, Authereni, Warnefrid (Paul's family group), and also Gucing (from which came the first king, Agilmund), while Rothari came ex genere Harodus (The Harod fara?).⁴⁵ Bona describes the fara thus: 'a line held together by the bonds of family relationship'.⁴⁶ Such bonds explain

easily the wholesale migration of a fara as recorded in Rothari 177.⁴⁷

The social cohesion of such groups was carried forward into military affairs: although Marius' reference to the invasion in fara does not necessarily signify military groupings, nonetheless we have the evidence of the Strategicon which notes the Longobard method of fighting in groups of varied numeric consistency formed on the basis of mutual blood and sentimental ties; in addition Gregory's mention of Longobard mercenaries called Grusingi and Gaugingi may represent such farae.⁴⁸ Despite the lack of documentary evidence a military background and function for the fara is generally accepted, and is to some extent supported by both archaeological finds in Pannonia and Italy and toponymical indications in Italy.⁴⁹

Toponymy indeed presents many traces of farae, many still surviving, others only recorded as medieval land names: these indicators are spread thinly over Northern Italy in particular, but diminish southwards (e.g. Farra d'Isonzo, Ca Farra, Farra d'Alpago, Fara Vicentina, Fara d'Adda, Fara Novarese, Fara in Sabina). Too few survive to reveal a distinct military settlement pattern, although some studies attempt to link these with other Longobardic toponymic traces in order to locate lines of Longobard advance or communication.⁵⁰ Few individual sites have met archaeological investigation, but where this has occurred, as at Farra d'Isonzo, results do indeed show Longobard-period presence.

The extensive archaeology of Pannonia has yielded much evidence regarding Longobard social groupings, deduced principally from excavated cemeteries.⁵¹ Unfortunately some excavators have based their conclusions heavily on later documented social stratifications amongst the Longobards, in particular the laws of Astulf concerning the arms-bearing capabilities within each sect, laws which are two centuries older than the Pannonian

phase.⁵² This is not to argue that Longobard society had changed radically in this time, but merely to suggest that the stratification identified in Pannonian cemeteries may not correspond exactly with the classes documented in 8th century Italy.⁵³

Bona shows Longobard settlement in Pannonia following two distinct phases, the first of 526(i.e. post-Theoderic)-547/8 with occupation south of the Danube, and the second from 547-568, with residence in Central Pannonia and the Hungarian plain.⁵⁴ Excavations verify this sequence of shorter occupation in the south. The cemeteries appear based on a structural scheme of squares of c.80 x 80m, perhaps belonging to a family group or fara of c.80-100 individuals: in the north, these cemeterial units were filled, showing long fixed settlement here, whereas Central Pannonian sites show a temporary, irregular usage - Kadarta yielded just seven burials in its necropolis.⁵⁵ The nobles within such groupings are ascertained both by their rich gravegoods and through their notable central or isolated positions.⁵⁶ Bona identifies the social groups below the nobles primarily from 'the weapon burials, which make up c.20% of burials on average, for individual cemeteries do not offer a clear pattern' and from these he identifies rankings related to weapon ownership. A summary of these runs thus: 1) Tombs with most weapon types, of wealthy character, often with associated horse burial - dukes and adalingi (family heads); 2) Tombs with sword, lance and shield, forming the main group - arimanni (arms-bearing freemen); 3) Tombs with lance alone - young arimanni (poor armed-freemen); 4) Tombs with bows - aldii or aldiones (the half-free); 5) Tombs without weapons -servile population.⁵⁷ The dominance of the second group identifies the principal military and social category, composed of the arimanni, the arms-bearing freemen, who, below the fara-heads, formed

the backbone of the Longobard exercitus.

How far this picture re-emerges in Italy is uncertain. Unfortunately the present state of Italian documentation cannot yet confirm every indication observed for Pannonia, but the evidence from Friuli and Cividale in particular suggests that initially at least a like pattern persisted.⁵⁸ Certainly Pannonian material continues to be found in graves in Italy until c.600. Simultaneously the tomb finds reflect the Longobard settlement mode: occupation was primarily military, centred on strategic sites and road lines to protect their new-won holds, presumably with garrisons and settlement groups composed of faræ.⁵⁹ These units soon lost their original significance, although some were dominant enough to leave their mark in the toponymy; after Rothari 177, where no military connotation is seen, fara apparently disappears from Longobard usage.

The evidence for the individual units of the fara is disputed. Much has been written on the social and military organisation of the Longobards in Italy, but this was based wholly on late and generally post-Longobard documentary evidence which, as Bertolini has shown, does not securely correspond to the early Longobard phase. For instance, the men of the fara were considered faramanni, but this term is absent from Longobard documents and legislation, and appears solely in the early 6th century Burgundian lex Gundobada, and even here its meaning is obscure.⁶⁰ We do know, however, that the soldiers of the army were exercitales, who formed a strong sect of the homines liberi.⁶¹ Documents from the Farfa registry show them present in various fortified centres including castrum Fermo and vallis Mauri ... intra finibus Castri Arquatensis, though other cases show them as landowners.⁶² They are recorded in Rothari 20, 23, 24, 373 and in Liutprand 62, as well as in later non-royal documents, but these

reveal the soldiers gradually becoming tied to the land and civil functions.⁶³

Bertolini summarises thus: 'The evolution of the value of the term (exercitalis) was undoubtedly in symphony with the inevitable gradual modifying of the warrior customs of the Longobards in the course of whole generations, growing ever more accustomed to a stable life, to civil benefits due to prolonged periods of peace, and ever less used to a continuous use of arms which after an almost uninterrupted succession of war campaigns had closed from the start of the 7th century'.⁶⁴ In effect, contemporaneous with the militarisation of the Byzantine lands and the social rise of the milites, there was the romanisation and partial de-militarisation of the Longobard exercitus perhaps to a level comparable with the imperial populus.

The extent of this romanisation is overemphasised by authors like Schneider, Pertusi and Cavanna: although part-exposed to Byzantine military organisation and institutions before 568, it is unlikely that the Longobards altered their mode of warfare before the end of the century. There occurred some adoption of Roman titles, influenced principally by service in Italy under Narses before 554 of a number of troops, presumably with their leaders entrusted with commands and posts - a pattern repeated of course post-568 as the imperials sought Longobard defections through gold or army commands.⁶⁵

However, Bertolini demonstrates that 'of high military ranks indicated with terms taken from the technical language of the imperials, besides that of dux, the Royal laws make no mention'.⁶⁶ The duces, composed from the heads of the farae, are well attested in the invasion years, and after Clef (572-4) indeed took control to hold power during the Interregnum on a

scale organised enough to continue the assault against both Byzantines and Franks.⁶⁷ Below the dukes stood the comites, attested occasionally in the sources as troop commanders in ducal territories.⁶⁸

Bertolini argues that lower 'romanised' rankings, such as decani and centenarii possessed civil, not military, functions, but given that the documentary references are late and speak primarily of civil matters, military origins should not be dismissed.⁶⁹ A final early-Italian Longobard military term is the sculca, denoting a spying or reconnaissance group or look-out; the use of the term by Gregory and Theophylactus Symocatta indicates it 'an example of the words of military terminology common to both Longobards and Byzantines; it was though of Germanic origin, which passed into Byzantine usage'.⁷⁰

Much discussion has occurred concerning the connection between imperial limitanei and Longobard arimanni in Italy: both groups were considered by Leicht, Checchini and Schneider as having 'the ownership of lands to cultivate, either woods or pasture, of royal patrimony, but with the onus in return of permanent military service, in defence of the area or land against foreign powers in the border zones; in defence of the royal authority in the cities and in the countryside within the Kingdom itself'. The arimanni were regarded as direct Longobard imitations of the Roman and Byzantine limitanei.⁷¹

However, as summarised above, the evidence for such Byzantine Italian farmer-soldiers is totally lacking, and drawn from provinces unrelated to the Italian situation. If correct, the idea of the institution of such landed defensive troops by the early Longobard kings in copy of the limitanei loses all foundation and with it our understanding of the defensive arrangements of the invaders considerably weakens. So how and

where do the arimanni and their arimanniae, their stations, fit in?

Through examination of the documentary and legal sources of the Longobard era (pre-774) Bertolini highlights the paucity of references not only to arimanni themselves, but also their presumed military character: indeed an arimannus is first mentioned in 715, when an Ursus ariman is recorded in the Siena inquisitio as founder of a monasterium in the Val d'Orcia, while another source 15 days later records aremannos. The only other non-legal reference names Possone aremannus in 752 as a witness. No instance specifies military roles for these free men.⁷²

In legal texts the arimannus first appears in March 723 in Liutprand 44, and soon after in 2 and 5 of the remaining six Chapters of his Notitia de actoribus regis; it is more common in Ratchis' Laws (1, 2, 4, 10, 14, out of fourteen), and appears once in Astulf's Law (no. 4, out of twenty-two Chapters). Rothari makes no mention of them.⁷³ In most cases the arimanni 'are clearly seen only in the ambit of the administration of civil justice and of the safety or safeguarding of the civil authority of the iudex' and are shown, like the exercitales, as a particular sect of free men.⁷⁴ In Ratchis 4, however, there is 'the obligation on each arimannus to carry on his own account a shield and lance when he rode 'cum iudicem suum' ... ' - their armament here fits into the third category listed in Astulf 2-3, and the fact that this compares well with a social stratum deduced from the Pannonian cemetery evidence has provoked the crude application of the term arimannus to these early free warriors.⁷⁵ Yet no early documentation verifies this hypothesis.

Liutprand's Notitia also shows arimanni directly dependent upon the king as well as the iudex, suggesting an immediate armed source for both king and his ducal representatives.⁷⁶ The term does not replace exercitalis,

which perhaps still denoted a regular soldier, for this remained in use fifty years after its last appearance in the legislation;⁷⁷ in contrast the paucity of references to arimanni before the Frankish conquest is notable. Nothing recommends an equation of arimanni=exercitales, even though both sects were homines liberi, and also landowners of various standing.⁷⁸ However, post-774 the term arimannus grew more frequent, representing not just 'private men' or 'sons of the church' but even 'Longobards'.⁷⁹

Finally we can note how Tabacco demonstrated sworn ties between both exercitales and the king and his army, and directly between the arimanni and king (or via his representatives the dukes).⁸⁰ In connection with this Bertolini postulates that the prefix ari- derives not from the German Heer and thus exercitus, but rather from the Latin erus (herus) or dominus, and the old German her or heri in the meaning of the Latin procerus (= chief or leader): this link makes the arimannus a 'potentioris, domini homo' as opposed to an 'exercitus homo'.⁸¹ Liutprand's Laws show the arimanni 'directly dependent on the king, guarding his patrimonial interests in the ambit of the curtes regiae, or on the iudex, in the ambit of his iudiciaria, and if so ordered, outside of this elsewhere in the Kingdom in defence of the internal peace', serving also in the army ranks. Bertolini claims more than mere coincidence in the fact that the first references to arimanni hail from the reign of Liutprand: this king arose not from royal or indeed ducal stock, but in response to the internal strife of the kingdom, and must naturally have sought to secure his throne and lands, much of which remained to be recovered. 'All this required the action of men personally tied by a particular oath of loyalty to the new king or to his faithful iudices, which made them subordinates, and thus no threat':

these men were probably the arimanni, men of the king or master, given a name perhaps revived from olden days.⁸²

What of the arimanniae? These were considered the garrison posts of the arimanni occupying public or royal lands, which were to be cultivated by the men in return for military service. However, the word arimannia is totally unknown to the legislation and charters of the Longobard era, as with the supposed land concessions. Bertolini points out that although Notitia 2 and 5 speak of properties of fiscal provenance in connection with the arimanni, this is 'only and always in the field of functions entrusted to them for the safeguard of the integralness of the public patrimonium' and at no point do we hear of abuses of ownership which would be expected if any such concession of fiscal property had occurred.⁸³ Even Schneider admitted the documentary absence of the arimannia, saying it was 'a post-Carolingian term but for a much older institution'.⁸⁴

This discussion has been necessarily extended in order to clarify current thinking on the Longobard arimanni. The arguments fall hard upon Schneider in particular regarding his evidence for the extent and form of Longobard settlement and defence. In this his principal tool was the late documented presence of arimanni: using the conclusions of Leicht and Checchini, who first proposed the limitanei-arimanni link, Schneider had sought to identify in detail arimannic settlements along the frontiers of the Longobard Kingdom implemented in the first decades of their arrival,

a process which continued with little change until the end of the Longobard regime, with arimanniae still being founded in conquered territories and duchies like Ferrara, Comacchio, and even Istria in the 8th century.⁸⁵

Nonetheless, our conclusions need not detract too greatly from

Schneider's theories. The late origin of the arimanni and their roles as revealed by Bertolini and Tabacco does not signify the collapse of his framework; rather it postpones his organisation (or at least part of it) to the 8th century, to a time when the Franks posed the greater threat. The observation that the arimanni occupied important defensive positions still holds true: 'Of particular importance for the character of the institution is the phenomenon, stressed more by Checchini than Leicht, of the geographical setting of the arimanniae: notably in the vicinity of the forts of the Longobard frontier defence, as, for example, in Friuli, furthermore in Ceneda and Belluno, on the Po and on the Adige'.⁸⁶ This aspect above all had recommended the limitanei-arimanni link. Even if the latter are to be seen as an 8th century creation nothing denies their assumption of a border defence role: if Liutprand promoted these men to defend his lands and interests, these undoubtedly coincided with the existing defensive centres, and thus too perhaps with the initial defensive posts of the Longobards in Italy. As will be shown below, the border installations north of Cividale in Friuli best illustrate this, with a full thirty locations revealing arimannic connections corresponding well with those castra listed by Paul the Deacon on the occasion of an Avar invasion.⁸⁷

The appearance of arimanni in these sites should thus mark a tightening of the Longobard belt, maybe a reorganisation of security measures for the whole Kingdom in the 8th century, but on the lines of the former frontier arrangement. There is no need to date the institution of these arms-bearing king-bonded freemen back to before this period. One may thus assume that initial Longobard military occupation was indeed accomplished in fara, in kinship groups, and that toponyms derived from this term or a

family name denote the earliest settlement foci: these were perhaps few, for the Longobards would have for the most part simply reoccupied existing towns and fortifications, stationing there their own garrisons. The fara unit decayed through the gradual romanisation of the Longobards, and with it perhaps the early forms of military settlement and garrisoning. It was with the reawakening of an offensive policy and of external threats in the 8th century that new measures, including the arimanni, would have been introduced to combat this decline in their warrior character and to restore the Longobard Kingdom to a capable military footing.

NOTES TO CHAPTER ONE

1. 1978, p.325; also 1984, p.44, 83, 89.
2. Maurice, Strat.X,2 - both sources are extensively used by Pertusi, 1968, though he gives greatest consideration to the various set-piece battles in Procopius.
3. Maurice, Strat.XI,4: Brown 1984, p.83.
4. On the hierarchy of command see Brown 1984, Chap.3: Tribunes p.56-8; lower grades p.48-60; dukes p.53-6. See also studies of Hartmann 1889, Pertusi 1968.
5. Brown 1984, p.84 with note 8, adding 'indeed the number of regular troops in most strongholds must have been very small'.
6. For instance he records garrisons ranging from 500 men (at Tivoli, Todi, Cesena, Montefeltro) to 1000 (Chiusi, Terracina, Orvieto) and even 4000 men (Osimo).
7. Var.II,5: the importance of the site (quadam porta provinciae ... in finalibus locis) is most evident - cf. also Petra Pertusa (Proc.VI,xi), a similar natural fortress site.
8. On these sites, see below, Chap. 4, section C. Bandi references: Coccoluto, Ricchebono 1974, p.38.
9. For African limitanei nb. Hartmann 1889, p.52 and notes p.151: Cod.Just. I, 27, 2, 8: 'pro limitanei vero ordinandis (quia necessarium nobis esse videtur, ut extra comitatenses milites per castra milites limitanei constituantur, qui possint et castra et civitates limitis defendere et terras colere, ut allii provinciales videntes eos per partes ad illa loca se conferrant) exemplum fecimus unius numeri limitaneorum ...'.
limitanei
10. Hartmann 1889, p.52, 58; Diehl 1888, p.312, 317; Schneider 1924, p.15-37, 107-15; cf. Brown 1984, p.101f.
11. Ibid.p.103 with note 43; cf. also 1978 article. Procopius on the Armenian frontier (showing regulars under duces): de Aed.III,iii,14 and i,28-29. Reference to limitanei being badly ignored by Justinian: Anec. xxiv, 12-4.
12. Cf. Brown 1984, p.54, 88-9 and note 16, 103 with note 42.
13. Hartmann 1913, p.227-8; Brown 1984, p.3.
14. Ibid. p.104.
15. Ibid. p.104-5.

16. 1889, p.69-72; Brown 1984, p.102. On themes see also below, Chap. 5, p. 258-9.
17. Jones 1966, ii, p.678; Brown 1984, p.88. Recruitment: *ibid.* p.85f, nb. p.86 with note 10: local units appear to adopt the name of their garrison point of place of recruitment (Argenta, Fermo, Civitavecchia, Rimini); others (numeri of Milan, Verona, Treviso) were formed of refugees from lost towns.
18. 1968, p.682 n. 129 developing the view of Diehl 1888, p.304-12, 316-8; cf. however Brown 1984, p.197-8 with notes, arguing against Pertusi's subsequent claim of a fusion of the troops with the possessores.
19. *Ibid.* p.89-92; Stein's view: *ibid.* p.92 with note 21.
20. Offensive noted in Brown 1984, p.90-1.
21. See below, Chap. 5, Section E.
22. Richards 1980, p.188. Below, Chap. 5, Section D.
23. Cf. Hartmann 1913, p.227-8; peace of 603-5 with Agilulf eagerly renewed by Byzantium (Paul IV,28) after losses of Monselice, Cremona, Mantua and Brescello - with the contemporary fortification by Smaragdus of Ferrara and Argenta on the northern front of the Exarchate. In the Rome area there was much contact (at least ecclesiastically) once Gregory gained a peace with Ariulf.
24. Brown 1984, p.91-2. Nb. however p.82 noting the forced shift of the Patriarch of Aquileia to Cormons (Paul VI,51).
25. Internal campaigns: *ibid.* p.91 - Lib.Pont.i,319, 321 the exarch Eleutherius marching on Rome and thence Naples to defeat the rebel John of Conza (in 616); in 653 Theodore employed a military contingent from Ravenna to arrest the Pope; in 668 troops from as far as Istria quelled rebellions after the murder of Constans II (i,346); and in 693 troops from Ravenna and Pentapolis prevented the arrest of Pope Sergius I at Rome (i,373). Recoveries: in 716 the governor of Naples recaptured Cumae (i,400); and in 733 the Venetian troops recovered Ravenna (Paul,VI,54).
26. Origo ch.6; Paul IV,45. See below, Chap. 5, Section B. Much depends on the interpretation of the epitaph of the exarch Isaac. Brown 1984, p.89-90 notes also the movement of the numerus Laetorum from Genoa to Ravenna after Rothari's campaign - a transfer forced by circumstance of defeat.
27. *Ibid.* p.82 note 3.
28. Agn.ch.140: here duke George mobilised the forces in Ravenna into numeri or bandi (including Ravennas, Laetus, Classensis, Constantinopolis, Veronensium, Mediolanensium, Firmens etc.) - cf. Hartmann 1889, p.63 and 157-8; Brown 1984, p.90 with note 18.

29. As in 642, Lib.Pont.i,331: '(Maricius) misit per omnes castras qui erant sub civitate Romana per circuitum et congregavit eos'; and in 772, Lib.Pont.i,493: aggregantes multitudinem populi Tusciae et Campaniae seu ducatus Perusini.
30. 1984, p.93 with note 23.
31. Ibid. p.83.
32. Invasion: Paul IV,46; V,10.
33. Brown 1984, p.83; Pertusi 1968, p.660-2 comparing evidence in Proc., Agathias, Anonymous and Maurice, showing a dominance of horse and foot archers; Strat.VIII,3; XI,4; cf. also Pertusi 1968, p.674-5 on feints, horse archers, etc.
34. Longobard weaponry and evolution: von Hessen 1978; cf. Appendix 3, Pannonian weaponry noted in Bona 1976, p.48-51. See also Todd, The Barbarians, 1972 (London), p.108f, nb.p.114-5.
35. Brown 1984, p.83 with note 6. Few Byzantine weapons come from excavated sites, apart from square-sectioned arrowheads from Zignago and Invillino (Cabona et al. 1978, p.303-4, 337-8, pl.XIII; Fingerlin et al. 1968, p.99, 194, fig.8 nos.3-4, 8-11) which differ from Longobard hook-barbed or rhomboid types (Invillino: Fingerlin et al. 1968, p.104, fig.8 nos.5-7. No Longobard types from Zignago). In addition we have some military material recently uncovered from late 6th-early 7th century Byzantine contexts at Classe, notably belt-buckles (Guidoni Guidi 1983, p.180-91).
36. von Hessen 1978, p.266f; Appendix 3.
37. Cf. Teall 1965; Brown 1984, p.70f.
38. 3000 Heruls fought with Narses at Busta Gallorum: Procop.VIII,xxvi, 12.13. Sindual and Heruls: Brown 1984, p.70, 73, 88 with notes. See below, Chap. 3, p.103.
39. Procop.VIII,xxvi, with 5,500 Longobards in the imperial ranks.
40. Brown 1984, p.71-4. See below, Chap. 5, p.255.
41. Bertolini 1968a,p.481ff; Cavanna 1978; Brown 1984, p.71.
42. Pannonian phase (see Procop.VII,xxxiii,10) see Werner 1962, p.119-121; Bona 1976 ; Kiszely 1979. Discussed below, Chap. 3, p.109.
43. Cavanna 1978, p.11; cf. Bertolini 1968a,p.494-8.
44. Marius Av.Chron.a.569 (MGH, AA XI); Paul II,9.
45. 1976, p.74-6; Wickham 1981, p.116.
46. 1976, p.74. The heads of the farae were probably of status suitable for the ducal class.

47. Bertolini 1968 a,p.508.
48. Strat.XI,4; cf. Pertusi 1968, p.674; Wickham 1981, p.116.
49. See note 47.
50. See studies of Fasoli in particular. On siting see also Cavanna 1978 on Lombardy, and Brozzi 1981, p.15 on Friuli.
51. See studies noted in note 42.
52. Bertolini 1968 a,p.497f: Astulf 2, 3 of the first group of additions to his Edict, promulgated at Pavia on 1 March, 750.
53. Compare Bona 1976, p.74f.
54. 1976, p.31-4.
55. Melucco Vaccaro 1982, p.34f - interrupted perhaps by the decision to invade Italy.
56. Noble tombs from Zuran, Veszkeny, Mesonszentjanos, Szentendre - Bona 1976, p.77.
57. 1976, p.77-8; Melucco Vaccaro 1982, p.38-9.
58. On Cividale cemeteries and Longobard Friuli see Brozzi 1981.
59. Cf. von Hessen, Brozzi 1973, Introduction; Cavanna 1978, p.13.
60. Bertolini 1968a,p.509-12.
61. Ibid. p.450f.
62. Ibid. p.460f.
63. Ibid. p.433-9.
64. Ibid. p.460f.
65. Brown 1984, p.70f; p.71: 'Many Lombard institutions and titles derived from Roman prototypes - a debt which originates not only in their service as mercenaries in the Gothic War but also from a widespread later practice of entering imperial service'. See below, Chap. 5, p. 255-6.
66. 1968a,p.481.
67. Paul II,32. Beside the dukes stood the gastaldi, representatives of the kings - Cavanna 1978.
68. For refs. see Bertolini 1968a,p.482-9. There are few 6th century references: comes Pronulfus; comes Langobardorum de Lagare, Ragilo (Paul III,9) - discussed in Conti (1964). There are more 8th cent. refs. including the comes civitatis Firmanae in 787 - p.487.

69. 1968 a, p.490f; cf. also Wickham 1981, p.42.
70. Bertolini 1968 a, p.496. Sculca appears in Rothari 21 and Ratchis 13; 'marcas nostras ... ut inimici nostri et gentes nostre non possint per eas sculcas mittere'; also Greg.Reg.II,33; Theoph.Hist.VI,9 - p.495.
71. Ibid. p.430-1 with refs.
72. Ibid. p.544f.
73. Ibid. p.513f.
74. Ibid. p.514f.
75. Ratchis 4: Ibid. p.523-4.
76. Ibid. p.532-3, 543.
77. Ibid. p.573-4.
78. Cf. Tabacco 1966.
79. Tabacco 1969; Wickham 1981, p.136-8.
80. Liutprand Notitia 5; Tabacco 1969; Bertolini 1968 a, p.529-43; cf. also Toubert 1967, p.127-44.
81. Cf. Foulke 1907 (repr. 1979) in his translation of Paul's History of the Lombards, p.87 seeing ari (prefix and suffix) as tied to the word for duke, e.g. Aripert, Arioald, Rothari, etc.
82. 1968 a, p.572-80, nb. note 337, p.579-80.
83. Ibid. p.547f.
84. 1924, p.103. Its absence in Longobard sources weakens the view that it was a Longobard term.
85. 1924, p.102ff.
86. Ibid. p.110-1; cf. also p.114-5, 167f. Friulian arimanni: Mor 1962. Locations are noted in the various sections in Chaps. 4 and 5.
87. Paul IV,37: Schneider 1924, p.138-9. Again see Mor 1962. Below, Chap. 4, Section j.

CHAPTER TWO

PATTERNS OF MILITARY AND CIVIL SETTLEMENT IN LATE ANTIQUE ITALY

(a) Fortifications: Strategy and Function

The increasing reliance on the capture and defence of strongholds during and after the Gothic War has already been noted. The forces at the disposal of both Goths and Byzantines were never sufficiently strong to achieve a decisive or rapid victory as had occurred in Africa and this necessitated a series of smaller campaigns of advance and consolidation of captured enemy positions. Such a policy is of course only successful if all the points held are interlinked and can be supplied or relieved if threatened. This was achieved by the Byzantines to a great extent in the War through their dominance of the sea - when this supremacy was broken and Totila asserted himself, the results were almost catastrophic for Byzantium, and only the naval victory of 551 reversed the dire situation. After 568, this maritime aspect of Byzantine control is again most apparent.¹ The period of Longobard expansion in Italy fully repeated the mode of warfare which had so exhausted Byzantium in the peninsula from 535-563, but this time the Empire was too weak to regain its former possessions, and a full defensive strategy eventually had to be applied.

The Ostrogoths under Theoderic in particular had done much to prepare themselves for the inevitable conflict between West and East, and Theoderic's policy of erecting new fortifications or refurbishing existing sites (Verruca) and defended grain-depots (Tarvisium, Trento, Pavia, Tortona and Rome) proved a major factor in the solidity of Gothic resistance in the north.² Indeed Cassiodorus himself remarks for 536: 'In this new war the

citadels are well-stored granaries'.³ The upkeep of these centres enabled the provisioning of not only the various troops and garrisons but perhaps also the provincial population, whose lands and crops were devastated by the ravages of the struggle. These granaries undoubtedly formed key targets in the imperial advances.⁴ We can only assume that the Byzantine conquest attempted to reestablish the Theoderican arrangements, but the absence of sources precludes an identification of such after 553/563. Certainly, however, imperial garrisons replaced Gothic ones.

The Longobards likewise appear to have rapidly taken over the pre-existing defensive organisation of Rome, the Goths, and the Byzantines in Upper Italy during their initial surge over the Alps, and then pursued a policy of capturing major strongholds and towns before wearing down remaining pockets of resistance. The Byzantines had initially reeled under this body blow but recovered to defend their surviving territories through fierce resistance along natural defensive lines such as the Appenninic Alps, the Po and the Venetian littoral, attempting to regroup and counter-attack. However, once the invaders had strengthened their newly won gains the Longobards resumed their slow push, forcing further imperial withdrawals. These advances and the various frontier lines within Italy will be considered later, but here we must examine the siting of the defensive installations and consider their function and the role played by their garrisons.

Before progressing, however, we must first attempt to define the various defensive constructions recorded in our sources: the civitas remained, as under Rome, a town or city with related territorium, but references to these become militarised in time and they are frequently equated with castra, as Paul clearly demonstrates in the case of Cividale; similarly Anonymous of Ravenna lists all the maritime centres of Liguria as

civitates - as does Fredegarius - but at their capture by Rothari they are jointly named as civitates vel castra, whether large urban nuclei such as Genoa itself or small harbour fortresses like Varigotti.⁵ Toubert defined these castra as 'fortified habitats', subordinate to which were castella of a more strictly military nature, definable as 'fortifications without a habitat - a true castle' but with space to shelter the local population when required.⁶ Such definitions are not always rigid. Well-known are the references to civitates with dependent castra: Forum Cornelii cuius castrum Imolas appellatur, Forumlivi cum castro Sussubio, and Faventia cum castro Tiberiaco, clearly indicating military forts close by civitates, perhaps acting as their refuge centres.⁷ Many castra were fully independent of such urban nuclei, however, but our poor documentation allows no neat distinction between the various types of fortification. For instance with regard to the forts taken by the Franks in the Trentino, Paul records all those listed as castra, and likewise lists a series of castra in the Friuli duchy, though interestingly he leaves unnamed here reliquis castellis, which may have been smaller fortified units. Limited excavation, however, makes it plain that most of these castra formed purely military posts, often with minimal capability for sheltering refugees.⁸ Finally there are fortifications which may not fit into these 'official' military categories, such as the Fliehburgen of Noricum, the hilltop sites of Pannonia and the promontory towns of South Etruria, all variously documented as castra or castella - these will be considered separately below.

Turning to the question of the siting of these fortifications, we can first note Cassiodorus' description of the Alpine centres of Aosta, Como and Trento as keys or doors to the province of Italy, dominating the lines of penetration through the Alps towards the Po: he is most detailed in each

instance, describing in particular the Augustanis clusuris and their 60 men in finalibus locis at the porta provinciae preventing the entry of enemies, while castellum Verruca is recorded tenens claustra provinciae.⁹

The sites all demonstrably cover vital arteries on the Italian side of the Alps, rearward of the main passes, to which they were presumably linked by a chain of watchtowers or minor forts. Cassiodorus' letters identify merely the foci of these Alpine defences, but the later evidence of Paul recommends the extension of the defensive arrangements to a network of fortifications covering all possible lines of penetration, namely the road and river courses leading into the interior from the pass-lines.

Limited excavations in Paul's Friulian sites have provided greater understanding of the composition of these castra and castella, and these, combined with detailed topographic, toponymic and historical studies, have revealed the basics of the defensive organisation in this vital north-eastern frontier duchy in the early 7th century. Here we can summarise the main characteristics of these defences: their administrative centre was Cividale, which lay slightly withdrawn from the actual frontier; its dependent fortresses cover both major and minor river and road lines, most of which converge on Cividale; to the east lies Cormons, and northwards castrum Nemas; north of Cividale, along the line of the Tagliamento and the via Iulia Augusta lay the fortifications of Artegna, Gemona, Osoppo, Ragogna, Invillino, and lastly Zuglio. Various studies and finds have developed Paul's skeletal framework and revealed a compact arrangement of front-line fortresses hugging high positions dominating access routes and interlinked by lesser sites like Venzona, Resiutta, Farra d'Isonzo, Castello di Doberdo and Duino, all similarly sited; between lay various signal points which could communicate back to the ducal capital when required.

Such early warning systems are only hypothesised here, but their attestation in 8th century Anatolia suggests at least a late Roman origin to such beacon arrangements.¹⁰ The predominantly militaristic character of the majority of the tomb-finds highlights the defensive nature of Friuli, a picture furthermore supported by numerous traces of both faræ and arimannia.¹¹ Investigations on the Longobard Trentine frontier are less advanced, with discussion only recently having turned from linguistic arguments towards the archaeological and physical remains.¹² Noticeably, many of the proposed sites in both regions have Longobard traces.

The evidence from Pannonia and Noricum, on the other hand, reveals little concerning the Longobard defensive organisation. In each the distribution of their cemeteries concentrates in and around the Roman settlements and forts, though without clear signs of occupation within these. In all cases the actual defences are late Roman in origin.¹³

As regards Byzantine defensive arrangements - leaving aside the argument that the Longobard systems in the Alps represent a total reutilisation of the Byzantine system¹⁴ - our best source of information derives from the province of Liguria.¹⁵ Although almost totally devoid of documentary references, careful research has nonetheless uncovered much data concerning the region after 568.

Work has focussed principally on the Lunigiana, the area of the Val di Magra up to the Passo della Cisa, and on the town of Luni, which administered the south-east defences of the province. Here scholars have located a network of castra and lesser fortifications - often watchtowers overlying prehistoric castellieri - centred on Surianum-Filattiera and radiating out towards the Appenninic passes: these sites include M. Castello, Torre Nocciola and Zignago, the last of which has been shown to be a high-

perched Byzantine fortlet, set over a castelliere, and reused in the 13th century.¹⁶ (Map 13)

Elsewhere our picture is often blurred, for instance along the borders of Byzantine Venetia and the southern zone of the Pentapolis; while for the Via Amerina and the northern extent of the Rome Duchy patterns are slowly emerging. These areas will be considered shortly. However, the overall pattern of defence is clear: 'In brief the aim was to block access routes by building fortifications along roads, and at river crossings and by strategic passes. Close communication was maintained within these chains of forts with the aid of signal stations'.¹⁷ This was apparent since Gothic times, but ultimately will have derived from late Roman models.¹⁸

Nonetheless, questions arise regarding the internal organisation and actual functions of these fortifications and their garrisons: to what extent were these troops static, and how was the threat of attack combatted? To what extent did the castral units combine to form a unified defensive whole?

It is useful to note the views of the Byzantine strategists of the 6th-7th centuries in this regard. Pertusi's analysis of these military treatises - in particular the Strategicon - demonstrates that although the Strategist concentrates his attention on the Byzantine mobile forces, underlying his work is a strong non-offensive attitude, and a belief in defence-in-depth; he prefers not to risk defeat by exposing 'large forces in open battle, but to put them at the defence of trenches and fortifications', even when no immediate danger threatened.¹⁹ As Brown says, 'Troops were deployed not only on the frontiers but also in heavily fortified centres in the hinterland. Great emphasis was placed on fortifications from the angles of construction, defence and assault'.²⁰ This defensive strategy is

reflected also in the early letters of Theoderic by Cassiodorus, and indeed in general in the Gothic War, where pitched-battles were exceptional.

It is impossible to verify this pattern wholly through the existing physical evidence, but some conclusions can be drawn from the siting and size of the various identified fortifications. For this, however, we must first consider the defensive measures implemented elsewhere in the Byzantine Empire in this epoch, and then examine the available evidence for Italy.

Recently Pringle made an extensive survey of the defences of 6th century Byzantine Africa, from which he concluded that here the fortifications were 'designed more to control and defend the centres of Romano-Byzantine administrative and economic life than to form any kind of defensive screen separating the areas of Roman settlement from the barbarians'.²¹ With the castra and castella thus set more in the midst of areas of population than in sites which blocked or barred routes through the mountains, 'the security of a province threatened by Moorish attack depended less on the strength of its fortifications than on the ability of its garrison to counter the Moors in the field': in effect their road-locations enabled the swift massing of troops and their dispatch to threatened regions.²² In terms of military intervention, Pringle visualises the following sequence: 'The response to local disturbances was at first made locally: the dux was to intervene using limitanean troops. If he was unable to deal effectively with the problem, however, comitatenses, either belonging to the standing garrison of the province or detached from the field-army, would have to be used. If even these forces were unequal to the task, the field-commander, who later in the 6th century would have been the magister militum Africae, or the exarch, might himself take charge of operations. Only if the situation got out of hand at any point did provincial forces retreat behind their

fortifications until reinforcements could arrive, and then with their help drive out the invaders ...'.²³ A similar defensive strategy is postulated by Howard-Johnston for the 10th century Byzantine Armenian canton of Anzitene, and in general in 8th century Anatolia by Arvites.²⁴

Pringle dismisses the idea of forts being able to 'block' routes of penetration or indeed stand against an invading force - garrisons were individually too small to perform thus, and in any case the forts themselves did not constitute an actual running barrier-wall or claustra: most sites occupied high hills and thus overlooked or 'dominated' routes but did not physically bar these to an invader. This is equally valid for sites as Verruca, which, although occupying an almost impregnable hill, lies on the right bank of the Adige, opposite Trento through which the artery ran, and thus fails to block the road physically. Nonetheless, to omit capture of such a site would be a grave error in a determined invader's plans, for its continued resistance would be a major thorn in their side particularly as regards the disrupting of communications and the hindering of easy withdrawal.

The Moorish threat appears less substantial than that created by the Longobards after 568, and indeed to be in general on a far lesser scale than that encountered in Italy since 535; instead it was small-scale yet persistent, and of a nature that could generally be met and repelled by the Byzantines in the field given ample warning and an able commander. It is obscure whether this method was applicable in Italy, where the mode of fighting, outlined above, appears of relatively limited mobility and lacking in large set-piece battles after c.600.²⁵ Nonetheless the cavalry clearly maintained a dominant role in the Byzantine - and indeed Longobard - army, and much of the warfare revolved around these forces. What proportion of a

garrison was formed by cavalry also remains obscure, but we should consider these stationed preponderantly in the many regional centres and deployed as mobile troops when the need arose.²⁶

Our best evidence for the use of such mobile troops in fact comes from Longobard Trentino and Friuli, again in relation to the Frankish and Avar invasions. In the first instance, in response to the Frankish occupation of castrum Anagnis in 584, the comes Ragilo - undoubtedly duke Ewin of Trento's subordinate military commander based in the Val Lagarina - moved against the Frankish dux Chramnichis and plundered Anagnis; but on returning with his booty 'he was slain with many of his followers' (i.e. troops). Only when Chramnichis threatened Trento did Ewin himself stir, pursuing and killing him near Salerno.²⁷ Similarly in the 610-11 Avar invasion of Friuli, duke Gisulf left Cividale to meet the enemy 'with all the Longobards he could get' but was defeated and killed, at which point the remaining Longobards locked themselves up in Cividale and numerous other stongholds.²⁸ This tactic had previously also been successful in 590 when the Franks invaded Upper Italy and the Longobards sat firm within their fortresses and waited patiently for the threat to dissipate.²⁹ The pattern here is close to that described for Africa: first an attempt to repel the threat and, if that met with failure, a consequent recourse to the fortifications, from which the enemy was harassed.³⁰ It seems strange why a similar entrenchment was not pursued by the Byzantines in 568: no source testifies to Longobard skill at siege-warfare - Milan resisted for three years despite being cut off from the imperial forces - and indeed, as will be shown below, surviving Alpine forts like Anagnis, Comacina and Susa seem to have had little trouble in holding out against the invaders.³¹

Our sources for comparative Byzantine responses are considerably

weaker, and in general simply demonstrate the maintenance of an active military policy - seeking to restrict Longobard advance and to consolidate surviving imperial territories - until c.600. From the silence of our sources and the minimal advances of the Longobards in the 7th century we should assume that subsequently the scale of warfare diminished, with the Byzantines intent on a strongly defensive policy due to logistical exhaustion, and the Longobards satisfied with the stability produced from the treaties of the 600s. Against the few later instances of large armed threat, however, imperial resistance appears low.

Noticeably absent are references to such resistance in Liguria, but this stems principally from our inadequate documentation: for a province so well supported by the Byzantine ~~thassalocracy~~ one would expect stiff if not fierce resistance, yet our meagre indications note only the razing of town walls and the enslavement of the population.³² Despite this, various studies have nonetheless sought to evaluate the pattern of imperial defence, notably with regard to the Lunigiana, and it is to this that we briefly turn.

Beyond the maritime bases of the riviera, Formentini and Conti both calculate a heavy defence of the principal roads and passes converging on the Val di Magra, arguing that an enemy would presumably prefer direct and established routes; these roads should have witnessed the initial placement of defensive installations, and only with the definitive crystallisation of the frontiers were the lesser routes of penetration properly fortified.³³ Conti visualises the defensive layout of the Lunigiana thus: the Byzantine front was somewhat withdrawn, behind the natural arc of the Appeninic watershed from east of Sestri to the Apuan Alps; connected to the line of main fortifications, known most probably in their totality, was a somewhat

more advanced line of minor fortifications, more or less unknown individually and today not traceable, made up of former, reused castellari or by the temporary adaptation of natural strongholds, plentiful in the area; every effort was certainly made to prevent penetration into the valleys, it being clear that once the enemy penetrated in force within the fortification network, their tactical functionality would have risked being seriously compromised and their mutual relations or links cut away or at least much exposed'. He hypothesises the existence of a mobile field-force, 'in how a defence organised and founded on the resistance of positions could in no way have long preserved the region from invasions. It is also clear that the besieged could not have long troubled the besiegers if they had to trust in their own means'.³⁴ The maritime bases are regarded as supplying not only regular provisions and materials but also mobile units in times of threat, aiding the inland positions if the available forces of the main castral base were insufficient.³⁵

It seems likely that these border zones were divided into smaller military districts, based either on a civitas such as Luni or on major castra. These enabled rapid deployment of troops when danger threatened, without awaiting detachments from more withdrawn bases.³⁶ These military circumscriptions are well attested under the Longobards and later when adopted wholesale by the Carolingians, set under gastalds or dukes (collectively iudices) based in positions of strategic importance often in the proximity of the borders.³⁷

Schneider argued that many of these castral territoria or fines in fact stem from the Byzantine military organisation of Italy. In particular he records the references to the fines Surianenses and fines Carfanienses, whose districts enclosed the northern and eastern borders of Byzantine

Lunigiana, bordering to the south with the territorium or finis Lunense; likewise he traces back the gastaldatus of Pietra Bismantova, east of the Lunigiana, to the district of the Byzantine fort of ΧΑΙΟΤΡΟΝ ΒΙΣΜΑΝΤΩ recorded by George of Cyprus.³⁸

However, Bullough convincingly shows that not every finis can claim a Byzantine origin, for some are undoubtedly Longobard: the finis Carfanienses, based on Castelnuovo di Garfagnana, and the finis Castellana in the region of Piacenza, to be linked to Castell'Arquato, are unlikely to have remained Byzantine outposts long after 568-9 despite Schneider's claims, and indeed their districts clearly confront opposing Byzantine districts rather than flank them.³⁹ Other finis to the north, around Pombia, Sirmione and Castelseprio, face the Alpine lands, and cannot be ascribed secure Byzantine or Longobard origins. As Bullough suggests, they may even have arisen pre-568, possibly a result of the campaigns of the Gothic War, when district control is seen as organised around strategic strongholds like Susa.⁴⁰ In many cases these finis still remained part of the territorium of a civitas. Both Surianum and Garfagnana remained in the Luni diocese, suggesting that the civitas remained the focus of military and ecclesiastical administration. Other cases, however, demonstrate full independence from the civitas, at least by the time of the Carolingians, when most of these districts formed comitatus. The emergence of such self-sufficient, independent territorial units after the disintegration of Carolingian rule of course denotes a new development in the pattern of power in the Italian peninsula.⁴¹ Schneider differentiates between these two district forms by nominating each respectively Bismantova type and Seprio type.⁴²

Bullough summarises the function of these castral finis thus: 'castle territories such as these represent areas of military command in the fullest

sense, often embracing a number of fortifications of different types.⁴³

Their extent was often considerable: notable is the case of Castelseprio, whose territory incorporated segments of those of Milan and Como in particular; this castrum rapidly grew beyond its fortress status and is recorded in the 9th century as a civitas and the seat of a mint.⁴⁴ As regards the finis Surianenses Formentini reveals its district as including the upper Magra valley south-westwards into the Val di Vara up the Val di Taro and the western bulwark of M. Gottero, from where the border ran to the Cisa and thence Linari passes, thus covering 'all the old lines of communication of Piacenza and of Parma with Luni'.⁴⁵ In effect Surianum controlled, with an array of lesser fortifications, all routes between the passes and the coast. (Map 13)

Although Bullough doubts some of Formentini's ideas relating to the installations dependent on Surianum, nonetheless the results from Zignago indicate the absence of a distinct 'Byzantine' architecture at such sites, and rather the presence of ad hoc defensive measures such as the reoccupation of castellieri and the minimal or 'local' refurbishment of the old defences - measures first identified by Formentini.⁴⁶ Indeed excavations at Surianum now recommend the location of the late antique castrum at Castelvechio, a lowish hill above both river and road, girded by a roughish riverstone wall of a form similar to that at Zignago and Castelseprio - Castelvechio marks the seat of the prehistoric settlement. In a situation where such early medieval defences cannot be differentiated from pre-Roman structures without excavation, the ready identification of Byzantine or Longobard works is impossible, and only detailed surveys will provide clues regarding the extent of the defensive arrangements within a given finis. Whatever the organisation, however, the survival of Byzantine Liguria to

643 and the overall endurance of the Byzantine frontiers testifies to the relatively efficient functioning of the adopted defensive system.⁴⁷

Our evidence must remain inconclusive concerning the origin of these finēs: not all were Byzantine, but the majority should belong to the 6th century, even if the castra to which they belong are generally of pre-6th century date. If they did arise in the period after the Gothic War, we can assume that the dislocations caused by the Longobard invasion and expansion brought any such defensive entrenchment to a head: as the frontiers within Italy then crystallised so too did these castle-territories while Byzantines and Longobards alike sought to strengthen their border zones by entrusting control of each frontier district to a strategically strong castrum or civitas. Balbis has associated this development with the institution on the Ligurian coast of the Maritima, or more widely of the Themes, but since this is a much disputed event, it should rather be set in line with the progressive militarisation of Italy and the adoption of a predominantly defensive policy.⁴⁸ The presence of such districts may thus form a significant guide in the recognition of the Byzantine-Longobard frontiers zones in Italy - as will be shown, this is especially valid for understanding the territorial evolution of coastal Tuscany in the later 6th century.⁴⁹

The coastal possessions of Byzantium probably presented a similar defensive facies. Although Byzantine maritime supremacy appears well-attested for Italy, this does not exclude the possibility of piracy on the waters of the Tyrrhenian or Adriatic especially once the Longobards seized those coastal districts of Tuscany which had briefly resisted. The fact that Gregory the Great advises bishop Ianuarius on Sardinia in 598 to be on guard against the enemy, pinpoints some naval activity on the part of the

invaders.⁵⁰ This activity, combined with the general process of militarisation, no doubt provoked the Byzantines into securing their coastal holds by fortifying or refurbishing ports and harbours: this is visible at Varigotti - whose circuit may be Byzantine in date - Savona, Vado, Portovenere and other riviera castella occupying peninsular or hill seats. The evidence also suggests close intercommunications between points through watchtowers such as on Isola di Bergeggi opposite Spotorno, Isola Gallinara off Albenga, and on Capo di Noli between Noli and Varigotti. In the same way as inland border zones are visible, so may coastal military districts be discernable, - six key castral districts are claimed for the western riviera.⁵¹ (Map 12)

A similar picture emerges along the coasts of Marche, Byzantine Pentapolis, with well-defended ports at Numana, Ancona, Fano, Pesaro and Senigallia, communicating north to Rimini and Classe, and indeed along the shores of the Rome Duchy.⁵² The Venetian Lagoons perhaps form an exception in how nature performed the necessary defensive functions, although many ports such as Grado and Altino were firmly protected by walled castra.⁵³

The various waterways also provided important communications channels, not least the course of the Po, which enabled rapid linkage between castra such as Ferrara and Comacchio and frontier towns like Brescello. The cases of Ferrara and Comacchio well illustrate the defensive aspect of river-set fortresses: both, presumably founded by Smaragdus c.600, occupy island sites, the latter holding the larger island in a lagoonal zone, while the former was girded by a moat which transformed it into an impregnable stronghold (Fig. 9). If these are indeed exarchal foundations we have a notable insight into Byzantine strategic aims.⁵⁴ Ferrara indeed grew to control an

extensive duchy on the Exarchate's northern border along the Po. Mor has demonstrated the importance of the Po waterway in the early Middle Ages and the development of trading centres along its courses, notably Comacchio; Patitucci Uggeri's studies, meanwhile, indicate a continuous flux and flow of minor sites here.⁵⁵

In all instances, the waterborne communications gave great advantage to Byzantine control of their possessions: principally they allowed provision of supplies and logistical support for each area, swift linkage (in comparison with the land routes) between imperial zones (n.b. Liguria - Rome, Ravenna - Constantinople, Ravenna - Istria) and the maintenance of trade contacts between both Byzantine and indeed Longobard territories.

Questionable, however, is the extent to which the waterways contributed to the deployment of reinforcements: in areas such as the Exarchate the Po certainly formed a vital channel for bringing in troops to threatened positions (and likewise tributaries like the Panaro), but in Liguria, the dispatch of reinforcements from outside the province in response to an appeal for relief would be undeniably tardy, perhaps fatally so. Presumably, however, men were drawn from neighbouring castral districts, but here again the time factor was vital. Without doubt the troop bodies available within each district were sufficient for small-scale disturbances, but as the size of the threat grew, so would the requirement in terms of manpower from neighbouring districts increase (compare Pringle's reconstruction for Africa). Nevertheless, large-scale attacks from various fronts - perhaps even supported by Longobard naval action - would have so seriously impaired such a defensive system that resistance would be inadequate. This was perhaps the fate which befell isolated Byzantine Liguria.⁵⁶

Finally in this section regarding defensive strategy we can examine

the case of the via Amerina, which, under the ducatus Perusinus, linked the Exarchate with the Rome Duchy as an alternative route to the Longobard-held central branch of the via Flaminia. As the lists in Anonymous of Ravenna's Cosmographia show, this province of Perugia 'stretched as a narrow tract between the duchy of Spoleto and Tuscia Langobardorum, generally only just wide enough to cover or guard the road line, and was protected by numerous castra'⁵⁷ (Map 1). Its importance in Byzantine Italian inter-communications is of course documented in the struggles for its ownership between c.570 and 591 - once retaken, the Byzantines could ill-afford its loss and necessarily defended it heavily.⁵⁸ Nonetheless the Byzantines could not prevent communication between Longobard territories across the line of the Amerina⁵⁹: as Schneider showed, the province consisted basically of a string of fortified road centres (chiefly Etruscan hilltop sites) with sparse territorial possessions, whose control controlled the road traffic; it did not constitute an effective barrier wall or limes, and breaches were unavoidable. 'Indeed this was not in fact its function; not to cut off or neutralise the enemy traffic in every circumstance, but rather to ensure its own'.⁶⁰ Without doubt minor fortifications existed off the road, and these, along with the road castra, could furnish ample warning of impending hostility, giving time thereby for traffic to shelter in the nearest stronghold, and for some form of resistance to be employed against the enemy. When necessary troops from the other garrison centres could be deployed to raise sieges or block attacks, and if the threat were greater its mid-Italian position allowed the deployment ^{of} troops from Pentapolis or Rome. This is attested for the period up to c.591 but is not noted subsequently.

In contrast a reconstruction of the Longobard defence towards these

Byzantine territories is difficult: we can merely assume an analogous policy to that encountered in the Trentino and in Friuli, in part reflective of the Byzantine system of defence-in-depth. This picture will be developed shortly in Chapters Three and Four. Here, however, we must consider a further aspect of late antique fortifications, namely the defence of the local *populus* in times of insecurity.

The shelter of the population around each castrum or castellum is a function only partially alluded to above. We noted the Longobard withdrawal inside the Friulian strongholds at the approach of the Avars, and this certainly included civilians as well as actual troops.⁶¹ Pertusi in addition shows the military treatises recommending that when the alarm was given through fires 'the peoples of the land around would have sought refuge in the fortified towns and fortresses'; these people could then also help man the walls.⁶² Instances of this appear in the letters of Gregory who notes the *populus* of Terracina manning the defences, while of course Procopius shows the inhabitants of Rome likewise employed by Belisarius.⁶³ As Brown notes, however, such defenders were clearly distinguished from the regular military garrison of such castra, and their utilisation does not mark 'a wholesale mobilisation of the people' as Hartmann claimed, 'but an obligation imposed on all citizens to participate in the watch'.⁶⁴

Evidence of the settlement of refugee peasants within castra is drawn from two letters of Gregory, misleadingly used by Hartmann to show the presence of farmer-soldiers or limitanei in Italy. The first records the foundation of the castrum Scillacinum (a fortress in the vicinity of Squillace) on the land of the Cassiodoran monastery of Vivarium, and the failure of its inhabitants to pay the due yearly rent. The tenants are not referred to as milites or limitanei, however, and most likely the

castrum lay on monastic land and provided a shelter for the monks and the local rustici, but the latter had failed 'to pay rent on their houses and not necessarily on the land which they cultivated, which may not even have belonged to the monastery'.⁶⁵ The second letter records the peasants of the castrum Callipolitanum (Gallipoli) oppressed by the tribune of Otranto, but again these are refugees not limitanei: in return for shelter and protection these paid rent and additionally helped defend the walls, and once within the castrum stood under the jurisdiction of the local military commander, the tribune. The rustici were not regarded as a garrison force, but may have supplemented a minimal official troop body within each fort. Such may have occurred at most castra or castella in Italy.⁶⁶

The presence of castra on Church land is not surprising: the Church owned a large proportion of the lands in Italy, and it would have been in both its and the State's interests to protect both Church foundations and their occupants as well as their tenants through fortified shelters and castra. Brown shows that 'on occasion the imperial authorities cooperated with the Church to the extent of building strongholds on ecclesiastical land which possessed strategic value, but there is no evidence of compulsory confiscation by the state ...'.⁶⁷ Church involvement in the erection of such fortifications in Italy is barely discernable. We know of the contribution of some clergy towards public castra, yet it is apparent that the bulk of the finance and indeed the initiative behind these came from the military or state authorities. In the case of castrum Misenum the bishop Benenatus, entrusted with the work, had kept to himself part of the money for financing the project and was being hounded by Gregory for its return;⁶⁸ similarly the unique case of an Italian clergyman recording his foundation of a castrum in 556 at Laino - ipse etiam sua industria et labore nec sine maxima expensa hunc castrum fundabit - may actually hide,

according to Pringle's analysis of African inscriptions, evidence of direct state involvement.⁶⁹

The Letters of Gregory clearly express the cooperation between military and clergy in the late 6th-early 7th centuries, whereby the military officials of a zone helped organise elections for bishops, erected religious buildings, and sorted out religious discord - usually at papal request.⁷⁰ Indeed as Brown states 'there is no evidence of this private direction of settlement in the Byzantine period (i.e. towards the 9th-10th century process of incastellamento promoted by private lords), partly because notions of public authority remained firmly entrenched, and partly because in the period of greatest disruption there was no source of local leadership apart from the bishops and the military commanders, both in their way public officials'.⁷¹ Rather, contemporary evidence suggests a state initiative, a practice still apparent in Sicily in the 8th century with the Arab invasions, and in the 10th-11th centuries in southern Italy. Presumably it remained the task of the bishops to organise the local populus to carry out such projects.

The African inscriptions make plain the role of imperial officials, notably the Praetorian prefect (especially Solomon), in erecting fortifications. For Italy our sole comparative data is the evidence in Agnellus to the prefect Longinus, 'who assumed supreme authority in Italy after the recall of Narses in around 568 and he is recorded as building fortifications, conducting diplomatic negotiations, and acting as supreme commander at the time of the Lombard invasion'.⁷² In areas where the secular authorities were weak, however, notably Rome and Campania, the Church assumed the greater role in the building and repair of walls.⁷³

Ward-Perkins reaches the same conclusion with regard to construction of

defensive works under the late Empire and the Ostrogoths: 'these new projects and repairs were in late antiquity carried out by a combination of central government funds, and local funds and local labour contributed as a compulsory public service'.⁷⁴ Cassiodorus thrice records construction work in and around northern fortifications by the local population undoubtedly under state directives. In two of the cases the locals are recommended to build their homes within the fortresses' walls, while the other records the obligatory work by the possessores of Feltre in the construction of a nearby civitas, though with the bonus of some pay.⁷⁵

This wall-work duty is noted still in Byzantine and papal Rome, but is elsewhere poorly attested. A few instances in Longobard towns, particularly Verona, may denote the extension of this duty to these regions, although surprisingly it lacks mention in the Carolingian capitularies.⁷⁶ The picture is obscure for lesser fortifications, but we should assume that the local commander was responsible for the maintenance of defences by his troops and any attached populus; the same may be true for refuges and (unidentified) rural ecclesiastical castra, where the inhabitants were obliged to maintain defences for their common safety.⁷⁷

(b) Unofficial fortifications: refuges and the pattern of upland settlement

This question naturally leads us on to the problem of distinguishing official military castra and castella from unofficial or non-military fortifications of a refuge character, that is defensive points which had no specific military role but were rather expressions of the flight of the population of the countryside or towns to sites away from a military presence. As will be shown, this movement, added to the new defensive settlement mode, has great bearing on the process of incastellamento, which

reached its height in 10th-11th century Italy.

Pertusi has attempted to define the various categories of fortifications of Byzantine Africa through size, and proposes a similar application for Italy.⁷⁸ Yet no direct comparison is possible: in Italy regularly laid-out sites are virtually non-existent for this period except in the case of a few town-castra like Ferrara and Terracina, and size was instead determined primarily by the optimal defensive capabilities of the natural hilltop sites that were adopted. Shrinkage of the defensive circuit to strategic ground, is encountered in towns like Verona, but is a process presently little recognised.⁷⁹ While some size-ranking may be discernable, whereby district centres occupy sites relatively larger than their dependent satellites, nonetheless the fact that so many fortifications pre-date the Byzantine occupation further weakens Pertusi's categorisation.⁸⁰

This irregularity of the defensive plan naturally creates problems in differentiating official fortifications from hilltop or promontory sites which perhaps initially served as temporary refuges but later developed into fixed defended settlements or castelli. The situation is best summarised by Johnson (discussing the later Roman period, but with details pertinent to the post-Roman era): 'It was clearly in the frontier zones of the Empire that the threat of invasion and consequent loss was at its most imminent. Here of course there were towns, civitates, forts with vici nestling for protection round them, and a variety of walled centres, ranging from road posts to grain stores. In times of danger however there was no guarantee that local civilians would be welcomed within the walls of all of these for protection. There was therefore a need to provide more security for provincial folk who lived and farmed in the frontier areas. What was perhaps more important was the removal of livestock and produce

from the path of an invading band. Such measures were vital to sustain the livelihood of those who farmed the frontier areas, often probably at little more than subsistence level, and by removing easy sources of food supply to ensure that barbarian raiding did not increase in intensity. A further form of fortification thus became increasingly more common to supplement the protection afforded by the official establishments. These took a variety of forms, but normally consisted in the provision of defences round a convenient hill, either enclosing its summit entirely with walls, or, more commonly, defending the easily accessible side of a hillspur with walls, ramparts or ditches, and relying on natural defences for the rest of the circuit ... Normally they lay well away from the main roads and deep in the heart of the countryside'.⁸¹

In Austria (southern Roman Noricum) many such refuge sites (Fliehburgen) represent the transfer of Roman towns of the plain to secure upland positions, as evident at Aguntum and Virunum with their respective late Roman centres of Lavant and of the Ulrichsberg and Karnburg.⁸² In such instances, however, purely defensive characters are unlikely, given their continued location along major valley routes. The presence of military-style buildings at the Duell and Hoischhügel has convinced some authors of official military involvement in their siting and garrisoning; certainly the sites of Noricum Mediterraneum were termed castella after c.450.⁸³ Yet the possibility remains that originally, before the breakdown of the frontiers to the north, the Fliehburgen simply formed refuges, but that settlement was formalised and put on a military footing with the growth of the barbarian threat.⁸⁴

Similar may be the refuges around the Julian Alps, especially where sites lie close to roads: of late antique hill-settlements well-known are

the strongholds of Velike Malence (successor to Neviodunum) and Kranj, while Rifnik and Vranje are both defended refuges well-hidden from the main arteries.⁸⁵ (cf. Fig.2)

Difficulties arise when extending this picture to Italy, and our sole guide in this may be the characteristic avoidance of communication lines. Known refuges are otherwise limited to cave sites in Upper Italy, whose occupation runs from late Roman into early medieval times.⁸⁶ Where such natural shelters were unavailable hilltop positions were adopted.

We may perhaps insert into this category the promontory sites of South Etruria and specifically of the Ager Faliscus, recently postulated by Whitehouse and Potter as links in the northern frontier chain of the Rome Duchy: although flanked by frontier sectors, grounds exist for denying their direct involvement in the Byzantine defences.⁸⁷ The fortifications at each consist usually of a ditch or wall blocking the approach, and a central house- or observation-tower, but few other works (unless a medieval castello); the standing structures do not predate the medieval era. More significantly, these castelli occupy secluded seats, chiefly below the level of the surrounding valley sides, on steep naturally defended promontories cut by torrents, and detached from major roads.⁸⁸

The South Etruria Survey results reveal a gradual decline in open land settlement north of Rome from the 3rd century A.D., perhaps explicable through the increasing insecurity, a diminished population, the absorption of smaller landholdings by larger landowners, or even migration to the towns. Yet the consistent decline also affected towns like Veii, which were abandoned or at least heavily depopulated (as Tuscania), and in some cases led to a shift of the remaining townspeople upland to older centres or to nearby castra.⁸⁹

The loss of datable late African Red Slip wares (ARS) after c.600-625, when supplies to Italy ceased, thus depriving us of our principal post-Roman chronological guide, appears to coincide with the desertion of open settlements in the Ager Faliscus. Interestingly Potter demonstrates the close juxtapositioning between abandoned villas and the characteristic Faliscan promontories: Castel Porciano with a villa at Casale l'Umilta, Pizzo with M.Cinghiale, and likewise in the cases of Mazzano Romano and Castel Paterno.⁹⁰ The reasons for transferral were undoubtedly tied to the insecurity; from where the initiative came is uncertain, but Johnson notes that villa owners in the late Empire did occasionally pay for the construction of defended sites for themselves on high secure positions rather than fortifying their own exposed villas.⁹¹ An instance of the latter occurs at the villa of Anguillara - S.Stefano di Mura, where the building was defended by a ditch and had its ground floor windows blocked up.⁹² (Fig. 21)

Although no direct link can be established between villas and promontory sites, the likelihood is strong. Possible confirmation may lie in the 774 document which lists among the possessions of the domusculata of Capracorum Castel Porciano as fundus Porcianus, while the site is only denominated castello in the 12th-13th centuries, perhaps when the tower was constructed; the 8th century designation could denote a refuge of non-military character.⁹³

The chronology of this movement must remain insecure while the date of Forum Ware, the distinctive green-brown glazed ceramic found on these promontory sites, and indeed on open sites in the Ager Veientanus, remains disputed: recently Whitehouse claimed its likely floruit in the period from c.600, but this awaits archaeological verification - indeed excavations in the Crypta Balbi at Rome now suggest a date as late as the 10th-11th century.⁹⁴ The lack of Forum Ware on villa sites in this area and conversely

the lack of ARS on the promontories identifies a significant break in settlement and a notable disruption in the supply of fine wares. The insecurity of the later 6th-early 7th centuries caused by Longobard incursions into Tuscany and the Campagna probably provoked this settlement displacement and the cessation of local and regional trade: how long this situation persisted is unknown but it is probable that once Rome had established her ducal confines, old trade contacts and networks were renewed, and in time a new fine ware, perhaps a glazed ceramic, introduced from the East, was soon imitated and produced in Rome itself. Thence this ceramic became available to rural sites and marks the first distinguishable type-fossil on the promontory castelli.⁹⁵

Nevertheless some defended sites in the Faliscus demonstrate stronger military characters which may be indicative of official Byzantine involvement: this is most appropriate for Ponte Nepesino, a strategic hilltop castello overlooking the Via Amerina, 3km from Nepi - recently excavated in an attempt to clarify the Forum Ware problem.⁹⁶ Although providing no fixed termini to the chronology of this ware, its finding within the earlier defended enclosure of its hilltop within which also lay a stone tower and wooden house traces, links its early floruit with other promontory sites. Its siting, however, recommends a military and strategic function in controlling the road and bridge point behind the castrum of Nepi. An analogous role is suspected for Torre dell'Isola, north of Nepi. It is doubtful whether the promontory sites to the east can be similarly visualised: both their geographical settings and their earliest references ill-support this idea of an early military role. Some sites, closer to townships, however, such as Castel Paterno and Castel Sant'Elia, or near the frontier like the Viterbese castelli of Luni sul Mignone and

Blera, indeed fulfilled military functions, but such positions remain little recognised.⁹⁷ (Cf. Map 17)

Whatever the case these sites represent a definite early phase of nucleated settlement unconnected with the later deliberate process of incastellamento, but promoted by the general insecurity of late antiquity and heightened in the Byzantine era with the installation of the frontier line in the region's proximity. The situation is best summarised by Brown: 'It may be tentatively suggested that these early sites were set up for defensive purposes, and that the initiative may have come from Byzantine military commanders in the late 6th and 7th centuries. This model is more applicable to sites close to access routes than elsewhere, and some peasants may have preferred to seek refuge in remote sites away from a military presence. However, this hypothesis of imperial involvement in creating 'strategic hamlets' is in line with known Byzantine military policy and may offer a useful context in analysing settlement changes'.⁹⁸

The castra and 'strategic hamlets' or promontory sites near roads in upper South Etruria, buttressed by non-military promontory settlements, set in opposition to the Spoleto duchy and Tuscia Longobarda, would thus have buffered the Ager Veientanus to the south above Rome, where the pattern of nucleated settlement evolved only much later, and with a sharp break from the preexisting agrarian system.⁹⁹

The appearance of the Faliscan promontory sites naturally has great bearing on the chronology of the upland shift of settlement in Italy - a process termed by Toubert for Lazio as incastellamento and documented by monastic sources for the 9th-11th centuries - whereby the classical open settlement was replaced by medieval gravitation around castelli. Incastellamento marked a deliberate policy encouraged by large landowners or domini (dominatores) of colonisation of lands upland or around castelli,

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designed for the reorganisation of property and the rationalisation of its exploitation, and allowing easier control of both land and its dependent population - it was not a defensive pattern of settlement.¹⁰⁰

The date of this process has been incautiously applied to all nucleation in Italy, and only now, after a series of regional surveys, has this hypothesis been calibrated to demonstrate that the date and form of incastellamento varies widely regionally and conforms to no overall pattern. Additionally the surveys partly aid in attempting to extend Brown's theory of the erection of 'strategic hamlets' to other frontier districts in Italy. Most important among recent surveys are the Biferno and Volturno projects, both in Molise in southern Italy, but with results perhaps applicable to regions further afield.¹⁰¹

The first covered much of the Biferno valley, which runs from the Appennines to the Adriatic, a low density area still characterised by nucleated settlements.¹⁰² Here, as in the Upper Volturno, a marked decline in the number of villas is evident after c.400 (dated by ARS), but no immediate recourse to the hills occurred, or at least is not yet identified. Our subsequent chronological guide is the broad-line red-painted ware, of the 5th-9th centuries, with the initial 5th-7th century phase perhaps marked by thick-strap handles, replaced by thinner forms in the second phase.¹⁰³ This ceramic was extensively used in southern and Central Italy, but problems remain as regards its chronological sequence, due to regional variations in types.

While this ceramic appears at the Adriatic end of the Biferno on a few classical sites also possessing 5th century ARS, only one nucleated site, D85, (S.Maria in Cività), featured just broad-line ware, thus designating it the earliest instance of nucleation in the valley. Yet D85 occupies

neither hilltop nor promontory, but rather hugs an isolated knoll overlooking a crossing-point of the Biferno. This suggests a possible military initiative behind its construction, and indeed to its west side lay a palisaded defence and to the east a crude but strong wall, against which the habitations leant; on the high ground to the north lay a church.¹⁰⁴ Though featuring all the characteristics of other nucleated sites of the area, these others lack the earlier assemblages located at D85, and this prompted the excavators to postulate that S.Maria was an artificial creation, a nucleation erected for military needs - perhaps to stem Longobard penetration south in the 570s or to counter the Byzantine thrust north in the 660s.¹⁰⁵ The non-military artifacts from D85 were taken to indicate rustici entrusted with the defence of this 'strategic hamlet'; however, the lack of weapon finds seems strange, for even sites like Belmonte, which have a strong agricultural bias in their small-finds, possess some weaponry.¹⁰⁶ This absence may be due to the limited area excavated at D85. However, the presence of imported red-painted wares, glass vessels, and other materials, reveals maintenance of long-distance trade contacts, just as Forum Ware in South Etruria shows continued contacts with Rome.¹⁰⁷

As the military function of D85 dissolved, there was a shift in its settlement to higher ground in the 9th century, in line with the incastellamento process documented in Molise, in this instance to the better-disposed hilltop seat of Gualdifiera on the opposite bank. To the same period belongs Vetrana near Guglionesi, a hamlet abandoned in the 12th century and characterised by the presence of locally-produced pottery.¹⁰⁸ D85 therefore forms an unrepresentative and early antecedent of this upland settlement pattern and should instead be connected with an official military defence

of the Biferno.

In contrast, the upper Val Volturno survey, covering the area held by the 8th century monastery of San Vincenzo al Volturno in the foothills of the Appennines, reveals a transition from open to nucleated settlement by the 7th century, in close analogy with the Ager Faliscus findings.¹⁰⁹

The lack of ARS from lowland sites after c.500 locates the probable beginnings of this movement, although there is no direct physical evidence of nucleations in the 5th-6th centuries, and even at the San Vincenzo monastery site (South Church), the 8th century religious structures overlay, but exhibited no continuity with, a large late antique cemeterial church complex.¹¹⁰ While distinctive 7th century pottery types are absent, nonetheless 8th century wares identified at San Vincenzo are known from widely-spaced sites, including the hills of Vacchereccia near Rocchetta and Le Mura above Filignano, showing that non-plain positions replacing the villas at the hill-feet were already firmly established by the 8th century. That their origin lies in the obscure 6th-7th century epoch is postulated from the results of the excavations at Vacchereccia, although this is based principally on analysis of insecurely stratified potsherds of late Roman tradition, and distinct structural features are lacking.¹¹¹ Noticeably, the early medieval foci at Vacchereccia and Le Mura both lie on middle-hill terraces as opposed to the brows of the hills (which at Vacchereccia yielded material dating only from the 12th century).¹¹²

The insecurity of the 5th-7th centuries did not ignore these districts of the Molise - indeed Capua on the Volturno saw the defeat of Butilinus by Narses in 554¹¹³ - but the degree of disruption caused by this cannot be accurately gauged. We know that Southern Italy was sparsely garrisoned by the Ostrogoths and that this aided the rapid Byzantine advance to Rome in

535; the region was undoubtedly much affected in the later course of the Gothic War when Totila overran most of the peninsula, and in the 570s when the Longobards established duchies at Spoleto and Benevento, but our evidence for devastations here is weak. Indeed, excavations and surveys in Puglia signify general continuity in sites from late Roman into early medieval times at least, and for the Capitanata (prov. Foggia) Russi emphasises that most medieval settlements overlies Roman ones.¹¹⁴ Yet at the same time many late antique sites occupy hilltops (Tressanti, Torre di Lama), while some early medieval sites lie upland of Roman predecessors (Masseria S.Lucia, Castelpagano).¹¹⁵

Comparative findings are proposed for Campania by Peduto, claiming a general continuity of sites into the early Middle Ages (as Pratola Serra and Pareti), but the evidence here remains incomplete.¹¹⁶

Our picture blurs considerably northwards, due to the paucity of regional surveys with related excavations. In the case of the Ager Lunensis westward of Roman Luni, examination revealed little early medieval land-use on the lowland, but the possibility of the occupation of two sites just above the plain in the 7th-9th centuries, perhaps representing an intermediate phase between the abandonment of Luni and the foundation of the hill-top castelli.¹¹⁷

Analogous developments may be expected in the Lunigiana and the district of Genoa, for which we have the barest outlines: in each region, late antique villages, of 5th-7th century date, have been excavated which testify to a continued open settlement in positions rearward of the frontier lines.

The first of these lies north-east of Genoa in loc. Refundou at Savignone and features both late Roman and Byzantine amphorae as well as

some glass- and metal-work, and in addition the distinctive 'ceramica vacuolare' which is present throughout the occupational sequence. This ceramic type presently appears limited in its distribution to Byzantine sites of eastern Liguria, notably Zignago, Luni and the defended hilltop site of Castellaraccio di S.Romano in the upper Garfagnana, which may be linked to the Byzantine defensive system.

It was also found at loc. Gronda at Luscignano (Casola in Lunignana) which, like Savignone, was an open village site, but with houses consisting of sunken beaten-earth floors with hearths, and with associated 'migration period' small finds - Savignone in contrast possessed dry-stone wallings for one house at least; tiles were also present in quantity, but are unlikely to have been used for roofing and may rather identify a tile-workshop.¹¹⁸

These villages and the ceramica vacuolare shortly disappeared, and we still await recognition of occupation sites of the 7th-10th centuries in Eastern Liguria at least.¹¹⁹ As was deduced for the Ager Lunensis, some upland shift is assumed, formalised by the foundation of castelli from the 10th-11th centuries. At Luscignano, however, burials were later cut into the abandoned village levels, and above one of these was a late 10th century coin, suggesting that occupation continued close by.

Scarce comparative data is available for the Alpine area: in Piemonte in areas like the Orco valley and the lower Valsesia refuge was taken in caves (Boira Fusca à Salto; Monfenera),¹²⁰ while in the Trentino relevant excavations are limited to the settlement at Doss Zelor near Castello di Fiemme, where there occurs a late antique period upland shift, and the late Roman necropolis at Servis, Savignano which may also demonstrate a move from the troubled valley to a safer mid-hill point away from the roads.¹²¹ Otherwise we possess just the crude settlement data that can be drawn from

Longobard-period cemeteries: the difficulty lies in judging how far these reflect the location and nature of their associated settlements. For instance, in Friuli many localities can be validly linked to military sites and need not necessarily denote hilltop settlements or village sites, while elsewhere non-military tombs originate from likely castra locations: this is the case at Farra d'Isonzo, set close to the Friulian border, guarding a river-crossing, and bearing a Longobard name, yet with tombs indicating a strong autochthonous presence.¹²² Does this show locals living with the Longobards in the castello, around it or below it? Or did locals provide the troops forming the garrison? Or was it a dependent settlement in the proximity of the castello? A similar situation arises at Invillino, where the garrison on Colle Santino presumably utilised the church on Colle di Zuca, which, from the tomb-finds uncovered there, chiefly served a local populus; no evidence exists for the latter's habitations, which perhaps lay at the feet of the castrum.¹²³

Udine may form a useful guide to events behind the frontier: under Rome it was an unimportant township beside no significant road line, but in the post-Roman era the hill of S. Maria di Castello became the new settlement focus, and rapidly developed under the Longobards when the via Iulia Augusta branched through here.¹²⁴

While the reoccupation of a number of pre-Roman castellieri in Friuli (cf. events in the Lunigiana) stresses again the progressive upland shift, the function and nature of these sites remains obscure at present, though again the correlation between site position and the communications network may provide worthwhile clues in this regard.

Nucleation in Italy was not therefore solely the product of incastellamento: rather, it was a consolidation of the defensive responses

of the population against a continuous insecurity evident in Italy since the 3rd century. These responses naturally varied regionally both structurally and temporally but all had the basic aim of defence; while some can be closely linked to military exigencies, others are identifiable as probable refuges which became established with time. The urban transfers visible in Etruria are a larger scale version of this shift in rural settlement, and can be considered as part of the same process. In contrast incastellamento created a new version of nucleation, an artificial acceleration of this process, part-formalising and part-replacing the existing pattern: only regionally was this new surge influenced by insecurities, notably in the north, where Magyar and Saracen invasions of the 9th-10th centuries played an important role, as did the Arab penetrations to the south;¹²⁵ otherwise the process was caused by the 'anarchy that resulted from the erosion of most forms of central authority at this period be it an abbey, bishopric or duchy, by a nobility increasingly feudal in character', and by the desire of these domini to 'tie the people to the land and make an effective exploitation of their holdings'.¹²⁶ For some areas, in particular those which had been greatly buffered from enemy threats and lay well back from the frontiers, this prompted a sudden switch from classical to medieval settlement and farming patterns. The Survey results south of the Ager Faliscus highlight this change: nearer Rome, in the Ager Veientanus and in Lazio east and south of the Tiber 'the medieval villages represent a sharp break with the pre-existing agrarian structure, where the Roman fundus and its associated land divisions were almost totally ignored. The 10th century saw the imposition of a quite novel system which had little to do with a move toward security; it was essentially an act of colonisation ... The product of completely different factors'.¹²⁷

In sum, not all nucleations were early, but where insecurity had been stronger, there the response had been quicker. Likewise not all early nucleations will have been 'strategic hamlets'.

(c) The form and composition of late antique fortified sites

Our evidence for African affairs is more complete than that for Italy, given Procopius' lists of fortifications supposedly erected by Justinian, and the constitutions and directives issued by the Emperor for Africa to the general Belisarius, which clearly describe the model for the Byzantine military reorganisation of the province.¹²⁸ This great body of information, further expanded by the comparative wealth of building inscriptions, chiefly resulted from the rapidity of the Byzantine conquest of the Vandals and the immediate consolidation of the territory against the Moors. Money had obviously been set aside for the extensive project of reorganisation, restoration, and refortification of decayed strongholds, as part of Justinian's overall aims of reconquest of the West, as is also witnessed in the speed and quality of construction.¹²⁹ Internal and external threats did not seriously hamper this work.

In Italy, on the other hand, the Ostrogothic Kingdom failed to crumble meekly to imperial force. Justinian, after the initial setbacks to Belisarius' campaigns, sadly neglected the logistics for a full reconquest and thus allowed the War to drag on interminably for eighteen years with wildly fluctuating fortunes, until the able leadership of Narses gained the vital victories of 552-3.¹³⁰ Even then of course it needed ten more years of hard campaigning before the Gothic and Frankish threat over the Po was finally terminated.¹³¹ By the close of the War, and indeed well before this, Italian human and logistical resources were so exhausted that an overhauling of the defences on the scale of the African or Eastern

provinces before the advent of the Longobard invasion was impossible.¹³²

Although one assumes a greater temporal availability south of the Po, the evidence denies this. Indicative of the severe financial shortages is the considerable delay before Narses completed the restoration of the Ponte Salaria in 565 - a full twelve years after victory at Mons Lactarius.¹³³ Indeed, of 'Byzantine' defensive installations comparable to the African examples, we possess no more than the fine masonry walls at Terracina (Fig.49), and the single tower-bastion affixed to the republican citadel walls of Ardea.¹³⁴ To the north such identifications are virtually impossible, in particular through continuous castral occupation and evolution. In many cases of supposed Byzantine fortifications - such as the walls of Grado and the tower of S.Giorgio at Filattiera - construction is now considered late Roman or early medieval in date.¹³⁵ Otherwise excavated examples - as S.Stefano di Lecco, Zignago, Monte Castello and Ferrara - demonstrate a wide variety of construction techniques, having little in common with the fine walling at Terracina, Ardea and indeed Isola di Brioni.

As noted, the Byzantines, and the Goths before them, generally trusted in existing fortifications, whether late Roman (as Rome, Ravenna, Susa, Grado), early imperial (Rimini, Fano, Pesaro, Aosta, Turin) or republican, Etruscan or pre-Roman (Ardea, Spoleto, Perugia, Orvieto). These needed few repairs, and these were undoubtedly effected by Ostrogoths and Byzantines alike during the course of the War as each sought to secure their territorial gains - though the Goths in fact destroyed some defences to prevent their use by imperial troops.¹³⁶ Presumably, after 553-4 Narses established garrisons in all the recaptured towns and forts and planned the effecting of stronger repairs and the erection of new defences once resources were deemed sufficient.

When not representing a total reuse of preexisting fortifications, Byzantine defences (with the few exceptions noted above) contrast greatly with the forms witnessed in 6th century Africa: work is predominantly local in character, using local materials and manpower, and often housing garrisons drawn from the proximity. In poor cases, therefore, we observe a rushed construction with poorly-cut stones and with slapdash use of mortar, but usually built solidly, with secure foundations - this is best demonstrated in the Castellaro at Zignago, where construction is principally in dry-stone.¹³⁷ Indeed many Lunigianese sites may represent an ad hoc defensive response to the sudden Longobard irruption: the Byzantines perhaps rapidly erected a makeshift defensive arrangement along the Appenninic ridges reusing suitable abandoned prehistoric castellieri which still afforded some degree of structural defence; then, as the threat dissipated, time and resources allowed the addition of more solid installations. The speed of the Longobard penetration will have provoked similar re-adoption of abandoned acropolis or hill-seats elsewhere in Italy, as along the borders of the Exarchate, where many sites reveal pre-Roman presences (Monteveglia, Pavullo, Bismantova), and likewise in Etruria, where the natural acropoli offered excellent defensive opportunities.

The reuse of such positions was often at the expense of the poorly-protected lowland centres. The depopulation of these was not always wholesale, however, and sometimes the transfer of a bishop from an old Roman seat to the new early medieval location took many years. This is well illustrated in Etruria where Etruscan Falerii Veteres replaced its Roman successor Falerii Novi, and similarly ancient Orvieto regained its former importance - an event first recorded by Procopius.¹³⁸ Where no natural defensive seat was available other towns fell into total decline,

yet others, like Faventia, Forum Livii and Forum Cornelii apparently possessed separate nearby fortifications which allowed urban survival.¹³⁹

Partly influenced by the older fortifications, circuit walls of this period closely follow the best defensible hill contours, usually crowning hilltops and heavily guarding points of access. In the case of the South Etrurian promontory settlements, the gorges around provided natural defences to the site, and generally defensive arrangements devolved solely around the entry-point. But even on the steepest of hilltop sites, walls, usually of stones of local provenance, were a basic provision.

The reliance on natural strongholds is reflected in the utilisation of the island fortresses of Isola di S.Giulio (Lago d'Orta), Isola Comacina (Lago di Como), and the Dalmatian castrum of Brioni (off Pola). Similar are the lagoonal centres fostered by Byzantium after 568, many of which possessed no artificial defences, and relied on nature and imperial naval supremacy.¹⁴⁰ The Byzantine fleet, attested at Classe, probably had stations within the lagoons west of Grado, and even under the Ostrogoths tribunes of the lagoonal sites are recorded, thus denoting some official military presence in the early War years.¹⁴¹

With regard to the structural composition of fortifications of this era nothing conclusive can be deduced from the minimal data derived from the limited systematic excavation. The cases of Castelseprio, Invillino, Belmonte and a handful of other sites are exceptional, and offer interesting indications, which presently fail to provide a fully coherent pattern applicable to a wider context. Nonetheless a general sequence can be discerned, wherein initial late Roman defensive installations, where not consisting of a fortified town, were often formed by watchtowers (as Phase 1, Castelseprio with its three towers) successively enclosed by further

defensive features, dependent on the relative importance of the site (as Castelseprio's growth to castral status) or replaced by other fortifications as Rome's defensive needs expanded (erection of forts at Grado, Invillino, etc.). In later examples circuits with towers are fewer (when site reuse is not present), with a tendency towards a main tower set within a circuit, designed for observation and communication with larger fortifications (e.g. Gemona, Zuglio, Zignago and Varigotti). Often the natural strength of a site precluded the addition of circuit-towers (Ferrara may not have possessed towers; at Ardea only a bastion was added).

While the paucity of excavations and simultaneously our lack of datable finds prevents a chronological determination of this sequence, Coccoluto and Ricchebono have nevertheless attempted to locate a pattern in the development of masonry styles from late Roman into early medieval times in dated constructions along the Ligurian coast, suggesting continual adaptations of opus certum technique.¹⁴² As bases for this model they use the circuit and tower at Varazze, near Albisola. Here they consider the circuit wall, composed of successive courses of well-aligned stones of varied proportions mixed with river-cobble with occasional herring-bone style rows of pebble-stone and pieces of stone with a strong mortar bond, as 6th century and Byzantine in date; the internal tower, internally 2.40m wide with walls c.1.10m thick, internally composed of irregularly cut small stones with much mortar, and externally of larger more elongated blocks more regularly set with traces of horizontal courses covered by mortar, dates to the 5th century.¹⁴³ The latter construction is compared with the circuit walling at Campomarzio in Valle Argentina, the circuit at Taggia, and other Ligurian structures of 5th-6th century date, and conclude for Varazze a castral evolution of late Roman tower-later Roman/post-Roman circuit.¹⁴⁴

The results from Castelseprio and the Lario district tend to support this hypothesis, but broader confirmation is still required.

Other Ligurian towers, however, claim a later origin, datable to the period of Byzantine occupation. This suggests an extension to the provincial defensive network in this epoch, provoked by the Longobard expansion: examples include the Zignago Tower C - c.8.30 x 8.0m with walls 1.50m thick - constructed in uneven courses of local greenstone roughly dressed with mortar present only in the corners (elsewhere using horizontal or vertical wedges to pad the unbonded rubble-cored walls).¹⁴⁵ (Fig. 19)

Andrews has argued that 'in the Ligurian Appennines ... certain dry-stone enclosures with free-standing towers of about 8m square have now been shown on archaeological evidence to date from the 5th-6th centuries', though as he himself notes, 'the only example so far to have been published in detail is the Castellaro di Zignago'.¹⁴⁶ The other sites in question are S.Martino di Framura and Montale di Levante, plausibly identified by Conti as the Byzantine road fortifications of Rexum and Cebula listed by Anonymous of Ravenna:¹⁴⁷ both possess strong towers on the scale of Zignago, with that of S.Martino of 8.50 x 8.50m, with irregular walling of rough limestone blocks lower down, and smaller blocks above, while the S.Siro del Montale tower is smaller but quadrangular. While all similar, only Zignago has received adequate archaeological investigation, and the chronology of the Framura and Montale towers is drawn chiefly from their record in Anonymous, their siting in relation to adjoining medieval churches, and comparisons with other structures of the Lunigiana - including the S.Giorgio tower at Filattiera (now shown to be 12th century in date).¹⁴⁸ Nonetheless their undoubted original function as road-guards sets them to the start of the early Middle Ages, and perhaps indeed to the period of Byzantine -

Longobard opposition. If evidence of this is forthcoming, then our understanding of Byzantine strategy here is much magnified.

The evidence from the Western riviera is less revealing with regard to the origin of the Ligurian defensive installations: the S.Nicolo castrum at Bardineto for example is considered both Longobard (opposing the Byzantine base of Toirano) and Byzantine (as advance fort, guarding the Nera and Varatella valleys) - its tower is of diameter 2.90m internally, and still stands to c.2.25m with walls c.1.70-2.25m thick; like Zignago Tower C it has rubble coring, but with outer faces in roundish, well-aligned stones, and internal successively superimposed rough courses featuring some inclined rows.¹⁴⁹ The Varigotti tower, however, has been wholly restructured and gives no indication of its original aspect.

Though smaller fortifications like Zignago yield little or no evidence of internal habitations (though Tower C here was presumably a casa-torre), traces of houses are generally present, frequently built up near or against the circuit. At Belmonte in the Canavese, four huts of c.6 x 6m are claimed close to the circuit, with central hearths and containing much domestic debris, and another structure resembling a smithy. No constructional details were given.¹⁵⁰ Plans of excavated houses at Castelseprio are few and not fully published: of Longobard date are houses built against the circuit with stone foundations and wooden superstructures and tile roofing, and featuring internal hearths: in addition there is the 5th-6th century casa-torre in the south of the castrum. Numerous traces of further overgrown stone habitations adjoining the curtain are discernable - as at Verruca - but these await excavation. How much of the castrum is late Roman remains unclear, but the presence of the 5th century basilica and cistern testifies to a large fixed garrison and populus.¹⁵¹

The late Roman presence at Invillino is equally obvious: this consists of mid-late imperial house remains, probably belonging to a statio (as may be the case for many of the Friulian castra which flank the roads), which were variously altered and extended with the addition of mortared or dry-set walls; in Phase IV, 6th-7th century structures, west-east orientated, in dry-stone appear in the south of the Colle Santino plateau, with dimensions of 16 x 8m, 12 x 7m and 10 x 5m.¹⁵² (Fig. 7) Both houses and curtain were built with local stone. The erosion of the north hill-side in particular prevents recognition of their location in respect to the actual circuit.

The habitations located at Castel Grande, Castrum Pertice and D85 all certainly adjoin the defensive perimeter: on the south-west flank of the first, 2 dry-stone houses of c.6.2 x 5.8m with walls c.55cm thick, of forms closely comparable to the Carasso house, were uncovered, of a size similar to those in the inner circuit at Castrum Pertice (6 x 4m, walls c.60cm thick, with two beaten earth floors).¹⁵³ (Fig. 5) The D85 huts were revealed principally through geophysical survey, which indicated wooden houses against the east circuit. The disposition of these and the apparent lack of structures in the remaining castle area - whether left for cultivation or for shelter of locals - is a common feature in many surviving nucleated sites.¹⁵⁴

It is worthwhile bringing into comparison here the two Byzantine houses discovered at Luni, datable to c.600: these were poor timber constructions erected on the abandoned Forum, in one case using as a wall-support the line of the old portico, but generally crudely built with large padded post-holes and with internal partitions and hearths; dimensions were c.12 x 6m and 10 x 5m.¹⁵⁵ (Fig. 14) Although the town itself was in gradual decline,

its strategic importance in this epoch is recognised: the finding therefore of such buildings should reflect the general economic poverty and the house-types to be expected in both urban and rural contexts. Their construction, though poor, denies a temporary nature. The few house remains located at Tuscania in the Viterbese repeat this picture, with a series of timber-built structures beside the road (in an area likewise abandoned since late Roman times) only later replaced in stone when the town reflourished - an event which failed to occur at Luni.¹⁵⁶

In most cases part of the open area was utilised for religious structures, as is most apparent at Castelseprio (S.Giovanni and baptistery, and other later religious structures), and Verruca (Basilica of SS.Cosma and Damiano). In the Norican Fliehbürgen of the Drau valley, the most notable structure besides the imposing gate installations is the church, usually occupying the highest point within the circuit; the same is true of sites like Vranje and Rifnik in Pannonia.¹⁵⁷ In some cases the church apparently replaced a late Roman summital tower, which was occasionally utilised as a bell-tower.¹⁵⁸

In towns and castra at least one intramural church was present, and the number increased in time according to the site's stability and importance: Cividale was richly furnished with religious foci both intra- and extra-moenal, which have all revealed conspicuous traces of Longobard usage; to Castelseprio, after the 6th century, was added a baptistery, the extramural church of S.Maria, and below the castrum, the monastery of Torba; and Isola Comacina held no less than three churches of late Roman-early medieval date.

The space available within the defended circuit was often restricted, however, and where little more than the defences themselves could be installed, provision was made for the castral chapel in a secure, neighbouring, extramural position. This occurs at many Friulian and Ligurian

fortresses, and is best illustrated at Invillino, where, upstream of the Colle Santino castrum, a cemeterial church of late antique date was unearthed on Colle di Zuca (Colle dei Pagans): here a number of construction phases were identified complementing the life of the fort, extending into the 8th-9th century when the castrum area was levelled and used as a cemeterial zone for the newly-erected S.Maria delle Grazie at the east end of the Santino plateau.¹⁵⁹ Longobard churches are known also below the Artegna castrum (S.Stefano in Clama), and at Gemona, while the pieve of SS.Gervasio and Protasio below castrum Nemas is of proposed Byzantine foundation.¹⁶⁰ Of like date are the church and later monastery of S.Lorenzo near the castrum peninsula of Varigotti, which has graves of Justinianic date, and the church of S.Paragorio at the foot of the S.Michele hill at Noli, also with 6th-7th century material.¹⁶¹ Church structures were also identified in the excavation of the major Longobard extramural cemeteries of Nocera Umbra and Castel Trosino. This practice follows the Roman norm of extramoenal burial.

The presence of a stone-built church on the knoll of D85 overlooking the poor timber-built houses of the inhabitants vividly illustrates the importance of religion in these post-Roman centres. This is further highlighted by the extensive mosaics which embellish the churches at Colle di Zuca and Verruca, and the sculptural or fresco ornamentation in many castral chapels, including Nimis, Ragogna, Zuglio, Castelseprio and Comacina.

It is apparent, however, that in cases of structurally well-developed castral churches an early Christian origin is likely, and where an early medieval origin is demonstrated construction is generally simple and much smaller in size, and often only gaining decorative elaboration at a later date.¹⁶² The stark contrast between late- and post-Roman religious establishments is witnessed notably at Castelseprio and Invillino: the former

presents the monumental intramural 5th century S.Giovanni and later baptistery, as well as the plain, small, single-aula extramural S.Maria foris portas (though containing fine frescoes); on Colle di Zuca at Invillino, subsequent to the destruction of the late Roman church, the original structure of 28 x 14.9m was reduced to one of 17.3 x 7.20m with walls 60cm thick (built generally in fish-bone technique); sometime in the 7th-9th centuries this was further reduced to 13.2 x 7.2m, again composed of simple rectangular aula with isolated altarroom - a common format in Longobard churches of this Alpine region.¹⁶³

The construction of these castral chapels appears, from our limited archaeological data, contemporary with the installation of their respective fortresses: at Castelseprio, for instance, S.Giovanni arose after the three-towers phase, inferring the presence of a substantial garrison. The subsequent growth of the stronghold and its obvious attraction to the local population increased the religious requirements, and consequently a baptistery was added to the north apse of the basilica. The continuing development of Sibrium under the Longobards soon caused the appearance of a borgo: the religious needs of this community were then met by the small church of S.Maria.¹⁶⁴ Undoubtedly in some cases a church arose in points not designed to serve a military garrison, but where included within castral circuits direct military usage should be inferred. Many island sites like Comacina, for instance, may originally have fulfilled wholly religious purposes as sanctuaries, but were transformed in the later Roman epoch with the adaptation of these natural strongholds for defensive needs.

Yet while the presence of late antique churches may imply a contemporary origin to many fortifications, less clear is the relationship between post-Roman churches and related fortresses. In the case of the Friulian

castra recorded above, Invillino, Cividale and Zuglio are credited with late Roman origins archaeologically, but at present the intermediate sites suggest only post-Roman occupation. In these circumstances it is always necessary to review first the historical position of such sites and then the strategy of their locations. Thus in Liguria the occupation of defensive headlands like Varigotti or hills like Zignago controlling minor pass routes suits best the historical situation of the Byzantine-Longobard struggle - a picture generally confirmed through excavation.¹⁶⁵ Towns like Susa and Bellinzona, however, consistently performed a vital border role, and this is closely reflected in the evident traces of settlement continuity.

Who the patrons of the castral churches were is not easily shown, but we may presume that as in the instances of fortifications under Rome and later, the initiative came from the central authorities. Whether this entailed direct supervision is obscure, but the likelihood is that the troops themselves and the local population at hand participated in the construction.

In an urban context Ward-Perkins notes the widespread sources of patronage of churches: 'there is good evidence from Rome and Ravenna of patronage throughout our period (c.300 to c.850) by all propertied classes: popes, bishops, emperors, kings, government officials, and local aristocrats (both clerics and laymen). From Pavia and Lucca the evidence starts rather later, but is almost as dense and varied'.¹⁶⁶ In a Longobard urban context the conclusion remains valid, although one particular category of patron stands out: the local Longobard governors, the dukes and gastalds.¹⁶⁷

Although information regarding non-urban churches is minimal a similar pattern of patronage probably extended to the forts: many castral chapels, as said, appeared in the later Roman era, but could have been erected by either provincial governors or neighbouring bishops in accordance with the

garrison's needs. Theoderic undoubtedly constructed Gothic Arian churches in both towns and fortifications, often in rivalry with existing orthodox buildings, but as these were unRoman and heretic, he omitted mention of these in Cassiodorus' Variae.¹⁶⁸ The letters of Gregory the Great offer some clues regarding the Byzantine patronage of churches in castra, however: after a probable reoccupation of Picenum in 597-8 the new local military commanders sought Gregory's help in reestablishing religious control there and electing bishops anew. While refugee bishops returned to their old seats (Passivus returned to Fermo in 598), some building work was initiated: at Fermo an oratory was built in 598, probably by the bishop; at Ascoli Passivus consecrated a monastery built by a deacon in 602; and in 598 he also consecrated an oratory to S. Pietro built by the comes Anio at the castrum Aprutiensis Firmensis.¹⁶⁹ In sum, both local religiosi and imperial military officers were involved in church construction and organisation. The same should be true for Longobard Italy, with considerable patronage by the provincial dukes and gastalds assumed but not proven.

Finally we can note that once built these churches needed constant attention and repair, much in the same way as the fortifications. In the towns many churches will have been supported by private donors or ecclesiastical revenue reserved for individual buildings, though there is also the evidence of Italian capitularies of Carolingian date which 'refer to an old custom in the Lombard kingdom of repair, of at least baptismal churches as a public duty, requiring contributions of money or labour when necessary ... Like other such services (to bridges and walls), these duties almost certainly were inherited from late antiquity, when indeed we do find references to a common duty "to build and repair public or sacred buildings"'.¹⁷⁰ This no doubt applied also to forts and even refuges, where maintenance was for the common good.

NOTES TO CHAPTER TWO

1. Naval victory near Senigallia: Procop. BG. VIII,xxiii. On naval importance of Byzantium in Italy: Schmiedt 1978, p. 129f, esp. p.132-3; on battle p.217-8. On Byzantine naval activity see also Ahrweiler 1978, p.259f (generally considering the Middle Byzantine eastern Mediterranean).
2. Granaries recorded in Cass. Var.XII,27,28; Rome: Var.XI,5.
3. Var.XII,28
4. Though this is not clearly witnessed in Procopius' Histories. Towns were most at threat through the ravages of the War, for despite the stores that each possessed, the desperate measures necessarily instigated during a siege by the authorities often formed a common cause for treachery on the part of the townspeople in receiving in the enemy in order to relieve their hardships. Numerous instances of this appear in Procopius and Agathias.
5. Paul on Cividale: IV,37. On Ligurian coast see Anon.Rav.IV,29; Origo ch.6; Paul IV,45; Fredégarius IV,71. Below Chap. 5, section C.
6. Toubert 1971 - cf. Luttrell's review of, 1975.
7. Imola: Paul II,18; Sussubio, Tiberiaco: Lib.Pont. V.Steph.II 47,51; cf. Hartmann 1889, p.59-61 with notes p.156.
8. Trentino: Paul III,31 and below Chap. 4, section F. Friuli Paul III, 47, and below Chap. 4, section J.
9. Augustanis clusuris : Cass.Var.II,5; Verruca: Var.III,48. Como is likewise a munimen claustrale...provinciae:Var.XI,14; Cassiodorus also notes Goths and Romans in ports and clusuris: Var.II,18.
10. The Anatolian beacons communicated all the way back to Constantinople. On these see Pattenden 1983, and Arvites 1983, p.220 - article noted below in note 24.
11. See in particular Brozzi 1981, passim. Finds: note 8.
12. Much is owed to G.Roberti who collated all information regarding Trentine archaeology for 400 - 1000 in 1951; Ciurletti 1980 has added to this picture. Note 8 above.
13. See Bona 1976; Ulbert 1979; Johnson 1983, p.288-290.
14. See Hartmann 1889, Schneider 1924, and Stein 1949 (p.612-3).
15. Cf. Brown 1978, p.327. On Liguria see Chap. 5, section C.
16. On Lunigiana in general see Formentini 1930; Ferrari 1929; Conti 1960;

Balbis 1979. Zignago: Cabona et al. 1978.

17. Brown 1978, p.326.
18. Ibid. p.327.
19. Maurice, Strat.X,2: cf. Pertusi 1968, p.684-7.
20. Brown 1978, p.323; 1984, p.44 and 83 with note 5. Maurice, Strat.XI,4. Pertusi 1968, p.684-7. As Brown notes (1984, p.83): 'In order to survive against the Lombards and defend effectively widely scattered areas with limited resources, the army had to change the techniques which had brought the eventual victory in the large scale battles of the Gothic War'.
21. 1981, p.109.
22. Ibid. p.97.
23. Ibid. p.98.
24. Howard-Johnston 1983, p.239f, esp. p.257-261, and Arvites 1983, p.219f esp. p.219-221, in: Mitchell et al. 1983. The defensive system of Asia Minor cannot yet be validly compared with Italy, for here the work by Foss in particular has concentrated on urban sites and does not yet reveal details concerning castra and castella - cf. Ahrweiler 1962, esp. p. 15-22 and 28-32; Foss 1975; 1976; 1979. The studies by Muller-Wiener on fortresses concentrate on defences of a slightly later date, and on a province that lies closer to the home of the Empire, which may have thus received more attention than that accorded Italy. A similar pattern nonetheless emerges, in particular with regard to gravitation around the imperial coastal centres (Muller-Wiener 1961, 1962 articles in *Istanbul Mitteilungen*). But as Brown notes, the scale of insecurity in Asia Minor as a result of the Arab invasions, and the contemporary recourse to strategic heights, bears close comparison with the Italian situation. Further fieldwork may extend this analogy: 1976, p.155-8; 1978, p.324-5; 1984, p.44. Another useful parallel should be the development of settlement in Spain where the Byzantine province underwent gradual diminishment through continuous threat from the rest of Spain. Too little archaeology has occurred but a useful summary appears in Bazzana, Guichard 1976, p.61-3. On Spain see Thompson 1969, esp. p.320-334.
25. Brown 1978, p.325 and 1984, p.41-2 and 83. Brown 1976, p.155f; 1978, p.324-5 validly compares the Italian insecurity with 7th century Asia Minor - see note 24.
26. Brown 1976, p.107; 1984, p.83 with notes 5, 6.
27. Paul III,9; cf. Conti 1964.
28. Paul IV,37.
29. Paul III,31, also recorded in Greg. Hist.Franc.X,3. Compare also the

earlier invasion by Childebert, Paul III,17. Cf. also Ward-Perkins 1984, p.197-8.

30. This indeed occurs in 590 when near Bellinzona the Franks, who came unprepared for siege-warfare, sought booty from around the town, but 'were destroyed by the Longobards who fell upon them while they were scattered in various places' - Paul III,31. The same tactic was used to good effect by Belisarius while besieged in Rome: Procop. V, xxiii; VI,i-ii, noting that in all 69 encounters were made in the course of the siege (37-8).
31. See Chapter 3; cf. also Conti 1964
32. Cf. note 5 above.
33. For the Lunigiana, the Cisa pass road running down along the course of the Magra, formed the principal communications line. Formentini, 1939; Conti 1960, p.67f.
34. 1960, p.67-8.
35. Schmiedt 1968, p.898-905 calculates a greater role played by the maritime forces and bases, who dealt with the enemy forces which had been 'hindered' by the inland fortifications.
36. Such may perhaps be assumed for Byzantine Africa, but in the instance of the struggle for Anagnis the fact that Ragilo came from a district south of rather than north of Trento argues for a distinct zone of military quartering. The musters recorded in the Liber Pontificalis (listed by Brown 1984, p.90-1) show only larger scale mobilisation of troops by the imperial commanders, whether at Rome or Ravenna, for notable threats and campaigns, and not small scale mustering within border districts.
37. On these see in particular Schneider 1924, Chapter 1, p.3-69, n.b. p.62-9. cf. also Wickham 1981, p.41.
38. Lunigianese finis: Schneider 1924, p.5-8, Bismantova p.40-1. Under Charlemagne we indeed hear of 'in finibus Bismanti': cf. also Bullough 1956, n.b. p.20-1; Formentini 1929, p.7-8.
39. Bullough 1956, p.20.
40. Ibid. p.20.
41. Schneider 1924, p.62-9; cf. also Fumagalli 1971. The gastaldatus Bismantus lay in the Parma comitatus, and thus with
42. Schneider 1924, p.68.
43. Bullough 1956, p.20.
44. Schneider 1924, p.30-1. See below, Chap. 4, section C.

45. Thus controlling the routes of the Gottero, Bratello, Cisa, Cirone, Lago Santo and Linari passes - Formentini 1930, p.33f.
46. Bullough 1956, p.20; Cabona et al. 1978, p.308-9.
47. The Longobard border system within Italy is even more obscure, but if analogous with that of the Byzantines it is clear from the Carolingian invasion and occupation that it could not cope with a new, determined external threat; nonetheless, the fact that the Carolingians themselves adopted the existing system wholesale argues for its continued usefulness and even effectiveness. In general see Wickham 1981, p.47f and 58 with notes, p.201, and on the Marches in more detail see Drew 1964.
48. Formentini 1929, p.167f; Balbis 1979, p.160f. Cf. also Brown 1976, p.55-7; 1984, p.46-8.
49. Schneider 1924, p.3f. Tuscany: see Chap. 5, section C.
50. Greg. Reg.IX,11; also for June 603 for Pisa, Gregory informs Smaragdus 'drumones eorum iam parati ad egrediendum nuntiati sunt': Reg.XIII,36.
51. On these districts, articulated between 1. Savona, 1a. Albisola - Varazze, 2. Varigotti - Noli, 3. Toirano, 4. Albenga, 5. Taggia, 6. Ventimiglia, see Lamboglia 1946, p.119; Coccoluto, Ricchebono 1974, p.38-9; and Balbis 1980, p.41. Below, Chap. 5, section C. Some of these districts are in fact called comitatūs in medieval documents - cf. Noli in Lamboglia 1946.
52. Schmiedt 1978 provides an interesting summary of the history of the Italian ports in the early Middle Ages, mentioning the roles of many under Byzantium. See also Ahrweiler 1978. Cf. note 1.
53. Most island sites or ports in Istria are likewise well-defended - as Capodistria (Iustinopolis), Isola, and Isola di Brioni. Below, Chap. 4, section I.
54. On both sites see below, Chap. 5, section B.
55. Mor 1977; Patitucci Uggeri 1983.
56. We may also identify similar multi-pronged attacks in the Longobard advances under Liutprand and Astulf, when inroads were made into the Exarchate through attacks on both Emilia and the Pentapolis. See various sections in Chap. 5.
57. Schneider 1924, p.44, though Bullough 1966 has shown that the province held land either side of the road was thus not so fully exposed to Longobard threat. Below Chap. 5, section E.
58. Gregory of course bitterly complained to Maurice of Romanus' denuding of Rome of its garrison in order to defend Perugia: Greg. Reg.V,36, in 595: ut Perusia teneretur, Roma relicta est.
59. However, the extent of such communication is disputed, considering

- the independence of both the Spoleto and Benevento duchies from the rest of the Kingdom: Wickham 1981, p.33. See also Drew 1964, p.438.
60. Schneider 1924, p.45.
 61. See above, with notes 28-9
 62. Pertusi 1968, p.684 with refs.; Brown 1978, p.325, 328; 1984, p.96 with note 30.
 63. Greg. Reg.VIII,19. Cf. also Reg.IX,11; 162; 240. Rome: Procop. V, xxviii, 18, 29, though clearly Belisarius was reluctant to use these men despite the exigencies of the situation: he was clearly uncertain of their loyalty.
 64. Hartmann 1889, p.58-9; Brown 1984, p.95f with notes, and 106; Ward-Perkins 1984, p.194-6 on the continued duty of wall-work in late antiquity. Maurice's Strategicon, X,3 also advises 'commanders to make use of a demos in resisting a siège if one existed in the city by giving it defensive duties and especially the repair of the fortifications' - Brown 1984, p.96, note 30. As Brown demonstrates, p.97-8, by the 8th century the military onus seems to extend to most of the populus, except in the largest garrison centres of Rome and Ravenna. The most quoted instance is of course the equation milites = populus at Comacchio: Brown 1984, p.42 and 95.
 65. Brown 1978, p.328; 1984, p.105-6. Greg. Reg.VIII,32, discussed by Hartmann 1889, p.59-60. Cass. Var.XII,15 records Squillace as unwallled still in 535. As Brown 1984, p.106, note 48, notes: 'The castrum was built at Mons Castellum on the site of a hermitage belonging to the monastery of Vivarium...'
 66. Greg. Reg.IX, 206. Cf. Hartmann 1889, p.59-60; Brown 1978, p.328; 1984, p.106.
 67. Brown 1984, p.45 with note 15.
 68. Greg. Reg.IX, 121 of 599. Cf. Hartmann 1889, p.59. Brown 1978, p.328-9.
 69. Inscription: CIL, V.5418. See below p.146. Cf. Pringle 1981, p.92-3 who analyses such dedicatory inscriptions: 'Such examples show..... that inscriptions which purport to record acts of munificence by private individuals should not necessarily be taken at their face value'. Bishop Benenatus may have claimed similar recognition for constructing castrum Misenum. Italy lacks the African epigraphic evidence regarding castral foundations.
 70. The general Ansfrid obtained a bishop for Bagnoregio: Greg. Reg.X,13; comes Anio of Aprutium built an oratory in 598: Greg. Reg.IX,71; Iohannes magister militum arrested the bishop of Fossombrone in 559: Pelagius Ep. 69, 70, 71. The religious needs of a garrison were met by the central authorities and implemented by the Church.
 71. 1978, p.329.

72. African praetorian prefects: Pringle 1981, p.89-94, summarising: '...if any (unofficial fortifications) could be shown to have existed in 6th century Byzantine Africa they would betoken in effect a lapse of the State's control of one aspect of provincial government over which it expected to exercise a monopoly'. Longinus: Brown 1976, p.14; 1984, p.10; Agnellus ch.95-6. However, Agnellus (ch.95) accords Longinus solely the feat of walling the suburb Cesarea at Ravenna, and lists no other forts; otherwise only Smaragdus is named as erecting forts. Below, Chap. 5, section B.
73. Ibid. p.328; 1984, p.18, 44-5. Ward-Perkins 1984, p.196, with note 61. The Byzantines possessed too few troops to let the military carry out buildings works as the Roman practice had been. Brown notes that only Ferrara and Argenta are recorded - though not epigraphically - as official Byzantine foundations, erected by Smaragdus c.604. N.b. 1976, p.153 and 1984, p.44: 'Byzantine activities in erecting new forts should not be exaggerated since they were able to take over many existing sites and many cities, including Rome, had had walls for centuries'. The same is valid for the Longobards.
74. 1984, p.193. On City wall maintenance in general, p.191-9.
75. Cass. Var.I,17; III,48. Feltre: V,9: '...receiving their pay, all who live close together are to repair a length of wall by common effort'. Ward-Perkins 1984, p.194 wrongly thinks these letters refer to building castra: those of Tortona and castellum Verruca already existed, while that near Feltre was a civitas. His quote is from V,9 not I,17.
76. These provide 'our main source for church-, palace-, bridge- and road-work' - Ward-Perkins 1984, Rome: p.195-6; Longobard Italy: p.196-7.
77. Ibid., p.196-7, note 61: for these postulated ecclesiastical castra we should suspect the availability of funds from the source for upkeep, but we lack evidence. Only from the late 9th century do bishops 'start to take over effective political power in many towns of the peninsula, and with it assumed control of the walls' - p.196 - though, as noted, Rome and Campania proved early exceptions in this respect: note 74.
78. 1968, p.685-7. He gives the following examples of town sizes: Tebessa 320 x 280m; Thelēpte 430 x 180m; Castra: Haidra 120 x 85m, Timgad 220 x 70-85m; castella: Mdaourouch 50 x 45m, Lemsā 40 x 39m, Tobna 90 x 75m; pill-boxes: c.10 x 9-10m. Cf. Pringle 1981, p.143-5.
79. On towns and walls see again Ward-Perkins 1984, p.191-4. Luni may have shrunk to the 'citadella' around the cathedral - *ibid.*, 1977, p.637; 1978, p.316; while Florence perhaps withdrew into a more compact defensive shell: Hardie 1965, after Maetzke 1948.
80. For the Lunigiana we note the hierarchical grouping of Luni (c.560 x 438m), the Castelvechio of Filattiera (c. 300m²), and Zignago (c. 90m² on its upper terrace).

81. 1983, p.226-7.
82. Alföldy 1974, p.214-7; Johnson 1983, p.240. Discussed below, Chap. 4, section H(i).
83. Alföldy 1974, p.219f on 'Military-style' buildings. On Castella see the Vita S. Severini 25,2 and Vita S. Martini IV,649 when Venantius Fortunatus in 565-6 travelled along the Drau.
84. Vettors 1968, p.940f.; Alföldy 1974, p.216f.
85. See Ulbert 1979: and below, Chap. 4, section H(ii).
86. Best known are the caves at Monfenera in Valsesia: Fedele 1975, listing possible cave-refuges in Lombardia and Venetia - p.279, notes 36-7. An early medieval cave shelter near Ragogna: Cerutti 1982, p.7f. Caves in the Savonese, Liguria: Bonora et al. 1984, p.217.
87. Whitehouse, Potter 1981, p.206-10; 1983, p.4-5. See Chap. 5, section E.
88. Potter 1979, p.138, 148-9, 157. Potter synthesises the overall results of the Survey.
89. From the letters of Gregory the Great we observe a number of bishopric combinations, whereby depopulated seats joined with better established bishoprics, or were directly transferred to an imperial castrum: for instance, Orvieto's seat eventually moved to Bagnoregio (Reg.II,17; VI,27; X,13), Minturnae with Formiae (I,8), and Interamna (Terni) with Narni (IX,60); cf. Duchesne 1903; Richards 1980, p.100f on reorganisation of Sees. On poverty of the Italian landscape after the War see Brown 1984, p.6-7. General insecurity: Potter 1979, p.138-46.
90. Ibid., p.165f.
91. 1983, p.242f.
92. Whitehouse 1979; 1983; Hodges, Whitehouse 1983, p.43-4.
93. Potter 1979, p.166f. 'Thus Tomasetti lists among the properties of the domusculata the fundi of Campanius (= Campagnano di Roma), Calcata, Mazzanus (possibly an erroneous inclusion), Stabia (= Faleria), Porcianus and Roncilianus, all of which can be identified with existing or deserted medieval settlements. It looks then as if these are the names of the late Roman villas and farms that are situated close to the fortified villages - names which were transferred with the migration to the promontary sites. Indeed it may be that the northern estates of the domusculata of Capracorum were being farmed not from the Roman villas but from the incipient medieval villages'.
See p.167 on the possible identification of the castrum Capracorum

with Il Castellaccio of Mola di Monte Gelato, replacing a villa on the valley shelf. On fundus, see Wickham 1978b, p.142-3.

94. Whitehouse's dating in 1981, based on coin finds from the Lacus Iuturnae. My thanks to Dr. C. Wickham for information relating to the Crypta Balbi excavations. On Forum Ware and its chronology, see Appendix One. We still lack datable stratified deposits of the 7th - 9th centuries in Lazio and Central Italy.
95. Potter's hope that buff-combed ware from some promontory sites and late Roman deposits in N.Africa could bridge the ceramic gap has not been realised: 1979, p.147. Late 6th century insecurity around Rome: Brown 1978, p.326, 330.
96. Whitehouse, Potter 1983; Cameron et al. 1984.
97. Below, Chap. 5, Section E. Caves appear cut into the tufa at most promontories, including Castel Porciano and Calcata - perhaps the early homes of the inhabitants (Mallett, Whitehouse 1967, p.133-5).
98. 1978, p.330.
99. N.b. Wickham 1978a, 1978b, 1979; Potter 1979, p.164f; cf. Hodges, Whitehouse 1983, p.43f.
100. Toubert 1971, i, p.303-447, nb. p.330-8; Luttrell 1975; Wickham 1978a; 1978b; 1979; 1985, esp. p.24-52, p.53ff and 79ff; Andrews 1981.
101. Both surveys were undertaken by teams from the University of Sheffield.
102. Hodges, Barker, Wade 1980, p.70ff; Hodges, Wickham 1981a, p.305f.
103. Hodges, Barker, Wade 1980, p.86-91; Whitehouse 1966, p.30f; 1978, p.478-9. On red-painted wares from ~~the area~~ and Puglia, see Russi notices in MVRG reports 1975, 1977, 1978; cf. Peduto 1979 for Campania finds (as Altavilla Silentina - p.259-61, with fig.16).
104. Location and defences of D85: Hodges, Barker, Wade 1980, p.72, 108-9, 111-5. It defends the Larino - Trivento road. My thanks to Dr. Hodges for much information regarding D85.
105. See synthesis: *ibid.* 1980, p.111-5.
106. Though the site may have been slowly abandoned and cleared, thus leaving no such traces. The only significant metal find is part of a small iron buckle: 1980, p.93, 114. Belmonte: Carducci 1975-76, and below, Chap.4, section B.
107. D85 finds: Hodges, Barker, Wade 1980, p.86f; glassware p.91-3. Imports and their significance p.113-4.
108. On Vetrana and the 9th century settlement trend in the Biferno:

Hodges, Wickham 1981a, p.305f, nb.p.309-11; and 1981b.

109. On San Vincenzo and the survey of its terra: Hodges 1982; Wickham 1985. Population decline here: Hodges, Whitehouse 1983, p.46. My thanks to both Dr.Hodges and Dr.Wickham who provided me with interims of the survey and discussed various questions relating to the terra.
110. It is unclear if these remains mark an earlier 4th-6th century monastic site or a villa with associated cemeterial church: Hodges 1982, p.308; on South Church phases see p.303-4. The site is dated by 120 coins and ARS to between c.400/425 - 525/550. The site did produce two late 6th century coins; while inhumations part-cut into the area of the late Roman residential tower, which suggests some vestige of continuity into the 7th century.
111. Vacchereccia and Le Mura: S.Vincenzo Project Interim 1981, p.9-10; Hodges 1982, p.308-10. Vacchereccia excavations: Hodges et al. 1984, n.b. p.188-9. See also Appendix One.
112. MVRG report 1982, p.26; Wickham 1985, p.28-9; Hodges et al.1984, p.183-5, 189 on causes of mid-slope choice. Vacchereccia is first called castello in the 10th century, which presumably refers to this mid-slope site.
113. Agathias II,iv,5-7.
114. Russi 1976, eg. Fara Sentinella and Motta Panetteria. MVRG report 1983, p.31 notes his work in the territory of S.Severo (Foggia). The same appears true for Sicily where the Monreale Survey shows that of the 38 sites with material of the 6th century and later, two are hilltop citadels reoccupied under Byzantium, but the rest are villages in the valleys - half of these even survived into the Norman epoch. My thanks to Dr.J.Johns for discussing the Survey results - cf.MVRG 1983, p.31-2.
115. MVRG Reports 1975-1978; 1980, Italy sections.
116. See Peduto 1979; and MVRG Reports 1980-1981. Pratola Serra: NAM 32, p.7. Peduto also notes the fortress of Civita d'Ogliara, reused in the 8th-9th centuries by the Longobards against the Byzantines; Woolley PBSR 1910, p.212 first saw it as a Roman fortress erected in 410 against Alaric.
117. Ager Lunensis survey: Mills 1981. Luni's decline: Ward-Perkins 1981a,n.b.p.187-8 regarding the transfer of the Cathedral seat to Sarzana in the 12th-13th century.
118. Ceramica vacuolare: Fossati et al. 1976, p.311, 313; Cabona et al. 1978, p.301-2. Luscignano: MVRG Report 1973. At Savignone the presence of ARS and amphorae indicates close ties with the coast, and argues against its isolation: interpretation of the finds: Fossati et al.1976, p.323-5.
119. Cf. Mannoni 1974.

120. MVRG Report 1977; Fedele 1975, and above note 88.
121. Doss Zelor: Dal Ri, Leonardi 1974-75, p.129-30; Servis: Rigotti 1975, p.286-7.
122. Farra d'Isonzo: Dreossi 1943; Chap.4, Section J.
123. Wickham 1981, p.67-8 notes the Roman-Longobard mixture here and in other excavated sites and cemeteries.
124. Udine: Brozzi, Tagliaferri 1971.
125. It was to aid in feeding Rome that the domusculatae were set up in the mid-8th century: they replaced dwindling, inefficient farms and reinforced the supply of food to the capital: Potter 1979, p.146-55; Partner 1966. The domusculatae declined in the later 9th century, partly as a result of Arab attacks. Arabs actually held land around Sutri in the 900s: Partner 1966, p.76. Magyar invasions: Andrews 1981, p.313-4.
126. Potter 1979, p.148; Andrews 1981, p.314; cf. Brown 1978, p.329; 1984, p.45, 218-9, with notes. Incastellamento: notes 99-100 above.
127. Potter 1979, p.167. He also notes (p.148): 'the subsequent history of many of the castella also supports the argument: at least 80 were largely abandoned by AD 1200, clearly revealing the artificial element in their foundation'.
128. Procop. de Aed. VI, vi, vii; directives for Africa: Cod. Just. I, 27, 2, 8.
129. Cf. Pringle 1981, n.b. Chapter IV on Fortification Types, Forms, and Composition. He distinguishes two principal building phases in 6th century Byzantine Africa: p.89-90.
130. Victories at Busta Gallorum (Procop. VIII, xxix-xxxii) and Mons Lactarius (VIII, xxxv). On Justinian's negligence of the desperate Italian situation see Procop. VIII, xxvi, 7 - a comment made, noticeably, in his Wars volumes, not his Secret History, which abounds in exaggerated complaints against Justinian's ignorance on the needs of war.
131. Below, Chap.3, p.101-2.
132. See Brown 1984, p.104 and 6-7: 'The economic position of the 550s and 560s was hardly conducive to the stable functioning of civil society and totally inadequate to bear the burden of renewed war'.
133. CIL, VI.1199; Ward-Perkins 1984, p.48, 187. The bridge was destroyed by Totila, but only repaired once libertate urbis Romae ac totius Italiae restituta. This may mean repairs were to have begun after 554, or to be initiated only once all Italy was reconquered, i.e. when time could be directed to such work.

134. Lawrence 1962.
135. On these see Brown 1976, p.151; 1978, p.324, with refs. On Grado see Chap.5, section A; pentagonal tower at Genoa (probably 8th-9th century in date), see Chap.5, section C.
136. As recorded for Rome (Procop. VII,xxiv,3-4) and for Fano and Pesaro (VII,xi,32-7) in great detail. Such repairs are perhaps still visible in a few sections at Fano, consisting of rough stone and rubble pushed into the fabric to plug gaps (pl.44). The repairs noted by Richmond at Rome (1930) in wall tracts D22, E10, G12, L24 and 34, and towers G5, 6, 11, 13, H1, M8 and 10, are similar to those at Fano (their dating is drawn chiefly from the evidence of Procopius).
137. Cabona et al. 1978, p.298-300; cf. also Mannoni 1974, p.292f.
138. These settlement shifts are discussed in Schmiedt 1974, p.576-591 (Below Chap.5, section E). Orvieto: Procop. VI,xi.
139. See above, p.31 with note 7.
140. Venetia and the lagoons: Schmiedt 1974, p.506-36. At Torcello the excavations located no artificial defences. Nonetheless, Grado, Altino and other positions at the fringes of the lagoons possessed later Roman circuits.
141. Tribunis maritimorum: Cass. Var.XII,24 for AD 537-8.
142. Coccoluto, Ricchebono 1974. The sites are discussed in full in Chap.5, section C.
143. Ibid., p.23-5, 33-4.
144. Comparisons, ibid., p.25f; conclusions, p.34f.
145. Cabona et al. 1978, p.342-6.
146. 1981, p.313.
147. 1960, p.23f, and p.52f on site remains.
148. See note 147. Andrews 1981, p.331 on Filattiera tower.
149. Bardineto: Coccoluto, Ricchebono 1974, p.30 with note 36; Balbis 1980, p.27f.
150. Carducci 1975-76, p.92. On the internal structuring of forts in Africa see Pringle 1981, p.164-6. We omit discussion of water-supplies in Italian sites for which we possess minimal data: where present cisterns are usually 5th century in date; in general, however, wells formed the basic water-source, as suggested by the findings at Luni. On urban water-supply see Ward-Perkins 1984, p.119f, n.b.p.122-5, 132-3.

151. Castelseprio houses: Brogiolo, Lusuardi Siena 1980, p.479-80.
152. Fingerlin et al. 1968, p.84f; Pauli 1984, p.104.
153. Bellinzona: Donati 1978. Castrum Pertice: Bonora et al.1984, p.237-8. Cf.Hudson 1982, p.19 with fig.4 p.20 on the Longobard house on Rocca di Rivoli.
154. D85 houses: Hodges, Barker, Wade 1980, p.72-81, 109-10. Forms postulated at Vacchereccia: Hodges et al. 1984, p.190-1.
155. Ward-Perkins 1984, n.b. p.96-8.
156. Luni decayed irreversibly after the Longobard conquest, when its border role disappeared: Ward-Perkins 1978. Tuscania: Potter 1979, p.161-4. See Ward-Perkins 1981b, p.97-8 on the flimsiness of the Luni and Castelseprio houses. Comparable are the houses excavated at Savignone and Luscignano.
157. Cf. Ulbert 1979. Duel and Lavant are clear examples of Norican summital churches. African chapels: Pringle 1981, p.164.
158. At Castelseprio and the Lavant the basilicae flank late Roman towers: such also occurs at S.Donato di Varazze, S.Martino di Levanto (Coccoluto, Ricchebono 1974, p.23, 27; Conti 1960, p.52f), S.Stefano in Genoa, and the abbey of S.Andrea at Borzone. Such was also hypothesised for the 'Byzantine' tower at Filattiera - Bullough 1956.
159. Bierbrauer 1973c, p.101-2.
160. N.b. Brozzi 1981, p.86f. Intramural castral chapels are known at S.Pietro in Zuglio, S.Columbano at Osoppo, and S.Pietro at Ragogna. The church of S.Giorgio on the Bazzano hill below Cormons is comparable in location to the church at Invillino. The church of S.Lorenzo in Villuzza near Ragogna probably belongs to a settlement near the castello (Cerutti 1981).
161. Varigotti: Lamboglia, Ugo 1952. Noli: Lamboglia 1973.
162. For instance, in Friuli the excavation of the 6th-7th century churches at Nimis, Artegna, Ragogna and Udine yielded only 8th-9th century architectural fragments: Brozzi 1981, p.86f; Buora 1984; Gaberscek 1984.
163. Other Friulian examples include: S.Maria in Castello at Udine (comparable to S.Stefano in Pertica and S.Pantaleone at Cividale), of 12 x 6.35m, but lacking an apse; S.Pietro at Ragogna is just 7 x 4.2m, while S.Lorenzo in Villuzza is 9.9 x 5.8m with horseshoe-apse. On Longobard churches in Upper Italy in general see Melucco Vaccaro 1982, p.136-61. In comparison see the mid-5th century church forms in the Julian Alps: Ulbert 1979, p.148, comparing the Vranje churches with types at Grado, Invillino, the Duel, etc. (Fig.2). On variance in scale between late antique and

- early medieval churches: Ward-Perkins 1984, p.55f, n.b.p.58-61, noting that, where present, late antique churches were well-maintained: the rebuilding of the first church on Colle di Zuca (after the Avar raid of 610?) shows an inability to reconstruct in full. A rebuilding on a less 'lavish' scale may also have suited a smaller local population.
164. Castelseprio churches: Melucco Vaccaro 1982, p.156-8; S.Maria restorations and excavations: Carver 1980-1.
165. Similarly Ragogna, with only later Longobard evidence, would have performed an analogous function under Byzantium (the site is in fact first named by Venantius in 565). The presence of a Gothic church at Osoppo may even push this picture back to an earlier epoch. On these sites, see below Chap.4, section J.
166. 1984, p.51. Within churches even the decoration was variously donated, with donors recorded in floor or mural inscriptions. At Grado, both church- and laymen, including soldiers from the local numeri, contributed to church mosaics: p.53, 74. See also CIL,V. 1583-1616, and Not.Scavi 1928, p.287-92. (Pl.33).
167. Ward-Perkins 1984, p.54 with notes.
168. Ibid, p.69: 'For all we know, the Ostrogoths in fact spent far more on Arian churches than they ever did on baths or amphitheatres'.
169. Fermo oratory: Greg. Reg.IX,58, 59; Ascoli monastery: XIII,18; Aprutium oratory: IX,71. Recovery of Picenum: Chap.5, section D.
170. Ward-Perkins 1984, p.63. (Latter reference from Codex Theod. xi, 16, 15(382) or 18(390)).

CHAPTER THREE

THE ALPINE FRONTIER OF ITALY

(a) Roman defensive systems in the Alps¹

The Italian Alps cannot be seen as a true frontier until the post-Roman period. In the late Republic and early principate the Alps were finally won over to Rome by the surrender of various tribes - as witnessed in Augustus' tropaeum Alpium - but this was for the most part gradual and achieved through feats of arms, advances and the foundation of military colonies in strategic points to allow the swift diffusion of romanitas.² Other tribal territories were peaceably incorporated into the Empire: for example, Susa and the Cottian Alps under King Cottius and his successors remained nominally autonomous until A.D.63, although readily enjoying Roman citizenship. No frontier lines existed in this era: the Roman army was unequalled, and strategic colony settings backed up by the mobile forces effectively ensured romanisation and territorial control.

Italy indeed remained relatively secure from danger well into later Imperial times, when external barbarian and internal army threats rapidly led to the fortification of previously undefended centres, including Rome itself under Aurelian in A.D.270-1. This process came to a head in the 4th and 5th centuries A.D. when the Rhine and Danube limes buckled and broke under constant pressure, and the threat of invasions loomed ever closer to the heart of the Empire.³

The peninsula had not escaped previous injury: under Marcus Aurelius in 169 the Quadi and Marcomanni crossed the Danube and destroyed the Roman units which opposed them. Pillaging the east Alpine valleys, they penetrated

Italy, unsuccessfully besieged Aquileia but razed Oderzo: Marcus retaliated and destroyed their armies, and immediately instigated defensive measures for Italy's protection.⁴ These included the institution, perhaps temporary, of the praetentura Italiae et Alpium, a defensive screen for the passes of north-east Italy, the Julian Alps. We know of its commander, who presumably initially held two newly raised legions as a mobile force behind or on the line of the command. With the end of the crisis and the reestablishment of the limes, however, the praetentura was disbanded, although its defensive dispositions may have persisted.⁵ Little is known of the composition of the praetentura, but the command probably did not extend beyond the area of the Julian Alps: here Šašel and Petru, although showing no systematic mid-Imperial permanent fortification in the area, have nonetheless identified 1st and 2nd century occupation of many strategic sites, but not on the scale of the mid-3rd and 4th century phases. The principal elements were the larger urban centres of Aquileia, Salona and Cividale, all girded by circuits by then; beyond these, guarding the main road and pass points there presumably arose forts.⁶ However, the duration of the praetentura limits possibilities of archaeological identification of these measures.

Many positions reveal notable 3rd century activity, chiefly marked by the erection of new fortifications. This occurs at both the towns of Aquileia (which received a hastily built circuit with much spolia, defending in particular the town's port face), Pola, Cividale, and probably also Concordia, Trieste, and Tricesimo, and also the forts of Vrhnika, Martinj and Loski Potok.⁷ By the reigns of Diocletian and Constantine the majority of the castella defending the north-eastern approaches to Italy had been constructed and put into operation. By now the barbarian threat was such that the bases remained on a military footing and began to form an integral part in the overall frontier strategy:⁸ their function grew as

the insecurity grew, and before the close of the 4th century this area formed a solid defensive line, with castella, interlaced with walls and towers, drawn up in depth to secure the penetration routes. This line is recorded as the Claustra Alpium Iuliarum. (Fig. 1).

References to the Claustra date from the mid-4th century and clearly illustrate a system of fortifications controlling the passes.⁹ Exactly when this network of barrier walls and forts was erected is unclear, but must lie between the advance of Maximinus over the Alps in 238 when no opposition was met, and the struggle between Magnentius and Constantius II in 351; Stucchi prefers a date after the abandonment of Dacia by Aurelian.¹⁰

Johnson neatly summarises the form and function of the system: 'The walls and towers which block only the more accessible of the passes normally ran across the valley floor from peak to peak. The traveller had to pass through a single entrance through these walls which was normally controlled by a fort or small guard-post. The walls control the two major routes which gave access to Italy. One was the main road from Ljubljana to Aquileia, controlled by three lines of barrier walls and small posts, each one supervised by a central larger fort. The other route led along the coastline, up to Rijeka, where there was a further series of walls defended by towers, and across the Istrian promontory base to Trieste and Aquileia... Wherever they have been found, the walls were almost uniformly 1.80m thick and built of rubble concrete with square towers spaced at unequal intervals attached to the rear face'.¹¹

A major factor insufficiently stressed by authors is the importance of the Julian Alps as the principal penetration route into Italy, used by many invaders after the Marcomanni, in particular the Goths, Byzantines and Longobards in the 5th-6th centuries.¹² Whereas in the Western and Central

Alps access is strictly limited to a few practicable crossings, in the north-east the natural mountain barrier is less of an obstacle to a determined invader, being the lowest range and the least difficult to traverse.¹³ It was in an attempt to counter this deficiency that artificial barriers were erected to constrict the lines of passage to those running through the fortified towns of Hrušica, Adjovščina and Rijeka. The Claustra thus constituted an elaborate defensive longstop designed to control passage into the peninsula: such appears the aim of Theodosius in 394 when he took possession of the north-east passes.¹⁴

Though still named in the 5th century, the Claustra then 'seems no longer to have been a vital or effective bar to progress along the roads'.¹⁵ Significant in this respect are the results of recent excavations: at Adjovščina, Lanišče, and Martinj destruction levels are dated by coin sequences which terminate abruptly with those of Theodosius; the same may be valid for Hrušica and Vrhnika. It is postulated that the destruction and abandonment of these forts coincides with the battle of Fiume Frigido in 394 or perhaps with Alaric's invasion in 401.¹⁶ Whichever the case we must assume that its life as an effective barrier did not outlast the start of the 5th century: our few sources show that it hindered no enemy after this date, and indeed Odoacer's vain attempt to repel Theoderic at the Pons Sontii argues for the absence of a forward line of Alpine resistance. Furthermore, the lack of post-Roman occupational levels within the forts denies the continuity or re-adoption of the Claustra Alpium Iuliarum in the 6th century.

The Claustra formed only one part of a long chain of late Roman defence across the whole of the Alpine range, a system recorded in the Notitia Dignitatum as the Tractus Italiae circa Alpes.¹⁷ The Tractus lay sub dispositione viri spectabilis comitis Italiae, a commander subordinate to

the magister peditum praesentalis, and was divided into regional sectors. This is indicated by the presence of the legiones Iuliae Alpinae I, II, and III at the disposal of the comes; their original stations are not known. That the Tractus was considered as a frontier to the province is testified by its designation elsewhere in the Notitia as limes.¹⁸

Exactly when the Tractus command was instituted is disputed but may be contemporary with the organisation of the Claustra Alpium Iuliarum aimed at creating an integrated defence of the potential routes of penetration into Italy; the fact that the north-east corridor formed the weakest link in this chain is adequately reflected in its fuller documentation. In the same way, moreover, the sketch accompanying the designation of the Tractus should apply solely to the Julian Alps where the illustrated valley-side barriers are attested. As recent studies on terminology have shown, it is futile to search for similar barrier walls where natural conditions do not necessitate artificial defences.¹⁹ The archaeology of the Tractus west of the Claustra is thereby minimal. Presumably the major sub-Alpine towns of Trento, Como, Bellinzona, Aosta and Susa, as strongly fortified centres along the Alpine roads, formed the backbone to the system, linked together and screened by smaller castra, castella or turres; these will have provided warning of attack from the north and enabled troops stationed in the Padane cities to deploy in response. Only with the failure of Rome's active military policy in the course of the 5th century do we find a greater recourse to a structural defensive policy. Few details can be given of the make-up of the Tractus, but the late Roman towers and forts at Castelseprio, Pombia, in the Lario and on the island and peninsula sites of Comacina, S. Giulio d'Orta, and Sirmione should all have played important roles in the network.²⁰ (See Maps 3, 4).

The end of the Claustra Alpium Iuliarum in c.400 does not imply the physical termination of the Tractus as a whole: most Alpine centres clearly continued in use and were modified to meet the intensifying threat of insecurity. Castelseprio, like Pombia, expanded into a castrum with religious buildings, while at Bellinzona and Susa the pre-Roman citadels were refortified. Rather than a destruction of the Tractus we should see a suspension of its military duties at a time when a firmer control was temporarily restored to the frontiers to the north. The analysis of the Notitia Dignitatum by Jones reaches important conclusions: he argues that the listing of the Italian command represents a relic of a pre-existing reform, predating the appearance of the comes Illyrici in c.409-420. While broadly correct it is more logical perhaps to see the comes Italiae as instituted under Stilicho to meet the threats to Italy at the start of the 5th century.²¹ Therefore the defensive installations themselves remained, but formed part of no formal administrative organisation. No direct continuity otherwise exists between the late Roman Tractus and the clusurae of Gothic Italy.²² We have no evidence for other Alpine frontier arrangements before the fall of Rome.

(b) The Northern Frontiers of the Ostrogothic Kingdom

The Kingdom of Theoderic brought stability back to Italy and its new frontiers. The Ostrogothic realm was not limited to the peninsula alone but extended materially west and east of the Alps, and at least nominally over the old Roman provinces of Raetia and Noricum. Much territory was lost after the death of Theoderic, but it was only on the eve of the Byzantine invasion that Ostrogothic possessions were reduced to no more than Italy, as the Franks enveloped the Alps to the north-west and north.²³

The physical extent of the kingdom and the defensive arrangements at work enlarged from the Variae of Cassiodorus, which cover the period up to the early years of the Gothic War. To the north-west the Goths had taken Visigothic Provence in 509, and maintained, with castella, a border on the Durance; in 523 this reached up to the Drome, and after 526 the Rhone became the frontier.²⁴ By 530, however, areas north of the Durance were ceded to the Burgundians, and in 536 the remainder of the Gallic province was abandoned in order to secure Frankish support, and the Ostrogoths withdrew behind the Alps. It is now at the latest that the fortresses mentioned in the Cottian Alps would have been fully integrated in an Alpine defensive system.²⁵

To the north lay the old Roman provinces of Raetia and Noricum. Nothing proves that Raetia II was actually Ostrogothic although influence was strong; for Raetia I on the other hand there are some indications that part at least belonged to Theoderic and his successors: Cassiodorus mentions a dux Raetiarum for 507/11,²⁶ while in Chur a 6th century praeses Raetiae primae is attested, indicating survival of at least a remnant of the Roman organisation. Cassiodorus even records the Raetiae as 'munima sunt Italiae et claus-trale provinciae'. There is little trace, however, of a physical Ostrogothic presence here and it is possible that the dux, ostensibly a survival of the office named in the Notitia, is here represented with only a few troops who are to live peaceably with the provincials. Ostrogothic rule was thus little more than nominal, seeking to use the old provinces as buffers.²⁷ Nonetheless, the fact that the castellum Verruca at Trento was only settled in 507/11 suggests that the Ostrogothic hold further north was strong, as indeed is supported by Theoderic's hope that the occupation of the site was a 'superfluous measure in terms of care'.²⁸ By 536, however, any control in

Raetia ended as Witigis sought Theudebert's support.

Cassiodorus likewise does not distinguish between the two old Roman provinces of Noricum Ripense and N. Mediterraneum: although he mentions 'Provinciales Noricis' in 507, he does not write to the Goths and the Romans of the province.²⁹ While the early 6th century mosaic at Teurnia in St. Peter im Holz refers to Ursus vir spectabilis and shows a further survival of Roman officialdom, excavation, still limited, reveals little sign of Gothic activity with the exception of bow-brooches found at Kraig, Grafenstein, and Duell.³⁰ (Map 6) By 539-540 the Franks certainly held Noricum, for now Theudebert claims control of the passes from Mt. Genevre up to the Plöcken.³¹

To the East the extent of Gothic sovereignty is more easily recognised, covering Savia, Pannonia II (= Sirmiensis), and Dalmatia. Savia, between the Save and Drau, was Ostrogothic from 489, but an expedition was mounted in 504 to wrest the east part of Pannonia II, including Sirmium, from the Gepids. While the Singidunum-Bassiana region became Byzantine in 510 by treaty, Sirmium remained Ostrogothic until its recapture by the Gepids in 535/6.³² The recruitment of troops here in 537 by Gothic comites, however, indicates that this province only broke up gradually at the outbreak of the war in Italy.³³ The situation was clarified only in 547-8 when Justinian donated Savia and part of inner Noricum to the Longobards of Audoin - whether they had already occupied this area is unspecified, but their presence in Pannonia I after 526 is attested both historically and archaeologically, and events to the south had provided ample opportunities for expansion.³⁴ The Ostrogoths maintained themselves in Dalmatia until 538-9, and a comes is recorded for the insula Curitana et Celsina (Krk with Veglia), that is, a command over the Dalmatian Islands. In the south of the province the

border with Byzantium remained on the Drina and Neretva.³⁵

In effect, the north-eastern border corresponded to neither the line of the Claustra Alpium Iuliarum nor the later Longobard limes in Friuli. Nonetheless their defences appear to have been drawn in depth, for finds are known from points like Invillino and Zuglio in the latter line.³⁶ Excavated sites and cemeteries in Pannonia fail to locate Ostrogothic settlement east of Venetia: tombs at Kranj, Dravljje and Rifnik near Sentjur are known, but often the material can be interpreted simply as Gothic elements amongst the indigenous Romanic population.³⁷

Within Italy itself, however, their defensive dispositions are clearer. As Bierbrauer demonstrates, the evidence of Procopius' narrative, coupled with that of the Variae, reveals a predominantly Upper Italian pattern of Ostrogothic occupation, principally around the Po plain and in a net around Ravenna.³⁸ While Central Italy and in particular the line of the Via Flaminia formed an integral part of the defence of the royal capital, the absence of garrisons in all but the major centres of the south is an important factor in understanding the early course of the Gothic War: this paucity of resistance allowed the Byzantines to overrun the South despite their small numbers; however, in garrisoning the liberated cities and dispatching troops northwards, the imperial forces became so splintered that continuing lack of reinforcements thwarted efforts to complete the conquest. Indeed, when Procopius closes his work in 553 claiming the war as ended, Byzantine Italy basically consisted of the peninsula south of the Po. This is evident when both Procopius and Agathias relate that after the defeats at Busta Gallorum and Mons Lactarius, the remaining Goths retreated to their homes over the Po where, with Frankish help, they continued to fight.³⁹ It was no simple 'mopping-up' exercise on the part of Byzantium after 553, for much energy

had to be expended in first defeating a Frankish expeditionary army, and then capturing and besieging among others Lucca, Luni, and ultimately Verona and Brescia before Italy was secured in 563.⁴⁰

The Ostrogoths were a numerically weak dominant race in Italy and sought to secure their position by stationing troops and men in each of the strategic towns.⁴¹ This pattern emerges during the War as the besieged Gothic forces concentrated their manpower in fortresses, along the main roads and passes and on the coast, aiming to hinder and block Byzantine advances. Most significant in this respect were the regions of Picenum Suburbicarium, Flaminia and Picenum Annonarium, which combined as a southern buffer to Ravenna, centred on the stronghold of Osimo. Significantly, a relatively large number of finds of this date are known from Picenum.⁴²

For northern Italy our evidence for Gothic dispositions in the War is weak given Procopius' preoccupation with Rome and its environs. However, documentation for the rule of Theoderic, drawn from Cassiodorus (Variae and Chronica) and Anonymous Valesianus (a Ravennate source), demonstrates that Ostrogothic resources were cast in a wide arc north of the Po, and that the foci of this settlement were the royal cities of Ravenna, Verona and Pavia. Ward-Perkins shows how each of these cities, whose strategic importance was manifest during the conflict with Odoacer, was heavily patronised by Theoderic in the form of palaces, additions to the town walls and other building programmes.⁴³ The king undoubtedly saw in these the mainstays of his defence if troubled times arose. Certainly their later history bears out their crucial role: Ravenna formed the imperial capital and seat of the Exarch, Pavia the Longobard capital, whilst Verona, perhaps the initial Longobard seat, resisted the Byzantines until 561-3. To these bastions Cassiodorus adds the granary - fortresses of Tortona, Trento-Verruca and

Treviso, and the city of Como.⁴⁴ In the light of this we should suspect that Cassiodorus' description of the building feats of Theoderic - 'plurimae renovantur urbes, munitissima castella conduntur, consurgunt admiranda palatia ...' - applies almost exclusively to Upper Italy.⁴⁵ As will be shown, archaeology fails to augment this settlement picture greatly, but does note traces of Gothic occupation in the zones of Como and Friuli barely noted by Cassiodorus.

Despite their territories beyond, the Alpine frontier was not neglected by the Ostrogoths. Much has been written on the possible link between the late Roman Tractus Italiae circa Alpes and the Gothic clusurae recorded in the Variae.⁴⁶ These indicate the Italian Alpine defence as being articulated between the principal centres of the Alpine foreland, namely the portae provinciae of Susa, Aosta, Como and Trento which controlled routes into Italy.⁴⁷ Yet, as has been seen, the Tractus, presumably drawn up on the same lines, no longer functioned after c.420: Aetius perhaps briefly defended the Julian Alps in 452 to block Attila, but we hear no more of these clusurae until Ostrogothic times. Indeed, even Ennodius' reference to clusurae in the western Alps in 494 may signify merely the Alpine valley-passes.⁴⁸ By 507-11 Theoderic seems to be reviewing the defensive arrangements in Italy, for now references to claustrae and clusurae reappear, clearly linked to military measures.⁴⁹

The locations of the clusurae are uncertain, but must necessarily have lain in reach of these regional headquarters. In the case of the Augustanis clusuris with their sparse garrison of 60 men we should expect a siting not at Aosta itself, but rather at a fortification guarding an obligatory passage of the Alpine road in advance of the town. Analogous should be the situation of those fortresses recorded by Procopius in the

Cottian Alps dependent on Susa. Significantly their garrisons lived with their families and were clearly used to form expeditionary corps and were thus capable of combined, mobile resistance to threats.⁵⁰ The regional centres will have been responsible for the functioning of such forts within their respective sectors. Unfortunately nothing shows whether this marks a deliberate continuation of an existing late Roman organisation or simply an unconscious readaptation of an abandoned system. Theoderic's policy of maintaining and reviving Roman institutions is widely recognised if not always directly documented, but with regard to the Alpine fortifications no relevant details survive. However, the fact that the king ordered construction work on or in the fortifications at both Verruca and Tortona, demonstrates that the system adopted by Theoderic was incomplete or still required some refinements, even when Gothic rule extended beyond Italy. Our sources do not show the effectiveness of these measures, although it is apparent that once the Goths were pressurised to the south by the Byzantines these Alpine clausurae failed to prevent penetration by Franks to the West and Byzantines to the East.⁵¹

The Franks did not hesitate in taking advantage of Ostrogothic weakness after 535 and plundering south of the Alps. Under Theudebert I, from 539 the Franks overran much of Liguria and Venetia, exacting tribute from the beleaguered provinces, effecting control presumably by means of garrisons supported by mobile troops.⁵² Indeed, in 552 they denied Narses' army passage through Venetia - forcing Imperial troops to travel along the marshy coast.⁵³ From Agathias we also learn that Frankish garrisons supported Gothic troops in towns in Tuscany.⁵⁴ Their strategy was selfish yet indecisive, and inadequately supported from home. After the eventual defeat of the expedition of the Alamannic dukes Butilinus and Leuthari, the

Franks were slowly reduced with the Goths to a few strongholds; the capture of Verona and Brescia in 561-3 broke their hold and they were ejected from Italy.⁵⁵ The Frankish occupation of Northern Italy is invisible in the archaeological record.

(c) Byzantine Alpine Italy

It is impossible to agree wholeheartedly with the words of the Auctarium Havniense that 'Narses patricius cum Italianam florentissime administraret urbes atque moenia ad pristinum decorem per XII annos restauret'.⁵⁶ For Italy south of the Po the imperial authorities could indeed attempt to implement the Pragmatic Sanction of 554 and repair the damage incurred during the War; to the north, however, the mopping-up of resistance by Narses allowed far less time for a social and economic reorganisation and revival before the advent of the Longobard hordes. The political and religious crises that afflicted the peninsula after Narses' final victories, not least the revolt of Sindual and his Heruls on the frontier, and the hostility aroused by the Empire's condemnation of the Three Chapters, will have greatly undermined the reestablishment of imperial power in Upper Italy in particular and certainly 'facilitated the success of the Lombard invaders in 568'.⁵⁷

As current studies show, and as argued above, we cannot identify any active reorganisation of towns and defences by Narses throughout the peninsula nor a restructuring of the defensive arrangements in the Alpine zones. The pattern established during the period 535-554 persisted with the Byzantines occupying sites which previously housed Gothic garrisons, and relying predominantly on pre-existing fortifications.⁵⁸

These factors naturally prevent a conclusive assessment of Byzantine policy as regards the defence and organisation of the Alpine districts.

However, there is perhaps sufficient circumstantial evidence available to construct at least a possible outline.

Historical documentation is minimal, with an absence of contemporary sources: Procopius ended his narrative with the victories of 552-3, while Agathias' text is cut short before he considers the activities of Narses in the north. In fact we possess no relevant, detailed narrative until Paul The Deacon's History. Although this is of 8th century date, it clearly draws on a number of earlier sources, in particular the Historiola of Secundus of Trent, who wrote between 565-610, but who is otherwise unknown to us. It is in notices derived from such sources that we learn of pockets of Byzantine resistance in the Alps after 568. Furthermore, broad confirmation of this scant picture comes from the early 7th century geographer George of Cyprus, who appears to make use of a list of imperial possessions in Italy in c.580.⁵⁹ By 590, however, this resistance had ended, and certainly no mention of such is found in the letters of Pope Gregory I.

Archaeology only partially supplements this picture. It is crucial to bear in mind the minimal duration of the Byzantine occupation in the Alps. This fleeting presence provides little opportunity for any imprint in the archaeological record. Equally significant is the noted practice in the Byzantine world which excluded the deposition of gravegoods with the deceased. Since this Christian practice was prevalent from the 5th century, the location of unfurnished graves provides indeterminate chronological data. Longobard tombs, like those of other Germanic tribes, did contain funerary items and are thus, in contrast, chronologically definable. Even where the Byzantine occupation is archaeologically identifiable, however, such as at Luni, the evidence is vague at best and of an easily-destructable nature.⁶⁰ To attempt therefore to recognise distinct Byzantine occupational levels in

the Alps is almost impossible.

Both Byzantines and Longobards - and indeed Ostrogoths - represent single phases in the occupational sequence of towns and fortifications in the Alps as elsewhere in Italy. It is generally assumed that the Longobard occupation marks a direct substitution of the imperial troops: the latter had replaced the Ostrogothic garrisons during the Gothic War; after 568 the Longobards should have similarly ejected the imperial forces from captured sites.⁶¹ Excavation (as at Castelseprio, Invillino) has permitted the recognition of this transition with relative success, but awaits further verification.⁶² Yet an Ostrogoth - Byzantine - Longobard sequence is not always applicable: the Goths, whose border initially lay beyond the Alps, may not have garrisoned every Alpine or sub-Alpine site; in contrast, the Byzantines and Longobards, (through the lack of transalpine territories), possessed analogous defensive requirements to the north. These facts above all have been used to locate the Byzantine Alpine fortifications.

Here we will examine the historical reconstruction, before considering in the main section the available physical evidence regarding both the Byzantine and Longobard Alpine defences, and in brief those of later Rome and the Ostrogoths.

In 1889 Hartmann postulated a series of three Alpine Duchies organised by the patrician Narses after 563 based on the towns of Susa, Como and Cividale del Friuli; he later expanded this by including a central Alpine duchy of Trento.⁶³ This reconstruction was bolstered in 1924 by Schneider, who eagerly sought Byzantine origins for many of the castra and castella recorded by Paul. Both historians visualised direct imperial involvement in the erection of these fortifications and the consequent reuse of these by the Longobard invaders after 568.⁶⁴ Here we can briefly summarise the

evidence for the principal elements of this scheme.

Hartmann and Schneider both saw Alboin's immediate occupation of Cividale del Friuli as the king's securing of his first frontier and its defence. The institution of a Friulian Duchy was regarded as an indication of a pre-existing Byzantine ducal province centred on Cividale (Forum Iulii).⁶⁵ The presence of the generalissimo Narses in the north-east sector in the 560s heightens this likelihood of a Byzantine frontier district.⁶⁶ (Map 6)

To the west, south of the Brenner pass, lay the civitas Tridentinum - Trento with the castellum Verrucas, guarding a frontier zone bordering the Breoni.⁶⁷ (Map 4) An analogous role under the Longobards is testified by the events of 590, when the Franks pushed into the Trentino and occupied various fortresses of the duchy. Hartmann located pre-Longobard origins for these sites.⁶⁸ In addition Brown suggests that Narses entrusted the Heruls with the frontier duty here: in 565-6 their leader Sindual revolted, supported by the Breoni, but was eventually defeated by Narses. Noticeably Sindual was previously called magister militum in letters of Pelagius I (556-561).⁶⁹

Como appears in Cassiodorus as an important pre-Alpine centre. Hartmann and Schneider argued for the maintenance of its role, locating here a probable ducal seat. The evidence was drawn from Paul, who describes the eventual surrender in 588 of the imperial magister militum Francio, who had resisted the Longobards from his island fortress of Comacina.⁷⁰ Paul does not mention Como, however, nor suggests Francio's original seat; nonetheless a transfer from Como to the island is assumed.⁷¹ (Map 3)

The final Alpine ducal headquarters were set at Susa, at the confluence of the roads from the Mt. Cenis and Mt. Genevre passes. (Map 2) Paul relates the continued presence here in 574 of the imperial magister militum

Sisinnius during a Longobard attack on Francia through the Vallis to Embrun: the general allowed Longobard passage past the fortress, and likewise appears on reasonable terms with the Frankish commander Mummolus.⁷² According to the Frankish historian Fredegarius, defeat by Mummolus forced the Longobard dukes to cede their rights to 'the cities of Aosta and Susa, with all their lands and inhabitants, to King Guntram of Burgundy' also promising an annual tribute of 12000 solidi in retribution for their audacity.⁷³ Whether this meant the towns were peaceably given over to the Franks by the Byzantines, or whether the imperial garrison remained to be worn down, is unclear. The enticing hypothesis that Sisinnius was in fact the general Sisigis named in Procopius who joined the Emperor's party, adds further weight to the location of a duchy at Susa.⁷⁴

This scheme of four duchies appears somewhat incomplete, however, if one makes full consideration of the siting of their respective centres. While Susa administered an extensive territory under Sisigis in the later years of the Gothic War and presumably for some time afterwards, it is doubtful that this remained true after c.560 - certainly Liguria was detached from the Cottian Alps to form a separate province.⁷⁵ To the north the territory of Aosta constitutes a distinct region, poorly linked to the Susa valley. The separate listing of Aosta with Susa by Fredegarius, and indeed the presence of the Gothic 'Augustanis clusuris', may support the hypothesis of an additional duchy. (Map 2).

Como, entrusted with a vast circumscription, lies somewhat behind the frontier zones: northwards, closer to the passes and their road exits is the fortress of Bellinzona, whose importance is recounted by Paul during the Frankish invasion of 590.⁷⁶ Its position is closely comparable to the river-road-pass nodes of Susa, Aosta and Cividale, and similarly Chiavenna

to the east, which defends the confluence of routes from the Spluga, Maloja and Septimer passes, preventing penetration towards lake Como and along the Valtellina.⁷⁷ (Map 3) Como indeed controls the outlet of a major road into the Po Plain, but in this respect resembles rearguard sites like Lecco, Castelseprio, Pombia, Ivrea and Turin.

In the Trentino the Longobard duke was undoubtedly based in Trento, at a time when the border with the Bavarii lay in the vicinity of Salorno and Anagnis.⁷⁸ It is possible, however, that before Sindual's revolt Byzantine sovereignty extended up to the natural limit of the Alpine watershed and the Brenner pass; the revolt and the Longobard invasion possibly weakened Italian control here allowing the encroachment of both Breoni and Bavarii. If so, Bolzano, dominating traffic from two passes, may have formed the focus of the Byzantine frontier duchy. (Map 4)

Cividale del Friuli, on the other hand, lay in close proximity to the delicate eastern front and was well linked to the M.Croce Carnico and Predil passes to the north (respectively defended by Zuglio and Chiusaforte), and the routes through the Julian Alps. It was thus excellently positioned for the defensive administration of Friuli. (Map 6)

Such a situation may be reflected in the Cosmographia of Anonymous of Ravenna (and his later copyist, Guido), a later 7th century geographical source listing towns along the main Italian highways.⁷⁹ While drawing upon some older sources, his information is generally contemporary, thus aiding the location of the main late antique settlements; Anonymous' lists have been used to good effect in regions like the Lunigiana in particular, to identify Byzantine sites.⁸⁰

For the Alpine regions, Anonymous clearly distinguishes between the civitates 'iuxtae Alpes' which include Segutione-Susa, Augusta Preduria-Aosta,

Bellitiona-Bellinzona, Tredentem-Trento, Filtrio-Feltre and Foroiulium-Cividale, and those 'ad partem inferioris Italiae' like Plumbia-Pombia, Sibrium-Castelseprio, and Comum-Como, which ring the northern edges of the Po Plain.⁸¹ Two distinct zones emerge: firstly that closest to the Alpine watershed and the pass routes, and secondly, a more withdrawn band at the exit of the Alpine roads from the foothills. Although the siting of an Alpine ducal seat in one of these second-line positions is not impossible, the surest form of effective defence would be to stifle hostile threats at points in advance of the plain before the enemy could select their routes of attack. If this hypothesis is valid, Susa was chosen in preference to Turin, and likewise Cividale for Aquileia. Como, whose advance-base point may have lain at Bellinzona, would thus have formed part of the equally important secondary defensive line, to which also belonged castra at Ivrea, Orta, Pombia, Castelseprio and Lecco in the western pre-Alpine zone. Between the two lines lay minor fortifications like Comacina and others still unidentified which watched over the roads and rivers and occupied positions allowing swift visual communication between zones. A similar system may have lain in advance of the front-line seats but these too are little known.⁸² In effect the system was one of defence-in-depth, an extension of that pattern which had emerged within Italy between 535 and 563, and a development of the Alpine defences in existence under Theoderic.

The ability of some of the northern fortresses to resist long after 568 when direct communication with other imperial possessions was severed demonstrates their individual strengths; but the failure of the defences as a whole to resist the Longobard invasion reveals that the individual points had not had sufficient time to become integrated. Similarly the Frankish occupation of castella in the Trentino in 590 suggests a Longobard failure

to adapt fully to this defensive system. By the early 7th century, however, Longobard resistance against the Avars in Friuli signifies a well-coordinated and integrated frontier.⁸³

Finally comment can be made on Byzantine policy towards its northern neighbours, though the evidence for this is minimal. It is possible that the imperial military successes against the Franks - defeating the expeditionary army of 554 and removing their remaining troops from Upper Italy, backed up perhaps by a successful foray into Noricum - gave Byzantium a decisive superiority in the field against the internally-weakened Francia, and that it was this fact above all that kept the peace against its major western adversary. Simultaneously, Byzantine gold kept the Franks at bay just as later it was used to obtain their support against the Longobards. Yet the failure of the Franks to turn to their own advantage the turmoil created in Italy by the Longobard invasion reveals the extent of their internal strife.⁸⁴

In the old Raetian zones the Breoni, with whom Sindual colluded, were quite likely cultivated as a buffer kingdom by Narses - what measures were undertaken following the Herul-Breoni revolt is unknown, but presumably order was swiftly reestablished and old alliances restored.⁸⁵

The picture is somewhat clearer to the East: the Longobards, for long allies of Byzantium, had been granted extensive lands in both Pannonia and Noricum, a region evacuated by the Goths at the start of the War and one which could not be maintained by Belisarius' over-stretched resources and troops.⁸⁶ The Longobards were evidently to form a buffer for the north-eastern corridor and thus protect the Italy-Constantinople land-communications, while fighting off Slav or Gepid threats to the north and east. The heavy reliance put on this buffer is best illustrated by the total unprepared-

ness of Byzantine Italian forces for the Longobard invasion, and by their overuse of Longobards as federates and mercenaries.⁸⁷

(d) The Longobard Frontier of Northern Italy

Some details of the Longobard occupation of the Alps have been noted above. Briefly here we shall reiterate details pertinent to the identification and location of their border installations. The evidence for these is set out in full shortly.

The Longobards are credited with adopting and later adapting wholesale those fortifications and defensive systems wrested from the Byzantines in the years between 568 and 588 in the Alps, and, in contrast to the Byzantines, are rarely accorded with the feat of erecting strongholds.⁸⁸ The Longobards were used to occupying fortifications, their years in Pannonia and Noricum having accustomed them to the former Roman settlements and their defences, and supposedly also methods of upkeep and repair, while their employment as federates in Narses' army will have shown them the value of castral possessions in Italy. It was natural, therefore, to utilise existing systems once they entered Italy, but we should not exclude the possibility of later refinements to these, particularly consequent to both the Frankish and Avar invasions. Indeed, as will be noted below, the loss of the territories in the west around Susa and Aosta necessitated the erection of replacement borders for which some evidence survives.

Thus, the Longobards installed dukes where perhaps previously sat imperial counterparts. These dukes formed the backbone of the Longobard army and consisted of the heads of the noble families, acting as the king's lieutenants. Significantly the king sought to maintain control by allocating dukedoms to his kinsmen and most trusted friends: hence Alboin installed his nephew Gisulf in Cividale; the Friulian seat long remained in

the hands of this family.⁸⁹ This pattern probably follows a policy developed in Pannonia, but was one met with dubious success after 568. In the east, Cividale and Trento were entrusted with extensive territories and difficult borders; to the west, however, smaller duchies predominate, at Turin, Ivrea, Como(?), Brescia and Bergamo, all closely tied to the royal capital of Pavia. This wide scatter may reflect an early congregation of Longobard forces around remaining imperial possessions in the Como zone (to which can be linked the resistance of Francio at Comacina); we have no record of Longobard dukes at Como, Bellinzona or Chiavenna.

Longobard sovereignty of Alpine Italy endured for almost two centuries. In the initial decades of their rule threats remained manifest, but were seen off by forceful military response or resistance. These threats generally subsided in the course of the 7th-8th centuries, notably through the internal disruption of the Frankish kingdom - although the north-east corridor continued to face Avar-Slavic aggressors. While not necessarily leading to the actual abandonment of fortresses in the Alps, this lessening of insecurity may have slackened the Longobard military effort and allowed many fortifications to fall into disrepair. In Friuli this sequence may be apparent at Zuglio and Invillino: at the latter a church and cemetery encroach upon the old castrum in the mid-8th century, while at a similar date the bishop of Zuglio leaves his (abandoned?) seat to go to Cividale. Notable is the swift collapse of the Longobard kingdom (with the exception of a few towns) against the invasions of Peppin and Charlemagne in the second half of the 8th century. This hypothesis of decay still awaits verification.⁹⁰

In much the same way as the Byzantines, the Longobards used various methods in their relations with their neighbours over the Alps. In the

west, in Francia, they attempted, during the Interregnum (574-584), to extend their influence by raiding and plundering deep into the lands of King Guntram; ultimately the dukes were defeated by Mummolus, but Guntram, with many internal problems of his own, was satisfied with gaining tribute and a few noteworthy territorial concessions in the Italian Alps, without pushing home his military advantage.⁹¹ The subsequent Frankish penetrations came from the Austrasian Franks under King Childebert, with whom the Longobards only secured peace in 590-1.⁹² Internal Frankish wrangles then reasserted themselves and the Longobards were left relatively secure from pressure in this quarter; indeed both sides in 604 were brought together by a marriage alliance between Adaloald, son of Agilulf, and the daughter of Theudepert II of Austrasia.⁹³ It was not until the mid-8th century that the Franks again intervened militarily in Italian affairs.⁹⁴

In the Trentino, however, the Bavarii, a tribe nominally subject to the Franks, in the later 6th century became increasingly independent in their actions, even seeking open friendship with the Longobards in the 580s - a move that hardly pleased the Austrasians.⁹⁵ Paul the Deacon notes instances of carefully-planned marriage alliances made with the Bavarii, most notably that between Duke Ewin of Trento and the daughter of King Garibald, and soon after between Authari and Theudelinda, another daughter of Garibald (previously betrothed to Childepert).⁹⁶ The Bavarii inhabited the Tyrol and thus controlled the approaches to the central and Eastern Alps. Inevitably the Franks sought to restore their sovereignty over the Bavarii: in 588-591 they attacked their kingdom and replaced King Garibald with their choice, Tassilo.⁹⁷ Our picture blurs until the 670s when Bavarii and Longobards appear in conflict in the Bolzano region, from which the Trento duke Alahis emerged victorious.⁹⁸ In the 8th century the pattern recurs

with the Bavarii attacking Italy in 712-3, soon after which Liutprand brought peace by marrying Guntrut, daughter of Theutpert, duke of Bavaria. The Franks also entered into a marriage alliance at this time to bring harmony to the north.⁹⁹

Lastly, in the north-east, as noted, the Slavs and Avars formed a constant military threat to Longobard Friuli, and were chiefly met by armed intervention or by determined resistance and counter-offensives. For the most part an unsteady alliance prevailed. The first of these arose during the Longobard occupation of Pannonia, when marriages were also arranged with the Franks and other Germanic tribes; indeed, on leaving for Italy the Longobards bestowed Pannonia on the Avars with the condition that they could return to their old homes if the need arose.¹⁰⁰ This peace had fallen through by the 590s, when Agilulf bargained for a renewal of the treaty, but still existed in the early 7th century, when the Avars joined the king to attack Cremona in 603.¹⁰¹ The treaty had again lapsed when the Avars devastated Friuli in 610-1 taking many captives. It is significant in this instance that Romilda, the widow of duke Gisulf of Friuli, offered herself in marriage to the Avar Cagan in order to gain the Avar withdrawal; though she did not survive the abuses of the enemy, her daughters escaped the ordeals and lived to be 'afterwards sold throughout various regions, and secured worthy marriages on account of their noble birth; for one of them is said to have wedded a king of the Alamanni, and another a prince of the Bavarii'.¹⁰² The unsteady Avar-Longobard alliance persisted into the 7th century, and is witnessed in the 660s when Grimoald ordered them to attack the rebel Lupus of Friuli, but once this was accomplished the Avars refused to leave until threatened by the king.¹⁰³ In the 720s-730s, finally the Longobards established supremacy over the Slavs in Noricum Mediterraneum.

when the Friulian dukes Pemmo and later Ratchis achieved notable victories.¹⁰⁴

Despite the longevity of Longobard occupation archaeology has added little to the available historical picture of the Alps. Only in Friuli has adequate groundwork clarified the settlement of the Germanic invaders, in both Cividale and many other sites in the territory. Elsewhere the evidence consists predominantly of casually-discovered stray tombs (the Longobard archaeology of the Trentino, though large, consists of little else) or larger units, with old excavations (generally of disturbed tombs) often unsystematic and poorly-recorded in urban locations. The archaeology of the Longobards is thus the archaeology of their tombs.¹⁰⁵

Fortunately the Longobard practice of inserting accompanying grave-goods allows the ready distinction of their tombs from the impoverished (i.e. poorly-furnished) graves of the Romanised autochthonous population and the unaccompanied Christian tombs of indeterminate date. The analysis of the material from the cemeteries of Cividale, Nocera Umbra and Castel Trosino - in particular the metalwork - allows the formulation of a clear chronological evolutive sequence to their grave assemblages and thus a secure basis for dating of isolated or individual finds.¹⁰⁶

Too frequently, however, a Longobard tomb is regarded as a sign of a Longobard military presence, even when the finds signify a civil or non-military owner. Only where distinctly military gravegoods are uncovered can any credence be given to this equation, and then only if such tombs are not isolated or are associated with defensive sites. The bulk of these military tombs date to the later 6th-early/mid.-7th centuries, and only in delicate border provinces like Friuli did such graves persist.

This important chronological guide disappears, however, in the final

decades of the 7th century, when the Longobards assume a Christian burial practice, that is without gravegoods. In virtual recompense, however, there emerge sufficient late Longobard and Carolingian sources in the 8th century to document contemporary settlement, administration, and defence in Upper Italy.¹⁰⁷

NOTES TO CHAPTER THREE

1. On the Alps and the passes in general see Pauli 1980; 1984, n.b. p.193ff. Pauli gives a thorough summary of all aspects of the Alps from the earliest times.
2. Ibid., 1984, p.30-7. The Tropaeum was erected above Monaco in 7-6 BC. Military colonies include Turin and Aosta.
3. Johnson 1983, p.117-21 on Italian fortifications under Rome.
4. SHA, Vita Marc.14,6; Pauli 1984, p.41. Degrassi 1954 prefers a date of 170-1; Fitz 1966, p.339 argues for mid-169; and Gazzetti (From Tiberius to the Antonines, London 1974), p.488 claims 167.
5. The new legions of II and III Italica were subsequently stationed at Lauriacum and Regensburg respectively. The commander of the praetentura was Q.Antistius Postumius, consul of 167/8, and given this command in 169/70: ILS,8977; Fitz 1966, p.339. Ammianus XXIX,6.1 also records this invasion, although Johnson 1983, p.220 mistakenly thinks this refers to an invasion in 374-5.
6. Castra-Ajdovščina, Ad Pirum-Hrušica, Nauportus-Vrhnika, and Martinj all show occupation from the 1st to 4th centuries, though the earliest levels may not mark military usage. Stucchi 1945, p.348-9 tries to locate sites of the praetentura; cf. Petru 1974; 1976. Military tombstones of soldiers of the II Italica come from Karnburg and Virunum in Noricum, both datable to 170: see Jantsch, JÖAI 1935, Bb.p.264; Egger thought the walls of the Hoischhügel are of Marcus Aurelianic date (cf.Šašel, Petru 1971, p.88-9).
- 7.. Johnson 1983, p.218f. Stucchi 1945, p.350 links some forts of this epoch to the Alamannic invasion of Italy of 238 (recorded by Orosius, VII,23; Aur.Vict.Caes. 35).
8. See Šašel, Petru 1971, sections on Lanišče, Ajdovščina, Vrhnika, etc. - p.92f.
9. Amm.Marc. XXI,12.21 (AD 361); XXXI,11.3 (referring to events in the 350s); Julian, Letters III,17,20-5; 18,1-4 - cf. Johnson 1983, p.220-1. In 351 Ad Pirum, the fort at the head of the pass, was the scene of a bitter struggle. The Claustra is considered in detail in Šašel, Petru 1971, and is well summarised in Johnson 1983, p.215-21. See also Burns 1974(1984), p.194-5.
10. 1945, p.350-1.
11. 1983, p.216. The section at Jelenje corresponds to these dimensions. However, Petru 1976, p.230-1 shows the walls vary in thickness: 1.10m at Rijeka, near Martinj Vrh, and Lanišče; it is

- irregular in other points, upto 2.20m near the spring of the Eneo, and 2.50m at S.Caterina di Fiume.
12. Cf. Zeiss 1928, p.26f.
 13. Šašel, Petru 1971, p.7.
 14. Philostorgius XI,2: Johnson 1983, p.221.
 15. Ibid. p.221: Rufinus Turrianus on Alaric in 401: diruptis Italiae claustris Alarico duce Gothorum; Prosper Tito on Attila in 452: clusuris...Alpium (Chron.13,67 - MGH, AA,IX, p.482). See Šašel, Petru 1971, sources.
 16. Petru 1976, p.232-3.
 17. Not.Dign. Occ.XXIV Comes Italiae (Seeck 1876, p.173 with sketch).
 18. Not.Dign. Occ.V, 126 and 127. The lists show two of the Alpine legions in Italy and one in Illyricum. Their names, suggestive of a siting in the Julian Alps (between Aquileia and Emona?) - cf. Clemente 1968, p.130 - may derive from a Constantinian institution: Jones 1964, I, p.99.
 19. See Appendix Two.
 20. The paucity of evidence is best illustrated in Johnson's terse comments on Italy: 1983, p.215. Sarmatian stations in the Po: Not.Dign. Occ.XLII,51-63; troops for the north are recorded at Turin, Ivrea, Quadrata, Vercelli, Novara, etc.
 21. Jones 1964, III, p.354: 'The comites Italiae and Argentoratensis, who have no troops under their command and no officia, but only chapter headings and places in the index and in the list of comites rei militaris subject to the magister peditum, must be vestigial relics of posts which had existed but had been suspended. The comes Italiae whose zone was the tractus Italiae circa Alpes, would seem to date from a period when there was no comes Illyrici holding Raetia and Noricum and thus guarding the northern approaches to Italy...The posts might have been established not long after Stilicho's death, and retained until the re-establishment of the comes Illyrici and a magister equitum Galliarum made them superfluous' in around AD 420. See also I, p.191; II, p.36, note 43. On comes as a Stilichian institution, disbanded after 407: Clemente 1968, p.207f, n.b.p.210-1.
 22. See section B below. It is possible that with the abandonment of the tractus and the re-institution of the comes Illyrici there arose many hilltop refuge sites, notably in Noricum Mediterraneum: Alföldy 1974, p/214-20; below Chap.4, section H(i).
 23. Our current thinking on Ostrogothic Italy owes much to Bierbrauer (1973a, 1975, 1978). The number of excavated Ostrogothic tombs

- does not exceed 30 (with only the female tombs containing funerary gifts), and reliance is placed heavily on stray finds (generally from destroyed tombs), metalwork- or coin-hoards, limited excavation finds, and toponymy (words from root God-). See also Burns 1974 ; 1984 ; Melucco-Vaccaro 1982, p.62-9.
24. Cass. Var.III,41; province set under the praefectus praetorio Galliarum. On occupation of Provence see Bierbrauer 1973a, p.2-4, and Burns 1974, p.248-9.
 25. Procop. VI,xxviii; cf. also Cass. Var.IV,36, calling the Cottian provincials the guards of the 'viam Italiae'. Wolfram 1979, p.391 sees these rearward defences functioning simultaneously with the Gallic positions.
 26. Var.I,11 and VII,4, where the vir spectabilis Servatus is named. The dux Raetiae also appears in the Not. Dign. Occ.XXXV.
 27. Var.XI,14. On the Raetiae see Bierbrauer 1973a, p.4-9, suggesting that the Ostrogoths controlled the Alpine sector of Raetia II from the upper Inn to Innsbruck upto the Noricum border - p.7-8. Burns 1974, p.247, (1984, p.196-7) sees the zone as Ostrogothic, but with scattered troops, in a manner much like that identifiable for the Goths in southern Italy; cf. Wolfram 1979, p.391-2, who considers the militia here locals.
 28. Var.III,48. However the fort itself appears already in existence.
 29. Var.III,50. Noricum: Alföldy 1974, n.b. p.225f. Odoacer abandoned N. Ripense in 488.
 30. On the extent of Gothic rule see Schaffran 1955, p.111f; Alföldy 1974, p.225f.; Wolfram 1979, p.391-2; Burns 1984, p.197. Teurnia mosaic: Zeiss 1928, p.33. Brooches: Egger 1929, p.208f; Jantsch 1938; Werner 1961, p.600; Fingerlin et al. 1968, p.109. Important will be the results of the analysis of the tombs found at Teurnia: Glaser 1978, p.51f, and Pauli 1984, p.140, who suggests these date to c.540-600.
 31. His letter to Justinian boasts this fact: MGH, Ep.III, 133,20.
 32. Cf. Bierbrauer 1973a, p.8-10; Burns 1974, p.291f ; 1984, p.193f; Wolfram 1979, p.396-400.
 33. Procop. V,xvi,8f.
 34. Procop. VII,xxxiii. Below, section H(ii).
 35. On the island command: Var.VII,16. Cf. Wolfram 1979, p.397. We also hear of Gripas holding Salona in 536: Procop. V,vii.
 36. See Friuli section, Chap. 4, section J.
 37. Cf. Bolta 1970-71; Vinski 1970-71; Kisley 1979, p.129-137; Ulbert 1979. Below, section H(ii).

38. 1973a, p.16-8. Ravenna's importance under the Ostrogoths is well documented both historically and monumentally through standing remains (churches, baptistery, mausoleum) and archaeology (cemeterial finds, inscriptions, drains): cf. Ward-Perkins 1984, p.68-9, 72, 158f.
39. Procop. VIII,xxvi,18f; xxxiii,6-9; xxxv,37-8; Agathias I,i,6-7.
40. Agathias, n.b. II,i-ii; Agnellus c.79; Paul II,2. Cf. Stein, 1949, ii, p.597f, 610-11; Brown 1984, p.2, 104 with note 44.
41. Administratively, the Gothic kings sought harmony between their people and the native Italians, chiefly through firm government and a maintenance of the old Roman offices and institutions. In defence also Cassiodorus' letters make it plain that both Goths and Romans filled the ranks, but it is uncertain whether the command structure was similarly shared. Cf. Burns 1984; Wolfram 1979; Brown 1984, p.4-6; Ward-Perkins 1984, p.158f. n.b. p.164-5.
42. Procop. VI,xi,2; xxiii-xxiv. On garrison points in Italy see Bierbrauer 1973a, Appendix, p.36-7. Picenum finds: Ibid. p.15-7 Below Chap. 5, section D.
43. 1984, n.b. p.165-6. On palaces p.158-165; defences p.192-3, with refs: the Ravenna circuit was not extended or altered under Theoderic, although Athalaric later redug the ditches. At Pavia he added to the walls, while at Verona he concentrated his efforts on the highly defensible Castrum.
44. Granaries: Var. XII,27,28; Como XI,14.
45. Chron. anno 500, 1339. (MGH, AA, 11, p.160).
46. Lauterborn 1926; Schmidt 1927; Zeiss 1928; Duparc 1951, p.23f; Šašel, Petru 1971; Šašel 1970-71; Petru 1976; Wolfram 1979, p.380.
47. Como: Var.XI,14; Trento: III,48.
48. On the end of the Tractus see above, note 21. Prosper Tiro (Chron. 13.67 - MGH, AA, IX, p.482-3) says Aetius failed to make use of the 'clusuris...Alpium' which may refer just to the pass not the walls. Cf. Maenchen-Helfen The World of the Huns (Berkeley, California 1973) p.132-6; Burns 1984, p.191. Odoacer sought victory against Theoderic through battle at Pons Sontii. The Ennodius reference, in Vita Epiphani 177: (MGH, AA, VII, p.105) concerns the return of Italian prisoners from Burgundia.
49. See Appendix Two for discussion of the meanings of these terms (and claustra and kleisourai).
50. On these forts see Procop. VI,xxviii,28f. Cf. Burns 1984, p.250, 276
51. We cannot tell how typical were the actions of Sisigis in the western

Alps, though in this instance his fortresses were denuded of troops. In addition we cannot say how many Romans in the Gothic army deserted in the early War years.

52. On the Franks in Italy see Buttner 1960.
53. Procop. VIII,xxvi,18f. The Frankish presence in Venetia is noted in both Procop. VIII,xxiv,1f and Agathias I,i.
54. Agathias I,xi.
55. See note 40.
56. Extr. 4. (MGH, AA, 9, Chron.Min.I, p.337).
57. Brown 1984, p.2-3, on Italy between 554 and 568; on effects of the Gothic War on society and economy see p.6-7.
58. See above, Chap. 2, section C; cf. Brown 1984, p.44 and note 11.
59. Paul's sources regarding the Trentino and Friuli are discussed below, sections F and J. On George of Cyprus: Honigmann 1939; Conti 1964, 1975.
60. Eg. the flimsy Byzantine houses uncovered in the Forum at Luni, dated by chance coin finds: Ward-Perkins 1981, n.b. p.92, 96-8.
61. Cf. Paul II,26; Lib. Pont. V. Benedict. I: i,308. Cf. Brown 1984, p.43 and note 11, p.44.
62. Castelseprio and Invillino are both discussed in Chapter 4. The Ostrogothic presence, though temporally longer, is perhaps even more fleeting.
63. Hartmann 1889, p.53-4, with notes p.151-2; 1899, p.1f on Trentino.
64. Cf. Schneider 1924, p.15f. in particular; cf. also Stein 1949, ii, p.612-3, and Guillou 1969, p.149. In general see Brown 1984, p.102-3 with note 42. Hartmann 1899 does however recognise Roman origins to many of his proposed Trentine castra.
65. Hartmann 1889, p.53, 151; 1899, p.13-4; Schneider 1924, p.18-9. Cividale: Chap. 4, section J.
66. Paul II,4.
67. Verruca: Cass. Var.III, 48. Breoni: Var.I,11. Trento: Chap. 4, section F.
68. Hartmann 1899. Invasion: Paul III,31; Chap. 4, section F below.
69. Sindual's revolt: Paul II,3, calling him rex Brentorum; see Wopfner

- 1925, p.398-9, regarding the Breoni as allies and a buffer to Byzantine Trentino (p.392f); Brown 1984, p.54. Pelagius' letters: Epp.31, 73.
70. Paul III,27.
 71. Como and Comacina: Chap.4, section E.
 72. Greg. Hist.Franc.IV,44; Fredeg. III,67-8; Paul III,8. Daviso 1952, p.247.
 73. Fredeg. III,67-8.
 74. Susa forts: Procop. VI,xxviii,28f. Cf.Balbis 1979, p.157f.
 75. Ibid., p.157-9 on Sisinnius and the Cottian Alps to 568.
 76. Paul III,31.
 77. See Schneider 1924, p.26f.
 78. Paul III,9, with Anagnis set in confinio Italiae. Below, Chap.4, section F.
 79. Schnetz 1939.
 80. Conti 1960, p.23f. Cf. Bullough 1966 on the via Amerina.
 81. Anon.Rav.IV,30: Schnetz 1939, p.66-8 (Guidonis Geog.11-18: Schnetz 1939, p.115-6).
 82. Though Paul's Trentine castella may conform to this scheme. Our evidence is too scanty to be conclusive - we know nothing of the size of the Byzantine garrisons or indeed the duchies in the Alps, and clearly the time available allowed no thorough systematisation of the defences. Army size: Brown 1984, p.84.
 83. Paul IV,37. However, here the Avars were intent on booty not conquest. Below, Chap.4, section J.
 84. On the Franks and their Alpine policy: Buttner 1960, p.62ff; internal strife, p.69-70. Cf. also Goffart 1957, n.b. p.96f.
 85. Paul II,3; and note 69 above.
 86. Procop. VII,xxxiii; Paul I,22. The Longobards were also given a substantial donative.
 87. Longobards as allies: Paul II,1; Procop. VIII,xviii,25. For Longobards v. Gepids: Paul I,23, 27. As mercenaries, below, Chap.5, p.252-3.
 88. This opinion is best expressed in Hartmann 1899, p.2-3: '...es

ist vollständig ausgeschlossen, dass die Langobarden in den ersten 20 Jahren ihres Aufenthaltes in Norditalien eine halbwegs umfassende Bauthätigkeit entfaltet haben....'

89. Paul II,9; Hartmann 1913, p.196-7.
90. See below, Chap.4, section J.
91. Cf. Goffart 1957, p.73f, 82f; Buttner 1960, p.71-4.
92. Goffart 1957, p.105f; Buttner 1960, p.74f. Paul III,34. Peace restored in 593: IV,13.
93. Paul IV,30. Buttner 1960, p.83f.
94. However, Paul does record an invasion in the 660s, defeated by Grimoald: V,5. Peace was restored in c.668: V,32.
95. Buttner 1960, p.75-6.
96. Ewin's marriage in c.585: Paul III,10. Authari's marriage: III,30. The Franks' subsequent invasion of Bavaria: III,30.
97. Paul IV,7.
98. Paul V,36: Alahis defeated a Graf or duke of the Bavarii who governed Bolzano.
99. War in 712-3: Paul VI,35. Liutprand's marriage: VI,43. General harmony: VI,58.
100. Alliances with Avars/Huns: Paul I,27; with Saxons: II,6. Pannonia given to the Avars: II,7.
101. Paul IV,4, 12, 24. Cremona siege: IV,28.
102. Paul IV,37.
103. Paul V,21.
104. Paul VI,45, 52, when the Slavs held the Carneola.
105. Finds in general, see the Schede di archeologia longobarda in Italia: von Hessen, Brozzi 1973; von Hessen, Calderini 1974; von Hessen 1974. Friuli: Brozzi 1981 also.
106. See Appendix Three.
107. Sources in general: Wickham 1981, p.28-9, 64-5; Brown 1984, Appendix A, p.223-6.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE ARCHAEOLOGY OF THE ITALIAN ALPS

This chapter examines in detail the available data for the occupation of the Italian Alps in late antiquity and in particular attempts to identify and evaluate the likely defensive dispositions of both the Byzantine and Longobard occupations. The evidence is of disparate nature, consisting of both documentary data and archaeological material (whether casual finds or recovered from systematic excavation), which, when combined, provide an adequate framework for reconstruction. Each Alpine sector is considered in turn, beginning in the west with Susa and the Cottian Alps (including a discussion on the Cuneese).

(a) Susa and the Cottian Alps (Map 2)

In this district there is little information regarding the post-Roman period. Nothing beyond the brief reference by Procopius to unnamed Gothic fortresses in the Cottian Alps ceded to the Byzantines, and by Fredegarius to Sisinnius at Susa record the imperial occupation of the town and its province.¹

Nonetheless, excavations within the medieval Castello d'Adelaide of Susa, set in the immediate proximity of the Arch of Augustus, have revealed the later Roman reoccupation of the pre-Roman citadel, which doubtless formed part of the castrum held by Sisinnius in 574-5 (pl. 1). The well-preserved west flank of the castello features a single-arched gateway strongly defended by circular towers, and also formerly incorporated both the Augustan Arch and the dual arches of a section of the Roman aqueduct.² Trenches within

the gateway cut through the post-Roman levels and reveal only the later Roman (3rd century) structural phase. However, the fabric of the gateway walling and towers has been attributed, on the basis of the fish-bone technique of stone-laying, to the Byzantine era. Further excavation may clarify this.³ (pl.2)

Similarly, the imposing town gateway of Porta Savoia, set into the 3rd century town wall (dated by spolia in the fabric) north of the castello, while only partially investigated, may likewise incorporate 5th-6th century repairs.⁴ (pl. 3) There are no finds from Susa of the period c.400-1000.⁵

Susa formed the defensive focus of the Dora Ripara valley at the confluence of the routes from the Mt.Cenis and Mt.Genevre passes. It was presumably linked to advance blocking fortifications such as the notable medieval castelli of Exilles and Bardonecchia - both of considered but not proved Roman origin.⁶

Downstream of Susa, however, evidence for the early medieval defence of this zone comes from the Caprie-Chiusa S.Michele sector. Here are generally located the Clusae Langobardorum, first recorded in the Chronicle of the monastery of Novalesa (upstream of Susa). This hypothesis is supported by both the survival of the Chiusa toponym and the presence of further Longobard toponyms in the vicinity.⁷ These Clusae, described as consisting of turres et propugnacula, will have been designed to block access through this defile, and perhaps originally comprised a wall with towers running from the foot of the S.Michele hill across to the castello at Caprie (Anonymous' Ocelum?).⁸ These were the same clusae which the Carolingian armies penetrated in the 8th century. Nothing survives of this defensive work, which was still visible in the 9th century; remains may lie buried below the valley floor. There has been no investigation of Caprie, but the

standing remains exhibit no features predating the 11th century. Chiusa S.Michele, dominating an extensive area of the valley, has, however, revealed traces of an early medieval - perhaps 8th century - foundation to the monastery, but no military role is evident.⁹ (pl.4,5) We cannot say if the clusae are of pre-Longobard foundation. Nonetheless, there was no direct replacement by the Longobards of the imperial garrison and duke at Susa: rather, the territorial concessions to the Franks will have necessitated the erection of defences rearward of the town, perhaps consisting of these clusae.

The sole early medieval find from the valley is a Frankish type brooch from a Longobard tomb at Avigliana, a castello downstream of Caprie, first named in 973 (the earliest recorded castello of the valley).¹⁰

Fredegarius' terse comments allow us no perception of the character of the imperial resistance at Susa post-568, whether marked by lengthy sieges, or occasional assaults during Longobard raids into Francia. Two facts are significant: firstly he notes that not only the towns of Susa and Aosta but also their lands were ceded to the Franks after 575, which may indicate relatively wide territorial control by the Byzantines in both districts; yet secondly it is clear that the Longobards made passage of both valleys during their assaults on Francia, but met no recorded Byzantine resistance.¹¹

Sisinnius' response towards both sides is interesting: at the approach of each he merely stands secure within his castrum and does not interfere (although the enemy 'received a harsh welcome from the locals'), thus adopting an essentially neutral stance.¹² Yet a predominantly pro-Frankish attitude may also be detected if we consider the sequence of Byzantine-Frankish alliances of the 570s-580s. In this case the resistance of Susa (and Aosta?) may have been nominally supported by the Franks, and recognition

of this was made in the treaty of 575. As will be shown, contemporary events elsewhere in the Alps support this view.¹³

East of Susa lay the vital support base of Turin, which guarded the outlet of the Alpine roads into the Po plain. While no evidence for the Byzantine occupation and defence of this centre exist, the dense net of Longobard tomb and cemetery finds girding Turin - the best known of which is Testona, which may possess a hazy Gothic phase - testifies to the extensive settlement of the invaders around this ducal seat, whose importance will have been heightened by the losses of 575.¹⁴

To the south, the late antique picture in the Cuneese is even more obscure, although in the eastern region from Alba to Tortona, facing the Ligurian Apennines, evidence is stronger.¹⁵ For this province the Notitia Dignitatum records stations of Sarmatian troops in Acqui, Tortona, Pollenzo and Benevagienna, possibly as a consequence of the devastation caused by the Visigothic invasions of the early 5th century, when this region was a major battle ground between Alaric and Stilicho.¹⁶ The river Stura, running west of Cuneo and originating in the Alps near Colle di Maddalena, formed the principal node of access and was accordingly defended by later Roman castra at Auriates-Centallo and Bredulum-Breolungi, both of which later held notable territorial circumscriptions; linked to these were lesser fortifications of late Roman date at Roccavione (near Borgo S. Dalmazzo), Morozzo, and possibly Carru.¹⁷ No archaeological proof demonstrates the continuity of these sites into the post-Roman era. In contrast the few Longobard findspots concentrate around Asti and towards Turin, and do not extend into the vicinity of Cuneo.¹⁸ Under the Longobards, however, the frontier line was directed more towards Byzantine Liguria and was consequently organised from the ducal seats of Asti and Tortona.¹⁹

(b) Northern Piedmont and the Aosta Valley (Map 2)

For Northern Piedmont, the Sarmatian stations of the Notitia likewise congregate on the fringes of the Po plain: Turin, Ivrea, Quadrata (nr. Verolengo, south of Ivrea), Vercelli and Novara - all sites listed, along with Pombia, as rearward of the Alps by Anonymous of Ravenna.²⁰ Beyond these lay a number of centres lying on, flanking, or dominating, the Alpine roads; these, recorded by Anonymous, include in the Aosta valley the sites of Verres, Aosta and Arvier, and north of Ivrea the civitates of Victimula (near Biella), Domodossola, Scationa, Magesa, Lebontia and Bellenica.²¹

Late antique findspots - primarily Longobard tombs - are neither numerous nor do they closely reflect the settlement scheme of the Cosmographia. Nevertheless most finds do lie in the vicinity of the larger centres (though this reflects local antiquarian interest rather than actual settlement distribution).²² The most significant excavation of the zone is that of a fortified habitat near Valperga, on the high hill behind the Santuario di Belmonte, south-west of Ivrea, which may possess a site sequence not readily revealed by the casual, inadequately published, excavations.²³ The site, girded by a ponderous wall of local stone, often doubled or tripled in thickness at weak points, or absent where the natural slope was sufficient, shows signs of a long-established community of agricultural and industrial character, although a few weapons were also present. While the latter appear distinctly Longobard, the pottery is atypical of Longobard wares, consisting rather of crude vessels with wavy-line decoration and a few glazed sherds, attributable to the 6th-7th century autochthonous population.²⁴ The site was probably used from late Roman into barbarian times, perhaps initially as a refuge (3 small Constantinian bronzes indicate the Roman presence), and later adopting a military function in control of the Orco valley. This, in its

western reaches, communicates with the Val Savara which enables an evasion of the fortifications of the Val d'Aosta; a similar by-passing movement was possible by the Val di Cogne - Val Soana route north-west of Valperga.²⁵ (Map 2)

Further late antique refuge sites exist at Rivarolta di Salassa, and the cave at Boira Fusca a Salto to the north.²⁶ There is also the possible toponymic survival of a Byzantine watchpoint south-east of Belmonte at Feletto, a name derived from the Greek φυλακτηρία (a fortified post or part of a garrison). Such traces are discussed below, but we can briefly note that if valid, this instance marks a surprising survival in a zone swiftly lost by the Byzantines.²⁷

To the north-east lies Ivrea, whose role as a Longobard frontier duchy, armed with its cluse of Bard, is well attested.²⁸ To place here, well behind Aosta, Cassiodorus' Augustanis clusuris, is illogical, for Aosta will have performed for both Goths and Byzantines the same role as Ivrea performed for the Longobards after the abandonment of Aosta to the Franks in 575; rather, these clusurae should have lain above Aosta at the gorge of Clusaz before Etroubles and have been in Byzantine hands for some years. No fortification traces remain near the gorge, but the nearby village of Godiaz may represent a toponymic relic of a Gothic garrison and Clusaz itself a trace of the clusurae.²⁹ The lack of evidence precludes the theory that the cluse of Bard predate the Longobards, though a late antique origin for the castello of Bard, for the defence of Ivrea, cannot be dismissed.

Along the Val d'Aosta only S.Vincent and Aosta have yielded late Roman finds, both in the form of cemeterial areas. At Aosta excavations outside the Porta Decumana revealed a church, of simple horse-shoe apsed-aula form, part set over a later Roman cemetery, in which the earlier tombs were dated by a coin to the late 4th century; glazed sherds indicate continued use of

the necropolis in the 5th-6th centuries.³⁰ No structures of this epoch remain. Like many old Roman colonies, Aosta maintained almost complete its Augustan walls throughout this period, although some repairs and patches, not closely datable, are visible at points (as in theatre sector); only in the medieval era is there a change, when some of the Roman square circuit towers were remodelled (often with circular superstructures) and small individual fortresses like the Torre del Lebbroso south of the Porta Decumana, and the Torre del Pailleron opposite the station formed around them).³¹ (pl. 6)

Remaining data for the late antique defence of the valley is somewhat speculative: below Aosta the strongpoint of Cly dominates the road, with further protection from the castello at Montjovet (which declined with the construction of Bard); upstream defences are postulated on the cliffs of Montbardon and at Avise (west of Aosta) as guards of the Small St. Bernard's road, with Clusaz controlling the northern approach from the Great St. Bernard's pass, along the Buthier valley.³²

For the region north-east of Ivrea up to Domodossola and Lago Maggiore the evidence is equally scant, being limited to sparse late documentary references and just three Longobard findspots.³³ Nonetheless some cautious conclusions may still be drawn. Between Ivrea and the Valsesia, a region lacking notable Roman centres or roads, we have finds from the Biella cathedral (Bugella), consisting of Longobard coins and pottery, probably from destroyed tombs.³⁴ The Valsesia had no strategic value and thus possesses few ancient castelli of note; nonetheless it did not escape the insecurity, as is witnessed by the occupation of cave-sites on the Monfenera hill above Borgosesia. Here occupation covers the late 4th-6th century (finds: late 4th century coin, one of 526-552, and glazed sherds of the 5th-6th century), but may be of an impermanent nature.³⁵ Elsewhere

valley settlement perhaps shifted upland: at Borgosesia tombs extend only into the late Roman period, while the early medieval church of S.Maria di Naula occupies a spur near Piane Sesia and is surrounded by late Roman inhumations.³⁶

Insula S.Iuliani-S.Giulio d'Orta on lacus Sancti Iulii-Lago d'Orta is recorded as held by the Longobard duke, Mimulf, who defected in 590 to hold the island for the Franks. This is presumed to be his seat, but this is uncertain given his rebel status, and his original station may rather have lain at Pombia.³⁷ (pl. 7) A fortification of the island by the Byzantines is postulated, but the castello walls are medieval in character and are heavily restored; limited excavation within the basilica, traditionally dated to the late 4th century, indeed shows restructuring of the 5th-8th centuries, thus confirming a late Roman origin to the settlement. S.Giulio communicated northward towards Gravellona Toce via the Toce river, and southward by road to Novara along both the Agogna and the Ticino.

The importance of Gravellona is much disputed: some authors locate here the civitas Stationensis-Stazzona rather than at Angera near the toe of Lago Maggiore.³⁸ The finis bordered those of Pombia; this fact alone recommends Gravellona as its location, despite its relative proximity to S.Giulio d'Orta, which, as noted, may not necessarily have been a ducal seat.³⁹ The zone's late antique occupation is reflected in Longobard weapon finds from Al Motterone and further north by seven tombs probably of the autochthonous population from Gurro in Val Cannobina.⁴⁰ (Map 3)

Schneider also postulated a Byzantine origin to the castrum of Domodossola, which controls the descent of the Val d'Ossola from the Sempione pass; this argument was based chiefly on the reference in Anonymous to Oxila, which Schneider linked to the 10th cent. comitatu(lu)s in valle Oxila.

He claimed 'the town itself is recent; in 970 we hear of infra castro quod noviter aedificato esse videtur in loco et finibus Oxila'.⁴⁰ More likely this centre was first fortified in late Roman times and maintained its importance.

The principal penetration route after Domodossola followed the west side of Lago Maggiore and the course of the Ticino towards Novara. The road was heavily guarded from Roman times, with castra at Pombia and Castel Novate, supported behind by Padane Novara and Vercelli.⁴² Early medieval Pombia occupied a natural steep-sided spur set high over a wide river bend, dominating the road to the south (fig. 3); its twin, Castel Novate, assumes an analogous position on the opposite bank of the Ticino. The importance of both sites is well attested under the Longobards and Carolingians, when each possessed mints. Only Castel Novate has produced direct archaeological testimony of this period in the form of a cemetery.⁴³

It is suggested that Ennodius' reference to a castellum built by the bishop Honoratus of Novara should be linked to the foundation of the fortress of Pombia in the 490s, but its strong position is unlikely to have been previously ignored and we should rather seek this castello Honorati episcopi elsewhere.⁴⁴ Pombia lacks systematic archaeological investigation although d'Oldenico's recent synthesis proposes some valid considerations: he rightly places the antique zone around the church of San Vincenzo in Castro, and the medieval castelli to the north, but dubiously claims the circuit wall of cobble construction as being of Honoratian date and that wall reusing Roman brick and stone as of later build; neither fabric suggests a date much before the 9th century, and indeed both circuits are much remodelled.⁴⁵ (pl. 8) Finds demonstrate Roman activity in the vicinity into the 4th century, but there is no early medieval material, despite the adequate documentary evidence:

as well as Pombia's listing as a civitas by Anonymous, we know it as the seat of a iudiciaria and mint in 867 and consequently as a comitatus; there is also reference to in finibus Plumbiense considered by Schneider to indicate a Byzantine military fines.⁴⁶

Other sites are proposed as members of a possible defensive screen centred upon Pombia, but few have archaeological verification. In brief, a strategic line is visualised stretching eastwards through Pombia from Orta to Como, dependent upon various communication routes: south of Orta lay the tower of Buccione (Gozzano - a Gothic site?), and the castello of Briga which communicated eastwards to Borgoagnello (Paruzzaro), Angera and Castelletto sopra Ticino (where late Roman glazed ware suggests a reoccupation of this prehistoric hilltop site); from here the road follows the Ticino through Varallo to Pombia past the castello of Oleggio.⁴⁷ East of Lago Maggiore, and probably enclosed within the sphere of influence of the castrum of Castelseprio, towers have also been identified at Biandronno (west of Varese), Velate and Roderò, in an area of attested Ostrogothic and Longobard activity.⁴⁸

(c) Castelseprio and North-West Lombardy (Map 3)

Castelseprio formed the next castral centre set midway between Pombia and Como. It controlled a vast territorial circumscription in the pre-Alpine zone extending northwards up to the Val d'Intelvi beside Lakes Lugano and Como and into the Val d'Agno, across to cover the whole west side of Lago Maggiore, and south to a point close to Milan, thereby breaking up the territoria of the old civitates of Como and Milan.⁴⁹

The site was abandoned after its destruction in 1287, thus allowing easy access for archaeological investigation. In this respect it is comparable to Torcello and Invillino, though of course the latter pair differ

greatly in terms of settlement character (Castelseprio being a district head, Torcello an island settlement and religious focus, Invillino a military castrum).⁵⁰

First named by Anonymous as Sibrium, Castelseprio appears in both Longobard and Carolingian sources as civitas, vicus and, in 804 castrum, controlling wide finis (elsewhere territorium and iudiciaria); a gastaldo is recorded as resident in 842, and under the Franks it formed an earldom and also held a mint.⁵¹ The fortress dominates the Olona river, a minor route of penetration towards Milan from Lago Lugano, located centrally between the territoria of Pombia and Como. It occupies a high spur naturally defended to the east by the steep valley slopes, and to the north and south by deep ravines, while the west side is separated from the hillside opposite by a gorge, with access by a 3-pierced bridge set parallel to the circuit (fig. 4). These piers, as with all the structures at Castelseprio, are built with local river cobblestone. The natural strength of the site was heavily reinforced by a circuit wall c.1.30-1.40m thick, which follows the crest of the hilltop (chiefly along the 350-355m contour level), and buttressed by rectangular or square towers built into or onto the wall (plates 9 and 10).

The site chronology, only recently clarified, still presents problems: the archaeology has been too limited in extent and often too poorly recorded to offer a comprehensive site sequence, and closely datable finds are few.⁵² Nevertheless it is clear that a castellum arose in the later Roman period when the threat of invasion from over the Alps grew and an advance warning system was required to enable preparations for armed resistance: hence the initial phase at Castelseprio appears to show a set of three 4th-5th century towers built of split cobble and some spolia, of 7m x 7m, with walls c.1.60m

thick, disposed on the north-west and north-east corners (i.e. facing the Alpine routes), and centrally, south of the apse of S.Giovanni.⁵³ No systematic investigation of these towers has occurred to confirm this dating, which is presently based on finds made elsewhere on the site.⁵⁴ It is possible that the much-repaired bridge also dates to this period.

The construction of the circuit is attributed to the 5th-6th century, chiefly on the basis of the material recovered in External Tower 2: this included two sherds of early 6th century sigillata chiara D in level 2 of its fill, contemporary with the military usage of the tower. However, the erection of the curtain wall should lie between the start of the 5th century, when much fortification work occurred in towns in Italy, and before c.450 when the basilica of S.Giovanni was constructed, undoubtedly to meet the religious requirements of a large garrison and a local populus.⁵⁵

Within the circuit the Polish excavators calculate a series of 3 late Roman levels (IX, VIII, and VII ending in a fire with associated finds of glass, bones, and pottery - including one late 4th century terra sigillata sherd) linked to partially-uncovered settlement traces; these too should be contemporary with or subsequent to the circuit's construction. It is worth noting Lusuardi Siena's comments on this: 'the assignation to the 5th-6th centuries suggested by the Poles for the settlement phase characterised by the erection of the curtain wall with the external towers seems well-founded even if further confirmations are needed. On the other hand the relative homogeneity which characterises the levels referable to this phase and the later Longobard ones seems to exclude the possibility of a neat chronological division between the two moments'.⁵⁶ Indeed the second site phase postulated by Kurnatowski et al. (1968) contains no constructions in the examined area but solely traces of a fire, and finds (notably glass) comparable to those

of the 7th century phase 4 above (levels III and II); this second phase, dated by the opus gallicum constructions and the presence of 'ridged bowls lacking in the earlier levels', marks the late Roman-early medieval transition (pre-dating the Longobard levels V-I).⁵⁷

The phases are chiefly distinguished by destruction levels which are set to coincide with appropriate transitions (late Roman - Gothic, Gothic - Byzantine, Byzantine - Longobard). There are no distinctive finds in upper levels postdating the Roman occupation to demonstrate unquestionable barbarian sequences: finds are all of later Roman tradition, with the exception of a single Longobard type rivet of the 7th century from within S.Giovanni. There is no other find of clear Germanic tradition.⁵⁸ Individual features offer a somewhat clearer picture, most notably at the 'pozzo perdente' outside the south wall of the central late Roman tower: this contained chalices, ridged-bowls, basins, pietra ollare and also an olla with stamped decoration broadly similar to known Longobard forms, and was dated by a gold tremiss of Justinian (a later 6th century imitation, perhaps coined over the Alps).⁵⁹ Basically, however, the distinction between the moment of Longobard occupation and the preceeding phase is 'witnessed by the different modes of settlement (partial reuse of pre-existing, probably already part-decayed, structures, the overlying of these, and the diversity of constructive technique)'.⁶⁰ To discern a Byzantine phase, therefore, is difficult.

Nonetheless, one area of the excavations which may show this transitory presence is Brogiolo - Lusuardi Siena's Sector A, set between the east cistern wall and the west wall of the central late Roman tower. Here, following the construction of the tower, to which was linked Ditch 19, was built the cistern, cutting through the ditch which was filled with 5th-6th

century refuse attributable to the Goths.⁶¹ The area was then levelled and two (Ostrogothic?) burials cut into this surface, with a hearth inserted between these. Subsequently a cobbled surface was laid which 'appears referable to a unitary systematisation of the zone for a cemeterial function' to which a set of burials belong (tomb 1 and tombs within and to the east of the tower): of these, tomb 1, (disturbed), contained a Byzantine type arrow-head of rhomboidal section.⁶² Various cuts followed for burial 3, a hearth, and then a wall with associated beaten-clay flooring of considered Longobard character. If the sequence is correct then some evidence exists for the Byzantines at Castelseprio. The Polish levels VI and V may perhaps also be linked to this. Only an extension of the excavations will clarify the sequence.

Nevertheless, we must note the probable occupational continuity of this fortress from late Roman into Longobard and early medieval times, this being a pattern we meet in other Alpine castra.

The defensive arrangements within the Sibrium fines will have responded to the needs already noted for the pre-Alps, namely the protection of the roads from the north, in this instance along the east side of Lago Maggiore and along the river south of Lake Lugano. The dispositions should have formed a secondary line of defence behind the northern blocking forts of the Bellinzona district, to which we shall turn shortly.

To the west, beside Lago Maggiore and between the Ticino and Olona, there is evidence of dense Roman settlement, but as yet little late antique activity: southwest of Castelseprio we find traces of continuity into Longobard times at Arsago Seprio, Sesto Calende and Varese.⁶³ Varese, located close to the Olona may indeed communicate with Como through towers at Roderò, Balerna and perhaps Stabio: the Balerna tower is dated to the late

Roman period on the basis of Roman spolia in its lower structure (Mor has suggested that it dates to the time of Valentinian's defeat of the Alamanni in 366), while its upper levels are attributed to the Longobards - if correct we have a useful indication of continuity in a lesser military structure.⁶⁴ The same may be true for Roderò, where lie the remains of a later Roman fortress with a powerful tower, cistern and circuit wall.⁶⁵ These tower-forts could in turn signal back to Castelseprio via points along the Olona, but this hypothesis awaits archaeological verification. If the dating sequence is correct, however, Castelseprio initially formed just one point in a chain of watchtowers and lesser forts communicating from the Alpine sector back to the military headquarters of the Po plain; with the growth of threats the tactical significance of Castelseprio will have grown to an extent that warranted the installation here of a large castrum.

An analogous tower-system west of Varese is unidentifiable, although Longobard military tombs are known from Cadrezzate, Bogno and Besozzo (loc. Castello), while the Angera castello is of postulated Longobard origin. Finds of this epoch are scarce to the north.⁶⁶

The region of Lake Lugano up to the Valle d'Intelvi probably also lay within the confines of castrum Sibirium. This zone, mostly incorporated into modern Swiss Canton Ticino, guarded the outlet of the road descending from Bellinzona along the Val d'Agno: sites here controlled the southern lines of movement like the Intelvi. Noticeably many Ticinese sites previously belonged to the Milan diocese - most notably those north of Lake Lugano, while to the south most sites lay in the Como diocese. Schneider has clarified this situation: initially at least the Sibirium fines extended up to the Intelvi valley, and indeed in 961 we hear that count Nantlem of Seprio was resident on Isola Comacina, presumably then subject to him; in 1140 the

Seprio counts still maintained Mendrisio to the north-west of Como; however, in 1185 the Stationa, Seprio, Martesan, Burgaria and Lecco territoria were put under the Milanese (who in 1287 destroyed Seprio), while in 1192 Como came to control the areas of Bellinzona, Locarno, Comacina and others.⁶⁷

This evidence suggests that Como, so important in the late Roman and Gothic eras, afterwards possessed a limited finis, perhaps containing only the west side of the lake, and was bordered to the east by the districts of Martesana and Lecco. This arrangement also explains the construction of the castrum of Laino - beside the Intelvi west of Comacina - by a Milanese subdeacon.⁶⁸ Como would thus have been entrusted with the lake defence, in a manner analogous to Stationa, S.Giulio d'Orta and Sirmione (Lakes Maggiore, Orta and Garda respectively).⁶⁹

In the west sector, under Rome the Lake Maggiore water-route of Locarno - Angera formed the major traffic artery; in the later Roman period this was displaced to the road which, south of Bellinzona, follows the Val d'Agno to Ponte Tresa before approaching Varese. This was perhaps the route taken by the Alamanni in 354 and also by the Franks in 590, en route to Milan.⁷⁰ Archaeological evidence is restricted to a list of undatable 'Tombe Protocristiane' at Gerra, Isonne, Lugano, Sureggio and Tesserete.⁷¹

The zone south of Lake Lugano is more fruitful, at least as regards Longobard settlement. Here the road from Riva S.Vitale, branching at Mendrisio to reach Como or Castelseprio, has yielded a number of findspots, chiefly of Longobard tombs. Best known are the Longobard shield decorations and gold crosses from tombs at S.Pietro in Stabio (3km west of Mendrisio), though poorer tombs of the romanian population are also present at S.Abbondio..⁷² As noted, a late Roman watchtower is postulated at Stabio and certainly Stabio lies above the road. At Riva S.Vitale there is the well-known 5th-6th century

baptistery, with 7th century occupation witnessed by a Byzantine type brooch from a tomb.⁷³ To the south is another hilltop site, Besazio, whose church of Sant'Antonio contained a Longobard tomb.⁷⁴ Lastly, in the parish of Balerna are Mendrisio and Morbio: the former has a 7th century church to S.Martino; the latter consists of two separate localities, Morbio Inferiore and Superiore, both with late antique religious foci. At Morbio Inferiore S.Giorgio has a clear Longobard origin, featuring a double nave burial, while on Morbio Superiore the oratorio di S.Martino Vescove sul Colle (or San Martino di Sagno), contains a headstone datable to the consulship of the Ostrogoth Eutharicus Cillix (early 6th century).⁷⁵

(d) Bellinzona and the upper Canton Ticino (Map 3)

The first stage of the defence above Lakes Maggiore and Lugano was castrum Bilitionis. This is the Castel Grande of Bellinzona, which dominates, at a bottleneck of the Ticino valley, the road leading from the Alpine crossings of S.Bernardino and San Gottardo (pl. 11). Even before Bellinzona similar blocking forts are visible at Giornico, Serravalle and Mesocco.⁷⁶

The 1967 excavations within Castel Grande provided an important glimpse of its structural evolution, even if the report is confused in its details and attempts over-precision in its dating of features. Its basic fault lies in Meyer's poorly supported argument for a date of c.800 for the fire-destruction level overlying the late Roman - early medieval deposits, although an earlier date is equally likely: indeed Meyer has to explain the tombs of barbarian style (but lacking grave-goods), belonging to a burial ground cutting into this level, as mere 'archaisms'. Indeed a destruction date of c.700 would better explain the burial forms as well as the lack of 7th-8th century finds below the fire stratum.⁷⁷ Nonetheless Meyer's interpretation of the site chronology must remain broadly acceptable.

The excavations concerned the south wing of the castello (Sector Q) relating to the line of the circuit wall (Fig. 5). Here was uncovered the earliest circuit (M3) overlying an early imperial deposit (mid-imperial finds are lacking), constructed of dry-set oblong stone slabs, but in some points featuring well-worked stones joined with abundant white lime; on average it is c.1.40-1.50m thick. It also features a doorway at the west end of its 15m stretch. Repairs to M3 correspond to the fabric of M8 which detaches from M3 to the south-west on a less regular path and with thicker foundations; the doorway was blocked at the erection of M8. Its westward course is lost, although a trace appears at M17 before disappearing - probably below the present circuit line.⁷⁸ The finds in the fill of the M3 foundation trench suggest 4th century construction, but no data is given on the fill of M8 - later trenches undoubtedly removed these deposits.⁷⁹ However, the fire, which left traces over the whole excavation zone, covers a 20-30cm thick grey sandy level (set in clear relation to M3 and M8), which contained late-post Roman finds. Above the fire level early medieval finds (9th century onwards) are present, occasionally overlying detritus perhaps referable to the collapse of the late antique walls.⁸⁰ From the actual destruction level little more than some Lavez (pietra ollare) sherds were recovered, though its density indicates heavy occupation within the castello.⁸¹ After the fire Wall 1a-1b was built, forming a right-angle and, reusing the foundations of M8 in the west. This construction is of rougher stonework: its partial reuse of the late antique circuit demonstrates that the latter remained visible, if not still in use. Only in the 10th century did the Castello curtain shift a few metres south, a position since maintained.⁸²

Meyer's analysis of the pottery from the pre-fire strata is of dubious value. As he himself notes: 'To judge from their form they could in part be

late Roman material but their working seems rather to point to a medieval date ... Thus the dating proposed by us is based more on the find-spot than on the type of material and on form'.⁸³ However, Blake's examination of the data has furnished fuller details, noting that sherds found in direct association with the walls exhibit 'all the forms which characterise that (ceramic suite) of Castelseprio', thus suggesting a late 4th-5th century stratum (perhaps extending into the early 6th century). A like date is proposed for finds underlying the ash layer.⁸⁴

We should therefore recognise at Bellinzona - after an early (Augustan?) imperial occupation - a 4th century fortification of the hilltop (M3) with occupation extending into the 5th-6th centuries, with repairs or additions to the defences (M8 and M3a) at indeterminate dates. Meyer hypothesises renovation of the fortress by Narses, after dismissing the idea of Gothic intervention here.⁸⁵ The castrum was probably lost to the Longobards in the late 570s, although it is mentioned only in 590 during the Frankish invasion of Upper Italy when the Longobards barricaded themselves within the defences and harassed the Franks and even killed their commander, dux Olo.⁸⁶ These events demonstrate an efficient functioning of the circuit then.

The size of the hilltop argues against Bellinzona being a purely military site: the number needed to man a full circuit would exceed 1000 men, and it is likely that Castel Grande was also the refuge for the local populus (as perhaps indicated in Gregory's words 'urbis castrum'); the presence of the S.Pietro church and its cemetery within the walls indeed indicates that before the 9th century the population had access to the fortress.⁸⁷ The excavations indeed located two habitations of square plan (3 x 3m) comparable with a house uncovered at nearby Carasso (loc.Lusanico). As their drystone walls appear to overlies the late Roman deposit and antedate

the early medieval fire they are assigned to the 6th-7th centuries. The same date is given to the Carasso house (6.20 x 5.80m, walls 55cm thick and with local dry-set stonework) from which came Lavez sherds and a 7th century fibula 'a ponticello'; its decoration, however, is more representative of the autochthonous population than the Longobards.⁸⁸ Longobard military tombs of the 7th century come from the vicinity of Castel Grande (with scramasaxes, knives, a lancehead and belt fittings).⁸⁹

One other fortress of the zone has been investigated, if only superficially: castello di Tegna, north-west of Locarno, a hill (529m above sea level) dominating the confluence of the Melezza and Maggia rivers at the mouth of the Centovalli.⁹⁰ This powerful natural site, divided from the main Salmone mountain range by a natural cut, the Forcola, features a gently sloping summit with a level central area where was constructed the main internal building. A medieval fort occupies the highest point.

The brief excavations considered two zones: the central structure and the circuit walls.⁹¹ The former, of c.23 x 23m, with inner square walls of 13 x 13m and 9 x 9m and boasting a central, barrel-vaulted cistern, produced minimal finds, but includes a late Roman iron lancehead. Gerster interpreted the building as the house of the garrison's commander.⁹²

A series of three or possibly four circuit walls girding the hilltop were identified, though only at the west flank opposite the Forcola access were three lines located together. Here the central wall was c.2.50m thick built of local stone slabs with smaller stone bonding, while the wall behind, only 3m distant, was 4m thick and featured mortared stone slab rubble construction.⁹³ At some points the site's natural inaccessibility deemed the artificial defences unnecessary, but otherwise the circuit was complete: it ran in an arc to protect the north-west corner (in drystone construction

c.1.25m at base) before roughly following the 470m contour to the south-east corner. In this sector three towers were located: the first, in the north-west corner, 5.20m x 6.30m internally, possessed the only datable find from the site, a coin of Constans I (333-350). Parallel to the wall in the east was an inner circuit on the 484m level, while in the south a curtain was identified at 497m. In a manner similar to Castelseprio and Torba, separate defences on the 470m level on the Forcola guarded a spring and simultaneously the hollow of the cut.⁹⁴

Gerster hypothesises two phases, considering that the western and north-western defences predate the circuits to the east: the former are probably 4th century in date, while the full curtain belongs to the Ostrogothic-Byzantine era (significant is the absence of a church which he considers a sign of abandonment after 568).⁹⁵ His arguments lack support and are inferred from general historical conclusions. We should instead suspect two later Roman phases of the 4th and 5th centuries. While the inadequacy of both the excavations and the report prevents a reconstruction of the site history, nothing demonstrates a post-Roman occupation, though this cannot be excluded. Tegna hugs a strong position on the Domodossola-Bellinzona route, and although the importance of this road in late antiquity is uncertain, a garrisoning of this fortress would be logical. The presence of the medieval castello may indicate that the site was abandoned for some period in the post-Roman period.⁹⁶ Systematic excavations would clarify many problems here.

The region possesses other late Roman evidence: graves from Locarno (where arimanni are later recorded), glazed pottery from Ascona, (similar to types found at Tegna), and a possible fortification at Crep da Caslac; in addition Longobard burials are known at Vedretto in the Maggia valley,

and a probable Longobard church lies at Gudo (from Goto?) near Bellinzona.⁹⁷

Our picture of late antique occupation of the zones north of Bellinzona derives principally from Longobard tombs. The Alpine roads combined at Castione to continue southward to Bellinzona, and here 7th-8th century non-military graves show a Longobard presence near this vital crossing.⁹⁸ To the north-west the Ticino (Valleventina) descended from the San Gottardo pass to join near Biasca the Val Blenio (from the Lucomagno pass). Along the Ticino, Crivelli notes tombs at Airolo, Lavorgo (military), and Iragna (also military), south of Biasca.⁹⁹ One of the largest necropoli of barbarian date in Canton Ticino (c.130 graves) lies at Castro in the Blenio: few finds are recorded, and these, including 3 pietra ollare vessels and a spindle-whorl with die-dot decoration, are indicative of the 6th-7th century indigenous population.¹⁰⁰ Also interesting is the late 6th century lancehead found near Cavagnago at a height of c.2120m near the passes of Laghetti and Piancabella (linking the Blenio to the Valleventina). In the Val Mesolcina, (descending from the S. Bernardino pass) Mesocco has produced a tomb with 7th century material, including belt-fittings and a ponticello brooch,¹⁰¹

The paucity of systematic excavations in the Canton prevents the identification of a Byzantine presence. No source notes the extent or duration of their hold in this zone, but it is likely that Narses only captured the Ticino valleys in the late 550s or early 560s, leaving little time for a thorough reorganisation of the existing defensive arrangements.

Our evidence becomes more concrete, however, in the adjoining territory of Como, for which documentation of the Byzantine occupation is, even if minimal, at least present.

(e) Como, the Lake, and the Zone of Chiavenna (Map 3)

The all-important Milan-Como-Chiavenna-Chur route, known in the Middle

Ages as the strada Regina, ran parallel to the west side of Lake Como (lacus Larius) up to Samolaco (Summolacus) before following the Mera valley towards the Spluga pass; a branch departed from Chiavenna for the Septimer and Julier passes via Val Bregaglia. A more arduous link existed between Chiavenna and Lecco along the less accessible east side, providing access south to Milan and south-east to Brescia and Bergamo along the Adda. Both routes have significant late antique findspots.

Como has many post-Roman traces. Outside the city in loc.S.Marta (near the railway station), a large cemetery continued in use from Roman into early medieval times, though it lacks Longobard material; and the church of S.Abbondio contains numerous epigraphs which show its continued vitality in late antiquity. Within Como the 5th-6th century baptistery of S.Giovanni in Atrio has been identified ^{with} S.Fedele, while the presence of reused material in walls near the Palazzo Vescovile may locate the early medieval administrative seat (of the Longobard gastald and, after 1013, of the bishops).¹⁰²

Notable are the remnants of the later town walls which mark a reinforcement and extension of the early republican colony circuit (of c.59B.C.) by Diocletian and Maximian; these were in turn reinforced in the later Roman or Ostrogothic era with hastily-constructed towers and curtain containing abundant spolia.¹⁰³ The bulk of existing circuit is medieval in date. Equally impressive is the series of 20 inscriptions for the period of 453-556, attesting in particular a strong Gothic presence.¹⁰⁴

Historical documentation is brief: Procopius relates that Mundilas garrisoned Como, Milan, Bergamo and Novara at the end of 538, but surrendered to the Goths after a siege; this caused other forts 'in the area' to surrender, allowing the Ostrogoths to recover Lombardy. When the region was retaken by Byzantium remains uncertain: the Franks still held Comacina in 550, and in

554 Narses still faced Gothic resistance in northern Tuscany. Paul the Deacon omits mention of Como.¹⁰⁵ Yet Como's earlier importance is evident: besides Cassiodorus' reference to Como as munimen claustrale Italiae, the Notitia Dignitatum names a praefectus classis Comensis cum curis eiusdem civitatis Como.¹⁰⁶

The incursions of the Sibrium fines into the old civic territorium of Como have been noted. This, and the fact that the fortress of Comacina held its own fines just north of that of Castelseprio, may indicate that after the Ostrogoths Como was territorially restricted to the western half of the lake (the east held by Lecco) and the lower course of the strada Regina.¹⁰⁷ Nevertheless, Como probably remained a fleet station and an important supply base for the northern positions.

A possible indication of the defensive arrangement comes from the Val d'Intelvi-Val Menaggio zone. Here a tight net of fortifications appears strung to defend two lines of penetration from the north and north-west. The Val d'Intelvi perhaps formed the border with Sibrium, terminating at a point south-west of Comacina: confirmation of this may lie in the little-known inscription of Byzantine date commemorating the builder of the castrum of Laino.¹⁰⁸ The site, S.Vittore di Castello, above Laino, north of Castiglione d'Intelvi, unfortunately still awaits archaeological investigation. The building of the castrum is credited to Marcellinus, a subdeacon from Milan (not Como), and in addition possesses a church dedicated to a Milanese saint, Vittore.¹⁰⁹ While the date of 556 refers to Marcellinus' death, we should assume that the fort was constructed only shortly before, and that for this the initiative came from Milan (Castelseprio had close links with Milan). Marcellinus' claims that the building was 'all at his own expense and effort' are paralleled in inscriptions from Byzantine Africa,

showing that this phrasing normally cloaks the fact that the venture was government-financed, and entrusted to a church official in whose diocese the fortress lay.¹¹⁰ The position retained its function after 568, as shown by the casual find of a Longobard tomb (containing 2 gold earrings and a knife).¹¹¹

Zecchinelli has linked Laino to a line of castles running from the rise of Osteno to the north via Laino to Scaria, (where the belltower of SS.Nazaro e Celso may be an earlier watchtower), and thence to Ramponio in the west, a pre-Roman caslè. To the south-east the defended hilltops of S.Fedele and Castiglione may be additional links in this chain.¹¹² We cannot discern if this line lay under Sibrium or combined with the Como finis; to the north, however, we clearly enter the district surveyed by Comacina.

This natural fortress (pl. 12) played a major role in the Byzantine resistance against the Longobards in the Alpine zone, and even after their ejection still played a significant part in later insurrections within the Longobard kingdom. Paul first relates that the imperial magister militum Francio had maintained himself on insula Amacina for twenty years since 568, but had surrendered after a six-month siege; subsequently he was allowed passage to Ravenna, while the Longobards unearthed the treasures 'deposited there by particular cities'.¹¹³ This resistance is also indirectly recorded by George of Cyprus, who, using for Italy a source of c.575-580, lists a small group of surviving Byzantine Alpine castra, including Susa and indeed the Νῆσος κωμανίχαια.¹¹⁴ Especially interesting is the fact that Francio apparently only suffered siege in the final six months of his 20 year hold of the island, and had therefore avoided constant attack. It is clear that the Longobard occupation of Upper Italy remained incomplete by 575, and that

where resistance was met the Longobards wore it down with difficulty. This was certainly true for Susa - despite the passage of Longobard troops toward Francia - Anagnis in the Trentino, and presumably also Comacina and its zone. The extent of this resistance will be examined shortly, but it suffices here to claim that individual sites could not have withstood Longobard pressure unless materially assisted by other territorial units.¹¹⁵

The presence of treasures on Comacina from 'particular cities' may indicate that after 568 local wealth was deposited on the island, perhaps initially as a temporary measure, made permanent with the loss of Como, which also meant the refocussing of Byzantine resistance on Comacina. Francio was probably first based at Como only to withdraw to the island castrum to reorganise his defences.

No Longobard duke of Como or Comacina is named. Yet the island was used as a refuge by rebellious nobles like duke Gaidulf of Bergamo, king Cunicpert who fled from duke Alahis of Trento and Bergamo, and Ansprand.¹¹⁶ King Aripert solved the problem by destroying the fortress after Ansprand had fled onto Chur.¹¹⁷ We should also remember that the Franks proudly boasted their possession of the island (Christopolis or insula Lariensa) in 550, again indirectly demonstrating its military value.¹¹⁸ This fact also recognises the pre-Byzantine origin to the castrum. Aripert's destruction of the fortress in the early 700s appears total: no trace of any defences is visible on the island, with the exception of a corner of a later (9th century?) tower in the flank of the church of S.Eufemia (pl.13); the walling on the higher ground appears to be just terracing, although in parts it attains a height of c.3m. But a secure reference point is the summital church of S.Maria, denominated 'in castello' in the 12th century.¹¹⁹

Five churches are present, three of which appear to be of 5th century

foundation. S.Eufemia (a dedication of between 451 and 544) lies to the north, a construction credited to S.Abbondio, the bishop of Como who died between 461 and 489. Beside this, excavations in S.Giovanni revealed the presence of an 'aula-battistero' containing an octagonal font with opus signinum floor, a 5th century fish mosaic, and a 9th century mosaic recording the bishop Abbondio. Its intermediate use is revealed in the 7th century tombstone of bishop Agrippinus.¹²⁰ The churches of S.Pietro and S.Faustino e Giovita are both first recorded in the 10th century. S.Maria is named in 982, but partial excavation showed an early phase with 5th century parallels.¹²¹

This evidence identifies conclusively a late Roman occupation of Comacina from the 5th century at a date contemporary with the rise of Castelseprio. Although lack of appropriate excavation precludes the location of its military focus, nevertheless, the high number of churches signifies that Comacina was both an important settlement and a notable castrum.

On the mainland promontory of Lenno to the north, funerary inscriptions are known for the Ostrogothic-Byzantine epoch: in addition to a fragment of 535, there is an inscription recording a clergyman of Como of 554, while most significantly the S.Maria oratory belltower preserves two inscriptions of 571, both dated by the reign of Justin. These register a continued imperial presence here in the years after 568.¹²² This strengthens the hypothesis that Comacina was supported by other Byzantine possessions.

Further north, above Spurano lie traces of an early medieval fortification, enclosing the Torre del Soccorso. This overlooks the road and is linked by sight to both Bellagio, (a later arimannia at the tip of the Larian triangle), and Varenna.¹²³ Trenches at the Soccorso tower uncovered a cistern with late Roman opus signinum lining, while the tower (c.8 x 6.50m with walls 1.70m thick except on the west, though medieval in form, may

possess Roman foundations.¹²⁴ At neighbouring Ossuccio, loc.Campo, a rich noble tomb with military finds is evidence for Longobard activity here. Also noteworthy is the coinhoard found at Griante, deposited during the Gothic War and including 20 solidi (3 of Justin I and 17 of Justinian) - a reminder of the insecurity which threatened the population along this road in the 6th century.¹²⁵

Beyond the Val Menaggio¹²⁶ lie two further sites of interest: Rezzonico and Gravedona. The former possesses a fortification locally called 'the Roman walls of Rezzonico' also set opposite an east lake-side fortification (Dervio). The structure, 52 x 40m, has stone and riverstone walls c.1.62m thick containing arrowslit views, and with an extension leading towards the lake below both road and church. Zecchinelli postulates a function connected with the supply and upkeep of the Larian fleet, forming a northern patrol base. The complex is undated.¹²⁷ No such military role is visible at Gravedona, however, where late antique vitality is reflected solely in the religious finds of the centre.¹²⁸

There are few finds north of Lake Como. Chiavenna retained its importance at the crossroads of the pass-routes, but nothing demonstrates that it held a castral district to defend these and the lake-head. Paul's sole reference concerns Ansprand's flight here en route to Chur after his defeat on Comacina.¹²⁹ In 937 the bishop of Como received the clusas et pontem de Clavenna, but we lack further details and these may merely indicate the toll-station and crossing-point at Chiavenna itself.¹³⁰ Longobard toponyms in the region are few, consisting of wald-type names and a single fara north of Chiavenna at S.Giacomo Filippo.¹³¹

The picture for the east lake side is considerably less detailed, but does broadly reflect that of the west. Firstly, at a point near the outlet

of the Adda (the Valtellina) is the tower of Olonio, locally attributed to Agilulf, who in 603 destroyed the town of Volturena and its castle, which tradition sites here. The tower has been heavily restored and so although the area has many Roman finds, no element supports this tradition. Nonetheless, some fortification is logical here to protect the important Adda-Como route.¹³²

South-west of Dervio is Castelvetro (vedro=vetere?) (350m), set near the mouth of the Varrone. The site dominates the Dervio delta and a wide stretch of the Lario, and visually communicates across the lake to Rezzonico. This promontory fortress, covering an area of c.1500m², forms a rough trapezoid with an oval addition to the south-east, with walls constructed of local stone more or less regularly laid, and strongly mortared. In antiquity a road crossed the valley to link with Lecco via Piazzo, where defensive works are also known, and along the Valsassina; with the later undated shift of the road Castelvetro declined and was replaced by Castello d'Olezio. Pensa ascribes a late Roman-barbarian origin to Castelvetro, but the site still awaits excavation.¹³³

Similar is the case for Varenna and its Torre di Vezio: though linking across the lake to towers at both Spurano and Bellagio, Varenna controls a road which saw little or no traffic until recent times. As noted, the Valsassina rather than the lakeside road formed the main link southwards. Nineteenth century historians ascribed a Theudelindan origin to Varenna solely on the grounds of tradition. The site was transformed into a villa in the 1950s, an event which uncovered some undated and since lost iron javelin heads.¹³⁴

Firmer ground is reached when we consider Lecco, which occupies a position corresponding to that of Como - with which it communicated by road

via Erba - at the right leg of the lake. Borghi's recent study and reassessment of the archaeology of the town has clarified many problems relating to the late Roman-Byzantine occupation of Lecco.¹³⁵ Lecco was the seat of a Longobard iudiciaria and subsequently a Carolingian comitatus. It is first named by Anonymous of Ravenna as Leuceris (though erroneously placed between Brescia and Bergamo), in 879 as Leucum, and in 957 as castro Leuco; this gave rise to speculation that the name derives from the Greek, ie. κρότρον λεῦκος (white fortress), and forms an example of the Byzantine habit of rechristening fortresses with geographical or cult names. Here the name reflected the colour of the limestone used in its construction. Schneider saw this as evidence that Lecco was a Byzantine foundation.¹³⁶ Borghi, however, sheds new light on this hypothesis.

First in this connection we note the excavations at S.Martino in Agra, a church on a hillock near the lake edge: here 5th-6th century pietra ollare vessels were found, confirming finds made during earlier restoration work of a tomb (linked to the local tradition of the grave of a Frankish princess).¹³⁷ To the south lies colle di S.Stefano, a hill detached from Monte San Martino, 1km north of the town centre, and indeed joined by road to S.Martino. East is the medieval castello on Colle del Castello, above the church of S.Protasio, and near to those of S.Nazaro and S.Nicola.

Colle di S.Stefano rises to 260m above sea level, with a summit 60m above the level of the lake; the hilltop is girded by a circuit describing an irregular pentagon enclosing a total area of 2½ha. This in turn is divided into upper and lower lakeside levels by an inner wall running from north-east to south. Throughout the wall is c.1.20m thick, reaching in parts a height of 2.50m, and constructed with white limestone blocks of largish dimensions set in regular courses bonded with a strong mortar, and

in general resting on the bedrock. Repatching is prominent in upper portions of the circuit, notably the southern tract, while some stretches have disappeared (as on the west).¹³⁸ On the summit are remains of a large tower, externally 7.40 x 8m, with walls c.2m thick, and still c.4.5m high; though its facing is gone, exposing its rubble core, it remains an imposing structure. Taken as a whole, Borghi argues that '... all the castrum seems to respond to a single precise draft formed by the tower and by the pentagonal circuit wall without other towers'.¹³⁹

At c.100m south of the tower, a dairy farm overlies the old church of S.Stefano (converted thus in 1779), first recorded in the 13th century and originally single-apsed; this conversion uncovered the tombstone of the priest Vigilius (d.535) and located other tombs. In addition, a fragment of white musso stone, once used as a doorstep to the farm, was recognised by Boggetti as a Byzantine pilaster (measuring 1.09 x 0.30 x 32m) worked in low relief.¹⁴⁰

The finds demonstrate both Gothic and Byzantine activity at the church and perhaps therefore the castrum. If so, the Greek name marks a rechristening of an existing site, not the naming of a new fort. Borghi puts the S.Stefano tower in line with the Wachttürme of the Rhine (and indeed Castelseprio) and proposes a 4th-5th century date - thus agreeing with Zecchinelli's arguments for a late Roman line of watchtowers guarding the lake - and sees a later erection of the circuit wall and castral chapel.¹⁴¹ Borghi also suggests that the Longobards preferred instead to fortify the Colle del Castello after or during their conquest of this zone, as may be supported by the neighbouring Longobard church dedications at S.Nazaro and S.Nicola: if valid this may even indicate Byzantine resistance at S.Stefano which prompted the erection of a counter-fortification on the Colle del

Castello.¹⁴²

Although Lecco was a minor vicus and statio in Roman times, its attestation in geographical lists from the 7th century reveals its function in late antiquity as one link in the sub-Alpine defensive chain, guarding penetration routes from the north, and closely linked to Como, Milan and Bergamo. The extent of its command, however, remains undetermined.¹⁴³

Intermediate between Como and Lecco at the base of the Larian triangle is Erba with its defensive nucleus at Castelmarte, overlooking both road and river routes leading to Milan. Here too Byzantine resistance post-568 is documented in the listing in George of Cyprus of κάστρον Ἰλβας - Erba, although no other source notes its continued defence. No relevant material has come from Erba, though in the vicinity in 1961 a Longobard tomb, containing a sword, was casually discovered.¹⁴⁴ At Castelmarte, however, near the chapel of S. Maria, above the Lambro, there are fortification traces, regarded as early medieval in date, and equated with the Byzantine castrum of Erba; a stray sherd of 5th-6th century date found in fieldwalking provides some corroborative evidence.¹⁴⁵ To the south Longobard tombs are known along the Milan road, from Garbagnate and Bulciago Brianza, both of military character.¹⁴⁶ (Map 3)

The extent and duration of Byzantine resistance in this region must remain vague. Although we possess a few fixed points (Lenno: Byzantine still 571, Comacina to 588, Erba post-575, Lecco perhaps post-568) no documentary data supplements this minimal outline, nor it is likely that archaeology will greatly clarify the problem. Toponymic study is likewise of little use: Mastrelli's lists of Longobard toponyms in Lombardia do show relatively little penetration into the Como area (with names derived chiefly from the words braida, wald, gahagi and sala - such as Sala Comacina - none of

military significance), while fara-derivatives are too few: 3 lie in the west of the Bergamo province (Fara di Gera d'Adda - the Fara Authari of medieval documents; Monte della Fara north-east of Bergamo; and Fara Olivana - Fara Livani in 915 - on the Serio) and another lies near Gallarate (Varese).

These can hardly be shown to encircle a surviving Byzantine territory (as is possible in the Bellunese), (Map 5). Indeed this argument stumbles when we note a toponym Fara north of Chiavenna, which may conversely pinpoint early Longobard penetration beyond the proposed area of resistance.¹⁴⁷ It is probable that the Longobards had initially concentrated their efforts on centres in the plain before extending their conquests into the Alpine zones. In this setting a series of strong fortifications such as those of the Lario, adequately supported by efficient supply-lines - in this case the lake - could have resisted until logistics were broken and the various positions isolated: the fact that Francio suffered siege only in the last 6 months of his 20 year hold of Comacina must reflect the effectiveness of the resistance here.

It is logical therefore to perceive the Valtellina and the region of Sondrio as another sector of Byzantine survival. This case is strongly argued by Conti, who sees here the route of march taken by the Franks in the joint Frankish-Byzantine venture of 584 (575 says Conti) in which they captured the Trentine castle of Nanno, then still in imperial hands; the Valtellina indeed forms a notable communications channel between the two regions and could well explain the continued resistance at the otherwise isolated Anagnis.¹⁴⁸ Yet supporting evidence is lacking.

Conti bases much of his argument on his identification of Teglio, (east of Sondrio), with Paul's Vulturina, from which the valley then took its name: Valtellina.¹⁴⁹ We have noted the tradition that the city of Volturena

lay near Olonio and was destroyed by King Agilulf. However, neither siting matches Paul's vague location of the fortress near Brescello.¹⁵⁰ Nonetheless, Teglio was undoubtedly designed to control traffic along the Valtellina towards the Oglio valley, and thence from Edolo south along the Val Camonica or north-east over the Tonale pass into the Val di Sole and the Trentino. It guarded an important crossroads, for here also converged the route along the upper Adda from Bormio and the Passo di Stelvio. At Teglio we have record of a Castelvedro (=Castellum vetere?) above the medieval castello, where unspecified Roman coins were found.¹⁵¹

Although the geographical lists of Anonymous record no towns in this area, Roman finds testify to widespread settlement, but with no evident continuity; Longobard material is restricted to a few placenames (chiefly of gahagi and wald type).¹⁵² Nevertheless, we find references to towns in finibus Valtellina and in valle Tellina, which Schneider regards as an indication of a Byzantine castral district controlling the Adda; later there is even mention of a vicecomitatus de valle Tellina.¹⁵³ Physical evidence only emerges to the south, in the Valcamonica, around Lago d'Iseo and to the south-west as a scatter between Bergamo and Brescia in the form of Longobard and indigene tombs.¹⁵⁴ Interestingly Schneider showed that both the Valtellina and Valcamonica were virtually wholly state-owned under Charlemagne, who gave the former to the abbey of St.Denis, and the latter to that of S.Martin at Tours; he notes that each were also areas of Longobard royal gifts, suggesting direct control by the king.¹⁵⁶

Finally, nothing proves that the Byzantines maintained any of the upper Oglio valley below Edolo, which would have allowed the functioning of a Valtellina-Val di Sole link. Certainly Longobard toponymy shows relatively dense settlement of the valley.¹⁵⁷ In sum, Conti's hypothesis must remain

uncorroborated.

(f) The Trentino (Map 4)

The comparative wealth of details offered by Paul regarding Longobard defensive arrangements in the Trentino is due principally to his access to the works of Secundus, who lived in the monastery at Nanno in the Val di Non at least until 580 and perhaps until 584 when this Byzantine 'island' was lost, and later appears as an abbot at Trento. He wrote a small history - Gregory the Great in fact mentions his Historiola - and the loss of this work is a major disappointment: in it he clearly used his knowledge of local topography, details which have unfortunately become blurred through Paul's editing, but which nonetheless in general survive.¹⁵⁸ In contrast to the Western Alps where Paul names only a few sites, here we receive a list of castella undoubtedly derived from Secundus. Despite this evidence, however, research has predominantly centred on place-name discussion rather than on excavation, so that even today in many cases only the site of the forts is known.¹⁵⁹ Nonetheless, the Trentino is an area rich in finds of barbarian date, and these, combined with Secundus' list, permit the forming of a comprehensive picture of the settlement and defence of the Trentino.

When Byzantium finally took the Trentino is uncertain, but we should recall that Venetia formed the focus of the temporary Frankish occupation of Upper Italy, and consequently conquest may have been late. In 565, however, Narses faced the revolt of the Herul Sindual, stationed in this sector as dux and magister militum in proximity to the Breoni and Bavarii.¹⁶⁰ The rebellion no doubt disrupted the defensive organisation, but no details exist of the measures taken post-566. As noted, however, the support of the Breoni was possibly lost, leaving the Trentine territory slightly reduced. Confirmation of this may lie in the words of Venantius Fortunatus who described his

crossing of the Brenner and subsequent use of the Pusteria to reach the Drau in 565: before the Brenner he notes that the Bavarii lay in the area where the Breoni dwell and could block one's access. This argues for the appearance of a hostile northern neighbour after Sindual's revolt.¹⁶¹

The Longobard occupation of the Trentino was relatively swift, if at first incomplete: Nanno only became Longobard in 584-5, while the region to the north and north-west appears to have remained outside the Longobard sphere of control. This is apparent when Paul describes Nanno as super Tridentinum in confinio Italiae, in effect placing Bolzano outside the duchy.¹⁶² Malfatti, however, argued that duke Ewin of Trento extended his territory after the conquest of Anagnis, to hold the upper Adige from Merano to the Vintschgau, as well as the Isaac and the region beyond Chiusa-Säben.¹⁶³ Although some of the castella destroyed by the Franks in 590 lie in the Bolzano district, it is significant that bishop Ingenuinus of Säben intervened with the bishop of Trento to request the release of captives held by the Franks, demonstrating that the sites did not belong exclusively to the Trento diocese.¹⁶⁴ The Bavarii held this northern zone, and through marriage ties with the Longobards formed a generally reliable buffer for Trento.¹⁶⁵ When the Bavarii first took possession of the area south of the Brenner is not known, but this must lie between 565-600.¹⁶⁶

The region was traversed by two major arteries: the via Claudia Augusta Altinate, and the via Claudia Augusta Padana. The former departing from Altino in Venetia, ran through the Val Sugana to reach the Adige at Trento, there combining with the road from Verona which flanked the river Adige; they continued on to Bolzano (with minor routes branching off into valleys like the Val di Cembra and Val di Non). Here the road divided: the via Claudia Augusta continued alongside the Adige via Merano and Malles into the Venosta to cross the Resia pass,

whilst the Verona road passed Chiusa and Fortezza (there branching eastwards into the Val Pusteria and Drau) to cross the Brenner.¹⁶⁷

The provincial capital lay at Trento on the mid-Adige. The city bears contrasting data: extra-mural settlement appears to decline in the 4th century - witness the 1st-3rd century villa in via A.Rosmini, over which were set unfurnished tombs - which suggests contraction within the walls.¹⁶⁸ Yet simultaneously insufficient manpower at Trento may have led to the use of the natural stronghold of Dos Trento, west of the urban nucleus in times of danger. Its refuge function clearly persisted into the Gothic epoch, as witnessed in the coin hoard datable to 491-3 found on the summit; this perhaps even prompted the habitation of the ground immediately below the hill, the Piedicastello.¹⁶⁹ This is perhaps confirmed when Cassiodorus wrote to 'Universis Gothis et Romanis circa Verrucam castellum consistentibus' suggesting the existence of both a military encampment on the hill and a settlement at its feet.¹⁷⁰ But the city was not abandoned: bishops continue to be recorded, and the 5th century basilica of San Vigilio remained in use, as attested by the inscription to bishop Censorius dated to 539, 554 or 569.¹⁷¹

Between 507-511, however, Theoderic ordered the Sajo Leodifrid to build habitations within castellum Verruca as a safeguard against future troubles.¹⁷² Soon after an imposing basilica, dedicated to SS.Cosma e Damiano, was constructed near the summit by the Trentine bishop Eugipius, as recorded in a dedicatory mosaic inscription revealed in crude excavations. It is unclear if this basilica represents a castral church or a religious establishment for the whole population, but its dimensions and decoration suggest the latter.¹⁷³ Finally, Cassiodorus also records the presence of a state granary at Trento, but does not specify its location; that at Tortona, however, is

clearly sited within the hilltop castello.¹⁷⁴

Verruca is graphically described by Cassiodorus as a powerful circular hill with near-vertical sides rising from the plain, detached from the M.Bondone range, and endowed with a level summit; it is, he says, well-deserving of its Latin name (= wart).¹⁷⁵ (pl. 14) Modern access is by a road winding up the south side of the hill: this should reflect the ancient approach, which was heavily guarded at mid-slope by a defended gateway built between the hillside and a rocky outcrop (pl. 15). This features medieval restorations, but may date back to the Gothic defences. The summit is criss-crossed by overgrown stone walls, mortared or dry-set, but preserves no traces of a circuit wall: a gate presumably lay at the principal access point although the road and carpark probably cover this. Nevertheless, Verruca's natural strength may not have necessitated a full circuit.

The site's importance is signified by Cassiodorus' words: 'castrum paene in mundo singulare, tenens claustra provinciae ...'. It will not have lost this function after the War, and indeed Paul's account of the Frankish invasion of 590 reveals that the castrum remained a lynch-pin of the duchy defences; at the same time, however, Trento itself, the seat of a duke and bishop, remained the administrative focus of the territory.¹⁷⁶ Under duke Ewin Verruca was garrisoned by a force of just 600 men (or more if others had been killed or had escaped), which was obviously insufficient to prevent its capture. The garrison figure seems very low, but was dictated by the available space.¹⁷⁷

The numerous gravegoods found in the Piedicastello belong to a late Roman-early medieval cemeterial zone, with Longobard usage discernable in early 7th century material from destroyed military tombs (2 spathae, 3 scramasaxes, 2 belt-fittings, a shield boss and a cross). Furthermore, its

continued use is attested by a tomb belonging to a rich military nobleman of the later 7th-early 8th century.¹⁷⁸ Although indicated on old maps there is no trace of a circuit enclosing the Piedicastello area.¹⁷⁹

In the south the Trento duchy extended territorially to Rivoli and the Chiusa di Verona, bordering westwards with the lake district of Sirmione (Map 4). The latter is recorded in the early Middle Ages as the finis Sermionenses, embracing both sides of Lake Garda and stretching northwards to Riva, thereby occupying sections of the present Brescia, Trento and Verona provinces.¹⁸⁰ Yet the picture is somewhat confused by the existence of the finis of Garda recorded in 906 (later a iudiciaria).¹⁸¹ The relationship between the two sites is unclear, but Garda may have been a later Longobard defensive district set up on the Trento-Verona border: it lies close to both the Chiusa and a band of arimannic sites; indeed in 1193 we hear of 'omnem districtum et arimanniam pertinentem ad prefatam arcem Garde'.¹⁸² Similarly to the south we find Lazise with its arimanni and arimanniae in Malesine, Cisano, Desenzano, Peschiera - lands previously in the Sirmione finis. Opposite the Gardesana in the Tredici Comuni (tributaries parallel to the left bank of the Adige) many further arimanni are attested chiefly around the sculdasia Fluvium and Valpolicella.¹⁸³ These references provide evidence of a thick network of defensive posts in royal land designed to protect royal interest north of and around Verona; the extent to which these can show earlier defensive dispositions cannot be determined, and as yet excavation is limited to a single significant site, the Rocca di Rivoli.¹⁸⁴

This hilltop castello lies due east of Garda above a loop of the Adige which cuts through the Chiusa gorge: the walls of the gorge rise sheer above the river to a height of c.200m, and through it runs the Brenner-Po road. Rivoli dominates the northern end of the Chiusa, with access solely from the

south. The importance of the pass is borne out by the numerous battles fought in defence of the approach to the Veronese plain.¹⁸⁵ Excavations in 1874 and 1963-68 recovered both prehistoric and medieval material (there is a 12th century castello here), but also a 7th century Longobard buckle; recent investigations sought to identify both this early medieval presence and the extent of the castello.¹⁸⁶ These excavations revealed a modest two-phased house (c.4.6 x 3.6m) within the levelled area of the castello, with bonded stone footings to support a wood superstructure (2nd phase shows an enlargement with stronger walls and a hearth); the sparse finds included 'late antique' cooking pots of micaceous paste and pietra ollare, and two arrowheads and glass sherds characteristic of a 7th century Longobard context. In addition a crossbow brooch of this epoch was found in a 14th century deposit.¹⁸⁷ No trace of a contemporary fortification is yet known - Hudson suggests this consisted of a timber palisade with ditch, but this awaits verification.¹⁸⁸

The Longobard occupation of the Rocca was presumably tied to the military control of the outlet of the Via Claudia before Verona. Whether an earlier phase remains to be identified is unclear, but the absence of late Roman traces argues against this. Monte Castello, equally well sited to the north, perhaps formed an alternative defensive focus, but Barfield reports only Iron Age potsherds from the hill, which is topped by a modern fortress. Roman finds are limited to the road area.¹⁸⁹

Sirmione occupies the end of the long peninsula which extends into Lago di Garda, with the medieval borgo and castello separated from the main trunk of the peninsula by an artificial channel, (pl. 16). Under Rome it was the seat of a luxury villa, but its excellent harbour may later have recommended the siting of a fleet station.¹⁹⁰ While accorded mansio status in the Antonine Itinerary, Anonymous of Ravenna names it a civitas, and it is later

recorded under the Carolingians a finis and iudiciaria. Its district may be of later Roman origin and correspond to lake districts like Stationa and S.Giulio d'Orta.¹⁹¹

The late antique focus lay on the elevated Rocca di Cortine, which in the mid-19th century preserved traces of a circuit wall, and remains of two round corner-towers.¹⁹² Late wallings are still visible at the tip of the peninsula, attached to the villa, but in general they have fallen victim to erosion; built in courses of large cobblestone and stone chips alternating with tile, the walls are probably late Roman in date. Within the lost circuit in the 8th century were three churches - including that of S.Salvatore founded in 765, and a small monastery dedicated by Ansa, wife of Desiderius (which have both yielded 8th century sculptural fragments) - which were included in Charlemagne's donation of castro Sermione to the abbey of St.Martin of Tours. Pottery from two tombs also attests the Longobard presence.¹⁹³

Hartmann equated Sirmione with Paul's Sermiana, but although his arguments on the physical evidence are good, Egger rightly shows that Sirmione lay outside the Trento province: as Paul expressly states that the Franks took just unum in Verona (Rivoli, Garda?), we should reject Hartmann's hypothesis, though this in no way undermines his views regarding the strategic importance of this castrum.¹⁹⁴

Little is known of fortifications within the finis Sermionenses, but some indications may be gleaned from finds in the west. For instance, a coin hoard dating to c.535 was recovered at Padenghe, a site linked by road to Manerba di Garda, below whose medieval castello were found limited traces of early medieval occupation.¹⁹⁵ The control of this hilltop allows visual communication with Sirmione as well as Garda and Rocca di Rivoli. Also in visual contact was Fasano di Garda, considered by Hartmann to be Paul's

castellum Fagitana: Fasano preserves a rectangular tower foundation, locally ascribed to the Romans, but without supporting evidence, while nearby Maderno possesses a possible Longobard basilica of S.Andrea, constructed with much Roman material. Hartmann postulates a fortress at Fasano, and a related settlement upstream at Maderno.¹⁹⁶ The theory is again misleading, for Fasano also lay outside the Trento duchy. Nonetheless the site, with its visual links both south and east (to Torri di Benaco), is noteworthy, and may well have been adapted for the lake defence. The northernmost point of this was Riva, which has an early medieval baptistery with 8th-9th century sculptural finds, and the reused inscription of Ianuarius (d.539). No defensive works are attested.¹⁹⁷

From Riva extended the iudiciaria summa Laganensis, first recorded in the 9th century, and incorporating the Ledro, Chiese and perhaps upper Sarca valleys, and preserved in the name Valli Giudicari.¹⁹⁸ Its district centre perhaps lay at Arco. To the west a route along the Ledro reached the Chiese, and features three sites of interest: the first two, Pre di Ledro and Tiarno di Sotto possess non-military Longobard date tomb - finds, and Storo has traces of a possible Roman hilltop fortress, but bears the Longobard toponym Rocca Pagana.¹⁹⁹ Finds in the Chiese-Sarca zone likewise deny a strong military presence, though it seems clear that the region was well inhabited during late antiquity.²⁰⁰ There are few notable castelli, though finds at Castel Condino may indicate a later Roman origin to castello 'Bastia'.²⁰¹

In contrast, the Mori valley east of Lake Garda was heavily guarded, since its penetration allowed an evasion of the Adige below Rovereto, and of the Rivoli clusa. Along the valley Cazzano and Brentonico have produced weapon finds, while Mori has both late Roman and Longobard tombs, suggesting continuity of settlement.²⁰² Hartmann equates Brentonico with castrum

Bremtonicum: here, in loc. Castello are remains of split stone and tile walls and part of a cistern, perhaps of late Roman date; the site links by eye eastwards to Chizzola and Serravalle all'Adige, and north-eastwards to Mont'Albano where wall remains and stray Longobard weapon finds may testify another defensive post.²⁰³ This in turn communicates with Lizzana, first named in 927 and later called castrum et wardam Lizanae and comitatus Lizanae. It tops a steep hill, and is girded by a full four medieval circuits; Roman material from the hill suggests an earlier foundation. Its reuse by the Longobards is supported by numerous military tombs at the feet of the Castello.²⁰⁴ Longobard weapons also originate from Castel Pradaglia opposite Lizzana on the right Adige, a site fortified by a double circuit of local stone construction.²⁰⁵ This region, and that of the Mori valley both lay within the Trento duchy, within the sphere of control of the civitas Ligeris, which will be considered shortly.

Our picture along the Adige is quite full, with many findspots complementing the data offered by Paul. The historian provides information regarding both Longobard fortifications, and indeed the military conflict between Franks, Byzantines and Longobards before the latter took full control of the Trentino.

Of this conflict, Paul, using Secundus as his source, relates the following episode:

'His diebus advenientibus Francis, Anagnis castrum quod super Tridentinum in confinio Italiae positum est, se eisdem tradidit. Quam ob causam comes Langobardorum de Lagare, Ragilo nome, Anagnis veniens depraedatus est. Qui dum cum praeda reverteretur, in campo Rotaliani ab obvio sibi duce Francorum Chramnichis cum pluribus e suis peremptus est. Qui Chramnichis non multum post tempus Tridentum veniens devastavit. Quem subsequens Evin

Tridentinus dux, in loco qui Salurnis dicitur suis cum sociis interfecit, praedamque omnem quam ceperat excussit. Expulsisque Francis, Tridentinum territorium recepit'. (206)

Since Hartmann it has been accepted that castrum Anagnis (Nanno) at this time was still Byzantine, and that its surrender marked a Franco-Byzantine agreement by which the Franks would aid the Imperials in removing the Longobard invaders: to carry out such a venture successfully full cooperation was required from Byzantine troops resisting in the Alps to allow Frankish access to the borders of Longobard territory and to use such points as springboards for attack. Nanno, set in the upper Adige in confinio Italiae, and thus at the fringes of the Trento duchy, formed one of these stepping-stones. Confirmation of this situation appears in George of Cyprus, who indeed lists Nanno alongside Susa and Mart, thus demonstrating its survival until 576 at least.²⁰⁷ Of interest in this respect is the fragment of the writings of Secundus, who, while resident in Anagnis, still enumerated the years according to the Emperor's reign, thereby indirectly confirming the site's continued appurtenance to Byzantium.²⁰⁸

The contemporary political situation within the Frankish kingdom is noteworthy: in both parts of Francia the kings Guntram (Burgundia) and Sigebert (Austrasia) faced serious internal disruption which impaired their movements. In the west, as noted, Guntram failed to follow up Mummolus' success over the Longobard dukes, and was content with an annual tribute and control of the areas of Aosta and Susa; at no time did he attempt to invade, nor could he be induced to.²⁰⁹ Similarly, Sigebert of Austrasia, until his death in 575, sought to re-establish himself and his kingdom in the face of losses consequent to the Byzantine occupation of Italy; he was succeeded by the young Childebert II, who also had to assert his authority before turning

to external affairs (although Tiberius may have tried to provoke him into action with gold in 577 and 579). At this time Byzantium still hoped for victory in the field, but the failure of Baduarius' campaign in 575-6 and the lack of logistics, rapidly led to a recourse to wholesale bribery of Longobard dukes; only when this tactic failed and Childebert became free to act did Byzantium turn to the idea of a joint campaign with the Franks.²¹⁰ We have notice of a payment by Maurice, or more probably Tiberius, to the Franks, which produced a recorded invasion of Italy only in 584. It is to this date that we should probably set this first Trentine attack.²¹¹

Conti's article on the expedition of Ragilo against Nanno provides interesting ideas concerning the structure of Byzantine survival in the Alpine lands, relevant to not only Anagnis but also the Larian district.²¹² In the first decade after their arrival in Italy, 'the Longobards were far from having completely and firmly occupied even just the northern parts, where indeed in the mountain zones - and especially in those Alpine and pre-Alpine zones - they were still opposed by forces which could not be overcome without much difficulty, due to the technical efficiency of the castral-limitanean system now long-implanted, gradually perfected and adapted according to experience and determination of the needs that arose'.²¹³ This delay in the full establishment of Longobard control was due to the failure of the Longobards to pursue a firm united policy, chiefly as a result of the Inter-regnum, the numerousness of their fronts and the disjointed aims of the various dukes, each possessing their own forces and territories. Resistance by the Byzantines varied greatly, but where determined (as at Milan, Pavia) it was not easily overcome by invaders who were ill-equipped for siege warfare. Initially, the Longobards sought to capture the cities of the plain, receive surrenders where offered, and substitute imperial garrisons with

their own, while elsewhere following a policy of gradually wearing-down imperial positions by cutting off supplies, ravaging lands around fortresses and rare sieges.²¹⁴

The difficulty lies in our inability to perceive firm territorial possessions by Byzantium in the Alps: we hear merely of individual sites, and in the case of Aosta and Susa of associated lands, which may suggest that these fortresses still maintained certain lands; however, since the Longobards had no difficulty by-passing Sisinnius in Susa, even this is doubted. Nonetheless, Conti sees the Byzantine territories within the Alps as 'a kind of diaphragm' between Franks and Longobards: as long as the imperial forces could count the Franks as allies their situation remained relatively stable, while common control of the passes and castella on the Italian side will have enabled effective raids into Longobard lands to be mounted. The failure of this alliance was due to the weakness of the Byzantine forces in Italy.²¹⁵

The Lario-Valtellina-Val di Sole line is considered one part of this 'diaphragm' linked to Frankish territory by the Splüga, Maloja and Julier passes, which all communicated with Chur and thence Metz. Although we possess little more than evidence for Comacina, Mart and Nanno, the resistance of the Valtellina axis is indeed credible given the buffer of these positions. This would of course explain the route taken by Chramnichis to reach Anagnis, apparently without resistance: most likely the Franks crossed via the Tonale pass (near the source of the Sole), having entered Italy by the Julier and penetrating the Inn and Bernina valleys to reach Teglio and the Oglio.²¹⁶

The extent of the Byzantine presence in the Val di Sole is unknown. It is clear from Paul's words that lands north of Anagnis also lay in enemy hands, for count Ragilo plundered the area, and on his return was attacked

and killed at campo Rotaliani (nr. Rallo). Presumably the Franco-Byzantine forces held the Mendola pass to the north as well as defences in the Non, Noce, and Sole valleys, but these cannot be identified. (Cf. Map 4)

Anagnis-Nanno lies on the right bank of the Noce, on a spur at the confluence with the Tresenga. It is ideally sited to guard the communications of both the Val di Non and the Sole (descending from the Mendola, which linked the Adige at Merano to the Non). No relevant finds come from Nanno and few are known along the valley.²¹⁷

After the defeat of duke Ewin's military lieutenant, Ragilo,²¹⁸ Chramnichis attacked Trento, but while returning with his booty was killed by Ewin at Salorno, near Egna.²¹⁹ With this victory Paul declares 'expulsisque Francis, Tridentinum territorium recepit': this should denote Frankish and even Byzantine abandonment of strongholds to the Longobards. No further imperial resistance is recorded, and we may assume that after 584 and before the advent of the Bavarii, the Trento duchy attained its maximum extension. As will be shown, it is uncertain if Bolzano and Merano ever lay within its confines.²²⁰

Although other invasions are recorded for 585-589 none seem to have involved the Trentino.²²¹ Only in 590 was this region affected again, as a result of a large-scale operation between Franks and Byzantines, where the former penetrated the Alps and marched towards the Po in two strike forces, while the imperials struck out from the Exarchate and attacked Longobard positions in the plain. Of the Frankish parties, one under Audovaldus and six dúces headed toward Milan (losing duke Olo in a raid on Bellinzona) as the other, led by Cedinus and 13 dukes, penetrated the Trentino and the Veronese. The plan of the exarch Romanus was to combine at Verona with Cedinus and advance onto Pavia to join Audovaldus and there destroy the

Longobards.²²² This was to be the culmination of plans formulated between Childebert II and Maurice, plans which had seen abortive attempts at action in the years since Maurice's accession in 582:²²³ these had achieved nothing beyond warning the Longobards of future attacks, and shown Maurice the unreliability of his allies. The failure of this campaign terminated Byzantine recourse to Frankish help in removing the Longobards: the Byzantines retained no money for Italy, no further possessions in the Alps, and too few resources to pursue the offensive.

First, however, we must consider the castra listed by Paul as destroyed by the Franks, and then clarify the visible organisation by relating it to finds and other evidence. Paul describes the incursion thus:

'Pervenit etiam exercitus Francorum usque Veronam, et deposuerunt castra plurima per pacem post sacramenta data, quae se eis crediderant nullum ab eis dolum existimantes. Nomina autem castrorum, quae diruerunt in territorio Tridentino ista sunt: Tesana, Maletum, Sermiana, Appianum, Fagitana, Cimbra, Vitianum, Bremtonicum, Volaenes, Ennemase, et duo in Alsuca et unum in Verona. Haec omnia castra cum diruta essent a Francis, cives universi ab eis ducti sunt captivi. Pro Ferruge vero castro, intercedentibus episcopis Ingenuino de Savione et Agnello de Tridento, data est redemptio, per capud uniuscuiusque viri solidus unus usque ad solidos sexcentos'. 224

The source is obviously Secundus: he naturally had close regard to the local topography and would have accurately listed the sites that met destruction and set them out in order, thereby indirectly identifying the line of advance. Hartmann's hypothesis that 'no order can easily be established within the listing of the castella despite some interpretative efforts' and that Paul's

editing has confused the lists is generally refuted. As already noted, two of Hartmann's postulated identifications (Fagitana-Fasano and Sermiana-Sirmione) ignore their listing by Paul in territorio Tridentino; his arguments against other accepted interpretations are also weakly supported.²²⁵ However, if an order does exist, the value of the evidence is magnified and may reveal the aims and strategy of Longobard (and older?) territorial defence in the Alps. This is also valid in the Friuli duchy, where equally important documentation is available. Finally it is interesting to note that Paul here combines the records of Secundus and Gregory of Tours in order to expand his narrative: while Gregory gives us the directions of the early stages of the invasion, Secundus illustrates it with the course of the destruction in the Trentino.²²⁶

If the Franks had marched from Metz, they should have divided near the Italian border in order to approach Milan and the Trentino separately. It is unclear which route Audovaldus took and whether Olo was part of his group: to reach Bellinzona intentionally he should have taken the S. Bernardino pass, but the fact that he arrived importune suggests that he crossed the Splüga with Audovaldus and then raided Bellinzona. The idea that Audovaldus' group used the main Chiavenna-Milan route gains support from Gregory's comment that Cedinus turned ad laevam, perhaps after also using the Splüga before entering the Trentino via the Valtellina - unless, as in 584, the Julier or Septimer pass was used to reach the Adda and thence the Tonale.²²⁷ Malfatti, however, dubiously claims Cedinus entered Italy from the Finstermunz and Resia passes to reach the Venosta and upper Adige.²²⁸

The main problem is the identification of Paul's sites and their correlation with the proposed geographical order: where the Resia pass is preferred, the sites are made to correspond with ones in the upper Adige, but where the Tonale route is proposed, identifications are set to the Val di Sole.

However, a compromise between the two views is possible if we consider that the two sites which definitely lie in the upper Adige (i.e. Tesana and Sermiana) were reached by an advance party using the Mendola pass, which then proceeded down the Adige perhaps paralleling the other Frankish force in the Non, before combining in the Fagitana-Cimbra zone to march on Trento. The importance of the Mendola pass is well attested by finds, and possession of this and forts in the vicinity would allow a significant consolidation of the Frankish positions.²²⁹ Thus attempts to locate Tesana at Ossana or Deggiano in the Val di Sole and Sermiana at Meano, Sevegnano or indeed Sirmione, in opposition to the likeliest identifications of Tisens and Sirmian, are unnecessary,²³⁰ as are similar attempts to site Maletum in the upper Adige.²³¹ Once this hurdle of identification is cleared, the rest of the course is straightforward and has few stumbling blocks. (Map 4)

The first position is Maletum, identifiable with Malé, the centre of the Sole valley, indeed recorded in 12th-13th century charters as Maletum, and set at the confluence of the Noce and Rabbies. Here the local name Castellaccio at loc.S.Biagio may locate the lost castello, but no remains are preserved.²³² No barbarian date finds come from the vicinity or along the Noce up to the Tonale: only in the region of Lago di S.Giustina do such finds appear, as at Ponte Mostizzolo, where weapons, including a javelin and lance-head, probably from tombs, demonstrate late antique settlement in the area. Barbarian tombs are also known at Cles to the south and over the river at Sanzeno; a road runs eastwards from here over the Mendola pass via Appiano towards Bolzano. The Novella torrent possesses interesting find-spots like Revo, Romallo, Brez, Cloz and Castelfondo, but only a few of these yielded weapons (Seio, San Romedio), while there is one significant toponym, Castel Fava (from fara?) at Cloz.²³³ Late Roman settlements are attested at

Dos Castelaz (Cavareno, nr. Romeno), Sanzeno, and even on the Mendola, where tombs and gold, bronze and glass finds were discovered.²³⁴ No clear picture emerges: the valley and road line was clearly much populated in late antiquity, but possible defensive dispositions are limited to Castelfondo, Castel Fava, Dos Castelaz, San Romedio and Romallo, none yet archaeologically studied.²³⁵ With the exception of Malé, the ancient defences of the Val di Sole likewise remain unrecognised.²³⁶

Tesana should equate with Tisens, on the right bank of the Adige, midway between Bolzano and Merano, first documented in 1194 as plebe Teseni. It is linked by road from Merano onto Appiano and thence over the Mendola or down the Adige past Caldaro and Egna. Within its parish, 3km to the south, is Sirmian, Paul's Sermiana, a village perched on a height over the road, but preserving no fortification.²³⁷

Appianum, modern Appiano or Hoch Eppan, forms another link in this Adige-Mendola chain, and should validate the above two sitings. Here the hill, first named in 845 as de Apiano, bears the ruins of a powerful castello datable to the 12th century (part-restored in the 1960s).²³⁸ A Roman settlement is postulated at nearby S.Paolo, to be associated with similar sites to both north and south, at Anduiano and Caldaro. In the later Roman period there seemingly arose a number of hilltop positions, such as Predonico-Perdonig (in visible contact with Appiano) and Castelveccchio near Caldaro. Both sites are postulated as late Roman-early medieval refuges or Fluchtburgen, but they may also have functioned as look-outs: certainly Predonico preserves traces of a robust circuit wall with houses built up against this and an internal cistern, and possesses many finds including Roman tiles; both sites have 5th-6th century churches, dedicated to S.Vigilio and S.Pietro respectively.²³⁹ Castelveccchio communicates by eye with an

analogous stronghold above Egna (Roman Endidae), plausibly Paul's Ennemase - perhaps misplaced in his list - on the hill of Castelfeder (= Castelveter) near Montagna. Here we find a late Roman adaption of a prehistoric castelliere, with strong encircling walls set over a Roman temple.²⁴⁰ To its south lies Salorno, the battleground of 584.

Rasmo extends this picture of late antique refuges in the upper Adige into the Isaac (Isarco): here he identifies similar installations in the area of Bolzano (Paul's castellum Bauzanum) where he considers the hill of S.Vigilio sul Virgolo the late 5th-6th century successor to the town, marked by the dedication of the old parish church.²⁴¹ The zone was girded by fortifications designed to guard the Pons Drusi, the passage into the Adige and towards Trento: Castel Firmiano-Sigmundskron, the 10th century munitio Formiciaria, with its (Roman?) defences also overlying a castelliere; to the north-east Monte Castello and Castelrotto, again with prehistoric traces.²⁴² The early medieval basilica on the Dosso di Sabiona at Chiusa-Klausen may mark a contemporary adoption of hilltop occupation.²⁴³

The defensive focus of the upper Adige was Merano-Castrum Maiense, Roman statio Maiensis (recorded still in the toponyms Maia Alta and Bassa). It is first documented as a fortress in the Vita S.Valentini, when this bishop-saint fled here from Augsburg in the 460s. This shows a Roman foundation, as may be proposed for Bolzano, Appiano and Chiusa.²⁴⁴

In 1954 Tessmann attempted to reconstruct a 5th-6th century South Tyrolean limes, to be linked with a Carnic limes of the Drau: its axis was the Pusteria, running east from Fortezza via Sebato to join the Gail and Drau valleys; its focus lay at S.Lorenzo di Sebato (Roman Sebatum), girt by a series of defensive points (Hinterbichl, Maurach, Lothorn, Stürmbühel, etc.).²⁴⁵ While most of these have 4th century coin finds, only Sebato has

both late and post-Roman material, including a hoard of Byzantine coins, and some 6th-7th century autochthonous finds (combs, horse brooches). He extends the limes from the Brenner across to Merano and the Vinschgau, but with little proof: while indeed revealing late Roman activity, there is no evidence for a fortified line. Only the larger centres of Sebato, Merano and Bolzano appear heavily fortified at this time, and only when the region became a proper frontier zone would deeper installations have developed, but these are obscure. Indeed Paul the Deacon notes only Bolzano and reliqua or plurima castra belonging to the Bavarii, which he leaves unnamed. We can merely postulate Bavar reuse of certain existing forts from this data.²⁴⁶

Noticeably Paul lists no castra between Malé and Faedo in the Non Valley. This had earlier been the scene of bitter fighting between Franks and Longobards in the struggle for Anagnis, and it is likely that duke Ewin had consequently sought to strengthen its defensive capabilities. If so, the Franks may have attempted to evade this cordon by crossing over the Mendola into the Adige before continuing their advance. However, to leave Nanno and similar strongholds in Longobard hands would have seriously threatened Frankish supply-lines around Lago di S.Giustina, and this omission seems strange. Nonetheless the fact that Secundus omits his former home from the captured forts is significant.

As regards finds, Rallo (= Campo Rotaliani) has yielded two Longobard tombs with military equipment of belt-fittings and scramasaxes - a re-examination of the finds has set them to the latter 7th century.²⁴⁷ To the west Longobard dress ornaments come from destroyed tombs at Mechel, Sanzenone, and, to the south-west of Nanno, at Flavon and Cunevo, and Vervo to the east. Further afield, near the Non-Adige confluence, rich military tombs are known at Mezzolombardo, and a late Roman cemetery is attested for nearby Mezzocorom.²⁴⁸

Roberti lists unprovenanced finds from the Val di Non, which include a Frankish framea and a Gothic bow-brooch.²⁴⁹ Despite evident Longobard settlement, nothing demonstrates a strong military presence.

From Appiano (and Egna), Cedinus' army next fell upon Fagitana and Cimbra, both to be sought on the left Adige along the Avisio, the Val di Cembra, at Faedo and Cembra respectively.²⁵⁰ The Faedo castello may occupy the end slope of the hill called Chunisperc (now Koenigsberg), once owned by the counts of Appiano, overlooking the line of access from Salorno through the Stretta di Cadino.²⁵¹ Communication was easy from Faedo to Cembra, the township which gives its name to the lower Avisio (thus indirectly documenting its former importance); although evident traces of occupation from prehistoric into Roman times exist, there is no sign of the castello.²⁵²

In the vicinity, however, late Roman-late antique finds have come from near Segonzano, and downstream there are significant Longobard traces from Verla, Lavis and Pressano. In particular the village of Lavis has yielded many military graves: the first of these, uncovered in 1886, included the famous sheet gold cross bearing the name of king Clef (572-4), along with weapons and belt-pieces, which may date from the initial conquest of the Trentino under Ewin; the second set of tombs included a shield boss, lance-head and stamped gold cross, which date to the early 7th century, demonstrating continuity here in terms of military usage. The tombs may belong to the fort of Pian da Castel which guards a crossing of the Avisio.²⁵³ The Pressano castello to the north, first named in 845, lies on the dos Pristol or Castel, from where comes a 7th century shield boss.²⁵⁴

Like Faedo and Lavis, Pressano defends the roads along both the Adige and the Avisio beyond Cembra. Presumably duke Cedinus sought to block this line by means of a raid against Cembra, whose occupation would have prevented

Longobard support from this quarter. The only secure late antique site along this valley is castello di Fiemme, whose Dos Zelor (940m) was recently excavated, uncovering a late Roman habitat extending into the mid-4th century; a possible Longobard necropolis in loc.Castello may suggest a subsequent upland shift of habitat, still unclearly dated by finds.²⁵⁵ To the north-east the castello di Cavalese is the late documented seat of a gastaldus who held jurisdiction over the arimanni of the Val di Fiemme (that is, from the clusa Trodenae-Truden up to the bridge at Moena north of Predazzo). Castello di Fiemme may have been a notable centre of this district.²⁵⁶

After Cembra fell Vitianum, generally identified with Vezzano above Lago di Toblino west of Trento. Its capture necessitated passage past Trento, and the initial submission of the civitas. It is thus at this moment that the 600 strong garrison from castrum Ferruge will have been ransomed.

The city was protected by a close cordon of castella watching over the approaches, which included Faedo, Cembra and Lavis in the north. Eastwards, in the proximity of the Val di Mocheni (Fersino river), where the via Claudia Augusta Altinate reaches Pergine, we find a series of prominent castelli. Civezzano, controlling the final stretch of the road, has produced 4 notable, rich Longobard tombs: the first three of these (earth-cut) contained brooches, belt-fittings and a few weapons, while the fourth, the Prince's Tomb (wooden coffin with iron fittings) held a full complement of military equipment (umbo, spatha, scramasax, 3 arrowheads, shield grip, belt-pieces, studs, lancehead, shears, gold thread, gold cross, bronze basin, and an iron bracelet for a bucket).²⁵⁷ On its hill of Castel Telvana a further set of seven, probably female, tombs containing dress ornaments are known, while within the circuit other tombs contained gold crosses and some weapons.²⁵⁸ The castello has been much remodelled and no traces recommend a late antique

origin, despite the site's first attestation in 845. Castel Telvana is linked by eye and road to Castelvetro (destroyed in 1259) and thence Trento, and both are clearly points in this defensive net. Pergine performed an analogous role: the site shows occupation from Roman to barbarian times, but the medieval defensive nucleus has like Civezzano been heavily restructured.²⁵⁹

That the Franks recognised the Valsugana as a major artery capable of relieving Trento is witnessed by their capture/destruction of two fortresses: 'et duo in Alsuca'. Civezzano, Castelvetro or Pergine may be included in these. Certainly the road was strongly guarded by hill-top fortifications throughout its course, many of which claim late Roman origins, with occupation and functions persisting into the Middle Ages.²⁶⁰

Around Lago di Caldonazzo, 7th century Longobard weapons come from loc. Nogaredi west of Bosentino, which joins by road along the Valsorda saddle to Vigolo Vattaro - through which a road runs south from Trento into the Val d'Astico and onto Vicenza - with Roman finds from both town and castello (800m).²⁶¹ A further road-guard perhaps lay at Castello Vecchio, Tenna, on the isthmus between Lakes Caldonazzo and Levico, where drystone walls mark a tower base.²⁶²

Along the Valsugana lie Levico with the nearby Castel Selva on Colle della Guardia, Novaledo and its Tor Quadra, and Marter with the ruins of the Tor Tonda, each traditionally ascribed a Roman origin.²⁶³ More concrete evidence emerges at Borgo Valsugana: here lay Roman Ausugum (385m), dominated by Castel Telvana (559m) on a spur of M.Ciolino, and with its ancient plan still discernable in the Borgo Vecchio. While the town has yielded many imperial finds and some late antique material, nothing derives from Castel Telvana, often proposed as one of the two Alsuca forts; its 14th century

sack and subsequent rebuilding minimises the possibility of finds.²⁶⁴ (pl.17-8)

The Roman road diverted north-eastwards beyond the Brenta to Telve di Sopra and thence to Castello Tesino before reaching Feltre. In antiquity Telve was defended by the fortress at Casteliri, which still preserves traces of its circuit, within which lay five tombs arranged in a star formation, with the central one furnishing a spatha, an umbo with gilded rivets, and belt-pieces.²⁶⁵ Castello Tesino above Pieve di Tesino covers part of the Colle di S.Ippolito, topped by a church of the same dedication; within the circuit finds and coins demonstrate site activity from the Iron Age into the imperial era, but the castello origin is obscure. The post-Roman presence in the area is attested solely by the 6th century chalice of the deacon Orsus found in loc.Coronini, a cave in the Rodena valley, a zone in fact traversed by the so-called Pagan Road.²⁶⁶

One could hypothesise that in 590 the Franks had sought to combine with the Byzantines in the Bellunese via the Valsugana, but that its strong Longobard hold prevented this action; however, the line of imperial advance seems clearly directed towards Verona, and it is more logical to consider the Franks capturing duo in Alsuca to guard against Longobard reinforcements reaching Trento along the via Claudia.

Vitianum-Vezzano probably formed part of the western cordon protecting the ducal capital. The identification is secured by Roman inscriptions, one of which mentions the conlustrium fundi Vettiani. The castello probably lay at loc.Castin on Dosso della Bastia, which guards the small Vezzano basin and dominates the hollow of S.Mazzenza and Castel Toblino, and thus the road heading east through Sopramonte to Trento.²⁶⁷ The region has few finds: barbarian period tombs from Ciago to the north, 2 military tombs from loc. Dos de la Costa near Terlagio, and brooches from loc.Cedonia; and a francisca

is reported from Sopramonte.²⁶⁸ Finally arimanniae are recorded in 1236 as forming a confederate community under Sopramonte, containing Oveno, Cadine, Vigolo, Baselga and Sardagna - these may be tentatively attributed to later Longobard defensive measures around Trento.²⁶⁹

Like the raid on Cembra and into the Valsugana, the occupation of Vezzano should be connected with a plan of control of the major routes of the Adige valley: the control of each valley centre (e.g. Cembra, Vezzano and probably Civezzano and Pergine - the duo in Alsuca) would have secured the backbone of the Frankish invasion line and simultaneously ensured sufficient warning of Longobard counter-attacks.²⁷⁰ It is therefore unlikely that the Franks penetrated the Valli Giudicarie to assail forts of Lake Garda; rather, as Paul's list suggests, they marched from Trento to reach the Val Lagarina, where they captured Volano and Brentonico (listed in reverse order by Paul).

Paul first notes this region in his account of the invasion of 584: then, after Chramnichis had taken Nanno, duke Ewin's troop commander, the comes Ragilo de Lagare marched out to oppose the Franks.²⁷¹ Lagare is clearly the civitas Ligeris of Anonymous of Ravenna, identifiable with present Villa Lagarina.²⁷² Conti has argued that the 6th century Longobard comites held no formal office but merely a grade in the army (much in the same way as the numerous Byzantine magistri militum between 568-600); under Grimoald they remain attested as army commanders, 'the men responsible for war operations in a given sector when the war devolved over more than one'.²⁷³ He thus sees Ragilo intervening against the Franks 'not through a territorial competence of his, but by rank ...'; only when Trento itself was threatened after Ragilo was killed did duke Ewin act.²⁷⁴

The Val Lagarina is relatively rich in Longobard finds, covering the whole zone of its four early medieval parishes: Lizzana, Volano, Villa

Lagarina and Mori. Mention has already been made regarding Lizzana and Mori. Of the remaining two parishes, Villa Lagarina occupies a lowish hillside position (189m) with evidence of occupation from the Iron Age into the Longobard epoch but no associated castello.²⁷⁵ Within its parish Pedersano has produced items indicative of the 6th-7th century autochthonous population, but no material directly connected with the fortification on nearby Dosso dei Castelleti; similar is the case of Castellano (786m) with a medieval castello probably overlying a prehistoric castelliere, and an imperial presence testified by coins.²⁷⁶ To the south-west tombs of Longobard soldiers come from both Nogaredo and Noarno (latter with a sword from the Castello), while at the dos Pagan (n.b. toponym), Brancolino, barbarian period tombs furnishing some weapons, were found amongst Roman graves:²⁷⁷ each site lies on the right Adige overlooking the Verona road, and should have performed military roles. From here the road continued onto the Mori valley with its strongholds of Mori, Brentonico and Mont'Albano.

North of Villa Lagarina excavations have also uncovered late antique burials at both Servis di Savignano above Pomarolo, and Nomi: the former group is dated by coins to the late 3rd-early 5th century and lies at a mid-hillslope site, suggestive of a late Roman upland shift of settlement due to insecurity in the valley;²⁷⁸ in loc.ai Brioni at Nomi near the Dosso di S.Pietro 4 slab-tombs furnished limited 7th century material, not necessarily Longobard.²⁷⁹ The via Claudia crossed the Adige near here and connected north to Trento and south to Rovereto, Lizzano and Ala, the site of the mansio Ad Palatium.

The post-Roman vitality of Rovereto is well-demonstrated by finds: from Rovereto itself come weapon and jewellery items from poorish tombs in Corso Bettini; similar finds derive from loc.Drio Poz, while a largish

necropolis is located at Sabbioni alti with principally non-military material; analogous is S. Ilario to the north-east.²⁸⁰ Volano, Paul's Volaenes, lies opposite Villa Lagarina. Despite Roman and prehistoric material, we have no pointers regarding the Longobard castrum which is variously sited among the hills of the Dossi delle Bagole.²⁸¹

A final indication of Longobard strategy in defending the side valleys of the Adige can be deduced from finds at Besenello opposite Nomi. Here at the foot of the Castel Beseno hill, were found two rows of tombs, from which the gravegoods of just one tomb were salvaged: these included weaponry (spatha, scramasax, shield boss with gilded/bronze applied decorations, shield-grip with gilded rivets, and belt elements), of a late 7th century date belonging to a high-ranking personage. The whole assemblage suggests an important settlement and fortification guarding the outlet of the road from the Valle del Rio Cavallo to the high plains of Lavarone and Asiago, from where it descends to Vicenza.²⁸²

With regard to Cedinus' movements, Paul relates the capture of unum (castrum) in Verona, but leaves it nameless. It is impossible to site this final fortress: it obviously lay south of the Val Lagarina, outside the Trento duchy. Our only other pointer is the letter of Romanus which bemoans the fact that duke Cedinus or Henus 'viro magnifico, in viginti milibus prope Veronensi civitate resedente', made peace with Authari before allowing the Byzantines time to join him with their troops:²⁸³ to have come this far Cedinus cannot have left unoccupied one point of the Chiusa di Verona, Rivoli or Ceraino. This, however, is conjecture.

Finally in connection with the Veronese we can note the postulated trace of a Byzantine 'antifranco limes' in the Vicenza-Verona zone among the Monti Lessini.²⁸⁴ Here Mor identifies the toponym Purga at Purga di Durlo

above Crespadoro, on which lies the crude remains of a rushed square tower construction, with the Greek Πύργος = tower, and thus with a Byzantine post: as support he locates two other similarly-denominated hilltops at Purga di Bolca and Monte Purga, both in visible contact with Durlo. He argues that these watchpoints, if indeed Byzantine, belong to a period when the Byzantines were pushing the remaining Frankish forces out of upper Italy; one cannot regard them as a line of imperial resistance in the Veronese post-568 since they guard or 'watch over the heads of the valleys where the descent from the Lessini Mts. starts to expand into an easier route in the lower valley'.²⁸⁵ Doubtful, however, is the longevity of these purga whose functions would have rapidly declined: no apparent reoccupation occurs, and only at Velo d'Astico are Longobards attested (church of S.Agata and its 'Cimitero pagana', and the pieve of S.Giorgio with its 8th century architectural fragments and Carolingian frescoes).

(g) The Feltrino-Bellunese-Cenedese (Map 5)

As noted, the via Claudia Augusta Altinate departed from the Valsugana after Borgo to pass through Tesino into the Feltrino. It ran through Lamon onto Feltre, from where it headed northward to Cesio Maggiore before crossing the Piave to cross the Praderadego pass beyond Zumelle to reach Altino (via Sernaglia and Priula). An extension of the artery continued from Cesio to Belluno, up the Piave through Lozzo and over the Monte Croce Comelico pass to enter the Pusteria. Finally, roads linked Oderzo to Ceneda and to the Piave at Polpet, Oderzo to Altino, and Oderzo to Feltre (via Priula and Quero). It is difficult to recognise which routes still operated in the late- and post-Roman periods, but many sites show continuity and presumably maintained their road-communications; certainly the denomination 'strada pagana' for the route west of Feltre should attest Longobard usage.²⁸⁶

The defence of the roads leading to the plains formed the priority in late antiquity. In the later Empire attention seems centred on the via Claudia Augusta where it emerged from the Valsugana: in addition to Castel Telvana (Borgo) and Castello Tesino, Roman foundations are tentatively claimed for the forts at Lamon, S. Donato di Lamon, Castello di Servo and Arten. At Lamon Roman remains crown Colle di S. Pietro, with imperial coins and burials also known closeby; from a cave near S. Donato comes the mid-5th century chalice of Orsus, while the habitat also preserves Roman traces. Opposite lies Castello di Servo (di Sovramonte), with coins and a bronze statuette from the ruins of the castello; further coins are known at Arten castello in addition to a silver-hoard datable to the mid-6th century featuring a patera with a wedding scene and a missorium with the inscription Geilamir rex Vandalorum et Alanorum.²⁸⁷

Feltre is rich in Roman finds, but also possesses an early Christian baptistery before the duomo, which is overlain by an early medieval building.²⁸⁸ Feltre still flourished under Theoderic, who requested that its possessores each help pay for building-work in a new civitas ... in Tridentina: although the location of this township is unspecified, it presumably lay in the proximity of the Feltrian fines, and is perhaps identifiable with one of the castelli along the Valsugana.²⁸⁹ The regional focus, and state granary, however, lay at Treviso; while in late Roman times, Sarmatians were stationed at Oderzo and an arms factory lay at Concordia.²⁹⁰

Further signs of road defence are the castelli south of Mel: the first of these, castello di Zumelle, recorded in the 8th century as Gemellarum castrum, directly overlies the via Claudia with a tower of ascribed Roman origin; separated from this by the gorge of the Terche torrent is a corresponding hilltop fortress, Castelvint, from which comes a famous figured

5th-6th century patera.²⁹¹ Uncertain are the origins of the castelli of Valmarino, (also first recorded in the 8th century), and Baldenica.²⁹²

While no significant material derives from Belluno, late Roman tombs are known along the road at Erto, and to the north-east at Polpet, Ponte nell'Alpi (where Longobard tombs were also discovered) and nearby Losego.²⁹³ The fortifications at Cor to the south of Belluno are improperly investigated, but the presence of a cistern may indicate a Roman origin.²⁹⁴ Although Roman finds are present upstream of the Piave, only Lozzo di Cadore has evidence of late Roman defensive works in the form of a tower (internally 2.60 x 1.80m, with walls c.0.90m thick,) on the Tamber hill above the Piazza della Croce, where some weapons (axe, knife) were discovered along with a late Roman coin; within the actual tower lay a skeleton with a few potsherds.²⁹⁵ Lozzo covers a difficult but important route which communicates from the Piave with the upper Tagliamento.

The Byzantine-Longobard occupation of the region receives adequate coverage in Paul, but solely in regard to the principal urban centres: in 586-7 we are informed of participating schismatic bishops at the Marano Synod who included 'Petrus de Altino ... Horentius Vicentinus, Rusticus de Tarvisio, Fonteius Feltrinus, Agnellus de Acilo (= Asolo), Larentius Bellunensis', of whom all but Petrus held seats in Longobard territory.²⁹⁶ In 569 the invaders had occupied Verona, Vicenza and Treviso, where the latter represented a deep wedge into Byzantine Venetia, either side of which lay the imperial possessions of Padua and Oderzo. These latter positions were lost only in 603 and 663 respectively. The extent of this Byzantine resistance north and west of Oderzo has recently received attention, and will be discussed below in connection with the frontier line in Venetia.²⁹⁷ Briefly, however, we can note likely Byzantine defences at Castelvint,

Castelrotto, San Boldo, Cor and Castel Maior, opposed by Longobard military posts at Zumelle, Mel, Baldenica, Fara, Farro, Farra di Soligo and Fara d'Alpago, which form a tight cordon around this imperial wedge.

Little is known of the pre-568 Byzantine phase: the Franks still held the area in 554 when duke Leuthari died at Cenetam urbem, but no other mention occurs until the invasion of 568 and the loss of Treviso and Vicenza.²⁹⁸ From this period date the fara-derived toponyms which extend from above Vicenza at Fara Vicentino to Farra di Fonte, north-west of Asolo, Farra di Soligo, Farro and Farra (between Belluno and Montebelluna) and onto Fara d'Alpago: while the eastern farae facing Ceneda appear to oppose the imperial wedge, uncertain are the functions of those to the west. They were perhaps guardposts to centres of possible resistance, or perhaps represent the early garrison points of the conquered towns: this may indeed be the case for Fara beside Feltre and Farra di Fonte near Asolo.

Fasoli has attempted to locate a consistent line of communication between these sites via intermediate hill-points: for this she uses both documented and toponymic arimanni locations (with derivatives like maragni, maragnole, romano) and significant church dedications.²⁹⁹ She suggests they mark a defensive line erected by the Longobards in the early years after 568 to combat a Byzantine recovery from Venetia and also the continued Frankish threat from the Alps.³⁰⁰ Her arguments are weak, however, for in each case the line is somewhat too withdrawn to have been effective: to the south Vicenza and Treviso were in Longobard hands, while to the north the Trentino fortifications are well-attested by Paul.³⁰¹ Nonetheless it represents interesting evidence of early Longobard military settlement between the Piave and Astico, reflecting the invaders' consolidation of their new lands and the protection of their communications beyond the Oderzo salient.

Arimanni are attested at Feltre, Belluno, Ceneda as well as Mel and Zumelle.³⁰² In contrast Longobard tomb finds are limited to Arsie di Feltre, Pez, Moldoi, and Polpet, while possible tombs of this epoch may lie on colle Castellin beside Belluno. Nor is a Longobard date to be excluded for the grave in the Lozzo tower.³⁰³ The Pez and Moldoi tombs are military and may reflect garrison sites beyond the Byzantine wedge on the right of the Piave: we await similar finds west and east of this zone.

(h) The Defence of the North-East Corridor

The defences on the Italian side of the Alps in modern Friuli hinged closely upon events beyond its passes, for here, under Rome at least, heavy reliance was placed on the buffers of Noricum Ripense and Pannonia Prima and Valeria to protect her weak north-eastern portal. The Marcomannic invasion may have provided the first installation of strategic fortifications within the corridor, but as shown, few details exist regarding the form of the praetentura; we have also discussed the origin and development of the Claustra Alpium Iuliarum, the defensive barrier wall designed to control the approaches into north-east Italy.³⁰⁴ This section, however, will briefly consider the evidence for the continuity of the defences beyond Friuli from late antique into Longobard times, and examine the likely extent of both Byzantine and Longobard control outside this province.

It is uncertain if the Claustra extended north-westwards into the Carneola or the Carnic Alps to defend the Loibl, Arnoldstein and M.Croce Carnico passes: barrier walls are absent except at Rattendorf (defending the route from the Gail into the Fella valley at Pontebba), and indeed these lines could not have been adequately controlled by such claustra.³⁰⁵ As Šašel and Petru suggest, 'perhaps the military protection of the province should be sought in some system of isolated forts; yet today for the area

of the Eastern Alps we cannot yet distinguish military posts from refugia ...'.³⁰⁶ Little excavation has occurred, and even at these sites the dating evidence is disputable. Despite this, scholars have, chiefly on the basis of inferences from the sparse documentation, attempted to identify a Carnian limes of the 4th-6th centuries.

The same is true of the Julian Alps: here we have noted the probable termination of the Claustra system around 400, despite the persistence in terminology in the sources. After the fall of the Empire notices are scarce, and the meagre archaeology concerns sites to the east at the borders of the provinces of Noricum Mediterraneum and Pannonia Savia. These too have disputed, and variously interpreted, chronologies. Only closer to Italy is the evidence, though less extensive, more conclusive. First, however, we must consider the so-called Drau limes.

(hi) Noricum and the Drau Limes (Map 6; Fig. 2)

Noricum suffered as heavily as any Roman province in the 3rd century invasions, but recovered to continue a relatively flourishing existence into the 4th century. Yet soon it was subjected to a series of devastating raids which destroyed much of the provincial organisation, to the extent that Roman control virtually ceased in the early 400s: in 405 Radagaisus and his hordes overran Noricum, while in 407 Alaric and his Visigoths, having occupied the province, actually asked Honorius to cede Noricum to them.³⁰⁷ Some hold was restored in the 430s when Aetius suppressed disturbances, but in 451 the Huns and their allies overwhelmed the region. The Vita S. Severini, written by Eugippius in 511, but dealing with events in Noricum from c.460-c.495, reveals that in the 460s Noricum Ripense had no governor and that Severinus himself had to take charge; but the few troops that remained were unpaid and could not defend the land, and in 488 Odoacer abandoned Ripense, in effect

leaving Noricum Mediterraneum wide-open to devastation.³⁰⁸

During this time there occurred a drastic change in the settlement pattern, whereby the lowland Roman towns were abandoned in favour of nearby hilltop refuges or citadels. Villas virtually disappear by c.400, while many cities including Solva and Aguntum in S.Noricum were destroyed or irreparably damaged by Radagaisus' and Alaric's ravages. The pattern differs to the north, where life eventually picked up on a lesser scale in the former forts and towns of Juvavum, Cetium, Lauriacum, Faviana, Commagena and even Enns, Mautern and Tulln.³⁰⁹ This was perhaps due to swifter barbarian occupation, whereas Noricum Mediterraneum had to continue as a frontier district well into the 6th century, and remained a barbarian goal. Notable is the case of the former capital Virunum, which, exposed to assaults, was abandoned in the 5th century for the hilltops of the Ulrichsberg, Maria Saaler Burg, Grazerkogel and the Karnburg,³¹⁰ and the administrative focus shifted westwards to Teurnia - the metropolis Norici of the Vita S.Severini. This lay relatively distant from the main penetration routes, though still on good communications lines, and was well-protected by its walls and natural siting on the Holzerberg plateau. An Ostrogothic governor is attested here c.500 by the floor mosaic in the church of St.Peter in Holz.³¹¹

As Alföldy summarises, 'life remained relatively secure only in the Fliehburgen (= refugia) which appeared in large numbers in Noricum c.400 onwards. These were forts built on protective slopes, difficult of access, frequently with a church in the middle of the settlement; many of them served as a refugium in time of danger only, but most of them had dwelling houses and were built as permanent fortified settlements'.³¹² Excavations show sites possess circuit walls with adjoining houses, strong gate-towers and a church. While the date of the circuit-construction (two-phased at the

Duel) cannot be fully ascertained, coin and pottery finds generally indicate occupation from the 4th century.³¹³

Most 'Fliehburgen' congregate in southern Noricum, notably in the east Tyrol and Carinthia; a few like Tiffen lie north of the Drau, but most are on the valley edge to the south. Johnson claims a gradual site evolution: some smaller sites of the plain were perhaps the first abandoned, but some older hill-sites like Karnburg and Hoischhügel may long have served as refuges for larger towns before the population took permanent residence there.³¹⁴ By the 470s, however, Fliehburgen appear synonymous with castella and mark the settlement norm: during an Alemannic raid (473?), Severinus warned the population to lock themselves up within the castella Tiburniae - i.e. the forts around Teurnia; likewise when Venantius journeyed up the Drau in 565 he records 'qua se castella supinant, hic montana sedens in colle superbit Aguntus' - he no way refers to settlements of the plain, but rather positions dominating the upper Drau, such as Aguntum. No longer was this the Roman riverside town (destroyed by the Visigoths in 407-8) but instead the hilltop citadel of Lavant-Kirchbichl east of Lienz.³¹⁵ (Map 6)

Such references to castella, the numerousness of the Fliehburgen of the Drau and Gail valleys, and also the discovery within sites (Lavant, Duel, Hoischhügel) of military-style buildings, has led some scholars to formulate a Drau-limes, erected in the 5th-6th centuries to combat the northern threat after the breakdown of the Rhine and Danube limes.³¹⁶ Jantsch in particular backed up his theory with useful ground work, but was ill-supported by the minimal excavations of his day. In sum he conceived a limes drawn along the axis of the Drau with defensive lines along the road-river routes to the north (Lieser and Gurk valleys), and to the south (Gail). He wisely considered the intercommunication of sites by eye and road

and their relationship to the routes towards Italy: for instance, Aguntum-Lavant could control positions both south-west to the Pusteria and south-east over the Drauberg saddle to the M.Croce Carnico (Plöcken) pass, before which lay a late Roman tower at Mauthen; Teurnia and forts like Treffling and Duell held the middle Drau course; on the lower Drau forts around Villach (Tscheltschnigkogel, St.Martin) and on the Gail around Maglern (Zagrad, Hoischhügel, Thörl) defended the approaches to the Arnoldstein and Wurzen passes;³¹⁷ a number of sites then hug the Drau eastwards to join the important Virunum-Loibl-Ljubljana road which joined the Save, while to the north lie the forts/hilltop sites around Virunum (notably Grazerkogel, Karnburg, Ulrichsberg, Magdalensberg); finally, to the east on the Drau further refugia such as the Lamprechtskogel and Steinerberg, formed possible defensive positions.³¹⁸

The dating of many sites relies on stray finds, chiefly coins (which Jantsch links to garrison pay). Yet it is clear that the 5th century Roman administrative organisation had virtually collapsed in Noricum and by 460 no governor presided in upper Noricum. That 'castella' existed at this time is attested in Eugippius, but these obviously lacked regular troops or imperial officers. In times of invasion the people locked themselves away, and, although the land was devastated, 'the forts felt no danger at all'.³¹⁹ This suggests well-defended refugia, not military castella with room for the refugee population. Indeed, in 472, Eugippius records 'the citizens of Teurnia' bravely defending their city.³²⁰ Not every Flieburg will have been an active member of an organised limes, although some sites presumably played definite roles in defence of the passes: the fact that so many Flieburgen flank the road, lie in close visual contact and watch over pass routes should verify this. In any case their actual presence should have formed in the

4th-5th centuries a buffer system north of Friuli.

This is valid for successive generations: Odoacer abandoned Noricum Ripense in 488, but probably maintained the Drau until defeated by Theoderic in 493; the new ruler of Italy restored some order by installing a governor at Teurnia. Teurnia has indeed yielded many tombs of the 6th century, many of Germanic type.³²¹ Coin finds of this era derive from Hohenstein-Pulst, Augsdorf and Reisberg, and Ostrogothic bow-brooches from Duel, Kraig and Grafenstein.³²² Compared with Italy the Gothic evidence is quite strong, yet lacking in documentation.³²³ The region remained Ostrogothic until the late 530s when ceded to the Franks in return for aid against the Byzantines. No evidence survives for the Franks in lower Noricum.

Questionable is the postulated Byzantine occupation of part of the Carneola. In support of Hartmann's theory that the Byzantines took the Drau valley, we have Paul's reference to Narses capturing Vitalis, bishop of Altino, who had previously fled to the Franks at Aguntum; in addition Venantius records his route past Aguntum and its castella in 565 but without stating to whom the area belonged.³²⁴ The problems are chronological: after 563 the Byzantines had time to establish themselves within Italy, but we do not know whether Narses sought to extend the conquest beyond the Alpine confine. While campaigns into Noricum to exterminate Gothic and Frankish resistance are logical, Narses' restricted resources in Italy make this unlikely. Paul's reference dates to c.566, and it may be possible that Narses briefly raided Norican territory to ensure imperial control of the passes, and this perhaps included the capture of Aguntum and the rebel bishop. If so, Narses may have visualised Noricum as a buffer province and accordingly installed troops in a few key points. A total occupation of the 'Drau limes' seems unlikely, for its maintenance was impossible. Although

Venantius' progress was hindered in no way, suggesting a region at peace with the Empire, an individual's pilgrimage should not have been threatened.

An unreliable guide are sites with Byzantine coin finds. While finds such as the solidi of Maurice and Heraclius from the Ulrichsberg must belong to the Slavic occupation, there are many solidi of Justinian and Justin II which can be variously interpreted: the hoard of 8 Justinianic solidi from Pittersberg, associated with its walls, may well indicate an imperial post north of Mauthen and the M.Croce Carnico, en route to Aguntum. Hoischhügel at Maglern - castellum Meclaria - above the Arnoldstein pass has a hoard of 4 Justinianic solidi, one of Justin II, and one Longobard minted Justinianic solidus of pre-584, but this suggests a Longobard deposit. Similarly coins west and east of Virunum at Hohenstein and Helenenberg (Justinianic tremiss, and solidus of Justin II with Sophia respectively) could mark either a Byzantine or a Longobard presence, or simply the result of trade. Again only systematic excavation could clarify the historical sequence in late antique Carnia.³²⁵

Physical evidence for the Longobards is also lacking.³²⁶ Toponymic traces may lie, however, in references to the 'Heidenschlössse', 'Heidenblüchel' - with its Slavic equivalent 'Ajdovski Gradec' - i.e. 'pagan castles', which, from Italian parallels (notably in Friuli), ^{point to} recognise Longobard sites.³²⁷ Noticeably these lie principally along the Gail from Maria Schnee-Mauthen (above M.Croce Carnico) to Danz near Rattendorf, and onto the Ureinzn saddle near the Loibl pass, and near Teurnia at Aschbach, Rothenthurm and Weissenstein.³²⁸ We add to this picture the likely Longobard hoards at Maglern-Hoischhügel and Pittersberg. The former hoard postdates 584-5 and may coincide with the arrival of the Slavs in around 590-1, when Teurnia and Virunum fell.³²⁹

The Longobards perhaps briefly held Eastern Carnia before retreating behind Virunum after c.580, to organise their defences from the centrally-sited Maglern-Meclaria.³³⁰ No Longobard dux of Noricum is recorded. Shortly the Slavs overran the Drau and Gail valleys and ejected the Longobards.

Between 611 and 615 the Friulian dukes Taso and his brother Cacco launched an offensive against the Slavs, and regained lands stretching from 'Zellia ... usque ad locum qui Medaria dicitur', that is, the Gail to the Hoischhügel at Maglern. This occupation resulted in both tribute from the Slavs to the Friulian dukes, and more importantly an advanced guard over the northern passes.³³¹ It is unclear if this involved Longobard garrisons in the Carnic Alps.

(hii) Pannonia Savia and the Defence of Italy (Fig. 2)

This region has been the subject of more recent research, in particular as regards the late antique settlement and the question of continuity.³³² Yet the investigations are ill-supported by fieldwork, and depend on poor excavations and publications which preclude precise interpretation of the results.

In 504, after adding Dalmatia to his realm, Theoderic dispatched the expeditio Sirmiensis. This brought him Sirmium, Pannonia Savia and part of Secunda and created thereby a buffer to Italy.³³³ The outbreak of the Gothic War in 535 saw a crumbling of Ostrogothic power in the east with the rapid loss of Savia and Secunda - though perhaps not at one blow - and by c.538 both Dalmatia and Istria succumbed to Byzantine pressure. With the overstretching of resources, Justinian freed one hand by entrusting the Longobards with the guard of these eastern gains by donating them in 547-8 'Norican towns and Pannonian forts' to buffer imperial movements to both south and

west.³³⁴ The 'Norican towns' must be the areas of Celeia and Poetovio between the Drau and Save on the border of Noricum Mediterraneum with Pannonia Savia, while the 'Pannonian forts' include the sites of Velike Malence and Vranje and perhaps even Kranj in the Carneola.³³⁵ The Longobards had already occupied upper Pannonia (Prima and Valeria) by c.526, but, harassed by other tribes, would have readily accepted Justinian's offer of an alliance and new lands. In 568 Alboin and his nation left for Italy: a wholesale migration is recorded, but not all of Pannonia Savia was abandoned, and some advance points were maintained for the external defence of Friuli and the protection of the Julian Alps. The Slavs, however, overran Savia within twenty years: in 579 Poetovio fell, by 588 Celeia and Emona were lost to them, and before 600 they reached the Isonzo (Šoča), which then formed the frontier.³³⁶

There is no evidence for the Longobards in the Poetovio zone after 547. Evidence exists, however, around Celeia and Neviodunum, between the Drau and Save. Best investigated is Vranje and the hilltop settlement of Ajdovski Gradec (= pagan castle), covering a habitable space of 80 x 30m and set away from the road.³³⁷ Its occupation began in the 2nd century, and extended into the late 4th century, when a break occurs. Later, notable building activity is apparent with the construction of two churches, of types similar to churches at Lavant, Teurnia, Hemmaberg, the Duel, and within Italy, at Aquileia and Invillino.³³⁸ (Fig. 2) These are datable to the mid-5th century, as confirmed here by finds from a cemetery of the indigenous Romanic population. To the same phase belong the only defensive traces, two single towers at the east and west ends.

Although no Gothic finds were recovered, the site was badly damaged by fire dated by a Rome-minted coin to c.541: Ulbert suggests that 'the partial

destruction which followed in connection with the fire in the churches after 541 may coincide with the end of Gothic rule in the area,³³⁹ Shortly afterwards stamped Longobard pottery appears in a building near the east church, and site repairs are tentatively linked to the Longobard arrival: certainly the denomination 'pagan castle' recommends at least a temporary presence of a Longobard garrison. No tombs are known for these men, although the indigenes remained archaeologically attested in this phase. Longobard metalwork further confirms this presence, but does not help date their departure. The site was then radically destroyed and abandoned, perhaps contemporary with the fall of Celeia. The Slavic occupation is unidentified.³⁴⁰

30km distant, to the south, is the late antique fortress of Velike Malence, identified as the fortified successor of Roman Neviodunum, and constructed between the 3rd and 4th centuries (dated by spolia in the walls). The walls gird a rough oval of c.440 x 300m, covering c.8ha, on a hilltop plateau overlooking both river and road routes (Emona-Celeia). It is proposed as one of the castra occupied by the Longobards in 547, but excavation remains to prove this.³⁴¹

A hidden location comparable to Vranje lies east of Celeia, at Rifnik near Sentjur. This hilltop was defended by a ditch-bank along its south side, strengthened by towers at the centre and each end; some internal buildings are known, including a church, but these are improperly excavated. A sequence similar to that at Vranje is proposed, based on grave finds.³⁴² The extensive cemetery (c.109 tombs) lies to the south with graves principally of the native-Romanised folk, although Bolta stresses the appearance of both Ostrogothic and Longobard elements, chief among which are a Gothic bow-brooch, 3 Longobard S-brooches and some Pannonian type vessels (grave 86). In addition there are, besides 3rd-4th century coins, two 6th century issues,

a gold triens of Justinian (Grave 100) and a silver coin of the Longobard king Clef (572-4).³⁴³ Although these demonstrate the site's survival into the 570s, it is unclear if Rifnik was a military position held by small Ostrogothic and then Longobard garrisons. Notable, however, is the dearth of weapons.

Further sites in the area may have similar sequences, but these await investigation. Pirkovic proposes Longobard castra on the Gorjanci, south of the Gurk river, at Malence, Zidani and Hrib, and in the hinterland at Vinji Vrh, near Bela Cerkev, Zasavaska Gora, Kapla Vas and Sava.³⁴⁴ Johnson notes late antique sites at Trebinec Vrh (west of Malence) and at Tinje (north of Vranje) but without details. Kiszely notes Longobard necropoli at Bela Cerkev and Veliki Orekek only, with 6 and 36 graves respectively.³⁴⁵ Hilltop refuges are also located in Dalmatian lands, north of Rijeka within the area of the old Claustra, but these too await excavation.³⁴⁶ Only one site, Castel dei Pagani, hints at Longobard occupation, perhaps a guardpost against Byzantine Istria.

Our final evidence for Longobard positions outside Italy post-568 comes from the area around Bled in the upper Carneola, along the routes from Yugoslavia into Italy. Most important is Kranj on the Emona-Virunum road which entered Noricum by the Loibl pass; a road from Celeia also ran through here towards the Wörzen pass. Kranj is identified with Castel Carnium, and considered one of Procopius' Pannonian Forts: it has a cemetery of c.700 tombs, with finds testifying a strong Ostrogothic presence, followed by a Longobard phase, perhaps running into the later 6th century, and with an earlier phase of usage by the romanised autochthonous population.³⁴⁷

Just 5km to the north-east is the fort of Pivka near Naklo, on a crag 20m high with a 2m thick circuit and an external ditch, forming a defended

tower-house 10 x 10m.³⁴⁸ The walls are built with Roman spolia, considered by the excavators to be of 'Byzantine style', though it should have long performed its function as rider of the Emona-Virunum road above Kranj. Most significant are the finds from the 20cm thick destruction layer which include both Byzantine and Slavic arrowheads and a few of Longobard form.³⁴⁹

To the west Bled has 215 tombs of the 5th-7th century, but these belong to the autochthenenes, with a few Germanic elements; similar are tombs from Podmelec on the Tolmino road, which are variously attributed to the 5th-7th century Germanic population, indigenes or Longobards.³⁵⁰ Finally, in the Emona-Ljubljana region, where some Longobard and Gothic items are known, there is the Ostrogothic cemetery at Dravlje, perhaps denoting a guardpost near Emona.³⁵¹

In sum nothing demonstrates a wholesale continuation of military sites east of Friuli by the Longobards: in most cases the Longobard presence appears to extend beyond 568, but cannot be directly related to military occupation. Evidence is stronger closer to Italy on routes to the passes, and these perhaps constituted a defensive line against the Slavs after the fall of Celeia and Virunum. No reuse of the Claustra can be claimed, for there is no evidence of continuity within the forts of the system. As noted the line of the late Roman Claustra at no time fulfilled a frontier function in the 6th century except perhaps momentarily at the start and end of the Gothic War and briefly before 568; by 610-11, however, the forts of Friuli formed the Longobard north-east frontier.

(i) Istria (Map 8)

Before considering Friuli, however, we must first note the defences of Istria, a province held by the Byzantines not against the Longobards but the Slavs and Avars of the north. Istria was a vital supply base for both coastal

Venetia and the Exarchate and survived virtually unchanged until its capture by Desiderius in 770 and by the Carolingians in 774. It was generally administratively and militarily bonded with Venetia (at least initially), as shown in Paul's words 'Venetiae etiam Histria conectitur et utraeque pro una provincia habentur' and also in Byzantine military commands like that recorded in the Torcello inscription.³⁵² Yet Brown has demonstrated that some Istrian magistri militum were fully detached from Venetia and were presumably generals of its borders.³⁵³

Exactly when the Istrian limes arose is unknown, but it cannot have existed before the 6th century. Most probably a border was drawn up to denote imperial lands after the Longobard occupation of Pannonia, and this crystallised between 548-568. Since the Slavs are not attested in this area until the 590s when they reached the Frigido river, we should recognise the existence of an Istrian frontier against the Longobards after 568.

The archaeology of this limes is weak. The principal site is the necropolis at Brezac near Buzet-Pinguente, excavated in 1898, which contained one rich cavalryman's tomb, along with lesser tombs, some with female accessories (bracelets, earrings, necklaces). The finds indicate a durable occupation, dubiously set by some authors to the period between 588 and 602 when Longobard raids in and around Istria are documented.³⁵⁴ The necropolis is associated with a fortified site near the frontier, south of the Aquileia-Tarsatica road facing a likely Byzantine castrum in the vicinity of Pinguente. This is supported by findings here of tombs attributed by Marušič to the 'romano-Slavic-barbaric' population, whose cemeteries extend in an arc between Meizza, Veliki Mlum and Zajcji Brč around Pinguente, and also to the east at Rozzo.³⁵⁵ These are dated to the 7th-8th century, but may originate in the later 6th. They show a barbarisation of the Romanic tombs in both

construction and also association of grave materials, with weapons forming the largest percentage of these (interestingly spathae are quite rare, but arrowheads are common); decoration, however, is prevalently Byzantine in character. We may possess here the graves of a barbarised Byzantine frontier guard, opposing at Pinguente an enemy station, and defending the principal internal penetration route of the Quieto.³⁵⁶

The location of these cemeteries broadly confirms this hypothesis: behind Pinguente there are two sites near Montona (Brkac) and at Visinada to the west. A further site guards a road-river point near Buie d'Istria. The finds demonstrate a notable Slavo-Byzantine mixture in weaponry (arrowheads: Byzantine square-sectioned; Slavic winged-ala types) and in buckles.³⁵⁷

The province was traversed by the coastal via Flavia, which, via Trieste, ran around the Istrian peninsula to reach Pola and thence Rijeka. Minor routes extended along internal rivers, notably the Ningus-Quieto joining Cittanova to Pinguente. The internal road running near Buzet from Trieste to Rijeka lay largely outside Byzantine control. Anonymous of Ravenna records the following centres: Arsia, Nessatico, Pola, Rugino seu Rucigno, Parentium, Neapolis, Humago, Siparis, Silbio, Piranon, Capris, Tregesten: he is the first source to mention Pirano and the second for Capris.³⁵⁸ Noticeable is the presence of three island sites - Humago, Piranon and Capris, to which we can add Isola. All four replaced undefended mainland centres in late antiquity and grew in stature under Byzantium: Capodistria appears in some sources as Continopolis-Constantinopolis or Justinopolis (after Justin II), and was even recorded by Gregory and later by Dandolo as a bishopric, castello and civitas.³⁵⁹ The principal civitas was Cittanova-Neapolis, Gregory's castello quod Novas dicitur, closely linked by the Quieto with the frontier.³⁶⁰ Nearby lies the paleo-Slavic cemetery of Celega.³⁶¹

In the south-west end lies Pola - featuring later Roman and Gothic tombs - a notable port for linkage with the Exarchate for both troops and grain.³⁶²

An external bulwark of Pola is another island, Isola di Brioni grande, whose fortress is widely regarded as Byzantine.³⁶³ Surveys in the Val Madonna here have located both early christian and late antique structures, including a cemeterial basilica and a castrum, both of the early Byzantine epoch. The basilica of S.Maria occupies a small hillock, and is internally 9.7 x 27.4m, with rooms 4.8m, 17.1m and 4.5m deep. The narthex contains a series of burials, of broken stone construction with monolithic covers, many of which have incised Christian symbols, and one Greek inscription to a Silvanus. Decorative elements from the church exhibit relief 'characteristic of the Migration Era', with similarities to the decorations at S.Apollinare in Classe, while the actual plan has African affinities.³⁶⁴ Further crosses and Greek inscriptions appear on the column capitals.

Close by, on the level isthmus between Val Salie and Porto Buon, are the remains of a castrum, dominating wide views. Of rectangular form, c.120 x 90m, it is best-preserved on its south side where lies an intact gateway; the east and north walls are still visible, but only traces remain to the west. The arched gateway, 1.25m wide and 1.9m high, has walls 2.6m thick and is built with reused material. Inside are a cistern and the remains of a probable villa and other uninvestigated buildings. The 1935 excavations near the south angle of the castrum in fact revealed the existence of a 1st-2nd century Roman tower of semi-circular plan (5m diam., walls 60cm thick) preserved for more than 3m near the circuit.³⁶⁵ No actual proof exists for ascribing the castrum a Byzantine date. The basilica features 5th-6th century material and thus probably has a later Roman-Gothic-Byzantine sequence: the latter presence is indeed witnessed in the tombs, but this

alone cannot signify a Byzantine construction for the castrum. Although a Byzantine occupation of Brioni is strategically logical, so too is the case for a late Roman and Ostrogothic garrisoning. Only systematic excavation would verify whether Brioni forms an example of early Byzantine military construction, but for the moment its castrum has no Italian parallel.³⁶⁶

After the early 7th century, Longobard and Avar attention shifted from Istria: the Avars and Slavs now pushed against Friuli, and meanwhile settled along the borders of the Byzantine province. Finds indicate a gradual exchange of contacts and a barbarisation of its autochthonous romanised residents.³⁶⁷ The Istrians apparently made no move against the Friulian Longobards, and indeed the province even became a land of refuge for fugitives like duke Rodoald. It remained an important logistical base for Ravenna, and possessed a strong military force which contributed troops in 668 to counter the rebellion provoked by the murder of Constans II in southern Italy. When ~~stulf~~ briefly held Ravenna in 750 he launched an attack against Istria, but the province only fell in 770 to Desiderius who maintained it until 774.³⁶⁸

(j) The Duchy of Friuli (Maps 6 and 7)

This province, the first taken by the Longobards, is, through its comparative wealth of documentary, archaeological and toponymical sources, one of the best studied areas of post-Roman Italy. The bulk of the evidence is Longobard, focussed on the ducal centre of Forum Iulii, but there is sufficient evidence to document the pre-Longobard settlement pattern.³⁶⁹

The region was traversed by many Roman roads, in particular in the east. These initially had radiated from Aquileia, but with the establishment of a duke at Cividale del Friuli, the communications came to gravitate on this capital. Aquileia maintained its religious importance, although its patriarch

- rivalling the Byzantine one at Grado - was transferred to Cormons in c.688; its position opposite Grado also endowed it with military significance.

In connection with the many Longobard finds (c.500 tombs in all), Brozzi pointedly remarks that 'All the places in which finds were made lie beside rivers or along communication routes, letting us see that the Longobard settlements were set to defend fords or crossings, roads, and Forum Iulii, thus forming a rigid garrison for the whole region'.³⁷⁰ Most strongly defended were the Isonzo, Natisone, Tagliamento rivers and the via Claudia Augusta (running from Aquileia to Noricum). We shall shortly view the evidence of this and simultaneously seek the origins of the various sites. We are aided in this by just one systematic excavation of a castello, namely Invillino, but the results of this may be typical of finds to be made elsewhere in Friuli.

Historically, Narses only gained control of this province in the later 550s-early 560s, having first to remove the Frankish threat.³⁷¹ Despite the time at their disposal, the Byzantines appeared ill-equipped to resist the invasion of 568: Paul relates that the Longobards entered Italy without obstacle, and only the flight of the Patriarch of Aquileia to Grado illustrates the Byzantine response in Friuli. They swiftly captured Cividale, and installed here their first duke, Gisulf.³⁷² They overran much of Friuli, restricting the Byzantines to the littoral, perhaps with no land-link surviving between imperial Istria and Venetia.

The border ran west of Grado south of the disused via Annia, which now designated a no-man's land, up to the Livenza, where began the imperial Oderzo salient. By 600, the Friuli dukes had lost possessions both north and east of the present confines, but in 663 occupied the Oderzo territorium.³⁷³ Though no Byzantine attacks on the Longobard province are recorded -

this task was left to the Slavs in the 7th century - they successfully bought off dukes between 580-600 to preserve their possessions and to aid them in campaigns.³⁷⁴ Our sole clue that the Byzantine resistance above Grado was less than passive comes when Paul recounts that the Patriarch of Aquileia moved to Cormons 'propter Romanorum incursionem': fierce fighting was presumably often encountered in the Grado-Aquileia sector, as was still the case in the 660s when duke Lupus successfully raided Grado and retrieved treasures of the church of Aquileia.³⁷⁵

As noted, the high incidence of Longobard military tombs in Friuli reflects not only the continuous function of the duchy as a border province - witness the Avar invasions of 610-11 and of 663/6, and the Slavic raids of c.670 and 715³⁷⁶ - but also the rebellious nature of the Friulians and their dukes from the mid-7th century - witness the deeds of Lupus, his son Arnefrit, Ansfrut of Ragogna, the short-lived dukes Ferdulf and Corvolus, and the successful Ratchis.³⁷⁷ The region accordingly remained heavily militarised.

As concerns early Longobard settlement Paul significantly refers to Gisulf accepting the ducal seat on condition that he received the best of the farae.³⁷⁸ Friuli is quite well endowed with fara-derived toponyms, although only a few occupy strategic seats: Farra d'Isonzo near Gradisca, Cà Farra at Ragogna, and two between Ragogna and Cividale, while those near Montereale Valcellina may be linked - along with warda (lookout) names - to the protection of the road bypassing Oderzo.³⁷⁹ Of these, only Farra d'Isonzo has confirmatory finds, but with tombs which may belong to the autochthonous population.³⁸⁰ The region also possesses numerous documentary references to arimanniae, a group of sites recorded in the corpora or playta (Placita) arimannorum. All these notices are late, of the 11th-14th centuries, and are thus not definite pointers to primary settlements;

nevertheless, many of the locations lie in strategic areas like the But valley and the Canale del Ferro, and may reflect later ducal interest over earlier defensive stations. Indeed for the Carnia these are a prime source for Longobard activity.³⁸¹ In addition we can add the Documento Sestense of 726 which names many vici and curtes, and allows us a view of the physical aspect of northern Friuli in the late Longobard era.³⁸²

A firm outline to the Longobard defences in Friuli derives from the passage of Paul recording an invasion by the Avars in 610-11:

'Circa haec tempora rex Avarorum... cum innumerabili multitudine veniens, Venetiarum fines ingressus est. Huic Gisulfus Foroiulianus dux ... cum omnibus pene suis extinctus est. Uxor vero eiusdem Gisulfi nomine Romilda cum Langobardis qui evaserunt ... intra murorum Foroiuliani castris muniit septa ... Communierant se quoque Langobardi et in reliquis castra quae his vicina erant, hoc est in Cormones, Nemas, Osopo, Artenia, Reunia, Glemona, vel etiam in Ibligine, cuius positio omnino inexpugnabilis existit. Pari etiam modo et in reliquis castellis, ne Hunnis, hoc est Avaribus, praeda fierent, se communivere'. 383

In contrast to the Trentino sites, the modern successors of these castra are easily traced: Cividale, Cormons, Nimis, Osoppo, Artegna, Ragogna, Gemona and Invillino.³⁸⁴

Paul's source is unknown, but we should assume that as a native of Cividale he had access to local records and histories dating back to the later 6th century - including Secundus' Historiola; the details given strongly suggest his use of a contemporary account of the Avar attack.

As recent studies show, these castra held notable positions in the

defence of Friuli: Cividale and Cormons held the central and eastern sector of the duchy, while the others guarded against penetration from the north along the Tagliamento, Fella and But valleys.³⁸⁵ They were interlinked by roads, and, presumably, by lesser fortifications (reliquis castellis), (Map 6). To understand the system as a whole we shall study the named sites individually and expand the defensive picture through relevant findspots in each district, and simultaneously consider the origin of the system.

The southernmost castrum named is Cormones, in visible contact with Cividale and positioned to cover the outlet of the Iudrio, and also the route along the Isonzo. The castrum and indeed the seat of the Patriarch of Aquileia from 628-737 occupy the site of a castelliere and a Roman villa on M.Quarin (274m) high above present Cormons.³⁸⁶ Despite the fact that it has been abandoned since the castello was destroyed, no excavation has occurred. The principal standing remain is the torrione at the end of the summit looking toward Cividale, set outside the circuit. The tower is circular with a later accretion to the right of the doorway, and is constructed of roughly-cut, coursed sandstone blocks with a white pebble mortar. (pl.21) The structure is c.10m in diameter with walls up to 2.5m thick, and has traces of a first floor level at c.2.5m above the present ground level. Of the castello, part of two circuit-sides are visible, in general following the hilltop crest, although the curtain facing the tower (c.25m distant) cuts straight across the summit; this wall attains 3m externally (1.5m internally). The walls (c.1m thick) exhibit construction analogous to the tower. No features are visible within the levelled interior of the castello.

X M.Quarin extends westwards with the appendix of Brazzano (157m), where stands the church of S.Giorgio (a Longobard military saint); incorporated into its east wall are two 8th century marble fragments, one bearing the

words 'Hoc Miru(m) opus Ca(listi)' recording work under the patriarch Callistus, resident here until 737.³⁸⁷

To the north-west, along the Aquileia-Cividale road, 7th century military tomb finds derive from Visinale dello Iudrio (including remains of a horse, lanceheads, shields).³⁸⁸ South-eastwards along the vital Isonzo line we have further positions presumably within Cormons' sphere of competence. Chief among these is Farra d'Isonzo, observing both the Isonzo and the Vipacco, near the site of the Pons Sontii.³⁸⁹ The Emona road runs north of Farra past Monte Fortin, where excavations in 1942 uncovered 10 tombs similar to ones at Villanova di Farra and Mainizza, which belonged to the autochthonous population; the Longobard presence indicated by the toponym may lie on M.Fortin. Early medieval tombs also come from Gradisca d'Isonzo, while Longobard military tombs are attested along the river at Moraro, Gorizia, and at Bilje and Solkan in Yugoslavia, which thus reflect a strongly militarised zone.³⁹⁰

Finally, to the south, on the Aquileia-Trieste road, castella are identifiable at Doberdo and Duino. The first, Castellazzo at Doberdo del Lago (158m) dominates the road from its craggy summit, which is enclosed by a sub-trapezoidal circuit (undefended on its sheer south side) buttressed with semi-circular bastions and an internal tower at its peak. The walls, (c.3m thick), are c.460m in extent and built in rough limestone blocks: three circuits are apparent, the outer two being mortared, the inner one dry-set. Castellazzo has yielded Roman sherds and lost weapon finds (in 1903), and also coins from the mid-3rd to the early 5th century as well as two bronzes of the Vandalic era, one featuring Hilderic (523-530), suggesting a late Roman site still in use in the Gothic epoch.³⁹¹

Duino, on the other hand, is plausibly identified with Paul's castellum Potium, quod supra mare situm est, and the Puciolis of Anonymous of Ravenna.³⁹²

The Duino castello preserves Roman material in its walls, not least an inscription of Diocletianic date, and the fact that a castellum Pucinum is recorded in Pliny indicates the long existence of a fortified post here.

Cividale-Castrum Foroiulianum, the ducal seat, commanded a tight network of fortifications for its own defence. The town occupies a good natural position on a small hill, with streams to both east and west (Rio Emiliano and Roja) and the gorge of the Natisone to the south; walls girded the town in a horse-shoe form on all but this south side, and the three gates gave access to roads to Verona - Pavia, Aquileia, and toward Artegna and the via Iulia Augusta³⁹³ A bridge crossed the Natisone to join another route leading upstream. (Fig. 6) (pl. 19)

Although few of its secular buildings are known,³⁹⁴ the religious foci are attested by documents and cemeterial finds dating from 568. Excavations have so far revealed intramural cemeteries at S. Pietro dei Volti, S. Maria (the duomo), S. Giovanni in Valle and at a church of unknown dedication in the Piazza Paolo Diacono, from where comes the sarcophagus of Gisulf II. More extensive necropolises ring Cividale: S. Pantaleone and S. Martino to the south, S. Giovanni and Cella to the north, S. Mauro to the north-west, and to the west in the zone called Pertica cemeteries have emerged at Grupignano, Gallo, S. Stefano and near the railway station.³⁹⁵

The town walls are two-phased, with an external circuit of cobblestone walling c. 2.20-2.50m thick with strong line mortar bonding, later reinforced by a smaller wall of similar form, but constructed at a level 30-45cm higher. Stucchi sets the first wall to the Marcomannic Wars, but guesses that the addition, could 'even be of the barbarian period'.³⁹⁶ The walls performed well against the Avars in the 7th century, when Cividale only fell through treachery, but the strength of resistance in 568 cannot be gauged. The

second circuit should probably pre-date the 6th century (pl.20).

Traces of heavy settlement in the immediate vicinity of Cividale appear through finds from Remanzacco, Premariacco, Firmano, Orsaria and Azzano di Ipplis, while to the north and east settlement takes on a more military nature, as guards to the valleys of the Natisone, Alberone, Cosizza and Erbezzo, which converge at S.Quirino.³⁹⁷ In defence of this bridge lay the gastaldia of Antro (with later castles at Urubergo and Gronumbergo), while for the Natisone military tombs come from S.Pietro al Natisone, Torreano di Cividale and Purgessimo di Cividale.³⁹⁸ Near S.Pietro there are also remnants of a blocking wall, as recognised in the toponym Claustr. This runs from Colle di Barda across to Colle di Scrutto, defended by a castello (unnamed, but consisting of two parts, 13 x 30m and 13 x 33m, a format similar to Hrušiča) and a tower (Gradinča-Hradinza-Castellana, c.4 x 4m) respectively; from the castello the wall runs westwards 800m and eastwards 900m.³⁹⁹ As Stucchi describes, 'this stretch of the Vallum Alpium thus blocked, in addition to the Natisone valley, the main road, and even those minor routes of the Erbezzo and Alberone tributaries, in a way which cancelled out any possible outflanking manouevres'.⁴⁰⁰ This section of Claustra was probably maintained by the Longobards as a defence in advance of Cividale.

Northwestwards ran the road which acted as the prime communications link between Cividale and its northern forts. Along this route lies castrum Nemas - Nimis, also recorded as the site of the death of the rebel Arnefrit, son of duke Lupus in 664.⁴⁰¹ The castello occupies the wooded spur of Monte Mache Fave at the Cornappo-Montana confluence, where the toponym Pecol di Centa hints at a circuit wall (= cinta), of which sparse traces remain. Its castello was destroyed in the 13th century.⁴⁰²

At the foot of the hill is the parish church of SS.Gervasio e Protasio, first recorded in 1247 (pl.22). Recently excavated by Menis, an early medieval basilical foundation with rectangular aula with narthex and squared presbyterium was discovered.⁴⁰³ While its architectural fragments only date from the 8th-9th century, the pottery finds recommend an earlier phase: Menis compares these - broadly defined as 'tardo antica locale' - in fabric and form with 6th-7th century sherds from elsewhere in Friuli, notably Invillino.⁴⁰⁴ Furthermore, he attempts to pinpoint the date of construction by analysis of the dedication to the two Milanese saints, plausibly attributing this to the Byzantine occupation of Nimis in the 560s.⁴⁰⁵ The Longobard presence, however, is confirmed by a 7th century olive-leaf section lancehead from loc. Pra di Ponte.⁴⁰⁶

Schmiedt and Mor link Nimis to Cividale, Artegna, and Tricesimo by means of likely tower positions: to the south-east these are postulated at Partistagno - known in 762 as 'ad turrionem' beneath whose castello stood Fara, present Faris - and perhaps Cuccagna, Zucco and Prestento.⁴⁰⁷ To the north-west Tarcento and Coia are proposed.

Other Longobard positions appear along the via Iulia Augusta before Artegna. Chief among these is Udine, with its defensive focus on the Colle di Castello. Udine has a number of well-equipped military tombs of c.568-later 7th century, while the church of S.Maria del Castello, perhaps of 6th century construction, has 7th-8th century marble decorative elements, including one piece with the inscription of '...O LIUTP....' - Domino Liutprando, perhaps indicative of rebuilding under Liutprand (712-744).⁴⁰⁸ Due north lies Tricesimo, which bears a Longobard castle name in San Floriano, and has Longobard weapon finds from loc.Casanova.⁴⁰⁹ Furthermore the road features a number of recorded arimanniae: Chiavris, Reana del Roiale and

Fraelacco (Tricesimo).⁴¹⁰

Artegna guards the confluence of the Cividale road with the via Iulia Augusta, which ^{is} just below the small castello hill (252m). Here stand the church of S.Stefano in Clama, the 14th century castello and the present summital cemeterial-church. (pl.23) The hill communicates visually northwards with Gemona and westwards with Osoppo, to form a strategic triangle defending the outlet of the Alpine road into the plain.⁴¹¹ The site was much damaged in the earthquake of 1976 which badly affected central Friuli, and since through subsidence: indeed the medieval castello, previously well-preserved, now possesses a solitary standing tower, while the remaining structure is inaccessible. Its large central tower was in fact locally denoted 'Longobard', but this too is ruined. The incomplete restorations of 1977 involved no archaeological investigations.

However, girding the eastern hill crest runs a well-constructed wall built in rough cut poorly coursed limestone bonded with an inclusioned white mortar, occasionally featuring a thin layer of undulating tile sherds and possible put-logs (pl. 29). The wall, up to 2m high, runs from north to south and disappears in turning towards the lower medieval castello; it reappears behind the clock tower, which may overlies an ancient circuit-tower. The west side presents just terracing. The area with the walls is heavily built-up. Below, restorations at S.Stefano in Clama uncovered decorative fragments including four small pilasters and two plutei with plait decoration of the 8th-9th centuries.⁴¹²

Although no Longobard finds are known here, nearby Magnano in Riviera, loc.Longeriacco or Fontanuzis, recently produced a rich tomb containing silver-inlaid spurs, brooch, bone comb, dagger, belt-fittings, and also a ring with a setting of a solidus of Constantine IV (668-684).⁴¹³ Schmiedt suggests a visual linkage south-westwards to Ragogna through towers at Buia and Susans;

as evidence he notes that Buia is named in 982 and that nearby Colosomano di Buia has yielded 7th century tomb and weapon finds, while c.80 tombs (chiefly military) come from S.Salvatore di Maiano, datable to the mid-late 7th century.⁴¹⁴ It is more likely, however, that these guarded the Artegna-Codroipo road, (the via per compendium), along which lie other findspots.⁴¹⁵

Osoppo hugs a high isolated saddle of rock (350m) set beside the Tagliamento in a wide basin of land controlling routes from Lago di Cavazzo and Gemona (pl. 25). Its strong natural position has long performed 'its function as a bulwark against attacks coming from the north': it was a Napoleonic fort and also a Swiss munitions dump in 1914-18 (subsequently heavily broken up, leaving thereby few possibilities of systematic excavation).⁴¹⁶

Nevertheless some conclusions can be drawn through epigraphic and documentary evidence: upon the hill lay the small church of S.Columba, where in 1717 was found an inscription recording the burial of Columba in 524.⁴¹⁷ Forty years later in 565 during Byzantine rule Venantius Fortunatus travelled 'per rupes Osope tuas qua lambitur undis et super instat aquis Reunia Tiliamenti' en route to Zuglio.⁴¹⁸ Although neither reference records the castrum, the likelihood of its existence then is strong, thus recommending a defence of this site by the early 6th century.⁴¹⁹

Downstream the road reaches Reunia-Ragogna, a castello defending the crossing where the Tagliamento emerges between two steep rocky partitions, and thus holding one of the last defensible positions before the marshy plain behind. An analogous function was perhaps performed by the castello of Pinzano (279m) directly opposite. Both township and castello were badly affected by the earthquake and only now is restoration underway, though not as yet fully complemented with excavation.⁴²⁰

The castello occupies the steeply-sloping Monte di Ragogna (234m) and

consists of concentric circuits (as also found at Toppo and Flagogna), forming an upper and a lower castello (pl.26-7). It was much restructured in the 13th-15th centuries, but the late antique focus should be contained in the upper castello. The walls here are of local stone, obtained from the Tagliamento or quarried, as are the traces of two towers south of the belltower of the intramural church of S.Pietro.⁴²¹ Finds here verify the site's antiquity: from below S.Pietro came three 3rd century glass phials, perhaps from a tomb, some iron tools and knives, and on the west slope some potsherds of late Roman-early medieval date; and reused in the church structure were four fragments of 8th-9th century bas-relief of leaf and plait design. While the latter suggest at least a late Longobard phase to the church, there are no finds directly associated with the fortress.⁴²²

Nonetheless, Ragogna's history under the Longobards is adequately documented: besides its mention in 610-11, we hear in 694 of its count Ansfrid who marched on Cividale during the absence of duke Rodoald; he then declared war on king Cunibert but was captured near Verona and sent into exile.⁴²³ In addition there is Fortunatus' reference to Reunia, which should indicate a stronghold here at least from the time of the Gothic War. Interestingly there is even a kastron Reunia listed in George of Cyprus, which, if identifiable with Ragogna, shows its resistance under Byzantium until c.575 - but no other source hints at such, and the likelihood appears small.⁴²⁴

The Longobard presence is attested elsewhere at Ragogna. One hamlet is still called Cà Farra (= Casa Fara = House of the Fara), and at Villuzza to the south a Longobard-Carolingian predecessor to the church of S.Lorenzo has been discovered. This church, containing 10th century frescoes, was excavated following damage in 1976: below the 9th-10th century apse and

presbyterium were found burials, west of which lay the foundations of a small chapel of simple rectangular plan with horse shoe-shaped apse (all covered by a burnt layer). Finds were scanty, but included 8th century decorative elements similar to the S.Pietro fragments.⁴²⁵

Finally the location of two late antique refuge sites near the castello are noteworthy: the first at Monte di Muris, where a prehistoric enclosure (the Muris) may have been reused, and the second, part-excavated, in a cave beside the torrent Riûl del Puint which revealed temporary occupation in the 7th century (an early medieval olla sherd was found) - and again under the the Venetians in c.1600.⁴²⁶

It is uncertain whether defensive posts existed west of Ragogna. No Longobard finds are known, although, as noted, three faræ appear in the zone of Montereale Valcellina, perhaps linked to the defence of the road towards the Val Belluna, evading Byzantine troops at Ceneda.⁴²⁷

The 1976 earthquake also devastated much of Gemona including the Castello hill, but the site still awaits full clearance and restoration (pl.28-9). Of the Castello, the medieval towers have collapsed and only the circuit remains relatively intact: it is currently inaccessible and restoration has barely begun.

The Longobard castrum undoubtedly occupied the site of the 13th century castello on the steep hill of Glemina (307m), detached from the mountains behind, and excellently disposed for the road defence.⁴²⁸ Structurally discernable is a circuit enclosing the levelled summit of the hill, on which stood the remains of two towers, one central and the other on the highest hill point to the east. There are few relevant local finds: in 1876 a tomb was located containing a knife, while Moro reports on two possible Longobard decorative elements incorporated into the sacristy wall of the duomo and the

baptismal font. Lastly there is the toponym Godo at the hill-foot, which may recall a Gothic station here at Gemona.⁴²⁹

The via Iulia Augusta branched at Ospedaletto to run through Bordano and Cavazzo towards Invillino; to the north, however, lies the gorge of Venzone, first recorded in 1001 as a toll-station, clusae de Albintione. Most likely Venzone formed one of a series of similar check-points, controlling the roads along both the Tagliamento and Fella valleys. Venzone has few relevant finds: there is a 7th century lancehead, and also the oral tradition of the construction of the Venzone citadel (remains dating from 13th century) by Theudelinda.⁴³⁰ No relevant material derives from the Fella valley despite the obvious importance of this line. The point best suited to a traffic defence is the narrows of Chiusaforte, and indeed a Roman customs station lay (8km behind) at Resiutta. Moggio Udinese, above Resiutta, is recorded as an arimannia.⁴³¹

Along the upper Tagliamento and the But we have the evidence of two important excavations: Invillino and Zuglio. Both sites, along with an unidentified third in the Fella, should have been tied to the defence of the three main routes from the Gail and Drau (via the M.Croce di Comelico, M.Croce Carnico and the Würzen-Arnoldstein passes), of which that guarded by Zuglio was the most used, and that of Invillino perhaps the least so. Nonetheless the identification of a road from Zuglio running beneath Invillino onto Carazzo-Bordano, and thus evading the Tagliamento-Fella confluence heightens the importance of Ibligo in this organisation.⁴³²

Invillino lies 6km upstream of Tolmezzo, on the right bank of the Tagliamento, dominated by the 55m high conglomerate Monte Santino, 650m long with a maximum width of c.100m on its western plateau. (pl. 30) Its near-sheer sides give it a great natural strength, and this, combined with

its castrum, would have undoubtedly made it a posito omnino inexpugnabilis.⁴³³ The large, levelled western plateau dips to a mid-section where stands the church of S.Maria Maddalena, which is separated by a deep cutting from the east hill of Ciastelat, a small high plateau terminating in a far spur. This zone was unsuited for settlement, but was useful for communication eastwards to Caneva and Tolmezzo: the excavators located here a late Roman cistern and a 7th century tomb (no. 9), but there is in addition on the far spur the remaining courses of a round tower (not noted by the excavators), which commands excellent views. The date of the structure is unclear, but its courses are part-mortared.⁴³⁴ The 1963-66 excavations aimed to reveal the Longobard defences, to clarify the internal buildings of the castrum and to locate the castral church and cemetery, while work in 1972 concentrated on nearby Colle di Zuca, identified in 1963 as the probable cemeterial site.⁴³⁵

Since its abandonment, its sides have suffered much erosion, as a result of which the excavations failed to ascertain the existence of a continuous circuit wall.⁴³⁶ Of the surviving defences, however, some towers were found, most notably that defending the gateway, controlling access from the hill's south-west flank - another more difficult approach lay between the Ciastelat and S.Maria, but no defences remain here.⁴³⁷ (Fig 7) The gate-tower (c.3 x 8m), rested on 1m wide foundations and was of roughly-cut but evenly-coursed mortared local sandstone: it was rubble-filled, containing much 6th century settlement debris, thus suggesting a 4th-5th century construction date with consequent disuse or remodelling. On the north face of the plateau were noted traces of dry-stone structures, dissected by erosion, dubiously considered by Bierbrauer as additional towers, although the excavators regarded them as houses.⁴³⁸ Settlement focussed on the levelled zone of the western plateau, and consists of various structures,

forming a complicated pattern of reused walls, extensions and so forth. For these the excavators note 'the actual temporal gap between the individual phases must for the time being remain, going by the building traces, uncertain'.⁴³⁹ But the numerous small-finds have elucidated the site chronology and allow a reconstruction of the occupation of Invillino.

Three Roman phases were identified, running from the mid-1st century perhaps up to the arrival of the Goths: the first involved a possible statio, which was extended or converted in the 2nd-3rd centuries into a villa structure (unless still functioning as a statio), and subsequently variously altered in the 3rd-4th centuries.⁴⁴⁰ Linked to this latter stage are three cisterns, including one on the Ciastelat, which may suggest that the defences had by then come into play. This phase extended into the final Roman period.

The rubble fill of the gate-tower indicates the full implementation of the defences by the 6th century. Presumably the garrison was housed within the various structures now erected over the ruined villa. These houses, comparable to types excavated at Castelseprio, are all of similar long-house format, east-west orientated, with thinnish dry-set foundations suggesting wood superstructures. The best preserved house lies near the gateway and a (filled?) cistern: it is c.16 x 8m with undressed stones laid on the rock surface, with traces of a flagged floor. Other huts overlies the Roman building, reuse its stones, and contain sandstone slab hearths.⁴⁴¹ (Fig.7)

Invillino's military role appears to terminate in the mid-8th century, as shown by the presence inside and outside of the investigated structures of 15 burials, three of which yielded 8th century earrings. This probably coincides with the construction of the church of S.Maria Maddalena in the 8th century.⁴⁴² This supposes that Invillino was not defended by the Longobards during the Carolingian invasions.

While many 4th century finds are present,⁴⁴³ the 5th century material is more limited, though this should not cast doubt on the continuity of occupation: there are two 5th century stirrup-brooches, while Fingerlin et al. note that items like coarse wares, needles, and glass may be late Roman, although more commonly attested in the Longobard milieu.⁴⁴⁴ The tremissis of Zeno (Milan mint 474-6), a brooch and two belt-buckle tongues should identify the Ostrogothic presence, while the fleeting Byzantine hold is perhaps witnessed in some goblet bases, a coin weight, some jewellery items, and more significantly a set of four Byzantine square-sectioned arrowheads.⁴⁴⁵

Surprisingly there is actually 'little specifically Longobardic' material present: their characteristic metalwork and pottery is lacking, although arrowheads, combs, brooches and pearls of the 7th century are present.⁴⁴⁶ By far the largest part of the post-Roman finds stem from the autochthonous population: looped earrings, needles, an equal-armed brooch, zoomorphic bird brooches, and pottery, which is of exclusively local forms, as occurs at Castelseprio. All this registers a final phase at Invillino with a population of mixed indigenous and Longobard elements. The material from Colle di Zuca supports this picture.⁴⁴⁷

This hill, 300m long and 80m wide with a western plateau of c.100 x 60m, lies 700m west of M.Santino and is one of the few areas outside the castello free from flood danger. The hill is locally ascribed to the 'pagans' (Colle dei pagans, with its Cimiterio dei pagans), who are normally equatable with the Longobards.⁴⁴⁸ Trenches in 1963 located two tombs, and the 1972 campaign aimed at extending these.⁴⁴⁹

The full extension of the cemetery was not ascertained due to human agricultural interference. However, the excavations uncovered a complex church sequence covering the period of the late 4th-9th centuries with

associated graves. The first of these churches - hitherto undiscovered - Church A (28 x 14.9m), was of a form comparable to 5th century churches in the eastern Alps (p1.31). Its mosaics and a 4th century tomb cut by the foundations, confirm this date. Church A was burnt down in the 6th or 7th century, and rapidly replaced by Church B1 (17.3 x 7.2m). This, like A, possessed walls c.60cm thick, of fish-bone technique, built of local sandstone; an associated early tomb (no. 15) containing 7 skeletons, held a comb, knives and a buckle tongue of 6th-7th century date. Two subsequent structural phases ensued, with restructuring in B2 and minor embellishments in B3 (of Carolingian date). This was destroyed in the 9th century and abandoned - S.Maria Maddalena should by then have been constructed, and the M.Santino settlement transferred to the plain. The sparse tomb-finds reveal no lucid chronology, nor do they reflect Longobard hegemony, for again the indigenous element is strongest.⁴⁵⁰ Again we should stress the site's continuity.

Although Longobard findspots west and north of Invillino are limited to four (cf. Map 7), a pattern can nevertheless be derived from toponymic traces along the upper Tagliamento and the Degano. While the latter formed a secondary route allowing the evasion of Zuglio via Cervicento, the former communicated towards the Mauria pass and Lozzo to continue onto the M.Croce di Comelico pass (though actual road traces are absent). By bearing in mind the toponyms at Invillino, where pagans=Longobards, their presence along each route is evident.⁴⁵¹

To the north lies Lauco, south of which is the Cuel dal Fari (= Hill of the fara), possessing rock-cut tombs locally called tumblis dai Gans (= tombs of the Pagans). In addition there is a small cave near the Radina torrent called Chiase dai Gans (= Church of the pagans). From Cuel dal Fari up to the upland plain of Langania run walls attributed to an ancient

castello. Road traces lie nearby, and further rock-cut tombs appear at Ciavuians/Clavais.⁴⁵²

Upstream of Invillino, near Enemonzo Maiaso bears the toponyms Salvans (= pagans) and Buse dai Pagans (= wood of the pagans).⁴⁵³ Socchieve, at the Tagliamento-Lumiei confluence has traces of a castello (documented in the 11th century) on Monte di Castoia, and a grave of Lauco type from loc. Chiampuz dai Pagans.⁴⁵⁴ Along the Lumiei is Nonta, which in 1340 controlled arimanniae at Cervicento, Sutrio and Paluzza, and which even held lands up to Gemonia; the Ampezzo fortress arose in loc. Chiastelat, while Longobard period tombs come from Colle Savia and Colle Mulentet.⁴⁵⁵

The two final findspots sites lie in the upper Tagliamento: Forni di Sotto (with a castello of unclear origin), has both Roman tombs and a 6th century Longobard olive-leaf section lancehead; from Andrazza come two late 6th century Longobard inhumations, but no castello traces.⁴⁵⁶

Few finds exist upstream of Lauco in the Val Degano. Luint has yielded some tombs containing weapons and a gold cross, while Luincis possesses circuit corner-tower traces in loc. Castello - a 7th century autochthonous tomb was found in the area in 1880.⁴⁵⁷ The Val Calda, linking the But with the Degano, provided a means of evading the forts of the But. Entry to this route appears closely guarded at least in later Longobard times, for in the 13th-14th centuries arimanniae are attested for Cervicento, Paluzza, Rivo and Sutrio, along with those of Sezza and Fielis to the south.⁴⁵⁸ Of these, only Paluzza has Longobard finds, with 4 tombs from varied localities, two with weapons.⁴⁵⁹

The regional centre was Zuglio-Iulium Carnicum, controlling traffic to and from Noricum, and holding a municipal jurisdiction which in the 3rd century covered Carnia, the lower Fella, and part of the Cividale and Cadore

districts.⁴⁶⁰

The excavations of the Roman town show that Zuglio underwent destructions in the 4th-5th centuries, as is most apparent in regio X, where dwellings near the baths were burnt down at the end of the 4th century (coins of Constans to Gratian - linked to Alaric's invasion?), and twice more subsequently at undated intervals.⁴⁶¹ It is unclear if the late 4th century basilica was affected by these troubles.⁴⁶²

The devastations led to the abandonment of the town before 490, at which date bishop Ienuarius was buried in the church of S.Pietro on the ridge of the hill above Zuglio: the funerary inscription attests his presence as bishop since c.480.⁴⁶³ Since the church was usually one of the last civic institutions to transfer from depopulated seats we should imagine the population also resident on the hill by then. Indeed the brief excavation in 1974 recognised the existence of a probable late 5th century basilical foundation.

Paul mentions Iulium Carnicum twice, first when bishop Maxentius attended the Murano Council in 589, and again in 737 when bishop Amator, successor of Fidentius, asked permission to move to Cividale: by c.740 therefore Zuglio was perhaps all but abandoned.⁴⁶⁴ Mor identifies the castral seat in the S.Pietro zone, tracing part of its perimeter running from the church of the Madonna towards the valley; he takes the presence of a reddish mortar (lime with crushed brick) among the well-coursed stones to indicate a later 5th century date. If correct we have here a late Roman-Gothic fortress with episcopal seat, adopted in Byzantine (Fortunatus mistakenly calls it Forum Iulii) and Longobard times, and perhaps in disuse by the mid-8th century.⁴⁶⁵ However, it is interesting to see that the Honorantie civitatis Papie includes in its list of clusas an octava sanctus Petrus de Julia via de Montre Cruce, suggesting a revival of activity under the Carolingians.⁴⁶⁶

Our picture for the But valley is completed with the finds from Arta and around Tolmezzo. The former consist of skeletons beside the road near Chiusini, but without named finds. Similar is the case for 12 tombs at Illegio near the church of S. Floriano.⁴⁶⁷ Finally at Casanova, near the castello of S. Lorenzo, is the loc. Cort dal Salvan, where, beside the remains of a pentagonal structure, a set of military tombs were uncovered. These may be associated with the defence of the road at its entrance into the But.⁴⁶⁸

* * * * *

The excavations at Invillino confirm the sequence already postulated elsewhere in the Alps: in Friuli the Longobards were successors to a series of fortifications which had first been erected in the later Roman era as defensive installations along the roads leading into Italy, and which were consequently reused by both Ostrogoths and Byzantines. Under each the defensive requirements grew stronger as the external frontiers shifted ever closer to the present Italian confines, and presumably the defensive arrangements were accordingly expanded. The temporally brief occupation by both nations of such sites has left a minimal imprint (e.g. Goths: toponyms, funerary inscriptions - Osoppo, Zuglio - and finds - Invillino, Aquileia; Byzantines: Fortunatus' sites - Cividale, Ragogna, Osoppo, Zuglio - and finds - Nimis, Invillino), leaving us to extrapolate from the more extensive Longobard data. How accurate this method is cannot be proved without the aid of excavation, and so as yet we cannot securely regard Invillino, Castelseprio and Bellinzona as type-sites for the defensive sequence in the Alps. The likelihood remains strong, however. Thus, despite the assertions of Hartmann and Schneider, the Alpine 'limes' were not erected by Narses, but date back in various forms and guises to the Ostrogoths and late Romans

and to their respective Clusurae and Tractus Italiae circa Alpes.⁴⁶⁹ The Byzantines and Longobards thus represent single phases in an apparently continuous occupational and defensive sequence, and the contribution of each to the system of defence as a whole will be ascertained only through future detailed ground-work.

NOTES TO CHAPTER FOUR

A) SUSA AND THE COTTIAN ALPS.

1. See Chapter 3, notes 72-5. George of Cyprus names a kastron Sousas: Honigmann 1939, no.551; Conti 1975, p.49-50.
2. Excavations: Carducci 1938; 1941a; E. & L. Patria 1983, p.52. The walling which linked both Arch and aqueduct to the castello was largely removed in the 19th century.
3. See note 2. Carducci's work aimed at the retrieval of Roman sculptures, small finds and finewares; medieval coins were also found but were neither described nor dated. The cistern behind the gate-rooms should be 4th-5th century in date. Fish-bone walling: Coccoluto, Ricchebono, 1974, p.29-30.
4. Ibid. p.29-30; Crosseto et al. 1981, p.397; E. & L. Patria 1983, p.9, 45.
5. Crosseto et al. 1981, p.394f.
6. E. & L. Patria 1983, p.9-10, 39, 50: Exilles is identified with the pre-Roman oppidum of Excingomagus, and with Gessabone in Anon. Rav. IV, 30; Bardonecchia is equated with the geographer's Diovia.
7. Crosseto et al. 1981, p.375f.
8. E. & L. Patria 1983, p.10. See also Appendix Two.
9. Caprie: Ibid. p.9-10, 38. The whole valley maintained its military character through into modern times due to this border siting. Chiusa S. Michele monastery excavations: Guide Arch. Lat. 1982, p.57. The Novalesa monastery has an equally early origin: Wataghin, in Archeologia Medievale 1979, VI, p.294-317.
10. Crosseto et al. 1981, p.375-7, 391.
11. See Chapter 3, note 72.
12. Cf. Daviso 1952, p.247f; Conti 1964, p.307.
13. See section F, p.166f. Frankish attitude to events in the Alps: Buttner 1960, p.71f, showing King Guntram to be satisfied with these territorial gains in Italy, and not eager for conquest - the possession of these valleys safeguarded against further Longobard incursions into Francia.
14. Finds in the Turin region: von Hessen 1974, p.494f. Testona necropolis: von Hessen 1971.

15. On general finds from region: Guide Arch. Lat. 1982, p.12ff.
 16. A number of the towns were so devastated by these events that many moved to upland seats - eg. Pollenzo, Benevagienna and Libarna: Schmiedt 1974, p.544-70.
 17. Guide Arch. Lat. 1982, p.12f. See Schneider 1924, p.37 with refs. on the comitatus of Auriates and Bredulum. Roccavione excavations: NAM, 11 (Oct.1974), p.5.
 18. This is chiefly due to the lack of regional fieldwork: the Maddalena route cannot have been neglected by the Longobards. Cuneese finds: von Hessen 1974, p.506.
 19. Schneider 1924, p.152-3. Tortona has both Gothic (supporting the evidence of Cassiodorus' Variae) and Longobard material; the castrum walls may well be Gothic in date. Finds: Bierbrauer 1973b; Gallina 1980. Anon.Rav.IV,33 provides a confused list for this region, listing above Alba '1.Ororiatidis item, 2.Albis, 3.Polentia, 4.Pollentino, 5.Agodano, 6.Arnesi, 7.Diovia, 8. Capris'. The latter three may be Almese, Bardonecchia, and Caprie in the Susa valley (TIR 32).
- B) NORTHERN PIEMONTE AND THE AOSTA VALLEY.
20. Not.Dign. Occ.XLII,62; Anon.Rav.IV,30; Schmiedt 1974, p.536-43; Guide Arch. Lat. 1982, p.42-3.
 21. Anon.Rav.IV,30 (Schnetz 1939, p.66-7).
 22. Region in general: Guide Arch. Lat. 1982, p.40-86. Longobard findspots: von Hessen 1974, p.498f, gathering around Turin, Vercelli and Novara in particular.
 23. Carducci 1970; 1975-76; Scafile 1970; von Hessen 1974, p.502; Blake 1981, p.33; Guide Arch. Lat. 1982, p.70-1.
 24. Blake 1981, p.33.
 25. Cf. Guide Arch. Lat. 1982, p.70 on Orco valley.
 26. See MVRG reports 1975, 1977, Italy sections.
 27. On derivatives, see Giuliani 1930, p.75f. Discussed below, Chap.5, p.302.
 28. Schneider 1924, p.37 with note 2, p.151; Finocchi 1975-76.
 29. See Daviso 1952. See also Appendix Two on Aosta and Bard clusae.
 30. Carducci 1941b; Blake 1981, p.27. The tomb of bishop Agnellus (d.528) was found in S.Lorenzo, where should also lie the tombs of Gratus (d.470?) and Gallus (d.546). The christianization of

Aosta and the valley, and recent studies on S.Lorenzo are discussed in papers in Atti del 5 Congresso Nazionale di Archeologia Cristiana 1979. On Aosta see also Guide Arch. Lat. 1982, p.96-115.

31. Town walls: Guide Arch. Lat. 1982, p.98. On the survival of the early circuit: Johnson 1983, p.119; Ward-Perkins 1984, p.191f and note 44. Cf. also Barocelli 1970.
32. Daviso 1952; Coccoluto, Ricchebono 1974, p.32 also briefly note the medieval castelli of the valley. Valley finds in general: Guide Arch. Lat. 1982, p.87-124. We can also note the stray find of a coin of the Ostrogoth Baduela (541-552): Orlandoni 1975.
33. Schneider 1924, p.34, 151 nonetheless seeks to identify some Byzantine activity here.
34. Von Hessen, 1974, p.504, no.25. A necropolis of c.700^{tombs} shows a lengthy Roman presence here: Guide Arch. Lat. 1982, p.85-6.
35. Fedele 1975; Blake 1981, p.33-4.
36. Guide Arch. Lat. 1982, p.85-6.
37. Paul IV,3 - cf. Schneider 1924, p.24. On his seat, see d'Oldenico 1971, p.316 with notes.
38. Ibid. p.312-5 on the basis of finds. For finds at Gravelona Toce, see Carducci 1968, p.48-9.
39. Schneider 1924, p.32-3 saw the finis as a Byzantine institution and records the finis Statzonenses documented in 807, and the comitatus in 1185, when, along with those of Seprio, Martesana, Lecco and Burgaria, it was given to Milan.
40. Al Motterone finds consist of 2 lanceheads and an axe, and Gurro of 2 axes and 2 Lavez vessels: von Hessen, 1974.
41. 1924, p.33 with note 2.
42. See note 20 above.
43. Pombia is recorded in Anon. Rav. IV,30; cf. d'Oldenico 1971. On the Pombia - Castel Novate pairing see Schmiedt 1974, p.536f. The Novate necropolis lies near the church of S.Eusebio.
44. Enn. CCLX:Carm.2,110 - MGH, AA,VII, p.201.
45. D'Oldenico 1971, p.316 considering Berengar's activities here; on walls see p.323f.
46. 1924, p.33-4 - finis first mentioned in 747; Schmiedt 1974, p.537f; d'Oldenico 1971, p.316, 320f.

47. The 'antiretico' limes: *ibid.* p.341, note 9. Castelletto Finds: Blake 1981, p.34.
48. See von Hessen, Calderini 1974, p.1109-11; Bierbrauer 1978, p.213f.

C) CASTELSEPRIO AND NORTH-WEST LOMBARDY.

49. Schneider 1924, p.30-2.
50. Cf. Ward-Perkins 1983, p.114f. Excavations at Castelseprio: see list in Brogiolo, Lusuardi Siena 1980, p.476 with figs.2 & 3, showing that not all work has been published, and often publications are merely preliminary reports. Most useful are: Leciejewicz et al. 1965; Kurnatowski et al. 1968; Dejana 1968; Dejana, Sironi 1973-75; Mirabella Roberti 1973-75; Dabrowska et al. 1978-79; Brogiolo, Lusuardi Siena 1980. Shorter summaries: Schmiedt 1968, p.896-7; Mirabella Roberti 1976, p.209-10; Lusuardi Siena 1978, p.32-3; Melucco Vaccaro 1982, p. 156-8; Guide Arch. Lat. 1982, p.323-6.
51. Documentation: see note 49. Anon.Rav.IV,30 lists it between Novara and Como, 'ad partem inferioris Italiae'.
52. Indeed, Brogiolo, Lusuardi Siena 1980, p.488-9 suggest that the near-total absence of finds of the post-Longobard period upto the late 13th century may be due to the removal of the medieval levels during the unpublished 1950s campaigns. Cf. Dabrowska et al. 1978-79, p.130.
53. The same dimensions appear in the south-east circuit tower: though not thought to belong to this initial late Roman phase, it is interesting to note the presence of both split cobbles and Roman spolia (including inscriptions) (pl.10) - a feature generally absent in the curtain. In addition, a 4th century terra sigillata plate sherd was found in this tower's base: Brogiolo, Lusuardi Siena 1980, p.486f.
54. 4th century material comes from near External Tower 2, and the south-east corner tower; also present are some indecipherable bronze coins: Dejana, Sironi 1973-75, p.327f; Mirabella Roberti 1973-75, p.431f; Brogiolo, Lusuardi Siena 1980, p.486f, 498.
55. Cf. Mirabella Roberti 1973-75, p.432; and now also Dabrowska et al. 1978-79, p.93, 128.
56. Brogiolo, Lusuardi Siena 1980, p.498.
57. *Ibid.* p.496f: cf.excavations in External Tower 2: Dejana, Sironi 1973-75, p.327f; External Tower 1, where at the end of Phase 2 after a fire which part-destroyed the tower, a thin L-shaped wall was built to transform it into a habitation: *ibid.* p.334f.
58. von Hessen,Calderini 1974, p.1110; Brogiolo, Lusuardi Siena 1980, p.498. Some stamped potsherds may, however, be Longobardic.

59. Pozzo perdente: Leciejewicz et al. 1965, p.158-60; Brogiolo, Lusuardi Siena 1980, p.494-5; Dabrowska et al. 1978-79, p.6-34. Tremiss of Justinian: ibid., p.117-8 with note 43.
60. Brogiolo, Lusuardi Siena 1980, p.498.
61. Ibid. p.480f, n.b. p.481-2.
62. Ibid. fig.11,4. Cf. types from Invillino: Fingerlin et al. 1968, p.104, fig.8,10-1.
63. Von Hessen, Calderini 1974, p.1110-1; Guide Arch. Lat. 1982, p.321f. 7th century Longobard tombs from Arsago, Sesto, and Varese.
64. See Mirabella Roberti 1975, p.92.
65. Roderò: Basega 1937, p.7f; TIR L32 (Milano); Zecchinelli 1969, p.165. The tower is 9.84 x 9.84m, with walls 2.8m thick at base; Roman sherds should indicate a Roman origin to cistern and circuit.
66. Von Hessen, Calderini 1974, p.1109-10 on Leggiuno, Ligurino Portovaltravaglia; Guide Arch. Lat. 1982, p.321f.
67. 1924, p.27-32, 149.
68. CIL,V.5418 - unless Laino was his birthplace. Laino:, below, section E, p.146-7.
69. And perhaps also Castro on Lake Iseo. Not.Dign. Occ.XLII notes a praefectus classis for Como, Aquileia, Ravenna and Miseno.
70. 590 invasion: Paul III,31; Greg. Hist.Franc.X,3. In 354 Constans I pushed the Alemanni back to defeat them near Bellinzona.
71. Crivelli 1944, p.938. Surregio has an 8th century phase to its church: Donati 1978.
72. Bognetti 1958. S.Pietro: Baserga 1929; Donati 1978, p.169 with plates LXXIX-LXXXVI; Schwab 1979. S.Abbondio: Crivelli 1944, p.938.
73. Bognetti 1958.
74. Donati 1978, p.166 with plates LV-LVII; the church lies near a mid-late Roman necropolis.
75. Ibid. p.167-8, plates LXIV-LXXV. A Gothic castellum?

D) BELLINZONA AND THE UPPER CANTON TICINO.

76. Meyer 1976, p.12.

77. Ibid. n.b. p.20-32. Burnt level, p.20-5; cemetery, p.25f.
78. Ibid. defences, p.39-46; medieval walls, p.47f. See also summary in Donati 1978, p.165-6.
79. The work in fact focussed on the exterior of M8.
80. This collapse is poorly recorded in Meyer: p.24-5; depicted in figs.7, 19. See sections Q15, 16, 19, 20.
81. Burnt level: Ibid. p.20-5.
82. Ibid. p.47f.
83. 1976, p.72f; See fig.43, p.96.
84. 1981, p.35-6.
85. Meyer 1976, summaries on Roman phase p.130-2; late Roman - Byzantine epoch p.132-4; early medieval - Carolingian phase p.134-6. Narses' restoration p.133.
86. Paul III,31 - Bilitionis castrum; Greg. Hist. Franc.X,3 - Bilitionem huius urbis castrum, in campis situm Caninis.
87. Donati 1978, p.165, plates L-LII.
88. Castel Grande houses (also with Lavez): ibid. p.165-6, with plates LIII-LIV. Carasso: Donati 1969, p.52f, with pottery of late Roman tradition. Late Roman tombs are known nearby.
89. Baserga 1929; Crivelli 1944, p.938.
90. Gerster 1969.
91. Excavations were intermittent between 1941-45: ibid. p.117-9.
92. Ibid. p.120-6, 142-5.
93. Defences: ibid. p.126-37, with figs.16-26; reconstruction of towers and circuit: p.140-2.
94. Ibid. p.134-7, fig.27 p.136. Castelseprio-Torba defences: Rotondi Secchi Tarugi 1973, p.87-8. Both also have internal cisterns.
95. 1969, p.145-9.
96. Cf. Ibid. p.149, and fig.41, p.148.
97. Tegna - Ascona pottery: Blake 1981, p.36. Crep da Caslac: Meyer 1976, p.133, note 19. Vedretto: Crivelli 1944, p.938. Gudo: Schwab 1979.

98. Finds include jewellery, an umbo and a coin of Aripert (702-12): Baserga 1929; Crivelli 1944, p.937; Schwab 1979. Many unfurnished graves were also present.
99. 1944, p.938. Also, an early medieval church is known at Airolo: Donati 1969, p.50-1; 1978.
100. The tombs were east-west orientated slab-tombs, grouped around a small cult-building: Baserga 1929; Crivelli 1944, p.938.
101. Cavagnago: Donati 1969, p.66-9. Mesocco: Crivelli 1944, p.938; Donati 1969, p.62; Meyer 1976, p.12. Crivelli also records a brooch from Soazza and a Seprio-minted coin of Charlemagne from Grono.

E) COMO, THE LAKE , AND THE ZONE OF CHIAVENNA.

102. On finds in general in zone: Guide Arch Lat. 1982, p.326-337. S.Marta: Baserga 1927, p.110; von Hessen, Calderini 1974, p.1111. Palazzo Vescovile: Guide Arch. Lat. 1982, p.329.
103. Much spolia appears near the Porta Praetoria, notably at the tower in via Cinque Giornate: Luraschi 1977, p.55-6; Guide Arch. Lat. 1982, p.327. The most significant element of the Diocletianic work is the Porta Praetoria, (located in via Cesare Cantu), featuring octagonal gatetowers.
104. CIL,V.5402ff. Inscriptions of 546 and 547: nos. 5427, 5411; of 556: no. 5403. Other fragments, undated, may also belong to these phases.
105. Procop. VI,xii, xxi. Paul notes Como only as the name of the lake: V,38.
106. Above, note 69. Cf. Zecchinelli 1969, p.167.
107. Anon. Rav. IV,30 lists Bellitiona, Omula, Clevenne, where Omula is perhaps a corruption of ad Comum lacum; Como is recorded separately between Sibrium and Mediolanum; cf. Schneider 1924, p.24-5. See above p.138 on Sibrium, though Borgi 1971, note 39, p.244 considers Comacina solely a fortress subordinate to Como, adopted by Francio after Como fell.
108. CIL,V.5418, (in Museo Giovio, Como). Johnson 1983, p.242 mistakenly attributes this to a bishop of Milan building a castrum on an island in lake Como.
109. Cf. S.Vittore e S.Sabina at Genoa, post-568: Lamboglia, Uzzechini 1960-61.
110. See above, p.47f; Pringle 1981, p.91-2, on initiative. Yet 556 could equally relate to Gothic rule here, and represent the construction of a fort to meet the Byzantine threat. Presumably Marcellinus

was buried at Laino, for the inscription says 'hunc castrum'.

111. Von Hessen, Calderini 1974, p.1111.
112. 1969, p.161, 165-6. Castiglione: Schneider 1924, p.31-2.
113. Paul III,27: this siege may be linked to a counter-offensive in response to an attempted Austrasian Frankish invasion in 588: cf. Buttner 1960, p.77. Paul VI,19 also calls it insula Commacina.
114. Honigmann 1939, no.547; Conti 1975, p.44-5; and 1964, p.311f.
115. Ibid. p.305-14.
116. Gaidulf: Paul IV,3; Cunicpert: V,38; Ansprand (a nobleman who aided many dukes in the early 700s): VI,19.
117. Paul VI,21.
118. MGH,Epp. Austr. III, 117, n.6.
119. Mirabella Roberti 1960, p.139.
120. Ibid. 1960; 1961; Guide Arch. Lat. 1982, p.334-5.
121. Mirabella Roberti 1960, p.138-40.
122. CIL,V. AD 535, 554 inscriptions: nos. 5232, 5231; of 571: nos. 5229, 5230 (to Cyprian and Laurentius respectively).
123. Zecchinelli 1969, p. 163-4.
124. Ibid. p.163. The pieve at Spurano contains much Roman spolia: Guide Arch. Lat. 1982, p.335.
125. Ossuccio: Baserga 1927, p.183; von Hessen, Calderini 1974, p.1111. Griante: Bierbrauer 1978, p.216, 223.
126. A medieval castello, with supposed Roman origin, guards the valley outlet (Zecchinelli 1969, p.165), while at the Lugano end Poriezza has many late Roman finds (TIR L32, 1966).
127. 1969, p.166-7; Guide Arch. Lat. 1982, p.336.
128. Finds: ibid. p.336. Inscriptions of 484 and 501: CIL,V.5241.
129. VI,21.
130. Schneider 1924, p.26; Duparc 1951, p.16-7, showing the clusae named again in 901: he locates these at the bar of Promontogno.
131. An Avar toponym is postulated at Averro in Val Virasca, recorded in medieval texts as Vallis Averi: Mastrelli 1978. Conti 1975,

- p.45-6 locates George of Cyprus' kastron Moulion (no.548) at Castel Mur in val Bregaglia, but lacks proof.
132. Zecchinelli 1969, p.164-5; Paul's words, however, suggest a siting between Mantua and Cremona, in the vicinity of Parma, for its garrison set fire to Brescello as they retreated: IV,28; cf.Schneider 1924, p.69-71.
133. Pensa 1974-75, dating p.164, site p.152f.
134. Zecchinelli 1969, p.163-4.
135. 1971, p.211f.
136. 1924, p.32 on Lecco documentation and name; Bognetti 1948, p.141; 1958-59, p.74; Borghi 1971, p.244-5 note 40; and Brown 1978, p.328, and 1984, p.44 on rechristening of forts by Byzantine troops, as at Bomarzo-Polymartium, and Città di Castello-castellum Felicitatis.
137. Borghi 1971, p.220; cf. Patitucci Uggeri 1974, p.133.
138. Borghi 1971, p.225f.
139. 1971, p.230.
140. Inscription: CIL. V.5214. Pilaster: Bognetti 1948, p.142; Borghi 1971, p.230-1. The additional apse was added at some stage to hold an altar to S.Bernardo.
141. 1971, p.232f, and notes 29-31 p.242. Nb. the circuit lacks spolia. Lake defence: Zecchinelli 1969.
142. 1971, p.233-4, and note 32 p.243; but the good state of preservation of the S.Stefano castello may argue against its eventual Longobard destruction. George of Cyprus omits Lecco, but this does not deny a resistance upto 575.
143. Borghi 1971, p.235f.
144. George of Cyprus no.552: Honigmann 1939, p.52; Conti 1975, p.50-1. Tomb: von Hessen, Calderini 1974, p.1111.
145. Brogiolo, Lusuardi Siena 1980, p.490; Guide Arch. Lat. 1982, p.337.
146. von Hessen, Calderini 1974, p.1111, nos.16, 17. In the Bora valley, the grotta del Buco del Piombo may be a late antique refuge: Guide Arch. Lat. 1982, p.336; Conti 1975, p.51 claims that 'quel "buco del piombo"...era sbarrato da un muro tipicamente bizantino'.
147. Mastrelli 1978.

148. Cf. Conti 1964; see below, section F.
149. Conti 1964, p.310-1 on Teglione and its location. Ennodius calls the valley Tellina Vallis in 521: CCXL (Opusc.4), 15 - MGH, AA, 7, p.187, line 13.
150. See note 132 above.
151. Pensa 1974-75, p.163-4. Bormio is mentioned by Cassiodorus for its spa: Var.X,29. Behind Teglione is the pairing of Chiuso - Castello dell'Acqua.
152. Mastrelli 1978.
153. 1924, p.29-30, 149.
154. Von Hessen, Calderini 1974, p.1115-6 (p.1116 for Valcamonica); Lozzio is the northernmost findspot (no.46). P.1107-9 briefly discusses the duchies of Bergamo and Brescia.
155. *ibid.* p.1115, no.48. Nearby are Erbanno (47) and Darfo (49); also in the Lago d'Iseo zone there is a solitary rich tomb at Colognola (38), and indigenous tombs at Iseo (Notiziario 1981, July 1982, Soprintend. Arch. della Lombardia, p.135-7; also discussing Villa Carcina, p.142-3).
156. 1924, p.28-30.
157. Mastrelli 1978, p.46, with figs.2, 3: names are mainly derived from braidà (upto Lozzio) and gahagi (upto Edölo, especially dense east of Lago d'Iseo and to the west of Lago di Garda). There are no fara names, and arimanni appear only at Salö and castello di Calavagose, east of Brescia (Schneider 1924, p.148).

F) THE TRENTINO.

158. Greg. Reg.IX,52. Paul's references to Secundus: III,28; IV,27; IV,40. III,28 refers to his Historia, while IV,40 mentions that Secundus 'succinctam de Langobardorum gestis composuit histori-
olam'. See also Schneider 1924, p.15-6; Wickham 1981, p.65-6.
159. On arguments concerning identifications: Malfatti 1883; Hartmann 1899; Egger 1901; Schneider 1924, p.20f.
160. See above, Chap.3, p.105 .
161. Ven.Fort. Vita S.Mart.IV,644-6 (MGH, AA, 41, p.368): 'si vacat
ire viam neque te Baiouarius obstat,qua vicina sedent Breonum
loca, perge per Alpem, ingrediens rapido qua gurgite voluitur
Aenus'; cf. Egger 1901, p.378f; Wopfner 1925, p.373f.
162. III,9.

163. 1883, p.299f.
164. Paul III,31; Egger 1901, p.391f.
165. On marriage alliances with Bavarii, see Chap.3 p.112-3 with notes. See Egger 1901, p.380-1, 395; Malfatti 1883, p.340.
166. Egger 1901, p.380; cf. Malfatti 1883, p.308f.
167. On roads see TIR L32: 1966, Claudia Augusta, via. Altino road: Anti 1956.
168. Roman finds from Trento: Guide Arch. LAt. 1981, p.183-8. Villa: p.184-5.
169. Hoard: Bierbrauer 1978, p.214, and fig.16 p.240.
170. Var.III,48.
171. CIL,V.4998. Rogger 1975, p.25-31.
172. Var.III,48: 'Leodifrido Saioni nostro praesenti delegavimus iussione, ut eius instantia in Verruca castello vobis domicilia construatis'.
173. Oberziner 1900; Rogger 1975, p.25-31. Eugipius was bishop between 536 and 544, which may indicate a transfer of the bishop's seat to Verruca at the start of the Gothic War. But the Censorius inscription within S.Vigilio may reveal a consequent return to the plain. Cf. Boschi 1980, n.18.
174. Trento granary: Var.X,27, (A.D. 535). Extensive standing brick and stone structures within the circuit of the castello hill at Tortona may belong to the granary (pers. obs.).
175. III,48: 'in mediis campis tumulus saxeus in rotunditate consurgens.. totus mons quasi una turris efficitur'.
176. Paul III,31, presuming no transfer of their seats to the fortress.
177. Ibid.: 'Pro Ferruge vero castro, intercedentibus episcopis Ingenuino de Savione et Agnello de Tridento, data est redemptio, per capud uniuscuiusque viri solidus unus usque ad solidos sexcentos'. Trento has some military belt-pieces: Roberti 1951, p.355, (listing other casual finds from here). Malfatti 1881, p.334f. suggested that Cedinus did not beseige Verruca or Ewin in Trento, but was bribed off: this would have been tactically dangerous for the Franks, who could not afford to leave Trento uncaptured, and we should rather assume the installation of their own garrison to ensure their passage. Unlike the other forts listed, Verruca is not named as destroyed.
178. Early Longobard tombs: Roberti 1951, p.354-5. Later tombs: Ibid. 1922: west-east orientated stone slab tomb, containing spatha,

- spur and lance-head of olive-leaf section, gilded bronze shield-umbo, and multiple silver-inlaid belt-pieces; also Ciurletti 1980, p.360-3 with plates 5, 11.
179. Cf. Boschi 1980, plate 1.
180. Ibid. 1980.
181. Schneider 1924, p.22-3: in 942 Gardo oppido, 962 Gard castellum, and named as civitas between Sirmio and Ligeris in Anon. Rav. IV,30.
182. Schneider 1924, p.143f.
183. Ibid. p.145f: include Fumane, Ceraino, Castelrotto, and Breonio.
184. Veronese arimanni: ibid. p.146f. Late antique evidence emerged in the excavations at the Cortile del Tribunale and at via Dante, Verona: Hudson, La Rocca Hudson 1982-3; 1985.
185. See Appendix Two on the Chiusa di Verona; also Duparc 1951, p.17-8; Hudson, La Rocca Hudson 1982, p.22f.
186. Earlier excavations: Barfield 1964, nb. p.79f. Latest work: Hudson, La Rocca Hudson 1982, p.11f.
187. Ibid. p.17f on house; p.21f on finds, and figs.4,5.
188. Ibid. p.19.
189. 1964, p.1, 88-91, and pl.1b; Roman finds derive from a mansio at Brentino: Hudson, La Rocca Hudson 1982, p.17. The name Monte Castello may recognise a late antique castellum - but if so it seems strange why the Longobards did not reoccupy an existing site: perhaps Rivoli appeared more suited to their needs. My thanks to Dr. Hudson for information regarding the defensive role of both Rivoli and M.Castello.
190. Sirmione was the site of a villa of Catullus - still recognised in the local name Grotte di Catullo: Guide Arch. Lat.1982, p.255-9.
191. Anon.Rav.IV,30; Schneider 1924, p.23-4. Blake 1981, p.24 notes late Roman vessels in association with early 4th cent. coins.
192. Hartmann 1899, p.4-5, with ref. to the local historian Orti-Manara (1856), considering (as Schmiedt 1968) this circuit to be Byzantine.
193. Schmiedt 1968, p.895-6; tombs: von Hessen, Calderini 1974, p.1118.
194. Egger 1901, p.390; cf. Malfatti 1883, p.320. Egger against Hartmann: p.397f.

195. Padenghe: Bierbrauer 1978, p.213, 216; Not.Scavi 1885, p.336f. Manerba di Garda: Bazalgette 1980-81, p.51; Carver, Massa, Brogiolo 1982.
196. Hartmann 1899, p.5-6 on siting of Fasano.
197. Roberti 1951, p.351. Inscription: CIL,V.4998.
198. Boschi 1980.
199. Roberti 1951, p.350, 353. Similar Longobard period tombs lie north of the Val di Ledro at Locca, Enguiso and Lenzumo: p.346-7 (most with dress items).
200. Ibid. lists many finds, n.b. 8th century sculptured Christian reliefs from Premione, Stenico, Vigo Lomaso, Seo, Lundo, Tenno and Vognola; also 'barbarian tombs' from Arco, Ceniga (a few weapons from S.Sisto, Arco).
201. TIR L32, 1966: Condino.
202. Roberti 1951, p.343; Manzano finds p.348; Mori p.349.
203. 1899, p.7-8.
204. Site and documentation: Gorfer 1977, p.139f. Longobard tombs: Roberti 1951, p.347.
205. Weapons now at Rovereto: Gorfer 1977, p.259.
206. III,9.
207. Honigmann 1939, p.51-2; Conti 1975, p.49-52: Susa no.551; Mart 552; Anagnis 553. Cf. Conti 1964.
208. MGH, SRL, p.25, n.3: 'acta sunt omnia in civitate tridentina in loco Anagnis'
209. Goffart 1957, p.82-7, summarises succinctly the various intrigues and relations between Franks and Byzantines in this epoch; Buttner 1960, p.71-4; Conti 1964, p.307-8. Noticeably the Emperor did not complain to Guntram over the occupation of the former imperial lands of Susa and Aosta.
210. Goffart 1957, p.80f: cf. Menander Prot. 25, 29, on buying up the enemy. See also Buttner 1960, p.75 (who like Conti sees the Anagnis episode occurring in 575)
211. Payment and invasion: Greg. Hist.Franc.VI,42. Goffart 1957, p.105f, 114; Buttner 1960, p.76f. 'Paul introduces III,9 with the temporal clause his diebus, which could refer to any time .. after 575 (III,8 records the death of Sigebert); the marriage of

Ewin to Garibald's daughter recorded afterwards belongs to the mid-580s: Malfatti 1883, p.300f; Egger 1901, p.380f.

212. Conti 1964.
213. Ibid. p.305.
214. Ibid. p.306-7.
215. Ibid. p.307.
216. Egger 1901, p.384; Conti seeks their entry above Chiavenna, but this is unnecessary, as the Julier would have been quicker, and easier if Byzantium held bases in the Valtellina (p.311).
217. The Mendola road evaded strongholds like Tesimo, Meltina (Conti's Maletum), Appiano, Egna, and Bolzano, and also the flood-prone mid-Adige: Conti 1964, p.308-10; Ciurletti 1980, p.370-1. Roberti 1951 lists some findspots in the Non and Mendola zone: see below.
218. Cf. Conti 1964, p.315-8, and below, p.180, with notes 273-4.
219. Malfatti 1883, p.308 records the 19th century discovery of many weapons, coins and skeletons of 'Longobard-Frankish origin' at Salorno, perhaps from this battle. No evidence of these finds survive.
220. Paul's expression that Nanno lay super Tridentinum in confinio Italia is probably his own approximation of the frontier either in 584 or at the time of writing.
221. Invasions: Greg. Hist.Franc.VI,42; VIII,18; IX,29; Paul III,17, 22, 29; Egger 1901, p.385; Goffart 1957, p.110f.
222. Paul III,31; Greg. HF.X,3, claiming Byzantine failure to combine with Audovaldus; MGH, Epp.III, Austr.40, 41: Byzantine complaints over Frankish failure to fulfil plan. Paul and Gregory both refer to an invasion force with 20 Frankish duces, yet the forces under Audovaldus and Cedinus had 6 and 13 dukes respectively. Cf. Malfatti 1883, p.311f; Goffart 1957, p.114f on background; Buttner 1960, p.79-81.
223. N.B. Goffart 1957.
224. III,31.
225. 1899 - against which see Egger 1901, p.397f. See Malfatti 1883, p.317 on order, though again some of his identifications for the Upper Adige are dubious.
226. Greg. HF.X,3 describes Olo's attack on Bellinzona, Audovaldus'

march on Milan, and Cedinus' advance on Verona, recording for the latter 'quinque castella cepit, a quibus etiam sacramenta exegit' - these 5 castella may refer to forts taken in the Trentino campaign for which Gregory seemingly received limited information, or alternatively sites captured before entry into the Trentino: cf. Malfatti 1883, p.312 on sources; Egger 1901, p.386-7 seeing the forts falling on the march to the Tonale.

- 227. Ibid. p.386-7.
- 228. 1883, p.314f.
- 229. Mendola and finds: note 217.
- 230. Ossana, Deggiano: Hartmann 1899; Egger 1901, p.387. Sermiana: cf. Malfatti 1883, p.320.
- 231. Ibid. p.319; Conti 1964, choosing Meltina. Against these: Egger 1901, p.396.
- 232. Hartmann 1899, p.9-10.
- 233. See Map 4. Finds listed in Roberti 1951, nb. p.352 (S.Romedio, Seio), 345 (Cloz). Rasmø 1962, p.204f regards San Romedio as a possible late antique refuge, along with the ridge of S.Biagio near Romallo.
- 234. See refs. in TIR L32, 1966.
- 235. Cf. Rasmø 1962, p.204f; Conti 1964, who attempts to identify the Longobard defensive organisation in the zone, considering the Romeno - Caldaro sector a gastaldia (p.309-10).
- 236. As noted (note 230), the Tesana = Ossano/Deggiano identification should be dismissed, though each has a medieval castello.
- 237. Malfatti 1883, p.320; Egger 1901, p.390.
- 238. Rasmø 1973. In 1160 it is named as in Piano, in 1248 in Epiano, leading to the modern German form. De Campi 1909, p.127 notes a 7th century buckle from here.
- 239. Rasmø 1962, p.204f.
- 240. Malfatti 1883, p.329f; TIR L32, 1966: Endidae.
- 241. 1962, p.198: the dedications to S.Vigilio are of late 4th-early 5th century.
- 242. Ibid. p.197-8.
- 243. Paul III, 26, 31 calls Sabiona Sabia; its bishop's involvement in

the negotiations of 590-1 for the return of prisoners shows the continued vitality of this seat - Egger 1901, p.391-3. The first use of the name Chiusa may be of late Longobard or Carolingian date. Basilica: Rasmo 1962, p.196-7. Around Bresanone we note a number of undated castello sites: Castel S.Pietro, Castel Taso, Castel di Strada: TIR L32, Fortezza.

244. At Merano, the Torre Pertanes is ascribed a Roman origin: TIR L32, 1966 Maiense-Merano. In the Venosta we have the early churches of S.Vigilio at Morter, Merano, and Malles, and that of S.Sisinio at Lasa: Rasmo 1962, p.200. Malles also has the early Carolingian church of S.Benedicto: Ibid. 1981.
245. 1954, p.216f. Drau limes: Jantsch 1938, p.337f.
246. III,31; IV,39 (Bavarii in Pusteria); V,36; VI,58 - Malfatti 1883, p.339-40. Paul V,36 (for 680): 'Hic dum dux esset in Tredentina civitate, cum civitate Baioaviorum, quem illi gravionem dicunt, qui Bauzanum et reliqua castella regebat, confligit eum-que mirifice superavit'. On the Bavar occupation of the S.Tyrol and Bolzano district: Egger 1901, p.395-7. Longobard finds from Civezzano, Besenello, and elsewhere do show much Bavar influence in the later 7th century, suggesting much cultural contact: Ciurletti 1980, p.368-9. A useful summary of finds in the Bolzano district with regard to settlement appears in Loose 1975-76.
247. Roberti 1951, p.351; Ciurletti 1980, p.366-7.
248. Roberti 1951, p.348-9.
249. Ibid. p.357 (mainly ornaments); Gothic Brooch: Werner 1961, p.600.
250. Malfatti 1883, p.322-4 on names and derivations; Hartmann 1899, p.11; Egger 1901, p.389f.
251. Fai was also proposed - occupying a high plain (950m) on the opposite bank - but the name is too short to have evolved from Fagitana; the site does have Longobard finds though: Roberti 1951, p.346. Nearby S.Michele all'Adige has a late Roman - barbarian necropolis: p.352; Ciurletti 1980, p.357-8.
252. Unless to be sought on Dos Caslir (641m) or Casteleri di Lona: the former with both Gallic and Roman finds - Gorfer 1977, p.402.
253. Lavis finds: Ciurletti 1980, p.359-60. Castello: Gorfer 1977, p.375.
254. Roberti 1951, p.350. Gorfer 1977, p.402f notes nearby Lisignano with the toponyms Val dei Pagani and Castel.

255. Dal Ri, Leonardi 1974-75, n.b. p.129f; Gorfer 1977, p.559. See also Egger 1901, p.397 on Fiemme-Fleims.
256. Schneider 1924, p.141-2. TIR L32, 1966: Monte Pergol records the nearby finding of a Roman inscription marking the confine between Feltre and Trento.
257. De Campi 1909; Roberti 1951, p.344-5; Pauli 1984, p.141, with fig.81 p.144. The finds were made in 1885 in loc.Foss.
258. 1902 finds, Castel Telvana: see note 257; ornaments included bronze basins, brooches, buckles, necklace beads, earrings, and comb. Site discussed in Gorfer 1977, p.453f; Ciurletti 1980, p.370.
259. Roberti 1951, p.350; Gorfer 1977, p.810. Schneider 1924, p.142 notes the presence of arimanni in 1166, and at Vattaro to the south in 1242.
260. Valsugana in general: Gorfer 1977, p.783f. Bellunese sites: below, section G, and Chap.5, section A.
261. Roberti 1925, p.210f; 1951, p.357, noting a post-Roman bas-relief from Vigolo; Ciurletti 1980, p.356-7.
262. Gorfer 1977, p.839 noting finds from township.
263. Levico, Castel Selva: *ibid.* p.871 Roman coin finds. Novaledo: p.873-4 - the town is said to overlie a citta pagana, and the Tor Quadra lies at the centre of the Carezar hollow, the Clusa Xichi (14th century Chiusa Sicone). Marter: p.874.
264. Finds: Roberti 1951, p.325; Gorfer 1977, p.883f. One round tower at the valley end may belong to the earliest circuit.
265. These cannot now be traced in the Trento museum: Ciurletti 1980, p.368, n.31. Cf. Roberti 1951, p.353.
266. Tesino valley: Gorfer 1977, p.931f; pagan road: p.957.
267. Inscriptions: CIL,V.5002-5. Presumably the name derives from a personal name like Vettius. Castello location: Malfatti 1883, p.324-5. Wall remains at loc.Ciago, and burials at loc. San Valentino locate the Roman site: TIR L32. Hartmann 1899, p.8-9 notes an inscription of 860 in the church, recording the beati Valentini.
268. Ciago: Roberti 1951, p.344; Terlagio p.353; Sopramonte: p.352.
269. Schneider 1924, p.142.
270. The Franks are unlikely to have destroyed the castra as Paul relates, but rather captured and garrisoned them with their own troops.

271. Paul III,9: comes Langobardorum de Lagare, Ragilo nomine.
272. Anon.Rav.IV,30. In 1154 it was de Lagari, and de Lagaro in 1316: Malfatti 1883, p.304 n.1; Hartmann 1899, p.8.
273. 1964, p.315f, n.b. p.316-7.
274. Ibid. p.318. Malfatti 1883, p.305 thought Ewin was absent from Trento initially, but this view is unsubstantiated.
275. Finds include coins (Augustus - Aurelian), 4th century rings, a 6th-7th century peacock brooch (autochthonous item), and a 5-knobbed fan brooch: Roberti 1951, p.357; Gorfer 1977, p.234.
276. Ibid. p.240f. (Commodus - Gallienus).
277. Roberti 1951, p.349, 343.
278. Rigotti 1975, n.b. conclusions p.286-7. One stray tomb at Servis found in the 1960s yielded a rusted sword: p.261.
279. Though a buckle with Bavar influence is present: Perini 1975, p.350-3 (cf. Roberti 1951, p.351).
280. Finds: ibid. p.351.
281. Malfatti 1883, p.328-9; Hartmann 1899, p.8. Perhaps sited on Dos de Gardole?
282. Ciurletti 1980, finds: p.363-6; siting: p.370 with note 36. The actual castello, however, appears of 12th cent. date.
283. MGH, Epp.III Austr. 40 (cf. note 222 above).
284. Mor 1979b. (Mor 1981, however, expresses doubts on this).
285. Ibid. p.138-9. To these points he adds Velo Veronese and Velo d'Astico.

G) THE FELTRINO - BELLUNESE - CENEDESE.

286. Roads: Anti 1956; Guide Arch. Lat. 1981, p.196f; and note 266 above. Anon. Rav.IV,30 records 'Item desuper' (i.e. above Vicenza, Padua, Altino, Concordia, Tarvisium, Oderzo) sunt civitates, id est: 10. Filtrio 11. Susonnia 12. Ceneda 13. Aquillieia 14. Foroiulium.'
287. See refs. in TIR L32, 1966. Also: Anti 1956, p.504-5. Arten hoard: Ferrerio 1975, p.56-7, regarding it as part of a Byzantine commander's war booty from the Africa Campaigns.

288. Guide Arch. Lat. 1981, p.198-9.
289. Cass. Var.V,9. Ward-Perkins 1984, p.194 erroneously states it refers to construction of a castrum. Malfatti 1883, note 3, p.299, as many others since, thought the work connected with the building activity at Verruca (III,48).
290. Not. Dign. Occ. XLII (Seeck 1876, p.218).
291. Zumelle: Alpago-Novello 1956. Castelvint: Anti 1956; Alpago-Novello 1976, p.65f. The site has coins of Justinian and Justin II which should testify to the Byzantine occupation - Ferrerio 1975, p.58-60.
292. Valmarino: Anti 1956, p.504. Baldenica, from where come two 6th -7th cent. plutei: Ferrerio 1975, p.65.
293. Fabbiani 1968; 1976.
294. TIR L33, 1961: Cor: Ferrerio 1975, p.60-2 argues for a Byzantine fortification; Below, Chap. 5, section A.
295. Barnabo (Not. Scavi) 1881, p.155-61.
296. III,26.
297. Below Chap. 5, section A.
298. Leuthari's death: Agathias II,iii. Longobard occupation of inland Venetia: Paul II,9-14.
299. 1952, p.304f. Arimanni locations also noted in Schneider 1924, p.141.
300. Fasoli 1952, p.303-4; p.312f. on Longobard advance on Padua.
301. Similarly the presence of late arimannic references is irrelevant. Longobard finds derive chiefly from around Vicenza: Sovizzo, Dueville (Not. Scavi 1921, p.291f), Sandrigo. Fasoli 1952, p.309.
302. Schneider 1924, p.140-1.
303. Findspots noted in Ferrerio 1975, p.62-3; Polpet: Fabbiani 1968, p.164; Castellin: Not. Scavi 1882, p.291; Lozzo: see note 295.

H) THE DEFENCE OF THE NORTH-EAST CORRIDOR.

304. Chap. 3, section A.
305. Cf. Šašel and Petru 1971, sections XXI-XXIV p.86-90 (The wall at Rattendorf is called the 'Pagan Wall'.); Johnson 1983, p.220.

H:i) NORICUM AND THE DRAU LIMES

307. See Alföldy's summary of later Roman Noricum: 1974, p.213f.
308. Ibid. p.220-4.
309. Ibid. p.226; the few northern hill-top sites: p.217.
310. Jantsch 1938, p.366-9; Alföldy 1974, p.215.
311. Metropolis Norici: Vita S. Sev. 21,2. Mosaic: naming Ursus vir spectabilis and his wife Ursina: Alföldy 1974, p.216; cf. Pauli 1980, p.70,213, and plate 126, p.216.
312. 1974, p.216-7.
313. Excavations and sites: Egger 1929; Miltner 1950; Vetters 1968, p.940f; Alföldy 1974, p.216f. For churches or evidence of, see Alföldy 1974, Appendix XVII, p.279-281. 4th century finds at Teurnia, the Duel, St.Martin nr. Villach, Gurina, Tschelschnigkogel, nr. Warmbad-Villach, Hoischhügel (where coins run from 2nd century, while the last from Roman Maglern below are of 407-450), Hohenstein, Pulst, Kraig: refs in Jantsch 1938, p.349-67.
314. 1983, p.240.
315. Castella Tiburniae: Vita S. Sev. 25; Egger 1929, p.208; Jantsch 1938, p.343; Alföldy 1974, p.220. Aguntum-Lavant: Fortunatus, Vita S. Mart. IV,649f; Miltner 1950, p.99; Alföldy 1974, p.217.
316. Egger 1929; Jantsch 1938; Tessmann 1954; Vetters 1968; cf. Alföldy 1974, p.219f; Johnson 1983, p.220.
317. Mauthen: Dolenz, JÖAI, 1940, Bb. p.35f. Teurnia - Maglern zone: Jantsch 1938, p.357f.
318. See relevant sections in Jantsch 1938; cf. Johnson 1983, p.220.
319. Vita S. Sev. 25,3.
320. Vita S. Sev. 17,4; Alföldy 1974, p.222.
321. Piccottini 1976; Pauli 1984, p.140.
322. Werner 1961, p.600. Thought originally by Jantsch 1938 and Egger to be Longobard. Göselsdorf near Eberndorf, and Kastellnig-Göselsberg west of Virunum are possible toponymic traces of Gothic settlement.
323. We are limited to Cass.Var.III,50 which indicates Alamanni sent to the province as defenders.

324. Paul II,4: ad civitatem Agonthisensem. Cf. Wopfner 1925, p.389f. Venantius: note 315 above. Beyond the Pusteria, however, lay the Breoni and Bavarii.
325. See various site refs. Jantsch 1938.
326. Kiszely 1979, p.137 is doubtful about 'Longobard' tombs at Grafenstein, Kraig and Lamprechtskogel: 'Both the archaeological and anthropological material is problematic'. As noted, coin evidence is unreliable; see note 322 on bow-brooches.
327. An Italian example is Colle/Cimiterio dei Pagani at Invillino. Mor 1962 considers the toponymy of Early Medieval Carnia.
328. See refs. Jantsch 1938.
329. Šašel, Petru 1971, section XXIII. Grafenauer 1970-71 calculates the Slavs present in Pannonia, the Mur valley and eastern Carnia by c.580, followed by their push with the Avars between 582-8 into the Celeia-Emona sector and the Rosen valley, and before 591 into the Gail and upper Drau. Cf. Šašel 1979. The Bavarii were directly threatened by this expansion, but by c.615 maintained an area upto Aguntum: Paul IV,39; Tassilo had raided Slavic territory with varied fortune (IV,7, 10), but soon after 598 made firm territorial gains (IV,39). Paul wrongly earlier locates Bavaria in Noricum: III,30.
330. Cf. Jantsch 1938, p.384f: the Slav dux or Voda by c.600 sat at Karnburg, but this does not signify an earlier ducal seat (Virunum was the Roman capital, and the Gothic praeses sat at Teurnia): Karnburg (the 9th century civitas Karantana) formed a central position only with respect to Slavic territory. Jantsch claimed the upper Drau-Gail-Rosen and Jaun valleys formed a second Longobard limes against the Slavs, but proof is absent.
331. Paul IV,38: Hi suo tempore Sclavorum regionem quae Zellia appellatur usque ad locum qui Medaria dicitur possiderunt (Taso & Cacco) unde usque ad tempora Ratchis ducis idem Sclavi pensionem Foroiulianis ducibus persolverunt.

H:ii) THE DEFENCE OF PANNONIA SAVIA.

332. Šašel, Petru 1971; Šašel 1971; 1979; Ulbert 1979.
333. Discussed in Chap.3, section B.
334. Procop. VII,xxxiii; Chap.3, section D.
335. Šašel 1979, p.137; Ulbert 1979, p.151.
336. Grafenauer 1970-71; Brozzi 1981, p.53-5. See note 329.
337. Ulbert 1979; Petru 1976, p.234 wrongly claims a circuit and

dimensions of 140 x 66m; Johnson 1983, p.288, no.147 follows him and incorrectly locates it on fig.88, p.237: the position indicated is for Kranj - Vranje lies between nos.174 and 179.

338. Ulbert 1979, p.146-50.
339. Ibid. p.151.
340. Longobard-Slavic phases, ibid. p.153-4.
341. Ibid. p.155-6; Petru 1976, giving site dimensions of 430 x 283m; Johnson 1983, p.290 no.179. A possible Longobard vessel was found here.
342. Excavations: Bolta 1970-71; cf. Kiszely 1979, p.136; Ulbert 1979, p.154.
343. This was found with a coin of Probus (276-282) in tomb 39, a probable indication of tomb-reuse: Bolta 1970-71, p.139-40. Kiszely 1979, p.136 notes that the cemetery plan is uncharacteristic of Longobard necropolises.
344. 1970-71, p.173f. Finds from these are part-published in articles in Arheoloski Vestnik 1967, 1970-71 - Hrib: Sribar 1967, p.365-76; Gorjanci: Petru 1967, p.435-52.
345. 1979, p.137.
346. Sites identified chiefly by Puschi in 1902, e.g. Sembije, Castua, Ternovo, Grafenbrunn, Siler Taber, and Golo: cf. Johnson 1983, p.218 and p.288-90.
347. Brooches: Werner 1961, p.600, nos.1-4. Romanised-Longobard phases: Vinski 1970-71; Kiszely 1979, p.129f. Dug in the 1900s, but poorly published. Noted by Johnson 1983, p.220.
348. Valic 1968, p.485f.
349. Ibid. p.498; pl.6 p.506: square-sectioned Byzantine heads, nos. 10-12, 16.
350. Bled: Vinski 1970-71, p.151-3; Kiszely 1979, p.137. Podmelec: ibid. p.137; Sribar 1967 (see note 344).
351. Slabe 1970-71; Kiszely 1979, p.136-7. Slavs in region: Svoljsak 1970-71, p.153-62.

I) ISTRIA.

352. II,14. Torcello, below Chap.5, section A.
353. E.g. Carellus, v.g.magister militum in 591 (Pelagius Ep.61);

Gulfaris v.g.magister militum in 599 (Greg. Reg.IX,160). Also: Iohannes, patricius of Venetia et Istria for 553-9 (Pelagius Ep.24, 50, 52, 53), and Iulianus, scribo of 595-600 (Greg. Reg.V,29). The renegade Longobard duke Gisulf was dux Istriae from c.590-610 (probably an honorary office in recognition of his pro-Byzantine stance) (MGH Ep.III Austr., 41; Paul II,9). See Brown 1984, p.55 with note 32.

354. Brozzi 1981, p.53-9; Tagliaferri 1972, p.287-9. Ewin of Trento was sent to Istria in 588-9, when duke Grasulf I of Friuli, in Byzantine pay, was fighting both Avars and Slavs: Paul III,26; Gisulf II replaced Grasulf in 590, while the Longobards raided Istria with Avars and Slavs in 602: IV,25.
355. Marušić 1958-59; 1960, p.19f; Tagliaferri 1972, p.290f.
356. Cf. Šašel 1974, p.459.
357. Locations: Tagliaferri 1972, p.288 fig.3. The belt-buckles include some of 'Corinthian type', as from Veliki Mlum, while some of 'Syracuse type' derive from Montona: Marušić 1967, fig.6.
358. IV,31; Guido V,14. Capris first named in Greg. Reg.IX,152, 154, as Insulae Capreae Histriae provinciae.
359. Šašel 1974, p.456-61.
360. Greg. Reg.IX,155 (May 599).
361. Marušić 1958-59, p.129f.
362. Cf. Tagliaferri 1972, p.276, 285-6. Tombs: Gnirs 1911, p.95f (S.Theodore de fonte); JÖAI 1930 Bb. p.189-90 (between amphitheatre and sea).
363. 1906-7 work: Gnirs 1911, p.75f; 1935-6 survey: Mirabella Roberti 1936, p.293-5.
364. Gnirs 1911, p.82-90.
365. Mirabella Roberti 1936, p.295.
366. Schmiedt 1968, and Brown 1976, 1978 accept the castrum as Byzantine; cf. however, Gnirs' scant dating evidence regarding the fort: 1911, p.94f.
367. Marusic 1967, p.310-1; Tagliaferri 1972, p.283.
368. Ibid. p.292-4; Brozzi 1981, p.53f. The fact that we find 11th century arimanni references for Capodistria, Cittanova, Pola and Parenzo, again signifies the lateness of this institution: cf. Schneider 1924, p.140.

J) THE DUCHY OF FRIULI.

369. The best study of Longobard Friuli is Brozzi 1981, recording findspots p.61-74, updating von Hessen, Brozzi 1973.
370. 1981, p.61.
371. N.b. Procop. VIII,xxvi, shows the Franks in 552 refusing Narses passage, forcing him to use the part-flooded coastal via Annia.
372. Invasion and duchy: Paul II,9; Gisulf was nephew to Alboin, and was given control of Cividale 'and its whole district'.
373. Brozzi 1981, p.13f.
374. Above note 354.
375. Cormons transfer: Paul VI,51. Lupus: V,18.
376. Paul IV,37; V,19-21, 23; VI,45 respectively.
377. Lupus, Arnefrit, and the 'army of the people of Forum Iulii': Paul V,18-19, 22, 39, 41. In the latter instance no duke led this army, which may indicate direct royal control over the duchy. Ansfrid: VI,3; Ferdulf and Corvolus: VI,24-5. The King appears to be in greater control of the Friulian dukes in this era: VI,25 - though Ratchis was successful in his rebellion against Pavian dominance. History of Duchy: Brozzi 1981, p.31-51.
378. II,9.
379. Brozzi 1981, pl.VI (p.34-5). Farae: Chap.1, p.13f.
380. Von Hessen, Brozzi 1973, no.53, p.1151.
381. Arimanni: Schneider 1924, p.138-9; cf. Brozzi 1960-61, p.285-6 on arimanniae and farae in Friuli (omitted in 1981). Carnic arimanniae: Mor 1962. Arimanni: Chap.1, p.18f.
382. Brozzi 1981, p.15-6, 139-42.
383. IV,37.
384. Ibligine was originally sought at Ipplis (Waitz in MGH, SRL, p.29 note 3; Hartmann 1899, p.13) and Illegio (Brozzi 1960-61, p.289). Both possess Longobard-period material.
385. N.b. Schmiedt 1968, p.905-18; Mor 1972; Bosio 1979.
386. Falzani 1960; Tavano 1966 on site history; site and finds are considered in Schmiedt 1968, p.907. Patriarch: Paul VI,51. The described structural remains are personal observations.

387. A 3rd century sarcophagus is also present in the walls: Brozzi 1981, p.91.
388. Von Hessen, Brozzi 1973, no.38; knives belonging to the autochthonous population come from Giassico - S.Giovanni al Natisone to the south. See my Map 7 for Longobard period tomb findspots, correcting locations on maps in Brozzi 1981 and von Hessen, Brozzi 1973.
389. Dreossi 1943, p.189 locates the bridge at Mainizza, where coins from a villa run to the 5th century; on the Vipacco route see also Bertacchi 1978, p.55. Farra excavations: Dreossi 1943; von Hessen, Brozzi 1973, no.53.
390. Brozzi 1981, p.72-4, nos.51-4, 57-8; cf. Map 7. Gorizia: Stucchi 1948. It is unclear if Bilje and Solkan remained Longobard after c.600, though finds at Solkan consist of mid-7th century inlaid belt-fittings. Petru 1976, p.235 sees the lower Vipacco as part of the duchy.
391. Furlani 1969, passim.
392. Paul VI,51; Anon.Rav.IV,31 - cf. Bosio 1971, p.359f. The incident described in Paul between duke Pemmo and the patriarch Callistus in the 730s shows Potium firmly in Longobard hands. Site: Bosio 1971.
393. Brozzi 1968, p.134f; 1981, p.19-20.
394. The ducal corte and the royal corte or gastaldaga: *ibid.* p.26-7.
395. Summaries: von Hessen, Brozzi 1973, p.1136-41; Brozzi 1981, p.27-30 with pl.2-5; churches p.20-5. Gallo excavation: Marioni 1951. S.Stefano in Pertica: Mutinelli 1961. S.Giovanni: Brozzi 1968, p.65-9 (with 83 tombs of late 2nd-5th/6th century, then 47 early Longobard tombs, replaced by cemeteries in the Pertica zone). Paul V,34 says pertica denotes a tomb marker.
396. 1950.
397. Findspots: von Hessen, Brozzi 1973, nos.26, 30, 32, 35, 36, on roads to Cividale - Map 7. Firmano: Brozzi 1971 - tombs chiefly autochthonous. S.Quirino: This lay 3.7km north of Cividale, and was perhaps the battleground between duke Wechtari and the Slavs in c.670: Paul V,23. Schmiedt 1968, p.907-8.
398. Brozzi 1981, nos.21, 19 (autochthonous tombs in loc.Sotto Castello), 31. Antro: Leicht 1911.
399. Šašel, Petru 1971, section XIX, p.85f.
400. 1951, p.108-9; note 399 above.

401. Paul V,22: apud castrum Nemas non longe a Foro Iulii.
402. Ostermann 1888 (noting villa traces in loc.Bearzut, with coins of Gallienus and Claudius Gothicus); Bertolla 1892, p.154-6; Menis 1968, p.15f.
403. Excavations: ibid. p.26-44, and conclusions p.88-101, figs.13-14.
404. Ibid. p.45-52, plates XVI-XVIII, fig.8.
405. Ibid. p.88-101, n.b. p.98f. Cf. Brozzi 1981, p.87.
406. Von Hessen, Brozzi 1973, no.14.
407. Schmiedt 1968, p.907-8; Mor 1972, p.194.
408. Finds summarised in Brozzi, Tagliaferri 1962-64, p.19f; Longobard Udine p.37f; Brozzi 1981, no.29, p.67, 95-6. 1953 finds: Someda 1953. Tagliaferri also records coins of Gratian (375-383) and Gallus (351-4) from S.Maria, showing late Roman use of the hilltop.
409. Swords, lancehead, umbo and belt-fittings: von Hessen, Brozzi 1973, no.16.
410. Schneider 1924, p.138-9; Brozzi 1960-61, nos.11, 42, 25. Between Udine and Tricesimo is a possible Byzantine toponym Feletto Umberto - if correct, its survival is notable for a region so swiftly lost.
411. Cf. Mor 1972, p.193: Gemona-Osoppo 5.5km, Gemona-Artegn 4km, Osoppo-Artegn 6km. Artegn castello: Schmiedt 1968, p.913-4.
412. Brozzi 1981, p.86, note 281. Artegn's earliest reference outside Paul is of c.1000 (which names Buga, Arthenea, Glemona: Pellegrini, Frau 1975, p.116).
413. Mensile dei Gruppi arch. d'Italia 1982, p.18; Brozzi 1984, p.97-8. See Map 7, no.13.
414. Von Hessen, Brozzi 1973, nos.13, 15. Maiano: Brozzi 1961, p.157-63, figs.1-8.
415. Von Hessen, Brozzi 1973, nos.23(Rodeano Alto), 24(Ciconicco), 27 (S.Vito di Fagagna), 33(Mereto di Tomba). Cf.Brozzi 1984, p.97.
416. Moro 1955, p.166f; Schmiedt 1968, p.913; Fingerlin et al. 1968, p.73-4. The 1976 earthquake further added to the devastation. The road runs from Osoppo through Ragogna onto Concordia and thence Oderzo. Brozzi 1981, pl.VI and VIII totally misplaces Osopum and Glemona: cf. my Maps 6 and 7.
417. CIL,V.1822, in the consulship of Opilio: cf.Moro 1955, p.144-5.

418. Vita S. Mart.IV,654; echoed in Paul II,13: per fluenta Tiliamenti et Reunam perque Osopum.
419. Moro 1955, p.144-5 notes Roman finds on the hill, and for loc. Paradic 'some ancient tombs with skeletons and some blades' (Longobard?), and in a cave on the north-west flank ' a clay vessel was found containing a full 120 silver coins, immediately stolen and thus not identified' (late Roman hoard?)
420. Site function: Schmiedt 1968, p.913-4; Bosio 1979, p.531; Toniutti 1981, p.43f. The work of the local archaeological group REUNIA has, however, highlighted the possibilities of such regional activity: their studies have greatly increased understanding of the Ragogna area, and thus of Friuli in general. I am most grateful to Dr. Cerutti and G.Toniutti of REUNIA who warmly welcomed me to Ragogna and allowed me to view both the Museo and nearby sites; many thanks also for subsequent help regarding their studies.
421. My thanks to G. Toniutti for information regarding the defences.
422. S. Pietro finds: Toniutti 1981, p.65-6. Late Longobard sculpture: Buora 1984; Gaberscek 1984, showing decorative links with Zuglio (both articles kindly supplied by G. Toniutti).
423. Paul VI,3.
424. George of Cyprus no.623a: Honigmann 1939, p.54; though Conti 1975, p.111-2 shows that Honigmann misleadingly reinterprets George, and the site, kastron Eurenica, should lie in Emilia (suggesting Pavullo nel Frignano).
425. Cerutti 1981. S. Pietro features an analogous plan; Cerutti even postulates Longobard origins for the churches of S.Giovanni in Monte and S. Remigio, where the former has east-west lain tombs and late antique coarse ware sherds: 1981, p.59-64.
426. Ibid. 1982, p.7-14.
427. There are traces of a later Roman statio at Malnisio, Montereale, with coins from Probus to Valens, ornaments, bones, and a few blades and a lancehead: Gruppo Ricerche Grizzo, MSF 1974, p.207-8; Fasti Arch. 1975-76, p.812, no.11855. An early medieval phase is postulated at Castello di Montereale: Andrews, PiuZZi 1984. Farae: Brozzi 1981, pl.VI.
428. Schmiedt 1968, p.912-3. The road to Osoppo departs from mansio Ad Silanos to the south, thus giving Gemona the function of controlling access into the various branches. Cf.note 416.
429. Finds: von Hessen, Brozzi 1973, no.10; Moro 1955, p.135f, fig.51. Schneider 1924, p.139 notes the 1280 reference to Glemonenses

vocati arimanni seu edelingi. Godo: Brozzi 1963, p.141-2 (who considers the evidence for the Ostrogoths in Friuli); cf. also Schmiedt 1968, p.913. Mor 1972, and Bosio 1979 both seek a late Roman origin for Gemona.

430. Function of clusae: Schmiedt 1968, p.911f, and discussion p.963-6. Lancehead: von Hessen, Brozzi 1973, no.9. Tradition: Brozzi 1981, p.129. This castello too was affected by the 1976 earthquake.
431. Moro 1955, p.110-3 on Roman finds.
432. Roads: Schmiedt 1968, p.909. Invillino's importance: Fingerlin et al. 1968, p.76-7.
433. Paul IV,37; Fingerlin et al. 1968, p.79-80; Schmiedt 1968, p.908-10.
434. Pers. obs. of tower base. Fingerlin et al. 1968, p.82 suggest a 'Venetian fort' here.
435. 1972 work: Bierbrauer 1973c, p.85f; results summarised in Pauli 1984, p.104-5.
436. Fingerlin et al. 1968, p.82. Schmiedt 1968, p.910 claims a circuit hugging the hill rim.
437. Fingerlin et al. 1968, p.82-3.
438. Bierbrauer 1973c, p.85 claims 4 dry-stone walled towers, and one mortared (gate-tower); cf. Fingerlin et al. 1968, p.82, and 88: 'A hearth indicated that here again we have living quarters, not the remains of a fortification'. One wall c.80cm thick to the north-east may be part of a tower, or larger house. Schmiedt 1968, p.910 notes 'the remains of 3 towers of the 7th-8th centuries'
439. Fingerlin et al. 1968, p.84.
440. Ibid. p.109. Third century coin evidence: p.91.
441. Ibid. p.86f; cf. Pauli 1984, p.104.
442. Tombs: Fingerlin et al. 1968, p.90, 110. S. Maria: this contains the Ianuarius inscription found in the south-wall, and fragments of the choir-stall - ibid. p.76; Bierbrauer 1973c, p.125-6. It is difficult to regard this as the castello church.
443. Fingerlin et al. 1968, p.91f: coins of Constantine I, Valentinian I, Theodosius; brooches, lamps, terra sigillata, pietra ollare.
444. Ibid. p.93f. Stirrup-brooches: Bierbrauer 1973c, fig.1,6.
445. Fingerlin et al. 1968. Gothic finds illustrated: brooch (fig.5,2).

- 'Byzantine': goblet bases (fig.13, 19-20), coinweight (fig.7,5), jewellery (fig.6, 19, 20, 22), arrowheads (fig.8,8-11 - p.99; cf. Cabona et al. 1978, p.303-4, 357-8, pl.XIII).
446. Longobard evidence: *ibid.* p.101-4 (the stamped handles are not Longobard). Pommel: fig.8,1. Arrowheads: fig.8,5-7; combs: fig.7, 1-2; brooches: fig.5,6; pearls: fig.6,6-11; glassware: fig.13. Bierbrauer brooches: fig.1, 1,9,10.
447. Fingerlin et al. 1968. Earrings: fig.6,22; equal-armed brooch: fig.5,4; bird-brooches: fig.5,7. Pottery forms p.104. 'However, the picture drawn from the equipment of a middle Italian Longobard cemetery (like Castel Trosino, Nocera Umbra) show us that there also the native element predominates' - p.102.
448. Mor 1962, p.76f; Fingerlin et al. 1968, p.89.
449. Bierbrauer 1973c.
450. *Ibid.* *passim*; summaries in Guide Arch. Lat.1981, p.287-9; Pauli 1984, p.104-5. The destruction of church A1 may be linked with the Avar attack of 610-1, but no finds support this.
451. On roads, finds, etc. see excellent gazetteer in Moro 1955.
452. *Ibid.* p.140.
453. *Ibid.* p.127. See Mor 1962 on the equation Salvans = Pagans, arguing that each remained in use until the mid-7th century.
454. Moro 1955, p.150.
455. Mor 1962 on sites; von Hessen, Brozzi 1973, no.2 on finds.
456. Forni di Sotto: Moro 1955, p.127. Andrazza: von Hessen, Brozzi 1973, no.1.
457. *Ibid.* nos.4, 5. Ovaro: Moro 1955, p.146 notes barbarian period military tombs in loc. Collina. Mor 1962 also notes castelli at Raveo and Agrons.
458. *Ibid.* p.76f. In 1275 Mels held that of Sezza and lost those of Sutrio and Rivo; in 1295 Thomas of Cucagna held two at Fielis; in 1340 the lords of Nonta surrendered those of Cervicento, Sutrio and Paluzza.
459. Von Hessen, Brozzi 1973, no.6: laurel leaf lancehead at Pontaiba and spatha at loc.Fontanone. Sezza has a loc. Chiamp dai Salvans: Moro 1955, p.156. Mor notes a castello at Sutrio, two at Siao, a possible Roman tower of S.Daniele below the Rocca di Moscardo, and records that the zone between here and Paluzza is called 'Entretors' - cf. Bosio 1979, p.534.

460. Moro 1955, p.107f; table VIII.
461. Excavations in 1875, 1941-44: *ibid.* p.52f; Guide Arch. Lat. 1981, p.280-6 on Roman finds. Building destructions: Moro 1955, p.38, 82-6, suggests dates of 452 and 568.
462. Basilica: *ibid.* p.89-104; Guide Arch. Lat. 1981, p.280-1; Mirabella Roberti 1976, p.94f. A bishop Amantius is attested here in 381 (CIL,V.1623).
463. CIL,V.1858, of the consulship of Fausti v(iri) clarissimi Iunioris.
464. VI,51.
465. Mor 1954-55, p.228-9; 1972; cf. also Moro 1955, p.51; Schmiedt 1974, p.506f, arguing against it being a frontier head.
466. It also refers to 'septima Trevile' - perhaps Chiusaforte: cf. Duparc 1951, p.19 n.1, p.29. See also Appendix 2.
467. Arta: von Hessen, Brozzi 1973, no.7. Illegio: this may be of Longobard dedication - cf. the churches at Sutrio, and the hill of S.Floreato at Imponzo.
468. Moro 1955, p.152; von Hessen, Brozzi 1973, no.11.
469. Cf. Vettors 1968, p.946; Brown 1978, p.326-7; 1984, p.102-3. Above, Chapter 3.

CHAPTER FIVE

FRONTIER SYSTEMS WITHIN ITALY: THE LONGOBARD-BYZANTINE BORDERS

The evidently heavy reliance placed by the Byzantines on the Longobards for military needs - as mercenaries, as officers in the imperial armies, and as buffers to north-eastern Italy - appears to have backfired in the years after the Byzantine occupation of Upper Italy.¹ Perhaps prompted by Avar pressure the Longobards entered Italy in 568-9 and rapidly overran Friuli, meeting minimal resistance (the bishop of Aquileia had time to flee south to Grado); they soon penetrated the Po and northern valleys, gaining submissions en route - as from the bishops of Treviso, Vicenza and Verona - to reach Milan by Sept. 569. Only Pavia put up stiff (recorded) resistance, before falling in 572.²

The lack of spirited resistance by the imperial forces has been attributed to various causes: Narses' invitation to the Longobards to invade, the hostility towards Byzantium provoked by the Three Chapters Schism (combined with the rigorous taxation), the Byzantine failure to recognise the invasion as one of lasting effect, and the defection of Germans entrusted by Narses to the defence of the frontiers.³ Whatever the case, the Longobard move was unexpected: falling back as the invaders swept through the frontier, the Byzantines rallied only in the Oderzo-Ceneda sector, but failed to prevent the enemy bypassing this salient and occupying fortifications in the zone around. Yet although troops in the Po valley were generally caught unawares as the Longobards occupied key centres, as seen the Byzantines did not immediately let slip all of their pre-Alpine positions, though these were soon worn away once the Longobards had established themselves.

Defections played a notable part in the patchwork of duchies that emerged after c.570: both the Spoleto and Benevento duchies perhaps arose through treacherous disloyalty on the part of Longobards formerly in the imperial ranks, perhaps consequent to the failure of the expedition of Baduarius in 575-6. The first duke of Spoleto, Faroald, indeed turned against the Byzantines after being entrusted with the defence of Classe, while his successor Ariulf had fought against the Persians in 582. Analogous appears the rise of the first two Benevento dukes Zotto and Arichis.⁵

As Brown discerns, the proportion of Longobard and indeed German military officers in imperial pay was high, with a similar proportion to be sought in the ranks.⁶ Despite the poor behaviour of the Longobard mercenaries and foederati in 552, the Byzantines could ill-afford to neglect this source of troops, however unwieldy: certainly individuals like Droctulf and Guduin became stalwarts of the imperial cause, but many others 'were primarily adventurous leaders of warrior bands, who sold their services to the highest bidder' and acted for their own advantage.⁷ While this inconstant pattern dominates our picture of late 6th century Italy, the subsequent dearth of sources fails to demonstrate whether this dependence on Longobard soldiery decreased.⁸

At the dissipation of the initial Longobard thrust, Italy emerged a patchwork of battle zones, with each army seeking with bare resources to strengthen their respective holds: the Longobards to expand sufficiently to ensure their permanency, and the Byzantines to attempt a recovery after heavy territorial and logistical losses and regain dominance. Once both sides reached mutual exhaustion by the start of the 7th century, the process of militarisation of both settlement and society was already far advanced.

In Byzantine lands in particular this was greatly favoured by the

necessary territorial entrenchment and the need to maintain zones on a constant military footing; in contrast Longobard society had always been militaristic, and conditions naturally led to a more sedentary, 'romanised' Longobard population. As Brown has expertly described, the persistence of this insecurity, the increasing reliance by the Byzantines on local resources and in time local leaders in response to the failure and weakness of Eastern support, caused the growing independence of regions and towns within regions. By the later 7th century, this process had greatly undermined official Byzantine authority in Italy.⁹

How the Byzantines initially sought to administer their contracting possessions is not easily discernable. Undoubtedly the provincial organisation maintained by Narses from the Ostrogothic era struggled on to exist while Byzantium continued to misinterpret Longobard aims and ignore Italian logistics. It is probable, however, that the eventual recognition of these provoked a provisional territorial reorganisation, whereby the Italian administration - civil and military - was adapted to face the political and military realities of the moment and to restore imperial authority in the crumbling peninsula. Such a reality may only have been faced after the disastrous conclusion of the campaign of Baduarius and the subsequent ineffective buying-over of Longobard dukes.¹⁰

Conti and Bavant in particular have recently argued that the territorial divisions - ἐπαρχίαι / eparchiae - recorded in the Descriptio orbis romani of George of Cyprus depict the results of such a provisional arrangement drawn up under Tiberius (578-582 - Caesar from 574), a reorganisation which within a decade had totally dissolved and been replaced by an ad hoc arrangement which coalesced on more natural, strategic lines.¹¹

Briefly, the lists of George of Cyprus, with sections badly distorted

and little decipherable, are arranged into six eparchiae (including Sicily) listed in anticlockwise order: Urbicaria, Campania, Sicilia, Calabria, Annonaria, and Aemilia.¹² In the sectors which concern us, Urbicaria (an old Roman diocesan division like Annonaria)¹³ appears to include surviving Byzantine territories in Roman Liguria, the Alpes Cottiae (Susa), Tuscia, Valeria, Picenum and the extreme north of Campania; Annonaria is composed of Flaminia, Pentapolis, the east of ancient Aemilia and the remains of southern Venetia (and Istria); and lastly Aemilia comprises the core of ancient Aemilia, the western end of Venetia (Cremona zone), and lands formerly in south-eastern Liguria (as Lodi Vecchio).¹⁴

Conti visualises in these divisions 'a true configuration of limitanean "tractus" rather than actual provinces', though Bavant brings this into question, noting that this organisation permitted greater possibilities of military effort in Northern Italy, than in central or southern Italy.¹⁵ Yet the strategy of the proposed reorganisation derived from the lists is unclear: while the inclusion of the Ligurian coastal sites in Urbicaria may reflect the importance of naval linkage with Rome, the additional inclusion of the surviving Alpine positions cannot represent any significant strategic territorial arrangement, but simply records their attachment to this old diocesan division.¹⁶ Similarly the province of Aemilia is restricted in George to just three castra at the western fringes of Annonaria, and more logically should have been incorporated into Annonaria, (with Ravenna the regional headquarters).

Although the nature of the listing of George of Cyprus must remain obscure, nonetheless the high incidence of military sites, witnessed both in their possession of castrum status and in some cases in their subsequent or contemporary historical attestation (Comacina, Anagnis, Bismantum,

Surianum), verifies the strong military character of the Descriptio; if not necessarily recording an official imperial reorganisation of the Italian defences, the lists must reflect Byzantine military foci at the close of the primary Longobard expansion in c.577. Most unfortunate therefore is the obscurity of many of the listed locations, recently studied by Conti, whose identifications are often disputable.¹⁷ At the same time we can recognise the mutilated survival of the old territorial divisions of Italy, whose new contours only crystallised in c.600.

As Brown has shown, the militarisation of the imperial lands was a continuous and not sudden evolution: in delicate border areas the civil administration indeed rapidly lost ground to the military, but elsewhere the process was slower, although equally apparent as the insecurity failed to diminish. The appearance of the exarch coincided with no noticeable alteration to imperial policy in Italy, however, nor with any overall militarisation of the imperial possessions. The office marks rather the application of a new title to distinguish the supreme military commander at Ravenna from the now over-numerous magistri militum and duces active in the field, and thus gives him powers 'hardly more extensive than those of Belisarius ... or of Narses'.¹⁸ We cannot therefore visualise a wholesale institution of the Exarchate or of a theme system contemporary with this 'new' office, and instead should regard Italy's progressive militarisation as coming to reflect, in its completed state, the themes of the East.¹⁹ As Brown summarises, 'although Italy may have been comparable at such an early date with the eastern "proto-themes" in the sense of being administered by an army corps, by the time more characteristic thematic structures developed Italy's institutions were too distinctive and her ties with the central government too weak for her to become a thorough-going theme'.²⁰ This

'thematization' was thus an adaptation forced by the consequences of the Longobard invasion and expansion, not an adoption to face the Longobard threat.

From Ravenna the exarch was able to appoint both dukes and tribunes and simultaneously exercise effective power over all the Italian troops; around him therefore devolved the task of safeguarding the imperial lands. Even before 568 Narses had pursued a similar policy by organising the Alpine duchies, entrusting one of these to Sindual.²¹ However, with the devaluation of the exarchal office in the course of the 7th-8th centuries there was a proportionate rise in the powers of the various provincial commanders or governors, fostered by the reduction in Longobard threats to petty but persistent incursions, which 'led to a reliance on local authority and on local military units equipped to resist sporadic attacks'.²² Likewise 'the peace of 680 removed the need for unity against the common enemy and permitted a new outburst of resentment against Byzantine venality and interference'.²³

When the various imperial duchies were first moulded is unclear, but initially the term ducatus referred solely to the ducal office, and not to the territory, which remained a provincia. In the time of Gregory the Great the duces or magistri militum occupy strategic centres near the foci of insecurity: Perugia for instance housed a dux during the struggles for control of the via Amerina while a magister militum (not dux), is recorded in Rome for 593-5 when it was threatened by the invaders. Only the decline of the exarch and the establishment of dukes in permanent garrison seats and their subsequent increase in control of their respective zones of competence in the later 7th century formalised the duchies and their lands, and it is then that references to zones like the ducatus Pentapolensis appear.²⁴

We have already considered the effects of the invasion upon the Alpine regions. Here we shall investigate the structure and development of the frontier lines within Italy, established as the respective Longobard and Byzantine territories became more sharply defined. In all cases, the Longobard arrival forced the imperials towards the coasts, where dominance of the sea enabled provision of logistical support. Internally the frontiers were drawn principally along natural lines like the Po, Panaro or Appennines.

(a) Venetia (Map 9)

By the end of 569 the Byzantines were restricted to little more than the lagoons of Venetia west of the Isonzo: no land-link remained with Istria. Westwards, from the Tagliamento they retained the coastline below Concordia and the part-submerged via Annia up to the line of the Livenza. Between this and the lower Piave extended the Byzantine Oderzo salient, wedged between the duchies of Friuli and Treviso; south of the latter some land remained imperial, but was in a state of flux, for the Byzantines had to recapture Altino in 590. Further west lay the bastions of Padua and Monselice which bore the frontier line along the via Postumia via Mantua to the Po, opposing the Longobard line of Vicenza-Verona-Brescia. Before the joint Franco-Byzantine assault of 590, however, the border had been drawn back through the loss of Mantua. Between 601-3, Monselice and Padua fell and imperial Venetia became ensconced among the lagoons which remained to link the region to the Exarchate (via Adria and Ferrara).²⁵

This entrenchment was evident even before 568: when bishop Paulinus fled that year to Grado from Aquileia with the church treasures he took refuge in a castrum in existence since the mid-5th century. Aquileia itself had long become inefficient as a river-port and by the 5th century formed solely the religious focus of Venetia, with its commercial role usurped by

its coastal port Grado. Aquileia, like Altino and Concordia, had suffered at the hands of Attila, but presumably still flourished into Gothic and Byzantine times. The Patriarch is first attested here in 568-60, but was replaced by an anti-Roman Longobard Patriarch after 568: the transfer of the latter to Cormons in the 7th century verifies the weak, exposed border siting of this former metropolis. By this time Aquileia's port was destroyed and its urban nucleus much reduced; in 811 the Patriarch Maxentius even proposed to reconstruct the town.²⁶

Comparable fates befell Roman Concordia and Altino, which by the 6th century were in irreparable decline. Recorded in the Notitia as an arms factory, Concordia has also produced numerous military tombstones; excavations have revealed a notable early Christian zone, which suffered numerous inundations undoubtedly caused by the failure to control the water system around - to counteract these, floor-levels were frequently raised. Construction work did continue into the 6th century (mosaics and ciborium in basilica), but by then the population was low. Life persisted into the 10th century, when the town was devastated by the Hungars.²⁷

Flooding of both the via Annia and via Claudia Augusta Altinate also effectively isolated Altino from the 5th century. Altino nonetheless persisted into the Longobard era, when it formed a frontier guard against the Byzantines; while falling to the imperials in 590 it was presumably lost around 639-40 when Rothari briefly occupied Oderzo.²⁸

Unfortunately, for coastal Venetia Anonymous of Ravenna appears to utilise an old source, for he records Aquileia, Concordia and Altino, but omits Grado and other lagoon stations; Guido does however denote Altinum quae nunc Pucellis dicitur (i.e. Torcello), a transfer later confirmed by Constantine Porphyrogenitus.²⁹

Beyond these centres our understanding of Longobard southern Venetia is poor: we do not know of castra opposing the Byzantines, and the border was perhaps delineated by a no man's land. The few Longobard finds appear between Aquileia and Pordenonone.³⁰ (cf. Map 7).

Fuller details emerge regarding the early medieval settlements of the lagoons, set among the islands between Grado and Chioggia. This pattern closely parallels that visible in the eastern Mediterranean in the 6th-7th centuries, when Avar-Slavic threats caused the occupation of numerous island refuges and promontories in Istria, Dalmatia, Greece as elsewhere.³¹

The best understood of these is Grado, the religious focus of imperial Venetia, and initially at least its administrative centre.³² Under Rome, Aquileia's decline saw a proportionate growth and later fortification of Grado: at the same time as Honorius took refuge behind the marshes at Ravenna, bishop Agostinus of Aquileia (407-434) fled here. It subsequently became the episcopal summer seat and was embellished with churches. Contemporary was the erection of the castrum (Fig. 8): Mirabella-Roberti has distinguished two phases of circuit construction, both poorly investigated archaeologically: the first involves a central trapezoidal nucleus of 100 x 70m between Campiello Porta Grande and calle P.Piccola, within which lies the church of S.Maria in Castello (now delle Grazie). This predates the mid-5th century, when the present duomo, Santa Eufemia, ceased to be a cemeterial church extra moenia. At this point, probably under bishop Nicetas (454-485) consequent upon Attila's invasion, the castrum was extended to include S.Eufemia, attaining 320 x 90m.³³ Its traces appear along calle Gradenigo, while a polygonal gate-tower (with destroyed flanking tower) faces the mainland between Campo Porta nuova and Campiello della Torre. The tower, compared to the gateway at Yverdon, recommends a Valentinianic date

for the castrum extension - a detail which corresponds well with the evidence from Ravenna.³⁴

After 568, bishop Elias (571-586) initiated the enlargement of S.Eufemia, and construction of S.Maria and an unnamed church in Piazza della Vittoria.³⁵ Elias' activities are well-attested in Greek and Latin votive mosaic inscriptions, which also record a number of military donors demonstrating the presence in Grado in c.580 of the numeri Tarvisianus, Cadisianus and equitum Persoiustinianorum (pl. 33). Thus, in addition to two non-Italian units there is a contingent composed of refugees from Treviso.³⁶ These constituted the garrison of Grado. We do not know, however, if this force was maintained after c.640, when the military headquarters for maritime Venetia moved to Eracliana.³⁷

Grado is atypical of the lagoon settlements in that it possessed artificial defences, due both to its Roman origin and to its greater exposure to attack; to the west few actual castra are recorded, although Constantine Porphyrogenitus misleadingly names many of the island stations castra in the 10th century.³⁸ As noted, these relied principally on natural defences (shallow, marshy waters, difficult approaches, proximity between sites) and Byzantine naval dominance (bases at Grado and Classe at least).

Westwards we find Marano, Biacianum, and Bibione (nr. Bevazzana), and Caorle-castrum Caprulae - the focus of the Caorle lagoon, a centre traditionally established by refugees from Concordia in two waves after its capture in 569 and again in 615.³⁹ Between the mouths of the Piave and Livenza lie Cittanova (Civitas Nova) and Iesolo (Equilus), founded by refugees from Oderzo, and from Asolo and Feltre respectively. According to references in John the Deacon Cittanova was allegedly founded under Heraclius after Rothari destroyed Oderzo in 639-40: Civitas Nova quae dicitur Eracliana;⁴⁰ yet Oderzo

remained imperial until c.666-9, and it is uncertain whether the military headquarters for this sector had already been withdrawn. Indeed Brown has recently argued that the name Heracliana is most likely a 10th century invention, adopted by Venetian chroniclers to court Byzantine favour, and that Civitas Nova was the original name.⁴¹ Iesolo, on insula Equili, rose to prominence with Cittanova's decline in the 8th-9th centuries after conflicts with Malamocco, although a tribune is recorded for the late 6th century.⁴² (Map 9)

West of Iesolo a group of islands lie opposite Altino: of these, Torcello took on special significance in the 6th-7th centuries as the home for Altinate refugees.⁴³ Two vital sources exist for Torcello: firstly an inscription recording the dedication of the church of S.Maria in 639, and secondly the Polish excavations of 1960-61. (pl. 34)

The excavations concerned three zones: San Marco, the piazza between S.Fosca and palazzo del Consiglio, and the Benedictine monastery, all traditionally accredited 7th century origins.⁴⁴ The piazza excavation (Scavo II) was the most significant regarding the occupational sequence of the island. Here, in an area of 92m², below the medieval levels lay a series of late Roman-early medieval deposits, terminating in level IV, which consisted of a 10th-12th century cemetery of 59 tombs overlying the levelled remains of a glass workshop (13 x 8m) composed of 3-4 furnaces.⁴⁵ Material from these gave a C14-date of 840 \pm 45, but the excavators, stressing the clear late antique-Longobard era context, propose an earlier date; confirmation may come from level VI which supported the workshop, and had finds of the same tradition. Ceramics are chiefly late Roman types but lack fine wares (cf. finds from Castelseprio, Invillino and Bellinzona); a few brown-glazed vessels are present, but Blake sees these as either 7th century or

later Byzantine imports.⁴⁶ Nonetheless other material from level V includes 'Longobardic' combs, plentiful glass fragments - many belonging to chalices - and an early Christian lamp of the 5th-6/7th century, while in level VII, at a point in contact with V, was found a presumably intrusive 7th century Longobard-type bronze brooch.⁴⁷ The level VI strengthening secured the zone from flooding by using large posts and some rubble walling c.89cm thick; it should probably date to a 6th century reoccupation of the island resulting from mainland insecurity: the colonists would have extended the available habitation space, and, perhaps reusing material brought from the mainland, rebuilt their homes and even workshops. The demolition of these workshops is undated, but by 1000 Torcello had certainly lost its dominance of glass production to Rialto - although in the 10th century Constantine Porphyrogenitus still called it an emporion mega.⁴⁸

Previous to Level VI Torcello suffered a series of alluviations: these are broadly datable to the 5th-6th centuries through indirect historical references and comparison with the levels at Concordia and Altino. No settlement traces were present. Nonetheless, levels IX and VIII reveal a vague Roman occupation, attested by 1st-3rd century finds (a 4th-5th century coin from the cemeterial area - itself dated by a coin of Charlemagne and an arab dirrham of the 9th century - may show a lingering presence).⁴⁹

No finds help determine the beginnings of this reoccupation, though we do possess Cassiodorus' notice of settlers in the lagoons: he indicates modest island settlement, with wooden habitations, and fishing and salt production - while not extensive, this presence was sufficient to draw his attention.⁵⁰ The letter is addressed to the tribunis maritimorum, suggesting military officers either on the islands or along the coast responsible for ensuring the passage of supplies by ship from Venetia or Istria. It is in

keeping with general settlement trends in Italy to see refuge taken within the lagoons from c.500.

These settlements were formalised with the Byzantine withdrawal from mainland Venetia, with the islands allowing a secure footing for imperial authority. This is evident in the inscription recovered from the church of S.Maria Assunta at Torcello, recording the consecration of the basilica in the reign of Heraclius in Sept.-Oct.639.⁵¹ This shows construction of S.Maria by Mauricius, magister militum for Venetia, resendentem in hunc locum suum, and consecration by bishop Maurus under the auspices of the exarchus patricius Isaac, on behalf of the emperor Heraclius.

The inscription poses some problems: firstly was Mauricius himself resident on Torcello, or did he merely hold lands here? Tradition sets the general's seat to Cittanova-Eracliana after the fall of Oderzo, while no source documents the military at Torcello. Pertusi proposes this as Mauricius' temporary seat in 639 after Rothari's assault on Oderzo, with a subsequent transfer to Cittanova or return to Oderzo.⁵² This is contradicted, however, by the tradition that the episcopal sees of Torcello and Cittanova were contemporary: if Heraclius had indeed provided for both centres it is strange to find Mauricius at Torcello rather than Cittanova which lay closer to Oderzo.⁵³ Simultaneously, the church consecration demonstrates that settlement of Torcello was well established by 639. Pertusi argues that we should perhaps recognise the formal foundation of these positions under the exarch Isaac at the orders of Heraclius following Rothari's attacks, with the aim of consolidating Byzantine dominion of the lagoonal ports of the upper Adriatic.⁵⁴

We know little of early medieval Malamocco, the islands of Venice (main seats on Luprio and Rialto) and Chioggia, although the first was a

ducal seat after 740. Their populations were provided by refugees from Monselice and Padua, which fell to the Longobards between 601 and 603, at which point the border shifted onto the coast and through Adria.⁵⁵

No details exist for the defence of Patavium and castrum Mons Silicis, which rises like a thumb from the surrounding plain: both were vital in the 590 push against Vicenza and Verona, and were major gains in Agilulf's advances against Venetia and the Exarchate. Fasoli has attempted to reconstruct these advances through toponyms and dedications drawing an arc of Longobard positions from the Monti Berici to Treviso, but her arguments have poor archaeological support. The extent of the territoria of these bastions is unknown.⁵⁶

The Byzantines maintained an influential wedge between the Longobard duchies of Treviso and Friuli in the form of the Oderzo-Ceneda salient, extending northwards into the Val Belluna. This wedge apparently resisted Longobard pressure until the Rotharian conquests of c.639-40 and recovered sufficiently until Grimoald razed Oderzo to its foundations in 663-6.⁵⁷ Oderzo was its focus, as attested by the presence here in 611-2 of the patrician (magister militum?) Gregorius who treacherously killed the dukes of Friuli, the brothers Taso and Cacco.⁵⁸ Its territory, divided up in 666 between Cividale, Treviso and Ceneda, followed in the west the line of the Piave along the Altino-Priula-Follina road into the Bellunese, and eastwards the Livenza up to Sacile and thence the Fadalto saddle. Recent studies argue for an extension of this wedge towards the Piave downstream of Belluno (from Mel to Castion), repeating an argument first offered by Bognetti.⁵⁹ Near its head lay Ceneda (present Vittorio Veneto), Paul's Cenitense castro: its gain of part of the Oderzo territory in 666 recognises the probable loss of the northern portion of the salient and the installation of a

Longobard dux here in c.640.⁶⁰

The evidence for the Byzantines in the Feltrino and Bellunese outside this wedge has been noted.⁶¹ Data within this sector is scattered, yet sufficiently coherent, (cf. Map 5). Directly opposite Zumelle, but separated from it and the via Claudia Augusta Altinate by the deep Terche torrent (val Maor) is the height of Castelvint, on which lie traces of a fortified enclosure and the church of S.Lazzaro. In addition to the eastern church dedication, there were finds made in 1937 of a 6th century silver patera and a cross-form brooch; recent finds include two bronze coins of Antoninus, a gold triens of Justinian I, and a bronze follis of Justin II with Sophia, a burial of barbarian date beneath the church floor with gold-ornamented gown (thread, studs) and silver shoe-buckles, and other slab-tombs around the church.⁶² To the north-east lies Castelrotto, an equally rushed construction; Alpago-Novello draws attention to the Latin names: Castellum vinctum, castellum ruptum, which may record their destruction by the Longobards.⁶³

South of Belluno Ferrerio observed the strong fortlet of Cor: this structure, of 12.3 x 8.45m with a quadrangular tower-room on the north-east side with angled internal entrance, and with walls c.1.20m thick of regular cut stones with a strong pebbly mortar, is compared with Byzantine forts in Africa, chiefly through tower comparisons.⁶⁴ The idea is attractive and gains some support from the Byzantine African hoard at Arten, and further from the recovery at Cor of Byzantine date chalice fragments and 5 iron arrowheads with round-sectioned socket and square-sectioned heads (7.5-8.5cm long). In addition the external cistern yielded many (lost and unidentified) iron swords and lances.

The Longobards presumably erected military stations north of these points to protect the Friuli road, which crossed from Cansiglio towards

Feltre through Fara d'Alpago, (Map 5). Castelvint was opposed by Zumelle and Feltre to the west, to the north-west by a station near Pez - where is known a Longobard military necropolis - and to the north by Moldoi, with military tombs.⁶⁵ Above Castelrotto lay Fara di Mel and the Baldenica castello (with 7th century plutei from S.Fermo), while Cor was watched by Longobard Castion, Belluno and Fara d'Alpago.⁶⁶

The imperial strongholds linked southwards by trackways over the S.Boldo or S.Ippolito pass towards Oderzo, and through the Canali di Limana and the Fadalto pass to Ceneda. In opposition the Longobards maintained the via Claudia (protected by Farra di Soligo and Farro) and the Praederadego pass, and probably respected a border extending from the Terche facing Castelvint along the Val di Foran into the Trevigiano via Mura, Gai, Zuel and Colle di Guarda.⁶⁷ A tower located at San Boldo protected an important crossing within the salient: although the alternative pass-name Ippolito may reflect an eastern presence, the actual tower, c.6.9 x 6.2-6.4m, of quite accurate construction, still awaits investigation. The situation recurs at the Limana and Fadalto crossings: both are presumed to be Byzantine, but castelli above Ceneda at Castel Maior, Castel Minor and S.Floriano lack relevant finds.⁶⁸

In sum, therefore, after the loss of Eastern Venetia the Byzantines successfully blocked the viae Postumia and Annia, diverting the Longobards northwards through Belluno and Feltre from whence they pushed into the plain and gained Treviso, Vicenza and Verona; in the Bellunese the imperials 'entrenched themselves in their fortresses (some hastily erected: Castelvint, Castelrotto) in the region of the left Piave, along the slope of the pre-Alps which culminate in the Col Visentin, a zone easily linked with the Opitergian plain lower down through comfortable muletracks (San Boldo, Limana

'canali', Fadalto)'.⁶⁹ The Longobards strongly defended the Friuli-Vicenza road, and eventually obtained the Bellunese and the Cenedese up to Oderzo under Rothari; only in the later 660s was the via Postumia revitalised as a link between the eastern Longobard lands.⁷⁰

(b) Aemilia and the Exarchate⁷¹ (Maps 10, 11)

To understand fully the fluctuations of the border between Longobardia and Romania in the later 6th century, a review of the historical data is necessary. In general unable to withstand the Longobard flood into the Po plain, the Byzantines attempted a regrouping south of the Po, supported by an excellent network of roads, in particular the via Aemilia.⁷² Yet once Alboin established himself at Milan and attacked Pavia, the Longobards appear to have broken through this temporary line to penetrate south in Tuscia towards Rome. In doing so they captured Mantua, Piacenza, Cremona, Parma, Reggio, and Modena, where they installed dukes. In 585-6 duke Droctulf of Brescello rebelled but was forced by Authari to flee to Ravenna, where he became a staunch ally of the imperial cause.⁷³ In 590 the exarchal army under Romanus seized Altino, Modena, Reggio, Parma and Piacenza, and recaptured Mantua and presumably also Cremona and Brescello in a joint campaign with the Franks, thereby advancing over the Po and into the heart of Longobardia.⁷⁴ The fickleness of the Frankish dukes, however, prevented total conquest, and gradually Agilulf set about restoring Longobard lands, a process completed at the start of the 7th century.⁷⁵ (cf. Map 11)

Firmly tied to these vicissitudes is the well-known promissio or donatio of 774. This document is recorded in the Vita of pope Hadrian I, who secured from Charlemagne recognition of the Church's (St. Peter's) right to 'easdem civitates et territoria' within a 'designatum confinium'. This ran

'a Lunis cum insula Corsica, deinde in Suriano, deinde in monte Bardone, id est in Verceto, deinde in Parma, deinde in Regio; et exinde in Mantua atque Monte Silicis, simulque et universum exarchatum Ravennantium sicut antiquitus erat, atque provincias Venetiarum et Histria; necnon et cunctum ducatum Spolitinum seu Beneventanum.' (76)

The historical outline limits the physical formation of this confinium to the period between 590 and 601-3, giving the likelihood that 'on the occasion of one of the truces made between Agilulf and the exarchs in those troubled years, the Luni-Monselice line may have been taken as the basis of the negotiations and indicated as a confinium to be respected'.⁷⁷ As Benati adds: 'Admittedly this line was short-lived; but it probably lasted long enough to be fixed in the diplomatic tradition as a datum of fact which, through some unknown reason or mistake, somehow reemerged in the course of the Franco-papal meetings'. It perhaps dates to c.591 after the Franks treacherously departed Italy, when the Byzantines maintained their gains and Agilulf sought time to rearrange his defences.⁷⁸

To this epoch also many authors ascribe the provincia Alpes Appenninae, cited by Paul amongst the Italian provinces and stretched across the middle of Italy, dividing Tuscia from Aemilia and Umbria from Marche.⁷⁹ It contained the 'civitates Ferronianum et Montebellium, Bobium et Urbinum, nec non et oppidum quod Verona appellatur', sites indeed south of the via Aemilia guarding Appenninic routes into the Exarchate and Pentapolis.⁸⁰ Yet contemporary authors ignore this province: Anonymous of Ravenna notes only the provincia Castellorum, (the internal defences of the Pentapolis), while George of Cyprus shows the late imperial division of Tuscia Annonaria embracing much of what Paul includes in the Alpes Appenninae.⁸¹

If the province did exist, it will have formed 'a military organism designed to protect imperial Padane territory from the Longobards who pressed

upon it from both the Liguro-Toscan Appennines which they held up to the upper Taro valley, and northern Tuscia, occupied by them since 569-570 up to the upper Tiber valley'.⁸² Yet territorially it comprised only an extended narrow band, since northern towns like Piacenza and Reggio undoubtedly lay in Emilia: in effect, as Brown notes: 'the chief centres ... (of this mythical zone) commanded no major lines of communication or invasion routes'.⁸³

While the existence of this province is doubtful, clearly identifiable, however, is the strong military presence parallel to the via Aemilia and transverse to the Appenninic crossings and rivers descending to the Po. Evidence for this comes from the lists of George of Cyprus, supported by the sparse historical data.

No western frontier line can be securely identified north of the Cisa pass: the 590 conquests certainly extended imperial control up to Piacenza and Cremona, and perhaps even restored a link with Tortona, though the promissio explicitly designates the confine running from the Cisa to Parma.⁸⁴ However, two Byzantine forts are claimed within the Piacenza-Parma zone, both with documented finis: the first of these, Castrum Arquatense-Castell'Arquato on the Arda, is recorded in 760 ('intra finibus castris Arquatense'), while in the same area should lie Castrum Neble, whose finis, extending to the edge of the plain, were named in a dispute of 673 between Parma and Piacenza: king Perctarit confirmed the older decision of Arioald (626-636) that the territory belonged to Piacenza. Neble's siting is unknown, though Rocca supposes Castell'Arquato as its heir.⁸⁵

Within the confinium of 774 lay the imposing bulk of Pietra Bismantova (1047m), near Castelnovo ne'Monti on the Secchia-Enza watershed on the road from Reggio towards the Garfagnana (Map 10). It is named in George of Cyprus

(no. 623c), as κάστροον βισιμάντω, and in the Carolingian era we hear of 'in comitatu Parmense, in finibus Bismanti', as well as '... in gastaldatu Bismantino' marking its continued importance. The fortress did not long remain Byzantine, for in 628 the site is named as a stop on the return journey of abbot Bertulf from Bobbio to Rome.⁸⁶ Presumably by then first the Parma-Cisa line, and next the Enza confine had fallen and Bismantova and the Emilia-Liguria link lost. A few Longobard finds are known.⁸⁷

George also lists a κάστροον Σημανία (no. 623b) which Conti identifies with S.Vitale delle Carpinete, north-east of Bismantova; the name may equally apply to Semeiano nr. Montetortore close to Pavullo nel Frignano, both strategically strong locations.⁸⁸

It is unclear if Rothari's conquests in fact extended into Emilia: undoubtedly he seized all Liguria and raided Venetia, but for Emilia we hear solely that he won a great victory at the Scultenna. This is assumed to denote an advance into the Exarchate and the establishment of a new frontier, but scrutiny of the sources disputes this. Both Paul and the Origo record just the battle and its siting 'ad fluvium Aemiliae quod Scultenna dicitur': the battle may thus have occurred on the borders of the Exarchate, not within it.⁸⁹ While an advance would have been richly recorded in the Origo (written under Rothari), the reference on the exarch Isaac's epitaph at Ravenna to keeping 'unharmd Rome and the Roman West' could indeed signify that he preserved the Exarchate - behind the Panaro; it blatantly ignores the loss of Liguria, however, but this, as Bertolini suggests, could post-date the epitaph.⁹⁰ If correct, we can propose that between c.605-643 the Byzantines successively lost hold of the Cisa-Parma line, the Enza line (including Bismantova), and finally much of the Secchia line including Modena; between the upper Secchia and Panaro, however, some Byzantine Appenninic

positions endured, notably Ferronianum.⁹¹ (Map 11) Longobard forts of this period lie at Castellarano on the Secchia, and Castelvetro di Modena, both with 7th century finds.⁹²

It is only when Liutprand overwhelmed the Scultenna defences in 727-8 and marched upon Ravenna that we gain details of the border strongholds.

Paul summarises the incursion thus:

'Rex quoque Liutprand castra Emiliae Feronianum et Montebellium, Buxeta et Persiceta, Bononiam et Pentapolim Auximumque invasit ...'

while an interesting variant appears in the Liber Pontificalis:

'Langobardis vero Emiliae castra, Ferronianus, Montebelli, Verabulum cum suis oppidibus Buxo et Persiceta, Pentapolim quoque Auximana civitas se tradiderunt'. (93)

The castra are named in a south-north direction, lying midway between Modena and Bologna: (Ferronianum) Pavullo nel Frignano, (Montebellium) Monteveglio, (Verabulum) Crespellano, (Buxo-Buxeta) Bazzano, (Persiceta) S.Giovanni in Persiceto and (Bononia) Bologna. They defend three river lines: the Panaro, Samoggia, and Reno. Liutprand probably organised a two-pronged attack, across western Emilia from Lombardy, and against Pentapolis from Tuscany or Spoleto. He briefly occupied Ravenna but withdrew - at Gregory II's intervention - not to the Scultenna, but only as far as the Santerno or Senio, setting his headquarters at Imola, effectively terminating the existence of the Exarchate.⁹⁴

The Scultenna defences are enlarged by two forts listed by George of Cyprus: κάστρον Νοβώ-Castelnuovo di Vergato (no. 623) east of Pavullo at the Reno-Aneva confluence, and κάστρον Σαμουρχία-Samoggia (no. 627) defending the crossing of the via Aemilia over the Samoggia. Rearward lies κάστρον Σάγγα (no. 622) which Conti locates at Castel dell'Alpi on the upper Saveno south of Loiano.⁹⁵

Most sites bear interesting documentary records, demonstrating continued

defensive importance, although Verabulum seems to have quickly declined while conversely one of its oppida, Persiceta rose in prominence.⁹⁶ In contrast, archaeological testimonies for the period of Byzantine and Longobard domination are non-existent.

The Byzantine defences ran on the Appenninic mid-slopes parallel to the via Aemilia, and generally follow the modern confine. They are best identifiable south of Bologna and Imola, where, as Benati states, the early medieval border ran in a longitudinal East-West sense, without regard for the natural south-north river courses.⁹⁷ Here 11th century documents distinguish between property set up-and downhill of M.Morosino in the Fontanelice comune, on the heights dividing the Sillaro valley from the Santerno: that downhill belonged to Po sites, while uphill lands lay under Tuscan families extending from the Mugello. The southern extent of the Emilian properties is marked by the castelli of Casandri, Loiano, Monterenzio, Castelvechio (di Sassuno or Piancaldoi) and Castel del Rio.⁹⁸ The hypothesis is attractive, if lacking archaeological support.

Longobard positions are identified principally through toponymy: south of the Pavullo-Vergato line lies Gaggio Montano, which has also produced Longobard military tombs, and which may be linked to the documented Gabba, Lizzano and the monastery at Fanano.⁹⁹ Eastwards, between the upper Idice and Senio and south of the Brento-Monterenzio-Castel del Rio line there are weaker traces (Cafagiti, Gaggio, Gardengo, M.Faggiola and Scolcola), but the presence of some of these over the confine diminishes their chronological value.¹⁰⁰ Analogous is the situation to the south-east, where within the presumed confine, appear Longobard names (Gualdo, S.Martino in Gualdo) which must be 8th century in date.¹⁰¹

How the defences operated cannot be discerned. One cannot claim that

the border sites were arranged into distinct duchies: in the case of the supposed duchy of Persiceta, our evidence is late Longobard, although the dukes named appear of Ravennate origin; an argument against its Byzantine institution derives from its recorded appurtenance with Buxo as oppidum to Verabulum.¹⁰² The decline of Verabulum after Liutprand's advances perhaps prompted the rise of Persiceta, but this cannot be proved.¹⁰³ Defence was drawn in depth, with the towns and roads of the plain forming the backbone: the stations of the Panaro would have been ably supported by the major garrison centres of Bologna and Ferrara, which could have rapidly provided troops; along the Appenninic ridges, however, the fortifications guarding the numerous water courses were more detached from the bases of the via Aemilia, a situation which left them open to raids. Indeed these appear incapacitated on at least two occasions: firstly we hear of the burning down of Forum Cornelii in c.570-580 (leading to the erection of castrum Imolas), and secondly the assault by Grimoald on Forlimpopoli in c.663.¹⁰⁴ Both instances show a failure to repel attacks from Tuscia, and prevent withdrawal by the raiders before the mobilisation of sufficient imperial troops.

Despite some spirited armed resistance, Liutprand's advance and reduction of the Exarchate could not be checked.¹⁰⁵ In 740 and 742 the Longobards pushed up to Cesena (with Bologna and Imola Longobard since 727-8) occupying Eaenza, Forli and Forlimpopoli; in 750-1 Astulf gained Ferrara, Comacchio, and Ravenna itself, but had to cede most of these eastern gains before his death in 756; in 757 Desiderius ceded to the pope most lands east of Imola, but retained the northern sector.¹⁰⁶ Little of the Exarchate remained by 774 and this was a poor reflection of Byzantine rule. Its nominal papal ownership did not restore its former strength.¹⁰⁷

As noted, in 603 the new border was fixed along the Po at least up to

Ostiglia; its western extent is disputed, but it is assumed that in addition to Parma and Brescello Agilulf also took Guastalla.¹⁰⁸ By 643 the border followed the Panaro up to its confluence with the Po, east of which lay the defensive foci of Ferrara, Gavello and Adria. The Frignano-Adria confine endured until 728, but the northern frontier fell only in 750-1; Charlemagne restored it to the popes after 774.¹⁰⁹ Schneider demonstrates in detail the arimanniae of the opposing Longobard districts of Pieve di Sacco and Este: after 750-1 the picture altered as a Longobard dux (replacing a Byzantine one) was established at Ferrara, and the Gavello-Adria district became subordinate to the Rovigo arimanniae.¹¹⁰ Here we will consider the evidence for Byzantine Ferrara, Argenta and Comacchio, which combined to guard the communications north of Ravenna.

Although their first historical references are of the mid-8th century, archaeological finds, aided by the tradition recorded by Biondo in 1551 that the circuits of Ferrara and Argenta were built by the exarch Smaragdus in 604 - an event neatly coinciding with the loss of the trans-Po confinium - have positively identified the early Byzantine origin of these sites.¹¹¹

Ferrara lay at the confluence of the old Po courses of Volano and Primaro which allowed direct communication with Comacchio and Argenta (and from there by road to Ravenna). The castrum defended the ford, accommodated here by the isola di S. Antonio.¹¹² (Fig. 9)

Although finds attest a Roman presence, Ferrara owed its growth primarily to its new found strategic siting, which in turn meant the decay of the diocese of Voghenza.¹¹³ Recent findings have allowed partial recognition of the original urban nucleus in the zone of S. Pietro, identifying circuit traces near via Coperta. In the first instance, along via Porta S. Pietro, a wall up to c.2.50m high, of rectangular brick work was identified, while at Casa del Capitano, below a remnant of the brick walling (only 82cm

high) lay its deep foundations: these consisted of reused Roman road-stones with internal cobble and mortar fill, while the brick superstructure had facings of rectangular bricks, internally bonded with a brick, tile and mortar fill.¹¹⁴ Although associated finds were minimal or late, at the via Coperta-Porta S.Pietro angle were found sherds of pietra ollare vessels of late antique tradition and half of a 6th-7th century amphora with wavy-line decoration.¹¹⁵

To this information can be added the topographical setting of the S.Pietro zone: this is atmetrically higher than the township, and is girded by lower-lying roads, themselves in turn girded by other roads (Canmello, di Camelino, Borgo di Sotto, Ghisilieri). Noticeable also is the regular NE-SW street layout around S.Pietro, orthogonal to via Coperta. The circuit traces, dissecting the roads, fit neatly into the outline of a castrum of c.160 x 110m with surrounding ditch or moat. The subsequent expansion outside the nucleus has only slightly blurred this plan.¹¹⁶ (Fig. 10)

Yet the regularity of the plan is atypical of fortifications noted for this period in Italy. In addition, its solid, 'Roman' wall construction is unusual: although there is some spolia in the foundations, none is noted in the brick walling, where the bricks are reminiscent of those used in the Valentinianic walls at Ravenna. This does not deny the postulated Byzantine date of the castrum: the fortress was implanted upon an artificial motte and was not dictated by natural hill-contours; the regular lay-out may indeed be the norm for such fortifications. Brick appears readily available in late antiquity around Ravenna district, and the similarity in dimensions between the Ferrara and Ravenna bricks may merely reveal continuity in brick-production.¹¹⁷ Biondo's reference to Smaragdus constructing this circuit in 604 may therefore indeed be accurate.

The recent urban excavations north-west of S.Pietro, although uncovering numerous timber houses of the 9th-10th centuries below the medieval levels, identified no early settlement spread.¹¹⁸

Midway between Ferrara and Ravenna lies the other Smaragdan stronghold, Argenta-castrum Argentae. While the fortress is otherwise only named from 1034 Agnellus does record the church of S.Giorgio built in rura argentea in 569 by archbishop Agnellus.¹¹⁹ Argenta's military significance is further testified by the existence of the numerus Argentensium, recorded at Ravenna in 639.¹²⁰

Civitas Comiaclum is first recorded in the dedicatory inscription of the church of S.Cassiano, erected in 708 by bishop Vincentius, and its castrum in 755-6.¹²¹ Between these dates there is reference to the citizens of Comacchio as milites, demonstrating the military importance of the site.¹²²

Trenches in 1975 in the historical centre of S.Cassiano (along corso Mazzini) revealed evidence of early medieval settlement, although only the second half of this trenching was supervised after burials were located; subsequently a series of graves, predominantly in bare soil, were excavated. These tombs formed part of a larger necropolis at 'the west end of the island on which arose the central nucleus of the Comacchio habitat'.¹²³

The burials, comparable with those at nearby Valle Pega, are dated through typology, stratigraphic context and finds from tomb 2 (of cappuccina type), which included a Byzantine jug with wavy-line decoration. Stray amphorae sherds, comb-decorated vessels and pietra ollare confirm a 6th-8th century date. The cemetery at Valle Raibosola, set around a religious construction is of analogous date.¹²⁴ This evidence documents settlement at Comacchio contemporary with the castra of Ferrara and Argenta, and should register the presence of a castrum and secondary fleet position.

It was probably destroyed by Venice in 932, then its political and economic rival.¹²⁵

Other discoveries serve to show the mode of late antique settlement within the Comacchio zone, fostered by the relative security behind the border line. To the south-west excavations have uncovered the church of S. Maria in Padovetere on the Motta della Girata, with related 5th-8th century necropolis. Besides Byzantine material (nb. 7th century bronze coins), late Roman coins and terra sigillata D help identify the site with the ecclesia Beate Marie in Pado Vetere founded by bishop Aurelianus of Ravenna in 519-21. 259 inhumations were investigated.¹²⁶ No other positions along the Pado Vetere (apart from Valle Ponti) have produced comparable material.¹²⁷

North of Comacchio the medieval via Romea followed the course of the via Popilia which linked Venetia with the Exarchate. At its crossing of the Volano is the 7th century abbey of S. Maria in Pomposa, while southwards a series of small demic nuclei are part-located. Best understood of these is the necropolis between S. Giuseppe and Vaccolino of at least 27 inhumations: reexamination of the finds shows these to be of 7th century date, as pinpointed by a Byzantine bronze buckle of Corinthian type.¹²⁸ Uggeri's studies reveal within the Ferrara-Comacchio zone settlements of short duration in this era, and although these lie near the main communication lines, many declined in the 8th century, contemporary with the decay of centres like Comacchio. This was due to the altered political situation, as well as alterations in the river system, and the rise of new foci and monasteries along the Volano and via Romea.¹²⁹

(c) Liguria (Maps 12, 13)

Despite the relative brevity of Byzantine rule in Liguria and the consequent dearth of relevant documentation, sufficient archaeological data

is available to reconstruct the form of the defensive measures employed within the province in the wake of the Longobard invasion. Interest has focussed principally on the eastern limb of Liguria and the Lunigiana - the most threatened sector of the province, set between Tuscany and Lombardy - where Formentini in particular has provided a basis for subsequent investigations on the 'limes bizantino'.¹³⁰ However, recent excavations at Luni, Zignago and Filattiera have brought a firmer footing to such studies. In the west riviera, on the other hand, research is geared chiefly towards the coastal centres, and the overall picture is consequently less complete. Before considering the evidence, we must first understand the historical sequence.

Balbis has succinctly divided the evolution of Byzantine Liguria into three distinct phases: AD 538-40, 540-68 and 568-641/3. The first marks the imperial conquest of Liguria up to Milan under Mundilas, Fidelius Felix and a force of c.1000 men, who were warmly received: in effect a wedge was driven between the Cottian Alps and Venetia containing the cities of Tortona, Pavia and Milan. But this yielded to the fierce Gothic response, and Milan was destroyed as the Byzantines withdrew to Tortona.¹³¹ When the Ostrogothic general Uraias was ordered east by Vitigis to relieve Ravenna (besieged by Belisarius), Sisigis, praeses of the Alpes Cottiae (probably based in Susa), sought terms with the Byzantines; as a result of the negotiations the castra under him came over to the Empire and Sisigis continued in the role of governor; he even remained loyal during the campaigns of Totila.¹³² His province was thus vital in both guarding imperial interests in the north and indeed providing a base for the reconquest of upper Italy after 554. We do not know the subsequent extent of his province, but Liguria should no longer have included the Transpadana.¹³³

The situation radically altered with the advent of the Longobards, who penetrated westwards in 569 to isolate Susa and occupy Asti, Acqui and Tortona to limit the imperials to the coastal lands up to the Alpine-Appenninic ridge. Here begins the third phase when Byzantine Liguria adopted the outlines of the modern province and was deprived of land-links with other Byzantine regions.¹³⁴ At this stage the maritime bases of Genoa, Ventimiglia and Luni came into prominence forming the backbone to the Tyrrhenian possessions and maintaining vital sea-borne communications with Rome: once further Longobard penetration was blocked, this maritime aspect took a leading role in the province's continued resistance.

Perhaps at this point arose the 'provincia maritima Italorum, quae dicitur Lunensis et Vigintimilii et cetarum civitatum' which initially included not just the Ligurian littoral, but also sites surviving along the Tyrrhenian seaboard.¹³⁵ Indeed Schneider has shown that south of Luni and Pisa the coastal lands of Tuscan Populonia, Rosellae and Suana and also the castello di Corneto near Tarquinii, are all recorded in finibus Maritimae. We know from Gregory that Sovana surrendered to Ariulf of Spoleto in June 592, while imperial bishops still resided in Populonia and Rosellae.¹³⁶ By 595, however, Populonia had fallen, for at the Rome Synod that year Rosellae forms the northernmost named bishopric of the duchy.¹³⁷ To the north Pisa may have resisted the initial Longobard assault to oppose the duchy of Lucca, but the bordering coastal district of castellum de Versilia (Pietrasanta), previously under Luni, probably soon fell.¹³⁸

Combining the data one can hypothesise coastal resistance by the Byzantines north of Civitavecchia up to Pisa, dependent on naval support from the south. This resistance was part-aided by the former lagoons of this shoreline, which, if not as effective as the Venetian lagoons, at least

hindered the Longobard occupation of Tuscany. Pressure was soon exerted by the dukes of Lucca and Chiusi, who would have removed this obstacle by c.600: Lucca occupied lands from Populonia to Sovana, while Chiusi held areas around Rosellae and perhaps Pisa.¹³⁹

If these territories ever combined to form a provincia maritima Italorum this should have occurred before the fall of Sovana and have been sufficiently established in the administrative record to survive into later Longobard and Carolingian documents. It was perhaps a provisional designation, applied to surviving Tyrrhenian and Ligurian positions, and dropped after the loss of coastal Tuscia. It is possible that Anonymous' lists, which appear to reflect closely Byzantine road installations in Liguria, here used an official military source, although neither Gregory nor George of Cyprus mention the provincia.¹⁴⁰ However, Balbis considers that it was instituted after the first Longobard wave; like Formentini and Conti he regards the attachment of George's Ligurian sites to the eparchia Urbicaria as an emergency measure through which Rome sought to secure the western maritime regions.¹⁴¹ Certainly Gregory I takes interest in the zone, writing to bishop Venantius of Luni and Aldio, magister militum (active in Tuscany, but perhaps based at Luni), and appointing Iohannes vices agens at Genoa.¹⁴² Whatever the case, by the start of the 7th century, Liguria was 'dependent on Byzantine naval units for military and logistic support'.¹⁴³

The evidence of George, and indirectly that of Anonymous, indicates that even before c.600 the defence of Liguria was articulated between a series of maritime civitates and castra.¹⁴⁴ These extended into the Ligurian Apennines to oppose positions lining the watershed south of the Lombardy duchies, and in particular up to the heights of the Lunense-Parmense Apennines to defend the major passes into Lunigiana.

Further indications emerge only with the conquest of Liguria in 641/3 by king Rothari, who 'rupit civitates vel castra Romanorum que fuerunt circa litora apriso Lune usque in terra Francorum'.¹⁴⁵ It is a Frankish source, however, which furnishes greater details:

'Chrotarius cum exercitu Genava maretema, Albingano, Varicotti, Saona, Ubitergio et Lune civitates litore mares de imperio auferens, vastat, rumpit, incendio concremans; populum derepit, spoliat et captivitate condemnat; murus civitatebus supscriptis usque ad fundamento destruens, vicus has civitates nomenare praecepit.' (146).

Fredegarius also refers solely to maritime seats. We can assume, however, that once this line broke, the internal castra were deprived of logistical support and rapidly surrendered - unlike those few Alpine forts which resisted for up to twenty years, the Ligurian castra did not even have the nominal support of the Franks. Plausible is the theory that isolated coastal pockets, supported by Byzantine ships, resisted, in turn supplying internal sites, but this is not reflected in the sources.¹⁴⁷

Despite Fredegarius' claims, not every town was destroyed: excavations reveal that Albenga alone suffered badly through fire, whereas at Luni, Ventimiglia and Savona the transition was not destructive.¹⁴⁸ The subjugated towns were perhaps reduced to ministeria or posts dependent on Pavia with only later transformation of municipia (like Ventimiglia, Savona, Genoa and Luni) into iudiciariae, set under gastaldi.¹⁴⁹ In regions like the Lunigiana, however, the axis of major interest shifted, and although most coastal stations persisted, many internal fortifications were abandoned, deprived of their border functions; conversely others grew in importance due to their proximity to revitalised traffic routes. This picture is reflected in the limited survival of sites listed by Anonymous. How long this process took is obscure, but we should assume a period of stagnation before one of revival.

The Byzantine defence of the western riviera appears to have devolved around seven castral districts based on maritime sites: Ventimiglia, Taggia, Albenga, Toirano, Varigotti-Noli, Savona and Albissola-Varazze, all dependent on Genoa.¹⁵⁰ (Map 12) Each aimed to control penetration routes through castella disposed along both rivers and roads, and when required naval communications could ensure reinforcements from neighbouring districts. This is the presumed pattern, for which we lack any documentation: indeed Rothari seemingly met no such resistance in his assault on Liguria. We must first examine this system before attempting to explain the reasons for its collapse.

The extreme western zone gravitated around Ventimiglia, George of Cyprus' βιντιμιλίω, at the mouth of the Roia whose course descends from Colle di Tenda, delineating the border between Romania and Francia, and with Longobardia over the Alpine ridge to the north. Evidence is restricted to Ventimiglia where detailed excavations have clarified the late antique urban aspect.¹⁵¹ Work on the theatre and the Officina del Gas to its west revealed the 5th century destruction of the town and the subsequent levelling of many buildings and the construction of undated dry or clay-bonded stone wallings. In the Officina these early medieval levels were vague and impoverished, and less distinct than in the theatre stratigraphy where dry-set cobblestone walls with some reuse cover much of the abandoned building in particular within the parados: here a succession of walls appears at 3 different levels related to 3 successive phases of soil raising and construction (pl. 35). Finds are of late Roman tradition and belong to the 5th-7th centuries. Burials lay to the west of the theatre, giving rise to speculation that post-Roman life perhaps concentrated around this zone of Albintimilium. Yet the theatre appears undefended and in fact it overlies

the Republican city-walls. The course of the late Roman circuit remains undetermined.

The excavations yielded no material later than the 8th century; at this point probably only a small nucleus of population and the early Christian church persisted on the plain, while a new urban focus arose on high ground west of the Roia. Decorative elements from the Cathedral confirm this late Longobard date, though we should suspect an earlier beginning to the uphill nucleation. By 641/3 therefore Ventimiglia may well have been a split community, perhaps with the military focus established in the medieval seat.¹⁵²

Along the coast late antique settlement traces are evident at Bordighera, Vallecrosia, San Rocco and Sanremo. Uncertain is the role of the Val Nervia which communicated north-eastwards into the Taggia valley, but which possesses no distinct defensive function.¹⁵³

Taggia occupies the brief plain near the mouth of the Taggia (valle Argentina). The abandonment of the Roman foci of Costa Balenae and Capo Don for the medieval borgo of Taggia 2km inland is paralleled to the east in the replacement of Riva Ligure and S.Stefano di Villaregia by the upland villages of Pompeiana, Terzorio and Cipressa. The Byzantine castrum identified in George of Cyprus' κάστρον ταβία is generally located on the unexcavated Capo Don.¹⁵⁴

For its immediate defence, on a spur at the bend of the Argentina arose the castelo de Campomarzio, first recorded in 962. The fortification consists of an elliptical circuit girding the hill crest, defended at each end by a tower, and at whose centre is the church of S.Giorgio. Although assigned a 7th century Byzantine foundation, the castello has features recommending a late Roman date: around the church lies a disturbed late antique necropolis with slab-built tombs, while both towers contain opus

signinum floors; Lamboglia even records an excavation on the north flank 'where were found at c.2m depth remnants of numerous late Roman amphorae and pots, including vessels in pietra ollare, under a continuous ash layer ...',¹⁵⁵ Similarly, analysis of the wall fabric, of mortared irregular cut stones of loca tufa, also suggests a 5th century construction.¹⁵⁶ The pottery may also testify to a post-Roman occupation which was destructively terminated, perhaps by the Longobard arrival.

The coastline as far as Capo Cervo lay under castrum Taggia, and included the fine ports of Porto Maurizio and Oneglia. The former, at the mouth of the Prino, has minimal traces of an oval defensive wall preserved by buildings in its course, but lacks excavation. The site is accorded a Byzantine foundation on the basis of its name, supposedly recording the emperor Maurice, but no evidence supports this. The early medieval focus of Oneglia (castrum Uneliae?) lay on the hill of Castelvecchio commanding the outlet of the Impero; its name alone suggests its antiquity.¹⁵⁷

Closely linked to the control of these maritime bases was the defence of the road along the Impero up to the Colle S.Bartolomeo where it reached the upper Arroscia and thence the Cuneese. Perhaps significant in this is parallel setting of Chiusavecchia and Chiusanico, near which also lies castello di Torria. Although uninvestigated, Byzantine origins may be proposed.¹⁵⁸ A separate military district is claimed for Pieve di Teco on the upper Arroscia, designed to defend the confluence of routes leading to Oneglia and Albenga and to oppose the route over the Colle di Nava. Its distance from Albenga suggests an autonomous defence, but one in communication with the coast. Remains are late, however, and our sole clue regarding a Byzantine presence is the identification of Teco with the Greek τείχος - wall.¹⁵⁹

Albenga, ignored by George of Cyprus, is nonetheless listed by Fredegarius, and in addition has the oldest epigraphic reference to a Byzantine military commander, Tzittas/Tzittanus, comes et tribunus of AD 568.¹⁶⁰ Unlike Ventimiglia, Albenga still occupies the site of the Roman town, with continuity apparent in the surviving town plan. Following its destruction in the early 5th century Constans III girded the city in c.415 with new walls, following the course of the part-demolished Republican circuit.¹⁶¹ Both baptistery and cathedral - with 4th, 6th and 8th century floor levels underlying the Romanic structure and overlying imperial and late Roman non-secular buildings - attest Albenga's religious continuity. The extramural cemeterial zone around S.Calocero also remained in use into late antiquity.¹⁶²

Stratigraphic excavations have occurred twice alongside the walls, at the Civic Hospital in the west corner, and in the south with the Scavo Vaccari, both with deep archaeological deposits. The walls of Constans provide a terminus post quem for levels above its foundation trench: at the Hospital there were three late Roman levels (H, I, L), where H postdates the walls and marks the final Roman period; level G is probably Gothic/Byzantine, predating a destruction level and the appearance of light-glazed wares in level F, and postdating the destruction of H. Level G revealed both drystone structures and walls of fishbone style overlying the razed Roman structures; it is associated with a 'notable growth in late Roman residue among the fragments collected'. A like stratigraphy emerged from the Vaccari excavation.¹⁶³ The evidence suggests large-scale destruction in both the late Roman and Byzantine periods; that this did not disrupt life here is evident both in site-continuity and in the Cathedral excavations. Simultaneously the excavations document neither abandonment nor nucleation

within the walls.

In its environs lie the early medieval religious buildings of S.Giorgio di Campochiesa and of Isola Gallinara, a monastery and refuge since the 5th century; to the south-west Alassio with its castello di Tirasso, and the castello di Andora in the Merula valley, are accorded important positions within the Albenga district.¹⁶⁴

Strategically the Val Neva (combining to form the Centa west of Albenga) guarded routes from the upper Tanaro over Colle S.Bernardo, and the upper Bormida over Colle Scravaion. It possesses some significant toponymic traces: Cisano sul Neva is equated with a Byzantine Chiusa; Castelvechio di Rocca Barbena may denote a late antique fortress; and Erli derives 'almost certainly from a barbarian settlement of Heruls' probably founded in the late Empire.¹⁶⁵

The adjoining link in the castral chain was Toirano, whose district opposed the Longobards of the Val Bormida, and lay in relative proximity to Albenga, to which it may have been subordinate. George of Cyprus names it κάστρον Βαρακτηλία, where Toirano forms the focus of the Val Varatella; no other early source records it.¹⁶⁶ Its hill of Torracco dominates the confluence of the Varatella with the T.Barescione south of the Toirano giogo (807m). In the upper valley the abbey of S.Pietro, whose chronicles claim a foundation by Charlemagne, occupies the ancient refuge site of Monte S.Pietro.¹⁶⁷

A major threat towards the maritime bases of Albenga, Toirano and Finale, came from Longobards installed in the upper Bormida from the later 5th century: here they controlled roads to the Scravaion, Toirano, Melogno and also Cadibona hills. The chief defensive node of the zone was Bardineto, on a spur overlooking these routes. Here, south-east of the

S.Niccolo church is a tower of near semi-circular form with an internal diameter of c.2.90m, with walls 1.68-2.25m thick, preserved to c.2.25m high. Its position affords visual linkage with Calizzano, Massimino, Murialdo, and the rest of the Bormida. While its Longobard possession is undoubted, Balbis has recently hypothesised an initial Byzantine presence at Bardineto. Support comes from two sources; firstly, structural analysis of the tower fabric (with internal traces of fish-bone construction) may recommend Byzantine work, and secondly the nearby toponym Bando may recall its imperial garrison (βάνδος or numerus).¹⁶⁸ A Byzantine castrum here forms a logical guard for the crossings towards coastal Liguria, but Balbis queries whether the fortress acted as an advance point of Toirano or was rather included within a separate Bormidan sector - he even suggests that this was κάστρον βαρακτηλιδ, and that Toirano was a secondary base. The question must remain open, and excavation is still required to determine whether the Bardineto tower belonged to a larger fortification, and whether it was one of a series of castella.¹⁶⁹ Its continued use after the Rotharian invasion highlights its strategic importance.

Another Byzantine castral district is postulated for Varigotti-Noli, providing the coastal link between Albenga and Savona. Yet it is contentious that these maritime castra had anything beyond a purely naval function: neither site dominates a river or road course nor indeed lies directly on the coastal via Aurelia. Nonetheless there is the 11th century attestation of comitatus Naboli independent from Vado-Savona controlling territory from Capo di Vado to Finale. Lamboglia recognises in this a Byzantine district, adopted by both Longobards and Franks. He cites in support the plausible reference to Noli in the Descriptio as ΝεάΠολις, listed between Luni and Ventimiglia - though Anonymous and Fredegarius omit reference to it and the

latter only names Varicottis.¹⁷⁰ Lamboglia suggests that the comitatus Naboli was heir to the Varigotti finis destroyed by Rothari: this is supported by the tradition recording the flight of the population to the sea with Noli's subsequent growth from the desolation of Varigotti.¹⁷¹ Nonetheless a high road, much used in the Middle Ages, did lead from Capo di Noli via Isasco onto the Manie high-plain, linking south to Noli and Varigotti by trackways, reaching Orco in the Aquila valley before leading to the Finale. The later Roman necropolis at Isasco demonstrates 3rd-4th century use of the road.¹⁷² We should thus visualise Noli and Varigotti as vital joints in the coastal articulation using their natural harbours as supply-bases for further positions of the riviera.

Both sites retain traces of Byzantine rule, in particular Varigotti whose castello is considered 'an almost complete example of a Byzantine-Longobardic castrum'.¹⁷³ This occupies the upper portion of the steep-sided wide promontory linked to the mainland by a high saddle crowned by a medieval construction, (Fig. 12). At mid-slope are visible the remains of the circuit wall, preserved for roughly a third of its total course (pl. 36). The walls are of local rough-cut stone with a coarse white pebble mortar; a few traces of tile are present, noticeably in put-log holes to the west, but no evident spolia. Inside are a series of drystone terrace-walls, principally for olive cultivation, but some of ancient construction; except for a rock-cut cistern there are no habitation traces visible. Surface pottery scatter is chiefly medieval. The summital tower is late, but may overlie an earlier watchtower which gives visual contacts towards Albenga and across to Capo di Noli. Access is restricted to the gentler western slope, where a rock-cut pathway is defended by probable gate-towers, again of dry-stone construction (pl. 37). The circuit appears little disturbed

by later occupations (harbour filled in 1341 by the Genovesi), although the heavy mortaring on the north face may represent a medieval reinforcement on the harbour side.¹⁷⁴ The promontory still awaits excavation.

Attention has instead focussed on the church of S.Lorenzo on the hill-slope opposite, which, if identifiable with the castral chapel, should present a sequence analogous to the fortress. San Lorenzo is crudely constructed with ample spolia, including fragments of a 3rd century sarcophagus and a 5th-6th century funerary inscription, and owes its present form to an 8th century Longobard phase, testified by internal decorative elements.¹⁷⁵ That an earlier church existed is verified by late Roman-Byzantine tombs, with one tomb yielding an aureus of Justinian.¹⁷⁶ The church formed a monastery in 1127 and saw 14th century rebuilding before the parish moved onto the plain.

Until recently the church lay within an enclosure which has now partly collapsed. This wall, built with small rough square blocks of local Finale stone, mainly laid in horizontal courses, was regarded as late Roman in technique, probably 'dating to the first early medieval construction of S.Lorenzo' - recent studies propose a 5th-6th century date.¹⁷⁷

Medieval Noli consisted of two distinct halves: the walled borgo of the coastal plain and Castel Ursino, a 12th century fortress occupying the steep hill to the north with walls enclosing much of the seaward slope. Neither site has yet furnished definite traces of pre-feudal settlement.¹⁷⁸ Studies have concentrated on the extramural church of San Paragorio at the south end of the borgo, (pl. 38). In excavating its southern flank, numerous medieval tombs were discovered overlying an earlier baptistery, against whose apse was set a later, early medieval tomb (featuring the Lidoria inscription of the 7th-8th century): both tomb and baptistery were

cut by the foundations^{of} the existing 10th century church.¹⁷⁹ Only the southern half of the baptistery survived, built in rough mortared stone courses with an internally buttressed outer wall, and featuring a fine central octagonal font; the church was floored in opus signinum. This structure probably flanked a larger church, still obscured: certainly the 6th-7th century tombs located in the crypt lay at a level corresponding to the baptistery, and from one of these presumably derives the funerary epigraph of Theodorus corepiscopus. Plait-decorated marble decorative fragments from the church belong to the 8th century.¹⁸⁰

The fill overlying the baptistery indicates activity up to the 9th century, while finds associated with its floor include late Roman tradition pottery. The abandonment level outside contained early medieval wares, including two green-glazed sherds, assigned to the 8th-9th centuries; level VII, apparently contemporary with the construction has possible late Roman-Byzantine sherds.¹⁸¹ A 6th century construction is also confirmed by Lamboglia's analysis of the dedication: he regards Paragorio as a Greek-Byzantine, who in local tradition was a Roman warrior in the Emperor's service, martyred with his companions Parteo, Partenopeo and Severino, each with close ties with Corsica and Naples. Lamboglia identifies Paragorio as a Byzantine naval officer who won a famous victory and was honoured posthumously as a saint. Additionally George's reference to a Neapolis may signify a Byzantine foundation of Noli.¹⁸²

The site of the Byzantine castellum for the moment remains undetermined. A candidate should, however, be the hill of S.Michele, at whose feet lies S.Paragorio. Near the summit, is the church of S.Michele, named from the 11th century, but dating structurally to the 10th. Surface inspection revealed only medieval potsherds; no defensive traces are evident on the

hilltop.¹⁸³

The comitatus Naboli comprised in its western confine the Finalese and the Pora and Pia valleys (Roman Pullopice). The pieve at Finale dates back to the late 5th century and overlies Roman and later Roman constructions. Longobard decorative elements appear absent.¹⁸⁴

In defence of the via Aurelia was castrum Pertice, a fortress of 5th-7th century date (first recorded in 1162) near the head of the Pora on high ground separating this from the Aquila. Recent excavations were made on the height of S. Antonino within the line of the two castello circuits (Fig. 11). The external circuit contains 4 rectangular towers, while the internal line has just a single squarish tower; both curtains are of local dressed stone poorly coursed but bonded with abundant mortar. The castello overlies a pre-Roman oppidum.¹⁸⁵

Four sectors were investigated: external tower 2, and three points adjoining the inner circuit. Each sector, and in particular the foundation trench of the inner walls produced 6th-7th century date terra sigillata chiara D, abundant fragments of amphorae, pietra ollare and a few pieces of glazed ware.¹⁸⁶ The fortress is two-phased, with the outer circuit perhaps of late Roman date (though still requiring further excavation), and the internal circuit erected by the Byzantines in the later 6th century 'with the evident functions of control of the valley access points towards the littoral and of protecting the vicus of Perti below'.¹⁸⁷ The castrum's close contact with the littoral and Byzantine trade links is attested by the numerous sherds of African Red Slip Ware.

Analogous should have been the function of castello di Orco (named in 967) in the Aquila valley presiding over the road-branches towards Finale, Varigotti and Noli, and indeed standing in view of castrum Pertice.¹⁸⁸

Before entering the riviera Savonese one passes isola di Bergeggi, where stands an abbey, founded by S.Eugenius, a Carthaginian bishop whose cult was popular in this zone. Before the abbey, however, there stood a tower of circular form within a triangular enclosure, identified as both a lighthouse and a watchtower, subsequently topped by a square medieval tower. The Roman construction should date to the later 4th century, but it may not have remained in use after the abbey was built in the 5th-6th centuries; a signal-tower linking Noli and Savona is logical, although a fortification on Capo di Vado was perhaps better suited to this function.¹⁸⁹

Vada Sabatia-Vado lies at the outlet of the via Aemilia Scauri from Acqui-Tortona and of a route from Alba, both much in use in late antiquity. Roman Vado's open location had few defensive capabilities, and this caused its rapid decline in late antiquity in favour of Savona and its powerful harbour fortress of Priamar. Vado nonetheless retained nominal municipal rights and remained a bishop's and comital seat until the 10th century.¹⁹⁰ Excavations confirm this sequence, disclosing the destruction of a Roman house in the 4th-5th century, over which arose in the final occupational levels (II and I) impoverished heaped-stone and clay-bonded constructions; later, perhaps from the 6th century, the site assumed a cemeterial role.¹⁹¹

The defence of this zone was thus entrusted to Savona, whose finis perhaps initially extended into the Val Bormida to control the confluence of the via Aemilia Scauri with the Alba road, but which later lay behind the colle di Cadibona. No evidence exists for either Byzantine or opposing Longobard strongholds, which were presumably based on possession of Millesimo and Cairo.

The citadel of Priamar, transformed in the 16th century into the present fortress, dominated a small natural port in the same manner as Varigotti.

The refortification did not destroy all the underlying levels, and excavations have distinguished a notable stratigraphic sequence dating back to the pre-Roman oppidum. The work claims recognition of the Byzantine presence through 'structures and tombs of this epoch', greatly obscured by early medieval and feudal levels.¹⁹² The form of the defences of the civitas Saona remains obscure, but an occupational continuity is claimed. A Longobard watchpoint is postulated to the east at S.Donato (S.Lorenzo since 1589) on mons de vardia or mons guardiae, though the Longobard town undoubtedly lay on Priamar.¹⁹³

A final west Ligurian castral district has recently been added to Lamboglia's original system: that of Albissola-Varazze, organised from the castello di S.Donato at Varazze. Both maritime castra lay at the end of routes descending from Acqui and crossing the colle di Giovo.¹⁹⁴

Roman Alba Docilia appears gathered around the church of S.Pietro. Excavations here record a hiatus in occupation at the end of the Roman era, perhaps corresponding to an upland shift. This perhaps centred on the colle di Castellaro, where stands the medieval castello; relevant finds are lacking.¹⁹⁵

Varazze, (Roman ad Navalìa?), preserves a walled borgo, joined to the early romanic church of S.Ambrogio on the low coastal hill. On the Parrasio hill north of the habitat, at a bend in the Teiro is the church of S.Donato, enclosed within a fortification. These comprise traces of a circuit wall girding a summital tower located against the church apse. The tower, 4.6 x 4.6m, still up to c.3.50m high with walls c.1.10m thick, was built with mortared irregular cut small stones, but with a facing in larger blocks. In contrast the circuit features successive courses of well-aligned stones of varied size, mixed occasionally with cobble and bonded with sparse sandy mortar. In addition the face exhibits infrequent rows of spina-pesce style

walling. Though towers are absent, traces of buttresses behind the walls exist.¹⁹⁶

The tower fabric is structurally comparable with later Roman buildings of the early 5th century in Liguria, while the circuit construction, characterised by the spina-pesce appears of post-Roman or even Byzantine date.¹⁹⁷ The late Roman origin of the tower is explicable through the crises of the early 5th century, when Alaric and Radagaisus plundered much of north-west Italy in particular. Further elements of the late Roman defence should be the castello of Campomarzio, the resurgent Savona, the walls of Taggia and those of Constans at Albenga. The transition into a castellum in the post-Roman era follows a trend discernable elsewhere in the peninsula and best recognised at Castelseprio. The chronological evolution is obscure but may correspond to either the Gothic or Byzantine dominance. However, the toponym Pian di Banda near the castello at Varazze may record a Byzantine βανδος at S.Donato, and thus mark a later 6th century circuit construction. The subsequent Longobard presence is recognised in the insertion of the chapel - of typical Longobard dedication - in the heart of the fortress. Excavation is required to verify this sequence.¹⁹⁸

Of unquestioned importance is Genoa, the administrative centre of Byzantine Liguria. Strategically, Genoa guarded the southern exit of the via Postumia from Tortona-Libarna (over the Giovi pass) and of the Bisagno-Trebbia line (over the Scoffera, where Torriglia is attributed an early medieval origin).¹⁹⁹ There is no evidence for the defence of Genoa and its environs in late antiquity, although we do have the inscription of 591 of the vice-prefects John and Vigilus, Gregory's reference to Iohannes, vices agens of the Rome Prefect in Genoa, and mention of the numerus felici Laetorum in the Genoa garrison. Little is known of the topography of Byzantine and

Longobard Genoa.²⁰⁰

The most significant excavation concerned the cemetery of the demolished S.Sabina near Piazza Annunziata c.1km distant from the Roman city. Here were uncovered 25 graves, chiefly of pitched-tile covers, but with some later slab-tombs, probably Longobard given the presence of 8th century decorative elements from the church.²⁰¹ The former are of proposed Byzantine or 5th-6th century date, as supported by the 17th century find here of the tombstone of Magnus, miles of the numerus felici Laetorum, buried in 590-1.²⁰²

The 1971-76 excavations on Collina di Castello, the logical early medieval defensive focus overlooking the port, revealed no concrete late antique evidence: while identifying the pre-Roman oppidum, the rubble-built wall 33m long located on the crest appears to date to the 8th-9th centuries. Nonetheless this did cut through a deposit containing late Roman glazed pottery, thus demonstrating some form of late presence on the hill. Residual sherds of 6th century ARS were also found.²⁰³

The evidence for Eastern Liguria is highly biased toward the Lunigiana. Our geographical sources concentrate on this zone, and leave our picture of the Genoa-Levanto zone devoid of details. This ties in well with the geographical framework of the east, where the penetration routes from Longobard Padania and Tuscia congregate around the Lunigiana. Discussion of the western areas is thus brief. (Map 13)

The important ports of Recco and Portofino are both postulated Longobard arimanniae, but have no evidence for Byzantine occupation save through their appearance in Anonymous' Cosmographia.²⁰⁴

The comitatus Turisianus, recorded first in the 9th century, is set by Formentini to the Lavagna zone and regarded as a Byzantine castral territory,

linked to that of Castell'Arquato. It supposedly opposed the area dominated by Bobbio, the Geno and Taro valleys, and bordered with Genoa near Cicagna and with Levanto near Moniglia, although its actual siting remains disputed.²⁰⁵

Firmer ground comes in the Levanto-Framura zone, wherein Conti sets four sites listed by Anonymous: Cebula, Bulnetia, Boron and Rexum.²⁰⁶ In the case of Cebula the identification with Montale di Levanto is secured by the medieval designation of its church as plebs de Ceula, while his other identifications are achieved through less secure toponymic traces. The region was charged with the defence of routes descending from the passo di Cento Croci and M.Gottero along and perpendicular to the Vara.²⁰⁷ At both Montale and S.Martino di Framura large quadrangular towers lie beside later churches, reused as belltowers; their analogous construction and placing (facing the interior, not the sea) is considered indicative of a contemporary origin, and their similarity with the Zignago tower may reveal the activity of Byzantine military architects in the Lunigiana. This must remain a tentative hypothesis, however, due to the lack of excavated, datable parallels.²⁰⁸ Bulnetia and Boron preserve no traces of their early medieval phase.²⁰⁹

Portovenere is perhaps identifiable with George of Cyprus' κάστρον βενενης (no. 624) listed between Bismantova and Taggia. However, the site probably functioned solely as a maritime castrum, for it controls no significant land route. More important are those sites along the lower Vara like Vezzano (castrum Coloniola) at the confluence with the Magra.²¹⁰

Near the outlet of the Magra lay Luni, George's Λούνη (no. 534) (Fig. 13). This has been the subject of extensive excavations, yielding precious results, in particular regarding the decay of an urban settlement in late antiquity.²¹¹ The fact that Luni was transformed after 568 into a key

Byzantine frontier centre gives the archaeological data special significance as regards life in an important imperial town. Significantly the excavations revealed no revival in the gradual urban decline, least of all in the old Roman focus of the Forum.²¹² This appears abandoned by c.A.D.400 stripped of its marble paving; when it was brought back into use for habitations in the 6th century much of the space was covered in soil up to 30cm deep. Two excavated houses partly reused remaining Roman structures, but otherwise consisted of dry-stone wall footings or simple timber sides, with internal wooden partitions and beaten earth/clay floors (Figs. 14, 15). Both are datable to the Byzantine occupation: a deposit below House I contained later 6th century pottery, while one of the refloorings of House II contained a coin of Justin II (565-578).²¹³ Although excavations have been limited to the monumental centre, this sparse picture is unlikely to be contradicted by finds elsewhere; however, settlement may have contracted around the Cathedral where the ground level is considerably raised within the confine of a walling (c.140 x 90m) now little more than a terrace wall, but which in the 17th century was designated 'Mura della Cittadella'.²¹⁴ (pl. 39)

The city was entrusted with the organisation of the eastern Ligurian front, defending the coastal route from Lucca and Pisa and the inland line from the Garfagnana, (Map 13). Administratively Luni controlled much of the riviera di Levante, extending into the Val di Magra, but other districts existed to aid in the defence. Indeed it appears that the defence of the upper Lunigiana was allotted to the κράσιον Σωρων-Filattiera, whose importance is demonstrated in its presence in the confinium of Pippin, running 'a Lunis ... deinde in Suriano deinde in monte Bardone id est in Verceto', and in references to the finis Sorianense.²¹⁵ Its southern extent probably lay in the Aulella, and interestingly the road course described in Anonymous

of Ravenna departing from Luni extends up to the Tavarone-Magra confluence before turning west to Cornelium and thence the coast at Cebula: by omitting positions in the upper Magra we may consider that this road delimits the finis Luniensis.²¹⁶

Besides Surianum, George of Cyprus names Μικαυρία, considered as Micoria-Castello di Nicola in the immediate defence of Luni.²¹⁷ We lack evidence for other fortifications in the Lunense, although if the Aulella and the Linari pass were dependent on Luni forts may be discernable at Bibola, Soliera and Minucciano.²¹⁸

Filattiera, dominates the road south of the confluence of the northern pass-routes (passes of Valdena, Bratello, Cisa and Cirone), and is a habitat divided into 4 distinct parts: the modern town which overlies the medieval Borgo vecchio, the medieval hill-habitat which is separated by a hollow from the colle di S.Giorgio where lies both pieve and castello; lastly, to the north lies the high Selva di Filattiera, whose final spur is called Castelveccio.²¹⁹ (pl. 40)

For many years the S.Giorgio castello was regarded as the site of the Byzantine castrum, with traces surviving in the lower courses of the tower facing the church (3.70 x 3.90m), but recent investigations demonstrate that both tower and related circuit are 13th-14th century in date.²²⁰ However, excavations on Castelveccio (c.150 x 60m) above the pieve di S.Stefano have identified the probable late antique fortification, reoccupying the site of a pre-Roman castelliere (Pl. 41): trenches revealed a 'campo trincerato' consisting of double-ditch and cobblestone rampart defences, within which were located post holes for wooden constructions, but no walled remains (Figs. 16, 17). Some small sherds of 5th-7th century ceramica vascolare were recovered, but otherwise mobile finds were minimal.²²¹ Further wall remains,

generally dry-set, but with some clay bonding, are visible girding the sides of the spur, but again with no internal structures recognisable (pl. 42).

Further excavations should clarify this limited picture and identify the full seat of the Byzantine fortress which is at present of unimpressive stature.²²²

The name Filattiera is itself a toponymic trace of the Byzantine presence: it derives from the Greek φυλακτῆριον (a guard- or garrison-post), a term used by Procopius.²²³ Noticeably Filattiera became the village name only from 1033, although Surianum-Sorano survived beyond 1203. How the Greek superseded the old Roman name four centuries after the collapse of Byzantine rule cannot be explained but may represent the eventual acceptance of its local name. The recognition of this root provoked useful studies of the regional toponymy, revealing other Byzantine positions: in sight of Filatierra is a Filetto near Villafranca, perhaps also in communication with Filetta near Ceparana at the Vara-Magra confluence, and a Feiletta lies near Soliera east of Terrarossa on the Aulella. While no archaeological confirmation of their Byzantine foundation exists, their siting as guards of the major roads and thus as units in the general defensive system is well-recognised.²²⁴

Medieval documentation shows the fines Sorianenses extended north-westwards across to M.Gottero and up to sites below the passes - like Montelungo - and along the Appenninic ridges to the Cirone, Cerreto and Linari (Foce Carpinelli) passes. Beyond lay the notable Longobard towns of Borgotaro, Berceto, and Garfagnana, themselves with territoria reaching toward the Byzantine province. Filattiera formed a natural focal point, set almost centrally with respect to the penetration lines, utilising a network of roads which radiated out to combine with each sector.²²⁵ (Map 13) These communications should have been assured by a series of towers and castella; Filattiera presumably maintained a substantial garrison capable of

repelling raids and of drawing upon the forces of adjoining strongholds.²²⁶

Although the Lunigiana as a whole has been adequately studied we await examination of individual sites to verify the composition of the defensive arrangements here. Nonetheless a rough guide derives from the eastern front, beginning in the Capria valley which descends from the Cirone. Here Ferrari and Formentini located on the height of M.Castello (886m), near Rocca Sigillina, the remains of a pre-Roman castelliere probably refurbished under the Byzantines. As a chronological guide Formentini identifies in the toponym Costa di Bando, referable to the south slope, a bandos or Byzantine numerus.²²⁷ If valid, it represents another significant survival of Byzantine terminology.

The castello occupies a strong spur overlooking the Capria and the 'strada lombarda'; it features two concentric circuits of irregular stone build which converge at the head of a saddle which formed the sole access point; both circuits appear strengthened by towers or buttresses, with the external walls containing squared or circular types; the walls were c.1.40m thick and occasionally mortared, although other sections show prehistoric, Cyclopaean traits. On the summit overlooking the gate are the remains of a tower (6.50 x 6.62m), with well-built walls 1m thick of small sandstone blocks. The different construction and the scatter of Roman tegulae recommend a later Roman date for this tower, and a later date for the rushed circuits.²²⁸ As Formentini claims, it is difficult to visualise a period other than that of the Byzantine-Longobard opposition for the erection of the castello; while the tower may be a late Roman measure of the 5th century, the fort installation suggests the requirement for more rigid fortification work.²²⁹

Other proposed sites are less acceptable. Ferrari for instance lists additional local prehistoric castello-toponyms and presumes their

reoccupation in the barbarian invasion era. Formentini similarly, though more cautiously, uses toponymy to fix further points in the limes Surianensis: he reconstructs a visual link south-eastwards from M.Castello across to M.Sant'Antonio (956m) between the Bagnone and Tavarone valleys, whose peak is Castellaro, in the area of the Monti della Guardia; this then connects with Torre Nocciola (944m), between the Tavarone and Rosaro, where lies a circular tower entrenched behind 3 ditches. From here one could view the Cerreto pass, combine with the Apuan positions, or relay back along the Tavarone to Terrarossa and thence Filattiera or even Luni. No proof exists for this arrangement.²³⁰

In this south-east sector the Byzantines faced Longobard Garfagnana, whose finis may have been an imperial institution: Formentini regards castrum Vetus-Castelvechio, as the earlier, late Roman/Byzantine stronghold, facing north, which was rapidly replaced by castrum Novum, (present Castelnovo di Garfagnana), to oppose the Longobards at Lucca and to support the Tyrrhenian bases of Pisa and Versilia-Pietrasanta; this will have capitulated, however, once the Byzantines were forced to withdraw over the Linari.²³¹

Although the finis Sorianenses touched upon the Val di Vara at Torpiana, the Vara otherwise appears independent, and was perhaps organised from the Framura coast; nor can we exclude an autonomous castral district.²³² The valley had two major functions: to guard passage from the Taro valley over the Passo di Cento Croci and from the Passo delle Tre Potenze, and to prevent outflanking or evasion of the Magra castra from the north-east. The defensive axis appears delineated along the Vara-Magra watershed, from their confluence south of Ceparana up to Monte Gottero: along this ran the via regia, a high ridge-road which evaded the variable banks of the mid-upper Vara, and commanded a wide view of both the Vara and the north-west Magra

zone, linked to each by minor roads.²³³ The toponyms Filetta and Filettino, at Ceparana and near Calice al Cornoviglio respectively, document Byzantine interest along the road, while, if Conti's identification of Zignago with Cornelium is correct, the via regia probably formed part of the road recorded by Anonymous of Ravenna before it turned towards Levanto. Its later importance is indicated in the growth of the monastery of Brugnato.²³⁴ (Map 13)

Near the Pontremoli-Levanto- via regia crossroads south of Rossano in the Zignago comune rises Castellaro (950m), a truncated cone-shaped peak with distinct traces of artificial terracing (pl. 43). Recent excavations have uncovered the defensive structures of a medieval and an early medieval castello, dating back to the Byzantine epoch, and overlying a protostoric settlement. The fortification covers two summital terraces, with the main terrace of trapezoidal form (270m^2) with a slight northward incline, delimited to the side by rocky projecting edges and terminating to the north in an 8m long walling; the lower terrace to the south is smaller (90m^2).²³⁵ (Fig. 18)

While the protostoric occupation concerned both terraces, the early medieval fortress occupied only the upper level, centred on Tower C, which lay at the head of a circuit wall on the east side and behind a possible circuit on the west; the medieval castello reused the abandoned Tower C, but made the lower Tower T the circuit head (Fig. 19). When the dry-stone circuit on this south terrace was built is unclear, but its close similarity to the upper walls recommends an early medieval date.²³⁶

In zone C lay a quadrangular tower lacking its south side, but with probable dimensions of c.8.30 x 8m, built into the east curtain. Its foundations lay on bedrock and part-cut the prehistoric levels; the walls, c.1.50m thick, were constructed in faces of unequal dry-set courses of rough-dressed local greenstone, strengthened by vertical and horizontal wedges, though

with coarse white-rosy lime-mortar in the north-east angle. The core was packed with smaller stones, with earth not clay bonding. The construction contrasts strongly with the medieval Tower T (6.70 x 7.70m) which features abundant white-yellow mortar - its walls still stood to c.1.20m. Circuit traces in zone P on the east, north and west sides of the upper terrace consisted of little more than their initial foundation courses, drystone built of a thickness less than that of Tower C, and composed of small tabular worked stones. The first castellum thus comprised 'a polygonal circuit wall which follows the existing edges, with a wide quadrangular tower on the inside of one wall-side, that which more directly dominates the road track, reinforced by one or more circuit walls on the opposite side of the tower, the only one which shows traces of a steep access point ...'.²³⁷

Belonging to its earliest phase is the ceramica vacuolare, closely comparable with wares from the 5th-7th century villages of Savignone and Luscignano and from a 6th-7th century context at Luni; two types (Tipo Luscignano and Zignago) were distinguished, with the latter of principally local distribution. While this ceramic is elsewhere associated with products of late Roman tradition, suggesting an early post-Roman epoch, at Zignago the finds signify a later date, presumably that of the Byzantine dominion. The ware seemingly disappears with the Longobard conquest, however, leaving us ignorant of the Longobard presence in the zone.²³⁸ Corroboration of this date comes from the few metal finds, notably the thin, square sectioned arrowheads analogous to types from Invillino. No Longobard barbed arrowheads are present.²³⁹

Exactly when the stronghold was constructed remains obscure. Although crudely built, the Castellaro fortress is not a rushed construction, and the lack of mortar and dressed stone is more a reflection of the unavailability

of suitable local materials than the ability of its builders. The Byzantine withdrawal into present Liguria hastened the erection or occupation of strategic watch- and guard-posts, in many cases abandoned protostoric hilltop sites, perhaps adapted as part of a general directive from the military authorities. How thickly this defensive network was laid out here is unknown. Along the Zignago-Levanto road we can postulate the presence of garrisons at Vezzola and M.Bardellone; on the Sestri road only Godano can be cited; and on the final stretch of the via regia Gretta di Patigno and Chiusola are additional guards. These dispositions allow easy visual control over the Vara which was thus enclosed between fortifications of the littoral and of the Vara-Magra watershed.²⁴⁰

How effectively these measures, as with those elsewhere in the Ligurian Alpine-Appenninic zones, performed before 641/3 is unknown. However, when Rothari's forces fell upon the province the system proved wholly incapable of sustaining the impact and rapidly caved in.²⁴¹ Nor are the causes of this failure clear, whether due to tactical inadequacy, the weakness of the garrisons, lack of logistics, the strength of the invasion, or even lack of foresight with regard to the political and military situation. Whatever the case Byzantine Liguria was overcome.

No destruction levels accompanied the abandonment of Castellaro at the end of this phase, nor indeed are there items referable to a Longobard reoccupation. This may denote either a surrender or desertion of the stronghold after the imperials had lost their sea bases and the Longobards had penetrated deep inland: swiftly deprived of support the Zignago garrison, few as they were, probably surrendered rather than preserve a lost cause. The enemy perhaps did not attack the site, but after its evacuation merely demolished the walls and tower. The end of the Byzantine limes terminated

the Castellaro's military functions, which only resumed in the early 11th century when a similar strategic need arose. Under the Longobards life probably devolved around the nearby monastic seat 'in Grignacula'.²⁴²

As noted, a similar fate will have befallen many other Byzantine sites in the Lunigiana and Liguria as a whole, and after almost a century the Byzantines finally let slip their maritime province.

(d) The Pentapolis²⁴³

The Pentapolis formed a southward extension of the Exarchate, which it bordered along the Marecchia river. The province, which, like the Ravennate, remained substantially Byzantine until the reign of Astulf, was a purely Byzantine administrative division corresponding to no Roman province, being a patchwork of regions. Although the name survived, the territorial division faded after 774.²⁴⁴

This zone is first recorded as provincia Pentapolis in 680 when the bishops of Rimini, Pesaro, Fano, Ancona, Numana and Osimo signed at the 3rd Council of Constantinople; later, in 693, the Liber Pontificalis distinguishes the ducatus Pentapolitanus from the provincia Ravennatis.²⁴⁵ Furthermore, Anonymous of Ravenna names three adjacent provinces along the Adriatic littoral: provincia Ravennatis, Annonaria Pentapolensis and Spolitium Sauciensis; he also records the separate provincia castellorum set super (i.e. upland of) Annonaria Pentapolensis.²⁴⁶

This division between coast and interior is magnified in 8th century sources, with populus utrarumque Pentapolim, civitates utrarumque Pentapoleos, and, exceptionally, Decapolis. The date of the institution of this inner Pentapolis is obscure.²⁴⁷

As Alfieri has shown, the five cities of the littoral are identifiable

with those of the 680 Concilium, where each represents a bishopric; Diehl used the same criterion to identify the internal pentapoleis with Urbino, Fossombrone, Cagli, Iesi and Gubbio. However, the bishop's seat of Osimo, at the border of the putative provincia castellorum, was also represented in 680. Diehl perhaps misleadingly inserts Gubbio, which acted as rider between the towns of the via Amerina and those of Pentapolis.²⁴⁸

Territorially Pentapolis arose as a result of the expansion of the duke of Spoleto in Central Italy and Picenum in particular. Buffered by the Appenninic ridges, however, the Byzantines regrouped to contain the advance, thanks chiefly to the proximity of the forces at Ravenna. Initially at least the region was administered from Ravenna as the governor sought to maintain the land-link with Rome. Only once this was accomplished and the Amerina lay firmly in imperial hands could the province of Pentapolis have solidified administratively. Subsequently it functioned much like Ostrogothic Picenum as a buffer to Ravenna and principal guard to the Rome-Ravenna corridor. The inclusion of Gubbio in the Pentapolis corroborates this fact.²⁴⁹

The physical configuration of Pentapolis is pronounced: from the relatively level coastline there is a progressive rise to the line of the subappenninic ridges and thence to the mountainous zone of the full Appenninic chain; parallel to this west-east declivity are numerous valleys which give the province its 'combed' aspect. This geography greatly influenced communication between the littoral and the hinterland: the Appennines limit access into central Italy to a few high pass-routes, in particular the Furlo-Scheggia, through which ran the via Flaminia.²⁵⁰ (Maps 14, 15)

Pentapolis thus resembled the southern flank of the Exarchate in making the Appenninic ridges and their river valleys the border zone, and in taking

advantage of natural obstacles. Simultaneously the coast road and the natural ports enabled swift, healthy contacts with Ravenna, and the continued survival of these positions beyond the Gothic War and the Longobard invasion is not unexpected. The same is true for the interior, where sites recorded as theatres of war by Procopius maintained their significance after 568.²⁵¹

Few documents relating to the towns of the Pentapolis exist after Procopius before the 8th century - beyond the signatures of 680 and the geographical lists.²⁵² In the final period of Byzantine rule, however, the Liber Pontificalis observes the fluctuating Longobard advances into the province, illustrating a succession of gains and restorations.²⁵³

The first and most incisive of these was that of Liutprand, who in 727-9 in his campaign against the Exarchate '... Pentapolim Auximumque invasit', suggesting a dual attack from both Tuscia and Spoleto. Though the king restored much of the Ravennate, it is probable that in the Pentapolis he failed to restore the Ancona-Osimo-Numana zone.²⁵⁴ An offensive by Astulf is postulated for 750-1: Pope Stephen II asked the king to restore those former lands of the Exarchate and Pentapolis to papal jurisdiction, but, meeting no success, sought the aid of Pippin of Francia, who entered Italy in both 755 and 756 to bring Astulf to heel. At the conclusion of a treaty Pippin drew up a Donatio to meet the Pope's wishes and reestablish the nominal imperial hold over the lost regions. The Donatio names 23 restored towns, of which seven lay in Emilia, and fifteen in the Pentapolis: Rimini, Pesaro, Conca, Fano, Senigallia, Iesi, Montefeltro, Arcevia, Serra S. Quirico, S. Marino, Sarsina, Urbino, Cagli, Lucioli (Pontericcioli?), Gubbio.²⁵⁵

After Astulf's death, the pope aided Desiderius in his claim to the throne and bargained for the return of further towns. Desiderius partly complied, but retained the vital Ancona-Osimo sector and positions girding

Ravenna.²⁵⁶ Finally, in 772 Desiderius took the offensive and captured Senigallia, Iesi, Urbino, Gubbio, S.Leo and 'caeterarum civitatum Romanorum'. Although these were again papal subsequent to Charlemagne's invasion of 773-4 and the issue of his Donatio, Byzantine Pentapolis no longer existed.²⁵⁷

Beyond these details we know little of the province. Archaeological testimonies are few and early, and show a southern bias, while toponymy offers no coherent patterns.²⁵⁸ Nonetheless the recognition of the late antique foci and the articulation between these, combined with the later documentary evidence and regional topographical factors, provides an adequate framework for reconstructing the defensive aims of the Pentapolis.

Close communication with Ravenna by road and sea and with Istria and Dalmatia by sea allowed tight imperial management of the province, while the coastal centres in turn provided a stable foundation for the supply and control of the interior. Rimini to the north formed the provincial capital. Its importance was determined by the network of roads radiating outwards into the Exarchate, notably the via Flaminia, which, after Ravenna passed through Rimini onto Fano before running up the Metauro and then Burano valleys; a coastal branch linked Rimini with the ports of the western Adriatic. Further roads left Rimini for Urbino and for the Montefeltro along the Marecchia. It thus constituted the focal point for the defence of the southern border of the Exarchate and likewise the principal base for the distribution of logistical support for the Pentapolis. As such it formed the seat of a dux or magister militum.²⁵⁹

Despite their documentation neither Pesaro nor Fano have yielded finds beyond the 4th century. Both maintained their Augustan circuits into the 6th century, when they underwent destructions at the hands of Vitigis 'who tore down their walls to about half their height', at which Belisarius dis-

patched Thurimuth and Sabinianus 'to build up in whatever manner possible such parts of the circuit wall as had fallen down, putting in stones and mud and any other material whatsoever'. While no vestiges of this remain at Pesaro, some crude patches in the south walls at Fano may be tentatively associated with these repairs (pl.44).²⁶⁰ No finds at Senigallia supplement its sparse documentary record.²⁶¹

Ancona undoubtedly maintained its strategic importance well after the Gothic War, since much Dalmatian traffic was channeled through here. Its proximity to the southern border of Pentapolis heightened this prominence, and its capture by Liutprand will have crippled Byzantine control here. The post-Roman city perhaps reoccupied the Greek acropolis.²⁶²

The southern littoral is divided from the Ancona-Rimini coastline by the height of M.Conero (572m) which caused the coast-road to divert inland until reaching the mouths of the Musone and Potenza. Unlike the northern region, south of Numana the coincidence of bishop-seats with the littoranean centres is only attested at Potentia, Castrum Truentinum and Cluana in the 5th century. A possible cause for this comes from documents of 494-6 for Cluana-Porto Civitanova, which locate the bishop's seat not in the Roman coastal town but rather at Cluentensis vicus, the medieval Civitanova Alta (157m). If this upland shift occurred throughout the zone, many diocesan seats may have decayed and been abandoned by the 6th century.²⁶³

Depopulation is adequately documented for Central-South Italy in later Roman sources which show that consequent to the Visigothic invasions taxes on cultivated land were heavily reduced for Campania, Tuscany, Picenum, Samnium, Bruttium, Calabria and Lucania in both 413 and 418. The desertion of lands and even towns would have rapidly provoked the disappearance of diocesan centres after Rome's fall.²⁶⁴ This process was accelerated by the

Gothic War, when plague, famine and army movements laid waste Picenum.²⁶⁵ The Longobard-Byzantine conflict continued this destruction, and indeed led to many refugees flooding north of the Musone into the Byzantine province. With the Longobard occupation, however, the economic basis for these southern towns disappeared, depriving them of long-enjoyed contacts. Settlement undoubtedly persisted, albeit on a reduced scale, geared primarily to defensive needs: hence the continued importance of Ascoli Piceno, Fermo and Macerata, and the institution of the late Longobard duchy of Fermo. But in the old Roman littoral centres medieval documentation infers the presence of little more than cult buildings.²⁶⁶

The expansion of the duchy of Spoleto into Picenum Suburbicarium dates to c.580, when the bishop of Fermo fled to imperial Ancona. This was probably shortly followed by the loss of Ascoli, Teramo, and S.Benedetto del Tronto, whose survival to c.580 may be indirectly recorded in George of Cyprus.²⁶⁷ We may visualise a border roughly established then along either the Musone or Potenza, behind which lay the fortress line of Osimo-Iesi-Serra. The western frontier will have remained in flux until the 590s when the Longobards established their hold on the central via Flaminia and the Fabrianese.

In these years, however, the Longobards seized Osimo, which was only recaptured in 598 and its bishop re-installed.²⁶⁸ The presence of Bahan, magister militum, further testifies to restored imperial authority. Using the evidence of Gregory's letters, Richards has recently hypothesised an offensive under the exarch Callinicus in 597-8 designed 'to establish his negotiating position from strength. Gregory talks darkly in May 597 of the exarch being "busied in the valley of the Po", and the evidence of ecclesiastical reorganisation in Picenum suggests an imperial push into that

province to recover long-lost territory ... Having made his point, Callinicus ... renewed the negotiations with Agilulf, associating the pope with them ...'.²⁶⁹

The offensive (led by Bahan?), extended Byzantine control southwards to Teramo-Aprutium (Interamnia Praetuttiorum) and westwards to Camerino where it was checked by Ariulf of Spoleto.²⁷⁰ In 598 bishop Passivus was elected at Fermo, proceeding then to claim back treasures deposited at Ancona since 580. He later consecrated an oratory built by the Byzantine comes Anio at castrum Aprutienesis Firmensis: the bishop's ability to travel freely should indicate extensive Byzantine gains.²⁷¹ In 602 Passivus also consecrated a monastery built by a deacon at Ascoli, which still lacked its own bishop, even though one was installed at Teramo.²⁷² Furthermore Gregory exercised his secular influence over the Longobard bishop Chrysanthus of Spoleto firstly in order to provide relics for an oratory in Fermo, and secondly to hand out punishment to priests cohabiting with 'foreign' (Longobard?) women around Nursia. In the latter instance Gregory dispatched the defensor Optatus and called for assistance from the local commanders Romanus, Gattulus and Wintarit: the participation of the bishop of Spoleto suggests Nursia straddled the frontier.²⁷³

The new frontier arrangement is obscure. We should not consider the occupation as designed solely to accumulate 'bargaining blocks' given the attested building activity and the election of bishops; nonetheless, no actual record exists of any armed conflict here after 603 to deny a surrender of these gains through treaty. The longevity of imperial occupation also remains unknown, and unfortunately the cemeterial finds at Castel Trosino cannot confirm such a cursory break in the Longobard presence.²⁷⁴

The battle near Camerino demonstrates that the duke of Spoleto struggled

to maintain his eastern possessions. The conflict must coincide with the height of the Byzantine offensive in 597-8 and mark a vague frontier zone. Only with Ariulf's death in 601 may the Longobard counter-attack have resumed, but with unrecorded fortunes.²⁷⁵ Nonetheless, whether by conflict or more likely by treaty, this area of Picenum Suburbicarium was securely Longobard before c.610. Subsequently the southern border devolved around the natural Numana-Osimo barrier.²⁷⁶

Although the Musone offers the most logical confine, it is probable that this, on the basis of the 12th century division between the dioceses of Numana and Fermo, extended for some distance along the lower Potenza before running north-westwards (via Filottrano?) to join the Musone. Hence the Byzantine Iesi-Osimo-Castelfidardo-Numana line opposed a possible Longobard Treia-Macerata-Civitanova Alta guard. No finds confirm this picture, and the recent survey of rural sites in the zone revealed late Roman traces at Castelfidardo and Portorecanti alone.²⁷⁷ Similarly few finds complement the documentary record for southern Marche: at Fermo and Ascoli the early Christian churches on the acropoli (piazza del Girfalco and Colle dell'Annunziata respectively) presuppose late antique occupation of defensive heights, while stray and excavated finds along the Tronto and via Salaria (Ascoli, Grotta-mare, Offida, Forcella, Rosara and Acquasanta) recognise a strong Ostrogothic presence. Longobard evidence is strictly limited to Castel Trosino.²⁷⁸

The border west of Iesi is unclear. Serra S.Quirico remained Byzantine, but the Fabrianese was Longobard from an early date, with documents recording a gastaldato di Castelpetroso (Pierosara) holding lands extending towards Sassoferrato. This zone was closely attached to the control of the via Flaminia at Nocera Umbra.²⁷⁹ Perhaps using the natural obstacle of M.Murano, the confine ran along the Appenninic ridges up to M.Catria (1701m), behind

which a road joined the Flaminia near Cagli. Rearwards lay Arcevia and Castelleone di Suasa, recorded in the Donatio, and identifiable with the medieval hill-sites rather than the low-lying Roman townships, which appear abandoned by the 5th century.²⁸⁰ (Map 15)

An analogous reliance on the natural barrier of the Appennines occurred in the north-western confine in opposition to Longobard Tuscany. Here the border was articulated along a double Appenninic ridge: the watershed from M.Falterona (1654m) south-eastwards to the Alpe della Luna (1453m) at the sources of the Marecchia, onward to Gubbio; and another to the east, parallel to the first, running from the Montefeltro and ascending to M.Catria.²⁸¹

We can bring into consideration here details furnished by Paul concerning the provincia Alpes Appenninae. Besides Ferronianum et Montebellium, he records Bobium et Urbinum, necnon et oppidum quod Verona appellatur. Frignago and Monteveglio were clearly Emilian castra at the southern confine of the Exarchate; Bobium-Sarsina, at the fringes of the Montefeltro lay on the Exarchate-Pentapolis boundary; and Urbinum is Urbino south of Rimini. Verona's listing after Urbino denotes its inclusion in the same region, as indeed Fabre's investigations relating to the Massa Verona in the upper Tiber verify. Documents delimit the Massa to the uppermost Marecchia, corresponding to the region included in Tuscany beyond the Alpe della Luna. This siting is significant in that it defends a difficult approach towards the Montefeltro from Arezzo and the Tiber via the Passo di Viamaggio. If this was the function of oppidum Verona we should seek it not near Fabre's Pieve S.Stefano, but rather east of the Alpe della Luna. This argument simultaneously casts further doubt on the existence of the Alpes Appenninae province.²⁸²

This sector lay in close communication with Rimini through the Marecchia,

with castra interposed at S.Leo and S.Marino. The first held a notable strategic importance in the Gothic War, as indeed earlier when Eugippius records it as castellum nomine montem Feletrem in 490. The restructured fortifications allow no recognition of this early fortress.²⁸³ No other sites are recognisable, unless Paul's vicus Pilleus (the site of a defeat of Liutprand's forces) can be identified with Pennabili.²⁸⁴

Each border zone - our documentation allows no reduction into castral districts, although such may be presumed for Verona, Gubbio, Serra and Osimo - was supported by road-river lines leading ultimately to the coastal centres. The Ligurian defensive arrangements are closely comparable, but relate to a less extensive territory. In the north-west, as seen, Verona combined with Rimini along the Marecchia. To the east, Urbino, linked by road to both Rimini and Pesaro, controlled access along the Metauro and from the Verona district.²⁸⁵

Urbino likewise combined with Fossombrone in a rearguard defence of the Gola del Furlo. Here lay the fortress of Petra Pertusa whose garrison easily controlled the narrow approach to the pass, but could signal back to Fossombrone for support. The discovery in 1886 of much carbonised material, consisting of foodstuffs, pottery, utensils, etc., situated in a manner suggesting the collapse of burning debris from Monte del Grano above, was considered proof of the fortress destroyed by the Longobards in the 570s. It is doubtful, however, whether the recorded 400 man Ostrogothic garrison comfortably fitted the sparse available ground, and this may instead recommend a watchpoint in visual contact with Petra Pertusa behind.²⁸⁶

Beyond the Furlo the Flaminia followed the Burano through Cagli, Cantiano and Pontericcioli before crossing the Scheggia pass. Cagli, controlling a branch road via Suasa to Senigallia, formed the sector head, as

heir to Acqualanga-Pitinum Mergens, although the bishop's seat only moved here in the 8th century. Castrum Luciolis, (probably Pontericcioli) marks the final stage of the road departing Pentapolis. It is best known as the site where the exarch Eleutherius, en route from Ravenna to Rome in 619 to claim the imperial crown, was killed by mutinous troops.²⁸⁷

Traditionally both Ostra and Suasa were destroyed by Alaric, though their populations perhaps regrouped in secure sites above the plain: Castellone di Suasa (206m) replaced Suasa, while Ostra splintered into three small centres (Ostra vetere, Ostra, Belvedere Ostrense).²⁸⁸

South of Arcevia, Serra S.Quirico opposed the gastaldato of Pierosara, defending the course of the Esino and the via Clementina, whose mid-point was Iesi. No evidence is available regarding the defensive organisation in this sector. Similarly details are sketchy for the Longobard territory to the south.²⁸⁹

Without the historical documentation a reconstruction of the Pentapolis is impossible. The picture that emerges reveals a province composed of two interlinked regions, one coastal, the other at mid-slope and mid-valley, thereby allowing rapid communication and support with the borders. As in Liguria our sources fail to show the effectiveness of this defensive arrangement in the 7th century. The blows suffered under Liutprand and the contemporary rise of independent dukes weakened imperial control of their borders to the extent that the later advances were poorly checked. In addition, the encroachments on the Exarchate also seriously undermined the effective defensive capabilities of the Pentapolis: the provinces were interdependent, and once Ravenna was reduced solely to protecting its remaining territory, it could little afford aid to the beleaguered Pentapolis. As in the Gothic War, the fate of one determined the fate of the other.

(e) The Via Amerina, the Duchy of Perugia, and the defence of Rome (Maps 16-17)

From the Scheggia the via Flaminia descended into Umbria and ran south-eastwards to Nocera Umbra before running via Spoleto and Narni onto Rome. This road long served as the chief line of land-communication between the Capital and the Adriatic coast of Picenum. Its importance was magnified in the Gothic War, when control of this artery was regarded by the Ostrogoths as a priority for the maintenance of their Kingdom and by the Byzantines as the key to the reconquest. Consequently the battle for Spoleto was a key issue in these struggles.²⁹⁰

To the west lay the via Amerina, whose role was constricted by the construction of the Flaminia. It branched from the via Cassia south of Nepi and ran parallel to the Flaminia through Todi, Perugia and Città di Castello towards Emilia, though a branch did extend from Perugia onto the Scheggia to combine with the Flaminia. The Gothic War likewise brought it renewed vitality with Perugia regarded like Spoleto as a pivot for the defence of Umbria and the protection of the North. Indeed the Byzantine advance towards Ravenna in 537 perhaps involved both roads, thus protecting their southern gains.²⁹¹ The termination of the war did not lessen the role of either route, although the Longobard invasion determined a significant alteration in their functions.

The events which caused this splintering of traffic are confusingly reported. No source clearly records the Longobard expansion into Central Italy during the initial wave: Paul, reporting on the siege of Pavia, adds: 'Interim Alboin ... invasit omnia usque ad Tusciam praeter Romam et Ravennam vel aliqua castra, quae erant in maris litora constituta', which Hartmann thought indicated no advance over the Appennines by Alboin, whose expansion was thus restricted to the Po plain.²⁹² Contrarily Agnellus notes, 'Post

vero, depraedata a Langobardis Tuscia, obsiderunt Ticinum quae civitas Papia dicitur', and Gregory writes in 595 that Rome had been threatened by Longobard swords for 27 years.²⁹³ However, even if raids into Tuscany occurred, no source refers to activity beyond the viae Amerina and Flaminia. Yet Paul relates that the second duke of Benevento, Arechis, succeeded Zotto in 591 after the latter had ruled for twenty years. This fact prompts some authors to consider the duchy of Spoleto a contemporary foundation, set up during the first wave of Longobard expansion.²⁹⁴

Significantly references to Faroald, first duke of Spoleto, occur only from c.575 when he achieved the notable feat of capturing Classe. This seizure is only possible if Faroald was a Longobard commander in imperial pay, entrusted with the defence of the port; certainly the inscription recording the life of Droctulf, the general who regained Classe, states 'retinet dum Classem fraude Faroaldus'.²⁹⁵ Bognetti convincingly connects this episode with the defeat in 575 of Baduarius, which sparked off the rebellion of Longobard mercenaries stationed south of the Po to contain Alboin's invasion. He sees subsequent attempts to bribe the Longobards as an effort to win back former, long-unpaid allied soldiers. Faroald thus appears a renegade who had perhaps stirred these mercenaries into revolt after his ejection from Classe, and who then installed himself as an independent duke at Spoleto, much in the same way as Zotto had created the Benevento duchy.²⁹⁶ To this period also belongs therefore the menace at the gates of Rome: the Liber Pontificalis first records Longobards under Benedictus (575-579) and Pelagius II (579-590).²⁹⁷ By 584 the threat was such that Pelagius requested the presence of a magister militum in the City.²⁹⁸

By the early 580s, therefore, the territorial expansion of Longobards in both Tuscany and the southern duchies had badly disrupted the Rome-Ravenna

corridor. Faroald's presence at Spoleto precluded use of the eastern branch of the Flaminia, and traffic was necessarily channelled along the Amerina and sectors of the western Flaminia. In Tuscany Longobard dukes at Lucca and Chiusi soon threatened the via Amerina and the Bolsena zone.²⁹⁹ The poorly-documented period up to 590 probably witnessed the gradual consolidation of Longobard positions and continued assaults against the Byzantines. Only with the letters of Gregory (590-605) do details emerge concerning the military situation in Central Italy.

As this point new aggressors appeared in the struggle, dukes Ariulf of Spoleto and Arechis of Benevento, supported by the aggressive king Agilulf. Despite major setbacks, the Byzantines somehow withstood these new advances. Most immediate of their aims was the maintenance of the Rome-Ravenna corridor around which events of the next decade focussed.

In 591 Gregory reports Ariulf threatening Rome and urges a local magister militum, Velox, and later also Maurice and Vitalian, to attack his rear if he approached the city. The seriousness of the situation in Tuscia shows in a letter of April 592 when he tells John, bishop of Ravenna, the difficulties of communicating with the northern capital 'pro interpositione hostium'.³⁰⁰ The via Amerina had thus been wrested from Byzantine hands. The position of Rome became dire: in July 592 Soana surrendered to Agilulf while Ariulf took Narni; shortly Ariulf even marched up to Rome.³⁰¹

How long Rome remained cut off is unclear, but Romanus rapidly executed the recovery of the Amerina, recapturing 'civitates quae a Langobardis retenebantur quarum ista sunt nomina: Sutrium, Polimartium, Hortas, Tuder, Ameria, Perusia, Luceoli et alias quasdam civitates'.³⁰² Its strategic importance is then demonstrated by the exarch's garrisoning of Narni and Perugia, an action which required denuding Rome of its defenders.³⁰³

Agilulf launched a counter-offensive in late 593, recapturing Perugia and executing its Longobard duke Marisio, and advancing on Rome. As with Ariulf, Gregory bought off the king and persuaded him to withdraw. By Nov. 594 Perugia was again Byzantine.³⁰⁴ By the truce of 598, Byzantine control of the Amerina was recognised, and its territory was preserved virtually intact until the mid-8th century.³⁰⁵ (Map 17)

The advances of Liutprand and the southern dukes in the first half of the 8th century constricted the Rome duchy territorially and undermined communications northwards, contributing materially to Rome's growing independence from imperial Ravenna and the East. The foolish alliance seemingly made with Duke Thrasimund of Spoleto in 738-9 almost cost Rome dear: Liutprand first took Spoleto and then Amelia, Orte, Bomarzo and Bieda, thus breaking the Amerina and exposing Rome's western flank. It was only the spectacular diplomatic turn-around by the new pope Zacharias that rescued the city and led to the restoration of its lost lands.³⁰⁶ Despite the ravages of its countryside by Astulf, the Rome duchy subsequently remained relatively stable as papal authority grew dominant and watched as the rest of the imperial ship in Italy floundered and sank.³⁰⁷

In the later 6th century western Umbria and the via Amerina in particular clearly constituted a war zone, repeating the pattern of the Gothic War. It was a zone which even after 598 required a constant military presence to ensure the smooth running of the Rome-Ravenna link, flanked as it was by Longobard duchies. Our limited documentation obscures the mechanics of this control: only in 735 is there mention of a dux Perusinorum, Agatho, although the ducal seat had probably been long in existence.³⁰⁸ No source attests an independent early Byzantine ducatus Perusinus: our first references to this are of the 8th century.³⁰⁹ Before this period the region appears fluid, at

one time attached to the Pentapolis, at another to Rome: in c.735 Agatho fought in the Exarchate, in 749 Perugia is included in the Pentapolis, and at the 680 Rome Synod the list of episcopus provinciae Tuscia (i.e. Tuscia Romana) encompasses Perugia in the north to Narni in the east and Bieda in west.³¹⁰ At times it undoubtedly constituted a separate duchy, but at other moments the influence of Rome or Ravenna attached it to one or other province.

Difficulties arise in attempting to delineate imperial territory buffering the via Amerina, for our sources note only the road-centres, and the limited archaeology of the zone, geared predominantly towards Roman and Etruscan sites, is of minimal use in elucidating the late antique situation. We can, however, assume direct continuity between the medieval towns and underlying Etruscan oppida, since their defensive aspect reflects the pictures in Procopius. The survival of the pre-Roman circuits explains the absence of later Roman defences at these sites - though we should nonetheless expect some construction of defences at this time. Undoubtedly many castellieri and Etruscan hilltop-sites were reoccupied, but again such an occupational sequence remains unrecognised.

Significant, however, are the medieval diocesan confines of Umbria, which may well reflect the imperial territoria.³¹¹ (Map 16) These suggest a wide cushion of land separating the Tuscan Longobards from those of Spoleto, drawn out along the natural divisional lines of watersheds and river courses. Broad confirmation of this lies in the survival of the ancient dioceses into the medieval epoch: whereas those along the via Amerina continue, for the Longobard-held Flaminia districts the ravages of war and the proximity to the frontier caused the decline and abandonment of many late Roman dioceses, namely Terni, Bevagna and Spello (incorporated into the Spoleto diocese), San Giovanni Profiamma (combined with Foligno), and later, after the Longobards,

Nocera Umbra, Plestia and Tadino were amalgamated. As Bullough notes, the frontier line, as delineated by royal and papal missi in 760 should correspond to the territorial division between Todi and Spoleto and have lain close to and through the western Flaminia branch.³¹² A similar division is presumed for the zones west of the Amerina.

The two roads converged near Scheggia after the Flaminia had departed Gualdo Tadino and the branch of the Amerina left Gubbio. The latter held a vast diocese bordering eastwards with that of Nocera Umbra, and westwards with Città di Castello, divided from each by the courses of the Chiascio and an affluent of the Tiber. The town, overlying an Umbrian oppidum, has few finds to demonstrate its late antique activity. However, a road-guard is postulated at Rocca Posteriore on the ridge of M. Ingino, where excavations revealed reuse of the pre-Roman site in the 6th-7th centuries. No other site within the diocese has yet provided analogous material.³¹³

The Longobard presence in the Fabrianese has been noted. South of Tadino the importance of the Flaminia as a settlement axis under the invaders is testified first by 12 tombs from Gaifana, and secondly by the extensive Longobard cemetery of Nocera Umbra.³¹⁴ This cemeterial zone lies north of Nocera in loc. Il Portone, where in 1897-8 a total of 165 graves were discovered. In contrast with Castel Trosino, the military character of the tomb equipment is evident and surely reflects its strategic position close to the Byzantine-Longobard border. The material dates from the invasion period, containing typical Pannonian artifacts, including stamped wares (absent at Castel Trosino, and indeed most cemetery sites south of the Po): this indicates at least some movement of the Longobard tribe southwards into the Spoleto zone. The necropolis remained in use until the later 7th century. The Longobards probably occupied the present hill-top town, although it is

possible that the fortified height of Castellano west of Nocera - still uninvestigated - performed as a military watchpost.³¹⁵

Minimal information derives from the Città di Castello region. Three or four well-equipped military tombs of the 7th century were located near the road between here and S.Giustino. While no evidence exists for Longobard fortifications, it is suggested that the fort name of Città di Castello, castellum Felicitatis or Felicissimum, was a Byzantine renaming.³¹⁶

Despite the plentiful documentation, late antique Perugia is largely unknown archaeologically: the survival of its powerful Etruscan walls and gates cancelled the need for late Roman defences, although two gates (Arco di Augusto and Porta Marzia) bear additional mid-3rd century inscriptions (pl. 46). The extramural church of S.Angelo is our sole testimony to this later occupation. This picture strongly parallels evidence from Spoleto, where the 4th century church of S.Salvatore marks our late Roman reference point. The remains of the so-called Palace of Theoderic beneath the palazzo Archivescovile still present interpretative problems.³¹⁷ Here too the Etruscan walls, repaired and repatched at various intervals, provided the defensive circuit (pl. 47). It is uncertain when the Rocca was first occupied.

The border between Perugia and Longobard Assisi followed the Chiascio south towards its confluence with the Tiber, where it opposed the town of Bettona. As Bullough shows, after Torgiano, the line of the Puglia formed the confine. This border appears fluid until the late 590s, for in 591 Mevania was still Byzantine - its loss predates 597 when Spoleto appointed a visiting bishop. The decline of the dioceses of Bevagna and Bettona should be linked to population fall, accelerated by the decline of the western Flaminia and the proximity to this border. The survival of Assisi is a

notable exception, however, as is the rise of Foligno in preference to the seat of Forum Flaminii-S.Giovanni Profiamma.³¹⁸

The Perugia-Chiusi confine is even less distinct. Here the diocesan boundary basically follows the provincial border in skirting Lake Trasimene to reach Città di Fallera and the border with Orvieto (Map 16). Although the zone possesses numerous important medieval sites like Umbertide, Corciano and Castiglione del Lago, there is a total absence of relevant finds.³¹⁹

In the Todi district, on the basis of the medieval dioceses, the Byzantine-Longobard confine in the east lay along the M.Martano-M.Torre Maggiore watershed, and in the north and west ran from Casalina near the Puglia-Tiber confluence to the Lago di Corbara. No finds verify this division, nor testify to late antique Todi.³²⁰ As well as the via Amerina, Todi controlled the high road westwards to a region which had resisted the Longobard advance until 592, but had recovered to fight again until falling in 605.

Before considering the fate of this zone and the rest of Rome's Toscan frontier brief mention can be made of the final two Umbrian sites of the Amerina, namely Amelia and Orte: although recorded in 593 and again in Anonymous, neither site has finds attesting their late antique importance.³²¹

At the close of the 6th century the Byzantines retained much of southern Etruria, extending in an arc from Lake Trasimene towards Lake Bolsena and westwards to include Roselle. This picture is reflected in the bishop lists of the Rome Synods of 595 and 601, recording bishops at Civitavecchia, Bieda, Tuscania, Roselle, Ferento, and Bolsena, while Gregory elsewhere records a bishop of Orvieto, and the election of another at Bagnoregio.³²² Populonia, Suana and certainly Chiusi had fallen to the Longobards, who consolidated their positions facing the Byzantine front.

The Western zone was temporarily breached in 592-3, for Romanus had to recapture Bomarzo and Bieda. Gregory omits reference to this. Whether the Visentium-Castro sector remained Byzantine after Romanus' campaign is uncertain, but a withdrawal to the Marta line is likely. Nevertheless, the shift of the Visentium diocese to Castro may be a Gregorian transfer of a depopulated see to an imperial fort.³²³

A probable trace of Byzantine defensive policy in this region survives in Gregory's rearrangements of the bishoprics. For instance, the bishop of Volsinii, though named in the Synods, resided no longer in the old Roman civitas, but rather at Orvieto, a better-defended position, in fact named in George of Cyprus.³²⁴ Similarly the Ferentium seat was transferred to Bomarzo, whose bishop in 649 was of Ferentopolymartius, but by 680 solely of Polymartiensis. The Greek-Latin mixture in this name is regarded as proof of a Byzantine foundation, or at least the implant of an imperial garrison on an abandoned site.³²⁵

These moves occurred for a combination of motives, whether depopulation, exposure to attack, weak defensive capabilities, or even enforced abandonment in favour of a secure location. In a few instances new castra like Bagnoregio, or Aprutium in Picenum, attracted sufficient population to request from the pope the provision of a bishop.³²⁶ We can perhaps see in this nucleation an illustration of official policy in border territories, whereby the population was encouraged (if encouragement were needed) to transfer to a local garrison centre, thereby securing threatened seats. However, the fortifications utilised by the Byzantines here represent merely a recourse to abandoned Etruscan hill-forts, which had generally already seen some reoccupation in the 4th-6th centuries, and we await clear evidence of Byzantine defensive construction. Yet this is not surprising if one

considers the notable survival of the pre-Roman circuits, and the recognition that Byzantine work may differ little in form from these.³²⁷

In 605 Agilulf captured Orvieto and Bagnoregio, and probably simultaneously extended his conquests towards and beyond the Marta until meeting stiff resistance from the Bieda-Bomarzo line.³²⁸ Although Tuscania was represented at the 649 Synod, (but not the 680 Synod), it is unlikely that this Byzantine stronghold was maintained beyond the mid-7th century; Schneider indeed considered it Longobard from c.608. Its importance as a Longobard frontier town is evident from the presence of a royal gastaldo here in 742.³²⁹ After 605 the frontier must have already been drawn south of the Marta, along the Mignone, extending towards the Monti Cimini, and thence Bomarzo and the right Tiber bank. Little change occurred until Liutprand seized the M.Cimini through the temporary occupation of Sutri in the 720s, thus driving a wedge between Bieda and the Tiber valley, and enabling him to take Amelia, Orte, Bomarzo and Bieda in 739.³³⁰ The return of these territories in 741-2 restored the Rome duchy to the situation of c.720, which, despite Astulf's threats, persevered. (Map 17)

Vicissitudes east of the Amerina after the initial Longobard expansion appear less pronounced. Narni and Otricoli were both imperial bishoprics in 595 and 601, while Terni-Interamna, united in 598 by Gregory with Narni, appears Longobard soon after 600. It is unlikely to have withstood long considering its proximity to Spoleto on the eastern Flaminia.³³¹ Rieti's loss was swifter: by 593 its bishop had fled to Rome, and by 598 the bishop of Spoleto was involved in church matters here.³³² The border was subsequently fixed on the watershed dividing Narni and Terni south of the Nera and extending towards the Monti Sabini opposite Rieti. A drastic change occurred in 721-4 when both Narni and Otricoli, which prevented access from Spoleto towards

Rome, were lost to duke Faroald II. Restoration came only with the Pippinian Donatio in 754, thus forcing a restructuring of the border on the left Tiber bank.³³³

It is now at the latest that the Byzantine castrum Gallensium arose to the southwest of the Nera-wedge between the viae Amerina and Flaminia. The struggles for its possession following the capture of Narni highlights its defensive role, and its ownership was secured only with a large tribute paid to the Spoletans. Unlike Narni which overlooked the confluence of the Flaminia courses, Gallese lay on a hill between both the Flaminia (at its crossing of the Tiber) and the Amerina, with which it communicated by minor roads; to the south routes also linked it with Civit  Castellana and Nepi. Its origin cannot be determined: though listed by Anonymous of Ravenna among the stations of the Amerina, its insertion after, rather than before, Falerii, has given rise to suspicion of a late addition to the lists.³³⁴

The archaeology of this western and northern border is inconclusive. To the west the confine chiefly followed the present territorial division between Rome and Viterbo, first along the lower Mignone before running between Monti di Tolfa and Cimini. It was dissected by three major road axes, the viae Aurelia, Clodia and Cassia, and the defence of these formed Rome's priority from the early 7th century.³³⁵ (Map 17)

This defence was aided by the geomorphology of the Viterbese, characterised by settlements perched on spurs and promontories defined by deep vales and valleys cutting through the soft tufaceous land. The region was heavily settled by the Etruscans, and many sites, first used in the Bronze/Iron Ages, were fortified in the course of the 6th-5th centuries BC in response to the expansion of Rome. With Rome's victory many were abandoned, save those that now lay on the roads such as Bieda, Sutri, Viterbo, Norchia. The barbarian

invasions of the 5th-6th centuries AD undoubtedly provoked the revival of some positions as refuges, although this occupation is undocumented. The Byzantine-Longobard conflict reawoke the need for fortifications in this zone, and it is presumed that Byzantines and Longobards alike adapted Etruscan defences. Materially, however, the quest for Etruscan antiquities has seriously reduced the chances of recognising this sequence, further hampered by instances of continuous site-occupation; even where sites have remained abandoned since medieval times the Etrusco-Roman bias in excavations is considerable.³³⁶

By the early Middle Ages the via Aurelia was virtually abandoned, partly inundated by marshes which, with the failure to regulate the water courses, covered much of the area, causing the decay of many towns. A notable survivor of this was Civitavecchia-Centumcellae which formed the northernmost port of the Rome duchy. The Longobard conquest of Populonia, Roselle, Cosa and Tarquinia perhaps hastened the decline of towns of the Toscan Maremma. Civitavecchia thus formed Rome's principal guard to the via Aurelia and indeed to coastal attack from Pisa; its importance is documented both by the presence of the numerus Centumcellis and by the repairs to its defences by pope Gregory III.³³⁷

Strategically more important was the via Clodia, upon which Roman Bieda opposed Longobard Tuscania, with the frontier set between Bieda and Norchia. Late antique Tuscania appears to lie on Colle San Pietro south-east of the present town: excavations in 1974 near the church of S. Pietro exposed a narrow Roman street flanked by small comfortable town houses, abandoned around AD 400. An 8th century reoccupation of the site is documented by a resurfaced road on a new alignment, and solid timber houses in part using Roman foundation walls; these were replaced in stone, and only abandoned in the

14th century when the focus shifted to present Tuscania. Bishops are recorded for the late 6th and 7th centuries, which argues for a nucleation of settlement not identified in the excavations.³³⁸ To the south, Norchia, despite its road-location, has bare traces of Roman presence, though late antique tombs, comparable to types located at Bomarzo, appear at the romanic church of San Pietro - no finds date these.³³⁹

For Bieda we rely on the few documentary references: besides its capture by Liutprand in 739, there is record of the part played by its inhabitants in an insurrection in 728 supporting the Greek pretender Tiberius Petasius who also incited to revolt the Manturianenses and Lunenses, that is, the inhabitants of Manturia and Luni. The rebellion was short-lived, for the exarch combined forces with the pope to crush the insurrectionists.³⁴⁰ The incident reveals the location of two likely fortresses guarding positions close to the frontier. The first of these, Manturia, lies west of Lake Bracciano on the upper Mignone at Monterano, but has no finds.³⁴¹ Luni, however, has been the focus of excavations, allowing us some insight into a Byzantine border installation of the 7th-8th centuries.

At the point where the Mignone turns westwards towards the coast there rises a steep tufa hill, delimited to the south and north by the torrents Vesca and Canino, and locally called Pian di Luni, from which derives the present name Luni sul Mignone. Unlike many Viterbese hilltop sites, Luni was abandoned in the Middle Ages, thus presenting excellent opportunities for detailed examination. Despite the documentation relating to its Byzantine and medieval occupation, the goal of the Swedish excavators was the prehistoric and Etruscan site, to the detriment of the upper levels.³⁴² The hill, excellently defended by both nature and Etruscan walls, visually communicates eastwards towards Bieda along the Vesca, and south and west

along the Mignone. The defensive focus was the summital castello, overlooking the access-point from the northeast. Like the circuit, the Castello, c.10 x 12m, appears of Etruscan date, constructed in squared tufa blocks, and lacking mortar bonding. The survival of only the lowest courses for much of the walling allows no recognition of later, medieval additions or repairs.³⁴³ No post-Etruscan finds are recorded, although coarse Roman and medieval ceramics are briefly noted from the surface of the protostoric habitat on M.Fornicchio. Nonetheless the historic occupation is partially recorded by the discovery of a small church with associated 'Christian tombs', c.100m west of the Castello, and a series of early medieval wells and pits - no details of these are given.³⁴⁴

An analogous adaption of an abandoned Etruscan stronghold is suspected at San Giovenale, whose topographical setting is almost identical to Luni. This barricaded the confluence of the Vesca and Pietrisco torrents, and communicated across to S.Giuliano. It is named with Luni in medieval documents as Castri sive Castellaris S.Juvenalis bordering Civitella, Bieda and Luni. Set between Luni and Manturia, a Byzantine military presence is likely and the discovery of some sherds of Forum Ware may indicate its reuse from the 8th century.³⁴⁵

To the east lay the third road, the via Cassia. The principal stage of this route into the Duchy was Sutri, which was joined by roads from Nepi and Civit  Castellana with the Amerina and Flaminia. From Sutri the Cassia skirted the Monti Cimini to reach Viterbo and thence Lake Bolsena. A lesser route ran via Ronciglione before branching for Viterbo and for Bagnoregio.³⁴⁶ Sutri was thus a vital guard to Rome's western border, as witnessed in the hectic claims for its restoration following its capture by Liutprand in 728.

Continued activity along the via Cassia ensured Sutri's persistence.

Little remains of the ancient town with the exception of portions of the Etruscan or Roman circuit, while traces of the medieval borgo emerge on the ridge south-west of the town.³⁴⁷ Here lay the ward of S.Stefano, through which the Cassia passed, defended by rock-cut ditches and tufa walls. First attested in the 11th century, the origins of the wards are obscure, but a late antique origin should not be rejected.³⁴⁸ Few exposed sites persisted in its environs after the 5th century, and a process of gradual nucleation into the incipient medieval towns of the zone is assumed (Capranica, Ronciglione, Basano di Sutri). The few Longobard finds from Sutri are late 6th century in date (including a barely worn coin of Tiberius) and may belong to Longobard mercenaries or even to Longobard troops (dating to their brief occupation of the city in the 590s).³⁴⁹

Uncertain is the Viterbo-Sutri border before and after Liutprand's conquest of this territorium; however, his gains certainly included the M.Cimini. How Rome readjusted her defences is equally obscure.³⁵⁰

Also little understood are the Longobard dispositions to the north. Viterbo, recorded as a castrum in the 8th century, follows the pattern of many spurs of the region: the early medieval nucleus covered the spur now occupied by the Cathedral and papal palace, defended to the east by ditches, and elsewhere by walls and nature. To the south-west lay Castello di Salce (casale in 796, castrum in the 11th century), though Andrews identified no early medieval phase.³⁵¹

As in the north Ravenna tightly guarded the entry of the via Amerina into the Pentapolis with the provincia castellorum, so to the south a wide net of fortifications defended the approach towards Rome. The principal elements of this defence were the towns, Sutri, Nepi, Civit  Castellana and Gallese, controlling the routes south of Amelia-Orte and Narni-Otricoli.

Too little is known of their post-Roman phases, but all played significant roles in the road-control.³⁵²

Noteworthy, however, is the abandonment of Roman Falerii Novi, beside the Amerina, in favour of Falerii Veteres-Cività Castellana. The former served as the administrative centre of the Ager Faliscus after its foundation in 241 BC in place of the destroyed oppidum; it was girded by a powerful circuit reinforced by numerous towers. The survival of these denies the town's destruction and suggests a gradual depopulation, which meant that the circuit could not be adequately manned in times of threat. The authorities at Rome perhaps eventually provided for the transfer of the populus to the natural fortress of Cività Castellana - possibly already in use as a refuge. The move was also of strategic value: it lies at the natural centre of communications for a wide area of the Faliscus, standing 'at the centre of a radiating series of deep vertical gullies and elevated tufa promontories'.³⁵³

Notable among the roads radiating from here is that running westwards towards Nepi and the via Amerina through Castel Sant'Elia. This crossed the steep-sided rio Filetto - n.b. toponym - to the opposite plateau of Piani di Castello before heading south-westwards. Besides Castel Sant'Elia, a further defensive position may be the preceding promontory which directly controls the road. On the plateau opposite lies Castel Paterno, first named in 1002.³⁵⁴ Cività Castellana additionally communicated with Gallese to the north, and the Tiber and Flaminia to the east.³⁵⁵

Southwards lie the regions studied in the South Etruria Survey. We have already noted these as regards the transition from the pattern of classical dispersed settlement to that of medieval nucleation and incastellamento, but here discussion concerns the possible causes of the earlier occurrence of this process in the northern sector, the Faliscus, and

the possible role played by its promontory sites in the defence of Rome. Arguments hinge heavily on the chronology of Forum Ware, but the dispute regarding its proposed early 7th century date is largely irrelevant if we accept that the ceramic was in use in the 8th century: both dates imply a production based on Byzantine Rome, presumably predating the cessation of imperial rule in Italy.³⁵⁶

In 1981 Whitehouse and Potter proposed that those defensive promontory sites of the Ager Faliscus occupied during the floruit of Forum Ware 'formed part of the frontier zone' of Rome from the later 6th century, acting as 'strategic hamlets' between the major road arteries, (cf. Fig. 21).³⁵⁷ This hypothesis presents a number of problems.

First there is the question of dates. Briefly, an examination of the available evidence regarding ceramic production in Central and Southern Italy suggests that the availability of glazed wares on any scale does not predate the 8th century. Indeed those found at S.Vincenzo are 'almost without exception in 8th or 10th century contexts', and a similar date can be claimed for the sherds from Vacchereccia.³⁵⁸ In Upper Italy the pattern appears different and concerns a continuity in later Roman glazed forms for which we have little evidence after the early 7th century. This does not seriously undermine the Whitehouse and Potter theory, save to propel forward in time the date of the earliest identifiable occupation of the promontories of the Faliscus to the later Byzantine era. This does not deny, however, the possibility of an earlier settlement shift unobserved archaeologically.³⁵⁹

Second is the geographical problem. The region itself never truly constituted a 'frontier zone': certainly the Ager Faliscus saw much devastation in the 580s-590s when the Longobards directly threatened Rome depriving the capital of its northern communications, but this is equally valid for the

Ager Veientanus, both then as in the Gothic War. In the Veientanus only minimal dislocation of settlement is attested, and in general the open classical pattern persisted into the later 8th century, breaking up only after the Arab invasion, if not later.³⁶⁰

The very presence of ARS of c.600 on some villas in the Ager Faliscus argues against a major disruption of the old Roman dispersed settlement mode, although some sites near the highways were perhaps abandoned earlier than those more distant.³⁶¹ Finally, the surveyed zone of the Faliscus did not lie in direct proximity to the northern confine of the Rome Duchy, but rather was buffered to the north, west and east by castra and their territoria. To the south, this buffer, and the immediate proximity of the Rome garrison, undoubtedly afforded the Ager Veientanus even greater protection still.³⁶²

In consideration of the absence of datable late Roman ceramics at villas, Potter proposed that occupation of many of the Faliscus castelli began in the early 7th century, but is only documented with the advent of Forum Ware in the 8th century. Whitehouse's redating of the ware sought to bridge this ceramic gap, but by doing so he created many problems regarding the duration of its production. More likely is the use by the populus of the Rome district of local coarse wares and old vessels until the emergence of sufficient supplies of a new fine ware.³⁶³ Our failure to recognise this intermediary ceramic is not wholly surprising, but may be corrected with systematic excavation of an urban site like Sutri or Nepi. We cannot therefore yet pinpoint the transition in the Ager Faliscus from dispersed to nucleated settlement; by the advent of Forum Ware, however, occupation of the promontory sites was established, though the level of this remains unclear. Conversely one could argue that these positions were first occupied

at the time of Forum Ware, and therefore originate in the 8th century.

In this respect the chief question is the source of the initiative for this settlement transition. In 1978 both Brown and Wickham hypothesised, in conclusion of works of significantly different approaches, that these sites, clearly chosen for their defensive capabilities, may have been the result of the 'deliberate establishment of strategic defence-points by the Byzantine military administration against the Lombards ...'.³⁶⁴ Indeed, as Brown notes, 'this hypothesis of imperial involvement in creating "strategic hamlets" is in line with known Byzantine military strategy'.³⁶⁵ Wickham argues that this state initiative may be reflected in the distribution of Forum Ware: he sees it as difficult to explain otherwise how such remote castelli could obtain this ceramic, when to the south in the Ager Veientanus findspots are in closer contact with the road arteries.³⁶⁶ (Fig. 21) However, at present we perhaps have a biased picture as regards Forum Ware distribution: the few excavations made, such as Ponte Nepesino, and further afield Luni sul Mignone, seemingly illustrate a more extensive distribution than revealed in the ground survey. Indeed its presence at Mazzano and Castel Porciano emerged only through excavation. Perhaps then the presence of Forum Ware at these 'remote castelli' merely signifies the revival of decayed distribution networks at a time when this fine ware had, through production at Rome, become readily available.³⁶⁷

This does not detract from the compelling theory of 'strategic hamlets', but rather questions the general application of this term to certain sites of the Faliscus. The very location of some promontory sites denies their inclusion in a frontier system: frequently cited is the secluded siting of castelli like Mazzano, Calcata and Castel Porciano below the level of the surrounding countryside and away from the roads (pl.48); certainly medieval

roads link these with the Roman arteries, but this represents no more than an indication of their successful continued vitality in later times.³⁶⁸ Indeed Brown noted that 'strategic hamlets' were not commonplace: 'this model is more applicable to sites close to access routes than elsewhere, and some peasants may have preferred to seek refuge in remote sites away from a military presence'.³⁶⁹ We should be cautious therefore in attributing more than a refuge status to the initial promontory phases: the usefulness of these sites will have been observed during the 5th-6th centuries, and the constant insecurity of the 7th century perhaps prompted movement from the villas towards full occupation of the safe promontories.

Nonetheless, the Longobard encroachments on the Duchy of Rome in the 720s (loss of Sutri territorium, and of the Narni-Otricoli sector) brought the Sutri-Nepi-Civita' Castellana zone under increased pressure (dispute over Gallese, Rome's military aid to Spoleto, and Liutprand's offensives of 738-9) and must have greatly disturbed settlement in the Ager Faliscus. It is perhaps at this moment that the roles of some promontory sites altered as military functions were assigned to them by the Rome authorities in defence of possible penetration routes.³⁷⁰ If this is the case, one could return to Wickham's view that the presence of Forum Ware - in an 8th century context - denotes close ties with the imperial authorities.

This idea is more securely attested at sites performing a documented military role. Hence the discovery of Forum Ware at Luni Sul Mignone and San Giovenale should recognise imperial castella on the western frontier, installed to face the Tuscan Longobards.³⁷¹ A similar function is envisaged for Ponte Nepesino, a promontory site controlling the crossing of the Fosso Cerreto by the Amerina south of Nepi. Here the excavators claimed that 'if the Byzantine frontier was defended in depth, as is supposed, it is hard to

think that the bridge was not controlled, and if Forum Ware belongs to the Byzantine period one would expect to find it here'.³⁷² Forum Ware was indeed located in the initial historic use of the installation, along with sparse-glazed ware to document continued occupation, but no material suggested a late 6th-early 7th century date for its origin.³⁷³ The investigations showed occupation at the promontory end in the innermost of two enclosures defended by perimeter walls and a tower, both in tufa, and with internal wooden constructions. When the walls were constructed was not ascertained, but they perhaps mark a post-Roman adaptation of Faliscan defences.³⁷⁴

Comparable road-river positions appear north of Nepi at La Torre dell' Isola, and north of Falerii Novi at Il Castellaccio and Corchiano. Using the criteria established by Whitehouse and Potter, these too should have been fortified during the currency of Forum Ware.³⁷⁵

The Ponte Nepesino excavations failed to reveal fortifications and Forum Ware of early Byzantine date. However, analogous to the noted situation of sites in the Ager Faliscus, its fortification may have occurred later in the Byzantine era, perhaps only in the 8th century, when, as said, the Spoletan Longobards forced a wedge into Roman territory by capturing Otricoli and Narni. With the consequent heightened insecurity north of the Faliscus and against the line of the via Amerina the erection of additional strongholds within and around the threatened region was logical. Accordingly the presence of Forum Ware at Ponte Nepesino and promontory sites in the Ager Faliscus could reflect an 8th century settlement pattern. The excavation of a position closer to the earlier border, such as Narni on the Nera, or Bomarzo on the right Tiber, is more likely to provide an appropriate stratigraphic sequence of post-Roman occupation.³⁷⁶

Whatever the sequence, the Ager Veientanus and the immediate neighbourhood

of Rome were adequately buffered, and apparently maintained their classical system of farming. The erection of the domuscultae was an attempt to systematise existing farms in order to secure Rome's food supply. The fact that Hadrian combined the estate of Capracorum with a number of adjoining farms to create a single unit suggests that the old pattern persisted but at an inadequate level.³⁷⁷ When the papal estates broke down is not well documented, but they appear variously affected by the 9th-10th century Arab invasions, and replaced only in the 10th-11th centuries by the medieval settlement pattern of incastellamento. In contrast, the Ager Faliscus had already long possessed this pattern.

NOTES TO CHAPTER FIVE

INTRODUCTION

1. Cf. Brown 1984, p.70f.
2. Invasion: Paul II,9f. Historical summary: Hodgkin, Vol.V, 1895; Hartmann 1897, p.197-280; 1913, p.195f; Bognetti 1948, p.71-271; cf. Wickham 1981, p.30-1; Brown 1984, p.2-3.
3. Narses' invitation: Paul II,5; Origo ch.5: 'Ipse Albuin adduxit Langobardos in Italiam invitatus a Narsete scribarum' Lib. Pont. i,157; Fredeg. Chron.III,65. The rumour is not in Agnellus or Marius of Avenches. All ideas are interestingly considered in Mor 1980.
4. Cf. Bognetti 1967, p.439-75; Brown 1984, p.71 with n.17.
5. Faroald: Paul III,13, 19; IV,16. Ariulf: Greg. Reg.ii,7, 32, 45; v,36; Paul IV,16. Zotto: Paul III,33; IV,18. Arichis: Greg. Reg. ii,45 ('Aregis...republica contra fidem venit').
6. Brown 1984, p.73 'Of the 26 dukes and magistri militum recorded between the Lombard invasion and the death of Gregory I, no less than 14 were German by birth'.
7. Ibid. p.71; He shows that lack of pay to Longobard troops in imperial service was a chief cause in the ready transferral of allegiance. Bavant 1979, p.46-9 sees Tiberius' buying over of dukes (Men. Prot. fr.25, 29) as a late attempt to win back these unpaid deserters. Brown p.72 differentiates between Longobard condottieri or freebooters and those 'dukes who possessed territorial authority under the Lombard king and were bribed into joining the imperial cause at least temporarily'. Longobards in 552: Procop. VIII,xxv, xxxiii.
8. Cf. Brown 1984, p.74-5: 'the lack of evidence for Lombards in the 7th century suggests that most of the earlier recruits were time-savers and that any more permanent recruits were soon romanised. On the other hand, as the Lombard kingdom became stronger and more stable there was less possibility or inclination for Lombard malcontents to ally themselves with the Empire'.
9. Historical summary: ibid. p.3-4; economic situation: p.6-8. On militarisation in general, ibid. 1978; 1984, p.39-60, n.b. p.39-48.
10. Cf. Bavant 1979, p.42f, after Conti 1975, p.21-6.
11. See note 10. Both suggest that George used an official register of Italian towns (but not a complete list) of c.578-580, even though the rest of the Descriptio appears drawn up in c.600.
12. Conti 1975, p.12.

13. Ibid. p.27-8; Bavant 1979, p.43-4; Brown 1984, p.43 note 10.
14. Conti 1975, Urbicaria p.27-8; Annonaria p.96; Aemilia p.120-1. Cf. Bavant 1979, p.49-50.
15. Ibid. p.52-3, (cf. Conti 1975, p.21) showing that while Longobard movements in the north could be checked from Urbicaria, Annonaria and Aemilia, 'on the other hand the Longobards at Benevento, Spoleto and Tuscia were installed in the actual heart of the eparchiae of Campania and Urbicaria'.
16. Cf. Brown 1984, p.43 (though Conti 1975, p.62-4, 70-1 denies the recognition of Oderzo and Grado, and identifies more suitable candidates). Bavant 1979, p.53 says that with Rome as its focus Urbicaria 'was difficult to defend because it extended from the Alps across to Picenum. It certainly found its *raison d'être* in the ease of the maritime liasons with the Tyrrhenian littoral, but any Longobard expansion could lead to a break in the territorial unity'.
17. 1975. Survival of the Descriptio p.3-5, 10-11; effects of the Latin to Greek transliteration p.16-20.
18. Brown 1984, p.50; The undoubtedly 'vague use (of exarchus) certainly does not merit the hypothesis that its first occurrence denotes the holder of a powerful new office'). Exarch discussed p.47-53. Cf. Hartmann 1889, p.9, 28f; Bavant 1979, p.53-4. George of Cyprus appears to set his Italian sites 'sub gloriosissimo praefecto (praetorio) Romae vel Italiae' (no.530) - Conti 1975, p.27; cf. p.23-4, which, Conti thinks recommends a date pre-584, when the word exarchus first appears in Italy (letter of Pelagius II: MGH Ep. ii, 441, App.ii - Brown 1984, p.48).
19. On traditional and gradualist schools concerning the institution of the themes see Brown 1984, p.46-8, as 1976, p.55f. Traditional: Hartmann 1889, p.69-73, 103-4; 1949, p.8f. Gradualist: Kaegi 1967.
20. 1984, p.48.
21. Powers of exarch: see note 18; cf. Hartmann 1889, p.30f, 55-6; appointment of dukes and tribunes p.57, 155. Alpine duchies: Brown 1984, p.54.
22. 1984, p.52-3; cf. Hartmann 1889, p.56-7. On magistri militum, dukes and the evolution of their powers: Brown 1984, p.53-6; tribunes p.56-8.
23. Ibid. p.53.
24. Ibid. 1984, p.55 with note 32; 1976, p.66; Bavant 1979, p.54f on the question of the Rome dux. Interestingly, Gregory records the instances of Gudiscalcus, dux Campaniae in 600 (Reg.X,5) and

and Guduin, dux Neapolim in 603 (Reg.XIV,10): Guduin and Maurisio (dux at Perugia) may indeed have been imperial commanders, but Gudiscalcus, like Gulfaris, dux Istriae (Reg.IX,160) may have held an honorary title - see notes 31-2, p.54-6. The mid-8th century also saw many town commanders assuming the ducal title (as Comacchio, Ferrara, Iesi and Nepi): 'This presumably reflects a breakdown of the official military hierarchy as local strongmen arrogated the title of the more powerful territorial rulers' - p.56.

A) VENETIA.

25. Historical situation: Mor 1980, n.b. p.251f.
26. Schmiedt 1974, p.506f; Brown 1984, p.15, 82. Excavations: Guide Arch. Lat. 1981, p.210f, port p.224; walls p.226f. (see pl.32); basilicae p.234-40. Ostrogothic finds: Brozzi 1963, p.142-3.
27. Not. Dign. Occ.IX,24. Tombstones: Not.Scavi 1890, p.172; 1892, p.335. Basilicas: Guide Arch. Lat. 1981, p.200f. There are no Longobard finds, but an 8th century Carolingian church exists.
28. 590 capture: MGH Ep.III Austr., nos. 40, 41. Oderzo: Paul IV,45.
29. Anon. Rav. IV,31; Guido 20. Finds: Guide Arch. Lat. 1981, p.192-3. Schmiedt 1974, p.518-9.
30. Von Hessen, Brozzi 1973. Hostilities in this zone: Paul VI,51; V,17 (See Chap. 4, section J.)
31. Cf. Boltin Tome 1970-71; Leciejewicz 1971, p.994; Hood 1970, (on 'Refuge Isles' off the Peloponnese).
32. Religious history of Grado: Mor 1979a.
33. Diminishes in width to the north: Mirabella Roberti 1974-75, p.565f. S.Eufemia was rebuilt at the same time, as noted in the Elias inscription.
34. Ibid. p.568f. fig.2 (width 8m, walss c.1.40m thick). Ravenna walls: Savini 1905; Mazzotti 1971; Schmiedt 1968, p.874-8; the date of the circuit extension is considered in the recent survey: Christie, Gibson NAM 36 (Sept. 1983), p.23; 39 (Nov. 1984), p.37-8.
35. S.Maria and latter show rebuilding after fires: S.Eufemia 35.70x19.5m with new mosaic floors. S.Maria 16.81x11.50m. Vittoria church 33.58x19.55m - Guide Arch. Lat. 1981, p.251-8; Cuscito, Die Frühchristliche Basiliken von Grado, Bologna 1981.
36. CIL,V.1593: Laurentius, miles de numero Tarvisiano, CIL,V.1590: Iohannes, miles de numero Cadisiano (both from S.Eufemia). CIL,V.1591: Iohannes, miles de numero equitum Persoiustinianorum (S.Maria). We also hear of the primicerius Zimarcus: CIL,V.1624. Many are illustrated in Cuscito 1971 (see note 35). Treviso unit: Brown 1984, p.86 recording similar units from Longobard-occupied Verona, Milan

and Fermo (bandus Firmens).

37. Transfer: Pertusi 1962, p.27f. Grado garrison: Pertusi 1968, p.682, note 29; cf. Brown 1984, p.84, note 8.
38. Molmenti 1927, p.17; Const. Porphy. c.27.
39. Pertusi 1962, p.27; Molmenti 1927, p.18.
40. John 64, 9-14; Pertusi 1962, p.30f.
41. Brown, et al. 1978, p.30-8, n.b. p.33f.
42. Tribunus Antoninus: Année Epigraphique 1972, p.200. On sites and history: Schmiedt 1974, p.515f. Finds at Cittanova include basilical remains, while S.Maria at Iesolo shows early medieval structures.
43. Above, p.261 with note 29.
44. Leciejewicz et al. 1969-70; Leciejewicz 1971; 1976; Leciejewicz et al. 1977. The reports still present chronological and interpretive problems.
45. Best is the circular, central Furnace II: Ibid. 1969-70, figs 9, 16, 18.
46. 1981, p.36-7.
47. There are in fact signs of bronze-working from the furnaces, including a brooch-mould.
48. Leciejewicz et al. 1969-70, p.89 showing its rise to religious prominence.
49. Leciejewicz 1976, p.56-7.
50. Var. XII,24 of 537/8, noting the inhabitants 'having fixed your homes in the manner of water-fowl'.
51. Found in 1895 at the base of the presbytery wall under the floor of the ambulatory. The inscription is considered in detail by Pertusi 1962, and is dated to between 1st September and 5th October 639.
52. Ibid. p.33-5.
53. Chron. Altin. 46,1-2; 64,9-14; John the Deacon 84,21-4 (both in MGH,SRL): Pertusi 1962, p.29-31.
54. Ibid. p.31. He also discusses a confused passage in Chron. Altin. 154, 23 - 155,4 referring to a dux Paulicius and his son at Heracliana, a tribunus Gardocus at Treviso with a command up to Padua, the tribunus Egilius Gaulua at Asolo and his son Eneas at Oderzo, who commanded land usque ad Panonie finis - Pertusi thinks

this records a time pre-640, but the source is meaningless given how the Byzantines could only have held these sites during the 590 offensive, when Altino was taken and duke Ulfari of Treviso came over to them, (and Asolo captured?). We should not rely on this passage to reflect the military situation in the late 6th-early 7th century - cf. Brown et al 1978, p.31.

55. See Schmiedt 1974 on sites. A dux Marinus Maurogenus is named for Venice in the 1st half of the 8th (?) century, and Iulianus, magister (militum) for Adria: Brown 1984, p.268; 266. Capture of Padua and Monselice: Paul IV,25-6.
56. 1952, p.312f; cf. Schneider 1924, p.52-3. Guillou 1969, p.290 names two Byzantine soldiers from 7th century Padua: Barbatus domesticus numeri Armeniaci, and ?Blandinoni, tribunus - both doubtful: Brown 1984, p.253, 254.
57. Rothari advances: Paul IV,45. Grimoald: V,27-8.
58. Paul IV,38. Oderzo finds: Guide Arch. Lat. 1981, p.200f.
59. Ferrerio 1975 - Boggetti, L'età longobarda IV,1949, p.512-3.
60. Paul II,13 noting Venantius Fortunatus' birthplace: 'in loco qui Duplabilis dicitur fuit; qui locus haut longe a Cenitense castro vel Tarvisiana distat civitate'; Agathias II,iii names Cenetam urbem (where duke Leuthari died). The first recorded dux is Ursus in 700-1 (Paul VI,24) not 610 as Schmiedt 1974, p.535 says. Schneider 1924, p.19 records this as a Carolingian comital seat and iudiciaria.
61. See Chap.4, section G with notes.
62. Ferrerio 1975, p.58-60, fig.59: the follis is wrongly attributed to Julian II. On burial, however, see note 70 below.
63. 1976, p.65.
64. 1975, p.60f, fig., p.60: Lemsä tower of same dimensions. However, the African parallels are from larger forts, and no Italian parallels are known.
65. Pez: *ibid.* p.62-3, with 50 tombs investigated; one tomb contained an umbo with animal plate decoration, of which only part of a griffin remains. Moldoi: *ibid.* p.63 - tombs found in 1955, including one with umbo, gilded rivets, lancehead.
66. Baldenica: *ibid.* p.65.
67. These are all considered Byzantine by Alpago-Novello 1976, p.69.
68. *Ibid.* p.65-9. However, there is a likely Byzantine toponym southwest of Ceneda at S.Pietro di Feletto (not noted by Alpago-Novello).

69. Ferrerio 1975, p.66. p.65-7 records the traditions of the destruction of Feltre and Belluno at the hands of Alboin and Rothari respectively.
70. However, the date of the loss of the northern Bellunese zone may be earlier following analysis of the gravegoods from the 'noble's tomb' at Castelvint, which belong to the first decades after 568: this may reveal a Longobard encroachment in the 570s-580s east of the via Claudia - perhaps upto the T.Ardo where Fara di Mel opposes Casteldardo: von Hessen 1984, nb. p.457-8 (Unless, of course, this was a Longobard mercenary).

B) AEMILIA AND THE EXARCHATE.

71. Discussed in general in Guillou 1969.
72. Cf. Schmiedt 1974, p.570-6.
73. Paul III,18 - this may have coincided with an imperial offensive; certainly Authari was quick to root out rebels.
74. Events related in MGH, Epp. III Austr. 40, 41.
75. Paul IV,25-6; 28. It is argued that Piacenza, Parma and Reggio were rebellious Longobard duchies which simply reverted to Agilulf's control once he began his reprisals. Some scholars (cf. Benati 1980, p.305) see Brescello as Longobard in 603, but Paul's narrative should indicate that the Byzantine garrison burnt down the castellum as they fled from it: milites vero Brexillum oppidum igni cremantes fugierunt - cf. Schneider 1924, p.46. When Reggio became Longobard again is uncertain, and similarly the border line from c.605-643 must remain obscure; finds from Reggio and Castellarano record Longobards from the mid-7th century, but not yet before this date (Degani 1949; Werner 1952). The incident at Parma where Callinicus' troops seized Agilulf's daughter leaves uncertain the city's ownership, but hints at non-imperial occupation: Paul IV,20. Hartmann believes Parma and Piacenza were reoccupied by Agilulf in 592: 1900,ii, p.105; cf. Fasoli 1949-50, p.150.
76. Lib. Pont. i,498.
77. Benati 1980, p.305; cf. Schneider 1924, p.42f.
78. The major problem in this argument, however, is the fact that Cremona was only wrested from the Byzantines in 603. Two possibilities exist: that it formed an island within Longobard territory, or that the confinium was drawn up after Cremona's capture. Neither argument is convincing.
79. II,18: 'Nona provincia in Appenninis Alpibus computatur quae inde originem capiunt ubi Cottiarum Alpes finiuntur'.
80. See below for Ferronianum and Montebellium, both later called Emilian

castra (VI,49). Bobium is Sarsina, not the Bobbio monastery founded in 612 in the Cottian Alps: Benati 1975, p.40. Urbinum is Urbino in the Pentapolis. Verona has been identified with Massa Verona named in 967, nr. Pieve S. Stefano in the upper Tiber: Fabre 1893; Benati 1980, p.306f. Other authors who see the province as real include Schneider 1924, p.37f. (seeing it as post-592, after the loss of Piacenza, Parma and Reggio - p.46); Formentini 1939. Against: Brown 1984, p.43, note 10.

81. Anon. Rav. IV,29; cf. Benati 1980, p.317-8, note 41. George of Cyprus: Conti 1975, p.12, 96; cf. Benati 1980, p.308. As Benati notes, Paul's province represents a critical emendation of an earlier source (the Laterculus of Polemius Silvius, whose source, Aurelius Victor, does not actually detach this from the Cottian Alps.).
82. Ibid. p.308.
83. 1984, p.43. See note 93 below.
84. Schneider 1924, p.44 argues that Tortona was Byzantine until c.600.
85. 1975, p.101. See Schneider 1924, p.41; Fumagalli 1971, p.914f. Conti 1975, p.46-8, dubiously claims a Byzantine presence in the Val di Taro in George of Cyprus no.549.
86. Conti 1975, p.113. Documentation: Schneider 1924, p.40-1; Fumagalli 1971, p.917; Rocca 1975, p.103.
87. Degani 1949, p.27 recording simply 'vessels and other finds' in Reggio. The 'Roman fortress' has traces visible on the east side of the Pietra: Rubbi, Tassinari Clò, L'Appennino Emiliano Romagnolo 1980, p.44.
88. Rocca 1975, p.104; Benati 1975, p.42; Conti 1975, p.112-3. Pavullo is perhaps no.623a in the Descriptio: Conti 1975, p.11-2.
89. Paul IV,45: 'cum Ravennantibus Romanis bellum gessit (Rothari rex) ad fluvium Aemiliae quod Scultenna dicitur'. Origo 6: '...et pugnavit circa fluvium Scultenna, et ceciderunt a parte Romanorum octo milia numerus'
90. Epitaph see Hodgkin, VI, 1895, p.169-70; Bertolini 1968, suggesting that Isaac fell in this battle.
91. Fasoli 1949-50, p.153 - indeed if we take Isaac's epitaph literally the losses occurred before his term of office (625-643): perhaps they mark further Agilulfan gains. Yet Agnellus ch.108 notes 'vexationes gentium' in the Ravenna area between 633-41.
92. Degani 1949, p.27; 1954; 1975-56, p.1193, no. 18117. Castelvetro has the toponym ariano (villa: Not. Scavi 1876, p.66).

93. Paul VI, 49; Lib. Pont. V. Greg.II, ch. 18, p.405 - Schneider 1924 p.48f; Fasoli 1949-50 p.151; Benati 1980, p.310f. Significantly both sources call the forts 'Emiliae castra' not sites in the Alpes Appenninae (cf. Benati 1980, p.306f). Some of these were possibly included in the forts of the Bologna area noted in Procop. VII,xI,12; Perlorentzou 1967, p.324.
94. Lib. Pont. i, p.429-30 refers to an embassy of 742-3 to Astulf arriving 'in finibus Langobardie, in civitate que vocatur Imola'. Fasoli 1949-50, p.154 postulates the Senio as the border, with Byzantine resistance in the mountains, while Benati 1980, p.314 prefers the Santerno. Liutprand's advances: Fasoli 1954-55.
95. Conti 1975, p.110-1, 116-7 and 108-10 respectively. Despite their listing in this section I reject Conti's suggestion that nos.624-6 lie in Emilia (p.114-6: Monte Venere, Tabiano, Monteveglio) and prefer their identification with Ligurian coastal sites (Portovenere, Taggia, Varatellia) which is more in keeping with George's Latin to Greek names - this view is also expressed in Bonora et al 1984, p.237 with note 8.
96. Cf. Rocca 1975, p.103f. Documentation in Schneider 1924, p.48f: the Ferronianum fines is recorded in 826, 888 and 931 and its comitatus in the 11th century; in 822 the iudiciaria Montebeliensis is named, and in the 8th century we hear of a duke of Persiceta as well as 48 praeceptales Persicetani - p.162-3. See below note 109.
97. 1975, p.40. On confine: Ibid. passim. For the Bolognese and sites in the upper Reno: Palmieri, 'Un probabile confine dell' esarcato di Ravenna nell' Appennino bolognese', Atti mem. Dep. Romagna s.4, III, 1913, p.38f.
98. 1975, p.36-9. Perhaps former exarchal castra?
99. Gaggio Montano: Not. Scavi 1887, p.390-1; 1914. Others: Schneider 1924, p.162.
100. Gaggio and Gardengo both lie north of Castel del Rio, and Scolcola near Pieve S. Andrea, south-west of Imola: Benati 1975, p.45f.
101. Fasoli 1951-53. Byzantine castra lie at Castrocaro (with late Roman origin? Coin finds: Gamurrini, Not. Scavi 1892, p.454-6) and Sarsina.
102. Lib. Pont. i, p.405.
103. Duchy: Schneider 1924, p.162-3, dismissed by Benati 1980, p.324f; cf. Fasoli 1949-50, p.155-6. More likely, if of Byzantine origin, the dukedom was based on a town held by a local strongman: cf. Brown 1984, p.55-6 with note 33 - above, note 24. Guillou 1969, p.266-71 records a donation by Ursus, son of the dux of Ravenna, to the Nonantola monastery, which names the fines of the pagi of Persisita, Dulio, Montebeli and castrum Feroniano. Verabulum is omitted.

104. Forum Cornelii: Agnellus ch.95, p.338 (Discussed in Fasoli 1951-53, p.38f; Benati 1975, p.46f). Castrum Imolas: finds at Villa Celeia show a Byzantine site over a late Roman - Gothic cemetery, identified with the castrum S. Cassiani: NAM 26, 1980, p.4; Maioli 1982. Forlimpopoli: Paul V,27, with Grimoald probably using the so-called strata petrosa que vocatur Longobardorum documented in the zone and running from the Cisa to the Furlo pass along the Appennines: Benati 1975, p.49f; 1980, p.310f. The imperial fort at Bertinoro-Brectanorum south of Forlimpopoli probably guarded this road: Guillou 1969, p.57; Schmiedt 1974, p.575.
105. Advances: Fasoli 1951-53, p.35f. Imperial resistance, n.b. victory at Fano: Brown 1984, p.82, note 3.
106. Lib. Pont. V. Steph.II, p.454f. On advances: Hodgkin Vol.VIII,1899, n.b. p.160f; Pippin donation of 756: p.22-3; Desiderius p.240. Fasoli 1951-53 uses toponymy to demonstrate rapid Longobard advance on Ravenna with little evidence of military sites facing the city; arimanni toponyms (cf. Schneider 1924, p.162) in the foothills, are explained as positions opposing remaining Byzantine forces in the hills. The notable absence of the arimanic sites to the west and along the Panaro strengthens Bertolini's hypothesis of their Liutprandine origin (above Chap. 1, Section B).
107. It is beyond the scope of this study to consider Byzantine Ravenna. For a summary see Guillou 1969, nb. p.65-76. Recent research : Ravenna e il suo porto (Ravenna, 1983). On troops stationed here in the 7th century : Guillou 1969, p.156-60; in 710 *ibid* p.160-61; Brown 1984, p.90 (using Agnellus, 140- MGH SRL, p.370). (Bologna research : Walls - Bergonzoni Not. Scavi (1973), p.5-7; tower and Longobard finds - Martelli, Bologna nel 544 fra Goti e Bizantini, Carrobbia 9 (1983), p.257-61).
108. Fasoli 1949-50, p.149-151.
109. Frignano-Adria line : Benati 1980, p.311-2, 318 ; Goubert 1965, p.43. Ferrara is first named in 757 in a letter of Pope Stephen II to Pippin : Patitucci Uggeri 1974, p.130-1.
110. 1924, p.159f; Ferrara arimanni: p.161-62, note 1.
111. Patitucci Uggeri 1974, p.144-5; Biondi 1551, i, recording 'Argenta oppidum simul cum Ferraria a Smaragdo exarcho primo moenibus circumdatum'.
circumdatum'.
112. On Po course and topographic aspect of the zone pre-1000 : Patitucci Uggeri 1983, p.392-9.
113. *Ibid.* p.401-3. Last bishop recorded is Justinus in 686. Transferred to Ferrara in the 8th century.
114. Patitucci Uggeri 1974, S. Pietro wall: p.112-4, Casa wall: p.121-6. Bricks of 29x13x5cm, 5 module height of 37.5cm.
115. *Ibid.* p.114-6, fig.3; discussion p. 132-4. From wall sectors only a pietra ollare sherd was found: p.126, 134.

116. Ibid. p.136f with figs.15-17; 1983, p.404-6.
117. Ferrara Walls: *ibid.* 1974, p.134f. There is no evidence of rushed construction.
118. Excavations: A. Visser Travagli, B. Ward-Perkins, NAM 37 p.7-8. It is possible that this area was by the water's edge and unsuited for habitation until the 9th century.
119. MGH, SRL, p.336. The church, still standing, posses a 6th century pergula and altar front. Patitucci Uggeri 1983, p.409-10.
120. Iohannes, primicerius of the numerus : Brown.1984, p.264 and 90 with note 18. Guillou 1969, p.156 note 53 argues that the numerus was from the region of Srebrnica east of Bosnia. Interestingly we find two possible Byzantine toponyms near Argenta: Bando to the north-east, and Filo to the south-east.
121. Lib.Pont. V.Steph.II, p.453-4.
122. Brown 1984, p.42, note 8 with ref. to Hartmann. Brown uses this to show 'the rise of power of the local garrison and the strengthening of their local ties'. In addition, the Chapter of Liutprand of 715 regulating salt commerce in the Po plain names Comacchio as a notable salt centre and thereby documents its earlier vitality : Mor 1977, p.493ff regards this pactum as late 7th cent. in date; Patitucci Uggeri 1983, p.410-5.
123. Ibid. 1976, p.284 discussing the excavations.
124. Ibid. p.290; 1983, p.415f.
125. Ibid. p.414-5. We can note the mid-7th cent. century cloisonné disc-brooch featuring central female head probably from Comacchio, now in Baltimore (see: Romans and Barbarians, P.136, fig.165). Melucco Vaccaro 1982, p.114, notes similar brooches.
126. Agnellus.p.315; Patitucci Uggeri 1970, p.69ff; 1983, p.424-7 with figs.12-7, plan p.416. Finds are of late Roman tradition, including combs, rings, glassware, pottery. The glazed material is compared to Forum Ware (p.118-21;1983, p.423), but this is disputed by Blake 1981, p.29-30. See Appendix 1).
127. Patitucci Uggeri 1983, p.421. Ostellato, Campolungo, S. Giovanni, etc. have Roman and medieval material. Two late Roman log-boats, now in Ferrara, come from Valle Isola - Boccaccini et al. 1983, p.35f.
128. Patitucci Uggeri 1983, p.428f, figs. 18-20. Previous Italian examples were known only from Sicily and Sardinia.
129. Ibid. p.428f.

C) LIGURIA

130. 1929, 1930, 1939. Recent studies: Conti 1960; Balbis 1979.
131. Procop. VI,xii. Balbis 1979, p.152f.
132. Procop. VI,xiii-xxv, xxviii. Balbis 1979, p.157-8.
133. Ibid. p.159, as under Rome and Theoderic.
134. Ibid. p.160f, though the confinium of c.590 should represent a briefly-maintained land-bridge across to the Exarchate.
135. Anon. Rav. IV, 29; Guido 69 'Vintimilia ripariolum Lunensis quae et Maritima'; Balbis 1979, p.161-2.
136. Documentation: Schneider 1924, p.11-5. In Jan. 591 Gregory asked Balbinus, bishop of Roselle to ordain a priest and 2 deacons for Populonia, whose bishop Cerbonius, who had previously fled to Elba, had died: Dial.III,11; Reg. I,15. Suana: II,33.
137. Cf. Bavant 1979, p.59. (Map 17).
138. Schneider 1924, Pisa p.12; Versilia, p.6; no reference to the fines Maritimae at either site or adjoining coastal strip. Conti 1962 notes the toponym Filettole west of Lucca as a Byzantine outpost of Pisa.
139. Schneider 1924, p.14-15. Longbard finds in Tuscany : von Hessen 1974, nb.p.1127, nos.10-14 on the cemeteries around Grosseto-Roselle (cf. Not. Scavi 1959, p.66f), where Grosseto may represent the Longobard heir to depopulated Roselle. Cf. Schmiedt 1974, p.576-91 on the decline of coastal towns of Etruria. Roselle: Roselle - Gli Scavi... 1976-(Barbarian tombs in old town fig.1 p.4-5; late material p.126-7; the south hill has medieval tower reusing Roman stone).
140. George's Italian source may perhaps be too early, while Gregory seems to ignore its existence; Paul uses too early a source for his list of provinces. Anonymous' source : Formentini 1929, p.33f; Conti 1960, p.23-4.
141. Balbis 1979, p.160-1; Formentini 1939, p.167f; Conti 1975, p.27-8. Cf. Brown 1984, p.43 note 10 against the significance of the lists. While sites like Luni, Ventimiglia, Genoa, Surianum are indeed linked to the Urbiciaria, nos.624-6 (Portovenere, Taggia and Varatelia) appear wrongly listed in Annonaria, which part-confirms Brown's view.
142. Aldio : Greg. Reg.IX, 102, Iohannes; IX,103..Formentini 1939, p.167-8.
143. Brown,1984, p.43.
144. George of Cyprus nos.533-5, 537-8, 550, 624-6 - cf. Conti 1975: Balbis 1979, p.161-2, 171 with bibliography.

145. Origo 6; cf. Paul IV, 45 : civitates ab urbe Tusciae Lunensi universas quae in litore maris sitae sunt usque ad Francorum fines cepit.
146. Freeg. Chron. IV, 71 with the erroneous inclusion of Oderzo, probably misunderstanding the reference in the Origo to its capture ad partem Orientis - cf. Balbis 1979, p. 164f.
147. I therefore reject the views of Conti 1960, p. 67f, nb. p. 80; Balbis 1979, p. 167; Formentini 1930, p. 59-63; 1939, p. 175 who sees the Liutprandine foundation of the monasteries of Berceto and Brugnato proof that the Surianum sector only fell in the 720s. However, Liutprand's zeal for monasterial foundations is well attested and need not indicate new territorial gains (Conti 1960, p. 122f on Liutprand's activities in the Lunigiana). Conversely Agilulf's foundation of Bobbio in 612 probably held some military significance. Brugnato excavations : Lamboglia 1971, p. 257-9. Conti 1960, p. 80 correctly dismisses Formentini's view (1930, p. 60) that the survival of Greek-derived toponyms represents a notable permanence of settlement - the period up to 643 was ample for their establishment.
148. But there was perhaps prompted some urban shift : Savona replacing Vado, while Ventimiglia moved upland. See Schmiëdt 1974 on Liguria.
149. Conti 1960, p. 81-96; Balbis 1979, p. 167-8.
150. Lamboglia 1946, p. 119-21 note 3; Coccoluto, Ricchebono 1974, p. 38f; Balbis 1979, p. 171f.
151. George no. 537: Conti 1975, p. 35. Excavations : Lamboglia 1956, p. 144-52 with figs. 29-35; 1970a, p. 9f; 1976, p. 171-6. Bibliography: Balbis 1979, p. 179.
152. Cf. Lamboglia 1956a, p. 151-2. The bishop only moved to his new seat in the 8th century. Excavations: note 151.
153. Ventimiglia zone: Lamboglia 1970a, p. 33f; Balbis 1979, p. 182 (bibliography): churches at Bordighera, San Rocco, San Remo, tomb at Valle Crosia. Val Nervia: Ibid. p. 185.
154. George no. 625: Lamboglia 1970a, p. 42; Balbis 1979, p. 179. Settlement of zone: Lamboglia 1970a, p. 48f; Balbis 1979, p. 182-3. Coccoluto, Ricchebono (1974), p. 25 propose tentative considerations of Taggia's walls.
155. 1950, p. 48-9; 1951, p. 71-2; 1970a, p. 45.
156. Coccoluto, Ricchebono 1974, p. 25, 33-6.
157. Porto Maurizio. Lamboglia 1964, p. 119; 1970a, p. 51, 60f; Balbis, p. 183. Circuit: Coccoluto, Ricchebono 1974, p. 36. Porto Maurizio first named 1064. Brown et al. 1978, p. 32 doubts the association pointing out that its naming after Maurice at a late date is unlikely because no pro-Byzantine political feeling was present here unlike around Venice later where in case of Heracliana the naming may bear some relevance

to political and historical facts (above p.262). Its absence in the Descriptio is not totally surprising, if indeed George of Cyprus' source for Italy is of c.580. My thanks to Dr Brown regarding this problem. Oneglia : Lamboglia 1970a, p.62; p.67-71 on Diano Marina and Cervo.

158. Ibid. p.63f. postulates Roman origins ; Balbis 1979, p.185 claims derivation from Byzantine chiusae.
159. Lamboglia 1970a, p.106; Coccoluto, Ricchebono 1974, p.38 note 75; Balbis 1979, p.185. Cf. Appendix 2.
160. CIL V.7793, probably the garrison commander - cf. Brown 1984, p.279.
161. These are now topped by the medieval walls. Constans' building work (between 411-17) : CIL V 7781 (not 7793 as Lamboglia 1970b note 2 states); walls : Lamboglia 1970b, p.23f (opus incertum with 'uniform blocks of regularised-dressed sandstone on the faces with mortared joints' with little reuse; thickness c.2.30m Similar are the walls of S. Calocero and S. Vittore.
162. Religious buildings: Lamboglia 1970a, p.81f; 1976, p.159-65 (Bibliography : Balbis 1979, p.179-80). S. Calocero : Coccoluto, Ricchebono 1974, p.26, 29.
163. Excavations : Lamboglia 1970b, p.30f on stratigraphy, setting F to c.900 and suggesting some disruption in settlement. Grosso's analysis of the ceramics wrongly considers the white and yellow glazed wares Byzantine by regarding G as late Roman and F as Byzantine (La ceramica altomedioevale e medioevale di 'Albingaunum', RII XIII (1968), n.1-2, p.20-6). Spina-pesce walling : Lamboglia 1970b, p.34, describing the early medieval walls of rough stone and clay construction as built 'with the accustomed irregularity and frailty known of this period.' (p.50). Vaccari excavation: p.50f.
164. Ibid. 1970a, p.73f, 100-1; Balbis 1979, p.183.
165. On zone: Lamboglia 1970a, p.111; Balbis 1979, p.185.
166. George no.626 following Tabia-Taggia, though Conti argues for an Emilian siting (1975, p.115-6). Cf. Lamboglia 1970a, p.112f; Balbis 1980, p.27f.
167. Lamboglia 1970a, p.112f; Balbis 1979, p.180; 1980, p.47f.
168. Site description: Balbis 1980, p.19f; fabric analysis p.31 (cf. Coccoluto, Ricchebono 1974, p.30). Bando refers to the wooded zone between Bardineto and Calizzano. The road up the Varatella to the Toirano ridge is called 'via Romana' - p.32. Lamboglia 1965, p.2f; 1970a, p.136 sees it solely as a Longobard castrum opposing Toirano. Balbis also notes an arimannia of the zone in 1189: 1980, p.37f.
169. Ibid. p.39-44. Only Roman and medieval evidence survives for the rest of the val Bormida, though Calizzano is named in the S. Pietro

chronicles. Early medieval picture p.47-59. Also named is Mombasiglio -Mons Basilicus regarded by Lamboglia (1965, p.6) as a Byzantine outpost of Albenga.

170. 1973, p.64f: George no535 (cf. Conti 1975, p.31 though); Fredeg.IV,71.
171. 1946, p.118f, 127; *ibid.* 1973, p.64f; Lamboglia, Ugo 1952, p.29-30; Formentini 1947, p.56. Tradition in Grandoglia, La storia di Noli (Savona, 1897), p.30-8.
172. Isasco: Ugo, Lamboglia 1956, late tombs p.64-5: 17 out of the 40 tombs were late, but only one had gravegoods (4th-5th century olpe).
173. Lamboglia 1976, p.129-30. In general: *ibid.* 1946, p.117f; Formentini 1947; Lamboglia, Ugo 1952; Lamboglia 1970a, p.134-5. Bibliography Balbis 1979, p.181.
174. This wall still stands to c.5m high and is stronger than the other circuit traces. Site description: pers. obs. On medieval Varigotti: Lamboglia 1970a, p.134-5.
175. Lamboglia, Ugo 1952; 8th century finds include part of a pluteus and a small pilaster and capital.
176. *Ibid.* p.30f and note 29 (cf. Formentini 1947, p.59f). The cappuccina tombs inside the church are probably Longobard: p.41f. We do not know the location of the Roman settlement.
177. *Ibid.* p.38-9; Coccoluto, Ricchebono 1974, p.27.
178. Lamboglia 1970a, p.150f; 1973, p.68. Surface pottery from Castel Ursino chiefly 12th-13th century in date - pers. obs.
179. Excavations: Vavassori 1973; Lamboglia 1973; 1976, p.125-6; Guide Arch. Lat. 1982, p.183-4.
180. Baptistry: Vavassori 1973, p.56f; Crypt tombs: p.58-60; Lamboglia 1946, p.123-4; 1973, p.67-8, fig.1, dates the inscription to the Byzantine-Longobard epoch, but misleadingly inserts the letters ...IMP.D.N. Corepiscopus is a local bishop. Lamboglia prefers the reading Theodosius.
181. These pre-date the Lidoria tomb: Vavassori 1973, p.60-3, comparing the glaze with Forum Ware. Lidoria tomb: *Ibid.* p.45f; Lamboglia 1973, p.70-1.
182. 1946, 124f; 1973, p.65; 1976, p.125-6. See note 170.
183. *Ibid.* 1970a, p.152f on S. Michele as Byzantine castello, though the dedication appears Longobard (*ibid.* 1973, p.68-9). Visual links from here also recommend a tower on Capo di Noli to communicate with Varigotti.

184. Pullopice: Lamboglia 1970a, p.118f. From tombs at Finale, one funerary inscription to an unknown child is dated to 517 - *ibid.* 1956b, p.226f; 1971, p.258. Bibliography Balbis 1979, p.184.
185. Murialdo et al. 1982, p.38; 1984, p.8; main report: Bonora et al. 1984, walls p.219-23. (the circuits cover the gentler western slope). The roman church of S. Antonino dates from the 10th-11th century: p.223-5.
186. *Ibid.* p.224f; we await the metal and glass reports. Habitation traces and drystone house (6x4m), p.228-33, 238. See above, Chap. 2, p.71.
187. Murialdo et al. 1982, p.38; Bonora et al. 1984, p.235-7, nb. p.236 on function in Byzantine defensive system as a whole.
188. Lamboglia 1970a on Finale p.118-33; restorations at S. Eusebio in Perti show a pre-Romanic origin, p.258.
189. *Ibid.* p.163-4; Coccoluto, Ricchebono 1974, p.26; bibliography Balbis 1979, p.184.
190. Lamboglia 1955, p.38-41; 1970a, p.164-6; 1976, p.124, with occupation at castrum Vadense subsequently focussed around S. Giovanni. Bibliography, Balbis 1979, p.184.
192. Lamboglia 1970a, p.166-72; 1976, p.123-4.
193. Excavations: bibliogrphay Balbis 1979. p.181. I have not seen C. Varaldo, Archeologia Medievale a Savona. Dieci anni di ricerche al Priamar, Bollettino Ligustico XXVIII 1975, n.3-4, p.65-78. S. Donato: Coccoluto, Ricchebono 1974, p.21-3.
194. Lamboglia's system: 1946, p.119 note 3, leaving a wide territorial gap between Savona and Genoa. On Varazze district: Coccoluto, Ricchebono 1974, nb.p.37f; roads, p.38 - they postulate a tower at Stella near the Riobasco-Teiro confluence.
195. Bibliography: Balbis 1979, p.181-2; Lamboglia 1970a, p.122-3 on zone. Honigmann 1939 wrongly postulated Albissola for George's no.626 (Baratelia).
196. Coccoluto, Ricchbono 1974, tower, p.23-4. circuit, p.24-5. The internal ground level is heavily built up.
197. Tower compared with walls at S. Calocero, Bergeggi, Campomarzio, *ibid.* p.25f. Spina-pesce at Susa, Brioni, Sirmione, Bardineto p.28f - this is considered a combination of Roman opus incertum and opus spicatum, used not in a decorative sense but functionally 'in how the technique permits a better laying of the material and thus also the use of more irregular or even unworked stone elements. It is thus a type which lends itself well to use in buildings - limitanean castra? - more often than not built in a great rush and with material readily available' - p.37.

198. Function of fortress: *ibid.* p.35-8, claiming that the Byzantine circuit was built in the wake of the Longobard invasion, perhaps under Maurice (p.37). San Donato dedication, nb. in Toscana : p.21f.
199. Torriglia: Bullough 1956, p.18; Cabona et al. 1978, p.306. Late antique village of Savignone: above Chap. 2, p.60-1.
200. Iohannes: Greg. Reg. IX, 103; numerus: CIL, V, 7771. George of Cyprus calls the city Genoues (no.538). Bonus is named as commander of the Genoa garrison in 544-5: Procop.VII, x,14. Archaeology in Genoa, see Archeologia in Liguria (1976), p.93-112.
201. Church formerly of S. Sabina e S. Vittore: Lamboglia 1958, p.1-8; Lamboglia, Uzzecchini 1960-61, p.117f. See also bibliography Balbis 1979, p.178. None of the tombs have gravegoods.
202. Lamboglia 1958, p.102f; Brown 1984, p. 84 note 8 corrects the reading of CIL V, 7771.
203. Fossati, Gardini 1976, nb. p.102; Andrews, Pringle 1978; Andrews et al. 1978, p.430-1 on pottery. It is possible that the pre-Roman circuit, part-cut by the 9th century wall, still functioned in late antiquity, although some sectors were undoubtedly buried by this time: Fossati, Gardini 1976, p.98. My thanks to Dr. D. Pringle for details regarding the wall and pentagonal tower here.
204. Refs: Balbis 1979, p.172 (including Solaria and Chiavari).
205. Formentini 1929, p.7f; he wrongly claims this Cicagna-Moniglia zone became Longobard pre-641 on the basis of the siting of a terra arimannorum and a mons Arimannorum at these sites: p.32-3; cf. Conti 1960, p.84f on Moniglia. Bibliography Balbis 1979, p.173, (including Sestri). Anon. Rav. IV, 32 lists a Turres between Rexum and Stacile.
206. Anon. Rav. IV, 32; Conti 1960, p.32f.
207. Roads: Formentini 1955, p.103f, map.p.100; Conti 1960, p.52f.
208. Montale and Framura towers: *ibid.* p.52f. with additional wall traces at Montale (p.54); Cimaschi 1965, p.17f; Zignano: Cabona et al. 1978, p.281. Cimaschi also notes a later guard tower beside S. Agata do Lagneto, an inland position. Byzantine towers: Andrews 1981, p.313 - see above Chap. 2, p.69.
209. Conti 1960, p.32-3. Cimaschi and Formentini locate Boron near S. Venerio di Migliarina; cf. Balbis 1979, p.174.
210. Portovenere and Golfo della Spezia : *ibid.* p.174; Lamboglia 1971, p. 257-8. Vezzano: Schmiedt 1968, p.903.
2211. Frova 1973; 1977.

212. Ward-Perkins in Frova 1977, p.635f; 1978; 1981a; 1981b. Gregory records both the bishop of Luni (IX, 86, 102, 114) and Aldio, magister militum, probably based here (IX, 103) until the end of the Byzantine offensive policy - though Formentini sites him at Filattiera.
213. Ward-Perkins 1981b, p.91f. A fragmentary 3rd house, C-14 dated to AD640[±]80, in fact part overlay House II.
214. Ibid. Frova 1977, p.637. This nuckation predates the erection of the square tower facing the Cathedral datable to the 9th century (Conti 1960, p.180). The Cathedral dates from the 5th century though the first recorded bishop of Luni is of the mid-4th century (Lusuardi Siena 1976, p.35f). The city walls at Luni still await investigation.
215. Surianum presumably later formed a Longobard iudicaria: Formentini 1930, p.39ff; Schneider 1924, p.6-7 (who erroneously locates Surianum at Sorgnano); Bullough 1956; Schmiedt 1968, p.900f; Conti 1960, p.15f, 39f shows an overlap of its finis with those of Luni; iudicaria p.94-6. Bibliography Balbis 1979, p.176. Kastron Soreon: George no. 550 - Conti 1975, p.48-9. Archaeology, see below.
216. Conti 1960, p.25f on Anon. Rav. IV, 32: Luni, Pullion, Bibola, Rubra (Castrovecchio di Terrarossa), Cornelium, Cebula.
217. No.533: Formentini 1939, argues that it helped oppose the Garfagnana after 568. Schneider apparently concurred with these views: Formentini 1954, p.41-2 (publishing only part of Schneider's letter). Against: Conti 1960, p.20-3, noting its proximity to Luni, its omission in Anonymous and late documentation.
218. Formentini 1939, p.173. Balbis 1979, p.177 on bibliography on Aulella and Apuan Alps. In this zone lies the 5th-7th century village of Luscignano: see above Chap. 2, p.61.
219. Ferrari 1929, p.122f; Bullough 1956. The Roman name Surianum applied to the township and statio, and subsequently to the fortress. Filattiera first appears in 1033, though the changeover is first noted in the 16th century: 'Surianum postea Filateriam nominatum' - Formentini 1930, p.39f.
220. Tower, church, castello : Bullough 1956, p.17f; Conti 1960, p.39-50, followed by Schmiedt 1968, p.903f (first suggested in Ferrari 1926, p.106). Circuit is of 120x50m featuring at least one other tower. Recent doubts on dating: Coccoluto, Ricchebono 1974, p.26-7 note 35; Andrews 1981, p.331-2. Archaeology: Cabona et al 1982, p.331f; Pizzolo 1983.
221. Mannoni 1982 (NAM 34, p.45); Cabona et al. 1984, defences, p.244; finds, p.243-4, discussed p.246.
222. Ferrari 1926, p.113 records marble decorative elements from a Byzantine-Longobard date church below Castelvechio (S. Stefano?). The

inscription of Leodegarius of 752 was recovered from S. Giorgio, but this need not imply a castral chapel here; Conti 1960, p.46-50 dates S. Giorgio to the 8th century but this is now unlikely (note 220 above).

223. Giuliani 1930, p.69-77; Conti 1962.
224. Cf. Giuliani 1930; Conti 1960, p.65f; 1962, p.3f. See below on other toponyms.
225. Cf. Giuliani 1951 on the 'strada lombarda', predating of course the rise of Pontremoli and Aulla which deprived Filattiera of much traffic.
226. On form of defence: Conti 1960, p.67. No figures exist for its garrison. Presumably garrisons were supplemented by any local population which took refuge within the various fortifications; above, Chap. 2, p.46 .
227. Ferrari 1926, p.87ff, Bando, p.90; Formentini 1930, site p.48-56; bando p.55-6; Conti 1960, p.64-5. No other find yet supports this dating.
228. The interior featured various undatable dry-set wallings of indeterminate functions : Ferrari 1926, p.92f; Formentini 1930, p.51.
229. Ibid. p.51-2.
230. Ferrari claims: 1926, p.117f. Formentini watchtower system: 1930, p.56-8.
231. Behind this then lay Formentini's Mikauria. Garfagnana: *ibid.* 1939, p.172-4; castrum vetus lies at Piazza al Serchio - cf. G. Ciampottrini, AM XI (1984), p.297-307 on excavations, nb. p.297 with notes on documentation. Formentini links Castelnuovo with George of Cyprus' kastron Nobe (no.623) and castrum Versiliae with kastron Eourias (no.542 - cf. Conti 1975, p.48-50), but this is doubtful. Fines Carfanienses: named in 884, adjoining those of Luni and Filattiera (cf. Bullough 1956, p.15).
232. Compare the proposed Pieve di Teco district, above. Torpiana: Ferrari 1926, p.109-110.
233. via regia: Conti 1960, p.35f; roads from Magra to coast: Formentini 1955, p.99f, (dating from the rise of Pontremoli); Mannoni 1977, p.35, 40; Cabona et al. 1978, p.309, 311. The watershed forms the present regional boundary.
234. Ibid. p.275, fig.1, p.277, fig.2; links with Magra, p.314-5. Zignago: Conti 1960, p.29-31.
235. Excavations: Cabona et al. 1978, nb. p.298-306 and 306-12; terraces

p.340-1. On general historico-archaeological summary of zone: Mannoni 1977.

236. Excavation zone: Cabona et al. 1978, p.340f: zones C and P, upper terrace Tower C and circuits p.342f and 346f; zone T medieval tower p.348f. The hill has suffered much erosion, leaving minimal stratigraphy except where wash has accumulated; p.298f. The walling in zone T perhaps simply enclosed the available levelled space on the summit.
237. Ibid. p.305. Within the perimeter internal usage apart from Tower C is attested only by two post-holes to its north. Presumably the tower acted as a casa-torre and indeed 'the probably matrix of a building type found later in the surroundings' (p.281 and note 19).
238. Pottery: Ibid. p.301-2 and note 84, 305, 353 and pl.X p.354 (Ceramica di impasto vacuolato NG:VL (Luscigagno) and VZ (Zignago) types; the former extends over much of the eastern Liguria area). Found mainly on upper terrace, but also in wash in zone T. We await full analysis of the post-Roman wares at Luni to provide an early medieval pottery typology. Late Roman material: tile fragment, handle of jug type known at Luni and Luscignano, and fragments of a grooved North African amphora: p.303, 356 and plXII, p.357.
239. Arrowheads: ibid. p.304, 356-7 and pl.XIII nos.49-56 (cf. Invillino: Fingerlin et al. 1968, p.114, 121). A belt-buckle tongue from Tower C phase 1 is insecurely dated: p.357, pl.XIII.
240. Cf. Conti 1960, p.35-8; Cabona et al. 1978, p.276f, nb. p.278: the Zignago castello 'dominates the middle Vara valley for a radius of at least 20km, controls part of the road tract which runs along the Vara-Magra disfluvial and overhangs in an obligatory point the course of the crest, which, going from this, descends through Zignago to Brugnato and to Levanto'. Vezzola: Fossati, NAM 32 (1982), p.14; Gretta di Patigno-Zeri: Cabona et al. 1978, p.309; Godano and Chiusola: Formentini 1955(Chiusola a Byzantine chiusa and Godano a Gothic garrison?).
241. See Conti 1960, p. 71f on invasion.
242. Cf. Cabona et al 1978, p.310; medieval reoccupation p.311-2, with the destruction of the fort in the later 13th century,

D) THE PENTAPOLIS

243. This province was imperfectly considered in Guillou 1969.
244. Alfieri 1973, p.13.
245. Ibid. p.7-8; here its troops and those of Ravenna intervened against the rebel Zaccharias - Lib.Pont. i, 161 : 'exercitum est cor Ravennatis militiae, ducatus etiam Pentapolitani'.

246. Anon. Rav. IV, 29; Guido 66; cf. Alfieri 1973, p.8-9. George of Cyprus lists sites in this zone in the eparchia Annonaria (eg. Fano, Pesaro, Senigallia: nos.611, 615, 632 - Conti 1975, p.96f).
247. Alfieri 1973, p.9-10. We cannot prove that Anonymous' provincia castellorum was of official nomenclature: the zone certainly contained many important towns and forts, though perhaps no more than any other imperial border zone.
248. Alfieri 1973, p.10-1. Senigallia, a castrum in Goerge (see note 246 above), may have declined by the later 7th century.
249. Functions: *ibid.* p.17-18 (Spoletan expansion p.12, 16). On the via Amerina and its fluctuating ownership, see Section E. As a bulwark to Gothic possessions in Emilia, see Alfieri 1977, p.93-4 and above Chap.3, Section B.
250. Alfieri 1973, p.14; 1977, p.87-9; Guide Arch. Lat 1980, p.188.
251. Eg. Ancona: Procop. VI, xi, xiii; VII, xxx; VIII, xxiii; Osimo: VI, x-xiii, xxiii-xxvii; VII, xi; cf. Alfieri 1973, p.16-7.
252. Nb. *Ibid.* p.8-9. Anon. Rav., Coast IV, 31: Ariminum, Pensaurum, Fanum, Senogallia, Sextia, Ancona, Humana, Potentia...; Interior IV, 33 : Sesena, Montefeletre, Orbino, ForoSempronii, Intercissa, Callis, Luciolis, Egubio.... Guillou 1969, p.56f.
253. Nb. Lib. Pont. v Steph. II, p.454f, and Vitae of Paul I, Steph. III and Hadr. I; cf. Hodgkin 1899, vol VII, chaps. VIII-XIV. Also above Section B.
254. Paul VI, 49, recorded in Lib. Pont. v. Greg. II, p.405 as '...Pentapolim quoque Auximana civitas se tradiderunt'. Hold on zone: Hodgkin 1899, p.240; restored only in 757: Lib. Pont. i, 461.
255. Lib. Pont. i, 454, 460 - Emilian sites: Ravenna, Cesena, Forlimpopoli, Forlì, Castrocaro, Mons Lucatii and Comacchio; cf. Hodgkin 1899, p.222-3. Hodgkin and Diehl identify Conca with Cattolica on the torrent Conca, but a site upstream in defence of the Rimini-Urbino road - perhaps Montfiore Conca - is more likely (though cf. Guillou 1969, p.57 note 43; p.56 note 40 suggests Serra S. Abbondio for Serra).
256. Lib. Pont. i, 461; Hodgkin 1899, p.240.
257. Lib. Pont. v. Hadr. I; Hodgkin 1899, Chaps. XIII-XIV, nb. p.356, 378, 387f.
258. Archaeology: Guide Arch. Lat. 1980, p.188f. At most the evidence consists of early Christian tombs, Gothic finds and Longobard cemeteries outside imperial territory. No Byzantine forts can be claimed.
259. No material evidence is forthcoming for its late antique occupation.

Roman remains: Guide Arch. Lat.1981, p.21f; there are undated late accretions to the walls, notably flanking the Arch of Augustus. Byzantine military at Rimini: Procop. VI,x1-x19; dux Arsicinus in 591 (Greg. Reg.I,56); and the 8th cent. duces Andreas, Martinus, and Verus, the magister militum Mauricius, and consul Paulus (see refs. in Brown 1984, p.250f). The numerus Arimensium is recorded at Ravenna in the 8th century (ibid.p.250, Adulfo).

260. Procop. VII,x1,33-7; VII,xxiv. Finds: Guide Arch. Lat.1980, Pesaro p.196f; Fano p.207f. Nearby 4th cent. tombs: Mercado, RDSL XXXVI, p.208f.
261. Guide Arch. Lat.1980, p.212-3. Procop. VIII,xxiii names it as a port; Brown 1984, p.56 note 33 records the magister militum (8th cent.) Eleutherius.
262. Procop. VI,x1, xiii; VII,xxx; VIII,xxiii. Finds: Guide Arch. Lat. 1980, p.226f (6th-8th cent. building located near a 4th cent. oratory on via Menicucci; early Christian basilicae below S.Maria della Piazza, and the duomo).
263. Alfieri 1977, n.b. p.93f.
264. Hodges, Whitehouse 1983, p.42, recording analogous event in Campania recorded by the Theodosian Code.
265. Procop. VI,xx,15-22, estimating the death of 50,000 persons through famine; cf. VI,xvi-xvii. Interestingly Belisarius sent just 2000 men to overrun Picenum (VI,vii). Interest north of Numana: Alfieri 1977, p.93-4.
266. Ibid. p.94-5: in the 14th cent. Constitutiones Aegidanae there are no southern coastal civitates.
267. George no.612: Olcoua (Ascoli?); no.619: kastron Terentinon (San Benedetto- castrum Truentinum?) - Honigmann 1939, p.54; Alfieri 1977, p.96 note 1. Feliciangeli 1908, p.77 and Conti 1975, p.97-8, 104-5 doubt these.
268. Greg. Reg.IX,99, 100, appointing bishop Serenus of Ancona as visitor of Auximum 'for a long time lacking pastoral solicitude'.
269. 1980, p.188-9, and 102-3; cf. Feliciangeli 1908, p.74-5 on Gregory.
270. Richards 1980, p.188-9.
271. Fermo: Greg. Reg.IX,51; Richards 1980, p.102-3. Oratory at Teramo: Reg.IX,71; Anio is the only military commander recorded for these reconquered towns.
272. Ascoli: Reg.XIII,18; Aprutium: XII,4, authorising Passivus to ordain a religiosus layman as bishop. Richards 1980, p.103.
273. Fermo oratory: IX,58, 59; Nursia: XIII,38, 39. Richards 1980, p.103.

274. Nor are there details of military conflict during this offensive. Castel Trosino: Mengarelli 1905; Kiszely 1979, p.150-4; Melucco Vaccaro 1982, p.98-105. Noticeable is the relative lack of weapons with the exception of the rich tombs; despite its position on the via Salaria C.Trosino was quite withdrawn from the south border of the Pentapolis, and cannot claim any notable military role.
275. Paul IV,16: 'cum bello contra Romanos in Camerino gessisset victoriamque patrasset' - Feliciangeli 1908, p.48f; Richards 1980, p.189. Camerino lies south of S.Severino (Sculptural finds: Pigorini, Not. Scavi 1897, p.95f).
276. Alfieri 1973, p.15-6; 1977, p.95.
277. Mercado 1979: Castelfidardo, p.132f with 4th cent. end to a house; Portorecanati, p.180f with villa/factory in use to late 4th cent., over which lay 5th-6th cent. burials, lacking gravegoods. Survey showed overall abandonment of lower ground in late antiquity (see conclusions p.294-6). Finds: Guide Arch. Lat.1980, Osimo p.240f; Potenza valley p.247f. Filottrano may be a Byzantine toponym - cf. Filetto between Senigallia and Ostra.
278. Fermo, Ascoli: *ibid.* p.271, 287f. Gothic material: Annibaldi, Werner 1963, n.b. p.364-5, also noting finds from around Teramo and Guilianova to south.
279. Feliciangeli 1908, p.78 (Farfa document). Fabrianese: Alfieri 1973, p.16-7.
280. Guide Arch. Lat. 1980, p.212f (Cesano, Misa, Esino valleys).
281. Alfieri 1973, p.16-7.
282. Paul II,18; Fabre 1893, extent of Massa Verona p.392-3, note 2.
283. Eugippius: Vita S.Sev. ch.44,7; Procop. VI,xi records a Gothic garrison of 500 men in S.Leo; S.Marino named in Lib.Pont., Vita Steph.II as castellum sancti Marini - Schneider 1924, p.54. Anon. Rav.IV,33 lists the line Sesena, Montefeletr, Orbino.
284. VI,54.
285. Urbino finds: Guide Arch. Lat. 1980, p.200f.
286. Finds: Vernarecci, Not.Scavi 1886, p.225-8, 411-6. Fortress: Procop. VI,xi, 10-4; small Byzantine garrison, defeated by Goths: VII,vi; VIII,xxviii; Longobard destruction: Agn. ch.95. Procopius' description (VI,xi) implies that men could mount the cliff behind the fort and wreak havoc by cascading stones down. Fossombrone: Schmiedt 1974, p.591f; Guide Arch. Lat. 1980, p.204. Its bishop was arrested in 559 by Iohannes, mag.mil. (Pel.Epp.69,70,71: see Brown 1984, p.53-4 note 30).
287. Luciolis: Anon.Rav.IV,33. Eleutherius: Paul IV,34; Lib.Pont.1,321;

Cont.Havn.36; cf. Feliciangeli 1908, p.70-1, Schneider 1924, p.54-5. In 1235 the inhabitants of Pontericcioli populated the castello di Cantiano.

288. Schmiedt 1974, p.602-4. Finds: Guide Arch. Lat. 1980, p.214f.

289. Faraone, mag.mil. named for Iesi pre-806: Brown 1984, p.56, note 33. Longobard evidence: the ducatus Firmanus (formed by Desiderius to counteract the Spoletan dukes), the Castelpetroso gastaldato, and the Nocera Umbra necropolis, and finds around Ascoli.

E) THE VIA AMERINA, THE DUCHY OF PERUGIA AND THE DEFENCE OF ROME.

290. Gothic War in Umbria: Feliciangeli 1908, p.19; Giunta 1964; Guide Arch. lat. 1980, p.13. Spoleto's importance: procop. V,xvi-xvii; VII,vi, xii, xxiii; VIII,xxxiii. N.B. Bullough 1966, p.214-5 note 13. Via Flaminia: Ashby, Fell 1921.

291. Procop. V,xvi. Sieges of 542: VII,vi (Bessas holding Spoleto, Cyprian Perugia).

292. Paul II,26; Hartmann 1913, p.198.

293. Agn. ch.94-5, recording attack usque ad Romam, which included the burning of Petra Pertusa. Greg. Reg.V,39 in hac urbe; XIII,41, recording 35 years of Longobard menace, but not directly naming Rome. Sources: Feliciangeli 1908, p.5-18.

294. Zotto: Paul III,33.

295. Paul III,13, 19; cf. Bognetti 1967, p.453f; Bavant 1979, p.45-7, notes 27-8.

296. Bognetti 1967, p.453-63; Bavant 1979, p.45-9. The words of Men. Prot. (ibid.p.47 note 37) regarding payment to the Longobards show that those who accepted were to fight in the ranks in the East - it thus was no mere bribe or tribute. However, this does not fully explain the earlier origin to Zotto's rule. We can note the lack of early Longobard placenames around Spoleto, which would be expected if involved in the early expansion (cf.Schneider 1924, p.165 noting lack of arimanni names).

297. Lib.Pont.i,308-9. Agn.ch.94-5 may then be postdated to this time and Gregory's words may refer to Longobards ravaging Italy, not Rome (note 293).

298. MGH, Epp.II p.440-1, with first reference to an exarch: Bavant 1979, p.53f. Duke at Rome: ibid. p.62f, though Brown 1984, p.54-5 regards generals at Rome before c.600 as mobile local commanders not necessarily stationed in Rome.

299. Spoleto expansion: Feliciangeli 1908, p.29f; Tuscans: Schneider 1924, p.14f; Bavant 1979, p.47, 55.

300. Velox: Reg.II,7,32; Richards 1980, p.182f. John: Reg.II,28.
301. Reg.II,33; II,45; V,36. Cf. Feliciangeli 1908, p.36-41; Bavant 1979, p.56f; Richards 1980, p.184. Rome then held solely the poorly-paid numerus Theodosiacus, since Romanus had removed troops into Umbria. Narni's importance as a control of routes from Spoleto: Procop.V,xvi-xvii; VIII,xxxiii.
302. Lib. Pont. i,312; Paul IV,8 - the 'other sites' probably included Narni, Otricoli and Gubbio. Feliciangeli 1908, p.39-41; Goubert 1965, p.44; Bullough 1966, p.217; Llewellyn 1970, p.144-5; Bavant 1979, p.57-8. The sites correspond exactly to the list in Anon. Rav.IV,33.
303. Greg. Reg. V,36: '...ut Perusia teneretur, Roma relictæ est'.
304. Agilulf's attack: Paul IV,8 - no letters come from Gregory during the winter 593-4: Bavant 1979, p.58 note 70. Dux Maurisio appears installed at Perugia probably in early 592, and joined Romanus when attacked. As Brown notes (1984, p.55 note 32) he is not Mauricius, magister militum (Greg. Reg. II,7,31). Perugia restored: Reg.V,15; IX,116.
305. Truce: Reg. IX,66,67; X,16; Bavant 1979, p.58, 81f; Richards 1980, p.186f. Gregory's ties with Ariulf in mid-590's: Feliciangeli 1908, p.41f.
306. Conquests: Lib. Pont. i,426. Sutri was lost in 728 (LP,i,407), but retrieved by Gregory II's pleas (but without its lands) - Bavant 1979, p.82-3. Restoration: Lib. Pont. i,428; Bavant 1979, p.84.
307. Llewellyn 1970, p.200f; Bavant 1979, p.81-8, n.b. p.85 on Pippinian donation to the Popes. Brown 1984, p.180 notes that well before then the Papacy had had 'to adopt a policy of independence from the Empire and allegiance with the Franks'.
308. Agatho: Paul VI,54. Otherwise Maurisio is our only other attested duke of Perugia.
309. Lib. Pont. i,478, 493; Brown 1984, p.92 note 21.
310. Bavant 1979, p.80 (cf. Greg. Reg. V,57a). The 817 Privilege of Louis also puts Perugia and Todi in Tuscia Romana - p.86; Brown 1984, p.55 note 32. The references (note 309 above) to the ducatus Perusinus in 772 and 774 also link this to Rome.
311. Bullough 1966, p.223f; Bavant 1979, p.58.
312. 1966, p.218-9 with notes; Schmiedt 1974, p.591. Byzantine bishops recorded for Gubbio (Greg. Reg. IX,184-5), Perugia (I,58), Todi, Amelia and Bomarzo (in 680 - Bavant 1979, p.80); Narni (Reg. V,57a; II,4), Otricoli (V,57a). Orte is not named. On decline of bishoprics:

Duchesne 1903, p.93-6; Richards 1980, p.100f.

313. Gubbio finds: Guide Arch. Lat. 1980, p.173-5. Rocca Posteriore: NAM 1977, 21, p.45; cf. Whitehouse, Barker in AM, 1978,V, p.461f. (medieval remains) - no dating evidence is given for the 7th century fort.
314. Tadino in 599 had Gaudiosus of Gubbio as visitor, indicating devastations in this area and continued dependence on the imperials. Gaifana tombs: Arena, Fasti Arch. 1975-76, no. 18146. Nocera Umbra: Pasqui, Paribeni 1918. Summeries: Felletti Maj 1964, p.105-13, noting also recent excavation in loc. Pettinara-Casale Lozzi.
315. Military finds: Paroli 1980, p.18; Melucco Vaccaro 1982, p.111-2; site chronology: *ibid.* p.109f, comparison with C.Trosino p.102-4. The cemetery is a striking exception to the near total absence of Longobard tombs from the duchy.
316. Tombs: Not. Scavi 1889, p.397-8. Naming: Schneider 1924, p.9 with reference from Anon. Rav. IV,36: Civitas quae dicitur Tifernum, quae et Felicissimum dicitur (Tifernum = Tifernum Tiberinum) - not called fortress; Brown 1984, p.44; cf. also p.89 note 17 on Byzantine troops quartering in periculosis locis in this area.
317. Perugia: Guide Arch. Lat. 1980, p.78f. Spoleto: *Ibid.* p.100-1, 105f; church p.117, palace p.115-6. The amphitheatre, transformed into a fortress by the Goths (Procop. VII,xxiii) and maintained thus into the 13th century retains much undated blocking (p.116).
318. Bevagna: Guide Arch. 1980, p.125-6; Bettona p.95-7: this was added to the Assisi diocese. Foligno's growth: Bullough 1966, p.226f and figs.6-8; p.227 records the 17th century tradition of the destruction of Forum Flaminii in 740 by Liutprand, perhaps linked to the events of the Rome-Thrasimund treaty. On the hill of S. Fortunato opposite Assisi thirteen 7th century slab-tombs are known: Arena, 1975-76, no.18230.
319. Chiusi duchy: Bavant 1979, p.58 with later Longobard tombs at Chiusi and nearby Arcisa (late 6th-early 7th century with five rich military tombs: von Hessen 1974, p.1127-8; Melucco Vaccaro 1982, p.96-7).
320. Confine: note 312 above. Todi named in George of Cyprus, no. 621; Finds: Guide Arch. 1980, p.57-60, 71-7.
321. Neither appear in Gregory. Amelia finds: Guide Arch. Lat. 1980, p.18-20, 32f.
322. Bavant 1979, p.59f on Synods; Greg. Reg. V,57a. Orvieto: I,2; II,11. Bagnoregio: X,13. Bishoprics in Regio VII: Duchesne 1903, p.89-92.
323. Cf. Schneider 1924, p.10, and below. Castro is first named as a bishop's seat in 680 (Episcopus Valentino Castrum): Bavant 1979, p.79.
324. Greg. Reg. V,57a for 595 names Candidus of civitas Bolsinensis, yet

previously noting him at Orvieto (II,11); cf. Duchesne 1903, p.92. Excavations at Bolsena (MEFR 1969, p.113) show no activity after a 4th century abandonment (though some gold-basket earrings come from the S.Cristina catacombs - Melucco Vaccaro 1982, p.113); Orvieto lacks late finds, but appears in Procop. (VI,xx, noting the ancient walls), and George (no.574, kastron Ourbebeta).

325. Schneider 1924, p.9, 13; Bavant 1979, p.80-1; Brown 1984, p.44 on name. Sarcophagi at S.Cecilia nr.Bomarzo may be Byzantine: Serra 1974, p.70-6.
326. Bagnoregio: Greg. Reg.X,13; Aprutium, above section D. Brown 1978, p.328. Cf. however, Richards 1980, p.101 on Orvieto-Bagnoregio see.
327. Cf. above, Chapter 2, n.b. p.66 , showing an extensive adaptation of castellieri in the Lunigiana. Ardea, however, may possess a Byzantine tower/buttress inserted into the ancient acropolis wall - Lawrence 1962, p.44-5 (fig.10 p.38). Bishopric combinations in war zones: Richards 1980, p.100f.
328. Paul IV,32, probably marking Roselle's fall too.
329. 1924, p.15; cf. Bavant 1979, p.80; Lib.Pont.i,428.
330. Bavant 1979, p.82-4 with refs.
331. Greg. Reg.IX,60: bishop Constantinus of Narni was previously visitor at Terni. By 649 the seat of castrum Utriculum disappears, with the subsequent rise of S.Maria in Vescovio.
332. Greg. Dial.I,4; Bavant 1979, p.60. On border towards the Liri valley and to Gaeta, p.61f and 81f.
333. Losses: Lib.Pont.i,463 (Faroald then reputedly captured Classe - repeating the feat of his namesake in 575). Restoration: i,452; Bavant 1979, p.82.
334. Bullough 1966, p.222-3, and note 34; Bavant 1979, p.83. Struggle for its possession: Lib.Pont.i,420, 424. Also named as castellum Gallisem in 817; its first bishop is of 826 (not 465). Roads: Frederiksen, Ward-Perkins 1957, p.162f.
335. Border: Ostenberg 1961, p.106; the Mignone is named as confine in a papal bull of 755: Schmiedt 1974, p.576f.
336. Medieval reoccupation of Viterbese sites: Frederiksen, Ward-Perkins 1957, p.193-4; Ward-Perkins 1962, p.389f; 1972, p.867f; Schmiedt 1974, p.576-91, who also documents the decline of Etruscan sites.
337. Ibid. p.576f. Numerus: Schneider 1924, p.11; Brown 1984, p.59 note 39 p.60, 74 (see Theodorus 21, p.278; a comes Theophanius is named in 593: Greg. Dial. IV,28). Repairs to wall: Lib. Pont. i,420-1. George of Cyprus also names the kastron Centoucellai (no.541). Schmiedt

notes Leo IV's foundation in 855, after the early 9th cent. Saracen invasions, of Leopolis or Centocelle within the old town (masonry: Andrews 1978, p.393).

338. Potter 1979, p.161-4, figs.49-50; Andrews 1981, p.319.
339. Serra 1974, p.76-8. Bomarzo: note 325 above.
340. Lib.Pont.i,408; Ostenberg 1961, p.104 and note 3; Brown 1984, p.159 with note 29. Tiberius' revolt forms one instance of the growing 'separatist feeling' in Italy pre-751, aimed at the usurpation of the Empire. The revolt may coincide with Liutprand's conquest of Sutri, and was perhaps Longobard-backed.
341. Ostenberg 1961, p.104, and Whitehouse 1973, p.868 located Manturia at S.Guiliano-Barbarano Romano near Bieda. Monterano: Brown 1984, p.279. Bishop named in 680 (Bavant 1979, p.80, note 225).
342. Ostenberg 1961, p.103f. Documentation p.105, notes 1-3. The 12th-13th cent. documents record Luni as a castrum and tenuta, when the area became Viterbese (Last notice of 1301).
343. Ibid. p.115f - plan p.112 fig,4; castello fig.5. The castello walls may be medieval despite the lack of mortar (cf. Andrews 1978, note 2 p.408).
344. Ibid. p.124; Whitehouse 1978, p.479 notes 9th century wares here, and a possible Forum Ware sherd (1973, p.867-8). M.Fornicchio: Ostenberg 1961, p.106-7.
345. Excavation: Not.Scavi 1960, serie 8, XIV, p.1ff. Schmiedt 1974, p.576f discusses the role of Luni, Bieda and S.Giovenale. Forum Ware: note 344. Medieval documentation notes further fortifications like Bisenzio, Marzano, Pianzano, Castel di S.Archangelo, and Rocca di Rispampani; possible Longobard sites are Castro Lombardo and Caziliuprandi-Gacaliprand (a Liutprandine site?) - note 342 above. Rocca : Andrews 1978, p.391-3.
346. Roads: Schmiedt 1974; Duncan 1958, p.77f, n.b. p.82-4 (Cassia), p.84-6 (Ciminia).
347. Ibid. p.69f, 123f.
348. Ibid. p.124-5 suggest this as the castello taken by Liutprand; first recorded under Gregory VII (1073-85): Ecclesiam S.Stephani cum castello et borgo. The ward declined in the 14th-16th cents.
349. Brown 1978, p.326. Tombs: Not.Scavi 1878, p.159-60. Sculptures in duomo: Gamurrini 1891, p.26-8.
350. Bavant 1979, p.82-3 with refs.
351. Viterbo: Andrews 1981, p.318 with refs.; Salce: p.318-9 with fig. 26.2 p.317.

352. Cf. Brown 1978, p.329. Of these only Nepi is recorded by George of Cyprus (no.546), though the rest appear in the Lib.Pont.
353. Frederiksen, Ward-Perkins 1957, p.129. Shift of seat: p.128f; Falerii Novi: p.155. Lawrence 1964, p.90-1 calls it 'Incomparably the strongest (site) in the region'.
354. Road course: Frederiksen, Ward-Perkins 1957, p.136-40 (n.b. p.140 grid no.849816, pl.xxxvii a-b, xxxviii a; Castel Sant'Elia pl.xl). Castel Paterno: Lawrence 1964, p.92-5.
355. Frederiksen, Ward-Perkins 1957, p.149-55, 166-8.
356. See Appendix 1.
357. 1981, p.209; 1983, p.4-5, and in Cameron et al.1984, p.63f.
358. Hodges et al. 1984, p.172; latter site: cf. p.171-3. Noted in detail in Appendix 1.
359. They actually cautiously note in Cameron et al. 1984, p.143-4 in the case of Ponte Nepesino that even if Forum Ware is later than the 6th century 'the site still remains archaeologically important' in demonstrating upland nucleation pre-incastellamento.
360. Above, Chap.2, p.53f with notes.
361. ARS distribution: Wickham 1979, p.85-7; Potter 1979, p.146.
362. Cf. Brown 1978, p.330; Wickham 1979, p.89, showing settlement in the Veientanus beside the road in the Forum Ware phase and later.
363. Potter 1979, p.146-7; Wickham 1979, p.87.
364. Ibid. p.89; 1978a, p.380; Brown 1978, p.329-30: 'These early sites were set up for defensive purposes... the initiative may have come from Byzantine military commanders in the late 6th and 7th centuries'.
365. 1978, p.330.
366. 1979, p.82-4.
367. Ibid. p.82, however: 'The areas covered by the AV and AF surveys are unlikely to produce more (FW) in the near future'.
368. Positions: Potter 1979, p.156-7; medieval roads: 1972, fig.1 p.118.
369. 1978, p.330. Whitehouse, Potter 1981 ignore this proviso.
370. This is possible for Mazzano and Calcata along the Treia. The other water courses needed little defence. It is likely that C.Paterno and C.Sant'Elia had long existed as road guards upstream of Civita Castellana; neither site has FW, however.

371. Though the FW sherds from Luni are not secure, and were associated with early medieval coarse ware from pits not closely datable: Whitehouse 1978, p.479 (n.b. pit 3 finds). Cf. Potter 1972, p.145; Whitehouse 1973, p.867-8.
372. Whitehouse, Potter 1983, p.4-5; Cameron et al. 1984, p.69.
373. Ibid. p.93-5, 143-4. Site abandoned in the 12th-13th century.
374. Excavations: Cameron et al. 1984, p.69f. On defences: n.b. p.70-2, 77-9; tower p.83-7. Site before excavation: Frederiksen, Ward-Perkins 1957, p.81-7, with figs. and plates. Keep controls the entry: n.b. p.83-4. 'The use of mortar shows that this is certainly medieval work; but in all other aspects it is so uncharacteristic of medieval masonry that one is led to wonder whether the medieval builders may not have been using the material and copying the methods of an earlier fortification'.
375. Ibid. 1957, La Torre p.92-6 (medieval Castrum Insulae), Il Castellaccio p.108-10, Corchiano p.115-8. La Torre and Corchiano were both Faliscan oppida, and for La Torre a close similarity with the mortar type at Ponte Nepesino is noted (p.95). The sites resemble the situation of D85 in Molise (Hodges et al. 1980, p.111-3).
376. Although near the Tuscan confine, Luni sul Mignone and S.Giovenale were not suitable candidates for excavation in this regard: at Luni for instance the exposed acropolis suffered heavy weathering and consequently stratigraphy was minimal.
377. Potter 1979, p.149f, 155, 164; Whitehouse 1973, p.861.

CONCLUSION

The present state of evidence restricts attempts at conclusive assessments of the pattern of Byzantine and Longobard settlement and defence in Italy. The historical sources are few and cursory in their details: while Procopius carefully considers the vicissitudes of the Gothic War, he lists only the larger fortifications and towns involved in the struggle, and in fact is largely ignorant of events beyond the Po; similarly Paul the Deacon is preoccupied with the basic facts of his narrative, and only in the case of the invasions of 584, 590 and 610-1, where he clearly utilises contemporary accounts, does he furnish details relevant to defensive dispositions within the Kingdom. In contrast, however, our geographical authors offer us interesting evidence for subtle changes in the distribution of the foci of late antique settlement, and, in the case of George of Cyprus, locations of notable military bases in the various Byzantine territories.

The historical framework as yet remains relatively bare of archaeological support: this material is scattered and sparse, and for the most part consists of individual or group tomb-finds and of minimal systematic excavation within towns and fortresses. Although the numerous Longobard and Longobard-period tombs, finds, and toponyms can be combined to provide a relatively detailed picture of the Longobard occupation, the Byzantine presence - like that of the Ostrogoths - remains almost invisible in the archaeological record. Nonetheless, the integration of the historical and archaeological data has permitted the drawing of some general conclusions regarding military and civil settlement in late antique Italy.

For the later Roman epoch the effects of the barbarian invasions on Italian society are adequately understood, even if we are still ill-informed

on the manner of the defensive measures employed by Rome once her armies had come to be matched by those of her enemies. For the northern border we hear of the Tractus, the elements of which are obscure beyond the physical barrier of the Claustra Alpium Iuliarum. Yet these barriers had clearly become ineffective by the early 5th century, and no longer hindered barbarian movements. Nevertheless, the few excavations appear to recognise a policy of structural defence-in-depth in the Alps: for instance, behind the fortresses of Susa and Bellinzona we can identify castra at Castelseprio, Pombia and Comacina, with a plausible line of intermediate watchtowers; indeed, the Castelseprio evidence seems to record an evolution from observation towers to castrum (perhaps reflecting the consistent growth of the barbarian threat towards the heart of the Empire). Even in Friuli some of the forts which later formed the Longobard limes appear to have late Roman origins.

Although the Gothic kingdom physically extended beyond the Alpine confine, Theoderic clearly provided for further defences within Italy, even if he hoped that these were 'superfluous measures in terms of security'.¹ Despite the attestation of Goths in various sub-Alpine cities, there is no evidence for a conscious adoption of the late Roman Tractus system.

Once the ill-supported Byzantine forces failed to gain the emphatic victory over the Ostrogoths that had been expected after the successful Africa campaigns, the Gothic War rapidly degenerated into a conflict of attrition, of sieges, sacks and skirmishes, with the occupation and capture of strategic sites the priority for victory. The eventual close of the War brought little respite to beleaguered Italy: Narses was still required to exterminate both Goths and Franks beyond the Po, quell a revolt by a subordinate, and face the political and religious crisis of the 'Schism of the Three Chapters'. That a full Byzantine reorganisation could not be achieved

is most evident: the interminable War had totally shorn Italy of her resources, and the failure of Constantinople to give sufficient logistical support to Narses laid the peninsula bare to the Longobard invasion.

Narses undoubtedly installed garrisons in those towns and fortresses which had proved their worth in the Gothic War, and planned to consolidate and effect repairs and renovations when time and resources allowed. However, his continued campaigns in the north can have granted him only a superficial review of the defensive organisation. There is no evidence for the institution of limitanei in the Alps: dukes or magistri militum were certainly installed within frontier sectors in the Alpine arc, but the roles of these are not fully understood. We must assume a Byzantine adoption and adaption of the existing arrangements: in the Cottian Alps Procopius records that imperial troops replaced Gothic garrisons in forts in the Susa district, while the later evidence of Paul recognises the Byzantines in former Roman strongholds like Comacina;² likewise the excavations at Castelseprio and Invillino hint at the fleeting Byzantine occupation. The chronic lack of resources precluded any building programme comparable to that in Africa (hence, perhaps, Procopius' omission of Italy from his De Aedificiis), and our few Italian instances of similar 'Byzantine' architecture (Terracina, Ardea, Brioni) are atypical.

The Longobard invasion destroyed the plans of restoration: conscious of Byzantine weaknesses, this tribe, previously a loyal ally and buffer to imperial Italy, unexpectedly swept into the peninsula and firmly installed themselves in their new home. Their experience as mercenaries and federates in the Byzantine army in both Italy and the East had fully accustomed them to the strengths of their adversaries and demonstrated to them the value of the occupation of strategic positions. Despite Hartmann's claims that 'undoubtedly

the Lombard bands had as little idea of systematic attack as the Imperialists of systematic defence', the invaders clearly first sought the key centres and arteries of the Po plain (after securing Friuli) and then pushed back the Byzantines.³ Our evidence demonstrates, however, that this occupation was not wholesale, and that large pockets of Byzantine resistance persisted in the zones of Susa, Lake Como, and the upper Adige: despite the nominal support of the Franks, however, the survival of these enclaves was restricted by the minimal chances of Byzantine reconquest, and inevitably the Longobards rooted out these stubborn defenders and replaced them with their own troops. In the case of the Oderzo wedge and Liguria resistance was ably supported by Byzantine naval supremacy.

This study has also attempted to illustrate the evolution of the patchwork of territories that arose within Italy as a result of these struggles. On the Byzantine side we can recognise the establishment of rigid borders guarded by military districts, the mechanics of whose defence remain largely obscure. The Longobards responded in similar vein, although historians have tended to treat their border systems as Byzantine in origin. The Longobard occupation of Roman towns and institutions appears to have gradually romanised their character and diminished their military nature, if not their strength. In contrast, the persistent insecurity had provoked the growing predominance of the military and the uneven militarisation of the administration in imperial lands, which led first to the appearance of the exarch and subordinate dukes as governors of the Byzantine duchies (matched by the Longobard ducal system), and then later, with the decentralisation of military power, to the rise of semi-independent local military commanders and dukedoms.

This insecurity naturally affected settlement patterns, whereby settlements concentrated on upland positions, with heavy reliance on both natural

and artificial defences, although simultaneously the fortified Roman towns remained the norm of urban residence.⁴ However, it is clear that the form, extent and date of this upland nucleation varied considerably regionally through a variety of factors, often dependent on the degree of insecurity and militarisation suffered by each zone - only now are these regional responses slowly being revealed. This is also valid for the towns, which had become progressively impoverished between the 5th and 6th centuries: even the notable Byzantine border town of Luni appears a poor shadow of its former self, with undistinguished habitations of poor construction overlying its abandoned Forum. Where sites lay open to enemy attack there was recourse or direct transfer to more defensible locations, although often refuge was taken on hills away from roads and a military presence. To a large extent this pattern repeated the settlement mode of the Etruscan era, and consolidated trends apparent since the onset of the barbarian invasions in the later Empire.

Yet numerous problems remain to be resolved before developments in late antique settlement and defence can be conclusively assessed. Only the extension of field surveys combined with programmes of systematic excavation will provide data to expand the patterns outlined above. Although we perhaps now have the outlines to this complex jigsaw, we still have many other pieces to locate, test, and insert.

NOTES TO CONCLUSION

1. Cass. Var. III,48.
2. Procop. VI,xxviii; Paul III,27.
3. 1913, p.196.
4. 'as a result of cultural conditioning as much as economic and defensive considerations' - Brown 1984, p.14.