Abstract

Early maps of Mediterranean areas differ in important respects not only from contemporary reality, but also from the increasing wealth of topographical data in written records since high medieval times. This contrast exposes both the mapmakers and authors to complex questions about their methods and motives, which have seldom been discussed adequately. Some of the problems are treated here in the case of southern Greece and focusing on a small but significant region, the western Mani peninsula. Despite substantial past study of its toponyms and monuments, these two categories still correlate poorly with each other, and the reasons must be sought in the region’s historical role from the Frankish period onward. Confusion about it can be seen already in the “Chronicle of Morea” and comparable documents, leading understandably to the vague or artificial representations on maps, which reflect diverse traditions such as the Ptolemaic and portolanic. There are also progressive indications of older toponyms deriving not from local survival, but from late reintroduction through Byzantine literary sources and/or Western influence, causing further errors in their localization. A prominent example of the issues involved will be found in the so-called castle of Leuktron/Beaufort, whose site has long been thought certain but should arguably be reassigned to the vicinity of Cape Matapan. The evidence often suggests that previous interpretations would benefit from closer combination of the verbal, visual and field material, as well as from publication of hitherto ignored archives in Italy and Turkey.

Maps showing Greece have been made for well over one, and some would say two, thousand years. Hundreds of versions survive, most of them including part, and usually all, of the country’s southern mainland. This peninsula, the Peloponnese, is relatively difficult to map for geographical and historical reasons. Yet numerous cultural factors have led foreigners, and increasingly natives, to take up the challenge, spelling trouble
for cartography and students thereof. The resultant maps are liable to pose many problems, while allowing few coherent solutions. For every generalization we attempt, a map may be found that contradicts it, promoting superficiality. Still, the research is vital as much, because the maps and the country are of intrinsic interest, as because they are relevant to other realms of knowledge.

Whoever knows—or thinks he knows—the real topography of the past, such as an archaeologist or historian, is intrigued by the apparent inaccuracies on early maps. Until the 19th century, Greece was rather badly charted in both pictures and words, that is, by cartographers and authors who had opportunities to depict or describe its inhabited places and other topographic features. The badness comprised lacunae, redundancies, inconsistencies and distortions, which can be proved with enough effort or luck. My concern is to determine where and how these phenomena occurred in areas of potential importance.

I do not mean only areas in which no prominent topographic features were recognized during a given period covered by a map or text, for example because they were uninhabited, unimpressive, or unvisited. This might be said about various parts of Greece at various times, on the view that maps and texts, which misrepresented them were good, or at least honest. It has even been said about all of Greece, in the sense that cartographers or authors thought the whole region unprofitable or inaccessible to their audiences, and therefore not worth greater exactness—an assumption which surely goes too far in general. Absent, imprecise or conflicting topography can have deeper explanations, and some of them may have wide implications for cartography, literature and history.

Thus, I would speak of an area that was misrepresented due to insufficient knowledge as a “blank” or blind spot, and distinguish it from an area that was misrepresented due to excessive knowledge of incompatible sources or geographical theories. The latter I would call “grey” zones, being confused in the brains of their creators. After all, a map or text is a
description not of reality but of the maker’s mind, and/or his informants’ minds, in regard to what reality was or ought to be. It exhibits an epistemology that must strike a balance between *terra incognita* and cognitive terrorism.

The interaction among the makers and informants was decisive during the Middle Ages. Ancient geographers depended on informants, who were objective within their limitations; but the world’s growing complexity rendered medieval informants more speculative as well as deceptive. In addition, a medieval map or text normally described, not a given period’s features, but a mixture of features from several unspecified periods. This is particularly worrying in Greece, where knowledge about different periods was preserved or reintroduced from classical, Byzantine and Western sources, with unclear influence on everyone from the geographer to the village gossip.

Since Roman times, in both East and West, some people seemingly had a continuous visualization of the Balkan mainland as protruding southward and ending in a large peninsula with names such as Achaia. Evidence ranges from the Peutinger Table, and the Anonymous Geographer of Ravenna around 700, to a variety of shapes by the 10th century on Islamic maps and the 12th century on European ones. This essentially correct image, which could easily have been refined before the advent of portolan charts and the “renaissance” of Ptolemy, was obscured with cartography based on religious and cosmic preconceptions. Subsequent political and ethnic ideas have been less restrictive, but no less stimulating for the study of maps of Greece.

My present discussion belongs to a comprehensive project that includes field archaeology and related texts, mostly medieval. The aim is to clarify certain kinds of place-names and their continuity from the Bronze Age onward, primarily in the southern Peloponnese, where such information—as well as the scientific and cultural issues that it entails—may be more densely distributed than anywhere else in Greece, if not on Earth. Countless experts have worked on it, and its mysteries are self-multiplying. Maps are a natural aspect of this inquiry,
although many remain unpublished or are shown in such reduced sizes that their place-names cannot be read. It has also been remarked, for instance by the greatest explorer of the medieval Peloponnese, Antoine Bon, that old maps of Greece were made by such uncritical methods that their value for showing where places were located is extremely limited. However, maps do show where some people, expert or not, have believed that places were located, and at best show why the beliefs were wrong. These sources and impacts are clues to the true locations – and they can lead to the discovery of lost cities under our car parks.

A fundamental question about medieval maps of Greece is why so few have survived with much detail. The simple answer is not loss, but an assumed lack of demand for maps in a country full of local guides. Yet there are reasons for thinking that good maps, if only small ones, were needed and perhaps were commonly used. While we have records of guides, for example of entire armies, they are likely to have been sporadic and unreliable, especially during the social upheavals that Greece suffered throughout the Middle Ages. A guide could be hired or fired on the spot more quickly than a mapmaker back in Constantinople or Venice, but a military strategist or commercial planner preferred sources of information that had a sensible distance from the scene of action.

Even those who were at the scene cannot always be imagined to have contented themselves with “talking topography.” The Crusaders knew virtually nothing about the Peloponnese, when they invaded it in 1204, and were still dependent on guides half a century later – or so we are told by accounts like the Chronicle of Morea. But its original author may hardly have known what a map was, and who can tell what sketches were kept secret by his superiors? Not only acquiring, but administrating and appreciating, such a labyrinth of loot and living room should have found visual tools and expressions, albeit rough by cartographic standards. Again, the fact that sea charts served
mainly for locating harbors does not mean that sailors could ignore the interior of a country—whether for taking their bearings on points inland, or for reaching ports near their ultimate destinations inland.

Moreover, historical writers who required a knowledge of topography were becoming increasingly abundant. They tended to write as if their readers knew all the directions and places involved, but their own uncertainty about routes and locations invited verification by maps. Sometimes they actually wrote in a way which suggests that they were checking a map. The Byzantine scholar Pachymeres, naming places in the Péloponnèse that were ceded by the Franks in 1262, followed a sequence from east to west and from south to north—Monemvasia, Maina; Geraki, Mistra; Nauplion, Argos—though he ended with a district called Kinsterna, whose location is enigmatic as we shall see. However, as a rule these authors, and presumably leaders who made use of their works, persisted in the psychological and linguistic conservatism of grasping the intricacies of East Mediterranean space with slippery terms such as “at, around, near, towards, beyond, territory, on the right, in the direction of Mecca” and so on, which have caused even more problems than do the names on extant maps.

Equally strange is that neither the Franks, who returned to the West during and after the Crusades, nor most of the Byzantine exiles in Italy, seem to have greatly influenced Western mapmakers, in spite of knowing Greece better and frequently wanting to return there for purposes such as reconquest or commerce. Some of them, like Marino Sanudo, might have been tired out, as we are after vacations when we shuffle our photographs. Still, many of them must have carried small maps in their heads, if not in their pockets, without realizing that this was a major opportunity for innovation and transfer of a technology. It was never just a matter of mapmakers being satisfied to sell bad maps for orientation and ornamentation to fools who had not been there. Otherwise, their maps would be even worse and more diverse, and would have been ridiculed by comparison with the geographical
textbooks that were beginning to flourish in translation from Greek.

Small maps are easier to lose than big maps, but their existence in this case can be supported by the manner of composing big maps. There was clearly a practice of making one-dimensional charts, i.e. lists of toponyms, and then arranging them in two dimensions. Only a drawing of the region around them was needed to produce a proper map. The customary product, of course, was a copy of the names as another list – although wrongly when it confused the columns and rows, as has been demonstrated with Venetian recording of castles during the mid-15th century. Similar mistakes are visible on two-dimensional maps that are accurate within, yet not between, regions.

A curious example occurs on maps derived from Ptolemy's coordinates, where the 100-km long western coast of what we call the Mani peninsula, in the south central Peloponnese, is an almost empty straight line, despite its familiarity in his day. The missing group of toponyms has been shifted and rotated toward the northeast, and a couple of other names added for credibility, as if a piece of parchment showing this area was moved by a sneeze of the original map's owner before he copied the coordinates. If that sounds unlike Ptolemy, we may wonder how the learned Gemistós Pléthon felt upon seeing crowds of Maniots listed as his neighbors at Mistra, when he inspected a Ptolemaic codex at Florence in 1439. Evidently speechless for once, he could only comment on the names' correctness, and not very learnedly.

The example is relevant, too, because medieval maps of the Mani are characteristically puzzling. Not only do individual toponyms defy identification, as all researchers agree although seldom pursuing them exhaustively. Toponyms were also omitted in groups, moved up and down the coasts, removed to distant regions and so forth, in rather systematic ways. This may have been due largely to the influence of Ptolemy, even on non-
Ptolemaic or portolan-based maps. Moreover, there was similar influence of Ptolemy's literary sources on maps and contemporary texts, and of the latter on each other.

To illustrate, one of the places involved in the above-mentioned shift was the ancient town of Leuktron in the northwestern Mani. Around 1250, the Franks built a castle with a nearly identical name, Leftro, somewhere in the peninsula. Its subsequent fate is poorly documented, but anybody who did not know where it was—possibly even Pléthon, or his friend Cyriaco of Ancona, who saw a bit of the southern Mani in 1447—would only have needed to glance at Ptolemy's increasingly familiar map of Greece, or in Strabo or Pausanias, to believe that Leftro had inherited both the name and location of the ancient town. These works were already available to the Byzantines, and soon to be brought through Greece to Europe, during the 14th century, when texts such as Pachymeres' were being written.

It was in this century, however, that a dual tradition about the location of Leuktron arose, including what might be called the non-Ptolemaic view that it lay in the far south of the Mani. Instead of staying securely on the northwest coast, variants of the name, most frequently Leuctra, were recorded or displayed all the way down to Cape Tainaron/Matapan. Normally we might infer replication of the name, as it means simply "Whiteville"—or else a wandering "blank spot" of vague information. Not entirely by chance, the same province of Messenia contains the ruins of at least two other "Whitevilles," a classical town and a prehistoric one, which have yet to be definitely located. Further research in the present case, though, has established that the probable cause is the opposite: data from more recent sources. The combination of ancient geography with memories about the medieval castle, or real sightings of its remains on the parapet-piled peninsula, has generated a "grey zone" of vast proportions that extends throughout modern conjecture as to where Leftro lay.

This process started as early as 1300, when Ptolemy was revived, and perhaps revised, by the Byzantines. His astronomical tables were out of date and being extrapolated by
both them and Westerners, so people were prepared to doubt his geographical coordinates. The first “editor,” Planoudes, was himself in the habit of correcting sources such as Strabo, comparing these with ancient sites on the ground, and spreading his opinions: he had journeyed as far as Venice. Knowledge of Ptolemy might have reached the West even faster through other agencies, such as the Arabs who had preserved the Geography, or foreigners in Greece. Just as Roger of Sicily learned of it from Idrisi in the 1150s, the Franks of the Morea could have acquired Ptolemaic maps from the Greeks, preceding their exportation to Italy by a century. Indeed, there are signs that such maps were copied in the Peloponnese around 1330. At that very time, the French version of the Chronicle of Morea was written by someone, who took pains to point out that Leftro lay on the west coast. Nonetheless, the southern location for Leuktron became explicit on some versions of Ptolemy’s map – those of the first printed editions at Bologna in 1477 and Venice in 1511, respectively by Germanus and Sylvanus, who are known to have modified their manuscripts and had indirect contacts with Greece. Meanwhile, authors such as Gregoras and Sphrantzes began to connect the name of classical Leuktron with that of Maina, a Frankish fortress farther down the coast, and with indications that what they referred to was a castle still farther south. This was to be followed by centuries of maps showing Maina too far south, equating Maina with Leuctra, or leaving out the latter for safety’s sake. In sum, the hunt for Leftro was on, and an awareness of it is crucial to understanding both the texts and the maps. One can fairly say that, if the castle had not existed, scholars would be bound to invent it.

Why were the data not improved? Our assumption that maps tended to progress, as information from travelers was gathered to update the Ptolemaic – and temporarily the portolanic- framework, is logical rather than factual, when it comes to a rarely visited region like the Mani. Medieval maps were more exact here than in other corners of the mainland, but less so
MEDIEVAL MAPPING IN SOUTHERN GREECE

than in the Aegean islands. One reason was the different accessibility of these regions. The Mani was easy for sailors to notice, yet also to pass by, since it lay halfway between Crete and the foreign colonies in southwestern Messenia. It was more repulsive than attractive, being cursed with barren mountains and eventually pirates. Neither were its inhabitants in obvious need of maps to strengthen their own social cohesion or environmental comprehension.

Maniots did have sporadic contact with the outside world. There was substantial immigration by Slavs, Westerners and Byzantines at certain times until around 1500, as well as sporadic emigration westward from around 1700 onward. But the two intervening centuries saw mainly military traffic in the vicinity. Some of it involved the Mani and had an impact on maps, especially during the final war between Venetians and Turks. Otherwise, little news leaked out. This was a Golden Age of European cartographers, including several Greek ones; yet their preconceptions about the Mani were forced, or allowed, to become traditional. For example, they often reverted to Ptolemaic toponymy even until late in the 18th century. The changes in maps were so few and peculiar that the most plausible “missing links” would be reports by occasional emigrants—both Maniot refugees and the foreigners, who farmed or fought there—whose reminiscences may have been vague and conflicting. The dominant Orientals came to know the Mani somewhat better, and a number of Turkish sea charts suggest keen observation of its coastline. But I have not heard of any Islamic maps showing more of the Mani’s land details than Western maps do.

In fact, the Mani’s insularity until the modern age might well have earned it separate maps, as in the islands. Granted, almost no such visual records have survived; the consensus is that its features were copied among cartographers as conventionally as much else on the larger maps that included it. Examination of these, however, reveals significant variations and regularities, implying elaborate relations between the mapmakers. A wealth of toponyms awaits interpretation in the broader context of the
region’s role in Greek and European history.

Maps that place toponyms accurately are derived from some mixture of two contrary flows of information. The locality and its past disclose the names to outsiders, or *vice versa* – outsiders impress the names on the locality. We may expect that good old maps reflect the former process, and that bad ones were caused by inadequate access to what the natives know – not by what cartographers or other outsiders profess to know. But there are two complications. First, the natives themselves do not necessarily know a place’s name. In a multiethnic and backward country, they may have several names for it, or no name at all. The Mani peninsula exemplifies a prominent place which had no consistent medieval name. At best, aspects of it were referred to: Cape Tainaron, the Taygetos mountain range, the borderlands of Laconia and Messenia, the fortress of Maina, and the region’s shape resembling a *braccio* (arm). These terms worked by synecdoche, but they, too, were insecure: Tainaron became Matapan, Taygetos was also Pentadachtylos, the borders moved, Maina faded into legend, and the “arm” disagreed increasingly with maps.

Similarly, from Porphyrogenitos’ description in the 10th century until Felix Fabri’s pilgrimage in the 15th, the peninsula could be endowed with the name of Cape Malea to its east. This appealed to Idrisi in spite of his knowledge of Ptolemy, whose text distinguished between Tainaron and Malea; presumably he used, not the text, but maps like those that were later drawn from it in the West, which omitted Cape Malea’s name. The latter was changed to “Saint Angelo” by the Renaissance, preventing a risk that the Mani might end up being called the “Mali”. Yet the consequence has been a scholarly controversy about these capes which is still unresolved. And the same confusion prevailed on maps regarding most of the toponyms within the peninsula. How much was due to the Greeks’ flexible or nonexistent nomenclature, not to cartographers’ lack of information, should therefore not be underestimated.

Secondly, even the available data can be blurred by cartographers, not for practical reasons, such as a technique or
a market, but on theoretical grounds: compromising between different sources, and showing something that does not match any source. A “path of least resistance” then leads to obsessive interpolation and fabrication. Hence, in part, the enormous diversity and unrealism of maps of the Peloponnese. In the Mani, many toponyms seem to have been approximated in this way. While places with uncertain names could have inspired efforts to verify them, places with no names discouraged attempts to explore them. In other words, a “grey zone” was likelier than a “blank spot” to become wrongly inked.

Erroneous maps were self-fulfilling prophecies, more than self-correcting studies. On Ptolemy’s maps, the Mani was among the emptiest regions in the country, which may have been a main cause of the delay in learning about it. Nor should the worst kind of self-fulfillment be ruled out: influence by cartography on the natives’ toponymy, or on both of these by a source such as literature. This is familiar in Greece during recent times, and it explains some of the features of the medieval Mani. A map that is accurate by dictation, instead of reflection, can indeed be considered good, but it turns the maker from a scientist into a propagandist.

This brings us back to the search for Leftro. Enthusiasts of the French Chronicle of Morea gradually identified it with a picturesque old fort on the northwest coast, at the site of ancient Leuktron. But fresh light was shed by maps, notably that of the French expedition in the 1830s, showing a place at Cape Matapan with a name like Pachymeres’ Kinsterna. According to the Greek version of the Chronicle, Leftro lay near a place with a similar name, Gisterna, so its southern location became more plausible. However, that version also seemed to connect Leftro with the “Zygos of the Melings,” a part of the mountains inhabited by Slavs, which was later reported to be in the western Mani. The same area even suited the description of Kinsterna, as did some other post-Frankish documents. As a result, during the 20th century, historians in Greece started a
landslide of opinion toward the west. Traces of Slavic settlement
there perpetuated the notion that Leftro was built in 1250 to
help subdue the Melings.\textsuperscript{12}

Today, the fort at Leuktron is generally accepted as the sole
Crusader castle in the northwestern Mani, and is the only one in
the entire Mani, –except Passava on the east side– whose
location enjoys a consensus. Disagreement about the fortress of
Maina has monopolized specialists’ attention.\textsuperscript{13} But things will
change, as the preceding contraindications must be accounted
for, and worse objections faced. Most obviously, this fort is
flimsy and its Frankish origin has never been upheld by
archaeologists, who tend to regard it as Venetian.\textsuperscript{14} In addition,
it lies within the alleged district of Kinsterna, whereas the
\textit{Chronicle} stated that Leftro lay near Gisterna and, conversely,
Pachymeres did not mention Leftro. The evidence of Slavs is
unambiguous that they scarcely existed in the area until 1262,
when the Byzantines, taking over Laconia and the Mani, pushed
them across the mountains to form a buffer against the Franks
still in Messenia.

The Franks needed a stronghold in the area before then, and
possessed one. Also overlooked by the accepted theory, as well
as by the French \textit{Chronicle}, this was the barony of Gritsena,
established about 1209. Its base probably lay not far from
Leuktron, on another ancient site –the acropolis of Kardamyli
near the present village of Gournitsa– guarding a main route
across the mountains.\textsuperscript{15} It was doubtless intended to keep the
Melings away from the capital of Kalamata. Leftro, by contrast,
as the Greek \textit{Chronicle} makes clear, was proposed, constructed,
and named by Melings themselves. They had already been
subdued by two different castles, and wanted the Franks to
dominate, not them alone, but the “whole Zygos,” including the
lower southern part of the mountains, which boasted the same
name according to authors such as Sphrantzes. Down there,
other enemies lurked: Slavs called Ezerites, Greeks called
Mainotes, and threats at sea to the traffic round the peninsula.
There, too, is a place suiting the description of Kinsterna and
preserving similar names, the plain of Kitta.\textsuperscript{16} By protecting this
exposed flank of both the Mani and the Morea, the castle of Leftro would have had a strategic purpose, and been correspondingly open to destruction. It may now be scattered among the cape’s white stones that perhaps gave rise to its name.\textsuperscript{17}

Better information about these castles can turn up on every map that becomes available for study of the Mani, and maps do much to clarify the above comedy of errors in scholarship. For instance, their foreign users must have contributed to reintroduction of the name Leuktron in the northwestern Mani, because we have no testimony that the name survived locally into medieval times. Neither do names like Kinsterna and Zygos appear on maps of the area until its conquest by the Venetians around 1700.\textsuperscript{18} Yet many other toponyms with ancient or medieval roots were shown – usually in a standard sequence, even when not placed accurately. Thus along the west side, between Kalamata and Cape Matapan, one might find Carama (classical Kalamai), Gristo (recalling the barony of Gritsena), Laina (from the Slavic name Poliana), Elephero (a fort termed Belforte by the Venetians), Chitres (Port Kitries), Chiores (ancient Pig Valley), Virobo (the Slavic name of the Kardamyli river), Germen (a corruption of Homer’s Kardamyli), Prestea (later Proasteio), Istechia (see below), Vitulo (Oitylon), Corota (Charouda), Maina. The inclusion of Slavic names is a striking pointer to the non-classical education of mapmakers like Gastaldi, although how they were reported is anybody’s guess.

The area of Leuktron was not only mapped without features supporting the accepted theory of Leftro. It was reduced or completely negated by moving its names into the adjacent areas or vice versa, which is strange if it had been so important in medieval times. This habit was as old as the first land maps updating those of Ptolemy. An extreme case is a well-known map by Sanson, printed as late as the 1690s. It looks authoritative at a glance, but leaves out the middle third of the west coast, and conflates the rest so far that an overlap results. The famous Turkish fortress of Kelefa ends up at the position of Kardamyli– where in fact a similar structure, the castle of
Gritsena, may have been visible and confused with that fortress. No such confusion indicates that the fort at Leuktron, though visible, was of interest, as the theory would imply. Hence, the cartographer had some excuse; and his illusion was copied or only partly corrected by others, like De Fer and De Wit, despite their incorporation of new data about the Mani due to the Venetian conquest.

What the mapmakers omitted was certainly not always their own fault. For example, the name *Istechia* is among the most frequent in the peninsula on all sorts of maps, and was sometimes the only place shown there. It bobs up and down the coast, a cork in the tide of conjecture, though tending to stay in the center. Beneath its fictitious sound, it evidently referred to a small harbor that was later called *Christeika*. This port traded throughout the Mediterranean, as was noted by the Turkish traveler Evliya Celebi in 1670. Around 1800, it became a seat of the chieftains of the very district, which was then termed the Zygos. That the latter term did not also spread by sea earlier, and inspire a stable representation of the area, is thus a confirmation that it was not rooted in local medieval tradition, but was imported by Slavic migrants from the eastern Taygetos.

Greece’s slow emergence from the Middle Ages left a trail of further cartographic mistakes reaching back to antiquity. For instance, during the 1600s, possibly with Lauremberg, a belief arose that the biggest river in the Mani—at Kardamyli, still called the *Virios*—was named the *Nedon*. So was the river of Kalamata at the top of the peninsula; and a similar transference of a river’s name had occurred in Roman times, from the Pamisos near Kalamata to a stream south of Kardamyli. The latter facts were transmitted by the geographer Strabo (8.4) whom, of course, the mapmakers studied intensely. Yet he seems to have misled them in this case, for the relevant passage was jumbled and easily gave the impression that the Nedon of Kalamata adjoined Kardamyli. Fortunately their belief soon died out, and no such name as “Nedon” exists today in the corpus of local toponyms. As a conclusion, our view of the medieval surroundings in the
Mani, and to a lesser degree in all of southern Greece, has admittedly been complicated by the region's tale of ethnic conflict, population movements, isolation, and imposition of foreign visions. Intellectual influence on both the topography and its representation may have begun a couple of centuries before the Renaissance, and lasted longer than we suppose. But significant findings about it can be made by comparing cartography with other kinds of material that require equal expertise in fields such as philology, ethnography, and excavation. The benefits are also promising, as suggested by the castle of Leftro. Once the tourists at the village of Stoupa understand that their fort was a mediocre post-Frankish refuge, their romanticism will pay genuine tribute to the phantom baronies of the Morea.

Finally, the value of modern mapping in the Peloponnese should not be confined to improving its scale, or to the application of techniques such as GPS and satellite photography. Local place-names in the Greek countryside often date from medieval times, and are occasionally catalogued, but they are almost never mapped, which renders them rather useless except to linguists. The peasants, who remember their locations, will be dead within a few years, and ought not to take unique knowledge to the grave, where much of the truth that we seek already rests.

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NOTES

1. See McLeod. These records could already have been influenced by ancient toponymy (see text below). It should be added that their interpretation and correlation with other sources, such as maps, are still very incomplete.

2. Annotations on Urbinas Graecus 82, see Stavridou. They show remarkable ignorance of where such famous places as Kaineopolis and Thalamae lay. On pieces of Ptolemaic maps, see also the contribution by Alberto Gandolfi and Lucio Russo at this conference under the title “A Statistical Analysis of Ptolemy’s Geographical Data.”

3. See e.g. Wagstaff 1977, and Tantoulus. Such identification is often impeded by presuppositions that maps had purposes other than toponymy, e.g. Harrison: 92.

4. These are known, respectively, from authors such as Thucydides and from the Mycenaean archives at Pylos. Such places belonged to another tradition, which I will discuss elsewhere.

5. On such revision in general, see Harley and Woodward: 189 ff., 269 ff., and 426 ff.

6. I owe this information to Stella Chrysochoou-Stavridou’s contribution at the present conference in the Poster Session under the title “Byzantine and Post-Byzantine Contribution in the Revival of Ptolemy’s Geography (13th-16th Century).”

7. Karrow: 255 ff., and 520 ff.; Skelton. Germanus’ sources are further entangled by the fact that he also made maps showing Leuktron on the west. For an analogous case of southward shift of a classical name, in western Messenia on 16th-century maps, see McDonald: 64. The French chronicler’s sources are more obscure, and there is internal evidence that his location was a mistaken alteration of an earlier text, as I will show elsewhere.

8. Tolias 1999, and Tolias 2001. Such a turbulent period was most prone to turn a frontier area like the Mani into a “grey zone” of the kind involving “silences and secrecy,” studied by Harley.

9. A good example is Mehmed Reis’ well-known chart of the Aegean (1590-1). But the Turks were evidently bad at collecting toponyms, and an early attack in 1335 yielded only a nickname for some part of the Mani, unlike Laconia; see Lemerle: 102 ff.

10. See most recently Avramea, and Katsafados: 287 ff.

11. For an excellent study of the area’s features, see Hartleb. It should be emphasized that my present treatment is only a brief outline of these theories, and that the texts concerned are still inadequately interpreted.
12. See e.g. Bon: 502 ff. This theory, anticipated already by e.g. Hoff in 1867 (see Hoff: 1:208, and 2:184), was pioneered by P. Fourikis, P. Kalonaros, S. Kougeas, and D. Zakythinos. It was also partly inspired by the cultural ideal of continuity from antiquity as at Leuktron, and by a view of the northwestern Mani as a geographical unit, which the Romans supposedly called the “Denthelian Territory” (Valmin: 195).

13. The usual positions are given by Wallace and Boase: 220 f.; Katsafados, passim; Avrarea. The Maina debate has been largely invalidated by neglect of the Leftro issue; e.g. Wagstaff, in a sweeping theory of these castles, even confuses Kinsterna with the barony of Gritsena (see below).

14. See e.g. Forster: 162; Valmin: 203; Hope Simpson: 233. The fort is not even mentioned by e.g. Andrews: 161, or Longnon, while Traquair: 263, effectively denies that it was Leftro (under the Frankish name Beaufort). A typically exaggerated description is given by Katsafados: 429 f. Another goes so far as to imagine that the walls have vanished, Hetherington: 134.

15. Proofs of this location are too detailed to give here, but it resolves a long controversy: see e.g. Kriesis. It, also, lies between two other such routes, via Zarnata and Milia, which supposedly needed control by castles as at Leuktron. On Kardamyli see Valmin: 199 ff.; Hope Simpson: 234 ff. The barony’s name may derive from a Greek family whose land it confiscated; see Vayakakos 1958-9: 197 f. (Gritzas).

16. Vayakakos 1965: 185. This plain actually contained a huge “cistern” in the form of a catchment lake, which was also marked on many early maps. The Gisterna of the Chronicle may have been on the ridge west of the plain, where the fortress of Maina has dubiously been located by some, e.g. Katsafados. On the Franks’ enemies in this area, cf. Mexis: 262, and 269.

17. A well-known site of this kind is the possible medieval predecessor of the Turkish fortress at Porto Kayio. Various related maps, e.g. the 16th-century type in Tantoulos: 65 f., showed similar castles with debatable locations or names in the southern Mani. Several other sites await investigation nearby, e.g. those charted in Saitas 1996: 363 ff. A ruined castle on Cape Matapan itself was mapped in the early 1500s by none other than Piri Reis (Phil Re’Is: 2: 646, 649), although he equated it with Maina (just as Westerners did Leuctra).

18. E.g. “Zigo,” initially restricted to the vicinity of the above-mentioned fort, as on a map of 1707. See Wagstaff and Chrysochoou-Stavroutou. I am grateful to the latter for a copy.


20. Alchemes; see, also, the Minnesota Morea Project website.
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