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David Austin, Rosamond Faith, Andrew Fleming and David Siddle, *Cipières. Community and Landscape in the Alpes-Maritimes, France*. Oxford: Windgather Press, Oxbow Books, 2013. 333 pp. 223 figures, and index. \$76.00 U.S. (cl). ISBN 9781905119998.

Review by Bailey K. Young, Eastern Illinois University

This book is the result of a cooperative interdisciplinary research project by a team consisting of two landscape archaeologists (David Austin and Andrew Fleming), an historical geographer with particular expertise in demography and family structures (David Siddle), and a medieval historian specializing in peasant families and farming (Rosamond Faith). The father of the project, however, was Anthony Lewison, an English solicitor who retired to the Provençal village of Cipières in the 1970s, discovered a rich archive of communal documents dating back to the sixteenth century, completed a master's thesis in 1992 on the village and its territory for the University of Wales Lampeter, and persuaded Austin (a professor of archaeology at Wales Lampeter), Siddle, and other scholars to join forces in an expanded, methodologically innovative research program. This began with three seasons of excavation (1993-1995), directed by Austin and funded by French cultural authorities, targeted to study a particular sector of the rural landscape (*le Plateau de Calern*) in relation to the village.

Austin was able follow up in subsequent years with detailed archaeological mapping and some limited excavation in the *quartier du Baoume de Brun* which offered well-preserved manmade landscape features in *enclose*, areas enclosed by crude stone walls, and *bories*, circular dry-stone structures with corbelled roofs, looking very much like the "beehive huts" which in Ireland are usually considered to be prehistoric or early medieval in date. At the same time, Andrew Fleming conducted an intensive landscape survey of a square kilometer of the Calern plateau, mostly in the quartier des Baumes, aimed at delineating in detail the primary clearance features, establishing a hierarchy of zones of land use, and at working out the relationship of the agrarian landscape to the road connecting Cipières to the larger town of Caussols to the southwest. Meanwhile, David Siddle was studying the property-tax records (cadastres) and other documents in the town archive (the earliest cadastre dates to 1531, followed by others in 1610, 1630, 1640, 1727, 1750, 1791, and 1842) to reconstruct demography, economy, and society from medieval to modern times. Rosamond Faith, who had previously worked on the peasantry and agrarian history in western Provence, was fitting the emerging new data into the larger story of what the early modern landscape and socio-economic systems owed to their medieval predecessors.

Quite a lot, these authors argue. Quite a lot more than recent scholarly opinion has allowed. They cite the notice on Cipières published in 1994 in the authoritative *Inventaire général du patrimoine culturel*, which argues that the medieval settlement was quite small and that it was a series of massive expansions in the sixteenth century that gave the village its character. [1] In chapter two, Austin and Fleming critique the methodology that underlies this conclusion and offer their own model based on a retrogressive analysis of the morphology of the village, using as a fundamental tool the very precise, reliable and highly detailed 1842 cadastral map. The primary elements which set the pattern for future development were established, they propose, in the high Middle Ages, plausibly in the eleventh to twelfth century with the construction

of the castle, streets, and houses running along its south flank, the terraces for garden plots, and the village church.

This “first village” subsequently expanded considerably to the west and south, more than doubling in size and while there is currently no hard evidence, such as archaeology might provide, to date this expansion, it is more likely to be medieval than early modern, for it was followed by a third phase of growth which can be securely identified, on the basis of both written records and architectural history, with the sixteenth century. Moreover, Rosamond Firth in chapter five, entitled “Settlement, Social Structure and Politics from the 5th to the 14th century,” and David Siddle in chapter six, “Population, Economy and Society, 1050-1531,” offer arguments based on their reading of the medieval documents to support the hypothesis of significant later medieval expansion. They discuss *caslani* and *maleservi*, the two categories of villagers mentioned in fourteenth century Provençal documents, the former referring to peasants of higher status linked by ties of originally voluntary allegiance to a lord known as the *caslani*, which derives from *castellani*, to signify free dependents connected with the castle (*castellum*) like the one that dominated the medieval village here. *Maleservi*, like serfs in the north of France, were by birth completely dependent politically and economically on the lord and owed him significant labor services. Might not the *caslani* at Cipières have enjoyed the larger family compounds on the western side of the original village while the *maleservi* families were squeezed into the smaller plots under the castle walls to the east, where the lord’s agents could more easily manage them as the labor force working the demesne lands?

In chapter three, “The archaeology of the central part of the Plateau de Calern,” and chapter four, “The Les Baumes landscape survey: dating the basic agrarian landscape of the Plateau de Calern,” David Austin and Andrew Fleming, respectively, apply the survey, mapping, and targeted excavation techniques developed by British landscape archaeologists not only to reconstruct landscape history, but to link this to the changing economic basis and social structure of village life. That the upland Plateau de Calern, a dry, rock-strewn desolation just west of the village and likened by the authors to a moonscape, had played some kind of marginal role in past village life was not news, as the many *bories* and vestiges of stone enclosures found there witnessed, but these have been dismissed as not very old: “it was received wisdom that most of what we saw was created by peasants of the ancien regime reacting to the population pressures of the 17th and 18th centuries...” (p. 67). Until Anthony Lewiston had defined a kilometer-wide transect over the center of the plateau and analysed it intensively both with limited ground survey and by using the very accurate and precise vertical air photographs provided by France’s *Institut géographique national* (IGN) for his 1992 thesis, no one had looked closely at any part of it. David Austin followed up by defining four areas within and near Lewiston’s transect (fig. 85) for systematic mapping of all visible features complemented by targeted excavation of characteristic structures to add a stratigraphic dimension.

Meanwhile, independently, Andrew Fleming was using the Cipières-Caussols road in its relationship to surrounding features in order to construct a model of the “primary clearance landscape,” including “the hierarchy of zones of land use, ranging from the richer soils of the dolines, uvulas and stream terraces to less favored stony areas dotted with clearance cairns” (p. 139). They both read the archaeological evidence to argue that the plateau, hitherto wasteland, was rather suddenly developed in the high middle ages into a complex “workscape” which contributed to the overall village economy by balancing some small-scale arable farming in the dolines, sinkholes which collected the richer soils through erosion, with significant stock-raising. An important series of fourteenth-century documents discussed by Rosamond Faith (chapter five) and David Siddle (chapter six), which provide the names of the principal families and many details of estate management at a time when a single lord, Raibaude (a lady, by the way) held both Caussols and Cipières, illuminates the functioning of this system, where peasant self-subsistence strategies had to compete with “feudal” obligations, in its medieval heyday. At a time when the effects of the medieval “agricultural revolution” were driving population up and straining resources, the model that emerges from the separate but interactive research of this team of archaeologists and historians strikes this

reviewer as most plausible. And it is worth stressing that without the teamwork, the distinct methodologies, the new perspectives and the shared questions the model could never have been developed.

The remaining chapters take the story into and through the early modern period, offering less in the way of surprise. In chapter seven, “Medieval agrarian systems,” Rosamond Faith argues that even before the Black Death changed the fundamentals in the mid-fourteenth century, the mixed farming system was yielding to the pressures and attractions of the emerging capitalist-market economy. Evidence includes the appearance of *mergerie* contracts where a Cipières villager with the right to pasture so many sheep on the plateau would go into partnership with a town-dweller to expand the flock and—having fattened it and driven it down that road studied by Andrew Fleming in chapter four—sell it for a good profit in the booming wool market in Grasse. David Siddle takes it from there, using the tax-records (*cadastres*) to focus on changes in land-use and family status in the post-medieval period (chapter eight). With a particular focus on two families whose names are attested in the records over a very long time he is able to show the emergence of a village elite (and even link them to particular houses as well as land-holdings) in the context of a shift from clan-identity to individual property ownership.

Chapter nine, “Population, economy and society, 1531-1900),” adds to the mix of tax and property documents the methodology developed for studying demographic history through birth and death records. Siddle sees the new opportunities offered by capitalist-scale sheep farming attracting new families with resources and modern skills into the village in the early modern period, like the Lamberts who arrived in the fifteenth century, became notaries and built one of the finest surviving houses. Other *Cipèrois* adapted by moving into the wider world without giving up their roots, like Raymond Girard, who became a *bourgeois d’Antibes* while continuing to own two houses in Cipières, one with a *pigeonnier au jardin*. By the eighteenth century, when the village had recovered its peak population of around 1000, Siddle can distinguish not only the village elite, made up of incomers like the Lamberts intermarried with the old families who had successfully adapted, but also a “middling” group like the carpenter Joseph Guizol, who owned a cottage and perhaps, like Joseph, some land-parcels, and the poorer class, who rented living space and worked for wages. Many of this lower group can be identified as “movers” who would migrate out part of the year to find work in the more dynamic labor markets, and return when they could. Despite the disruptive effects of such “outside events” as the French Revolution and Napoleonic wars these structures and patterns continued to define village life until the later nineteenth century.

The authors and editor deserve commendation for the high quality “production values” of this book, beginning with the charming colored poster on the cover. Illustration is a critical feature of any publication that makes serious use of archaeology and the 223 figures offered here mix photographs (many in color) with crisp and clear line drawings and a good number of graphs and tables to help the reader with such statistical data as the evolution of vital events from 1680 to 1770 (fig. 206). Though there is no index, the appendix offering “Information on the *Quartier* Names drawn from Key Documentary Sources,” adds greatly to the long-term value of the book. This is likely to become a classic, of interest not only to those interested in Provence, but to medievalists and early-modernists concerned with how the study of a rural village and its landscape can contribute, in the best *Annales* tradition, to understanding long-term historical trends.

NOTE

[1] J-C Poteur, *Inventaire general du patrimoine culturel: Cipières: Conseil Général des Alpes-Maritimes* (Nice, 1994).

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