

SEASONAL SETTLEMENT

IN THE MEDIEVAL AND EARLY MODERN COUNTRYSIDE

edited by PIERS DIXON & CLAUDIA THEUNE

RURALIA XIII

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Seasonal agro-pastoral and craft-related temporary settlements in medieval and post-medieval Provence (France)

Sylvain Burri and Aline Durand***

Abstract

Woodlands and pastures were living spaces complementary to village houses during medieval and post-medieval periods. Due to their ephemeral nature, seasonal settlements have left few traces either on the ground or in written records. While temporary dwellings are totally absent from historical research, archaeology has long focused on mountain summer grazing settlements, to the detriment of winter grazing ones. Those related to woodland crafts (logging, charcoal and tar burning, harvesting of bark and leaves, etc.) and to shifting cultivation are largely unknown. However, when spatial (distance from residence to place of production), time (duration of the operating season), and technical (operational time and monitoring) constraints were too great, these activities also led to the creation of temporary dwellings.

This paper proposes a comparative study of pastoral and craft-related seasonal settlements in Provence, cross-referencing archaeological and historical data. It tackles several issues, such as the identification of the drivers of temporary occupations, the characterisation of temporary settlements' structures as such, the duration and seasonality of their occupation, their long-term use dynamics, and finally the daily life of their inhabitants. Occupied for between two days and several months a year, these settlements call into question the concept of temporary and permanent settlements.

Keywords: *temporary dwelling, seasonality, woodland crafts, pastoralism, mobility.*

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Résumé

Habitats temporaires et saisonniers liés aux pratiques agropastorales et artisanales en Provence (France) au Moyen Âge et à l'époque moderne

Au Moyen Âge et durant l'époque moderne, les forêts et les pâturages ont servi de lieux de vie alternatifs et complémentaires à la maison villageoise pour toute une catégorie d'hommes et de femmes des bois. En raison de leur nature éphémère, les habitats temporaires ont laissé peu de traces tant dans les sources écrites que sur le terrain. Alors

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que les habitats temporaires sont quasiment absents des recherches historiques, l'archéologie, elle, s'est longtemps focalisée sur les habitats temporaires d'estivage au détriment de ceux liés à l'hivernage des troupeaux. Les habitats liés à la pratique d'artisanats forestiers (coupe de bois, production de charbon de bois et de goudrons, récolte des écorces et des feuilles, etc.) et aux cultures temporaires demeurent largement inconnus. Pourtant, lorsque les contraintes spatiales (distance résidence-lieu de travail), temporelles (durée de l'exploitation) et techniques (temps technique et surveillance) sont trop élevées, ces activités ont également mené à la création d'habitats temporaires.

Cette contribution propose une étude comparée des habitats temporaires et saisonniers, liés à la pratique du pastoralisme et à celle des artisanats forestiers, croisant des sources archéologiques et historiques. Elle explore divers enjeux, comme l'identification des facteurs d'implantation temporaire, la caractérisation des structures d'habitat temporaires en tant que tel, la durée et la saisonnalité de leur occupation, leurs dynamiques sur la longue durée, et enfin la vie quotidienne de leurs habitants. Occupés entre deux jours et plusieurs mois par an, ces habitats remettent en question le concept même d'habitats temporaires et permanents.

Mots-clés : *habitat temporaire, saisonnalité, artisanats forestiers, pastoralisme, mobilité.*

Zusammenfassung

Temporäre Siedlung von Weidewritschaft und Waldgewerbe in der mittelalterlichen und frühneuzeitlichen Provence (Frankreich)

Wälder waren im Mittelalter und in der frühen Neuzeit ein elementarer Teil der Lebenslage, die nicht auf die bäuerlichen Gehöfte beschränkt waren. Saisonale Siedlungen in den Wäldern sind kurzlebig und haben deshalb nur wenige materielle und schriftliche Zeugnisse hinterlassen. Für die Geschichtswissenschaft sind saisonale Siedlungen kein Thema, wohingegen sich die Archäologie intensiv mit Almen auf den Sommerweiden befasst hat. Dies ging jedoch zu Lasten der Siedlungen der Winterweidegebiete, dem Waldgewerbe (Holzeinschlag, Holzkohle- und Teerherstellung, Laubgewinnung etc.) und des Wanderfeldbaus, die uns letztlich noch völlig unbekannt sind. Grundsätzlich kann behauptet werden, dass mit der Einrichtung saisonaler Siedlungen zu rechnen ist, wenn die räumlichen, zeitlichen und technischen Anforderungen (Distanz Wohnplatz – Werkplatz, Dauer der saisonalen Tätigkeit, Produktionsablauf und dessen Kontrolle) zu hoch sind.

In dem vorliegenden Beitrag wird eine umfassende, interdisziplinäre archäologisch-historische Erforschung der mit Vieh- und Waldwirtschaft verbundenen ländlichen Siedlungen in der Provence diskutiert. Verschiedene Themen, wie die Bestimmung der Faktoren saisonaler Besiedlung, die genaue Charakterisierung der saisonalen Siedlungen selbst, die Dauer und zeitliche Eingrenzung der Nutzungsphasen, deren langfristigen Dynamiken und schließlich der Alltag der Bewohnerinnen und Bewohner werden erörtert. Die Nutzung der saisonalen Siedlungen von wenigen Tagen bis zu über sieben Monaten stellt indes grundsätzlich einen Gegensatz zwischen temporärer und permanenter Siedlung in Frage.

Schlagwörter: *saisonale Siedlungen, Saisonalität, Waldgewerbe, Mobilität, Weidewirtschaft.*

Introduction

The study of temporary settlements is a relatively recent field of research in France. The history and archaeology of forests and settlements have advanced simultaneously, yet separately, over a long period of time. The history of uncultivated areas is inherent to the history of the rural world. Studies originated with the Annales School in the 1930s and were further developed in the 1960s and 1970s. Initially focused on legal and socioeconomic aspects, it turned more towards environmental history in the 1970s and 1980s. In parallel to this, under the influence of geographers, environmental archaeology was born. This took off in the 1990s with the development of paleoenvironmental disciplines (anthracology, palynology), with the aim of assessing the impact of human activities on the environment. Independently of this, forest archaeology developed in the 2000s with the advent of remote sensing. The hybridisation of history, archaeology, and paleoenvironmental studies began with Aline Durand's research on the medieval landscapes of the Languedoc region (*Durand 1998*). While the first European synthesis on forest history (*Cavaciocchi 1996*) showed little disciplinary porosity, an evolution towards multidisciplinarity is ongoing (*Corvol-Dessert 2004*; *Bépoix – Richard 2019*). At the same time, French medieval historians and archaeologists, who had long focused on grouped settlements, have been exploring alternative forms of settlement, such as dispersed settlement, including in the outfield (*Fau 2006*). Temporary settlements are studied mainly in archaeology, but in a very irregular fashion. Archaeologists have focused on the study of high mountain pastoral dwellings, first considered as testimonies to the anthropisation of the mountains, and then as a subject in their own right (*e.g. Tzortzis – Delestre*

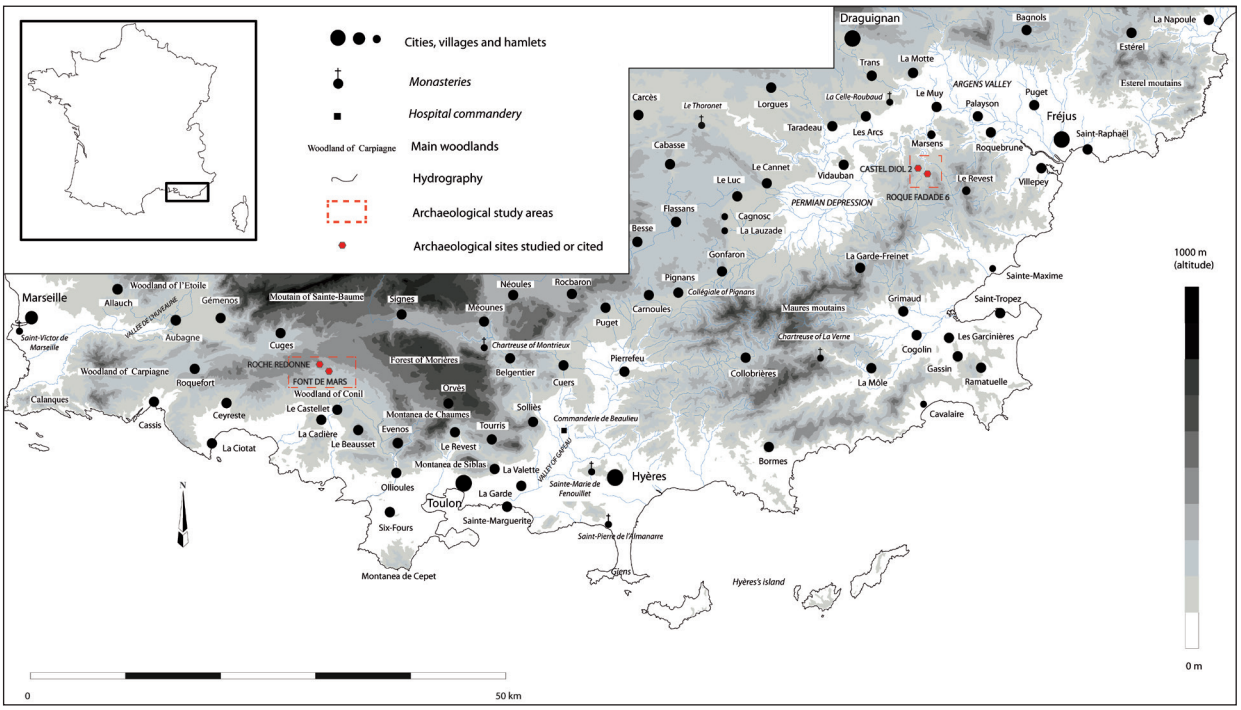


Fig. 1. Study area (© S. Burri).

2010; Rendu 2003; Rendu et al. 2016; Collis et al. 2016; Costello – Svensson 2018). On the other hand, there has been little archaeological research into pastoral dwellings used during winter or on the plains (*Burri et al. 2018*), and none connected with other activities, such as the temporary cultivation of wooded areas and the itinerant exploitation of natural resources. Also, the way of life of the 'people of the forest', prior to the modern era, is largely unknown (*Jahan – Dion 2002*).

The issue of temporary dwellings related to forest use was investigated as part of a PhD research (*Burri 2012*). The framework of this study was lower central Provence from the 12th to the 17th century. This geographical area stretches from the Calanques of Marseille, in the west, to the Maures and Esterel Mountains, to the east (Fig. 1). It is bordered on the northwest by Mount Sainte-Baume and by the Permian depression and the Argens valley on the northeast. The medieval forest environment is difficult to reconstruct due to lack of paleoenvironmental studies. As previously demonstrated (*Burri 2014*), the *incultum* of Provence was not a marginal landscape in every sense of the word. It was spatially, economically, and socially integrated. It was characterised by a rich and diversified natural-resources-related economy, operated by numerous actors, such as shepherds and peasant-craftsmen, for whom it may have been an alternative living space complementary to their main house. This research is based on a systematic study of written sources and on the archaeological excavation of two open-air sites (Roque Fadade 6, Castel Diol 2) located at Le Muy (Maures Mountains) and two others (Font de Mars, Roche Redonne) at Le Castellet.

Why settle in the woods?

Agro-pastoral activities

Every year, Lower Provence is host to several thousand sheep from the Southern Alps, which arrive to spend the winter season there, adding to the local flock (*Burri et al.* 2018). In contrast to mountain pasture rental contracts, winter pasture leases never mention a hut, but only the possibility of building structures to shelter and pen the animals. However, the shepherds' presence is sometimes reflected in the right to cut wood to build fires for domestic purposes during the day as well as at night. Although the need to monitor the animals, the remoteness of the pastures and shepherds' places of residence, the distance from the centres of habitation, and the length of their stay made the construction of temporary settlements a necessity, it seems that it was not deemed necessary to specify this in the contracts. Besides, the regulatory texts clearly specify the right of shepherds to cut wood for the construction of huts and enclosures. A law dating from 1223 distinguishes between huts used to contain and shelter the belongings of the shepherds ('*ad tenendum necessaria*') and those intended to shelter and protect the most fragile, young, and sick animals from predators and

the cold ('*ad opus averi fragilis*'). Although it is likely that the first type also served as temporary accommodation for the shepherds, the text does not specify this.

Clearing trees, followed by the temporary cultivation of wooded plots, also implies the construction of temporary settlements (*Burri 2016*, 57-59). Thus, in 1543, two peasants, from Le Muy, were hired to make a clearing. They were to cut the wood, burn it, and then sow and maintain the clearing for two years. The expenses incurred for the maintenance of the clearing would be shared by the patron and the lessees, except for the '*cabano*', *i.e.* the expenses related to the domestic life of the occupants of the cabin. Two years later, another lessee would be required to 'make a hut and sow the said clearing and maintain the said sown land'. The peasant received some remuneration for the care and maintenance of the clearing. Provisional settlement appears to be implied by the need to monitor seedlings for wildlife damage and theft. It was the same for Pascal Autrani, who in 1550 received a reward for sowing the land and for its supervision and enjoyed the use of the patron's hut. The pre-existence of a hut on the plot suggests a resumption of exploitation of a clearing after a period of abandonment, during which the ground cover had re-established itself.

Forest crafts

Written sources provide only indirect evidence of settlements associated with the practice of forest crafts (*Burri 2012*, 441-450). Most often, only the length of time spent in the woods is mentioned. It varies greatly according to the activities practiced and even within a particular craft. For example, in the 14th century, the working time for cutting firewood could vary from 2 to 87 days. While we often know where they worked, we rarely know where the workmen lived, making it impossible to tell whether they settled in the forest or returned to their homes in the evening. A logging contract, signed in 1447, provides proof of the temporary settlement of two woodcutters from Marseilles. Under this contract, they undertook to cut firewood in Pormiou between July and the end of September. It was stipulated that the two woodcutters had the right to take only 15 rest days, one man after the other, presumably to avoid interrupting the work and so that they could keep watch over the stock of wood, which was scheduled for delivery at the end of the operation. Provisions were to be taken at the workplace, which proves that the woodcutters were staying in the woods, although no cabin was mentioned in the contract. The same applies to timber harvesting. In a contract signed in 1549, Nicolas Teysseire from Jausiers (Southern French Alps) and his men undertook to cut 3600 rafters and 1200 planks in the woods of La Môle between October 1549 and May 1550. The team of woodcutters must have lived onsite, because the owner undertook to provide them with food in the woods.

Charcoal burners also settled in the forest (*Burri 2018a,* 219). In addition to the spatial constraints and the duration of exploitation, there were also technical constraints specific to charcoal production: fire control and surveillance, day and night. The carbonisation time and related constraints depended largely on the quantity of wood to be charred and the carbonisation technique used, whether in a mound or in a pit. Burning times could vary from 2 to 20 days, depending on the technique used (evaluation based on ethnographic data). In addition to surveillance of the charring process, stocks ready for delivery had to be watched over. Thus, in 1480, two charcoal makers lived, with their workers (*famuli*) *in carboneria,* during the charcoal production time. While they may have returned to their homes occasionally, other charcoal burners were obliged to stay and had to be supplied throughout the operating season. Only one deed mentions the construction of a hut, not to live in, but to store the charcoal. The illustrations show some examples of charcoal makers' wooden huts (Fig. 5b).

Resin producers and wood tar makers also settled in the woodlands (*Burri 2012, 757-835; Burri in press*). A contract from 1497 stipulates that the producer should work continuously for one year. The consignment was to be made available in the woods where the tar was being produced and required supervision. Another, dated 1562, is more specific: the tar producer and his family would live at their place of work and their employer would provide them with supplies. It was not until the 18th century that the first real mention was made of a hut for the producers to live in.

Finally, the existence of huts intended for the use of cork harvesters at Revest in 1500/1501 should also be noted, although it is unclear whether these were used as housing or storage facilities (*Burri 2016,* 57). Other activities may also have required these actors to settle near to their work, but written sources do not mention this subject.

Huts in the woods

Redounet 6 and Castel Diol 2: temporary settlements related to unknown activities

These two sites are located on hillsides bordering the valley of the Marri Vallat stream, which is a communication route that crosses the Maures Mountains from north to south. The site of Roque Fadade 6 is formed of a rectangular structure built on a naturally flat area (Fig. 2a). The two gable walls and the two lateral walls are built in dry stone. The remains of the walls are 1.2 m high at their maximum, on the east gable wall, and the average thickness of the walls is about 0.75 m. The entrance to the dwelling is built into the south lateral

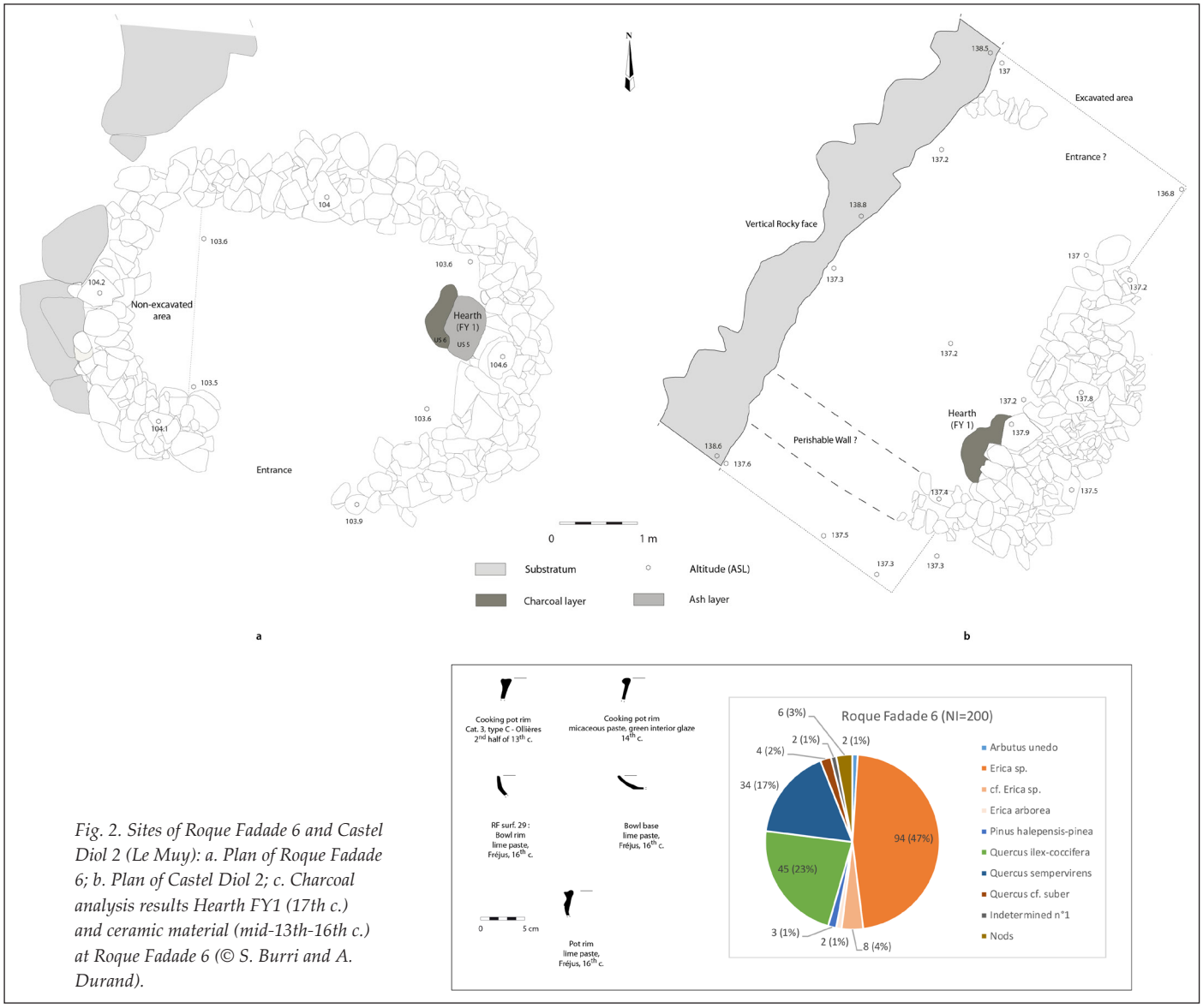


Fig. 2. Sites of Roque Fadade 6 and Castel Diol 2 (Le Muy): a. Plan of Roque Fadade 6; b. Plan of Castel Diol 2; c. Charcoal analysis results Hearth FY1 (17th c.) and ceramic material (mid-13th-16th c.) at Roque Fadade 6 (© S. Burri and A. Durand).

wall. The excavation has uncovered the floor of the living area and a fireplace, built directly on the ground against the east gable wall. Modern and medieval pottery discovered lying on the floor raises the question of dating. The hearth has been radiocarbon dated to between AD 1520 and 1663 (^{14}C date 280±30 BP, calibrated date AD 1520-1663 [Ly-14963]). A fragment of an earlier floor, devoid of artefacts, was discovered against the north lateral wall. Excavation of the periphery of the hut has brought to light some important ceramic pieces, which bear witness to at least four phases of occupation: mid-13th, 14th, 16th, and 17th centuries.

The hut at Castel Diol 2 is built against a small vertical rock face with a maximum height of about 1.40 m, which provides a natural shelter (Fig. 2b). Facing this, a drystone gable wall, c. 4 m long and 1.60 m wide at its centre and curved in shape, delimits the living area. A stone foundation corresponds to the north lateral wall, which was probably partly made of perishable materials. The south lateral wall must have been built entirely of perishable materials. The living area is structured around a hearth. The floor of this space yielded a heterogeneous collection of ceramic pieces. It comprises mainly ceramics dated to the 18th century, a dating confirmed by the discovery of a coin issued between 1710 and 1715. Residual material bears witness to earlier occupations during the 14th-15th and 16th centuries. In the absence of tools or specific structures (*e.g.* pastoral enclosures, kiln-type structures, charcoal platforms, etc.) in the vicinity of these temporary dwellings, the activities practised by the people who lived in them are unknown. They could have been agro-pastoralists as well as artisans and the activities may have varied over time.

The difficulty of linking a temporary dwelling to an activity: the site at La Font de Mars (Le Castellet)

The site of La Font de Mars (Le Castellet) comprises a group of structures, namely a temporary dwelling (A), a heap of stones (B), a charcoal kiln (C), and an area scattered with ceramic fragments (D) (Fig. 3a). The temporary dwelling (A) is a rectangular structure about 4.30 m long and 3.30 m wide (including walls) (Figs. 3b-c). It is excavated directly into the limestone bedrock, the faces of which form the north and east walls (maximum height: 0.60 m). The structure is closed off to the west by a drystone wall. The elevations and roof must have been made of perishable materials. The entrance to the dwelling is in the southwest corner. The excavation revealed two distinct phases of occupation that are well preserved. The earlier floor rests directly on the limestone substrate (Fig. 3b). There is a fireplace (FY 2), set directly on the ground, against the gable wall (MR1). No ceramic material was found on this floor. This phase of occupation has been dated to the first half of the 15th century, using radiocarbon dating of charcoal from the hearth (^{14}C date 496 ±30 BP, calibrated date AD 1407-1445 [Ly-13923]). A later floor, dated to the 17th century using ceramic fragments, follows the same layout (Fig. 3c).

In the absence of artefacts characteristic of a specific activity (*i.e.* tools), an excavation of the surrounding structures was undertaken. Structure B is a pile of densely stacked stone on a flat area on the side of the slope. The position of the stones and dimensions of the blocks suggested a collapsed drystone structure. However, the excavation revealed no organisation or archaeological layers. Such a pile of stone could be linked to the clearing of stone in order to cultivate a wooded plot. However, in the absence of other artefacts within it, it cannot be dated. The charcoal-burning platform (C), used to produce pine charcoal, is a large semicircular flat area of about 10 m from north to south by 8 m from east to west, built on the slope of the hill. To the west, it is bordered by a 7 m long semicircular drystone supporting wall. Several ceramic fragments, discovered at the bottom of the charcoal kiln, date from the modern era. Radiocarbon dating is being carried out to narrow down the date range. Finally, the ceramic fragments spread in area D are pieces of jars that were used for the extraction of wood tar, dating back to the 14th-15th centuries, although no production facilities have been identified in the surrounding area.

The absence of a stratigraphic link between these different dwelling and production structures, as well as their dating, which in some cases is approximate, makes it difficult to link a phase of occupation of the dwelling with an activity. One hypothesis is that the earlier occupation (first half of the 15th century) could be related to a wood tar production activity, and that the later occupation (17th century) was related to charcoal production, whereby the charcoal maker reoccupied an existing structure rather than building a new one, but this cannot be demonstrated with any certainty.

Temporary dwellings linked to the production of wood tar at the site of La Roche Redonne (Le Castellet)

The site of La Roche Redonne (Le Castellet), a production site for pine resins and wood tars, was made up of two sectors. Sector 2 was occupied between the 13th and 15th century and sector 1 between the 16th and 17th century (*Burri 2011; 2012, 581-645; in press*). Excavation of the medieval levels did not reveal any temporary dwellings; post holes are the only remaining evidence of some small wooden structures of indeterminate function. During the second half of the 16th century, on the other hand, a rectangular structure was built in stone (ST1). However, its poorly preserved condition makes its practical use difficult to interpret. The concentration of fragments of a large vessel for liquids could indicate that this building was used for domestic purposes. Alternatively, it could have been a shed or shelter where water supplies or tools were kept. These possible uses, as a dwelling or as a shed, are not incompatible.

By contrast, it has been established that producers lived on the site in the second phase of occupation in the 17th century (Fig. 4). The dwelling (ST2) is built to the northeast of the tar kiln. It is a rectangular hut 4 m long and 3 m wide (including walls). The structure abuts a vertical rock face that serves as the east wall. The west wall is built of dry stone, still standing to a height of approximately 0.7 m. The side walls and the roof must have been made of perishable materials. A fireplace is situated on the floor against the gable wall. Outside, a monolithic bench rests against the gable wall. The fireplace has been radiocarbon dated to the second half of the 17th and 18th centuries (^{14}C date 205±25 BP, calibrated date AD 1649-1804 [Ly-15731]).

Life in the woods

Who were the 'people of the woods'?

It is difficult to learn much about people who lived in the huts and their way of life (*Burri 2012; 2014*). One of the archaeological clues is the living area of the structures, which ranges between about 9 m² at Font de Mars A, 10.5 m² at La Roche Redonne ST2, and 12 m² at both Roque Fadade 6 and Castel Diol 2. However, these differences are not yet interpretable in terms of number of inhabitants, because the pattern of occupancy of the huts could vary widely, depending on the inhabitants and within the same group over a period of time (*Burri – Durand submitted*).

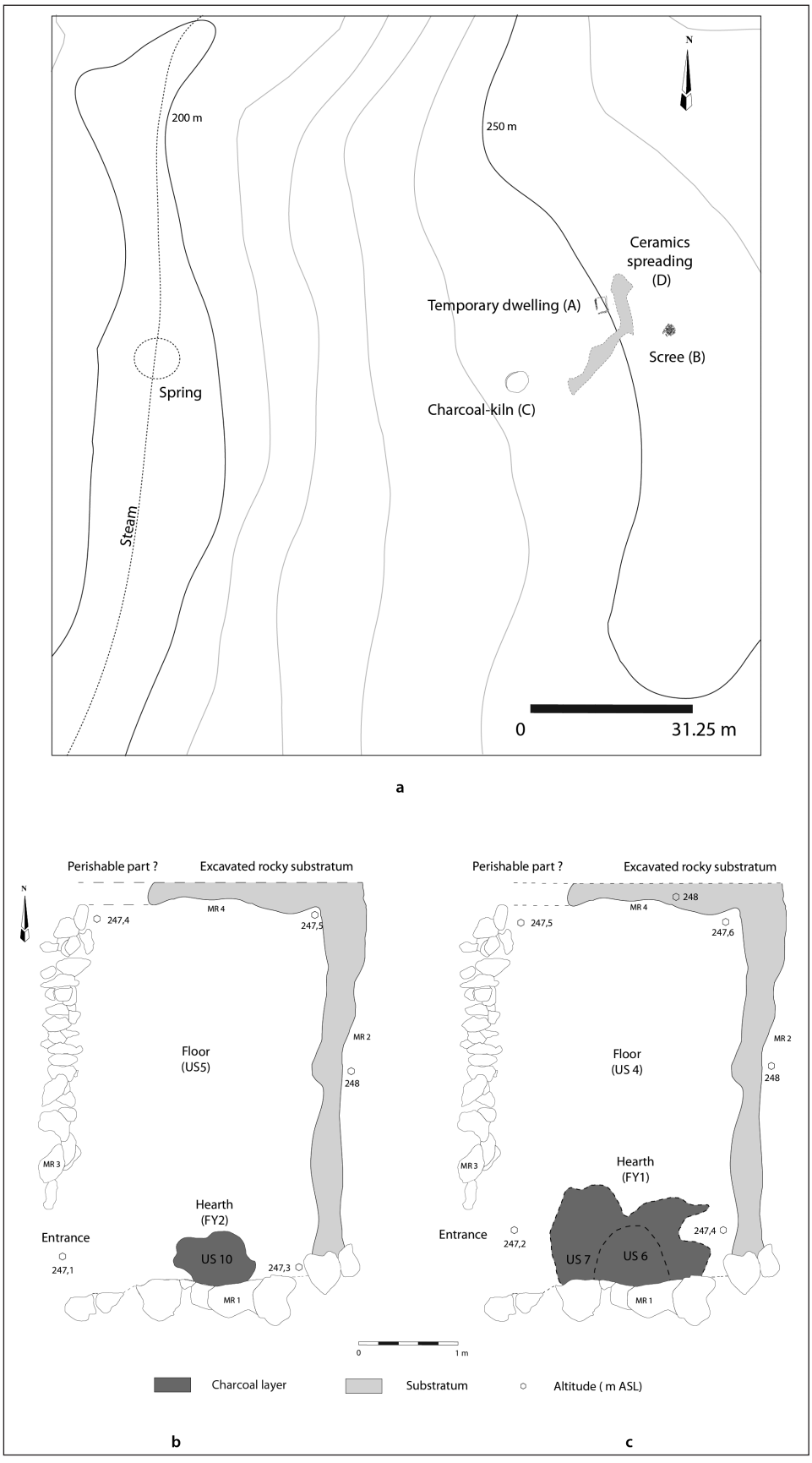


Fig. 3. Site of La Font de Mars (Le Castellet): a. Topographical location and composition of the site ; b. Late medieval occupation of Font de Mars A (15th. c.); c. Modern occupation of Font de Mars A (17th c.) (© S. Burri).

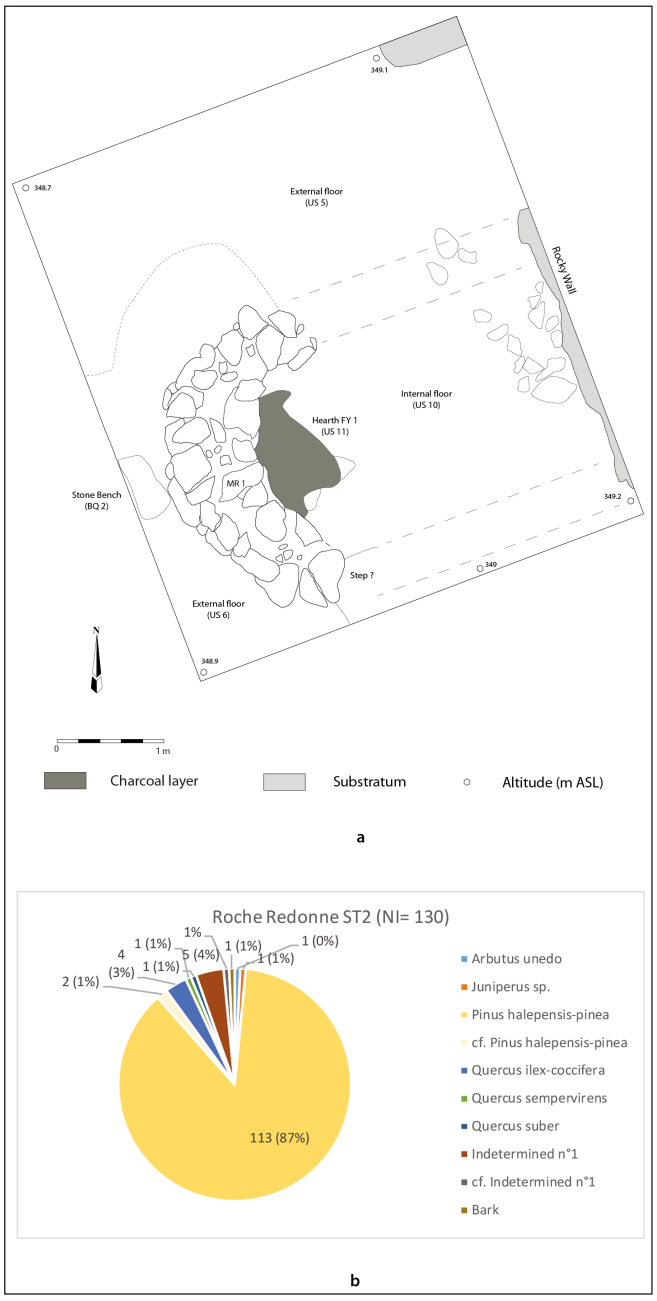


Fig. 4. Site of La Roche Redonne (Le Castellet) : a. Plan of the hut ST2 (18th c.) ; b. Charcoal analysis results Hearth FY1 (18th c.) (© S. Burri and A. Durand).

Written sources reveal a plurality of situations. Some men seem to have worked alone, such as the charcoal maker Jean Rambaudi in 1465, and others in pairs, such as the woodcutters from Marseilles in 1447 and the tar makers Pierre Laugier and Joseph Pierrehugues in 1727-1728. Sometimes they were three men, such as Guillaume Alemmani, Hugues Sonequerio and Jean Spitalerio, who cut wood together on several occasions in 1340. There were also large teams of men, made up of salaried workers who were managed by a 'master', such as Nicolas Teysseire's team of woodcutters in 1549, Barthélémy Sengla and Jean Arpezini's charcoal makers in 1480, and Guigues Estienne's tar makers in 1570. Unfortunately, the sizes of these teams are not specified.

Ethnoarchaeological (*Acovitsioti-Hameau 2005; Burri et al. 2013; Burri – Durand submitted; Costello 2018*) and modern history studies (*Jahan – Dion 2002*) raise the question of the gender and age composition of the 'people of the woods'. Careful study of written sources reveals the presence of women and children, but when they are mentioned these women remain anonymous. One such example is that of Master Pierre Columbi, a blacksmith from La Garde who lived in Toulon, produced charcoal on the mountain at Cepet along with his wife and mother-in-law in around 1332-1333. This feminine presence is illustrated by Heinrich Gross on a plate depicting charcoal making. A man is sitting in a wooden hut, accompanied by a woman; their position suggests an intimate relationship (Fig. 5b). Two women, three men, and a child, resident in Toulon, were arrested cutting firewood on the mountain of Cepet around 1335. In addition to the men's camps, there were also family camps, such as that of the tar maker Jean Gutymard's family and his workers in 1562.

Fragments of daily life

Because the occupations were ephemeral, the remains of daily life were rare. In all of the dwellings studied, the domestic space is structured around the hearth, which is placed against a gable wall (Figs. 2, 3, 4). Such fireplaces are most often lenticular. Only the one in the ST2 dwelling at La Roche Redonne is built in a slight basin and bordered by a few stones. In order to document the fuel source, two fireplaces were the subject of anthracological studies. The analysis of charcoal from the fireplace at Roque Fadade 6 (17th century) shows a taxonomic weakness of characteristic flora (5 taxa) and an over-representation of *Erica* sp. (47%), and, to a lesser extent, *Quercus ilex-coccifera* and *Quercus sempervirens* (Fig. 2c). This fuel source reflects the typical Mediterranean scrub vegetation that still characterises the environment around the site today. Anthracological study of the fireplace in the ST2 dwelling at La Roche Redonne (mid-17th-18th centuries) shows the use of 6 taxa, largely dominated by *Pinus halepensis-pinea*, at 87% (Fig. 4b). The impression given by the charcoal is one of the typical vegetation of a pine grove, dotted with evergreen oak, kermes oak, juniper, and strawberry tree. Only a fragment of cork oak charcoal raises a question, since this tree is calcifuge and no longer present in the area. This local supply of wood fuel is corroborated by the archives, which sometimes mention the right to cut wood or collect dead wood for heating and cooking.

A few texts provide information on food supplies for forest workers. Such supplies could have been provided by



a b

Fig. 5. Gender composition of charcoal burners' team: a. A team of charcoal burners at work (Codex Granatensis, De natura rerum by Thomas Cantimpratensis, 1440-1445, Southern Germany, illuminated by Martinus Opifex (Granada, Biblioteca de la Universidad de Granada, C. 67, fol. 89 – Biblioteca H. Real BHR/Caja A-00) ; b. Intimate scene in a charcoal burner hut (Henrich Gross, "Les charbonnières", La Rouge Myne de Saint Nicolas, 1530) (© S. Burri).

a partner. This was the case with the previously mentioned 1447 logging agreement, which provided that loggers would take turns bringing in supplies when they returned from breaks. Supplies could also have been provided by the client. This was the case for Jacques de Lamia, a charcoal maker and merchant from Marseilles, who undertook to supply his colleague Jean Rambaudi with '*victualia*' throughout the entire 10-month production period. No payment or compensation was anticipated. Two contracts from the mid-16th century mention the supplying of food by the client to the tar makers from High Provence, who migrated on a seasonal basis to work in Le Muy and Les Esclans. The first, in 1561, stipulates that the lessor should provide all necessary bread for the tar makers. These supplies were to be paid for by the producer. The following year, the same client had to provide the tar worker and his family with all the bread they needed at their place of work. The contract does not specify whether or not the client was obliged to supply the bread to the workers as well, nor does it specify whether the supplies were to be paid for by the client or by the producers. Such supply agreements were also made with woodcutters. For example, Alexis Pelgros, from Cogolin, undertook to supply Nicolas Teysseire and his companions for almost 8 months. He was to have the supplies delivered directly to them at the cutting site. Supplies of bread and wine were to be paid for. Contrary to what is written in summer contracts, there are no clauses linked to the supply of bread to Alpine shepherds who spent the winter in Provence (*Burri et al. 2018*, 144).

The discovery of ceramic fragments on the ground during excavations is quite unusual. In this case, they were found around the domestic hearth on the site at Castel Diol 2 and not far away at Font de Mars A (2nd occupation). At La Roque Fadade 6, their distribution on the ground occupied was more diffused and most of the ceramic pieces had been discarded outside the dwelling during successive occupations. The ceramics related to these temporary occupations are mainly made up of pots for the preparation of meals and individual containers (bowls) for their consumption. It is worth noting the presence of fragments of water jugs in the possible temporary dwelling ST1 and in the temporary dwelling ST2 at La Roche Redonne. The presence of these jugs raises the question of water supplies. La Roche Redonne is, incidentally, the only site studied that is located far from the nearest spring, about 2 km away, close to the site of Font de Mars. Both sites in the Maures Mountains have easy access to water other than during the summer period. Excavation of these sites did not produce any water containers, but this does not, of course, mean that their occupants did not use them. The ceramics discovered are only broken pieces left behind on the site, not a true and complete picture of the inhabitants' tableware, some of which may have been made of wood.

Time: the question of seasonality, duration, and patterns of occupancy

The issue of seasonality, duration, and patterns of occupancy is essential for the characterisation of temporary dwellings. Archaeology provides, through

relative and absolute dating, the chronological background of the sites. Some huts were occupied temporarily but repeatedly. Thus, 4 phases of occupation were highlighted in the hut at Roque Fadade 6 (mid-13th, 14th, 16th, and 17th century) and 3 in that at Castel Diol 2 (14th/15th, 16th, and 18th century). Despite their long history, only one complete floor has been identified at these 2 sites. Periodic cleaning of previous occupations is evidenced at Roque Fadade 6. On this site and that of Castel Diol 2, the presence of diachronic artefacts within the same layer suggests the formation of a palimpsest floor. On the other hand, in Font de Mars A, the 2 occupations (15th and 17th century) are clearly distinguishable by a layer formed during a phase of abandonment. In La Roche Redonne, only one occupation was revealed in the ST2 dwelling (late 17th century). The cleaning of the floors, coupled with the imprecision of the relative dating, prevents a more accurate reconstruction of the rhythms of occupation. Historical sources provide little information on these reoccupation phenomena, other than perhaps in the case of the huts used by workers involved in shifting cultivation.

Seasonality is a key factor in understanding the management and use of woodland resources; it influences the type, abundance, and quality of available plant resources (*Burri 2012; 2014; 2018b*). Cultural and social constraints also influence the seasonality of activities, including through regulation and control of resources. The season when the use of forest products was the most diverse, if not the most intense, was spring. During the months of April and May firewood; harvesting of bark, cork, and leaves for dying and tanning; woodcutting; charcoal burning; and cultivation took place. Summer would have been the least active season or at least the less diversified. Barrel hoops were cut, bark and leaves for dyeing and tanning were picked, and honey was harvested. The dormant winter period was a time when gathering of plant material (bark, cork, and leaves) was interrupted. It was, however, an ideal time for producing timber, fuel, wooden dishes, and charcoal. Pitch seems to have been produced throughout the year, while juniper oil was only manufactured from October to the end of May.

Pastoralism is characterised by the practice of summer and winter grazing. Thus, Provencal pastures host herds of sheep from the high country and the Southern Alps mainly from late September to late May. Alpine and Provencal cattle then moved up to Alpine summer pastures. In the absence of pollen, seasonality can be determined by studying charcoal, if it has retained its last growth ring. For example, the felling season for the wood used in the fireplace in the ST2 cabin in La Roche Redonne could be determined in some cases. It seems that the craftsmen cut their domestic firewood in summer (transition from initial wood to final wood) and early autumn (final wood), at least until the time of the last fires. Although it is likely that the wood was burned soon after it was collected, this cannot be confirmed.

Concerning the duration of stay, only the two definite examples of woodcutters' settlement have been included: about 3 months for those from Marseille in 1447, and more than 7 months for Nicolas Teysseire's team in 1549. Charcoal burners lived in the woods for a period of between 3 months and a year. In Le Muy, in the 16th century, the tar workers generally worked for 8 months. The length of time peasants stayed in the clearings to monitor seedlings and harvests is, on the other hand, unknown.

Conclusion

As demonstrated, the creation of temporary dwellings in the woods depends on spatial (distance from residence to place of production), time (duration of the operating season), and technical (operational time and monitoring) constraints specific to each kind of activity, whether agro-pastoral or crafts related. Because these ephemeral dwellings were not enshrined in property law, they appear only in passing, and often indirectly, in written sources. *A contrario*, archaeology studies only the physical and material aspects of these huts, so characterisation of the activity to which archaeological dwellings relate is often very tricky, or even impossible, due to lack of discriminating structures or artefacts. Excavation shows the same organisation of domestic space, divided into two functional areas: the preparation and consumption of meals around the fireplace and the rest area behind it. Only the most recent organisation is usually known. The plans, the construction methods (using a combination of stone and perishable materials), and the organisation of the domestic space are reminiscent of the forest craftsmens' huts of the early 20th century (*Acovitsioti-Hameau 2005*). A major limitation of archaeology is that only structures built *pro parte* in stone can be identified and studied, whereas historical research into modern times (*Jahan – Dion 2002*) and ethnographic research (*Lugli – Stopiello 2000; Burri – Durand submitted*) show the importance that temporary wooden encampments may have had in the past. The frequency of archaeologically visible reoccupation varies from several centuries to less than a century apart. Low sedimentation, high bioturbation, the cleaning of previous floors, and successive restorations created palimpsest floors and architectures. By hosting periodical and repeated occupations, structures planned to be temporary remained in place over the long term. Archaeology captures centuries-old dynamics, while the actual rate of occupation is in annual or multiyear cycles, as documented in the archives. Such texts provide food for thought on seasonality and occupancy duration ranging

from a few days to several months. The daily life of the inhabitants, documented in part by ceramic remains and charcoal, is enhanced by the texts. Perhaps soil chemistry and geoarchaeology could refine our archaeological vision, in cases where bioturbation has not been too high (*Pecci et al. 2016*; *Kupiec – Milek 2018*). The archives also question the nature of the encampments in terms of the number of occupants and their gender. They also question the occupation of the same settlement by different inhabitants and for different activities during the same year or over a number of years. On an annual scale, some people lived longer in their woodland cabins than in their main homes in the city or village, but this nevertheless remained the familial and spatial foundation of their lives. Furthermore, analysis of the social networks of these 'people of the woods' shows that living in the woods for a few days or even several months did not mean being marginalised by their communities or losing their family ties (*Burri 2012*, 1121-1283*; 2018a*). In addition, as with the notion of marginality, the concept of temporary settlement depends on the observer's point of view and the time scale at which he or she looks at it.

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