

To Ghjuvellina

Discovery of a territory of the inside of Corsica through ages by a study of sites

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I. INTRODUCTION

The centre of Corsica, as proves it to us the numerous already made discoveries, is very early occupied by the man. The neolithic, the Niolu produces us the proofs of the occupation of a plateau situated in Piedmont most high mountains of the island. The pieve of Caccia, she too brings her testimony on the other bank of Golu, notably with the site of Pietra Frisgiata. The pieve of Talcini with all the sites of the neolithic which are listed testifies of an important prehistoric occupation there. Ghjuvellina being situated in the center of these regions is inescapable and is imperative by its major routes. Even if for the moment no discovery gives evidence of it, this territory must have known an occupation during neolithic period. For the antique period the ancient texts create that very early Corsica is desired for its wealth. The populations not being quartered on banks, civilizations which approached the island implicitly had to get inside lands to exploit the resources. The vestiges of the Roman occupation are omnipresent; they are under various forms at the same moment real estate, numismatics, toponymical and geographic. The medieval period occupies a very important place in the history of the region, from the point of view of vestiges and the demography as well as for its place and its brilliance on the other regions of the island. For the moment no archaeological excavation, even a simple prospecting was realized to allow the update of discoveries, which would bring elements necessary for the confirmation or for the invalidation of the various hypotheses.

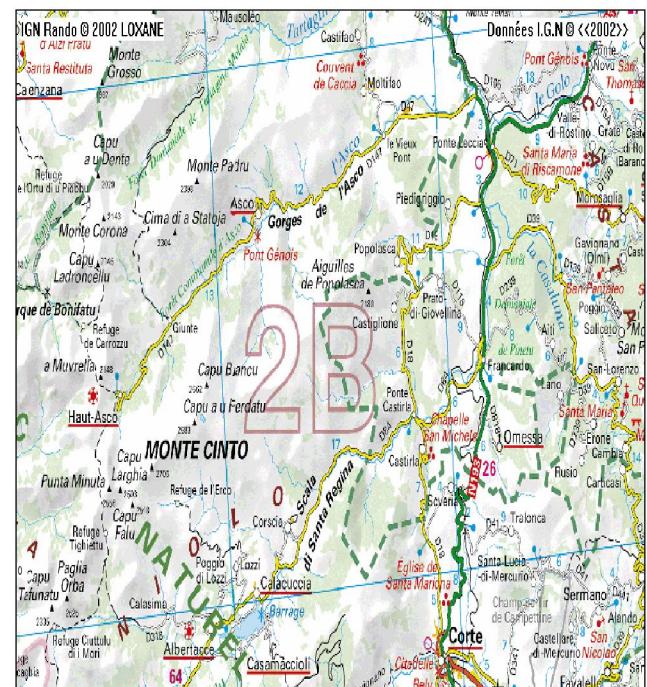
II. THE GHJUVELLINA, geographic and historic situation

Ghjuvellina is included in a space bounded by two rivers, are Golu and Ascu, its confluence. Westward, it is concerned by the first relief of Cintu, higher massif of the island peaking in 2710 meters.

Of a total surface of 5603 hectares, its plant landscape mainly consists of hills covered with copse, with forests of green oaks and with cliffs. The height varies 150 to 600 meters for the pond of Ponte Leccia which is its first outlet in the average valley of Golu and which forms its limit in the North. The territory is mainly situated on a zone of low mountain range, it is dominated by highest impressive and majestic summits between 1800 and 2000 meters. The height varies from 200 to 800 meters and it is in this zone that the populating was made and that the demography is strongest there, it is explained to us by P. SIMI « *The Mediterranean economy blooms completely between approximately 200 and 600 meters, offering as in all the*

Mediterranean countries a strong concentration of people and cultures on some favored points ». [1]

We reach in Ghjuvellina, since Corte by taking the direction of Castirla by D18, up to the bridge of Castirla then one continuous to borrow (take) this secondary road in the direction of Castiglione via Croce D' Arbitru. We also reach it since Francardu either in the direction of Niolu by D184 to join D 18 coming of Corti in the bridge of Castirla, or by borrowing (taking) the secondary road 118 since the station of Francardu in the direction of Pratu. We can also go to Ghjuvellina since Ponte Leccia by using the secondary road 18 in the said place Taverna in the direction of Piedigriggio.



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The region is situated in left bank of Golu, on zone of contact between several regions of the centre of Corsica. It is surrounded with Niolu, with Talcinu, with Rustinu, with Caccianincu. It is constituted in major left a space of low mountain range but also possesses high steep summits (Needles of u Pulasca). In its part the

North, it is bounded by the class of Ascu, on its limit is and the South, it is Golu which bounds the circumferences with its valley. The chain of the needles of u Pulasca closes its part West. It is very well sprayed by a multitude of small brooks, three tributaries of Golu get loose from brooks without being there for all that important courses of waters, they are Bornalincu, Ancinu and Canavaghjolu. The region is situated at the same time as the North / South main line, which becomes integrated into the central depression of Corsica, having served and serving even nowadays as main way for the traffic connecting two big urban poles of the island. In part its central position and resulting in the plain of Ponte Leccia in the North giving the access to the regions of Balagne, Bastia, Casinca and Castagniccia. Francardu or the *strette* of Omessa, give the free access to the regions of Boziu and Cortenais. She can act in bolt on the main axes of penetration in the centre of the island. It is directly connected to the opening of the passages between the other regions of the centre of the island. Besides the shrinkage of Caporalinu with the hook of Supetra of which Sampieru corsu will try to stop the troops sponge cake of the governor Doria in the XVIth century, the bridge of Castirla is another passage importing in the access in the area of Corte for people of the Niolu. These last ones had access directly to the region of Castiglione by leaving Corsica and would cross the road which followed the course of Ancinu. It is a passage obliged to go in numerous directions; Bocca Tiagna opened the passage to the region of Caccia by a passable road even not enough time ago. By the roads of crest, it is possible to join the region of Ascu, then the village abandoned by *Sepula* and to dive on the region of Ghjussani.

Four villages Castiglione, Piedigriggiu, u Pulasca and Pratu di Ghjuvellina, constitute the pieve ancient of Ghjuvellina.

To define this space, we are to press on the most old sources at our arrangement, that is the various divisions which used the Roman Catholic Church to control the island territory. The *pieve* due to his role administrator marked for a long time the rural Corsica company, notably until XIXth century. From the VIIIth century, then during the Means-age, it indicates the main church of a community occupying a defined territory. The most important function the load of which it had at the spiritual level was the administration of the baptism, the church thus carried the title of *plebs baptismalis*.

On an architectural plan of sight, till the end of the Means-age, in rare exceptions near, only *pieve* has a baptistery inside the nef. The *pieve* is also the cemetery of the community. By extension, the term indicates the surrounding poles these places of cult [2], a close environment then the whole territory dependent on the church. Then, in the modern time, it is used to evoke a geographic district.

In its book « The plan Den of Corsica in the XVIIIth century » has. Albitreccia [3], gives us another definition of this naming so by defining it: « *pieve* passes to be the districts which corresponded best to the geographic cells of the island, the study of the limits of the *pieve* of the Cap Corsica confirms hardly this opinion ...

He would more be in accordance to speak, for *pieve*, about

social cells rather than about geographic cells. *Pieve* doubtless constituted the highest social group of the appropriate evolution of the company Corsica. This group sometimes corresponded to a well-defined geographic frame, not always however; the constitution would rather be due to ethnographical conditions.

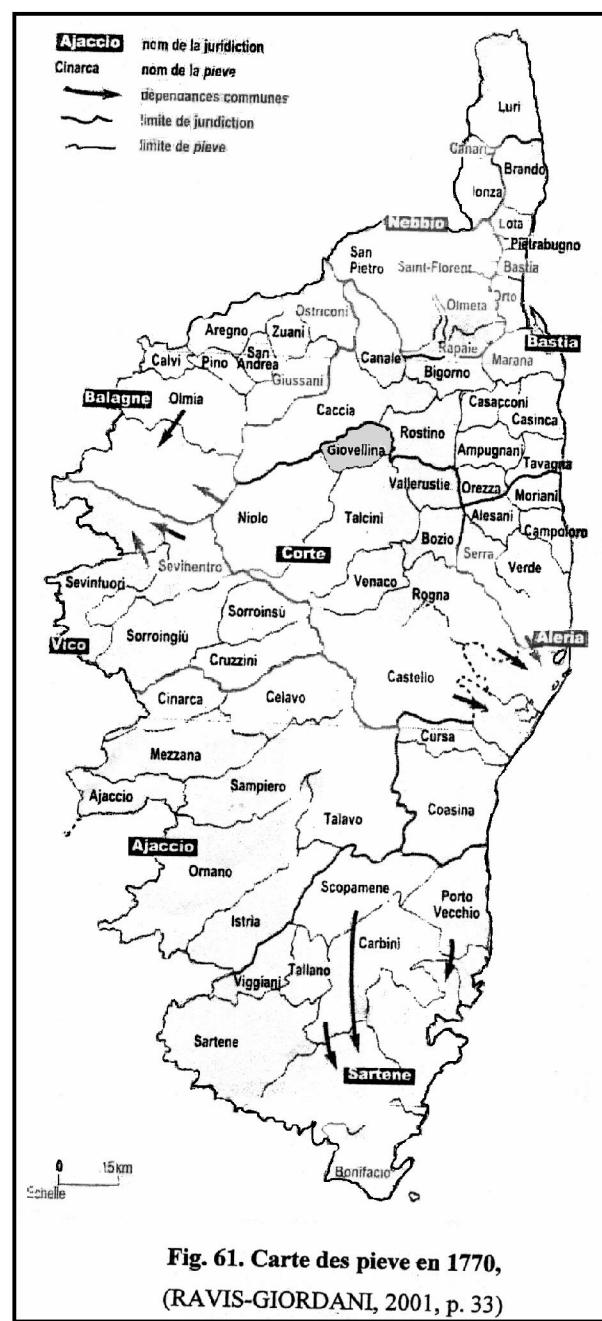


Fig. 61. Carte des pieve en 1770,
(RAVIS-GIORDANI, 2001, p. 33)

The politics of the various dominions which succeeded one another on the island until the arrival of France, is not hostile to this administrative district. It constituted the most stable pit, in this company Corsica, to which the continuous increase of the populations imposed a sort of continual future and which was even reflected during the XIXth, in the variation of the limits of numerous communities ».

According to the medieval columnist Giovanni della Grossa, this region possessed seven hundred fires before being reduced in thirty fires after the war actions of the bishop Orlando Cortinchi [4]. Monseigneur Giustiniani[5] in his "Dialogo Nominato Corsica" brings us some information about this pieve. It account 140 fires distributed in 4 villages *lo Pedegrisgio, Populatia, li Castiglione and lo Prato* and 152 fires and half-fires in the register of the *taglie* of 1537. The titulature of the church (of the pieve) is *San Gervasio and San Protasio*.

As regards the human occupation, at the stage current of the research, the information is relative even if some discoveries were confirmed by J.M Colombani in its master's essay of the university of Corsica [6]. He speaks to us about prehistoric sites dating the neolithic in the locality Paratella; site over the brook of the same name, the lithic material was found and in the locality Rastella; site which is over the brook of Canavaghjolu, the lithique material and ceramic was also found.

He also speaks to us about the locality Castellucciu that would be him of the age of the bronze. This one is in sommitale position dominating Piedigrigi and the nearby peak of Castiglione.

At the beginning of the last century, it was updated in a cave of the human bones « *with which the dimensions surprised* » [7]. By knowing that the mountain of Castiglione and of u Pulasca offers very numerous caves which were often used by the herdsmen, the meticulous investigation of this one could bring us to the other discoveries of this type. On the municipality of Castiglione in the locality Murzatu « *some shards without big meaning* » were discovered [7].

As regards the Roman presence, G. Moracchini-Mazel evokes a temple dedicated to Jupiter on the territory of Castiglione. The popular tradition indicates as for her the establishment of a Roman village near a source said about Lassalimaccia. According to In. Amadei, « not far from this source [] we can raise on the ground of shards and the fragments of bricks which could be of Roman time ». J.M Colombani announces us recent discoveries near the church ruined by *Tribuna* « today still, considers held especially by recent ploughings in the constitution of a big agricultural domain, we note easily on the spot a zone of manuring of shards of curved tiles with hooks on several dozens square meters everything around this church; we found not far from this one, three currencies of Roman time. Two of these currencies are recognized; a detail is Gordien III and the other one would be Philippe's currency the Arab. It is a question credibly, at least for a part of the zone of manuring of the superficial vestiges, the environment. It is completely possible that a part at least of these vestiges testify of the presence of a Roman churchyard of burial under tiles in the place of which was built the first church of the pieve of Ghjuvellina.

We have to note that the recollection of an important Roman site near has Tribuna appears to have survived in the popular culture of modern times.

A.F Colonna, who is a local scholar, him attribute the name of Sernitium by referring at your choice of Ptolémée (always for the said place has Tribuna) but it remains a

working hypothesis which it will be necessary to confirm by archaeological researches.

The Roman presence is already attested in the center of the island, and in particular to Corti and to Venacu, with numerous sites having known a perdurance of several centuries, as the hill of Santa Mariona [8]. This one revealing a ceramic material dating di IVÈme century BC until the VIth AD with a spathéion. It is necessary not to forget the discovery of the Etruscan situles found to Capuralinu, small village situated on the main road near Francardu and near Omessa

The means-age was the historic and social period during which the region lives its demography to increase and the human occupation of the space to develop; the trump cards of this one are exploited as well as the central position. A relief adapted to the installation of human groups, numerous streams and major routes. According to Giovanni della Grossa the zone was considered « *for the quality of the trouts for which we fish there* ». At the means - age, the region was occupied as shows the ruins of it of the said church *has Tribuna or has Pieve*, on the right bank of the brook named Canavaghjolu. The term of pieve used as place-name is particularly interesting here; indeed, it arrives as in the pieve of Talcini or Venacu, that the main church, localizes on an ancient (former) Roman establishment even protohistory.

G Moracchini-Mazel [9] evokes this building in its work *Romanic Corsica*, which according to her shall date the XIth century or of the beginning of the XIIth century. She indicates « *Prato di giovellina, building of Tribuna, court and piévanie having probably replaced in the XIth century e so much that piévanie, the small preRomanic church of San Cervone. Still impressive facade; preRomanic girder reused (interlacing). Difficult of access, it against bottom of the village* ». The abandoned village e Line is constituted by architectural elements (a barn, stables, houses, admirable oven) which according to In. Amadei (op.cit!) both strong houses would be post-medieval, excepted which were the places of residence of the family of Omessa, the considerably known family which gave several holders to the Episcopal seat of Aleria and the other people of church

The choice of the region to implant a fortification such as the castle of Serravale gives us the example of the importance as for its strategic place. The construction of a castle of this scale in oriental Ghjuvellina, demonstrates the will to lock the North / South communications during the means-age and was not accidentally made. It was the seat of a big family, stemming according to Giovanni della Grossa, of the Roman close Lord Amundo Nasica companion of legendary count Ugo Colonna. Always according to Giovanni della Grossa, it would be Ugo Colonna who made him Lord of the Golo and from whom came down Amundaschi which occupied the castle of Supetra and which reigned over pieve di Talcini, Niolu, Vicu, Mariana, Ortu, Casinca and Casaconi. The influence of Amundaschi will be very important through centuries and will weaken only in the decades, which will follow the events of 1358.

III. THE PROSPECTING

The prospecting in the modern archaeological research is an inescapable domain and an indispensable resource.

You should not see in the prospecting the simple action of the collection of surface localizing a possible archeological site. In Ferdière in fact a description of most just « for a long time considered as a method upstream to the excavation, and intended as its name indicates it preparing this one, the archaeological prospecting became a method of separate ground. It is now allowed that these methods may supply by themselves interpretable archaeological data with term of history of the occupation of the ground, evolution of the landscapes etc. » [10]

« *The prospecting on the ground gives a limited, but faithful description, by studying the garbage and other tracks than companies (societies) did not miss to leave* » it is one of the conclusions that removes from it Anthony SNODGRASS and John BINTLIFF in their article on the prospecting of the antique cities [11]. La notion of prospecting is in constant evolution to adapt itself to the research which it accompanies. For the research archaeology, it brings a spatial dimension and a combined material vision allowing to insert the site into its environment. The becoming landscapes one of the important elements of help to the understanding of the site, in the same way as the ceramic or the numismatics. The study of the modeling of a landscape, into which is inserted the site, answers the need to arrest the vision of the social context. On the environmental theme of an inventory of the sites of a territory, the factor has to be the most sensible choice in this approach. The man evolving in his historic context shapes and models his space to adapt it to his needs and to his activities. It ensues from these observations that the study of the environment for a region, a territory, a municipality will give necessarily the indications necessary for the discovery of unpublished sites. The toponymical study will enrich the study so much it is true that its contribution is of a major importance for the understanding or the research for sites. In this research we shall lean on the ancient texts, on the columnists, on the cadastres, ancient and modern, as well as on the inquiry of ground with the population (this one with rural majority and for a pastoral great majority keeps the memory of these names of places). The development of the sciences specialized for the archaeological systems brings the precision which missed in the archaeology until the middle of the XXth century. The archeogeography, the archeozoology, the archeobotany etc. are tools, which were added to the palette of the researcher for lead a sharp scientific inquiry.

For our research the implemented means will not also be pushed but a prospecting inventory will allow beginning to decipher the first specific environmental elements. In a second time have will proceed to a classification of monuments and already present sites in the region. This classification will consist in grouping including this inventory by period, by function and by geographic situation. The third part will consist in emitting research and working hypotheses by basing itself on the results obtained in the first work shifts.

The principle of the prospecting inventory of the municipality of Castiglione in summer adopted for a contacting with the soil of this space. This prospecting will be only the first action of a series of the others whom I hope for it will continue in a near future.

IV. WORKING HYPOTHESIS

We shall base our working hypothesis on two main axes, the editorial staff of a report of Master of the University of Corsica and the realization of a prospecting inventory. These will be interfering and especially additional.

The report Master will articulate in six main parts which we shall so define: the problem of the internal space, the geographic situation of the territory, the human activities, the language, the archaeology, the history, which we shall decline in several parts to be able to clarify the main lines.

The study on the problem inside of the island will be mainly based on a deepening of the ancient texts the authors of which are the big writers of the antiquity such as Sénèque, Polybe, Diodore of Sicily, Salluste, Pline the ancient, Pausanias etc. ... Then we shall lean for the modern texts on the studies of Jean Jehasse, Raimondo Zucca and Stéphanie Oberti.

The geographic situation of the territory will decline by a research on the general geography of the island, on the geography of our space, the hydrology, the Ghjuvellina in the card of Ptolémée, our *pieve* among the *pieve* of the means-age, the roads and the routes in the inside of the territory.

The human activity will dedicate itself to the pastoralism and to the industry.

The language will allow us to have an analysis of the preLatin, Latin place-names, toscanised to which will add an exam of the plan Den and of the Napoleonic cadastre. The archaeology will be made by a inventory of sites and monuments of the territory as well as a study of the Roman and medieval numismatics.

The history will enclose this work by an inquiry on the occupation of the region during the prehistory, the antiquity and the means-age.

The prospecting inventory, following the privileges of the Regional Services of the Archaeology (SRA), consists in making the inventory of sites on the municipality of Castiglione, any confused times. A research will be made on the air sights digitized by the National Geographic Institute (IGN) and we can also proceed to our own air shots to have more precise tests executed at low height.

The completeness of this work will open new perspectives for the knowledge of a territory of the inside. It will demonstrate that this one gives evidence of originality for the understanding of a more complex group represented by the history of an island of Mediterranean. In Amadei and J.-M Colombani is the initiators of the research on Ghjuvellina, our intention is

to succeed this work for the whole territory and for period going of the prehistory at the end of the means-age. The first reflections on the question bring us to encouraging conclusions on the perspective of new discoveries. They will enrich our patrimony in a actual way and can be also of use to the modern development of this region dedicated to more or less brief term in the depopulation which becomes widespread in the internal municipalities of Corsica.

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