

## **Trabzon Vilayet Survey**

Apart from some surveys conducted by A.A.M. Bryer and D. Winfield in the 1960s and 1970s, the Trabzon area had remained largely unexamined by archaeologists until James Crow and Anthony Bryer conducted surveys at a number of sites there between 1992 and 1994 with help from teams from the University of Newcastle upon Tyne and University of Birmingham.

In 1992, they focused on a site at Buzluca that they suspected to be ancient Hyssos Limen or Susurmaina, a military centre operating between the second and seventh centuries A.D. A detailed topographical survey was undertaken, and all standing remains were mapped to scale. The site looked to be a lightly fortified enclosure, with at least three chapels, a curtain wall, and two gates. They concluded that it was not likely the location of the Roman fort; Hyssos Limen is more likely at the site of Araklı Kale, west of Kara Dere (the name Araklı may derive from the emperor Heraclius and his campaigns in the Pontos). The site at Buzluca did not appear to date to any earlier than the sixth or seventh century AD, and looked as though it was a single period site.

Work at Buzluca was continued in 1993, with much of the work centring on a structure called the 'havuz' (pool); the overgrowth was cleared to reveal an octofoil church with a domed central space, which was subsequently planned and dated tentatively to the 10th or 11th century AD. Investigative work was also undertaken at Araklı Kalesi, a site that displayed evidence of a curtain wall and some towers, which was identified as being the Roman fort of Hyssos Limen, also known in ancient times as Sousarmia. Hortokop Kalesi, a site identified as Gizenenica near the modern village of Ortaköy featuring the remains of fortification structures and a tower, was also surveyed.

Work in the region continued in 1994, with the primary objective of investigating communication routes and surrounding landscapes. Though Classical sources didn't indicate the existence of Roman roads, routes from later periods – used by the armies – were known to exist. Two reported roads were investigated: one was narrow with worn-down pavement that led towards Camiboğazi, and the other showed some evidence of road cutting with stone kerbs, and lay to the west of the road running between Trabzon and Torul, likely representing a stretch of Roman highway. The secondary aim of the season was to complete survey work around Gümüşhane. They visited a number of sites in the region, the two most significant being Baladan (Cebeli) and Atra (Edre). The former featured a 13th century Byzantine chapel with some wall paintings in poor condition, and this was measured and recorded. The latter site comprised a medieval chapel and a small but impregnable castle.