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Workshops in Ptolemais in the late Roman period. Study of the changes in urban development.

Summary:

This thesis refers to changes in the architecture and function of the private buildings during the Late Antiquity in Cyrenaica in Libya, with particular emphasis on the North African Ptolemais. Cities of Cyrenaica, located on the coast of Africa, in their long history, experienced the ups and downs in political, economical and social life. Small urban centers, founded by Greek settlers in 7th and 6th century BC, gradually grew in power. But during the Early and Middle Roman period they were experiencing political crisis (worldwide, but also local, such as assaults of local tribes from the coast, harassing new settlers) but also natural earthquakes. In consequence these areas were depopulated and deserted. This situation leads to changes in social structures, where next to the wealthy citizens, there was a group of artisans - less affluent city dwellers. Craftsmen re-used the empty spaces of middle-class houses, converted them into small centers of workshop, producing objects for their everyday needs. These workshops were changing space in the cities in the 5th and 6th century, leading also in Ptolemais to the situation where in the originally planned residential areas were hand-crafted production centres. These workshops functioned for some time, probably a few years, after which the spaces deserted, and the remains are buried by the sand from the desert.

Keywords

Cyrenaica, Ptolemais, earthquakes, Late Roman, workshops, re-used space