

## Centenarium

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### Abstract

The neuter substantive *centenarium* appears in a series of documents to designate a particular type of building. The etymology and precise meaning of this word have long been debated by scholars, who have proposed a wide range of explanations, none of which appears to be entirely satisfactory. In this paper, we put forward a different solution, taking into account textual, archaeological and linguistic evidence. In our opinion, the word *centenarium* comes from *centenum*, which means a kind of a cereal; thus, *centenarium* indicates a ‘fortified grain-house’. It seems probable that original *centenaria* were military structures of varying shape and size, first created in the third century and then spreading in the Tetrarchic period. They appear to be distinctive of the African provinces, from which comes most of the evidence, but one cannot exclude that the same name was applied to similar structures in other parts of the Empire (such as in the Iberian Peninsula, for instance). The military *centenaria* were later imitated by private landlords – maybe even indigenous chieftains in charge of the defence of sectors of the frontier – who transferred the name to their unofficial or para-official defensive structures. This process of emulation was already advanced in Constantinian age.

### 1. Evidence concerning *centenaria* and their function

The neuter substantive *centenarium* appears in a series of documents to designate a particular type of building. The etymology and precise meaning of this word have long been debated by scholars, who have proposed a wide range of explanations, none of which appears to be entirely satisfactory. In this paper, we want to put forward a different solution, taking into account the textual, archaeological and linguistic aspects of the problem.

#### 1.1. Geographical distribution (IT)

Evidence for *centenaria* is geographically concentrated in the African provinces<sup>1</sup> (Fig. 1).

There are eight inscriptions, six in Latin and two in neo-Punic, commemorating the building or the restoration of *centenaria*; four of them (including both neo-Punic texts) come from *Tripolitania*, two

from *Mauretania Sitifensis*, one from *Mauretania Caesariensis*, and one from *Numidia*. Further indirect evidence concerns the province of *Numidia*: the *Tabula Peutingeriana* records a post called *Ad Centenarium* between Thigisi and Gadiaufila (IV, I; possibly this is the same place mentioned by the *Geogr. Rav.* III, 6 p. 149 *centenarias*: Gauckler 1903, 126 nt. 6); another *Ad Centenarium* is attested by the *Tabula* on the road between Lambaesis and Zarai (II, V; cf. also *RE* III, 2 col. 1926 [Schmidt 1899]). In addition to this, a community called *Centenarienses* – implying the existence of a place named *Centenarium* or *Ad Centenarium* – must also have existed in *Numidia*, as its bishops took part in the African *concilia* of 411 and 484 (*RE* III, 2, col. 1924 [Dessau 1899]); this may refer either to one of the two above mentioned *Ad Centenarium* in the *Tabula*, or to another unknown place. One of the parcels of land mentioned in the *Tablettes Albertini* (found on the Algero-Tunisian border, c. 100 km south of Theveste) is said to be located *post Centenarium*, i.e. to a building called *centenarium* (VIII [AD 493], 1, 4, 6; Courtois *et al.* 1952, 195). Finally, it may be added that Arab medieval sources register the presence near Tozeur, in southern Tunisia, of a place whose name they transcribe as *Ḳ.ṇṭ.nâr / Ḳ.ṇṭ.râr / Ḳ.ṇṭ.rârh* (Lewicki 1951–1952, 466–67; cf. 463; Lewicki explains this occurrence by connecting it to the Roman *centenaria*).

Evidence for *centenaria* outside of Africa is extremely meagre. The *burgus centenarius* listed in *Valeria (Pannonia)* by *NDOcc.* 33, 62 (*tribunus cohortis, ad burgum centenarium*) may constitute a slightly different case: as observed by Leschi (1941), the African *centenarium* is a neuter substantive, while in the Pannonian case *centenarius* is just qualificatory of *burgus*: this adjective could thus refer to many different things.<sup>2</sup> More interesting – since Gauckler (1903, 127) seems to use it for arguing the connection between *centenarium* (building) and *centenarius* (officer in the Late Roman army): see *infra* – is the case of a place on the road that crossed the Pyrenees located between Illiberri and *in summo Pyreneo*: this is called by the *Tabula Peutingeriana* (LV) *Ad Centenarium* and by the *Itinerarium Antonini* (397, 6) – which places it between *Ruscino* and *in summo Pyreneo* – *Ad*

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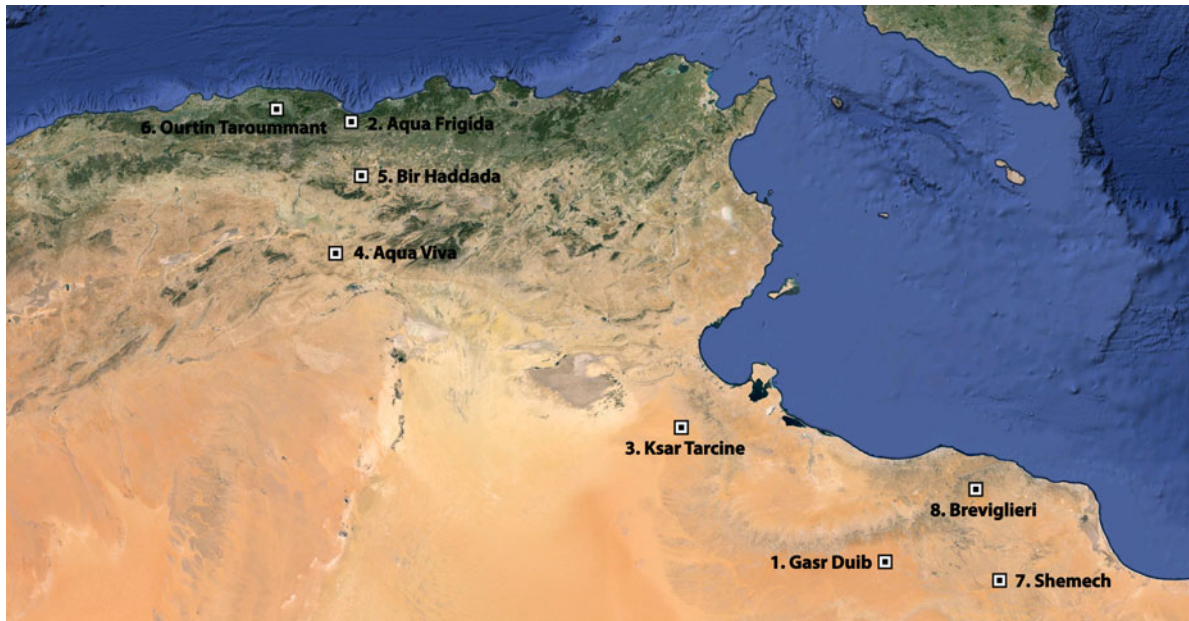


Figure 1. The geographical distribution of centenaria (M. Munzi, background image: Google Earth).

*Centuriones*. It could actually be the only non-African example of such a neuter noun.<sup>3</sup>

### 1.2. Chronology (IT)

The oldest inscription referring to a *centenarium* comes from Gasr Duib – a small fort on the Tripolitanian *limes* – and dates back to AD 244/247 (no. 1, see Catalogue). According to Smith (1968) the expression *novum centenarium* alludes to a building built to replace an older one: Smith postulated that structures of this type and their name could date back to the Severan reorganisation of the African *limes* (and had their antecedents in a second-century outpost in Scotland). Against this interpretation, Di Vita-Evrard (1991) has convincingly argued that both the formula of this inscription and archaeological evidence fit better an *ex novo* built structure.<sup>4</sup> The other dated inscriptions concerning *centenaria* are of Tetrarchic and Constantinian age (nos 3–6, apparently referring to *ex novo* foundations; no. 2 is a Tetrarchic restoration of an already existing structure). Concerning the remaining two texts, some arguments recommend a date in the fourth or in the early fifth century: no. 8 shows clear palaeographical analogies with texts dated to the fourth/fifth centuries; as for no. 7, in addition to its late palaeographic features, the dedicator bears the name Flavius, which may indicate a Constantinian or post-Constantinian date (see 1.3). More generally, the *gasr*-type structures of the pre-desert area are considered to be not earlier than the mid-third century AD (Elmayer 1985; Munzi

2010). A rather late appearance of the neuter word *centenarium* is not at odds with literary records: the *Tabula Peutingeriana* dates from the fourth century, while the presence of *centenarium* in the *Itinerarium Antonini* can be explained as a later, maybe Tetrarchic, addition (see Leschi 1941, 172 n. 1; 1943, 18 n. 44).

### 1.3. The defensive purpose of centenaria: textual evidence (IT)

Both inscriptions and archaeology show that *centenaria* were conceived as defensive, fortified structures. It is important to note that their foundation can either be linked to regular army programmes, or to private, unofficial initiative (especially Elmayer 1985, 79).

The military nature and function of *centenaria* is explicitly stated at least in one of the inscriptions (no. 1): *incursib(us) Barba[ro]rum constituto novo centenarium ... prae[cl]useru[nt]*; an allusion to the defensive role of the *centenarium* could be found in no. 7, if one accepts Elmayer's interpretation of its neo-Punic inscription ("Flavius Dasama and his son Macrinus, landowners, have made (this) *centenarium* to guard and protect the whole zone"). In any case, the military origin and role of other *centenaria* (nos 1–5) is indirectly proved by the fact they were either restored or built by Roman military authorities, or by governors with military powers.<sup>5</sup>

While the above mentioned *centenaria* are undoubtedly official buildings (with the exception of no. 7), the *centenarium* referred to in no. 6 was

erected by an ex-prefect, perhaps a *praefectus gentis* or a military officer – *ex pr(a)ef(ecto) v(eteranus?)* – but *suīs sumptibus*, which suggests that in doing so he acted as a private individual, probably on his own personal estates (as already recognised by Berbrugger 1861). In number 7 and number 8, no direct or indirect connection of the builders to the army or with official posts is detectable. The lack of any allusion to official initiative or patronage, and the use of the Punic language, confirm that they were private buildings. Such ‘private’ *centenaria* (nos 6, 7 and 8) may easily be compared to other private fortified edifices of the African frontier area (which are also called *turres*,<sup>6</sup> *munitiones*,<sup>7</sup> or simply *loca*,<sup>8</sup> in Arabic *gsur*) whose formal features and construction typology does not substantially diverge from that of our no. 8.<sup>9</sup> This is an important point to stress: even if it is possible that their owners had previous experience in the army (the name Flavius carried by Dasama in no. 7 may derive from former service as an officer in Constantinian or post-Constantinian times: cf. the case of Bir ed-Dreder: Goodchild 1954b), we can no longer follow Goodchild’s theory about their role in the defensive system of later Roman *Tripolitania*. Goodchild was the first to propose a derivation of smaller and ‘not regular’ military structures from the official ones;<sup>10</sup> unfortunately he thought that these edifices, like dozens of similar ones, were occupied by *limitanei*, whom he considered to be a militia of soldier-farmers: this view was based on a misunderstanding of the role and significance of *limitanei* (and was thus rejected by Jones 1968; now Isaac 1988 and Le Bohec 2007). In a more recent reappraisal David Mattingly (see 1995, 103, with reference to several previous studies) has correctly set the *centenaria* in the context of Tripolitanian border society.<sup>11</sup> It should be remembered that at some

point in the third century, the defence of some sectors of the frontier was assigned to local tribes (later called *gentiles*) of the pre-desert – who in principle acted on behalf of the Empire but sometimes came to terms with raiders from outside – and a reorganisation of the countryside (centred on fortified structures) was undertaken by Roman private landowners. Local landlords and chieftains thus assumed an active role in shaping the landscape of this area.<sup>12</sup>

#### 1.4 Defensive purpose of *centenaria*: archaeological evidence (MM)

Of the eight *centenaria* known in Africa through textual evidence, only four are, to date, archaeologically documented (Table 1): those of Gasr Duib (no. 1), Ksar Tarcine (*centenarium Tibubuci*, no. 3), Ain-Naïmia (*centenarium quod appellatur Aqua Viva*, no. 4) and Breviglieri/al-Khadra (no. 8). They may be divided, according to size, in two groups, corresponding to two types of buildings, hierarchically well distinguished. The *centenaria* of Gasr Duib, Ksar Tarcine and Breviglieri are small square buildings, ranging from 225 m<sup>2</sup> in the case Gasr Duib and Ksar Tarcine (though the latter is placed within a broader defensive circuit) and the 560 m<sup>2</sup> covered by Breviglieri in its first construction phase. If Gasr Duib and Ksar Tarcine were clearly small military outposts for a garrison of minimum size (around 10–20 people), the case of Breviglieri is more uncertain. It seems rather to have been a non-official outpost and/or a fortified farm. Only the *centenarium Aqua Viva* belongs to the second group: with its 7800 m<sup>2</sup> it was clearly a small fort, able to accommodate a substantial military detachment of around 300 men, comparable with the Tripolitanian fort of Ras el-Ain, built in AD 263, measuring 8600 m<sup>2</sup>, for

Table 1 - The four *centenaria* documented archaeologically.

Name	Catalogue n.	Dimensions (m)	Area (m <sup>2</sup> )	Garrison/population size (approx.)	Chronology
Ain-Naïmia/ <i>Aqua Viva</i>	4	88.60 x 87.90	7800	300	303
Breviglieri/ al-Khadra	8	23.68 x 23.68	560 (1st phase) c. 1450 with later additions	20	4 <sup>th</sup> /5 <sup>th</sup> century
Ksar Tarcine/ <i>Tibubuci</i>	3	15 x 15	250 (inside a larger defensive wall)	10	303
Gasr Duib	1	15 x 15	250 (ground floor); a first floor is attested	10	244–247

which David Mattingly (1995, 98) estimates a garrison of 300–400 men (the *Cohors VIII Fida*).

The archaeological reading of the landscape could be of crucial importance for the interpretation of the function of the *centenaria*. Since the question arises for *Tripolitania*, where the highest concentration of *centenaria* is recorded, the data collected by the systematic surveys conducted in the Tripolitanian pre-desert, in the Syrtic region and in the territory of Lepcis Magna, appear to be of fundamental relevance.<sup>13</sup> According to the survey data, between the middle of the third century AD and the fourth century AD, in connection with the partial dismantling of the Tripolitanian *limes* which exposed the eastern region to the raids of the nomads coming from the Syrtic oases, the countryside witnessed an extensive defensive restructuration, substantially on private initiative. Fortified buildings, identifiable as fortified farms, were built *ex novo* or realised by restructuring previous open villas or farms. Judging by their plans and tower-like shape, it seems probable that their prototypes were the military outposts and fortlets which, between the Severan years to the middle of the third century, were built to strengthen the *limes*.

The fortified farms were normally small quadrangular buildings, measuring between 8 to 25 m per side; Mattingly estimates that in the pre-desert the great majority of their ground plans fall under 300 m<sup>2</sup>. The masonry of the strong perimeter walls ranges from ashlar or semi-ashlar to coursed or poorly coursed medium–small block-work. The buildings were often surrounded by a defensive ditch. Some of them were tower-like buildings with one to three storeys of rooms, arranged around a central court or light-well.<sup>14</sup>

We have already discussed that in *Tripolitania* as well in *Mauretaniae Caesariensis* and *Sitifensis* some military fortlets or outposts, between the middle of the third century AD and the Constantinian age, were called *centenaria*. In the same manner of their prototypes, also some of the private fortified structures could have been named by their owners, as indicated by the Latino-Punic inscriptions of Shemech (no. 7) and Breviglieri (no. 8). The same sculpted eagles and *Victoriae* which decorated these inscriptions were probably meant to echo the official military iconography (see the description of nos 7 and 8).

The fortified farms marked the Tripolitanian landscape for centuries. When the Arab conquerors arrived, they called these structures and the military fortlets (or their ruins) with the same word: *gasr/gsur* from the Latin *castrum*, through a Greek

mediation.<sup>15</sup> The fortified farm could be considered as the Tripolitanian version of the *pyrgos* of the Romano-Byzantine Levant (there in Arabic *bordj*), a rural building with a double function, residential and defensive, equipped to cope with low-level dangers such as those represented by nomadic raids (Decker 2006).

## 2. Origin of the name

### 2.1. Current explanations (IT)

As already observed, scholars have long debated the origin and the exact meaning of '*centenaria*'. The earliest epigraphic occurrences of it puzzled the commentators, who suggested some manifestly incorrect interpretations, such as 'element of a bath complex', 'monument of a hundred gold pounds' value', 'edifice of a hundred feet long side'.<sup>16</sup>

The fundamental military significance of the term was firstly recognised by Paul Gauckler (1903) who, after discarding previous solutions, concluded that the only possibility was that *centenaria* drew their name from their commander, i.e. the *centenarius*, an officer of the Late Roman army considered equivalent to a centurion by Vegetius on the grounds of a false etymology (II, 8; Southern and Dixon 1996, 62). This interpretation has been largely endorsed and repeated in highly authoritative works, such as Cagnat's book on *L'armée romaine d'Afrique*, Grosse's *Römische Militärgeschichte von Gallienus bis zum Beginn der Byzantinischen Themenverfassung* (both make reference to Gauckler's explanation without further discussion), Leschi's article on the *centenarium Aqua Viva* and the pioneering research of Goodchild and Ward-Perkins in the eastern Tripolitanian pre-desert.<sup>17</sup> The possibility of a derivation from *centuria*, that is from the strength of the garrison, already taken into account by Gauckler (1903, 129), was not completely discarded (especially Elmayer 1985; Smith 1968). This, despite that it was early on observed that a considerable difference in size exists between structures such as *Aqua Viva* (no. 4) and, for example, *Tibubuci* (no. 3), and that the garrisons were hardly of the same size, so that consequently the commanders would have held different ranks.<sup>18</sup> Others scholars have been more cautious, or have not committed themselves.<sup>19</sup>

### 2.2. A different solution (GS)

A different etymology of the word has already been proposed by J.N. Adams (2007, 550–54): *centenarium* may be derived from the Latin *centenum*, which means a kind of cereal (on the semantics see

below). Adams observed about such a solution: “it is linguistically impeccable, but I must leave it to archaeologists to determine whether it is appropriate to the structures that have been found” (Adams 2007, 553). The proposition is largely plausible from the linguistic point of view.

Adams’ reconstruction can be summarised in the following way: the basis of derivation, represented by the word *centenum*, is clearly attested in the ancient documentation. The Edict on Prices of Diocletian records “*centenum siue sicale*” (*Edictum de pretiis*, I 1 3);<sup>20</sup> Isidore of Seville provides an etymology for this word: “*centenum appellatum eo quod in plerisque locis iactus seminis eius in incrementum frugis centesimum renascatur*” (XVII 3 12); this explication of the noun seems to make reference to a passage in Pliny where concerning *secale* is written: “*nascitur qualicumque solo cum centesimo grano*” (*Naturalis Historia* XVIII, 141). A derivation of the word *centenarium* from *centenum* is supported by two main arguments. First of all, the word formation process is very likely: from the basis *centenum* the word *centenarium* can be derived by means of the suffix *-arium*, by the same process which can be seen in *granum* ‘grain’ > *granarium* ‘granary’. The suffix is well attested as a means to form denominations of rural buildings (or parts of them), with reference to farm activities: e.g. *palearium* ‘chaff loft’ (< *palea* ‘chaff’); *carnarium* ‘meat deposit’ (< *carō* ‘meat’); *aviarium* ‘enclosure for birds’ (< *avis* ‘bird’); *columbarium* ‘pigeon nesting box’ (< *columba* ‘pigeon’); *aluearium* ‘beehive, structure in which hives are kept’ (< *alueus* ‘hive’ in apiculture).<sup>21</sup> A second argument is of a geo-linguistic order: as already shown, the word *centenarium* is testified in African epigraphy, with some further attestations in *Hiberia* (*Tabula Peutingeriana*).<sup>22</sup> The lexeme *centenum* was probably popular at that time in the same area. First of all, there is definite evidence for it in *Hiberia*: it is attested by Isidore, and has Romance reflexes in Spanish and Portuguese, respectively *centeno* and *centeio* with the meaning of ‘rye’. But the word is also the model of loanwords in Berber (*tāšēñtīθ*, *tīšēñtīt*, *āšēñtīt išēñtī*) and Maghrib Arabic (*ašēñtīl*, *ššēñtī*). Following Georges Colin, Berber forms are attested in Arabic sources since the fifteenth century in the Branes Mountains; now they are widely spread in the different varieties of Moroccan Berber. These data can be interpreted as the result of a Latin loanword from Antiquity.<sup>23</sup> For that reasons, there can be a coextension of the documentation area of the Latin

word *centenarium*, and the areal diffusion of the modern linguistic testimonies (Romance continuations and loanwords) of the Latin word *centenum*.

Some further observations may be added to those by Adams. Firstly, such a solution does not need a reference to the Latin word *centenarius*, with its meaning of army officer, which gives some chronological difficulties: the rank of *centenarius* for a centurion seems not to be positively attested before the reign of Gallienus (Speidel 2005, 206): and even if it may have been introduced some time earlier, it is extremely improbable that a building in the reign of Philip the Arab (no. 1: our first dated evidence of *centenarium*) would draw its name from a recently added officer rank.

Furthermore, a semantic consideration is necessary. Diocletian’s Edict on Prices’ attestation of the word *centenum*, where it is presented as a synonym of *sicale* and an equivalent of the word βρίζη used in the Greek version of the text, allows a precise interpretation of the word as ‘rye’: the same meaning can be assigned to the Romance reflexes in Spanish (*centeno*) and Portuguese (*centeio*). This fact can not justify the postulation of a strong link between a linguistic expression (the word *centenum*) and a referent represented by a precise biological variety (the cereal ‘rye’): modern scientific taxonomy can not be attributed to ancient world and to common language classification; moreover, botanical and zoological denominations frequently shift their content and can be used as indications of different referents.<sup>24</sup> The meaning of the word *centenum* could be wider, more generic than a precise variety of cereals; the diffusion of the word is not necessarily linked with a parallel diffusion of the thing. For instance, in a Greek-Latin glossary the word is presented as a synonym of *scandula* (*Hermeneumata vaticana*, 429 64); the latter term (*scandula/scandala*, which has a meaning comprehensive of ‘barley’ and ‘spelt’), is discussed by Isidore just before *centenum*, as a variety of ‘barley’. These observations are consistent with the Arabic references collected by Colin (1926) on the meaning of Berber loanwords, which seem to include ‘rye’, ‘barley’ and ‘spelt’. Therefore, although rye was introduced in North Africa from Europe, the term *centenum* could be diffused in this region with a more generic meaning of ‘grain’ or ‘cereal’, or with reference to other varieties of cereals. In this context, the semantics of *centenarium* can be easily reconstructed, and the word can be interpreted as having an original meaning of ‘deposit of grains’, ‘granary’, which can be directly applied to the North African fortified farms. Adams (2007, 314–15) interpreted it as a regional synonym of

*spicārium* ‘corn store, granary’, ascribable to Gaul; a similar semantic evolution of a derived noun, initially represented by the denomination of a vegetable to the generic meaning of ‘depository’ is attested for *horreum*.

Moreover, a comment can be added to the Punic epigraph of Gasr el-Azaiz,<sup>25</sup> where the word *našiba* is interpreted by Robert Kerr (2005) as an equivalent of the Latin ‘*centenarium*’.<sup>26</sup> Kerr intends the Punic noun (probably a feminine) as a calque of the Latin *centenarium*, through the mediation of the Latin noun *centenarius* ‘officer’, and a presumed equivalent Punic word \**našib* ‘officer’ (masculine) which is reconstructed on the basis of a comparison with Biblical Hebrew \**nāšīb* ‘military commander, official’ (the Punic gender shift from masculine to feminine would be calqued from the relationship between masculine and neuter in Latin: *centenarium* < *centenarius* = \**našib* > *našiba*). Nevertheless, the semantic equivalence between Punic *našiba* and Latin *centenarium* can be preserved even without reference to an etymology of the Latin word based on its derivation from the military term *centenarius*. The Punic word could have had the intended meaning of ‘settlement, plantation’, also attested in Aramaic, as Kerr recognises (2005, 496 n. 81). He rejected this hypothesis because of the lack of attestation of such a meaning in the Canaanite branch of North-West Semitic; but it seems to be a common semantic development for a noun derived from the widely attested Semitic base  $\sqrt{nsb}$  ‘situate, set up, raise, erect’ and thus ‘plant’. Kerr’s only (2010, 194 n. 3) criticism of Adams’ reconstruction is that “such a neologism [*centenarium*] would be better suited in Northern Europe”, and that “rye [...] was not farmed in the pre-desert”. Whatever should be the cereal intended by the Latin noun *centenum* (a topic already discussed), this latter word, with the meaning of a kind of grain, is clearly reflected in Romance, Berber and Arabic lexicon of North Africa and Iberian Peninsula: therefore, it is a sure basis for an etymology.

A second observation concerns the expression *ad burgum centenarium* displayed by the *Notitia Dignitatum* as a place name of the province of *Pannonia Valeria* (*NDOcc.* 33, 62). As we already noted, it is not clear if it could be a geographical spreading of the same word attested in Africa. Neither is it clear if *centenarium* in this instance is a noun of neuter gender, or an adjective inflected in the masculine accusative. In any case, the expression finds an exact equivalent in a late Greek inscription (eighth century) from Nicaea, attesting the phrase *πύργον κεντινάριον* in the accusative case.<sup>27</sup> It should be emphasised that the three words, the

Latin *centenarium* and *burgus*, and the Greek *πύργος*, are all used to indicate a fortified tower in Late Antiquity. The semantic equivalence is reflected by the late gloss ‘*πύργος* haec turris, bu<r>gus’ (*CGL* II 426 46). In particular, the Greek word seems to be used in the East with reference to the same kind of rural building named *centenarium* in Roman Africa.<sup>28</sup> Thus, it can be easily imagined that the word *burgus*, regardless of its origin,<sup>29</sup> might be determined by the noun *centenarium*, or by an adjective developed from it. Similar constructions are very common in late Latin: a combination with an adjective can be found, e.g., in *burgum specularium*, in the accusative case (*CIL* VIII 2494; *CIL* VIII 2495), or in *Burgo Nouo*, in the ablative (*NDOOr.* 42, 36); a determination made by a noun in the genitive case is displayed in *Burgo Severi* (*NDOOr.* 31, 63). The same patterns are attested, in Greek transliteration, as denominations of military buildings in the writings of Procopius of Caesarea (e.g. Βουγουάλτου, *De Aedificiis* IV 6 22; Στλιβούργου, *Aed.* IV 6 18), where constructions of two nouns juxtaposed can also be found: e.g. Λακκοβούργο (*Aed.* IV 6 20); Μαρεβούργου (*Aed.* IV 6 18);<sup>30</sup> these expressions can be compared with others displaying the Greek *πύργος*, instead of *burgus*, combined with a Latin noun: Σαλτουπύργος (*Aed.* IV 7 10) and πυργοκάσπελλον, in the accusative (*Aed.* II 5 8). The latter is very close, semantically (and perhaps syntactically as well), to the already cited *πύργον κεντινάριον*.

The circulation of the term *centenarium* in the Greek world with the meaning of ‘fortified tower’ may be related to the denomination *Κεντηνάριον*, which is attested in Constantinople by historians of the Late Byzantine age: a great tower (*μέγιστος πύργος*) of the Imperial Palace, and dividing it from the Hippodrome, so called (“ὅς κικλήσκειται *Κεντηνάριον*”), is mentioned by Nicetas Choniates (*Historia* XI 8 1); the same information is given by Nicholas Mesarites, who records a fortress (*πυργόβαρις*) having the name of *Κεντηνάριον* (“*Κεντηνάριον τὸ ἐπωνύμιον*”, Nikolaos Mesarites *Palastrevolution* 27, 25).<sup>31</sup> This building does not seem to be identifiable with the tower on the maritime walls, located on the Bosphorus just in front of Galata, where one end of the iron chain of the Golden Horn was set (“ἐπὶ τὸν πύργον [...] ὃν *Κεντηνάριον* κικλήσκειν εἰώθασιν”), following the account of Leo Diaconus (*Historia*, V 2, 78–79). The same tower is recorded by the late anonymous *Patria Konstantinupoleos* (“τὸ *Κεντηνάριον* τὸν πύργον”, *Origines* 150, 264), where it is stated that it was built by Constantinus, and rebuilt by Theophilus.<sup>32</sup>

### 3. Conclusions (MM, GS, IT)

It seems probable that the original *centenaria* were regular military structures, albeit of different shape and size – first created in the third century and then spreading in the Tetrarchic period. They appear to be distinctive of the African provinces, from which comes most of the evidence; however, one cannot exclude that the same name was applied to similar military structures in other parts of the Empire (such as the Iberian Peninsula, for instance). The military *centenaria* were later imitated by private landlords – maybe even indigenous chieftains in charge of the defence of sectors of the frontier – who transferred the name to their unofficial or quasi-official defensive structures (which in other cases could be referred to with other names, also of military origin, such as *turris*). This process of emulation was already advanced in the Constantinian age (to which no. 6 is dated).

Concerning the etymology, in our opinion, the word *centenarium* comes from *centenum*, which means a kind of a cereal; thus, *centenarium* indicates a ‘fortified grain-house’.<sup>33</sup> It was not its shape, its size or the name of its garrison or commander that gave the *centenarium* its name but, at least originally, its purpose.

### 4. Catalogue of inscriptions (IT) and related archaeological remains (MM)

#### 1. Gasr Duib; Tripolitania (Libya). Figure 2.

IRT 880 = AE 1950, 128 = 1951, 149 = 1991, 1621.

Date: 244/247 (Di Vita-Evrard 1991, 434 with note 17)

*Imp(erator) Caes(ar) [[M(arcus) Iulius Ph]ilippus] Invictu[s Aug(ustus)] / [[et M(arcus) Iul(ius) Philippus] [Ca]es(ar) n(obilissimus) regionem limi-[tis Ten]/theitani partitam et [finitam?] incur-sib(us) Barba[ro]rum constituto novo centenarium [- - -] / SAS prae[cl]useru[nt] Cominio Cassiano leg(ato) Augg(ustorum) / pr(o) pr(aetore) c(larissimo) v(iro) Lic(inio) An[- - -] v(iro) e(gregio) pr[oc]uratore) e(-orum) praep(osito) limitis cura / Numisii Maximi domo [- - -]SIA trib(uni).*

Gasr Duib is located along the Wadi Duib in the upper basin of the Wadi Sofeggin (*Barrington Atlas*, 35 E3). The Arabic toponym identifies a small square building, measuring 15 × 15 m (225 m<sup>2</sup>), without angle towers but with a central tower above the entrance. The dedicatory inscription IRT 880 is carved on the arched lintel of the door, while a second inscription is placed in the entrance hall. The building is composed of a series of rooms, some

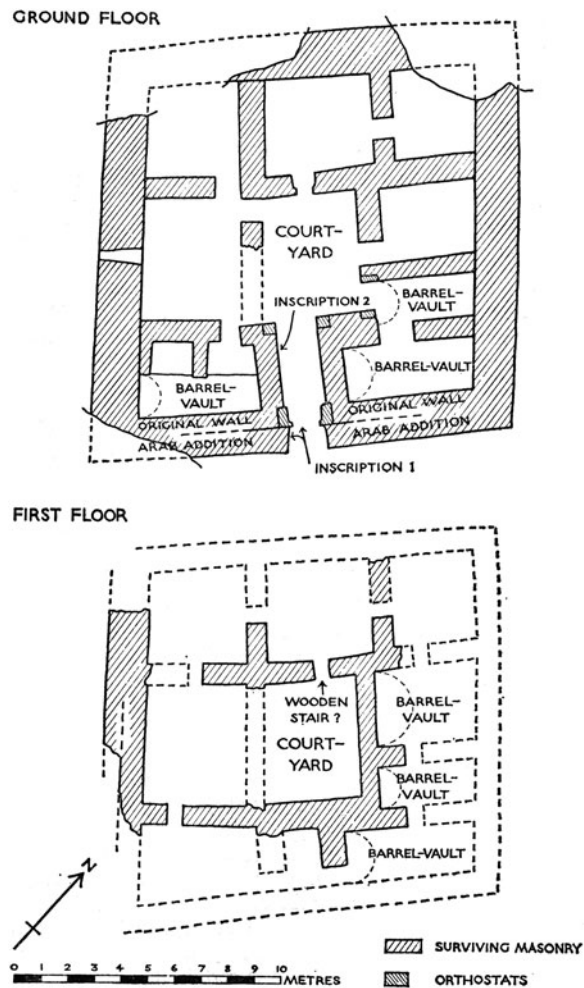


Figure 2. Novum centenarium of Gasr Duib: plans of the ground floor and first floor (Goodchild and Ward-Perkins 1949; Goodchild 1976, 25).

vaulted, others with flat wooden ceilings, overlooking a small central courtyard; the first floor, still partially preserved, shows the same distribution of rooms as the ground-floor, but with the particularity that the rooms are connected in circuit with only a door into the central courtyard, placed in front of the main entrance; from that door a wooden staircase led to the ground-floor.

The building was re-used and partially restructured in the Islamic period: a vaulted ceiling in the entrance corridor replaced an earlier wooden ceiling, and the outer wall, flanking the entrance, was refaced and some stucco decorations were added.

Bibliography: Di Vita-Evrard 1991; Goodchild and Ward-Perkins 1949 (Goodchild 1976, 24–29); Lenoir 2011, 364; Mattingly 1991; Scott *et al.* 1996, 76; Smith 1968.

#### 2. Centenarium Aqua Frigida, Tala Aïzraren / Tala K'frida; Mauretania Sitifensis (Algeria).

CIL VIII 20215 = ILS 6886 (= EE 5, 932).

Date: AD 293/305 (probably 293, or shortly after since Litua was already in charge as *praeses* in 290: CIL VIII 9041 = ILS 627; PLRE I, 511, s.v. Litua).

*Impp(eratoribus) Caess(aribus) C(aio) Aurel(io) Val(erio) Di[o]cletian[o] / et M(arco) Aurel(io) Val(erio) Maximiano Invictis Pii ff(elicibus) Augg(ustis) et Constan[tio] / et Maximiano nobilissimis Caesaribus T(itus) Aurel(ius) Litua / v(ir) p(erfectissimus) p(raeses) p(rovinciae) M(auretaniae) Caes(ariensis) centenarium / Aqua Frigida restituit a[t]qu[e] ad meliorem faciem reforma[vit] - -]is feliciter.*

The *centenarium* Aqua Frigida is known only through epigraphic evidence. The inscription was recovered near the source called Tala Kafrida/K'frida or Tala Aïzraren, 300 m south-west from the hilltop of Tizi Kafrida/K'frida (in the Kabylie de Babors/Petite Kabylie), where the ruins of two forts were still visible (*Atlas archéologique*, f. 7, no. 61; cf. *Barrington Atlas*, 31 C3). The toponym Kafrida has been considered as a corruption of the ancient *Aqua Frigida* (Poulle 1880, 258).

Bibliography: Poulle 1880.

3. *Centenarium Tibubuci*, Ksar Tarcine; Tripolitania (Tunisia). Figure 3.

AE 1902, 47 = CIL VIII 22763 = ILTun 5 = ILS 9352 = ILPBardo 21.

Date: c.AD 303 (Tantillo et al. 2010, 373).

*Centenarium Tibubuci / quod Valerius Vibianus / v(ir) p(erfectissimus) initiari(t!) / Aurelius Quintianus v(ir) p(erfectissimus) / praeses provinciae Tri/politanae perfici curavit.*

The small outpost (*Barrington Atlas*, 35 B1), situated between Bir Sultane and Ksar Ghilane in Southern Tunisia (Western Tripolitania in Late Roman times), consists of a square building of 15 × 15 m (225 m<sup>2</sup>) surrounded by a polygonal defensive wall circuit. The *centenarium* was at the service of the western sector of the *limes Tripolitanus*. Still in use in the 390s, according to the numismatic evidence (the last coin attested is a *nummus* of the emperor Eugenius), its abandonment has been related to the revolt of Gildo in 396 (Gauckler 1902, 326).

Bibliography: Gauckler 1902; 1903; Lenoir 2011, 364; Mattingly 1995, 103–104, 106, 191; Troussset 1974, 90–92.

4. *Centenarium Aqua Viva*, Ain-Naïmia/M'Doukal; Numidia (Algeria). Figure 4.

AE 1942/43, 81.

Date: AD 303 (Kolbe 1962, 48–49).

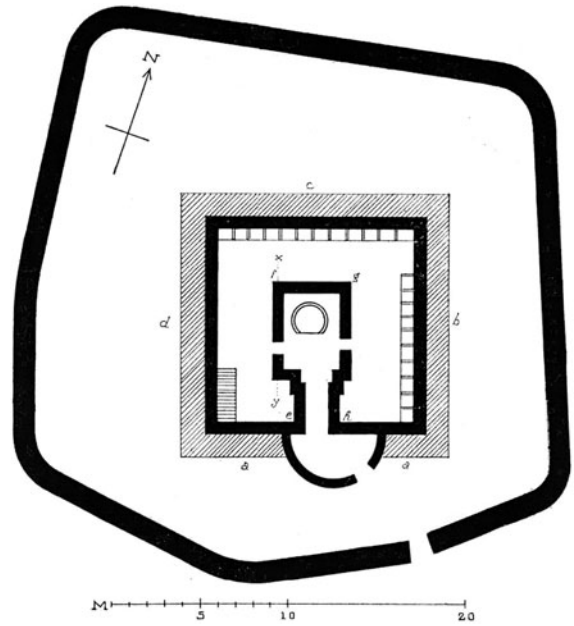


Figure 3. *Centenarium Tibubuci* (Ksar Tarcine): plan (Gauckler 1902, 327).

*Impp(eratoribus) dd(ominis) nn(ostris) Diocletiano et Maximiano aeternis Augg(ustis) et / Constantio et Maximiano fortissimis Caesaribus principib(us) / iuventutis centenarium quod Aqua Viva appellatur ex praecepto / Val(eri) Alexandri v(iri) p(erfectissimi) agent(is) vic(es) praef(ectorum) praet(orio) et Val(eri) Flori v(iri) p(erfectissimi) p(raesidis) p(rovinciae) N(umidiae) a solo / fabricatum curante Val(erio) Ingenuo praep(osito) limit(is) dedicatum / dd(ominis) nn(ostris) Diocletiano VIII et Maximiano VII Augg(ustis) cons(sulibus).*

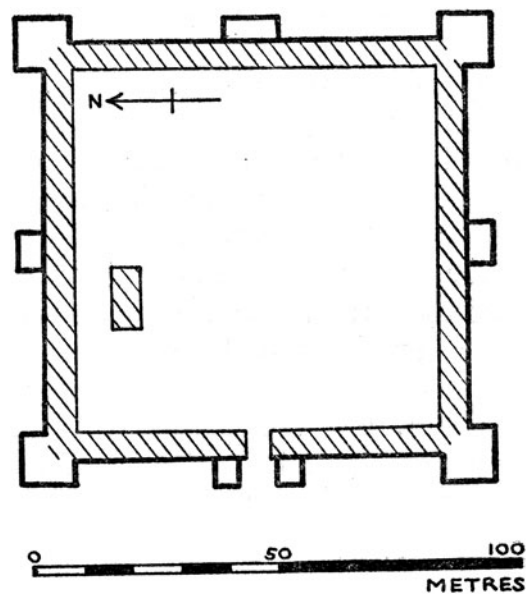


Figure 4. *Centenarium Aqua Viva* (Ain-Naïmia/M'Doukal): plan (Goodchild [1950] 1976, 40 fig. 9).



The site of Ain-Naïmia is located at the edge of the Hodna plain, at the foot of the Djebel Ahmar, 35 km south-west of Tobna and around 60 km north-west of Gemellae (*Atlas archéologique*, f. 37, n. 37; *Barrington Atlas*, 34 D2). The complex is a nearly square fortlet measuring 88.60 × 87.90 m (0.78 ha) (86.80 × 85.90 m measured inside the perimeter wall) with angular towers 3.80/4.40 m wide. Inside only one building is visible, the only one brought to light; its identification as the *praetorium* is highly doubtful. According to Baradez the fortlet was built for the commander of the *limes Tubunensis*.

Bibliography: Baradez 1949, 137, 140, 159, 297; *L'Année épigraphique* 1942/1943, 81; Lenoir 2011, 220–21, 364 fig. 125; Leschi 1941; 1943 and 1957, 47–55.

##### 5. *Centenarium Solis*, Bir Haddada; *Mauretania Sitifensis* (Algeria).

CIL VIII 8712–8713 (p. 1934).

Date: AD 315 (cf. PLRE I, 349 s.v. Flavianus 16).

[*Imp(eratoribus) Caes(aribus) Fl(au)uio Val(erio) Constantino / [[et Val]l(erio) Liciniano Licinio] Invictis / semper Aug[us]t(ustis) centenarium / Solis a solo construxit et dedicavit / Septimius Flavianus v(ir) p(erfectissimus) p(raeses) p(rovinciae) Maur(etaniae) Sitif(ensis) / numini maiestatiq(ue) eorum semper dicatissimus.*

The inscription was found at Bir Haddada, a rural and military settlement, more than 20 hectares in size according to Féraud (1860) or c. 60 hectares according to the *Atlas Archéologique* (f. 16, n. 372; cf. *Barrington Atlas*, 34 D2), located on the ancient Sitifis–Perdices–Zarai road. At the same site many other inscriptions have been documented (Pelletier 1861, 447–452; CIL VIII 8710–31; 20490–4) one of them being a dedication by *K(astellani) B(...)* to Gordian III (CIL VIII 8710); others clearly belong to the Christian period. The settlement is reported to be encompassed by a wall-circuit, and it is possible that the *centenarium* was a fortified quarter located inside it.

Bibliography: Baradez 1949, 333; Berbrugger 1861, 184–85; Féraud 1860, 188–89; Pelletier 1861; Poulle 1874, 393–412, esp. 402–404.

##### 6. Ourtin (or Ourthi n) Taroummant / Aguemoun Abekkar (Aguemoun Oubekkar); *Mauretania Caesariensis* (Algeria).

CIL VIII 9010.

Date: AD 328 (provincial year)

*M(arcus) Au[re]li[us] - - - / MM[- - -]en[.] / ex pr(a)ef(ecto) v(eteranus?) cen/tenarium a fu/ndamenta su-/is sum(p)tibus fel/cit et dedicavit / p(rovinciae) CCLXXXVIII.*

Judging by the paper squeeze in the CIL archives, a full restoration of the second line is impossible. Nonetheless, Gsell (1902, 30 with n. 3) claims to have been able to read as follows: *M(arcus) Au[re]li[us] / Masaisilen / ex pr(a)ef(ecto) V...* Concerning the last extant letter he wrote: “lire peut-être quinze : conf. les Quinquegentanei, qui vivaient en Kabylie”. This hypothesis was further developed by Courtois (1955, 120 n. 2) through comparison with the corrupted form *Mauri Gentiani* in the *Laterculus Veronensis*, which would be an incorrect interpretation by the scribe of an original *V iensani* = (*Quinque*)iensani. Leveau (1973, 184) rightly considers this supposition weak and doubts are also voiced by Modéran (2003, 90, n. 127). Even if the identification of the builder with a *praefectus gentis* remains likely, one cannot exclude that he could have been a former army officer. In any case, note that this *praefectus* was no longer in charge when he built this *centenarium* and would thus have been acting as a private citizen.

This *centenarium* is known only through epigraphic evidence. According to the editor (Hanoteau 1861), the inscription was found east of Bou-Atelli (*Atlas archéologique*, f. 6, n. 99; *Barrington Atlas*, 30 H3), in the territory of Ait Iratem (or Beni Raten in the Kabylie Djurdjura/Grande Kabylie), in the locality named Ourthi n Taroummant (“le Jardin du Grenadier”). Leschi (1941, 172; 1943, 16) mentioned it as the *centenarium* of Aguemoun Abekkar / Aguemoun Oubekkar (*Atlas archéologique*, f. 6, n. 97). The building where the inscription was recovered was interpreted as a tomb (Bibesco 1865 considered the inscription to be an epitaph).<sup>34</sup>

Bibliography: Berbrugger 1861, 184; Bibesco 1865, 888–89; De Vigneral 1868, 88; Hanoteau 1861, 175–77.

##### 7. Wadi el-Bir, near Shemech (Shumaykh), Wadi Soffegin basin; *Tripolitania* (Libya). Figure 5.

IRT 889 = Elmayer 1983, 90–91 = Elmayer 1984, 149–50 = Elmayer 1985, 82–83 = KAI<sup>5</sup> 179 = Jongeling and Kerr 2005, 62–63 = Kerr 2010, 185–89.

Date: probably fourth century (Elmayer 1983, 92)

*Flabi Dasama vy binim / Macrine felv centenari balars / Sumar nar sabare s/avn.*

“Flavius Dasama and his son Macrinus, land-owners, have made (this) *centenarium* to guard and protect the whole zone” (Elmayer 1985)

*Flabi Dasama vybinim / Macrine felv centeinari bal ars / oymarnar sabare o/avn.*



Figure 5. Wadi El-Bir, near Shemech/Shumaykh: inscription IRT 889 (British School at Rome archive).

“Flavius Dasama and his son Macrinus made (this) *centenarium*, (the) architect who [made it was] Sabarrus ...” (Jongeling and Kerr 2005).

The epigraphic text is flanked by two *Victoriae*, facing one another, holding one wreath between them, exactly as in the Theodosian bronze coins VICTORIA AVGGG, minted in the years 383–387 in Rome and Aquileia (LRBC II, 62 and 68, nos 782–93, 1091–94) and well diffused in *Tripolitania*. Similar *Victoriae* (this time each holding a wreath and a palm branch) decorated the keystone of the tomb North B at Ghirza (Brogan and Smith 1984, 136, 216–17, pls 60a, 61a), but also the north gate of the Gheriat el-Gharbia fort (Goodchild 1954a, 66; Mackensen 2012) and the obelisk tomb of Wadi Taghiggia.

The inscription was found *in situ*, above the entrance of an ancient building, probably a fortified farm, evidently the *centenarium* mentioned in the text. The site is located along the Wadi el-Bir, near Shemech (Shumaykh), in the Wadi Soffegin basin (*Tripolitania*).

Bibliography: Elmayer 1983, 90–91; 1985, 78, 82 ff.; Petragani 1928, photos between pages 80 and 81.

8. Gasr Sidi Ali ben Zaid, near Breviglieri/al-Khadra; *Tripolitania* (Libya). Figures 6 and 7.

IRT 877 = Goodchild 1951 (1976, 101, pl. 39) = Elmayer 1983, 87–88 = KAI<sup>5</sup> 304 = Jongeling and Kerr 2005, 63–64 = Kerr 2010, 189–91.

Date: fourth/fifth century (lettering comparable to that of IRT 874 and IRT 875: Goodchild 1951 (1976, 101).

*Centenari(um) / mu felthi a/na Marci Cae/cili Bymu/ pal fesem a/pero y nban/em bucu buo/ms ayo nema.*

“A *centenarium* which Thiana Marcius Caecilius has made with a marble panel and a small altar was built. He lived in grace” (Elmayer 1983)

*Centenari / mv felthi a/na marci ce/cili bymu/pal fesem a/pero y nban/em bucu buo/ms ayo nema.*



Figure 6. Gasr Sidi Ali ben Zaid, near Breviglieri/al-Khadra: inscription IRT 877 (photo: J.B. Ward-Perkins in Goodchild [1951]1976, pl. 39).

“*Centenarium* which I Ana Marcius Caecili(us) (made)...” (Jongeling and Kerr 2005)

The epigraphic text is significantly flanked by an eagle and a lion. This kind of decoration is similar to that used in the *gasr* of Wadi el-Amud, where the epigraphic *tabula* is flanked by two eagles carrying hares in their claws (Brogan 1964, 52–53, pl. 33c), and in tomb North A at Ghirza, where two eagles with hares flanked the *tabula*, placed above the doorway, and an impressive lion with front-facing head appears in the frieze of the cella wall (Brogan and Smith 1984, 123 and 216, pls 51, 52a–b, d).

The inscription was found in the doorway of a *gasr* located on a hill-top 8 km east of the Breviglieri/al-Khadra village (*Barrington Atlas*, 35 F2). This is a fortified building, approximately square in plan, without protruding angle towers; the sides are *c.* 80 Roman feet long, corresponding to 23.68 m (surface area approx. 560 m<sup>2</sup>). The building is made of blocks of local limestone, of medium and small sizes. The discovery of a coin in the fallen debris, identified as Vandalic by F. Panvini Rosati (quoted by De Angelis D’Ossat and Farioli 1975, 35) and considered as originally nestled into the masonry, was used as evidence for the late date of the building, which should not be earlier than the fifth century. It should be said that this numismatic find cannot be considered as incontrovertible evidence for dating the construction of the building. Inside, the rooms are articulated around a central hall, with the external and internal doors staggered for safety reasons. The Latino-Punic inscription IRT 877 was found just outside the door. The stairs which radiate from the courtyard indicate that at the four corners of the building there probably were towers, each one served by a staircase.

At a later date other buildings with various functions (collective housing and storage) arose around the fortified core, forming with their outer walls a new defensive perimeter, this time equipped with

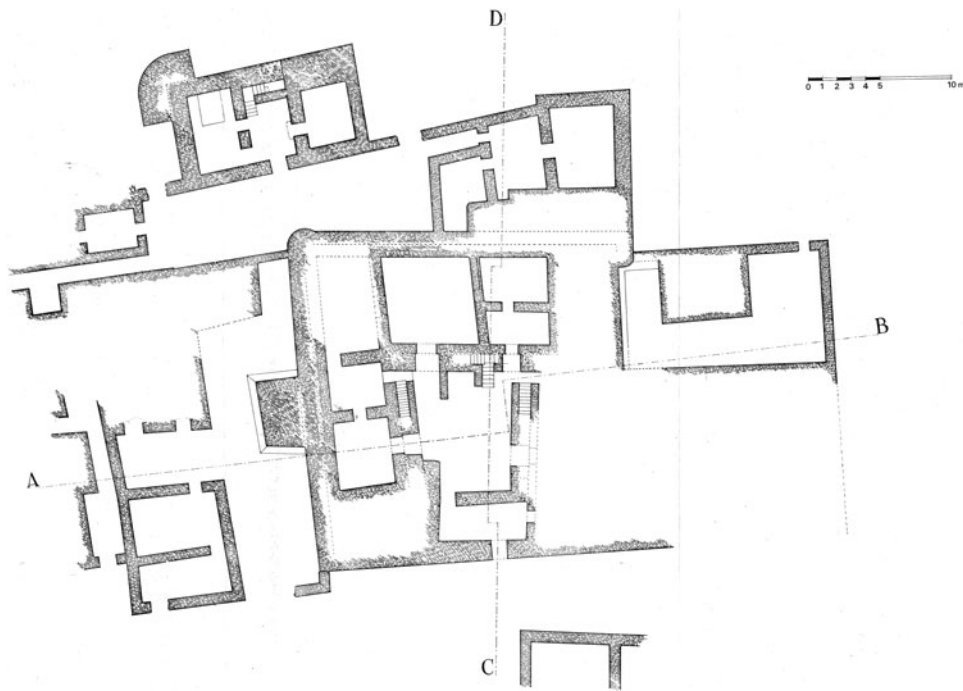


Figure 7. *Gasr Sidi Ali ben Zaid, near Breviglieri/al-Khadra: plan* (De Angelis D'Ossat and Farioli 1975, plate I).

protruding towers. The complex, thus extended, covered an area of approximately 1450 m<sup>2</sup>.

Bibliography: De Angelis D'Ossat and Farioli 1975, 34–41, 115–17; Elmayer 1983, 87–88; Goodchild 1951 (1976, 101, n. 7, pl. 39); IRT 877.

#### Notes

- 1 Evidence has been partially collected in Kerr 2005, 1–4, whose discussion of literary texts and geographical entries is incomplete.
- 2 Böcking 1839–1853, II, 714 suggested that this *burgus* derived its name from being capable of hosting a hundred soldiers. Its location remains unknown (Clemente 1968, 347; Faleiro 2005, 642). For further discussion, see below.
- 3 Another possible exception is a place named *Centinares* recorded in Bédar, in the Spanish province of Almería: its etymology has been linked by J. Corominas (1954, 765) to the Mozarabic *čenteno* ‘raw’ (through a by-form \**centino*), which in turn comes from Latin *centenum*: therefore, it can represent a modern reflex of the ancient *centenarium* (on the relationship between *centenarium* and *centenum* see below). The case of the eighth century inscription from Nicaea which mentions a *pyrgos kentinariōs* will also be discussed below.
- 4 Compare the case of Bir Haddada (n. 5): the inscription of the dedication of the *centenarius*, which is said to be built *ex solo*, dates from 315, but in the same area many older inscriptions were also found: see Catalogue, description of n. 5.
- 5 For military powers of the early *praesides* in the North African provinces see Tantillo 2010 and Forthcoming.

6 Examples of *turres*: CIL VIII 22774 (*turris* of the Manilii, *Tripolitania*: not precisely dated, probably third or fourth century); IRT 876; Goodchild 1951, 100–101 (found among the ruins of a tower surrounded by a ditch near Breviglieri, *Tripolitania*; beginning of the fifth century: cf. Callu 1959, 334–35). Cagnat 1912, II, 568 compares such cases to *turres* mentioned in *Itineraria* and other literary sources (*Turris Tamalleni*, *Turris ad Algam* etc.). Note that on the eastern frontier similar structures were called *pyrgoi*.

7 IRT 884 (Wadi Sofeggin area).

8 IRT 875; Goodchild 1951, 99–100 (fourth to fifth century, Tarhuna, hinterland of Lepcis Magna).

9 A list of inscriptions connected to fortified structures in the province *Tripolitania* and their chronology in Felici *et al.* 2006, 646 nt. 131; on the Tripolitanian *gasr*-type buildings, see now Munzi 2010, 57–58.

10 See also Smith 1968, 303 nt. 2: “it seems most probable, in fact, that the word passed from the Roman army into the local speech in the third century and came to be applied to fortified farms”.

11 A similar view is independently expressed, through the comparison to other frontier regions (such as Syria or Arabia), by Whittaker 1994, 259.

12 See Felici *et al.* 2006; Tantillo 2010. See also 1.4 *infra*.

13 Barker and Mattingly 1996 for the survey in the Tripolitanian pre-desert; Rebuffat 1988; Reddé 1985 and 1988 for the survey in the Syrtic region; Munzi 2010, Munzi *et al.* 2004–2005 and 2010 for the research in the territory of Lepcis Magna.

- 14 Felici *et al.* 2006, 664–73; Goodchild 1950 (1976, 42); Mattingly 1995, 202–205; Mattingly and Dore 1996, 127–33.
- 15 *Gasr* (قصر), plur. *gsur*, from *castrum* via the Byzantine Greek *kastron*, according to Shahid 2002, 67–75. The transmission of the term probably developed in the East in Late Antiquity, especially among the Roman troops of Arab origin, in particular the Arab *foederati* which in the sixth century AD occupied the Romano-Byzantine frontier *castra* and *castella* (in arabo *qastal*). The word *qasr*, brought to the West by the Umayyads, gave origin to the Italian *càssero* (ant. *càssaro*), Spanish *Alcázar*.
- 16 Mommsen (*Eph Ep.* V 932), thought that the *centenarium* mentioned in the *Aqua Frigida* inscription was a synonym of *frigidarium*; Willmanns (ad *CIL* VIII 8712) proposed a monument of a hundred gold pounds value; Gatti 1900 hesitates between “un edificio del valore stesso [i.e. of 100 gold pounds]” or a building of 100 feet (thus comparable to the Greek *ekatompedos*). An (incomplete) list of earlier interpretations in Gauckler 1903, 128.
- 17 Cagnat 1912, II, 580 with nt. 2; Goodchild and Ward-Perkins 1949, 28; Grosse 1920, 117; Leschi 1941, especially 172–73 (correcting Gauckler’s statement according to which *centenarius* was an adjective); 1943; cf. also Troussset 1974, 136.
- 18 This argument has been recently stressed by Mattingly 1995, 103.
- 19 Baradez 1949, 221, 244, 271, 295, 298; Van Berchem 1952, 46–47: “que son nom lui vienne de l’effectif de la garnison ou du titre du commandant, le *centenarium* apparaît désormais comme un element caractéristique, une maille, de l’organisation des *limitanei*...”; Romanelli 1959, 506–507, refers to Van Berchem 1952.
- 20 To be precise, the sequence *centunum*, attested by the *exemplum stratonicense* of the Edict, is amended ‘*centenu*<*m*>’ by modern editors.
- 21 On this derivational pattern in the agricultural Latin lexicon, see Bruno 1969: 120–21, 142, 164–65.
- 22 These data can be integrated with the toponym *Centinares* in Southern Spain, as a possible reflex of *centenum* (see above), and, among the African documents, the already mentioned place-name *K.nt.nār* recorded in the Tozeur region (cf. Fanciullo 1992, 169; Lewicki 1951–1952, 466–67).
- 23 See Colin 1926, 70–71; cf. as well, for modern Berber attestations, Destaig 1920, 258 (s.v. *seigle*); Laoust 1920, 488; Wagner 1936, 25; Lancel 1981, 294. The phonetic and morphological adaptation of Berber forms does not require a Portuguese model (but such a solution is preferred, for instance, in Portères 1958: 348–49): the chronology and geography of their attestation seem better compatible with an ancient loanword. Latin loanwords are largely recognised in Berber: on the phenomenon see, among others, Brugnatelli 1999; Durand 1998, 87; Fanciullo 1992; Kossmann 1999, 24–25; Schuchardt 1918.
- 24 On the lack of correspondence between ancient and modern (scientific) taxa in botanical denominations, and the fallacy of reconstruction of ancient environment based on the lexical arguments, see Genaust 2005, 1–16; on vernacular biology classifications implicit in common language, see Cardona 1995, 117–28.
- 25 *CIL* VIII 22664; *IRT* 893; see also Jongeling and Kerr 2005, 64–66; Kerr 2010, 193–95.
- 26 The word is read *nš̄b* ‘stele’ in Krahmalkov 2000, 334 (s.v. *NŠB II*); Krahmalkov 2001, 127.
- 27 *IK Iznik* 450 (= *CIG* IV 8664); cf. Adams 2007, 552. On the stone (ll. 4–5):  $\pi\acute{\upsilon}\rho\gamma\omicron\nu\ \kappa\epsilon\nu\tau\iota\nu\acute{\alpha}\rho\iota\{\sigma\}/\omega\nu$ , which is read with expunction of < $\sigma$ > and change < $o$ > / < $\omega$ >.
- 28 On the tower called  $\pi\acute{\upsilon}\rho\gamma\omicron\varsigma$  in the late eastern Roman Empire, see Nowicka 1970; Decker 2006.
- 29 The Latin *burgus* is considered either as a Germanic loanword (see Ernout and Meillet 2001, 78; cf. Adams 2007, 552), or as a Greek loanword (*TLL* II col. 2250; Pennick 1940–1945), or as a blend of Germanic and Greek lexical interference (Walde and Hoffmann 1938, 102). In turn, the Germanic noun (e.g. Gothic *baurgs*, German *Burg*) is often considered as a Latin loanword (see, for example, Kluge 1999, 145; Lehmann 1986, 64–65; Much 1929; Tiefenbach 1973, 24–28).
- 30 On these denominations in the texts of Procopius, cf. Skok 1930, 529–32. All of them seem to be invariable in the Greek morphology, and have a syntactic function of either nominative or accusative case.
- 31 On the tower named *Kentenaarion* in the Palace of Boukoleon of Constantinople, see Guiland 1969, vol. I, 517–18, 521–22; Janin 1950, 344; Mango 1996, 45; Müller and Wiener 1977, 225.
- 32 On the iron chain of the Golden Horn, and the tower named *Kentenaarion* on the Bosphoros, see Janin 1950, 275; Guiland 1969, vol. II, 122–27; Tsangadas 1980, 44–45; Erkal 2011, 207–208. The explication of the name given in the *Patria Konstantinupoleos* (“ὁ μέγας Κωνσταντῖνος κεντενάριον ἐξωδίασεν” ‘Constantinus the Great defrayed hundred pounds of gold’) is a possible folk etymology (cf. Berger 1988, 676). A different case seems to be represented by the public bath named *Kentenaarion* in Antioch mentioned by Malalas (“τὸ δημόσιον τὸ λεγόμενον Κεντηνάριον”, *Ioannis Malalae Chronographia* 213, 74): the typology of the building (a bath is presumably a structure of large dimensions) allows a comparison with the use of the Latin word *centenarius* with the meaning ‘of hundred (feet or steps)’ attested, for example, in the expression *basilica centenaria*, on which cf. Luschi 1982, 176–77; Mau 1897, 74; *ThLL*, III col. 813.
- 33 Compare the *praesidia* of the eastern Egyptian desert, called *hydreumata*, i.e. ‘(fortified) watering points’, under many aspects comparable to the African *centenaria* as

both can vary in shape and size: cf. Bagnall *et al.* 2001; Brun and Reddé 2003; Scott 2011; Sidebotham *et al.* 2000; Sidebotham and Zitterkopf 1997; 1998; Zitterkopf and Sidebotham 1989.

34 Hanoteau 1861, 176: “Le tombeau ... est encore debout, et une partie de la voûte est assez bien conservée. La maçonnerie n’a rien de remarquable; elle est en mortier de chaux ordinaire et moellons bruts du pays. Les angles seuls sont formés de chaines de pierres de taille de petite dimension. La partie inférieure du monument est divisée

en deux compartiments voûtés destinés à recevoir les cercueils et orientés de l’Est à l’Ouest. Des portes extérieures en plein cintre et très-basses donnaient entrée dans ces petits caveaux qui paraissent avoir été fouillés à une époque déjà ancienne ... M. le lieutenant Finot, du 9<sup>e</sup> régiment d’infanterie, qui, à ma prière, a bien voulu se charger de faire exécuter quelques fouilles dans ces ruines, a trouvé, sur la façade Nord, une pierre de grès de 0 m. 36 de haut sur 0 m. 34 de largeur, encastrée dans le mur, et sur laquelle est gravée l’inscription”.

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