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ABSTRACTS

DESERTIFICATION IN THESSALY (CENTRAL GREECE): A HISTORICAL AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC PERSPECTIVE

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The social, economic and political activities, and especially their changes through time, constitute an objective of historical research. Due to the interdependence of man and the natural environment, Braudel (1987) and Marwick (1985) mark the significance of issues concerning the results of human practices on the environment.

The importance of historical research for the study of the evolution of vegetation has already been recognised by geobotanists and palaeobotanists of the past century (Acot 1991), and historians of the present stress the influence of human communities on vegetation changes. De Certeau (1981), referring to the studies of Le Roy Ladurie (1966), states that plants are objects of historical research due to their continual modifications caused by man.

In this study, we will try to approach the problem of land desertification in a certain part of Greece, mostly from a historical point of view. More specifically, we will try to examine the socio-economic factors, which contributed to the desertification process. By combining the changes in natural ecosystems with socio-economic and historical changes, our aim is to establish a linkage between landscape history and local history.