

The image is a book cover featuring a landscape photograph. In the foreground, a rocky, sparsely vegetated hillside slopes down from the left. The middle ground is dominated by a vast, flat agricultural plain with a grid-like pattern of fields in various shades of green and brown. In the far distance, a range of mountains with snow-capped peaks is visible under a clear sky. The text is overlaid on the upper portion of the image.

ROBIN RÖNNLUND

THE CITIES OF THE PLAIN

URBANISM IN ANCIENT
WESTERN THESSALY

THE CITIES OF THE PLAIN

πολλὰ γὰρ πολλᾶ λέλεκται, νεαρά δ' ἐξευ-
ρόντα δόμεν βασάνῳ
ἐς ἔλεγχον, ἅπας κίνδυνος [...]

For many things have been said in many ways,
but to discover new ones and put them to the touchstone
for testing is sheer danger [...]

Pindar, *Nemean Odes* 8.20–21.
(trans. William H. Race)

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URBANISM IN ANCIENT WESTERN THESSALY

ROBIN RÖNNLUND

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Front cover: The fortifications of the ancient city at Vlochos with the Western Thessalian plain and the Pindos mountains in the background.

Back cover: The Western Thessalian plain with the hills at Vlochos and Metamorfosi as seen from the north.

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Summary

This book presents and discusses urbanism in a pre-Industrial context from an archaeological perspective, focusing on the area of Western Thessaly in central Greece. The region is defined and dominated by a vast plain surrounded by mountain ranges, with many large rivers and smaller streams watering the copious fields. Thessaly has been inhabited by humans at least since the Middle Palaeolithic and was arguably the first place where agriculture was practised on the European mainland; its rich inland soils starkly contrasting with the archetypical barren lands of coastal Greece. Historically, Western Thessaly has been part of several federations and states before becoming a part of modern Greece in 1881 and the landscape is rich in archaeological remains of all periods of history. This study collates all the available evidence for ancient cities in Western Thessaly and presents each relevant site with photographs and topographical plans in order to outline and discuss the origins, development and decline of urbanism in the region.

The archaeological evidence shows that urban sites in Western Thessaly developed from the late 4th century BCE and were typically established in close connection to older hillfort locations. The number of sites was high, with at least 22 identified contemporaneous cities spread over the area. These cities appear to have been planned and organised from the outset, with regular street-grids, fortification systems and water supply works. However, the cities were generally short-lived, typically existing for only five–six generations. Most of the sites were completely or nearly completely abandoned as settlements in the early 2nd century BCE, often with evidence of violent destruction, and only a handful survived as smaller regional centres under

the Roman administration. Restorations of the former urban sites and especially their fortifications occur towards the end of Antiquity, especially the first half of the 6th century CE, but re-occupation appears again to have been short-lived, as only three cities survived into the Middle Ages.

The findings reflect developments that have been observed in other regions on the Greek mainland, namely that the cities of the Classical–Hellenistic period were political rather than organic establishments, being founded through and highly dependent on supra-regional subvention from leagues, kingdoms and empires. As soon as subvention was withdrawn – in this case by the abolishment of the Kingdom of Macedon in the early 2nd century BCE – the inhabitants of the cities quickly reverted to village life. The local political organisations that had ruled the cities often, but not always, remained intact until a period of collapse in the 3rd century CE, as is evident in the numismatic and epigraphic record. The situation in the following Late Roman period further highlights the short-lived nature of urbanism, as cities briefly re-appear in the archaeological record in the early 6th century CE as part of an Imperial response to “barbarian” intervention in the region, only to be again abandoned soon after.

From a regional perspective, the study shows that the rise and fall of urbanism was not caused by gradual and organic developments in Thessaly, but rather reflects changes in regional and supra-regional political organisation. On a global scale, the study exemplifies the political nature of the pre-Industrial city, its synthetic rather than organic role in agrarian societies, and the cyclic nature of urbanism in history.

Περίληψη

Κεντρικό θέμα του βιβλίου αυτού αποτελεί η παρουσίαση και η συζήτηση του αστισμού στη Δυτική Θεσσαλία από μια αρχαιολογική οπτική. Η Δυτική Θεσσαλία είναι μια μεγάλη, εύφορη πεδιάδα, που περιβάλλεται από βουνά και λόφους, ενώ τη διατρέχουν πολυάριθμα ποτάμια με κατεύθυνση τη θάλασσα. Αυτά τα γεωμορφολογικά της χαρακτηριστικά διαμόρφωσαν ένα ιδιαίτερα φιλόξενο περιβάλλον για την άσκηση της γεωργίας και της κτηνοτροφίας από τους κατοίκους της ήδη από την Νεολιθική περίοδο. Η κατοίκηση στη Δυτική Θεσσαλία υπήρξε αδιάλειπτη, ενώ κατά την ιστορική της πορεία μέσα στις χιλιετίες οι μορφές διοίκησής της μετασχηματίστηκαν ποικιλοτρόπως ανάλογα με τις ιστορικές συνθήκες των εκάστοτε χρονολογικών περιόδων. Αποτέλεσε, άλλωστε, σε διάφορες περιπτώσεις τμήμα πολλών και διαφορετικών βασιλείων και αυτοκρατοριών, έως την απελευθέρωσή της από τους Οθωμανούς και την προσάρτησή της στο Βασίλειο της Ελλάδος το 1881. Η μακρά ιστορία της Δυτικής Θεσσαλίας και ο πολιτιστικός της πλούτος αποτυπώνεται στους ιδιαίτερα σημαντικούς αρχαιολογικούς χώρους, που διατηρήθηκαν έως τις μέρες μας τόσο στο πεδινό, όσο και στο ορεινό της τμήμα. Στο βιβλίο αυτό επιχειρείται η πλήρης καταγραφή όλων των δημοσιευμένων πληροφοριών που αφορούν στον αστισμό της Δυτικής Θεσσαλίας από την Πρώιμη Εποχή Σιδήρου έως τα χρόνια του αυτοκράτορα Ιουστινιανού. Παράλληλα, κάθε αρχαιολογικός χώρος παρουσιάζεται σε συνάρτηση με αντίστοιχους χάρτες και φωτογραφίες, με στόχο την πλήρη περιγραφή της γέννησης, της ανάπτυξης και της εξαφάνισης των αρχαίων πόλεων της περιοχής.

Τα αρχαιολογικά δεδομένα δείχνουν ότι δεν υπήρχαν αστικοί οικισμοί στη Δυτική Θεσσαλία κατά την Αρχαϊκή και την Κλασική περίοδο, καθώς οι πόλεις της περιοχής ιδρύθηκαν για πρώτη φορά στα τέλη του 4ου αιώνα π.Χ. Στις αρχές της Ελληνιστικής περιόδου, η Δυτική Θεσσαλία είχε εξαιρετικά πολλές πόλεις. Στην περιοχή, έχουν εντοπιστεί τουλάχιστον είκοσι δύο αστικοί οικισμοί,

που χρονολογούνται στον 3ο αιώνα π.Χ. Οι οικισμοί αυτοί περιβάλλονταν από οχυρωματικά τείχη και είχαν δρόμους, σπίτια, δημόσια κτίρια, ακόμα και τρεχούμενο νερό. Ωστόσο, οι πόλεις αυτές δεν είχαν μεγάλη διάρκεια ζωής, ενώ οι περισσότερες εξαφανίζονταν ύστερα από πέντε έως έξι γενιές.

Το μεγαλύτερο ποσοστό των πόλεων της Δυτικής Θεσσαλίας είχαν ήδη εγκαταλειφθεί, όταν η περιοχή έγινε μέρος της Ρωμαϊκής αυτοκρατορίας τον 2ο αιώνα π.Χ. Οι ανασκαφές των πόλεων της Δυτικής Θεσσαλίας έχουν δείξει ότι οι οικισμοί καταστράφηκαν απότομα, ως αποτέλεσμα ίσως των πολλών πολέμων στην περιοχή. Οι πόλεις που δεν καταστράφηκαν, συνέχισαν να ακμάζουν και κατά τα Ρωμαϊκά χρόνια. Στις τοποθεσίες ορισμένων εκ των εγκαταλελειμμένων πόλεων δημιουργήθηκαν, στην Ύστερη Αρχαιότητα, οικισμοί, αλλά και αυτοί εγκαταλείφθηκαν σύντομα.

Αυτή η εξέλιξη παρατηρείται και σε άλλες περιοχές στην Ελλάδα και υποδηλώνει ότι οι πόλεις της Κλασικής-Ελληνιστικής περιόδου ήταν «πολιτικά δημιουργήματα» και όχι το αποτέλεσμα μιας αργής φυσικής εξέλιξης. Οι κλασικές-ελληνιστικές πόλεις πιθανότατα ιδρύθηκαν από το Μακεδονικό Βασίλειο και στηρίχθηκαν σε χρηματοδοτήσεις των βασιλέων για να επιβιώσουν. Η οικονομική αυτή στήριξη έληξε όταν η Μακεδονία έχασε τον έλεγχο της περιοχής κατά τον 2ο αιώνα π.Χ., και ως αποτέλεσμα οι περισσότερες πόλεις εγκαταλείφθηκαν σύντομα. Οι Ρωμαίοι δεν έδειξαν ενδιαφέρον να στηρίξουν οικονομικά τις πόλεις, εκτός από λίγους οικισμούς που λειτουργούσαν ως διοικητικά κέντρα.

Τα αποτελέσματα της παρούσας μελέτης δείχνουν ότι η αστικοποίηση στη Θεσσαλία συνέβη πολύ ξαφνικά και ως συνέπεια των μεγάλων πολιτικών εξελίξεων στην ηπειρωτική Ελλάδα κατά την πρώιμη Ελληνιστική περίοδο. Επιπλέον, συνιστούν μια συνολική θεώρηση της πολιτικής φύσης του αρχαίου αστισμού και της πολύ σύντομης ζωής των πόλεων στην ιστορία.

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The staff of the Swedish Institute at Athens have as always been more than helpful in my work, not only relating to this present book but in all my research in general.

Being my second scholarly home during the difficult pandemic years of 2020–2021, the institute and its co-managed Nordic Library made that this book could actually be written. The institute director Jenny Wallensten with her permanent staff Eleni Androvic and Katerina Gabierakis, as well as the staff at the Nordic Library, Jens Mangerud and Patrick Talatas, have all been invaluable for my work, and I am truly indebted to them. The Canadian Institute in Greece and its director Jacques Y. Perreault and assistant director Jonathan E. Tomlinson have been helpful in giving me access to the Frederick E. Winter archive, and granting me the publication rights of some of Winter's photographs. Mrs Ioanna Dymenou was exceedingly helpful in assisting me in reading some rather impenetrable Katharevousa texts, both in print and in *kalligrafia*. As this book was to a large extent inspired by my ongoing fieldwork at Vlochos with surroundings, I would like to thank the Greek, Swedish, British, Australian and American members of the Vlochos and Palamas archaeological projects for their tireless efforts. Sotiria Dandou, Johan Klange, Harry Manley, Derek Pitman, Rich Potter, Ian Randall, Lawrence Shaw and Lewis Webb, thank you so much.

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A statement regarding illustrations, photographic permits and rights

All photographs, maps and plans – except when explicitly so marked – are by the author. All site plans are made from Greek official and publicly available aerial photographs and maps, as well as existent site-plans (when available). No measurements or drawings were made in the field by the author. The rights to all the depicted monuments belong to the Greek Ministry of Culture and Sports (law no. 4858/2021).

The archaeological sites of Domokos (ancient Thaumakoi), Ekkara and Neo Monastiri (ancient Proerna) are under the jurisdiction of the Ephorate of Antiquities of Fthiotida and Evrytania. The permission to photographically depict these monuments in this work has been granted by the Ephorate of Antiquities of Fthiotida and Evrytania, issue no. 517800, dated 1 December 2022.

The archaeological sites of Episkopi Mouzakiou, Ermitsi (ancient Peirasia), Fylliio Oros Kastro 1, Gefyria (ancient Thetonion), Kallithiro, Kedros (ancient Orthos), Metamorfosi, Mitropoli (ancient Matropolis), Myrini (ancient Methylian), Pyrgos Ithomis, Pyrgos Kieriou (ancient Kierion), Proastio, Sykies and Vlochos are under the jurisdiction of the Ephorate of Antiquities of Karditsa.

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The archaeological sites of Fiki, Kalampaka (ancient Aiginion), Kalogiroi, Klokotos, Paliogardiki, Pialeia, Omvriasa, Skoumpos, the Asklepieion of Trikala (ancient Trika) and Zarkos (ancient Phaýttos) are under the jurisdiction of the Ephorate of Antiquities of Trikala. The permission to photographically depict these monuments in this work has been granted by the Ephorate of Antiquities of Trikala, issue No. 238490, dated 26 May 2022. The aerial photograph of the Asklepieion of Trikala was graciously provided by the Ephorate for the use in this book.

The photograph depicting the funnel or measure of the Methylian (Fig. 58) is © the Trustees of the British Museum and published with permission.

A note on transliterations

For the sake of consistency, all modern Greek toponyms have been transliterated to the Latin alphabet using the 2nd edition of the Hellenic Standard ΕΛΟΤ 743 transliteration system (*ELOT 2001*), also known as ISO 843:1997, developed by the Greek Organisation for Standardisation, and officially adopted by the Greek government. To the reader not familiar with the spelling of modern Greek, some combinations of Latin characters might appear unexpected, such as word-initial *nt-* (for a sound often rendered with “d” in English), word-internal *-mp-* (which represents English “b” or “mb”), or the digraphs *ai* and *oi* (close to the vowels of English “hear” and “tea”).

Regarding the transliteration of ancient Greek words, I have strived to use the system commonly employed in

library catalogues around the world (*e.g.* δῆμος, ὥρα, θαυμάζω, λύχνος as *dēmos, hōra, thaumazō, lychnos*). Ancient toponyms have not been fully transliterated according to this system, with diacritics mostly left out, as is common in research literature. I have avoided the often-inconsistent Latinesque forms of local toponyms preferred in 19th century literature and still prevalent on Wikipedia (Kierion, Krannon, Pharkadon, Pharsalos, and Triikka, and not Cierium, Cranon, Pharcadum, Pharsalus, and Tricce).

Finally, in the cases where a local toponym clearly represents a Greek transliteration of a Turkish name, I have strived to also render the name in the modern Turkish alphabet. I would like to express my gratitude to Ms Gökem Çimen for assisting me with this interesting puzzle.

Foreword

This book is the result of a fascination for a landscape of stark contrasts, immense flatness, high mountain peaks, scorching summer heat and biting winter air. It is also the result of my admiration of a local population ploughing the deep soils, grazing their animals in the hills and welcoming a stranger to their corner of the world.

My first visit to Western Thessaly was on 27 August 2010, when members of the Swedish Institute were invited to a traditional full-moon concert on the *akropolis* of ancient Proerna at Neo Monastiri. Sadly, we arrived after dark, and I did not get to see the vastness of the plain, only the flickering lights of the neighbouring villages. For reasons still mysterious to me, I afterwards soon became besotted with the archaeology of this region, reading everything I could get my hands on. I decided to write my PhD thesis on sites in western and southern Thessaly, further delving into the complex history of research of the area. I had to wait another five years before I managed to make an extensive tour of the region, visiting all the places I had hitherto only

seen on maps. Since then, I have paid innumerable visits to the western plain, frequenting small villages, dirt tracks in the foothills and shrub-covered ridges. It has always been a great experience and I have made many friends over the years. The remains at Vlochos made such an impression on me that I got involved in a still-ongoing collaborative survey and excavation at the site, and it has become somewhat of a mission of mine to lure further researchers into working in Thessaly. The latter is indeed my not-so-hidden purpose with the book, hopefully making some of the published research accounts more accessible, especially to a non-Greek speaking scholarly public.

It cannot be overstated that this book stands nearly in its entirety on the work of my Greek colleagues at the ephorates of antiquities in Thessaly. Any claim I have to novelty of interpretation and ideas is fully dependent on their enormous effort over the past century producing the data necessary for this study. All mistakes or errors are naturally my own.

Introduction

This is a book on urbanism in ancient Western Thessaly, focusing mainly on its archaeology. As literary evidence is scarce, it will only play a supporting role. The main aim is to understand the origins, development, organisation and disappearance of urban settlements in Western Thessaly over the course of antiquity (from the Early Iron Age until the Early Byzantine period). The book consequently does not aim to outline the history or complete archaeology of ancient Western Thessaly, nor does it aim to explain the full political, social or religious developments in the region. However, as urbanism in some respects relates to the latter, I will not avoid these topics when relevant.

This book began as a chapter for an edited volume on Thessaly but the lack of previous syntheses and the extent of the archaeological evidence soon made it evident that a larger scope was necessary in order for the work to be coherent. As will be outlined later in this chapter, there has been only limited research interest in the urban archaeology of Thessaly as a whole and few studies on the ancient cities of Western Thessaly. In my view, the ancient urban sites of Western Thessaly are not only fascinating by themselves, but they also provide important insights into the development of urbanism on the Greek mainland and into the underlying mechanisms of pre-Industrial urbanisation generally. Central to the book is the hypothesis that cities are not organic in their development but synthetic creations highly dependent on political subvention for their initiation and maintenance. Consequently, I argue that cities have little innate resilience. Patterns supportive of this hypothesis are clearly discernible in the archaeological and historical record of Western Thessaly and beyond. The appearance, flourish, decline and disappearance of cities over the course of antiquity could consequently be explained by supra-regional political developments that affect the region. Even if such developments can be observed on a Panhellenic, Mediterranean or even

global level, I believe they can be studied most efficiently on a regional scale, where examples of similar conditions and resources can be compared along the same baseline.

In order to support this argument, this book is organised into four chapters containing introductory information, summaries of the archaeological and historical evidence, discussions and concluding remarks. Chapter 1 serves to give the basic context of the study for the reader, as well as to outline the rationale behind my choice of sites. In spite of extending to one and a half the size of Attica and over three times that of the Argolid, Western Thessaly is probably not too familiar to most scholars of ancient Greece. To make this less of an obstacle for the reader, I present short summaries of the topography, history and historiography of the area in this chapter. It is not my aim with these summaries to give any definite accounts and they all have a conscious lack of detail. Later in this chapter, I will also outline the rationale behind my choice of sites and vocabulary. It is surprisingly rare for scholars of ancient urbanism to define what they mean by words such as “urban” and “city”, and I argue that some caution is called for when approaching the study of the archaeology and history of “cities”. Words and terminologies change over the course of time and may vary between traditions and conventions.

In Chapter 2, I outline the relevant evidence for urbanism in Western Thessaly as extracted from the sites presented in Appendices 1 and 2. The arrangement of the chapter focuses on archaeologically discernible features of the urban landscape. The textual sources mentioning cities or urban communities in Western Thessaly are also presented, as well as a short outline of the production of coins in the Classical and Hellenistic periods.

The discussion in Chapter 3 follows the themes of origins, development, organisation and disappearance of urbanism in Western Thessaly and aims to link the evidence as presented

in the preceding chapter with the overall hypothesis of the book. I also discuss some topical issues in more detail to further illustrate specific questions or events and how these can form part of the solution of larger research questions.

In the final Chapter 4, I synthesise the evidence and discussions as given in previous chapters and present my suggestion of a basic historical narrative. Finally, I give my personal view of what the developments in Western Thessaly might tell us of cities generally.

Appendix 1 contains all the available published information relating to 30 large settlement sites in the region, partially to provide the evidential base for the study, but also to make these sites more accessible for researchers. I have strived to provide the complete bibliography of each site but I have consciously excluded “empty citations”, *i.e.* publications merely referring to previously published information. I have visited all but one of the sites in the catalogue (this due to poor accessibility), and each entry is accompanied with a plan-sketch. Photographs accompany nearly all entries. Naturally, the varying degree of publication has great influence on how much can be said of each site. Whereas some locations have been studied and published in great detail, others have barely been mentioned in research literature. In some cases, the amount of information was so considerable that the brief reports of some minor rescue excavation works had to be excluded (this is mainly the case of Farsala and Mitropoli). References in the book to an entry in this catalogue are made in bold as **No.** followed by the catalogue entry number. This also serves to limit the number of bracketed citations in the main text.

Compiling the first appendix, it became evident that the region contains a great number of smaller fortified sites, which could not (and should not) be included among the main cases in Appendix 1. These were previously known to archaeologists working in the region, but as there had been no previous compilation of their distribution, I decided to include them in a more basic catalogue in Appendix 2. Several of these fortifications are located at or within sites listed in Appendix 2, being either older or younger installations at the same location as an ancient city site. References in this book to entries in this appendix are made in bold in accordance with the catalogue as **2.4, 4.5, etc.** with the first number representing the municipality and the second the site within the municipality.

The material presented in the appendices is fully dependent on information provided by previous scholarship. The stated chronological estimations, descriptions of architectural remains, and stylistic characterisations are consequently often not my own.

The topography of Western Thessaly

Being a land-locked region, Western Thessaly presents a contrast to the archetype image of Greece. This is not a land of seaside cliffs, sandy beaches and blue waves. Instead, it is dominated by a vast plain of immense flatness, surrounded in all directions by hills and mountain ranges (Fig. 1). Before the advent of mechanised agriculture, ancient Western Thessaly was a country of great rivers, myriads of streams and large swamps, of winter floods and baking summer heat.



Figure 1 The Western Thessalian plain, as seen from the castle of Grizano (4.3). To the left, the hills of Stroggylovouni at Vlochos (No. 29) and to the right, Kourtikiano Vouno at Metamorfosi (No. 16). © Greek Ministry of Culture and Sports – Organization for the Management and Development of Cultural Resources.

Today, the summer heat remains but the swamps are gone, the rivers have been tamed and the winter floods only make episodic cameos in the story.

The Western Thessalian plain, or the Plain of Karditsa, is locally known as the Kampos, meaning just “the plain”. The area is also referred to by the inhabitants – with affection – as the Gourná, a word meaning “cavity”, or in this case, “watering trough”, which well illustrates what the landscape looks like from the air. Encompassing in total *c.* 200,000 ha, the plain slopes gently from the southwest towards the area of the confluence of the Enipeas and the Pineios (see below) in its northeastern corner. The slope is barely noticeable; the higher parts of the plain at Ekkara rises to *c.* 130 m above sea level (asl), whereas the lowest area, 50 km away at Keramidi, is just 30–40 m lower. Lines of hills protruding from the surrounding mountain and hill areas create adjoining valleys to the plain which could probably be seen as “gulfs” due to the gentleness of the surrounding terrain. The area south of Neo Monastiri and the basin of Enipeas north of Farsala forms two of the most distinct gulfs but the

most substantial is at the western end of the plain, which is only connected with the main plain through a 12 km gap between Trikala and Fanari. Smaller gulfs are found at the north end of the plain at Palaiopyrgos, Neochori, Grizano and Zarkos, as well as in the east at Mikro Vouno.

At present, nearly all the plain is cultivated. Extensive land reclamation and redistribution schemes (*anadasmós*) in the mid-20th century drained the many large marshlands that covered vast swathes of what are now cotton and maize fields. The modern agricultural practices – with considerable subvention from the European Union – have proven catastrophic in the long run, with water mismanagement and excessive use of artificial fertilisers leading to increased desertification of the soils (Psaropoulos 2021).

The largest river of Thessaly, and one of the largest rivers of Greece, the Pineios (formerly Salamvrias) flows through the northern part of the plain from the Kalampaka pass, to continue towards the eastern plain and the sea through the Kalamaki pass at Pineiada and Koutsochero (Fig. 2). The Pineios has numerous tributaries, the largest



Figure 2 The river Pineios at Pineiada.

of which is the Enipeas which has its springs in the area of Chiliadou in the Othrys range. Having flowed northwards through the Domokos plateau, it enters the plains east of Farsala, and joins with the Apidanos, Sofaditikos, Karampalis and Bliouris at Vlochos, and finally the Pineios at Keramidi. The other significant tributaries are the Portaikos, which joins the Pineios at Drosero, the Lithaios (formerly Trikalinos) and the Neochoritis, both of which joining at Klokotos. All the rivers mentioned went through substantial configurations in the mid-20th century, with some – like the Enipeas – getting completely new artificial courses. The Bliouris – possibly the Pliris (Πλήρης) known from medieval sources – was nearly completely reconfigured by Italian engineers during the Fascist occupation of Thessaly in the 1940s and is locally now often referred to as the Italikos: “the Italian river”. The Megas, which was especially prone to flooding, has retained nothing of its natural state and runs in one single artificial canal all the way from the area of Fanari to its confluence with the Pineios at Keramidi. The river system has not only gone through physical transfigurations. The very names of the rivers have also been changed over the course of the 20th century, much in line with the official policy of “returning” to pre-Ottoman toponyms (see below). As many of the rivers known from ancient sources cannot be confidently identified with present-day rivers, these “revived” modern names should be used with caution.

Western Thessaly was, until recently, a marshy area. This is especially evident from the accounts of 19th century travellers frequenting the area, as well as from early 20th century maps of the region. Swamps, known as *valtoi* (sing. *valtos*) or *eli* (sing. *elos*), were found mainly in the eastern and central parts of the plain, the most substantial covering much of the land on both banks of the river Megas north of Karditsa, with further marshlands downstream at Marathea and Metamorfofi. Further large swamps extended at Petroporos, Petrino, Othomaniko, Ekkara, Neo Monastiri and Fyllo. Whether these marshy areas had remained stable over the millennia and represented a situation comparable to antiquity is impossible to say. Theophrastus (*De caus. plant.* 5.14.2–3) observed in the 4th century BCE that much of the area around Larisa in Eastern Thessaly had been drained at his time, and some of the ancient agricultural works found by the *Kampos Project* (Orengo *et al.* 2015) are potentially of the historical periods. A situation corresponding to the modern completely drained landscape, however, should not be expected for any pre-Industrial period. As Theophrastus (*De caus. plant.* 5.14.4) further observed in a disputed section, the area around the city of Kierion (No. 24) was, in his time, a wet lowland (τόπος κοῖλος καὶ ἔφυδρος), which suffered from frost in the wintertime.¹ The swamps were highly seasonal and must have been important to the local economy all through the pre-Industrial era as grazing ground for livestock during high summer. In the early 20th century, pastures (*livadia*, *tsairia*) were, according to preserved

toponyms, either situated in these marshes or in the hills surrounding the plains (see below). The importance of the swamps for fowl hunting must also have been considerable, as well as for fishing. Until quite recently, the remaining marsh at Metamorfofi was well-known for its crayfish (now extinct due to pesticide poisoning), which were a local delicacy celebrated with an annual culinary festival.

Isolated hills are found at several locations in the plain and form important *topoi* in the landscape. The most prominent are found in the northeastern corner of the area, including the Kourtikiano at Metamorfofi (No. 16), Stroggylovouni at Vlochos (No. 29) and Sykia/Vigla at Klokotos (No. 14) but further, lower hills – such as Makri at Fiki (No. 7), Oglas at Pyrgos Kieriou (No. 24) and Chtouri at Polyneri (No. 1) – are also found in other areas of the plain. As isolated hills attract the gaze of someone in the plain, it is perhaps not surprising that many, if not most of, these hills have ancient fortifications on their tops. Some, however, have not, such as the dramatic Gerakovouni at Dafnospilia or the Petromagoula north of Domokos.

The area immediately east of the plains consists of a hill-land known in scholarly literature as the Revenia, a toponym which is relatively unknown to inhabitants of the western plain. The Revenia stretches in a wide arch from the Mavrovouni hills at Skotousa in the east, to the Dovroutsis hill in the northwest. To the north, northeast, and south, the area gradually slopes to the level of the eastern and western plains but in the west is a threshold-like escarpment facing the area between Orfana and Keramidi. The only pass through this steep slope is at Sykies, where both the pre-modern route and the current national highway between Karditsa and Larisa run. At the southeastern corner of the plain, south of Farsala, is another hill-country, the Kasidiaris, which is separated from the larger Othrys range to its southeast by the Enipeas. South of the Kasidiaris is the Domokos plateau, a fertile tableland at the western end of which was, until the 1940s, a shallow lake known as the Ezeros or Ntaoukli. The plateau ends abruptly in the north with a sharp escarpment over the southern edge of the western plain, with the most important pass at Domokos. To the west are the high hills of the Agrafa, the easternmost part of the Pindos range. The Pindos, which stretches through most of northwestern mainland Greece, constitutes the abrupt west border of the Western Thessalian plain. The slopes above the plain are relatively gentle in the southern parts but become increasingly steep further to the northwest. Wooded foothills spread along the border with the plain and several rivers originate from the mountains to enter the plain through deep ravines. The Pindos is separated from the hills of Chasia by the Pineios in the northwestern corner of the plain. The Chasia and its neighbouring range, the Antichasia, border the plain to its north, with steep hillsides and few traversable passes. The hills constitute important resources as they function as pastures in the summertime, as well as a source for firewood,

which is scarce in the plains. Semi-nomadic ethnic groups such as the Vlachoï and the Sarakatsanoï have historically moved large flocks of sheep in transhumant cycles between plains and hills and mountains, traditions which completely died out in the 20th century.

Until the construction of the railroad line Athens–Thessaloniki in the 19th century, most travellers arrived in Thessaly from the sea, either disembarking at Volos or at Stylida near Lamia. The main route from the latter (and also the main route from the southern mainland) was through the Fourka pass, where the old national highway winds in serpentine up the Othrys from the Valley of Spercheios. The road went on to Domokos (No. 2), from where it took a steep descent down the slope to finally reach the western plain. This part of the plains, however, was until the mid-20th century a vast marsh, and it is probable that most routes led along the foothills, either towards north through the area of Neo Monastiri (No. 19) to Farsala (No. 6) or towards the west, passing by Ekkara (No. 3).

A reason for confusion when studying Thessalian topography is the widespread 20th century phenomenon of renaming communities. When the region was annexed by the Kingdom of Greece in 1881, the villages and rivers of Thessaly had names originating from centuries of multi-lingual coexistence. Local speakers of Greek, Slavic, Turkish, Albanian and Aromanian had all left their imprint on toponyms. This was ill-suited to the ideology of Greek national rebirth, and in analogy to the invention of “purified” Katharevousa Greek, many villages were cleansed of their non-Greek toponyms. One practice in the first half of the 20th century was to “revert” to the names of ancient cities known to have existed in the general proximity, resulting – for example – in Tsioti becoming Farkadona, Lepenitsa becoming Pialeia and Palaïokastro becoming Mitropoli. A more common way of ridding oneself of unwanted names was to choose a religious toponym, often derived from the name of an important local church, such as Kourtiki becoming Metamorfofi, Merichovo becoming Agia Triada, and Kourtesî becoming Prodromos. Local inhabitants, however, continue to use the old name forms which are also preserved in the denominations of village communities, such as *Kourtikianoi*, *Merichovites* and *Kourteses*. Several older research publications, including Stählin’s important *Das hellenische Thessalien* (Stählin 1924) use the pre-reform toponyms which has sometimes led to situations where one archaeological site has been thought of as being two. To be completely clear, I have strived to present all toponyms in the catalogue of this book (Appendix 1).

A very brief overview of the history of ancient Western Thessaly

The history of Thessaly as a whole is not well-known, and most research rarely concerns the western half of the region.

The few studies of the general historical developments are notably outdated, some of which are now over a century old. Roland Grubb Kent’s (1904) doctoral thesis was only partially published but contains summaries of all historical and epigraphic information available at that time. A few years later, Gerhard Kip (1910) presented his Inaugural Dissertation on the political geography, history and constitution of Thessaly, with discussions on the inhabitants of Thessaly proper as well as of its dependent or perioecic peoples. Building on an interest in Jason of Pherai, Henry D. Westlake (1935) published a detailed exposé of the historical developments in the region in the turbulent 4th century BCE which, for a long time, was one of the most influential studies on the region. Roughly 20 years later, Marta Sorti (1958) presented a similarly themed yet much more detailed study of the same period. The latest grand narrative of Thessalian history was Bruno Helly’s (1995a) work on Aleuas the Red of Larisa and the development of the “Thessalian state”. Since then, only thematic studies have been published, such as Sławomir Sprawski’s studies on the tyrants of Pherai and the politics of Philip II in the region in the 4th century BCE (Sprawski 1999; 2003), the Copenhagen Polis Centre’s overview of the *poleis* of the region (Decourt *et al.* 2004), Denver Graninger’s (2011) and Maria Mili’s (2015) studies of Thessalian religion and Richard Bouchon and Bruno Helly’s (2015) exposé of the history of the Thessalian League.

As the historical textual sources – even if not abundant – have a strong bias towards the eastern half of the region and the great centres of Larisa and Pherai, the historical developments of the west are notably understudied. Were such a study to be produced, it would suffer from a lack of material. There are no internal sources apart from inscriptions and any overview of the historical developments would consequently be dependent on short and fragmentary external material and on interpretations of archaeological evidence.

Despite these challenges, and in order to place the development of urbanism of the region in its historical context, I present below a short overview of the history of the area from the end of the Bronze Age to the end of Antiquity. Its purpose is to present the broader and relevant developments for the sake of understanding my arguments. I am aware of its brevity and lack of detail.

The Late Bronze Age

The scholarly understanding of the archaeology of the region in the Late Bronze Age suffers greatly from the lack of any synthesising work presenting a coherent view of the available evidence. What is evident from published excavation reports, however, is that Late Helladic (“Mycenaean”) material culture is well represented in the archaeological record of Western Thessaly. The pottery, figurines and metalwork are typical, showing a continuity of material culture unseparated from the “core Mycenaean areas” of

central and southern Greece. Inland Thessaly (which to a large extent includes Western Thessaly) has, however, been regarded by some as a peripheral area to the “Mycenaean world” (Feuer 2011, 525), a view which at a closer look is reflected poorly in the archaeological evidence. The large tholos tombs at Georgiko (at **No. 17**), southwest of Kallithiro (**No. 11**), and at Ano Ktimeni/Dranista (at **6.1**), with associated grave-goods, do not give the impression of a peripheral community, and the pottery from cemeteries and settlements all belong to the typical Late Helladic shapes of the coastal and central Greek areas. The settlement pattern of Late Bronze Age Western Thessaly remains an understudied subject. It appears from rescue excavations that some of the larger tells – or *magoules* (sing. *magoula*) as they are called locally – on the plain were settlement foci at this time, as exemplified by Magoula Papoutsi at Palamas (Hatziangelakis 2012, 163), the *magoula* at central Markos (Fotini Tsiouka pers. comm.), Magoula Keramaria (Gallis 1984, 176) at Vlochos (**No. 29**), Magoula Paliampela at Fyllo (**No. 8**) and Gefyria (**No. 9**). There is no evidence to either refute or confirm a violent end to the Mycenaean period in the region, and the sub-Mycenaean period is barely known from published excavations.

The Early Iron Age

The study of the Early Iron Age in Western Thessaly is still in its infancy. The period was for long mainly known through burials and the bronzes that were retrieved from the excavations of the sanctuary at Filia (Karouzou 2017). It is only through recent re-assessment of excavated material in the light of new stratigraphically executed excavations that it has become clear that much of what was previously understood as Middle Helladic grey ware pottery is in fact proto-Geometric or Geometric (Karagiannopoulos 2018c, 125–128). This has revealed a much different settlement landscape in the region, with several identified smaller settlements on the plain often located close to important springs. The most important excavated settlements are the villages revealed at Kalathia (see Chapter 2), Ermitsi (**No. 5**) and Orfana (**No. 8**). Some of the settlements appear to have possibly been continuously inhabited from the Late Bronze Age, such as Chtouri (**No. 1**), Neo Monastiri (**No. 19**) and Gefyria (**No. 9**). The burials of the period range from smaller graves, to larger communal and monumental tumuli (Gounaris 2009). The most lavish burial is the proto-Geometric to Geometric tholos at Agioi Theodoroi (Intzesiloglou 2000d, 373), which belongs to the largest tombs of any period in the region. Smaller tholos burials, however, have been noted elsewhere, including at Chomatokastro close to Ermitsi (**No. 5**), or north of Farsala (**No. 6**).

The Archaic period (c. 700–480 BCE)

Thessaly and, to an even greater degree, Western Thessaly, features but sparingly in the written sources of the Archaic period. The name of the region itself is not used in the

Homeric epics, but the region is described in the *Catalogue of Ships* (Il. 2.681–756, see Chapter 2) as consisting of several “kingdoms” containing 29 toponyms which traditionally have been understood as “cities” (Decourt *et al.* 2004, 677). Several – but far from all – of these toponyms are reflected in Classical and Hellenistic ethnics and communities of the region. The earliest appearances of the name Thessalia/Thettalia (Θεσσαλία/Θετταλία) are in the Pythian Odes by Pindar (*Pyth.* 10) of 498 BCE and in a fragment of Anacreon (*fl.* early 5th century BCE, Fr. 107), both consequently of the very end of the Archaic period. The word *Thessalos* (Θεσσαλός), “Thessalian”, appears, however, already in a fragment by Alcman (Fr. 16) in the 7th century, where it is used in a pejorative manner to denote a foolish, bucolic person from a backwater region in contrast to what it is meant to be a civilised Sardinian (Crielaard 2009, 359). The few preserved literary sources present a situation in the late Archaic period with influential aristocratic families, which is further supported by the lavish burials excavated at several locations throughout the region. The burials display several common traits with Early Iron Age customs, both in their location and execution, and it has been argued that they functioned as legitimising statements for the local elites by acting as links with a glorious past (Stamatopoulou 2006; 316; 2016, 192). The aristocratic families were mainly associated with the important communities (*poleis*?) of Larisa, Krannon and Pharsalos, but appear to have interacted within a civic pan-Thessalian environment, in later periods characterised as an *ethnos* (Stamatopoulou 2006, 317; 2016, 191). The aristocratic families in Thessaly joined with the Persians (“medised”) after the other Greeks had abandoned the stand at the Tempe pass in 480 BCE (Hdt. 7.174), and they later bribed the Spartan king Leutychides who had been sent on an expedition to punish the Thessalians for their betrayal (Hdt. 6.72; Paus. 3.7.9. Stamatopoulou 2006, 337). This story harmonises with the fabled wealth of the Thessalian aristocracy, which in all probability originated in their control over the vast arable lands in the region (Stamatopoulou 2006, 327).

Scholars often point out that the fragmentary literary record suggests that towards the end of the Archaic period Thessaly was divided into four units – *tetradēs* (τετράδες) or “tetrads” (Helly 1995a, 9; Sprawski 1999, 17; Decourt *et al.* 2004, 680; Bouchon and Helly 2015, 233; Graninger 2011, 11; Mili 2019, 278; Stamatopoulou 2019, 22–23). These units were, according to some scholars, for the purpose of military conscription and thus did not aim at dividing the region into topographic areas but in four demographical parts (Sprawski 1999, 19; Stamatopoulou 2006, 316). The sources for this having occurred are few and late, the interpretation mainly based on a fragment of the Aristotelian *Constitution of the Thessalians* dating to the 4th century BCE. According to most scholarship, Western Thessaly belonged to the tetrads of Hestiaiotis (Ἑστιαιώτις) and Thessaliotis (Θεσσαλιώτις), with the area of Pharsalos

(No. 6) belonging to Phthiotis (Φθιώτις). The community of Thaumakoi (No. 2) at the southern edge of the western plain belonged, in the Classical period, to the area of Achaia Phthiotis (Ἀχαΐα Φθιώτις), but whether this was also the case in the Archaic period cannot be ascertained. Achaia Phthiotis was, together with Perrhaibia in the north and Magnesia at the coast, one of the perioecic areas, regions traditionally regarded as subjected to “Thessaly proper” or tetradic Thessaly.

Writing appears early in the region in the shape of an inscribed pithos jar of the 7th century (Doulgeri-Intzesiloglou 2000, 22–23, from No. 5), but inscriptions – as in the rest of Greece – are rare throughout the Archaic period. This is also the case with monumental architecture but the discovery of an Archaic Doric-style temple close to Mitropoli (No. 17) indicates that the picture might change in the future.

The 5th century BCE

The beginning of the Classical period in Western Thessaly constitutes much of a gap. Most sources which relate to this period mention how the Thessalians participated in the conflicts between Athens and Sparta in the southern parts of the central Greek mainland (Stamatopoulou 2006, 337–338) but, apart from the turbulent politics of Pharsalos (No. 6), the information is mainly irrelevant for the western plain. Thessaly was at the time organised in a league (*koinon*), the nature of which is still debated (Bouchon and Helly 2015). It appears, however, that this league was relatively loosely organised and not fully federal (Mili 2019), with the individual local communities organising their internal affairs as they pleased but joining forces when a common threat presented itself. The communities of the western plain struck their own coins from the beginning of this period. The imagery of the pan-Thessalian “monetary union” (Bouchon and Helly 2015, 238–239) – if it existed – features on several of the coins, including the bull-wrestling scene and the horse head. Funerary and domestic evidence from a handful of excavated sites, including Pharsalos, Kalathia and Gefyria (No. 9), show that the region prospered in the period, with Athenian and even Italic imports noted among the finds. Settlements were relatively large, with semi-regular layouts and a continuous preference for apsidal houses.

The first half of the 4th century BCE

As stated above, most of the historical developments in Thessaly in the 4th century are only known from the eastern parts of the region. This is mainly because the many political conflicts of the day related to the *poleis* of Pherai and Larisa which, at the time, were the dominant centres of Thessaly. However, as the Pharsalians (No. 6) were often involved in these conflicts, there is some limited information regarding the situation also on the western plain. At the beginning of the century and the advent of the Corinthian

War (395–387 BCE), Pharsalos was held by a Lacedaemonian garrison. At least one of its leading aristocratic families had close ties with Sparta and later sought an alliance with the Lacedaemonians for the protection against the growing threat of the neighbouring Pheraians. Pherai had grown to become an expansionist power under the leadership of the tyrant Lycophron, resulting in bloody conflicts with the other Thessalian communities and the eventual disintegration of the Thessalian League (Sprawski 1999, 38–40). Lycophron’s successor at Pherai, Jason, continued the expansionist policies, and managed in the 370s to take full control of the whole of Thessaly. Installing himself as *tagos*, an old civic magistrate position which he modified into meaning the supreme military leader of Thessaly and the perioecic areas, he made Thessaly one of the great powers of mainland Greece. This was only to last for a short while, however, as he was murdered in 370 BCE (Sprawski 1999, 115–116). We know little of how Jason’s policies influenced Western Thessaly but the extensive military organisation that was introduced in the 370s must certainly have had its effect upon local society.

The Macedonian period (c. 350–200 BCE)

Western Thessaly really only enters the annals of history at the middle of the 4th century BCE when the area came under the dominance of the Macedonian kingdom (Helly 2009). The traditional narrative of how Philip was elected *archon* of the Thessalians after the Battle of the Crocus Fields (c. 353 BCE) gives the impression of a relatively peaceful annexation (Sprawski 2003, 58–59; Graninger 2010, 314). However, fragmentary information in the late Polyaeus (4.2) indicates a longer period of internal strife, including an account of how the Macedonians sacked the fortified city of Pharkadon. The Macedonian kingdom fundamentally transformed Thessaly and its settlements during the c. 150 years it ruled over the area. Macedonian cultural influence can be inferred from jewellery and pottery excavated in tombs, for example at Paliogardiki (No. 20) and Pyrgos Kieriou (No. 24). The rationale behind the Macedonian interest in the region was probably the abundance of arable land and the famous Thessalian cavalry (Sprawski 2003, 56). The latter became incorporated in the Macedonian war machine and participated in the great conquests in Asia. Under Macedonian rule, local communities were apparently allowed to run their internal affairs, as indicated by inscriptions. Many cities displayed loyalty to the Macedonians in cases of external threat, including Pharsalos, which was rewarded with extended influence over its lesser neighbours (Boehm 2018, 68–69). Others were less faithful, especially the cities in the perioecic areas in the south, which joined the more and more influential Aetolian League in the second half of the 3rd century (Graninger 2011, 26–27). The complex situation with varying loyalties became quite evident in the tumultuous final years of the century when Rome started to become interested in the area.

The Macedonian and Seleucid Wars with aftermath

In Livy's accounts of the Macedonian and Seleucid Wars in 200–196 and 192–188 BCE (Liv. 32; 34), Western Thessaly receives more attention than in any other ancient text, mainly as it was the theatre of several of the important campaigns of the Romans. The landscape as described from Livy's sources is one with many fortified cities (*oppida, urbes*), several of which can be identified with locations in the catalogue. Some of the cities were clearly pro-Macedonian and had Macedonian garrisons which resisted hard Roman sieges (Pelinna, Atrax), whereas others – such as Matropolis (No. 17) and Kierion (No. 24) – peacefully surrendered to the Roman generals. Many of the cities only figure as having been destroyed during the course of the conflicts, either through siege and sacking, or as part of Macedonian scorched earth tactics to disallow the Romans any advantage after a victory in battle. The routes of the various armies traversing the landscape as they are presented in Livy have provided the main set of evidence for the traditional identification of several cities with archaeological sites (Béquignon 1928; Decourt 1990, 97–107). The decisive battle to end the era of Macedonian dominance over Greece took place at Kynoskephalai near Pharsalos in 197 BCE, with the forces of the Roman consul Flamininus defeating those under king Philip V. Flamininus subsequently declared the liberty of the Greeks at the Isthmian Games of 196 BCE and re-instated the Thessalian League as a functioning administrative body (Graninger 2011, 28–29; Bouchon and Helly 2015, 240–241). Inscriptions indicate that the local political communities (*poleis*) continued to function and even thrive in the subsequent period. However, there is also evidence for considerable destruction at many of the urban centres in the first decades of the 2nd century BCE, indicating a possible sudden de-urbanisation of the communities. Some of the more influential Western Thessalian *poleis* had citizens elected leaders (*stratagoi*) of the Thessalian League, including Matropolis, Gomphoi and Kierion, showing that they had benefited under the new political organisation. Pharsalos, however, having been the most influential *polis* in Western Thessaly in the Classical and Hellenistic periods, is completely absent from the epigraphical record, indicating its probable demise.

The Late Roman Republic (150–27 BCE)

Fragmentary information from literary sources indicate that much of Thessaly was ravaged and conquered by the Macedonians under Andriskos, the self-styled Philip VI (“False Philip”), during the Fourth Macedonian War in the early 140s BCE. The effects of this conflict on the local communities, whether they ceded to the Macedonians or not, is not known, but it is probable that the conflict had a negative effect on local autonomy in Thessaly as it had in the rest of Greece. The Roman province of Macedonia, created

in 148 BCE by the *praetor* Metellus, incorporated Thessaly, making it formally a part of Rome. The league continued to act as a local political body, but epigraphic evidence from the following years indicates several organisational reforms (Bouchon and Helly 2015, 246). Even if some of the cities and communities survived the conflicts, the available archaeological evidence suggests that only relatively few continued to be inhabited after the middle of the century. Notably, the most important cities of Western Thessaly in the early Roman period were not necessarily the same as in the Hellenistic era. The main cities were Gomphoi (probably at Episkopi, No. 4), Kierion (No. 24), and Matropolis (No. 17), which feature in Roman era sources as notable centres in the region, but smaller centres could also be found at Thaumakoi (No. 2), Kedros (No. 13), Krini (No. 15), Trikka (No. 28) and Phayttos (No. 30). The “tetrads” continued to function in some respect into this period, as they are described in an inscription of c. 150–130 BCE (*SEG XXXIV 558 33–34*) outlining a decision by the League to send grain to Rome. Western Thessaly became part of Roman collective memory as the theatre of a decisive battle of the Roman Civil War in 48 BCE, when the troops under Caesar defeated the army of Pompey at Pharsalos (No. 6).

The Imperial Roman period (1st–3rd centuries CE)

The Imperial Roman period constitutes maybe the least known part of Western Thessalian history and archaeology. This is in contrast with the fact that most of the literary sources providing information as to the topography and history of the region date to this time. From an archaeological perspective, it is a period of decline, with relatively few sites continuing to be inhabited from the Hellenistic and Early Roman periods. The available evidence suggests that most of the city sites were either abandoned or considerably reduced in size by the time of Augustus's accession. Whether the extremely fertile landscape was used for the large plantation-like farms known from elsewhere in Greece cannot be ascertained yet, but a bath complex probably belonging to a villa has been excavated southwest of Sykies (No. 27), and the existence of Imperial estates in Western Thessaly can be inferred from an inscription from Palamas (Vaïopoulou *et al.* 2022, 93–95). Inscriptions from the federal sanctuary of Athena Itonia at Filia show that the location was still in use in the period and that wealthy Thessalians were recruited for the Macedonian senate (*SEG XXXVII 492; 493*). Manumission inscriptions from over the region further attest to the continuous function of the *poleis*, even as their former urban centres were more-or-less uninhabited. The Thessalian League also continued its operations, issuing coins with the image of the emperors and often empresses until the second half of the 3rd century, when all minting ended abruptly. This latter point constitutes a critical period in Thessalian history, with 700 years of relative continuity being disrupted

within just a generation. Possibly brought on by the Gothic invasions of the Balkans and the “crisis of the 3rd century”, the Thessalian League and the *poleis* all disappear from the numismatic (Rogers 1932, 55–56), epigraphic and historical record in the 260s CE.

The Late Roman and Early Byzantine periods (4th–7th centuries CE)

After the collapse of the old political systems in the late 3rd century CE, Thessaly entered a nebulous period which is still poorly understood. A substantial re-organisation of the political and inhabited landscape can be inferred from the scanty evidence, with the old League and the *poleis* no longer functioning. Some of the evidence suggests that previously deserted city-sites were re-inhabited during this period, in the case of Vlochos (No. 29) in the shape of a more typical frontier-style Roman town of the type common in the northern Balkans. Whether there were further examples of such re-established towns in the area, or if Vlochos was unique, is at present not known. The available evidence from Vlochos suggests that the town was not inhabited for long, but what caused its end and at what exact point in time cannot be determined. It is only in the 6th century that the archaeological situation becomes somewhat clearer. The century represents a boom in the construction of fortifications within Thessaly and central Greece as a whole, and Western Thessaly constitutes no exception. The emperor Justinian’s building programme, aiming at strengthening the defence of local communities in the region, led to many fortresses being constructed on and around the plain, with several dilapidated Classical–Hellenistic urban sites being refortified. Procopius (*De aed.* 4.3) mentions that Pharsalos, Matropolis, Gomphoi and Trika – the main administrative centres of the area – were among the cities (*poleis*) that the emperor had refortified. From an archaeological perspective, it appears like the refortification scheme was unsuccessful, with little to indicate further investment at most of the sites after the death of Justinian. Only Pharsalos, Matropolis and Trika remained inhabited among the cities mentioned by Procopius, and the many other locations where restorations had taken place in the 6th century were all abandoned at the end of antiquity.

Into the Middle Ages

Little is known of the developments in the region as it passed out of the hands of the Roman Empire. Few of the preserved churches date back to this period and, among the toponyms, only Trikala, Farsala and Domokos reflected the Trika, Pharsalos and Thaumakoi of antiquity. The northern part of the plain is one of the areas in Greece with the highest concentration of Slavic toponyms (Koder 2020, 86–86) which, together with recent discoveries at Vlochos (Vaïopoulou *et al.* 2022, 83–84), indicates a potential

Slavic influx into the area in the 7th or 8th centuries CE. From this point and until the end of the Middle Ages, there is virtually nothing in the archaeological record to indicate any considerable settlements in Western Thessaly. Large fortresses were kept by the various lords and despots governing the region, however, indicating that there was still an interest in higher political circles to maintain influence over the area.

A summary of previous research

Thessaly is to a certain extent one of the least well-studied regions of ancient Greece. A simple bibliometric comparison made with Attica, Boeotia and the Argolid supports this, but in essence it is only true when it comes to non-Greek and especially Anglophone scholarship (Aston 2012, 247–248). The state of research on Thessalian topics has improved significantly over the last 20 years, not only due to the domestic archaeological rescue works in the region, but also because of more interest from Greek scholars. Foreign interest in the region has increased as well, both through archaeological projects and synthesising works. However, this is only true when it comes to Eastern Thessaly, which is clearly over-represented in studies of the region as a whole (Karouzou 2017). The western half remains largely understudied (Stamatopoulou 2012b, 75; Orengo *et al.* 2015, 100), and it is difficult to get an overview of published material of any historical period without a close study of a highly fragmented official record. There are some relevant synthesising works which should be mentioned. For urban sites of the Archaic and Classical periods, some of the (then) available material was compiled together with associated literary sources in the chapter on Thessaly in the *Inventory of Archaic and Classical Poleis* (Decourt *et al.* 2004). As this study had the focus of *poleis* in the stated historical periods, it lacks in detail on the Hellenistic period, to which most of the urban sites in the region belong. A more overarching but more public-oriented synthesis was edited by Elsa Nikolaou and Sofia Kravaritou (2012), presenting all of the ancient *poleis* of Thessaly as well as the sites associated with them, together with much of the literary evidence. Much hitherto unpublished material relating to urban sites in the region can also be found in Leonidas Hatziangelakis’s (2007) chapter on prehistoric and historic archaeology in a guidebook to the sites of the region of Karditsa. Finally, the gazetteer by Georgios Zachos (2021) presents virtually all the Roman archaeology of Thessaly (excluding some of the perioecic areas). The integrated role of religion in Thessalian politics and identity is discussed by Denver Graninger (2011), and the “urban” or *polis* cults in Thessaly (including the west) have been outlined in great detail by Maria Mili (2015), who – focusing on the Classical and Hellenistic periods – demonstrates the vivid and sometimes confusing cultic

practices in the region. Gerald Lalonde's (2019) recent monograph on Athena Itonia contains much information about the cult of the goddess at the great sanctuary at Filia in Western Thessaly and adds to Graninger's and Mili's studies.

Greek archaeological work in Western Thessaly

The first Greek to systematically tackle the question of Thessalian archaeology was the Volos amateur scholar Nikolaos Georgiadis (1837–1923) whose *Thessalia* (Georgiadis 1880; second edition 1894) was published just months before Thessaly became part of the Kingdom of Greece in 1881. For long, it was one of the main first-hand sources of information on Thessalian antiquities but, being a product of its time, it contains much speculation and imprecise observations. The area of Western Thessaly was at the time remotely located from Volos and Georgiadis only summarily described some of the sites relevant to this study. In the early days of Greek Thessaly, the main archaeological authority in the region was the appointed ephor of antiquities in Larisa, the first being the *gymnasion* teacher Eleftherios T. Kousis, who sent in several reports of finds to the General Ephorate of Antiquities in Athens. In 1905, probably as a consequence of his ardent work for the preservation of antiquities, the journalist Apostolos Samaropoulos was made curator (*epimelitis*) of antiquities in the *nomos* of Karditsa. Samaropoulos sent several reports to the central authorities (Rönnlund forthcoming), and published some of his discoveries in a guidebook to the region of Karditsa (Samaropoulos 1901).

From c. 1910 until WWII, the four regions (*nomoi*) of Thessaly, together with the part now belonging to Fthiotida, were under the jurisdiction of the 9th Archaeological Periphery. Among the first ephors active in the region we may note Panagiotis Kastriotis (1859–1931) and Apostolos Arvanitopoulos (1874–1942). After the war, the four regions (excluding Fthiotida) were re-organised into the 12th Archaeological Periphery, which lasted until 1973. That year, new legislation was passed creating three ephorates of antiquities (*eforeies archaiotiton*): one in Volos responsible for the region of Magnisia; one in Larisa responsible for the regions of Larisa, Karditsa, and Trikala; and one in Lamia, responsible for the region of Fthiotida (Deriziotis 1979, 32; Gallis 1979c, 3). A few years later, the region of Karditsa became the responsibility of the Ephorate of Volos. As the headquarters of the ephorates were in far-off Larisa and Volos, for a long time Western Thessaly remained a distant and relatively unknown region. It was only in 2004 and 2014 that new ephorates were instated in Karditsa and Trikala which, together with the large infrastructural developments in the following years, constituted a major turning point in the history of research in the region.

The results of the excavations and surveys conducted by the ephorates have mainly been published as short reports

in governmental bulletins or presented at local conferences. A handful of names dominates these reports until the last ephorate reform, mirroring the then small number of archaeologists working in the region. The Ephorate of Volos was for long represented in the peripheral unit of Karditsa by Charalambos “Babis” Intzesiloglou, who for two decades conducted excavations at several of the sites in the catalogue. Leonidas Hatziangelakis, also of the ephorate in Volos and later the first ephor of the Ephorate of Karditsa, similarly conducted excavations in the same area, as well as in the region of Trikala. Elisavet “Elsa” Nikolaou of the same ephorate oversaw many of the infrastructural works in the central parts of the plain, with her colleague Vasiliki “Vaso” Rondiri doing the same especially for the area of modern Mitropoli. The Ephorate of Larisa conducted much work in modern Farsala (ancient Pharsalos), with extensive rescue excavations from the 1960s and onwards. After the early death of the director Dimitris Theocharis, Konstantinos Gallis oversaw much of this work, which was later continued by Giorgios Toufexis, Styliani “Stella” Katakouta and Sofia Karapanou. Epigraphical discoveries from all the area covered by the ephorate were often published by its then-ephor Athanasios Tziafalias. A small section of the southeastern part of the plain, corresponding to the northern villages of the present municipality of Domokos, has been under the jurisdiction of the Ephorate of Fthiotida and Evrytania. Few excavations were conducted here, with the exception of Neo Monastiri, a community that was moved in the 1960s to its present location after the destructions caused by the war crimes carried out by the Italian army during WWII and the catastrophic earthquakes of the 1950s, prompting many rescue excavations. These were supervised by the ephor Fanouria Dakoronia and her successor Maria-Fotini Papakonstantinou.

As a consequence of the 2014 re-organisation of the Greek archaeological authorities (Fig. 3), by which each peripheral unit was equipped with its own ephorate, most of the western plain came under the jurisdiction of the Ephorate of Antiquities of Karditsa, with the northern edge under the Ephorate of Antiquities of Trikala. Among the archaeologists active within these new ephorates we may note Maria Vaïopoulou, Krystallo Mantzana, Dimitris Athanasiou, Evaggelia Dafi, Christos Karagiannopoulos, Constantinos Koutsadelis, Nancy Krahtopoulou, Fotini Sofianou, Lefki Theogianni, Fotini Tsiouka, Konstantinos Vouzaxakis and others, all contributing to the substantial wealth of new material reported in the *Archaiologikon Deltion*. The eastern end remained within the area of the Ephorate of Antiquities of Larisa, and the southeastern corner with the Ephorate of Antiquities of Fthiotida and Evrytania. The former Ephorate of Volos, now the Ephorate of Antiquities of Magnisia, was after this reform no longer associated with Western Thessaly.

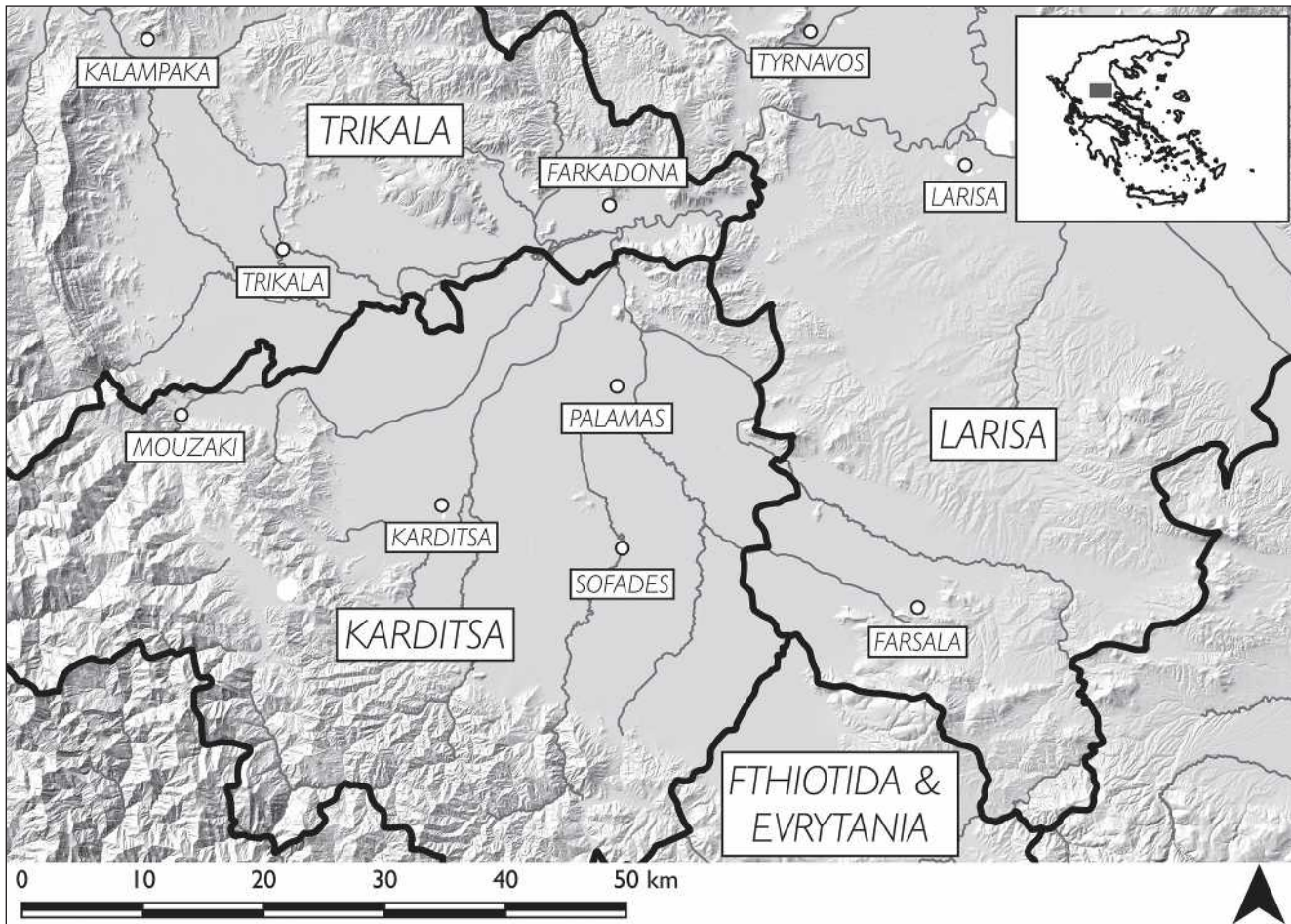


Figure 3 Present extent of the jurisdiction of the archaeological directorates (ephorates) of Western Thessaly, with modern cities and towns.

Foreign archaeological work in Western Thessaly

Being part of the Ottoman empire until 1881 and far from any common route of travel, Western Thessaly does not feature in Western literature prior to the late 18th century. The first known Western scholar of antiquity to visit the area was the Swedish philologist Jacob Jonas Björnsthål (1731–1779) who, on his 1779 travel from Volos to the monasteries of Meteora, arrived at a number of archaeological sites in the upper Pineios basin, including Alifaka (ancient Atrax), Zarkos (No. 30) and Klokotos (No. 14) (Björnsthål 1783, 138–140). Björnsthål contracted dysentery on his way back from Thessaly and died in Thessaloniki shortly after. His reports were published posthumously in letter form and became well-known over Europe in German and Italian translations. Many of Björnsthål's papers, including his transcriptions of Thessalian inscriptions, ended up in a Russian collection and their present whereabouts are unknown (Sabatakakis 2021, 450). Several Western travellers visited Western Thessaly in the following decades, most notably the British antiquarian and diplomat William Martin Leake (1777–1860), who traversed the region several times in 1800s, noting many archaeological sites.

His observations were published much later in his *Travels in Northern Greece* (Leake 1835a; 1835b). The young Danish philologist Johan Louis Ussing (1820–1905) travelled extensively in the region in 1846 and published his many important observations in Danish (Ussing 1847) and later in German translation. Together with Georgiadi's (1880) aforementioned volume and the observations made by the French scholars Léon Heuzey (1831–1922) and Honoré Daumet (1826–1911) (Heuzey and Daumet 1876; Heuzey 1927), Leake and Ussing's publications remained the main sources for the knowledge of the archaeology of Western Thessaly until the early 20th century.

The German epigraphist Habbo Lolling (1848–1894) made three extensive trips to Thessaly in 1881, 1882 and 1884, shortly after its annexation by the Kingdom of Greece. Mainly transcribing inscriptions, Lolling's work has for long been associated with the epigraphy of the region, but his unpublished notebooks (*Lolling 1*; *Lolling 2*), kept in the Athens archives of the German Archaeological Institute, contain surprisingly detailed plan-sketches of several sites (Fig. 4), some of which have since been destroyed or damaged. Lolling's epigraphical work was continued

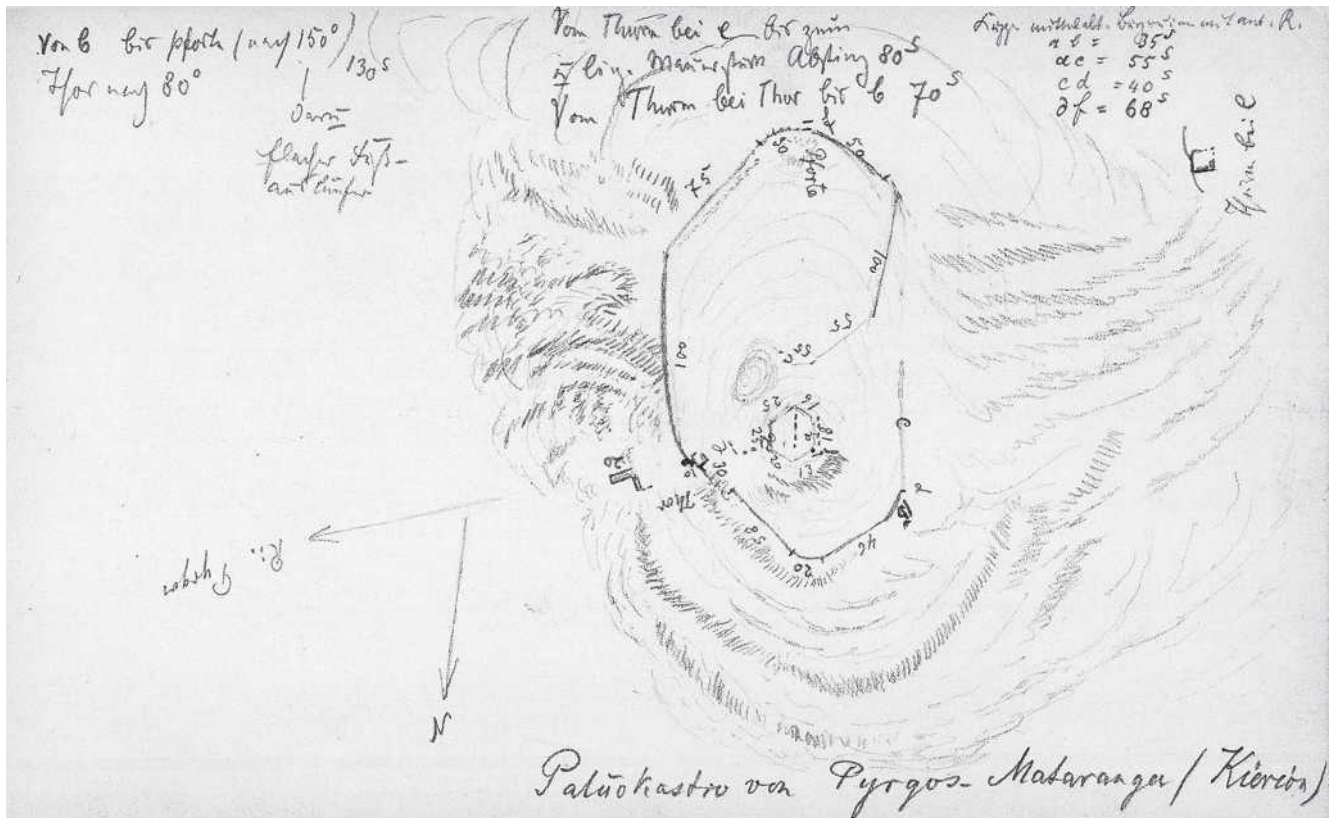


Figure 4 Lolling's 1882 sketch of the fortifications at Pargos, the akropolis of ancient Kierion (No. 24) (Lolling 2, 30). Unpublished notebook kept in the archive of the German Archaeological Institute, Athens. D-DAI-ATH-Archiv NL-Lolling-R-2-C-6. CC BY-NC-ND 3.0.

by Otto Kern (1863–1942), who published all Thessalian inscriptions known at the time in the *Inscriptiones Graecae* series (IG IX,2). The British prehistorians Alan J.B. Wace (1879–1957) and Maurice S. Thompson (1884–1971) conducted excavations at the Tsani Magoula at Sofades in 1909 (Wace and Thompson 1912, 135–149), and Wace's (*Wace 2*) notebooks contain several important observations of the general archaeology of the area.

Collating the observations made by the early travellers and the recent archaeological discoveries made by the local archaeological authorities, the German archaeologist and philologist Friedrich Stählin (1874–1936) published his *Das hellenische Thessalien* (Stählin 1924). This work remains, to this day, the most influential publication on Thessalian archaeology and has been reprinted and translated into Greek and Italian. Stählin had visited several sites in Western Thessaly, making sketches of the visible remains, and he included the relevant ancient sources and their significance into his account. He also published several entries in the *Pauly-Wissowa (RE)* encyclopaedia on ancient sites in the region, including information collected in the 1920s and 1930s. The French archaeologist Yves Béquignon (1899–1990) conducted excavations in the area of Farsala in the 1920s and made several important observations on the topography of Livy's accounts of the historical events in the region (Béquignon 1928; 1932; 1933; 1935). The French

presence in Western Thessaly continued in the second half of the 20th century through the work of the so-called Lyon school. Starting from the 1970s, several scholars of what is now the Maison de l'Orient et de la Méditerranée of the University of Lyon have been active in Thessaly as a whole. The most productive in the group concerning Western Thessaly and the basin of Enipeas in particular is Jean-Claude Decourt, whose *La vallée de l'Énipeus* (1990) and *Inscriptions de Thessalie I* (1995) provide invaluable information regarding the sites of the eastern and northeastern part of the region. The French conducted several extensive surveys in the 1980s and 1990s at the northern edge of the area, mainly in the foothills of the Antichasia hill-range, as well as a 1977 collaborative survey (unpublished) with the Ephorate of Larisa of the site of Alifaka, ancient Atrax, immediately northeast of the plain (Decourt 2013; Tziafalias *et al.* 2016).

In the southeastern corner of the plains, in the area under the supervision of the Ephorate of Antiquities of Fthiotida and Evrytania, an Italian programme under Floriana Cantarelli embarked in the late 1980s and 1990s to map all the archaeological sites. One volume (Cantarelli *et al.* 2008) has so far been published, with another reportedly in press, containing information on the chronology of several hitherto unknown sites.

So far, four formalised projects (with permits issued centrally by the ministry) involving the foreign archaeological

schools in Athens have been carried out in the region. The Greek–British excavations (2010–) at the Koutroulou Magoula close to Neo Monastiri (No. 19) and the Greek–Austrian works (2014–2017) at Plateia Magoula at Zarkos (No. 30) concerned Neolithic settlements and only the *Vlochos Archaeological Project* (2016–2018) and its successor the *Palamas Archaeological Project* (2020–) focusing on Vlochos (No. 29) have dealt with remains relevant to this study (Vaïopoulou *et al.* 2020; 2021; 2022; forthcoming).

“Cities” in Western Thessaly, or, how to compile a catalogue

What is a city? A superficial survey of scholarly literature on urbanism in ancient Greece will show that this question is rarely asked and even more rarely answered. Discussions have instead been focused on conceptual issues and whether it is possible to define cities in any way relevant to the perceived literary and archaeological material (Morgan and Coulton 1997; Schallin 1997; Osborne 2005; Zuiderhoek 2017, 4, 8; Karambinis 2018, 271–272). The near-universal conclusion to this discussion has been that it is not possible to do so, leaving the meaning of words such as “city”, “town” or “urban” open for interpretation. However, the unresolvedness of the problem does not mean that it disappears. It is surprising how common it is in discussions on the nature of the word *polis* to encounter expressions such as “the *polis* as city”, without any definition what “city” is supposed to denote. What is implied by these terms can often only be perceived through the choice of analogies and parallels. In some cases, the conceptual roots of the idea of a city can be discerned, but only indirectly, such as in Armin von Gerkan’s classic *Griechische Städteanlagen* (von Gerkan 1924). Von Gerkan never borrows terminology from ancient Greece, and his concept of the *Stadt*/city is clearly derived from a specific medieval or early modern European type of settlement, which can be grasped from his choice of terms (*Markt, Burg, etc.*). To regard the ancient Greek city as analogous to a medieval city is naturally anachronistic but this at least presents some idea of what a “city” means to the scholar. Generally, scholarly works on ancient urbanism – be they on urbanism generally or on a specific city – rarely give such analogies, state any definitions or discuss conceptual challenges. Descriptions of “urban” sites and “cities” are given but the rationales for their classification are not.

When attempting to study the development of urbanism and cities in a specific region from an archaeological perspective, however, it is pressing to confront these issues. My main point here is that we cannot and should not try to address the question of “what was a city in antiquity”, but instead focus on “how we can identify cities in the archaeological record”. These are two fundamentally different things. A “city” is an archaeological category and not a mode of settlement organisation employed by ancient

societies. The creation of a “catalogue of cities” for the study of their physical traits and chronological development is something that takes place today, not in antiquity. This is not a study of a concept in a far-gone history, but an attempt at understanding material remains preserved until today. We should consequently try to be specific in what we read into the terms in relation to what we are studying (Smith 2020). The compilation of a “catalogue of cities” *must*, in my meaning, include some kind of discriminative factors, be they definitions, spectra or categories. Even if we cannot be too specific, we still cannot be too vague.

Inevitably, the quality of the available evidence will cause issues, as some sites are not sufficiently well-published to allow for either acceptance or dismissal. Well-published sites will also inevitably have more impact on the analysis than less well-published sites. The case of Athens is illustrative of this on a Panhellenic level; being the most well-known ancient “city”, with a superabundance of published material, it is often thought to be representative of the ancient world when, in fact, it was quite atypical (McInerney 1999, 4; Vlassopoulos 2019, 47). In this book, I have strived to circumvent some of these issues by establishing a catalogue not of ancient cities but of sites relevant for the study (Appendix 1). In essence, it is a catalogue of what can arguably be the “big settlement sites” known from the region as determined by their chronology. I acknowledge the idiosyncratic nature of my selection. Some of the sites were most probably urban at some point in their history, whereas others were not. I am of the opinion that a larger and more inclusive body of settlement sites should be included in the analysis before eventual identifications of urbanism are done.

As stated above, to discuss the development of urbanism requires definitions. In compiling the historiography of Western Thessalian archaeology (see above) it became evident that a more archaeological understanding of what constitutes a “city” had to be formulated for the sake of identifying sites. Previous attempts have been either unsystematic or too reliant on external historical evidence to fit this specific purpose. Generally, the existence of “cities” and *poleis* in Thessaly and elsewhere in Greece from the Archaic period onwards has, for long, been assumed (to name but a few, see Stählin 1924; Decourt 1990; Morgan and Coulton 1997; Hansen 2000, 149; Graninger 2011, 11; Mili 2015, 54; Boehm 2018) but the archaeological and historical evidence to systematically support this view has, to my knowledge, never been compiled. As an example, presenting their rationale behind their choice of entries to be included in the *Inventory of Archaic and Classical poleis* (Hansen and Nielsen 2004), Jean-Claude Decourt and Bruno Helly (Decourt and Helly 2006) use *polis* and *cit * interchangeably without defining the latter, a practice which has long been common in research literature (to name but a few, Snodgrass 1992; Morgan and Coulton 1997; Mili 2015; Zuiderhoek 2017; Boehm 2018; Karambinis 2018).

The use of the word *polis* (pl. *poleis*) in modern scholarly literature and the problems it carries with it deserves a book of its own. In modern Demotic Greek, the word *poleis* is both the plural of *polis* (πόλις, ancient *polis*) and of *poli* (πόλη, modern city). That means that when Greek scholars write of “*archaies poleis*”, it is both conceptually and semantically difficult for the reader to separate ancient political organisation from the idea of a city. The *Archaies poleis Thessalias* (Nikolaou and Kravaritou 2012) presents the “*poleis*” of ancient Thessaly (Kravaritou 2012a), which means that the book does not only present the political communities known from ancient sources, but also the urban remains found within the region, spanning from the Neolithic sites of Sesklo and Dimini to the Justinianic period. With the dual meaning in Greek, this is natural, but to argue for the existence of *poleis* in the Late Bronze Age in the English language is problematic or at least challenging. As has been demonstrated by the *Copenhagen Polis Centre*, the word *polis* had several subsequent and simultaneous meanings over the course of antiquity (Hansen and Nielsen 2004, 39–46). Its meanings were thus never static.

To approach the identification of ancient cities through the concept of the *polis* is consequently a precarious route. In one of the *Copenhagen Polis Centre* volumes, Catherine Morgan and James J. Coulton (Morgan and Coulton 1997) argued that it is difficult to identify *poleis* status in ancient Greek communities through the physical appearance of urban remains. Their argument was based on the application of urban characteristics (as proposed by Max Weber (1966) and Gordon Childe (1951)) upon archaeological remains commonly associated with *poleis*. By demonstrating that many confirmed *polis* settlements of the Archaic and Classical period differ much from these characteristics, they concluded that without supporting (literary) evidence, it is impossible to detect “*polis* towns” through archaeological methods only. My main objection to this otherwise excellent paper is that Morgan and Coulton never define what “town” and “city” essentially mean to them; what kind of settlements these words are supposed to describe. The same is valid with the preceding chapter by Mogens H. Hansen (1997b), which forms the conceptual basis of the article by Morgan and Coulton. Hansen argues throughout his article for the validity of regarding “town” or “city” as possible meanings of “*polis*”, but avoids (Hansen 1997b, 41–42) explaining what these words – including adjectives such as “urban” – are supposed to imply. The implications of not specifying terms becomes evident when Morgan and Coulton (1997, 92) use “city” (as a proxy for “*polis*”) to describe Early Iron Age and Archaic communities known from archaeology to have consisted of scattered, smaller nuclei without continuous intermediate habitation areas. Even if I do not doubt that these communities might have constituted *poleis*, I find it unsuitable and potentially misleading to refer to them as “cities” or “towns”, especially

without closer specification. The main issue, however, is that the Weberian and Childean characteristics (population density, crafts, monumental architecture, social stratification, writing, trade) explored and discussed by the authors are not relating to political communities (such as *poleis*) generally, but to *cities* explicitly. I consequently argue that we have to approach the question of Greek urbanism from this latter perspective, avoiding ancient terminology and addressing the physical attributes of ancient cities as discernible from their material remains.

How then are we to identify cities in the archaeological record? As framed above, the question has rarely been asked in studies on ancient Greece but the debate is ongoing within the study of other city cultures, such as that of Mainland Europe, Central America and Saharan Africa (Gaydarska 2017, 178–180). Urban characteristics in the Weberian and Childean tradition are still debated and developed and, to a large degree, still employed. In his short chapter illustratively named *How can archaeologists identify early cities?*, Michael E. Smith continues along this way of thinking, outlining the difficulties and challenges in identifying ancient “cities” in the archaeological record. Smith argues, however, that “a reliance on definitions of urbanism is not the best way to identify and understand the earliest cities” (Smith 2016, 166). Too strict definitions are not helpful and will often exclude relevant sites rather than help at identifying them. Smith points out that the ways and traditions according to which cities were established and developed differ considerably in time and space, and that economic, political and religious factors may produce quite different settlement types depending on context. Further difficulties may also arise when there is not enough archaeological evidence for comparison, as can be seen when one employs Smith’s list of suggested urban attributes (Smith 2016, 159) to the sites of Western Thessaly. Of 22 sites of the Classical–Hellenistic period, only eight (Episkopi, Farsala, Kallithiro, Kedros, Mitropoli, Paliogardiki, Pyrgos Kieriou and Vlochos) can arguably be regarded as “cities” judging from Smith’s archaeological criteria only (Table 1). The number is certainly higher, and it is probable that further “cities” could be similarly identified were more archaeological evidence available.

As can be observed in comparison with Smith’s template table (Smith 2016, 159), even among these “identified cities”, there are criteria which are never filled regarding the Western Thessalian sites. Royal palaces are very seldom found in ancient Greek cities; the only one in Thessaly is in the Macedonian regional capital of Demetrias (itself an extreme rarity in the Greek cultural sphere), and the criterion is thus not overly relevant for this study. Indications of social diversity and neighbourhoods – so-called “zoning” – has not been observed with certainty at any site, nor has agricultural or garden installations. Regarding the latter, the geophysical survey at Vlochos (No. 29) indicates that

Table 1 Smith's (2016) criteria for the identification of urban sites as applied to five examples from Western Thessaly.

	<i>Episkopi</i>	<i>Farsala</i>	<i>Kallithiro</i>	<i>Kedros</i>	<i>Mitropoli</i>	<i>Paliogardiki</i>	<i>Pyrgos Kieriou</i>	<i>Vlochos</i>
Confirmed ancient <i>polis</i>		<i>Pharsalos</i>		<i>Orthos</i>	<i>Matropolis</i>		<i>Kierion</i>	
Settlement area (ha)	60	80	10	30	70	50	42	15
<i>Social impact</i>								
High aristocratic burials	X	X	X	X?	X	X	X	X
Large sanctuaries	–	X?	–	–	X?	X?	X?	X?
Civic architecture	Some	Medium	Some?	–	Some	Some	Some	Medium
Craft production	–	Some	Some	Some	High	–	–	Some
Market or shops	–	High	–	–	–	High?	–	High?
<i>Built environment</i>								
Fortifications	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Gates	X	X	X?	X	–	X	–	X
Connective infrastructure	X	X	X	X	–	X	X	X
Medium sanctuaries	X	X	–	X	X	–	–	X
Residences, lower elite	–	X	X	–	X	–	–	X?
Formal public space	–	X	X	X	–	X	–	X
Planning of epicentre	–	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
<i>Social and economic features</i>								
Burials, lower elite	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Imports	Medium	Medium	Some	Some	Medium	Medium	Medium	Medium

A dash indicates features that are either not attested or yet identified.

the whole intramural area was built up in the Hellenistic period, with no identified empty areas used for garden plots. Smith's table contains two additional criteria, population and population density, which can only conjecturally be reconstructed for the sites in question (see Chapter 3), and which have consequently also been left out. There are several common factors to be noted among the sites mentioned, mainly the existence of urban planning, civic architecture, highly developed fortifications, and elite (both higher and lower) burials. These criteria can be observed at several other sites in the catalogue, indicating that they are indicative of "cities" in Western Thessaly in the Classical–Hellenistic period. Turning these criteria into descriptive form, a Classical–Hellenistic city in this study could consequently be described as a planned larger settlement, containing private, civic and public architecture, surrounded by extensive fortifications, whose population was interred in cemeteries outside the settlement. This description is highly productive in detecting ancient "cities" in the region and would put the number of cities in Classical–Hellenistic

Western Thessaly to 22 at the minimum, the real number probably being higher.

The issues with equating *poleis* and other similar communities with cities have already been introduced but as cities are nothing without their inhabitants – and inhabitants form communities – it is necessary to address the nature of communities in Western Thessaly. Contrary to the use in scholarly literature, *polis* was not a common term by which Thessalians designated their respective communities. It is first attested internally in the mid-5th century BCE and remains exceedingly rare until the end of the Hellenistic period. The use of ethnics, however, is widespread and, judging from the many coin issues produced in Western Thessaly already in the early Classical period, there was a strong sense of belonging to some form of socio-political community among many of the inhabitants of the plain. As urban settlements start to appear in the 4th century BCE, many of these ethnics start to be associated with physical locations. It is at present not possible to fully ascertain whether an urban toponym received its name from an

ethnic or vice versa. Some of the toponyms, like Methylon (No. 9), Orthos (No. 13) or Phakion (see Chapter 3) appear to be descriptive of topography (“by the woods”, “steep”, “lentil”) whereas others are more nebulous as to their nature. It might be that a community chose or were assigned their ethnic from a particularly conspicuous topographical feature in the area where they lived, which then was transposed upon the later Classical–Hellenistic urban settlement. The ethnics appear to have been remarkably stable over the course of antiquity, as some of them can arguably be identified already in the Homeric *Catalogue of Ships* (see below), with the last internal cases of use in the 3rd century CE. The toponymic forms of the ethnics continue in literary sources into the 6th century and survive in the cases of Domokos (No. 2), Farsala (No. 6) and Trikala (No. 28) even to this day. What is evident, however, is that the ethnics pre-date and in some cases even post-date urbanism in Western Thessaly. It might appear obvious that a community could exist prior to its urbanisation but it is sometimes assumed that ethnics are indicative of cities, not only in Thessaly but on the whole Greek mainland (Hansen 1996, 179–180). While studying urbanism in the region, one must consequently be cautious; instances of communities (as known from textual sources) do not necessarily imply the existence of urbanised communities.

When it comes to cities of other chronological periods in Western Thessaly, the evidence is not so abundant, as will be demonstrated in the next chapter. The Roman period is relatively unknown from an archaeological perspective but the available evidence suggests a period of rapid urban decline in the last two centuries BCE. Fortifications appear not to have been repaired (a phenomenon known from elsewhere in Greece), public architecture is much more limited and urban sites are increasingly used (when used) for industrial production. Aristocratic tombs re-appear, being lavishly built and furnished, but their connection with the urban environment gets less and less obvious. Had it not been for the remains of the Classical–Hellenistic cities often found at the same locations, it is doubtful whether we should be able to speak of cities in Western Thessaly after 100 BCE, at least from the loose description presented above. This is interesting in itself as urbanism did not disappear in the Roman empire, rather the opposite. However, it is only in the late 3rd century CE that a Roman-style city was established in Western Thessaly, at Vlochos (No. 29). Being completely circumvallate, with a dense built environment and street grid, public architecture and cemeteries, it easily conforms with what should be expected of an ancient city. At present, however, Vlochos represents the sole example of this kind of urban settlement in Western Thessaly and, adding to this, it was apparently short-lived. The Early Byzantine cities of the region are less nebulous but still quite understudied. From what has been published of excavations and surveys they also appear to have been occupied for quite a short period

and rarely built on any pre-existing inhabited urban sites. Even if they were heavily fortified, with associated remains of domestic architecture and cemeteries, it is difficult to say whether they represent urbanism in the same sense as the Classical–Hellenistic cities or if they are more to be regarded as inhabited fortresses. In the following chapter, I discuss the particularities of the main three phases of urban settlements in Western Thessaly as they appear in the archaeological and textual record. As will be evident, the Classical–Hellenistic evidence is by far greater than any of the other periods. The period c. 300–150 BCE was clearly the main stage of urban life in Western Thessaly.

In the catalogue (Appendix 1), archaeological evidence has been given precedence over historical sources. In cases where an identification is sufficiently strong, I have also included some rudimentary information as to the historical and numismatic evidence associated with the community. This is not a numismatic study, however, but the brief overview of the production history and the design of coins serves the purpose of highlighting some surprising political developments relating to the respective communities.

As already stated, there has been no overarching study of Thessalian archaeology since Stählin’s (1924) *Das hellenische Thessalien*. This means that the record of Thessalian archaeological sites is fragmented and only available through scattered publications of various resolutions. Many of these publications are difficult to access, especially outside Greece, and, consequently, one of the underlying motivations behind writing this book was to make the fragmentary record more available to researchers globally. The catalogue was established by a thorough study of all the issues of the *Archaiologikon Deltion*, a gazette of archaeological work conducted by the local archaeological authorities and issued on an annual basis since 1960 by the Hellenic Ministry of Culture. Every entry for Western Thessaly was noted and added as a spatial point in QGIS, an open-source geographical information system software. The process was continued with other governmental issues and publications by Greek archaeologists, as well as by complimentary studies of other gazettes of archaeological discoveries, such as the *Archaeological Reports* of the British School at Athens or the *Chronique des fouilles* of the French School at Athens. Finally, through conversations with the Greek archaeologists at present responsible for the cultural heritage management in the region, I managed to track down the more precise locations of excavations in cases where these were imprecisely published. I am truly indebted to all my Greek colleagues who have selflessly shared with me much relevant information, as well as their interpretations of the historical developments in the region. The published plans available for the sites in the catalogue vary from mere sketches to high-precision GPS-generated digital maps. To present a more comparable picture, I have therefore made

site plan-sketches to accompany the text, using existent plans and aerial photographs as their basis. Using aerial photographs and 5-m resolution Digital Elevation Models (DEM) published and provided by the Greek National Cadastre (Ktimatologio AS), the individual site sketches were made using QGIS to illustrate the basic spatial outline of the archaeological remains. Finally, the chronological span of the available archaeological evidence is given, and a coordinate for the site (using the projection of the national Greek GGRS87 system).

Note

1. The manuscript tradition has Κίθρον/Cithrum which, by several editors has been corrected to Κιέρων. Bruno Helly (in a letter cited in Amigues 2017, 185) claims that the description poorly fits the situation at ancient Kierion, which I believe is only valid in reference to the present situation. Theophrastus's description fits perfectly well with the situation in the pre-Industrial landscape, as discernible in 1940s aerial photographs and early 20th century maps, in which many bogs, ponds and streams are visible.

The evidence

In this chapter, I present the evidence thematically in a synthesised form, as extracted from various publications and presented in Appendix 1. The main focus is on the archaeological evidence but, in the last section of the chapter, I give a longer outline of the main textual and numismatic evidence as relating to cities in Western Thessaly. The region is rich in archaeological sites and, even when limiting the scope to the Geometric to Roman period, the number of known settlement locations is notably high (Fig. 5). Not all these sites are relevant for the main objectives of this study but many are, either by being urban in their nature or by being illustrative to the development of cities in the region.

The pre-Urban setting

Contrary to what is often asserted regarding mainland Greece (see, for example, Lang 1996), the combined archaeological evidence from Western Thessaly is quite clear: until the mid-4th century BCE there is no evidence in the region for settlements that can reasonably be regarded as cities. This does not mean that there was a lack of settlements, nor that there was a lack of complex society inhabiting them. In this book, the period preceding this urbanisation drive will be referred to as the *pre-Urban setting*, emphasising a fundamentally different Western Thessaly to what was later to come. The idea of a pre-Urban Western Thessaly, however, might appear teleological and to support a linear or determinist view of the development of cities. I see the term in this case as descriptive. As the area in *c.* 350–200 BCE was completely dominated by at least 22 urban settlements, we can regard the period preceding urbanised Western Thessaly as characteristically “pre-Urban”.

It is worth emphasising that pre-Urban Western Thessaly was not a void. To understand the environment to which

urbanism eventually was introduced, it is important to have an idea of the situation pre-dating the urbanisation drive of the late 4th century. Contrary to what has sometimes been expressed, the region was no backwater. The archaeological, historical and numismatic material attests to societies and communities forming complex political organisations with connections on local, regional and global levels. In spite of the evidence supporting a lack of cities in Western Thessaly prior to the late Classical period, there is much that supports the existence of local political groups. These exercised authority over areas and communities, some of which would later become urbanised. As will be outlined later in this chapter, the textual and numismatic evidence shows that communities were distinct enough to publicly name themselves the Pharsalians, the Peirasieans or the Pelinnaians (to just name a few), and to issue coins bearing these denominations already in the early Classical period. These communities were known to Greeks of other regions of the mainland and they interacted with major political powers such as the Lacedaemonians, the Athenians and the Boeotians over the course of the 5th century BCE. The question is, where did the members of these communities live if they did not inhabit cities? Traditional scholarship has taken Archaic and early Classical urbanism as given, paying little thought to alternative models of habitation. Maybe it has been difficult to imagine that great aristocratic personae (such as the family of Olympic victors from Pharsalos, the Daochids) lived in villages, especially as they were affluent enough to erect lavish monuments in Panhellenic sanctuaries (Sprawski 1999, 28–29).

Recent excavations in Western Thessaly have started to provide answers to the settlement question. Whereas there is no evidence for cities in the 6th, 5th and first half of the 4th centuries BCE, several village communities have started to

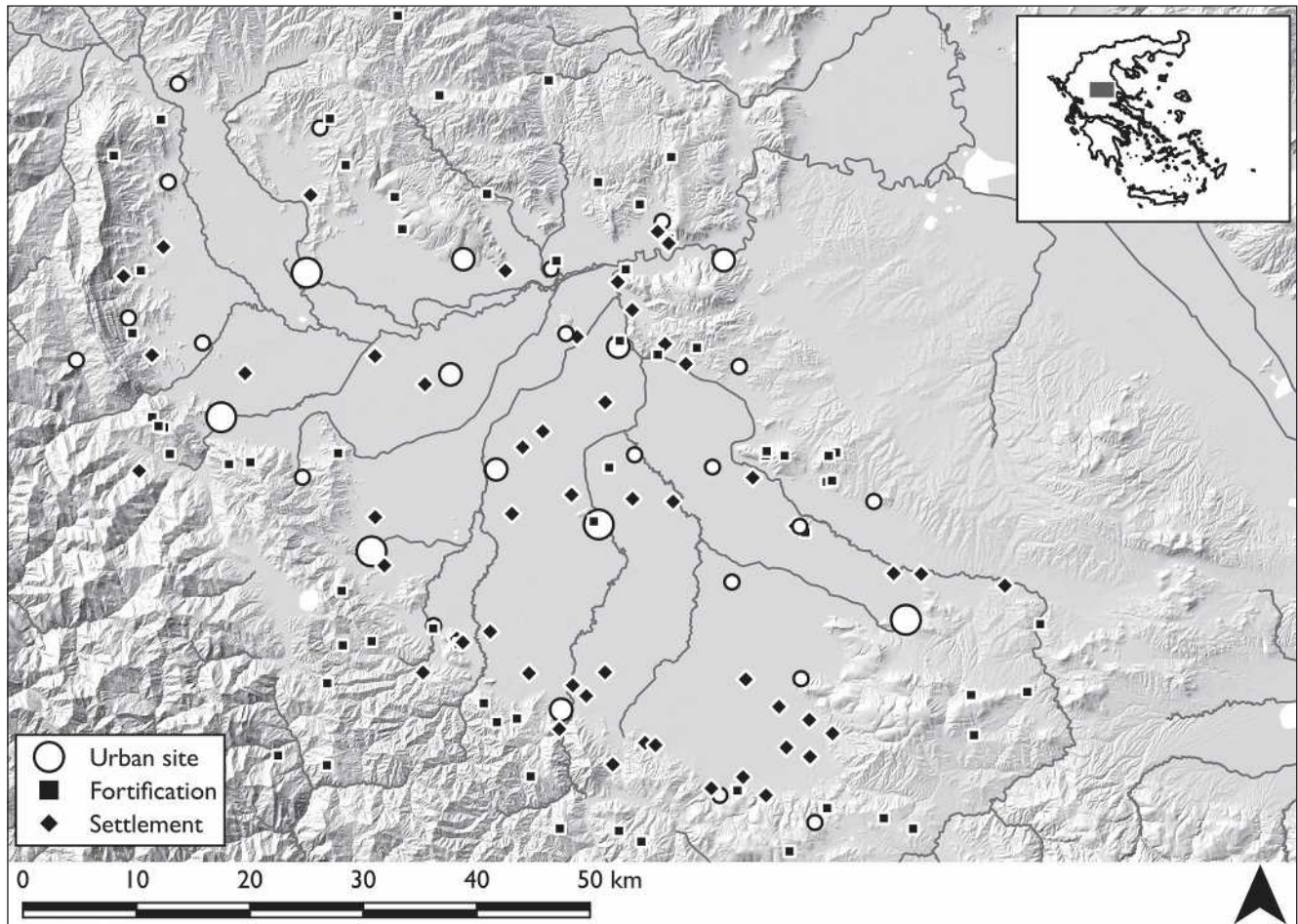


Figure 5 Geometric to Roman Western Thessaly, with present-day rivers.

be identified as scattered over the landscape. The imported pottery and other luxury items discovered in the houses of these settlements reveal an unexpected wealth of the villagers who, in essence, inhabited monumentalised longhouses. The discovery in 2010 of an extensive settlement at the location Kalathia, *c.* 2 km southeast of the village of Filia in the region of Karditsa, belongs to the most important archaeological developments in central Greece in many years. The settlement was found during the construction of the new E-65 national highway connecting Karditsa and Trikala with Lamia and the Athens–Thessaloniki highway, and it was consequently possible to excavate a large section of it. The findings of the rescue works have been summarised by the excavator Christos Karagiannopoulos (2018c), but the publication process of the complex material is still in progress.

The remains at the site belongs to at least six phases of habitation, the earliest being of the 7th century BCE, characterised by post-supported huts with wattle-and-daub walls. The best-preserved architectural remains belong to the whole 6th century BCE until the end of the Archaic period, with two distinct phases containing apsidal houses

built along a southeast–northwest axis. The apsidal houses have their entrances facing southeast and are overall *c.* 15 m long and 6 m wide on the interior, with foundations of river-stones and a superstructure in mud-brick covered in plaster. Rectangular buildings, interpreted by the excavator as possibly auxiliary to the apsidal houses, were also found during the excavations. The buildings of the Archaic phases were probably thatched, with the roofs supported by posts (Karagiannopoulos 2018c, 115–118). The remains of the later 5th century phases were less well-preserved due to damage caused by stone-robbing in antiquity and by modern agriculture. It is apparent, however, that houses in the 5th century started to follow a rectangular scheme. At least one apse was retained in one of the houses, however, indicating a certain architectural conservatism. Remains of workshop activities including pottery kilns were identified in connection with the houses, but the general finds picture indicates that the buildings were mainly constructed for domestic purposes (Karagiannopoulos 2018c, 118–119).

At the centre of the excavated area was an open space, paved with stones, gravel and tile fragments. This was flanked to west and south by two shallow *stoai* or similar

structures, which were apparently modified slightly in each construction phase. Finds of stamped roof-tiles of the 5th century BCE were found in the area, and probably originated from the *stoai*. Terracotta figurines found in the southeastern part of the open space indicate possible cultic activities in the area. A street was found by the excavators leading through the settlement in front of one of the *stoai*, which was apparently used over a long time, as its size varied over several phases of restructuring and repairs (Karagiannopoulos 2018c, 120). A possible communal building was identified in the southern part of the excavation, most of the preserved remains of which belonged to the last phase of the settlement. This consisted of a larger rectangular central room surrounded by three smaller rectangular chambers, with an adjoining outdoor paved space, which has been identified as possible courtyard. The roof of the building was seemingly decorated with Laconian-style antefixes, which would make it a high-status building in the settlement (Karagiannopoulos 2018c, 120–122). Another structure, possibly also of a communal nature, was found further to the south. The long period of use of the building, and complex series of reconfigurations means that its exact function is difficult to pinpoint. The excavator finds it likely a building used for the preparation of communal meals or feasts taken place in the aforementioned communal building.

Finally, the settlement also displays several indications of workshops and storage facilities, especially of the early Classical period. Pottery production and iron slag from metalworking is evident, probably serving the needs of the settlement (Karagiannopoulos 2018c, 122). Among the finds are many fine-wares including Archaic Corinthian vessels and late Archaic and early Classical Athenian imports (Karagiannopoulos 2018c, 123). As pointed out by the excavator, the settlement clearly displays several hallmarks of a planned community: street surfaces, buildings oriented along the same axis and possible communal structures speak for some kind of spatial plan for the settlement. In many ways, it resembles an urban environment, but its size, the lack of fortifications, burials, *etc.* still makes it much of a “village” or *kōmē*.

Similar, but less extensively excavated, sites have been found elsewhere in the region of Karditsa, notably at Metamorfofi (No. 16), Orfana (No. 8) and Ermitsi (No. 5), as well as in the foothills of the Pindos at Anavra (Karagiannopoulos and Christoforidi 2020), displaying several common architectural traits. These sites are still in the process of further publication. Fragmented evidence of contemporaneous apsidal houses has been reported from other sites in Western Thessaly, including at ancient Pharsalos (No. 6), at Chtouri (No. 1) and Neo Monastiri (No. 19). Much new information on the settlements of the Thessalian Early Iron Age will undoubtedly soon be available.

The distribution of the pre-Urban villages appears to have been substantially resource driven, especially focusing on

the accessibility of freshwater. This was not a chronologically isolated situation. Even today, the villages of the plain are all located at spring-sites or at locations where wells can be dug with relative ease. Some of the most particular features of the Thessalian plains are the so-called *matia* (sing. *mati*), perennial springs that break through the ground, forming a pool. The most famous Thessalian spring by far, the Hyperian spring (mod. Kefalovryso) of ancient Pherai (mod. Velestino) in Eastern Thessaly, was of this type, and was probably the main reason why the community originally formed at the location. The Hyperian spring – as with several other *matia* in Thessaly – dried out in the late 20th century because of agricultural work (Papadopoulos 2006, 428). In Western Thessaly, there are still a few active *matia*, the most important of which at Chtouri, Ekkara (No. 3), Fyllo (No. 8), Keramidi, Megalo Kefalovryso, Metamorfofi and Vrysia northeast of Neo Monastiri. In the pre-Industrial era, the springs were often surrounded by wetlands rich in fowl and were consequently important to the local economies. Today’s over-consumption of water for the watering of cotton fields has resulted in that the springs are not nearly as abundant as they used to be, and the wetlands have disappeared. Indications of ancient settlements have been noted at many of these springs, mainly in the form of surface pottery, but excavations have in some cases revealed evidence for diachronic habitation at these sites. Most of the Early Iron Age settlements that have been identified in Western Thessaly are located in close proximity to either a *mati* or a smaller spring. This includes the large settlement at Kalathia, as well as the probable villages at Asvestaria close to Paliogardiki (No. 20), Chtouri, Farsala, Metamorfofi and Orfana. It appears as the pre-Urban Western Thessalian communities generally chose such locations for their settlements, and directed surveys aiming at examining known such places would probably produce evidence for further pre-Urban villages.

As the villages would have outnumbered the named communities known from literary sources, political organisation in this pre-Urban environment must arguably have been arranged more according to community rather than by settlement location. One village probably did not constitute a complete political unit, but rather a fraction of a larger whole. Small, “cantonal” federations of local village communities are in the absence of urban sites probably the way in which we should understand the political bodies later known as *poleis* (Ehrenberg 1969, 23; Hall 2014, 78–79). The communities belonging to this system of *poleis kata kōmas* were able to exercise considerable political influence, as is evident from literary sources and archaeological evidence, and were not dependent on cities to stay powerful. Their elite controlled some of the most fecund soils in Greece, far from the typical *stenochōria* (“shortness of land”) of mainland Greece that caused so many waves of emigration to other parts of the Mediterranean. Archaic and Classical Thessaly is

highly associated with aristocratic wealth, often with notions of a vulgar culture of display (Aston 2012, 248–249). This is probably the result of a literary trope caused by how the area is described in some – mainly Athenian – ancient works. Disregarding the Athenian scorn, it is evident that the local elites of Thessaly were quite wealthy, as can be inferred by the rich burials found at several cemeteries in the region. Within Western Thessaly we may note large tumuli at Ermitsi, Farsala, Mavroneri (No. 11), Myrini (No. 18), Mitropoli (No. 17), Paliogardiki, Pyrgos Kieriou (No. 24) and Sykies (No. 27), some of which producing finds of immense wealth. Generally, these burials are not associated with any later urban environments and some of them most probably pre-date any city in the vicinity. Tumuli and tholos burials continued to be common for the aristocratic elite long after the end of the Bronze Age (Georganas 2009), as exemplified by the especially large Early Iron Age tholos at Agioi Theodoroi west of Pyrgos Kieriou, and the early 4th century BC tumulus at Chani Katsoula south of Kallithiro (No. 11). The need to also separate yourself from your dead spatially was apparently common, with large burials often located far from any settlement. The aristocratic burials were conspicuously located apart from other cemeteries also in later periods, often at a relative distance from any urban settlement. For example, the Hellenistic multi-burial tumulus at Sykies was – and still is – located at one of the major routes connecting Eastern and Western Thessaly and, in spite of being at the rim of the western plain, probably relates to members of the Eastern Thessalian *polis* of the Krannonians, whose city was 8 km to the west.

Some of the fortified locations in Appendix 2 pose an interesting problem in that they appear not to have been related to the protection of a settlement. Several of these can, on the basis of masonry style and general layout, be dated to long before the 4th century BCE formalisation of defensive architectural vocabulary. Peter Marzloff (1994, 256) interpreted these early fortified locations in Thessaly as representing small fortified *Oberstädte* (“upper cities”) of the non-fortified settlement locations – the *Unterstädte* (“lower cities”) – below them. This model of upper-and-lower cities have been a common way of reconstructing the development of Greek urbanism but, as I have shown previously (Rönnlund 2018, 21), a closer scrutiny of the archaeological evidence shows that it is probably not valid. There is little evidence generally from Greece to support the existence of this “bipolar city” which, in all probability, is a scholarly fiction derived from an outdated understanding of the situation at Athens. Marzloff’s example location, Chtouri, poorly fits his description of “a small upper city”, being one of the largest fortified enceintes of any period in Thessaly, covering 21 ha of hilltop. A Geometric to Archaic settlement has, however, been found close to the west foot of the hill of Chtouri, but this some 1.5 km from the fortifications. This appears further to have been separately fortified

at some point in time, but whether the excavated wall was contemporaneous with the fortifications on the hill cannot be ascertained at present.

The lack of reported settlement material from the hilltop at Chtouri indicates that the settlement was limited to the area west of it, where the settlement has been excavated. A similar situation has been noted at Vlochos (No. 29), where the (late Archaic?) Phase 1 fortifications on the hill appear not to enclose any contemporaneous settlement. The 5 ha fortification of Plateia Rachi at Zarkos (No. 30, 4.6) and the 18 ha fortification at the hill of Kastro west of Xylades (10.6) belong to the same category, even if their walls are barely preserved. These three examples of extensive fortifications on isolated hills on the plain are merely the largest cases. Further examples can be found on nearly every conspicuous hill, indicating a pattern. The Classical–Hellenistic *akropolis* (citadel) of ancient Kierion on the hill of Oglas at Pyrgos Kieriou (No. 24) consists of the heavily reconfigured walls of a similar probably Archaic hillfort, with walls in large polygonal masonry enclosing the hilltop only. Similarly, the Classical–Hellenistic fortified cities at Klokotos (No. 14) and Farsala (No. 6) incorporate the walls of apparent pre-Urban hillforts in monumental-size polygonal masonry, probably also of the Archaic period. The small hill of Makri at Fiki (No. 7) was similarly fortified probably at the same time but apparently never later modified. It appears probable that the pre-Urban hillforts were constructed and used not by any “lower cities” found at the foot of the respective hills, but by one or (more probably) several villages found in the vicinity. The situation at Chtouri mentioned above constitutes one good example but we may note further possible cases at several other locations. At Vlochos, Archaic pottery and terracotta figurines have been found at locations surrounding the hill (Nikolaou 2003b; Vaïopoulou *et al.* 2020, 68; Ieremias and Rönnlund forthcoming), as is the case at Fyllio Oros (No. 8) and at Klokotos (No. 14). The sizeable Archaic to Classical settlement at Metamorfofi (No. 16) probably relates to the late Archaic or Classical hillfort on Kourtikiano hill, which is only 900 m from the settlement.

There are many common traits among these fortified sites (Table 2). They can be characterised as being limited to hilltop locations overlooking the plains and valleys, often encompassing considerable swathes of ground. There are no towers in the fortification walls, the latter of which are built curving along the natural topography in a rough polygonal or rubble masonry (Marzloff 1994, 256; Intzesiloglou 2010a, 142). The size of these fortifications – which in my view should be referred to as *hillforts* – varies to a great extent, from the quite small 0.5 ha enclosure at Chrysavgi (2.8) to the 21 ha fortified hilltop at Chtouri (No. 1; 9.3). They are consequently not similar in their scale but, apart from the aforementioned stylistic similarities, they form a discernible pattern in the archaeological record. The original date of construction cannot confidently be ascertained and there

Table 2 List of identified pre-urban fortifications.

<i>Location</i>	<i>Date of construction</i>	<i>Approx. size (ha)</i>
Makri, Fiki	Archaic?; Classical.	0.95
Palaiokastro, Prodromos	Archaic; Classical– Hellenistic.	0.44
Paliampela, Ardani	Archaic?	0.47
Vigla, Chrysavgi	Classical?	0.53
Kastri, Diasello	–	1.1
Sykia, Klokotos	–	5.2
Klokotos	Archaic.	4.1
Kastro, Metamorfofi	Classical.	2.4
Stroggylovouni, Vlochos	Archaic.	11.1
Choirinokastro, Dafnosplia	Classical– Hellenistic.	–
Oglas, Pyrgos Kieriou	Archaic; Classical– Hellenistic.	1.95
Vimperotripa, Portitsa	Archaic?; Classical?	3.78
Profitis Ilias, Farsala	Archaic.	1.1
Fylliio Oros 1, Mikro Vouno	Archaic?	2.25
Fylliio Oros 2, Mikro Vouno	Archaic?	0.25
Kastro Psychikou 1, Psychiko	Archaic?	0.61
Kastro Psychikou 2, Psychiko	Archaic?	1.27
Arapises, Agios Antonios	Archaic?	0.78
Chtouri, Polyneri	Archaic?; Hellenistic.	21
Kalogiros 1, Ypereia	–	0.5
Kalogiros 2, Ypereia	–	1.86
Kastro, Xylades	Archaic?; Classical– Hellenistic.	18
Kastro, Omvriaki	Archaic?	–
Vounokastro, Vouzi	Archaic?; Classical– Hellenistic.	1.9
Gynaikokastro, Ekkara	Classical– Hellenistic?	1.63

has been no excavations aiming at acquiring any chronological information relating to them. Judging from their layout, masonry and position in the landscape, however, it is possible if not probable that they belong originally to the late 6th century BCE or slightly thereafter. This has been suggested for the cases of Farsala and Vlochos, which both were partially overbuilt by later fortification programmes. It is highly probable that the walls were continuously repaired

over the centuries and we should regard the enceintes as diachronic features in the landscape. There is no concrete evidence for any settlement within the bounds of these enceintes. In most cases the locations are clearly unsuitable for permanent residence as there is no good access to water and the hilltops are highly exposed to harsh weather conditions. Their function was consequently not to protect a settlement but more probably to protect a population, acting as local refuges for humans and livestock. Similar sites have been noted in neighbouring Macedonia (Lawrence 1979, 172) and they probably belong to the same phenomenon. However, being constructed at highly visible locations in the landscape, they were seemingly not meant to be secret places to which to flee, which indicates that their function cannot solely have been to act as refuges. The monumentality of the walls found at these hilltops indicate that the walls must also have served a function of display. The type of fortification is not limited to Western Thessaly, with several examples to be found in the eastern half of the region, especially in the area around modern Volos. These are also constructed in polygonal masonry, often with blocks of large size, with circular or oval layouts encompassing the hilltops. As in Western Thessaly, the walled enceintes do not contain any towers of any sort. Among the examples, we may note the c. 2 ha fortification on a hill c. 1 km southeast of Kanalia (Intzesiloglou 2010a, 141–142; Adrymi-Sismani 2012, 172), and another fortified hilltop of the same size on the hill Profitis Ilias just northwest of Glafyra (Intzesiloglou 2010a, 137–138; Adrymi-Sismani 2012, 170–172). The fortification at Soros near ancient Demetrias encompasses 4.2 ha of the near-conical hilltop, with a protruding antenna or annex in the saddle area to the southwest (Marzloff 1994, 256). Across the gulf, at Ano Lechonia on the Pilio peninsula, is the most substantial fortification of this kind in the area, encompassing c. 6 ha of a low, flat hill (Adrymi-Sismani 2012, 176–177; Agnousiotis 2016, 386).

Western Thessalian sanctuaries have, with few exceptions, been found or identified at what can be understood as non-urban locations. Sometimes, such locations are regarded as extra-urban which, in this book, is a term that has to be used with caution. The existence of sanctuaries clearly pre-dates that of cities in Western Thessaly, with ample evidence for cult in the Archaic period and before (Mili 2015, 325–345). The most important sanctuary in Western Thessaly, arguably in Thessaly as a whole, was located at the present-day village of Filia, southeast of Karditsa. The location had been suggested by Stählin (1936c, 98) as a possible location for the Panthessalian sanctuary of Athena Itonia based on the find of an inscription of the League of the Thessalians at the modern village (Giannopoulos 1928). Excavations triggered by extensive looting in the 1960s at the Chamamia location just north of the village proved the existence of a sanctuary, with finds from the Mycenaean to the Roman period (Lalonde 2019, 68).

Little architectural material was revealed apart from a much later Christian basilica, but a substantial ash layer was excavated all over the trench containing an abundance of votive material, including a considerable number of bronzes (Kilian-Dirlmeier 2002). The lack of any temple or monumental architecture led to some scholars interpreting the sanctuary as of an open-air type, maybe located within a sacred grove (Intzesiloglou 1993, 256–257; Lalonde 2019, 69–71). The relatively small size of the excavated area in comparison to the size of the site, however, makes this merely a conjecture. Inscriptions found at the Chamamia site show that the sanctuary functioned as an important federal meeting place, especially after the re-organisation of the Thessalian league in 196 BCE. The location at Filia is relatively remote on the plain, with the settlement at Kalathia (see above) being the closest neighbour, 3 km to the southeast. The site of Orthos (No. 13) is the closest ancient city, being located 5 km south of Filia, but there are no other urban sites to the west, north, or east for up to 15 km. Bruno Helly (1992, 90–91) suggested that this might be explained by the existence of a “holy land” (*hiera chōra*) belonging to the sanctuary, similar to what has been noted elsewhere in Greece. Even if this theory is not implausible, at present it cannot be substantiated.

In modern scholarship, Western Thessaly was for long associated with the cult of Asclepius who, according to Homeric epic (*Il.* 2.792), hailed from Trika (No. 28), where a large, mainly Roman, compound has been excavated and is often identified with his cult. Part of another sanctuary of Asclepius, probably constructed in the 4th century BCE, was revealed in a field south of Gorgovites at Palamas but, just as in the case of Filia, no temple was excavated. Two buildings were found during excavations, as were statues of Dionysus and other deities, as well as of children (Intzesiloglou 1992a, 265–266; 1993, 253–254). Again, the limited size of the trenches can possibly explain this, and a cache of architectural members including column drums found nearby might indicate that the buildings at the location were looted for building material at some point in time (Intzesiloglou 1990a, 196). The sanctuary was located between the two cities of Kierion (No. 24) and Methyion (No. 18) and stamped roof-tiles of the former found at the site shows that it belonged to the Kierians at least in the later Hellenistic period. Whether the sanctuary pre-dates the city sites can, at present, not be determined.

The Archaic temple at Lianokokkala, 1.5 km west of ancient Matropolis (No. 17), remains the only completely excavated larger temple in the whole region. Stamped roof-tiles found during excavations showed that the temple belonged to the Matropolitans, which at the time of the construction of the temple had seemingly not yet urbanised nor synoecised. This extraordinary structure in a unique Doric style was completely unknown until it was revealed by chance in the 1990s, being completely covered by

destruction masses forming a small mound. The existence of such a considerable structure, not mentioned in any literary source, indicates that further unlocated monumental sanctuaries and temples might exist in Western Thessaly. According to a short report in the *Bulletin de Correspondence Hellenique* (Béquignon 1930, 495), Friedrich Stählin discovered yet another temple at the village of Pazaraki (present Agios Vissarion), 4 km east of Sofades. Rescue work at the location, however, has shown that the antiquities at the location consist of Hellenistic remains with an Ottoman-era mosque with adjacent *hammam* constructed on its top (Hourmouziadis 1969; Vaïopoulou 2014b, 762–763). A *stoa* belonging to a Classical to Hellenistic sanctuary has been excavated at Neo Monastiri (No. 19), and identified through an inscription as being of Artemis Proernia, a deity probably depicted on the coinage of the *polis* of the Proernians. The excavations yielded a rich terracotta material, including an abundance of figurines.

Smaller sanctuaries have been noted at several locations in the landscape. On the Karaplas ridge southwest of the city of Farsala is a natural cave which was used as a shrine for the Nymphs from the 5th century BCE until the Late Roman period. Inscriptions on the rock-face welcome the visitor, with a wealth of terracotta figurines and other objects excavated in the early 20th century (Wagman 2015). A small sanctuary has been found at the Ampelia location between Chtouri and Farsala, with limited excavations producing terracotta objects of the late Archaic or early Classical period (Liangouras 1965, 143). Yves Béquignon’s excavations at the Palaiokastro location just north of the village of Ampelia (formerly Kato Derekli), 8 km east of Farsala, yielded material which have been interpreted as originating in an important sanctuary, possibly the Thetideion known from Strabo (Strab. 9.5.6; Béquignon 1932, 115–116; La Torre 2019). This is the find-spot of the famous late 6th century BCE *deinos* (a large vessel used for mixing wine) signed by Sophilos, depicting the funerary games of Achilles (Béquignon 1933).

The extensive archaeological work prompted by the construction of the new Lamia-Kalampaka highway revealed a rural sanctuary northeast of the village of Agia Triada, only a few hundred metres south of the site of Proastio (No. 22). The sanctuary consisted of a small building (*oikia*) surrounded by an open area, all within the bounds of a cemetery. The finds date to the end of the 7th century until the beginning of the 5th century BCE and, due to their location within a burial ground, can probably be related to the cult of chthonic deities (Theogianni 2018b, 105–112). A small sanctuary with contemporaneous cemetery were excavated at the Bourtenia location in the southeastern part of the village of Prodromos just north of the road leading from central Karditsa to the present roundabouts connecting with the national highway. The sanctuary consisted of four buildings (*oikiai*), one of which was of a hall or *megaron*

shape, and the finds included many terracotta figurines depicting seated females and horse riders as well as hand-made ritual vessels (*kernoi*) of the 6th and 5th centuries BCE (Intzesiloglou 1989b, 148; 1990a, 196; 1992a, 269). Another sanctuary producing similar votive figurines was discovered 5 km to the southeast at the location Kalyvia near the village of Karpochori (Tziafalias 1983, 197–198).

Six marble dolphins with inscribed dedications to Poseidon have been found at the village of Prinos, 12 km west of Trikala (Tziafalias 1990b, 206), possibly originating at the hill of Chalkiorrachi 500 m northeast of the village. An extensive survey by the University of Thessaly of the site showed that the hilltop contained the looted remains of a probable temple, with a Classical–Hellenistic larger settlement on the lower slopes of the hill (Pikoulas 2012, 279). Two pre-urban dedications to Poseidon have also been found at Vlochos (Decourt 1995, no. 1; Intzesiloglou 1999b, 116–117; Doulgeri-Intzesiloglou 2000, 16–19), both *ex situ*. Terracotta figurines from the Keramides location south of the city at Vlochos are possibly indicative of a small shrine at the location (Nikolaou 2003b). The Choirinokastro fortification at Dafnospilia (7.2) contains the remains of what has been interpreted as a temple, and a late Archaic dedication to Aphrodite (*IG IX,2 271*) was reportedly found here (Doulgeri-Intzesiloglou 2000, 20–21). The site is poorly studied and the validity of the information is hard to ascertain (Stählin 1924, 147; Helly 1992, 72; Hatziangelakis 2007, 53). Further non-urban sanctuaries can also be inferred through epigraphic material found, such as at Agios Taxiarchis south of Zarkos (No. 30) (Dafi and Rönnlund forthcoming) and at Thavmako north of Domokos (No. 2) (Stählin 1934, 1333–1334), being probable locations of display for arbitration inscriptions.

The urban sites of the late Classical and subsequent periods

In the final decades of the 4th century BCE, Western Thessaly and central Greece as a whole underwent a massive restructuring of its settlement organisation. Larger village sites such as that of Kalathia (see above) were rapidly abandoned, having been inhabited for hundreds of years. There is little evidence for this development being gradual, instead we see clear indications of comparable abruptness in the change. At the time of the Diadochi and the turn of the century, Western Thessaly contained at least 22 urban settlements. Some of these were small in size, like Kallithiro (No. 11), whereas others, such as Pharsalos (No. 6) and the city at Paliogardiki (No. 20), were some of the larger urban settlements on the Greek mainland. As I will demonstrate below, these cities – as we can rightly call them – were inhabited for a relatively short time, generally less than 200 years, before most were either partially or completely abandoned by the middle of the 2nd century BCE. Urbanism

in Western Thessaly was afterwards limited to a handful of sites, with little or no investment in fortifications and public works until the end of the Roman period.

Distribution and choice of sites

At first impression, the Western Thessalian urban sites display a remarkably even distribution in the landscape, placed c. 10 km from one another. This is, however, something of a Cartesian illusion. The distances are not comparable in physical travelling time, as marshes, hills, and other difficult terrain separated the individual sites. A closer scrutiny of the map of the distribution of the sites (see Fig. 7, below) also reveals that the physical distances between cities were often twice as large, with relatively large swathes of the plain devoid of known urban settlements of any period. A chronological layer also needs to be added, showing that all of these sites were not necessarily occupied at the same time. Sites are most frequent along the rim of the plain or at one of the isolated hills found upon it. Some of the urban sites, however, occupy locations with no natural height, such as Ermitsi (No. 5), Paliampela at Fyllo (No. 8), Gefyria (No. 9) and Myrini (No. 18). In these cases, artificial mounds have either been constructed or re-used to acquire an elevated settlement area over the plains. In two cases, the so-called Chomatokastra (“dirt castles”) of Mataragka (No. 5) and Proastio (No. 22), high earth banks have been constructed as ramparts, in the first case completely enclosing a small area and in the latter the inside of a river bend. Neither of these two sites can be conclusively dated but burials adjacent to the former indicate that it was constructed in the Early Iron Age. A few of the sites, including Domokos (No. 2), Kalampaka (No. 10), Kalogiroi (No. 12) and Pialeia (No. 21), are found in a more mountainous environment, yet at a relatively close distance from the plains. The occupied areas of these settlements, when known, must have been on steep ground, much like the modern towns occupying the first two. In the case of Kalogiroi, only scattered traces of fortifications have been noted, and it is at present difficult to say whether there ever was a nucleated city at this location. Judging from the situation in the early modern period, none of the Western Thessalian rivers was navigable in antiquity, and as they were extremely prone to flood in springtime, few of the ancient urban sites are found built directly at river banks. The exceptions are ancient Trika at Trikala (No. 28), which appears to have been right on the northern bank of the Lithaios, and Peirasia at Ermitsi (No. 5) which is on the western bank of the Apidanos. Marshy ground, however, provided additional protection from siege engines and several of the urban sites were consequently probably chosen with this in mind.

Access to water was critical for the survival of the urban settlement and natural springs are consequently often found at the respective sites. Waterworks for the artificial distribution of freshwater have also been found at several

locations, as have wells and cisterns. There are cases where no spring is at present to be found at the site (Nos 4–6, 9, 17, 19–21, 23, 24, 27, 29), but there is reason to suspect that this was not the case in antiquity, such as at Farsala (No. 6), Vlochos (No. 29) and Trikala. Abundant springs were known to have existed in the early 20th century at Farsala and Trikala but both dried out towards the middle of the century, probably due to the construction of new buildings in the modern towns. The Byzantine aqueduct found south of Zarkos (No. 30), leading over 8 km from the springs of Mati to the ancient city of Atrax at Kastro, is indicative of the importance of freshwater to the urban environment (Dafi and Rönnlund forthcoming).

The urban layout

The Classical–Hellenistic remains at the urban sites display many of the hallmarks of the “Greek city” as known from elsewhere on the mainland. There is little at present to suggest any local phase of development and the architectural vocabulary was clearly already established at its introduction to the region. The basic scheme is that of a fortified settlement at the foot of a hill, with a separately fortified *akropolis* or citadel towering above it on the hilltop. Only in cases where there was no suitable terrain do we encounter exemptions to the rule (see above).

Excavations carried out by the local archaeological services at several of the sites in the catalogue (Appendix 1) have revealed indications of regular street grids, with streets and buildings built on the same alignment. The limited areas revealed by the excavations makes that it is most often impossible to reconstruct any street-grid, but in a few cases, such as at Farsala (No. 6), Kallithiro (No. 11) and Paliogardiki (No. 20), it is clear that the settlements were staked out according to a type of grid, with larger streets connecting to the extramural area through gateways. This is also evident at Vlochos (No. 29), where recent geophysical work has revealed the extensive urban grid of the Classical–Hellenistic site, with a long central “avenue” leading from the west gate across the city to end up at its east gate. The overall layout is not of the typical “Hippodamian” model with blocks (*insulae*) separated by artificially regular and straight streets, but rather of an adapted type, with the avenue following the overall terrain, and the side-streets (*stenopoi*) deviating on both sides at near right-angles (see Fig. 86). The fragmentary plan of the city at Paliogardiki prior to its partial destruction in the 1970s show that this settlement was similarly organised, with a probable larger street leading from west to east across the lower settlement area. Just as at Vlochos, a larger central gate was located at the middle of the southern fortified edge of the city at Paliogardiki, with another larger street leading from it towards a junction at the centre of the lower settlement area. Apparent boundary markers (*horoi*) have been found at street-side locations at Kallithiro and Farsala, but their exact function

cannot be ascertained as they are unscribed. Streets of the Roman period have been discovered at a few sites that survived from the Hellenistic period, including at Mitropoli (No. 17), but whether the whole settlement retained a regular layout cannot be ascertained at present. The Roman-phase re-establishment of a fortified town at Vlochos partially re-employed the Classical–Hellenistic street-grid, but with some modifications. As this establishment was not a continuation of a pre-existing settlement, it is difficult to say if it represents a typically Western Thessalian example of a Late Roman town or an innovation. The similarities with contemporaneous fortified towns in the northern Balkans, however, speaks more for the latter (see below).

Apart from streets, Greek cities of the Classical–Hellenistic period are typically understood to have been organised around their *agorai* (sing. *agora*, “marketplace”). *Agorai* have been identified with confidence at some Thessalian urban sites but only in the eastern part of the region. The Greek–Canadian programme at Kastro Kallithea confirmed Stählin’s (1938) identification of the *agora* with a rectangular area in the saddle of the double-peaked hill, which appears to have been flanked by public buildings such as a *stoa* and a probable sanctuary (Haagsma *et al.* 2011). The large (*hiera*) *agora* at Demetrias is located in the area just south of the Macedonian royal palace (*anaktoron*) in the centre of the settlement area but the royal nature of the extremely large city makes it a particularly atypical example in its Thessalian context (Stamatopoulou 2018, 355). The literary evidence contains no references to *agorai* in Western Thessaly. Some texts, however, including Western Thessalian inscriptions, indicate that the Thessalian word corresponding to the common Greek *agora* was *limen* (λιμέν), a word which otherwise generally indicates a harbour (Rönnlund forthcoming). A 3rd century BCE inscription (*SEG XXXVII 494*) containing a record of *sympoliteia* (the merging of two communities) between the communities of the Gomphean and the Thamiaians (see below) found at the sanctuary of Athena Itonia at Filia (see above) mentions the *limen* of one of the settlements, but whether this was at Gomphoi (at No. 4?), Thamia, or elsewhere cannot be ascertained from the fragmentary text. In his *Politics*, Aristotle mentions that the Thessalian *poleis* had two *agorai*, one for commerce and one for political activities (*Arist. Pol.* 1331^a; Mili 2015, 125–126). The archaeological evidence for this has long been lacking (and it is doubtful whether there were many cities in Western Thessaly at the time of Aristotle), but the aforementioned geophysical prospection at Vlochos has revealed two open areas within the walled settlement (Vaïopoulou *et al.* 2020, 59). However, the complex stratigraphy at the site, with overlapping remains of different phases of occupation, means that this cannot be taken as conclusive evidence for a double *agora*. The western open space at the site is situated above but not adjoining the main avenue of the city, and is relatively small in size, whereas

the other is at the northern side of the avenue, just within the central “Kierion gate” at the centre of the lower settlement area. The latter is more definitively the location of the marketplace (*forum*) of the Roman period town when it was seemingly flanked by *stoai* at its south and north sides.

A rectangular enclosure within the urban settlement has been reported from Kedros (No. 13), apparently where inscriptions with decrees were put up, possibly being part of the *agora/limen* of the city (Rönnlund forthcoming). Arvanitopoulos’s excavations at the Plateia Laou in Farsala yielded monumental foundations that he interpreted as that of the entrance to the *agora*, even if no open spaces have been identified around them. These and further structures found in Farsala give the impression of being *stoai* or similar buildings, aligned on an east–west or north–south axis, following the natural direction of the slope. It is possible that the *stoai* enclosed open public spaces at the centre of the ancient city, one or two of which being the *agorai* of Pharsalos. As only parts of the buildings have been revealed, it is impossible to reconstruct the outline of such a public space. Judging from the topographical positions of the excavated remains, however, it appears that these supposed *agorai* must have been substantial in size, as the excavated building foundations are located up to 180 m from one another.

Other monumental structures are relatively rare. Probable *stoai* have been identified in the geophysical results from Vlochos but their date or function are still unknown. A large Roman-era bath complex has been partially excavated at Mitropoli (No. 17), including a large polychrome mosaic depicting the abduction of Europa by Zeus excavated in the S. Petsas plot, indicating affluent inhabitants in the settlement (Intzesiloglou 1995, 205–206; Hatziangelakis 2007, 59). A possible monumental structure has been found at Myrini (No. 18), but its function cannot be firmly established. In spite of discoveries of the aforementioned monumental structures, Thessaly rarely if ever features in textbooks on ancient architecture and even the fully excavated Doric temple at Mitropoli only gets mentioned anecdotally in discussions on temple architecture (Miles 2016, 207; Pierattini 2022, 276), if ever. Spoliated blocks originating in monumental buildings have been reported from many places around the western plain, notably in the churches of Kalampaka (No. 10), and scattered architectural members have also been found at sites in the catalogue. It is probable that the apparent lack of monumental buildings is more due to later spoliation than indicative of an actual situation.

Little in the published excavation accounts suggests any zoning in the Classical–Hellenistic cities of Western Thessaly. Habitation appears to have been mainly limited to the intramural parts of the settlement, with domestic architecture excavated at a large number of sites. The excavations at Farsala have yielded both more modest dwellings and large courtyard houses, indicating substantial social stratification.

Parts of dwellings have also been revealed at Ermitsi (No. 5), Kallithiro, Mitropoli, Myrini (No. 18), Neo Monastiri (No. 19), Pyrgos Kieriou (No. 24), Trikala (No. 28) and Vlochos. Industry could apparently be located in areas of habitation, with several intramural kilns excavated at Mitropoli. A probable ceramic workshop, the so-called “House of the potter”, has been excavated at the site of Kedros in a secluded – yet intramural – location on the middle hillslope above the settlement area. It appears from the scanty publication that this structure might also have served as habitation, perhaps for the potter and/or the workers employed in the production. Considerable pieces of slag have been found all over the intramural area of the city at Vlochos (Derek Pitman pers. comm.), also indicative of industrial activities mixed with habitation. The types of domestic structures found at the excavated Classical–Hellenistic urban sites belong to familiar types of houses known from well-known cities elsewhere in the Greek world. There is as of now no apparent “Thessalian” domestic architectural tradition, nor does the apsidal tradition continue into the new urbanism. The probably aristocratic dwellings at Farsala – the largest example probably being the building excavated on the Polyxos plot (Karapanou 2005, 423) – have probable parallels in the geophysical results from Vlochos, where very large courtyard buildings can be seen flanking the north side of the main avenue of the city. The same results have indications of other forms of domestic architecture, including buildings of *pastas* type, but it is to be noted that the high regularity of cities such as Olynthos, Priene or New Halos is not to be noted (Hoepfner and Schwandner 1986, 27–74, 141–186; Reinders 1988, 108–113). Beyond the main settlement areas, an isolated, large courtyard building has been identified on the *akropolis* at Vlochos, possibly belonging to the leader of the garrison stationed at the hilltop (Vaïopoulou *et al.* 2020, 53–54). A similar structure has been noted at Makrakomi in Southern Thessaly (Papakonstantinou *et al.* 2013, 232).

Very little is known regarding the domestic architecture of the Roman period urban sites, with houses only partially excavated (and published) at Episkopi (No. 4) and Mitropoli. A Roman period building with a mosaic floor was discovered at Krini (No. 15), but whether this was located in an urban environment cannot be learned from the publication. At Vlochos, aerial photography and geophysical prospection have revealed the ground plans of several, very large, double-courtyard buildings, possibly urban villas of the central court (peristyle) type belonging to the late 3rd century CE re-establishment at the site. The sizes of these buildings far exceed anything else noted in Western Thessaly, and they are more reminiscent of aristocratic urban dwellings found in the northern Balkans (Mulvin 2002; 2004) as well as in Roman Britain (Higgins *et al.* 2009, 114–120).

One of few published Early Byzantine buildings from Western Thessaly was found outside of the contemporaneous

fortification wall at Vlochos. It was a single-room structure, on the basis of the pottery constructed and destroyed in the 6th century CE to be re-inhabited briefly in the 8th century by peoples using so-called “Slavic” ware pottery. At Vlochos and Metamorfoosi, but possibly also at Farsala, Grizano (4.3) and Paliogardiki, it is evident that the Early Byzantine fortified settlements were limited to the hillslope and the area within the walls. Whether this was the case at further locations cannot currently be confirmed, primarily due to the lack of fieldwork at many of the Early Byzantine sites.

Urban temples and sanctuaries

As stated above, few examples of cultic monumental structures have been identified in Western Thessaly including at the urban sites in the catalogue. Epigraphic evidence, however, as well as large numbers of terracotta figurines, strongly suggest that cultic activities were conducted generally at sites within the Classical–Hellenistic walled cities. Even if no *in situ* remains of a monumental sanctuary or temple have been identified at ancient Pharsalos (No. 6), the excavators of the Ephorate of Larisa have noted many *ex situ* fragments of monumental architecture in non-local sandstone, indicating the existence of an Archaic Doric temple somewhere in the same area. Scattered and *ex situ* architectural members, such as column drums, have been noted at several locations within the region, including at Episkopi (No. 4), Farsala, Gorgovites northwest of Kierion (No. 24), Leontari (Karagiannopoulos 2020c, 1538), Metamorfoosi (No. 16), Myrini (No. 18), Neo Monastiri (No. 19), Palamas (Wace 2, 55) and Psathochori (Tsiouka 2019b, 756). Whether these belong to temples or sanctuaries cannot be fully ascertained but, as they have mainly been found far beyond the urban walled enceinte, the identification with extra-urban sanctuaries is arguably the most probable one. Early travellers visiting the site of ancient Matropolis (No. 17) noted architectural remains that they identified as probably belonging to the sanctuary of Aphrodite Kastnietis, known from Strabo (see below). The evidence for this being the case, however, is scant, and the remains have since disappeared. A building identified on the basis of ceramic types as that of a sanctuary to the Mother of the Gods (*metroön*) was excavated in the Kiritsis plot in Farsala but this identification is not supported by any epigraphic evidence. A smaller shrine with several terracotta busts (protomes) was excavated in the upper slopes above the main settlement area at Episkopi, yet within the walled area. Such small shrines, often not housed in a particular building, were probably the most common form of sanctuary in Western Thessaly, serving the everyday needs of the everyday person. At Vlochos (No. 29), architectural elements, votive sculptures, reliefs and terracottas found at the site of an abandoned quarry provide strong evidence for a sanctuary of the Thesalian goddess Ennodia, with finds from the late Archaic–Hellenistic periods (Jeremias and Rönnlund forthcoming).

The cult of the goddess has been noted elsewhere in Western Thessaly but her sanctuaries (temples) were previously only known from the large cities of Pherai and Melitaia in the eastern and southern parts of the region. Some of the material from the same assemblage indicates that the Nymphs were worshipped in the sanctuary, such *nymphaia* being previously only known from extra-urban locations in the region (see above). A square enclosure with a central building has been noted in the geophysical results at Vlochos which could possibly be that of a temple surrounded by a portico (*stoa*) and a sacred enclosure (*temenos*) wall. A stamped roof-tile bearing the name of Zeus Thaulios was found in the immediate vicinity, and could possibly belong to this complex. Excavations in the area, however, have shown that it was re-used as a (Christian?) burial ground in the Early Byzantine period, seriously disturbing the older remains. A slightly larger yet similar complex can be found at a comparable location within the ancient city at Paliogardiki (No. 20). The excavator Leonidas Hatziangelakis (Hatziangelakis 2011b, 590; 2021, 53–54; Hatziangelakis *et al.* 2016b, 571–572) regarded the remains as that of a possible hero shrine (*heroön*), whereas Stählin (1936b) interpreted it as a small temple surrounded by a *temenos* with a *stoa*. Hatziangelakis’s excavations have yet not been published, but excavations by the Ephorate of Trikala are ongoing at the location.

As I have discussed elsewhere (Rönnlund 2018, 49–50), it is often said that the *akropoleis* of the typical Classical–Hellenistic Greek city were the locations of the main cults of the *polis*. This is poorly supported by the evidence in the catalogue, and it is only at the *akropolis* of the settlement at Pialeia (No. 21) that a sanctuary has been identified with some certainty. The small size of the fortified area on the hillock, combined with the great inaccessibility of the location, means that it was probably not the main sanctuary of the settlement.

What can be arguably described as a peri-urban sanctuary has been excavated at ancient Proerna (No. 19), consisting of a *stoa* with other associated buildings just south of the Classical and Hellenistic settlements. Epigraphic material identifies it as the sanctuary of Artemis Proernia, which appears not to have included a conventional temple building. Vladimir Milojević (1960, 168) claimed to have found an Ionic *stoa* on top of the Magoula Makrya at Pyrgos Kieriou (No. 24), but he did not provide any closer details as to its appearance.

From the Roman period, little is known regarding cultic structures from any site in Western Thessaly. The aforementioned spoliated material in the church of Koimisis tis Theotokou in Kalampaka probably originates in at least one monumental structure, but whether this had a cultic function cannot be ascertained. The large complex in Trikala (No. 28) was probably part of a larger sanctuary complex. On the basis of literary evidence this has been interpreted as being a

sanctuary of Asclepius (*asklepieion*) and ancient Trikka was regarded as the original home of the god. However, there is no evidence available at present to connect the complex with Asclepius and the large-scale excavations of the early and mid-20th century are still only partially published. The location is notably outside of the area where most of the urban remains of ancient Trikka have been found, making it a possible peri-urban sanctuary.

Churches replace pagan temples from the Late Roman period onwards and Early Christian churches have been found at a number of sites in the catalogue, including the small basilica that was revealed during excavations within the aforementioned *Asklepieion* of Trikala and at the Chamamia area at Filia. At Omvriasa (No. 25), two basilicas were found next to one another at a location that has not previously been identified as a potential city. The location of the Classical–Hellenistic city at Klokotos (No. 14) also had several early Christian churches, with one excavated and two additional known from earlier accounts. On the hilltops of nearby Metamorfoosi and Vlochos, two small three-aisled churches were constructed atop earlier remains roughly at the same time. Whether these served a settlement or a monastic community cannot be ascertained at present.

Urban fortifications

The by far most well-preserved and substantial category of archaeological remains at the sites in the catalogue (Appendix 1) are fortifications. At most locations, they constitute nearly all what is left visible above ground from antiquity, and often still stand several metres above the ground. Fortifications are not unique to the period of urban settlements; as has been outlined above, they start to appear in the region already by the end of the Archaic period in the shape of fortified hilltops. The urban fortifications, however, clearly belong to a wholly different fortification strategy, and display so many differences in their internal logic and modes of construction that they clearly are not continuations of the older fortified sites found in the region. It is evident that the urban fortifications constructed in Western Thessaly were laid out as part of the planned endeavour of creating a fortified settlement. The wall trace follows the outline of the natural topography, and makes use of ridges and raised ground wherever possible. The general aim was clearly to create a completely walled-off enclosure, and not even at locations where steep cliffs made any wall superfluous is there any strong evidence for an absence of fortifications. There are examples, especially at Pialeia (No. 21) and Vlochos (No. 29), where the erosive powers of steep slopes have obliterated the wall. Wherever discernible, fortifications and street layouts appear to have been put out at the same time as part of the same overall plan, which consequently must have incorporated the construction of new dwellings at the site.

Western Thessalian fortifications of the Classical–Hellenistic period were always of a composite nature, with

a substantial lower part in stone and a mud-brick superstructure. The *akropolis* wall at Vlochos preserves the upper, flat course of the wall, and show that the stone sub-structure could be over 2 m in height, which is also supported by fragmentary sections of the walls at Farsala (No. 6), Neo Monastiri (No. 19), and Paliogardiki. The complete height of the walls could easily have been more than 6 m, as the width of the curtains were often close to 3 m in width, and Philo of Byzantium suggests a recommended height of at least 20 cubits or 9.2 m (Ph. Mech. *Polior.* 11, in Lawrence 1979, 77). The mud-brick superstructure must have been clad in some kind of waterproof protective plaster layer in order not to disintegrate by rainfall, creating a white or bright surface which surely made the fortifications quite visible from afar (Lawrence 1979, 211). The masonry style of Western Thessalian urban fortifications is generally either polygonal (multi-angular stones) or trapezoidal (quadrilateral stones with one pair of sides parallel), with isodomic (quadrilateral stones with opposite sides parallel) examples quite rare. It appears that the city walls in polygonal masonry started to be built in the decades following the Macedonian annexation, with well-executed examples found at Domokos (No. 2), Fiki (No. 7), Klokotos (No. 14), Vlochos, Paliogardiki and the small, fortified settlement of Drakospito at Zarkos (No. 30). These are mainly limited to steep sections of the wall trace, probably as the type of masonry offered greater stability at such positions. Polygonal masonry was probably continued to be used over the following decades but, as in the case of the somewhat later Phase 2B at Vlochos, coursed masonry styles including trapezoidal started to be more commonly applied, especially in the larger enceintes. The largest (known) urban enceintes in Western Thessaly were at Farsala, Paliogardiki, Episkopi (No. 4), Kedros (No. 13) and Vlochos, mainly as the fortification walls enclosed not only the lower settlement areas of the cities but also a substantial section of hillslope and hilltop. The lower fortifications of these settlements were all built in trapezoidal, or more rarely, isodomic masonry, and it is only at Farsala that isodomic and trapezoidal styles are employed also in more steep sections of the enceinte.

In stark contrast to the fortifications of the pre-Urban period, all the urban fortified sites in Western Thessaly utilised towers to strengthen the walled enceinte. These could often be quite numerous, as in the cases of Farsala, Kedros, Paliogardiki and Vlochos, which had a great abundance of towers. These were almost universally rectangular in shape and were placed along the walled enceinte at more-or-less regular intervals. The only sites with non-rectangular towers in Western Thessaly are at Domokos and Metamorfoosi (No. 16), where semi-circular towers have been noted. The latter, however, does not belong to an urban settlement but to a Hellenistic fortlet. The towers most probably also functioned as battery units, with internal chambers housing various forms of catapults. Some of the sites display

tower-like features which due to their size probably were more oriented towards the battery function, including the *Bollwerk* at Paliogardiki, the large northeastern tower at Klokotos, and the Phase 2A northernmost tower at Vlochos. Similar constructions have been noted at Goritsa (Bakhuizen 1992, 105–114, 156–157) and Arcadian Alea (Maher 2017, 111–112). The fragmentary information regarding the fortifications of the large city of Matropolis (**No. 17**) indicates that they were of an unusual type, forming a circular enceinte around the settlement. Whether this actually was the case or just how the early 19th century traveller William Leake perceived it all (it was dismissed by Johan Louis Ussing) is still impossible to say, but historical aerial photographs seem to support the former. Judging from the present-day topography, the city of Peirasia (**No. 5**) might have had the same outline, but there are no reports of any fortifications found at the site.

The fortified urban sites in Western Thessaly often had three main and monumentalised gateways, with several intermediate smaller gates or posterns providing exit and entrance to the city. Only three larger gates of the Classical–Hellenistic period have been excavated in Western Thessaly, at Neo Monastiri, Kedros and at the *akropolis* at Farsala. None of these has been published in any greater detail, but Niek Bosch’s (1982) study of the first shows that it followed standard Hellenistic conventions as applied to its topographical position. The geophysical results from Vlochos have revealed the outlines of a central courtyard gate (the “Kierion gate”) nearly identical to one excavated at New Halos in Achaia Phthiotis (Reinders *et al.* 2014, 61–95). Such a courtyard gate probably also existed at Paliogardiki prior to its destruction in the 20th century, being the monumentalised central entrance to the lower parts of the city.

Several of the fortified enceintes of the urban sites of the Classical–Hellenistic period contain a separately walled area at the highest point of the settlement, an area which is often referred to as the *akropolis*. Such can be identified at Ekkara (**No. 3**), Episkopi, Farsala, Fiki, Kedros, Klokotos, Neo Monastiri, Paliogardiki, Pialeia, Pyrgos Kieriou, Vlochos and Zarkos, but possibly also at Kallithiro (**No. 11**), Skoumpos (**No. 26**) and Trikala (**No. 28**). Most of these were far too small to function as refuges (which has been the traditional scholarly interpretation), and their remoteness as well as their strong fortifications are more indicative of them functioning as strongholds for the garrison of the cities (Rönnlund 2018, 120). The *akropolis* at Vlochos, however, stands out by being extremely large (*c.* 11 ha), to my knowledge only surpassed in size by the Acrocorinth and the *akropolis* of Sykeon in the Peloponnese. Fragmentary remains on the hilltop, however, reveal that the large area was only walled in a second sub-phase of construction (Phase 2B), probably in order to completely wall-off the hilltop and make the fortifications more visually imposing from the north. There are,

however, few remains of any buildings within the fortified area, nor any ceramics indicating habitation. The opposite is the case at Neo Monastiri, where building foundations can be seen all over the intramural space of the *akropolis*, and building foundations or rock-cuttings has also been noted at Ekkara, Farsala, Pyrgos Kieriou and Zarkos. The small *akropolis* at Pialeia could barely have housed much more than the aforementioned sanctuary, similarly to the hilltop at Zarkos, which is almost purely a barren exposed cliff. A section in Livy (36.14) on the aftermath of the siege of Pelinna mentions that there was a garrison complex (*praesidium*) in the city. Pelinna has not conclusively been identified (see **No. 20**), and the structure can consequently not be identified with any archaeological remains, but as Livy describes it as being a separate unit from the rest of the city, it is possible that it was located in a separately fortified *akropolis*.

It is evident that no expansion nor repairs of the fortifications at the urban sites were done after the second half of the 2nd century BCE.¹ This is not unique to Western Thessaly but reflects the general trend all over the Greek mainland, with little or no investment in fortifications after the creation of the Roman provinces (Lawrence 1979, 427–429). However, from Caesar’s narrative of the events leading up to the Battle of (Palai-)Pharsalos in 48 BCE, we learn that the Gompheans and the Matropolitans were capable at shutting the Roman army out of their fortified cities, indicating that the fortifications were at least in a good enough condition to function still. If the site at Episkopi is to be identified with ancient Gomphoi, the excavated sections of the fortification wall in the western part of the ancient city site show no indications of having been altered in its construction after the Hellenistic period.

Urban fortifications re-appear in Western Thessaly in the late 3rd century CE, probably as a response to the so-called “crisis of the 3rd century”. However, this can so far only be discerned at Vlochos, where a new fortified enceinte was constructed in the southeastern corner of the former Classical–Hellenistic city. This fortification has yet not been excavated and can only be traced through the results of the geophysical prospection, which shows a near-circular fortification with hollow, rectangular towers at almost equal distances, surrounding a 7 ha, densely built-up town. A gate flanked by two towers has been noted in the western side of the enceinte; the nearby large Classical–Hellenistic “Kierion” courtyard gate possibly re-used as well. The eastern “Peirasia” gate of the Classical–Hellenistic enceinte was probably also re-used, creating three entrances to the town. The fate of this fortified town is not known, but surface material indicates that it was inhabited for only a short time.

The persons behind the Early Byzantine re-fortification scheme (see below) were especially active in Western Thessaly, with many sites either re-constructed or built *ex novo* in the mid-6th century CE. The scale of this

investment – especially considering that it involved the whole Balkan peninsula – must have been ruinous for the imperial economy, with extremely costly defensive structures built simultaneously at difficult places all over the landscape. Some of the urban sites were reconfigured to follow a new fortification layout, with the settlement located on the lower slopes of a hill (above the main settlement area of the Classical–Hellenistic period), protected by a long wall running along the foot of the hill. The area of the former *akropolis* was included as a form of citadel above the settlement, the latter constructed on a series of terraces. This scheme can be observed at Farsala, Vlochos, Metamorfofi and Grizano (4.3), the latter two of which the most well-discernible. At Vlochos, it appears as if the fortifications were not completed, as only the lower and eastern flanks of the settlement area have any remains of walls and towers. The only well-excavated 6th century fortification in Western Thessaly is that of Kallithiro, which due to its layout most probably constitutes a fort rather than an urban settlement. The fortlet within the former *akropolis* at Pyrgos Kierou is a similar case, if even smaller than the former, with few indications of any urban settlement at the foot of the hill. The walls of the Justinianic period were generally not in use for very long, and in many cases, they stand isolated at abandoned places. At a few places in the catalogue, such as Domokos, Farsala and Trikala (No. 28), they were incorporated in the medieval defence works, and survived as fortresses into the Ottoman period.

Cemeteries

As is the case with the rest of the Greek world, the inhabitants of the cities of Western Thessaly did not bury their dead inside the fortified enceinte protecting their settlements. Large extramural cemeteries have been found and partially excavated at a number of the Classical–Hellenistic sites in the catalogue, including Episkopi (No. 4), Farsala (No. 6), Gefyria (No. 9), Mitropoli (No. 17), Kedros (No. 13), Paliogardiki (No. 20) and Pyrgos Kierou (No. 24). There was rarely any single burial ground; instead, the cemeteries form groups, probably located at the major routes of access leading to the main city gates. Generally, the cemeteries do not date back to the period preceding the establishment of the urban settlement, with some exceptions, most notably Farsala. The cemetery excavated east of Gefyria, ancient Thetonion, dates to the 7th–5th centuries BCE, which is well before any of the urban settlements in Western Thessaly. The famous inscription by the Thetonians dating to roughly the same period as the burials, however, indicates that the community already existed in the early Classical period, which is supported by surface ceramics at the site. Burial markers and funerary *stelai* are common from all over the western plain but are not generally found in the same numbers as in Eastern Thessaly. These range from modest, barely cut stones to lavishly executed monuments with figures and

ornamentations in relief. Tumulus burials continue among the Western Thessalian elite in the urban period, with some rich examples excavated at Mitropoli and Episkopi. Most burials, however, are of the cist or roof-tile types, with few grave-goods. Several of the cemeteries contain what are apparently sanctuaries to chthonic deities (see above).

In the Roman period, built funerary monuments were constructed at a closer distance to the urban centre. The burial buildings found at Episkopi, Mavroneri (No. 11), and Zarkos (No. 30) belong to this group, with spoliated material of similar structures found at Kalampaka (No. 10). At Episkopi, the contracted urban space meant that one especially rich Roman era burial was found within the area of the former Hellenistic city, and sarcophagi of the same period have also been noted in the intramural area of the city at Vlochos (No. 29). Tumuli continued as a grave form in the period, as evidenced from Mitropoli (No. 17). Roman period cemeteries with more modest burials have been excavated at Kedros (No. 13), Mitropoli and Pyrgos Kierou (No. 24).

Burials of the Early Byzantine period have mainly been found in connection with excavations of the Early Christian churches located at some of the sites in the catalogue, including Omvriasa (No. 25) and Zarkos. However, potentially Christian burials have also been found on the *akropoleis* of Kierion and Vlochos, as well as in the lower slopes of the latter. Tombs of the post-Hellenistic period, however, are often difficult to date, and publications often refer to them collectively as just “Roman”.

Non-urban fortified sites

Not all Classical–Hellenistic fortifications in Western Thessaly relate to urban sites. The mountain ranges and hills surrounding the plains contain a large number of forts and isolated towers, forming a dense network (Appendix 2). The highest concentration of these is found along the southwestern rim of the plain, where they appear in a long band from the area of Kalampaka in the northwest to Domokos in the south. This remarkable concentration of sites has previously been uncommented, and several of the forts and towers have only recently been recorded. The majority of the fortified sites in this area have been dated to the 4th and 3rd centuries BCE, but as they appear to contain little surface material, their more exact chronology remains unknown. As their building techniques are virtually identical to the urban fortifications, it is probable that they were constructed at the same time as these and possibly by the same masons. A few of the sites can be dated to the Byzantine period, or display signs of Byzantine repairs, but the vast majority give the impression of being used during a relatively short period of time in the Classical–Hellenistic period. They are consequently contemporaneous with the major urbanisation drive of the plains, and probably somehow relate to this.



Figure 6 The mountainous region south of the plain, with the modern dam of Smokovo at the centre, towards northeast.

The fortifications are generally distributed on hilltops overlooking the valleys and passes found over the Pindos range (Fig. 6), often at a considerable distance from the major routes traversing these areas. Their limited size indicates that they were not manned by any large body of guards, but their sheer number still speaks of a considerable and long-term investment in fortifying the landscape. As they generally do not relate to any settlement, they would have required specialist forces for their operation. With a total number of over 30, we must imagine a total force of guards or soldiers in the hundreds for the continuous manning of these forts, excluding other staff and reserves. The forts are often within sight of one another, and it is highly likely that one of their functions was to act as relays in a signalling network. Their locations, however, are nearly always so topographically conspicuous that signalling could easily have been conducted without the construction of any tower or similar structure; a simple beacon would have been enough.

The fortified sites in the Chasia range to the north of the plains show both a difference in their distribution and in their overall size to the aforementioned ones along the southwest border of the area. Here, larger and more dispersed sites are found at locations dominating central positions in valleys, seldom with any apparent intervisibility. The sites are often Classical(-Hellenistic) in date, with extensive Byzantine repairs noted in several cases. Little is known about these sites, which appear to have been costly investments, but they differ in their size and distribution to that of the southern and western rim of the plain.

Some of the more conspicuous hilltops at the centre of the plain also contain considerable forts and fortresses of the same period. Hellenistic fortlets occupy the hills of

Chtouri (**No. 1**) and Metamorfofi (**No. 16**), with a much larger possibly contemporaneous enceinte to be found atop Fyllio Oros. The Kastro 3 (**8.3**) is situated over 400 m above the surrounding plain and is visible from virtually all over Western Thessaly. The construction of a large enceinte at such a location would have made a considerable impact on the ancient landscape, but the several kilometre long steep and difficult descent to reach the foot of the hill would have made the fortress impractical as a mean of controlling movement of people in the region. Compared with neighbouring regions such as Achaia Phthiotis, Phocis and Boeotia, Western Thessaly has few known isolated towers of the Classical-Hellenistic period. Tower-like structures were instead incorporated into smaller fortlets, such as at Keramidi (**4.7**), Pyrgos Ithomis (**No. 23**) and the Drakospito at Zarkos (**No. 30**).

In the Early Byzantine period, several non-urban fortified sites were constructed in the region as part of the Justinianic building programme. These are mainly found along the west and north rim of the plains, often at important passes, such as the fortresses at Grizano (**4.3**), Oichalia (**4.5**), Kallithiro (**No. 11**), Pialeia (**No. 21**) and Trikala (**No. 28**). Similarly to the non-urban fortifications of the Classical-Hellenistic period, these often appear to have been manned by specialist forces, as they did not function as the protection for any settlement.

Textual evidence

The number of ancient literary sources explicitly mentioning cities in Western Thessaly is low and the combined textual material only provides hints to the situation in the region over the course of antiquity. As a whole, however, the corpus

of inscriptions and the fragmentary literary record provide valuable clues to the political and social development of urbanism in the area.

Poleis and other communities

There is no internal evidence for the use of the word *polis* in Thessaly prior to the 4th century BCE. Pindar (*Pyth.* 10.62) refers to *poleis* (in the plural genitive) in his ode to a Pelinnaian victor in the Pythian games but given the Panhellenic context it is dubious whether this should be taken as evidence for the internal usage of the word in Thessaly. The word is securely attested in inscriptions from the 3rd century BCE until the 3rd century CE, and then always denotes a political community rather than a physical location. The spelling in compounds is sometimes *ttolis* or *tylis*, possibly a dialectal variant of the Archaic form *ptolis* (*IG IX,2* 1233 from Krannon; *SEG XLVII* 717 from Atrax; *XLIII* 311 from Skoutoussa; *XXXVI* 548 from Matropolis). *Polis* is most commonly used in decrees, and in the Imperial Roman period mainly in manumission records. In total, only nine communities in Western Thessaly are known (or assumed) to have internally referred to themselves as *poleis* throughout the period (Table 3), indicating that even if the word was not used commonly (Decourt *et al.* 2004, 678), it was at least established as a term.

The situation in Western Thessaly is similar in the rest of the region. One of the earliest (if not the earliest) instances of use of the word *polis* in Thessaly is in an inscription found during infrastructural works at Roosevelt Street in Larisa (*SEG XXXIV* 560; *LIV* 562; Helly 2004) dating to shortly after the Battle of Tanagra in Boeotia in 457 BCE. “*Polis*” in this instance (appearing in the genitive) refers to the *polis* of the Atragiens, the city of which (Atrax), was located immediately outside of the western plain, c. 6 km

southeast of Zarkos (No. 30). As the text mixes elements of Thessalian and Ionian/Attic dialect, it is not certain that the inscription indicates the use of the word *polis* in Thessaly at this point in time. However, as the word is included, it at least suggests that it would be understandable to the intended readers.

There are instances of the use of similar terms in Western Thessalian inscriptions to denote a political community possibly similar to the *polis* type. This includes *demos/dāmos*, which appears in the adjectival forms *dēmosios/damosios* on a number of roof-tiles from the region (see below). The term *koinon*, which normally implies a federation or league, is used once for the community of the Pharkadonians in a controversial inscription from Petroporos (Theocharis and Hourmouziadis 1969, 269. See No. 20), but not elsewhere in this particular political sense (see Hansen 1998, 24). The related word *asty*, generally thought to imply the inhabited part of the urban *polis*, does not feature in any Western Thessalian inscription and is even rare in personal names. The word *wasstos*, meaning roughly “townsman” features in a 5th century Perrhaibian law tablet from North Thessalian Phalanna, but whether it reflects the use of the word *asty* – which in Classical Thessalian probably would be **wassty* – cannot be ascertained (Miller 2014, 230–231). However, *asty* features in the earliest text mentioning Thessaly, the early 5th century epigram by Anacreon (Fr. 107) for a dedication to Dionysus by the *archon* Echekratidas. As Anacreon was not a Thessalian, however, the use of *asty* in Thessaly at this time cannot be inferred.

Generally, the Western Thessalian communities referred to themselves just by their ethnic, and this already in the 5th century BCE (in coinage, see below). The ethnic is in itself often derived from a toponym, as is common elsewhere (Hansen 1997c, 93; 1998, 56), indicating that there

Table 3 Internally attested use of the word *polis* with associated ethnic in Western Thessalian inscriptions.

Polis (ethnic)	Attestation(s)	Dates of attestation(s)
Aiginion (<i>Aiginieōn</i>)	<i>IG IX,2</i> 324–325; 327–329; [1342]	1st century BCE–3rd century CE
Gomphoi? (<i>Gompheōn</i>)	<i>IG IX,2</i> 287; 289; 296	2nd century CE
Kierion? (<i>Kieriōn</i>)	<i>IG IX,2</i> 260b (= Decourt 1995, no. 14b); 262 (= Decourt 1995, no. 18); <i>FD III</i> 3:118	2nd century BCE
Metropolis/Matropolis (<i>Metropolitōn</i> & <i>Matropolitoun</i>)	<i>IG IX,2</i> 284; <i>SEG</i> 37:495; Helly 1973 II, 88	2nd century BCE
Orthos/Ortha (<i>Orthieōn</i> & <i>Orthieion</i>)	Rönnlund forthcoming	Early 2nd century BCE
Pharsalos (<i>Pharsalioun</i> & <i>Pharsaliōn</i>)	<i>IG IX,2</i> 234 (=Decourt 1995, no. 50); 243 (= Decourt 1995, no. 55); Decourt 1995, no. 52; no. I 90	(4th?–) 3rd century BCE
Phayttos (<i>Phayttiōn</i>)	<i>IG IX,2</i> 488–489; 493; Kougeas (1949, 103)	3rd century BCE–2nd century CE
Thaumakoi (<i>Thaumakōn</i>)	<i>IG IX,2</i> 215–219; 221; 259 (= Decourt 1995, no. I 16); <i>SEG</i> 3:468	3rd century BCE–c. 50 BCE
Trikka (<i>Trikkaiōn</i>)	<i>IG IX,1</i> ² 1:136; <i>IG IX,2</i> 302; <i>SEG</i> 41:539; Kougeas (1949, 102)	3rd century BCE–2nd century CE

must have been some kind of central place associated with the community even before the population was urbanised (see Chapter 1).

The Catalogue of Ships and Strabo's description of Thessaly

A longer section in Book 2 of the *Iliad* (2.494–759) contains what is commonly known as the *Catalogue of Ships*, a list of the mythical contingents of the Achaeans who sailed to Troy. As noted in Chapter 1, the *Catalogue* does not contain any references to communities referred to as “Thessalian” (the word Thessaly does not figure at all in the *Iliad*), but *c.* 30 toponyms known from later sources as being Thessalian are listed in lines 2.681–759. The toponyms are arranged according to the hero or “king” under which the ships sailed rather than by topography or region, which causes some confusion for the reader. The leaders of the (“Thessalian”) contingents were Achilles, Protesilaos, Eumelos, Philoktetes, Podaleirios, Machaon, Eurypylos, Polypoites, Leonteus, Guneus and Prothoös, encompassing toponyms from the area between Thermopylae and Mount Olympus. As will be evident, the outline of the contingents in the Homeric *Catalogue* cannot be seen as representing a territorial or spatial division of the ancient landscape in the Cartesian sense. However, albeit with *much* caution, some of the toponyms from the *Catalogue* can tentatively be identified with communities and settlements known from the later Classical and Hellenistic periods. Regarding Western Thessaly, these include Phthia, Thaumakie, Triikka, Ithome, Asterion and Orthe. Of these, only Triikka and Orthe can with more certainty be linked with archaeological sites (**No. 28**; **No. 13**), but Pharsalos (**No. 6**) has traditionally been identified with Phthia, as has Ithome with Pyrgos Ithomis (**No. 23**) and Asterion with Peirasia (**No. 5**). The *Catalogue* itself contains few clues as to the supposed physical locations of the places listed and the modern identifications with archaeological sites are consequently heavily dependent on the description of Thessaly as given in Strabo's *Geography* (Strab. 9.5). As the latter dates to the early 1st century CE, at least 700 years after the suggested compilation of the *Catalogue*, one should proceed with much caution regarding the validity of Strabo's identifications.

Strabo (9.5.4–23) uses the *Catalogue* as the basis for his outline of the ancient landscape and it is quite clear that his interest lay in connecting the Homeric toponyms with the contemporary landscape of his day. The difficulties in so doing are especially evident as he tries to establish whether ancient Hellas was a Thessalian region/country (*chōra*) or a city (*polis*), the former reflecting the use in the Homeric epics, whereas the latter was apparently how the Thessalians of his own day understood the toponym (Strab. 9.5.6). To Strabo (*cf.* 9.5.16), the toponyms in the *Catalogue* generally represent cities (*poleis*), but he is yet aware of the difficulties in connecting the world of Homer with his present day, stating

that “[t]he boundaries and the political organisation of the tribes [*ethnē*] and of the places are always changing” (Strab. 9.5.8). Some of his spatial divisions are difficult to harmonise with physical topography; the site of Triikka (**No. 28**) is said to border on the lands of the Dolopians, which is over 50 km to its south, beyond the plains of Hestiaiotis and Thessaliotis. Whether this is due to perceived or cultural topography or a misunderstanding cannot be ascertained.

Regarding Western Thessaly, Strabo encounters several problems and conundrums in his attempts of making order out of the *Catalogue*. The area of Eurypylos is presented in the *Iliad* (2.734–736) as encompassing Ormenion, the spring of Hypereia, Asterion and the (hill of?) Titanos, the first two of which – according to Strabo – were located on the Pelion peninsula and in the city of Pherai respectively, up to 75 km from Western Thessaly where Strabo puts Asterion and Titanos. To put the spring of Hypereia in the latter area, Strabo states, is “absurd” or “paradoxical” (*atopos*). Orthe, a *polis* known to have been at modern Kedros in Southwestern Thessaly (**No. 13**), is listed in the *Catalogue* among the places under Polypoites (*Il.* 2.738). As the other locations mentioned as belonging to this hero are all in northern and northeastern Thessaly, it appears that Strabo is again encountering a difficulty in his harmonisation and he consequently states that “some” (*tines*) regard Orthe as an alternative name for the *akropolis* of the *polis* of the Phalannaians. Phalanna was an important city in Northern Thessaly, probably located at Kastri Magoula southeast of modern Tyrnavos (Dasios 2012b, 217). The name Orthe (from *orthos*, “upright, straight”) suggests a rather steep hill, which is ill-fitting with the low (yet substantial) mound at Kastri.

That Strabo's sources of information were not completely disconnected from a contemporary reality, however, can be noted in the case of Ithome. Strabo notes that the location shares its name with the famous mountain at Messene, but that the first syllable of the name was originally not pronounced, thus being Thome (Strab. 9.5.17). A fragment of an inscription (*SEG XXXVIII 448*) found at the site of Matropolis (**No. 17**) contains the fragmentary text of a treaty (*sympoliteia*?) of the late 3rd or early 2nd century BCE between the Matropolitans and the Thoniaians, a previously unattested community. As Strabo states that Ithome (at his time?) was in the country (*chōra*) of the Matropolitans, having been synoecised (merged with another community) to form the latter, it appears possible that Thome (locally rendered Thone?) had indeed been absorbed politically by its powerful neighbour Matropolis. The latter does not figure in the *Catalogue*, and Strabo describes it as having been formed by the synoecism of three insignificant towns (*ek triōn synōikisto polichniōn asēmōn*), including Thome and Onthyryon (see below). Strabo's description of Western Thessaly contains further settlements and cities which do not figure in the *Catalogue*, most notably Pelinna(ion) and

Gomphoi, which are well-known from earlier sources, as well as Pharkadon (Strab. 9.5.17). None of these has been identified conclusively with an archaeological site, but scholarly tradition nearly universally puts them at Palio-gardiki (No. 20), Episkopi (No. 4) and Klokotos (No. 14). Finally, Strabo (9.5.14) mentions locations of Thessalotis which, in later scholarly tradition, have been interpreted as cities (Decourt 1986), including Phyllos and Ichnai, housing sanctuaries to Apollo Phyllios and Themis Ichnaia, which are otherwise unattested. However, Strabo does not refer to them as cities, nor states whether they were still inhabited at his time. Ichnai – possibly the same as the Achnai found in Stephanus of Byzantium (*s.v.* Achnai, see below) – and the epithet of Themis *Ichnaia* are interesting names in themselves, deriving from the word *ichnos*, meaning track or spoor, or even foot or sole.

The *Catalogue* and Strabo have both been central to the historical study of Western Thessaly and play important roles in the current scholarly understanding of the development and distribution of cities in the region. Beyond reflecting changes in settlement patterns, neither source is exhaustive regarding urbanism, containing no or few descriptions of the places mentioned, and should consequently be used sparingly. Also – as can be seen in comparisons with the information in Livy and the Delphic, Epidaurian and Argive lists (see below) – Strabo does not mention all the urban settlements in Western Thessaly.

Coinage

A relatively large number of Western Thessalian communities minted coins in the Classical period, as a rule well before they were established in urban settlements. The minting of coins has traditionally been seen as an indication of autonomy, that the coins can be taken as evidence for the independence of a city/*polis* (Engelmann 1985, 165; Martin 1996, 260; Sprawski 1999, 17). However, as pointed out by Catherine Morgan (2003, 81), the minting of coins is not indicative of autonomic rule but reflects a solution by a local community to solve a highly specific need of payment. Generally, coins can be connected to known communities but, in some cases, issues provide nearly the only indication of the existence of a community. This is the case with Pharos, which is otherwise only known from Stephanus of Byzantium (see below) but, judging from the coins issued, might have been situated in Western Thessaly (Hoover 2014, 75). The first Thessalian community to issue coins was Eastern Thessalian Larisa, which minted silver coins on the Persian standard in the early 5th century BCE. This most probably reflects that after the Thessalians had sided with them (medised), the Persians demanded tribute according to this standard. Federal coinage by the League of the Thessalians soon followed, with obols, drachms and hemidrachms depicting a horse head on the obverse and either a spout or a Heracleian club on the reverse, with the legend ΦΕΘΑ (Φεθαλόν) or similar.

Some Western Thessalian communities started to issue coins in the following decades, but according to the Aeginetan standard (Hoover 2014, 80). The legends on these coins often constitute the first (partial) internal attestation for some of the Western Thessalian communities, including the Kierians (KIAP, 470s (?) BCE, No. 24); Methylicans (ΜΕΘΥ, 460s BCE, No. 18), Pelinnaians (ΠΕΛ, 450s BCE), Pharkadonians (ΦΑΡ, 460s BCE), Pharsalians (ΦΑΡΣ, 450s BCE, No. 6) and Triikkaians (ΤΡΙΚ, 450s BCE, No. 28). These display many similarities with one another, often depicting a horse forepart, a wheat grain, or a bull-wrestling scene. Coin production, especially bronze coins, was continued into the 4th century BCE, with several more communities added to the list of mints. Adding to the aforementioned communities, the Ekkareans, Gomphaians (No. 4?), Matropolitans (No. 17), Orthieians (No. 13), Peirasieans (No. 5), Phakiasts, Phalorians and Proernians (No. 19) issued series of bronze and silver coins in the first decades of the century, often depicting the head of a (tutelary?) deity or nymph on the obverse, and a hero or mythological beast on the reverse (Moustaka 1983).

Generally, coin production by individual communities appears to have halted by the mid-4th century, often interpreted as the result of Philip II suppressing the local mints (Cohen 1995, 117), thus coinciding with the beginning of the main phase of urbanisation. The federal mint in Larisa produced most of the Thessalian coins of the Hellenistic period. A relatively small number of communities continued with their individual minting, including Kierion, Matropolis, Orthos, Peirasia, Pelinna and Gomphoi – the latter notably being briefly renamed Philippoupolis by Philip II (see above). The number of coins from this period, however, is much smaller than previously, with federal Larisaeian coinage being far more commonly found.

After the mid-2nd century BCE, Western Thessalian communities ceased their mint production, which became solely handled by the federal mint in Larisa (Hoover 2014, 80) until the end of the 3rd century CE, when this also ceased. The Roman period coins, however, continued to use figurative elements known from older issues, depicting typical Thessalian motifs such as the horse, the eponymic nymphs, and (what in all probability represents) well-known cult statues.

Epigraphy

The epigraphic record of Western Thessaly provides invaluable insights into the local political and social organisation of the area in a much more direct way than the scant literary record. However, the preserved inscriptions which relate to subjects relevant to this volume are not too numerous and often quite fragmentary. Inscriptions often constitute the only source of information for the structure of social and political organisations. In Western Thessaly, a handful of sites have yielded decrees set up by various political

bodies, including *poleis* and *koina*, giving hints as to the development of settlement organisation (see above). Political bodies and offices seem to have appeared before the advent of urbanism, with examples from the 5th and early 4th centuries BCE. A dedication to Poseidon (Doulgeri-Intzesiloglou 2000, 16–19) was erected at Vlochos (No. 29) in the mid-5th century by one Kinon, “while he was *archegetes*” (*archegeteumon*). The title of *archegetes/archēgetēs* is generally regarded as meaning “the founder of a city”, often implying heroic founders of a community (Kravaritou 2012b, 264–266). However, as an office it could also imply a leader or a chief of a community, which is probably how we should see it in this case. The inscription pre-dates the Classical–Hellenistic city at Vlochos by at least a century, indicating a pre-existing political community (and a cult of Poseidon) in the vicinity. Similarly, a possibly non-urban political office, that of the *hylouros*, “the warden of the forest”, which was the eponymous official for the famous Sotairos inscription (*JG IX,2 257*, 5th century BCE) from Thetonia (No. 9). *Hylouroi* are also attested from Eastern Thessaly; at Pherai, they were headed by the *archihylouros*, and were possibly responsible for keeping order in the hinterland (Mili 2015, 123–124). A recently rediscovered inscription from Orthos (No. 13) suggests that the eponymous official of that city (at least in the beginning of the 2nd century BCE) was the *agoranomos* (Rönnlund forthcoming). The roughly contemporaneous inscription (Helly 1971; Decourt 1995, 23–25) from Makrya Magoula at Pyrgos Kieriou (No. 24) attests to the existence of a council building (*bouleion*) at Kierion; as the inscription was to be put up in this structure, we may assume that it was located at the extra-urban hill of Makrya Magoula.

Patrick Baker (2001) argues from the basis of epigraphic material that the Thessalian cities in the Hellenistic period had “civic militias” organised for the protection of the community, contrasting to the “federal army”. Little is known about the actual composition of the “army” of Thessaly, with much inferred from non-Thessalian sources. The situation in Western Thessaly is, as usual, even less-well known.

Epigraphy also allows for a glimpse of the settlement history of the region. The synoecism resulting in the creation of the *polis* of the Matropolitans (No. 17) was for long only known through Strabo’s account (see above), but epigraphic discoveries in the 20th century have validated some of the information. An inscription found in 1960 close to ancient Krannon in Eastern Thessaly (Habicht 1970 = *SEG LI 724*) contains a decree (probably by the Matropolitans) granting citizen rights to certain individuals, apparently Krannonians judging from the findspot of the inscription. The decree – which probably dates to the years immediately before the re-instatement of the League of the Thessalians in 196 BCE – states (l. 5–7) that the individuals have the right to choose to which *phylē* they wish to belong and that they had chosen that of the Onthyreans (*heilonto Onthyreōn*).

In his outline of the Matropolitan cult of Aphrodite Kastnietis, Strabo states that certain rituals originated in Onthyrion (Ὀνθύριον), one of the towns or cities (*polichnia* or *poleis*) from which Matropolis had been synoecised (Strab. 9.5.17). Rhianos (probably in his lost *Thessalika*, quoted in Steph. Byz. s.v. Ὀνθύριον), writing in the 3rd or early 2nd century BCE, apparently also regarded Onthyrion as a *polis*. Judging from the inscription from Krannon, the community of the Onthyreans continued to exist and function within the *polis* of the Matropolitans as a *phylē*. The word *phylē* is often translated as “tribe”, but – as the *LSJ* puts it – it can also indicate a “union formed in an organized community”. The location of the settlement of Onthyrion remains unknown, but the fortified hilltop of Vimperotrypa (7.11) has been suggested (Kirsten 1939), as has the site of Prodromos at Karditsa (Intzesiloglou 2022).

The second of the three *poleis* synoecising into Matropolis, that of Ithome/Thome/Thone (Stählin 1916, see also above), possibly also survived in some form, as can be construed from a fragmentary inscription of the second half of the 3rd century BCE, found at Mitropoli (*SEG XXXVIII 448*). The site of the settlement has not been identified, but from Strabo’s description of it as a “fortified village/spot and a heap of stones” (*chōrion erymnōn kai tōi ontī klōmakōen*) located within a rectangle formed by three other “forts” (Triikka, Matropolis, Pelinna and Gomphoi), the sites of Pyrgos Ithomis (No. 23) or Fanari (8.4) have commonly been suggested. It is to be noted, however, that the sites of Pelinna and Gomphoi have not been conclusively identified. The text of the inscription, which has been interpreted as a treaty of the Matropolitans and the Thonians, mentions lands (*chōrai*) and forts (*phrouria*), the latter of which are especially numerous in the hills above Matropolis (see Appendix 2). The situation with ex-*poleis* at Matropolis has a possible parallel at the site of Paliogardiki (No. 20), almost universally identified as that of ancient Pelinna. A late 3rd century BCE *stēlē* (Theocharis and Hourmouziadis 1969, 269 = *SEG XLIII 293*) found at the nearby village of Petroporos records a legal dispute between two private individuals and the *koinon* of the Pharkadonians (*koinon Pharkadoniōn*). Normally, an inscription with this kind of content would prompt an identification of the site of Paliogardiki as that of Pharkadon, known to have existed in the vicinity. However, the latter is traditionally identified with the site at Klokotos (No. 14) – albeit on few conclusive grounds. There appears to be a certain reluctance in scholarship to question the identification of Paliogardiki, leading to some – in my meaning – problematic extended arguments. Athanasios Tziafalias (1992b, 116–121), who first published the text of the inscription, argued that the reason why the Pharkadonians in the Hellenistic period were not a *polis*, but a community (*koinon*), was because they had been subjected to the Pelinnaians after the destruction of Pharkadon by Philip II in the late 350s BCE (Polyaen. 4.2.18).

There is no evidence in Polyaeus nor elsewhere of this supposed forced synoecism and Pharkadon features as an *urbs* in Livy's description of events in 200 BCE (Liv. 31.41). Tziafalias also restores a substantial missing piece of the inscription as containing the information that one of the private individuals was from Pelinna, which then would partially explain why the *stēlē* was found at Paliogardiki. I find this reading unconvincing. As there is no firm evidence for the identification of the settlement of the Pharkadonians, the argument could as easily be reversed, with Paliogardiki being Pharkadon and Pelinna at Klokotos. The word *koinon* is used in an inscription from Thessalian Krannon (IG IX,2 460) as indicating a community not in contrast to that of a *polis*, and it is therefore not unlikely that the inscription actually puts ancient Pharkadon at the site of Paliogardiki.

A fragmentary record of a *sympoliteia* between Gomphoi and Thamiiai (SEG XXXVII 494), has been found at the sanctuary at Filia (second half of 3rd century BCE). This community was previously known from Stephanus Byzantius (who had his information by Rhianos, see below), and together with the evidence regarding Matropolis and its neighbours, the inscription suggests that synoikisms, *sympoliteias* and other inter-polity unions were relatively common also in the Hellenistic period in Western Thessaly. That politics eventually disappeared as the region became part of the Roman sphere of influence can also be inferred from inscriptions, as some ethnics – including the Methylians, Phakiasts, Pharkadonians and Pharsalians – disappear from the epigraphical record.

The Epidaurian, Delphic and Argive lists

Until the beginning of the last century, reconstructions of the ancient Western Thessalian topography were all dependent on preserved written sources. Considerable new information was added to these in the final decades of the 19th and beginning of the 20th century through the systematic collection and publication of inscriptions. Interestingly, most of this information did not come from inscriptions found in Western Thessaly but from the large sanctuaries at Delphi in Phocis and Epidaurus in the Argolid. Two *stelai* listing the so-called *theōrodokoi* or *thearodokoi* – persons who were responsible for hosting religious ambassadors known as *theōroi* or *thearoi* – were found at each sanctuary, both in a fragmentary state. Adding to these two records, a fragmentary *stēlē* of 316–293 BCE found in Argos in the Argolid (IG IV 617) records the sums donated by various individuals or groups of individuals to some religious festival, possibly the Nemean games or the Heraia (Perlman 2000, 74). The lists are organised by region, listing the *theōrodokoi* in each settlement or – in some cases – kingdoms. It has been argued that the lists basically follow the route of the *theōroi*, as this would explain the order in which the toponyms are given (Perlman 2000, 74–75), but they have also been interpreted as regional gazetteers (Galvagno 2015, 372–373,

379–380). Interestingly, the lists do not refer to the ethnics of the communities, but to the toponym; in the Epidaurian list with the toponym in the nominative and in the Delphic list as “in” (ἐν) followed by the toponym in the dative (Galvagno 2015, 366). This does not follow the standard way of indicating ethnicity (Hansen 1996, 179–180; 1998, 61–62), and might show that the point of the list was to note the physical location where the *theōrodokos* resided (Perlman 2000, 33) and not their ethnic. The latter makes the lists exceedingly interesting for the study of urbanism in the 3rd and 2nd centuries BCE, and of Western Thessaly specifically, as both lists are partially or completely preserved regarding this region.

The oldest of the lists is that from Epidaurus (IG IV², I 94) which, on the basis of the names of the *theōrodokoi*, can be dated to the mid-4th century BCE. The Thessalian section of the text is in a fragmented state. After a long break, the first listed Thessalian toponym – in Hiller von Gærtringen's (1925–1926) reading – is Oxynio[n], followed by Pharkad[on], neither of which has the name of the *theōrodokos* preserved. After this comes Atrax (as Adrakas), which is immediately east of (the unmentioned) Phayttos (No. 30). Neither Oxynio[n] (see below) nor Pharkadon have been conclusively identified with an archaeological site, even if the traditional identification of the latter is at Klokotos (No. 14). The Delphic list is preserved in several small fragments and consisted originally of five columns with text inscribed at least two separate occasions (Plassart 1921). The first part of the list, which probably dates from the late 3rd century BCE, follows a possible route through several regions, whereas the following columns lists settlements in a much more chaotic manner. The section on Thessaly and Macedonia begins ten lines into the third column of the inscription, but a long section is only fragmentarily preserved. The first complete lines (III.21) records the *theōrodokos* for Pharsalos (No. 6), followed by the important cities to its north Skotoussa and Krannon. Following these, the list apparently re-enters the area of the western plain, giving Phakion, Kierion (No. 24), Ortha (No. 13), Kelaitha, Methylian (No. 18), Matropolis (No. 17) and Gomphoi. The list then mentions the mountain area of Athamania (represented by the kings Theodoros and Amyndros), followed by the unlocated Phaloria, before becoming too fragmentary to interpret.

The toponyms listed in the column belong to the original text, which later received updates in column IV and V, adding repetitions (but not in the same order) of Matropolis (twice), Ortha (twice) among many fragmentary names. The Argive list of donors begins in the area of the Oitaian, Ainians and Malians to the south, before entering Thessaly proper from the east by Pagasai and Pherai, coming into the western plain by Pharsalos (No. 6), before turning north to Larissa and Atrax. It then re-enters the western plain, possibly passing by the [Peiras]jeans (No. 5), coming to Kierion

(No. 24), [-]llitha (see below), Gomphoi and Pelinna, before exiting the plain. Most of the toponyms of the sections for Western Thessaly are known from other sources and the archaeological record. Kelaitha (III.28) remains, however, a bit of a conundrum, situated between Ortha and Methyion in the Delphic list. The latter two settlements have been identified from inscriptions and stamped roof-tiles as being at modern Kedros and Myrini, which would put Kelaitha in the area southeast of modern Karditsa (if the inscription reflects a route). The [-]llithas ([-]ΛΛΙΘΑΣ) which figures in the Argive list (*IG* IV 617, line 9) is most probably a misreading of Kelaitha ([ἐκ Κε]λαίθας, Cabanes 1976, 124), which – featuring after Kierion – fits the general area as construed from the Delphic list.

The Delphic *theōrodochos* of Kelaitha is listed as being one Epigonos son of Epainetos, who is otherwise unattested. Kelaitha is only known from three additional inscriptions, one decree from Epirote Dodona (370–368 BCE) with a reference to one Eustratos of the Kelaithians being a *damiorgos* (*SEG* XV 384; Cabanes 1976, 534–535), one (Cabanes 1976, 121) with Droatos the Kelaithan being *prostatas* and [Theari]das the Kelaithan first of the *synarchontes*, and a third inscription (c. 170 BCE) set up by the Aetolians in Delphi mentioning a woman of a *genos* from Kelaitha (*SGDI* II 1756).² Livy (see above) mentions “the area of Celathara” (*vicus Celathara*, Liv. 32.13.12) which has been interpreted as a corrupted form of Kelaitha (Helly 1992, 86; *Neue Pauly* s.v. Kelaitha). Stephanus of Byzantium (s.v. Κέλαίθοι) cites the *Thessalika* of Rhianos (*FGrHist* 265) claiming that the Kelaithans (*Kelaithoi* or *Kelaithois*) were a Thesprotian *ethnos* living close to Thessaly. The validity of this information is impossible to verify, Thesprotia being located far from the supposed location of Kelaitha. Pierre Cabanes (1976, 124) concluded that on epigraphical grounds, the Kelaithans were most probably a Molossian tribe occupying an area adjacent to the Thessalian plains. Finally, the 2nd or 3rd century CE *Metamorphoses* of Antoninus Liberalis (Ant. Lib. *Met.* 4), has the *Kelaithoi* as one of the Epirote peoples fighting Heracles.

Another mysterious toponym is the Oxynio[n] in Friedrich Hiller von Gaertringen’s reading of the Epidaurian list. The *Inventory of Archaic and Classical poleis* (Decourt *et al.* 2004, 699) includes Oxynion in the list of *poleis* of Thessaly proper, and equates it with Oxyneia (Οξύνεια), a *polis* which according to Strabo (7.7.9) should be located at the north-western corner of the plain on the river Ion (Ἴων). Which modern river corresponds to the Ion cannot be established with certainty, but it has traditionally been identified with the Mourgkanis, officially renamed Ion, which joins with the Pineios at Mourgkani, c. 6 km northwest of Kalampaka (Stählin 1924, 114). If this identification is correct, Oxyneia should be located in the Mourgkanis valley, possibly at Mykani or Xirokampos. Strabo’s account, to the degree

it can be trusted, indicates that the area of the *polis* was possibly disputed between the Thessalians and the Tymphaians, a community residing in the mountains northwest of the plain. If Oxyneia and Oxynio[n] constitute the same settlement, however, there is an apparent discrepancy with the Epidaurian list, as the distance between Oxynio[n] and the following item of the list Pharkadon would be at least 50–60 km (depending on the identification of the latter settlement). Comparing with the other settlements in the same list, the distances between locations are rarely this considerable, and the large geographical “leap” is consequently difficult to explain. However, an alternative reading of the same text by Perlman (2000, 178–179) has Pelinna (Πέλινα[να]) where Hiller von Gaertringen and the *IG* has Oxynio[n], which indeed looks much more plausible judging from the photograph of the squeeze in *IG* (IV², I Tab. 5), which shows Π[.]ΛΙΝ[–].³ A route Pelinna–Pharkadon–Atrax should in all likelihood be completely plausible, even if the exact locations of the first two settlements are still to be settled, and the reading settles the topographical issues as raised by Ernst Kirsten (1942, 2041). These cases highlight the challenges relating to the source material for many of the reconstructions of the Western Thessalian topography in antiquity and calls for much caution in treating tentative reconstructions as definitive.

Stephanus Byzantium and his sources

The *Ethnica* by Stephanus of Byzantium is mainly preserved in an epitome version (Billerbeck 2008, 301), meaning that most of the encyclopaedic information that it originally contained has been condensed and consequently lost. The work dates to the 6th century CE and contains references to several communities which otherwise would not have been known. The work is often treated in modern scholarship as unreliable and too late in date to be relevant for earlier periods, but recent re-assessments by Margarethe Billerbeck (2008) have rehabilitated Stephanus’s worth for the understanding of ancient topography. This is also the case for Thessaly. Generally, Stephanus refers to the Thessalian toponyms as being *poleis*, but the work also contains references to villages (*komai*), areas, hills, *etc.* As can be seen in Table 4, where Stephanus states his sources, they are with few exceptions of the Archaic–late Hellenistic period, indicating that the list is not reflecting his contemporaneous world. Semi-mythological topography (derived from Homeric and other epics) is, however, notably present, as in the case of Strabo, obscuring the image of the region.

Regarding Western Thessaly, it is clear that Stephanus had acquired information from the Hellenistic epic poet Rhianos (*fl.* second half of the 2nd century BCE), whose lost *Thessalika* is probably the exact source. Stephanus is the main source for the fragments of this work, which appears from the preserved toponyms to have been fairly detailed

Table 4 Thessalian and perioecic poleis and kōmai mentioned in Stephanus of Byzantium's *Ethnica*.

<i>Transcription</i>	<i>Greek</i>	<i>Passage</i>	<i>Source</i>	<i>Remark</i>
Agylla	Ἄγυλλα	23.11	Rhian.	“κτίσμα τῶν ἐκ Θεσσαλίας Πελασγῶν”
Aia	Αἶα	36.16	S., unknown play.	“ἔστιν τις Αἶα Θεσσαλῶν παγκληρία”
Ainia	Αἰνία	51.2		“πόλις Περραιβῶν”
Ainos	Αἴνος	51.14		
Aixioneia	Αἰξώνεια	52.12		“πόλις Μαγνησίας”
Aison	Αἰσῶν	54.16	Hes.; Pherecyd.	
Akte	Ἀκτὴ	64.6		“ἔστι καὶ Ἀκτὴ Μαγνησίας”
Alea	Ἀλέα	69.2		
Alope	Ἀλόπη	77.8	Pherecyd.; Ph. Bybl.	“ἔστι δὲ μεταξὺ Λαρίσσης τῆς Κρεμαστῆς καὶ Ἐχίνου”
Aloion	Ἀλώιον	79.2		“ἐπὶ τῶν Τέμπεων”
Amolbos	Ἄμολβος	86.7	Balakros, <i>Mac.</i> 2	
Amyros	Ἄμυρος	88.1	Hes. <i>Cat.</i> (through Strab. 9)	
Amphanai	Ἀμφαναί	89.4		“χωρίον Θεσσαλίας”
Antron	Ἄντρον	101.14		
Aperanteia	Ἀπεράντεια	104.11	Polyb. 20	
Argos	Ἄργος	112.18		“ἡ νῦν Λάρισσα”
Argoura	Ἄργουρα	113.19		“ἡ πρότερον Ἄργισσα”
Arne	Ἄρνη	123.18		“ἡ Κιέριον καλεῖται”
Asbotos	Ἄσβωτος	130.8		
Asterion	Ἀστέριον	138.17	<i>Il.</i> (2.735)	“ἡ νῦν Πειρεσία”
Atrax or Atrakia	Ἄτραξ or Ἄτρακία	143.5	Lycoph.; Eup.	τῆς Πελασγιώτιδος μοίρας
Aphetai	Ἀφεταί	149.6	Hellanic.	“πόλις τῆς Μαγνησίας”
Achnai	Ἄχναι	152.16	Cleod.	
Boibe	Βοίβη	172.9	<i>Il.</i> (2.712)	“ἔστιν οὖν καὶ πόλις καὶ λίμνη Βοιβιάς”
Boudeia	Βούδεια	180.3	Lycoph.; <i>Il.</i> (16.572)	“πόλις ἐν Μαγνησίᾳ”
Bodone	Βωδώνη	190.20	Apollod. Ath. (<i>De deor.</i> 1)	“πόλις Περραιβική”
Glaphyrai	Γλαφύραι	209.3	<i>Il.</i> (2.712)	
Gomphoi	Γόμφοι	210.9		
Gonnoi	Γόννοι	210.15	<i>Il.</i> (2.748)	“πόλις Περραιβίας”
Gonnoussa	Γοννοῦσσα	211.4		“πόλις Περραιβίας”
Gyrton	Γυρτόν	215.20	<i>Il.</i> (2.738)	“πόλις τῆς Θεσσαλίας καὶ Περραιβίας”
Deipnias	Δειπνιάς	223.12	Call. (<i>Aet.</i>)	“κώμη Θεσσαλίας περὶ Λάρισσαν”
Demetrius	Δημητριάς	227.6		
Dia	Δῖα	229.1		“Αἰακοῦ κτίσμα”
Dion	Δῖον	232.3		
Dotion	Δώτιον	256.14		
Elateia	Ἐλάτεια	264.3		
Helike	Ἑλίκη	266.19		
Hellas	Ἑλλάς	268.3	(<i>Il.</i> 9.395)	
Eretria	Ἐρέτρια	276.3		
Erineos	Ἐρινεός	277.6		
Euryamos	Εὐρύαμπος	286.19	Lycoph.	“πόλις Μαγνησίας”

(Continued)

Table 4 Thessalian and perioecic poleis and kōmai mentioned in Stephanus of Byzantium's *Ethnica*. (Continued)

Transcription	Greek	Passage	Source	Remark
Eurymenai	Εὐρυμεναί	287.1	Hecat. <i>Γῆς Περίοδος</i> 1	
Ephyra	Ἐφύρα	290.3		
Elone	Ἠλώνη	301.11	<i>Il.</i> (2.738)	“πόλις Περραιβική”; “νῦν δὲ Λειμώνη”
Herakleia	Ἡράκλεια	303.16		
Thamia	Θαμία	306.8	Rhianos, <i>Thess.</i> 14	
Thaumakia	Θαυμακία	307.3	<i>Il.</i> (2.716)	“πόλις Μαγνησίας”; “δευτέρα πόλις κατὰ τὸν Μαλιακὸν κόλπον”
Thespeia	Θέσπεια	310.9		
Thestideion	Θεστίδειον	312.7	Hellanic.	
Thebe	Θήβη	312.15		“Θεσσαλίας τῆς Φθιώτιδος”
Thegonion	Θηγώνιον	313.7	Hellanic., <i>Deuc.</i> 1	Probable mistake for Thetionion (Θητώνιον).
Thorax	Θώραξ	321.3		“ἔστι καὶ Μαγνησίας”
Ithome	Ἰθώμη	329.1	<i>Il.</i> (2.729)	“τῆς Πελασγιώτιδος”; “καλεῖται δὲ ὁ τόπος τῆς Θετταλικῆς Θούμμιον”
Ilion	Ἴλιον	330.18		
Iope	Ἰόπη	333.13		
Iros	Ἴρος	337.8	Lycoph.	“καὶ Τραχῖνα καὶ Περραιβικὴν”
Iton	Ἴτων	342.5	<i>Il.</i> (2.695)	
Iolkos	Ἰωλκός	343.4	<i>Il.</i> (2.711)	
Kastanaia	Κασταναία	366.11	Eudox. <i>Cyz.</i> 9; Lycoph.	
Korope	Κορόπη	375.8	Nic. <i>Th.</i>	
Krannon	Κραννών	381.21	Hecat.; Call. (<i>Aet.</i> ?); Theopomp. <i>Hist.</i> (<i>Ph.</i> ?); Hdt. (6.177.4); Strab. (7).	“τῆς Πελασγιώτιδος ἐν τοῖς Τέμπεσιν”
Ktimene	Κτιμένη	388.17		
Kytina	Κύτινα	399.7	Theon.	
Kyphos	Κύφος	399.15	<i>Il.</i> (2.748.); Lycoph.	“πόλις Περραιβίας”
Lakereia	Λακέρεια	408.8	Hellanic., <i>Deuc.</i> 1	“πόλις Μαγνησίας”
Lamia	Λάμια	409.4	Polyb.	
Lapithe	Λαπίθη	412.9	Eraph.	
Larisa	Λάρισα	412.18		
Larisa	Λάρισα	412.18		
Kremaste	Κρεμαστή			
Larisa	Λάρισα	412.18		“ἐν τῇ Ὀσση χωρίον”
Larisa	Λάρισα	412.18		“Θεσσαλίας πρὸς τῇ Μακεδονίᾳ”
Lytai	Λυταί	423.12		“χωρίον Θεσσαλίας”
Megara	Μέγαρα	438.13		
Methydriion	Μεθύδριον	440.15	Ph. <i>Bybl.</i>	
Methone	Μεθώνη	440.17	<i>Il.</i> (2.716)	“πόλις [...] Μαγνησίας”
Meliboia	Μελίβοια	442.7	Strab. 9; Theopomp. <i>Hist.</i> (<i>Ph.</i> ?).	
Melitaia	Μελίταια	443.1	Alex. <i>Eph. Asia</i>	
Metropolis	Μητρόπολις	451.3		“τῆς ἄνω Θετταλίας”
Minya	Μινύα	454.1		“ἡ πρότερον Ἀλμωνία”
Misgomenai	Μισγομεναί	454.12	Hellanic., <i>Deuc.</i> 1	

(Continued)

Table 4 (Continued)

<i>Transcription</i>	<i>Greek</i>	<i>Passage</i>	<i>Source</i>	<i>Remark</i>
Mopsion	Μόψιον	458.11	Strab. 9	
Mylai	Μυλαί	461.6		
Nesson	Νέσσων	472.20	Dionys. Epic. Gig. 3	
Xynia	Ξυνία	481.19	Polyb. 9	“καὶ Ξυνιάς λίμνη”
Oichalia	Οἰχάλια	487.18		
Olizon	Ὀλιζών	489.14	Hecat. Γῆς Περίοδος	
Oloosson	Ὀλοοσσών	490.11	II. (2.738)	“πόλις Μαγνησίας”
Homarion	Ὁμάριον	491.22	Theopomp. Hist. Ph. 21	
Homolion	Ὁμόλιον	493.5	Strab. 7	“πόλις Μακεδονίας καὶ Μαγνησίας”
Omphalion	Ὁμφάλιον	493.11		
Onthyrion	Ὀνθύριον	493.15	Rhian. 8	
Orthe	Ὄρθη	496.1		“πόλις Περραιβίας ἢ Θετταλίας”
Paralos	Πάραλος	503.1		“πόλις τῶν Μηλιέων”
Peirasia	Πειρασία	514.8		
Pele	Πέλη	514.18		
Pelinna	Πέλινα	515.3		“ἐν τῇ Φθιώτιδι”
Pella	Πέλλα	515.6		
Perrhaibos	Περραιβός	518.5		
Pereia	Πήρεια	521.2		“Θεσσαλίας χωρίον”
Pelion	Πήλιον	521.4		
Pialeia	Πιάλεια	522.2		“πόλις Θεσσαλικῆ ὑπὸ τὸ Κερκετικὸν ὄρος”
Pras	Πρᾶς	534.12		“ὄνομα πόλεως Περραιβικῆς”
Pteleon	Πτελεόν	537.21		“τῶν περὶ Θετταλίαν Ἀχαιῶν”
Proana	Πρώανα	537.14		
Rhizous	Ῥιζοῦς	545.4		
Skotousa	Σκότουσα	578.1		“πόλις καὶ χωρίον τῆς ἐν Θετταλία Πελασγίας”
Spaethre	Σπαλέθρη	583.13	Hellanic.	
Symaitha	Σύμαιθα	591.13	Theopomp. Hist. Ph. 22	
Tilphossaion	Τίλφωσσαῖον	624.10		“χωρίον Θετταλίας”
Titaron	Τιταρών	627.3	Lycoph.	
Trachis	Τραχίς	632.12		
Trikke	Τρίκκη	635.1		
Tripolis	Τρίπολις	637.5		“καὶ ἄλλη [πόλις] Περραιβίας”
Phakion	Φάκιον	654.25	Thuc. 4	“πόλισμα Θεσσαλίας”
Phalanna	Φάλαννα	655.17	Lycoph.; Hecat. Hist. 1; Ephor. 9.	“πόλις Περραιβίας”
Phalara	Φάλαρα	656.3		“πλησίον Λαμίας”
Phaleron	Φάληρον	656.14	Rhian.	“ἔστι καὶ Θετταλίας ἄλλη πρὸς τῇ Οἴτῃ, ἦν Ῥιανὸς διὰ τοῦ <α> γράφει Φάλαρον λέγων καὶ Φάληρον διὰ τοῦ <η>”
Pharkedon	Φαρκηδών	658.19	Theopomp. Hist. Ph. 9	
Pharos	Φάρος	659.13		“ἔστι καὶ πόλις Περραιβικῆ”
Pharsalos	Φάρσαλος	659.18		

(Continued)

Table 4 Thessalian and perioecic poleis and kōmai mentioned in Stephanus of Byzantium's *Ethnica*. (Continued)

Transcription	Greek	Passage	Source	Remark
Pherai	Φεραί	662.12	<i>Il.</i> (2.711)	
Phthia	Φθία	663.16	Parmeniscus; Strab. 4; E. (unknown play).	“πόλις καὶ μοῖρα Θετταλίας”
Philippoi	Φίλιπποι	666.1		“ἐκλήθησαν Φίλιπποι καὶ αἱ Θῆβαι Θεσσαλίας καὶ Γόμφοι Θεσπρωτίας”
Phorbas	Φόρβας	670.5		“πόλις τῶν ἐν Θεσσαλίᾳ Ἀχαιῶν”
Phylake	Φυλάκη	673.14	<i>Il.</i> (2.695); Heliod. Hist.	
Phyllos	Φύλλος	674.14	Strab. 9; Rhianos, <i>Thess.</i> 9	
Photinaion	Φωτίναιον	676.7	Hecat. <i>Eur.</i>	

Boldface indicates securely identified archaeological sites. An empty field in the 4th column indicates that the location was referred to as “πόλις Θετταλίας” *vel sim.*

regarding communities and settlements in Western Thessaly and the Pindos range. I find it probable that other entries with information on Western Thessalian *poleis* contained information also from Rhianos, even if they do not explicitly state so, as most of the locations had long ceased to be inhabited by the 6th century CE. One or several older sources are consequently to be expected, and Rhianos being the main identified source, I find it most probable that the *Thessalika* was where Stephanus collected much of his information. Another interesting source is Theopompus's lost *Philippika* (Theop. Hist. *Ph.*), who provided information on one site in Western Thessaly (Steph. Byz. *s.v.* Pharkedon) and several in the east. The *Philippika* chronicled the reign of Philip II of Macedon, and it is more than probable that the toponyms were collected from accounts of his campaigns in the region. Interestingly, Stephanus lacks entries on some communities, such as Ekkara and Phayttos (No. 30), which either means that they did not figure in Rhianos's and Theopompus's works, or that the entries have been lost. Some of the communities which are treated as Thessalian in scholarly tradition appear in the fragments of Rhianos as belonging to the Thesprotians, notably the Kelaita, discussed above. This might reflect a less topographically based understanding of ethnicity at the time, with communities occupying locations on the western plain regarding themselves ethnically or ancestrally different from their immediate neighbours.

Regarding Rhianos, we should note that much of his information is more harmonious with the Delphic, Epidaurian and Argive lists (see above) than with later geographers such as Strabo and Pliny, it is possible that he had actually visited the areas about which he composed his epic. Not being limited by the composition of the *Catalogue of Ships*, Rhianos could – unlike Strabo – focus on an actual Hellenistic landscape and its inhabitants. Collecting local myths and histories, he compiled the information in a coherent whole (Spanakis 2020), which is sadly nearly completely lost except through Stephanus.

Stamped roof-tiles

Among textual sources, stamped roof-tiles are undoubtedly the most understudied medium. In spite of constituting the only technique for the mass-production of text in antiquity (excluding perhaps, mould-made *skyphoi* (wine cups)), there has only been a handful of articles written on the subject. Rainer C.S. Felsch's (1979; 1990) two catalogues of stamped tiles and terracottas from the Greek mainland constitute the largest collections of stamps from a wider geographical region, showing that the practice was already widespread in the area in the Archaic and Classical period. Most of Felsch's examples, however, are purely figurative, and to a large extent pre-date most of the urban settlements of the Greek mainland.

From a wider Greek perspective, roof-tile stamps with text can be divided into four groups. By far the most common one is the maker's or workshop stamp, which generally contains a personal name in the genitive. Examples of such have been noted at many locations in Western Thessaly, indicating the existence of local ceramic workshops (Intzesiloglou 2000a). The second group, which is not too common, contains examples with stamps bearing personal names in the nominative, which can probably indicate the name of the person or official who ordered the tiles. The stamps of the third group have names of deities in the dative, indicating that the roof was produced and/or purchased as an offering to the god or goddess to roof a sanctuary or similar. Such tiles are not too common, but one example is known from Vlochos (Vaïopoulou *et al.* 2020, 65). The fourth and final group consists of tiles marked with text to show that the tile was the common property of a community.

This fourth group is the most interesting for this study, as such tiles have played a great role in the identification of the names of ancient settlements of Western Thessaly, probably more so than at any other region of Greece. The tiles of the fourth group should further be divided into two sub-groups, the first being tiles merely stating that they are public property, and the second with the actual name of

the community. The most common text for the first sub-group is *dēmosion/damosion*, which have been found at Ermitsi (No. 5; *IG IX,2* 269; Hatziangelakis 1998, 244) and Kallithiro (No. 11; Intzesiloglou 1997, 26–27). The second sub-group, which is the most interesting here, are the tiles bearing the name of the community, including those of the Peirasieans from Ermitsi (No. 5; Hatziangelakis 1998, 244), of the Methylicans from Myrini (No. 18. Intzesiloglou 2000a, 182), of the Matropolitans from Lianokokkala (Mili 2015, 181; 333), the Orthieians from Kedros (No. 13; Intzesiloglou 2000b, 169) and the Kierians from Pyrgos Kieriou (No. 24; Hatziangelakis 2001b, 361). Apart from the Matropolitans, the locations of the settlements of these communities were not known with any certainty prior to the discoveries of the tiles, highlighting the great importance of this source material.

By contrast to inscriptions in stone, stamped roof-tiles are rarely re-used as building material. They thus tend to be found at their original location and, in the case of the second sub-group mentioned above, consequently provide valuable information through their relative context. However, tiles are found in enormous quantities at urban sites and, without a closer scrutiny of the thousands of fragments found during the excavation process, it is all too easy to miss stamps and other marks. The stamped roof-tiles of Western Thessaly which belong to the second sub-group of the fourth group all mention communities that were previously known from other textual sources. The communities of the Methylicans and the Orthieians, however, were only firmly attested in inscriptions, showing that further epigraphical discoveries, together with new stamped roof-tiles, might produce evidence of previously unknown communities to be linked with urban sites in the region.

Western Thessalian cities in Livy and other early Roman sources

As mentioned above, there is no single ancient literary source as important for the understanding of the ancient topography of Western Thessaly as is Livy's *Ab urbe condita* (Béquignon 1928, 446; Decourt 1990, 97–124; Decourt *et al.* 2004). Written in the final decades BCE, the account draws on other sources for the military campaigns conducted in the area as part of the Macedonian Wars, probably mainly the lost books of Polybius (Eckstein 1976). Compared to other sources describing the area (such as the near-contemporaneous Strabo), Livy has proven highly reliable through the discoveries of inscriptions or stamped roof-tiles confirming the existence of settlements mentioned in the text. However, nearly 200 years separate the events described and the time of compilation in their present form and some caution is consequently called for. Livy did not use Greek loan-words to describe topography and the built environment but the choice of certain translated terms indicates that the original sources were indeed to a large extent in Greek. As an

example, the Latin word *arx*, originally a toponym in the city of Rome, is used throughout the work describing *akropoleis* or *akrai*, which were typical to Greek cities (Rönnlund 2018, 40). Regarding the region of Thessaly, Livy uses the word *oppidum* throughout to describe what is often translated as “city” or “town”. *Oppidum* is often used in archaeological literature to describe Central and West European Iron Age hillforts, but the use in Livy is notably broader than such. In the case of Western Thessaly, *urbs* and *oppidum* are used interchangeably for certain settlements, whereas others are only referred to as *oppida*. Interestingly, the settlements that survived as important local centres into the Roman period are indeed often the ones that are named as *urbes* in Livy's account. In total, 31 toponyms referring to settlements in Western Thessaly figure in books 31, 32 and 36 of *Ab urbe condita*, describing mainly the events of 198 and 191 BCE (Table 5). Some are merely mentioned by name, others described as either *oppida*, *urbes* or *castella*, whereas a few are described in more detail as scenes of sieges. Half of the 31 toponyms are known from other sources, with 15 only found in Livy. Attempts at identifying the unique names with toponyms found elsewhere have been made by several scholars (Stählin 1924; Béquignon 1928; Decourt 1990) with a varying level of success. Celathara (Liv. 32.13.12), which apparently was situated at the southwest rim of the plain, is sometimes identified with Kelaita (see above), and Cymine (Liv. 32.13.10) has been suggested to be the Ktimenai known from several sources as having been an important settlement in the mountainous region of Dolopia, just south of the plains (Stählin 1922). The *oppidum* Euhydrium (Liv. 32.13.9) has by some (see Stählin 1924, 143, note 6) been interpreted as a mistake for Methydrium, a toponym known from Philo of Byblos through Stephanus of Byzantium (*s.v.* Μεθύδριον), and possibly a non-Thessalian variant of Methylian (No. 18), which – notably – does not feature among the Livian toponyms. On the basis of the sequence of names in Livy, Euhydrium is generally and officially identified with the fortified hill of Chtouri (No. 1). There is little published evidence to support an urban site of the early 2nd century BCE at this location. The *castellum* Ligynae (Liv. 32.13.3) shares a similar name with the Ligynaioi (οἱ Λιγυναῖοι), a community known in a famous boundary conflict inscription of the early 2nd century BCE from Delphi (*FD III* 3:355 l. 29; Ager 1996, 415–420). These are viewed to have inhabited an area bordering to the sacred land contested between Phthiotic Thebes and Halos at the plain west of the Pagasetic Gulf (Stählin 1926a), and it is consequently difficult to say whether they in any way relate to the fortified location Ligynae.

Both Palaepharsalus and Pharsalus feature in Livy's accounts, the first as one of the *oppida* destroyed by Philip V and the Macedonians during their scorched earth retreat through Western Thessaly in 198 BCE and a location close to the camp of Aulus Hostilius in 168 BCE (Liv. 44.1.4),

Table 5 Locations in Western Thessaly mentioned in Livy.

Passage in Livy	Type	Latin toponym	Greek toponym	Location
32.13.13		Acharrae	Ἐκκάρρα	Unlocated.
32.15.4; 36.13.5	<i>oppidum</i>	Aeginium	Αἰγίνιον	Kalampaka (No. 10).
32.13.10		Angeiae	*Ἀγγεαί	Unlocated.
32.13.3	<i>castellum</i>	Argenta	*Ἀργέντα?	Unlocated.
32.13.11	<i>oppidum</i> *	Callithera	*Καλλίθηρα	Unlocated.
32.13.12		Celathara	*Κελαθάρρα (Κελαίθα?)	Unlocated.
32.15.3; 36.14.6	<i>urbs</i>	Cierium	Κιέριον	Pyrgos Kieriou (No. 23).
32.13.10		Cymine	*Κτιμέναι?	Unlocated.
32.13.9	<i>oppidum</i>	Euhydrium	*Εὐῦδριον (Μεθῦδριον?)	Unlocated.
31.41.6; 32.14.1–3; 36.13.5	<i>urbs, oppidum</i>	Gomphi	Γόμφοι	Unlocated (No. 4?).
32.13.9	<i>oppidum</i>	Iresiae	Πειρασία(ι)	Ermitsi (No. 5).
32.13.3	<i>castellum</i>	Lampsus	*Λάμπος	Unlocated.
32.13.3	<i>castellum</i>	Ligynae	*Λιγύναι	Unlocated.
36.13.9; 36.14.1–2		Limnaeum	*Λιμναῖον	Unlocated.
32.13.11; 32.15.3; 36.14.6	<i>oppidum</i> *, <i>urbs</i>	Metropolis	Μητροπόλις/ Ματρόπολις	Mitropoli (No. 17).
32.13.9; 44.1.4	<i>oppidum</i>	Palaepharsalus	Παλαιφάρσαλος	Farsala (No. 6).
36.13.5–9; 36.14.2–4	<i>oppidum</i>	Pelinnaeum	Πελιναῖον	Unlocated.
32.14.1	<i>oppidum</i>	Phaeca	*Φαίκα	Unlocated.
32.13.9; 36.13.3	<i>oppidum</i>	Phacium	Φάκιον	Unlocated.
36.13.4		Phaestus	Φαῦττός	Zarkos (No. 30).
32.15.1–3; 36.13.5	<i>urbs, oppidum</i>	Phaloria	Φαλώρεια	Unlocated.
31.41.8	<i>urbs</i>	Pharcadon	Φαρκαδόν	Unlocated.
36.14.11		Pharsalus	Φάρσαλος	Farsala (No. 6).
32.13.3	<i>castellum</i>	Pherinium	*Φερίνιον?	Unlocated.
36.14.12		Proerna	Πρόερνα	Neo Monastiri (No. 19).
36.13.5	<i>oppidum</i>	Silana	*Σιλάνα	Unlocated.
32.13.3	<i>castellum</i>	Strymon	*Στρυμών	Unlocated.
32.13.12		Teuma	*Τεύμα	Unlocated.
32.4; 32.13.14; 36.14.12–14	<i>urbs</i>	Thaumacus	Θαυμακοί	Domokos (No. 2).
32.13.3	<i>castellum</i>	Timarum	*Θιμάρον?	Unlocated.
32.13.5; 36.13.5	<i>oppidum</i>	Tricca	Τρίκκα	Trikala (No. 28).

Asterisk (*) after the Latin settlement type indicates that the type is inferred. Asterisk before Greek toponym indicates that the form is reconstructed. The bold numbers are references to Appendix 1.

and the other as one of the garrisoned places that surrendered to Manius Atilius in 191 BCE (Liv. 36.14.11). The toponym Palaepharsalus, corresponding to the Greek Palaipharsalos, indicates “old Pharsalos”, a fact which has stirred the imagination of a long line of scholars. Palaipharsalos is most well-known as being named in certain sources (*Bell. Alex.* 48.1; Strab. 17.1.11. Morgan 1983) as the location of the decisive battle between the forces of Julius Caesar and Pompey in 48 BCE. Strabo (9.5.6) mentions “the Pharsaloi of old and the

new” as being located at equal distance from the (sanctuary of?) Thetideion, which is an intriguing way of speaking of the largest urban settlement in ancient Western Thessaly. It is also remarkable that Julius Caesar in his own account does not name the scene of the battle, which is just put as having taken place “in Thessaly” (Caes. *BCiv.* 3.101.5). This has been commented on by previous scholars, as well as that the location of the battle in the earliest Roman sources is often named as Pharsalia, which is the region surrounding

the city rather than the city itself (Perrin 1885, 177). As described in Appendix 1 (No. 6), the site at modern Farsala has yielded virtually no evidence of Roman-era habitation. All this combined makes it probable in my view that the site of Hellenistic Pharsalos was abandoned by the time of Caesar and Pompey, thus receiving the name “old Pharsalos”, and that “new Pharsalos” was located elsewhere, maybe at modern Krini (No. 15).

In 149 BCE, Andriskos – often referred to as pseudo-Philip – a contender to the Macedonian throne claiming to be the son of the deceased king Perseus, caused alarm in Rome when he managed to seize control over Macedonia. Cassius Dio (21.28) writes that Andriskos and his Macedonians soon had conquered also a considerable part of Thessaly, beginning a conflict known as the Fourth Macedonian War. The Thessalians sent petitions to the Romans for help against the Macedonians, and legion under the *praetor* Publius Juventius Thalna was sent to defend the region. At an unspecified location in northern Thessaly, the Roman legion was nearly annihilated by the Macedonians, with the *praetor* killed (Walbank 1979, 678). The Macedonian army continued to ravage Thessaly, prompting the Romans to send yet another *praetor*, Quintus Caecilius Metellus, with a great military force. This defeated the forces of Andriskos in the area of Pydna, with the latter forced to retreat further towards Thrace, where he was ultimately betrayed and delivered to the Romans (Dio Cass, 21.28; Liv. *Per.* 50). The effect of the Fourth Macedonian War on the cities of Thessaly has not been overly discussed in scholarly literature, probably because the preserved texts do not contain much reference to the local topography. The repeated instances of looting as conducted by the Macedonians (Dio Cass. 21.28), however, is indicative of rather substantial destruction. The context in which this occurred was probably also troubling for the cities. According to Polybius, the situation in Greece at the time was difficult. He states that Greece as a whole suffered by “childlessness and a general population decrease, owing to which the cities were denuded of inhabitants, and a failure of productiveness resulted, though there were no long-continued wars or serious pestilences among us”²⁴ (Polyb. 37.9). Polybius ascribes these changes to more-or-less moral and/or personal choices, including the disinclination to marry and have more than two children, as well as by spoiling the latter so that they grow weak, *etc.* These reasons were probably not too causative in reality, but Polybius remains an important witness to the relatively rapid depopulation of the Greek mainland in the 2nd century BCE.

Western Thessaly rarely features in Roman historical narratives after this period apart from accounts of the aforementioned battle of Pharsalos. Some sources relating to the First Mithridatic war mention that Thessaly had been held by Roman troops, which were not enough to withstand the invasion by the Mithridatic general Taxiles in 86 BCE

(Plut. *Sull.* 15). How this affected the western part of the region is impossible to say, but judging from the destruction in Phocis and Locris, the possibility for yet another dire situation in Thessaly is not improbable.

Procopius and the Justinianic re-fortification programme

The *On Buildings* by Procopius (Proc. *De aed.* 4.3) contains some fragmentary information regarding the situation in Thessaly in the mid-6th century CE, stating that the fortifications of many of the large cities (*poleis*) had fallen into a dilapidated state and no longer served as protection for the local population. Even if this narrative clearly functions as a backdrop for the Justinianic propaganda, the image harmonises with what can be discerned from the archaeological evidence (see below). The fortifications of the former major urban sites appear not to have been modernised or repaired since the 2nd century BCE, and 700 years of quarrying of their stones for other building projects had probably reduced their size considerably. Procopius mentions that Justinian “renewed” (*ananeōō*) the walls of Pharsalos (No. 6), Matropolis (No. 17), Gomphoi (No. 4?) and Triikka (No. 28), “making them safe and strong, since they all had suffered with the passage of time and could be captured easily, if anyone should attack them” (*trans.* H.B. Dewing). The question whether the *On Buildings* contains reports of actual building activities or merely reflects imperial propaganda has not yet been resolved. The *Synekdemos* (attributed to Hierocles), a list of administrative divisions of the Eastern Roman empire in the first half of the 6th century, puts just these four *poleis* as the administrative centres of Western Thessaly (Hier. *Syn.* 642.8–13), which might be why they are mentioned by Procopius. Among the four *poleis* mentioned, Pharsalos and Triikka are the only ones where possible Justinianic restorations of fortifications have been noted. No Early Byzantine material has been reported from Matropolis, but this might be explained by the fragmentary state of publication from this site. Provided that the site at Episkopi (No. 4) is that of ancient Gomphoi, we see the same situation. At Triikka, no fortifications of the post-Hellenistic period have been reported apart from the large fortress on the *akropolis*, which to the largest extent is much later in date.

Among the lists of non-urban fortifications constructed or repaired on the orders of the emperor (*De aed.* 4.4), Procopius lists seven forts (*phrouria*) in Thessaly, Alkon, Lossonos, Gerontike, Perbyla, Kerkineou, Skidreous and Phrakellan. Whether any of these were located in Western Thessaly is impossible to say at present; only Lossonos can, with some certainty, be identified with modern Elassona in Perrhaibia. Kerkineou has been connected with a Cercinium mentioned by Livy (see above), which would locate it somewhere in Eastern Thessaly (Oberhummer 1921; Decourt *et al.* 2004, 689). It is to be noted, however, that apart from the latter

two, none of the toponyms are reminiscent of sites known from earlier or later sources. Interestingly, there are within the whole area of Thessaly far more than seven 6th century CE fortresses, indicating that the list was incomplete or amended later. Procopius's entries represent the last detailed accounts of the situation in ancient Thessaly. The contemporaneous Stephanus of Byzantium contains further information regarding the region, but the entries of his *Ethnica* appear to have mainly been compiled from earlier sources (see above). After the 6th century, we never again encounter the toponyms of antiquity from Western Thessaly, except in the later forms Domokos, Farsala and Trikala.

Notes

1. Inscriptions mentioning the repairs of the walls of Eastern Thessalian Larisa (*SEG* XLII 510, 170s BCE) and Skotoussa (*SEG* XLIII 311, c. 197–185 BCE) indicate that some efforts were made in Thessaly to maintain the fortifications after the tumultuous first decades of the 2nd century BCE.
2. The commentary in the *SGDI* equates the Kelaithra of the inscription with the (unidentified) Kelaithra close to Arne in Boeotia (*Steph. Byz. s.v. Κελαίθρα*, see below), which appears unlikely. As Arne is a toponym also associated with Thessalian Kierion (**No. 24**), it is possible that Kelaithra and Kelaitha are indeed the same location, somewhere in the southwestern part of the plain (Helly 1992, 86; Spanakis 2020, 249).
3. Perlman (2000) does not comment on the differences in the reading in her commentary, neither does Decourt *et al.* (2004, 699).
4. Polyb. 37.9: Ἐπέσχευεν ἐν τοῖς καθ' ἡμᾶς καιροῖς τὴν Ἑλλάδα πᾶσαν ἀπαιδία καὶ συλλήβδην ὀλιγανθρωπία, δι' ἣν αἱ τε πόλεις ἐξηρημώθησαν καὶ ἀφορίαν εἶναι συνέβαινε, καίπερ οὔτε πολέμων συνεχῶν ἐσχηκότων ἡμᾶς οὔτε λοιμικῶν περιστάσεων.

Discussion

The archaeological material from Western Thessaly contains ample evidence for the existence of cities or urban-like settlements. Further, there are many indications of several discrete chronological phases, with some sites limited to one phase only, while others display signs of diachronic habitation. Instead of treating urbanism as one single occurrence I will, in this chapter, discuss the developments and characteristics of the main three phases: Classical–Hellenistic, Roman, and Early Byzantine – as illustrated by the sites in the catalogue (Appendix 1). A common problem in understanding all three phases is the question of demography and how many inhabitants the cities actually had. As is evident from previous attempts at estimating urban populations, this is not an easy riddle to solve and I argue in this chapter that the suggested numbers are probably not reliable. Another concept central to previous attempts at understanding ancient cities is that of territories and territoriality, something that I regard as a probable anachronism and of little significance to Thessaly and the ancient Greek world in general.

Last in the chapter, I address the more over-arching questions behind urbanisation and urbanism. Since I suggest that cities are, to a large extent, political creations, I discuss the political and economic rationale behind the various urbanisation drives discernible in the archaeological record. Relating to this, there is the question of when the cities of Western Thessaly were eventually abandoned, and which processes and events made locals to choose rural life over urban life. Finally, I discuss the apparent “returns” of urbanism, how cities in some areas and locations cyclically re-appear as modes of settlement, and the mechanisms possibly driving this development.

The late Classical and Hellenistic cities

Previous scholarship has put more focus on the political organisation of the Western Thessalian Classical–Hellenistic

cities than on their physical aspects. This is naturally due to the interest in *poleis* and *koina* as outlined above, but also due to the better availability of the source material. This said, it is crucial to remember that the social organisation of the Western Thessalian urban communities in the late Classical and Hellenistic periods can mainly be studied indirectly. Few primary textual sources are preserved, either epigraphic or literary, and many assumptions about the social organisation, political offices, *etc.* have been inferred from the more well-known eastern parts of Thessaly. Epigraphic texts reveal local variation between communities, and a coherent unity over all the region is probably not to be expected. An archaeological approach to the topic of Classical–Hellenistic urbanism is consequently crucial and will, in my view, reveal much more of ancient cities than can be extracted from textual sources.

Guided by my short description of what an ancient city is (see Chapter 1), it is evident that the vast majority of urban sites in Western Thessaly were established in the second half of the 4th century BCE. There is in the strict sense no available archaeological evidence for urban communities prior to this period and the textual evidence essentially supports this observation. The Classical–Hellenistic cities were in most cases abandoned or heavily depopulated and reduced over the course of the first half of the 2nd century BCE, making them relatively single-period in their nature. As a group, they display several strong similarities when it comes to the choice of site, their architectural vocabulary and social organisation, further indicating that they should be regarded as belonging to a particular phenomenon in the history of the region.

It is difficult to establish precisely when the Classical–Hellenistic cities were first laid out. This is mainly because few of the sites in the catalogue have been excavated to any greater stratigraphical depth, and in the cases where this has been done, we lack any detailed publication of

the results. Judging from the cases where the urban layout is known, it is clear that the street-grids and fortifications form a coherent whole and that, consequently, they should belong to the same initial stage of urban establishment. In short, the urban settlements appear *not* to have been established at an earlier stage than the fortifications or vice versa. The most well-preserved remains at all sites (except, tragically, for Orthos, **No. 13**) are fortifications, which makes them important for comparative studies. The dating of fortifications on the basis of their masonry style is difficult (Lawrence 1979, 243; Frederiksen 2011, 62–69; Maher 2017, 41–43) and has led to several chronological mis-attributions in Thessaly and beyond. However, together with the other aspects of fortification construction, masonry forms part of the defensive architecture of a site and should consequently be taken as one factor in the dating of these urban settlements. The details of fortification architecture will be discussed below but, on a general level, the fortified Classical–Hellenistic cities were, at the earliest, established in the second half of the 4th century BCE and then more often towards the very end of the century. These cities were constructed as complete units including fortifications, public and domestic architecture, as well as infrastructural installations. The differences in masonry indicate either that all cities were not constructed at the exact same time, or that different architects and workers were employed in the construction. Overall, the sites often follow the same general scheme, implying an existent architectural vocabulary apparently introduced to the region. There is little to suggest that this vocabulary was first developed in Western Thessaly, which is also to be expected, as the area is lacking in urban settlements prior to the time of the Macedonians.

It is a well-known fact that the Macedonian kingdom established many new cities *ex novo* in the East as part of the expansionist programmes under Alexander III. That they started this practice of synoecising communities into urban settlements long before this, however, is less well-known. A late source (Arr. *Anab.* 7.9.2) states that Philip II forcefully relocated the population of Macedonia into newly constructed cities in the mid-4th century BCE, and the archaeological evidence from Thessaly supports that this was done here too after the annexation of the region in c. 352 BCE. The (re-?)naming of the settlement of the Gomphaians (at **No. 4?**) to Philippoupolis, which was probably done at the middle of the 4th century BCE (Cohen 1995, 116–118), is indicative of strong Macedonian interference in the settlement policies in the region (Stählin 1924, 126; Nikolaou 2012, 64).

Combining the literary sources with the archaeological evidence, it is apparent that most of the Classical–Hellenistic urban settlements of Western Thessaly were instigated and executed over the course of one to two generations at the end of the 4th century BCE. A rapid construction pace is probably to be expected, as fortifications (especially of

the type employed in the region, being exclusively made of mud-brick on a stone socle) are not efficient nor stable unless complete. Mud-brick walls must be in a relative complete state to not wither from rain and snow. A similar rapid construction pace for the accompanying settlement can be inferred from the fortification programme, as urban fortifications serve no direct purpose except as the protection of a city. I thus argue that the urban settlements were constructed at the same time as the fortifications or very soon afterwards.

As can be seen in the map accompanying Appendix 1 (Fig. 7), the distribution of urban sites on the western plain is remarkably even (*contra* Darmezis 1996, 229). Cities are only lacking in the areas where great marshlands were found until the mid-20th century, and where large-scale habitation would consequently have been difficult. It is apparent from the local topography that the choice of site, while constructing a city in the late Classical or early Hellenistic period, was conditioned by several factors. These include access to a continuous water source, a naturally defensible ground, a visually conspicuous position in the surrounding landscape, and relative proximity to natural routes of communication. Notably, the choice of site was apparently not too dependent on a pre-existing settlement at the location even if indications of older village sites can be found at a handful of urban settlements. The typical Western Thessalian Classical–Hellenistic city is located in the foothills of a larger mountain body bordering on the plain. A conspicuous hill- or ridge-top acts as a separately fortified *akropolis* for the city, with the actual settlement area is in the flatter fields at the foot of the hill. This arrangement is fairly typical for the ancient cities of the Classical–Hellenistic Greek mainland. However, the flatness of the great plain means that not all communities in the region could be urbanised at such a site. The marshy ground in the east and to the centre contains few or no hills and the sites at Paliampela at Fyllo (**No. 8**), Ermitsi (**No. 5**), Gefyria (**No. 9**) and Myrini (**No. 18**) were consequently constructed on small artificial hillocks. Whether they were similarly fortified like the hill-slope cities is at present not known but it appears probable. The earth banks at Fyllo are clearly supported by substantial terracing, possibly by a buried fortification wall. Whether the substantial banked enclosure at Proastio (**No. 22**) constitutes an urban settlement cannot be ascertained as no fieldwork has been conducted at the site. What is known, however, is that the large city of Matropolis (**No. 17**), which was seemingly also laid out in a flat area, was surrounded by a large fortification with no apparent *akropolis*.

The typical division of a lower (*katō polis*) and an upper (*akropolis*) walled area within the city is evident at 13 of the sites in the catalogue. The traditional narrative of *akropoleis* acting as places of refuge for the population of the city cannot be substantiated, as I have demonstrated elsewhere (Rönnlund 2018), and Western Thessaly is not an exception.

The *akropoleis* of Episkopi (No. 4), Farsala, Kallithiro (No. 11), Kedros (No. 13), Neo Monastiri (No. 19), Pialeia (No. 21), Skoumpos (No. 26) and Zarkos (No. 30) are all too small to function as evacuation centres and the lack of freshwater on the hilltops made them ill-suitable for the refuge of large number of people. In the cases with larger *akropoleis* – at Klokotos (No. 14), Paliogardiki, and Vlochos – there are at present no indications of the walled enclosure being built to facilitate the entry of such a large number of people. At Vlochos, only narrow posterns provide access from the lower settlement area and the *akropolis*, and the extremely steep slopes makes a 200 m ascent evacuation quite improbable. There are no reported gates into the *akropolis* area at Klokotos except in the curtain wall facing the direction opposite of that of the lower settlement. It is instead more probable that these locations acted as the base for garrisons occupying or controlling the city, as known from literary sources (Rönnlund 2018, 47–48). This is supported by Livy’s account of the Second Macedonian War (see above), which contains several passages with references to Macedonian garrisons posted in Western Thessalian cities.

The Western Thessalian cities were organised along a fixed street-grid, sometimes rigid in its outline and sometimes more adapted to the local topography. The existence of such grids indicates that the settlements were established *ex novo* or that substantial reconfigurations of pre-existing settlements must have taken place. Paving and drains for rainwater at a number of sites also speak of an infrastructural plan and probably also of organised upkeep, as such installations tend rapidly to fall into disrepair. The high magnetometry readings of the streets of the city at Vlochos (No. 29) indicate that both the larger and the smaller streets had been covered in ashes and other domestic refuse thrown there. Some form of garbage management is consequently to be expected to avoid congestion. The contemporaneity of the street-grid with the fortification system is implied by the former connecting with the major gates of the settlement. The whole inhabited part of the intramural area at Vlochos is built up around the large avenue-like street running from the eastern (“Peirasia”) gate to the western (“Pharkadon”) gate, and similar situations can be noted at Farsala (No. 6) and Paliogardiki (No. 20). The avenue at Vlochos was over 8 m wide and affected the layout of the whole city. It is quite probable that it was laid out prior to the construction of adjacent buildings and structures, as its size would have called for substantial reconfiguration of any eventual existent architecture.

Water pipes have been found at a number of the sites in the catalogue, highlighting the need for artificial access to freshwater within the settlement. Again, this could only have been implemented with great difficulty after the construction of streets and buildings, indicating a pre-meditated water strategy. Relatively few of the city sites have constant access to freshwater at present, contrasting with the situation in

the pre-Urban period. Cisterns and wells have been noted at some sites but these appear to have been highly location-specific, fulfilling the water needs where no freshwater was available (Klingborg 2017, 100–102).

Buildings can easily be seen in many areas of the geographical plot at Vlochos, some of which clearly of a domestic type. House sizes vary to great extent, from the smaller *c.* 175 m² buildings with a backyard, to several exceedingly large of *c.* 500 m². The latter is well beyond any of the average numbers presented by Mogens H. Hansen (2006, 49), which never exceed 300 m². My rough estimation of the number of possible houses at Vlochos is around 100–150, but the true number is probably higher, possibly up to 200. Probable upper floors make ground plans further difficult to interpret. Whether these large houses are typical of Thessaly cannot be determined but the difference in size compared to other regions is striking. Buildings of a domestic type have been identified at 11 Classical–Hellenistic sites, virtually corresponding to those submitted to excavation, but few have been published with a plan (Nos 6; 11; 17–19; 23; 28). Some of the houses excavated at Kallithiro (No. 11) probably exceeded well over 100 m² in size, as were certainly several of the houses found at Farsala (No. 6). The architecture is typical of the wider Greek world, with courtyard buildings of various types dominating the picture. Evidence for planned public spaces including *agorai/limenes* have more recently started to be identified in the archaeological material from the sites in the catalogue. The exact layout of the *agorai/limenes* are yet not known, nor their function within the settlement. It appears from a small number of inscriptions that they were locations where decrees were displayed, similarly to other regions of Greece and beyond.

In essence, the Classical–Hellenistic cities present coherent wholes, being the results of the implementation of a pre-existing notion of a nucleated urban settlement. As stated above, all available evidence suggests that they formed part of a pre-meditated settlement programme and that this programme was enacted within a remarkably short time-frame, possibly only a generation or two.

When it comes to the social organisation of these communities, we again know little. Oligarchic rule of the Classical–Hellenistic communities is probably to be assumed, judging from the strong evidence of a relatively small group of aristocratic families figuring in inscriptions (Mili 2015, 70). The *polis* appears to have been an institution in Hellenistic Western Thessaly (see Table 3), but it does not figure very prominently in inscriptions, and its structure is difficult to discern except by inference. Citizenship (*politeia*) was most certainly not a right for every inhabitant but could be granted to non-citizens, both locals and foreigners. Conscription into the federal forces in the 5th century BCE was apparently made according to *polis*-membership, indicating that the institution pre-dated urbanised *poleis* (Bouchon and Helly 2015, 235–236).

Some *poleis* (most notably Matropolis) had apparently formed as the result of a synoecism, with the synoecised communities still existing afterwards as *phylai* (see above). The *phylai* are poorly understood but could possibly have functioned similarly to the *dēmoi* of Attica, giving the member the right of holding an office within the community (Mili 2015, 63). A situation similar to Matropolis has been suggested for Pharkadon under the Pelinnaians (see **No. 20**), with the former existing as a *koinon* under the latter, which should be seen as speculation. There were possibly even smaller units within the *phylai*, such as the *genē* (sing. *genos*), but their function in society is poorly known. Generally, the epigraphic material is not sufficient to make any wider interpretations. Some late Hellenistic inscriptions from Thaumakoi (**No. 2**), Orthos (**No. 13**) and Phaýttois (**No. 30**) indicate that the governing body of the urban community was the assembly or the *agora* (in Koine rendered as *ekklēsia*), led by an eponymic official, the *agoranomos* (Kramolisch 1978, 17; Rönnlund forthcoming). Whether participation in the assembly was open to all citizens or restricted to the larger landowners cannot be determined from the literary evidence (Mili 2015, 70). Contemporaneous or slightly later inscriptions (*SEG* XXXVII 495; Decourt 1995, no. 17; Giannopoulos 1936, 149) from Matropolis, Kierion and Triikka (**No. 28**) further mention a *boulē* or the existence of a *bouleion*, an institution which has been interpreted as signifying the demise of the *ekklēsia/agora* (Hansen 2000, 149). Whether this is the case in Western Thessaly cannot be ascertained at present. An inscription of the first half of the 2nd century BCE found at Paliogardiki contains a list of *gymnasiarchoi*, unique for Western Thessaly. A *gymnasion* is known to have existed at Pharsalos, but the office of *gymnasiarchos* has otherwise only been attested from Eastern Thessaly (Helly *et al.* 1979).

Under the Antigonids, the Thessalians became *symmachoi* (allies) with Macedon, which probably brought with it a loss of the influence over foreign policy by the League of the Thessalians and its member communities. The installation of garrisons was probably more for the control of the local community than for the defence of the settlement (Lawrence 1979, 129–130; Chaniotis 2005, 88), providing a strong link between the Royal court and local society. Some fragmentary epigraphic texts have been seen as evidence for “citizen militias” used to staff the urban defences (Baker 2001). Mentions in epigraphic texts from Eastern Thessalian cities of *politophylakes* and *poliarchoi* have been interpreted as referring to officials elected for the defence of the city (Mili 2015, 107–108). Such officials do not figure in inscriptions from the western parts of the region. Whether there was a defensive organisation consisting of citizens or if mercenary forces were employed at all times cannot be ascertained, but it is clear that the large, fortified enceintes would require a substantial group of armed persons to function well as defences. Pro-Macedonian sentiments were not always stable within the

population, and several of the Southern Thessalian communities appear to have joined the League of the Aetolians towards the second half of the 2nd century BCE (Graninger 2011, 26–27). Judging from the descriptions in Livy, however, several of the cities of Western Thessaly remained supportive of Philip V throughout the Second Macedonian War (Karambinis 2018, 282), and Macedonian cultural influence has been noted in local ceramic finds (Zorba and Karagiannis 2020).

We know little, if anything, of the lowest social strata. The so-called *penestai*, a caste of serfs known from some few literary sources to have been in a similar situation as the Messenian helots, are not attested internally from Western Thessaly, except as forming part of the private army of Menon of Pharsalos (Graninger 2010, 308; Bouchon and Helly 2015, 236; Mili 2015, 56). It is not possible to determine if such agricultural workers would have lived in the urban centres or in rural settlements. An abundance of manumission inscriptions, however, supports the existence of a large group of enslaved persons, as was common all over the ancient world.

As has been demonstrated by Maria Mili (2015), Thessaly in the Classical–Hellenistic period was exceptionally rich in various cultic communities. These were tied to complex networks of kinship and societal functions and it is often impossible to distinguish apparent “state” cults from the “private” ones. Mili (2015, 99–160) presents a division of cults according to their location in the ancient city, with *akropolis*, *agora* and extramural cults. As is evident from the evidence presented in this book, to speak of cults as relating to various parts of the city prior to the late 4th century constitutes an apparent anachronism in Western and indeed in most of Thessaly. Mili’s identification of typical *akropolis* cults is in my view problematic. The identification of the cult of Athena Polias as typical for *akropoleis* (Mili 2015, 102–111) is spurious, with only one definite case, namely Phthiotic Thebes, itself dismissed by Mili (see criticism in Stamatopoulou 2021, 687, n. 92). As I have shown previously (Rönnlund 2018, 114), poliadic cults, including those of Athena and Zeus, quite rarely relate to *akropoleis*, contrary to what is often stated in older scholarship. Mili’s evidence for the cult of Zeus Thaulios being mainly associated with *akropoleis* is even more scarce, with a single (*ex situ*?) inscription from Larisa providing the evidence for this (Mili 2015, 111). The evidence for cults at the *agora/limen* is also spurious, with only the epithet *Agoraia* (*vel sim.*) providing a connection with a marketplace. As *agora* in a Thessalian context does not imply “marketplace”, but what is commonly referred to as the *ekklēsia*, I find it more probable that *Agoraia* in this case refers to the assembly (Kip 1910, 134; Béquignon 1935, 64; Rönnlund forthcoming). From my perspective, there is no evidence in either Western or Eastern Thessaly for any similar zoning of cults. The apparent lack of *akropoleis*, *katō poleis*, *limenes* and of urban environments generally prior to the Hellenistic period

makes it more probable that cults were organised according to other spatial restrictions, if at all.

A difficult problem relating to the size of the urban settlements (see below) is the question of the cemeteries. Even if we employ the most conservative approximated numbers for urban populations, we should expect cemeteries with burials in the tens of thousands surrounding the settlements. This is at present not the case. Even if no cemetery has been completely excavated, there are simply not enough burials to fill these numbers. Cemeteries are indeed found, but they are much too small to account for all the deceased which a population in the low thousands ought to have produced over the course of a century or more. At present, there is no simple solution to this problem. However, I find it possible that families chose to bury their dead at the traditional cemetery, which might not have been at the more recently founded city but at the locations of the old village communities. This is indeed how burials are mainly done in modern Greece, with relatively few persons being buried in the major cities.

The archaeological evidence strongly suggests a sharp decline in urban settlements in Western Thessaly during the first half of the 2nd century BCE. Destruction layers have been noted at many sites in the catalogue and younger strata are lacking in a number of cases, indicating urban abandonment. The most dramatic case is definitively Pharsalos, which appears to have been completely abandoned within the course of the 2nd century, with evidence of destruction from several of the rescue excavations spread over the modern town. The 2nd century was a turbulent time in the region, with literary evidence of at least three highly destructive wars supplementing the archaeological picture. A gradual erosion of urban resilience caused by repeated destructions and limited access to subvention for reconstruction might have been causing the de-urbanisation, as I will argue below.

The Roman period cities

Exceedingly little is known about the Roman period cities in Western Thessaly. The historical and epigraphic evidence suggests that they were far fewer in number than in the preceding Hellenistic period (Karambinis 2018, 283), consisting of a handful of sites, probably functioning as local administrative and industrial centres. The accounts relating to Julius Caesar's activities in the region in 48 BCE indicate that at least two of the remaining cities had maintained their fortifications, Gomphoi (No. 4?) and Matropolis (No. 17), both of which were figuring in the dramatic events prior to the battle of Palaipharsalos. However, there is no clear evidence for any expansion or major modifications of the fortified enceintes constructed in the Classical or Hellenistic periods. Roman period domestic installations have been excavated at Episkopi (No. 4), Kierion (No. 24), Krini

(No. 15), Matropolis (No. 17) and Triikka (No. 28), suggesting possible urban habitation there at the time.

When it comes to the epigraphic material, it appears that some of the Hellenistic *poleis* survived into the 2nd century BCE and the re-establishment of the League of the Thessalians by Flamininus. A number of the elected *stratagoi* were Western Thessalians: Amyneas son of Krates from Kierion, Aiakides son of Kallias and Proteas son of Monimos of Matropolis, and Phrynos son of Aristomenes of Gomphoi (Kramolisch 1978, 46–55; Rönnlund forthcoming). The bulk of the inscriptions of the period, however, are manumission records stating that the former enslaved person had paid the standard 22 *dēnaria* to the *polis*, sometimes also giving the name of the treasurer (see Zelnick-Abramovitz 2013). Such inscriptions are known from the sites of ancient Aiginion (No. 10), Orthos (No. 13), Phayttos (No. 30) and Triikka (No. 28), continuing into the 2nd and 3rd centuries CE. Another group of inscriptions is that of proxeny decrees, which are especially numerous from the first half of the 2nd century BCE, indicating a boom in inter-polity interaction and euergetism following the decline of Macedonian influence in the area. *Poleis* which were previously of little importance, such as Thaumakoi (No. 2) and Kierion (No. 24), now featured in political networks and became local nodes in the new Roman-era political landscape.

Thessaly remained of interest to the Roman imperial administration as a source of grain, as is also supported by inscriptions from Larisa (Garnsey *et al.* 1984). The existence of imperial estates in the region can be inferred from an inscription from Palamas (Vaïopoulou *et al.* 2022, 93–95), being a *terminus* set up by a local *procurator* by the authority of the emperor Commodus. A lavish Roman-era bath, probably belonging to a villa, has been excavated at nearby Sykies (No. 27), and another country estate of the Early Roman period has been found close to Mataragka (Hatziangelakis 2013).

Judging from the available archaeological and epigraphic evidence, the largest cities in the first centuries CE appear to have been Gomphoi and Matropolis. Compared to the Hellenistic remains at the sites (if Gomphoi is to be identified with No. 4), these were towns at most, with the bulk of the excavated material relating to industrial production. A similar situation has also been noted at Kierion, where a contraction of the inhabited area of the city can at least be inferred. Generally, the urban populations appear to have been small in number, a situation which can be noted elsewhere in Thessaly and the Greek mainland. The true centres of Roman Thessaly were Larisa and Demetrias in the eastern half of the ancient region, with Hypata in the valley of Spercheios increasingly growing in importance. Monumental architecture in the Roman period is barely known from urban contexts and was mainly limited to the funerary monuments of the (Romanised?) local elite, with large elaborate peri-urban tombs found at Episkopi

(No. 4), Mavroneri (at No. 11) and Zarkos (No. 30), and further spoliated evidence at Kalampaka (No. 10). Honorary monuments to members of the mainland Greek senatorial elite were put up at the sanctuary of Athena Itonia at Filia in the 3rd century CE (*SEG* XXXVII 492), and inscriptions honouring the emperors have been noted at Kalampaka and Thaumakoi.

The only available Roman-era urban plan is that of Vlochos (No. 29), where a fortified town appears to have been re-established in the late 3rd century CE at the location of the long-abandoned Classical–Hellenistic city. The town layout is dense, with large townhouses and monumental architecture, as well as a probable *forum*. The form of this settlement has many similarities to urban foundations of the same period in the northern Balkans, being partly a settlement but mainly a military stronghold. It is likely that this establishment at Vlochos relates to the re-arrangement of the Roman Balkans following the so-called “crisis of the 3rd century”. Thessaly was greatly affected by this traumatic period, with all evidence for the League of the Thessalians and the local *poleis* disappearing abruptly around the 270s. Whether similar installations to that at Vlochos appeared elsewhere in Western Thessaly at the same time cannot be firmly established but the smaller “inner citadel” (*Īç kale*) of Matropolis, together with the 4th century CE Imperial bronze statue head found at the same location, speaks of a possible similar installation at the site. The evidence from Vlochos currently suggests that the new, fortified town here was not long-lived, perhaps lasting only one or two generations. Similar to the Classical–Hellenistic cities, such an artificial establishment far from any natural source of water would have been quite dependent on subvention to function. Any lack of interest from the central government combined with a dwindling of the economic significance of the region would have resulted in the eventual abandonment of the settlement.

The Early Byzantine towns

The archaeology of Early Byzantine Western Thessaly supports Procopius’s portrayal (see Chapter 2) of a rapid and extensive refortification programme. However, there is little to suggest long-lasting habitation at the sites fortified in the 6th century CE and the sites instead give the impression of having been abandoned relatively quickly. The community of the Pharsalians was possibly resettled from smaller sites in the vicinity – including from the location at Krini (No. 15) – to the old location (Palaipharsalos?) at present-day Farsala, with the ancient *akropolis* and its northern slopes turned into a fortress or fortified town. Nearly identical schemes were employed at Metamorfofi (No. 16), Paliogardiki (No. 20) and Vlochos (No. 29), and probably also at Grizano (4.3). It is possible that similar towns were constructed elsewhere but this is currently not possible to state conclusively as

the majority of sites remain unstudied. A large number of non-settlement fortified sites probably also belong to this programme, some of which at former urban settlements, such as at Triikka (No. 28), Kallithiro (No. 11) and Pyrgos Kieriou (No. 24). Others were constructed at new locations, often at important passes connecting the mountains with the plains, such as at Kokkona (2.4), Oichalia (4.5), Almpinia at Pialeia (No. 21) and Vitoumas (at No. 26).

Little is known of the function of the Early Byzantine fortified towns. Procopius’s account as well as the extensive fortifications indicate that their main purpose was to protect a population, perhaps functioning as places of refuge, but the recent surveys at Metamorfofi and Vlochos have produced strong indications of relatively substantial intramural habitation. Pottery imported from both the wider Eastern Mediterranean as well as from the large regional centres at the Pagasetic Gulf indicates functioning and active trade networks operating to serve a prosperous population in the region. The overall image is that of investment, of a restructuring of the settlement patterns of a prosperous region. In short, the image speaks of a political programme. The similarities with the situation in the late 4th century BCE are striking. That the (re-)foundations of these sites were not local initiatives but resulted from the aforementioned state instigated programme can also be inferred from their relative short-livedness. The vast majority of the sites in the catalogue were completely abandoned by the early Middle Ages, with the present-day village settlements dominating the Ottoman tax records from the 14th–16th centuries (Kayapınar and Spanos 2016). Only Triikka and Pharsalos appear to have continued to be inhabited after the 6th century, which is also mirrored in the continuous use of the ancient name in their present toponyms Trikala and Farsala. That Thaumakoi (No. 2) followed a similar trajectory can also be inferred from the survival of the toponym as Domokos, but the Early Byzantine archaeology of the site is too obscured by modern buildings and a lack of publications to conclusively establish this.

There are a handful of sites which do not fit immediately into the supposed Justinianic scheme. However, as they remain quite unsurveyed and unexcavated (apart from their churches), it is difficult to state with any certainty whether they were already existent in the 6th century or formed part of the aforementioned programme. The largest (as far as can be discerned) was the town occupying the same location as the Classical–Hellenistic city at Klokotos, where at least four Early Christian churches have been noted, one of which was excavated by the 8th Ephorate of Byzantine Antiquities (Mantzana 1996, 242). Little is known about this site at any period of time, but the importance of the location appears to have continued beyond the Early Byzantine period in the form of the important market town of Klokotos, situated less than a kilometre to the west. Another potentially important site in vicinity of Klokotos, similarly positioned at the foot

of hill instead of on its slopes, is that around the ruined Early Christian church of Agios Nikolaos o Fonias (No. 30). The number of burials found during the construction of the adjoining national highway is indicative of extensive settlement, the remains of which have not yet been found. Similarly to Klokotos, there is an important medieval market town nearby, Zarkos, only 1.5 km to the north. The situation is again similar at Omvriasa (No. 25), where two large Early Christian churches have been excavated in a flat area below a fortified hill some kilometre north of the town of Platanos.

Estimating urban populations

When trying to understand how urbanisation (and de-urbanisation) impacted on Western Thessalian society, the question of demography inevitable presents itself. As with the estimation of any historical population, approximating the population size of ancient Western Thessaly is a difficult task, but the near complete lack of historical records makes this even more difficult. There have been some previous attempts at estimating the ancient population of Thessaly, most notably by Julius Beloch (1886, 197–202), Jean-Nicolas Corvisier (1991, 229–294), and Mogens Herman Hansen (2006, 119–120), employing various demographic and topographic models. All have their faults, mostly relating to the coarseness of their data but, in my meaning, their main fault lies with equating *polis* with “city”, as critiqued above.

Beloch’s work is based on obsolete data and belongs to the period long before the advent of archaeological research in Thessaly. It is consequently of little interest to this present study. Regarding the more recent works, Corvisier takes the approach of estimating the total number of inhabitants in the region, to then divide it by the number of *poleis*. This has its apparent problems. When applying Corvisier’s method, the connection between spatial extent and number of settlements is central and the results are highly dependent on knowledge of *all poleis* in the region. In such an under-explored region like Western Thessaly, the discovery of two or three additional urban settlements would alter the population estimations of already known settlements. I would further argue that the varying nature of the natural landscape on the plains does not allow for any generalisation based on spatial extent only.

Hansen’s *Shotgun Method* (2006) aims in essence to get an approximation of the total number of inhabitants in all combined Greek cities (= “*poleis*”) in antiquity and, consequently, does not have the explicit goal of calculating the number of inhabitants in any particular settlement. In the case of Thessaly, Hansen’s model takes its numbers from the Thessalian list of *poleis* (Decourt *et al.* 2004) of the *Inventory of Archaic and Classical poleis* (Hansen and Nielsen 2004), assuming that the entries all represent contemporaneous urban settlements. One of the main points of this present study is that there is little or no evidence for urbanism in Western Thessaly in Hansen’s period of

analysis and the list has consequently little relevancy to the application of the *Shotgun Method*. Adding to this (as I have discussed in Chapter 2), there are significant issues relating to the inclusion of some of the entries in the list, with one example having probably never existed. Hansen approaches the question of urban populations by discussing the sizes of the settlements and of their “territory” or hinterland. The *carrying capacity* (maximum agricultural yield potential relating to a population) forms an important part of Hansen’s argument. He points out that previous estimations have taken for granted that the agrarian situation in 19th century Thessaly corresponded to that in antiquity, which he – quite correctly – regards as probably incorrect. Hansen instead suggests that the carrying capacity of mainland Greece had been breached already by the Classical period and that the peninsula was consequently dependent on imported grain (Hansen 2006, 33–34). I find this improbable, as I will discuss later in this chapter.

Both Corvisier’s and Hansen’s methods suffer from a lack of more precise chronology. The situations in the Archaic, in the early Classical, the late Classical, and in the Hellenistic periods were most certainly different from one another and neither of the models take this into closer consideration. This said, I find both models worthy of application upon a more well-defined material. Instead of limiting the view to the *polis*, which might not be a central settlement, we should instead consider the *city*. By employing the 22 Classical–Hellenistic urban settlements (Appendix 1) in Western Thessaly as the basic unit for population estimations, we will arguably acquire more representative numbers. Corvisier’s estimation of a situation in ancient Thessaly with 40 persons per km² in the plains and 15 persons per km² in the hills would mean *c.* 80,000 inhabitants for the *c.* 2000 km² western plain, and a mean population of *c.* 3600 inhabitants for each of the 22 Classical–Hellenistic cities. Corvisier does not consider the vast marshlands of the plain, which I find a major flaw. The whole expanse of the plains was not inhabitable nor available for agriculture. Hansen criticises Corvisier’s numbers as being dependent on all inhabitants being settled in urban environments, and that “[Corvisier] does not take into account that a large part of the intramural space was used for public buildings or simply left open” (Hansen 2006, 120). To this I would like to add that Corvisier’s numbers are also dependant on all *poleis* being simultaneously urbanised, which – especially for the Classical period – was not the case.

With no evidence for urbanism in the periods discussed by Hansen, his suggested method has indeed more relevance when applied to the Hellenistic period. Hansen’s method as applied to this period and situation would then indicate a mean population of a Western Thessalian city in the low thousands, probably around 2000 inhabitants. Very coarse total estimations of the total population of the western plain would then result in *c.* 40,000 inhabitants, a remarkably

low number. However, contrary to Corvisier, Hansen makes a point that many of the members of the *polis* lived and worked in the surrounding countryside, which would mean that his model in fact does not differ too much from that of Corvisier's in its actual total output.

Since Hansen's time of writing, much additional archaeological data have been made available, allowing for less coarse employments of his method. Through the magnetometry results from the site at Vlochos (No. 29), we have a near-complete plan of a Classical–Hellenistic city, allowing for experimental closer approximations of the size of the local urban population. The space which contained the settled area at this site covers *c.* 17 ha of the *c.* 48 ha total intramural area, out of which approximately 12 ha was not covered by streets or other public open surfaces. Only limited evidence for a small *proasteion* or suburb have been found. In the case of Vlochos, consequently, only one quarter of the walled space was inhabited, probably constituting an extreme in Classical–Hellenistic Greece (Hansen 2006, 37–39). Applying Hansen's model, the population at Vlochos in the Classical–Hellenistic period should consequently have been between 1800 and 3400. Even the most optimistic number is fairly low; for comparison, the nearby present-day small town of Palamas has over 5000 inhabitants. If we calculate the population from the number of houses, with 5–6 individuals per household, we get even lower numbers: 500–1200 inhabitants. Considering that the city had several kilometres of fortification walls, a probable population in the low thousands is remarkable, and presents several logistical challenges. Robin Osborne (2005, 8) claimed that a central settlement with up to 7500 inhabitants could easily be sustained with an agricultural area of 5 km radius, and that in the Early Iron Age. The situation at other sites in Western Thessaly, when comparable, is similar to that of Vlochos. The largest urban settlements, at Episkopi (No. 4), Farsala (No. 6) and Paliogardiki (No. 20) can according to Hansen's model at most have had 5000–6000 inhabitants each. The smallest, for example Kallithiro (No. 11), consequently had inhabitants in the hundreds rather than in the thousands. The data necessary for applying the model is often not available, as there are several cases where the size of the settlement cannot be estimated. Ancient Triikka, for example, is found underneath the modern town of Trikala (No. 28) and its size at any point in history remains unknown.

As the reader has probably already recognised, all these numbers are only relevant for the Classical–Hellenistic city. What happened in the Roman and Early Byzantine towns and cities is rarely if ever discussed (but see Karambinis 2018, 284–291). Applying Corvisier's method on the Roman period, we get truly improbable numbers, with urban populations in the tens of thousands, as the number of cities is far lower but the topographical extent of the region remains the same. Hansen's estimations of urban populations as dependent on intramural/settled space would in the case of

the Roman city at Vlochos indicate a few hundred inhabitants, but the quite different domestic architecture and the apparent monumentalised public spaces that take up much of the settlement probably makes this model inapplicable. The archaeological situation from other Roman period, urban-like sites in Western Thessaly also suggests a distinct contraction of the settlement as well as a probable more sparsely built environment, as will be outlined below.

In conclusion, I find the suggested models dependent on data that, to be proven or disproven, would have to be of a quality and quantity that are at present not available. However, even as estimations, the numbers are in my view too variable to be suggestive and even the highest calculated populations appear small for the cities to function as the fortified nuclei of agricultural city states. The present-day western plain, a mechanised agricultural society, has less than 200,000 inhabitants and is a notably sparsely populated. There is also reason to assume that the *real* current population numbers are far lower, with many people registered as living in villages actually residing in Larisa, Thessaloniki or Athens. To me, the suggested numbers of inhabitants for the western plain – be it 80,000 or 40,000 – give the impression of being far too low (Hansen 2006, 91). In a society lacking mechanised agricultural machinery, such small populations would have major difficulties supporting urban environments.

Territory, a terrible term

In the study of ancient Greek cities or *poleis*, it is quite common for scholars to speak of so-called “territories” associated with the community or settlement. The existence of “territories” in antiquity is generally taken as given, and that *poleis* were fundamentally “territorial” is sometimes even strongly asserted (Snodgrass 1987–1989, 53; Hansen 1997b, 19–18; 1998, 54–55; Morgan 2003, 164; Hansen and Nielsen 2004, 71; Crielaard 2009, 356). The “territories” of *poleis*, cities, and even *dēmoi* have frequently been “reconstructed” using cartographic means, mainly employing various forms of *Thiessen polygons* (see below), more recently facilitated by the availability of GIS software. Examples of such “reconstructions of territories” are common from many regions, for instance in Attica (Fachard 2016), Boeotia (Decourt 1992, 37; Farinetti 2011, 28), Thessaly (Auda *et al.* 1990; Decourt 1990, pl. xiv; 2013, 64; Helly 1995a, 92), and the whole of Greece (Karambinis 2018, 292). However, what the terms “territory” and “territorial” actually imply in this context is rarely (Morgan 2003, 165–168; Karambinis 2018, 291) if ever discussed.

In modern usage, *territory* is used colloquially to denote “area”, “space” or even “field of interest”. In the political sciences, however, the word “territory” has a stricter meaning, and it is in essence defined as the spatial extent over which a state enjoys sovereignty or political dominance.

Sovereignty is evenly or flatly distributed over the territory and the territorial extent is defined by fixed borders which demarcate both the end and beginning of the spatial dominance. This set of meanings belongs entirely to the modern period and were not ascribed to the word “territory” prior to the 17th century CE (Elden 2009, xxvi). Even if the word “territory” originates in Latin *territorium*, it received its present meaning only with the advent of modern cartography. It is a remarkably rare word in Classical Latin and appears not to have been commonly used to describe spaces (Elden 2013, 11). There is no ancient Greek word corresponding in meaning to “territory”. Just as in most European pre-Cartographic literature, ancient Greek texts instead use less abstract words relating to topography or the exploitation of resources. As examples, we have references to the “land”/“country” (*chōra*) or “earth” (*gē*) of the Thessalians (Thuc. 5.51.2; Isoc. 8.117) to denote the physical landscape inhabited and owned by the Thessalian communities. The situation is the same in epigraphic texts (cf. Graninger 2012). There are to my knowledge no textual sources describing “crossings of borders” or “territorial violations” or similar. Such concepts consequently appear to be modern in nature. The many arbitration inscriptions found in the region in which boundaries are described (see Ager 1996), clearly deal with violations of landed resources; property conflicts, that is. The word used in inter-polity arbitration inscriptions to refer to land (*chōra*) is identical to that used relating to the property of sanctuaries, suggesting that there was no difference in how “the land” of sanctuaries and *poleis* were perceived. As a *polis*-affiliated sanctuary is not a sovereign political entity, it is questionable whether one should regard its landed property as a “territory”. In turn, this puts into question the validity of the use of the term for the landed property of the members of the *polis*. Catherine Morgan (2003, 81) argues that the allocation of inscriptions with public decrees at large sanctuaries and “big sites” in Thessaly – being places people would frequent – reflects the difficulties enacting public policy in “difficult areas”. An evenly distributed spread of authority – as is imagined in modern territorial states – would be hard if not impossible to enact in this environment. Some places would inevitably be *more* within the authority of a group/state than others could ever be.

The “territorial” divisions as imagined by many scholars could – as the ancient Thessalians lacked cartographic technologies and conventions – also only have been maintained by a frequent use of boundary markers. In an influential volume, Moses Finley asserted that such – often referred to as *horoi* – were very common in the Greek world, and that inscribed boundary markers are plentiful in the epigraphic corpora (Finley 1952, 3–4). However, I have yet managed to identify but a single possible inscribed “territorial” *horos* from the whole of Thessaly (*SEG* XXXVII 496, from near Ellassona), notably dating to the Late Roman period, and no

further from its neighbouring regions. The only known Hellenistic *horoi* are uninscribed pillar-like stones found at the side of streets, with at least three examples found during excavations in Farsala (No. 6). A similar lack of “territorial” *horoi* has been noted in other regions (Ober 1995; Canevaro 2017, 56), where they similarly are only relating to property, sacred precincts or legally defined spaces. A handful of property markers are known from the region, however, but only from the Roman period. The exceedingly large number of boundary markers that would be necessary for the upkeep of “territories” on the flat, nearly featureless Western Thessalian plain is simply not existent.

There is yet another problem relating to the “reconstruction of territories”, namely that it stipulates the primacy of the city location over “territory”, or put otherwise, that “territories” are ultimately defined by the distribution of the physical locations of the main settlement. Thiessen polygons of varying forms cannot be generated without the point forming the centre of the cartographically constructed space. This means that the formation of the “territory” as perceived above cannot have taken place before the allocation of the city or the Big Site predecessor of the city. The sequential logic in this can be questioned, and it appears from some literary sources that this was not how at least some Greeks understood the situation. In the *Laws*, Plato seems indeed to perceive the opposite order of things, with the characteristics of the land (*chōra*) deciding the location of the city (*polis*):

[T]he lawgiver must first plant his city (*polis*) as nearly as possible in the centre (*en mesō*) of the country (*chōra*), choosing a spot which has all the other conveniences also which a city requires, and which it is easy enough to perceive and specify. (Pl. *Lg.* 5.745B; trans. R.G. Bury)

Of course, this is from a philosophical treatise, and not a description of reality, but Plato’s order of primacy is supported by cities seemingly not existing in Western Thessaly (and indeed in many other regions of mainland Greece) prior to the 4th century BCE (Morgan 2003, 85). That community lands/countries (*chōrai*) should not have existed or at least not have been perceivable prior to this is improbable.

Consequently, I caution against the use of words such as *territory*, *territorial*, etc. as they convey context-specific traits. There was no ancient Greek word corresponding to *territory*, there was not enough cartographic knowledge to regularise it, nor the political platforms and technologies to enact it. The bodily experience of landscape mattered most in non-cartographic societies, and the right and access to resources were far more important than the exact spatial extent of the resource (Morgan 2003, 167–168). I argue that it is instead more productive to imagine a pre-Urban situation in which village communities (*poleis*?) operated and lived, owned or controlled certain landed resources, forming more or less continuous expanses of land which were referred to as their “country” or “land” (*chōrai*). This is much in line

with the *community area* theory of landscape studies, as advocated by Czech archaeologists (see Farinetti 2011, 7). Within these expanses of land, there were locations in the 4th century BCE that were chosen by either internal or external decision as suitable for the new urban establishments. This order of development is not inconceivable, but in essence makes the conception of “territory” as outlined above impossible. Cities will – as Plato says above – probably often be found close to the centre of the “country”, but this “centre” is not to be found in the Cartesian or cartographic centre, but in the bodily or psychologically perceived centre, which might be quite distant from the former. A.T. Smith (2003, 109–110) similarly regarded “territory” (the geographic universality of the political power of the state) as an illusion, and – paraphrasing Solzhenitsyn – instead described state spatial dominance as an (at best) “archipelagic landscape created in practises of governance and oversight of varying intensity and sustainability”. This view is far more productive when it comes to understanding the ancient landscape of Greece and Western Thessaly, with overlapping forms of land-use, seasonability and visibility, all of which form a complex system of property.

The nature of urbanisation, or, who paid for it all?

A common narrative of urbanisation in the Greek world follows an organic or evolutionary trajectory, meaning that one imagines a slow and gradual transition from a village-based society to cities (Winter 1971, 5; Crouch 1993, 47–48; Crielaard 2009, 349). This is not unique to Greek archaeology but very much forms part of an overall urbanisation narrative globally (Childe 1950; Cowgill 2004). The main urbanisation developments are often stated to have taken place in the Archaic period, with illustrative examples from mainly islands and coastal areas of the Aegean (Lang 1996, 141; Frederiksen 2011; Hall 2014, 70–74). Urbanisation in this narrative is seen as a “long-drawn-out process” that in many cases did not finish until in the Classical period (Crielaard 2009, 369). The interpretation of the archaeological evidence presented as supporting this development is somewhat spurious. A handful of cases supporting the existence of urbanism in the Archaic and early Classical periods are commonly cited (Osborne 2005), often Zagora on Andros (Beaumont *et al.* 2015), Vroulia on Rhodes (Lang 1996, 193–194) or Azoria on Crete (Fitzsimons 2014), to name some of the most common. That such sites are few, scattered, not too reminiscent of later cities and abandoned already in the Archaic period is rarely taken into consideration. They were, as Anthony Snodgrass (Snodgrass 1992, 7–9) pointed out, essentially a group of “failed cities”. Some scholars have also pointed out that the word “city” is not entirely suitable to describe these settlements (Hall 2007, 42). Most of them would only qualify as small villages today according to their estimated population size and spatial extent. They are also

notably few in number, even if further examples will probably be discovered, and are mainly found in the Cyclades or around the Euboean gulf (Knodell 2017, 201–202). I have as yet found little presented evidence for these settlements forming part of a gradual transition of a population from countryside dwellings to urban life and they instead appear to have been important political centres, probably also serving to control important trade routes.

In the case of inland Western Thessaly, there are no indications of similar developments in the Geometric and Archaic period. Adding to this, the creation of cities in the region was in all probability not the end result of an organic or spontaneous development, but a conscious choice in settlement organisation. This is evident in all three phases of urbanism presented in this book. There is no apparent evidence for a gradual development at any period in time and the archaeological record, to the contrary, contains much to support a rapid and directed change to city life (*contra* Ortman *et al.* 2020, 153).

What then caused this development? The factors (*cf.* Raja and Sindbæk 2020, 176) behind urbanisation as a process in ancient Greece have been identified as originating in safety precautions (Fachard and Harris 2021, 10), as a response to population growth (Scheidel 2007, 81), or from perceived economic benefits or imperialist policies (Boehm 2018, 99). Most of these factors, however, are not causative, but reactive. Urban life in itself does not provide security, which the consequent fortification of cities clearly demonstrates. The construction of walls and towers to protect an existing settlement is indeed clearly indicative of some consideration for the defence of the community, but it does not explain the establishment of a city as a coherent complex. In short, one does not build a new fortified city to protect the city. Similarly, to regard population growth as causative risks to confuse the situation with Industrial era cities. There was no (known) unemployment crisis in the Western Thessalian countryside which resulted in a mass exodus to cities about to be constructed. In an essentially agrarian economy, there is also comparably little economic benefit for the individual to move from the more sparsely populated countryside to a dense, built-up environment (Scott 2017), the *Ackerbaustadt*. Nor are cities beneficial for trade but, to the contrary, they often signify regional control and restriction of trade through custom duties and taxation.

I argue instead that it is in the last factor that we should look for the main explanation to the establishment of cities in all the periods discussed in this study, namely imperial rule, as an effectivisation of regional economies through a centralisation of habitations. It is too incredible that all the local communities in Western Thessaly should spontaneously, synchronously and independently have embarked upon the urbanisation venture and I argue that we need to look for an external cause. This is also the view of Ryan Boehm (2018), who argues that centralisation programmes

of the Macedonian kings were the main driving force behind the synoecisms of *poleis* in the Hellenistic Greek world. Boehm convincingly argues for his model, using Eastern Thessalian Magnesia as one of his case studies. My main expansion to Boehm's thesis is that synoecisms in the second half of the 4th century BCE in Thessaly (and elsewhere) did not involve *poleis* as cities, but *poleis* as communities. The centralisation of the mainland Greek economies was consequently also an urbanisation programme aiming at making the rule of populations and the subsequent extraction of surplus more efficient. In my view, this is the only way by which we may explain the enormous costs involved in enacting this urbanisation drive. Any calculation of the approximate costs and work hours for constructing *ex novo* 22 Classical–Hellenistic cities would strongly indicate an external source for resources. The archaeological record is clear: the cities must have constituted enormous endeavours.

However, Boehm (2018, 93–99) argues for the opposite, using epigraphic evidence from Asia Minor to show that the even if the instigation of the new fortified city was made by a royal decree, the economic burden fell on the *polis*. According to Boehm's interpretation of the sources, the external (royal) support for the construction of a new urban centre was possibly mainly through the contribution of manpower and materials. I argue that this would have been by far the most important contribution to the building programme, as pre-Urban ancient Greece including Thessaly was not a Capitalist economy with unemployment and available specialist labour for hire. Even if the king could pay in silver for the work to be done (Lawrence 1979, 117), any citizen, worker or enslaved person volunteering, forced or employed to work on the construction of a new urban settlement had to be transferred from their regular tasks. The only alternative to this would be to bring in the workforce from elsewhere, which then had to be housed and fed for a considerably long period of time in an already stretched economy. A relatively large number of specialists would also be required for the work, as there was no tradition of building such settlement complexes, at least not in Western Thessaly. As the work was of a substantial scale, most probably involving workers and specialists in the high hundreds or thousands engaged for several years, all this must in my view have caused a notable disruption in the local economy. Adding that the 22 Hellenistic cities were nearly simultaneously constructed, the local disruption becomes a regional one. Were these projects fully funded by the local communities, as Boehm suggests, which at the same time were obliged to pay tax to the king, the financial burden on the region must have been immense. Adding the trauma caused by uprooting from centuries-old traditional settlements, we see a situation which to many must probably have been catastrophic.

It is not difficult to imagine that there must have been popular resistance to these endeavours and such can also

be discerned in literary sources. Coercion and force must have been an ingredient in the synoecism process, possibly involving royal forces and mercenaries for its execution. Failed synoecisms are also known, with the communities reverting to their old settlement locations (Hammond and Walbank 1988, 222; Boehm 2018, 68). Having assumed power over Thessaly, Philip II renamed the Western Thessalian community of the Gomphaians (at Episkopi, No. 4?) Philippoupolis (Φιλίππουπολις), a name it used on a few issues of coins, but which it soon abandoned for its original name of Gomphoi (Stählin 1924, 126; Cohen 1995, 116–118). Whether this reflects a resistance to or unpopularity of the urbanisation programme cannot be ascertained at present. However, if the site of Gomphoi/Philippoupolis can be identified with Episkopi, then it is remarkable that the original name for the urban settlement was discarded after such a short period of time.

Why was this urbanisation programme rolled out? Boehm (2018, 99) argues for a stronger control over the newly conquered lands and the potential in enhancing the agricultural surplus by nucleating the population, and he is not alone in this analysis. In a study of the urban site at Kallithea (ancient Peuma?) in Achaia Phthiotis, Laura Surtees, Margriet Haagsma and Sofia Karapanou argue that the fortification programmes in early Hellenistic Thessaly were instigated and funded by the Macedonian kings, who consequently “were able to provide a sense of security and thus bolstering loyalty, while protecting their own territorial investment, organizing and controlling the local population, reaping the benefits of agricultural production and commerce through taxation and regulation of the markets, and displaying their authority” (Surtees *et al.* 2014, 444–445). These arguments are good and should, in my view, be taken even further. With no evidence for cities prior to the late 4th century BCE, there could consequently have been no synoecisms of cities, only synoecisms *into* cities. Similarly, there could not have been any fortification programme at cities, but instead one or several building programmes for the construction of fortified cities. Further, to be able to extract surplus value from the local economies in Western Thessaly, there must either already have been an existing agricultural surplus production or the potential for one. These three observations are indicative of a much more considerable societal change being imposed onto Thessaly in the late 4th century BCE than has previously been assumed.

Regarding the agricultural surplus, it has been argued by Hansen (2006, 33; see above) that by the 4th century BCE, the carrying capacity of the Greek mainland had been breached, with a domestic consumption corresponding to 140–160% of the production, making the population heavily dependent on imported grain. If Hansen is correct, and the numbers are valid for Western Thessaly, there would have been absolutely no additional surplus potential for the region at the onset of the urbanisation process. This is problematic,

as it would either imply that there was already a considerable surplus extraction conducted by another agent that could be tapped into, or that the reason for Macedonian centralisation was not related to the extraction of agricultural surplus. Hansen argues that overland transport of grain must have been essential for the continuous survival of the city states. However, it is quite difficult to imagine how transporting an additional 40–60% of the grain production over hills and swamps to the Western Thessalian communities could be logistically plausible. Hansen (2006, 34) indeed stresses that the ancient Greek economy was not a subsistence economy but the costs and issues relating to the procurement and transport of such large quantities of grain makes one wonder what the basis of the economy could have been. How did the Western Thessalians pay for all this grain? As I have outlined above, there are reasons to reconsider the numbers. The assumption (Hansen 2006, 33) that Classical Greece corresponds with Modern Greece in *c.* 1880 when it comes to carrying capacity is probably wrong. Thessaly was according to Theophrastus (*De caus. plant.* 5.14.2–3) highly drained and irrigated at his time (*fl.* 4th–3rd century BCE). As in Boeotia, this situation had reverted by the 19th century CE, creating a false image of the past. Pre-WWI maps of Thessaly clearly show that there were large areas of uncultivated land, vast marshes and seasonal swamps. The late Ottoman Empire was in a long phase of great decline, with most of the land not used for cultivation and considerable swathes of land only used as pastures and grazing grounds. It is only through the large governmental land reclamation and redistribution programmes in the mid-20th century (*anadasmos*) that the area was turned into the (ecologically unsustainable) agricultural landscape we see today. Adding the aforementioned prospect of making agricultural production more efficient through centralisation, it is at least probable that agricultural surplus was the cause for the Macedonian interest in the area. An additional element possibly raising Macedonian interest was the extensive horse-rearing in Thessaly, which would have been crucial to the Macedonian imperial ambitions. The Thessalian cavalry formed an important and integrated part in the Macedonian forces during the campaigns in Asia (Graninger 2010, 317), with the most well-known Thessalian horse of course being Alexander's own Boukephalos.

Scattered village populations inhabiting a marshy and treacherous terrain would have been difficult to control. Tax or tribute collection would have been inefficient, unruly citizens and other groups hard to contain and imperial agendas difficult to communicate. To resettle much of the population forcefully in regularised urban settlements would have eliminated most of these difficulties, at the same time leading to a more streamlined and efficient economy. This forced transformation of dispersed networks of village settlements into urbanised communities in Thessaly had a precursor in Macedonia (Demand 1990, 151–152; Boehm 2018, 16; Davies 2020, 13–14) and continued to be a Macedonian

policy as the empire grew. The first wave of urbanisation in Western Thessaly was consequently anything but gradual or organic, but rather abrupt and highly synthetic. As I will argue later in this chapter, this was eventually also the cause for cities ultimately disappearing in the region.

As outlined in Chapter 2, the so-far only known example of a new urban establishment in Western Thessaly in the Roman period is the small but heavily fortified town at Vlochos. This appears from the available evidence to have been constructed *ex novo* towards the end of the 3rd century CE, possibly as a reaction to the Gothic invasions in Thessaly at the time and the administrative reforms imposed by Diocletian (Fine 1991, 13–14). The limited size yet highly formalised and monumentalised urban layout speaks of a different function of the urban settlement than the pre-existing cities established in the Hellenistic period. Similar to the latter, however, I find it evident that the town was not the outcome of an organic settlement development but constitutes the result of a political agenda. The placement of the settlement within the remains of the 500 year old Hellenistic city can probably be explained by the ready access to building materials rather than by the former being the successor to the latter. Despite this, the costs of constructing this small fortress of a town must still have been substantial. In contrast to the situation in the Hellenistic period, however, the underlying rationale cannot have been the nucleation of a population. Instead, we should look to similar cases from further north on the Balkan peninsula, where fortress towns were common (Donjev 2019). These installations most probably functioned in a multiple capacity as garrison towns, administrative centres and safe settlements for the elite. Their function was to allow for the execution of imperial power, to act as bases for the Imperial administration in a tumultuous time (Hoddinott 1975, 111–236).

A similar explanation can be inferred some 150 years later from the information in Procopius. The fortress towns constructed at Farsala, Metamorfofi (**No. 16**), Paliogardiki (**No. 20**) and Vlochos were not large enough to house any considerable population, as is also indicated by the quite steep intramural spaces. The extreme sums involved in establishing these settlements, however, are quite evident from their well-preserved fortifications. Again, political agenda must be seen as causative rather than organic population growth; the infrastructure and funds required for the acquisition of slaked lime for the construction of the walls, the masons and architects involved, as well as the sheer size of the towers and walls are all indicative of supra-regional agents rather than local.

De-urbanisation and the non-organic nature of cities

How did urban life come to an end? Whereas the beginnings of *poleis* and cities in Greece has long been debated, it is exceedingly rare in scholarship to find discussions on the

end of urbanism (Hansen 2000, 150). Violent destruction by ravaging armies features in some narratives, with the subsequent abandonment of the city taken as the unpronounced given. However, as demonstrated by the authors in a recent edited volume on the destruction of cities in ancient Greece (Fachard and Harris 2021a), destructions of urban settlements were rarely as complete or catastrophic as implied in ancient sources or construed by archaeological publications. The resilience of ancient urban communities in re-inhabiting the supposedly destroyed settlement and repairing damaged infrastructure appears to have been considerable in the Classical and Hellenistic periods. Sylvian Fachard and Edward M. Harris (2021b) interprets this as an indication that many if not most of the members of the communities must have been able to escape the pillaging and destruction, to be able to return to the city after the violent episode. This is an important point, but with a caveat. Signs of rehabilitation in a ravaged city can only serve to repudiate destruction as the causative factor if we regard the abandonment as an event. As historical and archaeological evidence instead points at cities being abandoned as part of a gradual or extended process, violent destructions may still be highly indicative of the end of urban life. I use *de-urbanisation* to signify this process, a term figuring but sparingly in archaeological research, and which mainly belongs to the field of demographics (Petsimeris 2002, 165). In the latter, it is often connected with another term, *counter-urbanisation*, which denotes the phenomenon when present-day urban dwellers seek to escape city life in exchange for country life, often with romantic or idealist overtones. De-urbanisation as the reversed process of urbanisation is rarely if ever discussed, and it is only through the effects of the, at the time of writing ongoing, COVID-19 pandemic that it appears to have even become a topic of discussion. In a Mediterranean perspective, it is only within the study of Iron Age urbanism that de-urbanisation has been discussed as a process in ancient settlement history, and that only quite recently (Fernández-Götz 2020). The lack of scholarly interest in the phenomenon is striking, as Greece and the Mediterranean is extremely rich in abandoned urban settlements.

What can then be said of the abandonment of cities in Western Thessaly? The diachronic archaeological evidence indicates that this was not due to synoecism, as outlined by Ryan Boehm (2018, 18–19). Synoecisms in Western Thessaly appear more likely to have involved non-urban settlements and communities, as in the case of Matropolis. That the city of the Pharkadonians should have been destroyed and absorbed by Pelinna (as suggested by some scholars, see **No. 20**) cannot be substantiated in any way, and appears to be unlikely judging from the available source material. However, it is evident in both the archaeological and historical records that the number of urban sites in the region declined rapidly in the 2nd century BCE. The situation as given in Hellenistic sources contrasts sharply with

what we know of the area in the Roman period, with only a handful inhabited sites mentioned, indicating a decline in urban settlements. Excavations point to the same pattern, as does epigraphy. The extensiveness of abandonment and, in the cases where cities survived, the reduction in settlement size, point to a general de-urbanisation phase in the region at the beginning of the Roman period, a process that can be discerned elsewhere in Greece (Karambinis 2018; 2020, 442; 2021, 611). The only apparent causes in textual sources to this development in Western Thessaly are given in Livy as being the outcome of the cities being ravaged by various armies, but he does not claim that the cities were consequently abandoned.

Some of the events mentioned by Livy appear to have been particularly devastating, especially the so-called “retreat of Philip V” in 197 BCE, when the Macedonian king withdrew from his defeat against the Romans at Aoös (Liv. 32.13.4–8; Béquignon 1928; Decourt 1990, 97–107). Practising scorched earth tactics, Philip’s army evacuated the populations of a series of settlements and destroyed the cities in order to disallow the Romans the benefits of conquest. Most of the settlements mentioned make their final appearance in ancient literature in Livy’s account, indicating that they were indeed completely destroyed. Some, however, appear to have been resilient enough to survive this traumatic event, such as Phakion (Φάκιον, τό), which apparently still existed as a fortified city in 191 BCE when it was again taken during the Seleucid War by the Roman army under M. Baebius (Liv. 36.13.3–4). Phakion is known to have existed as a location somewhere in the northeastern corner of the Western Thessalian plain from at least the second half of the 5th century (Decourt *et al.* 2004, 701), with the Spartan general Brasidas and his troops camping there in 424 BCE (Thuc. 4.78).

Epigraphic mentions of Phakiasts (Φακιασταί, οἱ) or persons from the *polis* of Phakion are known from around the Greek mainland, including the list of *theōrodoikoi* from the sanctuary of Asclepius at Epidaurus (Perlman 2000, 75, see Chapter 2), until the end of the 3rd century BCE. The location of the ancient city is at present unknown, but the site at Vlochos (**No. 29**) has been suggested as possible by myself and others (Helly 2017, 358, n. 11; Vaïopoulou *et al.* 2020, 63). That Phakion might have been destroyed both as a settlement and as a community can be inferred by combining the archaeological, literary and epigraphic evidence. The inscription with Delphic *theōrodoikoi* from the c. 220s BCE (see Chapter 2) lists one Aphareus son of Megalokleas as residing in Phakion (*en Phakiōi*). Interestingly, one Megalokleas son of Aphareus is mentioned as a *gymnasiarchos* in a c. 190–170 BCE list of athletic victors (*SEG LIV 566*) found in the *katō polis* at Paliogardiki (**No. 20**, ancient Pelinna? or Pharkadon?), some 15 km northeast of Vlochos. As has been argued by Laurence Darmezis and Athanasios Tziafalias (2005, 61), the *gymnaisarchos* Megalokleas is

most probably the son of the *theōrodokos* Aphareus (son of Megalokleas) of Phakion, who for some reason had settled in another, relatively nearby city. A 3rd century BCE funerary *stēlē* of one Megalokleas from Vlochos (Decourt 1995, 5, no. 11) could possibly be of the father of Aphareus, further supporting that Phakion was at this location (Vařopoulou *et al.* 2020, 63).

The Second Macedonian War and the Seleucid War were not the only armed conflicts to take place in Western Thessaly in the 2nd century, and I argue that they were not definite in their damage to local urban settlements. The Fourth Macedonian War, as outlined above, was apparently just as destructive, but also ultimately led to Thessaly being annexed to the Province of Macedonia in 146 BCE. How exactly the war played out in Western Thessaly is not known, but as one of the main passes to Macedonia through Perrhaibia was at the northeastern corner of the plain, it is not difficult to imagine substantial destruction.

Regarding the archaeological situation, the catalogue (Appendix 1) contains many examples of destruction layers identified at excavated urban sites in Western Thessaly, nearly all of them of the late Hellenistic period and several belonging to the first half of the 2nd century BCE. It is, however, difficult to form any conclusions from the existence of destruction layers alone, as they might belong to quite localised events (Snodgrass quoted in Fachard and Harris 2021b, 2–3). It appears from the excavation reports, however, that the destruction layers do not seem to form just one stratum among many, but the final stratum of the urban settlement of the Hellenistic period. The implications of this and that, in most cases, there are no indications of settlement continuity after the destructive event point to the settlement being (at least partially) abandoned following the destruction. The most well published examples are Farsala (No. 6) and Kallithiro (No. 11), where considerable evidence of destruction has been found all over the settlements. In the case of Farsala, it appears that the settlement – which was definitively the largest among the ones featured in the catalogue – was violently destroyed towards the end of the Hellenistic period, tentatively around the year 200 BCE, with no new architecture being constructed on top of earlier remains until the Late Roman period. Kallithiro, perhaps the smallest fortified town in Western Thessaly, might have been destroyed somewhat earlier; the excavator Babis Intzesiloglou dated the destructive event to the 230s BCE on the basis of coins and pottery found during excavations, but this could also be seen as a possible date *terminus post quem*. At Kallithiro, as at Farsala, there is nothing to indicate any renewed settlement until the mid-6th century CE. Recent trial trenches at Vlochos have also produced a destruction layer of the first half of the 2nd century BCE, with a similar situation also noted at nearby Myrini (No. 18). Both sites have no reported material of the subsequent centuries, similarly to Farsala and Kallithiro. At Trikala (No. 28),

considerable destruction layers of the same period have been noted, but with Roman period rehabilitation built on top. Whether this indicates a rapid resettlement of the location cannot be confirmed at present.

The main phase of urban life in Western Thessaly appears consequently to have been a surprisingly short one, spanning roughly 100–150 years. The large Classical–Hellenistic cities as they appear in the archaeological and literary record were generally inhabited for only 5–6 generations, a remarkably short lifespan. In some cases, such as the city at Kallithiro, complete destruction appears to have occurred even earlier, leaving the abandoned city site uninhabited until the modern era. Some sites contain evidence for limited habitation activities after the early 2nd century decline, but just as with the pre-Urban material from these locations, the volume of archaeological material is considerably small. The overall picture is clearly that of violent destruction in the beginning of the 2nd century BCE, followed by a near if not complete abandonment of the city as an inhabited place. Exceptions are few, and the excavated remains indicate a radical change in the appearance and possibly the function of the settlement.

Next to nothing is known of the final abandonment of the cities that survived into the Roman era. Some of them might never have been fully abandoned, as medieval or early modern settlements occupy the same locations (Aiginion (No. 10), Kierion (No. 24), Matropolis, Phařttos (No. 30), Thaumakoi (No. 2), Trika (No. 28)), but it appears from Procopius (see Chapter 2) that, by the time of Justinian, they were generally in a dilapidated state. Possible destruction layers of the Roman period have been identified at Matropolis but the publications are not exhaustive enough to make this completely clear. The Gothic wars and the “crisis of the 3rd century” appear to have been particularly destructive in Thessaly, heralding the end of the League of the Thessalians and (judging from the lack of epigraphic material) the end of most of the traditional communities of the region. The consequent reforms instated by Diocletian in the late 3rd and early 4th centuries CE led to a new centralised form of Imperial government which made the *poleis* obsolete (Hansen 2000, 149). The Roman-phase fortified settlement at Vlochos (as presented above), which should be seen as representing a new urban paradigm in the region, was ultimately a failure, and did not survive long after its establishment. The fortified settlements (re-)established in the 6th century CE were apparently also short-lived, lasting perhaps less than a generation, and limited evidence from Vlochos indicates that the end of these might have been violent. The so-called Justinianic plague and the extensive economic crisis following the emperor’s death in 565 CE could have added to the low resilience of these settlements, but this cannot at present be substantiated. Late Roman or Early Byzantine Western Thessaly remains a poorly studied field and much remains to be done. It is only at Pharsalos and

Trikka that the 6th century fortified complexes continued to function as settlements, but it is worth noticing that whether these towns were continuously inhabited or subsequently reinhabited cannot be ascertained at present.

There is a strong general tendency in all the developments outlined above, namely that the urban settlements had little inherent resilience. As all these settlements were politically instigated and non-organic, I would argue that they consequently were heavily dependent on political subvention. To relocate large groups of people, settling them in a densely built-up environment far from their places of work and ancestral homesteads, requires a considerable and efficient political apparatus. This includes the capacity for the coercion necessary to compel people to build the city, to move to the city and to stay in the city. It includes the capability to procure fresh water through artificial means, to ascertain ample and stable access to foodstuffs and to ensure the mitigation of the spread of infectious diseases. It also requires the ability to sell the idea of the city as being a better place to live than the alternative, a life in the countryside. A population which is convinced that urban life is essentially undesirable will be difficult to contain within the city. The latter becomes most evident when crisis strikes; be it the form of destruction, plague or famine. If the political apparatus, with its means of repair, subvention and coercion, fails or is missing, the gradual or complete abandonment of the settlement is to be expected. Limited or eliminated water access and increased distance to food procurement will probably be the strongest factors behind de-urbanisation.

The lack of coercive forces would allow inhabitants to seek other dwellings removed from the densely populated and highly competitive urban settlement. Popular resistance to urban life has been discussed recently by James C. Scott (2017), who argues that the collapse of urbanised states led to enhanced living conditions for the general population. A de-urbanised community was under less strain to produce surplus for taxation, had a higher life-expectancy due to more salubrious dwellings, and probably enjoyed much more freedom than when it was confined to the intramural urban settlement. Polybius's observation (see above) that mainland Greece in his time was becoming rapidly depopulated, with diminished cities and a general childlessness, might in this light not be a sign of decline. Lower fertility rates in populations are not necessarily caused by deteriorating standards of living. As is evident in our present day, the situation might actually be the opposite.

The key to understanding the rapid urbanisation and de-urbanisation of Western Thessalian communities is in my view to regard cities as non-organic creations. By non-organic I mean that they were not the result of any societal developments on the grassroots level and that they remained detached from the general needs and regimes of their population. In contrast to the urbanisation and cities

of the Industrial era, the Western Thessalian cities were not population magnets that grew by attracting labour from the countryside to work in mills and factories. They were also lacking the infrastructural means of transportation, sanitation, heating and refrigeration, as well as a market economy, all hallmarks of the success of 19th and 20th century urbanisation. The Western Thessalian cities were populated by farmers and pastoralists, practitioners of the same economic system as in the societies preceding and succeeding them. Whereas villages were settlements adapted for such inhabitants, affording close access to fields and pastures as well as ample space for living, cities were removed from where people worked, and the cramped streets and houses afforded nothing but disease and poor drinking water. In essence, cities constitute poor village substitutes and this would eventually lead to their abandonment.

The returns of cities and “cyclic urbanism”

In a recent book, Arne Jarrick observed that “history sometimes takes a cumulative and directed course and sometimes seems to be moving in circles, although never really returning to its point of departure” (2021, 31). A common perception of the development of cities in the (Western) world pre-supposes that the development of cities followed this cumulative course, in that it is a narrative of linear and gradual development from hunter-gatherer bands, through sedentary life on farms, to villages and finally onto cities. As others have argued (Yoffee 2005; Fernández-Götz 2020, 33; Fletcher 2020), this stage theory understanding of the development of urbanism is not archaeologically relevant, neither on a local nor a global scale. Cases in the catalogue (Appendix 1) and elsewhere instead show that urbanism occurs as episodes in the archaeological and historical record, with relatively clear-cut beginnings and ends, and that cities often form a series of returns. If urbanisation and the development of cities had followed a cumulative trajectory, we would expect to see material evidence thereof. The archaeological record instead highlights the episodic nature of urban settlements, with more evidence for discontinued habitation and hiatuses between construction phases than for continuous occupation. We would also expect to see several cities surviving into consequent historical periods, which is not the case. Among the entries in the catalogue, only four ancient city locations are today occupied by modern urban-like or dense settlements: Domokos (No. 2), Farsala (No. 6), Kalampaka (No. 10) and Trikala (No. 28). The archaeological evidence from these locations shows no definite indication of continuous urban habitation and, in the case of Farsala (which is by far the most well-excavated), everything instead suggests the opposite: the site was re-inhabited in the 500s CE, at least 700 years after it was last abandoned (Karapanou and La Torre 2021, 522; Karambinis 2021, 611).

This situation raises several questions in the light of traditional research. Why is urbanisation even attempted again? What can be the cause of this return to urbanism? Why is more-or-less the exact site selected again for a renewed urbanisation attempt? I argue that the main explanatory force behind this series of returns to urban life must be explained by the political nature of cities, as outlined above. From a grassroots perspective, there is no logic to urban life in an agrarian society. Cities were abandoned and left uninhabited as they were ill-suited for village habitation. From a top-down perspective, however, cities may function as political tools for the benefit of supra-regional powers. The site of Vlochos (No. 29) constitutes the best example of this development at one site. Currently, the archaeological site is completely uninhabited and has been so from at least the early 19th century, but probably even since the early Middle Ages. There is no stable fresh water source at the site, it is separated from the hill pastures to the east by the river Enipeas, it was until the mid-20th century surrounded in most directions by a vast marshland and the reflective crystalline limestone of the cliffs above the city site makes it absolutely scorching in the summertime. As a location for a village, it is consequently a poor choice, which is probably why it remains uninhabited. In contrast, over the course of antiquity, the site was at three discrete points in time chosen as the location for extensive urban habitation. These three phases were separated by hiatuses of 500 and 150 years respectively, with nearly no evidence for any continuous habitation in between. These urban episodes can be explained by the above outlined political nature of urbanism. Whereas the site at Vlochos constitutes a poor

location for a village, it constitutes the by far best location for a fortified city in the vicinity. The hill above it can be incorporated in the urban defences, the marshes and rivers make it hard to bring on heavy siege engines, there is ample access to natural stone and clay for construction works and the site is highly visible from all over Western Thessaly. As soon as the political subvention apparatus fails, however, all these assets become void, to again become valuable as a new supra-regional power aims to construct a city at the location.

The cumulative trajectory consequently bears little relevance to Western Thessaly, and probably also to mainland Greece as a whole. The episodic nature of cities as well as the re-establishment of cities on the same locations as old ones or indeed completely new cities at new locations instead indicate a cyclic trajectory, with a number of urban returns. By seeing cities as cyclic, as re-occurring modes of settlement for existing communities executed for supra-regional political gains, some problems in Greek history and archaeology can be resolved. Communities, in this view, are not the primary product of an urban settlement, but instead constitute malleable, resilient and relatively mobile units of social organisation which at some points in time might be settled (or resettled) in cities. It is consequently possible for *poleis* to figure in the *Catalogue of Ships* with no evidence for an urban settlement before the 3rd century BCE, or for *poleis* to keep manumission records even when their urban nucleus had been destroyed and abandoned for 500 years. By understanding cities as a political technology, as episodes in community history instead of the defining hallmark of antiquity, we may come closer to understanding the long-term developments of ancient societies.

Conclusions

To many present-day Greeks, Western Thessaly is much associated with rurality. Located far from the great population centres, it is a rustic antipode to the urbanity of Athens and Thessaloniki, and a country famous for its cotton, yoghurt and traditional music. In contrast to this modern-day picture, this study has shown that the region was once bustling with urban life. Ancient Western Thessaly was a land of many cities. However, what this essentially *means* needs qualification.

Ever since Western Thessaly was first surveyed in the early 19th century, archaeologists and historians have studied the region with a presupposition of the existence of cities. Supplied with toponyms extracted from Homer, Livy and Strabo, scholars have scoured the plains and its surrounding hills for potential city candidates, step by step matching historical narratives with archaeological evidence. Time and time again, this work has proven difficult and problematic, as sometimes there were too many potential cities and sometimes too few, leading to the patchy “map” of the ancient region which much prevails today. In this book, I set out to do something different. Reversing the order of priority, I strive to consider the available archaeological evidence first, interpreting textual sources in the light of material evidence. Considering what has essentially been a non-question, namely the material appearance of a city, it is evident that the city as a physical form of a settlement had never been systematically addressed in Western Thessaly, neither from a chronological, a configurative, or a social perspective. This situation is not unique to the region, and it is much the consequence of a lack of archaeological focus in understanding the ancient landscape. To me, the study of the scanty literary sources has failed to produce a satisfactory image of the regional developments. Ancient texts relating to Western Thessaly present a complex chronological

palimpsest much influenced by myth and epic, and rarely a reflection of an actual reality at any point in time. They consequently poorly correspond to an archaeological situation. To interpret authors such as Strabo as describing a physical landscape is in my view to miss the point. Collating the archaeological evidence, I have instead aimed to present a new narrative of ancient urbanity in the area from a grassroots perspective, using the information painstakingly collected by generations of Greek archaeologists. Some of the combined evidence is surprisingly clear: from what can be discerned in the archaeological record, urbanism in Western Thessaly was essentially a phenomenon limited to the years of Macedonian control over the area. There is only little evidence for urbanism at a handful of locations after this period, and virtually nothing prior. This “window of urbanity” greatly contrasts with what had previously been assumed regarding the settlement patterns of the region and presents several challenges to our understanding of Thessalian society especially in the Classical period.

As has been highlighted through recent discoveries in the region of Karditsa, the most significant Archaic and Classical settlements were most probably what could be described as village sites. This does not imply a lack of wealth and influence, rather the opposite, as indicated by the lavish imports found at these sites. The villages had their own settlement logic, different from that of the later cities and, consequently, occupied different sites in the ancient landscape. In their history of development, they followed an organic and cumulative trajectory distinct from the imposed or artificial nature of the latter. Coinage, epigraphy and literary sources clearly show that their inhabitants were organised already in the early Classical period in political groups known and referred to by their ethnics, which were later often transferred to new urban establishments. I see

these groups as probably forming small local federations or “cantonal unions”, perhaps to be equated with *poleis*. For their security, these federations did not depend on walls around their villages; in times of peril, safety could instead be found within the walls of any of the large hillforts in the vicinity. Such hillforts might have been the central political focal point, acting as the unifying common factor in the maintenance of the community (Bintliff 1994, 211).

The rapid re-organisation of communities from scattered village societies to urbanised *poleis* at the end of the 4th century BCE must have had a profound impact on social organisation. The limited epigraphic evidence for the pre-Urban period indicates heterogeneous political systems among the Western Thessalians, whereas the network of new cities called for a more streamlined and regionally harmonised organisation, which is indeed what we see. As archaeological sites, the more than 20 Hellenistic cities display many similarities, especially in their shared architectural vocabulary, which was apparently not home-grown but brought in. The cities were often established *ex novo*, with only occasional and limited indications of pre-existing (and non-urban) habitation at the same site. The combined evidence is strongly suggestive of a co-ordinated programme behind the establishment of the urban site: cities were not the outcome of a spontaneous re-organisation of village communities. Similar to other regions on the Greek mainland, Western Thessaly had in the late Classical period come under the dominance of Macedon, leading to a major reconfiguration of the political and social landscape. This included the foundation of cities on a massive scale. That the Macedonian kings instigated new cities on the Greek mainland and beyond has been known for some time, but this study shows that this was done to a far greater extent than had previously been assumed. I find it more than probable that what Western Thessaly (and many regions beyond it) experienced around the year 300 BCE was not a refortification phase or re-investment in existent cities, but an outright urbanisation programme aiming at transforming the sparsely settled landscape into a centralised and productive resource. With Macedonian subvention and support, urban life boomed in Western Thessaly over the 3rd century BCE. The archaeological evidence produced by ephorate excavations at the many city sites speak of settlement activity on a scale unrivalled in regional history. Industry, artisanship and infrastructure reached great heights, showing that this area was no backwater but an integrated part of the Hellenistic world.

Perhaps even more apparent than the evidence for the early Hellenistic urbanisation scheme are the indications of a sharp decline in the number of cities just a little more than a hundred years after their foundation. Ancient contemporaneous authors were apparently aware of a general depopulation of cities in mainland Greece by the middle of the 2nd century BCE, and archaeologists working across Thessaly and the mainland have noted a distinct drop in

urban life in this period (Karambinis 2018). Generally, the Western Thessalian material strongly suggests not only a dip, but outright violent ends to several settlements, with considerable destruction layers often constituting the youngest strata at some urban sites. Violent destruction in itself is rarely the cause of the abandonment of an urban site. However, since habitation activity at the Western Thessalian sites often ends after the destruction event, I argue for an apparent lack of resilience of the settlements. It is probable that the inhabitants did not find it profitable or strategically sound to rebuild their cities. Some cities survived the violence of the early 2nd century, but their continuous and gradual decline can be discerned in the archaeological evidence as indicated by the shrinking of the inhabited area within the walls.

Within the settlement logic of Roman Thessaly, urbanism did not play the same role as it did under the Macedonians and the Leagues. The Roman economy was more focused on profitable resource extraction through plantation-like estates and only a limited number of urban sites survived as administrative centres in Thessaly. It is only in the late 3rd century CE, after the collapse of the League of the Thessalians and the old *polis* system, that the need for new fortified towns arose again, but now as part of the regional defences. Thessaly had become part of the Danube–Balkan frontier area through the tumult brought on by invading Goths and other northern peoples, and a reconfiguration of settlements and political organisation was direly needed. However, the sole probable example of this from Western Thessaly, the new town at Vlochos, appears to have been neither too successful nor long-lasting, with little evidence of habitation after the early 4th century. The short lives of cities are even further evident in the brief refortification scheme in late antiquity, possibly to be connected with the programmes instigated by Justinian in the mid-6th century CE. In spite of the enormous investments in strengthening the defences of the remaining large communities in the region, most sites were as rapidly abandoned as they were re-established, with only three towns surviving into the Middle Ages.

The two main factors driving the developments in the narrative presented above were the innate political nature of cities and their fundamentally poor resilience. The urban settlements of Western Thessaly only came into existence as the political landscape imposed them, and they virtually diminished or disappeared as soon as the political necessity dwindled. There was nothing organic in the nature of the cities in my understanding; they did not develop out of the needs of the inhabitants of the plains, nor were they the end results of gradual village growth. As agricultural settlements (*Ackerbürgerstädte*: Weber 1966, 70–72) they were cumbersome, distancing their inhabitants from their fields and other landed resources. As fortified points in the landscape they were probably not as efficient as commonly thought, at least as means of defending lives and livestock,

which could more easily be saved through evacuation to hills and mountains. The upkeep of defensive architecture and other infrastructure was a constant expense to be carried by the community and unforeseen damages, such as could be caused by earthquakes and floods, must have called for extensive external economic help. As a political technology, however, urbanism had strong advantages. This has previously been demonstrated by Boehm's (2018) study of Hellenistic epigraphic and literary evidence, showing that by physically reforming the local settlement pattern, the economic potential of a community could be unleashed, allowing for higher tax and tribute revenue. The concentration of populations into nucleated settlements also allowed for a closer control of the communities and for a more efficient exposure to imperial ideology. The completion of such a feat, however, must have required a combination of substantial coercion and persuasion, making the process all but a pleasant experience for the local population.

The story of Western Thessaly reverses the narrative of urbanisation as a process and de-urbanisation as an event. Cities did not grow from fluid organic developments (Leadbetter 2021). This has consequences for interpretation also outside of the region, both on the Greek mainland and beyond, providing insights into the nature of cities in the ancient and pre-Industrial world. Further, the lack of cities prior to Macedon and the *diadochoi* carries implications for the understanding of early Thessalian history. That the political developments of the Archaic and Classical periods, including the affairs surrounding the tyrants of Pherai, did not take place in urban landscapes (Graninger 2010, 307) is thought-provoking. The strong Thessalian aristocracy and military might in the 6th–4th centuries BCE, however, show that complex societal structure is not necessarily the product of urbanism, and that communities can form around other foci than large, centralised settlements.

This book is not without its limitations. Being explicitly focused on cities and urban developments in the region, defining them through relatively rigid hallmarks, it cannot explain everything relating to the development of Thessalian society. Even if cities were truly important nodes in the Thessalian web of settlements in the Hellenistic period, the total or relative lack of urban sites in earlier and later periods show that we cannot use the city as the basic unit of society throughout antiquity as a whole. Developments in non-urban centuries are consequently difficult to trace through the material presented here and would require a different focus for their examination. Even if the urban hallmarks give the study a solid framework and the opportunity for comparisons between sites and chronological periods, they inevitably exclude other settlement forms from the analysis and potentially conduct our thoughts into linear trajectories of settlement development. For example, the large village communities preceding the urban boom in the late 3rd century BCE should not, in my meaning, be regarded as urban,

nor as proto-urban. In a hypothetical “what if” scenario, these villages (such as at Kalathia) might eventually have developed into urban-like settlements had the Macedonian annexation never taken place. The point is that they did not. The pre-occupation of traditional scholarship with urban sites presents a challenge here, with much fieldwork left to be done in the seemingly empty spaces between the ancient cities.

As this book does not contain my own efforts of fieldwork, but a synthesis of endeavours presented by others elsewhere, the overall observations and interpretations suffer from the simple fact that data was not collected for the purpose of conducting this study. To prove or disprove the analysis of the material more closely would, in my meaning, require directed fieldwork, aiming to acquire both detailed stratigraphical data *and* spatially relevant information through digital recording methods, geophysics and remote sensing. Methodologies employing non- and minimally invasive elements have, over the course of my team's work at Vlochos, proven to be both cost- and time-efficient, rapidly producing data allowing for interpretative work. Many of the sites in my catalogue have only been mapped as sketches, while others have never been subjected to any cartographic efforts. A basic yet systematic survey of visible architectural remains, preferably in tandem with an at least elementary surface pottery study, would radically change our knowledge of these sites without impacting them. Such non-invasive approaches grow more urgent in Western Thessaly, as the exploitation of the landscape takes on new forms, mainly as extensive solar park installations, which already cover an increasingly large portion of previously agricultural land. At the same time, there is much archaeological material from these sites that has never been published in any closer detail. This includes many of the records of ephorate excavations carried out in the 20th century which, to date, are mainly available in summary form. Most of these were also carried out in a time when spatial technology had yet not developed enough to be commonly employed in fieldwork, and hand-drawn plans of trenches can consequently be relocated only with difficulty in the present landscape. New publications of old records together with the exact locations of the respective excavations would cause a revolution in our understanding of local archaeology and would make the artefacts kept in various store-rooms known to a larger scholarly audience. At present, many ceramic sequences and shapes are dependent on sites far from Western Thessaly and detailed publications including profile drawings are rare. The rectification of this issue would, in the long run, facilitate dating of newly acquired material and make surface pottery surveys much more precise. The latter relates to the main problem with this study, namely the low resolution of chronological data. All the interpretations of chronological sequences, of the development of urban sites as well as their decline,

are completely dependent on the analyses presented in existent publications. I have no way of re-assessing the dating of this material and can consequently not check its validity. The suggested re-assessment of excavated material would be the only way out of this situation and would possibly lead to a different picture of the developments in the region.

Finally, I would like to make a specific chronological note. During the compilation of the catalogue (Appendix 1), it became evident that directed research at urban-like sites is particularly lacking for the Roman, Late Roman and Early Byzantine periods. Chronological tools (including tile typologies, masonry styles and pottery sequences) have rarely been employed systematically on sites of these periods, with many being simply described as “Roman” or “late”. Much systemising work remains to be conducted if the developments after especially the 1st century CE are going to be better understood, including the categorisation of settlements, fortifications and cemeteries. The recent re-assessment of heritage data from Karditsa that led to the identification of a whole network of Early Iron Age sites show the potential impact of such endeavours. None of the above is particularly unique for Western Thessaly but these are issues common for regions all over Greece. As the area has received relatively limited scholarly attention, however, directed efforts as suggested above would have a considerable impact on the understanding of the local archaeology. I hope and wish that this book will either persuade or provoke further scholars to take an interest in this region, as it has proven a fascinating and welcoming place of study for me. The final word on cities in ancient Western Thessaly has not been said.

This is a book about cities in a narrow sense, in which I have tried to outline my own views and understandings of urbanism as a phenomenon applied upon a specific archaeological material. I believe the observations and analyses made are not only relevant to the relatively small area of study, but tell us part of the much larger story of human society and life; a part worth considering in this day and age. Essentially, I think we must regard the city as a political technology. It is not only a built environment, but a built community, a settlement and society formed through cognisant choices, strategies and policies. Through a city, populations can be concentrated into a space where they can be counted, taxed and controlled – in short, the city constitutes a monitor of the community for a ruling political body. Cities are monumental structures in that they serve to make imperial and royal prerogatives tangible, visible, comprehensible, and *lived*. In other words, they are explanatory architecture, conveying power through the language of size and spatial restriction. The establishments of cities occur mainly when they are needed the most, that is in the formative phases of political bodies, at moments in time when the socio-political order is established or disputed. When political interest and subvention ends, cities eventually get abandoned. I argue that this is indeed what we see in Western Thessaly, not only in the Hellenistic period, but also in the Late Roman and Early Byzantine periods.

The story of ancient Western Thessaly might seem remote in time but it carries several lessons to be learned for our present time and our current challenges. To me, what the evidence in this book ultimately indicates is that eventually – and unavoidably – cities will fail, and urban life will end. The question remains: would this be so undesirable?

Appendix 1

Catalogue of sites

The catalogue of sites – 30 in number – is not a catalogue of urban sites, but rather sites that are important for the argument of this study. Many, if not most of them, however, *are* urban sites, at least when it comes to certain periods in history, mainly the Hellenistic period. The sites are situated on or immediately adjoining the Western Thessalian plain (Fig. 7), with sites that topographically belong or relate to other regions in Thessaly omitted. This includes ancient Atrax, Krannon, Skotoussa and Eretria in the region of Larisa, and the site at Petroto in the region of Fthiotida.

Each site is presented with its modern (Greek and Turkish) and ancient name(s), its general topography, a summary of the archaeology and coordinates in the GGRS87 system. In cases where the site can be *definitively* identified with an ancient community, a general outline of the written sources relating to the site is given, as well as a brief description of possible coins minted by the community. It is to be noted that some sites in Western Thessaly that are commonly assumed to be securely identified with an ancient settlement are in fact not so, as can be illustrated by Episkopi (**No. 4**), often taken to be ancient Gonnoi, Klokotos (**No. 14**), nearly always identified with ancient Pharkadon, or Paliogardiki (**No. 20**), generally assumed to be ancient Pelinna. In some cases, the catalogue entry relates not to one site but to a cluster of sites. As argued in this study, it is evident in many cases that ancient communities moved their settlements to new locations over the course of time. To avoid a catalogue swamped with small and little-excavated/surveyed sites, they are instead presented together.

The descriptions are accompanied with maps or plan sketches of the ancient remains as known from published studies and excavations. The maps and plans were made in QGIS from aerial photographs and digital elevation models (5 m resolution) provided by Ktimatologio AS, with roads

and structures drawn in by the author. None of the plans was made using measurements collected in the field, and should not to be regarded as precise depictions of the archaeological situation, but more as topographical sketches or illustrations to the text.

1. Chtouri

Modern name

The hill is known as Chtouri or Ktouri (Χτούρι/Κτούρι), possibly an Aromanian (Vlach) or Turkish toponym. A village in the Trikala prefecture bears a similar name, Pachtouri (Παχτούρι). The popular etymology *ochto touri*, “eight towers”, as retold to the author by several locals, appears improbable.

Ancient name

Often identified with Euhydrium, a location only known from a passage in Livy (32.13), probably from Greek Euhydrium (*Εὐῦδριον, τό), meaning “well-watered”. This might be a manuscript mistake (see **No. 18**). The identification is not supported by any archaeological evidence.

Description of site

The hill of Chtouri (Fig. 9) lies between the villages of Elliniko (formerly Bitsiler) and Polyneri (formerly Simikli), c. 10 km northwest of modern Farsala, and presents a stark silhouette in the otherwise featureless plain. The hill rises c. 90 m over the plain (211 masl), and extends for 1.7 km in a north–south direction from the south bank of the Enipeas, with a maximum width of c. 750 m. Several springs are located below the west and southwest slopes (Fig. 8).

The remains at the location have yet not been systematically mapped or surveyed. Trial excavations at locations

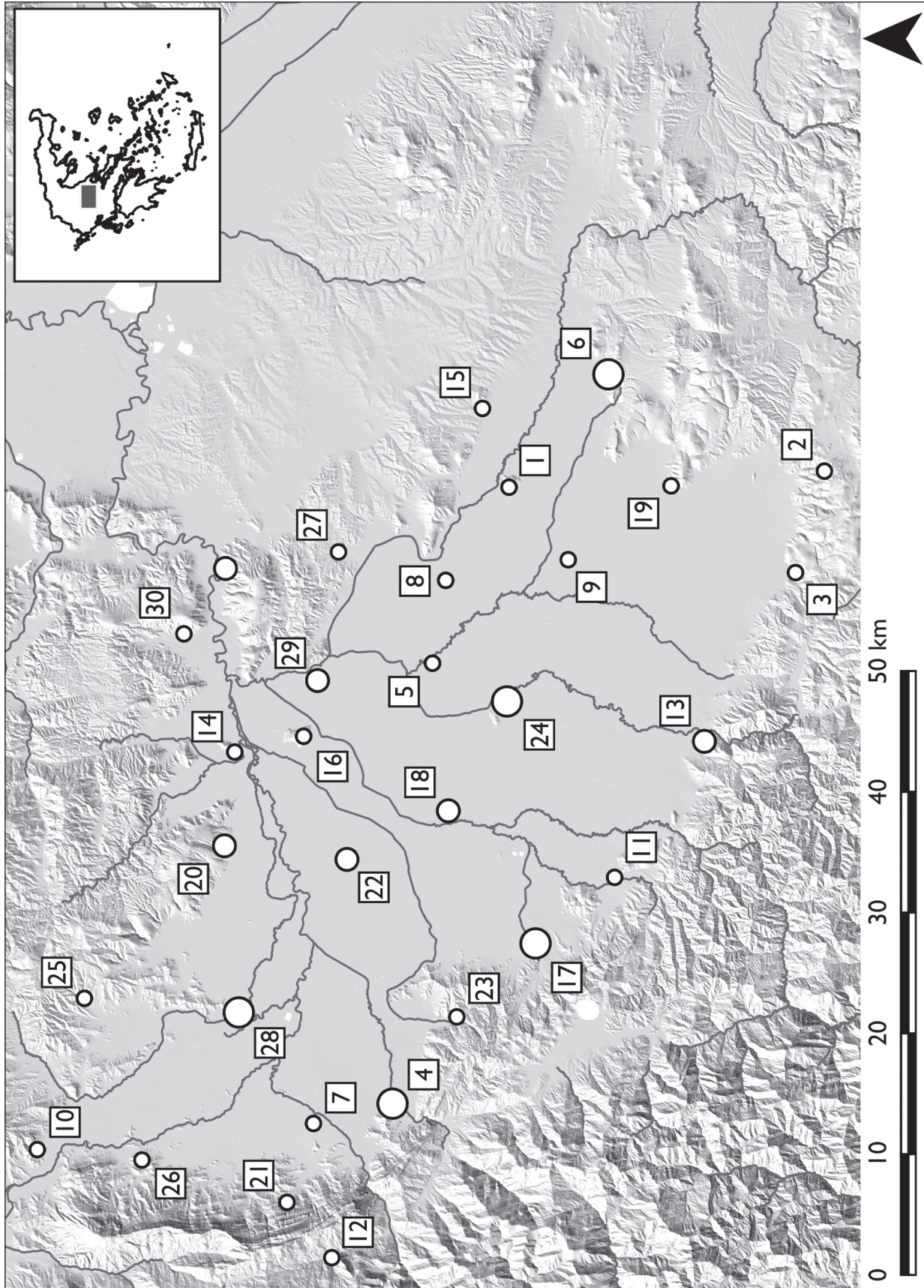


Figure 7 The sites in the catalogue (Appendix 1). 1. *Chitouri*, 2. *Domokos*, 3. *Ekkara*, 4. *Episkopi*, 5. *Ermisi*, 6. *Farsala*, 7. *Fiki*, 8. *Fyllo*, 9. *Gephyria*, 10. *Kalampaka*, 11. *Kallithiro*, 12. *Kaloiroi*, 13. *Kedros*, 14. *Klokotos*, 15. *Krimi*, 16. *Metamorfosi*, 17. *Mitropoli*, 18. *Myrini*, 19. *Neo Monastiri*, 20. *Paliogardiki*, 21. *Pialeia*, 22. *Proastio*, 23. *Pyrgos Ithomis*, 24. *Pyrgos Kierioti*, 25. *Omvriasa*, 26. *Skoumpos*, 27. *Sykies*, 28. *Trikala*, 29. *Vlochos*, 30. *Zarkos*.

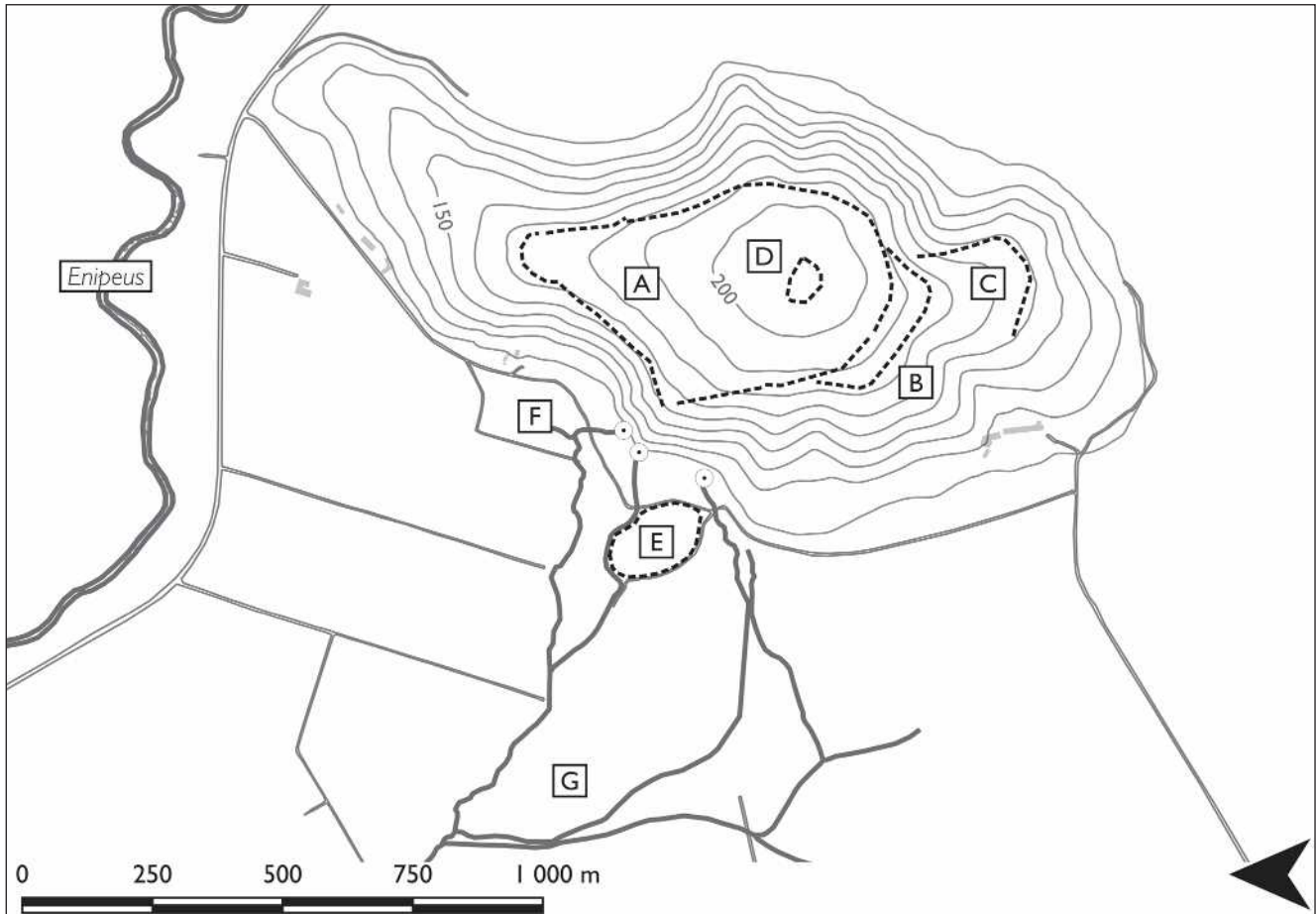


Figure 8 The hill of Chtouri. Hydrological features represent situation in 1945. Plan-sketch after plans and descriptions in Béquignon (1932), Karachalios et al. (2018, fig. 15), Greek army maps, and aerial photographs.



Figure 9 The hill of Chtouri as seen from northwest. © Greek Ministry of Culture and Sports – Organization for the Management and Development of Cultural Resources.



Figure 10 Fortification wall on Chtouri hill. © Greek Ministry of Culture and Sports – Organization for the Management and Development of Cultural Resources.

on and immediately below the hill were conducted by Yves Béquignon in 1931 (Béquignon 1932, 122–191), and the visible remains were described and photographed by Jean-Claude Decourt in 1979 (Decourt 1990, 102, 214–215). The remains on the hill consists of stretches of several joined fortified enceintes, together enclosing an area of over 25 ha. The main enceinte, as drawn on Greek army maps and discernible in aerial photographs, has a trace of c. 1800 m, surrounding the plateau-like summit of the hill (A in Fig. 8). This wall has a width of 2.65 m and is built with an inner and an outer face with a rubble fill, employing a rough polygonal masonry (Fig. 10) with stones of up to 1.7 m in size (Béquignon 1932, 124–125). Two extensions of this area, expanding the fortified space by poorly preserved similarly executed walls (*proteichismata*?), can be traced on the south slope of the hill (Stählin 1924, 143; B and C in Fig. 8). Five gates have been identified in the main enceinte, at west, north, northeast and south. The north gate is flanked to the west by a rectangular protrusion of the wall (Béquignon 1932, 125). Only vague traces of structural foundations have been noted on the hilltop, but there is a continuous scatter of pottery all over the site and one of Béquignon's *sondages* at the northeast gate produced some Classical–Hellenistic (?) material (Béquignon 1932, 126).

On the highest area of the summit is a discrete, small, fortified enceinte known locally as the *Frourio* (Fig. 11, at D in Fig. 8). Béquignon's plan and description of a roughly oval walled area, 247 m in circumference, with five, possibly six square towers correspond well with aerial photographs (Béquignon 1932, 128, fig. 31). The masonry style is polygonal but employing much smaller stones than the larger enceinte, and presenting a more even face. The walls are 2.3–2.7 m wide, and are constructed as two faces with a rubble fill (Béquignon 1932, 127). Béquignon claims that there were no gates in the enceinte, but that one entered the fort by a double ramp-like feature in north (Béquignon 1932, 130).¹ This appears to this author as improbable and that the entrance should be seen as having been between the two closely set towers in northwest. Béquignon's excavations at the *Frourio* indicated mixed soils with some limited sub-Mycenaean pottery and more abundant Classical–Hellenistic material. Among the latter were several pyramidal loom-weights, and stamped roof-tiles (Béquignon 1932, 130–137; Decourt 1995, 57–58). No cistern was noted but there were several fragments of *pithoi* and the excavator interpreted this fortification as a fortlet. An Ottoman (?) garrison building (*kazarma*) appears from the plan to have been built on top of the wall at the southeast corner of the *Frourio*. This is probably the



Figure 11 Inside of Classical–Hellenistic fortlet on the hill of Chtouri, view towards west. © Greek Ministry of Culture and Sports – Organization for the Management and Development of Cultural Resources.

“mit Mörtel und Ziegeln geflicktes Gebäude” mentioned by Stählin (1924, 143).

At the west foot of the hill is a sizeable low *magoula*, c. 200 × 120 m in size (Fig. 12), separated from the cliffs of the hill by a marshy area with several springs (at E in Fig. 8). Béquignon (1932, 139–147) conducted trial excavations on the *magoula*, revealing the remains of several structures, one of which he interpreted as an Archaic temple. Several of the finds, however, are most probably of a later date, including Classical–Hellenistic stamped terracotta discs and pyramidal loom-weights. Further to the west of the *magoula*, Béquignon noted a plateau-like area with many scattered large stones (area between E and G in Fig. 8). Test-trenches revealed structures and tombs which he interpreted as sub-Mycenaean based on the pottery (Béquignon 1932, 147–148). Two Archaic bronze statuettes of the 6th century BCE were shown to Béquignon by the villagers of Polyneri, reportedly found in this area west of the *magoula*, one of which depicting a nude standing warrior-like figure, holding a raised (now lost) spear (Béquignon 1932, 174–180; Biesantz 1965, 33, no. 89).² Béquignon did not manage to procure the second statuette, which might possibly be the smaller bronze figurine of Zeus with a *letuus* wand published

by Biesantz (1965, 33, no. 88) as found at Simikli. Recent rescue excavations by the Ephorate of Larisa in a field at the west end of the plateau, c. 500 m northwest of the *magoula* have revealed remains of what was interpreted as an Archaic fortification wall (at G in Fig. 8). This is c. 3.5 m wide and follows a straight trace north-northwest–south-southeast for over 30 m. This wall appears to have been partially overbuilt with a secondary building. A few metres east of the wall, a small apsidal single-chamber building was found, as well as a semi-circular stone wall encompassing a single cist burial. The architectural remains were dated on the basis of pottery to the Geometric to early Archaic period, with a thick covering layer of soil containing much pottery of the Archaic until Hellenistic periods (Karachalios *et al.* 2018, 13; Karapanou 2020b, 1450).

The main spring in the marshy area between the *magoula* and the hill had at some point been made accessible by a paved pathway of large slabs, as seen by Béquignon (1932, 180) from the cliffs above, at the time several metres under the water surface. The small chapel of Agios Ioannis Prodromou is located close to the northernmost spring in the area and appears from the excavations by Béquignon to have been constructed on top of a small Classical–Hellenistic



Figure 12 The magoula at the hill of Chtouri, looking west. The excavated Geometric–Archaic settlement is just to the left of the solar park at the upper right corner. © Greek Ministry of Culture and Sports – Organization for the Management and Development of Cultural Resources.

building. Ample imported Crusader and Moslem pottery of the 13th–16th century CE (published by Béquignon as Byzantine; Ian Randall pers. comm.) support the local tradition at the time, that the chapel had been built on top of a previously ruined structure (Béquignon 1932, 181–189). Béquignon (1932, 180) observed remains of cist tombs south of the springs at the foot of the hill but did not conduct excavations in the area. A late 4th century BCE relief *stēlē* found at the west foot of the hill further indicates a possible multi-period cemetery at this location (Gallis 1977b, 335–336; Decourt 1995, 47–48). A 2nd century CE funerary inscription was found at the time of Béquignon’s work in a house in Polyneri, presumedly from the site at Chtouri (Decourt 1995, 52–53). A Latin funerary inscription of unknown date was found by Léon Heuzey at the hill of Chtouri in the 1870s but the exact place of origin is unknown (CIL III 1; Decourt 1995, 56–57).

Chronology

Late Helladic, sub-Mycenaean, Geometric, Archaic, Classical, Hellenistic, Roman, medieval, early modern.

Coordinates

351966, 4358173.

2. Domokos

Modern name

The town occupying the site of the ancient settlement is called Domokos (Δομοκός) in Greek, and Dömeke in Ottoman Turkish.

Ancient name

The ancient name of the settlement was Thaumakoi (Θαυμακοί, οἱ), which is preserved in the present-day toponym. The identification of the site has been verified through several inscriptions mentioning the polis of the Thaumakans (*hē polis Thaumakōn*) found both at Domokos and elsewhere. The *ethnikon* was *Thaumakos*, as attested in inscriptions. The dramatic location of the site was allegedly (Liv. 32.4.3) the reason behind the name (from the verb *thaumazō*), referring to the state of wonder one experiences gazing at the Thessalian plains from the settlement.

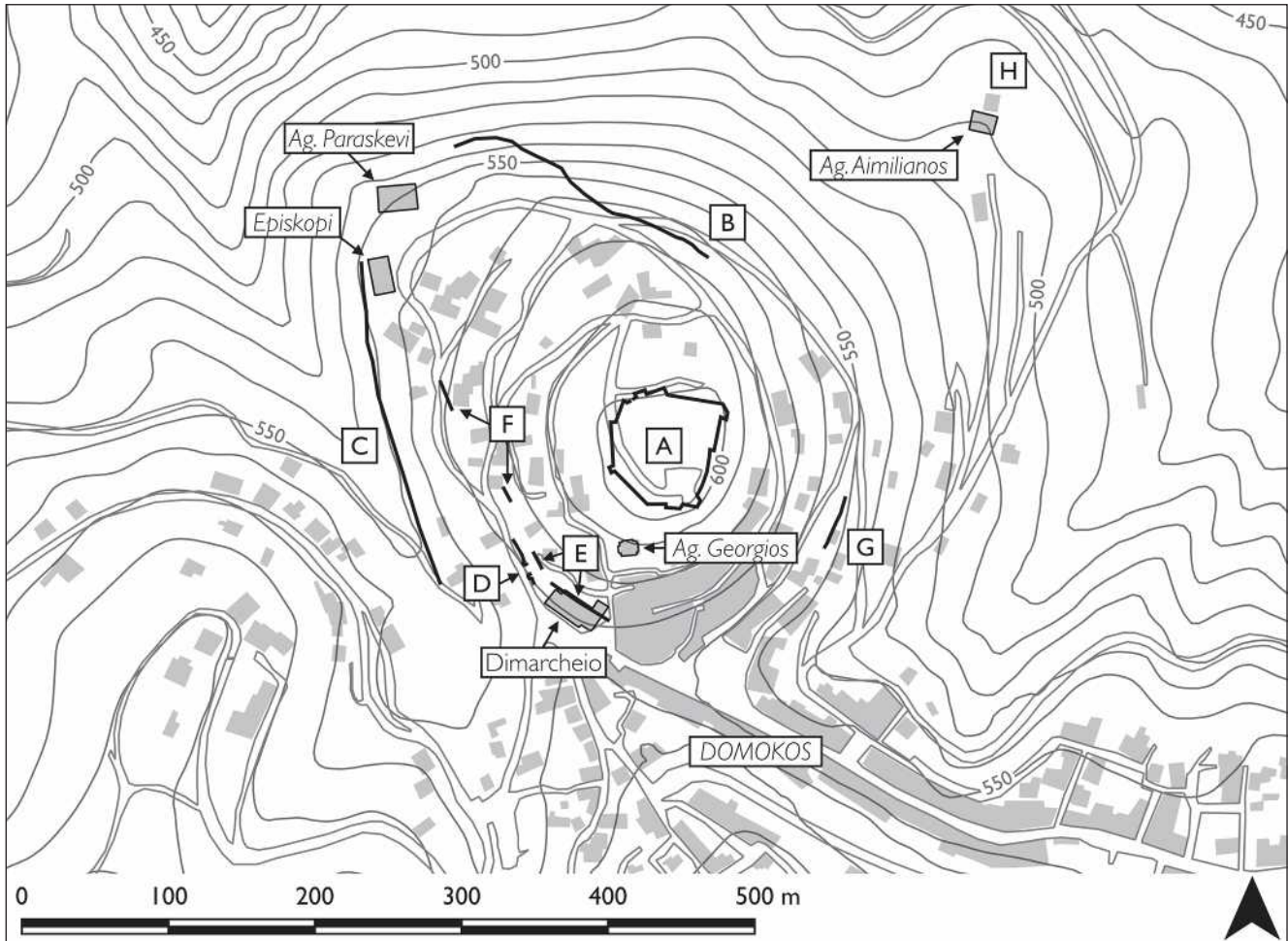


Figure 13 The site at Domokos. Plan-sketch after Stählin (1924, 156, fig. 13) and aerial photographs.

Description of site and area

The site at Domokos is located at an important pass leading from the Domokos plateau in the south down to the Western Thessalian plain below in the north. According to Livy (32.4.3), this pass was known locally as “the hollows” (*ta koila*). Prior to the recent construction of the new national highway Lamia-Trikala, the pass was still the main route of access between Thessaly and Central Greece. The exact outlines of the site are poorly understood, as the medieval and early modern town of Domokos occupies most of the area of the ancient city. Further, little archaeological work has been conducted at the location and most of the available information is from Stählin (1924, 155–157; 1934) who visited the area in 1912.

The site is centred around a hill-like spur (c. 600 masl) in the northern slope of a range of hills just south of the Western Thessalian plain (Fig. 14). On the hilltop are the remains of a medieval and Ottoman citadel (at A in Fig. 13), which reportedly contains some masonry of previous periods (Ussing 1847, 302). This was almost completely destroyed during WWII. Today, the intramural area here is nearly completely covered in concrete slabs and park installations

with no ancient remains visible (Cantarelli *et al.* 2008, 66; Pallis 2008, 567). Stählin (1924, 157) noted a stretch of the fortification wall with a postern running along a steep cliff in the north slope of the hill (at B in Fig. 13), as well as along the west slope (at C in Fig. 13). The northern wall was not preserved at my visit (2022). The west slope fortifications are clearly of a later date re-using stones of a trapezoidal masonry wall (Lolling 2, 25). Pierre La Coste-Messelière and George Daux (1924, 354) observed a wall and a tower in isodomic masonry running from south of the church of Agioi Apostoloi towards the church of Agia Paraskevi (at D in Fig. 13). A section of a wall and a circular tower was revealed during road-works in 1973 at this very location (Fig. 15) and an additional round tower can today be seen next to it. It appears possible that there was a gate in between these two towers. The wall and towers, however, are in trapezoidal masonry and can probably be dated to the 3rd century BCE (Ioannidou 1977c, 282–283). Stählin mentions further remains of the fortification wall (at G in Fig. 13) in the yard of the old Turkish barracks (*kazarma*), today housing the *dimarcheio* of the municipality of Domokos. This wall is still visible, and is constructed in



Figure 14 The akropolis of ancient Thaumakoi, looking north. The Western Thessalian plain in the background. © Greek Ministry of Culture and Sports – Organization for the Management and Development of Cultural Resources.



Figure 15 Domokos. Semi-circular (?) tower in akropolis fortifications. © Greek Ministry of Culture and Sports – Organization for the Management and Development of Cultural Resources.



Figure 16 Fortification wall in polygonal masonry behind the dimarcheio of Domokos. © Greek Ministry of Culture and Sports – Organization for the Management and Development of Cultural Resources.

polygonal masonry (Fig. 16). Small-scale excavations in 1950 by Nikolaos Verdelis revealed the continuation of this fortification (at E in Fig. 13), which included a bastion constructed in polygonal and isodomnic masonry and an adjoining tower (Gallet de Santerre 1951, 115). Further stretches of walls in trapezoidal masonry can be seen in the southwestern slopes (at F in Fig. 13). Stählin also noted further fragmentary stretches of fortification walls in the area close to the old magazine (*apothiki*) in the east slope (at E in Fig. 13), which were not visible at my visit (2022). Further trial excavations by Verdelis in the slopes north of the church of Agios Aimilianos northeast of the town (at H in Fig. 13) revealed the foundations of a rectangular structure (5.7×2.7 m), which was interpreted as a tower in the lower defences of the ancient settlement (Gallet de Santerre 1951, 115; Cantarelli *et al.* 2008, 66). The area is today covered by the modern cemetery of Domokos.

Nothing is known at present of the ancient settlement within the fortifications as there are no reports of excavated buildings or structures. The Verdelis excavations in 1950

produced black glaze pottery of the 4th and 3rd century BCE and coins of Thessaly, Euboea, Boeotia and the Aetolians (Gallet de Santerre 1951, 115). Some pottery of the Hellenistic and Roman periods was found during excavations of an Ottoman cistern at the Agia Paraskevi church in the northwestern corner of the site (Dakoronia 2004, 391). In the Arapakos plot in the southeast part of the modern town, an early 5th century BCE tomb has been excavated, yielding an inhumation burial with rich grave-goods, including a sword and imported Attic decorated pottery (Sipsi 2015). A Hellenistic chamber tomb of *c.* 200 BCE with several burials was found (and accidentally destroyed) in the saddle area south of the hill, indicating a probable cemetery area at the location (Dakoronia 1990a, 170–171).

An Early Christian basilica has been excavated in the village of Thavmako (formerly Skarmitsa), *c.* 2.2 km northwest of Domokos (Ioannidou 1977a, 329). East of the village, at a water mill, an arbitration inscription between the Ktimeneians and the Angeians was found (Stählin 1934, 1333–1334), possibly indicating a sanctuary.

Several fortifications are located in the hills to the southwest of Domokos, many of them probably medieval or Ottoman. Inscriptions on the bedrock (unknown date) have been reported from the location Grammeni Sterna between Omvriaki and Domokos (Arvanitopoulos 1911, 197–198), now probably destroyed by later quarrying.

Written sources

Thaumakoi was located in Achaia Phthiotis (Strab. 9.435), and was together with Ekkara (at modern Ekkara?, **No. 3**) the northwesternmost community in this region. Almost nothing is known of the history of the settlement prior to the late 3rd century BCE, when it was apparently a member of the Aetolian league (Stählin 1934, 1335–1336). A longer section in Livy (32.4) accurately describes the topographic setting, while outlining how Philip V and his troops lay siege onto the city. In spite of constructing siege mounds and possessing artillery, Aetolian troops under Archidamos managed to reinforce the besieged, and Philip eventually withdrew.

The *polis* of the Thaumakans is mentioned in inscriptions dating from the 4th century BCE (Spyropoulos 1974, 237) to c. 50 BCE (*IG IX,2* 219), with most of the evidence being from the 2nd century, indicating that the *polis* survived into the Roman period. Epigraphic evidence for an *ekklēsia* exists from the 2nd and 1st centuries BCE (*IG IX,2* 218; *SEG III* 468). A Latin inscription of 140/141 CE, seemingly put up by the Hypatians of the Valley of Spercheios, was reportedly found at the location Chousou Kotroni and brought to Domokos (Arvanitopoulos 1911, 197), and was at the time of La Coste-Messelière and Daux's (1924, 375–376) visit in the yard of a private house in Domokos.

Chronology

Late Archaic?, early Classical, Hellenistic, Roman, Byzantine.

Coordinates

352678, 4332366.

3. Ekkara with environs

Modern name

The village is since 1930 known as Ekkara (Εκκάρρα), formerly Kato Agoriani (Κάτω Αγόριανη), which is still the name used locally.

Ancient name

The site at the village has traditionally and officially been identified with Ekkara (Ἐκκάρρα, ἄ/ῆ) or Akkara (Ἄκκαρα, ἄ/ῆ), a *polis* belonging to Achaia Phthiotis. The name appears in Livy (32.13.13) as Acharrae. There is no definite evidence for this identification, which has been contested (Decourt *et al.* 2004, 714). Ekkara struck coins in the 4th

century BCE, with the head of Zeus on the obverse and a standing Artemis on the reverse, bearing the legend *Ekkarreōn* or *Ekkarreiōn* (Liampi 1998).

Description of sites

The archaeology of the area of Ekkara is at present more-or-less unknown, with only fragmentary information regarding a handful of sites (Fig. 17). The village itself is located on the northwest slopes of a small hill (Fig. 19, A in Fig. 17) which contains the *akropolis* of a small, walled settlement now underneath the modern houses. The *akropolis* was fortified with a wall in polygonal masonry (3 m wide), running for c. 365 m around the hilltop, with a gate facing the saddle in the south (Stählin 1924, 154–155; Cantarelli *et al.* 2008, 56–57). Apostolos Arvanitopoulos (1912, 349) noted remains of the fortification wall of the *kato polis* as extending from the *akropolis* wall down the eastern slope of the hill towards north. Stählin (1924, 155) saw nothing of this but observed scattered ashlar blocks on the slope. The poorly preserved fortification wall in polygonal masonry (Fig. 18) runs around the rim of the quite flat *akropolis*. The descending wall noted by Arvanitopoulos is visible in the west slope of the *akropolis* hill (B in Fig. 17), indicating that his plan sketch has accidentally been mirrored. Arvanitopoulos also described remains of intramural structures on the hilltop, where limited excavations in 1973 revealed the foundations of a building, seemingly not of a public nature, dated through finds to the Hellenistic period (Ioannidou 1977b). This trench was located at the highest point of the *akropolis* area at its eastern end and produced Hellenistic pottery and tile. The *katō polis* was possibly not of a great size and must have been limited in the west by small stream that runs from south to north through the village. A manumission inscription of unknown date has been found at the village (Zelnick-Abramovitz 2013, 156). A cemetery with tile graves has been found in the southeast slope of the hill (on the southwest slope in Arvanitopoulos's plan), and some Hellenistic marble funerary *stēlai* have been found in the area of the modern village (Arvanitopoulos 1912, 349–350; La Coste-Messelière and Daux 1924, 376).

A multi-period settlement is probably to be found on the ridge of Ampelorachi, just northwest of the modern village (at C in Fig. 17). Pottery of the Neolithic, Middle and Late Helladic, Classical, Hellenistic and Roman periods have been noted here, as well as possible Geometric and Archaic sherds (Ioannidou 1977b; Froussou 2012). No structural remains have been reported from this location.

Approximately 1.5 km east of the village of Ekkara is another fortified site known as the Gynaikokastro, on a hill bearing the same name (Fig. 20, at D in Fig. 17). This is sometimes confused with the nearby Gynaikokastro at Neo Monastiri (**No. 19**). As discerned in aerial photographs, the fortification is roughly rhomboid in shape and c. 490 m in

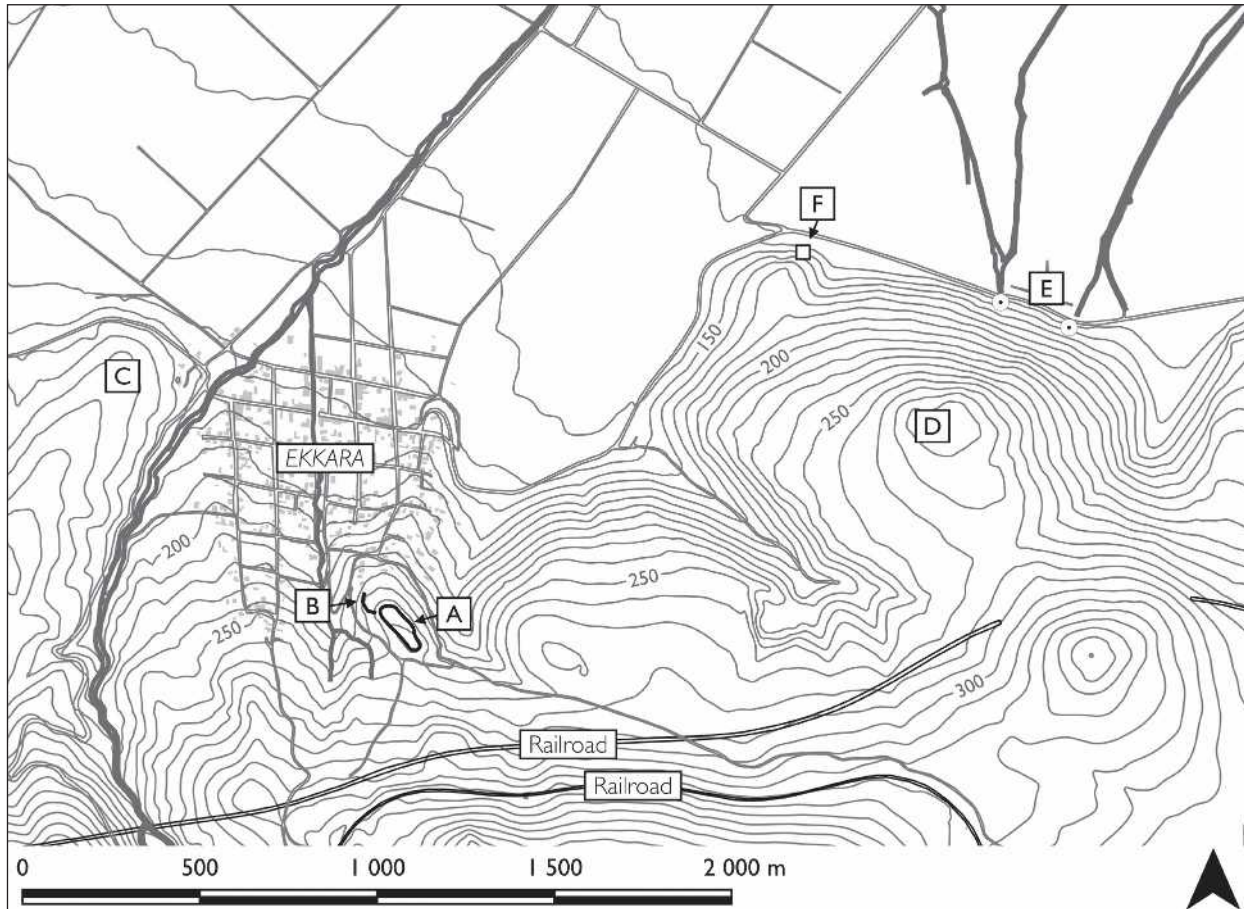


Figure 17 Ekkara with environs. Plan-sketch after Arvanitopoulos (1912, 349) and aerial photographs.



Figure 18 Polygonal fortification wall surrounding the akropolis at Ekkara. Southern slope of the hill. © Greek Ministry of Culture and Sports – Organization for the Management and Development of Cultural Resources.



Figure 19 The akropolis at Ekkara and the Western Thessalian plain, as seen from the south. Behind the village, to the left, is the Ampelorachi ridge. On the horizon is Mount Olympus. © Greek Ministry of Culture and Sports – Organization for the Management and Development of Cultural Resources.



Figure 20 The Gynaikokastro fortification at Ekkara, as seen from south, with the Western Thessalian plain and Mount Olympus in the background. © Greek Ministry of Culture and Sports – Organization for the Management and Development of Cultural Resources.

circumference, enclosing an area *c.* 180 m long and 130 m wide. The walls are drywalled and mostly reduced to collapsed rubble, with no towers. Fragmentary remains of intramural structures have been noted (Stählin 1924, 155), with the surface ceramic material reportedly “unpainted Hellenistic” (Cantarelli *et al.* 2008, 58). It is difficult to date the fortification but the lack of towers and the curvature of the walls are suggestive of a pre-Hellenistic date, possibly late Archaic.

At the northeast foot the hill of Gynaikokastro was the now dry double spring of Matia (at E in Fig. 17), which

was probably the outlet of the water coming from the *katavothres* draining former lake Nezeros/Xynias. Hellenistic pottery and tile have been noted in the fields north of the springs and a Classical period tomb has been excavated by the ephorate in the area (Cantarelli *et al.* 2008, 60). West of this area, in a natural hollow in the cliff is a rock-hewn monumental sarcophagus, locally known as the Sarmanitsa (Aromanian *sărmăniță*, “cradle”. F in Fig. 17). This was robbed already in Antiquity and has been dated to the Roman period (Ussing 1847, 303–304; Lolling 2, 24–25; Stählin 1924, 155; Cantarelli *et al.* 2008, 58).

Chronology

Classical, Hellenistic.

Coordinates

Fortification at Ekkara: 344280, 4334756; Gynaikokastro: 345826, 4335192.

4. Episkopi**Modern name**

The site is generally referred to as Episkopi (Επισκοπή), which is the location of the ancient settlement.

Ancient name

The site at Episkopi has traditionally been identified with ancient Gomphoi (Γόμφοι, οἶ), a settlement known from a wide array of ancient sources as having been located in the area. Even if Episkopi with all probability is to be identified

as ancient Gomphoi, there is no direct evidence to support this identification (Stählin 1912, 1584).

Description of site and area

The archaeological site at Episkopi lies *c.* 2 km northeast of the town of Mouzaki, *c.* 1.5 km south of Gomfoi and *c.* 1.5 km west of Gelanathi, just north of the modern road Mouzaki–Lazarina. The site has been regarded as the site of ancient Gomphoi since at least the early 19th century, with no other candidates suggested, and the nearby village of Rapsista was accordingly renamed Gomfoi in 1930. The site is defined by two ridges in the west and north, as well as by the river bed of the Pamisos to the south and southeast. The fortifications are poorly preserved but can be traced as following the ridge-lines (at the As in Fig. 21). A section of the city wall was revealed during trial works in 1964 (Theocharis 1966, 263) and a 63 m stretch of the same section of the wall was cleaned and

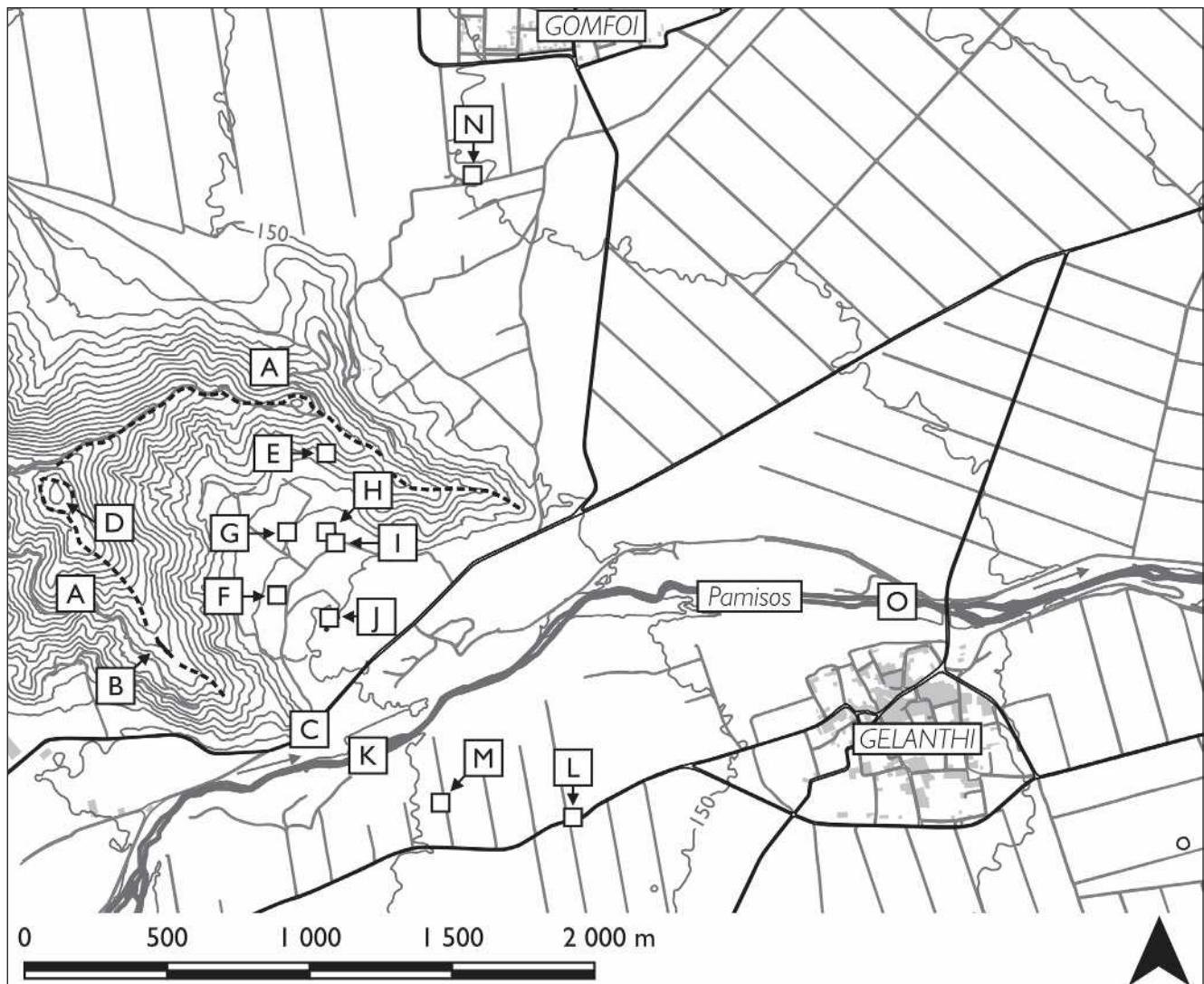


Figure 21 The site at Episkopi with environs. Plan-sketch after Hatziangelakis (2016a, 567) and aerial photographs.

excavated in 1988 (B in Fig. 21). The wall is in trapezoidal masonry (judging from photographs), preserved up to three courses, and was built in compartments with two preserved rectangular towers 33.7 m apart. The south tower protruded 2.7 m from the wall with a width of 7.7 m. The northern tower was located at a bend in the wall trace and was 7.5 m wide. A little bit further to the north, an additional 22.5 m stretch of the wall was found with a single rectangular tower with internal chamber divisions. Immediately outside the walls were scanty remains of structures of unknown function. Much tile was found at the fortifications, indicating that they had been roofed. The walls were dated to the Hellenistic period by the excavator Leonidas Hatziangelakis (1993a, 253; 2000b, 388). During his visit to the site in 1810, William Leake (1835b, 519–520) observed a gate at the foot of the hill southeast of the aforementioned excavated section of the wall (at C in Fig. 21), which is apparently not preserved. He also saw a smaller walled enceinte at the highest section of the fortified area (at D in Fig. 21), which he identified as being the *akropolis* of the city.

The inhabited area of the urban site was in the theatre-like valley between the ridges (Fig. 22), most probably defended in the southeast by a now lost fortification wall. The reconstructed settlement area is large, over 60 ha, with a minimum city wall trace of 4.5 km, enclosing nearly 130 ha. It is at present not known whether the whole expanse of the

walled area was inhabited in the Hellenistic period, but the excavated remains indicate that much of the settlement was arranged along a northwest–southeast axis. During agricultural works in one of the fields in the northeast slope (E in Fig. 21), building remains were found including three large female terracotta protomes *in situ*, with finds of the Hellenistic and Roman periods (Hatziangelakis 2004, 448). Several excavations have been conducted on the flatter ground below this location by the ephorate as part of rescue work, revealing mainly buildings of the Roman period constructed on top of Hellenistic structures. The most notable excavation took place in the Karalis field (I in Fig. 21), where a larger public building of the Roman period was found, covered in a collapsed roof. Several Roman and Late Roman tombs were found at the field, including two unlooted rich burials of the 1st–2nd century CE (Hatziangelakis 1999a, 329; 2000a, 380; 2000b, 388–399; 2003, 473; 2004, 448; Athanasiou 2018, 515–517). In the nearby Koundouris and Krios fields, another large Roman building was found, as well as a Late Roman tomb (Hatziangelakis 1992, 264–265). The finds of Roman and Late Roman tombs in the area of the Hellenistic settlement indicate that the latter had seemingly contracted to a smaller size in the 1st or 2nd century CE.

The vast south cemetery (at K in Fig. 21) of the site has been severely damaged by the shifting bed of the River Pamisos, repeatedly revealing tombs of the Hellenistic



Figure 22 The site of Episkopi, as seen towards northwest. © Greek Ministry of Culture and Sports – Organization for the Management and Development of Cultural Resources.

and Roman period (Hatziangelakis 1992, 265; 1999a, 329; 2001a, 356–357; 2003, 474; 2004, 448–449). The cemetery seemingly continued on the right bank of the river towards Mavrommati, where several Hellenistic cist tombs have been excavated (Hatziangelakis 2000a, 380–381) and where there is also the large Gelanthis tumulus (L in Fig. 21; Athanasiou 2018, 515), possibly located at an ancient road from the city towards the site at Pyrgos Ithomis (No. 23). Funerary *stelai* of the Roman period have been reported from the area of Gelanthis, probably originating from the same cemetery (Tzi-falias 1993, 279; 1996, 225–226). A funerary monument of the Roman period has been excavated at the Geroplatanos location in the southern part of the cemetery (M in Fig. 21), towards Mavrommati (Athanasiou 2019, 703–705). There was possibly another cemetery to the northwest of the urban site, as a looted tomb has been located here (Hatziangelakis 2004, 449–450). Between the site at the village of Gomfi, c. 1 km north of the city walls, is the large Early Roman Loggarakos tumulus (Katakouta and Stamatopoulou 2020, 385), which was excavated in 2000 by the Ephorate of Larisa (N in Fig. 21).

During maintenance works in the Pamisos riverbed, just west of the modern bridge north of Gelanthis (at O in Fig. 21), the north and south stone abutments of a 3rd century CE bridge were found. The foundations contained the spoliated remains of probable theatre seats and parts of the cobblestone paving of the bridge was also found here (Hatziangelakis 1999a, 330–331; 2000b, 391).

Chronology

Hellenistic, Roman, Late Roman, Early Byzantine.

Coordinates

300313, 4368122.

5. Ermitsi with environs

Modern name

The main archaeological site (Fig. 23) is located within the bounds of the village of Ermitsi (Ερμίτσι, Turkish İzmiç, in older literature sometimes referred to as Hermetsion, from the Katharevousa spelling Ἑρμήτσιον).

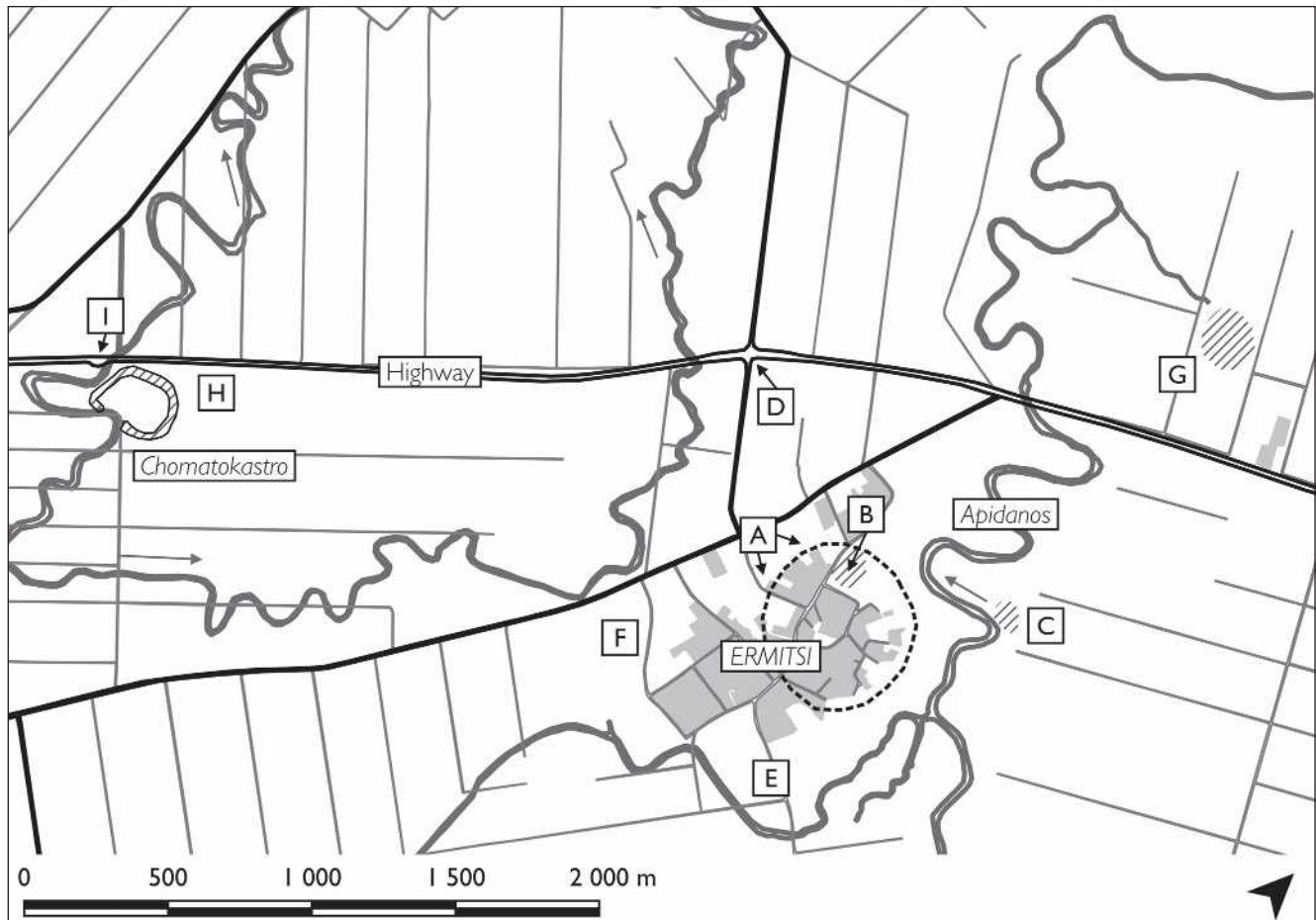


Figure 23 The archaeological site of Ermitsi with environs. Hydrology as it appears in 1940s aerial photographs. Plan-sketch after aerial photographs.

Ancient name

Stamped roof-tile(s)³ of the Classical–Hellenistic (?) period bearing the legend ΠΕΙΡΑΣΙ[ΕΩΝ] found in 1993 (Hatzangelakis 1998, 244; 2007, 42; Stamatopoulou 2012b, 88) during excavations inside the village provide evidence for Ermitsi being the site of ancient Peirasia (Πειρασία, ἦ/ᾱ). The onomastics of Peirasia have been thoroughly discussed by Decourt (1990, 162–169) with some points relevant for this study. The name of the community is most often spelled Peirasia, but Apollonios Rhodios (*Argon.* 1.37) has *Peiresia*, which also constitutes the earliest mention, even if in a mythological context. The -ra- stem appears to have been the local and most common form (Stählin 1936a, 102). Livy (32.13) mentions a settlement Iresiae in the region, which is probably a mistake for Piresiae. Some variants of Pliny (*Nat.* 4.16) have an Iresiae in Magnesia but this is surely a mistake, as he cites many other *poleis* in the same passage that were definitively not located in Magnesia. The masculine *ethnikon* is *Peirasieus* (plur. *Peirasieis*) in inscriptions and on coins (see below), and Stephanus Byzantius (*s.v.* Πειρασία) has *Peirasis* as the feminine (see below). Prior to the find of the stamped roof-tile(s), the location of Peirasia was assumed to be either at Vlochos (Stählin 1924, 134; 1936a) or at Sykies (Decourt 1986, 383; *Barrington Atlas*). The discovery of the tile appears not to be widely known,

as publications since refer to Peirasia as at Vlochos or other locations (Decourt *et al.* 2004, 700; Pendleton 2008, 54; Roller 2018, 574).

Description of site

The extent of the archaeological site at Ermitsi (Fig. 24) is not known, as modern habitation covers most of the area, and excavations have mainly been carried out in house plots within the village. Aerial photographs show, however, a ring-like feature in the terrain (A in Fig. 23), which might indicate a fortification wall perimeter of the ancient settlement. This is nearly completely circular, with a diameter of *c.* 520 m and *c.* 1.7 km in circumference. Aerial photographs of the 1940s show that there was a water-filled ditch surrounding the northeastern and eastern edge of this ring-like feature. The area within this circle is raised and forms a large mound. At the northwestern edge of the circular area is a small hill, on top of which is the village church of Zoodochos Pigi (B in Fig. 23). An inscribed 7th century BCE pithos rim has been found on the church plot (Hatzangelakis 1993b, 258; Doulgeri-Intzesiloglou 2000, 22–23) and a Hellenistic stone water conduit has been excavated just north of the church, leading towards the northeast (Hatzangelakis 1992, 262).

During construction works within the village, proto-Geometric and Geometric material (Nikolaou 1997a,



Figure 24 The village of Ermitsi, looking southeast. © Greek Ministry of Culture and Sports – Organization for the Management and Development of Cultural Resources.

235) as well as buildings and structures of the Classical–Hellenistic period have been unearthed. Several of these were aligned on a northeast–southwest axis but there is not enough evidence to suggest any street-grid. The Koutsioumpas plot excavations in the village uncovered remains of two buildings with much material of the Classical–Hellenistic period, including red- and black-figure pottery, a mould-made skyphos with scenes of the Trojan war and terracotta discs with stamped impressions of horses and griffins. The excavation also yielded several stamped roof-tiles with manufacturers’ names and at least one with the name of the settlement (see above). Two wells with terracotta walls were also found and were excavated to a depth of 5 m. Deposits of pottery of the Geometric, Archaic and Hellenistic periods were also unearthed, showing the diachronic use of the site (Hatziangelakis 1998, 244–245; 2000a, 378). At the centre of the site, at the Tisadimos and village supermarket plots, further building remains of the Classical–Hellenistic period have been found (Nikolaou 2000, 378; 2001, 356). The Grammatelis plot excavations yielded further material of the Archaic, Classical and Hellenistic periods, as well as a piece of a terracotta water conduit (Nikolaou 1997a, 235).

Across the river that runs just east of the village is a small *magoula* (at C in Fig. 23) of unknown date (Wace 2, 55). During roadworks at the junction west of the village (at D in Fig. 23), three (possibly four) apsidal buildings were found, originally thought to be Middle Helladic, but recently redated to the Geometric period on the basis of the pottery (Karagiannopoulos 2018c, 128). The site also yielded ceramic material of the prehistoric and Hellenistic periods (Hatziangelakis 2007, 41–42; 2008, 319; 2011a, 569–572).

Scanty finds of the historical periods from the south cemetery at Ermitsi (at E in Fig. 23) have been handed in by private citizens (Alexiou and Hatziangelakis 2016, 588–589), and a metal belt (in silver?) of an unknown period have also been found in the general area (Alexiou and Hatziangelakis 2016, 591). Trial trenches 100 m southwest of the village (at F in Fig. 23) revealed pottery of the Early Iron Age and the Archaic period (Sofianou 2019, 738).

Some 1.3 km north of the village (at G in Fig. 23) is the large *magoula* of Gianiki, with surface pottery of the Neolithic and Ottoman periods. Ottoman-period records and maps states that it was also the location of a small village and it still features on the 1909 Greek army maps of the region (Vaiopoulou *et al.* forthcoming). Two kilometres southwest of the village is the Chomatokastro, a dyke enclosure of irregular shape, *c.* 770 m in circumference, located just southeast of the highway (at H in Fig. 23; Wace 2, 55). As discernible in historical aerial photographs, the banks of this apparent fortification have been damaged by agricultural works in the 20th century as well as by the eroding forces of the small river that flowed beside it until the 1960s. In its original state the enclosure had a possible access-way in the southwest, where is the only real corner in the otherwise nearly ellipsoid enceinte. The three gates

reported by Léon Heuzey and Honoré Daumet (1876, 412) cannot be discerned in historical aerial photographs. The embankments reach 4–5 m in height (Heuzey and Daumet 1876, 412; Decourt 1990, 149, n. 5, figs 31–32). There are no reports of ceramic surface material inside the embankment.

Rescue excavations carried out north of the enclosure of Chomatokastro yielded several burials (Tsiouka and Kokonaki forthcoming). A small proto-Geometric tholos tomb was found close to this location, just north of Chomatokastro, during a widening of the highway. This contained a single skeleton and some limited grave-goods. The whole tomb was moved to the roadside rest area lot just west of the Chomatokastro (at I in Fig. 23), where it is protected under a small roof (Hatziangelakis 2007, 51; 2011a, 577–578).

Written sources

The community of the Peirasieans is virtually unknown from ancient historical sources, with only one inscription and a handful of literary or mythological texts referring to Peirasia. A passage in Thucydides (2.22.3) mentioning cavalry of the *Parasioi* (Παράσιοι) in Athens in 431 BCE has a textual variant *Peirasioi* (Πειράσιοι) in one papyrus. This has by some (Stählin 1936a, 102; Decourt *et al.* 2004, 700; Pendleton 2008, 54–55) been seen as a reference to the Peirasieans. As the *ethnikon* is elsewhere always *Peirasieis* (Πειρασιεῖς), I find it more probable that *Parasioi* is a reference to the *Pyrasioi* (Πυράσιοι) or Pyrasians of Pyrasos in Eastern Thessaly (Achaia Phthiotis). The other Thessalian cavalry units mentioned in the same passage (the Larissians, Pharsalians, Krannonians, Gyrtionians and Pheraians) were all from communities in Eastern Thessaly (except for maybe the Pharsalians), further supporting this reading.

Apollonios Rhodios (*Argon.* 1.35–39) connects the Argonaut Asterion (Ἀστερίων) with Peirasia. The Homeric *Catalogue of Ships* (*Il.* 2.736) mentions a location Asterion (Ἀστερίων, τό) as held by followers of Eurypilos and the similarities between the toponym and the name of the Argonaut probably led to the association of Peirasia with Homeric Asterion. This was first done by Stephanus Byzantius (*s.v.* Ἀστερίων), who writes that the Thessalian *polis* of Asterion corresponded to the place known as Peiresia in his time and that the name (meaning “starry”) is derived from the white rocks of a hill which, from afar, shines like a star. The same author has the *ethnikon* of the *polis* as *Asterieus* (Ἀστεριεύς) or *Asteriōtēs* (Ἀστεριώτης) in the masculine and *Asterēis* (Ἀστερηίς) in the feminine. There are no other references in ancient texts or inscriptions to this *polis* apart from Stephanus Byzantius (*s.v.* Ἀστερίων; Πειρασία), who states that it was a *polis* of Magnesia. As there are no other sources mentioning a Peirasia in Magnesia, I find it probable that this is just a mistake. The Peirasieans paid 206 drachmae in the first half of the 4th century to the Amphictyony in Delphi (*CID* II 8, 2.6–8), but are otherwise unknown from inscriptions.

Two inscriptions have been found at Ermitsi, one of which indicating a cult of the Great Gods (*Theoi Megaloi*) at the site (Decourt 1995, no. 29).

Coinage

The only scholar to have published systematically on the coinage of Peirasia is Pendleton (2008), who notes that they are extremely rare even within Thessaly. They have the legend ΠΕΙΡΑΣΙΕΩΝ or ΠΕΙΡΑΣΙΕΩΝ in full or in abbreviated form on the reverse. Just as with the case of ancient Orthos (No. 13), the early 4th century BCE silver trihemibols struck by the Peirasieans were similar to the coinage of the Pharsalians, with the head of Athena wearing a Corinthian helmet on the obverse (Moustaka 1983, 27) and a horseman centring right on the reverse. The silver obols of the same period have a young male head on the obverse, and a naked warrior in helmet with raised spear and shield on the reverse. This figure appears almost identically on a stamped roof-tile found in Ermitsi, also bearing the legend “of the Peirasieans” (see above). It is possible that this is a local mythological figure, maybe Homeric Eurypilos (Heyman 1970, 123; Mili 2015, 179) or Asterion the

Argonaut (see above). Neighbouring Methyilion (No. 18) and Kierion (No. 24), however, issued coins in the 4th century BCE with the same figure on the obverse, as did Triikka (No. 28). In the late 4th century, the Peirasieans also minted bronze coins depicting the head of Athena wearing a Corinthian helmet on the obverse, and the standing figure of Athena Itonia on the reverse.

Chronology

Geometric, Archaic, Classical, Hellenistic.

Coordinates

Ermitsi: 336777, 4364815; Chomatokastro: 334536, 4363674.

6. Farsala

Modern name

The modern name for the town covering most of the archaeological site is Farsala (Φάρσαλα), formerly Fersala (Φέρσαλα). The official Ottoman Turkish name was Çatalca, sometimes rendered in Greek as Tsatalza (Τσατάλτζα).

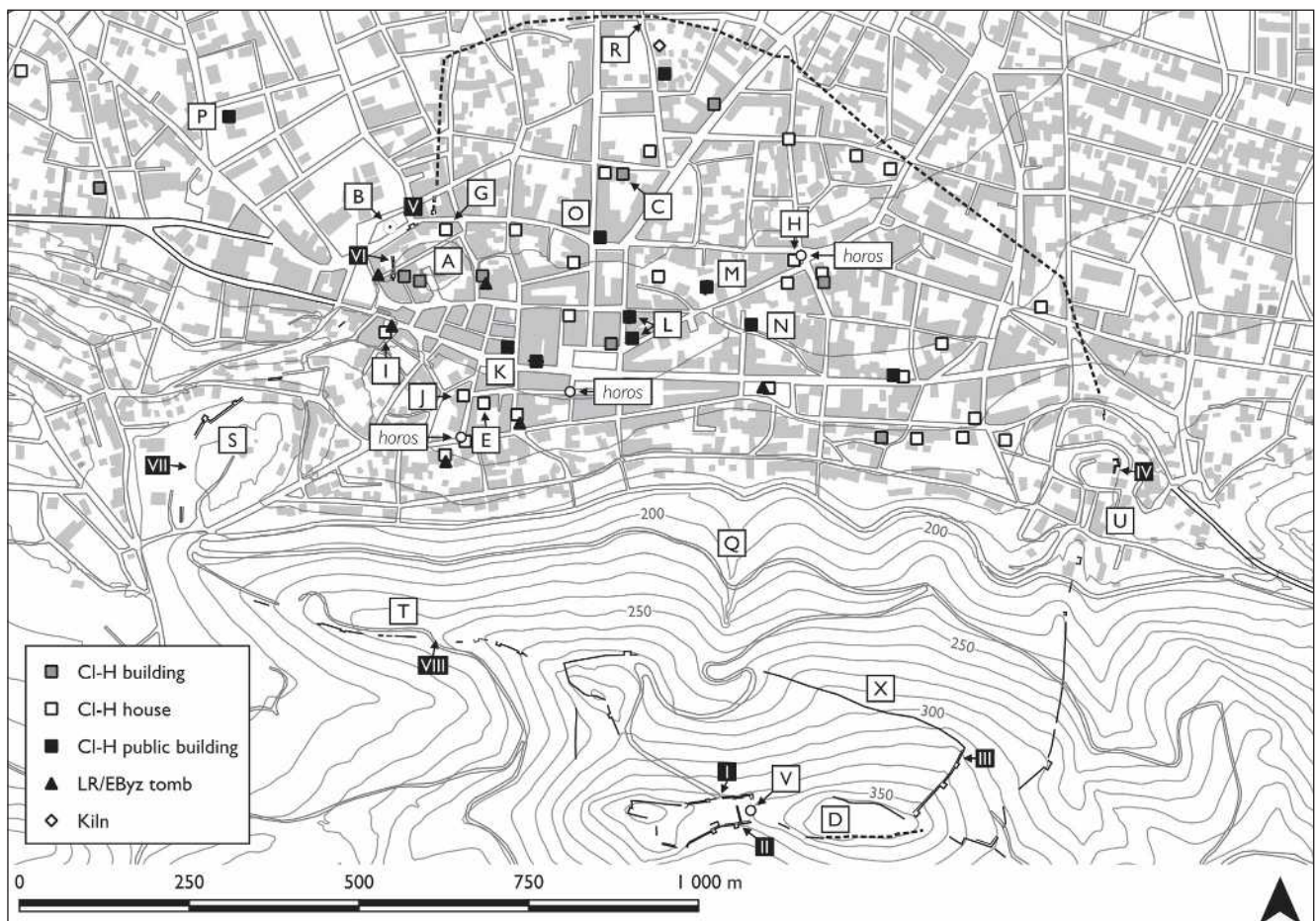


Figure 25 Plan of the visible and excavated architectural remains at Farsala. Plan after Stählin (1924, 138, fig. 9); Katakouta and Toufexis (1994, 190); Katakouta et al. (2016, 43, fig. 2); Karapanou and Noula (2016, 64, fig. 11); Karachalios et al. (2018, fig. 2), and aerial photographs. Labels in black indicate gates as numbered by the Ephorate of Larisa.

Ancient name

The location has through epigraphical finds been securely identified as that of Pharsalos (Φάρσαλος ἡ/ᾰ), which is preserved in the present toponym. The ethnic was *Pharsalios*, as attested from inscriptions and coins.

Description of site

The archaeological site of ancient Pharsalos probably constitutes the most complex in this catalogue, lying beneath the sizeable modern town of Farsala (Fig. 26). A long line of rescue excavations since the early 20th century has revealed the scattered remains of ancient habitation ranging from the Bronze Age until the present, highlighting the importance of the location in Western Thessalian history. The excavation plots marked in Figure 25 have been extracted from their street addresses as provided in reports, and might not represent accurately the real locations.

The site is located at the southern edge of the eastern extension of the Western Thessalian plain and is centred on the northern slopes of the Profitis Ilias hill (Fig. 25) whose two peaks constitute the highest point (369 masl) of a ridge extending in a general east–west direction. The area of the modern town appears to have been settled from the Middle Helladic period and onwards and was probably established as a settlement on the Agia Paraskevi hill (at A in Fig. 25), just above the now dried-out source of the

Apidanos river (at B in Fig. 25). The hill seems to have been the focal point of the community before the establishment of the city, with Late Bronze Age pottery found at the former mosque and church (Karapanou 2001, 375–376), and contemporaneous building foundations excavated at the northern (Karapanou 2011c, 554) and southern foot of the hill (Karapanou 2014b, 706). Proto-Geometric tombs have also been found close to the church (Gallis 1977a, 336; Katakouta 2012, 243), indicating a possible continuity of settlement after the Bronze Age. The area below and northeast of this hill was apparently also settled, as is evident from the excavations at the Tsinopoulos-Zigouris plot (at C in Fig. 25), where remains of Middle Helladic habitation have been noted underneath sub-Mycenaean, Archaic, Hellenistic, and Roman structures (Karapanou 2011a, 542–543). Limited Late Bronze Age material have also been noted on top of the Profitis Ilias hill (D in Fig. 25), but the nature of activity at the location at this time cannot be ascertained at present (Katakouta *et al.* 2016, 43; Katakouta 2020, 1458). The settlement appears to have survived into the Geometric and Archaic period, with pottery found at several scattered locations (Karapanou 2011a, 542–543; 2011b, 551–552; 2013, 516–519; 2014b, 706; Katakouta 2012, 243). The fragmentary remains of apsidal houses found at the Bakalis-Lioupis plot (at E in Fig. 25; Katakouta 2001a, 373–374) indicate that the settlement was similar to



Figure 26 Modern Farsala, as seen from the akropolis. On the horizon is Mount Olympus. © Greek Ministry of Culture and Sports – Organization for the Management and Development of Cultural Resources.

other contemporaneous Western Thessalian villages (such as at Kalathia, Neo Monastiri, Chtouri, *etc.*).

The main phase of habitation at Farsala is the large urban settlement that was laid out at the site in the mid-4th century BCE or soon thereafter. Evidence for a planned city, probably built *ex novo*, consists mainly of clear indications of a regular town-plan with orthogonal street-grid (built along a north–south axis) found at excavations all over the ancient settlement (Karapanou 2012, 406). At the Kiriazopoulos plot excavations (at G in Fig. 25), the street – which led from a gate (Gate V) just west of it – was 5.5–6.45 m wide and was paved with stones, with the worn impressions of wheel-marks (Karapanou 2011c, 554–555). Another street surface was found on Apollonos street, running east–west, 5.5 m wide and preserved for nearly 25 m (Karapanou 2014a, 722–723). A 9.1 m wide street, preserved for 19 m and paved with dirt and gravel, was excavated at the crossroads of Koukouflis and Plastiras street (at H in Fig. 25), running along a general east–west alignment. A *horos* stone was found *in situ* at this location, set in a base at the side of the road, something which had also been noted in the excavations in the Loukoutos plot (Karapanou 2012, 407; 2013, 516–518). Another *horos* with associated Hellenistic streets was found at the crossing of Athinas street and 25 March street (Karapanou 2014b, 705).

Domestic architecture of the Classical–Hellenistic period has been excavated all over the modern town, the distribution of which indicates that the whole intramural area of the city was built up (Fig. 25). Houses vary in size and layout, with no apparent zoning. Courtyard houses have been found at several locations, such as at the Chronis plot (Karapanou 2020a, 1436–1437; at I in Fig. 25) at the Koukoufli-Plastira crossroads (Karapanou 2013, 516–518; at H in Fig. 25), the Kiriazopoulos plot (Karapanou 2011c, 554–555; at G in Fig. 25) and at the Bekris plot (Karapanou 2014a, 722–723). One of the largest domestic structures was found on the Polyxos plot, where a large Hellenistic courtyard house with colonnade and peristyle was found, as well as part of an adjacent *stenopos* alley with entrance to the building (Karapanou 2005, 423; at J in Fig. 25). Another large Hellenistic house was excavated on 28 October Street (Karapanou 2014b, 706–707).

Public architecture has also been found at several locations, as in the area of the Plateia Laou (Πλατεία Λαού, at K in Fig. 25). Early 20th century excavations yielded remains of monumental architecture and what was interpreted by the excavator as the entrance to the *agora* of the city (Arvanitopoulos 1911, 178; Stamatoπούλου 2012a, 20, fig. 1).⁴ A large *stoa*-like building on a north–south alignment, facing west, was found on Koukouflis street (L in Fig. 25). A 4th century BCE inscription with a dedication to Olympian Zeus found at the location indicates the existence of a sanctuary at the site (Gallis 1977a, 333–334; Tziáfalias 1990a, 202–203; Decourt 1995, no. 58). On the nearby Nevrandzas plot

(at M in Fig. 25), another (Hellenistic?) *stoa*-like structure has been excavated, with collapsed column drums showing that it was of a monumental nature (Misailidou–Despotidou 1989, 237–238). Yet another Hellenistic *stoa*-like structure on an east–west axis (along the natural terrain) was found *c.* 80 m to the southeast on the Papapostolou plot (at N in Fig. 25; Katakouta 2014a, 636) and another unidentified public building on Larisa Street (at O in Fig. 25; Tziáfalias 1989, 151–152) indicate that this central area of the city had several public spaces. A podium and a possible *horos* stone (uninscribed) were found at the southwestern corner of the Plateia Dimarcheiou (Karapanou 2014a, 723). Sandstone fragments of a Doric monumental building found at several rescue excavations indicate that there might have been a possible Archaic temple somewhere in the area of the present Plateia Dimarcheiou but its more precise location cannot be ascertained (Karapanou 2013, 413). Outside the city, a possible *gymnasion* was found in the area of the plot of the 4th municipal school (Karapanou 2001, 378–379; Katakouta 2011a, 543–544).

Material indicating cults and sanctuaries have been found at some locations within the city, ranging from inscriptions, to more portable artifacts. On epigraphical grounds, it appears that the hill of Agia Paraskevi (at A in Fig. 25) might have housed a sanctuary to Zeus Thaulios and the corresponding hill of Agios Nikolaos (at U in Fig. 25) that of Asclepius (Karapanou 2012, 412), but no architectural remains of these have been found. Further inscriptions attest to the cult of several deities in the Classical–Hellenistic city (Olympian Zeus, Zeus the Saviour, Apollo and the Apollonian triad, Artemis, Aphrodite Peitho, Hestia and Hermes), none of which has been located with any certainty (Decourt 1995, nos 58–61, 64–69). Two Classical–Hellenistic sanctuaries have been identified on the north slope of the Profitis Ilias hill, above the supposed area of settlement (Tziáfalias 1979a, 578–579). In the Alexopoulos plot, a possible house altar with semi-spheres was found in a Hellenistic courtyard house (Karapanou 2001, 376–377), with a similar altar found in another Hellenistic house in the Chouliaras plot (Tziáfalias 1999, 335). The cliff-face at the hills of Agia Paraskevi and Agios Nikolaos contained such carved semi-spheres at the time of Arvanitopoulos but they have not been relocated (Karapanou 2012, 412). A possible *mētrōon* was identified on the basis of the finds in a Hellenistic building in the Kiritsis plot (Katakouta 2011b, 546–547; 2013b; 2016). A small shrine was excavated on 28 October Street which yielded two marble statuettes of Aphrodite and one terracotta of Ennodia (Karapanou 2014b, 706–707).

There are several reports of drainpipes found at excavations in the city, indicating a network of waterworks throughout the area (Arvanitopoulos 1911, 178–180; Gallis 1977a, 332–333; Toufexis 1993, 271–274; Katakouta 2001a, 373–374; 2005, 242; 2011c, 555; Karapanou 2013, 518;

2014a, 724). Leake (1835a, 453) saw a trough-shaped water conduit cut into the northern slopes of the Profitis Ilias hill, which possibly was fed by a stream. The course of this stream can still be traced in the terrain (at Q in Fig. 25), where Stählin (1924, 139, fig. 9) would place the theatre of the city. The water of the stream fed an underground aqueduct which has been traced for nearly 50 m during rescue work (Karapanou 2012, 410–411).

The city was protected by a substantial fortification wall which, in its original mid-4th century BCE state, must have been over 4.3 km in length, encompassing an area of *c.* 110 ha (Karapanou 2012, 406). Most of the wall at the foot of the hill was already gone at the time of Leake's (1835a, 452–453) and Ussing's (1847, 267–268) visits in 1803 and 1846, with only fragmentary sections visible in the east and west end of the modern town. However, the outline of the walled area could, until the mid-20th century, be traced in the line of fields (Stählin 1924, 138, fig. 9), as can be seen in 1940s aerial photographs. A part of the wall was found during rescue work on Larisa Street and in the southwestern corner of the Cultural Centre plot, confirming its position (R in Fig. 25; Karapanou 2012, 406; 2014a, 724). Sections of the wall and several towers in trapezoidal-isodomic masonry have been unearthed and excavated mainly in the area of the hill of Agia Paraskevi, previously the location of the Fethiye mosque (at A in Fig. 25; Gallis 1979a, 567, 576–578). Further up the hillslope, in the area known as Katrana, further extents of the western section of the wall have been excavated (at S in Fig. 25), revealing that it was between 2.6 and 3.3 m wide and built in trapezoidal-isodomic masonry. A large (7.1 × 6.6 m) rectangular tower forms the corner of a jog in the wall trace, which is dated by the excavators to the mid-4th century BCE (Katakouta 2013a, 519; Karapanou 2020a, 1415–1416, 1447–1450). The western ridge of the Profitis Ilias hill contains a longer section of the fortification wall (at T in Fig. 25), with 11 rectangular towers (Katakouta and Toufexis 1994, 194). In the eastern part of town, in the area of the church of Agios Nikolaos (at U in Fig. 25), the eastern fortification wall descends the slope and can be traced in fragments among the modern buildings (Toufexis 1993, 270–271). At the eastern foundation of the church are the remains of a small gate (Gate IV in Fig. 25; Ussing 1847, 269; Katakouta and Toufexis 1994, 196), constituting the only known entrance to the city from the east. Two gates have been found in the west, one at the source of the Apidanos (Gate V in Fig. 25) and one in the Katrana area (at R in Fig. 25; Karapanou 2020a, 1447–1450).

The *akropolis* of the settlement consists of a separately walled area encompassing both peaks of the Profitis Ilias hill and the low saddle in between. The eastern peak (at D in Fig. 25) is the highest of the two, and on the summit is the modern chapel of Profitis Ilias, which has given the hill its present name. The fortifications of the *akropolis* are

of several different building phases, the oldest of which consisting of walls in polygonal masonry employing large blocks. These can mainly be seen on the west side of the gate in the northern wall of the *akropolis* (Fig. 27; Gate I in Fig. 25) and in the southern wall of the eastern peak of the hill and have been dated to the first half of the 5th century BCE (Katakouta and Toufexis 1994, 193, 197; Katakouta *et al.* 2016, 44), possibly belonging to the *akropolis/akra* mentioned as entrusted by the locals to one Polydamas in 374 BCE (Xen. *Hell.* 6.1.2–3). In the northeastern and southwestern walls of the hilltop fortification line are Hellenistic period walls in isodomic trapezoidal masonry, best preserved in the southern wall of the saddle area (Katakouta and Toufexis 1994, 192–193). Byzantine and later masonry with mortar is visible especially in the northern walls of the *akropolis*, where they still stand to a considerable height (Katakouta and Toufexis 1994, 190). In the saddle area is a large bottle-shaped cistern (V in Fig. 25) – by some early travellers identified as a treasury (Leake 1835a, 450; Ussing 1847, 267) – which probably belongs to the Hellenistic phase of fortification on the *akropolis* (Katakouta *et al.* 2016, 45). Finds of figurines in the internal area of the *akropolis* shows that it possibly contained one or more sanctuaries in the Hellenistic period (Katakouta *et al.* 2016, 46).

The Hellenistic phase at the site appears to have ended abruptly in the early 2nd century BCE, apparently through a violent event. Destruction layers have been noted at many excavated plots in the city, with little or nothing to suggest a subsequent phase of reconstruction (Karapanou 2001, 374–378; 2020a, 1436–1437). The Roman period is poorly attested at Farsala, with few possible Roman buildings noted (Karapanou 2001, 378). A possibly Roman fortification (?) wall has been excavated in the lower parts of the settlement (at C in Fig. 25), but its function and more exact date cannot be confirmed (Karapanou 2011a, 542–543).

Procopius's (*De aed.* 4.3) claim that Pharsalos was one of the Thessalian cities refortified under the reign of Justinian (527–656 CE) appears to be supported by the archaeological evidence. The *akropolis* of the ancient city was refortified with a new, separately fortified settlement area (at X in Fig. 25) in the upper slope just below it. A large cistern was constructed immediately inside the fortification wall (Katakouta *et al.* 2016, 48), similarly to at Kloketos (see above). Three towers and a gate have been noted in the eastern section of this fortification (Gate III in Fig. 25), and an additional tower towards its western end (Katakouta and Toufexis 1994, 191; Katakouta *et al.* 2016, 42). A number of Late Roman or Early Byzantine tombs (see Fig. 25) found excavated into the building foundations of the Classical–Hellenistic city below probably belong to this settlement (Gallis 1979a, 567; Karapanou 2001, 377–379; 2020a, 1436; Katakouta 2014a, 635–636).

Several cemeteries have been located around the settlement, the most important of which is immediately to the west



Figure 27 Farsala. West side of akropolis gate, showing multi-phase masonry. © Greek Ministry of Culture and Sports – Organization for the Management and Development of Cultural Resources.

of the ancient city. The earliest of the tombs found here are of the Mycenaean and sub-Mycenaean periods, with a large number of Early Iron Age burials – some in multi-burial tholos tombs – attesting to the continuation of settlement in the area after the Bronze Age (Katakouta 2012, 241; 2014b, 707–708). The cemetery was continuously in use over the Archaic, Classical, and Hellenistic periods, with the most well-known tomb being the late Archaic so-called Verdelis tomb (named after the excavator Nikolaos Verdelis), which is preserved at the western entrance to the city. The tomb was originally covered in a large mound and consists of a central tholos accessible through a *dromos*. The sides of the mound were held up by polygonal orthostates in the same style as the polygonal masonry on the *akropolis* on Profitis Ilias hill. The finds from the excavation indicated repeated use of the tomb from the time of construction until the early 2nd century BCE. The burial chamber had partially been built on top of a Late Helladic chamber tomb (Verdelis 1952, 157–163; 1955, 185–194; 1956, 127–132; 1957).

Coinage

The Pharsalians appear to possibly have been members (the leaders?) of a local monetary union in the Classical period,

as several of the communities of Western Thessaly use the same iconography or even near-identical obverse stamps as those of Pharsalos (Lavva 2001, 19–20). Silver coins with the head of Athena on the obverse and the head of a horse on the reverse were minted between *c.* 480–440 BCE (Moustaka 1983, nos 51–55; Lavva 2001, 43–44). Series with a galloping horseman on the reverse appear somewhat later, in 400–344 BCE, as does bronze coins (Lavva 2001, 44–45). All minting ends at the time of the Macedonian annexation in the mid-4th century BCE (Béquignon 1970, 1081–1082).

Written sources

Among the communities of ancient Western Thessaly, the Pharsalians clearly features the most and probably also first. One Phaidros the Pharsalian won the *stadion* at the 56th Olympiad in 556 BCE (Stamatopoulou 2006, 331), and the *polis* provided further Olympic, Delphic and Isthmian victors in the following centuries such as Agias, Philomelos, Polydamas, Telemachos and Agelaos.

The first mention of Pharsalos as a community is by Thucydides (1.111) who speaks of it in relation to a campaign by the Athenians, Boeotians and Phocians under Myronides to restore one Orestes son of Echekratidas to power

in 457/456 BCE. Whether this fragmentary reference to a *polis* is to the settlement or the stronghold on the Profitis Ilias hill cannot be ascertained. The Echekratids emerge in the 6th and 5th centuries BCE as a powerful family in Thessaly and Pharsalos and, even if seemingly originating in Larisa, they dominate much of the political scene of the area (Béquignon 1970, 1051–1052). The Pharsalians was the only Western Thessalian community to send military aid in the form of cavalry under the commander Medon to the Athenians during the Peloponnesian War (Thuc. 2.22). At the beginning of the subsequent Corinthian War, possibly in 395 BCE, Pharsalos was under a Spartan garrison which was expelled by the allied troops under Medios of Larisa. This is recorded by Diodorus (Diod. Sic. 14.82), who also states that the inhabitants were sold off as war booty. The relationship with Sparta was reinstated by the local aristocrat Polydamas, who was invested with the power of the community *c.* 20 years later. The reason behind these renewed ties with Sparta was much the threat of nearby Pherai and its tyrant Jason (Xen. *Hell.* 6.1). Polydamas was murdered a few years later by Jason's brother Polyphron, as were other distinguished Pharsalians (Béquignon 1970, 1059–1060). The Pharsalians ceded early with Philip II of Macedon and were consequently rewarded with influence over their neighbouring communities and their land (Graninger 2010, 316; Boehm 2018, 68–69). A possible war around the middle of the 4th century BCE against Western Thessalian Pelinna is implied by Polyaeus (4.2.19). Towards the end of the 3rd century, the Pharsalians appear to have joined the Aetolian League, similarly to several communities in Southern Thessaly (Béquignon 1970, 1067–1068). Its final appearance as a settlement is in Livy's mention that the garrison of Antiochus in Pharsalos surrendered to the Roman consul Manius Acilius Glabrio in 191 BCE (Liv. 36.14.10). There are no historical references to the city nor to the community after this (Béquignon 1970, 1070–1071), except maybe Strabo's (9.5.6) brief mention of Pharsalians in the late 1st century BC or shortly thereafter.

The area of modern Farsala has produced a wealth of epigraphic material, beginning in the 4th century, and ending rather abruptly in the years of the Macedonian wars of the early 2nd century BCE (Decourt 1995, 59–132). Some of the inscriptions relate to aristocratic groups in the Classical and Hellenistic periods, also known from other places in Greece including Delphi. These include the Daochids and Menonids, with the monument set up by the latter in Delphi a clear witness of their immense wealth (Béquignon 1970, 1055–1058). A large number of cults are attested from inscriptions from within the ancient city. A mid-3rd century BCE dedication to Homer by the Pharsalians was found in a mosque in Farsala in the 1880s (Decourt 1995, no. 56), indicating a possible cult of the poet. Further dedications of Olympian Zeus (Decourt 1995, no. 58), Zeus Soter (Decourt 1995, no. 59–60), Zeus Thaulios (Decourt

1995, no. 62), the Apollonian triad (Decourt 1995, no. 64), Artemis (Decourt 1995, no. 66), Aphrodite Peitho (Decourt 1995, no. 67), Hestia (Decourt 1995, no. 68) and Hermes (Decourt 1995, no. 69). The last epigraphic mention of Pharsalos is possibly a fragmentary proxeny (?) decree by the *polis* of the Krannonians, a community *c.* 22 km north of Pharsalos (*SEG* XXXV 583). The mid-2nd century BCE date of the inscription (Bruno Helly puts it to *c.* 150 BCE), however, is not completely secure.

A handful Roman-era texts contain the toponym Palaipharsalos or Palaepharsalus, which has triggered much speculation regarding the settlement history of the community. Palaepharsalus was, according to Frontinus (*Str.* 2.3.22), Eutropius (20) and Orosius (6.15) the location of the battlefield of 48 BCE when the armies of Julius Caesar and Pompey clashed. Caesar's own account (*Caes. BCiv.* 3.101) contain no reference to where this battle took place, except for being in Thessaly, and other sources put the battleground simply at Pharsalos. Palaipharsalos, but notably not Pharsalos, was according to Livy (32.13) one of the cities ravaged by Philip V's troops during their retreat from the Romans in 197 BCE.

Strabo (9.5.6) mentions that the Thetideion, probably a sanctuary to Thetis, was located "close to both Pharsaloi, the old and the new" (*plēsion tōn Pharsalōn amphoin tēs te palaias kai tēs neas*). The same passage makes a reference to the Pharsalians pointing out what they regarded as the ruined city (*kateskammenēn polin*) of Hellas, some 60 stadia from their own city (*polis*). Whether this is based on Strabo's own experiences or not cannot be ascertained.

Chronology

Middle Bronze Age, Late Bronze Age, sub-Mycenaean, proto-Geometric, Geometric, Archaic, Classical, Hellenistic, Early Byzantine, Middle Byzantine, Late Byzantine.

Coordinates

360494, 4350527.

7. Fiki

Modern name

The site is sometimes referred to as Varympompi (Βαρυμπόμπη), which is the former name of the nearby village Fiki (Φίκη). The hill at the location is marked as Magoula (Μαγούλα) on Greek maps and is named so by Kirsten (1938a, 1561), whereas the German WWII army maps names it Kotroni (Κοτρόνι). Ussing (1847, 246) states that the hill was known as Makri (Μάκρη?).

Ancient name

The official identification of the remains is with the ancient settlement of Phaeca (*Φαίκα, ἦ/ἄ), known only from Livy (32.14.1; Kirsten 1938a). The nearby village was

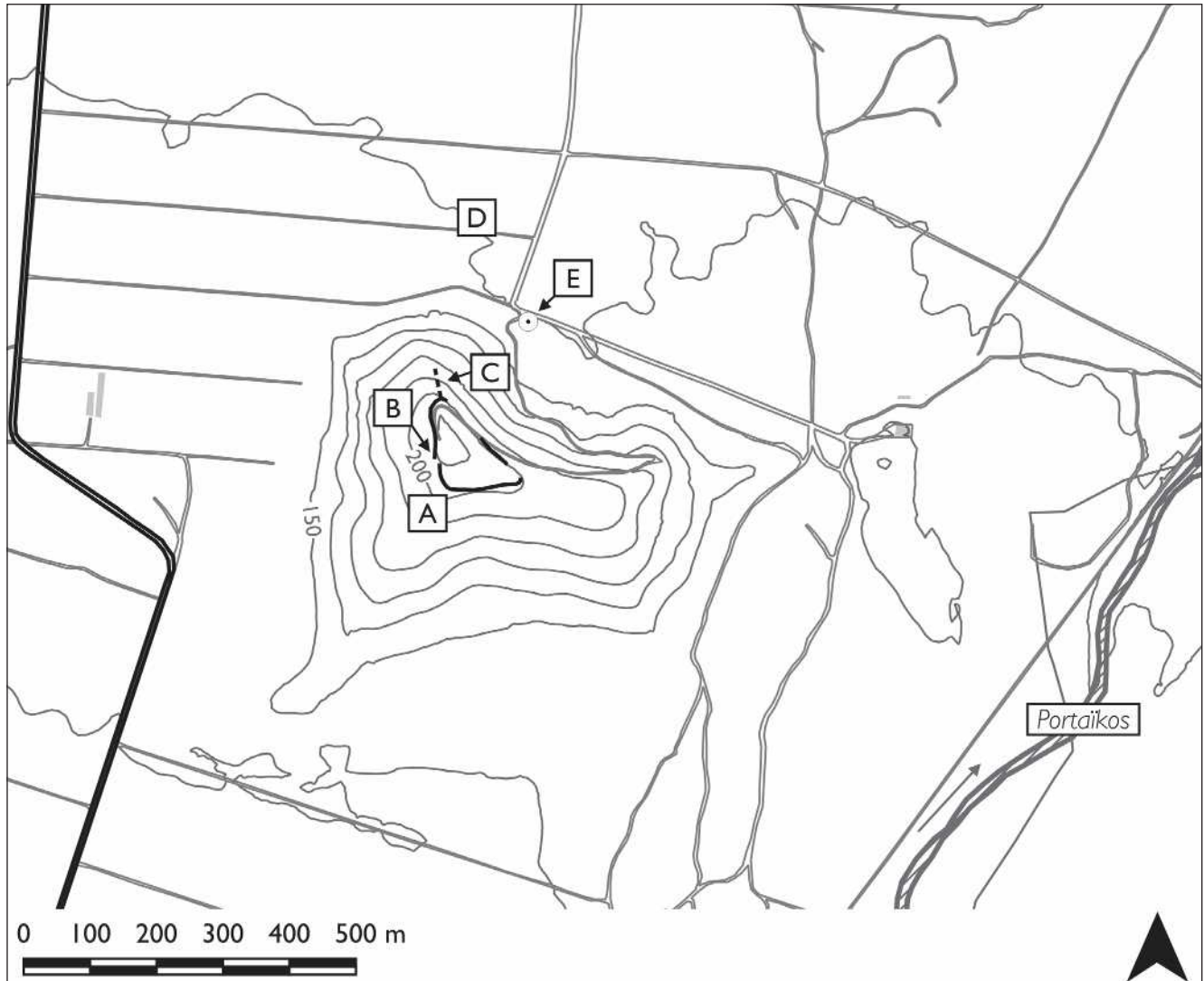


Figure 28 The site at Fiki. Map-sketch after (Lolling 2, 40) and aerial photographs.

accordingly renamed Fiki after this location. Apart from the position of the site (more or less) between ancient Gomphoi and the Pyli pass (as described by Livy), there is little evidence to support this interpretation.

Description of site

The site is located on the small, isolated hill of Magoula/Kotroni/Makri (c. 213 masl) in the plains (Fig. 29), c. 500 m northwest of the Portaikos river. The area is nearly devoid of modern habitation and is situated 1 km south of the village of Fiki and 1.5 km northwest of the village of Lygaria. The hill is slightly elongated along a northwest-southeast axis, with a protruding spur in the southwest. The north hillslope and parts of the hilltop have been damaged by a bulldozed road but remains of a fortification in well-executed polygonal masonry (*contra* Pikoulas 2012, 280) can still be traced, surrounding the hilltop (Fig. 30). This enceinte forms a triangular area (at A in Fig. 28), consisting

sloping and partially rocky ground. Lolling's plan sketch (Lolling 2, 40) shows the pre-destruction outline of the fortifications, including a possible gate (B in Fig. 28) in the western wall. The extension of the fortified area to the east as noted in Lolling's plan appears to be just geological features in the ground. At the northwestern corner, a fragmentary fortification deviates from the enceinte, descending the wall towards north (at C in Fig. 28). Aerial photographs show cropmarks (D in Fig. 28) in the fields below, indicating the trace of a possible lower fortification. Ussing (1847, 246–247) saw remains of buildings in the fields below the hill and pottery of the Archaic until Hellenistic periods provide further evidence of habitation (Pikoulas 2012, 280; Karagiannopoulos 2014b, 668). At the north foot of the hill is also a spring (E in Fig. 28). A 3rd century BCE funerary *stēlē* has been reported from nearby Fiki, possibly originating from the site (Tziafalias 1988a, 294; *SEG* XXXV 642).



Figure 29 The hill of Magoula/Kotroni/Makri, as seen from west. © Greek Ministry of Culture and Sports – Organization for the Management and Development of Cultural Resources.



Figure 30 Fiki. Stretch of fortification wall in polygonal masonry, revealed by bulldozed road. © Greek Ministry of Culture and Sports – Organization for the Management and Development of Cultural Resources.

Chronology

Archaic, Classical, Hellenistic.

Coordinates

298676, 4374667.

8. Fyllo with environs

Modern name

The sites are often referred to by the names of the modern villages of Fyllo (Φύλλο, formerly Siamпали Σιαμπαλί) and Orfana (Ορφανά).

Ancient name

The identifications of the sites in the region rely on a highly fragmented set of sources, none of which providing enough evidence to support a conclusive identification. The hill formerly (and locally) known as Doğanca Dağ has officially been re-named Fylliio Oros after the Phylleion Oros (Φυλλήϊον Ὄρος) mentioned in Apollonius Rhodios's *Argonautica* (1.35). The identification of the remains at Palampela is officially with the Phyllos (Φύλλος, ἡ/ᾰ) known from a handful of sources (Kirsten 1941; Decourt 1986). There is no evidence to substantiate these identifications.

Description of sites

East of the village of Fyllo is the large hill of Fylliio Oros, with its highest peak in the east (533 masl) and a long, ridge-like extension, the Xemisari, extending towards the west (Fig. 31). The hill and its environs are completely

devoid of habitation and covered in weeds and low shrubs. A decommissioned stretch of the 19th century railroad Athens–Thessaloniki circumvents the hill at its foot in the west, with the present line passing through a tunnel underneath it. The hill and its slopes contain three fortifications (Decourt 1986, 386; 1990, 178), conventionally named the *kastra* 1–3 (at A, B and C in Fig. 31). No systematic investigation of these features has been carried out.

The first fortification (Kastro 1) is located on the ridge-like extension of the hill, at the base of the steep slopes of the east peak (Fig. 32; at A in Fig. 31; Decourt 1994, fig. 9). The fortified area occupies a higher point of the ridge with sloping grounds surrounding it in all directions. The enceinte is irregular in shape, being roughly triangular with rounded corners and bulging sides, and extends 300 m in a north–south direction, with a maximum width of *c.* 100 m (Decourt 1990, 178). The construction of the walls is somewhat difficult to outline as much of the stonework has collapsed, leaving a continuous heap of rubble. At the south end are the clear remains of a gate, formed by the inward curvature of the flanking curtain walls. An additional fortified space extends towards northeast for *c.* 60 m. from the northeast corner of the enceinte, giving the impression of

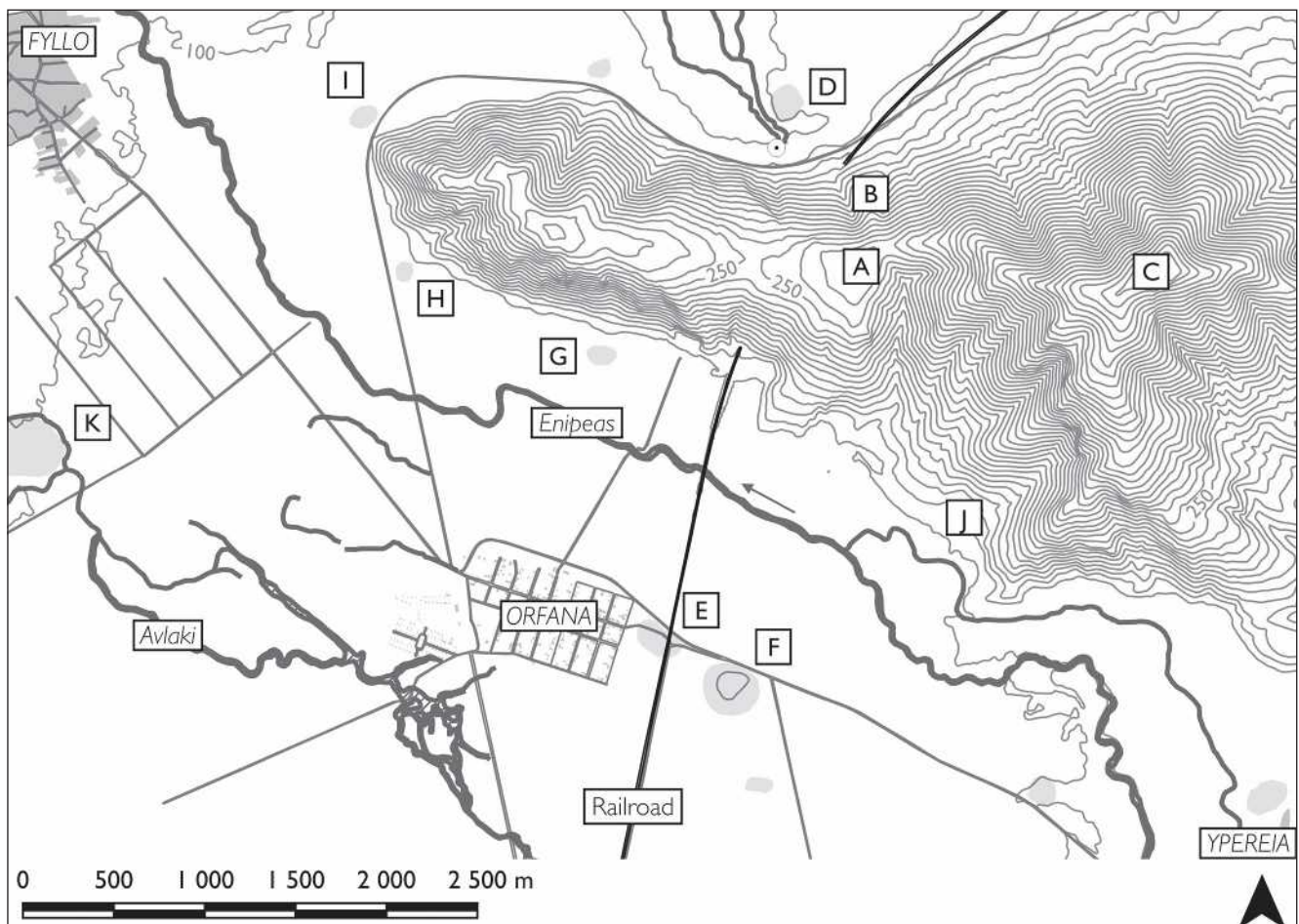


Figure 31 Fylliio Oros/Doğanca Dağ with environs. Hydrology represents situation in 1945. Map-sketch after aerial photographs.



Figure 32 The Kastro 1 atop Fyllio Oros, as seen towards west. © Greek Ministry of Culture and Sports – Organization for the Management and Development of Cultural Resources.

an elongated antenna-like barbican, as is common at Central European or British hillforts. There are clear indications of a gateway through this extension, which would then act as a barbican for the route into the main enceinte from the north (Decourt 1990, 178). Decourt identified another gate at the northwest corner of the enceinte which he suggests might have been flanked by towers. There are no reported remains of structures inside or outside this fortification and bedrock constitutes much of the ground surface. The antenna-shaped barbican accentuates the beginning of a ridge that extends towards the foothills to the north (Fig. 33), where is the second fortification, the Kastro 2 (at B in Fig. 31). This enceinte has a similar shape to the previously described barbican but is an isolated feature *c.* 95 m in length and 30 m wide. There are indications of openings or gates at each end, formed by the walls being turned inward.

On the highest peak of the hill (586 masl) is the Kastro 3, which forms an irregularly shaped enceinte, extending *c.* 235 m along the main east–west axis of the hill, and *c.* 150 m across (*contra* Decourt 1990, 179). The fortified area is *c.* 600 m in circumference, with walls in dry-walled rubble masonry. Square towers protrude from the outside of the wall. On the highest point of the area, Decourt (1990, 179) saw a “*phourion*” or a watchtower. The date of the fortification is difficult to ascertain but the masonry, lack of mortar and existence of towers point to a Classical–Hellenistic date.

Just below the Kastro 2, in the area where the new railroad line exits its tunnel, are the springs of Gkioli (from Turkish *göl*, “lake”). Today, the springs feeds a small bog and a canal that connects with the artificial waterway of the Enipeas *c.* 1 km to the northwest. Historical aerial photographs and maps, however, show that the springs fed a lake-like marshland to its north which, further to the north, turned into a small river, the Ofios Remma. This, in turn, emptied into the vast (now drained) marshland south of the village of Petrino (Decourt 1990, 177). In the middle of the marshes at the springs of Gkioli is a large *magoula* (at D in Fig. 31), which Decourt (1990, 176–177) interpreted as

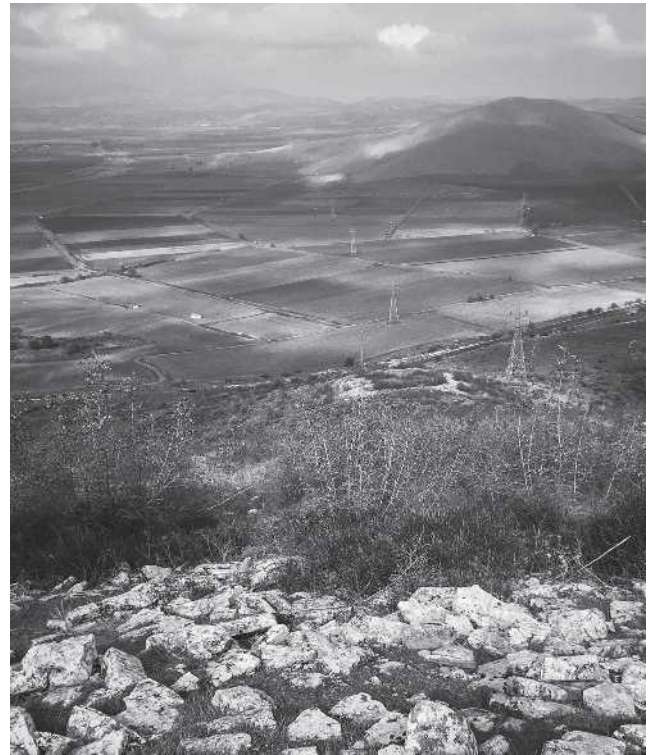


Figure 33 Kastro 2 (centre) as seen towards north from the barbican of Kastro 1. Below the hill, at left, is the spring and magoula of Gkioli. © Greek Ministry of Culture and Sports – Organization for the Management and Development of Cultural Resources.

mainly prehistoric. He states, however, that the sherds found on the surface cannot be dated, but that the few cut blocks at the location should not be indicative of a *polis*.

During railroad construction works in 1992–1993, an Archaic to Classical period settlement was excavated just east of the village of Orfana, *c.* 1.5 km south of the hill (at E in Fig. 31). The excavations produced several apsidal houses and circular cobblestone features, as well as a large tile kiln of the Classical period. The oldest material of the

settlement was dated by the excavator to the 6th century BCE and it appears to have been abandoned in the middle of the 4th century BCE (Rondiri 1998a; 1999). The sizeable prehistoric Magoula Kaliora is located immediately east of the excavated area (at F in Fig. 31) and has also reported finds of the historical period (Nikolaou 1997b, 238). Among the numerous *magoules* around the hill, Magoula Karagkouni (G in Fig. 31) is Neolithic (Nikolaou 1999b, 334; Krahtopoulou and Stamati 2020, 1540), Magoula Mytika (at H in Fig. 31) is yet unpublished, but the small Magoula Karamitrou (at I in Fig. 31) is Neolithic and Bronze Age (Nikolaou 1999b, 334; Krahtopoulou and Stamati 2020, 1542). The location Paliokklisi (at J in Fig. 31) has remains from the Bronze Age until Byzantine period (Nikolaou 1999b, 334).

Approximately 2 km southwest of the hill (at K in Fig. 31) is the large *magoula* known as the Chomatokastro (“dirt castle”) or Magoula Paliampela. Prior to the mid-20th century land-reclamation schemes in the region (*anadasmos*), the *magoula* and its environs were situated in a marshy area created by the Avlaki stream, running from the springs at Chtouri (Decourt 1990, 151). The top of this large mound (115 masl) presents an irregularly shaped flat area of *c.* 290 m length and 230 m width (5 ha), delineated by escarpments (Heuzey and Daumet 1876, 412). The sharp profile of the latter indicate buried retaining structures in stone, possibly fortifications, none of which are visible today. Decourt (1986, 364) saw what he interpreted as a gate in the north slope and reported the existence of large, cut limestone blocks, as brought to light during farming activities. Judging from his photograph, they could belong to at least one substantial Classical–Hellenistic public building. Surface finds of figurines and other terracotta objects suggested to Decourt (1990, 152–153) that a sanctuary of some kind could possibly be identified at the highest point within the plateau at its northeast edge. A marble votive *stēlē* of unknown date was also found at the settlement around the mid-1980s (Intzesiloglou 1989c). Further Classical–Hellenistic (and possibly Roman) finds were noted on the plateau by Decourt (1986, 364–365), who also reported Neolithic, Middle Helladic and Late Helladic ceramics (especially below the *magoula*). Private citizens have handed in coins from the same location (Alexiou and Hatziangelakis 2016, 587). The site extends beyond the *magoula*, with cemeteries in southeast and northeast (Hatziangelakis *et al.* 2016b, 590), where fragments of a Roman poros stone sarcophagus were seen by Decourt (1986, 366). The extent of the site and the nature of the reported archaeology indicate that the remains at Chomatokastro might be of a small city or town. Decourt interprets it as the probable site of the *polis* (his identification) of Phyllos (Φύλλος, ἦ/ύ), known from a small number of textual sources as being located in the proximity. A systematic study of the site has recently been instigated by the Ephorate of Karditsa.

Coordinates

Kastro 1: 348333, 4364759; Kastro 2: 348402, 4365136; Kastro 3: 350005, 4364745; Magoula Paliampela: 343638, 4363719; Orfana EIA settlement: 347188, 4362769.

9. Gefyria

Modern name

The archaeological site is located *c.* 3 km north of the village of Gefyria (Γεφύρια) but is sometime still referred to by the former toponym Kouprintzi (from Ottoman Turkish Köprücü(ler)). Early 20th century maps mark the area immediately south of the site as Romaiika Mnimata, “the Roman (= Greek) tombs”, and the area north of the site as Desi Chasampasi.

Ancient name

A Classical inscription (see below) identifies the settlement with that of the Thetonians, or Thetonion (Thessalian Θετόνιον, τό, Koine Θητώνιον, τό). Stephanus Byzantius (*s.v.* Θηγώνιον) has “Thegonion, a *polis* of Thessaly” which is most probably a mistake (Γ for T, see Stählin 1924, 132; 1936d). The *ethnikon* was *Thetonios* or *Thētōnios*.

Description of site

The archaeological site at Gefyria (Fig. 34) is located on a slightly raised area between the river Farsalitis and the now disappeared western riverbed of Apidanos. The railroad line Palaiofarsalos–Kalampaka runs across the site, as does the asphalt road Gefyria–Stavros. The area north and northeast of the site is slightly lower than to the south and southwest and appears in early 20th century maps and aerial photographs to have been a seasonal marshland. At the centre of the site is a prominent *magoula* (Fig. 35), rising above the surrounding ground. No architectural remains have been reported in the area but Leake (1835b, 492) observed “some vestiges” at the *magoula* as he rode by the location in 1803. Historical aerial photographs show indications of a spring some 200 m east of the supposed area of the settlement; a stream ran from this towards the west, dividing the raised area into a larger northern and smaller southern part. The location has been subjected to little archaeological interest and is mainly known as the findspot of the famous Sotairos inscription (*IG IX,2 257*) (see below). The so-called Perseus of Thetonion (Biesantz 1965, 35, no. 110), a 5th century BCE bronze figurine, was not found at the site, but at the Kalathia site close to Filia (Karagiannopoulos and Katevas forthcoming). The fields surrounding the *magoula* contain much pottery of the Late Helladic, Geometric, Archaic and Classical periods (Fotini Tsiouka pers. comm.).

A cemetery belonging to the settlement was excavated east of the site in 1997, in the direction of the village of Stavros and just north of the modern road. The 17 excavated

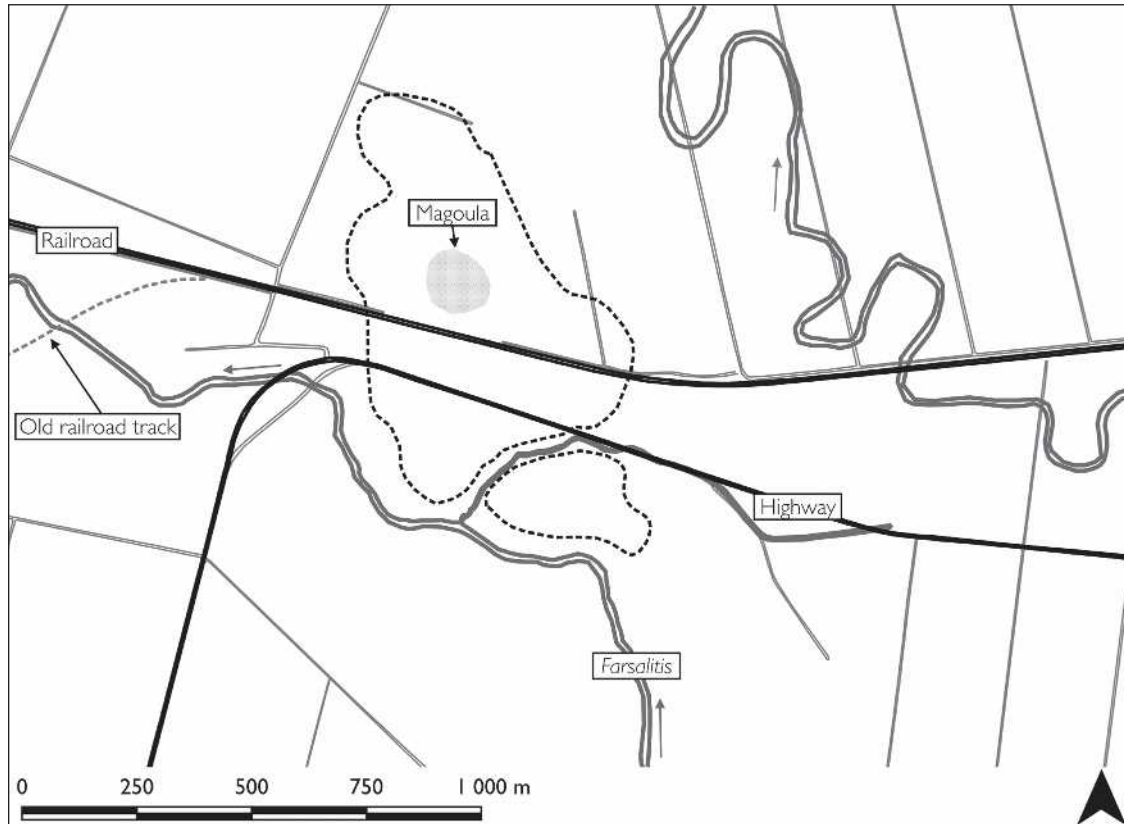


Figure 34 The site at Gefyria. Dashed lines mark the possible extent of the settlement as indicated by soil-marks. Hydrology according to 1960 aerial photographs. Plan-sketch after aerial photographs.



Figure 35 The site of Gefyria, looking northeast. © Greek Ministry of Culture and Sports – Organization for the Management and Development of Cultural Resources.

tombs contained pottery of the Archaic and early Classical period, the earliest vessels being 7th century and the majority of the 6th century BCE (Nikolaou 2003a, 490–492; Nikolaou *et al.* 2010; 2012).

Written sources

The community of the Thetonians is not definitively attested anywhere except in the 5th century BCE bronze plaque containing a proxeny decree by the Thetonians to the Corinthian Sotairos found in the 19th century at Gefyria. The significance of the inscription in Thessalian dialect studies has been great but has seemingly not prompted any interest in the archaeological site. The inscription mentions gold and silver objects formerly stored in the *Belphaion*, which was possibly a local sanctuary to Apollo.

Chronology

Late Helladic, Geometric, Archaic, Classical.

Coordinates

345347, 4353578.

10. Kalampaka

Modern name

The site is known as Kalampaka (Καλαμπάκα), which is the name of the modern town here, or as Stagous or Stagoi (Σταγοί, possibly a corruption of σ'τ' Αγίν', itself from εις τὸ Αἰγίνιον), which was the Byzantine name of the settlement.

Ancient name

Identified as the location of the *polis* of Aigenieans (*polis Aiginieōn*) from an inscription found in the church of Agios Prodromos in Kalampaka (IG IX,2 329, c. 200 CE, Fig. 37, see below). The *polis* of the Aigenieans appears in Livy (32.15) as Aeginium and in Strabo (7.7.9) as Aiginion (Αἰγίνιον, τό).

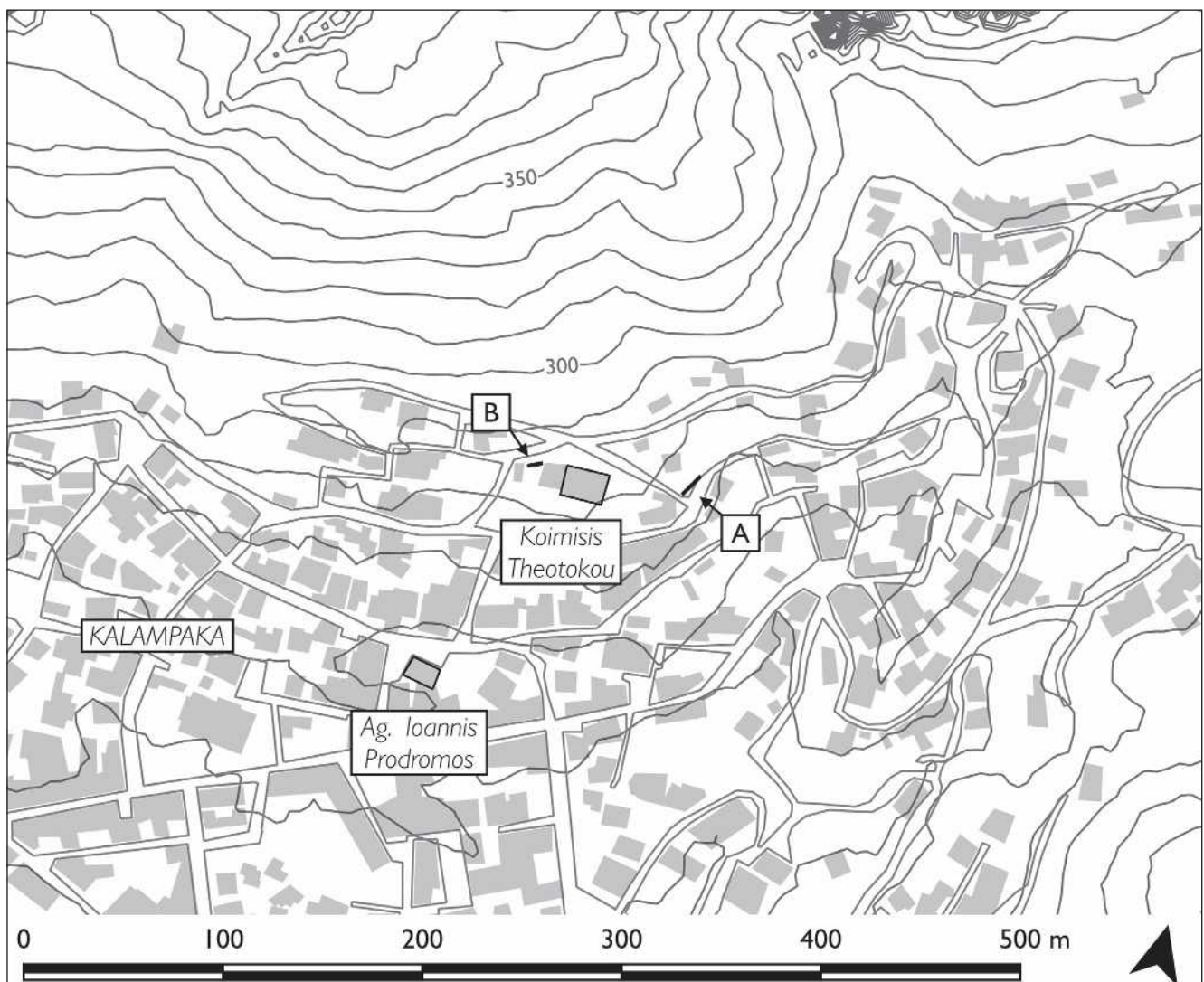


Figure 36 Parts of modern Kalampaka. Plan-sketch after aerial photographs.



Figure 37 Inscription (IG IX,2 329) in the walls of Agios Ioannis Prodromos, Kalampaka. © Greek Ministry of Culture and Sports – Organization for the Management and Development of Cultural Resources.

Description of site

The site of Aiginion is the same as the present-day town of Kalampaka (Hatziangelakis 2011b, 592–593). Remains of the fortification walls in pseudo-trapezoidal masonry have been found in a road-bank (at A in Fig. 36; Fig. 38) 40 m east of the church of Koimisi tou Theotokou in the northern part of modern Kalampaka. In the yard of the church are rock-cuttings (at B in Fig. 36) which possibly belong to the wall (Nimas 1988, 266; Pikoulas 2012, 278). The church itself contains much spoliated material of the Roman period, including a manumission inscription (IG IX,2 325, c. 131–132 CE), a funerary relief, a statue base and several column drums. The location is immediately below the famous cliffs of Meteora, with a splendid view of the plains below. The outline of this fortification cannot be discerned in any detail. Hellenistic tombs have been found and excavated in the area of the railroad station and a single Early Iron Age burial has also been found inside the modern town (Dasios 2012a, 48).

The small church of Agios Ioannis Prodromos, c. 100 m down the slope contains apart from the aforementioned

inscription by the Aiginieans (IG IX,2 329. Fig. 37) – which is walled-in above a fountain – also two manumission records (Björnsthål 1783, 128; IG IX,2 323; 324).

Written sources

The site of Aiginion is first mentioned in Livy (32.15) in the account of the events of 197 BCE, when the Roman general Titus Quinctius Flamininus failed at taking the place by force due to its strong location. Later in 191 BCE, Livy (36.13) mentions that the location was one of the *oppida* that had fallen to the Athamanians and which were retaken by the Roman army under Marcus Baebius.

There appears to be some confusion relating to the name Aeginium in Livy, as the text mentions an Aeginium (Liv. 44.46; 45.27) which, due to its context in the account, has been placed in Macedonian Pieria by Hatzopoulos and Paschidis, with Aeginium at modern Kalampaka belonging to the Epirote region of Tymphaia (Hatzopoulos and Paschidis 2004, 795–796). The latter interpretation probably comes from Strabo (7.7.9) who states that Aiginion – which



Figure 38 Fortification wall in the side of modern street, Kalampaka. © Greek Ministry of Culture and Sports – Organization for the Management and Development of Cultural Resources.

was at the border with the region of Aithikia with Triikka – was formerly in Tymphaia. It is probable from the sources, however, that there only was one Aiginion and that in Western Thessaly. The idea of an Aiginion in Pieria has made that the town of Limpanovo in Lower Macedonia was officially renamed Aiginio in 1926.

Aiginion is mentioned by Julius Caesar (*BCiv.* 3.79) as the location where his and Calvinus' troops met on their way into Thessaly, just before the battle of Palaiopharsalos in 48 BCE. The last mention of Aiginion is the aforementioned inscription (*IG IX,2 329*), which is an honorific inscription for Septimus Severus and Caracalla set up by the *polis*, which should be dated to the years around 200 CE (Fig. 37).

Chronology

Hellenistic, Roman.

Coordinates

296512, 4397537.

11. Kallithiro and environs

Modern name

The larger urban site is generally referred to as Kallithiro (Καλλιθίρο) or Sekliza (Σέκλιζα), which is the former name of the village occupying the ancient settlement location.

Ancient name

The site at Kallithiro is officially identified with Callithera (*Καλλιθηρα?, ἡ/ἄ), a settlement (*oppidum*) only known from Livy (32.13). The identification is not supported by any primary evidence, and has been criticised as improbable (Helly 1992, 71).

Description of area

The archaeological site at Kallithiro is situated in the southern parts of the modern village where numerous excavations have revealed extensive remains of a small Hellenistic urban settlement. Immediately south of the village is a hill with the chapel of Agios Athanasios, at whose western foot flows the

river Karampalis. The hill has remains of several historical periods, the most well preserved of which are the walls of an Early Byzantine fortress. The eastern cemetery of the Hellenistic settlement has been found at the eastern end of the modern village, at the Ragazi location, with many tombs of the late 4th and 3rd centuries BCE, including a levelled tumulus (Intzesiloglou 1990a, 194; 1992a, 266–267; 1995, 205; 2004, 440; Karagiannopoulos 2014a, 657–658; 2014d, 743–751). Further Hellenistic tombs have been found about a kilometre to the east of the village (Karagiannopoulos 2016d, 418). A cist tomb with a bronze amphora of the late 4th century BCE has been found at the western end of the village, indicating the existence of a western cemetery (Tziafalias 1984a, 182–183; Intzesiloglou 1997, 30).

Some 2.5 km southeast of Kallithiro is the small contemporary settlement of Mavroneri, at which there is a spring feeding a stream that joins with the Kalentzis at the village of Zaïmi 3.5 km to the north. On a low hill, the Fteromagoula, 400 m north-northeast of Mavroneri is 4th century BCE settlement, to which possibly belongs a fortification to its west and a small cemetery (Intzesiloglou 1992a, 269; Karagiannopoulos 2014d, 755). A Roman cemetery of the 4th century CE was discovered during land reclamation works approximately 1 km north of Mavroneri, at the Xinovrysi location (Intzesiloglou 1992a, 267). At the foot of the hill northwest of the location, a large (5.3 × 5.3 m) Roman funerary monument has been excavated, dated by a coin of Salonina to the second half of the 3rd century CE (Intzesiloglou 1993, 256). The cemetery has been interpreted as possibly belonging to a settlement at the Paliokklisi location c. 400 m to the southeast (Intzesiloglou 1992a, 267).

On the other side of the Kalogiros ridge, approximately 2.3 km south of Kallithiro and just north of the small village of Chani Katsoula, is the large tumulus of Toumpa. It and 18 additional tombs surrounding it have been excavated, yielding finds of the first half and middle of the 4th century BCE. It has been suggested that the cemetery belongs to a settlement at Paliokklisia, 700–900 m south of the cemetery (Skafida 1996, 216–217; Karagiannopoulos 2014d, 751–753).

Description of the site at Kallithiro

The village of Kallithiro is located on the northern slopes of the Agios Athanasios hill and the right bank of river Karampalis (ancient Onochonos?). The settlement is built on top of the extensive remains of habitation of several chronological periods, with Middle and Late Helladic material found at deeper strata within the village (Intzesiloglou 2005a, 410; Karagiannopoulos 2016b, 618–620), but the bulk of the material found belongs to a small urban settlement of the late 4th–3rd century BCE. There is a natural spring in the eastern outskirts of the town.

Sections of the fortification walls of the Hellenistic settlement have been found at several plots within the

village, giving the rough outline of the fortified area. In the S. Papavasiliou plot (at A in Fig. 39), a straight segment of the wall was found, with the fragmentary remains of a rectangular tower, and a narrow drain opening (Intzesiloglou 1997, 12–13; 1999a, 331). The continuation of this wall was found c. 80 m to the east in the M. Paschou plot (at B in Fig. 39), both having the width of 2.7 m and constructed in trapezoidal masonry preserved to one course with a river-stone fill (Intzesiloglou 1990a, 194; 1997, 11–12). In the E. Skordas and V. Vlachos plots (at C and D in Fig. 39), 200 m southeast of the M. Paschou plot, a fragmentary rectangular tower (c. 7 × 5.7 m) with adjoining curtain walls on a northwest–southeast alignment was found (Intzesiloglou 1993, 255–256; 1997, 13–14), showing that the fortification wall was curved along the terrain. In the eastern slope of the Agios Athanasios hill, c. 280 m south of the aforementioned tower, a final 21 m section of the fortification wall was uncovered on a north–south alignment (at E in Fig. 39). This wall, which is also 2.7 m wide, was constructed in trapezoidal masonry with internal supporting compartments and had a road surface on its inside (Intzesiloglou 1993, 254–255; 1997, 49–51; 2004, 440–442). The western part of the fortified enceinte can only be traced fragmentarily in the northwestern slope of the hill, just above the river Karampalis (at F in Fig. 39), probably connecting with the S. Papavasiliou plot wall through a bend underneath the modern football field (Intzesiloglou 1997, 15). No sections of Hellenistic fortification walls have been found on top of the Agios Athanasios hill as the latter is covered in remains of later periods (see below), but it is probable that the *akropolis* of the settlement was located here, with the northern, northwestern and northeastern slopes forming the actual settlement area.

The excavations within the modern village have revealed several sections of an extensive street-grid, apparently following the general curvature of the terrain, with a larger street running in a curve from the west towards the southeast. A large section of this street is kept open and visible for visitors in the southern part of the plot of the primary school (G in Fig. 39; Fig. 40), preserved for 20 m, with a width of 4.2 m (Intzesiloglou 2004, 440). This street continued towards the east with part of it found in the A. Kapnias plot (at H in Fig. 39) and another more substantial part in the southwestern corner of the A. Lagos plot (at I in Fig. 39), where the road is 4.5 m wide and preserved to a length of 14.6 m, with a surface of compacted soil, pebbles and crushed tile (Intzesiloglou 1989a, 232; 1997, 40; Karagiannopoulos 2014a, 656–657). A small section of the same street was also noted in the adjoining E. Skordas plot (at C in Fig. 39), further turning towards the southeast (Intzesiloglou 1992a, 267). A compacted surface found during excavations in the A. Papavasiliou plot (at J in Fig. 39) was interpreted by the excavator as belonging to the western continuation of this street, which thus must

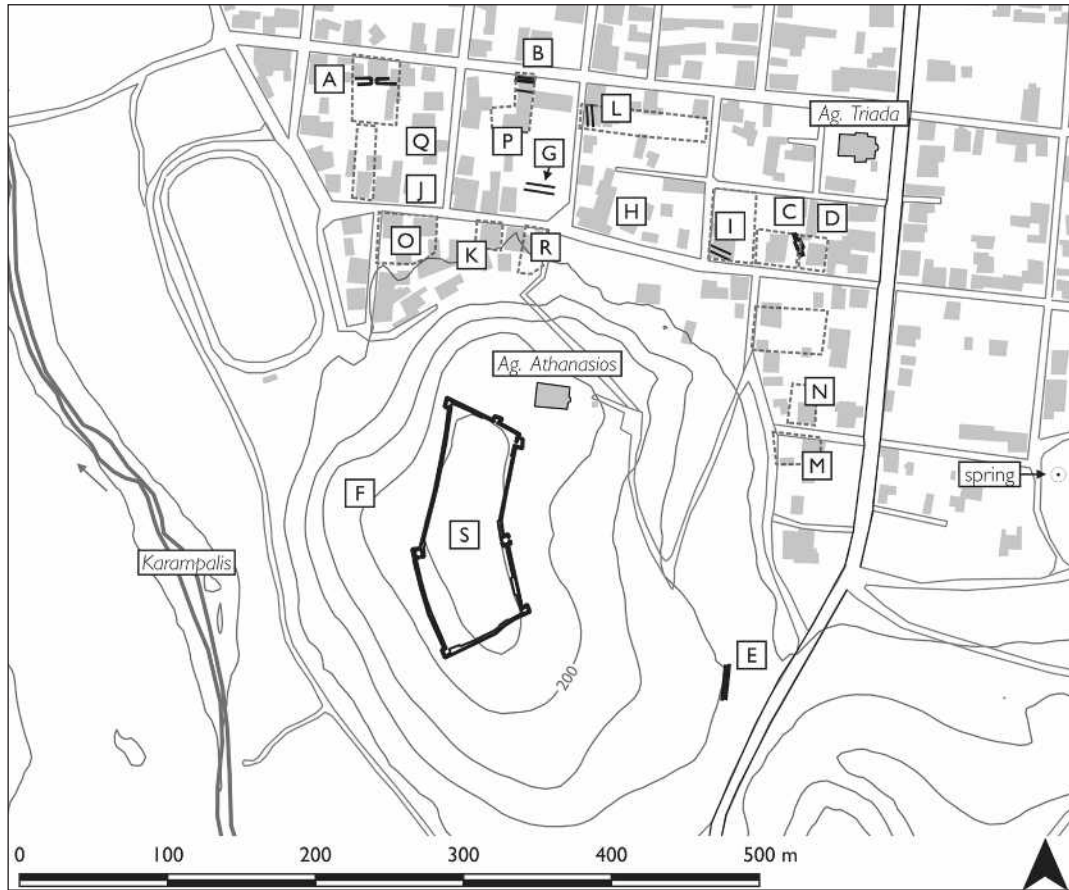


Figure 39 Kallithiro. Plan-sketch after Intzesiloglou (1997, σελ. 1; 2004, 441) and aerial photographs.



Figure 40 Excavated section of street (at G in Fig. 39). © Greek Ministry of Culture and Sports – Organization for the Management and Development of Cultural Resources.

have continued to curve southwest along the terrain and parallel to the fortification wall (Karagiannopoulos 2014a, 655–656). At least one additional street followed the same scheme, as has been revealed at the K. Papalexis plot (at K in Fig. 39) where a corner of intersecting streets was also found (Intzesiloglou 1988b, 253–254; 1997, 19).

A short section of a street running almost perpendicular to the course of the aforementioned main street was revealed on the K. Skordas plot (at L in Fig. 39), which must arguably have led to a gate in the fortification wall some 10 m further to the north (Intzesiloglou 1992a, 267; 1997, 44–46). At the S. Papavasiliou and M. Paschou plots (at A and B in Fig. 39), a 2.0–4.6 m wide street ran along the inside of the northern wall (Intzesiloglou 1988a, 268; 1990a, 194; 1997, 11–12, 42–43), just as has been observed inside the wall at the southeastern end of the enceinte (at E in Fig. 39).

The rescue excavations within the village have also revealed many foundations of buildings and houses of the Hellenistic phase. In the A. Lagos plot (at I in Fig. 39), parts of two buildings dated to the late 4th–early 3rd century BCE were found next to the main street of the ancient settlement, one of which appears to have been a store for roof-tiles, as large amounts were found stacked inside (Intzesiloglou 1989a, 232; 1997, 40–41). In the adjoining E. Skordas plot (at C in Fig. 39), further remains of the same complex of buildings were found, with roof-tiles stamped *damosios* indicating that it might be a publicly owned workshop. The complex had, according to the excavator, indications of four building phases and was covered in a destruction layer dated through coins to the late 3rd century BCE (Intzesiloglou 1992a, 267; 1993, 255–256; Skafida 2000, 382–383).

Similar to the E. Skordas plot, the rescue excavations on the A. Fitsilis plot (at M in Fig. 39) in the southern part of the ancient settlement revealed buildings with four phases of construction beginning in the 4th century BCE, identified by the excavators as a public bath. Stamps with *damosios* and *dēmosios* were also found here, as well as a late 3rd century BCE destruction layer (Intzesiloglou 1992a, 266–267; 1997, 25–26). Just north of this complex, beneath the modern street, and on the A. Siokou plot (N in Fig. 39), further buildings of the same period were noted, with similar destruction layers (Intzesiloglou 1988b, 253–254; Skafida 2000, 383–384).

Further domestic building remains of the Hellenistic period have been noted at the S. Danopoulos plot (at O in Fig. 39; Intzesiloglou 2005a, 410), at the E. Tsitiridis plot (Intzesiloglou 2003, 478; at P in Fig. 39), at the Gazounis plot (Karagiannopoulos 2014a, 655; at Q in Fig. 39), at the Papalexis plot (Intzesiloglou 1988b, 253–254; 1997, 19; Karagiannopoulos 2016d, 417–418; at K in Fig. 39) and at the P. Zouloumis plot (Karagiannopoulos 2016b, 618–620; at R in Fig. 39), indicating an even distribution of habitation over the intramural area. The built environment was

organised along a near-rectilinear scheme (Intzesiloglou 1997, 16). Very little is known about the extramural parts of the settlement but two Hellenistic buildings were found in the Th. Dafos plot in the northern part of the village, one of which appears to have been used for worship (Intzesiloglou 1989b, 148).

The Hellenistic settlement appears to have been subjected to violent destruction in the second half of the 3rd century BCE, as indicated by the destruction layers found all over the modern village. The excavator Babis Intzesiloglou dates the destruction to the 230s on the basis of coins and pottery and there is little evidence of any immediate resettlement of the location (Intzesiloglou 1997, 27).

On the top of the Agios Athanasios hill (at S in Fig. 39) are the well-preserved remains of an Early Byzantine fortress, almost completely excavated in 1996–1998 by Babis Intzesiloglou (2004, 440–442). The walled enceinte stretches for *c.* 420 m, following a roughly rectangular trace, enclosing an area of 0.83 ha. The south end of the fortification has two towers (5.0 × 3.3 m and 5.76 × 3.6 m) separated by a *c.* 55 m curtain wall of 1.9 m thickness constructed in re-used stones of the Hellenistic city wall on the outside and smaller stones cemented with mortar on the inside. Limited Classical–Hellenistic material (?), including probable votive objects, has been found during rescue work at the modern cemetery on the hilltop (Karagiannopoulos 2014d, 751). Along the inside of the wall are two staircases in stone, originally providing access to the parapet (Intzesiloglou 2001, 348–349). The *c.* 170 m wall of the western side of the fortress is similarly constructed, but with a square tangential-type gate tower in the middle of the wall, flanked in north by a staircase. The northern side of the enceinte has a rectangular tower at the northeastern corner and yet another rectangular tower in the middle of the *c.* 50 m wall, the latter of which has a staircase on its inside. Immediately south of the northeastern corner of the enceinte is another rectangular tower, which contained storage jars (Intzesiloglou 2003, 476–478), flanked in south by another staircase. The *c.* 120 m wall of the eastern side of the fortress makes a sharp turn from south towards south-south-east, just south of which is another rectangular gate-tower which protrudes from the wall-trace. The excavations of the gate revealed indications of repair. On the inside of the wall-stretch south of the gate and north of the southeastern tower is another staircase.

The construction technique of the walls, the ceramic material and a coin of Justinian made that the excavator interpreted the hilltop fortification as a fortress of the mid-6th century CE (Intzesiloglou 2003, 478). Little of the intramural area was excavated but, apart from the repairs of the gate mentioned above, there are no indications of continued use of the fortress after the 6th century. Some limited Byzantine remains have been noted at the foot of the hill, including stray finds (Karagiannopoulos 2016b,

618–620) above the Hellenistic layers in the P. Zouloumis plot (at R in Fig. 39), and a tomb in the A. Siokou plot (at N in Fig. 39) dug down into the earlier Hellenistic layers (Skafida 2000, 383–384), but whether they relate to the fortress or not cannot be ascertained. The Agios Athanasios hill is, since 1999, an archaeological park (Intzesiloglou 2005b, 418).

Coordinates

Kallithiro: 319050, 4349734; Mavroneri: 321630, 4348266; Chani Katsoula tumulus: 318895, 4347077.

12. Kalogiroi

Modern name

The site is most often referred to as Kalogiroi (Καλόγηροι), which is the name of the nearby village.

Ancient name

The official identification of the remains at Kalogiroi is with ancient Potnaion. There is no concrete evidence to support this identification (Kirsten 1951, 1217).

Description of site and area

The area of Kalogiroi is situated in a long valley extending from the area of Pyli to the south in a general north-north-west–south-southeast direction between the elongated hills of Kastanea in east and Gravos in west. A rivulet, the Potami, flows in a south-southeastern direction at the bottom of the valley, which is fed by several streams from the mountainsides.

The main ancient site is located at the chapel of Agia Triada, on a small plateau 400 m east of the village (at A in Fig. 41). Remains of fortifications in trapezoidal masonry have been reported from the location, as well as scattered

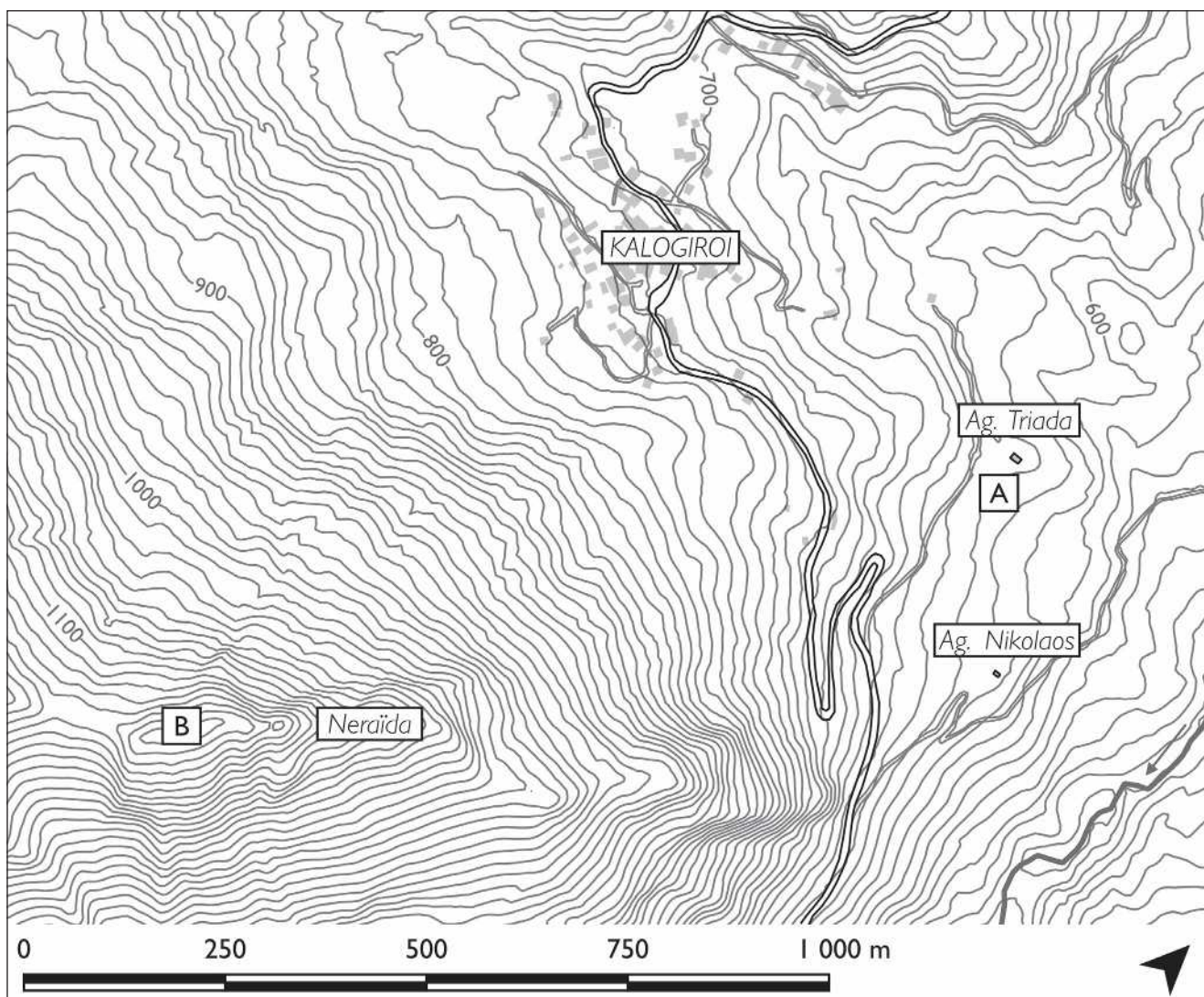


Figure 41 The area of Kalogiroi. Map-sketch after aerial photographs.

foundations of buildings and *ex situ* architectural elements (Hatziangelakis 2011b, 590–591). The famous so-called Echenios inscription, a 4th century BCE funerary figurative *stēlē*, was found in the village in the early 20th century (Romeos 1919). Its original find-spot is not known, but an additional find of a 2nd century BCE funerary *stēlē* at the village indicates the existence of a cemetery somewhere in the vicinity (Tziafalias 1993, 279).

On the steep ridge of Neraïda, *c.* 700 m south of the village, is the summit Palaiokastro, where a small ancient fortification has been noted (at B in Fig. 41) but not described (Romeos 1919, 123).

Chronology

Classical, Hellenistic.

Coordinates

287562, 4373150.

13. Kedros

Modern name

The site is most often referred to as Kedros (Κέδρος), which is the name of the nearby modern village, formerly

Chalamprezi (Χαλαμπρέζι). The ancient settlement itself is located on and below a hill west of the village and in and around the *dasos* (“forest”) of Agios Nikolaos, a chapel southwest of the road Kedros–Kallifoni.

Ancient name

The site has been identified through the find of a stamped roof-tile bearing the inscription [O]PΘIEΩ[N] (“of the Orthieians”) as that of Orthos (Ὀρθος, ἦ/ᾱ), a *polis* known from numismatic and textual sources (Intzesiloglou 2000b, 169; *SEG* LII 565; *Orthi*, 1). An inscription (Rönnlund forthcoming) found at the *dasos* of Agios Nikolaos in 1905 mentions the community (*[tai p]oli tai Orthieiou[n]*). The conventional modern name for the ancient settlement is in the Ionic form Orthe (Ὀρθη, ἦ), but the forms Orthos, Ortha (Ὀρθα, ᾱ), and Orthoi (Ὀρθοι, οἰ) are the only ones attested in ancient sources outside of Homeric epic. The ethnic is attested as *Orthieus* on coins and on the stamped roof-tile mentioned above (Decourt *et al.* 2004, 698–699; Georgiou 2015, 62).

Description of area and site

The remains of the ancient site are centered around a hill-slope area and adjacent flat ground *c.* 750 m northwest of the village of Kedros (Figs 42 and 43), in the north foothills

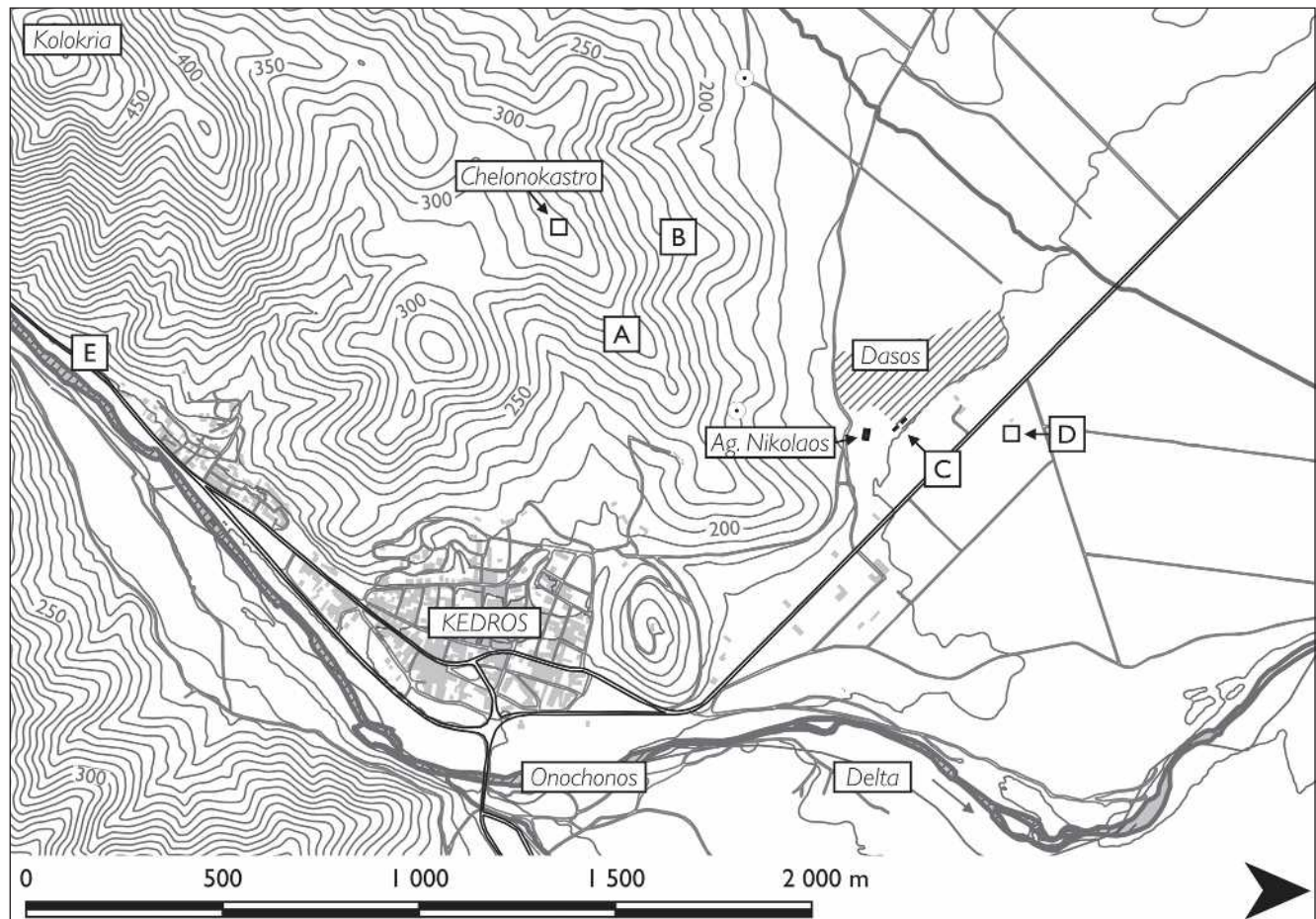


Figure 42 The archaeological site at Kedros. Map-sketch after aerial photographs.



Figure 43 The site at Kedros, seen from the akropolis area looking north. The dasos at centre. © Greek Ministry of Culture and Sports – Organization for the Management and Development of Cultural Resources.

of the Pindos range (Helly 1992, 66). The river Onochonos (formerly Pentamyli) exits a steep mountain pass southeast of the site and enters the plains in the Delta area north of the village. The highest part of the ancient urban settlement is at the hilltop at the south end of the site, the Chelonokastro, c. 320 masl. Here was the small *akropolis* of the ancient city. As visible in aerial photographs, two fortification walls ran downhill from the *akropolis* along two ridges (at A and B in Fig. 42). These were completely robbed-out of stones in 1905 to be used for road and bridge construction and it is only through the remaining trenches that their outlines can be traced (*Orthi*, 2; Rönnlund forthcoming). The fortifications of the lower part of the settlement at the foot of the hill have only been revealed during excavations of a larger tangential gate in the northeastern side of the urban enceinte, flanked at its northeastern side by a tower (C in Fig. 42), just north of the chapel of Agios Nikolaos (Intzesiloglou 2000b, 169; *Orthi*, 2). The fortifications have been dated to the Hellenistic period (Hatzangelakis 2007, 52), but the possibility of two building phases has been noted (Georgiou 2015, 62, n. 72). The *katō polis* of the settlement has not been systematically studied, but surface finds have been reported from the *dasos* and the fields just west of it. These include an inscribed votive *stēlē* to Apollo

of the first half of the 3rd century BCE (Intzesiloglou 1992b, 271–272) and a manumission inscription of the 1st century BCE (Intzesiloglou 1990b, 196–197), as well as possible sanctuary-related material (Karagiannopoulos 2016c, 426) and other artefacts of the historical periods (Karagiannopoulos 2014c, 668). Trial excavations in the early 1960s revealed a Roman era building, possibly a bath (Theocharis 1963, 179). Infrastructural work immediately outside and east of the fortified lower enceinte has yielded ceramic material of the Hellenistic throughout Roman periods (Karagiannopoulos 2019, 726–728). Above the *katō polis* on the slopes of the hill, and within the city walls, two rooms of a 4th century building were excavated by the 13th Ephorate of Classical Antiquities. This was named *The House of the Potter* by the excavator due to the finds of moulds and discarded misfired vessels (Intzesiloglou 2000b, 169; Hatzangelakis 2007, 52), which are currently on display in the Karditsa museum. In a dell in the hillslope above the chapel of Agios Nikolaos are many springs, the streams of which turning the area immediately below the slope quite wet in springtime (Rönnlund forthcoming).

The settlement was surrounded by cemeteries in most directions except in the south and southeast. A large cemetery of the 4th century BCE–2nd century CE has been excavated

in the Chaliadia area immediately northeast and outside of the excavated gate at Agios Nikolaos (Intzesiloglou 1992a, 268; 2000b; Gardalinou and Skafida 2000, 385–386; Skafida 2000, 399). Further tombs of the Classical–Hellenistic and Roman periods have also been found a little further northeast from this location (Intzesiloglou 1992a, 268; Karagiannopoulos 2014d, 753–754; 2019, 728–729). Parts of a road surface leading from the lower city area through the cemeteries have been excavated during infrastructural works, with finds indicating use until the Roman period (Karagiannopoulos 2019, 727–728). The southeast cemetery was located further towards the modern village from Chaliadia, containing tombs of the 4th–2nd centuries BCE (Hatziangelakis 2011a, 579; Karagiannopoulos 2018a, 514). A Hellenistic cist tomb probably belonging to the north cemetery has been excavated just north of the *dasos*, with a secondary Late Roman burial covering it (Karagiannopoulos 2020a, 1531–1532). A funerary *stēlē* found in the area of Ampelia, west of the ancient settlement, indicates another possible cemetery (Alexiou and Hatziangelakis 2016, 586). Several tombs of the 4th–2nd century BCE west cemetery were excavated by the ephorate at the foot of the hillslope immediately outside the fortified enceinte (Hatziangelakis 2011a, 579). In the middle of the Chaliadia cemetery, and only 200 m from the fortification wall of the ancient city, are the remains of a late 4th and 3rd century BCE sanctuary (D in Fig. 42). This contained a building *in antis* with two auxiliary buildings, one rectangular and one circular. The many female figurines found prompted excavator Babis Intzesiloglou to interpret it as a sanctuary to a chthonic goddess, maybe Persephone (Intzesiloglou 1989a, 232; 1990a, 196; 1992a, 268; Karagiannopoulos 2016c, 618).

West of the walled area and the west cemetery is the location known as Viza. A still functioning, possibly Hellenistic, ancient terracotta pipe feeds a water trough at this location from a spring further up the slopes (Karagiannopoulos 2014a). A covered water conduit was found during infrastructural works close by, below the northwestern slopes of the hill (Karagiannopoulos 2016a, 1141–1142). Another terracotta pipe, albeit out of use, was found in the area between the *dasos* and the modern road, possibly dating to the Roman or Early Byzantine period (Karagiannopoulos 2022, 988).

The wider area of the settlement contains several archaeological sites of interest. A possible rural shrine or sanctuary has been noted northwest of the village of Loutro, west of the site (Karagiannopoulos 2014e, 743). Excavations inside the modern village of Kedros yielded remains of a considerable Hellenistic house (Hatziangelakis 1990, 196) and, at the Delta area just northeast of the village, a bronze horse figurine dating to the second half of the 4th century BCE has been found (Intzesiloglou 2005c, 421). 1.3 km southwest of the site, and on the highest peak of the same ridge as Chelonokastro, is the conspicuous peak of Kolokria, possibly the location behind the toponym

Orthos. At Platanakia (at E in Fig. 42), a riverside location southeast of Kolokria, is an ancient settlement dating to the second half of the 5th century BCE. This settlement, which appears to have been violently destroyed, was interpreted by the excavators as the precursor of the fortified city of Orthos (Intzesiloglou 1992a, 268). Several rural installations have been found on the plain close to the city, including a possible Hellenistic or Late Roman farmstead at Magoula Karampina, 2 km northwest of Kedros towards Filia (Karagiannopoulos 2014a, 659–660). A possible Late Roman bath or secondary settlement has been identified at Paliokklisia, c. 2.5 km northeast of the ancient city (Karagiannopoulos 2016c, 619). At Tragana, 2 km north of Kedros, a Late Roman building has been excavated atop a small artificial mound (Karagiannopoulos 2014a, 660–662).

Coinage

The Orthieians issued several series of coins of the Aeginetan standard from the 4th century BCE onward. A catalogue of these have been compiled by Georgiou (2015), who identified three production periods. The first of these, stylistically dated to the 380s–370s BCE, closely follows the coinage of the Pharsalians (No. 6) of the same time. The obverse of the coins has Athena Promachos and the reverse a trident and olive wreath, with the letters ΟΡΘΙ[ΕΙΩΝ]. The second period has the same motifs, differing mainly in weights and execution, and is tentatively dated to the mid-4th century BCE or a little earlier. The similarities with the coins of the Pharsalians are even stronger and Georgiou thinks some of the dies must have been made by the same master. The third period marks a break in the Pharsalian connection, with the obverse Athena now wearing a Corinthian helmet, and the reverse has ΟΡΘΙΕΙΩΝ and the forepart of a horse springing from a rock from which two olive twigs sprout. The period has been dated to the late 4th or early 3rd century BCE based on stratigraphic evidence from Halos (in Achaia Phthiotis) where one of the coins of this group has been found.

The imagery on the reverse of all these coins clearly relates to Poseidon and the horse and rock motif – as pointed out by Georgiou (2015, 63) – might specifically relate to the cult of Poseidon Petraios or Hippios, as is known to have existed in ancient Thessaly (Moustaka 1983, 22–23).

Written sources

The community of Orthieians features little in textual sources of Antiquity, and then only in epigraphy and on coins. The only published epigraphical text containing any information in detail is the early 2nd century BCE inscription from the area of the chapel of Agios Nikolaos which is an honorary text put up by the *polis* of the Orthieians, most probably to Phrynos, the son of Aristomenes, of Gomphoi. The reconstructed text indicates the existence of an *agoranomos* in the community (Rönnlund forthcoming). One Akousias,

son of Medon, a Thessalian from Orthos, is mentioned in an inscription from Delphi of 341/340 BCE (*CID* II 12, lines 67–68), and Kleoptolemos son of Oiolykos and one Sibys are named as residing *en Orthai* or *en Orthois* in the 230–220 BCE list of *theōrodokoi* from the same sanctuary (Plassart 1921, 16, 22, 52).

Livy (32.13) does not mention Orthos in his account of the Aetolians ravaging the southern parts of the plains in 198 BCE. This could be interpreted as that the Aetolians did not attack the city, that it was abandoned at the time (which appears unlikely judging from the archaeological and epigraphical evidence), or simply that Livy's sources failed to mention the attack. Neither does Strabo mention Orthos, but he notes (Strab. 9.5.19) that the *akropolis* of Phalannaians, a *polis* of Perrhaibia, was sometimes identified with the Homeric Orthe (*Il.* 2.739), which then should be regarded as a different place than the settlement at Kedros. It is difficult to say whether the Late Antique geographical entries refer to Orthos or Homeric Orthe (Steph. Byz. *s.v.* Ὀρθή; Hsch. *s.v.* Ὀρθή), but the latter is probably more plausible.

Chronology

Classical, Hellenistic, Roman, Late Roman, Byzantine.

Coordinates

330313, 4342303.

14. Klokotos

Modern name

The name of the village mostly appears as Klokotos (Κλοκοτώτς), but in older literature sometimes as Kolokotos (Κολοκοτώτς). The Turkish name of the settlement was Baklali. The hilltop to the northeast and above the village is known as Vigla, whereas the higher, northeastern peak of the same hill is either Sykia or Anemomylos.

Ancient name

The remains at Klokotos have officially been identified with Pharkadon (Thessalian Φαρκαδόν, ἄ, Koine Φαρκηδών, ἦ), which remains the most common scholarly identification. There is no concrete evidence supporting this identification, and as an inscription of the *koinon* of the Pharkadonians has been found at nearby Paliogardiki, it might potentially be erroneous (see **No. 20**).

Description of site

The summit of Sykia (at A in Fig. 44; Fig. 46; right in Fig. 45) is surrounded in all directions except towards the steep west slope by a poorly preserved wall in crude polygonal masonry. This can be discerned for *c.* 550 m, forming an elongated enceinte, *c.* 380 m long and 120 m wide, with a possible gateway at the north end. A smaller, inner enclosure

in polygonal masonry is located on the actual summit, forming a 140 m long and 50 m wide platform-like structure. Within the inner enceinte are foundations of buildings and much surface tile. It is at present impossible to date these two enclosures (Dafi and Rönnlund forthcoming). Below the Sykia fortifications in southeast is a large spring (at B in Fig. 44), which feeds a small stream that joins with the Pineios further to the east.

Most of the archaeological site, however, is centred on and around the Vigla hill (at C in Fig. 44; left in Fig. 45), which contains remains of several phases of fortifications. Friedrich Stählin's observations from a visit in 1926 (published in Kirsten 1938b) corresponds to great extent with the present situation at the site (Theogianni and Athanasiou 2021; Dafi and Rönnlund forthcoming). On the steep southwestern slope of the Vigla hill, following the outline of the terrain, are the preserved sections of a fortification wall in well-executed polygonal masonry (Fig. 47) built using large stones. The wall is not preserved at the south end of the hilltop, where the wall-trace is only discernible as rock-cuttings. The fortifications can be traced as an artificial bank along the east and north slopes of the hill, with fragmentary sections of an outer wall face visible in the turf. At the western end of the fortified enceinte (D in Fig. 44) is a gate, protruding by *c.* 1 m from the wall face, with a gateway of 4 m (Kirsten 1938b, 1836). Immediately north of the gate, and partially built into the fortification wall, is a rectangular Byzantine cistern (E in Fig. 44). Further Byzantine remains can be seen at the summit of the hill, probably constituting a keep-like feature with a central cistern (Dafi and Rönnlund forthcoming). Approximately 70 m southeast of this is a relatively well-preserved tower of the same date, built in spoliated stones and tiles joined with mortar (F in Fig. 44). A 60 m long low bank, probably the remains of a robbed-out wall, run southwest from this tower to join with the polygonal wall in the southwest slope (Kirsten 1938b, 1836). Rock-cuttings show that a wall once descended the hilltop towards the plain below along a ridge-line in the southeastern slope (G in Fig. 44). Historical aerial photographs show the line of the continuation of this wall at the foot of the hill (H in Fig. 44) but it is now completely robbed-out, probably due to the proximity of the village (Theogianni and Athanasiou 2021, 28). Further remains can be traced in the saddle between the Vigla and Sykia hilltops (Kirsten 1938b, 1836). The fragmentary remains of a fortification wall can be traced here, running along the saddle towards east. Immediately within and south of this wall is a feature built in polygonal masonry with large blocks (I in Fig. 44), forming a right-angle corner with a fragmentary stretch of wall or terrace foundations in the hill slope to the south. Whether these are the remains of buildings or a large monumental terrace cannot be ascertained (Dafi and Rönnlund forthcoming). Further along the saddle the fortification wall is truncated by a deep artificial hollow

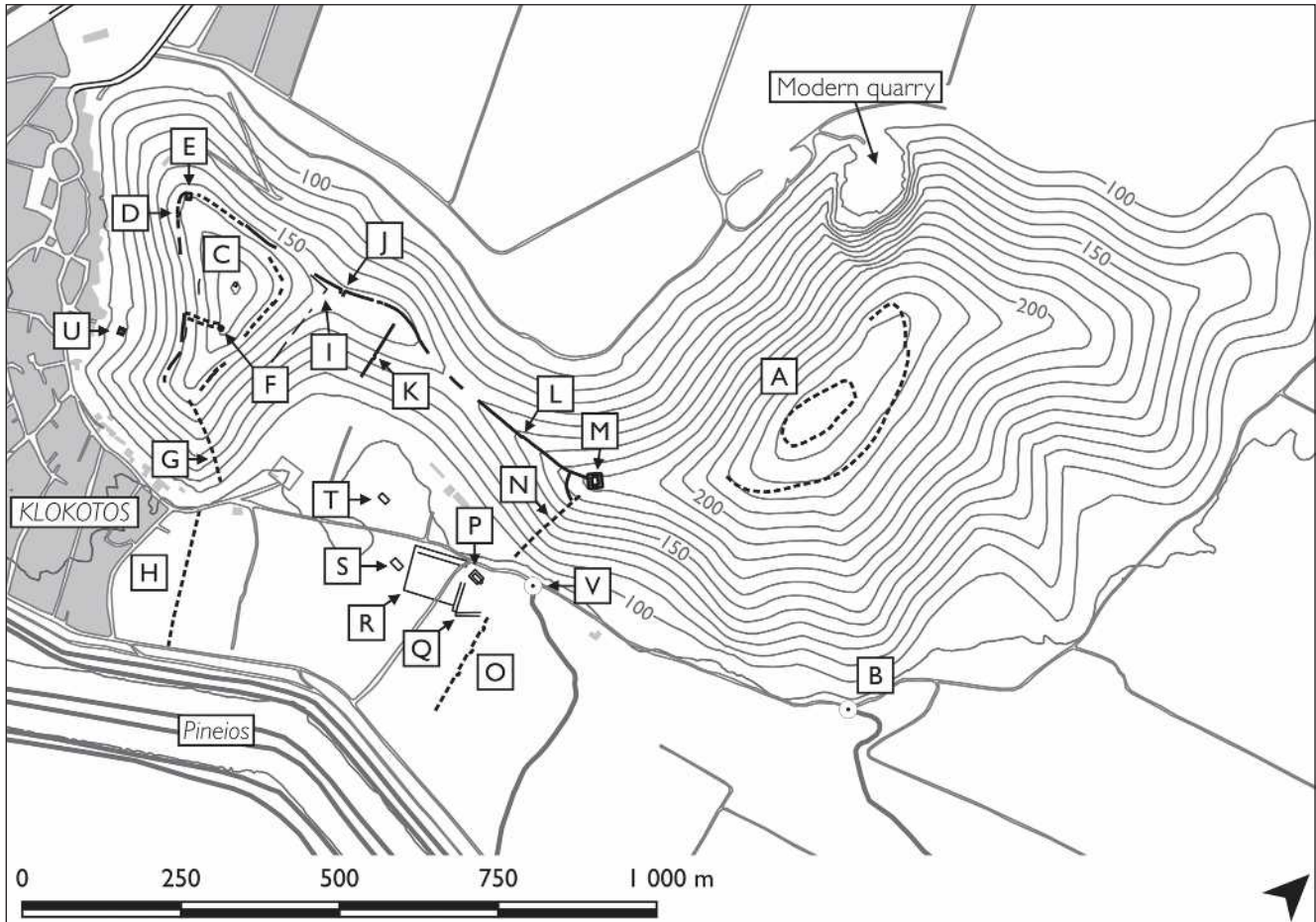


Figure 44 The archaeological site at Klokotos. Plan-sketched after (Lolling 2, 50), Kirsten (1938b, 1836), Dafi and Rönnlund (forthcoming), and aerial photographs.



Figure 45 The double hill at Klokotos looking north, as seen from Kourtikiano hill, Metamorfofi. The peak to the left (Vigla) is the akropolis of the ancient city, the one to the right (Sykia) contains another fortification. © Greek Ministry of Culture and Sports – Organization for the Management and Development of Cultural Resources.



Figure 46 The fortification wall on the northern slope of the Sykia hill. © Greek Ministry of Culture and Sports – Organization for the Management and Development of Cultural Resources.



Figure 47 The fortifications in the southwest slopes of the Vigla hill, looking southeast. At horizon, Stroggylovouni at Vlochos. © Greek Ministry of Culture and Sports – Organization for the Management and Development of Cultural Resources.

in the bedrock – possibly a gateway – forming a *c.* 40 m long and 5 m wide passage across the saddle (J in Fig. 44). The fortification wall continues after the hollow, reaching the highest point in the saddle. Stählin (in Kirsten 1938b, 1836) noted a fortification wall with at least one tower descending the hillslope towards south here (K in Fig. 44). Further along the ridge of the saddle, the fortification wall starts to ascend the Sykia hillside, making at least one jog in its course (L in Fig. 44). The wall here is interchangeably in polygonal and trapezoidal masonry, and is *c.* 2.2 m wide (Kirsten 1938b, 1837). In the middle of the slope the wall ends in a large tower or bastion, 14 × 15 m, forming the accentuated northeastern corner of the walled enceinte (M in Fig. 44, at centre in Fig. 48). Rock-cuttings (N in Fig. 44) show how a wall descended the slope towards south from this bastion. A small, separately fortified triangular area was created by a short cross-wall running from the ridge fortification to the descending wall. Traces of a long trench in the flat ground below the hill (O in Fig. 44) possibly indicate the robbed-out continuation of this fortification wall (Theogianni and Athanasiou 2021, 28; Dafi and Rönnlund forthcoming). The two wall traces (H and O in Fig. 44) indicate the western and eastern edges of the settlement area which was in a slightly elevated flat area at the foot of the hillslopes. The eastern wall has apparently been robbed of its stones, with a remaining ditch containing indications of

three possible towers (O in Fig. 44; at the upper left corner in Fig. 49). The south end of the fortified settlement area cannot be traced, as the large mid-20th century artificial river channels of the Pineios traverse the area.

The intramural fields contain much ancient material and fragments of architecture but the only presently visible structure are the ruins of the small church of Agia Sofia (P in Fig. 44), just south of the modern road that traverses the site. The outlines of two large buildings can be traced as low ditches in the ground immediately south of the church ruins (Q in Fig. 44), probably created by villagers excavating for building materials. The buildings are both over 45 m long and 5–6 m wide, with indications of internal dividing walls or foundations. The first is built along a north-northwest–south-southeast axis and the second along a northeast–southwest axis, on a 72° angle from one another. The buildings nearly join at the south, forming a triangular open (?) area between them. Their general appearance is indicative of possible *stoai*, but as no excavation has been conducted here, this identification must be seen as tentative (Dafi and Rönnlund forthcoming). The features are quite visible in a 1962 photograph by Frederick Winter (Fig. 49), which also shows another nearly square open area further to the west (R in Fig. 44). Immediately to the west of this are the clear outlines of a larger building (S in Fig. 44), which probably corresponds to the church which stood ruined at



Figure 48 The Vigla hilltop and the bastion, as seen from the Sykia hilltop looking southwest. © Greek Ministry of Culture and Sports – Organization for the Management and Development of Cultural Resources.



Figure 49 Klokotos. Detail of 1962 photograph of the area immediately below the hill. Photograph by Frederick E. Winter. Courtesy of the Canadian Institute in Greece. Published with permission.

this location at the time of Stählin's visit (Kirsten 1938b, 1837).⁵ The remains were excavated in 1991, showing that the church was originally constructed in the 6th century CE (Mantzana 1996, 242). Northwest of this (T in Fig. 44), Stählin also noted the remains of the church of Panagia, which is to have contained spoliated metopes and column drums (Kirsten 1938b, 1837). Björnsthäl (1783, 96–97; 139) mentions a fragmentary and illegible inscription at one of the ruined churches at Klokotos but which one is impossible to determine from his published letter. Leonidas Hatziangelakis (2021, 53) noted spoliated architectural elements in the Byzantine church of Agioi Apostoloi Petrou kai Pavlou (Nikonanou 1977, 384–385) in the village of Klokotos (U in Fig. 44).

A votive *stēlē* of the 4th century BCE has been found somewhere at the site, indicating a possible sanctuary (Tziafalias 1993, 279). Immediately northeast of the church ruins is a large spring (V in Fig. 44), which creates a small seasonal lake at the foot of the hill (Ussing 1847, 261). There are reports of possible sanctuary material found in the fields surrounding the hill (Theocharis and Hormouziadis 1969, 269), and 6th–5th century figurines from a sanctuary of Demeter and Kore from Klokotos were exhibited in 2020–2021 in the Archaeological Museum of Larisa.⁶ During rescue works relating to the widening of the national highway northeast of the hill, a pottery kiln of unknown date was found (Hatziangelakis 2021, 47–48).

A proto-Geometric and Geometric cemetery is known from the area immediately west of the western wall (at H in Fig. 44), yielding characteristic bronze pins (Tziafalias 1992b, 115; Hatziangelakis 2021, 52). Very little is known of the cemeteries of the Classical–Hellenistic settlement, with only one reported tomb found during canal cleaning works (unlocated), with an adjoining (sepulchral?) structure built in mud-brick. The masses of broken bone and

Classical pottery found on the surface around the tomb indicate a possible cemetery (Vaïropoulou 2016b, 423). A Roman period funerary *stēlē* has also been handed in from a private citizen in the village, its original location unknown (Tziafalias 1992a, 286–287).

A small 6th century BCE bronze figurine of a naked bearded man, currently in the Staatliche Museen in Berlin (Ident. Nr. Misc. 7488) is, according to Biesantz (1965, 33, no. 87), from Pharkadon, probably meaning that it was found at Klokotos (Kirsten 1938b, 1836).

Chronology

Proto-Geometric, Geometric, Classical, Hellenistic, Roman, Byzantine.

Coordinates

329423, 4381187.

15. Krini

Modern name

The modern village is presently known as Krini (Κρήνη), formerly Driskoli (Δρίσκολη, Turkish İdrisköy).

Ancient name

The location has tentatively been identified as that of Palaipharsalos (Παλαιφάρσαλος, ἡ/ᾰ); an identification which is not supported by any concrete evidence.

Description of area and site

The archaeological site at Krini (Figs 50 and 51) is only known from extensive surveys and rescue work. The site mainly figures in scholarly attempts at locating the ancient settlement of Palaipharsalos. The village is located at the western foot of the Vouno Krinis, a 325 masl isolated hill

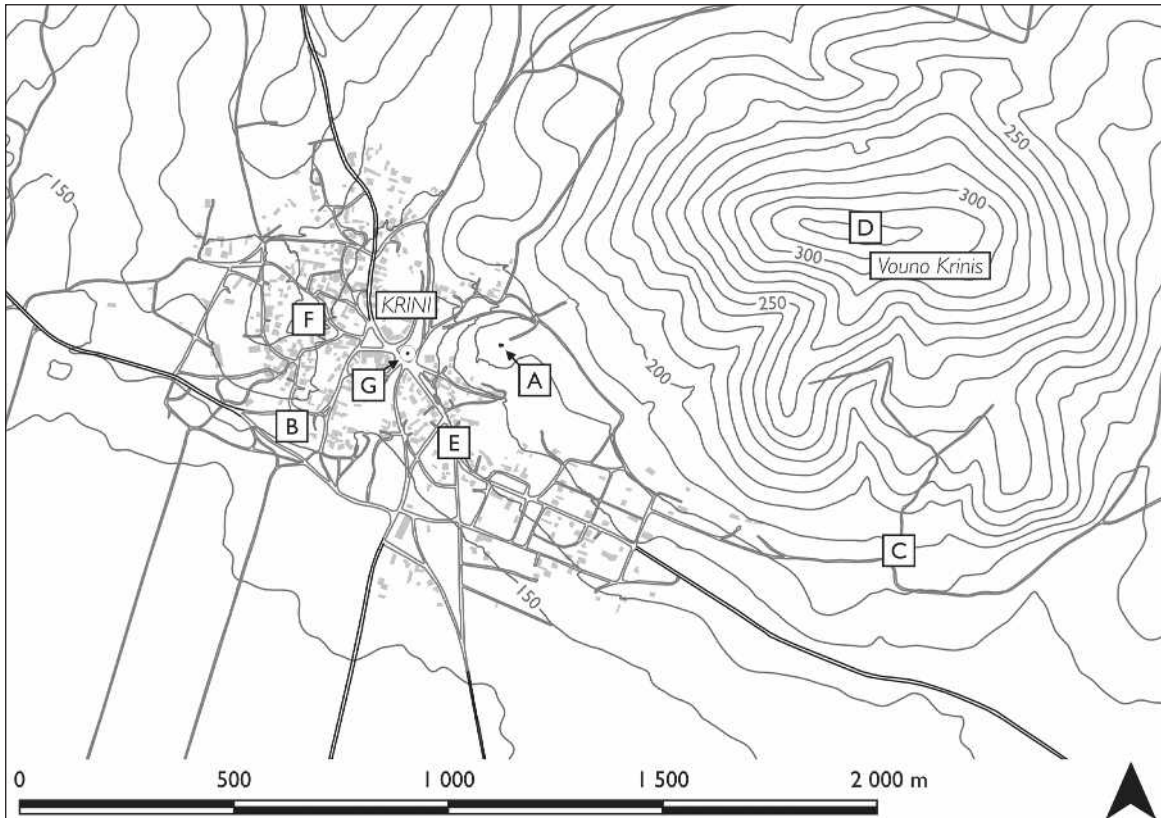


Figure 50 The village of Krini with surroundings. Map-sketch after aerial photographs.



Figure 51 The village of Krini with the Vouno Krinis as seen from the southwest. © Greek Ministry of Culture and Sports – Organization for the Management and Development of Cultural Resources.

at the southern end of the Revenia hills, and has taken its present name from the copious spring (*krini*) around which it was centred. Prehistoric pottery has been found on the hill crowned by the chapel of Profitis Ilias, just northeast of the village (A in Fig. 50), indicating a settlement of the Neolithic and Bronze Age (Giannopoulos 1911, 46; Karapanou 2016, 215). A Classical–Hellenistic settlement is indicated by the presence of surface pottery on a small hillock at the southwestern end of the village (B in Fig. 50), where two Roman funerary inscriptions have been found (Decourt 1995, nos 39 and 44). Another settlement of the same period, also extending into the Roman period, has been reported from the southern foothills of Vouno Krinis (at C in Fig. 50), 1.2 km to the east, and on the top of the hill (D in Fig. 50) are the fragmentary remains of structures of unknown dates (Morgan 1983, 45). The main phase of habitation at Krini appears to have been the Roman period, especially the 2nd and 3rd centuries CE. Structural remains, including 3rd–4th century CE buildings with mosaics (Choulia 1990, 216; Sdrolia 1996, 242), have been unearthed during rescue work in the southeastern part of the village (at E in Fig. 50). A larger cemetery has recently been discovered during infrastructural developments, with tombs found on the western hill (at F in Fig. 50). Several child burials have been noted here, dating to the 1st–early 4th centuries CE. A larger Roman period kiln was found to the northwest of the cemetery, indicating an industrial area outside of the settlement (Karapanou 2016, 215–218).

Several Roman period funerary inscriptions (including the two mentioned above) have been found at Krini, all of the 2nd and early 3rd centuries CE, possibly originating from the aforementioned cemetery (Decourt 1995, nos 37; 40; 42; 43; 45–47). The *vrisi* or fountain of the village spring (G in Fig. 50) contained several re-used blocks of unknown date, most probably originating from a monumental building within the settlement (Decourt 1990, 216). However, the old spring was demolished in the end of the 20th century and a new structure in concrete now occupies the location.

Chronology

Neolithic, Bronze Age, Classical, Hellenistic, Roman, Byzantine.

Coordinates

357876, 4360675.

16. Metamorfosi

Modern name

The site is presently referred to as Metamorfosi (Μεταμόρφωση), which is the modern name of the nearby village. This was formerly known as Kourtiki (Κουρτίκι), which is how the site is named in older sources. The hill

west of the village is marked as Kastro on army maps, but its official name is Titanio. The locals always refer to the hill as the Kourtikiano, which is how it will be referred to here.

Ancient name

The official identification of the remains is with the Limnaeum (*Λιμναῖον, τό) mentioned by Livy (36.13–14, events of 191 BCE), a location not known from any other source. The basis of this identification is the situation of the hill in the middle of several seasonal lakes prior to the modern period (Stählin 1926b). Decourt (1995, 1) puts Limnaeum at Vlochos (No. 29), an identification which since has been commonly adopted in modern research publications.

Description of site and area

The large Kourtikiano hill is together with Stroggylovouni (No. 29) and Vigla/Sykia (No. 14) one of the three large, isolated limestone features at the northeastern corner of the plain. It presents a roughly triangular profile when seen from east (Fig. 53) or west, with its highest peak at south (329 masl) and the long, gentle slope of Patoma at the north. The village is *c.* 0.5 km to the southeast of the foot of the hill across the modern engineered riverbed of the Bliouris/Rogkozinos/Langatsa or Italikos, as it is known today. Prior to the considerable land reclamation schemes of the 1940s–1970s, the area surrounding the hill was covered in nearly all directions by large marshlands, including the Derrpinia to the north and the Marathies to the west, as well as seasonal lakes at the east and west foots of the hill. At present, only the area at the eastern foot of the hill remains somewhat marshy but this mainly at springtime. Many springs originated around the foot of the hill and the landscape was frequently flooded until the 1960s.

Several phases of habitation and construction have been noted on the hilltop (at A in Fig. 52). The oldest of these is the lentil-shaped enclosure in polygonal and pseudo-trapezoidal masonry, originally *c.* 630 m in circumference, surrounding a *c.* 2.4 ha area. Only the eastern and northern parts of this fortification are preserved today but fragmentary sections of its foundation can be traced along the cliff-edge above the steep southwestern slope, showing that it originally enclosed the whole hilltop. There are no visible towers in this wall, but a simple gate is preserved in the southeast, with what appears to be a *proteichisma* built in the slope below it. In the north is a small postern. On the basis of the masonry and layout of the fortification, it can possibly be dated to the Archaic or possibly early Classical period, which is also supported by the considerable contemporaneous scatter of pottery on the hilltop (Vařopoulou *et al.* 2022, 97; forthcoming). At the centre of this enclosure, on the very top of the hill, are the fragmentary remains of a circular fortification, *c.* 33 m in diameter, with four preserved protruding towers. These are semi-circular in shape and stand on rectangular platforms. The positions of the

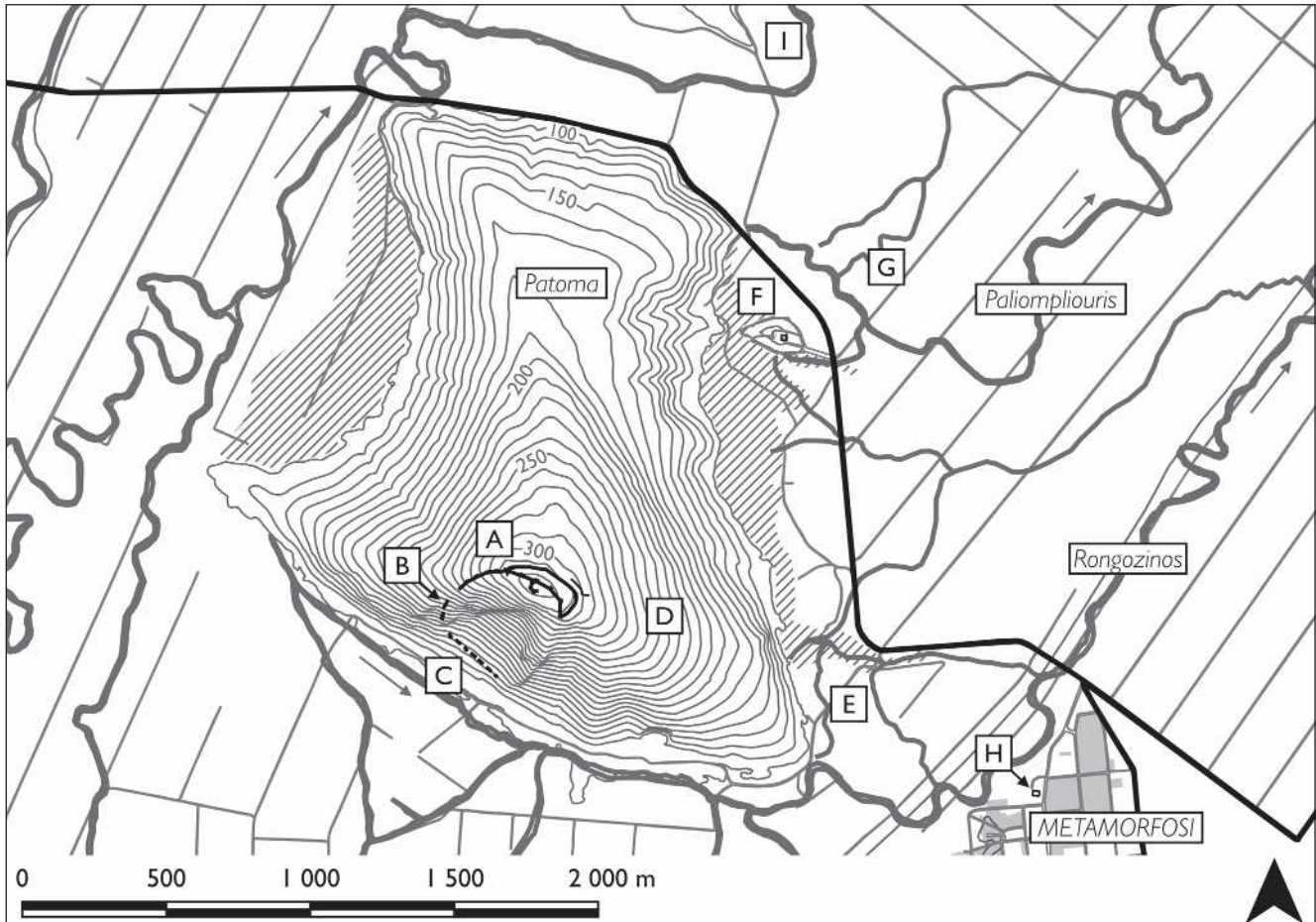


Figure 52 The Kourtikiano hill with environs. Hydrology represents situation in 1945. Map-sketch after Vaïopoulou et al. (2022, 98; forthcoming) and aerial photographs.



Figure 53 The Kourtikiano hill, looking west, as seen from Stroggylovouni. © Greek Ministry of Culture and Sports – Organization for the Management and Development of Cultural Resources.

preserved towers indicate that their original number was six, with two of the towers most probably being overbuilt by later fortifications. This *hexapyrgion* is only preserved to the level of its foundations, but it appears to have been built in trapezoidal masonry and can tentatively be dated to the Hellenistic period. The towers are c. 6 m wide and are circular,

standing on rectangular platforms c. 7 m wide (Vaïopoulou et al. 2022, 97–98). Partially built on top and across the *hexapyrgion* is another fortification wall, stretching c. 270 m from the southernmost point of the older fortified enclosure in polygonal masonry to its northwestern corner. This wall is built in mortared masonry, c. 1.7 m wide, preserved

up to 1.7 m, with nine protruding rectangular towers. The towers are hollow, with entranceways from the inside of the fortified area. The wall extends towards the west down the slope to a steep precipice, where it ends abruptly. At the middle of the rocky hillside below this point are two stretches of wall in mortared masonry (B in Fig. 52) which appears to be the continuation of the fortification line. A fragmentary tower can also be observed here. The mortared fortification walls are quite similar in their execution to fortified sites of the Early Byzantine period or the 6th century CE in Thessaly (Vaïopoulou *et al.* 2022, 98). Possibly relating to this phase of construction on the hilltop are the remains of what appears to be a small, church built inside the older *hexapyrgion*, partially re-using the foundations of an apparently older structure. This building can be compared in its execution to the similar feature found 5 km to the east at Vlochos (No. 29), in that it was seemingly constructed in mud-brick masonry on a stone foundation (Vaïopoulou *et al.* forthcoming).

At the lower hillslopes to the southwest of the hilltop, and below some exceedingly steep cliffs (at C in Fig. 52), is the area of Aspropetra, where a Byzantine building was uncovered in the 1960s during construction works (Theocharis 1968b, 255).⁷ A fortification wall with several towers following a straight line across the topography shows that the slope area was fortified, most probably as part of the Byzantine fortified enceinte. The extreme erosion at the site, however, makes that intramural architectural remains can only be partially discerned, but surface material indicates a 6th–7th century CE occupation at the site (Vaïopoulou *et al.* 2022, 99; forthcoming).

Aerial photographs reveal clear indications of an old pathway leading up the east slopes of the hill in zigzag towards the fortifications on the hilltop (at D in Fig. 52). At its upper end are the remains of the aforementioned *proteichisma*. A large ancient settlement has been partially excavated in a low area immediately below the zigzag pathway southeast of the hill (at E in Fig. 52). Extensive rescue work by the Ephorate of Antiquities of Karditsa (2016–2018) conducted for the installation of a water pipeline revealed housing remains of the Archaic to the Classical period in the over 300 m excavation trench. Residential buildings of the early Classical period were found here, with much ceramic material of the Archaic and possibly also the Geometric period. The settlement appears to have been abandoned in the Classical period, as no more recent finds were discovered. The excavations highlighted the strong alluvial processes in the area, as some of the ancient remains were over 2 m below the present ground level, well below the modern water-table (Tsiouka *et al.*, forthcoming).

Some 1.2 km north of the ancient settlement is a small hillock just west of the foot of the Kourtikiano, on the top of which is the modern church of Metamorfosis tou Sotiros. Several springs (*matia*) surface around the hillock, and an

important local festival (*panigyri*) is celebrated here annually in early August. Local tradition claims that the original location of the shrine to the Metamorphosis of the Redeemer was at the location of Paliokklisi, c. 400 m northeast of the present church (at G in Fig. 52). Here, Roman roof-tiles and pottery indicate possible habitation but there are no visible remains of structures in the ploughed cotton fields (Vaïopoulou *et al.* 2022, 96).

The village church of Metamorfofi (H in Fig. 52) has the anthemion of a 3rd century BCE funerary *stēlē* walled into its apse. The church was originally constructed in 1863 but was extensively renovated after the large Sofades earthquake of 1953 (Decourt 1995, 5). The area surrounding the hill contains some prehistoric *magoules*, including at Petromagoula north of the hill (at I in Fig. 52. Vaïopoulou *et al.* forthcoming). The rocky low ridge of Petromagoula reportedly contains some tombs of the historical (?) periods (Nikolaou and Firfiris 1999, 63).

Chronology

Neolithic, Middle Helladic, Late Helladic, Geometric, Archaic, Classical, Hellenistic, Roman?, Early Byzantine.

Coordinates

330558, 4375156.

17. Mitropoli

Modern name

The site is most often referred to as Mitropoli (Μητρόπολη), but in older literature also as Palaiokastro (Παλαιόκαστρο), from which it was renamed.

Ancient name

The site at Mitropoli is securely identified through epigraphical finds (Ussing 1847, 253; *Lolling* 1, 40; *IG IX,2* 284; Stählin 1932b, 1493; Nikolaou 1997b, 237) with ancient Metropolis (Μητρόπολις, ἡ) or Matropolis (Ματρόπολις, ἡ), an important local community mentioned in several written and epigraphical sources. In this volume, the Thessalian dialect form Matropolis is preferred throughout. The *ethnikon* was *Matropolitias* or *Mētropolitēs*.

Description of site and area

Ancient Matropolis (Fig. 54) was situated on flat ground in the southwest corner of the Western Thessalian plain, just east of an outcrop of the Pindos range, and on the northern (left) bank of the river Gavras, a tributary to the Gavria and Karampalis rivers. All ancient remains are at present covered by the town of Mitropoli, with no visible ancient architecture. It is exceedingly difficult to map the ancient remains of this complex site, as street names and ownerships of house plots have shifted over the many years it has been excavated. Aerial photographs of the 1940s also

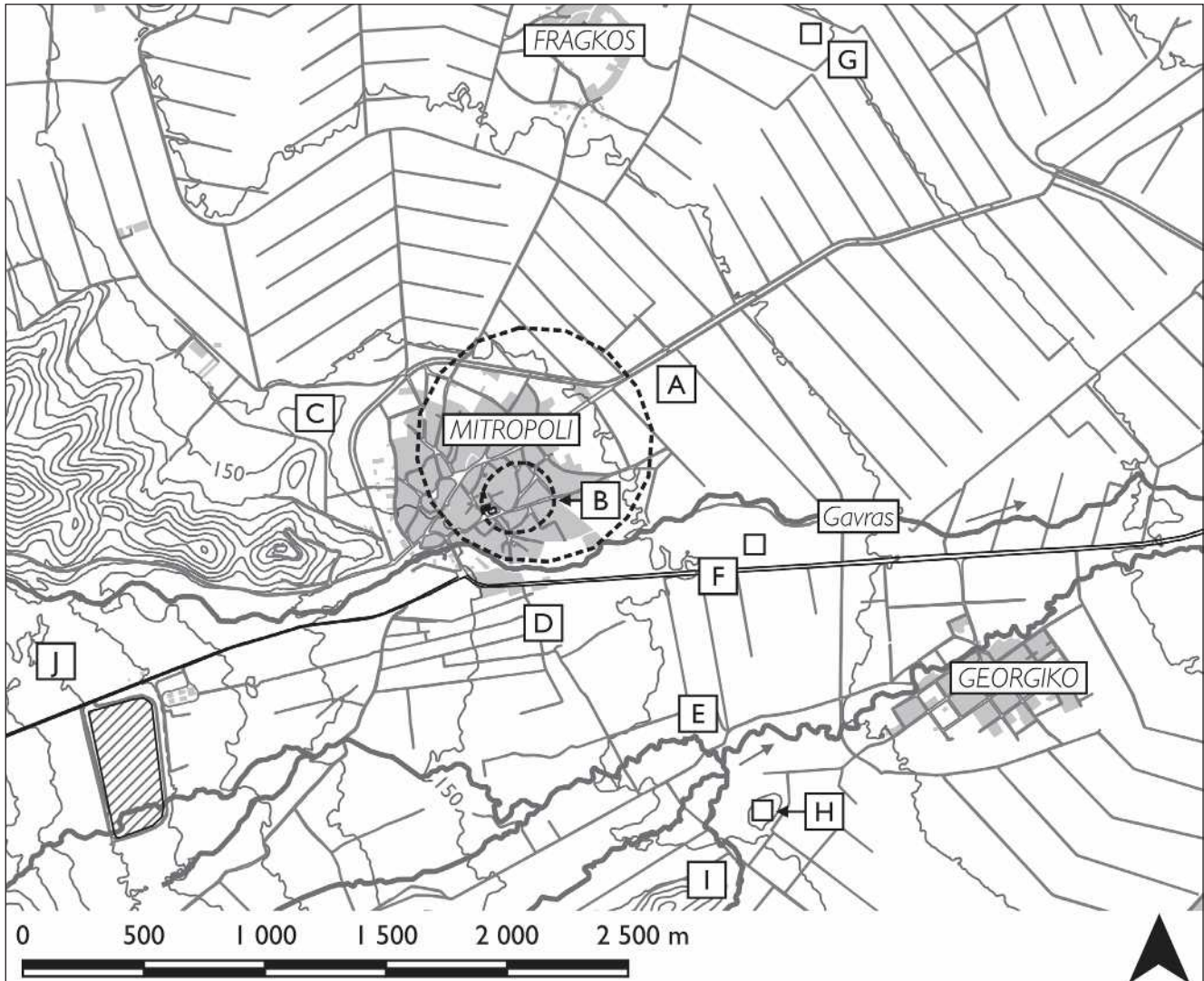


Figure 54 Mitropoli with environs. Hydrology represents situation in 1943. Map-sketch after aerial photographs.

reveal how much the village and its surroundings changed after the 1960s and 1970s land reclamation schemes, causing further confusion as to the exact locations of finds and excavations. William Leake (1835b, 506–509) and Johan Louis Ussing (1847, 252–255) reported in the first half of the 19th century that the outer fortifications of ancient Matropolis were still visible (at A in Fig. 54). The walls at the time of their visits were extensively quarried for building material for the construction of churches, including for those in Karditsa. Ussing describes the fortifications as “rather square in shape” and constructed in sandstone ashlar (Ussing 1847, 253), contrary to Leake who claims it was completely circular (Leake 1835b, 506). Only fragmentary sections of the wall have been found, in the southeast at the river (Stählin 1932b, 1493), just north of the village at the location Trochalo towards Fragkos (Arvanitopoulos 1916, 175), as well as inside of it. The excavator Babis

Intzesiloglou (1988a, 268; fig. 116β) describes the fragmentary sections of walls found at the Arampatzis and Pagonis plots as being 3.7 m wide, and built in two rows of sandstone ashlars with a river-stone fill. A protruding rectangular tower, 7.48 m wide was found in the former plot. Stählin describes the small section at the southeastern part of the enceinte as being constructed in *emplekton* employing dark sandstone, with a width of 2.0–2.5 m. Intzesiloglou interprets the circular enceinte as being a 16-sided polygon, with *c.* 450 m radius and a total circumference of 2560 m. The approximate course of the fortification can be discerned in 1940 aerial photographs (A in Fig. 54), showing that it was slightly larger, with a *c.* 485 m radius and a 3000 m circumference. Babis Intzesiloglou’s (2012) hypothesis that the modern field boundaries surrounding the village reflects the shape of the ancient fortification is not supported by a comparison with pre-1970s topography. The present-day

fields appear instead to be adjusted to the natural terrain and poorly match the outline of the circular fortification wall. The fragmentary wall found during rescue work just north of the Mitropoli–Karditsa road in 1997 (Rondiri 2003, 486) is, due to its small size (1 m wide) and situation outside of the settlement area, possibly not to be regarded as belonging to the main fortification. Similarly, the possible *euthynteria* found in 2013 along the same road in my view probably belongs to either another structure or a secondary fortification (Theogianni 2018a, 505–506).

Leake, Ussing and Arvanitopoulos also noted a smaller, inner enceinte (approximated as B in Fig. 54) surrounding the area of the old church of Agios Georgios (Fig. 55), which is immediately northwest of the new concrete church. Ussing (1847, 254) reports that this was known as the İç Kale (Turkish for “inner castle”), but that, to him, it more resembled a *temenos*. Nothing more is known of this fortification which was not on higher ground than the rest of the site.

The remains of settlement can be roughly divided into two periods: a Hellenistic and a Roman phase. The area around the church of Agios Georgios appears possibly to have been the monumentalised centre of the city, as fragments of architectural elements including reliefs and a cassette roof were noted by early travellers (Leake 1835b, 506–507; Ussing 1847, 254–255). Remains of domestic

architecture of the period have also been noted in the area, however, including in the D. Tseas (Hatziangelakis 1992, 263), the V. Tasiopoulos (Rondiri 1998b), the A. Katsougias (Nikolaou 1997a, 234) and the A. Krikelis and A. Daïs (Theogianni 2016) plots. Further Hellenistic houses have been found in other parts of the village, including in the F. Baïrami and E. Karagiorgou (Nikolaou 1997a, 234), P. Karakletsis (Vaïopoulou 2014a, 662), A. Zografos (Nikolaou 1997a, 234) and the Papadoulis (Intzesiloglou 1989b, 147–148) plots. An extensive excavation on the Papadimitriou plot yielded remains of several phases of Hellenistic habitation, ending in a substantive covering layer of roof-tiles dating to the end of the period. The same location was continuously used after this in the Roman period and into the Late Roman period (Theogianni 2014). Excavations in the central square revealed an extensive destruction layer belonging to a possible ceramic workshop with finds of the 2nd century BCE (Rondiri 2011, 494–496). Another possible large Hellenistic workshop, with excavations producing much metal scrap, was found in the Th. Kotoulas plot (Rondiri 2003, 484–485) and another with a kiln adjoining M. and N. Petsias plot (Vaïopoulou 2014a, 662–665).

The distribution of Roman domestic installations is mainly limited to the area around the church and the İç Kale (Intzesiloglou 1989b, 148), making it possible that the latter represents a Roman or Late Roman refortification, similar



Figure 55 The old church of Agios Georgios (under restoration, at front) and the new church (at back), Mitropoli. © Greek Ministry of Culture and Sports – Organization for the Management and Development of Cultural Resources.

to at Vlochos (**No. 29**). Well-defined Roman houses are, however, rare at the site. Just southwest of the church of Agios Georgios, at the supermarket plot, a large 4th century CE building with well-preserved mosaics was found (Intzesiloglou 1990a, 195). On Papagou street, in the eastern end of the village, a Roman bath complex was discovered, seemingly well outside the Hellenistic walls. This contained a well-preserved polychrome mosaic depicting the abduction of Europa (Intzesiloglou 1995, 205–206; 2000d, 374–375; Hatziangelakis 2007, 59). A large, monumental building, possibly a Late Roman Christian basilica, was excavated in the P. and A. Anagnostopoulous plot (Vaïopoulou 2014a, 665). Several Roman period kilns and other industrial installations have been excavated at the ancient settlement (Kalogianni *et al.* 2009). From the area within the Hellenistic enceinte, but maybe outside the Roman town (see above), we may note the Early Roman kiln at the central square of the village (Rondiri 2011, 494–496), but most of the excavated kilns have instead been found south of the village in the area of the cemeteries (Intzesiloglou 1989b, 147; Rondiri 2003, 486–488; 2004, 442–443; 2009, 485–488). Immediately outside of the settlement, on a flat hill just north of the last houses of the village (possibly at C in Fig. 54), Arvanitopoulos found the fragmentary remains of a severely robbed-out monumental structure. This he interpreted as the ancient temple of Aphrodite Kastnietis, a deity known from Strabo to have been worshipped at Matropolis. Only the stereobate remained of the building, which had served as a quarry for the construction of the churches in Rouso, Georgiko and Fragko as well as the Agios Konstantinos in Karditsa (Arvanitopoulos 1912, 342–343). A life-size bronze head belonging to an imperial portrait of the first half of the 4th century CE was found at the same location in 1910 and was transferred to the National Museum in Athens (Deligiannakis 2013).

The ancient settlement had several cemeteries, one of the more extensive ones across the river south and southeast of the modern village (at D in Fig. 54). These include several rich Classical (Gallis 1979b, 583; Intzesiloglou 1989b, 147) and Hellenistic burials (Intzesiloglou 1988a, 268; 269; Tziafalias 1979b, 579–580; Theogianni 2020, 1534–1535) as well as Roman (Hatziangelakis 1992, 263; 1993a, 252; Arvanitopoulos 1912, 337–342) and Late Roman tombs (Theogianni 2016). Further to the southeast, and around 1.3 km from the modern village is the Malamata location (at E in Fig. 54), where plundered cist tombs indicate another cemetery (Hatziangelakis 1993a, 252). Several tumuli have been found and excavated around the village, especially in the area east of the ancient settlement. A Roman period tumulus with seven sarcophagi was excavated in the Vouzas field (Tziafalias 1984a, 183). At the Kapriani location, 80 m north of the Mitropoli–Karditsa road (at F in Fig. 54), is a small Neolithic *magoula* re-used in the historical periods as a multi-burial tumulus (Gallis 1979a, 567–568; Theogianni

2020, 1532–1533). A looted tumulus containing six stone sarcophagi and an altar was excavated and removed 2 km north of the village (at I in Fig. 54?) in the Stavroulakis field (Rondiri 2000, 488–489).

Across the Gavras, on a small hillock (at H in Fig. 54) c. 1.3 km southeast of the village and 600 m southwest of the village of Georgiko, is a large Mycenaean tholos tomb (Intzesiloglou 2003, 478–480; 2004, 439). An Archaic sanctuary, possibly relating to ancestor cult, has been found at this tomb, with an inscribed roof-tile interpreted as containing a reference to the mythical Aiatos, the father of Thessalos (Intzesiloglou 2005a, 408–409). On the Kotronaki ridge southwest of the tholos tomb (at I in Fig. 54), a possible secondary settlement with a cemetery has been found, yielding terracotta sarcophagi of the 4th and 3rd centuries BCE (Intzesiloglou 2004, 439–440).

The best-known archaeological site within the region of Karditsa is arguably the Doric temple of Apollo at Lianokokkala (at J in Fig. 54), c. 1.2 km west-southwest of the village. The temple was discovered by chance, buried under a small mound in a field just south of the river Gavras, and was fully excavated in 1994–1997. Chronologically, the building belongs to several building phases, beginning in the Archaic period, and was destroyed by fire in the early Roman period. Stamped roof-tiles confirm that it belonged to the community of the Matropolitans (Intzesiloglou 1999a, 331–333; 2000c, 375–376; 2001, 347–348; 2003, 475–476; 2005a, 410).

Coinage

There is only one incomplete corpus of Matropolitan coins (Hoover 2014, 94–97), which were first minted on the Aiginetan standard in the first half of the 4th century BCE until the middle of the 3rd. The iconography is often centred around a figure which has been interpreted as Aphrodite Kastnietis, a deity known from Strabo (9.5.17) to have been worshipped in the city (Moustaka 1983, 39–40). Whether the figure is indeed the same cannot be ascertained, and similar imagery has been found at Kallithiro (**No. 11**, Intzesiloglou 1997, fig. 37) and Vlochos (**No. 29**, Ieremias and Rönnlund forthcoming). The figure is sometimes depicted on the reverse as standing leaning on a column, with a dove or bird in her hand, and an eros figure at her feet reaching for the bird. Other reverse side depictions relating to this are of a dove, either in flight or standing, sometimes with a female head on the obverse. Some of the coins with the female head on the obverse has also a small bird in front of it, and Apollo playing the lyre on the reverse.

Some coins have a bearded, horned deity on the obverse, possibly a river god, with a seated Dionysus or a seated female figure on the reverse. Among the rarer coins are those with a laureate Apollo on the obverse and the front of a man-headed bull on the reverse, the nature of the latter is unknown.

Written sources

Writing in the late 1st century BCE, Strabo (9.5.17) claims that the *polis* of the Matropolitans was the result of a synoecism of three smaller communities (*polichnia*), occurring at some point in time before 358 BCE. These have been interpreted as including Onthyriion (Ὀνθύριον) and possibly Polichnai (Πολίχλαι) but no concrete evidence for this exists (Decourt *et al.* 2004, 698). Strabo also mentions that in his time, the location Thome/Ithome (Θώμη/Ἰθώμη), often identified with Pyrgos Ithomis (No. 23), was in the territory of the Matropolitans. A fragmentary Hellenistic inscription from Mitropoli (Intzesiloglou 1988b, 254; *SEG* XXXVIII 448) mentions a possible *sympoliteia* (?) between Matropolis and the community of the Thonaians (Θωναῖοι), which may possibly be the local name of the same polity as mentioned in Strabo.

Magistrates and *phylai* are attested already in the Classical period (Decourt *et al.* 2004, 698) and the Matropolitans were among the communities in Thessaly that are mentioned in the Hellenistic lists of *theōrodokoi* of Delphi and Argos. Livy (32.15; 36.10; 36.14) mentions the Kierians together with Matropolitans as siding with the Romans in 198 BCE in exchange for their cities not to be destroyed, but a few years later, in 191 BCE, Philip V and the Macedonians take both cities. The city appears from inscriptions to have continued to flourish into the Roman period, mirroring the rich archaeological material. Matropolitans served as *stratagoi* of the Roman period Thessalian league (*IG* IX,2 461b; Kramolisch 1978, 36).

Having ravaged the city of Gomphoi (possibly at Episkopi, No. 4), Caesar's troops turned towards Matropolis in the summer of 48 BCE, threatening the Matropolitans with the same fate as their neighbours, prompting them to surrender without siege (Caes. *BCiv.* 3.81). Some years later, in the early 1st century CE, the Matropolitans lost a boundary dispute with the Kierians (No. 24), a community 20 km to the east, indicating that the landed properties of the two *poleis* had expanded considerably during the early Roman period (Decourt 1995, no. 14). Procopius's (*De aed.* 4.3) states that Matropolis was one of the Thessalian cities refortified under the reign of Justinian (527–656 CE) but there is no archaeological evidence to support this claim.

Chronology

Classical; Hellenistic; Roman; Late Roman.

Coordinates

313578, 4356283.

18. Myrini

Modern name

The site is located inside the village of Myrini (Μυρίνη) or Myrina (Μύρινα), formerly Moiroi/Myroi (Μοίροι/Μύρους).

Μοίροι), in everyday speech still Moirous/Myrous (Μοίρους/Μύρους).

Ancient name

The ancient remains have been identified from a stamped roof-tile (see below) as being of ancient Methyilion (Μεθύλιον, τό), a settlement (*polis*?) known from coins, inscriptions and (possibly) literary sources. It has been argued that the non-Thessalian name for the community was Methydriion (Μεθύδριον, τό, “between the waters”), and that the Euhydrium (see No. 1) mentioned by Livy is a scribal mistake (Stählin 1932a). The *ethnikon* was *Methylieus*, as attested from inscriptions and coins.

Description of site and area

The archaeological site (Fig. 56) occupies the same location as the present-day village of Myrini (Fig. 57), with ancient remains recovered during construction work and infrastructural developments. The village is located east of the river Kalentzis and west of a formerly marshy area with small streams feeding into the river Leipsimos. The many excavations reports, as well as the Ktimatologio digital elevations model (DEM), indicate that the ancient settlement was located in a slightly elevated area in the southeastern part of the modern village (at A in Fig. 56; Intzesiloglou 1989a, 230–231; Orengo *et al.* 2015, 106). Extensive trial excavations in the Tzoliis field just south of the village (at B in Fig. 56) yielded few structural remains but much pottery of the 4th century BCE (Nikolaou 2011, 472), an indication that the area was at the southern outskirts of the ancient settlement. A similar situation was noted at the church plot of Agios Dimitrios (at C in Fig. 56), also at the border of the marked area, where pottery of the Classical and Hellenistic periods was found, but no structural remains (Nikolaou 1998, 245). Historical aerial photographs show that three small streams originated from springs at the perimeter of this elevated area (probably giving the village its name), including the sacred spring (*agioneri*) at the church of Agios Dimitrios. The many rescue excavations conducted inside the village provide a fragmented view of the layout of the ancient settlement. Most of the remains are Hellenistic and the destruction layers with collapsed roofs are indicative that the final phase of the settlement was possibly in the 3rd century BCE (Intzesiloglou 1989a, 230–231; 1989b, 147; Nikolaou 2003a, 482; 2011, 472). During excavations at an unknown location in the village, two stamped roof-tiles of the second half of the 3rd century BCE were found, bearing an inscription identifying the settlement as ancient Methyilion (Intzesiloglou 2000a, 181–183, see below). The Hellenistic settlement appears to have been aligned on a north–south axis, with examples of typical domestic architecture as well as possible public buildings. One house excavated on the Chasiotis plot contained a larger pebble mosaic, one of relatively few known from Western Thessaly (Nikolaou 2011, 472). A larger building



Figure 56 Myrini with environs. Hydrology represents situation in 1945. Map-sketch after aerial photographs.



Figure 57 The village of Myrini, as seen looking northeast. The ancient settlement is in the right of the image. © Greek Ministry of Culture and Sports – Organization for the Management and Development of Cultural Resources.

with foundations in ashlar masonry, possibly of a public nature, was found underneath a roof-tile destruction layer at the Zamanis plot (D in Fig. 56; Nikolaou 2003a, 482–483). Hellenistic buildings excavated on Papagou street contained both a cistern and a drainpipe following the south–north alignment (Nikolaou 2003a, 492). A drain conduit was also found at the Grammatelis plot, also following the same alignment (Nikolaou 1997a, 235). At several locations in the village, deeper strata contained fragmented remains of Classical buildings, seemingly less stringently aligned than in the following phase. Late Archaic pottery has also been found (Nikolaou 1997a, 235; 1999a, 328), as well as some Geometric painted pottery (Nikolaou 1997a, 235), indicating a long continuity of habitation on site.

Arvanitopoulos mentions ancient inscriptions in the village church (Agios Dimitrios), one of which in the church floor. Apostolos Samaropoulos (1901, 18) provided an unedited transcription of one of the inscriptions, which has since not featured in any epigraphical corpus. No other inscriptions have been published from the area of the village.

A ceramic vessel containing 149 Aeginetan silver staters was found during works at the church plot of Agios Dimitrios in 1970, dating from the late 7th to the mid-5th century BCE (Caramessini-Oeconomides 1972, 180–182; Hatziangelakis 2007, 39). Another large coin hoard had been found in 1914 at a location Lakkoi Sofouli (possibly at E in Fig. 56), just 200 m from the village. Inside a large broken clay vessel, were found 1647 silver coins, including 1063 of Boeotian Thebes, 186 of Sikyon, 333 of Aegina and four of Tanagra, dating from the early 6th century to the end of the 4th century BCE (Svoronos 1917; Arvanitopoulos 1920, 27–28).

Arvanitopoulos described the destruction of a large tumulus in the general environs of the village, the Magoula stous Myrous, in which several cist burials were found. Among the funerary goods was a large bronze hydria, now in the Volos Archaeological Museum (Arvanitopoulos 1920, 27–28). The location of the tumulus is uncertain, but it could probably be identified with a now destroyed feature visible on the 1945 aerial photographs (at F in Fig. 56). Travelling from Karditsa towards Myrini, Ussing (1847, 256) observed Ionic columns next to the road in the general proximity of the tumulus. At the church of Makrychori north of Myrini, Ussing also saw pieces of a sarcophagus lid with a reclining male figure and a marble round bench (*rund Bænk*). The church probably corresponds to the present *xokklisi* of Agia Paraskevi, c. 1 km north of the modern village of Makrychori, as the settlement was moved from this location to its present place in the early 20th century. At the chapel of Agia Varvara (at G in Fig. 56), c. 2 km northeast of the village, a section of an ancient road and settlement material of the prehistoric and historical periods were excavated during the construction of the new national highway (Krahtopoulou 2020, 1524).

Coinage

The only comprehensive study on the coinage of Methyilion is Heyman (1970), which together with Rogers (1932) contains relatively few types compared with what is now known from auction catalogues. The Methylian coins appear to have produced several series of copper and silver coins from as early as the first half of the 5th century BCE, with much variation in iconography.

The earliest of the coins are silver obols (460s BCE) with a horse head facing left on the obverse and a barley grain in opening pod on the reverse, with lettering MEΘY (Heyman 1970, group 1). Hemidrachms (450s BCE) with a similar design on the reverse have the forepart of a horse facing left emerging from a rock, similar to Orthos (at modern Kedros, **No. 13**). One group of late 5th or early 4th century BCE chalkons (Hoover 2014, 197) depicts a grain ear on the obverse with MEΘY (misread as of “Olea” by Franke 1960), and a ram facing right with MENEKPATOYΣ on the reverse. Menekrates has been interpreted as the name of a magistrate responsible for the issue. A group of Hellenistic silver obol issues (Heyman 1970, group 2) has a seated female figure on a throne facing right with a spear or staff, with an animal behind her facing the same direction. Heyman (1970, 119–121) and others have interpreted this animal as a cow, which I find highly improbable. The small size of the animal and the shape of the head and legs are more suggestive of a dog or possibly a sheep. If the animal is that of a dog, then it is probable that the seated figure is Ennodia rather than Hera or Demeter. A silver obol of the early to mid-4th century BCE depicts a winged Nike on the obverse and a nude warrior wearing a Corinthian shield with raised shield facing left with [M]EΘYAI[E][ΩN] on the reverse (Heyman 1970, group 3). The reverse figure is near-identical to some coins of Pelinna and of neighbouring Peirasia (**No. 5**) and features also on the tile-stamp of this community. The winged Nike features on other silver coins of Methyilion, and a similar design can also be found on coins of Pelinna.

Written sources

The Methylian coins do not appear in any of the preserved literary sources except possibly in Stephanus Byzantius, if we accept the spelling Μεθύδιον as a mistake or variant (*s.v.*). One Kleippos son of Agathokles of the Methylian coins appears in the 230–220 BCE list of *theōrodokoi* from Delphi (Plassart 1921, 16) between the Kelaitians and the Matropolitans (**No. 17**).

Two stamped roof-tiles of the 3rd century BCE found during excavations in the village contained the inscription *epi Philoxenidou Methylieōn Satyrou*, “(made by) Satyros in (the period of office of) Philoxenides of the Methylian coins” (Intzesiloglou 2000a, 181–183; *SEG* L 527). A second stamp has apparently been found at Myrini, but has yet only



Figure 58 Bronze measure or funnel with inscription, the British Museum (1922,1019.1). © The Trustees of the British Museum. Published with permission.

been published as a photograph, containing the inscription *Methyl[ie]ōn epi [Kl]eippo[u] Satyro[u]*,⁸ “(made by) Satyros in (the period of office of) Kleippos of the Methylianans” (Hatziangelakis 2007, 39). It appears at least likely that the Kleippos mentioned in the list of *theōrodokoi* and the Kleippos of the stamped roof-tile could be the same person. The manufacturer of the tiles, Satyros, is only known from the site at Myrini. Together with the Menekrates named on coins (see above), Philoxenides and Kleippos were seemingly magistrates or officials of the community, and the tiles probably belonged to a roof of a public building.

A bronze measure or funnel with the punctuated inscription *Methylieōn dēmosion* (“common property of the Methylianans”) is on display in the British Museum (Inv. no. 1922,1019.1. Fig. 58). Its original find-spot is unknown, having been bought from the Athenian antiquities dealer Thodoris Zamboulakis in the early 1920s. Some publications mistakenly state that the vessel is kept in the National Archaeological Museum in Athens (Rogers 1932, 132; Helly 1992, 85), others just mention that it was found close to Karditsa (Biesantz 1965, 140, n. 235; Heyman 1970, 115). The curators of the National Archaeological Museum in Athens have informed me that there is no such object in their collection catalogue. It is probable that the funnel originates from the area of the village of Myrini.

Chronology

Geometric, Archaic, Classical, Hellenistic.

Coordinates

324558, 4363502.

19. Neo Monastiri

Modern name

The site is most often referred to as Neo Monastiri (Νέο Μοναστήρι), which is the name of the 20th century village that covers most of the Classical settlement. Some older publications refer to the location as the Gynaikokastro (Γυναικόκαστρο), which is the fortified hill immediately east of the village.

Ancient name

The location has been identified through epigraphy (*SEG* XLIX 629) as that of ancient Proerna (Προέρνα, ἦ/ᾶ), a settlement known from Strabo and Livy (see below) to have been located in the area. The *ethnikon* was *Proernios*, with variant spellings *Prōernios* (internal use on coins), *Prounrios* (as indicated by an inscription from Krannon; Habicht 1981), and *Proelnios* (mid-5th century proxeny decree from Pherai: *SEG* XXIII 416).

Description of site and area

The site at Neo Monastiri (Fig. 59) lies at the end of a larger arm of the Kasidiaris range, extending westward into the plains. A *trapezi* or flat-topped *magoula*, the Tapsi, forms the very end of the line of ridges, and is visible from far across the surrounding plains. Excavations on the top of the *magoula* has yielded pottery of the Neolithic–Classical period, with revealed fragments of a Classical fortification wall along the brow of the hill. A large circular structure (A in Fig. 59) of the Classical–Hellenistic period was partially excavated on the hilltop. The structure had a diameter of 16.5 m, with a possible entrance in the southeast. Remains of other structures were found next to it, as well as a considerable destruction layer with Laconic-type roof-tiles to its east (Theocharis 1968a, 249; 252; Dakoronia 1997, 206; Froussou 2007; Kyparissi-Apostolika 2011, 307–308). Further excavations on the *magoula* have revealed rectangular structures of the Classical–Hellenistic period but their function cannot be ascertained (Froussou 2008, 79). Just below the Tapsi hill is the modern village of Neo Monastiri, a settlement for Pontic refugees from present-day Bulgaria, displaced by the 1924 Greek–Turkish population exchange. The village moved from its original location *c.* 2 km to the

southwest⁹ to its present position in 1956 after the devastating 1955 Sofades earthquake (Theocharis 1968a, 249), which had its epicentre at Kommeno Tzami Magoula (see below). House construction at the site revealed remains of settlements from the Bronze Age to the Classical–Hellenistic period, including many tombs. A Late Helladic III building was found during rescue excavations on the Teloudis plot (B in Fig. 59), giving the so far only structural remains of habitation of this period (Dakoronia 1990a, 179; Froussou 2007, 10). Bronze Age tombs have been found at several locations in and around the village, indicating a rather substantial settlement in this period (Dakoronia 1990a, 178; 1997, 206; 2003, 443; Papakonstantinou 1990, 179; Stamoudi 2011, 397). One tomb with sub-Mycenaean pottery indicates a possible continuity of habitation after the Bronze Age (Papakonstantinou 1989b, 136). The area of the village has further yielded substantial evidence for habitation in the Early Iron Age. Settlement material of the proto-Geometric and Geometric periods has been found at scattered locations around the village, as well as several apsidal houses (Theocharis 1968a, 249–250; Dakoronia 1988, 250–252; 1990b, 69–70), at least one of which seemingly destroyed by fire. A few tombs belonged to this settlement phase,

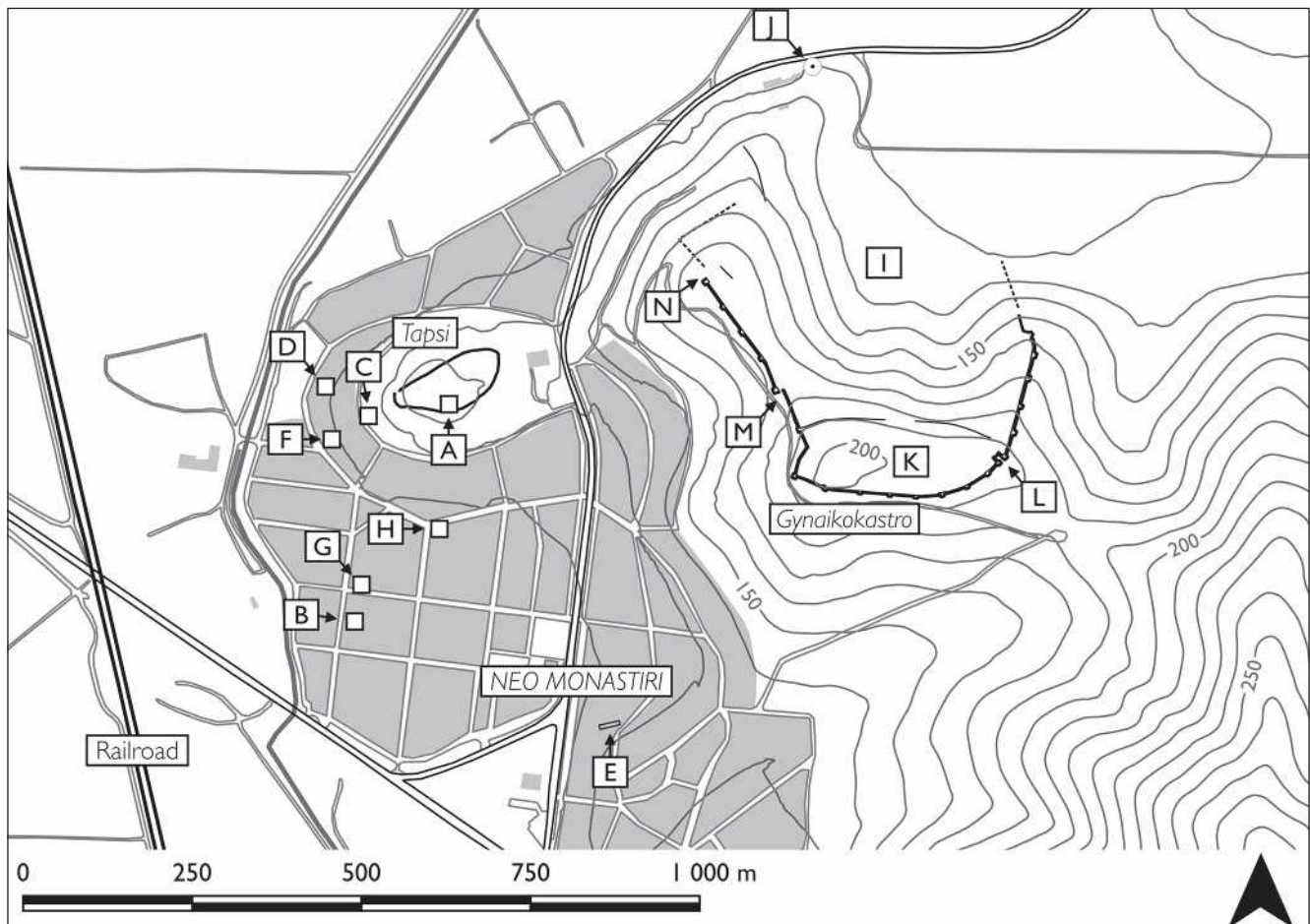


Figure 59 Neo Monastiri. Plan-sketch after Stählin (1924, 158), Bosch (1982, Fig. 16), Froussou (2007, 12), and aerial photographs.

including a small proto-Geometric tholos tomb (Dakoronia 1997, 206–207; Froussou 2007, 10; 2008, 73), found in the southwest slope of the Tapsi hill (C in Fig. 59). Another, smaller tholos tomb has been found just to the south of the village, dated to the late Geometric or early Archaic period (Froussou 2008, 73). Stray finds delivered to the authorities, including bronze bracelets and buckles (Dakoronia 1998, 220; 2000, 349), testify to probable further tombs of this period in the area. The Archaic period is poorly represented on the site, with only fragmentary indications of settlement buried beneath remains of later periods. The Vouvaloudis plot excavations (D in Fig. 59) yielded evidence of Geometric–Archaic habitation on a considerable depth, with Middle Helladic and Late Helladic remains underneath (Stamoudi 2011, 394–397). At the adjacent Kaltsounoudis plot, remains of buildings and a small street of the early Hellenistic period were found during rescue work (Psarogianni 2019, 521–522).

On a small, rocky hill in the southeastern part of the modern village, rescue excavations on the Kaltsounas plot (E in Fig. 59) revealed remains of a sanctuary, the oldest phase of which could be dated to *c.* 500 BCE, continuing to the early 3rd century BCE. The sanctuary contained a 4th century stoa, 30 × 6 m, on a west-southwest–east-northeast axis, built on top of earlier structures (Theocharis 1968a, 250–252; Dakoronia 2001, 321–322; Froussou 2008, 79–80). The sanctuary has through an early 2nd century BCE inscription (*SEG* XLIX 629) been identified as belonging to Demeter Proernia (see below), and the torso of a marble statue of the goddess has been found in a nearby cairn (Dakoronia 1987b, 199). Many terracotta figurines were found at the site and in the general area (Dakoronia 1987a, 191). A life-size marble statue, tentatively dated to the Roman period, has also been found at the site (Arvanitopoulos 1911, 180). The sanctuary was located outside the settlement, probably at a now dry spring, as tombs have been found on plots around it (Lambropoulou 1989, 136).

The settlement appears to have grown in density in the 5th and 4th centuries BCE, with several rescue excavations producing domestic architecture arranged along the topography on the south and west slopes of the Tapsi hill. A mid-4th century BCE destruction layer indicates a disruption in the settlement, with new buildings erected in the late 4th and 3rd centuries BCE (Dakoronia 1988, 247–250; 1990a, 178–179; 2003, 443–444; Pandos 1989, 201; Rozaki 1989, 182–184; Stamoudi 2011, 394–397). Hellenistic houses have been found around the same area, some on a shallow depth, indicating no later habitation (Dakoronia 1985, 139; Onasoglou 1989, 201; Stamoudi 2011, 393–394). An isolated building *c.* 200 south-southwest of the Tapsi-hill was found at the Vouvaloudis plot (G in Fig. 59), having the outline of a small temple *in antis*, but no reported cult-related material (Papakonstantinou 1989a, 184). The Classical and early Hellenistic settlement was at least partially surrounded

by a fortification wall, a segment of which was found on the Tsiakaridis plot (F in Fig. 59). This could be traced for *c.* 9 m and was 2.2 m wide and constructed in polygonal masonry. A possible postern was found in the wall and other structures were noted immediately to its east (Papakonstantinou 1989b, 184–185; Froussou 2007, 11). Another part of a fortification, built in the same style, albeit only 1.6 m wide, and traceable for 14 m was excavated on the Kidoudis plot (probably H in Fig. 59). The profile of the wall was step-like, possibly to counteract the erosive forces (Pandos 1989, 201; Froussou 2007, 10). The fragmentary outline of the enceinte indicates that the fortified area was centred around the southern slopes of the Tapsi hill. Part of the western cemetery of the Classical–Hellenistic settlement has been found just outside the village below the western slopes of the Tapsi hill, with three tombs of the 5th century BCE excavated during infrastructural development (Dakoronia 1987a, 193).

In the first half of the 3rd century BCE it appears that the whole settlement was moved *c.* 800 m to the northeast and the northern slopes of the Gynaikokastro hill (Kirsten 1957). Next to nothing is known about the reasons for this move nor about the layout of the new settlement area, apart from what can be surmised from its extensive fortifications. The settlement area must, however, have been located in a hollow area in the north slope (at I in Fig. 59), but no survey nor excavation has been conducted in this area. Historical aerial photographs show a spring (*contra* Stählin 1924, 158) just below the hill in north (J in Fig. 59).

The well-preserved fortifications of the Gynaikokastro hill have been known to scholars since the early 19th century and were from quite early on identified as being of ancient Proerna. The walls and towers of the *akropolis* (at K in Fig. 59) were extensively cleaned when the site was turned into an archaeological park in the early 2000s. The fortifications are in well-executed isodomic and trapezoidal masonry (Fig. 60), in the south part preserved to up to eight courses (4.2 m), with drainage holes allowing for rainwater to flow out from the intramural area. The excavators saw a possibility that the enceinte never was completed in antiquity, with the marshland north of the site acting as a natural barrier (Bouyia 2007, 16). It might be more probable, however, that the fortifications in the north are buried by the alluvial processes of the marsh or have been carted away as they were located on more accessible ground. Complementary excavations on the *akropolis* revealed a destruction layer at the eastern gate (K in Fig. 59), indicating a possible violent end to the Hellenistic settlement (Papakonstantinou 2011, 363). The eastern gate is of a courtyard type and leads into the separately fortified *akropolis* area, the latter of which corresponding to *c.* 2.7 ha, with much surface pottery and several foundations of larger structures. At least 22 rectangular towers are preserved above ground along the fortified enceinte and two more gates in the southwestern side of



Figure 60 Hellenistic fortifications on the Gynaikokastro hill, Neo Monastiri. © Greek Ministry of Culture and Sports – Organization for the Management and Development of Cultural Resources.

the walled area (M and N in Fig. 59). The whole complex gives the impression of being of one phase, with similarities in masonry with nearby ancient Pharsalos. It is at present impossible to state the fate of the Hellenistic settlement at Gynaikokastro but the well-preserved fortifications indicate that the area was not densely inhabited after the 2nd century BCE. Some scanty remains of Roman structures have been noted in the area of the modern village by the ephorate (Papakonstantinou 1989a, 184; Cantarelli *et al.* 2008, 31) but whether these belonged to a settlement or merely a farmstead cannot be ascertained. The location was uninhabited in the 19th century, and 1940s aerial photographs show no modern structures at the site.

The area surrounding Neo Monastiri is rich in remains of the prehistoric periods, with over 20 identified *magoules* (Frousou 2008, 68). A considerable Neolithic settlement has been investigated by a Greek–British team at Koutroulou Magoula, 2 km southeast of Neo Monastiri. Dug into the older remains was a smaller LHII–LHIII tholos tomb, indicating a possible nearby settlement in later periods (Hamilakis *et al.* 2017, 87; Kyparissi-Apostolika *et al.* 2021). The Neolithic Kommemo Tzami Magoula lies 3 km south-southeast of Neo Monastiri and 800 m south of Koutroulou Magoula, on the top of which were the ruins of a mosque until the early 20th century, containing spoliated material probably originating from ancient Proerna (Arvanitopoulos 1911, 198). A cist tomb of unknown date has been excavated at the location (Dakoronia 1987a, 191). The important springs at Vrysia are situated 4.5 km north-east of Neo Monastiri. Here, at the location Gkioli (Turkish

göl, “lake”) is another Prehistoric *magoula* (Arvanitopoulos 1911, 198). A 5th century inscription (*IG IX*, 2 255; *SEG XV* 369) with a funerary epigram was found in the wall of the church of Agios Georgios in the eponymous village (previously Hacı Amar), probably originating at Neo Monastiri. A late Archaic or early Classical funerary *stēlē* was found in the final years of the 19th century in a wall in Grammatiko (previously Uzun Karalar), 4 km west of Neo Monastiri (*IG IX*, 2 270; Doulgeri-Intzesiloglou 2000, 11–13). Like the previously mentioned inscription, it is probable that it originated in one of the cemeteries of Proerna, as ancient Thetonion (No. 9) is nearly 10 km to the north, but local informants stated that it had been brought there from another village named Karalar, possibly the mostly abandoned Othomaniko (previously Osman Karalar), 1.5 km west (Doulgeri-Intzesiloglou 2000, 12 has east) of Grammatiko. Several artefacts including a marble funerary *stēlē* have been reported from the Dekaeftaria area between Neo Monastiri and Sofiada (Papakonstantinou 2022, 836), possibly indicating one of the cemeteries of Proerna.

Coinage

Proerna struck three series of bronze coins in the early 3rd century BCE, depicting the head of a nymph on the obverse and a standing Demeter (Proernia?) holding a torch and corn-ears on the reverse (some have a bird – crow? – on the ground in front of the goddess). The legend on the reverse reads *Prōerniōn* or *Phroerniōn*. Some examples have the letter phi or a ΦΘΙ monogram on the reverse, possibly corresponding to *Phthiōtōn/Phthioutoun* (of the Phthiotans).

The issues were seemingly not large, as only 76 coins of the Proernians have so far been published (Georgiou 2018, 78).

Written sources

Scholars have traditionally identified Proerna as belonging to Achaia Phthiotis, thus being a perioecic community in Thessaly. However, the aforementioned ΦΘΙ monogram on the coinage of the community suggests that it belonged to the *tetras* of Phthiotis, as the coins of Achaia often use an AX monogram (Hoover 2014, 15). Steph. Byz. (*s.v.* Πρόαρνα) puts Proerna (spelling Proarna) in the nearby region of Malis, which must be a mistake. The community of the Proernians barely features in any ancient textual source. Strabo (9.5.10) lists Proerna between Thaumakoi and Pharsalos. Livy (36.14) recounts how the Roman consul Manius Atillius in 191 BCE captured Proerna and its nearby fortified outposts on his army's route from Krannon towards Thaumakoi, again reflecting the geographical position of the settlement. The Proernians are mentioned in a handful of inscriptions, including the aforementioned mid-5th century BCE proxeny decree from ancient Pherai, and a fragmentary list of Delphic *naopoioi* (CID II 8) of the first half of the 4th century BCE has been reconstructed as containing a reference to the *[Proe]rniotai*. A late 3rd century BCE inscription from Krannon (Habicht 1981; SEG XXXI 572), mentions the sanctuary of Apollo Prounios in that city, but how this epithet relates to the city of the Proernians cannot be established.

Chronology

Neolithic?, Early Helladic, Middle Helladic, Late Helladic, Geometric, Archaic, Classical, Hellenistic, Roman.

Coordinates

351465, 4345061.

20. Paliogardiki

Modern name

The site is known locally as Paliogardiki (Παλιογαρδικί), “old Gardiki”, from the proto-Slavic *gardikǐ*, meaning a walled town or settlement; or as Petroporos (Πετρόπορος), which is the name of the nearby village.

Ancient name

The site at Paliogardiki presents an interesting problem in ancient Thessalian geography. The official identification of the remains is Pelinna (Πέλινα, ἡ/ἄ) or Pelinnaion (Πελινναῖον, τό), a settlement known from several textual sources as existing in the general area in the late Archaic until the 1st century BCE (Pind. *Pyth.* 10.3; SEG LI 585). There is, however, no evidence from the site to support this identification. A late 3rd century BCE *stēlē* recording a legal dispute between two private individuals and the

koinon of the Pharkadonians has been found at Petroporos (see above), which indicates that the site at Paliogardiki was actually that of Pharkadon. As others have already observed (Decourt *et al.* 2004, 702), the inscription highlights some of the difficulties in reconstructing the ancient geography of the area. The evidence as it stands, however, indicates that the site is that of ancient Pharkadon, but more conclusive evidence is probably needed to settle the issue.

Description of site and area

The site of Paliogardiki (Fig. 61) is centred around the southern slope of a hill-like promontory from the mountain-body of Paliosamarina, itself the southernmost extension of the Chasia range. The ridge is separated from the rest of the mountainside by a large collapsed cave or doline, the Zori Papa, the steep sides of which plummet over 60 m to a small natural pool at the bottom (Fig. 62). Just above the doline and nearly at the summit of the promontory is the small chapel of Agia Paraskevi, with adjoining older structures.

An 8.5 ha area of the upper slopes of the promontory (A in Fig. 61) is enclosed by a fortification wall, traceable for *c.* 1050 m, but probably originally with a circumference of *c.* 1.4 km, with walls along the steep cliffs of the doline. The earliest identified phase of this fortification – which can possibly be dated to the 6th (Theogianni and Athanasiou 2021, 23) or 5th century BCE (Stählin 1936b, 337) – is in a well-executed semi-coursed polygonal masonry which is preserved in scattered sections along the wall, especially at southeast (at B in Fig. 61) and northwest (at C in Fig. 61), where it is overbuilt with masonry of Late Roman or Byzantine period (Fig. 63). There are faint traces of a gate (D in Fig. 61) at the modern dirt track leading to the chapel of Agia Paraskevi on the hilltop (Stählin 1936b).

The most substantial feature constructed in polygonal masonry is the so-called *Bollwerk* at the northernmost point in the fortified area (at E in Fig. 61), recently cleared of covering debris by the Ephorate of Trikala (Constantinos Koutsadelis pers. comm.). This has the appearance of a large bastion, *c.* 35 m wide and 9 m deep, with two flanking towers facing northwest and the narrow saddle connecting the promontory with the mountainside (Stählin 1936b, 330–331, Abb. 2). This feature is probably a battery in the defences (Lawrence 1979, 397–398), similar to the northeastern tower at Klokotos (No. 14), the Great Battery at Goritsa at Volos (Bakhuizen 1992, 105–106) or the uppermost tower at Arcadian Alea (Maher 2017, 111–112), which are located at similar positions.

At the eastern side of the slope fortifications (at F in Fig. 61) is a *c.* 100 m stretch of wall in polygonal masonry, with two visible towers, the northernmost of which just above the cliffs of the doline. This stretch of wall most probably relates to the construction of a larger, nearly rectangular enceinte at the foot of the promontory (G in Fig. 61). This extension of the fortified area was dated

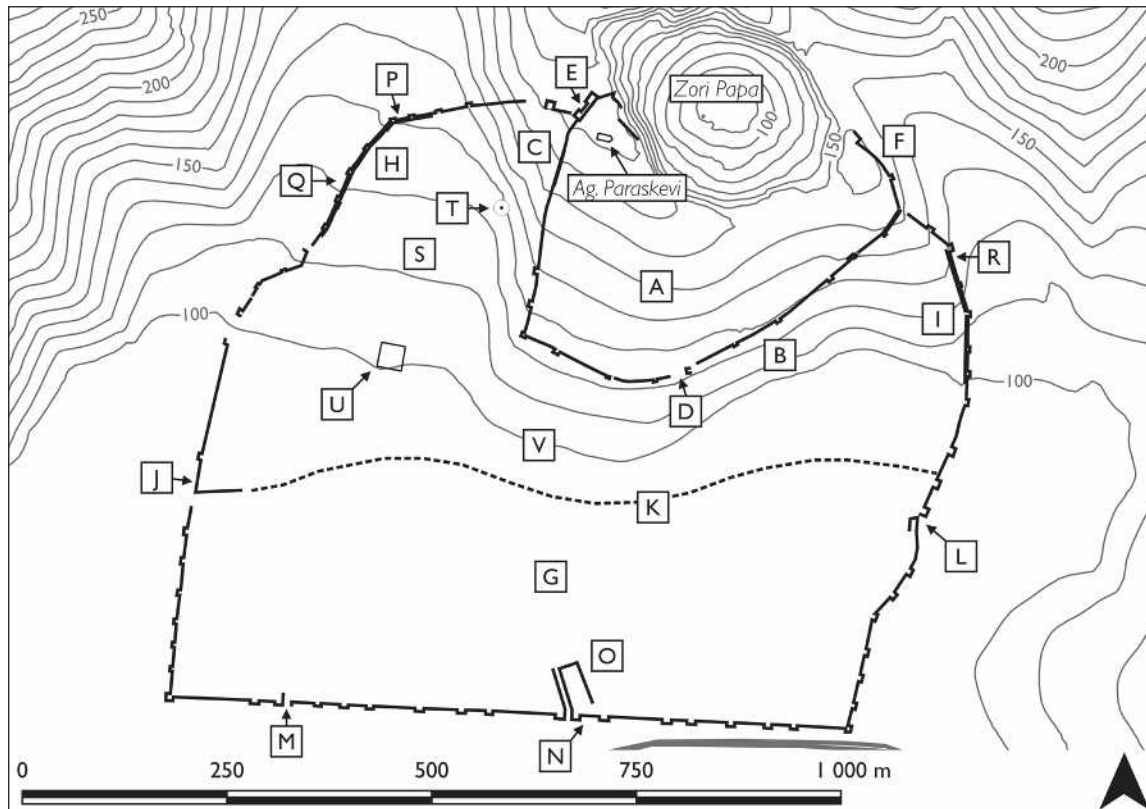


Figure 61 The site at Paliogardiki. Plan-sketch after (Lolling 2, 45–49); Stählin (1936b) and aerial photographs.



Figure 62 The Zori Papa doline at Paliogardiki. © Greek Ministry of Culture and Sports – Organization for the Management and Development of Cultural Resources.



Figure 63 Multi-phase wall in the akropolis fortifications at Paliogardiki, as seen looking south. In the background, in front of the village of Petroporos, the cropmark of the destroyed fortification wall is visible. © Greek Ministry of Culture and Sports – Organization for the Management and Development of Cultural Resources.

by the excavator Leonidas Hatziangelakis (2011b, 589) as having taken place towards the end of the 4th century BCE.

The lower enceinte was nearly intact at the time of Friedrich Stählin's (1924, 117–119; 1936b) visits in the 1910s and 1920s, but most of the southern part of it was completely destroyed during agricultural works in the 1960s and 1970s (Fig. 64). Even if the outline of the walls can clearly be seen in historical aerial photographs, it is only through Lolling's and Stählin's sketch-plans that the details of the fortifications can be reconstructed. This shows that the lower settlement fortification wall contained over 30 rectangular towers, seemingly irregularly distributed over the enceinte. Only the sections of the wall which ascend the slopes (H and I in Fig. 61) are preserved to this day, the western one of which (H) was partially excavated by the 34th Ephorate of Classical Antiquities in the 2000s. The preserved sections of the fortifications are in trapezoidal and isodomic masonry, with the walls *c.* 2.7 m wide (Hatziangelakis 2011b, 589–590). A set of unpublished 1962 photographs by Frederick Winter shows that the lower walled enceinte was slightly elevated from the surrounding ground, which probably prevented flooding (Fig. 64).

There were several gates in the walls. The one in west (J in Fig. 61) was barely preserved in Stählin's (1936b, 333)

time and could possibly have been partially obliterated by the (later?) construction of what could be a long cross-wall (K in Fig. 61), the trace of which is visible in historical aerial photographs. Just south of the eastern end of this possible wall at the opposite side of the settlement was another gate (L in Fig. 61) of the overlapping type (Stählin 1936b, 334). In the southern side of the fortified area, *c.* 140 m from the southeastern corner (M in Fig. 61) was a courtyard gate flanked by towers (Stählin 1936b, 333), and *c.* 340 m further to the east of this, another courtyard gate. This was seemingly the main gate towards south, and immediately inside of it were remains of substantial buildings which Stählin (1936b, 333–334) identified as of as possible *stoai* (at O in Fig. 61). His plans, however, indicate that the remains here could all be of a larger gate complex, leading to a main street that led towards the hillslope in a northwestern direction. Further smaller gates or posterns can also be found in the enceinte (at P, Q and R in Fig. 61).

Traces of a regular street-grid in the lower part of the settlement have been noted (Stählin 1936b, 335; Tziafalias 1992b, 126) and there are many foundations of buildings on an east–west alignment in the lower slopes (at U in Fig. 61), where is also a small spring (T in Fig. 61).



Figure 64 1962 photograph of the now-destroyed lower fortifications at Paliogardiki. Photograph by Frederick E. Winter. Courtesy of the Canadian Institute in Greece. Published with permission.

Recent excavations by the Ephorate of Trikala have revealed monumentalised walls and a stone-clad street, suggesting the existence of public spaces at this part of the site (Constantinos Koutsadelis pers. comm.). Further down the slope is a large nearly square feature, 30×31 m in size, which is formed by walls and buildings enclosing a central area at the centre of which are the fragmentary remains of a rectangular building (T in Fig. 61). Stählin (1936b, 336–337) interpreted this complex as that of a temple surrounded by a *temenos* and *stoai*. The remains were excavated in the 2000s by the 34th Ephorate (Hatziangelakis 2011b, 590; 2021, 53–54; Hatziangelakis *et al.* 2016b, 571–572) as part of the larger works at the site and the remains were interpreted as possibly belonging to a *heroon*. The entrance to the structure was in the northern part of the east side. Sanctuary-relating material, including a votive *stēlē* with an Asclepius motif and figurines of the Dionysiac cycle, were reportedly found here, dating the complex to the 3rd century BCE. Stählin (1936b, 335) identified the theatre of the city 150 m southeast of this place (at V in Fig. 61), and it is generally assumed that the area also housed the *agora* of the city (Tziafalias 1992b, 127). A 3rd century BCE dedicatory *stēlē* to Zeus Kataibates has been found a little to the south of the urban site (Hourmouziadis 1972, 282), indicating a possible peri-urban cult of this unusual deity.

The Classical–Hellenistic city appears not to have developed further after the 3rd century and the excavator, Hatziangelakis (2008, 307), suggests that it was not inhabited from the 2nd century BCE onwards. The fortifications surrounding the *akropolis* of the site were extensively repaired towards the end of Antiquity and the original walls in polygonal masonry were reinforced with mortared masonry. This is especially visible at the northwestern corner of the *akropolis* (Fig. 63) but further traces can be seen at some other places. The modern chapel of Agia Paraskevi was partially built on top of the ruins of a three-aisled medieval church which stood ruined at Stählin’s (1936b, 332) visit in the 1920s. The ecclesiastical importance of the site in the Byzantine period is attested by the fact that it was the seat of a Diocese (*episkopē Palaiogardikiou*) from the 10th century CE until the end of the 12th century, when it moved to Zarkos (No. 30), retaining its name (Spanos 2008, 723).

The area immediately south of the 4th century BCE fortified enceinte consisted of marshy ground until the mid-20th century, as is evident in maps of the period. This formed part of the larger marsh of Voula which was mainly located further to the east of the settlement area. The closest firm ground was further towards modern Petroporos, where agricultural and infrastructural works have yielded a large number of burials dating to the 5th–1st centuries BCE (Hourmouziadis 1972, 282; Katakouta 1999, 339;

Karapanou 2003, 513–522; Karagiannopoulos 2018b, 524–527; Hatziangelakis 2021, 44–45). The most famous tomb is certainly the large Macedonian style tumulus excavated by Arvanitopoulos (1907, 128–130) in 1906. Another tumulus, south of the village, was excavated in the 1980s, producing a wealth of finds of the 3rd century BCE, including much jewellery (Tziafalias 1992b, 134–138). Among the more unusual burials, however, is certainly that of several horses in the northern part of the southern cemetery (Hatziangelakis *et al.* 2016b, 577–578). An eastern cemetery of the Hellenistic period has also been identified at the promontory of Koulia, just east of the settlement area (Theogianni and Athanasiou 2021, 25).

A sizable settlement of the Early, Middle and Late Hellenic period has been excavated at the Asvestaria location, 4 km east of the ancient site. Apsidal houses were found here and it appears that this location was possibly also inhabited in later periods, as a Geometric bronze pin was found during the excavations (Hatziangelakis *et al.* 2016b, 579–580; Vaïopoulou 2016a; 2022, 1003–1004; Hatziangelakis 2021, 45–47).

Chronology

Archaic, Classical, Hellenistic, Late Roman, Byzantine.

Coordinates

324664, 4382043.

21. Pialeia

Modern name

The site is most often referred to as the Palaiokastro (Παλαιόκαστρο) of Pialeia (Πιαλεία), formerly Lepenitsa (Λεπενίτσα), or Karvounolepenitsa (Καρβουνολεπενίτσα), which is the name of the nearby village.

Ancient name

The official identification of the remains at Palaiokastro is with ancient Pialeia (Πιάλεια ἡ/ἄ), a *polis* known only from the 6th century CE Stephanus of Byzantium (s.v. Πιάλεια) as being at the foot of the Kerketion mountain range. The *ethnikon* of the community was *Pialeus*. The modern municipality and the nearby village have been renamed after this ancient toponym, but there is no concrete evidence to support the identification.

Description of site and area

The site at Pialeia (Fig. 65) is located in a small valley adjacent to the plain, formed by the stream of Bentenis,

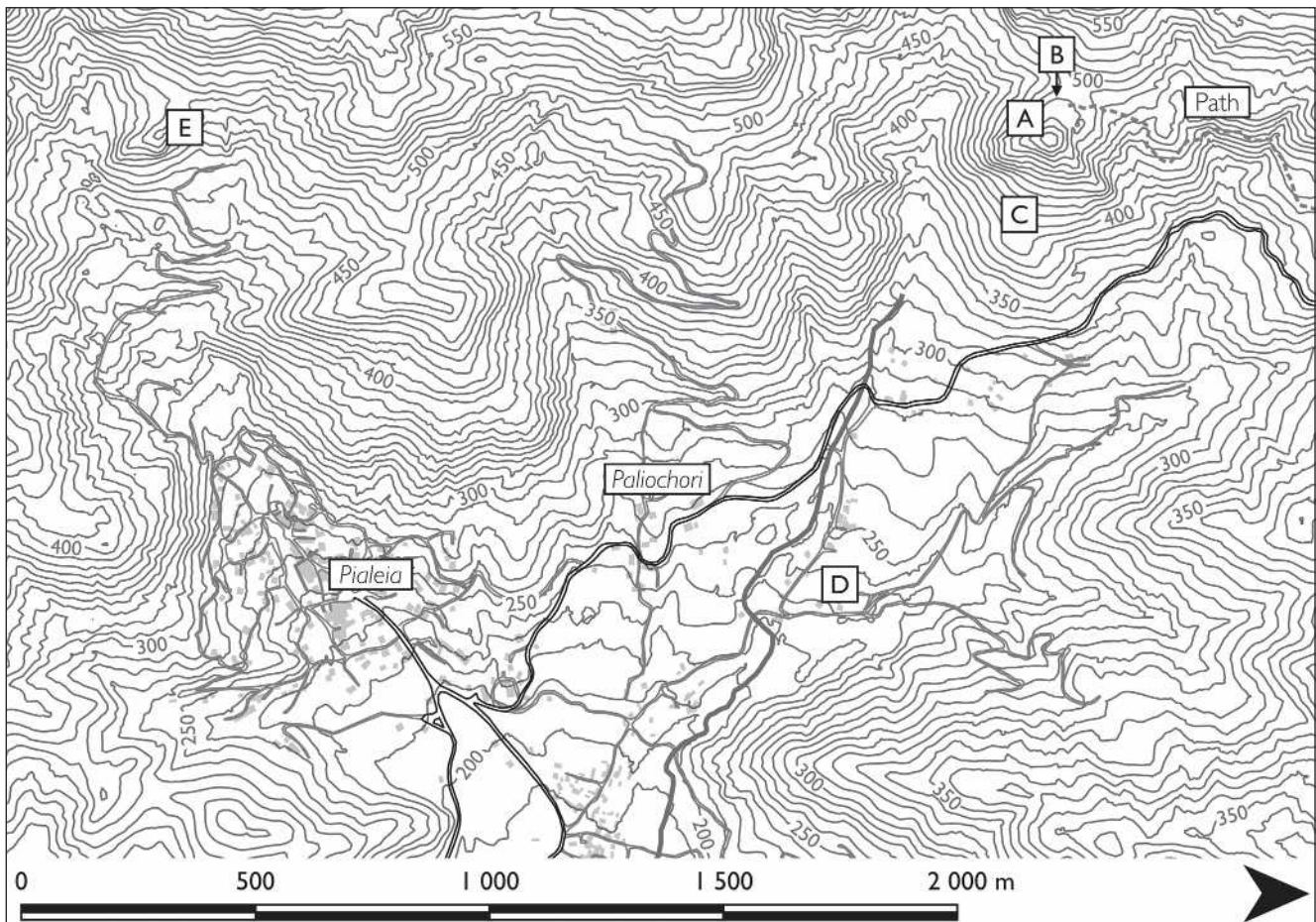


Figure 65 The area of Pialeia. Map-sketch after aerial photographs.

a tributary to the larger Portaïkos river. The area is relatively unknown as to its archaeology, and the closest larger site is at Fiki (No. 7), *c.* 7 km to the southwest.

The hill of Palaiokastro (Fig. 66; at A in Fig. 65) is conical and situated between Xyloparoiko and Pialeia, *c.* 1.7 km northwest of the latter. Very little archaeological work has been conducted at the location apart from the excavations by the ephor Panagiotis Kastriotis in the late summer of 1902, and the site rarely features in accounts of Thessalian archaeology. The hilltop area is only accessible by a small path originating at the concrete road, 750 m north of the site, ending in the saddle area between the hilltop and the larger mountain body. Here (at B in Fig. 65) is a small dyke, defining the only real point of access to the hilltop. The summit of the hill is extremely steep in all directions, with the natural cliffs creating near-vertical rock-faces with sharp edges. The whole hilltop is enclosed by a fortification wall mainly in trapezoidal masonry (Fig. 67), often employing stones over 1.5 m in length. Kastriotis (1903, 29) describes the fortifications as being mainly preserved on the western

side of the hilltop.¹⁰ Kastriotis also mentions a small gate or postern, 1.5 m wide, in the western wall of the hilltop fortification. Yiannis Pikoulas briefly describes the hilltop fortifications as constructed in trapezoidal masonry with two towers, all of which he dates to the second half of the 4th century BCE. Pikoulas (2012, 279–280) further describes a possibly earlier phase of fortifications at the east brow of the hill. At the northwestern corner of the hilltop is a finger-like cliff, *c.* 4 m higher than the rest of the area. Rock-cuttings show that the northern face of the fortification wall abutted this formation, continuing up its side. This makes that the fortification wall must originally have towered more than 10–15 m above the saddle area.

A 2 m deep and 1.5 × 1.5 m square cistern, cut into the bedrock and plastered on the inside, was observed by Kastriotis (1903, 37) on the left-hand side inside the postern. This is still visible on the hilltop and is built up with small, well-cut stones on the level above the bedrock. Kastriotis (1903, 31) found fragmentary remains of a small sanctuary on the highest point of the hilltop (*c.* 540 masl),



Figure 66 The hill of Palaiokastro at Pialeia, looking south. © Greek Ministry of Culture and Sports – Organization for the Management and Development of Cultural Resources.



Figure 67 Palaiokastro, Pialeia. Outer face of fortification wall at the southern part of the akropolis. © Greek Ministry of Culture and Sports – Organization for the Management and Development of Cultural Resources.

the architectural remains of which had been almost completely robbed out for the construction of later fortifications at the site. The heavily eroded trench is still visible on the hilltop. Two low square pillars were discovered here together with their respective capitals and were interpreted as sacrificial tables or altars by the excavator (Kastriotis 1903, 31). Among the finds were a c. 500 BCE bronze figurine – possibly a decoration from a tripod – of a woman in Doric helmet holding a small sword or long knife, interpreted by the excavator as an amazon on the basis of similar finds from the Athenian Akropolis. Other finds included ten spearheads (some with preserved wood from the shafts), small (votive?) shields, a bronze wing from a larger statuette, several loom-weights and a fragment of a 3rd century BCE bronze plaque with the inscription *[basi]leōs*. The nature of the finds prompted Kastriotis to interpret the sanctuary as probably being dedicated to Artemis. The large amounts of roof-tiles – some stamped with the name Aristoboulos in the genitive, probably a magistrate or tile-maker – was interpreted by the excavator as coming from the roof of the

sanctuary (Kastriotis 1903, 31–37). The layout of the rest of the site probably followed the common arrangement with a separately fortified *akropolis* on the hilltop, with the *katō polis* or inhabited part of the site at the east foot of the hill, 200 m horizontally and 150 m vertically from the *akropolis* area (at B Fig. 65). Pikoulas (2012, 279) noted a large scatter of pottery here, dating to the same periods as the finds from the *akropolis*. The lower area is naturally protected in northwest and southwest by rocky promontories, but there are no reports of any fortifications in the area.

Kastriotis spent one hour in the late evening excavating at the location Ftelia, at the right bank of the stream in the valley below the site of Palaiokastro (at C in Fig. 65). Here, he found two votive reliefs of the Roman period¹¹ which he interpreted as having been re-used in a destroyed Byzantine church on the location. The Artemidean scenes on the reliefs made that the excavator interpreted them as originating from the sanctuary on the hilltop at Palaiokastro (Kastriotis 1903, 38). The great distance and difficult terrain separating the two locations – as well as the lack of reported Roman finds

from the hilltop excavation – makes this improbable. Further finds of the Roman period, including hypocaust tiles, have been found in the general vicinity of the village, and are kept in the municipal museum.

Approximately 2 km south of the Palaiokastro site, and 0.7 km southwest of the village is a rocky crag (at D in Fig. 65) known as Almpina. A small Byzantine fortification has been noted here, with a view towards the *kastra* at Trikala and Fanari (Pikoulas 2012, 280).

Chronology

Archaic, Classical, Hellenistic, Roman?

Coordinates

Site at Palaiokastro: 292144, 4376861; site at Almpina: 292117, 4375008.

22. Proastio

Modern name

The site is not well-known, but appears interchangeably as the Chomatokastro (Χωματόκαστρο), the Chantakia

(Χαντάκια), or Avlakia (Αυλάκια) of Proastio (Προάστιο, formerly Paraprastaina, Παραπράσταινα), which is the adjoining village.

Ancient name

The location is locally associated with ancient Silana (*Σιλάνα, ἡ/ᾰ), a settlement only known from Livy (36.13.6), which in turn led to the naming of the now disbanded municipality of Silana. There is nothing at present to support this identification apart from the relative location as perceived from Livy.

Description of site and area

Just southeast of the village of Proastio, at the location of Chantakia, is a partially fortified space (Fig. 68) known as the Chomatokastro, “dirt castle” (Decourt 1986, 360; 1990, 149, n. 5). A high embankment preserved for c. 200 m (at A in Fig. 68), but in WWII aerial photographs nearly 630 m long (at B in Fig. 68), stretches along a third of the circumference of a circle (Fig. 69). It appears as if this dyke closed off an area in the bend of a stream, creating a protected space of nearly 18.5 ha (at D in Fig. 68). An opening in

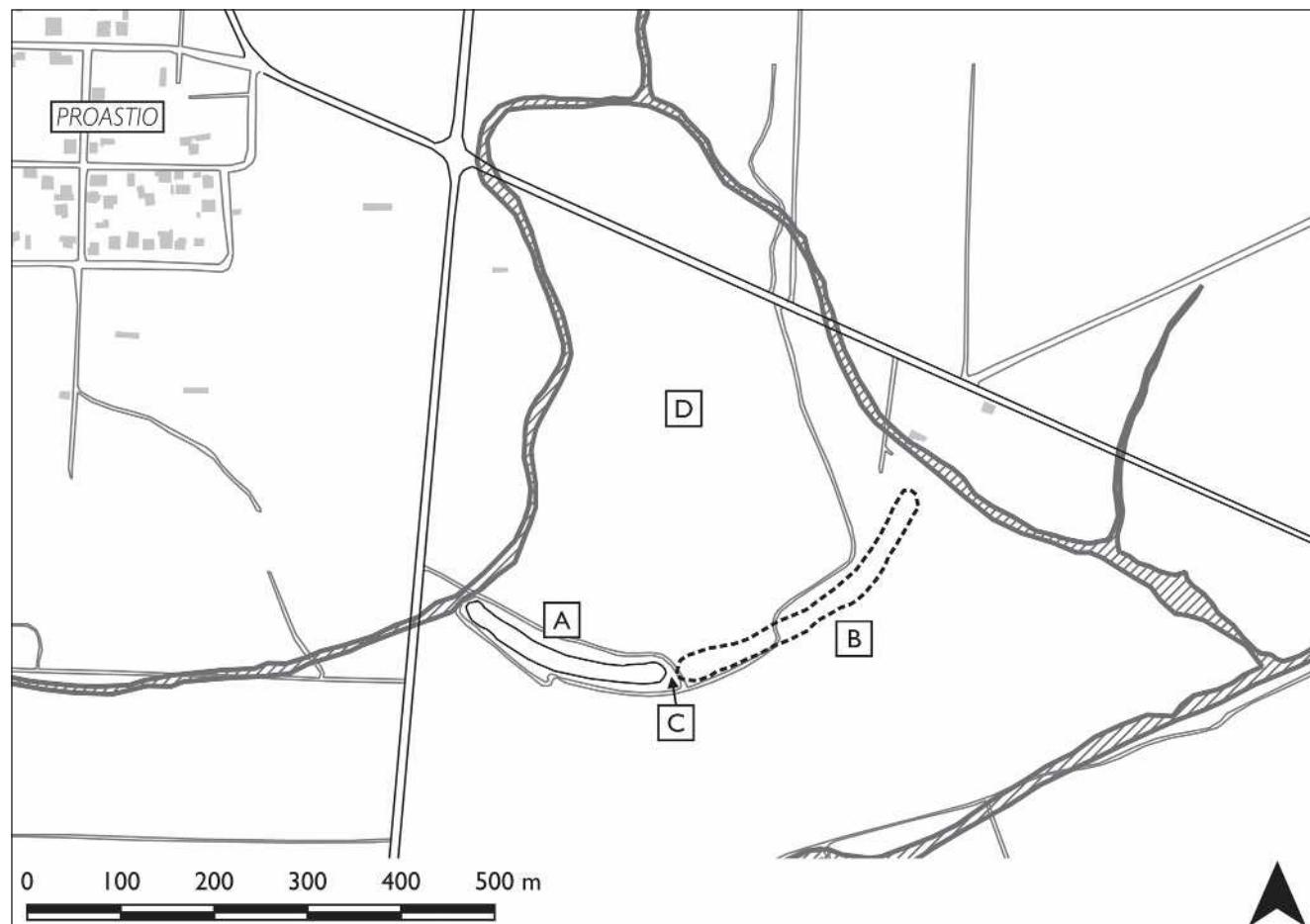


Figure 68 The site at Proastio. Hydrology represents situation in 1940s. Plan-sketch after aerial photographs.



Figure 69 Embankments at Proastio, as seen from the east. © Greek Ministry of Culture and Sports – Organization for the Management and Development of Cultural Resources.

the middle section of the dyke (at C in Fig. 68) indicates a possible gate or passage, but whether this belonged to the original layout of the site cannot be ascertained. There is a report that the site was mapped in 1992 (Nikolaou 1997b, 237), but no such plan has been published, and the above sketch is wholly made from aerial photographs.

An agricultural installation of the Classical–Hellenistic period was excavated c. 650 m south of the site during the construction of the new national highway; whether this relates to the fortification cannot be ascertained (Vaïopoulou 2018b, 113).

Chronology

Unknown.

Coordinates

320590, 4371697.

23. Pyrgos Ithomis

Modern name

The site is located on the ridge of Kastro, c. 1.5 km south-east of Pyrgos Ithomis (Πύργος Ιθώμης), formerly Piros (Πίρος). Lolling refers to the site as Bogazi, a Turkish word (*boğaz*) implying a narrow pass, which well describes the topographical situation.

Ancient name

The official identification of the remains is with ancient Ithome (Ιθώμη, ἦ). Apart from its location, there is nothing that supports this identification, and the medieval site at nearby Fanari (Appendix 2, Fig. 94, 8.4) has also been suggested as the location of Ithome (Stählin 1916).

Description of site

The ridge of Kastro (Fig. 71) slopes towards northwest from a higher hill above it. The slope is steep on both the northeast and southwest sides, with the stream of Potamia/Megas running along the modern road at the southwest foot of the ridge. On top of the ridge (A in Fig. 70, c. 340 masl) is a larger isolated tower in coursed trapezoidal masonry (*contra* Hatziangelakis 2001b, 361). The tower is 7.9 × 10 m in plan and is preserved up to 4.7 m in height, and is probably early Hellenistic in date (Hatziangelakis 2007, 65–66). Lolling observed a square cistern (B in Fig. 70) next to the tower along with some additional building remains and the fragmented layout of a fortification (Lolling 2, 37. C in Fig. 70). In all, the ridge-top remains have the outline of a triangular fortified space, possibly serving as an *akropolis* to a lower settlement (Hatziangelakis 2007, 65). The only real access to this fortified area by the tower is along the ridge-line. Fragmentary traces of walls follow along the top of the steep northeast slope (at D in Fig. 70), descending the ridge towards northwest. Lolling noted building remains on the small plateau-like end of the ridge (at E in Fig. 70), and around the nearby 19th century church of the Twelve Apostles, further architectural remains, pottery and tile have been noted. Built into the church is an undated votive inscription to Artemis by Glaukia, daughter of Antigonos. Tombs have been noted in the area below the ridge (Hatziangelakis 2001b, 361).

Chronology

Classical, Hellenistic.

Coordinates

307500, 4362802.

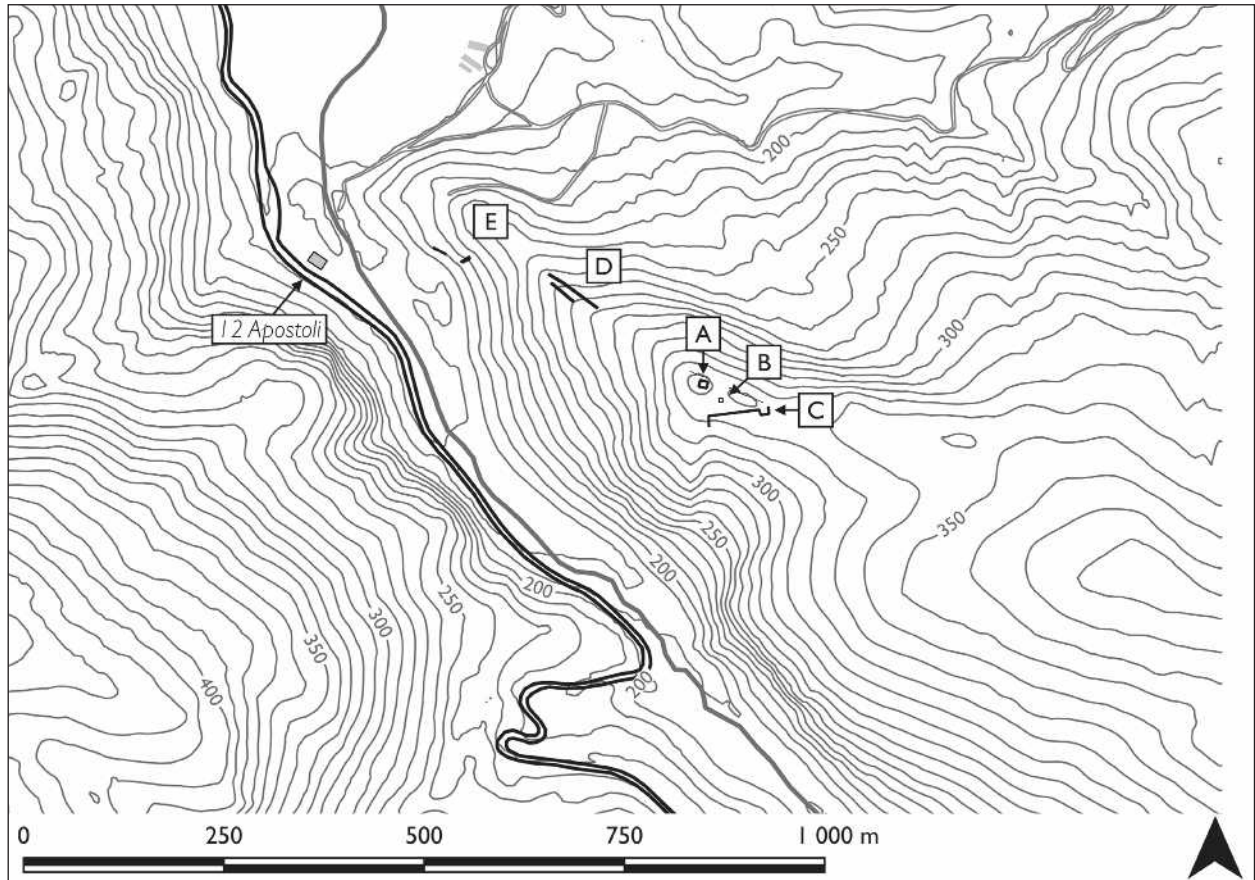


Figure 70 The Kastro ridge at Pyrgos Ithomis. Map-sketch after (Lolling 2, 37) and aerial photographs.



Figure 71 The Kastro ridge at Pyrgos Ithomis, looking east. The silhouette of the tower can be seen at the summit. © Greek Ministry of Culture and Sports – Organization for the Management and Development of Cultural Resources.

24. Pyrgos Kieriou

Modern name

The site is often referred to as Pyrgos Kieriou (Πύργος Κιερίου), which is the name of the adjoining village, formerly Pyrgos Mataragkas (Πύργος Ματαράγκας). The hill upon which is the *akropolis* of the ancient settlement is known as the Oglas (Ογλάς).

Ancient name

The site at Pyrgos Kieriou was, from quite early on, identified as that of ancient Kierion (Κιέριον, τό), which has now been confirmed by several finds of stamped roof-tiles bearing the name of this community (Hatzangelakis 2001b, 361). The local Thessalian spelling was sometimes Kiarion (Κιάριον, τό), as indicated by inscriptions. The ethnic was *Kiereus*, as attested on coins, or sometimes *Kiarios*. There are some indications that an extra-Thessalian name for Kierion could have been Pierion (Πιέριον, τό) or Pierios (Πιέριος, ό), as such toponyms occur in a number of texts (*inter alia* Liv. 32.15).

Ancient tradition had the location of Kierion as being the same as that of Homeric Arne (Ἄρνη, ἦ), which was said to be the ancestral home of the Boeotians prior to their (mythical) migration to the south (Strab. 9.1.29). The nymph

Arne – marked *Arna* – appears on early 4th century coins of Kierion (see below).

Description of site and area

The archaeological site at Kierion (Fig. 72) lies immediately underneath and west of the modern village of Pyrgos Kieriou.¹² Most of the published archaeological evidence from the site comes from rescue excavations within the western parts of the modern settlement, as well as from the roadworks cutting through the vast southern cemetery. Most visible remains at the site are on the top of the Oglas hill, the 2 ha of which is enclosed by a multi-period fortification wall, c. 520 m in circumference (at A in Fig. 72). Large parts of the southwestern, southern and eastern sections wall were excavated by the 13th Ephorate during an extensive programme in 1996–1998 aiming at turning the location into an archaeological park (Hatzangelakis 2000b, 386–387; 2001b, 358–361; 2003, 473; 2004, 444–445; 2011a, 578), revealing a series of discrete building phases. The oldest phase of fortification on the hilltop is represented by a wall in polygonal masonry, employing moderately large to very large (“Cyclopean”) stones (Fig. 73). This is mainly preserved in the south part of the enceinte (B in Fig. 72) but also in the north (Hatzangelakis 2011a, 578). The fortification

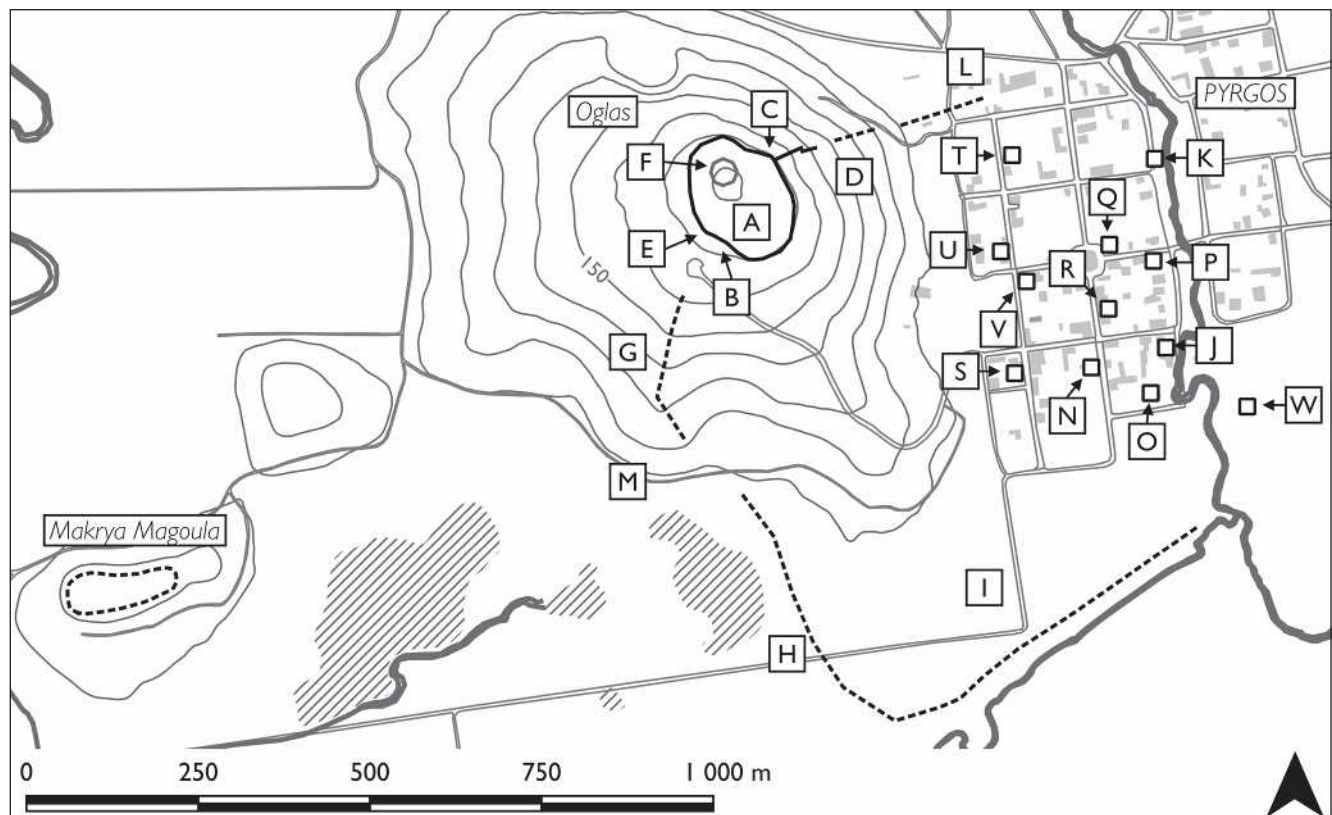


Figure 72 The Oglas hill at Pyrgos Kieriou with environs. Hydrology represents situation in 1945. Plan-sketch after (Lolling 2, 30), Theocharis as reproduced in Hatzangelakis (2000b, 388), and aerial photographs.



Figure 73 Panoramic view of fortification wall in polygonal masonry at the akropolis of Kierion. © Greek Ministry of Culture and Sports – Organization for the Management and Development of Cultural Resources.

also contains sections employing near-isodomic masonry (Hatziangelakis 2004, 444–445), which possibly constitutes another building phase. A rectangular tower (C in Fig. 72), 7.20 m wide and protruding 6.5 m from the curtain wall towards the centre of the enceinte, in similar masonry is located at the northeastern brow of the hill (*Lolling* 2, 30; Hatziangelakis 2001b, 360). This tower connects to a fragmentarily preserved wall (D in Fig. 72) descending the hill in a serrated fashion towards the northeast (*Lolling* 2, 30; Hatziangelakis 2007, 47; 2011a, 578). On the corresponding southwestern side of the hilltop enceinte is another rectangular tower (E in Fig. 72), protruding from the wall-trace (Hatziangelakis 2007, 47). At the southern end of the hilltop enceinte is a stretch of the excavated section which clearly shows the multi-phase nature of the fortifications, as identified by the excavator, Hatziangelakis (2011a, 578). A Late Roman (6th century CE?) lamp found during excavations indicate activities on the hill at least until this point (Hatziangelakis 2000b, 389). Two burials (dates not given in the report), both on an east–west alignment, were found excavated into the wall at the eastern sector of the enceinte. One of the skeletons found had an iron arrowhead wedged into its spine (Hatziangelakis 2003, 473). On the very top of the hill are the fragmentary remains of a hexagonal keep-like structure (*Lolling* 2, 37) (F in Fig. 72). This is probably the Byzantine tower observed by Leake (1835b, 497), which might have given the name to the village of Pyrgos (“tower”). There are no gates in the hilltop fortifications judging from the published reports.

The *akropolis* fortifications were connected with the lower defences of the city by a descending wall in the southwestern slope of the hill (at G in Fig. 72. Theocharis

as reproduced in Hatziangelakis 2000b, 388). At the foot of the hill, a low depression (at H in Fig. 72) is still visible (Hatziangelakis 2001b, 359) which, until the mid-20th century, formed a series of small seasonal lakes on the inside of which the ancient wall probably continued (Theocharis as reproduced in Hatziangelakis 2000b, 388). The depression might possibly indicate an ancient ditch protecting the lower settlement area. Army maps show that area immediately to the east is clearly more elevated than most of the surroundings. Parts of the lower fortification wall on the opposite side of the settlement were on the west bank of a small stream, where two sections of it have been found and excavated (Intzesiloglou 1989a, 230; J and K in Fig. 72). The northernmost section of the fortifications must have run from the descending wall in the east slope of the hill and made a bend (at L in Fig. 72) southwards to connect with the excavated eastern section of the wall. The intramural area of the city appears consequently to have covered at least *c.* 50 ha, including the *akropolis* on the hill. It is possible that the fortified area was modified, however, as a 12 m stretch of fortification wall was found in the Batzias field (at M in Fig. 72), running at an opposing angle to the general enceinte (Hatziangelakis 1992, 262–263).

Remains of buildings and houses have been found during several rescue excavations within the western part of the modern village. On the E. Theodorou plot (N in Fig. 72) a street surface was found (Nikolaou 1999a, 328). A Hellenistic building, with ceramic material stretching back to the Archaic period, was excavated in the nearby Th. Kefalas plot (Nikolaou 1998, 245; O in Fig. 72). Further to the north of this, on the E. Evaggelou plot (P in Fig. 72), substantial remains of Classical, Hellenistic and Roman buildings

were found (Nikolaou 2005, 410–413). Further Classical–Hellenistic structures have been excavated in the I. Vasilakopoulos plot (Q in Fig. 72), constructed on an east–west axis, with a destruction layer covering some of the remains (Nikolaou 2011, 479). Deep (6 m) Classical layers were excavated underneath a Hellenistic building with an adjacent street running east–west on the Th. Papounis plot (R in Fig. 72), with a later Roman building constructed on top of the Hellenistic foundations (Nikolaou 2003a, 483–482). Another Roman building, with a bottle-shaped cistern, was excavated on the V. Tsianas plot (S in Fig. 72), with remains of a Mycenaean building on a lower stratum (Hatziangelakis 2000a, 377–378). Finds ranging from the Geometric to the Roman period, including matrixes for figurines and discs, were excavated on the D. and Ch. Platonis plots (T and U in Fig. 72; Intzesiloglou 1988b, 254). A large pithos was found and excavated on the Th. Paschalis plot (V in Fig. 72; Hatziangelakis 1992, 262).

The cemeteries of Kierion were vast, as revealed by excavations extending even beyond the modern highway Karditsa–Sofades to the south of the modern village. The Kotronolakkes area at the highway yielded tombs from the beginning of the 5th until the 4th centuries BCE (Hatziangelakis 2000a, 376–377; Nikolaou 2001, 352–356; 2003a, 488–490; 2005, 413; 2009, 480; Vaïopoulou 2014b, 764–765), with further cemeteries of the 4th century in the area towards Moscholouri (Rondiri 2011, 494). A Roman period cemetery (W in Fig. 72) with rich finds was excavated east and just outside the line of the lower fortifications (Tsiouka 2019a, 735–737). North of the village, close to the road towards Mataragka, are further cemeteries, including one with Roman burials (Nikolaou 2003a, 490; Rondiri 2004, 443).

Nine hundred metres southwest of the *akropolis* on Oglas hill is the Makrya Magoula, a low elongated hillock with nearly flat top. Recent excavations by the Ephorate of Karditsa have shown that the hilltop was surrounded by a wall dating to the Late Helladic Period (Vaïopoulou 2018a, 504). Vladimir Milošević (1960, 168) reported the remains of an Ionic *stoa* at the site as well as a mosaic, none of which are visible today. An inscribed *stēlē* (Helly 1971; Decourt 1995, 23–25) was also found at this location, containing two inscriptions of the early 2nd and late 1st century BCE, recording the names of the donors for the construction and subsequent repair of a *bouleion*, to be erected in the sanctuary of Heracles. A section of a road was excavated and traced for some hundred metres at a location southwest of Makrya Magoula, possibly connecting Kierion with its neighbours (Intzesiloglou 2010b).

A sanctuary to Asclepius was partially excavated at the Paliokastra location, just south of the village of Gorgovites, 4 km northwest of Oglas (Intzesiloglou 1992a, 265–266; 1993, 253–254). Stamped roof-tiles confirm that the sanctuary belonged to the Kiereans (Intzesiloglou 2010b, 77).

Coinage

The only study presenting the coinage of the Kiereans specifically is by Fotini Tsiouka (1993), highlighting similarities with the mint of neighbouring communities in Western Thessaly. The Kiereans struck coins beginning in the 5th century BCE, ending around the second half of the 3rd century, with the legend KIEPIAION or KIEPEIΩN *vel sim.* (Tsiouka 1994, 38). The issues vary in their iconography, but most of the coins feature the laureate head of Zeus on the obverse, either facing left or right. In some cases, a small thunderbolt features behind the head. Some issues have a laureate Apollo on the obverse. Among these is one with a thunderbolt within a laurel wreath, and one with a standing nude Zeus facing right, holding a thunderbolt behind his head in his right hand, with a bird residing on his extended left hand in the pose of the famous “Poseidon of Artemision”. In front of the god is the kneeling nymph Arne/Arna (Moustaka 1983, 49), which also features on the reverse of many of the issues, depicted as kneeling right playing with *astragaloi*. The identification with the nymph, eponymous with the mythological predecessor of the *polis*, is confirmed by the legend APNA on some of the issues. Arna/Arne also features on the obverse of some issues. The cult of Asclepius, whose sanctuary was in the Kierian countryside, is supported by the reverse of a 4th century BCE stater, depicting the god seated on a rock among some trees. A group of 4th century BCE obols feature on the obverse the same nude warrior as can be seen on coins of Triikka (No. 28) and Peirasia (No. 5) as well as the stamped roof-tiles of the latter. The figure wears a Corinthian helmet with a large shield on his left arm and a sword in the right hand. The reverse has a horse prancing or galloping to the right.

Written sources

The earliest mention of the community of the Kiereans is on the early 4th century coins mentioned above. Pseudo-Scylax (64), writing in the 330s BCE, puts Kierion among other *poleis* of central and Western Thessaly, and Kiereans figure in inscriptions from Delphi, Argos, Thespiiai, Gonnoi, Demetrias, Larissa and Lamia from the end of the 4th until the beginning of the 1st century BCE. Livy (32.15; 36.10; 36.14) mentions the Kierians together with Matropolitans (No. 17) as siding with the Romans in 198 BCE in exchange for their cities not to be destroyed, but a few years later in 191 BCE, Philip V and the Macedonians take both cities. A proxeny inscription dated to the c. 180s BCE mentioning one Roman citizen and three or four of Italic origin indicates a possible pro-Roman sentiment at the time (Decourt 1995, 15–20).

An early 1st century CE arbitration inscription found at Pyrgos Kieriou (*IG IX,2*, 261; Decourt 1995, 10–13), shows that the Kierians still existed as a community at this point. The inscription records the vote in the *koinon*

of the Thessalians (instituted by Flamininus in 196 BCE) and subsequent correspondence with the Roman governor of Achaia (Gaius Poppaeus Sabinus) regarding a boundary dispute with the neighbours to the southwest, the Matropolitans. The last mention of Kierion is by Steph. Byz. (*s.v.* Ἄρνη), who merely mentions that the location of mythical Arne was (at his time?) called Kierion.

Chronology

Late Helladic, Geometric, Archaic, Classical, Hellenistic, Roman, Late Roman, Byzantine.

Coordinates

333618, 4358646.

25. Omvriasa

Modern name

The archaeological site is most often referred to as Omvriasa (Ομβριάσα), named after an adjacent spring, but sometimes also as Platanos (Πλάτανος, formerly Bania, Μπάνια), which is the nearby village.

Ancient name

No ancient name has been suggested for the settlement.

Description of site and area

The site at Omvriasa (at A in Fig. 74) is located *c.* 1.3 km north of the village of Platanos and *c.* 2.5 km southwest of Ellinokastro (formerly Koursovo). Surface material indicated a substantial Classical to Byzantine settlement at the location, which occupies a flat plateau-like area between two small streams. Excavations from 1990 onwards have revealed two Christian basilicas, constructed side by side. The southernmost of these was taken out of use before the northern one and its location used as a burial ground. Immediately west of the churches are the excavated remains of a possible auxiliary building (Fig. 75; Mantzana 2014a, 766; 2014b, 625; 2015, 385; Papanastasouli 2014, 745).

Approximately 1 km upstream from the site at Omvriasa is a steep ridge between two smaller streams (at B in Fig. 74). This location is marked as Synoro on Greek maps and contains the remains of a multi-period larger fortification, *c.* 320 m long from east to west and with a maximum width of *c.* 120 m (Nimas 1988, 269). Bruno Helly (1995b, 244)

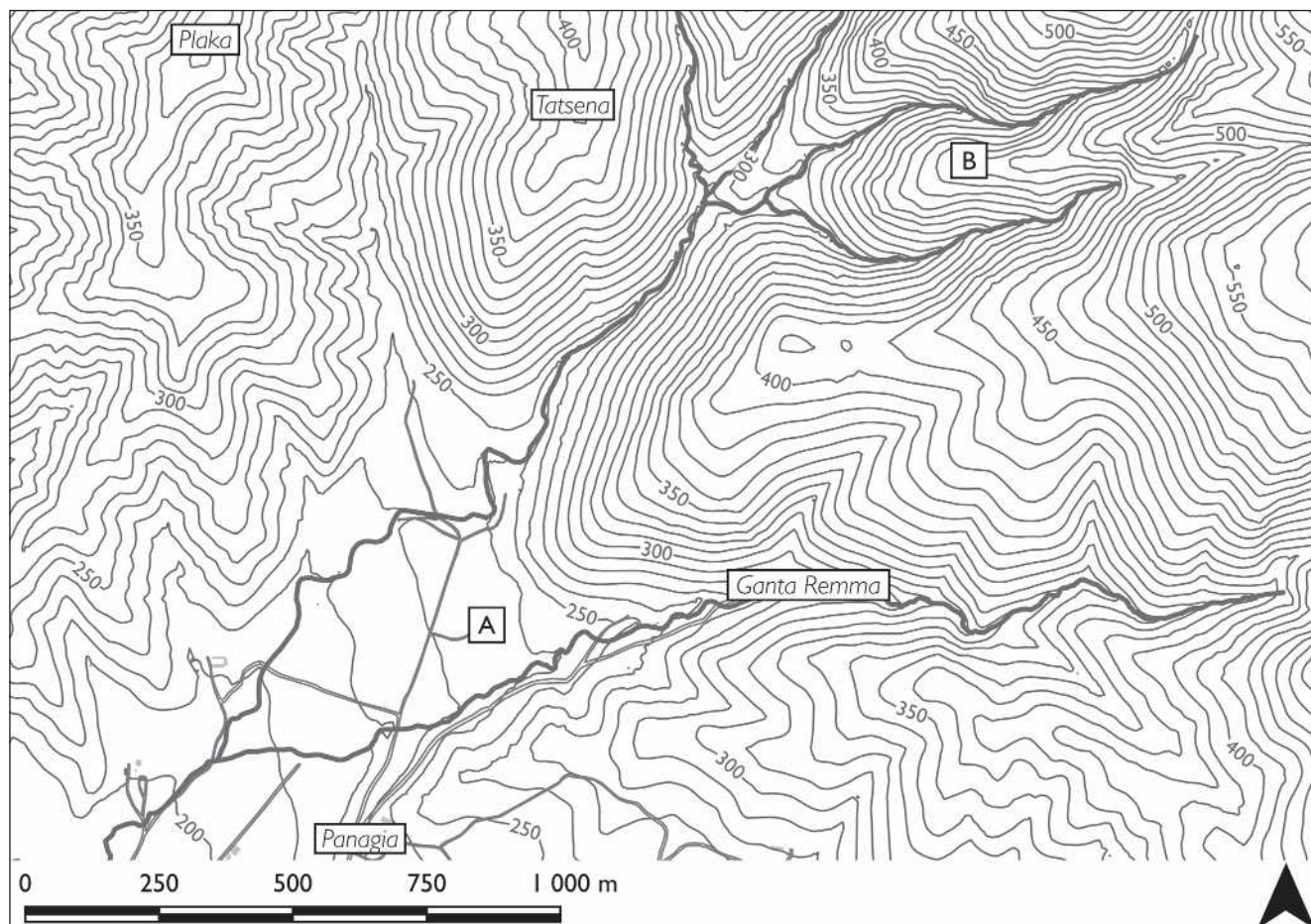


Figure 74 The site of Omvriasa with environs. Map-sketch from aerial photographs.



Figure 75 Excavated auxiliary (?) building at Omvriasa. The excavated basilicas are under the roof at the back. © Greek Ministry of Culture and Sports – Organization for the Management and Development of Cultural Resources.

noted walls in polygonal masonry along the north side of the fortified area, but most of the remains are reportedly medieval. Aerial photographs show foundations of several rectangular structures of unknown dates within the enceinte.

Chronology

Classical?, Byzantine.

Coordinates

309044, 4393633.

26. Skoumpos

Modern name

The site is most often referred to as Skoumpos (Σκούμπος), from Albanian *shkëmb* (“cliff”, “crag”), but sometimes also as Megarchi (Μεγάρχη), which is a nearby village.

Ancient name

The traditional identification (*Lolling 1*, 76; Darmezis 1996, 228; Karagiannopoulos 2014b, 667) of the ancient

remains at Skoumpos is that they are of ancient Phalōreia (ἡ Φαλώρεια), also known as Phalorion or Phalorea (ἡ Φαλώρη), a *polis* known from coinage, a handful of inscriptions (Plassart 1921, 16), Livy (32.15; 36.13; 39.25) and Stephanus Byzantius (*s.v.* Φαλώρη). The *ethnikon* appears to have been *Phalōriastēs* or *Phalōreus*. No definite evidence for this identification exists. An alternative identification is with Pialeia (ἡ Πιαλεία) (Meyer 1965), which is more commonly associated with Pialeia (**No. 21**).

Description of site and area

Skoumpos (Fig. 76) is a conspicuous peak (409 masl), the highest (Fig. 77) of a group of hills separated from the Pindos range by the Vitoumitis and Kalo Nero streams to north and east. The hill is located approximately 2.3 km northeast of Ouranos, a village just northwest of Megarchi and the west banks of the Pineios river as it flows from the pass at Kalampaka. Several springs surround the hill to the north, east and south but the area is nearly completely empty of modern habitation. The hilltop is enclosed east and west by a fortification wall in uncoursed and coursed polygonal

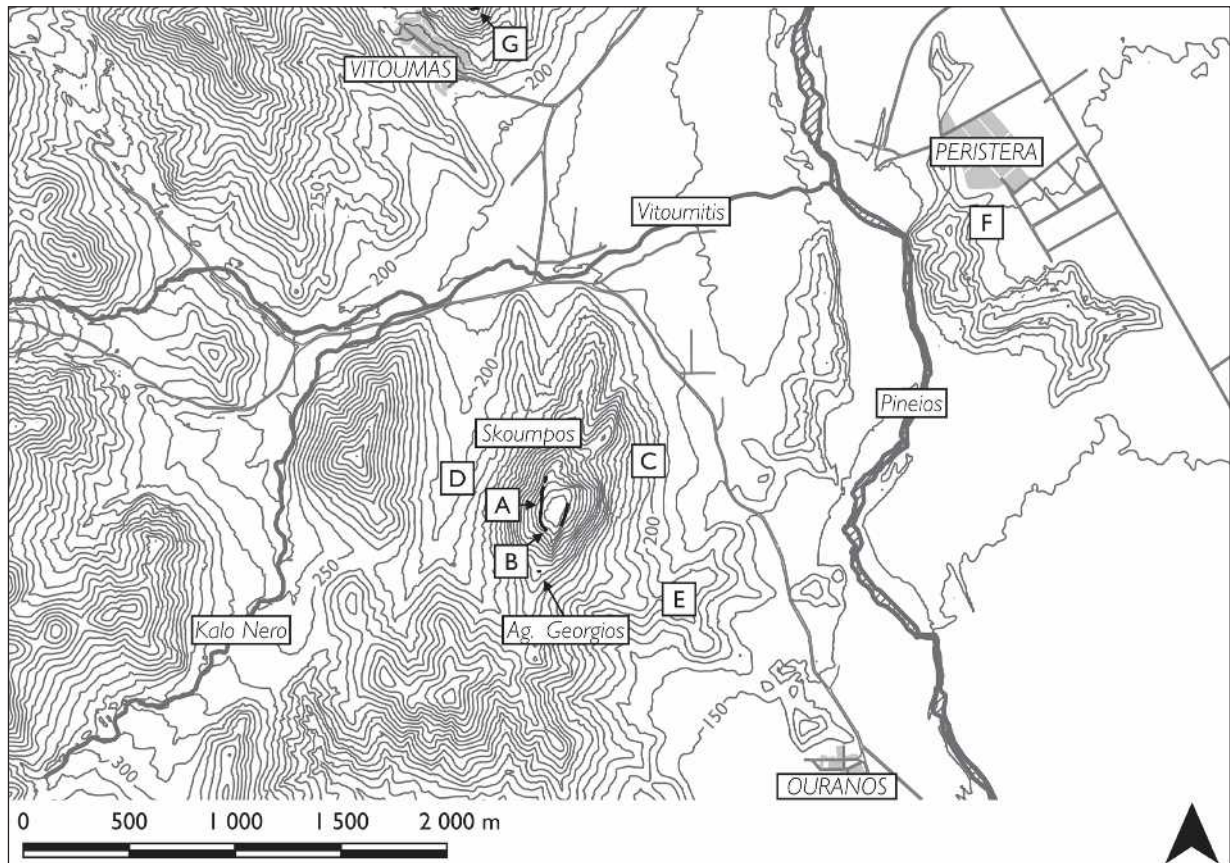


Figure 76 The hill of Skoumpos with environs. Map-sketch after (Lolling 1, 81) and aerial photographs.



Figure 77 The hill of Skoumpos as seen from the south. © Greek Ministry of Culture and Sports – Organization for the Management and Development of Cultural Resources.



Figure 78 Fortification wall in polygonal masonry, western slope of the Skoumpos hill. © Greek Ministry of Culture and Sports – Organization for the Management and Development of Cultural Resources.

masonry, the latter almost trapezoidal. The western wall (at A in Fig. 76) is in well-executed masonry, still preserved to over 2 m in height with large stones (Fig. 78). Habbo Lolling (*Lolling 1*, 76) noticed a gate in the southwestern part of the fortification (B in Fig. 76), which is the only real point of access to the hilltop from the south. The wall was stylistically dated by Pikoulas to the 4th century BCE and the hilltop is rich in Archaic, Classical and Hellenistic pottery. Around the plateau around the church of Agios Georgios in the south slope is much ceramic material, indicating a possible lower settlement. Lolling (*Lolling 1*, 76) noted building remains on the eastern slope of the hill, including cut blocks at a small spring (at C in Fig. 76). Below the hill to the west (at D in Fig. 76) is a possible cemetery (Decourt *et al.* 2004, 701; Pikoulas 2012, 278–279; Karagiannopoulos 2014b, 667), and a late Hellenistic tomb *stēlē* has been found in the area (Theocharis 1968b, 254). It is possible that this is a mistake for another location in the eastern foothills (at E in Fig. 76). Geometric and Archaic pottery have been reported at Peristera (at F in Fig. 76),

c. 2 km northeast of the hill (Karagiannopoulos 2014b, 667). A Byzantine fort is located on a ridge-spur just north of the village of Vitoumas, 2.5 km north of Skoumpos (Pikoulas 2012, 278. G in Fig. 76).

Chronology

Archaic, Classical, Hellenistic.

Coordinates

295649, 4388870.

27. Sykies

Modern name

The village at the site has many alternative names, including the more common Sykeonas (Συκεώνας) or Sykies (Συκιές), and the official Katharevousa Sykeai (Συκέαι) with its Demotic form Sykees (Συκεές). The village is still referred to by locals by the original name Mousalari (Μουσαλάρι, Turkish Müsalar), which is still how it is registered in the

official list of archaeological sites. The adjoining small settlement just east of the village is Magoulitsa (Μαγουλίτσα).

Ancient name

The *kastro* at Sykies was suggested by Jean-Claude Decourt (1986, 383; 1990, 174) as being the site of ancient Peirasia, but the discovery of a stamped roof-tile of this settlement in the village of Ermitsi (No. 5) has made this identification improbable.

Description of site

Sykies (Hatzangelakis 2016a, 563–565) is located at an important pass connecting the eastern and western Thesalian plains, traversing the hill-land of Revenia, and is still used by the main Karditsa–Larisa highway (Fig. 79). This hill-land surrounds the site and the adjacent village to the west, north and east, with the western plains extending below towards south. The *kastro* is located on a hilltop c. 400 m northeast of the village (A in Fig. 79). The area has been used for cultivation but is at present mainly grazed, making the terrain quite bare of any substantial vegetation. A distinct embankment surrounds the hilltop, creating a flat

platform with steep sides that presents a stark silhouette when seen from the plains below (Fig. 80). The embankment contains no visible towers but a gate can possibly be identified in the middle of the north side of the enceinte (at B in Fig. 79), with semi-circular protrusion in the bank line just east of it (Decourt 1990, fig. 45). The highest point within the embankment is in the east part, where the ground rises to a roughly circular summit (as can be seen to the right in Fig. 80). A small trial excavation was carried out by the ephorate on the summit of the hill in 2000 (at C in Fig. 79), revealing at least two major phases of habitation. The most recent of these consisted of a collapsed tile roof covering an elongated building on a northwest–southeast axis, 6.4 m wide and preserved to 16.8 m in length. Six bases were found along the centre of the building, probably supporting wooden pillars or columns. The finds included pottery of the Classical period, terracotta figurines of the Archaic–Hellenistic period and coins (some of nearby Krannon) of the 4th–3rd centuries BCE. The structure was interpreted by the excavator as that of a public building of the Classical period, possibly of a cultic character. On a lower stratigraphic level, partial remains of an apsidal house

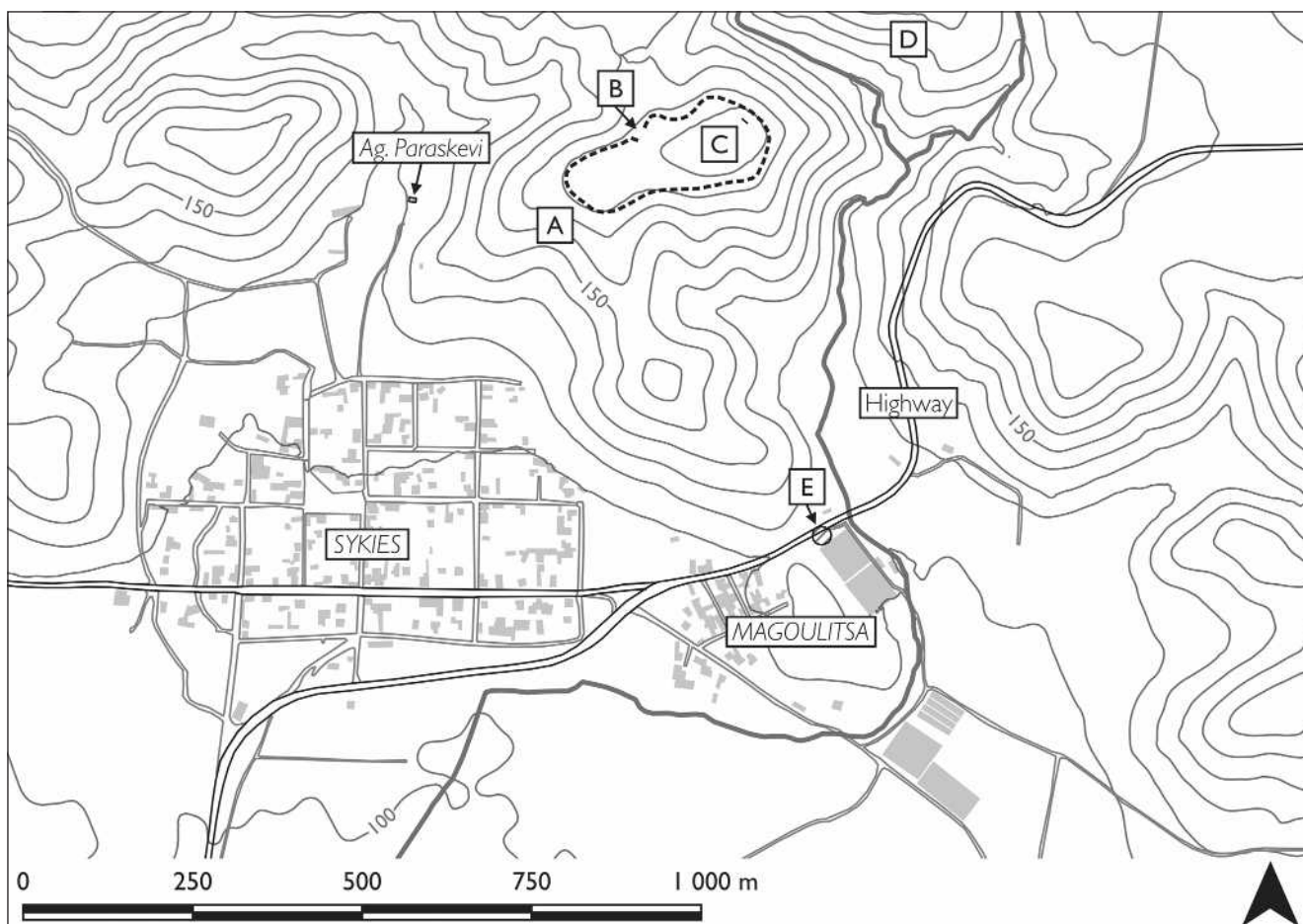


Figure 79 The archaeological site at Sykies. Map-sketch after aerial photographs.



Figure 80 The *kastro* at Sykies, as seen from the southeast. © Greek Ministry of Culture and Sports – Organization for the Management and Development of Cultural Resources.

were found, dated on stylistic grounds to the Middle Helladic period. Surface pottery of the Middle Helladic period has been reported from the *kastro*, as well as from the hill to its northeast (at D in Fig. 79). The excavator, Leonidas Hatziangelakis (2006, 81–83; 2007, 28–29; 2009, 481–483), interprets the hilltop as a possible Middle Helladic fortification with secondary settlement activities in the historical periods. Coins of unknown dates, found at the *kastro*, have been handed in by a private citizen to the museum in Karditsa (Alexiou and Hatziangelakis 2016, 587).

A large tumulus of the late Classical and Hellenistic periods has been excavated at the foot of the hill in southeast, just south of the highway (at E in Fig. 79). The tumulus, which had an original diameter of 50 m and height of 15 m, had an adjoining sepulchral building and contained five preserved larnax burials, one – containing the skeleton of a woman – could be dated to the 3rd century BCE (Hatziangelakis 1989; 1993a, 252; 2001b, 358; 2007, 30; 2008, 324; Stamatoopoulou and Katakouta 2020, 163).

In the hills c. 500 m southwest of the village, a Roman period building complex of the second half of the 2nd century CE, including a bath, has been excavated (Hatziangelakis 2001b, 358; 2007, 31; 2012, 164), yielding mosaics and a marble statuette of Heracles. Stray finds of marble fragments have been reported from other parts of the general area of the village. These include a piece of marble inscribed in the Thessalian alphabet found in 1988 (Hatziangelakis 1993b, 258), and a worn marble head found in 2011 (Alexiou and Hatziangelakis 2016, 590), both probably from the same field at the location of Simsireika, c. 2 km southeast of the village.

Chronology

Middle Helladic, Geometric, Classical, Hellenistic, Roman.

Coordinates

345992, 4372597.

28. Trikala

Modern name

The modern city occupying the site is known in modern Greek as Trikala (Τρίκαλα), in older literature often Trikala (Τρίκκαλα), with the Ottoman Turkish variant Tirhala.

Ancient name

The modern city preserves the ancient name of the settlement Triikka (Thessalian Τρίκκα, ἄ, Ionic Trikke Τρίκκη, ἦ). The ethnic was *Triikkaios*, as appearing in inscriptions, coins, and Stephanus of Byzantium.

Description of site

The modern town of Trikala (Fig. 81) occupies the same location as ancient Triikka, which means that most evidence has come from rescue excavations within the modern settlement. The sites marked on Figure 81 have been identified through the street addresses given in the respective publications. As Trikala arguably is the oldest continuously inhabited urban settlement in Western Thessaly, the city has remains not only of Antiquity but also of the Middle Ages and the late Ottoman period, including the recently renovated 16th century twin baths (at A in Fig. 81) and the important contemporaneous mosque of Osmân Şâh (at B in Fig. 81), both in the formerly Turkish/Moslem quarter of town. The Jewish quarter was in the area of the synagogues north of the central square (at C in Fig. 81). The Christian quarter was centred around the Frourio hill, the last outcrop of a long ridge-line extending from the Chasia range far to the north, in an area with springs on the northern (left) bank of river Lithaios (formerly Trikalinos or Kainak). One of the springs – the Gourná – was active in the early 20th century (D in Fig. 81). For a long time, the centre of the ancient settlement was supposed to be in the area of the Christian quarter, where a large trench has been excavated and expanded since the mid-20th century (Fig. 82; at E in

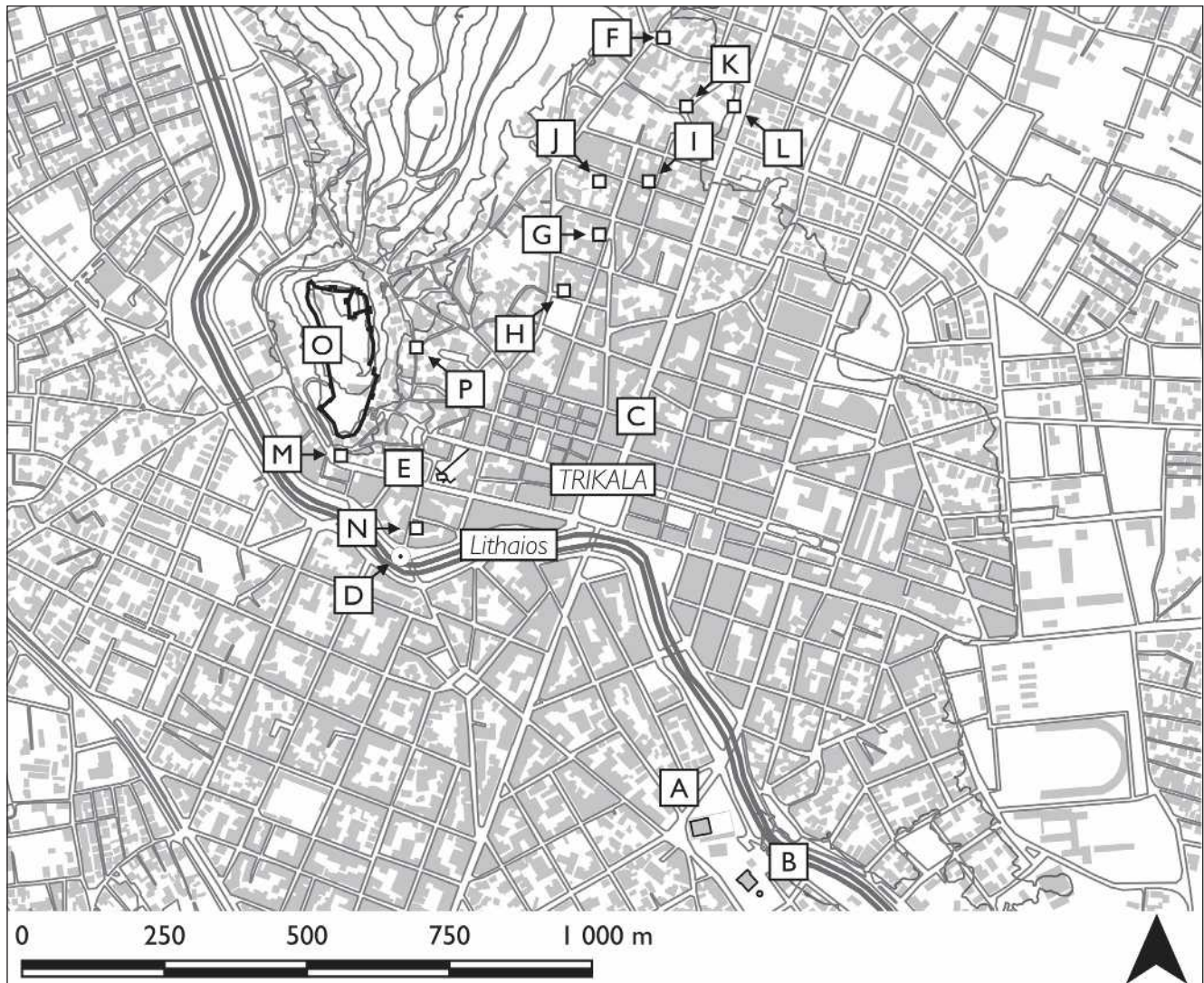


Figure 81 Map of modern Trikala with locations of excavated plots in the ancient city. Map-sketch after Stählin (1924, fig. 8), Kalogeroudis (2015, figs 3 and 5), and aerial photographs.

Fig. 81). This (hereafter, the Agios Nikolaos trench, after the adjoining church) has yielded a Roman bath and a possible Hellenistic *stoa*, which have been interpreted as belonging to the Asklepieion known to have existed in ancient Triikka. A Byzantine church was found in the same plot (Tziafalias 1984a, 178–181; 1984b, 137; 1987, 224–225; 1990a, 202–205; 1993, 283–284; 1995, 235–236; 1998, 249; Hatziangelakis 2016a, 567–569).

More recent excavations in the area north of the Jewish quarter have shown that the actual settlement area might have been in the area east of the ridge slopes. A damaged section of a possible fortification wall found in the A. Daskalopoulos plot, c. 900 m north-northeast of the Agios Nikolaos excavation (F in Fig. 81) indicates the possible end of the intramural area. The masonry style and date of the wall is not given by the excavator but, judging from the illustrations, it was constructed in isodomic ashlar masonry

with a superstructure built from small stones cemented with mortar. Tombs of unknown dates were reported in the same area (Hatziangelakis 2011b, 585–586). Domestic buildings and possible sanctuaries of the Hellenistic and Roman periods have been noted south of this excavation. A Hellenistic–Roman building with a large mosaic floor was found in the Ch. Siafarikas plot (at G in Fig. 81), through which several early Christian tombs had been dug (Hatziangelakis 2011b, 587–588; 2012, 167). Further Hellenistic and Roman houses have been excavated on the D. Papastergiou (at H in Fig. 81. Hatziangelakis 2011b, 589; 2012, 167–168) and Koutelidas plots (at I in Fig. 81; Athanasiou 2016b, 621–622). A possible Hellenistic–Roman sanctuary, with several terracotta plaques depicting Hermes, was found on the Kalliargas plot (at J in Fig. 81; Hatziangelakis 2011b, 586–587). Excavations in the adjacent plot revealed domestic remains of the Hellenistic period, with evidence



Figure 82 Aerial photograph of the Agios Nikolaos trench. Courtesy of the Ephorate of Antiquities of Trikala. Published with permission. © Greek Ministry of Culture and Sports – Organization for the Management and Development of Cultural Resources.

of substantial destruction by fire. The location was subsequently occupied in the Roman period, with evidence of pottery production (Athanasίου 2016a, 1121–1124). Excavations at the Litsas and Tsiaras plots in the same area of the modern town have yielded domestic structures of the Hellenistic and Roman periods, as well as a 33 m stretch of a 3 m wide street leading north–south. A water conduit in terracotta was found during the same excavation, dating to the Hellenistic period. A destruction layer with indications of fire was also noted (Athanasίου 2014, 599–602). A street with domestic buildings of the Hellenistic period was found at the junction of Koumoundourou and Metaxas streets (K in Fig. 81), with much evidence of Roman period re-habitation. A destruction layer of the latter period was noted at the location (Athanasίου 2014, 602–603). At the bank plot just to the east of this location (L in Fig. 81), further Hellenistic domestic structures have been found, again with evidence of Roman period re-habitation (Athanasίου 2014, 604). On the north bank of the Lithaios, just below the Frourio hill (at M in Fig. 81),¹³ Panagiotis Kastriotis excavated a

Late Roman building with mosaics which covered remains of a substantial Classical–Hellenistic feature in isodomic masonry, which he interpreted as part of the Asklepieion. Roman (= Early Byzantine?) tombs were also found at the location (Kastriotis 1918, 67–68). Further Roman tombs have been excavated just southwest of the Asklepieion complex (at N in Fig. 81; Athanasίου 2014, 599).

The *akropolis* of the ancient city is assumed to have been at the location of the Byzantine–Ottoman fortress on Frourio hill (at O in Fig. 81), where isodomic masonry was observed by Leake (1835a, 429). Judging from the positioning of Late Roman or Early Byzantine tombs in the northern part of the modern city, it appears that the settlement of this period had moved to the area of the Asklepieion and the Gournas spring, where the Christian/Greek quarter of the city, with its many churches, survived to the present time. A Late Roman or Early Byzantine larger structure was revealed at the east foot of the Frourio hill (P in Fig. 81), further supporting the relocation of the settled area (Athanasίου 2016a, 1124; Mantzana 2016, 1146).

Coinage

The Trikkaians issued coins from the first half of 5th century until the late 3rd century BCE (Hoover 2014, 110–111). The legend is either ΤΡΙΚΚΑΙΟΝ or ΤΡΙΚΚΑΙΩΝ. The earliest issues are hemidrachms similar to the ones issued by the Pharkadonians and others, with Thessalos wrestling a bull on the obverse and the foreparts of a galloping horse on the reverse. At least one issue of c. 400 BCE has a galloping horse on the obverse and a striding, robed Athena on the reverse, wearing Corinthian helmet and aegis, hurling a spear from her right arm, the left holding a large shield. The horse motif continues throughout the 4th and 3rd centuries BCE, when also the head of the nymph Triikka/Trikke is introduced on the obverse. She is also depicted on some of the reverses as seated, holding a phiale or mirror, playing ball, leaning against a column extending her hand towards a swan, opening a cista or sacrificing at altar. Some of these reverses has been interpreted as depicting Mantho (Hoover 2014, 112). A number of 3rd century issues bear strong resemblances to the coins of Kierion (**No. 24**) and Peirasia (**No. 5**) as well as a stamped roof-tile of the latter. On the obverse, these coins feature the head of the nymph Triikka/Trikke, and on the reverse a nude warrior with shield and sword, wearing a Corinthian helmet. The warrior is sometimes identified with either Podaleiros or Machaon, the sons of Asclepius, but there is no real foundation for this identification apart from the connection in the *Iliad* with Triikka and these two characters. Another similar coin to one of Kierion depicts again Triikka on the obverse and a seated Asclepius on the reverse.

Written sources

The name Triikka/Trikke first appears in Homer (*Il.* 2.729; 4.202), and is mainly associated with Asclepius, who was supposed to have been born here. Apart from a few scattered mentions in ancient literature, the Triikkaians were seemingly not important political players in Thessaly and appear to have possibly taken an anti-Macedonian stance in the mid-4th century BCE (Diod. 18.56.5; Martin 1985, 104; Hammond 1994, 48; Decourt *et al.* 2004, 707). Philip V went to Triikka in 197 BCE as his army retreated from Epirus (Liv. 32.13), and a few years later, in 191 BCE, it was one of the fortified towns (*oppida*) held by the Athamanians (Liv. 36.13). Strabo (9.5.17) refers to Triikka as a fortress (*phourion*), indicating that it might not have contained an urban community at his time. The last mention of Triikka is in Stephanus Byzantius (*s.v.* Trikke) and in Procopius, who mentions it as being one of the locations refortified by Justinian (*De aed.* 4.3.3).

Triikka/Trikke figures in an inscription from the Asklepieion at Epidaurus (*IG* IV²,1 128, c. 280 BCE), one from Delos (*IG* XI,4 606, first half of 3rd century BCE), one from Keos (*IG* XII,5 1073, 3rd century BCE), a proxeny decree (*SEG* XLI 539, c. 230–200 BCE) and a boundary

delineation from Trikala (*IG* IX,2 301, 2nd century BCE) and, finally, in a funerary epigram from Larisa of the 2nd or 3rd century CE (*SEG* XXIII 440). Triikkaians are mentioned in inscriptions from Delphi (*CID* II 1.16, 360s BCE; II 2.49A.46, 330s BCE), Trikala (Giannopoulos 1936, 149, first half of 2nd century BCE), and in an undated honorary inscription from Atrax (*SEG* XXXIII 449). The *polis* of the Triikkaians is attested in the aforementioned proxeny decree from Trikala (*SEG* XLIII 539, c. 230–200 BCE) and in an inscription from Aetolian Kalydon (*IG* IX,1² 1:136, c. 200 BCE).

Chronology

Hellenistic, Roman, Late Roman, Early Byzantine.

Coordinates

307864, 4380852.

29. Vlochos

Modern name

The site is known in research literature as Vlochos (Βλοχός), which is the name of the adjacent village, and in official Greek record as Stroggylovouni (Στρογγυλοβούνι), the name of the hill. Ottoman records preserve the name Kısıklı (Greek Κισικλί or Κουσακλί) for Vlochos, which is never used in literature.

Ancient name

The remains at Vlochos have been associated with several settlements known from ancient literature and epigraphy, but there is no internal evidence for the validity of any of them. The official identification with Peirasia was invalidated by the find of stamped roof-tiles bearing this name at nearby Ermitsi (**No. 5**), which currently leaves two common candidates in Phakion (Φάκιον, τό) and Limnaion (*Λιμναῖον, τό), two communities known mainly from Livy (36.14).

Description of site

The archaeological site at Vlochos (Fig. 83) is centred around the large hill of Stroggylovouni (Fig. 84), just south of the modern village. The site has been surveyed and excavated since 2016 by a team of archaeologists (directed by Maria Vaïopoulou and the author) from the Ephorate of Antiquities of Karditsa and the Swedish Institute at Athens, yielding remains of a complex series of habitations, organised by the surveying team into five building phases (Vaïopoulou *et al.* 2020; 2021; 2022; forthcoming).

Phase 1

The remains of Phase 1 consist mainly of a large hillfort atop Stroggylovouni, with a near-continuous 1.3 km encircling wall in rough polygonal masonry enclosing a c. 11 ha

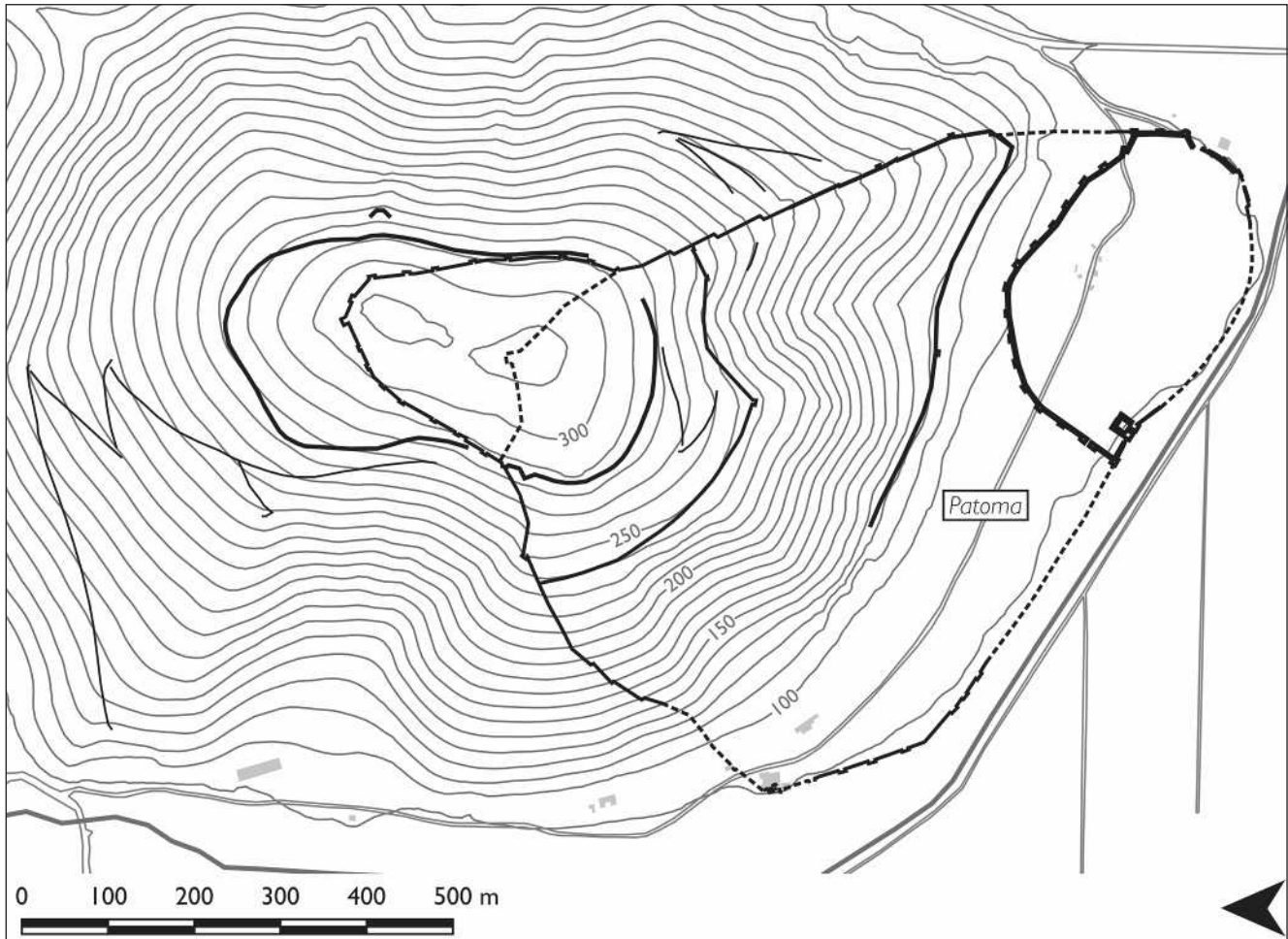


Figure 83 Vlochos. Plan-sketch of combined fortifications after Vaïopoulou *et al.* (2020).



Figure 84 The hill of Stroggylovouni at Vlochos as seen from south. © Greek Ministry of Culture and Sports – Organization for the Management and Development of Cultural Resources.

area on the hilltop (at A in Fig. 85). There are no structural remains within the enceinte associated with the fortifications and the complex gives the impression of being the remains of a refuge hillfort rather than of a settlement (Vaïopoulou *et al.* 2020, 28). A small bastion-like feature (B in Fig. 85)

in the slope immediately below the walls of the enceinte probably belongs to the same complex (Vaïopoulou *et al.* 2020, 35). The fortified space of the hillfort was accessible through two large gates, the western of which (C in Fig. 85) remains relatively well preserved and was with its

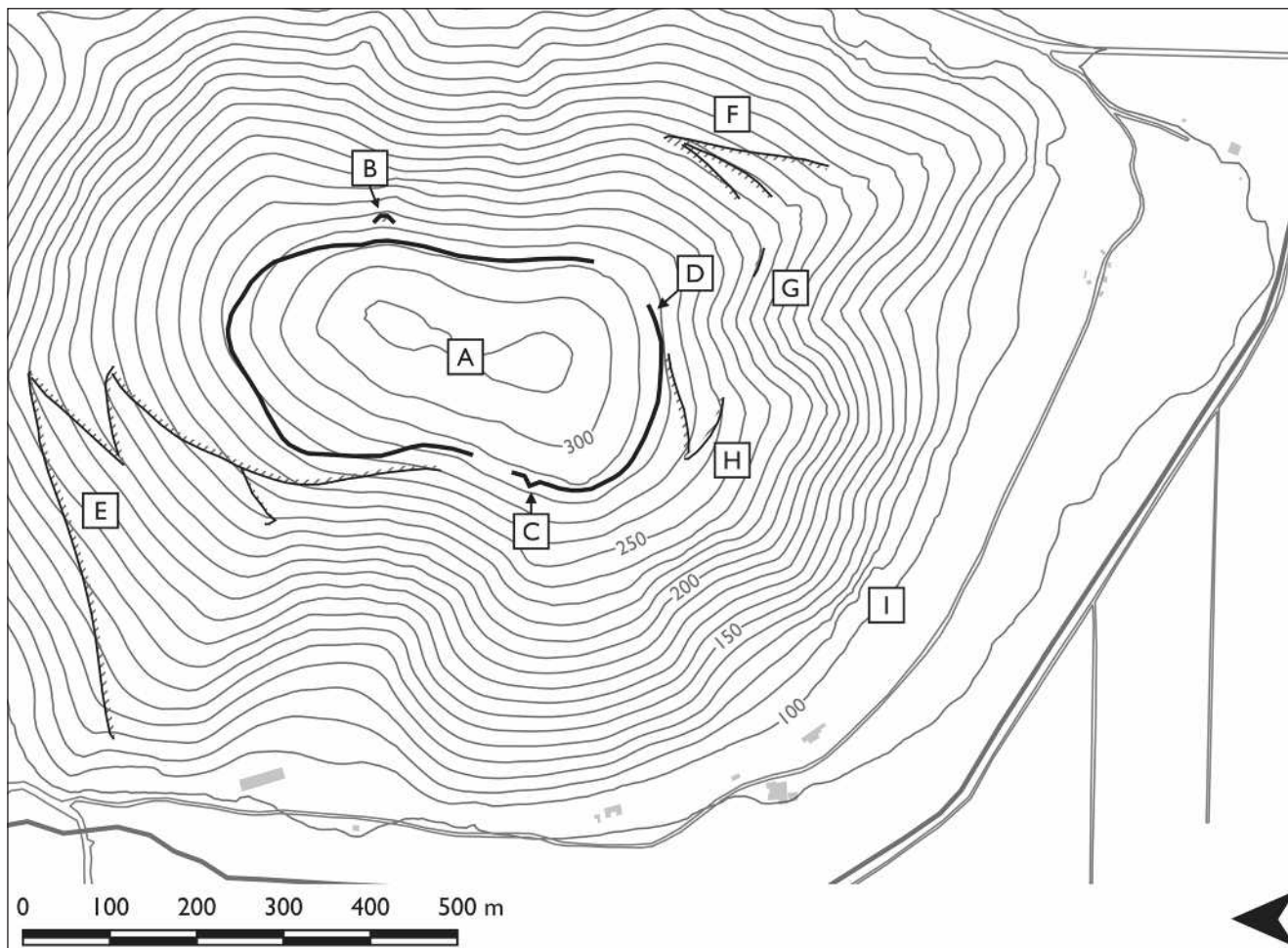


Figure 85 The Phase 1 hillfort at Vlochos. Plan-sketched after Vaïopoulou *et al.* (2020, 29).

c. 12 m width and 3.5 m wide entranceway of monumental proportions. The southeastern gate (D in Fig. 85) is barely preserved due to later building activities on site but appears to have been of a similar construction (Vaïopoulou *et al.* 2020, 31). The gates opened up towards two large, terraced roads descending the slopes in a zigzag. The most well preserved of these is the one in the north slope (at E in Fig. 85), which can be traced for 1.2 km, making three sharp turns leading down to the plains. The last section of the road is not preserved, probably due its proximity to the plain and the nearby village. The lower sides of the road are lined with a considerable terrace wall, employing stones to up to 2 m in size, creating a terraced road surface 4–6 m in width. A small deviation can be traced in the upper part of the road, the function of which cannot be ascertained. The southern road is more fragmentarily preserved, with a larger segment in the southeastern slope (at F in Fig. 85), which apparently continued along the southern slope (at G in Fig. 85) to connect with an upper bend (at H in Fig. 85) before leading to the southeastern gate in the hilltop enceinte (Vaïopoulou *et al.* 2020, 33–34). The date of the Phase 1

fortifications cannot be securely ascertained but, stylistically, they probably belong in the pre-Classical period and the surveyors tentatively date the remains as being of the late Archaic period (Vaïopoulou *et al.* 2020, 34–35). Limited late Archaic period material has been found at the foot of the hill (at I in Fig. 85), possibly indicating a settlement at that location (Vaïopoulou *et al.* 2020, 68). A dedication to Poseidon of the mid-5th century BCE (*contra* Decourt 1995, 1–2) was found during road construction works in the 1930s just east of the hill (Doulgeri-Intzesiloglou 2000, 16–19), and a (now lost) roughly contemporaneous tomb marker was seen by Lolling at a bridge 3.6 km north-northwest of the hill (IG IX,2 272; Doulgeri-Intzesiloglou 2000, 19–20; Dafi and Rönnlund forthcoming).¹⁴

Phase 2A and 2B

The architectural and geophysical survey and the limited excavations carried out at the southern foot of the hill, in the area known as Patoma, provided evidence for an extensive urban building programme taking place around the mid-4th century BCE. This second phase of habitation

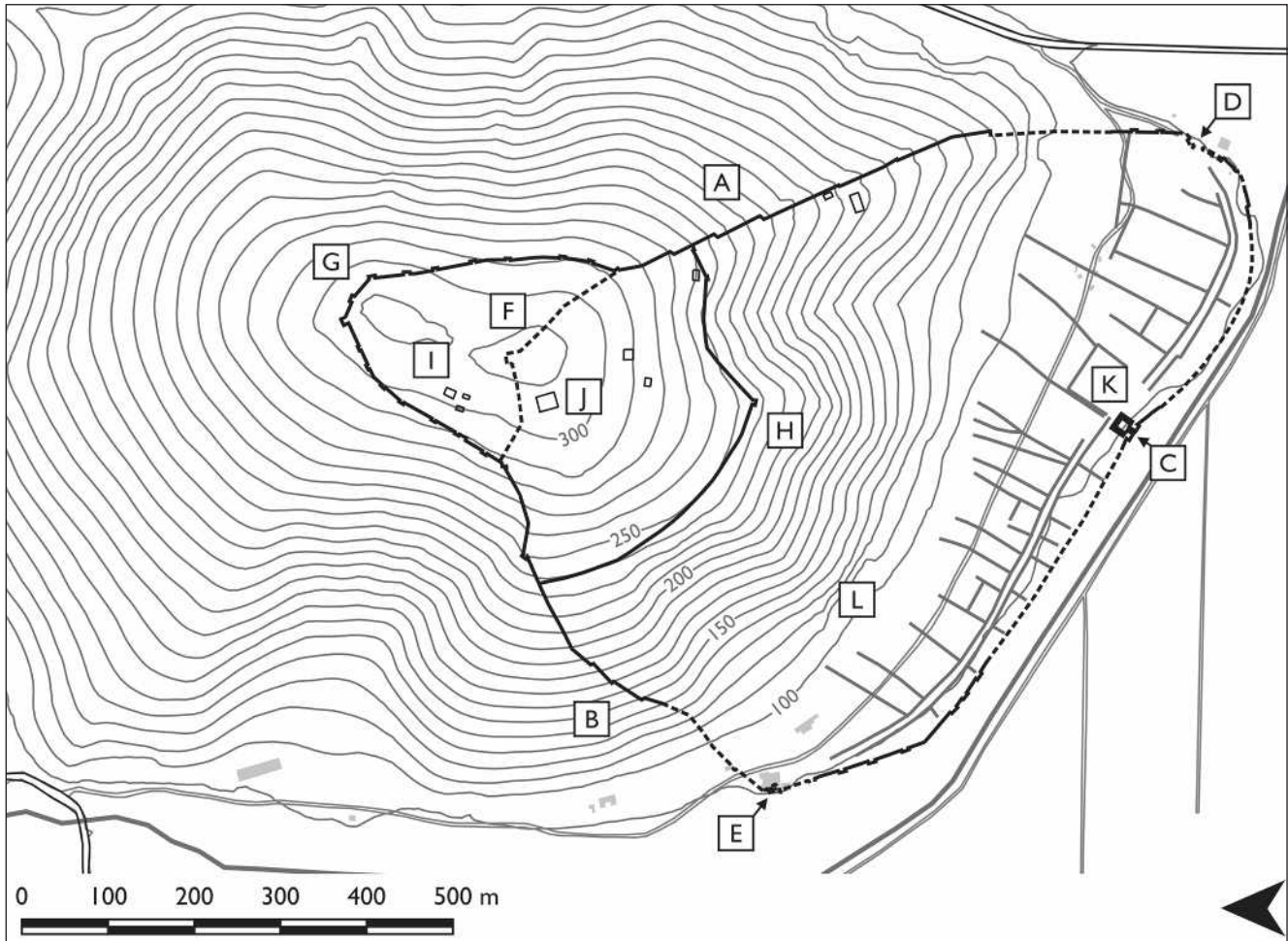


Figure 86 The Classical-Hellenistic city of Phase 2A and 2B at Vlochos. Plan-sketched after Vaïopoulou *et al.* (2020, 26, 37).

at the site can, from the perspective of the fortifications, be divided into two sub-phases, 2A and 2B (Fig. 86). Phase 2A is characterised by the construction of a fortified enceinte surrounding the whole Patoma area as well as the southern hillslope and a section of the hilltop. The walls were constructed in polygonal masonry, which is best preserved in the upper slopes, where the wall descends the hill in a serrated trace with distinct “jogs” (at A and B in Fig. 86). Very little is preserved of the fortifications at the foot of the hill, as they have been severely stripped for building material over the centuries. Nearly the whole outline of the fortifications, however, can be traced in the magnetometric imagery and drone photography (Vaïopoulou *et al.* 2020, 25; 2022, 87–89; forthcoming), showing that the central entrance to the walled enceinte was through a large courtyard gate in the south wall (at C in Fig. 86). Fragmentary remains of what was probably a bridge traversing a small stream or motte has been found in the sides of the 1960s artificial canal just outside of the gate (Vaïopoulou *et al.* 2022, 89–90). Aerial photographs show indications of further gates in east and west (D and E in Fig. 86) at locations

now covered by modern structures. The fortifications at the foot of the hill contained 35–40 rectangular towers, many of which are clearly distinguishable in the magnetometric imagery and aerial photographs (Vaïopoulou *et al.* 2020, 37; 2022, 87; forthcoming).

The original wall trace on top of the hill (dashed line at F in Fig. 86) was at some point removed and replaced with a new wall running further to the north, enclosing the whole hilltop (at G in Fig. 86), which marks the beginning of Phase 2B. This new extent contained 18 rectangular towers and was constructed in trapezoidal masonry of poor execution. The northernmost tower was considerably larger than the others and formed a bastion-like feature clearly visible as one approached the site from the north. Probably at the same time, a cross-wall or *diateichisma* was built along the southern brow of the hilltop, connecting the eastern and western descending wall, with a large tower built on a promontory at its centre (at H in Fig. 86). This created a separately fortified *akropolis* on the hilltop, enclosing 11 ha. The only entrances to the *akropolis* were through narrow postern gates, indicating that the area was not meant as an

evacuation point (Vaïopoulou *et al.* 2020, 39–40, 44–45). Very few structures have been found within the *akropolis*, and few can be accurately dated. A closely set group of building remains (at I in Fig. 86) have been interpreted as possible garrison buildings and a large courtyard building near the very top of the hill (at J in Fig. 86) should probably also be seen as relating to a military presence. The ground on the hilltop is mainly bare rock with little soil preserved except in the southern parts. There is virtually no pottery visible on the ground, probably due to the strong erosive forces at this location (Vaïopoulou *et al.* 2020, 52–56).

The situation is much different in the Patoma area below the hill. Ample surface material, excavations and the geophysical results show that the flat ground was used for large-scale and planned habitation in the Late Classical and Hellenistic periods. The magnetometric imagery shows indications of a possible *agora* immediately inside the large courtyard gate (at K in Fig. 86), and a long avenue-like street (8 m wide) runs parallel to the fortification wall from the eastern to the western gate. A large number of side-streets deviate from this avenue in a general northeasterly direction, creating housing blocks or *insulae* with the clear outlines of typical Classical–Hellenistic domestic architecture (Vaïopoulou *et al.* 2020, 59–61). There are some indications in the geophysical image of public buildings, including possible sanctuaries. Rescue work in 1964, prompted by the operation of a quarry, at the location Gkekas (at L in Fig. 86) produced a number of votive *stēlai* dated to the 4th and 3rd centuries BCE (Liangouras 1967, 320–321; Decourt 1995, 2–4). Cleaning work conducted as part of the ongoing Greek–Swedish programme has revealed substantial amounts of sanctuary related material from the quarry spoil heaps, including votive statuettes and reliefs depicting Ennodia, indicating the presence of a temple or cultic structure in the area (Vaïopoulou *et al.* 2021, 61; Jeremias and Rönnlund forthcoming). A number of Hellenistic tomb markers have been found in the fields immediately south of the fortified lower city (Decourt 1995, 4–6), indicating the presence of cemeteries. The strong alluvial processes in the area, however, have probably meant that most of the tombs are buried at considerable depths.

There is at present no evidence of the Classical–Hellenistic city of Phase 2A and 2B continuing into the 2nd century BCE. Recent excavations in an area just south of the Gkekas quarry have revealed an extensive destruction layer of the Hellenistic period, with a collapsed roof covering a floor surface. The results of the ground resistance survey show that the roof probably belongs to a sizeable Hellenistic building flanking the north side of the main avenue-like street (Vaïopoulou *et al.* forthcoming). The preserved collapse together with surface pottery and material from the spoil heaps indicate that the urban settlement could possibly

have been destroyed and abandoned after the Macedonian wars, similarly to other cities in the region.

Phase 3

The eastern sector of the Patoma area was re-occupied towards the end of the Roman period, seemingly without apparent settlement continuity from the Classical–Hellenistic city of Phase 2A and 2B. The only visible remains of this phase are a long robber’s trench (at A in Fig. 87), possibly of the 19th century, which still contains some few large stones. Magnetometry survey in the area revealed that this trench is what is left of a substantial fortification wall, which enclosed a *c.* 7 ha area at the foot of the hill. As the fortifications cut across the Classical–Hellenistic street grid, they clearly belong to a later period of habitation. Nineteen rectangular towers can be discerned in the extent of the wall, which makes a curve from southwest to southeast over a course of 490 m. A larger gate (at B in Fig. 87) was constructed across the main avenue of the previous urban phase, flanked by two towers. Whether the central (C in Fig. 87) and eastern (D in Fig. 87) gate of Phase 2 were re-used in this phase is at present unknown, but the Classical–Hellenistic fortifications of the south-eastern corner of the Patoma area appear to have been incorporated in the new wall (Vaïopoulou *et al.* 2020, 45–46; forthcoming).

Snowy weather in January 2019 allowed for the documentation of snow-marks in the eastern sector of Patoma. The clarity of these indicates the existence of shallowly buried stone foundations of buildings in the area and provided, together with the magnetic and ground-resistance image, the outlines of *insulae* and large buildings. Among the latter were at least three centred around substantial court-yards, reminiscent of Roman urban villas. A possible *forum* flanked to north and south by *stoai* can be discerned in the western half of the settlement, just north of the main avenue-like street. The existence of monumental architecture can also be found in the ground-resistance survey, revealing what is possibly a *palaestra* just north of the *forum* area, with several internal divisions forming rooms around a central courtyard (Vaïopoulou *et al.* 2022, 86–89; forthcoming). The avenue of the Classical–Hellenistic city appears to have been retained as a major route through the south end of the Phase 3 town, leading from the area of the eastern gate towards the new gate in west (B in Fig. 87). In the road-surface of the extension of the avenue, and within the area of the Classical–Hellenistic city, are looted tombs (at E in Fig. 87), which probably belong to the settlement of this phase (Vaïopoulou *et al.* 2022, 90–91). A possible bridge structure was identified in the sides of the artificial 1960s canal that runs just south of the site (at F in Fig. 87). This clearly relates to the large gate immediately north of it, but whether it relates to this or the previous phase at



Figure 87 Plan of Phase 3 remains at Vlochos. Plan-sketch after plans, geophysical plots and aerial photographs in Vaïopoulou *et al.* (2020, 46; 2022, 87; forthcoming).

Vlochos cannot at present be determined (Vaïopoulou *et al.* 2022, 89–90). The remains of this phase belong to a small Roman town, probably of the late 3rd century CE, and possibly relating to the turbulent political situation during the so-called “crisis of the 3rd century”.

Phase 4 and 5

Some 200 years after the possible date of abandonment of the Phase 3 town, Stroggylovouni was yet again fortified, in the mid-6th century CE. A long stretch of the Classical–Hellenistic southeastern descending wall (at A in Fig. 88) was repaired re-using older stones that had collapsed from the wall as well as smaller stones cemented with mortar. The wall here still stands to over 3 m at places but was possibly never finished as the repairs end abruptly halfway up the slope. Two near-rectangular towers were added to the wall trace (B and C in Fig. 88), both with hollow cores and similar to the contemporaneous towers at nearby Metamorfofi (No. 16) and Grizano (4.3). Rock-cuttings and mortar still clinging to the rock indicate that the fortification

wall made a turn to the west in the lower slope of the hill (at D in Fig. 88). This whole extent of the wall has been completely robbed out with not a single stone remaining. A small section of the continuation of the wall was revealed by rainwash in 2016 among the colluvial masses in the little cleft in the southern slope (at E in Fig. 88), showing that it was constructed of spoliated blocks cemented with mortar. Further to the west are more fragmentary traces of the wall as well as a possible tower (at F in Fig. 88). Some rubble mixed with mortar clinging to the bedrock found just above a small modern quarry (at G in Fig. 88) shows that the wall probably continued further to the west but colluvial deposits make it impossible to trace it further along the slope. However, it is quite clear that the southwestern descending wall of the Classical–Hellenistic city was not repaired or included in the 6th century CE fortifications. Whether this was due to an incomplete building programme cannot be ascertained at present (Vaïopoulou *et al.* 2020, 52). Most of the surface material relating to this phase of construction can be found in the lower slopes of the hill, immediately

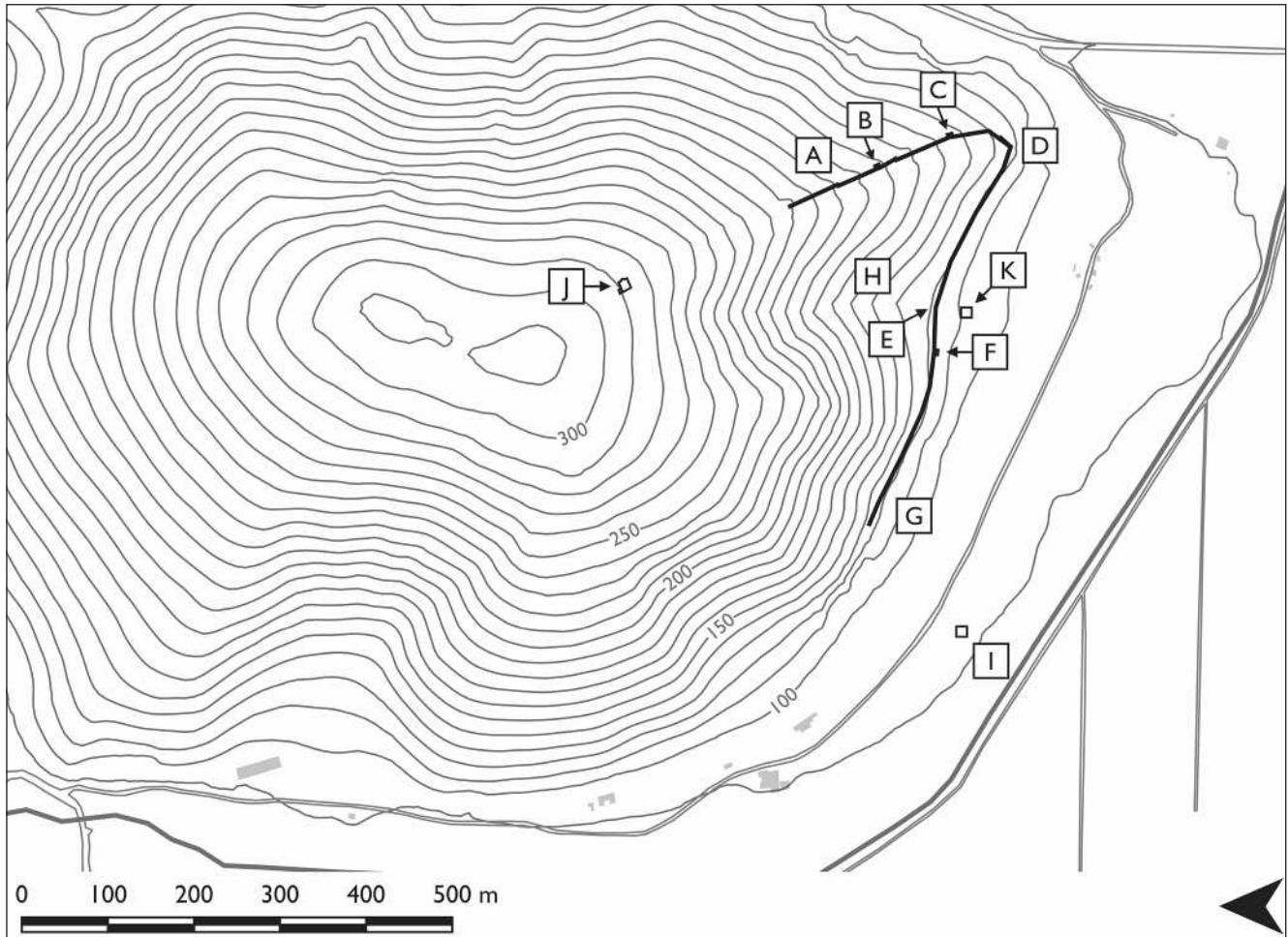


Figure 88 Plan of Phase 4 remains at Vlochos. Plan-sketch after Vaïopoulou *et al.* (2020, 47; 2022; forthcoming).

within or below the fortification wall (at H in Fig. 88). It is probable that the settlement was mainly limited to the area in the slope, similarly to the situation at Metamorfofi. However, on a stratigraphically higher level than the Hellenistic destruction layer south of the Gkekas quarry (at I in Fig. 88) the remains of a single-room building were found, originally constructed in the 6th century. Destruction debris surrounding the building indicates that it was destroyed at some point not long after, only to be re-used *c.* 200 years later in the 8th or 9th century CE. At this point, the building was extended to the northwest by the addition of a smaller room with a central hearth. Fragments of 8th century so-called “Slavic” ware pottery was found *in situ* in the hearth, giving the date of the re-inhabitation. The general lack of roof-tiles in the building indicates that it was possibly roofed with thatch or other perishable materials (Vaïopoulou *et al.* 2022, 82–83; forthcoming). At the brow of the hill, and immediately upon the fragmentary remains of the Phase 1 southeastern gate, are the remains of what is most probably a small three-aisled church (at J in Fig. 88).

Some surface material indicates that it probably belongs to the same period as the 6th century fortifications. A single burial has been found just south of it but remains unpublished (Vaïopoulou *et al.* 2020, 56–57). An Early Christian cemetery was partially revealed by excavations in the deep colluvium between the Late Roman and the Early Byzantine walls (at K in Fig. 88). Coins of Justinian I were found by a private citizen at the same location and was delivered to the museum in Karditsa (Vaïopoulou *et al.* 2020, 68). The lack of grave-goods makes the burials difficult to date but it is possible that they relate either to the Justinianic (?) fortification or to the subsequent re-inhabitation of the site in the 8th century CE (Vaïopoulou *et al.* forthcoming).

Chronology

Archaic, Classical–Hellenistic, Late Roman, Early Byzantine.

Coordinates

335173, 4374215.

30. Zarkos with environs

Modern name

The archaeological sites are located close to the village of Zarkos (Ζάρκος) or Zarko (Ζάρκο), with the *akropolis* of the ancient settlement on the hill of Profitis Ilias (Προφήτης Ηλίας) just east of the village.

Ancient name

A 3rd century BCE inscription (*IG IX,2 489*) in the church of Agios Nikolaos in the village provided evidence that the ancient settlement is that of Phaÿttos (Thessalian Φάϋττος, ἄ? or Φαῦττός, Latin Phaestus, from Φαιστός?), a *polis* known from few sources (see below). The *ethnikon* of the community was seemingly *Phaÿttios* (reconstructed from 3rd pers. plur. gen. *Phaÿttiōn*).

Description of site and area

There are no considerable remains of the ancient settlement at Zarkos due to the proximity of the modern village which partially covers it. The apparent *akropolis* (at A in Fig. 89) is located on the Profitis Ilias hill just east of the village (Fig. 90), named after the small chapel on its top. The hill

forms a spur, separated by a steep saddle from the large mountain body of Kokkinadaki above and east of it. The hilltop contains some scanty remains of ancient buildings (Ussing 1847, 261–262) and was probably completely surrounded by a wall. This wall, however, is partially covered by a low bank, which appears to be modern, maybe of the 1897 Turkish war. At the southwest corner of the *akropolis* bank are the fragmentary remains of a rectangular tower (Theogianni and Athanasiou 2021, 29). Recent bulldozing activities have revealed a fragmentary stretch of a wall in polygonal masonry (Fig. 91) on the east side of the hilltop, facing the mountainside (at B in Fig. 89). The wall is built in large stones and appears to be part of the outer *akropolis* defences (Kirsten 1938c; 1905; Nimas 1988, 260; Theogianni and Athanasiou 2021, 29). On the south slope of the hill are some fragmentary remains of a fortification wall descending the hill from the *akropolis* in a curving line towards the area of the village (C in Fig. 89). The masonry style of this wall is impossible to discern, as only parts of the foundations are visible. A corresponding descending wall can be traced on the northwest slope of the hill (D in Fig. 89), but this is in an even more fragmentary state (Theogianni and Athanasiou 2021, 29).

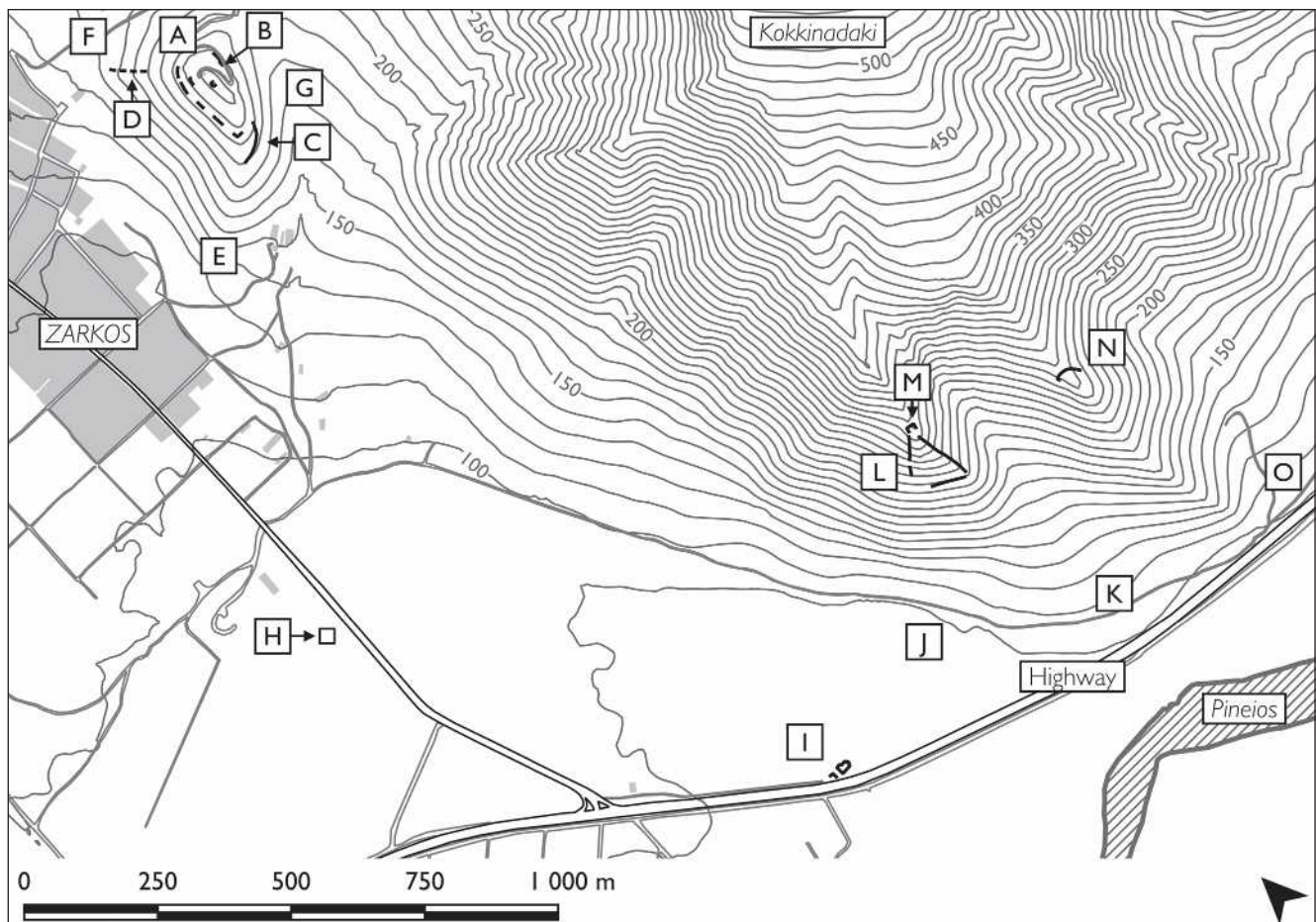


Figure 89 The sites at Zarkos. Map-sketch after Dafi and Rönnlund (forthcoming) and aerial photographs.



Figure 90 The Profitis Ilias hill, Zarkos, as seen from the south. In the distance is the Koutra hilltop. © Greek Ministry of Culture and Sports – Organization for the Management and Development of Cultural Resources.

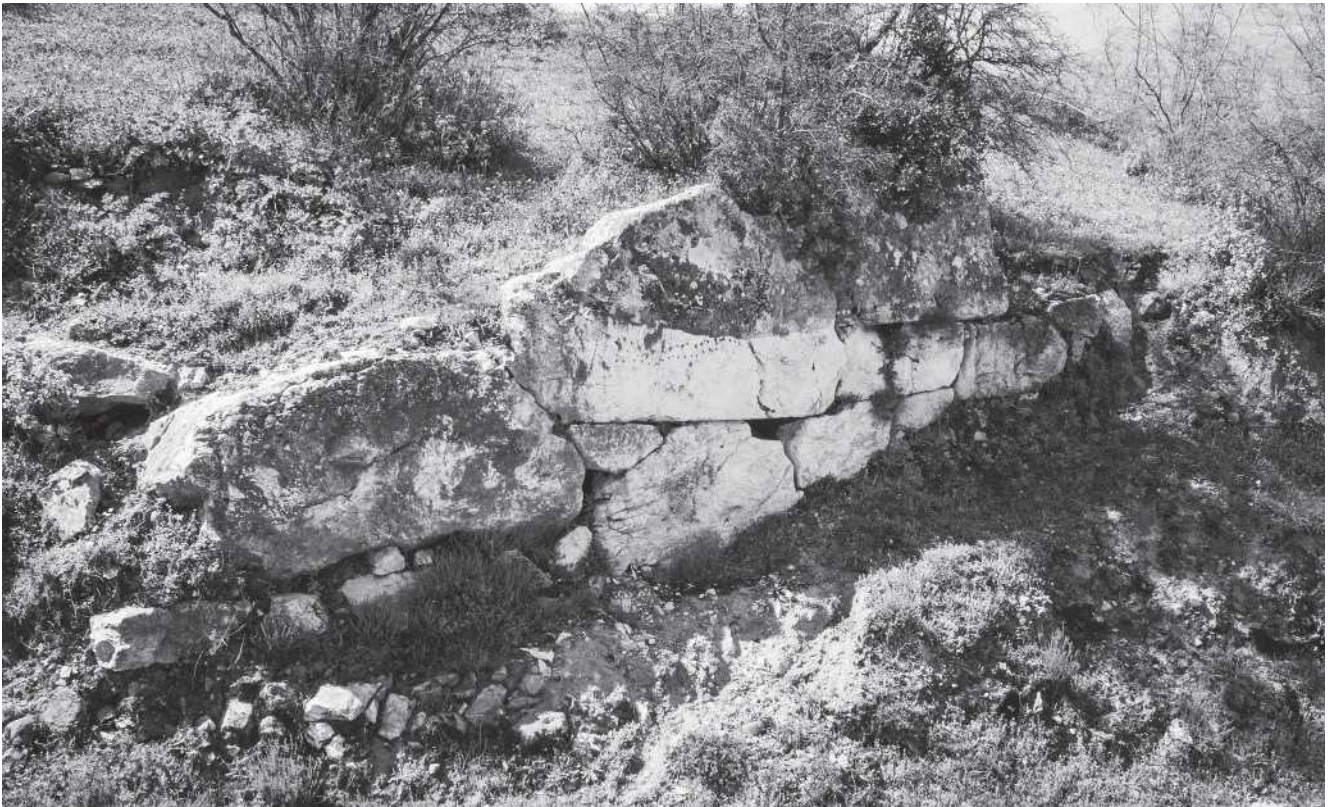


Figure 91 Polygonal masonry on the western brow of the Profitis Ilias hill. © Greek Ministry of Culture and Sports – Organization for the Management and Development of Cultural Resources.

The modern village probably covers most of the area of the *katō polis*, but some building foundations have been reported at the south hill foot and around the chapel of Agios Nikolaos north of the hill (Edmonds 1899, 21; Kirsten 1938c; 1905; Theogianni and Athanasiou 2021, 29–30),

which could be part of the intramural settlement (at E and F in Fig. 89). Several inscriptions are reported from the vicinity, including in the many churches and chapels (*JG IX,2* 488–490; 492; 494–497; 500–503). A dedication to the Muses (*JG IX,2* 492), a 3rd century BCE marble votive *stēlē*

to Artemis (Tziafalias 2003, 525; *SEG* LI 732) and a marble dedicatory *stēlē* of the end of the 3rd or beginning of the 2nd century BCE (Tziafalias 1988b, 260) have been found at the village, indicating cults at ancient Phaÿttos. Biesantz (1965, 30, no. 26) states that there is a 3rd century BCE marble head of Ge in the Istanbul Archaeological Museum (898) which is reportedly from Phaÿttos, indicating Zarkos. Heinz (1998, 428–429), however, states that this object is the votive base with a dedication (*IG* IX,2 491) to Ge (Γᾶ) Pantareta found at ancient Atrax, 6 km southeast of Zarkos.

Tombs have been reported (Theogianni and Athanasiou 2021, 30) from the area of the chapel of Agios Nikolaos at the abandoned army camp north of the hill of Profitis Ilias (at F in Fig. 89), as well as at the eastern slopes of the hill (at G in Fig. 89; Tziafalias 1995, 236; Hatziangelakis *et al.* 2016b, 582; Hatziangelakis 2021, 52). A Roman funerary monument in marble, measuring 9 × 6 m, with an internal vaulted structure in brickwork was found in 1882 in the area of the chapel of Agios Nikolaos. In connection with the tomb, a well preserved larger-than-life early Roman marble statue of a male figure was found, seemingly only missing its nose (Rienach 1887, 70). It is possible that another similar monument was located on the small mound known as the magoula Vasileios, a few hundred metres south of the village. Here, the remains of a structure built in ashlar blocks as well as a *stēlē* base have been noted (Hatziangelakis *et al.* 2016a, 569). Two kilometres north of the village is the 17th century monastery of Agios Ioannis tou Theologou, in the walls of which have been found several tomb markers (Theogianni and Athanasiou 2021, 30). More tomb markers and funerary *stēlai* have also been found in the houses of the village (Tziafalias 2003, 525).

Just north of the modern highway, *c.* 1 km south of the village (at H in Fig. 89), are the remains of the Early Christian church of Agios Nikolaos o Fonias (Nikonanos 1977, 378; 1997, 143, no. 493). The church contained an inscription at Otto Kern's visit in the late 19th century (*IG* IX,2 493), of which there are no further reports. Excavations at the site in 1996–1997 produced much material of the Middle Byzantine period, including tombs and settlement traces (Apostolou and Sideri 2014). Early 20th century maps show a spring just south of the location, where was also an inn (*chani*). A continuous scatter of pottery can be found in the fields immediately northeast of the church ruins (at I in Fig. 89), continuing towards the foothills of Kokkinadaki which towers above the area. Immediately below the rocky slopes of the mountain is a gently sloping colluvial fan (at J in Fig. 89), at the base of which is a modern agricultural road. This area, known as the Petromagoula, contains many dislocated architectural pieces and fragmentary traces of building foundations, indicating a settlement (Fig. 92). The copious surface pottery is of the Classical–Hellenistic period (Nimas 1988, 261; Dafi and Rönnlund forthcoming).

Flanking the colluvial fan in west and east are two rocky spurs protruding from the mountainside. The western of these contains the fragmentary remains of a fortified triangular enceinte (at K in Fig. 89), built in rubble masonry. Due to the extremely steep slopes, relatively little remains of this fortification, and it is impossible to ascertain whether it originally extended all the way to the foot of the spur (Dafi and Rönnlund forthcoming). At the upper corner of the enceinte (at L in Fig. 89) is a large rectangular tower, known locally as the Drakospito (“the house of the beast”). The northern face of the tower still stands to over 2 m, constructed in well-executed polygonal masonry (Fig. 93). The east, south and west faces are only preserved at their foundation levels showing that the tower was *c.* 15 × 10 m. Whether the fortification walls below the tower connected with it cannot be ascertained (Nimas 1988, 261; Theogianni and Athanasiou 2021, 30; Dafi and Rönnlund forthcoming).

The eastern spur, which is marked as that of Sgourogianni on some maps, contains fragmentary traces of a small fortification on its highest point (at M in Fig. 89). The walls are in well-built rubble masonry and form a semi-circle around the peak. The 1881–1913 Greek–Ottoman border crossed right over this location and from contemporary maps it appears that one of the control points (No. 96) was right on top of the ancient fortification (Dafi and Rönnlund forthcoming). It appears from these remains that a considerable settlement was located in the Petromagoula area, with fortifications protecting its flanks. A cist-tomb of an unknown date has been excavated just east of the area (at N in Fig. 89), probably belonging to the settlement (Gallis 1984, 175). A cemetery of the Hellenistic and Roman periods has been excavated further to the east at Paliopigado, close to Pineiada (formerly Mari), which probably belongs to another settlement, possibly secondary to nearby ancient Atrax (Katakouta 2001b, 379).

In the general region of Zarkos are some notable ancient sites of a non-urban character, including at the chapel of Agios Taxiarchis, *c.* 3.8 km south of the village. The chapel sits on a low isolated hill just north of the north end of the Revenia hills. At its northern foot is a stream that is fed by a copious spring 700 m west of the hill, the Mati with an adjacent *magoula* (Dafi and Rönnlund forthcoming). A dilapidated aqueduct (*ydragogeio*) led from the springs reportedly to Larisa at the time of Ussing (1847, 262–263), who interpreted it as Ottoman in date. The course of the aqueduct is still marked on early 20th century maps and traces of it have been found just north of the hill of Agios Taxiarchis (Dafi and Rönnlund forthcoming). The chapel of Agios Taxiarchis is a 19th century structure, possibly substituting an older, larger structure at the location. Lucas (1995, 119, n. 29) states mistakenly that the chapel is a modern, post-1970 concrete building. Inscriptions were noted at the chapel by Hiller and Lolling, including a (3rd–2nd century BCE?) tomb marker (*IG* IX,2 498) and a



Figure 92 The area of Petromagoula looking southeast, as seen from the eastern fortified spur. At upper right are the ruins of Agios Nikolaos o Fonias. © Greek Ministry of Culture and Sports – Organization for the Management and Development of Cultural Resources.



Figure 93 The Drakospito tower from the north. © Greek Ministry of Culture and Sports – Organization for the Management and Development of Cultural Resources.

longer inscription (*IG IX,2 487*), containing an arbitration between the *polis* of the Ereikineans (see below) and an unknown counterpart (the Phaÿttians?). The ground around the chapel has been much disturbed by recent bulldozing, but contains much Roman and Byzantine pottery, *stēlai* and architectural elements (Dafi and Rönnlund forthcoming). Across the valley from Zarkos, some 2 km northwest of the village, is the flat ridge with the suitable name Plateia Rachi. The whole top of the ridge is surrounded by a 950 m long poorly preserved fortification wall in polygonal masonry, enclosing *c.* 5 ha of gently sloping ground (4.6). There are at present no indications of this being a settlement, with no reported surface material (Dafi and Rönnlund forthcoming).

Written sources

The *polis* of the Phaÿttians is only mentioned twice in ancient works, and then in the Ionic toponymic form Phaistos or Phaestus (Ptolem. 3.12.41; Liv. 36.13). The Phaestus of Livy's account of the events of 191 BCE only appears as one of the Thessalian settlements captured by Marcus Baebius, seemingly located between Phakion and Atrax. The Phaÿttians belonged to Hestiaiotes according to Ptolemy (3.12.41).

The only epigraphical information on the *polis* comes from inscriptions found at the ancient settlement. A 2nd century BCE honorary decree of the Phaÿttians for Gorgias of Gyrtone, inscribed on a statue base (*IG IX,2 489*; *SEG XXVIII 526*), mentions that it was to be put up in the *agora* of the *polis*. The same inscription mentions the existence of an *ekklēsia* of the Phaÿttians. Inscribed on the same base is a manumission record of the Roman period, also mentioning the *polis*.

Chronology

Classical, Hellenistic, Roman, Byzantine.

Coordinates

Profitis Ilias hill: 339388, 4385385; Petromagoula area: 339790, 4383596.

Notes

1. The text has *à l'O[est]*, but the plan shows that it was supposedly to the north.
2. The statuette is in the National Archaeological Museum, with catalogue number B E 24. The figure has the same pose as the famous bronze statue found at the Archaic temple excavated just south of modern Mitropoli: see Intzesiloglou (2002, 112).
3. There is some confusion as to how many of these have been found. Hatziangelakis's (1998, 244) mentions one with the inscription ΠΕΙΡΑΣΙ[ΕΩΝ] but the published images of a stamp (Hatziangelakis 2012, 162; Stamatopoulou 2012b, 88) have [Π]ΕΙΡΑΣΙ[ΕΩΝ] with a depiction of a warrior facing left, with a raised shield with an M at its centre.
4. The *agora* is sometimes mistakenly identified as being at the Plateia Dimarcheiou, but Arvanitopoulos's plan clearly indicates that the excavated remains were at Plateia Laou, more precisely under the present National Bank office and the vertical mall on Lamia Street. I am indebted to Maria Stamatopoulou for sharing with me her copies of documents from Arvanitopoulos's archive.
5. Stählin had noted this church as the Agia Sofia and the extant church ruin as that of Agios Nikolaos. The 1909 Greek general staff's map of the region has the extant church ruin as Agia Sofia.
6. Exhibition *Ένας κόσμος σε μικρογραφία: Θεσσαλία και Μακεδονία (A world in miniature: Thessaly and Macedonia)*.
7. The publication states that the location is at Stroggylovouni (5 km to the east), which is clearly a mistake for the Kourtikiano Vouno.
8. Μεθυλ[ιέ]ων ἐπὶ [Κλ]εῖτρο[υ] Σατύρο[υ].
9. The location of the 1920s' settlement is interpreted by Cantarelli *et al.* (2008, 36–38) as a fortified Byzantine settlement with towers, a motte, orthogonal street-grid, *etc.* This interpretation is inexplicable, as the remains on the location are clearly of the 1920s–1950s, with no indication of previous Byzantine habitation.
10. Kastriotis's (1903, 30) text regrettably appears to contain typographical errors at this point, as he states that the wall measurements as 32 m in length (μῆκος), 23 m in width (πλάτος), and with a 0.65 m thickness (πάχος), the latter two measurements both improbable.
11. Kastriotis (1903, 38) dates the reliefs to the 2nd century BCE, which appears highly unlikely. Otto Kern (in *IG IX,2, 304*) correctly questioned this, and put them to the 2nd century CE.
12. I am exceedingly grateful to Fotini Tsiouka and Stefanos Bakalis for helping me identify the approximate locations of the many rescue excavations within the village of Pyrgos.
13. Misplaced by Stählin (1924, 118, fig. 1, at 8).
14. Lolling (1883, 118) states that the inscription was found at a bridge between the villages of Vlochos and Kourtiki/Metamorfofi (No. 16), but a closer examination of his notebook (*Lolling 1, 102*) shows that the bridge in question was between the village of Keramidi (Κεραμίδι) and Kourtiki/Metamorfofi, where there is a large *magoula*. The bridge and the stream which it crossed was destroyed during the land reclamation schemes of the 1960s.

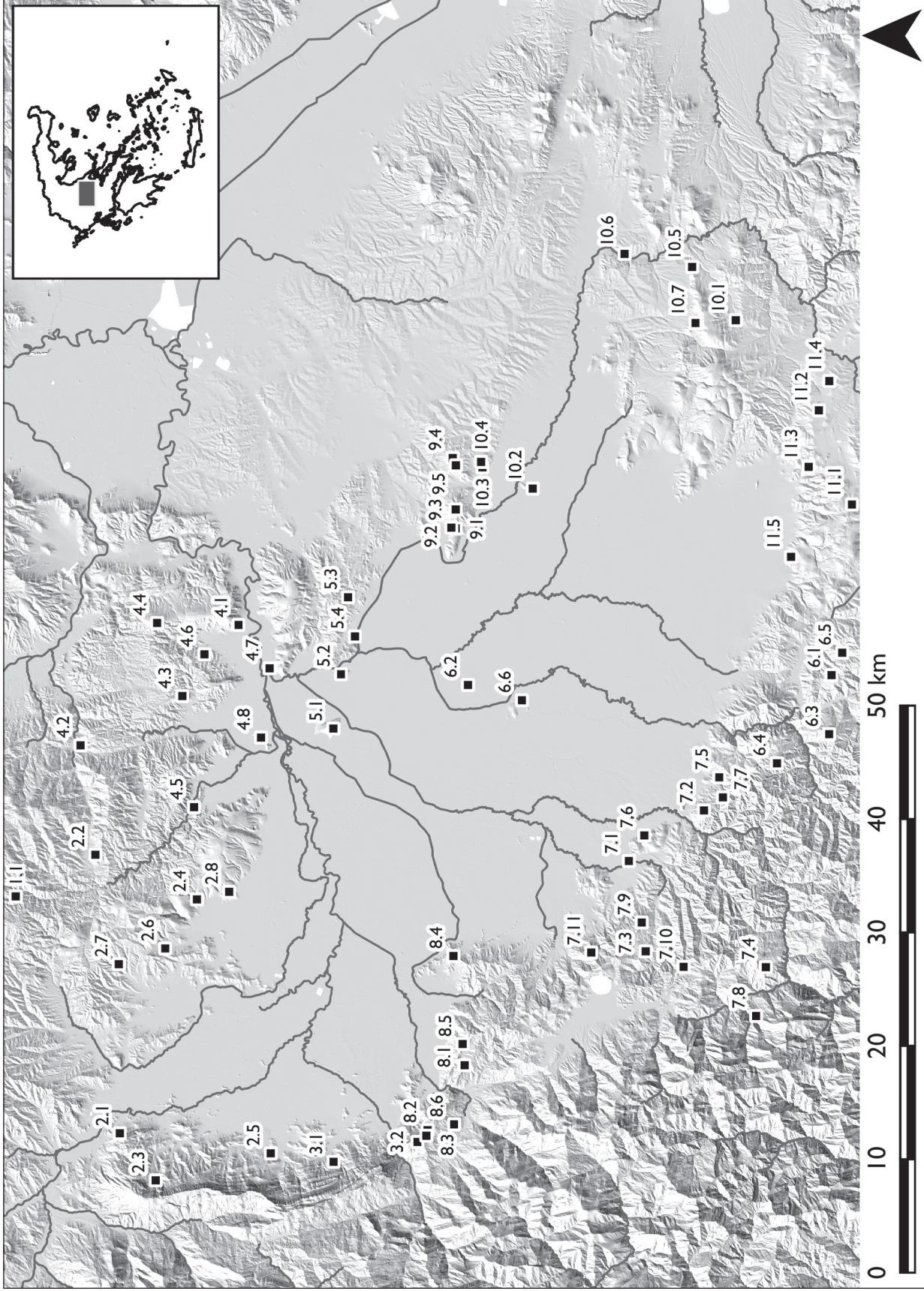


Figure 94 Fortified sites in Western Thessaly, as labelled in Appendix 2.

Appendix 2

Catalogue of fortified sites

This catalogue gives summaries of fortified locations on and immediately around the Western Thessalian plain (locations in Fig. 94), that cannot strictly be associated with an urban-like settlement. The descriptions and coordinates have been taken from publications and from the aerial photographs available online from the Greek national cadastre service Ktimatologio.

Municipality of Meteora, prefecture of Trikala

1.1 Kastri, Palia Skotina

Roughly ovoid-shaped fortification on steep hill, *c.* 5 km south of Gerakari. Well-preserved walls (still standing up to 3 m). The masonry (as depicted in Nimas 1988, fig. 28) is difficult to date, but could possibly be Late Roman or Early Byzantine.

Chronology: Late Roman?; Early Byzantine?

Bibliography: Nimas (1988, 270).

Coordinates: 315889, 4403534.

Municipality of Trikala, prefecture of Trikala

2.1 Kastri, Agia Paraskevi

Small fortification, *c.* 21 × 23 m on rocky outcrop. Irregular trapezoidal masonry of good quality.

Chronology: Probably of second half of 4th century BCE.

Bibliography: Pikoulas (2012, 278); Karagiannopoulos (2014b, 667).

Coordinates: 294983, 4394373.

2.2 Nea Smolia, Agrelia

Also known as Petsa Selloma. Hilltop, *c.* 3.2 km southwest of village, possibly a fortified settlement. The outer fortified area is roughly triangular, enclosing *c.* 0.8 ha with an approximated circumference of 370 m. The walls are

reportedly in isodomic masonry (but photographs of the site clearly show sections of fortifications in well-executed polygonal masonry), and are best preserved towards the north, east and south. At the western corner of the enceinte is a tower in irregular trapezoidal masonry and *c.* 30 m east of it another tower in the same masonry style. In the east wall is a small postern and at the south corner a larger gate protected on its west side by a bastion or tower. An inner fortification can also be traced, including a gate at its south, but the construction of an Ottoman border fortlet (post-1881) has obliterated most of the traces of this. The area contains some pottery of the Hellenistic and Byzantine period. At the north foot of the hill is a probable Hellenistic cemetery.

Chronology: Hellenistic; Byzantine.

Bibliography: Nimas (1988, 270–271); Darnezin (1992, 146–151); Marzloff (1994, 256, 258, Abb. 9); Glegle (2009, 53).

Coordinates: 319570, 4396498.

2.3 Palaiokastro, Kaloneri

Small fortification on rocky location. Preserved fortification wall, 16 m long and 2.10 m wide, with large scatter of pottery.

Chronology: Mainly Hellenistic, some Late Roman.

Bibliography: Pikoulas (2012, 278).

Coordinates: 290857, 4391194.

2.4 Palaiokastro, Kokkona

Ridge in narrow valley, *c.* 1 km northeast of village. Remains of fort (?) on hilltop built in polygonal masonry, with extensive Byzantine fortifications all over the slope.

Chronology: Classical–Hellenistic; Byzantine.

Bibliography: Nimas (1988, 264–265); Helly (1995b, 243).

Coordinates: 315635, 4387551.

2.5 Palaiokastro, Prodomos

Fortress or fortified settlement on hilltop, reused in the Middle Byzantine period. Fortifications in irregular trapezoidal masonry.

Chronology: Archaic; Classical–Hellenistic; Middle Byzantine.

Bibliography: Pikoulas (2012, 279); Karagiannopoulos (2014b, 667).

Coordinates: 293244, 4381038.

2.6 Paliampela, Ardani

Fortified isolated hilltop *c.* 2 km north–northeast of village. Walls constructed of slabs and in poor state of preservation.

Chronology: Unknown (Archaic?).

Bibliography: Nimas (1988, 268–269).

Coordinates: 311289, 4390374.

2.7 Synoro, Ellinokastro

Ridge in between ravines, *c.* 1 km southwest of village. Fortification with walls in polygonal masonry, with later Byzantine additions. *Circa* 1.5 km southwest of the location is the Omvriasa site (**No. 25**).

Chronology: Classical; Byzantine.

Bibliography: Nimas (1988, 268); Helly (1995b, 244); Mantzana (2015, 385).

Coordinates: 309890, 4394438.

2.8 Vigla, Chrysavgi

Location on hill-like ridge *c.* 0.8 km northeast of village. Fortified elongated enceinte of *c.* 0.5 ha clearly visible in aerial photographs, traceable as a robber's trench left from when nearly all the stones were removed. A fragmentary tangential gate can be discerned in the east side of the enceinte.

Chronology: Archaic or Classical?

Bibliography: Not previously published.

Coordinates: 316300, 4384720.

Municipality of Pyli, prefecture of Trikala

3.1 Almpina, Pialeia

Fortification on rocky outcrop, *c.* 0.6 km southwest of village. See **No. 21**.

Chronology: Roman?, Byzantine?

Bibliography: Pikoulas (2012, 280).

Coordinates: 292489, 4375522.

3.2 Itamos, Pyli

Fortification on hilltop, *c.* 2 km southwest of village.

Chronology: Unknown.

Bibliography: Kirsten (1951, 1216).

Coordinates: 294237, 4368125.

Municipality of Farkadona, prefecture of Trikala

4.1 Drakospito, Zarkos

Fortified mountain spur *c.* 1 km southeast of village. For more detailed description, see **No. 30**.

Chronology: Classical?

Bibliography: Nimas (1988, 261); Theogianni and Athanasiou (2021, 30); Dafi and Rönnlund (forthcoming).

Coordinates: 339825, 4383899.

4.2 Kastri, Diasello

Hilltop *c.* 1.3 km northwest of village. Fortification wall of 400 m length constructed in polygonal masonry enclosing area of *c.* 1.1 ha on summit.

Chronology: Unknown.

Bibliography: Nimas (1988, 271); Darmezín (1992, 152).

Coordinates: 329204, 4397819.

4.3 Kastro, Grizano

Large medieval castle on lofty ridge just northeast of village. Nearly all remains are clearly of the Early Byzantine period or later, but a section of a wall in rubble masonry in the southeastern part of the hilltop could possibly be of a Classical–Hellenistic fortification.

Chronology: Classical–Hellenistic?; Early Byzantine; Middle Byzantine.

Bibliography: Leake (1835b, 316–318); Stählin (1924, 116); Nimas (1988, 268); Darmezín (1992, 143–144); Gialouri (2015).

Coordinates: 333554, 4388858.

4.4 Koutra, Zarkos

Large (*c.* 3.75 ha) walled enclosure on hilltop (728 masl), *c.* 5 km north of village. Several circular (hut?) foundations can be seen within the *c.* 550 m wall.

Chronology: Unknown.

Bibliography: Dafi & Rönnlund (forthcoming).

Coordinates: 340033, 4391058.

4.5 Palaiokastro, Oichalia

Hill *c.* 2.5 km northwest of village, just south of the Neochoritis river. Probably an Early Byzantine fortress. Fortified area of *c.* 1.3 ha enclosed by a 440 m wall. Most of the fortifications are covered in dense vegetation but visible sections of the masonry are constructed in rubble masonry cemented with white mortar. Two large rectangular towers have been noted in the eastern side of the enceinte and one central *donjon* on the hilltop. Some surface pottery indicates a Classical–Hellenistic phase on the location, little of which can be traced in the fortification walls (Darmezín 1992, 145).

Chronology: Classical–Hellenistic; Byzantine.

Bibliography: Nimas (1988, 262–263); Darmezín (1992, 144–145).

Coordinates: 323754, 4387819.

4.6 *Plateia Rachi, Zarkos*

Fortified ridge, *c.* 1.2 km northwest of village. Fortification wall in poorly preserved polygonal masonry, running for 950 m, enclosing 5 ha of gently sloping ground. At the highest point in the west, immediately above the saddle connecting the ridge with the larger mountain body in the northwest, are the fragmentary remains of structures of unknown function.

Chronology: Archaic?

Bibliography: Dafi and Rönnlund (forthcoming).

Coordinates: 337391, 4386837.

4.7 *Prosilio, Keramidi*

On steep ridge, immediately east of village. Fortlet consisting of larger rectangular building and separate tower. A terraced road leads from the remains along ridge-line towards the southeast, descending the hillside at the saddle in zigzag fashion towards the direction of the site of ancient Atrax.

Chronology: Classical–Hellenistic.

Bibliography: Vaïopoulou *et al.* (2020, 34); Dafi and Rönnlund (forthcoming).

Coordinates: 335992, 4381151.

4.8 *Sykia, Klokotos*

Fortified hilltop northeast of village. Fortification wall in poorly preserved polygonal masonry surrounds the north, east and south sides of hilltop. At the summit is another walled enceinte in polygonal masonry, surrounding a flat area with several building foundations. For detailed description, see **No. 14**.

Chronology: Archaic?, Classical?

Bibliography: Dafi and Rönnlund (forthcoming).

Coordinates: 329890, 4381883.

Municipality of Palamas, prefecture of Karditsa

5.1 *Kastro, Metamorfosi*

Multi-phase fortifications on hilltop. See **No. 16**.

Chronology: Late Archaic; Classical; Hellenistic; Early Byzantine.

Bibliography: Decourt (1986, 373; 1990, 159–160); Vaïopoulou *et al.* (2022, 96–99; forthcoming).

Coordinates: 330702, 4375522.

5.2 *Stroggylovouni, Vlochos*

Large, fortified hilltop, for details, see **No. 29**.

Chronology: Late Archaic?; Classical; Hellenistic; Byzantine.

Bibliography: Decourt (1990, 161–162); Vaïopoulou *et al.* (2020).

Coordinates: 335451, 4374814.

5.3 *Paliomonastiri, Petrino*

Isolated tower on hilltop north of village, constructed in small stones cemented with mortar. Preserved to a height of over 3 m.

Chronology: Early Byzantine.

Bibliography: Decourt (1990, 101).

Coordinates: 341977, 4374582.

5.4 *Paparma Vrysi, Agios Dimitrios*

Isolated tower on rocky outcrop of the Makryvouni ridge, southeast of village. Possibly destroyed by quarrying. Constructed in “large blocks”, and *c.* 15 m in width.

Chronology: Hellenistic?

Bibliography: Decourt (1990, 101).

Coordinates: 338897, 4373871.

Municipality of Sofades, prefecture of Karditsa

6.1 *Ano Ktímeni*

Also known under its former name Dranista. Small fortification with a circumference of *c.* 250 m, partially within the modern village, located on a natural terrace in the hillslope. The walls are in polygonal masonry, with an apparent width of *c.* 3.5 m. The fortified area has surface material of the Classical, Hellenistic, Roman and later Byzantine periods. Arvanitopoulos and Stählin reported two towers in the enceinte, which were not found by Helly. A Late Helladic tholos tomb was excavated by Arvanitopoulos just outside of the fortified area. The remains have officially been identified as those of ancient Ktimene (Κτιμένη), an important *polis* of the Dolopians, but the archaeological remains on the site are too modest to support the identification of a city at this location.

Chronology: Late Helladic; Classical; Hellenistic; Roman; Byzantine.

Bibliography: Arvanitopoulos (1912, 348; 351–352); Stählin (1922; 1924, 149); Béquignon (1937, 331–332); Helly (1992, 53–56); Stamatopoulou (2012a, 23); Galanakis and Stamatopoulou (2012).

Coordinates: 335393, 4331601.

6.2 *Chomatokastro, Mataragka*

Bank enceinte on flat ground on south side of national highway, *c.* 1 km northeast of village. See **No. 5**.

Chronology: Proto-Geometric; Geometric; Archaic.

Bibliography: Heuzey and Daumet (1876, 412); Decourt (1990, 149, n. 5); Hatziangelakis (2011a, 577–578); Tsiouka and Kokonaki (forthcoming).

Coordinates: 334534, 4363656.

6.3 *Kastro, Loutropigi/Smokovo*

Small, fortified enceinte, 550 m in circumference, on hilltop, *c.* 0.8 km northwest of village. The walls are in crude

polygonal masonry, 2.3 m wide. The chapel of Agios Ilias is built within the fortified area, where there is also a cistern. An arrowhead was found by a private individual in the walls of the fortification and a Byzantine coin on a plateau southwest of the hilltop, below the fortified area.

Chronology: Classical–Hellenistic?; Byzantine.

Bibliography: Leake (1835b, 272); Arvanitopoulos (1912, 348); Stählin (1924, 149); Béquignon (1937, 329–331); Helly (1992, 62); Karagiannopoulos (2020b, 1537–1538).

Coordinates: 330191, 4331824.

6.4 Palaiokastro, Thrapsimi

Fortified hilltop, c. 1 km south of village. Walls and towers are in coursed trapezoidal masonry of the second half of 4th century or first half of the 3rd century BCE. Possibly secondary settlement or fortified outpost of the city at Kedros (No. 13), c. 6 km north-northeast.

Chronology: Classical–Hellenistic.

Bibliography: Arvanitopoulos (1912, 348); Stählin (1924, 147, n. 9); Helly (1992, 62); Intzesiloglou (1992a, 266).

Coordinates: 327628, 4336421.

6.5 Palaiokastro, Ano Ktimeni

Fortified hilltop 2.3 km southeast of Ano Ktimeni, between the ravines of the streams Koklas and Gelanitis. Constructed in crude polygonal masonry, with two gates and a heap of stones interpreted as a possible temple.

Chronology: Classical–Hellenistic?

Bibliography: Arvanitopoulos (1912, 348); Stählin (1924, 150); Helly (1992, 55).

Coordinates: 337385, 4330660.

6.6 Oglas, Pyrgos Kieriou

Tower (?) on hilltop, partially built on remains of previous structures.

Chronology: Byzantine.

Bibliography: Leake (1835b, 497).

Coordinates: 333249, 4359031.

Municipality of Karditsa, prefecture of Karditsa

7.1 Agios Athanasios, Kallithiro

Fort on hilltop. For details, see No. 11.

Chronology: 6th century CE.

Bibliography: Intzesiloglou (2001, 348–349; 2003, 476–478; 2004, 440–442; 2005b, 418).

Coordinates: 319013, 4349482.

7.2 Choirinokastro, Dafnospilia

Fortification in polygonal masonry, with reported possible remains of a temple.

Chronology: Classical–Hellenistic.

Bibliography: Stählin (1924, 147); Helly (1992, 72); Hatzangelakis (2007, 53).

Coordinates: 323472, 4342868.

7.3 Kastri, Katafygio

Fortified settlement on ridge-top, c. 1.8 km northwest of village. Fortifications and building remains of the Classical–Hellenistic period have been noted at the site. The sites of Profitis Ilias (7.9) and Tsouka (7.10) are located 2.5 km east and 3.6 km south-southwest of the site.

Chronology: Classical; Hellenistic.

Bibliography: Leake (1835b, 272); Governmental Gazette ΦΕΚ 434/ΑΑΠ/9-9-2009, 5054 (No. 2).

Coordinates: 311055, 4347976.

7.4 Kastri, Megas Lakkos

Fortified hillock/spur in south slope of the Valaora/Lykodonti hill, c. 0.9 km north of the village. Possibly a small fort.

Chronology: Classical–Hellenistic.

Bibliography: FEK 434/ΑΑΠ/9-9-2009, 5055 (No. 13).

Coordinates: 309636, 4337394.

7.5 Kastro Agiou Ioanni, Paliouri

Virtually no information is available regarding this site, apart from being allegedly where a dedicatory inscription to Aphrodite was really found (*IG IX,2 271*). This is otherwise given as at Choirinokastro (7.2). Ridge 1.2 km southeast of village.

Chronology: Unknown.

Bibliography: Hatzangelakis (2007, 53).

Coordinates: 326377, 4341503.

7.6 Kastro, Mavroneri

Coordinates: 321265, 4348110.

Fortification on low hill, c. 0.2 km northwest of village. For more detailed description, see No. 11.

Chronology: Hellenistic?

Bibliography: Intzesiloglou (1992a, 269).

Coordinates: 321265, 4348110.

7.7 Kastro Ai Ilia, Paliouri

Fortified ridge-like hilltop, 3.2 km southwest of village.

Chronology: Unknown.

Bibliography: Helly (1992, 85–88).

Coordinates: 324621, 4341203.

7.8 Palaiokastro, Karoplesi

Fortified settlement on hilltop, c. 0.6 km west of the village. Fortifications and terraces of the late Classical and Hellenistic periods. Cist tombs have been found north and west of the site.

Chronology: Classical–Hellenistic.

Bibliography: FEK 434/ΑΑΠ/9-9-2009, 5055 (No. 11).

Coordinates: 305349, 4338248.

7.9 *Profitis Ilias, Ampeliko*

Fortified settlement on hilltop, *c.* 1.8 km southwest of village. Fortifications and remains of buildings of the late Classical or Hellenistic period, with cist tombs found in the southwest slope of the hill.

Chronology: Classical–Hellenistic.

Bibliography: FEK 434/AAΠ/9-9-2009, 5054 (No. 5).

Coordinates: 313583, 4348316.

7.10 *Tsouka, Kastania*

Fortified settlement on hilltop, *c.* 0.5 km southwest of village. Fortifications and building remains of the late Classical and Hellenistic periods.

Chronology: Classical–Hellenistic.

Bibliography: Samaropoulos (1901, 18); Helly (1992, 62); FEK 434/AAΠ/9-9-2009, 5055 (No. 10).

Coordinates: 309690, 4344645.

7.11 *Vimperotrypa, Portitsa*

Large, fortified hilltop, *c.* 0.7 km southwest of village. The walls are in coursed polygonal masonry with slab-like stones. Location damaged by quarrying. No visible surface ceramics.

Chronology: Archaic? Classical?

Bibliography: Leake (1835b, 272); Arvanitopoulos (1911, 345); Intzesiloglou (2010a, 142).

Coordinates: 310920, 4352783.

Municipality of Mouzaki, prefecture of Karditsa

8.1 *Agios Ilias, Ellinokastro*

Hellenistic fortification on long and steep ridge, *c.* 1 km north of village. The walls are in pseudo-isodomic masonry with two rectangular towers. Some tombs found at the location. Possibly secondary fortification to the city at Episkopi, Mouzaki (No. 4), *c.* 4 km to the north. The tower at Ellinopyrgos (8.5) is located on parallel ridge, *c.* 1.9 km to the east.

Chronology: Classical–Hellenistic.

Bibliography: Hatziangelakis (2011a, 581–582); Athanasiou (2022, 994–996).

Coordinates: 301012, 4363955.

8.2 *Athinaio/Souvlero 1, Porti*

Fortification on hilltop, *c.* 2.5 km south of village. Fortlet constructed in pseudo-isodomic masonry with one rectangular tower. Location is 500 m southeast of smaller fortification (8.3).

Chronology: Hellenistic?

Bibliography: Oberhummer (1898); Kirsten (1951, 1216); Athanasiou (2022, 996–997).

Coordinates: 295286, 4367222.

8.3 *Athinaio/Souvlero 2, Porti*

Fortification wall in pseudo-isodomic masonry protecting lower hilltop, with steep unfortified slope to the west. Location is 500 m northwest of the Souvlero 1 fortlet (8.2).

Chronology: Hellenistic?

Bibliography: Oberhummer (1898); Kirsten (1951, 1216); Athanasiou (2022, 997).

Coordinates: 294797, 4367337.

8.4 *Fanari*

Byzantine fortress, heavily modified in the Ottoman period. Recently restored by the Ephorate of Karditsa.

Chronology: Byzantine, Ottoman.

Bibliography: Sdrolia (1987); Vlachostergios (2009, 551); Kalogeroudis (2015).

Coordinates: 310638, 4364950.

8.5 *Monolithos, Ellinopyrgos*

Steep hilltop on ridge, *c.* 2 km northeast of village. A tower in irregular trapezoidal masonry is preserved to seven courses and a height of 3.1 m.

Chronology: Classical–Hellenistic.

Bibliography: Hatziangelakis (2001b, 361; 2007, 66).

Coordinates: 302953, 4364080.

8.6 *Palaiokastro, Porti*

Fortified hill-spur in the slope of larger mountain (on top of which is the Souvlero tower, 3.4), *c.* 1 km southwest of village. Unknown date, but tombs of the 2nd and 1st centuries BCE have been found at the location. Possibly secondary settlement of the city at Episkopi (No. 4), *c.* 5 km to the northeast.

Chronology: Hellenistic?

Bibliography: Hatziangelakis (1999b, 333; 2004, 450).

Coordinates: 295803, 4364907.

Municipality of Kileler, prefecture of Larisa

9.1 *Fyllio Oros 1, Mikro Vouno*

For details, see No. 8. Half of the fortified area is within the municipality of Palamas, prefecture of Karditsa.

Chronology: Archaic?

Bibliography: Decourt (1986, 386; 1990, 178).

Coordinates: 348340, 4364738.

9.2 *Fyllio Oros 2, Mikro Vouno*

For details, see No. 8.

Chronology: Archaic?

Bibliography: Decourt (1986, 386; 1990, 178).

Coordinates: 348420, 4365117.

9.3 Fyllio Oros 3, Mikro Vouno

For details, see **No. 8**. Half of the fortified area is within the municipality of Palamas, prefecture of Karditsa.

Chronology: Classical–Hellenistic?

Bibliography: Decourt (1986, 386; 1990, 178).

Coordinates: 350027, 4364723.

9.4 Kastro Psychikou 1, Psychiko

On the Mavrovouni, a hilltop location *c.* 1.2 km southeast of village. Enceinte in rubble masonry, roughly rectangular in shape. The southern part has been somewhat damaged by a trackway. No surface material noted by Morgan (1983, 44). The Kastro Psychikou 2 fortification (**9.5**) is *c.* 1.2 km to the southwest.

Chronology: Archaic?

Bibliography: Morgan (1983, 44); Decourt (1990, 18; 103; 128; 178; fig. 74).

Coordinates: 354554, 4364984.

9.5 Kastro Psychikou 2, Psychiko

On the Mavrovouni, a hilltop location *c.* 1.2 km south of village. Enceinte in rubble masonry, roughly rectangular in shape. A modern bulldozed dirt road runs across the fortifications in the north and southwest. No surface material noted by Morgan (1983, 44). The Kastro Psychikou 1 fortification (**9.4**) is *c.* 1.2 km to the northeast.

Chronology: Archaic?

Bibliography: Morgan (1983, 44); Decourt (1990, 18; 103; 128; 178; fig. 74).

Coordinates: 353883, 4364700.

Municipality of Farsala, prefecture of Larisa

10.1 Arampises, Agios Antonios

Low triangle-shaped *magoula*, *c.* 0.7 ha, at conflux of two smaller streams, *c.* 1.5 km west of village. Poorly preserved fortification walls in large polygonal masonry. Stählin (1924, 170) noted nearby springs and some prehistoric ceramic surface material at the site.

Chronology: Prehistoric? Archaic?

Bibliography: Stählin (1914, 90; 1924, 170); Decourt (1990, 214, 219–220, fig. 119).

Coordinates: 366701, 4340059.

10.2 Chtouri, Polyneri

Classical–Hellenistic *phrourion* on hilltop. For details, see **No. 1**.

Chronology: Archaic?; Hellenistic.

Bibliography: Stählin (1924, 143); Béquignon (1932, 122–191); Decourt (1990, 102; 214–215) Karachalios *et al.* (2018, 13).

Coordinates: 351851, 4357940.

10.3 Kalogiros 1, Ypereia

On hilltop, *c.* 3.1 km northeast of village. Semi-circular fortification. 300 m to the west is the Kalogiros 2 site (**10.4**). No surface material noted by Morgan (1983, 44).

Chronology: Unknown.

Bibliography: Morgan (1983, 44); Decourt (1990, 103; 128; 177, n. 94; 178; figs 77–79).

Coordinates: 353731, 4362389.

10.4 Kalogiros 2, Ypereia

On hilltop, 3.8 km northeast of village. Poorly preserved enclosure on same hill-body as Kalogiros 1 (**10.3**), which is 300 m to the west. Roughly lens-shaped fortified enceinte. No surface material noted by Morgan (1983, 44).

Chronology: Unknown.

Bibliography: Morgan (1983, 44).

Coordinates: 354205, 4362493.

10.5 Kastro, Narthaki

Small fortification on hilltop 1 km southeast of village. Poorly preserved walls, mainly reduced to rubble, run along the southern rim of the *c.* 0.4 ha hilltop.

Chronology: Unknown.

Bibliography: Decourt (1990, 24; 128; 219–220; fig. 114).

Coordinates: 371396, 4343893.

10.6 Kastro, Xylades

Fortified hilltop southwest of village. Large enceinte in polygonal masonry originally surrounding most of *c.* 18 ha hilltop, but recently damaged by agricultural activities. Probable gates to the east and south lead into large intramural area, where is a smaller enceinte (*peribolos?*). An altar to Zeus Thaulios has been found here.

Chronology: Archaic?; Classical–Hellenistic.

Bibliography: Leake (1835b, 469); Stählin (1924, 143); Morgan (1983, 33); Decourt (1990, 185–223; figs 96–101; 1995, no. 63).

Coordinates: 372534, 4349848.

10.7 Profitis Ilias, Dilofos

Small fortification on hilltop *c.* 600 m south of the village.

Chronology: Unknown.

Bibliography: Decourt (1990, 219–220; fig. 115).

Coordinates: 366450, 4343594.

Municipality of Domokos, prefecture of Fthiotida

11.1 Kastro, Omvriaki

Small fortification in rubble masonry, just north of village. Prehistoric (?) and Classical–Hellenistic (?) pottery in the west slope of the hill.

Chronology: Prehistoric? Classical–Hellenistic?

Bibliography: Stählin (1924, 161); La Coste-Messelière and Daux (1924, 355).

Coordinates: 350453, 4329800.

11.2 Vounokastro, Vouzi

Hill *c.* 800 m southwest of village with roughly ovoid fortified enclosure.

Chronology: Classical–Hellenistic.

Bibliography: La Coste-Messelière and Daux (1924, 359); Cantarelli *et al.* (2008, 94–95).

Coordinates: 358733, 4332723.

11.3 Peristeria, Pournari

Small fortification constructed in “irregular blocks” on hilltop just east of modern highway Domokos–Neo Monastiri. Two rectangular structures have been noted inside the fortified area, which is poorly preserved.

Chronology: Middle Helladic; Late Helladic; Hellenistic.

Bibliography: Cantarelli *et al.* (2008, 62–64).

Coordinates: 353756, 4333647.

11.4 Pyrgaki, Vouzi

Small fortification encompassing *c.* 0.05 ha, constructed in poorly preserved trapezoidal masonry, located in cultivated field on hilltop, *c.* 2 km southeast of village. Described by Cantarelli *et al.* (2008) as the probable site of the Hermaion (interpreted as a “tower-temple”) mentioned in a mid-2nd century BCE inscription found at the monastery of Agia Triada at Melitaia (*IG IX,2 205*; Stählin 1914, 84), but remains are clearly of a fortlet or similar.

Chronology: Classical–Hellenistic.

Bibliography: Cantarelli *et al.* (2008, 98–100); Lambros Stavrogiannis pers. comm.

Coordinates: 361307, 4331824.

11.5 Gynaikokastro, Ekkara

Small fortification in rubble masonry, east of the village. For details, see **No. 3**.

Chronology: Classical–Hellenistic?

Bibliography: Stählin (1924, 155); Cantarelli *et al.* (2008, 57–59).

Coordinates: 345829, 4335171.

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