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Cover illustration from Robin Rönnlund in this volume, p. 123, fig. 6. Photograph by Robin Rönnlund. Courtesy of Ministry of Culture and Sports—Directorate for the Administration of the National Archive of Monuments—Department for the Administration of the Historical Archive of Antiquities and Restorations.

An overlooked 2nd-century BC decree

by the *polis* of the Orthieians, Thessaly

Abstract

The National Archive of Monuments in Athens contains a dossier with documents regarding complications relating to road construction works in 1905 at the then-unknown archaeological site of Kedros in Western Thessaly. Among the documents is a paper copy of a fragmentary inscription of the 2nd century BC, reportedly found at the site. The preserved text of the inscription indicates that it was an honorific decree set up by the *polis* of the Orthieians to a benefactor from the nearby city of Gomphoi.*

Keywords: *agoranomos*, archival research, Gomphoi, inscription, Kedros, Orthos, *polis*, Thessaly

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* The author would like to express his gratitude to the Ephorate of Antiquities of Karditsa for granting him the permit to publish the photograph of the site at Kedros (issue no. 224474, 10/05/2023). Mr Christos Karagiannopoulos of the said ephorate has been more than generous in discussing the remains and topography of the site. The author is indebted to the Ministry of Culture and Sports, the Directorate for the Administration of the National Archive of Monuments, and the Department for the Administration of the Historical Archive of Antiquities and Restorations for granting the permit to photograph and publish the records discussed (permit request no. 183456/22-04-2022). The staff of the Directorate for the Administration of the National Archive of Monuments and especially Dr Sofia Frangouloupoulou were exceedingly helpful in locating the relevant documents stored in the archive at Psaromiligou Street, Athens. The author would also like to express his thanks to Mrs Ioanna Dymenou and Dr Stelios Ieremias for assisting in transcribing the difficult *kalligrafia* of the original documents. Dr Jenny Wallensten of the Swedish Institute at Athens, as well as Dr Peder Flemestad of Lund University, Dr Matthew Scarborough of the University of Copenhagen, and Dr Martin Hallmannsecker of the University of Vienna have also been more than helpful. Finally, the author would like to thank both the anonymous first reviewer and Prof. Nikolaos Papazarkadas, who graciously ceded his anonymity for the benefit of further discussions on the text, for their constructive comments and great contributions to this study. The author wishes to acknowledge the recent paper by Anthi Batziou (2021) on the Thessalian records in the National Archive of Monuments, which was published too late to be considered in this article.

Introduction

The area of Western Thessaly (*Fig. 1*) remains one of the least-studied regions of the ancient Greek mainland, not least due to its remote location far from the major modern cities, but recently also from the highways. It was only through infrastructural developments in the late 20th century and onwards that the area started to be more systematically investigated, especially through the excavations brought on by the construction of the new national Lamia–Kalampaka highway. The archaeology of the region is now becoming increasingly better understood, but much remains to be done on all levels of examination.

Western Thessaly rarely figures in ancient literary sources, which has also added to the region's relative obscurity. Several of the ancient cities dotting the landscape are only known from summary accounts in Livy and from the lists of *theōrodokoi* from the sanctuaries of Delphi and Epidaurus,¹ figuring in scholarship only as names on a map. In this article, I present some old yet overlooked evidence for one of these settlements, ancient Orthos, as recently rediscovered in early 20th-century archival records preserved in Athens. Among the papers relating to complications that arose during roadworks at the village of Chalamprezi in 1905 are descriptions of the antiquities of Orthos as well as a drawing of a fragment of a hitherto overlooked inscription of the 2nd century BC. The inscription can be identified as a decree issued by the *polis* of the Orthieians and provides valuable insights into the political life of Thessaly in the early years of Roman domination, linking Orthos with the wider developments in the region in the first half of the century. The archival material also gives us a rare glimpse into the difficulties faced by the local archaeological authorities, just over 20 years after the incorporation of Thessaly into the Kingdom of Greece.

¹ Plassart 1921; Perlman 2000, 68–81.

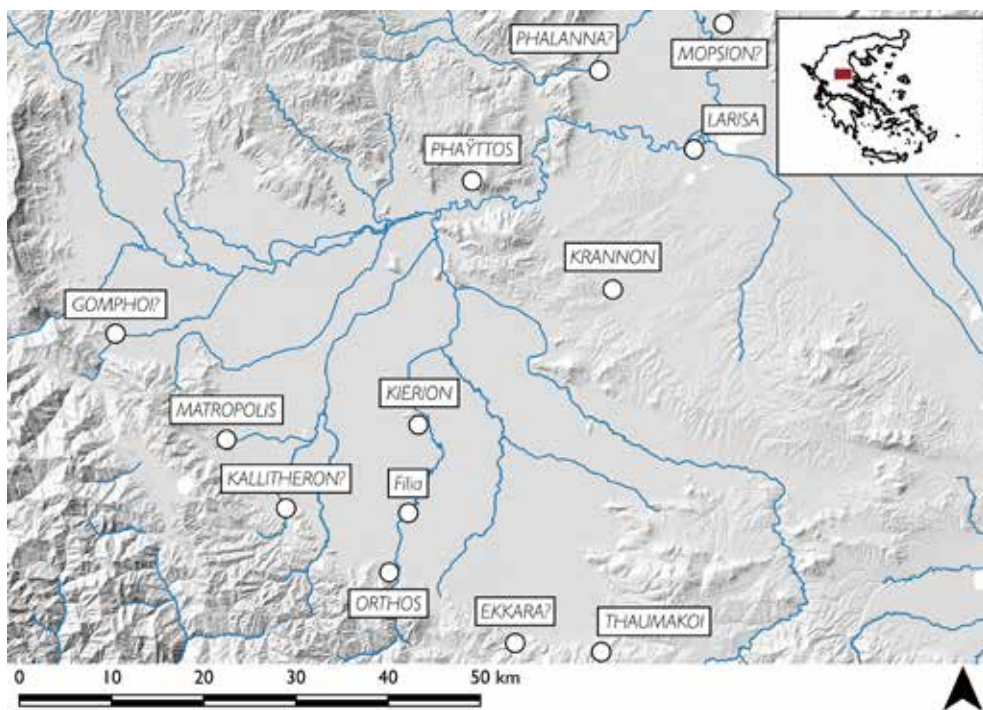


Fig. 1. Western Thessaly as shown within modern Greece, with ancient sites mentioned in text. Upper case indicates ancient toponyms, lower case indicates present-day toponyms. Map by Robin Rönnlund.

Ancient Orthos

Orthos (Ὄρθος), or the *polis* of the Orthieians, does not figure in the extant ancient literary sources, and has for long been known only from an inscription from Delphi from 341/340 BC,² the 230–220s BC list of *theōrodoxoi* from the same sanctuary,³ and from a small number of coins.⁴ The location appears as either Orthos, Orthoi (Ὄρθοι), or Ortha (Ὄρθα) in these sources, but the Ionic form Orthe (Ὄρθη) has been more common in modern scholarship. A toponym Orthe figures in the *Catalogue of Ships* in the *Iliad*,⁵ but is commonly regarded as not referring to ancient Orthos in Western Thessaly, but to the acropolis of Phalanna (probably close to modern Tyrnavos), due to a comment in Strabo.⁶ Whether Homeric and Strabonic Orthe really represent the same place cannot be determined, and scholarly attempts at harmonizing

the information in the *Iliad* and Strabo with the epigraphic and numismatic evidence relating to Orthos resulted in some confusion quite early on.⁷

Orthos was located in the ancient region of Hestiaiotis, just north-west of the modern village of Kedros (until 1928 known as Chalamprezi) in the prefecture of Karditsa. That Kedros was the location of the ancient settlement was relatively recently (re-)established through the surface find at the site of a Classical–Hellenistic roof tile bearing the stamped inscription [O]PΘ[IEΩ][N] (“of the Orthieians”).⁸ The site is centred around the grove or “forest” (*dasos*) and 19th-century chapel of Agios Nikolaos, just 120 m south-west of the Karditsa–Loutra Smokovou road (Fig. 2). Whereas much of the site is public land, a large swathe of ground south-west of the grove is still privately owned and cultivated, with cotton fields covering approximately 10 out of the c. 50 hectares of intra-mural ground of the ancient settlement.

The site was not known to the 19th-century travellers frequenting the region, and is one of the few ancient cities that do not feature in Friedrich Stählin’s important *Das hellenische Thessalien*.⁹ The first published scholarly mention of the site was in the 1980s by Charalambos “Babis” Intzesiloglou,

² *Corpus des inscriptions de Delphes* II 12, I:67–68.

³ Plassart 1921, I, IV:25, V:C (b):9.

⁴ Georgiou 2015.

⁵ *Hom. Il.* 2.739.

⁶ Strabo 9.5.19: “Ὄρθην δὲ τινὲς τὴν ἀκρόπολιν τῶν Φαλανναίων εἰρήκασιν, ἢ δὲ Φάλαννα Περραιβικὴ πόλις πρὸς τῷ Πηνειῷ πλησίον τῶν Τεμπῶν” [“Some have said that Orthe is the acropolis of the Phalannaeans, and Phalanna is a Perrhaibaeon *polis* at the Peneios close to Tempe”]. See also Decourt *et al.* 2004, 698–699. Strabo’s mention of a separate (?) acropolis of Phalanna is intriguing, as the main candidate for the city site of Phalanna is the large *magoula* or tell of Kastri, c. 3 km south-east of Tyrnavos, which is over 6 km from any larger hill.

⁷ As summarized in Lenk 1942.

⁸ Intzesiloglou 2000, 169.

⁹ Stählin 1924.



Fig. 2. The site of ancient Orthos, looking towards the north-east, as seen from the location of the so-called “House of the Potter” on the slopes of the acropolis ridge of Chelonokastro. The grove or “forest” (*dasos*) of Agios Nikolaos at centre, with the chapel at right. Mount Olympus at centre horizon. Courtesy of the Hellenic Ministry of Culture and Sports—Organisation for the Management and and Development of Cultural Resources. Photograph by Robin Rönnlund.

who excavated a Classical–Hellenistic sanctuary of a chthonic deity (Persephone?) in the cemetery area immediately north-east of the ancient city.¹⁰

In the Hellenistic period, the ancient city was surrounded by extensive fortifications, with a strong but small acropolis on the highest point of the steep ridge of Chelonokastro, which is just south of the lower settlement area.¹¹ Two descending fortification walls, one running northwards down the slope and the other running along the top of the continuation of the ridge towards the north-east, connected the acropolis with the fortifications of the lower settlement area. A larger overlap-type gate was excavated by the 13th Ephorate of Prehistoric and Classical Antiquities just north of the chapel of Agios Nikolaos,¹² representing the only known entrance to the ancient city. Trial excavations by the then-ephorate of Thessaly in the early 1960s conducted in the lower parts of the site revealed remains of a Roman-era building, possibly a bath.¹³ The fortifications at the site were apparently well-preserved until 1905, when they were robbed of their stones for road and

bridge construction (see below). Aerial photographs show the extent of the destruction, with robber trenches running for over a kilometre along the Chelonokastro ridge. Cemeteries of the Hellenistic and Roman periods surround the site,¹⁴ and a pottery workshop of the Hellenistic period has been excavated in the slope of the Chelonokastro ridge above the lower settlement area, the so-called “House of the Potter”.¹⁵ Two inscriptions, one a dedication to Apollo of the first half of the 3rd century BC,¹⁶ the other containing early Roman manumissions,¹⁷ have been found in the area surrounding the *dasos*, indicating the cultic and political importance of the site throughout antiquity. A Classical-period settlement has been excavated at the riverside location of Platanakia, south of the village of Kedros. The latter was apparently violently destroyed in the 5th century BC, and could consequently be a predecessor to the late 4th-century BC city of Orthos.¹⁸

¹⁰ Intzesiloglou 1982, 232; 1985, 196; 1987a, 268; Karagiannopoulos 2011, 618.

¹¹ Hatziangelakis 2007, 52.

¹² Intzesiloglou 2000, 169.

¹³ Theocharis 1961–1962, 179.

¹⁴ Intzesiloglou 1987a, 268; 2000; Gardalinou & Skafida 1995; Hatziangelakis 2001–2004, 579; Karagiannopoulos 2014, 1531–1532.

¹⁵ Intzesiloglou 2000, 169; Hatziangelakis 2007, 52.

¹⁶ Intzesiloglou 1987b = *SEG* XLII 539.

¹⁷ Intzesiloglou 1985, 196–197. According to Intzesiloglou, the stone is inscribed with three separate manumission decrees, none of which have been published. Not in Zelnick-Abramovitz 2013.

¹⁸ Intzesiloglou 1987a, 268.

Samaropoulos and his 1905 reports to the central authorities in Athens

Apostolos G. Samaropoulos was born in the mid-19th century in Palamas, a small town in inland Thessaly. At the time, the area was part of the Ottoman Empire, located in the *kaza* of Karadige (present-day Karditsa), itself part of the *sancak* of Tirhala (present-day Trikala). Little is known of Samaropoulos's early life, apart from his employment as a prison guard in Karditsa. In 1885, just four years after the annexation of Thessaly by the Kingdom of Greece, he founded and served as the editor of the local newspaper *Thessaliotis*,¹⁹ which ran until 1920.²⁰ Avidly interested in local history and culture, in 1901 Samaropoulos wrote the first book on the prefecture of Karditsa, the *Ὁδηγὸς νομοῦ Καρδίτσας*,²¹ which contains much valuable information on local society at the beginning of the 20th century. Its great rarity prompted its reissue with commentaries by archaeologists and historians in 1992.²² At some point in or before 1905, Samaropoulos was made curator of antiquities for the region of Karditsa on behalf of the General Ephorate of Antiquities in Athens, as he is mentioned as such in official correspondence. There was no Ephorate of Antiquities in Karditsa at the time,²³ and the discoveries of antiquities were mainly reported to the central authorities in Athens.

The archives administered by the Directorate for the Management of the National Archive of Monuments in Athens house some of the official correspondence regarding ancient sites discovered in Thessaly in the decades surrounding 1900. Two dossiers contain the records of the antiquities unearthed at the village of Chalamprezi (Kedros) during roadworks in the spring of 1905, as well as Samaropoulos's efforts at halting their ongoing destruction (*Table 1*).²⁴ The documents only give a partial view of the situation, but are valuable as they provide glimpses of the archaeological site some 80 years before the site became known to the scholarly public, as well as hitherto unpublished information regarding discoveries at the location.

¹⁹ Stavropoulou 1992, 121.

²⁰ Information kindly provided to me by Mr Thanassis Papadimitriou of the National Library of Greece.

²¹ Samaropoulos 1901.

²² Samaropoulos 1992.

²³ This was only instated in 2004, and reformed to its present state in 2014.

²⁴ Box 859 (Νομός Καρδίτσης 1885–1909), kept in the archives of the directorate. The Greek Directorate of Archival Research has informed me that there are no further preserved documents of this period relating to the handling of archaeological sites in Thessaly in their archives.

The Karditsa–Loutra Smokovou roadworks of 1905

In 1905, the Directorate of Public Works of the Ministry of the Interior executed the construction of a new national road from Karditsa to the thermal baths of Loutra Smokovou in the Pindos mountains. This was a considerable investment at the time, with the road stretching for over 35 km, through often very difficult mountainous terrain. As the roadworks progressed and reached its section III in the area just northwest of Chalamprezi in the then-municipality of Tamasion, the workmen discovered a tomb, two marble sculptures, and a fragment of an inscription.²⁵ This caught the attention of the journalist Samaropoulos, who noted the finds and promptly telegraphed the Ministry of Ecclesiastical Affairs and Public Education—the predecessor of the present Ministry of Culture and Sports with regards to heritage management—in Athens on 28 April 1905.²⁶ Two days later, on 30 April, he telegraphed the same ministry again, asking for instructions.²⁷ The same day, an unsigned article appeared in the newspaper *To Asty*, reporting the discovery of the ancient site, and that the Sofades police had seized the antiquities, as well as a reading of the fragmentary inscription.²⁸ The similarities between the wording of the newspaper article and what Samaropoulos communicated to the central authorities suggest that he was the author of the former. On the following day, 1 May, Samaropoulos wrote to the ministry,²⁹ now explaining the situation

²⁵ The present whereabouts of these objects are unknown, but Samaropoulos states in his report to the ministry (*Document 2.1*; *Appendix 1*) that he took them to his office as there was no space in the antiquities collection at the *gymnasion* in Karditsa.

²⁶ *Document 1.1*.

²⁷ *Document 1.2*.

²⁸ *To Asty* (30 April 1905, page 2): “In the village of Chalamprezi near Karditsa, workmen digging for the extraction of stones found two stone statues, missing their heads and with broken hands and feet, but of admirable sculptural craftsmanship, as well as a piece of an inscribed plaque. These archaeological finds were taken to the Sofades police, but were later received by the curator of antiquities of the region of Karditsa, Mr A. Samaropoulos, who from the inscription on the plaque could extract that the location at where it was found was the ancient city of Orthe, where there was also a temple of Artemis. The inscription of the plaque is the following: [*a transcript of the inscription follows*].” [Εἰς τὸ πᾶρὰ τὴν Καρδίτσαν χωρίον Χαλαμπρέζι ἐργάζεται σκάπτοντες πρὸς ἀνόρυξιν λίθων, ἀνεύρον δύο λίθινα ἀγαλιᾶτια, ἀκέφαλα καὶ μὲ τεθραυσμένας τὰς χεῖρας καὶ τοὺς πόδας, θαυμασίως ὁμως γλυπτικῆς τέχνης, καὶ τεμάχιον ἐνεπιγράφου πλακός. Τὰ ἀρχαιολογικὰ τὰυτὰ εὐρήματα μετεφέρθησαν εἰς τὴν ἀστυνομίαν Σοφάδων, παρελήφθησαν δὲ κατόπιν ὑπὸ τοῦ ἐπιμελητοῦ τῶν κατὰ τὸν νομὸν Καρδίτσας ἀρχαιοτήτων κ. Α. Σαμαροπούλου, ὅστις ἐκ τῆς ἐπιγραφῆς τῆς πλακός ἐξάγει ὅτι εἰς τὸν τόπον ὅπου εὐρέθησαν ἔκειτο ἡ ἀρχαία πόλις Ὀρθη, ὅπου ὑπῆρχε καὶ ναὸς τῆς Ἀρτέμιδος. Ἡ ἐπιγραφὴ τῆς πλακός εἶνε οὕτω.] Transl. by author.

²⁹ *Document 2.1* (*Appendix 1*). On 15 May, Samaropoulos sent a copy of his letter to the General Ephorate of Antiquities in Athens, *Document 2.3*.

<p><i>Dossier 1</i> Νομός Καρδίτζης [Region of Karditsa]. Άνευρέσις ἀρχαίων παρὰ τὸ χωρίον Χαλαμπρέζιον τοῦ δήμου Ταμασίου [Discovery of antiquities at the village of Chalamprezi, municipality of Tamasion].</p>	<p><i>Document 1.1</i> Telegram from A.G. Samaropoulos to the Ministry of Ecclesiastical Affairs and Public Education, 28 April 1905.</p>
	<p><i>Document 1.2</i> Telegram from A.G. Samaropoulos to the Ministry of Ecclesiastical Affairs and Public Education, 30 April 1905.</p>
<p><i>Dossier 2</i> Καρδίτζης 1905 [Karditsa 1905]. 1) Άνευρέσις ἀρχαίων εἰς Χαλαμπρέζιον κατὰ τὴν θέσιν Ἁγίου Νικόλαος [Discovery of antiquities at the location of Agios Nikolaos]. 2) Παρεμπόδισις ἐργολάβου κατασκευῆς ἐθνικῆς οδοῦ Καρδίτζης-Καρπενησίου νὰ λατομῆ ἐκεῖ καὶ ἐξαγωγή λίθους [Prohibition for the construction contractor of the national Karditsa–Karpenisi highway (this is the complete extent of the road, the relevant sector of which is referred to as the Karditsa–Loutra Smokovou highway in the documents) to quarry and extract stones at the location]. 3) Διαμαρτυρία ἐργολάβου [Objection by the contractor].</p>	<p><i>Document 2.1</i> Letter from A.G. Samaropoulos to the Ministry of Ecclesiastical Affairs and Public Education, 1 May 1905. Diary number 1. (Figs. 3–5. Transcription in <i>Appendix 1</i>).</p>
	<p><i>Document 2.2</i> Letter from A.G. Samaropoulos to the Ministry of Ecclesiastical Affairs and Public Education, 15 May 1905. Diary number 1 (arrival number 7720).</p>
	<p><i>Document 2.3</i> Letter from A.G. Samaropoulos to the General Ephorate of Antiquities, 15 May 1905. Diary number 1 (arrival number 17984).</p>
	<p><i>Document 2.4</i> Copy of letter from the minister of Ecclesiastical Affairs and Public Education to the nomarchis of Karditsa, 15 June 1905. Diary number 8977.</p>
	<p><i>Document 2.5</i> Telegram from A.G. Samaropoulos to the Ministry of Ecclesiastical Affairs and Public Education, 26 June 1905.</p>
	<p><i>Document 2.6</i> Telegram from A.G. Samaropoulos to the Ministry of Ecclesiastical Affairs and Public Education, 28 June 1905.</p>
	<p><i>Document 2.7</i> Letter from the Directorate of Public Works at the Ministry of the Interior to the Ministry of Ecclesiastical Affairs and Public Education, 13 September 1905. Diary number 14295.</p>
	<p><i>Document 2.8</i> Letter from the Directorate of Public Works at the Ministry of the Interior to the Ministry of Ecclesiastical Affairs and Public Education, 19 September 1905. Diary number 14812.</p>
	<p><i>Document 2.9</i> Copy of letter from the minister of Ecclesiastical Affairs and Public Education to the Ministry of the Interior, 7 October 1905. Dairy number 14922.</p>

Table 1. National Archive of Monuments. Contents of two dossiers, box 859 (Νομός Καρδίτζης 1885–1909).

in full (Figs. 3–5).³⁰ These documents contain most of the relevant information regarding the archaeological site and the situation in which it was found.

The murder of the prime minister Theodoros Diligianis on the steps of the Greek parliament building on 31 May 1905 caused a political crisis in the country, and prompted the election of the government of Dimitrios Rallis. The domestic upheaval probably delayed the ministry's response, but the new minister of Ecclesiastical Affairs and Public Education, Lambros Kallifronas, wrote to the regional prefect of Karditsa (either Andreas Vasiliou or Georgios Gioldasis) on 15 June, asking for clarification of the situation.³¹ Eleven days later, on 26 June, Samaropoulos again telegraphed the ministry in Ath-

ens, informing that a new contractor had caused destruction at the ancient city at Agios Nikolaos.³² Samaropoulos sent a new telegram on 28 June expressing his great frustration with the situation.³³ With the permission of the regional prefect, the new contractor Thomas C. Papadopoulos had resumed the quarrying and removal of stones from the ancient city which he used for the road construction. Samaropoulos appealed to the ministry to intervene and stop the destruction. From this point on, there are no further dated documents in the National Archive of Monuments until 13 September, when the Directorate of Public Works wrote to the Ministry

³⁰ Document 2.1.

³¹ Document 2.4.

³² Document 2.5.

³³ Document 2.6.

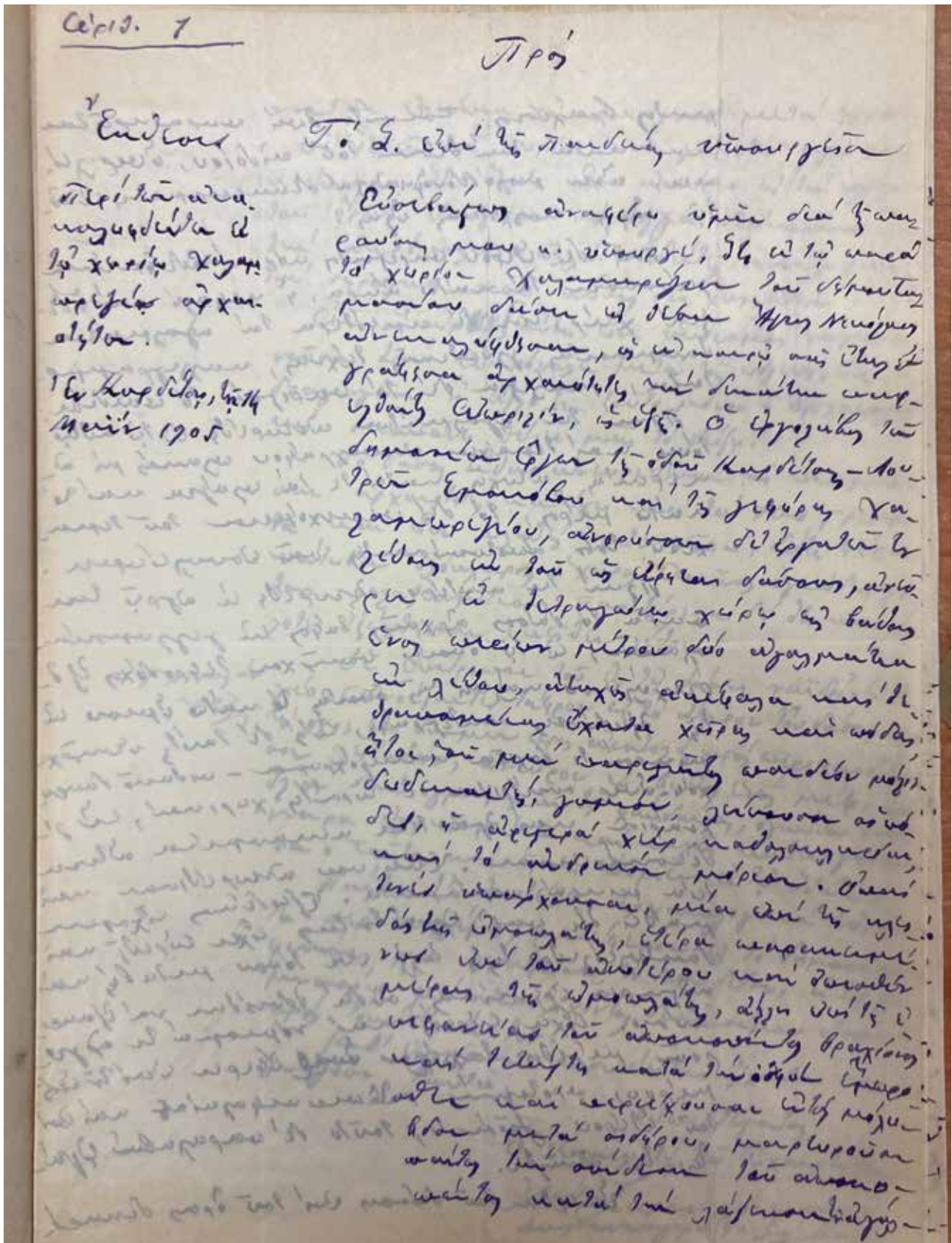


Fig. 3. A.G. Samaropoulos's report to the Ministry of Ecclesiastical Affairs and Public Education of 1 May 1905 (Document 2.1; Appendix 1). Greek National Archive of Monuments, box 859. Photograph by Robin Rönnlund. Courtesy of Ministry of Culture and Sports—Directorate for the Administration of the National Archive of Monuments—Department for the Administration of the Historical Archive of Antiquities and Restorations.

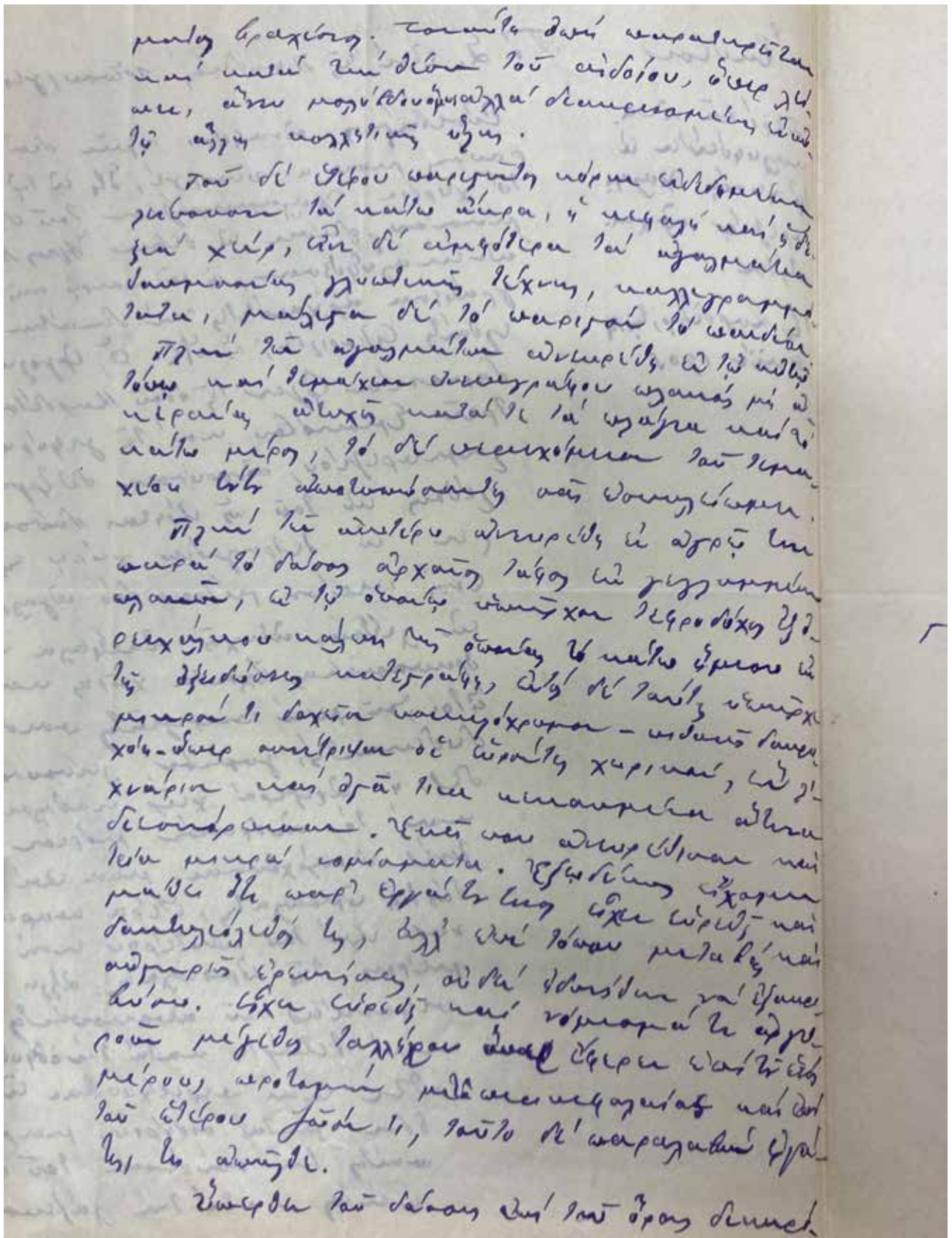


Fig. 4. A.G. Samaropoulos's report to the Ministry of Ecclesiastical Affairs and Public Education of 1 May 1905 (Document 2.1; Appendix 1). Greek National Archive of Monuments, box 859. Photograph by Robin Rönnlund. Courtesy of Ministry of Culture and Sports—Directorate for the Administration of the National Archive of Monuments—Department for the Administration of the Historical Archive of Antiquities and Restorations.

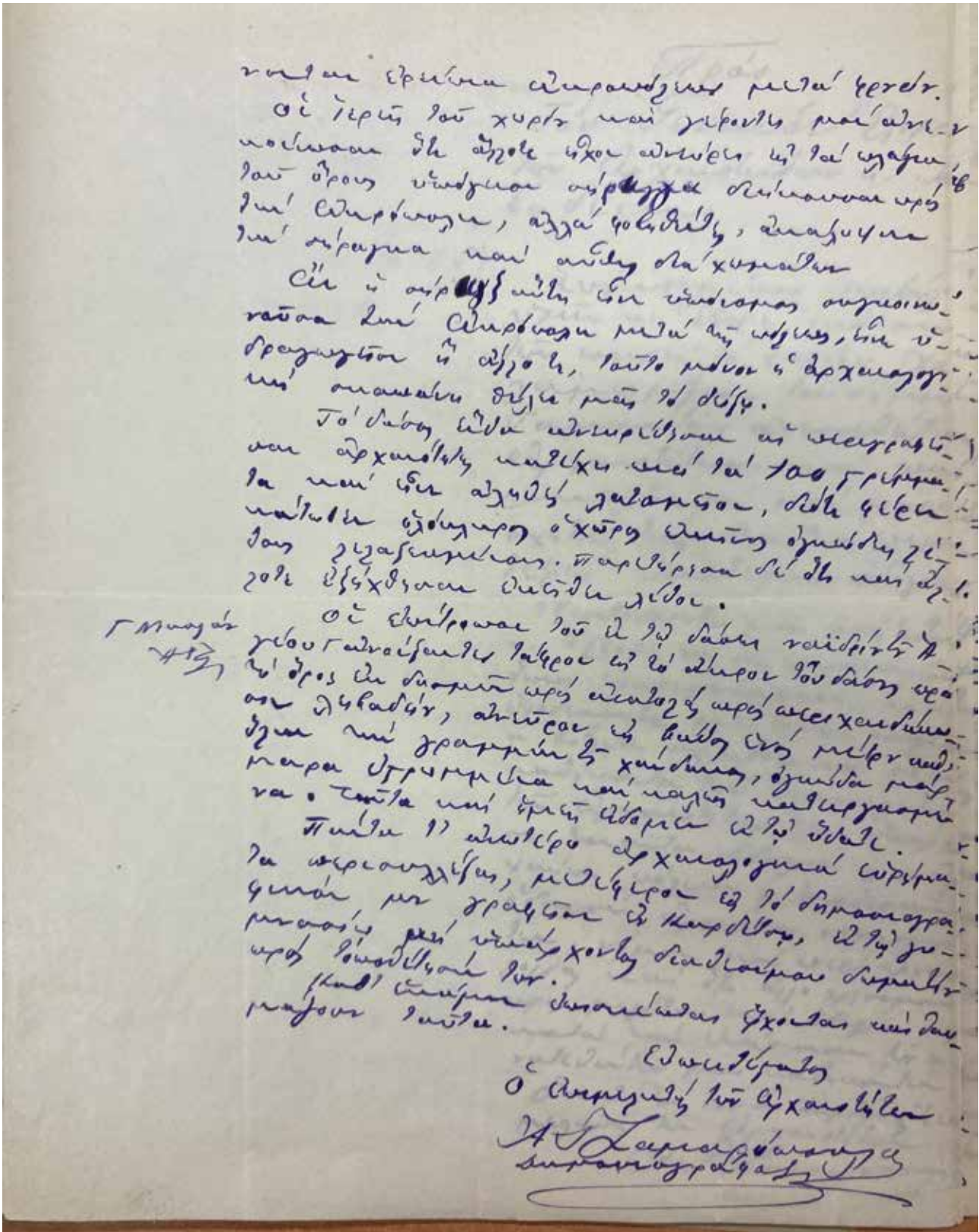


Fig. 5. A.G. Samaropoulos's report to the Ministry of Ecclesiastical Affairs and Public Education of 1 May 1905 (Document 2.1; Appendix 1). Greek National Archive of Monuments, box 859. Photograph by Robin Rönnlund. Courtesy of Ministry of Culture and Sports—Directorate for the Administration of the National Archive of Monuments—Department for the Administration of the Historical Archive of Antiquities and Restorations.

of Ecclesiastical Affairs and Public Education, forwarding the protests by the contractor Papadopoulos.³⁴

The inscription

The second dossier in the archival box contains a loose sheet of semi-transparent paper, probably regular sandwich paper, with a depiction of an ancient Greek inscription executed with pencil (*Fig. 6*), clearly the same as reported in *To Asty* (see above). The sheet is 23.5 cm high and 21.5 cm wide, and appears to be an accurate representation at 1:1 scale of the original inscription, which is probably why it was made on semi-transparent paper. Tracing the inscription through the paper, the person copying the text has made the effort to represent various letter-shapes as well as damages to the original stone. That it was Samaropoulos who made the copy himself can be inferred by his letters to the ministry of 1 May 1905,³⁵ and to the General Ephorate of 15 May,³⁶ in which copies are mentioned: which of the two letters the copy belonged to cannot be ascertained. That Samaropoulos had read the fragment is evident from the newspaper article but also from his later telegram to the ministry of 28 June the same year,³⁷ in which he describes the remains at Chalamprezi/Kedros as that of ancient Orthe (= Orthos), which can only have been inferred from the text of the inscription. The news of the discoveries appears not to have been noted by scholars at the time,³⁸ as the site did not feature in any scholarly literature from the time of its discovery in 1905 until the late 1980s, when excavation results from the site were first reported to the public. The letters state that the inscription and the statues were found in a square stone enclosure within the *dasos* at a depth of *c.* 1 m, while the contractor's workmen were extracting stones for the construction of the road.³⁹ The size of this enclosure is not giv-

en by Samaropoulos, but it is not improbable that it belonged to some monumental installation of the ancient city.

DIMENSIONS

The dimensions of the original fragment are not known, but granted that the copy reflects the actual size of the inscription, it must have been at least 18.5 cm wide at the top and 18 cm wide at the bottom, with a maximum preserved height of 22 cm. Samaropoulos's description of the fragment as being a part of a plaque or slab (*plax*) indicates that it was not overly thick.

DESCRIPTION

There are 97 characters either partially or fully legible in the copy, distributed over eight lines. Judging from how it was drawn, as well as from Samaropoulos's description,⁴⁰ it appears that the first line is the original first line of the inscription, as there is nothing that marks a break close above the letters. The top rim of the inscription is only vaguely discernible, indicating a distance of 1.5 cm between the top and the first line. The right, left, and bottom sides are drawn as broken off, however, with pencilled hatching indicating that the right side had been worn down. The suggested reconstructed size of the inscription makes that it must have belonged to a relatively small stele, perhaps not more than *c.* 45 cm wide.

EPIGRAPHIC NOTES

The letters of the inscription are unevenly spaced within lines, and a tendency of narrower spacing towards the left end of the fragment, strongly indicating that it represents the right half of the complete inscription (see below). Lines 1, 3, and 6 are neither completely straight nor horizontal, but curve either upwards or downwards, making the line spacing uneven, varying from 0.3 cm to 2 cm. The letters vary in height from 1.0 cm (line 2) to 1.7 cm (line 1), with most letters being *c.* 1.3 cm. Notable letter shapes are *alpha* with a bent crossbar (not the case at the end of lines 6 and 7), raised circular *omicron*, ellipse-shaped *theta* with horizontal crossbar, and *pi* with full-height right stem (line 3). *Delta* is of a wide triangular shape, with width often larger than height. The *nu* are both drawn with straight and slanted stems, as are the *mu*. *Sigma* is four-barred (line 4), with the upmost bar horizontal and the lowest slightly slanting. Several letters were apparently serified, which is quite evident in lines 1–2, but it appears that the copyist was less attentive to details further down the text. It is consequently impossible to state with confidence whether serifs were em-

³⁴ Document 2.7.

³⁵ Document 2.1 (Appendix 1).

³⁶ Document 2.3, page 2: "Apart from the statues found at this location, there was also a piece of an inscribed slab, unfortunately somewhat broken at the sides and at the lower part, and as I will publish its contents in our newspaper *Thessaliotis*, I enclose it for you." [Πλήν τῶν ἀγαλμάτων ἀνευρέθη ἐν τῷ αὐτῷ τόπῳ καὶ τεμάχιον ἐνεπιγράφου πλακός μὴ ἀκεραίας ἀτυχῶς κατὰ τὰ πλάγια καὶ τὸ κάτω μέρος, τὸ δὲ περιεχόμενον δημοσιεύσαντος ἐν τῇ ἡμετέρᾳ ἐφημερίδᾳ «Θεσσαλιώτιδα», σὰς ἐσωκλείομεν ταύτην ὧδε.] Transl. by author. There are no copies of issues of *Thessaliotis* from 1905 in the National Library of Greece, and it is consequently impossible to say at present whether Samaropoulos eventually published the inscription.

³⁷ Document 2.8.

³⁸ It is not mentioned in Stählin 1924 (Stählin was especially well-informed of antiquities in the region), nor in Lenk 1942, both of which discussed possible locations of Orthos in Northern Thessaly and Perrhaibia.

³⁹ Documents 2.1 & 2.3.

⁴⁰ Documents 2.1 & 2.3.

ployed throughout the text. There are not enough inscriptions from Western Thessaly published with detailed photographs to allow for any closer comparison of letter-shapes. The generalities of the letters, however, are characteristic of the 2nd century BC. The stone-cutter has apparently followed the principle of syllabification, as lines end with either complete words or break at syllables.

Transcription⁴¹

[---]ΙΟΛΙΤΑΙΟΡΘΙΕΙΟΥ[-]
 [---]ΟΥΤΑΠΡΑΤΑΑΓΟΡ[-]
 [---]ΡΑΙΟΥΕΠΕΙΔΕΙ
 [---]ΣΤΟΜΕΝΕΙΟΣΓΟΜ
 5 [---]ΟΝΟΥΝΧΡΟΝΟΥΝ
 [---]ΕΡΓΕΤΕΙΟΥΝΤΑ[-]
 [---]ΚΑΧΡΕΑΝΕΧΑΙ
 [---]ΑΘΙΔΔΙΑΝΓ[-]

Transliterated text with restoration⁴²

[ἔδοξε τᾶι] πόλι τᾶι Ὀρθιείου[ν]
 [- c. 7–10 -]ου τᾶ πρᾶτα, ἀγορ[α]-
 [νομέντος ?Πετ]ραίου· ἐπειδεῖ
 [Φρῦνος Ἄρι]στομένειος Γομ-
 5 [φεὺς ἀπὸ πλει]όνου χρόνου
 [διατελεῖ εὐ]εργετείου τᾶ[ν]
 [πόλιν ἀμοῦν αἴ] κα χρέαν ἔχ[ε]
 [καὶ κοινᾶ καὶ κ]αθ' ἰδίαν ἐ[κ-]
 [άστου τοῦν πολιτᾶν - - - -]

Translation of restored text

“It was resolved by the *polis* of the Orthieians, on the first day of the month of [...] when [?Pet]raios was *agoranomos*: since [Phrynos] son of [Ari]stomenes of Gom[phoi for] many years [has constantly] been a benefactor [to our *polis*,] whenever it has some need, [both in common and] individually [to each one of the citizens ...].”

The text contains the right upper half of a decree issued by the *polis* of the Orthieians, honouring an individual from nearby Gomphoi, on the basis of historical and epigraphic accounts to be identified with one Phrynos son of Aristomenes. The text has much in common with similar decrees of 2nd-centu-

ry BC Thessaly, but also displays several traits more typical of Western Greek and the dialect of Hestiaiotis.

Commentary

Line 1: **πόλι τᾶι Ὀρθιείου[ν]**: The first partially preserved letter is almost certainly a *pi*.⁴³ Although one would have liked to restore a salutation of the type ἀγαθᾶ τύχαι *vel sim.*⁴⁴ in the missing part of this line, there does not seem to be enough space in view of my reconstruction of the text (see below). As the restored width of the inscription does not allow for this, it is more probable that the decree began with the standard ἔδοξε τᾶι.⁴⁵ The plural genitive of the community of the Orthieians figures on coins as either Ὀρθιέων or Ὀρθιέων,⁴⁶ with -ου- for -ω- being the regular Thessalian dialectal orthography in the Ionic alphabet.⁴⁷

Line 2: **[-]ου τᾶ πρᾶτα**: The first two preserved letters on the line belong to the name of a month, as the following τᾶ πρᾶτα informs us of the specific day when the decree was issued. This follows a common convention in inscriptions of the 2nd century BC. The Thessalian calendar had been standardized in the early 2nd century with the reinstatement of the League of the Thessalians, and the month should arguably be one of the standard ones rendered in dialectal spelling.⁴⁸ Judging from the available space, the month was either one with a short name (like Ἄφριου or Θυίου), which would require the insertion of μειννός or μεινός (“month”) at the beginning of the line,⁴⁹ or one with a longer name (like Λεσχανορίου or Ἰπποδρομίου), which would fill the whole line. It is less probable (but not impossible) that the month was Ἰτουσίου, Πανάμου, or Ἐρμαίου, as these names are either too short to fill the necessary c. 7–10 missing letter-slots, or too long to fit with a hypothetical μειννός. The contracted Western Thessalian -ου genitive of time⁵⁰ contrasts to Eastern Thessalian, which more commonly has -οι.⁵¹ Together with the numeral

⁴³ Thessalian, including the dialect of Hestiaiotis, would traditionally have ττόλις (or even ττύλις?) for πτόλις/πόλις. Buck 1955, 61 no. 67, 73 no. 86; Helly 1970, 171. This spelling was probably obsolete by the 2nd century BC, as it does not figure in any contemporaneous inscriptions.

⁴⁴ IG IX,2 215–216 (Thaumakoi); Helly 1970, 11 (Matropolis).

⁴⁵ IG IX,2 219 (Thaumakoi, ἔδοξε | τῆι πόλει τῆι Θαυμακῶν); Helly 1973, no. 86 (Gonnoi, ἔδοξε | τῆι πόλει τῆι Γουνέων); ArchEph 1916, 18–19 no. 272 (Phalanna, ἔδοξε τῆι πόλει τῆι Φαλανναίων).

⁴⁶ Georgiou 2015, 62.

⁴⁷ IG IX,2 234 (Φαρσαλίον), 460 (Κραννουσίου), 591 (Λαρισαίου). Blümel 1983, 32–33 §26.

⁴⁸ Trümper 1997, 216; Granger 2011, 95–106.

⁴⁹ IG IX,2 258 (= Decourt 1995, no. 15. Kierion, c. 187–168 BC); SEG XXXI 577 (Larisa, c. 136/135 BC); XLIII 311 (Skotoussa, c. 197–185 BC).

⁵⁰ Helly 1970, 172.

⁵¹ Buck 1955, 150 no. 213:2.

⁴¹ The article in *To Asty* (see above) has the inscription as ΟΛΙΤΑΙ ΟΡΘΙΕΙΟΥ | ΟΥΤΑΕΡΑΤΑΑΓΟΡ | ΡΑΙΟΥ ΕΠΕΙΔΕΙ | ΣΤΟΜΕΝΕΙΟΣΓΟΜ | ΟΝΟΥΝ ΧΡΟΝΟΥΝ | ΕΡΓΕΤΕΙΟΥ ΤΑ | ΚΑΧΡΕΑΝ ΕΧΑΙ | ΑΘΙΔΔΙΑΝΓ.

⁴² The author would here like to acknowledge the great contributions to the restoration of the text by Prof. Nikolaos Papazarkadas.

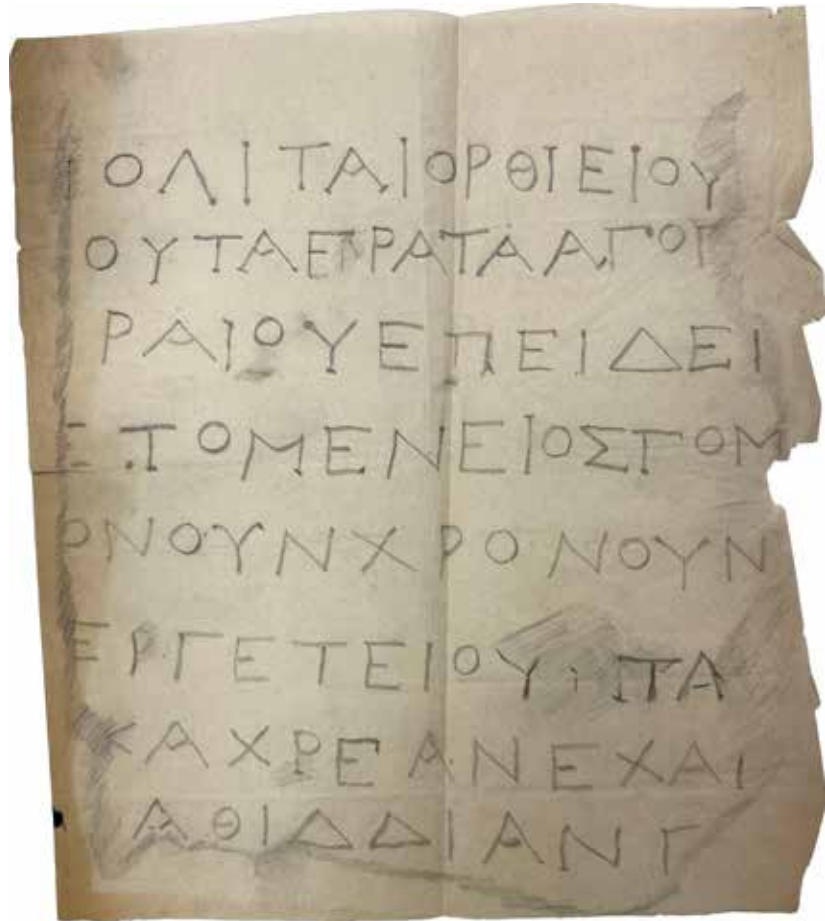


Fig. 6. Drawing of inscription found at the site of Agios Nikolaos, Kedros. Attachment to letter to the Ministry of Ecclesiastical Affairs and Public Education or to the General Ephorate of Antiquities in 1905 by A.G. Samaropoulos. Greek National Archive of Monuments, box 859. Scale 1:2. Photograph by Robin Rönnlund. Courtesy of Ministry of Culture and Sports—Directorate for the Administration of the National Archive of Monuments—Department for the Administration of the Historical Archive of Antiquities and Restorations.

πρᾶτα (Eastern Thessalian sometimes προῦτα⁵²), the form highlights the Western Greek elements of the regional dialect.⁵³ The dative article τᾶ (singular, without *iota*) of the ordinal number has, however, a near contemporaneous parallel from Larisa.⁵⁴ The letter restored as a *pi* in πρᾶτα is poorly drawn, and appears to have been damaged or mis-cut in the original. Although such dating formulas were often preceded by relatively long references to eponymous officials (in this context, usually the *stratagos* of the Thessalian League),⁵⁵ this does not seem to be the case here, as it would require a much wider original size of the inscription. The shorter form has a parallel in the aforementioned inscription from Larisa.⁵⁶

Lines 2–3: ἀγορ[α]νομέντος ?Πετ[ρ]αίου: The first *rho* is damaged but can be reconstructed with confidence. Larisaean inscriptions containing the participle ἀγορανομέντος continue with the name of the office holder in the genitive (-ου). It is not inconceivable that this was also the case in our inscription, as [-]ραίου (with Western Thessalian genitive -ου) most probably represents the end of a personal name, possibly Petraios, which was quite common in Thessaly.⁵⁷ Line 4 has a patronymic adjective ending in -εῖος, and [-]ραίου should consequently possibly not represent the patronymic (which would have been rendered as *[-]ραεῖου⁵⁸). However, it is to be noted that patronymics can in some rare cases be represented by the genitive singular (-ου) in Western Thessalian of the 2nd century BC.⁵⁹ That these forms should be mixed,

⁵² IG IX,2 506, line 4; Béquignon 1935, 38 no. 1, lines 35–36; SEG LV 605, line 14.

⁵³ Buck 1955, 154 no. 223:9.

⁵⁴ SEG XXVII 202 (220–210 BC).

⁵⁵ Kramolisch 1978. IG IX,2 102 (Kofoi, 2nd century BC), 274 (Mantropolis, 186/185 BC), 461b (Krannon, c. 168 BC); SEG XXX 533 (Phthiotic Thebes, 2nd century BC); LIII 510(1),B (1st century BC?)

⁵⁶ SEG XXVII 202.

⁵⁷ Robert 1940; Mili 2015, 238 n. 127. Poseidon Petraios was possibly an important deity at Orthos, as inferred from the iconography of some of the coins of the community, see Georgiou 2015, 63.

⁵⁸ Cf. IG IX,2 517.

⁵⁹ Buck 1955, 150–151 no. 214.

however, is less probable, as this is rare in other inscriptions.⁶⁰ **ἐπειδεί:** Koine ἐπειδή, in Eastern Thessalian also sometimes ὀπειδεί.⁶¹ The spelling is attested in a Larisaean inscription of the early 2nd century BC.⁶²

Line 4: **[Ἀρι]στομένειος:** Near-contemporaneous parallels from Larisa and Pherai.⁶³ Patronymic adjectives are common in Thessalian inscriptions.⁶⁴ **Γομ[φεύς]:** A man of Gomphoi, a major polis of Western Thessaly, is attested in inscriptions from Delphi⁶⁵ and in Athamania⁶⁶ among others.

Line 5: **[ἀπό] πλειόνων χρόνων:** Parallel in Koine from Larisa:⁶⁷ ὅτι ἐ[πι] | [τ]ῆν πόλιν ἡμῶν ἐνδημήσας ἀπὸ χρόνω[ν] | [π]λειόνων. The [ἀπό] could also be [ἐκ], as in a contemporaneous inscription from Magnesia.⁶⁸ It is sometimes stated that Thessalian had ἀπύ for ἀπό,⁶⁹ but as the former features in only one Larisaean inscription,⁷⁰ and the latter is attested in several dialectal inscriptions,⁷¹ I find it more probable that ἀπό was used here.

Line 6: **[εὐ]εργετοῦν:**⁷² To praise an honorand for “being a benefactor” (εὐεργέται ὄντι) is a relatively common formula in proxeny decrees,⁷³ but here we encounter the present active participle of the verb εὐεργετέω,⁷⁴ apparently in an uncontracted local dialectal form that was previously unattested.⁷⁵ To judge from the drawing, the letters at the end of the line were damaged, but the suggested restoration τὰ[ν] (or even

τὰ[μ]) is possible in light of the suggested continuation on line 7.

Line 7: **[πόλιν] ἀμοῦν:** The Thessalian equivalent of Koine ἡμῶν is sometimes given as ἀμμέουν,⁷⁶ which is only attested in a single inscription from Larisa.⁷⁷ This form of the word would be at least two letters too long to fit with the suggested line width. As there are other Western Greek elements in the dialect of the inscription, I very hesitantly suggest the form ἀμοῦν,⁷⁸ in analogy with the form ἀμῶν.⁷⁹ **[αἰ] κα:** The Western Greek modal particle κα (Koine ἄν) is not found in Eastern Thessalian inscriptions, which have κε⁸⁰ or sometimes ἄν,⁸¹ but the form is attested in Hestiaiote inscriptions.⁸² A parallel can be found in a decree of *sympoliteia* between Western Thessalian Gomphoi (see below) and Thamiiai:⁸³ αἰ τέ κα ἐν Θαμίαι[ς]. **χρέαν:** The form χρέαν (accusative singular of χρεία, “need”, “want”, “necessity” but also “business”, “employment”, and “function”) is known from just one inscription from Iasos,⁸⁴ with χρέαν being common from most Greek regions, including Thessaly.⁸⁵ There is no trace of an *iota* between the *epsilon* and the *alpha*, and I therefore regard it as probable that the *iota* was omitted, as is sometimes the case with the diphthong εἰ before a vowel.⁸⁶ **EXAI:** The end of the line is clearly damaged here, as is the case on the line above. The *epsilon*, *chi*, and *alpha* are clearly drawn, while the final letter is only preserved as a partial vertical bar, which could be an *iota*. The word χρέαν is typically followed in Thessalian inscriptions (see above) by some form of the verb ἔχω (mainly ἔχουσι[ν]).⁸⁷ Now, the modal κα would make us expect a subjunctive but the *alpha* makes any such supplement difficult. Note, however, that the *alpha* with a straight horizontal bar (as is the case of the letter on the line above it) is not similar to the other *alphas* of the text, possibly signalling that the letter was poorly preserved and that Samaropoulos made an ap-

⁶⁰ To have both forms in the same text is not impossible, however. See Helly 1970, 177; 1971b, 15–18.

⁶¹ *SEG* XXVII 202 (Larisa, 220–210 BC); XXIX 529 (Larisa, undated); XXXI 572 (Krannon, c. 200 BC); LV 605 (Larisa, early 2nd century BC).
⁶² *IG* IX,2 506.

⁶³ *IG* IX,2 517 (Larisa, 214 BC); *SEG* XXIX 552 (Pherai, late 3rd/early 2nd century BC).

⁶⁴ See, for example, the aforementioned inscription from Kierion, Helly 1971b, 15–18.

⁶⁵ *FdD* III 2:68, line 6.

⁶⁶ Intzsiloglou 1987c, 348.

⁶⁷ Tziafalias & Helly 2004, 407 no. 2, lines 11–12.

⁶⁸ *IG* IX,2 1100a, line 11.

⁶⁹ *LSJ* s.v. ἀπό; Buck 1955, 27 no. 22.

⁷⁰ *IG* IX,2 594 (3rd century BC).

⁷¹ *IG* IX,2 553 (Larisa, early 1st century BC), 414 (Pherai, undated), 1229 (Tyrnavos, early 2nd century BC); *SEG* XXXV 616 (Larisa, c. 200 BC).

⁷² The correct interpretation of this word was provided by Prof. Nikolaos Papazarkadas.

⁷³ Mack 2015, 38. Similar cases at nearby Thaumakoi: *IG* IX,2 215: ὄντι εὐεργέται αὐτῶς προσενία etc (c. 145 BC), 216: ὄντι εὐ[ε]ργεταὶ αὐ[τ]ῶς προσενίαν (3rd century BC).

⁷⁴ The final vowel of the stem εὐεργετέ- is lengthened to -εῖ- (= -ή-) before the ending -οῦν (= -ων). Parallels in the κατοικεῖουσθι (*IG* IX,2 514, line 3, undated) and ὑπαγαγείουσθι (*SEG* LV 605 = Tziafalias & Helly 2004, 378–379, 388, early 2nd century BC), both from Larisa, see Buck 1955, n. 159, and Blümel 1982, 170 §184.

⁷⁵ I have only managed to find one possible parallel for an uncontracted participle of εὐεργετέω with -εῖ-, and that in the form εὐεργετείοντα, as attested in a 3rd–2nd-century BC inscription from the Boeotian Amphiarion, see Petrakos 1997, no. 74, line 6.

⁷⁶ Buck 1955, 98 no. 119:3.

⁷⁷ *IG* IX,2 517 (214 BC).

⁷⁸ The form has been suggested in a restoration (τὰν πόλιν ἀμο[ῦν]) of an inscription from Larisa (last third of 2nd century BC), Tziafalias & Helly 2018, 283, line 10, 291.

⁷⁹ Buck 1955, 98 no. 119:3.

⁸⁰ Buck 1955, 148 no. 202.

⁸¹ *IG* IX,2 461b, line 26; Miller 2014, 232.

⁸² Helly 1970, 176; Miller 2014, 232.

⁸³ *SEG* XXXVII 494, line 15.

⁸⁴ Blümel 1985, no. 80.

⁸⁵ *IG* IX,2 520 (Larisa, reign of Augustus); *SEG* XII 306 (Demetrias, c. 117 BC); XXX 533 (Phthiotic Thebes, 2nd century BC).

⁸⁶ Buck 1955, 32 no. 31.

⁸⁷ *IG* IX,2 461b (Krannon, c. 168 BC), 520 (Larisa, 2nd century BC); *SEG* XXX 533 (Phthiotic Thebes, 2nd century BC); XXIII 447 (Demetrias, second half of 2nd century BC); XXXIII 613 (Demetrias, c. 120–115 BC).

proximation. I suspect that we should be reading ἔχει (Koine ἔχει), or at least ἔχ(ε)ι.⁸⁸

Lines 8–[9]: [καὶ κοινᾶ καὶ κ]αθ' ἰδδῖαν ἐ[κ]ᾶστος τοῦν πολιτᾶν]: The suggested [κοινᾶ] (singular dative, without final *iota*) corresponds in Thessalian to Koine κοινῆ. [κ]αθ' ἰδδῖαν is dialectal with regular consonant doubling,⁸⁹ with parallels from Larisa⁹⁰ and Krannon.⁹¹ The final *gamma*-shaped glyph on line 8 has here been interpreted as a damaged *epsilon*, which would allow for the possible restoration ἐ[κ]ᾶστος] (masculine dative singular).⁹² The suggested [τοῦν πολιτᾶν] (or possibly [τοῦμ πολιτᾶν]) on the unpreserved line 9 is more conjectural, but a specification of the group (“of the citizens”) in the genitive plural should be expected.

Notes on the text

Judging from the decreasing letter spacing in lines 1–2, it appears very probable that the preserved fragment of the inscription represents the upper right part of the original inscribed surface. As ἐπειδὴ in line 3 should be followed by the full name of the honorand in the nominative, as is common in similar inscriptions,⁹³ I would expect a proper name to be the first to appear in the missing beginning of line 4. The preserved section of line 4 begins with the adjectival patronymic [Ἀρ]ιστομένειος, the first name of which probably being [Φρῦνος], as argued below. This would give a 22-letter width of line 4. This fits with the restoration [ἔδοξε τᾶ] πόλι τᾶι Ὀρθιεῖου[ν] for line 1 (24 letters, tighter spacing) and ἀγορ[α]νομήντος Π[ετ]ραίου ἐπειδὴ for line 3 (23 letters), indicating that the original width of the inscribed area was

a little bit less than twice the size of the preserved fragment. With a preserved width of *c.* 18.5 cm, the original width of the inscribed surface would then be *c.* 35–40 cm. This suggests that the inscription did not begin with an invocation such as [θιὸς· τύχαν ἀγαθάν·]⁹⁴ *vel sim.*, which is otherwise common in Thessalian decrees.

Some comments on the contents of the inscription

The inscription provides the first explicit evidence for ancient Orthos being a *polis*, which had only been inferred previously.⁹⁵ The word *polis* is poorly attested internally for Western Thessaly, with the majority of cases belonging to the later Hellenistic or Roman periods.⁹⁶ The closest confirmed *polis* neighbours of Orthos were Kierion at modern Pyrgos Kieriou (16 km to the north), Thaumakoi at modern Domokos (22 km to the south-east), and Matropolis at modern Mitropoli (21 km to the north-west) (see *Fig. 1*). There were closer neighbours in the form of the small fortified towns at modern Sekliza (11 km to the north-west) and Kato Agoriani (16 km to the south-east), traditionally—but not conclusively—identified with ancient Kallithera and Ekkara,⁹⁷ but whether these two locations were inhabited at the time of the new inscription from Orthos is doubtful.⁹⁸

The honorand of the inscription can with some confidence be identified as Phrynos the Gomphean, son of Aristomenes. He occurs as P'iwrinos (Φιρηρήνου) son of Aristomenes the Gomphean in the Armenian version of Eusebius (*Chron.* 92 Helm),⁹⁹ being the *stratagos* of the Thessalian League in the year when Philip V of Macedon died (180/179 BC).¹⁰⁰ This, and the similarities with other decrees, firmly puts the date of the text to the first half of the 2nd century BC. Phrynos (Φρῦνος) is a relatively uncommon name in the Greek world, but there are enough examples from Western Thessaly to show that it figured among the members of the administrative élite.¹⁰¹

⁸⁸ EXAI- (restored as EXAP-) could hypothetically represent an aorist of χαρίζω (ἐχαρίσατο/ἐχαρίσαντο), which would fit the context in its meaning of showing someone favour, donating something, forgiving debts, etc., but the word is far too long to fit any reasonable restoration. The aorist of χαρίζω features mainly in 1st to 3rd-century AD inscriptions in central Greece, and not at all in Thessaly, see, for example, *SEG* XV 330 (Akraiphia, *c.* AD 47); *IG* VII 2713 (Akraiphia, AD 67); 2808 (Hyettos, 3rd century AD); *FdD* III 1:467 (Delphi, AD 163). The word χαρίζω generally in Thessaly is notably quite rare, and then only features in the aorist participle χαρισσάμενος and the future indicative χαρισούνται, see Lazaridis 1972, 48 (Phthiotic Thebes [modern Nea Anchialos], 2nd century AD) and Helly 1971a, 544–545 (Demetrias, *c.* 150–100 BC). I consequently find it most improbable that a form of the word should be found here.

⁸⁹ Buck 1955, 150 no. 213:5.

⁹⁰ Béquignon 1935, 55 no. 2, lines 36–37 = *SEG* LVI 638.

⁹¹ *IG* IX,2 461b. Another (Eastern) Thessalian form is καθ' ἰτδῖαν, also from Larisa: Béquignon 1935, 37 no. 1, lines 16–17.

⁹² Similar example in the aforementioned inscription from Larisa (Béquignon 1935, 56 no. 2, lines 36–37 = *SEG* LVI 638): καὶ κοινᾶ καὶ καθ' ἰδ|ἰδῖαν ἐκάστος μετὰ πάνσας σπουδᾶς. Buck 1955, 88 no. 106:2.

⁹³ Numerous examples. *IG* IX,2 11 (Hypata, mid-2nd century BC), 62 (Lamia, 218/217 BC), 219 (Thaumakoi, *c.* 50 BC); *SEG* XXXI 576 (Larisa, mid-2nd century BC).

⁹⁴ *IG* IX,2 458 (Krannon, 3rd century BC); *SEG* XXXVI 548 (Matropolis, 3rd century BC).

⁹⁵ The community is included through inference in Decourt *et al.* 2004, 698–699.

⁹⁶ Rönnlund 2023, 33–34.

⁹⁷ Intzesiloglou 1997, 9; Liampi 1998, 418. The villages were officially re-named Kallithiro and Ekkara in the 20th century, which should not be seen as indicating a correct identification. The former toponyms are still used by the local population.

⁹⁸ According to the excavator, the small fortified town at Sekliza was destroyed violently in the second half of the 3rd century BC, see Intzesiloglou 1997, 25–26. The site at Kato Agoriani has so far only yielded Hellenistic material, see Rönnlund 2023, 76.

⁹⁹ The first book of the *Chronicle* of Eusebius is only preserved in an Armenian translation, see Mosshammer 1979, 65–66.

¹⁰⁰ Kramolisch 1978, 54.

¹⁰¹ *SEG* LI 711 (Krannon, 3rd century BC); *IG* IX,2 517 (Larisa, *c.* 214 BC); *SEG* XXVIII 526 (Phaÿttos, 2nd century BC); *IG* IX,2

Two inscriptions from Delphi¹⁰² mention a man who is probably his son, Pollichos the Gomphean son of Phrynos (Πόλλιχος Φρύνου Γομφεύς), who in the 120s BC was *hieromnēmōn* of the Thessalians to the Delphic Amphictyony. The latter is with all probability also the *stratagos* of the Thessalians as mentioned in the 150–130 BC fragmentary inscription from Larisa:¹⁰³ Πολ[λ]ίχου τ[οῦ] Φρύνου | [Γ]ομφέως. A fragmentary inscription from Larisa mentions another potential Pollichos, also *stratagos* of the Thessalians in the 170s BC.¹⁰⁴ The editors of the inscription suggest through a chronological argument that he might be a brother of Phrynos, and not his son.¹⁰⁵ One of (the first?) Pollichos' sons, Themistogenes (Θεμιστογένης Πολλίχου [Γομφε]ύς), also eventually became a Thessalian *hieromnēmōn*, as he is mentioned as such in a 110s BC inscription from Delphi.¹⁰⁶

Phrynos belonged to an influential family of Thessalians who served as the highest officials in the Thessalian League in the 2nd century BC. It is to be expected from this that this family was affluent, which is also supported by the fragmentary words of the inscription implying—provided that the reading is correct—that he had been a benefactor both to the community and to individual citizens. Gomphoi (Γόμφοι) was a city located north-west of the city of Orthos, most probably at Episkopi just north-east of modern Mouzaki.¹⁰⁷ Gomphoi had survived the destructions brought on by the Second Macedonian War (200–197 BC), and was an important local centre in Roman Western Thessaly.

The use of the word [εὔ]εργετείου in line 6 makes it probable that Phrynos was regarded as an *euergetēs* of the community of the Orthieians. Euergetism was a Panhellenic phenomenon which features in several Thessalian inscriptions. The *polis* of Thaumakoi, one of Orthos' closest neighbours, put up several decrees declaring that the honorands had been or were *euergetai* to the community,¹⁰⁸ with an additional similar example from the unidentified site at nearby Paliokaita.¹⁰⁹ These inscriptions are all proxeny decrees, and it is possible that the fragmentary text from Orthos also belongs to this group, even if this cannot be conclusively stated.

The third line of the inscription contains the end of what is most probably a proper name in the genitive, seemingly the name of the eponymic magistrate ([?Pet]raios), an *agoranomos*. The office of *agoranomos* constitutes a relatively understudied topic in pre-Roman Greece. Traditionally, *agoranomoi* have been seen as imposed by the Romans as a local version of the *aediles*,¹¹⁰ but more recent studies conclude that they were officials whose duties were mainly associated with the general maintenance of the marketplace and with price regulations.¹¹¹ There is nothing in the Thessalian record to support such a view, and applications of this understanding of the office in the region has led to some rather peculiar interpretations of the epigraphic material.¹¹² Instead, I argue that the epigraphic material suggests that *agoranomoi* functioned as leaders of the *agora* in the sense of an assembly. Hesychius and other ancient authors state that the Thessalian word for marketplace was not *agora*, but *limēn* (λιμήν),¹¹³ a word that in Koine otherwise implies a port.¹¹⁴ The Thessalian word *agora* instead corresponds to Koine *ekklēsia*,¹¹⁵ which is also supported by internal Thessalian epigraphic evidence.¹¹⁶ *Agorai* cease to be mentioned in Thessalian inscriptions after c. 170 BC, and we instead encounter Koine *ekklēsiai*,¹¹⁷ a word which is not attested in any Thessalian inscription predating the 2nd century.¹¹⁸ We should note, however, that *agoranomoi* are not previously attested in Western Thessaly, and are generally rare in Thessalian inscriptions except for in Larisa. In total 14 *agoranomoi* are mentioned in ten Larisaean decrees of the late 3rd and early 2nd centuries BC, most of which were simultaneously acting as *tagoi*.¹¹⁹ The supposed

414 (Pherai, undated); *SEG* XXIX 552 (Pherai, late 3rd/early 2nd century BC); XXXIV 564 (Pherai, early 2nd century BC); Helly 1973, nos. 76 & 77 (Gonnoi, first half of 2nd century BC).

¹⁰² *FdD* III 2:68, 2:213.

¹⁰³ *SEG* XLVII 744; Kramolisch 1978, 70.

¹⁰⁴ *SEG* XLII 510.

¹⁰⁵ Tziafalias *et al.* 2006, 473.

¹⁰⁶ *Corpus des inscriptions de Delphes* IV, 119B, line 5.

¹⁰⁷ Decourt *et al.* 2004, 692–693; Hatziangelakis 2007, 67–70. The site is generally treated as confidently identified with Gomphoi, but conclusive evidence is still missing.

¹⁰⁸ *IG* IX,2 215 (c. 145 BC), 216 (early 3rd century BC?), 218 (c. 160/159 BC), 219 (c. 50 BC); *SEG* III 468 (c. 50 BC).

¹⁰⁹ *IG* IX,2 223 (undated). The site has been identified as either that of ancient Ekkara or Kyphaira, see Decourt *et al.* 2004, 714.

¹¹⁰ Oehler 1894, 883.

¹¹¹ As exemplified by the papers of a series of 2007 workshops on the topic, see Capdetrey & Hasenohr 2012.

¹¹² Migeotte 2005, 292. It appears to me as somewhat improbable that the exchange of *agoranomoi* between the neighbouring *poleis* of the Melitaiaans and the Pereians (as mentioned in the arbitration inscription *IG* IX,2 205) was carried out in order to solve minor disputes at the respective marketplaces.

¹¹³ Dio Chrys. *Or.* 11.23; Gal. *Thrasymbulus*. 3.2; Theon *Progymnasmata*. 81.24 Hesychius of Alexandria *s.v.* ἀγορά. In Thessalian, λιμήν would have been written λιμέν. See also Tziafalias *et al.* 2006, 446.

¹¹⁴ The etymological root of *limen* is probably in a word for pasture, indicating that an open field was possibly the origin of the Thessalian marketplace, see Buck 1955, 150 no. 213:27; Gschnitzer 2001.

¹¹⁵ Buck 1955, 150 no. 213:27.

¹¹⁶ *IG* IX,2 517, line 42 (Larisa, late 3rd century BC), see Mili 2011, 45–46. *SEG* XXXVII 494 (Filia, late 3rd century BC).

¹¹⁷ *IG* IX,2 11 (Hypata, by the Matropolitans, mid-2nd century BC); *SEG* XXXI 576 (Larisa, mid-2nd century BC); *IG* IX,2 11 (Hypata, 160/150 BC?); *SEG* III 486 (Thaumakoi, c. 50 BC); and possibly *SEG* XXVIII 526 (Phaÿttos, 2nd century BC).

¹¹⁸ The only exception is an inscription from Perrhaibian Gonnoi (Helly 1973, no. 109) from the late 3rd century BC. The word *ekklēsia* in this text, however, is in a decree by the Athenians, not referring to a Thessalian institution.

¹¹⁹ *SEG* XXVII 202 (220–210 BC); *IG* IX,2 517 (217 BC); *SEG* LV 605 (early 2nd century BC); *IG* IX,2 506 (early 2nd century BC); *SEG*

Roman origin of the office (as mentioned above) is clearly not supported by the Larisaeon evidence, as the inscriptions both pre- and antedate Flamininus' reinstatement of the Thessalian League in 196 BC. As in the case with *agorai*, *agoranomoi* do not feature in any Thessalian inscriptions after the mid-2nd century BC. In my opinion, this all indicates that the function of the office of *agoranomos* relates to the meaning of the word *agora* as outlined above, and that the word disappears from common usage through the increased use of the Koine word *ekklesiā* in the 2nd century BC and onwards.¹²⁰

Concluding remarks

The documents preserved in the National Archives of Monuments in Athens highlight the value of the study of archival material relating to the archaeology of Greece, as has previously been demonstrated in the case of Thessaly by Maria Stamatopoulou among others.¹²¹ The inscription published in this article is but one of several forgotten artefacts described among the many letters and reports sent to the central archaeological authorities. To locate the whereabouts of the physical objects themselves presents a great challenge, as

often nearly 120 years have passed since their discovery. In the case of the finds from Chalamprezi/Kedros, Samaropoulos writes that he brought them all to his office in Karditsa,¹²² and it is possible that they were transferred elsewhere from there. However, the catalogues of the National Archaeological Museum in Athens contain no reference to the inscription,¹²³ and it is quite possible that the pencil drawing on the loose sheet of transparent paper represents all that is left of it.

Through the copy, however, we get a rare glimpse of the local world of Western Thessaly in the early 2nd century BC. The confirmation of the *polis* status of Orthos, the existence of an *agoranomos*, as well as the euergetism of an individual known to have been *stratagos* of the Thessalians all represent welcome insights into this little-known community.

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XXXI 757 (170 BC); Axenidis 1949, 48 (c. 170 BC); Béquignon 1935, 55 (2nd century BC); *IG* IX,2 512 (2nd century BC), 515 (2nd century BC); *SEG* XXIX 529 (undated, 2nd century BC?).

¹²⁰ Kip 1910, 134; Béquignon 1935, 64; Kramolisch 1978, 17.

¹²¹ Stamatopoulou 2010; 2012.

¹²² *Document* 2.3.

¹²³ As communicated to me by the deputy director of the National Archaeological Museum, Mr Evangelos Vivliodetis, 27 July 2022.

Appendix I: Transcription and translation of *Document 2.1* (A.G. Samaropoulos's report to the Ministry of Ecclesiastical Affairs and Public Education, 1 May 1905)¹²⁴

Ἐκθεσις:¹²⁵ Περί τῶν ἀνακαλυφθέντων ἐν τῷ χωρίῳ Χαλαμπρεζίῳ ἀρχαιοτήτων. Ἐν Καρδίτῃ, τῇ 1^ῃ Μαΐου 1905
Πρὸς: Τὸ Σ. ἐπὶ τῆς παιδείας Ὑπουργεῖον

Εὐσεβάστως ἀναφέρω ὑμῖν διὰ τῆς παρουσίας μου κ. ὑπουργέ, ὅτι ἐν τῷ παρά τὸ χωρίον Χαλαμπρέζιον τοῦ δήμου Ταμασίου δάσει ἐν θέσει Ἅγιος Νικόλαος ἀνεκαλύφθησαν, ὡς ἐν καιρῷ σᾶς ἐτηλεγράφησα ἀρχαιοτήτες τὴν δεκάτην παρελθόντος Ἀπριλίου, ὡς ἐξῆς. Ὁ ἐργολάβος τῶν δημοσίων ἔργων τῆς ὁδοῦ Καρδίτσης – Λουτρῶν Σμοκόβου καὶ τῆς γεφύρας Χαλαμπρεζίου, ἀνορύσσωσιν δι' ἐργατῶν τους λίθους ἐκ τοῦ ὡς εἴρηται δάσους, ἀνεύρη ἐν τετραγώνῳ χώρῳ εἰς βάθος ἐνός περίπου μέτρου δύο ἀγαλμάτια ἐκ λίθου, ἀτυχῶς ἀκέφαλα καὶ τετρασπασμένας ἔχοντα χεῖρας καὶ πόδας, ἦτοι, τοῦ μὲν παριστῶντος παιδίον μόλις δωδεκαετές, γυμνόν, λείπουσιν οἱ πόδες, ἡ ἀριστερὰ χεῖρ καθολοκληρίαν καὶ τὸ ἀνδρικόν μόριον. Ὅπαι τινές ὑπάρχουσαι, μία ἐπὶ τῆς κλειδός τῆς ὦμοπλάτης, ἕτερα παρακειμένως ἐπὶ τοῦ ἀνωτέρου καὶ ὀπισθὲν μέρους τῆς ὦμοπλάτης, ἄλλη ἐπὶ τῆς ἐπιφανείας τοῦ ἀποκοπέντος βραχίονος καὶ τετάρτη κατὰ τὴν ὀσφύν ἔμπροσθεν καὶ περιέχουσαι ἐντός μόλυβδον μετὰ σιδήρου, μαρτυροῦσαι πάντως τὴν σύνδεσιν τοῦ ἀποκοπέντος κατὰ τὴν λάξουσιν τοῦ ἀγάλματος βραχίονος. Τοιαύτη ὀπή παρατηρεῖται καὶ κατὰ τὴν θέσιν τοῦ αἰδοίου, ὅπερ λείπει, ἄνευ μόλυβδου ὅμως ἀλλὰ διακρινομένης ἐν αὐτῇ ἄλλης κολλητικῆς ὕλης.

Τοῦ δὲ ἑτέρου παριστῶντος κόρην ἐνδεδυμένην λείπουσιν τὰ κάτω ἄκρα, ἡ κεφαλὴ καὶ ἡ δεξιὰ χεῖρ, εἶνε δὲ ἀμφοτέρω τὰ ἀγαλμάτια θαυμασίας γλυπτικῆς τέχνης, καλλιγραμμότατα, μάλιστα δὲ τὸ παριστάν τὸ παιδίον.

Πλήν τῶν ἀγαλμάτων ἀνευρέθη ἐν τῷ αὐτῷ τόπῳ καὶ τεμάχιον ἐνεπιγράφου πλακός μὴ ἀκεραίας ἀτυχῶς κατὰ τὰ πλάγια καὶ τὸ κάτω μέρος, τὸ δὲ περιεχόμενον τοῦ τεμαχίου τούτου ἀποτυπώσαντες καὶ ἐσωκλείομεν.

Πλήν τῶν ἀνωτέρω ἀνευρέθη ἐν ἀγρῷ τοῦ παρά τὸ δάσος ἀρχαῖος τάφος ἐκ γεγλυμμένων πλακῶν, ἐν τῷ ὁποίῳ ὑπῆρχαν τεφροδόχος ἐξ ὀρειχάλκου¹²⁶ κάλλιπη τῆς ὁποίας τὸ

Report regarding the antiquities discovered in the village of Chalamprezi. Karditsa, 1 May 1905.

To the honourable Ministry of Education.

Mr Minister, I hereby report with the utmost respect that antiquities were discovered at the site of Agios Nikolaos in the forest near the village of Chalamprezi in the municipality of Tamasion, on the tenth of April this year, as I communicated to you in time by telegram, in the following way. The contractor of the public works for the Karditsa–Loutra Smokovou road and of the bridge at Chalamprezi, while digging up with his workmen stones from the aforementioned forest, found two stone statuettes in a rectangular enclosure at a depth of about one metre, regrettably lacking their heads and with broken arms and feet. One of them, which represents a youth of only just twelve years, nude, is missing its feet, the left hand completely, as well as the male member. There are holes, one of which at the clavicle of the shoulder blade, others close to the upper and back part of the shoulder blade, another on the surface of the broken arm, and a fourth on the front of the waist, which had inside it [a shank of] lead and iron, indicating the joint of the arm that broke during the sculpturing of the statue. A similar [shank] is also visible in the area of the missing genitals, this is however without lead, but another binding agent can be seen in it.

The other [statuette] represents a dressed girl, missing the legs, the head and the right arm. Both statuettes are of admirable sculptural craftsmanship and are both well-executed, especially the one representing the boy.

Apart from the statuettes, a piece of an inscribed plaque was found at the same location, regrettably broken at the bottom and at the sides. However, having copied the fragment, I enclose it [in this letter].

Adding to the above mentioned, an ancient tomb was found in a field next to the forest, constructed out of sculpted slabs, in which was a brass urn, the bottom half of which was

¹²⁴ The transcription and translation have benefited much from the corrections and observations by Prof. Nikolaos Papazarkadas, including the identification of several calligraphic conventions employed by Samaropoulos.

¹²⁵ Samaropoulos used throughout his letters the now-obsolete letter *stigma* (ς) instead of spelling out στ. For the sake of legibility, the two letters have here been written out fully. Also, he used the acute accent (´) where standard Katharevousa would have used the grave accent (`). This has been reproduced in the transcription.

¹²⁶ Ὀρείχαλκος in the strict sense means “brass”, but it is probable that Samaropoulos meant that the vessel was of bronze.

κάτω ἡμισυ ἐκ τῆς ὀξειδώσεως κατεστράφη, ἐντός δέ ταύτης ὑπῆρχε μικρόν τι δοχεῖον ποικιλόχρωμον—πιθανῶς δακρυχόη—ὅπερ συνέτριψαν οἱ εὐρόντες χωρικοί, ἐν ᾧ λυχνάρια καὶ ὄστᾶ τινὰ κεκαυμένα ἄτινα διεσκόρπισαν. Ἐκεῖ που ἀνευρέθησαν καὶ τρία μικρά νομίσματα. Ἐξωδίκως εἴχαμεν μάθει ὅτι παρ' ἐργάτου τινός εἶχεν εὐρεθῆ καὶ δακτυλιόλιθος τις, ἀλλ' ἐπὶ τόπου μεταβάς καὶ αὐστηρῶς ἐρευνήσας, οὐδέν ἠδυνήθην νὰ ἐξακριβώσω. Εἶχεν εὐρεθῆ καὶ νόμισμά τι ἀργυροῦν μέγεθος ταλλήρου ὅπερ ἔφερον ἐπὶ τοῦ ἑνός μέρους προτομὴν μετὰ περικεφαλαίας καὶ ἐπὶ τοῦ ἑτέρου ζῶν τι, τοῦτο δέ παραλαβὼν ἐργάτης τις ἀπῆλθε.

“Ὑπερθεν τοῦ δάσους ἐπὶ τοῦ ὄρους διακρίνονται ἐρείπια ἀκροπόλεως μετὰ φρουρίου.

Οἱ ἱερεῖς τοῦ χωρίου καὶ γέροντες μοί ἀνεκοίνωσαν ὅτι ἄλλοτε εἶχον ἀνευρεῖ εἰς τὰ πλάγια τοῦ ὄρους ὑπόγειον σήραγγα διήκουσαν πρὸς τὴν ἀκρόπολιν, ἀλλὰ φοβηθέντες, ἐκάλυψαν τὴν σήραγγα καὶ ταύτην διὰ χωμάτων.

Ἄν ἡ σήραγγα αὕτη εἶνε ὑπόνομος συγκοινωνοῦσα τὴν ἀκρόπολιν μετὰ τῆς πόλεως, εἶνε ὑδραγωγεῖον ἢ ἄλλο τι, τοῦτο μόνον ἡ ἀρχαιολογικὴ σκαπάνη θέλει μᾶς τό δεῖξει.

Τὸ δάσος ἔνθα ἀνευρέθησαν αἱ περιγραφεῖσαι ἀρχαιοτήτες κατέχει περί τὰ 100 στρέμματα καὶ εἶνε ἀληθὲς λατομεῖον, διότι φέρει κάτωθεν ὀλόκληρος ὁ χῶρος ἐκεῖνος ὀγκῶδεις λίθους λελαξευμένους. Παρατήρησα δέ ὅτι καὶ ἄλλοτε ἐξήχθησαν ἐκεῖθεν λίθοι.

Οἱ ἐπίτροποι τοῦ ἐν τῷ δάσει ναϊδρίου τοῦ Ἁγίου [Νικολάου]¹²⁷ ἀνοίξαντες τάφρον εἰς τὸ ἄκρον τοῦ δάσους πρὸς τὸ ὄρος ἐκ δυσμῶν πρὸς ἀνατολὰς πρὸς περιχανδάκωσιν λειβαδείου,¹²⁸ ἀνεῦρον εἰς βάθος ἑνός μέτρου καθ' ὅλην τὴν γραμμὴν τοῦ χάνδακος, ὀγκῶδη μάρμαρα ἐστρωμμένα καὶ καλῶς κατεργασμένα. Ταῦτα καὶ ἡμεῖς εἶδομεν ἐν τῷ ὕδατι.

Πάντα τ' ἀνωτέρω ἀρχαιολογικὰ εὐρήματα περιουλήξας, μετέφερον εἰς τὸ δημοσιογραφικόν μου γραφεῖον ἐν Καρδίτῃ, ἐν τῷ γυμνασίῳ μὴ ὑπάρχοντος διαθεσίμου δωματίου πρὸς τοποθέτησιν των.

Καθ' ἐκάστην ἐπισκέπτται ἔρχονται καὶ θαυμάζουν ταῦτα.

Εὐπειθέστατος

Ὁ ἐπιμελητὴς τῶν ἀρχαιοτήτων

Ἄ. Γ. Σαμαρόπουλος

Δημοσιογράφος.

destroyed due to oxidation, in which was also a small polychrome vessel—perhaps an *unguentarium*—which the villagers who found it subsequently broke, as well as lamps and some burned bones which were thrown away. Three small coins were also found somewhere over there. Informally we also learned that a gemstone had been found by a workman, but arriving at the site and searching hard for it, I was unable to verify this information. A silver coin the size of a thaler was also found, which on the one side had a bust of a figure with a helmet and on the other some animal, but this had been taken away by a workman.

The ruins of an acropolis with a fortress can be discerned on the hill above the forest.

The priests and elders of the village told me that at some time, they had found an underground tunnel that was leading from the slopes of the hill towards the acropolis, but fearing [an accident], they had filled in the tunnel with soil.

Whether this tunnel was a wastepipe connecting the acropolis with the city, or if it is an aqueduct or something else, only the archaeological pick-axe will show us.

The forest in which the aforementioned antiquities were found covers approximately 100 *stremmata*¹²⁹ and is a veritable quarry, as this whole area contains under [ground] heaps of huge cut stones. However, I observed that stones had been taken out of there also in older times.

The commissioners of the chapel of Agios Nikolaos in the forest, when they opened a trench at the edge of the forest towards the hill running west to east in order to create a ditch around the meadow, found along the whole extent of the trench at the depth of one metre large pieces of marble arranged in lines and well-tooled. These I saw myself in the water.

After having collected all the above-mentioned archaeological finds, I transferred them to my newspaper office in Karditsa, as there was no spare space in the *gymnasion* to house them.

Every day, visitors come and admire them.

Yours obediently,

The curator of antiquities

A.G. Samaropoulos

Journalist

¹²⁷ Added in the margin.

¹²⁸ This sentence may cause some confusion. However, having visited the site (June 2022), I noted a long, shallow ditch (Samaropoulos's *tafros/chandax*?) which runs east–west from the area of a spring close to the chapel. As observed in aerial photographs, this ditch often gets flooded, forming a small lake, being an important waterhole for grazing sheep in the area. Samaropoulos's observation of antiquities “in the water” can probably also be explained by this.

¹²⁹ The *stremma* (plur. *stremmata*) is the standard Greek spatial unit used for landed properties, corresponding since 1922 to 1,000 m². Aerial photographs of the 1940s show that the *dasos* covered approximately 85 metric *stremmata*, a situation which remains the same today.

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