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ARTEMIS EPHESIA AND HERAKLES
THE GREATEST GOD IN THE NORTHWESTERN
MACEDONIAN CONFINES:
ASPECTS OF THE RELIGIOUS LANDSCAPE
OF ROMAN MACEDONIA

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Religion¹ is a field of social life where structural changes are often imperceptible, and follow their own, slow pace, seemingly unconnected with the turbulence of the *histoire événementielle*. And yet religion is hardly immune to change. The rich epigraphic harvest of the last hundred years from ancient Macedonia offers us a fascinating body of badly lacking textual evidence on religion, which complements the archaeological record and remedies the frustrating silence of the literary sources. In order to make some sense out of this evidence, we need to move beyond catalogues of cults, and try to interpret trends and changes. In this paper, I attempt a closer view on two epigraphically attested cults in northwestern Macedonia; their interest lies mainly in their value as evidence for religious and cultural trends attested throughout the Roman Empire.

I. FOREIGN, INTERNATIONAL AND LOCAL:
THE CULT OF ARTEMIS EPHESIA AT KOLOBAISE

The first cult I would like to focus on is the cult of Artemis Ephesia, a renowned deity of international caliber.² The goddess had acquired notoriety well

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¹ Religion is a field of study that was not central to the work of Fanoula Papazoglou, whose achievements and impact this volume celebrates. Nevertheless, Papazoglou, a pioneer of the modern study of ancient Macedonia, combined an intimate knowledge of the area's historical geography with a painstaking effort to make use of all possible textual sources; therefore, any attempt to understand ancient, and especially Roman, Macedonia –in whichever field– inevitably owes a lot to her attention to detail, and to the depth and thoroughness of her study, which never lost sight of the big picture. I would like to thank Marijana Ricl for her invitation to the conference, her remarks and her help, and Slavica Babamova for her cooperation.

² This is obviously not the place to give a thorough overview of the goddess and the cult, the bibliography on which is prolific: Oster 1990 is a concise treatment of all Ephesian cults (including of course the one of Ephesian Artemis), with the abundant earlier bibliography;

beyond the borders of Ephesos and Ionia already by the end of the 7th century BC, when she headed the Ionian colonization of the Far West, as we know from Strabo's famous story of the foundation of Massalia by the Phokaians.³ When Xenophon, more than 200 years later, built a copy of the Ephesian Artemision in reduced size and established in it a *xoanon* of the goddess, both as close as possible to the form of the originals,⁴ he merely followed the precedent set not only by the Phokaians, who had carefully preserved the *nomima* of the Ephesian cult at Massalia, but also of the Massaliotes who did likewise in Spain.⁵ Throughout the long history of the cult, however, the goddess remained primarily the Artemis of Ephesos.⁶ Just like her city, the prosperity of which depended both on the sea routes linking it to the West and on the inland routes linking it to the rich Asian hinterland, the goddess faced from time immemorial both towards the East and towards the West: her early connection with Croesus of Lydia,⁷ only decades after the colonization of Massalia under her protection, illustrates this universalizing appeal. An Anatolian divinity in origin, Artemis Ephesia was consistently projected early on as a symbol of Ephesian and 'Ionian Greek' identity, without losing her inherently Anatolian character, which facilitated her assimilation with the Phrygian and Lydian Mother of the Gods and made her very popular with the indigenous Asian populations.⁸ The Artemision of Ephesos was one of the wonders of the ancient world⁹ and remained after its successive reconstructions one of the largest temples of the Roman empire. The sanctuary complex and the cult were in many respects one of the foundations of the economic prosperity of Hellenistic Ephesos, and they continued to be a focal point not only of social life

Rogers 2012 is essential reading on the mysteries of the Artemis of Ephesos and contains more up-to-date bibliography; Immendörfer 2017, the latest relevant monograph, became known to me only after the completion of this paper; Fleischer 1973 remains the standard work of reference for the iconography of the goddess and the diffusion of the cult; the papers gathered in Muss 2008 may serve as a practical guide to the voluminous bibliography on the Artemision and the archaeological evidence on the cult at Ephesos itself.

³ Strabo 4.1.4 C 179; see the illuminating analysis of Malkin 2011: 171–204.

⁴ Xen. *Anab.* 5.3; see the detailed commentary of Purvis 2003: 61–116.

⁵ Strabo 4.1.5 C 180; cf. 3.4.6 C 160.

⁶ The most famous illustration of this connection is, of course, the acclamation "Great is the Artemis of the Ephesians" (*Acts* 19.28: μεγάλη ἡ Ἄρτεμις Ἐφεσίων) during the riot at Ephesos against Paul.

⁷ Nicolaus of Damascus, *FGrHist* 90 F 65: Croesus seeks the protection of Artemis Ephesia at the beginning of his rule; Hdt. 1.26 and Ael. *VH* 3.26: Artemis saves Ephesos from Croesus' siege; Hdt. 1.92: Croesus subsequently contributes to the rebuilding of the Artemision.

⁸ Artemis Ephesia and Kybele: Munn 2006: 163–169; the connection was evident for ancient writers: *ibid.* 164 n. 115. Some of the 'Asian' aspects of the iconography of Artemis Ephesia, however, were probably of later date (Hellenistic period onwards): see LiDonnici 1992.

⁹ The epigrammatist Antipatros of Thessalonike not only counts it among the wonders of the world, but actually claims it was the most magnificent of them all (*Anth. Pal.* 9.58).

in Ephesos, but also of economic activity throughout the province of Asia in the Roman period.¹⁰ The Ephesians always took their role as apostles and protectors of the cult very seriously –to the point that they had officials of the interconnected and competing Artemis cult at Sardis executed, in the famous sacrilege incident.¹¹ The popularity of the goddess and her cult are attested throughout the Greek world, from Africa and Alexandria to Pannonia, from the Peloponnese and the islands of the Aegean to the Black Sea, and from Marseille to all of Asia Minor, while the characteristic iconography of the goddess, so different from the one of Artemis the Huntress we are usually accustomed to, became a much reproduced divine image in the Roman World, especially in the 2nd century AD.¹²

It comes therefore as no surprise that a cult of Artemis Ephesia is also attested in Pelagonia and Lynkos –as far as I know, however, the evidence discussed below is the only evidence, epigraphic or archaeological, for Artemis Ephesia in the entire province of Macedonia. An act of sacred manumission dated to 200/201 AD (*IG X 2.2*, 233)¹³ and offering us the complete name of the deity (ll. 4–5:

¹⁰ Hellenistic period: see the illuminating analysis of Davies 2011. Roman period: see Oster 1990: 1713–1722 for a concise, informative overview. The temple and the cult as the focal point of social life in Ephesos and of the Ephesians’ self-image: see, for example, Rogers 1991 on the Salutaris bequest and Elsner 2007: 228–246; Thomas 1995: 85 has calculated that almost a third of non-casual references to Ephesos in literary sources of the Imperial period refer to Artemis of Ephesos. For the regional religious and economic importance of the cult and the Artemision (“an important pillar in the financial and banking structures of Asia” in the wording of Oster 1990: 1717), see *I. Ephesos* 18 b, ll. 1–6, where the temple is presented by the Roman authorities as the pride “of the whole province” (...τό τε τῆς Ἀρτέμιδος αὐτῆς ἱερὸν, ὃ τῆς ἐπαρχείας | ὅλης ἐστὶν κόσμος καὶ {ὁ} διὰ τὸ τοῦ ἔργου μέγεθος | καὶ διὰ τὴν τοῦ περὶ τὴν θεὸν σεβασμοῦ ἀρχαιότη<η>τ<α> | καὶ διὰ τὴν τῶν προσόδων ἀφθονίαν τῶν ὑπὸ τοῦ | Σεβαστοῦ ἀποκατασταθεισῶν τῇ θεᾷ...). The cult authorities of the sanctuary of Artemis were one of the few corporate religious bodies legally allowed to inherit property according to Roman law (Ulp. *Tit.* 22.6).

¹¹ *I. Ephesos* 2. The inscription makes clear (ll. 8–9) that the cult at Sardis was seen as a branch instituted by the Ephesians themselves. The incident is discussed in all general accounts of the cult of Artemis Ephesia; for details on the Sardians’ impiety, see Masson 1987: 228–231 and Delli Pizzi 2011: 70–71.

¹² Iconography and diffusion of the cult: Fleischer 1973: 2–46; Hermary 1986; LiDonnici 1992; for the diffusion of the cult, see also Szabó et al. 2016; on the significance of the diffusion both of the cult and of representations of Artemis Ephesia for the social and religious mindframe of the Roman imperial period, cf. also Elsner 2007: 241–251.

¹³ For earlier editions, see the *lemma* in *IG X 2.2*, 233. After the publication of the corpus, the inscription has, paradoxically, attracted practically no attention, despite the crucial new reading of the divine epithet in l. 2. The inscription was reprinted without comments in Babamova 2005: no 51 and there were passing remarks by A. Chaniotis (*EBGR* 1999 [*Kernos* 15 (2002)] no 181 [p. 395]; Chaniotis 2009: 57; cf. Chaniotis 2012: 216), who adduces this inscription as an example of dedications which are the result of divine punishment, Youni 2005: 192, who includes this inscription to examples attesting the depositions of ὀνάι to the archives of the sanctuary during manumissions, Sverkos 2000: 35 and Chatzinikolaou 2011: 81 (cf. Chatzinikolaou 2010: 215–216), but no detailed commentary.

Ἀρτέμιδος Ἐφεσίας [τῆς] | ἐν Κολοβαίση) was located before 1934 by Nikola Vulić at the monastery of Treskavec, on a steep mountain slope overlooking the Pelagonian basin. The location is not geographically central: far to the north of the via Egnatia, the ancient settlement at Treskavec¹⁴ lay near –but not on– the road leading from Stobi in Paionia to Herakleia in Lynkos through Audaristos and Kerameiai, the only settlements in the area that the authors of *Roman Itineraria* deemed important enough to mention.¹⁵ Fanoula Papazoglou quite sensibly stated that the remains of the ancient walled settlement at Treskavec were unfitting for a major civic center and unequivocally called the place a village.¹⁶ The inscription informs us that a woman (whose name must have been inscribed in the two missing lines at the beginning of the text) dedicated her slave Helene, the slave's daughter Peristera and the future offspring of these two to Artemis. The rest of the document conforms with well-known details of sacred manumission acts known from other parts of Macedonia: the former owner of the slaves deposited the two slaves' deed of sale (ὠνή) to the sanctuary's archive (ll. 11–12: [π]ρὸς τὰ ἕτερα γράμματα [τ]ῆς θεοῦ), and then had a version of the manumission act engraved on stone (ll. 12–15: καὶ ἐνεχα[ράχθη τ]ὰ προγεγραμμένα εἰς [τ]ὸ γράμμα μνήμης [χ]άρις. The document ends with the date and the place where it was drafted (ll. 15–16).¹⁷ The only striking feature of this inscription is that the dedicant liberated her slaves by consecrating them to Artemis Kynagos (l.2),¹⁸ “because she was pestered by Artemis Ephesia at Kolobaise” (ll. 3–5: ἐνωχλημέν[η ὑπὸ] Ἀρτέμιδος Ἐφεσίας [τῆς] ἐν Κολοβαίση). In other words, Artemis Ephesia at Kolobaise ordered a devotee to make a dedication to another form of Artemis, Artemis Kynagos.

The first issue to be dealt with here is a notoriously intricate problem: how should we understand the fact that the same deity bears two distinct epithets in the

¹⁴ See *TIR* K 34: 72 (Ivan Mikulčić); *Arheološka Karta* II 313–314 (Boško Babić and Blagoja Kitanovski). The altitude of Zlatovrv, where the acropolis of the settlement seems to have been located, is 1250 m.

¹⁵ *Tab. Peut.* VII 5–VIII 1; *Geog. Rav.* IV 9); Kerameiai is otherwise unattested; on Audaristos (*Euristos* or *Euriston* in the *Itineraria*), see Papazoglou 1988: 327 with the rest of the evidence.

¹⁶ Papazoglou 1988: 291: “Rien n’indique qu’il s’agissait d’une ville et le terrain, haut dans la montagne, ne semble pas propice au développement d’une ville. Kolobaisè était sans doute une kômè”.

¹⁷ All those elements are equally present in manumission acts known to us from other parts of Roman Macedonia (and elsewhere): dedication of a slave after divine punishment: see n. 13, above; dedication of the liberated slaves' offspring as well: see, for example, *I. Leukopetra* 14, 19, 30, 123, 130, and *EKM* II 65; deposition of deeds of sale in the sanctuary's archive: see *I. Leukopetra* p. 56–59; *EKM* II 143, 144, 151, 156, 164, 168, 169, 406, 407; cf. Youni 2005: 192; mention of the place the document was drafted at: see below.

¹⁸ The reading Κυ[ναγῶ] in l. 2 is quite secure: see the *apparatus* in the *IG* edition, where it is rightly pointed out that the alternative κυ[ρία] would leave too much blank space at the end of the line (there is space for 5–6 missing letters). Moreover, faint traces of an A after the missing N seem discernible on the photograph.

same cultic context?¹⁹ In this specific case, should we assume that the same goddess was worshipped in two distinct hypostases, or that two distinct divine figures were worshipped? In simpler terms, should we speak of one Artemis or two? And if our answer is the latter, how should we interpret the relationship between the two cults?

Prima facie, there would be nothing incongruous about two hypostases of the same god honoured in a single place, even in a remote village of northern Pelagonia. The classic example often adduced to prove this point, is the fact that a single deme of Attica, Erchia, could acknowledge in its sacred calendar no less than six distinct forms of Apollo, all officially worshipped on different days of the month and with different sacrifices, occasionally at different shrines.²⁰ In such cases, we obviously have no reason to assume that the citizens of Erchia believed in six entirely different gods who simply happened to be all called Apollo and it is thus safer to interpret the variety of cult epithets simply as ways to denote different qualities of the same god. But this is not necessarily how the inscription from Treskavec should be interpreted. The difference between Artemis Kynagos and Artemis Ephesia in Macedonia in 200/201 AD cannot be of the same order as the difference between, for example, Apollo Lykeios and Apollo Nymphegetes in early 4th century BC Athens. Artemis Ephesia had a very specific identity, with a birthplace, genealogy and iconography quite distinct from the standard versions of Artemis worshipped throughout the Greek world,²¹ one of which was precisely the traditional form of ‘Artemis the Huntress’ of Treskavec. In other words, Artemis Ephesia was too precise a divine figure to simply be understood as just another version of Artemis, either in the religious mind frame of the villagers in Treskavec or by us today.

¹⁹ Divine epithets continue to form an area of study where perplexity is the rule. As Henk Versnel and Robert Parker have pointed out, there is a noteworthy lack of sophisticated theoretical approaches to the study of the Greek cultic epithet, at least until the late 20th century. To quote the latter: “Perhaps the extraordinary infrequency, amid all the huge literature that exists on Greek religion, of theoretical discussions of the cult epithet as a category is the product of a suspicion that there is indeed nothing illuminating to be said except about particular examples” (Parker 2003: 174; cf. Versnel 2011: 60 with n. 140 with further bibliography). For valuable recent contributions to the subject after Parker’s pessimistic observation, see Belayche 2005; Versnel 2011: 60–87 and 517–525; Parker 2017: 1–32.

²⁰ *LSCG* 18 (*CGRN* 52 with text, translation and subsequent bibliography), second quarter of the 4th century BC. The epithets of Apollo are: Lykeios, Pythios, Delphinios, Apotropaïos, Pagion, Nymphegetes.

²¹ I do not wish to downplay the evolution of Artemis Ephesia from a version of Artemis perceived as somewhat ‘exotic’ to a mainstream Graeco-Roman deity, indeed to the Artemis *par excellence* of the Roman world (see Oster 1990: 1726–1727; Thomas 1995: 85–98; Versnel 2011: 106–107; Frayer-Griggs 2013: 466–469); still, this evolution did not in any way undermine the specificity of the Artemis of Ephesos. Versnel 2011: 76–77 uses precisely the example of Artemis Ephesia to illustrate why “gods bearing the same name but with different epithets *may*, but *need not* have been perceived self-evidently as different functional or local manifestations or aspects of one god” (77). Parker 2017: 29 also uses the example of Artemis Ephesia in his discussion of one of the functions of divine epithets, which is to classify a particular form of a god as a “distinct existent entity”.

There is an aspect of this document that could point to the same direction. Ever since the inscription was published, it has been unanimously taken for granted by scholars that the ancient name of the settlement at Treskavec is attested in ll. 15–16: “concluded at Kolobaise, in the year 348” (ll. 15–16: ἐγένετο ἐν Κο[λο][βαί]-ση τοῦ ημ’ καὶ τ’ ἔτ[ους]). Yet it should be stressed that this is not necessarily the case: the verb ἐγένετο in l. 15 does not refer to the engraved text, but to the manumission act *stricto sensu*, that is, the actual legal document; the former was not necessarily identical to the latter,²² and was only set up on stone in order to ensure publicity and the divine protection of the transaction –μνήμης χάριν, as the text itself explicitly states (ll. 14–15). The longest series of manumission acts we have from Macedonia, those found at the sanctuary of the Autochthonous Mother of the Gods at Lefkopetra in the territory of Beroia, provide a useful parallel: there are only four cases among the several dozens of acts from Lefkopetra where the place the legal document was drafted is mentioned, and in only one of them is this place the sanctuary itself; in the other three, the manumission act is explicitly stated to have been drafted elsewhere.²³ In fact, one may argue that the reference of place was under normal circumstances deemed superfluous in such documents, *unless* they had been drafted elsewhere. The assumption, therefore, that Kolobaise was not located at Treskavec²⁴ remains, I think, a distinct possibility when the inscription is viewed from a legal perspective. Moreover, the syntax of our text may strengthen this assumption: the recipient of the donation, Artemis Kynagos (l. 2), bears no local geographical identifier, while the goddess ordering the donation and mentioned immediately afterwards, i.e. Artemis Ephesia (ll. 4–5), does, probably because the location of the former was self-evident but the one of the latter was not.

If Kolobaise was not located at Treskavec, then the religious consequences of this dedication are of a rather different order. Only two cults would be attested at the settlement of Treskavec: the preexisting cult of an Apollo bearing an epithet of local origin²⁵ and the cult of Artemis the Huntress, the quintessentially tradi-

²² See *I. Leukopetra* p. 43.

²³ Document drafted at the sanctuary itself: *I. Leukopetra* 63: ἐν Αὐτόχθονι ἐπὶ τῇ θεῶ. Documents drafted elsewhere: *I. Leukopetra* 99: ἐν Βεροίᾳ τῇ μητροπόλει τῆς Μακεδονίας καὶ δις νεωκόρου; *I. Leukopetra* 115: ἐν [Β]εροίᾳ; *I. Leukopetra* 103: ἐν Αἰγιαίᾳς. There are, of course, isolated counter-examples from Macedonia which weaken this argument: in the manumission acts from Blaganoi near Aigeai, there is at least one case where ἐν Βλαγάνοις seems to refer to the place the document was drafted (*EKM* II 63) and this is also the case in the idiosyncratic manumission act of Skydra (*EKM* II 123: ἐν Σκύδρας). Nevertheless, the Lefkopetra series is much richer and statistically more significant; at the very least it allows for the possibility that Kolobaise was not necessarily located at Treskavec.

²⁴ The only other reference to Kolobaise in the literary or epigraphic record is the ethnic (Κολο[βαί]σαῖ[ος]) of a veteran of the Roman army (*IG* X 2.2, 229, ll. 1–2). The inscription was found at Mažučište, 4 km to the SW of Treskavec.

²⁵ Apollo Eteudaniskos or Oteudanos or Oteudanikos: *IG* X 2.2, 230 (112/3 AD), 231 (early 2nd century AD) 232 (2nd century AD). For the reasonable assumption that this Apollo is of Paionian origin, see already Heuzey 1876: 319; cf. Düll 1977: 55–56 and Bitrakova 1999: 159–161. It is important to note that all three inscriptions predate the appearance of Artemis Ephesia not only at Treskavec, but in Macedonia in general (see below).

tional Greek version of the goddess, which is also the one dominating the archaeological record in the whole area.²⁶ The dedicant would probably be a resident of the settlement, who received a divine order by Artemis Ephesia at Kolobaise –perhaps during a pilgrimage to the latter sanctuary– to proceed to a dedication to her local version of Artemis in order to redeem herself from her sins.²⁷ This would mean that, rather than assuming two interconnected local variations of Artemis, we would need to assume that we are dealing with two separate cults of two distinct divine entities located in two different places. In any case, and wherever Kolobaise was located, it is clear that the authorities of the cult of Artemis Ephesia attempted, through the interpretation of divine will,²⁸ to exercise influence on other cults of Artemis in the area and to publicize on a regional level the might of the goddess and the unwavering faith of her devotees.

Very similar is the case of another inscription mentioning Artemis Ephesia in Pelagonia (*IG X 2.2*, 188, late 2nd – early 3rd century AD), found at Kokre, to the southeast of Treskavec and to the other side of the mountain pass leading from Herakleia to Stobi. It is a dedicatory inscription, part of a dedication offered to Artemis Kynagos and the *polis*²⁹ by Zoilos son of Dioskourides and Cassandra daughter of Kassandros. The dedication was offered in compliance to the will (l. 5: κατὰ κέλευσιν) of the couple's daughter Alexandra, “who by command of Ephesia and patroness Artemis, remained a virgin for 27 years, and then she was married for 8 months and 22 days; and she lived (?) in Pella”.³⁰ According to

²⁶ See Düll 1977: 58–72, 287–306; Sokolovska 1987: 177–181; Chatzinikolaou 2011: 271–282.

²⁷ The alternative would be to suppose that the dedicant was a resident of Kolobaise who was ordered by Artemis Ephesia to make an offering to the neighbouring cult centre of Artemis at Treskavec; but this assumption seems less convincing, especially if one considers the rest of the evidence on Artemis Ephesia in the area (see below).

²⁸ The cult of Artemis Ephesia at Ephesos may not have been centered around a famous oracle, but it certainly involved some sort of oracular activities, since it employed interpreters of divine will (θεσμοφοδοί): see Horsley 1987: 81; Oster 1990: 1724–1725.

²⁹ I cannot enter here into the complex discussion of which *polis* is referred to in this text. It is usually assumed that it was the elusive city of Pelagonia, which is why “Pelagonia” is placed by many scholars and maps near Kokre, usually at Prilepec, ca. 4 km to the west, where remains of a large settlement have been located (see *TIR K 34*: 99 [Ivan Mikulčić]; *Arheološka Karta II* 309 [Boško Babić and Blagoja Kitanovski]). Nevertheless, the very existence of a *polis* called Pelagonia before the Late Roman period is debatable; cf. Hatzopoulos 1996: I 91–92 (for later evidence and bibliography on the intricate problem of *poleis* in Upper Macedonia, see Sverkos 2013: 244–258).

³⁰ ... ἥτις κατὰ | ἐπιταγὴν Ἐφεσίας | καὶ πατρωνίσσης Ἀρ¹⁰τέμιδος διήγαγεν | παρθεναίαν ἔτεσιν | κζ´· καὶ μετὰ ἀνδρὸς | μῆνας · η´ · ἡμέρας | κβ´ · καὶ ἐβίωσεν (?) |¹⁵ ἐν Πέλλῃ. The concluding phrase is awkward. Κα<τ>εβίωσεν ἐν Πέλλῃ (“she died at Pella”) may make more sense, despite the absence of a conjunction (καταβῶ in the sense ‘to die’ is attested in funerary inscriptions of the Imperial period in Pamphylia and Pisidia: *I. Perge* 66, *I. Central Pisidia* 168–169).

the interpretation of the editors of the *corpus*, the command came from Artemis in both her hypostases: Artemis Ephesia, referred to simply as Ephesia, and the patroness Artemis, presumably the Artemis Kynagos to which the offering was made. But even if we discard the obvious theological problem of two distinct hypostases of Artemis –let alone two distinct divine figures– issuing the same sacred order, I do not think the language used favours this interpretation: why refer to one hypostasis by epithet only, and to the other only by the theonym? I believe, therefore, that one and the same Artemis is referred to here: Artemis Ephesia *who is also* the patroness of Alexandra. In other words, the religious pattern here is identical to the situation at Treskavec: Alexandra was a devotee of Artemis Ephesia, presumably the one at nearby Kolobaise; she remained a virgin for 27 years at the divine order of the goddess (a well-known protectress of virgins,³¹ as all Artemides), and dictated in her will that her parents should make an offering to Artemis. The offering, once again, was made not to Artemis Ephesia herself, but to the local version of Artemis the Huntress. The only difference is that in the case of the dedication from Kokre we cannot be certain that this was due to a deliberate policy of the cult authorities of the Ephesian goddess, as it was in the case of the dedication from Treskavec: Zoilos and Cassandra may have chosen a different Artemis on their own initiative, or have followed the instructions of their deceased daughter. The religious outcome, nevertheless, is identical at Treskavec and at Kokre: the cult of Artemis Ephesia appears –and is publicized– as an overarching Artemis cult in the area, potentially ruling over and encompassing all other local –and preexisting– versions of the goddess.

The evidence for a cult of Artemis Ephesia at Stobi, further to the north, is, at best, very inconclusive.³² We may, therefore, turn our attention towards the

³¹ See, e.g. Achilles Tatius, *Leukippe and Kleitophon* 6.21.2.

³² There are three possible references of Artemis Ephesia from Stobi: (1) *I. Stoborum* 3 (marble plaque, 2nd century AD) is a fragmentary dedication, which has been variously restored by various editors (see Babamova's *apparatus*). Here is the text in the latest edition: Ἀρτέμιδι[ι - -] | τὸν βωμ[ὸν ἔθηκε] | Θεούχηρ[στος μετ]ἰὰ τῶν το[ῦ θιάσου ἐ]πιμελη[τῶν - -] | Ζωίλου κ[αὶ Διοσκου]ρίδου κα[τὰ - -]. In l. 1, both Ἀρτέμιδι Ἐφεσία, proposed by N. Vulić, *Spomenik* 77 (1934) 41 no 20, and Ἀρτέμιδι Λοχία, proposed by Wiseman 1973: 182, are arbitrary, since there is no other attestation of an epithet of Artemis at Stobi. Incidentally, [μετ]ἰὰ τῶν το[ῦ θιάσου ἐ]πιμελη[τῶν] (ll. 3–5) would be without parallels, since it would imply that these *epimeletai* were regular officials of the *thiasos*, while in private associations the *epimeletai* are invariably simple members charged with specific tasks (cf. Nigdelis 2006: 203). Thus, the restoration [μετ]ἰὰ τῶν το[ῦ ἱεροῦ ἐ]πιμελη[τῶν] proposed by Wiseman 1973: 182 (and not mentioned in the *apparatus* of the Stobi *corpus*) is probably preferable. (2) *I. Stoborum* 4 (2nd century AD) is a relief depicting a horseman, to the right, with two dogs in front of him: the inscription reads [- -]νὸς Ἀρτέμιδι | [- -] κατ' ἐλύχην. The missing epithet may well be [Κυναγῶ], given the iconography, but for present purposes it suffices to note that there is no reason to suppose that the Artemis in question is the one of Ephesos. (3) *I. Stoborum* 5 (lower left fragment of an altar, 2nd century AD) is very poorly preserved: [- -]Μ[- -] Ἄρ[τ]ε[μ]ιδι Ε[- -] | [- -]ΣΙΝΔΩ[- -]. In l. 2, N. Vulić, *Spomenik* 75 (1933) 27 no 70, followed by Düll 1977: no 67, proposed Ἐ[φεσία], but again the restoration is arbitrary, as Babamova correctly points out.

south, where there are at least two other certain references to Artemis Ephesia from neighbouring Lynkos. The first (*IG X 2.2, 9*)³³ comes from Živojno, not far from the southeastern extremity of Pelagonia, an important settlement of unknown ancient name.³⁴ In 160 AD, Glaukias, the superintendent slave of a certain Ancharienus Adaios³⁵ made a dedication to Artemis Ephesia. Two interesting – and perhaps interrelated – aspects of this inscription are its date and its dedicatory relief. First of all, this is the earliest attestation of the cult of Artemis Ephesia in all of Macedonia. The badly eroded relief portrays two male figures in front of their horses to either side of a standing goddess; it is the well-known iconographic motif described by Chapoutier as “les Dioscures au service d’une déesse” and well-attested in Roman Asia Minor, where it is often used to portray a major local goddess, the name(s) and attributes of which have been the subject of much discussion.³⁶ For present purposes, it suffices to point out that this motif clearly does not belong to the standardized iconography of the Ephesian Artemis³⁷ – an iconography which is, to the best of my knowledge, completely unattested not only in the areas under consideration, but anywhere in Macedonia. On the contrary, both the cult of the Dioscuri in general and this particular iconographic motif are amply attested in the area (Lynkos, Derriopos, Pelagonia, Paionia) and are associated with a number of different deities.³⁸ This means that, in the one

³³ See also Chatzinikolaou 2011: 80 and 279–280 no 110.

³⁴ On Živojno, see *TIR K 34*: 136–137 (Ivan Mikulčić); *Arheološka Karta II 32* (Borka Josifovska).

³⁵ Γλαυκίας, Ἀνχαρινοῦ Ἀ[δα]ίου οἰκο|νόμος, Ἀρτέμιδι Ἐφεσῖα ἀνέθηκεν· | ἔτους ζτ' μηνὸς Ἀρτεμισίου θ'. The alternative interpretation, “Glaukias son of Ancharienos, superintendent of Adaios” (followed by Tataki 2006: 90–91 no 37), cannot stand for several reasons: (a) superintendents of large estates were invariably of servile origin, if not still slaves (Nigdelis 2006: 226–228, including a reference to our inscription in 227 n. 31), and thus Glaukias need not carry a patronym; (b) Anchar(i)enus is a relatively rare non-imperial *nomen gentis* (cf. Sverkos 2018: 84–85) which is unlikely to be used as a personal name (nor is it thus used in its only other attestation in Macedonia: *EKM I 135*); finally, (c) one would expect Adaios, an owner of a large estate in 160 AD, to possess the Roman *civitas*.

³⁶ Chapoutier 1935; Düll 1977: 67; Robert 1983: 553–578 (the fullest discussion of the subject after Chapoutier); Hermary 1986: 593; Geppert 1996: 117–118.

³⁷ If one excludes two 3rd century AD coins from Ephesos itself (Chapoutier 1935: 75–77 no 68 and pl. 12; cf. 237–238), where it is expected for the tutelary deity to be associated with any divine figure, the motif is explicitly associated with Artemis Ephesia only once, in a relief from Phrygia, now lost (Chapoutier 1935: 74–75 no 67; Geppert 1996: 192, no R64 with the previous bibliography).

³⁸ For epigraphic, numismatic and archaeological evidence for the Dioscuri in the area (including Paionia), see Sokolovska 1974; Düll 1977: 112–116 and nos 75, 82, 200–206; Sokolovska 1987: 83–84, 202; Bitrakova 1999: 237–239, and 252 figs. 5–7; Nikoloska 2009; Chatzinikolaou 2011: 80–81, 279–80 no 110, 281 no 113, 282 no 115; Nikoloska 2015: 262–264. From the inscribed monuments it becomes clear that the Dioscuri and this particular iconographic motif may be connected with a variety of divine figures and religious notions: (1)

and only instance in the areas under discussion where we have a combination of a secure epigraphic attestation of Artemis Ephesia with a relief depicting the goddess—an instance which also happens to be the earliest attestation of the cult in the area—the iconographic motif is not specific to Artemis Ephesia, but rather belongs to the generic iconographic repertoire of powerful, commanding female divine figures, who are associated with the popular Dioscuri. The introduction of Artemis Ephesia in the area thus seems to have been facilitated by her assimilation to more familiar deities,³⁹ and by the use of a more familiar iconography. The fact that the dedicant in our inscription is a slave of someone belonging or connected to a Roman commercial *gens*, therefore to one of the most cosmopolitan and well-travelled elements of society in the Roman East, merely adds to a complex picture of change and novelty superimposed on familiar religious and artistic patterns; a picture the details of which remain beyond our full grasp.

Probably from Lynkos (but the origin is unclear) also comes another stele pertaining to Artemis Ephesia and bearing at least two sacred manumission acts

IG X 2.2, 191 (found at Peštani in Pelagonia, only 3.5 km to the SE of Kokre) is a dedication to the Dioscuri alone, without any mention of the female goddess portrayed in their midst. (2) *IG X 2.2*, 302 (Trojkrsti in Derriopos, near Styberra) is a dedication to Asklepios; the dedicatory relief depicts the Dioscuri alone. (3) *IG X 2.2*, 310 (also found in Derriopos, at Krušejani, west of Prilep), bears a badly damaged inscription; its end, however, if Papazoglou's transcription of the badly eroded l. 4 is accepted (ll. 4-6: ἀπασῶν (?) καὶ ἀπά|{πα}ντων (?) θεῶν, | θεοῖς σωτήρσιν) would be extremely interesting: the genitive “of all the gods and goddesses” points either to a reference to the Mother of the Gods or to a superlative declaring that “the Saviour Gods” of l. 6 (either the Dioscuri alone, or the triad of the Dioscuri and the female goddess depicted in their midst) are the “greatest (*vel sim.*) of all the gods and goddesses”, in a reflection of the religious competition which is very characteristic of the period (see below, part II and n. 73) and strongly reminds us an inscription from Ephesos where Artemis Ephesia is declared to be “forever the greatest of all the gods” (*I. Ephesos* 1265 + *SEG* 43 [1993] 756, 2nd century AD, ll. 2-4: ἡ τε πάτριος Ἐ[φρῆσι]ν θεὸς Ἄρτεμις καὶ θεῶν πάντων πῶποτε μεγίστη). (4) Düll 1977: 374-375 no 201 and fig. 59 (*SEG* 29 [1979] 578), found at Demir Kapija in Paionia is another intriguing text and relief. The first line is read by Düll as [- - - κ]αὶ Θάλαμος εὐχὴν Μεγάλῃ Τύχῃ [- -], but the first letter is clearly a delta as Fanoula Papazoglou (1979: 313) had already remarked, which is why Sokolovska 1974: 269 reads [Ἀρτέμι]δι θάλαμος εὐχὴν μεγάλη τύχῃ [- -], and interprets μεγάλη τύχη as an acclamation and θάλαμος as ‘chamber’ (followed by Nikoloska 2009: 122 who connects this interpretation of θάλαμος with the mysteries of Kybele). This alternative reading, however, is syntactically problematic; it may therefore be simpler to assume that the delta engraved in l. 1 is a common engraver's mistake (delta instead of an alpha). In any case, the relief depicts the standing goddess with torches, an attribute pointing again both to Artemis and to Kybele, who was quite popular along the Axios valley until the Roman period (Bitrakova 1999: 199-205; Nikoloska 2009). The high concentration of the motif in Derriopos, Pelagonia and Paionia is noteworthy; in other parts of Macedonia it is only attested once, as far as I know, in a dedicatory relief possibly from Thessalonike (*IG X 2.1*, 56, Geppert 1996: no R18); the dedicatory inscription mentions only the Dioscuri.

³⁹ Nikoloska 2009: 124 tentatively suggests that Artemis Ephesia takes the place of Kybele in the area (cf. the preceding note). For the connection between Artemis Ephesia and Anatolian Mothers of the Gods, cf. n. 8, above.

(*SEG* 55 [2005] 685).⁴⁰ Unfortunately, the upper left and the bottom of the stele are badly damaged and an autopsy of the stone would be required in order to establish a text better than the one the published photograph allows for. What is certain is that in the second act, dated to 205 AD, the dedicant proceeds to the liberation of a slave “because she was asked to do so by Artemis Ephesia” (act II, ll. 3–4: ἐτουμένη ὑπὸ θεᾶ[ς] | Ἀρτέμιδος Ἐφεσία[ς], followed by the incomprehensible dedicatory formula). The phrase is very similar to the wording of the inscription from Treskavec: we are dealing once again with a dedication made at the “request” of Artemis Ephesia, therefore under fear of divine punishment by the goddess. There is, however, another feature reminding us the inscription from Treskavec: the fact that the name of the goddess issuing the order is spelt out in full, contrary to the expected syntax. Even when divine commands are mentioned, the name of the goddess normally belongs to the dedicatory formula: “so-and-so dedicated to so-and-so, at *her* command (or because she was ordered by *her*, or by the goddess)”.⁴¹ One reason why the phrase “because she was asked by Artemis Ephesia” would precede the dedicatory formula itself –thus giving more prominence to the divine command rather than to the dedication itself or to the goddess receiving it–, could be that the recipient of the dedication was, once again, *not* Artemis Ephesia. Could Artemis Ephesia, just as at Treskavec or at Kokre, have commanded Claudia Stratonike to liberate her slave by donating her to another, local Artemis?⁴²

⁴⁰ Babamova 2005: 106 no 35 transcribes only the second, dated act and lists the first editions, which I have not seen; the text of the badly preserved first act is transcribed by A. Chaniotis in *SEG* from the photograph; see also Chatzinikolaou 2011: 280–281 no 112, without the text. The fact that the stele was found in a private house in Bitola does not necessarily mean that the provenance is Herakleia Lynkestis.

⁴¹ For some examples from Macedonia, see e.g. *I. Leukopetra* 35, 131 and *IG X* 2.2, 34, mentioned immediately below in the main text. Phrases such as κατ’ ἐπιταγήν, or κατὰ πρόσταγμα, or κατὰ κέλευσιν τοῦ / τῆς θεοῦ are of course ubiquitous everywhere. Among the several hundreds of cases in the PHI database, I have come across very few counter-examples, i.e. cases where the name of the god is spelt out in full in the κατ’ ἐπιταγήν / κατὰ πρόσταγμα / κατὰ κέλευσιν formula and not in the dedicatory formula *per se*: κατ’ ἐπιταγήν: *I. Leukopetra* 34, 151; *IGBulg IV* 2338 (but this is a much longer text); *IG XII Suppl.* 27; *TAM V* 1, 51 and 342; *I. Hadrianoi* 8; *I. Prusa* 44; *I. Iznik* 1080; κατὰ κέλευσιν: *IG IV*² 1, 566; *IGBulg IV* 2073 (but again this is a longer text); *RECAM II* 324; *MAMA I* 5; *MAMA IV* 226; *MAMA V* Lists 181 no 13; *MAMA IX* 57; *SEG* 29 (1979) 967; *SEG* 33 (1983) 1159; *SEG* 38 (1988) 1321; *I. Anazarbos* 50; *IGUR I* 100, 165, 176; no examples with κατὰ πρόσταγμα. Most of these examples come from the Anatolian hinterland, a fact that further illustrates that this is not expected language usage.

⁴² Perhaps one should not press a bold hypothesis even further, given the poor state of preservation of this text, but the first manumission act may actually strengthen my assumption. One would expect that the same goddess, Artemis Ephesia, is involved in the first document as well, and, indeed, the word following the theonym in act I begins with an epsilon. And yet the restoration Ἀρτέμιδι Ἐ[[φεσία] in ll. 4–5 seems epigraphically impossible: there is (barely) space for five letters in the beginning of l. 5, but then there would be no more space left before the rest of the line (ME τῆς θεοῦ), making the text incomprehensible. If there are indeed letters in the beginning of l. 5 (the poor photograph

Finally, a last intriguing case from Lynkos should be mentioned: it is an inscription (*IG X 2.2*, 34, *post* 212 AD) on an Ionic column, now lost, from Vašarejca, far to the northeast of Herakleia, and again very close to the Pelagonian border. According to the text, Aurelius Ioulianos dedicated his wife, Aurelia Amia, to Artemis, “on the command of the goddess” (ll. 6–7: κατὰ κέλευσιν | τῆς θεοῦ). The precise meaning of the dedication – a dedication of an image of the deceased in the form of the goddess, or simply an actual dedication of a free person to the god, certainly not an inconceivable notion, as we know by now?⁴³ need not detain us here. The only element of this inscription which is useful for present purposes is the fact that we have here yet another attestation of an Artemis – not necessarily Artemis Ephesia – who issues commands to her devotees; a powerful, menacing deity, demanding the full devotion and dedication of her worshippers, like so many popular gods in the eastern part of the Roman Empire in the 2nd and 3rd centuries AD.

Two interrelated features of the cult of Artemis Ephesia in Pelagonia and Lynkos should be highlighted. The first is the delicate balance between old gods and new gods, or, more precisely, between local and ‘foreign’. I have elsewhere⁴⁴ attempted to explore the importance of localization in the nomenclature of gods worshipped in Roman Macedonia. One of the strategies put forward in the context of some cults in the Roman period was to strongly emphasize the god’s regional or local character, his or her firm anchoring in the local community.⁴⁵ Next to these emphatically ‘local’ gods, there are those whom we could call *metic* or *travelling gods*.⁴⁶ A god of a certain Macedonian locality may, for example, be proclaimed to have originated in another city of Macedonia, which was also presumably the homeland of its present devotees.⁴⁷ A travelling god, however, may also come from afar. A renowned and readily recognizable deity of international fame may retain her geographically specific foreign origin – and the prestige that comes

does not allow conclusions), the word starting with epsilon at the end of l. 4 may be not a divine epithet but, e.g. a verb ending in –μαι and conjugated with τῆς θεοῦ. In any case, if the restoration Ἐ|[φεσία] is rejected, then the goddess to whom the slave is dedicated in act I (and thus in act II as well) is not Artemis Ephesia, but just (another) Artemis.

⁴³ Robert and Papazoglou (see the comm. in *IG*), prefer the latter hypothesis, in my view correctly.

⁴⁴ Paschidis forthcoming.

⁴⁵ Among the many examples from Macedonia, I mention here only the ones involving Artemis: *Deana Baphyria* (“Diana of the river Baphyras”, on the coins of the Roman colony of Dion, Kremydi 2004: 78–83); Ἄρτεμις Διγαία ἐν Βλαγάνοις or Βλαγανίτις (“the Righteous Artemis of Blaganoi”, near Aigai, *EKM II* 62–77, esp. 64, 66, 67, 69, 76), Ἄρτεμις Κυραία Πολιτική (“Artemis of the *polis* of Kyrrhos”, *EKM II* 411), Ἄρτεμις Ρηκελία (“the Artemis of Raikelos”, a *kome* of Thessalonike, *IG X 2.1 Suppl.* 1656). The strongest example of firm local anchoring is obviously “the Autochthonous Mother of the Gods” (Μήτηρ Θεῶν Αὐτόχθων, *I.Leukopetra*, *passim*).

⁴⁶ Cf. Versnel 2011: 88–142.

⁴⁷ Among the several examples, I restrict myself here again to the one example pertaining to Artemis: Ἄρτεμις Ἀγροτέρα Γαζωρεῖτις καὶ Βλουρεῖτις (“Artemis of the fields and the mountains (?), from Gazoros”, honoured at Skydra, *EKM II* 120–121).

with it— but at the same time be now relocalized and understood as firmly protecting a specific local community. This is the case of the Syrian Virgin of *Gyrbea*,⁴⁸ or, precisely, of Artemis Ephesia at *Kolobaise*. What is, in my opinion, particularly important to add is that in all the many examples one comes across in the epigraphic evidence (with only one exception),⁴⁹ such divine epithets or geographical identifiers of Macedonian cults are unattested before the period of Roman rule. In other words, this was a deliberate new pattern, verbally expressing new needs.

Artemis Ephesia at *Kolobaise* should therefore be perceived as a deity simultaneously ‘foreign’ and firmly local. She is foreign because her origins are known with precision, part of her appeal, and proof of her might. She is the mighty patron of wealthy Ephesos, one of the most important nodes of the networks linking East and West and conveying commerce, people and ideas.⁵⁰ The power of the Artemis of Ephesos is intricately connected to the glory of her homeland; in the famous sacred law of the Antonine period, Artemis Ephesia is declared to be a mighty goddess because she is worshipped “by Greeks and barbarians alike, so that temples and sanctuaries and altars for her are founded everywhere, on account of her various epiphanies”, but primarily because she is the patron of Ephesos, “a city that she has rendered more glorious than all others because of her divine nature”.⁵¹ Pausanias has a remarkably similar explanation for the cult’s popularity: the renown of Artemis Ephesia “in all cities” is due, among other things, to her temple at Ephesos, to the prosperity of the city of Ephesos and to the god’s epiphanies all over the world.⁵² In both texts, the Ephesian Artemis is declared to be a mighty and popular goddess everywhere, not only because of her epiphanies in various places but also because the glory of Ephesos proves that she is mighty. This connection between the might of the goddess and her precise origins is reflected in the transportation of the cult’s *nomima* in all the places where the cult is transplanted, from Massalia and Spain to the imperial capital, Rome.⁵³

⁴⁸ *EKM* II 428: θεὰ Συρία Παρθένος Γυρβιάτισσα.

⁴⁹ Athena of Kyrrhos (*EKM* II 402–405, Ἀθηνᾶ Κυρρεστής).

⁵⁰ Strabo 12.8.15 C 577 with Kokkinia 2014: 182 n. 6.

⁵¹ *I. Ephesos* 24B (Sokolowski, *LSAM* 31; Horsley 1987: 74–82 no 19) ll. 8–14; [ἐπειδὴ ἡ π]ροεστῶσα τῆς πόλεως ἡμῶν θεὸς Ἄρτε[μις] | [οὐ μόνον] ἐν τῇ ἑαυτῆς πατρίδι τειμαῖται, ἦν ἀ[πασῶν] | [τῶν πόλεων] ἐνδοξοτέραν διὰ τῆς ἰδίας θεϊότητ[ος πεποι]κεν, ἀλλὰ καὶ παρὰ [Ἑλλησίν τε κ]αὶ [β]αρβάρ[ο]ις, ὥ[στε παν]ταχοῦ ἀνεῖσθαι αὐτῆς ἱερά τε καὶ [ἰ]τεμένη, ναοὺς δέ] | αὐτῇ τε εἰδρῦσθαι καὶ βωμοὺς αὐτῇ ἀνακεῖσθαι διὰ | τὰς ὑπ’ αὐτῆς γεινομένας ἐναργεῖς ἐπιφανείας (...).

⁵² Paus. 4.31.8: Ἐφεσίαν δὲ Ἄρτεμιν πόλεις τε νομίζουσιν αἰ πᾶσαι καὶ ἄνδρες ἰδία θεῶν μάλιστα ἄγουσιν ἐν τιμῇ· τὰ δὲ αἴτια ἐμοὶ δοκεῖν ἐστὶν Ἀμαζόνων τε κλέος, αἶ φημὴν τὸ ἄγαλμα ἔχουσιν ἰδρῦσασθαι, καὶ ὅτι ἐκ παλαιότητας τὸ ἱερόν τοῦτο ἐποιήθη. Τρία δὲ ἄλλα ἐπὶ τούτοις συνετέλεσεν ἐς δόξαν, μέγεθός τε τοῦ ναοῦ τὰ παρὰ πᾶσιν ἀνθρώποις κατασκευάσματα ὑπερῆρκότος καὶ Ἐφεσίων τῆς πόλεως ἡ ἀκμὴ καὶ ἐν αὐτῇ τὸ ἐπιφανὲς τῆς θεοῦ.

⁵³ For Massalia and Spain, see n. 3–5, above. For Rome, see Strabo 4.1.5 C 180; cf. Livy 1.45.2–3; Dion. Hal. *Ant. Rom.* 4.26.3–5 and the rest of the textual sources conveniently gathered by Cenci 2011; for the archaeological evidence, see the detailed publication of Capodiffero and Quaranta 2011; see also Goldhill 2006: 141–143, with further literature.

The universalizing tendencies of Artemis Ephesia in the Roman period⁵⁴ do not come at the expense of a diminished sense of origin; Artemis Ephesia is still a ‘foreign’, though now international, goddess.

But, in a different sense, Artemis Ephesia at Kolobaise is also a firmly local deity. Wherever she came from, no matter in how many different places she is worshipped, she is, here and now, also relocalized: she resides at and watches over Kolobaise, as far as the religious clientele in northwestern Macedonia is concerned. The powerful newcomer eased her way into the local religious landscape and established herself in the area not only by putting into effect her undeniable international prestige, but also by assimilation with pre-existing cults both of Artemis and of other commanding female deities popular in the area, as well as by the use of an iconographic repertoire familiar to the local audience.

And this brings me to the second important feature of this cult, the struggle for cultic supremacy, which is so characteristic of religion in general in this period.⁵⁵ It is in the guise of a goddess who is foreign and international, but, simultaneously, also has a new base at Kolobaise that the cult of Artemis Ephesia interacts with devotees and with other Artemis cults in the area. The cult lays a claim on the lives of its devotees, and especially women: one of them was ordered to proceed to a dedication in order to be forgiven for her sins; another was ordered to remain a virgin for 27 years; a third was perhaps dedicated to the goddess as if a liberated slave. The cult, however, also lays a claim on all other cults of Artemis in the area, cults with a better established past in local communities, long before the arrival of Artemis Ephesia. By ordering her devotees (immediately upon setting her foot in the area) to proceed to dedications to her competitors, the other Artemides – a form of interaction between cults which is, to my knowledge, extremely rare outside the context of oracles –,⁵⁶ the mighty goddess of Ephesos attempted to engulf all pre-existing Artemis cults, and declared her sovereignty over them.

⁵⁴ Cf. LiDonnici 1992: 404–407.

⁵⁵ See part II, below.

⁵⁶ Questions of the type “to which god should I sacrifice?” (and their answers), are quite common in various oracles (see Versnel 2011: 43–49, and for Dodona in particular Carbon 2015 with the earlier bibliography). Outside an oracular context, however, one struggles to find parallels. *IG XI 4, 1234 (RICIS 202/0173)* is a misleading one: a dedication is made on the order of Osiris, Διὶ τῷ πάντων κρατοῦντι καὶ Μητρὶ Μεγάλῃ τῇ πάντων κρατούσῃ, *i.e.* to Osiris himself and his divine consort. The only clear parallels to the situation at Treskavec that I have been able to find are *I. Iznik 1508* from Bithynia, a dedication to Zeus Bronton κατὰ κέλευσιν τοῦ θεοῦ Φοῖβου, and Ramsay 1890: 235 (adduced as a parallel by the editors of *I. Iznik*), from Phrygia, a dedication to Zeus Galaktinos κατὰ ἐπιταγήν Ἀπόλλωνος ὑπ[ὲρ] καρπῶν εὐχῆν. In both cases the god receiving the dedication is a traditional local deity and the god issuing the order is Apollo; this brings to mind the best known and most intriguing example of this sort of hierarchical interaction between cults, the dedications to “all gods and goddesses, on the interpretation of the oracle of Apollo Klarios”: see Mitchell 2003: 151–155 no 13 with the single Greek text, the corresponding Latin texts and analysis; cf. *SEG 53 (2003) 1587* with further bibliography; cf. also Chaniotis 2010: 116–118 and Renberg 2014: 120–122.

II. OVERSTATING A MACEDONIAN IDENTITY? THE CULT OF “HERAKLES THE GREATEST GOD”

The second cult to which I would like to draw attention is a cult of “Herakles the greatest god” attested twice, once in Lychnidos and once near modern Resava in Paionia. The noteworthy features of this cult are the nature of the god worshipped and the identity of the group of his devotees.

Herakles is often perceived as a quintessentially Macedonian deity; he was after all the purported ancestor of the ruling Temenid dynasty, the cult of Herakles Kynagidas was a cult of major importance for the royal court,⁵⁷ and the Temenids purposefully named some border *poleis* Herakleia, in order to mark new territory incorporated to the Macedonian state.⁵⁸ In one of these border colonies, Herakleia at Lynkos, there was a tribe named after Herakles.⁵⁹ The association of the god with Macedonia in the royal period was well understood in both sides of the borders: Herakles figures prominently on Macedonian coins (including those of Upper Macedonia, the Fourth Macedonian District), but also on coins of the Paionians from the 4th century BC until the rule of Audoleon, in an effort of Paionian kings to enhance legitimacy both of their rule and of their claim over Macedonia.⁶⁰ The god is also often depicted in sculpture in the round and especially in funerary reliefs from the areas under consideration.⁶¹ And yet, despite the god’s iconographic presence in art, actual organized cults of Herakles in the area north of Elimeia and Eordaia (where the cult thrives), are rarely attested: dedicatory reliefs are relatively scarce, and epigraphic evidence is even more infrequent.⁶² Apart from the two attestations of “Herakles the greatest god” that will be discussed below, and a reference to a statue and temple of Herakles at Isar-Marvinci (Idomene rather than Doberos, in Paionia)⁶³ I know of only three other certain⁶⁴ attestations of a cult of Herakles in the northwestern confines of

⁵⁷ Hatzopoulos 1994: 92–111 remains essential reading; cf. recently Touratsoglou 2016 and Koulakiotis 2017.

⁵⁸ Gounaropoulou and Hatzopoulos 1985: 68–69.

⁵⁹ *IG X 2.2*, 112.

⁶⁰ Herakles on Macedonian coins: Touratsoglou 2016; Upper Macedonia: Düll 1977: 338 no 127; Iliadou 1998: 160 no 21 with previous literature; Paionia: Düll 1977: 86; Waggoner 1987: nos 1019–1021 (king Lykkeios); 1061 (king Audoleon).

⁶¹ For the archaeological evidence on Herakles in the area, see Düll 1977: 86–93; Sokolovska 1987: 80, 192–194; Chatzinikolaou 2011: 144–153; cf. Iliadou 1998 for a general overview of evidence on the cult of Herakles throughout Macedonia.

⁶² Cf. Düll 1977: 91–92: “Ingesamt läßt sich feststellen, daß die Zahl der Denkmäler mit Heraklesabbildungen bei weitem die anderer Gottheiten übertrifft, ihr kultischer Aussagewert aber wege der zahlreichen Grabstelen und seltenen Weihinschriften entsprechend dahinter zurückbleibt”.

⁶³ See Sokolovska 2015.

⁶⁴ It is doubtful if *IG X 2.2*, 59, an incomplete fragment of a small 2nd–3rd century AD altar from Herakleia with an inscription in Latin ([- -] Herc[- -] | [- -]us Zos[imus])

Macedonia. There are two attestations of the cult of Herakles Kynagidas – one from Styberra in Derriopos and one from a small Roman city near modern Mojno in Pelagonia –,⁶⁵ and a cult of Herakles bearing a different, only partially preserved epithet, attested at Stobi.⁶⁶ The existence of an organized cult can safely be deduced only in the case of Styberra and Idomene (?). More importantly, all the above attestations of cults of Herakles in northern Macedonia postdate the Roman conquest.⁶⁷ In other words, the cult of Herakles was not necessarily widely implanted in the area before the Roman period, at least outside the main urban centers, and even then, Herakles appears to have been more of a popular cultural figure than a revered traditional deity.

Both instances of the cult of Herakles “the greatest god” which will be now discussed have their peculiarities. First of all, they come from Lychnidos and Paionia, two areas only marginally Macedonian, politically, ethnically and culturally. Moreover, in neither case are we dealing with a normal civic cult. The earliest one (*IG X 2.2*, 355, small altar, 1st / early 2nd century AD), from Lychnidos, is a privately founded cult, as made clear by the dedicatory formula, with the name of the founder in the genitive after the name of the god.⁶⁸ The cult was instituted by a certain Publius Quintianus son of Lysimachos and the inscribed altar was erected by the sole dignity of the settlement (κωμαρχῶν),⁶⁹ Publius Sevius Pompeius. It was therefore a new, private cult, as its association with a founder suggests, but also a cult acknowledged by public authorities, as the office of the dedicant testifies. The cult of the settlement near Resava (Düll 1977: 340 no 131, stele, 2nd – 3rd

| [- - -]S), actually refers to Herakles. Even if it does, the language and the size of the monument could point to private veneration rather than to an established cult.

⁶⁵ Styberra: *IG X 2.2*, 319, altar, 192 AD: Ἔτους θλτ΄ | Λούκιος | Νευκηφό|ρος <K>έλερ | ιερητεύ|σας Ἡρα|κλεῖ Κου|ναγίδα | ^{vac} | εὐ^{vac}.τυ|χῶς. Mojno: *IG X 2.2*, 172, stele, 2nd century AD: Ἡρακλ|εῖ Κυνα|γίδα | [Π]αράμω|νος [- - -]ου. For the Roman city near Mojno, in the Pelagonian plain, see *TIR K34*: 87; (Ivan Mikulčić); Papazoglou 1988: 288; *Arheološka Karta II* 37.

⁶⁶ *I. Stoborum* 9, dedicatory relief (reclining Herakles), 1st century BC (this is probably the earliest inscription of Stobi): Λεύκιος Νώβιος [- - - -] | Ἡρακλῆ ΣΥΝΚ[- - - -]. N. Vulić, *Spomenik* 75 (1933) no 58 (followed by Düll 1977: 340 no 132), restored Συνκ[αταγωγῶ], but this restoration of an unattested epithet is rightfully doubted by Robert 1934: 31–32 n. 3 and Papazoglou 1982: 41 n. 5. Indeed, such an epithet would be an *hapax legomenon* and it would thus be useless to speculate on its possible meaning here; for the religious connotations of κατάγω, cf. Gentile 1999 with *SEG* 49 (1999) 2357, *BullÉpigr* 2002, 538 and *EBGR* 2002 (*Kernos* 18 [2005] 425–474), 51, with further bibliography.

⁶⁷ Even iconographically, Herakles is attested in the area only after the Roman conquest, if one excludes coins.

⁶⁸ Ἡρακλεῖ | Μεγίστω | Π(οπλίω) Κουειντι|ανου τοῦ Λυ|σιμάχου Π(όπλιος) | Σηούειος | Πομπέειος | κωμαρχῶν | ἀνέθηκεν.

⁶⁹ The settlement in question cannot be identified, since the exact provenance of the monument is unknown: on the office of the *komarches*, see Sverkos 2000: 44, with references and bibliography.

century AD),⁷⁰ on the other hand, is an associative cult; the dedicant offered the monument both to the god and to his fellow members of the association. In fact, family ties between the members and the social milieu to which other members belong (see below) suggest that this was a religious association bringing together a few interrelated families; one even wonders if the association is not related to one of the *villae rusticae* unearthed near the settlement of Resava.⁷¹ These two attestations of “Herakles the greatest God”, therefore, do not involve normal, civic cults with a long history, but ‘irregular’, modern cultic structures.

As far as the god himself is concerned, it has to be noted that this particular combination of theonym and epithet is hardly common; it is not attested anywhere else in Macedonia, and I know of only two other cases where Herakles is called μέγιστος in Greek epigraphy.⁷² Μέγιστος is one of the acclamatory adjectives that become increasingly popular as divine epithets in the 2nd and 3rd centuries AD and reflect the intense antagonism between cults, the phenomenon that Angelos Chaniotis has aptly described as megatheism.⁷³ Many popular gods of the period are publicly declared by their devotees to be strong, efficient, often menacing, and *epekooi*; a god who is *meγas*, is often declared to be *megistos* when he has demonstrable presence, power, justice, holiness, efficiency, and willingness to listen to prayers above all other gods. In other words, the divine epithet, just like the organizational framework of the cult of “Herakles the greatest god”, points not to cultic continuity, but to new religious developments and concepts.

Let us now turn to the devotees. The founder of the cult in Lychnidos (*IG X 2.2*, 355), Publius Quintianus, bears a *nomen* with a certain pedigree in Macedonia. It is borne, with the same *praenomen* (Publius), by two persons honoured by

⁷⁰ The basic editions are those of Heuzey 1876: 329 no 133 (followed by Demitsas 1896: 319 no 284) and N. Vulić, *Spomenik* 71 (1931) 75, with a photograph (followed by Düll 1977: 340 no 131). I notice here a few changes to the text published by Vulić and Düll: L. 2: μέγιστω Vulić, μέγισστω Heuzey’s copy and the photograph. L. 3: Μενά<v>δρο[υ] Heuzey, Μενά<v>δρ[ου] all subsequent editors; the correction is unwarranted. L. 5: Μακεδόν[ος] Heuzey, Μακεδόνος Vulić; there is in fact no space for the missing letters. L. 8 ff.: Heuzey does not transcribe all the text. L. 8–10: κ(αι) Vulić and Düll, Κ(όιντος) Papazoglou 1982: 44 n. 16. L. 10, *in fine*: ΜΟ or ΛΛΟ? This last word is a mystery, since there is no text after that line.

⁷¹ For the settlement and its finds, see *TIR* K34: 108–109 (Ivan Mikulčić) and *Arheološka Karta* II 156–157 (Živojin Vinčić). Among the *villae rusticae* discovered near the settlement, noteworthy is especially the one at Čakovec, with finds of good quality (2nd - 4th century AD), and its own funerary enclosure.

⁷² *MAMA* VII 131 = *I. Sultan Daği* I 260 (Thymbreion-Hadrianopolis, Paroreios Phrygia, undated): [Ε]ὔτακτος | Βονβάστου | θεῶ μέγιστω | Ἡρακλεῖ and P. Fraser, *JEA* 38 (1952) 120 no 21, Bahria desert, Egypt, 3rd century AD (?): Ἡρακλεῖ θεῶ μέγιστω [- - -] | Αὐτοκράτωρ Καῖσαρ [- - -] | ἀνθρώπων ἐκ καινῆς τὸ[ν ναόν etc.]. The adjective κύριος which very often accompanies the name of Herakles in Thrace and Moesia (for an example involving an association, see *IGBulg* IV 2039) is not a precise parallel: it conveys the same notion of authority and power, but has no connotations of comparison with other gods.

⁷³ Chaniotis 2010; cf. North 2010: 51–52; Versnel 2011: 69–70; Belayche 2011.

the *koinon* of the Macedonians at Beroia: Publius Memmius Quintianus Makedon (honoured by the *koinon* and the Beroian tribe Paionis) and the Macedoniarch Publius Memmius Quintianus Kapiton honoured by decree of the *koinon* by his wife and his children, the Quintiani Alexandra and Kapiton.⁷⁴ It appears, therefore, that the *gens* of the Quintiani were at some point connected, at least in the Macedonian heartland, with the important *gens* of the Memmii, the members of which include two proconsuls of Macedonia and a number of Macedonian aristocrats.⁷⁵

The lack of *cognomen* and the mixture of Latin and Greek nomenclature of Quintianus (*praenomen* + *nomen* followed by a Greek patronym expressed in the Greek onomastic formula) allow the assumption that the founder of the Herakles Megistos cult at Lychnidos had acquired the Roman citizenship fairly recently. This seems also to be the case of the dedicant, who bears a *nomen* (Sevius / Seveius) attested in Macedonia only in Lynkos,⁷⁶ and a *cognomen* (Pompeius) obviously pointing to the recent Roman past.⁷⁷ In other words, both the founder and the dedicant appear to be locals connected to Romans established in the area at an early date; the *gens* of the founder was, at least later, also connected to the Macedonian provincial aristocracy.

The members of the associative cult of Resava are connected by family and social ties. There are two distinct groups of devotees. The four members mentioned first on the list (ll. 3–7), and therefore presumably the most distinguished members of the *thiasos*, including the dedicant, do not have the Roman citizenship, and are clearly related to one another: the dedicant Meleagros son of Menandros is most probably the father of Gaios son of Meleagros in l. 7, while Makedon son of Makedon and Hermogenes son of Makedon (ll. 5–6) are obviously brothers. The four members in the second part of the list (ll. 8–10) include a person bearing a *praenomen* and a *nomen* but no *cognomen* (Γάϊος Λίβιος), and three persons bearing the same combination of *praenomen* and *cognomen* (Κ(όϊντος) Μαμέρ[κ]ιος), two of which even bear the same *cognomen* (Ἀκύλας); the third Mamercius bears a *praenomen* as a *cognomen* (Μᾶρκος). These onomastic irregularities point with relative certainty to freedmen, and the otherwise unattested in Macedonia and the Balkans *nomen gentis* Mamercius points more specifically to freedmen of descendants of Roman settlers in the area.

⁷⁴ *EKMI* 120 (2nd century AD) and 78 (early 3rd century AD) respectively. For the correct reading of the name of the honourand in the former, see Salomies 2000: 115 n. 1; Tataki 2006: 311 no 355.15, *SEG* 50 (2000) 576.

⁷⁵ Quintiani in Macedonia: see Tataki 2006: 368–369 no 493. Memmii in Macedonia: *ibid.* 310–312 no 355 and Sverkos 2018: 97. Non-Italian Memmii of Macedonia bearing the *praenomen* Publius most probably owe their Roman citizenship to the earliest proconsul, Publius Memmius Regulus, governor of Macedonia sometime between 35 and 44 AD. Another proconsul of Macedonia who could have been of some relevance for our Quintianus, namely Marcus Ulpius Annius Quintianus, honoured at Bouthrotos (*I. Bouthrotos* 12), not far from Lychnidos, is unrelated, since he postdates our dedication to Herakles Megistos.

⁷⁶ Tataki 2006: 393 no 558 και 396 no 563.

⁷⁷ For *cognomina* given after famous Romans (and thus presumably expressing some degree of political attachment to Roman power), see Solin 2001.

The most interesting names, however, are the first names of the list, because of their pronounced Macedonian overtones: Hermogenes is merely a popular Panhellenic name, not infrequently attested in Macedonia, but Meleagros and Menandros belong to Panhellenic names which are particularly popular in Macedonia.⁷⁸ The name that stands out in that respect is undoubtedly Makedon son of Makedon, a combination far too precise in meaning not to be deliberate. The name Makedon and all its derivatives are *never* attested in Macedonia before the Roman conquest and the overwhelming majority of its attestations in Macedonia is dated to the 2nd and 3rd centuries AD.⁷⁹ It is therefore not a traditional Macedonian name surviving into the Roman period but a name purposefully referring to the Macedonian past; it is yet another attestation of a popular onomastic strategy attested in Macedonia in the 2nd and 3rd century AD and pointing to a conscious projection of a new, revamped identity –cultural and regional rather than ethnic– as I hope to be able to show elsewhere more systematically.⁸⁰

The association of Resava, therefore, should not be conceived as some sort of ethnic Macedonian enclave, with members proudly declaring their ethnic identity and worshipping the ancestral Macedonian god in a small Roman city, deep into the Paionian territory. The cultic structures, theological concepts, social status and onomastic choices attested in the two inscriptions pertaining to the cult of “Herakles the greatest god” in Lychnidos and Paionia point to new self-images rather than to cultural resistance. Throughout Roman Macedonia, indeed throughout the Roman Empire, the renewed interest in the local past seems to reflect the need for a regional identity *within* the reality of the Roman empire, and often in close connection to Roman power and its representatives, rather than any notion of confrontation or separatism.⁸¹ Makedon was, as we saw, also the *cognomen* of one of the Quintiani honoured at Beroia by the *koinon*, the institution linking

⁷⁸ For the categorization of Macedonian names, see especially Hatzopoulos 2011.

⁷⁹ See the *LGN* entries for Μακεδών, Μακεδονία, Μακεδονικός, Μακεδόνιος, Μακεδόνις (attested in Macedonia and elsewhere) and Μακεδονιανός, Μακεδῶ (attested only outside Macedonia). The earliest certain example from Macedonia is *EKM* I 142, l. 14, dated to the 1st century BC / 1st century AD. Three cases which are or are supposed to be earlier are partly or entirely misleading: **a**) a slave from Amphipolis named Makedon and liberated at Naupaktos in the mid-2nd century BC (*IG* IX 1², 3, 639.6, l. 9) was most probably so named by his non-Macedonian owner; **b**) nothing is known about the Μακεδονικός Ἀμφιπολείτης, author of a paean to Asklepios (*IG* II² 4473+*SEG* 23 [1968] 126; see Käppel 1992: 200–206 and 383–384 no Pai. 41; Furley and Bremmer 2001: vol. 1, 266–267 no 7.5 and vol. 2, 228–233 no 7.5); the inscription dates to the 1st century BC / 1st century AD, and the assumption that the author and his work are much earlier is quite arbitrary; **c**) the dating of the epigrammatist Μακεδόνιος from Thessalonike (see *LGN* IV Μακεδόνιος 1, with references and bibliography) to the 1st century BC is also rather hypothetical; even if accepted, it postdates the Roman conquest as well.

⁸⁰ Cf. Paschidis 2014: 160–162; cf. also the comments in *EKM* II 151 and 185.

⁸¹ This is not the place to discuss local identities in the context of the Roman Empire; for a brief introduction to the conceptual problems and to the sprawling relevant bibliography, see Whitmarsh 2010.

the provincial elite and Roman power. At Mojno in Pelagonia, where Herakles Kynagidas was worshipped, a statue of emperor Gallien was crafted by a Makedon son of Makedon, and the Hero Rider was portrayed on the funerary relief of a veteran named Αὐρήλιος Ἀλέξανδρος Αὐρηλίου Φιλλίππου and married to an Αὐρηλία Ἀντιγόνα.⁸² The pronounced Macedonian nature of the names of these two individuals at Mojno can hardly be interpreted as an expression of any sort of opposition to the Roman power: one worked on a statue of the Roman Emperor and the other was a veteran of the Roman army. Our Makedon son of Makedon from Resava is thus not necessarily a proud descendant of actual Macedonians celebrating his ethnic distinctiveness in opposition to any other group, just as our Herakles the greatest god is not necessarily the ancestral Macedonian deity.

To sum up: the cult of “Herakles the greatest god” in Lychnidos and Paionia is not a traditional Macedonian civic cult, nor evidence for Macedonian enclaves in a land only marginally Macedonian, but rather the expression of a new religious sentiment and a new sense of local communal identity in two fringe areas of Hellenism. This version of Herakles is a traditional Greek/Macedonian cultural figure, perceived as such, but also imbued with new, ‘modern’ divine qualities, more suitable to the religious tendencies of the era.

There is a reason I have juxtaposed in this study two very different –and completely unrelated to one another– cults of the northwestern confines of Roman Macedonia, namely a local version of a famous international cult, exercising influence if not control over pre-existing local cults of a goddess bearing the same name, and a religious association and a private cult in the fringes of the Macedonian sphere of cultural influence, worshipping a hybrid divine creation, partly traditional and regional, partly a universalizing product of its time. The reason is that there exists a common denominator in these two cults: an intricate interplay between old and new, traditional and innovative, local and foreign, regional and imperial. Cultic practice and religious beliefs are as much about the here and now, about culture and identity, as they are about the hereafter, therefore understanding local religious responses to the changing imperial world constitutes, I believe, a fruitful approach to the understanding of the imperial phenomenon in general.

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⁸² *IG X 2.2*, 173 and 174 respectively.

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АРТЕМИДА ЕФЕСКА И ХЕРАКЛЕ НАЈВЕЋИ БОГ
НА СЕВЕРОЗАПАДНИМ ГРАНИЦАМА МАКЕДОНИЈЕ:
НЕКИ АСПЕКТИ ВЕРСКОГ ПЕЈЗАЖА РИМСКЕ МАКЕДОНИЈЕ

Резиме

Верски пејзаж римске Македоније претрпео је значајне структурне промене у прва три века наше ере; ове промене су одјек верског развоја посведоченог широм Римског царства, попут успона нових култова – „страних“ или наглашено „локалних“, обнове традиционалних култова, организацијске промене ка верским удружењима и другим облицима директнијег учешћа у верским ритуалима, новим, изражено личним облицима побожности, жестоке утакмице међу моћним божанствима у потрази за новом публиком, потраге за новим или обновљеним локалним и надлокалним идентитетима. Прилог истражује одређене култове на северозападној периферији античке Македоније у поменутом контексту и покушава да повеже слику која се одатле појављује са упоредивим кретањима у остатку Македоније и широм Римског царства.