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A GOLDSMITH'S DEDICATION: NEW EVIDENCE FOR THE CULT OF ASCLEPIUS AT TRAJANOPOLIS*

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For Raphael B. Sealey

Abstract

A recently discovered dedication to Asclepius and Hygieia supplies motivation for a re-examination of the early history of Trajanopolis in Aegean Thrace. Using archaeological, topographic, epigraphic and numismatic evidence as well as the testimony of native lore, the present paper argues for the prominence of the cult of Asclepius in Trajanopolis during the Roman period and for the existence of an important ancient healing centre at the site.

The physical remains of Trajanopolis, 1 just to the south of the modern village of Loutra on the western edge of the Hebrus delta, offer glimpses to the past significance of a city that flourished in the Roman imperial period, was named an episcopal seat in the 4th century, and served as a metropolis from the 5th century down to the moment of its final decline and abandonment in the mid-14th century. The French archaeologist Albert Dumont, who visited

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The ancient ruins in the vicinity of Loutra, at the 16th kilometre of the modern Alexandroupolis—Pherai national road, are correctly identified as those of Trajanopolis on the *Atlas* of Viquesnel (Viquesnel 1863, pl. 14 fig. 2), who further indicates that the site was known under the name of Trajanopolis by the local inhabitants (Viquesnel 1868, vol. II, 162: 'Belles ruines de Trajanopolis, encore connues dans le pays sous cet ancien nom'). On the earlier scholarly confusion regarding the location of the site and definitive arguments for its identification, see Dumont 1869 (= Dumont-Homolle 1892, 224); 1876, 62–63.

² Among earlier collections and discussions of the literary and archaeological evidence on

Loutra in 1868, estimated the area of the ancient city to 'more than a square league', not counting the suburbs and the adjacent acropolis on the hill of St George that rises steeply to the east (Fig. 1).³ Surviving sections of the *via Egnatia* along the southern, seaward side of the city emphasise its strategic location on the main thoroughfare of the southern Balkans, significantly, near the intersection with a principal route of access to the interior of Thrace through the lower Hebrus river valley.⁴ To this day, however, the ruins of that important city lie in neglect and the history of Trajanopolis remains largely elusive.

Of the ancient fortifications, whose towers are said to have been repaired by Justinian (AD 527–565),⁵ only small, earth-covered sections survive,⁶ appearing as soft undulations in the countryside around the buildings of the thermal baths⁷ and the 'Hana',⁸ which represent to date the most substantial manifestations of earlier building activity at the site (Fig. 1). Robbed of their stone over the centuries in the interests of later construction, the rest of the structures that once stood within the city and on the hilltop are currently reduced to an unintelligible landscape of scattered building materials and stone foundations.

In the lack of a systematic archaeological investigation of the site, traces of the past have materialised mainly in the form of isolated finds and salvage digs of burials⁹ which fall short of producing a balanced picture of Trajanopolitan

the history of Trajanopolis, see esp. Oberhummer 1937 and Asdracha 1976, 118–20. See also, more recently, Kounkoulos 1989 and Kyrkoudes 1992–94.

³ Cf. Dumont-Homolle 1892, 224. Poimenides (1963, 134–38) estimated the total length of the fortification wall as approx. 2 km.

⁴ Sections of the *via Egnatia* that have been recovered by Trajanopolis are illustrated among the unnumbered plates of Asdracha 1976 and Poimenides 1963. A reconstruction drawing of such a section by Th. Kounkoulos is illustrated in Kyrkoudes 1992–94, 232. On the literary and epigraphic evidence concerning the place of Trajanopolis on the road network of Aegean Thrace, see esp. Mottas 1989, 92–104.

⁵ Procopius, De aedificiis 4. 11.

⁶ See Poimenides 1963, 134–38.

⁷ Brief descriptions of the extant remains of the bath installations are offered by Poimenides 1963, 151; Bakirtzis and Triantaphyllos 1988, 64; Kounkoulos 1989, 32–33; Kyrkoudes 1992–94, 261–63.

 $^{^8}$ A plan and photographs of that nearly completely preserved building, which is also known locally as 'Roman bath of Trajanopolis' and 'Palace of Trajan,' and which now houses the Archaeological Collection of Trajanopolis, were published by Tsimpides-Pentazos (1973, 32–35, Pls. KZ-AE). The structure was identified as a guardpost of *via Egnatia* during the early Christian period by Bakalakis (1961, 17, pls. 6 η -0, and 1965, 285) but it is quite likely to have succeeded a Roman period structure (of analogous function?) (Tsimpides-Pentazos 1973, 33; *cf.* Poimenides 1963, 139–42).

⁹ Poimenides (1963, 143) mentions early finds of graves in the necropolis outside the eastern wall of Trajanopolis without specifying their dates. For more recent, salvage excavations of burials dating from the Late Antiquity in the same cemetery, see Pantos 1973–74, and Koutsoumanis 1995 [2000]. For the wealthy Roman period tumulus on the plain to the west of Trajanopolis, see Triantaphyllos 1991[1994] and below.

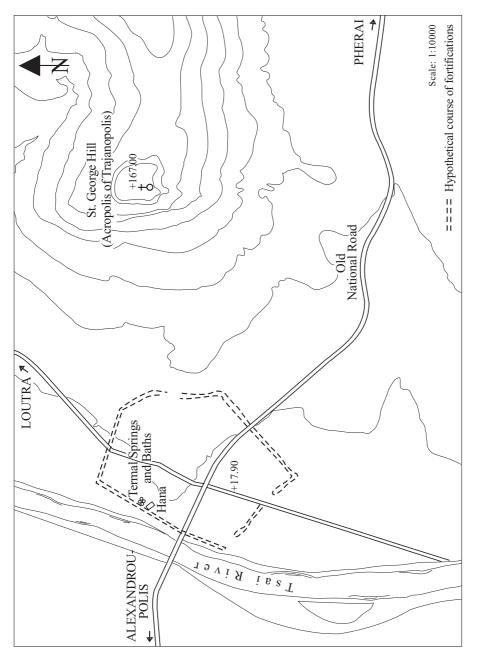


Fig. 1: Topographic diagram of Trajanopolis and its immediate vicinity. Drawing by R. Docsan.

society and which, inevitably, raise questions about different aspects of the city's existence. And, perhaps most intriguingly, while the few available written references to Trajanopolis and, not least, her name might appear to support a moment for its emergence as an urban centre in the Roman period (reign of Trajan, AD 98–117), surface ceramics scattered throughout the site speak of the existence on the same location of a still earlier settlement whose origins, name, and character remain unknown.¹⁰

A recent find from the hill of St George now adds a further piece to the complex puzzle of Trajanopolis and offers a fresh opportunity to reflect, among others, upon the early character and history of the site. It is a great pleasure to dedicate these reflections to Raphael Sealey as fruits of new directions in my research work, a work whose earlier, formative stages he so caringly guided.

The Inscribed Altar from the Hilltop of St George

Description

The find that gives rise to the present discussion is an inscribed, rectangular altar of white marble (Fig. 2), now conserved in the Archaeological Museum of Komotini. According to the museum records, it was discovered in 1997 by Efstratios Lykides, an inhabitant of the modern village of Loutra, in the vicinity of the small country chapel of St George and Constantine at the top of the hill of St George overlooking the ancient city and plain of Trajanopolis. 12

The altar $(0.36 \text{ m [h.]} \times 0.175 \text{ m [l.]} \times 0.19 \text{ m [w.]})$ is simple and elegant in form. The text, engraved in six equidistant lines (interspaces 0.05 m), records in Greek the name of the dedicant and his profession and states the monument to have been a thank offering to Asclepius and Hygieia:

¹⁰ Our knowledge of pre-Roman pottery finds at the site is subject to all too brief notes (e.g., Tsimpides-Pentazos 1973, 32, Pantos 1983, 173) which do not describe the finds. Different scholars have more or less tentatively identified that earlier settlement with Zemis (e.g., Sakellariades 1929, 67, and Euthymiou 1954, 146 and n. 1, 1965, 19) or Tempyra (e.g., Bakalakis 1961, 17) or Charakoma (Lazarides 1971, 150, 157) or ancient Doriscus (e.g., Oberhummer 1937, 2084−85; Samothrakes 1943, 177−79). The latter site is still sometimes referred to as the likely predecessor of Trajanopolis (see, e.g., McAllister 1976, 930−31; Zahrnt 1989, 201; Schönert-Geiss 1991, 141), despite Bakalakis' convincing arguments for the identification of Doriscus with the fortified, hilltop settlement at Saragia, a site located some 7 km to the east of Trajanopolis (see esp. Bakalakis 1961, 18−19; cf. Pantos 1983, 174 and n. 100; for the results of subsequent excavations and surveys at the site, see Bakalakis 1961−62 [1963], 260; Triantaphyllos 1971 [1975], 439−40; Karadema 1995 [2000]). For Poimenides (1966, 47, 50) either Charakoma or Tempyra may have been located specifically on the hill of St George.

¹¹ Komotini Museum, General Inventory No. 11704.

¹² Komotini Museum, Acquisition Record A/A 2761 of 21 January 1997.

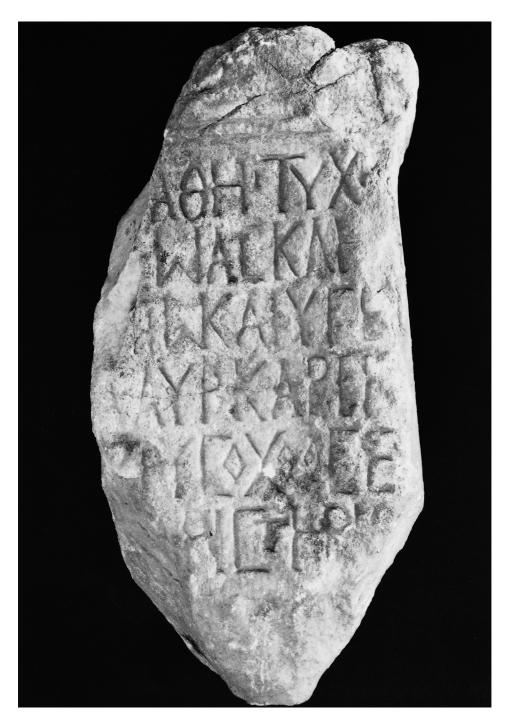


Fig. 2: The inscribed altar from the hill of St George, Komotini Museum, Inv. No. 11704. h.: 0.36 m, l.: 0.175 m, w.: 0.19 m. Phtograph courtesy of the Komotini Museum.

['Αγ]αθηι τύχ[ηι] [θ]εῷ ᾿Ασκληπιῷ καὶ Ύγεία Αὐρ(ήλιος) Κάρπο[ς] χρυσοχόος ε[ύ]-[χ]αριστήριο[ν].

The inscription belongs to a standard type of dedication of which countless examples are known from the Graeco-Roman world. The letters (h.: 0.0030-0.035 m; T on line 6 and omicrons 0.02m) are engraved with care. The use of abbreviation (AYP for Aurelius on 1. 4) and ligature (WK on 1. 3 and HP on 1. 6); the angular omega and sigma; and the consistently rhomboid omicron strongly point to a date in the late 2nd or the 3rd century AD. The deep, irregular breaks on the sides of the altar are responsible for the one or two obliterated letters in the beginning and/or end of lines 1, 2, 4, 5, and 6, but the text is easily legible in any case. In the beginning of line 2, the surviving ends of the three horizontal strokes of an epsilon and the following omega suggest that in that position—where one would expect, if anything, either the article or a term of address of the immediately following 'Ασκληπιῶ in a matching dative case—the term $\theta \epsilon \hat{\omega}$ was originally inscribed. 13

Owing to the circumstances of the discovery, the exact provenance of the altar cannot be ascertained. Its Trajanopolitan origin can hardly be put to doubt, however, and its association with a sanctuary that was located on the hilltop, where the piece was reportedly found, remains the most likely possibility.¹⁴

The dedicant

Name and profession offer clues to the identity and status of the dedicant of the altar who is otherwise unknown to us. His gentilitial, Aurelius, was commonly borne by individuals who were not Roman citizens by descent and nearly all of whom acquired citizenship in the reigns of Marcus Aurelius (AD 161-80), Commodus (AD 180-92) and Caracalla (AD 198-217), their numbers visibly increasing after AD 212 as a consequence of the Constitutio Antoniniana. 15

 $^{^{13}}$ Cf., e.g., IGBR III 2, no. 1842 (a closely similar marble altar from Ajtos inscribed: 'Aγαθ $\hat{\eta}$ τύχη. Θεῷ/᾿Ασκληπιῷ καὶ Ὑγεί/ᾳ Γλύκων Χρυσίπ/που χαριστήριον).

14 On the sacredness of the acropolis in Roman times, see below.

¹⁵ On the Constitutio Antoniniana in general, see Buraselis 1989. No chronological inferences seem possible to draw from the omission of the praenomen in this instance. The earlier view of Robert (e.g., BullÉpigr 1950, no. 204), namely, that individuals calling themselves Marcus Aurelius would have become citizens before the edict of Caracalla, while those simply named Aurelius would have acquired citizenship after it, has proven difficult to uphold since the praenomen appears not to occur, as a rule, in inscriptions of the imperial period in the east (see, e.g., Papazoglou 1955, 362, 371; Follet 1976, 92-95; Daux 1979, 19; Tataki 1988, 370 and n. 302; Rizakis

The name Kάρπος, which is generally well attested, also has parallels in Thrace, ¹⁶ and an $A\mathring{\upsilon}\rho(\mathring{\eta}\lambda\iota\iota\varsigma)$ $K\acute{\alpha}\rho\pi\iota\varsigma$ is known from an imperial period inscription of a sarcophagus that is now conserved in the museum of Callipolis (on Chersonese) but is said to come from Parium. ¹⁷

The goldsmith's profession may be attested in the written record for Thrace in one other instance (namely, an inscription from Perinthus, where the crucial term, as restored by Ernst Kalinka, is rendered by a Greek transliteration of the Latin *aurarius*), ¹⁸ and comparative evidence for the status of ancient precious metalworkers in general is limited. ¹⁹ However, at least in the Roman period they could attain a level of economic and social prestige, as evidenced by occasional references to their organisation into professional associations, ²⁰

^{1996, 19} n. 28 with additional bibliography). Robert's postulate seems to underlie, nonetheless, Samsaris'chronological classification of the Aurelii attested in Thrace (see Samsaris 1984, 221–26 [reigns of Marcus Aurelius and Commodus], and 238–76 [reign of Caracalla]), although he also notes on p. 224 (cf. 221–22, and 240) one instance in which the *praenomen* is omitted in an inscription from Perinthus datable to AD 161–211.

¹⁶ In Thrace Κάρπος occurs as a Greek name in an catalogue of members of a bacchic thiasos from Apollonia Pontica (IGBR I no. 401 l. 12: [Κ]άρος 'Αλεξάνδρου); an inscription of unknown provenance assigned to Thrace (see Dumont-Homolle 1892, 471 no. 113^{a29}: Κάρπος Βασσάρου); and two inscriptions from Thasos (see Sève 1979, 379 no. 7: Κάρπος Δειοσκορᾶδος, and Dunant and Pouilloux 1958, 145 no. 297: Σωτηρίων Κάρπου, from after the first century AD). The name also occurs as a signum in an inscription from Nicopolis ad Istrum (IGBR II no. 692, l. 2: Καλπουρνίω Γαίω τῷ καὶ Κάρπω). For occurrences of the name outside Thrace see, e.g., LGPN I–III (Peloponnese, Western Greece, Attica, the Aegean islands, Cyprus and Cyrenaica), Solin 1996, 524–25, 'Carpus.'

¹⁷ Initially published by Mordtmann (1881, 259-60 no. 8); see now also *IvParion* no. 44.

¹⁸ Kalinka ¹896, 67–68; *cf.* Sayar 1998, 232 no. 49 B. On αὐράριοι, in general, see more recently Roueché 1995 (suggesting that they may have also been involved in activities related to the payment of Roman taxes in gold).

¹⁹ The ancient goldsmiths' craftsman (as opposed to artist) status is indicated, however, by references to them as χειροτέχναι οr δημιουργοί (e.g., in Eustathius' *Commentary to Homer's Odyssey*, vol. I, 136, l. 20) and βάναυσοι (e.g., in Hesychius *s.v.* βαναυσία) and by their association with γαλκεῖς (e.g., in Hesychius *s.v.* γαλκεῖς).

²⁰ In the east, professional associations of precious metal workers are attested in Smyrna (IvSmyrna II no. 721, ll. 1-2: ή συνεργασία τῶν/ἀργυροκόπων καὶ χρυσοχόων), Aphrodisias Roueché 1993, 98 no. 45 Block 39 Row P: τόπος αὐραρίων, from the Stadium; cf. ibid. 112 no. 46 Block J Row 8: προταυ-/ραρίου, from the Theater. Both examples are datable between the 2nd and 6th centuries AD), Miletus (Hermann 1998 nos. 893?: αὐρ]αρ[ίων, 940 a-d: reading, respectively, τόπος αὐραρίων Βενέτω[ν], τόπος αὐραρίω[ν], τόπος ἐπινικίων αὐραρίων and τόπος φιλαυγούστον αὐραρίον, all datable to after the middle of the 5th century AD), Ephesus (Acts XIX 23-41, of ca. AD 50; cf., among others, Horsley 1987), Corycus (CI7 II no. 793 from Patara: Σωματοθήκη [Μ]ωσῖ προταυραρίου, Έβρεος; however, the term protaurarios, usually interpreted as 'head of the guild of goldsmiths' [see, e.g., MAMA I no. 281, and Roueché 1993], was suggested by Frey [CI7 II, 47] to possibly mean instead 'orfèvre en chef' or 'l'un des principaux orfèvres de la ville'), Palmyra (IGRR III, 1031 (ll. 3–4: συντέ[λεια τῶν χρυσοχ]όων/καὶ ἀργ[υροκόπων] of AD 258.) and Bostra (IGLSyr XIII.1 9161–9162 and possibly also 9163; cf. Sartre 1991, 173 n. 10). If correctly restored, the inscription from Perinthus just mentioned (above n. 18) would provide a record of the initiation of new members to yet another guild of aurarii, this time in a city of Thrace.

their right to reserve seats at the stadium and the theatre, ²¹ and their economic affluence—an affluence that would have been most feasible in a free profession that catered to the luxury needs of a wealthy clientele and, especially, to cultic needs for gold and silver paraphernalia. ²²

The expense of the offering and the mention of Aurelius Carpus' occupation as a *chrysochoos* may have proclaimed the dedicant's privileged economic and/or social standing as a member of a professional craftsmen's class.²³

Asclepius and Hygieia in Trajanopolis

The inscription's most interesting feature is its reference to Asclepius and Hygieia, whose connection with Trajanopolis has received scant attention.

Asclepius and Hygieia are featured, separately or with each other, on a number of Trajanopolitan issues of L. Verus (AD 161–169), Septimius Severus (AD 193–211), Iulia Domna, Caracalla (AD 211–217) and Geta (AD 198–209).²⁴ The local coinage of Caracalla even includes an issue depicting Telesphorus (shown as a hooded figure, dressed in an ankle-length cape).²⁵ Although illustrations of these coins were widely disseminated only about ten years ago in Edith Schönert-Geiss' extensive survey of Trajanopolitan coinage, numismatic allusions to a local cult of Asclepius and Hygieia were possible to discern from at least as early as the 1870s from a coin described (but not illustrated) in the numismatic catalogue of the British Museum. Barclay V. Head identifies it as an issue of Caracalla whose reverse depicts Asclepius and Hygieia in the standard pose and attire, accompanied by the legend TPAIANO Π O Λ EIT Ω N common to all Trajanopolitan coinage.²⁶ Curiously enough, references to that type are missing from Head's entry on Trajanopolitan coinage in his Historia Numorum (which only mentions types of Apollo, Hermes and Orpheus),²⁷ and the relevant evidence has been largely overlooked in subsequent general treatments of the history and culture of Trajanopolis.²⁸

²¹ E.g., in Aphrodisias, Miletus and Bostra (above n. 20).

²² See, e.g., the economic affluence of jewellers who fabricated votive offerings for the Artemision at Ephesus, described in Luke's account of St Paul's visit, *Acts* XIX 23–41; *cf.* Broughton 1975, 827–29.

²³ On the tendency, especially prominent in epigraphic documents of the first centuries AD to stress one's association with the professional craftsmen's class as a means of self-definition within a civic environment, see Van Nijf 1997, 28 and 247; cf. Pleket 1999, 84.

²⁴ See Schönert-Geiss 1991, esp. 155 with references to the relevant entries in her corpus.

²⁵ See Schönert-Geiss 1991, 156 and no. 146.

²⁶ BMC, Thrace... 179 no. 19 (= Schönert-Geiss 1991 no. 56).

²⁷ Head 1886, 288 (see also Head 1911, 288).

²⁸ For instance, Oberhummer (1937, 2082) cites only types representing Apollo, Hermes and Orpheus under local coinage even though he seemingly consulted the British Museum Catalogue. Sakellariades (1929, 68; *cf.* Euthymiou 1954, 147) and Samothrakes (1943, 189) mention types of Apollo, Zeus, Athena and Hebrus. Poimenides (1963, 146–47) even goes as far as to deny

Local coinage and the newly discovered altar—both seemingly datable no earlier than the mid-2nd century AD—remain to date our only secure evidence for the worship of Asclepius in Trajanopolis. It is, however, at least a fact that Aegean Thrace, including the Hebrus delta, fell within the compass of expansion of Asclepius' cult since the 4th century BC,²⁹ and indications for the prominence of the cult at Loutra are arguably not limited to the testimony of the coins and the altar. Additional indications, to which we now turn, include the natural potential of Loutra as a healing site, the traditions of healing and sacredness that have long been associated with the hilltop of St George, where the altar was reportedly found, and the contents of a nearby turnulus.

The Thermal Springs and Baths of Trajanopolis

Largely forsaken by modern archaeologists, Trajanopolis is mainly known (and visited) today for its thermal springs and baths,³⁰ which are responsible for the name of the site in modern Greek as well as in Turkish toponymy (Gk. *Loutra/Tk. Lidjaköy; Loutra*, like *Lidja*, meaning 'baths').

Local lore—be it Christian or Muslim—has long ascribed the healing properties of the springs to divine power. Allusions to the springs' sacred character can be traced as far back as 1433, in Bertrandon de La Brocquière's description of Loutra as 'ung baing que l'on nomme eau saincte...au pié d'une montaigne qui luy est devers le soleil'. They recur in 19th- and 20th-century accounts. 32

any connection of Asclepius with Trajanopolis. To my knowledge, with the notable exception of Kyrkoudes (1992–94, 244), acknowledgments of the appearance of Asclepius and Hygeia on the coinage of Trajanopolis only occur in discussions dealing with the coinages of Thrace or with the cult of Asclepius (see, e.g, Apostolides 1980–81, 240; cf. id. 1940, 270).

²⁹ This is not the place to rehearse all the evidence related to the progress of Asclepius in Aegean Thrace. One might still mention, e.g., the first catalogue of *theorodokoi* of 365 BC from Epidaurus which contains references to, among others, Thasos, Abdera, Maroneia and Aenus ($IG IV^2 94$, Il. 28–31 and 46; cf. Tomlison 1983, 25), and the reference to an important panegyris of Asclepius in a decree of the 3rd or 2nd century BC that is said to have been found at the site of *Saragia* (ancient Doriscus), some 6 km to the west of Trajanopolis (Bakalakis 1961, 19 and pl. 5 ζ).

³⁰ The location of the springs is indicated on Viquesnel's summary drawing of the layout of the site (Viquesnel 1863, pl. 14 fig. 2; *cf. id.* 1868, vol. II, 162, 297–98). Samothrakes (1943, 190–92), cites the results of a chemical analysis of the springs' waters by M. Perteses, and a list of the different ailments for which the thermal baths of Trajanopolis are held to offer remedy is drawn up in Kyrkoudes 1992–94, 263. The earlist known acknowledgment of the springs' superior curative properties occurs in the 17th-century writings of Evliya Çelebi (see Spatharis 1934, 184–85).

³¹ See Stamoulis 1928, 121–22.

³² Writing in 1871, Melirhytos relates that on 21st May, the feast of SS Constantine and Helen, patrons of the modern village of Loutros, crowds of people came to bathe in the waters

The extant written references to the baths and springs do not antedate the 15th century³³ and the earlier bath complex surviving at the site is dated to the Ottoman period.³⁴ It would certainly be premature, however, to rule out earlier building phases since the surviving facilities show signs of extensive rebuilding and reuse,³⁵ and especially since, as far as one can tell, the area of the baths formed an integral part of the ancient city.

From the still discernible, surviving sections of the fortifications, which were first traced systematically by Angelos Poimenides,³⁶ it would appear that the city proper was not built on the hill of St George, where it would have been more easily defensible and where stone for construction was plentiful. It seems instead to have extended from the western slopes of the hill to the current riverbank of the torrent Tsai (Fig. 1), thus on flat territory, which was presumably extensively covered by marshes in antiquity as in modern times.³⁷ Poimenides attributed the choice of this unsalubrious³⁸ and more vulnerable location to the desire of the city-planners to integrate the thermal springs (located some 200 m to the west of the foothill of St George) within the walled area of the town.³⁹ And, indeed, not least in view of the popularity of therms in Roman urban contexts, it seems quite reasonable that the Romans would have given preference to Loutra over neighbouring sites that were similarly positioned for safeguarding and servicing the *via Egnatia*.⁴⁰

While Poimenides' surface survey can be taken to produce (at least tentative) indications for the inherent connection of the springs with the ancient

of the hot springs and drink from them 'for bodily benefit' (see Vasileiades 1980, 89). Poimenides' report, namely, that 'Muslim visitors to the baths hang rugs (as votive offerings) on the bushes around the springs as they do in their mausoleia, *tekedes* and cemeteries' (*cf.* Poimenides 1963, 147), accounts for a Muslim practice that continues to this day.

³³ Thus, while de La Brocquière's report (see above n. 31) implies that the baths already existed in 1433, Çelebi (see Spatharis 1934, 184–85) also states that the bath installations 'were renovated' by Mustafa Çelebi, son of Sultan Bayazid I (1389–1402).

³⁴ Avezou and Picard refer to the baths as a 'Muslim monument' (cf. Avezou and Picard 1913, 147 n. 10), and Bakirtzis and Triantaphyllos (1988, 64) trace the extant bath structures to the 16th century AD (but see also above n. 33).

³⁵ Indeed, it was most likely such signs of rebuilding that prompted Seure's designation of the complex as 'bains romains de *Lidja keu*' (Seure 1900, 147; *cf.* Poimenides 1963, 134 and 139). Kounkoulos (1989, 32–33) traces the earlier phase of the southern and eastern building of the baths to the Roman period. With that now elusive Roman period bath installation it might be tempting to associate 'a large inscribed stele and torso of a statue', said by Euthymiou (1954, 147) to have been found at the site of the baths in 1935 while laying the foundations for a new hostel for bath visitors. Those two stones, said to have been transported to Alexandroupolis, are now difficult to locate, however.

³⁶ Poimenides 1963, 132–38.

³⁷ Poimenides' observations and measurements appear to form the basis of the topographic diagram of the circuit of the walls in Kyrkoudes 1992–94, 250.

³⁸ Dumont (1876, 63 = Dumont-Homolle 1892, 495) and Samothrakes (1943, 92) refer to an acute problem of malaria at the site until relatively recent times.

³⁹ Poimenides 1963, 133–34.

⁴⁰ Cf. Poimenides 1963, 133-34.

settlement, grounds are also available for contemplating the place of the springs in the religious life of the city.

Among possible patrons of the springs during the Roman period,⁴¹ particular reference may be made to the Nymphs, who were popular in Thrace at sites of baths and thermal springs⁴² and whose long-term prominence in Trajanopolis is suggested by their recurring appearance on local coinage from as early as its beginnings in the reign of Marcus Aurelius (AD 161–80). On that coinage the Nymphs are depicted as a trio of standing, draped or naked maidens,⁴³ alone or in the company of a reclining male figure in the foreground, who can be identified as a river god (Hebrus?).⁴⁴

Although the association is seldom exclusive, Asclepius' sanctuaries are also located in conjunction with natural springs as far back as we can trace. Furthermore, from the Hellenistic period onward, as thermal springs became more popular for medicinal purposes, new sanctuaries of that god were specifically founded at sites with hot springs. Our sources record that, in addition to the imperative of ablutions and purification with water as a part of the ritual performed by those who sought his help, healing baths were prescribed as treatment, and baths appear to become a regular feature of later Asclepieia. The great Asclepiea of the imperial period (such as the ones in Epidaurus, Cos and especially Pergamum) are aptly described as 'virtual water cities where cultural activities and thermalism were directly linked'.

⁴¹ Thermal sources in general are likely to have been a natural phenomenon that ancient rural populations readily associated with the supernatural. The springs of Trajanopolis were thus most probably assigned a supernatural patron by the natives, who lived in the area around Loutra, long before the foundation of the Roman period city.

⁴² E.g., *IGBR* I nos. 380 and 381 (from *Aquae Calidae*); *IGBR* III 1 nos. 1477, 1479–1482 and probably 1483 (from Hisar); *IGBR* V no. 5599 (from Augusta Trajana, Starazagorski Mineralni Bani). For an early assessment of the importance of the cult of the Nymphs in Thrace, see Dobruski, 1897, esp. 122–23.

⁴⁵ See Schönert-Geiss 1991, 155, and nos. 1, 27, 50 and 81. There are no legends stating their identity, but that is clear from the use of two standard iconographic types that are encountered on a plethora of inscribed votive reliefs dedicated to the Nymphs at different Thracian sites; see, e.g., *IGBR* I nos. 87–88 (from Odessus) and 380–381 (from *Aquae Calidae*); II no. 570 (from the Asclepieum at Glava Panega); III 1 nos. 1338–1368 passim (from the Nymphaeum at Burdapa), 1477–1483 passim (from Hisar), 1543 (from Čirpan), and III 2 no. 1848 (from Kamen Vrâh); V nos. 5012 (from Rogačevo, near Dionysopolis) and 5687 (from Krsna poljana, Sofia).

⁴⁴ See, e.g., Schönert-Geiss 1991, 155. On the worship of Hebrus in Thrace, see Detschew 1976, 163 and Cahn 1988. It is at least possible, however, that the reclining river god shown on the coins of Trajanopolis was meant to allude instead to the River Tsai that flows in the immediate proximity of the springs and the city.

⁴⁵ An overview of the relevant sites is offered by Croon 1967. *Cf.* Edelstein and Edelstein 1945, vol. 1, T. 707.

⁴⁶ See Croon 1967.

⁴⁷ See, e.g., Edelstein and Edelstein 1945, vol. 1, T. 407, T. 432, cf. T. 408 a, and vol. II, 152–53.

⁴⁸ Ginouvès 1962, 357–61, offers a succinct overview of the relevant textual and archaeological evidence.

⁴⁹ Cf. Holtzmann 1984, 865.

Subject to the now securely attested worship of Asclepius and his dependents in Trajanopolis, it is possible to suggest that the local thermal springs, which are known to this day for their healing properties, could also have been associated in antiquity with Asclepius,⁵⁰ and may have even *a priori* recommended the appropriateness of the natural environment of Loutra for the implantation of his cult.

The Agiasma of St George

Thermal springs are not the only healing waters at the site. Right beside the Christian chapel of the acropolis there is a rectangular cistern built into the bedrock. The cistern (measuring 1.90×6.5 m),⁵¹ is accessed by a flight of steps that lead down into a pool of water supplied by an underground spring and covering the entire area of the floor of the chamber.

The cistern is currently referred to as an *agiasma* ('sacred water') and is expressly associated with St George, whose icon hangs in the middle of the entrance lintel on the outside. Our earliest evidence for the religious importance of this water comes from the notes of the Turkish traveller Evliya Çelebi who visited the site in 1668 and who indicates, among others, that: 'on the square of (the) convent (i.e., the teke *Ishiklar* or *Nefes Baba*)⁵² there is a cistern with 'water of life' (*abu hayat*) which in the beginning of the New Year in September becomes very cold, like pieces of ice.'⁵³

A report, dated to 1988, by Eugenios Zenkines further informs us that it is the local custom for both Christians and Muslims who suffer from fever or other ailment(s) to descend to the source and to sprinkle themselves with the sacred water. Afterwards they hang a shred of their clothing (or even the entire piece of clothing that covered the/an ailing part of their body) on the tree that stands near the *agiasma*.⁵⁴

Supplied though it may be at present with an innocuous Christian or Muslim identity, the cistern that is identified as an *agiasma* on the acropolis of Trajanopolis

 $^{^{50}}$ Cf. also the association of Asclepius with the Nymphs in Thrace, e.g., IGBR II no. 570 (a dedication to the Nymphs at the Asclepieum at Glava Panega).

⁵¹ Zenkines 1988, 241.

⁵² The teke *Ishiklar* or *Nefes Baba*, was an important convent of the Bekhtashi dervish order, which was perhaps founded in the 14th century and still flourished at the time of Çelebi's visit to the site. It was probably abandoned or demolished by Sultan Mahmud II's edict in 1826, which brought an end to many other Bektashi tekes in Thrace (Zenkines 1988, 177, 200–03). According to Dumont a small teke with a single monk was all that was left of that important convent in the 1860's (Dumont-Homolle 1892, 225).

⁵³ Spatharis 1934, 182 and 183 with n. 1.

⁵⁴ Zenkines 1988, 241–42 (cf. 200 n. 76) and fig. 67, showing the rug ladden tree by the agiasma and the chapel of SS George and Constantine.

is not a regular fixture of Christian practice;⁵⁵ and, although water is important to Bektashi and Muslim rituals, *agiasmata* are not featured expressly in cultic settings associated with these faiths. In common with *agiasmata* present at other localities, the rite practised at Loutra may echo cultic practices associated with the acropolis' pagan past.

In the vicinity of the country chapel of St George/St Constantine, scattered building fragments and epigraphic finds, some recorded by earlier visitors⁵⁶ and others still visible today, attest to substantial earlier construction. Some of the debris is to be associated with the teke *Ishiklar* or *Nefes Baba*.⁵⁷ Other traces of building activity are said to go back to Early Christian/Byzantine times.⁵⁸

Epigraphic finds indicate occupation of the hill of St George at least as far back as the Roman period. One such find is an *horos* (a boundary inscription), putatively of the 1st century AD, carved 'on a colossal rock by the foothill of the acropolis'. The inscription reads ὅρος ἰερᾶς χώρας ('boundary of sacred territory')⁵⁹ and, as Dumont suggested, it most likely demarcated the limits of the territory of a pagan sanctuary located on the acropolis.⁶⁰ Additional

⁵⁵ See, e.g., Stamouli-Saranti 1943, 288–89.

 $^{^{56}}$ See, e.g., Dumont-Homolle 1892, 225. *Cf.* Poimenides' report (1963, 133) that some 70 years before his survey of Trajanopolis a 'plethora of marbles, some of which were inscribed', were to be seen lying around in the vicinity of St George. Those 'marbles', he notes, had been photographed by an employ of the postal service, but the photographs were lost during World War II.

⁵⁷ See above, n. 52.

⁵⁸ See Dumont-Homolle 1892, 225. Samothrakes (1943, 187) surmises that the dervish convent succeeded a Christian church dedicated to St George. For inscribed documents found in Trajanopolis and datable to that period, see Asdracha and Bakirtzis 1980 [1986], 256–61 nos. 14–16 and Pl. 65, and Meimaris and Bakirtzis 1994, 37–40 nos. 26–29 and 30 and Pls. VIII–X.

⁵⁹ Dumont-Homolle 1892, 225, 440 no. 108, and 495. Seure (1900, 147–48), who also saw and copied the inscription, indicates that it was engraved on the north face of a small (!) rock 'à mi-côte du promontoire méridional qui termine l'acropole de Trajanopolis . . . et à distance égale des bains romains de *Lidja keui* et de la fontaine d'*Ouroundjik*' and dates it to the 1st century AD.

⁶⁰ Dumont's interpretation, which was initially presented in 1869 (Dumont 1869, repr. in Dumont-Homolle 1892, 225), did not remain entirely without following (see, e.g., Oberhummer 1937, 2084–85; Samothrakes 1943, 188). However, beginning with Seure (1900, 147–48), the majority of scholars who have dealt with the inscription lean towards the view that it constitutes a marker of the continental territorial holdings of Samothrace (see, e.g., *IG* XII, 8, p. 40; Bakalakis 1961, 16; McCredie 1968, 221; Mottas 1989, 103; Kounkoulos 1989, 27; Kyrkoudes 1992–94, 238). Reason for that assumption was provided by another, more or less contemporary, boundary marker that was discovered in 1898 on the seabord of modern Alexandroupolis, see Seure 1900, 147–48, and, more recently, Cole 1984, 17 n. 31, Appendix I no. 15, pl. V a). The latter inscription, datable by its letters to the 1st or 2nd century AD and specifically stated to be marking the 'sacred territory of the Gods of Samothrace', was seen by Seure as evidence that the holdings of Samothrace in Roman times included territories on the opposite mainland coast, as they presumably did in Archaic-Classical and perhaps also Hellenistic times

leads to the activities that took place on the hilltop in Roman times are afforded by our inscribed altar, which was reportedly discovered in the vicinity of the chapel and the *agiasma*, and by a dedication (an inscribed podium of a statue?) offered by the city to the Roman emperor, Marcus Aurelius. ⁶¹ The stone, previously incorporated as building material in a wall of the Bekhtashi convent and now lying among its ruins some 50 m to the northwest of the chapel, is likely to have been set up in antiquity, as was usual practice, near a major sanctuary of the city.

Our evidence does not lend itself to a reconstruction of the topography of the acropolis in Roman times. What does remain arresting, however—at least on present, limited evidence—is the probability that the hilltop served as a sacred precinct that was dedicated, at least in part, to Asclepius. And in this reconstruction, some more specific implications could also be formulated about the past history of the *agiasma*.

(literary testimonia collected by Fredrich [IG XII, 8, pp. 39–40]; see also, among others, Roussel 1939, 138–41; McCredie 1968, 220–21 no. 65.843; Bakalakis 1961, 16; Mottas 1989, 103). In support of his argument, Seure also drew attention to the horos in Trajanopolis as a further possible instance of a marker of the mainland territory controlled by Samothrace (Seure 1900, 148; however, Seure's 'possible' association of the Trajanopolis horos with the sanctuary of Samothrace, has tended to be treated as more or less certain by those who followed his interpretation, e.g., IG XII, 8, p. 40, Bakalakis 1961, 16, McCredie 1968, 221; Kounkoulos 1989, 27; Kyrkoudes 1992–94, 238).

The detailed presentation of the arguments and uncertainties pertaining to the definition and history of the mainland holdings of Samothrace at any particular period falls outside the scope of the present discussion. However, it is at least worth noting, first, that the archaeological context of the Alexandroupolis inscription, which constitutes the cornerstone of arguments supporting the reality of Samothracian mainland holdings in the Roman period, remains unknown. One cannot entirely exclude, therefore, that that stone might even have been initially erected on the island of Samothrace, whence it was transported to the mainland at some later time. Secondly, unlike its counterpart from Alexandroupolis, the Trajanopolis inscription, as recorded by both Dumont and Seure, does not specify the identity of the sacred territory concerned. Thus, even if the marker found in Alexandroupolis could be established as evidence on the territorial rights of Samothrace on the opposite mainland coast in Roman times, this condition does not automatically apply to the marker from Trajanopolis as well. Finally, and perhaps most importantly, from Seure's discussion it emerges that the association of the Trajanopolis horos with the sanctuary of Samothrace was formulated in the first instance in ignorance of the archaeological and topographic considerations that led Dumont to associate the same inscription with a sanctuary on the hill of St George (see Seure 1900, 147, where it is stated that 'Albert Dumont n'a pas commenté cette inscription, ne sachant de quel territoire sacré il s'agissait'; but see Dumont-Homolle 1892, 225). The considerations cited by Dumont are now further augmented by the discovery of the inscribed dedication to Asclepius and Hygieia presented here. In view of the indications that bear on the importance and sanctity of the acropolis of Trajanopolis in antiquity, it seems a far more reasonable assumption that the unnamed sacred chora of the Trajanopolis horos was that of an immediately adjacent sanctuary on the hill of St George.

⁶¹ See Dumont-Homolle 1892, 224–25, 440 no. 109, and 495; cf., more recently, SEG 45, 1995, 882.

The importance of water is common to ancient Greek cult practice as a whole.⁶² The choice of sites deemed to be healthy and to be supplied with waters from salubrious fountains is nowhere more emphasised, however, than in the case of Asclepiea.⁶³ A possibility that emerges, therefore, more or less spontaneously from the evidence at hand is that the (so-called) *agiasma* could be connected in the past with the rites and rituals of Asclepius'cult.

Should further speculation on the ancient cultic setting of the acropolis be allowed, one might point, however tentatively given the limitations of our evidence, to features of the *agiasma* that might preserve echoes of the installations associated with sanctuaries of Asclepius.

In temple complexes associated with Asclepius, water installations are found, among others, in association with the *abaton*, a structure probably used for oracular sleep.⁶⁴ Allowing for the uncertainty surrounding the origins of the current edifice of the *agiasma* of St George, its layout and dimensions are closely comparable to those of a water installation excavated in the Asclepieum of Corinth. The Corinthian structure, dated by C. Roebuck to the late Classical period, was a rock-cut chamber located next to the *abaton*. Visitors descended a flight of six steps to a small room, measuring 5.10 × 1.70 m, which contained a basin built into the floor.⁶⁵ Roebuck interpreted the chamber as a lustral room designed for a purificatory bath before incubation.⁶⁶ The thorough water proofing of the chamber and its provisions for drainage at two levels suggested to him that the bath was a thorough washing.⁶⁷ However, the basin in Corinth is not large enough for full immersion, and as in the water pool of the *agiasma* of St George, water could have been poured over the worshipper.⁶⁸

The Tumulus of Trajanopolis

Possibly relevant to this discussion of Asclepius and healing in general in Trajanopolis is, finally, a funerary tumulus, located on the plain approximately 1.5 km to the north-west of the city. The tumulus, investigated by Diamantis

⁶² For a general overview of the important and varied functions of water in Greek religious ritual, see Cole 1988.

⁶³ See, especially, Vitruvius *De architectura* 1.2.7 (= Edelstein and Edelstein 1945, vol. 1, T. 707) and the panegyrics of the spring of the Pergamene Asclepieum by Aelius Aristides *Or.* 39 and *Or.* 53 (fully quoted, respectively, in Edelstein and Edelstein 1945, T. 804–805).

⁶⁴ See especially Ginouvès 1962, 352–55, with references to water installations connected with the *abaton* in the Asclepiea of Corinth, Troezen, Paros, Cos, Gortys, Epidaurus, Athens and Pergamum.

⁶⁵ Cf. Roebuck 1951, 46-51, 157.

⁶⁶ Roebuck 1951, 26, 157-58. Cf. Cole 1988, 163; Ginouvès 1962, 352.

⁶⁷ Roebuck 1951, 157-58.

⁶⁸ Cole 1988, 163.

Triantaphyllos in 1991–92,⁶⁹ was found to conceal at its centre a circular enclosure some 10 m in diameter, which contained two important cremations, both datable by their contents, according to the excavator, to 'about the time of the foundation of the city by Trajan'.⁷⁰

The size of the tumulus (some 50 m in diameter and 6.5 m in height)⁷¹ and the array of expensive offerings associated with each of the two cremations⁷² leave no doubt about the exceptional status of the occupants. The discovery of *enagismoi* at no less than seven different points around the enclosure⁷³ also suggest that the deceased were the recipients of exalted posthumous honors. Taking into account the date of the find, Triantaphyllos suggested that the tumulus could be contemporary with the foundation of the city and belong to individuals from Trajan's immediate entourage.⁷⁴

Of special interest to us are certain items in the two assemblages that are indicative of the professional affinity of the deceased. Two of those items, whose form it became possible to reconstruct from the better preserved remains in Cremation A, are hinged, semicircular cases of wood, measuring some 0.50 m along their rectilinear side and secured by a bronze lock in the middle of the curved side. The cases' exteriors are faced with a thin layer of plaster, impressed, in the case of the hinged box from Cremation A, with circles and floral motifs. Recovered from the latter case were an iron blade, a bronze tube with a lid containing a bronze spatula, and a rectangular stone slab framed with bronze and fitted on one side with small bronze cases. That the tube originally joined the palette opposite to the attached cases is seen from an intact counterpart recovered from Cremation B. Triantaphyllos

⁶⁹ Triantaphyllos 1991 [1994]; *cf.* the summary presentation of the same find in Triantaphyllos 1991 [1996].

⁷⁰ Cf. Triantaphyllos 1991 [1994], 439; cf. 444 (with reference to a silver dinarius of Domitian [AD 81–96] minted in AD 88 that supplies a *terminus post quem* for Cremation A), and 446.

⁷¹ Triantaphyllos 1991 [1994], 439, 440, fig. 1; in terms of its size, the tumulus is said to be one of the two most impressive tumuli known in the area, the other one being the tumulus of Maistros, on the eastern outskirts of Alexandroupolis.

⁷² With the two assemblages were associated, among others, decorated lampstands and tableware of glass, bronze and silver, items of personal adornment of gold decorated with semi-precious stones, and two iron swords, placed one in each of the two cremations (Triantaphyllos 1991 [1994], 443–46; 1991 [1996], 334).

⁷³ Eight *enagismoi* are recorded in the preliminary report (Triantaphyllos 1991 [1994], 441). However, subsequent analysis of the osteological materials indicated that one of them was instead a human cremation on a much more modest scale than those of Cremations A and B (Diamantis Triantaphyllos, personal communication 18 January 2002).

⁷⁴ Triantaphyllos 1991 [1994], 446.

⁷⁵ Triantaphyllos 1991 [1994], 442–43, 448, figs. 4, 5. In Cremation A the excavators also found the much decayed remains of the plaster facing of another, rectangular case, presumably also made of wood. Triantaphyllos 1991 [1994], 444, 451, fig. 15.

⁷⁶ Diamantis Triantaphyllos, personal communication, 18 January 2002; cf. Triantaphyllos 1991 [1994], 443.

⁷⁷ Triantaphyllos 1991 [1994], 445, 453, fig. 19. The hinged, metallic cylindrical case affixed

identifies the wooden boxes found in the two cremations as 'physicians' cases',⁷⁸ and comparative evidence from the Roman period supports this conclusion.⁷⁹

Hinged, presumably wooden, cases (containing mainly scalpels) are depicted on 2nd- and 3rd-century AD funerary stelai of physicians and other medical scenes from Greece and Italy⁸⁰ as symbols of the medical profession. Together with capping vessels, 'they appear to have been,' as R. Jackson indicates, 'synonymous with the *medicus*'.⁸¹

Actual examples of metal cases of different sizes divided into small compartments are also attested in the archaeological record in association with physicians' instruments⁸² and appear to have served as ointment and other medicine boxes. Metal tubes with a lid and rectangular stone slabs, as those found in the Trajanopolis tumulus, were also among the standard elements of the *instrumentaria* of Roman period physicians. They were used either as containers of medical instruments (in which case they have an average length of 18 cm) or as medicine tubes (average length *ca.* 10–11 cm).⁸³ Rectangular stone slabs were commonly used for preparing cosmetics and painters' colours.⁸⁴ Their use as pharmaceutical implements for crushing, working and mixing ointments and powders is nonetheless also attested by their inclusion in physicians' burials.⁸⁵ Some of the surviving examples bear traces along their edges that indicate that they were used for sharpening cutting tools,⁸⁶ and one slab with a cylindrical instrument case attached to it, as in the Trajanopolis examples, is reported by J.S. Milne to have been found at Herculaneum.⁸⁷

to the stone slab from Cremation B is divided into three compartments, each containing residual traces of solidified matter. Attempts to identify those substances through laboratory analysis proved unsuccessful due to the radical alteration of their consistency by exposure to high temperatures during the cremation (D. Triantaphyllos, personal communication 18 January 2002).

⁷⁸ Diamantis Triantaphyllos, personal communication 18 January 2002; cf. Triantaphyllos 1991 [1994], 443.

⁷⁹ On the constantly growing body of evidence concerning the accessories of Roman period physicians, see among others the early treatments of Milne 1907 and Tabanelli 1958 and the more recent presentations of Künzl 1983; Bliquez 1994 and Jackson 1995.

⁸⁰ See, e.g., Tabanelli 1958, pls. X-XVI, and the more extensive, recent list of relevant representations in Jackson 1995, 191 n. 11.

⁸¹ Jackson 1995, 191.

⁸² See, e.g., Milne 1907, 172, pl. LIV; Tabanelli 1958, CXXI–CXXII; Bliquez 1994, 191 nos. 296–297, 192 Ill. 189–92 and Pl. XXIV.

⁸³ See, e.g., Milne 1907, 169 and Pl. LIII; Bliquez 1994, 192–97 nos. 298–315 and Pls. XXV and XVIII. See also Michaelides 1984, 331, with reference to two examples of medicine tubes containing pills and powders that were found in the tomb of a physician of the Roman period in Nea Paphos (Cyprus) and references to earlier known examples.

⁸⁴ *Cf.* Michaelides 1984, 330 n. 120.

⁸⁵ Künzl 1983, 8–9, fig. 2 a-b ('Salbenreibplatte'), offers an idea of the frequency of this type of artefact in Roman period physicians' burials and its geographical distribution throughout the empire.

⁸⁶ See, e.g., Milne 1907, 166–67. Such marks are clearly preserved, for instance, on the slab found in the 'physician's tomb' in Nea Paphos (Michaelides 1984, 318 no. 19; 330, pl. LXXI: 5 and fig. 2.6).

⁸⁷ Milne 1907, 171.

The splendour of the burial, which is greater than what we might expect given the middle-class status of most physicians, ⁸⁸ can be explained if the deceased were connected to the imperial court, as Triantaphyllos suggested. Given the location of Trajanopolis on the *via militaris*, one might further venture a suggestion that the deceased were associated with a military hospital established at the site. ⁸⁹

In view of the importance of religious healing in Trajanopolis proposed in the present discussion, however, the possibility also needs to remain open that the individuals resting in the tumulus could be connected with a local healing cult. One item from Cremation B that might point to the religious affiliation of the occupant is a gold ring with carnelian bezel engraved with the figure of a naked man holding a lyre. Triantaphyllos identifies the figure as Apollo, and it is not inconceivable that the bearer of the ring might have had a particular association with this deity, who was worshipped in Trajanopolis, and who, in addition to being the healer *par excellence* of the Olympian pantheon, was also specifically worshipped as a healer, $i\alpha\tau\rho\delta\varsigma$, notably in cities of the northern and western Black Sea. 91

Further speculation on the religious affiliation of the deceased also seems feasible at least in connection with the Trajanopolitan cult of Asclepius. Despite the divide that some scholars have envisaged between religious and public healing, 92 the important role of physicians in the cult of Asclepius, who was their patron, is fairly well established in the Roman period. Instances of physicians who served as priests or officers are known from different centres of Asclepius' worship in Asia Minor, Corinth and Athens. 93

⁸⁸ See, e.g., the overviews of the evidence related to the status of ancient physicians by Nutton 1995 and Pleket 1995. According to Pleket (1995, 29), although the evidence does not absolutely preclude the high social status of public physicians in antiquity, 'in most cities... the public physician (*iatros dêmosios*) hardly transcended the social status of the Homeric *dêmioergoi*...' A similar conclusion, namely, that '... for the most part, doctors associated, or were presumed to associate, with craftsmen of moderate wealth and were rarely part of the local elite', is reached by Nutton 1995, 3.

⁸⁹ This possibility has been suggested by Dr Aikaterine Romiopoulou (personal communication, 2 October 2002). Concerning the interest and involvement of the Roman army in the development of medicinal sites throughout the Roman empire, see, e.g., Dvorjetski 1997, 468–71, with references to earlier discussions. In the case of the Trajanopolis tumulus, a military connection of the deceased might be implied by the two iron swords that were found, respectively, in Cremations A and B (Triantaphyllos 1991 [1994], 443–44 no. 13, 445 no. 11).

⁹⁰ Triantaphyllos 1991[1994], 445 no. 8, refers to similar representations of Apollo in Richter 1971, nos. 71–84.

⁹¹ On the cult of Apollo *Iatros* and its centers, see, among others, Wernicke 1895, 54; Lambrino 1937, 357–58; Graf 1985, 250; Schwabl 1986, 14–16, and more recently Ehrhardt 1989.

⁹² See, in particular, Edelstein and Edelstein 1945, vol. 2, 139-40 and 158-59.

⁹³ E.g., Heraclitus of the Lycian city of Rhodiapolis in Asia Minor, who is called an ἰατρός and διὰ βίου ἱερεύς and who built a temple of Asclepius and Hygieia at the city (*IGRR* III no. 732; cf. Robert 1970, 256). For an inscription of the imperial period from Corinth in which a Gaius Vibius Euelpistus is simultaneously identified as a priest of Asclepius and a

The possible allusions to Asclepius and Apollo that might be inferred in this instance need not be mutually exclusive since those two deities' common capacity as healers also supplied the basis for their intimate association with each other in Greek cult.⁹⁴

Concluding Remarks

The existence of the thermal springs, the long traditions of healing and sacredness that are associated with the separate, natural water sources of the site, and parallel evidence for the worship of Asclepius and his dependents in the Imperial period, would all seem to allow a perception of ancient Trajanopolis as a healing site where Asclepius was one of the primary deities worshipped.

The identity of the occupants of the Trajanopolis tumulus, whose construction has been linked chronologically with Trajan's foundation of the city, is bound perhaps to remain forever uncertain. However, it is tempting to consider that the references to healing in the material remains of that prestigious funerary monument might also allude *inter alia* to a local healing cult—a cult that, perhaps because of its significance in local affairs, did not (or not entirely) remain outside the purview of the leading representatives of the newly founded city.

Needless to say, until more tangible evidence becomes available, the antiquity, 95 the details of the physical setting, and the local aetiology of the Trajanopolitan cult of Asclepius are impossible to ascertain. The evidence examined here should at least renew, however, the call for a systematic archaeological investigation of Trajanopolis. 96

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physician, see Roebuck 1951, 156–57 (suggesting that the priest/physician was associated with the local Asclepieum). For physicians, who served as *zakoroi* in the Asclepieion at Athens, see Aleshire 1989, 59 and n. 3, 66, 74 and 87–88. For an earlier example, see *Suda Lexicon s.v.* 'Demokedes' (a physician of the 6th century BC, who is said to have become priest of Asclepius at Cnidus).

⁹⁴ Cf. Lambrino 1937, 358; Burkert 1985, 147; Schwabl 1986, 15.

⁹⁵ In this regard, one should also keep in mind the possibility that the important *panegyris* of Asclepius mentioned in the decree of the 3rd or 2nd century BC from nearby Saragia (above n. 29) constitutes an allusion to religious activities in honour of Asclepius at the site of Trajanopolis before the Imperial period.

⁹⁶ Cf. Dumont-Homolle 1892, 224; Oberhummer 1937, 2085; Samothrakes 1943, 189; Bakalakis 1961, 17; Poimenides 1963, 148–49.

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Abbreviations

ArchDelt Archaiologikon Deltion

ATGLT Archeion tou Thrakikou Glossikou kai Laographikou Thesaurou

BCH Bulletin de Correspondance Hellénique

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IGLSyr XIII.1 Sartre, M. (ed.). 1982: Inscriptions greeques et latines de la Syrie. Vol. XIII.1:

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IGRR III Cagnat, R. and Lafaye, G. (eds.) 1906: Inscriptiones Graecae ad res Romanas per-

tinentes. Vol. 3 (Paris).

IvParion Frisch, P. 1983: Die Inschriften von Parion (Bonn).

IvSmyrna Petzl, G. 1982–90: Die Inschriften von Smyrna, Teil I–II (Bonn).

LGPN Fraser, P.M. and Matthews, E. (eds.) 1987-. A Lexicon of Greek Personal Names,

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LIMC Lexicon Iconographicum Mythologiae Classicae (Zurich/Munich)

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RDAC Reports of the Department of Antiquities, Cyprus

RE Pauly-Wissowa, Real-Encyclopädie der klassischen Altertumswissenschaft (1893–)

SEG Supplementum Epigraphicum Graecum ZPE Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik

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