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MARONEIA AND STRYME REVISITED
SOME PROBLEMS OF HISTORICAL TOPOGRAPHY¹

In the wake of Xerxes' march

The foundation of Greek colonies on the Thracian coast between the river Nestos and Mt. Ismaros dates as early as the middle of the 7th century BC, roughly about the same time that the Parians colonized Thasos. According to the seldom unequivocal literary evidence, three cities (*Abdera*, *Dikaia*, *Maroneia*) and one lesser —probably dependent— settlement (*Stryme*) occupied the coast between the Nestos estuary and Cape Serreion before the middle of the 6th century BC. A fourth city, *Orthagoreia*, is attested only by later evidence. Of these, only the site of Abdera during the various phases of its history, and that of Maroneia, at Hagios Charalambos on the SW flank of Mt. Ismaros (Hagios Athanasios, 678 m.), have been securely identified; on this latter site however, no remains or traces of pre-Hellenistic date have been identified. As to the proposed locations for Dikaia, Stryme —and

¹ Bakalakis (1958) = G. Bakalakis, *Προανασκαφικές Έρευνες στη Θράκη* (Thessalonike 1958)

Bakalakis (1967) = G. Bakalakis, *Ανασκαφή Στρώμης* (Thessalonike 1967)

Isaac = B. Isaac, *The Greek Settlements in Thrace until the Macedonian Conquest* (Leiden 1986)

IThrAeg = L. D. Loukopoulou, M.-G. Parissaki, S. Psoma and A. Zournatzi, *Inscriptiones antiquae partis Thraciae quae ad ora maris Aegaei sita est* (Athens 2005)

Lazaridis 1971a = D. Lazaridis, *Αβδηρα καὶ Δίκαια* ("Αρχαῖες ἑλληνικὲς πόλεις" 6; Athens 1971)

Lazaridis 1971b = D. Lazaridis, *Μαρώνεια καὶ Ὀρθαγορία* ("Αρχαῖες ἑλληνικὲς πόλεις" 16; Athens 1972)

Loukopoulou 1997 = Louisa Loukopoulou, "Ὁ Φίλιππος Ε' καὶ ἡ ἐκτροπή τῆς βασιλικῆς δια τῆς Θράκης ὁδοῦ", *Αφιέρωμα στὸν Ν.Γ.Λ. Hammond* (Thessalonike 1997) 295-303.

Pouilloux 1954 = J. Pouilloux, *Recherches sur l'histoire et les cultes de Thasos I. De la fondation de la cité à 196 av. J.-Chr.* (Paris 1954)

THRACE = THRACE, *General Secretariat of the Region of East Macedonia-Thrace*, ed. A. Avramea et al. (Athens 1994)

Orthogoreia for that matter—,² these have not been confirmed beyond reasonable doubt.³

Dikaia is first mentioned by Herodotus, whose narrative of Xerxes' march through Aegean Thrace offers a first anthropogeographical account of the geography and ekistics of the area.⁴ According to Herodotus, *Dikaia* was a "Greek city" (πόλις Ἑλληνίς) situated between Maroneia and Abdera, near Lake Bistonis. The actual location is specifically defined by Strabo: east of, but also "near" (πλησίον) Abdera, on the southern border of Lake Bistonis, namely at the far end of some bay near its seaward mouth, which also served the city as a port.⁵ According to Pseudo-Skylax,⁶ the river *Koudetos* —presumably the

² See *infra*, p. 79-80.

³ For a recent evaluation of primary and secondary sources see recently *IThrAeg* p. 121-38.

⁴ Hdt. 7.108-109: Παραμείβετο δὲ πορευόμενος ἐκ Δορίσκου πρῶτα μὲν τὰ Σαμοθηρίκια τείχεα, τῶν ἐσχάτῃ πεπόλισται πρὸς ἐσπέρης πόλις τῇ οὐνομά ἐστι Μεσαμβροίη. Ἐχεται δὲ ταύτης Θασίων πόλις Στρώμη, διὰ δὲ σφῶν τοῦ μέσου Λίος ποταμὸς διαρρέει, ὃς τότε οὐκ ἀντέσχε τὸ ὕδωρ παρέχων τῷ Ξέρξῳ στρατῷ ἄλλ' ἐπέλιπε. Ἡ δὲ χώρα αὕτη πάλαι μὲν ἐκαλέετο Γαλλαϊκή, νῦν δὲ Βριαντική· ἐστι μέντοι τῷ δικαιοτάτῳ τῶν λόγων καὶ αὕτη Κικόνων. 109: Διαβάς δὲ τοῦ Λίσου ποταμοῦ ῥέεθρον ἀπεξηρασμένον πόλεις Ἑλληνίδας τάσδε παραμείβετο, Μαρώνειαν, Δίκαιαν, Ἀβδηρα. Ταύτας τε διὴ παρεξήμε καὶ κατὰ ταύτας λίμνας ὀνομαστὰς τάσδε. Μαρωνείης μὲν μετὰ καὶ Στρώμης κειμένην Ἰσμαρίδα, κατὰ δὲ Δίκαιαν Βιστονίδα, ἐς τὴν ποταμοὶ ἐσιεῖσι τὸ ὕδωρ, Τραυὸς τε καὶ Κόμφατος, κατὰ δὲ Ἀβδηρα λίμνην μὲν οὐδεμίαν εὐῶσαν ὀνομαστήν παραμείψατο Ξέρξης, ποταμὸν δὲ Νέστον ῥέοντα ἐς θάλασσαν. *Dikaia* is listed as Δικαιοπόλις in Harpocration and the Souda (s.v.). The city ethnic is only attested by Stephanos Byzantios (s.v. *Δίκαια*) as Δικαιοπολίτης, Δικαῖος, Δικαιεύς.

⁵ Strabo 7 fr. 43 (44): Μετὰ δὲ τὸν εἰς Θάσον πορθμὸν Ἀβδηρα καὶ τὰ περὶ Ἀβδηρα μυθεύμενα. ... εἶτα Δίκαια πόλις ἐν κόλῳ κειμένη καὶ λίμνη. ὑπέρκειται δὲ τοῦτον ἢ Βιστονίς λίμνη κύκλον ἔχουσα ὅσον διακοσίων σταδίων. Cf. fr. 48 (47): Ὅτι μετὰ τὸν Νέστον ποταμὸν πρὸς ἀνατολὰς Ἀβδηρα πόλις, ἐπάνωμος Ἀβδήρου, ὃν οἱ τοῦ Διομήδους ἵπποι ἔφαγον. εἶτα Δίκαια πόλις πλησίον, ἧς ὑπέρκειται λίμνη μεγάλη ἢ Βιστονίς. εἶτα πόλις Μαρώνεια.

⁶ [Skylax] 67 [68]: Νεάπολις, κατὰ ταύτην Δάτον πόλις Ἑλληνίς, ἣν ὤκισε Καλλίστρατος Αθηναῖος, καὶ ποταμὸς Νέστος, Ἀβδηρα πόλις, Κούδητος

Kompsatos of Herodotus 7.109— which flowed into Lake Bistonis separated Dikaia from Abdera;⁷ it must have marked the territorial boundary between the two cities. The origin of Dikaia and the date of its foundation remain unknown. Its early history is illustrated by its coinage: two series of 5th century silver coins struck on the “Thracio-Macedonian” standard and marked with the letters ΔΙ or ΔΙΚ have been securely attributed to Dikaia.⁸ It is also known to have been a member of the Athenian League, contributing 3000 drachms from 454 to 447 BC,⁹ and later, from 435 to 432, 2000 drachms.¹⁰ Thereafter, the fortunes of Dikaia remain unknown. However, recent numismatic finds indicate that the city survived at least during the 4th century BC.¹¹

The location of *Stryme* remains controversial owing to confusing — contradictory and occasionally cryptic— evidence in the literary tradition. According to Herodotus, it was a “city of the Thasians” on the Thracian littoral, situated in the Briantike (formerly named Gallaike), which was part of the land of the Kikones. Stryme is listed immediately west of Mesembria, said to be the westernmost of the forts (τείχεα) of Samothrace on the Thracian littoral that stretched along the plain west of Doriskos, right across the island. A river, the Lissos, flowed between Mesembria and Stryme. Further west lay Maroneia; there was a sizable lake, Lake Ismaris, between Maroneia and Stryme.¹² The combination proves unrealistic: Stryme, the river Lissos and Mesembria may well be sought east of Maroneia-Hagios Charalambos, but no lake is to be found at this part of the coast, which is occupied by the rocky outcrops of Mt.

ποταμός καὶ πόλεις Δίκαϊα καὶ Μαρώνεια. Κατὰ ταῦτα Σαμοθράκη νῆσος καὶ λιμὴν.

⁷ The *Koudetos* of [Skylax] is usually identified with Herodotus's *Kompsatos*, one of two rivers —the second named *Travos* — which flowed into Lake Bistonis (Hdt. 7.109; see *supra*, n. 4).

⁸ J. M. F. May, “The Coinage of Dicaea-by-Abdera”, NC 1965, 1-25, pl. II-III; Edith Schönert-Geiss, *Griechisches Münzwerk: Die Münzprägung von Bisanthe - Dikaia - Selymbria* (Berlin 1975) 15-29.

⁹ IG I³ 259 IV 19; 261 I 15; 262 I 25; 263 III 19; 264 III 14; 265 II 44.

¹⁰ IG I³ 277 VI 19; 278 V 33; 280 II 60. In the assessment lists of 425 and 422 it is believed to have been quoted together with Abdera.

¹¹ *IThrAeg* p. 127 and 130; see also *infra*, p. 60.

¹² Hdt. 7.108-109 (*supra*, n. 4).

Ismaros and the Zonaia mountains. A later testimony, by Herakleides Ponticus cited in Harpocration's *Lexikon*, only adds to the confusion: Stryme, one of the foundations (ἀποικία) of Thasos in Thrace, indeed an *emporion* of the Thasians, is said to be an island.¹³ However, no islands are to be found along the Aegean littoral between Lake Bistonis and the delta of the river Hebros (Map 1).

The history of Stryme is equally cryptic. Colonised as an *emporion* by the Thasians at an early date, it occupied presumably —on unspecific evidence attributed to Hypereides— highly coveted agricultural land, which bordered on the incomparable vineyards of Mt. Ismaros.¹⁴ The presence of Thasians on this part of the Thracian coast did not fail to provoke the fierce reaction of Maroneia, which is believed to resonate in some of Archilochos's verses.¹⁵ Sooner or later Maroneia succeeded in gaining control over Stryme.¹⁶ Thasos is known to have tried to recapture Stryme with the support of an Athenian naval squadron under the general Timomachos in the winter of 361/0 BC; the aggressors were successfully confronted by the Maronitans, who mobilized even "foreign mercenaries and their barbarian neighbours".¹⁷ This serious conflict between two members of the Second Athenian Confederacy was ultimately settled by Athenian arbitration.¹⁸ It is notable that the

¹³ Harp. s.v. Στρώμη· Δημοσθένης ἐν τῷ περὶ τοῦ τριηραρχήματος. Ἡρακλείδης ἢ Φιλοστέφανος ἐν τῷ περὶ νήσων φησὶν "ἀποικίαί δέ εἰσι "Θασιῶν ἐπὶ τῆς Θράκης Γαληψός καὶ Στρώμη ἢ νῆσος." ἔστι δὲ ἐμπόριον Θασιῶν...

¹⁴ Poll. 7.149: λέγει γοῦν (sc. *Hypereides*) ἐν τῷ πρὸς Θασιούς "εὐθὺς δὲ καρπεύειν ἀγαθὴν καὶ πλείστην χώραν." Cf. Pouilloux 1954, 222. For a possible indication of the presence of Thasians on this part of the Aegean coast, see *infra*, p. 78.

¹⁵ Philoch. *apud* Harp. (s.v. Στρώμη): Στρώμη. ... μνημονεύει τῶν Θασιῶν πρὸς Μαρωνεῖτας περὶ τῆς Στρώμης ἀμφισβητήσεως Φιλόχορος ἐν ε', Ἀρχιλόχον ἐπαγόμενος μάρτυρα. Cf. C. Fredrich, *IG* XII 8, p. 76 and Pouilloux 1954, 33.

¹⁶ Either as early as the 7th or 6th century BC or following the decline of Thasian power after the suppression of its secession from the Athenian Confederacy (465-463 BC).

¹⁷ Dem. 50.21-23 (see *infra*, n. 47).

¹⁸ [Dem.] 12.17 = Anaximenes (*FGrHist* 72) F 41.17:... καὶ λογίεσθ' ὡς ἄλογόν ἐστιν Ἀθηναίους Θασιούς μὲν καὶ Μαρωνίτας ἀναγκάσαι περὶ Στρώμης

narrative of this confrontation by Demosthenes includes a vivid description of the physical setting, including the qualification of Stryme as a "harbourless location" (χωρὶον ἀλίμενον).¹⁹

Geography and Archaeology

The solution to this puzzle has been sought in the nature of the terrain and in the archaeological map of the area between Lake Bistonis, securely and generally identified with the lagoon of Porto Lagos, and the Zonaia mountains, which mark the western marches of the Peraia of Samothrace. For Lake Ismaris, given the fact already stated that there is no lake *between* Maroneia/Hagios Charalambos and the western end of the Peraia,²⁰ the only possible candidate is the lake of Mitrikon situated in the opposite direction, some 20 kms *west* of Maroneia/Hagios Charalambos. Interestingly, a tentative mapping of ancient remains unearthed to date and illustrated in the recently published corpus of *Inscriptions from Aegean Thrace* allows for some interesting remarks: with the exception of the fortified acropolis on Hagios Georgios (461 m.), a craggy hill directly east of Mt. Ismaros and Maroneia/Hagios Charalambos, important pre-Hellenistic finds associated with the Greek presence in the area are concentrated exclusively in the coastal zone *west* of the river Filiouri;²¹ this was interpreted as an indication that the territory of the Greek colonies during the Archaic and Classical period was relatively limited in depth and that no important Greek settlements had been established east of the river Filiouri (and west of Mt. Ismaros). In fact, the archaeological map of the coastal zone which extends between Abdera and the Peraia of Samothrace marks important remains of sizeable pre-Hellenistic settlements mainly in three locations : (A) on the hill of Katsamakia by Fanari, (B) near Cape Molyvoti and (C) on Hagios Georgios, directly east of Hagios Charalambos/Maroneia. The two former occupy two of the rare locations offering safe anchorage in an otherwise exposed and harbourless coast.

διακριθῆναι λόγοις... A different interpretation of this passage is proposed *infra*, p. 76.

¹⁹ For a detailed analysis of Dem. 50.21-23, see *infra*, p. 65-66.

²⁰ *Supra*, p. 57-58.

²¹ *IThrAeg* p. 129-32 and map 2 (p. 133); post-Classical developments are illustrated in map 3 (p. 135).

A. The site on the hill of *Katsamakia* was first identified through sparse, isolated remains by G. Bakalakis.²² Limited excavations under D. Triantaphyllos in 1971 and 1972 brought to light foundations of houses, a plastered floor, and possibly also part of a fortification wall. A cemetery identified at Daout Bunar, near the mouth of Lake Bistonis, was attributed to the same settlement; the finds confirm the establishment of Greek colonists as early as the 6th century BC.²³ Bakalakis identified the settlement with *Dikaia*,²⁴ a hypothesis reinforced thereafter by the frequent discovery of bronze coins inscribed with ΔΙΚ; they confirm the survival of this city at least during the 4th century BC.²⁵ No inscriptions have been discovered or attributed to Dikaia, while the extent of its territory is uncertain.²⁶

B. Excavations undertaken by G. Bakalakis on the NE part of the low peninsula S at *Cape Molyvoti* (1957-1959) have uncovered the remains of a fortified city of the Classical period, namely parts of the fortification wall dated to the 4th century BC and sparse remains of residences²⁷. The numerous numismatic finds include mainly 5th and 4th century BC bronze and silver coins of Maroneia, but also coins of Abdera, Dikaia and Orthagoreia of the same period. The cemetery of this significant centre extends over a large area, some 5 kms deep, on the adjacent mainland. Chance finds as well as the excavation of a total of 9 tumuli to date have brought to light a rich and varied harvest, including good quality Attic pottery and marble sculpture, and a uniform group numbering to date no less than 60 inscribed grave stelae dating from the 5th and 4th century BC.²⁸ The city at Molyvoti was practically abandoned during the

²² Bakalakis (1958) 68-70; cf. Lazaridis 1971a, 45 §223.

²³ D. Triantaphyllos, *ArchDelt* 27 (1972) [1973] "Chronika" 535-36, pl. 470-72 and 28 (1973) [1977] 469-73, pl. 421-29. A number of small *tumuli* have been investigated; they contained clay sarcophagi, cremations, pit and slab-covered burials with excellent quality imported east-Greek, Rhodian, Corinthian and Attic pottery dating from the end of the 6th and the early 5th century BC.

²⁴ Bakalakis (1958) 89-90; cf. Lazaridis 1971a, 45 §223; Isaac 109-111; *IThrAeg* p. 130.

²⁵ *IThrAeg* p. 127, 130 n. 5.

²⁶ Lazaridis 1971a, 46 §225; cf. *IThrAeg* p. 130-31.

²⁷ Ancient remains were first identified by the Bulgarians in 1917 (B. Filow 5 [1928-29] 1-11; in Bulgarian with a German translation).

²⁸ Bakalakis (1958) 79-83; Bakalakis (1967); D. Triantaphyllos, "Ανασκαφή τύμβων στα νεκροταφεία της αρχαίας Στρώμης", *AEMTh* 6 (1992) [1995] 655-

second half of the 4th century BC; Bakalakis assumed that it was destroyed by Philip II around 350 BC.²⁹

With the adjacent lake of Mitrikon plausibly believed to be Lake Ismaris, this important site was conveniently identified by Bakalakis with Stryme *pace* Hdt. 7.109 ("Lake Ismaris located between Maroneia and Stryme"), a hypothesis widely but not generally accepted owing to the absence of definitive, namely epigraphic evidence;³⁰ furthermore, the Filiouri, a major stream east of the lake of Mitrikon, was arbitrarily identified with the river Lissos,³¹ *contra* Hdt. 7.108 ("between Mesembria and Stryme") and 7.109 (marching from east to west, the army reached Maroneia *after* crossing the river Lissos).³²

C. On the summit of *Hagios Georgios*, directly east of Maroneia, G. Bakalakis investigated a fortified acropolis with characteristic polygonal walls of local limestone, some of cyclopean dimensions.³³ According to the same author, the fort on Hagios Georgios, which he dated on the basis of parallel fortified sites to the Archaic, pre-Persian period, may well have been the first acropolis of Maroneia.³⁴ Bakalakis's conclusions were reiterated by Lazaridis, who proceeded to a detailed mapping of the site, adding the remains of two parallel long walls linking the acropolis with the small bay on the coast below, some 3 kms east of Hagios Charalambos.³⁵ However, following an excavation by E. Pentazos

67; *eiusdem*, "La nécropole de la colonie thasienne Strymè, Pratiques funéraires dans l'Europe des XIIIe- IVe siècles av. J.-C.", *Actes du IIIe Colloque international d'Archéologie funéraire, Tulcea 15-20 septembre 1997* (Tulcea 2000) 87-104; D. Terzopoulou, *ArchDelt* 50 (1995) [2000] 657-59; *eiusdem*, "Στρυμνη, εμπόριον Θασίων: τα νεότερα δεδομένα της έρευνας", *ΚΑΝΘΑΡΟΣ. Έλληνες και Θράκες στη Θράκη του Αιγαίου, Πρακτικά Συμποσίου στη μνήμη του Βαγγέλη Πεντάζου, Κομοτηνή 19-21 Μαρτίου 1999* (forthcoming). Cf. recently *IThrAeg* p. 287-317, with inscriptions Nos E107-167.

²⁹ Bakalakis 1967, 145, followed by Lazaridis, Terzopoulou *et al.*

³⁰ See for example Isaac 12 and 70-71.

³¹ Bakalakis 1958, 94.

³² See *supra*, n. 4.

³³ Bakalakis 1958, 102-106.

³⁴ Bakalakis 1958, 103; the author mentions having consulted R. L. Scranton, a specialist in the study of ancient fortifications, on the chronology of the acropolis.

³⁵ Lazaridis 1971b, 34-35 §121, with Figs 33-36.

in 1971 which revealed pottery dating from the Late Bronze Age, the Classical and Byzantine periods, the first fortification works on the hill were dated to the 13th-12th century BC and the site was identified with *Ismara*, a Kikonian town; subsequent improvements of the walls, and pottery finds of Classical and Byzantine date were attributed to the continued use of the acropolis during these periods.³⁶ This latter hypothesis was later revised by D. Triantaphyllos, who dated the acropolis to the 9th-8th century BC.³⁷

All identifications proposed for the three sites A, B and C remain hypothetical pending further research and, most importantly, decisive epigraphic evidence. In the case of Cape Molyvoti, the identification with Stryme appears all the more insecure, because it clashes in several ways with data from both secondary and primary sources. Attention is drawn to the following points:

1. The area east of the Nestos targeted by Thasian colonisation should plausibly be sought further east, closer to Mt. Ismaros, the source of the famous Ismarian wine, which is known to have reached Thasos and to have been greatly appreciated as early as the 7th century BC.³⁸

2. Stryme and/or its region is qualified by an eye-witness, as a "harbourless location",³⁹ whereas the peninsula occupied by the city at Molyvoti seems to offer at least one, if not two anchorage sites on either side of the isthmus linking it to Cape Molyvoti. It is indeed one of the very few locations in the otherwise harbourless coastline of Aegean Thrace offering relatively secure anchorage.

3. Most significantly, the size and importance of the surviving remains at Molyvoti, the wealth and extent of the cemeteries and the large number of inscribed funerary stelae of the 5th and 4th century BC collected from the adjacent area (*IThrAeg* E107-E167), can hardly be attributed to a minor, dependent settlement, an *emporion* such as Stryme.

³⁶ *Prakt* 1971, 97 ff., 1972, 90 ff.; *Ergon* 1972, 37f.; *BCH* 99 (1975) "Chronique" 668.

³⁷ D. Triantaphyllos, *Thrakike Epeterida* 7 (1987-1990) 302 and *THRACE*, p. 46 (caption). Cf. recently *IThrAeg* p. 130-31.

³⁸ Archil. fr. 2.2: 1 ἐν δορὶ μὲν μοι μᾶζα μεμαγμένη, ἐν δορὶ δ'οἶνος Ἰσμαρικός. πίνω δ' ἐν δορὶ κεκλιμένος.

³⁹ Dem. 50.22 (see *infra*, n. 47); the narrative is provided by Apollodoros son of Pasion, the Athenian trierarch who headed the expedition against Stryme.

It is furthermore notable that:

4. Stryme, a foundation-*emporion* of Thasos, was probably established as early as the 7th century BC, since the dispute between Thasos and Maroneia and the Thasians' appreciation of the local wine were mentioned by Archilochos;⁴⁰ yet the oldest finds identified at Molyvoti date no earlier than the last quarter of the 6th century BC. More importantly, none of the inscriptions from the area of Molyvoti, not even those of early date, show evidence of the use of the characteristic Paro-Thasian alphabet, which would have been expected in the case of a Thasian foundation.⁴¹

5. If Stryme was indeed located at Cape Molyvoti, it is difficult to explain its presumed presence among other dependent *komai* in an inscription of imperial date from Traianopolis,⁴² a Roman foundation which is safely located east of modern Alexandroupolis.

A last but most important point:

6. The identification of Stryme with Molyvoti —and of the river Lissos with the river Filiouri for that matter— invalidates parts of Herodotus's testimony: namely (a) that the Lissos flowed between Mesembria and Stryme; (b) that Stryme was located *west* of the westernmost end of the Peraia of Samothrace (Hdt. 7.108); and (c) that Xerxes' army marching from east to west reached Maroneia *after* crossing the river Lissos, which should thus be sought *east* of that city (Hdt. 7.109).

Proposing a "second reading" of Herodotus 7.108-109

Scepticism over the identification of Stryme with Cape Molyvoti is reinforced by a "second reading" of Herodotus's puzzling description of Aegean Thrace in 7.108-109.⁴³ A careful analysis of the text indicates that, the "straight-line", sequential narration is occasionally interrupted, as so

⁴⁰ *Supra*, notes 15 and 38.

⁴¹ We owe this judicious remark to Professor Denis Knoepfler. Indeed, in all of Aegean Thrace from the Nestos to the Hebros, the use of this particular alphabet is only documented in two inscriptions probably originating from Abdera (*IThrAeg* E13 and E30).

⁴² *IThrAeg* E433.

⁴³ *Supra*, n. 4.

often in the *Histories*, by circumstantial supplementary information — in this case, by geographical and ethnological remarks — meant to assist the reader in forming a clear understanding of the situation. Thus, there can be no doubt that 7.108 gives a “straight-line”, sequential *east to west* description of Xerxes’ march from Doriskos in the lower Hebros valley through the coastal forts of Samothrace as far as Mesembria and the otherwise unattested river Lissos. From this point on however, the unexpected change of structure (from the personal *παράμειβετο δὲ πορευόμενος* to the impersonal *ἔχεται δὲ ταύτης Θασίων πόλις Στρυμὴ* ...) marks a change of perspective. Actually, the entire second part of 7.108, introduced with *ἔχεται δὲ* and containing information on Stryme, on the name of the surrounding area (Briantike, former Gallaike) and on its native Thracian inhabitants (the Kikones), is simply a geographical *excursus*. The Persian army probably never reached or passed Stryme, which is only mentioned here as being the immediate neighbour of Mesembria to the west — with the Lissos separating the two cities.

Our hypothesis is confirmed by the introduction of the following paragraph, Hdt. 7.109. Indeed, Herodotus resumes the sequential — still from east to west — narration of the Persian army’s march from the point where he had left off, viz. on the banks of the river Lissos: “having crossed the Lissos, Xerxes’ army met three cities, Maroneia, Dikaia and Abdera” — in that order — all three presumably located *west* of the river Lissos. Stryme is not mentioned at this point, despite the fact that it was listed in 7.108 as located directly *west* of the Lissos river. The omission is easily understandable if, according to our analysis of Hdt. 7.108, the Persian army, after crossing the river Lissos, did not march as far as Stryme, but rather turned inland along the valley of this river and reached the territory of Maroneia *bypassing Mt. Ismaros on the north*. From Maroneia, it proceeded uneventfully in the direction of Dikaia and Abdera.⁴⁴

⁴⁴ Bakalakis (1954, 93) was probably right in supporting the view that Xerxes’ army did not actually march *through* these coastal cities but rather by-passed them, crossing the plain of Komotini over solid ground along the lower outcrops of Mt Rhodope, marking the course of the “old royal road running underneath the Thracian Paroreia” (Livy 39.27.10), which was also adopted by the Roman *Via Egnatia*. On the history of this route, see Loukopoulou 1997.

It is perhaps notable that this detour was also followed in the year 44 BC by the Roman legions of Brutus and Cassius, marching through Aegean Thrace in the direction of the plain of Philippi.⁴⁵

At this point of the narrative in 7.109, with the army having reached Abdera, Herodotus intercalates a second geographical *excursus* with information on the existence of famous lakes along the way, in the area of the cities already mentioned: Lake Ismaris, situated between Maroneia and Stryme, and Lake Bistonis, in the area of Dikaia, the latter fed by two rivers, the Travos and the Komsatos.

Our proposed “second reading” of Herodotus 7.108-109 attempts to restore credibility to a narrative usually believed to be confusing if not erroneous. Overturning some views widely accepted today, our analysis:

1. Argues that the historian gives a consistent account of the march of part at least of Xerxes’ troops from Doriskos to Abdera.

2. Proposes the identification of the river Lissos of Herodotus with one of the streams between Mesembria-Zone and Mt. Ismaros, most probably the Yagli (or Yala) Dere, which flows through the valley of Petrola. And, finally,

3. Disposes us to seek Stryme, a “harbourless location” (ἀλίμενον χωρίον) on the rocky outcrops of Mt. Ismaros.

Indeed, the physical traits of this battered coast, projecting into the sea to form the “rough” outline of Cape Serreion, represent an awe-inspiring landmark for seafarers.⁴⁶ Unlike Cape Molyvoti, the coastline east of Hagios Charalambos matches the eye-witness description of the scenery of the doomed expedition during a stormy night in the winter of the year 361/0 BC, when the squadron of Athenian and Thasian ships under the trierarch Apollodoros son of Pasion, having crossed from Thasos a “very long distance in the open sea”, endured a heavy storm

⁴⁵ App. *B Civ.* 4.12.101-13.102: δύο δ’ ἡμέραις τὸν Μέλανα κόλπον περιοδεύσαντες ἐς Αἶνον ἀφίκοντο καὶ ἐπὶ Αἶνῳ Δορίσκον τε καὶ ὅσα ἄλλα μέχρι Σερρείου ὄρους παράλια. Τοῦ δὲ Σερρείου προύχοντος ἐς τὸ πέλαγος, αὐτοὶ μὲν ἐς τὰ μεσόγαια ἀνεχώρουν. See M.-G. Parissaki, “Τὰ στενὰ τῶν Κορπίλων καὶ τῶν Σαπαίων. Ἡ ἐπανεξέταση ἑνὸς τοπογραφικοῦ προβλήματος”, *HOROS* 14-16 (2000-2003) 345-362 (333-354).

⁴⁶ Cf. Strabo 7 fr. 47 (48): μετὰ δὲ τὴν Μαρόνεια Ὀρθαγόρεια πόλις καὶ τὰ περὶ Σέρριον, παράπλους τραχύς. Cf. App. *B Civ.* 4.13.102: Τοῦ δὲ Σερρείου προύχοντος ἐς τὸ πέλαγος...

and violent winds “riding at anchor all night long in the open sea without food and without sleep”, unable to find refuge on the harbourless coast.⁴⁷ If the naturally defended acropolis at Hagios Georgios with its strong, partly polygonal ramparts was correctly dated by Bakalakis (and Triantaphyllos), this location, which controls the fertile eastern flanks of Mt. Ismaros but has no safe sea outlet except for the relatively exposed creek where the parallel wings of its Long Walls terminated,⁴⁸ must be considered a good candidate for the location of the

⁴⁷ Dem. 50.20-23: ἀφικόμενος δὲ εἰς Σηστόν ἐγὼ μὲν ὦμην οἰκαδὲ καταπλεύσεσθαι, τοῦ τε χρόνου μοι ἐξήκοντος καὶ ἐπιτετριραρχημένων ἤδη μοι δυοῖν μηνῶν καὶ διαδόχου οὐχ ἥκοντος ἐπὶ τὴν ναῦν· ὁ δὲ στρατηγὸς Τιμόμαχος, ἀφικομένων ὡς αὐτὸν πρέσβων Μαρωνιτῶν καὶ δεομένων αὐτοῖς τὰ πλοῖα παραπέμψαι τὰ σιτηγὰ, προσέταξεν ἡμῖν τοῖς τριηράρχοις ἀναδησαμένοις τὰ πλοῖα ἔλκειν εἰς Μαρώνειαν, πλοῦν καὶ πολὺν καὶ πελάγιον. καὶ ταῦθ' ὑμῖν διὰ τοῦτο ἅπαντα διηγησάμην ἐξ ἀρχῆς, ἵνα εἰδῆτε ὅσα ἀνηλωκῶς αὐτὸς καὶ ἡλικίης μοι γεγεννημένης τῆς λητουργίας ὕστερον ὅσα ἀναλώματα ὑπὲρ τούτου ἀνήλωσα ἐπιτετριραρχῶν, οὐχ ἥκοντος τούτου ἐπὶ τὴν ναῦν, καὶ κινδύνους ὅσους ἐκινδύνευσα αὐτὸς πρὸς τε χειμῶνα καὶ πρὸς πολεμίους. μετὰ γὰρ τὴν παραπομπὴν τῶν πλοίων τὴν εἰς Μαρώνειαν καὶ τὴν ἀφίξιν τὴν εἰς Θάσον, ἀφικόμενος παρέπεμπε πάλιν ὁ Τιμόμαχος μετὰ τῶν Θασίων εἰς [τὴν] Στρώμην οἶτον καὶ πελταστάς, ὡς παραληψόμενος αὐτὸς τὸ χωρίον. παραταξαμένων δὲ Μαρωνιτῶν ἡμῖν ταῖς ναυσὶν ὑπὲρ τοῦ χωρίου τούτου καὶ μελλόντων ναυμαχῆσαι, καὶ τῶν στρατιωτῶν ἀπειρηκότων, πλοῦν πολὺν πεπλευκότων καὶ πλοῖα ἐλκόντων ἐκ Θάσου εἰς Στρώμην, ἔτι δὲ χειμῶνος ὄντος καὶ τοῦ χωρίου ἀλιμένου, καὶ ἐκβῆναι οὐκ ὄν οὐδὲ δειπνοποιήσασθαι πολεμίας τῆς χώρας οὐσης καὶ περικαθημένων κύκλω τὸ τεῖχος καὶ ξένων μισθοφόρων καὶ βαρβάρων προσοίκαν, ἀναγκαῖον ἦν ἐπ' ἀγκύρας ἀποσαλεύειν τὴν νύκτα μετεώρους, ἀσίτους καὶ ἀγρύπνους, φυλαττομένους μὴ τῆς νυκτὸς ἡμῖν ἐπιθῶνται αἱ Μαρωνιτῶν τριῆρεις. ἔτι δὲ συνέβη τῆς νυκτὸς ὥρα ἔτους ὕδαρ καὶ βροντὰς καὶ ἄνεμον μέγαν γενέσθαι (ὕπ' αὐτὰς γὰρ Πλειάδων δύσεις οἱ χρόνοι οὗτοι ἦσαν), ἐξ ὧν τίνα οὐκ οἴσθε, ὦ ἄνδρες δικασταί, τοῖς στρατιώταις ἀθυμίαν ἐμπεσεῖν; πόσῃν δέ μοι μετὰ ταῦτα ἀπόλειψιν γενέσθαι πάλιν, τῶν ἀρχαίων ναυτῶν ταλαιπωρουμένων μὲν πολλὰ, ὠφελουμένων δὲ βραχέα, ὅσα ἐγὼ δυναίμην ἐκάστῳ δανειζόμενος ἐπαρκέσαι πρὸς ᾧ πρότερον εἶχον παρ' ἐμοῦ, ἐπεὶ ὁ γε στρατηγὸς οὐδὲ τὸ ἐφ' ἡμέραν αὐτοῖς τροφὴν διαρκὴ ἐδίδου. καὶ ἤδη τρεῖς μῆνες ἐπετετριραρχήντ' μοι, καὶ οὐδέπω οὗτος ἦκεν ἐπὶ τὴν ναῦν, ἀλλ' ἐμισθοῦμην ναῦτας ἀντὶ τῶν ἀπολιπόντων, δανειζόμενος ἀργύριον.

⁴⁸ *Supra*, p. 61-62 with notes 36-37.

Thasian *emporion* so highly coveted by the Maronitans. On the contrary, the restricted size of the walled area on Hagios Georgios, the absence of portable finds of early date in the surrounding region (as opposed in particular to the rich materials found in the cemeteries excavated in the area of Molyvoti and the lake of Mitrikon) seem to rule out, in our view, Bakalakis's and Lazaridis's proposal to identify this site with a Greek colony as important and as rich as the pre-Hellenistic city of Maroneia.⁴⁹

Hekataios on Maroneia

Even so, our "second reading" of Herodotus does not resolve the problem of the identification of Lake Ismaris and of the important archaeological site on Cape Molyvoti. If the lake of Mitrikon is the only possible candidate for Lake Ismaris, and if Stryme is to be sought *east* of Hagios Charalambos and Mt. Ismaros, both Stryme *and* Maroneia, which is undisputedly identified through epigraphic and numismatic evidence with the vast Hellenistic and Roman site at Hagios Charalambos, are situated *east* of the lake, *contra* Herodotus's statement in 7.109 that Stryme and Maroneia were on either side of the lake. Worse, the identity of the site at Molyvoti remains unidentified. There can only be two solutions to the problem: either

(a) Herodotus misplaced Stryme (*and* the river Lissos?) in 7.108 —in which case Bakalakis's identification of Stryme with Molyvoti⁵⁰ may be justified—, or

(b) Herodotus's statement in 7.109 that "Lake Ismaris lay between Maroneia and Stryme" is inaccurate.

Yet our analysis of Hdt. 7.107-108 has shown that both the sequential narrative and the geographical excursus can be shown to be consistent. Herodotus's location of Maroneia relative to Lake Ismaris, in particular, is confirmed by a quotation of undefined authorship preserved by the excerptors of Stephanos Byzantios's *Ethnika* s.v. *Maroneia*, - a quotation

⁴⁹ The contributions of Maroneia to the Athenian league, as listed in the tribute lists, bear witness to the size and economic importance of this city. Cf. recently *IThrAeg* p. 320-21 with exhaustive bibliography.

⁵⁰ *Supra*, p. 60-61.

that has rightly been attributed by Meineke to Hekataios.⁵¹ Presuming that the description of Thrace in the *Periodos* followed a *west to east* direction, Hekataios's quotation "ἐν δὲ λίμνῃ Ἰσμαρίς, ἐν δὲ Μαρώνεια πόλις" was admitted as confirmation of the fact that Maroneia/Hagios Charalambos was indeed *east* of Lake Ismaris, which could be none other than the lake of Mitrikon. However, the precise meaning of Hekataios's quotation is just as ambiguous as Herodotus's statement: Maroneia lies on one side (ἐν δέ) of Lake Ismaris (with Stryme on the other, according to Herodotus 107.9).

It has often been stressed that Herodotus used Hekataios's geographical description to illustrate his narrative of Xerxes' march.⁵² Herodotus's dependence on the *Periodos* of Hekataios, as indeed that of Stephanos Byzantios, our principal source of Hekataios's fragments, is being systematically analysed by Michael Zahrt in a special study which proposes a re-evaluation of the evidence for the Peraia of Samothrace, indeed of the entire plain east of Cape Serreion as far as the estuary of the river Hebros.⁵³ Once again, Zahrt stresses the fact that, owing to the non-geographical scope of Stephanos's monumental work—it focused primarily on the formation of ethnic names rather than on geography—⁵⁴ his use of Hekataios's phrasing was not only quite circumstantial, but clearly fragmentary, selective, abbreviated and inconsistent; moreover, Stephanos's original, including his quotations, was further manipulated and curtailed by the excerptors responsible for the text which was handed down to posterity.⁵⁵ Thus, for example, the

⁵¹ For the characteristic formula ἐν δέ..... ἐν δέ frequently used in several quotations expressly attributed to Hekataios, see *FGrHist* 1 F 80, 116, 141, 229, 287 *et al.*

⁵² See *infra*, p. 108, with references in n. 53.

⁵³ *Infra*, p. 87-120. We wish to thank Professor Zahrt for allowing us to consult his manuscript long before publication and for frequent discussions of relevant matters during repeated visits together to Aegean Thrace.

⁵⁴ *Infra*, p. 109.

⁵⁵ Suffice it to reiterate Zahrt's remarks (*infra*, p. 110) on our inability to reconstruct either Hekataios's works or his way of working: "In ihrer Mehrzahl geben die aus Hekataios' Werk überlieferten bzw. erhaltenen Fragmente nicht den Wortlaut des Originals wieder und sind daher in gewisser Weise irreführend. Insbesondere Stephanos ist seinem Zweck entsprechend mit dem Werk grosszügig umgegangen; weitere Verkürzungen bzw. Veränderungen

relative position of adjacent or neighbouring locations in Hekataios's *Periodos* is more often than not unspecified.⁵⁶ Consequently, in a cryptic quotation such as the one concerning Lake Ismaris and Maroneia, it is unsafe to assume that the city lay *east* or *west* of the lake: the phrase of Hekataios ἐν δὲ λίμνῃ Μάρις, ἐν δὲ Μαρώνεια πόλιν, preserved completely out of context in Stephanos, can only serve simply as confirmation of the fact that Maroneia indeed lay *near* or *beside* Lake Ismaris, with no specific indication whether it was located east or west of the lake. Similarly, Herodotus's *excursus* on the lakes in 7.109 —which probably paraphrases the above mentioned phrase from Hekataios's original— while indicating that Maroneia and Stryme were on either side of Lake Ismaris, does not necessarily indicate the relative position of the two cities east or west of the lake.

As to the (original?) hydronym Μάρις attributed to Hekataios for Lake Ismaris,⁵⁷ there can be no doubt that it inspired the name Μαρώνεια which was adopted by the Chians for their colony, while the name Ἰσμαρίς which prevailed in due course of time must have derived from some corrupt form of a location formula such as εἰς Μάριν or εἰς Μαρώνειαν, as already suggested by Isaac.⁵⁸

A Case of Relocation?

To summarize, evidence from literary sources of early date, such as Herodotus or even Hekataios does not exclude a location *west* of Lake Ismaris=lake Mitrikon for Maroneia. The idea of seeking Maroneia far from the securely confirmed city-site at Hagios Charalambos, on the southwestern flank of Mt. Ismaros, would appear far-fetched, were it not for the often emphasised fact that, to date, archaeological research has

mögen durch die Epitomatoren verursacht worden sei. ... Ferner sind die dem Werk des Hekataios entnommenen und alphabetisch angeordneten Angaben völlig aus ihrem Zusammenhang gerissen und bieten keinen Hinweis auf ihre ursprüngliche Anordnung oder Reihenfolge, was bei einem geographischen Werk natürlich besonders wichtig wäre...

⁵⁶ Cf. *infra*, p. 110.

⁵⁷ Unnecessarily emended to Ἰσμαρίς by Berkel (see *FGrHist* 1 ad F 159).

⁵⁸ Isaac 113, n. 324.

failed to discover traces of pre-Hellenistic strata on this site.⁵⁹ Is it possible that Maroneia was initially founded at a different location?

The absence of remains of Archaic or Classical date prior to *ca.* 350 BC in the ancient city which has been excavated since 1969 near Hagios Charalambos might easily be attributed to a combination of ill-chance, the vastness of the archaeological site and the small percentage of the areas as yet tackled. The case of Abdera, where remains of the pre-Classical city and its cemeteries have come to light only recently, after five decades of excavations,⁶⁰ might serve as a parallel. The early site and port of this latter colony down to the middle of the 4th century BC were eventually identified directly north-west of the Hellenistic and Roman city.⁶¹ It should be noted however, that all along, an ever increasing abundance of chance finds of Archaic and Classical date in and around Abdera left no doubt that the remains of the Classical and pre-Classical city only waited to be uncovered. In the case of Maroneia/Hagios Charalambos, the situation differs. Unlike Abdera, the entire area in and around Hellenistic and Roman Maroneia —indeed from the lake of Mitrikon to Hagios Georgios and as far inland as the southern outcrops of Mt. Rhodope for that matter— has not produced a single artefact of any significance of pre-Hellenistic date,⁶² as though this entire region were practically untouched by Greek colonisation.⁶³ Should we assume that the pre-Hellenistic city lay at a different location? Interestingly,

⁵⁹ *Supra*, p. 55.

⁶⁰ See recently *IThrAeg* p. 175, with bibliography.

⁶¹ See recently *IThrAeg* p. 175 n. 9, with bibliography.

⁶² Two chance finds of pre-Hellenistic date but in fact of unknown provenance are usually attributed to Maroneia: (a) a palmette finial, probably of a funerary stele, deposited in the Archaeological Collection of Maroneia, which was dated to the very first years of the 4th century BC (G. Bakalakis, “Κορυφώμα ἐπιτύμβιας στήλης ἐκ Μαρωνείας”, *Χαριστήριον εἰς Ἀν. Ὀρλάνδον*, v. 4 [1965] 45-56 [= *Οἶνος Ἰσμαρικὸς* 799-815]), and (b) a corner acroterion of Thasian marble, dated to the middle of the 5th century BC, recovered from a house in modern Maroneia (G. Bakalakis, “Γωνιακὸ ἀκρωτήριο ἀπὸ τὴν Μαρωνεία”, *Ελληνικά* 14 [1955] 3-22 [= *Οἶνος Ἰσμαρικὸς* 377-97]). Both may have been transported a considerable distance (from the area of lake Ismaris-Mitrikon ?) for their decorative value.

⁶³ For scanty finds of Classical, Hellenistic and Roman date on the coast near Imeros, see Lazaridis 1971b, 26 §90.

literary sources say no more about the archaeologically confirmed relocation of Abdera than about that —presumed— of Maroneia.

Geography and the description in Herodotus 7.108-109 as interpreted above, seemed to point at the city on Cape Molyvoti, located *west* of lake Maris-Ismaris (= lake of Mitrikon), with Stryme *east* of the lake and *west* of Mesembria-Zone —possibly at Hagios Georgios. Our proposal to identify pre-Hellenistic Maroneia with the city at Molyvoti supported, if not confirmed:

(a) By the privileged location of Cape Molyvoti, which meets the requirements for a typical colonial foundation: a cape or peninsula for defensibility, offering relatively safe anchorage and access to fertile agricultural land. It could not fail to attract colonists seeking a favourable site on an otherwise inhospitable coast. The disadvantages of the location, to which we shall return, were probably not felt during the early stages of the colony.

(b) By the importance of the excavated urban centre, its fortifications and its impressive public works —most importantly by the monumental waterworks of pre-Persian date, consisting of underground reservoirs and tunnels cut in the natural rock at the southern border of the city, presumably for the collection and storage of drinking water.⁶⁴

(c) By the vastness and richness of its cemeteries; and

(d) By the particularly numerous epigraphic finds.⁶⁵

Significantly also:

(e) By the impressive number of bronze coins of Maroneia found on the site of the city. Indeed, of a total of 998 coins collected in or around the city at Molyvoti, 56% are Maronitan; they include an important

⁶⁴ A structure comparable to the famous *Eupalineion* of Samos, according to Bakalakis (1967) 38-45.

⁶⁵ For a detailed collection of bibliographical data on the excavations at Cape Molyvoti, see *IThrAeg* p. 287-88; inscriptions found in or attributed to the city at Molyvoti appear under nos E106-167.

number of small Classical silver fractions of Maroneia;⁶⁶ further, a hoard of 28 silver Maronitan tetradrachms.⁶⁷

(f) By the fact that a considerable number of personal names appearing on inscribed coins of Maroneia are also attested on funerary stelae from the area of Cape Molyvoti.⁶⁸

(g) By the fact that life in the city of Molyvoti practically ceased during the second half of the 4th century BC, to which the earliest strata at Maroneia-Hagios Charalambos are to be dated.

Most importantly, there is sufficiently hard evidence:

(h) In the seldom mentioned fact that finds from the urban centre at Molyvoti include several public lead weights, marked with the letters ΜΙΑΙΡΙΩ, viz. Μαρώ(νιτών).⁶⁹

⁶⁶ On these see D. Terzopoulou, "Μικρές αργυρές υποδιαίρέσεις από την αρχαία Στρώμη", *NomChron* 22 (2003) 9-22. Excavation coins also include coins from Abdera, Dikaia, Neapolis, Thasos, Orthagoreia, the Macedonian kings etc.

⁶⁷ Cf. Bakalakis (1967) 33. For this hoard (*IGCH* 718), a burial date around 361/0 BC was proposed (Schönert-Geiss *Maroneia* 91; cf. however C. C. Lorber, *Amphipolis: the Civic Coinage in Silver and Gold* [Los Angeles 1990] 65-66). Interestingly, of a total of 2952 coins collected in Abdera, 70% are Abderitan (Chryssanthaki Dissertation). A similar percentage of coins of Zone (77%) is identified among the 2925 specimens excavated in Zone-Mesembria (Mina Galani-Krikou, "Προσέγγιση στη νομισματοκοπία της Ζώνης. Η μαρτυρία της ανασκαφής στην Αιγαιακή Μεσημβρία-Ζώνη", *Χαρακτήρ. Αφιέρωμα στη Μάντω Οικονομίδου* (Athens 1996) 63-80, esp. 68-70. On the coins of Maroneia found in the Hellenistic and Roman site of Maroneia, see Chr. Karadima and S. Psoma, "The excavation coins of Maroneia: a Preliminary Report", *Thrace in the Graeco-Roman World. Proceedings of the 10th International Congress of Thracology, Komotini-Alexandroupolis, 18-23 October 2005* (Athens 2007) 291-98.

⁶⁸ Μητροδότος, Μητροφών, Ποσίδε(ι)ος (Ποσηδῆιος), Ἡρόβολος, Ἡρόφιλος, Ἀπελλής, Πατροκλής, Πολυάρχης on coinage of Periods V, VI, VIII according to Schönert Geiss, dated between 436/5 and 348/7 (dates partially revised by H. B. Mattingly, "The Fifth-Century Tetradrachms of Maroneia", *NC* 160 (2000) 261-63; *AJA* 103 (1999) 712-13; see also C. C. Lorber, *Amphipolis: the Civic Coinage in Silver and Gold* [Los Angeles 1990] 65-67). For an analysis of personal names on inscriptions from the city on Cape Molyvoti, see M.-G. Parissaki, *Prosopography and Onomasticon of Aegean Thrace* ("ΜΕΛΕΤΗΜΑΤΑ" 49; Athens 2007) 299-302.

The proposed hypothesis raises an unanticipated question. Was Maroneia relocated and refounded at a different site around the middle of the 4th century BC or a little later? Is Maroneia/Hagios Charalambos another case of a relocated urban centre? The situation would not be unprecedented. Both literary and archaeological evidence reveal a considerable number of cities which abandoned the site of their initial settlement for a different, more or less close location. The well-known cases of late 5th century Pydna and early Hellenistic Smyrna, and, most significantly, of neighbouring Abdera offer the closest parallels.⁷⁰

Indeed, the case of Abdera, a close neighbour who shared in more than one way the destinies of Maroneia, provides a direct parallel. In view of Abdera's dismal situation following the Triballian invasion of 376/75 BC, the relocation and grandiose refoundation of its urban centre directly south of the Archaic and Classical city in the middle of the 4th century BC can only be attributed to some initiative probably related to the ambitious Thracian policy of Philip II. As to the archaeologically still unspecified reasons for its relocation, they may very probably be sought in some major physical deterioration of the site of the pre-Hellenistic city —advanced silting up of its harbours and one or more examples of the proverbial flooding of the river Nestos.⁷¹

In the case of Maroneia, the circumstances and reasons for a presumed abandonment of the original foundation site at Molyvoti may also be attributed to similar physical disasters: the adjacent lowlands are exposed to flooding, which may also have been responsible for the silting up of the twin harbours of Molyvoti and for the fatal destruction of the city's impressive waterworks, causing a shortage of drinking

⁶⁹ Permission to mention and study this important material, together with the sling bullets mentioned below, was generously granted by the XVIIIth Ephoreia of Prehistoric and Classical Antiquities in Komotini. A separate publication is forthcoming.

⁷⁰ For a recent discussion, see G. M. Cohen, *The Hellenistic Settlements in Europe, the Islands and Asia Minor* (1995) 180-83. For relocations of cities during the Archaic and Classical periods, see N. Demand, *Urban Relocation in Archaic and Classical Greece* (Oklahoma 1990); on the relocation of Pydna by Archelaos of Macedonia see M. B. Hatzopoulos, "Makedonia", M. H. Hansen and Th. H. Nielsen (eds), *An Inventory of Archaic and Classical Poleis* (Copenhagen 2004) 806. For the case of Abdera see *supra*, p. 70.

⁷¹ Cf. Strabo 7 fr. 43 (44).

water; moreover, while there is no evidence that the city was occupied, much less destroyed, by Philip II, such a possibility can not be excluded. It is even supported by the discovery of a significant number of sling-bullets similar to the ones found at Olynthos and associated with that city's destruction by Philip II. One way or the other, there should be no doubt that, as in the case of Abdera, Philip's intervention must have been crucial in planning and executing the relocation programme for Maroneia, indeed on a scale far outstripping the past situation. This hypothesis is reinforced by epigraphic evidence indicating the establishment of Philip II's cult in the new city of Maroneia.⁷²

The reasons for the selection of an unusually distant relocation site over 20 kms (!) east of the original location of the colony must remain undefined. However, for those familiar with the Thracian coast round and about Lake Ismaris-Mitrikon this decision appears quite realistic. Today, just as ever, the lowlands in the area of the lake of Mitrikon are infested by vicious swarms of mosquitoes, thriving in the noxious air of extensive swamplands. Access to arable lands must have been — and still is — hampered by frequent floods. Moreover, east of Cape Molyvoti, the coastline, partly flat and partly precipitous and unapproachable (the vertical soft-rock formations are locally known as "Yaria"), is harbourless, totally exposed to strong currents and the fury of the high seas. On the contrary, the site of Hellenistic — and Roman — Maroneia, dominated by the high-rising flanks of Mt. Ismaros (Hagios Athanasios) offers the advantages of a well-protected natural cove in Hagios Charalambos to serve as a safe port, and an excellent microclimate; last but not least, it provides direct access to fertile plains and hillsides, indeed the very countryside where the famous Maronitan vineyards thrived.

In the early days of the history of Maroneia the situation must have been quite different. The territory of the colony established on Cape

⁷² *IThrAeg* E186; cf. M. B. Hatzopoulos (*BullEpigr* 1991, 377; 1995, 91-92; 1996, 239; 1995, 867), who disputes the identification of the deified Macedonian king with Philip V by the ed. pr. (Chryssoula Veligianni-Terzi, "Weihinschrift aus Maroneia für Philip V", *ZPE* 85 [1991] 138-44 to Philip V; cf. also *TEKMERIA* 1 [1995] 191-92). See also Manuela Mari "The Ruler Cult in Amphipolis and in the Strymon Valley", *Thrace in the Graeco-Roman World. Proceedings of the 10th International Congress of Thracology, Komotini-Alexandroupolis, 18-23 October 2005* (Athens 2007) 371-86, esp. 377 with n. 21.

Molyvoti must have been quite restricted, encompassing only the westernmost parts of the fertile areas west of Mt. Ismaros. Self-sufficiency was secured from arable land on Cape Molyvoti and from more or less active trade with the hinterland, while the extensive marshlands surrounding the city and its territory served as a natural defence. The twin harbours on either side of the isthmus served traffic with the Aegean world. In those early days, the free development of the colony was only hampered by Thasian antagonism and by the presence of Stryme, an *emporion* of Thasos on the Thracian coast. The situation changed significantly some time after the middle of the 5th century BC, as evidenced by the drastic rise of Maroneia's tribute to the Athenian League.⁷³ The city's evident prosperity may reflect an extension of its territory on the Aegean coast, possibly at the expense of Thasos, which lost control over its *emporion* as a consequence of its ill-fated secession from the Athenian League. Maroneia and Abdera claimed the lion's share in the Thracian trade. Stryme, the prized *emporion* of Thasos, eventually fell under the sway of Maroneia. Significantly, roughly the same period marks the beginning of the important series of silver coins of Maroneia, with reverse types referring to Dionysus and wine production,⁷⁴ probably inspired by the contemporary silver coinage of Mende,⁷⁵ the main wine-trading port in the North Aegean.⁷⁶

The outstandingly successful development of Maroneia is further confirmed by the fact that it claimed a favoured place among the trading partners of the Odrysian kings during the first half of the 4th century BC⁷⁷ —especially after the fatal blow dealt to Abdera by the Triballians in 376/5

⁷³ The tribute of Maroneia was raised from 3 to 10 talents from 436/5 to 433/2 BC (*IThrAeg* p. 320, with references).

⁷⁴ E. Schönert-Geiss (*Maroneia* 17-18) dates periods IV and V to 437/6-436/5 and 436/5-411/10 BC respectively. For these two periods different dates were proposed by H. B. Mattingly (2000, 261-63): 432 for period IV and 432/1-424/3 BC for period V.

⁷⁵ Mattingly 2000, 261-63.

⁷⁶ J. K. Papadopoulos and St. A. Paspalas, "Mendaian or Chalcidean Wine", *Hesperia* 68.2 (1999) 161-88.

⁷⁷ *IThrAeg* TE55, lines 20-32. On the relations between Maroneia and Odrysian royalty (Xen. *An.* 7.3.15-17) see *IThrAeg* p. 321.

BC.⁷⁸ At the time Maroneia represented a major military power in Northern Aegean and seemed to have the benefit of unlimited support from the native populations in the Thracian hinterland.⁷⁹ It is thus very doubtful whether the efforts of Thasos to regain Stryme with Athenian support in 361 BC⁸⁰ were successful, as is usually agreed: the *διάκροις* mentioned by Demosthenes⁸¹ must rather be interpreted as some kind of arbitration, a mediation which persuaded the two cities to share the facilities offered by the *emporion* as well as the advantages of the Thracian trade.⁸²

As to Stryme, occupying the hilltop acropolis of Hagios Georgios directly east of Mt. Ismaros/Hagios Athanasios, it was probably abandoned and merged with Maroneia, when the latter was relocated on the adjacent mountain flank dominating the bay of Hagios Charalambos.

*Hellenistic and Roman Maroneia (Hagios Charalambos)
and the evidence of Strabo*

The territory of the new city of Maroneia at Hagios Charalambos, which was now some distance from Lake Ismaris/Mitrikon, was undoubtedly quite extensive; it must have encompassed both the ancient territory of Archaic and Classical Maroneia and the valley of the river Filiouri to the west, and the southern flanks of Mt. Ismaros, at least as far east as Cape Serreion; to the north, it probably included the fertile hills which mark the southern border of the plain of Komotini. At some point, probably in the late Hellenistic period, it extended even further east.⁸³

⁷⁸ *IThrAeg* p. 162 with references.

⁷⁹ Cf. the role of Maroneia in the Triballian attack on Abdera (Diod. Sic. 15.36; Aen. Tact. 15.8-10), and the support offered by “neighbouring” Thracians in repelling the Athenian attack against Stryme (*IThrAeg* p. 321-22 with references; cf. *supra*, p. 73).

⁸⁰ See *supra*, p. 58.

⁸¹ [Dem.] 12.17 (*supra*, n. 18).

⁸² It is noteworthy that in the famous inscription of Vetren (*IThrAeg* TE55), Thasos —along with Apollonia— is cited as a major trading partner in the Thracian trade, in addition to Maroneia; nevertheless this latter city is clearly the most privileged partner-state.

⁸³ According to Livy (38.41), Sale, one of the foundations of Samothrace on the Peraia (Hdt. 7.59), was a *vicus Maronitarum*. See also *IThrAeg* p. 325.

Of the specifics of this vast territory little is known, except for some micro-toponyms preserved in a certainly corrupt fragment of Strabo's 7th book: the banks of some unknown river or stream (ἡδυσ...γείου ῥεῖθρον) and the "Thasian summits" (Θασίων κεφαλαί), both listed in the *Epitome Vaticana*⁸⁴ in close association with Maroneia, Lake Ismaris and Ismaros/Ismara, the town of the Kikones; also, the "Heroon of Maron", added to the above from a commentary by Eustathios *ad Odysseam*, which is presumably based on the same passage of the *Epitome* or on the actual text of Strabo's 7th book.⁸⁵ The *Epitome* excerpt appears to be clearly elliptic or corrupt, thus providing confusing data. The confusion may easily be attributed to the fact that Strabo is often known to have combined information from various sources of different date. In the case of the littoral of Aegean Thrace, at least one of Strabo's acknowledged sources, Herodotus,⁸⁶ gives an account of the situation which prevailed in the early (pre-Hellenistic) period,⁸⁷ when the relative location of Maroneia was, as argued above, different: at the time Lake Ismaris was indeed adjacent to Maroneia. Strabo however was most probably unaware of a relocation which had happened some 350 years earlier. On the contrary, such micro-toponyms as those listed in Strabo's excerpt but absent from Herodotus may have derived from sources of a later date and should most probably be linked with Hellenistic and/or Roman Maroneia. The situation is further confused by the ambiguous syntax of the *Epitome* excerpt: does the term ῥεῖθρον (= banks) relate to Lake Ismaris, as understood by Eustathios, or to some river or stream? Are the Θασίων κεφαλαί —and for that matter the *Heroon of Maron*,

⁸⁴ Strabo 7 fr. 43 (44): μετὰ δὲ τὴν ἀνὰ μέσον λίμνην (sc. Lake Bistonis) Ξάνθεια Μαρώνεια καὶ Ἰσμαρος, αἱ τῶν Κικόνων πόλεις· καλεῖται δὲ νῦν Ἰσμαρά πλησίον τῆς Μαρωνείας· πλησίον δὲ καὶ ἡ Ἰσμαρίς ἐξήησι λίμνη· καλεῖται δὲ τὸ ῥεῖθρον ἡδυσ... γείον· αὐτοῦ δὲ καὶ αἱ Θασίων λεγόμεναι κεφαλαί. Σαπαῖοι δ' εἰσὶν οἱ ὑπερκείμενοι.

⁸⁵ Eust. *Od.* 9.30 (1.322.19-22): Ἡ ῥηθεῖσα Ἰσμαρος ἢ καὶ Ἰσμαρά ὕστερον, Κικόνων φασὶ πόλις, ἐγγὺς Μαρωνείας, ἐνθα καὶ λίμνη, ἧς τὸ ῥεῖθρον Ὀδύσειον καλεῖται, ἐκεῖ δὲ καὶ Μάρωνος Ἡρώων, ὡς ὁ Γεωγράφος ἰστορεῖ. Cf. Strabo 7 fr. 44a for a combination of the *Epitome* excerpt and Eustathius's comment.

⁸⁶ Strabo 7 fr. 51 (52): ... καθάπερ Ἡρόδοτος καὶ Εὐδοξος· εἰρηκε δέ, φησὶν, ὁ Ἡρόδοτος ...

⁸⁷ For Hdt. 7.108-109, see *supra*, n. 4.

which was added in Eustathius's commentary— located near Lake Ismaris or are they rather to be sought in the vicinity of (Hellenistic and Roman) Maroneia, near Hagios Charalambos?

The first of Strabo's micro-toponyms, *Θασίων κεφαλαί*, probably refers to some rocky protrusion and is most probably reminiscent of the Thasian presence at this part of the coast;⁸⁸ it can only be sought on the craggy coastline of Mt. Ismaros east of Hellenistic and Roman Maroneia (Hagios Charalambos).⁸⁹ As to the mysterious *ῥεῖθρον*, this is qualified by some partially preserved adjectival complement: *ῥεῖθρον ἡδύ...γειον*.⁹⁰ At Kunze's suggestion⁹¹ *ἡδύ...γειον* was emended to *Ὀδύσειον*, an adjectival form drawn from Eustathius's commentary on Homer's *Odyssey*.⁹² It is doubtful, however, whether this particular adjectival form was actually present in Strabo's text or whether it was an invention or emendation introduced by Eustathius, under the influence of the text on which he was commenting (the *Odyssey*), into the already corrupt manuscript of Strabo's 7th book —or of the *Epitome*— that he was using. In fact, palaeography allows various restorations for *ἡδύ...γειον* in the *Epitome*.⁹³ If indeed Strabo 7 fr. 43 (44) relies on or paraphrases (as expressly acknowledged further down, in 7 fr. 51 [52]) geographical data from Herodotus 7.109, we should not exclude the possibility that Strabo's corrupt *ῥεῖθρον ἡδύ...γειον* derives from Herodotus's description of the coast east of (Archaic and Classical) Maroneia, with the river Lissos flowing "between Stryme and Mesembria", west of the westernmost end of the Peraia of Samothrace, along the rocky outcrops of Mt. Ismaros and the Zonaia mountains. If such is the case, one might restore the corrupt adjective *ἡδύ...γειον* as some derivative form of the hydronym Lissos itself, e.g. *ῥεῖθρον*

⁸⁸ *Supra*, p. 58.

⁸⁹ A recent hypothesis by K. Boshnakov (*Die Thraker südlich vom Balkan in den Geographika Strabos* ["Palingenesia" 81; Stuttgart 2003] 279-81), locating *Θασίων κεφαλαί* on the north-eastern part of Thasos itself appears unjustifiable.

⁹⁰ See also Bakalakis (1958) 104, n. 2.

⁹¹ R. Kunze, "Strabobruchstücke bei Eustathius und Stephanus Byzantius", *RhM* 58 (1903) 126-37, esp. 126-27.

⁹² See *supra*, n. 85. Eust. *Od.* 9.30 (1.322.19-22).

⁹³ For a detailed analysis of various emendations and restitutions proposed, see recently K. Boshnakov (*supra*, n. 89) 279-80.

[Λίσ]σειον —even better, ῥεῖθρον ἢ δὺ [Λίσ]σειον, to account better for the 3-4 letter *lacuna* of the *Epitome* manuscript.⁹⁴

Strabo's last information, concerning the location of the *Heroon of Maron* near Maroneia, in the immediate vicinity of the river, supports the hypothesis that the Heroon should also be sought east of Hagios Charalambos. This hypothesis is strongly supported by excavations in the small creek of the Byzantine *Synaxis*. Archaeological research at this important Byzantine monastic complex situated some 10 kms east of Maroneia, directly west of Cape Serreion, uncovered important architectural remains of a circular building incorporated in the southern apse of an Early Christian basilica, along with richly decorated marble architectural remains of some building of monumental dimensions dated to the Hadrianic period, also reused in early Christian and Byzantine structures, as well as remains of port and hostel installations. It has been plausibly suggested that in pre-Christian times the site of the Synaxis was occupied by the Heroon of Maron, which should be identified with the circular building, typical of a Greek *heroon*, and various lavishly decorated constructions; furthermore, that the Synaxis creek, located directly opposite Samothrace, served as the port of passage to the famous Sanctuary of the Great Gods.⁹⁵ The latter hypothesis is now corroborated by a recently published edict of Hadrian found in Maroneia-Hagios Charalambos mentioning boats, rowers and hostels serving the passage from Maroneia to Samothrace.⁹⁶

"Maronea, prius Orthagurea dicta"

Our hypothesis concerning the relocation of Maroneia from Cape Molyvoti to the western outcrops of Mt. Ismaros may further provide some clue as to the still unidentified location of Orthagoreia. As already

⁹⁴ On the proposed identification of Lissos with Yagli dere, see *supra*, p. 65.

⁹⁵ On excavations at the Synaxis and on the proposed identification with the Heroon of Maron, see Ch. Bakirtzis, "Βυζαντινὴ Θράκη, 330-1453", *THRACE* 167-71 and Ch. Bakirtzis – G. Chatzimichalis, *Σύναξη Μαρωνείας* (Athens 1991) 59-142 (also translated in French, Ch. Bakirtzis, *Synaxis de Maronée. Données des fouilles (1985-1990)*, Exposition d'art contemporain et d'archéologie, 25 juin-15 septembre 1994, Domaine de Kerguehennec 1994). See also Ch. Bakirtzis, D. Triantaphyllos *et al.*, *Thrace* (Athens 1988).

⁹⁶ *IThrAeg* E185.

noted, this latter city minted silver and bronze coinage exclusively in the middle of the 4th century BC, which circulated no further than the cities of Aegean Thrace (Abdera, Cape Molyvoti, Maroneia, Zone-Mesembria). According to Strabo, Orthagoreia was situated east of Maroneia and west of (or near) Cape Serreion;⁹⁷ yet, according to Pliny, Orthagoreia was merely the earlier name of Maroneia itself.⁹⁸ This information is usually believed worthless, as representing some error in the manuscript tradition. In view, however, of the proposed relocation of Maroneia and of the short life-span of the mint of Orthagoreia, one should not exclude the possibility that Pliny's statement echoes some phase in the ekistics of the area immediately prior to the relocation of Maroneia. To judge from the city toponym — a derivative of the personal name Orthagoras or of an epithet of Artemis? — and from the iconographic types illustrated on its coinage, Orthagoreia may have been some minor Macedonian foundation at Hagios Charalambos.⁹⁹ Its particularly advantageous location may have encouraged the Maronitans eventually to abandon their city on Cape Molyvoti and to resettle at Orthagoreia,¹⁰⁰ which was thus finally absorbed in the new civic centre.¹⁰¹

⁹⁷ Strabo 7 fr. 47 (48): *supra*, n. 46.

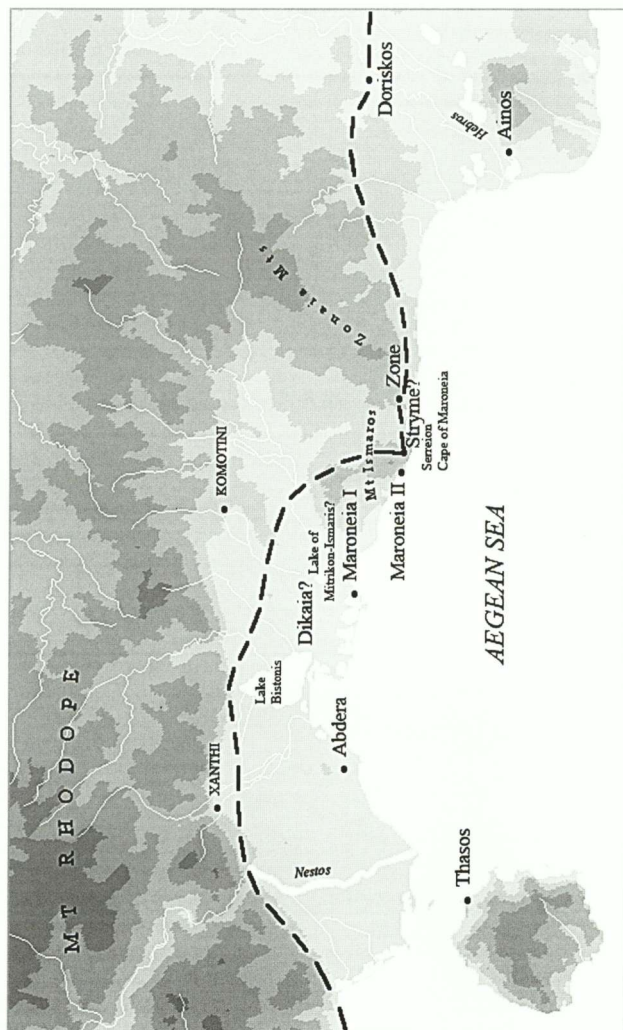
⁹⁸ Plin. HN 4.43: *Maronea, prius Orthagurea dicta*.

⁹⁹ Cf., however, the name Orthopolis of another foundation of Philip II in the Parorbélia (Strabo 7 fr. 36). The use of the prefix ὀρθό- (from ὀρθός) with words referring to civic status and civic institutions in name formations such as Orthoboulos/le, Orthodamos, Orthodikos, Orthopolis, Orthotimos (Bechtel 352) may indicate a similar etymology for Orthagoras and Orthagoreia.

¹⁰⁰ For Orthagoreia see S. Psoma, "Orthagoreia. A Macedonian Foundation in Aegean Thrace", in S. Psoma, Chr. Karadima and D. Terzopoulou, *Coins from the Classical City at the Peninsula of Molyvoti and the Excavations of Maroneia* (forthcoming).

¹⁰¹ This study has largely benefited from frequent discussions and always readily offered support by our colleagues in the XIXth Ephoreia of Classical Antiquities of Komotini, particularly Chryssa Karadima, Nikolitsa Kokkotaki, Dimitris Matsas, Domna Terzopoulou, and Athanasia Tsoka. However, the authors bear sole responsibility for the views here proposed.

For most of the photographs here published we are indebted to Professor M. Zahmt.



Map 1. Xerxes' march through Aegean Thrace



Fig. 1. View of the Molyvoti peninsula from the East

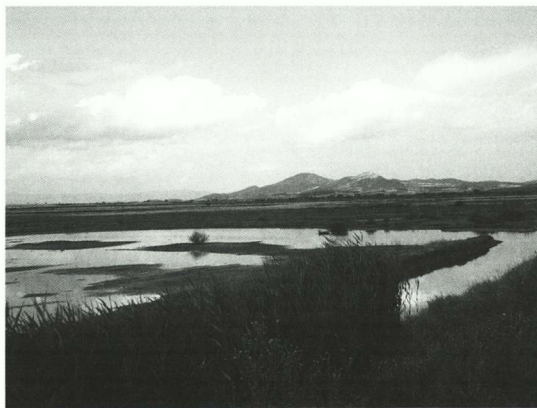


Fig. 2. Marshland in the vicinity of the Lake of Mitrikon

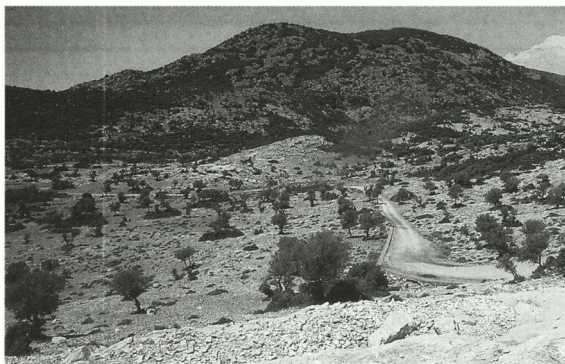


Fig. 3. Hagios Georgios viewed from the south-east

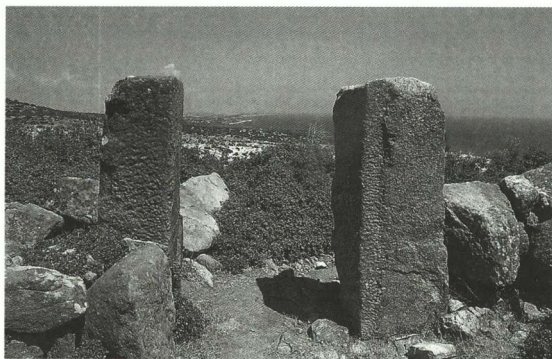


Fig. 4. Ancient remains on the hill of Hagios Georgios



Fig. 5. View of the harbour of Hellenistic and Roman Maroneia (Hagios Charalambos) from the summit of Hagios Athanasios (Mt. Ismaros)

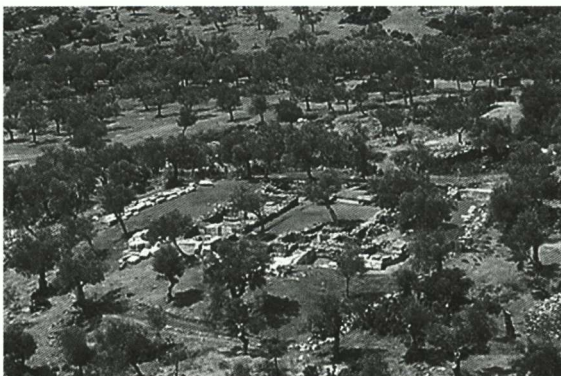


Fig. 6. The archaeological site at Synaxis



Fig. 7. Constructions of Roman date at Synaxis bay



Fig. 8. Cape Serreion and the Peraia of Samothrace viewed from SE

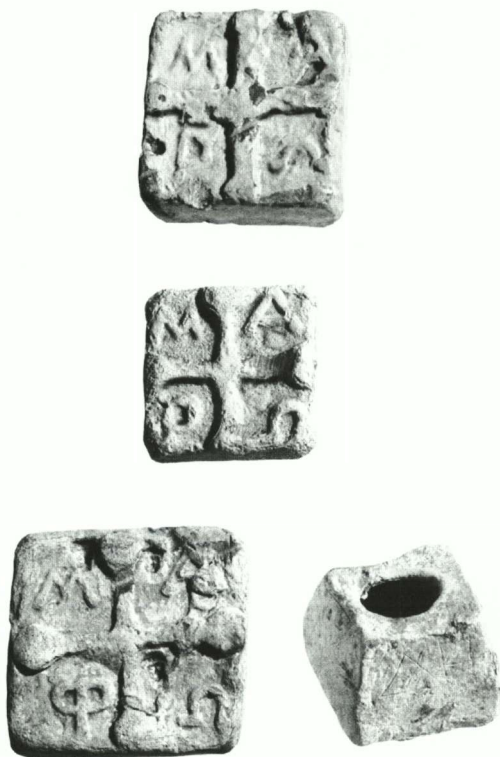


Fig. 9, 10, 11, 12. Inscribed lead weights of Maroneia from the peninsula of Molyvoti