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The Cave of the Nymphs at Pharsalus

Studies on a Thessalian Country Shrine

Robert S. Wagman

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Cover illustration: Pharsala. View of the Karapla hill and the cave of the Nymphs from N, 1922 (SAIA, Archivio Fotografico B 326)

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A. καὶ A. ἀνέθēκα θεαῖς τόδ' ἔργον

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Acknowledgements

> What better way to supply a plot for the directionless soul than at least read about a trip, at best to go on one and write it up?
>
> EISNER, *Travelers to an Antique Land*

I made my first acquaintance with the Karapla cave while collecting material for a dissertation I never wrote. The topic of my doctoral thesis was decided during a fateful conversation with my graduate mentor in Baltimore. As a result of that meeting, in the late eighties I relocated to Athens to begin work on a corpus of Greek sacred poetry preserved in inscriptions. The memory of my first year abroad is a blurry succession of images which fade into the chaotic background of 1987 Athens. Like Henry Miller, eventually I found peace at Epidaurus. Between visits to the Argolis, the American School of Classical Studies gave me room, board, and a refuge where to collect the pieces of my personal and professional life. As work at Epidaurus progressed, colleagues and friends at the School continued to provide me, on occasion, with material for the forgotten corpus of Greek religious poetry. One morning, an index card with the *SEG* reference to a 'hymn' for the Nymphs from Pharsalus appeared, unsigned, on my carrel in the Blegen Library. I put it away in a file where I kept other similar notes, vaguely wondering what it would be like to work in a cave.

The chance to satisfy this curiosity presented itself years later, after I joined the faculty of the University of Florida in Gainesville. Opportunity appeared in the form of an MA student who, as I had done during my graduate years, was looking for a thesis topic and an excuse to flee east. Having decided on a project entitled *The Cave of Pantalkes at Pharsala*, Brian T. Moore followed me to Thessaly in July 1993 for a three-day survey of the Karapla site and its surroundings. His work, completed the following Spring, was the first study of the cave to appear in over half a century. Despite some initial plans to develop the thesis for publication, Brian opted in the end for Law School and a professional career. The fieldwork we carried out together that Summer of 1993 thus became the nucleus of this book, not to be completed until much later.

I began working again on the Karapla cave in 2005, partly to fulfill a project that continued to intrigue me, partly to seek occasional relief while serving a term as department head. Throughout the five years that I spent in this position I tried to go back to Thessaly as many times as possible without testing the tolerance of my colleagues and family. Work proceeded in fits and starts, but the stark beauty of the Thessalian mountainland and the friendliness of its people provided the cement that my discontinuous research calendar was lacking. At home my daughter grew along with my fieldbooks, relishing in tales of caves, bats, and giant horseflies that attack little girls. An expert at decoding my non-native English, my wife bravely proofread the first draft of this manuscript as it slowly took shape.

Despite the small size of the resulting monograph, researching the Karapla cave was a long and complex project that could not have been accomplished without the assistance of many people. I aknowledge them here in no particular order. In Greece: Professor Ioannis Barmpoutis and the Faculty of Forestry and Natural Environment of the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki; Dr. Panagiotis (Takis) Karkanas of the Ephorate of Palaeoanthropology and Speleology of S. Greece in Athens; Dr. Stella Katakouta of the 15th Ephorate of Prehistoric and Classical Antiquities in Larissa; Vassiliki (Vasso) Rontiri and Charalambos (Bampis) Intzesinoglou of the 13th Ephorate of Prehistoric and Classical Antiquities in Volos; the current Mayor of Pharsala, Mr. Aris Karahalios, and the special archaeological consultant to the Mayor's Office, Dr. Vassiliki (Vasso) Noula-Karpeti; Mr. Ilias Dinos of the Aigli Hotel in Pharsala, to whom I am indebted for far more than hospitality; the Director, Professor Emanuele Greco, and the staff of the Italian Archaeological School in Athens; the Directors, Professor Stephen Tracy (2002–2007) and Professor Jack Davis (2007–2012), and the colleagues and friends at the American School of Classical Studies at Athens, especially William and Evren Bruce; the Directors, Professor James Whitley (2002–2007) and Professor Catherine Morgan (2007–2014), the Assistant Director, Mr. Robert Pitt (2007–2014), and the staff of the British School in Athens; the staffs of the Hellenic Military Geographical Service and the Institute for Geology and Mineral Exploration (IGME). In France Professor Bruno Helly, Drs. Laurent Darmezin, and Richard Bouchon were a congenial and helpful audience at a seminar on the Karapla cave I held at the *Maison de l'Orient et de la Méditerranée*; Professor Jean-Claude Decourt also extended friendship and support for my research *per epistulas*. From the Netherlands Marco Rasi provided timely assistance with a terracotta figurine in Amsterdam.

Funding for the project was supplied by the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences and the Center for Greek

Studies of the University of Florida. I am grateful to both for their continued financial assistance through the years. I am also grateful to the Neikirk family for endowing the Term Professorship which I held during the final stages of the work.

Of the many readers whose suggestions were critical in making this a better book, Jennifer Larson is the one to whom I owe the greatest debt—not least for presenting me with a much treasured copy of her monumental study on the Nymphs. It now features prominently on my shelves, in place of the mangled university copy which I shamelessly returned to the library after many years of abuse.

I am also grateful to Brill's anonymous reader for helpful advice and especially to Professors Adele Scafuro and John Bodel for welcoming my study in their series. Professor John M. Fossey, Editor-in-Chief of *Monumenta Graeca et Romana*, offered friendly support at an early stage of the project. Jennifer Pavelko, Tessel Jonquière, Tessa Schild, Gera van Bedaf, and the other editorial staff at Brill provided steady and patient assistance throughout the publication process.

Just as the book was reaching its final shape, the dear mentor whom I mention earlier in this preface passed away after a brief illness. It is my hope that in the following pages readers will be able to catch a glimpse, however small, of Diskin Clay's human and intellectual legacy.

Finally, a very special thanks goes to my fellow traveler and field assistant Andrew G. Nichols. A historian and scholar of Ctesias of Cnidus, for the last seven years Nichols was always ready to trade *FGrH* for the topographer's boots and accompany me in many seemingly endless ramblings on the goat trails of the northwest Othrys. My apologies to him if in return for his help he has collected more bruises than salary.

The author quoted at the beginning of this preface writes of travel literature that it "must satisfy not only the reader's hunger for narrative fact or fiction, but a more general human hunger for narrative in our lives". Although based on many transatlantic crossings, the present study is not about travel, and most of the personal experiences which occurred in the course of its making must be omitted for the sake of scientific exposition. But even if I do not aknowledge them in the book, I am deeply indebted to all the unnamed friends from Greece, America, and other countries who wrote, with me, the narrative behind it.

Gainesville, Spring 2015

Abbreviations and Other Prefatory Matters

Abbreviations

Abbreviations of ancient authors and their works are those found in H.G. Liddell, R. Scott, H.S. Jones, and R. McKenzie, (eds.) *A Greek-English Lexicon*, Oxford 1996 (*LSJ*) and P.G.W. Glare, *Oxford Latin Dictionary*, Oxford 1982 (*OLD*). Periodicals and references follow the the list printed in the appendices to B.H. McLean, *An Introduction to Greek Epigraphy of the Hellenistic and Roman Periods from Alexander the Great down to the Reign of Constantine* (*323 BC–AD 337*), Ann Arbor 2002, pp. 387–472; some titles not included by McLean are cited according to *L'Anneé Philologique*.

ABV	*Attic Black-Figure Vase Painters*. Beazley, J. Oxford 1956.
AEThSe	*Αρχαιολογικό Έργο Θεσσαλίας και Στερεάς Ελλάδας. Πρακτικά επιστημονικής συνάντησης*. Mazarakis Ainian, A. (ed.) Volos, 2006; 2009; 2012.
CEG I	*Carmina epigraphica graeca saeculorum* VIII–V *a. Chr. n.* Texte und Kommentare 12. Hansen, P. (ed.) Berlin 1983–1989.
CIL 6	*Corpus inscriptionum latinarum vol.* VI. *Inscriptiones urbis Romae Latinae.* Henzen, G., De Rossi, I.B., Bormann, E., Huelsen, C. and Bang, M. (eds.) Berlin 1874–2000.
CIL 8	*Corpus inscriptionum latinarum vol.* VIII. *Inscriptiones Africae Latinae*. Wilmanns, G. and Mommsen, T. (eds.) Berlin 1881; reprint: 1960.
DK	*Die Fragmente der Vorsokratiker*. Diels, H. and Kranz, H. (eds.) 10th edition, Berlin 1961.
DAGM	*Documents of Ancient Greek Music: the Extant Melodies and Fragments Edited and Transcribed with Commentary*. Pöhlmann, E. and West, M.L. (eds.) Oxford 2001.
EAA	*Enciclopedia dell'arte antica, classica e orientale*. Istituto della Enciclopedia Italiana. Rome 1958–1966.
Ta Pharsala 2013	*Τα Φάρσαλα και η ευρύτερη περιοχή του. Ιστορικά και αρχαιολογικά δεδομένα από τους προϊστορικούς έως τους νεώτερους χρόνους*, International Scientific Conference, Pharsala 1–3 November 2013. Proceedings forthcoming.
FGE	*Further Greek Epigrams. Epigrams before AD 50 from the* Greek Anthology *and Other Sources, not Included in* Hellenistic Epigrams *or* The Garland of Philip. Page, D.L., Dawe, R.D. and Diggle, J. (eds.) Cambridge 1981.
FGrH	*Die Fragmente der griechischen Historiker*. Jacoby, F. (ed.) Berlin 1923–1958.
FHG	*Fragmenta historicorum Graecorum.* Müller, K. (ed.) Paris 1841–1873.
GHI	*Greek Historical Inscriptions 404–323 BC*. Rhodes, P.J. and Osborne, R. (eds.) Oxford 2003.
GVI	*Griechische Vers-Inschriften*. I. *Die Grab-Epigramme*. Peek, W. (ed.) Berlin 1955; reprint: Chicago 1988.
IACP	*An Inventory of Archaic and Classical Poleis*. Hansen, M.H. and Thomas, H.N. (eds.) Oxford 2004.
IAG	*Iscrizioni agonistiche greche*. Studi pubblicati dall'Istituto Italiano per la Storia Antica 12. Moretti, L. (ed.) Rome 1953.
IEG	*Iambi et elegi Graeci ante Alexandrum cantati.* West, M.L. (ed.) Oxford 1989.
IDelos	*Inscriptions de Délos*. Plassart, A., Durrbach, F., Roussel, P., Launey, M. and Coupry, J. (eds.) Paris 1926–1972.
IDidyma	*Didyma.* II. *Die Inschriften*. Rehm, A. (ed.) Berlin 1958.
IG I^3	*Inscriptiones Graecae vol.* I. *Inscriptiones Atticae Euclidis anno anteriores. Editio tertia.* Lewis, D. and Jeffery, L. (eds.) Berlin 1981–1994.
IG II^2	*Inscriptiones Graecae voll.* II *et* III. *Inscriptiones Atticae Euclidis anno posteriores. Editio altera.* Kirchner, J. (ed.) Berlin 1913–1940.
IG IV^2, 1	*Inscriptiones Graecae vol.* IV. *Inscriptiones Argolidis. Editio altera. Pars* I. *Inscriptiones Epidauri*. Hiller von Gaertringen, F. (ed.) Berlin 1929.
IG V, 1	*Inscriptiones Graecae vol.* V. *Pars* I. *Inscriptiones Laconiae et Messeniae*. Kolbe, W. (ed.) Berlin 1913.
IG IX, 2	*Inscriptiones Graecae vol.* IX. *Pars* II. *Inscriptiones Thessaliae*. Kern, O. (ed.) Berlin 1908.
IG XII, 3	*Inscriptiones Graecae vol.* XII. Pars III. *Inscriptiones insularum maris Aegaei praeter Delum. Inscriptiones Symes, Teutlussae, Teli, Nisyri, Astypalaeae, Anaphes, Therae et*

	Therasiae, Pholegandri, Meli, Cimoli. Hiller von Gaertringen, F. (ed.) Berlin 1898. Suppl. Berlin 1904.
IG XII, 7	*Inscriptiones Graecae vol.* XII. *Pars* VII. *Inscriptiones Amorgi et insularum vicinarum*. Delamarre, J. (ed.) Berlin 1908.
IG XII, 8	*Inscriptiones Graecae vol.* XII. *Pars* VIII. *Inscriptiones insularum maris Thracici*. Friedrich, C. (ed.) Berlin 1909.
IG XIV	*Inscriptiones Graecae vol.* XIV. *Inscriptiones Siciliae et Italiae, additis Galliae, Hispaniae, Britanniae, Germaniae inscriptionibus*. Kaibel, G. (ed.). Berlin 1890.
IGBulg IV	*Inscriptiones graecae in Bulgaria repertae*. *Vol.* IV. *Inscriptiones in territorio Serdicensi et in vallibus Strymonis Nestique repertae*. Mihailov, G. (ed.) Sofia 1997.
IGR	*Inscriptiones Graecae ad res Romanas pertinentes*. Cagnat, R. et al. (eds.) Paris 1911–1927.
IGUR	*Inscriptiones Graecae Urbis Romae*. Moretti, L. (ed.) Studi pubblicati dall'Istituto Italiano per la Storia Antica 17. Rome 1968–1990.
IMag	*Die Inschriften von Magnesia am Maeander*. Kern, O. (ed.) Berlin 1900.
IMilet	*Milet. Ergebnisse Der Ausgrabungen und Untersuchungen seit dem Jarh 1899. Bd.* 6. *Inschriften von Milet. Teilen* 1–3. Rehm, A., Hermann, P., Günther, W. and Ehrhardt, N. (eds.) Berlin-New York 1997–2006.
IMT	*Inschriften von Mysia und Troas*. Barth, M. and Stauber, J. (eds.) Munich 1973.
IRhodB	*Die Inschriften der Rhodischen Peraia*. Inschriften griechischer Städte aus Kleinasien 38. Blümel, W. (ed.) Bonn 1991.
IRhodM	*Nuova silloge epigrafica di Rodi e Cos*. Maiuri, A. (ed.) Florence 1925.
ISE	*Iscrizioni storiche ellenistiche. Testo traduzione e commento*. Biblioteca di studi superiori 53. Moretti, L. and Canali De Rossi, F. (eds.) Florence 1967.
IThess	*Inscriptions de Thessalie*. I. *Les cités de la vallée de l'Énipeus*. Études épigraphiques 3. Decourt, J.C. (ed.) Paris-Athens 1995.
LGPN	*A Lexicon of Greek Personal Names*. Fraser, P. M. and Matthews, E. (eds.) Oxford 1987–.
LIMC	*Lexicon iconographicum mythologiae classicae. Bildlexikon der antiken Mythologie*. Zurich 1981–1999.
LSCG Suppl.	*Lois sacrées des cités grecques. Supplément.* École française d'Athènes. Travaux et mémoires des anciens membres étrangers de l'école et de divers savants, fasc. XI. Sokolowski, F. (ed.) Paris 1962.
LSCG	*Lois sacrées des cités grecques*. École française d'Athènes. Travaux et mémoires des anciens membres étrangers de l'école et de divers savants, fasc. XVIII. Sokolowski, F. (ed.) Paris 1969.
NGSL	*Greek Sacred Law. A Collection of New Documents*. Religions in the Graeco-Roman World 152. Lupu, E. (ed.) Leiden-Boston 2005.
PCG	*Poetae Comici Graeci*. Kassel, R. and Austin, C. (eds.) 1983. Berlin-New York 1983–2001.
PMG	*Poetae Melici Graeci*. Page, D. (ed.) Oxford 1962.
RE	*Realencyclopädie der Classischen Altertumswissenschaft*. Pauly, A. and Wissowa, G. (eds.) Berlin 1894–1978.
SEG	*Supplementum Epigraphicum Graecum*. Leiden 1923—present.
ThesCRA	*Thesaurus Cultus et Rituum Antiquorum. Lexikon antiker Kulte und Riten*. Los Angeles 2004–2006.
TrGF	*Tragicorum Graecorum Fragmenta*. Kannicht, R., Snell, B. and Radt, S. (eds.) Göttingen 1971–2004.

National and local government publications are abbreviated as follows:

ΕΣΔΦ	*Επιχειρησιακό σχέδιο δήμου Φαρσάλων για την περίοδο 2011–2014*. Pharsala 2011.
ΦΕΚ	*Φύλλο Εφημερίδος της Κυβερνήσεως* (full title: *Εφημερίς της Κυβερνήσεως της Ελληνικής Δημοκρατίας*).

In addition, the following sigla have been adopted for academic, scientific, and other organizations cited in the text:

AENAA	Αναπτυξιακή Εταιρεία Νομαρχιακής Αυτοδιοίκησης Λάρισας.
ASCSA	American School of Classical Studies at Athens.
BSA	British School at Athens.
DAI	Deutsches Archäologisches Institut.
EL.STAT	Hellenic Statistical Authority (Ελληνική Στατιστική Αρχή, or ΕΛ.ΣΤΑΤ.).

HMGS	Hellenic Military Geographical Service (Γεωγραφική Υπηρεσία Στρατού, or Γ.Υ.Σ.).
HNMS	Hellenic National Meteorological Service (Ελληνική Μετεωρολογική Υπηρεσία, or E.M.Y.).
IGME	Institute for Geology and Mineral Exploration (Ινστιτούτο Γεωλογικών και Μεταλλευτικών Ερευνών, or Ι.Γ.Μ.Ε.).
NOA	National Observatory of Athens (Ελληνικό Αστεροσκοπείο Αθηνών, or E.A.A.).
MEDALUS	Mediterranean Desertification and Land Use.
SAIA	Scuola Archeologica Italiana di Atene.
USDA	U.S. Department of Agriculture.

All other abbreviations, including units of measurement and related terminology (e.g. masl: meters above sea level), are those used in ASCSA publications.

Transliteration

In order to facilitate readers outside the Classical disciplines, an effort has been made to transliterate Greek in those sections of the book for which knowledge of the original is not strictly necessary. When available, Greek names are rendered by their familiar Latin or English forms (e.g. Φάρσαλος: Pharsalus). Otherwise the transliteration system recommended for ASCSA publications is used (e.g. Φάρσαλα: Pharsala). The following exceptions apply to ancient Greek:

β	*b*	
η	*ê*	
υ	*u*	
ω	*ô*	
ευ	*eu*	
῾	*h*	(aspiration mark, when noted over initial vowels and diphthongs)

Turkish names from the Ottoman period are rendered according to current Turkish spelling (*Yeni imlâ kılavuzu*, 3rd edition 1967). In citations, all names are given as originally printed.

Translation

English translations are provided for the ancient and modern texts quoted throughout the book, except in sections 4.1.1–4 and 4.2.1–4, which assume a specialized knowledge of the Classical languages. Unless otherwise noted, the translations are my own.

Geographical Names

For the sake of consistency, the Thessalian toponymy employed by HMGS cartographers is adopted throughout the text. However, since the local reality often proves to be more exuberantly polyonymous than any map or gazeteer can reflect, older Greek and Turkish names are also noted as needed. Thessalian toponyms are subject to changes and permutations within what seem to be relatively short spans of time and accuracy is difficult to achieve. What used to be an oronym in one decade can become a hydronym or a district name in the next; not infrequently, place designations retrieved from scholarly articles and other specialized references turn out to be obsolete by the time one tries to retrace them. Readers are asked to approach the matter with an open mind. A similar plea must be made as to the inevitable ambiguity which underlies the use of the names Pharsalus and Pharsala: although the distinction is straightforward in most cases, occasionally ancient and modern tend to overlap in the narrative just as they do in the stratigraphical records.

Epigraphical and Metrical Symbols

The following editorial sigla, commonly referred to as the Leiden system, have been used for the text of Inscriptions I–II and all epigraphical citations.

[---]	lacuna of uncertain length
[. . .] or [3]	lacuna of estimated length
[ααα]	letters restored by the editor
[[ααα]]	letters deleted by the lettercutter
{ααα}	letters deleted by the editor
⟨ααα⟩	letters added/substituted by the editor
(ααα)	abbreviation resolved by the editor
ạ̣ạ̣ạ̣	letters of uncertain reading
AAA	letters of clear reading but uncertain meaning
<u>ααα</u>	currently missing letters recorded by previous editors
v	single letter space
vac.	empty space

In the metrical analysis the symbols used are those found in West, *Greek Metre* (Oxford 1982).

Catalog of Objects

The archaeological materials retrieved at the Karapla cave during the Italian excavations of 1922 and successively stored at the Athanasakeion Museum in Volos are currently reported as lost. Thus the Catalog of objects in Chapter 3 of this book is not based on autopsy, but on a study of photographic and archival records kindly placed at my disposal by the Italian Archaeological School in Athens. Whenever a scale was used in the excavation photographs I attempted to provide approximate measurements for the objects discussed. Occasional objects retrieved during my own work at the site have been included at the end of the Catalog.

Works Unavailable for Consultation

Below is a list of theses and dissertations which I was unable to access during the writing of this study. Unconsulted works of shorter kind, such as recent conference papers, are reported in the footnotes.

Intzesinoglou, A. *Θεσσαλικές επιγραφές σε τοπικό αλφάβητο*. Diss. University of Thessaloniki 2000.

Mili, M. *Studies in Thessalian* Religion (Diss. University of Oxford 2005).

Richard, P. *Etude géologique de la région de Pharsala* (*Grèce*). Thèse, Université des sciences et technologies de Lille, 1980.

Stamatopoulou, M. *Burial Customs in Thessaly in the Classical and Hellenistic Periods*. Diss. University of Oxford 1999.

A revised version of M. Mili's 2005 dissertation appeared in print just as this manuscript was about to be released to the publishers. I regret that except for some last minute adjustments I could not do full justice to the extensive wealth of information and scholarly insights contained in this important volume. Outside the field of Thessalian scholarship, I regret that I was not able to consult P. Liddel and P. Low, *Inscriptions and their Use in Greek and Latin Literature* (Oxford 2013) and the recently published studies on the Greek symposium by M. Węcowski, *The Rise of the Greek Aristocratic Banquet* (Oxford 2014) and F. Hobden, *The Symposion in Ancient Greek Society and Thought* (Cambridge 2013).

Introduction

> To mountain gorges sweeps the level view,
> above it stands Pharsalus old and new.
>
> GOETHE, *Faust* (transl. Priest)

Pharsalus is a name deceivingly familiar. As a locus of the literary tradition it is recognizable by most. The physical locus is another matter. Many of us have heard of the place at some point or another in connection with Julius Caesar and the famous battle of 48 BCE. Very few, on the other hand, have any precise knowledge of where Pharsalus is or what it looks like (the present writer certainly had none, until he wandered in the city's main square on a viciously hot day of Summer 1993).

Once a crossroads of important trade routes, in modern times Pharsalus has been confined to an isolated agrarian existence by the rearrangement of the Greek highway system. The city lies completely outside the tourist circuit. Disfigured by concrete, it has no iconic monuments by which to attract visitors or assert a visual identity of its own. Pharsalus lacks a 'brand' image such as the Parthenon or the Theater of Epidaurus.

If asked to visualize Pharsalus, the Classically trained person is likely to turn to commonplace imagery about Thessaly: vague vistas of endless plains filled with horses and cereal cultivation come to mind from high school or college. When delving into the literature, the standard references appear to confirm this mental image. Pharsalus controlled that long tract of the West Thessalian plain stretching along the banks of the Enipeus river. Only when one makes a deliberate detour from the Athens-Thessaloniki superhighway and drives to modern Pharsala across the mountain pass of Eretria does it become apparent how imperfect such a perception is.

Soon after taking the exit to National Road E65, the westbound traveller realizes that he is driving at the far edge of a mountain massif which dominates every angle of vision with its vastness, overpowering all other land features in sight. This range, which arches over southeast Thessaly like the eyebrow of a giant, is Mt. Othrys, the mythical ladder of the Titans. Biased as we are by the iconographical clichés which we mentioned earlier, to most of us it will come as a revelation that Pharsalus, a city of plains and horses, could be associated with such scenery. Yet, as we discover after further inquiry, much of the land ruled by Pharsalus in antiquity was made up by the northwest contreforts of this range, sharing in many of the physical and cultural characteristics that are peculiar to mountain territories in ancient Greece. These rugged uplands, which climb up to the foot of Mt. Narthacium and extend as far west as the Alogopati elevations, remain largely unexplored today. One of the objectives of the present study has been thus to reconsider the cave of the Nymphs on the Karapla hill in light of its little-known geographical setting, the mountainous borderland between Pharsalus and Proerna where the Othrys rises one last time before subsiding into the West Thessalian Plain. For the investigation of this terrain is not only relevant to the reconstruction of the site's physical features, but also of the cultural and socio-economic associations which made it a dominion of the local Nymphs. As Jennifer Larson writes,

> The spring might be described as the microhabitat of the nymph; if this is so, the macrohabitat is the mountain, which is regularly defined in both ancient and modern Greece not by a specific height but by its opposition to "the plain". A "mountain", *oros*, need be little more than a hill in terms of altitude. Yet *oros* carries a consistent range of associations in Greek thought. . . . It is the space beyond, and contrasted with urban areas. It is the setting for many activities of economic importance. To take Attica as an example, Parnes (like Pelion in Thessaly) was a source of timber and charcoal; Pentelikon and Hymettos were sources of marble; Hymettos was a site for apiculture. The economic significance of mountains also lay in in the age-old practice of pastoral transhumance . . . Goats and, to a lesser extent, sheep can be grazed well in the rocky scrub and wooded area of the mountain slopes. They share part of this habitat with bees, who are dependent on the wildflowers in the open areas like the slopes of Hymettos. Finally, the hunt took place in the wild mountain spaces, particularly in the pine and oak woods. The nymphs are associated with all of these occupations at some time or another. The activities of herding, beeekeeping, tree cutting, hunting and even quarrying might fall under their purview because of their spatial and conceptual ties to the *oros* (2001, pp. 8–9).

If a deceiving sense of familiarity affects our perception of the Pharsalian landscape, the commonly held view of caves as dark, cellar-like spaces beneath the surface of the earth proves equally misleading when applied to the Karapla site. It is again with a feeling of surprise that the modern visitor steps inside the pleasantly lit, ascending corridor of this cave, once echoing with the sounds of a

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rushing stream. For the educated person, surprise will be accompanied by the realization that such a setting may be incompatible with the classical interpretation of caves as mystic descents, or *katabaseis*, to the world below. More suggestive of an attic than a cellar—and therefore more suitable for analysis within an anabatic, rather than catabatic, conceptual frame—the Karapla cave demands a careful reconsideration of its natural and architectural layout, largely neglected by former studies. Another reason for writing this book was to offer, therefore, a more comprehensive overview of the site's material features than has been available thus far. Special attention was given to the terrace in the lower level of the sanctuary and the sacrificial area directly above it, with the connecting stairway which still constitutes the visual focus of the sanctuary, highlighting its upward configuration. In concentrating on these areas, I chose to be guided by ancient eyes, following the lead of the two inscriptions found at the site, which emphasize the same features. To the study of these texts—perhaps the best known among the extant remains from the Karapla cave—a separate chapter is dedicated.

Unlike the remote rural world to which they belong, Pantalces and his epigraphical legacy are by no means a foreign entity to the modern Classicist. In the last three decades this interesting Thessalian has been a guest star in several important studies (Yulia Ustinova's 2009 *Caves and the Ancient Greek Mind* and Corinne Pache's 2011 *A Moment's Ornament* being two recent titles in a much longer series). Scholarly fascination with Pantalces, however, has even earlier roots. The excitement which the Karapla inscriptions aroused in the academic world upon their appearance in the first issue of *SEG* can be assessed from the volume of notes and citations that fill their bibliography in the years between the two World Wars. Although educated classes in both Europe and America had been long acquainted with the charms of Greek epigram, never before had a personality as amiable as the founder of the Karapla cave emerged from the past to describe the life of a rural Nymph sanctuary. In contrast to the faceless portrait of fellow cave-founder Archedamus of Thera, which stares wordlessly at us from the darkness of the Vari cave, the poetry attributed to Pantalces has almost the familiar ring of live speech:

> Greetings, you who are coming this way . . .

Except that, just as in the other situations which we discussed, in this case too the deceitful arts of Pharsalian witches seem to have been at play. For the intriguing personage whose voice we have been coaxed into hearing for almost a century now, proves to be, after closer analysis, a literary creation from a time when the historical Pantalces had long been dead. As an example of how Pharsalians recognized and constructed their past, the epigram from the Karapla hill is thus treated in this book as a study in reception rather than historical biography.

A brief word on methodology and related matters. For a study of an ancient site, this monograph may seem overloaded with details on contemporary Pharsalian realities. Methodological issues aside, my main reason for such an approach was the simple realization, when I first started working on the project, of how little is known outside Thessaly itself about this city and its surrounding territory. As noted above, despite its iconic status in our culture, Pharsalus is ultimately a stranger to most outsiders, general readers as well as professional Classicists. Individuals conversant with German can still turn to the works of early twentieth century geographers such as Stählin or Philippson, but these do not account for any changes that have since occurred in local toponomastics, hydrography, or population, not to mention the even more drastic alterations observed today in the socioeconomic and ecologic profiles of the area. It could be argued that as archaeologists working in Greece, we have a responsibility not only towards the local archaeological heritage but also the human and natural landscapes in which this is enframed. By virtue of our profession, which brings us in direct contact with the realities of the sites we research, we are well positioned to inform the public of the larger social and environmental issues surrounding culturally 'forgotten' areas of Greece. Ultimately a monograph about a cave in the Pharsalian countryside does not seem too strange a place for addressing crucial concerns such as these.

Although in some of my arguments I rely on the present to make inferences about the past, this work cannot aspire to be a fully developed analogical study of the kind described, e.g., by Halstead 2009. I am referring, in particular, to the reconstruction of the cave's garden proposed in Chapter 2.2.2: what I hoped to offer, there, is rather a working hypothesis which may be used until the future retrieval of specific palynological and archaeobotanical data can shed further light on the subject. As to the wisdom of using the modern Thessalian landscape to make deductions about the ancient one, I have tried my best to keep a balanced approach such as that envisioned by S. Isager and J.E. Skydsgaard,

> These investigations, and others, however, leave us with the fundamental question: to what degree dare we deduce from contemporary conditions to antiquity? [. . .] The geographic determinism that

> allows one to make unmodified deductions from contemporary pre-industrial agriculture to that of the ancient world holds as many pitfalls for the person who accepts it as it does for one who deliberately rejects it. [...] On the other hand, it is a well-known fact that you cannot grow sugar beets in the Sahara, and those who wish to disregard the later and better-known agrarian history of Greece would do well to abide by this simple rule with all its consequences (1992, p. 6).

Several works cited in this book, such as Forbes on the economy of uncultivated land (1996), or Garnsey, Gallant and Rathbone on the Thessalian grain supply (1984), just to mention a few, show how a judicious use of the modern evidence can provide important insight into scarcely documented aspects of the ancient world.

Some misgivings could also be expressed about the reliability of literary depictions of woods and caves for reconstructive purposes, or the use of Hellenistic and Late Antique epigram as evidence for cult practice in earlier periods. When available, however, the material evidence seems to mesh well enough with the information of the written sources, encouraging investigators to be less guarded against the rhetorical nature of literary landscapes or the accuracy of post-Classical poets (see e.g. Mason 1995 on the realism of Longus' rupestral tableaux; or Larson 2001, p. 228, note 4, on the *Greek Anthology* as evidence for ancient cult practices). Moreover, in researching sacred caves—or for that matter any features of the ancient Greek territory—it would be risky to draw too definite a separation between the physical locus and the cultural one. Space is recognized and constructed differently across history ("Like anything else" wrote French sociologist H. Lefebvre, "space is an historical product, in the classical sense of the term", 1976, p. 31). If 'literary' caves are more likely to reflect conventional ideas than actual places, they can still teach us something about ancient perspective. A hypothetical modern researcher who is not conversant with *locus amoenus* topography, for example, could easily overlook the outer vegetation of a cave in favor of other features which seem more speleologically relevant to us. We owe it to a long tradition of stylized cavescapes from antiquity if we know that outside growth was as essential a part of a cave site as the speleothems and galleries of the interior. In conclusion, one could say that the Karapla cave, just as the ancient culture which produced it, is too complex an affair to be captured by a single approach, the examination of a single body of evidence, or a single visit to the site: to quote the words of two eminent landscape historians of our time, "All sources of evidence must be used" (Grove and Rackham 2001, p. 21). Archaeological territories like Pharsalus are as elusive as they are fascinating. We can only hope that in trying to unravel the deceits of the Pharsalian witches we have not succumbed to those of our own mind.

CHAPTER 1

Geography and Landscape (Plates I–V, VII–X)

1 Overview of the Pharsalian Territory[1]

> Greece is changing fast and the most up-to-the-minute account of it is, in some measure, out of date by the time it appears.
>
> FERMOR, *Roumeli*

The cave site examined in this study is located in southern Thessaly, on one of the rocky ridges which bound the southern border of the Pharsalian plain. Today this area falls within the borders of the Larissa peripheral unit, in the municipality of modern day Pharsala.[2] In antiquity it belonged to the *chôra* or territory of Pharsalus, the main city in the tetrad of Phthiotis.[3] Situated on a spur of the lower Narthacium range—approximately in the same spot where Pharsala stands today—ancient Pharsalus controlled the middle basin of the Enipeus river and the mountainland to the north and south of it.[4] This rugged landscape of mountains and low hills unfolding at the edges of a river valley formed the natural background in which the Karapla sanctuary was established. It therefore seems reasonable, before undertaking a detailed examination of the cave and its immediate surroundings, to begin with a general discussion of the Pharsalian region and its main morphological features, both as they appear to us now (1.1, pp. 4–8) and as they may have appeared in those distant times when the Karapla cult was alive (1.1, pp. 8–11). A section specifically dedicated to the district where the cave lies will conclude the chapter (1.2).

At present the Pharsala municipality extends over an area of ca. 740 km², incorporating the formerly independent municipalities of Enipeas in the west, Polydamantas in the east, and Narthaki in the south.[5] The territory of ancient Pharsalus is estimated to have been far smaller, ranging between 100 and 200 km². Its boundaries can be determined to a reasonable degree of approximation. In the west it was delimited by the adjoining territory of Euhydrium, probably along a line running somewhere in between this site and the road to Larissa. In the east it bordered the territory of Eretria where the Enipeus river enters the plain. In the north it shared with Scotussa the lower slope of the Revenia hills. In the south, where it was bounded by the Achaean domains of Peuma and Proerna, it extended up to the foot of the Narthacium range, encompassing the highlands west of the upper Enipeus valley.[6]

Geologically the region described above shows the characteristic profile of the Sub-Pelagonian zone, with deep-water limestones and other marine sedimentary rocks resting on an ophiolitic subtructure.[7] Recent deposits of Holocene alluvium and Pliocene fluvio-terrestrial sediment respectively fill the Pharsalian basin and form most of the lower elevations along its perimeter, including the elongated hill chain that bounds the northern part of the area, the Revenia or Mid Thessalian Ridge.[8] In the south, Upper Cretaceous limestones with underlying layers of shales, cherts, marly limestones in fine alternations—a configuration referred to as 'Schiefer-Hornstein Complex'—form the main ridge of the Narthacium. The 'Schiefer-Hornstein Complex' also fills the basins of Rizi and Narthaki in the highlands above town.[9] In terms of tectonics, the region is situated in one of the major fault

1 For the locations discussed in this and the following sections, see the maps in Plates I–II.

2 *ΦΕΚ* 87, A, August 2010, p. 1791.

3 Stählin 1924, pp. 135–144; Béquignon, *RE* Suppl. XII (1970) cols. 1038–1084, s.v. 'Pharsalos'; *IACP*, pp. 682; 702–704.

4 Cf. Decourt, *IThess* I, p. 60. For an assessment of the Pharsalian domain based on 'Nearest-Neighbor' statistical methodology, see the map in Decourt 1990 a, plate II c = 1990, plate XIV, fig. 27. The limits of this approach are discussed by Mili 2015, p. 161, note 2.

5 *ΕΣΔΦ*, pp. 13–16; cf. note 2 above.

6 On the size and boundaries of the Pharsalian territory: *IACP*, p. 702. See also the map cited at note 4 above and the *IACP* entries on Euhydrium and Eretria (p. 679), Scotussa (pp. 706–707), Peuma (pp. 715–716), Proerna (p. 716). Further estimates on the territorial extension of Phtiotic and Achaean cities can be found in the earlier study by Corvisier 1991, pp. 146–147; 152–153.

7 *Geological Map of Greece*, sheet 'Farsala' (1964); see also sheets 'Velestino' (1983), 'Domokos' (1957), and 'Anavra' (1957). On Sub-Pelagonian geology, as relevant to Thessaly: Higgins and Higgins 1996, p. 88.

8 A different geological structure is observed at the western and eastern extremities of the Revenia, where these hills almost connect to the Olymp and the Othrys ranges with the peaks of Titanos (gneiss, schist) and Chalkodonion (limestone, schist). See Stählin 1924, p. 80; Decourt 1990, pp. 35–36 and plate IV, figs. 4–6.

9 Schiefer-Hornstein Complex Philippson 1950, p. 185 (with earlier bibliography); see also pp. 172–176 on the general geology of the Narthacium. Rizi and Narthaki: p. 6 below.

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zones of southern Thessaly, thus being prone to seismic activity of varying strength.[10]

Much of the land once controlled by Pharsalus was either mountain or lowland bound by mountains. The southern part of this territory (modern municipal units of Pharsala and Narthaki) is occupied by the contreforts of the lower Othrys,[11] while the low country in the north (modern municipal unit of Enipeas) is delimited by the long hills of the Revenia.[12] In the east (modern municipal unit of Polydamantas), the minor chain of the Ziragiotis[13] guards the routes which connected Pharsalus to the sea.

Encircled in nearly all directions by the curving stream of the Enipeus, the lower Othrys forms a self-contained mountainous region projecting into the west Thessalian plain with the promontory of Proerna at Neo Monastiri. The main ridge of the system, which rises approximately 10 km south of modern Pharsala, is officially known today by the historical name of Mt. Narthacium.[14] Many Pharsalians still use the local designation Kassidiaris, or 'Mangy Head', a word which imaginatively captures the scarred appearance of this karstic landscape, unevenly covered by scrub and deeply scored by cracks and fissures.[15] Here, in the southwest reaches of the Othrys massif, the territory of ancient Pharsalus gave way to the domains of Phthiotic Achaia.

Two series of foothills issue from the Narthacium to the north, marking its junction with the Pharsalian plain: the eastermost is a low ridge crowned by the remains of the ancient citadel, still visible over the double summit of the Prophitis Ilias peak.[16] The other is a loftier, more imposing cluster of elevations which once guarded Pharsalus' southwest boundary with the nearby city of Proerna. There appears to be no specific designation for these hills, although the area is generically known as Alogopati, or 'Horse Trail' district.[17] A deep pass aptly named Steni, or 'Narrow',[18] cleaves the Alogopati hills at their farthest northwest point, opening onto the great vistas of the western Thessalian Plain and connecting Pharsalus to the major transhellenic routes that crossed central Thessaly.[19]

Between the two hill systems described above unfolds a natural "amphitheater of gentle and undulating reliefs"[20] which skirts the southern Pharsalian basin alongside the ancient road departing from the city's east gate (now National Road E65). During Ottoman times the region was known as the Chaïdaria valley, emphasizing the association of this meadowland to the old Pharsalian suburb by the same name.[21] Current topographic maps identify the same area as Mavrochoma, or 'Black Soil',[22] possibly an allusion to the moist nature of the land, which stands in stark contrast with the barren look of the hills rising above it. Morphologically as well as topographically the Mavrochoma acts as a bridge between the lowlands of the Enipeus floodplain and the high country stretching from the southern end of town to the slopes of the Narthacium. Gently tilted in the direction of the city, this rolling

10 Papadimitriou and Karakostas 2003, p. 402, table 2. On the seismic episodes associated with the Pharsala and Sophades fault segments, see the table in *ΕΣΔΦ*, p. 82, with the corresponding entries in Papazachos and Papazachou 1997, pp. 216; 221–222; 277; 278–279.

11 Othrys: Stählin 1924, pp. 151–153; Philippson 1950, pp. 181–211; Decourt 1990, p. 37.

12 Revenia: Kriegk 1858, pp. 36–37; Philippson 1950, pp. 67–72; Decourt 1990, pp. 35–36. On the toponym, which may date back to the High Middle Ages (Anna Comn. 5, 5, 8), see Georgiades 1894, pp. 25; 47.

13 Ziragiotis: Philippson 1950, pp. 169–172. On current maps these reliefs are no longer indicated by a collective name but by the individual name of each peak, e.g. HMGS *General Use Map*, 1985 edition, sheet 'Velestínon'. The older denomination Tsiragiotika—from Tsiragi, a village at the east end of the chain mentioned by Leake 1835, p. 452 (most probably the same as Philippson's Serantzi, modern Perivlepto)—appears to have fallen into disuse since before the 1950's.

14 On the uncertain identification of this ridge with the ancient *Narthakion oros* (X. *HG* 4, 3, 3–9; Plu. *Ages*. 16, 5) see the bibliography in Laticheff 1882, pp. 359–360. The name may have applied to another mountain in the modern municipality of Lamia, near the archaeological site of Narthakion (*IACP*, p. 687): Stählin 1924, pp. 187–188; Spinelli 2008, p. 15.

15 Stählin 1924, p. 83, note 1; Philippson 1950, p. 173.

16 Prophitis Ilias and adjacent reliefs: Philippson 1897, pp. 66–67; 1950, pp. 63–64. The Pharsalian hills reach their highest point northeast of the city with Mt. Thronos (or Sourla: 429 masl).

17 The name appears as early as 1886 in Heuzey's map, where it is used to designate the northermost elevation in the system, now known as Karapla hill; cf. Georgiades 1894, p. 24. The Alogopati reliefs peak at 521 masl with Mt. Grivas; see p. 12 below.

18 HMGS *General Use Map*, 1985 edition, sheet 'Fársala' [Plate III]; cf. the former denomination Bogazi (from Turkish *boğaz*, 'gorge') recorded in the *Geological Map of Greece*, 1964 edition, sheet 'Farsala'. For a detailed account of the area, see Philippson 1897, p. 66.

19 See p. 15 below.

20 Heuzey 1886, p. 133. On the recurrence of this amphitheatrical configuration in Thessalian geography and its impact on the layout of Thessalian cities, see Plin. *Nat.* 4, 30.

21 Cf. Heuzey 1886, p. 133 and plan VII, 'Région de Pharsale'. Chaïdaria is the westermost of the three *oikismoi* or developments of the Pharsala municipal unit, the other two being Stathmos and Rizi, respectively to the north and south of town.

22 HMGS *General Use Map*, 1985 edition, sheet 'Fársala' [Plate III].

countryside is spread across two contiguous mountain basins parted by the waters of the Kakletzorema stream.[23] The eastern basin, named after the village of Narthaki,[24] looks over the neighboring lands of Eretria across the upper valley of the Enipeus. The western one, named after the village of Rizi, unfolds along the valley of the Chaïdarorema,[25] extending in the opposite direction up to the lower slopes of the Alogopati mountainland.

In contrast with the mountainous south, the northern part of Pharsalus' territory was almost entirely occupied by its much celebrated plain.[26] After descending from the Othrys ca. 11 km east of town, the Enipeus river makes an ample bend to the west, hewing a gradually widening valley between the Mid Thessalian range and the lower spurs of the Narthacium. Seen from above, this famous district of northcentral Greece appears as a cone-shaped expanse of undulating fields enclosed by hills in all directions but west, where the land fans out into the vast spaces of the Karditsa basin. In the east the smaller Paliomylos valley[27] marks the transition to the territory of Eretria, gently climbing up into the Ziragiotis hills.

The middle tract of the Enipeus is the focus of the region's hydrography.[28] Into it pour the waters of a number of additional streams rising in the high country south of town. Foremost among these is the Apidanus, born of a rocky spring near the city's west gate.[29] A major landmark of Pharsalian topography, this once picturesque river was damaged by an earthquake in 1954 (note 10 above) and is no longer visible today except in its extra-urban course, where it survives in a degraded canalized form.[30] Still active, though greatly susceptible to seasonal variation, are the Kotzarmani, in the eastern reaches of the Pharsalian territory near the village of Ampelia, and the aforementioned creeks of the Chaïdarorema and Kakletzorema in the southern uplands.[31] Finally, at the north end of town the diminutive Aïklis continues to trace a muddy path among scattered civic buildings.[32] These are but the meagre remnants of a far richer hydrographic network which previously graced the city and its surrounding countryside. Following the city's transition from a prevalently pastoral to an agricultural economy in the second half of 1900, Pharsalian hydrography has been deeply altered by the unregulated exploitation of its groundwater resources.[33] Consistent with the depletion of the aquifer, many of Pharsalus' famously plentiful springs[34] have now ceased to exist, while the extensive marshes once characteristic to this district have all succumbed to land reclamations with their animal and plant population.[35] A distant memory of this hydric wealth—and of the divine powers who once presided over it—can be still discerned in the local toponymy, in names such as Neraida ('Water Nymph'),

23 Cf. Decourt 1990, p. 37 and plate V, figs. 9–10. On the Kakletzorema, or 'Stream of Kakletzi' (the current village of Achilleio), see p. 13 below.

24 In earlier times the same plateau was named after the village of Saterli (current day Dilopho, Turkish Çaterli); cf. Heuzey 1886 pp. 130, 141 and plan VII, 'Région de Pharsale'.

25 Rizi: note 21 above. On the Chaïdarorema, or 'Stream of Chaïdaria' (not "Charadra-Rhevma" or 'Ravine Stream', as printed by Riethmüller 2005, II, p. 293, note 20), see p. 18 below.

26 The reception of the Pharsalian plain in modern times is indissolubly linked to that of the battle of 48 BCE and the lasting influence of its chronicler, the Roman poet Lucan, on later literature, cf. e.g. von Albrecht 1996, pp. 925–929; Conte 1994, pp. 449–451. On the area's reputation in antiquity see e.g. the sources cited in note 83 below.

27 The village of Paliomylos (formerly Ineli, whence the designation 'Plain of Ineli' used by Leake, Heuzey, and other early travelers) takes its name from a small stream, now dry, which runs across the countryside north of Eretria; see Stählin 1906, pp. 19, fig. 5; 20.

28 Enipeus, the current Enipeas, formerly known as Koutsouk Tsanarlis or 'small river of the plane trees' (from Turkish *küçük*, 'small', and *çinar*, 'plane'): Stählin 1924, p. 83; Decourt 1990, pp. 39–40 and plates VI–VII, figs. 12–18.

29 Apidanus or Tampakos / Tampachanas ('tanner's river', from Turkish *tabakhane*, 'tannery'; see also the early names Pharsalitis and Bougiouk Tsanarlis, from Turkish *büyük*, 'small'): Stählin 1924, p. 82; Decourt 1990, pp. 39–40.

30 Modern day Apidanou street, in the west end of town, is partly built over the tract of river that has disappeared. For a pictorial history of the Apidanus/Tampakos and its traditions, see Gountoulas and Zacharis 2009, pp. 73–94. Local lore identifies the Apidanus as the mythical water in which Thetis submerged the baby Achilles (see e.g. "Thetis baptizes Achilles" in the Larissa daily *Eleftheria*, 10 January 2014).

31 Although their course is recorded on most maps, Kotzarmani (from Turkish *koca orman*, 'Great Wood'; cf. p. 13 below) and Kakletzorema do not appear in the geographical literature about the region. On the Chaïdarorema see Stählin 1924, p. 144; Decourt 1990 a , p. 181 and plate II a–b.

32 Béquignon 1960, p. 186, note 4. 'Aíchil': Gimbutas et al. 1989, p. 1 and map 1.3.

33 A 20 to 40 m groundwater drawdown has been observed in the region since 1990. On the overexploitation of ground-water in the Stavros-Pharsala area: Rozos et al. 2010, pp. 1850–1857; cf. Mariolakos et al. 2001, pp. 71–80. This situation can be contrasted with that described in 1984 by Garnsey et al., who report that in some parts of the West Thessalian Plain "the watertable may be no more than four centimetres below the surface" (p. 31).

34 For a vivid description of the waters which once ran "in many pellucid streams" from the rocks below the city, see Leake 1835, pp. 453–454.

35 Decourt 1990, pp. 40–41; contrast Béquignon 1930, p. 374 and the sources at note 62 below.

Polyneri ('Place of Many Waters'), Krini ('Fountain'), and other similar designations.

Climatically, the region lies within the continental zone, showing the same seasonal alternance between cold/wet and hot/dry conditions that we encounter in most of inland Thessaly.[36] Average temperatures range from 5–6° C in January to 26–27° C in July. Precipitation (ca. 500 mm a year) is concentrated in the fall and winter months, but rainstorms of considerable intensity continue to occur from May to September. Since the 1970's a general transition towards a more arid climate has been known to affect the traditional weather pattern, with further consequences for the hydrographic situation described above.[37]

In terms of vegetation the Pharsalian territory belongs to the *Ostryo-Carpinion* subdivision of the lower Mediterranean zone *Quercetalia pubescentis*, and specifically to the *Coccifero-Carpinetum* growth area.[38] The downy oak (*Quercus pubescens*), the oriental plane (*Platanus orientalis*), and the common elm (*Ulmus campestris*) are characteristic trees of this countryside, along with smaller plants such as the Mediterranean hackberry (*Celtis australis*) and the wild pear (*Pyrus pyraster*). Prickly oak (*Quercus coccifera*) is the dominant shrub species. Above 200 m, the prevailing vegetation cover is the typical one of Greek regions with a long pastoral history, a pervasive tapestry of maquis and phrygana interspersed with patches of steppe. In the plain, steppe and occasional savanna continue to occupy the areas that have not been reached by agriculture.[39] Woodland is rare, usually appearing in the form of gallery forests growing along streams or thickets of overgrown maquis.[40]

Within this natural theater, a most conspicuous absence is that of the animal element, especially in the low country. Except for the usual microfauna of the cultivated field—rodents, reptiles, and the various avian predators that typically feed on them—today the Pharsalian plain appears as devoid of wildlife as it is filled with cultivations. Small game, foxes, wolves, and other common animals of the rural countryside are now encountered mostly in the uplands, as is a great percentage of the livestock reared in the region.[41] Once a routine presence in the fields during fallow periods, grazing flocks of sheep and goat now tend to be seen less and less in the plain, as the recent intensification of the agricultural cycle has deprived them of their lower pastures.

A reverse tendency is observed in the human demographics of the region, which show a steady decline in the population of the mountain villages to the advantage of the city and the lowland settlements.[42] Ever since the Pharsalian economy began to change from a traditional agropastoral system to a cash crop industry, human activities have been progressively re-centering around the plain. The great majority of municipal residents are now engaged in commercial agriculture (cotton, wheat, barley, maize, and vegetables),[43] although some subsistence farming is still present, and herding continues to play a reduced role in local economy (caprovids and cattle).[44] Other subsistence practices once found in the area, such as those traditionally associated with wetland and riparian settings,[45] have instead completely faded out of Pharsalian daily life, along with the environments which supported them.

Ethnically and culturally the municipality retains the composite nature that has been one of its enduring characteristics throughout the ages. If the Turkish element has virtually disappeared from Pharsalian demographics,[46] Sarakatzans and Vlachs continue to make up a substantial

36 *ΕΣΔΦ*, pp. 79–81 (based on data HNMS). Cf. Stählin 1924, p. 81; Decourt 1990, p. 41.

37 Loukas et al. 2007, p. 19; cf. *ΕΣΔΦ*, pp. 90–91. On the warming of the Greek climate in general, see e.g. Loukas et al. 2006, p. 1 (based on 2001 data by NOA).

38 *ΕΣΔΦ*, p. 85. On the classification of vegetation zones in Greece: Dafis 1975, pp. 29–31; 35.

39 Maquis, phrygana, steppe, savanna: Grove and Rackham 2001, chs. 4; 12, pp. 210–212. See also Rackham 1982, pp. 183–188; 1996, pp. 20 and 28.

40 Gallery forests: Stählin 1924, p. 80; Sivignon 1975, p. 72. Prickly oak woodland, resulting from ungrazed maquis: see e.g. Rackham 1982, pp. 184–185, plate II. Some of the pine woods visible in the area today, such as the *dasos Pharsalon* which now mantles the hills around town, are the product of modern landscaping.

41 *ΕΣΔΦ*, pp. 85–86 (wildlife); 106 (livestock). A familiar sight at Springtime are the storks that still come to nest in the area. Once sacred to the ancient Thessalians (e.g. Arist. *De Mirab. Ausc.* 832a), this bird continues to have a special place in Pharsalian lore; cf. Coote Lake 1954, p. 174.

42 The censuses of 1981, 1991, and 2001 show that between the early 1980's and the early 2000's, Pharsala experienced a demographic growth of over 38%, raising from a population of less than 8,000 to one of almost 10,000. Conversely, over the same two decades, the population of rural communities such as Narthaki and Achilleio decreased by a commensurate or even higher percentage (data EL.STAT.).

43 *ΕΣΔΦ*, pp. 114–120. A few other crops once traditional of this region, such as tobacco (Kriegk 1858, p. 36; Georgiades 1894, p. 25) and sugar beet (Decourt 1990, p. 44), have lost their prominence today.

44 About one third of the modern population of Pharsala is still engaged in agropastoral activities, according to EL.STAT. data for 2001. See *ΕΣΔΦ*, p. 105.

45 Horden and Purcell 2000, pp. 186–190; 575–576. See p. 9 below.

46 Georgiades 1894, p. 212.

percentage of the city's population, having exchanged transhumant pastoralism with more contemporary lifestyles and occupations.[47] Settled and fully integrated into Pharsalian society, these ex-seminomads have been replaced in their former minoritarian status by a new generation of Balkan immigrants who come to the region seeking employment on sheep ranches or construction crews.[48] Another ethnic group with strong ties to local tradition is the gypsy community (*tsinganoi*) encamped in the northwest part of town (the 'Bachana', from the Apidanus' former name Tampachanas; note 29 above). A mixture of long- and short-term migrants, Pharsalian *tsinganoi* have kept a steady presence along the banks of the Apidanus since Ottoman times, making a living as seasonal crop pickers and farm hands.[49]

Overall, the image which the municipality offers today is that of a place in transition, striving to adjust its identity to the socioeconomic changes of the last half century and emancipate itself from its public image as a rural, uninspiring province at the fringes of modern Thessalian culture.[50] The second decade of our century, in particular, has seen the arising of a new wealth of nationally and internationally funded initiatives centered on the revitalization of the municipal seat and its surrounding communities. Especially important, in this effort, is the promotion of the area's archaeological resources, still unknown to the wider public,[51] as well as the protection of the historical landscape within which such resources are housed. In addition to key city landmarks such as the acropolis hill or the headsprings of the Apidanus,[52] the rehabilitation of rural sites like the Karapla nymphaeum is thus central to the region's revival, in that it serves a dual function of both natural and archaeological preservation.

Having come to the end of this brief overview we can ask ourselves to what extent the territory described above may reflect the one in which the Karapla sanctuary was created, approximately two and half millennia ago. As far as one can tell, except for the now ubiquitous presence of agriculture and the severe degradation of the hydrological network, the Pharsalian plain and the surrounding mountainland have not changed much from antiquity. Natural vegetation is likely to have been more substantial, especially along the eastern fringes of the territory, where extensive concentrations of oaks can still be seen to this day. Here, on one of the low hills between Pharsalus and Scotussa, was the oracular grove of Zeus Phegonaeus, or Zeus of the Oakery, considered by some as the predecessor of the cult at Dodona.[53] Agriculture would not have overpowered the landscape as it does now; the intricate, seemingly endless mesh of cultivated plots that fills the aerial view of the Pharsalian plain is a product of the last few decades.[54] In antiquity smaller grids of tilled fields would have coexisted with a natural scenery of grassland, marshes and patches of savanna.[55] Pollen analysis shows that the weather in Classical times was wetter than it is now,[56] with probable consequences on the agroclimatology of the region. Pharsalus enjoyed a more favorable topography than the rest of the West Thessalian plain, with ample tracts of well-drained hill country stretching

47 On the sedentarization process of these and other pastoralist groups of Thessaly: Sivignon 1975, pp. 340–354 (on Sarakatsans and Vlachs in general, see also pp. 319–323; 323–328; and the studies by Campbell 2002 and Winnifrith 1987, 2002).

48 On recent Albanian immigration in Greece: Chong 1997, pp. 123–139.

49 For historic and demographic data on the Pharsalian Romani population see AENAA 2003.

50 *ΕΣΔΦ*, p. 200. Pharsala's pre-nineteenth century fame as a hub of important trade routes (reflected in its Turkish name *Çatalca*, or 'Crossroads') began to dwindle after the city was struck by an epidemic in 1818. The effects of this decline transpire from the descriptions of contemporary tourist guides, in which Pharsala is variously portrayed as a "straggling little town" (Baedeker guide of 1894, p. 225), or a "village . . . much ruined, and in very miserable condition" (Murray 1900, col. 758). For a history of Pharsala's urban development from the 1800's to our day see now Theloura and Kokalis, *Ta Pharsala 2013*.

51 *ΕΣΔΦ*, pp. 200–201. As late as 1960, D. Theocharis referred to Pharsalus as one of the 'unknown' sites of Thessaly; cf. *AD* 16, p. 168. Since then, a remarkable amount of new evidence has been unearthed through rescue excavations; see note 73 below.

52 On the Municipality's historical restoration projects for 2011–2014, see *ΕΣΔΦ*, pp. 201–205.

53 Sch. Hom. *Il.* 16, 233, "For the Scotussans say that in their territory, fifteen stades from Scotussa, there is an elevation called Oakey Hill (*lophon Phagoenta*) and on it is a shrine to Zeus of the Oakery (*Dios Phêgônaiou*)"; for additional testimonies and discussion: Stählin 1924, pp. 23, 110; Biagetti 2008, pp. 32–34; Mili 2015, p. 187. *Phagoeis lophos* appears to be the earliest in a long list of toponyms alluding to the wooded nature of this district, e.g. current day Dasolophos, or Ottoman Orman Magoula, respectively Greek and Turco-Greek for 'Woody Hill'. See also note 99 below.

54 Cf. e.g. Leake 1835, p. 455, with the comments by Grove and Rackham 2001, p. 322. For some views of the Pharsalian plain before World War 2, see Gountoulas and Zacharis 2009, pp. 12–17.

55 On the distribution, size, and shape of farming plots in ancient Thessaly, see e.g. Salviat and Vatin 1974, pp. 256–262 and 1983, p. 311; Helly 1995, pp. 279–328. Corvisier estimates that over one quarter of the total surface of the Thessalian plain was cultivated (1976, pp. 235–236).

56 Rackham 1990, pp. 88–90.

along the borders of the floodplain.[57] We can expect that in order to avert flooding most agricultural activities were concentrated on high ground, leaving the lowlands for pasturage—consistently with the area's reputation for horse-breeding—and some moisture resistant crops, such as, e.g., chick peas and broad beans.[58] The low slopes of the Revenia, which Pharsalus once shared with the neighboring city of Scotussa, continue to provide in our day the best land for the cultivation of wheat.[59] On these hills or in the undulated terrain east of town (where toponyms like Ampelia, 'Vineyard', may preserve a memory of past agricultural practices) we could also place, tentatively, the cultivation of grapes.[60] As for the steeper regions at the far edges of this countryside—the uncultivated or 'marginal' sections of Pharsalus' territory—it is plausible to assume that they were associated with types of land use not unlike the ones observed there now. If the plain was a natural terrain for horses and cattle, the high country provided pasturage for goats and bees. We may also expect that it contributed, as it still does today, wood for fuel and construction, wild game, and edible and medicinal herbs.[61] Another sector of the 'marginal' landscape which contributed both food and raw materials were the wetlands once formed by the Enipeus and its tributaries in the low country.[62] As late as the mid-twentieth century, swamps such as those of the Apidanus and the Aïklis were a common destination for fishermen, waterfowl hunters, and reed-harvesters.[63]

In terms of human resources, the territory described above was inhabited by two ethnically and socioeconomically differentiated groups: a population of Thessalian settlers established near the end of the second millennium, and an earlier population of indigenous and Aeolic stock living in conditions of serfdom under the new invaders[64]—a diversity which to some extent foreshadows the ethnic differentiations of later Pharsalian society (pp. 7–8 above). Organized as an oligarchy, the Thessalian elites had control over a vast portion of the land and the herds which grazed on it; the rest was distributed among two other classes of free citizens known as the cavalrymen (*hippeis*) and the hoplites (*hoplitai*).[65] The enserfed locals (*penestai*) provided the work force necessary to cultivate the fields and tend the animals, living off the product in excess of their rent.[66] As in the other oligarchic states of Thessaly, livestock appears to have been the true focus of Pharsalian economy, not just as a mere substinence strategy but as a wealth- and status-engendering activity of the elites.[67] In this instance, too, the variety of terrain

57 Georgiades 1894, p. 46. The lowlands around and to the east of town were themselves less susceptible to flooding than those of the main Karditsa basin. Cf. Decourt, *IThess* I, p. 60.

58 Garnsey et al. 1984, p. 33; Karagiorgou 2001, p. 16; Megaloudi 2006, pp. 53, 56. Pharsalian horse-breeding: Arist. *HA* 586a (cf. *Pol.* 1262a); horsemanship: Stamatopoulou 2007, pp. 212–213, note 2.

59 Decourt 1990, p. 44 (cf. Sivignon 1975, p. 271). On the prominence of Scotussan cereal cultivations in antiquity, see Stählin 1924, pp. 110–111.

60 Vine branches with grapes appear in the Hellenistic coinage from Scotussa, Head 1911, p. 309; Rogers 1932, pp. 171–172, nos. 540, 543–544 and figs. 298, 300–301. For Pharsalus, see *IThess* I, 53, lines 2–5 and the cautious remarks by Decourt. Today vineyards make up but a negligible fraction of the Pharsalian cultivated land (ca. one third of a ha, *ΕΣΔΦ*, pp. 118–119).

61 On 'using mountains' in antiquity: Buxton 1992, pp. 2–6. The leading study on the uses of uncultivated land in Greece is that by Forbes 1996; see also Foxhall 2010, pp. 274–276, and Horden and Purcell 2000, pp. 178–182; 574, for additional discussion and bibliography.

62 References to the Pharsalian wetlands appear in the literature on the battle of 48 BCE, Plu. *Brut.* 4, 7 and 6, 1; Fron. *Str.* 2, 3, 22; on the ancient marshes west of town see also Katakouta and Toufexis 1990, p. 74 and 1994, pp. 196–197. On the swamps formed by the Aïklis in the east: Gwatkin 1956, pp. 119–120; Kromayer 1907, pp. 406–407.

63 I collected this information from private conversations with locals. On ancient marshland economy: Traina 1988, pp. 101–108; Horden and Purcell 2000, pp. 575–576.

64 On Thessaly's settlement history: Stählin 1924, pp. 85–87; Sordi 1958, pp. 1–31; Larsen 1960, pp. 228–229 and 1968, pp. 13–14; Hammond 1976, especially pp. 141–149; Corvisier 1991, pp. 17–50 and 137–144; cf. Archibald 2000, pp. 226–227. On the region's demographics and social stratification: Sordi 1958, pp. 320–327; Corvisier 1991, pp. 233–256; Helly 1995, pp. 279–287. For further bibliography and a discussion of the scholarship on these topics: Mili 2015, pp. 54–59.

65 Aristotle refers to the Pharsalian government as a "harmonious oligarchy" (*homonoousa . . . oligarchia, Pol.* 1306a, with the comments by Mili 2015, pp. 169 note 40; 174–175); Thucydides calls it a "dynasty" (*dunasteia*, 4, 78, 3). On the ruling dynasties of Pharsalus see the bibliography in *IACP*, p. 703. On the division of landed property in Thessaly, see Larsen 1960, p. 238 and 1968, p. 14; Salviat and Vatin 1974, pp. 256–262 and 1983, p. 311; Helly 1995, pp. 287–328; Mili 2015, pp. 53–60. Because of its topography, less fragmented than other parts of Greece, Thessaly was able to support, particularly in the early part of its history, the development of large estates comparable to the Roman *latifundia*. Stählin also underlines the role played by the region's climate (1924, p. 86).

66 On the *penestai* see also p. 15 below.

67 On 'Animals as Gentlemanty Wealth', see Howe 2008, pp. 27–47. It was not unusual for Thessalian noblefolk to participate in the slaughtering and butchery of their cattle: *Dissoi Logoi*, fr. 2, 11 DK; cf. Howe 2008, pp. 79–81; Mili 2015, p. 265. The size of Thessalian meat cuts was proverbial: e.g. Crates Com. *PCG* 4, fr. 21 = Ath. *Deipn.* 10, 12; cf. Mili 2015, p. 263.

forms comprised within the Pharsalian territory may have played an important role, facilitating the development of large-scale, mobile forms of animal rearing not as dependent on arable land as elsewhere in Greece.[68] If diachronic evidence is of any value, transhumance and agropastoralism were practiced side to side in ancient Pharsalus, rather than constituting mutually exclusive animal management strategies.[69]

Over the scenery thus reconstructed we can try to overlay the names of the ancient topography. As in the rest of Thessaly, evidence for human presence in the Pharsalus area begins in the Stone Age.[70] The archaeological record from the Helladic and Geometric periods is also significant (note 122 below), although no traces of extensive settlements have been recovered to date that could be reconnected to the epic tradition on Phthia and the kingdom of Achilles.[71] Scholars have attempted to identify Phthia with a variety of sites in the Pharsalian territory, but their suggestions remain thus far only theoretical.[72] Consistent with the city's growth in Classical and Hellenistic times, much of what survives today above ground dates to these periods.[73] As mentioned at the beginning of this study, ancient Pharsalus lies for the most part under the concrete architecture of modern day Pharsala, its most visible vestiges being the citadel on the Prophitis Ilias hill and some sections from its extensive wall circuit.[74] In addition to this site the ancient sources report the existence of an 'earlier' Pharsalus, a locality which came to be known as Palaepharsalus presumably after its original name was taken over by the city on the Prophitis Ilias hill.[75] The location of Palaepharsalus is not specified, but recent studies argue for its identification with the fortified site of Xylades near the bend of the Enipeus, in the eastermost part of the Pharsalian territory.[76] Closely associated with Palaepharsalus, in the accounts of the ancient writers, is also a holy place of Thetis known as the Thetidium, which Euripides uses as the setting for his *Andromache*.[77] The remains of this shrine have been tentatively identified with a small church in the lower reaches of the Revenia, on the side of the river valley opposite from Xylades.[78] More problematic remains the identification of Hellas and Makkarai, two toponyms associated with the mountainland south of Pharsalus. To date the archaeological

68 On the topographical and climatological characteristics which made the Othrys an optimal summer destination for the pastoralists of the adjacent plains, see Reinders and Prummel 1998, p. 91 (it is significant that, out of the small handful of testimonies which are available to us on ancient transumhance, two should be associated with this mountain; Reinders and Prummel 1998, pp. 92–94; Cuscuná 2008, pp. 357–359).

69 For the use of ethnographic models in the study of ancient Greek pastoralism as well as a thoughtful assessment of current research on the subject, see Forbes 1995, pp. 325–338.

70 Pottery of the Chalcolithic and Neolithic B periods was retrieved by N. Verdelis in 1955 on the northeast slope of Agia Paraskevi, pointing to a continuous human presence in this area from Prehistoric times; see *PAAH* 1955, pp. 145–146. On nearby Achilleio and the newly excavated site of Vasili in the Stathmos area, see, respectively: Gimbutas et al. 1989; Toufexis et al. 2012. For a general overview of Neolithic settlements in the Enipeus valley: Decourt 1990, pp. 47–55, fig. 23; Toufexis, *Ta Pharsala 2013*.

71 Phthia is explicitely identified with Pharsalus in some post-Classical sources (e.g. Sch. *Od.* 4, 9); the earlier literature, however, is far from clear on the subject. As Béquignon and others have noted, although Verdelis' findings in west Pharsalus appear to support Stählin's identification of Phthia with Agia Paraskevi (1924, p. 136; 1914, p. 17), evidence for a substantial Bronze Age center—as Phthia presumably would have been—is yet to be unearthed. On the known Bronze Age sites of the Enipeus valley: Decourt 1990, pp. 55–62, fig. 24. See also Toufexis et al. 2012 on the Bronze Age findings from the recent Vasili excavations. On the Pharsalians' perception of their past with regard to Phthia and Achilles: Mili 2015, p. 175. Cf. p. 90 and commentary to Inscription II, line 7 below.

72 A complete summary of the evidence and relevant scholarship up to the 1960's can be found in Béquignon, *RE* Suppl. XII (1970) cols. 1046–1050, s.v. 'Pharsalos'.

73 For an overview of Hellenistic Pharsalus, as it has progressively been unveiled by rescue excavations from the early twentieth century to our time, see Karapanou 2012. Remains of the Classical city also continue to come to light: on the recent findings from the urban area, see e.g. Katakouta 2009; on those from the city cemeteries, Stamatopoulou and Katakouta 2013 (note 122 below). A report by Karapanou on the evidence from the Roman Period is forthcoming in the proceedings of *AEThSE* 4. General *études d'ensemble* on ancient Pharsalus include Karapanou and Katakouta 1994, and the earlier works by Stählin 1914; 1924, pp. 139–143; Béquignon, *RE* Suppl. XII (1970) cols. 1040–1046, s.v. 'Pharsalos'. On the archaeology of Pharsalian household cults see also the recent discussion by Mili 2015, pp. 86–89.

74 Acropolis: Stählin 1914, pp. 11–13; 1924, pp. 139–140; Katakouta et al., *Ta Pharsala 2013*. Walls: Katakouta and Toufexis, 1990; 1994; Karapanou 2012, pp. 405–406; Karapanou and Noula, *Ta Pharsala 2013*.

75 See Decourt 1990 for a conspectus of the literary testimonies (pp. 201–205) and discussion of relevant scholarship (pp. 208–218).

76 Xylades: Decourt 1990, pp. 185–200 (description of the site) and 218–223 (identification with Palaepharsalus).

77 Summary of the evidence and discussion: Pritchett 1969, pp. 114–118; Decourt 1990, pp. 205–208; Mili 2015, p. 176. On a possible cult of Thetis (?) at Pharsalus see also Heinz 1998, p. 428, no. A 107.

78 Agios Athanasios, "on the crest of a ridge between Dasolophos and Orman Magoula", Pritchett 1969, p. 115, plates 81–84 (based on an identification by Giannopoulos).

record from this region remains disappointingly thin.[79] One testimony places Hellas between Pharsalus and the Achaean city of Meliteia,[80] pointing perhaps to a location in the Narthacium ridge: a possible candidate within this area would be a small fortification in cyclopaean masonry reported by Stählin to the west of Agios Antonios (form. Koutselir),[81] but it is uncertain whether the Pharsalian border did extend this far. As for Makkarai, a locality placed "above Pharsalus" by Stephanus of Byzantium, no convincing identifications have yet been suggested.[82]

Except for these few locations, ancient writers are not otherwise generous with information on Pharsalian topography. Occasional references to the Pharsalian plain appear in the work of historians;[83] poets seem to be more interested in the region's hydrology—especially the Enipeus and Apidanus rivers, usually portrayed in tones far grander than the modest appearance of these streams today would warrant.[84] Descriptions of the local relief are even scarcer. The elevations which bound the plain in the vicinity of the city are mentioned in Caesar's *Civil War*, but only in a passing manner.[85] A brief reference to the Revenia as the 'Back of Thessaly', *nôton Thessaliês*, also appears in an epigram from the *Greek Anthology* cited by Plutarch.[86] Lastly, when we turn to the epigraphical record from the area we find the evocative toponym Makouniai, once used to designate the poppy sprinkled country fields that fill the landscape spreading around Pharsalus and our cave (*IThess* I, 50, line 3). This region and the river which runs through it, the Louerchos or present-day Chaïdarorema, are discussed in closer detail in the next section.

2 The Pharsalian Hill Country: Anatomy of a Borderland

> A mountain is in the eye of the beholder. Height is only part of the story.
>
> BUXTON, "Imaginary Greek Mountains" (adapted)

The Karapla ridge, where our cave lies, is an escarpment formed at the rim of a geological fault.[87] From the countryside behind Pharsala it runs in a southeast-northwest direction for a little more than 4 km, overlooking the middle Enipeus valley across the Mavrochoma meadow. The name Karapla, 'Bald Head' (from *karaphla*, a metathesized form of *phalakra*), is a reference to the barren nature of its crestline.[88] It reflects the tendency, already encountered in local toponomastics, to anthropomorphize mountains as metaphors of the human head.[89] Somewhat paradoxically, during the early twentieth century the same hill

79 As Stählin succinctly puts it, "On the Kassidiaris mountains between Tsatma [modern day Petroto] and Pharsalus there are no known ruins" (1924, p. 170). See also Decourt 1990, p. 66 and the discussion on the highlands south of Pharsalus in the second half of this chapter (1.2).

80 Heraclides Criticus fr. 3, 2 Pfister. On the ancient sources on Hellas: Decourt 1990, pp. 211–214.

81 1924, p. 170. Stählin marks the position of this site "above a spring in the Arabises fields" (probably the location marked *Arapissa* on the HMGS *General Use Map*, sheet 'Dhomokós', 1987). For the tentative identification of this site with Hellas see Decourt 1990, pp. 213–214 (with discussion of previous scholarship).

82 St. Byz. s.v. *Makkarai* = Theopomp. Hist. *FGrH* 2 B, 115, 55. According to Heuzey and Daumet 1876, p. 428, Theopompus' *Makkarai* could be the same as *Makouniai,* a location in the southern Pharsalian countryside discussed at pp. 14–15 below.

83 Plu. *Pomp*. 68, 1 (cf. 71, 1); Plin. *Nat.* 8, 21, 55; Theophylact. *Ep*. 127; Scylitzes, *Synopsis Historiarum, Bas. et Const*. 23, 22.

84 See e.g. A.R. 1, 38 and 2, 515. In Homer "fair Enipeus" is a veritable lady-killer (*Od*. 11, 235–240), while to Euripides the Apidanus is "father to the fairest streams' (*Hec*. 451–454). Some authors refer to the 'wild', 'threatening', nature of the Enipeus (e.g. Zonar. s.v. *Enipeus*) as well as the force of its floods (Luc. 7, 224; Fron. *Str*. 2, 3, 22). Contrary to modern practice, ancient authors often stress the the superiority of the Apidanus over the Enipeus (e.g. Str. 9, 5, 6; Plin. *Nat.* 4, 30; see the comments by Perrin 1885, p. 175; Stählin 1924, p. 82). As we saw earlier, a similar pattern is also noted in Ottoman toponomastics (*Büyük*, or 'great' Tsanarlis, vs. *Küçük* or 'small' Tsanarlis).

85 Caes. *Civ*. 3, 88–99. Two brief references to the steep cliffs where the Pompeians take flight after the first engagement (*Civ*. 3, 93; 95) effectively capture the rugged look of Pharsalus' karstic topography.

86 Plu. *Flam*. 9, 3 = *AP* 7, 47. Cf. Kriegk 1858, p. 36; Georgiades 1894, p. 25; Stählin 1924, p. 80.

87 Heuzey 1886, p. 134 (who refers to the Karapla as Mt. Alogopati; cf. note 17 above). HMGS surveyors label the hill *Sykies*, applying the designation *Karaplas* to the Chaïdarorema (*General Use Map*, sheet 'Fársala', 1985 [Plate III]). Locally there seems to be no consistency between the use of the feminine form *Karapla*, 'Bald Head', and the masculine *Karaplas*, 'Bald Man'.

88 This naming practice has ancient origins: "All barren mountains are called 'Bald Heads' (*Phalakrai*)" claims e.g. Stephanus of Byzantium, in discussing a summit of Mt. Ida particularly devoid of life on account of its cold temperatures. The geographer also cites two more localities by the same name in Corcyra and Libya; see St. Byz. s.v. *Phalakrai*. It is worth noting that in Thessaly, as elsewhere in Greece, *Phalakros*/*Phalakra* occur as personal names (e.g. Robert 1938, p. 164); for two examples from the immediate vicinities of the Karapla, see *IThess* I, 50, lines 23–24 and the comments by Decourt 1990a, p. 175.

89 Cf. See e.g. the name Kassidiaris ('Mangy Head'; modern day Narthacium) at p. 5 above. Examples from the anatomy of animals are not lacking, as in the much celebrated *Kunos Kephalai* ('The Dog Heads', modern day Chalkodonion).

appears to have been known both as 'Bald Head' and 'Green Mountain', Prasino Vouno.[90]

As stated earlier, the Karapla is part of a mountainland formerly known as Alogopati (p. 5 above). This name was once used to designate a cluster of minor reliefs that rise directly west of the Rizi plateau in the lower reaches of the Narthacium. The highest of these, named Grivas (521 masl), merges with the east end of the Karapla about three and a half kilometers southwest of Pharsala. Today Alogopati is a location (*thesis*) at the back of the mountain, on the slope that faces the Narthacium across the Rizi plateau.

Karapla, Grivas, and associated reliefs form the western boundary of a hinterland that stretches from Pharsala to the foot of the Narthacium, encompassing the high country south of town. Within this region we can distinguish three zones showing similar characteristics in elevation and terrain. In the west raises the steep meadow of the Mavrochoma, which extends from the outskirts of Pharsala to the base of the Karapla. South-southeast of the city are the contiguous basins of Rizi and Narthaki, formed respectively around the valleys of the Chaïdarorema and Kakletzorema streams. The prevailing type of terrain is highland with hilly/mountainous fringes to the north, south and west. Altitudes range from 200 m, in the southern outskirts of Pharsala, to 350–400 m on the lower slopes of the Narthacium.

The differentiation of the territory into mountain and highland corresponds to a difference in geological zones.[91] The Upper Cretaceous transgression is observed in the laminated limestone of the hills (Karapla) and the brecciated and sub-lithographic limestones of the higher elevations (Grivas). In the highland between the mountains and Pharsala we observe instead a soft belt of radiolarian chert and argillaceous schists dating to the Jurassic and Triassic periods. Under it lies an ophiolite formation (peridotites, serpentines and dolerites) which surfaces along the southern perimeter of Pharsala, interspersing with the limestones of Prophitis Ilias and the neighboring hills.

This geological structure has a direct effect on the hydrology of the region. The limestones of the elevated areas form a karstic aquifer limited in depth by the waterproof ophiolite layer that lies beneath.[92] The system is hydraulically open to the fine grain aquifer of the west Thessalian plain, with discharges at a number of karstic springs west and north of the Narthacium main range. The most significant of these are located ca. 7 km southwest of Pharsala, in a locality aptly called Vrysia, 'The Fountain Place'.[93] Here a stream by the same name cuts a narrow bed between the Karapla and the west Narthacium range, flowing into the plain just north of town (a small marshland, one of the few to survive the massive land reclamations of the last century, marks this spot even in the heat of the summer months).[94] No longer active today are the headsprings of the Apidanus in the western outskirts of Pharsala, damaged by seismic activity in the mid-twentieth century (p. 6 above).[95] Vestiges of another important source connected with the city's water supply are also recorded at the opposite end of town, east of the neighborhood of Varoussi.[96] Here, on the old road to Achilleio, Arvanitopoulos identified the remains of an ancient aqueduct fed by a spring called Aï Thanasis. Still in use during Ottoman times, spring and aqueduct were later incorporated in the new

90 Giannopoulos 1919, p. 48; cf. 1912, p. 668, and, for a depiction of this landscape consistent with the 'Green Mountain' designation, Georgiades 1894, p. 24. Arvanitopoulos, the first archaeologist ever to visit the area, only uses the name Karapla, 1910, p. 182.

91 Geological subdivision of the Pharsalian territory: *Geological Map of Greece*, 1964 edition, sheet 'Farsala'; cf. Philippson 1897, pp. 66–69, map 5; Mariolakos et al. 2000, pp. 345–348, fig. 2.

92 Mariolakos et al. 2000, p. 343.

93 Cf. the earlier toponym Bei Bounar (*Bey Bunar*, Ottoman Turkish for *Beypinar*, 'Ruler's Spring'). A detailed account on 19th century Vrysia and its geology is given by Philippson 1897, pp. 64–65; cf. 1950, pp. 57; 63. Now a municipal subdivision of Pharsala, in antiquity Vrysia was plausibly under the control of Proerna, as were many of the lands south-southwest of the Karapla: cf. Stählin 1924, p. 158 (who remarks however on the distance of the city from the source); on the boundary lines between the territories of Pharsalus and Proerna, see also the map in Decourt 1990, plate XIV, fig. 27. A small settlement seems to have existed in the area, according to a 'suggestion' attributed to Arvanitopoulos in *BCH* 46 (1922) p. 518 note 4. On the various Neolithic sites in the vicinities see Arvanitopoulos 1910, pp. 198–200; Tsouknidas 1994, pp. 109–124.

94 On the Vrysias stream: Kriegk 1858, p. 18; Stählin 1924, p. 83; Decourt 1990, pp. 31; 40. Stream and marsh are well-marked in Tsouknidas' map; see 1994, p. 111, fig. 2.

95 On the headspring of the Apidanus and its geology: Philippson 1950, p. 64. For several views of the source and the river from 1900 through 1960: Gountoulas and Zacharis 2009, pp. 73–94.

96 Arvanitopoulos 1910, pp. 178–180; see also Hiller von Gaertringen 1911, p. 62; Stählin 1914, pp. 6–7 and 1924, p. 141. The remains of the aqueduct are still visible on the south side of the road, opposite the rocky hill where once stood the chapel of Agios Athanasios. The small defile in which the ruins lie was formerly known as Bogazaki, from Turkish *boğaz*, 'gorge' (cf. note 18 above on the Steni pass). For an overview of the Pharsalian water supply in light of the recent discoveries, see now Karapanou 2012, pp. 409–410.

water network of the twentieth century.[97] Between Vrysia and Pharsala, more karstic sources rise in the countryside at the foot of the Narthacium: few of them still connect to fountains or waterspouts, such as the one that still stands at the junction of E65 with the road to Rizi (p. 18 below); others pour into the drainage network of the region. The main waters in this system are the aforementioned Chaïdarorema and Kakletzorema streams, which drain respectively the basins of Rizi and Narthaki. Both maintain a stable, if not always substantial flow throughout the year, descending into the plain where they merge with the Enipeus.[98] Other spring-fed streams include the Aïklis, which skirts Pharsala to the north after curving around the hill of Thronos (Sourla), and, further to the east, the Kotzarmani, a large *rema* that runs between oak-shaded banks near the village of Ampelia.[99] For the rest, this territory is marked by a number of minor rain-fed streams whose narrow beds trace weedy paths across the surrounding countryside. During the winter rains, seasonal lakes are sometimes also formed by runoff water and marshy conditions occur in some areas.

Soils are prevalently lithosols formed on limestone bedrock, with a reddish-brown color and characteristically poor horizon development in the more elevated areas.[100] Erosion—the main agent of change in this landscape prior to the arrival of bulldozers—is particularly evident in the countryside west of the city, characterized by the steep, harsh gradients of the Mavrochoma and the Karapla. Karst topography dominates in the upper part of this mountain and the rest of the Alogopati reliefs, especially to the south, in the great wasteland of limestone and prickly oak that overlooks the gorge of the Vrysias. Other forms of erosion, such as gullying, are visible in the lower elevations, as exemplified by the many channels of storm-fed streams that streak the north toe slope of the Karapla and the 'natural amphitheater' of the Mavrochoma. These bear testimony to the occurrence of runoff in times of heavy rainfall, despite the absorbing action of the karst. During ordinary rainfall, the porous nature of the bedrock and the mantle of hardy, tenacious scrub which covers most of the uncultivated land significantly reduce the amounts of soil lost to sheet flooding. Not as protected are the increasingly larger plots reclaimed for agricultural use, especially in the upper part of the Mavrochoma. Here, when the land is still barren after autumn sowing, the topsoil is exposed to the intense rainstorms of the season.[101]

As for the crops grown in the high country, the sloping, well-drained fields of the Mavrochoma are a natural home to moisture sensitive cultivations like wheat and pulses, while the Rizi tableland is extensively planted with cotton. The growth of agriculture in this part of the Pharsalian territory has not been matched by a corresponding growth in population. For unlike the neighbouring basin of Narthaki, which is inhabited by relatively large farming communities such as Dilopho (population: 253) and Narthaki (population: 355), the Rizi plateau is utterly devoid of people except for the small eponymous settlement at the south end of the region, which exhibits a total population of 5 individuals. Given the short distance (8,6 km by main road; 3,8 km if using the dirt path), Rizi farmers prefer to commute from Pharsala, a practice which the development of modern means of transportation has facilitated in most parts of the surrounding countryside. This trend towards a depopulation of the rural areas—presumably to the advantage of the municipal seat[102]—is illustrated by the following table:

97 Arvanitopoulos 1910, p. 180; Stählin 1914, p. 7. See note 96 above: on the same side of the road as the aqueduct are also an old fountain (cf. the name 'Vrysi' recorded for this location by Hiller von Gaertringen 1911, p. 62) and a number of recently restored early twentieth century waterworks (*ΕΣΔΦ*, pp. 203–205; Liapis, *Ta Pharsala 2013*). The site of the spring lies a little further up the street, in an area covered by a small rotunda.

98 Fed by an intricate network of seasonal streams, the Kakletzorema carries a volume of water much larger than its western neighbor. In the elevated areas its aspect and behavior can be compared to those of a true mountain torrent.

99 The Kotzarmani, or 'Great Wood' stream, takes its name from the extensive gallery forest which runs along most of its course. Similar allusions to the wooded nature of the area east of Pharsala are not uncommon in local toponymy, cf. Dendra, 'Trees'; Xylades, 'Woodcutters'; and the examples cited at note 53 above. See also Decourt 1990, p. 22.

100 Sivignon 1975, p. 91.

101 The introduction of autumn-sown cereal cultivations has increased erosion rates in the Thessalian hill country by as much as 1,7 cm per year (Grove and Rackham 2001, p. 265; contrast with the earlier practice of sowing cereals in the spring, in order to protect the crops from floods; Garnsey et al. 1984, p. 31, Karagiorgou 2001, p. 16). A tabulation of sheet-flood erosion rates, as calculated on different parent materials during experiments conducted by MEDALUS in the early 1990's, is given by Grove and Rackham 2001, p. 265, table 14.iv.

102 *ΕΣΔΦ*, pp. 96–97 table 10.3.

TABLE 1 *Decrease in the population of rural centers south of Pharsala 1981–2011 (data EL.STAT.)*

Village (with driving distance from Pharsala)	Census 1981	Census 1991	Census 2001	Census 2011
Narthaki (13,7 km)	961	589	584	355
Achilleio (6,0 km)	561	396	344	200
Dilopho (10,5 km)	519	399	369	253

In antiquity the uplands described above corresponded to the *chôra* or In-territory of ancient Pharsalus, while the mountainous zones at their fringe were its *eschatiai* or Out-territory.[103] The eastern sector of the region was more developed than the western one. Settlement of the Narthaki basin began in the Stone Age and continued through the end of Classical antiquity.[104] On the contrary the countryside south and southwest of town appears to have been uninhabited for most of its history. An intensive land survey (*prospection serrée*) directed by J.C. Decourt in 1986 confirms that the the Rizi plateau was no more populated in antiquity than it is today.[105] In this absence of archaeological data, an interesting glimpse into the region's past is afforded by an inscription found in Rizi in the nineteenth century, *IThess* I, 50 (= *IG* IX 2, 234).[106] The stone, of a dark variety called *sideropetra* by the locals, was used as an altar top in the small church of the Presentation of the Virgin. In it is recorded a politography decree granting citizenship and land to 176 individuals listed by name and patronymic.[107] The document, assigned on palaeographical grounds to the Hellenistic Period, is contemporary to a number of other such actions at Larissa and Phalanna:[108]

> Good Luck. The city of the Pharsalians granted to those who from the beginning were joined to them in sympolity and most willingly fought on their side (*sumpoliteuomenois kai sumpolemeisantessi*) the same citizen rights (*politeian*) as the Pharsalians always had. We also gave them the uncultivated lands in the Makouniai by the banks of the Louerchos, sixty plethra for each adult, in permanent possession. The decision was taken under the leadership of Eumelidas son of Nikasas, Lukos son of Droupakos, Oiolukos son of Mnasippos, Lukos son of Pherekrates and Antiochos son of Dunatos.
>
> (Names of grantees follow)

One of the questions posed by this inscription concerns the location of the lands which are mentioned in it. It has been suggested that Makouniai is a toponym formed from

103 Cf. Helly 1995, p. 294. For a general discussion of the *eschatiai* and other similar territorial designations, see e.g. the study on Greek borderlands by Daverio Rocchi 1988; a comprehensive bibliography on the *eschatiai* is found in Jameson 2002. On the archaeological applications of Locational Analysis theory and the development of 'In territory' and 'Out territory' concepts: Bintliff 1977, pp. 62–66. On Rizi as part of Pharsalus' In-territory: Decourt 1990a, p. 181 (extended discussion in 1990, pp. 135–145).

104 The Neolithic settlement of Achilleio ca. 4,5 km southeast of Pharsala dates to 6400–5600; see Gimbutas et al. 1989, pp. 23–31. Other Prehistoric sites in the area of the Narthaki Plateau include Narthakion 1 ,2, 3 and 4 (Decourt 1990, p. 55, fig. 23, nos. 71–73; cf. note 70 above).

105 1990, p. 66. As the French scholar specifies in another publication (1990a, p. 181), the only (alleged) antiquities recently found in this area were a few coins reported by a shepherd. Decourt's results thus seem to be at variance with Moretti's earlier hypothesis that the Makouniai might have been a settlement of some sort on the Rizi plateau (commentary to *ISE* 96, p. 64: see also Hatzopoulos 1993, p. 153; 1996, pp. 64–65; and, more recently, Pasqual 2007, p. 176).

106 Bibliography and commentary: Decourt 1990a, pp. 163–184; cf. Ducat 1994, pp. 107–113; Helly 1995, pp. 302–311.

107 The first 159 entries in the list contain names followed by the patronymic; with one exception (line 176), all other entries contain names only. This distinction—also reflected in the arrangement of text, with the last 17 names occupying a column entirely of their own (col. 4)—is likely to mark a difference in social status. As Decourt notes, the absence of the patronymic identifies the individuals in the second group as slaves, freedmen, or similar category, 1990a, pp. 175–176.

108 Larissa: *IG* IX 2, 517; Phalanna: *IG* IX 2, 1228 (further bibliography in Decourt 1990a, p. 176, note 12). Like these documents, the purpose of the Pharsalian politography was probably to remedy ongoing population shortages and increase agricultural production, cf. Asheri 1966, pp. 30–31. On the bestowal of citizenship and other similar privileges in Thessalian inscriptions see the recent discussion by Mili 2015, pp. 71–80. On Greek sympolity agreements, including the one alluded to in *IThess* I, 50: Rzepka 2002, pp. 240–245; Pasqual 2007; cf. Hatzopoulos 1993, p. 153; 1996, pp. 64–65.

mêkon, meaning 'The Poppy Fields'.[109] But this information is of course of no use for locating a place in a landscape where poppies are ubiquitous.[110] Could these fields have been in the same area where the stone was found? Based on its weight and size, scholars doubt that the slab ever moved too far from its original location. It is agreed that the Rizi countryside, only 4 km south of town, offers a very plausible match for the lands cited above. As righly pointed by Decourt, the existence of a dedicated city gate opening in this direction would point to the relevance of the area in Pharsalian affairs.[111] The presence of the Chaïdarorema is also consistent with the reference to a river in line 3 of the decree. Following Stählin, this watercourse has been tentatively identified with the inscription's Louerchos.[112]

A second, closely related question concerns the identity of the grantees themselves. Neither metics nor mercenaries, this group of individuals is presented as a community outside the Pharsalian citizen body but with close, ancient ties to the city.[113] Who exactly were they, and where were they settled? Their characteristics appear to match those of the Penests (*penestai*), a class of unfree laborers who lived in Thessaly in conditions that have been compared to those of Laconian Helots.[114] Like the people named in the Rizi inscription, the Penests fought in war alongside the Thessalian army and received farmland in compensation for their services. The matter of their location is more complex. As mentioned above, Decourt's survey of the Rizi plateau has not yielded any evidence for ancient habitation. The French scholar therefore suggests that the 176 land holders mentioned in *IThess* I, 50 were probably commuters, like the farmers working in Rizi today.[115] He advances the hypothesis that they could indeed have been seminomads, an ancient equivalent of the Sarakatzan shepherds that make up a percentage of modern Pharsalian population.[116]

If our knowledge of the Rizi plateau in antiquity relies on a single inscription, less is known about the history of its southwest extension, the sloping meadowland that descends from the foot of the Karapla into the valley of the Chaïdarorema dominating the view from our cave. In antiquity this territory was bound at its lower end by a road which linked Pharsalus to a major communication route, the great trans-Thessalian way Thessaloniki-Larissa-Lamia-Corinth.[117] A small section of this important road, the course of which appears to have coincided in part with that of the old National Road, is still visible today in Thetidos Street immediately to the northeast of the town market.[118] Here west- and south-bound travellers left Pharsalus from a gate near the headprings of the Apidanus.[119] Further up the same stretch of city wall, above the small hill of Agia Paraskevi, three more gates opened onto the countryside west and southwest of town; the southernmost of these connected with a path to Rizi[120] and perhaps another road which passed between the

109 Heuzey and Daumet 1876, p. 428. See also Fick 1914, p. 91 (who compares Makouniai with the ancient name for Sicyon, *Mêkônê*); Buck 1955, p. 227.

110 The alternative 'Fields of Makon' (from a personal name well attested in Thessaly; see *LGPN* III B, s.vv. *Makoun*, *Makôn*, *Makounis*) also lacks geographical specificity.

111 Decourt 1990a, p. 181. On the south city gate see the aforementioned studies by Katakouta and Toufexis 1990, p. 73 ('Gate 4'), with a photo of the tower at p. 75, fig. 4; 1994, p. 197 ('Gate II').

112 1924, p. 144; cf. *RE* XIII, 2 (1936) col. 1712. See also Moretti, commentary to *ISE* 96, p. 64; Decourt 1990a, p. 181.

113 As Heuzey was the first to observe, not a single name in this inscription is accompanied by the ethnic. Thus, according to Heuzey, the beneficiaries of the decree are not foreigners, but constitute "a category of Pharsalian residents" in some kind of client relationship to the local oligarchy (Heuzey and Daumet 1876, p. 427). See the commentary by Decourt 1990a, pp. 176–177.

114 Heuzey and Daumet 1876, p. 427; Decourt 1990a, p. 179 and commentary to *IThess* 50, p. 63; Helly 1995, pp. 302–311. The main study on the Penests is that by Ducat 1994; see also Morgan 2003, pp. 190–192, and, more recently, Zelnick-Abramowitz 2013, pp. 7–9.

115 Decourt 1990a, p. 182. As Decourt observes, the language of the decree differs from that of *enktêsis* texts: "If the text does not mention the right to purchase homes, would it be too far fetched to conclude that these people already had residences in Pharsalus?" (1990a, p. 177). See also note 105 above.

116 Cf. pp. 7–8 above. Decourt himself warns that such comparative ethnographic data ought to be used with a grain of salt (1990a, p. 184); cf. Ducat 1994, p. 111.

117 Katakouta and Toufexis 1990, p. 73; 1994 p. 196. For a recent reconstruction of the N-S trans-Thessalian way based on the combined evidence of the *Tabula Peutingeriana* and twenty-five or so Roman milestones found in the region see Decourt and Mottas 1997, pp. 332–337. A record of the junction with the Pharsalus road appears to have survived in one of these milestones, recovered in the village of Zoodochos Pigi, *IThess* I, 112 = Decourt and Mottas ibid. p. 348, no. 5.

118 The remains of the road, which consist of a layer of packed earth, rooftile sherds, and pebbles over a foundation of small stones and sherds, were recovered inside the west gate of the city; see the studies by Katakouta and Toufexis cited in the note above (as the authors point out, these traces may belong to a post-Classical restoration, 1994, p. 200, note 66). On the street system of the Hellenistic city, cf. Karapanou 2012, pp. 406–409.

119 'Gate V' in Katakouta and Toufexis 1994, p. 190, fig. 1; see discussion and drawing at pp. 196–197, fig. 8. For a photo see 1990, p. 75, fig. 6 (in this earlier study by the same authors, the west city gate is marked as 'Gate 1').

120 'Gate VIII' in Katakouta and Toufexis 1994, p. 190 fig. 1.

Gyphtovrysi and Prophitis Ilias hills, crossing the southern highlands in the direction of the Narthacium range.[121] Only a limited portion of this land outside the west fortification walls appears to have been developed. Especially notable is an area between Agia Paraskevi and the neighboring hill of Gyphtovrysi where the Pharsalians, following in the tradition of their Bronze and Iron Age ancestors, buried their dead on the sides of the main road.[122] Cult sites are attested at both ends of the cemetery, a temple of Zeus Thaulios on the summit of Agia Paraskevi and a shrine to an unidentified deity across from Gyphtovrysi.[123] Beyond this point no further traces of permanent structures have been found. West of the cemetery stretched an uninhabited countryside bound by hills on one side and marshes on the other. It seems doubtful that the lands between the Chaïdarorema and the site of our cave were farmed in antiquity as they are today. Rather, according to a practice still attested in the late twentieth century, this territory was probably used for grazing, hunting, and other occupations associated with the economy of fringe areas or *eschatiai*. The economic and demographic map of the region can be approximated from the characteristics of the terrain. The presence of fish and waterfowl in the lower valley of the Chaïdarorema, where the swamps formed by this stream merged with those of the Tampakos/Apidanus, is likely to have brought hunters and fishermen to this part of the Pharsalian countryside.[124] Similarly, the presence of wooded areas upriver—planes and other riparian trees comparable to those growing today in the Chaïdaria district—can be plausibly associated with the activity of woodcutters and charcoal-burners. Lastly, we can expect the phrygana-mantled hillsides of the Karapla to have been a most appropriate domain for the wanderings of goatherds and their flocks. This sparse universe of travellers, hunters, woodcutters, and herdsmen, set against a landscape of limestone ridges and marshy plains, constituted the primary socio-geographical context within which the cult at our cave was established and supported over a span of several hundred years.[125] With the disappearance of the wetlands and the introduction of large scale cultivation in some areas, this context has undergone significant physical change in recent times: still, much of the land remains uninhabited and the modalities of human interaction with it continue, for the most part, to be the same. This is especially true of the Alogopati region, the rugged mountainland at the back of the Karapla where Pharsalus bordered with the neighboring state of Proerna. Here, at the far end of the Othrys massif, it is possible for us to get a better understanding of that notion of marginality which ancients refer to in qualifying this kind of terrain. Even if the old territorial borders are long gone, engulfed by those of the present day peripheral unit, Alogopati remains a world of boundaries. Here is where the plain begins and the Othrys dies, rising one last time in the rocky ridges that skirt the old National Road to Lamia. As at its northeast end, vast marshes once lined the edges of this territory, enclosing the mountain like a moat. At the same time, as we hike the high country within this natural boundary the eye registers a near total absence of directional landmarks. From here to Rizi the land that lies in between is untouched by roads or even paths that can be managed with a regular vehicle.[126] Scattered stone

121 A trace of this thoroughfare survives perhaps in the old route from Pharsala to Petroto (formerly Tsatma, Turkish *Çatma*), clearly marked on Heuzey's map of 1886. A 'drivable soft surface road' in its lower tract, after a certain elevation the Petroto route degenerates into a mule track (HMGS *General Use Map*, sheets 'Fársala', 1985 [Plate III] and 'Dhomokós', 1987).

122 Evidence for the continuous use of this area as a burial ground is found from the Middle Helladic to the Hellenistic periods. The Bronze Age is well-documented, starting with two cist tombs dating to 2000 BCE and continuing through the end of the Mycenaean period with a variety of the most representative burial types. On the west cemetery see Verdelis 1948/1949, 1950/1951, 1951, 1952, 1953, 1954, 1955 (the so-called 'Verdelis Tomb', on the north foothill of Gyphtovrysi, is briefly discussed at p. 88 note 48 below). See also Katakouta 2012; Stamatopoulou and Katakouta 2013. A new comprehensive study of the Pharsalian cemeteries is in preparation by Stamatopoulou.

123 Zeus Thaulios: Arvanitopoulos 1907, pp. 151–153; Stählin 1914, p. 7 and 1924, p. 136; Mili 2015, appendix 2, p. 335. Cf. *IThess* I, 62, now lost. Temple (?) to unidentified deity: ca. 20 minutes west of town, on a property of the Ministry of Agriculture, Verdelis reports a 70 m. long foundation wall, covered at the west end by a cistern, which he tentatively assigns to a temple (1952, p. 203). This may be the same structure as that observed by Gell in 1827 (p. 286, "ruins of a temple") near the fountain which still stands opposite the Rizi intersection along E65. See p. 18 note 3 below.

124 Stratigraphic sampling in the area has revealed layers of dark earth that confirm the presence of marshes in connection with the Chaïdarorema (I am most indebted to S. Katakouta for this and other information on the region west of Pharsala). Considered in this light the name 'Mavrochoma', used sometimes for the district, assumes particularly interesting connotations. On the Pharsalian wetlands see pp. 6; 9 above.

125 On the openness of this rustic environment to influences from the city, facilitated by the presence of major communication routes, see p. 21 below.

126 The HMGS *General Use Map* of 1985 [Plate III] records one category 1 (*evvatos*, or 'passable') mule track ascending the south slope of the Karapla from the W end of the Steni pass to a point SE of our cave. Further south a handful of such trails are shown departing from Vrysia to the summits above the village and the

cairns provide the only points of reference in this wasteland of limestone and low-growing prickly oak, marking invisible lanes for shepherds and their flocks. The pastoral element is more evident here than most other parts of the Pharsalian territory north of the Narthacium.[127] Up to the mid-twentieth century the area was a traditional wintering station for transhumant herdsmen, reflecting a practice that may have very remote origins.[128]

The landscape preserved on the southern slopes of the Karapla can give us a better idea of what the land looked like on the other face of the ridge—the one facing Pharsalus—before the changes introduced by agriculture. Although its roughness may be suggestive of the old dichotomy between nature and culture, such distinctions should be used with care. This kind of terrain was—and still is—as culturally charged as that of the city and the farmed countryside it borders with. Karst topography, territorial marginality, and pastoralism are all interconnected aspects of the Nymphs' socio-geographical domain. The Nymph shrine discussed in the next chapters was located at the far end of the "finely calibrated scale" which existed in ancient Greece between any urban nucleus, with its adjacent farmland, and the uncultivated areas at the edges of its territory.[129] A one hour walk from Pharsalus, the Karapla cave stood outside the 'civilized' domain of the city and the cropped fields around it, but was still part of an economic and religious continuum which linked the center of this universe to its outer margins. Herding—in Thessaly a means of subsistence but also a source of wealth for urban elites—played a major role in bringing the city to the mountain and vice versa; other common activities, such as hunting, also reinforced this link.

The apparent contradictions inherent to the cultural construction of the 'wilderness' are best captured, perhaps, by the contrasting answers one gets from Greek villagers today when inquiring about certain parts of their countryside.[130] I cannot even recount the times that, having asked for directions to some mountain site, I was told in return, *ti psachneis? den yparchei tipota ekei pano* ('What are you looking for? There is nothing up there'). The lack of sightseeing opportunities perceived as worthy of a foreigner's attention does not necessarily mean that the 'wilderness' is empty. Outside the small community of Neraida, in the eastern reaches of the Pharsalian territory, I once asked an old lady walking a goat on a leash if the name of her village was related to that of the nearby mountain, the looming Neraiditis.[131] No, was her reply, the name came from the Neraides (Water Nymphs) who used to live out there. When she was small she could still hear them at night dancing and playing their instruments, the *klarino* (clarinet) and the *tampourlo* (drum).[132] Eventually, she concluded, the evils of modern life had driven them away. Having taken a few seconds to readjust to the reality of this conversation, my assistant and I then asked the old lady where she thought the Neraides could be found now. By then, however, our interlocutor had shifted to the more customary response pattern, *den yparchoun*. As it turned out, our investigation of Thessalian Nymph lore was to last much longer, leading us eventually to the cave site which is the focus of the second part of this book.

current location (*topothesia*) of Alogopati. As of this writing a long driveway has been opened at the east end of Alogopati (Bania) to facilitate communication with the local cattle farms.

127 See e.g. Cantarelli 2008, p. 30.

128 In his extensive overview of semi-nomadic pastoralism in modern day Thessaly, Sivignon refers to the high country between Pharsala and Domokos as "a frequent wintering place", 1975, p. 31; see also Georgiades 1894, p. 24. On the antiquity of pastoral practices in the area cf. the remarks by Cantarelli 2008, p. 30, who observes that the toponym Proerna—the city which once shared this mountainland with Pharsalus—may be etymologically related to the word for 'small animal' (with reference to Chantraine 1968, p. 374 s.v. *ernos*. Although this root has more applications in the vegetal world, its less widespread use in reference to horned animals fits well with Cantarelli's point).

129 Barnett 2007, p. 7 (elaborating on Horden and Purcell 2000).

130 Unpredictable as the results of such conversations usually are, "we all know the strategic importance of the village coffee shop for the surveyor!" (Decourt 1990, p. 24).

131 Neraiditis or Meraditis: Philippson 1950, pp. 172; 174. Neraida, former Anabakli, is a village of 140 inhabitants (data EL.STAT. 2011) on the north foot of the mountain.

132 Music making and all-night dancing are traditional activities of the Neraides; see e.g. the analogous narratives collected by the Blums during the 1960' (1970, p. 114, nos. 73–74, also featuring drums; 116, no. 82; 118, no. 88). On the Neraides of modern Greek folklore as successors of the Classical Nymphs: Lawson 1910, pp. 130–173.

CHAPTER 2

The Site (Plates VI, VIII–XXII)

1 Description

1.1 *Approach*

The cave is visible from National Road E65 in a rocky crag at the top of the Karapla. The elongated mass of the Karapla appears to the southwest as one leaves the Pharsala city limits driving past the hillock of Gyphtovrysi [Fig. 3].

Here the road goes over a small tributary of the Apidanus which flows from the highlands south of town. Rising in the vicinity of Rizi, this stream enters the plain after forming an ample bend around the foot of Gyphtovrysi. In its mid-course it runs through the plane-shaded district of Chaïdaria, after which it takes the name of Chaïdarorema [Fig. 3].

The cave comes into full view near the junction with the Stavros road. An isolated cluster of trees near the top of the hill betrays the presence of underground water in this spot, marking out the position of the site on a hillside otherwise devoid of any significant vegetation [Fig. 4].[1] The same source appears to feed also a seasonal stream flowing approximately 150 m northeast of the cave. This small watercourse, which descends to the plain near the intersection of E65 with the road to Rizi,[2] is responsible for the other concentrations of trees in the farmland between the plain and the hill. On the north shoulder of E65, opposite the Rizi intersection, is also a fountain shaded by a single plane tree.[3]

To reach the base of the Karapla one must turn left at the fountain and drive in the direction of Rizi for a little over a half km. At the third roadbend it is then necessary to continue on foot through the fields of the Mavrochoma up to a dirt path which begins at the bottom of the hill (marked on the HMGS *General Use Map* as a 'passable mule track', *evvatos imioniki odos*) [Plate III]. From an initial elevation of 268 m this path climbs up to 350 m, ending immediately west of the cave in the belt of scrubland which girdles the upper part of the Karapla. Gorse and prickly oak dominate the scenery, with wild pears, nettles, and Christ's thorns rising occasionally in their midst. The path lies inside a gully that runs through the Karapla crosswise, fanning out in two separate branches near the junction with the Mavrochoma[4] [Plates III–V; Fig. 4].

Near the top of the hill the incline rises sharply, as the main path disintegrates into a number of minor trails.[5] Scattered over the hillside we observe a considerable number of large rocks which were detached from the limestone walls of the summit—another reminder of the effects of erosion on this landscape.[6] The increased presence of water in the ground is also indicated by a noticeable tran-

1 Cf. Heuzey 1886, p. 134. These underground waters are likely to be responsible for another tree-shaded spot at the foot of the hill, ca. 420 m below the site of our cave. The area, now occupied by a water trough and artificial irrigation works, belongs to a farming estate which stands at the west end of the Mavrochoma. On the hydrology of the district see pp. 12–13 above.

2 On the route from Pharsala to Domokos, at 18 minutes from Pharsala Gell notes "A river, and a road from l(eft)" (1827, p. 286).

3 A fountain is recorded by Gell, albeit on the left side of the road, just before the ascent to the pass of Steni (1827, p. 286. On Steni, see p. 5 above). This is most probably the same as the "good spring" which, according to Murray's *Handbook for Travellers in Greece*, lies ca. 25 minutes east of the same pass, and "the copious spring", named Gouyáva, which the 1894 Baedeker guide to Greece places half an hour west of Pharsala. See Murray 1900, Route 11 (Lamia to Pharsala), col. 758; Baedeker 1894, p. 229. At the same distance from town Dodwell reports "some ancient foundations near a stream and a fountain", 1819, p. 121.

4 The gully already appears in a watercolor by H. Daumet dated to 1861–1863 [Plate V]. The rocky walls of the cave—then still unknown to the academic world—are clearly visible above the word *emplacement*. As shown by this painting, the landscape of the Karapla hill has not changed much from the 19th century.

5 The HMGS *General Use Map* [Plate III] shows the path as continuing on to a location at the west end of the ridge, where E65 begins its descent to the great Karditsa basin after crossing the Steni pass. From this point another trail (which I did not have the opportunity to inspect) is shown to climb up the south side of the Karapla in an easterly direction.

6 According to the locals I have spoken to, many of the fallen rocks visible today on Pharsalian hillslopes are a result of the infamous earthquake of April 30, 1954, the most powerful seismic episode ever recorded in the region (Papastamatiou and Mouyiaris 1986; Papazachos 1997, p. 277). It should be noted that at the Karapla the detachment of large fragments from the cliff wall appears to have begun earlier than the mid-twentieth century; see the photographs Archivio Fotografico della Scuola Archeologica Italiana, negativi 324, 327 (= Levi 1923–1924, p. 28, figs. 2, 1), and 326 (unpublished).

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sition in the vegetation, which changes from low scrub to thick shrubbery and small to mid-size trees [Figs. 4, 6, 12]. The total walking time from the city to this area, across a distance of ca. 4 km, is approximately 1 hour.[7]

1.2 *The Site* (*Lower Level*)

At the end of the ascent, the dirt gives way to exposed limestone, with high cliff walls rising vertically from the ground. Here, where the slope forms a sort of natural embankment abutting the base of the precipice [Fig. 12],[8] the cliff bends inwards, framing a patch of land large enough for a dozen people to gather on it [Plate VI: 1; Figs. 9, 13]. Fallen rocks and prickly oak cover a large portion of the grounds, interspersed with elms and wild figs [Figs. 12, 15–16]. At the back of this natural cove, between the east wall of the cliff and a small dried up waterfall,[9] are a series of rocky projections which form the steps of a rudimentary stairway [Plate VI: 2; Figs. 13–15, 17–19].[10] As the variation in their size and shape suggests, these stairs were hewn in the cliffside following the natural contours of the surface. This is especially evident in the lower part of the stairway, which appears like an uneven assemblage of boulders flattened on top. Halfway up, where it runs into a particularly rough patch of rock, the stairway continues round the obstacle with a series of smaller, better-formed steps carved closer to the wall [Figs. 17–19]. Damage occurred at the top, where the last step is broken [Figs. 17–18], and at the bottom, where the extant steps seem too far apart from one other [Fig. 14]. The first step is also set at an impossible height [Fig. 13], showing that the ground surface has lowered considerably since the stairs were built. This is due partly to erosion, partly to human intervention (a change in the soil level of this specific area appears to have occurred during or immediately after the Italian excavations of 1922).[11] As the collapsed rocks scattered over the hillside also remind us, additional shifting was probably caused by the dramatic seismic events of the mid 1950's (cf. note 6 above).

On both sides of the stairway are inscriptions carved respectively into the north and east faces of the cliff (below, Chapter 4). The inscription facing north (Inscription II: Plate VI: 3; Figs. 46–47) stands at eye level on a large, flat-surfaced rock projecting beside the stairs to the right of the waterfall. The writing on it is weathered and barely visible today to the naked eye. The inscription facing west (Inscription I: Plate VI: 4; Figs. 44–45) is located higher up, above the second step of the stairway, on the wall that rises left of this structure. Despite its elevated position it is clearly distinguishable from ground level [Fig. 13] and in a much better state of preservation than the lower text.

Except for the features described above, the lower level of the sanctuary does not present any other rock-carvings or visible alterations. The eroded walls of the cliff are scarred with a large number of holes and crevices of which some, suggestively geometric in shape, could be perforations for the hanging of votives (cf. Chapter 4.3 Cat. nos. 2a, 26 below). However, none bear traces of rust or metal residue that would allow for a positive identification.

1.3 *The Site* (*Upper Level*)

At the top of the stairway is a trapezoid-shaped landing enclosed on all sides except the front [Plate VI: 5; Figs. 16, 20, 25–26].[12] Its measurements are approximately 6 × 3 m. The east end of the landing has been rounded into a shallow apse [Fig. 21] with carefully smoothed walls [Fig. 23], approximately 1,30–1,40 m in diameter. Within this alcove, resting on a stepped area hewn in the floor of the landing, is a tall rocky outcrop with a squared top [Plate VI: 6; Figs. 20–21].[13] The approximate height of the outcrop is 1,50 m;

On the seismic history of the region: p. 5, note 10 above; Stiros and Papageorgiou 1994, pp. 29–31; Caputo and Helly 2005, pp. 215–216.

7 Time and distance were calculated taking as a starting point the west gate in the old city wall.

8 "A roughly quadrangular terrace, ample, but with a strong incline" Levi 1923–1924, p. 30. Based on this account and the accompanying photograph (p. 28, fig. 1), we must conclude that since the time of the excavation erosion has affected both size and shape of the area.

9 'Waterfall' is admittedly too grand a term for what can be better described as a dank rocky recess covered by moss (partly visible in Fig. 17, upper left). There is no doubt however that in times preceding the foundation of the sanctuary a continuous flow of water sculpted the rocks in this area into the shape that they are now.

10 "Six rock-cut steps or climbing holds of variable height", Peek 1938, p. 19. See also Levi 1923–1924, p. 29; Decourt, commentary to *IThess* I, 72, p. 88; Riethmüller 2001, II, p. 294.

11 A photograph of the stairway taken at the time of the excavation (Archivio Fotografico della Scuola Archeologica Italiana, negativo 324 = Levi 1923–1924, p. 28, fig. 2) shows the first step barely emerging above ground. Writing in the late 1930's Peek found the ascent difficult enough to postulate damage in the lower steps of the structure (1938, p. 19).

12 Brief descriptions also in Levi 1923–1924, p. 30; Peek 1938, p. 19.

13 Cf. Peek 1938, p. 19; Riethmüller 2001, II, p. 294. Neither this rock formation nor the apsidal recess behind it are discussed by Levi, although both appear in the map included with his excavation report (1923–1924, p. 31, fig. 6). Both structures are also carefully recorded in an unpublished photograph at the SAIA archives, showing that the Italian archaeologist had been aware of them

that of the raised area 0,37 m (lower step: 0,22 m; upper step: 0,15 m).[14] On the upper end of the outcrop [Fig. 22], which is flat and roughly quadrangular (0,85 × 0,90 × 0,90 × 1,00 m), we observe a small rectangular socket almost obliterated by erosion. Behind it, the corresponding section of the cliff wall has been dug out in the shape of a semicircular niche [Figs. 22–24].[15] The approximate height of this recess is 0,80 m; its diameter 0,70 m. Immediately to the left, lodged in a large crack in the wall of the cliff, is a triangular shelf with a round depression on top [Fig. 24, left].[16]

The entrance to the cave is at the other end of the landing, about 4 m to the right of the area described above [Figs. 26, left]. Here the stone floor shows a more pronounced slope as well as a brittler consistency due to sheet erosion.[17] Resting against the west wall of the cliff is a rectangular rock formation which resembles a bench or low dais [Plate VI: 7; Figs. 25–26]. It is freestanding on all sides except the back, where it joins the rear wall of the forecourt with a short left return. Like most of the surrounding limestone (e.g. the section of cliff wall in Fig. 10), it shows a characteristically laminate texture. Its approximate measurements are 2,00 (l.) × 0,87 (w.) × 0,74 (h.).

Left of the bench-like formation, a fissure in the cliff leads to a roofless vestibule connecting the landing to the cave [Plate VI: 8; Figs. 11; 27–28].[18] Upon entering this space one steps into the mouth of an ancient streambed carved into the limestone floor [Fig. 28].[19] The bottom of it is lined with a sediment of reddish-brown dirt mixed with small stones. Discoloration marks observed at about waist height on the vestibule's left wall show, however, that a much larger body of water originally flowed inside the cave [Fig. 31]. Where this mass of streaming water made two sharp returns to the east, the vestibule's walls are moulded into a double apsed shape [Plate VI: 8–9; Fig. 28].[20] The effects of erosion are also visible at the west end of the room, where water has excavated a small secondary channel alongside the right wall [Fig. 29].

The cave itself consists of a long vaulted corridor that bores into the cliff at an upward angle [Figs. 32–33, 38]. The corridor has a north-south direction and is laid out on a straight line except at the end, where it veers to the east[21] forming a small secondary chamber [Plate VI: 10–11]. At the entrance its height is ca. 9 m, dropping gradually to 3.50 m as one moves deeper into the cave. Its total length, excluding the secondary chamber, is a little over 20 m.[22] The secondary chamber is a small elliptical room of 3,90 m (l.) × 3,26 m (h.), accessible through a low round opening [Fig. 41]. It is linked to the main corridor by an elbow-shaped, equally low passage[23] whose flat ceiling contrasts with the sharp vaulting observed in the rest of the cave [Fig. 40]. Its measurements are 1,30 m (w.) × 1,70 (h.). Two more openings, which are better described as clefts in the rock than real rooms, are also visible on the corridor's west wall. One is found in the upper end of the cave, to the right of the elbow-shaped passage [Plate VI: 9c; Figs. 38–39]. It is a natural closet of 0,60 m (w.) × 2,00 m (h.) × 2,6 m (d.), with a shape vaguely reminescent of a Russian church dome. The other occurs in the vestibule down below [Plate VI: 9; Fig. 30]. Much less spacious than the first, it is just a tall gash in the wall. Its measurements are 0,50 m (w.) × 3,50 m (h.) × 1,10 m (d.)

Inside the secondary chamber are a tall cave pillar, or stalagnate [Fig. 42], and a bench-like formation under a rocky shelf [Fig. 43].[24] Except for these, the site is otherwise devoid of speleothems or any other natural characteristics of note. The most remarkable feature is the narrow, winding streambed that water has excavated into the cave's floor. This channel begins at the back of the corridor, where the stream flowed out of two clefts in

(Archivio Fotografico della Scuola Archeologica Italiana, negativo B 329).

14 The stepped area in this part of the landing has been hitherto unnoticed by scholars. The upper step of the structure is visible in the unpublished photograph cited at note 13 above.

15 Peek 1938, p. 19; Riethmüller 2001, II, p. 294. Not mentioned by Levi.

16 A detailed description of this feature, inclusive of measurements, is given by Peek 1938, p. 19. Except for Peek, none of the other authors make any mention of the triangular shelf.

17 This strip of crumbling limestone marks the path of the water that washed across the ledge to form the waterfall on the right side of the stairway (p. 19 above).

18 Most scholars do not differentiate between this space and the corridor of the cave proper. Levi correctly notes the vestibular character of the area but omits to report the absence of a roof (1923–1924, p. 30). The sunlight filtering from this overhead opening reaches almost to the upper end of the corridor, giving the interior of the cave a pleasantly bright appearance throught the greater part of the day.

19 Levi 1923–1924, p. 32. Peek 1938, p. 19. Riethmüller 2001, II, p. 294.

20 On the distinctive configuration of this part of the wall see also Levi 1923–1924, p. 30.

21 Not to the west, as erroneously shown in Levi's otherwise very reliable map (1923–1924, p. 31, fig. 6). The same error in orientation appears in Peek's account (1938, p. 19).

22 Cf. Levi 1923–1924, p. 30. Decourt computes the total length of the cave, inclusive of the secondary chamber, to about 25 m (commentary to *IThess* I, 73, p. 88).

23 Peek inaccurately refers to this passage as the innermost part of the cave, estimating its width to be less than 1 m (1938, p. 19: see also note 21 above).

24 The bench is itself the result of a small cave pillar spreading out at the base.

the threshold of the secondary chamber. After washing down the elbow-shaped passage, the water dropped into the channel forming a small waterfall in an area where the rock still shows a particularly polished surface [Plate VI: 9b; Fig. 37]. From here it followed the natural slope of the floor, descending to the entrance in a series of irregularly spaced bends [Figs. 34–37]. From start to end one counts a total of nine turns, R-L-R-L-R-R-L-R-L. The average width is ca. 0,50 m (with variations up to 1 m near the entrance and down to 0,22 m in the upper part of the cave).

2 Interpretation

2.1 *Approach*

> Goatherd, on turning the corner of that path where the oaks are, thou shalt find . . .
>
> THEOCRITUS, *Epigrams* (transl. Paton)

The approach to the cave described in section 1.1 above takes as a reference E65, the National Road that skirts the Karapla to the north. It is one of many approaches that are possible from this direction, since the visitor can leave the road virtually at any point and begin the ascent through the cultivated fields. From the hillock of Gyphtovrysi to the pass of Steni the cave is always in clear view of anyone travelling on E65. Thanks to the amphitheatrical shape of the region (p. 5 above), a similarly unencumbered view offers itself to those travelling through the highlands south of town, especially from the valley of the Chäidarorema. In antiquity the Karapla and the reliefs of the Alogopati mountainland were encircled by two routes which departed from the west side of town, linking Pharsalus to Proerna, Thaumakoi, and the territories of the south (p. 5 above). One of these was the main roadway which, as we have seen, originated at the sources of the Apidanus following approximately the same path as the old *ethniki odos*. The other was more of a local route which bisected the Rizi plateau in the direction of the Narthacium ridge. Both routes afforded an easy access to the cave through an energetic scramble on the slopes of the Karapla, for we may assume that in antiquity, just as today, a variety of minor trails must have scored the sides of this hill, connecting the open countryside between the two roads.[25] As anyone who has ever asked a Greek shepherd for directions is aware, such *monopatia,* or 'one-person tracks', are often invisible to the uninitiated. Less clear is the situation at the south end of the area, where the Alogopati reliefs subside into the valley of the Vrysias. Here, in the rugged borderland that divided Pharsalus from Proerna, there are no records of ancient routes or other topographical features that can provide a point of reference. Inconvenient for travellers (who would have had to stray far from the main road without having the site in their view), the southern approach to the cave was still viable for other users of the Greek countryside, such as herdsmen, woodcutters, and hunters.

2.2 *The Sacred Garden*

> I have a garden which I cultivated with the toil of my own hands . . . if you were to remove the fence around it, you would think that you were looking at a sacred grove.
>
> LONGUS, *Daphnis and Chloe*

Both inscriptions found at the Karapla cave (Chapter 4 below) attest to the existence of a cultivated area in the sanctuary. Inscription I hints at the early dedication of a laurel tree (line 4). Inscription II refers instead to a plurality of plantings (lines 9 and 12), indicating that a fully established garden or grove[26] must have existed by the time this text was engraved. As with the majority of such installations, Pantalces' garden cannot be traced archaeologically;[27] we can only surmise about its nature

25 If the presence of a spring was the primary factor in the development of the Karapla cult, proximity to these two routes linking Pharsalus with its outer territory is also likely to have played a role: "Both roads and fountains have strong connections with acts of foundation, with the first transformation of an uninhabited landscape into one of human habitation and culture", Mili 2015, p. 43. As the same author notes, roads and springs are characteristically prominent features of the Thessalian religious landscape.

26 In the opening paragraph the term "cultivated area" is more faithful to the epigraphical text, which never specifies whether Pantalces planted a garden (*kêpos*) or a grove (*alsos*). The preference given to 'garden' in this study is based on comparison with Archedamus' analogous foundation at Vari; cf. *IG* I^3, 977. As scholars have pointed out, a clear distinction between garden and grove is not always possible; see Birge 1982, p. 1; Bonnechere 2007, pp. 17–19. For an overview of the word *kêpos* and its application to different forms of planted land, see also Carroll-Spillecke 1989, pp. 11–12.

27 As Bonnechere puts it, "the physical garden remains one of the great unknowns of Greek civilization" (2001, p. 31–32). On the difficulties in studying Greek gardens see also Carroll-Spillecke 1989, pp. 11–12, cf. 79; Osborne 1992, pp. 373–374. The most current overview on the topic is that by Carroll-Spillecke 1989, who provides a convenient tabulation of all extant literary, epigraphical and archaeological evidence (pp. 89–94, tables A-E). Similar

on the basis of external evidence and what little information can be gleaned from Inscriptions I–II.

Based on the language of Inscription II (Chapter 4.2.4 below, commentary to line 2) the cultivated plot must have been physically close to this text, i.e. in the patch of level ground which lies directly below the cave at the base of the cliff. Although the term 'terrace' is often used in the scholarly publications,[28] there is no evidence for terracing in this spot or elsewhere in the surroundings. Given the highly eroded conditions of the hill and the recent tectonic history of the region, one is justified in assuming that a fair amount of soil loss has occurred. Size and shape of the ancient 'terrace' are thus difficult to estimate, as are the boundaries of the precinct proper,[29] but it is clear that unlike other parts of the site, the grounds below the cave could admit more than a handful visitors at once.

At the Karapla cave, native vegetation (line 9, *emphuta*) and cultivated plants (line 12, *taut' ephuteuse*) co-existed under the energetic care of Pantalces. As Inscription II makes clear, this balanced landscape was not mantained without effort. The reference to the gardener's labors in line 12, while consistent with the conventions of the epigrammatic genre (commentary to Inscription II, line 12 below), has also a basis in reality. Just keeping the area clear of fallen rocks and encroaching scrub must have required, in itself, a considerable amount of time and effort. The presence of a spring inside the cave, while essential for the health of Pantalces' plants, must have also favored, as it still does now, the spread of stinging nettle and other undesirable seasonal weeds.

The analysis of the soil can help us form an idea of what Pantalces' garden might have looked like. From a pedological point of view the Karapla can be assigned to the category of Entisols called Orthents, shallow rocky soils that cover the slopes of limestone mountains.[30] The Narthacium range, of which Karapla is a foothill, consists of an upper layer of limestone resting on a basement of shales and ophiolites (see discussion at p. 12 above). Rich in calcium, soils formed over limestone and serpentine foundations are basic in pH and therefore toxic to most plants, save for the hardy, adaptable undershrubs found in garrigue and phrygana biomes. There are no reasons to believe that the Karapla's soil chemistry and geomorphology have undergone any drastic change over the last three thousand years: the most significant erosional activity in Greece dates to the Pleistocene or earlier, "long before any human impact on the land" (Rackham 1990, p. 110).[31] Likewise, botanists agree that the main changes in the natural vegetation of Greece—namely the transition from aboriginal woodland to the widespread steppe and maquis mosaic we see today—occurred in the early Holocene, between the Neolithic and the Bronze Age.[32] If so, it is fair to assume that in Pantalces' time the hill was mantled by a maquis and phryganic vegetation very similar to the one growing there now. The laurel mentioned in line 4 of Inscription I certainly fits a maquis context. We can imagine this vegetation as a discontinuous cover of ligneous scrub, punctuated here and there by small trees or tree-stands. Thick cushions of thorny bush would enmesh with aromatic and medicinal plants to form a scented mosaic of muted greens and browns. In spring and summer, this mosaic would come ablaze

problems also hinder research on sacred groves, on which see the in-depth study by Birge 1982 and the more recent discussions by Bonnechere 2007 and Sporn 2010, pp. 554–555. Physical evidence for the planting of sacred trees has been recovered at the sanctuary of Zeus of Nemea (Birge, Kraynak, and Miller 1992, pp. 85–98 = Birge 1982, pp. 86–93) where the existence of a sacred grove is confirmed by Paus. 2, 15, 2–3 and other sources; at the Hephaestaeum in Athens (Thompson 1937, pp. 396–425 = Birge 1982, pp. 64–72), the Asclepieum in Corinth (Roebuck 1951, pp. 40–42 = Birge 1982, pp. 72–78), and the sanctuary of Apollo Hylates at Kourion (Scranton 1967 = Birge 1982, pp. 78–86).

28 Cf. Levi 1923–1924, p. 30 (note 8 above), where a natural terrace is intended. For an overview of terracing practices in Greece: Foxhall 1996, pp. 44–67; Grove and Rackham 2001, pp. 112–113. On terraces as a feature of cave shrines: Sporn 2010, p. 559; 2013, p. 206.

29 On the issues concerning the demarcation of cave- and other nature shrines see Sporn 2010, p. 559.

30 USDA, *Soil Taxonomy*, p. 420–443. On the soils of ancient Greece and their possible religious associations see Retallack 2008 (especially p. 642 on Orthents). On paleopedology and the study of ancient soils in general, see the 1990 book-length study by the same author.

31 Contemporary with the last glaciation in Northern Europe, this "gigantic phase of erosion" (Rackham 1982, p. 195) is responsible for the alluvial formation known in Greek geology as 'Older Fill'. Lesser erosional periods, of a more localized nature, occurred in Classical times producing deposits designated as 'Younger Fill'. It is worth-noting that, especially in the case of the 'Old Fill', climate is proven to have played a much bigger role than 'deforestation' or other forms of human land exploitation. On the alluviation cycle, according to the model developed by C. Vita-Finzi, see the main study by the same, 1969, and the studies by Bintliff, especially 1975 and 1992.

32 Rackham 1990, p. 101. For a general overview of Prehistoric Mediterranean vegetation, with tabulated pollen readings by area, see Grove and Rackham 2001, pp. 151–166. On the natural vegetation of Greece during historic times, ibid. pp. 169–172; Rackham 1990, pp. 85–111. In Thessaly a more extensive cover of oak and pistachio woodland appears to have existed before the Bronze Age, cf. Sivignon 1975, p. 69, and, for the data specific to the Pharsalian high country, Gimbutas et al. 1989, p. 1.

with the blooms of the flowering shrubs; in fall and winter, the intricate foliage of its evergreens would provide a contrasting background for the grasses and flowers of the wet months. We can expect spurges and brooms to have dominated the color palette of this landscape as they do now. The scent would have been a blend of thymes, sages, and mints. Theophrastus confirms that most shrubs and herbaceous plants growing on the Karapla today were known in his time and that several were raised in gardens on account of their colors and fragrance.[33] Among these we find plants with specific ties to the Nymphs, like violet (*Viola odorata*) and tufted thyme (*Thymus serpyllum*),[34] as well as many other flowers and herbs traditionally used for wreath-making and the decoration of shrines, such as aster (*Aster amellus*), rose campion (*Lychnis coronaria*), chrysanthemum, (*Chrysanthemum coronarium*), calamint (*Calamintha incana*), and wild marjoram (*Origanum majorana*).[35] Ultimately, Pantalces and all later caretakers of the cave had a wealth of options to choose from, if they wanted to ensure a steady rotation of greenery and blooms at the Karapla shrine.

As far as we can reconstruct them from the literary texts, three features were considered desirable in a place planted for the gods: running water, shade, and pleasant vegetation.[36] Vegetation refreshed the air and provided aesthetic effect. The geographer Pausanias praises the sacred grove of Apollo at Gryneum for its rich assortment of trees, which included both fruit-bearing and decorative varieties:

> . . . a most beautiful grove . . . with cultivated trees, and all those which, although they bear no fruit, are pleasing to smell or look upon (1, 21, 7 transl. Jones).

As Pausanias makes clear, fruitless trees (*akarpa*) could still be appreciated for their aesthetic value, based on the visual and olphactory delight they could provide.[37] Indeed, as a natural refuge for birds, the trees of a pleasantly wooded place would not only be appealing to the senses of sight and smell, but that of hearing as well. The legendary grove of the Nysean Nymphs, in Diodorus of Sicily's *Library*, may be cited as an idealized version of such environments:

> Further in there is a cave, circular in shape and of marvellous size and beauty. [. . .] Before the entrance grow marvellous trees, some fruit-bearing, others evergreen, and all of them fashioned by nature for no other end than to delight the eye; and in them nest every kind of bird of pleasing colour and most charming song. Consequently the whole place is meet for a god, not merely in its aspect but in its sound as well (3, 69, 1–2 transl. Oldfather).

In addition to this fundamental aesthetic function, the trees and shrubs of a sacred grove had a variety of cultic uses. Both were a handy source for traditional offerings such as fruits and flowers and supplied the primary material for the wreaths used in the ritual; trees also functioned as stands for the hanging of votive gifts.[38]

As we saw, to fashion a garden that could grow in the thin, alkaline soil of the Karapla, Pantalces had to rely on the hill's native flora.[39] He would have been motivated to do so not only by soil chemistry,[40] but also religious reasons—namely the need to please the resident deities with the flowers of their own domain.[41] Fortunately the local phryganic vegetation supplied enough blooms to satisfy both divine residents and human visitors with all kinds of visual and olphactory delights. Much more problematic, in a phryganic setting, would have been the matter of shade and of the leafy trees that could provide it. Broad-leaved trees like planes or thickly crowned trees like

33 *HP* 6, 6–8. On *stephanômatika* or coronary plants (the plants farmed for the ancient wreath trade), see also the extensive discussion by Athenaeus in *Deipn*. 15, 8–33.

34 Ath. *Deipn*. 15, 31 = Nic. fr. 74 Gow and Scholfield, 2–5, 40–42.

35 Thphr. *HP* 6, 6–8; Ath. *Deipn*. 15, 31 = Nic. fr. 74 Gow and Scholfield, 66–68 (aster and calamint used at shrines). Wreaths in Nymph worship: Men. *Dysc*. 51 (Cnemon's daughter 'wreathing' Nymph images).

36 Overview of the evidence and discussion in Larson 2001, pp. 8–11 and 2007, pp. 58–60; see also the bibliography on *locus amoenus* landscapes at note 65 below. On the role of the natural landscape in the Greek perception of sacred space: Brulé 2012.

37 Cf. Diodorus of Sicily 5, 42 on the woods surrounding the sanctuary of Zeus Triphylius.

38 Fruit and flower offerings: notes 47, 49 below. Wreaths: notes 34–35 above. Trees as stands: two Thessalian examples in Heinz 1998, pp. 289–280, no. 216, plates 279–280, and 348, no. 312, plates 282–283; see also Boetticher 1856, pp. 56–100 and plates 1–5, 8–9, 11–14, 16, 20, 27–30a, 31, 37, 47–48, 55, 63; Cazenove 1993, pp. 111–126.

39 As shown by the example of king Mithridates, who tried to grow laurel and myrtle in the Cimmerian Bosporus (Plin. *Nat*. 16, 59; cf. Thphr. *HP* 4, 5, 3), religious motivation and hard labor are not enough for cultivating plants outside their habitat.

40 On the edaphological knowledge of the ancient Greeks see Bech i Borràs and Gadea Buisán 1999.

41 The natural domain of a deity could be seen metaphorically as his/her garden; see e.g. Dionysus' cave at Brasiae, in Laconia, where the surrounding plain is referred to as the god's *kêpos*, Paus. 3, 24, 4–5.

oaks are not a common occurence in maquis and phrygana environments. It is no surprise, then, that Pantalces would have chosen laurel as his first planting. Besides its aromatic qualities, laurel has thick, plentiful foliage that can efficiently block the harsh sunlight bouncing off the Karapla's limestones. The sheltering properties of the laurel are exemplified in one of the earliest cave representations in literary history, *Od*. 9, 182–183, where the Cyclops' hole is described as a high cave "roofed over with laurels" (*daphnêisi katerêphes*).

Yet what really made a difference in the creation of the Karapla garden was the immanent presence of the Nymphs themselves, in the form of the life-giving water which issued from the rocky depth of the hill and encouraged the growth of large size plants that otherwise would not have been as readily available in traditional maquis and phrygana conditions. Today, conspicuous amidst a copse of slender elms, a small community of wild figs spread their branches over the sanctuary's terrace and stairway [Figs. 15–16], casting a thick shade on the cave entrance.[42] Their presence on the naked hillcrest of the Karapla is so distinctive that the entire district has been renamed Sykies, 'Fig Trees', after them.[43] First mentioned by Levi in 1923, their existence goes back to an early date, apparently predating most of the current vegetation at the site.[44] How far back, one wonders[45]? One of the earliest attested fruit plants in the Mediterranean,[46] the fig has symbolic and religious connotations that are appropriate to the garden of a rustic shrine. Its uses in cult are widely attested throughout the Graeco-Roman world and beyond.[47] In myth it is linked to the domain of the Nymphs through one of the Hamadryads, Syce, the eponymous Nymph of the fig tree (cf. Ath. *Deipn.* 3, 14).

Another fruit-bearing tree that we see on the Karapla today is the ubiquitous *gortza*[48] or wild pear of the Greek countryside—Theophrastus' *achras*—attested in the varieties *Pyrus amygdaliformis* and *Pyrus pyraster*. Like the fig, this plant has ancient religious associations which make it a likely choice for the garden of a cave sanctuary.[49] An important source of food and timber since the Stone Age,[50] the wild pear is often identified in literature with the economy of pre-agrarian or marginal cultures.[51]

42 To some extent it is possible to retrace the growth of this group of plants from the scholarly publications: see e.g. how Levi's "small caprifigs" (1923–1924, p. 30) become, in Decourt's description of the early 1990's, "a magnificent fig tree" (commentary to *IThess* I, 72, p. 90).

43 Unlike ancient Greek, which differentiates between the domestic fig tree, *sukê*, and its wild relative, *erineos*, modern Greek uses the same word, *sykia*, for both varieties.

44 Except for a few references to shrubbery (1923–1924, pp. 28–29 and 32) Levi does not report any vegetation worth of note on the Karapla. The photos taken during the excavations of summer 1922 show indeed a hillside much more arid and devoid of trees than today; see Archivio Fotografico della Scuola Archeologica Italiana, negativi 326, 328; cf. also a 1932 view of the reliefs southwest of Pharsala in Gountoulas and Zacharis 2009, pp. 78–79. Preserved in these documents is a sample of that landscape sometimes referred to as the 'Greece of Yesterday' (i.e. Greece before the economic changes of the last thirty years; see Rackham 1990, pp. 87–92; 101–111).

45 Writing in the early twentieth century, Weller reports the presence of a fig tree at the Vari cave which had endured at the site for nearly two hundred years (1903, p. 265).

46 Figs were gathered from the wild since the eighth millennium (Dalby 2003, p. 143; see also Zohary and Hopf 2000, map 16). In Thessaly the archaeological evidence for fig consumption dates back to the Neolithic (fig pips from Argissa and Sesklo: Kroll 1981, pp. 100; 101 table 1; Zohary and Hopf 2000, p. 163; Megaloudi 2006, p. 65). On the associations of the fig tree with the countryside see e.g. Hsch. s.v. *kradophagos*: "a fig eater; a dried fig eater. Also used to indicate a rustic (*agroikos*)"; on its associations with country worship in particular, *AP* 6, 42; 16, 240–241.

47 See the ample body of evidence collected by F. Olck under the heading 'Sakrale' in *RE* VI (1909) cols. 2148–2149, XIX, s.v. 'Feige' (also Boetticher 1856, pp. 437–440 et pass. Murr 1890, pp. 31–35 et pass; Megaloudi 2006, p. 66) Fig trees appear in a variety of cultic functions: they provide wood for cult images, branches for processions, or fruit for food offerings; they also function as stands for the hanging of votives, religious implements, and parts of sacrificial victims (contact with a fig tree was believed to have a tenderizing effect on the meat, Plu. *Quaes.Conv*. 696e–697a). In Men. *Dysc*. 393–396, set at the nymphaeum of Phyle, a fig tree on the way to the cave is at the center of a humorous episode with an uncooperative sacrificial sheep. On clay figs as votive gifts for the Nymphs: Katsarou 2013, p. 35.

48 A word related to Albanian *goricê*; see *RE* III (1897) col. 492 s.v. 'Birnbaum'; Polunin 1980, p. 276; Karagiorgou 2001, 3, p. 20. Like ancient Greek *achras*, the modern folk name seems to encompass both *amygdaliformis* and *pyraster* subspecies of *Pyrus* (Polunin 1980, nos. 464–464b). Theophrastus differentiates between an *achras* that grows on the mountains, spiny and small (*P. pyraster*?), from one growing in the plains (*P. amygdaliformis*?), *HP* 3, 3, 2.

49 In the *AP* wild pears are attested in connection to wreath making (4, 1) and fruit offerings (6, 316), or as stands for the hanging of votives (6, 255).

50 Wild pears were collected in Greece as early as the Upper Paleolithic (Franchthi cave, Hansen 1991, pp. 68–69, figs. 30 b–c, plate 12, et pass. See also Megaloudi 2006, p. 63). In Thessaly the archeological evidence for pear trees dates to the Early Bronze Age (specimens from Argissa and Pefkakia: one plant of the *Pyrus* species, Kroll 1981, p. 101, table 1).

51 Like the acorn, the wild pear was stereotypically associated with the diet of 'primitive' peoples, usually mountainfolk; see e.g. Plu. *Quaest. Gr*. 51, and, for the parallel with acorns, Ael. *VH* 3, 39.

Its habitat is indeed the uncultivated world of the fringe areas:[52] various epigrams in the *Greek Anthology* (e.g. 6, 255; 9, 316) depict its use in cult by a rustic population of shepherds, hunters, and wayfarers. On the other hand, the same sources also indicate that this tree could be domesticated by grafting,[53] thus allowing for that combination of wild and tame elements which Greeks found so desirable in a grove.

To the trees considered thus far we may add two other members of the Karapla's modern day flora, both species of the Ulmaceae family, that would have been most at home in a rural sanctuary. One is the *phtelia* or common elm (ancient *ptelea*),[54] the tree that now grows in a cluster of twenty or so specimens in the terrace underneath the cave [Fig. 12]. The other is the *melikoukia* or European hackberry (ancient *lôtos*),[55] found in the lower periphery of the sanctuary. Elms share the same rich cultural ancestry as figs and pears, appearing in Greek mythology and cult from an early date.[56] Like the fig tree, they have close ties to the world of the Nymphs through one of the Hamadryads, Ptelea.[57] They also occupy a place in Thessalian tradition, as attested by the tale of Erysichthon and his defilement of Demeter's *alsos* in the Dotium plain (where elms grew together with pear trees),[58] and the existence of a Bronze Age center in Achaia named Pteleon, the 'Elm Grove'.[59] Hackberries are, likewise, an ancient presence in the Mediterranean.[60] Their fruit (a bean-size, sugary drupe often confused with the similarly named fruit of the Homeric Lotus-Eaters) was collected by the Prehistoric inhabitants of Greece as far back as the Lower Mesolithic period.[61] In historical times, their wood was used for the carving of religious images, the construction of temple buildings, and the making of wind instruments.[62]

The list of trees discussed above is one of various arboreal combinations that could have been found at the Karapla shrine. In absence of palynological data or other concrete evidence it is impossible to be specific. As far as hypothetical restorations go, it is not an unreasonable one: figs and pears grow spontaneously in close proximity and they can both be cultivated *in situ* without much mantainance; with the olive, they make a group of three plants commonly adapted for cultivation from the wild.[63] Elms occur also in the company of pears and other fruit trees, as in the examples cited above, or in Vergil's *Georgics*, where they are planted in rows for hedging.[64] Given its modest

52 Wild pears are generally portrayed as growing in the rough country at the far edges of the cultivated land (e.g. *AP* 9, 4, 3), a depiction true to this plant's real life habits, but their use in orchards is also attested (Longus 2, 3, 4; see citation p. 26 below. Aristotle also recommends the planting of wild pears in proximity to beehives, *HA* 627b).

53 *AP* 9, 5; see also 4; 6. Modern grafting of wild pears is discussed by Procopiou and Wallace 2000, pp. 1970–1971, and illustrated by Forbes 2007, p. 105, fig. 4.1.

54 *Ulmus campestris*, Polunin 1980, no. 58 (already distinguished in antiquity from the larger wych elm, *Ulmus glabra*—Theophrastus' *oreiptelea*, *HP* 3, 14, 1—found mostly in northern Greece. On the chorology of both species, see Boratyński et al. 1992, nos. 261–262).

55 *Celtis australis*, Polunin 1980, no. 60. Trees of this genus are alternatively classified in the Cannabaceae.

56 Elm wood was in use in northern Greece as early as the Stone Age, as attested, e.g., by its presence in charcoal samples from the Neolithic sites of Nea Makri and Dispilio (Ntinou and Badal 2000, pp. 38–51). Hesiod recommends it, with prickly oak and laurel, for the construction of ploughs, *Op*. 427–436. Mythology and cult: overview in Murr 1890, pp. 26–27.

57 Ath. *Depn*. 3, 14; cf. p. 24 above. Elm Nymphs: Hsch. s.v. *pteleades*. Elm trees planted by mountain Nymphs: *Il.* 6, 419–420.

58 See Call. *Cer*. 25–30 and the relevant observations by Dillon 1997, p. 119; Larson 2001, pp. 75–78; Brulé 2012, pp. 71–72. Hopkinson's commentary to the same text stresses the literary nature of Callimachus' description, 1984, pp. 102–103. Elms and wild pears occur together in Menander's *Hero*, set in the rural deme of Ptelea in Attica (fr. 1, 3 Sandbach; see Capps 1910, p. 5; Gomme and Sandbach 1973, pp. 385; 389).

59 *IG* IX 2, 520, lines 3–4; Plin. *Nat*. 4, 29. Cf. Stählin 1924, p. 181 and note 3; for the toponymic usage cf. Attic Ptelea in note 58 above); *IACP*, p. 688. Pteleon is listed with Antron in the Homeric catalog of ships, *Il.* 2, 697, as one of the cities under the command of Protesilaus.

60 Palynological evidence for the presence of the genus *Celtis* in the Mediterranean begins as early as the Oligocene (Palamarev 1989, p. 100; cf. p. 99, table 1).

61 Francthi cave: Hansen 1991, p. 76, fig. 33d, plate 15d. Hackberry was also a staple food of the first agrarian cultures in the Fertile Crescent. Remarkably large quantities of *Celtis tournefortii* fruit stones appear in the archeobotanical record from the Early Neolithic settlement of Asikli Höyük, Central Anatolia, pointing to "the substantial collection of these fruits", Woldring and Cappers 2001, p. 8: see van Zeist and de Roller 1995, pp. 183–184, tables 2–3. Similarly, appreciable numbers of *Celtis australis* stones have been excavated at Çatal Hüyük, Helbaek 1964, p. 123. The honey-like taste of the *Celtis* drupe (emphasized in the Modern Greek name, *melikoukia*) has encouraged identification with the *lôtos* of Homeric fame (*lôtoio . . . meliêdea karpon*, *Od*. 9, 94; the latter, however, has a better match in the so-called Jew's thorn, *Zizyphus lotus*; see discussion in Dalby 2003, p. 20).

62 Pausanias cites hackberry among the woods used 'in antiquity' for the making of *xoana*, 8, 17, 2; on this tree as a preferred material for sculpture see also Thphr. *HP* 5, 3, 7. Hackberry appears with elm and boxwood in the building accounts of the temple of Asclepius at Epidaurus; see *IG* IV^2 1, 102, 44–45 and the relevant comments by Meiggs 1982, pp. 423–430.

63 Plu. *Fab*. 20, 4. Cf. Thphr. *HP* 2, 2, 12.

64 *G*. 4, 144–146. On this and other uses of the elm in agriculture see also Cato *Agr*. 6, 3; Var. *R*. 1, 15.

size, it would not be appropriate to compare Pantalces' garden with the farming estates depicted by Vergil. Rather, if one had to visualize this site based on a literary example, a better comparandum would be Philetas' garden in the passage from Longus inscribed at the beginning of this section. Longus' text deserves to be quoted now in full:

> Children, I am old Philetas: many a time I have sung for the Nymphs here, played the pipes for Pan over there, and guided an entire herd of cows by music alone. I have come to tell you what I have seen and announce to you what I have heard. I have a garden (*kêpos*) which I cultivated with the toil of my own hands, ever since I became too old for shepherding. Whatever fruits and flowers each season brings, they are there: in spring, roses, lilies, hyacinths, and two kinds of violets: in summer, poppies, wild pears, and all types of apples: and now, in the autumn season, grapes, figs, pomegranates, and green myrtles. Every morning flocks of birds assemble in the garden, some to seek food, others to sing: for it is thickly shaded by trees, and watered by three fountains: if you were to remove the fence around it, you would think that you were looking at a sacred grove (*alsos*) (2, 3, 1–5).

Philetas' portrayal shares some notable similarities with that of Pantalces in Inscription 11, such as the devotion for the Nymphs and singing skills which are common to both characters. The most obvious parallels, however, are noted in the wording used to describe their gardening activities (Chapter 4. 2 below, commentary to line 12). Clearly both Longus and the composer of the Karapla epigram are drawing from the same formulaic repertory to depict a similar theme, the planting and tending of a country garden. Unlike Pantalces', Philetas' is not a sacred garden but, as its creator makes a point to let everyone know, it could definitely pass as one. We may therefore rely on his description to understand what features made a rustic *kêpos* 'look' like an *alsos*—if not in actuality, at least in the projections and the desires that this literary tradition reflects. Besides the three essential elements of the *locus amoenus*[65]—running water, foliage, and shade, enriched by the presence of songbirds—particular emphasis appears to placed on a well-planned seasonal rotation of fruits and blooms: regardless of the time of the year, Philetas' garden is always a pleasant place to visit.[66] Cultivated and wild plants are used to ensure the continuity of vegetable life from one season to the next; orchard mainstaples like apples and grapes combine with wild pears, poppies, and myrtles in this natural cycle. No large trees are cited, from which we conclude that size was not as relevant to the making of an *alsos* as year-round foliage and blooms. The extent of the gardened plot does not seem to have mattered either. Philetas, as an old man, might not have been able to manage a large cultivation.

If there is some basis for speculating on the plant varieties that once grew at the Karapla sanctuary, little or nothing can be said on the layout itself of the garden and the planting techniques used by Pantalces and his successors. In his report Levi does not include any data that could shed light in this regard: based on the information at hand, we must dismiss the possibility that any evidence for planting pits—whether dug in the bedrock, as seen at the Athenian Hephaesteum and the sanctuary of Apollo at Kourion, or in the soil, as at the sanctuary of Zeus at Nemea[67]—may have survived at the Karapla cave site. Yet Inscription 11 appears to imply a cultivation that would have left a more substantial trace of its existence. Similarly uncertain is the question of whether planting pots were used in the decoration of the sanctuary.[68] In this instance, Levi reports the retrieval of a large amount of sherds which he assigns to pottery and rooftiles.[69] Regrettably, since all the findings from Levi's excavation have been lost or misplaced (pp. xvi above; 36 below), these materials can no longer be re-examined to assess the use of potting vases.

2.3 *The Stairway*

> On a path that is steep and slippery, we climb by pushing our feet against a root or rock or a sod or into a rut. These footholds may develop into a pattern of rough steps.
>
> TEMPLER, *The Staircase*

Further information about the landscaping of the cave is given in lines 14–15 of Inscription 11. The poem tells us how Pantalces, invigorated by Heracles, cut 'a way up' in the rocky flank of the Karapla,

65 On the natural characteristics that make up a *locus amoenus* see, in addition to the classical study by Curtius 1953, pp. 186–195, the bibliography cited by Hopkinson 1984, pp. 102–103, note 4.

66 Cf. the "marvellous trees, some fruit-bearing (*karpima*), others evergreen (*aeithalê*)" growing in front of the Nymph cave at Nysa, D.S. 3, 69, 2: full citation at p. 23 above.

67 See bibliography at note 27 above.

68 On the use of planting pots in ancient gardening see e.g. Gleason 1994, pp. 16–17.

69 Levi 1923–1924, p. 32: See pp. 59 -60 and Chapter 3.3, Cat. no. 60 below.

> Heracles gave him strength of will, heart, and body, with which he pounded these rocks and turned them into a way up.

The reference is to a series of steps, crudely hewn in a recessed area of the cliff, which provide, still today, the only viable access to the cave. The irregularities in the shape and size of the steps, compounded with the effects of erosion, cause this structure to blend in with the natural rock formations around it, disguising its man-made nature.[70] Once all growth and detritus are removed, however, the layout of Pantalces' 'way up' becomes apparent—a modified land stair delimited by the cliff wall on one side and the drop of an old waterfall on the other.[71] To fashion it, Pantalces used a naturally stepped section of the slope which spreads out at the bottom in a series of massive projecting rocks. These he levelled with his tools, turning them into stair treads (an action effectively captured by the verse 'he pounded these rocks and turned them into a way up'). Near the top, where the angle of the slope increases sharply and no more footholds are present, he continued with a series of smaller, more regular steps carved closer to the east cliff.[72] Here Pantalces appears to have worked on the vertical elements of the stair as well (risers).

Caves are environments which are not naturally configured for human access. Many of them are located on steep cliffsides and have uneven, precipitously sloping floors. In such conditions stairs are indispensable if a cave is to be used on a regular basis. Steps and stairs are thus a recurrent feature of cave shrines, where they are needed to facilitate visitation by worshippers.[73] Depending on the layout of the individual sites, stairs may be external or internal, have an upward or downward direction and vary in size and number of steps. Upward flights of steps like the one discussed here (*anabaseis*) are found, e.g., outside the caves of Daphni in Attica and Aphyte in the Chalcidic paeninsula.[74] Downward stairs (*katabaseis*) also appear outside, as in the cave of Krounia in Thessaly, but are mostly an interior feature:[75] the long stepped descent into the cave of Vari in Attica is an appropriate example. This spectacular feat of rock-carving serves also to illustrate another function of cave stairs. A stairway can be used infact in the manner of a processional way to link different areas of a sanctuary along an established ritual route. At Vari, where the sanctuary loops around a rocky partition in the middle of the cave, a network of downward and upward stairs[76] guides the visitor through the various cult stations found along this circuit. First a narrow, steep hanging stair descends from the entrance to a landing engraved with information about the sanctuary and its founder.[77] Then, past a corridor equipped with purification facilities, a series of low steps lead down to a spring at the west end of the site.[78] From here it is possible

70 Undetected by early explorers, Pantalces' stairway was first noted by Levi during the excavations of July 1922. Levi briefly describes this structure a "steep flight of tall rocky steps" (1923–1924, p. 29), indicating that it functioned as an "access stairway" (1923–1924, caption to p. 28, fig. 2). The architectural nature of the steps escaped Giannopoulos, who refers to them simply as 'rocks' (*petromata*, 1919, p. 48). Likewise Comparetti uses the expression 'rock heaps', *pietrami*, but poses the possibility that the 'heaps' belonged to the ruins of an early stairway (1923–1924, p. 147).

71 Architecturally these are the characteristics of an open well stair (i.e. a stair that "does not rest against the walls of the well except on one side only", Ginouvès et al. 1985, II, p. 201). On modified land stairs see Templer 1992, pp. 1–7.

72 "Where the influence of topography becomes insignificant, then stair shape typically takes on a geometry quite different from the meanderings that are usual to modified land stairs", Templer 1992, pp. 6–7.

73 Sporn 2007, p. 45; 2010, p. 568; 2013, p. 206. On the biomechanics associated with steps: Hollinshead 2015, pp. 19–24 (this study focuses on monumental forms, but some of the data in it are relevant to to all kinds of steps).

74 Daphni (Aigaleo), Cave of Pan: Deligiorgi-Alexopoulou 1985, p. 50; full description in Travlos 1937, pp. 397–398, fig. 5 and plate A; cf. Wickens 1986, p. 291. Aphyte (Nea Kallithea), Cave of Dionysus and the Nymphs: Giouri 1971, p. 361, figs. 10–11; see also the drawing in 1976, p. 138, fig. 3.

75 Krounia, unassigned sacred cave: Agouridis et al. 2006, pp. 250–251, fig. 5; cf. figs. 4 and 7.

76 Stairs and underground networks are closely associated in the Greek mind, as shown by the building records of the temple of Apollo at Didyma which suggestively refer to the temple's stairs as 'labyrinths' (*laburinthoi*). See *IDidyma*, 25 A; 26 AB; 27 AB; 29; 35, and, for a discussion, Montagu 1975, pp. 304–305. The archetype of the labyrinthine stair finds a powerful graphic expression in Piranesi's visionary etchings *Carceri d'invenzione* (e.g. II, 'The Round Tower', or VII, 'The Drawbridge'; see the relevant plates in Wilton-Ely 1994).

77 Stair: Schörner and Goette 2004, pp. 17–19; plate 6: 2; map 3: 1 (for a definition of 'hanging' stair see Ginouvès et al. 1985, II, pp. 201–202). Inscription: *IG* I^3, 980 = Schörner and Goette 2004, pp. 42–44, no. 1, plate 29, map 3: a.

78 Purification facilities: (*a*) small water basin at corridor entrance, Schörner and Goette 2004, p. 19, plate 8: 2, map 3: 7; (*b*) large water basin at corridor exit, ibid. p. 20, plate 8: 2, map 3: 11; (*c*) water channel connecting *a* and *b*, ibid. p. 19, plate 8: 2; map 3: 8; see also purification law on north wall of corridor (*IG* I^3, 982) ibid. pp. 44–46, no. 3, plate 31: 2, map 3: c. Stair: ibid. 20, plate 9: 1, map 3: 12; (for the original number of steps see Weller 1903, plate 1: λ). Underground spring: ibid. pp. 20–21, plate 9: 1, map 3: 12 (fuller treatment in Weller 1903, pp. 273–274, plate 1: ι).

to cross over to the east or main room of the cave through a stepped passage in the middle partition wall.[79] In this area, which was the focal point of the cult, the visitor is routed though a variety of shrines and votive displays by two major flights of stairs. One connects the lower part of the room, where a carved image of Archedamus stands next to an altar for Apollo, with a mezzanine occupied by a chapel to Pan and sacella for other deities.[80] The other completes the sacred circuit by taking the visitor back to the entrance landing.[81]

A stairway's practical purpose can be married to a symbolic function.[82] In caves with a downward orientation or other similar hypogea, stairs can be integrated in ceremonies featuring a ritual catabasis.[83] This is often the case with underground oracular installations (such as the *adytum* at the temple of Apollo at Clarus, accessed from the pronaos by twin flights of stairs);[84] or cave shrines associated with rites of passage (such as the cave nymphaeum at Cyrene, where local brides descended on rock-hewn steps to purify themselves before their wedding night).[85] Except as a natural sequel to catabatic ceremonies, the celebration of ritual ascents is not as well documented in cave worship;[86] yet it can be quite obvious from the topography of certain sites that the stairs found in them had an anabatic purpose. A spectacular case in point are the 272 steps leading to the sacred Batu caves near Kuala Lumpur in Malaysia.[87] A much smaller, yet intriguing, example from ancient Greece is the shrine of Heracles Buraicus in Achaia. An oracular establishment specializing in *astragalomanteia* or divination by lot, this site has been identified with a cave west of the Vouraikos gorge, in the modern municipal unit of Diakopto.[88] The cave is laid out on three levels at the top of a psamite conglomerate cliff overlooking the old National Road. Access from the first to the second level was achieved through a well shaft in the ceiling of the ground floor chamber, probably by means of a ladder (a detail curiously reminescent of the procedure at the Trophonium in Lebadeia, except in a reversed direction).[89] A vertiginous stairway on the outer wall of the cliff then lead the visitor to the third chamber and the roof of the sanctuary. It would be surprising if no ritual meaning was assigned to this upward progression of rooms in the cave, or no symbolic continuity was perceived between it and and the steep ascent from the bottom of the hill.[90]

2.4 *The Forecourt and Its Structures*

> Or are you one of the nymphs who dwell on this beautiful mountain? . . . For you, on a lookout, in a place that is visible all around, I will build an altar, and I will perform beautiful sacrifices in all seasons.
>
> *Homeric Hymn to Aphrodite* (transl. Pache)

Inscription 11 informs us that at the Karapla sanctuary sacrifices and other similar ritual acts took place in an elevated area (lines 20–21),

> But go on up, with good fortune: let everyone be free to sacrifice, pray, and enjoy.

79 Stepped passageway: Schörner and Goette 2004, pp. 20–21, plate 10: 2, map 3: 13.

80 Stair: Schörner and Goette 2004, p. 25, plate 10: 3, maps 3: 17, 4. Archedamus relief and altar of Apollo: ibid. pp. 21–24, plates 10: 3–12, maps 3: 14–16, 4. Pan chapel: ibid. pp. 28–29, plates 14, 17, maps 3: 25, 5.

81 Stair: Schörner and Goette 2004, pp. 25–26, plate 14, maps 3: 17, 5.

82 "The presence of stairs in Nymph sanctuaries is linked to specific rituals, documented in the literary sources, which took place at particular times of the year and in connection with special occasions in life" (F. Martorano, in Costabile 1991, p. 14); cf. De Francesco 2009, pp. 102–103.

83 For a general survey of Greek catabatic rituals see Ustinova 2009.

84 On the twin stairs and the subterranean chamber at Clarus see Robert 1954, pp. 14–16; 1967, pp. 310–311; also Montagu 1975, pp. 304–305; Parke 1985, pp. 138–139; Friese 2013, p. 232. The ritual is described in Tacitus, *Ann*. 2, 54.

85 *LSCG* Supp. 115 (*Lex Cathartica* of Cyrene), B, lines 9–10. On the identification of this nymphaeum with one of the rupestral installations south of the sanctuary of Apollo see Chamoux 1953, pp. 315–320; Wright 1957, pp. 309–310; Settis 1973, pp. 685–688 (who suggests comparison with the Paestum hypogeum, after an idea of S. Ferri, *PP* 10, 1955, pp. 195–196). The archaeology and topography of the cave are discussed by Stucchi 1975, pp. 581–596. On the stairs, in particular, see p. 586.

86 An interesting but ambiguous piece of evidence is Heraclides Criticus' account of the yearly ascent celebrated by the Magnetes on Mt. Pelium, where a cave of Chiron stood near the precinct of Zeus Acraeus, fr. 2, 8–12 Pfister. Unfortunately the exact role (if any) played by the cave in this ceremony is unclear; cf. Aston 2006, pp. 354–357. On the site see Arvanitopoulos 1911, pp. 305–315, fig. 5; Stählin 1924, p. 43 (who believes that Chiron antedates Zeus as the original deity of the Pelium); Galoukas 2012, pp. 331–339; Mili 2015, appendix 2, pp. 334–335. On the ritual see Pfister's commentary to Heraclides, 1951, pp. 208–214, with the further remarks by Burkert 1997, pp. 125–133; Buxton 1994, pp. 93–95; Aston 2006, p. 356, note 40; Mili 2015, p. 203.

87 Baldon and Melchior 1989, p. 95.

88 Paus. 7, 25, 10–11. Katsonopoulou–Soter 1993, pp. 60–64.

89 Paus. 9, 39, 9–10. On the Trophonium and its ritual procedures: Bonnechere 2003, especially pp. 159–163; Ustinova 2009, pp. 90–96; Friese 2013, pp. 230–231.

90 A glimpse of the ancient ritual can be caught perhaps in a contemporary anabasis performed for the inauguration of the archaeological site in August 2010; see the article "Diakopto: an Ascent to the Oracular Cave of Heracles Buraicus" in the local newsletter *Ta Nea tis Aigialeias*, August 14, 2010.

This could not be but the small ledge that lies on top of the stairway, where the remains of an altar-like structure and other cultic equipment were found (section 1.3 above). The substantial amount of votive material retrieved[91] here confirms that this was a focal point for visitors; likewise, the lack of any additional archaeological record from the interior of the cave would suggest that little or no cult activity took place beyond the ledge area. Wide enough for three-four people to move comfortably about it, this rocky projection forms a natural forecourt in front of the cave. At each end of the forecourt are cult furnishings carved in the local rock. In the east the stairway leads up to a small apsidal 'chapel' obtained from a nook in the cliff. One obvious use of this area was for the display of sacred art. The presence here of the only niche found at the site may hint at the special nature of the exhibits (an image from the early days of the sanctuary?).[92] Less clear is the function of the tall squared rock that rises within the chapel. The upper part of this formation has been cut in the shape of a trapezoidal altar top, perhaps to provide worshippers with a level surface for the deposition of offerings. If so, the chapel served also as a sacrificial enclosure: its position at the top of the stairs, consistent with the frequent placement of such installations on high stepped platforms,[93] closely reflects the instructions given to the readers in the inscription at the bottom of the cliff, "go up, sacrifice" (*anabainete*, *thuete*, line 20). Issuing from the cliff's west wall, to the right of the cave opening, is a low rocky outcrop that has been cut into a rectangular block. Peek, the only scholar to take note of this formation, was reminded of a *trapeza* or offering table.[94] From a cultic point of view this type of implement is suited to the kind of ritual acts associated with the worship of countryside gods (which involved the laying out of fruit or other food offerings and small gifts).[95] *Trapezai* cut out of a single, solid block of stone are documented alongside the more familiar type with a separable tabletop; similar specimens have survived, e.g., in Aegina and Athens.[96] Given its comparatively low height, one wonders however if this block should not be interpreted rather as a bench or a couch of some kind.[97] Rock-cut seats are a recurrent feature in the iconography and archaeology of cave shrines.[98] In this case the position of the block near the collection basin of the cave stream would reinforce even more its identification as a bench. Stone benches and couches were commonly set up near water sources for the comfort of visitors or passersby, a famous example being that of the Lerna spring at Corinth.[99]

91 Levi 1923–1924, p. 32. A percentage of the large quantity of votives retrieved at the bottom of the cliff (ibid. p. 32) is also likely to have washed down from the ledge.

92 Contrast e.g. the multiple niches carved into the outer walls of the cave at Phyle, Skias 1918, pp. 2–3, 20, fig. 11; cf. Amandry 1984, p. 417, fig. 10. Examples from other cave sites: Sporn 2007, p. 53; 2013, p. 206.

93 See e.g. a fifth century BCE votive relief from Aegina (now in Athens, National Museum 1950 = Svoronos 1908, p. 633, plate 135; *LIMC* II, 1984, p. 685, no. 461, s.v. 'Artemis'), showing a sacrificial procession approaching an altar on a tall stepped platform. On altars at cave shrines and their placement: Sporn 2007, pp. 54–55; 2010, pp. 560–564.

94 "A second block, in the shape of a *trapeza*, occupies the width of the right side wall" 1938, p. 19.

95 Fruit: see e.g. a sacrifice to Pan described in *AP* 6, 42 (an apple, a fig, and some water, presented by the gardener Alcimenes). Offerings of figurines and small objects: ibid. 6, 43, (bronze frog to the Nymphs); 54 (bronze cicada to Apollo). On the practice of laying fruit and other food upon offering tables (*trapezômata*), cf. the well-known scene in Aristophanes' *Plutus* (especially lines 677–678) and the relative comments by the scholiast. For a detailed discussion of this ritual custom see Gill 1974.

96 Aegina, opisthodomos of the temple of Aphaia, *in situ* = Gill 1991, pp. 39–40, no. 9, plate 2, fig. 18; Athens, Asclepieum, inv. 40 = Gill 1991, pp. 40–41, no. 10, plate 3. Tables found in caves: Athens, EM 128 = Gill 1991, p. 90, no. 59, and 130 = Gill 1991, p. 90, no. 58 (both from the cave of Pan and the Nymphs at Phyle; see Skias 1918, pp. 22–23, nos. 9–10, figs. 12–13, who identifies the two stones as fragments from perirrhanteria). A rock-hewn structure in the cave of Archedamus at Vari, interpreted by Gill as a cult table of Apollo Hersos (1991, pp. 37–39, no. 8, fig. 17), is identified by Schörner and Goette as an altar (2004, p. 23, plates 11–12). To the evidence listed by Gill in his monograph of 1991 we must add the stands of an offering table which can still be seen *in situ* in the southeast corner of the cave of the Nymphs at Penteli, Zoridis 1977, p. 6, plate E′: α. Cf. Wickens 1986, pp. 204–205, fig. 39: 6.

97 Cf. for a similar ambiguity of function the step-like cuttings in cave A on the north slope of the Athenian Acropolis ('stairs', according to Kavvadias 1897, p. 26; or "benches forming a kind of exedra", according to Travlos 1971, p. 417). Concerning the low height, cf. e.g. the dining couches in the so-called Theater Cave at Isthmia, Broneer 1973, p. 38 (0,30 m).

98 From Homer onwards, seats and couches are commonly cited in literature as cave furniture, e.g. *Od.* 12, 317–318; cf. the rocky beds of the Nymphs in *Il.* 24, 614–616. These cave furnishings constitute a surprisingly widespread and enduring topos: see e.g. how *Aen.* 1, 167–168,—itself an imitation of *Od.* 13, 107–109—reappears at the spring of Am Medudja, Tunisia, in a Roman nymphaeum of the fifth century CE see (*CIL* 8, 23683). Rock-cut benches and seats are attested at a variety of cave shrines, such as, e.g., the School of Aristotle at Mieza (note 106 below), the 'Cave of the Priests' at Cyrene (Wright 1957, pp. 301–304), and, in an amphitheatrical arrangement, at Grotta Caruso (F. Martorano, in Costabile 1991, p. 12; see the reconstruction drawing at p. 93, plate II, and the plans at pp. 8, fig. 6 and 10, fig. 9 a–b). In Thessaly see the low bench hewn in the outer wall of the recently discovered cave of Krounia, in southeast Thessaly, Agouridis et al. 2006 p. 251, and p. 261, fig. 6.

99 Paus. 2, 4, 5. Cf. Roux 1958, pp. 11 and 127; Lavagne 1988, p. 298.

2.5 *The Roof*

> The essential element that characterizes all caves: the *orophos,* the cover, the roof.
>
> LAVAGNE, *Operosa Antra*

On the landing at the top of the stairway Giannopoulos noted "scattered fragments of pottery and rooftiles" which he took as proof that "the cave had a roof over the entrance".[100] Considerable amounts of rooftile fragments were also reported by Levi among the sherds excavated in this area and the terrace below. Levi observes that the tiles were made of a coarse yellow clay with white granules. He further specifies that they bore decoration in relief, herringbone and other linear patterns.[101] This material is no longer available for study today, but the likelihood that an architectural roof existed at the Karapla cave is supported by other types of evidence.[102]

As shown in votive art, supplementary roofing was indeed used to cover the entrance of sacred caves. This could take the form of a simple canopy roof or a porch built into an architectural facade; both types are attested in the clay models excavated at Grotta Caruso.[103] Self-standing (?) roofed shelters, or *skênêmata*, are also cited in literature as a source of shade.[104] Built on perishable wooden supports, canopy roofs are difficult to trace archaeologically. On occasion, their existence can be inferred from the presence of architectural cuttings in the surrounding rock or deposits of collapsed rooftiles.[105] Roofed porticoes leave behind a more substantial archaeological record and are easier to identify. Examples of caves with porticoed annexes are found at the nymphaea of Mieza in Macedonia[106] and Cyrene in Libya;[107] cuttings for the crossbeams of a roofed structure survive also at the

100 Giannopoulos 1912, p. 668; cf. 1919, p. 48; *contra* Peek 1934, p. 19, note 3 (who was unaware that at the time of his visit the site had been already cleared and excavated by the Italian Archaeological School; cf. Riethmüller 2001, II, p. 294, note 22). "Numerous rooftile sherds" are reported by Arvanitopulos at another Pharsalian cave, now lost, on the northeast cliff of the Prophitis Ilias hill (1929, p. 226).

101 Levi 1923–1924, p. 32. See Chapter 3.3, Cat. no. 60.

102 That the Greeks distinguished between naturally and artificially roofed caves is evident from a fragment ascribed to Dionysius Scymnaeus (Ath. *Deipn.* 9, 65 = *TrGF* 76 F 1), which refers to a "self-covered" Nymph cave, *numphôn . . . spêlunga . . . autostegon*. The hapax *autostegos* (*LSJ* = *autorophos*) seems to imply an intrinsic contrast with a roof or cover that does not occur in nature.

103 Reggio Calabria, Museo Nazionale inv. Locri-Gr. Car. 359 = Costabile 1991, A 2.1, pp. 68–70, figs. 110–115: as F. Martorano remarks, the strip of lion antefixes along the top edge of this model is suggestive of a tile canopy roof (ibid. p. 68; see also p. 47, where the same structure is referred to as "a small roof used to shelter the sacred cave"). In model inv. Locri-Gr. Car. 358 = Costabile 1991, C 2.1, pp. 84–87, figs. 144–149, the cave is faced by a pedimental porch with female protomae at each end. The models from Grotta Caruso provide important evidence on the development of the architectural nymphaeum from the cave sanctuaries of Greek cult (in the words of H. Lavagne, they constitute the "missing link" in the transition from the artificial caves of the Hellenistic period to the Roman nymphaea of the Late Republic, 1988, p. 149).

104 See X. *HG* 5, 3, 18, where the Spartan king Agesipolis, afflicted by heatstroke, longs for the shady "shelters" (*skênêmata*) of Dionysus' cave at Aphyte. The exact meaning of the word *skênêma* is unclear. That a cabin or another similar form of temporary shelter was implied is confirmed by Pollux, who lists *skênêmata* among the structures of a military camp along with *skênai* and *kalubai* (9, 14). On the use of such installations at religious centers, see two inscriptions from the Asclepieum of Epidaurus detailing the construction of *skanamata* on the slope of Mt. Cynortium, *IG* IV^2 1, 109, *SEG* 25, 392, and the relevant commentary by Burford 1966, XX–XXI. Burford renders *skanamata* as "apartment blocks"; Holland, Householder and Scranton prefer to translate "barracks", retaining the military associations of the term: (undated typescript, p. 1952, no. 164; see bibliography: Holland). A similar difficulty is encountered with the cognate word *skana*, also used to denote lodging facilities within a sacred precinct. At Epidaurus (*IG* IV^2 1, 393; 400–402), the term refers to the priestly residence in the sanctuary of Apollo Maleatas, a multi-room, multi-function complex in mortar and rubble construction erected by the consul Julius Major Antoninus Pythodorus in the second century CE (Lambrinoudakis, *PAAH* 1990, pp. 45–48, fig. 1 and plates 10–18; see also 1989, pp. 50–54; 1991, pp. 44–49; 1992, pp. 44–49). A special set of regulations concerning the placement, size and furnishings of *skanai* within a sacred enclosure is found in the so-called 'Rule of the Andanian Mysteries' from Messenia, *IG* V 1, 1390 (= *LSCG* 65) lines 34–41.

105 F. Martorano, in Costabile 1991, p. 14. On canopy roofs in Greek architecture: Ginouvès et al. 1985, p. 172, plates 78, 3 and 79, 7.

106 The shrine of the Nymphs at Mieza was part of a complex which also housed the school of Aristotle; see Plu. *Alex.* 7, 4 (who reports that the complex's "shaded walkways", *huposkioi peripatoi*, were still standing in his time). The site of this extraordinary compound lies at the foot of Mt. Bermius near modern day Naoussa. Here a low cliff stretching between two natural caves was architecturally altered to receive an L-shaped portico with a slanted roof. Grooves for the roof's supports are visible on all three sides of the rocky façade. The area between the two openings measures approximately 50 m. in length, but the complex extended much further, incorporating a third cave to the north of the porticoed section. See Petsas 1965, pp. 39–46; cf. *EAAH* 1965, pp. 21–28; 1968, pp. 59–63; also Martorano, in Costabile 1991, pp. 14–15.

107 Settis 1973, p. 690; Stucchi 1975, p. 587; also Martorano, in Costabile 1991, pp. 14–15.

oracle of Heracles Buraicus in Achaia and the cave of the Nymphs at Phyle.[108]

At the Karapla sanctuary the limited size of the area projecting in front of the cave would imply a cover of correspondingly modest size, such as a canopy or small shed roof. In either case one would expect to find traces of architectural work in the rock surface above and beside the cave opening, i.e. in the areas where the roof and its supports would have been leaning against. A shed roof would have also left behind some evidence for foundation work, such as post holes on the ledge floor. The absence of any such markings is puzzling;[109] one is left wondering whether they could have been obliterated by erosion, or the ancient builders (Pantalces?) simply adopted a roof design that did not require permanent alterations of the environment.[110] A similar situation is encountered at the Vari cave in Attica, where scattered remains of a fourth century roof were discovered near the entrance but no corresponding postholes or other architectural cuttings.[111]

Architectural roofs extended the natural cover that a Greek was accustomed to expect at a cave sanctuary.[112] They provided a sheltered space outside the cave proper where visitors could worship or simply stop to peer inside. At caves with underground springs they also functioned in the manner of fountainhouse roofs, preventing debris from falling in the water that collected out front (an appropriate example of such a roof being that of the so-called fountain of Apollo at Cyrene, built outside of a former Nymph shrine).[113] The latter function fits well the situation at the Karapla sanctuary, where a small stream trickled out of the cave or formed a pool by the entrance.[114] Here, as we have seen, a bench was carved in the rock of the cliff according to a layout frequently used for fountains and natural springs. The same basic elements—a roof cover and stone seating, closely connected to a body of water—are present at the cave of Krounia, some sixty kilometers to the southeast, near the border between the peripheral units of Magnesia and Phthiotis (notes 98; 109 above).

2.6 *The Cave*

A cursory glance at the interior of the cave is enough to realize that this space could not be used for cult activity. Even in its current dry conditions, it is an environment which allows very little freedom of movement. The water channel which cuts its path through the rocky floor occupies most of the place, leaving almost no room for a visitor to walk by. The steep incline of the floor adds to the difficulty.[115] In antiquity, when water streamed down from the source at the back of the cave, the slippery condition of the rock surface would have made movement

108 Bura cave: "A roofed stoa or room, a building in any case appropriate to an ancient rural sanctuary", Katsonopoulou–Soter 1993, p. 64; cf. p. 61. For a fuller discussion of this site see p. 28 above. Phyle cave: Skias 1918, p. 20, fig. 11 (the cuttings are visible below the rightmost niche).

109 As reasonably pointed out by Riethmüller 2001, II p. 294, note 22. At the aforementioned cave of Krounia, in southeast Thessaly, the excavators found remains of both rooftiles and columnar supports; interestingly, however, no mention is made of architectural cuttings, either on the ground or on the walls. See Agouridis et al. 2006, p. 252; also pp. 250–251 and figs. 2–6.

110 Simple tiled roofs, built without any visible alteration to the surrounding rock face, appear today over the entrance of some Orthodox cave shrines. An example not too far from our site is the small grotto of Agia Paraskevi on the north slope of Mt. Ossa, above the modern town of Omolio. Cement-based construction is substantially different, of course, from ancient Greek building techniques.

111 Schörner and Goette 2004, p. 53, note 318; see also pp. 12, note 64 and 108. The occurrence of a few rooftile fragments on a sacred site does not necessarily imply the existence of a roof, as spare rooftiles were sometimes used as improvised supports for votives (I owe this information to Bampis Intzesinoglou of the 13th Ephorate of Prehistoric and Classical Antiquities in Volos). Much depends on the quantity of the fragments—which in the case of our cave is reported to have been considerable (p. 30 above).

112 Lavagne 1988, p. 298 rightly describes the covered walkways (*huposkioi peripatoi*) seen by Plutarch at Mieza as "monumental facilities *which extended* and surrounded the cave" (italics mine). Artificial shade appears to have been appreciated as much as natural one; cf. Agesipolis' yearning for the *skiera skênêmata* of the cave of Dionysus at Aphyte in X. *HG* 5, 3, 18, note 104 above.

113 Stucchi 1975, p. 587 and fig. 595. On the sacred grotto or that opens behind, see ibid. pp. 585–589; Wright 1957, pp. 309–310; Settis 1973, pp. 689–693. It was not unusual for sacred caves to be refurbished as fountainhouses in some phase of ther history, a case at point being the above cited nymphaeum of Cyrene—defined by Settis as "a model sequence" in the historical development from cave to architectural nymphaeum, 1973 p. 689. On this process see also Lavagne 1988.

114 Although the activity of this watercourse is difficult to reconstruct in any historical detail, it is clear that its behavior was subject to seasonal change. When fed by rainwater, it appears to have flowed out of the cave forming a waterfall over the border of the ledge. Brittle and fractured, the bedrock in the middle section of the ledge floor still bears the effects of intense water exposure (p. 20 above). The occurrence of runoff on this narrow strip of floor would not have necessarily interfered with the sanctuary's activities; cf. e.g. the situation at Grotta Caruso, where altar and cult statue were actually set up in a pool of water ca. 0,5 m deep (Martorano, in Costabile 1991, pp. 12–13, see also the photos at p. 7, fig. 5; p. 235, fig. 363 and the plans at pp. 8, fig. 6; 10, figs. 9a–b).

115 Peek speaks of a "gentle" tilt (1938, p. 19), but the gradient in the inner part of the cave is well above 45 degrees.

within this confined space even more problematic. Yet, in contrast with other caves which have been altered architecturally in order to facilitate human use,[116] here no visible attempts appear to have been made to mitigate the imperviousness of the natural setting. The most plausible explanation is that all essential cult activities took place outside the cave proper. As we saw, this is supported by the fact that, with the exception of two isolated sherds, the great majority of votives from this site were retrieved on the ledge in front of the cave entrance and on the terrace immediately below. The likelihood that the ledge was fitted originally with a roof also leads to the same conclusion.

3 Conclusions

The geographical position and the type of terrain in which the site is located suggest that the Karapla cave, like the great majority of such installations, was mainly visited by individuals associated with the economy and culture of the *oros*.[117] On the other hand, its proximity to Pharsalus and the fact that it was both visible and accessible from one of the city's major communication routes facilitated patronage by other categories of the local population.[118] Not as easy to assess is the possible use of the cave by Pharsalus' southwestern neighbor, the bordering city of Proerna. Access to the site from this direction, although unaided by communications or visibility, was by no means impossible. As the topography of many other cave shrines shows, the ancients could go to great lengths in order to worship at such locations.[119]

According to a pattern also attested at the cave of Vari in Attica, Pantalces' foundation on the Karapla hill consisted of two essential acts, the planting of a garden and the outfitting of a natural cave for cult purposes (see Chapter 4.2.4 below, commentary to lines 12, 14–15). Today the most visible vestige of this work is a stairway cut in the live rock of the mountain. This stairway does not stand alone, but is the central feature in a more comprehensive landscaping effort that bridged two distinct regions of the sanctuary. From the sacred garden at the foot of the cliff to the mouth of the cave on the landing above, it marked a trail for visitors to follow, a reduced version, as it were, of the processional ways or *hierai hodoi* found at larger sanctuaries.[120] Along its border there were stations where the visitor could find information on the sanctuary's history, admire the votive art on display, and perform ritual acts. As M. Hollinshead notes, in one of her important studies on monumental steps, "An individual's experience of a site would be shaped by the pathway (space) and the sequence of perceptions (time) created by a prescribed route of access".[121] A similar landscaping approach, as we saw, was adopted by Archedamus of Thera for his own stairway at the Vari cave.

As in Vari, worshippers began their visit at a planted area in the outer part of the sanctuary. We can surmise that this enclosure, which spread over a natural terrace extending along the base of the cliff, was planted with trees and flowering shrubs not unlike those found there today. Here visitors would be greeted by Inscription 11, which informed them about the site and its founder, directing them to continue their visit upstairs.

From the garden, the stairway climbed up the rocky slope to the upper level of the sanctuary. Because of the roughness of the ascent and the limited space, visitors had to proceed in small groups and go up the stairs one or few at a time.[122] High above the third step they could read the original dedicatory inscription by the sanctuary's founder, carved on the cliff's east wall. Upon reaching the top of the stairway they found themselves on a small

116 See, e.g., a wall built to provide secure footing near one of the shrines in the Vari cave, at a spot where "so steep is the floor of the cave . . . that it is almost impossible to stand upon it", Weller 1903, pp. 273–274, fig. 4; cf. plate 1, Y.

117 See p. 1 above. For recent perspectives on the *oros* in Greek culture see the studies by Buxton 1992; Langdon 2000. On mountains and the city state: Jameson 1985.

118 Sporn 2007, pp. 45–46. Elsner and Rutherford 2005, p. 18.

119 The remote location of most Nymph caves did not seem to deter, for example, the patronage of pregnant women who regularly sought the assistance of these goddesses in childbirth; see e.g. Rakatsanis-Tziafalias 2004, pp. 92–93. Although rare, the occasional presence at such sites of large or heavy stone votives which we would consider difficult to transport is also revealing about ancient attitudes on the subject. Within Thessaly an instructive example is that of the inscribed stelai recovered in the nymphaeum on Mt. Ossa, a cave located at an elevation of ca. 1000 masl in a rocky wilderness far more remote and intimidating than the Karapla hill (Wace and Thompson 1908–1909, pp. 243–247; cf. Nichols and Wagman 2010, plates 1, 10–11). On 'spending energy' as an important part of Greek religious behavior, see Naerebout 2003–2004.

120 "As pathways, steps create processional routes toward and within cities and sanctuaries", Hollinshead 2015, p. 3. It goes without saying that significant differences exist between the processional way to a major temple and the steps to a rural cave shrine; the analogy suggested here is only concerned with the function that such paths seem to have, regardless of scale or topography, in shaping and choreographing the visitor's experience. On *hierai hodoi* in general: Sinn, *ThesCRA* IV (2005) pp. 46–50.

121 Hollinshead 2012, p. 31; see also 2015, pp. 29–32.

122 A similar situation must have also existed at the Vari cave, where visitors had to make their descent into the shrine through a narrow, vertiginously steep stairway open on both sides (p. 27 above).

landing stretching in front of the cave. This, as Peek rightly saw, was the sanctuary's "actual cult space", the area specifically reserved for sacrifices and other ritual activities. Here was also where some of the oldest and most revered items of the shrine's votive collection (Pantalces' original gifts) were likely to be displayed. There seems to have been no differentiation between a sacrificial area proper and a space dedicated to votive exhibits, such as has been suggested, e.g., for the Vari cave.[123] As no references to archaeofaunal remains or ash deposits are found in the excavation records, it is difficult to determine whether animal sacrifice was practiced on the Karapla or just unbloody offerings, such as fruits and flowers, were used. The steepness of the stairs leading to the sacrificial area and the limited space around the 'altar' would argue against the former possibility but, as already noted, ancient Greeks were not generally discouraged by terrain conditions which seem unfavorable to us. Even if the precinct's upper level could be accessed by only a few people at a time, it was still possible for a small sacrificial party to operate comfortably within it, just as it was possible for a small animal to be hoisted up the stairway without too much trouble. As for further activities such as cooking and banqueting, the situation is more elusive: technically, the ledge's dimensions are compatible with (or, in some cases, even greater than) those of several dining rooms found at other sanctuaries.[124] On the other hand, the precinct's lower level, with its ample and attractively planted terrace, would seem a far more suitable space for parties than a rough rocky shelf projecting several meters above ground.[125] As we saw, tents and other similar forms of temporary shelter were regularly employed in visits to sacred sites—nor should we exclude that some of the rooftiles found by Levi at the bottom of the cliff wall (Chapter 3.3 Cat. no. 60) could belong to a structure other than the canopy roof placed over the cave entrance.

The last station in this sacred itinerary was at the cave's mouth, where a stream once gushed forth from inside. Originally the water flowed out over the edge of the landing, forming a waterfall to the right of the stairway. In Pantalces' time it is more likely that it stopped near the entrance, creating a pool in the roofless room at the front of the cave. In this spot visitors could refresh themselves and rest on the nearby stone bench, as they would have done, e.g., at the sanctuary of Grotta Caruso, where a large water basin with amphitheatrical seating stood at the cave entrance (probably replacing a natural pool like the one considered here).[126] As for the cave itself, the evidence seems to suggest that no cult activities took place beyond its threshold.

With its upward orientation and well-lit interior,[127] open to the sounds of the surrounding countryside, the Karapla cave defies the common perception of caves as dark, secluded descents to the underworld. Thus, although there have been some attempts to interpret this site as a setting for underground mystic experiences and self-induced trance,[128] Pantalces' shrine fails to display the most two essential features of a such an establishment. These, as Y. Ustinova has argued in a recent study, are the all-enfolding darkness and silence which in subterranean environments can cause our sensory world to shut off, prompting the neurological system to respond in unusual ways.[129] Now, there is no spot in the Karapla cave where one can attain to this state of complete perceptual isolation: even in the small room at the far end of the gallery—a space which would otherwise qualify as a perfect *adytum* in size and shape[130]—darkness is never complete during the daytime and silence can always be

123 Schörner and Goette 2004; Sporn 2007.

124 Cf. e.g. the measurements of the banqueting rooms in the northeast 'Cult Cave' at the sanctuary of Poseidon at Isthmia: Broneer 1973, pp. 34–35; or those of the dining facilities at the sanctuary of Demeter and Kore on Acrocorinth: Bookidis and Stroud 1997, appendix 1, table 2 (with bibliography at p. 393, note 2). See also the overview on 'sympotic space' by Bergquist 1990, pp. 37–65.

125 As one might expect, the preparation and consumption of meals at sacred caves had to be adjusted to the topography of the individual sites: contrast, e.g., the indoor setting of the famous banqueting scene in Menander's *Dyscolus* with the open air 'picnic' described in Alciphron 4, 13.

126 Martorano, in Costabile 1991, p. 9, see also the plans at pp. 8, fig. 6 and 10, fig. 9 b; and the photos at pp. 9, fig. 8 and 11, figs. 12–13.

127 As mentioned in the Introduction (p. 2 above) the cave is more suggestive of an attic than a cellar. On the possible ritual function of attic spaces (and the staircases associated with them) in Greek temple architecture see the very interesting study by Miles 1998–1999. Especially intriguing, with regard to the topic at hand, is the example of the Temple of Concord at Acragas, where the two doorways to the attic have a mysterious ogival shape strongly reminescent of a cave entrance (pp. 16–17, figs. 23–24).

128 Ustinova 2009, pp. 33–34. Some of the earlier studies suggest that Pantalces' description in Inscription 11 fits the profile of a possessed or inspired individual, but abstain from postulating a correlation between this condition and the physical characteristics of the cave: Himmelmann-Wildschütz 1957, pp. 10–11; Connor 1998, pp. 162–163; Bonnechere 2001, pp. 34–37; Larson 2001, pp. 17–18; Pache 2011, pp. 52–55. *Contra* Decourt, commentary to *IThess* 1, 73, p. 93.

129 Ustinova 2009, p. 64. The neuropsychological response to being confined in a cave is described at p. 34.

130 *Adyta* of small size are found at famous prophetic establishments such as Delphi and Lebadeia; cf. Ustinova 2009, p. 145; Bonnechere 2003, pp. 159–163.

pierced by a birdsong.[131] In antiquity, the stream which ran inside the cave would have also filled the entire place with the lively sounds of flowing water. It is fair to say that one's senses could never stay idle at the Karapla cave: rather, the place does enfold its visitors in a variety of sensory experiences which in Classical literature were typically associated with the ideal pastoral landscape.[132] As we have seen, these are visual, olphactory, tactile, and aural stimuli that arise from the presence of certain natural features: the colors and fragrance of flowering vegetation, shade, and the freshness and pleasant murmur of flowing water—all elements that, with the exception of the last, are still found at the Karapla today. It is seems reasonable to conclude that when one visited the Karapla cave it was not to achieve a voluntary deprivation of the senses, but to replenish them. This kind of stimulus-rich environment is indeed more consistent with Greek beliefs about altered states and inspiration than the stimulus-poor, 'ascetic' cave model adopted by Ustinova in her study. Many narratives ancient and modern attest to the bewitching effect that such picturesque Nymph haunts as springs, woods, and meadows may have upon the human mind: Socrates' response to the enchanted scenery of the Ilissus, in the beginning paragraphs of the *Phaedrus*, is an appropriate case in point. Beguiled by the charms of a small nymph grove on the banks of the river,[133] in this famous story even the level-headed Socrates has to aknowledge, if only in a playful way, the seductive influence that the place appears to have upon him:

> Soc. Well, my dear Phaedrus, does it seem to you, as it does to me, that I am inspired?
> Phaedr. Certainly, Socrates, you have an unusual fluency.
> Soc. Then listen to me in silence; for truly the place seems filled with a divine presence; so do not be surprised if I often seem to be in a frenzy (*numpholêptos . . . genômai*) as my discourse progresses, for I am already almost uttering dithyrambics (238c–d transl. Fowler).

There is no reason to doubt that, just as Socrates' 'unusual fluency' in the Platonic story, Pantalces' devotional activities at the Karapla cave may have been inspired by the surrounding environment; but if so, it would have been through the unusual richness of physical sensation, not the lack thereof, that the Nymphs of the place did exert their power over him.[134]

As a freshwater source, the Karapla cave would have been a watering stop for those categories of the Pharsalian population that pursued their occupations in the mountains west of town—goatherds, woodcutters, beekepers, charcoal-burners, hunters and general wayfarers. As a religious shrine, it provided a space for human worshippers to share with the local gods the gifts of their natural domain—especially the pleasantness of year-round vegetation, a welcome diversion from the treeless monotony of the Pharsalian landscape. In this double function, which involved mainly the outside part of the sanctuary, the Karapla cave was not unlike many other rural shrines of the ancient world. Besides such general characteristics, the investigation of the site's physical layout does not reveal any evidence for a specialized use of the cave, such as an oracular seat or a healing center. For further information on the Karapla and its cults we need to turn thus to the examination of the votive and epigraphical materials found at the site. These will be discussed in the following two chapters.

131 A recent addition to the sounds of the Pharsalian countryside is the noise of highway traffic from state road E65. Even from a distance of over 1 km, cars and trucks are clearly audible at the rear end of the cave. On the avian fauna of Nymph caves (and its appreciation by the ancients), see the passage by Diodorus cited above, p. 23. This text is also worth noting for its description of a well lit cave interior (3, 69, 3). On cave shrines and natural lighting: Sporn 2007, p. 44.

132 In addition to the aforementioned excerpt from Diodorus, see e.g. the detailed cavescapes by Longus, 1, 4 and Quintus Smyrnaeus 468–490. On the aesthetics of *locus amoenus* landscapes, see the bibliography given at note 65 above.

133 A textbook example of *locus amoenus* topography, the riverside setting of this dialogue described in detail in 230b–c: "Soc. By Hera, it is a charming resting place. For this plane tree is very spreading and lofty, and the tall and shady willow is very beautiful, and it is in full bloom, so as to make the place most fragrant; then, too, the spring is very pretty as it flows under the plane tree, and its water is very cool, to judge by my foot. And it seems to be a sacred place of some nymphs and of Achelous, judging by the figurines and statues. Then again, if you please, how lovely and perfectly charming the breeziness of the place is! and it resounds with the shrill summer music of the chorus of cicadas. But the most delightful thing of all is the grass, as it grows on the gentle slope, thick enough to be just right when you lay your head on it" (transl. Fowler). As Larson observes, "such a place as this is never without a divine presence, which accounts for the appeal of the landscape, and its strong influence upon the susceptible observer" (2001, p. 20; cf. Brulé 2012, pp. 35–39). On nympholepsy and landscape see also the recent discussion by Fabiano 2013.

134 As their beliefs in the mind-altering power of sound show, Greeks were well aware that sensory stimulation is just as effective as sensory deprivation in triggering possession and other similar religious phenomena. A classic example is the sound of the *aulos*, on which see the sources cited by West 1992, pp. 105–106.

CHAPTER 3

The Votives (Plates XXV–XXXV)

1 Discovery

> Just as a dove that is suddenly startled from a cave flies out to the fields loudly flapping her wings …
>
> VERGIL, *Aeneid*

The modern history of the Karapla cave begins in 1912, at the outset of the Balkan Wars, when amateur antiquarian Sotirios Evangelopoulos of Pharsala accidentally came upon the site while hunting for wildfowl on the hills near town. Deeply embedded into a cliff and covered by foliage, the place had become a nesting place for rock doves.[1] Only two years before, the ephor of Thessalian Antiquities Apostolos Arvanitopoulos had walked up to the same spot, where he had noted the presence of inscriptions carved in the walls of the cliff.[2] Hindered by the late hour and bad weather conditions, Arvanitopoulos did not notice the passage which opened a few meters above the carvings.

Evangelopoulos reported his discovery to the renowned Thessalian archaeologist Nikolaos Giannopoulos, who decided to visit the site while on a reconnaissance trip "in the municipalities of Pharsalus, Scotussa, and Euhydrium". He and Evangelopoulos made the climb to the cave on August 16. This is how the site appeared to them on that summer day of 1912:

> The cave lies on the northeast slope of the mountain, between very high cliffs. Though sufficiently tall and spacious, it is elongated and of average width, extending into the mountain to a great depth, which we did not measure (Giannopoulos 1919, p. 48).

Like most scholars after him, Giannopoulos devoted his attention mainly to the epigraphical findings, recording only basic information on the topographical and archaeological aspects of the site. Following a brief report on the discovery of the cave in 1912, which appeared in *BCH* of the same year, he went on to publish a full commentary on the text of both inscriptions in *AE* 1919. The decipherment of these documents did not turn out to be an easy task. Inscription I, although deeply and clearly cut, stopped making sense in the last two lines, ending with a seemingly incomplete word. Inscription II was hardly legible to the naked eye because of the shallow lettering and the weathered condition of the stone. Despite these challenges (or maybe exactly because of them) the new documents from Karapla proved to have an immediate allure for the scholarly world of the time and a number of distinguished Classicists tried their hand at improving Giannopoulos' readings, especially in the text of Inscription I.[3] Inspired by the promise of "tablets, statues, and many gifts" in the longer inscription and the wealth of surface remains scattered in front of the cave, several of these early scholars advocated a prompt archaeological exploration of the site.[4]

2 Excavations

> It seems to be a sacred place of some nymphs … judging by the figurines and statues.
>
> PLATO, *Phaedrus* (transl. Fowler)

The task of excavating the Karapla cave site was undertaken by the Italian Archaeological School at Athens during the excavation season of 1921–1922. The supervision of the work was entrusted by SAIA director A. della Seta to two junior members of the school, the famed archaeologists D. Levi and G. Bagnani, then at the beginning of their careers.[5] The digging, conducted in mid July at the very end of the campaign, took less than a week to complete (17–22/7/1922). Levi and Bagnani opened a total of five trenches, three of which were dug in the terrace directly below the cave and in two areas to the east and west of it. The remaining two were dug inside the cave proper and on the landing before the entrance. Despite the fact that all trenches reached down to virgin soil (i.e. to a depth of over 2 m below the current ground level), only two of them yielded a significant amount of remains.

1 As reported by Stählin 1924, p. 144.

2 Arvanitopoulos 1910, p. 182.

3 For a discussion of the scholarship on the two inscriptions see Chapter 4 below.

4 Giannopoulos 1919; Comparetti 1923–1924, among others.

5 Della Seta 1922–1923, pp. 284–285; Comparetti, ap. Levi 1923–1924, p. 27.

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The greater part of the finds came from the terrace below the cave, especially the area near the stairway. This part of the terrace had to be cleared out of the thick shrubbery and the many fallen rocks encumbering it. The second largest collection of material was retrieved at the top of the stairway, on the rocky landing in front of the cave entrance. The cave itself contained almost no findings at all. Equally unsatisfactory were the soundings east and west of the terrace, especially that of a small subsidiary cave approximately 100 m to the west of the main site, which had seemed at first particularly promising.

In accordance with the remains found on the surface, the excavated material consisted primarily of small terracotta sculpture, pottery, and tiles. Levi produced a descriptive catalog of the objects, based on the excavation inventory, which was published in the Italian School's annals of the following year. Upon the completion of the excavation, the objects were transferred to the Volos Museum, where they are now reported as missing.[6] The Catalog included in the present study is based on Levi's inventory and on the photos preserved in the Archivio Fotografico of the Italian Archaeological School at Athens, files B 322–341 and C 902–911.

3 Catalog of Objects

For the sake of simplicity the objects described below are listed in the same order as the original excavation inventory; occasional exceptions and additions are noted. Measurements have been added whenever a photographic scale was available. In absence of a scale, an effort has been made to provide estimates based on comparison with measured items. Such estimates are only intended to be indicative and make no claim to accuracy.

Terracottas (1–61)

1a–b. Two bird-faced figurines.
Excavation Inventory: no. 1.
SAIA Photographic Archive: B 335; C 904–905.
Bibliography: Levi 1923–1924, p. 33, fig. 8.

[a] **Figs. 52: 6, 60: 2, 61: 5.** Clay statuette, wholly preserved. Height: ± 0,035 m. A female figurine of the bird-faced type, standing, with arms folded over the chest perhaps in the act of holding an infant. Early Archaic?

[b] **Figs. 52: 5, 60: 1, 61: 4.** Clay statuette, wholly preserved. Height: ± 0,033 m. A female figurine similar to the one above. Early Archaic?

Both figurines show the characteristic facial traits of the beaked or bird-faced type, where "the features are represented by two blobs for eyes and an unbroken curve for nose and chin" (Higgins 1969, p. 32, no. 1). The head is tilted upwards, as are the eyes, which are oval in shape. The body is cylindrical with an upward taper. The arms, damaged in both figures, are folded over the chest in the act of holding something which is no longer discernible. As the surviving traces show, this item was fashioned from a separate piece of clay pressed into the main figure. Levi, comparing a similar statuette from the Geometric period at the Acropolis Museum in Athens (Winter 1903, I, p. 24, no. 1), assumes that the missing part was an infant. However, in the absence of any other Geometric finds at the cave, he dismisses the possibility of a pre-Hellenic cult at this site ("or even a cult of Cybele, the Μήτηρ Ὀρεία", 1923–1924, pp. 33–34), suggesting that the two figurines represent instead a case of religious conservatism.

Evidence for the cult of eminent female deities with kourotrophic attributes is found throughout the territory of Pharsalus and its environs, beginning in the seventh millennium at the nearby site of Achilleio, ca. 8 km southeast of our cave (Gimbutas et al. 1989, pp. 179–198 and 335), and continuing into historical times on the acropolis hill at Pharsalus (Daffa-Nikonanou 1973, pp. 26–27, 73–78; Mili 2015, appendix 2, pp. 335–336) and at the Demetreium of Proerna (Daffa-Nikonanou 1973, pp. 22–26; 60–73; Mili 2015, appendix 2, pp. 342–343); see also the recently discovered Metroum in Pharsalus (Katakouta, forthcoming; summary: Stamatopoulou 2013, p. 47). It is unclear if any major goddesses of the Greek pantheon were venerated on the Karapla. With the possible exception of the two figurines described above (and the seated female with an animal on her lap listed at Cat. no. 32 below), none of the other votives from the cave seem to point in that direction, nor do Cybele or Demeter appear among the local deities celebrated in Inscription II. More likely, Cat. no. 1 a-b are representations of Nymphs, since these deities are often associated with nursing and child rearing in both mythology and cult (*LIMC* VIII, 1997, pp. 897–898, s.v. 'Nymphai'; see also the Thessalian evidence cited by Hadzisteliou Price 1978, p. 164).

2a–b–c. Three female figures in relief.
Excavation Inventory: nos. 2–4.
SAIA Photographic Archive: B 331; C 905, 909.
Bibliography: Levi 1923–1924, p. 34, fig. 9.

6 Cf. F. Pitt-Kethley's humorous account of her own attempt to see the same objects, 1994, pp. 189–201.

[a] **Figs. 48: 4, 66: 4**. Fragment from the upper right half of a small clay pinax; right edge partially preserved. Below the top edge is a suspension hole. Maximum height (estimated): ± 0,052 m. A female figure in left profile, represented in the act of holding up her dress in front of her lap. The lower part of the figure is missing. Archaic.

[b] **Figs. 48: 5, 66: 3**. Fragment from the upper end of a small clay pinax; top edge partially preserved. Maximum height (estimated): ± 0,035 m. A female figure in left profile, with her arms raised in front of her chest. Only the head, upper chest and part of the arms are extant. Hair and clothing are very similar to [a]. Archaic.

[c] **Fig. 61: 12**. Fragment from the lower left corner of a small clay pinax; bottom edge partially preserved. Maximum height: 0,048 m. The feet of a female figure in left profile are visible, a fold of the figure's dress hanging over them. Archaic.

3. Seated female figure (from a group of three or more; see cat. no. 69 below).
Excavation Inventory: nos. 5–9, 44.
SAIA Photographic Archive: C 904.
Bibliography: Levi 1923–1924, p. 34, fig. 10.

Fig. 60: 4. Clay Statuette, wholly preserved. Height (estimated): ± 0,13 m. A female figure sitting frontally with the hands on her knees. The discernible plastic detail is minimal, possibly because of wear. No footrest. Archaic.

Cat. no. 3 belongs to a broadly attested type in which the enthroned figure wears a himation over her head and shoulders. Similar terracottas have been found at the aforementioned sanctuaries of Pharsalus and Proerna, and the rural precinct of Ampelia Pharsalon (Daffa-Nikonanou 1973, pp. 68–72, ΠΡ 98–138; 76–77, ΦΑ 31–46; 82–83, ΑΜ 57–69, with discussion at pp. 101–103. On the Ampelia precinct see also pp. 27–28; Mili 2015, p. 336). It is unclear whether these statuettes depict divine or human personalities; their appearance in both sacred and funerary contexts, combined with the absence of any specific iconographical attributes, pose a problem of interpretation. The enthroned position is suggestive of some form of female power—goddess, priestess, or deceased ancestor. Within the particular setting of cave shrines, it is difficult to imagine how such figurines could represent anything but the Nymphs themselves. Seated females are a recurrent feature in the coroplastic art from rural nymphaea; for example, a significant quantity of them, still awating full publication, was retrieved at the Corycian cave (*BCH* Suppl. 7, 1981, p. 81, fig. 4); also worth mentioning are the examples from Grotta Caruso at the National Museum of Reggio Calabria, especially inv. 240 and 317 (Costabile 1991, p. 94, figs. 161–162; p. 96), which bear a close resemblance to the ones in our Catalog. Outside the terracotta medium, a most impressive specimen of an enthroned female figure is the so-called 'Cybele' hewn in the live rock of the cave of the Nymphs at Vari (Schörner and Goette 2004, pp. 26–27, plates 14–16 and map 3, no. 20; *LIMC* VIII, 1997, p. 748, no. 6, s.v. 'Kybele'; cf. Connor 1988, pp. 185–187). Vari has also yielded a number of remarkable marble reliefs showing Nymphs sitting inside a cave frame, Athens, National Museum inv. 2011–2012 (Schörner and Goette 2004, pp. 69–74 R5-R6, plates 41–42). For a discussion of the seated figure in Greek art, particularly in the Archaic Period, see the dissertation by Alford 1978.

4. Female figure with diadem.
Excavation Inventory: no. 10.
SAIA Photographic Archive: B 338–341; C 907–908a–b.
Bibliography: Levi 1923–1924, p. 34, figs. 11–11a.

Figs. 55: 2, 56: 3, 57: 10, 58: 10, 63: 3, 64: 5, 65: 4. Clay protome of the backless variety intended for suspension, extant in the face only. Maximum height: ± 0,08 m. The figure seems to belong to the well-known type with diadem (*stephanê*) and veil (*krêdemnon*). Veil, ears, and neck are missing. Under the στεφάνη the hair is parted in two untextured bands framing the forehead and the temples. The face has an oval shape, with full cheeks and a prominent rounded chin. The lips are equally prominent and turned up at the corners in the so-called 'archaic smile'. Eyes are almond-shaped and outlined in relief; the brows well-marked. These characteristics, reminescent of some *korai* from the Acropolis Museum in Athens (e.g. nos. 679, 684), or other equally well-known sculptures from the Archaic Period such as the Nike of Delos (Athens, National Museum 21), would safely place our terracotta in the 6th century. For further discussion, see no. 5 below.

5. Female figure with diadem.
Excavation Inventory: no. 11.
SAIA Photographic Archive: B 335, 338.
Bibliography: Levi 1923–1924, p. 35, fig. 12.

Figs. 52: 11, 55: 3. Fragment from the upper part of a clay protome similar to no. 4 above, but considerably larger in size. Maximum height: ± 0,125 m. Only a strip of forehead with the *stephanê* and part of the left ear are extant. The *stephanê* has a raised border;

the hair below it, rendered in stylized, regular wavelets, is parted in two and gathered against the slightly oversized ear. Hair, ear, and diadem match those of other large protomes discovered locally; cf. e.g. the beautiful mask published by Theocharis in 1966 (*AD* 21, B′, Χρονικά, plate 246, now at the Volos Museum, inv. M 4520; full discussion and additional photos in Daffa-Nikonanou 1973, pp. 73, ΦΑ 1, and 105–108, plate 5, figs. 3–4; Croissant 1983, p. 355, no. 236, plates 139–140). Late Archaic/Early Classical?

The veiled female visage—a woman with *krêdemnon* and *stephanê* shown frontally from the chest up—is the most widespread of Greek protomic types, attested across the Mediterranean from Asia Minor to Southern Italy, as well as Punic Africa and Sardinia: in Smyth's words, "something like a *koine*: not quite universally popular [. . .], but widely manufactured [. . .], with local differences less remarkable than the uniformity of development", 1949, p. 355. As with the enthroned statuettes discussed above, the exact meaning of these votives is not altogether clear, but it is almost universally agreed that they represent divine, rather than human figures. The identity of the godhead seems to vary according to location and archaeological context, which can be cultic as well as funerary, the only seemingly invariable element being the chthonic aspect common to most offerings (e.g. Daffa-Nikonanou 1973, pp. 112–115; although the earth associations of this type of votive have been recently doubted by Uhlenbrock 1989). Significant lots of such masks associated with the worship of Demeter have been discovered in the second half of the twentieth century within the city of Pharsalus (Daffa-Nikonanou 1973, pp. 73–75, ΦΑ 1–20, plate 5, figs. 3–4; Croissant 1983, nos. 236, plates 139–140; 238–239, plate 140; Mili 2015, especially pp. 122–123), as well as the neighboring sites of Ampelia (Daffa-Nikonanou 1973, pp. 80–81, AM 32–43) and Proerna (ibid. pp. 63–66, ΠΡ 45–52, 59–66, 68–69, 80–82, plate 6, figs. 1–2). The Pharsalian material, in particular, includes some very refined specimens in early Severe Style which point to the existence of an important local workshop, perhaps of Athenian or Phocian origin (Croissant 1983, p. 357). Our Cat. no. 5 shows characteristics peculiar to the protomes from this atelier—especially the rimmed diadem, not attested anywhere else except Cirrha in Phocis (Croissant 1983, nos. 233–234, plate 138; no. 237, plate 139). Cat. no. 4, on the other hand, appears to be stylistically and chronologically distinguished from no. 5 and the other Pharsalian masks, reflecting an earlier phase in local coroplastic production. Although smaller and far less known than the later specimens from the city deposit, the head from the Karapla cave is a remarkable piece of protomic art. Not surprisingly, Levi, who was writing at a time when no other evidence from the area had yet been unearthed, believed that Cat. no. 4 could stand comparison with the well-known terracotta masks at the British Museum, remarking that its features revealed "a notably personal and energetic character" (1923–1924, pp. 34–35). The skillful rendering of the figure's face is in contrast with most Pharsalian protomes of the same size, where plastic detail is usually replaced by painting. For an overview of small protomes found in the region, see Daffa-Nikonanou 1973, pp. 74–75, ΦΑ 11–20 (Pharsalus); 80–81, AM 32–43 (Ampelia); 63–65, ΠΡ 45–52, 59–66, 68–69 (Proerna).

Votive protomes appear in connection with Nymph worship at a number of sites, including the Corycian cave (Croissant 1983, nos. 194, plate 123; 199, plate 124; 201–202, plate 124; 204, plate 125; 212, plate 128; 243, plate 142; 248, plate 143; 249, plate 141; 250, plate 143), the so-called 'cave of Odysseus' on Polis Bay, Ithaca (Benton 1938–1939, pp. 40–42, nos. 36–38, plates 19–20) and the recently excavated Drakaina Cave in the island of Cephalonia (Chatzioti 2009, p. 4, fig. 8); other occurrences are listed by Smyth 1949, p. 354, note 3 (Chrysovitsa, Aetolia: *Qulia*, a brook Nymph? Rhomaios 1920–1921, pp. 76–80, nos. 50–98, figs. 10–14: 2; Palma di Montechiaro, Sicily: cult of a Nymph—or of Demeter and Kore? at a sulphurous spring: Caputo 1938, pp. 608–615, figs. 16–22.

6. Female figure with earrings.
Excavation Inventory: no. 12.
SAIA Photographic Archive: B 339–341; C 907, 908b.
Bibliography: Levi 1923–1924, p. 35, fig. 13.

Figs. 56: 4, 57: 8, 58: 8, 63: 2, 65: 5. Fragment from the upper part of a clay pinax (?) showing the head of a female figure in full frontal view and traces of a possible second figure along the breakline on the right side. Maximum height: ± 0,55 m. The first figure is broken in the upper left part of the head and below the neck. The face has a delicate round shape with a soft, ample chin and a small, full-lipped mouth placed very close to the nose. The hair is rendered as a crown of plastic wavelets framing the upper part of the head from ear to ear. On the ears are small disk pendants. Immediately to the right is a blurred convex shape which may be part of another human head, although the traces are too indistinct to be

specific. Levi is reminded of the familiar terracotta type, especially favored by Hellenistic coroplasts, depicting two females sitting or standing closely to each other as in the examples printed in Winter 1903, II, p. 106.

Figural groups are common in votive art, especially in the worship of divine pluralities such as the Nymphs. For the most part they are representations of the goddesses themselves, in configurations of two, three, or more figures, shown in the act of dancing, standing, or sitting. Such groups can also depict human votaries engaged in some form of ritual activity, vz. sacrificing, music-making, dancing, or banqueting. In addition to the female couples cited by Levi, the figural arrangement in Cat. no. 6 is reminescent of some kourotrophic pairs where the child appears on the upper right side of the group, its head aligned with that of the mother; local examples for this kind of scheme are found at Proerna, see Daffa-Nikonanou 1973, pp. 63, ΠΡ 39, 43 and 69, ΠΡ 145; plate 3, figs. 1–3. Rather than a double protome or statuette group, as suggested by Levi, the shallow depth of this relief seems more consistent with a votive tablet. An appropriate Pharsalian comparandum is a clay pinax from the acropolis hill showing Demeter and Kore sitting side by side within an *aedicula* enclosure (Daffa-Nikonanou 1973, p. 75, ΦΑ 26, plate 12, fig. 2). Countless deposits of similar pinakes related to the cult of the Nymphs have been found in caves around Greece; for examples and bibliography see Larson's overview of known Nymph shrines in 2001, pp. 226–267. As for the date of Cat. no. 6, hair and the overall style of the main figure would place this relief in the fourth century (or, at the very earliest, in the late fifth; cf. e.g. the Late Classical heads retrieved by Benton at the Polis cave in Ithaca, 1938–1939 pp. 41–42, nos. 51, 53, 55, plates 19–20).

7. Female figure with tall hairdo.
Excavation Inventory: no. 13.
SAIA Photographic Archive: B 340–341.
Bibliography: Levi 1923–1924, p. 35, fig. 14.

Figs. 57: 2, 58: 2. Head from a clay statuette broken below the neck and on the upper left side; the nose is also damaged. Maximum height (estimated): ± 0,08. The face, a well-designed oval resting on a tall neck, shows features similar to Cat. no. 6, with a rounded chin and a small mouth drawn in the same serious countenance. Although emphasized by prominent superciliary arches, the eyes are not rendered in plastic detail. The remains of a diadem are discernible in the hair, which is drawn up in a tall hairdo.

Hair and overall features of Cat. no. 7 easily place this piece in the Hellenistic Period. Levi cites a similarly-styled figure at the Louvre (inv. 221 = Winter 1903, II, p. 5, no. 7); comparable hairdos can also be observed on some Hellenistic heads from Proerna, cf. Daffa-Nikonanou 1973, pp. 66–67, ΠΡ 94–98, plate 8, with discussion at pp. 118–120. Recent rescue excavations of Hellenistic homes in downtown Pharsala have brought to light large quantities of similar statuettes, attesting to the popularity of the genre as well as the strength of the local coroplastic tradition.

8. Male figurine with ivy wreath (Dionysus?).
Excavation Inventory: no. 14.
SAIA Photographic Archive: B 340–341;
C 907–908a–b, cf. 911.
Bibliography: Levi 1923–1924, p. 35, fig. 15.

Figs. 57: 3, 58: 4, 63: 1, 64: 2, 65: 2; cf. 59. Head from a clay statuette broken below the neck. Maximum height (estimated): ± 0,08. The face of this figure has an oval outline comparable to Cat. no. 7 but features of a somewhat more emphatic design, such as well-defined eyes and a straight long nose. The mouth is small, as in nos. 6–7, but with the corners turned up in a slight smile. The most notable attributes are the shaggy hair framing the figure's forehead and the leafy ivy wreath flaring at its temples, which would identify Cat. no. 8 with a satyr or perhaps, as Levi suggested, Dionysus himself (no further clues on this point are provided by the shape of the ears, indiscernible under hair and wreath). Style and iconography argue for a date in the Late Classical or Hellenistic Periods. On the rendering of the wreath in particular, cf. a Tanagra figurine at the British Museum shown in Higgins 1986, pp. 136–137, fig. 164, with discussion at p. 123. For a comparable representation of Dionysus, cf. a figurine of the god from Myrina, now at the Louvre, Ammerman 1990, p. 40, fig. 27.

Dionysus is closely associated with the Nymphs in both mythology and cult. The Nymphs commonly appear in the god's iconography as his nursemaids or as participants in his mountain revels (*LIMC* VIII, 1997, -s.vv. 'Nymphai' and 'Nysa I, Nysai'; Larson 2001, pp. 36–37, 91–96). Conversely Dionysus and his semiferal entourage of Satyrs and Silens are habitual neighbors of the Nymphs in cave shrines. The evidence for this cultic contiguity is abundant; the aforementioned nymphaeum at Aphyte in Macedonia, on the grounds of a major Dionysiac precinct, is one of many examples of how these deities can share the same

religious space (p. 27, note 74 above; see also Sporn 2013, pp. 203, 205, 206, 207–208, 209). Although his name does not appear in the local epigraphic record, Dionysus' presence on the Karapla hill may be inferred from a sympotic reference in Inscription 11; see discussion in Chapter 4.2 below. The god was worshipped together with the Nymphs in the nearby city of Atrax; cf. a 3rd century BCE dedication by the local poet Astioun now at the Archaeological Museum in Larissa, *SEG* 45, 554 (see p. 92 below). On the cult of Dionysus in Thessaly see Mili 2015, especially pp. 114–116 and appendix 1, nos. 231–232.

9. Fragmentary female figure with diadem.
Excavation Inventory: no. 15.
SAIA Photographic Archive: no records available.
Bibliography: Levi 1923–1924, p. 35.

Head from a clay statuette broken in two pieces and very weathered, "with tall triangular *stephanê*" (Levi). Measurements not available. If Levi's description is correct, the shape of the diadem may imply an elaborate Hellenistic head ornament or, less likely, an object of Eastern Greek origin or influence (a mitre?). Without autopsy or photograph it is difficult to judge.

10. Female figure with veil.
Excavation Inventory: no. 16.
SAIA Photographic Archive: B 340–341.
Bibliography: Levi 1923–1924, p. 35–36, fig. 16.

Figs. 57: 1, 58: 1. Fragment from a clay protome of the backless variety, broken on the top, bottom, and right sides. Maximum height (estimated): ± 0,075. Only the middle portion of the mask is preserved, from the neckline to the base of the nose. The face appears to have been an elongated oval resting on a tall neck, with a gently prominent chin and a small, full-lipped mouth turned up at the corners. One ear and part of the headdress are visible to the left. What Levi reports as "a form of the so-called klaft" is a veil as in Cat. nos. 4–5 above (on the iconography of the Egyptianizing veil in Greek protomic art see Uhlenbrock 1989, pp. 142–145); as for the slight swelling discernible next to the figure's temple, it is more likely to be a lock of hair than a fold of fabric. Date: Late Archaic or Early Classical.

11. Fragmentary female figurine.
Excavation Inventory: no. 17.
SAIA Photographic Archive: B 336–337.
Bibliography: Levi 1923–1924, p. 36, fig. 17.

Figs. 53: 1, 54: 1. Upper part from a small clay statuette, broken from the chest down. Maximum height (estimated): ± 0,055. Despite the advanced state of wear one can still make out such details as the tall diadem with veil and the hair framing the figure's forehead (somewhat confusingly described by Levi as "tall crown of hair"; the suggestion that this piece could perhaps belong to a relief has also no apparent explanation). The only discernible feature on the face is a swelling corresponding to the nose. Based on the attire, Cat. no. 11 could be assigned to the Late Archaic or Early Classical period.

12. Fragmentary female figures
Excavation Inventory: nos. 18–20.
SAIA Photographic Archive: no records available.
Bibliography: Levi 1923–1924, p. 36.

Fragments from the heads of three (?) clay figures of unspecified type. All are reported by Levi as wearing a diadem and having wavy hair parted on the forehead in the Archaic style.

13. Female figure with melon coiffure and veil.
Excavation Inventory: no. 21.
SAIA Photographic Archive: B 337.
Bibliography: Levi 1923–1924, p. 36, fig. 18.

Fig. 54: 11. Fragment from the head of a clay statuette, broken from the forehead down. Maximum height (estimated): ± 0.055. The hair is dressed in a traditional *Melonenfrisur* or melon coiffure, i.e. divided and twisted into multiple parallel bands from the front to the back of the head, in an effect that recalls the rind of a cantaloupe. Cat. no. 13 shows the standard number of eight bands; part of one ear is visible beneath the last bandelet to the left. Since no rear view of this head is included in the photographic record, we have no way of telling whether the coif ended with a coil, i.e. in the manner of late fourth century *Melonenfrisuren*, or a bun, characteristic of later Hellenistic fashion. Levi offers no information on the subject, except for noting the presence of a veil not discernible from the front.

An interesting parallel for Cat. no. 13 is provided by a third century head from Proerna showing a fourteen-plait melon coiffure framed by a fillet; see Daffa-Nikonanou 1973, p. 66, ΠΡ 94, plate 8, figs. 3–4, with discussion at pp. 118–119. The hair of this figure is tied at the back into a bun and, as in the case of Cat. no. 13, appears to be covered by a cloth of some kind (a *mantili* or kerchief, according to Daffa-Nikonanou, ibid. p. 118).

14. Fragmentary female figure.
Excavation Inventory: no. 22.
SAIA Photographic Archive: no records available.
Bibliography: Levi 1923–1924, p. 36.

Head from a female figure of unspecified type (a statuette?). Reported by Levi as having 'striped' or 'streaked hair' and wearing a diadem. No indications as to the object's date.

15. Male figure with ivy wreath.
Excavation Inventory: no. 23.
SAIA Photographic Archive: no records available.
Bibliography: Levi 1923–1924, p. 36.

Fragment from the head of a male figure of unspecified type (a statuette?). Reported by Levi as wearing an ivy wreath and probably belonging to a Satyr; no comparison with Cat. nos. 8, 28, or 48 is offered. No indications as to the object's date.

16. Three fragments from *stephanê* headwear.
Excavation Inventory: no. 24.
SAIA Photographic Archive: no records available.
Bibliography: Levi 1923–1924, p. 36.

No information available.

17. Fragmentary female figures.
Excavation Inventory: nos. 25–30, 32–33.
SAIA Photographic Archive: B 331, 335, 340–341; C 905, 908 a, 909.
Bibliography: Levi 1923–1924, p. 36, fig. 19 a–c.

[a] **Figs. 57: 9, 58: 9, 64: 6.** Fragment from the head of a female figure in shallow relief (a pinax?). Maximum height: ± 0,053 m. The nose, the left side of the face above the mouth, and a small section of background with a vertical frame are preserved. Part of the hair is also visible over the left temple. Date uncertain: Late Classical or Hellenistic?

[b] **Figs. 48: 3, 66: 2.** Fragment from the head of a female figure of unspecified type (a statuette?), broken on all sides. Maximum height (estimated): ± 0,04 m. Only half of the face, with the right eye, the right half of the mouth, and most of the nose are preserved. A swelling in the upper corner of the fragment may have been a lock of hair or part of a headdress. The figure shows the crisply outlined features of Archaic sculptures, with emphatic cheekbones, a strong nose, and the mouth turned up at the corners in the characteristic smile. Worth noting is the plastic rendition of the eye, with the round projecting pupil which gives the figure an unusually intense gaze.

[c] **Figs. 52: 2, 61: 2.** Fragment from the head of a female statuette, preserved in the face only. Maximum height: ± 0,061 m. The features of this visage—oval outline, long straight nose, and a 'rosebud' mouth set above a gently rounded chin—recall those of Cat. nos. 6–7, arguing for a Late Classical or Hellenistic date. The careful design of the statuette, also evident in the treatment of the eyes and the superciliary arches, is proof of the high level of refinement achieved by the Pharsalian coroplasts of the fifth and fourth century.

18. Fragmentary female figure.
Excavation Inventory: no. 31.
SAIA Photographic Archive: B 335.
Bibliography: Levi 1923–1924, p. 36, fig. 20.

Fig. 52: 4. Fragment from the head of a clay female (?) figure of unspecified type, broken on all sides. Maximum height (estimated): ± 0,02 m. Only the forehead with parts of the hair, eyes, and nose are extant. The treatment of the eyes and the hair is suggestive of an Archaic sculpture.

19. Figurine with conical hat.
Excavation Inventory: no. 34.
SAIA Photographic Archive: B 335; C 905.
Bibliography: Levi 1923–1924, p. 36, fig. 21.

Figs. 52: 9, 61: 9. Head from a clay statuette, broken from the neck down. Maximum height: ± 0,04 m. Except for the nose, which is damaged, and faint traces of the eyes and mouth, the rest of the face is devoid of any discernible features. The figure wears a pointed piece of headgear which could be readily identified with a cowl or a hood if hair did not pour

out of it, as Levi specifies in his description. Possibly the statuette was a depiction of Hermes, who often appears as a *deus pileatus* in Rhodian and Boeotian terracottas (see e.g. the ram-bearer figurine in Higgins 1969, p. 91, no. 251, plate 44, where the god is shown with a hat very similar to Cat. no. 19). Hermes is listed as one of the gods of the Karapla cave in Inscription II, cf. Chapter 4.2 below (on his worship in Pharsalus see especially commentary to lines 5–6). Date uncertain.

20. Fragmentary female figure.
Excavation Inventory: no. 35.
SAIA Photographic Archive: no records available.
Bibliography: Levi 1923–1924, p. 36.

Head from a clay female figure, probably from a pinax (Levi indicates the presence of a background). Extremely weathered. No other information available.

21. Female figurine with double top-knot hairdo.
Excavation Inventory: no. 36.
SAIA Photographic Archive: B 332, 336–337.
Bibliography: Levi 1923–1924, p. 36, fig. 22.

Figs. 49: 1, 53: 4, 54: 4. Head from a clay female statuette, very small, broken from the neck down. Maximum height (estimated): ± 0.025 m. The hair is parted and tied into a double knot at the crown, in a fashion characteristic of the Hellenistic Period.

22. Female figurine with diadem.
Excavation Inventory: no. 37.
SAIA Photographic Archive: B 340–341.
Bibliography: Levi 1923–1924, p. 36, fig. 23.

Figs. 57: 5, 58: 7. Head from a clay statuette, very small, broken from the neck down. Maximum height (estimated): ± 0.03 m. Date uncertain.

23. Miniature female figurine.
Excavation Inventory: no. 38.
SAIA Photographic Archive: no records available.
Bibliography: Levi 1923–1924, p. 36.

Head from a 'minuscule' female statuette, disfigured by weathering. No further information available.

24. Male figure with Severe Style hairdo.
Excavation Inventory: no. 39.
SAIA Photographic Archive: B 335; C 905.
Bibliography: Levi 1923–1924, p. 37, fig. 24.

Figs. 52: 3, 61: 3. Strip-like fragment from a clay pinax, broken on all sides. Maximum height: ± 0,023 m. Maximum width: ± 0,072 m. On the left end is the head of a male figure in right profile facing an object or objects of uncertain identification. The photograph in the SAIA archive does not offer a clear enough view of the facial features, but the style of the hair, rolled at the back as in the Apollo from Olympia appositely cited by Levi) would assign this figure to the early fifth century.

25. Female figure with large headdress.
Excavation Inventory: no. 40.
SAIA Photographic Archive: B 333.
Bibliography: Levi 1923–1924, p. 37, fig. 25.

Fig. 50: 1. Fragment from a small clay pinax, upper and left edges partially preserved. Maximum height: ± 0,05 m. On top is a frame approximately 0,012 m wide. Immediately below the frame, encroaching on it with a bulky-looking piece of headwear which could be a diadem or a thick wreath, is a female figure in frontal view, preserved from the chest up. The face is a broad, featureless oval. The hair is parted at the forehead and arranged over the shoulders. According to Levi the figure appears to be reaching at her neckline with the right hand, in a pose similar to the Archaic statuette from Corfu shown in Winter 1903 I, p. 96, no. 8 (cf. no. 7). The traces in the photo from the SAIA archive are too faint to allow further study. Levi suggests to assign Cat. no. 25 to the same period as no. 2, i.e. the late Archaic age.

26. Female figure.
Excavation Inventory: no. 41.
SAIA Photographic Archive: B 331; C 909.
Bibliography: Levi 1923–1924, p. 37, fig. 26.

Figs. 48: 2, 66: 1. Fragment from (the upper left corner of?) a clay pinax. Maximum height (estimated): ± 0,035 m. Near the left edge there seems to be a raised border, sketchily executed (perhaps a cave frame?); on top is a suspension hole. The latter is drilled directly above the head of a small female figure in frontal view, preserved from the neck up. As

with Cat. no. 25, the face is worn out to a blank oval, framed by what appears to be a veil or the figure's own hair. The date is difficult to estimate, but a time in the late Archaic age seems plausible.

27. Female figure with bonnet.
Excavation Inventory: no. 42.
SAIA Photographic Archive: B 332, 336–337.
Bibliography: Levi 1923–1924, p. 37, fig. 27.

Figs. 49: 2, 53: 7, 54: 6. Fragment from (the upper right corner of?) a clay pinax. Maximum height: 0,029 m. The remains of a raised border or frame are visible along the edges (the section along the right edge is especially well-preserved). Within the space delimited by the two converging elements of this border is the head of a female figure in left profile, extant from the chin up. Although dimmed by weathering, the features of the figure are still discernible in the photograph, revealing a straight nose and well-designed eyes and mouth. The hair appears to be tied back and enclosed in a *sakkos*, in the traditional fifth century fashion.

28. Silenic and Dionysiac masks.
Excavation Inventory: no. 43.
SAIA Photographic Archive: B 334; C 910.
Bibliography: Levi 1923–1924, p. 37, figs. 28–28a.

Of the four 'Silenic beards' listed in Levi's catalog only two are preserved in the photographic record. The frontal configuration of the two recorded pieces would support their identification as small masks:

[a] **Fig. 51: 3.** Fragment from the lower half of a male clay mask, bearded. Maximum height: ± 0,04 m. Based on what we can see in the photograph, Cat. 28 [a] appears to have been a mask of the solid type, with a flat back. The ogival shape of the beard is consistent with Silenic representations from the Late Archaic and Early Classical periods; see e.g. a terracotta mask at the Museo Provinciale Campano di Capua, no. 99 (*LIMC* VII, 1994, p. 1126, no. 168, plate 772, s.v. 'Silenoi') or the well-known black-figure neck amphora at the Staatlichen Museen in Berlin, F 1671 (ibid. p. 1121, no. 112, plate 764).
[b] **Fig. 67: 1.** Fragment from the lower left half of a male clay mask, bearded. Maximum height (estimated): ± 0,038 m. Although Levi describes it as 'profiled', it is clear from the photograph that this beard belongs to a frontal face similar to [a] above. Part of the lower lip and the moustache are preserved. The beard hairs are rendered as wavy vertical incisions.

Votive masks of a size comparable to Cat. no. 28 (i.e. approximately 0,10 m high in their complete form) have been retrieved a few kilometers southwest of our site in the territory of Proerna, see Daffa-Nikonanou 1973, p. 66, ΠΡ 92–93, plate 11, figs. 1–2, with discussion at pp. 130–131. All Proernan examples are depictions of Dionysus, suggesting that Cat. no. 28 [a-b] may also have represented this god, and not his ferine followers. Dionysus is of course the quintessential *Maskengott* of the Greek pantheon; on the use of masks in Dionysiac cult and iconography see the overview in *LIMC* III (1986) pp. 424–429, nos. 6–61, plates 296–301, s.v. 'Dionysos'.

29. Standing female Figure.
Excavation Inventory: nos. 45–46.
SAIA Photographic Archive: B 336.
Bibliography: Levi 1923–1924, p. 37, fig. 29.

Fig. 53: 3. Fragment from a clay relief showing the lower part of a standing female figure with a high-belted chiton. Maximum height (estimated): ± 0,06 m. Levi, who assigns the fragment to a pinax, fails to report the broad, unworked strip of clay which can be seen projecting from the bottom of the relief (a tenon-like feature?). Also omitted in Levi's description is a tall curved enclosure which frames the figure as in a niche—a feature strongly reminescent of a cave entrance in frontal view. Cf. the raised border in Cat. no. 26 above, which lends itself to a similar interpretation. As for the use of the cave frame in Thessalian votive reliefs see e.g. the plaque from Phtelia cited in the commentary to Inscription II below, lines 5–6 (Volos, Archaeological Museum 573). Date uncertain: Archaic?

30. Hydrophore.
Excavation Inventory: nos. 48–49.
SAIA Photographic Archive: B 332–333, 336; C 906.
Bibliography: Levi 1923–1924, p. 38, fig. 31.

Figs. 49: 5, 50: 5, 53: 11, 62: 3. Female clay statuette, broken from the chest down. Maximum height: ± 0,084 m. The figure is shown in frontal view, supporting a hydria on her head with both hands (on the identification of the vessel, which would argue for the more specific designation 'hydriaphore', see Daffa-Nikonanou 1973, p. 88, note 1, with earlier bibliography). A folded cloth, used as padding, is visibile

under the jug. The head, small and v-shaped, rests on a disproportionately tall conical neck. The hair is parted on the forehead in two bands. The face, in a fair state of preservation, has large eyes emphasized by well-marked superciliary arches, a small mouth, and a rounded chin. Overall the style of the figure would justify Levi's dating to the Archaic Age.

The sculptural type of the hydrophore—a standing female figure represented in the act of holding a water vessel on her head—is well attested across the Greek world, especially continental Greece and Southern Italy. Usually found in the proximity of water sources, hydrophore votives may have been associated with purification ceremonies. The type appears in three basic variants, all documented in Thessaly and the Pharsalian territory: (a) figures holding the vessel with one hand; (b) figures holding the vessel with both hands; (c) figures balancing the vessel with no hands. Besides the Karapla cave, the hydrophore holding the vessel with two hands is also attested at Pharsalus (Daffa-Nikonanou 1973, p. 76, ΦΑ 30), Proerna (ibid. p. 69, ΠΡ 9–11), and Ampelia (ibid. pp. 79–80 AM 23–26). All finds from these sites show traits characteristic of the Severe Style (see the discussion in Daffa-Nikonanou 1973, pp. 88–89), except for our no. 30, which may well be the earliest known hydrophore in the area.

31. Hydrophore.
Excavation Inventory: no. 47.
saia Photographic Archive: B 332, 336–339.
Bibliography: Levi 1923–1924, p. 37, fig. 30.

Figs. 49: 3, 53: 5, 54: 3, 55: 1, 56: 1. Female clay statuette, broken at the bottom. Maximum height: ± 0,115 m. A hydrophore of the same type as no. 30 above, wearing the peplos (cf. the specimens from Proerna and Ampelia cited above). As noted by Levi, the style is more recent than no. 30 above.

32. Seated female figure (Artemis?) with fawn.
Excavation Inventory: no. 50.
saia Photographic Archive: B 334; C 911 (drawing).
Bibliography: Levi 1923–1924, p. 38, fig. 32.

Figs. 51: 4, cf. 59. Clay statuette, broken from the waist down. Maximum height: ± 0.085 m. A female figure sitting on a wingback throne with a small fawn in her right hand. Head and upper body are covered in a cloak which she keeps pinned to her chest with the left hand. Three horizontal creases are visible in the fabric. The hair is parted on the forehead and combed down the sides in a simple, graceful fashion. Except for nose and eyes (which are only discernible in faint outline), the remainder of the face is weathered beyond recognition; fig. 59 is an artist's restoration. Date: Early Classical?

A nearly identical version of this statuette is listed by Daffa-Nikonanou among the findings from the Pharsalian acropolis, 1973, p. 75, ΦΑ 27, plate 4, fig. 2. Although they reflect a local type not encountered outside Thessaly (Daffa-Nikonanou, ibid. p. 99), the two figurines share a general relationship with the representations of Artemis, particularly some enthroned images associated with the Attic cult of Artemis Brauronia (Brauron, Archaeological Museum K 2646: *LIMC* II, 1984, p. 671, no. 665, plate 498, s.v. 'Artemis'). The presence of a markedly Artemisian attribute such as the fawn may indeed be an indication that Cat. no. 33 and its companion were representations of this goddess (a Pharsalian cult of Artemis is confirmed by the dedication of a certain Hageisareta inscribed in local dialect, *IThess* I, 66). As protectors of maidenhood and female puberty, Artemis and the Nymphs oversaw very similar domains of influence and it would not be surprising to find them side by side in a setting like the Karapla cave. Artemis does not appear in Nymph worship as frequently as Pan or Hermes, but parallels for her presence in the rocky abodes of these deities are not completely lacking as it has been sometimes argued (e.g. Larson 2001, pp. 107–110): an appropriate example is the aforementioned nymphaeum of Grotta Caruso in S. Italy, where the existence of ritual practices for Artemis is attested by the statuette of a woman carrying the image of the goddess in procession (Locri, Antiquarium, inv. 580 = Costabile 1991, pp. 192–194, 5.3, fig. 309) as well as the terracotta figurine of a fawn (National Museum of Reggio Calabria, inv. no. unknown = Costabile 1991, pp. 192–194, 5.3, fig. 310). Daffa-Nikonanou also considers the possibility that Cat. no. 33 and the Pharsalian figurine may depict a local deity with powers and iconographical attributes similar to Artemis (1973, p. 99). On the cult of Artemis in Thessaly: Mili 2015, appendix 1, nos. 79–174 et pass. (on the goddess' iconography see especially pp. 152–153).

33. Torsoes from various statuettes.
Excavation Inventory: nos. 51–56.
saia Photographic Archive: B 334, 337.
Bibliography: Levi 1923–1924, p. 38, figs. 33–33 a.

Of the six (?) "headless and fragmentary" torsoes listed as nos. 51–56 in Levi's catalog only 55 (= 33 a) and 56 (= 33 b) are preserved in the photographic record:

[a] **Fig. 54: 10**. Fragment from a clay statuette, headless and broken from the hips down. Maximum height: (estimated): ± 0,063 m. A female (?) figure tightly wrapped in a cloak which she keeps pinned to her chest with the right hand. The figure's right arm, elbow, and forearm are visible from underneath the fabric, which forms a series of diagonal creases on either side of the forearm. Levi remarks on the crude workmanship of this piece, describing Cat. no. 33 a as "Archaic looking".
[b] **Fig. 51: 1**. Fragment from a clay stauette, headless and broken from the waist down. Maximum height: ± 0,05 m. A female figure with peplos. Over the peplos is a himatidion falling on her chest in two sets of vertical folds. The attachment of the right arm suggests that the figure may have had one or both arms raised. Rightly, Levi is reminded of a hydrophore as in Cat. nos. 30–31 above. Date uncertain (Early Classical?)

34. Seated male figure with kylix.
Excavation Inventory: no. 57.
SAIA Photographic Archive: B 333; C 906.
Bibliography: Levi 1923–1924, p. 38, fig. 34.

Figs. 50: 7, 62: 5. Fragment from a clay relief, broken at the top and bottom. Maximum height: 0,077 m. A male figure dressed in a knee-long chitoniskos, sitting in left profile but with the upper body turned to face the viewer. Head and feet are missing. Part of the chair is visible in the lower half of the relief. The figure is shown in a relaxed posture, leaning back in its seat while holding a kylix with both hands. The date is uncertain: perhaps Early Classical? See discussion below.

Levi, who in his time could find no parallels for Cat. no. 34, was rightly puzzled by this unusual piece, expressing doubts even as to its gender. The retrieval of an almost identical relief from the Demetreium of Proerna (Daffa-Nikonanou 1973, p. 72, ΠΡ 173, plate 10, fig. 3; cf. ibid. ΠΡ 174) has since confirmed that the figure in the image is a male, enabling the restoration of the head and other missing parts. The two reliefs appear to reflect a figural type not attested anywhere else. The presence of a kylix and certain postural details such as the figure's backward 'slouch', particularly evident in the Proerna relief, would point to the representation of a banqueteer or a reveller, although the enthroned position seems incongruous with conventional depictions of either subject (banqueteers are shown reclining on couches, as in Cat. no. 35 below, while comasts stand or walk unsteadily, as in a terracotta group from the nymphaeum of Grotta Caruso in S. Italy now at the National Museum of Reggio Calabria (inv. 134 = Costabile 1991, pp. 175–176, 4.7, fig. 282). Based on the drapery and other stylistic details, Daffa-Nikonanou believes that the Proerna relief could be assigned to the time of the Severe Style (1971, p. 124).

35. Reclining figure.
Excavation Inventory no. 58.
SAIA Photographic Archive: B 334.
Bibliography: Levi 1923–1924, p. 38 fig. 35.

Fig. 51: 6. Clay Statuette, broken in the lower half. Maximum height: ± 0,05 m. Maximum width: ± 0,086 m. Upper torso from a figure reclining on its left side. Only the head, part of the chest, and the right arm are extant. The figure, which appears to be unclothed, wears a tall headpiece with the hair loose over the shoulders. The right arm rests along the right side. The head is tilted to the right. Except for the projection of the nose, no other facial features are discernible. The date is uncertain: perhaps early fifth century (see discussion below).

The closest parallel for Cat. no. 35 is once again a statuette from the nearby site of Proerna (Daffa-Nikonanou 1971, p. 70, ΠΡ 151, plate 4, fig. 5) showing the reclining figure with a kylix in its right hand. The gender and meaning of these images are unclear: Levi and Daffa-Nikonanou identify the mysterious banqueteer as female, but the possibility that its torso may be unclothed would rather point to a male, perhaps an unbearded Dionysus (or a local hero associated with him; cf. the parallels cited in Guarducci 1962). Regrettably, the clay surface in both statuettes is too worn out to allow any definitive pronouncement. Reclining statuettes of similarly ambiguous interpretation have been found at Corinth and a small handful of other sites (Robinson 1906, pp. 168–170, no. 20, plate XII; Stillwell 1952, p. 104, note 3). Scholars who support their identification as females have suggested that they could be representations of courtesans (Sieveking 1937) or the goddess Aphrodite (Robinson 1906)—two possibilities that would account for the presence of nudity. In most cases, however, the bodies of the figures display an ephebic spareness that leaves room for ambiguity. For the occurrence of the same figural type at other Nymph caves, see e.g. a statuette from Grotta Caruso now at the National Museum of Reggio Calabria, inv. 626 = Costabile 1991, pp. 134–137, 5.3,

fig. 220). Based on stylistical grounds, Daffa-Nikonanou proposes to assign the Proerna figurine to the early fifth century BCE (1971, p. 104); most likely Cat. no. 35 belongs to the same period.

36. Cloaked figure.
Excavation Inventory: no. 59.
SAIA Photographic Archive: C 909.
Bibliography: Levi 1923–1924, p. 39, fig. 36.

Fig. 66: 5. Clay statuette, headless and chipped along the front bottom edge. Maximum height (estimated): ± 0,08 m. A figure of unknown gender, tightly enveloped in a cloak. The left flap of the cloak forms a vertical ridge running through the middle of the figure; additional creases in the fabric are visible around the neck and the shoulders. It is unclear if the figure is sitting, as Levi suggests, or squatting. Posture and drapery are reminiscent of some squatting figurines of Hermes from Boeotia where the god is also completely enfolded in a cloak; see especially the example in Higgins 1954, p. 222, no. 834, plate 114 (from Lake Copais, now at the British Museum). Date uncertain: perhaps fifth century, as the Boeotian statuette?

37. Dancing female figure.
Excavation Inventory: no. 60.
SAIA Photographic Archive: B 333; C 906.
Bibliography: Levi 1923–1924, p. 39, fig. 37.

Figs. 50: 2; 62: 1. Lower half from a clay relief (?), also broken along the bottom. Maximum height: ± 0,046 m. A female figure in a flowing gauzy dress, partially preserved from the hips downwards. The figure is shown as moving swiftly to her right, perhaps in the act of dancing (rather than 'running', as suggested by Levi). The fabric of her dress clings closely to her left leg, which is flexed at the knee. The rest of the garment unfurls in a series of sweeeping s-shaped folds. Movement and drapery are reminescent of many Attic Nymph reliefs from the Classical and Hellenistic periods where the goddesses appear in dancing triads lead by Hermes. For a comprehensive treatment of this figural type and its antecedents see Edwards 1985; a close parallel for the figure in our fragment is e.g. the middle Nymph in a late fourth century relief now in the Treviso Museum, ibid. pp. 634–637, no. 58, plate 26. Cat. no. 37, as Levi surmises, is likely to be from the same period, although an earlier date is also possible.

38. Fragments of drapery.
Excavation Inventory: no. 61.
SAIA Photographic Archive: no records available.
Bibliography: Levi 1923–1924, p. 39.

From female clothing. No further information available.

39. Fragmentary limbs.
Excavation Inventory: no. 62.
SAIA Photographic Archive: no records available.
Bibliography: Levi 1923–1924, p. 39.

Arms and legs from statuettes of different kind and size. No further information available.

40. Standing male figure.
Excavation Inventory: no. 63.
SAIA Photographic Archive: B 333.
Bibliography: Levi 1923–1924, p. 39, fig. 38.

Fig. 50: 4. Clay statuette, broken on the lower left corner. Height: ± 0.015 m. A youth leaning with his left elbow on a support of unidentified nature (a rock or a tree according to Levi). The figure is nude except for a cloak covering his back from the left shoulder to the right hip. Portions of this cloth are visible on both sides of the figure, draped over each forearm. The off-center posture, with the out-thrust right hip and flexed left leg, are characteristically Praxitelean features which point to a date between the fourth and third centuries.

The Neo-Praxitelean type of the leaning ephebe is attested across the Hellenistic world in a broad range of variants. In southeast Thessaly it appears to have been as popular as anywhere else, as shown by Cat. no. 40 and another very similar statuette from the sanctuary of Demeter at Proerna (Daffa-Nikonanou 1973, p. 71, ΠΡ 168, plate 9, fig. 4, with discussion at pp. 123–124).

41. Standing male figure.
Excavation Inventory: no. 64.
SAIA Photographic Archive: B 339; C 910.
Bibliography: Levi 1923–1924, p. 39, fig. 39.

Figs. 56: 2, 67: 3. Torso from a clay statuette, with substantial portions of the right arm and upper thighs still extant. Maximum height: ± 0,095 m. A youth, nude, leaning with his right elbow on a herm where he has hung his cloak. As with Cat. no. 40, the

influence of Praxiteles is evident in the posture and the soft rendering of the musculature. The date is most likely Hellenistic.

42. Standing figure.
Excavation Inventory: no. 65.
SAIA Photographic Archive: B 334.
Bibliography: Levi 1923–1924, p. 39, fig. 40.

Fig. 51: 5. Clay statuette, headless and broken on all sides. Maximum height: : ± 0.075 m. A figure of uncertain gender, nude, shown in a Praxitelean pose similar to Cat. nos. 40–41 above. Head, feet, and most of the arms are missing. The stump of the right arm suggests that this limb was extended, perhaps in order to hold an object which survives in part along the lower left edge of the fragment (a cloak, or some other kind of hanging drapery?). Regrettably the view preserved in the photograph does not allow us to discern any details about the other arm. Faint traces alongside the neck and shoulders area seem to indicate that the figure had some kind of head cover, or that it wore its hair long. The date may be Hellenistic (cf. nos. 40–41 above).

Levi identifies Cat. no. 42 as a 'nude youth' although there is really no evidence for the gender of this figure other than its vaguely ephebic aspect. If female, Cat. no. 42 could be a 'boyish' Aphrodite comparable to British Museum 2494 (Burn and Higgins 2001, p. 173, no. 2494, plate 82), which shows a very similar body type and posture. If male, the range of possibilities widens considerably: youths with the right arm raised appear in a large number of variants, as illustrated by the examples collected in Winter 1903, II, pp. 244, no. 2; 252, no. 10; 357, nos. 6–7.

43. Standing female figure.
Excavation Inventory: no. 66.
SAIA Photographic Archive: B 334.
Bibliography: Levi 1923–1924, p. 39, fig. 41.

Fig. 51: 2. Fragment from a clay statuette (or relief?), broken on the top, bottom, and right sides. Maximum height: ± 0.064 m. A standing female figure shown in frontal view as she holds an unidentified object to her chest with the right hand. Head, feet, and part of the left arm are missing. The surface of the clay in the lower half of the fragment is badly worn, obscuring the details of the figure's dress. The date is uncertain.

Levi believed that Cat. no. 43 could be a fragment from a male figure; however, both the position of the right hand, characteristic of the female offer-bearer type, and a certain fullness in the statuette's upper chest would be more compatible with the representation of a woman. Countless parallels for this type of figurine—a female votary holding a flower, fruit, or other similar offering to her chest—can be found across the Greek world, including locations within a short distance from our cave, such as Proerna and Ampelia (Daffa-Nikonanou p. 62, ΠΡ 27–34; p. 80, ΑΜ 27–31, plates 1–2, with discussion at p. 90).

44. Standing boy (from a group of two figures).
Excavation Inventory: no. 67.
SAIA Photographic Archive: B 333; C 906.
Bibliography: Levi 1923–1924, pp. 39–40, fig. 42.

Figs. 50: 6, 62: 4. Fragment from a clay statuette, broken on the top, bottom, and right sides; part of the left side appears to be preserved. Maximum height: ± 0,08 m. A young boy, nude, holding onto the arm of a larger figure to his left. The child is shown in a three-quarter view but his head is turned to face the viewer and slightly tilted up. The child's feet and all of the second figure except for the right arm are missing. Faint traces of the child's eyes, nose, and mouth are discernible on a full, youthful face. Above the forehead is a thick roll of curls (or perhaps a wreath?), worn smooth. The marked s-curve in the body is suggestive of a date in the Hellenistic Period.

As Levi convincingly suggests, Cat. no. 44 may have been part of a group of Eros and Aphrodite similar to the one shown in Winter 1903, II, p. 252, no. 6. The offering of such images to the Nymphs has parallels in other areas of the Greek world; see e.g. IMT Kaikos 963 (from Mysia). Clay figurines of Aphrodite, Eros, and other subjets of erotic nature were also retrieved in large quantities at the Locrian nymphaeum of Grotta Caruso in S. Italy (Costabile and Tropea in Costabile 1991, pp. 127–150: see especially a statuette of Eros dedicated inside a votive cave model, inv. 508 = ibid. pp. 142–143, fig. 230; cf. pp. 59–60, fig. 91. The votive doves in Cat. no. 57 below would be another indication for the presence of Aphrodite and her associates in the cults of the Karapla hill. In Pharsalus the goddess was worshipped as Aphrodite Peitho (*IThess* I, 67; Mili 2015, pp. 174–175); a figurine of Eros is also listed among the findings from the acropolis hill (Daffa-Nikonanou 1973, p. 77, ΦΑ 51, plate 12, fig. 1, with discussion at p. 131). On the cult of Aphrodite in Thessaly: Mili 2015, appendix 1, nos. 1–15 et pass.

45. Seated female figure.
Excavation Inventory: no. 68.
SAIA Photographic Archive: no records available.
Bibliography: Levi 1923–1924, p. 40.

Fragment from a clay statuette? Leg from a female figure sitting on a rock. Levi supposes that it could belong to a group similar to Cat. no. 45. No further information available.

46. Male figure.
Excavation Inventory: no. 69.
SAIA Photographic Archive: no records available.
Bibliography: Levi 1923–1924, p. 40.

Fragment from a clay statuette? Headless torso from a male figure with a cloak under the left arm. No further information available.

47. Two male figures.
Excavation Inventory: no. 70.
SAIA Photographic Archive: no records available.
Bibliography: Levi 1923–1924, p. 40.

[a] Fragment from a clay statuette? Genitals and upper thighs from a male figure. No further information available.
[b] Fragment from a clay statuette? Genitals and upper thighs from a male figure. No further information available.

48. Squatting Silen.
Excavation Inventory: nos. 71, 74–76.
SAIA Photographic Archive: B 335–337; C 909.
Bibliography: Levi 1923–1924, p. 40 fig. 43.

Figs. 52: 13, 53: 9, 54: 9, 66: 7. Torso from a clay statuette, preserved from the abdomen up. Maximum height: ± 0,075. A Silen, squatted or seated, playing the double aulos. Lower trunk and legs are missing. The creature has a round, protruding belly and a characteristically Silenic visage with a bald forehead, round eyes, and a snub nose. The influence of Socratic portraiture (see discussion below) is suggestive of date in Hellenistic or Roman times.

Although Levi describes Cat. no. 48 as "Pan playing the double flute", the distinctive 'Socratic' traits of this statuette leave no doubt as to its identity as a Silen. Variants of the same figure—a Silen with Socratic features, seated or squatted, shown in the act of playing the double aulos—appear in the archaeological record of major nymphaea such as Phyle (Rhomaios 1906, cols. 108–109) and Grotta Caruso (Tropea and Costabile in Costabile 1991, pp. 161–164, nos. 6–8, 11–12, figs. 261, 265; see also nos. 1–5, 9–10, 13–16 for further variations on the type). A figurine similar to ours is also listed by Daffa-Nikonanou among the votive terracottas from the Demetreium of Proerna (p. 72, ΠΡ 176, plate 10, fig. 6; discussion at pp. 128–129). On the popularity of the pot-bellied, squatting Silen type from the Archaic period onwards see *LIMC* VIII (1997) pp. 1114, s.v. 'Silenoi'.

49. Seated Pan.
Excavation Inventory: no. 72.
SAIA Photographic Archive: B 332, 335–336; C 909.
Bibliography: Levi 1923–1924, p. 40, fig. 44.

Figs. 49: 4, 52: 12, 53: 10, 66: 6. Clay statuette, broken on the bottom. Maximum height (estimated): ± 0,088 m. Pan, pot-bellied and ithyphallic, sits with his legs crossed (?) playing his syrinx. The lower part of the legs is missing. The god has rounded ears and a pair of small horns growing from the top of his skull. Facial features, beard, as well as the syrinx which he holds up to his mouth with both hands, are weathered almost beyond recognition. The date is uncertain. The stiff posture would point to a the earlier part of the Classical Period.

As Levi observes, Cat. no. 49 belongs to a figural type widely attested in votive art. Seated Pans—with their legs up, crossed, or dangling—appear in the terracotta deposits of many Nymph shrines, including the caves of Phyle (Rhomaios 1906, col. 109), Penteli (Zoridis 1977, p. 9, plate Z: δ), Eleusis (Travlos 1960, plate 42 β), and Grotta Caruso (Tropea and Costabile in Costabile 1991, pp. 152–161, nos. 1–9, 12, 31, figs. 245–250, 255). Beyond the coroplastic medium, the type is also common in relief and full-round sculpture (Wagman 2000, pp. 38–41, notes 35–37; cf. Edwards 1985, pp. 68–70; *LIMC* VIII, 1997, s.v. 'Pan'). In Thessaly the only example of a seated Pan comparable to Cat. no. 49 is found in a relief from Scotussa showing the Goat God in the company of three Nymphs (Volos, Archaeological Museum inv. Λ 764 = Heinz 1998, pp. 314–315, no. 254, plate 195, with discussion at pp. 142–143). Otherwise, all other evidence for Pan in Thessalian sacred art appears to be concentrated in the hill country southwest of Pharsalus, at the Karapla cave (see Chapter 4.2 below, commentary to Inscription II, lines 5–6, 18) and the nearby city of Proerna; see a clay statuette from the

local Demetreium showing the god with a poppy flower in his hand, Daffa-Nikonanou 1973, p. 72, ΠΡ 175, plate 10, fig. 4. Whether the attribute of the poppy is connected in any way to the local toponym *Makouniai* (used in antiquity to designate a territory in the vicinity of our cave: pp. 14–15 above), it is difficult to say. As for the markedly pastoral character of the lands between Pharsalus and Proerna, an aspect which would be consistent with Pan's presence in the area, see pp. 16–17 above.

50. Pan playing the syrinx.
Excavation Inventory: no. 73.
SAIA Photographic Archive: B 336–337; C 911 (drawing).
Bibliography: Levi 1923–1924, p. 40, fig. 45.

Figs. 53: 8, 54: 8, cf. 59. Upper torso from a clay statuette, headless and broken from the chest down. Maximum height (estimated): ± 0,036 m. Pan playing the syrinx. Except for a portion of the chest, the arms, and the syrinx, the rest of the statuette is missing. The god wears a cloak over his shoulders; the exposed part of his body shows a trim musculature. It is difficult to determine whether the figure was sitting, as in the example from the British Museum cited by Levi (Winter 1903, II, p. 408, no. 2) or standing, as in the well-known marble statue from Delos (*LIMC* VIII, 1997, p. 928, no. 96, s.v. 'Pan', plate 620). Date uncertain; probably late Classical or Hellenistic.

51. Herm.
Excavation Inventory: no. 77.
SAIA Photographic Archive: no records available.
Bibliography: Levi 1923–1924, p. 40.

Clay herm, ithyphallic. The head is missing. No further information available.

On Hermes see also Cat. nos. 19, 36 above and Chapter 4.2 below, commentary to Inscription II, lines 5–6.

52. Hand from a fragmentary figure.
Excavation Inventory: no. 78.
SAIA Photographic Archive: B 334.
Bibliography: Levi 1923–1924, p. 40, fig. 46.

Fig. 51: 7. Fragment from a clay relief (?) broken on three sides. Orientation uncertain. Measurements: 0,08 × 0,065. Right hand of a large figure, palm upwards, holding a tiny object of unidentified nature. Directly opposite (or directly below, depending on the original orientation of the relief) is another unidentified object or figure of roughly round shape. The surface of the background is slightly convex, especially near the preserved edge. Date uncertain.

53. Arm from a fragmentary figure.
Excavation Inventory: no. 79.
SAIA Photographic Archive: B 336–337.
Bibliography: Levi 1923–1924, pp. 40–41; fig. 47.

Figs. 53: 2, 54: 2. Fragment from a clay relief broken on all sides (except right?). Maximum height (estimated): ± 0,05 m. Arm of a small figure holding a circular object ("a kind of wreath" Levi) towards the fragment's right edge. Date uncertain.

On the use of wreaths in Nymph worship see p. 23, note 35 above.

54. Fragmentary chariot.
Excavation Inventory: no. 80.
SAIA Photographic Archive: B 335; C 905.
Bibliography: Levi 1923–1924, pp. 40–41, fig. 48.

Figs. 52: 1, 61: 1. Fragment from a clay relief broken on all sides. Maximum height: ± 0.036 m. Maximum width: ± 0,06 m. Lower part of a chariot with four-spoked wheels, showing the right wheel and the rear end of the box. Date uncertain.

The photograph in the 1920's publication is incorrectly oriented, showing the chariot pointing downwards. A very similar type of chariot is depicted in a clay pinax at the Acropolis Museum in Athens, inv. 12981, representing Athena in the act of boarding her vehicle. Additional examples are cited by Levi.

55. Arm from a doll.
Excavation Inventory: no. 81.
SAIA Photographic Archive: B 335; C 905.
Bibliography: Levi 1923–1924, p. 41, fig. 49.

Figs. 52: 8, 61: 8. Arm from a small clay doll, preserved from the wrist up. Top pierced. Maximum height (estimated): ± 0,038 m. Date uncertain.

As tutelary deities of the female life cycle, the Nymphs received dedications of toys from girls who were about to leave maidenhood. Fragments from articulated dolls

appear in the archaeological record from Vari (King 1903, p. 333, nos. 67–69; cf. Schörner and Goette 2004, pp. 52, 64) and the Corycian cave (Amandry 1972, p. 260). On articulated dolls in antiquity: McK Elderkin 1930, pp. 455–479; on the use of dolls as votive offerings for the Nymphs and other female divinities: Larson 2001, pp. 101–120.

56. Stud earring.
Excavation Inventory: no. 82.
SAIA Photographic Archive: B 340–341.
Bibliography: Levi 1923–1924, p. 41, fig. 50.

> **Figs. 57: 6, 58: 5**. Clay stud earring in the shape of a rosette, slightly chipped along the edge. Diameter (estimated): ± 0,025 m. Date uncertain.

On the use of terracotta for jewelry see e.g. Higgins 1980, p. 42 (bibliography: p. 202).

57. Three dove figurines.
Excavation Inventory: nos. 83–86.
SAIA Photographic Archive: B 331; C 911 (drawing).
Bibliography: Levi 1923–1924, p. 41, fig. 51. Of the three (?) pieces listed in Levi's catalog as nos. 83–86, only two are shown in the accompanying photograph.

> [a] **Fig. 48: 6; cf. 59**. Clay statuette. Height (estimated): ± 0,082 m. Length (estimated): ± 0,012 m. A dove, wholly preserved, of very plain design. The bird's body is rendered as one solid mass, with no apparent attempt to distinguish tail and wings (Levi mentions a groove on the back, not visible in the photograph). The legs are simple conical stumps. Date: Late Archaic?
> [b] **Fig. 48:7.** Clay statuette. Height (estimated): ± 0,08 m. Maximum length (estimated): ± 0,09 m. A dove similar to [a] above, slightly damaged in the head and the tail. Date: Late Archaic?
> [c] **Fig. 48: 8**. Fragment from a clay statuette. Trunk from a dove similar to the ones above; head and legs are missing. Measurements comparable to those of [a] and [b]. Wings and tail are more detailed than in the latter statuettes. Date: Late Archaic?

Clay doves very similar to Cat. no. 57 were retrieved at Proerna and Ampelia; see Daffa-Nikonanou 1973, pp. 72, ΠΡ 182, and 83, ΑΜ 73, plate 14, fig. 1. These sites yielded significant quantities of animal figurines, including statuettes and miniature reliefs of pigs, goats, cattle, horses, and turtles. Doves and other animals appear in the votive deposits of many Nymph shrines, e.g the Corycian cave (Amandry 1984, p. 403), Pitsa (*EAA* 6, 1965, pp. 200–206, s.v. 'Pitsa'), Daphni (Travlos 1937, p. 406, no. 24, fig. 26), and Ithaca (Benton 1938–1939, p. 42, no. 60, plate 22, no. 60), among others. The dedication of doves at these sites may have been associated with ritual practices for Aphrodite (cf. e.g. the dove sacrifices performed at the Athenian Aphrodisia, *IG* II^2, 659 = *LSCG* 39, pp. 73–74; Simon 1930, pp. 48–51); for the possible presence of the goddess on the Karapla Hill see also Cat. no. 44 above (35, 42?). Based on comparison with dated material from Boeotia (e.g. Burrows and Ure 1907–1908, p. 295, no. 260), Daffa-Nikonanou assigns the doves from Proerna and Ampelia to the Late Archaic Age. The figurines in Cat. no. 58 are likely to be from the same period.

58. Fragments from various statuettes.
Excavation Inventory: no. 87.
SAIA Photographic Archive: no records available.
Bibliography: Levi 1923–1924, p. 41.

> A large quantity of minute fragments from different clay statuettes. Assessed by Levi as "beyond recognition". No further information available.

59. Spindle whorl.
Excavation Inventory: no. 88.
SAIA Photographic Archive: B 335; C 905.
Bibliography: Levi 1923–1924, p. 33, fig. 7 f.

> **Figs. 52: 7, 61: 7**. Clay spindle whorl, wholly preserved. Diameter (estimated): ± 0,035 m. Not decorated.

The Nymphs' association with weaving and the works of the loom is amply documented from Homer onwards, e.g. *Od*. 13, 103–108. For the dedication of weaving implements in Nymph shrines cf. the loom weights found at the Corycian cave, Jacquemin 1984, p. 172, nos. 20–23, fig. 22.

***Pottery* (60–61; see also 76 below)**

60. Vase and tile fragments.
Excavation Inventory: ?
SAIA Photographic Archive: no records available.
Bibliography: Levi 1923–1924, p. 32.

> "Considerable" quantities of pottery sherds, "noteworthy for their variety in date, technique, and decoration" are reported by Levi in the area immediately below the cave entrance. Among these Levi mentions the remnants of large Attic black-colored amphorae

and drinking cups, sometimes with vestiges of painting. Many other pieces—vase handles as well as tiles (?)—he describes as bearing relief decoration, in herringbone or oblique linear patterns. Two main types of clay are recorded: a coarse-textured, pale yellow variety with minute white pebbles, and a a slightly finer one with a greenish yellow hue. The date of the materials ranges from the sixth century BCE to the Graeco-Roman Period.

61. MINIATURE VOTIVE VASES.
Excavation Inventory: nos. 90–92.
SAIA Photographic Archive: C 910.
Bibliography: Levi 1923–1924, p. 32, fig. 7.

[a] **Fig. 67: 5a.** Clay miniature lekythos, of the squat variety. Neck and handle are broken off. Maximum height (estimated): ± 0,053 m. Painted; color unspecified. Date uncertain.
[b] **Fig. 67: 5b.** Clay miniature lekythos, of the squat variety. The handle is slightly chipped. Height (estimated): ± 0,058 m. Painted; color unspecified. Date uncertain.
[c] **Fig. 67: 5c.** Clay miniature lekythos, of the squat variety. The neck is broken off. Painted; black. Height (estimated): ± 0,056 m. Date uncertain.

Cf. the miniature vessels found at the sites of Proerna and Ampelia, Daffa-Nikonanou 1973, pp. 73, ΠΡ 189, and 83, ΑΜ 76, plate 12, fig. 3. Miniature pottery is found in a variety of archaeological contexts, sacred, domestic, and funerary; for the evidence retrieved from Nymph shrines see e.g. the 150 or so specimens discovered by Levi himself at the Aspri Petra cave on Cos, 1925–1926, pp. 261–266, figs. 39–44. Also: Amandry 1984, p. 410 (Corycian cave); *EAA* 6, 1965, p. 201, s.v. 'Pitsa' (Pitsa); King 1903, pp. 322–324, nos. 346–367 and 395–426 (Vari); Travlos 1937, p. 404, nos. 8–11, figs. 15–17 (Daphni) and 1960, p. 55, note 20, plate 43a (Eleusis). On this ceramic form and its interpretation, see Hammond's studies on the material from Arcadia, 1998, pp. 14–20 and 2005, pp. 415–433.

Lamps (62)

62. LAMP FRAGMENTS.
Excavation Inventory: ?
SAIA Photographic Archive: no records available.
Bibliography: Levi 1923–1924, p. 33.

A few lamp fragments are reported by Levi along with the spindle whorl at Cat. no. 59 above. No further information available.

Metal Objects (63–66)

63. VASE PENDANT.
Excavation Inventory: no. 94.
SAIA Photographic Archive: C 905, 908 a.
Bibliography: Levi 1923–1924, p. 32, fig. 7a.

Figs. 61: 6, 64: 4. Bronze pendant in the shape of a small amphora with lid. Height: 0,012 m. Found inside one of the miniature vessels in Cat. no. 61 above. Date: Classical or possibly later.

64. BELT BUCKLE.
Excavation Inventory: no. 95.
SAIA Photographic Archive: B 340–341; C 908 a.
Bibliography: Levi 1923–1924, p. 33, fig. 7 c.

Figs. 57: 4, 58: 3, 64: 1. Frame from a bronze belt buckle. Length: 0,05 m. Date: uncertain.

65. RING.
Excavation Inventory: no. 96.
SAIA Photographic Archive: C 905.
Bibliography: Levi 1923–1924, p. 33, fig. 7 b.

Fig. 61: 10. Bronze ring. Diameter: ± 0,04 m.

For the dedication of pins, buckles, rings, and other small metalwork in Nymph caves see e.g. Zagdoun 1984 (especially p. 189); Rolley 1984.

66. FRAGMENTARY VASE.
Excavation Inventory: no. 97.
SAIA Photographic Archive: C 910.
Bibliography: Levi 1923–1924, p. 33, fig. 7 d. Date: uncertain.

Fig. 67: 4. Fragment from the lip a large bronze vase; rim folded. Length (estimated): ± 0,12 m.

A bronze artifact of the kind and size implied by this fragment stands out among the other votives in the Karapla collection. With some notable exceptions (e.g. the findings from the Polis cave in Ithaca, Benton 1934–1935; Deoudi 2008), large metal vessels are a rare occurrence in the archaeological record of sacred caves.

Coins (67)

67. BRONZE COIN.
Excavation Inventory: ?
SAIA Photographic Archive: B 336–337, 340–341; C 905, 908 a–b.
Bibliography: Levi 1923–1924, p. 33, fig. 7 e.

Bronze coin of Antigonus Gonatas, 277–239 BCE
Figs. 53: 6, 54: 5, 65: 3. Obverse: head of Athena with Corinthian crested helmet.
Figs: 57: 7, 58: 6, 61: 11, 64: 7. Reverse: Pan with a tail and human legs erecting a trophy to the right. Between the figure's feet: ANTI in monogram. To the left are traces of other letters (BA?) and an object of uncertain nature which is possibly the Macedonian helmet visible on better-preserved specimens of the same coin.

Cat. no. 67 belongs to a well-known coin series ascribed to the Macedonian dynast Antigonus II Gonatas. Most numismatic references also concur in identifying the figure on the reverse with Pan, based on the role that this god is said to have played in Antigonus' early military successes (battle of Lysimacheia: e.g. Mørkholm 1991, p. 134; see however Pritchett 1974, pp. 32–34). Although Levi challenges this assessment, claiming that the tail and the human legs are more suggestive of a satyr than the Goat God (cf. Mionnet 1806, p. 581, no. 854), the frequent presence of a *pedum* on other coins from the same series is clearly in support of the commonly accepted identification with Pan. This deity appears to have had a special significance for Antigonus, as shown by another coin emission by the same king, the well-known silver tetradrachm with Pan's head within a Macedonian shield (Head 1911, p. 231, fig. 143; Mørkholm 1991, no. 430). Cf. also the hymn to Pan composed for Antigonus by the poet Aratus (*Vita Arati* 3= *Scholia in Aratum vetera* p. 15 Martin. Cf. *Vita* 1 = ibid. p. 9). A group of 25 coins of the same type as Cat. no. 67 were retrieved at New Halos on the Pagasetic gulf (ca. 45 km southeast of our cave) in the area of the so-called SE Gate; see Reinders 2003, pp. 232–233.

***Stone Objects* (68; see also 77 below)**

68. FRAGMENT FROM A LARGE FEMALE FIGURE.
Excavation Inventory: ?
SAIA Photographic Archive: no records available.
Bibliography: Levi 1923–1924, p. 33.

In Levi's words, "a fragment of tooled stone, apparently from a female garment, attesting to the existence of a large cult image or perhaps a more substantial votive offering". No further information is given as to the size of the fragment, the type of stone, or other details.

With few exceptions (namely the items studied by Marcadé at the Corycian cave, 1984, pp. 307–337, nos. 7–8, 10–21), stone statuary is extremely rare at Nymph shrines, and even rarer are statues that can be identified as cult images within any degree of plausibility (Larson 2001, p. 230; Sporn 2007, pp. 51–54 and 2010, pp. 564–565; see also Mylonopoulos 2010 on the issues concerning the distinction between 'cult' and 'votive' images). Based on Levi's meagre description it seems unlikely that Cat. no. 68 would have contributed any new evidence to this latter question; nonetheless, the presence of a large stone sculpture at a site like the Karapla cave is a fact worth noting. Pliny *HN* 34, 68 credits the fifth century sculptor Telephanes for a much-praised statue of the Nymph Larissa, but does not provide any information as to the size and function of the work (on Telephanes' possible association with Pharsalus, see Lavva 2001, pp. 85–98).

4 Appendix: Unpublished Objects

***Unpublished Objects from Photographs in the SAIA Archive* (69–75)**

69. TWO SEATED FEMALE FIGURES.
Excavation Inventory: = Cat. no. 3 above? (nn. 5–9, 44).
SAIA Photographic Archive: C 904.
Bibliography: unpublished.

[a] **Fig. 60: 5.** Clay Statuette, headless. Maximum height (estimated): ± 0,09 m. A female figure similar to Cat. no. 3 above but with more pronounced breasts. No footrest. Archaic.
[b] **Fig. 60: 3.** Clay Statuette. Height (estimated): ± 0,10 m. A female figure similar to Cat. nos. 3 and 70 [a] above, but of smaller size and plainer workmanship. No footrest. Archaic.

70. UNIDENTIFIED FRAGMENT.
Excavation Inventory: ?
SAIA Photographic Archive: B 332.
Bibliography: unpublished.

Fig. 49: 6. Fragment from a clay sculpture of uncertain identification.

71. FEMALE FIGURE WITH DIADEM AND VEIL.
Excavation Inventory: ?
SAIA Photographic Archive: B 335.
Bibliography: unpublished.

Fig. 52: 10. Head and upper torso from a clay statuette, broken below the chest. Maximum height (estimated): ± 0,060 m. A female figure with the head

slightly turned to her right, wearing a low diadem and a veil. The hair is rendered as a continuous band of small curls framing her forehead and temples. The face shows the graceful features typical of Hellenistic female figurines—a long, straight nose set above a small mouth and a round, prominent chin. The remaining anatomy is not as straightforward—possibly on account of the veil enveloping the figure's upper body or simply as a result of wear. Immediately below the neckline it is possible to see two small swellings, round and set close together, which could be interpreted as breasts except for their implausibly high position. The sloping of the shoulders also seems slightly odd. One wonders if these idiosyncratic traits in the lower part of the figure could be due to the fact that Cat. no. 71 was perhaps a small bust. Without autopsy or additional photographic evidence it is difficult to assess the situation.

72. Hydrophore.
Excavation Inventory: ?
SAIA Photographic Archive: B 333; C 906.
Bibliography: unpublished.

Figs. 50: 3, 62: 2. Clay statuette, preserved only from the chin up. Maximum height: ± 0,047 m. A hydrophore similar to Cat. nos. 30–31 above, very weathered. Date uncertain: probably Late Archaic or Early Classical.

73. Standing female figure.
Excavation Inventory: ?
SAIA Photographic Archive: B 337.
Bibliography: unpublished.

Fig. 54: 7. Clay statuette, headless and damaged at the bottom. Maximum height (estimated): ± 0,065. The figure is clad in a garment which hangs down to her feet framing her body within two long, parallel folds. Except for the swelling of the breasts no further plastic detail is discernible. Its simple conception and stiff frontality would argue for an early date, as e.g. with Cat. nos. 3 and 69.

74. Female figure.
Excavation Inventory: ?
SAIA Photographic Archive: C 908a.
Bibliography: unpublished.

Fig. 64: 3. Fragment from the face of a clay statuette (or a small protome?), preserved from the neck to the brow. Maximum height: ± 0,059 m. All facial features are very faint; the nose is partly broken. The figure shows traits similar to Cat. nos. 6–7 and other statuettes discussed above (prominent round chin, 'rosebud' mouth), suggesting a date in the Late Classical or Hellenistic period.

75. Female figure.
Excavation Inventory: ?
SAIA Photographic Archive: C 908b.
Bibliography: unpublished.

Fig. 65: 1. Fragment from the face of a clay statuette, preserved from the chin to the nasal bridge; traces of the lower eyelids can also be discerned. Maximum height (estimated): ± 0,043 m. The design of the chin, mouth, and nose is comparable to Cat. 74 above. Date: Late Classical or Hellenistic.

***Other Unpublished Objects* (76–77)**

76. Handle from a vase.
Place and date of discovery: Karapla cave, lower precinct, a few meters northwest of the stairway (Plate VI: 1–2). September 2006.
Current location: Pharsala Archaeological depot.
Bibliography: unpublished.

Fig. 68. Fragmentary handle from a vase. Black-glazed. Maximum length: 0,065 m.

77. Fragment from a stone object.
Place and date of discovery: Karapla cave, upper precinct, in the area of the 'Stone Altar' (Plate VI: 5–6). September 2009.
Current location: Pharsala Archaeological depot.
Bibliography: unpublished.

Fig. 69. Fragment from an unidentified object of light brown limestone. Maximum length: 0,045 m. The piece has a trapezoidal cross-section and appears to have been smoothed on the top side.

5 Conclusions

If the publication of the Karapla inscriptions aroused a feeling of excitement among contemporary scholars, that of the cave's archaeological holdings achieved the opposite

effect of damping their enthusiasm. With its allusions to the wealth and beauty of the shrine's votive collections, Inscription II had created expectations which Levi's catalog simply could not match. The disappointment surrounding the results of the excavation is exemplified by the words with which A. della Seta, then Director of the Italian Archaeological School at Athens, concludes his report on the School activities of 1921–1922:

> It is almost sad that grounds overlooking a plain which witnessed one of history's greatest battles only yielded such scarce remains of the humblest folk religion (1922–1923, pp. 284–285).

Yet when we reconsider the Karapla collection in light of the material from all other Nymph caves excavated since the 1920's it is apparent how misguided della Seta's assessment was. Excavations have confirmed that, far from being a literary construct, the practice of honoring the rural gods with small, inexpensive gifts was as much a reality of Greek religious life as were the statues and monumental precincts of the major deities. This devotional tradition of the "rustic votive" (Larson 2001, p. 227) was not confined to country folk but extended to all strata of the Greek population, urban as well as rural, irrespective of wealth or social status.[7] Naturally infused with the presence of the deity, sacred woods and caves did not require the use of cult images as manmade shrines usually did.[8] The pace itself of rural religion, with its emphasis on frequent, spontaneous offerings as opposed to more widely spaced, organized ones, did not support elaborate dedications. Perishable offerings (flowers, greenery, and first fruits from the surrounding environment), were the most common gifts alongside amateurish creations in wood, stone, or clay.[9] Commercially manufactured objects, especially in the latter material, were offered by worshippers from the city or with access to city workshops. Given the remote location of most Nymph caves, portability may have been an additional factor affecting the size and/or material of the votives. Thus, it should come as no surprise if the votive deposits from most country shrines consist primarily of pottery and terracottas (figurines, plaques), with moderate quantities of small to medium-sized stone objects (reliefs, inscribed stelae), and even fewer quantities of metal gifts (jewelry, miniatures, domestic and cultic apparatus). Similarly we should not be surprised if some sites appear to 'specialize' in a specific votive category, with certain types of gift occurring in significantly larger quantities than others, or display what we may call 'personalized' archaeological profiles, due to the presence of atypical artifacts inseparably linked to the specific personalities of local donors and supporters.[10] The size and variety of each shrine's collection were largely dependant on local tradition as well as the peculiarities of local geography, economy, and demographics. Nonetheless, one must be careful not to overstate the localized character of cave cults, as on occasion we do come upon sites that present us with a collection of transregional scope and size. The cave of the Corycian Nymphs near Delphi is a significant case in point.[11]

Reconsidered in this context, the artifacts from the Karapla cave no longer seem 'scarce' or 'humble', but prove to be consistent, overall, with the archaeological yield from most Nymph shrines and the devotional nature of the goddesses' cult. In the preceding pages the many references to comparable findings in Pharsalus, Ampelia, and Proerna, show that the Karapla terracottas are representative of a local coroplastic tradition that had already reached a considerable level of refinement by the time the cave was given a new landscaped form in the early 5th century BCE. Common artifacts from this period include statuettes, plaques, and especially protomes. Except for a few bird figurines and silen masks (Cat. nos. 57; 28), nearly all are female representations—depictions of the Nymphs and

7 What J.M. Redfield writes about clay plaques could be extended to a large number of equally small dedications, "To present a pinax, it seems, was something like lighting a candle to the Madonna—a modest act in which the rich came down to the level of the humble" (2003, p. 352). Modesty in votive gifts is recommended by Plato: "As regards votive offerings to the gods, it is proper for a reasonable man to present offerings of reasonable value" (*Lg*. 955e, transl. Bury). For further insights on the sociology of ex votos see Karoglou's study of Attic pinakes, 2010, pp. 49–61. On the class bias affecting early perceptions of devotionalism, Larson 2001, p. viii.

8 On the immanence of the deity in nature shrines: Sporn 2007, pp. 51–55 and 62 (elaborating on ideas formulated by Scully 1962); cf. 2010, pp. 564–565.

9 See e.g. the miniature pots unearthed during the Italian excavations at the Aspri Petra cave on Cos (Levi 1925–1926, pp. 261–266, figs. 39–44).

10 Such tendencies towards 'specialization' and 'personalization' are apparent, for example, at the nymphaeum of Kafizin on Cyprus, where the bulk of the votives consists almost solely of pots decorated with the portrait of the cave founder, Onesagoras (Mitford 1980).

11 Cf. Sporn 2007, pp. 61–62; 2010, p. 558. On the link between the Corycian Nymphs and Delphic Apollo: Amandry 1984, pp. 398–401; cf. 1981, p. 29. Even when we take its proximity to Delphi into due account, the Corycian cave stands as a powerful reminder of how deceptive it can be to interpret cave shrines as "only the objects of humble or strictly local piety" (Sourvinou-Inwood 1998, p. 3, criticizing views expressed by de Polignac 1984).

their human worshippers [Charts 2–3]. Traditional iconographical types, such as hydrophores (Cat. nos. 30–31, 72) or enthroned goddesses (Cat. nos. 3, 69), appear alongside more unusual subjects, such as the single female figure enclosed within a cave frame (Cat. nos. 26 and 29). The most notable product is unquestionably Cat. no. 4. Rightly praised by Levi for its artistic quality, this small protomic mask foreshadows the well-known series of Classical protomae discovered in Pharsalus in 1966. The latter kind of luxury protomae[12] make their own appearance at the cave around the mid-fifth century (Cat. no. 5), suggesting that the shrine was not only patronized by the nearby peasantry, as has often been assumed, but attracted a more diverse clientele consisting of both city and country folk as well as people from different economic backgrounds (the presence of fragments from a large size stone image, Cat. no. 68, and a metal vase, Cat. no. 66. is also instructive in this regard). The recurring similarities with the types, if not the quantities, of votive objects recovered from the votive deposits of the Pharsalian acropolis, indeed reinforce the view that the socioeconomic profile of some of the Karapla visitors may not have been too much unlike that of the people worshipping at this more centrally located precinct.

From the later part of the fifth century through Hellenistic times, small to medium size statuettes and reliefs prevail as the most common form of votive art at the site. As in the previous period, good quality sculptures appear next to products of more modest artistic value. Regrettably the fragmentary condition of most pieces does not allow any detailed analysis. During this time we also note a more balanced distribution between female and male representations, as opposed to the near-totality of female images recorded for the Archaic Period [Charts 2–3]. Levi has advanced the suggestion that the various ephebic figures in Praxitelean style found at the site (Cat. nos. 40–42; cf. Levi 1922–1923, p. 42) could be depictions of Pan, but there really is no evidence in support of this possibility. The Goat God is otherwise well represented on the Karapla hill, with conventional figurines of very plain craftmanship (Cat. no. 49), as well as images of a more sophisticated conception (Cat. no. 50). Of all the remaining divinities depicted, or possibly depicted, in the Karapla collection (Artemis: Cat. no. 32? Aphrodite: Cat. nos. 42? 44? Hermes: Cat. nos. 51, 19? 36? Dionysus: Cat. nos. 8? 28?), Dionysus and his retinue of Silens and Satyrs are otherwise the most prominent, according to a pattern noted in other Nymph shrines across the Greek world. Dionysiac figures appear early at the cave (Cat. no. 28), continuing into Classical and Hellenistic times with some statuettes of notable artistic skill (Cat. no. 8). As in the previous period, the Nymphs are the subject of most images, appearing in a variety of conventional attitudes: standing, dancing, or engaged in some form of ritual activity. And as before, it is often difficult to distinguish them from their worshippers. The latter problem is also encountered in the study of the male representations. The ephebic figurines mentioned above (Cat. nos. 40–42) could be images of a youthful god or daimon, or of young human votaries, possibly connected with a coming of age ritual.[13] Worth noting, among so many depictions of adolescence, is the one adult male figure in the entire Catalog (Silens excepted), the enigmatic seated man with a kylix in his hands (Cat. no. 34).

Chronologically, the votives are distributed across several hundred years from Archaic to Hellenistic and Roman times. A number of objects date to the late sixth-early fifth century BCE, suggesting that the cult was in existence before the shrine was landscaped and architecturally enriched in the first half of the fifth century (Chapter 4.1 below). The presence of two kourotrophic figurines in Geometric style, Cat. no. 1 a-b, could even push the origins of the worship farther back in time;[14] however, as Levi observed, in the absence of other Geometric remains at the sanctuary, it would be imprudent to use this material as evidence for early dating .

Based on the dilapidated condition of the extant pieces,[15] it seems reasonable to conclude that, in addition to the gifts of perishable material, a good portion of all other votives in the Karapla collection was also lost to the ravages of nature and humankind. As we have seen, the majority of the items were on display outside the cave proper, in the open air section of the sanctuary. Given the sloping, exposed nature of the site, it is not difficult

12 On the high quality of the Pharsalian protomae see e.g. Stamatopoulou 2007a, p. 324.

13 Ephebic figurines similar to Cat. nos. 40–42 appear at the Sanctuary of the Chthonic Nymphs at Cyrene, posing the same problem of interpretation; see Micheli and Santucci 2000, pp. 172–178, nos. 614–881, plates 40–46; cf. pp. 98–99, figs. 13–14. The Libyan nymphaeum also yielded several statuettes of clothed males—including bearded ones—which are not attested at our site. See the discussion by Santucci, ibid. pp. 81–115, who believes that these images represent of the local Nymphs.

14 A well-known passage from Plutarch on the Lelantine war (Arist. fr. 98 Rose) attests to the prominence of Pharsalus in Late Geometric times. The archaeological evidence for this period consists mostly of burials in the city's west cemetery, on which see above, p. 16, note 122.

15 Cf. especially the pottery, apparently too fragmentary to be properly inventoried (Cat. no. 60).

to imagine the ruin brought upon these artifacts by the storms of the Thessalian wet season (p. 7 above) after the shrine was no longer maintained. Occasional seismic events (pp. 4–5; 18, note 6 above) and centuries of unregulated human and animal use played their own part in the degradation of the cave's archaeological patrimony. Yet, when we think of the depleted state of other Thessalian cave shrines, such as the aforementioned sites of Krounia and Mt. Ossa, the fact that Levi was still able to unearth a substantial votive deposit in the terrace below the cave speaks a lot about the size of the original collection. The relative absence of any figured pottery or sufficiently preserved stone sculpture among the material which has survived has long kept scholars from appreciating the Karapla objects for the light that they shed on local coroplastic tradition. Thanks to the mid-twentieth century discoveries in Pharsalus town, Ampelia, and Proerna we are now able to re-examine Levi's findings in their proper context. The future publication of the several hundreds terracottas unearthed in rescue excavations at Pharsalus during the last twenty-five years[16] should enrich this context even further.

6 Charts

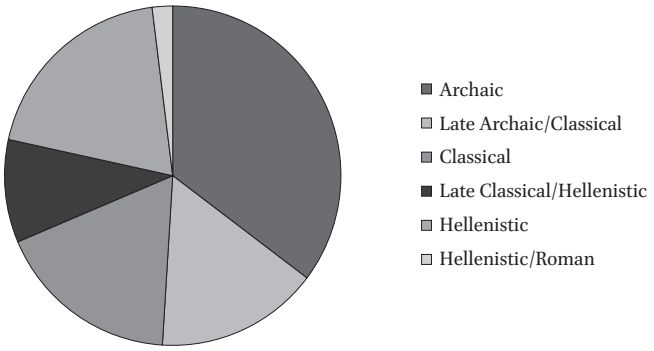

CHART 1 *Distribution of votives by period*

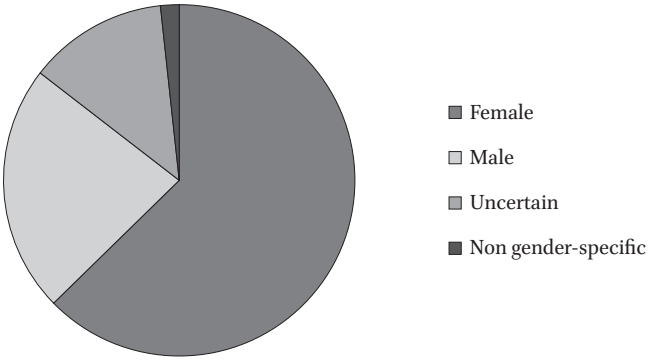

CHART 2 *Distribution of votives by gender of figures represented*

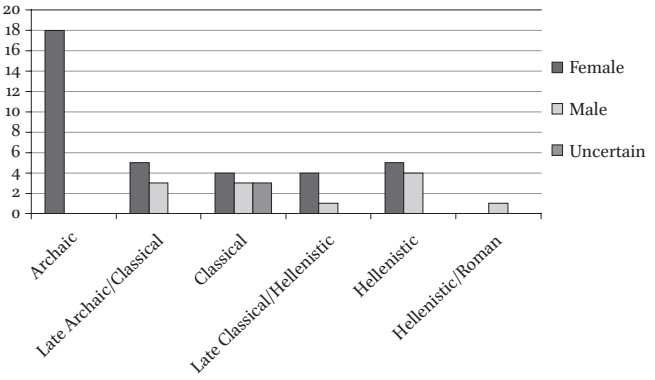

CHART 3 *Distribution of votives by period and gender of figures represented* (*synopsis*)

16 p. 10, note 73 above. See the examples featured in Karapanou and Katakouta 1994.

CHAPTER 4

The Inscriptions (Plates XXIII–XXIV)

1 Inscription 1

1.1 *Epigraphical Overview*

Karapla hill (Pharsala), on the elevation marked *Sykies* on current HMGS maps (formerly *Koukouvaia*).[1] Altitude: ca. 365 masl. Coordinates: 39° 16' 36.84" N, 22° 20' 42.90" E. Dedicatory inscription, engraved at ca. 3 m. above ground on the east wall of a small rocky bay opening into the north side of the cliff [Plate VI: 4; Fig. 13]. The text consists of a single column of writing laid out within a trapezoidal area which has been carefully smoothed out for the purpose[2] [Figs. 44–45]. This area occupies a recessed part of the wall enclosed above and to the right by a raised edge. Some of the text in the right margin of the inscription runs over this natural frame (lines 2–4). Except for these few letters, which are shallow and almost no longer visible today, the rest of the inscription is neatly cut and free of damage. The lettering shows the characteristic wavering between local and Ionic forms observed in Thessalian inscriptions around the mid-fifth century BCE.[3] Thus the tilted *delta* (lines 3, 5)[4] appears next to an upright one (line 4), while E for Ē (lines 1–2) appears next to Ionic *xi* (line 5). On one occasion the engraver seems to lapse back into retrograde writing (lines 3–2). Overall the tooling appears to be consistent with some of the other stonework found at the site (such as the dressing of the apsidal chapel on the sanctuary's upper level, p. 19 above). Dimensions of the smoothed area: height 0,35 m; width 0,5 m (at the top), 0,45 (at the bottom). Average letterheight: 0,03–0,045 m. Date: first half of the fifth century BCE (for some parallels of fifth century inscriptions from Pharsalus see e.g. *IThess* I, 69; 82).

ΠΑΝΤΑΛΚΕΣ
ΑΝΕΘΕΚΕ ᵛ ΝΟ
ΘΕΑΙΣΤΟΔΕ̣Ρ̣Γ̣
ΤΑΝΔΕΔΑΦ̣Α̣Ν
5 ΑΕΔΑΠΑΞ *vac.*
Φ̣ΑΝΠ *vac.*

2 NO: undetected by Giannopulos (although the *nu* is clearly discernible in fig. 2 of his 1919 article), the last two letters in line 2 were first reported by Peek on the raised edge which runs alongside the right margin of the writing panel. As Peek saw, NO completes the text of the following line running counter the direction of the other letters (although interestingly the N is not reversed). Such shifts in the the direction of the lettering can be explained by contextual reasons, such as position, symmetry, etc. For a discussion of Attic examples see Threatte 1980, pp. 52–54.

1 Della Seta 1922–1923, p. 284; Levi 1923–1924 p. 27. *Koukouvaia* ('Owl') and *Sykies* ('Fig Trees') are both names that reflect the zoology and botany of the area; cf. pp. 7; 24 above; also pp. 11–12 on the general toponomastics of the district.

2 Peek describes this area as an inverted triangle with a blunt apex, 1938, p. 20; see also Moore 1994, p. 10.

3 Examples and discussion are found in Jeffery 1990, pp. 96–99, plate 11, and Suppl. pp. 436–437.

4 Jeffery 1990, p. 96, fig. 29: δ3. For a similar example of the tilted *delta* see e.g. *IG* IX 2, 271 with the accompanying illustration.

 | DOI 10.1163/9789004297623_006

3: the ending letters of this line run over the right margin of the inscription, continuing into the rough area immediately adjacent to it (EṚΓ) and then in the space above (NO), as discussed in the previous note.

4 AN: inscribed in the same area as the line ends of 2–3 above. It is unclear why the lettercutter persisted in using this uneven part of the wall when over half of the smoothed surface was still available to him. Even assuming that he did not become aware of having omitted EPṚON until after he began to engrave the beginning of line 4, he could not have made the same error again with ΔΑΦΑΝ. After Φ Decourt reads a right-angled oblique which he prefers to render as a dotted N.

5–6: although no physical damage appears to have occurred, the last two lines of the inscription defy any attempt at interpretation. Line 6 ends impossibly with a *pi*, while the remaining ten letters in the text stubbornly resist organization in coherent word sequences. As shown in the next section, much ink has been spilled in trying to make sense of this part of Inscription 1. The third letter in line 5 is debated: some editors read a tilted *delta* as in line 3 (Giannopoulos, Comparetti, Moore), others (Hiller, Peek, Maas, Gallavotti, Decourt) prefer to print *rho*. "For the *rho* in the shape of French capital D" Decourt invites to compare *IG* IX 2, 151: the sign in line 5 has however the same markedly angular quality of the *delta* in line 3, of which is almost an exact replica.[5] At the end of the line, the letter previously printed by Giannopoulos as an *epsilon* is better restored as a *xi* on the evidence of Peek's squeeze (although Peek himself prefers to interpret this sign as a punctuation mark). After this sign, past an intervening space, Decourt believes he can discern the traces of an additional *epsilon* but the reading, as he admits, is far from certain. Some debate also arises over the first letter in line 6. Interpreted by most as a *phi*, this sign does not show as deeply cut a crossbar a s the *phi* in line 4, prompting Peek to consider *theta* as a more plausible option.[6]

There can be no doubt that Inscription 1 shows a number of puzzling aspects. The relatively good quality of the lettering seems in contrast with the way this engraver repeatedly runs over the right margin of the inscription (three times in a text of only six lines). While ON at the end of line 2 can be explained as the correction of an oversight, there seems to be no evident reason for the textual overflow at the end of lines 4–5. With all the space available to him, we cannot but wonder why our mason has resorted to using the unpolished surface to the right of the inscriptional field. A further reason for puzzlement is the way the text apparently breaks off in the last line. Since there is no evidence for physical damage we must conclude that this was also the text which presented itself to readers in antiquity. Were the ancient visitors of the sanctuary as perplexed as we are? Very likely one of the reasons for the engraving of Inscription 11 was to provide pilgrims and passersby with a guide to the interpretation of these ancient carvings. Similar initiatives were not unknown to the managers of Greek sanctuaries, who encouraged visitor interest in 'sacred relics' and the traditions associated with them. A pertinent example is that of the inscriptions in "Cadmean letters" seen by Herodotus on some votive tripods at the shrine of Ismenian Apollo in Thebes:[7] these texts, which named mythological heroes Amphitryon and Laodamas among the dedicators of the tripods, appear to have been a later addition by Ismenium officials—evidently for the purpose of educating onlookers about the origin of the votives. "Perhaps" writes J.W. Day, "early in the sixth century, the local authorities inscribed them, probably as labels to explain an oral tradition that had grown up about the tripods. The link between the real dedicators' names and their offerings had disappeared—a serious diminution of renown in a society which valued competitive display very highly".[8] In the case of Inscription 1, the

5 A *rho* of the kind described by Decourt is not listed in Jeffery's table of Thessalian letterforms (1990 p. 96, fig. 29), nor was I able to find evidence for it elsewhere. The alleged D-shaped *rho* in *IG* IX 2, 151 belongs to an early reading of the inscription discarded by Hiller in favor of the widely attested *delta* by the same shape (Jeffery 1990, p. 96, fig. 29: δ2). See ΔNODY (Ἀνόδου[ν]?) for *AD* 4 (1901) p. 7, no. 11 INOPOY in *IG* IX 2, 151, line 1.

6 1938, pp. 21–22.

7 "I have myself seen Cadmean writing in the temple of Ismenian Apollo at Thebes of Boeotia engraved on certain tripods and for the most part looking like Ionian letters. On one of the tripods there is this inscription: 'Amphitryon dedicated me from the spoils of Teleboae'. This would date from about the time of Laius the son of Labdacus, grandson of Polydorus and great-grandson of Cadmus. A second tripod says, in hexameter verse: 'Scaeus the boxer, victorious in the contest, gave me to Apollo, the archer god, a lovely offering.' Scaeus the son of Hippocoon, if he is indeed the dedicator and not another of the same name, would have lived at the time of Oedipus son of Laius. The third tripod says, in hexameter verse again: 'Laodamas, while he reigned, dedicated this cauldron to Apollo, the sure of aim, as a lovely offering' " (Hdt. 5, 59–61 transl. Godley).

8 1994, p. 40. The characterization of these texts as 'labels' is Stephanie West's: "Dedicatory inscriptions are an early and obvious application for writing, and we need feel no surprise if the guardians of the Ismenion decided to add such dedications to objects traditionally associated with local heroes, not, probably, with any intention to deceive the visitor, but rather as the curator of a museum might attach informative labels to the objects in his charge", 1985, p. 292.

builder of the Karapla cave did not forgo to sign his work, but the omission of any other information and the obscurities in the second half of the text created the need for an additional inscription revealing the full story of the sanctuary and its founder.

Another aspect of Inscription 1 which calls for comment is its position. With all the inscribing surface available at the site, it is unclear why this text should have been engraved ca. 3 m above ground. A plausible answer is that it had to be physically near the 'work' it was associated with (line 3 τόδ' ἔργον). This, as it will be argued below, was probably the stairway that climbed up to upper level of the sanctuary immediately to the right of the inscription. It is reasonable to assume that Pantalces carved the dedication after the construction was completed, working from the middle steps of the stairway. Even from this elevated position, however, access to the inscriptional panel appears very limited today [Figs. 13–14]. We must conclude that either the area has undergone some physical change from antiquity or a scaffold was used.[9]

1.2 *Text and Translation*

Παντάλκēς
ἀνέθēκε
θεαῖς τόδ' ἔργον.
τὰν δὲ δάφ⟨ν⟩αν
5 ΑΕΔΑΠΑΞ
ϕΑΝΠ

Pantalces dedicated this work to the goddesses. The laurel
. . .

3 τόδ' ἔργον legit Peek: τόδ[ε τὸ ἄντρον] Giannopoulos, τὸ δέ[νδρον] Comparetti. 4 τὰν δὲ δάφ⟨ν⟩αν e lectione ΔΑΦΑΝ supplevit Peek: τὰν δὲ δάφ[ναν] Giannopoulos, τὰν δὲ δάφῳ[αν] Decourt, τάνδε δ'ἀφάν Gallavotti. 5–6 versus Pelasgicis notis scriptos aexistimavit Giannopoulos: emendaverunt ἅ[ι] ἑδ' ἀπ' ἀέ[θλον] | Φάν[ι]π[ος] Comparetti, ἀε(ρ)ρ' ἄ(π)παξ | Φανῆι vel Φανῆτι Gallavotti, ἄερ' ἀπάξ[ας] | ὁ ἀνπ(ελουργός) Hiller, ἄερ' Ἀγαθάνγ(ελος) Maas apud Peek, ἄερ' Ἀθαν⟨ί⟩ππα ≠ Peek, ἀε⟨ι⟩δ' ἄπαξ | ΦΑΝΠ Moore, ἄερ ἄπαξ Ε | ΦΑΝΠ Decourt.

On the reception of early alphabetic inscriptions by the later Greeks see also the discussion in J. Boardman's study on 'the archaeology of nostalgia', 2002, pp. 93–95.

9 At the cave of the Nymphs of Phyle, a large number of cuttings for the insertion of votive displays are placed at a height of well above 2 m from the ground. Especially striking is the placement, high up in the curvature of the cave entrance, of a rock-cut inscription recording the dedication of a votive image to Pan by a certain Trophimianus and his partner (*IG* II^2, 4829: full citation at p. 63 below). The elevated position of these markings confirms that ladders or scaffolding were used by the stonecutters employed at the site. For a physical description of *IG* II^2, 4829 see Skias 1918, p. 19 (who does not report, however, on the exact height of the inscription from the ground).

1.3 *Metrical Conspectus*

The question of whether or not we can regard this text as metrical depends on the more general issue of where we draw the dividing line between prose and verse in Greek inscriptions.[10] I provide here the rythmical scheme of Inscription I followed by an overview of the main scholarly offerings:

– – –
⏑ ⏑ – ⏑
⏑ – ⏑ – –
– ⏑ – –
⏑ ⏑ ⏑ –
–

If lyric metres are to be considered for the identification of metrical inscriptions, the first three lines of our text (– – – ⏑ ⏑ – ⏑ ⏑ – ⏑ – –) show an obvious affinity with Aeolic rhythm, namely with the verse known in antiquity as logaoedic (or Praxillean, from one of its variants used by the 5th century BCE Sicyonian poetess Praxilla).[11] The basic form is (⏑⏑) (–⏑⏑) –⏑⏑ –⏑⏑– ⏑––.[12] Scholars agreeing with this view include Peek, Gallavotti, and Moore.

Not as straightforward is the rhythm in the second half of the inscription, the metrical analysis of which necessarily varies according to the restorations adopted by individual scholars. Peek, who rearranges lines 5–6 to read implausibly ἄερ' Ἀθ̣αν⟨ί⟩ππα, presents us with a sequence consting of one epitrite followed by an iambic sequence and a spondee. By reading the same lines as ἀε(ρ)ρ' ἄ(π)παξ Φανῆι, Gallavotti obtains an equally implausible sense but improved metrical results, with a rhythm very much akin to that of the first half of the inscription, – ⏑ ⏑ – – – – – – ⏑ –. In the reconstruction proposed by the Italian Classicist, Inscription I is interpreted as consisting of an elegiambic couplet with catalexis in the second verse (–– –⏑⏑–⏑⏑– ⏑ –– | –⏑⏑ –– –– –⏑ –$_{\wedge}$).[13] The most recent scholar to address the question of Inscription I's alleged metrical nature is B. Moore in his MA thesis of 1994. Based on a slightly emendated text ἄε⟨ι⟩δ' ἄπαξ ΦΑΝΠ, Moore cautiously proposes a sequence of one cretic element followed by an ithyphallic colon (–⏑– –⏑–⏑––) but expresses deep reservations on the likelihood that the matter could be resolved conclusively.[14]

1.4 *Commentary*

1 Παντάλκῆς

LGPN III B, s.v. Παντάλκης. Perhaps a Thessalian name? Unattested in the literary sources, Παντάλκης appears only once more in an agonistic inscription from nearby Larissa, *IG* IX 2, 529, lines 7 and 21, Διότιμος Παντάλκου. Outside of Thessaly we hear of a C. Claudius Pantalces in a Roman epitaph of the first or second century CE (*CIL* 6, 15622 = Solin 2003, p. 140). As in the rest of Greece, compounded names beginning with παντ- or παν- are not lacking in Thessaly, see e.g. the conceptually similar Παντάπονος also attested at Larissa in the patronymic adjectives Πανταπόνειος, *SEG* 35, 606, line 2, and Πανταπονεία, *IG* IX 2, 571, line 2; *SEG* 35, 591, line 8 (*LGPN* III B, s.v. Πανταπόνειος). Much less frequent in Thessalian onomastics are the occurrences of αλκ- in the second part of compounds; see the isolated example of Πολ]ύ̲αλκος in a dedication from Pharsalus of the early 4th century BCE, *IThess* I, 77, line 3 = *LGPN* III B, s.v. Πολύαλκος (versus the various appearances of Πολυάλκης elsewhere, e.g. *IG* II^2, 1818, line 11, and 12481; *IMilet* I 3, 147, line 100). On the identification of Thessalian anthroponyms in general, see García Ramón 1999, pp. 523 ff. and 2007, pp. 65–66).

Pantalces, 'The All-Powerful', is almost too perfect a name for the vigorous builder described in Inscription II not to raise some suspicion as to its historical authenticity; see e.g. Comparetti 1923–1924, p. 152. On the opposite side of those who believe Pantalces to be a fictional character, is however an overall majority who recognize in him the vivid and convincing reflection of a real personality; see e.g. Powell and Barber 1929, Larson 2001 and, more recently, Pache 2011. In fact there is nothing suspicious about the name of the dedicant in Inscription I, just as his 'portrait' in Inscription II has very little to do with the historical Pantalces. The two inscriptions, as it will be argued below, are best studied as independent (if intertextually linked) documents.

10 At one end of the debate we find scholars like P.A. Hansen who would not recognize as metrical any inscriptions down to 400 BCE which were not composed in dactylic hexameters, pentameters, or iambic trimeters (1975). A less strict editorial attitude is advocated by C. Gallavotti, who interprets many of the texts excluded by Hansen as composed of lyric cola (1979). For the problems with Gallavotti's analyses see Hansen 1984, and, for a sensible assessment of Hansen's own work (from an epigraphist's point of view), the review by Day 1985.

11 Heph. p. 24, 8 Consbruch. D.L. 4, 65, 7. Gallavotti 1979, p. 12.

12 West 1982, p. 197.

13 "They are two elegiambics, and the second one is catalectic", 1980, p. 1022; cf. 1979 p. 12. On the elegiambus or encomiologicum, see West 1982, pp. 194, 195. West's analysis of this verse, *D* ×–⏑–× (–⏑⏑–⏑⏑– ×–⏑–×) differs from Gallavotti's "*hem+reiz*" (–⏑⏑–⏑⏑– ×–⏑⏑–×).

14 1994, p. 15.

2–3 ἀνέθēκε | θεαῖς

Pantalces uses the simplest of dedicatory formulas (ὁ δεῖνα ἀνέθηκε τῷ δεῖνι), offering no information as to the nature of the dedication or the circumstances which prompted it. He even omits to identify by name the "goddesses" honored by his gesture. While not unparalleled, this disregard for specifics seems slightly at odds with the well-known propensity of private cult founders for carefully documenting their deeds (see e.g. Van Straten 1993, pp. 260–261 on Artemidorus of Perge). Evidently Pantalces had no reason to be concerned about ambiguity: a cult of the Nymphs must have existed at the cave long before he introduced the architectural improvements which we see there today. Not only were these goddesses the primary spirits of the place; they also were the only female plurality that would qualify as θεαί in the group of divinities listed in Inscription II. As for the nature of the dedication, the use of deictic τόδ' implies that it could be identified by its spacial relationship to the inscription (commentary to line 3 below). For this type of dedicatory language, which relies on context as much as verbal communication, we can compare a votive statuette of Pan from the Epidaurian Asclepieum bearing the inscription τῷ θεῷ | Δαρδάνιος (*IG* IV^2 1, 466): in this case the fact that the text is inscribed on the object itself leaves no doubt on the nature of the dedication; not as straightforward, on the other hand, is the identity of the dedicatee, who could be Pan himself or Asclepius. For another example of dedicatory text where the Nymphs are simply referred to as θεαί, see the dedication of a screen or door (?) from the Nymph cave of Budrasc in Cyrenaica, *SEG* 9, 727, τὰς θυρίδας | Ζώπυρος | ἀνέθηκε ταῖς | θεαῖς.

3 τόδ' ἔργον

Opinions differ as to what Pantalces' dedication might have been. Giannopoulos, who does not read any letters beyond τόδ', understands this demonstrative to mean the cave itself, 1919, p. 51. Stählin believes instead that τόδ(ε) indicated a pinax placed directly above the inscription (in an area of the rock where he identified a cutting for the insertion of a votive, 1924, p. 144). Along the same lines, Croenert proposes to restore τόδ'[ἀμεμφὲς ἄγαλμα], while Comparetti prefers τὸ δέ[νδρον], from comparison with Inscription II, line 12 ὅσπερ ταῦτ' ἐφύτευσε. The retrieval of the word ἔργον at the end of the line makes it clear, however, that a plant or other natural object would be unlikely. τόδ' ἔργον must refer to a manmade votive, or, in a broader sense, to the overall refurbishing of the cave, as suggested by Decourt, *IThess* I, 73, p. 90. It is possible, however, to be more specific. Today the two landscape features that dominate the sanctuary's view are the small elm wood growing at the base of the cliff and the massive rock-hewn stairs leading up to the cave. Inscription II confirms that this was also the situation in antiquity. This text describes the foundation of the Karapla sanctuary as the result of two basic landscaping acts, the planting of a sacred grove (line 12) and the building of a stairway to the cave (line 15). If the depiction of the former is formulaic, the construction of the stairs is portrayed in a strikingly expressive style: could it be possible that this 'way up' to the shrine, cut into the live rock of the hill, is the ἔργον which Pantalces' dedication refers to?

The placement of the inscription halfway up the ascent to the cave, on the cliff wall directly above the stairway's third step, certainly supports this hypothesis. A similar situation is found in the cave of Archedamus at Vari, where a rock-cut stairway in the west chamber of the cave is 'signed' with the builder's 'signature' engraved near the landing step (*IG* I^3, 978 = Schörner and Goette 2004, p. 50, no. 7, plate 34, map 3: g). The centrality of these stepped structures in the architectural and cultic layout of both sites is undeniable: at Karapla as well as Vari the stairs facilitate the worshipper's access to areas of the temenos otherwise difficult to reach; moreover, they serve in the way of sacred paths, routing the worshipper's visit through the different ritual stations found at each shrine—chapels, altars, offering tables, votive displays (p. 28 above). At the Karapla this second aspect is made explicit by Inscription II, which ends with an invitation for the visitors to go up the stairway and use the facilities of the upper sanctuary to sacrifice and enjoy themselves (lines 20–22). In light of these considerations, it seems thus reasonable to conclude that stairs constituted a dedication no less plausible than other architectural structures. For the offering of architectural works to the Nymphs, also qualified as ἔργα, see e.g. a Sicilian inscription from Catania, *IG* XIV, 453, face A.1, βαιὸν ἐμὲ Νύμφαις ἔργον κάμ[εν - - - - - - -] | οὐ γάρ μοι σθεναρὴν χεῖρ' ἐπε [- - - - - - -] | ἀλλ' ἐν ἐμοὶ καμάτων εὗρεν τέλ[ος, εὗρε δὲ τύμβον] | ἀγχόθι λαινέης αὔλακος ὑδρο[φόρου], | τὴν αὐτὸς ποίησεν ἐς ἠέρα πολλ[ὸν ἀείρας] | νᾶμα φέρειν καθαρὸν ἐνναέται[ς Κατάνης]. | Ἐννοῖου. Nymphs are often associated with the building of waterworks, cf. e.g. an inscription from Megara of 408–412 BCE, *IG* VII, 93, Ἑρκόλιον τὸν ἔπαρχον ἀνέστησαν Μεγαρῆε[ς] | παντοίω[ν ν]ήσω<ν> καὶ πόλεων φύλακα. | τείχεα δείματο ϙαὶ π[όρ]ον ἔμπεδον ὤπα<σ>ε Νύμφ[αις], | ἄστεα καὶ βουλὰς πλῆσε βροτῶν σοφίῃ.

4–6 τὰν δὲ δάφ⟨ν⟩αν | ΑΕΔΑΠΑΞ | ΦΑΝΠ

It is the nearly unanimous opinion of scholars that the second half of Inscription I concerns the offering of a laurel by a dedicator other than Pantalces. However, except for the words τὰν δὲ δάφ⟨ν⟩αν or τάνδὲ δάφ⟨ν⟩αν in line 4,

the text of the last two lines is very hard to break down into coherent units of meaning. Most editors agree that a verb ruling δάφ⟨ν⟩αν is to be recognized in the first three letters of line 5, interpreting ΑΕΔ as ἄερ' (from ἀείρω, "to raise, lift, hence *to present*, offer" Decourt, commentary to *IThess* I, 72, p. 89; see also Peek 1938, p. 21 who suggests comparison with Pi. *N.* 8, 40–41, ὡς ὅτε δένδρεον . . . ἀερθεῖσ' . . . πρὸς ὑγρόν αἰθέρα). A similar consensus exists about the restoration of the next world, restored by the majority as the adverb ἅπαξ, 'once' ("at the same time as" Decourt, on the evidence of E. *IT* 528). The true hapax in this text lies however in the last line of the inscription, as the letter sequence ΦΑΝΠ does not appear anywhere else in the Greek language. What does the sentence, 'carried up/raise the laurel once', mean? And who—or what—is ΦΑΝΠ, the presumed subject of ἄερ'? As the restorations listed in the apparatus show, it is difficult to improve the sense of lines 5–6 without introducing significant changes to the text. A widespread assumption is that the ancient inscriber, either by accident or voluntarily, left some words incomplete: this is essentially the underlying theory behind restorations such as Comparetti's τὰν δὲ δάφ[ναν] ἆ[ι] ἑδ' ἀπ' ἀέ[θλον] Φάν[ι]π[πος], "the laurel which Phanippus enjoyed after the contest"; Maas' τὰν δὲ δάφ⟨ν⟩αν ἄερ' ἅπαξ Ἀγαθάνγ(ελος), "Agathangelus carried up the laurel once"; or Hiller's, τὰν δὲ δάφ⟨ν⟩αν ἄερ' ἀπάξ[ας] ὁ ἀνπ(ελουργός), "the gardener uprooted and carried up the laurel". Not all scholars believe that Inscription I is incomplete or obscured by abbreviations. Gallavotti for example retains the text of the stone as it is, reading τάνδε δ'ἀφάν ἀε(ρ)ρ' ἄ(π)παξ Φανῆι, "and he (Pantalces) carried up this structure all in one piece for Phanes". Such reading, however, is based on Gallavotti's highly questionable interpretation of certain words—namely ἀφή, used here in the unparalled sense of 'structure', and ἅπαξ, preposterously explained as a syncopated form of ἀπόπαξ (itself a very rare term, only attested in Hesychius). Anomalies of this kind indeed mar the majority of restorations proposed for lines 4–6: in their effort to restore meaning to this unyielding text, scholars resort to making up new words (Comparetti: ἑδ' for an unspecified form of ἥδομαι; Hiller: ἀπάξ[ας] for ἀποπάξας) or populating the text with implausible vineyard growers (Hiller: ὁ ἀνπελουργός) and Orphic gods (Gallavotti: Φανῆι). The editor of the inscription's *editio princeps*, Giannopoulos, even considered the possibility of mysteric formulae (1912, p. 669) or ritual utterances in a Pre-Hellenic language (1919, p. 51). Overall, no one has succeeded in providing a text that reproduces the simplicity and directness of the first half of the inscription.

For W. Peek the problems in the second half of Inscription I arise not from an obscure abbreviation but a clumsy scribal correction, namely the inscriber's attempt to correct an oversight like the one already noted in line 3 (pp. 57–58 above). According to Peek's reconstruction, after inadvertedly omitting part of the second word in line 5 our mason was compelled to inscribe the missing letters in the space below, thus creating the illusion of an additional line of text. Restored to their proper position, these four letters complete the final word of the dedication—the personal name ΑΘΑΝΙΠ(Π)Α followed by a punctuation mark resembling a *xi*, τὰν δὲ δάφ⟨ν⟩αν ἄερ' Ἀθαν⟨ί⟩ππα ≠ "Athanippa raised the laurel". Unlike other scholars Peek is not as firmly convinced of the existence of a second human votary. Athanippa, he observes, could also be one of the θεαί, the Nymph of the spring who presided over the growth of local vegetation, 1938, p. 22).

Of the many restorations considered above, Peek's is arguably the most appealing. τὰν δὲ δάφ⟨ν⟩αν ἄερ' Ἀθαν⟨ί⟩ππα offers a plausible sense without resorting to abbreviations or grammatical eccentricities. Similarly plausible is the epigraphical argument which, for all its apparent convolutedness, is founded on observable fact (this mason's proven tendency for messy self-corrections). Yet problems persist: for to obtain the reading Ἀθαν⟨ί⟩ππα, one must postulate two additional scribal errors, *phi* for *theta* at the beginning of line 6 and the omission of the *iota* in the third syllable. Are we really ready to believe that this inscriber was so incompetent as to insert errors even when he was correcting himself?

In printing the present text I follow the prudent approach of J.C. Decourt, who shies away from any attempt to restore the final line of the inscription (commentary to *IThess* I, 72, p. 89). As for line 5, I am more hesitant than the French scholar to print ΑΕΔΑΠΑΞ: ἄερ' ἅπαξ. As we have seen, the palaeographical argument for reading ΑΕΡ in place of ΑΕΔ is far from solid. Also, even if ἀείρω appears in votive contexts, the fact that it is normally used in texts of poetic nature makes it seem somewhat out of place in an inscription like ours (for an epigraphical parallel, contrast e.g. *IG* XII 3, 349 = *CEG* I, 456, Εὐμάστας με ἄηρεν ἀπὸ χθονὸς *ho* Κριτοβώλο). Finally, the adverb ἅπαξ does not appear to provide any acceptable sense with ἄερ'.

1.5 *Conclusions*

> It is easy to read if you know what it says.
> E. VANDERPOOL, quoted by LANG, *Agora* XXI

In absence of physical damage it is hard to imagine what would have caused an ordinary six-line dedication like Inscription I to degenerate, in mid-text, into a seemingly incoherent word jumble. Blaming it all on the inscriber's

clumsiness seems unrealistic. But if lines 5–6 are not corrupted or abbreviated, what is it that prevents us from understanding them? This question, which does not appear to have a satisfactory answer, prompts another, related question: could such a text have been more comprehensible to the ancients than it is to us?

From comparison with other foundation inscriptions one would expect the sentence Παντάλκης ἀνέθηκε θεαῖς τόδ' ἔργον to be followed by a statement about the motive and circumstances of the dedication (for example, *IG* I^3, 980 informs us that Archedamus' work at the Vari cave was done at the explicit suggestion of the Nymphs, 3–4 φραδαῖσι Νυμφôν). Ancient dedicants had at their disposal a rich formulaic repertoire for all kinds of votive scenarios: dedications inspired by dreams, visions, or oracles; dedications offered in fulfillment of a vow; dedications offered in thanksgiving. Yet no trace of such an expression can be discerned in these lines, even in a corrupted form. Rather, it would appear that the second half of the inscription contained the statement of another sacred act, presumably the offering of a laurel. Furthermore, the word order seems to suggest that the two parts of the text may have been structured in a simple chiastic pattern (*subject-verb-object : object-verb-subject*). This kind of formal arrangement would have been appropriate to the description of two separate but complementary sacred actions, such as the furnishing and the planting of a rural shrine. A rupestral inscription from the well-known nymphaeum at Phyle records the dedication of a votive image to Pan where the supervision of the sculpture's setup and that of the accompanying sacrifices appear to be the charge of two different individuals (*IG* II^2, 4829: cf. p. 59, note 9 above):

> ἀγαθῇ τύ[χῃ]· | Τελ[εσφόρος]? | ΚΛ . . . . Κε- | λάδοντάδε | τέχ[το]νας θ[έ]- | σθαι [τ]ὴν εἰκὼ | τοῦ Πανός. ὁ | θύων δ' ἦν | Τ[ρο]φιμιανός | *folium*
>
> Good fortune. Telesphorus . . . this gorge of Celadon . . . that the workers set up Pan's image. The sacrifice was supervised by Trophimianus.

However, if Pantalces ever had an associate in the landscaping of the Karapla cave, the commemorative epigram in Inscription II makes no mention of it. There could be two reasons for this: that the epigram's author, like us, could not read the second part of the dedication and had therefore to rely on the first three lines, which only mention Pantalces' name; or, alternatively, that the same individual could read the dedication throughout and did not find there any names of additional people involved in the cave's foundation. As suggested above, the first possibility is the most plausible. Inscription II has all the appearance of a 'visitor's guide', intended to provide—among other things—some sort of aid to the understanding of the venerable carvings preserved in Inscription I. By retracing the thread of intertextual connections which link this poem to the earlier text it might be possible to reconstruct, thus, how much of lines 4–6 were the ancients able to read (or believed they were): one could argue, for example, that Pantalces' portrayal as an ἀοιδός is likely to have been inspired by the letterstring ΑΕΔ in Inscription I, understood as a form of ἀείδω—much the same way as ΔΑΦΑΝ, in the preceding line of this text, was probably responsible for the various references to planting found throughout the poetry. It is doubtful whether ancient readers were more successful than us in piecing together these *disiecta membra* into a logically and grammatically coherent sentence: rather, such fragments seem to have been loosely employed as 'thread' for the foundation tale presented in Inscription II. For speculation's sake we can try to reconstruct the readings that inspired the character of Pantalces ἀοιδός. An often neglected element in most studies about Inscription I is the letterstring ΑΠΑΞ, almost certainly to be restored as ἅπαξ. Despite various scholarly attempts to stretch its meaning, ἅπαξ in this context does not lend itself to translations such as 'in the same occasion' or 'at the same time'. A quantitative adverb used to denote a single occurrence in time or a single act in a series (in contrast with related adverbs such as δίς, τρίς, τετράκις), the term is appropriate to the language of agonistic inscriptions and laws. One may compare, for example, an agonistic inscription from Caria listing the accomplishments of a young pancratiast named Aristomachus (*IMag* 181, lines 14–16),[15]

> ἐστεφόμην ἄεθλον κύδιμον
> Οὐράνια — Ἴσθμια δίς, παίδων μὲν
> ἅπαξ, τὸ δ' ἅπαξ ἀγενείων
>
> I was crowned with glorious victory at the Ouranian games. At the Isthmian games (I was crowned) twice: once in the youths', once in the boys' class,

or a lease from Amorgus regulating the use of land at the sanctuary of Zeus Temenites (*IG* XII 7, 62, lines 8–11),[16]

> ἀμπέλους δ[ὲ] | [σκ]άψει δίς, τὸμ πρ[ῶ]το[ν μ]ηνὸς Ἀνθε[σ]τηριῶνος, τ[ὸν] δεύτερον | σκαφη[τὸ]ν [μηνὸς] Ταυρειῶνος πρὸ εἰκάδ[ος]· | συκᾶς ἅπαξ.

15 Extensive commentary by Moretti in *IAG* 71, pp. 198–206.

16 Commentary: Rhodes and Osborne in *GHI* 59, pp. 282–286.

> (The tenant) shall dig around the vineyards twice: first in the month of Anthesterion, the second time before the twentieth day of the month of Taurion. Around the fig trees (he shall dig) once.

Based on the words which they could recognize—the noun δάφνα and a form of the verb ἀείδειν near the adverb ἅπαξ—it would not be surprising if the ancients thought that this obscure text concealed a reference to a poetic contest once won by Pantalces (particularly since Pantalces' work at the cave could be construed as a thank offering for such a victory). A similar possibility was considered, in more recent times, by B. Moore, who noted the palaeographical merits of the reading ἄε⟨ι⟩δ' ἅπαξ, but was unable to reconcile the palaeography with the grammar.[17] As Moore admits, a present stem like ἄε⟨ι⟩δ' does not coordinate well with ἀνέθηκε in the first half of the text. Moreover, unless we are willing to embrace the theory of an abbreviated word (and possibly a second dedicant) in the last line of the inscription, the letterstring ΦΑΝΠ remains unaccounted for. On the other hand everyday users of the Karapla shrine might not have been as preoccupied with grammar as a modern day classicist, and it is quite possible that they were just content with a partial understanding of the text, accepting obscurity as natural in (what was perceived to be) an old document. The frequent occurrence of ἅπαξ in legal contexts also prompts us to consider another possibility: on occasion, foundation inscriptions such as ours include, after the information on the dedicant and the circumstances of the dedication, a ritual prescription or a set of instructions for prospective users of the sanctuary. This is the case, for example, of *IG* I^3, 987, a 400 BCE dedication from New Phalerum recording the establishment of a shrine to the river god Cephisus by a woman named Xenocrateia. In this inscription, the text of the foundation proper is followed by a short statement authorizing the public use of the site for sacrificial activities (lines 6–7),[18]

> θύεν τῶι βουλομένωι ἐπὶ
> τελεστῶν ἀγαθῶν.
>
> Whoever wishes to is allowed to sacrifice for the fulfillment of good things.

When reconsidering Inscription I in this light, one wonders if an ancient reader could have interpreted ΑΕΔΑΠΑΞ | ΦΑΝΠ as a liturgical prescription of some kind—namely an invitation to approach the cave intoning a certain chant (ἄε⟨ι⟩δε), followed by instructions concerning the number of repetitions (ἅπαξ) and the relevant musical notation (ΦΑΝΠ: g-f´-b-a?).[19] That chants and refrains were used in Greek cult to accompany ritual gestures is shown, for example, by a sacred law from Epidaurus detailing the daily liturgy at the Asclepieum,[20] *IG* IV^2 1, 742, lines 5–10:

> εἶτ' ἐν Ἀφροδισιδείωι ὁμοίω[ς - - - - - -]
> [- - - - - - - ὁ π]υρφόρος ἐπιβοᾷ ἑκάστου λύχνου [- - - - - -]
> [- - - - - - - -τ]ῷ τῆς ἱερᾶς λυχνίας πρὸς τ- - - - - - - - - -]
> [- - - - - - - - -]Ιου ἐν τῇ ἀρκτῴῳ θύρᾳ, β΄ ἐν τῇ - - - - - - - - -]
> [- - - - - - - -]ου, β΄ πρὸς τῷ λουτρῷ, α΄ πρὸς [- - - - - - - - -]
>
> Likewise, then, in the precinct of Isis and Aphrodite . . . the lamp bearer invokes . . . of each lamp . . . the sacred lampstand in the direction of . . . at the north gate . . . twice at the . . . twice in the direction of the bath, once in the direction of . . .

and by two other inscriptions from the same site, which preserve the texts of such chants as well as instructions about their execution,[21] *IG* IV^2 1, 133' col. II, 1, lines 8–9:

> κύριε χαῖρε γ΄ μέγας σωτὴρ [- - - - - - -]
> οἰκουμένης σωτήρ γ΄ [- - - - - - -]
>
> Hail lord (three times), great saviour . . . saviour of the world (three times) . . .

17 1994, pp. 26–27.

18 *LSCG* Suppl. 17; ample discussion in Purvis 2003, pp. 15–32. See also lines 16–19 in the foundation inscription of the Archilocheium in Paros, *LSCG* 180 (although E. Lupu has recently expressed skepticism on the interpretation of this text as a sacred law, *NGSL* p. 35, note 162).

19 Two readings are possible: Παντάλκεῖς | ἀνέθεκε | θεαῖς τόδ' ἔργον, | τάνδε δάφ⟨ν⟩αν. | ἄε⟨ι⟩δ' ἅπαξ· | ΦΑΝΠ, *Pantalces dedicated this work and this laurel to the goddesses. Chant once* (*to the tune*)*: g-f´-b-a;* or: Παντάλκεῖς | ἀνέθεκε | θεαῖς τόδ' ἔργον. | τὰν δὲ δάφ⟨ν⟩αν | ἄε⟨ι⟩δ' ἅπαξ | ΦΑΝΠ, *Pantalces dedicated this work to the goddesses. Chant once the 'Laurel song'* (*to the tune*)*: g-f´-b-a.* On songs or refrains named after plants, cf. the folksong *anthema* *PMG* 852 On 'singing the laurel'; Call. *Iamb.* 194, καὶ Πυθίη γὰρ ἐν δάφνῃ μὲν ἵδρυται, | δάφνην δ' ἀείδει καὶ δάφνην ὑπέστρωται.

20 *LSCG* Suppl. 25 pp. 60–63 .

21 Wagman 1995, pp. 189–201, IE 2, fr. b; pp. 247–255, IE 3, fr. c.

and *IG* IV^2 1, 135 II, lines 7–8:

> [Ἀσκληπιῷ καὶ Ἀπόλ]λωνι γ′ οἰκουμένης [- -]
> [σωτῆρσι μεγίσ]τοις
>
> . . . to? Asclepius and Apollo (three times) . . . greatest saviours of the world.

The rich epigraphical record from the Epidaurian Asclepieum is also evidence to the fact that musical notation would not have been an unfamiliar sight for visitors of Greek sanctuaries: to use an example roughly contemporary to Inscription II, we can cite a Hellenistic hymn to Apollo showing, above the first verse, a series of musical signs which have been interpreted alternatively as the songs's basic melody or an instrumental prelude, *SEG* 30, 390 (= *DAGM* 19),[22]

> *margo*
> ‾‾‾ ‾ ‾
> - -]ΕΝΑΖΘ[ϜΛ ᵛ ενδο[- -
> - -]ον ἀείσωμεν
> - -]ἀνθρώποισιν
> - - Ἀπόλλω]νι κλυτοτόξωι
> - - π]ῶς δὲ σ᾽ἀείσω
> - - ἐπιστα]μενως καταλέξαι
> - -].ου ἀγλαὰ τέκνα
> - -]ς ὕμνος ἀοιδῆς
> - -].ονδε σοι ητ[- -
> - -]ουνεκαπ̣[- -
> - -]μβ̣[- -
>
> . . . we shall sing . . . to? humans . . . to? Apollo of the famous bow . . . how shall I sing you . . . expertly listing . . . splendid children . . . hymn of the song . . . to? you . . .

Returning now to our text. The hypothetical readings explored above illustrate how, whether or not the final lines of Inscription I were actually concerned with music, they could have been construed as such based on the partial identification of words like ἀείδειν and ἅπαξ (accordingly, a non-lexical sequence like ΦΑΝΠ could have been interpreted in the same context as musical notation). Recent studies suggest that partial or abbreviated readings of inscribed texts were not uncommon among visitors to ancient sanctuaries, especially when dealing with oddly shaped or inconveniently located monuments, or letterforms of unfamiliar style.[23] Presumably individuals with previous epigraphical experience and sufficient education would have been able to supplement the hard-to-read parts, as long as the 'core' vocabulary and syntax[24] of the inscription were understood. The formulaic character of votive texts facilitated this process significantly. In our case it seems highly probable that the portrayal of Pantalces ἀοιδός in Inscription II originated from a reading strategy of this sort, applied to the final lines of Inscription I. The Epidaurian examples given above confirm that somebody conversant with the vocabulary of liturgical records could have easily seen an affinity between our inscription and those texts. Regrettably I am unable to suggest a restoration compatible with this interpretation which would not leave too many questions unanswered, musically and otherwise.

22 The text printed here is from Wagman 1995, 3 fr. A. On the interpretation of the music: (1) as a melody to be repeated for each verse, West 1992, pp. 279, 287–288, cf. 1986, pp. 39–46; (2) as a prelude to the hymn: Hagel 2010, pp. 280–281.

23 On the reading of inscribed dedications: Day 2010, pp. 26–284 (especially pp. 39–40 on 'partial readings'). On inscriptions, orality, and literacy see the overview in Bodel 2001, pp. 15–19 with the relevant bibliography.

24 Examples in Day 2010, pp. 6–7; 94–98.

2 Inscription 11

2.1 *Epigraphical Overview*

Karapla hill (Pharsala), in the same location as Inscription 1 above [Plate VI: 3]. Hexametric epigram, engraved at eye level (about 2 m. from the ground) on a flat-faced spur of limestone extending from the base of the cliff [Fig. 50]. The text of the inscription, laid out in a single column, is enclosed within a rectangular panel which has been roughly cleared out in the rock [Fig. 51]. Dimensions of the panel: 0,80 × 1,10 m. Average letterheight: 0,02–0,03 m. Average interline: 0,05 m. The lettering, although not incompetently executed, is shallow and shows the same lack of sophistication observed in the preparation of the inscribing surface. The overall impression is that of a non-professional effort very much like Inscription 1; the epigraphical hand, however, is quite different. This engraver does not cut letters as deeply nor does he tilt the horizontal elements of his alphas and deltas. The obliques in his kappas connect with the vertical in middle, not the upper section of the bar as do those by the Inscription 1 engraver. The pi's have verticals of even length. Other dissimilarities include H, Ω for Ē, Ō (contrast Inscription 1, 1 ΠΑΝΤΑΛΚΕΣ; 2 ΑΝΕΘΕΚΕ). Except for some inconsistencies in the notation of Ω (6 ΑΠΟΛΛΟΝΙ: 16 ΑΠΟΛΛΩΝ; 14 ΕΔΟΚ: 19 ΔΩΚΕ, 16 ΔΙΔΩΣΙ), the fully developed use of these and other Ionic letter forms shows that this text was engraved some time after the end of the fifth century.[25] Palaeographical analysis and comparison with other inscriptions from the region (e.g. *IThess* 1, 58; 63; 64; 74; 79; 91) would point to a date anywhere in the fourth century—perhaps even in the first quarter of the third—but it is very difficult to be specific. Based on a conservative assessment of the evidence we could estimate that the engraving of Inscription 11 took place about one hundred years after the original dedication of Pantalces in the Early Classical Period; the possibility of a later date, however, should to be entirely dismissed.

ΘΕΟ̣Σ̣
ΤΥΧ[1–2?]
ΧΑΙΡΕΤΕΤΟΙΠ̣Ι̣ΡΟΣΙΟΝ̲ΤΕ̲ΣΑΠΑΣΘΗΛΥΣΤΕ̣ΚΑΙΑΡΣΗΝ
ΑΝΔΡΕΣ ν ΤΕΗΔΕΓΥ̣ΝΑΙΚΕ̣ΟΜΩ̣Σ̣ΠΑΙΔΕΣΚΟΡΑΙΤΕ
ΧΩΡΟΝΔΕΙΣΙΕΡΟΝ̣Ν̣ΥΜΦΑΙΣΚΑΙΠ̣ΑΝΙΚΑΙΕΡΜΗΙ
ΑΠΟΛΛΟΝΙΑΝΑΚΤΙΗΡΑΚΛΕΙΚ̣ΑΙΕΤΑΙΡΑΙΣ *vac.*
Χ̣ΙΡΩΝΟΣΤ̣ΑΝΤ̣ΡΟΝΚΑΙΑΣΚΛΑΠΙΟΥΗΔΥΤΙ̣Ε̣Ι̣ΑΣ νν
ΤΟΥΤΩΝΕΣΤΙΤ[..]Ω[.]ΑΠΑΝΙΑΡΩΤΑΤΕΝΑΥΤΩΙ
ΕΜΦΥΤΑΚΑΙΠΠΙΝΑΚΕ̣Σ̣ΚΑΙΑΓΑΛΜΑΤΑΔΩΡΑΤΕΠΟΛΛ[.]
ΑΝ̣Δ̣Ρ̣ΑΔΕΠΟΙΗΕΣΑΤΑΑ̣Γ̣ΑΘΟΝΠΑΝΤΑΛΚΕΑΝΥΜΦΑΙ
ΤΩΝΔΕΠΙΒΑΙΝΕΜΕΝΑΙΧΩΡΩ̣ΝΚΑΙΕ̣Π̣Ι̣ΣΣΚΟΠΟΝΕΙΝΑΙ
ΟΣΠΕΡΤΑΥΤΕΦΥΤΕΥΣΕΚΑΙΕΞΕΠΟ̣Ν̣Η̣ΣΑΤΟΧΕΡΣΣΙΝ
ΑΝΤΙΔΟΣΑΝΔ̣Α̣ΥΤΩΙΒΙΟΝ̣ΑΦΘΟΝΟΝΗ̣Μ̣ΑΤΑΠΑΝΤΑν
ΗΡΑΚΛ̣ΕΗΣΜΕΝΕΔΟΚΙΣΧ̣Υ̣ΝΑΡΕΤΗΝΤΕΚΡΑΤΟΣΤΕ νν
ΩΙΠΕΡΤΟΥΣΔΕΛΥΘΟΥ̣Σ̣ΤΥΠΤΩΝΕΠΟΗΣΑΝΑΒΑΙΝΕΙΝ
ΑΠΟΛΛΩΝΔΕΔΙΔΩΣΙΚΑΙΥΙΟΣΤΟΥΔΕΚΑΙΕΡΜΗΣ
ΑΙΩΝΕΙΣΤΟΝΑΠΑΝΤΑΥΤΙΕΙΑΝΚΑΙΒΙΟΝΕΣΘΛΟΝ
ΠΑΝΔΕΓΕΛΩΤΑΚΑΙΕΥΦΡΟΣΥΝΗΝΥΒΡΙΝΤΕΔΙΚΑΙΑΝ
ΧΙΡΩΝΔΑΥΤΩΙΔΩΚΕΣΟΦΟΝΤΗ̣Μ̣Ε̣Ν̣[2–3]ΚΑΙΑΟΙΔΟΝ
ΑΛΛΑΤΥΧΑΙΣΑΓΑΘΑΙΣΑΝΑΒΑΙΝΕ[..]ΘΥΕΤΕΠΑΝΕΣ
ΕΥΧΕΣΘΕΕΥΦΡΑΙΝΕΣΘΕΚΑΚΩΝΔΕΕΠΙ̣Λ̣ΗΣΙ̣Σ̣ΑΠΑΝ
ΕΝΘΑ̣Δ̣ΕΕΝΕ̣ΣΤΑΓ̣ΑΘΩΝΔΕ[4–5]ΠΟΛΕΜΟΙΟΤΕΝΙ̣
ΚΗ

25 On the tardy appearance of Ω in the Thessalian epigraphical record: Jeffery 1990, pp. 96–99. At Pharsalus the dialect form ΟΥ continues to be attested well into the third century, e.g. *IThess* 1, 50, line 1 ἔδουκε; line 2 ἐδούκαεμ.

2 ΤΥΧ[1–2?]: the first three letters of this word are clearly legible below ΘΕO̱Σ, confirming Peek's reading against Decourt's suspicions of "an aberrant addition" (commentary to *IThess* I 73, p. 91). As for the markings which Peek read as an *upsilon*, they are more likely to be the product of nature than a chisel (they are thinner and shallower than real lettergrooves). To the left of *chi* are confused traces of what could be an *alpha* and a *nu.*

3 I̱I̱PΟΣΙΟ<u>ΝΤΕ</u>Σ: after ΧΑΙΡΕΤΕΤΟΙ, all editors read a *pi* followed by a letter of uncertain identification (*alpha*: Giannopoulos, Decourt; *rho*: Peek). Here the stone forms a natural indentation which Giannopoulos believed to be a chip in the inscribed surface (1919 p. 51. Inside this recessed area Peek was able to read the letter sequence ΟΣΙΟΝΤΕΣ, of which the fifth, sixth, and seventh letters are no longer legible today. ΑΠΑΣ: Gannopolous, followed by Decourt, only reads the second *alpha*; but as Peek saw, all four letters are clearly legible on the stone.

8 ΕΣΤΙ: *epsilon* and *sigma* are faint on the squeeze but clearly legible in the photograph. Τ[..]: after the *tau* is a letter, illegible in both the photograph and the squeeze, which Giannopulos and Peek read as an *omikron.* Hondius and Decourt prefer instead to restore [Α]. Next are the remains of two oblique strokes which could belong to a *delta* (Giannopoulos; Decourt, with dot) or a *chi* (Peek).

9 ΠΟΛΛ[.]: the last letter of the line is no longer legible. Alone among the editors of this text, Peek prints Giannopoulos' restoration πολλ[ά without bracketing the *alpha.*

10: All dotted letters in this line are very faint in both the photograph and the squeeze.

11: Eroded by water, the *epsilon*, *pi* and i*ota* of E̱I̱I̱ΣΣΚΟΠΟΝ are almost illegible in the squeeze but can be discerned clearly enough in the photograph.

12 ΕΞΕΠΟΝ̣ΗΣΑΤΟ: the first *epsilon*, dotted by Giannopoulos and other editors, is not visible on the photograph but can be read in the squeeze. As with the letters directly above and below them, the *nu* and the *eta* are now almost obliterated by erosion.

13 Η̣ΜΑΤΑ: *eta* and *mu* are also severely damaged by water; see comments to lines 10–12 above.

14: Letters 1–8 (ΗΡΑΚΛ̣ΕΗΣ) and 18–26 (Χ̣ΥΝΑΡΕΤΗΝ) of this line are not visible in the photograph.

15 ΛΥΘΟΥΣ̣: the *sigma*, legible in the photograph, is now damaged and does not show up in the squeeze The following *tau* is also very faint.

16 ΤΟΥΔΕ: the *delta* is partly obscured by a small dent in the stone: dotted by Giannopoulos, it is still readable in the squeeze (where one can clearly see the right oblique connecting with the bottom horizontal); only confused traces show in the photograph.

17: The *epsilon* and *nu* of ΥΓΙΕΙΑΝ are very faint in the photograph.

18: The *rho*, *omikron*, and last *nu* of ΕΥΦΡΟΣΥΝΗΝ, as well as the *upsilon* and *beta* of ΥΒΡΙΝ, are not legible in the photograph.

19 ΤΗΜ̣ΕΝ̣[2–3]: after *tau* Giannopoulos reads an *epsilon* (followed by Decourt, who dots both letters). As Peek saw, however, the traces in the squeeze (two verticals joined by a middle horizontal) are clearly those of an *eta*. The last discernible lettertraces before the lacuna belong to a *nu* (a vertical connecting on top to a downpointing oblique; the upper end of the second vertical is also visible above the break).

21 ΔΕ: followed by all later editors except Peek, Giannopoulos does not read the *epsilon* (although the letter can be distinguished without any difficulty in the *AE* 1919 plate). ΕΠΙ̣Λ̣ΗΣΙ̣Σ̣: this word is clearly discernible on the squeeze, confirming Peek's reading against Giannopoulos' palaeographically and lexically implausible ἔξαρσις. Carved on a particularly uneven area of the rock, the *epsilon* is slightly distorted but still readable, as is the following *pi. Iota* and *lambda* survive respectively in their bottom and top portions; *eta* is complete. The first *sigma* and second *iota*, although faint, are equally discernible. Only the final *sigma* is a barely recognizable smudge.

22 [4–5]: between ΔΕ and ΠΟΛΕΜΟΙΟ is a lettersequence disfigured by the weathering of the rock surface. On the squeeze after a gap of two letters it is possible to see traces of a rounded sign followed by some faint vertical marks. Peek reads: [..]PH, but the rounded letter visible after the lacuna is too large to be the loop of a *rho*. More appropriately Giannopoulos prints an *omikron.* At the end of the line survive the upper left part of a *nu*—two obliques converging at the top, which Giannopoulos assigns to a *lambda*—and possibly an *iota.* Peek prints: N[I]; all other editors follow Giannopoulos.

23 ΚΗ: as Peek saw, these letters are clearly visible below ΝΙ̣ in the preceding line. The remaining space before and after ΚΗ is uninscribed.

2.2 *Text and Translation*

Θεός
τύχ[α].
Χαίρετε τοὶ προσιόντες, ἅπας θῆλύς τε καὶ ἄρσην,
ἄνδρες τε ἠδὲ γυναῖκες ὁμῶς παῖδές τε κόραι τε,
χῶρον δ᾽ εἰς ἱερὸν Νύμφαις καὶ Πανὶ καὶ Ἑρμῆι,
Ἀπόλλ⟨ω⟩νι ἄνακτι, ⟨καὶ⟩ Ἡρακλεῖ καὶ ἑταίραις,
Χίρωνος τ᾽ ἄντρον καὶ Ἀσκλαπιοῦ ἠδ᾽ Ὑγιείας·
τούτων ἐστὶ τ[ὸ δ]ῶ[μα] ἅπαν ἰαρωτά τ᾽ ἐν αὐτῶι,
ἔμφυτα καὶ πίνακες καὶ ἀγάλματα δῶρά τε πολλ[ά]·
ἄνδρα δ᾽ ἐποιήσα⟨ν⟩τ᾽{α} ἀγαθὸν Παντάλκεα Νύμφαι
τῶνδ᾽ ἐπιβαινέμεναι χώρων καὶ ἐπίσσκοπον εἶναι,
ὅσπερ ταῦτ᾽ ἐφύτευσε καὶ ἐξεπονήσατο χερσσίν,
ἀντίδοσαν δ᾽ αὐτῶι βίον ἄφθονον ἤματα πάντα·
Ἡρακλέης μὲν ἔδ⟨ω⟩κ᾽ ἰσχὺν ἀρετήν τε κράτος τε,
ὥιπερ τούσδε λίθους τύπτων ἐπόησ᾽ ἀναβαίνειν,
Ἀπόλλων δὲ δίδωσι καὶ υἱὸς τοῦδε καὶ Ἑρμῆς
αἰῶν᾽ εἰς τὸν ἅπαντα ὑγίειαν καὶ βίον ἐσθλόν,
Πὰν δὲ γέλωτα καὶ εὐφροσύνην ὕβριν τε δικαίαν,
Χίρων δ᾽ αὐτῶι δῶκε σοφόν τ᾽ ἔμεν[αι] καὶ ἀοιδόν.
ἀλλὰ τύχαις ἀγαθαῖς ἀναβαίνετ[ε], θύετε πάν⟨τ⟩ες
εὔχεσθε, εὐφραίνεσθε· κακῶν ἐπίλησις ἁπάν⟨των⟩
ἐνθάδ᾽ ἔνεστ᾽, ἀγαθῶν δὲ [δόσις] πολέμοιο τε νίκη.

God.
Good fortune.
Greetings, you who are coming this way, every female and male, men and women as well as boys and girls, to (this) place sacred to the Nymphs, Pan, and Hermes, to Lord Apollo, Heracles, and the fellow deities, (this) cave of Chiron, Asclepius, and Hygieia: theirs are the entire construction and the sacred things inside, the plantings, the tablets, statues, and the many gifts. The Nymphs who tread these lands endowed Pantalces with a noble heart and made him their overseer: he is the one who planted this place and toiled over it with his hands; and they rewarded him in return with bountiful living through all of his days. Heracles gave him strength of will, heart, and body, with which he pounded these rocks and turned them into a way up; Apollo, his son, and Hermes gave him health and prosperity for his entire life; Pan laughter, merryment and just excess; Chiron gave him knowledge and musical skill. But go on up, with good fortune: let everyone be free to sacrifice, pray, and make merry. For here it is possible to forget all bad things, receive good things, and overcome conflict.

2 τύ⟨χα⟩ Peek: non legunt ceteri. **3** προσιόντες ἅπας Peek: πα[ριόντες] ἅπας Giannopoulos Comparetti, πᾳ[ριόντες, ἅ]π̣[α]ς Decourt. 5 εἰς Hondius: εἶς Giannopoulos. **6** Ἀπόλλ⟨ω⟩νι correxit Peek: Ἀπόλλονι Giannopoulos Decourt. ⟨καὶ⟩ ante Ἡρακλεῖ Giannopoulos metri causa, non scribit Decourt. ἑταίραις Peek: ἑταίροις Giannopoulos. 7 τ᾽ ἄντρον Croenert apud Hondius: τἄντρον Giannopoulos Comparetti. 8 τ[ὸ δ]ῶ[μα] ἅπαν supplevi: τόδ᾽ὦνα Πάν Giannopoulos, τ(ά)δ᾽ὦνα Πάν Hondius Comparetti, τὸ χω⟨ρίον⟩ ἅπαν Maas apud Peek. ἰαρωτά τ᾽ ἐν Giannopoulos Comparetti: ἰαρώτατ᾽ ἐν Hondius Decourt. 9 πολλ[ά] Giannopoulos. 10 ἐποιήσα⟨ν⟩τ᾽{α} Giannopoulos: ἐποιήσα⟨ν⟩τά Decourt. 14 ἔδ⟨ω⟩κ᾽ correxit Peek: ἔδοκ᾽ Giannopoulos Decourt. 15 ἀναβαίνε[ιν] Decourt. 16 τοῦ[δ]ε Giannopoulos. 19 τ᾽ἔμεν[αι] Giannopoulos, τ᾽ἦμεν Peek. 20 ἀναβαίνε[τε] Giannopoulos, ἀναβαίνετ[ε] Decourt. Πανί Giannopoulos, πάν⟨τ⟩ες Peek, Πανὶ Decourt. 21 δ[....]σις Decourt: δ᾽ἔξαρσις Giannopoulos Comparetti, δ᾽ἐπίλησις Peek. ἀπάντων Giannopoulos. 22 δὲ [δόσις] supplevi: δὲ [λάχ]ο[ς] Giannopoulos, [λάχος] Decourt, δὲ [..]ρη (= δὲ κ̣ό̣ρη vel φορή vel χα̣ρή) Peek. πολέμοιό τε λ[ᾶξις] Giannopoulos Comparetti, λ[ῆξις] Hiller, [τε λῆξις] dubitanter Decourt, ν[ί]κη Peek.

2.3 *Metrical and Stylistic Conspectus*

Unlike other verse inscriptions from similar archaeological contexts, e.g. the sacred foundations of Archedamus or Artemidorus of Perge,[26] the inscribed poetry from the Karapla cave shows a remarkably good command of metre. The technique is more reminescent of Homeric than Hellenistic versification,[27] pointing to a date in the late Classical Period; this evidence, on the other hand, seems inconsistent with the extended epigrammatic length, which would rather place the inscription in late Hellenistic or even Roman times (see section 2.4 below). As it will be shown further on in the commentary, the Homeric resonances noted in the versification are part of a more extensive, deliberate epicizing scheme traceable throughout the entire text.

– ⏑⏑ – ⏑⏑ – ⏑ | ⏑ – – – ⏑⏑ – –
– – – ⏑⏑ – ⏑ | ⏑ – – – ⏑⏑ – ⏑
– – – ⏑⏑ – | – – – – ⏑⏑ – –
– – – ⏑⏑ – ⏑ | ⏑ – – – ⏑⏑ – –
– – – – | – ⏑⏑ – ⏑⏑ – –
– – – ⏑⏑ – ⏑ | ⏑ – – – ⏑⏑ – –
– ⏑⏑ – ⏑⏑ – | ⏑⏑ – ⏑⏑ – ⏑⏑ – ⏑
– ⏑⏑ – – | ⏑⏑ – – – ⏑⏑ – –
– ⏑⏑ – ⏑⏑ – | – ⏑⏑ – ⏑⏑ – –
– – – ⏑⏑ – ⏑ | ⏑ – – – ⏑⏑ – ⏑
– ⏑⏑ – – | ⏑⏑ – – – ⏑⏑ – ⏑
– ⏑⏑ – ⏑⏑ – | – ⏑⏑ – ⏑⏑ – ⏑
– – – ⏑⏑ – ⏑ | ⏑ – – – ⏑⏑ – –
– – – ⏑⏑ – ⏑ | ⏑ – – – ⏑⏑ – ⏑
– ⏑⏑ – ⏑⏑ – ⏑⏑ – | – ⏑⏑ – ⏑
– – – – ⏑ | ⏑ – – – ⏑⏑ – ⏑
– ⏑⏑ – ⏑⏑ – | ⏑⏑ – ⏑⏑ – ⏑⏑ – ⏑
– – – – ⏑ | ⏑ – – – ⏑⏑ – –
– ⏑⏑ – ⏑⏑ – | ⏑⏑ – ⏑⏑ – ⏑⏑ – –

Colometry

Observed throughout, except at the end: πολέμοιό τε νί-|κη.

Caesura

Penthemimeral:

(1) masculine (–|⏑⏑): 9 πίνακες | καὶ. 10 ἐποιήσα⟨ν⟩τ' | {α} ἀγαθὸν. 13 αὐτῶι | βίον. 20 ἀγαθαῖς | ἀναβαίνετ[ε]. 22 ἀγαθῶν | δὲ.

(1b) masculine, before contracted biceps (–|–): 5 ἱερὸν | Νύμφαις. 7 ἄντρον | καὶ. 11 ἐπιβαινέμεναι | χώρων. 14 ἔδ⟨ω⟩κ' | ἰσχὺν. 15 λίθους | τύπτων.

(2) feminine (–⏑|⏑): 3 προσιόντες | ἅπας. 4 γυναῖκες | ὁμῶς. 6 ἄνακτι, | ⟨καὶ⟩. 8 δ]ῶ[μα] | ἅπαν. 12 ἐφύτευσε | καὶ. 16 δίδωσι | καὶ. 17 ἅπαντα | ὑγίειαν. 19 δῶκε | σοφόν. 21 εὐφραίνεσθε | κακῶν.

Hephthemimeral:

18 εὐφροσύνην | ὕβριν.

Bucolic:

7 Ἀσκλαπιοῦ | ἠδ'. 9 ἀγάλματα | δῶρα. 13 ἄφθονον | ἤματα. 20 ἀναβαίνε[τε], | θύετε.

Bridge Violations

Naeke's Law (avoidance of word-break after contracted fourth biceps): 5 Νύμφαις καὶ. 17 ὑγίειαν.

Hermann's Bridge (avoidance of word-break within the fourth biceps): 11 καὶ ἐπίσσκοπον.

Meyer's Second Law (avoidance of words shaped |⏑–| before caesura): 15 λίθους. Cf. 14 ἔδ⟨ω⟩κ'.

Hiatus

3 καὶ ἄρσην. 5 καὶ Ἑρμῆι. 6 (a) Ἀπόλλ⟨ω⟩νι ἄνακτι, (b) ⟨καὶ⟩ Ἡρακλεῖ, (c) καὶ ἑταίραις. 7 Ἀσκλαπιοῦ ἠδ'. 8 δ]ῶ[μα] ἅπαν. 9 καὶ ἀγάλματα. 11 καὶ ἐπίσσκοπον. 12 καὶ ἐξεπονήσατο. 16 (a) καὶ υἱὸς, (b) καὶ Ἑρμῆς. 18 καὶ εὐφροσύνην. 19 καὶ ἀοιδόν.

Elision

5 δ' εἰς. 7 (a) τ' ἄντρον, (b) ἠδ' Ὑγιείας. 8 τ' ἐν. 10 (a, b) δ' ἐποιήσα⟨ν⟩τ' {α} ἀγαθὸν. 11 τῶνδ' ἐπιβαινέμεναι. 12 ταῦτ' ἐφύτευσε. 13 δ' αὐτῶι. 14 ἔδ⟨ω⟩κ' ἰσχὺν. 15 ἐπόησ' ἀναβαίνειν. 17 αἰῶν' εἰς. 19 (a) δ' αὐτῶι, (b) τ' ἔμεν[αι]. 21 δ'ἐπίλησις. 22 (a, b) ἐνθάδ' ἔνεστ' ἀγαθῶν.

26 A few inscriptions from the cave of Archedamus at Vari appear to contain a rudimentary mixture of prose and verse; see Schörner and Goette 2004, pp. 42–44, no. 1 (*IG* I^3, 980); 44–46, no. 3 (*IG* I^3, 982); 51–54, no. 8 (*IG* I^3, 977). Artemidorus' own collection of inscribed poetry from Thera (*IG* XII 3, 421–422; *IG* XII 3 Suppl. 1333–1350), although more extensive, is hardly better in terms of quality: "A striking example of poor yet plentiful, epigraphic verse, from the mid-third century BC, is the series of poems inscribed at the sanctuary of Artemidorus of Perge on Thera [...]. It is hard to imagine that Artemidorus paid a professional to compose these. If he did, he was badly swindled" (Bing and Bruss 2007, p. 4, note 19; cf. van Straten 1993, p. 261. I did not have access to P. Bing's paper "Precinct of Epigrams: the Sanctuary of Artemidoros of Perge", presented at the 142nd meeting of the American Philological Association in S. Antonio, Texas, January 2011). On Artemidorus and his sacred complex hewn into the living rock of Thera island see Hiller von Gaertringen 1899, pp. 166, 172, 198–199; Palagia 1992, pp. 171–177; van Straten 1993, pp. 260–261.

27 Cf. Peek 1938, p. 26. On the hexameter of inscribed Hellenistic epigrams see the extensive survey by Fantuzzi and Sens 2006.

Synizesis
4 τε ἠδὲ. 7 καὶ Ἀσκλαπιοῦ. 17 ἅπαντα ὑγίειαν. 21 εὔχεσθε, εὐφραίνεσθε.

Enjambement
10–11, 21–22.

2.4 *Commentary*

Formerly labelled as a hymn on the basis of an erroneous reading of line 8 (thought to be an address to Pan, ὦνα Πάν; vd. apparatus p. 68 above), the hexametric poem contained in Inscription II shows stylistic and thematic features characteristic of the inscriptional epigram. Its length would assign it to the category of the so-called *epigramma longum,* an 'amplified' epigrammatic format occasionally attested in inscriptions from the late Hellenistic Period onwards.[28] In terms of style, the use of short sentences and simple paratactic structures, combined with the absence of elaborate diction, give the poetry a flavor reminescent of certain *carmina popularia*.[29] Peek, whose study of 1938 still remains the most detailed stylistic assessment of Inscription II, effectively captures this 'feeling' in the following statement:

> If the whole does not turn out to be monotonous, but there is a prevailing impression of movement and variety, this is accomplished by the structure of the individual components [of the poem], the many two-and multi-part constructions, sequences, and parataxes. In twenty lines we find only one participle. Besides the naïvete of the matter-of-fact exposition, it is this airiness of the short phrases which gives the poem its unique uncultivated feel (*Unbeholfenheit*), one may say idyllic charm (p. 25).

Yet it might be unwise to overstate the 'naïve' character of the composition.[30] Not unlike the nympholepts of old, Peek was so seduced by the combination of literary and real life idyll encountered at the Karapla shrine that in order to make Pantalces the author of this supposedly rustic poetry he was ready to compress the wide chronological gap—one hundred years or so—which separates Inscription I from Inscription II: a true epigraphical *adynaton* that would hardly stand scrutiny today. In fact, as J.C. Decourt perceptively observed, the Karapla epigram is the product of careful and painstaking work (*"un poème très travaillé"*, commentary to *IThess* I, 73, p. 91). In the same vein, P. Bonnechere has judged this text to be "full of subtleties and *souplesse*" (2001, p. 36).

The beginning and close of the epigram are conceived in the form of a direct address to the reader: lines 3–4 welcome incoming visitors, 20–22 invite them to complete their visit by taking the stairs up to the cave. Within this frame the main body of the poem unfolds with the tale of the sanctuary and its founder, articulated in two parts: lines 5–9 describe the site and the deities worshipped in it; 10–19 explain how the same deities inspired Pantalces to found and guard the sanctuary and what rewards they gave him in return. Transitions from one thematic section to the other are regularly marked by δέ (5, 10, 13) except at the close, where the return to the direct address is indicated by the more emphatic ἀλλά (20). The metrical text is preceded by a two-line heading with expressions of good wish (1–2).

Heading (lines 1–2)

1 Θεός

'God' or its plural, 'gods', is a formulaic word which appears in the headings of decrees and other official documents, alone or—as always in Thessaly—in combination with expressions of good wish such as τύχη ἀγαθή, or simply τύχη, 'good fortune' (see commentary to line 2 below). It is generally referred to as the 'invocation' (e.g. Rhodes and Osborne in *GHI*, p. xix) but its meaning is uncertain: scholars have variously interpreted it as a consecration formula (Larfeld 1902, p. 591, who somewhat inconsistently also calls it an 'appeal for good fortune'; Guarducci 1967–1978, II, p. 43), or an indication that religious rites have taken place in connection with the actions described in the inscription (Woodhead 1981, p. 39; cf. Rhodes and Osborne in *GHI*, p. xix; on the prayers recited at the opening of council and assembly meetings in Athens, see e.g. Dem. 19, 70; Ar. *Thesm.* 331 ff.). More convincingly R. Pounder has argued for an apotropaic function of the word (1984, pp. 243–250). According to Pounder, this type

28 The term *epigramma longum*, borrowed from Martial (I, 110; II, 77; VI, 65), is used by scholars today to designate epigrams of fifteen verses or more; see Szelest 1980, pp. 99–108 and the papers dedicated to this epigrammatic form in Morelli (ed.) 2008, especially Garulli's study on inscriptional epitaphs, ibid. II, pp. 623–662.

29 See e.g. *PMG* 848–849; 851–852; 854–856; 869.

30 References to the naïvete of the Karapla epigram are found throughout the early scholarship on this text: see e.g. Powell and Barber 1929, pp. 55–56, "The guardian, happily named Pantalces, describes the shrine in a simple and naïve way, with genial self-satisfaction . . . He was a merry good soul, with a good conceit of himself"; Buckler and Buckler 1944, p. 162, "A fourth-century inscription recently found in Thessaly contains a charming and naïve poem by Pantalces, constructor and dedicator of a local shrine to various deities".

of heading is not linked in meaning with the text which it precedes, but is concerned with the inscription as a monument. Specifically, the expression θεός/θεοί places the stone on which it is inscribed under the protection of the gods against theft, removal, or other disturbance (theft: Guarducci 1967–1978, III, p. 341; removal: ibid. p. 363). In its earliest and fuller form it may have included imprecatory content, cf. θιοσόλοιον = θιὸς ὅλοι ὄν? in the wall inscription of the laws from the temple of Apollo Delphinius at Dreros, Buck 1955, p. 313, no. 116 (= *BCH* 61, 1937, pp. 333–348: for the alternative restoration θιὸς ὁ λωΐος, i.e. θεός ἀγαθός, see Ehrenberg 1943, p. 15, after Guarducci 1939). Pounder traces the roots of this epigraphic practice to the Near East, citing the example of Babylonian *kudurru* stones (a type of boundary marker, carved with apotropaic curses and images of protecting gods, which had the function of placing land-grant property under divine protection; King 1912, introduction, p. x).

The formula θεός/θεοί has been discussed mostly in the context of government records, namely laws and decrees, but its occurrence above the text of an epigram seems to challenge the commonly held assumption that its use was restricted to that type of inscription. Further appearances of this expression (with or without any additional text) on objects of so disparate a nature as vases, metal tablets, bricks, and rooftiles seem to confirm that θεός/θεοί must have been, at least originally, a private formula with a wide number of applications. P. Traywick, who offers an extensive review of this material in his 1968 dissertation on the inscriptional use of θεοί and ἀγαθὴ τύχη, compares the unspecific nature of this expression to that of libation rituals:

> The heading θεοί, which seems to have been in order wherever there was writing, and elsewhere, may be compared with the practice of pouring libations, in order wherever there was drinking, and on many other occasions. This was a very unspecific effort on the part of men to remain in an inoffensive relationship with the gods (p. 111)

There appear to be no other examples for the placement of θεός/θεοί over a poetic text. A possible parallel is the well-known hydria from Vari showing Sappho in the act of reading a scroll (Athens, National Museum 1260: in the top part of the scroll the word ΘΕΟΙ is legible above a passage of uncertain restoration but inequivocably metrical nature. See Edmonds 1922, pp. 1–14; Traywick 1968, pp. 87–90). Otherwise worth noting is the use of the formula in documents related to the spheres of healing and prophecy—two domains commonly associated with caves: in the first category we have a single appearance in *IG* IV^2 1, 121, the only one of the four extant Ἰάματα from Epidaurus to show a complete heading (lines 1–2, Θεός. ᵛ Τύχα [ἀγ]αθά. | [Ἰά]ματα τοῦ Ἀπόλλωνος καὶ τοῦ Ἀσκλαπιοῦ). In the second category the expression is found, multiple times and in a large number of variants, in the corpus of the oracular tablets from Dodona, cf. Lhôte 2006, p. 343.

2 τύχ[α]

In its full or abbreviated form, the expression of good wish τύχη (ἀγαθή) is also a common element of decree or law headings; for an example specifically related to the cult of the Nymphs, see e.g. a sacred law from Marathon of the first century BCE, *SEG* 36, 267 = *NGSL* 4, ἀγαθῇ τύχῃ· ἐπὶ Θεο|φήμου ἄρχοντος· ᵛᵛᵛ | Πυθαγόρας καὶ Σωσι|κράτης καὶ Λύσανδρος | οἱ συνέφηβοι Πανὶ καὶ | Νύμφαις ἀνέθηκαν. <A>|ἀπαγορεύει ὁ θεός· μὴ | [ε]ἰσφέρειν χρωμάτιν[ον] | [μ]ηδὲ βαπτὸν μηδὲ Λ..| [—5–6—]ΕΙΣΠ[—6–7—]). Purpose and meaning are the same as those of the Latin expression *quod felix faustumque sit* (QFFQS). Unlike θεός/θεοί, the formula τύχη (ἀγαθή) and its variations are widely attested outside the sphere of official documents. For their appearance above poetic texts, see especially a stele at the Museumslandschaft Hessen Kassel containing the paean to Hygieia by Ariphron of Sicyon and other hymns, inv. SK 61 = *IG* II^2, 4533.

Peek's restoration τύχ[α] in this line is likely but not definitive, since in Thessalian documents the spelling in –η is no less frequent than the one in –ᾱ (at Pharsalus: *IThess* I, 51; multiple occurrences at Gonnoi, see *Gonnoi* II, pass.). Equally uncertain is the restoration of the case: besides the nominative, τύχη (ἀγαθή)/τύχα (ἀγαθά) is also commonly attested in the dative and accusative—the latter being especially popular in the Doric speaking areas of Central Greece (out of a total of 230 occurrences, 210 show the spelling in α).

On the cult of personified Good Fortune in Thessaly see Heinz 1998, pp. 320–323, nos. 266?, 268, 270, and 278, with discussion at pp. 79–80.

Text

I Lines 3–4: *Welcome Address*

According to epigrammatic custom, Inscription II 'speaks' to its readers in the manner of a real life encounter. Opinions vary as to the identity of the speaking voice: most scholars like to believe that the speaker is Pantalces himself, but the chronological discrepancy between Inscription II and Inscription I makes this a very unlikely possibility. Alternatively Ph. Borgeaud has suggested that these verses could be the utterance of a god, the nameless θεός of the heading (1995, p. 295; see commentary to

lines 1–2 above). A specific identification is not needed for the poetry to be effective. The ancients were used to being addressed by the disembodied voices of hundreds of epigrams speaking from tombstones, votives, or other objects (see e.g. Tueller 2008, especially pp. 150–154; Livingstone and Nisbet 2010, pp. 22–30). In very general terms we could say that the voice in Inscription II is that of a tour guide—a lapidary equivalent of those live cicerones who sometimes assisted visitors of ancient shrines with information on local history and tradition (e.g. the ἐξηγήται of Olympia, attested in *IvO* 64, lines 19–20, and thirty other inscriptions; see also Jones 2001, pp. 33–39 for a discussion of ancient guides in periegetic literature): stylistically, the deployment of catalog verse structures throughout the whole poem, starting from the very first lines, seems coherent with the didactic character of such a persona. This 'guide' we shall now follow as it extends its genial welcome to the men, women, and children who came to worship on the Karapla hill.

3 χαίρετε τοὶ προσιόντες

A variation on the greeting χαίρετε οἱ παριόντες found in funerary epigrams (*GVI* 1209, 1212; cf. 1216; 1210). The choice of προσ- (movement to) over παρ- (movement by) is due to the fact that the expected reader, here, is not the occasional passerby of grave inscriptions (Tueller 2008, especially pp. 14–15, 32–35, 36–42, 44–46, 65–94), but someone who is deliberately moving towards the sanctuary with the purpose of visiting it (προσιόντες . . . χῶρον δ' εἰς ἱερὸν, see discussion below). This is also apparent from the end of the poem, where the visitors are encouraged to resume their progress, interrupted in order to read the inscription (lines 20–21 below, ἀλλὰ . . . ἀναβαίνε[τε], θύετε, εὔχεσθε εὐφραίνεσθε). On this use of πρόσειμι see the dedication of another sacred installation to the Nymphs from the Pontus Euxinus, *Studia Pontica* III, 96, ταῖς μεγάλαις θε-|αῖς Νύμφαις, Λ. Ἰ(ούλιος) | Κορνηλιανὸς | Κέλερ ἐποίει. | οἱ προσιόν-|τες τούτωι | τῷ τόπωι | ἁγνῶς | πρόσιτε. On the difference with παρ-prefixed motion verbs: Diog. fr. 30 III, 5–14 Smith, ἓν] | μόνον δ' ἀξιῶ, [ὡς καὶ ἔ]-|νανχος, ὑμᾶς μ[ὴ τῶν πα]-|ροδευόντων τ[ρόπον], | μηδ' ἄν τι ἀκηδ[είας] | καὶ ἄλυος [ᾖ, ἐφισ]-|τάναι τοῖς γεγρ[αμμέ]-|νοις, ποικίλως [ἐπ' αὐ]-|τῶν ἕκαστον ἐ[πιστρέ]-|φοντας καὶ πα[ριέν|τας πάντα ἀναγινώσκειν]. The formula χαίρετε τοὶ προσιόντες is designed to fill the first half of the hexameter (–⏑⏑ –⏑⏑ –⏑); grammatically, however, προσιόντες reaches across the boundaries of the formulaic construct to form a broader syntagma with χῶρον δ' εἰς ἱερὸν in line 5 and ἄντρον in line 7 (cf. οἱ προσιόντες τούτωι τῷ τόπωι in the aforementioned inscription from the Pontus, lines 5–7). τοί for οἱ, with a slight demonstrative value ('you there') can be interpreted as *sermo homericus*, appropriate to the epicizing style of epigrammatic poetry (cf. the Homeric genitive πολέμοιο in line 22 below); on the other hand, τό, τά are also the regular plural forms of the definite article in the Doric dialect (cf. Ἀσκλαπιοῦ in line 7 below). As the editors of *SEG* 1 rightly observe, we have an *"exordium doricum in hymno ceteroquin epico"*.

3–4 ἅπας θῆλύς τε καὶ ἄρσην,| ἄνδρες τε ἠδὲ γυναῖκες ὁμῶς παῖδές τε κόραι τε

The inscription "welcomes all the world with a comprehensive greeting", Powell and Barber 1929, p. 56. Cf. χαίρετε πάντες, ὅσοι παροδεύετε in a funerary epigram from Scythopolis, Palestine (*QDAP* 8, 1938, 59 = *GVI* 1221). In our text, the all-inclusive character of the initial address is expressed through a three-step progression from general to specific, articulated in two interlacing series of gender and age opposites (*Male-Men-Boys: Female-Women-Girls*, and *Men-Women: Boys-Girls*). The series of gender opposites stretches across the first two lines of the poem with a light sense-enjambement (*Male: Female, // Men: Women, Boys: Girls*); by contrast, age opposites are neatly contained within one line, in two symmetrical couples facing one other from either end of the caesura (*Men: Women / Boys: Girls*). In all couples of gender opposites the male element precedes the female, except for the first couple of the series, ἅπας θῆλύς τε καὶ ἄρσην, where the order is reversed for the sake of chiasmus (θῆλύς / ἄρσην : ἄνδρες / γυναῖκες = ABBA; see Peek 1938, p. 23) as well as rhyme (ἅπας θῆλύς). A rhyming scheme in *–s* can be traced throughout the entire passage (προσιόντες, ἅπας θῆλύς, ἄνδρες, γυναῖκες, ὁμῶς, παῖδές; see also the occurrence of the sibilant in mid-word in ἄρσην), with the only exception of the first and last words, χαίρετε and κόραι τε, which echo one other at the beginning and at the end of the section in a ring composition frame.

Rhetorical effects aside, this complex diversification by gender and age may be a reflection of the actual sociodemographics of the cult. The Nymphs oversaw various aspects of both male and female life from childhood to adult age; as a consequence, their veneration was spread across all categories of the Greek population. Representations of Nymph worship in votive art confirm indeed that these goddesses enjoyed the devotion of the social groups mentioned in our text. The use of juxtaposed gender opposites gives a 'legal' ring to these lines: for the pair ἄρσην/θῆλυς, see especially a sacred law from Thasos of the early 5th century BCE, *IG* XII 8, 358, Νύμφηισιν κἀπόλλωνι Νυμφηγέτηι θῆλυ καὶ ἄρσ-|εν ἄμ βόληι προσέρδεν· ὃϊν οὐ θέμις | οὐδὲ χοῖρον. | οὐ παιωνίζεται. | Χάρισιν αἶγα οὐ θέμις οὐδὲ χοῖρον. | Ἀριστοκράτης Ἔρωτος; for ἀνήρ/γυνή,

a *symbolon* treaty between Athens and Troezen dating to after 400 BCE, *IG* II^2, 46, line 26 [-- ἄ]νδρα ἢ γυναῖκα [--]. The inclusive ideology of our inscription has been recently examined by E. Aston in a paper entitled " 'Welcome, Visitors': Religious Inclusivity in a Pharsalian Cave-Cult" (*AEThSE* 4, Volos 15–18 March 2012).

II Lines 5–9: *The Sanctuary, its Gods, and its Furnishings*

In the next five lines the epigram goes on to list the deities worshipped on the Karapla hill (5–7) and the shrine's most notable attractions (8–9). As this section reveals, the deployment of catalogic structures in the first half of the poem is based on an incremental pattern (visitors are organized in pairs: males-females, men-women, boys-girls; gods in triplets: Nymphs-Pan-Hermes, Apollo-Heracles-Heterae, Chiron-Asclepius-Hygieia; and votive gifts in quadruples: plantings-tablets-statues-gifts). A distinction also seems to be made between the first two triplets of gods (Nymphs-Pan-Hermes and Apollo-Heracles-Heterae), who are said to own the general grounds, and the last (Chiron-Asclepius-Hygieia), who are more specifically associated with the cave proper; the overall complex with its votive collections, on the other hand, is indicated to be the common property of the whole group. If this odd territorial arrangement has any explanation beyond the attainment of a certain stylistic effect (vz. the gradual revelation of the sanctuary's layout in a three-stepped progression *land / cave / architecture and artwork*; see relevant commentary below) it is not a forthcoming one: caves are not the exclusive dominion of healing powers such as Chiron, Asclepius, and Hygiea, but also of oracular forces like Apollo and Heracles, and especially of countryside gods like the Nymphs, Pan, and Hermes. As becomes apparent in the next section, however, the intent of the epigram is not so much to offer a coherent theology of the Karapla cults but to construct, rather, a credible and appealing aetiological tale where the foundation of the sanctuary is suitably explained in light of the local pantheon.

5 χῶρον δ' εἰς ἱερόν

The first reference to the sanctuary itself, emphasized by its position at the beginning of verse and by its self-contained metrical structure as a hemiepes (–– –⏑⏑ –). Framed between the list of projected visitors in lines 3–4, and the list of local deities in lines 5–7, χῶρον δ' εἰς ἱερόν binds grammatically with both, functioning as a bridge between the two first catalogic sections of the epigram. The particle δέ marks the return to the syntagma interrupted by the visitors list in lines 3–4, resuming the participial τοὶ προσιόντες . . . χῶρον δ' εἰς ἱερόν initiated in the first half of line 3; cf. *LSJ,* s.v. δέ, II.2. Peek's χωρόνδ' (obviously a typographical error for χῶρόνδ', with enclitic -δε denoting motion towards a place, as in οἰκόνδε, θύραζε [= θύρασδε] *et sim.*), although theoretically possible even in combination with the preposition, is unnecessary as well as unattested. All editors after Giannopoulos print εἰς instead of εἷς, as the numeral here is manifestly inappropriate to both the grammar and the sense of the passage.

The wording in this line echoes the language of boundary inscriptions, see e.g. a horos stone with lex sacra from Ithaca, *IG* IX 1, 654, ἱερὸς ὁ χῶρος τῆς | Ἀρτέμιδος. τὸν ἔ-|χοντα καὶ καρπού-|μενο[ν] τὴν μὲν δε-|κάτην | καταθύειν ἑ-|κάστου ἔτους, ἐκ δὲ τοῦ-|περιττοῦ τὸν ναὸν ἐ-|πισκευά[ζ]-ειν· ἐὰν δέ τις | μὴ ποιῇ ταῦτα, τῆι | θεῶι μελήσει; and, for the use of the same vocabulary in a poetic context, *IGUR* III, 1155, lines 79–81, κλῦτε περικτίονες καὶ γείτονες ἀγροιῶται. | ἱερὸς οὗτος ὁ χῶρος, ἀκίνητοι δὲ θέαιναι |καὶ πολυτίμητοι καὶ ὑποσχεῖν οὖας ἕτοιμαι.

From this initial reference to the sanctuary's general grounds (cf. the equally general τῶνδ' . . . χώρων in line 11 below) the focus of the poetry gradually narrows on the cave itself, according to a progression 5 χῶρον . . . ἱερὸν > 7 ἄντρον > 8 δ]ῶ[μα] which cleverly directs the reader's attention to the architectural improvements introduced by the sanctuary's founder.

5–6 Νύμφαις καὶ Πανὶ καὶ Ἑρμῆι, | Ἀπόλλ⟨ω⟩νι ἄνακτι, ⟨καὶ⟩ Ἡρακλεῖ καὶ ἑταίραις

After the caesura in 5, in the next two and a half lines the inscription goes on to introduce the various gods worshipped at the sanctuary, listing them in triads accurately framed within discrete metrical units. First come the Nymphs, Pan and Hermes, a triad occupying the paroemiac of the fifth verse (– –– –⏑⏑ ––); then, in the following line, Apollo, Heracles, and the unidentified ἑταίραι, with Apollo in emphatic position at verse beginning as the sole occupant of the hemiepes (–– –⏑⏑ –⏑). The order in which the deities are listed may reflect the hierarchy of the local cult. In line 5, Νύμφαις καὶ Πανὶ καὶ Ἑρμῆι is in fact a reversal of the sequence traditionally found in dedications, where the Nymphs are almost always placed after these gods (after Pan: *IG* II^2, 4646; 4827; 4875; 4994; *IG* XII 5, 248; *SEG* 31, 815 and 36, 267; *MDAIA* 67 (1942) pp. 61, no. 105; 67, no. 115; 68, no. 116 b; *IGR* I, 5, 1152; *IDelos* 1839. After Hermes: *IG* I^3, 986; *IG* II^2, 4546. On the Nymphs as subordinates of the main pastoral gods see also Larson 2001, p. 97. Exceptions are rare: *IG* I^3, 955; *IG* VII, 3092; *IMT* 566). The eminent role of the Nymphs at the Karapla cave is also confirmed by Inscription I as well as the cult artifacts found at this site (see especially Cat. nos. 3 and 69 a-b above, three statuettes showing the goddesses in

an enthroned position—"a natural expression of power", Connor 1988, p. 186: contrast the Scotussan relief at the Volos Museum mentioned at p. 48 above, where it is Pan who appears in a seated position beside a group of standing Nymphs). For the rest, the text of the epigram conforms to traditional religious iconography. By grouping the Nymphs with Pan and Hermes within the boundaries of the paroemiac, the anonymous poet succeeds in creating what we could call a 'pinax in verse' (cf. line 9 below), a literary reproduction of the familiar type of votive relief in which these three deities are shown enclosed in an arched cave frame; cf. e.g. Athens, National Museum 1859 = *LIMC* I (1981) p. 23, no. 186, s.v. 'Acheloos' and the many examples collected in Edwards 1985. Throughout Greece, Pan and his father Hermes are traditional companions of the Nymphs in religious iconography and worship. From the early fifth century onwards, Pan is especially a regular presence in the shrines of these goddesses, appearing either as their associate ('visiting god' Sporn 2010, p. 207) or the chief deity of the cult. As we have seen, in Thessaly a configuration of this second kind may have existed at Scotussa. Otherwise, with the notable exception of the Karapla cave and the one statuette from Proerna mentioned above, the Goat God's presence in Thessaly is not as substantial as in other parts of Greece, particularly in the epigraphical record (cf. Mili 2015, appendix 1). An interesting case, in this regard, is that of the nymphaeum on Mt. Ossa explored by the British School in 1908, which, in spite of its proximity to a peak of the mountain associated with Pan in the literary tradition, failed to yield any evidence for this god (as noted by Wace and Thompson 1908–1909, p. 246 and note 2; on Pan's connection with Mt. Homole at the northeast end of the Ossa see Theoc. 7, 104). By contrast, the Ossa cave accounts for a very large percentage of the overall epigraphical evidence on the Nymphs from Thessaly (cf. Mili 2015, appendix 1, nos. 353–361).

Far better attested across the region than Pan is Hermes (Mili 2015, appendix 1, nos. 307–311 et pass.). Although the status of this god in Thessalian religion is not altogether clear, his cult seems to have implied more than the simple devotional practices associated with Pan and the Nymphs (the existence of a month named after him in the Thessalian calendar may point, for example, to an annual festival in his honor: Graninger 2006, p. 47; cf. Trumpy 1997, pp. 216–244). For the most part he appears in funerary contexts as Hermes Chthonius, or, less frequently, Eriunius, 'The Helper': only at Pharsalus we find him in his unique aspect as Bruchalius, or 'Bellowing' Hermes—an epithet possibly reflecting the importance of the pastoral element in the area (Decourt in *IThess* I, 69: contra Avagianou 1997, pp. 207–213, Dettori 2000, pp. 27–33).

Ἀπόλλ⟨ω⟩νι ἄνακτι: "a major cult figure in every period of Thessaly's history" (Graninger 2006, p. 47; cf. Heinz 1998, p. 49. Also: Mili 2015, appendix 1, nos. 16–77 et pass.), Apollo stands out in our text as the only deity to receive an epithet. No supporting evidence exists, on the other hand, for a special worship of Apollo at the Karapla cave (on the Apollinean cult at Pharsalus in general see *IThess* I, 64–65). The prominent position assigned to him in line 5 could thus be the result of formulaic convention (Decourt, commentary to *IThess* I, 73, p. 91), e.g. Hom. *Il.* 1, 36, Ἀπόλλωνι ἄνακτι, τὸν ἠύκομος τέκε Λητώ, or a reference to his dominant role over the Nymphs, cf. Φοῖβος ἄναξ Νυμφῶν on an inscribed votive altar from Didyma, *IDidyma* 82, line 1. In the latter case the epithet would have sexual as well as musical implications. The worship of Apollo as chorus leader of the Nymphs, Νυμφηγήτης, is well attested throughout Greece, especially Attica (where he and the goddesses appear in the sacred calendar of Erchia as recipients of goat sacrifices during the month of Gamelion, *SEG* 21, 541, col. V.1, lines 40–47, — ὀγδόη(ι) ἱστα-|μένο, Ἀπόλλ-|ωνι Νυμφη[γ]-|έτει, Ἐρχιᾶ-|σιν, αἴξ, Δ⊢⊢.| — Νύμφαις, ἐπ-|ὶ τῶ αὐτοῦ β-|ωμοῦ, αἴξ : Δ. v); see also *IG* XII 8, 358 in the commentary to line 4 above, and, for the presence of a similar cult in Thessaly, a dedication to Apollo Musagetes in an unpublished inscription from Larissa, *SEG* 47, 746. Their subordinate role as Apollo's dance (and sexual) partners does not prevent the Nymphs from ranking above this god in the hierarchy of local cult. Once again, the example of the above cited *lex sacra* from Thasos is instructive, with the placement of the Nymphs in first position before Apollo Numphegetes, νύμφηισιν κἀπόλλωνι Νυμφηγέτηι, *IG* XII 8, 358, line 1.

Scholars who find it difficult to reconcile Apollo with a chthonic setting explain his appearance in caves as a byproduct of his relationship to the Nymphs (see e.g. a possible dedication of a cave to this god in a Hellenistic inscription from Thasos, *BCH* 91, 1967, pp. 583–585, no. 31, fig. 8, [----]Ν Ἀπόλλωνι | [---- σ]πήλαιον and the accompanying comments by the editor, who refers to the occurrence as "exceptional"). In fact Apollo's frequentation of caves is by no means restricted to Nymph shrines: see e.g. a joint cult of Apollo, Heracles and Hermes Σπηλαῖται reported by Pausanias at a cave near Themisonium in Phrygia, 10, 32, 5–6. Cases where the god is the only dweller of the cave are recorded as well: in the same section of book 10, Pausanias goes on to describe another grotto near Magnesia on the Meander, where an ancient cult image of the god had the power to grant ἰσχὺν ἐπὶ ἔργῳ . . . παντί (10, 32, 6: on the identification of the place as Lydian Hieracome, see Ustinova 2009 pp. 120–121). And in the very city of Athens, an aptly named Apollo Ὑποακραῖος occupied a cave on

the north slope of the Acropolis hill (immediately to the west of Pan's: for a review of the sources and the topography, see Travlos 1971 pp. 91–95, plates 115–122). Some form of subterranean setting, natural or artificial, is also a recurrent feature in the god's oracular establishments, including Delphi. Finally—not to stray too far from our Pharsalian location—we have the evidence of a votive relief from Phtelia (Trikala) showing Apollo and his sister Artemis worshipped in a cave by a group of human devotees (Volos, Archaeological Museum 573 = *LIMC* II, 1984, p. 298, no. 959, s.v. 'Apollon': according to Heinz 1998, pp. 241–242, no. 127, the two deities are represented under an overarching tree).

Ἡρακλεῖ: although Heracles is not attested anywhere else within the territory of Pharsalus, the hero had shrines in nearby cities such as Cierium (*IThess* I, 15) and Scotussa (*SEG* 25, 661). Thessaly was one of the lands ruled by his royal descendants, the Heraclidae; his special associations with the mythology of the region are also evident at Pherae, Pagasae, and Mt. Oeta (see e.g. Moustaka 1983, pp. 66–67; Heinz 1998, pp. 75–76; for the god's cult throughout Thessaly: Mili 2015, appendix 1, nos. 290–305 et pass.). On the Karapla hill he appears in a twofold role as archetypal figure of ἥρως κτίστης and grantor of physical strength. As the poetry makes clear (lines 14–15), Heracles played a role of great importance in the establishment of the sanctuary—second only to that of the Nymphs: for no divine character could have been more suited to assist a mortal κτίστης named Pantalces, the 'All-Powerful'. Prompted by onomastics as well as the massive nature of the stonework found at the site, this symbolic parallelism between divine and human founder, protector and protégé, is effectively exploited by the epigram's author for the construction of the sanctuary's *aition*, providing the inspiration for some of the most original verses in the text (below, commentary to lines 14–15). καὶ ἑταίραις: there is no reason to assume, as most scholars do, that the unnamed deities at the end of the line are exclusively Heracles' associates. The hero has ties with goddesses traditionally worshipped in groups (on his specific connection with the Nymphs see e.g. a Hellenistic dedication from Apameia, Bithynia, *IApameia* 138, θεῷ Ἡρακλεῖ καὶ Νύμφαις, cf. 139); but so do Apollo, Pan, and Hermes. As to the identity of the enigmatic ἑταίραι, a reasonable suggestion is that they are the Nymphs themselves (thus Decourt, who supports the traditional association with Heracles, *IThess* I, 73, p. 92), although a second reference to these goddesses appears redundant after Νύμφαις in the preceding line. Some scholars prefer to read ἑταίροις over the stone's ἑταίραις (Giannopoulos 1919, p. 51), but of these presumed 'fellows' of Heracles we never hear again in the poem, while all other divinities from lines 5–7 reappear without exception in the following section. At the nymphaeum of Nea Heracleitsa in Thrace (ancient Oysime), the term ἑταῖροι designated the members of a sacred society who met in the cave to make sacrificial offerings and consume ritual meals, see Bakalakis 1938, p. 90, 1 [Ν]ύμφαις ἀνέθηκέ μ[ε ὁ δεῖνα] | [καὶ ο]ἱ ἑταῖροι ⁝ Διοσκουρίδ[ης], | [Στρ]άτων ⁝ Σωσιμένης ⁝ Φάνις, | [Σ]ῶσις ⁝ Θαλίαρχος ⁝ Ἀλκίμαχος [.] | [Ἡ]ρογείτων.

7 Χίρωνος τ' ἄντρον καὶ Ἀσκλαπιοῦ ἠδ' Ὑγιείας

The second step in the aforementioned progression from general to specific: 5 χῶρον . . . ἱερὸν > 7 ἄντρον > 8 δ]ῶ[μα]. The transition to the cave proper and the next divine triad is marked by a grammatical shift which seems to imply a distinction between gods of the χῶρον and gods of the ἄντρον: "Lines 3–4 tell us whom the area—the *chôrion* (sic)—is sacred to: the nymphs, Pan, and Hermes. On line 5, however, there is a change of case—dative to genitive—and a break in sense, as we are told that the cave is 'of' Chiron, Asclepius, and Asclepius' daughter Hygieia. At this stage, it seems plausible to suggest that a distinction is being revealed, with the nymphs, Pan, and Hermes having a general authority in the area, and the cave itself being especially the territory of Chiron, Asclepius, and Hygieia" (Aston 2006, p. 360). Like Apollo in line 5, Chiron is here the sole occupant of the hemiepes (–– –– –|), his name standing in eminent position at verse beginning. The wholly spondaic rhythm of the colon, unique in the poem, would also appear to underscore the Centaur's importance. The reasons for this emphasis are unclear. Chiron's presence in a Pharsalian grotto, so far away from his own cave shrine on Mt. Pelium (Plu. *Quaes. Conv.* 647a; Heraclides Criticus fr. 2, 8–12 Pfister: see p. 28, note 86 above and commentary to line 9 below), could be explained perhaps in light of Pharsalus' association with Achilles and the kingdom of Peleus (p. 6, note 30 above; see also Moustaka 1983, pp. 60–63; Stamatopoulou 2007, pp. 223, 229, note 40 and 2007a, pp. 329–330, note 136; Mili 2015, p. 176). In addition to music, hunting, and athletics, Chiron's mentorship of the Pharsalian hero is known to have included the teaching of herbal medicine (Hom. *Il.* 11, 831), a craft that has deep associations with the Thessalian land and is reflected in the region's later reputation as a place of magic and witchcraft (Mili 2015, pp. 285–295). Healing is the link which also reunites Chiron with Asclepius, the second member of the divine triplet in line 7 and the centaur's most famous student in the healing arts. Another Thessalian hero from the northwest part of the country (Tricca: Hom. *Il.* 2, 729–732; Str. 9, 5, 17. Cf. Aston 2004, especially pp. 22–32; Riethmüller 2005,

I, pp. 91–98), Asclepius is a much more widespread presence in cult than his teacher, with Asclepiea in all major centers of Thessaly (Semeria 1986, pp. 932–935; Riethmüller's catalog lists evidence for worship at 26 sites besides our cave, 2005, II, pp. 143–314, nos. 143–176; cf. Mili 2015, appendix 1, nos. 175–201 et pass.). In Pharsalus the divine physician had a precinct at the east end of town, on the site of the modern metropolis of Agios Nikolaos; Stählin 1914, p. 7 and 1924, p. 141; Semeria 1986, pp. 934–935; see also Riethmüller 2005, II, pp. 291–293, no. 146 (who misunderstands however the topography of the area). Residents of the Varoussi neighborhood still refer to a rock-cut site south of the church as 'Asclepius' couch' (Stählin's *"Fels mit Heiligtum bei Dexameni"*, 1924, p. 138, fig. 9: l; cf. 1914, p. 7). In agreement with the arrangement reflected in this verse, the Pharsalian Asclepieum appears to have included the worship of personified Health, Hygieia, as attested by a votive relief of the Hellenistic period showing the goddess in the company of her father (Volos, Archaeological Museum 261; cf. Mitropoulou 1994, p. 492 VI, A, b). As in the rest of Greece, the two deities appear together in most Thessalian representations; one exception is a statue of the Hygieia Hope type now at the Volos Archaeological Museum, inv. Λ 268 (Mitropoulou 1994, p. 498; see also a dedication to Hygieia alone from the Larissa area (McDevitt no. 409 = *AE* 1933, Χρονικά, p. 2, 5).

8 τούτων ἐστὶ τ[ὸ δ]ῳ̣[μα] ἅπαν

Mildew stains and the weathering of the stone have disfigured the lettering in this section of the inscription. The restorations τόδ', ὦνα Πάν (Giannopoulos) and τ[ά]δ', ὦνα Πάν (Decourt, commentary to *IThess* I, 73, p. 90, after Hondius ap. *SEG* 1, 248) are unmetrical as well as incongruous: what is an address to Pan doing in the middle of a speech, otherwise addressed from start to end to the visitors of the site? (χαίρετε τοὶ πᾳ̣[ριόντες, line 3; ἀναβαίνετ[ε], θύετε, line 20; εὔχεσθε, εὐφραίνεσθε, line 21). Editors who support this restoration also read ἰαρώτατ' instead of ἰαρωτά τ' in the second half of the line, depriving the text of a perfectly sound Thessalian idiom (below, commentary to lines 8–9). As ἰαρωτά τ' ἐν αὐτῶι implies, the word missing in the lacuna had to be another designation of space, like χῶρον in line 5 or ἄντρον in line 7. Peek's τὸ χω⟨ρί⟩ον ἅπαν works well in this sense, but still fails to fit the metre. I propose to restore τ[ὸ δ]ῳ̣[μα] ἅπαν, which fits the traces on the stone (ΤΟΥΤΩΝΕΣΤΙΤ[..]Ω[.]ΑΠΑΝΙΑΡΩΤΑΤΕΝΑΥΤΩΙ: p. 67 above) as well as the missing metrical positions in this hexameter –– –⏑[⏑ –⏑]|| ⏑ –⏑⏑ –⏑⏑ ––, mutilated in its second and third biceps. Stylistically, the hiatus between δ]ῳ̣[μα] and ἅπαν is consistent with the extensive use of this feature throughout the poem, cf. lines 3, 5–9, 11–12, 16, 18–19. For the use of the feminine caesura, see lines 3–4, 6, 8, 12, 16–17, 19, 21. The term δῶμα is used to indicate a cave inhabited by Nymphs in both epic and epigrammatic poetry, e.g. *Od.* 5, 6, ἐν δώμασι νύμφης; *Studia Pontica* 3 (1910) 26, Νύμφαι ἀκοσμήτοις ἐνὶ δώμασι ναιετάουσαι. If Peek's text is correct, a close parallel for our our inscription is found in the nearby Thessalian city of Atrax, in an epigram commemorating the foundation of a hilltop sanctuary for the Nymphs, *ZPE* 14 (1974) p. 21, I, plate 1, fig. I, [εἰπόν, τίς τόδε δῶμ]ᾳ̣ καὶ ᾳ̣[ντί]α πᾶν ἐπόνη[σεν], | [στήσας σὺν πολλ]οῖς θύμασιν ἀνθέματα,| [ὄχθαισιν Πηνειοῦ ὑ]πὸ̣ λόφον ἀνθεμ[ό]-ε̣[ντα],| [ἧι ποσὶ δινοῦντ]αι Ναΐδε̣ς ἁβρόπεπλοι (full text and translation at p. 92 below). In this particular case, the term δῶμα refers to the stepped pathway that Pantalces hewed in the live rock of the cliff (line 15 below, τούσδε λίθους τύπτων ἐπόησ' ἀναβαίνειν), but it may also be inclusive of a rudimentary architectural structure which appears to have been annexed to the cave proper. Fragments of rooftiles were noted by the early visitors to the site on the small terrace below the cave entrance. As the interior of the cave was occupied in antiquity by a small stream, it seems perfectly plausible that a subsidiary roof was added to house the basic functions of the cult (see Chapter 2.2.5 above). The fact that the majority of the archaeological remains were found outside the cave confirms this hypothesis. Karapla is not an isolated example. At cave sanctuaries it was often the case that the natural setting of the site had to be altered architecturally in order to comply with cultic needs. Inscriptions found at these locations emphasize the construction skills of their founders (the second half of our epigram accordingly praises the efforts of Thessalian Pantalces as a builder and a planter of sacred groves; see lines 10–19 below). Especially instructive in this regard is the comparison with the dedications of Archedamus of Thera at the cave of Vari on the Hymettus, where explicit architectural terminology is used for describing the outfitting of the sanctuary, *IG* I^3, 977 b, 2–3 Νύνφαι<ς> ἐχσοικοδόμεσεν and *IG* I^3, 980, 5–7 τἄντρον ἐξηργάξατο. See also Wagman 2011, pp. 748–751.

8–9 ἰαρωτά τ' ἐν αὐτῶι, | ἔμφυτα καὶ πίνακες καὶ ἀγάλματα δῶρά τε πολλ[ά]

Whether they print: ἰαρωτά τ' or: ἰαρώτατ', all editors of Inscription II are unanimous in interpreting this word as an adjective modifying ἔμφυτα in the following line. Stylistically, however, the enjambement thus generated appears unjustified; contrast lines 21–22 below, κακῶν ἐπίλησις ἁπάν⟨των⟩ | ἐνθάδ' ἔνεστ', where such a device is purposefully applied to reinforce deixis. A preferable alternative (adopted by Connor in his English translation of 1988, p. 163; see also Larson 2001, p. 17) is to punctuate

after ἐν αὐτῶι, intending ἱαρωτά as a nominalised adjective followed by a list of appositives. Cf. a similar arrangement in line 3 above, τοὶ προσιόντες, ἅπας θῆλύς τε καὶ ἄρσην.

Hanfmann (who reads: ἱαρωτά τ᾽ ἐν αὐτῶι ἔμφυτα, "and the sacred plants that grow in the cave") believes that Pantalces might have kept a medicinal garden at the site, "perhaps in order to imitate the Chironion on Pelium" 1941, p. 486 (an idea also entertained by Decourt, *IThess* I, 73 p. 92). Chiron was closely associated with botanical medicine, as was his cultplace on Mt. Pelium—a mountain "rich in medical remedies" according to Heraclides Criticus, fr. 2, 8–12 Pfister, ἐπ᾽ ἄκρας δὲ τῆς τοῦ ὄρους κορυφῆς σπηλαῖόν ἐστι τὸ καλούμενον Χειρώνιον . . . τὸ δὲ ὄρος πολυφάρμακόν τέ ἐστι καὶ πολλὰς ἔχον καὶ παντοδαπὰς δυνάμεις τάς τε ὄψεις αὐτῶν γινώσκουσι καὶ χρῆσθαι δυναμένοις. Close ties with the world of medical plants also show Apollo, Hermes, Heracles and above all, Asclepius (Murr 1890, pp. 226–228; 232–233; 217–221; 225–226; on Asclepius see also Delatte 1936, p. 102); but whether the presence of a herb garden at our cave can be postulated on these grounds is doubtful—as doubtful is the assumption that such an establishment existed at the cave of Chiron on Pelium. We know that first fruit offerings in the form of roots and wild grasses (ῥίζαι γάρ εἰσι καὶ βοτάναι, Plu. *Quaes. Conv.* 647a, 1) were made to Chiron by the Magnesians; the use of cultivated herbs, on the other hand, is not recorded. For a modern ethnobotanical perspective on the topic, see Brussell 2004; on Thessaly's reputation as a 'Land Rich in Herbs': Mili 2015, pp. 259–299 (especially 290–292).

ἔμφυτα: based on line 12 below, ὅσπερ ταῦτ᾽ ἐφύτευσε, most scholars interpret this word in the sense of 'plantings', arbitrarily transferring to it the meaning of φυτεύειν (or rather, ἐμφυτεύειν: for the use of ἐμφυτεύω in reference to temple gardening, see a sacred law from Amorgus, *IG* XII 7, 62, lines 34–35: ἐὰν δὲ μὴ ἐμφυτ[εύ]-|[σηι] τὰ φυτά, ἀποτεισάτω ἑκάστου δραχμήν). Thus, e.g., Decourt, who finds the "shift from 'natural' to 'cultivated' " to be a semantically acceptable transition (*IThess* I, 73, p. 92). Other critics (Connor 1988, Larson 2001) adopt a more prudent stance, translating ἔμφυτα as φυτά, 'things which grow'—presumably in contrast with the inanimate objects also dedicated as gifts at the cave. In fact, by emphasizing natural growth over cultivation, ἔμφυτα (τὰ κατὰ φύσιν ὑπάρχοντα, *Lexicon Patmense* p. 153) appears to draw an intentional distinction between forms of vegetation native to the cave and the embellishments added by Pantalces (line 12 below, ὅσπερ ταῦτ᾽ ἐφύτευσε καὶ ἐξεπονήσατο χερσίν). The harmonious juxtaposition of natural and landscaped environments was a *desideratum* in the Greek conception of sacred space. As Larson writes, "to the Greeks, a 'garden of the nymphs' was a space intermediate between the untamed wild and the carefully tended field of grain or pruned orchard. The garden might exhibit signs of planned improvement, such as a built fountain, but it was ideally a natural spot that already serendipitously possessed everything needed to appeal to human tastes and comforts" (2007, p. 58).

The use of the Thessalian idiom ἱαρωτά—in a text otherwise not overloaded with regional traits—may have been intended to emphasize the local character of the cave's ornamentation. The word ἱαρωτός is attested only once more in an inscription from Crannon of ca. 168 BCE, *IG* IX 2, 461 b, lines 36–38 [τόνε τὸ] [ψάφισμ]α ὀνγραφεῖ ἐν κίονα λιθίν[αν] [καὶ τ]εθ⟨ε⟩[ῖ] ΑΚΡΟΥΝ ἐν τοῖς ἱαρουτοῖς (i.e. "in the consecrated territory of the city", Hoffmann 1893, II, pp. 38–39, no. 54; cf. Wilamowitz, *IG* IX 2, 461 b in app.). On ου for ω in Thessalian, see *IG* IX 2, p. 337, *Indices*, X. *Exempla Sermonis Thessalici*). ἱαρός or ἰαρός beside ἱερός are regular forms in Thessaly, where they appear later than in other West Greek dialects; see Buck 1955, p. 24.

καὶ πίνακες καὶ ἀγάλματα δῶρά τε πολλ[ά]: the contents of the sanctuary—plantings, tablets, statuary—may be listed here in the order which visitors would see them as they made their progress from the planted area to the upper level of the shrine. Tablets would appear first, affixed by nails on trees or the walls of the cliff (cf. Chapter 3.3 above, Cat. nos. 2 a; 26); statues and figurines, probably displayed under cover on the ledge in front of the cave entrance, would become visible to incoming worshippers as these went up the shrine's stairway. For a full discussion of the site's layout see Chapter 2. Overall the information contained in this line is in agreement with the archaeological record, which confirms that the great bulk of the cave's votive collection (Chapter 3. 3, Cat. nos. 1–54; 57–58; 69–75) was made up by πίνακες and ἀγάλματα. These numbers may not seem enough to justify the expression δῶρά τε πολλ[ά] (see e.g. della Seta 1922–1923, p. 285, who refers to the Karapla findings as "scarce remains"); however we should not forget that among the 'many gifts' were also a fair quantity of objects made of perishable material. Wooden tablets and figurines—such as the well-known panel paintings from the Pitsa cave (*EAA* 6, 1965, pp. 200–206, s.v. 'Pitsa') or the Νυμφέων ποιμενικὰ ξόανα cited in *AP* 9, 326—must have stood next to the clay ones. Toys, many of which were made of wood, were an equally common dedication in marriage and coming-of-age rituals for both sexes (*AP* 6, 280; 282; 309; discussion in Rouse 1902, pp. 249–251. On the offering of dolls to the Nymphs see Cat. no. 55 above and the observations by Larson 2001, pp. 101–120). A large number of additional articles fashioned out of organic materials (farming, hunting, and fishing equipment; household items; musical instruments; etc.) would

have also filled the displays of a country shrine: their existence we can only surmise from literary descriptions and the evidence of extant sanctuary archives; cf. the indexes to Rouse 1902, pp. 394–408.

III Lines 10–13: *Pantalces' Tale: His 'Investiture' by the Nymphs and* Aition *of the Sanctuary*

In the couplet that follows, readers are introduced to the founder of the sanctuary, Pantalces, and the story of how he was chosen by the Nymphs to oversee their grounds. Although only two lines long, the section is important in that it establishes the theme of Pantalces' ἀνδραγαθία, further elaborated in the remainder of the poem through the symbolic associations of the gifts bestowed upon him by the other cave gods.

10–11 ἄνδρα δ' ἐποιήσα⟨ν⟩τ'{α} ἀγαθὸν Παντάλκεα Νύμφαι | τῶνδ' ἐπιβαινέμεναι χώρων καὶ ἐπίσσκοπον εἶναι

ἄνδρα . . . ἀγαθόν: following a semantic evolution parallel to that of ἀρετή, from its original use in reference to military valour and aristocratic status, during the fifth century BCE the expression ἀνὴρ ἀγαθός came to denote worthiness in a broader sense, particularly in connection with services rendered to the state (e.g. trade-related services; see Engen 2010, pp. 121–123). Official recognition of these virtues was crystallized in the formulae ἀνδραγαθίας ἕνεκα or ἀρετῆς ἕνεκα καὶ ἀνδραγαθίας, found in over a hundred inscriptions from Attica (Veligianni-Terzi 1997) and other regions. As D. Whitehead writes, the abstractification of the Homeric ἀνὴρ ἀγαθός into ἀνδραγαθία was born from a "need to find . . . an *agathos*-abstract free from the elitist and necrological baggage of the past that *aretê* brought with it" (1993, p. 61; cf. 1983, p. 61). The class implications of this terminology did not entirely disappear with the new practice: the politically charged preface to Isyllus' paean in *IG* IV^2 1, 128, is an example of how ἀνδραγαθία was interpreted in an oligarchic context such as Epidaurus ca. 300 BCE, δᾶμος εἰς ἀριστοκρατίαν ἄνδρας αἰ προάγοι καλῶς, | αὐτὸς ἰσχυρότερος· ὀρθοῦται γὰρ ἐξ ἀνδραγαθίας (lines 3–4). In Thessaly, where aristocratic forms of government survived well into the fourth century BCE—along with the ideologies and traditions which supported them—we can expect these phraseologies to have also retained some of its original elitist connotations. Significantly, ἀνδραγαθία and καλοκαγαθία appear within a few lines from one other in a proxeny decree of the Magnesian League from the late second century BCE (*SEG* 32, 613), ἐπεὶ Πολεμαῖος Ἀρπαγίωνος Καλυδώνιος, ἀνὴρ καλὸς καὶ ἀγαθός, | εὐνόως διακείμενος πρὸς πάντας Μάγνητας πειρᾶται καθ' ὅσον ἐ-|στὶν δυνατὸς ἀεί τινος ἀγαθοῦ παραίτιος γίνεσθαι, κατὰ κοινόν | τε καὶ κατ' ἰδίαν ἑκάστωι ἡμῶν εὔχρηστον παρεχόμενος αὑτὸν τοῖς χρείαν ἔχουσιν· | ἵνα οὖν κ[αὶ] Μάγνητες ἐὐ[χά]ρι̣ς̣το[ι ὄντ]ες | φαίνωνται καὶ τιμῶντες το[ὺ]ς̣ ἀ[νδραγαθή]σαν[τας, δεδόχθαι τοῖς] | συνέδροις ἐπ[α]ι[νέ]σαι̣ τε [Πολ]ε[μαῖον Ἀρ]-π̣αγ[ίωνος Καλυ]-|δών[ιον] ἐπ̣ὶ [τούτοις] καὶ δεδόσθαι αὐτῶι καὶ ἐκγόνοις παρὰ τῶν | Μαγνήτων [προξ]ενίαν καὶ τἆλλα τίμια καὶ φιλάνθρωπα ὅσα | καὶ τοῖς ἄλ[λοις προ]ξένοις ἡμῶν ὑπάρχει.

Otherwise the qualification ἀνὴρ ἀγαθός is ordinarily bestowed upon Thessalians fallen in battle, as in a fifth century epitaph from the countryside northwest of our cave, *IG* IX 2, 255 = *CEG* I, 117, [μνᾶμα τό]δ' ἁ μάτ̄ερ Διοκλέαι ἔσσταϲ' Ἐχεναὶς | [πολλὰ γο]ῶσα ὅτ' ἀνόρ̄ος ὄλετο ὃν ἀγαθός. | - - - -]ολεα τεὸς ἀδελφεὸς ἔσστα Γέλ̄ō[νο?]ς. | [πᾶς δὲ κα]τοικτίρας ἄνδρα ἀγαθὸν παρίτ̄ō (commentary in Lorenz 1976, pp. 46–2).

Considered in this light, the designation of Pantalces as ἀνὴρ ἀγαθός in line 10 proves to be more nuanced than it may have seemed at first. On one hand we are reminded of the official language used to recognize distinction in service—*casu quo*, 'outstanding' service on behalf of the Nymphs—on the other, the phrasing seems to suggest an 'ennoblement' similar to that of the heroic dead, conferring on Pantalces' deeds an unmistakebly epic resonance. This epic frame of reference, mantained throughout the rest of the poem, is consistent with local tradition, as the Pharsalian elites traced their ancestry to the quintessential epic hero, Achilles (commentary to line 7 above; cf. pp. 87–88 below). Rather than some kind of peasant sage or holy man, as it has been hitherto assumed (e.g. Decourt, commentary to *IThess* I, 73; Connor 1988), Pantalces appears to have been commemorated by his countrymen as one of the noble dead, using iconographical conventions proper of upper class ideology.

ἐποιήσα⟨ν⟩τ' . . . εἶναι: cf. ἐπόησ' ἀναβαίνειν in line 15. The use of ποιεῖν with the infinitive—which has respectable epic antecedents, e.g. *Od.* 23, 258–259, ἐπεὶ ἄρ σε θεοὶ ποίησαν ἱκέσθαι οἶκον—is well-suited to convey the 'transformative' power of an encounter with the Nymphs (the term is borrowed from Pache 2011). Interaction with the goddesses is portrayed in the literary and epigraphical evidence as an experience of varying intensity: from the feelings of well-being associated with certain types of natural landscape (the *loci amoeni* of pastoral literature) to raving madness and even death, the Nymphs were thought capable of eliciting various kinds of psychophysiological responses in human beings. Within these altered states, grouped under the label of nympholepsy, were some compulsive forms of devotionalism involving extended

periods of withdrawal from society and complete self-dedication to the goddesses' worship (the classic study on the topic is that by Connor 1998; see now the remarks by Versnel 2011, pp. 129–130). In Pantalces' case, since the events are presented through the lens of a later aetiological narrative, the encounter with the Nymphs is rationalized as a form of ennoblement by which the founder is granted the virtues proper of an ideal κτίστης (cf. Schirripa 2009, who sees abduction narratives in Nymph lore as a "precise metaphor for heroization", p. 83).

Νύμφαι | … ἐπιβαινέμεναι: ἐπιβαινέμεναι is an epicism modeled on Homeric ἐπιβαινέμεν, *Od.* 9, 101, νηῶν ἐπιβαινέμεν ὠκειάων; cf. A.R. 1, 705–706, γαίης τε καὶ ἄστεος … | … θαρσαλέως ἐπιβαινέμεν. On the example of *Il.* 14, 226 and *Od.* 5, 550 some scholars take ἐπιβαινέμεναι to signify a descent of the Nymphs from up high ('to intervene in Pantalkes' life', Pache 2011, p. 54, following a previous idea by Decourt, commentary to *IThess* I, 73, p. 92); this interpretation is incompatible however with the grammar of the passage, since ἐπιβαίνειν in the sense of 'landing', 'lighting upon' would require an accusative of place (*LSJ*, s.v. ἐπιβαίνω, III; cf. Peek 1938, p. 24, who had independently considered the possibility of correcting the stone's τῶνδ' … χώρων into τ⟨ό⟩νδ' … χῶρων). There is in fact nothing wrong with the meaning provided by the ordinary genitive construction—"the Nymphs who tread these places" being an image well-suited to the localized character of the cult. τῶνδ' … χώρων looks backward to χῶρον δ' εἰς ἱερὸν in line 5; for the deictic element cf. τούσδε λίθους in line 15 below (also: ταῦτ' line 12; ἐνθάδ' line 22). καὶ ἐπίσσκοπον: as confirmed by its later usage in ecclesiastical administration, ἐπίσκοπος is a word with both bureaucratic and sacred overtones, used to denote state officers (e.g. in a Rhodian decree of the 1st century BCE, καὶ τοὶ συνάρξαντες | πρυτάνιες, γραμματεὺς βουλᾶς, | στραταγοί, ταμίαι, ἀστυνόμοι | ἀγωνοθέται, γυμνασίαρχοι, | ἐπίσκοποι …, *IRhodM* 20, lines 5–9) as well as tutelary gods (χώρας τοῖς πολισσούχοις θεοῖς, | πεδιονόμοις τε κἀγορᾶς ἐπισκόποις, A. *Th.* 271–272); for the spelling cf. line 12 χερσσίν; further examples of –σσ- for -σ- can be found in *IG* IX 2, p. 337 (*Indices*, X. *Exempla Sermonis Thessalici*). Pantalces' appointment may be compared to similar 'offices' mentioned in the inscriptions of other cult founders: Artemidorus was 'priest' of his own rock-cut sanctuary in Thera (*IG* XII, 3, 1345, lines 3–5, ἀθανάτοισι θεοῖσι | …. | … ὅσοις ἱερεὺς τέμενος κτίσεν Ἀρτεμίδωρος), while the Cypriot Onesagoras, builder of a nymphaeum near Kafizin, served as ritual barber and tithe collector (Mitford 1980, no. 46, lines 1–3, ἀγαθῆι τύχηι· | Νύμφηι Ἀδελφῆι [Ὀνησ]-ᾳγ[ό]ρας Φιλουνίου κου[ρεὺς] | [ὁ] δεκατηφόρος ἐμή τε καὶ [ἄλλα πολλ]ά), and appears to have headed a college of seers (μαντιάρχης? Mitford 1980, no. 258 b.1, Ὀνεσα[γόρου· ἀγαθῆι] $^{vac.}$ τύχῃ· μαγ̣ζιαρχήσαντος). A hieratic function may also be implied in Archedamus' cryptic self-reference as ὁ<ρ>χεστὲ[ς] in *IG* I^3, 977.

12 ὅσπερ ταῦτ' ἐφύτευσε καὶ ἐξεπονήσατο χερσσίν

ὅσπερ … ἐφύτευσε: the use of the emphatic relative pronoun, combined with deixis (ταῦτ'), effectively redirects the readers' attention from the text of the poem to the physical world around them. The focus is on the the area immediately surrounding the inscription, a terraced part of the hill which Pantalces adapted as a sacred garden or grove (ἐφύτευσε καὶ ἐξεπονήσατο χερσσίν). A few lines later, the same syntagma is deployed to call attention on the steep stairway, cut by Pantalces in the live rock of the cliff (τούσδε λίθους τύπτων ἐπόησ' ἀναβαίνειν, line 15), which leads from this terrace to the cave proper. Description is kept to the essential: all the text does is 'point' at these two landscape features (ταῦτ', line 12; τούσδε λίθους, line 15), leaving the appreciation of the details to the visitors themselves. The main concern is to identify the author of the work and the divinities for whom the work was done. In this the Karapla inscription follows a traditional scheme widely attested in inscribed epigrams; see e.g. Day 2010, pp. 6–7 et pass.

ἐξεπονήσατο: cf. the above cited dedication to the Nymphs from Atrax, *ZPE* 14 (1974) p. 21, I, line 1, [εἰπόν, τίς τόδε δῶμ]ᾳ καὶ ἀ̣[ντί]α πᾶν ἐπόνη̣[σεν]. In our text the use of the deponent form πονέομαι is an archaism, see *LSJ*, s.v. πονέω, πονέομαι, A (on πονέομαι with the accusative, ibid. A, II; for an epigraphic example, see e.g. a Carian funerary epigram from Rhodian Peraea, *IRhodB* 209, ὅτ' Ἄρεος ἔργα ἐπονεῖτο). χερσσίν: on -σσ- see commentary to line 11 above, ἐπίσσκοπον. The expression 'to labor with one's hands', is common in epigrammatic poetry, with both epigraphical and literary examples; see e.g. *GVI* 1425, <μν>αμεῖον τόδε σεῖο πατὴρ ἐπόνησεν ἑαυτο[ῦ] χερσὶν, πᾶσιν ὁρᾶν, σᾶς ἀρετᾶς ἕνεκεν; *AP* 6, 61, line 6, χερσί σε ταῖς ἰδίαις ἐξεπόνησε Χάρις.

13 ἀντίδοσαν δ' αὐτῶι βίον ἄφθονον ἤματα πάντα

Line 13 marks a thematic transition from the story of Pantalces' 'investiture' to the catalog of blessings bestowed upon him by the cave gods, with ἀντίδοσαν introducing the key motif of the next section (δίδωμι is a culturally 'charged' word which can denote human as well as divine giving, thus encompassing the entire range of this exchange-based relationship; see *LSJ*, s.v. δίδωμι, 2–3). This concept of reciprocity also appears in the inscriptions of other cult founders, such as Onesagoras of Cyprus (… N]ύμφη …

[ἀ]ρετῆς ἕνεκεν ὧν χ[ρυσὸ]ν ἀντιτεί[νεις, Mitford 1980, no. 291, line 1–5; cf. Pache 2011, p. 68), or Artemidorus of Perge (ἡ δ' Ὁμόνοια θεὰ βωμοῦ χάριν ἀνταπέδωκε | τὸν στέφανον παρὰ τῆς πόλεως μέγαν Ἀρτεμιδώρωι, *IG* XII 3, 1341–1342, lines 3–4). On the *da quia dedi, do ut des* arguments in Greek prayers and cult poetry, see Pulleyn 1997, pp. 16–38; Furley 2007, 124–127. Another recurring theme which is introduced in line 13 is that of Pantalces' life-long prosperity (cf. αἰῶν' εἰς τὸν ἅπαντα . . . βίον ἐσθλόν in line 17 below). βίος ἄφθονος is a 'life of means', see e.g. Ath. *Deipn.* 7, 12, 21 = Philetaer. *PCG* VII, fr. 13, θνητῶν δ' ὅσοι ζῶσιν κακῶς ἔχοντες ἄφθονον βίον, ἐγὼ μὲν αὐτοὺς ἀθλίους εἶναι λέγω; cf. also Hdt. 2, 121a; *TrGF* III, 196. This belief in the Nymphs' power to grant a comfortable life is also reflected in Menander' *Dyscolus*, where Pan and the goddesses reciprocate the attentions of Cnemon's daughter by engineering her marriage to a wealthy urbanite (*Dysc.* 36–44); the most striking illustration of the concept is found, however, at the nymphaeum of Kafizin in Cyprus, where a nameless Nymph was worshipped by an association of local businessmen (Mitford 1980: see also Larson 2001, pp. 257–258; Pache 2011, pp. 55–69). ἤματα πάντα: the formula—one of several Homerisms found throughout the text—frames the description of the Nymph's ἀντίδοσις in a heroic scenario, recalling similar lifelong privileges granted to the heroes of the Trojan cycle; cf. *Od*.4, 209–211, ὡς νῦν Νέστορι δῶκε (sc. Zeus) διαμπερὲς ἤματα πάντα | αὐτὸν μὲν λιπαρῶς γηρασκέμεν ἐν μεγάροισιν, | υἱέας αὖ πινυτούς τε καὶ ἔγχεσιν εἶναι ἀρίστους.

IV Lines 14–19: *The Rewards Granted to Pantalces by the Cave Gods*

The tale of the cave's foundation continues with the catalog of the rewards received by Pantalces in return for his devotion. The 'gifts', which include material goods as well as physical and moral qualities, are assigned according to each god's specific domain. The nine godheads introduced in lines 5–7 reappear in this section in a different arrangement, individually (Heracles, Pan, Chiron) or in new groupings (Apollo, Asclepius, Hermes, Hygieia), depending on their sphere of influence. The concept of divine 'giving', first introduced by ἀντίδοσαν in line 13, forms the key motif of this section, with three variants of the verb (14 ἔδ⟨ω⟩κ', 16 δίδωσι, 19 δῶκε) occurring at brief intervals from one another. The pattern is strongly reminiscent of folktale structure: it is tempting to see a similarity between the gods of the Karapla foundation story and the appositely named 'donors' of Propp's analysis, the supernatural patrons who traditionally assist the hero in the fulfillment of his quest (*Morphology of the Folktale*, 1968).

14–15 Ἡρακλέης μὲν ἔδ⟨ω⟩κ' ἰσχὺν ἀρετήν τε κράτος τε | ὥιπερ τούσδε λίθους τύπτων ἐπόησ' ἀναβαίνειν

Possibly two of the most successful verses in this poem ("*besonders hübsch*" Peek 1938, p. 24, who also praises the poetic quality of lines 18 and 19). ἰσχὺν ἀρετήν τε κράτος τε effectively encapsulates the Greek ideal of physical prowess applied to the attainment of excellence. This ideological construct is most appropriately personified by Heracles, the quintessential athlete and questing hero of Greek myth. The quest for ἀρετή plays an important role in Herculean mythology and symbolism, as shown by the well-known parable of Prodicus of Ceus, in which the hero, confronted at a crossroads by the opposite personifications of Ἀρετή and Κακία, bravely choses the difficult but glorious path of the former over the easy but undistinguished one of the latter (X. *Mem.* 2, 1, 21–34). It has been recognized that, with their emphasis on "individual glory and solitary accomplishment", Heracles' athletic pursuits reflect an aristocratic value system (Gregory 1991, p. 148; for a full discussion of the topic see Csapo 2005, pp. 304–315). Not surprisingly the hero is attested as a patron of gymnasia and aristocratic clubs: an illustrative example is the gymnasium of Cynosarges in Athens, where Heracles was served ritual meals with a fraternity of highborn individuals known as the 'half-breeds' (νόθοι) of Cynosarges (Polem. Hist. *FHG* 3, 78; see Humphreys 1974, pp. 88–95), and similar institutions are attested at various Thessalian locations (e.g. the Ἡρακλεισταί of Atrax: *AD* 34, 1979, Χρονικά, p. 226, no. 20 = Heinz 1998, pp. 303–304, no. 237; cf. Mili 2015, pp. 124–125; see also, at Pherae, the god's association with the ὑλουροί, or 'forest wardens', the officials charged with the mantainance of the countryside, *AD* 33, 1978, pp. 318–324 = Heinz 1998, pp. 304–306, nos. 238–239; cf. Mili 2015, pp. 123–124). Considered in this light, Heracles' tutelage confers to Pantalces' labors a distinctly heroic aura through the implicit comparison with his own ἄθλα. Line 14 thus reinforces the motif of the founder's ἀνδραγαθία discussed in connection with the 'investiture' story (above, line 10), deploying concepts and iconography proper of aristocratic aesthetics. ἰσχὺν . . . κράτος τε: ἰσχύς and κράτος are conceptually akin terms (Theoph. Ant. *Ad Autol.* 1, 3, ἴσχυν ἐὰν εἴπω, κράτος αὐτοῦ λέγω) linked to one another also in medical writing, e.g. Aret. *CD* 2, 6, 1, ἐς ἰσχὺν καὶ κράτος τοῦ σώματος. As god-given 'gifts' we find them again in Classically inspired Christian literature: Ph. *De providentia* fr. 2, 38, ὁ Θεός . . . ἰσχὺν καὶ κράτος δίδωσι τοῖς τὰς φύσεις ἀρχικοῖς.

τούσδε λίθους τύπτων ἐπόησ' ἀναβαίνειν: literally "pounding these rocks he made them go up", i.e., "he turned them into a stairway" (τούσδε λίθους refers to a series of

boulders, immediately to the left of the inscription, fashioned by Pantalces into a rudimentary flight of stairs; for a full discussion of this structure, see Chapter 2 above). Ἀναβαίνω, 'to be upward bound', is an appropriate verb for stairs, see ἀνάβασις = κλίμαξ in Ginouvès et al. 1985, II, p. 197 (other similarly coined terms for 'stairs' include ἀναβαθμός, ἀναβασμός, ἀναβάθρα). In light of these considerations, Larson's translation, "he smote the stones and *made a way up*", 2001 p. 17, is preferable to Connor's "he struck these stones and *built them up*", 1988 p. 163 (italics mine). The general sense of the passage is that given by Comparetti, "He [sc. Pantalces] . . . was able to complete the other, no less Herculean task of levelling out, blow by blow (τύπτων), that harsh and unyielding rock, so as to facilitate the access, or climb (ἐπόησ' ἀναβαίνειν), to the sacred cave", 1923–1924' p. 152; on Pantalces "leveller of rocks" (*"spianatore di . . . rocce"*), see also p. 151. Rock is an appropriate building material for a nymphaeum, cf. the above cited dedication to the Nymphs from Atrax *ZPE* 14 (1974) p. 21, I, lines 5–6, N[α]ϊᾴ[σ]ιν Νύμφαισι . . . [δ]ῷ[μά] τε ἴδρ[υ]σ[ε π]έτροις. Indeed, whether they inhabit a spring or a cave—two natural milieus often found in close contiguity—Nymphs appear to be intimately associated with the live rock of the Greek mountains: in vase-painting they are shown near rock-piles (as in the depiction of the Ismenian Spring in a calyx crater at the Louvre, N3157), while in prayers they are addressed as νύμφαι πετραῖαι, "Nymphs of the Rocks" (as in Aegisthus' sacrificial prayer in E. *El.* 805). Like other human activities that took place in a mountain setting, stone-quarrying fell under the tutelage of the goddesses; cf. the Nymph cults associated with the marble quarries of Penteli (Zoridis 1977; Wickens 1986, pp. 202–211, no. 39) and Paros (Bodnar 1973; Larson 2001, pp. 179–181). An awareness of the special connotations of live rock transpires from the inscriptions of other founders of rupestral shrines; see e.g. Artemidorus' dedication of a stone-hewn dolphin in his privately mantained precinct outside the town of Thera, *IG* XII 3, 1347, πέτραι ἐν ἀκαμάτηι δελφῖνα θεοῖσιν ἔτευξεν | εὔνουν ἀνθρώποις νενομισμένον Ἀρτεμίδωρος (Palagia 1992, fig. 48 c, van Straten 1993, fig. 27).

16–17 Ἀπόλλων δὲ δίδωσι καὶ υἱὸς τοῦδε καὶ Ἑρμῆς | αἰῶν' εἰς τὸν ἅπαντα ὑγίειαν καὶ βίον ἐσθλόν

Apollo and Hermes reappear in these verses in the company of an unnamed deity referred to as Apollo's son. With very exceptions (Pache 2011, p. 54: see now Mili 2015, pp. 145 and 177), most existing English translations of Inscription II fail to render line 16 correctly: Connor (1998, p. 163), followed by Larson and Aston (2001, p. 17; 2006, p. 360; see also Bonnechere 2001, p. 35 and note 23) impossibly identifies Apollo's son as Hermes; even more surprisingly υἱὸς τοῦδε is "Heracles' son" in Borgeaud 1995 (p.295: the original French edition of 1993, p. 276, reads "*le fils de celui-ci*"). As mythology and internal symmetry require, the unnamed god is Asclepius, cited by his full name at line 7 with Hygieia and Chiron. The understated manner of Asclepius' second appearance—all the more surprising in a line dedicated to the healing motif—could simply be a matter of metre. His subordination to Apollo is almost a formulaic trait: in Burkert's words, "Asklepios is always the son of Apollo who is himself accorded the epithet Doctor, *Iatros*" (1985, p. 147). Interestingly Hygieia is also brought back in an oblique manner: unlike all other deities in the poem she reappears here not as the bestower of a gift but as the gift itself, according to a motif also noted in the paean of Isyllus (Ἀσκλα|πιὸν . . . δωτῆρ' ὑγιείας, *IG* IV^2 1, 128, lines 51–52. Asclepius himself is invoked in hymnic poetry as μέγα δώρημα βροτοῖς, ibid. line 53; cf. *IG* II^2, 4514, line 20). For an interpretation of Hygieia as "a useful means of representing Asklepios' 'product'" see Stafford 2000, p. 167. καὶ Ἑρμῆς: the regrouping of this countryside god with two medical deities such as Apollo and Asclepius may be explained in light of Thessalian cult, which emphasized Hermes' mediatory role between life and death (Hermes Chthonius). Alternatively Hermes may be present here as Eriunius, 'The Helper', a faculty which gives him jurisdiction over the granting of βίος ἐσθλός, 'good livelihood'. On this notion of 'good' or 'respectable' revenue see e.g. Hes. *Op.* 633–634, ὥς περ ἐμός τε πατὴρ καὶ σός, μέγα νήπιε Πέρση, | πλωίζεσκ' ἐν νηυσί, βίου κεχρημένος ἐσθλοῦ); the belief in Hermes' power to facilitate financial gain is encapsulated in a graffito from the Caseggiato degli Aurighi in Ostia, Ἑρμῆ δίκαιε, κέρδος Ἐκτίκωι [δί]δου, Solin 1972, pp. 194–195). Such a reference to material wealth—the second one after βίον ἄφθονον in line 13—is not incompatible with the healing theme of the section. Health and financial security were two of the three most desirable blessings which the gods could bestow upon a Greek, the third one being relief from war or strife (see commentary to lines 21–22 below). Requests for a lifelong grant (αἰῶν' εἰς τὸν ἅπαντα, cf. 13 ἤματα πάντα) of one, two, or all three of these conditions constitute the focus of most extant Greek prayers: cf. *IG* II^2, 4473, lines 19–20, ἐς αἰ[εὶ θ]άλλειν | ἐν βιοτῇ σὺν τερπνοτάτῃ Ὑγιείᾳ, and the additional examples cited in the commentary to line 22 below. For a general discussion of the subject see the study by Versnel 1981 (especially the section on *'Gebetsegoismus'*, with earlier bibliography, pp. 17–21).

18 Πὰν δὲ γέλωτα καὶ εὐφροσύνην ὕβριν τε δικαίαν

γέλωτα καὶ εὐφροσύνην: two words frequently used in combination, especially to denote festive merrymaking (examples range from Homer to Late Antiquity and beyond,

Od. 20, 8, γυναῖκες / ἧϊσαν, αἳ μνηστῆρσιν ἐμισγέσκοντο πάρος περ, / ἀλλήλῃσι γέλω τε καὶ εὐφροσύνην παρέχουσαι; Lib. *Decl.* 48, 1, 56, νῦν γὰρ ἐν εὐφροσύνῃ μοι τὰ πράγματα καὶ ᾠδαῖς καὶ γέλωτι;). Convivial cheer, such as it would occur at the cave after a sacrifice (cf. the progression θύετε/εὔχεσθε/εὐφραίνεσθε in lines 20–21 below and, for a famous illustration of the revelries that could take place in caves, the final act of Menander's *Dyscolus*) was under the tutelage of Pan and the Nymphs, who received regular prayers at banquets and wedding parties; see, e.g., an Attic drinking song cited by Athenaeus where the Goat God is asked to bless the banqueteers with his own laughter, ὀρχηστὰ βρομίαις ὀπαδὲ Νύμφαις,| γελάσειας ὦ Πὰν ἐπ' ἐμαῖς | †εὐφροσύναις ταῖσδ' ἀοιδαῖς αοιδε† κεχαρημένος (*Deipn.* 15, 50 = *PMG* 887) and another version of the same prayer in Ar. *Thes.* 976–979, Ἑρμῆν τε νόμιον ἄντομαι | καὶ Πᾶνα καὶ Νύμφας φίλας ἐπιγελάσαι προθύμως | ταῖς ἡμετέραισι | χαρέντα χορείαις. Laughter and mirth have however a negative side, as they can degenerate into *hubris*, particularly if fuelled by wine: Ὁ οἶνος, εἰ καιρίως καὶ μετρίως ποθείη, ἄτε τιμηθείς, εὐφροσύνης αἴτιος γίνεται. Εἰ δὲ παροινηθείη, ἀμύνεται τὴν ὕβριν, καὶ δίκας ἀπαιτεῖ τοὺς ὑβρίσαντας, γέλωτα καὶ αἰσχύνην, καὶ κωμῳδίαν, καὶ μώλωπας αὐτοῖς προξενῶν (thus Isidore of Pelusium, *Epist.* 1272, writing in the fifth century CE, but the concept of objectionable laughter is already found in Homer; cf. the shameless conduct of Penelope's housemaids in the above cited passage from the *Odyssey*). Pan's help is crucial for keeping *hubris* within acceptable limits, since this god has the power to both soothe or exacerbate excessive behavior: Pan can use laughter to bring gaiety among the assembled gods (*h.Pan.* 45–47, πάντες δ' ἄρα θυμὸν ἔτερφθεν ἀθάνατοι . . . Πᾶνα δέ μιν καλέεσκον ὅτι φρένα πᾶσιν ἔτερψε) or drive an unfortunate parasite to a paroxystic fit (*POxy* III, 413, line 173, τάλας, δοκῶ πανόλεμπτος γέγονεν ὁ παράσιτος· τάλας, γελᾷ; cf. Borgeaud 1988, pp. 107–108). Considered in this light, ὕβρις δικαία in the second part of the line can also be linked to the sympotic sphere as the climactic element in a tricolon depicting the progressive stages of revelry: laughter, euphoria, excess. Stylistically ὕβρις δικαία is very effective in capturing the reader's attention with its oxymoronic force (on the legal implications of sympotic ὕβρις see e.g. Murray 1983, pp. 268–270). Odd as the comparison may seem, the closest parallel for this striking hapax is found in Aristotle's *Rhetoric*, in a passage where the philosopher describes the inclination of upper class youths for banter as 'educated excess', φιλογέλωτες, διὸ καὶ φιλευτράπελοι· ἡ γὰρ εὐτραπελία πεπαιδευμένη ὕβρις ἐστίν (1389b, 11–12: technically Aristotle's comment is not about sympotic jesting, but the conceptual and sociocultural contexts are similar; Fisher 1992, pp. 91–92, note 41; Borgeaud 1995, pp. 293–296; Halliwell 2008, pp. 307–331, especially 322–325). Long before it was discussed in Aristotle's books, this particular aspect of social etiquette constituted a concern of early aristocratic society, the Homeric suitors providing the oldest and most iconic example of offensive hilarity of all Greek literature. Not surprisingly sympotic self-control is an important principle in Theognis' praecepts about the proper conduct of the 6th century gentleman: 'Εν μὲν συσσίτοισιν ἀνὴρ πεπνυμένος εἶναι.' | πάντα δέ μιν λήθειν ὡς ἀπεόντα δοκεῖ. | εἰς δὲ φέροι τὰ γελοῖα—θύρηφιν καρτερὸς εἴη— | γινώσκων ὀργὴν ἥντιν' ἕκαστος ἔχει (308–311). More than a hundred years later the concept continued to live on as part of the social anxieties of Late Classical city sophisticates; significantly we find echoes of it in an anonymous elegy roughly contemporary to our epigram, *IEG* 27, lines 1–4 (fourth century BCE): χαίρετε συμπόται ἄνδρες ὁμ[.....· ἐ]ξ ἀγαθοῦ γὰρ | ἀρξάμενος τελέω τὸν λόγον [ε]ἰς ἀγα[θό]ν. | χρὴ δ', ὅταν εἰς τοιοῦτο συνέλθωμεν φίλοι ἄνδρες | πρᾶγμα, γελᾶν παίζειν χρησαμένους ἀρετῆι. That a motif so closely associated with the lifestyle of urban elites should appear in a rural context such as ours is a fact which commands attention. To be sure, opportunities for communal drinking must not have been completely absent in the Pharsalian countryside, nor should we expect that all guests at Pharsalian symposia could claim a blue-blooded lineage (e.g. Ar. *V.* 1270–1274 with the comments by Ducat 1994, pp. 15–17, and Mili 2015, p. 117), but overall it is reasonable to assume that the aesthetics of jesting and drinking held little interest for the scattered mountainfolk of the Karapla hill. Peasantry is traditionally depicted in Greek literature as lacking in both humour and table manners (on the humourlessness of the ἄγροικος: Arist. *EN* 1128a, 9; *EE* 1234a, 5, with the discussion by Cullyer 2006, pp. 191–196; cf. Borgeaud 1995, p. 294; Halliwell 2008, p. 322. On the ἄγροικος at dinner: Anaxandr. *PCG* II, fr. 1; Antiph. *PCG* II, fr. 69; see also the overview by Konstantakos 2005, pp. 11–21). Rather, this portrayal of Pantalces as a fun yet proper banqueteer was more likely to appeal to the city crowd that attended the banquets of the local notables and had a better grasp of the issues involved. Thessalians were notorious in Greece for the wild nature of their parties, which are routinely described in Late Classical literature as a rowdy mix of opulence and immoderate behavior (e.g. Theopompus, who specifies that Pharsalians were the worst of all: *FGrH* 115, F 49 and 81; cf. Mnesim. *PCG* VII, fr. 8: on these perceptions about Thessaly, see Pownall 2009; also: Stamatopoulou 2007a, p. 327; Richter 2011, p. 24; Mili 2015, pp. 175 and 262–266). Line 18 thus calls into question the common assumption that the poetry in Inscription II was mostly the product of a localized peasant culture, suggesting that the urban element in the demographics

of the Karapla cult might have been larger than has been hitherto assumed.

19 Χίρων δ' αὐτῶι δῶκε σοφόν τ' ἔμεν[αι] καὶ ἀοιδόν

Last in this catalog of divine ἀντιδόσεις, Chiron's 'education' of Pantalces completes the founder's heroic portrayal by implicitly assimilating him to the illustrious circle of the Centaur's legendary tutees. Chiron was well-known in Greek myth for his mentorship of divine and semidivine youths, including two of his own cultmates on the Karapla hill, Heracles and Asclepius (in whose company he also appears in a bronze group of the 3rd century CE at the British Museum; BM 1242 = *LIMC* III, 1986, p. 246, no. 101, s.v. 'Cheiron'). As Padgett notes, the musical teachings of Chiron reflect a distinctly elitist model which is in line with the already noted ἀγαθὸς ἀνήρ motif running through the poem: "Like the sons of the aristocracy, his pupils learned to play the lyre, and indeed, it has been noted that his 'curriculum', designed especially for mythic heroes, is more in harmony with the schools of the music teacher and the gymnasium instructor than with the teacher of letters" (2003, p. 20). On Chiron's prerogative over the granting of σοφία, cf. *IG* II^2, 4473, lines 11–12, τὸν δ' ἀνὰ Πηλιάδας κορυφὰς ἐδίδαξε [τέ]χνη[ν τε καὶ σο]φίαν Κένταυρος (referring to the rearing of Asclepius).

V Lines 20–22: *Closing Address to Visitors*

In the closing verses the epigram resumes the direct address interrupted by the long narrative section on the santuary and the story of its foundation. Enriched with this knowledge readers are now encouraged to complete their visit by moving on to the upper level of the sanctuary, where they can sacrifice, pray, and enjoy themselves. Our 'guided tour' comes to an end as no further directions are necessary: once on the stairway, visitors will be directed in their next steps by the natural topography of the site. The epigram closes with a promise of peace and well-being for all those who enter the precinct.

20–21 ἀλλὰ τύχαις ἀγαθαῖς ἀναβαίνε[τε], θύετε πάν⟨τ⟩ες | εὔχεσθε, εὐφραίνεσθε

ἀλλὰ: the transition to the epigram's close is marked by a stronger adversative than all other thematic shifts in the text. This second address to the readers is organized as a series of paratactically arranged imperatives extending from the second half of this line to the first half of the next. The imperatives are organized in pairs, each corresponding to a self-contained metrical unit (20 ἀναβαίνε[τε], θύετε πάν⟨τ⟩ες: |⏑ – ⏑⏑ – ⏑⏑ – ⏑, a paroemiac, and 21 εὔχεσθε, εὐφραίνεσθε: –– –– – ⏑|, a hemiepes). The use of parataxis, combined with alliteration, internal rhyming, and the chiastic arrangement of long and short syllabic sequences (ἀναβαίνετ[ε]/θύετε: εὔχεσθε/εὐφραίνεσθε = ABBA), gives these lines the feeling of a live conversation.

τύχαις ἀγαθαῖς: cf. τύχ[α] in the heading of the inscription, line 2 above. Expressions of good wish can frame the text of a document both at the beginning and the end (see, e.g., a foundation text of AD 209–210 from Parthicopolis in Macedonia, *IGBulg* IV 2265, lines 1, ἀγαθῆι τύχηι, and 25, εὐτυχεῖτε). ἀναβαίνε[τε]: i.e. 'take the stairs' to the sacrificial area of the sanctuary (Chapter 2.2.4 and 2.3, p. 32); cf. line 15 above, τούσδε λίθους τύπτων ἐπόησ' ἀναβαίνειν. As J.C. Decourt observes (commentary to *IThess* I, 73, p. 92) the resulting contrast between human ἀναβαίνειν in lines 15, 20 and divine ἐπιβαίνειν in line 11 may have been an intentional effect. θύετε πάν⟨τ⟩ες: πάν⟨τ⟩ες recalls ἅπας θῆλύς τε καὶ ἄρσην in line 1 of the opening address (also placed in the second hemistichium). When considering the rural location of the shrine and the local character of its cults it is tempting to smile at these assumptions regarding the volume of incoming visitors. Yet the votive deposits found in many nymphaea confirm that the rustic nature of these cultplaces did not preclude regular frequentation by city folk and that often such visits could take the form of group excursions (as with the famous sacrificial expedition described in Menander's *Dyscolus*; see Larson 2001, pp. 229–231). We shall also note that πάν⟨τ⟩ες is not meant to emphasize so much the quantity of passing worshippers as the unrestricted character of the cult (a sense which I attempted to convey by the translation "let everyone be free to sacrifice"). Similarly the aforementioned foundation inscription of Xenocrateia from New Phalerum grants freedom to sacrifice to everyone who wishes to do so, θύεν τῶι βουλομένωι ἐπὶ | τελεστῶν ἀγαθῶν (*IG* I^3 987, lines 6–7; cf. p. 64 above). As Purvis notes, on occasion such encouragements to sacrifice also appear in state cult regulations (see, e.g., a fourth century BCE decree from Colophon concerning the building of walls, ἐπιτελῶγ γενομένων τῶν ἀγαθῶν πρόσοδον ποιήσεσθαι καὶ θυσίαν | καθότι ἂν τῶι δήμωι δόξηι, *AJP* 56, 1935, p. 362, col. I, line 20) "... but usually in addition to precise rules for sacrifice" (2003, p. 17). Following Nock (1958, p. 418), Purvis dismisses the possibility that lines 20–21 of our inscription should be interpreted as a sacred ordinance in verse. Yet, even if we cannot call them a *lex sacra* in the strict sense of the word, it is highly likely that these lines were meant to pass on some form of instruction about the proper procedure to be used in the shrine. Rather than a random series of sacred acts, ἀναβαίνετ[ε], θύετε, εὔχεσθε, εὐφραίνεσθε appear to be steps in a structured ritual sequence. This sequence is shaped by religious custom as well as topography: prayers (εὔχεσθε) and feasting (εὐφραίνεσθε) are

traditional accompaniments to sacrifice (θύετε); here we found them adapted to the distinctive configuration of the Karapla site (ἀναβαίνετ[ε]), with each 'step' in the sequence corresponding to a transition in the shrine's physical layout (ἀναβαίνετ[ε]: stairs; θύετε, εὔχεσθε: altar; εὐφραίνεσθε: terrace? See Chapter 2.2.4 above). Such 'informal' cultic prescriptions are not unknown to the epigrammatic genre, see e.g. a funerary inscription from Stratonicea, *GVI* 985, line 9, ὡς ᾗ[ρῳ | π]ᾳ̣λ̣[αν]οῃ̣ πυρί μο[ι θ]έτε καὶ σ[τε]-|[φ]ανοῦτε.

21–22 κακῶν ἐπίλησις ἁπάν⟨των⟩ | ἐνθάδ' ἔνεστ', ἀγαθῶν δὲ [δόσις] πολέμοιο τε νίκη

The poem ends with one final catalogic structure listing the blessings that await visitors inside the precinct. First comes "forgetfullness of all evils", a construct inspired by Hom. *Od.* 4, 221, κακῶν ἐπίληθον ἁπάντων; cf. Pi. *P.* 1, 46, εἰ γὰρ ὁ πᾶς χρόνος ὄλβον μὲν οὕτω καὶ κτεάνων δόσιν εὐθύνοι, καμάτων δ' ἐπίλασιν παράσχοι. The second *desideratum,* ἀγαθῶν δὲ [4–5] must have been a symmetrical opposite of the first, e.g. 'abundance of good things' or some similar concept (cf. an Ἐπιτελεία τῶν ἀγάθων listed with Δίκα and Ὁμονοια among the city gods of Mytilene in a decree of the fourth century BCE, *SEG* 36, 750, lines 7–8). Giannopoulos restores [λάχ]ο[ς], 'allotment'; I prefer to print [δόσις] on comparison with κτεάνων δόσιν in the Pindaric passage cited above, noting that this choice would be thematically more suited to the motif of divine 'giving' found in the central part of the poem (13 ἀντίδοσαν, 14 ἔδ⟨ω⟩κ', 16 δίδωσι, 19 δῶκε). Not as transparent, instead (at least to a modern readership), is the continuity of thought between the first two items in the series and the last, "victory in war", unless an alternative translation is adopted, perhaps "victory over war", with πολέμοιο understood as an objective genitive: cf. "*Besiegung des Krieges*" Peek 1938 p. 25; "a halt to war" Borgeaud 1995, p. 295. Peace or relief from conflict appear alongside health and abundance as a common request in prayers, see e.g. the Attic scolion to Athena *PMG* 884 (Παλλὰς Τριτογένει' ἄνασσ' Ἀθηνᾶ, | ὄρθου τήνδε πόλιν τε καὶ πολίτας | ἄτερ ἀλγέων ⟦τε⟧ καὶ στάσεων | καὶ θανάτων ἀώρων, σύ τε καὶ πατήρ) and, for an epigraphical parallel, the *lex sacra* accompanying Isyllus' paean to Asclepius, (ἀγνῶς πομπεύειν καὶ ἐπεύχεσθαι πολιάταις | πᾶσιν ἀεὶ διδόμεν τέκνοις τ' ἐρατὰν ὑγίειαν, | τὰν καλοκαγαθίαν τ' Ἐπιδαυροῖ ἀεὶ ῥέπεν ἀνδρῶν | εὐνομίαν τε καὶ εἰράναν καὶ πλοῦτον ἀμεμφῆ, | ὥραις ἐξ ὡρᾶν νόμον ἀεὶ τόνδε σέβοντας, *IG* IV^2 1, 128, 21–25). As in these texts from Attica and the Argolid, the reference to peace in our epigram is likely to have been inspired by a period of uncertainty or crisis in local history. The early fourth century is known to have been a difficult time for Pharsalus, with years marred by unsuccessful military events (vz. the routing of the Pharsalian cavalry by Agesilaus, X. *HG* 4, 3, 7–8—an occurrence which took place in the immediate neighborhood of our cave) as well as civic strife (the στάσις which lead to the ascent of Polydamas, X. *HG* 6, 1, 2; cf. Gehrke 1985, p. 126). Similarly, around the end of the same century, the unfavorable outcome of the Lamian war, marked by the defeat of Meno IV at the hand of Polyperchon in 321 BCE, ushered in for the Pharsalians a long period of economic and social decline that culminated with the population shortages of the late Hellenistic Period (Asheri 1966, pp. 30–31; Stamatopoulou 2007, pp. 225–226: see pp. 14–15 and note 108 above). As Borgeaud puts it, πολέμοιο τε νίκη could be understood in light of "the oppressive climate of domestic war that reigned at that time in Thessaly" (1995, p. 295). Nonetheless it would be imprudent to dismiss entirely the possibility of a literal reading 'victory in war': military success had its own place among the *desiderata* of ancient Greek life, see e.g. the other Attic scolion *PMG* 888, ἐνικήσαμεν ὡς ἐβουλόμεσθα | καὶ νίκην ἔδοσαν θεοὶ φέροντες | παρὰ Πανδρόσου †ὡς φίλην Ἀθηνᾶν†, and, for the conceptual framework, X. *Hipparchicus* 8, 7, καὶ μὴν τό γ' ἐν πολέμῳ νικᾶν πολλῷ ἐνδοξότερον ἢ πυγμῇ· μετέχει μὲν γάρ τι καὶ ἡ πόλις ταύτης τῆς δόξης· ὡς δὲ τὰ πολλὰ ἐπὶ τῇ τοῦ πολέμου νίκῃ καὶ εὐδαιμονίᾳ οἱ θεοὶ τὰς πόλεις στεφανοῦσιν, ὥστ' οὐκ οἶδ' ἔγωγε τί προσήκει ἄλλ' ἄττα μᾶλλον ἀσκεῖσθαι ἢ τὰ πολεμικά. Nor are the Karapla cave and its cults necessarily incompatible with military ideology, as mantained by Peek (1938, p. 25): indeed we shall note that at least two of the deities listed in our epigram have traditional associations with the world of war, namely Apollo and Pan. In agreement with the epic 'color' observed in the rest the poetry, the epigram ends with a Homeric genitive. Second declension genitives in -οιο also appear in regular Thessalian usage, see *IG* IX 2, p. 338 (*Indices*, X. *Exempla Sermonis Thessalici*).

2.5 *Conclusions* (*Pantalces: Construction of a Cult Founder*)

> Caves invite heroic activity.
> BOARDMAN, *The Archaeology of Nostalgia*

There can be no doubt that one of the main reasons for the enduring interest of scholars in the Pharsalian cave is Pantalces himself, the ancient builder whose personality continues to exercise a fascination from behind rock-cut words on the Karapla hill. For in contrast to other known founders of local Nymph cults, such as Archedamus and Onesagoras, Pantalces' epigraphic legacy is not limited to prosaic cult records but includes a poetic account, in

a simple but competent epigrammatic style, of the sanctuary, its gods, and Pantalces' special relation to each of them.[31] The advantage that this 'portrait in verse' has over the pictorial representations we possess of Archedamus and Onesagoras is the immediacy of the medium: unlike the mute portraits of the two other cave founders, marked in so many ways by the 'otherness' of a different time and culture,[32] the hexameters of Inscription II speak to us in familiar tones, recreating the illusion of a live voice. But whose voice is that which we are enticed into hearing? A considerable number of scholars, stretching the limits of the palaeographical evidence, are eager to believe that the epigram was composed by Pantalces himself, some decades after he completed the work dedicated in Inscription I:

> He might have begun his work as a young man with the shorter inscription and composed the longer one as a valedictory, summarizing his achievements and making it clear that he expected the cave to be maintained for posterity (Larson 2001, p. 18, after Peek 1938, p. 25).

At the opposite end of this spectrum are others who even doubt the historical authenticity of the founder's figure, suggesting that Pantalces, 'The All-Powerful' could be a figment of local lore inspired by the formidable rock-cuttings surviving at the site:

> [Pantalces'] very name, which expresses that insuperable might that he takes after Heracles, gives the impression of having been deliberately invented for the purpose (Comparetti 1923–1924, p. 152).

As Himmelman-Wildschütz was the first to point out,[33] however, it is highly unlikely that inscriptions I and II could be the work of the same author—be he a true historical character or an ingenious counterfeiter. Rather, these texts seem to reflect two chronologically and qualitatively different occasions in the cave's history, i.e. the original landscaping of the sanctuary (by a Pantalces whose name, when considered *per se*, offers no reasons for suspicion)[34] and the poetic celebration of this distant event by a later sanctuary patron. This interpretation is supported not only by the substantial differences in the lettering and spelling of the two inscriptions—far too extreme to be ascribed to the same engraver—but also the absence, in Inscription II, of any personal references or other information that would necessarily imply Pantalces' authorship.[35] Indeed, as we shall see in the next section, what has been interpreted as the autobiographic memoir of a rustic sanctuary founder at the end of his career is a literary fiction crafted at a time when all memory of the historical Pantalces had been lost.

J.C. Decourt was the first to recognize a 'heroic' undercurrent in the depiction of Pantalces at lines 10–19 of Inscription II:

> We perceive . . . a barely sketched, very discrete attempt, first to elevate (ἀναβαίνειν) Pantalces to the level of human being par excellence, ἄνδρα ἀγαθόν, then to the rank of hero, equipped with all the moral and physical qualities, and protected by numerous divinities. A hero that does know toil (ἐξεπονήσατο), surely, yet one that definitely rises above the human measure.[36]

Noting the absence of genealogical references—a fact which would prevent this text from qualifying as heroization

31 On the epigraphic record from the Vari cave: Schörner and Goette 2004, pp. 42–59 (inscriptions), 60–77 (inscribed reliefs), 95–100 (graffiti on ceramic). From the cave at Kafizin: Friis 1953; Mitford 1980; Masson 1981.

32 Beginning with W. Gell in 1805 (Binyon 1900, p. 194, nos. 26, 37, 38), the rock-cut relief of Archedamus in a chiton with mason's tools in hand has been reproduced in many drawings and photographs. For a comprehensive pictorial survey on this unusual artifact see Schörner and Goette 2004, pp. 31–41, plates 10: 3–11: 1–2 and 22:1 (Gell, drawing), 23: 2 (J. Jackson, drawing), 25: 1 (L. Ross, drawing), 27: 1 (H.G. Lolling, engraving), 28: 1 (E. Curtius and J.A. Kaupert, engraving). On the bearded visage—presumably a portrait of Onesagoras?—which appears on the pottery from Kafizin see Mitford 1980 pass. and the comments by Pache 2011, pp. 60–66.

33 Himmelman-Wildschütz 1957a, p. 17. Other scholars who do not support the single author theory are the inscriptions' latest editor, J.C. Decourt (commentary to *IThess* I, 73, p. 91) and H.S. Versnel (2011, p. 120). C.O. Pache's recent study on the poetics of nympholepsy is ambiguous on this topic, although a reference to Pantalces' "self-presentation" (2011, p. 52) presupposes a view similar to Larson's et al.

34 On the name Παντάλκης see commentary to Inscription I above, line 1.

35 Citing Hdt. 1, 30; 32 as an example, Himmelman-Wildschütz questioned also the possibility that an individual would contradict all rules of religious piety by publically boasting about such god-granted privileges as those listed in lines 10–19 of Inscription II (1957a, p. 17, note 10).

36 Decourt, commentary to *IThess* I, 73, p. 92.

in a technical sense[37]—Decourt concludes however that Pantalces was never fully heroized at the cave. The founder's portrayal in Inscription II shows the traits of an ideal shepherd-philosopher, reminiscent of certain creations of later pastoral literature, but this idealization does not go beyond the human level ("he is never presented as a 'hero' in the strict sense of the word . . . and remains, therefore, a shepherd", 1995 p. 93). Nor, according to Decourt, did the reputation of the cave and its cults ever extend beyond the nearby villages and the local shepherd population: for him, the epigram in Inscription II is ultimately the result of "a religion that is at once popular and relatively refined in its expression" (commentary to *IThess* I, 73, p. 94).

Decourt's penetrating reading of lines 9–10 is crucial to the understanding of this composition. His identification of the subtle heroic theme that underlies the literary portrait of Pantalces—even in the absence of explicit, full-scale heroization and of any material evidence associated with hero cult—introduces a new angle from which to analyze this unusual poetry. However it is difficult to follow the French scholar in all of his conclusions. For example, we have no real reason to assume that Pantalces was a shepherd, much less that his portrait in Inscription II reflects the values and beliefs of a pastoral community.[38] It is true—as has been discussed in the previous chapters—that the socio-economic milieu of the cave was made up by categories associated with the world of the *oros* (p. 32 above). These included on the other hand a fair representation of city-dwellers, commuters or people who ventured to the mountain for occasional errands, e.g. a hunting expedition or a pilgrimage:[39] such bourgeois interactions with the rural countryside are famously illustrated in Menandrean comedy.[40] For all we know, Pantalces could have been a hunter who decided to honor the local Nymphs following a particularly meaningful encounter with the goddesses on the Karapla hill. Or a returning visitor from the surrounding district, pilgrim or picnic goer, someone who knew and cherished the cave from its pre-architectural phase.[41] Since the historical Pantalces who engraved Inscription I left no indication about his family, profession, or social status, it is impossible to know with certainty.[42]

Epigraphically, the omission of personal information in a dedicatory inscription is not unusual.[43] More surprising is instead its absence in a document like Inscription II, where it would have been relevant to the *aition* of the cave and the commemoration of its founder. Himmelmann-Wildschütz, in his important study of 1957, surmised that Pantalces may have been a familiar enough figure, at the local level, to require no detailed referencing.[44] The opposite is more likely to be true, namely that at the time of the epigram's composition very little knowledge had survived at the cave about its founder. In all probability, the author of Inscription II had to recreate Pantalces' character and the circumstances of the cave's foundation on purely autoschediastic grounds, working from the scanty data in Inscription I and the visual evidence he had at hand. Following the lead of Inscription I, which alludes

37 Decourt commentary to *IThess* I, 73, p. 93. On genealogy in Greek culture and society see especially Thomas 1989, pp. 173–195.

38 In his aforementioned study of 1995, for example, P. Borgeaud calls the Karapla cult a "rural cult for the use of city-dwellers". Borgeaud likewise identifies the passersby addressed by Inscription II as "the visiting city-dweller" (p. 295). The rural setting of most Nymph caves did not imply, necessarily, rural demographics and economics. At the nymphaeum of Kafizin on Cyprus, the founder of the cult himself, Onesagoras, appears to have been a barber by profession (κουρεύς). The inscriptions found at this site (by Onesagoras and his business associates, a group of flax and linseed merchants referred to as the 'company of Androclus') reflect concerns which are unmistakebly bourgeois in nature. See Mitford 1980; Masson 1981; Pache 2004, pp. 55–70. Larson calls the Kafizin cave a "religious locus for commercial enterprise" 2001, p. 258.

39 Cf. Larson 2001, pp. 226–231. Elsner and Rutherford 2005, pp. 18–19 also comment briefly on local pilgrimage to Nymph caves and *oreibasia*. A substantial number of graffiti related to ancient and modern pilgrim activities have survived at the cave of Melidoni (Tallaeum Antrum) in Crete; Tzifopoulos and Litinas 2009; Tzifopoulos 2011.

40 Traditionally cited plays, in this regard, are the *Dyscolus* and *Hero*. The *Dyscolus* is our main literary source on the patronage of rural cults by city folk (and the excessive forms that such devotion could take: cf. Handley's commentary to lines 262–263 and the relevant remarks by Elsner and Rutherford 2005, p. 18). Both plays offer examples of city-dwellers venturing to the countryside on hunting trips. *Hero*: p. 50, note 58.

41 Caves could be sought by city dwellers as an alternative setting for drinking parties in the heat of summer; for an example in the immediate neighborhood of Pharsalus see the story of Pulydamas at p. 91 below.

42 Generally speaking, the use of poetic *koinê* rather than the local parlance (ἀνέθεκε for ὀνείθεκε, 2) does not seem to mesh well with the herdsman hypothesis. On the other hand, in the absence of adequate evidence on the literacy of the region, such arguments must be used with caution.

43 Cf. e.g. another rock-cut dedication at the west end of Pharsalus (from the hilltop precinct of Zeus Thaulios, no longer visible today; cf. p. 16 above and note 76 below), Δὶ Θαυλίωι |ἀνχιστῶν οἱ περὶ Παρ-|μένισκον (*IThess.* I, 62; further examples from Pharsalus, including funerary monuments, are *IThess.* I, 64; 67; 69; 95; 98–100). On Greek naming conventions: McLean 2002, pp. 74–111; on the language of Greek dedications: ibid. pp. 246–259.

44 1957, pp. 10–11.

to the dedication of architectural work (ἔργον) and a live plant (δάφ[ναν]), the anonymous composer chose to represent the foundation of the sanctuary as the result of two landscaping acts—the building of a stairway (τούσδε λίθους τύπτων ἐπόησ' ἀναβαίνειν) and the planting of a garden (ταῦτ' ἐφύτευσε καὶ ἐξεπονήσατο χερσίν). We can be almost certain that these were also the most prominent features of the sanctuary in his time: still today, the small elm grove at the base of the cliff and the powerful rock-cut steps leading up to the cave are the two visually outstanding elements in an otherwise unchanging scenery of scrub and naked rock. From such a felicitous marriage of epigraphy and landscape the 'construction' of Pantalces was born. Epigraphy contributed to this creation beyond the mere transmission of information: we can expect that a name like ΠΑΝΤΑΛΚΕΣ ('The All-Powerful'), carved in an old fashioned letterstyle above the massive steps of the stairway, made quite an impression on the ancient composer, as it doubtlessly did on most contemporary cave patrons, conjuring up images of a bygone epic might.[45] It is this kind of highly evocative context that provided the inspiration for a line like

> τούσδε λίθους τύπτων ἐπόησ' ἀναβαίνειν
>
> he pounded these rocks and turned them into a way up.

To the Greek mythopoeic mind, carving shrines out of rocky wastes and bringing them to life with trees was often the work of gods and heroes. Pantalces' foundation on the stony side of the Karapla could thus be perceived as a distant mirror of similar superhuman efforts, such as Apollo's foundation of the Ptoan oracle (also a cave?[46] Pi. fr. 91 a Snell-Maehler):

> προ[.]ινηθεὶς ἐπῆεν
> γᾶν τε καὶ <– –> θάλασσαν
> καὶ σκοπιαῖσιν [ἄκρ]αις ὀρέων ὕπερ ἔστα
> καὶ μυχοὺς διζάσατο βαλλόμενος κρηπῖδας ἀλσ<έω>ν.
>
> Roaming, he traversed the land and the ... sea, and stood on the steep look-outs of the mountains, and sought deep hollows, laying the foundations of groves,

or Heracles' planting of Olympia (Pi. *O.* 3, lines 13–18):

> . . . ἐλαίας, τάν ποτε
> Ἴστρου ἀπὸ σκιαρᾶν
> παγᾶν ἔνεικεν Ἀμφιτρυωνιάδας,
> μνᾶμα τῶν Οὐλυμπίᾳ κάλλιστον <ἀέ>θλων,
> δᾶμον Ὑπερβορέων πείσαις Ἀπόλ-
> λωνος θεράποντα λόγῳ·
> πιστὰ φρονέων Διὸς αἴτει πανδόκῳ
> ἄλσει σκιαρόν τε φύτευμα
> ξυνὸν ἀνθρώποις στέφανόν τ' ἀρετᾶν.
>
> . . . the olive which once the son of Amphitryon brought from the shady springs of the Danube to be the most beautiful memorial of the Olympian contests, when he had persuaded the Hyperborean people, the servants of Apollo, with speech. With trustworthy intentions he was entreating them for a shady plant, to be shared by all men and to be a garland of excellence in the grove of Zeus which is hospitable to all (transl. Svarlien).

In the rest of the epigram, which never rises again to the quality of line 15 but is rather formulaic in both style and content, a number of epicisms and Homerisms woven into the poetry give further epic flavor to Pantalces' tale. The anonymous poet would have been predisposed to this epic interpretation of local history by the cultural context in which he was raised. The belief in their city's heroic roots—through its identification with Phthia and the kingdom of Achilles—provided Pharsalian artists and craftsmen with a special propensity for looking at the past through the lens of epic. Evidence for this epicizing trend can be found, from the Early Iron Age onwards, in many areas of Pharsalian material culture. Famous vases discovered locally, such as the Sophilus dinos or the calyx crater in the manner of Exekias,[47] confirm the local elite's

45 In Pache's words, "Space . . . becomes the repository of memories and stories, and the initial encounter [sc. between nymphs and cave founder] lives on in the imagination of the visitors to the site" (2011, p. 38).

46 The precinct of Apollo on Mt. Ptoum included an artificial cave (μυχός?) found during the excavations of the École Française at the site, see Guillon 1953, pp. 96, 137, 140–141, plate xiv; Ustinova 2009, pp. 113–116; Friese 2013, p. 231. In another fragment Pindar refers again to the Ptoan sanctuary as κευθμών, 'recess': καί ποτε τὸν τρικάρανον | Πτωΐου κευθμῶνα κατέσχεθε κοῦ[ρος] (91 b Snell-Maehler; on the interpretation of this text see Guillon 1953; Wagman 1986; Olivieri 2004).

47 Both vessels represent scenes from the aftermath of Patroclus' death at Troy. The well-known dinos by Sophilus from Ktouri (Athens, National Museum 15499: Beazley *ABV* pp. 39–40, no. 16; *Paral.* 18) depicts the hero's funeral games; the calyx crater from

taste for artwork with Homeric themes. The anachronistic use of Mycenean tomb designs in Pharsalian funerary architecture of the sixth / fifth centuries BCE is especially revealing about the desire of such elites to connect with the epic past.[48] It seems reasonable to assume that this trend permeated local poetry as much as it did architecture or the other crafts. Not much is known about Thessalian poets and their work,[49] but a first century BCE inscription from Larissa, concerning memorial games for the dead in an unspecified military operation,[50] appears to confirm a fondness for epic forms (*IG* IX 2, 531, lines 10–13; 44–49: especially worth-noting are the 'catalog',[51] performed in both the 'old fashioned' and 'modern' styles, and the 'epic encomium'):

> οἱ νενεικηκότες | ταυροθηρίᾳ· Μᾶρκος Ἀρρό<ν>τιος. | καταλογ[ῇ π]αλαιᾷ· Φίλων Φίλωνος | ὁ νεώτερος. (…) σκοπῷ ἱππέων· Ἀριστομένης Ἀσα[ν]-|δρίδου. ἐνκωμίῳ λογικῷ· | Κόϊντος Ὄκριος Κοΐντου. ἐνκω-|μίῳ ἐπικῷ· Ἀμώμητος Φιλοξ<ε>νί-|δου. καταλογῇ νέᾳ· | Φίλων Φίλωνος ὁ νεώτερος. | ἐπιγράνματι· Ἀμώμη-|τος Φιλοξενίδου.
>
> The winners in the bull hunt: Marcus Arruntius. In the old catalog: Philon son of Philon, the Younger. (…) In horseback-shooting: Aristomenes son of Asandrides. In the logic encomium: Quintus Ocrius son of Quintus. In the epic encomium: Amometus son of Philoxenides. In the modern catalog: Philon son of Philon, the Younger. In the epigram: Amometus son of Philoxenides.

In light of these considerations it is not surprising that our poet, when called to recreate a distant event of regional history such as the foundation of the Karapla sanctuary, would frame his tale in epic terms, particularly since the physical evidence at hand—a set of massive rock-carvings bearing the signature 'Pantalces' in early lettering—did so conveniently lend itself to a heroizing interpretation. If these clues hewn into the local rock provided the initial inspiration for Pantalces' portrait, the remainder of his personality was modeled on conventional motifs borrowed from encomiastic and funerary poetry. For another important factor in determining the register of the poetry, was the fact that the cave founder had been dead at the time of the composition:[52] even more so than a ἥρως

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the so-called Verdelis Tomb in Pharsalus' west cemetery (Athens, National Museum inv. 26746: Beazley *ABV* p. 148, no. 9) is a close replica of an Exekias original at the Agora Museum showing the fight for Patroclus' arms (AP 1044: *Hesperia* 6, 1937, pp. 469–486). See also an inscribed dedication to Homer found near Pharsala's main square (perhaps from a Homereium?), Larissa Archaeological Museum inv. 660 = *IThess* I, 56, [Ὅ]μηρον Φαρσαλίων ἡ [πόλις]. For further evidence on the city's associations with the Homeric epos see Moustaka 1983, pp. 60–63, and, for a recent discussion on the topic, Mili 2015, pp. 175–176. The acquisition of high quality Attic pottery by Thessalian aristocrats was recently discussed at the conference *Οι εισαγωγές της αττικής μελανόμορφης και ερυθρόμορφης κεραμικής στη Θεσσαλία,* held at the University of Thessaly in December 2010*;* see especially A. Alexandridou, "Αττική μελανόμορφη κεραμεική στη Θεσσαλία του 6ο αιώνα π.χ. Ειδικές παραγγελίες και τοπική αριστοκρατία", and, for a summary of the conference: Stamatopoulou 2011, p. 79.

48 "A notable and recurrent feature of Thessalian elites is their deliberate wish to associate with the past by choosing to build tholos tombs similar in appearance to those of Late Helladic III C, and often in close proximity to them" Stamatopoulou 2007a, p. 316; see also a discussion of the evidence at pp. 328–330. The best known example of this trend in Pharsalian funerary architecture is the so-called Verdelis Tomb in the city's west cemetery, a late sixth / early fifth century replica of a Mycenaean tholos tomb built over an earlier burial of the Late Helladic II B. Excavated by N. Verdelis in the early 1950's (*PAAH* 1951, pp. 157–163; 1952, pp. 185–195; 1953, pp. 127–132; 1954, pp. 153–155), today this remarkable monument is believed by many to have been a *heroum* (Stamatopoulou 2011, p. 79). The discovery, in the tomb's *dromos*, of the aforementioned vase depicting the fight over the body of Patroclus (note 47 above) has even prompted some scholars to suggest that the site may have housed a cult of Achilles (e.g. Marzolff 1994, p. 267; contra Mili 2015, p. 176, note 177).

49 For a survey of the epigraphic evidence see Bouvier 1975. See also a [ποιητὴς ἐ]πῶμ honored in a proxeny decree from Lamia for having worthily memorialized the city in his public exhibitions, [ἐν τὰμ] πόλιν δείξεις ἐποιήσατ[ο] | [ἐν αἷς] τᾶς πόλιος ἀξίως ἐπεμνάσ[θη] (*IG* IX 2, 63, lines 3–5).

50 Perhaps an event in the early stage of the war against Perseus of Macedonia; Bouvier 1975, p. 258 (after a suggestion by L. and J. Robert, *Bull. Épigr.* 1964, p. 227).

51 A poetic form associated, like the encomium, with funerary or memorial functions (Hsch. s.v. καταλέγεσθαι· ὀδύρεσθαι τὸν τεθνεῶτα, but apparently without musical accompaniment, ibid. s.v. καταλογή· τὸ τὰ ᾄσματα μὴ ὑπὸ μέλει λέγειν). The 'old-fashioned catalog', καταλογὴ παλαιά, appears in two other similar inscriptions from Larissa, *SEG* 53, 550, lines 14–15 (honoring the dead at the 'battle of the gorge'), and *IG* IX 2, 532, lines 11–12 (honoring the dead in an unidentified military engagement). On the distinction between 'old-fashioned' and 'modern' catalogs see Bouvier 1975, p. 259; Petrovic 2009, pp. 208–209. On the catalogic elements in our epigram, see commentary at pp. 72–73; 180 above.

52 For Peek the language and content of lines 10–19 of the epigram argue for Pantalces still being alive at the time of the composition (1938, p. 25). Expressions such as ἤματα πάντα (13), αἰῶν' εἰς τὸν ἅπαντα (17), and the like, simply indicate a continuing situa-

κτίστης, Pantalces could be evoked as a ἥρως in the funerary sense of the world, and thus celebrated accordingly.[53] Qualities such as nobleness, strength, virtue, knowledge, and even convivial cheer, are all familiar themes of the funerary epigram.[54] Thus, in an epitaph from Sicinus, the ἀρετή and κράτος of the warrior Archus earn him a place in "the precincts of the blessed and the shrines of heroes" (*IG* XII Suppl. 183 = *GVI* 1515, lines 1–5):

> [ἐν μακάρων τ]ε̣μένεσσιν ἐν ἡρώοισί τε, Ἄρχε,
> [ναίεις, ά δ' ἀ]ρετὰ λάμπει ἐν ἀμερίοις
> [δαλοῦσ' –⏑]ου υἱέ, τό τευ κράτος· οὐδ' ὁ δολόφρων
> [ἐχθρὸς ποι]ητοῦ μέλπετ' ἀπὸ στόματος,
> [ἀλλά τυ· εὐί]ππων γὰρ Ἄρης φίλος·
>
> Archus, you now dwell in the precincts of the blessed and the shrines of heroes but your valor shines on among the living, showing your strength, O son of. . . . Nor is the treacherous enemy celebrated by a poet's lips: you are. For Ares of the beautiful horses is fond of you,

while in another epitaph from the Athenian Agora, wine-loving Aphrodisius fondly reminesces about the εὐφροσύνη of his former *dolce vita*, βίος ἡδύς (*IG* II^2, 13151 = *GVI* 1301, lines 1–7):

> [βαιὸν ἐ]π̣ι̣στήσας στήλῃ κανθόν, παροδε[ίτα τῇ]-
> [δε ἐν τ]ῷ̣ τύμβῳ γνώρισον ὅσσα λέγω· ἦ ν[ύ ποτε]
> [ἐν ζ]ωοῖσιν ἐγὼ βίον ἡδὺν ἄθρησα πάση[ς γ' εὐ]-
> [φρ]οσύνης ἐντὸς ἐὼν γ[λυκ]ε̣ί̣[ης καὶ] φ̣[ίλος ἦν αἰεὶ]
> [Β]άκχος ἐμοὶ Βρόμιος τ[- - - - - - - c.16 - - - - - - - εὖ]-
> [τρ]οφον ἀνδράσι καρπὸν ζήσας μζ' καλῶ[ς ἐνι]-
> [αυτούς. κεῖ]μαι δ' ἐν φθιμένοις Ἀφροδε[ίσιος]
>
> Settling your little eye upon the stele on this tomb, passerby, learn what I say. Among the living I had quite a wonderful time, lots of fun, and Dionysus was always my friend . . . the fruit that feeds men well . . . But after forty-seven years of good life I, Aphrodisius, lie now with the dead.

Valor and sympotic congeniality are twin aspects of the heroic persona amply documented in funerary iconography.[55] It is no accident that Pantalces' portrayal begins with a reference to his strength and ends with references to his abilities as a banqueteer and a musician (or rather a bard, ἀοιδός, in accordance with the epic flavor of the poetry).

Beyond the two examples discussed above, endless parallels could be cited for the qualities that Pantalces shares with the epigraphical dead. His 'special' relationship to the deities of the cave is no less conventional than the other themes. Just as each of Pantalces' moral and physical prerogatives is traced to the tutelage of a corresponding deity, so the warrior Archus and the reveller Aphrodisius are depicted respectively as protégés of Ares and Dionysus.

Where the composer of our epigram shows his originality is in the ability to adapt such broad rhetorical themes to local reality. The deities listed in Inscription II may or may not have been all recipients of actual worship at the cave, but they doubtlessly belong to the religious world of Thessaly.[56] Most importantly, the main quality which Pantalces', and the majority of such encomia, are predicated upon—nobleness, a *condicio sine qua non* for heroic commemoration—is traced in this case to the founder's interaction with the spirits of the place. In an interesting variant of the traditional motif, it is the Karapla Nymphs who 'make' Pantalces an ἀγαθὸς ἀνήρ. The transformative power of contact with these goddesses is a common theme of many folktales in both ancient and modern

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tion in life without any implications as to the relative time of the narrative (i.e. without qualifying the situtation as 'current' or 'past'). One could argue indeed that only the dead are in a position to speak of life 'as a whole', since they can look at it objectively from the 'outside'. References to a former life of continuous, unbroken well-being are far from unusual in the narratives of the deceased; see e.g. the epitaph of Aphrodisius cited below, [ἐν ζ]ωοῖσιν ἐγὼ βίον ἡδὺν ἄθρησα πάση[ς γ' εὐ]-|[φρ]οσύνης ἐντὸς ἐὼν γ[λυκ]ε̣ί̣[ης (*IG* II^2, 13151 = *GVI* 1301).

53 Cf. the use of ἥρως as 'deceased' in Thessalian epitaphs of Hellenistic and Roman times, especially in the formula ἥρως (χρηστὲ) χαῖρε; for two examples from the area of Pharsalus and vicinities, see *IThess* I, 104 and 107. Discussion in Lattimore 1942, pp. 97–99. I am indebted to Laurent Darmezin and the other participants of a seminar I gave in Lyon in 2005 for a helpful discussion of the funerary aspects in this poetry.

54 Stressing the rhetorical nature of such motifs is not to deny the value of epitaphs as biographical documents; see Bodel's lucid discussion on the topic in 2001, pp. 30–41. On the other hand, as the same author repeatedly warns, "epitaphs attest commemorative habits rather than demographic realities" (ibid. p. 36).

55 An apt example of the relevance of the banquet in funerary and heroic iconography is the type of sculptural votive known as Totenmahl reliefs; see Rouse 1902, pp. 20–23 and the wide-ranging studies by Thönges-Stringaris 1965 and Dentzer 1982. Further bibliography in Stamatopoulou 2010.

56 See e.g. Decourt, commentary to *IThess* I, 73, p. 93 and, more recently, the aforementioned paper by Aston 2012.

Greek culture.[57] Using Inscription I as a basis for developing a similar narrative about Pantalces and the local Nymphs, our poet was able to craft, simultaneously, both an aetiology for the sanctuary and a noble status for its founder.[58] Mutually explanatory, the two accounts—that of the κτίσις and that of the ἥρως—were woven together into a tale effectively integrated into the physical landscape of the sanctuary. After reading Inscription II, pilgrims could turn to Inscription I to catch a closer glimpse of the founding hero commemorated in the epigram. We can imagine that they approached these ancient carvings with reverence, as they ascended the stairs to the cave, but is probable that, just like us, they would only be able to decipher them partly (see section 4.1.5 above).

Disappointing as it is to renounce a biographical reading of Inscription II, we must conclude that this document, albeit longer and seemingly richer in detail, sheds no more light on the historical Pantalces than does Inscription I. It does present us, on the other hand, with an interesting study in reception, showing how Pharsalians would reflect upon and construct their past. If the founder of the Karapla cave had indeed been a shepherd, as some scholars suggest, he was certainly not memorialized as one.[59] Physical prowess and proper sympotic etiquette are traits more plausibly associated with the culture of urban elites than the pastoral world. The composer of our epigram crafted a character consistent with contemporary Pharsalian views about the city's past, which, shared as they may have been by different strata of the local population, had their original roots in aristocratic ideology.[60] The perception of Pantalces as a happy rustic is a modern construct, not an ancient one.[61]

As to the circumstances which prompted the engraving of the epigram in Inscription II, the following possibilities might be considered. The composition could be the effort of a competent amateur, a private dedication much like Pantalces' own. Or it could be the work of a professional hired specifically for the purpose, in connection with a special occasion at the sanctuary. The second hypothesis, although supported by the use of the heading θεός (considered unusual for a private dedication, cf. commentary to line 1 above), seems unlikely on grounds of style; see below, p. 93. In either case the object of such an engraving was to provide the sanctuary with an 'official past' for visitors to refer to. The need for this kind of testimony could be taken as indirect proof for the relevance of the sanctuary in local cult. As we have seen, proximity to the city and visibility from two important communication routes extended the patronage of the Karapla cave beyond the local shepherd population. If it is sufficiently clear that Inscription II reflects an effort to restore the sanctuary's memory, what remains to be established is who might have been responsible for a cultural operation of this sort, either by composing and engraving the epigram himself or hiring professionals to perform these tasks. Was it an especially devout patron? An individual or a group of people in charge of the cave's upkeeping?[62] The lack of official records weighs against the possibility that the Karapla

57 For a broad overview of the material ancient and modern see Larson 2001, pp. 61–90. On the transformative power of Nymph encounters see Pache 2011.

58 It should be remembered that Nymphs are closely associated with both foundation myths and heroic genealogy (see e.g. the examples discussed in Larson 2001). Although not properly the son of a Nymph, according to our epigram Pantalces was nonetheless enpowered by the goddesses with the same founding prerogatives as a Nymph-born hero. In this sense the narrative of Pantalces' investiture by the Nymphs is essential in framing the larger narrative of the cave's foundation within the local heroic tradition. The epigrammatic form and the epigraphic medium contributed in no small measure to a reception of Pantalces in heroic terms; *mutatis mutandis*, we could apply to our text what Day writes of funerary epigrams, "Metrical epitaphs and funerary iconography offered . . . a kind of substitute funeral. Viewers and readers 'in the know' would recognize that a deceased warrior, for example, was being represented as the ἀνὴρ ἀγαθός into whom the rites of a grand funeral would have transformed him" (Day 1994, pp. 70–71). The nexus between cult places like the Karapla cave and their foundation stories is appropriately described by Pache: "There is also a deep connection between stories and space, and remembering can itself be a matter of both time and space . . . encounters with the supernatural in the form of female deities lead to the creation of sacred space, which becomes, in turn the focal point of a cult that aims at remembering and reenacting the extraordinary moment that led to its creation" (2011, pp. 9–10).

59 Contrast e.g. the epigraphic materials on shepherds and their world assembled and discussed by Robert 1949, especially pp. 152–160 (*Hellenica* VII, 'Épitaphe d'un berger à Thasos).

60 The particular epigrammatic form chosen—the so-called *epigramma longum*—may also be suggestive of upper class models. On long epitaphs as "factor of social distinction", see the discussion by Garulli 2008, pp. 626–632.

61 On the perception of the ἄγροικος in Greek culture see the aforementioned studies by Borgeaud 1995, Konstantakos 2005, and Cullyer 2006.

62 Cf. the tradesmen that held meetings at the aforementioned nymphaeum of Kafizin in Cyprus, note 38 above. At Pharsalus we have evidence for a neighborhood association by the name of Ἀγυιᾶται (*IThess* I, 74–75; Mili 2015, p. 133 and appendix 3, p. 351.) and a kinship group known as Ἄγχιστοι (*IThess* I, 62; Mili 2015, pp. 90–91: cf. note 43 above).

shrine was supported at any time by the state; rather, it appears that the cult retained its original private character throughout its history.[63] This is not to say that the cave was not patronized by a broad community of worshippers, including urban folk of both status and means. Contrary to the hasty pronouncements of earlier scholarship, some of the votives found during Levi's excavations at the site are of a quality that seems to imply a reasonably upscale patronage (Chapter 3.5 above). Even more to the point, as we have seen, the commemoration of Pantalces in Inscription II reveals a number of motifs consistent with the ideology and aesthetics of the local upper classes and their entourage. It is thus possible, for example, that a society of sacred banqueteers such as the ἕταιροι from the nymphaeum of Nea Heracleitsa in Macedonia[64] met also on the Karapla hill—a hypothesis which would further explain the sympotic references in our epigram as well as the presence of Dionysiac elements in the sanctuary's votive art.[65] A tale related by Pausanias about another heroized Thessalian and close neighbor of Pantalces, the famed pancratiast Pulydamas of Scotussa, indeed shows that it was not unusual for local aristocrats to hold their revels in caves, especially in the heat of summer (6, 5, 8–6, 6, 1):

> ἐς σπήλαιον γὰρ οἵ τε ἄλλοι τῶν συμποτῶν καὶ ὁ Πουλυδάμας ἐσῆλθεν ὥρᾳ θέρους, καί πως οὐ κατά τινα ἀγαθὸν δαίμονα ἡ κορυφὴ τηνικαῦτα τοῦ σπηλαίου κατερρήγνυτο, καὶ δῆλα ἦν ὡς αὐτίκα ἐμπεσεῖσθαι καὶ χρόνον οὐκ ἐπὶ πολὺν ἔμελλεν ἀνθέξειν· γενομένης δὲ αἰσθήσεως τοῦ ἐπιόντος κακοῦ καὶ τρεπομένων ἐς φυγὴν τῶν λοιπῶν παρέστη καταμεῖναι τῷ Πουλυδάμαντι, καὶ ἀνέσχε τὰς χεῖρας ὡς ἐπιπίπτοντι ἀνθέξων τῷ σπηλαίῳ καὶ οὐ βιασθησόμενος ὑπὸ τοῦ ὄρους. τούτῳ μὲν ἐνταῦθα ἐγένετο ἡ τελευτή.
>
> It was summertime and Pulydamas and his drinking companions went to a cave. Luck was not on their side: somehow the cave's roof began to crack and it became clear that it would collapse quickly and could not hold out much longer. As soon as they became aware of the impending disaster, the others turned and ran away. Pulydamas instead decided to stay, holding up his hands in the belief that he could contain the cave's collapse and would not be crushed under the mountain. It was thus that he met his end there.[66]

If Pantalces' character in Inscription II is an embodiment of the ideals and practices of such a group, the praise of his musical skill could also be self-referential, suggesting that one of the members was responsible for the composition of the epigram.[67] On the other hand if a company like

63 On the legal and financial implications of privately founding and managing a cult, see e.g. Purvis 2003, pp. 10–13 (cf. 31 on the specific topic of cave shrines).

64 Bakalakis 1938, pp. 81–97: an annotated text of the relevant inscription (*SEG* 18, 278) is given at pp. 94–96, fig. 14, [ἀπ' Αὐλ[ῶνος] | συνπόται | εὐξάμ[ε]νοι | πελαν[οῦ] | μνημεῖον | ἔθηκα (on the vowing of the sacrificial cake called πέλανος, see Jameson 1956; on the use of foodstuffs in Nymph worship, p. 29 above). A similar (or perhaps the same) company of Nymph worshippers, referring to themselves as the ἕταιροι, appears on another inscription from this site, Bakalakis 1938, pp. 90–94, figs. 12–13; see the brief overviews by Larson 2001, p. 239 and Sporn 2013, p. 209. To be sure, the fact that Inscription II reveals elements of an aristocratic worldview does not necessarily mean that it was dedicated by a member of the aristocracy. We can expect that the members of the knightly, hoplitic, and even Penestic, classes who so often accompanied the Pharsalian gentry on the battlefield or at the dinner table, shared some of the same cultural codes. On the interesting overlap between upper class and lower class roles that is sometimes encountered in Thessalian society, see e.g. Mili 2015, pp. 58–59, 265–266.

65 Meshed with the funerary motifs discussed above we also find, in Inscription II, a variety of moral, aesthetical, and political themes commonly encountered in convivial poetry. Besides the already noted reference to laughter and self-control, placed under Pan's purview as in *PMG* 887, there are striking correspondences on subjects like health (ὑγιαίνειν μὲν ἄριστον ἀνδρὶ θνητῶι, *PMG* 890, 1), wealth (τὸ . . . πλουτεῖν ἀδόλως, *PMG* 890, 3), political strife (ὄρθου τήνδε πόλιν τε καὶ πολίτας | ἄτερ ἀλγέων ⟦τε⟧ καὶ στάσεων, *PMG* 884, 3–4) and victory in conflict (ἐνικήσαμεν ὡς ἐβουλόμεσθα | καὶ νίκην ἔδοσαν θεοὶ φέροντες, *PMG* 888, 1–2). On the Dionysiac element in the Karapla votive art see Cat. nos. 8; 28; 35?; 48 in Chapter 3.3 above.

66 Cf. D.S. 9, 14–15. Pulydamas' failure to prevent the cave's collapse with his strength offers an interesting contrast with Pantalces' effective use of the same power in building up the Karapla cave. On the extensive lore about Pulydamas see Paus. 6, 5, 4–7. As in Pantalces' case, Pulydamas' deeds were collected in an inscription which the periegete might have used for his account. See also Stamatopoulou 2007a, pp. 331, 339; Mili 2015, p. 187.

67 On line 19 of our text as a σφραγίς: Peek 1938 p. 25. The corpus of the Attic scolia mentioned above (*PMG* 884–917) is adequate evidence for the level of poetic competence shown by the cultured participants of ancient banquets. Whcile Athenians may have been no match for the Thessalians, when it came to intellectual and artististic refinement, it would seem that the affluent youth of Thessalian cities had just as much access to a good literary education as any of their Attic counterparts (an apt example being that of Meno (III) of Pharsalus, the title character of the well-known Platonic dialogue, who disported himself with such personalities as Gorgias and Socrates, Pl. *Men*. 70b et pass. On the presumed Thessalian indifference for matters of the mind,

the Nea Heracleitsa banqueteers had held regular meetings at the Karapla cave, one would expect to encounter a tangible trace of their activities on the site, particularly in terms of tableware or cooking utensils.[68] An intriguing reference to 'various fragments' from drinking cups and large Attic amphoras is found indeed in Levi's report of 1923–1924;[69] regrettably, this material is no longer available for closer study.

When we consider the hypothesis of a professional poet, we have at our disposal a more extensive body of evidence. Despite all the ink that has been poured to underscore the personal and unique character of the poetry in Inscription 11, this composition in fact seems to be rooted in an established local tradition. Revealing on this point is the aforementioned existence at Larissa of poetic competitions in the 'epic encomium' and the 'epigram', i.e. the two literary styles reflected in the Karapla epigram (*IG* IX, 2, 531, lines 44–45, 48).[70] Equally instructive is the fact that in this inscription the same poet is listed as winning both specialties: Amometus son of Philoxenides could be used as an example of the kind of specialist that would have been hired to commemorate the founding of the Karapla sanctuary and immortalize the personality of its founder in a style consistent with the heroic past of Pharsalus. The involvement of such professionals in cult-related events is not unknown to the religious reality of the region: we could compare the Karapla poem with a very similar composition from the nearby city of Atrax,[71] where the establishment of a sacred structure for the Nymphs (δῶμα)[72] is also commemorated:

[εἰπόν, τίς τόδε δῶμ]α̣ καὶ ἀ̣[ντί]α πᾶν ἐπόνη[σεν],
[στήσας σὺν πολλ]οῖς θύμασιν ἀνθέματα,
[ὄχθαισιν Πηνειοῦ ὑ]πὸλ̣ λόφον ἀνθεμ[ό]ε̣[ντα],
[ἦι ποσὶ δινοῦντ]α̣ι Ναΐδε̣ς ἁβρόπεπλοι.
Ν[α]ϊά̣[σ]ιν Νύμφαισι κα̣τ' ἀγλαοε̣[ι]δ̣έ̣α̣ χῶρον
[δ]ῶ̣[μά] τε ἵδ̣ρ̣[υ]σ[ε π]έ̣τ̣ρ̣οις καὶ [κέρατ' ἀρ]γυρ̣έ̣α̣
Ἄρνεκλος προφρόνως, ἐκλυομ̣[ένην ὅθ'] ὑγείαν
ἐξ̣α̣[ῦτις] λά̣[χ'] ἐ̣ήν, νοῦσον ἀπ̣ω̣σ[άμενος]·
αἷς πρέπει ἀθανάτους αὔξων τιμαῖσιν ὁ Σούου
υἱὸς ἐπηγλάϊσεν Ναϊάδων τέμενος.
Ἀστίουν.

"Do tell: who labored over this structure and everything which stands in front of it, | setting up votives with many sacrifices, | below a flowering hill along the banks of the Peneius, | where Naiads in delicate dress twirl with their feet?" | "To the Naiad Nymphs, in a beautiful-looking place, | eagerly Arneclus erected a rock-made structure and silver horns(?), | as soon as he pushed away his illness and regained his health. | Elevating it with honors appropriate to immortals, the son of Soos gave splendor to the Naiads' precinct". By Astioun.

As I have pointed out elsewhere, this poetry shows remarkable analogies with our text.[73] Like the Karapla epigram it celebrates in epigrammatic style the building of a shrine to the local Nymphs. On the other hand, since the builder of this establishment is very much alive at the time of the dedication (indeed he has just recovered from a bad illness) here the encomiastic element is dramatically reduced to the advantage of the ecphrastic one: the praise of the foundation—and of its natural setting—clearly prevail over the praise of the founder. Another significant difference is that in this case the author of the poetry has made sure to sign his work, identifying himself as Astioun son of Soos. Known also for another inscription to the Nymphs and Dionysus (*SEG* 45, 554), the son of Soos appears to have had a personal involvement in Nymph worship.

Could it be that a local poet like Astioun, a Pharsalian with an equally strong devotion to the Nymphs, composed (and perhaps inscribed, of his own initiative) the epigram

see e.g. Richter 2011, p. 24; Mili 2015, p. 262; on the interest of 4th century Thessalian elites for rhetoric and philosophy: Sprawski 2005, pp. 45–46).

68 Good times—εὐφροσύνη—usually leave a material trail: on the evidence from Nea Heracleitsa see Bakalakis 1938, pp. 88–91, figs. 8–11.

69 "Nor there was lack of fragmentary cups and even large Attic amphoras, coated with a shiny black finish, and sometimes with traces of painting" (1923–1924, p. 32; cf. Chapter 3.3 above, Cat. no. 60). Remains from this black-coated ware can still be spotted in the terrace below the cave (Cat. no. 76, fig. 68).

70 On ἐγκώμιον and ἐπίγραμμα in *IG* IX 2, 531 see the aforementioned study by Petrovic 2009, who underlines the "commemorative character of these genres" (p. 208).

71 Peek 1974, pp. 19–25, plate 1: 1. A new edition of this text is forthcoming in the corpus of inscriptions from Atrax in preparation at the Université Lumière Lyon 2. I am grateful to B. Helly and R. Bouchon for providing me with a copy and showing me the squeeze of the stone in the archives of the *Maison de l'Orient et de la Méditerranée.*

72 A temple (Tziafalias 1989, p. 238, note 20; cf. 1995, p. 73) or a cave (Heinz 1998, p. 430, no. A 112); see also Mili 2015, p. 43.

73 Wagman 2011. Thematic and linguistical affinities between the Atrax and Karapla epigrams: 1 τόδε δῶμ]α (cf. 6 [δ]ῶ[μά]): 8 τ[ὸ δ]ῶ[μα], 1 ἐπόνη[σεν]: 12 [ἐ]ξεπονήσατο, 2 σὺν πολλ]οῖς θύμασιν ἀνθέματα: 8–9 ἱαρωτά… δῶρά τε πολλ[ά], 4 [ἦι ποσὶ δινοῦντ]αι Ναΐδες ἁβρόπεπλοι: 10–11 Νύμφαι | τῶνδ' ἐπιβαινέμεναι χώρων, 5 ἀγλαοε[ι]δέα χῶρον: 5 χῶρον δ' εἰς ἱερὸν, 6 ἵδρ[υ]σ[ε π]έτροις: 15 τούσδε λίθους τύπτων ἐπόησ'.

at the Karapla sanctuary?[74] The use of the word ἀοιδός—slightly incongruous, even in a composition so deliberately epicizing as ours—may then be taken as a disguised reference to the profession of the author. Regrettably, unlike for the Atrax epigram, we do not have in this case a signature that would confirm such a possibility. Based on style alone the hypothesis that a professional epigrammatist may be behind the poetry from the Karapla hill seems, at least on surface, a tenuous one. Even a cursory comparison with the Atrax epigram or other verse inscriptions signed by professionals[75] brings into focus the disparities—especially in vocabulary and diction—which separate our poem from such compositions. On the other hand, as observed at the beginning of this section (pp. 69–70), the nameless author of Inscription II displays a metrical skill and an overall 'souplesse' that place his work well above the amateurish poetry generally found at similar sites.

To conclude: even if it bears no real association to the historical Pantalces and cannot be used to illuminate the mysterious personality behind Inscription I, the epigram in Inscription II still constitutes an important testimony on the commemorative practices that were in use in central Thessaly for small sacred foundations like the Karapla cave or the Atrax δῶμα. Hewn into the rock of the local hills, such shrines were as much a part of the physical landscape as of the religious one.[76] To the pilgrims who visited them, they were special places where it was possible to connect with the land's ancient past by honoring the local deities and admiring the sacred works left by the original cult founders.[77] With the passing of time, as these markers of ancient piety became less comprehensible to later generations, newer, more explicit memorials had to be established for visitors to maintain this connection. The Karapla epigram is an example of how such a memorial was created, and how the story of a small country shrine and its founder became part of the greater epic tale of the city of Pharsalus.

74 Just as they hired the work of fine Attic potters (note 47 above), Thessalian notables were known as patrons of the poetic arts. On the commission of epigrams in particular cf. the two short dedications composed by Anacreon for Echecratidas and his family, *AP* 6, 136; 142 (*FGE*, 'Anacreon' VII, pp. 138–139; XIII, p. 142). On these compositions and the topic of Thessalian poetic patronage in general see Stamatopoulou 2007a, pp. 327–328 with the relevant bibliography.

75 For a collection of inscriptional epigrams bearing the author's signature see the study by Santin 2009. On the Thessalian material in particular: Santin and Tziafalias 2013, pp. 251–282 (the epigram by Astioun is not included).

76 Open air rock-cut shrines are found at both the east and west end of Pharsalus, in the Varoussi and Agia Paraskevi neighborhoods (Varoussi: p. 76 above; see also an unpublished precinct on the small hill of Agios Athanasios, Wagman and Nichols 2012. Agia Paraskevi: p. 16, note 123 above). At least one more sacred cave is known within the Pharsalian territory (reported by Arvanitopoulos below the acropolis walls in the northeast cliff of Prophitis Ilias; now lost? 1929, p. 226). Large amounts of sherds near another such grotto on the Plaka ridge—opposite the Karapla across the Steni pass (p. 5 above)—suggest that a religious cult may also have been housed in this location. A brief study of this site, hitherto unpublished, is in preparation by the author and A.G. Nichols.

77 As Pache notes, "what begins as a personal relationship between the nymphs and Pantalkes becomes a community ritual as pilgrims continue to commemorate both nymphs and nympholepts . . . The nympholepts project their encounter with the divine through the creation of artifacts (cave, sculptures, vases, inscriptions) that become the focus of attention for other visitors to the caves and help transform the original nympholept into a figure of cult", 2011, pp. 69–70. On privately founded Nymph caves standing at the intersection between space and memory cf. ibid. pp. 101–111.

Conclusion

Perhaps more than any other part of Greece, the lands and waters of Thessaly resonate with Nymph lore. In this composite landscape of massive mountain ranges and spreading river plains the cult of the Nymphs found a congenial home, continuing the nature cults of Thessaly's great Stone Age civilizations into historical times. Yet, if almost every corner of ancient Thessaly is linked, in legend, to a particular Nymph or group of Nymphs, the material trail left in the region by these goddesses is much scarcer than what mythology would lead us to expect.[1] Nymphs do not appear much in Thessalian inscriptions; except for coins, which corroborate the testimonial of myth, their presence in the local archaeological record is just as minimal. Despite the wealth of cave formations in the area, only a few have been identified to this day as Nymph shrines.[2] In this shortage of evidence the Karapla cave site constitutes a crucial resource for the study of Thessalian religion and our knowledge of the area in general.

Located at the southwest edge of the Pharsalian territory, on one of the rocky elevations which form a natural boundary with the neighboring state of Proerna, the Karapla cave belonged to that type of topographic and socioeconomic terrain which Greeks referred to as 'outer margins' or *eschatiai*.[3]

This rugged borderland of phrygana-mantled limestones was no more inhabited in antiquity than it is now. Except for the faraway sounds of grazing herds and the occasional sighting of a peasant looking for kindling or wild salad grasses, the only presences in the area were the Nymphs associated with the nurturing waters of the Narthacium aquifer. Today a memory of these natural forces survives in the toponymy of the region, in designations such as Neraida or Neraiditis. The centrality of the aquifer in local culture is also evident in the names of countless villages and small towns, which often point to the existence of a fountain or a spring.[4]

In the late Archaic Age an organized cult of the Nymphs appears to have developed around the spring in the Karapla cave. During the first half of the fifth century the site was enriched with a number of architectural features by a man named Pantalces, an unknown individual mythologized by later generations of worshippers as the original founder of the sanctuary.

The marginal nature of its location did not mean that the cult itself was marginal. On the contrary, the Karapla cave appears to have had closer ties to the urban element than has been hitherto assumed, being part of a larger network of Pharsalian cults which also included a Demetreium (?) on the acropolis hill and the rural shrine of Ampelia Pharsalon.[5] Especially significant in this regard are the female protomae found at both our cave and the acropolis site (Chapter 3.3 above, Cat. nos. 4–5), as well as at the nearby city of Proerna. The quality of these dedications, along with evidence for expensive gifts such as stone statuary (Cat. no. 68) and bronze vases (Cat. no. 66), likewise call into question current preconceptions about the sociodemographics of the cult. A further indication that the clientele of the Karapla cave was not limited to passing peasantry but included visitors from town is also found in the poetry inscribed at the site. As shown in Chapter 4 of this study, the long metrical inscription which greeted visitors at the sanctuary's entrance reflects a number of motifs consistent with the ideology and aesthetics of the city upper classes and their entourage. Most

1 For a comprehensive discussion of Thessalian Nymph lore see Larson 2001, pp. 163–168; for summaries of the archaeological evidence, ibid. pp. 238–239; Heinz 1998, p. 77. Inscriptions: Mili 2015, p. 22, table 1.3, and appendix 1, nos. 244, 353–362. Coins: Moustaka 1983, pp. 47–52; 120–127; Mili 2015, pp. 42–43; 291, note 173.

2 Currently the only other cave site in Thessaly which can be safely associated with Nymph worship is Zar Trypa on Mt. Ossa (Wace and Thompson 1908: p. 32 note 119 and p. 74 above). The still unexplored 'Chironion' on Mt. Pelium (Arvanitopoulos 1911: p. 28, note 86 above) may also have housed a cult of the goddesses. All remaining Thessalian cave shrines are either dedicated to other deities (cave of Zeus Meilichius at Goritsa: Te Riele 1972) or cannot be assigned with certainty (Pharsalus, Prophitis Ilias: Arvanitopoulos 1929, see note 76 above. Pharsalus, Plaka ridge: p. 93 note 76 above. Krounia: Agouridis et al. 2006, see p. 27 note 75 above. Scopelus, Panormos: Sampson 2000. For a current assessment of the evidence: Mili 2015, pp. 41–42.

3 We may compare the cave's position on the geographical and religious map of Pharsalus with that of the later *xoklisia*, or outlying churches, still in use in the Orthodox world. Not surprisingly, quite a few of these establishments are housed within caves. For a modern archaeological perspective on *xoklisia* and the 'location grammars' which govern their placement in space see the stimulating study by Nixon 2006. On the use of caves as church sites see e.g. the examples collected in Crete by Faure 1979; see also the general overview by Skouras 1985.

4 On the prominence of springs in the Thessalian religious landscape: p. 21, note 25 above.

5 See Mili's recent remarks on the extent of Pharsalus' 'religious landscape' and the correlated nature of its cults, 2015, pp. 178–179. On the organization of rural shrines in cult networks and the relevance of such networks in the religion of Greek city states, see e.g. Pedley 2005, p. 54.

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striking among these is the reference to 'justified excess' (*hubrin . . . dikaian*, line 18), a theme that does not seem to makes much sense outside the urban value system within which it originated. A literary *autoschediasma* composed several generations after the sanctuary's foundation, Inscription II, as we have seen, is unlikely to be of value for reconstructing the character of the historical Pantalces. This document does show on the other hand that the founder's reception in later Pharsalian culture was that of a figure sharing a legendary status and an iconography comparable to, if not technically identifiable with, that of the heroized dead. Whoever the obscure dedicant of Inscription I may have been, he was not memorialized as a shepherd or a holy man but as a founder/ancestor—an individual endowed with a noble spirit, wealth, physical prowess, health, a musical education, and proper banqueting etiquette.

From Inscription II we also learn that the Karapla cult was an inclusive one, open to all categories of the local population. The nature of the votives retrieved at the site appears to be consistent with this evidence. The powers of the cave bestowed their protection on Pharsalians of both genders at the critical stages of the male and female life cycle (puberty, marriage, childbirth) as well as in times of illness and other crises. There is no explicit indication for mantic activities at the site, although we can expect that the Karapla Nymphs, like most deities associated with underground water, must have been endowed with dual prerogatives of healing and prophecy. Likewise there is no evidence that the inner part of our cave was ever used as an *adytum* or a place of subterranean seclusion. Filled with natural light for most of the day and upwardly oriented, the enclosed part of the precinct did not lend itself to catabatic experiences. The near total absence of lamps or any other findings in the interior of the cave also supports this conclusion. In Inscription II the repeated references to the shrine's well-tended landscape emphasize the outdoor nature of the setting: a pleasantly verdant spot beneath a rocky cliff, with stairs leading to a holy cave. One can only guess at the nature of the plantings, but it is likely that they were a mix of flowering shrubs and wild fruit trees from the same phryganic vegetation which still grows in the area, carefully selected in order to ensure foliage and blooms all year round. As the inscription confirms, the other major feature of the site was the stairway, which dominated the view with its impressive bulk and allowed visitors to access the upper part of the precinct while browsing the rich assortment of votives displayed along the way. We can expect that the signature inscription of Pantalces, engraved high above the third step, was one of the main highlights—if not the centerpiece—of a visitor's experience at the shrine. Like the powerful stonework they were associated with, these ancient markings continued to stimulate the imagination of generations of worshippers, inspiring the foundation tale preserved in Inscription II. Memory played as important a role at the sanctuary as worship did. Placed at an intersection between past and present, city and wilderness, aristocracy and peasantry, the cave on the Karapla hill functioned as a nexus where these different worlds could converge and 'overcome conflict'. Its story, which I have attempted to reconstruct in the preceding pages, is mirrored in the myriad of similar tales, ancient and modern, that underlie the rocks, waters, and trees of the Greek landscape:

> ΤΑ ΔΕΔΡΑ 7 ΕΥΚΑΠ [—], ΤΑ ΑΝΘΗ, ΤΗ ΒΡΥΣΗ ΚΑΙ ΤΟ ΕΡΓΟ ΠΡΟΣΤΑΣΙΑΣ, ΤΑ ΧΑΡΙΖΩ ΣΤΗΣ ΠΑΝΑΓΙΑΣ ΤΗ ΧΑΡΗ [the name of the dedicant follows].
>
> The seven eucalyptus trees, the flowers, the well, and the work of supervision, I give in gratitude to the Panagia.[6]

6 From "a wooden table fixed at a eucalyptus tree somewhere in Crete"; photo sent to H. Versnel by A. Chaniotis (Versnel 2011, p. 120, note 1).

TABLE 2 *Chronological conspectus* (*many dates are approximated or speculative*)

NEOLITHIC	• Middle Neolithic female figurine Volos Museum M 168, 5100–4400 • Late Neolithic pottery, 4300–2800	
HELLADIC	• Middle and Late Helladic burials, 2100–1060 • Thessalian migrations, 1200–1100	
GEOMETRIC	• Protogeometric and Geometric burials, 1050–700 • Lelantine war: Cleomachus of Pharsalus, ca. 700	Early worship at cave?
ARCHAIC	• Early city walls, 600–500 • Rule of Echecratidas II, 560–540 • Olympic victory of Phaedrus (stadium), 556 • Rule of Antiochus, 520–490 ○ Anacreon and Simonides at Antiochus' court? • Olympic victories of Agias (pancratium) and Telemachus (wrestling), 484 • Second Persian war. Xerxes allegedly received by Thargelia, lover of Antiochus, 480 • Verdelis tomb in west cemetery, 525–475	Archaic votives
CLASSICAL	• Expedition of Leotychidas and end of Alevad supremacy in Thessaly, 479 • Earliest Pharsalian coins issued, after 480 • Meno I of Pharsalus with Cimon in the campaign against Eium, 476 • Rule of Echecratidas III, 475–457 • Rule of Orestes, 457–455; his exile and end of Echecratid rule, ca. 454 ○ Pharsalus besieged by Athenian general Myronides, ca. 454 • Rule of Daochus I, 431–404 • Peloponnesian war, 431–404 ○ Meno II of Pharsalus with the Athenians in a cavalry skirmish against the Boiotians, 431 • Brasidas encamped near the Apidanus on his way to Chalcidice, 424 • Meno III of Pharsalus with Cyrus at battle of Cunaxa, 401 • Pharsalus captured by Medius of Larissa, 395 • Pharsalian cavalry defeated by Agesilaus, 394 • Jason of Pherae ruler of Thessaly, 375–370 ○ Political strife in Pharsalus. Polydamas entrusted with the government of the city, 375–370 • Philip II of Macedonia ruler of Thessaly, 352–336 ○ Seaport of Halus captured by Philip and given to Pharsalus, 346 • Major dedications by Pharsalians at Delphi (family monument of Daochus II, group of Achilles and Patroclus); statue of Agias in Pharsalus, ca. 350–300 • Alexander of Macedon ruler of Thessaly, 336–323	Pantalces' work at cave Classical votives
HELLENISTIC	• Lamian war, 323–322 ○ Meno IV of Pharsalus negotiates with Antipater after battle of Crannon, 322 ○ Meno IV and his Thessalian cavalry defeated by Polyperchon, 321 • Demetrius Poliorcetes in Thessaly, 302–293 ○ Restoration of Halus to its citizens (New Halus), 301 ○ Foundation of Demetrias, 293 • Olympic victory of Philomelus (stadium), 284 • Pharsalus joins the Aetolian League, 266 • Rizi politography decree (*IThess* I, 50), ca. 225? • Pharsalus occupied by Philip V of Macedonia, 198 • Philip V defeated by T. Quinctius Flamininus at Cynoscephalae, 197 • Aetolian war, 192–189 ○ Pharsalus garrisoned by Antiochus III, 192 ○ Pharsalus surrendered to M. Acilius Glabrio, 191 • Thessaly incorporated by Rome into the Macedonian Province, 148	Hellenistic votives

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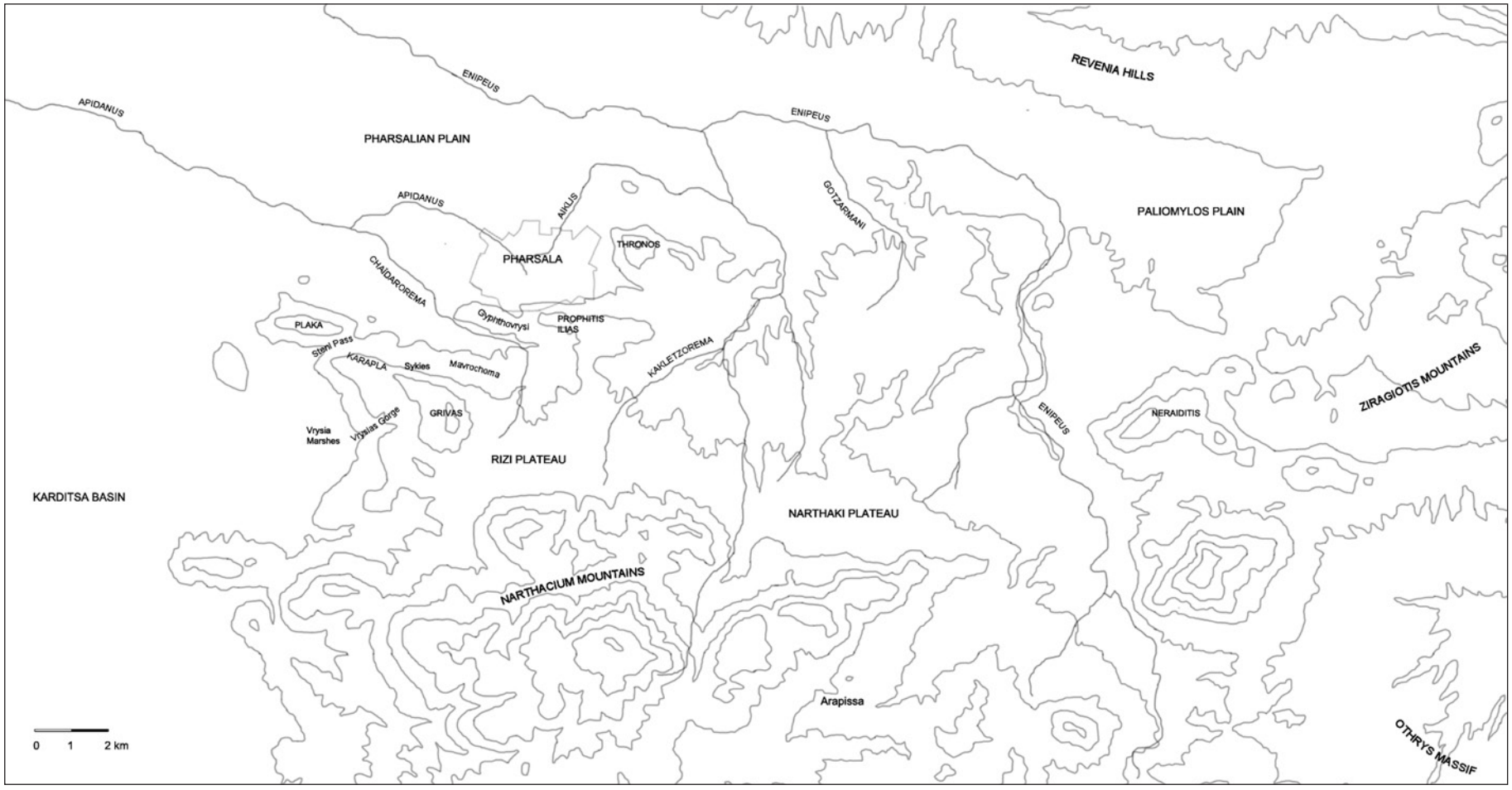
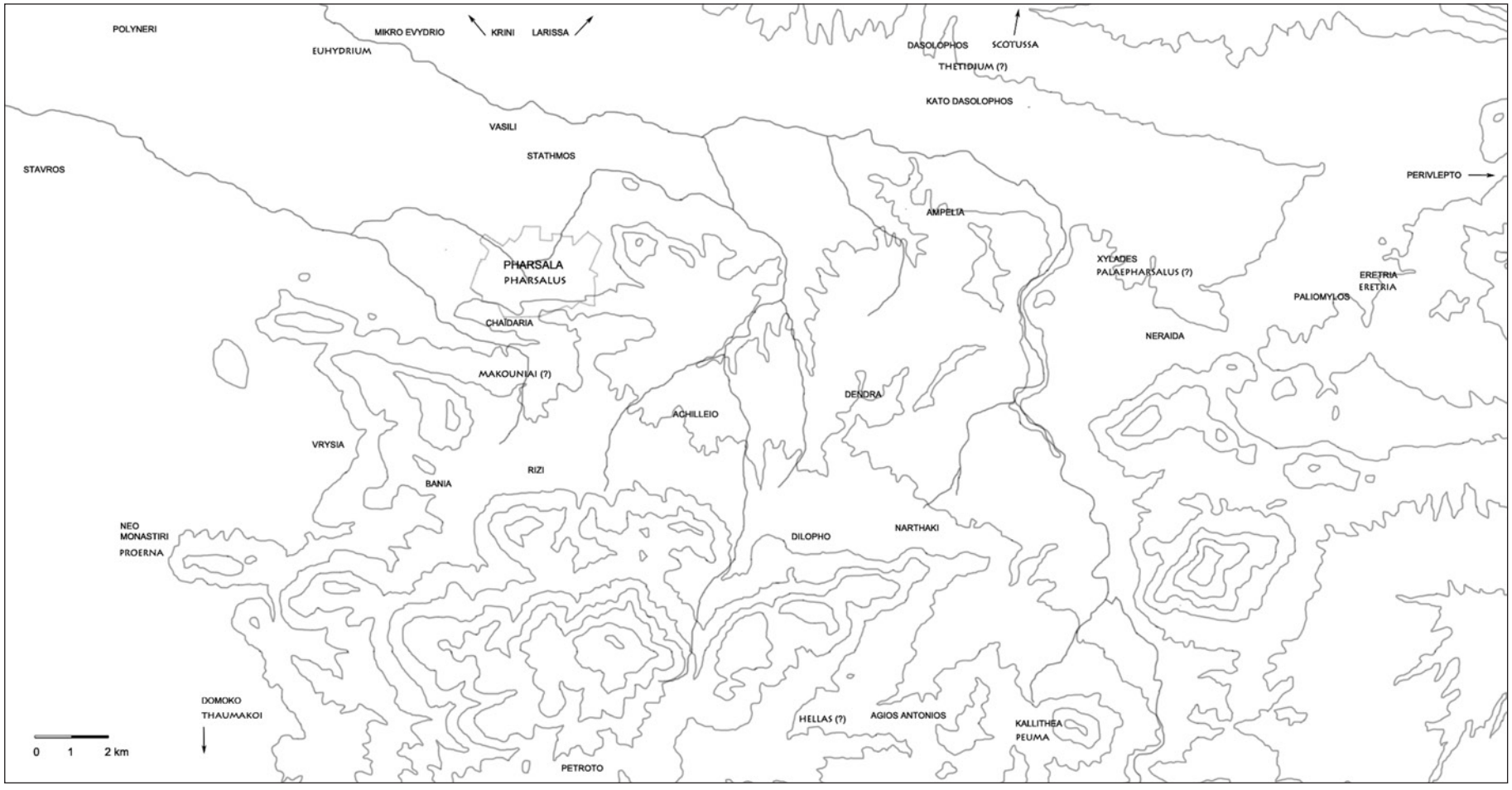
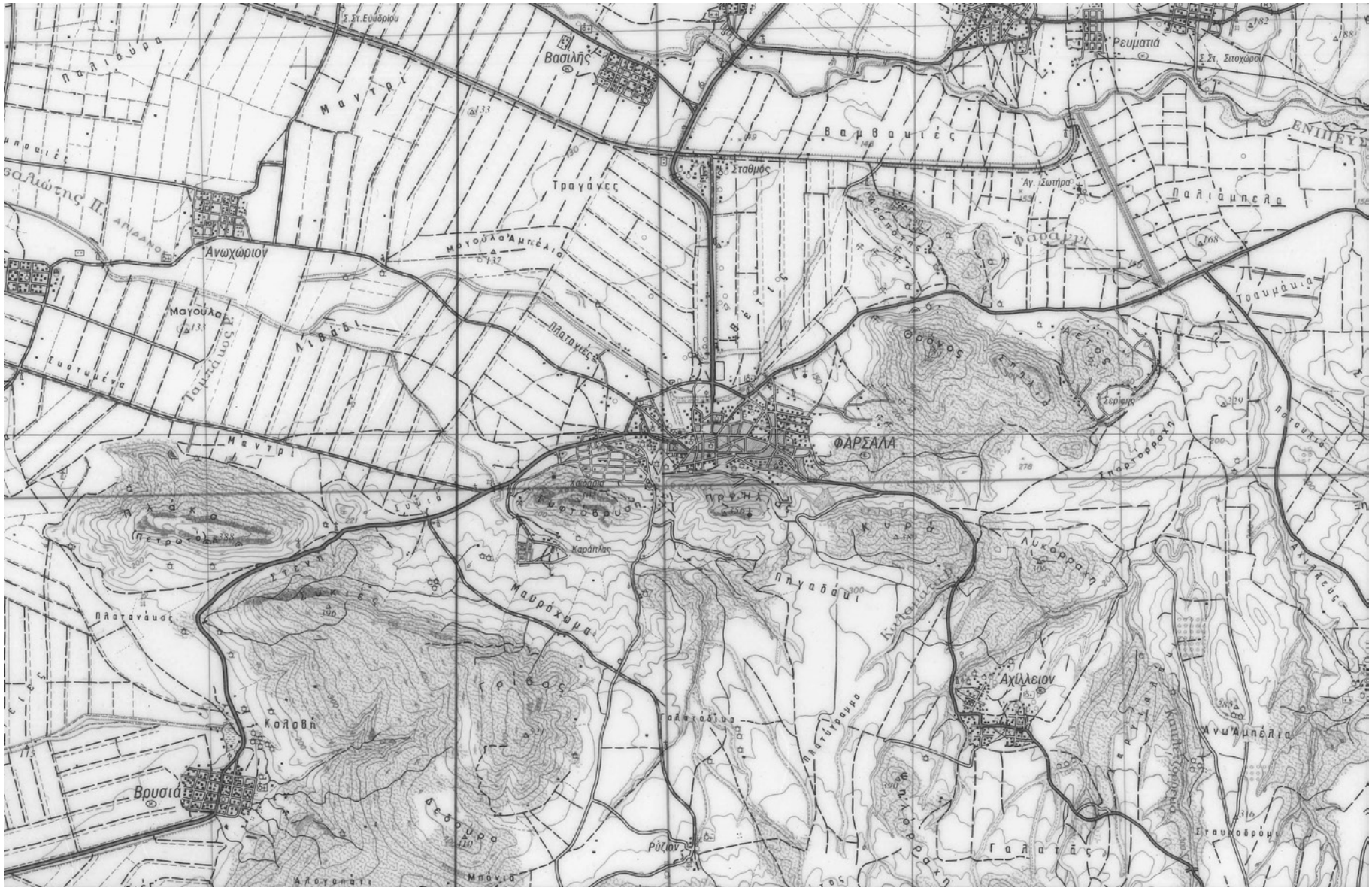


Pharsala and environs. Map of the physical features discussed in the text.



Pharsala and environs. Map of the sites discussed in the text (*arrows indicate off map locations*).

PLATE II

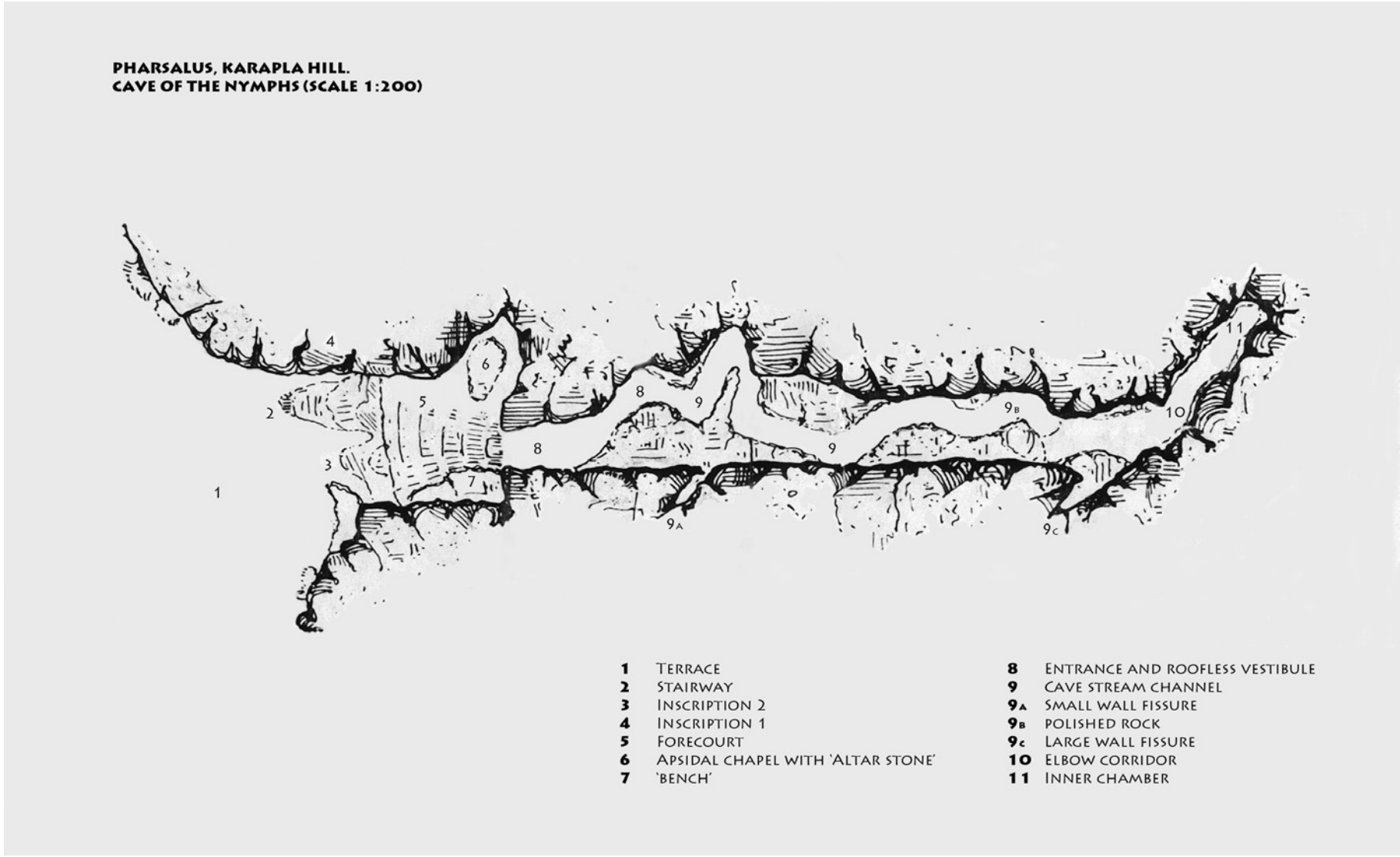


Pharsala and environs. Detail from HMGS General Use Map, *1985 edition, sheet 'Fársala'. Scale 1:50.000.*

Aerial view of Karapla and environs. H. 3650 m (*courtesy of* HMGS, *edited by author*).

PLATE IV

Detail from H. Daumet, 'Les collines de Pharsale vues de la plaine'. Watercolor, 1861–1863 (courtesy of the Institut National de l'Histoire de l'Art, Paris).



Cave site plan (SAIA *Arch. Fot. C 912, edited and corrected by author*).

PLATE VI

FIGURE 1 *The Pharsalian high country as seen from above the Steni pass, NW, with Pharsala to the left, the Mavrochoma at the center, and the Karapla ridge to the right* (*photo by author*).

FIGURE 2 *General view of Karapla ridge and Mavrochoma from E, with Pharsalian acropolis to the right. The Steni pass is visible in the mid background* (*photo by author*).

FIGURE 3 *Karapla ridge, Mavrochoma, and Steni pass, seen from the W summit of the acropolis. In the foreground, from left to right: Chaïdarorema, Rizi path, Gyphtovrysi* (*photo by author*).

FIGURE 4 *Karapla, Sykies summit. NE approach from Mavrochoma fields* (*photo by author*).

FIGURE 5 *Karapla ridge, seen from the acropolis of Proerna in the SW. The Steni pass is visible to the far left* (*photo by author*).

FIGURE 6 *Karapla, Sykies summit. Approach from W, with Pharsalian acropolis in left background* (*photo by author*).

FIGURE 7 *Karapla, Sykies summit. View from the top, looking N (photo by author).*

FIGURE 8 *Karapla, Sykies summit. View from the top, looking S (photo by author).*

PLATE XI

FIGURE 9 *Cave. View from above* (*photo by author*).

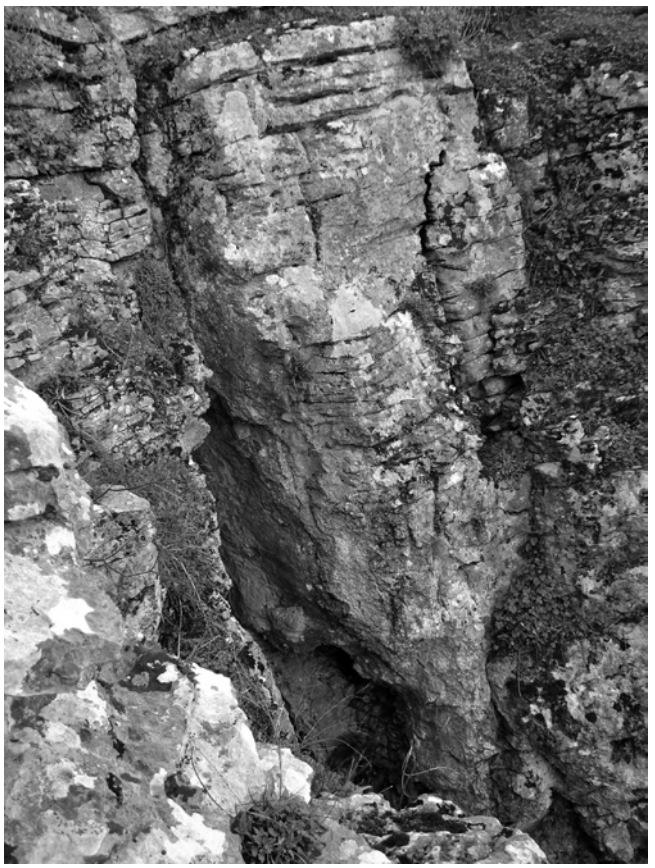


FIGURE 10 *Roofless vestibule. View from above* (*photo by author*).

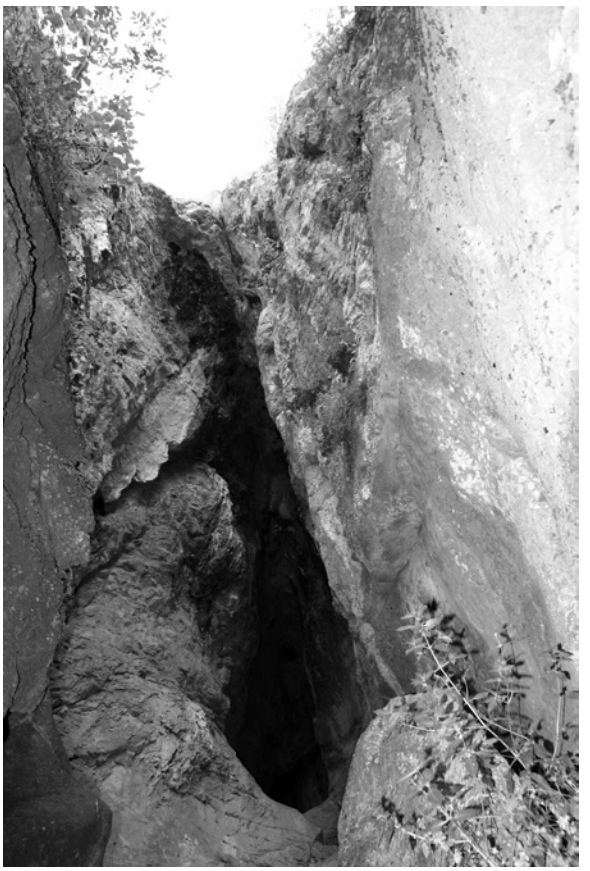


FIGURE 11 *Roofless vestibule. View from ground* (*photo by author*).

FIGURE 12 *Karapla, lower sanctuary. Terrace with elms* (*photo by author*).

FIGURE 13 *Karapla, lower sanctuary. General view from W* (*photo by author*).

FIGURE 14 *Stairway* (*photo by author*).

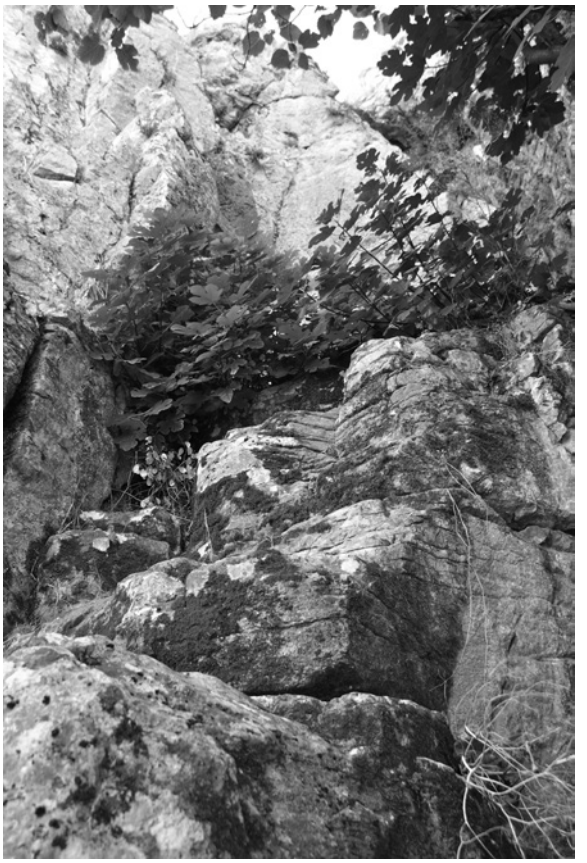


FIGURE 15 *Stairway* (*photo by author*).

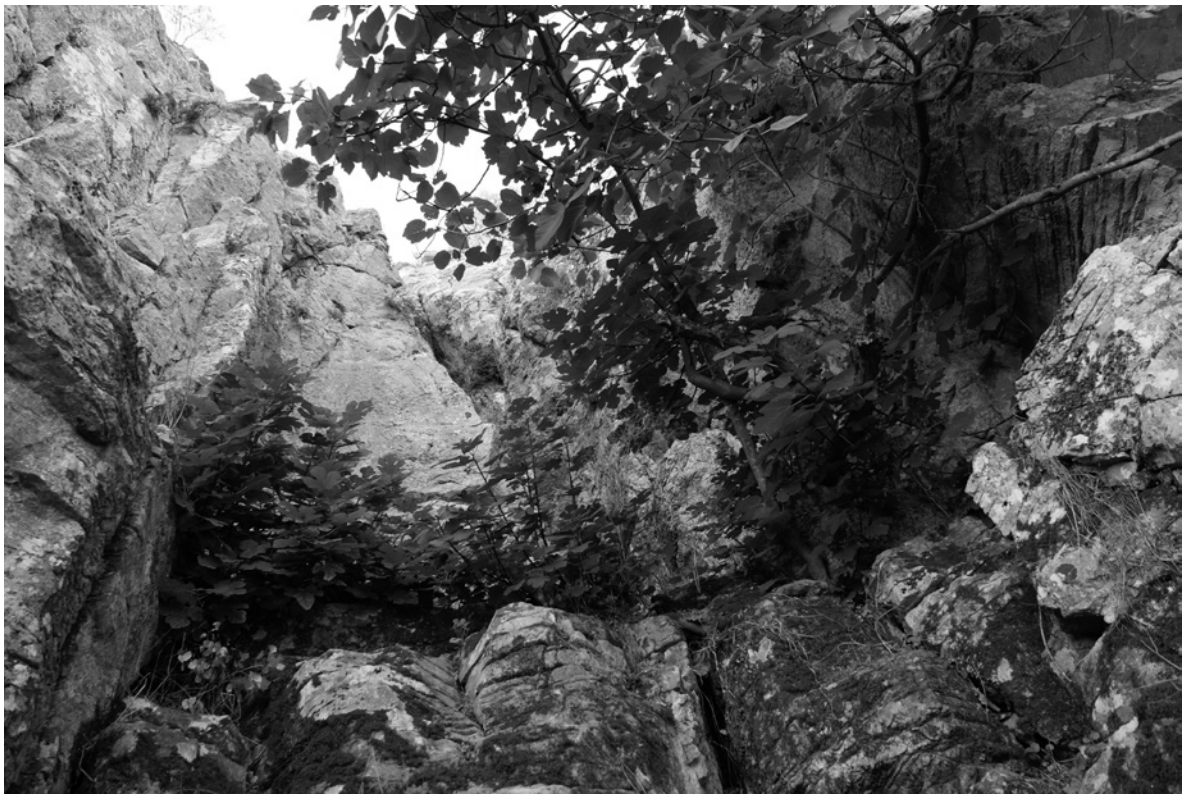


FIGURE 16 *Karapla, upper sanctuary. View from below* (*photo by author*).

FIGURE 17 *Stairway. View from upper sanctuary* (*photo by author*).

FIGURE 18 *Stairway, detail of upper steps* (*photo by author*).

FIGURE 19 *Stairway, detail of landing step* (*photo by author*).

FIGURE 20 *Karapla, upper sanctuary. General view from W* (*photo by author*).

FIGURE 21 *Apsidal chapel with 'altar' stone. View from W* (*photo by author*).

FIGURE 22 *Detail of 'altar' top with niche in background* (*photo by author*).

FIGURE 23 *Apsidal chapel, detail of wall dressing with niche to the left* (*photo by author*).

FIGURE 24 *Apsidal chapel. View of triangular base and niche* (*photo by author*).

FIGURE 25 *Karapla, upper sanctuary. General view from E* (*photo by author*).

FIGURE 26 *Entrance to roofless vestibule* (*left*), *with bench in background* (*photo by author*).

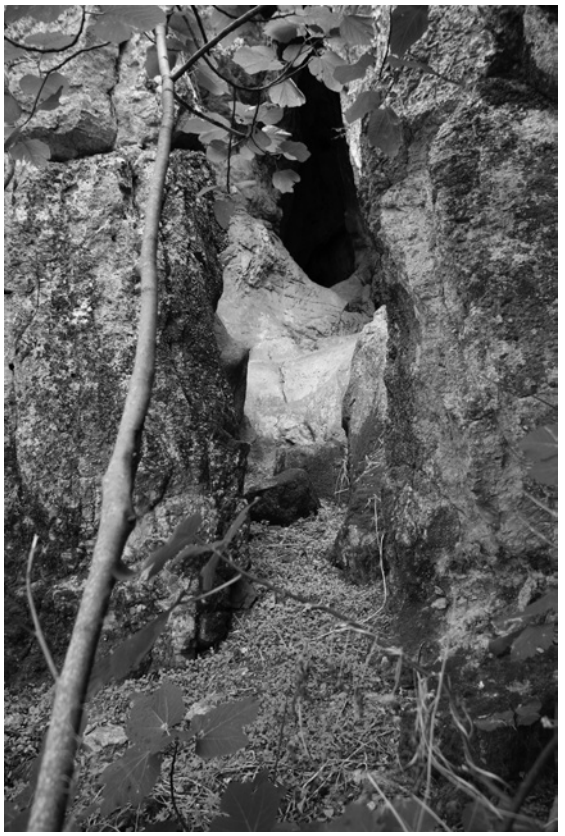


FIGURE 27 *Entrance to roofless vestibule. View from N (photo by author).*

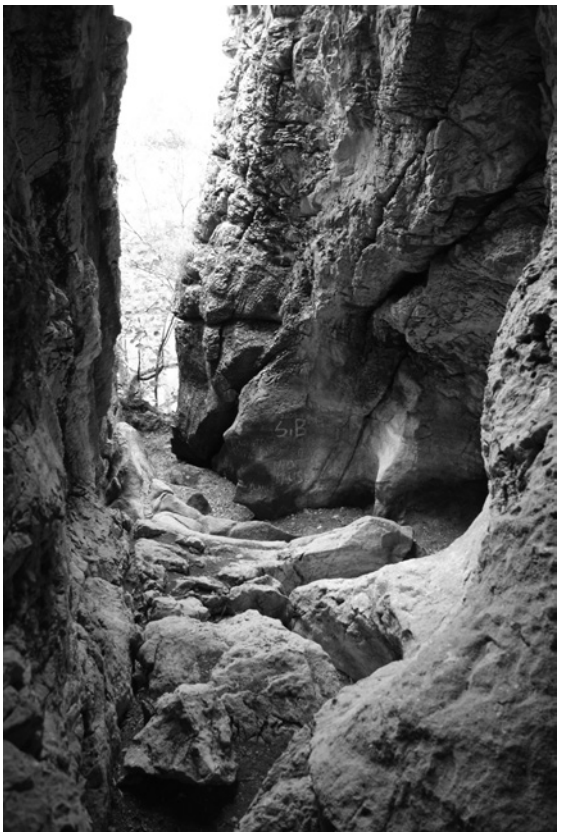


FIGURE 28 *Roofless vestibule interior. View from S (photo by author).*

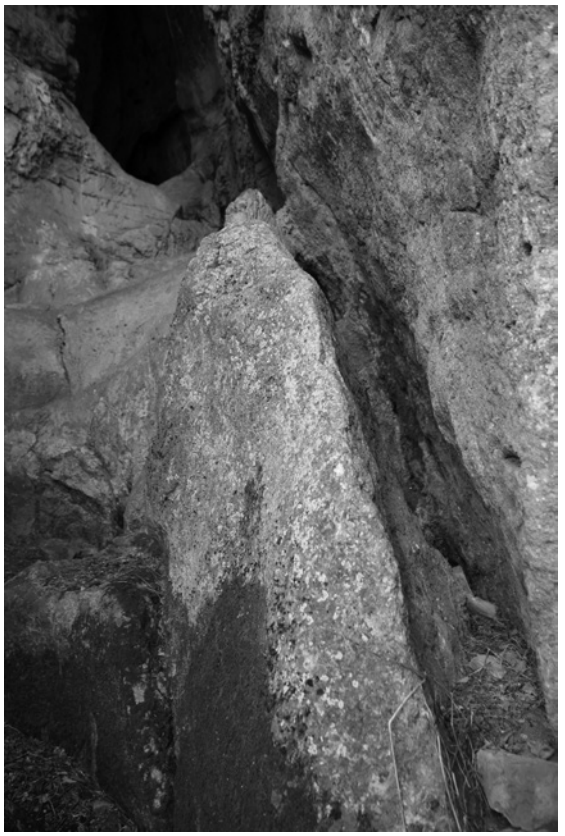


FIGURE 29 *Roofless vestibule. Small water channel in W wall (photo by author).*

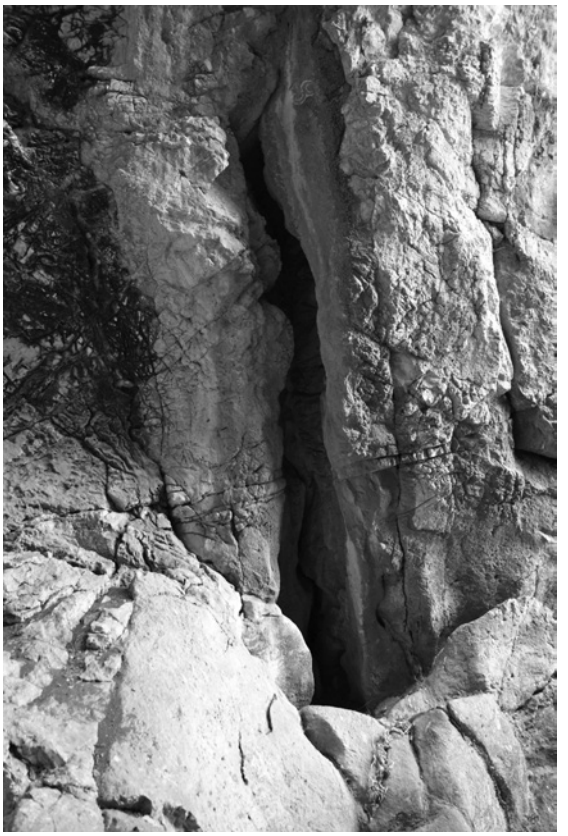


FIGURE 30 *Roofless vestibule. Fissure in W wall (photo by author).*

PLATE XIX

FIGURE 31 *Roofless vestibule. Watermarks on E wall* (*photo by author*).

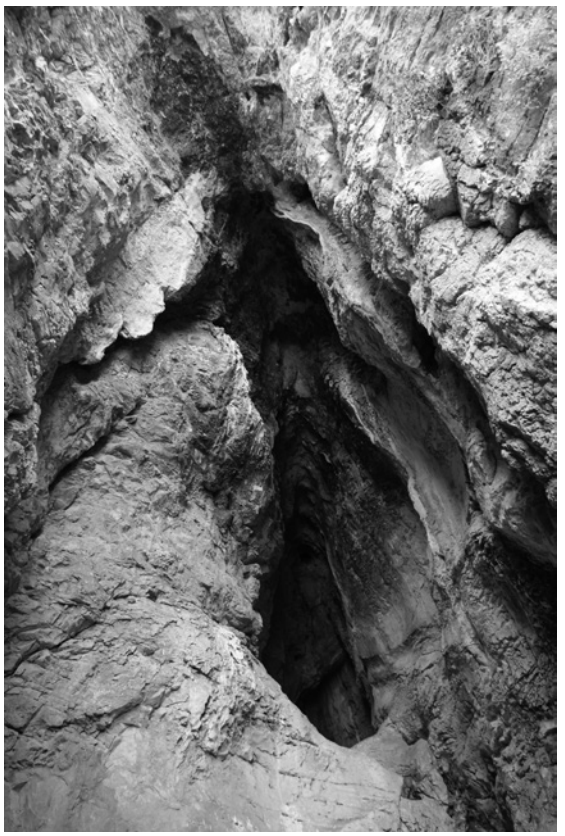


FIGURE 32 *Entrance to cave. View from N* (*photo by author*).

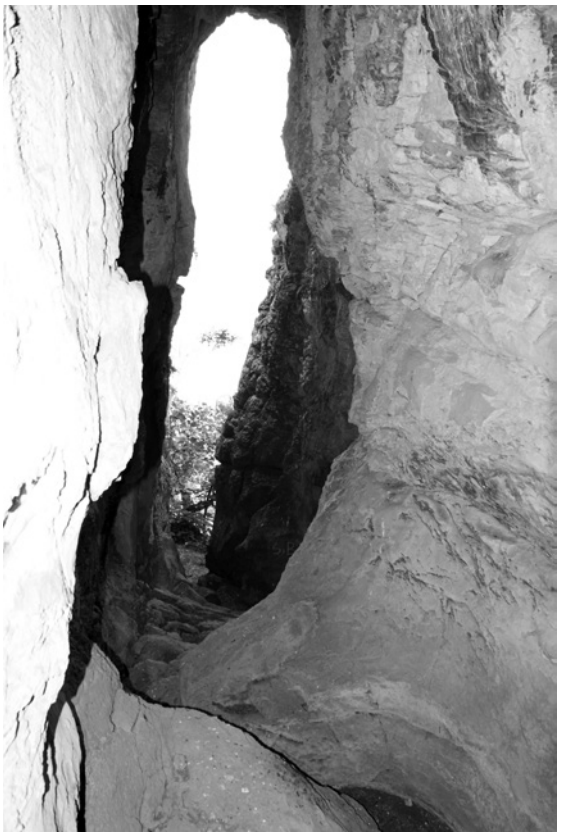


FIGURE 33 *Cave interior. View from S* (*photo by author*).

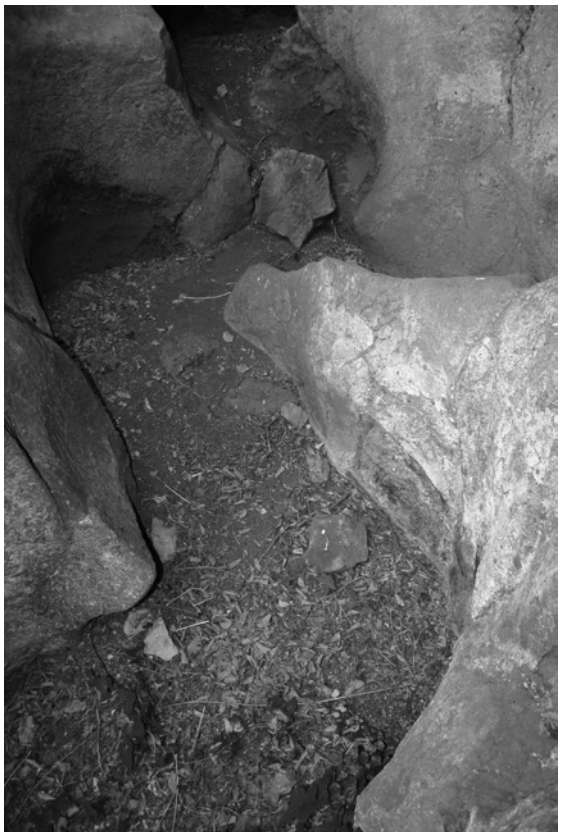


FIGURE 34 *Cave stream channel. Lower tract at vestibule entrance* (*photo by author*).

FIGURE 35 *Cave stream channel. Middle tract. View from S* (*photo by author*).

FIGURE 36 *Cave stream channel. Mid and upper tract. View from N* (*photo by author*).

FIGURE 37 *Cave stream channel. Upper tract* (*photo by author*).

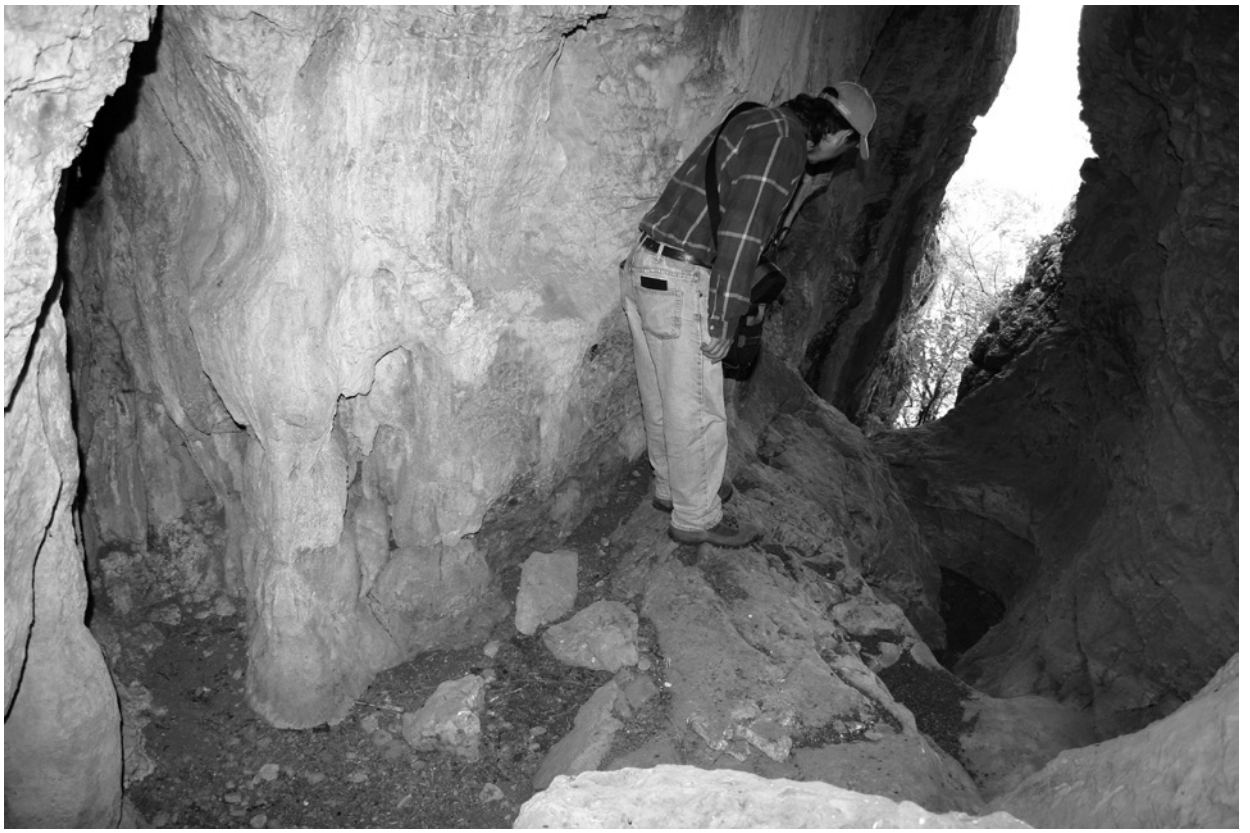


FIGURE 38 *Cave, upper end of corridor. View from S* (*photo by author*).

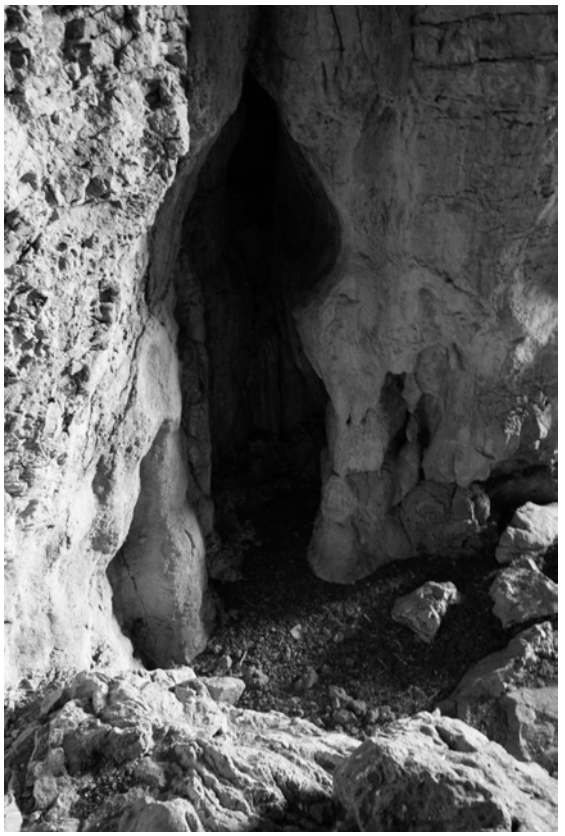


FIGURE 39 *Cave, upper end of corridor. Fissure in W wall* (*photo by author*).

FIGURE 40 *Cave, E elbow corridor* (*photo by author*).

FIGURE 41 *Cave, entrance to inner chamber* (*photo by author*).

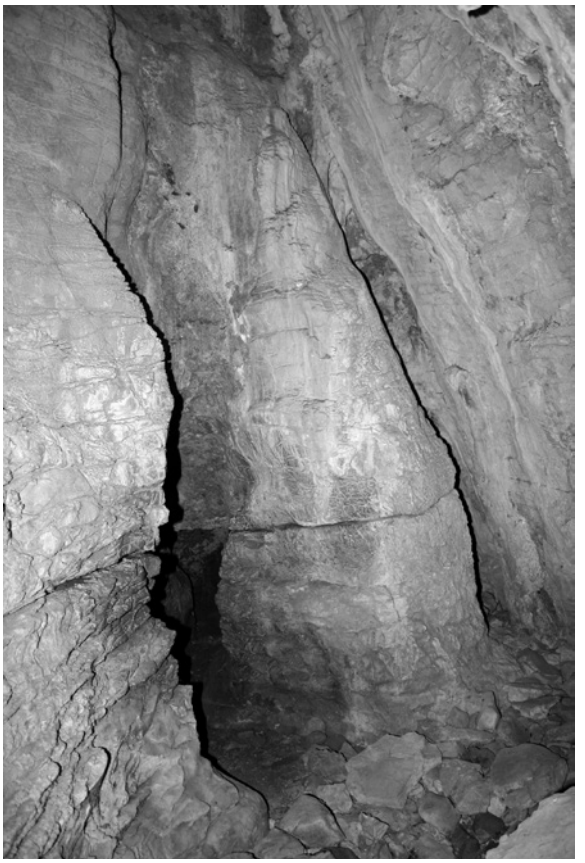


FIGURE 42 *Cave, inner chamber. Detail of pillar* (*photo by author*).

FIGURE 43 *Cave, inner chamber. Interior view* (*photo by author*).

FIGURE 44 *Inscription I with stairway in foreground. View from W (photo by author).*

FIGURE 45 *Inscription I (SAIA Arch. Fot. B 330: courtesy of SAIA).*

FIGURE 46 *Inscription II. View from N* (*photo by author*).

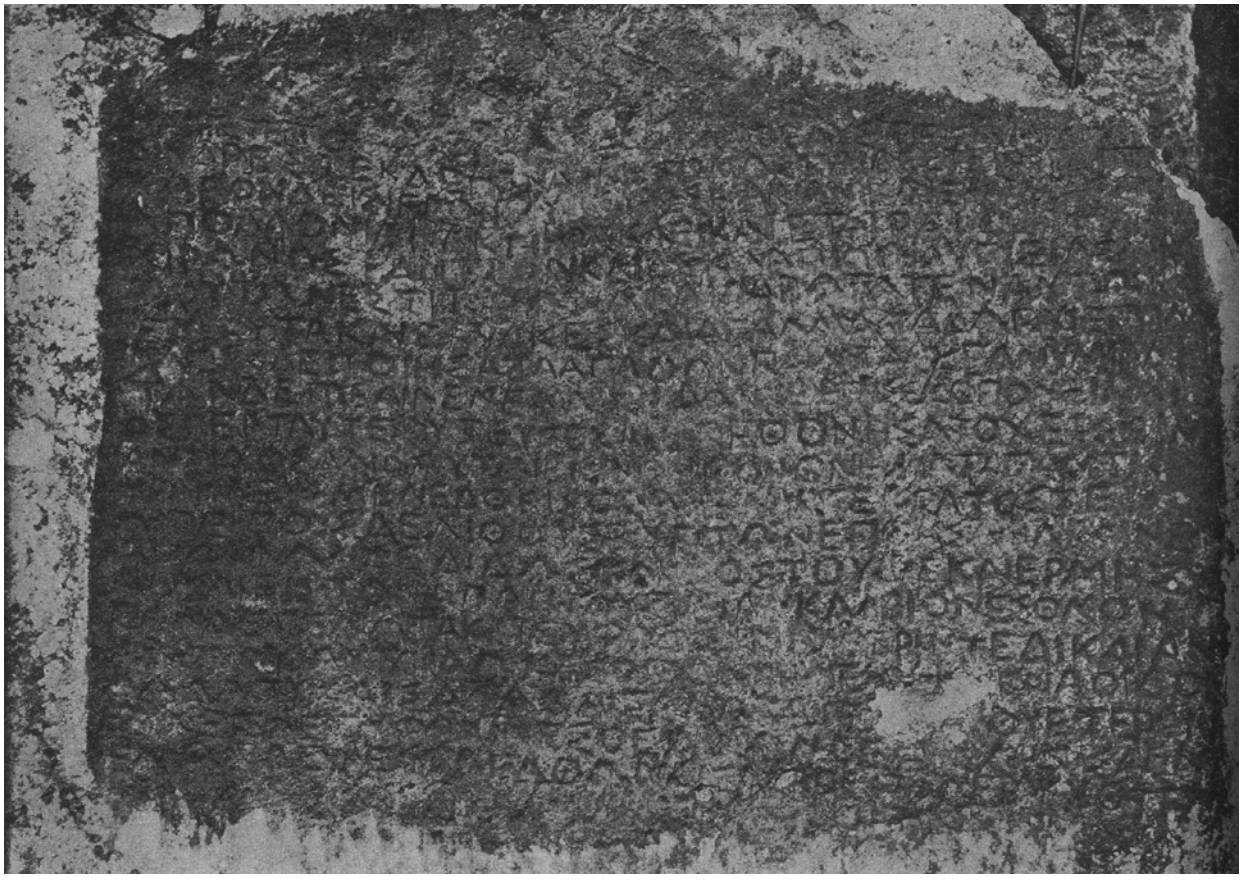


FIGURE 47 *Inscription II, enhanced* (*after Giannopoulos 1919*).

FIGURE 48 *SAIA Arch. Fot. B 331* (*courtesy of SAIA*).

FIGURE 49 *SAIA Arch. Fot. B 332* (*courtesy of SAIA*).

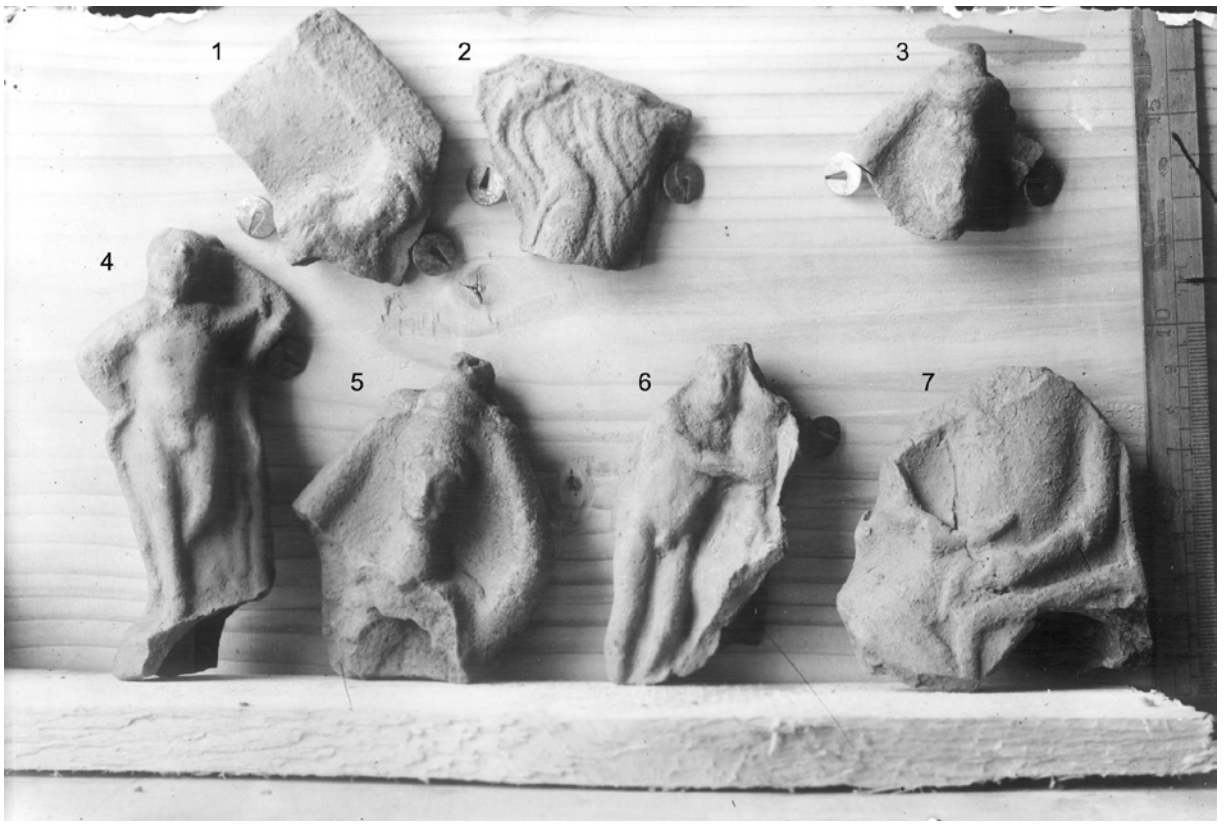


FIGURE 50 *SAIA Arch. Fot. B 333* (*courtesy of SAIA*).

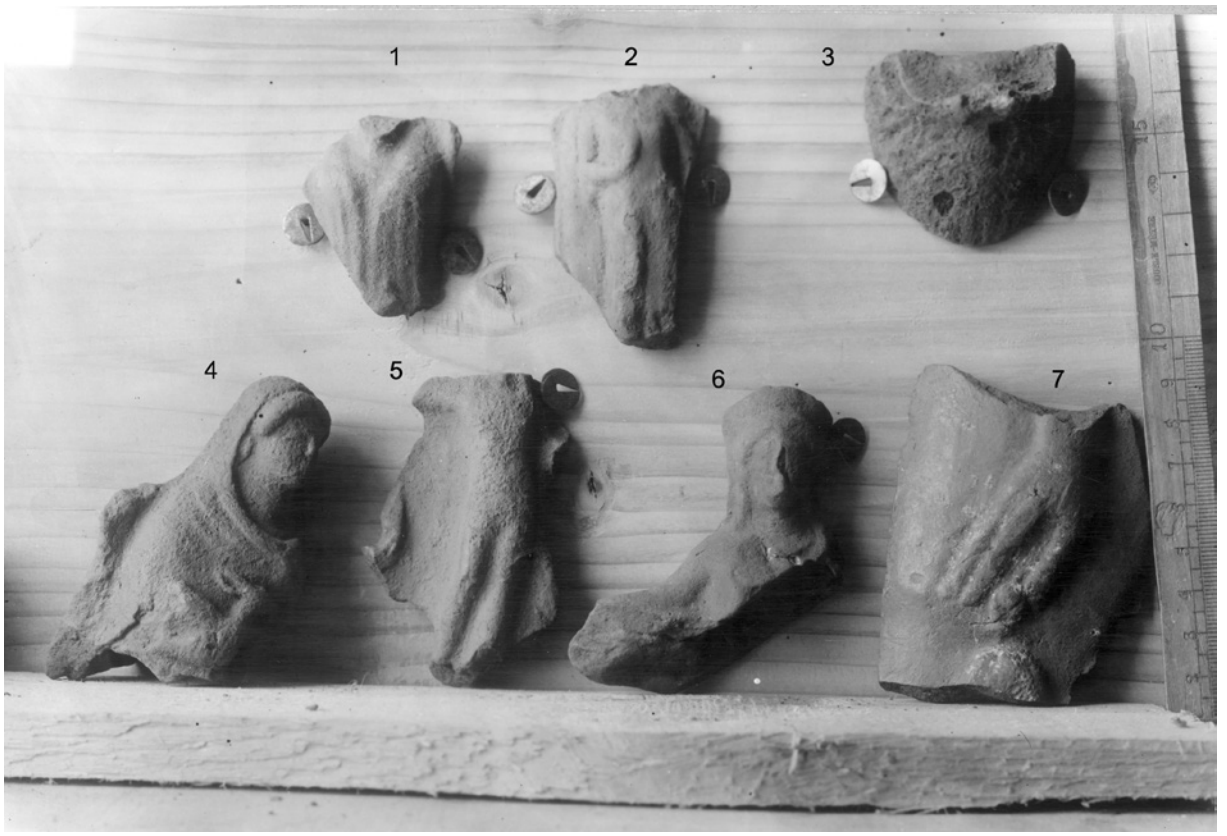


FIGURE 51 *SAIA Arch. Fot. B 334* (*courtesy of SAIA*).

FIGURE 52 *SAIA Arch. Fot. B 335 (courtesy of SAIA).*

FIGURE 53 *SAIA Arch. Fot. B 336 (courtesy of SAIA).*

FIGURE 54 *SAIA Arch. Fot. B 337* (*courtesy of SAIA*).

FIGURE 55 *SAIA Arch. Fot. B 338* (*courtesy of SAIA*).

FIGURE 56 *SAIA Arch. Fot. B 339 (courtesy of SAIA).*

FIGURE 57 *SAIA Arch. Fot. B 340 (courtesy of SAIA).*

FIGURE 58 *SAIA Arch. Fot. B 341* (*courtesy of SAIA*).

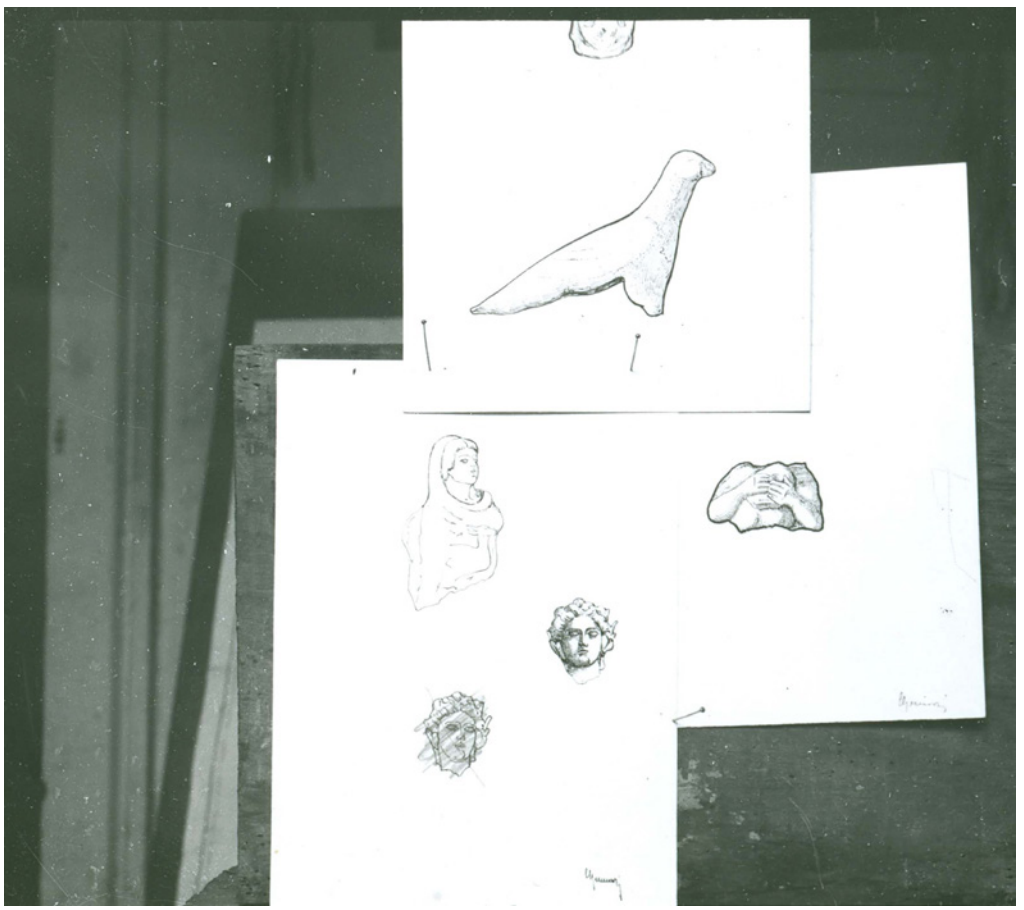


FIGURE 59 *SAIA Arch. Fot. C 911* (*courtesy of SAIA*).

FIGURE 60 *SAIA Arch. Fot. C 904 (courtesy of SAIA).*

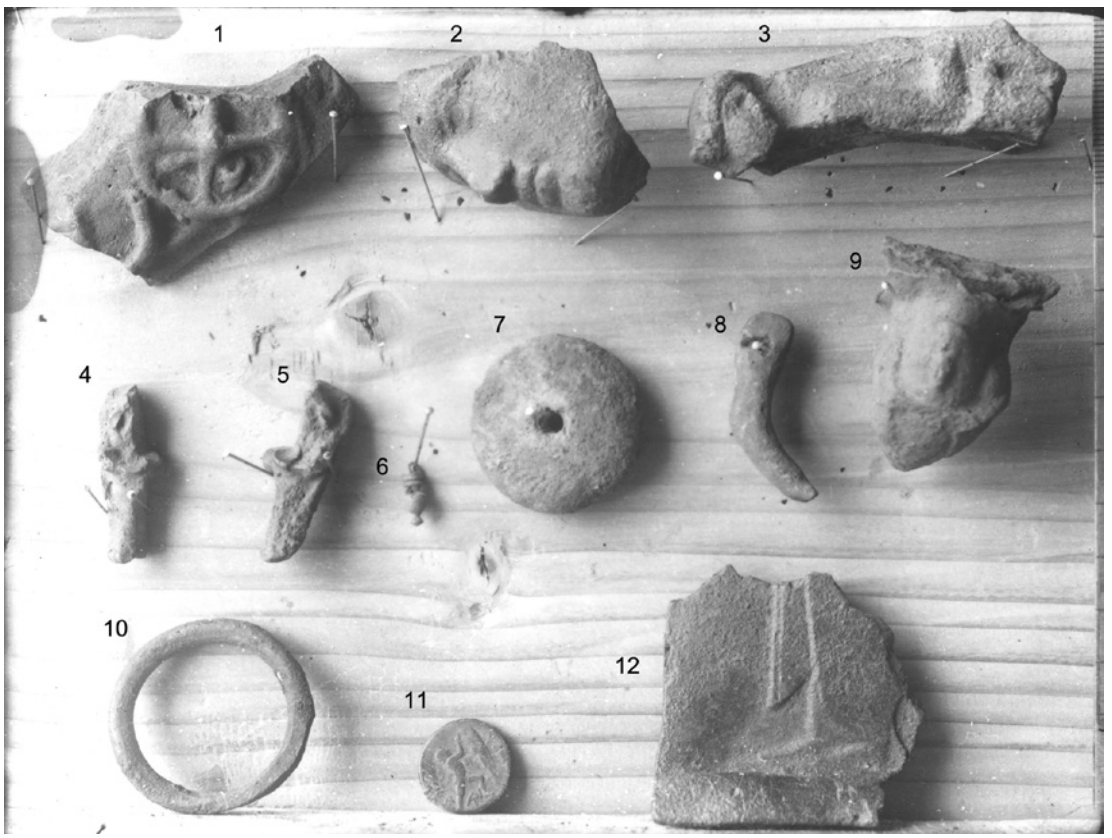


FIGURE 61 *SAIA Arch. Fot. C 905 (courtesy of SAIA).*

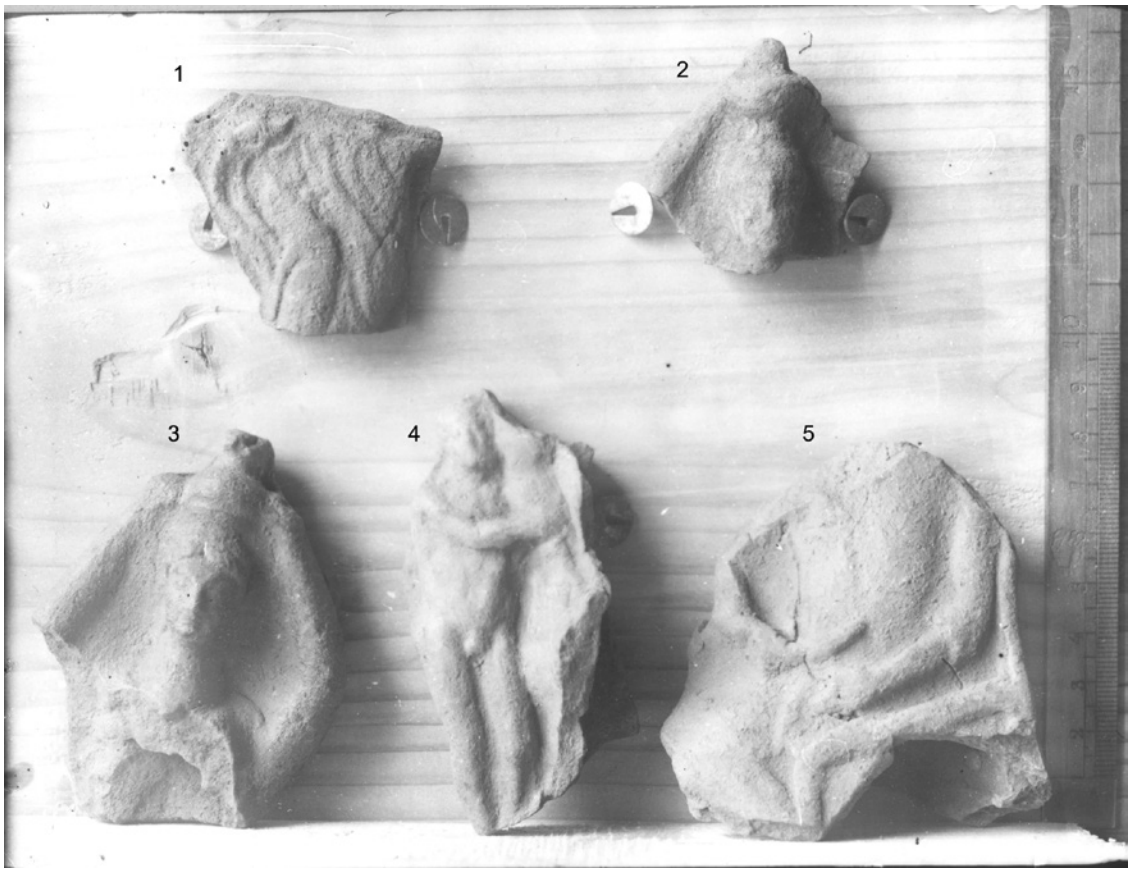


FIGURE 62 *SAIA Arch. Fot. C 906* (*courtesy of SAIA*).

FIGURE 63 *SAIA Arch. Fot. C 907* (*courtesy of SAIA*).

FIGURE 64 *SAIA Arch. Fot. C 908a* (*courtesy of SAIA*).

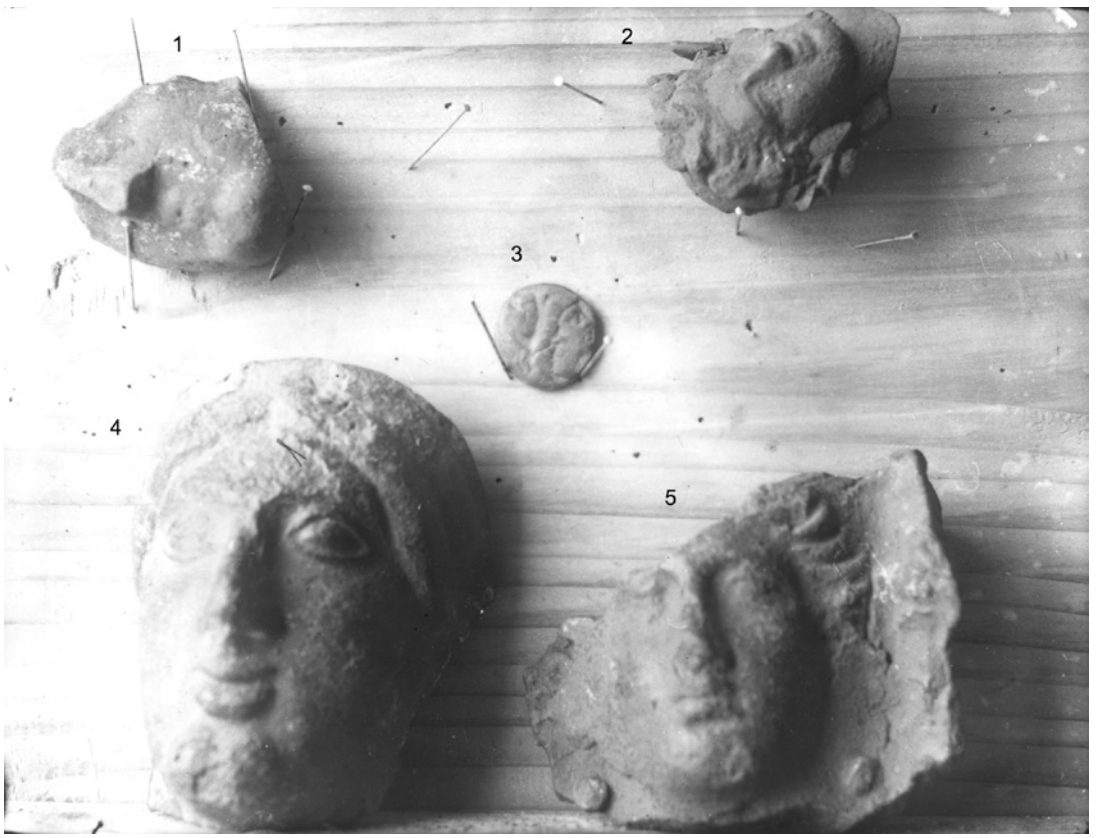


FIGURE 65 *SAIA Arch. Fot. C 908b* (*courtesy of SAIA*).

FIGURE 66 *SAIA Arch. Fot. C 909 (courtesy of SAIA).*

FIGURE 67 *SAIA Arch. Fot. C 910 (courtesy of SAIA).*

FIGURE 68 *Handle from vase* (*photo by author*).

FIGURE 69 *Fragment from stone object* (*photo by author*).