CHAPTER 15

Macedonia

Vassilis Evangelidis

Nature of the Evidence: Excavation and Survey

Novel approaches like Susan Alcock's *Graecia Capta* (1993) allowed the "rediscovery" of Roman Greece under the scope of a new interpretation: that the incorporation of the old Greek city states into the Roman Empire was a process that had a long-term effect on the organization of life, society, and culture. On the other hand, the provincial landscape of Roman Macedonia, the other great province of the Greek peninsula, still waits to be "discovered" before it can be "rediscovered." In contrast to south Greece, which after the foundation of the modern Greek state was a rather stable region, Macedonia suffered for a long time from turbulence, clashes between nations, and demographic changes that did not always permit unhindered archaeological research.

The Roman province covered a large geographical area that today extends over at least three modern states – Greece, the Republic of North Macedonia, and Albania – whose relationship has quite often been characterized by distrust (Figure 15.1). Although a large part of what is today central and south Albania belonged to the province of Macedonia, for the purposes of this essay the area of study will be restricted in the area between the lake of Prespes – Florina (at the northwest) and the Nestos river (east), and from central Thessaly (south) to the valley of Erigon and Axios (north). Additionally, the archaeology of the Roman period did not always receive appropriate attention, since academic and consequently public interest focused on earlier, more "illustrious" periods.

Despite these problems, the archaeological record is long. Since 1861, when L. Heuzey and H. Daumet arrived in Macedonia as emissaries of Napoleon III in order to head a large archaeological expedition, numerous systematic and rescue excavations have revealed a great number of Roman-period sites and monuments, among them important urban centers of the Roman period (Philippoi, Dion, Stobi, Heraclea, Demetrias), or monuments and buildings that came to light during the feverish postwar rebuilding of the Greek cities. More recently, the construction of the modern Egnatia highway in north Greece has instigated a number of rescue excavations and small-scale surveys along its route, greatly enhancing our knowledge

A Companion to the Archaeology of the Roman Empire, *Volume 1*, First Edition. Edited by Barbara Burrell.

about rural Macedonia, while archaeological research in the Republic of North Macedonia (Kuzman 2008) and Albania added new evidence about sites that were previously unknown or inaccessible to the broader archaeological community. Undeniably, a major setback in the archaeological research of the period is the relative lack of regional or even local surveys, especially those focusing on the transition from the late Hellenistic (LH) to the early Roman (ER) period. A few intensive survey projects (Figure 15.1) have produced conclusive evidence for changes in the landscape or the settlement patterns of the region, but these have not always focused on the Roman period. The Greek Archaeological Service has conducted a number of small-scale local surveys that occasionally have employed geophysical, pollen, or GIS analysis, but mostly the aim of these projects has been restricted to the identification of potential sites for excavation.

The Context of Roman Macedonia

Regional and local surveys (Bintliff 2012, 313–319) and new research approaches (Alcock 1993) reveal that mainland Greece underwent a series of changes as a result of its incorporation into the Roman Empire, among them the decline of the countryside, the gradual emergence of large estates, the disappearance of many small towns and villages, and the redistribution of the population. The continuous turmoil of the late Hellenistic period and the presence of large armies, which inflicted a heavy burden on mainland Greece, obviously played a very important role in the collapse of the traditional economic and political system, but do not solely account for the decline. The failure of the Greek cities to remain high up in the commercial network and the importance given to new metropolitan centers or strategically important regions were also contributing factors to the loss of prosperity, at least until the second century CE (Bintliff 2012, 318).

Macedonia seems to have followed the same general path of development as other areas of the Greek peninsula, but the preexistence of a system of large rural estates belonging to an elite equestrian class, the different form of urbanization based on large regional centers such as Pella or Demetrias, and, most importantly, the vast economic resources in comparison to southern Greece are factors that could have made the process of transition to the new reality less dramatic. The construction of the Via Egnatia in the second century BCE and the gradual extension of the road network to the Balkans (Figure 15.2) could also have had a beneficial effect on the economy of the province by providing a link to the West and access to the great markets of the East, as well as to the hinterland of the Balkans, rich in minerals and natural resources.

Nevertheless, no one can doubt that Rome intervened drastically in the organization of Macedonia even immediately after the defeat of Perseus in 168 BCE, creating four self-governing districts based on traditional boundaries (Nigdelis 2007, 51). Specific measures such as the prohibition of landowning, salt trade, and intermarriage across districts, as well as the suspension of silver and gold mining, clearly aimed at the political and economic control of the area. The next step was the official organization of the province (148 BCE), the nominal boundaries of which depended on the military activities and needs of Roman authority. Epirus, Thrace, the hinterland of the Balkans, and Thessaly were occasionally parts of the province, as attested by Cicero, *Against Piso* 38: "for the governors of Macedonia, the borders were always the same as those marked by swords and spears." The history of Roman Macedonia, with its territorial changes, constant barbarian raids, opposing Roman armies, and greedy governors, constitute the mosaic of the province at the end of the Hellenistic period, and are thoroughly documented (Nigdelis 2007). Archaeologically, however, this

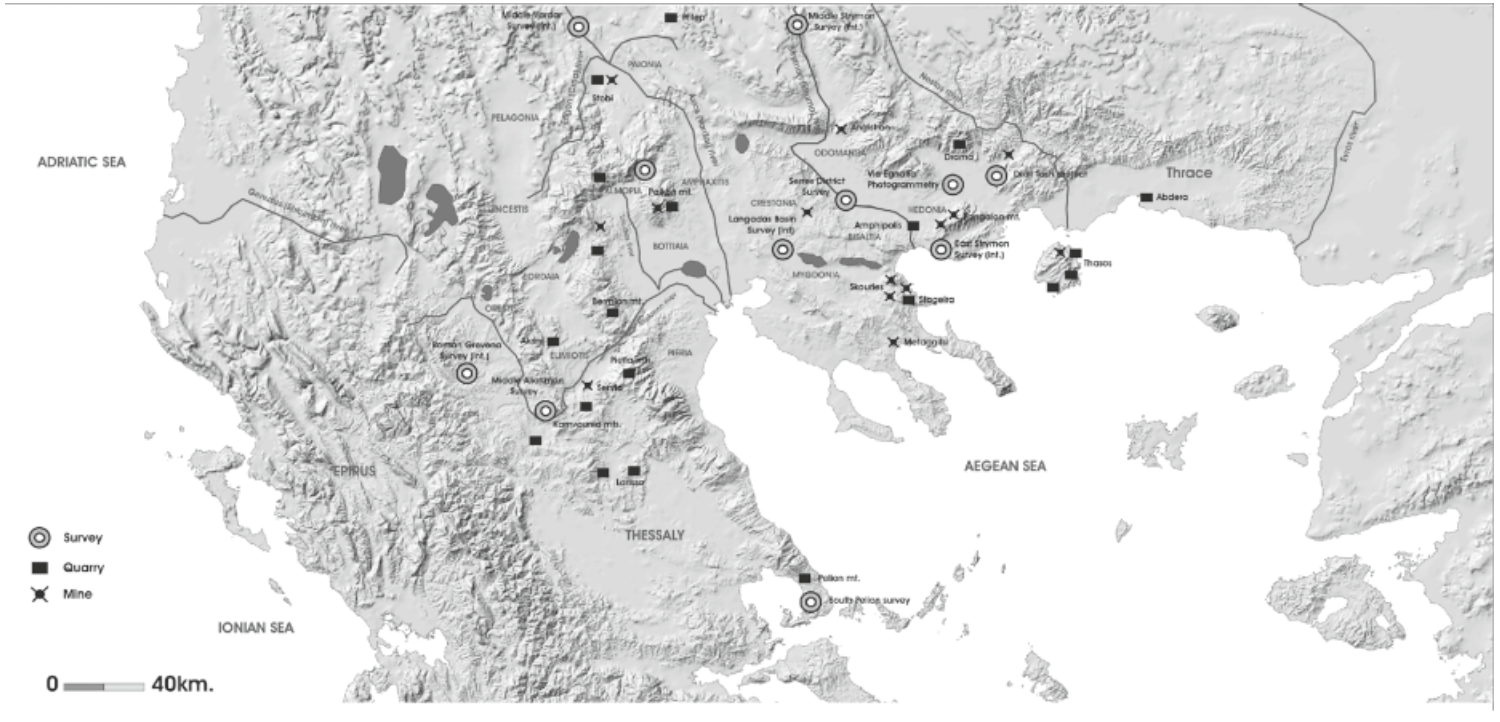

Figure 15.1 Main areas of Macedonia. Distribution map of surveys, quarries and mines. Digital map by Vassilis Evangelidis.

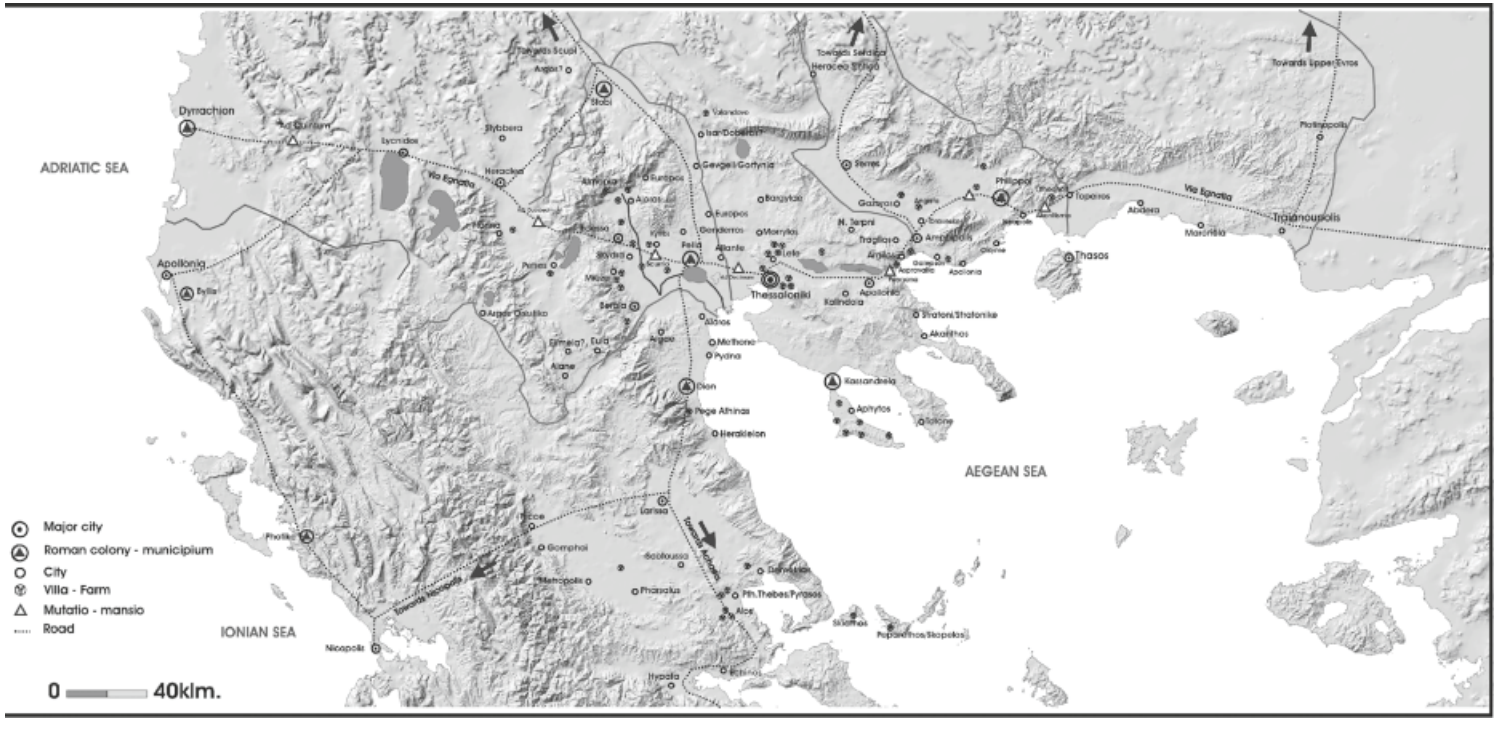

Figure 15.2 Network of cities, villas and roads of Macedonia. Digital map by Vassilis Evangelidis.

early stage of incorporation into the empire is difficult to trace. Roman troops, which for many regions in the West were important bearers of Roman material culture, were stationed in Macedonia to face the constant barbarian raids of the second-first centuries BCE, but their presence (e.g., forts) remains archaeologically elusive. Similarly elusive are traces of Roman *negotiatores*, the Italian adventurers who, after the collapse of the monarchy and especially during the first century BCE, engaged in business in Macedonia, buying land and trading timber, minerals, and slaves. Although their presence is attested by inscriptions or funerary stelae in many Macedonian cities where they were organized in *conventus*, official clubs with an active role in urban life (Nigdelis 2007, 59), large-scale architecture like the Agora of the Italians in Delos has not yet been associated with them. The best manifestation of the Roman presence during this transitional period is the construction of the Via Egnatia (mid-second century BCE), the great trans-adriatic military road that allowed rapid movement of troops toward the East and the Balkans (Lolos 2007; Figure 15.2). It is, however, the changes in settlement patterns and urbanization that reflect the transition to the new socioeconomic reality of the empire in the most tangible way. Extinction or continuity, decline or prosperity, shrinkage or enlargement could each be the result of the incorporation of a city, town, or village into the new administrative structure of the empire.

Urbanization and Settlements

Urban Sites: Extinction or Disappearance

Despite a lower level of urbanization compared with southern Greece or Asia Minor, Macedonia remained one of the most urbanized areas of the ancient world, with a network of cities of varied size, power, and influence (Talbert 2000, Vol. 2, map 50). In the new conditions of the Roman world, some cities adapted well; others did not, and fell into decline. For many small cities, such as an unidentified Hellenistic city discovered near the modern village of Petres in Florina, the end came violently at the end of the first century BCE. As in southern Greece, this was a period when each city depended on luck and making the right decisions or alliances in order to avoid plunder and destruction. In many cases, like that of the Thessalian city of Gomphoi (Caesar, *Civil War* 3.80), the financial strain of sustaining Roman troops was as hazardous as an invading army. The construction of the Via Egnatia might also have played a significant role in the decline of some traditional coastal centers such as the cities of Chalkidike, or Maroneia and Abdera in Thrace, since importance now was given to new centers, like Heraclea Lyncestis, Apollonia, Traianoupolis, and Ulpia Topeiros, strategically situated along the route (Lolos 2007, 285; Figure 15.2). For many old cities, such as Tragilos or even Philippoi, the decline brought about impoverishment and downgrading to the status of a village or *polisma* (Strabo, *Geography* 7.41).

Undoubtedly, the most characteristic case of "failure" was the gradual disappearance of the administrative capital, Pella, during the second half of the first century BCE. Despite its size and importance, the city did not manage to survive the transition to the early imperial period and a natural disaster (probably an earthquake); it was eventually abandoned and replaced by a Roman colony. The decline of Pella has been attributed to the upgrade of Thessaloniki to a provincial seat and its subsequent maximization. As in the case of the old capital Aigae, which also declined around the Augustan period, Pella's end was not the result of a violent act of war, but a gradual decay and abandonment caused by the shift to new commercial and administrative centers. Naturally, the abandonment was not always final. In the case of the small Thessalian port of Pyrasos, its abandonment at the end of the first century BCE was followed by a resettlement and the adoption of a new name, that of Pthiotic Thebes, an inland

center that also declined at approximately the same time (Strabo, *Geography* 4.5.14). At Pella, in spite of the general desertion of the site of the old city, recent excavations have shown that the south coastal sector was actually reinhabited during the imperial period.

Urban Sites: Continuity

Regardless of the difficulties of the early conquest and the changes that the transition inevitably brought, many cities, towns, and villages managed to survive (Figure 15.2). The most complete record of the cities and towns of the Roman period in Macedonia remains the fundamental work of F. Papazoglou (1988), largely repeated by the Barrington Atlas (Talbert 2000). Most of the large and medium-size urban centers at the core of the old Macedonian kingdom (central Macedonia) continued to exist during the early to middle Roman periods. Textual evidence indicates that smaller cities or villages were often grouped around a more important urban center (Hatzopoulos 1996, 49–104), forming a *sympolitia* (union) such as the *Pentapolis* or *Tripolis* known from eastern Macedonia, while in upper Macedonia, where the degree of urbanization was lower, the traditional *komai* (villages) formed *politeiai* (unions of individual communities), normally bearing the *ethnikon*, the name of the local *ethnos* (nation).

In many cases, the original large size of the city was reduced, as in Kassandreia (Chalkidike) or Demetrias in Thessaly, where the old, enormous urban center (440 ha) was restricted to a habitation zone near the coast and the harbor. In other cities that were traditionally well provided – such as Thasos, Edessa, Beroia, or the Thessalian cities of Larissa and Trikke – the Roman period brought expansion, with new habitation zones, lavishly built public (baths) or private buildings (houses), and monumental architecture. Undeniably, the most characteristic aspect of the urbanization of the period was the maximization of Thessaloniki to a "first-level city," a provincial capital and urban center for the whole of the Balkans (Adam-Veleni 2011). Its upgraded status is perfectly explained by its position as a link between the Aegean region and the Balkans (Lolos 2007, 274), its size (260 ha) and population being the most accurate indicators for its place in the hierarchy of power. Of course, the status of a city does not solely depend on quantitative data like size or population but can also be rooted in its long history (Beroia), religious importance (Dion), economic importance (Thasos), location (Stobi, Apollonia, Amphipolis), or the power of its citizens (Roman colonies).

Connectivity, one of the most important aspects of urban networks, was greatly enhanced by the construction (and maintenance) of the Via Egnatia and the smaller roads that allowed unhindered movement of persons and goods toward the Balkans and the Roman East (Figure 15.2; Lolos 2007). The northern region (Paeonia and Pelagonia) was clearly among the areas that benefited from this enhanced connectivity. Prosperity and rapid development during the late first century CE are well attested for the larger cities of the area (Stobi, Heraclea Lyncestis, and Lychnidos), which were strategically located along major Balkan routes. The northern border area, which had previously succumbed to barbarian raids, now became a core zone, easily accessible and therefore inclined toward economic development.

The most tangible evidence of the intervention of Rome in the provincial landscape was a systematic program of colonization, originally conceived by Caesar and other major players of the civil wars, later completed by Augustus (Rizakis 2013, 23). In most cases these colonies replaced preexisting centers of the old Kingdom, such as Dion, Pella, Kassandreia, and Philippoi (Figure 15.2). Since Roman colonization generally had agrarian motives, the foundation of the colonies was followed by changes in land ownership, with the best part of the confiscated land (*ager publicus*) given to the colonists, mostly followers and soldiers of the various generals of the civil wars. The rearrangement of the countryside was done mostly through the systematic application of centuriation (Rizakis 2013, 24), a system of land division that reflects the Roman ideas of territorial control and hierarchy of space. Although in

Macedonia traces of centuriation have only been discovered at Kassandreia, it is almost certain that the creation of a cadastral grid was also an important constituent of territorial organization in the other colonies. Dion, Kassandreia, and Philippoi (but not Pella) were granted extensive territories (Papazoglou 1988, 405–413), along with *ius italicum*, securing not only their financial survival but their status in site hierarchy. In Philippoi, archaeological and geophysical research has revealed the existence of an extended territory, which covered the fertile plain of Drama, and was dotted with villages (*vici*), small settlements, and villas, home to a mixed population of Romans, Greeks, and natives. In Pieria and Kassandra, the foundation of the colonies of Dion and Kassandreia also seems to have disturbed traditional settlement patterns. Archaeological research in the peninsula of Kassandra in Chalkidike during the last decade has shown that many of the small towns and villages which had spread across the territory were replaced by dispersed rural settlements – villas.

Systematic archaeological research in Philippoi and Dion during the last hundred years has revealed cities whose strong sense of *romanitas* was reflected in their material culture and architecture. Although the transformation of the urban landscape was a gradual process (not completed in Dion until the beginning of the third century CE), western influences are clear in the organization of space and architecture.

Rural Settlements

Outside the great urban centers, the nature, plans, and architecture of rural settlements (villages, hamlets, or little towns) remain largely unknown. Random finds, rescue excavations, and small-scale local surface surveys have revealed remains of rural houses, buildings, cemeteries, farms, villas, and warehouses, mostly in the fertile zone that extends between Mt. Paikon and Mt. Bermion (Bottiaia). Most were located relatively close to the main urban centers of the area, Edessa, Pella, and Beroia. Almost 130 rural sites of the LH and ER periods have been discovered in upper Macedonia, but it is debatable how many of these can actually be classed as ancient komai. Inscriptions have preserved the name of some of these (Hatzopoulos 1996, 117), but their connection to an archaeological site is not always possible. Absent a concrete site classification and typology study, the size, distribution, and exact date for most of these sites is unknown, and analysis is often restricted to the conventional urban/rural distinction. Most importantly, we do not know how and to what degree these rural settlements were affected by the transition to the new reality. Hatzopoulos (1996, 118) has assumed, probably correctly, that some of these villages, or their farmland, passed into the hands of rich Romans or Romanized Greeks.

The relationship between an urban center and the surrounding rural settlements is best manifested in the territory of the Roman colony of Philippoi (plain of Drama), where systematic archaeological research has spotted a number of rural settlements of the Roman to late Roman period situated every 3–10 km along major routes. These vici (some of whose ethnic names – such as *Medicani*, *Satriceni*, and *Coreni* – have survived) enjoyed a form of administrative and legal independence probably indicative of a territorial organization very similar to that in the western provinces.

Natural Resources and the Exploitation of the Landscape

The natural resources of Macedonia, vast in comparison to those of southern Greece, might have permitted an easier transition from the LH into the early imperial period (Bintliff 2012, 317). After the conquest of Macedonia, most of the old royal estates, farms, forests, mines, and quarries became ager publicus, property of the Roman state (Nigdelis 2007, 64), though

the exact mechanism of their exploitation remains largely unknown. It is quite possible that a large part was leased to Romans or Romanized Greeks, perhaps managed by freedmen. Agriculture remained the chief economic activity of the region, mainly on small or medium estates or rural agrarian settlements. Reflecting a reorganization of traditional land ownership schemes, from the end of the first century BCE onward a new model of large estates started to appear: the *villa rustica*, owned by members of the Roman or Romanized elite, and directed by free or slave stewards (Rizakis 2013).

Although it's easy (or alluring) to imagine the existence of large *latifundia* or slave villae (Alcock 1993, 149), the organization, size, relationship to the surrounding rural settlements, and way that these estates functioned all are largely unknown. The only tangible evidence is the rural sites, which we conventionally call villas or farms, complexes that combined habitation quarters and storage or manufacturing facilities (Figure 15.2). The archaeological evidence attests some sophistication in the organization of the habitation quarters, and to the production and/or storage of goods (Adam-Veleni 2009), but offers only a glimpse of the overall organization of these units. Many aspects of the function of these estates, such as their relationship with neighboring villages, or the nature of the workforce (whether hired labor or sharecropper tenants) remain obscure. Studies on Mediterranean landscapes of the Roman period have argued that these large estates might have focused on commercial agriculture aimed at regional or even interregional markets (Rizakis 2013, 37), but archaeological confirmation of such a hypothesis is often impossible. For example, research focusing on the development of human activities in the plain of Drama (Philippoi) has not produced conclusive findings indicating intensification of agricultural production during the Roman period (Rizakis 2013, 39–40).

Other forms of land exploitation such as animal husbandry (transhumant or stable), forestry, or even fishing are more difficult to trace archaeologically. Textual evidence such as the petition of the *Battynaioi*, a nation in upper Macedonia, to the provincial governor to protect their forests from the incursions of individual entrepreneurs probably indicates the importance of these resources for the economy of local communities (Nigdelis 2007, 74).

We are on safer ground with mining (Figure 15.1), though there is little archaeological trace of small-scale or local mines, or alluvial mining. A few mine sites, such as Metaggitsi and Skouries in Chalkidike, have provided detailed evidence for the development of mineral extraction over time. Macedonia was, and still is, a region rich in iron, copper, silver, gold, lead, zinc, and magnesium, and systematic exploitation of the gold and iron mines of Chalkidike and eastern Macedonia is attested from Classical times. The gold mines of Pangaion (Skapte Hyle) were probably known to the Thracians and attracted the imperial interest of Athens, while local communities (probably of Thracian descent) had a long experience in mining and metallurgy in areas such as Thasos, Serres, NE Chalkidike, and Mt. Paikon (Kostoglou 2008). The late Roman Theodosian code mentions officials responsible for Macedonian mines (*procuratores metallorum intra Macedonia*), indicating the continuation of mining up to late antiquity (Nigdelis 2007, 74). Hard rock mines with long interconnecting galleries have been found in sites like Angistron Serres, Mt. Stratonikon, the Crestonia area, Stobi, Mt. Pangaion, Thasos, Servia, and Mt. Paikon, but based on current archaeological data, it is difficult to draw safe conclusions about intensification (or the reverse) of mining in the Roman period. Slag dispersion, seen at Serres and Kavala, can be an indication of the existence of small iron mines serving local needs, but this is very difficult to trace archaeologically. An inscription from the area of Philippoi (Nigdelis 2007, 74) indicates that many of these small mines were leased to Roman contractors (*conductores*).

Macedonia and Thessaly also provided good-quality stones and marbles (Figure 15.1), and systematic survey in western and central Macedonia has provided us with a list of more than twenty ancient marble or stone quarries (Russell 2013). Many of these, such as Mt. Paikon, Stobi, Pieria, Drama, the Kamvounia mountains, Edessa, Prilep, and Mt. Bermion, might

have provided marble of medium and poor quality for local building projects, but others, such as the marble quarries of Thasos (*marmor thasium*: Aliki, Vathy, Marmaromandra, Saliara) or the quarries of Larissa (*verde antico*: Kasambali) were exported on a regional or wider level.

Architecture and Features of the Built Environment

If the formation of the living environment has a social logic, then the changes (or occasionally the lack of change) in architecture and organization of space can provide valuable information to archaeologists and historians exploring societies of the past, especially societies in flux, like Macedonia and Achaea during the Roman imperial period. Although Roman period levels did not always receive appropriate attention, the catalog of monuments, buildings, and architectural features is long and contains some impressive examples of monumental architecture (Figure 15.3).

Public Spaces: Agoras, Fora, Macella

As in previous periods, a great deal of everyday public or private life revolved around the public spaces, mostly the *agora* (in the Roman colonies, forum), but also around the commercial/food markets or even in the recreational complexes (palaestra/baths). The form of public space underwent a major transformation during the Hellenistic period, when the development of the urban landscape was based on architecturally defined monumental spaces with a very inward character (Ionian or *tetragonos* agora; see Sielhorst 2015). Macedonia was most probably one of the birthplaces of this new urban logic, and one of the best and earliest examples of this type of closed agora was discovered in Pella (Evangelidis 2014, 337). As in other areas of the Aegean world, the trend continued in the imperial period, when the stabilization of economic and political conditions allowed cities to renovate their main public spaces in order to meet the new urban standards (Figure 15.4; Evangelidis 2010, 291–297, 2014). One of the best excavated sites illustrating this transformation is the city of Thasos, which exploited the prosperity brought by the marble and wine trade and commenced a large project (funded partially by prosperous members of the community) of enclosing the previously open agora with long stoas (Evangelidis 2010, 95–104, 2014, 343). This renovation was not restricted to the agora; it also included its surroundings, where small, colonnaded buildings extended the functionality of the main public space and enhanced the monumental character of the city center (Figure 15.4). This model seems to have been followed by many other cities in the region, including larger ones like Maroneia (Thrace), where an impressive propylon of the Hadrianic period marked the entrance to a public space near the harbor (Evangelidis 2014, 343), or smaller ones like Kalindoia (Mygdonia), where archaeological research has started to reveal a large public space of the Augustan period surrounded by large stoas (Evangelidis 2014, 338).

The Antonine agora of Thessaloniki is impressive not just for its monumentality (a pi-shaped stoa surrounding a court 146 × 90 m), but also for an axial design, reminiscent of the plan of the forum of the Roman colony of Philippoi; the square seems to have been oriented toward a higher terrace adorned with temples (Figure 15.4; Adam-Veleni 2011, 556; Evangelidis 2014, 340). Excavations in the center of modern Thessaloniki brought to light the south (cryptoporticus with shops) and the east wing of the complex, including an elaborate odeon, an archive and a mint. The agora was probably part of a larger civic center that extended in successive terraces from the level of the main thoroughfare of the city, the colonnaded Via Regia, to the rocky area where the basilica of St. Demetrius was built in the early Christian period.

In Philippoi, as in the other well-preserved Roman colony, Dion, the design of the main public space (forum) shows a strong Roman character, with emphasis on central feature(s)

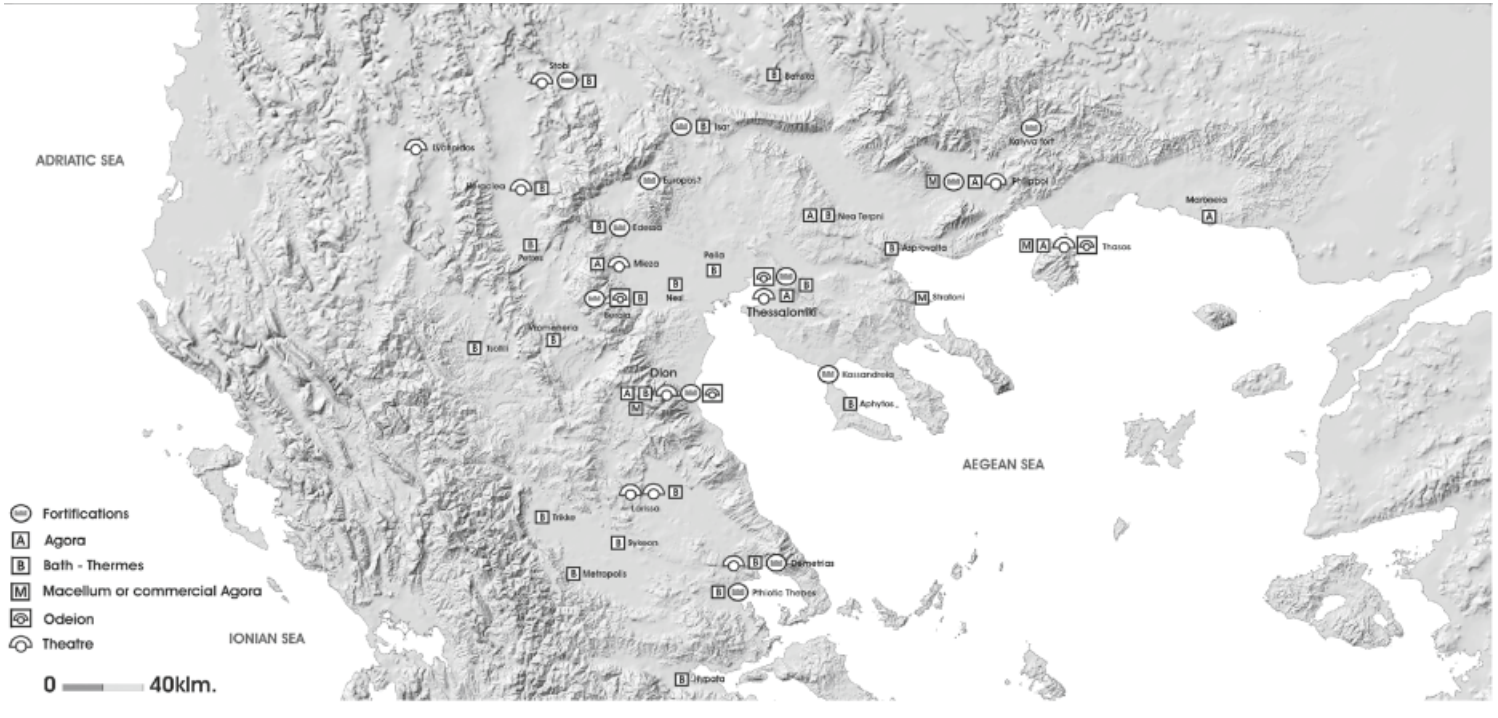

Figure 15.3 Distribution map of various buildings and architectural features within the province of Roman Macedonia. Digital map by Vassilis Evangelidis.

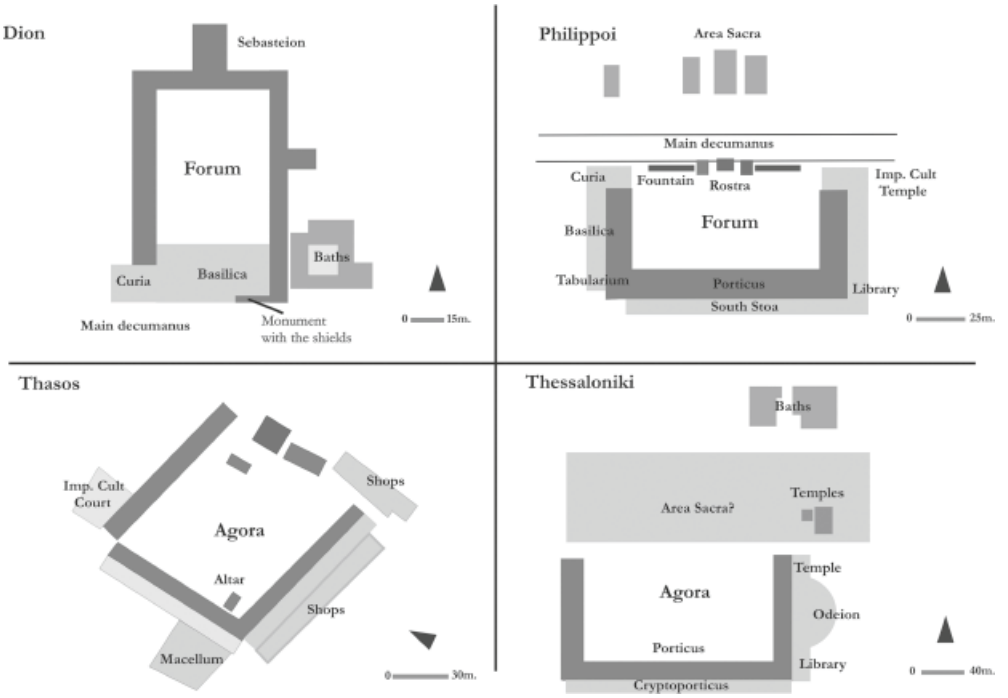

Figure 15.4 Public spaces: Agoras (Thessaloniki, Thasos) and Fora (Dion, Philippoi). Digital drawing by Vassilis Evangelidis.

(Figure 15.4). As in many northern Italian fora, the main *decumanus* of Philippoi separated the main area of the forum (second century CE) from a monumental *area sacra* where at least three elaborate temples, possibly of the Capitoline triad, stood (Evangelidis 2010, 270, 2014, 341). In Dion, the small forum (end of the second century CE), which stood at the north end of a long terrace, is reminiscent of the type of enclosed fora of the second and third century CE in the western provinces (Evangelidis 2010, 199, 2014, 350). The organization of space in both fora clearly reflects Roman societal values. The hierarchically structured public space (as reflected in the clear division between the area sacra and the public square), the strong sense of axiality with emphasis on a central architectural feature (normally frontal temple/s that stood on higher ground), the orientation to the cardinal points, and the standardization of the location of some of the buildings in the overall plan (e.g., the axial relationship between the basilica and the central temple or the close relationship between the basilica and the curia) are characteristics of a spatial logic that in many ways is different from that of the traditional Greek agora (even in its more symmetrical peristyle form). Such features appear in cities with a strong Roman character, like colonies, where the urban landscape (especially in the area of the forum) sent a clear symbolic message to visitors about the romanitas of the place (Evangelidis 2014, 350–351). Unfortunately, the evidence from the other Roman colonies of Macedonia, (Pella and Kassandreia), as well as the new cities that were founded or upgraded during the imperial period (like Ulpia Topeiros in Thrace), is scant.

The multiplicity and complexity of public life in Macedonia's great urban centers such as Thessaloniki or Beroia demanded the existence of more than one large public space, such as the *Megaloforon* (great forum) attested by the Byzantine sources (eighth and ninth century CE) for Thessaloniki. For many of the smaller cities, however, the old agora – with appropriate additions to enhance monumentality and functionality – must have continued to serve public needs until late antiquity.

A great part of public life also happened in the commercial or food selling markets, which also took a monumental form during the Hellenistic period. Although in many cities the traditional open periodic markets and numerous little food selling spots continued to exist, many such commercial activities found shelter in colonnaded buildings (agoras or *macella*) close to the main agora of the city (Evangelidis 2014, 343, 2019), and under the supervision of the city *archontes* (officials). In Roman Macedonia, such buildings have been securely identified at Philippoi and Thasos. A large building with an internal polygonal court, adjoining the forum of Dion, which was originally identified as a palaestra, has recently been identified as a macellum (Figure 15.3; Evangelidis 2010, 203; Zarmakoupi 2018, 289). It is very likely that this kind of commercial building (whether under the Latin term *macellum* or the Greek *makellos*) existed in every medium to large city in the province, while in many small cities, commercial and artisan activities might have coexisted, as in the case of the small rustic complex (first century BCE to fourth century CE) discovered in the modern village of Stratone (ancient Stratonike) in eastern Chalkidike (Evangelidis 2014, 338).

Public and Administrative Buildings

The area of the agora/forum was where most of the city's administrative or public offices were situated, sheltered either in free-standing buildings or in rooms behind the stoas. Some public buildings, like bouleuteria or basilicas, followed a specific plan that makes their identification easy, but identifying rooms behind the stoas (seen at Thessaloniki, Philippoi, Dion, and Thasos) is more difficult. Luckily, dedicatory inscriptions, architectural features, or small finds have allowed identification of the archive and mint in Thessaloniki (Adam-Veleni 2011, 556) and the *tabularium* and library in the forum of Philippoi (Evangelidis 2010, 268). Gatherings of the most important political institution of the Graeco-Roman city, the local council (*boule* or *ordo decurionum*) took place in buildings with a cavea, like the first phase of the bouleuterion in the agora of Thessaloniki (end first century CE), or in the form of a small odeon (Thasos, second century CE). In Roman colonies, the *curia*, seat of the ordo decurionum, is normally situated next to or near the basilica, either as a free-standing building (Philippoi), or as an attached hall (Dion). In Philippoi, the curia had the rare form of a Corinthian temple, and nearby stood another important monument of Roman political life: a speaker's platform (*rostra*), identifying the square as a place for public assemblies (*comitia*) (Figure 15.4; Evangelidis 2010, 266). A large building with a central niche on its north side at Argos Orestikon (Evangelidis 2014, 347) could have functioned as the seat of the Koinon (League) of Oresteians, a local tribal confederation in Upper Macedonia.

Basilicas, the iconic buildings of Roman architecture, have been discovered in the fora of Philippoi and Dion (Evangelidis 2010, 284). Parts of a public building of the Hellenistic period, including a long frieze depicting shields and cuirasses, were reused for the construction of the one at Dion. Although basilicas are rare outside the colonies, a fine three-aisled basilica (Evangelidis 2014, 347) of the second century CE has come to light at the center of a small, unidentified city at N. Terpni (Serres, east Macedonia), and basilical buildings of the first century CE have been discovered in Thasos (SE stoa) and in Stobi (building with arches).

Buildings related to provincial government have not yet been securely identified. At Thessaloniki, a late Republican building in the form of a Greek *oikia* has been called a *praetorium*, since it is hypothesized to be the house of the Roman praetor of the province (Adam-Veleni 2011, 549), and a public building offering accommodation to traveling officials (*praetorium cum tabernae*) was discovered close to the forum at Dion (Pantermalis 2000, 377–382).

The upgrade of Thessaloniki to an imperial capital by the emperor Galerius at the beginning of the fourth century CE was reified by the construction of a large administrative, ceremonial, and residential complex, planned on a monumental scale and covering a large section of the

eastern part of the city *intra muros* (Stefanidou-Tiveriou 2009). Among other, smaller buildings, the complex included (from north to south): a giant rotunda, possibly dedicated to the imperial cult; a tetrapylon (the Arch of Galerius), commemorating the military valor and grandeur of the Tetrarchy in sculptural friezes; a reception hall and basilica; the residential quarters or palace; the octagon, a large throne room or judicial hall; baths; an enormous hippodrome next to the east wall; and a harbor (Mentzos 2010). The intention of the architect(s) was clearly to impress the viewer not only with the sheer scale of the monumental buildings but also with their alignment along the descending terrain, which offered (and still offers) a spectacular vista.

Religious Buildings: Temples, Shrines, and Sanctuaries

Religious practice and sacred space were not left unaffected by the new sociocultural conditions of the imperial period. For Roman Macedonia, textual (inscriptions and literary sources) and sculptural evidence indicates the existence of a variety of cults and religious groups, reflecting the multiplicity of religious life in the Roman world (Steimle 2008). Temple building, or in many cases repair, continued to be an important public function that was largely supported by both local and provincial officials. The praetor of Macedonia was involved in the construction of the temple of the deified Caesar in Thessaloniki (Stefanidou-Tiveriou 2012, 274), and an unidentified Macedoniarch built a Roman podium temple in the little town of Isar in the second century CE (Kuzman 2008, 66–67). The introduction of the imperial cult at the end of the first century BCE seems to have boosted the construction of new temples in every major or minor urban center, with Beroia holding the scepter as *neokoros* and headquarters of the Koinon of Macedonians, the league promoting the imperial cult in the region (Nigdelis 2007, 71–72).

Religious sites and buildings of the imperial period have been discovered in a number of urban and rural areas (Figure 15.5). Many of the traditional pre-Roman religious centers, like the sanctuary of Zeus Ammon on the idyllic coast of Aphitos (Chalkidike), continued to prosper and attract visitors and devotees, as shown by the addition of new buildings (baths and stoas in Aphitos) and temples. Cult also continued in smaller, more rustic sanctuaries, such as that dedicated to the pastoral Apollo Nomios discovered at Portes – Kozani, Mt. Voion (Chatzinikolaou 2010, 201), or the sanctuary of the Autochthonous Mother of Gods at Lefkopetra near Beroia, where slave manumissions took place (Falezza 2012, 31–38), or the mountain sanctuary of Hero Auloneites at Pangaion (Falezza 2012, 114).

The size of the buildings varies from large urban free-standing temples at Thessaloniki and Kassandreia to small rural (Meneis) or urban (Thessaloniki, Thasos, Stobi) shrines and aediculae. The repertoire of types includes Greek-style temples (prostyle or with pteron), Roman podium temples at Philippoi, Dion, and Isar, temples with one central or lateral niches (Thessaloniki, Stobi, Styberra), monopteroi (Pella), shrines (Thasos), and aediculae or cultic rooms incorporated in public buildings (Kalindoia, Thasos).

Exceptional is the large 6 × 12 column Ionic temple discovered in 1936, then rediscovered in 2000, in the western part of ancient Thessaloniki (Stefanidou-Tiveriou 2012, 273–278). As at early imperial Athens (Alcock 1993, 191–196), the temple was partially made of materials reused from more than one late Archaic to early Classical building. Although originally regarded as the temple of Aphrodite transferred from the site of Aineia, 20 km away, to host the cult of deified Caesar in the first century BCE, more recent research on the sculpture suggests a Hadrianic date and a dedication to Dea Roma and Hadrian as Zeus Eleutherios (Stefanidou-Tiveriou 2012, 284).

The cosmopolitan character of great urban centers like Beroia, Thessaloniki, and Philippoi allowed the gradual establishment of new, often mystic, cults, some of which became very popular. The evidence for them is provided by inscriptions, literature, and sculpture, but connecting these to actual building remains is not always possible. Egyptian gods were

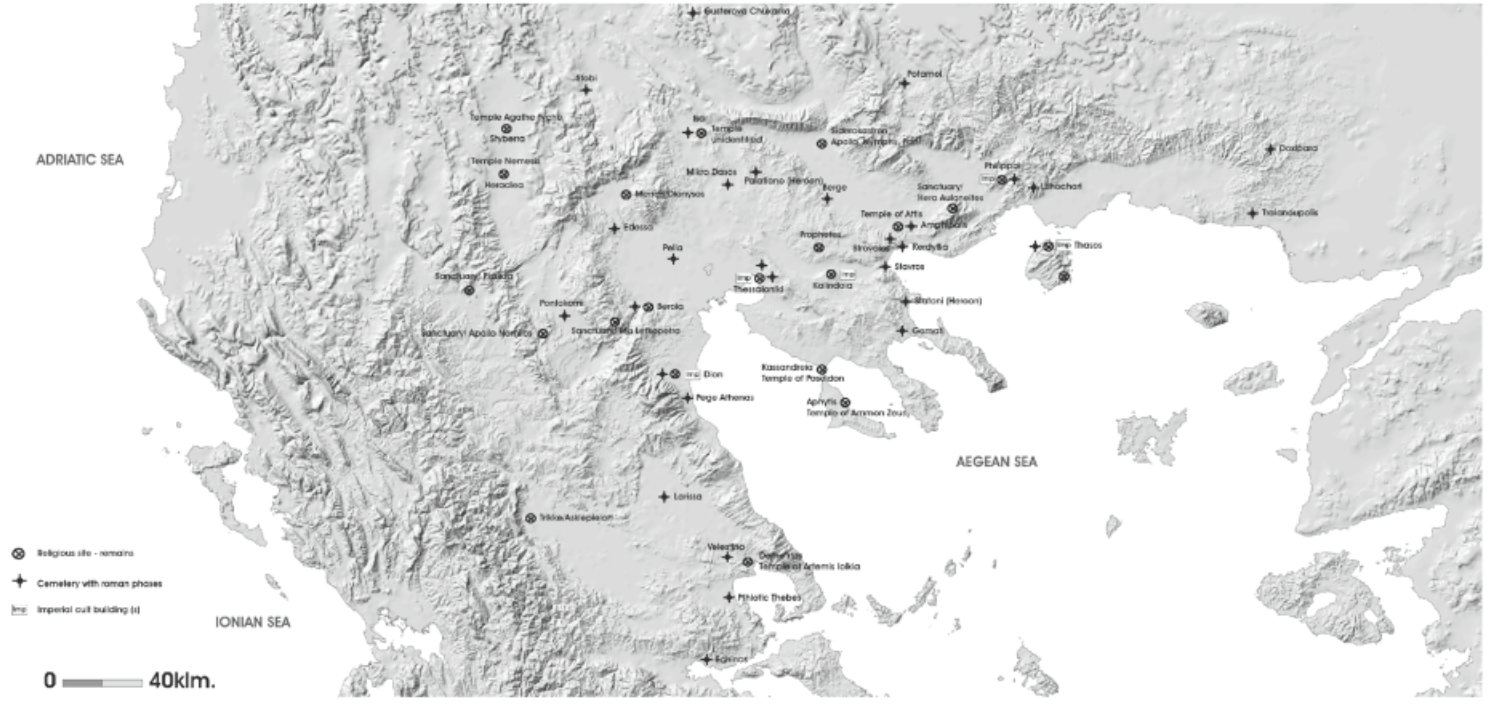

Figure 15.5 Distribution map of religious sites (with architectural remains) and cemeteries. Digital drawing by Vassilis Evangelidis.

worshiped in temples different from Greek or Roman forms, like the Serapeion discovered in Thessaloniki in the 1930s, now lost under modern buildings (Steimle 2008, 81–88). In this world of hybrid cultures, syncretism was unavoidable, as in the case of Zeus Hypsistos/ Capitoline Jupiter and Isis Locheia/ Artemis Eilitheia, whose Roman-style temples were added to the great sanctuary of Zeus Olympios in Dion (Pantermalis 2009).

In rural areas, religious life continued in small shrines (Dionysos at Meneis Bottiaia), rustic sanctuaries (site Prophetes – Langadas), caves (to Apollo, Nymphs, and Pan at Siderokastro Serres), hilltops (cult of Zeus Hypsistos at Hagios Eleutherios Kozani, Psalida Kastoria, and Heraclea Lyncestis), and natural features (rocks). Next to the traditional deities that were worshiped in the villages and hamlets of Macedonia, a new deity was often associated, arising from the multicultural context of the Roman world. Examples include Zeus Hypsistos (especially during the second century CE in the area of Upper Macedonia; Chatzinikolaou 2010, 197–199), Artemis Ephesia (Chatzinikolaou 2010, 215–216), and Atargatis, the Syrian Goddess whose statue was carried from village to village by eunuch priests, as eloquently described by the author of *Lucius, or the Ass* (36–42).

Spectacle Buildings

The Greeks held most of their dramatic and musical shows in stone-built monumental theaters, which occasionally functioned as places for public assemblies. Macedonia was not an exception, and a number of theaters of the Classical and Hellenistic period have been discovered (or are known by textual evidence) in sites such as Thasos, Aigae, Philippoi, Larissa, Demetrias, Maroneia, Dion, Mieza, Beroia, and Lychnidos (Di Napoli 2018, 322–323). Many, such as those at Dion, Philippoi, Thasos, Demetrias, Larissa, Mieza, and Lychnidos (Figure 15.3), continued to function in the Roman period, after undergoing significant alterations in accordance with the current Roman fashion: integration of the scene building to the sides of the cavea at Philippoi, and the erection of a tall columnar *scaenae frons* at Demetrias, Philippoi, and Thasos (Di Napoli 2018, 337).

After the end of the first century CE, some theaters were converted into arenas for Roman gladiatorial and wild beast shows, which were becoming more popular in the Greek-speaking East (Di Napoli 2018, 326). This involved removing the lowest row of the cavea seats and building a tall podium wall to protect the viewers from the action in the arena (Sear 2006, 43). Evidence of this is seen in the theaters of Larissa, Lychnidos, Thasos, and Philippoi; indeed, the Hellenistic theater of Philippoi (Di Napoli 2018, 329) was transformed and enlarged in three phases into an arena that even had a *fossa bestiaria*, an underground space and lifting system that allowed the appearance of wild beasts (Di Napoli 2018, 330–331).

Cities that had more than one theater, like Larissa, could convert one of them into an arena (the "large" Hellenistic theater) and use the other ("small" theater) for the usual theatrical or musical events (Sear 2006, 417–418). For many small or medium-size cities, however, their theater was made dual purpose by adding the necessary protective measures, such as a net or balustrades over the podium of the orchestra, just before arena games commenced.

New theaters are rarer. Dion's old extramural theater of the second half of the third century BCE was abandoned during the early imperial period, replaced by a new Roman-type theater, probably Hadrianic or later, built closer to the sanctuary of Zeus Olympios for theatrical and musical contests associated with the cult (Diodorus Siculus XVII 16, 3–4; Di Napoli 2018, 323). Although the plan and vaulted construction of the cavea are typically Roman, the theater also had Greek features, such as an orchestra larger than a semicircle and a separate scene building. The latter also appear in the new 90 m diameter theater built at Stobi, probably at the beginning of the second century CE (Sear 2006, 419). Many inscriptions, some inscribed on the seats, indicate that the theater was also used for public assemblies, with the citizens seated in

tribal units. In the Hadrianic period, Heraclea Lyncestis also got a new Roman-type theater, perhaps planned to include gladiatorial games from its origin: a temple dedicated to Nemesis, protector of gladiators, was built at the top of the cavea (Sear 2006, 417; Di Napoli 2018, 333).

Smaller theatrical buildings, usually located in or close to the agora or forum, have been discovered in Thessaloniki, Dion, Thasos, and Beroia (Figure 15.3). Though often identified as odea, the distinction between odeon and bouleuterion is not always clear (Sear 2006, 38; Di Napoli 2018, 339). In Dion, a small, elaborate odeon of the late second century CE probably functioned as an *akroaterion* (lecture hall) for a lavishly built public complex, which also included a bath, a latrine, and shops (Di Napoli 2018, 324). Thessaloniki's odeon, with its elaborate scaenae frons including three statues of Muses, was the central building of the east wing of the agora, replacing an older rectangular bouleuterion of the late first century CE (Adam-Veleni 2011, 556).

Besides theaters, the evidence for other kinds of spectacle buildings is minimal (Di Napoli 2018, 339). Athletic and musical contests during the imperial period were known to have taken place in the stadium of Dion, a large late Classical earth-made construction that was situated outside the walls, near the sanctuary of Olympios Zeus (Di Napoli 2018, 323). Amphitheaters such as the one found in the Adriatic port of Dyrrachion (Durrës, Albania; see Di Napoli 2018, 339, n. 90) have not yet been found in Macedonia. Part of an unusual spectacle building combining features of a theater and stadium was discovered in Thessaloniki (Di Napoli 2018, 325, n. 20), close to the west end of the later Galerian palace. The building, though of unknown date, has been identified as the *theatron stadion* where Roman *munera* were held, according to early Christian sources (Adam-Veleni 2011, 558). During the Tetrarchic period (early fourth century), a large Hippodrome (450 m long and 95 m wide) was built next to the east city wall of Thessaloniki, as part of the Galerian palace that occupied a large part of the SE sector of the city. The ruins of this large building (seating foundations, vaulted substructures, podium walls, carceres, and part of the spina) have only been fragmentarily preserved, some of which can still be seen in the basements of a number of modern buildings (Zarmakoupi 2018, 273, n. 43).

Water-Related Buildings: Baths, Fountains, Aqueducts

Cities in Macedonia were well provisioned with fresh water, since many were built near or next to rivers (Edessa, Amphipolis, Stobi), lakes (Argos Orestikon, Lychnidos), or natural springs (Kyrros), but it was Roman hydraulic technology and aqueducts that allowed water to evolve into something more than just a necessity. Water features – fountains, nymphaea, latrines, and, most importantly, baths – reflected a culture that could use the abundance of its resources for public benefit in the most spectacular way (Aristodemou and Tassios 2018).

The best manifestation of this culture is, without a doubt, the Roman-style baths. Although the Greeks had been using a type of public bath (*balaneion*) since the late Classical period (Adam-Veleni 2011, 551), it was Roman baths, with their upgraded hydraulic and heating technology (*praefurnium* and *tubuli*), that transformed public bathing to an amenity basic to urban life. Their succession of rooms of different temperature (*caldarium, frigidarium, tepidarium*) and elaborate pools, reception halls, and *apodyteria* gradually became more popular in Greece after the end of the first century CE. Bath complexes ranging from the late first century CE to the fourth century CE have been discovered in urban and rural sites throughout the province (Figure 15.3). A great number of second century CE baths, some with elaborate mosaics and decoration, have been discovered in the last decade in Thessaly, at Larissa, Metropolis, Sykeon, Pthiotic Thebes, and Demetrias (Stamatopoulou 2012). The presence of such baths even in remote, less urbanized areas, such as the rural site Vromoneria Panagias in Upper Macedonia near Kozani, indicates that bathing was a widespread public practice, and one of the clearest signs of Roman material culture in the East.

Naturally, large cities such as Thessaloniki, Beroia, Stobi, Philippoi, Edessa, and Larissa had more than one central public bath. Those in Thessaloniki, one under the basilica of St. Demetrius and one near the basilica St. Sophia (Adam-Veleni 2011, 557–558), were large, lavishly built complexes with monumental architectural features (Oulkeroglou 2018). Although not on the same scale as those in Thessaloniki, the baths in the center of the Roman colony of Dion, next to the forum (Zarmakoupi 2018, 290–291), and in the south part of the city of Philippoi feature decor like marble revetment, statues, and mosaic floors, upgrading public bathing to a leisure activity. This leisure was not restricted to bathing itself, but extended to other activities in secondary buildings; in Dion a small odeon, shops, and latrines were arranged around a central court. Outside city centers, baths have been found in residential districts at Thessaloniki, Larissa, Metropolis, Hypata, and Demetrias; sanctuaries such as those of Zeus Ammon at Aphytos, and the Asklepieion at Trikke; stations on the Via Egnatia like Bradashesh in Elbasan, Albania; villas and rural settlements such as Petres, Nesi, and Asprovalta; and in hot springs, e.g., the large (11 rooms, 1500 sq. m) and well-preserved baths at Bansko in the mountains of the Republic of North Macedonia (Kuzman 2008, 70).

Among other water features, latrines have been found at Dion, Philippoi, and Stobi, and cisterns at Larissa and Philippoi. Great water fountains (*krenai*) were probably a central feature of many public spaces, as in the agora of Thessaloniki; in the Forum of Philippoi, two long cisterns (22 × 3 m, capacity 400 cubic m) framed the central speaker's platform (rostra). Traces of aqueducts, reservoirs, and water pipes made out of clay or lead have been traced in various sites such as Demetrias, Larissa, Philippoi, and Neapolis; many, like the Mt. Chortiates aqueduct at Thessaloniki (Aristodemou and Tassios 2018, 50–69), continued in use through Byzantine, Ottoman, and early modern times. These aqueducts brought the water to reservoirs or cisterns, such as the tripartite one discovered in Larissa, 20 × 33 m (exterior dimensions) and 6 m deep, with a capacity of ca. 2350^3, its eastern face shaped into a monumental fountain (Stamatopoulou 2012, 85).

Domestic Architecture

The Hellenistic period brought radical changes not just in the organization of public space but also in the form and structure of private space (Zarmakoupi 2018). Houses became substantially bigger and more open, including elaborate courts and rooms for leisure or guest reception, where the owner could display signs of wealth and status. Roman-period domestic architecture retained, and possibly enlarged, many of these developments. Such features are attested in impressive urban houses like the Casa Romana or House GR in Stobi (Kuzman 2008, 31), the *Maison de fauves* in Philippoi (Zarmakoupi 2018, 284–285) or the Villa Romana in Amphipolis (Zarmakoupi 2018, 278–279). Mosaic floors were used in reception or dining rooms, such as the impressive mosaic of the god Dionysos decorating a 100 sq. m room in a large urban villa in Dion (Zarmakoupi 2018, 290–291). Many such elaborate floors in rich houses have been discovered in prosperous cities of Thessaly, like Larissa, Trikke, and Hypata (Stamatopoulou 2012). Such mosaics probably adorned luxurious dining rooms where the rich owners could establish cliental ties with different social groups. The trend became more vivid with the late third century introduction of reception or dining halls with an elevated apse on one side (Zarmakoupi 2018, 295, n. 193), probably imitating throne rooms in the palaces of the late Roman emperors. Such rooms, adorned with mosaics, marble revetments, and fine furniture like the *stibadium*, a semicircular dining couch, elevated activities held within to the grandeur so necessary for the social status of many local men of power in the turbulent world of late antiquity. Thessaloniki's group of twelve late Roman houses, dating from the third to sixth centuries CE, show some of the best examples of this kind of hall (Karagianni 2012; Zarmakoupi 2018, 271).

The habitation quarters of the less prosperous classes often remain archaeologically elusive. Great apartment blocks like those of Ostia or Rome have not been found in Macedonia, since

the urban population density that was the main reason for their construction was probably low. Recent research in Thessalian cities such as Demetrias and Metropolis has unearthed small neighborhoods with remains of houses, shops, baths, and, at Metropolis, a small temple, aligned along cobbled roads (Stamatopoulou 2012, 81).

Villas and Farms

The construction of the modern Egnatia highway, which crosses the heart of Macedonia like its ancient predecessor, brought to light a number of rural sites, interpreted as villas or farmsteads (Figure 15.2; Adam-Veleni 2009). Most are of medium size, ranging between 200 and 400 sq. m, and the majority date to the middle and late imperial period. Great complexes like the impressive villas of Italy or Britain have not yet been discovered in Macedonia, though the large second century CE villas discovered at Baltaneto and Tsifliki, near Mieza, display signs of lavish living like mosaic floors, marble revetments, and fine wares. Very rare are Hellenistic farmsteads that survived the transition from the LH to ER period, such as the farm at the foot of Mt. Olympos at Pege Athinas (Adam-Veleni 2009, 12).

Some villas/farmsteads were situated in close proximity to an urban center, as at Lete, Thessaloniki, Mieza, or Beroia, while others were in more rural areas, like those in the plain of Bottiaia, or Angista in the plain of Serres. At the latter site, a large complex (1100 sq. m) was built near the Via Egnatia, and many other farmsites adjoined major roads that allowed easy access to nearby villages or urban centers. In Lete, a small city on the outskirts of Thessaloniki, four villas were found clustered together within ca. 300–500 m distance, allowing us to imagine a peri-urban landscape dotted by such farms. In contrast to large, luxurious villas like that of Herodes Atticus in Arcadia, these smaller complexes had a distinct agrarian character, reflected in the various storage and food-processing facilities they possessed: *pitheones* for fermentation, wine or oil tanks, grain silos, stables, and – in one case from Beroia – a *pescarium*, or fish tank. Although some farms might have specialized in the production or processing of specific products, they all achieved a certain degree of sustainability through the storage of basic goods such as grain, wine, or oil. Those that were some distance from urban centers might have functioned as centers for the production of tools, vessels, and clothes at a local level. Undoubtedly, larger estates would have functioned as nuclei for surrounding rural settlements, but whether we can describe this system as "feudal" is debatable. For peri-urban villas, proximity to the city secured easy access to the great food markets, as well as to the necessary workforce and supplies.

The plan of most such farms follows that of a typical Greek oikia, with habitation quarters, banquet halls, and storage or food processing facilities arranged around a central court. In larger complexes like "Farmstead C" in Lete, there were two courts, one of which was used only for food processing or manufacturing activities (Adam-Veleni 2009, 12). In contrast to the many early Christian period villas and estates, which were fortified and set in easily defensible positions, the villas and farmsteads of the ER period lacked defenses.

Fortifications

In contrast to the great works of architecture and infrastructure undertaken during the three centuries of *Pax Romana*, Macedonian fortifications vividly reflect the turbulent period between the assassination of Alexander Severus in 235 CE and the rise of Diocletian in 283 CE. Constant changes in power, debasement of coinage, and the degradation of the traditional Roman military system resulted in a series of barbarian raids; the Herulian and Gothic invasions of 267 CE reached deep into the heart of the Greek peninsula. The defense of the empire could not depend solely on military units stationed on the remote *limes*, but each city had to

take the initiative to reinforce its fortifications against the threat of raiders. Archaeology has provided evidence that a series of defensive works were built around the mid-third century in the cities of Macedonia, projects that seem to have been controlled and financed, not by the central authority, but independently by the cities in danger (Figure 15.3).

There is scarce evidence for fortifications in the years before this. Apparently, some of the old Classical and Hellenistic circuits and forts, like the fort of Kalyva in Nestos, must have been repaired during the civil wars, or when the praetors of Macedonia had to face constant raids by tribes like the Celtic Scordisci. It was not until the mid-third century CE, however, that an almost-feverish effort to repair or rebuild old fortifications started. Where Hellenistic enceintes were not completely in ruins, extensive repairs were made, including adding towers at Beroia, strengthening stone masonry with mortar at Edessa, or even rebuilding parts of the wall with abundant reused material, such as grave stelai, altars, and parts of buildings. In the Roman colony of Dion, the 2580-m-long Hellenistic enceinte, left to decay and spoliation after the defeat of Perseus, was rebuilt (Stefanidou-Tiveriou 1998, 157–197). Spolia, vertical ashlars, architectural members, and sepulchral monuments formed the lower part of the wall, while the upper part was built in *opus mixtum* with alternating courses of concrete rubble and brick. Small rectangular towers with a ground floor strengthened the defense system (Stefanidou-Tiveriou 1998, 175).

Although Dion's fortifications were built with reused material, they were clearly not undertaken in haste, and seem to have been completed just before the middle of the third century. Around the same period, in Thessaloniki, a new circuit wall was built to face the first siege of the city by the Goths in 254 CE (Velenis 1998). It encompassed an area of 260 hectares, including less densely inhabited sections, like that in the southeast where the Galerian palace complex would later develop. The wall, 1.64 m wide, was reinforced by rectangular towers every 52 m, their size differing according to the terrain, and in areas deemed weak, especially in lowlands, an interior wall was added, doubling the enceinte's width, in the fourth century CE.

The fortifications of the urban centers probably instigated defensive works in smaller sites, towns, and small cities, such as the hastily built rubble wall, 1.40–2.10 m thick, protecting a still unidentified city (Europos?) in Almopia. On a much larger scale was the great wall (*diateichisma*) that isolated the peninsula of Kassandra from the hinterland. Although the wall in its current state is mainly early Christian, recent research has shown that its original phase dates back to the third century CE.

There is debate about how the third century barbarian raids affected the life of urban and rural areas of the province. Though shocking for the stability of the empire, they did not seem to have the dramatic effect that later invasions had on daily life and social coherence. It is undeniable, however, that over the course of time, many cities, such as Isar (where a Roman *castrum* was built in the fourth century CE; Kuzman 2008, 66), were reduced to more defensible sizes or abandoned, and many rural settlements and villas were fortified or moved to highlands. Dozens of small fortified sites of 1 ha or more have been found in naturally defensible positions such as hilltops, mountain passes, or along the main roads, but their exact date cannot be accurately determined. Some of them were probably old Hellenistic forts, reemployed during the late Roman period.

Burial Grounds

The most important feature of the peri-urban environment was the cemeteries covering free land outside the gates (Chatzinikolaou and Terzopoulou 2012). Extensive cemeteries with Roman phases have been traced in every major city of the region, including Thessaloniki, Philippoi, Stobi, Beroia, Edessa, Amphipolis, Pella, Dion, Thasos, and Demetrias (Figure 15.5), as well as in smaller cities like Berge in Eastern Macedonia or Isar in the Republic of North Macedonia, rural settlements like Pontokomi in Aiane, Strovolos and Stavros in Kerdyllia, Lithochori (Kavala), Potamoi (Drama), and Gomati Chalkidike, or even villas such

as in Pege Athenas (Pieria) or in Velestino (Thessaly). In large urban centers, the preexisting cemetery usually expanded toward any available space, but quite often Roman-period graves were dug among older burials. The organization of space was generally loose, and quite often graves, monuments, and other peri-urban features like workshops were intermingled.

Citizens who organized in *collegia* could afford burial in complexes of graves built in separated fenced areas, while the more prosperous, such as the senator T. Claudius Lycus in Thessaloniki, preferred their own private grounds, often carefully landscaped to resemble gardens. Eye-catching, lavishly decorated burial monuments, including sarcophagi, whose popularity increased after the second century CE, were located near the gates or main roads to cities, according to the social status of the deceased.

The usual burial continued to be inhumation, in a variety of grave types, from simple pit graves covered by tiles or slabs, to vaulted tombs (below), elaborate sarcophagi, and, occasionally, buildings, such as cubicula or mausolea at Thessaloniki, and *heroa* at Palatiano and Stratoni. Vaulted tombs with *opus caementicium* roofs became very popular after the third century CE and are normally found in groups with their own yard for rituals or funerary dinners.

In many sites in north or east Macedonia, the native Thracian population continued to be buried as cremations or inhumations under earth or stone tumuli, quite often accompanied by their horses, weapons, or even four-wheeled carriages like that found at Doxipara (Evros region, Greece). Roman-period tumulus cemeteries have been found in Greece at Potamoi Drama, Lithochori Kavala, and Mikro Dasos Kilkis, in Bulgaria at Vizegrad, and in the Republic of North Macedonia at Gusterova Chukarka at Mt. Ograzhden.

Roads and Streets

The largest project of the Roman authority in the early years after Macedonia's conquest was without doubt the construction of a military road, the Via Egnatia, from the shores of the Adriatic sea at Dyrrachion and Apollonia to the river Evros, a distance of 535 Roman miles (Strabo, *Geography* 7.7.4; Lolos 2007). It was designed and built as a single project ca. 146 to 120 BCE, after a long period of upheaval caused by constant barbarian raids and successive revolts. The name of the builder, the proconsul Cn. Egnatius, is preserved on two of the milestones that marked the distance from Dyrrachion, Apollonia, or the closest urban center; 40 of the original 535 milestones have been found along the route. As with other Roman roads, the Via Egnatia replaced parts of an older network that crossed upper and central Macedonia – for example, the mountainous Candavia road. Its route across Macedonia has been reconstructed with the help of ancient *itineraria*, milestones, physical remains of the road surface, bridges, and road stations (Figure 15.2; Zarmakoupi 2018, 262–264). Due to its advantageous position, Thessaloniki held a central place on the route, connecting with another major road that followed the valley of Axios toward Stobi and the Danube area. The road's construction depended on the different conditions and terrain types. A large section discovered near Philippoi was founded on a layer of small stones and gravel topped by packed earth, while the bed of the road itself was made of slabs and small stones. In areas where the 8 m width of the road allowed opposite lanes, there was often a divider in the middle. Stone-built bridges supported the road across the many rivers it encountered along its way, as at Kyrros, Gephyra, and Philippoi; at least eighteen more bridges with possible Roman phases have been recorded, and one found over the Genusus (Shkumbin) river in Albania reached at least 450 m in length (Lolos 2007, 284).

Journeys along Via Egnatia, at an estimated 40–60 km per day, were supported by stations offering food and accommodation (*mansiones* and *mutationes*). Most of their names are known from the late Roman *Itinerarium Antonini* or *Tabula Peutingeriana*, but a secure archaeological identification is often more difficult. One, an elaborate building including its own bath and nymphaeum near Elbasan in Albania, was possibly the station *Ad Quintum*. Others were

probably more humble, with rooms around a central court, barns, facilities for the pack animals, and often baths, like the *Mutatio Scurrio* found near Kyrros in central Macedonia.

A number of other, smaller roads besides Via Egnatia allowed contact with the Balkans or southern Greece, and sections of them have been discovered, mainly in mountain passes (Figure 15.2).

Streets, large and small, have been found in a number of cities, usually following the preexisting urban plan's orientation, but sometimes deviating, as in Philippoi or Thessaloniki, where the Roman grid is 5 degrees off the Hellenistic grid. Small streets were normally constructed of packed earth or gravel, but more centrally located ones had cobbled or even marble-paved surfaces and lateral gutters, as at Thasos or Thessaloniki. In major cities like Edessa, Beroia, and Thessaloniki, main arteries often attained a monumental form with the addition of stoas, becoming colonnaded streets. Monumentalization of streets and of city entrances was attained by the construction of elaborate gates or arches, like the four small single-bay arches marking the entrance to the forum of the colony of Philippoi (second century CE), or the large Severan triple-bay arch in Thasos. A large, single-bay arch that spanned Via Egnatia at the border of the territory of Philippoi is unique.

Regional Traits and Characteristics

As with all other provinces, the obvious question is, how deeply was the provincial landscape of Macedonia affected by Roman conquest and control? Due to its early contact with Rome, Macedonia could have received Roman material culture earlier than the rest of Greece, though thus far the evidence is inconclusive. Archaeological evidence does indicate that Rome's takeover brought a series of changes in territorial organization, land ownership, site as well as social hierarchy, and settlement patterns. After a difficult late Hellenistic period, the stabilization of social and economic conditions, a prolonged period of peace, enhanced connectivity, and increased exploitation of rich natural resources seem to have led to growth between the late first and early third century CE.

Although undeniably important, all these developments do not necessarily indicate a sharp break with the pre-Roman era. Cities remained the political, economic, and cultural focus of social life (Papazoglou 1988); the traditional bond between town and country that characterized the Classical polis remained intact until late antiquity, while many rural communities continued to follow their traditional organization and productive systems (Rizakis 2013, 31). Nonetheless, during the long imperial period, the cultural context of Macedonia – and along with it, many traditional societal and administrative habits and structures – gradually began to change (Lolos 2007, 279–283). The process of integration into the empire poses questions about the formation of identity that are difficult to analyze here. Over the long period between the defeat of Perseus and the rise of Galerius, a process of cultural blending that started earlier, under the Macedonian kings, continued (Hatzopoulos 1996, 70). New factors, like widely distributed material objects, the imperial cult, and the prevalence of a common lifestyle throughout the empire enhanced connectivity and homogeneity. Large urban centers played an important role in this development, as the base of the Romanized local elite, and the location where many of these features and trends were first introduced, tested, and established. The cities gradually incorporated all the features that characterized Roman urban life: provision of high-quality services, religious pluralism, a variety of spectacles, and commercial facilities, all in a monumental landscape (Evangelidis 2010, 293–294). Roman colonies and large regional centers like Thessaloniki supported their character as centers of power through large-scale architecture. Despite the gradual rise of *villae rusticae*, a large part of the countryside continued to live as in the past, in agricultural, pastoral, or mining communities organized near their productive zones, using traditional religious sites.

However, this was not a landscape unresponsive to developments in the wider Roman world. Archaeological evidence shows that even remote areas were open to new influences, trends, and architectural types (e.g., baths), possibly channeled through the villas, roads and road stations, or the nearest urban centers.

In Macedonia, many of the features of the architectural landscape, both urban and rural, date after the end of the first century CE. As in Achaea, that seems to be the point after which Roman-type buildings and construction techniques started to appear more frequently. Between the reign of the Flavians and the barbarian raids of the third century CE, building projects carried out in the cities of the province, as in Thessaloniki, Stobi, Philippoi, Dion, and possibly Beroia, radically transformed urban landscapes. If building activity can be regarded as a concise indicator of prosperity, the second and the early third centuries CE were undeniably a period of growth. Imperial interest might have played a role, but most important was the stabilization of financial and social conditions, allowing the agents of modernization – mainly members of the local elite – to invest in great building projects and urban growth (Nigdelis 2007, 77).

The architecture of the region took features coming from both the great repertoire of Greek architecture and the contemporary architecture of the Roman world (Zarmakoupi 2018, 293). The Greeks selectively adopted some Roman building types, such as baths or latrines, while others, like basilicas, podium temples, or amphitheaters, never had the popularity they had in the western provinces, at least outside Roman colonies. Development of the architectural landscape followed the same path as in other regions of the Roman world, with emphasis on function and monumentality (Evangelidis 2010, 293). This is reflected in features like the impressive second century CE façade *Las Incantadas*, which until the 1860s stood south of the agora of Thessaloniki, in the Jewish quarter of the post-antique city, and is now in the Louvre.

Like other areas of the Aegean world, Macedonia had a long tradition of ashlar masonry and an abundance of wood and good-quality stones, both marbles and limestone, factors that played a role in the hesitation to adopt Roman building techniques. Nonetheless, Roman brick-and-mortar building material became more frequent after the end of the first century CE (Vitti 1993). *Opus testaceum* is very rare; the most common masonry style was opus mixtum – zones of stone masonry alternating with zones of bricks, covering the whole width of the wall (Vitti 1993, 1695). Due to the lack of good-quality raw material for Roman cement and fewer brick factories (*figlinae*), opus mixtum was probably a local, affordable attempt to exploit the advantages of building in brick. Occasionally, opus caementicium was used for bold architectural solutions, such as the cryptoporticus of the south side of the agora of Thessaloniki (Zarmakoupi 2018, 295), or to create large, vaulted internal spaces for *thermae* or odea.

Beneath the surface of these innovations, many traditional architectural features, construction techniques, and practices continued to play a significant role in forming the living environment. The reconstructed early Classical temple in Thessaloniki and the reuse of the old frieze in the basilica of Dion indicate that sometimes the past was not just carefully preserved, but reconstructed as part of a cultural memory or identity formation process.

Macedonia shared a similar path of development with Achaea during the imperial period. As provinces far from productive zones and frontiers, both played a minor role in the imperial administrative structure, and this might have influenced the formation of their landscapes (Alcock 1993, 224). Beneath this similarity, however, lie many differences, in Macedonia's proximity to the Balkans, its early contact with Rome, its relatively low level of urbanization, and its sizable economy, which played their own role in the process we conventionally call *Romanization*. As more archaeological evidence comes to light in both rescue and systematic excavations, it is becoming clear that the provincial landscape of Macedonia is characterized by a regional individuality whose multiplicity is still to be discovered.

Acknowledgments

The author wishes to express his gratitude to Prof. T. Stefanidou-Tiveriou for kindly reading and making valuable comments on this chapter.

Biographical Note

Vassilis Evangelidis is Scientific Associate in Classical and Digital Archaeology at the Athena Research and Innovation Center in Information, Communication & Knowledge Technologies, and co-organizer of the Roman Seminar in Athens, dedicated to research in all facets of society of Roman Greece. He has published widely on the implementation of digital technology in archaeology as well as on Roman Greece, especially the agoras of Greek cities. His latest monograph is *The Archaeology of Roman Macedonia* (Oxbow 2022).

REFERENCES

Adam-Veleni, Polyxeni. 2009. "Farmhouses in Macedonia: The Beginning of 'Feudalism'?" *20 χρόνια. Το Αρχαιολογικό Έργο στη Μακεδονία και στη Θράκη*, 20: 1–15.

Adam-Veleni, Polyxeni. 2011. "Thessaloniki." In *Brill's Companion to Ancient Macedon: Studies in the Archaeology and History of Macedon, 650 BC – 300 AD*, edited by Robin J. Lane Fox, 545–562. Leiden: Brill.

Alcock, Susan E. 1993. *Graecia Capta: The Landscapes of Roman Greece*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Aristodemou, Georgia, and Theodosios Tassios, eds. 2018. *Great Waterworks in Roman Greece. Aqueducts and Monumental Fountain Structures. Function in Context*. Oxford: Archaeopress.

Bintliff, John. 2012. *The Complete Archaeology of Greece: From Hunter – Gatherers to the 20th Century AD*. Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell.

Chatzinikolaou, Kalliopi. 2010. "Locating Sanctuaries in Upper Macedonia According to Archaeological Data." *Kernos*, 23: 193–222.

Chatzinikolaou, Kalliopi, and Domna Terzopoulou. 2012. "The Cemeteries of Roman Thessaloniki." In *Field, House, Garden, Grave*, edited by Polyxeni Adam-Veleni and Domna Terzopoulou, 104–121. Thessaloniki: Ziti publications.

Di Napoli, Valentina. 2018. "Buildings for Entertainment in Roman Macedonia. Between Continuity and Rupture with the Past," In *Les communautés du nord Égéen au temps de l'hégémonie romaine. Entre rupture et continuités*, edited by Julien Fournier and M. G. Parissaki, 321–340, Meletemata 77. Athens: Fondation nationale de la recherche scientifique, Institut de recherches historiques.

Evangelidis, Vassilis. 2010. *Οι αγορές των ελληνικών πόλεων από τη ρωμαϊκή κατάκτηση ως τον 3ο αι. μ.Χ*. Thessaloniki: University Studio Press.

Evangelidis, Vassilis. 2014. "Agoras and Fora: Developments in the Central Public Space of the Cities of Greece during the Roman Period." *The Annual of the British School at Athens*, 109: 335–356.

Evangelidis, Vassilis. 2019. "Macella and Makelloi in Roman Greece: Archaeological and Textual Evidence Concerning Food Markets during the Imperial Period." *Hesperia*, 88, no. 2: 283–318.

Falezza, Giovanna. 2012. *I santuari della Macedonia romana: Persistenze e cambiamenti del paesagio sacro provinciale tra II secolo AC e IV secolo DC*. Roma: Quasar Edizioni.

Hatzopoulos, Miltiades B. 1996. *Macedonian Institutions under the Kings: A Historical and Epigraphic Study*. Meletemata 22. Athens: Kentron Hellēnikēs kai Rōmaïkēs Archaiotētos.

Karagianni, Flora. 2012. "The Urban House in Macedonia in Late Antiquity (4th – 6th century AD)." In *Threpteria: Studies on Ancient Macedonia*, edited by M. Tiverios, P. Nigdelis, and P. Adam-Veleni, 64–98. Thessaloniki: Ekdoseis A.P. Th.–Auth Press.

Kostoglou, Maria. 2008. *Iron and Steel in Ancient Greece: Artefacts, Technology and Social Change in Aegean Thrace from Classical to Roman Times*. British Archaeological Reports International Series 1883. Oxford: John and Erica Hedges Ltd.

Kuzman, Pasko, ed. 2008. *Archaeological Sites: Macedonian Cultural Heritage*. Skopje: Unesco.

Lolos, Yiannis. 2007. "Via Egnatia after Egnatius: Imperial Policy and Inter-regional Contacts." *Mediterranean Historical Review*, 22: 273–293.

Mentzos, Aristoteles. 2010. "Reflections on the Architectural History of the Tetrarchic Palace at Thessalonike." In *From Roman to Early Christian Thessalonike: Studies in Religion and Archaeology*, edited by Laura Nasrallah, Charalambos Bakirtzis, and Steven Friesen, 332–359. Harvard: Harvard University Press.

Nigdelis, Pantelis. 2007. "Roman Macedonia (168 BC – AD 284)." In *The History of Macedonia*, edited by I. Koliopoulos, 51–86. Thessaloniki: Museum of the Macedonian Struggle Foundation.

Oulkeroglou, Anastasios. 2018. *Οι λουτρικές εγκαταστάσεις στη Μακεδονία κατά τη ρωμαϊκή αυτοκρατορική και την πρωτοβυζαντινή περίοδο*. Thessaloniki: Thessaloniki University Press.

Pantermalis, Dimitrios. 2000. "Δίον 2000." *Το Αρχαιολογικό Έργο στη Μακεδονία και στη Θράκη*, 14: 377–382.

Pantermalis, Dimitrios. 2009. "Δίον: Ιστορικά και Λατρευτικά." *20 χρόνια. Το Αρχαιολογικό Έργο στη Μακεδονία και στη Θράκη*, 20: 261–272.

Papazoglou, Fanoula. 1988. *Les villes de Macedoine à l'époque romaine*. Bulletin de correspondance hellénique. Supplément, 16. Athens: École française de Athènes.

Rizakis, Athanasios D. 2013. "Rural Structures and Agrarian Strategies in Greece Under Roman Rule." In *Villae Rusticae. Family and Market Oriented Farms in Greece under Roman Rule. Proceedings of an International Congress Held at Patras 23-24 April 2010*, edited by A. D. Rizakis and I. Touratsoglou, Meletemata 68, 21–51. Athens: National Hellenic Research Foundation, Institute of Historical Research.

Russell, Ben J. 2013. "Gazetteer of Stone Quarries in the Roman World (Version1.0)." Accessed March 18, 2016. http://www.romaneconomy.ox.ac.uk/databases/stone_quarries_database

Sear, Frank. 2006. *Roman Theatres: An Architectural Study*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Sielhorst, Barbara. 2015. *Hellenistische Agorai: Gestaltung, Rezeption und Semantik eines urbanen Raumes*. Urban Spaces 3. Berlin: De Gruyter.

Stamatopoulou, Maria. 2012. "Archaeology in Greece 2011–2012." *Archaeological Reports*, 58: 75–95.

Stefanidou-Tiveriou, Theodosia. 1998. *Ανασκαφή Δίου: Η Οχύρωση*. Thessaloniki: University Studio Press.

Stefanidou-Tiveriou, Theodosia. 2009. "Die Palastanlage des Galerius in Thessaloniki: Planung und Datierung." In *Diocletian, Tetrarchy and Diocletian's Palace on the 1700th anniversary of Existence*, edited by Nenad Cambi, J. Belamarić, and Tomislav Marasović, 389–410. Split: Krug.

Stefanidou-Tiveriou, Theodosia. 2012. "Τα λατρευτικά αγάλματα του ναού του Διός και της Ρώμης στη Θεσσαλονίκη." In *Κλασική παράδοση και νεωτερικά στοιχεά στην πλαστική της ρωμαϊκής Ελλάδας, Πρακτικά Διεθνούς Συνεδρίου, 7-9 Μαίου 2009*, edited by T. Stefanidou-Tiveriou, P. Karanastasi, and D. Damaskos, 273–286. Thessaloniki: University Studio Press.

Steimle, Christopher. 2008. *Religion im Römischen Thessaloniki: Sakraltopographie, Kult und Gesellschaft 168 v.Chr.-324 n.Chr*. Tübingen: Siebeck.

Talbert, Richard J., ed. 2000. *Barrington Atlas of the Greek and Roman World*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Velenis, Georgios. 1998. *The Walls of Thessaloniki from the Time of Cassander up to that of Heraclius*. Thessaloniki: University Studio Press.

Vitti, Massimo, 1993. "Υλικά και τρόποι δόμησης στη Μακεδονία κατά τους ρωμαϊκούς αυτοκρατορικούς χρόνους." In *Ancient Macedonia V*, 3 vols, edited by the Διεθνές Συμπόσιο για την Αρχαία Μακεδονία. Thessaloniki: Institute for Balkan Studies.

Zarmakoupi, Mantha. 2018. "Urban Space and Housing in Roman Macedonia." In *Les communautés du nord Égéen au temps de l'hégémonie romaine. Entre rupture et continuités*, edited by Julien Fournier and Marie Gabrielle Parissaki, Meletemata 77, 263–298. Athens: Fondation nationale de la recherche scientifique, Institut de recherches historiques.