Healing Gods: The Cult of Apollo Iatros, Asclepius and Hygieia
in the Black Sea Region

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I hereby declare that the work submitted by me is mine and that where I have made use of another’s work, I have attributed the source(s) according to the Regulations set in the Student’s Handbook.

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in the Black Sea Region
To my parents, Δημήτρη and Αλεξάνδρα.
«πάς δ' οδυνηρός βιος ἀνθρώπων
κούκ ἐστι πόνων ἀνάπαυσις»

«The life of man entire is misery
he finds no resting place,
no haven of calamity»

Euripides, *Hippolytos* (189-190)
(transl. D. Greene)
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Abbreviations - Bibliography

*AEMTh*: Το Αρχαιολογικό Έργο στη Μακεδονία και Θράκη

*AJA*: American Journal of Archaeology


ASAtene: *Annuario della Scuola Archeologica di Atene e delle Missioni Italiane in Oriente (Bergamo- Rome).*


CIRB: Corpus inscriptionum regni Bosporani, (ed. Vasilii Struve) Replaces IosPE II and part of IosPE IV, Moscow 1965.


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RA: *Revue Archéologique*


SEG: Supplementum Epigraphicum Graecum


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PREFACE

The subject of this Master’s thesis is the cult of Apollo Iatros, Asclepius and Hygieia in the Black Sea region. The area and the chronological frame encompassed by this study are particularly broad and the material on which it is based is somewhat uneven, chiefly because of the different directions that archaeological research has taken in the various Black Sea countries. As far as the area is concerned, this work initially covers the Greek coastal cities of the Black Sea and, where required, is extended to include the cities of the hinterland, not all of which were founded by the Greeks. This is obvious in the case of Thrace and Lower Moesia, which occupy a large part of this work, as the manifestations of Asclepius and Hygieia’s cult in these areas are considered to be unique. As far as the chronological frame is concerned, the work covers a period extending from the first appearance of the cult of Apollo Iatros in the Northern Black Sea region in the 6th century B.C. until the early 4th century A.D., when the remaining sanctuaries of Asclepius fell into decline and were abandoned.

This work comprises four main chapters. In the first chapter we trace the evidence for the presence of Apollo Iatros in the Northern and Western Black Sea regions. The second chapter records the wide diffusion of Asclepius and Hygieia’s cult in the Northern and Southern Black Sea regions, and here it ought to be mentioned that there is only one piece of evidence for the presence of the healing gods on the coasts of the Eastern Black Sea. In the third chapter we deal with the wide diffusion of Asclepius and Hygieia’s cult in Thrace (mainly in modern Bulgaria). In this chapter we decided to adopt the Roman administrative divisions of the region – Thrace and Lower Moesia – as in the period under examination, the Roman presence is particularly noticeable, even though it was not able to obscure the Greek influence in the region. Because of the special character of Asclepius and Hygieia’s cult in Thrace, in the fourth chapter we attempt to describe some of the phenomenon’s dimensions and effects and finally its absorption by the local societies.

I would like to express my gratitude to my supervisor, Assistant Professor Manolis Manoledakis, for his useful observations and suggestions during the course of this work. The study could not have been completed without the support of the Director of the 30th Ephorate of Prehistoric and Classical Antiquities, Dr. Christina Ziota, to whom I extend my warmest thanks. My colleagues at the Archaeological Museum of Aiani and in the team working on the archaeological excavations at Mavropigi in ancient Eordaia kindly shouldered some of my responsibilities at the Museum and in the field and I am grateful to them, especially Mrs. Katerina Anagnostopoulou. To the Director of the Library of the National Institute of Archaeology and Museum of the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, Masleva Svetlana,
I am grateful for the assistance she gave me during my research in the library. It ought to be mentioned here that the doctoral thesis (PhD) of Ivanka Dontcheva on the cult of Asclepius in Thrace remains unpublished, and my efforts to locate a copy in the archaeological libraries of Sofia were unsuccessful. Professor Dr Piotr Dyczek of Warsaw University kindly sent me several of his articles and publications relating to his excavations at Novae and, in particular, the valentudinarium, such a unique find in the Balkans. I would like to thank the staff at the Archaeological Museum of Sofia for their permission in photographing the reliefs from Glava Panega. It goes without saying that this endeavour would not have borne fruit without the constant support of my friends and family.
Introduction

I swear by Apollo, the healer, Asclepius, Hygieia.

Hippocrates, Oath of Hippocrates

Apollo, the son of Zeus and Leto, appears in the Iliad on the side of the Trojans, a fact that cast his Greek origins in doubt. While researchers have proposed Asia Minor or Northern Greece as the birthplace of his cult, considerable evidence of his worship also exists in prehellenic Crete. In addition, we know that Apollo's oracle at Miletus was already in existence when the city was colonised by the Ionians and that Miletus had been originally founded by Cretans. However, the god was also known in southern mainland Greece during the Bronze Age. Of particular interest is the theory that the god is attested in Linear B under the name Paion or Paian, which means "healer," although in the Iliad, in response to the pleas of the priest Chryses, in a fit of anger, he rains down arrows of plague (nouson kaken) on the Achaean camp, striking down both animals and men.

The god's dual nature is evident in the Greeks' conviction that he held sway over both human life and death, while the god himself embodies both the splendour and the inscrutability of the world of the gods. His dual nature is also manifested in the Iliad, where the narrative begins with Apollo as a vengeful god and ends by portraying him as the leader of the Muses. Amongst many other epithets, the god was worshipped under that of Επικούριος, 'helper.' Pausanias states that the epithet comes from the help he gave during a period of plague and his ability to banish evil. He was also worshipped under the epithet Ακέσιος, from the verb ακέομαι, which means 'to heal,' and, finally, under the epithet Αλεξίκακος, which means 'banisher of evil or disease.' At Rome, where the god's temple was one of the first to be built in the city, the god arrived during a plague and was worshipped under the epithet Medicus. At Didyma in the vicinity of Miletus there existed one of the most important sanctuaries to Apollo, where the god was worshipped together with his sister Artemis. This sanctuary also contained an oracle, which also became very famous. Here Apollo was also worshipped as Ηεθος, god of healing.

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1 Simon 1996, p. 127.
3 Homer, Iliad, A, 35-52.
4 Simon 1996, p. 129.
7 Simon 1996, p. 129.
8 Simon 1996, p. 129.
9 Simon 1996, p. 129.
Asclepius's cult was added as a specialised expression of Apollo's attribute as a healer. Asclepius is mentioned in the *Iliad* as the father of two heroes from Thessalian Tricca who participated in the great campaign against Troy. The god's journey began when his father Apollo saved him, as yet unborn, from the pyre consuming his mother and led him to the centaur Chiron. Asclepius was taught the art of medicine by Chiron and became so proficient that he managed to resurrect Hippolytos. This did not escape the attention of Zeus, who punished Asclepius with death. The name of the god has caused controversy and given rise to different interpretations since as early as antiquity. The word 'Asclepius' is synthetic and the second part of the compound is the word 'ήπιος'. A possible suggestion for the name is that it comes from the words 'ασκείν' and 'ήπιος', so that the name Asclepius means 'he who can dispel the illness gently'.

As regards the question of the god's origins, two places are considered possible birthplaces: Tricca in Thessaly and Epidaurus in the Peloponnese. According to ancient literary sources, Asclepius came from Tricca and the god's Thessalian origin was usually stressed. The archaeological excavations at ancient Tricca have so far failed to unearth any early evidence of the god's cult; at Epidaurus, on the other hand, excavations have shown that the god was worshipped from an early period in the area. Asclepius would arrive in Attica and Athens (420-419 B.C.) through Piraeus and Zea, on board a ship from Epidaurus.

Hygieia, daughter of Asclepius, played an important role in his cult as the giver of health. In fact, she provided an extension of the characteristics of her father and represented healthy or hygienic living. In most cases she was worshipped together with Asclepius, and this is obvious from both the large number of inscriptions with dedications to Asclepius and Hygieia together and also the great number of statues or reliefs in which the two gods are represented together. In the most traditional sculptural works, Hygieia is represented at a young age, standing and dressed in a *chiton* and *himation*. A serpent is portrayed climbing up or around her.

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8. 'And they that held Tricca and Ithome of the crags, and Oecchalia, city of Oechalian Eyrutus, these again were led by the two sons of Asclepius, the skilled leeches Podaleirius and Machaon. And with these were ranged thirty hollow ships.' Homer, *Iliad*, B, 729-732.
14. The cult of Asclepius was instituted in Athens by Telemachus, initially as a private cult but it soon became public; see Beschi 1969, 381-436.
15. On the problems concerning Hygieia as a personification of health and an extension of Asclepius, see Beumer 2011, pp. 1-9.
16. The connection that the goddess had with Asclepius did not prevent her from playing her own part in the worship of the healing gods and having an independent function. By way of example, mention may be made of the goddess’s appearance in a dream of Pericles, with orders to cure one of his most useful artificers; Plutarch, *Pericles* 13.8.
body and coiling around her left arm towards a phiale that the goddess is holding in her left hand\textsuperscript{17}.

Apollo’s cult was particularly prevalent in the Black Sea region because of the Milesian origin of most of the colonies. The cult of Apollo Iatros had also succeeded in establishing itself in several cities in the Northern Black Sea region, such as Olbia, Panticapaeum, Hermonassa, Myrmekion and Phanagoria, and in the Western Black Sea region in Apollonia Pontica, Istrus and Tyra. The cult of Asclepius and Hygieia appeared in the region during the 4\textsuperscript{th} century B.C. and became established in quite a few cities on the shores of the Black Sea, except the eastern littoral, where, perhaps due to the lack of excavations, there is only one indication of the presence of Asclepius\textsuperscript{18}. In the hinterland of Thrace and Lower Moesia, as this area was called under the Roman occupation, the cult of Asclepius and Hygieia would experience a huge boom after the 1\textsuperscript{st} century A.D, which would last until the early 4\textsuperscript{th} century A.D.

\textsuperscript{17} LIMC V, Hygieia, 554-572. For the typology of Hygieia’s representations see Mitropoulou 1984.

\textsuperscript{18} A clay mould of Asclepius figurine, see Licheli 2007, p. 1086.
PART A

1. The Cult of Apollo Iatros in the Northern and Western Black Sea regions.

Epigraphic Evidence and Archaeological Finds. (map 1)

1.01 Olbia - Berezan

The cult of Apollo Iatros was very important and dominant for a long period in Olbia\(^\text{19}\). In the Western Temenos (pl.1a) which is considered to be the most ancient temenos in Olbia\(^\text{20}\), a temple of Apollo Iatros\(^\text{21}\) had existed since as early as the second quarter or the middle of the 6\(^{\text{th}}\) century B.C. Apart from the temple of Apollo Iatros, archaeological finds show that there were also other sanctuaries of Aphrodite, the Dioskouroi and various anonymous deities enclosed within the Western Temenos\(^\text{22}\). The first temple of Apollo Iatros, which was probably built in about the third quarter of the 6\(^{\text{th}}\) century B.C. did not last long as it was constructed of cheap materials\(^\text{23}\).

For a few decades the cult of Apollo Iatros was the dominant cult in the city, but a second temple of the same god, under the name Apollo Delphinios, was established in another temenos known as the Eastern or Central Temenos and the cult of Apollo Delphinios gradually replaced that of Apollo Iatros as the city’s dominant cult. Some authors maintain that there is a connection between the increasing number of offerings during the third quarter of the sixth century B.C. and the arrival of a new group of colonists after the Persian conquest of Ionia\(^\text{24}\). These *epoikoi* may well have established the cult of the city’s new protector. The Central Temenos with the cult of Apollo Delphinios was constructed in the third to fourth quarters of the sixth century B.C. close to the Western Temenos but in a dominant position in the city’s administrative and commercial centre.

The Temple of Apollo Iatros

The small temple of Apollo Iatros was replaced by another stone temple\(^\text{25}\) at the end of the sixth century B.C. Rusjaeva attempts to explain the simultaneous existence of two dominant cults of Apollo by stressing the social and ideological

\(^{19}\) For Olbia in general see Kryzhytskyy et al 2003, pp. 389-505.
\(^{20}\) Rusjaeva 2010, p. 69.
\(^{21}\) Rusjaeva considers Apollo Iatros as the city’s main divine protector; see Rusjaeva 2003: p. 96.
\(^{22}\) Rusjaeva 2010, p. 69.
\(^{23}\) Rusjaeva 2010, p. 69. In another article the same author maintains that there were only rough wooden structures for ritual purposes at the temple of Apollo Iatros, during the first period of Greek settlement at Olbia. The excavations have revealed the probable existence of wooden altars and a small number of votive gifts which are generally considered to be “primitive”; see Rusjaeva 2003, p. 95.
\(^{24}\) Rusjaeva 2003, p. 96.
\(^{25}\) Kryzhytskyy et al 2003, p. 399.
opposition between *apoikoi* and *epoikoi*. She believes that the first *apoikoi* were mostly aristocrats and landowners who tried to keep the cult of Apollo Iatros. The new temple of Apollo Iatros was an *in antis* or prostyle structure built in the Ionian order. Its main façade was approx. 7.30 m. wide. A large part of its decoration was found in pits (*bothroi*) that were dated to the fifth and fourth centuries B.C. The decoration included a unique group of painted Ionic architectural terracottas from the Archaic period. Other finds include acroteria from the pediment of the temple, fragments of simas, calypters, antefixes, fragments of capitals and Ionic bases. J. graffito on a tile preserves the name of the temple as it was known to the citizens of Olbia, Ἰητρόν, Ἐτροόν.

In the late Classical period the sanctuaries of the Western Temenos continued to function, with the cult of Apollo the healer continuing to coexist with other cults, such as those of the Mother of the Gods, Aphrodite, Hermes and the Dioskouroi, although there was a decrease in the number of offerings. This continuing decrease seems to be also connected with other new changes in the social life of Olbia, such as the establishment of a democratic system of government, which may have given greater impetus to the spread of the cult of Apollo Delphinios and Zeus.

**Inscriptions from Olbia- Berezan**

On Berezan Island some of the earliest inscriptions in the Olbia region have been found, dating from the early-mid. 6th c. B.C. The earliest of them may be on a pottery fragment and is dated to c. 600-575 B.C.: [Ἀπόλλωνι Ἰητρό]. Another similar inscription is dated to the last quarter of the 6th c. B.C.: [Ἀπόλλωνος (?) Ἰητρό]. From the same period (550-525 B.C.) is another inscription in a serpentine script on a plaque amulet of bone: [Βορυσθένος/έμι, [Βορυσθένου (?) Ἰητρό]. Later, to the turn of the 6th and 5th c. B.C. is dated a graffito on a fragment of the lip of a black-glazed cup: [Ἰητρό].

There is a very interesting graffito on a bone plaque, dated to the third quarter of the 6th c. B.C., which combines the symbolism of the number seven and its multiples with epithets and symbols of Apollo.

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27 Treister-Vinogradov 1993, p. 536, fig.7. For a schematic reconstruction of the temple see Kryzhytskyy et al 2003, p. 490, fig. 3.
29 IGDOlbia: 59.
30 Rusjaeva 2010, p. 69; from the older bibliography see Hirst 1902, pp. 245-267 and Hirst 1903, pp. 24-53.
33 For the archaeological research in Berezan see Solovyev 1999.
34 IGDOlbia: 54.
35 IGDOlbia: 55.
36 SEG 36: 693.
37 SEG 32: 737.
Ustinova supports the suggestion by Burkert, who interprets this text as a reference to the Didymaean oracle, based on the concept of the Great Year and its periods: 7, the first seven years of its existence, when the colony was a wolf without strength 70, the next seventy years, when it became a rightful lion and 700: after the initial period, the god, who carries a bow and wields the power of a healer, stands for 700 years by the side of Olbia, which is in fact sanctioning the cult of Apollo Iatros.

Petropoulos also accepts Vinogradov’s view that this is an important document containing information about the establishment of the settlements founded in the estuary of the Hypanis and Borysthenes Rivers. Especially the last two stages (700 and 7000) are of great significance as it seems that an event that occurred in this place during the third stage was brought about by the power of Apollo the Healer. Perhaps in this period the first half of the 6th c. B.C. the two settlements of Berezan and Olbia were unified in a single city under the name Borysthenes. The erection of a temple dedicated to Apollo Delphinios and Apollo Iatros also a calendar of the city of Olbia.

In Olbia there is epigraphic evidence of the temple of Apollo Iatros from the mid-6th c. B.C. on a fragment of an architectural terracotta dated to the second half of the 6th c. B.C.: [Ἀ]πόλλονι Ἡττρον Βορυσθένει.[ος μεδέοντι], and another one dated to the last quarter of the 6th c. B.C.: Ἡττρόν.

The existence of the two Apollo cults together in Olbia, already in the late 6th to early 5th century B.C., is shown by a graffito on a red-figure kylix, found in a Scythian tumulus near the village of Zhukovka: Δελφινίοι Ἁγιά Ἡττρό. Also, from the mid-5th century there is a fragmentary black-glazed skyphos with a graffito on the underside, which bears a dedication to Apollo Delphinios and Apollo Iatros and also a calendar of the city of Olbia.

From the 5th century B.C. we have the first lapidary inscriptions mentioning Apollo Iatros, such as the one on a round tripod base of white marble, dated ca. 475-450 B.C. The inscription concerns a dedication made by Xanthos, a citizen of Olbia, to Apollo, addressed as the Lord of Histria.

On a fragment of a grey marble plaque, which is dated to the 4th c. B.C., Apollonios, a citizen of Keos or Olbia, dedicates a statue to Apollo Ietros.

On the monumental base of a white marble statue, which has been engraved with two inscriptions, one inscription, dated to the second half of the 4th c. B.C., with a

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40 Petropoulos 2010, p. 287.
41 Petropoulos 2010, p. 287.
42 ΙΓΟΩλίβια: 57.
43 ΙΓΟΩλίβια: 59.
44 IΓΟΩλίβια: 65; the graffito was found at Zhukovka near Kiev but was probably brought from Olbia; see Rusjaeva 2007, p. 99.
45 ΙΓΟΩλίβια: 99, dated between 475 and 425 B.C.
46 ΙΓΟΩλίβια: 58, SEG 50: 701: Ξάνθος Πόλεωσις/ Ἀπόλλονι Ηηττρω/ Ηηττρό μεδέοντι Ολβιοπολίτις.
47 SEG 42: 712 (2) and IosPE I 2: 164; the inscription has been published three times, each version with a different description and attempted restoration. In the first publication it was dated to 475-450 B.C.; see SEG 28: 567.
dedication to Apollo Ietros from Leokrates, and another one bearing the signature of the Athenian sculptor Stratonides\(^49\), who carved the sculpture. Ustinova, probably by measuring the traces on the base, believes that this statue of Apollo was slightly higher than the Histrian statue dedicated to Apollo Ietros\(^50\).

\[\text{Λεωκρατης Απόλλωνι Ιητρωι.}\]
\[\text{vacat}\]
\[\text{Στρατωνίδης Ἀθηναῖος ἔποιης.}\]

**Coinage:** The arrow-shaped coins that have been found on Berezan Island, which date from as early as the second half of the 6\(^{th}\) century B.C. and were also in use at Olbia, Apollonia, Odessos, Tomis, Histria, Kerkinitis and Bosporus, are believed to be connected with the cult of Apollo Iatros\(^51\).

**Cimmerian Bosporus**

1.02 Panticapaeum (Kerch)

The cult of Apollo Iatros was the dominant cult in Panticapaeum among the other cults that existed there. There seems to have been a sanctuary of the god on the acropolis already in the Archaic period\(^52\). Among the earliest buildings on the western plateau of the acropolis of Panticapaeum, in the last quarter of the 6\(^{th}\) century B.C, there was a circular building with a diameter of 11m., which is considered to be the earliest *tholos* in the Northern Black Sea region and had a ritual use as a temple\(^53\).

**The Temple of Apollo Iatros**

According to the published report of the excavations, the Temple of Apollo Iatros was constructed between 460-450 B.C on the upper plateau of the acropolis, taking the form of an Ionic peripteral temple\(^54\). (pl.2a) After a new examination of the Temple\^\(^5\) architectural remains, Tolstikov comes to the conclusion that the temple was constructed earlier, between the last decade of the 6\(^{th}\) century B.C. and the first decade of the 5\(^{th}\) century B.C. As has been shown by the excavations, between 510 and 485 B.C, several monumental buildings were erected around the *tholos* on Mt. Mithridates\(^55\).

**Inscriptions:** There are three inscriptions found at Panticapaeum dating from the early 4\(^{th}\) c. B.C to the mid-3\(^{rd}\) c. B.C. The earliest one is a dedication by Stratokles,

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\(^{48}\) Olbia: 65A. We have a description by William M. Calder: 'The stone was a chance find. Monumental white marble statue base with traces of bronze in the cuttings on the top. Dimensions are cm 98 broad 80 thick and 32 high’; see Calder 1971, p.325.

\(^{49}\) Stratonides is also known from another Athenian inscription that was found on the south slope of the acropolis at the Asklepieion in Athens. His signature was on a dedication by Kichesippos to Asclepius; see Calder 1971, 325-329, and also Wickkiser 2008, p. 50.

\(^{50}\) Ustinova 2009, p. 249.

\(^{51}\) Solovyev 2006, pp. 63-74.

\(^{52}\) Petropoulos 2010, p. 288.

\(^{53}\) Treister 2007, p. 569. There is also the opinion that the *tholos* may have been used as a *prytaneion*, as part of an administrative centre.

\(^{54}\) For Panticapaeum in general see Tolstikov 2003, pp. 707-758.

\(^{55}\) For the new chronologies see Tolstikov 2010, pp. 334-365.
son of Deinokrates. Deinokrates was a priest at the Temple of Apollo during the reign of Leukon I, the Spartocid king of Cimmerian Bosporus from 389-349 B.C., who is described as the Αρχαιον of Bosporus. The next inscription is a dedication to Apollo Iatros by the priest Satyrion during the reign of Pairisades I of the Spartocid dynasty, who is also referred to as Ὄς Σερίς 3 of Bosporus. The last inscription dates from the reign of Pairisades II, between 284 and 245 B.C.

1.03 Hermonassa

At Hermonassa the cult of Apollo Iatros is known only from a number of inscriptions as the temple has not been found. The inscriptions were found in the vicinity of the former Turkish fortress, probably on reused material. In the first inscription, which is on a statue base, Demophon, son of Erginos or Aigios(?) makes a dedication to Apollo Iatros for his wife Akia or Akis. The inscription also refers to Levkon I (389-349 B.C.), as the Αρχαιον of Bosporus and Theodosia and the king of the Sindoi, the Toretoi, the Dandarians and the Psessoi. It is dated to between 389-348 B.C.

Δημοκράτης ἔργυν ἀνέθηκεν ὑπὲρ τῆς γυναικὸς
Ακίας Ἀπόλλωνι Ἰηρωί ἄρχοντος Λεύκωνος
Βοσπόρος καὶ θεοδοσίας καὶ βασιλεύσως
Σίνδων καὶ Τορετῶν καὶ Δανδαρίων καὶ Ψησσῶν.

The second inscription is dated to between 150-125 B.C. (?), during the reign of Pairisades IV (150-125 B.C.) and concerns the dedication of a statue to the temple by the priest Kallon.

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56 CIRB: 6, losPE II: 6.
57 CIRB: 10, losPE II: 10, dated from 349 to 310 B.C.: 60
58 CIRB: 25, losPE II: 15:
59 For Hermonassa in general see Finogenova 2003, pp. 1007-1045.
60 CIRB: 1037.
61 CIRB: 1044:
1.04 Myrmekion

At Myrmekion no evidence has been found in the excavations of the existence of a temple to Apollo Iatros, although there is a graffito on an Attic black-glazed cylix with a dedication to Apollo Iatros, dating from ca. 500-465 B.C.: [ὁ δείνα (ἀνέθηκεν) Ἀπόλλωνι] Ἱητρὼι

1.05 Phanagoria

Only one inscription found at Phanagoria, dating from between 304-283 B.C., mentions Apollo Iatros. In the inscription Theophilos, son of Sanchos, who was probably a priest of Apollo, dedicates a statue (?) to Apollo Iatros during the reign of Spartokos.

West coast of the Black Sea

1.06 Apollonia Pontica

The Temple of Apollo Iatros on St Cyricus Island

Regardless of where the first apoikia of Apollonia was established, modern research accepts that a sanctuary of Apollo Iatros already existed in the early settlement and there is obviously a connection between the name of the city and the patron deity. Now the most accepted view is that the temple of Apollo Iatros was on the central part of St Cyricus Island, where a basilica has been excavated. The temple of Apollo was mentioned by ancient writers, such as Strabo and Appian, mainly because the statue of Apollo, created by the Athenian sculptor Kalamis, was colossal in size and made of bronze. Pliny the Elder gives more details about the size and its construction costs.

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62 For Myrmekion in general see Vinogradov et al 2003, pp. 803-840.
63 SEG 48: 1006.1.
64 CIRB: 974, IosPE II: 348.
65 Strabo refers to the island as the main part of the city; Strabo 7.6.1: ‘The greater part of Apollonia was founded on a certain isle, where there is a temple of Apollo, from which Marcus Lucullus carried off the colossal statue of Apollo, a work of Calamis.’
67 Nedev-Panayotova, 2003, p. 97. There is also the view that the temple was situated on the Sozopol peninsula.
68 Pliny, Natural History, 34, XVIII: ‘Of boldness of design the examples are innumerable. We see enormously huge statues devised, what are called Colossi, as large as towers. Such is the Apollo on the Capitol, brought over by Marcus Lucullus from Apollonia, a city of Pontus, 45 ft. high, which cost 500 talents to make.’
Inscriptions: The inscriptions from Apollonia date from the first half of the 2nd century B.C. and later. The earliest, dating from between 200-150 B.C, is an honorary decree referring to Hegesagoras, son of Monimos, who was the admiral of a fleet sent by the Istrians to help defend the castle of Anchialos against a siege by the Mesembrians. Hegesagoras succeeded in his mission and distinguished himself by his bravery. The boule and demos of Apollonia, among others, decided to crown him with a gold wreath and make a bronze statue of him that was to be erected in the Temple of Apollo, with a decree written on its base69.

One inscription70, which dates from the 1st-2nd c. A.D., refers to Metokos, who helped to rebuild the city and repair Apollo's temple, apparently after the city had been struck by a disaster of some kind. The second inscription71 is a dedication to Apollo Iatros by Rhometalkes II and Pythodoris I, which also mentions the king of East Thrace and an ally of the Emperor Augustus, Cotys (19-38 A.D.) and his father, King Rhometalkes I. There is also an inscription72 bearing the words:[ἀνέθη] /Ἀπόλλωνι/ Ἱητρ<ῳ>, but it is not datable.

Coinage: Apollo Iatros appears on the coinage of the 2nd c. B.C. On the obverse of a tetradrachm there is a laureate head of the god and on the reverse Apollo is depicted naked, holding a bow and arrows in his left hand and a long laurel branch, in which a bird is perched, in his right. On the right-hand side is the word ΆΠΟΛΛΩΝΟΣ and on the left the word ΙΑΤΡΟΥ73. (pl.2b)

69 ISCNI: 64.
70IGBulg I: 400: Μητοκος Ταρουλου φύσι δὲ Δέκμου κτίσας τὴν πόλιν μετὰ τὴν ἐκπίπτον καὶ ἑπισκευάζοντα τὸ τρίτον καὶ τὴν βασιλείαν Ἀπόλλωναν Ἰητρ[ῷ].
71 IGBulg I: 399: [Ἀπόλλωνι Ιητρ[ῷ] [ὑπὲρ της Ροιμη[τ][[πολεμούμενων τοῦ] και τὴν βασιλείαν Ἀπόλλωναν Ἰητρ[ῷ].
72 IGBulg I: 403.
73 Lacroix 1949, p. 248 also Topalov 1993, no 98 and Oppermann 2007, p. 33.
1.07 Istros (Histria)

Although no architectural remains of a temple to Apollo have been found in the city of Istros, there are many inscriptions confirming the existence of Apollo’s cult in the city, with the god bearing the epithet Iatros.

**Inscriptions:** At Histria the bulk of the epigraphic evidence for the cult of Apollo Iatros dates from between the 4th and 3rd c. B.C. The first inscription\(^{74}\) (pl.3a) is on a statue base dedicated to Apollo Iatros by Theoxenos and bears the name of the priest Hippolochos, son of Theodotos. An inscription on an architrave\(^{75}\) includes a dedication to Apollo Iatros by the brothers Xenokles and Theoxenos during the eponymous priesthood of their father Hippolochos. According to one hypothesis, the two brothers donated an imposing monument as a temple, and two temples of Apollo co-existed in the city of Istros\(^{76}\). From the 4th or early 3rd c. B.C. also date two inscriptions\(^{77}\) mentioning Apollo Iatros: [Ἀπόλλωνι] [Ἰησοῦ].

In the middle of the 3rd c. B.C. the temple of Apollo Iatros is mentioned in an honorary decree\(^{78}\) for the benefactor of the city Diogenes, son of Diogenes. In the mid-1st c. B.C. the temple is mentioned in an honorary decree\(^{79}\) for another benefactor, Aristogoras, son of Apatourios, who, at great personal effort and without remuneration, undertook the reconstruction of the city walls. The last inscription\(^{80}\) is from a decree, dated to the 2nd c. B.C., that had to be set up in the sanctuary of Apollo Iatros and in the most prominent place beside the altar\(^{81}\).

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\(^{74}\) *IscM* I: 169 (400-350 B.C.).
| Θεοκλής Κυρίαρχος Παππόλονιαν | Ηππολόχος Ἀπόλλωνι | ἤπει τοις Ἐπίπολοχος τοις Θεοκλής | Ιησοῦ. |

\(^{75}\) *IscM* I: 144 (4th c. B.C.):
| Παππόλοχος Παπτώ / Ηγεσαγχόρη / Ξενοκλής Θεοκλής / Απόλλωνι / Ιησοῦ | ἠπεί ίερος / Ἡγεσαγχόρη / τοῦ Θεώκλης |

\(^{76}\) Ustinova 2009, p. 248.

\(^{77}\) *IscM* I: 314A and *IscM* I: 104.

\(^{78}\) *IscM* I: 1, *SEG* 56: 933 (1).

\(^{79}\) *IscM* I: 54.

\(^{80}\) *IscM* I 34; Ustinova dates it to the 3rd c. A.D.; Ustinova 2009, p. 248.

\(^{81}\) Inscription:

θαὶ καθὼς οἱ ὁμοιοίῷ ὁμοιοῖοι ὅτι ὃς ἔπει

ιστάται ἐν γράμματι τὸ πρῶτος μετὰ τῆς τελεσίας λευκοῦ

λίθου καὶ ἀναθέτει·[ναι ἐν τῷ ἵδρυ Ἀπόλλωνος]

νομοῦ τοῦ Ἱατροῦ, ἐν ἐν ἐν τῷ ἔποιθεν ἑλπίζω δὲ καὶ ἄνδρας δυνάμεις ἐπιμεληθῆσαι τῆς ἀναγράφης καὶ τῆς ἀναγράφης

θεῖως τῶν τελεσίων τὸ δὲ εἰς ταῦτα ἐσόμενον

ἀνάλωμα ὑποτελεῖν ὁμοίῳ τῷ ἵδρυ ἑρέθησαν

νόμων ὁμοίώ νομοῖς ὀικοῦν ὁμοίων − − − − − − − − − − − − − − − − −
At Histria excavations have also unearthed a marble stele of the 3rd century B.C. bearing a dedication to Apollo Ὑπάλλωνι Ἱττοelectronics. Ustinova, who has studied it, believes that there was a manteion (oracle) in the area or even a iatromanteion83.

1.08 Tyras
From the city of Tyras we have only one inscription, on a marble vase84: Ἀπόλλωνι Ἱττωνός.

82 IScM I: 105.
83 Ustinova 2004, pp. 25-44.
84 Ustinova 2009, p. 259.
PART B

1. The Cult of Asclepius and Hygieia in the Northern Black Sea Region:

Epigraphic Evidence and Archaeological Finds (map 2)

1.01. The Cities in the Northern Black Sea. In the Greek cities of the northern Black Sea region the cult of Asclepius can be traced back to quite an early date, as there are finds from the 4th c. B.C. The most important centres of the cult were probably Chersonesus, Olbia and Panticapaeum; at least, the most important finds connected with the cult come from these cities. From Kerkinitis there is a graffito on the upper section of a black-glazed kantharos: Υγίειας. It dates from 300-250 B.C. At Myrmekion an inscription has been found on another fragment of an Attic black-glazed kantharos, it bears the name of Hygieia: ΑΣΥΓΙΕΙΑ, and this fragment dates from 300-230 B.C. A graffito (pl.3b) on a fragment of Hellenistic black-glazed kantharos of baggy type has been found in Nymphaeum with the inscription ηπιωι; Namoylik, who published it, completes it with the word Ασκληπιωι. From Phanagoria there is an inscription on a grey marble fragment which refers to Asclepius. It is a manumission record from the reign of Tiberius Julius Sauromates I and is dated to the late 1st to mid-2nd A.D. From Tyras there is a Latin inscription with a dedication to Asclepius and Hygieia by the physicians of the Roman garrison. At Achilles Vicus an inscription has been found which refers to Apollodorus, son of Asclepius, and dates from the 2nd c. A.D.: Απολλόδω[ρος]// νικ Ασκ[ληπιος] / χαίρε.

1.02. Chersonesus

There are several finds from Chersonesus connected with the cult of Asclepius which provide strong evidence that the healing god was widely accepted in the city. The earliest evidence comes from a graffito (pl.4a) on a sherd from the body of a

85 SEG 37: 663.
86 SEG 37: 666, 13c.
88 SEG 43: 511:
89 Treister-Vinogradov 1993, pp. 521-563.
90 For the medical care in the Roman army see, Gui 2011, pp. 115-130.
91 CIRB: 1029.
92 Solomonik 1975, p. 439, also Namoylik 2010, p. 156 and Golenko –Shcheglov 1978
The dating of this fragment from the 4th to the 3rd c. B.C. gives us what may well be one of the earliest indications of the cult of Asclepius not only on the north coast of the Black Sea but probably in the whole of the Black Sea coastal region. Furthermore, some finds indicate the development of a rational and scientific form of medicine in the city, which may well have existed alongside traditional forms of medicine.

A decree concerning the conferral of citizenship on the basis of proxeny, dated to the early 2nd c. A.D, records the decision to have the decree inscribed on a white stone and placed in the Sanctuary of Asclepius.

Another inscription that has been found in the city and completed by Solomonik refers to Asclepius and Hygieia. Last inscription is on the base of a phiale: a partially preserved statue of Asclepius, a bronze statuette of the healing god and also a statue of Hygieia.

**Statues:** These consist of a partially preserved statue of Asclepius, a bronze statuette of the healing god and also a statue of Hygieia.

**Various finds:** Of significant interest are a number of stone eggs which research has shown were connected with the cult of Asclepius, as during Roman times, Asclepius is sometimes represented holding an egg. Another important find consists in the clay images of human parts that have been found in Chersonesus. These finds include images of arms, legs, female breasts, eyes and ears. These offerings, usually called 'anatomical' are found at Asclepius sanctuaries, as well as in those of other gods. They are interpreted as an invocation or plea to the god for healing or as a thank-offering for the cure of a certain part of the body.

The finds connected with the healing gods and their cult are supplemented by a Roman relief plate with a representation of Asclepius. On this vessel, which was found during the excavation of a plot in the vicinity of ancient Chersonesus, the god is portrayed standing, holding his rod. Finally, also worthy of mention is a gold medallion with a representation of the snake Glycon.

**Coinage:** At Chersonesus, healing gods appear on the coinage of the 2nd and 3rd centuries A.D. A coin (pl.4b) from the city dated to between 212-222 A.D. bears a depiction of Asclepius and the word ΕΛΕΥΘΕΡΑ on the obverse, while the reverse bears a depiction of Hygieia feeding a snake with a phiale and the word ΧΕΡΟΝΗ.
The development of rational and scientific medicine in Chersonesus

Two marble grave stelai provide important evidence of the development of medicine in Chersonesus during the Hellenistic period, possibly at the same time as Asclepius' cult was spreading and developing. The first of these is a limestone slab with an upper moulding which, at the centre, bears a painted representation of two naked men standing opposite each other, with the one on the left touching the other's head (pl.5a). Above the two men there is a representation of three medical instruments. The instrument in the centre is a cupping vessel (Greek: σικύα, Latin curcurbitula); this vessel, which was used for the extraction of blood, is often depicted on physicians' grave stelai dating from a long period of time stretching from the Classical era to Roman times. On the right-hand side there is a pair of forceps, an instrument used to place stitches, and on the left a pair of tweezers. The grave stele that is dated to the late 4th-early 3rd c. B.C. also has an inscription low down:

[τ]ῶιδε τάφωι κοσμεί Λεσχανορίδαιν ὁ τεκνώςας,
Εὐκλῆς ἰατρὸς πατρίδοις ἐκ Τενεδου.

The physician Eukles, who was born in Τενεδου, dedicated the stele to his dead son Leschanorida, who was also a doctor; otherwise there would have been no reason to depict medical instruments on the stele that was positioned over his grave. As far as we know, no other stele with a painted representation of tools survives from such an early period. Even the relief representations of doctors and medical instruments are very few up until the end of the Hellenistic period. This type is more widespread during the Roman period.

As for the second grave stele found at Chersonesus, only half of the stele has survived, with its upper moulding (pl.5b). Even so, a series of medical instruments can be discerned, along with an inscription: Διόνυσιος Πανταγώτου. Because of the tools portrayed it is obvious that Dionysius had practised medicine during his lifetime and so we have the name of another doctor who lived and worked in Chersonesus. Amongst the tools depicted, we can safely identify a cupping vessel for bloodletting on the right and after this a probe, which was used to deposit pharmaceutical preparations in wounds. The image of a third tool is poorly preserved and cannot be identified. A fourth tool, of which only half is visible, probably belongs to a series of double tools with a probe at one end and a sharp end at the other. As this grave stele dates from the same period as the previous one, it is possible to see that there was a significant development in the use of medical and surgical tools in the late 4th century B.C. and after. Although we do not know whether Eukles was invited by the city, or whether he arrived in Chersonesus by himself, knowing that there was a need for his services, it is certain that he helped to establish rational medicine in the city.

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105 SEG 36:697; also Zubar: Web Publication
106 For the use of the instrument, known examples and previous bibliography, see Moschakis 2009, pp. 24-26.
108 SEG 36: 696; also Zubar: Web Publication.
109 Moschakis 2009, p.27.
110 Moschakis 2009, p.27.
1. 03. Olbia

From Olbia the earliest epigraphic evidence for the cult of Asclepius comes from the Protogenes Decree\textsuperscript{111}, dated to 220-210 B.C., in which the citizens of Olbia warmly praised the rich Protogenes for his gifts of money to the city (pl.5c). In this inscription there is a reference to the tower of Epidaurus in the city, which has been regarded as evidence for the existence of a temple to Asclepius. This view has had little support and the tower cannot be regarded as definite evidence for the existence of a temple to Asclepius\textsuperscript{112}. Even so, the cult of Asclepius and Hygieia in Olbia during the 3\textsuperscript{rd} c. B.C. can be confirmed by some marble heads that belonged to statues of Asclepius\textsuperscript{113} (pl.6a) and one belonging to Hygieia, now kept in the Hermitage Museum at St. Petersburg. Leypunskaya recognises in a head of Asclepius or Zeus the work of an artist who was influenced by the school of Skopas. She also classifies a small head of Asclepius and the head of Hygieia as works of the Alexandria School, which were particularly widespread in Olbia during the Hellenistic period\textsuperscript{114}.

From the second half of the 3\textsuperscript{rd} century B.C. the city of Olbia faced a series of crises. From the beginning of the 2\textsuperscript{nd} century the city had to pay tribute and was finally occupied and became a protectorate of the Scythian king Scilurus. In the middle of the 2\textsuperscript{nd} century the city suffered a serious decline and in the middle of the 1\textsuperscript{st} century it was occupied by Goths\textsuperscript{115}. The city began to develop again during the 1\textsuperscript{st} century A.D., on a smaller scale, and finally became a Roman garrison in the 2\textsuperscript{nd} century A.D. Olbia's turbulent life may be one of the reasons why for a period of over three centuries there is no evidence for the cult of Asclepius in the city, as the next important inscription\textsuperscript{116} dates from 222 to 235 A.D. This inscription refers to Iulianos, son of Alexandros, who constructed or repaired the temple of Asclepius and Hygieia from its foundations to the tile roofs, at his own expense as a gift to his motherland. As is evident in the inscription, Asclepius and Hygieia had a different temple to the other gods Sarapis, Isis and Poseidon\textsuperscript{117}. The reference to a stoa is crucial for the existence of an organised sanctuary or even an Asklepieion\textsuperscript{118}. It is also significant that there is a supplication for good health, γυναικέται, for the emperor Marcus

\textsuperscript{111} IosPE 1-2: 32.
\textsuperscript{112} Hirst 1903, p. 44.
\textsuperscript{113} Sokolov 1974, p. 84; see also Leypunskaya 1994, p. 16.
\textsuperscript{114} Leypunskaya 1994, p. 16.
\textsuperscript{115} Leypunskaya 1994, p. 12.
\textsuperscript{116} IosPE 1-2: 184:

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\textsuperscript{117} Generally, it is common in Roman times for Asclepius and Hygieia to coexist with other gods in the same temple, see Lioulias 2010, p. 88-92.
\textsuperscript{118} For stoa with a use as an abaton or ἐγκοιμητήριον, see Riethmüller 1999, p. 131.
Aurelius, the Senate and the army. For the city there is a special supplication for good health and stability.

Of the other finds from the city, it is worth mentioning a relief which has generated a variety of different views and whose figures have also been identified as Achilles and Asclepius\textsuperscript{119}.

**1.04. Panticapaeum (Kerch)**

At Panticapaeum, where Apollo\textsuperscript{120}’s cult was already dominant in the late Archaic period, there is a find that could partly lead to the connection of the two gods, as might be expected. This find concerns a graffito, which is dated to the 4\textsuperscript{th} c. B.C. and refers to Apollo and Asclepius\textsuperscript{120}: \(\text{Ἀπόλλωνι καὶ Ἀσκληπιῶι} \) or \(\text{Ἀπόλλωνος καὶ Ἀσκληπιοῦ} \). This coexistence of the father and son, and probably their worship in the same temple or sanctuary, would be very important for the evolution of Apollo\textsuperscript{120}’s cult in the city. The problem is that the inscription has been completed by its publisher. As there is no other evidence from this time, and the next inscription found at Pantikapaion dates from the second century A.D., we believe there is a possibility that this completion is wrong.

There is literary evidence for a temple of Asclepius at Panticapaeum, and a priest there called Stratus, from Strabo\textsuperscript{121}: \textit{And Eratosthenes brings forward, also, the following epigram from the temple of Asclepius at Panticapaeum, which was inscribed on the bronze water-jar that had been burst by freezing: If any man is incredulous in regard to what happens in our country, let him look at this water-jar and know the truth; which, not as a fair offering unto God but as an illustration of our severe winters, has been dedicated by Stratus the priest\textsuperscript{120}}.

Near Pantikapaion, in the Adzhimuskaya region, on the mountain of Temir Gora\textsuperscript{122}, an underground sanctuary has been excavated. Stone staircases were found leading to a pit in the rock. From this sanctuary there is an inscription\textsuperscript{123}, dated to the 2\textsuperscript{nd} c. A.D., with a dedication to Asclepius with the epithets \(\text{θεῷ Ἀσκληπιῶι Σωτῆρι} \) and \(\text{Εὐεργέτῃς} \)

\(\text{θεῷ Ἀσκληπιῶι Σωτῆρι} \)  
\(\text{kai εὐεργέτῃ τὴν τι[νη]-} \)  
\(\text{ζαν ἀνέστησε Στρα[τόπη]-} \)  
\(\text{μος Μενεστράτου.} \)

The commissioner of the inscription, Stratodemos, son of Menestratos, donated to the temple the table which was used for the offerings. We know that these tables, made either of stone or marble, had a specific use in the ritual followed by the worshippers who came to the temple of Asclepius: they were used for depositing offerings that

\textsuperscript{119} Hirst 1903, pp. 44-45.  
\textsuperscript{120} Tolstoi, Graffiti, p. 182.  
\textsuperscript{121} Strabo II, 1, 16.  
\textsuperscript{122} Namoylik 2010, p. 157  
\textsuperscript{123} CIRB 957.
were either burned or left intact. After depositing their offerings, the pilgrims would perform the act of sacrifice\textsuperscript{124}.

In the museum at Kerch there is a statue of Asclepius which lacks the head and the right hand, which the god was using to lean on his rod, which is missing also\textsuperscript{125}.

\textsuperscript{124} Jameson 1994, p. 37.
\textsuperscript{125} Namoylik 2010, p. 157
2. The Cult of Asclepius and Hygeia in the Southern Black Sea Region:

Epigraphic Evidence and Archaeological Finds (map 3)

2.01. The Coast of Bithynia, Paphlagonia and the Pontus: There is evidence of an Asklepieion in Kalchedon (Kadıköy) from an inscription, dating from the 1st c. B.C. to the 1st c. A.D, which refers to the Temple of Asclepius and the stoa, and also defines the duties of the priests. In the coinage, Asclepius appears on coins issued during the reign of Emperor Hadrian (117-138 A.D.). From Heraclea Pontica (Eregli) there is a dedication to Asclepius by the healer Markios Xenokrates, dated to the 2nd c. A.D. From another grave inscription we learn that the έξοχος ιητρός Μήνιος died at the age of seventy. An inscription from Ticion (Filyos) refers to a priest of Asclepius:

Lambda[---]---
"ο διὰ βίου [πεύς Α]---
σιλπητοῦ [ετήσειν]
"υπέρ φυλής [---]---
5 καθώς υπέ[σχετο].

Asclepius, Hygieia and the snake appear in the coinage dating from the period stretching from the reign of Antoninus Pius (138-161 A.D.) until that of Valerian (253-259 A.D.). From Amastria(is) (Amasra) we have a reference to an Άσκληπις Φυλή in an inscription dated to 180 A.D:

μετὰ τὸ τεθήναι ἡμᾶς, ὡς ἀν ἀνεώξη ἢ κεινήση
ἡ μεταθή ἐκ τοῦ ἀναστήματος δώσει τῇ
[φυλής?] μὲν Άσκληπίωτα[δί] (θηνς.) αὐτῆ.

During the reign of Faustina Minor, Hygieia was perceived as Tyche, protectress of Amastria and founder of the city. From Sinope there is an inscription on an altar with a dedication to Asclepius Ετ Υμ and Hygieia by Ophilios Polykarpos. From a gravestone inscription we have the testimony of a certain healer named Maximos. In Amisos (Samsun) Asclepius and Hygieia appear in the coinage from the period stretching from the reign of Emperor Trajan (98-117 A.D.) until that of Trebonianus Gallus (251-253 A.D.). In another
In Amaseia (Amasya) in the hinterland, Asclepius and the snake appear in coinage from the period stretching from the reign of Antoninus Pius until that of Caracalla. In a gravestone inscription there is a reference to Aurelios Philomousos, who was an ἀρχίατρος, while in three other inscriptions we have the theophoric name of Asklepiades. Near Amaseia, in a minor city named Phazemon, there was a sanctuary of Asclepius and the Nymphae. In the city there were natural thermal springs and the local temples attracted pilgrims from the Greek cities of the Pontus, such as Sinope and others. In Cerasus (Giserun), Asclepius appears in coins from the reign of Antoninus Pius (138-161 A.D.). From Trapezous (Trabzon) there is a dedication to Asclepius and Hygieia on a relief from the Roman period:

{ ὁ δὲ ἵνα ἀνέθηκε Ἀσκληπιῷ καὶ Ὑγείᾳ }.

2.02. The Case of Abonuteichos I Ionopolis (Inebolu)

Abonuteichos was a minor city on the coast of Paphlagonia which achieved full civic status in the 1st century A.D. and adopted the name Ionopolis under Marcus Aurelius. From Lucian we know of the prophecy that was given at the Sanctuary to Apollo in Chalcedon and the structure of a temple for Apollo and Asclepius at Abonuteichos. This temple was linked with a legend of Glycon, a snake which was worshipped as a god. The instigator of this fictitious cult was Alexander, a false prophet of Glycon. Alexander claimed to possess a new manifestation of Asclepius in the form of a snake. The cult was successful, spreading through a wide area, especially in the Pontus and Asia Minor. Marcus Aurelius recognised the cult by conferring status on Abonuteichos. Sopyrin believes that the story of the foundation of the temple in Abonuteichos by a prophecy of Apollo can be connected with the cult of Apollo Iatros in the western and northern Black Sea regions.
PART C

The Cult of Asclepius and Hygieia in Thrace and Lower Moesia

1. The Cult of Asclepius and Hygieia on the Thracian Coast:

Epigraphic Evidence and Archaeological Finds (map 4)

1.01. The Cities on the Thracian Coast: Of the cities on the coast of Thrace (in Bulgaria and modern Turkey), the most important centres of the cult were Mesembria and Odessos. We have evidence for the cult of Asclepius from Apollonia Pontica, in the form of coinage: coins depicting Asclepius and Hygieia from the reigns of Marcus Aurelius (161-180 A.D.), Lucius Verus (161-169 A.D.) and Caracalla (198-211 A.D.). Healing gods appeared on the coinage at Anchialos: a snake on a coin from the reign of Antoninus Pius (138-161 A.D.); an Asclepius-Hygieia-snake group on a coin from the reign of Septimius Severus (193-211 A.D.); Asclepius, Asclepius-Hygieia and a snake on a coin from the reign of Geta (209-211 A.D.), and Asclepius and Hygiea-snake on a coin from the reign of Caracalla. At the East Thrace and the Propontis coast, (map 5) from Byzantium, an inscription has been found bearing a dedication to Asclepius and Hygieia, and the gods also appear on the city’s coinage: Asclepius on a coin from the reign of Septimius Severus, and Asclepius-Hygieia on a coin from the reign of Caracalla. At Perinthis, Asclepius and Hygieia appear both on coinage and medals: Asclepius on coins from the reigns of Geta, Caracalla and Elagabalus (218-222 A.D.), and Asclepius and Hygieia on a medal. In Salymbria, the name of Hygieia appears in an inscription that presents the goddess as having served as an eponymous hieromnemon.

1.02. Mesembria (Nesebar)

At Mesembria, there is evidence of the existence of two temples of Apollo, one in the agora of the ancient city and one near the south harbour, which was under the protection of Apollo. There is no evidence of Asclepius’ cult in the city during the late Classical and Hellenistic periods. We do not know if this is due to a cessation of relations with Athens or some other reason, such as the lack of excavations. We know that during the Roman period thermae, Roman baths, were operating in the city.

149 Kirova 2010, pp. 251-252
150 Riethmüller 1999a, p. 328
151 Kirova 2010, p. 249
152 Sherk 1992, pp. 243-244, for the inscription see, Perinthis- Heracleia, 304:
[— — ἡθεὰς Υγείας οἱ κατοι[-] [κοινές στεφα(?)]γοῦντα Στρατόνεικον]
153 Mesembria, a Dorian colony founded in the late 6th century B.C., probably by settlers from Megara, Byzantion and Chalcedon, was located on an island connected to the land by an isthmus. The city had close political connections with Athens during the 5th century B.C. and was a member of the Delian League. During the Hellenistic era Mesembria was most closely connected, probably as a kind of dependency, with the Thrace hinterland and its kings, Petrova 2013, p.124.
154 For the three earliest references to the temple of Apollo see IGBulg I: 308(11)
and excavations have brought to light a hall with a cruciform plan and five rooms with a heating installation\(^\text{156}\). The cult of Asclepius appeared in the city in the first century A.D.

**Inscriptions:** A very important inscription has been found in Mesembria which is dated to the late 1\(^{st}\) century B.C\(^\text{157}\). It is a decree for the dedication to the temple of Apollo of a statue of Glaukias, son of Athanaionos, described as σύγγραψανες. The decree must have been set up in the city's Asklepieion:

\[
\begin{align*}
18 & \text{... τὸ δὲ ψάρισμα τούτο εἰς τελα-} \\
20 & \text{μάνα λευκοῦ λίθου ἀναγράφαντες} \\
& \text{ἀναθέμεν εἰς τὸ Ἀσκλαπιόν}
\end{align*}
\]

It appears from the inscription that the healer Glaukias provided a great service to the city in very difficult circumstances, which are not mentioned in the inscription. In the city Asclepius was probably worshipped with the epithet ἄρσης as is evident in another inscription on a Thracian Rider relief, which comes from the site of Goritsa in Mesembria:\(^\text{158}\).

\[
[\text{Ἀσκληπιάω Κεμπῆς Φαρουλας Βεθυος} \\
\text{ὁ καὶ Σκορις χαριστήριον ἀνέθηκεν}]
\]

1.03. Odessos (Varna)

Odessos\(^\text{159}\) flourished most notably during the Hellenistic era, when the city served as a temporary base for the armies of the Thracian successor to Alexander the Great, King Lysimachus (323\text{–}280 B.C.). During this period Odessos acquired various public buildings and shrines. The period between the late 2\(^{nd}\) century B.C. and early 1\(^{st}\) century A.D. saw a significant expansion in the cult of the local Thracian Hero\(^\text{160}\) under the epithet Karabasmos and later Darzalas. Amongst the public buildings constructed in Odessos at this time are the great *thermae*\(^\text{161}\), a complex that occupied about 7,000 sq. m. and is considered to be one of the largest *thermae* complexes of the Roman period. (pl. 6b)

**Architectural Ruins:** During the excavations of the great *thermae* of Odessos evidence came to light of the existence of a temple to Asclepius and possibly of an Asklepieion. During the uncovering of the west façade of the *thermae*, there emerged a double underground passage leading to two porticoes, which served to support a second floor above. In this area were found altars, votive reliefs, monumental statues

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\(^{156}\) Preshlenov 2003, p.163.

\(^{157}\) *IGBulg* I\(^1\): 315.

\(^{158}\) SEG 24: 906: *IGBulg* I\(^1\): 354 (4); Riethmüller indicates the location in the *chora* of Anchialos, see Riethmüller 2005a, p.328, 58.

\(^{159}\) Odessos, a Milesian colony, was founded in the early 6\(^{th}\) century B.C., the city became an important port during the first few centuries of its life, even though its population was not particularly large. For the foundation of the city and its history see, Minchev 2003, p.209-278.

\(^{160}\) For the cult of the Hero Rider in Odessos and also the cult of the “Great God” see Gocheva 1996, pp. 121-127, Stoianova 2010 and also Petrova 2013, pp. 119-131.

\(^{161}\) For the great *thermae* of Odessos see Georgiev 2008, also Oppermann 2007, pp. 85-92.
and statuettes. All these finds lead to the conclusion that in this part of the complex there was a temple of Asclepius and possibly an Asklepieion, which was directly connected with the city's thermae. We know of the connection between Asclepius' cult and water, and this connection may be observed in all the Thracian sanctuaries, as we shall soon see. It is worth noting that the view of water, during the Roman period, as a means of expiation or purification was to assume a more practical aspect, as the healing properties of water acquired a greater importance through the use of thermal baths. Therefore, the existence of an Asklepieion beside the city's thermae can be safely supported. As we shall see below, a temple of Asclepius probably also existed in the thermae of Serdica.

**Statues:** From Odessos we have a marble head of Asclepius, together with one of Hygieia. Of greater interest is a group of small statues of Asclepius and Hygieia, partly preserved.

**Inscriptions:** One of the three altars found during the excavations bears a Latin inscription; it appears that the altar was dedicated to Asclepius and Hygieia during the reign of Emperor Antoninus Pius (138-161 A.D.), who is also mentioned in a number of inscriptions from Odessos and Dionysopolis since he was considered to be a benefactor of these cities. Another inscription, in a votive relief with a pediment and akroteria, bears a dedication to Asclepius, who is addressed as Οἰκουμένης Σώτηρ, Saviour of the Universe. It is also highly significant that Marcus Aurelius makes a dedication to Asclepius, thanking him for his healing. The inscription is dated to the beginning of the third century A.D.:
north of the Rhodope Mountains. It accompanies the names of many gods and particularly those of the Thracian Hero-Rider and the healing god Asclepius. This epithet is not considered common on the coast of Thrace.\(^\text{169}\)

Another inscription\(^\text{170}\) from Odessos, dated to the 2nd century A.D., refers to Asclepiades, a priest of the Αὐτοκλής Κῦρ Θεοῦ Δημητρίου, who is also Αὐτόκλής Κῦρ, head physician of the city, and seems to have played a prominent role as he is also referred to as 

\begin{center}
Αὐτόκλης Κῦρ ἦν ἀρχιατρὸς καὶ δημοφιλῆς καὶ ἱερεύς Θεοῦ Μεγάλου καὶ γυμνασίαρχος καὶ ἀριστεύς καὶ ἣ γυνὴ αὐτοῦ Ἀννὶ Νεικομήδους χαίρετε.
\end{center}

The Αὐτόκλής Κῦρ appellation indicates the existence of medical associations in the city during Roman times and Asclepiades was probably in charge and certainly had an important role in the structure that provided medical care in the city. The appellation 

\begin{center}
Οἱ ἀρχιατροὶGenerateHTML
\end{center}

probably refers to the ability of prominent rich men to offer the oil that was necessary for adolescents to train in the city’s gymnasium. The fact that Asclepiades was a priest in the temple of the Αὐτόκλής Κῦρ is very interesting. At first, the coexistence of a rational healer and the priest of a deity in the same person and temple could be an indication of the predominance of rational medicine; also, it is obvious that physicians had succeeded in convincing patients that medications and drugs were instruments of the gods’ healing powers. It is also interesting that Asclepiades served his duties as a priest at the temple of the Αὐτόκλής Κῦρ and not at the temple of Asclepius. This leads us to wonder about the healing properties of the local Thracian Hero, or the issue of the syncretistic fusion of the two gods. Furthermore, the case of Asclepiades might be a good opportunity to consider the possibility of the coexistence under the same roof of the Αὐτόκλής Κῦρ and other equivalent or secondary gods. Of the remaining inscriptions found at Odessos, it is worth mentioning the inscription dedicated to Asclepius Αὐτόκλής (saviour) and Hygieia, in which both are referred to as Εὐφροσύνη.\(^\text{171}\)

The last inscription\(^\text{172}\) is on a relief plaque with a depiction of the Thracian Rider and comes from Kichevo, which is located near modern Varna. It bears a dedication to Asclepius with the epithet Αὐτόκλής Πρῶτος Ασκληπιάτων. The inscription is another case in point for an open discussion of the relationship between the local god Hero and Asclepius.

**The physicians’ tombs:** In the area of Odessos the excavations uncovered four tombs dating from the 2nd to the 3rd centuries A.D. All of them contained

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\(^{169}\) See Veligianni, pp. 154-155; the author believes that this epiclesis was in use mainly during the Imperial period; she also notes that the αὐτοκλής (commissioners) are always local Thracians.

\(^{170}\) *IGBulg IV*: 150.


\(^{172}\) *IGBulg IV*: 76: τὸν σωτήρα Ασκληπιάτων καὶ τὴν Τριγυείαν ἀνὴρ ἐλευθέρος τοῖς κυρίοις Φαίδρου ἀνέστησεν.

\(^{173}\) *IGBulg IV*: 266 (2).
medical-pharmaceutical instruments and it is obvious that they belonged to doctors. The finds include a probe, a fragment of a speculum, a suction cup, a scalpel and wafers. In one of these tombs a booklet with instructions for preparing medicines was found. The richest of the tombs, which is dated to the 3rd century A.D., contained medical instruments, bottles for drugs and also traces of the drugs themselves. All these finds show a great flowering of the medical art in the area, with specialised doctors who practised medicine on a scientific basis.

2. The Cult of Asclepius and Hygieia in the Thracian Hinterland: Epigraphic Evidence and Archaeological Finds. (map 4)

2.01. Philippopolis (Plovdiv) Region

The region of Philippopolis was an area with a wide distribution of the Asclepius cult. As is evident from the finds, Philippopolis was an important urban centre of the Asclepius cult, although the god’s most important rural sanctuary was at Batkun. Another small suburban centre existed at Varvara. From Bolyartsi there is an inscription addressed to Asclepius Εἴτε ὅσιωτοι Hygieia and Telesphorus by Eustochios, son of Asklepiades, who is referred to as Ἰησοῦς Χριστός. From Izvor, in the Philippopolis region, there is a relief on which the figure of Asclepius has been identified. On the left-hand side of the relief, which has an arched top, is the figure of Hygieia and in front of her Asclepius is depicted holding his rod and looking towards an altar. On the other side of the altar there is a male figure depicted on a smaller scale than the other two, extending a horn towards the altar. This very interesting scene may well depict an offering on the god’s altar from a worshipper who came to the temple. (pl. 7a)

From Malko Belyovo there is an inscription with a dedication to Asclepius on a relief of the Thracian Rider. Asclepius is addressed as a god: θεὸς Ἀσκληπιάδου. From the village of Malo Konare there are inscriptions on statue bases and on a relief of the Thracian Rider. A sanctuary of the Thracian Rider and cult of Asclepius, Hygieia and Telesphorus probably existed at Novosel; two reliefs have been found there depicting the Thracian Rider and bearing inscriptions with

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174 Aparaschivei 2010, p. 147.
175 Bolyartsi village lies about 23 km. South-east of the town of Plovdiv (Philippopolis).
176 IG Bulg III, 1: 1149.
177 The village of Izvor lies about 19 km. south of Plovdiv (Philippopolis); its name is translated as ‘spring’.
178 Dobruski 1907a, p. 134, pl. 71.
179 H: 0.29m.; W: 0.24m.
180 This scene is reminiscent of the relief from Thirea, with the procession of pilgrims to the healing gods; see Krug 1997, p. 125.
181 The village of Malko Belovo is about 67 km. west of Plovdiv (Philippopolis).
182 IG Bulg III, 1: 1096.
183 The village of Malo Konare is about 30 km. west of Plovdiv (Philippopolis).
184 Riethmüller 1999a, p. 332.
dedications of thanks to Asclepius, who is addressed as θεός in both of them\(^\text{185}\). From Pastusha there is also an inscription on a relief of the Thracian Rider with a dedication to the ἄγιος Ασκληπιος\(^\text{186}\). From the same place come a fragmentary statue of Asclepius and statuettes of Asclepius, Hygieia and Telesphorus\(^\text{187}\). From Patalenitsa\(^\text{188}\), a village near Batkun, there are two inscriptions with a dedication to Asclepius, referred to as ἄγιος on the one and θεός on the other\(^\text{189}\). The second inscription gives us the name of a priest of the Temple of Asclepius, Ιερεύοντος Μπουκατερελεος Κοτυος. From Paradzhik there is an inscription with a dedication to Asclepius\(^\text{190}\).

2.02. Philippopolis (Plovdiv)

One of the main cults in the Philippopolis\(^\text{191}\) was that of Apollo Κενδρεισός, and it is known from the inscriptions that Pythian games were organised in the god’s honour under the name Alexandria\(^\text{192}\). Even if architectural traces of a shrine to Asclepius had not been found, it is certain that his worship was widespread not only in the city but also in the broader territory of Philippopolis. From the epigraphic evidence we know that there was an ἄγιος Ἀσκληπιας (Asclepian clan) in the city\(^\text{193}\); κρατιστή φυλή/ Ασκληπιας. From the inscription we understand that the ἄγιος Ἀσκληπιας had a dominant role in the social and religious life of the city as it is defined as κρατίστη\(^\text{194}\).

The Marble Frieze with Asclepius and his Family, the Asclepiads (pl. 7b).

A unique find from ancient Thrace comes from Philippopolis in the form of a marble freeze dated to the 3rd century A.D. depicting Asclepius and his family, the Asclepiads\(^\text{195}\). The frieze bears a complete representation of eight persons and a dog. Roughly in the centre of the representation is Hygieia, easily recognisable as she is depicted in the usual type. On her right stands Asclepius, who turns slightly to the right as he extends his hand to receive a gift from a woman. Asclepius holds his rod in his left hand; the rod is bending in such a way as to look like the branch of a tree. With her left hand, the woman, to whom Asclepius is extending his hand, is delicately

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\(^{185}\) IG Bulg III, 1: 1407 and 1408.
\(^{186}\) IG Bulg III, 1: 1397.
\(^{187}\) Riethmüller 1999a, p. 332.
\(^{188}\) The village of Patalenitsa is about 60 km. west of Plovdiv (Philippopolis).
\(^{189}\) IG Bulg III, 1: 1302 and 1303.
\(^{190}\) IG Bulg III, 1: 1091.
\(^{191}\) Philippopolis became a prominent centre of the province of Thrace during the Roman period, after it had acquired city status in the late 1st century A.D., under the Roman name of Trimontium. The Via Militaris passed through the city and contributed to its development, which acquired important public buildings, such as a forum, a stadium, public baths, sanctuaries, a theatre and an Odeon. For the development of Philippopolis from the 1st to the 4th centuries A.D. see Topalilov 2012.
\(^{192}\) Ulrike 2005, p. 109. At Philippopolis Apollo was worshipped as Κενδρεισηνός or Κενδρεισάς; see Riethmüller 1999, p. 211.
\(^{193}\) IG Bulg III, 1: 914.
\(^{194}\) We know of the existence of an Ασκληπιάς φυλή in Heracleia (modern Bitola) together with other clans, such as the Αρχεμιας, Ηράκλειος and Διονυσίας; see Karamitrou-Moschakis 2010 p. 67. There was also an Ασκληπιάς φυλή at Thessaloniki; see IG X, 2, 1: 183 and 265.
\(^{195}\) Seure 1929, pp. 51-83; also Dontcheva 2001, p. 189 and Kirova 2010, pp. 140-141.
touching the head of Telesphorus, who is standing between her and Asclepius. With her right hand she offers gifts (?) to Asclepius. Behind this woman and at the right-hand end of the representation stands another woman, portrayed frontally. To Hygieia’s left stands another woman, her head covered by her himation; in her left hand she is holding a thurible. Beside her stand two naked men, wearing only a cloak. Both of them are holding spears and in the space between them is portrayed a half-seated dog. At the left-hand end of the relief there is an altar-like structure. The female figure who gives the gifts to Asclepius could be identified as Panacea, while the other female figures are probably Iaso and Akeso. The two male figures have been identified, with reservations, as Machaon and Podaleirius. The depiction of Asclepius’ family was not common, and in this case we believe, if the identifications are correct, that we may have one of the very few representations of Asclepius’ family in existence.

Inscriptions and Votive Reliefs: Among the other finds from Philippopolis it is worth mentioning the inscription on a relief to Κύριος Άσκληπις και Τελέσφορος, another relief to Κύριος Άσκληπις and a relief with a depiction of the Thracian Rider and dedication to Asclepius, all of which are dated to the 2nd or 3rd century A.D.

Coinage: Of the 2nd-century coinage, healing gods are depicted on coins from the reigns of Antoninus Pius (138-161 A.D.): Asclepius, portrayed standing on the left, holding a serpent-entwined staff; Commodus (176-192 A.D.): Hygieia portrayed standing, feeding a serpent from a phiale, and Septimius Severus (193-211 A.D.): Portraying Hygieia in the well-known type and Hygieia with Telesphorus at her side.

2.0.3. The Sanctuary of Asclepius Zemedrenos at Batkun, Pazardzhik Vicinity (Phillipopolis Region)

One of the most important of the Thracian sanctuaries has been partly excavated near Batkun in the Pazardzhik region. It is situated about 4.5 km. away from Batkun near the Monastery of Sts. Peter and Paul. The sanctuary was probably built in the second half of the first century A.D., as is evident from coins of the Emperor Antoninus. The first official excavations of the sanctuary were carried out by Dimitar and Konstantin Hristovich Tsontchev, who found more than fifty votive reliefs, most of them with a depiction of the Thracian Rider, together with a number of statues with representations of Asclepius, Hygieia and Telesphorus.

The excavations indicate that the sanctuary extended over two different levels or terraces: the south terrace, which lay at the lowest level, and the north terrace, which lay at the highest level. In the northern section there was a natural source of water.

196 Kirova 2010, p. 141.
197 On one relief from Thirea Peloponnesus, dated to the first half of the 4th c. B.C., there is also a depiction of Asclepius’ family. In this relief the family is portrayed in a line and a group of worshippers, also in line, is depicted approaching them, bringing a pig for sacrifice. See Krug 1997 p. 127 pl. 50.
198 IGBulg III, 1: 934.
199 IGBulg III, 1: 945.
200 IGBulg III, 1: 967.
201 Mushmov 1912: no 5087; no 5088.
202 Mushmov 1912: no 5227.
203 Mushmov 1912: no 5292; no 5293.
204 For the excavations and the finds see, Tsontchev 1941.
Even if we know nothing about the construction of the sanctuary, the existence, among other finds, of a marble model of a *templum in Antis* is of great significance, since excavators believe that it is probably an imitation of the real temple that existed in the sanctuary. In Batkun there was also a sanctuary to Apollo, a fact indicated by inscriptions.

**Inscriptions:** The importance of the Asclepius cult and his sanctuary can be seen in the great number of inscriptions on statue bases and reliefs. Asclepius bears the epithet Ζυμεδρηνός which has many variants: Ζυμεδριηνός Ζυμεδρηνός Ζυμεδρηνός Ζυμεδρηνός Ζυμεζδρηνός Ζυμεζδρηνός Ζυμεζδρηνός Ζυμεζδρηνός Ζυμεζδρηνός Ζυμεζδρηνός Ζυμεζδρηνός. An inscription on a statue base dated to the reign of Trajan informs us about the dedication of a statue to Asclepius for the salvation and health of the commissioners, their homeland and the leaders of the army.

In a total of five inscriptions Asclepius has the epiclesis Ζυμεδρηνός. One inscription with a dedication by Καλός Καλός Καλός Καλός on the base of a statuary group, dated to the 3rd century A.D., addresses Ασκληπιός Asclepius together with Hygieia and Telesphorus. It is interesting that all of these figures are called Ζυμεζδρηνός. In another group of inscriptions the god bears the epithet Ασκληπιώτης and in another inscription the god has the same epithet as Hygieia.

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206 *IGBulg* III, 1: 1114.
207 Other inscriptions with a dedication to Asclepius, apart from those mentioned in the text, are as follows: *IGBulg* III: 1 Altar: 1278; statue bases: 1132; 1133; 1135; 1171; 1172. Reliefs: 1114; 1115; 1117- 1122; 1126; 1128; 1131; 1136- 1140; 1148; 1153; 1155; 1157- 1159; 1161- 1163; 1167; 1173- 1181; 1184; 1186- 1195; 1200; 1203; 1205; 1217; 1221; 1223- 1228; 1232- 1250; 1259; 1261; 1264- 1266; 1268- 1270; 1272; 1277; 1281; 1286; 1287; 1302.
208 *IGBulg* III, 1: 1115.
209 *IGBulg* III, 1: 1119: αγαθή [τύχη],

θεών επηρτήστα Ζυμεζδρήνος Ζυμεζδρήνος ΠΑΙ—

See also: 1120; 1126; 1128; 1159, relief.
210 *IGBulg* III, 1: 1132:

Καλάυστας Καλάυστας Καλάυστας Καλάυστας Καλάυστας Καλάυστας Καλάυστας Καλάυστας Καλάυστας Καλάυστας Καλάυστας Καλάυστας Καλάυστας Καλάυστας Καλάυστας Καλάυστας Καλάυστας Καλάυστας Καλάυστας Καλάυστας Καλάυστας Καλάυστας Καλάυστας Καλάυστας Καλάυστας Καλάυστας Καλάυστας Καλάυστας Καλάυστας Καλάυστας Καλάυστας Καλάυστας Καλάυστας Καλάυστας Καλάυστας Καλάυστας Καλάυστας Καλάυστας Καλάυστας Καλάυστας Καλάυστας Καλάυστας Καλάυστας Καλάυστας Καλάυστας Καλάυστας Καλάυστας Καλάυστας Καλάυστας Καλάυστας Καλάυστας Καλάυστας Καλάυστας Καλάυστας Καλάυστας Καλάυστας Καλάυστας Καλάυστας Καλάυστας Καλάυστας Καλάυστας Καλάυστας Καλάυστας Καλάυστας Καλάυστας Καλάυστας Καλάυστας

See also: 1120; 1126; 1128; 1159, relief.
211 For the epithet *επιμανέστατος* see Dontcheva 2006, pp. 96-100.
212 *IGBulg* III, 1: 1145: *εμφανεστάτως θεός Ασκληπιώτης θεός Ασκληπιώτης θεός Ασκληπιώτης.*
There are also inscriptions thanking the god, who probably heard the requests and responded\(^{213}\). In one case Asclepius bears the epithet Αὐρήλιος Ϙάρστος (Ἀσκληπιός Ραστόντελος)\(^{214}\).

All of the above inscriptions are on the bases of statues that were offerings to the gods. There is also a group of votive reliefs with dedications to Asclepius and Hygieia\(^{215}\). On two occasions Asclepius is referred to as Οὔσαρας ὄλιφος a great god\(^{216}\):

\[
(\text{.reserve} \text{reserved words})
\]

On at least one occasion there is a theophoric name in an inscription\(^{217}\). Οὔσαρας ἄρστος \(\text{reserved words}\) Professions or other titles of the dedicants allow us to perceive the wide distribution of Asclepius\(\dot{\circ}\) cult through different social groups: Ως ἄρστος \(\text{reserved words}\), Λατρευτὸς ἄρστος \(\text{reserved words}\), Πασείνος \(\text{reserved words}\), Πασαένιος \(\text{reserved words}\), Ποσειδώνιος \(\text{reserved words}\), Ρασπευνος \(\text{reserved words}\), Σπάσυπηρας \(\text{reserved words}\), Ταταρηός \(\text{reserved words}\). As far as the origin of the names is concerned, there are the local Thracian: Αὐρήλιος \(\text{reserved words}\), Greek: Ησυχος \(\text{reserved words}\), Πραγματευτής \(\text{reserved words}\), Βενεφικάριος \(\text{reserved words}\), Roman: Ζειτράλις \(\text{reserved words}\), Αυρήλιος \(\text{reserved words}\), and even local names that have been Romanized: Οὔσαρας \(\text{reserved words}\) and \(\text{reserved words}\).  

**Statues:** Thirteen statues of Asclepius have been found in Batkun, with the bodies mostly preserved but the heads missing; there is only one marble head from a colossal statue and a marble head from a statuette. An interesting group of two statues is of the Chiaramonti type\(^{236}\). (pl. 8a) In both of them the head and the right arm holding the rod are missing. The god wears a cloak which is draped over his shoulders and his left arm. The left hand grasps the folds of the cloak, pulling them over the lower part of his body. The chest, right shoulder and upper abdomen are uncovered. The linea alba, navel, chest muscles and the curve of the ribs are carefully rendered.

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Asclepius and Hygieia appear together in inscriptions on statue bases in the following: *IGBulg* III, 1: 1154; 1135; 1136; 1137; 1138; 1139; 1140.

\(^{213}\) *IGBulg* III, 1: 1183.

\(^{214}\) *IGBulg* III, 1: 1185.

\(^{215}\) *IGBulg* III, 1: 1145 relief; 1154 relief; 1257 relief.

\(^{216}\) *IGBulg* III, 1: 1229, 1230.

\(^{217}\) *IGBulg* III, 1: 1150.

\(^{218}\) *IGBulg* III, 1: 1170.

\(^{219}\) *IGBulg* III, 1: 1116.

\(^{220}\) *IGBulg* III, 1: 1183.

\(^{221}\) *IGBulg* III, 1: 1183.

\(^{222}\) *IGBulg* III, 1: 1122, 1123.

\(^{223}\) *IGBulg* III, 1: 1150.

\(^{224}\) *IGBulg* III, 1: 1168.

\(^{225}\) *IGBulg* III, 1: 1129, 1152.

\(^{226}\) *IGBulg* III, 1: 1126, 1127.

\(^{227}\) *IGBulg* III, 1: 1124.

\(^{228}\) *IGBulg* III, 1: 1147.

\(^{229}\) *IGBulg* III, 1: 1142.

\(^{230}\) *IGBulg* III, 1: 1143.

\(^{231}\) *IGBulg* III, 1: 1146.

\(^{232}\) For the dedicators with Roman names in Thrace see Boteva 2007, pp. 75-89.

\(^{233}\) *IGBulg* III, 1: 1148.

\(^{234}\) *IGBulg* III, 1: 1149.

\(^{235}\) *IGBulg* III, 1: 1141.

\(^{236}\) Tsontchev 1941, p. 41 nos 8-9, also Dontcheva 2007, p. 175, pls. 6-7.
One statue of Asclepius is of the Giustini type\textsuperscript{237}; it lacks the head and the lower part of the foot, as well as the right hand. The main difference between these and the previous statues is the fact that the \textit{himation} leaves only a small part of the trunk uncovered. From another statue\textsuperscript{238} of Asclepius, of the Florence type, most of the lower part of the body, the head and the right hand are missing.

**Statue Groups:** A series of statue groups, three in total, which appear mainly in Batkun, is very interesting. In this series we have a free-standing representation of Asclepius seated, Hygieia standing and Telesphorus\textsuperscript{239}. The best preserved of these free-standing works portrays Asclepius on the left-hand side of the group, seated probably on a throne\textsuperscript{240} (pl. 8b). He is depicted in three-quarter view, though his head and the lower part of his body are missing; to his right stands Hygieia, her body covered by the long \textit{chiton} and \textit{himation}, while her right arm hangs downwards. The last figure portrayed is that of Telesphorus, who is standing on Asclepius\textsuperscript{241} left, beside the throne. Telesphorus is represented in the usual manner, his head covered with a cap. Another series of statue groups portrays Asclepius together with Telesphorus\textsuperscript{242}. The best preserved of these retains the lower part of a standing Asclepius together with the lower part of his rod, and a standing, though headless, figure of Telesphorus on his left\textsuperscript{243}. A series of four statues and statuettes of Hygieia portray the goddess in the well-known type from northern Thrace\textsuperscript{244}. Only one example of a statue of Telesphorus\textsuperscript{245} alone exists from Batkun, in which Telesphorus is represented in the traditional iconographic form, covered with the cowl hood (pl. 8c).

**Votive Reliefs:** In the sanctuary at Batkun were found the two well-known types of relief connected with Asclepius\textsuperscript{246} cult. The first type is one with a depiction of Asclepius, or Asclepius and Hygieia, or Asclepius, Hygieia and Telesphorus. On several of these reliefs there is an inscription with a dedication to the god. The second type depicts the Thracian Rider and bears inscriptions to Asclepius or to Asclepius and Hygieia\textsuperscript{247}. Reliefs of the first type are to be found on plaques of small dimensions (H: 0.25-0.30m W: 0.16-0.20m) with an arched top. The relief is shallow and the sculpture work of poor quality. In one example at Batkun, Asclepius is depicted standing in the Giustini

\textsuperscript{237} Dontcheva 2007, p. 174, pl. 5; for the Giustini type see \textit{LIMC} II, Asklepios, No 154-233. The Giustini type of Asclepius has been associated with the cult statue of Asclepius set up in the Asklepieion at Athens, in 420/19 B.C., mentioned by Pausanias (1.21.4.) Some authors originally attributed the original statue to the sculptor Alkamenes.

\textsuperscript{238} Tsontchev 1941, p. 42; see also Dontcheva 2007, p. 175 pl. 8. For the Florence type see \textit{LIMC} II Asklepios, No 145-152.

\textsuperscript{239} Tsontchev 1941, 34 no 9; 35, 11, 13; Dontcheva 2007, p. 176, pl. 9, 10, 11.

\textsuperscript{240} Statues portraying a seated Asclepius are not very common. There is a description by Pausanias of a statue of Asclepius at Epidaurus: “He (Asclepius) is seated on a throne, grasping a staff...,” Pausanias, \textit{Descriprio Graeciae} II, 27, 2. On the other hand, there are numerous reliefs showing Asclepius seated; for example, see the relief from Epidaurus dating to the second half of the 4th century B.C.: Ridgway 1966.

\textsuperscript{241} Telesphorus is represented together with Asclepius in four statue groups from Batkun; see \textit{IGBulg} III,1: 1133; 1171; 1172; 1182.

\textsuperscript{242} Dontcheva 2007, p.177, pl. 13.

\textsuperscript{243} Dontcheva 2007, p. 177, pls. 14, 15; Metropoulou 1984, pp. 23-25.

\textsuperscript{244} Tsontchev 1941, 35, No 22; Dontcheva 2007, p. 177, pl. 16. For the cult and iconography of Telesphorus in Thrace see, Dontcheva 2001, pp. 185-199, also Dontcheva 2001d, pp. 99-110.

\textsuperscript{245} There are inscriptions on both types of relief: \textit{IGBulg}, III, 1: 1183; 1185-1195; 1205; 1217; 1221; 1223; 1225-1232; 1236-1242; 1244-1249; 1257; 1259-1261; 1264-1266; 1268-1272; 1277.
type, but holding an egg, which he offers to the snake. In another votive relief Asclepius is portrayed standing en face, with his right hand extending a phiale towards an altar. In a third relief plaque with an arched top, Asclepius is shown standing on the left touching his rod, while on the right stands Hygieia with a snake coiling up her chest and wrapping itself around her hand, which is holding a phiale. In the middle of the representation, between the two gods and above the level of their shoulders, there is a depiction of Telesphorus in his common form.

Of the type of votive relief with the Thracian Rider, all the various types of representation of the Hero exist. On one rectangular plaque of small size with an arched top, the galloping rider is depicted hunting boar. On another votive relief with an arched top, the form typical of Thracian votive plaques, there is a depiction of the Thracian Rider holding a deer and accompanied by two dogs, while his horse is walking towards an altar.

**Reliefs of a galloping Asclepius:** Some Thracian Rider reliefs from Batkun form a separate group as they depict a galloping Asclepius in the usual type of the Thracian Rider. In one of these reliefs, which was first published by Dobruski in 1907, the Rider bears many similarities to Asclepius, especially in respect of the bearded face. This relief also has a dedication to Asclepius. Asclepius is depicted sitting on a walking horse, moving towards an altar and a tree with a phiale to his right hand.

**Finds connected with physicians:** From Batkun there is an inscription referring to the physician Athys, son of Spartokos. The physician's name is probably Thracian, though the inscription does not provide any other information about the healer.

### 2.04. The Sanctuary of Asclepius Zydenos at Varvara, Pazardzhik Vicinity

**Architectural Ruins:** At Varvara excavations have brought to light a rectangular building with a N-SW orientation (dimensions: 16 x 14 m, pl. 9a) which probably belonged to a sanctuary of the Thracian Rider or Asclepius.

**Inscriptions:** At Varvara the cult of Asclepius can be traced mainly in the evidence on inscriptions. The first inscription is on a small cylindrical altar (pl. 9b) and is a dedication of thanks to Asclepius by the veteran Aurelios Salbis, son of

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246 Dobruski 1907a: there are only a few representations of Asclepius offering an egg to the snake; see Karamitrou-Moschakis 2009, p. 62.

247 Dontcheva 2007, p. 178, pl. 17.

248 Dontcheva 2007, p. 182, pl. 22.

249 Dontcheva 2007, p. 186, pl. 27.

250 Boteva 2007, p. 77.

251 Dontcheva 2002, p. 320.

252 IGBulg III, 1: 1204.

253 Kirova 2010, p. 82.

254 Varvara lies in the foothills on the northern side of the western Rhodope Mountains, 20 km. west of Pazardzhik and about 55 km. west of Plovdiv (Philippopolis). There are mineral springs in the area.

For the antiquities of Varvara see Tsontchev 1940-1941, pp. 60-87.

255 There is an inscription with a dedication to Hero or to Asclepius Ζυδηνός, see, IGBulg III, 1: 1108:

256 Tsontchev 1940-1941, pp. 74-76.

257 H: 0.36 m.; D: 0.095 m.
Asclepius is referred to as Κύριος. On a statue base there is a dedication by a soldier, Aurelios Moukatralis, to Κύριος Asclepius: Αὐρήλιος Μουκατραλίς στρατηγὸς κυρίῳ / Ασκληπιῶι.

2.05. Serdica (Sofia) Region, The Sanctuary of Asclepius Koukounesos

There is evidence for the cult of Asclepius in the Serdica, with the god bearing the epithet Κουκουσσηνος as can be seen in an inscription in which Asclepius is also called Κύριος and προστάτης (protector):

STATUES: In the city there was a statuette of Asclepius that has been found.

COINAGE: From the coinage iconography we have a depiction of Asclepius standing with his usual attributes (from the reign of Lucius Verus, 161-169 A.D.), a depiction of Asclepius in front of a tetrastyle temple (Septimius Severus, 193-211 A.D.), and a portrayal of Hygeia standing, feeding the snake from a phiale (Julia Domna, wife of Septimius Severus). During the reign of Emperor Caracalla (198-217 A.D.) a great increase in the number of depictions of Asclepius in different types may be observed, as well as of Hygieia and Telesphorus. The variations include Asclepius standing, holding a serpent-entwined staff, with Telesphorus extending a hand towards him; Asclepius seated on the left, holding a phiale and his serpent-entwined rod; Asclepius and Hygeia standing, depicted with their customary attributes; Asclepius standing, resting on his serpent-entwined rod and holding an egg, while opposite the egg lies the serpent. From the reign of Geta (209-212 A.D.) we have a depiction of Asclepius seated on a throne, while from the reign of Galienus (253-268 A.D.) we have depictions of Asclepius standing, holding his serpent-entwined staff and Hygieia standing, feeding a snake from a phiale.

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258 IGBulg III, 1: 1101; see also Danov 1937, p. 201, pl. 180.

INSCRIPTION: Αὐρήλιος Σάλβιος
Μουκακένθος
βετοπάνος
κυρίῳ
Ασκληπιῶι
εὐχαριστήσα-ον.

259 IGBulg III, 1: 1103.

260 Ancient Serdica, which lies beneath the modern city of Sofia, was a Thracian settlement. In the late 1st century B.C. Serdica was conquered by the Romans. It became a municipium, or centre of an administrative region, during the reign of Emperor Trajan (98-117 A.D.) and was renamed Ulpia Serdica. The ancient city, which had mineral springs, developed an urban character during the 2nd and 3rd centuries A.D. The city had walls, public baths, a forum, a theatre and administrative buildings.

261 IGBulg IV: 1934.

262 Riethmüller 1999a, p. 334.

263 Moushmov no 4760.

264 Moushmov no 4783.

265 Moushmov no 4800.

266 Moushmov nos 4815; 4817; 4819; 4820.

267 Moushmov no 4921.

268 Moushmov no 4953.

269 Moushmov no 4968.
2.06. The Asklepieion of Asclepius Limenos at Slivnitsa

The sanctuary lies about 7 km. north-west of the town of Slivnitsa. During the excavations carried out between 1983-1985, in the rocky area around the sanctuary niches dug into the rock were discovered. The main find in the sanctuary was a temple measuring 7.10 x 6.50m., with a NW-SE orientation. The poor condition of the remains makes any attempt to reconstruct its façade impossible. Around the perimeter of the temple a number of deposit pits were excavated. A sacrificial altar was found in front of the temple, also in a poor condition, which also makes any reconstruction of its form and size impossible. Various architectural fragments, volutes and capitals were found scattered around the area. (pl. 10a)

The sanctuary is very close to a subterranean cave, which may be connected to the karst spring of Aldomirovo. It was probably founded in the middle of the 2nd century A.D., as is evident from coin finds from the reign of Antoninus Pius, and was in use until the early 4th century A.D. The latest coins are from the reign of Theodosius (408-450 A.D.).

Inscriptions: There are 36 inscriptions with dedications to Asclepius, though none to Hygieia. In almost all of the inscriptions Asclepius is called Ασκληπιός, as for example in the inscription, dated to the 2nd-3rd c. A.D., on the base of a statuette of a Thracian rider who holds a deer being attacked by a lion and a dog. In five of the inscriptions the god has the epiclesis Δήμητρα and in one relief is also called Δημήτριος Φειλείος, son of Diogenes, who dedicated an altar. We may assume that Pheileios was a bouleutes of the Boule at Serdica, as it is the closest city to the sanctuary.

In another inscription it seems that Asclepius responded to a paraclesis from Aurelius, who felt the need to erect a new building (a temple?) in the god’s sanctuary as a token of gratitude to him:

5

θεῷ ἐπηκῶν λειψανητῷ
Λιμηνῷ Πηλείῳ Δι-
γένου βουλευτής εὐξα-
μένος ἐπικαιρὰν τὸν βιομον.

Inscriptions:


SEG 49: 917; the inscription dates from the end of the 2nd to the beginning of the 3rd c. A.D.

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270 Slivnitsa lies about 32.5 km. north-west from Sofia, ancient Serdica.
271 For a description of the sanctuary see Boteva 1985a, pp. 23-36 and Boteva 2011, pp. 84-105.
272 For the inscriptions of Slivnitsa, see Tacheva 1999, pp. 152-170.
273 IGBulg V, 5705, SEG 49: 916:

There are at least ten cases in which dedicants dedicated a statue representing the god Asclepius to the sanctuary, usually on a base, and it is interesting that in one inscription the god is called Ἐξ θεοῦ, ὁ σωτήριος. Amongst these dedicants it is worth mentioning Aurelius Herakleides, son of Markos, who was a θεραπευτής Σωτήριος and Aurelius Hermogenes, who was a soldier of the second Parthian Legion (Legio Secunda Parthica).

**Statues:** From the sanctuary there are a significant number of statuettes of the Thracian Rider and marble statuettes of Asclepius, Hygieia, Telesphorus and others. One small bronze statuette is of Asclepius (pl. 10b).

**Votive Reliefs:** The finds include 180 plaque reliefs, many of which are partially preserved, while the majority bear depictions of the Thracian Rider. There are also reliefs of Asclepius, Hygieia and Telesphorus.

### 2.07. Other Sites in the Serdica Region

In Kostinbrod there may have been a sanctuary or temple where Apollo and Asclepius were worshipped together (pl.11a). From Dolni Pasarel there are

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277 SEG 49: 970, IGBulg V: 5708, dated to the 3rd c. A.D.
278 SEG 49: 915, IGBulg V: 5701, the inscription on a column fragment probably used as a statue base dates from after 212 A.D.
279 For dedications from Soldiers and Veterans to Asclepius, in the provinces of Lower Moesia and Thrace, see Boteva 2005, pp. 199-210. There are dedications from Auxiliary soldiers, Legionary soldiers, Beneficiarii, Praetorians and Veterans.
281 The reliefs of the Thracian Rider are 91 in total, the statuettes 37. The statuettes of Asclepius, Hygieia and Telesphorus are 17 in total, most of which are partially preserved. Even in the reliefs which are partially preserved it is possible to distinguish the well-known types of Thracian Rider relief.
282 H: 0.093m; W: 0.024m, Boteva 1985, p. 37, pl.16. These bronze statuettes had a wide distribution during late Roman times and are products of local workshops; for the various types see Comstock-Vermeule 1971; for similar examples from Macedonia see Kefalidou-Moschakis 1995, p. 41 pl. 4.
283 Boteva 1985, pp. 31-38.
284 IGBulg IV: 2018: see also Riethmüller 1999a, p. 332.
285 Dolni Pasarel is about 33.5 km. south of Sofia, ancient Serdica.
reliefs and statues of Asclepius and Hygieia, but the most important find is an inscription on a statue base where Asclepius has the epithet Στραμινηνίς, where Asclepius has the epithet Στραμινηνίς:  

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### 2.08. Beroia (Stara Zagora) Region

The most important finds from the Beroia region come from Carasura, while finds have also been discovered at Augusta Traiana (Stara Zagora), mainly in the form of inscriptions and coinage. On the base of a statue of Hygieia there is a dedication by Ασκληπιόδοτος. From Dobri Dol there is an inscription with a dedication to Asclepius by Aurelios Dinius, son of Asklepiades. From Starozagorski Bani we have a dedicatory inscription on a relief of Asclepius and Hygieia by a certain Kapetoleinos. From Vinarovo we have a dedication to Asclepius as δώτειρ υγείης, by a certain Moukianos.

### 2.09. Carasura (Rupkite)

Carasura was a station (mutatio) on the Via Militaris, the Roman road that ran from Singidunum (Belgrade) to Serdica (Sofia), Philippopolis, Adrianopolis, Byzantium (Constantinople) and then on to Asia Minor and the east. The site was favourable for the development of sanctuaries, mainly to serve the needs of travellers. Thus, in this area evidence has been found for the existence of sanctuaries of Apollo, Pluto, Asclepius and the Thracian Hero. Unfortunately, none of the evidence indicates if the above gods were worshipped at the same sanctuary or whether they had separate temples. The existence of the cult of Pluto, god of the Underworld, is very important, because we know that in the late Roman period Ploutoneia had become a kind of Asklepieion. Even if we are not sure of the existence of a sanctuary to Asclepius, finds from this area are very interesting and in some cases they can be considered unique.

**Inscriptions:** An inscription on a limestone plaque refers to the symposiastai, symposiasts, of the god Asclepius:

| αγαθή τύχη- |
| συντομοσαυτὶς |
| θεοῦ Ἀσκληπιῶι |
| Γεμανὸς Γεμανὸν |

5 Επιτηραλίς Μουκα(—?)
Κοτῆς Διάλος
Μουκατεραλίς Επτη(—?)
Ταρσας Σκέληνος
Πιπτος Σκέλων

10 Δολῆς Διεξέξεται(ος)
Μουκαβορίς> Αυλοῦ(—?)

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286 IGBulg IV: 2050.
287 Riethmüller 1999a, p.330; see also IGBulg III, 2: 1596.
288 IGBulg III, 2: 1700.
289 IGBulg III, 2: 1664.
290 IGBulg III, 2: 1641.
291 For the Roman road system in Thrace see Madzarov 2009.
292 Dontcheva 1988c, p. 147.
293 Rizakis-Touratsoglou 1999, p. 952
294 IGBulg, III, 2: 1626; see also Dontcheva 1988c, pp. 148-149, pl. 1.
The inscription is very important because it informs us of the existence of a *thiasos*, a kind of worshipping society. We know that the offering of ritual meals during festivities in honour of Asclepius was a common practice. In the *Aσκληπιείον* of Athens ritual meals were held in the building to the west of the god’s sanctuary. These ritual meals may have been connected with the *Theoxenia* that we know were celebrated at Epidaurus and possibly at Athens. During the *Theoxenia*, worshippers left one of the beds full of food for the god. We know of the existence of one society of worshippers at Thessaloniki, who are referred to as *τίθεμεν τῶν θεοτόκων* and probably organised and participated in the celebrations for the god. We can conclude that the twelve *symposiastai* of Asclepius from the inscription from Carasura organised sacrifices and *symposia*, feasts, in the god’s honour.

In another inscription from Vinatrovo, near to Carasura, Asclepius is addressed as *τίθεμεν τῶν θεοτόκων*. Finally, mention should be made of the inscription on a limestone plaque in which Asclepius and Hygieia are addressed as *τίθεμεν τῶν θεοτόκων*.

**Statues:** Of the other finds worth mentioning, the marble head of a statue of Telesphorus (H. 0.13m) is of good quality and may have belonged to a group of statues of Asclepius, Hygieia and Telesphorus.

**The Relief with a depiction of the Thracian Rider, Asclepius and Hygieia**

(pl.11b)

As has already been mentioned, the finds of the Carasura area, albeit few in number, are exceptionally interesting because of the information they provide about the cult of Asclepius. A particular find from Izvorovo near Carasura in the municipality of Chirpan, reinforces our view. It is a relief, which is now on display in the Archaeological Museum of Plovdiv (Philippopolis). On this relief we have a depiction of the Thracian Rider, Asclepius and Hygieia. As far as its construction is concerned, this relief differs from all the others found in Thrace depicting the Thracian Rider or the healer gods. The plaque is unusually long, probably so as to give a better depiction of the scene. On the right-hand side of the relief there is a representation of the Thracian Rider moving calmly towards an altar, which is in the centre of the scene. Next to the altar stands Hygieia, in the well-known type, and beside her stands an Asclepius of the Este type. The only difference in this depiction of Asclepius is that he is extending an egg to the snake and not a phiale. The iconography of the relief is very important in providing evidence of the connection between the worship of the Thracian Rider (a local hero-god) and the healer gods.

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295 Riethmüller 1999, p. 139.
296 Riethmüller 1999, p. 139 and for Athens see Beschi 1969, p. 399.
297 For the *Oeοχέλεια* see Jameson 1994, pp. 35-57.
299 *IGBulg*, III, 2: 1641.
300 *IGBulg*, III, 2: 1628, see also Dontcheva 1988c, p. 151, pl. 3.
301 Dontcheva 1988c, p. 152, pl. 4.
302 The name of the site, Izvorovo, implies the existence of a spring.
2.10. Sliven Region, The Sanctuary of Asclepius at Kabyle

Kabyle was established during the occupation of Thrace by Philip II, and became an important commercial centre in south-eastern Thrace. The city was conquered by the Romans in 71 B.C. and a few decades later became part of the Roman province of Thrace.

Architectural Ruins: During the excavation of Basilica 1 in Sector X of Kabyle, sections of walls were found, in a poor state of preservation. The best-preserved section of wall is constructed with mortar and has a length of 5.10m and width of 0.80m. Because of the fragmentary state of the building it has not proved possible to identify its use.

Inscriptions: Amongst the other finds from Kabyle it is worth mentioning a partially preserved relief with Asclepius and Hygieia and a dedication by the soldier Βαλέρις. From Kabyle we also have one of the few examples of a Latin inscription to Asclepius in Thrace: Asclipi et Igia sacrum.

Statues: The finds from the excavation are connected with the cult of Asclepius and Hygieia. For example, there is a good-quality marble statue of Asclepius of the Eleusis type (pl. 12a), though the head, the left hand with the rod and the lower part of the legs are missing. Another good-quality marble statue of Hygieia (pl. 12b), with missing head and parts of her hands, was found together with the statue of Asclepius and it is possible that both of them were made by the same sculptor and belonged to a statuary group. From Kabyle comes another statuette of Asclepius, missing head, rod and lower part of the legs.

Votive Reliefs: A rare find of a relief on a base was also discovered. Unfortunately, this relief preserves only its lower section, although an altar and part of a snake entwined on a tree can be recognised. The base bears the inscription Νάρκισσος Ζήνονος εποίει, which gives us the name of the sculptor, Narkissos, son of Zenon.

Finds connected with Physicians: At Kabyle the name of a physician, ιητρός Άλεξανδρος son of Dilaes, has been preserved on an altar from his tomb. During the excavations of ancient Kabyle medical instruments were also found.

2.11. Pautalia Region

The most important sanctuaries in the region of Pautalia are those at Pernik (Daskalovo) and in the city of Pautalia (Kyustendil). There are also indications of Asclepius’s cult at Dolna Dikanya, where an inscription has been found dating from the 2nd to 3rd century A.D. on a relief with a depiction of the Thracian Rider in front of...
an altar and a serpent-entwined tree\textsuperscript{312}; the inscription includes a dedication to Asclepius by Beithys, son of Dizazeneos\textsuperscript{313}, who wishes for success, though unfortunately he does not specify in what matter (pl. 12c). From Germania (Sapareva Banya) there are some inscriptions on Thracian Rider reliefs with dedications to Asclepius\textsuperscript{314}, dating from the 2nd to 3rd c. A.D. From Peshtera there is a Thracian Rider relief with a dedication to άγ αύ Ήγιεια Ἅγεια by Gaianos, son of Gaio\textsuperscript{315}. From Spinopara (Konyavo) there is an inscription with a dedication to Asclepius άτ Άτ. The inscription includes a list of 21 names (3 of them are missing) of neokoroi\textsuperscript{316} of Asclepius Temple\textsuperscript{317}. In Sandanski was found an interesting relief representing Asclepius, Hygieia, Telesphorus and Panacea\textsuperscript{318}.

2.12. The Asklepieion of Asclepius Keiladenos at Pernik (plates 13a-b, 14a)

Architectural Ruins: The sanctuary at Daskalovo, in the Pernik region, is one of the best preserved sanctuaries of Asclepius in Thrace. The sanctuary is of a rectangular shape surrounded by walls with dimensions 25.70m x 28m. The entrance to the sanctuary is on the west side and on its east side lays a temple measuring 5m x 5.4m. The temple was divided into two parts, pronaos and cella. The excavators found some architectural remains, mostly of the columns in the temple façade and we have a hypothetical reconstruction of the building ground-plan, showing a tetrastyle prostyle temple\textsuperscript{319}. To the north and west of the temple, and parallel to the wall that enclosed the sanctuary, a number of column bases were found. It is likely that the enclosure wall was also lined, on its inner side, by a kind of stoa. According to one view\textsuperscript{320}, which seems to have been accepted by other authors as well\textsuperscript{321}, one of these porticoes might have been used as an abaton. In front of the temple the foundations of a sacrificial altar were unearthed. Along the north and south stoas and near the temple votive plaques, altars, statue bases and statues were found.

Inscriptions\textsuperscript{322}: In most of the inscriptions Asclepius' name is accompanied by the epithet Κειλαδεηνος\textsuperscript{23}; Κειλαδεηνος Άσκληπαιος Κειλαδεηνος or Άσκληπαιος Κειλαδεηνος, with various spellings: Κειλαδεηνος Κειλαδεηνος Κειλαδεηνος Κειλαδεηνος Κειλαδεηνος Κειλαδεηνος Κειλαδεηνος. Oppermann believes that this name also refers to the cult of the Thracian Rider\textsuperscript{324}. Asclepius is invoked as άγ in two inscriptions\textsuperscript{325}. In one of

\textsuperscript{312} LIMC II, Asklepios (In Thracia), p. 900, L. 31.
\textsuperscript{313} IGBulg IV: 2134.
\textsuperscript{314} IGBulg IV: 2206; see also Riethmüller 1999a, p. 331.
\textsuperscript{315} IGBulg IV: 2137.
\textsuperscript{316} Neokoroi are also attested in the Asklepieion of Delos and in Termessos, see Riethmüller 1999a, pp. 338, 387.
\textsuperscript{317} IGBulg IV: 2192.
\textsuperscript{318} Dontcheva 2003c, p. 97.
\textsuperscript{319} Boteva 2011, p. 92.
\textsuperscript{320} Szubert 1990, p. 411.
\textsuperscript{321} Kirova 2010, p.137.
\textsuperscript{322} Apart from the inscriptions mentioned in the text, there are also the following inscriptions on statue bases or reliefs with a dedication to Asclepius or Hygieia or Telesphorus: Reliefs: IGBulg V: 5786; 5787; 5795; 5798; 5799; 5800; 5801; 5803; 5804; 5810; 5821; 5823; 5824; 5837; 5839; 5840; 5842; 5843; 5844. Statue bases: 5788; 5789; 5790; 5791; 5792; 5793; 5796; 5797; 5818; 5822; 5823; 5841; 5853; 5850(?); 5856(?).
\textsuperscript{323} IGBulg V: 5787 relief; 5802 relief.
\textsuperscript{324} Oppermann 2006, p.175.
the inscriptions Asclepius has the epithet ἀγαθή τύχη. The inscription, which dates to 231 A.D. and is written on a statue base, concerns the dedication of a statue to Ἀριέλος Ηραγένης Asclepius by Aurelios Heragenes, a bouleutes of the city of Serdica.\(^{327}\):

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ἀγαθή τύχη.
κυρίῳ Ἀσκληπιίῳ Κο[υλ]-
κοινωνίᾳ Κειλαίεωσί[νῳ]
Αἰχή[νας] - Ἡσαγένης Ἡράνου [β(ουλευτής)]
5 τῆς Σερδικῆς πόλεως[ε]
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Finally, it is worth mentioning that, amongst the names of those making dedications to Asclepius, there also a number of local names, such as Moukazenis Dizatraleos\(^{328}\), Aulouzenis\(^{329}\). It is also significant that there are Roman soldiers amongst the dedicants giving thanks to Asclepius, such as Aurelios Markianos\(^{330}\) and Aurelios Silbanos\(^{331}\). In one case there is a dedication in the name of the glorious (Roman) army by Ailos Moukianos\(^{332}\).

**Reliefs:** The syncretistic fusion of Asclepius and the local Thracian Rider is very obvious in the sanctuary at Daskalovo in the Pernik region, where there are a great number (over 120) of reliefs and statues of the Thracian Rider. On many of these reliefs there is also an inscription with a dedication to Asclepius. Most of these reliefs are small in size. On one relief plaque with a triangular top\(^{333}\) the Thracian rider is depicted galloping towards an altar, while on the ground there is a crawling snake; above and below the relief there is an inscription\(^{334}\) (pl.14b). Another example worth mentioning here is a relief plaque with an arched top\(^{335}\), with small sections missing. The Thracian Rider is hunting with a raised spear, accompanied by a running dog, while there is an inscription on the frame above and below the relief\(^{336}\).

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\(^{326}\) *IGBulg* V: 2125.

\(^{327}\) Aurelios Heragenes offered several statues and reliefs with a dedication to Asclepius. In another inscription on a statue base Heragenes thanks the god Asclepius, probably for his help: *IGBulg* V: 5815:

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θεῷ Ἀσκλήπιῳ Ἡραγένης
Ἡράνου - β(ουλευτής) - εὐχαριστήριον.
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\(^{328}\) *IGBulg* V: 5825.

\(^{329}\) *IGBulg* V: 5824.

\(^{330}\) *IGBulg* V: 5818.

\(^{331}\) *IGBulg* V: 5819.

\(^{332}\) *IGBulg* V: 5855; 5856.1:

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eιδέαν δεκατίας δύο φορών τόδε σοί, Ἀσκληπιίῳ, 1 εὐδαι-
menoς Αἱλιος Μουκίανος Κάρρου χαριτωμέν τῷ θεῷ - α-νέθεσαι θείων.
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\(^{333}\) H. 0.45m W. 0.23m: see Oppermann 2006, p. 176, no. 396, also Boteva 2007, p.77, pl.1.B.

\(^{334}\) *IGBulg* V: 5807:

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κυρίῳ Ἀσκληπιίῳ
Πότ[σιος] - Καλποσ[φνος] - Μίλων
ανέθικεν
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\(^{335}\) H. 0.37m W. 0.27m: see Oppermann 2006, p. 176, no 399, also Boteva 2007, p. 77, pl. 2.

\(^{336}\) *IGBulg* V: 5808:

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κυρίῳ Ἀσκληπιίῳ
Καλποσ[φνος] Μίλων
εὐχαριστήριον.
```
worth mentioning the votive plaque relief with a triangular top and depiction of the Thracian Rider galloping with a spear towards an altar and a serpent-entwined tree.\footnote{IGBulg V: 5806, SEG 30.722, also Boteva 2007, p. 77, pl. 1.A.}

2.13. The Asclepieion of Asclepius Pautaliotes-Skalpenos at the City of Pautalia (Kyustendil)

The city of Pautalia (Kyustendil) is located near a complex of thermal springs in the Strymon valley. The city took its name from these springs. A sanctuary to Asclepius, probably along with one to Apollo, was located on the hill of Hissarlak, where, during the fourth century A. D., the city fortress was built.\footnote{Ivanov 1919-1220, pp. 66-124.} The city was laid out over the lower part of the Hissarlak hill and today lies under the modern town of Kyustendil. The Roman baths of Pautalia were constructed during the 2\textsuperscript{nd} to 3\textsuperscript{rd} centuries A.D., with construction probably commencing during the reign of Antoninus Pius (138-161 A.D.). The baths are considered to be the second largest Roman baths in Bulgaria after those of Odessos as their built area was approx. 3000 sq. m. The complex included six buildings supplied with a hypocaust internal heating system. A total of six areas have been investigated within an area of 1000 sq. m. All of these areas were equipped with a central heating system with columns and an arch-vault system of corridors. Among the ruins of the baths the \textit{apoditerium}, \textit{frigidarium} and \textit{tepidarium} have been identified.\footnote{Ivanov 1919-1220, pp 68-69.}

The sanctuary on the Hissarlak hill and the sanctuary in the city of Pautalia

Even though there are no architectural ruins, coins from the reigns of Septimius Severus, Geta and Caracalla give a very good view of a \textit{tetrastyle temple} on a wooden hill, and another \textit{tetrastyle temple} at the foot of the hill. On the coins are also depicted three more shrines. Even though a temple has never been found in the city of Pautalia, as the new town is built on top of its ruins, Kirova believes it very likely that a temple of Asclepius existed there, as votive reliefs with dedications to Asclepius and other gods have been found and some Corinthian-style architectural fragments in a Christian basilica might have belonged to a Roman temple. Kirova also argues that the existence of a sanatorium in the city was necessary for the patients that could not reach the top of the Hissarlak hill, where the main sanctuary of Asclepius was situated.\footnote{Kirova 2010, pp. 138-139.} This suggestion is also supported by other archaeological finds which show that the sanctuary of Asclepius extended over the slopes and the summit of the Hissarlak hill, and a part of the architectural complex was set apart at the foot of the hill, although it was not completely separated from the town in the valley.

The main sanctuary on the Hissarlak hill included shrines of various gods and probably a sanatorium. The complex was constructed in the 2\textsuperscript{nd} c. A. D. and remained in use during the third c. A.D. The \textit{Asklepieion} in Pautalia, together with the other temples which were constructed in the vicinity, played an important role in the city’s transformation into a religious centre.

An indication of the sanctuary’s development into a health centre, connected with the use of the therapeutic thermal springs, is the find of bronze surgical instruments in a
tumulus at Dragodan, a district near Kyustendil, dated to the 2nd c. A. D. Another assemblage of various medical instruments in a bronze case was found at the village of Kotchenirovo, near Kyustendil, also dated to the 2nd c. A. D.\(^{341}\).

**Statues:** During the excavations sculptures of Asclepius were found, as well as of Apollo, Zeus and Hera. The dedications to Asclepius, Hygieia and Telesphorus on the statue bases are numerous, amounting to 15 in total. It should be added that there are also dedications to Zeus, Hera, Hercules, Dionysus, Hermes, Artemis and the Thracian Hero.

**Votive Reliefs:** The votive reliefs in Pautalia share the same iconography as other sanctuaries of Asclepius. Most common are the reliefs with the depiction of the Thracian Rider and a dedication to Asclepius, Hygieia and Telesphorus. The second most common type of relief consists of those with representations of Asclepius (pl. 14c), Asclepius with Hygieia, or in only one example in Asclepius with Hygieia and Telesphorus (pl. 15a).

**Inscriptions:** There are inscriptions with dedications to Asclepius as \(\varepsilon \varepsilon \varepsilon \varepsilon \varepsilon \varepsilon \gamma \delta \gamma \gamma \delta\)\(^{1}\) or Asclepius \(\varepsilon \varepsilon \varepsilon \varepsilon \varepsilon \varepsilon \gamma \gamma \gamma \gamma \gamma\)\(^{2}\), [κυρίῳ Ἀσκληπιῷ Σκαλπήνῳ], and also with dedications to Asclepius and Hygieia\(^{3}\).

**Coinage:** The coinage of Pautalia\(^{345}\) constitutes a special case as there is an impressively large number of issues depicting Asclepius and the other healing gods. The coins of Pautalia also preserve an image of the city Asklepieion and a number of other shrines. In one case the Emperor Septimius Severus appears together with Asclepius holding a crater. The earliest coins are from the reigns of Antoninus Pius (138-161 A.D.): Asclepius in a temple-Hygieia-Telesphorus-Asclepius and Hygieia; Marcus Aurelius (161-180 A.D.): Asclepius in a temple-Telesphorus-Asclepius and Hygieia in a temple-snake; Lucius Verus (161-169 A.D.): Asclepius-Hygieia in a temple-snake; Commodus (180-192 A.D.): Asclepius in a temple-Hygieia-Telesphorus-Asclepius and Hygieia, and Telesphorus-snake; Septimius Severus (193-211 A.D.): Asclepius in a temple-Hygieia-Asclepius and Telesphorus-Asclepius and Hygieia-snake-Asklepieion of Pautalia and other temples, and the Emperor with Asclepius; Geta (209-211 A.D.): Asclepius in a temple-Hygieia-Telesphorus-Telesphorus and Hygieia-snake-Asklepieion of Pautalia; Caracalla (198-217 A.D.): Asclepius-Hygieia-Telesphorus-Asclepius and Hygieia-Asclepius and Hygieia and Telesphorus-snake-Asklepieion of Pautalia (obverse legend: AVT Κ Μ ΑΥΡΗ ΑΝΤΩΝΙΩΝ ΣΚΑΛΠΗΝΟΥ; obverse description: laureate head right; reverse legend: ΟΥΣ ΨΗ ΤΥ ΨΗ ΤΥ; reverse description: figure within a tetrastyle temple set on a wooded acropolis; below, figure standing in a tetrastyle temple, figures in distyle shrines on

\(^{341}\) Grigorova 2000, pp. 238-249.  
\(^{342}\) IGBulg IV: 2065  
\(^{343}\) IGBulg IV: 2100  
\(^{344}\) IGBulg IV: 2059; 2061  
\(^{345}\) Kirova 2010, pp. 242-244.
either side of acropolis; to right at ground level, statue grouping consisting of three figures standing (pl. 15b).
3. The Cult of Asclepius and Hygieia in the Lower Moesia
   Epigraphic Evidence and Archaeological Finds (map 6)

3.01 Cities in Lower Moesia: On the coast of Lower Moesia and in the ancient Greek cities Istros and Kallatis there is evidence for an early cult of Asclepius during the Hellenistic period in the 3rd and 2nd centuries B.C. The cult is also attested in the Greek colony of Tomis. In Lower Moesia the greatest centre of Asclepius’ cult, at least on the evidence of the archaeological finds, is in Glava Panega. Another important city where there is evidence for the cult of Asclepius is Nicopolis ad Istrum, together with the fortress of Novae.

There are also indications of the cult at Barboshi, Ispërhi, where there is an inscription on a Thracian Rider relief, Lilyache, inscription, Lipnitsa, inscription to ΄έγειρειν Asclepius on a Thracian Rider relief, Madara, Marcinopolis (Reka Devnya), inscriptions and a great number of specialized medical instruments (pl.15c), Medovina, inscription to ΄έγειρειν Asclepius, Montana (Mihailovgrad), Vicus Trullensium (Kunino) inscription with a dedication to Asclepius ΄έγειρειν (healer) Telesphorus and Hygieia:

ἀγαθὴ τύχη. I
Ασκληπιῶ Παιάνι
Τελεσφόρῳ ἕθε Τυγεία I
Μάρκελλος τήνδε
χάριν ἐθέμην. I
ἐυτυχῶς.

3.02. Istros (Histria)

At Istros there is early evidence confirming the cult of Asclepius in the form of an inscription dated to the 3rd c. B.C., which is a dedication to Asclepius by Apollonides. In another inscription dated to the 2nd c. A.D. there is a dedication to Asclepius with the name ΄έγειρειν.

**Coinage:** Caracalla (198-217 A.D.): Asclepius-Hygieia-Telesphorus.

**Inscriptions referring to healers:** An inscription of the 2nd c. B.C. provides us with information about Diokles, son of Artemidoros, a doctor who arrived in the city from Cyzicus. He held several lectures in the gymnasium in an effort to

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346 Riethmüller 1999a, p. 334.
347 IGBulg II: 779.
348 IGBulg II: 485.
349 Riethmüller 1999a, p. 335.
350 Riethmüller 1999a, p. 335.
351 IGBulg II 774; 763; 779.
352 Kirova 2002, pp. 73-94.
353 IGBulg II: 763.
354 Riethmüller 1999a, p. 335.
355 IGBulg II: 504.
356 ISciM I: 124: [Ἀπο]λλωνίδης [- - - -]
[Ἀσκληπιῶ Περγάμην] εἰς Χαριστήριον
[- - - - Ηρακλείδης] [- - - -]

�示ῃ τύχη.
Ασκληπιῶ
Περγάμην
Σαβεινίων.

357 ISciM I: 135.
358 Kirova 2010, p. 254.
359 ISciM I: 26.
demonstrate his abilities and also with the aim of attracting clients. From the inscription it is obvious that the doctor was invited to the city by the demos, probably with the aim of improving local medical care. An inscription dated to the second half of the 2nd c. A.D., which was carved in honour of the city's benefactress, refers to the organisation of physicians serving the community. The right for physicians to associate was recognised by decrees promulgated by Augustus and Vespasian.

3.03. Θallatis (Mangalia)

In Kallatis relatively early evidence exists confirming the cult of Asclepius and Hygieia in the form of an inscription containing their names, which also mentions the names of Dionysus, Hermes, Pan, Nymphae and Apollo, and is dated to the 2nd c. B.C. In an earlier inscription from the late 3rd c. B.C., concerning the construction of a temple, there are, amongst others, the theophoric names of Asklepiades, father of Simos, and the name Asklepiodoros. In an inscription dated 238-244 A.D. we have the theophoric names of Ιερωνύμου and Ηρέωνος. In an earlist inscription from the late 3rd c. B.C., concerning the construction of a temple, there are, amongst others, the theophoric names of Asklepiades, father of Simos, and the name Asklepiodoros. In an inscription dated 238-244 A.D. we have the theophoric names of Ιερωνύμου and Ηρέωνος. In an earlist inscription from the late 3rd c. B.C., concerning the construction of a temple, there are, amongst others, the theophoric names of Asklepiades, father of Simos, and the name Asklepiodoros. In an inscription dated 238-244 A.D. we have the theophoric names of Ιερωνύμου and Ηρέωνος.


3.04. Tomis (Costanta)

During the construction of a building in Constanta a group of statues and reliefs were discovered which is known as the treasury of sculpture. Amongst those of other divinities there is a statue of Asclepius. The statue lacks the right hand with the rod. Asclepius is presented with short hair and a beard, bending his left leg. Amongst the statues there is also one depicting the snake Glycon, which is associated with Asclepius. The snake Glycon is an artificial creation of the false prophet and healer Alexander. Alexander started an oracular and mystery cult at Abanoteichos, which became widespread. The snake Glycon is usually represented with a head vaguely resembling that of a dog or sheep, long hair, human ears and a lion's tail, and is considered to be a reincarnation of Asclepius. The snake sculpture of Tomis is considered to be one of the few surviving iconographic documents.


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360 IScM I: 57.
361 Aparaschivei 2010, p. 146.
362 IScM II: 48, B.
363 IScM II: 35.
364 Alexandrescu-Vianu 2009, pp. 27-46
365 Alexander arrived at Pella where he bought the snake, see Chrysostomou 2002, p. 114, for the life of Alexander see also, Grimm 1988, pp. 169-181.
366 Alexandrescu-Vianu 2009, p.4, fig. 11. For representations of Asclepius and Zeus Meilichios as a snake, see Mitropoulou 1977, pp. 190-195.
Hygieia; Gordian III (238-244 A.D.): Asclepius-Hygieia; Philip I (244-249 A.D.): Asclepius and Philip II: Asclepius-Hygieia.

3.05. Nicopolis ad Istrum

Nicopolis ad Istrum was founded by Trajan, amongst other cities, after his victories over the Dacians circa 101-106 A.D. The city was established at the confluence of the Iatrus and Rositsa rivers, on the northern borders of Thrace and Lower Moesia. 367

Statues: The most important find from Nicopolis ad Istrum that demonstrates the existence of Asclepius's cult is a statue of the god (pl. 17a). This statue, is one of the largest to have been found in Thrace as it is 1.83m high and its base 0.05m. The head, the right hand and the lower part of the leg are missing. A distinctive feature of the statue is the existence of two series of scrolls (ειλητάρια) connected by a ribbon at the base of the statue, where the left foot should be. The statue was found at a distance of 1 km to the north of the city’s forum, in a rectangular building with an inner courtyard with porticoes, Dontcheva believes that a sanctuary to Asclepius may have existed in this part of the city. 369


3.06. Novae (Svishtov)

Novae, near the modern town of Svishtov, on the Danube, evolved into a strategically important station for the Roman defence system in Moesia Inferior as a fortress of the Eighth Augustan Legion and later of the First Italic Legion. Excavations of the fortress have brought to light the headquarters building (principia), baths (thermae), the officers' residence, granaries (horrea), water tank, cavalry barracks and one of the largest known military hospitals (valetudinarium) from the Roman period. 371

Military Hospital (valetudinarium) (pl. 18): The building was constructed at the end of the first c. A.D. and remained in operation until the first half of the 3rd c. Its external measurements were 81.90 x 72.90m and it had an inner courtyard with porticoes. Two series of rooms lay around the courtyard. 372

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367 For the position and foundation of the city see Ruscu 2007.
370 Dontcheva 1999, pp 170-171, pl. 1, 2, 3, 6, 8, 9. See also Kirova 2010, pp.255-256.
371 For the plan of the fortress see Sarnowski and others 2008, p. 154, fig.1. For the excavations at Novae, see Dyczek and others 2001.
372 For the organization of a Valetudinarium and the positioning of corridors with the rooms see Siegwart 2011, p. 18. For the organisation of Valetudinarium at Novae, see Dyczek 1997, pp.199-204 and Dyczek 2005, pp. 871-879.
The Sacellum of Aesculapius (pl. 19)

In the centre of the courtyard there was a sacellum dedicated to Asclepius (Aesculapius) and the healing deities. The small temple measures 2.46 x 2.60m. It was elevated on a low podium with steps leading up to the interior. There was a low wooden screen between the two columns in the front portico. The finds include a base that probably belonged to the columns of the façade. The height of the small temple, including the podium and the roof, would have been about 4m. Amongst the ruins inside the structure were found pieces of the original decoration, fragments of painted plaster with an indefinite polychrome pattern, bunches of grapes and small Corinthian capitals. Construction of the temple was begun in the late 1st c. A.D., as is evident from the coins that were found during the excavation and were in use until the reign of Caracalla, when the hospital was abandoned.373

Altars: In front of the sacellum was found the foundation of an altar and in front of it other altars, some of them bearing inscriptions.

Statuettes: A marble head of an Asclepius statuette and two silver statuettes, one of Hygieia and one of Asclepius, were found. The Hygieia statuette bears a Latin inscription on its base.

Inscriptions: There is one inscription in Greek with a dedication to Ἄσκληπιος by a certain Diodoros. An inscription to Ὑγίαια 374 is dated to the 2nd c. A.D. and another one to Ὑγίαια Σακρομ 375, dated to the first half of the 3rd c. A.D. Another inscription has a dedication to Aesculapiet ον Ὑγίαιας legio I Italica 376. It is worth mentioning that there are also many inscriptions with dedications to the local god Sabazios and other deities377.

3.07. The Sanctuary of Aesclepius Saldenos at Glava Panega, Lovec Region

At Glava Panega378 there is one of the most important sanctuaries of Asclepius, together with strong evidence for the existence and operation of an Asklepieion 379. At Glava Panega Asclepius was worshipped under the epithet Ἄσκληπιος as is shown by the great number of inscriptions380 on reliefs with the common depiction of the Thracian Rider or representations of Asclepius and Hygieia.381. There is an impressive number of different spellings of the epithet Ἄσκληπιος with variants occurring in almost every inscription: Ἄσκληπιος Σαλδηνος382,
Asklepiou, Saldoosso, and the Asklepiou, Saldoosso are found, but there are no sanctuaries at these locations. As far as the etymology of the epithets Asklepiou and Asklepiou, Dobruski suggests that the compound derives from the Greek words άβυσσος or Dorian. It should be pointed out that the ancient Greek word άβυσσος or Dorian means canyon or forested valley. The word άβυσσος may also be connected with this. The sanctuary is in fact located in a long, deep forested valley, and there also many caves and springs rising to the surface through a system of underground caves. It should also be borne in mind that salus (σάλος) means health in Latin, but we cannot be sure of its connection with Asclepius's epithet.

**Architectural ruins:** During Dobruski's excavations in 1903, two buildings from the sanctuary were uncovered, Dobruski identified them as a temple and a sanatorium (pl. 20). The temple is a rectangular building, relatively small, measuring 5.70 x 7.70m. The building's entrance has been found, but there are no traces of its internal form. The second building is long, measuring 10.57 x 5.20m. This building probably served the needs of the pilgrim-patients that were staying at the sanctuary.

**Inscriptions:** On two of the inscriptions Asclepius has the epiclesis of a god: ὅ(ενο) ἕπικομον Σαλδοοσον. The most common form of epiclesis is άιος: τοιῷ Άσκληπιον Σαλδοοσον or τοιῷ Άσκληπιον τε Ύγεια, while in one instance he is invoked as άιος and άιος τοιῷ ἕπικομον Σαλδοοσον Άσκληπιον. In seven inscriptions Asclepius is mentioned together with Hygieia: Άσκληπιον or Άσκληπιον and Ύγεια. The god is also mentioned in a dedication with Artemis: Άσκληπιον και Ύγεια or Άσκληπιον και Ύγεια. The god is also mentioned in a dedication with Artemis: Άσκληπιον και Ύγεια. The god is also mentioned in a dedication with Artemis: Άσκληπιον και Ύγεια. From these inscriptions it is also worth mentioning the dedication to άιος ὅς Μεστριάνος κυρίῳ Άρτεμιος Σαλδοοσον. The sanctuary.

**Statuettes:** A large fragment of a seated Asclepius statuette exists, which lacks the head, right foot and right hand (pl. 21a). The statuette probably belonged to a group of statuettes including the figures of Hygieia and Telesphorus because it is in the same style as these found at Batkun.

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383 IGBulg II: 512.
384 IGBulg II: 521.
385 IGBulg II: 526.
387 Dobruski 1907, pp. 5-7.
388 IGBulg II: 530; 526.
389 IGBulg II: 514; 519.
390 IGBulg II: 517.
391 IGBulg II: 522.
392 IGBulg II: 515; the other inscriptions are IG Bulg. II: 514, 520, 527, 529, 549.
393 IGBulg II: 566, Artemis is mentioned in some more inscriptions from the sanctuary.
394 IGBulg II: 569 Aphrodite is also mentioned in some more inscriptions from the sanctuary.
395 IGBulg II: 587.
396 LIMC II, Asklepios (In Thracia), p. 898, L. 6; see also Dobruski 1907a, p.39.
**Votive Reliefs:** The largest category of finds from the sanctuary consists of reliefs, numbering 126 in all, many of which must have been left around the temple walls. These reliefs can be divided into categories according to their iconography and inscriptions. Glava Panega has one of the most comprehensive collections of votive reliefs, which can provide us with a good general idea of the cult of Asclepius and his syncretistic fusion with the local Hero, the Thracian Rider.

**Reliefs depicting Asclepius:** The first and largest category of votive reliefs consists of those with only a depiction of Asclepius and a dedicatory inscription. Some of these are of very good quality, with a deep relief and fine details. To this category belongs a relief where Asclepius is depicted with long hair and beard and a thick body; his right hand proffering an egg to the snake\(^\text{397}\) (pl. 21b). There is a dedicatory inscription at the top and below the relief. Unfortunately, the quality of work on this relief is not repeated in the others. Another relief with a depiction of Asclepius has a shallow relief and a few work details. Asclepius has short hair and a thick but unaccentuated body and his right hand holds the rod, which is tilted to the side (pl.21c). There is a dedicatory inscription at the top and below the relief\(^\text{398}\).

**Reliefs depicting Asclepius, Hygieia and Telesphorus:** The second, also large, category of votive reliefs consists of those representing Asclepius, Hygieia and Telesphorus, most of which have dedications. The quality, as in the former category, also varies from indifferent to good. On these reliefs Asclepius stands in the middle of the representation, with Hygieia in her common type standing on his right feeding the snake and Telesphorus in his usual type standing on his left. Of especial interest is an arched upper relief plaque of fine workmanship. Apart from the gods, serpents are also depicted in great detail and deep relief\(^\text{399}\) (pl. 22a). In two cases in this category Asclepius is depicted standing at the right-hand side of the representation, while Telesphorus is in the middle and Hygieia is on the left\(^\text{400}\).

**Thracian Rider:** A third category consists of several reliefs with a depiction of the Thracian Rider and an inscription with a dedication to Asclepius. In this category we have a relief with a dedication\(^\text{401}\) to the \(\theta\varepsilon\varepsilon\omega\ \varepsilonπηκων\ Σαλτοβυση\). It is a votive plaque with an arched top portraying the Thracian Rider holding a deer which is being attacked by a lion and a dog. The scene is supplemented by a depiction of a vessel pouring liquid and two standing women; in addition, there is a frieze with animals fighting. On another votive plaque with an arched top a galloping Thracian Rider is portrayed hunting a boar, with an altar and an entwined snake in front of him\(^\text{402}\) (pl. 22b). On a rectangular relief with a dedication to Asclepius, the Thracian Rider

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\(^\text{397}\) Dobruski 1907, p. 34, pl. 7.  
\(^\text{398}\) Dobruski 1907, p. 35, pl. 8.  
\(^\text{399}\) Dobruski 1907, p. 43, pl. 16.  
\(^\text{400}\) Dobruski 1907, p. 46, pl. 18,19.  
\(^\text{401}\) IGBulg II: 530.  
\(^\text{402}\) Dobruski 1907, p. 61, pl. 32.
rider is portrayed moving towards an entwined snake and a woman\textsuperscript{403} (pl. 23a). A fourth category, or subcategory, consists of reliefs with the representation of the Thracian Rider but without a dedicatory inscription to Asclepius or any other god. The iconography of the Thracian Rider in these plaques is no different to that in the other categories mentioned above.

\textsuperscript{403} Dobruski 1907, p. 68, pl. 40.
PART D

1. The Cult of Asclepius and Other Healing Deities in Thrace and Lower Moesia:
   Researching a Phenomenon

1.01. The Organisation of the Asklepieia

As was mentioned earlier, Asclepius’ cult became widespread, notably after Thrace had become a Roman province. This can be seen in the pre-existing cities on the Thracian coast, such as Mesembria and Odessos, the re-established cities, such as Philippopolis Serdica and Kabyle, and the newly-founded cities, such as Nicopolis ad Istrum and Pautalia. During the same period Asclepius’ sanctuaries experienced significant development in both suburban and rural areas such as Batkun, Slivnitsa, Pernik and Glava Panega. Because of the existence of these rural shrines, we are able to form a relatively clear picture of the organisation, function and development of the sanctuaries and the Asklepieia. Unfortunately, it is impossible to form a similar picture of the urban sanctuaries and Asklepieia, as most of these cities continued to be inhabited, and so far the excavations of these sites have been limited and incomplete.

Of the suburban or rural sanctuaries, the Asklepieion of Asclepius Keiladenos at Daskalovo in the Pernik region gives us the clearest picture of a sanctuary’s construction and function. The sanctuary is surrounded by a rectangular wall, with its entrance on the west side. On the east side of the sanctuary was the temple of Asclepius and, in front of it, the altar. Porticoes within the enclosure wall probably served as areas for hosting the pilgrims, sanatorium, or as abaton and εγκοιμητήριον. Roughly the same configuration can be seen in the sanctuaries at Slivnitsa and Glava Panega.

Altars have been found at Slivnitsa (in situ in front of the temple and in a poor condition), Batkun (with dedications to Asclepius), Varvara (with one dedication to Asclepius) and Pernik. Altars have also been found in several other places, though without any trace or ruins of a sanctuary or temple.

Statues and statuettes of Asclepius have been found in all of the sanctuaries of Asclepius in Thrace and at the same sanctuaries there are often statues of Hygieia and, less frequently, of Telesphorus. Three interesting free-standing groups of statues come from Batkun, and are probably the only sculptural works in Thrace where Asclepius is represented seated. The usual type for the sculptures of Asclepius is the well-known Graeco-Roman type and most of the sculptures in this category are of the Este and Giustini types. The statues of Hygieia are, likewise, of the well-known Graeco-Roman type, in which the goddess is portrayed standing and feeding the serpent from a phiale. The same applies to the statues of Telesphorus, which are very few in number. The number of statue bases probably exceeds that of the statues themselves and almost every one of them carries a dedication to Asclepius, Hygieia, Telesphorus or even other gods.
Votive reliefs are the most common type of find in the sanctuaries or elsewhere. There are two kinds of relief. The first category consists of reliefs that depict Asclepius, Hygieia and Telesphorus, and these usually also have a dedication to god. They rarely exceed 0.35m in height and 0.30m in width. Most of them have an arched top and a frame used for the inscription above and below the relief. The relief is usually shallow and of poor quality, although occasionally the quality of the sculpture may be considered very good. As far as the iconography is concerned, we have depictions of Asclepius (in the common types mentioned above); Hygieia; Asclepius and Hygieia; and Asclepius, Hygieia and Telesphorus. The other large category of reliefs consists of those of the Thracian Rider, with or without a dedicatory inscription to Asclepius or other gods.

1.02. The Thracian Rider

The image of the Thracian Rider is dominant in all Thracian sanctuaries, at least during the second and third centuries A.D. Although the number of reliefs depicting the Thracian Rider is huge, amounting to almost 3000, the forms of the reliefs and their iconography are very limited. The plaques rarely exceed 0.30m in height and 0.40m in width. The majority of them have an arched top and a frame surrounding the relief. This frame is used for the votive inscriptions. The basic scene consists of a depiction of a rider, turned to the right, seldom to the left. His horse is either galloping, walking, or standing still. According to the rest of the iconography, the reliefs are grouped into categories by type, or even subcategories.

In the first type, Type A, the rider is depicted on a walking or standing horse, facing a woman or an altar or a snake-entwined tree. Sometimes there is a combination of the three: thus the rider can be facing an altar and a serpent-entwined tree, or a woman and an altar, or a woman, an altar and a serpent-entwined tree. In some cases in this category, there is more than one female figure. In one special case, the Thracian Rider is depicted standing in front of an altar, Asclepius and Hygieia. This case will be discussed in more detail below as it is directly connected with the cult of Asclepius.

404 The notion of “Le Cavalier Thrace” was introduced by A. Dumont in 1876; see Boteva 2011, p. 85. In the English bibliography we find the terms ‘Hero Equitans’, ‘Thracian Horseman’ and ‘Thracian Rider’. Boteva believes that the basic difference between the Hero Equitans and the Thracian Horseman is that the Hero Equitans comes from a long Greek tradition on the funerary reliefs and the Thracian Horseman is a local variation or Thracian “invention”, which appears mainly on votive reliefs, and had a wide distribution for about two centuries; see Boteva 2011, p. 99.

405 For Type A see Oppermann 2006, pp. 8-30, nos. 1-339.


408 Oppermann 2006, nos. 11, 14.


410 Oppermann 2006, no. 84.
In the second type, **Type B**, the Thracian Rider is depicted galloping on a horse while hunting a boar, usually accompanied by a dog\(^{411}\). Very often the scene is supplemented by the image of an altar (in most cases), a woman, a snake-entwined tree or a combination of these. A variation of this type, which appears on several reliefs, is the Thracian Rider with a raised spear without any additional image\(^{412}\).

In the third type, **Type C\(^{413}\)**, the Thracian Rider is depicted returning from a hunt, carrying a deer. There are many variants of this type and it may be regarded as a sub-type of Type B\(^{414}\). In this third type the basic scene is enriched with multi-figure compositions or accompanied by reliefs on frames with hunting scenes\(^{415}\).

In the inscriptions the Thracian Rider is called θεός, ήρως, κύριος θεός, κύριος ήρως, as well as Apollo, Asclepius, Hephaistos and the Dioskouroi. He also has several other names and epithets, such as Karabasmos, Manimazos, Vetespios, Aularchenos, Aulosadenos and Pymeroulas, which seems to have a local use\(^{416}\). Despite the large number of the finds and the evidence they provide, it seems that they have not yet been able to answer a simple question that has preoccupied researchers for some time, namely the question of the origin and nature of the Thracian Rider. Even though the identity of the Thracian Rider is still unknown, at least some aspects of his origin have been documented. The prevailing view, held by most researchers, is that the Thracian Hero originates in the Greek tradition of the herois dead. Some scholars have also interpreted certain rider reliefs in Macedonia as the prototypes of the Thracian Rider\(^{417}\), while others have proposed that this tradition spread to central and northern Thrace, along the Aegean and Black Sea coasts of Thrace\(^{418}\).

In Greek tradition the cult of the herois dead can be traced back to the eighth century B.C. and there are even indications of a Mycenaean origin through the cult of the dead\(^{419}\). In the Homeric epics we have a description, in full detail, of the descent of Odysseus into Hades (Νέκυια) and his sacrifices to the ghosts of the dead. Farnell maintains that these offerings clearly indicate a form of worship\(^{420}\). We can see that Homer himself was willing to admit the possibility of a mortal becoming divine and immortal; thus Hercules becomes part god and part ghost and the Dioskouroi demigods. Homer knew that there was a cult of Achilles, but in his work allows Achilles merely to occupy a position of superiority and power amongst the shadows of the dead\(^{421}\). Farnell concludes that Homer knew about the Hero cult and

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\(^{411}\) Oppermann 2006, pp. 31-67, nos. 340-879.

\(^{412}\) Oppermann 2006, nos. 800, 801, 802, 804, 808, 811.

\(^{413}\) Oppermann 2006, pp. 68-75, nos. 880-1036.


\(^{415}\) Oppermann 2006, nos. 894, 897, 917.


\(^{417}\) Petsas 1978, pp. 192-204.

\(^{418}\) Koukouli-Chrysanthaki, Malamidou 1989, p. 554, with some references to the previous Greek bibliography.


\(^{421}\) Farnell 1996, p. 31.
the occasional deification of the dead, but it is not obvious if he accepted this practice\textsuperscript{422}. Of all the numerous heroes in Greek mythology, some were worshipped once as θεοί and in other times and places as θεοερώτημα\textsuperscript{423}. Their myths can also have a divine origin or simply spring from a human heroic type. The heroised dead possess the attributes of a local hero, who, even from his own grave, can wield a benign or destructive power. During the Hellenistic period this practice became very widespread, and it was common for a city to decide to honour and worship a dead man, which resulted in his becoming a hero. These heroes are usually connected with a specific area and possess an epithet that declares the name of the place or a quality\textsuperscript{423}. It is clear that the image of the heroised dead man, usually depicted with or mounted on a horse, had already reached the Thracian hinterland by the Hellenistic period, as a few finds show. In our opinion, the reason for the amazing dissemination of the cult of the heroised dead in the Thracian hinterland during the last few centuries of Roman rule has still not been satisfactorily explained.

1.03. Thracian Tradition: The Case of Zalmoxis and Rhesus

It has been widely accepted that the image of the heroised dead was attractive to the Thracians. The Thracians were preoccupied with beliefs in immortality and the way to attain it\textsuperscript{424}. A very well-known literary account comes from Herodotus\textsuperscript{425}: In this text Herodotus describes what he heard from the Greeks who lived in the Black Sea concerning the religious beliefs of the Thracians and the Getae and their god Zalmoxis\textsuperscript{426}; These peoples claim to be immortal and they show it in their belief that a dead person goes to the god Zalmoxis or Gebeleizis, as some of them call him. Every five years they send an envoy, chosen by lot among them, to Zalmoxis, informing him each time of their needs. After this, Herodotus describes the way in which the envoy is chosen: he has to pass a survival test in which spears are thrown at him. Plato also discusses Zalmoxis and the Thracian methods of healing in Charmides\textsuperscript{427}, where Socrates talks about the state of medicine in his day and mentions Thracian physicians and their belief in Zalmoxis and his ability to make people immortal. The Thracians refer to Zalmoxis as their king, who is a god. Pomponius Mela gives more information, considering the Thracians as savage individuals who delight in meeting the dead. Some of them believe that the souls of the dead return; others believe that

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{422} Farnell 1996, p. 31.
  \item \textsuperscript{423} Burkert 1993, p. 428.
  \item \textsuperscript{424} Ustinova 2004-2005: pp. 41-46.
  \item \textsuperscript{425} Herodotus 4.94.
  \item \textsuperscript{426} Eliade 1972, pp. 257-302.
  \item \textsuperscript{427} Plato, Charmides, 156D-157B.
\end{itemize}
they (the souls) do not perish, even if they do not return, while others believe that souls die, which is better than if they continued to live. For this reason some lament birth and newborn babies; in contrast, burials have a festive character and are celebrated like sacred rites with songs and games\(^{428}\). Regarding the life of Zalmoxis, Porphyrius\(^{429}\) states that the Greeks who live near the Hellespont and the Pontus say that Zalmoxis had been a slave of Pythagoras. When he returned home to Thrace, he built a hall (\(\text{ἐνδρεών}\)), feasted there with the most illustrious of his countrymen and taught that neither he nor they or their descendants would die. In the meantime Zalmoxis built himself an underground chamber, and lived in it for three years. In the fourth year he returned to the Thracians, who had been mourning for him during his absence, and managed to persuade them that he had died and risen again. Strabo\(^{430}\) states that Zalmoxis, after he was released by Pythagoras, arrived in the land of the Getae and managed to impress them with his mantic talents. In the end, he became a priest of the Getae\(\text{'s gods until he himself was also declared a god. He lived in a cavernous mountain, which became sacred. Strabo also}\(^{431}\) includes Zalmoxis with Amphiaraus, Trophonius, Orpheus and Musaeus, who were famous for their mantic and thaumaturgic powers.

Ustinova believes that the high priest of Zalmoxis was his substitute on earth and that a belief existed that Zalmoxis endowed his priests with the power of healing, and they were known as physicians\(^{432}\). Aside from any kind of connection with, or influence on, the Thracian cult, the myth of Zalmoxis and his immortality corresponds with the myth of Asclepius, who was the first to succeed in resurrecting a dead person, thus attaining the pinnacle of healing power, something which could not have escaped the attention of the gods.

In the tragedy of Rhesus, traditionally attributed to Euripides, when the Muse, mother of Rhesus, king of Thrace, learns about his death, she declares that he will not go under the earth but that he will live as a spirit in human form (\(\text{ἄνθρωποδαίμων}\), 'man-god\(\)). The Muse also says that Rhesus will inhabit a subterranean cavern somewhere in Mt. Pangaeum for eternity and that he is going to be a prophet of Bacchus. Philostratus gives an account of the Rhesus cult\(^{433}\), presenting Rhesus as a hunter, warrior and horse-bredener. Rhesus was considered a healer, like Zalmoxis, and he removed the pestilence from the mountain where he lived. The lack of evidence for the cult of Rhesus and the wide distribution of the cult of the Thracian Rider has led some scholars to propose, tentatively, that they should be identified as the same god\(^{434}\). In this direction, Liapis discusses the etymological origin of the name Rhesus, for which he proposes the meaning of ὄρδου with the Thracian Rider.

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\(^{428}\) Pomponius Mela, *De Chorographia* 2.18.
\(^{429}\) Porphyrius, *Vita Pythag.* 14.
\(^{430}\) Strabo 7.3.5.
\(^{431}\) Strabo 7.67.
\(^{432}\) Ustinova 2009, p. 270.
\(^{433}\) Philostratus, *Heroicus*, p. 680.
\(^{434}\) Liapis 2011, p. 98.
usually being addressed as θεός or θέαντας. Taking one step further, Liapis believes that the Thracian Rider’s (Hero’s) appellations evince a special connection with the healing gods Apollo and Asclepius, as both of them possess healing powers.

1.04. The Syncretism between Asclepius and the local Thracian Rider or Hero.

Regardless of whether it is possible to accept the Thracian Rider’s identification with Rhesus, or the long, domestic tradition of the immortal healer Zalmoxis, the cult of Asclepius Ἰ also as Apollo Ῥ found fertile ground in which to grow. We have already mentioned the inscriptions on the reliefs of the Thracian Rider, where the latter is called θεός, θεός, θεός, θεός, θεός, θεός, θεός, ἠρως, κύριος, κύριος, κύριος, θεός, and also Apollo, Asclepius, Hephaistos and Dioskouroi. Even more curious is a relief of the Thracian Rider with an inscription addressed to the Nymphae.

This coexistence or fusion of the local Thracian Rider and the Greek gods, especially Asclepius, supports the theory of syncretism, which is very clear in the following finds. On one (or perhaps more than one) relief from Glava Panega, Asclepius is portrayed on a galloping horse with a crawling snake by the horse’s hooves. Almost the same representation exists on a relief from Batkun, the difference being that the mounted Asclepius holds an entwined-serpent staff in which the serpent is depicted with a beard (pl. 23b). It is very obvious that the sculptor has taken the characteristics of the two gods and fused them together.

On the other hand, this reality is more questionable and at the same time more interesting in the plaque relief from Chirpan. In this relief the Thracian Rider, depicted on a calmly walking horse, faces an altar with a burning fire, while in his right hand he holds a phiale. Beside the altar stand Hygieia and Asclepius, portrayed frontally. There is no inscription on the relief but the representation itself is strikingly clear. A first reading of the representation suggests that there is a distinct role for the gods included in this synthesis. Both the Thracian Rider and Asclepius are depicted separately, accompanied by their symbols. It is obvious that the dedicant had a clear understanding of the gods’ different natures and roles.

Studying these two different options, Dontcheva has concluded that at the urban sanctuaries the Graeco-Roman tradition prevailed, a fact evident in the more formal Hellenistic iconography, while in most of the remoter rural sanctuaries Asclepius’ cult was more closely connected with that of the Thracian Rider, chiefly in the form of the Great God, Saviour and Healer. We personally believe that the archaeological finds and inscriptions undoubtedly testify to the existence of Asclepius’ cult in the sanctuaries of the Thrasian Rider and vice versa. However, in almost every case the differences between the two gods are conspicuous as Asclepius always displays the characteristics that are familiar in Greek art and, most importantly, brings together all those distinct properties which helped the establishment and diffusion of his cult.

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Conclusions

1. The Cult of Apollo Iatros in the Northern and Western Black Sea regions.

The cult of Apollo arrived on the Black Sea coasts at the same time as the Milesian colonists. His cult spread immediately and in a large number of cities came to occupy a dominant position in relation to the other cults. Amongst the numerous powers and attributes that characterised the god in the Greek world, for some reason the colonies on the western and northern shores of the Black Sea, amongst other epithets, also chose that of Ἰητρός, Ιetros or Ἱατρός, Iatros (healer).

A question of great significance is exactly in what capacity Apollo was worshipped as Iatros; that is to say, whether the god was worshipped as a doctor, a healer of the diseases that afflict mankind, or in a more general way, as a god with a generally apotropaic function, a god who banished any miasma (defilement or pollution) that might strike the city. It looks as if Apollo fulfilled both of these roles and may have combined them in himself. If there are several other cases in which the god was worshipped for similar attributes in the Greek world, and such cases have already been mentioned in the introduction, this specific case was encountered in the bibliography as a remarkable and almost unique phenomenon.

In the Greek world, from the 5th century B.C. onwards, many of Apollo’s sanctuaries gradually came to include temples of Asclepius and eventually took the form of Asklepieia. The joint worship of the father and the son was very common from the 4th century B.C. until the late Roman period. In this direction, it would be interesting to determine whether some of the sanctuaries of Apollo Iatros functioned as oracles and evolved into Asklepieia over the course of the centuries.

Searching in this direction, we know that there are certain features that can characterise the organisation of a sanctuary as a place of treatment. Those places which are recognised as Asklepieia function according to specific rules. Besides the altar and the temple, the most important place is the abaton or egkoimeterion. The egkoimeterion is the place where the patient has a metaphysical experience and is given the opportunity to take indispensable advice for his healing directly from the god, or even to feel his miraculous touch. The only precondition for this is that one should have fulfilled all the ritual requirements and been cleansed before entering the room where one was going to sleep while awaiting the god’s appearance. Of course, it is very important to research the political and economical circumstances in which these cities adopted the cult of Apollo Iatros. Equally important is the nature of their relations with the islands of the Aegean and the Greek mainland during the

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436 In the majority of inscriptions, the god’s epithet is written in the Ionic form Ἰητρός. This form was in use until late antiquity, mainly in epigrams; see Karamitrou-Moschakis 2013, p. 17.
437 Evidence of these places are the inscriptions expressing requests and thanks, the offering of reliefs with representations of cured parts of the human body, and even propagandistic stories about miraculous healings.
centuries following colonisation, in order to see whether conditions were ripe for this kind of development.

At Olbia, where two great sanctuaries of the god Apollo have been unearthed, there are indications of the way in which these sanctuaries were organised, including sacrificial altars, water cisterns and a *hestiatorion*, probably for the ritual meals. Even if all these structures were to constitute an *Asklepieion*, there is no evidence that they formed part of the sanctuaries of Apollo Iatros and Apollo Delphinios. Asclepius himself appears in the city's religious life in the 3rd c. B.C., judging from the archaeological finds and the existence of a later temple from the Roman period.

At Panticapaeum, there have survived architectural remains of a sanctuary to Apollo Iatros. Evidence of its possible development exists in the form of an inscription dating from the 4th c. B.C. which refers to the two gods together: *[Ἀπόλλωνι καὶ Ἀσκληπιῷ].* At Panticapaeum the local aristocracy was directly connected with the cult of Apollo Iatros, a fact that is clearly evident in inscriptions showing that its eminent members served as priests in the god's temple. The cult was probably exploited for political purposes by the Spartocid kings as a means of strengthening the union of the cities of Cimmerian Bosporus under their dynasty.

The case of Apollonia Pontica is very important because the cult of Apollo Iatros has the longest proven history as the god is mentioned on an inscription dating from the 1st-2nd c. A.D. Unfortunately, due to the continued habitation of the sites where evidence of the cult has been found, excavations have been unable to reveal many details of the organisation of the sanctuaries there. At Apollonia there is no evidence for Asclepius's cult as the god appears only on the coinage of the second quarter of the 2nd c. A.D.

Concerning Apollo's attribute as Iatros, in our opinion the answer should be sought in Olbia. In the first settlement on Berezan Island we have the earliest evidence for the cult and also clear evidence of an attempt to establish it as the dominant cult after the construction and reconstruction of the Western Temenos at Olbia. This attempt lasted for almost eighty years and was never abandoned, even when the cult of Apollo Delphinios gained predominance in the city. At Olbia the cult arrived from Miletus, where the god was worshipped as Oulios, which basically has the same meaning as Iatros. This probably excludes the existence of the cult of Apollo Ietros at Miletus, for which there is no evidence anyway. Thus, it seems that the differentiation between *Oulios* and *Ietos* derives from a decision made by the first settlers of Berezan Island, who may have sought to indicate their distinction from the metropolis through this slight change. There are a number of views regarding the reasons for this differentiation, including the view that the cult of Iatros was suggested

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439 See the section on the cult of Asclepius in Olbia, in this paper.
440 For the inscription and its attempted restoration see the section on the cult of Asclepius in Panticapaeum, in this paper.
by the oracle at Didyma\textsuperscript{441}, and the view that the cult was influenced by indigenous beliefs. Ustinova supports the latter view, stressing the Greek knowledge of Thracian and Scythian beliefs on immortality and the healing abilities of the Thracian and Scythian gods\textsuperscript{442}. In contrast, Rusjaeva maintains that in the first stadium of the Greek settlements in the area there is no evidence of any cultural interaction with the indigenous people. The same author also observes that the ’invisible’ Scythian gods, who lacked an anthropomorphic form, were distinctly unlike the humanised and idealised Greek images of gods\textsuperscript{443}.

It is obvious that the first generations of settlers in the Northern Black Sea region would have to face privations and a radically different climate from the one they had known in their homeland, a fact that is evident in the existence of dug-out houses. The mortality rate would have increased greatly at first and then probably took a few decades to level off. Within this frame, the adoption of the cult of Apollo Iatros, could be considered as an expected one.

2. The cult of Asclepius and Hygieia in the Black Sea region

In any search for evidence of the presence of Asclepius and Hygieia in the cities of the northern Black Sea region, it soon becomes obvious that there are two phases in the development of the cult. During the first phase, which can be clearly traced in Chersonesus, Olbia and Panticapaeum, the cult was introduced into these remote northern cities during the 4\textsuperscript{th} century B.C. This fact is very important if we take into account the fact that the cult was introduced into Athens only in the late 5\textsuperscript{th} century B.C., in about the year 420-419. This at least is a sign of strong cultural relations between the cities of the northern Black Sea region and the Greek islands and mainland. Moreover, the existence in Olbia of statues of Asclepius and Hygieia that are connected with the school of Skopas and the school of Alexandria or the physician Eukles from Tenedus, who lived and worked in Chersonesus, corroborate this. There is no evidence from this first period concerning the organisation of temples or sanctuaries to Asclepius. In the graffiti at Panticapaeum which refers to Apollo and Asclepius, there is a possibility or suspicion that the two gods coexisted in the same temple, maybe in a pre-existing temple of Apollo, but this is only a hypothesis that needs to be verified by excavation finds. During the Roman period and especially after the 1\textsuperscript{st} century A.D, the cult reappeared, a fact for which there is strong evidence, such as the inscription of Iulianos, whose reconstruction or repair of the temples of the sanctuary and the stoa benefited the city of Olbia. This act could in itself be regarded as strong evidence of the difficulties that the city had faced in the past.

At Panticapaeum the god’s temple is mentioned by Strabo, yet there is also a rural sanctuary on the Temir Gora, near natural springs. Stratodemos’ inscription confirms the common ritual practices that existed in the territories where the cult had spread.

It is surprising that the expansion of the cult in the cities of the northern Black Sea region does not seem to have been very wide since, apart from the small number

\textsuperscript{441} Vinogradov-Rusjaeva 1980, p. 30.
\textsuperscript{442} Ustinova 2011, pp. 265-278.
\textsuperscript{443} Rusjaeva 2007, p. 95.
of finds, there are also many Greek cities that are absent from the list mentioned above. This absence raises questions as we know that Apollo's cult was widespread in the area, in which Apollo was not only worshipped as Ιατρός 'healer'. We also know that the cult of Asclepius was welcomed in pre-existing sanctuaries of Apollo. An attractive explanation would be that the intense and particularly dynamic tradition of Apollo's cult allowed no room for the newly-arrived god of medicine to become established. This could be a logical explanation for the important growth of Asclepius's cult in the Dorian Chersonesus, but in any case there is no firm basis for this hypothesis, in terms of archaeological or any other kind of data.

As for the cult of Asclepius and Hygieia in the Southern Black Sea region, it is a fact that all the evidence dates from Roman times. It is impossible to say if this is so because of the lack of excavations and archaeological finds or because the cult really was introduced into the region at such a late period. We may suppose that because of the region's proximity to the Greek world it is rather unlikely that the cult was unknown during the Hellenistic period, not to mention earlier. During the Roman period, the cult can be found at both urban and rural sites in the region, presenting the same characteristics as those it displays in the rest of the Greek world under Roman domination.

Asclepius's cult spread throughout the region of Thrace, chiefly during the second and third centuries A.D., as a phenomenon that was particularly associated with local tradition and the influences of Graeco-Roman culture. The uniqueness of the Thracian sanctuaries lies primarily in the coexistence of the Thracian Rider with gods from the Greek pantheon, including Apollo, Asclepius, Dionysus, the Dioscuri and others. As far as Asclepius is concerned, his cult was practised in an area extending from the coast of Odessos to the region north of the Rhodope range and the valleys of Western Thrace. A common feature in all those areas where sanctuaries to Asclepius have been found is the existence of natural, and in many cases, healing springs. In most cases, during the Roman era thermae were built near these cities and very often these functioned alongside the sanctuaries to Asclepius, or perhaps even in conjunction with them.

This unique phenomenon of the wide diffusion of the cult of Asclepius and Hygieia in Thrace and Lower Moesia does not appear to have been repeated in the neighbouring regions, where the cult was evidently accepted to a lesser degree by the local population. The inscriptions to Asclepius and Hygieia, some of which have been presented in this paper, approach, or may even exceed, 500 in number. In contrast, the number of inscriptions from Macedonia, including those from both Hellenistic and Roman times, barely amount to 50. The difference is even greater if we compare Thrace and Lower Moesia with their neighbouring regions. The same disproportion is also clear in the case of the votive reliefs, but perhaps most importantly of all, is most clear in the case of the Asklepieia. Even though archaeological excavations have shed little light on this subject and the Thracian Asklepieia appear to have been less organised than the Asklepieia known in the Greek world, we cannot ignore the huge influence that they must have had on the local population. The names and professions of the dedicants testify to the acceptance of the healing gods by all social classes, although the majority of the dedicants held public office or possessed greater financial power as a result of their profession. The healing gods appear to have been equally accepted by all sections of the population, regardless of origin, as the inscriptions give
us a mosaic of Thracian, Greek, Roman and Romanised names. Inevitably, this wide
distribution leads us to conclude that Asclepius' cult was politically promoted.
Summary

Healing Gods: The Cult of Apollo Iatros, Asclepius and Hygieia in the Black Sea Region

The subject of this Master’s thesis is the cult of Apollo Iatros, Asclepius and Hygieia in the Black Sea region. The area and the chronological frame encompassed by this study are particularly broad and the material on which it is based is somewhat uneven, chiefly because of the different directions that archaeological research has taken in the various Black Sea countries. As far as the area is concerned, this work initially covers the Greek coastal cities of the Black Sea and, where required, is extended to include the cities of the hinterland, not all of which were founded by the Greeks. This is obvious in the case of Thrace and Lower Moesia, which occupy a large part of this work, as the manifestations of Asclepius and Hygieia’s cult in these areas are considered to be unique. As far as the chronological frame is concerned, the work covers a period extending from the first appearance of the cult of Apollo Iatros in the Northern Black Sea region in the 6th century B.C. until the early 4th century A.D., when the remaining sanctuaries of Asclepius fell into decline and were abandoned.

Apollo’s cult was particularly prevalent in the Black Sea region because of the Milesian origin of most of the colonies. The cult of Apollo Iatros had also succeeded in establishing itself in several cities in the Northern Black Sea region, such as Olbia, Panticapaeum, Hermonassa, Myrmekion and Phanagoria, and in the Western Black Sea region in Apollonia Pontica, Istros and Tyras. In Olbia, a temple of Apollo Iatros had existed since as early as the second quarter or the middle of the 6th century B.C. and in Panticapaeum. There seems to have been a sanctuary of the god on the acropolis already in the Archaic period.

The cult of Asclepius and Hygieia in the northern Black Sea region, can be traced back to quite an early date, as there are finds from the 4th c. B.C. The most important centres of the cult were probably Chersonesus, Olbia and Panticapaeum. Additional, in Olbia can be noticed a significant development of the medicine in the late 4th century B.C. and after.

Asclepius’s and Hygieia’s cult spread throughout the region of Thrace, chiefly during the second and third centuries A.D., as a phenomenon that was particularly associated with local tradition and the influences of Graeco-Roman culture. It is obvious that Asclepius’s cult became widespread, notably after Thrace had become a Roman province. This can be seen in the pre-existing cities on the Thracian coast, such as Mesembria and Odessos, the re-established cities, such as Philippopolis Serdica and Kabyle, and the newly-founded cities, such as Nicopolis ad Istrum and Pautalia. During the same period Asclepius’s sanctuaries experienced significant
development in both suburban and rural areas such as Batkun, Slivnitsa, Pernik and Glava Panega. Because of the existence of these rural shrines, we are able to form a relatively clear picture of the organisation, function and development of the sanctuaries and the Asklepieia.
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