

THE ODRYSIAN RIVER PORT NEAR VETREN, BULGARIA,  
AND THE PISTIROS INSCRIPTION

Zofia Halina Archibald

An unusual archaeological site dating to the pre-Roman Iron Age of Thrace was discovered in 1988 in fields belonging to the municipality of Septemvri in central Bulgaria. Traces of architectural remains, including a paved highway, flanked by stone and brick buildings (Figs. 1-2), lead to an imposing gateway and fortification wall (Figs. 3-4), representing the eastern periphery of an urbanised settlement, planned in the manner of Mediterranean towns. These remains overlie a terrace which rises above the flood plain of the River Maritsa, the ancient Hebros, within the territory of Vetren, a picturesque village nestling in the foothills of the westernmost chain belonging to the Sredna Gora range (Figs. 5-6). The excavations conducted on these remains, directed by the late Professor Mieczyslaw Domaradzki, on behalf of the Institute of Archaeology, Sofia, with the active support of the municipal authorities in Septemvri and Vetren, celebrated their first decade in April 1998 with a symposium (co-sponsored by the French School of Archaeology in Athens), which reflected the scope and variety of the research carried out by an international team of scholars<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> Papers read at the symposium concerning the Pistiros inscription are published in volume 123 (1999) of *Bulletin de Correspondence Hellénique*. Those relating to Vetren and other sites are published separately (Domaradzka/Bouzek/Rostropowicz 2000). In view of the large number of forthcoming papers, which will specifically address textual matters, I will confine my discussion in this paper to archaeological and historical issues. Excavations at Vetren from 1988-92 were conducted and directed by M. Domaradzki. In 1992 agreements were signed providing for scholarly collaboration between the Institute of Archaeology, Sofia, on the one hand, and the University of Bradford, UK, on the other, with Tim Taylor of Bradford (1992), and Zofia Archibald (1992-95), formerly of University College London, leading the British team. The Bulgarian team was also expanded to include Gavrail Lazov, Curator of Antiquities at the National Archaeological Museum, Sofia (who was at that time engaged on excavations at the nearby town of Belovo), and Daniela Katincarova-Bogdanova of the Regional Archaeological Museum, Pazardjik. In 1994 the international team was joined by another contingent, from Charles University, Prague, under the direction of Prof. Jan Bouzek. Collaboration between the aforementioned parties and individuals continued under a new agreement, which came into effect in 1995, but Bradford was now replaced by the University of Liverpool as the British academic institution sponsoring research.

I ca 20 ] IKL/  
 I ca 12 ] ΔΕΝΝΥ...Η εἰ δὲ.  
 [4 ἀμνύε]σ τὸν Διόνυσον καὶ  
 [4]ὀφειλέτω· ὁ τι ἂν δέ τις τῶν  
 5 [ἐμ]πορίτων ἐπιτελέη· ὁ δ' ἑταρος τ-  
 [ῶν] ἑτέρου κρινέσθαι αὐτοῦς ἐπὶ τ-  
 [οῖς] συγγενέσι καὶ ὅσα ὀφείλεται [1]  
 τοῖς ἐμπορίταις παρὰ τοῖς Θεραῖς-  
 [1]ν, τοῦτων χρεῶν ἀποκοπῆς μὴ  
 10 ποιῆε γῆν καὶ βοσκὴν δεσπὴν ἔχουσα-  
 ν ἐμπορίται, τοῖσιν μὴ ἀφαιρεῖ-  
 [σθ]εῖ· ἐπιουλιεῖς μὴ πέμπειν το-  
 [ῖς] ἐμπορίταις φρουρήμην μηδεμίαν  
 εἰς Πίστιρον καταστήσει μῆτε α-  
 15 [ὄ]τ' ὅμ μῆτε ἄλλω ἐπιτρέπειν  
 [κλ-]ναι ὁμ[ί]ηρος Πιστιρηνῶν μὴ λαμ-  
 [βάν]εμ μῆδὲ ἄλλω ἐπιτρέπειν  
 [τὰ] ναι γῆν] τῶν ἐμπορίτων μὴ ἀφαιρεῖ-  
 [σθ]εῖ μῆτε αὐτὸν μῆτε τοῖς ἐ-  
 20 [αυ]τοῦ τέλεια κατὰ τὰς ὁδοὺς  
 μὴ κρήσειν, ὅσα εἰς Μαρωνεῖα [ν]  
 [εἰσ]άγεται ἐκ Πιστιροι ἢ ἐκ τῶν ἐ-  
 [μ]πορίων ἢ ἔγ Μαρωνείης εἰς Πιστ-  
 [ι]ων ἢ τὰ ἐμπορία Βελανα Πρασε-

25 [ω]ν τοὺς ἐμπορίταις τὰς ΑΠΙΑΞ  
 [2-3] καὶ ἀνοίγει καὶ κλείειν ἄμα  
 [καθ]άπερ καὶ ἐπὶ Κοτυος (sic) ἄνδρα Μ-  
 [καρ]νίτην οὐ δῆσα οὐδὲ ἀποκ-  
 [ενέ]σθαι οὐδὲ ἀφαιρήσασμαι χρήμα-  
 30 [τα] οὔτε ζῶντος οὔτε ἀποθανόν-  
 [τος] οὔτε αὐτὸς οὔτε τῶν ἐμῶν  
 [οὔ]δεις οὐδὲ Ἀπολλωνιητέων, οὐδ-  
 [ὲ] Θεραίων, ὅσοι ἐμ Πιστιροι εἰσὶ [ν].  
 [οὔ]τε ἀποκτενεῖν οὐδένα, οὔτε  
 35 [δῆ]σθαι οὔτε ἀφαιρήσασμαι χρήμα-  
 [τα] οὔτε ζῶντος οὔτε ἀποθανόν-  
 [ν]τος οὔτε αὐτὸς οὔτε τῶν ἐμῶν  
 [οὔ]δεις εἴ τις] τῶν οἰκητέων  
 [14-16] τῶν οὐ ὁ ἐμπορ-  
 40 [14-16] ὄν εἰσὶν ΑΙΜ-  
 [14-16]ν, ἐὰν μὴ ΑΜ-  
 [14-16] τῆς ἀδικητῆ τῶ-  
 [ν] δεῖνα ναι -ου δεῖνας-] τε ΕΨΩ ΑΛΛΑ  
 [..ἀναδο- ναι ἀποδο-] ἡμεῖς τὴν ἐκ-  
 45 [5-6 δι' ἐκαστοῦ] ἑνιαυτοῦ  
 [-----] [A. End of the text.

Granite stele, 2 km south-east of Pistiros-Vetren. V. Velkov and L. Domaradzka, *BCH* 1994. L. Domaradzka, *BCH* 1. 2000. AM-Septemvri, inv. 1. 169.

I am grateful to Prof. Elizabeth Slater, and Prof. John K. Davies, of the School of Archaeology, Classics and Oriental Studies, University of Liverpool, who supported the British Vetren project from 1994 onwards, and whose encouragement and advice enabled me to obtain a major grant from the newly created Arts and Humanities Research Board, in 1998, to augment and document fieldwork. Updated information about current progress will shortly be posted on the University of Liverpool website (<http://www.csc.liv.ac.uk/~ken/vetren>), and an electronic archive (in preparation) will be accessible, within the next two years, via the Archaeology Data Service in York (<http://ads.ahds.ac.uk/catalogue/>).

Olivier Picard, Prof. Roland Etienne and members of the French Archaeological School in Athens facilitated the publication of the Pistiros inscription (Velkov and Domaradzka 1994) and negotiated a separate agreement in 1997 to collaborate with a Bulgarian team in exploring and surveying sites in the immediate vicinity of Vetren. A preliminary report of this survey will appear in *Pistiros 2* (the project leader is A.

Since the publication of the Pistiros inscription (*cf.* previous page; Velkov/Domaradzka 1994; *cf. eidem* 1995; 1996), and of the first site monograph (Bouzek/Domaradzki/Archibald 1996), the archaeological remains at Vetren have become better known outside Bulgaria.

The inscription has aroused great interest among economic and social historians as well as epigraphers, because of the detailed information it provides concerning inter-state economic relations. Inscriptions of this kind, particularly those predating the Hellenistic period, are so rare, that implications inferred from such a text are likely to affect general perceptions of the levels and infrastructure of long distance exchange, the nature of inter-state or inter-regional dynamics, and the institutional mechanisms developed by different communities to enable such exchanges to take place. Scholarly discussion of the inscription has produced divergent opinions about the stone's original location and the identity of places referred to in the text, as well as different interpretations of missing passages. In order to provide a framework for understanding the terms and provisions of the inscription, some appraisal should be made of its ancient context. Discussion of the inscribed stone from Asar Dere is unlikely to be fruitful without parallel consideration of its social and economic milieu – the people for and by whom the monument was erected. We also need to clarify the following, inter-connected issues:

1. the relationship between the inscription and the archaeological site near Vetren;
2. the nature and status of the site near Vetren;
3. the use of the terms '*emporion*', '*emporion*', '*emporitai*' in the epigraphic text and how we might interpret them in the light of what has been discovered at this site. The inscription is one element, albeit a rather important and unusual one, in a range of evidence concerning the activities and preoccupations of communities in the Thracian Plain during the Late Iron Age.

My principal aim in this paper is to re-examine the excavated remains; to try and understand their significance in terms of what we know about the inland parts of the Odrysian kingdom in the middle decades and second half of the 4th century BC, and to review the contents of the Asar Dere inscription in the light of these conclusions.

### **1. The archaeological site near Vetren and the 'Pistiros' inscription**

In a series of preliminary publications, M. Domaradzki set out the reasons for connecting the inscription with the site near Vetren. The granite slab, 1.64 m high, 0.63 m wide on its upper surface, and 0.27 m thick (at the top; 0.21 m at the base), was accidentally discovered at Asar Dere, within the confines of a Roman road station, Lissae/Bona Mansio (*IGBR*, 102-4; Velkov/Domaradzka 1996, 205 and Fig. 18.1), approximately 2 km south-east of Adjiska Vodenitsa (Hadji's water mill), the local name for the ter-



Fig. 1. View of the main east-west street of Adjiyska Vodenitsa, looking west, away from the eastern gateway.



Fig. 2. Western corner of Building complex no. 1, flanking the east-west road. Facing the road is a line of stone column bases, visible on the right hand side. (The inside wall in the middle ground has been partially reconstructed).





Fig. 3. The inner face of the fortification wall along its eastern flank, north of the eastern gateway. Most of the outer face has been robbed. In the middle ground is a drain channel which runs across the width of the wall (partially excavated close to the wall itself).



Fig. 4. Cross section of the eastern fortification wall, showing both inner (left) and outer (right) faces, with the intermediate rubble core. A stone paved drainage channel interrupts the wall foundation (this is a different drain from that illustrated in Fig. 3).



Fig. 5. Map of ancient Thrace with the principal topographic features and generalised location of 'tribes' referred to in 5th-4th century BC sources.

race on which the archaeological site near Vetren is located (Domaradzki 1993, 41 and App. No. 5; *idem* 1995, 75-85, esp. 75). The stone was not incorporated in any of the surviving architectural remains at Lissae/Bona Mansio, but was found lying at the edge of a field (see the plan, Velkov/Domaradzka 1996, 205, Fig. 18.1). Traces of plaster nevertheless indicated that it had been reused as a construction block.

Although surface material broadly contemporary with the inscription has been documented in the vicinity (Domaradzki 1995, 43; *idem* 1996, 32-3, Fig. 1.18, nos. 30-1), there is no evidence at present of any substantial 5th to 3rd century BC settlement at Lissae/Bona Mansio. But of clear relevance are reports made by V. Dobrusky in 1895, concerning two inscriptions, found 'in the ancient ruins at Adjyska Vodenitsa'.

The stones were evidently funerary *stelai*, not public documents (*IGBR* III/1,

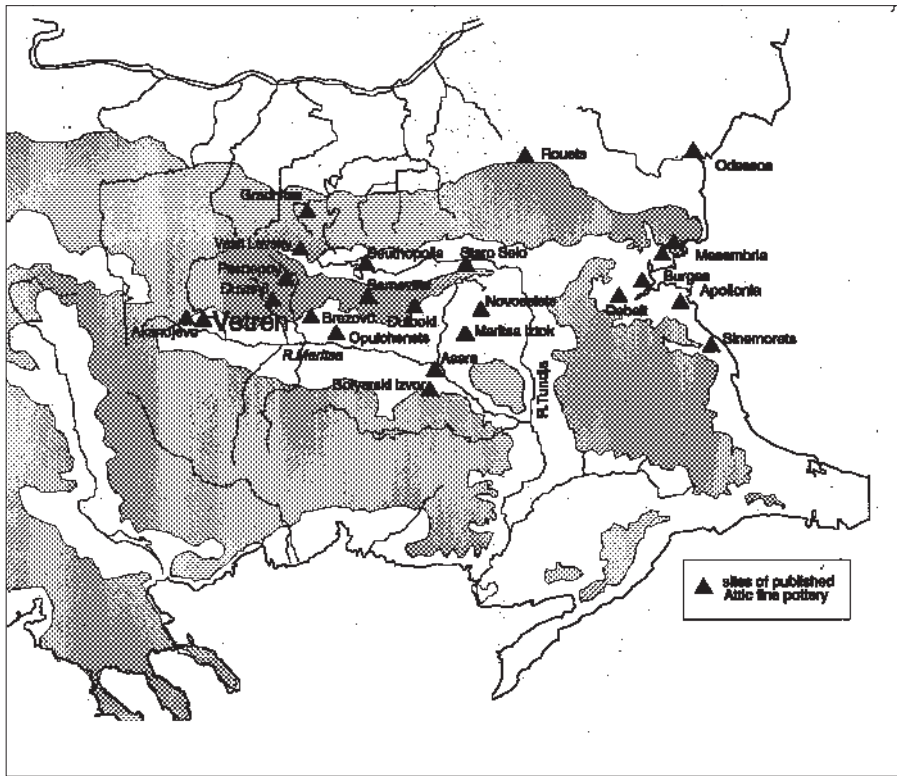


Fig. 6. Location of Vetren in central Thrace, with principal sites where imported Greek fine wares have been documented (5th-early 4th century BC).

1067-8 citing Dobrusky; L. Domaradzka in: Domaradzki 1993, App. Nos. 2-3; Domaradzka 1996, 89; Archibald 1999, 436-7). But the presence of Greeks, and the names themselves, as well as the probable origins of these individuals – Dionysios son of Diotrephes and a citizen of Apollonia, whose name is not preserved – tend to reinforce the connection between the contents of the inscription and the site at Adjiyska Vodenitsa. Apollonia was one of the named parties involved in the negotiations which the decree confirms. We do not know, at this stage, whether the subject was Pontika or a namesake in Chalkidike (see now Flensted-Jensen 1997, 117-21 on the Chalkidic Apollonia). Diotrephes is an unusual name. Diitrephes seems to have been the form more commonly found in the islands of the Aegean; only one near contemporary example has been formally documented, at 5th/4th century BC Ioulis on Keos (*LGPN* I, s.v. 1); while at Athens, Diitrephes seems to have been the usual spelling. There are ten Athenian examples, ranging in date

between the later 5th and 3rd centuries BC (*LGPN* II, s.v. 1-2, 4-11; Pouilloux 1954, 147-8; 165-6; Archibald 1998, 100; 122, no. 141, for Thasian connections of one prominent Athenian general of this name).

Epigraphic documentation is hard to assess as a datum of name frequencies. But this sort of evidence at least provides a feel for trends. Metro[ph]on, a name which appears on a reused *stèle* at Adjiyska Vodenitsa (Domaradzka in: Domaradzki 1993, 56, no. 5; Domaradzka 1996, 90; Domaradzka/Domaradzki 1999, 385-6; Schönert-Geiss 1987, 26, 201-2, on a magistrate with this name at Maroneia), is far less common among foreign residents in Classical and Hellenistic Athens, for instance, than Metrodoros or Metrophanes (Osborne/Byrne 1996, s.v.). Lydia Domaradzka's study of graffiti at Vetren (Domaradzka 1996; *eadem* 1999, 386; 2001b) has shown that there is a fair mixture of 'Greek' and 'native' names or prefixes. Athenagores, whose name appears on a graffito as the recipient of some unspecified payment for one day (Archibald 2001, Cat. No. 4; Domaradzka 2001b), during the earliest period in the site's history (mid 5th to first quarter of the 4th century BC), was probably a man from the Aegean islands (*LGPN* I, s.v. 1-3 (Chios), or 4 (Samos)), but very likely from Thasos. The name is particularly well represented in 5th to 4th century BC Thasos (*ibid.* 5-11; see esp. Pouilloux 1954, 262 ff., esp. Catalogue 1, *theoroi* of the Classical period, col. iv, 38; col. vi, 48). Although the man paid for some unknown work at Vetren, according to the graffito, may or may not have been related to the island officials of the same name, the rather limited distribution of this spelling is in keeping with the geographical direction of relations reflected on this site, whether formal (as recognised in the Asar Dere inscription), or informal, as exemplified in material terms by finds emanating from Thasos or linked to north Aegean traditions (Bouzek 1996a; 2001a on the fortifications; Domaradzki 1993 and Yourukova/Domaradzki 1990, on Thasian coins and imitations).

## **2. The nature and status of the site near Vetren**

The archaeological remains at Adjiyska Vodenitsa do not conform to any known Mediterranean town. It was not evidently modelled on an Aegean centre. Towns may have common characteristics, but local developmental factors endow them with individuality. This site is positively idiosyncratic.

Notwithstanding the comparisons made above with north Aegean architecture, there are numerous features which are quite uncharacteristic of 'Greek' towns, especially the extensive areas, on the western side of the terrace and immediately inside the circuit wall, which seem largely to have been devoted to cult purposes (Lazov 1996; Archibald 1999; Domaradzki 2001). The kinds of cult practices discernible are not without parallel in the Aegean, but are best represented elsewhere in Thrace (Figs. 7-8; Archibald 1999 with further references).



The overall characterization of Adjyska Vodenitsa has been hampered by serious geomorphological changes to the site's topography and the consequent damage wrought to archaeological deposits (see Fig. 9). The settlement underwent a series of greater and lesser inundations from the River Maritsa (Hebros) over the course of its history, and finally succumbed due to severe flooding some time in the 2nd century BC. Investigations during 1999 on the flood terrace below and south-west of the excavations have shown that the pre-modern river bed lay quite close to the terrace of Adjyska Vodenitsa, and that the modern contours of the terrain were shaped by it<sup>2</sup>. Although these studies are not yet complete, the presence of stray finds contemporary with the settlement, found below 4-5 m of alluvial deposit within this area, makes it likely that the ancient river bed was far closer to the excavated trenches than anyone had previously imagined. Wharves and quays would, following this interpretation, have extended some distance into the flood terrace.

The structures lining the main east-west road would have been at a convenient distance, not just from the main gateway, but from the river bank too. It is true to say that no quays have yet been found and we are unlikely to do so, unless such facilities have been preserved further up or down river.

The site's size, in any of its phases, still presents a formidable problem for the excavators. The scale of the area around the eastern gateway, including the dimensions of Building complex no. 1 (18.2 m x 14.35 m), is consistent with a sizeable urban centre (Domaradzki 1996, 24, Fig. 1.10). Yet the terrace itself covers little more than 2 ha (Fig. 9, area I). The western line of the circuit wall (Fig. 9, area II) nevertheless indicates that the fortified area was far more extensive than the excavated remains on the terrace. The built up centre must have extended for a considerable distance into what is now the flood plain north of the putative ancient river bed, and probably south of it too. It needs to be emphasised that the area excavated so far represents only

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<sup>2</sup> Domaradzki 1996, 13-5 on the topography; geophysical prospecting carried out in 1987 by Ilian Katevski, for the Institute of Archaeology, Sofia, under M. Domaradzki's direction, provided the first scientific evidence of largescale masonry structures at Adjyska Vodenitsa. Specialists from GSB Bradford have added further data, using gradiometry and magnetic susceptibility (1992-94). In 1999, a team from GSB Bradford led by Dr. Sue Ovenden-Wilson, working in collaboration with the British field contingent, investigated parts of the flood terrace, identified following the extraction of core samples by Prof. G. Baltakov (Sofia) and Prof. Eric Fouache (French Archaeological School in Athens) in May of the same year. The transects created by electrical imaging revealed traces of one or more palaeo channels of the River Maritsa, while a resistivity survey of the same area shows some evidence of anthropogenic activity, presumably below the alluvial levels measured in the core samples. The approximate date of the channel(s) will be determined once the core samples have been analysed. A full report is in preparation.



Fig. 7. General view of the area north-west of Building no. 1, showing circular ritual hearths *in situ*.



Fig. 8. Baked clay 'firedog' (zoomorphic cult figurine) found during the excavations in grid square B21, south of the east-west road, by the British team.

a fraction of the site itself. The quantities of material yielded, even in such a limited sector (a detailed quantitative analysis, in electronic form, is in progress), are not consistent with this having been a small port facility. Whether the site covered 50 ha or 100 ha in its heyday, in the second half of the 4th century BC, it is the scale of exchange operations here, in a region so remote from the principal international waterways, that impresses. But we need to bear in mind what kinds of comparisons are appropriate. Vetren cannot be compared with a coastal location and a harbour for ocean-going ships.

Large, round bottomed storage *pithoi*, of ovoid section, made from local clays, have been found buried in the soil of the courtyard belonging to Building no. 1 (Lazov 1999), and individual examples have been discovered in other parts of the site, sometimes largely complete (Domaradzki 1996, 24, Fig. 1.10, no. 6; Domaradzki 1999, Fig. 2.1). Considerable quantities of *pithos* fabric have been found in all trenches and testify, not only to the large numbers of storage vessels utilised on the site, but also to the high level of fragmentation of even the largest ceramic objects. Even in Building no. 1, the layout of the preserved vessels does not conform to a regular pattern. Similarly, in our own excavations south of the main road (grid square B21), large parts of several *pithoi* were found in a disturbed condition. Only in the structures immediately south of the main road, which are currently being excavated by the Czech team, were storage vessels found *in situ*, grouped together closely in rows, as appropriate for bulk storage. There such containers were evidently protected by the rubble walls of the surrounding rooms, whereas further south and east, whatever structures there might have been seem to have been destroyed by flooding. Buildings of various kinds did extend on both sides of the main road: this is clear enough from the quantities of burnt daub, tile deposits, and loose stones, even though plans for the later phases (*ca.* 300 BC onwards) cannot as yet be reconstructed. The accumulating evidence confirms that we are looking at a river port, probably with quays not far from the main east-west road, protected by a very substantial fortification wall, with storage facilities either side of the road, no doubt lockable warehouses. It was in one of these roadside storage rooms that in 1999 a hoard of 552 early Hellenistic coins was found in an S-shaped, locally made jug, which had been hidden in a wall niche<sup>3</sup>. The contents of Building no. 1 strongly suggest that it was used as a commercial exchange as well as a store. Among the non-ceramic finds were numerous coins, as well as weights and lead tokens, perhaps used to identi-

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<sup>3</sup> Prof. Y. Yourukova, who has acted as overall project Director at Vetren since the death of M. Domaradzki in June 1998, is preparing a monograph on the hoard, with the assistance of Boriana Russeva, who specialises in Macedonian coins, and Valentina Taneva, Director of the Archaeological Museum, Septemvri. Prof. Jan Bouzek will publish data on the hoards' context, a wall niche in the roadside structures (shops?) currently (1997 onwards) being excavated by the Czech team.

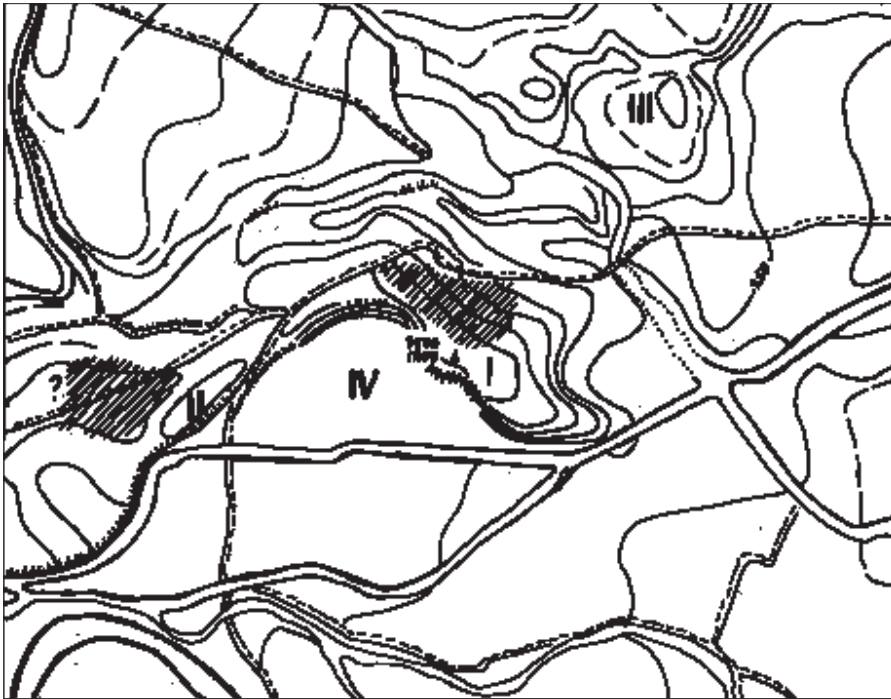


Fig. 9. Plan of the terrace at Adjiyska Vodenitsa (Hadji's water mill) and surrounding fields. AV I = principal site of excavations west, north and south of the eastern gateway; AV II = location of western circuit wall and Czech extra-mural excavations; AV III = extra mural site (function unclear). Hatched lines indicate damaged areas.

fy commodities (Domaradzki 1995, 60-1, and Fig. p. 61). The large number of isolated copper alloy coins discovered in the area between the main road and Building no. 1 (whose variable weights look as though they represent a range of face values), underscores the intense level of exchange activity, whose true character has been diluted by the periodic inundations of the terrace itself (Taneva 2001).

Geophysical prospecting (using fluxgate gradiometer and magnetic susceptibility sampling) has revealed widespread anthropogenic activity outside the eastern circuit wall. Several discrete areas have been partially investigated (Fig. 9, area III, and Domaradzki forthcoming for a summary report). Excavations by the Czech team in area AV II (Figure 9, area II; Bouzek *et al.* 2001), indicate residential units west of the fortifications, complementing the industrial activities noted in the extra mural areas east of the site,

which include an early 3rd century BC ceramic kiln. Adjijyska Vodenitsa was evidently a metallurgical production centre. Crucibles containing copper residues (see D. Katinciarova in *Pistiros 2*), various kinds of moulds and matrices for the production of decorative ornaments (Katinciarova-Bogdanova 1996; G. Lazov in *Pistiros 2*), a jeweller's hammer, even a gold nugget, have been found. Semi-manufactured *fibulae* of a particular Celtic form were concentrated in a well defined area south of the bastion (Domaradzki 1999). Large quantities of iron slag were redeposited in the courtyard of Building no. 1 (Domaradzki 1995, 22), but the smelting area(s) from which this was derived has(ve) not yet been discovered. Miss Emilia Petrova Ivanova, site Conservationist, working in collaboration with colleagues from the University of Liverpool, is currently conducting metallographic analyses to find out more about the composition of manufactured articles, which visually represent many different artistic traditions: local Balkan (weapons, knives, pins, *fibulae* and other ornaments; perhaps metal vessels), steppe-related but probably of local manufacture (G. Lazov in *Pistiros 2* on the side piece of a horse's bit); Persian related (silverware); Aegean (weapons, ornaments, decorative items, including the actor *applique*: Lazov 1996b; Bouzek 1996b) and Celtic (*fibulae*: Domaradzki 1999)<sup>4</sup>. Such examples by no means exhaust the range of items produced on or near the site itself, evidently as a consequence of the riverine connection. These include a variety of coarse handmade and fine hand and wheel made fabrics, with various types of surface finish, including burnishing and lustrous slips of gold and silver hue.

### **3. 'emporion' and 'emporia' in the Asar Dere inscription and Vetren: a comparison**

A short summary of the text (see above, p. 254) will help to clarify the context of places and people to which it refers. The beginning of the text is missing. There follows an invocation to Dionysos (and perhaps to other gods) in lines 3-5. Immediately afterwards there follow stipulations concerning the manner in which private disputes among a group of people called *emporitai* should be resolved, namely by internal arbitration (ll. 5-7).

It is unclear whether this clause refers to the members of one or more *emporia* (*i.e.* whether we are looking at a particular ruling, promulgated on an *ad*

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<sup>4</sup> Preliminary assessments of selected metal (copper alloy) objects were carried out at the School of Archaeology, Classics and Oriental Studies (SACOS), University of Liverpool, and the Conservation Centre (National Museums and Galleries on Merseyside) in 1996. Financial constraints prevented further investigations until 2000. Metallographic analyses are currently in progress at the University of Liverpool. Miss Ivanova is collaborating with Prof. E. Slater (SACOS), Dr. M. Adams (National Museums and Galleries on Merseyside) and Mrs M. Hughes (Department of Engineering and



*hoc* basis, or at a regulated custom of which this is one example: see Domaradzka 2001b for further discussion and references). Where debts are owed by Thracians to the *emporitai*, no cancellation is to be sanctioned (ll. 8-10). The territory (arable? and woodland), which is in the possession of the *emporitai*, is not to be seized (from them ll. 10-2). *Epaulistai* (farmers? travellers? unofficial personnel?) are not to be brought to the *emporitai* (ll. 12-3). No fort (*phroure*) is to be put up at Pistiros, by anyone, nor handed over (*epitrepein*) to anyone else (ll. 13-5).

*Kleroi* (??) of the *Pistirenoi* (people of Pistiros) are not to be seized or handed over to anyone else (ll. 16-7). Property belonging to the *emporitai*, or to their dependants (??) is not to be seized (ll. 18-20). Tolls are not to be levied, on roads leading from Pistiros to Maroneia or from the *emporita*, or from Maroneia to Pistiros, or to the *emporita* (including?) Belana of the Prasenoi (?) (ll. 21-5). (Here the text becomes particularly hard to reconstruct and interpret). There follows a sentence outlining further stipulations concerning *emporitai* and roads, with an injunction about ‘opening and closing’ (roads? gates? ll. 25-6).

The second half of the text incorporates what appears to be a citation from a similar set of injunctions, issued in the name of Kotys (usually interpreted as Kotys I, sole ruler of Thrace south of the Balkan range, ca. 383-359 BC: ll. 26-7). ‘I will not capture or kill a Maronitan citizen, or deprive him of his property, while he is alive or after his death, neither I, nor any of my [followers]. [This will also apply to] any citizen of Apollonia, or Thasos, who may be resident in Pistiros, nor will I kill anyone, or capture anyone, or deprive anyone of his property, while he is alive or after his death, neither I myself nor any of my [followers] (ll. 27-38). Further stipulations were included lower down, involving judicial arrangements (l. 42: *tis adikei*), and what might be a reference to prince Amadokos (l. 41), ruler of the central parts of Kotys’ former kingdom, 359-341 BC, plus an allusion, in line 45, to some event or process occurring annually (*[ekast]jou eniautou*).

The general thrust of the document is to enable safe exchange to take place and to spell out boundaries (social rather than geographical). There are no detailed regulations controlling exchange and there is no reference to water traffic or a port facility. Whatever regulations applied to exchanges as such, they were not included in this document. In contrast to what we learn from inter-state agreements between the Odrysian princes and Greek communities about the levying of harbour dues (Velkov/Domaradzka 1994, 9; 11-2; 14; Archibald 1998, Ch. 9), evidently a highly lucrative source of revenue, the rulers who promulgated the terms enshrined in this decree explicitly abjured any income which might be raised from road tolls on traffic passing through the countryside. This must have been intended to act as an incen-

tive to merchants operating along inland routes. Regular reference to Pistiros and its inhabitants is a clear indication that the decree was issued on their behalf and most of the text is concerned with personal safety and private relations or property, not commercial transactions. The late David Lewis dated it on palaeographical and historical grounds *ca.* 360-350 BC<sup>5</sup>. Although the absence of appropriate comparanda makes this hard to prove, there are no internal reasons for dating it in the Hellenistic period (as Tsatskheladze 2000 suggests). It is not a treaty between one community and another, but a royal edict concerning specific groups operating within his subject territories. Although the identity of the issuing authority cannot be recovered, both Vetren and Lissae/Bona Mansio would have belonged, at this time, within the territories of Amadokos II, Kotys I's successor in central Thrace, territories which extended as far as Abdera and Maroneia on the Aegean coast (see Archibald 1998, Ch. 9). The use of the Greek language and of specific Greek juridical terms shows that the models for princely decrees were Greek civic documents, while the adoption of the Ionic dialect points more particularly to Ionian civic communities. The Seuthopolis inscription continues the same trend.

In his compendious study of administrative documents from Greek communities at large, Peter Rhodes has pointed out that Thracian, like Macedonian, Karian, and Bosporan rulers, adopted the language and terminology we usually associate with civic decrees (Rhodes with Lewis 1997, 194 and no. 11; 202, 208 and no. 8; 354; 544, 561). The period between the middle of the 5th and middle of the 4th centuries BC was one of rapid development in the structure and style of administrative documents. Many procedural features found in decrees from various parts of the Aegean area owe something to Athenian practice, though differences may be equally significant, reflecting local procedural mechanisms (Lewis 1984; Rhodes with Lewis 1997, 18-29; 550-7). Academic interest has focused on the character of civic institutions and decrees; less attention has been devoted to royal or princely chanceries, not least because so little contemporary evidence survives. But the formulae adopted by monarchs deserve special care. The administrative requirements of realms incorporating communities which were recording and publishing their own documents ought to have made royal chanceries pioneering establishments. For the time being we cannot demonstrate what these processes entailed. Miltiades Hatzopoulos has

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<sup>5</sup>Mieczysław Domaradzki and Lydia Domaradzka generously allowed me to see a preliminary transcription of the text and photograph and show them to Prof. Lewis in Oxford. He drew up his own version, which was conveyed to the editors in summer 1992. Prof. Lewis was most interested in the discovery of this unique text and was confident in dating it to the pre-Macedonian period in Thrace. We discussed its contents by letter and in person a number of times before his final illness.

sketched out how the relationships between local communities, regional structures and the royal court may have worked in Macedonia (Hatzopoulos 1996, I, esp. 105-23, 127-65, 371-429).

What of the name Pistiros? Herodotus describes a *polis* called Pistyros near a salt lake full of fish, in the *peraia* of Thasos, west of the estuary of the River Nestos (7. 109; Koukouli-Chrysanthaki 1973 for 6th century BC and later discoveries at the presumed site west of the Nestos valley). But it is not the only Classical reference. The 4th century BC rhetorician Anaximenes of Lampsakos named several cities (*poleis*) in inland Thrace in his Philippic history, including a Basteira/Pisteira and an Epimaston (*FGrH*, 72, F10).

The context of this reference was not preserved by the lexicographer Harpokration, who cited these names as evidence of known Thracian cities (p. 124, 11), in order to cast doubt on some nonchalant remarks made by Demosthenes (8. 44; cf. 10. 15). Demosthenes was trying to write off Philip of Macedon's conquests in central Thrace with a slur on supposed 'hell holes' like Drongy lion, Kabyle and Masteira. Harpokration questioned Demosthenes' reference to a Masteira, which he could not find among the sites documented in Anaximenes' history. Although his works were far less influential on contemporary and later historians than writers like Theopompos and Kallisthenes, Anaximenes' historical pieces were not without merit.

Such fragments as have been preserved suggest that he provided a valuable independent source, with specialist insights into the history, landscape and customs of Macedonia and neighbouring areas (*FGrH*, IIA, pp. 112-30; cf. also Velkov 1988). No less, in fact, than one might expect from a man who would have been familiar, from childhood, with the north Aegean coastline in the area of the Straits, and someone who might well have travelled upriver towards the very cities which he apparently described in an account of Philip's military advance into Thrace between 342 and 340 BC.

Stephanus of Byzantium, summarising this data, conflated the details: Πί στρος, ἐμπόριον Θρακίας, τὸ ἐθνικὸν Πιστιρίται (p. 524, 11); Βί στρος, πόλις Θρακίας, ὡς Πί στρος τὸ ἐμπόριον (p. 171, 6-7 citing *Etym. Mag.* p. 488, 10 = Πί στρος; Whitehead 1994 on Stephanus; Velkov 1988 on Stephanus' probable source). In both instances the word *emporion* appears alongside Pistiros. Was there one or more than one Pistiros, and is the difference in spelling significant? Herodotus gives no suggestion that his Pistyros was known as a regulated centre of exchange. It may, of course, have developed along these lines later. In view of the limited excavations conducted at this coastal site, the absence of clear archaeological evidence in favour is not a reason to reject such a conclusion. We would need to determine whether Aegean Pistyros conforms to the kinds of sites which were called *emporion*.

What, then, is an *emporion*? In literal terms it is a place of exchange (*RE* V/2 (1905), cols. 2527-9, *s.v.*; *DNP* 3 (1997), 1020-1, *s.v. emporion*).

Theoretically, such places can arise in varied circumstances and locations. In practice ancient historians and archaeologists have tended to study *emporia* from one of two angles: either as clearing houses for the exchange of commodities (with the focus primarily on archaeological evidence for exchange: Austin/Vidal-Naquet 1977, 65-6, 223-5; Boardman 1999a; 1999b, *passim*; Horden/Purcell 2000, 395-400; Tsetskhladze 2000); or in institutional terms (exploring the relationship between those institutions connected specifically with an *emporion* and civic ones: Bresson 1980; Hansen 1997; Wilson 1997). Attempts to unite both approaches have sometimes caused confusion (see Wilson's remarks (1997, 199-200) on Ridgway 1992), although the contributors to a recent French collection of in-depth studies on Mediterranean *emporia* have had no such difficulties (Bresson 1993).

The main reason for confusion has been the attempt to identify 'Greek' institutions in isolation from other customs or practices, and to formalise the relationship between *emporia* and *apoikiai* (*poleis*). Considerable value can be derived from close study of the ways in which ancient authors applied these terms (Hansen 1993; 1995; 1998), and from compilations of such terms preserved in late lexica (see esp. Whitehead 1997). The databases created by the Copenhagen Polis Centre will provide the raw material for an assessment (Hansen 1993; 1995; 1997; 1998; Hansen/Raaflaub 1995; Nielsen 1997). But how objective might such lists and compilations (ancient and modern) turn out to be? An informed interpretation of the databases presupposes the existence of criteria according to which names and descriptions can be analysed. Problems in defining such criteria have already become apparent (see *e.g.* Flensted-Jensen 1997; Cartledge 1999). We know very little of how ancient authors set about collecting their information, except where the writers refer explicitly to earlier work, or where a particular text paraphrases another known source. There was, it seems, a strong temptation to rely on earlier writers, where available, rather than on new research. The kinds of textual relationships which can be recognised among the major surviving prose writers of antiquity may not, however, be a fair reflection of the kind of information available at large, and which could have found its way into late lexica; but major sources were also those most reliably followed (Whitehead 1997, 117-24). Such evidence as we do have in prose sources rarely explores diachronic changes (see Kosshenko/Marinovitch 2000 on Strabo and earlier sources on the northern Euxine). Development over time is one of the prime characteristics of *emporia* we would most like to know about.

The analysis of sites on the northern shores of the Black Sea to which both terms are applied in ancient sources has revealed no evidence of a generic relationship between *emporia* and *poleis* (Hind 1997; Wilson 1997). In such

cases at least, 'ports of trade' did not develop into 'cities'. Systematic investigation indicates, therefore, that ancient authors used terms such as *polis* and *emporion* in a descriptive rather than technical sense. Nor were they necessarily consistent about the terms they did use.

The geographer Strabo was fascinated by natural and human resources; his *Geography* is one of the most important ancient texts on *emporion*, and what he tells us is highly revealing.

Most of the Mediterranean sites to which he refers were situated at the intersection of routes or trajectories of exchange (Etienne 1993; Rouillard 1993), and many are geographically 'peripheral' in comparison with the lists of '*poleis*' already alluded to. In a new study of the Mediterranean in pre-modern times, Horden and Purcell perceive *emporion* as 'gateways' for inter- and intra-regional traffic in commodities; they regard them as an essential feature of the long-term dynamics of the Mediterranean landscape. This implies that it may be more fruitful to see Classical *emporion* too as the outcome of developing spatial networks, rather than the result of Greek overseas 'colonial' activity *per se* (Horden/Purcell 2000, 399). Particular locations may flourish and decline, only to be replaced by others close by. This emphasis on dynamic relationships rather than static institutional structures is a welcome step forward. The long term perspective, reaching back into the Bronze Age and forwards into the Middle Ages, reveals a sea crisscrossed by traffic of varied ethnic origin, destined for landfalls with an equally mixed population (*ibid.*, 391-400). The authors do not deny that there was a significant demographic dispersal to new locations; but the existence of *emporion* is consciously integrated with interchange in the Mediterranean as a whole. What characterises Mediterranean ports and *emporion* above all is their ethnic variety and polyglot culture (*ibid.*, 297, citing Bresson 1993, 226). The same impression is gained from the most detailed descriptions of an ancient *emporion*, the eponymous site in Spain (Strabo 3. 4. 8-9; *cf.* Livy 34. 9; *DNP* 3 (1997), 1018-9: *Emporiae/Ampurias*, with bibliography; Dominguez Monedero 1984; 1986; 1991; 1994; 1996, 63-5, 70-80). Adjiyska Vodenitsa shares many of the principal characteristics found at Spanish *Emporion*: the emphasis on fortification to protect valuable property; the distinctive ethnic mix, which according to Strabo extended to civic institutions as well; the extraordinary economic vigour and the overall emphasis on intermediate exchange. Recently Tanais on the Cimmerian Bosphorus has also been compared with Spanish *Emporion*; two distinct fortified quarters have also been recognised at the former, apparently populated by Greek and native settlers respectively (Koshelenko/Marinovitch 2000, 173-4; *cf.* Tsetschladze 1998, 44-50 on the mixed populations of the northern Euxine cities and *emporion*).



Whether the Pistiros inscription was originally located at Lissae/Bona Mansio or at Adjyska Vodenitsa, existing interpretations of the archaeological evidence remain substantially unaltered. Domaradzki's survey of sites in the region of Adjyska Vodenitsa-Vetren, on both banks of the River Maritsa (Domaradzki 1996, 31-4), shows that the kind of commercial activity documented there can only be traced at a small number of local sites; others lack imported material of any kind. This would not be altogether surprising if the bulk transports and finished goods which passed through the river port were intended for other large settlements or focal points of princely patronage in the region, perhaps outside the survey area. The inscription refers to a number of other *emporía*, not necessarily in the vicinity. Too little is known about the local settlement network as a whole for even tentative identification to be attempted. Moreover, archaeologists have yet to take full account of the alluvial deposits north and south of the Maritsa, which may well conceal ancient sites (Domaradzki 1996, 31-4, note the shaded area on Fig. 1.18). Adjyska Vodenitsa was undoubtedly a node, like all *emporía*, within its locality, and should not be studied in isolation. Its identity as a river port is evident irrespective of the inscription's relationship to it.

The identification of this site with Pistiros remains unproven, but the manifest connections in the material record between Adjyska Vodenitsa and Thasos, together with its *peraia*, reinforce the logic of the text. The Pistiros of the *peraia* may be a fortuitous etymological link; on the other hand, there might be some historical connection. But even if there is a connection, it would be etymological (Lazova 1996), not functional, whereas the Pistiros of the inscription can convincingly be explained in terms of Anaximenes' cities in inland Thrace.

Mogens Hansen has taken a rather different view of the epigraphically attested Pistiros: "Pistyros (sic) is an incontestable example of an *emporion* which was not a *polis*, but it is equally incontestable that almost all the other named *emporía* listed *supra* [...] were called *polis* as well as *emporion* by the Greeks of the Classical period." (Hansen 1997, 91). He distinguishes this site from the Thasian Pistyros (*ibid.*, 88, no. 38), but his principal argument for rejecting the status of *polis* for the former seems to be his impression that the *emporitai* are not referred to with an ethnic, whereas the text (l. 16) refers to them as *Pistirenoi* (not Stephanos' *Pistiritai*, which might be another instance of a self-generated ethnic on the historian's part: see Whitehead 1994). Hansen does not refer to the excavated site, although brief accounts had already appeared (Domaradzki 1993; 1995). He is perceptive about *emporía* of the 5th and 4th century BC and about what can and cannot be said about them: "... the choice between classifying a settlement as a *polis* having an *emporion* or as being an *emporion* does not depend on some objective criterion but on the context in which the classification is brought." (Hansen 1997, 97).

This underscores what I have already said about the fundamental significance of relationships. The issue of who was in control is highly pertinent (Hansen 1997, 104-5), though I have suggested elsewhere (Archibald 2000) that local decision making has been undervalued in northern Greece and Thrace. If the Pistiros inscription reflects the role played by rulers, this still leaves a great deal of organisational decision making in local hands. In this respect the contents of the inscription and the archaeological findings at Adjiyska Vodenitsa offer complementary evidence.

#### ABBREVIATIONS

- DNP* Cancik, H./H. Schneider (eds.), *Der Neue Pauly. Enzyklopädie der Antike*, Stuttgart/Weimar: Metzler 1996.
- IGBR* *Inscriptiones Graecae in Bulgaria Repertae* (G. Mihailov ed., vols. I-V, 1958-1997).
- LGNP* *A Lexicon of Greek Personal Names*, P.M. Fraser/E. Matthews (eds.); volume I, The Aegean Islands, Cyprus, Cyrenaica, P.M. Fraser/E. Matthews (eds.) Oxford 1987; volume II, Part A, Attica, M.J. Osborne/S.J. Byrne (eds.) Oxford 1994; volume III, Part A, P.M. Fraser/E. Matthews, Oxford 1997.
- Pistiros 2* *Pistiros 2. Excavations and Studies*, J. Bouzek/L. Domaradzka/Z.H. Archibald (eds.) 2001.
- RE* Wissowa, G. et al. (eds.), *Real Encyclopaedie der klassischen Altertumswissenschaft*, Stuttgart: Metzler, 1893-1981.

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Z. H. Archibald, School of Archaeology, Classics and Oriental Studies,  
University of Liverpool, Liverpool L69 3BX, UK.