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Πόλεις and Πολιτεΐαι in upper Macedonia under the Principate: A new inscription from Lyke in Orestis

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ΠΟΛΕΙΣ AND ΠΟΛΙΤΕΙΑΙ IN UPPER MACEDONIA UNDER THE PRINCIPATE: A NEW INSCRIPTION FROM LYKE IN ORESTIS

Although new inscriptions and archaeological data have tended to refute earlier views that there were no urban centres in Upper Macedonia under the Principate and that the main form of civic organisation in the region was the *komai*,¹ the degree of urbanisation —i.e. the number of cities— in the region is still a matter for debate. Modern scholars' estimates vary on this point, and this is partly due to the different interpretations that have been given at various times of the nature of the communities in Upper Macedonia, which in three different inscriptions are referred to as *politeiai*: i.e. the *politeiai* of Orestis (Battyna and Lyke) and Elimia (Oblostai). Thus, chiefly on the basis of the famous decree of Battyna, some scholars refer to these *politeiai* as cities, others doubt that they really were proper cities, and yet others believe that they were tribal communities.²

It is symptomatic of the general puzzlement that two eminent experts in

1. See the views of T. Mommsen, *Römische Geschichte*, Berlin 1894, vol. V, 275 and M. Rostovtzeff, *The Social and Economic History of the Roman Empire*, second edition, Oxford 1957, p. 253. For the views of other scholars who have challenged the existence of cities in Macedonia, particularly in the Classical period, see J. N. Kalléris, *Les Anciens Macédoniens*, Athens 1976, vol. II, pp. 575 n. 1, 576 n. 1, 590 n. 2, and 614 n. 6. For the degree of urbanisation in Macedonia in general and Upper Macedonia in particular in the period under discussion, see F. Papazoglou, *Les Villes de Macédoine à l'époque romaine (BCH, Suppl. 16)*, Athens 1988, pp. 441–2.

2. For the opinions that have been ventured from time to time regarding the nature of these communities, see F. Papazoglou, "Encore une fois sur une signification tardive du mot *politeia*", *ZA* 45, 1995, 239–40. Regarding Lyke, we must also add the views of Ph. Petsas, "Χρονικά Αρχαιολογικά 1968-70", *Μακεδονικά* 15 (1975), 311, and D. Samsaris, *Ίστορική Γεωγραφία της Ρωμαϊκής Έπαρχίας της Μακεδονίας*, Thessalonike 1989, p. 153, who both call it a city. As far as we know, no special study has been devoted to the term *politeia*; for the various meanings of the term in the inscriptions, see P. Herrmann's brief but comprehensive article, "Epigraphische Notizen 10–2", *EA* 21, 1993, 71–2 (10 πολιτεία).

the study of the Macedonian institutions have argued this particular issue from diametrically opposed positions in recent works. M. B. Hatzopoulos believes that the *politeiai* were simply *komai* — communities with rudimentary civic organisation and limited autonomy as regards their external relations and consequently their dealings with the Roman authorities.³ This theory has been criticised by Ph. Papazoglou, who argues that in Upper Macedonia the term meant a ‘small civic community’ (*petite communauté civique*), apparently meaning a city and standing by her theory about the origin of the word in the Macedonian inscriptions — i.e. that it is the Greek rendering of the Latin term *civitas*.⁴

We believe that fresh light is shed on the problem by the epigraphical find published here. It is a dedicatory inscription that was found in the summer of 1995 during an excavation conducted by Professor Nikolaos Moutsopoulos in the little basilica of St Demetrius on the islet of Ayos Ahillios on the smaller of the Prespa Lakes.⁵

Parallelipedic slab of soft limestone damaged at the left edge. Re-used as the lintel over the door from the narthex into the naos. Dimensions 1.04 x 0.34 x 0.34 m. Height of letters 0.030–0.050 m. Now in its finding place, the narthex of the church. The script is carefully executed. Characteristic letters are the reverse *sigma*, found eight times (ll. 1, 2 and 3), and the *upsilon*, which is considerably taller than the other letters (ll. 3 and 4).⁶ Ligatures : TH in ll. 1 and 4 (Plate 1).

3. “Epigraphie et villages en Grèce du nord: Ethnos, polis et kome en Macédoine”, *L’Epigrafia dell Villagio*, Faenza 1992, pp. 158–9; *idem*, *Macedonian Institutions under the Kings*, Athens 1996 vol. I (MEΛETHMATA, 27), pp. 80–1.

4. Papazoglou (n. 2), 243.

5. We should like to thank Professor N. Moutsopoulos both for his permission to study and publish the inscription and for his information about the circumstances of its discovery.

6. The reverse *sigma* does not appear in the published inscriptions from Upper Macedonia, though it is seen in a few inscriptions from Thessalonike from the mid-first century AD onwards: see *IG X 2*, 1, 70 (AD 66/7), 34 (AD 89), 69 (late 1st c. AD), 304 (2nd c. AD), 744, 749, and 812 (2nd/3rd c. AD). The distinctive tall *upsilon* is also seen in two inscriptions from Thessalonike: see *IG X 2*, 1, 57 (2nd c. AD; cf. D. Diamantourou-Papakonstantinou, “Ἐπιγραφαὶ Μυθρονίας, Κρησιτωνίας, Ἀνθεμοῦντος, Χαλκιδικῆς”, *Ποικίλα*, Athens 1990 (Μελετήματα, 10), p. 243, for a photograph and the improved text of the inscription), and 208 (2nd or 3rd c. AD; cf. P. Adam-Veleni, *Μακεδονικὸὶ Βωμοὶ*, unpublished diss., Thessalonike 1996, p. 181–82, No. 65, with photograph and the inscription dated on the basis of the form of the monument in the late 2nd c. AD).

[Θε]οῖς Ὡ Σεβαστοῖς καὶ τῇ Λυκαίων
 [πό]λει Ὡ Λ. Φλαούιος Φαβρικιανός Ὡ
 [Ἄντ]ίπατρος διὰ τοῦ ἰδίου πατρὸς Λευκίου
 [Φλ]αοῦιου Φαβρικιανοῦ τῇ πατρίδι θρεπτήριον

The reference to the *θεοὶ Σεβαστοὶ* does not constitute firm evidence for dating the inscription to a period when there were more than one emperor — i.e. after AD161— because the phrase could equally well refer to the living Emperor and his deified predecessors.⁷ Thus, apart from the *gentilicium* Flavius borne by the individuals mentioned, which dates the inscription to after the third quarter of the first century AD, there is no further internal evidence for its dating. However, the overall impression given by the writing suggests that the text probably belongs to the second, if not the early third, century AD.

The individuals mentioned in the inscription are not known from elsewhere. Their *cognomen* is found once more in Upper Macedonia. In an inscription from Herakleia in Lynkos, the *koinon* of the Macedonians honours the daughter of a Roman, one of whose *cognomina* is Fabricianus.⁸ The same *cognomen* also appears in an inscription from Beroia, which preserves a very fragmentary letter to the city from a Roman official or emperor.⁹ The name Antipatros borne as a second *cognomen* by the first person mentioned in the inscription is met occasionally in Upper Macedonia¹⁰ and attests that, under the Principate, inhabitants of the region used the names of figures from Macedonian history.

7. See E. Meyer, "Augusti", *Chiron* 5 (1975), 393–402.

8. M. Demitsas, *Ἡ Μακεδονία ἐν λίθοις φθεγγόμενοις καὶ ἐν μνημείοις σωζόμενοις*, Athens 1896, p. 258, No. 218; cf. Papazoglou (n. 1), 263.

9. I. Touratsoglou, *ArchDelt* 24 (1969) Chron. B 2, 325–6, No. 11; cf. A. Tataki, *Ancient Beroia: Prosopography and Society*, Athens 1988 (ΜΕΛΕΤΗΜΑΤΑ, 8), p. 287, No. 1258.

10. See A. Rizakis and I. Touratsoglou, *Ἐπιγραφές Ἄνω Μακεδονίας*, Athens 1985, vol. I (hereafter *EAM*), 20 (Elimia, 2nd–3rd c. AD, where mention is made of a freedman named Βάσος Ἄν [τ]ίπατρον ἐ [λ]]ευθερωθεὶς ὑπὸ Ἄντιπάτρο[υ] τοῦ Ἀλεξάνδρου), 164 (Lynkos, 2nd–3rd c. AD, Ἄντιπάτρος Ῥυμητάλκω), 204 (Orestis, undated, ΗΡΑΚΛΕΑΙ Ἄντιπάτρον).

The precise nature of Antipatros' donation, which, we are told, is made to his homeland in gratitude for his upbringing, is not specified. Judging by other dedicatory inscriptions in which the same formula, *θεοῖς Σεβαστοῖς καὶ τῇ (δείνων) πόλει*, is used, it was most likely a building, with the inscription built into the façade.¹¹ Nor do we know why it is his father who is executing the donation, as the text of the inscription specifically states. The most likely reason is that the donor was absent from the city either temporarily or perhaps even permanently. One cannot exclude also the possibility that he was a child.

The use of the word *θρεπτήριον* in this little city in Upper Macedonia is an interesting aspect of this brief dedicatory inscription. It is found already in Homer and the tragic poets, and as far as we know it is met in a small number of inscriptions of the late Empire relating to individuals making donation or offering other services to their homeland, with the intention of thus repaying it for having reared them, as children might repay their parents.¹² It is used in this sense equally rarely by writers under the Principate.¹³ The fact that the word is used so rarely and above all poetically suggests that the author of the inscription, who may well have been the donor himself, L. Flavius Fabricianus Antipatros, was one of the educated members of this little community.

Even more interesting is the fact that the inscription uses the term *polis*, which touches on the question of the status of Lyke. Lyke, which is on the islet of Ayos Ahillios on Little Prespa,¹⁴ was hitherto known to us chiefly from two

11. See, e.g., the inscription of the 2nd century AD from Thessalonike, IG X 2, 1 102 ll. 1–9 (*Θεοῖς Σεβαστοῖς καὶ τῇ πόλει ... τὸν ναὸν καὶ τὴν στοὰν τῆς Εἰσόδου Μεμφί[τ]ιδος καὶ τὸ πρόπιλον <τ>οῦ [του] τοῦ ναοῦ*), or the inscription of the 1st–2nd century AD from Lakonia, E. Kourinou and G. A. Píkoulas, “Ἐπιγραφή ἀπὸ τὸν Ἀσωπὸ (Πιλύτρα) Λακωνίας”, *HOPOS* 7 (1989), 126 (= *SEG* 39, 1989, 372), ll. 1–3 (*Θεοῖς Σεβαστοῖς [καὶ ταῖς] τῆς Ἀσσιπειῶν πόλ[ει] ἢ δείνας] .. τὸ βαλανεῖον ἐκ θεμελίων...*). All the same, it would seem that the donation is not always specified; see, e.g., the inscription from Selge in Asia Minor (Principate), IvSelge (*JK* 37), 1.

12. The inscriptions are collected and commented on by L. Robert, “Épigrammes d’Aphrodisias”, *Hellenica* IV (1948), 133–5.

13. See Plutarch, *Arat.* 25, 1, *ἅμα τῇ τε πόλει θρεπτήρια τὴν ἐλευθερίαν ἀποδοῦναι φιλοτιμιόμηνος*; Artemidoros, *Onirokr.* III 66, *διὸ θρεπτήρια οὐσημοὶ πατρίδι πρὸς μητρὸς ταῦτα ἀποδίδομι αὐτῇ*.

14. See Papazoglou (n. 1), 242, and Samsaris (n. 2), 153.

inscriptions from the Principate. One of them preserves the name intact;¹⁵ in the other there is only the genitive plural ending of the ethnic, the correct restoration of which [Λυ]χαιῶν, as had already been proposed,¹⁶ is now confirmed by the inscription published here. In the second inscription, which is dated to between the middle and the end of the second century AD, the Lykeans, as a *politeia*, honour the high priest K. Julius Crispus, who is probably the same person as the ambassador of the *ethnos* of the Orestai mentioned in the decree of Battyna.¹⁷

The expression τῇ Λυκαίων [πό]λει which appears in the new inscription, resolves the doubts about the urban nature of the community¹⁸ and firmly establishes that, in the period to which the inscription belongs, there was a, probably small, urban centre on the islet of Ayos Ahillios.

But what was the status of Lyke? Hitherto, scholars have produced various answers to this question, based on the term *politeia* in the inscription of Julius Crispus, which, in the absence of other data, they have interpreted in the same way as the same term in the decree of Battyna. The appearance of the

15. *EAM* 147, l. 1, πολιταρχοῦντος ἐν Λύκη Φιλίππου.

16. *EAM* 149, [Λυ]χαιῶν ἡ πολιτεία / Κ. Ἰούλιον Κρίσπον / τὸν <ἀ>ρχιερῆ καὶ ἐν / εργέτην τεμῆς χά / ριν, δι' ἐπιμελητῶν Νειχάρχου τοῦ Δημητρί / ου καὶ Τ. Φλαουίου / Διονυσίου, incl. older bibliography. The islet of Ayos Ahillios has also yielded the following epigraphical finds: i) fragments of clay roof-tiles bearing stamped names and dated (on the basis of the letter shapes) to the Hellenistic period (*EAM* 179); ii) the 'Macedonian' grave altar of the physician K. Julius Niketes (*EAM* 165); and iii) a four-sided slab of the second half of the third century AD, the text of which survives in very fragmentary condition (*EAM* 183). For the various excavations carried out on the island and their findings, see Ph. Petsas, *ArchDelt* (1961–2), Chron. B 2 219–26 and A. Andreiomenou, *ArchDelt* 22 (1967) Chron. B 2, 416.

17. *EAM* 186, ll. 32–4, διὰ τῶν πρεσβευτῶν το<ῦ> ἔθνους Ἰουλίου Κρίσπου καὶ Φιλάρχου καὶ Κλείτου τῶν / Πτολεμαίου. For the discussion about this identification, see Papazoglou (n. 1), 242 n. 41. The identification makes it likely that Lyke and the Little Prespa area came under the *ethnos* of the Orestai. Samsaris (n. 2), 52–3, supports this on the basis of the area's geomorphology. The editors of the *Corpus* of the inscriptions of Upper Macedonia (see *EAM* 149) leave the subject open, though on the map at the end of their work they include Lyke and the Little Prespa area in Orestis. At all events, wherever Lyke belonged administratively, the importance of the new inscription for the problem of the civic organisation of Upper Macedonia remains the same.

18. See Hatzopoulos (n. 4), 156 n. 28, who disagrees with Papazoglou that Lyke had the status of a *polis* and himself believes that, like Battyna, it was a *kome*. This is in line with his general theory that the only *poleis* of the *koine* of Upper Macedonia were their capitals: see Hatzopoulos, "Épigraphie et villages.." (n. 3), 160.

term *polis* in the new inscription gives us a new datum, which, if we consider it together with the already known term *politeia*, may shed some light on the question of the status of Lyke, as long as we can establish the relationship between the two terms. At first sight, one might say that they relate to two different points in time and reflect a change in the legal status of Lyke from a *polis* to a *politeia* or *vice versa*. However, this presents the drawback that no literary or epigraphical source gives any indication that *politeia* means a form of civic organisation different from that of a *polis*.¹⁹ It seems much more likely that both terms were in use at the same point in time in the inscriptions of Lyke; which means that *polis* in the new inscription denotes either the urban centre of the whole of the autonomous community of the Lykeans, which is called a *politeia*,²⁰ or, more probably, the city of Lyke itself, as a term equivalent to, and indiscriminately used for, *politeia*.

At this point, one might well wonder whether and when the term *politeia* is anywhere specifically defined as an autonomous city. There is epigraphical evidence to show that the term did in fact acquire this meaning as early as the Hellenistic period: in a well known Larisean decree of 217 BC, for instance, are mentioned at the same time the equivalent formulas *ψαφισαμένης τῆς πόλεως* and *ἐψάφισται τῶ πολιτείᾳ*.²¹ But even if one denies that the

19. However, attempts have been made to interpret it in this way. Thus, for instance, according to Hatzopoulos, "Epigraphie et villages" (n. 3), 158–9, in the inscriptions of Upper Macedonia the term *politeia* means *kome*. Furthermore, in the dedication from Bragylai in Krestonia (*SEG* 12, 1955, 349: *Βραγυλίων ἡ βουλή καὶ ἡ πόλις καὶ ἡ πολιτεία*) to Hadrian and his wife Sabina, the term *politeia* is interpreted by M. B. Hatzopoulos and L. D. Loukopoulou, *Morrylos, cité de la Chrestonie*, Athens 1989 (Μελετήματα 7), pp. 61ff., as neighbouring *komai* forming a 'sympolity' with the nearest urban centre; and by Papazoglou ("Encore une fois" [n. 2], partic. p. 238) as the rural population of the *politeia/civitas* of Bragylai, as she had already proposed in an earlier study, "Une signification tardive du mot ΠΟΛΙΤΕΙΑ", *REG* 52 (1959), 100–5 (cf. *Bull. épigr.* 1960, 202).

20. It goes without saying that, apart from the population of the city, the *politeia* of the Lykeans would have included the inhabitants of the lakeside *komai* (or settlements), archaeological traces of at least one of which have been located in the village of Pyle, southwest of Little Prespa: see Papazoglou (n. 1), 242, and Samsaris (n. 2), 167. On the basis of the remains of a wall he has located, Samsaris also mentions a 'fortress settlement' under the Principate on Kale Hill between the villages of Lefkonas and Karyes, 200m west of Little Prespa. With the evidence available, it is not possible to determine the administrative connection between these *komai* and the *polis* of Lyke.

21. See *IG* IX 2, 517, ll. 9 and 17 respectively, cf. l. 41; for the date of the decree see Chr. Habicht, "Epigraphische Zeugnisse zur Geschichte Thessaliens unter der makedonischen

use of the term could date back to the Hellenistic period in the case of the Lyke inscription (and the Upper Macedonian inscriptions in general) on the grounds that all the available evidence from the same area dates to the Principate, it is by no means difficult to understand the term as signifying a city. In this case, as has already been suggested, the usage would be a Latinism, because Greek translations of Roman administrative documents frequently use the term *politeia* for the Latin *civitas*.²²

From what has been said above, it is clear that the two inscriptions from Lyke, taken together, give us no choice but to accept that its *politeia* and, likewise, the other two communities attested by the same term (Battyna and Oblostai) were indeed cities — i.e. civic communities²³ — regardless of whether the use of the term in the relevant inscriptions is a Latinism (which it very probably is, at least in the light of the existing data) or part of the Hellenistic tradition.

This finding changes the picture we have had hitherto of the degree of urbanisation and the civic organisation of the Orestis area: to the unidentified city mentioned in the list of ephoroi (of AD 146/7) from Sisani²⁴ we may now add the civic community (*politeia*) of Lyke; and, equally, of Battyna, because, thanks to this new inscription, we now have strong grounds for believing that

Herrschaft”, *Ancient Macedonia* I, Thessalonike 1970, 273 - 279. The formula ἐνφάρισται τῆ πολιτεία also appears in the decree *SEG* 27, 1977, 202, l. 15 (of 220-210 BC), with which Larisa honours Philip V’s officer Chrysogonos.

22. To the examples collected by Papazoglou (“Encore une fois” [n. 3], 327–8), who was the first to moot this hypothesis, should be added such interesting epigraphical texts as an excerpt from the copy of the *Lex de provinciis praetoriis* (of 100 BC) found at Knidos; see IvKnidos (*IK* 41) I, 31 III l. 31 πρὸς τοὺς δῆμους πολιτείας τε (which corresponds to the Latin *gentes civitatesque*; see comments on the inscription), and a provision from the *Monumentum Ephesianum*: see H. Engelmann and D. Knibbe, “Das Zollgesetz der Provincia Asia”, *EA* 14, 1989, 103 A 39 αἰτίνες πολιτεία [ι καὶ ἄτινα ἔθ]νη καὶ οὔτινες δῆμοί εἰσιν ἔξω διοικήσεως Ἐφρῶσις, etc. (see comments on the inscription). See also P. Herrmann, “Rom und die Asylie griechischer Heiligtümer, *Chriron* 19 (1989) 113 ll. 33 - 4 τ [ῆ]ν / πο [λ]ιτεῖαν τῶν Σαρδιανῶν.

23. See already Papazoglou, (n. 1), where she uses the word *cité* for Lyke (p. 242) and the phrase *communauté autonome* for Battyna (p. 241); cf. *eadem*, “Encore une fois” (n. 2), 243, where the three *politeiai* of Upper Macedonia are collectively referred to as *petites communautés civiques*.

24. See *EAM* 187. Although reservations have been expressed as to whether the inscription was found *in situ* (see Papazoglou [n. 1], 244), most scholars accept that it originates from the

the latter's *politeia* was an civic community, like Lyke. The same must apply to the area of Elimia, where, apart from Aiane, there is an inscriptional reference to the Ὀβλοστίων πολιτεία.²⁵ Whether there was the same degree of urbanisation and similar civic organisation in the rest of Upper Macedonia is a question to which only new epigraphical and archaeological finds can give a definite answer.

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area of ancient Orestis: see, e.g., Rizakis and Touratsoglou, *EAM* 187, and N. G. Hammond, *A History of Macedonia*, Oxford 1972, vol. 1, n. 114. K. Buraselis, "Bemerkungen zum Dekret der Battynäer", *Ancient Macedonia*, V, Thessalonike 1993, p. 287 n. 24, also considers this origin very likely. For geographical reasons, however, Samsaris (n. 2), 134–5, suggests that the city mentioned in the inscription belonged to Elimia.

25. *EAM* 37. According to some scholars (see Papazoglou, "Encore une fois" [n. 3], 242, and G. Karamitrou-Mentesidi, *Κοζάνη, Πόλη Ἐλιμιώτιδος*, Thessalonike 1993, p. 28), the institutions of the boule and the [demos] mentioned in the honorary inscription *EAM* 34 (of the 2nd c. AD) belong to an unknown city of the *Koinon* of the Elimiotai, which was on the site of modern Kozani. This is challenged by Hatzopoulos, *Institutions* (n. 3), 89–90, who does not regard it as necessarily so and suggests that they are the boule and the demos of the *Koinon* of the Elimiotai. For new inscriptional evidence attesting the existence, at least in the 3rd century BC, of an otherwise unknown city in Elimiotis named Tela, see P. M. Nigdelis, "Μακεδονικά Σύμμεικτα", *Τεκμήρια* 1 (1995) 173–9, *SEG* 43, 1993 [1996], 937.

ΠΕΡΙΛΗΨΗ

Πόλεις και Πολιτεῖαι στην ἼΑνω Μακεδονία κατά τήν Αὐτοκρατορική ἐποχή:
Μιά νέα ἐπιγραφή ἀπό τήν Λύκη τῆς Ὀρεστίδος.

Ὁ προσδιορισμός τοῦ νομικοῦ καθεστώτος τῶν κοινοτήτων τῆς ἼΑνω Μακεδονίας πού εἶναι γνωστές ὡς πολιτεῖαι, δηλ. τῶν πολιτειῶν τῶν Βαττυναίων καί τῶν Λυκαίων στην Ὀρεστίδα καί τῶν Ὀβλοστίων στην Ἐλίμεια ἀποτελεῖ γιά τήν ἔρευνα ἕνα δυσεπίλυτο πρόβλημα. Ὅρισμένοι ἐρευνητές πιστεύουν ὅτι οἱ κοινότητες αὐτές ἦσαν πόλεις, ἐνῶ ἄλλοι ὑποστηρίζουν ὅτι ἐπρόκειτο γιά φυλετικές κοινότητες ἢ κῶμες. Νέο φῶς στό πρόβλημα ρίχνει ἡ σύντομη ἀναθηματική ἐπιγραφή (τοῦ 2ου ἢ τῶν ἀρχῶν τοῦ 3ου αἰ. π.Χ.) πού βρέθηκε πρόσφατα στή νησίδα τοῦ Ἁγίου Ἀχιλλεῖου τῆς Μικρῆς Πρέσπας καί δημοσιεύεται ἐδῶ γιά πρώτη φορά. Στήν ἐπιγραφή αὐτή ἡ Λύκη, ἡ ὁποία μᾶς ἦταν γνωστή ἀπό ἄλλη ἐπιγραφική μαρτυρία (EAM 149) ὡς *Λυκαίων* πολιτεία, ἐμφανίζεται ὡς *Λυκαίων* [πό]λις. Τό νέο δεδομένο μᾶς ἐπιτρέπει νά ὑποστηρίξουμε ὅτι ἡ κοινότητα αὐτή, καθῶς ἐπίσης, ἀναλογικά, καί οἱ ἄλλες γνωστές *πολιτεῖαι* τῆς ἼΑνω Μακεδονίας ἦσαν πόλεις.



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