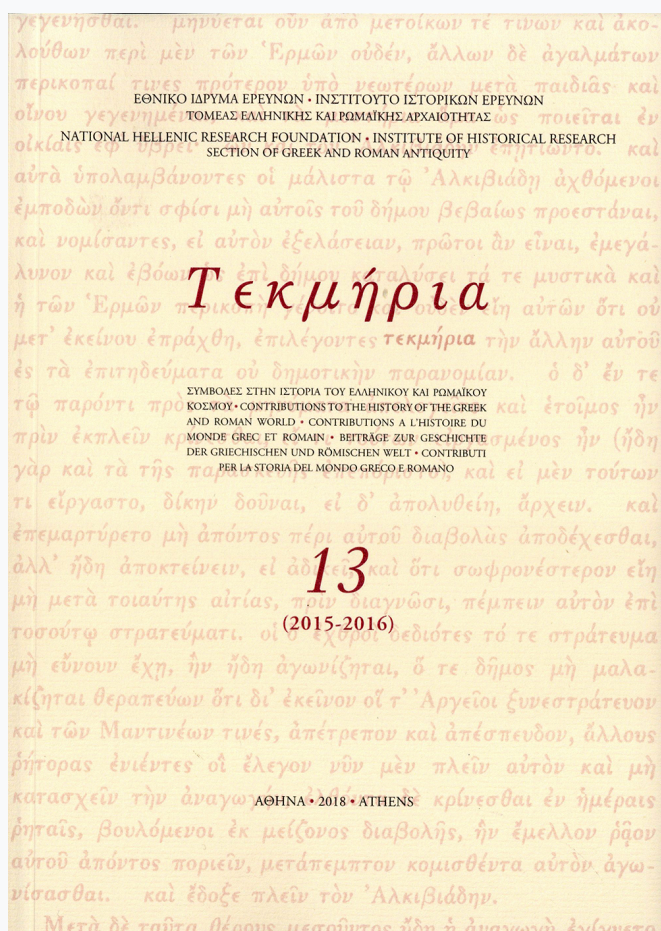


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### A new δεκαστάδιον (milestone) from Amphipolis

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## A New Δεκαστάδιον (Milestone) from Amphipolis

Unlike the Via Egnatia, pre-Roman roads in Macedonia are known only through a few passages in the ancient authors<sup>1</sup> and a small number of inscriptions.<sup>2</sup> The latter inscriptions indicate distances in *stadia* and are variously referred to by scholars as “Meilenstein”, “milestone”, “Distanzanzeiger” or “δεκαστάδιον”, which we adopt here as being the least problematic of these terms.<sup>3</sup> To the few known *dekastadia* a new one may now be added, which has been recently excavated outside Amphipolis.

According to the Catalogue of the Archaeological Museum of Amphipolis, Inv. No. 1944, the *dekastadion* was found in the summer of 2011 north of the city

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1. For the literary sources, see Ch. Edson, “The Location of Cellae and the Route of the Via Egnatia in Western Macedonia”, *CP* 46 (1951) 11, and K.D. Samsaris, “Τὸ ὁδικὸ δίκτυο τῆς Ἀνατολικῆς Μακεδονίας ἀπὸ τὰ ἀρχαῖα χρόνια ὡς τὴ ρωμαϊκὴ κατάκτηση”, *Makedonika* 14 (1974) 123-138.

2. It is about the following texts: *EAM* 109 (Eordaia); *SEG* 35 (1985) 752 (Isar-Marvinci [= Idomene?]); P. Pilhofer, *Philippi II. Katalog der Inschriften von Philippi* (2nd revised edition, Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament 119, Tübingen 2009; first edition 2000) no. 415a/G580 (= *SEG* 51 [2001] 823 [Philippi]); *EKM* II 561 (Pella). For the road signs from Drama (L. Heuzey and H. Daumet, *Mission archéologique de Macédoine* [Paris 1876] 143, no. 73) and Philippi (P. Collart, “Inscriptions de Philippes”, *BCH* 57 [1933] 313-379], see Ch. Koukouli-Chrysanthaki, “À propos des voies de communication du royaume de Macédoine”, in R. Frei-Stolba and K. Gex (eds.), *Recherches récentes sur le monde hellénistique. Actes du colloque international organisé à l'occasion du 60e anniversaire de Pierre Ducrey (Lausanne, 20-21 novembre 1998)* (Bern – Frankfurt am Main 2001) 56 with the relevant bibliography.

3. For terms, such as “Meilenstein” or “milestone”, see the criticism expressed by P.J. Thonemann, “Hellenistic Inscriptions from Lydia”, *EpigAnat* 36 (2003) 95 n. 2, who prefers “δεκαστάδιον”. In Modern Greek the appropriate term σταδιοδείκτης is a recently coined word used solely for academic purposes.

in the area of the ancient necropolis, 200 m. northeast of the intersection of the modern Thessaloniki-Serres national road and its branch leading to Amphipolis. It is a stele of coarse-grained white marble, of which only part of the left margin is preserved. The front side of the stele (A) preserves three lines of text, while its back side (B) is no longer extant. Dimensions: height 0.27 m., width 0.23 m., thickness 0.13 m. Height of letters from 0.025 to 0.033 m., inter-linear space 0.023 m. (fig. 1). The text of side A runs as follows:

A. ΕΚΦΙ[---]  
 ΣΤΑΔ[---]  
 ΚΟΣΙΟ[---]  
 [-----]

A. L. 1: Of the *epsilon* and the *iota* only the lower part is preserved. L. 3: Of the *iota* and the *omicron* the upper half is preserved.

The writing is very careful. The letters bear small apices and lay wide apart. The two oblique bars of *kappa* are of the same length and almost perpendicular to each other. The *omicron* appears slightly smaller than the other characters. The letter forms and the overall impression of the script allow a dating of the inscription to the third or second century BC.<sup>4</sup>

Since only a few letters are preserved on side A, a number of different restorations of the inscription might seem equally possible; and the discovery of the stele in the northern necropolis of the city could even be seen to warrant an interpretation as a grave inscription. However, such an interpretation must be rejected on the grounds of the following *dekastadion*, which was found recently in the village Kalambaki, outside Philippi, and indicates the distance between Philippi and Amphipolis (figs. 2-3).<sup>5</sup>

4. Compare the form of letters of the inscriptions: SEG 27 (1977) 245 (Amphipolis, 217 BC); SEG 39 (1989) 605 (Morrylos, 205/4 or 131/0 BC); IG X 2.1, 3 (Thessaloniki, 186 BC); SEG 46 (1996) 717 (Amphipolis, 182 BC); EAM 87 (Eordaia, 180 BC).

5. It was first published by Koukouli-Chrysanthaki, "Voies" (see n. 2) 53-64 (= Bull'Épigr 2002, 289; SEG 51 [2001] 823) and republished by Pilhofer, *Philippi* II<sup>2</sup> (see n. 2) no. 415a/G580.

A.	Ἐκ Φιλίππων	B.	Ἐξ Ἀμφιπόλ[ε]-
	στάδιοι τριά-		ως στάδιοι
	κοντα.		διακόσ[ιοι...]
			[-----]

There is a striking similarity between the text of face A of the Kalambaki find and the remaining traces on face A of the Amphipolis inscription with respect to their layout, wording, writing and letter height. This extensive similarity leaves no doubt that they both belong to the same kind of inscription and, more importantly, that they contain distance information relating to the Philippi-Amphipolis route.

Thanks to this new inscription the number of *dekastadia* originating from pre-Roman Macedonia increases now to five.<sup>6</sup> In all these cases, the usual formula “ἐκ + city name” is used, which is also attested outside Macedonia.<sup>7</sup> Unlike milestones (*milliaria*) of the Roman period, which had the shape of a column, the *dekastadia* of Hellenistic Macedonia are always stelae of two kinds: stelae which were engraved only on the front side of the stone, indicating distances from a certain town, and opisthographic stelae which informed travellers about the respective distances of the location where the milestone was erected from cities in opposite directions on the same road.<sup>8</sup> Due to the very bad state of preservation of the Amphipolis *dekastadion* we cannot say with certainty whether its back side was also inscribed. However, given the striking similarity with the *dekastadion* from Kalambaki and the fact that both were erected on the same road, it would seem a justifiable assumption that the new inscription was opisthographic as well.

Having determined the nature of the new inscription, we need to inquire if there is any possibility of restoring its heavily damaged or partly fully obliterated text. In this regard, the main question which arises concerns lines 2-3 of side A, i.e. the distance in *stadia* between its original position and Philippi.

6. See n. 2.

7. See e.g. H. van Effenterre, “Fortins crétois”, *RA* 31-32 (1948) 1045 (Crete); *SEG* 47 (1997) 1624 (Ephesos); *BullÉpigr* 1965, 316 (Thasos).

8. According to Koukouli-Chrysanthaki, “Voies” (see n. 2) 55, this is due to the fact that there were two milestone systems in the Macedonian Kingdom: the milestones of one type were erected along the “Royal Route”, i.e. the main road of the Kingdom, while milestones of the second type along secondary routes.

The distance between Amphipolis and Philippi (48 km.) corresponds to 32 or 33 miles according to various *itineraria*,<sup>9</sup> but it is not easily convertible to *stadia* since even in antiquity there was no consensus as to the conversion of miles to *stadia*.<sup>10</sup> In her edition of the Kalambaki inscription, Koukouli-Chrysanthaki rightly commented that it is not easy to convert exactly meters to *stadia*, because this unit of length was not uniformly defined by the Greeks. She also observed that, in the case of Macedonia, we ignore how many meters fit into a Macedonian *stadion*. All in all, calculations vary from 149.4 to 213.43 meters,<sup>11</sup> something which means that the afore mentioned distance in the *dekastadion* of Amphipolis is less than 300 *stadia*.<sup>12</sup> We may, thus, safely restore on lines 2-3 of text A at least the words  $\sigma\tau\acute{\alpha}\delta[\iota\omicron\iota\ \delta\iota\alpha]\chi\acute{o}\sigma\iota\omicron[ \iota\ \text{---}]$ . The stone is broken after line 3, and there is no way of determining if inscription A continued beyond the preserved lines. One may equally reasonably assume that the now entirely effaced side B would have recorded a distance from Amphipolis.

Based on the *dekastadion*'s find spot we could further formulate an assumption about this stele's original location. It is usually assumed that the pre-Roman roads in Macedonia, as elsewhere, bore distance indicators (*dekastadia*) every ten *stadia*, which practically means every 1.5 or 2 km.<sup>13</sup> As mentioned above, it is not known whether the new *dekastadion* was found in its original location; nor do we know the starting point of measuring the distance between Amphipolis and Philippi. These circumstances would seem, at first glance, to

9. *Itinerarium provinciarum Antonini Augusti* 320 and 331.

10. See Strabo 7.7.4 C322:  $\lambda\omicron\gamma\iota\zeta\omicron\mu\acute{\epsilon}\nu\omega\ \delta\acute{\epsilon},\ \acute{\omega}\varsigma\ \mu\acute{\epsilon}\nu\ \omicron\iota\ \mu\omicron\lambda\lambda\omicron\iota,\ \tau\acute{o}\ \mu\acute{\iota}\lambda\iota\omicron\nu\ \delta\epsilon\kappa\alpha\sigma\tau\acute{\alpha}\delta\iota\omicron\nu\ \tau\epsilon\tau\tau\alpha\chi\iota\sigma\chi\acute{\iota}\lambda\iota\omicron\iota\ \grave{\alpha}\nu\ \epsilon\acute{\iota}\epsilon\nu\ \sigma\tau\acute{\alpha}\delta\iota\omicron\iota\ \kappa\alpha\iota\ \acute{\epsilon}\pi'\ \alpha\upsilon\tau\omicron\iota\varsigma\ \delta\iota\alpha\chi\acute{o}\sigma\iota\omicron\iota\ \omicron\gamma\delta\omicron\eta\kappa\omicron\nu\tau\alpha,\ \acute{\omega}\varsigma\ \delta\acute{\epsilon}\ \Pi\omicron\lambda\acute{\upsilon}\delta\iota\omicron\varsigma\ \pi\omicron\sigma\tau\iota\theta\epsilon\iota\varsigma\ \tau\tilde{\omega}\ \delta\epsilon\kappa\alpha\sigma\tau\alpha\delta\acute{\iota}\omega\ \delta\acute{\iota}\pi\lambda\epsilon\theta\omicron\nu,\ \acute{\epsilon}\ \acute{\epsilon}\sigma\tau\iota\ \tau\acute{\rho}\iota\tau\omicron\nu\ \sigma\tau\alpha\delta\acute{\iota}\omicron\iota\upsilon,\ \pi\omicron\sigma\theta\epsilon\tau\acute{\epsilon}\omicron\nu\ \acute{\alpha}\lambda\lambda\omicron\upsilon\varsigma\ \sigma\tau\alpha\delta\acute{\iota}\omicron\iota\upsilon\varsigma\ \acute{\epsilon}\kappa\alpha\tau\omicron\nu\ \acute{\epsilon}\beta\delta\omicron\mu\acute{\eta}\kappa\omicron\nu\tau\alpha\ \delta\epsilon\kappa\acute{\omega},\ \tau\acute{o}\ \tau\acute{\rho}\iota\tau\omicron\nu\ \tau\omicron\upsilon\ \tau\tilde{\omega}\nu\ \mu\acute{\iota}\lambda\iota\omicron\nu\ \acute{\alpha}\rho\iota\theta\mu\omicron\upsilon.$

11. See RE III A.2 (1929), col. 1961, s.v. Stadion (F. Lehmann-Haupt).

12. According to Koukouli-Chrysanthaki's calculations, "Voies" (see n. 2) 54, the distance between Philippi and Amphipolis was 256-264 *stadia*.

13. A. Panayotou and P. Chrysostomou, "Inscriptions de la Bottiée et de l'Almopie en Macédoine", *BCH* 117 (1993) 396 n. 116; Koukouli-Chrysanthaki, "Voies" (see n. 2) 54 n. 26; see also the commentary of EAM 109 and EKM II 561. For a more thorough discussion, see Thonemann, "Hellenistic Inscriptions" (see n. 3) 95 n. 2. The *terminus technicus* "δεκαστάδιον" appears in IG IV<sup>2</sup> 1, 121, ll. 78-80. Regarding the responsibilities of "ἀγορανόμοι" in India, Strabo (15.1.50 C708) writes:  $\acute{o}\delta\omicron\omicron\pi\omicron\iota\omicron\upsilon\varsigma\ \delta\acute{\epsilon}\ \kappa\alpha\iota\ \kappa\alpha\tau\acute{\alpha}\ \delta\acute{\epsilon}\kappa\alpha\ \sigma\tau\acute{\alpha}\delta\iota\alpha\ \sigma\tau\acute{\eta}\lambda\eta\nu\ \tau\iota\theta\acute{\epsilon}\alpha\sigma\iota\ \tau\acute{\alpha}\varsigma\ \acute{\epsilon}\kappa\tau\omicron\pi\acute{\alpha}\varsigma\ \kappa\alpha\iota\ \tau\acute{\alpha}\ \delta\iota\alpha\sigma\tau\acute{\eta}\mu\alpha\tau\alpha\ \delta\eta\lambda\omicron\upsilon\sigma\alpha\nu.$

preclude any possibility of defining the stone's original position. Nevertheless, taking into account (a) that the stele was excavated 200 m. northeast of the intersection of the modern Thessaloniki-Serres national road and its branch leading to Amphipolis, as well as (b) that its find spot was about 1550 m. from the Strymon bridge, which is adjacent to gates A and C of the city, we cannot rule out the possibility that the stele was erected near its find spot, and that it was the first one on the Amphipolis – Philippi route. If so, we should restore on line 2 of side B [στάδιοι δέκα], of course with the appropriate reservations. We, therefore, propose the following restoration for sides A and B of the Amphipolis *dekastadion*:

A.	Ἐκ Φιλίππων]	B.	[Ἐξ Ἀμφιπόλεως]
	στάδ[ιοι δια]-		[στάδιοι δέκα? ---]
	κόσιοι[ι --?---]		
	[-----]		

The importance of the new *dekastadion* as a historical document is twofold. On the one hand, it confirms the path of the road between Amphipolis and Philippi: the road passed along the north side of Mount Pangaion, as happened later with the Via Egnatia<sup>14</sup> (fig. 4). On the other hand, it provides welcome insights into the institutions of the Macedonian Kingdom. Namely, that of the relation between the royal administration and Macedonia's cities concerning construction and maintenance of the Kingdom's roads. As we know from literary sources, the Macedonian kings took several initiatives with regard to road construction and maintenance.<sup>15</sup> The four previously known *dekastadia* do not provide any direct information to this effect. However, the variety of their letter forms has led Koukouli-Chrysanthaki to the conclusion that, although the entire road network had been developed by the central government, some cities reserved the right to plan and carry out road works in their territories by royal order or on their own initiative.<sup>16</sup> The new inscription from

14. For the route of Via Egnatia between Amphipolis and Philippi, see Y.A. Lolos, *Via Egnatia / Εγνατία Οδός* (Athens 2008) 82-84.

15. Thuc. 2.100.2; Arr. *Anab.* 1.26.1; App. *Syr.* 9.5.23.

16. Koukouli-Chrysanthaki, "Voies" (see n. 2) 56: "Ainsi, alors que l'ensemble du réseau routier était conçu par le pouvoir central, royal, on ne doit pas exclure que le bornage et l'exécution de travaux routiers revêtent un caractère local. Ce type de travaux

Amphipolis neither supports nor opposes this conclusion. However, taking also into account the apparently close resemblance of the find discussed here with the *dekastadion* of Kalambaki, regarding both its layout and writing, we cannot avoid attributing both of them to the same workshop. This could not have happened if the central government had no direct control over the main Philippi-Amphipolis road and its maintenance.

To sum up: The new inscription provides further evidence for the Macedonian precursor of the Via Egnatia from Philippi to Amphipolis. Most importantly, it testifies for the existence of a well-organized road network in Hellenistic Macedonia; a road network that was developed by the central government before it was acquired and improved by the Romans.

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publics peuvent avoir été planifiés et réalisés par certaines villes du royaume macédonien sur leur territoire, sur ordre royal ou de leur propre initiative”.

### Summary

The article presents a *dekastadion* (σταδιοδείκτης, milestone, Distanzanzeiger) that was recently found in the area of Amphipolis. Thanks to the new inscription, the number of *dekastadia* originating from pre-Roman Macedonia increases now to five. The new find confirms that in pre-Roman Macedonia the road between Amphipolis and Philippi was passing along the north side of Mount Pangaion, as it did in the later Via Egnatia. It also suggests that the central government had direct control over the construction and maintenance of road infrastructures in the Kingdom of Macedon.



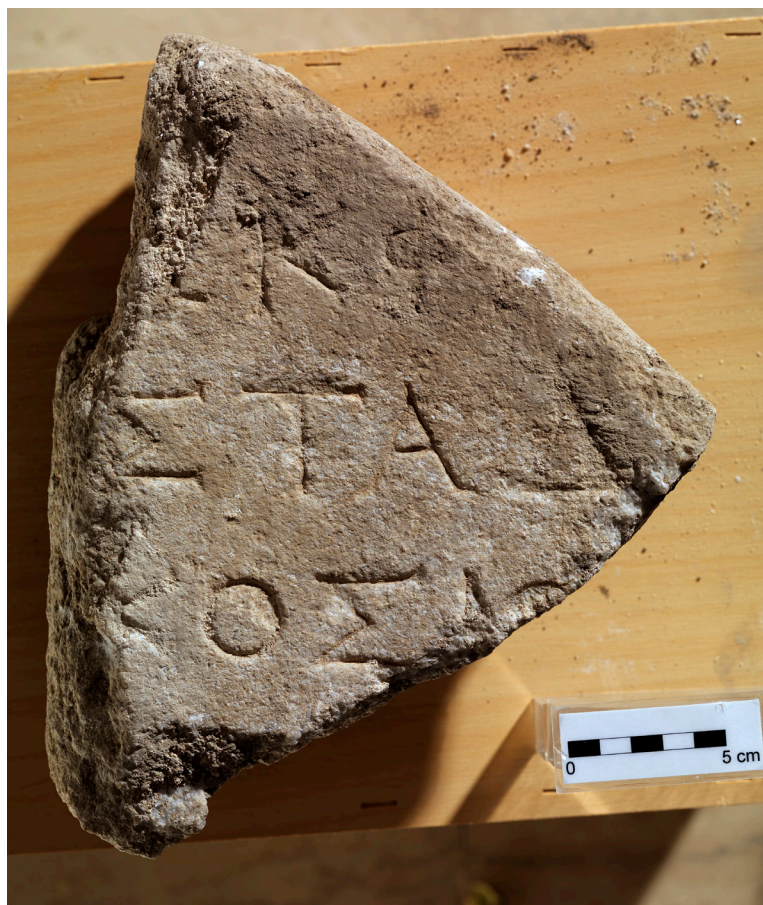


Fig. 1. Milestone from Amphipolis.

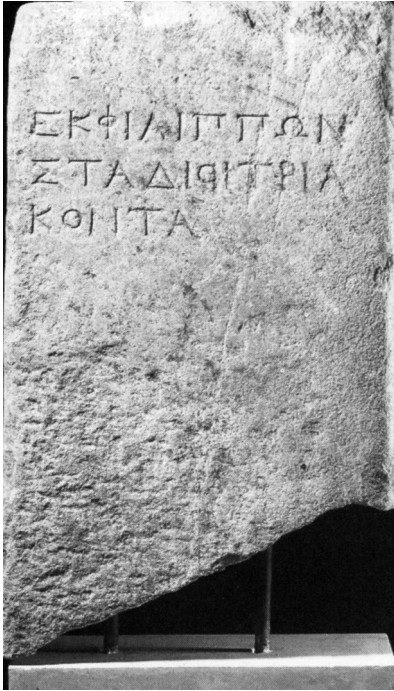


Fig. 2. Milestone from Kalambaki  
(face A).



Fig. 3. Milestone from Kalambaki  
(face B).

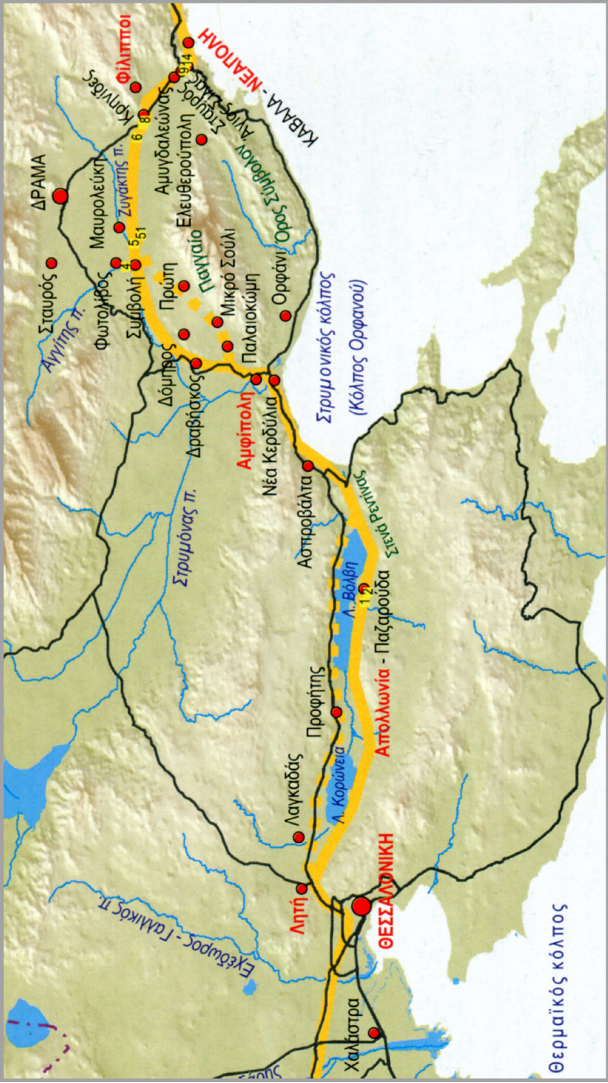


Fig. 4. The route of Via Egnatia between Thessaloniki and Philippi  
(after Y.A. Lolos, *Via Egnatia* [see n. 14] 37, fig. 4).