The Authority of Paul’s Memory and Early Christian Identity at Philippi[[1]](#footnote-1)\*

Cédric Brélaz

The city of Philippi in the Roman province of Macedonia is of special importance for the history of early Christianity. It was named after King Philip II of Macedon who in 356 BC founded a Greek city on the site of a former Thasian settlement called Krenides. This Greek city was turned into a Roman colony in 42 BC after the battle which was fought in the nearby plain between the army of Mark Anthony and Octavian, Caesar’s heirs, and the army of the Republicans Brutus and Cassius. It was then later re-established and reinforced by Octavian (Augustus) in 30 BC.[[2]](#footnote-2) According to the Acts of the Apostles, Philippi was the first city on the European mainland to receive Paul on his visit around AD 49. The long passage in Acts 16:12–40 devoted to Paul’s first stay in Philippi comprises some of the most iconic moments in the narrative, such as the conversion of Lydia, the questioning of Paul by the colony’s local officials on the forum, and the miraculous release of Paul and Silas from jail thanks to an earthquake which was depicted as a divine intervention.[[3]](#footnote-3) Acts 16:37–38 is also one of only two instances where Paul’s Roman citizenship is asserted in the narrative. The whole passage had a considerable influence on later Christian literature and tradition, as shown, for example, by the figure of Lydia who is still revered today by the Greek Orthodox Church as the first person to convert to Christianity in Europe, and to whom a baptistery was dedicated next to the river where Paul allegedly met members of the Judaizing community of Philippi. Paul’s visit to Philippi was therefore a landmark event for the spread of Christianity in Greece.

Paul himself acknowledged in his letter to the Philippians that he had a special connection with Philippi: the local church he had founded there had remained one of the most faithful to him, supporting him in hard times and even helping him with funding when he needed it.[[4]](#footnote-4) Paul probably visited Philippi several other times during his journeys to Europe. Due to its location in eastern Macedonia at the crossroads of land and sea routes between East and West, Philippi became an important hub for Christian connectivity between the communities of Asia Minor and those of mainland Greece.[[5]](#footnote-5) The importance of the site of Philippi for early Christianity is also reflected by the fact that we find there one of the earliest examples of a cathedral church in Greece and the Balkans, which, it must be stressed, was explicitly dedicated to Paul – this is an aspect I shall focus on later in this paper. In early Byzantine times, taking advantage of its position between Thessalonica and Constantinople, Philippi became a major centre for Christian worship in the Balkan peninsula and several magnificent basilicas were built in the city with the help of architects who had been previously involved in the building of the Hagia Sophia in the capital.[[6]](#footnote-6) For all of these reasons, special attention has been devoted to Philippi by historians of early Christianity as well as by New Testament scholars. Because of the extent of its Christian heritage, Greece officially applied in 2015 for the inclusion of the site of Philippi to the UNESCO World Heritage List, application which was successfully granted in July 2016.

The aim of this paper will be first to give an overview of the extant epigraphic evidence related to early Christianity at Philippi, which can be substantially supplemented by new material; second, to assess the significance of the memory of Paul for the emergence and the development of the local church in Philippi from the first to the sixth centuries, surveying the corresponding archaeological and epigraphic evidence; third, to examine how the church interacted with, and gradually encroached on, the secular political institutions of the colony from the fourth century onwards.

# 1. Christian Inscriptions from Philippi: An Updated Survey

The launch of the *Inscriptiones Christianae Graecae* (*ICG*) database by the Excellence Cluster 264 Topoi, Berlin, gives us the opportunity to update our information about Christian inscriptions at Philippi. I would like to give here a brief overview of what is known so far with regard to Christian epigraphy at Philippi and to give some perspective on future research prospects which will be made possible thanks to new unpublished material. The fundamental work on Christian epigraphy in Macedonia remains Denis Feissel’s *Recueil des inscriptions chrétiennes de Macédoine* (*RICM*), which was published more than thirty years ago. The corpus of evidence gathered by Feissel of course needs to be updated, but any research on Christian epigraphy in Macedonia still has to start with this book. A few more than thirty inscriptions from Philippi were included in Feissel’s volume.[[7]](#footnote-7) These inscriptions were also taken in the collection of Philippian inscriptions by Peter Pilhofer, who was able to add about fifteen inscriptions which had been published after Feissel’s volume appeared.[[8]](#footnote-8) Most of them were epitaphs. All of this material provides information about approximately fifty people (male and female) belonging to the local Christian community, about their social background, their occupations and, for some of them, about their ranks and the offices they held within the church. Two unusual documents should be mentioned here: first, a copy of the pseudepigraphic correspondence between King Abgar of Edessa and Jesus;[[9]](#footnote-9) second, a prayer to Christ and to the Virgin Mary.[[10]](#footnote-10) Both were engraved on the walls of Philippi in the fifth or sixth century and displayed near the eastern gate in order to be visible to anyone entering the city.

Nearly thirty more unpublished Christian inscriptions can now be added to Feissel’s and Pilhofer’s inventories. These new inscriptions will be included in the third volume of the *Corpus des inscriptions grecques et latines de Philippes* (*CIPh*), which will be entirely devoted to the Christian and Byzantine city.[[11]](#footnote-11) The publication of the epigraphic corpus of Philippi is an ongoing joint project involving the École française d’Athènes, which supported the first excavations carried out on the site shortly before World War I,[[12]](#footnote-12) the University of Lausanne (Switzerland),[[13]](#footnote-13) and the Greek archaeological services, especially the Ephorate of Kavala. The first published volume of the series bearing the issue number *CIPh* 2/1 appeared in 2014 and brought together all of the inscriptions related to the administration and to the public life of the Roman colony, ninety-six of which were still unpublished. New inscriptions form a very important part of our evidence at Philippi and the forthcoming publication of the other volumes of the series (especially the two volumes which will be devoted to the pagan cults and to the epitaphs of the Roman colony)[[14]](#footnote-14) should dramatically change our understanding of the social, cultural, and religious context in which Paul’s mission took place and out of which the Christian community emerged.

These thirty new Christian inscriptions are mostly epitaphs. This material will allow us to expand the Christian prosopography of Philippi with about twenty individuals, including five women. Some of these people’s names seem to be unattested, while others could be of Thracian origin. If it is confirmed, this information would be extremely important since the native population of the colony seems to have so far remained absent from the local Christian epigraphy, probably because of Paul’s focus on the Greeks living in the town during his mission.[[15]](#footnote-15) In this respect, it is also interesting to note a possible Latin epitaph, since we know so far of only two Christian inscriptions in Philippi in this language, both of which were found in the *extra muros* basilica.[[16]](#footnote-16) Even if Latin was maintained longer in Philippi than in most Roman colonies settled in the Greek-speaking provinces, and even if it could still be used for official purposes in the colony until the beginning of the fifth century,[[17]](#footnote-17) the predominant language of Christianity at Philippi had always been Greek. Finally, we can observe two new instances of the rank of διάκονος among the offices of the local church,[[18]](#footnote-18) and gain some information about the social status and occupations of the members of the Christian community. One inscription from the fourth century, for instance, refers to Christian freedmen. These new Christian inscriptions come from very different places, from most of the churches built within the city and its immediate surroundings, as well as from the colony’s territory,[[19]](#footnote-19) especially from the Pieria valley at the foot of the Pangaion and from Kipia, where an early Christian church was built next to a sanctuary dedicated to a native Thracian Hero God who was called the Hero Auloneites.[[20]](#footnote-20) This evidence thus provides valuable information on the geographical distribution of Christian worship in eastern Macedonia in general.

All of this new material will allow us to improve our understanding of Christianity at Philippi, though maybe not during its earliest stages (since no inscription can be assigned with certainty to the period prior to the fourth century), but at least from the time when Christianity gained recognition and visibility in the colony from the beginning of the fourth century until the mid-sixth century, that is, in the period during which Christianity thrived the most and when seven different churches were built in the city and its vicinity.

# 2. Asserting Local Christian Identity and Authority through Paul’s Memory

The second part of this paper will assess how significant the memory of Paul’s stay and ministry at Philippi was for building the identity of the local church. Unlike the Jewish cult, Christianity at Philippi is not attested by inscriptions until the first half of the fourth century. I am referring here to the funerary inscription dating to the mid-third century and mentioning the “synagogue” (συναγωγή) as the recipient of the fine to be paid by the desecrator of the tomb.[[21]](#footnote-21) This inscription is an important piece of evidence for the history of the Jewish community in the colony, since we are told in Acts 16:13 that there was at Philippi at the time of Paul only a modest, open air “place of prayer” (προσευχή) outside the city walls, where “God-fearers,” that is Judaizing people, customarily met to pray, and not a permanent building.[[22]](#footnote-22) This inscription tends to prove that in the meantime the Jewish community had grown in the colony and had become more institutionalized as a group.

One of the earliest, if not the earliest, pieces of epigraphic evidence for Christianity at Philippi is probably the dedication of the mosaic floor of the cathedral church by the bishop Porphyrios. Bishop Porphyrios is known to have taken part in the Council of Serdica in AD 343.[[23]](#footnote-23) With this inscription, the Christian community suddenly appears in our evidence as a well-organized group with its ecclesiastical official and its own meeting place in the city centre of the colony. Apart from the fact that this is one of the earliest examples of a cathedral church in Greece and in the Balkan peninsula, two more points deserve special attention: first, the church was explicitly dedicated as the “basilica of Paul” (βασιλικὴ Παύλου), as shown by the mosaic inscription commemorating the works made by Bishop Porphyrios;[[24]](#footnote-24) second, it was deliberately erected next to an Hellenistic tomb originally designed as a heroon.

We shall look closer at the connections between the church and this heroon in order to determine how, and to what extent, the construction of the basilica at this very location in the town was an attempt to support the local Christian community’s claims to authority vis-à-vis the remembrance of the apostle. The heroon was found during Stylianos Pelekanidis’ excavations in the 1960s, but, unfortunately, no comprehensive archaeological study of the monument has been published yet. This has led to competing interpretations on the supposed relationship between the cathedral church and the Hellenistic tomb, driving scholarly discussions about the significance of the heroon within the topography of early Christian Philippi to become very ideological in recent times.[[25]](#footnote-25) In what follows, I would like to reassess the issue in a more dispassionate manner. For that reason, I will first review the facts as they are stated in the archaeological reports published to date.[[26]](#footnote-26)

The underground barrel-vaulted tomb was built inside the city walls in the mid-third or second century BC (fig. 10.1). [PLACE ILLUSTRATION 10.1 HERE] Inside the funerary chamber was found a sarcophagus containing the remains of a young man who was about fourteen years old, together with various jewels, ceramics, and metal items used as offerings for the prematurely deceased. The epitaph engraved on the lid of the sarcophagus gives us his name: Euephenes son of Exekestos.[[27]](#footnote-27) According to a widespread custom in Hellenistic times,[[28]](#footnote-28) the Greek city of Philippi had decided with this burial to honour the young Euephenes – and thus his relatives as well (since ashes and bones belonging to other individuals were found in niches in the same chamber). In recompense for his family’s outstanding benefactions toward the community, they offered him a public funeral and erected his burial in a public location, in this case on the site where the Greek agora had most likely stood in former times.[[29]](#footnote-29) Above the tomb was erected a shrine, which presumably looked like a small temple, which was meant to indicate the location of the burial and allow public worship. The deceased was clearly assimilated to a hero and granted cultic honours, as is shown by the numerous vases and vessels found on the chamber’s floor which demonstrate that the tomb continued to be accessed and visited long after the burial. The fact that Euephenes’ family was probably of Thasian origin, as is suggested by his name,[[30]](#footnote-30) might indicate that his ancestors were involved in the foundation of the city in the fourth century BC, and that this hero cult was related to the commemoration of the early founder (οἰκιστής) of Krenides, even before the city was taken by Philip II and renamed after him.[[31]](#footnote-31)

Some of the vessels found inside the tomb apparently date to the late Hellenistic period, or maybe even to early Roman times,[[32]](#footnote-32) but a closer examination of the ceramics would be required to reach a more definitive conclusion. This evidence would support the view that a cult continued to be practised at the tomb until at least the creation of the Roman colony. It seems that the door of the tomb was then closed by a stone slab and that the superstructure, that is, the overground shrine, was torn down in early Roman times. We do not have any other indication as to what became of the tomb and the heroon above it during the Roman colonial era. What we know is that the city centre of Philippi underwent dramatic alterations a few decades after the Roman colony was established. During the first half of the first century AD, a large public square, which later became the forum, was built west of the assumed location of the Greek agora, where the heroon stood.[[33]](#footnote-33) Unlike the city walls and the theatre, most of the Hellenistic public buildings in the lower city seem to have been demolished on this occasion,[[34]](#footnote-34) while a bath house was built north of the heroon.[[35]](#footnote-35)

It is very unlikely that the hero cult of a Thasian family would have been preserved after the Greek city had been abolished and replaced by a Roman colony. Of course, we do have a lot of examples of Hellenistic cults to Thracian or Greek gods which survived and which were still practised in the Roman period (even by the Roman colonists themselves, in some cases).[[36]](#footnote-36) However, the worship of Euephenes was too deeply embedded in the history of the Greek city to have been left unaltered by the disappearance of Hellenistic Philippi as a political community, especially since it was located in the monumentalized city centre of the colony, which was dominated by the worship of the official Roman gods.[[37]](#footnote-37) Although the hero cult as such certainly faded, it is possible that the symbolic function and value of the heroon as a place of remembrance, as a “lieu de mémoire” (as sociologists would say),[[38]](#footnote-38) whoever the commemorated person or the worshipped deity had been in the past, was not completely lost and forgotten among the local population. In any case, the construction of the cathedral church of Philippi – which at the beginning was a simple quadrangular private building used as a meeting place for the Christian group[[39]](#footnote-39) – directly next to the heroon cannot have been coincidental, and the Christian community must have taken advantage of this location to build its own identity and to assert its authority, as we shall now see.

The church was built contiguously to the former heroon, which was somehow incorporated into the construction of the church, the southern wall of the heroon being used as a supporting wall for the church on its northern side (fig. 10.2). [PLACE ILLUSTRATION 10.2 HERE] What is more, the space above the Hellenistic tomb was refurbished in Christian times (a little pillar and a vase were found *in situ*), and hundreds of coins, ranging from the fourth to the sixth centuries, had purposely been thrown there as offerings. It appears therefore that the church and the redesigned heroon operated at the same time. The space above the tomb was used in some way as a side chapel, just as in the later basilicas of Philippi which had annex rooms.[[40]](#footnote-40) The former heroon seems to have been directly accessible from the cathedral church through a narrow opening in the northern wall of the church and through a passage running along the eastern wall of the heroon. This passage led to the northern side of the heroon, which must have become its main entrance after the cathedral church was built, as is made clear by the construction of a staircase. Such a plan can, to a certain extent, be compared to the integration of the alleged tomb of St Philip, an actual pagan funerary monument dating back to the early imperial period and on top of which a platform was built for worship, into a fifth-century church in Phrygian Hierapolis.[[41]](#footnote-41) With the incorporation of the heroon into the cathedral church dedicated to Paul at Philippi, however, we should not speak of syncretism, as Eduard Verhoef did in a paper published in 2008,[[42]](#footnote-42) or of an attempt to replace the figure who was regarded as the heroic founder of the local community,[[43]](#footnote-43) since this was not the result of a conscious merging of the two cults, and because Euephenes’ hero cult had certainly been interrupted for a long time before the church was built. We should rather speak of the reuse of a forsaken pagan cult place by Christians, who might thereby have wanted to take advantage of the social and religious memory of a place that certainly looked ancient and venerable at the time, and which was linked to an antique tomb with a shrine. This space was then reinterpreted from a Christian perspective.

Scholars who reject the tradition of the apostle’s execution in Rome assume that Paul could well have been put to death at Philippi, and that the burial/heroon above which the basilica of Paul was erected could have been reused as the martyrion of the apostle.[[44]](#footnote-44) Yet, apart from the fact that there is no evidence that Paul did die at Philippi, we must also observe that the commemoration of St Philip’s martyrdom in Hierapolis, which was on the contrary supported by a firm tradition in Christian literature, led to a much larger monumental display. This is evidenced by the construction in the fifth century of a complex that included, apart from the church already mentioned, ritual baths, a processional way, a bath house, an ablution fountain, as well as a monumental staircase leading to a huge octagonal church expressly designated as the martyrion of St Philip, which included rooms to host pilgrims.[[45]](#footnote-45)

At the beginning of the fifth century, the quadrangular basilica of Paul at Philippi was also expanded into an octagonal church – a typical shape for early Christian baptisteries and martyria.[[46]](#footnote-46) Annex rooms and buildings, which were specifically designed to perform baptisms, were then added during the first half of the sixth century. The former heroon was integrated into the whole complex and surrounded by other rooms used for liturgical purposes (fig. 10.3). [PLACE ILLUSTRATION 10.3 HERE] As the wear of the staircase leading to the former heroon and the coin offerings make clear, this space continued to be accessed and used for worship for a long time afterwards.[[47]](#footnote-47) This evidence, however, is not sufficient to prove conclusively that the heroon was seen as Paul’s martyrion in a strict sense, and that the local Christian community claimed it to be the apostle’s burial. Nevertheless, we should at least concede that, within the complex belonging to the cathedral church of Philippi, the space above the Hellenistic tomb was used as a chapel devoted to the martyrial cult of Paul. In this context, alleged relics of St Paul might have even been transferred and displayed there. However, access to the Hellenistic funerary chamber itself would not have been possible because of the construction of the cathedral church, and, for that reason, the tomb could certainly not have been used by Christians as a crypt. Still, some bones were buried in the ground above the tomb, most probably at a time when the chamber was already no longer accessible.[[48]](#footnote-48) It has also been suggested that the hydraulic installations found in the neighbouring rooms close to the baptistery might have been used for rituals related to the worship of relics,[[49]](#footnote-49) just as ritual healing baths have also been attested at Hierapolis next to St Philip’s tomb.[[50]](#footnote-50) Such equipment and layout must have been justified by the fact that the cathedral church was expressly dedicated to Paul. The fact that Paul is not called “saint” or “apostle” in the mosaic inscription of the first cathedral church, as is apparently the case for instance in the (much later) dedication inscription of a church in Corinth,[[51]](#footnote-51) should not be seen as an argument against the identification of the “Paulos” of our inscription with the apostle.[[52]](#footnote-52) Although the building program intended to celebrate a martyrial cult in Philippi did not prove to be as impressive as in Hierapolis, the deliberate construction of the cathedral church in this very location in the city centre, which enabled the reuse of a former heroon, and its dedication to a certain “Paulos” suggest that this monumental commemoration was particularly meaningful for the local church. All this probably makes more sense if we admit that the individual referred to in the inscription was the apostle Paul himself and not some local martyr named Paulos, as some scholars have assumed.[[53]](#footnote-53) This is all the more probable if we consider that, as early as the second century, the local church explicitly capitalized on the memory of the apostle’s visit to build its own reputation.

Before addressing this point, we should briefly mention the views Aristoteles Mentzos has recently expressed on the issue. According to him, the whole topography of early Byzantine Philippi should be reinterpreted in the light of the display and ritualization of the memory of the apostle Paul. Mentzos assumes that every single basilica which was built at Philippi during the fifth and sixth centuries was located at a place closely related to (the remembrance of) a specific event of the apostle’s stay in the colony.[[54]](#footnote-54) Basilica A, for instance, would have been erected on the upper terrace of the forum because this was where Paul was supposed to have been jailed after he was arrested by the colony’s officials (Acts 16:23–24). We should note, however, that although archaeological evidence shows that in the Mesobyzantine period pilgrims would later worship St Paul in an adjacent chapel of basilica A, which they thought to be the jail of the apostle, we cannot be sure that this tradition actually dates back to the fifth century and that a cult was already practised there at the time when the church was built.[[55]](#footnote-55) Regarding the cathedral church, Mentzos has argued that it had no connection with the Hellenistic tomb/heroon and that it was instead built on the location where the apostle was supposedly flogged, in the immediate surroundings of the forum where Paul had been brought to the duumvirs (Acts 16:22–23). Mentzos supports his interpretation by referring to an inscription commemorating the post where the apostle was allegedly bound in order to be flogged. The inscribed stone, which is known only through a copy by Symeon, the archbishop of Thessalonica (ca. 1381–1429), was apparently displayed together with a relief depicting the apostle in a chapel dedicated to St Paul, next to the church of the Acheiropoietos in Thessalonica, at the beginning of the fifteenth century.[[56]](#footnote-56) As Mentzos rightly points out, the commemoration of the apostle’s flogging fits better with the tradition about Paul’s mission at Philippi – where this event is explicitly said to have taken place, according to Acts – than in Thessalonica. Therefore, he has suggested that we should acknowledge that the stone bearing the inscription, which was undoubtedly engraved in the Byzantine period, was originally erected in Philippi and that, along with other stone inscriptions taken from Philippi to be reused as building material in Thessalonica in the Middle Ages or in modern times, it was only later (perhaps at some point during the fourteenth century) moved to Thessalonica in order to be displayed there.[[57]](#footnote-57) However, as we have noted above regarding the location of the alleged jail of St Paul and the subsequent cult in an adjacent chapel of basilica A, there is no evidence of a tradition commemorating the place where the apostle was flogged that dates back to the time when the cathedral was built. Moreover, and even if it has been convincingly argued that local Christians in Philippi were certainly eager to commemorate Paul’s achievements on the basis of Acts,[[58]](#footnote-58) it would be an extraordinary coincidence if the actual (or even alleged) location of the apostle’s flogging corresponded exactly to the superstructure of the Hellenistic tomb, which had been used as a heroon until the late Hellenistic period, and perhaps even until early Roman times. Given all these considerations, it is more reasonable to conclude that the reason why Christians decided to erect their cathedral church at this place and to dedicate it to Paul was due to the presence of an underground burial and was motivated by the desire to launch a martyrial cult in honour of the apostle there.

The Christian group at Philippi clearly benefitted from its special connection with Paul during his lifetime, as stated by the apostle himself in his letters, as well as after his death through his commemoration. This certainly helped the local church grow stronger in the fourth century and attract pilgrims in early Byzantine times. The full awareness that local Christians had of their privileged relationship with the apostle’s legacy is also reflected by the frequent use of the name “Paulos” as a personal name by the dignitaries of the Philippian church from the fourth to the sixth centuries.[[59]](#footnote-59) But the reputation Philippi enjoyed as one of the churches founded by the apostle was in fact much earlier and already widely acknowledged by the beginning of the third century.[[60]](#footnote-60) In the first half of the second century, for instance, Polycarp of Smyrna, in his letter to the Philippians, had emphasized the close relationship between the apostle and the local church.[[61]](#footnote-61) In the same way, Tertullian had included Philippi among the few churches which could pretend to be qualified and labelled as “apostolic,” which was seen as a proof of antiquity and of greater authority.[[62]](#footnote-62) Eventually, during the fourth century, the adjective “apostolic” (ἀποστολική) was even included in the official titulature of the church next to the words “catholic” (καθολική) and “holy” (ἅγια), with the result that the Philippian church’s claim for leadership among other Christian communities (based on its foundation by the apostle Paul) could be explicitly asserted and, in some way, institutionalized.[[63]](#footnote-63)

# 3. Institutionalizing the Christian Community at Philippi: The Philippian Church within the Roman Colony

In the last part of this paper, I would like to address the issue of the possible overlapping of civic responsibilities between the church and the colony at a time when the Christian community started to become more influential and visible in the public space through the construction of the basilica of Paul in the vicinity of the forum during the first decades of the fourth century. In contrast with Acts, in which it is suggested that Christianity already played a significant role in the public life of the colony in the mid-first century (as is evidenced by the fact that Paul was brought to the forum to be sentenced by the local authorities), we do not have any epigraphic or archaeological evidence for the existence of a Christian group prior to the early fourth century. It took two and a half centuries for the Christian community to acquire within the colony the centrality and significance the author of Acts assigned to it in earlier periods, and this was only made possible through the support given to the Christian cult by the imperial power in the meantime. We should note, however, that the Christian group formed by Paul had been organized and structured by the apostle himself, and that the life of the community was administered through officials as early as the mid-first century, as is made clear in Paul and Polycarp’s letters to the Philippians, both of which refer to titles which also appear, alongside others, in the epigraphic record from the fourth century onwards (here I will not enter the debate regarding the hierarchical significance of these titles and discuss the possible reasons why the ἐπίσκοποι mentioned by Paul in his letter seem to have later been replaced by πρεσβύτεροι).[[64]](#footnote-64)

During the first two centuries of its existence, the Christian group at Philippi must have been operating, with regard to its practical organization, largely like a club or a religious association in a way similar to the many pagan religious and occupational associations attested in the colony. As scholars of early Christianity have convincingly argued in recent years, this was the case of most Christian communities at that time.[[65]](#footnote-65) We should now ask the question: how did the local church interact, or interfere, with the colony’s political institutions and duties once the Christian community gained official recognition in the fourth century? Direct evidence for the church’s progressive encroachment on the colony’s responsibilities comes from the funerary fines, which are very common in Philippian epitaphs. Whilst during the first three centuries after the colony was established these fines were required to be paid to the colony’s local administration, or sometimes to the imperial treasury (*fiscus*/τὸ ἱερώτατον ταμεῖον),[[66]](#footnote-66) from the fourth century onwards the church (ἡ ἁγιωτάτη ἐκκλησία) begins to be mentioned as the recipient of these penalties.[[67]](#footnote-67) Cultic and occupational associations, instead of public institutions, were also very often among the recipients of funerary fines in the eastern part of Roman Empire, especially in Asia Minor.[[68]](#footnote-68) At Philippi, as noted above, a Jewish synagogue was mentioned in such capacity as early as the third century.[[69]](#footnote-69) In the case of the church, however, the influence it was gaining over public life in Philippi during the fourth century went far beyond the influence of a mere private association. This is shown by the fact that, in the epitaph we have just mentioned, the “most holy church” was referred to as the recipient of the fine next to the imperial treasury, and *instead of* the colony (unlike what had usually been the case). It follows that the colony was in some way replaced in this function by the church itself which was gaining public status. Another illustration of the growing significance of Christianity in the public sphere is provided by the curses which began to be mentioned about the same time at the end of epitaphs instead of funerary fines, and which stated that the desecrators “would be accountable to God” (λόγον δώσει τῷ θεῷ).[[70]](#footnote-70)

Still, the colony as a political entity was not superseded by the ecclesiastical power, even though the local bishop had become a crucial figure in the life of the whole community at Philippi – and no longer in that of the church solely – during the fourth and fifth centuries, playing an increasingly dominant role in secular fields as well during the fourth and fifth centuries, just as in numerous other eastern and western cities of the empire at the time.[[71]](#footnote-71) Yet, civic political institutions seem to have continued to work in the meantime: the colony erected honorific statues to the emperors throughout the fourth century,[[72]](#footnote-72) and milestones were still engraved with the names of the emperors Arcadius and Honorius at the beginning of the fifth century, probably because of the contribution of the colony to the repairs of the *via Egnatia*.[[73]](#footnote-73) The people in Philippi might well have become in the meantime primarily an assembly of believers led by the bishop, instead of an institutional body made of citizens; the colony, probably represented at the time by a narrower group of local dignitaries (similar to the *curiales* referred to in late antique legal sources),[[74]](#footnote-74) was still considered a political community by the imperial power.

In this respect, the discovery on the forum’s upper and lower terraces of several (still unpublished) blocks engraved with copies of public documents from early Byzantine times is of special importance. Particularly interesting is an imperial letter dating to the age of Justinian which addresses the tasks of the soldiers and functionaries who belonged to the central administration. This find raises the question as to where copies of administrative documents emanating from the imperial power, and which were certainly addressed to the colony of Philippi as a political community, were displayed in the city at the time. The city centre of Philippi underwent major changes during the fifth and sixth centuries. In addition to the Octagon complex, the so-called basilica C which was built on the slopes of the acropolis further west, and the *extra muros* basilica, two imposing churches were built at the place where public buildings of the colony had previously stood: the first one, basilica A, was built at the beginning of the fifth century on the upper terrace of the forum, where the Capitolium and the temples dedicated to the gods of the Roman state had presumably stood before;[[75]](#footnote-75) the second one, basilica B, was erected in the mid-sixth century on top of a market-house (*macellum*) and a palaestra, next to the lower terrace of the public square.[[76]](#footnote-76) A large number of people could have gathered in these churches, which were much bigger than the octagonal cathedral church, and could have attended ceremonies conducted by ecclesiastical dignitaries and by the bishop himself. In spite of this “Christianization” of the landscape of the city centre, which had deep implications on the public life of the colony (due to the replacement of the temples to the tutelary gods and the disappearance of the market-house), the original function of the lower terrace of the forum seems to have remained unchanged. The various public buildings around the square were even repaired in the late fifth or early sixth century, probably because they had been damaged by an earthquake.[[77]](#footnote-77) We can assume that most of the public activities (such as public assemblies and judicial hearings by the local officials of the colony; cf. Acts 16:19–23), which would have usually taken place in the forum, would have *in theory* continued to be carried out there. The copy of the imperial letter mentioned above might have thus been originally displayed on the lower terrace of the forum. The fact that some blocks inscribed with copies of fifth- or sixth-century public documents were apparently found on the upper terrace can probably be explained by the reuse of the stones as building materials in later works. Yet, even though the lower terrace of the forum was now surrounded by churches with both the basilicas A and B, as well as the Octagon bishop’s complex lying directly east of the square, a space apparently continued to be specifically dedicated to secular public activities in the city centre. One should not exclude, however, that by that time the square was chiefly used for commercial purposes, since basilica B was built in the place of the market-house.[[78]](#footnote-78)

The available evidence does not allow us to go any further in our analysis of the rise in power of the church and of the bishops in Philippi, and thus in our analysis of the transformation of the political institutions of the colony during the late antique and early Byzantine period. I would only like to mention one last document, a fascinating unpublished inscription, which will illustrate how prominent the church had become in Philippi by the sixth century. The inscription can be read on the mosaic floor of an underground burial located in the eastern necropolis of Philippi, in the modern village of Krinides.[[79]](#footnote-79) It consists of an epitaph of an ecclesiastical notable which refers to the various offices he held during his career. He is said to have come from “the city of the king Constantine,” which is obviously Constantinople, and to have been sent to “the city of Philip, the king of the Macedonians, which is taken care of by a universally-renowned church, relying on its apostolic links in Christ.”[[80]](#footnote-80) It is interesting to note that, at the time, no reference was made any longer to the colonial rank of Philippi or to its foundation by Augustus. Philippi is described as though it had always been an ordinary Greek city, and the only person to be mentioned as the founder of the city is the king of Macedon, echoing the figure of Constantine as the founder of the imperial capital. We should not, however, overestimate the omission of Augustus and of the Roman status of Philippi in this epitaph. There are other examples of classicizing rhetorical speeches in late antiquity which deliberately ignore the Roman history of Philippi to focus on the foundation of the city by the Macedonians, or even on the foundation of the earlier settlement of Krenides by the Thasians (together with some Athenians).[[81]](#footnote-81) Still, it is obvious from this inscription that the church was now the most important institution in the city, that it enjoyed an undisputed, widespread recognition as a church founded by the apostle Paul, and that this Pauline legacy enhanced the authority of the local Christians.

# 4. Conclusions: The Rise and Fall of the City of Paul

Since the publication seventy years ago of Paul Lemerle’s fundamental work on the history and archaeology of Philippi in Christian and Byzantine times,[[82]](#footnote-82) our knowledge of Christianity in eastern Macedonia has substantially increased thanks to the numerous excavations which have been carried out over the past few decades, and thanks to the many inscriptions which were found on these occasions. The new archaeological and epigraphic material has shown that Christianity grew dramatically, and therefore that the city of Philippi itself thrived after the beginning of the fourth century. According to what is known today, seven different churches were built in the city and in its vicinity between that time and the middle of the sixth century.[[83]](#footnote-83) As suggested by the fact that the first cathedral church was explicitly dedicated to Paul, and as confirmed by early Christian literature, the remembrance of the apostle played a crucial role for the local Christian community in building and developing its own identity. Whatever the actual significance of the reuse of a pagan heroon to build the first cathedral church might have been, it seems clear that a martyrial cult was established and devoted to the apostle by the local Christians there. Even if we do not fully accept the theory as to why the churches in early Byzantine Philippi were so numerous (theory which assumes that each one of them was built on the iconic place of an alleged event of Paul’s mission in the city, and which led to a sort of pilgrimage tour through the city), one cannot deny that the spectacular development of Christianity in Philippi at an early stage, from the beginning of the fourth century, was related to the memory and to the active commemoration of the apostle.[[84]](#footnote-84)

So clear a claim to Paul’s legacy was proper to the Philippian church. In no other city visited by Paul in the Greek peninsula or in Asia Minor did the figure of the apostle seem to have gained the centrality and importance it had for the local church in Philippi. In Ephesus, the tradition according to which John stayed and died there conflicted with Paul’s memory, and led to a fierce competition between the Christian supporters of the two apostles. Eventually, as is made clear in the apocryphal Acts of John, which was produced in the mid-second century in western Asia Minor, St John became the main figure of the local church there.[[85]](#footnote-85) In the Lycus valley, the memory of Paul’s journey was over time superseded by various local traditions, such as the claim made by the church of Laodicea concerning the apostle John’s visit, the legend of the archangel St Michael at Colossae, and, most importantly, the martyrial cult of St Philip in Hierapolis.[[86]](#footnote-86) At Corinth, the largest basilicas were dedicated to local saints rather than to St Paul. However, recent excavations carried out in Kenchreai by Elena Korka, Joseph L. Rife, and Konstantinos Kissas, suggest that an octagonal martyrium may have been built there as well, even if the identity of the figure worshipped in that building remains unknown.[[87]](#footnote-87)

In the city of Corinth itself, in the forum, a smaller church was dedicated as the “church of the apostle Paul” in the sixth century, as evidenced by an inscription.[[88]](#footnote-88) This church must probably be identified with the Christian basilica which was built within a former building south-east of the forum. At some point in the sixth century, this church incorporated the platform which previously stood in an exedra of the neighbouring Julian basilica, and which was regarded by Christians as the tribunal where Paul had been brought to the proconsul of Achaia, according to Acts 18:12–17.[[89]](#footnote-89) Moreover, as early as the second century, Bishop Dionysius of Corinth claimed Peter and Paul as founders of the local church.[[90]](#footnote-90) In spite of the awareness that the Corinthian church had of its links with the apostle, it does not seem that the commemoration of Paul was as central and as powerful as in Philippi.

The special connection the Philippian church had with Paul dates back to Paul’s lifetime. The apostle’s stated preference for the church he had founded in Philippi was claimed as a source of authority by the local Christians, and then acknowledged as such by other bishops as well as by the fathers of the church as early as the second century. The veneration of Paul in Philippi, however, proved unable to compete with the cults of St John in Ephesus or of St Philip in Hierapolis, where pilgrims continued to gather until the Middle Ages, at a time when these cities had sharply declined. Even though Philippi lay on the road network used during the Crusades,[[91]](#footnote-91) the significance of the martyrial cult of St Paul had already decreased considerably by that time. Philippi suffered deeply from an earthquake as well as from the Slavic invasions during the seventh century, and never totally recovered from the resulting destructions. Although the city was used as a garrison during the middle Byzantine period, and the walls were repaired in the eleventh century, the urban area of Philippi was severely reduced, and all of the fifth- and sixth-century basilicas were by then ruined – only chapels remained among the ruins – and located outside the walls of the smaller settlement.[[92]](#footnote-92) In the meantime, Paul’s martyrial cult in Philippi was overshadowed by the cult of Demetrius in Thessalonica, which had become the most important pilgrimage centre in northern Greece, just as Thessalonica had become one of the most significant cities in the Byzantine Empire.[[93]](#footnote-93) The failure of Philippi and of the local church to remain a major pilgrimage centre in Macedonia and to keep the memory of Paul alive over the centuries was probably also hastened by the claim of the Roman church that Paul’s genuine martyrion and burial place stood in Rome, a claim which was already widespread in the second century, as shown in the apocryphal Acts of Paul, and which was acknowledged and even confirmed by Constantine the Great himself, when the emperor decided to have a basilica built along the *via Ostiensis* at the alleged place of the apostle’s execution.[[94]](#footnote-94)

1. \* This study was completed during my Fellowship at the Harvard Center for Hellenic Studies, Washington, D.C. I would like to thank the convenors and the attendees of the Berlin conference for their valuable remarks and suggestions, as well as the Greek archaeological services of Kavala and Drama for their constant support towards the work of the École française d’Athènes at the site of Philippi and in the surrounding area. I am also grateful to Joseph L. Rife (Vanderbilt University), Erkki Sironen (University of Helsinki), Michel Sève (Université de Lorraine-Metz), and L. Michael White (University of Texas at Austin), for sharing material with me, and to Julien M. Ogereau for improving my English text. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. P. Collart, *Philippes, ville de Macédoine, depuis ses origines jusqu’à la fin de l’époque romaine* (Paris: de Boccard, 1937); C. Koukouli-Chrysanthaki, “Philippi,” in *Brill’s Companion to Ancient Macedon: Studies in the Archaeology and History of Macedon, 650 BC–300 AD* (ed. R.J. Lane Fox; Leiden: Brill, 2011) 437–452. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. C. Brélaz, “First-Century Philippi: Contextualizing Paul’s Visit,” in *The First Urban Churches*, vol. 4: *Philippi* (ed. J.R. Harrison and L.L. Welborn; Atlanta: SBL Press, forthcoming). [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Phil 1:7–8; 2:25; 4:10–18. See also 2 Cor 8:1–5. Cf. J.M. Ogereau, *Paul’s Koinonia with the Philippians: A Socio-Historical Investigation of a Pauline Economic Partnership* (WUNT 2/377; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2014). [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. C. Brélaz, “Philippi: A Roman Colony within Its Regional Context,” in *L’hégémonie romaine sur les communautés du Nord Égéen (IIe s. av. J.-C.–IIe s. ap. J.-C.): Entre ruptures et continuités* (ed. J. Fournier and M.-G.G. Parissaki; Athens: National Hellenic Research Foundation, forthcoming). [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. P. Lemerle, *Philippes et la Macédoine orientale à l’époque chrétienne et byzantine: Recherches d’histoire et d’archéologie* (Paris: de Boccard, 1945); J.-P. Sodini, “L’architecture religieuse de Philippes, entre Rome, Thessalonique et Constantinople,” *CRAI* 2014 (2016) 1509–1542. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. *RICM* 222–252. Some of the inscriptions placed by Feissel in the section devoted to the Christian epigraphy of the Pangaion area should probably be assigned to Philippi as well, since the places where they come from were part of the territory of the Roman colony in earlier periods: see *RICM* 218 from Moustheni (*Philippi* II² 613; *ICG* 3239); no. 219 from Eleutheroupoli (*Philippi* II² 634; *ICG* 3240); and no. 221 from Proti (*Philippi* II² 583; *ICG* 3242). Rodolivos was located at the edge of the colonial territory, but the Christian inscription which was copied there apparently mentions a man explicitly referred to as being Philippian (*RICM* 220; *Philippi* II² 591; *ICG* 3241); see also *Philippi* II² 594 (*ICG* 3293). On the contrary, it is uncertain whether Kariani (see *RICM* 217; *ICG* 3238) belonged to the colony or not. On the extent of the colonial territory, see C. Brélaz and G. Tirologos, “Essai de reconstitution du territoire de la colonie de Philippes: sources, méthodes et interprétations,” in *Espaces et territoires des colonies romaines d’Orient* (ed. H. Bru, G. Labarre, and G. Tirologos; Besançon: Presses Universitaires de Franche-Comté, 2016) 119–189. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. *Philippi* II² 108–109 (*ICG* 3297–3298), 114–115 (*ICG* 3380–3381), 123–124 (*ICG* 3382–3383), 125 (*ICG* 3290), 125a–b (*ICG* 3289), 196 (*ICG* 3291), 322a (*ICG* 3384), 421 (*ICG* 3292), 594 (*ICG* 3293), 630–632 (*ICG* 3294–3296); also possibly Christian are *Philippi* II² 467 and 633 (*ICG* 3385 and 3386). It happens that the Greek inscription *Philippi* II² 403 (*ICG* 4056), which was engraved on the same stone as the Latin epitaph *Philippi* II² 402, was actually the result of a Christian reuse of the gravestone, probably as a boundary stone referring to the local church; cf. *RICM* 224 (*Philippi* II² 528; *ICG* 3245) from Argyroupoli, as well as rock marks, including crosses, from the Pieria valley (G.A. Pikoulas, *Η χώρα των Πιέρων: Συμβολὴ στὴν τοπογραφία της* [Athens: National Hellenic Research Foundation, 2001] 145 nos. 56–57). [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. *RICM* 222 (*Philippi* II² 131; *ICG* 3243). [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. *RICM* 223 (*Philippi* II² 130; *ICG* 3244). [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. Byzantine inscriptions later than the sixth century include *Philippi* II² 115a, 162, 368–368a (the so-called “proto-Bulgarian” inscriptions); S. Provost, “Une réfection des remparts de Philippes sous Michel VII Doukas,” *REByz* 61 (2003) 167–182. The inscription commemorating the alleged place of Paul’s flogging, which seems to have been originally erected at Philippi and later moved to Thessalonica, will also be added to the corpus. See A. Mentzos, “Η ανάμνηση του αποστόλου Παύλου σε Θεσσαλονίκη και Φιλίππους,” in *Γηθόσυνον σέβασμα: Αντίδωρον τιμής και μνήμης εις τον μακαριστόν καθηγητήν της λειτουργικής Ιωάννην Μ. Φουντούλην*, vol. 2 (ed. P.I. Skaltsis and N.A. Skrettas; Thessaloniki: Adelphoi Kyriakidis, 2013) 1295–1304, and below n. 55. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. M. Sève, *Philippes 1914–2014: 100 ans de recherches françaises* (Athens: École française d’Athènes, 2014); P. Ducrey, “100 ans de fouilles et de recherches de l’École française d’Athènes à Philippes (1914–2014),” *CRAI* 2014 (2016) 1449–1462. [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. Several epigraphic surveys were conducted in 1979 to 1981 at Philippi and in the surrounding area by Pierre Ducrey together with André Charbonnet and François Mottas. See P. Ducrey, “Le recueil des inscriptions grecques et latines de Philippes de Macédoine: Etat des questions,” in *Πρακτικά του Η’ διεθνούς Συνεδρίου ελληνικής και λατινικής επιγραφικής (Αθήνα, 3–9 Οκτωβρίου 1982)*, vol. 2 (Athens: Ministry of Culture and Sciences, 1987) 155–157. [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. These will be *CIPh* 2/2 by A. Rizakis, and *CIPh* 2/3 by C. Brélaz and C. Sarrazanas. [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. R.S. Ascough, *Paul’s Macedonian Associations: The Social Context of Philippians and 1 Thessalonians* (WUNT 2/161; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2003) 122–128; C. Brélaz, “‘Outside the City Gate’: Center and Periphery in Paul’s Preaching in Philippi,” in *The Urban World and the First Christians* (ed. S. Walton, P.R. Trebilco, and D.W.J. Gill; Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 2017) 123–140.

    For another possible Thracian name among the local Christians, see *RICM* 236 (*Philippi* II² 102; *ICG* 3257): Γουρασιος. Cf. D. Dana, *Onomasticon Thracicum: Répertoire des noms indigènes de Thrace, Macédoine orientale, Mésies, Dacie et Bithynie* (Athens: National Hellenic Research Foundation, 2014) s.v. Γουρασιος. [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. *RICM* 251–252 (*Philippi* II² 111–112; *ICG* 3272–3273). [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. C. Brélaz, “La langue des *incolae* sur le territoire de Philippes et les contacts linguistiques dans les colonies romaines d’Orient,” in *Interpretatio:* *Traduire l’altérité culturelle dans les civilisations de l’Antiquité* (ed. F. Colin, O. Huck, and S. Vanséveren; Paris: de Boccard, 2015) 371–407. [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. See already *RICM* 241 (*Philippi* II² 77; *ICG* 3262) for a διακόνισσα; *Philippi* II² 115 (*ICG* 3381) for a female διάκονος; *RICM* 218 (*Philippi* II² 613; *ICG* 3239). [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
19. See already above n. 7 for a boundary stone from Argyroupoli and rock marks from the Pieria valley. [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
20. C. Brélaz, *CIPh* 2/1, pp. 52–55. [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
21. *Philippi* II² 387a: the epitaph was engraved in two different phases; the earliest one, which refers to the synagogue, might date back to the third century. [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
22. Brélaz, “Centre and Periphery.” [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
23. The era referred to in the epitaph *RICM* 233 (*Philippi* II² 360; *ICG* 3254), was certainly the Actian era rather than the Macedonian provincial era. The inscription should thus be dated to the year AD 379 rather than to AD 262/263. A nearby date should be assigned to the epitaph *RICM* 231 (*Philippi* II² 71; *ICG* 3252), because of the similarities in letter-cutting with the previous inscription; the assumption that the deceased was Christian is based on his name, Aurelios Kyriakos. By contrast, the epitaph *RICM* 232 (*Philippi* II² 83; *ICG* 3253), should not necessarily be regarded as Christian despite the fact that the exact same funerary formulas were used as in Kyriakos’ inscription. [↑](#footnote-ref-23)
24. *RICM* 226 (*Philippi* II² 329; *ICG* 3247). [↑](#footnote-ref-24)
25. V.A. Abrahamsen, *Women and Worship at Philippi: Diana/Artemis and Other Cults in the Early Christian Era* (Portland, Maine: Astarte Shell Press, 1995) 159–172 (pagan funerary and healing hero cult identified with a Christian martyr); C. Bakirtzis, “Paul and Philippi: The Archaeological Evidence,” in *Philippi at the Time of Paul and after His Death* (ed. C. Bakirtzis and H. Koester; Harrisburg, Pa.: Trinity Press International, 1998) 37–48 (pagan heroon and cathedral church operating simultaneously); A. Mentzos, “Ζητήματα τοπογραφίας των χριστιανικών Φιλίππων,” *Εgnatia* 9 (2005) 101–156 (no connection between the Hellenistic tomb and the cult of Paul worshipped in the former heroon above the tomb); E. Verhoef, “Syncretism in the Church of Philippi,” *HvTSt* 64.2 (2008) 697–714 (deliberate “Christianisation” of an Hellenistic hero cult); M.-F. Baslez, “La communauté paulinienne de Philippes à la lumière de l’archéologie historique: Considérations méthodologiques,” *Théologiques* 21.1 (2013) 191–212, here 202–207 (gradual replacement of an Hellenistic hero by the figure of St Paul as the founder of the local community). [↑](#footnote-ref-25)
26. Synthetic presentations are to be found in S. Pelekanidis, “Kultprobleme im Apostel-Paulus-Oktogon von Philippi im Zusammenhang mit einem aelteren Heroenkult,” in *Atti del IX Congresso Internazionale di Archeologia Cristiana*, vol. 2 (Rome: Pontificio Istituto di Archeologia Cristiana, 1978) 393–399; G.G. Gounaris, *Τὸ Βαλανείο και τα Βόρεια Προσκτίσματα του Οκταγώνου των Φιλίππων* (Athens: The Archaeological Society at Athens, 1990) 55–57; Sodini, “L’architecture,” 1526–1528. Detailed discussion of the material in L.M. White, *The Social Origins of Christian Architecture* (2 vols.; Valley Forge, Pa.: Trinity Press International, 1996–1997) 2.178–186 no. 49. A summary of the evidence as well as a survey of previous studies were recently provided by H. Schörner, *Sepulturae Graecae intra urbem: Untersuchungen zum Phänomen der intraurbanen Bestattungen bei den Griechen* (Möhnesee: Bibliopolis, 2007) 230–233, Kat. A12 with fig. 65–73; and again ead., “Revival of the Intraurban Burial in Greek *Poleis* during the Roman Imperium as a Creation of Identity,” in *Attitudes towards the Past in Antiquity: Creating Identities* (ed. B. Alroth and C. Scheffer; Stockholm: Stockholm University, 2014) 151–162. For further examination of the archaeological evidence, see S. Provost, “The Byzantine Topography of Philippi (6th c.–14th c.): The Decline and Revival of a Byzantine City,” in *Byzantine Greece: Microcosm of Empire? 46th Spring Symposium of Byzantine Studies, University of Birmingham, March 23–25, 2013* (ed. A. Dunn; forthcoming). [↑](#footnote-ref-26)
27. *Philippi* II² 327. A.G. Zannis, *Le pays entre le Strymon et le Nestos:* *Géographie et histoire (VIIe–IVe siècle avant J.-C.)* (Athens: National Hellenic Research Foundation, 2014) 478, suggests that we should prefer a different reading of the inscription and understands that Euephenes was instead the *grandson* of Exekestos. [↑](#footnote-ref-27)
28. P. Fröhlich, “Funérailles publiques et tombeaux monumentaux *intra-muros* dans les cités grecques à l’époque hellénistique,” in *Forgerons, élites et voyageurs d’Homère à nos jours: Hommages en mémoire d’Isabelle Ratinaud-Lachkar* (ed. M.-C. Ferriès et al.; Grenoble: PUG, 2013) 227–309. [↑](#footnote-ref-28)
29. M. Sève and P. Weber, *Guide du forum de Philippes* (Athens: École française d’Athènes, 2012) 12. [↑](#footnote-ref-29)
30. C. Brélaz, “Le *Corpus des inscriptions grecques et latines de Philippes*: Apports récents et perspectives de recherche sur une colonie romaine d’Orient,” *CRAI* 2014 (2016) 1463–1507, here 1499. The unpublished inscription from Philippi mentioning a *mystes* of the Great Gods of Samothrace also named Euephenes, son of Exekestos – referred to by M.B. Hatzopoulos, *Macedonian Institutions under the Kings* (2 vols.; Athens: National Hellenic Research Foundation, 1996) 1.188 n. 1 – is later than the epitaph found in the heroon and probably dates back to the third or second century BC. Therefore, it cannot be taken for granted, as is usually the case in scholarship, that the deceased worshipped as a hero at the tomb was himself a *mystes*. Still, the *mystes* was certainly a descendant of the hero, as was another Exekestos mentioned in *Philippi* II² 711a, which dates to the late Hellenistic or early Roman period. On the other hand, one more unpublished inscription from Philippi, which apparently dates to the fourth or third century BC, refers to a person named Exekestos who might well have been an ancestor of the hero. All of the evidence suggesting that Euephenes belonged to a family which remained prominent in Philippi during the entire Hellenistic period will be thoroughly discussed by Angelos Zannis in vol. 1 of *CIPh* (forthcoming). [↑](#footnote-ref-30)
31. C. Brélaz, “Entre Philippe II, Auguste et Paul: La commémoration des origines dans la colonie romaine de Philippes,” in *Une mémoire en actes: Espaces, figures, discours* (ed. S. Benoist, A. Daguet-Gagey, and C. Hoët-van Cauwenberghe; Lille: Presses du Septentrion, 2016) 119–138. [↑](#footnote-ref-31)
32. D.I. Lazaridis, *ArchD* 19 (1964) B.3 *Chron.*, 372–374. [↑](#footnote-ref-32)
33. Sève and Weber, *Guide*, 12. [↑](#footnote-ref-33)
34. Other Hellenistic monuments which were preserved in the Roman colony include an altar to Artemis, which still stood *in situ* (*Philippi* II² 246), as well as a temple located on the upper terrace of the forum. See C. Brélaz and J. Demaille, “Traces du passé macédonien et influences de l’hellénisme dans les colonies de Dion et de Philippes,” in *L’héritage grec des colonies romaines d’Orient: interactions culturelles dans les provinces hellénophones de l’empire romain* (ed. C. Brélaz; Paris: de Boccard, 2017) 119–156. [↑](#footnote-ref-34)
35. Gounaris, *Τὸ Βαλανείο*. [↑](#footnote-ref-35)
36. C. Brélaz, “Thracian, Greek, or Roman? Ethnic and Social Identities of Worshippers (and Gods) in Roman Philippi,” in *Philippi, From Colonia Augusta to Communitas Christiana*: *Religion and Society in Transition* (ed. S.J. Friesen et al.; Leiden: Brill, forthcoming). [↑](#footnote-ref-36)
37. The recognition and worship of local heroes and gods as founders of the community in the Roman colonies settled in the Eastern Mediterranean is a widespread, though later, phenomenon. See C. Katsari and S. Mitchell, “The Roman Colonies of Greece and Asia Minor: Questions of State and Civic Identity,” *Athenaeum* 96 (2008) 221–249. [↑](#footnote-ref-37)
38. For the application of this concept to monuments of the Roman East, see A. Gangloff, ed., *Lieux de mémoire en Orient grec à l’époque impériale* (Bern: Lang, 2013). [↑](#footnote-ref-38)
39. White, *Origins*, 1.134–135. [↑](#footnote-ref-39)
40. E. Pelekanidou and A. Mentzos, “Οκτάγωνο Φιλίππων: Πρώτα συμπεράσματα μετά τις νεότερες έρευνες,” in *Μνήμη Δ. Λαζαρίδη: Πόλις και χώρα στην αρχαία Μακεδονία και Θράκη* (Thessaloniki: Archaeological Museum of Kavala/École française d’Athènes, 1990) 597–607. Plans reproduced in Sodini, “L’architecture,” 1516–1529 fig. 7–16. [↑](#footnote-ref-40)
41. F. D’Andria, “Il Santuario e la Tomba dell’apostolo Filippo a Hierapolis di Frigia,” *RPARA* 84 (2011/12) 3–52, here 11–33. The earlier interventions, which aimed at creating a specific space dedicated to worship around the tomb and included rituals pools, date back to the fourth century, prior to the construction of the church. [↑](#footnote-ref-41)
42. Verhoef, “Syncretism.” Same argument again in id., “Elements of the Greco-Roman Context in the Christian Community of Philippi,” in *Paul’s Graeco-Roman Context* (ed. C. Breytenbach; Leuven: Peeters, 2015) 601–614. [↑](#footnote-ref-42)
43. Baslez, “La communauté,” 191–212. [↑](#footnote-ref-43)
44. Bakirtzis, “Paul and Philippi,” 47; H. Koester, “Paul and Philippi: The Evidence from Early Christian Literature,” in *Philippi at the Time of Paul and after His Death* (ed. C. Bakirtzis and H. Koester; Harrisburg, Pa.: Trinity Press International, 1998) 49–65; A.D. Callahan, “Dead Paul: The Apostle as Martyr in Philippi,” ibid., 67–84 (in which is advocated the strange view that the gravestone of a dignitary of the local church named Paulos, which was found in the *extra muros* basilica [*RICM* 238; *Philippi* II² 103; *ICG* 3259], could have been regarded by the Philippians themselves as the tomb of the apostle). [↑](#footnote-ref-44)
45. D’Andria, “Santuario.” [↑](#footnote-ref-45)
46. Sodini, “L’architecture,” 1516–1528. [↑](#footnote-ref-46)
47. Gounaris, *Τὸ Βαλανείο*, 57, does not rule out that some of the coins rather fell down from the second floor of the building, which was part of the cathedral complex after the church was expanded in the fifth century, and where the bishop’s treasure may have been kept. [↑](#footnote-ref-47)
48. Gounaris, *Τὸ Βαλανείο*, 57. [↑](#footnote-ref-48)
49. Bakirtzis, “Paul and Philippi,” 46–47. See S.-P. Bergjan and B. Näf, *Märtyrerverehrung im frühen Christentum: Zeugnisse und kulturelle Wirkungsweisen* (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 2014); S. Destephen, “Martyrs locaux et cultes civiques en Asie Mineure,” in *Des dieux civiques aux saints patrons* (ed. J.-P. Caillet, S. Destephen, B. Dumézil, and H. Inglebert; Paris: Picard, 2015) 59–116; E. Cronnier, *Les inventions de reliques dans l’Empire romain d’Orient (IVe-VIe s.)* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2015). [↑](#footnote-ref-49)
50. D’Andria, “Santuario,” 23–28. [↑](#footnote-ref-50)
51. See below n. 86. [↑](#footnote-ref-51)
52. Nor was the designation of Paul as *apostolus* systematic in the early Christian epigraphy of Rome. See C. Papi, “L’apostolo Paolo nelle iscrizioni cristiane antiche di Roma,” in *Paulo Apostolo Martyri:* *L’apostolo San Paolo nella storia, nell’arte e nell’archeologia* (ed. O. Bucarelli and M.M. Morales; Rome: Gregorian & Biblical Press, 2011) 183–218. On the other hand, Paul was called ἅγιος together with Peter on a monument from Edessa dedicated to the two apostles (*RICM* 1). Compare to Demetrius who is called μάρτυς or ἅγιος in inscriptions from Thessalonica (*RICM* 81, 93, 107). [↑](#footnote-ref-52)
53. Gounaris, *Τὸ Βαλανείο*, 57. For martyrs from Philippi, see Pol. *Phil.* 9:1; *Philippi* II² 196 (*ICG* 3291) from basilica C: Δομ[νίν]ου μ[άρτυρος] (it is uncertain whether the martyr worshipped here, if any, was Domninus from Thessalonica or rather a local homonymous). [↑](#footnote-ref-53)
54. Mentzos, “Ζητήματα.” [↑](#footnote-ref-54)
55. Moreover, it is highly improbable that the *tabularium* of the colony would have been located on the upper terrace of the forum, as proposed by Mentzos, rather than on the lower terrace together with the other official public buildings (see Sève and Weber, *Guide*, 61–62). Similarly, it is unclear why the construction of basilica B, which was built upon the former market-house of the colony (*macellum*), should be connected with the arrest of Paul by the duumvirs, since the word ἀγορά in Acts 16:19, which describes the place where Paul was brought to the colony’s officials, stands in this context for the Latin *forum* and refers to the public square, not the market-house. Mentzos’ views on the topography of Philippi have been challenged by the observations of M. Sève, “Urbanisme, architecture et territoire,” in *Philippes, de la Préhistoire à Byzance: Études d’archéologie et d’histoire* (ed. J. Fournier; Athens: École française d’Athènes, 2016) 131–150. [↑](#footnote-ref-55)
56. Mentzos, “Η ανάμνηση.” The inscription reads as follows: Ἐν τῷδε Παῦλος τανυθεὶς πρὶν τῷ λίθῷ, | ἤνεγκε ῥάβδων ἀφορήτους αἰκίας. | Ξεσθεὶς δὲ τανῦν μορφοτύπῳ γλυφίδι, | τὰς προσκυνήσεις λαμβάνει καὶ τὰ γέρα. (“Paul, once lying upon this stone, suffered the unendurable torments of the rods. Now hit only by the sculptor’s chisel, he receives reverence and honours.”) The text plays here on the double meaning of the verb ξέω which can mean “to carve” as well as, metaphorically, “to flog.” [↑](#footnote-ref-56)
57. See *CIPh* 2/1, pp. 375–378 (Appendice 2), for Philippian inscriptions found in the Jewish cemetery of Thessalonica. [↑](#footnote-ref-57)
58. See L.M. White, “Visualizing the ‘Real’ World of Acts 16: Toward Construction of a Social Index,” in *The Social World of the First Christians: Essays in Honor of Wayne A. Meeks* (ed. L.M. White and O.L. Yarbrough; Minneapolis: Fortress, 1995) 234–261, who rightly points out that the name of the bishop (Porphyrios), who had the mosaic floor of the cathedral church made, might have been a deliberate reference to, and commemoration of, Lydia who is described in Acts 16:14 as a πορφυρόπωλις. [↑](#footnote-ref-58)
59. *RICM* 237–238 (*Philippi* II² 100, 103; *ICG* 3258–3259), and one more unpublished epitaph. See C. Breytenbach, “What’s in the Name ‘Paul’? On Early Christian Inscriptions in Lycaonia,” in *Paulus – Werk und Wirkung: Festschrift für Andreas Lindemann zum 70. Geburtstag* (ed. P.-G. Klumbies and D.S. du Toit; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2013) 463–477. [↑](#footnote-ref-59)
60. A. Standhartinger, “‘The Beloved Community’ after Paul: Early Christianity in Philippi from the 2nd to the 4th Century,” in *Philippi, From Colonia Augusta to Communitas Christiana*: *Religion and Society in Transition* (ed. S.J. Friesen et al.; Leiden: Brill, forthcoming). [↑](#footnote-ref-60)
61. Pol. *Phil.* 3; 9:1. [↑](#footnote-ref-61)
62. Tertullian, *Praescr.* 36.1–2. [↑](#footnote-ref-62)
63. *RICM* 235 (*Philippi* II² 101; *ICG* 3256). For the church as “holy” or “catholic,” see also *RICM* 224, 233, 238 (*Philippi* II² 528, 360, 103; *ICG* 3245, 3254, 3259); *Philippi* II² 125a (*ICG* 3289). [↑](#footnote-ref-63)
64. Lemerle, *Philippes*, 52–56; P. Pilhofer, *Philippi*, vol. 1: *Die erste christliche Gemeinde Europas* (WUNT 87; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1995) 140–147, 226–227. See also above n. 17 for διάκονοι. [↑](#footnote-ref-64)
65. Ascough, *Associations*; P.A. Harland, *Associations, Synagogues, and Congregations* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2003), rev. ed. (2013) online at http://www.philipharland.com/associations/; Ogereau, *Koinonia*. [↑](#footnote-ref-65)
66. *CIPh* 2/1, pp. 70–74. [↑](#footnote-ref-66)
67. *Philippi* II² 125a (*ICG* 3289). [↑](#footnote-ref-67)
68. T. Ritti, “*Iura sepulcrorum* a Hierapolis di Frigia nel quadro dell’epigrafia sepolcrale microasiatica: Iscrizioni edite e inedite,” in *Libitina* *e dintorni: Atti dell’XI Rencontre franco-italienne sur l’épigraphie* (Rome: Quasar, 2004) 455–634. [↑](#footnote-ref-68)
69. See above n. 20. [↑](#footnote-ref-69)
70. *RICM* 238 (*Philippi* II² 103; *ICG* 3259). See also *RICM* 218 (*Philippi* II² 613; *ICG* 3239); *Philippi* II² 631–632 (*ICG* 3295–3296): with the addition of the provision ὁ͂δε κ(αὶ) ἐν ἡμέρᾳ κρίσεως); *RICM* 219 (*Philippi* II² 634; *ICG* 3240). For a possible influence of this formula from north-western Asia Minor, see *RICM*, p. 202. [↑](#footnote-ref-70)
71. J.H.W.G. Liebeschuetz, *Decline and Fall of the Roman City* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001) 137–168. [↑](#footnote-ref-71)
72. *CIPh* 2/1.28 (for Constantius I as Caesar), 29 (for Constantine I), 31 (for Gratian). [↑](#footnote-ref-72)
73. *AE* 1974, no. 590; as well as an unpublished milestone. See Brélaz and Tirologos, “Essai de reconstitution du territoire.” [↑](#footnote-ref-73)
74. A. Laniado, *Recherches sur les notables municipaux dans l’Empire protobyzantin* (Paris: Association des Amis du Centre d’Histoire et Civilisation de Byzance, 2002). [↑](#footnote-ref-74)
75. M. Sève and P. Weber, “Le côté Nord du forum de Philippes,” *BCH* 110 (1986) 531–581. For the problematic identification of so-called “Capitolia,” see J.C. Quinn and A. Wilson, “Capitolia,” *JRS* 103 (2013) 117–173. [↑](#footnote-ref-75)
76. Lemerle, *Philippes.* [↑](#footnote-ref-76)
77. Sève and Weber, *Guide*, 20–24. [↑](#footnote-ref-77)
78. Sève and Weber, *Guide*, 24. [↑](#footnote-ref-78)
79. A partial translation of the inscription was given by Bakirtzis, “Paul and Philippi,” 47 (*ICG* 3389). The same author should provide a full publication of the text in the near future. [↑](#footnote-ref-79)
80. Bakirtzis, “Paul and Philippi,” 47. [↑](#footnote-ref-80)
81. Himerius, *Oratio* 40.2–3 (A. Colonna, ed., *Himerii declamationes et orationes cum deperditarum fragmentis* [Rome: Pub. Off. Polygraphicae, 1951]). See Brélaz, “La commémoration.” [↑](#footnote-ref-81)
82. Lemerle, *Philippes*. [↑](#footnote-ref-82)
83. Sodini, “L’architecture”; Provost, “Topography.” [↑](#footnote-ref-83)
84. By contrast, in neighbouring Amphipolis, where several churches were also built during the fifth and sixth centuries on the acropolis, the construction of so many basilicas in such a narrow space should probably not be related to Paul’s visit, since according to Acts 17:1 the apostle only passed through the city and apparently did not stay there for a long time, but was rather due to the competition between local benefactors. See N. Zikos, *Amphipolis: Early Christian and Byzantine Amphipolis* (Athens: Archaeological Receipts Fund, 1989). [↑](#footnote-ref-84)
85. See the contribution by Paul Trebilco in this volume. [↑](#footnote-ref-85)
86. A.H. Cadwallader, “A Stratigraphy of an Ancient City through Its Key Story: The *archistrategos* of Chonai,” in *Colossae in Space and Time* (ed. A.H. Cadwallader and M. Trainor; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2011) 282–298; U. Huttner, *Early Christianity in the Lycus Valley* (AJEC 85/ECAM 1; Leiden: Brill, 2013) 185–195, 343–383. [↑](#footnote-ref-86)
87. See E. Korka, J.L. Rife, and K. Kissas, “Kenchreai,” *AR* 56 (2009–2010) 1–201, here 22–23 (with fig. 20). [↑](#footnote-ref-87)
88. *Corinth* 8/3.728 (*ICG* 2800): [+ εἰ δέ τ]ις πάντων τῶν̣ | [ἐνοίκω]ν̣ τῆς γῖς μὴ παρ̣α|[τύχῃ εἰ]ς τὴν τημορή[αν], | [ἐχέτω πίσ]τ̣ιν ἐν Παύλο[υ]. || [ἡ ἁγιωτάτη ἐ]κ̣κλησία τοῦ | [ἀποστόλου] Παύλο̣υ̣. [+] (“If anyone of all the dwellers of the earth is to escape retribution, let him put his faith in Paul. The holiest church of the apostle Paul.”) This inscription was first dated to the middle Byzantine period. It happens to be in fact much earlier, as has been shown by Erkki Sironen in his recent edition of the Christian inscriptions from Corinthia (*IG* IV² 3, 1291). Cf. *IG* XII 6.2, 941 (altar from a late sixth century basilica in Samos): [– – – τ]οῦ ἐνδόξου ἀπ(οστόλο)υ Παύλου. [↑](#footnote-ref-88)
89. P.D. Scotton, “A Sixth-Century Church in Corinth,” paper delivered at the Annual Meeting of the Archaeological Institute of America in New Orleans, January 2015. The inscription mentioning the “church of St Paul” (see previous note), which was found in the Julian basilica, was first thought to have belonged to the middle-Byzantine church built upon the *bema* standing in the middle of the lower agora, which also seems to have been later considered as the tribunal were Paul was flogged (R.L. Scranton, *Corinth*, vol. 1/3: *Monuments in the Lower Agora and North of the Archaic Temple* [Princeton: American School of Classical Studies at Athens, 1951] 91–92, 131–132; and vol. 16: *Mediaeval Architecture in the Central Area of Corinth* [Princeton: American School of Classical Studies at Athens, 1957] 42–46). The revised dating of the inscription and the identification of an earlier church in the south-east building, closer to the find spot of the inscription, makes Scotton’s attribution of the inscription to this church more convincing. [↑](#footnote-ref-89)
90. Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* 2.25.8. [↑](#footnote-ref-90)
91. Lemerle, *Philippes*, 169–183. [↑](#footnote-ref-91)
92. Provost, “Une réfection”; id., “Remarques sur la topographie de Philippes à l’époque byzantine (Xe–XIVe siècles),” in *Η Καβάλα και τα Βαλκάνια: Από την Αρχαιότητα μέχρι σήμερα*, vol. 1 (ed. N. Roudometof; Kavala: Kentro Istorikon Spoudon kai Ekdoseon Notioanatolikis Europis kai Mesogeiou, 2004) 193–211. [↑](#footnote-ref-92)
93. C. Bakirtzis, “Pilgrimage to Thessalonike: The Tomb of St. Demetrios,” *DOP* 56 (2002) 175–192; E. Russell, *St Demetrius of Thessalonica: Cult and Devotion in the Middle Ages* (Bern: Lang, 2010); J.-M. Spieser, “Le culte de saint Démétrius à Thessalonique,” in *Des dieux civiques aux saints patrons (IVe–VIIe siècle)* (ed. J.-P. Caillet, S. Destephen, B. Dumézil, and H. Inglebert; Paris: Picard, 2015) 275–291. [↑](#footnote-ref-93)
94. D.L. Eastman, *Paul the Martyr: The Cult of the Apostle in the Latin West* (Atlanta: SBL Press, 2011) 15–69. [↑](#footnote-ref-94)