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**Publication Date**

2021

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UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

Los Angeles

A Vlach Nun and Her Thirteenth-Century Monastery

A thesis submitted in partial satisfaction of the  
requirements for the degree Master of Arts  
in Art History

by

Sofia Pitouli

2021

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## ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS

### A Vlach Nun and Her Thirteenth-Century Monastery

by

Sofia Pitouli

Master of Arts in Art History

University of California, Los Angeles, 2021

Professor Sharon E. J. Gerstel, Chair

This thesis examines the destroyed thirteenth-century monastery of Lykousada, located at Loxada, in Thessaly and founded by the nun Hypomone. A surviving *chrysobull* issued by Andronikos II in 1289 mentions Hypomone exclusively in terms of her monastic foundation. An analysis of the lands belonging to the monastery place Lykousada within thirteenth- and fourteenth- century religious, cultural, and ethnic networks of the region. Lykousada presents the only example of a Byzantine monastery founded by a Vlach. By focusing on the architectural commissions and properties of this elite nun, my study investigates the material culture left by the transhumant group. I examine the repetition of thirteenth-century architectural models from Epiros to Thessaly to uncover features of Hypomone's monastery. A study of Vlachs—encapsulated in the story of this elite nun—demonstrates their indispensable role in Thessaly. The medieval roads that connect Hypomone's estates indicate the boundaries of her influence and power, and subsequently that of her Vlach ancestors.

The thesis of Sofia Pitouli is approved.

Charlene Villaseñor Black

Lamia Balafrej

Sharon E. J. Gerstel, Committee Chair

University of California, Los Angeles

2021

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT .....	ii
THESIS COMMITTEE .....	iii
TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	iv
LIST OF FIGURES .....	v
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	viii
INTRODUCTION .....	1
HISTORIOGRAPHY .....	5
MAPPING MONASTIC LANDSCAPES.....	7
ARCHITECTURAL AND DECORATIVE NETWORKS.....	13
THE VLACH CONNECTION.....	20
LYKOUSADA’S RE-EMERGENCE IN THE PRESENT DAY .....	36
FIGURES.....	41
APPENDIX .....	55
BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	59

## LIST OF FIGURES

1. John I Doukas's funerary portrait. Porta Panagia at Pyli, near Trikala, 1283.  
(Photo: Sharon E. J. Gerstel, 2017)
2. Map showing Kato Panagia, Porta Panagia, Loxada, Fanari and part of the Pindos mountain range separating Epiros from Thessaly.  
(Source: Google Maps)
3. Map showing the identifiable villages mentioned in Andronikos II's *chrysobull*.  
(Source: Google Maps, 2021)
4. The late- thirteenth-/early- fourteenth-century church of the Dormition of the Theotokos, at Achladochori (prefecture of Trikala). Floor plan.  
(Source: Nikonanos, *Βυζαντινοί ναοί της Θεσσαλίας*, 92.)
5. The late- thirteenth-/early- fourteenth-century church of the Dormition of the Theotokos, at Achladochori (prefecture of Trikala). Cross section plan.  
(Source: Nikonanos, *Βυζαντινοί ναοί της Θεσσαλίας*, 93.)
6. The late- thirteenth-/early- fourteenth-century church of the Dormition of the Theotokos, at Achladochori (prefecture of Trikala). Exterior view of the northeastern side.  
(Photo: Sofia Pitouli, 2021)
7. The late- thirteenth-/early- fourteenth-century church of the Dormition of the Theotokos, at Achladochori (prefecture of Trikala). Detail of animals from the templon capitals.  
(Source: Nikonanos, *Βυζαντινοί ναοί της Θεσσαλίας*, table 42.)
8. The late- thirteenth-/early- fourteenth-century church of the Dormition of the Theotokos, at Achladochori (prefecture of Trikala). Detail of floral ornamentation from the templon entablature.  
(Source: Nikonanos, *Βυζαντινοί ναοί της Θεσσαλίας*, table 43.)
9. Kato Panagia (Birth of the Virgin) monastery at Arta, ca. 1250. Floor plan.  
(Source: Orlandos, *Αρχαίον των Βυζαντινών μνημείων της Ελλάδος*, II, 73.)
10. Kato Panagia (Birth of the Virgin) monastery at Arta, ca. 1250. Cross section.  
(Source: Orlandos, *Αρχαίον των Βυζαντινών μνημείων της Ελλάδος*, II, 73.)
11. Porta Panagia at Pyli, near Trikala, 1283. Floor plan.  
(Source: Orlandos, *Αρχαίον των Βυζαντινών μνημείων της Ελλάδος*, I, 12.)

12. Porta Panagia at Pyli, near Trikala, 1283. Cross section.  
(Source: Orlandos, *Αρχαίον των Βυζαντινών μνημείων της Ελλάδος*, I, 13.)
13. Porta Panagia (south façade), at Pyli, near Trikala, 1283.  
(Photo: Sofia Pitouli, 2020)
14. Porta Panagia at Pyli, near Trikala, 1283, templon and adjacent *proskynetaria*  
(Photo: Sharon E. J. Gerstel, 2017)
15. Porta Panagia at Pyli, near Trikala, 1283. Double-headed eagle and cross detail from the templon capital and floral ornamentations at the entablature.  
(Photo: Sofia Pitouli, 2020)
16. Panagia Olympiotissa, at Ellassona, 1295/6. Section of a marble pier and a marble column from the original Byzantine templon (?).  
(Source: Constantinides, *The Wall Paintings of the Panagia Olympiotissa at Ellasson in Northern Thessaly*, 2, 124.)
17. Panagia Olympiotissa, at Ellassona, 1295/6. Fragment of a marble chancel barrier.  
(Source: Constantinides, *The Wall Paintings of the Panagia Olympiotissa at Ellasson in Northern Thessaly*, 2, 125.)
18. Church of Agios Ioannis Prodromos, at Fanari, 1873. East façade.  
(Photo: Sofia Pitouli, 2021)
19. Church of Agios Ioannis Prodromos, at Fanari, 1873. Marble fragment from east façade.  
(Photo: Sofia Pitouli, 2021)
20. Church of Agios Ioannis Prodromos, at Fanari, 1873. Marble fragment from east façade.  
(Photo: Sofia Pitouli, 2021)
21. Marble capital from the church of the Twelve Apostles, at Pyrgos Ithomis, 1845.  
(Photo: Sofia Pitouli, 2021)
22. Fragment from the church of the Twelve Apostles, at Pyrgos Ithomis, 1845. East façade.  
(Photo: Sofia Pitouli, 2021)
23. Vlach passage Wace and Thompson traveled through in 1910 which starts from Tirnavos and terminating to Samarina.  
(Source: Google Maps, 2021)



24. Icon of the Virgin Glykophilousa of Kanaliotissa, Monastery of the Transfiguration, at Great Meteoron.  
(Photo: Stavroula Sdrolia, 2020)

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to my supervisor, Professor Sharon Gerstel, who guided me throughout the research and completion of this thesis. Her advice and methodology directed me to a novel type of on-site work, one that explores folklore and documents the stories of local inhabitants. Professor Gerstel's insightful guidance and constant support assisted me through every stage of the thesis. Additionally, I am indebted to P. S. Katsafados for his help and edits of the English translation of Andronikos' *chrysobull* (1289).

I would also like to extend my gratitude to the residents of Fanari and Loxada, who have helped me immensely with archival and on-site research. The residents include Apostolos Floridis for his continuous availability to share crucial materials, Katerina Papaioannou for opening the church of Agios Ioannis Prodromos (St. John the Baptist), as well as Dimitris Athanasiou (o Liontos), Alexandros Athanasiou, Vainas Stergios, and Elias Kakanis.

Lastly, I would like to thank my family. My mother Nelly, who maneuvered all the dirt roads of Thessaly with me. My father George, whose Vlach heritage and stories have always been central to my upbringing, and my brother Fotis, who has been a source of inspiration throughout my life.

Kănd are z yină prumuveara  
S easă Arumănl'i pri la mundză,  
Lilitshe n'I di pri Maiu!

When it is the season for the spring to come,  
for the Vlachs to go out on the mountains,  
my flower May!  
Vlach song<sup>1</sup>

The direct route from any location in eastern Thessaly to the Vlach villages in the Pindos Mountains passes through Trikala and turns westwards. From there, the route connects to other passes which continue either south or north, depending on the traveler's final destination. Marking the eastern end of one of these passes is the church of Porta Panagia,<sup>2</sup> built in 1283 by the *sebastokrator* John I Komnenos Angelos Doukas, ruler of Thessaly (r. 1268-1289) and illegitimate son of Michael II Komnenos Doukas, ruler of the Despotate of Epiros (r. 1230-1266/68).<sup>3</sup> John, tonsured as a monk before his death, was buried in the monastery that he founded; his empty tomb and funerary portrait still survive (fig. 1).<sup>4</sup> The church appropriates the architectural design of an earlier monastery constructed in ca. 1250 by his father, Kato Panagia

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<sup>1</sup> Alan J. B. Wace and Maurice. S. Thompson, *The Nomads of the Balkans: An Account of Life and Customs among the Vlachs of Northern Pindus* (New York, NY: Biblio & Tannen, 1972), 11.

<sup>2</sup> Panagia in Greek signifies the Virgin Mary. Porta Panagia was known as the monastery of the Virgin Akatamachetos at the Great Gates during the Late Byzantine period. The old name indicates the location of the church as an entrance marker. So does its post-Byzantine name, Porta Panagia. Porta in Greek means door but it also signifies a gate.

<sup>3</sup> The title of *sebastokrator* was used by rulers related to the Byzantine Empire or ruling a state within the empire. The circumstances of John's illegitimacy are attested in several sources. In the *Vita* of St Theodora (a hagiographic text on the wife of Michael II), Michael II's mistress and mother of John I Doukas, appears with the name Gangrene. Gangrene, the daughter of Gangrenos, emerges as a wicked figure in the description of the affair. Michael II's legitimate son, Nikephoros, inherited the Despotate of the Old Epiros (ruling from Arta); while, John inherited the Thessalian 'state'. John's sons and grandson ruled over Thessaly after his death. For Gangrene, see Alice-Mary Talbot, "Life of St. Theodora of Arta," in *Holy Women of Byzantium: Ten Saints' Lives in English Translation*, ed. Alice-Mary Talbot (Washington, D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, 1996), 331-332; Paul Magdalino, *The History of Thessaly, 1266-1393* (Oxford: University of Oxford, 1976), 136; Sofia Georgiadou, "Architecture and Statehood in Late Byzantium: A Comparative Study of Epiros and Trebizond" (University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, 2015), 40; Anastasios Orlandos, "Η Αγία Θεοδώρα της Άρτης," in *Άρχαίον των βυζαντινών μνημείων της Ελλάδος*, vol. 2 (Athens: Τυπογραφείον Εστία, 1936), 88-89.

<sup>4</sup> Sarah T. Brooks, "Poetry and Female Patronage in Late Byzantine Tomb Decoration: Two Epigrams by Manuel Philes," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 60 (2006): 234-235.

near Arta. The two “Panagias,” built by father and son, marked an important pass through the Pindos mountains, each guarding the entrance to territories governed by members of the family (fig. 2).<sup>5</sup>

This thesis focuses on a church that was constructed twenty-seven kilometers south-east of Porta Panagia, the convent of the Merciful Virgin (Παναγία Ελεούσα), also known as Lykousada, in the village of Loxada.<sup>6</sup> Loxada is situated on the eastern foothill of the Agrafa, a mountainous region at the southernmost part of the Pindos mountain range.<sup>7</sup> The same pass crossing through Agrafa, which shepherds used until recently, also connects Fanari, a

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<sup>5</sup> Porta Panagia at Pyli and Kato Panagia near Arta appear as entry points to a passage that runs through the Pindos. Approximately, at the half point between Arta (58.3 kilometers east) and Pyli (78.6 kilometers west), a late-thirteenth-century church stands at the village Vourgareli. The church is known as Panagia of Vella or the Red Church (Κόκκινη Εκκλησία) due to the ceramic ornamentation on the exterior. The modern highway E.O. Artas-Trikalon is built over the medieval passage. However, today herdsmen shepherd their flocks on this road and create traffic. The Byzantine historian, Donald Nicol traveled via this route by foot to study the networks of communication between Epiros and Thessaly during the time of the Despotate of Epiros. For a detailed account on the Despotate of Epiros, see Donald Nicol, *The Despotate of Epiros 1267–1479: A Contribution to the History of Greece in the Middle Ages* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984).

<sup>6</sup> Loxada appears in history under various names: Lykousada, Lykousiada and Leykousiada. Bees explains that the name Lykousada may derive from the male surname Lykouzás. The plural form of the name is Lykouzádes and was perhaps changed into Lykousádes and then to Lykousáda (female, singular). For the name Loxada, see Nikos Bees, “Αποσπάσματα ενός χρυσόβουλου για τη μονή ‘Παναγία Ελεούσα’ στη Λυκουσάδα – Λωξάδα της Καρδίτσας,” *Θεσσαλικό Ημερολόγιο* 12 (1987): 7; Antonio Carile and Guglielmo Cavallo, “Το ανέκδοτο χρυσόβουλο του Ανδρόνικου Γ’ Παλαιολόγου για τη μονή της Λυκουσάδας (1332),” *Θεσσαλικό Ημερολόγιο* 15 (1989): 56. The village of Lykousada (Λυκουσάδα) is mentioned twice in the *chrysobull*. “[<sup>75</sup> the village of Lykousada, in which this monastery was erected;]” (Χωρίον ἢ Λυκουσάδα ἐν ᾧ καὶ ἡ τοιαύτη ἀνηγέρθη [<sup>76</sup> μονή]). “it is honored<sup>60</sup> by the name of the most pure lady<sup>61</sup> and mother of Christ, the Merciful and is called<sup>62</sup> of Lykousada.” ([<sup>60</sup> ἐπ’ ὄνοματι τῆς πανυπεράγνου μου δεσποίνης καὶ [<sup>61</sup> θεομήτορος τῆς Ἐλεούσης: καὶ ἐπικέκληται [<sup>62</sup> οὕτω πως τῆς Λυκουσάδος]). For the village of Loxada, its proximity to Fanari and the Lykousada monastery’s *chrysobulls* and other medieval documents, see Dimitrios Sofianos, “Τα υπέρ της μονής της Παναγίας της Λυκουσάδας του Φαναρίου Καρδίτσας, παλαιά Βυζαντινά (ΙΓ’ και ΙΔ’ αι.) έγγραφα (χρυσόβουλλα κ.α.),” in *Ανατυπώσεις εκ του ΝΒ’, 2004-2006, Τόμου της Επετηρίδος της Εταιρίας Βυζαντινών Σπουδών* (Athens: Εταιρίας Βυζαντινών Σπουδών, 2006), 487; Bees, “Αποσπάσματα ενός χρυσόβουλου για τη μονή ‘Παναγία Ελεούσα’ στη Λυκουσάδα – Λωξάδα της Καρδίτσας,” 3-7; idem, “Συμβολή εις την ἐκκλησιαστικὴν ἱστορίαν Φαναρίου τῆς Θεσσαλίας,” *Vizantiiskii Vremeniik* 15 (1913): 57-62; idem, *Les manuscrits des Météores, Ta cheirographa ton Meteoron: catalogue descriptif des manuscrits conservés dans les monastères des Météores*, 4 vols. (Athens: Académie d’Athènes, 1967-1993); Antonio Carile and Guglielmo Cavallo, “L’inedito crisobollo di Andronico III Paleologo per il monaster di Licusada,” *Atti della Accademia delle Scienze dell’Istituto di Bologna, Classe di Scienze Morali*, anno 69°, Rendiconti 63 (1974-1975): 81-126; idem, “Το ανέκδοτο χρυσόβουλο του Ανδρόνικου Γ’ Παλαιολόγου για τη μονή της Λυκουσάδας (1332),” 33-64; Stavroula Sdrolia, “Συμβολή στην ἱστορία τοῦ Φαναρίου Καρδίτσας (1289-1453),” *Θεσσαλικό Ημερολόγιο* 12 (1987): 129-144.

<sup>7</sup> William Martin Leake, in his mid- nineteenth-century travel account, explains that Agrafa (τὰ Ἄγραφα) is a mountainous region located south of Trikala, and it is considered part of the Trikala regional unit. The toponym Agrafa means “not written down,” specifically referring to the publicans’ books of the Byzantine period. The inhabitants of the district accounted collectively for their taxes. William Martin Leake, *Travels in Northern Greece*, vol. 4 (London: J. Rodwell, 1835), 266, 268-279. For Agrafa, see also Magdalino, *The History of Thessaly*, 110.

neighboring village crowned by an important fortress, to Arta and Ioannina. Like the two “Panagias,” the Panagia Eleousa also places this mountain pass under the sacred protection of the Virgin. The Loxada church is also linked to the two “Panagias” in another important way. Its construction is attributed to the nun Hypomone (Υπομονή; Patience), the wife of the *sebastokrator* John, who was a Vlach, a member of an important minority group that resided within Byzantium.<sup>8</sup> Hypomone belonged to the *fara* (family) of Taronas, which controlled livestock in the mountains of Pindos, and ultimately served as mediators between the nomads and the Thessalian authorities.

My study places the Lykousada monastery and its female founder within the political and religious networks of thirteenth- and fourteenth-century Thessaly. In studying the monastery and its landholdings, I navigate between intertwined stories of past and present, shedding light on an enigmatic figure in Byzantine history—a Vlach woman who married into a powerful family of rulers—and consider the role that the monastery plays in modern-day identity formation. Building on Sharon Gerstel’s “overlapping landscapes,”<sup>9</sup> in which she examines agrarian, sacred and artistic settings and the place of villagers, settlements, and churches, I investigate how Hypomone’s monastery manifests her indispensable role in Thessaly as the connector between populaces in the mountainous regions of Thessaly and the Thessalian plateau, and ruling male figures.

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<sup>8</sup> According to the Byzantine scholar Georgios Pachymeres, “It is said about the magnate Prince, according to the cavaliers, he fell in love with the wife of John I Doukas, who was the daughter of Taronas” (Λέγεται γὰρ τοὺς περὶ τὸν Πρίγκιπα μεγιστᾶνας, οὗς ἐκεῖνοι καβαλλαρίους λέγουσι, τούτων τινὰς ἐποφθαλμίζειν κατ’ ἔρωτας τῆ τοῦ δούκα Ἰωάννου συζύγῳ, ἣν καὶ τοῦ Ταρωνᾶ θυγατέρα ὁ λόγος ἐδείκνυ). George Pachymeres, *Georgii Pachymeris de Michaele et Andronico Paleologis libri tredecim*, trans. Immanuel Bekker (Bonne: Impensis Ed. Weberi, 1835), 83-84. The name of John I Doukas’s wife is Hypomone. We arrive at her name by examining Pachymeres’ account of the Battle of Pelagonia, in which he describes that John was accompanied by the army of his father-in-law, Taronas and through Andronikos II’ *chrysobull* which refers to John I Douka’s wife with her monastic name, Hypomone. Her birth name is unknown.

<sup>9</sup> Sharon E. J. Gerstel, “Mapping the Boundaries of Church and Village: Ecclesiastical and Rural Landscapes in the Late Byzantine Peloponnese,” in *Viewing the Morea: Land and People in the Late Medieval Peloponnese* (Washington, D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, 2013), 335.

Critical to this study is a set of *chrysobulls*, imperial gold-sealed documents, which demonstrate that Loxada was located at the western end of Hypomone's estates. Written in medieval Greek, these *chrysobulls* mention numerous villages without specifying their location. I examine these *chrysobulls* through Bruno Latour's theory of the *actant* and *blackboxing* to conceptualize how a text (*chrysobull*) with very specific goals (to secure the properties endowed to a monastery), upon maneuvering the medieval language, with a close reading in-between the lines, reveals the multifaceted nature of the textual source.<sup>10</sup> I use the *chrysobulls*, particularly the *chrysobull* issued by the emperor Andronikos II in 1289 (see Appendix), the year of John's death and nearly contemporaneous to the monastery's foundation, to map the medieval roads connecting the monastery, its estates, and the buildings standing on their properties. Starting from Loxada and traveling west, east, north, and south, I reconsider these locations and the purposes they served, and examine the broader architectural, ethnic, social, economic, and (geo)political network of the period.<sup>11</sup> The *chrysobull* of 1289 lists entire villages (and their dependent villagers), *metochia* and *monydria*,<sup>12</sup> vineyards, lakes, mills, and herds of livestock that formed parts of the holdings of the monastery and contributed to its financial stability. The villages listed on the *chrysobull* bring forth important information about monastic networks. I supplement this information with the study of the promotion and repetition of local architectural

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<sup>10</sup> According to Latour, an *actant* is an agent (human or non-human) performing towards specific goals. When the *actants* interact within a machine, they are "in the process of exchanging competencies, offering new possibilities, new goals, and new functions." In his third technical mediation, Latour explains *blackboxing* as "a process that makes the joint production of actors and artifacts entirely opaque," and uses as an example a fully constructed projector. When the projector scatters into pieces, the owner/user realizes all of the internal intricacies essential for the composition and use of the device. These intricacies of *actants*, permit the machine to succeed in specific coordinated functions. The *actants* exchange competencies; therefore, form a web of collaboration. See Bruno Latour, "A Collective of Humans and Nonhumans," in *Pandora's Hope: Essays on the Reality of Science Studies* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1999), 183.

<sup>11</sup> For a reading of *chrysobulls* as word maps, see Gerstel, "Mapping the Boundaries of Church and Village," 334-368.

<sup>12</sup> A *metochion* is a small monastic establishment, which functioned as an administrative center for the monastery's estates. A *monydrion* is a small church linked to a monastery.

forms. Surviving features of monastic structures, related to Lykousada, will provide further insights into the initial design of Hypomone's monastery.

Lykousada presents the sole example of a Byzantine monastery founded by a Vlach woman or man. Hypomone's foundation demonstrates the use of land as a manifestation of power and control over the region, both worldly and sacred. By mapping the medieval roads that connect Hypomone's estates, I will identify the diverse population of the region and the villages mentioned in the *chrysobull*. Finally, I will determine how the *chrysobull* marked the boundaries of Hypomone's influence and power, and subsequently that of her Vlach ancestors.

### ***Historiography***

Previous scholarship on the Lykousada monastery has focused principally on the surviving written documents, omitting information on the architectural features of the monastery and its surviving fragments, but also limiting Hypomone's history to what is known from these textual sources. In 1858, the French archaeologist and paleontologist Léon Heuzey, while travelling to Ottoman occupied Thessaly, discovered the Lykousada monastery's *chrysobulls* and sworn letter. In his monograph, *Excursion dans la Thessalie turque en 1858*, Heuzey translated the *chrysobulls* into French and documented the monastery's property accumulation in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries.<sup>13</sup> In 1909, Nikos Bees, a Greek Byzantinist and politician, established the connection between the Lykousada monastery and the village of Loxada. Upon his visit to Loxada, he discovered some ruins which the locals commonly referred to as originating from "the monastery of Louxada."<sup>14</sup> Antonio Carile and Guglielmo Cavallo published an article in 1974-1975, titled "L'inedito crisobollo di Andronico III Paleologo per il monaster di Licusada,"

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<sup>13</sup> Léon Heuzey, *Excursion dans la Thessalie turque en 1858* (Paris: Société d'édition "Les Belles-Lettres," 1927).

<sup>14</sup> Bees, "Αποσπάσματα ενός χρυσόβουλου για τη μονή 'Παναγία Ελεούσα' στη Λυκουσάδα – Λωξάδα της Καρδίτσας," 7.

which analyzed Andronikos III's *chrysobull*.<sup>15</sup> The authors refer to remains associated with the monastery of Lykousada at Loxada, but do not identify them.

Paul Magdalino, in his dissertation published in 1976, studied the topography, history, and architecture of the region from 1266 until 1393.<sup>16</sup> He explored the strained relationship between the *despotes* of Epiros and Thessaly, and the hostile relations towards the imperial family of Palaiologoi.<sup>17</sup> Magdalino examined both textual and visual sources, and also preliminarily mapped the medieval villages of the Thessalian plain. During the same year, Johannes Koder and Friedrich Hild devoted a volume of the *Tabula Imperii Byzantini* to *Hellas und Thessalia*, which contributed to the topographical study of the Thessalian plateau by documenting villages mentioned in primary sources, as well as surviving Byzantine sacred architecture.<sup>18</sup> *Βυζαντινοί ναοί της Θεσσαλίας: από το 10<sup>ο</sup> αιώνα ως την κατάκτηση της περιοχής από τους Τούρκους*, published by Nikos Nikonanos in 1979, documented the Byzantine monasteries located in Thessaly.<sup>19</sup> Stavroula Sdrolia, head of the Office of Antiquities at Larissa, contributed the article “Συμβολή στην ιστορία του Φαναρίου Καρδίτσας (1289-1453)” in 1987.<sup>20</sup> In her work, she expanded on the medieval history of Fanari, the fortress close to Loxada, by studying the *chrysobulls* and the men who ruled over the region.

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<sup>15</sup> Carile and Cavallo, “L'inedito crisobollo di Andronico III Paleologo per il monaster di Licusada,” 81-126; idem, “Το ανέκδοτο χρυσόβουλο του Ανδρόνικου Γ' Παλαιολόγου για τη μονή της Λυκουσάδας (1332),” 33-64.

<sup>16</sup> Magdalino, *The History of Thessaly*.

<sup>17</sup> Michael VIII Palaiologos had recently reconquered Constantinople from the Latins and negotiated a union of the churches with Pope Clement IV.

<sup>18</sup> Friedrich Hild and Johannes Koder, *Tabula Imperii Byzantini, Band 1: Hellas und Thessalia* (Vienna: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1976); idem, “Η Βυζαντινή Θεσσαλία: Οικισμοί – Τοπωνύμια, Μοναστήρια – Ναοί,” trans. Dimitris Agraphiotis and Costas Spanos, *Θεσσαλικό Ημερολόγιο* 12 (1987): 11-112.

<sup>19</sup> Nikos Nikonanos, *Βυζαντινοί ναοί της Θεσσαλίας: από το 10<sup>ο</sup> αιώνα ως την κατάκτηση της περιοχής από τους Τούρκους* (Athens: Fund of Archaeological Proceeds, 1979).

<sup>20</sup> Sdrolia, “Συμβολή στην ιστορία του Φαναρίου Καρδίτσας (1289-1453),” 129-144.



In 2006, the Greek historian Dimitrios Sofianos resumed work on the primary documents of the Lykousada monastery and the Stagoi (1163, 1335 and 1393).<sup>21</sup> In his article, “Τα υπέρ της μονής της Παναγίας της Λυκουσάδας του Φαναρίου Καρδίτσας, παλαιά Βυζαντινά (ΙΓ’ και ΙΔ’ αι.) έγγραφα (χρυσόβουλλα κ.α.),” Sofianos provided an analysis and transcription of the *chrysobulls* and Patriarch Neilos’ *sigillion*.<sup>22</sup> Georgios Terezakis, in his dissertation “Η Θεσσαλική κοινωνία, 12<sup>ος</sup>-15<sup>ος</sup> αι., Ιστορικές παράμετροι της σύνθεσης και κατανομής του πληθυσμού,” completed in 2013, reported the shifts in demographic and economic data from the twelfth to the fifteenth century in Thessaly.<sup>23</sup> The Lykousada monastery features in all of these works, but only as part of an analysis of the written evidence and the male figures they assisted.

### ***Mapping Monastic Landscapes***

Written documents from the late thirteenth century to the late fourteenth century record the additions and reductions of villages, vineyards, mills, constructions, and residents belonging to the Lykousada monastery. Other than the *chrysobull* issued by the emperor Andronikos II in 1289, surviving documents include a *chrysobull* issued by Andronikos III in 1336, by Stephan Dušan in 1348, by Nikephoros II Orsini in 1356-1358, and a sworn letter by Michael Gabrielpoulos in 1342. Other documents comprise of a copy of Patriarch Theophilos Kokkinos’s *sigillion*, pronouncing Lykousada as a stavropegic monastery. The *sigillion* dates around 1371-1376. A second *sigillion* survives by the ecumenical Patriarch Neilos, issued in 1383.<sup>24</sup> These documents inventory the monastery’s vast landholdings and manifest its imperial

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<sup>21</sup> Dimitrios Sofianos, “Acta Stagorum: τα υπέρ της θεσσαλικής επισκοπής Σταγών παλαιά βυζαντινά έγγραφα (των ετών 1163, 1336, και 1393), συμβολή στην ιστορία της επισκοπής,” *Τρικαλινά 13* (1993): 7-68; idem, “Τα υπέρ της μονής της Παναγίας της Λυκουσάδας του Φαναρίου Καρδίτσας,” 479-528.

<sup>22</sup> Sofianos’ transcriptions and photographic material are vital for any work on the monastery as access to these documents is restricted at the moment due to COVID-19 and the total lockdown enforced in Greece.

<sup>23</sup> Georgios Terezakis, “Η Θεσσαλική κοινωνία, 12<sup>ος</sup>-15<sup>ος</sup> αι., Ιστορικές παράμετροι της σύνθεσης και κατανομής του πληθυσμού” (University of Ioannina, 2013).

<sup>24</sup> For the transcribed *chrysobulls*, see Sofianos, “Τα υπέρ της μονής της Παναγίας της Λυκουσάδας του Φαναρίου Καρδίτσας,” 479-528. A *sigillion* is a document that bears a seal. Imperial and patriarchal figures used *sigillia*. An imperial *sigillion* may be distinguished from a patriarchal *sigillion* through the inclusion of the word *sigillion* written

connections. Of these, Andronikos II's *chrysobull*, issued in March 1289, is the most important surviving document.<sup>25</sup> The document responded to a request from the widowed Hypomone to legally secure the Lykousada monastery and her estates. As a widow, it was critical that she secure her landholdings for her sons, the future *sebastokrators* of Thessaly.

And the present *chrysobull*<sup>70</sup> grants to her, and through which positively anticipates and dictates and<sup>71</sup> orders to be possessed by the aforesaid venerated monastery,<sup>72</sup> everything described by the aforementioned wife of the mentioned<sup>73</sup> *sebastokrator*, adding to it all estates<sup>74</sup> the names of which explicitly listed.<sup>26</sup>

The *chrysobull* provides important information about the political situation in Thessaly following John's death. Magdalino explained that "the *prooemium* to this document, drafted by

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in red ink. It also includes the emperor's signature. From the thirteenth century onwards, *sigillia* were used by patriarchs to establish ecclesiastical laws or grant a privilege to a bishopric or a monastery. *Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium*, 3 vols. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), s.v. "sigillion."

<sup>25</sup> According to Spyridon Lampros, the *chrysobull* is composed of three attached sheets of parchments instead of a single one. This is not very common. Spyridon Lampros, "Ανέκδοτον χρυσόβουλλον τοῦ αὐτοκράτορος Ἀνδρόνικου τοῦ Παλαιολόγου (1289)," *Δελτίον Ἱστορικής καὶ Ἐθνολογικῆς Ἐταιρείας τῆς Ἑλλάδος* 1 (1883-1884): 115. No English translation of the *chrysobull* exists. For the medieval Greek transcription and an English translation of the *chrysobull* of 1289, see Appendix. For the medieval Greek transcription of the *chrysobull*, see Sofianos, "Τα υπέρ της μονῆς της Παναγίας της Λυκουσάδας του Φαναρίου Καρδίτσας," 500-503. For the date of the *chrysobull* and signature of issuer, "[...] the month of March of the running second indiction<sup>127</sup> of the six thousand seven hundred<sup>128</sup> ninety-seventh year, during which<sup>129</sup> our pious and god-chosen<sup>130</sup> state underscore (the *chrysobull*). † Andronikos, by the grace of Christ<sup>131</sup> the God faithful basileus and<sup>132</sup> emperor of the Romans<sup>133</sup> Doukas Angelos Komnenos<sup>134</sup> Palaiologos †" ([...] μῆνα Μάρτ(ιον) τῆν νῦν τρεχούσης δευτ(έ)ρ(ας) ἰνδικτι<sup>127</sup> ὠνος τοῦ ἑξακισχίλιοστοῦ ἑπτακοσιοστοῦ<sup>128</sup> ἐνενηκοστοῦ ἑβδόμου ἔτους· ἐν ᾧ καὶ τὸ<sup>129</sup> ἡμέτερον εὐσεβὲς καὶ θεοπρόβλητον ὑπεσημῆνατο<sup>130</sup> κράτος: † Ἀνδρόνικος ἐν Χ(ριστ)ῶ<sup>131</sup> τῷ Θ(ε)ῶ πιστὸς βασιλεὺς καὶ<sup>132</sup> αὐτοκράτωρ Ῥωμαί(ων) Δού<sup>133</sup>κας Ἄγγελος Κομνηνὸς ὁ<sup>134</sup> Παλαιολόγος †). The word ἰνδικτιῶνος (indiction) denotes a fifteen-year period starting on September 1. See Sofianos, "Τα υπέρ της μονῆς της Παναγίας της Λυκουσάδας του Φαναρίου Καρδίτσας," 503. For Byzantine date conversion, see Venance Grumel, *Traité d'études byzantines: la chronologie* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1958). Until 1882, the *chrysobull* was located at the Great Meteoron Monastery. It was then moved to the National Library of Greece in Athens. In 1858, Léon Heuzey found the *chrysobull* at the Great Meteoron Monastery archives. In 1859, the Russian archimandrite Porphyrios Uspenskij partially copied the *chrysobull* and it was published in his posthumous work. In 1883, Spyridon Lampros published on the *chrysobull*. His essay was then republished by Franz Miklosich and Joseph Müller in 1887. See Heuzey, *Excursion dans la Thessalie tourque en 1858*, 174-177; idem, "Βυζαντινά ντοκουμέντα για τη Λωξάδα και για το Φανάρι της Καρδίτσας," *Θεσσαλικό Ημερολόγιο* 5 (1983): 177-182; Polikhronī Agapieievich Syrku, *Vostok Christianskij-Putešestvie v Meteorskie i Osoolimpijskie monastiri v Fessalii archimandrita Porfirija Uspenskago v 1859 godu* (Saint Petersburg: Izdanie Imperatorskoj Akademii Nauk pod redakcieju, 1896), 485-486; Lampros, "Ανέκδοτον χρυσόβουλλον τοῦ αὐτοκράτορος Ἀνδρόνικου τοῦ Παλαιολόγου (1289)," 113-119; Franz Miklosich and Joseph Müller, *Acta et diplomata graeca medii aevi sacra et profana*, 5 (Vindobona: Carolus Gerold, 1887), 253-256; Sofianos, "Τα υπέρ της μονῆς της Παναγίας της Λυκουσάδας του Φαναρίου Καρδίτσας," 489.

<sup>26</sup> "καὶ τὸν παρόντα χρυσόβουλλον λόγον<sup>70</sup> ἐπορέγει αὐτῇ δι' οὗ καὶ εὐδοκεῖ καὶ προστάσσει καὶ διο<sup>71</sup>ρίζεται, κατέχεσθαι παρὰ τῆς διαληφθείσης σεβασμίας μονῆς,<sup>72</sup> τὰ παρὰ τῆς εἰρημένης συζύγου τοῦ μνημονευθέντος<sup>73</sup> σεβαστοκράτ(ο)ρος προσαρμόσαντα αὐτῇ ὅποιαδήτινα κτήματα·<sup>74</sup> ἃ δὲ καὶ καταμέρος οὕτως ἐπ' ὀνόματος ἔχουσι."

the grand logothete, Theodore Mouzalon, is unusually long and full of political allusion.”<sup>27</sup>

Unsurprisingly, the introduction to the *chrysobull* highlights Andronikos II’s argument that his God-given right allows him to rule Byzantium from Constantinople, including its provinces and exiled kingdoms:<sup>28</sup>

This is the acknowledged right of my kingship<sup>|21</sup> which to a great extent has been set forth previously, since to<sup>|22</sup> this authority of mine the One who has established and composed it,<sup>|23</sup> who created and keeps the world in unity<sup>|24</sup> staring at me mercifully said: augment what you have been apportioned<sup>|25</sup> further; expand to the right and left; lay foundations and do not spare<sup>|26</sup> what may restrict the view to your goal. And yet (my authority) performed and<sup>|27</sup> sustained in many periods of time, strengthened and increased.<sup>29</sup>

Andronikos II’s eagerness to expand over the western provincial lands is justified as sanctioned by God. To a certain extent, Andronikos’ act placed Hypomone, her family, the inhabitants of her estates, and their land under his imperial authority.

During that period when<sup>|41</sup> difficulties were overwhelming, on many people and things<sup>|42</sup> the power changed hands and until this day<sup>|43</sup> cities and villages are among those confiscated<sup>|44</sup> in so far as they are possessed by an (unnamed) Despotate, but<sup>|45</sup> they succumb to our power and obedience<sup>|46</sup> as rightfully they acknowledge it.<sup>30</sup>

The *chrysobull* permitted Andronikos to exert control over the region, something that he was unable to do before, as John’s persistence against imperial domination—or lack of cooperation—stood in the way.

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<sup>27</sup> Magdalino, *The History of Thessaly*, 183-184.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, 184.

<sup>29</sup> “Τοῦτο δὴ τὸ τῆς ἀρχῆς τῆς ἡμετ(έ)ρ(ας) δικαίωμα, <sup>|21</sup> καὶ εἰς μεῖζον μ(έν) ἦν διηρημένον ταπρότ(ε)ρα ἀφοῦ περ πρὸς τὴν <sup>|22</sup> ἡμετ(έ)ραν αὐτὴν ἀρχήν, ὁ πηξάμ(ε)νος αὐτὴν καὶ συστησάμενος <sup>|23</sup> δημιουργὸς καὶ συνοχεὺς τοῦ παντός, ἐκεῖνο ἐνιδὼν <sup>|24</sup> ἰλέω βλέμματι εἰρηκε· πλάτυνον τὰ σχοινίσματά σου <sup>|25</sup> ἔτι· ἐκπέτασον ἐπὶ δεξιὰ καὶ ἀριστερά· πῆξον (καὶ) μὴ φείσῃ <sup>|26</sup> τῶν αὐλαιῶν· καὶ μέντοι καὶ ἐξετέλεσε καὶ διήγαγεν ἐπὶ <sup>|27</sup> πολλαῖς ὅτι κρατυνομ(έ)νη καὶ αὐξομ(έ)νη περιόδοις ἐτῶν.”

<sup>30</sup> Τότε δὴ ἐν τῇ κινήσει τῶν <sup>|41</sup> πραγμάτων ἐκεῖνη ἢ τὰ δυσχερῆ ἐπλεόνασε, τότε πρὸς πολλοὺς <sup>|42</sup> πολλὰ τῶν τῆς ἀρχῆς μεταπέπτωκε καὶ ἔτι δὴ ἐς τὸ παρὸν <sup>|43</sup> πόλεων τινὲς καὶ χωρῶν ἔστιν οἷς τῶν τότε κατασχόντ(ων), <sup>|44</sup> ὡς ἰδιάζουσιν τὴν δεσποτείαν κατέχονται, ἀλλ’ ὑπο<sup>|45</sup>κύπτουσι τῷ ἡμετέρῳ κράτει καὶ τὴν ὑποταγὴν <sup>|46</sup> δικαίως ἀσπάζονται.”

The exact date of the Lykousada monastery's erection is unknown; however, the *chrysobull* of 1289 identifies Hypomone as its founder:

The officially defined spouse of the dearest relative<sup>47</sup> by marriage to my rulership, the certain *sebastokrator* Komnenos,<sup>48</sup> *kyr* John Doukas,<sup>49</sup> later given monastic vows Komnene *kyra* Hypomone<sup>50</sup> Doukaina, having well recognized the unique power vested upon me<sup>51</sup> and not being secured of her right of administering all she<sup>52</sup> owns, either of the laymen, or the monastic establishments<sup>53</sup> if not attach on these possessions the validity of the royal<sup>54</sup> decrees, she addresses to my rulership<sup>55</sup> and towards the revered monastery she founded, the lawfulness<sup>56</sup> of the existing (related property) asks for, through this *chrysobull*<sup>57</sup> of my kingship, to be authorized. This monastery,<sup>58</sup> which was built and established by her, stands somewhere near<sup>59</sup> the town named Fanari; it is honored<sup>60</sup> by the name of the most pure lady<sup>61</sup> and mother of Christ, the Merciful and is called<sup>62</sup> of Lykousada.<sup>31</sup>

Despite its manifest importance and wealth, the Lykousada monastery faded from textual sources after the fifteenth century. Sources indicate that the monastery was destroyed sometime in the early seventeenth century. In 1611, in reaction to rebellions at Fanari and Ioannina led by the Bishop of Trikki (Trikala), Dionysius the Philosopher, the Ottoman Turks burned and destroyed the monastery's structures.<sup>32</sup> The story goes that at the time of the attack, one hundred and ten monks occupied the monastery.<sup>33</sup> The Turks tortured and killed all the monks, except ten,

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<sup>31</sup> “Ἡ μέντοι τῷ περιποθῆτω συμπενθ(έ)ρω<sup>47</sup> τῆς βασιλείας μου τῷ σεβαστοκράτ(ο)ρ(ι) ἐκείνω Κομνηνῷ<sup>48</sup> κυρ(ῶ) Ἰω(άνν)η τῷ Δούκα κατὰ κόσμον χρηματίσασα σύζυγος,<sup>49</sup> εἶτα τὸν μοναδικὸν ζυγὸν ὑποδύσα Κομνηνὴ κυρ(ᾶ) Ὑπομονῆ<sup>50</sup> ἢ Δούκαινα, τὸ τῆς βασιλεί(ας) καλῶς ἐπεγνωκυῖα δικαίωμα,<sup>51</sup> καὶ ὡς οὐκ ἔστιν ἐν βεβαίῳ τὴν τῶν προσόντ(ων) ἀποφέρεισθαι<sup>52</sup> κτήσιν, οὔτε μὴν καθ' ἓνα τῶν ἐν βίῳ, οὔτε μοναστῶν κατὰ<sup>53</sup> γόγιον, εἰ μὴ τὸ κῦρος ἐπιθεῖν τούτοις βασιλικά<sup>54</sup> διατάγματα, διαπέμπεται τε πρὸς τὴν ἡμετέραν βασιλ(είαν)<sup>55</sup> καὶ τῇ παρ' αὐτῆς συστάσῃ σεβασμία μονῆ, τὸ κῦρος<sup>56</sup> τῶν ἐνυπαρχόντων αἰτεῖται διὰ χρυσοβούλλου<sup>57</sup> προσγενέσθαι τῆς βασιλείας μου. Ἔστι μὲν οὐκ ἡ οἰκο<sup>58</sup>δομηθεῖσα αὕτη καὶ συστάσα παρὰ ταύτης μονῆ, πλησίον που<sup>59</sup> διακειμένη τοῦ ἄστεος ὃ Φανάριον ὀνομάζεται· τιμᾶται δὲ<sup>60</sup> ἐπ' ὀνόματι τῆς πανυπεράγνου μου δεσποίνης καὶ<sup>61</sup> θεομήτορος τῆς Ἐλεούσης· καὶ ἐπικέκληται<sup>62</sup> οὕτω πως τῆς Λυκουσάδος.” This is the oldest and most important document regarding the monastery's foundation, as it indicates that the foundress of the monastery was indeed, Hypomone. In addition, it denotes all the properties belonging to the monastery in 1289. Through a comparative study of all the *chrysobulls*, we can determine whether the monastery expanded in the following century.

<sup>32</sup> Sofianos, “Τα υπέρ της μονῆς της Παναγίας της Λυκουσάδας του Φαναρίου Καρδίτσας,” 488; Carile and Cavallo, “Το ανέκδοτο χρυσόβουλο του Ανδρόνικου Γ' Παλαιολόγου για τη μονή της Λυκουσάδας (1332),” 33; idem, “L'inedito crisobollo di Andronico III Paleologo per il monaster di Licusada,” 81-126; Father Polykarpos, *Ta Μετέωρα: Ιστορία* (Athens: D. A. Fexi, 1882), 42-44.

<sup>33</sup> It is unknown whether the monastery was occupied by nuns or by monks in its early years. Scholars and locals still debate the matter. Others believe that Hypomone founded it and stayed there. Others say that she founded it but resided at a neighboring monastery. Some people have also posed the question of whether the monastery is the same as Anna Komnene's (her monastic name was Pelagia) foundation. However, I believe it to be unlikely. Andronikos II clearly states that the monastery was constructed by Hypomone. Bees believed that it was a nunnery while Carile

who escaped and sought refuge at Meteora. With them, they brought valuable possessions from the monastery, among them the monastery's sacred vessels, written documents, and the icon of the Virgin Glykophilousa of Kanaliotissa.<sup>34</sup>

The villages endowed to the Lykousada monastery in 1289 are connecting points between the western and eastern sides of the Thessalian plateau. They are twelve in number: Lykousada (Λυκουσάδα), Vatousiani (Βατουσιάνη), Raxa (Ράξα), Tritsenikos (Τριτσηνίκος), Vlachokatouna - Praktikatous (Βλαχοκατούνα - Πρακτικάτους), Goriani known as Achladochori (Γοριάνη), Lake Ezerou (λίμνην τοῦ Ἐζερού σανδ(ά)λ(ι)α), Vounena (Βουναίνης), Magoula (Μαγούλα Ἀλμυροῦ), Simisarati (Σιμισαράτοι), Levachatou (Λεβαχάτων) and Taronaton (Ταρωνάτων) (fig. 3).<sup>35</sup> In the *chrysobull*, the villages are listed according to their proximity to the Lykousada monastery, with closer ones mentioned first followed by the villages further to the east. Although the exact locations of some of these villages remain unknown, the *chrysobull* provides important information about monastic structures, agriculture, their inhabitants' activities, and the strategic position of these landholdings.

The exact geographical location of the village Vatousiani is unknown. However, other sources mentioning the village suggest that Vatousiani once stood between Fanari and Trikala.<sup>36</sup>

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and Cavallo argued that the monastery was occupied by monks. See Bees, “Αποσπάσματα ενός χρυσόβουλου για τη μονή ‘Παναγία Ελεούσα’ στη Λυκουσάδα – Λωξάδα της Καρδίτσας,” 3; Carile and Cavallo, “Το ανέκδοτο χρυσόβουλο του Ανδρόνικου Γ’ Παλαιολόγου για τη μονή της Λυκουσάδας (1332),” 33, 39, 55-56. Andronikos III's *chrysobull* issued for the Lykousada monastery starts by saying that “The monks of the holy monastery near Fanari which venerates the Virgin Mary and is called Lykousada, asked me to issue this *chrysobull* to obtain its landholdings (metochia) [...]” (Ἐπεὶ οἱ μοναχοὶ τῆς περὶ τὸ Φανάριον σεβάσμιαις μονῆς τῆς εἰς ὄνομα τιμωμένης τῆς ὑπεραγίας Θεοτόκου καὶ ἐπικεκλημένης τῆς Λυκουσάδος ἐζήτησαν καὶ παρεκάλεσαν τὴν βασιλείαν μ[ο]υ ἵνα τύχωσι χρυσοβούλλου ταύτης ἐφ’ οἷς κέντηται μετοχίαις [...]). Therefore, if Andronikos III mentions monks, we could assume that by 1336, when this *chrysobull* was issued, the monastery was occupied by a male community. For a transcription of the *chrysobull* see Sofianos, “Τα ὑπὲρ τῆς μονῆς τῆς Παναγίας τῆς Λυκουσάδας τοῦ Φαναρίου Καρδίτσας,” 503-505.

<sup>34</sup> Bees, “Αποσπάσματα ενός χρυσόβουλου για τη μονή ‘Παναγία Ελεούσα’ στη Λυκουσάδα – Λωξάδα της Καρδίτσας,” 3; Carile and Cavallo, “Το ανέκδοτο χρυσόβουλο του Ανδρόνικου Γ’ Παλαιολόγου για τη μονή της Λυκουσάδας (1332),” 33. In a conversation on January 26, 2021, Kostantinos Floridis narrated to me the story of the one hundred and ten monks.

<sup>35</sup> See Appendix, ll. 75-95.

<sup>36</sup> Carile and Cavallo, “Το ανέκδοτο χρυσόβουλο του Ανδρόνικου Γ’ Παλαιολόγου για τη μονή της Λυκουσάδας (1332),” 48.

North of Vatousiani and Trikala emerges the small village of Raxa, which borders a low hill. The next village mentioned is Tritsenikos. According to Carile and Cavallo, Tritsenikos stood on the road between Raxa and Skourti.<sup>37</sup> Vlachokatouna or Praktikatous is another unidentified village in west Thessaly. Goriani, the sixth village in the *chrysobull*, is known today as Achladochori, which is located at the center of Hypomone's estates. The village, sited at the foot of Orfanos, is approximately sixty kilometers northeast of Loxada. Southeast of Achladochori, less than thirty-five kilometers away and on the road from Karditsa to Larissa, still stands the village of Vounena. The *chrysobull* mentions Lake Ezerou. Today, the lake is known as the lake bed of Askoris, and positioned south of Kallipefki, a village in the foothills of Mount Olympos. Lake Ezerou has an elevation of 997 meters. Magoula stood near the modern village of Aidini, positioned seven kilometers north of the coastal region of Almiros. The villages of Simisarati, Levachatou, and Taronaton were probably located in the area surrounding Almiros, near the foothills of Mt. Othrys.

Other than marking the monastery's boundaries by establishing a locational network, the *chrysobull* sheds light on structures in these villages. For instance, a bathhouse is recorded on the land of Vatousiani.<sup>38</sup> All of the *chrysobulls* issued from 1289 until 1358 register the village of Achladochori (Goriani or otherwise known as Vorgiani-Βόργιανη). Yet, the *chrysobulls* do not clearly state that the late- thirteenth-/early- fourteenth-century monastery, located at the north part of the village, belonged to the Lykousada monastery.<sup>39</sup>

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<sup>37</sup> Carile and Cavallo, "Το ανέκδοτο χρυσόβουλο του Ανδρόνικου Γ' Παλαιολόγου για τη μονή της Λυκουσάδας (1332)," 48.

<sup>38</sup> "another village Vatousiani; the village located near Trikala<sup>77</sup> which the monastery possesses together with the<sup>78</sup> bathhouse there." (ἕτερον χωρίον ἢ Βατουσιάνη· τὸ περὶ τὰ Τρίκαλα<sup>77</sup> χωρίον ὅπερ εὐρίσκεται κατέχουσα ἡ μονὴ μετὰ τοῦ<sup>78</sup> ἐκεῖσε λοετροῦ·).

<sup>39</sup> "the village of Goriani with its mills<sup>88</sup> and vineyards." (χωρίον ἢ Γοριάνη μετὰ τῶν ἐν αὐτῷ μύλο<sup>88</sup> θεσίων καὶ ἀμπελίων·)

### *Architectural and Decorative Networks*

Even though the Lykousada monastery no longer survives, evidence from the *chrysobull* helps us place it within a group of interconnected buildings that share similar architectural and decorative features. These local buildings share features with the Kato Panagia and Porta Panagia. The late-thirteenth-/early- fourteenth-century *katholikon* of the Dormition of the Theotokos at Achladochori is a single-aisled church (figs. 4-6).<sup>40</sup> The structure is built in the Late Byzantine architectural style known as stavropistegos (*σταυρεπίστεγος*), a cross barrel-vault characterized by a dominant, high transverse arch.<sup>41</sup> This architectural type copied buildings in neighboring Epiros, possibly through the emulation of the Kato Panagia.<sup>42</sup> The cross barrel-vault style appeared in the thirteenth century and developed both in single-aisled and three-aisled structures. Single-aisled cross barrel-vault plans prevailed, while three-aisled ones tended to be fewer. Sofia Georgiadou explains that “the model became widespread in Epiros and the Latin-ruled domains (Peloponnesos, Euboea, Attica, Crete, and the Aegean islands) from the thirteenth century onwards, while it is conspicuously absent from Constantinople and its sphere of influence.”<sup>43</sup>

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<sup>40</sup> The space to the west of the initial *katholikon* is a long building (interior dimensions are approximately 5.12 x 3.12 m) which was added shortly after the initial construction phase. This construction served as a narthex to the thirteenth-century *katholikon*. The shape of this section is semi-rectangular, covered by a wooden roof. The wooden roof was added when the open portico was built to the south of the structure. Later on, the church was further enlarged by demolishing the lower parts of the western wall (main church). Hence, a single space connected to the narthex was created. The last addition was a semi-square space, with irregular corners (interior dimensions range from 4.50 to 5.30 m.). This last addition serves as the current narthex. The interior surfaces of the church are decorated with post-Byzantine frescoes. The current church at Achladochori sustains some of its Late Byzantine structural elements, but has been through vast remodeling. Nikonanos is among the few scholars who has studied the monument, which was unknown until 1971. Nikonanos, *Βυζαντινοί ναοί της Θεσσαλίας*, 93.

<sup>41</sup> Anastasios Orlandos, “Οι σταυρεπίστεγοι ναοί της Ελλάδος,” in *Αρχαίον των Βυζαντινών μνημείων της Ελλάδος*, vol. 1 (Athens: Τυπογραφείον Εστία, 1935), 41-52.

<sup>42</sup> Anastasios Orlandos’ account on the monasteries of Kato Panagia and Porta Panagia remains the most important. See Anastasios Orlandos, “Η Μονή της Κάτω Παναγιάς,” in *Αρχαίον των βυζαντινών μνημείων της Ελλάδος*, vol. 2 (Athens: Τυπογραφείον Εστία, 1936), 70- 87; idem, “Η Πόρτα Παναγία,” in *Αρχαίον των Βυζαντινών μνημείων της Ελλάδος*, I (Athens: Τυπογραφείον Εστία, 1935), 5-40; Nikonanos, *Βυζαντινοί ναοί της Θεσσαλίας*, 91, 157. Nikos Nikonanos argues that cross-vault single-aisle structures existed before the construction of Kato Panagia; therefore, the architects of Kato Panagia may have found inspiration in these smaller foundations.

<sup>43</sup> Georgiadou, “Architecture and Statehood in Late Byzantium,” 39. The introduction of the cross barrel-vaulted typology to Epiros has been largely debated by scholars. According to Georgiadou, Bouras advocates for a western influence, which has been adopted by many scholars. Nevertheless, the material employed and ornamentation attest to Byzantine craftsmanship and regional visual repertoire. For more information, see Christos Bouras, “Ο Άγιος Γεώργιος της Ανδρούσας,” in *Χαριστήριον εις Α. Κ. Ορλάνδον*, vol. 2 (Athens: Η Εν Αθήναις

The oldest model of three-aisled cross barrel-vaulted basilicas has been identified as Kato Panagia near Arta.<sup>44</sup> Both it and Porta Panagia have three-aisles terminating in front of the sanctuary, where the cross barrel-vault is interrupted by a group of arches.<sup>45</sup> The arch over the middle aisle is raised higher than the arches on either side. This arch is interrupted vertically along its length, creating a cross on the roof (figs. 9-12).

The more modest *katholikon* at Achladochori is a single-aisled church with a cross barrel-vault variation (figs. 4-5). At Achladochori, the roof over the *katholikon* is supported by two uneven arches, one of them wider, expanding along the length of the structure (3.12 x 3.72 m), while the other one is a narrow transverse arch (2 x 5.30 m).<sup>46</sup> The transverse arch intersects along the first arch and is raised higher.<sup>47</sup> The employment of this architectural feature in single-aisled churches served numerous functions. According to Nikos Nikonanos, the cross barrel-vault offers more surfaces for decoration than a simple one-chamber space with the same dimensions.<sup>48</sup> Nikonanos also argues that this architectural type is not only economically constructed but also provides greater monumentality compared to more simply vaulted churches.<sup>49</sup> Kato Panagia, Porta Panagia, and the *katholikon* at Achladochori formed part of a broad network of cross barrel-vaulted constructions that included the late- thirteenth-

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Αρχαιολογική εταιρεία, 1966), 270-285. For the cross barrel-vault and floor plans of Kato Panagia and Porta Panagia, see Orlandos, “Η Μονή της Κάτω Παναγιάς,” 70-87; idem, “Η Πόρτα Παναγία,” 5-40; idem, “Οι σταυρεπίστεγοι ναοί της Θεσσαλίας,” 41-52; Gabriel Millet, *L'École grecque dans l'architecture byzantine* (Paris: Ernest Leroux, 1916), 50-53. Millet's analysis is among the earliest ones on the cross barrel-vault. He attributes the style to Mesopotamian influence.

<sup>44</sup> Nikonanos, *Βυζαντινοί ναοί της Θεσσαλίας*, 147.

<sup>45</sup> For Porta Panagia, see Orlandos, “Η Πόρτα Παναγία,” 5-40; Stavros Mamaloukos, “Η Χρονολόγηση του καθολικού της Πόρτα-Παναγιάς,” in *Η Υπάτη στην εκκλησιαστική ιστορία, την εκκλησιαστική τέχνη και τον ελλαδικό μοναχισμό. Πρακτικά, Υπάτη 8-10 Μαΐου 2009* (Athens, 2011), 463-479; idem, “The Chronology of the Exonarthex of the Porta-Panagia in Thessaly,” in *Σύμμεικτα. Collection of Papers dedicated to the 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Institute for Art History*, ed. Ivan Stevonić (Belgrade: Издавач, 2012), 237-250; Georgiadou, “Architecture and Statehood in Late Byzantium,” 43.

<sup>46</sup> The measurements of the arches are from Nikonanos, *Βυζαντινοί ναοί της Θεσσαλίας*, 94.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid., 149.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid.



century *katholika* of the Monastery of Ypapantis at Meteora and Saint Georgios at Klinovo and Taxiarchon in Elafi, both near Kalambaka.<sup>50</sup>

Based on its architectural form, the *katholikon* at Achladochori can be dated to the late thirteenth or early fourteenth century. Other architectural features, materials employed, and the exterior ornamentation of the *katholikon* also urge us to situate it within this chronological framework. The materials employed for the construction of the *katholikon* are the characteristic Epirotic and Thessalian coarsely worked stones and porphyry. Porphyry stones are usually found at the corners and arches of these foundations.<sup>51</sup> Decorative bands outlining blind arches and composed of alternately placed bricks and porphyry stones, began to dominate visually at the end of the thirteenth century. Around the early fourteenth century, the architectural feature arrived in Thessaly, for example, at the Panagia Olympiotissa at Ellassona, a church built by Hypomone's sons.<sup>52</sup> Simple ceramic brickwork ornaments the southern, northern, and eastern façades of the church and a dogtooth frieze runs over the eastern façade, outlining the arches of the sanctuary's two windows (fig. 6). The dogtooth motif also decorates the exterior of the sanctuary and frames the archway over the windows at Porta Panagia (fig. 13). Ceramic brickwork patterns and dogtooth friezes are characteristic of the ornamental repertoire of Epiros.<sup>53</sup> Undoubtedly, the

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<sup>50</sup> The *katholika* of Saint Georgios and Taxiarchon emphasize the horizontal axis more than the vertical. According to Nikos Nikonanos, Porta Panagia, and the *katholika* of the Monastery of Ypapantis at Meteora and the Dormition of the Theotokos at Achladochori are the only three known pure cross barrel-vaulted churches in Thessaly. These churches appear in the northwestern part of Thessaly. Nikonanos, *Βυζαντινοί ναοί της Θεσσαλίας*, 90-91. The Monastery of Ypapanti lies in a cave to the north of the Meteora. It is the least documented monastery, but it is well preserved. From the medieval foundation survive the architectural structure and wall decoration. Magdalino, *The History of Thessaly*, 61-62.

<sup>51</sup> For a description of the material used for the construction of the *katholikon* at Achladochori, see Nikonanos, *Βυζαντινοί ναοί της Θεσσαλίας*, 94-95.

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*, 98.

<sup>53</sup> Prominent examples with ceramic brickwork ornamental designs are the Red Church at Vourgareli, Panagia of Bryoni, at Neochoraki, Agios Nikolaos Rodias at Arta, Agios Basilios at Arta, and Agia Theodora at Arta. The construction of these churches dates to the mid-thirteenth century and demonstrates a cloisonné masonry technique of bricks and stones. In Thessaly, at the village of Ellassona, the church of Panagia Olympiotissa develops a complicated cloisonné masonry technique of bricks and stones in its exterior façades.

motifs at the *katholikon* at Achladochori, like its architectural typology, originate from the artistic sphere of mid- thirteenth-century Epiros.

Studies on the singled-aisled cross barrel-vaulted building have revealed connections to Porta Panagia. Two-lobed windows, separated by a column and placed on the northern and southern façades below the cross barrel-vaulted arch on each side, link the architectural features of the *katholikon* at Achladochori to Porta Panagia (figs. 6, 13). Likewise, the marble templon screens of the churches exhibit corresponding adornment. A single bird (perhaps an eagle) decorates the marble capitals of the templon at Achladochori while patterns of encircled floral motifs cover the entablature; Porta Panagia has comparable decoration (figs. 7-8, 14-15). On one side, the marble capitals exhibit a double-headed eagle, while on the frontal side emerges an enclosed foliate cross. The entablature displays a fine and more complicated variation of the encircled floral motif repetition (fig. 15).

A third templon screen, not intact today, has parallels to the templon screen of Porta Panagia. This templon screen decorated the area in front of the sanctuary of the Panagia Olympiotissa at Elassona.<sup>54</sup> Responsible for the erection of the church in 1295-1296 were Hypomone's two sons, Constantine and Theodore. Marble fragments of a small rectangular pier, a column, a capital with palmettes, and broken marble slabs, all located at the courtyard of Panagia Olympiotissa, may belong to the original Byzantine templon screen of the *katholikon*.<sup>55</sup> Two rings in relief, much more simplified than the two braided rings bracing the templon columns at Porta Panagia, decorate the slim column (figs. 14, 16). Constantinides paralleled the

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<sup>54</sup> Efthalia Constantinides explains that the templon screen from Porta Panagia is of finer craftsmanship than the templon at Panagia Olympiotissa. For a detailed account on the building, see Efthalia C. Constantinides, *The Wall Paintings of the Panagia Olympiotissa at Elasson in Northern Thessaly*, 1 (Athens: Canadian Archaeological Institute at Athens, 1992).

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*, 58. The dimensions of the rectangular pier are 0.72 x 0.10 cm (l x w), the diameter of the column is 0.13cm, the rings are 0.05cm thick, the broken marble slabs are approximately 0.65m square, and the small capital is 0.23cm x 0.27cm x 0.15-0.16cm (h x w x d). The dimensions are based on Efthalia Constantinides' measurements.

two templon screens from Orlandos' Porta Panagia illustration, "which deduced that the columns measured 2.28m in height and the span between the two piers was 2.50m; these sizes roughly correspond to the measurement (2.80m) of the span between the two piers of the *bema* of the Panagia Olympiotissa."<sup>56</sup> She concluded that "the two *thorakia* between the four columns at Ellassona would probably have formed a square of 0.65cm."<sup>57</sup> The broken marble slab, ornamented with birds, a foliate cross, and floral motifs, adheres to these measurements and may have served as a *thorakion* (fig. 17).

The sculptural decorations at Porta Panagia, Panagia Olympiotissa, and the *katholikon* at Achladochori, which bear numerous similarities with each other, further place the *katholikon* in the late- thirteenth-/early- fourteenth century. It is not unlikely that the church at Achladochori was built after the village's absorption into Lykousada's estates.<sup>58</sup> The monastery, with its marble features and overall rich decoration, strengthened by its relation to Porta Panagia, might reveal visual ties to the Lykousada monastery. Another feature also connects the churches. John and Hypomone's monasteries marked entrances to passages over the Pindos. As previously mentioned, Achladochori stands at the foot of Orfanos. Orfanos is one of the southern ends of the Antichasia mountains, facing south of their highest peak, Oxia (Οξυά). There, mountain passages lead to the north of Greece, to the east toward Olympos but also toward the Pindos mountain range. Hence, the *katholikon* at Achladochori may have marked another strategic pass.

Sources remain scant about the history of Fanari before Andronikos' *chrysobull*. His text mentions the village for the first time: "This monastery,<sup>58</sup> which was built and established by

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<sup>56</sup> Constantinides, *The Wall Paintings of the Panagia Olympiotissa at Ellasson in Northern Thessaly*, 58.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid.

<sup>58</sup> Nikonanos, *Βυζαντινοί ναοί της Θεσσαλίας*, 98. Nikos Nikonanos has also claimed that the *katholikon* at Achladochori was erected after the village's absorption to the Lykousada monastery. In addition, all *chrysobulls* appear to recycle what was written by Andronikos II. Perhaps they simply copied the information already at hand instead of investigating whether there have been any new additions at the village.

her, stands somewhere near<sup>59</sup> the town named Fanari.”<sup>59</sup> Like Loxada, Fanari stands near the exit of one of the mountain passes that connected Epiros with the Thessalian plain. Fanari (φανάρι) means beacon in Greek, suggesting that the village functioned as an important observation and signaling post. The medieval fortress occupies the summit of a hill off the Pindos. On a clear day, one can see as far as Mouzaki and Porta Panagia to the northwest, Trikala and Meteora to the north, the entire Thessalian plateau, and Mt. Ossa to the east. One cannot emphasize enough the strategic importance of the monastery’s location, marking the entrance from Thessaly to Epiros, and overseeing the Thessalian plateau and the passageways towards the Pindos mountain range.

On or before 1909, Bees visited Loxada, where he saw some Byzantine remains. He attributed those to the Lykousada monastery.<sup>60</sup> Loxada is located three kilometers southwest of Fanari, a village crowned by an important medieval fortress. Upon a visit at Loxada and Fanari, locals will tell anyone that the churches of Agios Ioannis Prodromos at Fanari, and Twelve Apostles at Pyrgos Ithomis allegedly contain *spolia* from the Lykousada monastery.<sup>61</sup>

The church of Agios Ioannis Prodromos (St. John the Baptist), or as the locals call it Ai-Yiannis o Prodromos, stands below the northern part of the fortress at Fanari. A narrow pathway amidst wild vegetation connects the two sites. Arriving from this pathway, the visitor cannot miss the sloping terrain on which the church stands.<sup>62</sup> There, facing east is the façade of the church’s sanctuary. White or semi-white fragments contrast from the stone surface. Of these, a stone plaque decorated with a central cross and the letter combination ΙΣ ΧΣ over the verb

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<sup>59</sup> “διακειμένη τοῦ ἄστεος ὁ Φανάριον ὀνομάζεται.” Sdrolia, “Συμβολή στήν ἱστορία τοῦ Φαναρίου Καρδίτσας (1289-1453),” 129.

<sup>60</sup> See Bees, “Αποσπάσματα ενός χρυσόβουλου για τη μονή ‘Παναγία Ελεούσα’ στη Λυκουσάδα,” 3.

<sup>61</sup> As far as I know, there has not been any scholarship on these remains. I would like to thank Katerina Papapioannou who came to the church of Agios Ioannis Prodromos during a rainy morning to give me access.

<sup>62</sup> The wooden templon screen at Agios Ioannis Prodromos bears an engraved date of 1882.

NIKA<sup>63</sup> establishes the church's construction date to 1873. Embedded on the exterior wall of the sanctuary are two small marble fragments, one inserted into the sanctuary wall, to the left of the central window (figs. 18-19). Small rocks, placed between the fragment and the wall, secure the marble slab. Two distinct patterns cover the rectangular fragment's surface. A braided design in relief, with ten incised circles, borders a thinner strand ornamented with carved lines. The designs develop vertically on the minute slab. Erosion appears at all ends, indicating that the marble fragment once belonged to a larger composition. A second marble fragment, slightly longer than the aforementioned one, frames the left side of the narthex's narrow window (fig. 20). Its position allows us to examine two of its four sides, which bear the exact same ornamentation. The bottom half of a cross appears at the top. Below this section emerges a curvilinear and knotted design, which develops vertically on the surface. The carved decoration includes three incised encircled motifs, of which two contain a star form. Like the first marble fragment, this one also displays signs of erosion. The disrupted designs denote its detachment from a larger composition.<sup>64</sup> These two marble fragments most likely belonged to a templon screen. The smaller fragment may have been positioned horizontally and formed part of the entablature.

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<sup>63</sup> ΙΣ ΧΣ ΝΙΚΑ translates as Jesus Christ vanquishes. This is a modern written version of IC XC.

<sup>64</sup> Erosion appears at all ends of the first slab, indicating that the marble fragment once belonged to a larger composition. Two types of erosion show on the second fragment. Like the smaller marble slab, this one also belonged to a larger composition, evident from the abrupt end of the motifs at the top and bottom. Here, an orange discoloration stains the white surface of the marble. The discoloration appears heavily on the side facing the interior of the sanctuary, but expands toward the outer surfaces as well. Perhaps this type of erosion occurred from the fire that burned the Lykousada monastery in the early-seventeenth century. It appears that the orange discoloration did not develop as a result of biofilms and/or lichens. In their essay, Judith Jacob, Michaela Schull and Federica Villa discuss the relationship between eroded marble, biofilms, lichens, and the environment. They describe the types of erosion related to biofilms and lichens that appear on marble monuments. The discoloration appears to be of a darker color, not orange, as in the case of the marble slabs discussed above. See Judith M. Jacob, Michaela Schull, and Federica Villa, "Biofilms and Lichens on Eroded Marble Monuments: Reconsidering Cleaning," *APT Bulletin: The Journal of Preservation Technology* 49, no. 2-3 (2018): 55-60; David Rinne, *The Conservation of Ancient Marble* (Los Angeles: Getty Publications, 1976), 4.

The church of the Twelve Apostles is located on the outskirts of the village of Pyrgos Ithomis, which is ten kilometers to the west of Loxada. The church was erected in 1845 during the last years of Ottoman rule over the region. At the center of the eastern façade surfaces a marble capital and a small fragment. Here, as at the church at Fanari, the fragments are embedded in the wall.<sup>65</sup> The marble capital preserves its circular base and volutes (fig. 21). On the capital appears a centrally-placed cross flanked by stylized acanthus leaves. The second fragment exhibits a misplaced cross (positioned horizontally, instead of vertically) (fig. 22). The cross bears resemblance to what is seen in the upper section of figure 20. The fragments from Agios Ioannis Prodromos and Twelve Apostles can be tentatively identified as belonging to the Lykousada monastery. Even though small in size, the *spolia* recall the Lykousada monastery and open new avenues of research for their material and visual repertoire. Likewise, based on the usage of cross barrel-vaulted ceilings at Kato Panagia, Porta Panagia, and Achladochori, the Lykousada monastery may have also employed such a ceiling. I suggest that the monastery bore the plan of a three-aisled cross barrel-vaulted basilica, imitating the imperial plans of Kato Panagia and Porta Panagia, which strongly influenced regional architecture.

### ***The Vlach Connection***

In the winter of 1909-1910, the British archaeologists Alan Wace and Maurice Thompson, accompanied by a Vlach-speaking guide, traveled to Southern Thessaly. They visited the area surrounding the coastal town of Almiros, between Magnesia and Mt. Othrys. While searching for inscriptions and other medieval remains at Ellassona, the three men lodged at the village of

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<sup>65</sup> Of particular interest is how the *spolia* both at Agios Ioannis Prodromos and at the Twelve Apostles are placed almost in similar positions. The capital is positioned centrally as the marble fragment frames the centrally placed window at Agios Ioannis Prodromos. Similarly, the smaller fragments emerge to the lower left side. Orange erosion appears on the two fragments from the Twelve Apostles. Perhaps the architect(s) of the churches was the same, as they have only thirty years difference. In addition, the Ottoman plaques found at Agios Ioannis Prodromos create a connection between the two churches and the time they were created.

Vlachogianni, a winter settlement of the Pindos Vlachs.<sup>66</sup> One night, they heard stories of the Vlach mountain village of Samarina. Locals described to the visitors “a church with a miraculous pine tree growing through its roof and a five-day festival at which all the marriages of the year were celebrated.”<sup>67</sup> Intrigued, the two men employed a second muleteer—this time, a native Vlach from Samarina—to learn more about his village. Fascinated by the stories they heard, the two travelers convinced the Vlach man to accompany him and his family on their return to Samarina the following summer. They planned to meet at Tirnavos, a village between Larissa and Ellassona, where the Vlach population consisted of over one hundred families, nearly all of them originating from Samarina.<sup>68</sup> From there, the two men would embark on their journey, traveling through the traditional route that ends at Samarina, alongside the Vlach families.

A series of ridges (with many peaks exceeding 2,000 meters), separated by plateaux which are deeply dissected by river courses, characterizes the highland zone of the Pindos, the location of Samarina.<sup>69</sup> Every winter, snow covers the mountainous villages. According to Vlach tradition, when the summer ends, the inhabitants desert these villages and move down to the plains. Thus, Vlach shepherds turn into settled pastoralists. For the duration of the six winter months, Vlachs populate the plains of Thessaly, longing to return to the villages in the hills—their home—in the spring.<sup>70</sup> The relocation of Vlachs from the plains of Thessaly to the highlands occurred around the same time every year. Families arranged their departure every spring before the fair of St. Achillios, which fell on the Monday between May 16 and 23.<sup>71</sup> As

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<sup>66</sup> Like Wace and Thompson, Leake mentions that the village of Vlachogianni formed a winter settlement for Samarina Vlachs. See Leake, *Travels in Northern Greece*, 313-315.

<sup>67</sup> Wace and Thompson, *The Nomads of the Balkans*, 4.

<sup>68</sup> *Ibid.*, 11-12.

<sup>69</sup> Nikos Efstratiou, Paolo Biagi, Paraskevi Elefanti, Panagiotis Karkanias, and Maria Ntinou, “Prehistoric Exploitation of Grevena Highland Zones: Hunters and Herders along the Pindus Chain of Western Macedonia (Greece),” *World Archaeology* 38, no. 3 (2006): 416-417.

<sup>70</sup> Wace and Thompson, *The Nomads of the Balkans*, 1-2. The six winter months start in November and end in May.

<sup>71</sup> *Ibid.*, 11. The number of Vlachs who currently maintain a nomadic lifestyle and migrate from the Thessalian plateau to mountainous villages is scant. However, descendants of Vlach families still attend the fair of Saint Achillios, the holy protector of Grevena. Nowadays, Saint Achillios is not a moveable feast. Grevenioties celebrate

customary, while traveling to Samarina, Vlachs stopped at Grevena, where the four-day celebration of St. Achillios still takes place. However, according to Wace and Thompson's account, that year, they departed a week later. On May 26, 1910, the two British archaeologists arrived at Tirnavos to begin their journey. Vlachs travel from the plateaux to the mountains in large groups. One can only imagine that their seasonal migration through Thessaly looked like a procession, as they were joined by friends and relatives from nearby villages and accompanied by their flocks. On June 2, a week after the trip first commenced, the nomads and the two travelers arrived at Samarina.

Documenting the various villages, rivers, and hills they encountered while traveling, Wace and Thompson mapped one of three passages that begin from the Thessalian plateau, crossing the Pindos mountain range, and terminating in Epiros.<sup>72</sup> After they arrived at Tirnavos, the two travelers and the Vlachs descended toward Gounitsa (Amygdalea). From there, they followed the banks of the Pineios River, which led them to the Vlach village of Zarko. At that point, additional families joined the caravan. Moving to the west, they reached Paleogardiki (ancient Pelinna), where they camped for the night. The next day they arrived at Trikala. From there, they traveled north to Kastraki, a village near Meteora. As they ascended towards Grevena,

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the saint on May 15th. On August 15 (*dekapentaugoustos*), occurs another fair, the feast of the Dormition of the Virgin at Samarina. The celebration is known as the “Αντάμωμα των Βλάχων” (Meeting of the Vlachs). Vlachs from nearby villages gather together and celebrate. For Vlach feasts (*panegyria*) today, see Kalliopi Panopoulou, “The ‘Panegyri’ and Formation of Vlach Cultural Identity,” *Dance Chronicle* 31, no. 3 (2008): 436-459. This essay refers to Vlachs from Chionochori, near Serres (a northern Greek city), however similar customs are followed by numerous Vlach descendants no matter regional differences.

<sup>72</sup> Other passageways running through the Pindos most likely connected Thessaly to Epiros and Kastoria, in Macedonia. My research has led me to three, all of which start from villages near Trikala and end in Epiros (this paper does not trace the Pindos passageways from Thessaly to Macedonia). Depending on the terminal point different routes were used. The three passageways I will refer to in this paper are: Fanari (at Karditsa), crossing Agrafa and reaching Ioannina or Arta; Pyli (at Trikala) to Arta through Vourgareli; and the route described by Wace and Thompson (Tirnavos - Trikala - Samarina). The early- nineteenth-century traveler William Martin Leake, in 1835 published a book on routes he explored in Northern Greece. His work was published in four volumes in which he examines both Epiros and Thessaly. Of interest for this topic is chapter 39, featured in his fourth volume. Leake from November 19 through December 7, traveled from Ioannina to Agrafa, from there toward Larissa and Tyrnavos, and passed through Vlachogianni on the way back to Agrafa, where he mentions the village of Fanari. See Leake, *Travels in Northern Greece*, 258-328.



by crossing the Venetikos river, they abandoned the broad, level, and fertile lowlands of the Thessalian plateau to maneuver through the rocky hilltops of the Pindos mountain range. With the shift in terrain, the archaeologists were surprised by the weather change, as they remembered seeking shelter under a tent during rainfall at Venetikos. According to the travelers, each Vlach family owned a tent, where they spent their nights. Once the rain stopped, they followed the Venetikos brink and reached the villages Mavronoros and Vodhendzko, marking the entrance to the Vlach villages of Kupatshari (to the west of Grevena). The travelers documented some of these villages: Spileo, Sharganei, Tishta (Krya Vrissi), Lavda, Tuzhi, Tshuriaka, and Filippaioi.<sup>73</sup> These villages and settlements form the road leading toward Samarina. This road, which travelers still use today, is known as Kutsokale (Lame Road) and passes through the northernmost part of Doauak'etri (Two Rocks).<sup>74</sup> The route that Wace and Thompson explored connects Thessaly to Epiros by entering the mountain through Trikala, crossing the Pindos, passing through Zygos (Katara pass), and terminating at Ioannina (fig. 23).<sup>75</sup>

Wace and Thompson's journey offers a glimpse into the seasonal movement of a transhumant nomadic and ethnic group, which during the thirteenth century gave its name to Thessaly, the "Great Vlachia."<sup>76</sup> The documentation of the villages they visited, the rivers they

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<sup>73</sup> The identification of some of these villages is difficult as shifting population changed their names over time. For instance, Tishta is known today as Tista or Krya Vrissi. The surrounding villages of Samarina, mentioned in Wace and Thompson's text, cannot be identified yet for the same reasons. These villages are known as Pade Mushata (Fair Mead) and Ghumara. For information on the location of Ghumara and Gorgul'u, or Mt Gorgul'u, see Efstratiou, Biagi, Elefanti, Karkanas, and Ntinou, "Prehistoric Exploitation of Grevena Highland Zones," 417; Wace and Thompson, *The Nomads of the Balkans*, 37.

<sup>74</sup> For the complete account of Wace and Thompson's journey to Samarina, see Wace and Thompson, *The Nomads of the Balkans*, 11-38.

<sup>75</sup> The Katara Pass is located five kilometers northeast of Metsovo and forms the natural border between Epiros and Thessaly. The elevation of the mountain peak approximates 1,705 m (5,594 ft). The peak is known as one of the highest and most dangerous in Greece, especially during the winter when it is covered with snow and the temperatures are low.

<sup>76</sup> In the French *Chronicle of Morea*, the name Vlachia denotes Thessaly. "The first Komnenian was the lord and governed over the region of Vlachia." (Τὸν πρῶτον γὰρ τὸν Κομνηνὸν ἐδιόρθωσε νὰ ἔνι ἀφέντης γὰρ καὶ κύβερνος στὸν τόπον τῆς Βλαχίας [...].) See John Schmitt, *The Chronicle of Morea, to Chronikon tou Moreos: A History in Political Verse, Relating the Establishment of Feudalism in Greece by the Franks in the Thirteenth Century* (London: Methuen & Co., 1904), 234. For the name Vlachia, see Magdalino, *The History of Thessaly*, 69-

crossed, and the environmental and chronological context under which they traveled enables an understanding of Vlach customs and mobility. The parameters of their movement parallel that of their medieval ancestors and urge us to reassess the role of medieval Vlachs in the Pindos mountain range and the Thessalian plateau.

The Lykousada monastery and Porta Panagia stand in the vicinity of Trikala, suggesting that the city held strategic importance during John's reign in the late thirteenth century. However, John's capital was located at Neopatras (Νέα Πάτρα), today it is known as Ypati (112 kilometers south of Trikala). The medieval castle of Neopatras occupies a hill above the Spercheios valley, not far from Lamia and Thebes.<sup>77</sup> Neopatras bordered the Epirotic Despotate, the Duchy of Athens, and was located close to the principality of Achaia. The capital's proximity to the northern section of Negroponte (Euboea) fulfilled tactical planning by facilitating maritime contact via commerce among Venetians, Seljuks, and Byzantines. Like Almiros, Negroponte permitted entry to Thessaly from Constantinople via the sea.<sup>78</sup> Because of the island's location, rulers monitored military activity in the Aegean. If the capital of John's Thessalian Despotate was at Neopatras, then why did he and Hypomone erect their monasteries near Trikala?

Attributed to John I Doukas, an inscription engraved on seals states "The seal of John the *sebastokrator*, whose ancestry stems from emperors."<sup>79</sup> The phrase aims to legitimize John's

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70. For Vlachs as an ethnic group, see Nicholas Geoffrey Lemprière Hammond, "The Ethne in Epirus and Upper Macedonia," *The Annual of the British School at Athens* 95 (2000): 345-352.

77 John Doukas did not construct this castle. It must have been a pre-existing structure that John inherited when he became the *sebastokrator* of the Great Vlachia.

78 For maritime commerce and Negroponte under the Venetians, see Livia Bevilacqua, "Liturgical and Devotional Artefacts in the Venetian Churches of the Levant, Thirteenth to Fifteenth centuries," in *Late Byzantium Reconsidered: The Arts of the Palaiologan Era in the Mediterranean*, ed. Andrea Mattiello and Maria Alessia Rossi (London: Routledge, 2019), 156-176.

79 "Σφραγίς σεβαστο[υ] Ἰωάννου τοῦ Δούκα| ρίζαν γένους ἔχοντος ἐκ βασιλέων." Magdalino, *The History of Thessaly*, 174-175.

royal identity by highlighting his descent from emperors.<sup>80</sup> Paul Magdalino ascribed two different identities to John I Doukas.<sup>81</sup> From a Byzantine point of view, and for his Thessalian subjects, John was the *sebastokrator* (the ruler) of Thessaly. For the Byzantines, John was a rebellious figure, who ruled as the heir of the Great Vlachia, due to the Despotate of Epiros' resistance to the Byzantine emperor.<sup>82</sup> John's second identity resulted from the mistranslation of his surname. His surname, Doukas, was translated as duke (*δοῦκας*) by the Latin-speaking rulers of Greece at the time. Sources indicate that Charles I of Anjou, the prince of Achaia (1278-1285), referred to him as "Duke John of Neopatra."<sup>83</sup> These two identities intertwined with John's imperial origins and duties as a *sebastokrator*. John I Doukas' marriage to Hypomone offered him a third identity: ally of the Thessalian Vlachs.

The origins of the transhumant nomadic group of Vlachs, otherwise known as Aromanians, emerge as a highly debatable topic, especially among Romanians, Bulgarians, and Greeks.<sup>84</sup> The arrival of Vlachs in Greece is ambivalent; however, scholars date their migration

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<sup>80</sup> The need to legitimize his identity comes as no surprise as he was the illegitimate son of Michael II Komnenos Doukas. John's half-brother Nikephoros acquired their father's capital at Arta and the broader region of Epiros. As the illegitimate son and hence the one with fewer rights to royal authority and control was immediately removed from the perspective to acquire the capital of the Epirotic Despotate at Arta. Neighboring Thessaly came under his governance.

<sup>81</sup> Magdalino, *The History of Thessaly*, 158-182.

<sup>82</sup> *Ibid.*, 177.

<sup>83</sup> *Ibid.*, 178; Nicol, *The Despotate of Epiros 1267-1479*, 2.

<sup>84</sup> It is important to distinguish between migratory groups of Vlachs, Albanians, and Serbians. In primary sources written in Greek from the thirteenth to the fifteenth centuries expressions such as "boulgaroalbanitoblachos" or "serbalbanitoboulgaroblachos" indicate the mixing between Vlachs, Albanians, and Serbians. However, their origins are not the same. These mixings perhaps occurred as an aftermath of marriage-alliances or even confusion of the authors. In the *Chronicle of the Tocco* the author, probably a Greek from Ioannina, makes a clear distinction between Albanians and does not mention them as Vlachs. Since the origins of Vlachs is an ambivalent topic, such confusions have lasted until very recently. For instance, in Greece, Vlachs from Epiros are frequently confused with Albanian migrants to Greece. This is attributed to the geographical location of Epiros, which borders the southern part of Albania. Sagiada, a small coastal village in Epiros, borders the wildlife refuge Korafit in Albania. Korafit is close to the coastal Albanian town of Sarandë. To the east, the Epirotic mountain range of Grammos creates a natural border with Albania. For the aforementioned expressions and the *Chronicle of the Tocco* see Brendan Osswald, "The Ethnic Composition of Medieval Epirus," in *Imagining Frontiers, Contesting Identities*, ed. Steven G. Ellis and Lud'ka Klusánová (Pisa: Pisa University Press, 2007), 130, 136-137. For the origins of Vlachs and the names Vlachs and Aromanians, see Achilles Lazarou, "Aroumain Bana: Est-il un héritage aborigène?" *Στ' Διεθνές Συνέδριο Σπουδών Νοτιοανατολικής Ευρώπης*, Athens (1990): 309-310. For diaspora in the Byzantine empire, and particularly the movement of nomads, see Hélène Ahrweiler and Angeliki E. Laiou, *Studies on the Internal Diaspora of the Byzantine Empire* (Washington, D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, 1998), 1-

to be sometime in the Middle Byzantine period.<sup>85</sup> Written evidence on Greek Vlachs is as scant as material remains. Therefore, any sources mentioning Vlachs—even briefly—are extremely useful. For instance, Basil II the Bulgar Slayer (Βουλγαροκτόνος, r. 976-1025), in 1020 issued *sigillia* to confirm the rights and jurisdiction of the former Church of Bulgaria; in these he mentions Vlachs.<sup>86</sup> Byzantines held the common belief that Vlachs originally occupied the Danubo-Carpathian basin.<sup>87</sup> Hence, some scholars ascribe the arrival of Vlachs in Thessaly and Epiros through the Bulgarian Tsar Samuel's tenth-century invasions to Greece, his military encounters with Basil II, and the dissolution of the first Bulgarian state in 1018 AD.<sup>88</sup>

Kekaumenos, in his eleventh-century *Strategikon* (Στρατηγηκόν), provides one of the few detailed accounts on Vlachs.<sup>89</sup> His description of the transhumant group allows us to contemplate their role in Thessaly during the tenth and eleventh centuries, and to assess whether their role changed in the following centuries. From the *Strategikon* we can decipher the origins of Vlachs and place their migration to Greece in a chronological framework. According to Kekaumenos, Vlachs originated from an area near the rivers Danube and Sava (Saos).<sup>90</sup> Later on, in the

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16. Perhaps, Romanians have the stronger case as to the origins of Vlachs. Vlach, otherwise known as Aromanian, is a Latin-based dialect (only spoken) and bears extreme similarity to Romanian.

<sup>85</sup> Magdalino, *The History of Thessaly*, i.

<sup>86</sup> Anthony Kaldellis, "The Apogee of Empire in the Eleventh Century," in *Romanland: Ethnicity and Empire in Byzantium* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2019), 240.

<sup>87</sup> *Ibid.*, 68; Cecaumeno, *Raccomandazioni e consigli di un galantuomo* (Στρατηγηκόν), trans. Maria Dora Spadaro (Alessandria: Edizioni dell'Orso Alessandria, 1998), 226.

<sup>88</sup> Magdalino, *The History of Thessaly*, 68; Fanis G. Dasoulas, "Οι Μεσαιωνικές Κοινωνίες των Βλάχων," *Βαλκανικά Σύμμεικτα* 16 (2014): 9. For the military relations among Bulgarians and Byzantines, see Alkmene Stauridou-Zafra, *Η Συνάντηση Συμεών και Νικολάου Μυστικού (Αύγουστος 913) στα Πλαίσια του Βυζαντινοβουλγαρικού Ανταγωνισμού, Βυζαντινά Κείμενα και Μελέται*, vol. 3 (Thessaloniki: Κέντρο Βυζαντινών Ερευνών, 1972).

<sup>89</sup> For information on the author and a critical analysis of his manuscript, see Cecaumeno, *Raccomandazioni e consigli di un galantuomo*, 7-32. The manuscript belonged to the genre mirror for princes, where the author advises the reader (an emperor or other imperial figure).

<sup>90</sup> "they lived near the Danube River and Saos, a river we now call Savas, where the Serbs live now, and when they lived there the land was fortified and hard to access." (ὄκουν δὲ πρότερον πλησίον τοῦ Δανουβίου ποταμοῦ καὶ τοῦ Σάου, ὃν νῦν ποταμὸν Σάβαν καλοῦμεν, ἐνθα Σέρβοι ἀρτίως οἰκοῦσιν, ἐν ὄχυροῖς καὶ δυσβάτοις τόποις). *Ibid.*, 226. The Savas River today is known as the Sava River. Today the Sava River passes through Slovenia, Croatia, and Serbia and functions as a natural border between Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina. The Sava terminates into the Danube, in Belgrade.

eleventh century, the region was occupied by Serbs. Fortifications and hard-to-access passageways characterized the area, and demonstrated the ability of Vlachs to maneuver through difficult terrain. At some point during his reign, the Roman Emperor Trajan (r. 97-117) combatted and captured Vlachs and beheaded their ruler, Dekebalos.<sup>91</sup> The author does not specify when Vlachs escaped life under Roman rulership; however, Kekaumenos narrates that once they escaped the Roman fortified cities, Vlachs scattered throughout Epiros and Macedonia.<sup>92</sup> Kekaumenos urged his readers (emperors and governors) to not trust the Vlachs, as he considered them to be an entirely untrustworthy and corrupted *genos*.<sup>93</sup> They did not believe in any God, nor obey any emperor, nor respect their relatives or friends.<sup>94</sup>

Despite their geographical dispersion, Balkan Vlachs structured their nomadic lifestyle under shared socio-economic standards. Kekaumenos' account sheds light on important

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<sup>91</sup> Cecaumeno, *Raccomandazioni e consigli di un galantuomo*, 226. Kekaumenos associated Vlachs who participated in this fight with Dacians and Bessi.

<sup>92</sup> In this account, Mátyás Gyóni raised the question of how was it possible for the Vlachs to arrive at Epiros, Macedonia and Thessaly if the Romans seized them under their control? For Gyóni it seems rational that Vlachs would have been scattered around the Sava and Danube area, which they once occupied. Mátyás Gyóni, "La transhumance des Vlaques balkaniques au Moyen Age," *Byzantinoslavica* 12 (1951): 29-42; Achilles Lazarou, *Βαλκάνια και Βλάχοι* (Athens: Εκδόσεις Φιλολογικού Συλλόγου Παρνασσός, 1993), 47.

<sup>93</sup> *Genos* (in Greek γένος) denotes ethnicity. According to Brendan Osswald, *genos* was based on ethnic elements but also the shared cultural and linguistic components of a group. As previously mentioned, Vlachs developed a spoken Latin-based dialect and had a nomadic lifestyle. Osswald, "The Ethnic Composition of Medieval Epirus," 126.

<sup>94</sup> Cecaumeno, *Raccomandazioni e consigli di un galantuomo*, 224-228. "The race of the Vlachs is entirely untrustworthy and twisted, and do not attain true faith in God, nor to the emperor, nor to their relative or friend, but they tend to cheat everyone, tell many lies and steal a lot, and every day they swear very solemn oaths to their friends and violate them without thinking of it twice, and they fraternize and unite, and doing so they deceive guileless people, they have never upheld their faith to anyone, not even with the most ancient emperors, the Roman emperors. And after combatting emperor Trajan, who completely destroyed and captured them, and their sovereign, named as Dekebalos, was also slain and beheaded and his head was placed on a spear, situated at the center of the city of the Romans. These were called Dacians and Bessi. Initially, they lived near the Danube River and Saos, a river we now call Savas, where the Serbs live now, and when they lived there the land was fortified and hard to access. Within these fortified places, they pretended to be friends and obey the ancient Roman emperors, and when they came out of these fortifications, they ruined the Roman territory. Irritated by them, they completely destroyed them. (The Vlachs) left the area and disseminated throughout Epiros and Macedonia, but most of them occupied the lands of Greece. They are cowards and have the hearts of hares, they are very audacious and this comes from their cowardice. For this reason I recommend that you do not trust them at all." (ἐπει δὲ τὸ τῶν Βλάχων γένος ἀπιστόν τε παντελῶς καὶ διστραμμένον, μήτε εἰς Θεὸν ἔχον πίστιν ὀρθὴν μήτε εἰς βασιλέα μήτε εἰς συγγενῆ ἢ εἰς φίλον, ἀλλὰ ἀγωνιζόμενον πάντας καταπραγματεύεσθαι, ψεύδεται δὲ πολλὰ καὶ κλέπτει πάνυ, ὁμνύμενον καθ' ἐκάστην ὄρκους φρικωδεστάτους πρὸς τοὺς ἑαυτοῦ φίλους καὶ ἀθετοῦν ῥαδίως ποιοῦν τε ἀδελφοποιήσεις καὶ συντεκνίας καὶ σοφιζόμενον διὰ τούτων ἀπατᾶν τοὺς ἀπλουστέρους, οὐδέποτε δὲ ἐφύλαξε πίστιν πρὸς τινα, οὐδὲ πρὸς τοὺς ἀρχαιότερους βασιλεῖς τῶν Ῥωμαίων, πολεμηθέντες παρὰ τοῦ βασιλέως Τραϊανοῦ καὶ παντελῶς ἐκτριβέντες

ethnographic information about Vlachs. Nikoulitzas, a renowned military figure in Greece, received the title of *arche* of the Vlachs of Greece by Basil II in 979.<sup>95</sup> Therefore, we can safely assume that in the late tenth century, Vlachs were already settled in Greece. In preparation for a local revolt in 1066-1067, local Larissans, Vlachs, and Bulgarians protested a tax hike.

Nikoulitzas' descendant, known as Nikoulitzas the Larissan or Nikoulitzas Delphinias, visited the home of the Vlach chieftain Beriboes in an attempt to pacify the spirits of the protestors.<sup>96</sup>

Larissa—the city in which the local revolt commenced—stands to the eastern section of the Thessalian plateau. Nikoulitzas Delphinias' visit to Beriboes indicates that this Vlach settlement was located somewhere near Larissa. Henceforth, by the late eleventh century, Vlachs had already settled at the Thessalian plateau. The twelfth-century traveler and Rabbi, Benjamin of Tudela, while referring to a city located on the foothills of Wallachia (Vlachia), described that the nation of Vlachia lived in the mountains.<sup>97</sup> His account suggests that Vlachs abounded in twelfth-century Thessaly.

The *Strategikon* provides significant information on Vlach settlements, customs, and the group's seasonal movement and activities in the Thessalian plateau. Kekaumenos narrates the dialogue between Nikoulitzas Delphinias and some Vlachs.

[...] “But also June has arrived, and how can we harvest in such disorder?” And he said to the Vlachs “Where are your herds and your women?” and they responded “In the

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έάλωσαν, και τοῦ βασιλέως αὐτῶν τοῦ λεγομένου Δεκαβάλου ἀποσφαγέντος και τὴν κεφαλὴν ἐπὶ δόρατος ἀναρτηθέντος ἐν μέσῃ τῇ πόλει Ῥωμαίων. οὗτοι γάρ εἰσιν οἱ λεγόμενοι Δᾶκαι και Βέσοι. ὤκουν δὲ πρότερον πλησίον τοῦ Δανουβίου ποταμοῦ και τοῦ Σάου, ὃν νῦν ποταμὸν Σάβαν καλοῦμεν, ἐνθα Σέρβοι ἀρτίως οἰκοῦσιν, ἐν ὄχυροῖς και δυσβάτοις τόποις. τούτοις θαρροῦντες ὑπεκρίνοντο ἀγάπην και δούλωσιν πρὸς τοὺς ἀρχαιοτέρους τῶν Ῥωμαίων βασιλεῖς και ἐξερχόμενοι τῶν ὄχυρωμάτων ἐλείζοντο τὰς χώρας τῶν Ῥωμαίων. ὅθεν ἀγακτήσαντες κατ' αὐτῶν, ὡς εἴρηται, διέφθειραν αὐτούς. οἱ και ἐξελθόντες τῶν ἐκεῖσε διεσπάρησαν ἐν πάσῃ τῇ Ἠπειρῷ και Μακεδονίᾳ, οἱ δὲ πλείονες αὐτῶν ᾤκησαν τὴν Ἑλλάδα. εἰσὶ και δειλοὶ πάνυ λαγῶν ἔχοντες καρδίαν, θράσος δὲ ἔχοντες και τοῦτο ἀπὸ δειλίας. παραγγέλλω οὖν ὑμῖν, ἵνα μὴ πιστεῦητε τούτοις τὸ σύνολον.) I translated the text from the primary source and with the assistance of an Italian translation by Maria Dora Spadaro.

<sup>95</sup> Kaldellis, “The Apogee of Empire in the Eleventh Century,” 240.

<sup>96</sup> “The next day, they held their assembly at the home of Beriboes, the Vlach.” (ἐκεῖνοι δὲ εἶχον τὸ συναγωγίον αὐτῶν εἰς τὴν αὔριον εἰς τὴν οἰκίαν Βεριβόου τοῦ Βλάχου). Cecaumeno, *Raccomandazioni e consigli di un galantuomo*, 210.

<sup>97</sup> Marcus Nathan Adler, *The Itinerary of Benjamin of Tudela: Critical Text, Translation and Commentary* (London: Oxford University Press, 1907), 11. Benjamin of Tudela shared the same opinion of Vlachs like Kekaumenos, by

mountains of Bulgaria” (The Vlach custom is to take their herds and their families, from April until September, to high mountains and cold regions).<sup>98</sup>

Responding to Nikoulitzas’ question “Where are your herds and your women?” the Vlach men explained that in the summer months, starting in April and ending in September, their families and animals migrate to their villages, located in the mountains of what would have been then, Bulgaria. While elders, women, and children were off to the mountains, the males of the family stayed in the lowlands to continue harvesting.<sup>99</sup> Comparing Kekaumenos’ description of the movement of the nomadic group to Wace and Thompson’s journey, we can decipher that even though nine centuries later than Kekaumenos’ account, Vlachs shared the same traditions with their medieval ancestors.

Following this episode, Kekaumenos described Nikoulitzas’ visit to Pharsala and the river Pleres. The text indicates that in the surrounding region of the Pleres river, Vlachs and Bulgarians set up their settlements in opposing sides.<sup>100</sup>

[...] he left his house to go to Pharsala and Pleres. Pleres is a river, surrounded by a big plain. The river divides the Vlachs and Bulgarians (their settlements). He set his tent there and gathered the Vlachs and Bulgarians who lived nearby, and a large number of men gathered around him.<sup>101</sup>

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describing them as lawless and untamed. It is important to note that Benjamin of Tudela arrived in Greece from Italy. He traveled by boat from Colo di Bari to Arta. Today, commercial and passenger ships travel from Bari to Igoumenitsa. The same or very similar nautical trip, with the one Benjamin of Tudela did in the twelfth century, is still used.

<sup>98</sup> Addressing the Vlachs, Nikoulitzas asked “[...] ἀλλὰ καὶ Ἰούνιος μὴν ἤδη ἐστί, καὶ πῶς ἔχομεν θερίσαι γενομένης ταραχῆς;». εἰπόντος δὲ καὶ πρὸς τοὺς Βλάχους· «ποῦ εἰσι τὰ κτήνη ὑμῶν καὶ αἱ γυναῖκες νῦν;», αὐτοὶ εἶπον· «εἰς τὰ ὄρη Βουλγαρίας» (οὕτως γὰρ ἔχουσι τύπον, ἵνα τὰ τῶν Βλάχων κτήνη καὶ αἱ φαμίλια αὐτῶν εἰσιν ἀπὸ Ἀπριλλίου μηνὸς ἕως Σεπτεμβρίου μηνὸς ἐν ὑψηλοῖς ὄρεσι καὶ ψυχροτάτοις τόποις.” Cecaumeno, *Raccomandazioni e consigli di un galantuomo*, 210; Dasoulas, “Οἱ Μεσαιωνικὲς Κοινωνίες τῶν Βλάχων,” 12.

<sup>99</sup> For the Vlachs, livestock nomadism was an essential economic activity. According to Dasoulas, Johannes Koder considers that nomadic livestock developed under Byzantines during the Justinian era. Dasoulas, “Οἱ Μεσαιωνικὲς Κοινωνίες τῶν Βλάχων,” 11.

<sup>100</sup> Avramea explains that the river’s name is Pleres due to the overflow of water. Likewise, she mentions that Pleres run through Thessaly, and one of its tributaries ended up at Mouzaki, which is a village near Pyli (where Porta Panagia is located). For the Pleres river see Annis P. Avramea, “Ἡ Βυζαντινὴ Θεσσαλία μέχρι τοῦ 1204, Συμβολὴ εἰς τὴν ἱστορικὴν γεωγραφίαν” (National and Kapodistrian University, 1972), 38, 61, 63, 97.

<sup>101</sup> “[...] ἐξῆλθεν δὲ ἀπὸ τοῦ οἴκου αὐτοῦ ἐπὶ τὰ Φάρσαλα καὶ τὸν Πλήρην. ποταμὸς δὲ ἐστὶν οὗτος ὁ Πλήρης ἔχων πεδιάδα μεγάλην ἔνθεν κάκειθεν, ὃς δὴ καὶ διέρχεται μέσον τῶν Βλάχων διαιρῶν αὐτοὺς ἔνθεν καὶ ἔνθεν. καὶ τεντώσας ἐκεῖσε περιεσώρευσε τοὺς τε Βλάχους καὶ Βουλγάρους τοὺς ἐκεῖσε πλησιάζοντας, καὶ ἠθροίσθη πρὸς αὐτὸν λαὸς πολὺς.” Of interest in this text is that even though frequently mentioned in relation to Bulgarians,

The excerpt mentions Pharsala, a large city near Larissa. The city is connected to the Lykousada monastery through the *chrysobull*, issued by Stefan Dušan in 1348. The *chrysobull* indicates that the village of Levachi, owned by the monastery, stands near the village of Pharsala.<sup>102</sup>

Nikephoros II Orsini's *chrysobull* (ca. 1356-1358) for the Lykousada monastery, also mentions the village of Levachi.<sup>103</sup> The two *chrysobulls* have differences in the written form of the village's name. Dušan's *chrysobull* names the village as Λεβάχοι, while Orsini writes it as Λεβάχη. The difference is at the endings of the two names: the first concludes in the plural ending 'οι', while the second in the singular female ending 'η.'<sup>104</sup> I propose that Λεβάχοι/Λεβάχη is the same village mentioned in Andronikos II and Andronikos III's *chrysobulls* as Levachatōn (Λεβαχάτων).

Andronikos II and Andronikos III's *chrysobulls* mention that the villages Levachatōn (Λεβαχάτων) and Taronatōn (Ταρωνάτων) were located near Simisarati (Σιμισαράτοι). Simisarati and Magoula stood within the broader region of Almiros. Magoula, known today as Aidini, is located eight kilometers north of Almiros and forty kilometers east of Pharsala.<sup>105</sup> Hild and Koder placed the village of Levachi in the region east of Pharsala.<sup>106</sup> Therefore, it may be

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Kekaumenos drew a clear distinction between them and Vlachs and Bulgars and does not consider them ethnically alike. Cecaumeno, *Raccomandazioni e consigli di un galantuomo*, 212.

<sup>102</sup> From Stefan Dušan's *chrysobull* (1348), "near Pharsala is the village known as Levachi" (περι τὰ Φύρσαλα χωρίον τὸ λεγόμενον Λεβάχοι). For the transcribed *chrysobull*, see Sofianos, "Τα υπέρ της μονῆς της Παναγίας της Λυκουσάδας του Φαναρίου Καρδίτσας," 506.

<sup>103</sup> From Nikephoros II Orsini's *chrysobull* (1356-1358), "and near the tower of Rimos, is the village of Levachi" (Καὶ εἰς τὸν τοῦ Ῥιμοῦ πύργον, χωρίον τοῦ Λεβάχη λεγόμενον). For the transcribed *chrysobull*, see *ibid.*, 509.

<sup>104</sup> Perhaps, the shifts in endings are due to different dialects or languages spoken by the two rulers. For instance, Stefan Dušan was the king of the Serbian Empire. The official language of the empire was Serbian but Greek was also used frequently.

<sup>105</sup> From Andronikos II's *chrysobull* (1289), "at Almiros, the village Magoula and Simisarati, including the lands of the families of Levacha and Taronā" (ἔτι δὲ εἰς τὸν τόπον τοῦ Ἄλμυροῦ, χωρίον ἢ Μαγούλα· καὶ οἱ Σιμισαράτοι λεγόμενοι σὺν τῇ ἐκεῖσε γῆ τῶν Λεβαχάτων καὶ Ταρωνάτων). From Andronikos III's *chrysobull* (1336), "at Almiros, the village of Magoula, and Simisarati and in addition to the lands of Levachatōn and Taronatōn" (εἰς τὸν Ἄλμυρον χωρίον ἢ Μαγούλα καὶ ἢ Σιμισεράτη σὺν τῇ ἐκεῖ γῆ τῶν Λεβαχάτων καὶ Ταρωνάτων). Of interest here is that Simisarati also display the same shift in the ending of the name, from 'οι' to 'η'. For the transcription of the *chrysobulls*, see Sofianos, "Τα υπέρ της μονῆς της Παναγίας της Λυκουσάδας του Φαναρίου Καρδίτσας," 502, 504. All excerpts of the *chrysobulls* have been translated in English by the author of this thesis.

<sup>106</sup> Hild and Koder, "Ἡ Βυζαντινὴ Θεσσαλία," 68.



presumed that Simisarati, Levachaton, and Taronaton occupied the area between Pharsala and Almiros (fig. 3). The *Provincia Velechative* (*pertinentia Velechativae*, *ἐπίσκεψις Βελεχατουΐας*), took its name from the Slavic group known as Velegeziton (Βελεγεζήτων), which migrated in the region between Dorida and Neopatras in 677.<sup>107</sup> *Velechative* appears on Alexios III Angelos' *chrysobull* in 1198, and in the *Partitio Romaniae* in 1204.<sup>108</sup> It is plausible that by the late-thirteenth century *Velechative* extended farther to the north, including the villages of Simisarati, Levachaton, and Taronaton. Seven centuries later, Wace and Thompson attest to the presence of Vlach-speaking muleteers there.

From the thirteenth to the sixteenth centuries, the Vlach word *cătun* appears in Serbian, Ottoman and Ragusan sources.<sup>109</sup> *Cătun*, known as *katouna*, signifies settlements of the mobile pastoralist group of Vlachs.<sup>110</sup> A *katouna* occupying spatial areas belonging to the local authority also indicated a specific type of tax unit (consisting of people with a collective tax-paying responsibility).<sup>111</sup> These communities take their name after their chieftain.<sup>112</sup> In an account of the Battle of Pelagonia, the anonymous author of the *Chronicle of the Morea* mentions that there was a *katouna* which had a tent, in which all the chieftains were invited.<sup>113</sup> *Katouna* here may

<sup>107</sup> Hild and Koder, “Η Βυζαντινή Θεσσαλία,” 31-32; idem, *Tabula Imperii Byzantini*, 133. For the Great (Megale) Vlachia and Mikri (small) Vlachia see Alkmene Stauridou-Zafraka, “Μεγάλη και Μικρή Βλαχία,” *Τρικαλινά* 20 (2000): 171-179. It is safe to assume that this group was a nomadic group similar to the Vlachs, if not actual Vlachs.

<sup>108</sup> Hild and Koder, “Η Βυζαντινή Θεσσαλία,” 32; idem, *Tabula Imperii Byzantini*, 133; Terezakis, “Η Θεσσαλική κοιωνία,” 49.

<sup>109</sup> Anca Tanașoca and N. Ș.Tanașoca, “Ancienneté et diffusion du «cătun» vlaque dans la Péninsule Balkanique au Moyen-Âge,” *RESEE* 27 (1989): 139. According to Fanis Dasoulas, Ottoman sources referring to Vlach and Albanian settlements in Greece, mention them as *katouna*. Dasoulas, “Οι Μεσαιωνικές Κοινωνίες των Βλάχων,” 16. For a primary source discussing the presence of Vlach in Ragusa in 1284, see Dušanka Dinić Knežević, *Tkanine u privredi srednjovekovnog Dubrovnika [Fabrics in the economy of medieval Dubrovnik]* (Belgrade: Srpska Akademija Nauka i Umetnosti, 1982), 125-131.

<sup>110</sup> Kaldellis, “The Apogee of Empire in the Eleventh Century,” 241; Tanașoca and Tanașoca, “Ancienneté et diffusion du «cătun» vlaque dans la Péninsule Balkanique au Moyen-Âge,” 139; Dasoulas, “Οι Μεσαιωνικές Κοινωνίες των Βλάχων,” 16.

<sup>111</sup> Dasoulas, “Οι Μεσαιωνικές Κοινωνίες των Βλάχων,” 17.

<sup>112</sup> Tanașoca and Tanașoca, “Ancienneté et diffusion du «cătun» vlaque dans la Péninsule Balkanique au Moyen-Âge,” 139.

<sup>113</sup> “The *katouna* had a tent supported on four columns and after it was set up, they designated and called all the chieftains” (Η τέντα τῆς κατοῦνας του τέσσαρους στύλους εἶχεν· κι ἀφότου τὴν ἐστήσασιν κ’ ἐσέβηκεν ἀπέσω, ὀρίζει κ’ ἦλθαν οἱ ἄρχοντες ὄλοι του οἱ κεφαλαδες). Schmitt, *The Chronicle of Morea*, 270.

indicate a military camp unit or even Vlach soldiers recruited to battle. According to Fanis Dasoulas, Konstantin Jireček argued that the root of the word *katouna* derives from Latin. Jireček traces its introduction to the Greek language through Byzantine military terminology (v. *κατουνεύω* [*στρατοπεδεύω*] meaning camping for military purposes).<sup>114</sup>

In Bulgarian, Yugoslavian, and Greek, *katouna* denotes the following types of settlement: a hamlet, a village, a camp, a tent, or a cottage.<sup>115</sup> According to the historian Anthony Kaldellis, “in the early twelfth century, a *katouna* consisting of three-hundred families, settled near Mount Athos. In the documents issued by Alexios I Komnenos regarding their settlement there, a *katouna* is treated as a taxable unit equivalent to a Roman *chorion* (or village, a fiscal unit).”<sup>116</sup> Therefore, the word *katouna* indicates the settlement of a large mobile group; its function parallels that of a village.

In 1266, the use of the toponym *Katouna* is attested in Thessaly. For instance, in Andronikos II’s *chrysobull* appears the village *Vlachokatouna*.<sup>117</sup> The combination of the name Vlach and the word *katouna* is indicative that the village was occupied by Vlachs. In the same context, emerge the villages of *Simisarati*, *Levachatou* and *Taronaton*. These villages were undoubtedly named after their chieftains (*Simisaras*, *Levachas* and *Taronas*). Indeed, *Taronaton* may have been under the domain of Hypomone’s father, *Taronas*, and must have been inherited by his daughter as part of her dowry.

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<sup>114</sup> Dasoulas, “Οι Μεσαιωνικές Κοινωνίες των Βλάχων,” 19-20; Konstantin Jireček, *Staat und Gesellschaft im Mittelalterlichen serbien: Studien zur Kulturgeschichte des 13-15 jahrhundert*, vol. 4 (Leipzig: Zentralantiquariat der Deutschen Demokratischen Republik, 1974), 156.

<sup>115</sup> Tanaşoca and Tanaşoca, “Ancienneté et diffusion du «cătun» vlaque dans la Péninsule Balkanique au Moyen-Âge,” 139.

<sup>116</sup> The account is written by the Athonite monk John Tarchaneiotos around 1100-1104. The presence of female Vlachs troubled the monks of Mt. Athos. *Ibid.*, 143-144; Kaldellis, “The Apogee of Empire in the Eleventh Century,” 24.

<sup>117</sup> At *Libohovë*, in Albania, there is a place named *Cătuna*. *Libohovë* borders the northern section of Epiros. At the *Pindos*, at a valley near *Aspropotamos* is the village *Paliokatounon*. *Aspropotamos* is a mountain village and stands on the passageway from *Pyli*, toward the northern sections of the *Pindos*. See Tanaşoca and Tanaşoca, “Ancienneté et diffusion du «cătun» vlaque dans la Péninsule Balkanique au Moyen-Âge,” 141.

Lake Ezerou emerges as the fifth Vlach-occupied area in Hypomone's *chrysobull*. The toponym derives from the Slavonic word for lake, "ezero."<sup>118</sup> Anna Komnene, in her twelfth-century manuscript *Alexiad*, narrates the descent of the Byzantine army led by her father, the emperor Alexius I, in 1083, to confront the Normans who besieged Larissa.<sup>119</sup> Her account attests to the presence of Vlachs at the village of Ezeros in the foothills of Olympos.<sup>120</sup> The village stood at the road that passed through Thessaloniki to Litochoro, and from there, to the Leptokarya plain, the Kanalia river (Rema Ziliana), and terminated at Gonnoi.<sup>121</sup>

Equally important is Anna Komnene's reference to the horsemen of her husband's army. These horses were bred in Thessaly.<sup>122</sup> Theodoros Prodromos observes that: "[i]mposing horses were bred in the land of Thessaly and Arabian valleys."<sup>123</sup> The historian Anna Avramea associated the breeding of horses with Vlachs as "livestock was the main occupation of the Vlachs settled in Thessaly."<sup>124</sup> In describing two transportation incidents, Magdalino also argues for horse breeding in Thessaly. The Byzantine scholar Michael Choniates, while planning to travel, "requested 'wagon-makers' (αμαξοποιούς), who were not to be found in Athens."<sup>125</sup> The early- thirteenth-century Metropolitan of Larissa, in a letter to John Apokaukos, complained about the hazardous status of the Thessalian roads.<sup>126</sup> Apokaukos, surprised by the Metropolitan's comment, responded that this should not be the case in "a land famed for its horses and carriages."<sup>127</sup>

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<sup>118</sup> Magdalino, *The History of Thessaly*, 107. In Lithuanian ezero means lake. In Russian and Ukrainian, the word is known as ozero (ozero). In Serbian and Chech, it is known as jezero (jezero).

<sup>119</sup> Lazarou, *Βαλκάνια και Βλάχοι*, 34; Terezakis, "Η Θεσσαλική κοινωνία," 143.

<sup>120</sup> Terezakis, "Η Θεσσαλική κοινωνία," 143.

<sup>121</sup> Lazarou, *Βαλκάνια και Βλάχοι*, 34; Avramea, "Η Βυζαντινή Θεσσαλία μέχρι του 1204," 78-79.

<sup>122</sup> Avramea, "Η Βυζαντινή Θεσσαλία μέχρι του 1204," 66.

<sup>123</sup> Ibid. "ἴπων δε γαύρων ἀγέλας δλας τρέφει ἐκ Θετταλης γης καὶ πέδων Ἀρραβίας."

<sup>124</sup> Avramea, "Η Βυζαντινή Θεσσαλία μέχρι του 1204," 66.

<sup>125</sup> Magdalino, *The History of Thessaly*, 31.

<sup>126</sup> Ibid., 31.

<sup>127</sup> Ibid.

In the thirteenth-century, Georgios Pachymeres, while narrating the beginning of the Battle of Pelagonia, referred to the army commanded by John I Doukas.

Alongside, he has his illegitimate son, John, with his people, and commanding great forces. And by marrying the daughter of Taronas, his domain consisted of his own people and those of Taronas; hence he was able to conquer and govern lands. (his people) were the old Greeks, from the time of Achilles, known as Megalovlachites [...].<sup>128</sup>

According to the scholar, John's power was augmented by his marriage to the Vlach Hypomone. The name of his followers appears as Megalovlachites. Since John married the daughter of one of the major Vlach chieftains, it only seems reasonable that he led an army supported by Vlachs. In the description of the battle, Pachymeres does not mention other soldiers commanded by John. Hence, it is evident that by the mid-thirteenth century, Vlachs formed allegiances with local rulers and the Thessalian *sebastokrator*. In 1278, the bishop John of Trikki emerged as a supporter of the union of the Catholic and Orthodox churches, and widely opposed John.<sup>129</sup> Even though Trikala was under the domain of John, religious figures could trigger political shifts in the loyalty of the local population. As John needed to establish his authority throughout Thessaly, he relied on Vlachs to support him and control the area.

Sources, prior to John's rule in Thessaly, describe Vlachs as opposing local authorities; their allegiance rested with several other Orthodox states. However, John's amicable relations with the group, resulting from his marriage, allowed Vlachs and Thessalians to unite and protect

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<sup>128</sup> Pachymeres refers to the Battle of Pelagonia (1259) where John fought on the side of his father, Michael I. "[...] εἶχε δὲ καὶ τὸν ἐκ νοθείας υἱὸν Ἰωάννην μετὰ τοῦ οἰκείου λαοῦ, τὰ μέγιστα συναϊρόμενον. ἐκεῖνος καὶ γὰρ ἤδη καθ' αὐτὸν τῆ τοῦ Ταρωνᾶ θυγατρὶ συνών, λαὸν ἐξαίρετον ἔχων, δυνατὸς ἦν καὶ μόνος στρατηγεῖν καὶ προσκτᾶσθαι· τοὺς γὰρ τὸ παλαιὸν Ἑλληνας, οὓς Ἀχιλλεὺς ἤγε, Μεγαλοβλαχίτας καλῶν." "His people" and "great forces" refer to the Vlach population of Thessaly. Pachymeres, *Georgii Pachymeris de Michaele et Andronico Paleologis libri tredecim*, 83; Albert Failler and Vitalien Laurent, *George Pachymeres: Relations Historiques I-II* (Leuven: Peeters, 1984), I-117; Terezakis, "Ἡ Θεσσαλική κοινωνία," 76-77. Contrary to Kekaumenos, Pachymeres ascribes the origin of Vlachs to Greece. This may indicate that by the time of John I Doukas, Vlachs were considered part of his rulership.

<sup>129</sup> Hild and Koder, "Ἡ Βυζαντινὴ Θεσσαλία," 102. For the name Trikki and the name's change to Trikk(k)ala, Avramea suggests that derived from the name's introduction by Anna Komnene. Kekaumenos seems to have borrowed the name from Anna Komnene and continued its use. According to Hild and Koder it is ambivalent whether Trikki or Trikkala is the older version of the name.

the region. John and Hypomone paved the way for following monarchs. A *chrysobull* issued by Andronikos III in 1324 demonstrates the inclusion of Vlachs into the Byzantine army.<sup>130</sup> The *chrysobull* lists Vlachs into two social categories: those who were obliged to offer military service to the emperor and the ones who did not serve in the army (*ασπράτευτους*).<sup>131</sup>

Due to the mountainous landscape and rich soil of northern and southern Greece, Thessaly and Epiros allowed for the movement of populations, seasonal settlement, and agricultural activities. Vlachs—nomads and at-times invaders—arrived in the region a couple of centuries before John’s rule and moved between Macedonia, Epiros, and Thessaly. John and Hypomone constructed their monasteries in the vicinity of Trikala, as the area borders the Pindos mountain range, where Vlach pastoralists lived and continue to live today. The Vlach-occupied estates belonging to Hypomone illustrate a map of connective points from the eastern Thessalian plateau (Simisarati, Levachatou, Taronaton and Lake Ezerou) to the western areas of Thessaly (Lykousada, Vlachokatouna). These areas emerge near or on hills, marking entrances to mountain passages that allow for movement throughout Greece, like the *katholika* related to or belonging to the monastery also did. Of equal importance are Hypomone’s other estates mentioned in the *chrysobull*. To the east emerge the villages of Achladochori and Vounena, while to the west, Vatousiani, Raxa, and Tritsenikos appear nearby Trikala.<sup>132</sup> Whether these villages encompassed Vlach residents, is not known. According to Dasoulas, evidence points to the fact that the livestock groups of the Vlachs wandered mainly on State or Church properties.<sup>133</sup> Many Vlach villages and farms, under the jurisdiction of monasteries, contributed

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<sup>130</sup> Dasoulas, “Οι Μεσαιωνικές Κοινότητες των Βλάχων,” 33

<sup>131</sup> Ibid.

<sup>132</sup> Ibid., 37-38. Andronikos II’s issued a *chrysobull* for the Metropolis of Ioannina in 1321 which recorded Vlach residents (*πάροικοι*). Written less than forty years after the Lykousada *chrysobull*, it is plausible that Vlach *πάροικοι* already have settled at Trikala during Hypomone’s construction of the monastery.

<sup>133</sup> Ibid., 14.

to their economy on an annual basis by providing leather, clothes, cereals, wine and more but also by providing services such as animal care, wool processing, cargo transportation, etc.<sup>134</sup>

As these lands belonged to Hypomone, her estates combined with that of her husband's formed an important locational network that supported John's authority throughout the Thessalian plateau. In Kaldellis' words, "Vlachs occupied the gray area between the polity and the empire of the Romans, and were not even fully subject to the latter."<sup>135</sup> The Vlachs deftly maneuvered local passes through the mountains and consequently held important roles in the planning of military campaigns by Byzantine rulers, such as John I Doukas, who sought to move armies through the passes. Through Hypomone, John gained powerful alliances with the transhumant group that asserted a smooth rulership over Thessaly. The Lykousada monastery—connected by a road to Porta Panagia—asserted the couple's sustained connections to the Vlachs and the mountainous regions that they controlled.

### ***Lykousada's Re-emergence in the Present Day***

The Lykousada monastery, its founder, and the estates endowed to the monastery form locational, ethnic, and authoritative connections throughout the Thessalian plateau. At the same time, the memory of the monastery and its founder are deeply embedded in the land on which the monastery once occupied. The easiest way to arrive at Loxada from Trikala is to merge into the provincial road of Eparchiakos Dromos-Karditsa Agrithea. A local resident offers directions in the following way: "You will know that you are approaching the village once you see a Revoil gas station. From there, continue straight for two-hundred meters and take a right-turn on the first street."<sup>136</sup> A street sign, composed of two blue and a middle white rectangle, with the name Loxada written horizontally, indicates the long entry-street to the village. However, upon closer

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<sup>134</sup> Dasoulas, "Οι Μεσαιωνικές Κοινωνίες των Βλάχων," 14.

<sup>135</sup> Kaldellis, "The Apogee of Empire in the Eleventh Century," 241.

<sup>136</sup> This is a quotation a visitor may expect from a hypothetical scenario.

inspection, on the bottom blue horizontal border surfaces the name Lykousada with white ink. From that point on, the visitor cannot help but notice that all the street signs mentioning the name of the village include the hand-written name of Lykousada.

Loxada emerges below the villages of Fanari and Kanalia, and neighbors Kompelos. Kanalia stands atop the hill west of Fanari. A dirt road amidst wild vegetation connects the two villages. Loxada, rising at the foot of Kanalia, is approximately four kilometers south of the village, viewing from down under the fortress at Fanari. According to Kanaliotes, the first residents to the village came from Epiros around the mid-seventeenth century.<sup>137</sup> The Epirotes certainly arrived at Kanalia through the Vlach passages of the Pindos mountain range. Directly below Fanari appears the settlement of Kompelos; it takes its name from the Slavic word for horse breeding. Perhaps the name may suggest Vlach residency in the vicinity of Loxada.

Today, the destroyed Lykousada monastery resurfaces through local oral tradition and ritual practice. Every year, on the sixth day of August, residents of Loxada recite: “Our Lady the blessed Virgin, yearningly we anticipate your arrival, when we bring you from Meteora every year.”<sup>138</sup> The hymn greets the icon of the Virgin Glykophilousa of Kanaliotissa (fig. 24), which travels from the Monastery of the Transfiguration, at Great Meteoron, to Loxada. There, it resides for a month or two, where local residents can venerate it.<sup>139</sup> According to a legend, the

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<sup>137</sup> In a conversation on January 26, 2021, Kostantinos Floridis narrated this story to me. The village of Kanalia has its own webpage which refers to the village’s history. In their webpage, the Lykousada monastery is mentioned and denoting that locals cherish the foundation, even if it does not stand today. Lampros Papavasileiou, “Η Ιστορία του χωριού μας,” Kanalia Karditsas, accessed January 23, 2021, <https://www.kanalia-karditsa.gr/history>.

<sup>138</sup> “Παναγία μας Μεγαλόχαρη λαχταριστά προσμένουμε, όταν απ’ τα Μετέωρα κάθε χρονιά σε φέρνουμε.” This is the first verse of the hymn. See Katerina Papaioannou, “Η ιστορία της Θαυματουργής Εικόνας της Παναγίας της Καναλιώτισσας,” *Karditsas.Blog*, accessed November 26, 2020. [https://karditsaras.blogspot.com/2020/08/blog-post\\_70.html](https://karditsaras.blogspot.com/2020/08/blog-post_70.html).

<sup>139</sup> Dimitris Athanasiou (ο Liontos) explains that in the past the icon stayed at the village for two months until the feast of Saint Demetrios on October 26. However, for economic reasons, nowadays, the icon travels to other nearby villages. As a result, in recent years, it usually stays at Loxada for a month (ex. Summer 2020). Heritage tourism has the potential of increasing income and growing the population. For monument restoration, heritage tourism and contemporary use of medieval churches, see Sharon E. J. Gerstel, “Recording Village History: the Church of Hagioi Theodoroi, Vamvaka, Mani,” *Journal of Modern Greek Studies* 38, no. 1 (May 2020): 21-41.

icon once belonged to the Lykousada monastery. Pious residents of Loxada and visitors from nearby villages venerate the icon at the mid- twentieth-century church of the Dormition of the Virgin. Local residents claim that the church of the Dormition of the Virgin stands over the ruins of the thirteenth-century Lykousada monastery.

Though hosted at Loxada, residents of Kanalia and Fanari also anticipate the arrival of the icon, as it passes through the villages to arrive at the church. Upon the icon’s entry to the village, Kanaliotes chant:

The Kanaliotes (inhabitants of Fanari), in August prepare to go to the monastery at Meteora, and from there to bring back to their town the icon of the Virgin, and all the Kanaliotes gather at the fount (Vromóvrissi) and await the icon’s arrival.<sup>140</sup>

*Vromovrissi* means spring, one with low quality water. This spring is located in the village square. Under the leaves of an old plane tree, history recalls shepherds spending their afternoons there. In the evenings, they gathered at the *στρούγκες*, located on the slopes below the monastery of Lykousada.<sup>141</sup> A second fountain decorates the stone-fence of the contemporary church of the Dormition of the Virgin at Loxada. Farmers from Loxada recount finding stone slabs on their properties. They explain that a stone pipeline transported spring water from Kanalia through the forest, and terminated at the fountain of the village, where the Lykousada monastery once stood.<sup>142</sup> Locals maintain that a ceramic pipeline, created by medieval Fanariotes (renown potters), also connected the two villages. The pipeline directly transported milk from Kanalia to

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<sup>140</sup> “Οι Καναλιώτες Αύγουστον στο Μοναστήρι στέλλουν; Των Μετεώρων κι’ εκεί, εικόνα μίαν φέρουν; Παναγίας Θεοτόκου, κι’ οι Καναλιώτες βγαίνουν; όλοι εις την Βρωμόβρυση κι’ εκεί την περιμένουν.” See Papaioannou, “Η ιστορία της Θαυματουργής Εικόνας της Παναγίας της Καναλιώτισσας.”

<sup>141</sup> *Στρούγκα* is a Vlach word denoting an enclosed area used for milking the animals of a herd. The word originates from Aromanian (*strunga*), the predecessor of Vlach language. In Albanian, the word appears as *shtrungë*. Even though Vlachs from Greece and Albania belong to distinct families, their language shares common elements as both derive from Aromanian.

<sup>142</sup> Ενιαίο Λύκειο Φαναρίου Νομού Καρδίτσας, *Ιστορικό Λεύκωμα Ημερολογίου 2000: Αφιέρωμα Λοξάδα και Κομπελος Καρδίτσας* (Karditsa, 2000), 211. In a conversation on January 26, 2021, Kostantinos Floridis narrated this story to me.



Loxada and farmers say they found remains of milk on the ceramics.<sup>143</sup> The location of the fountain and ceramic pipeline served the needs of nuns, monks and workers throughout the monastery's life and afterlife.

Whether the existence of such pipelines is true or not, the residents of the three villages establish their relations through the monastery's memory, rooted in their land. To further buttress the connection of the monastery to their land, a monumental metal plaque appears next to the fountain, and another one embedded on the exterior wall of the mid- twentieth-century church's entrance. The gold-looking plaque next to the fountain displays the text of the *chrysobull* issued by Andronikos II. The location is not coincidental. The selection of the near-contemporary *chrysobull* of Andronikos denotes that the fountain stood there from the time of the monastery's construction. Inscribed on the second plaque appears the *sigillion* issued by the ecumenical patriarch Neilos, in 1383, for the monastery. The *sigillion* appears to be the latest document produced for the Lykousada monastery. Through its placement on the walls of the most-recent church, local villagers mark the end of the written documentation of the monastery. From that point on, they become the sole narrators of the monastery's life and afterlife.

The medieval *chrysobulls*, along with the pipeline fragments, the metal reproductions of the *chrysobull* and *sigillion*, the icon, and the street signs, function as containers of memories for the Vlach woman and her thirteenth-century monastery.<sup>144</sup> The icon, the annual celebration of the Virgin Glykophilousa of Kanaliotissa, the hymns chanted in her honor and the gathering of the people to venerate the icon, revive the spirit of the monastery. Descendants of Vlachs from the surrounding villages, who have long abandoned the nomadic life, trace their unique stories

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<sup>143</sup> Kostantinos Floridis, Alexandros Athanasiou, Vainas Stergios, and Elias Kakanis narrated this story to me during my visit at Fanari in a conversation on January 26, 2021.

<sup>144</sup> Sharon Gerstel poses questions about "How churches function as containers of memory, how they participate in intersecting liturgical and agricultural calendars, how they accommodate life-cycle rituals, how the buildings, both epigraphically and acoustically, record and shape sound?" in Gerstel, "Recording Village History," 22.

back to Hypomone. Almost nothing survives of the thirteenth-century monastery and the area has never been excavated. Residents of Loxada, Fanari and Kanalia take it upon them to record, study, and promote the history of the region. Through their sole motivation—the love for their homeland, and Greece—they try to trace their roots, record and bring to light all those elements that compose the unique history of their land, which holds a major role in the country's past and national identity.

## FIGURES



Figure 1. John I Doukas's funerary portrait. Porta Panagia at Pyli, near Trikala, 1283. Photograph courtesy of Sharon E. J. Gerstel.

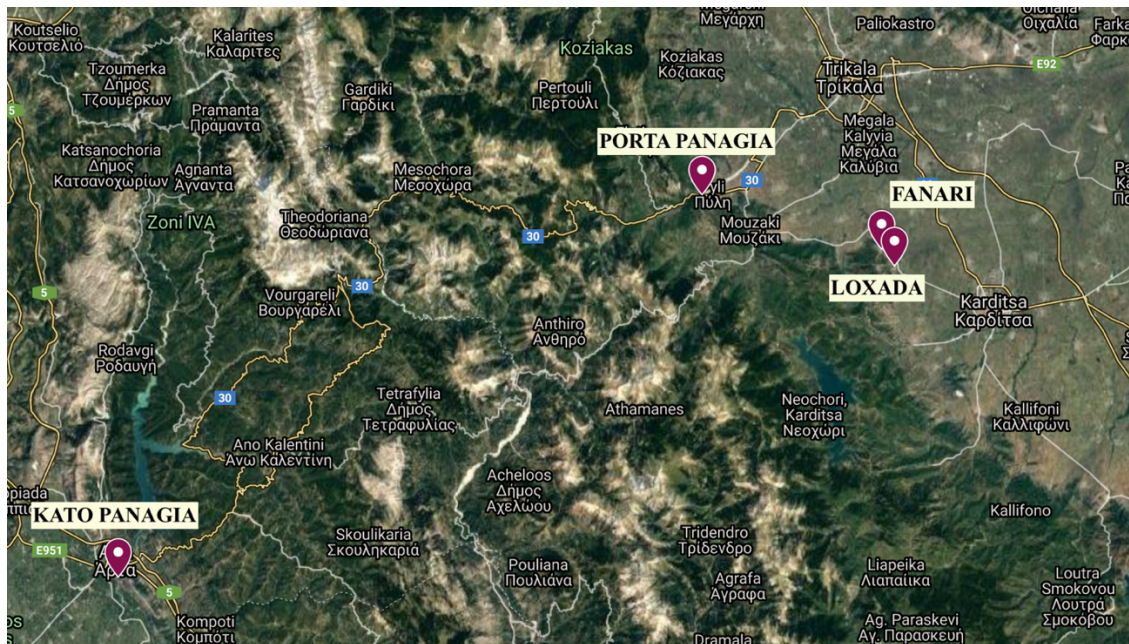


Figure 2. Map showing Kato Panagia, Porta Panagia, Loxada, Fanari and part of the Pindos mountain range separating Epiros from Thessaly.



Figure 3. Map showing the identifiable villages mentioned in Andronikos II's *chrysobull*.

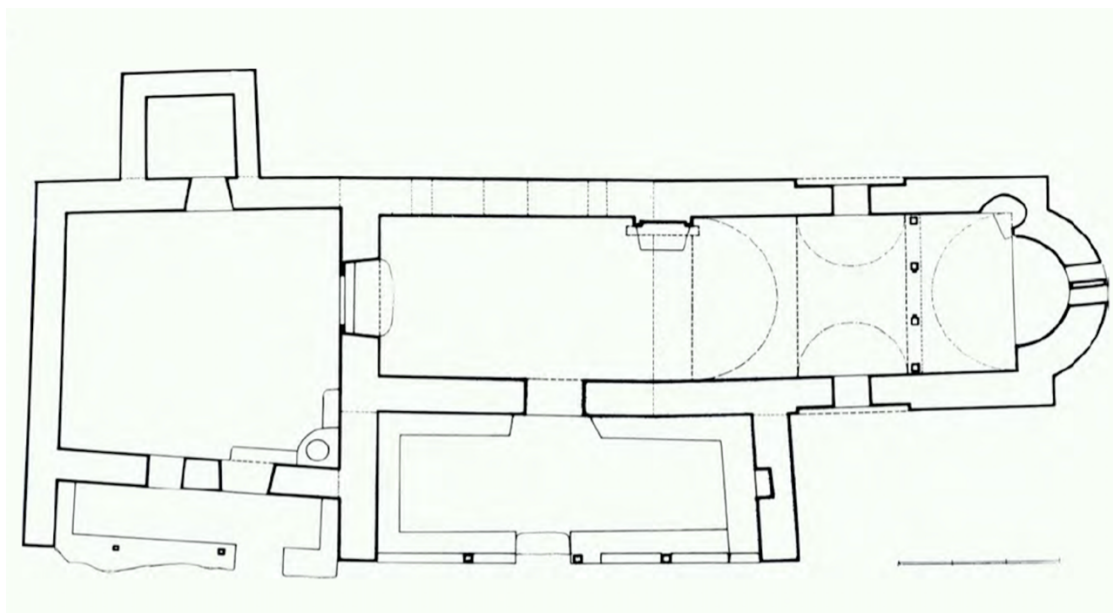


Figure 4. The late- thirteenth-/early- fourteenth-century church of the Dormition of the Theotokos, at Achladochori (prefecture of Trikala). Floor plan. After Nikos Nikonanos, *Βυζαντινοί ναοί της Θεσσαλίας: από το 10<sup>ο</sup> αιώνα ως την κατάκτηση της περιοχής από τους Τούρκους* (Athens: Fund of Archaeological Proceeds, 1979), 92.

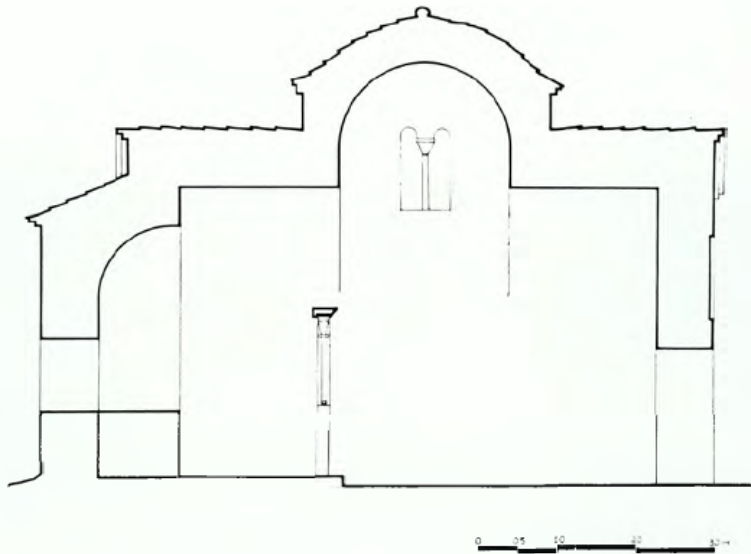


Figure 5. The late- thirteenth-/early- fourteenth-century church of the Dormition of the Theotokos, at Achladochori (prefecture of Trikala). Cross section plan. After Nikos Nikonanos, *Βυζαντινοί ναοί της Θεσσαλίας: από το 10<sup>ο</sup> αιώνα ως την κατάκτηση της περιοχής από τους Τούρκους* (Athens: Fund of Archaeological Proceeds, 1979), 93.



Figure 6. The late- thirteenth-/early- fourteenth-century church of the Dormition of the Theotokos, at Achladochori (prefecture of Trikala). Exterior view of the northeastern side. Photo courtesy of the author.



Figure 7. The late- thirteenth-/early- fourteenth-century church of the Dormition of the Theotokos, at Achladochori (prefecture of Trikala). Detail of animals from the templon capitals. After Nikos Nikonanos, *Βυζαντινοί ναοί της Θεσσαλίας: από το 10<sup>ο</sup> αιώνα ως την κατάκτηση της περιοχής από τους Τούρκους* (Athens: Fund of Archaeological Proceeds, 1979), table 42.



Figure 8. The late- thirteenth-/early- fourteenth-century church of the Dormition of the Theotokos, at Achladochori (prefecture of Trikala). Detail of floral ornamentation from the templon entablature. After Nikos Nikonanos, *Βυζαντινοί ναοί της Θεσσαλίας: από το 10<sup>ο</sup> αιώνα ως την κατάκτηση της περιοχής από τους Τούρκους* (Athens: Fund of Archaeological Proceeds, 1979), table 43.

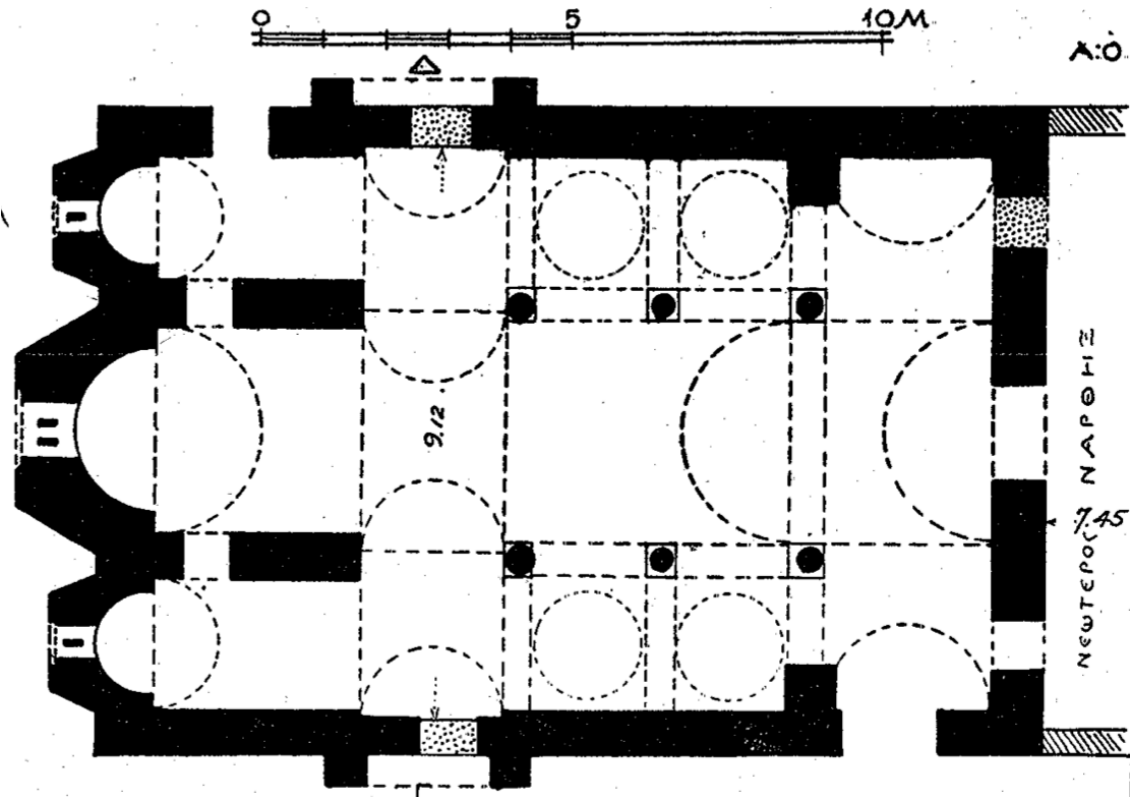


Figure 9. Kato Panagia (Birth of the Virgin) monastery at Arta, ca. 1250. Floor plan. After Anastasios Orlandos, *Αρχαίον των Βυζαντινών μνημείων της Ελλάδος*, vol. 2 (Athens: Τυπογραφείον Εστία, 1936), 73.

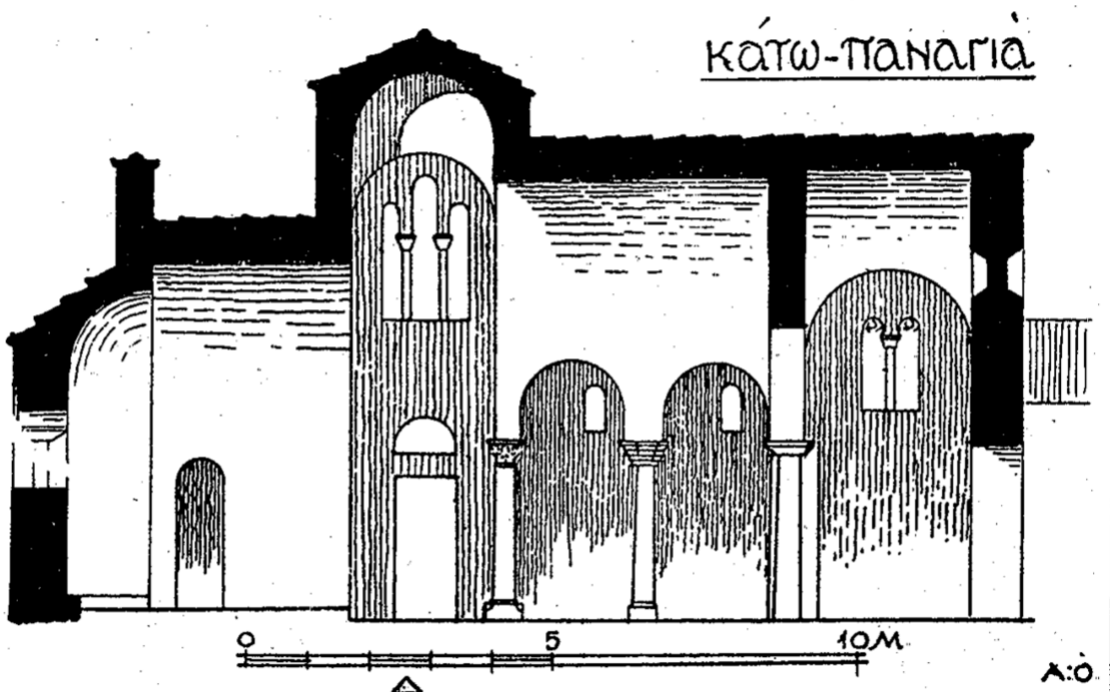


Figure 10. Kato Panagia (Birth of the Virgin) monastery at Arta, ca. 1250. Cross section. After Anastasios Orlandos, *Αρχαίον των Βυζαντινών μνημείων της Ελλάδος*, vol. 2 (Athens: Τυπογραφείον Εστία, 1936), 73.

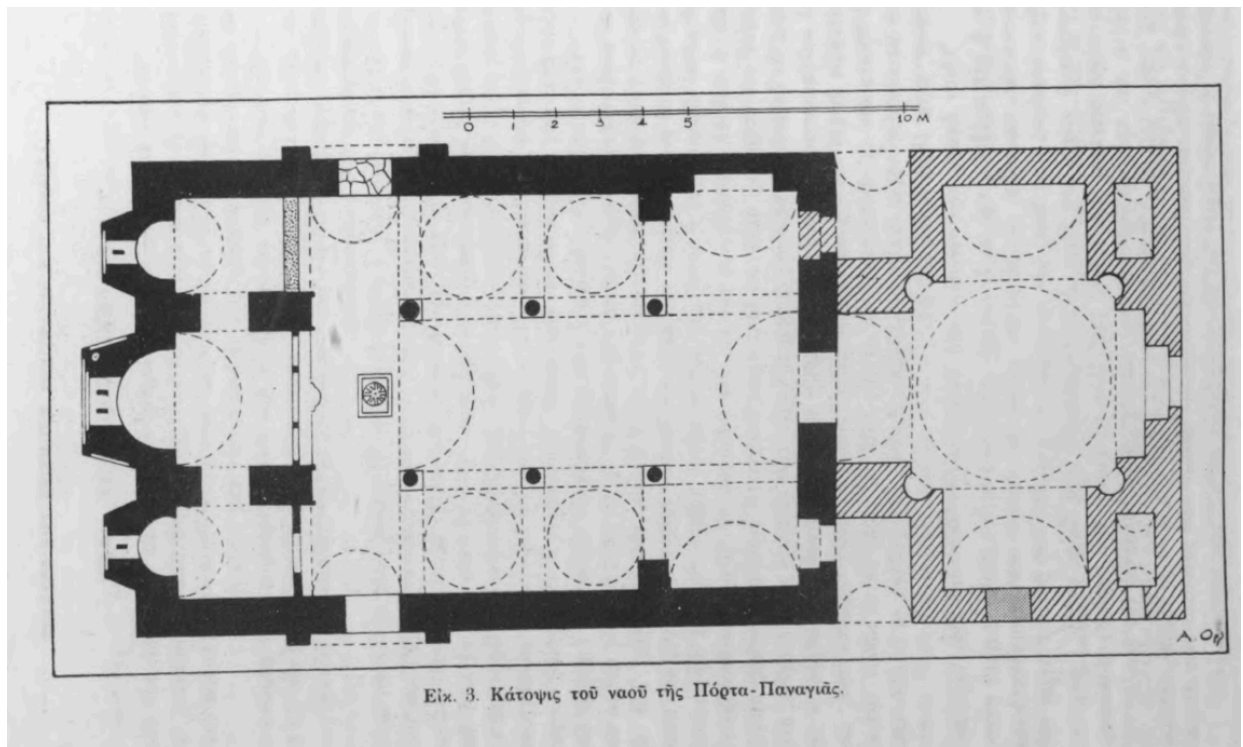


Figure 11. Porta Panagia at Pyli, near Trikala, 1283. Floor plan. After Anastasios Orlandos, *Αρχεῖον των Βυζαντινῶν μνημείων τῆς Ελλάδος*, vol. 1 (Athens: Τυπογραφεῖον Εστία, 1936), 12.

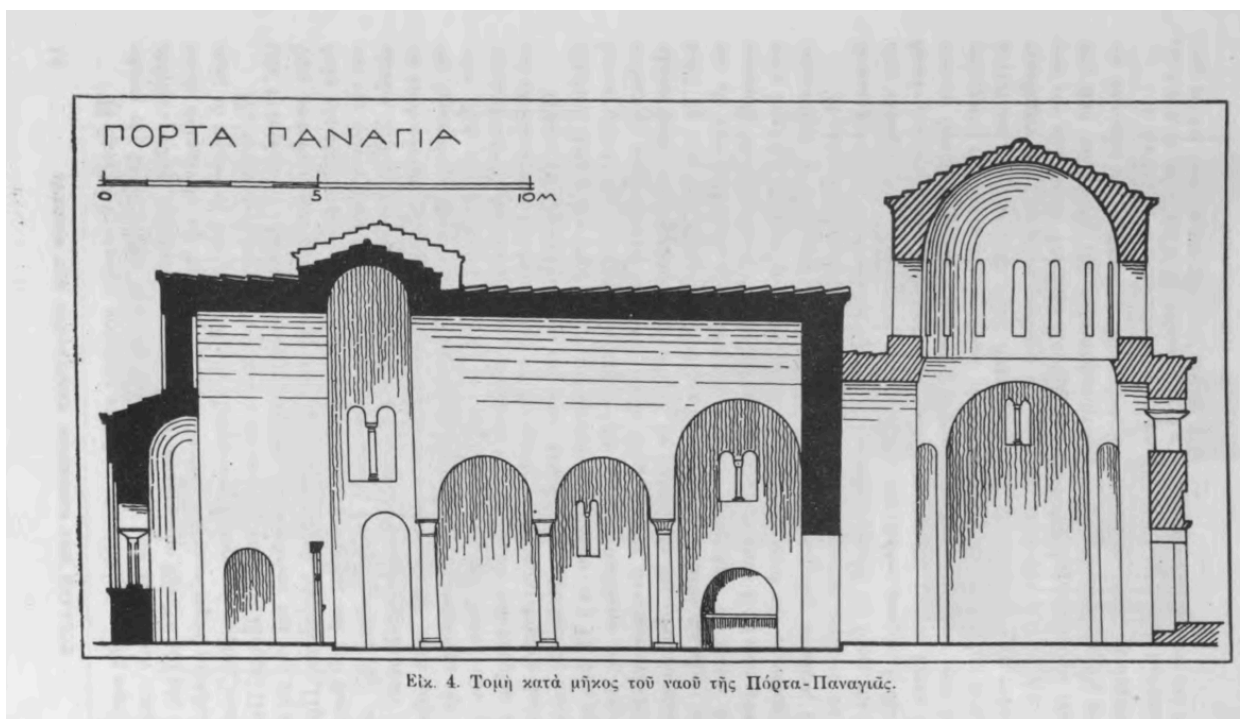


Figure 12. Porta Panagia at Pyli, near Trikala, 1283. Cross section. After Anastasios Orlandos, *Αρχεῖον των Βυζαντινῶν μνημείων τῆς Ελλάδος*, vol. 1 (Athens: Τυπογραφεῖον Εστία, 1936), 13.





Figure 13.  
Porta Panagia  
(south façade),  
at Pyli, near  
Trikala, 1283.  
Photograph  
courtesy of the  
author.



Figure 14. Porta Panagia at Pyli, near Trikala, 1283, templon and adjacent proskynetaria.  
Photograph courtesy of Sharon E. J. Gerstel.



Figure 15. Porta Panagia at Pyli, near Trikala, 1283. Double-headed eagle and cross detail from the templon capital and floral ornamentations at the entablature. Photograph courtesy of the author.



Figure 16. Panagia Olympiotissa, at Ellassona, 1295/6. Section of a marble pier and a marble column from the original Byzantine templon (?). After Efthalia C. Constantinides, *The Wall Paintings of the Panagia Olympiotissa at Ellasson in Northern Thessaly*, vol. 2 (Athens: Canadian Archaeological Institute at Athens, 1992), 124.



Figure 17. Panagia Olympiotissa, at Ellassona, 1295/6. Fragment of a marble chancel barrier. After Eftalia C. Constantinides, *The Wall Paintings of the Panagia Olympiotissa at Ellasson in Northern Thessaly*, vol. 2 (Athens: Canadian Archaeological Institute at Athens, 1992), 125.



Figure 18. Church of Agios Ioannis Prodromos, at Fanari, 1873. East façade. Photograph courtesy of the author.



Figure 19. Church of Agios Ioannis Prodromos, at Fanari, 1873. Marble fragment from east façade. Photograph courtesy of the author.



Figure 20. Church of Agios Ioannis Prodromos, at Fanari, 1873. Marble fragment from east façade. Photograph courtesy of the author.



Figure 21. Marble capital from the church of the Twelve Apostles, at Pyrgos Ithomis, 1845. East façade. Photograph courtesy of the author.



Figure 22. Fragment from the church of the Twelve Apostles, at Pyrgos Ithomis, 1845. East façade. Photograph courtesy of the author.

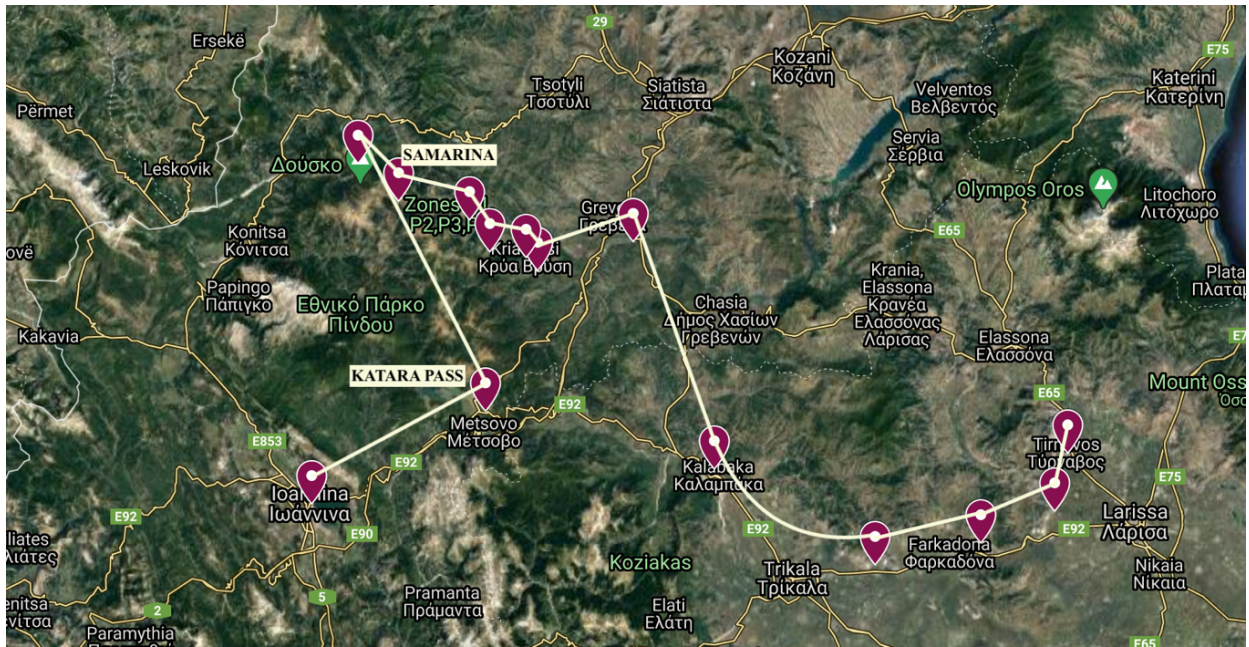


Figure 23. Vlach passage Wace and Thompson traveled through in 1910 which starts from Tirmavos and terminating to Samarina.



Figure 24. Icon of the Virgin Glykophilousa of Kanaliotissa, Monastery of the Transfiguration, at Great Meteoron. Photograph courtesy of Stavroula Sdrolia.



## APPENDIX

Andronikos II's *chrysobull* "ὑπὲρ τῆς Μονῆς τῆς Λυκουσάδος," March, 1289.

Parchment scroll no. 1464 E.B.E. 2,23m x 0,351cm, width of written surface 0,251cm.

English translation by P. S. Katsafados.

### Medieval Greek transcription

† Οὐδὲν τῆς ἀληθείας ἐπικρατέστερον καὶ <sup>2</sup> οὐδὲν τῆς κατ' αὐτὴν ἐπιγνώσεως ἀν(θρώπ)οις ἐπαι<sup>3</sup>νετώτερον· οἱ γὰρ ἐφ' ἐκάστω τῶν πραγμάτων τοῦ <sup>4</sup> ὄντος κατ' ἀλήθειαν γινόμενοι ἐπιγνώμονες, τὸ καλὸν ἄν <sup>5</sup> πάντως ἐπὶ πᾶσι προέλοιnton καὶ οὐδέποτ' ἄν <sup>6</sup> ἐκπέσαι(εν) τοῦ συμφέροντος· ἀλλὰ κἂν ἑαυτοῖς προσ<sup>7</sup>πορίσασθαι τι δέη τῶν ὠφελούντων, κἂν ἑτέροις οἷς τι <sup>8</sup> προμηθεί(ας) τοῦτο μεταδιδόναι σπουδάξουσιν, τοῦ ἀκριβ(οῦς) <sup>9</sup> ὑπάρχει τοιούτου κατευστοχεῖν. Τοῦτο τοῖς συνετωπ(έ)ροις <sup>10</sup> τῶν ἀν(θρώπ)ων ἐν οἷς περ ἄν ποιῶσι παρακολουθεῖν εἰωθός, <sup>11</sup> οὐχ' ἦττον ἔστι διαγνῶναι καὶ τῆς τὴν παροῦσαν εἰσενεγ<sup>12</sup>καμένης αἵτησιν ταῖς πράξεσι παρεπόμενον· τ(ῆς) μιᾶς δὴ <sup>13</sup> ταύτης προσκαρτερούσης, καὶ ἄλλαις τῶν πράξεων· <sup>14</sup> τὸ γὰρ προσὸν ἀπὸ θε(ο)ῦ τῆ βασιλεία δικαίωμα, μέγα μ(έν) <sup>15</sup> ἐν τοῖς κατὰ γῆν γνωρίζεται ἅπασ(ιν)· οὐ μὴν ὅτι πρόδηλον <sup>16</sup> αὐτῷ τὸ περίοπτον, οὐκ ἐπαινετέοι παρὰ τοῦτο κριθήσονται <sup>17</sup> οἱ καὶ λογιζόμενοι τὸν ὄγκον καὶ τὸ ἐπιβάλλον αὐτῷ τῆς <sup>18</sup> ὀφειλῆς ἀποσώζοντες, ἐν τῷ τὴν ὑποταγὴν ἀποδιδόναι <sup>19</sup> καὶ ἔργοις οἷον συνεπιψηφίζεσθαι τῆς ἐξουσίας τῷ <sup>20</sup> ὑπερέχοντι. Τοῦτο δὴ τὸ τῆς ἀρχῆς τῆς ἡμετ(έ)ρ(ας) δικαίωμα, <sup>21</sup> καὶ εἰς μεῖζον μ(έν) ἦν διηρημένον ταπρότ(ε)ρα ἀφοῦ περ πρὸς τὴν <sup>22</sup> ἡμετ(έ)ραν ταύτην ἀρχὴν, ὁ πηξάμ(ε)νος αὐτὴν καὶ συστησάμενος <sup>23</sup> δημιουργὸς καὶ συνοχεὺς τοῦ παντός, ἐκεῖνο ἐνιδὼν <sup>24</sup> ἰλέω βλέμματι εἴρηκε· πλάτυνον τὰ σχοινίσματά σου <sup>25</sup> ἔτι· ἐκπέτασον ἐπὶ δεξιὰ καὶ ἀριστερά· πῆξον (καὶ) μὴ φείσῃ <sup>26</sup> τῶν αὐλαίων· καὶ μέντοι καὶ ἐξετέλεσε καὶ διήγαγεν ἐπὶ <sup>27</sup> πολλαῖς ὅτι κρατυνομ(έ)νη καὶ αὐξομ(έ)νη περιόδοις ἐτῶν· καὶ τῶν <sup>28</sup> χεῖρα ὀτεδήποτε πειρασαμ(έ)ν(ων) ἀντάρα, κατευμεγεθοῦσα περιεγίνετο. <sup>29</sup> Εἶτα ἐκκαυθείσης ἄνωθ(εν) ὀργῆς διὰ παιδείαν πάντως συμφέ<sup>30</sup>ρουσαν, βήματι τὸ δὴ λεγόμενον ἐκινήθη, καὶ μεταπεπτῶκει <sup>31</sup> πρὸς τὸ χεῖρον τὰ πράγματα· καὶ ἡ ἀρχὴ ἐς τὸ βραχύτατον <sup>32</sup> συνεστάλη καὶ ἐπὶ μετρίτ(οις) ὄροις συνεληλαμ(έ)νη ἐδείκνυτο· <sup>33</sup> πρὸς γὰρ τοι τοῖς ἄλλοις μᾶλλον δε γε πρὸ τῶν ἄλλων, καὶ αὐτ(ῆς) ἐξε<sup>34</sup>πεπτῶκει τῆς βασιλευούσης τῶν πόλεων, ἕως ὃ <sup>35</sup> παιδεύων ἄχρι τοῦ ἰάσασθαι μόνον, καὶ εἰς τέλος μὴ <sup>36</sup> παραδιδούς, οὐδ' ἵνα πλήξῃ πλήττων, ἀλλ' ἵνα πρὸς τὸ κρεῖττον <sup>37</sup> μετάθηται, τὰ τε ἄλλα τῶν τῆς ἀρχῆς ἐξερρηκῶτων, καὶ <sup>38</sup> αὐτὴν τὴν βασιλεύουσαν ἐπανεσώσατο πόλιν, καὶ <sup>39</sup> ἐπὶ τὸ κρεῖττον αὐθις τῆ αὐτοῦ καὶ ἀρωγῆ καὶ συναρτήσει, <sup>40</sup> τὰ τῆς ἀρχῆς ἐπανεδράμα. Τότε δὴ ἐν τῇ κινήσει τῶν <sup>41</sup> πραγμάτων ἐκεῖνη ἢ τὰ δυσχερῆ ἐπλεόνασε, τότε πρὸς πολλοὺς <sup>42</sup> πολλὰ τῶν τῆς ἀρχῆς μεταπέτωκε καὶ ἔτι δὴ ἐς τὸ παρὸν <sup>43</sup> πόλεων τινὲς καὶ χωρῶν ἔστιν οἷς τῶν τότε κατασχόντ(ων), <sup>44</sup> ὡς ἰδιάζουσιν τινὰ τὴν δεσποτείαν κατέχονται, ἀλλ' ὑπο<sup>45</sup>κύπτουσι τῷ ἡμετέρῳ κράτει καὶ τὴν ὑποταγὴν <sup>46</sup> δικαίως ἀσπάζονται. Ἡ μέντοι τῷ περιποθήτω συμπενθ(έ)ρω <sup>47</sup> τῆς βασιλείας μου τῷ σεβαστοκράτ(ο)ρ(ι) ἐκείνῳ Κομνηνῷ <sup>48</sup> κυρ(ῶ) Ἰω(άνν)η τῷ Δούκα κατὰ κόσμον χρηματίσασα σύζυγος, <sup>49</sup> εἶτα τὸν μοναδικὸν ζυγὸν ὑποδῶσα Κομνηνῆ κυρ(ᾶ) Ὑπομονῆ <sup>50</sup> ἡ Δούκαινα, τὸ τῆς βασιλεί(ας) καλῶς ἐπεγνωκυῖα δικαίωμα, <sup>51</sup> καὶ ὡς οὐκ ἔστιν ἐν βεβαίῳ τὴν τῶν προσόντ(ων) ἀποφέρεσθαι <sup>52</sup> κτήσιν, οὔτε μὴν καθ' ἕνα τῶν ἐν βίῳ, οὔτε μοναστῶν κατὰ<sup>53</sup>γῶγιον, εἰ μὴ τὸ κῦρος ἐπιθείη τούτοις βασιλικά <sup>54</sup> διατάγματα, διαπέμπεται τε πρὸς τὴν ἡμετέραν βασιλ(είαν) <sup>55</sup> καὶ τῆ παρ' αὐτῆς συστάση σεβασμία μονῆ, τὸ κῦρος <sup>56</sup> τῶν ἐνυπαρχόντων αἰτεῖται διὰ χρυσοβούλλου <sup>57</sup> προσγενέσθαι τῆς βασιλείας μου. Ἔστι μὲν οὐκ ἡ οἰκο<sup>58</sup>δομηθεῖσα αὕτη καὶ συστᾶσα παρὰ ταύτης μονῆ, πλησίον που <sup>59</sup> διακειμένη τοῦ ἄστεος ὃ Φανάριον ὀνομάζεται· τιμᾶται δὲ <sup>60</sup> ἐπ' ὀνόματι τῆς πανυπεράγνου μου δεσποίνης καὶ <sup>61</sup> θεομήτορος τῆς Ἐλεούσης· καὶ ἐπικέκληται <sup>62</sup> οὕτω πως τῆς Λυκουσάδος· ἃ δὲ

αὕτη τῇ μονῇ |<sup>63</sup> προσήρμοσε κτήματα, ἐκεῖ μὲν ὅπουδήποτε τυγχάνουσι |<sup>64</sup> διακείμενα· καὶ ταῦτα δε γε κατω(έ)ρω ἐξ ὀνόματος δηλω|<sup>65</sup>θήσεται. Τῇ τοιαύτη τοιγαροῦν αἰτήσῃ αὐτῆς, οὐκ ἔγνω δέον εἶναι |<sup>66</sup> ἢ βασιλεία μου ὑπέρθεσίν τινα δοῦναο, καὶ μὴ παρατὰ τῷ |<sup>67</sup> τέλει ἐναγαγεῖν· ἀλλὰ τῆς εὐγνωμοσ(ύ)νης ὡσπερ ἀμειβομ(έ)νη |<sup>68</sup> ταύτην καὶ τῆς τοῦ καλοῦ ἐπιγνώσεως, ἐτοιμότητα κατανεύει |<sup>69</sup> πρὸς τὸ αἰτούμενον· καὶ τὸν παρόντα χρυσόβουλλον λόγον |<sup>70</sup> ἐπορέγει αὐτῇ δι' οὗ καὶ εὐδοκεῖ καὶ προστάσσει καὶ διο|<sup>71</sup>ρίζεται, κατέχεσθαι παρὰ τῆς διαληφθείσης σεβασμίας μονῆς, |<sup>72</sup> τὰ παρὰ τῆς εἰρημένης συζύγου τοῦ μνημονευθέντος |<sup>73</sup> σεβαστοκράτ(ο)ρος προσαρμόσαντα αὐτῇ ὅποιαδήτινα κτήματα· |<sup>74</sup> ἅ δὴ καὶ καταμέρος οὕτως ἐπ' ὀνόματος ἔχουσι: |<sup>75</sup> Χωρίον ἢ Λυκουσάδα ἐν ᾧ καὶ ἡ τοιαύτη ἀνηγέρθη |<sup>76</sup> μονή· ἕτερον χωρίον ἢ Βατουσιάνη· τὸ περὶ τὰ Τρίκκαλα |<sup>77</sup> χωρίον ὅπερ εὐρίσκεται κατέχουσα ἡ μονή μετὰ τοῦ |<sup>78</sup> ἐκεῖσε λοετροῦ· μετόχιον εἰς ὄνομα τιμώμενον τῆς ὑπεραγί(ας) |<sup>79</sup> Θε(οτό)κου, ἐπιλεγόμενον ἢ Ῥάξα μετὰ τῶν ἐν αὐτῷ παροίκων |<sup>80</sup> τῶν διαλαμβανομ(έ)ν(ων) κατ' ὄνομα ἐν τοῖς προσοῦσιν αὐτῷ |<sup>81</sup> δικαίωμασιν, ἔτι δὲ καὶ τῆς κατεχομένης παρ' αὐτοῦ |<sup>82</sup> τοῦ μετοχίου γῆς, καὶ τῶν μυλοθεσίων καὶ ἀμπελίων· ἕτερον |<sup>83</sup> μετόχιον ὁ Τριτσενίκος εἰς ὄνομα τιμώμ(εν)ον τοῦ ἁγίου μου |<sup>84</sup> μεγαλομάρτ(υ)ρος Γεωργίου· ἕτερον εἰς ὄνομα τοῦ ἁγίου |<sup>85</sup> Ἀνδρέου· μετὰ τῶν ἐν αὐτῷ παροίκων καὶ ἀμπελί(ων) καὶ τῆς |<sup>86</sup> προστεθείσης ἀρτίως γῆς· Βλαχοκατοῦνα ἢ ἐπιλεγομ(έ)νη |<sup>87</sup> Πρακτικάτους· χωρίον ἢ Γοριάνη μετὰ τῶν ἐν αὐτῷ μυλο|<sup>88</sup>θεσίων καὶ ἀμπελίων· εἰς τὴν λίμνην τοῦ Ἐξεροῦ σανδ(ά)λ(ι)α |<sup>89</sup> δύο μετὰ καὶ ἀλιέων δύο· μετόχιον εἰς ὄνομα τιμώμενον τοῦ |<sup>90</sup> ἁγίου μου μεγαλομάρτυρος Δημητρίου ἐν τῷ θέματι |<sup>91</sup> Βουναίνης διακείμενον· μετὰ τῶν ἐν αὐτῷ παροίκων |<sup>92</sup> ἀλλὰ δὴ καὶ τῶν ἀμπελίων καὶ μυλοθεσίων· |<sup>93</sup> ἔτι δὲ εἰς τὸν τόπον τοῦ Ἄλμυροῦ, χωρίον ἢ Μαγοῦλα· |<sup>94</sup> καὶ οἱ Σιμισαράτοι λεγόμενοι σὺν τῇ ἐκεῖσε γῇ τῶν |<sup>95</sup> Λεβαχάτων καὶ Ταρωνάτων· ἅ δὴ πάντα καθέξει |<sup>96</sup> ἡ εἰρημένη σεβασμία μονὴ τῆς πανυπεράγνου μου |<sup>97</sup> δεσποίνης καὶ θεομήτορος τῆς Ἐλεούσης, κατὰ δεσποτείαν |<sup>98</sup> καὶ νομὴν ἀναφαίρετον ὡς καταμέρος διαλαμβάνονται |<sup>99</sup> ἐν τοῖς γεγονόσ(ι)ν ἐπ' αὐτοῖς πρακτικοῖς· ἔτι δὲ καὶ ὡς |<sup>100</sup> προσεκυρώθησαν καὶ προσετέθησαν ταύτη παρὰ τῆς |<sup>101</sup> διαληφθείσης συζύγου τοῦ δηλωθ(έν)τος σεβαστοκράτορος· |<sup>102</sup> καὶ νεμηθήσεται αὐτά, ἀνενόχλητα, ἀδιάσειστά τε (καὶ) |<sup>103</sup> ἀναπόσπαστα εἰς ἅπαντα τὸν ἐξῆς καὶ μέλλοντα χρόνον, |<sup>104</sup> ἀλλὰ δὴ καὶ ἀνώτερα πασῶν τῶν κατὰ χώραν |<sup>105</sup> ἐπερχομένων δημοσιακῶν ἐπιηριῶν τε |<sup>106</sup> καὶ συζητήσεων. Οὐδεὶς γὰρ τῶν ἀπάντων ἔξει |<sup>107</sup> ἐπ' ἀδειας ἐπὶ παντὶ τῷ νῦν καὶ μέλλοντι χρόνῳ, λύμην |<sup>108</sup> οἰανδήτινα ἐπάγειν αὐτοῖς ἢ διασεισμὸν (καὶ) ἐπίθεσιν, |<sup>109</sup> ὅτι καὶ ἀποτραπήσεται τῇ ἰσχυί καὶ δυνάμει τοῦ παρόντος |<sup>110</sup> χρυσοβούλλου λόγου τῆς βασιλείας μου, πᾶς ὁ |<sup>111</sup> τοιοῦτόν τι ἐπενεγκεῖν πειραθησόμενος καὶ δι' ὄχλου ὅλως |<sup>112</sup> γενέσθαι τῇ εἰρημένῃ σεβασμία μονῇ ἢ τοῖς προσοῦσ(ι)ν |<sup>113</sup> αὐτῇ τοιούτοις κτήμασί τε καὶ δικαίοις· ὡς (καὶ) ὑπερκεῖσθαι |<sup>114</sup> ὀφειλόντων αὐτῶν, ἐπιηραστικῆς ἀπάσης καὶ |<sup>115</sup> ἀδίκου χειρὸς καὶ μηδεμίαν ὑφίστασθαι παρὰ μηδενὸς |<sup>116</sup> ἀρπαγὴν καὶ λύμην καὶ διενόχλησιν· ὡς ἐντεῦθ(εν) |<sup>117</sup> εἶναι καὶ τοῖς ἐν τῇ εἰρημένῃ σεβασμία μονῇ τὴν μονα|<sup>118</sup>δικὴν τε καὶ κατὰ θεο|<sup>121</sup>φιλοῦς δὴ ταύτης πολιτείας καὶ ὑψηλῆς. Διὰ γὰρ |<sup>122</sup> τοῦτο ἐγεγόνει καὶ ἐπεβραβεύθη τῇ διαληφθείσῃ |<sup>123</sup> σεβασμία μονῇ τῆς πανυπεράγνου δεσποίνης |<sup>124</sup> καὶ θεομήτ(ο)ρος τῆς Ἐλεούσης καὶ ὁ χρυσόβουλλος λόγος |<sup>125</sup> οὗτος τῆς βασιλείας μου, ἀπολυθεὶς κατὰ |<sup>126</sup> μῆνα Μάρτ(ιον) τὴν νῦν τρεχούσης δευτ(έ)ρ(ας) ἰνδικτι |<sup>127</sup> ὦνος τοῦ ἑξακισχιλιοστοῦ ἑπτακοσιοστοῦ |<sup>128</sup> ἐνενηκοστοῦ ἐβδόμου ἔτους· ἐν ᾧ καὶ τὸ |<sup>129</sup> ἡμέτερον εὐσεβὲς καὶ θεοπρόβλητον ὑπεσημῆματο |<sup>130</sup> κράτος: † Ἀνδρόνικος ἐν Χ(ριστ)ῷ |<sup>131</sup> τῷ Θε(ε)ῷ πιστὸς βασιλεὺς καὶ |<sup>132</sup> αὐτοκράτωρ Ῥωμαί(ων) Δού|<sup>133</sup>κας Ἄγγελος Κομνηνὸς ὁ |<sup>134</sup> Παλαιολόγος † |<sup>145</sup>

<sup>145</sup> The text has been transcribed by Dimitris Sofianos, see Sofianos, “Τα υπέρ της μονής της Παναγίας της Λυκουσάδας του Φαναρίου Καρδίτσας, παλαιά Βυζαντινά (ΙΓ’ και ΙΔ’ αι.) έγγραφα (χρυσόβουλλα κ.α.),” 500-503.

## English Translation

† Nothing prevails over the truth and<sup>2</sup> nothing is praised by humans more than the knowledge gained through following<sup>3</sup> the truth; Because those humans earning knowledge about all things<sup>4</sup> after having followed true facts, what is good<sup>5</sup> in every aspect can bring to themselves and they would never<sup>6</sup> endanger their own interest. Moreover, even if to themselves<sup>7</sup> they gain in addition any of the needful, and even if to others they<sup>8</sup> urge to pass it on, the precise<sup>9</sup> substance of it they will succeed. This to the most prudent<sup>10</sup> of people, who are accustomed to assess their actions,<sup>11</sup> it is not difficult to also foresee that the present application of the (female)<sup>12</sup> applicant accords with (her) deeds; of the present which is forthcoming,<sup>13</sup> and also of the others (to come).<sup>14</sup> Because the right to kingship given by God is a great privilege,<sup>15</sup> recognized on earth by all. Given it is evident that (this privilege)<sup>16</sup> has to be seen (and respected) by anyone, they will not be considered<sup>17</sup> worthy of appraisal those who considering the size of the debt they owe<sup>18</sup> are reluctant to give it, through offering obedience<sup>19</sup> and through actions to contribute to the authority<sup>20</sup> of the superior. This is the acknowledged right of my kingship<sup>21</sup> which to a great extent has been set forth previously, since to<sup>22</sup> this authority of mine the One who has established and composed it,<sup>23</sup> who created and keeps the world in unity<sup>24</sup> staring at me mercifully said: augment what you have been apportioned<sup>25</sup> further; expand to the right and left; lay foundations and do not spare<sup>26</sup> what may restrict the view to your goal. And yet (my authority) performed and<sup>27</sup> sustained in many periods of time, strengthened and increased. And to those<sup>28</sup> who attempted to raise their hands against (me), prevailed by being over-augmented.<sup>29</sup> When anger broke out from above, punishment in all cases bringing<sup>30</sup> with it, things started moving and declined<sup>31</sup> to the worse. And the authority was lessened<sup>32</sup> to the minimum. And within measurable borders was shown having been reduced.<sup>33</sup> In addition to other things, or rather moreover to anything else, it lost<sup>34</sup> the reigning of all cities, until The<sup>35</sup> Punisher reached out only to a recoverable point, and things lasted to the end<sup>36</sup> not allowing, not to deadly hurt while hurting, but in order for things to the better<sup>37</sup> to be changed, whatever was lost, and<sup>38</sup> the Queen of Cities saved again, and<sup>39</sup> to the best, readily by His assistance and appendage<sup>40</sup> the authority gave back. During that period when<sup>41</sup> difficulties were overwhelming, on many people and things<sup>42</sup> the power changed hands and until this day<sup>43</sup> cities and villages are among those confiscated<sup>44</sup> in so far as they are possessed by an (unnamed) Despotate, but<sup>45</sup> they succumb to our power and obedience<sup>46</sup> as rightfully they acknowledge it. The officially defined spouse of the dearest relative<sup>47</sup> by marriage to my rulership, the certain *sebastokrator* Komnenos,<sup>48</sup> *kyr* John Doukas,<sup>49</sup> later given monastic vows Komnene *kyra* Hypomone<sup>50</sup> Doukaina, having well recognized the unique power vested upon me<sup>51</sup> and not being secured of her right of administering all she<sup>52</sup> owns, either of the laymen, or the monastic establishments<sup>53</sup> if not attach on these possessions the validity of the royal<sup>54</sup> decrees, she addresses to my rulership<sup>55</sup> and towards the revered monastery she founded, the lawfulness<sup>56</sup> of the existing (related property) asks for, through this *chrysobull*<sup>57</sup> of my kingship, to be authorized. This monastery,<sup>58</sup> which was built and established by her, stands somewhere near<sup>59</sup> the town named Fanari; it is honored<sup>60</sup> by the name of the most pure lady<sup>61</sup> and mother of Christ, the Merciful and is called<sup>62</sup> of Lykousada. Whatever to this monastery<sup>63</sup> estates she gave, wherever in the areas stated<sup>64</sup> are located, and these (estates) are to be named in the<sup>65</sup> following. To this request of hers so, I do not know whether my<sup>66</sup> rulership has imposed anything and not to them any tax<sup>67</sup> to be charged. To the contrary, with gratitude to be rewarded<sup>68</sup> to her and in full knowledge of what is good, readily consents<sup>69</sup> to the request. And the present *chrysobull*<sup>70</sup> grants to her, and through which positively anticipates and dictates and<sup>71</sup> orders to be possessed by the aforesaid venerated monastery,<sup>72</sup> everything described by the aforementioned wife of the mentioned<sup>73</sup> *sebastokrator*,

adding to it all estates<sup>|74</sup> the names of which explicitly listed;<sup>|75</sup> the village of Lykousada, in which this monastery was erected;<sup>|76</sup> another village Vatousiani; the village located near Trikala<sup>|77</sup> which the monastery possesses together with the<sup>|78</sup> bathhouse there. A *metochion* which venerates the holiest<sup>|79</sup> Mother of God, known as Raxa, together with the paroikoi who live there<sup>|80</sup> whose listed names are attached (in the related<sup>|81</sup> documents), moreover the land owned by<sup>|82</sup> the *metochion* and the mills and vineyards; another<sup>|83</sup> metochion, known as Tritsenikos, which venerates my saint<sup>|84</sup> the great martyr Georgios; another one venerating Saint<sup>|85</sup> Andrew, including the *paroikoi* on it and vineyards together with<sup>|86</sup> recent land additions; Vlachokatouna, called<sup>|87</sup> Praktikatous. the village of Goriani with its mills<sup>|88</sup> and vineyards. At the lake of Ezeros, two fishing boats<sup>|89</sup> with two fishermen. A *metochion*, the name of which venerates<sup>|90</sup> the great martyr Saint Demetrios, located in the theme<sup>|91</sup> of Vounena, including the paroikoi in it<sup>|92</sup> together with vineyards and mills.<sup>|93</sup> Moreover, in the location of Almiros, the village of Magoula<sup>|94</sup> and the so-called Simisarati, including the lands there<sup>|95</sup> of Levachati and Taronatoi. All these will be retained<sup>|96</sup> by the aforementioned venerated monastery of the holiest<sup>|97</sup> Lady and Mother of Christ, the Merciful, in full ownership<sup>|98</sup> and inalienable utilization as item by item are described<sup>|99</sup> in the inventory drafted for this purpose; moreover, as these<sup>|100</sup> were countersigned and added to this monastery by<sup>|101</sup> the stated wife of the declared *sebastokrator*<sup>|102</sup> and utilize in the future undisturbedly and unshakably (and)<sup>|103</sup> inalienably now and in the future;<sup>|104</sup> even more not to be influenced by eventual local<sup>|105</sup> adverse public resolutions<sup>|106</sup> and discussions to come. No one at all will be<sup>|107</sup> permitted now or in the future to induce whatever ravage<sup>|108</sup> or violence and attack <sup>|109</sup> because he will be repelled by the power of the present<sup>|110</sup> *chrysobull* of my kingship, (that is) anyone who<sup>|111</sup> will attempt to cause something like this as well as to annoy by any kind of annoyance<sup>|112</sup> the mentioned venerated monastery or its possessions,<sup>|113</sup> estates and claims; as well as to impose<sup>|114</sup> anything due, any affecting and<sup>|115</sup> unjust hand and sustain by no one not<sup>|116</sup> any plunder, ravage and trouble; and hereafter<sup>|117</sup> let also those in the venerated monastery who have<sup>|118</sup> undertaken the only according to God tutelage<sup>|119</sup> and way of living, peacefully live the transient period<sup>|120</sup> and enjoy undisturbed this God-loving<sup>|121</sup> and respected community. For this reason<sup>|122</sup> happened and rewarded to the named<sup>|123</sup> venerated monastery of our most pure Lady<sup>|124</sup> and Mother of Christ the Eleousa and this *chrysobull*<sup>|125</sup> of my kingship, released in<sup>|126</sup> the month of March of the running second indiction<sup>|127</sup> of the six thousand seven hundred<sup>|128</sup> ninety-seventh year, during which<sup>|129</sup> our pious and god-chosen<sup>|130</sup> state underscore (the *chrysobull*). † Andronikos, by the grace of Christ<sup>|131</sup> the God faithful basileus and<sup>|132</sup> emperor of the Romans<sup>|133</sup> Doukas Angelos Komnenos<sup>|134</sup> Palaiologos †

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