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Authors: **Papadopoulos Stratis, Giamali Ioanna**

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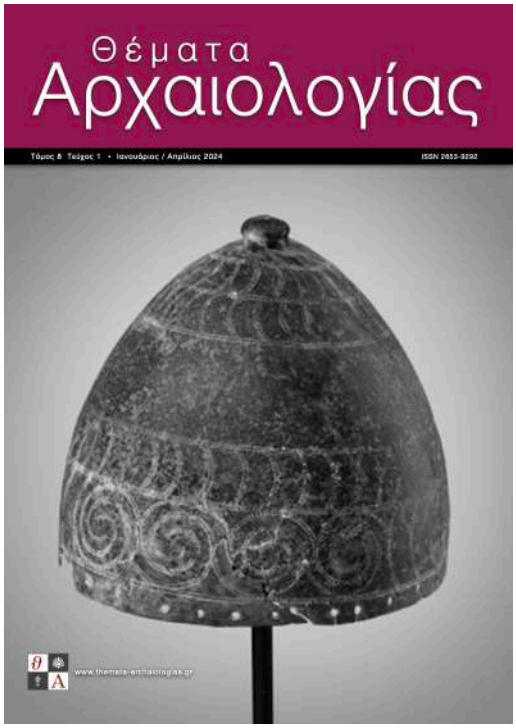

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Ελαιοτριβείο της Πρωτοβυζαντινής περιόδου στον Άγιο Ιωάννη Θάσου

*Περίληψη στο τέλος του άρθρου*

# Early Byzantine olive oil workshop in Agios Ioannis, Thasos

*to Oulkeroglou Anastasios, Archaeologist (Ph.D.)* † [1]

**Papadopoulos Stratis**

*Archaeologist, Ph.D.*

efstratiospa@gmail.com

**Giamali Ioanna**

*Archaeologist, M.Sc.*

ioannagiamali@gmail.com

The natural bay of Agios Ioannis in the island of Thasos was inhabited as early as the 4th millennium, serving as a fertile pastureland with a direct access to the sea, appropriate for organized fishing and livestock farming, with the potential of olive cultivation as well. The constant interest in the site, from the beginning of the Bronze Age to the Byzantine period, is evidenced by the abundant archaeological finds, such as a prehistoric settlement and cemetery, boundary walls, wells and towers from the Archaic to the Hellenistic periods, as well as a Late Roman/Early Byzantine farmhouse that includes the olive oil workshop discussed in this paper. The rural settlement of Agios Ioannis must have been permanently deserted at the beginning of the 7th century A.D., probably due to a major earthquake that also led to the abandonment of other coastal sites on the island. At the olive oil workshop, roofed spaces were excavated, along with part of its courtyard with the well and several structures and stone components, all of which reveal its function supporting the various stages of production. Ceramics and coins reliably date the second phase of the workshop to the 6th century A.D. A modern hut with a bread oven and several stone-built retaining walls that form small terraces required for olive cultivation in more recent times attest to the economic significance of the site up until the 20th century.

**Key words**

Thasos
olive oil workshop
farmhouse
oil production
rural settlement
ancient economy
Early Byzantine period

In the southeast region of Thasos, between the mountains of Melissopetra and Baboura, approximately 3 km east of the archaeological site of Alyki, lies the natural bay of Agios Ioannis (fig. 1). In 1909, Baker-Penoyre[2] identified there two towers, a circular and a rectangular one, which border the bay. Bon, in 1930, points out that it is difficult to explain the presence of defensive structures in an area that is either deserted or difficult to inhabit due to its isolation.[3] We know today that this bay was anything but unoccupied.

It was not until 1983 that more information about this place became available. At that time, the excavation carried out by the 18th Ephorate of Prehistoric and Classical Antiquities of Kavala and the archaeologist V. Poulios at the eastern end of the bay, revealed residential remains of a Late Roman/Early Byzantine farmhouse with at least two construction phases.[4] A surface survey across the eastern slope of the hill identified remnants of walls and marble blocks as well as abundant pottery on the ground. This fact led the excavator to assume that the building discovered at the base of the slope, very close to the shore, might have been part of a small mountain settlement. At the summit of the hill, where the church of Agios Ioannis Loukas now stands, the remains of an earlier small church with two phases of construction were recorded, inside of which several marble architectural elements were discovered.

Regarding the interior of the bay, V. Poulios notes the following: He attributes to the settlement he excavated, a small number of looted cist tombs in the northwest section of the olive grove, beneath the ring road of the island. The presence of a cemetery is reinforced by an *imago clipeata* with a female bust that was retrieved from the sea in 1971.[5] In the area of the workshop —which was not yet visible at the time— he observed a part of a Roman sarcophagus[6] and a marble slab with a circular groove, which he correctly attributed to a workshop.


**1. Thasos. The site of Agios Ioannis.**

Subsequent excavations by Dr. Stratis Papadopoulos in 1998 and, more extensively, in 2005 at the western end of the bay, very close to the shoreline, revealed (fig. 2):

1. A settlement of the first phase of the Early Bronze Age, at the end of the 4th millennium. Inside and amid the


**2. Agios Ioannis:**

**1. Olive oil workshop**
**2. Farmhouse**
**3. Prehistoric settlement**
**4. Circular tower**
**5. Rectangular tower.**

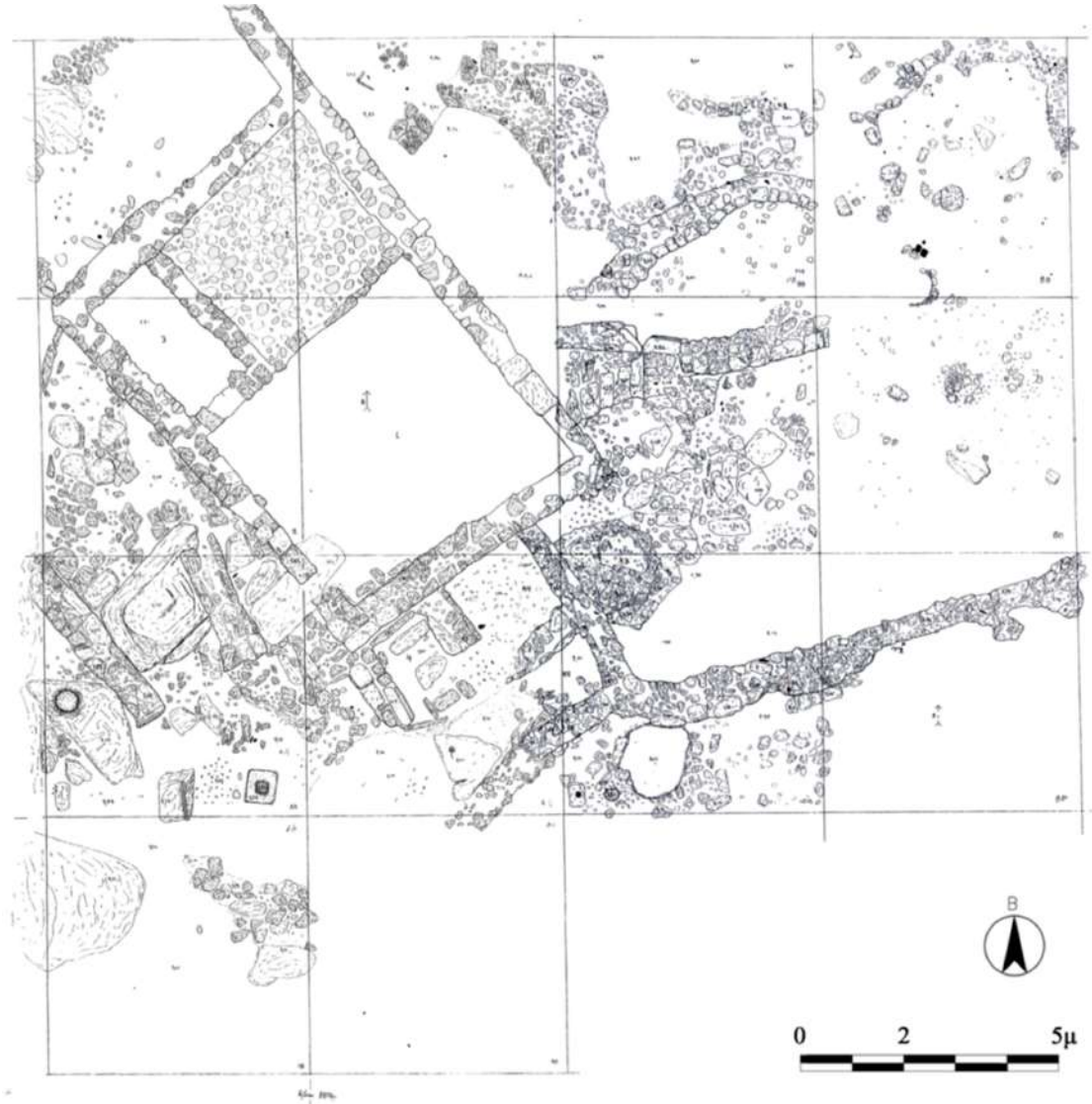
post-built dwellings, the excavation uncovered a large number of residential remains, primarily thermal structures and gneiss benches, along with an abundance of stone tools and pottery.

2. One additional tower at the northwestern hill, not far from the peripheral road artery of the island, as well as boundary walls, made of massive vertical limestone blocks, on the west slope of the bay.

3. A building with an area of approximately 50 sq. m., which includes at least three rooms and peripheral annexes. It was identified by the excavator as an olive processing workshop,[7] and it is the one that we present in detail in the current paper.

### The olive oil workshop in Agios Ioannis

The building complex in the bay of Agios Ioannis is preserved in a fragmentary state at the level of its foundations. We cannot say for sure whether this is a result of stone detachment or a natural disaster, since the building is only a few meters from the sea. The main building (fig. 3) measures 6.20 m. (southeast side), 9 m. (southwest side), 6.80 m. (northwest side) and 13.25 m. (northeast side). Three main rooms were excavated, together with additional structures to the southeast. The existence of additional indoor or outdoor spaces around the building is evidenced by several remains of walls.



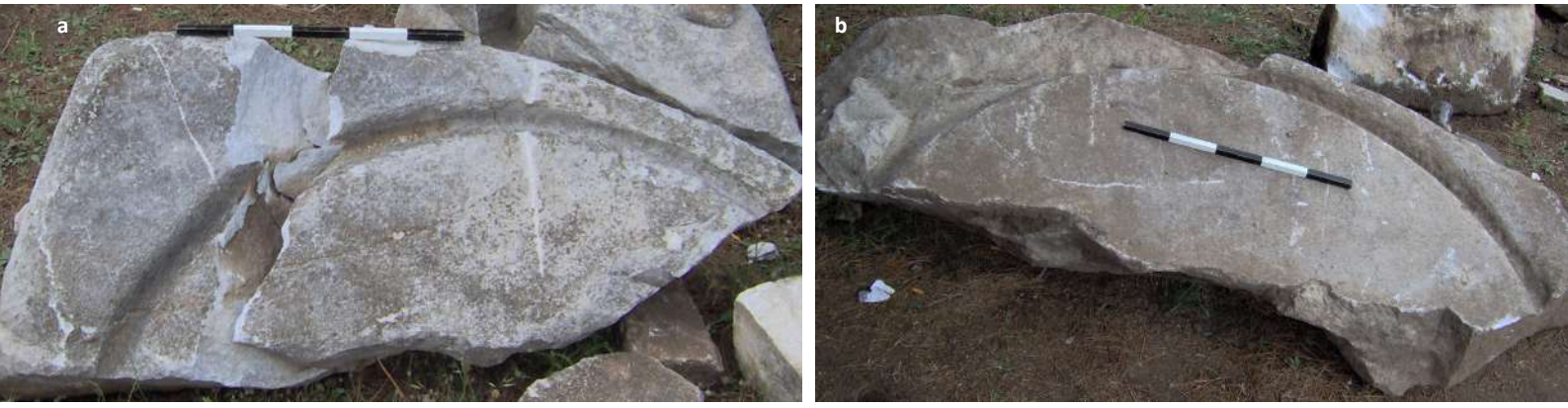

**3. Plan of Agios Ioannis olive oil workshop.**

The largest space, Room 1 (fig. 4), is almost (nearly) square with the three sides measuring 5 m. and the southwest 4.35 m. To the east, where the two-leaf threshold is maintained, there was a doorway probably leading to the courtyard of the complex. A second room, Room 2 (fig. 5), measuring approximately 3.20 x 3.80 m., is located north of Room 1 and is paved with small flagstones, although at a higher level than the floors of the other two rooms. Since it was preferred not to remove the cobblestone floor, this area has not been further investigated. It could likely be from the second construction phase of the building. However, it had a threshold for communication with Room 1, which was removed when the door opening was sealed with irregularly shaped and randomly placed uncut stones (*opus incertum*). The smallest rectangular space, Room 3 (fig. 5), in the northwest corner of the building, measures 2.90 x 1.47 m. and has a single-leaf marble threshold that leads to the central Room 1.

Remains of tanks and a number of finds, such as the two marble parts of circular press-beds with a peripheral groove (fig. 6 a-b), a marble part of a press outflow (fig. 7), and two stone weights, confirm the designation of the building as an olive oil workshop.[8] The preparation, i.e. washing the olive fruit before crushing it, could take place in the paved Room 2.[9] Despite its small size, Room 1 might be used for crushing olives with the aid of a stone mill.[10] Although no traces of the olive mill were preserved *in situ*, bibliographical references mention the discovery of a *trapetum*[11] during a surface survey of the French Archaeological school (École française d'Athènes) in Thasos in the 1980s. It is possible, nevertheless,

**4. Room 1 from the north-west.**

**5. Rooms 2 and 3 from the North.**




**6[a-b]. Circular oil press-beds.**

**7. Marble part of an oil press outflow.**



**8[a-b]. The rock-cut press-bed and the collecting vat.**

that the crushing took place in a sheltered semi-outdoor space east of the building, where a large, partially preserved, semicircular structure was found. This structure, with a maximum chord of 6.50 m. and maximum preserved height of 0.40 m., might serve as the foundation of an olive mill for crushing the fruit.

In the masonry of the entire building, hewn and rough stones of various dimensions are used, along with mortar as binding material. The archaeological excavation in Room 1 brought to light a significant number of thin gneiss slabs in a disordered arrangement. The continuation of the research in deeper layers at this point revealed that the slabs come from the roof, while the floor is made of limestone slabs and, in some places, the actual natural rock. Such an early roofing with gneiss slabs —a popular practice of Thasian traditional architecture[12]— was also proposed for the building excavated in 1983 at the eastern end of the bay.

Structures associated with the pressing of the olive pulp and the collection of the oil were identified southwest of the building, in an area with maximum revealed dimensions of 9 x 7 m. A formation of a press-bed with a perimeter groove was revealed on the natural rock.[13] It is almost rectangular in plan and measures approximately 1.30 x 2.05 x 0.10 m. (fig. 8a). The rock-cut structure is framed by small built walls from the east and west. A channel or gutter that runs down the eastern wall (fig. 9) might have supplied hot water to the press, which was required during the process of pressing. A deep circular carving measuring 0.55 m. x 0.21 m. is formed in the natural rock, west of the press-bed (fig. 8b). It is similar to a vat used to collect the oil produced during pressing. Black soil found inside might be related to olive pulp residues.[14] A collecting receptacle could be placed inside the carving.

At a distance of 2.50 m. south of the press-bed, a stone object was found, measuring 0.40 x 0.60 x 0.15 m. and with a square through hole, 0.22 x 0.24 m., which probably served as a weight for the wooden pressing lever. In an attempt to depict the pressing device, we can imagine the lever fixed to the exterior west wall of the building, passing over the press-bed, and —with an average length of 5-6 m.— reaching the western wall of the base. Nonetheless, we would expect the vat to be closer to the tank (1.10 m. distant) and at a lower level.

South of Room 1, there are two minor storage structures, enclosed by three walls on the SW-NE axis and a shared, most likely, wall on their south side. It appears

**9. The channel east of the press-bed.**

**10. The triple inscription.**

that an extended area measuring about 1 x 4 m. is formed to the south. At its southwestern end, a small square hole has been carved on the natural rock, with a side of 6 cm, apparently for the insertion of a wooden pole. The masonry of the structures consists of medium-sized stones, bonded with mud.[15]

The northern structure has internal dimensions of 1.90 x 1,70 m. and the southern one 1.60 x 1.18 m. Both of them appear to have had floors of stone slabs. The southern one is described as a case bounded by massive slabs of gneiss.[16] It was probably lined internally with wooden planks and was used to store oily materials — perhaps olive pulp— as evidenced by the excavated clay soft soil, which was light reddish/orange in color. At a short distance from the east wall of these three structures and inside the east courtyard of the workshop, a well with a diameter of about 1.60 and 1 m. deep was discovered, a common piece of equipment in olive workshops, since water was an integral element in olive oil production. Stones with round sockets found in the surrounding area of the three structures were possibly intended for the placement of wooden poles, also related to the function of the oil press.

East of the building, several architectural elements emerged —mostly parts of walls— but in a particularly fragmentary state. Some of them are related to the building of the olive mill, while ruins of a prehistoric settlement have also been discovered, which were more thoroughly examined during the period 2000-2005.[17] The complex of the olive mill appears to have been constructed on the SW part of this settlement. The severe damage and the immediate appearance of the natural soil frequently mix the architectural residues, making it difficult to understand the residential phases. In the southern part of the excavated area, a thick, poorly constructed wall of approximately 9 m. in length was revealed, which might have been a rough enclosure serving as the southern boundary of the olive mill complex.

According to the excavation finds, two construction phases of the building were identified. Bronze coins, such as the *follis* of Justin II (565-574 AD), small finds, such as a bronze cross, but also abundant "combed" ware sherds date the layer of destruction of the second phase of the building in the last quarter of the 6th century A.D.[18] Numerous large sea shells, primarily Ostrea Edulis and Spondylus, uncovered during the excavation of the oil mill, reveal eating habits, but they could also serve as ladles, probably useful in the workshop's procedures.

Architectural members in second use and three parts of a marble sarcophagus pedimental lid, provide a *terminus post quem* for the founding of the oil mill in the 4th century A.D.[19] The discovery of a "triple" inscription fragment of the 2nd or 3rd century A.D. (fig. 10) on one side of a sarcophagus is particularly interesting. The first two inscriptions appear within a *tabula ansata*, while the third, the lower one, is out of frame. The inscriptions are written in three different hands. We read:

]ΜΑΧΟΣΠΟΛΙΩ
]ΠΡΟΣΦΙΛΗΣΧΕΡΕ
]ΠΩΛΙΩΝΕΠΙ
]ΜΑΧΟΥΧΑΙΡΕ
]ΡΜΙΟΝΗΠΩΛΙΩ

We transcribe as follows:[20]

[Ἐπι]μαχος Πολίω-[νος]
Προσφιλής, χῆρε
Πωλίων Ἐπι-μάχου, χαῖρε
[Ἑ]ρμόνη Πωλίω-[νος …].

It must be a family memorial with a father (Epimachus), a son (Pollion) and a woman (probably Hermione), who passed away later. Spelling errors are very common in such inscriptions. Some other architectural elements, such as the square pillar served as building material on one of the storage structures in the southern part of the workshop, might also have a funerary purpose.

### The farmhouse

The olive mill is related to the farmhouse which, as mentioned above, was revealed on the east side of the bay and was excavated in 1983.[21] It is built on natural ground with gneiss stones, a small amount of limestones and with red soil as a binder.[22] The north part of this structure, was built direct touch with the natural rock that formed one of its sides. The walls of the other three sides are built with schist stones and a few marble stones, bonded with red clay. Its southwest corner was destroyed due to its proximity to the sea, as evidenced by the movement of building materials and a marble threshold both on the shoreline and in the water.

The complex consists of two spaces, which the excavator considers to be residential rooms. A space was identified as a kitchen, given the abundance of charred material and masses of baked clay that indicate the presence of a domestic oven. In the same room, part of storage jar (pithos) was found *in situ* and a marble circular slab next to it, which was probably used as a lid. In the main room, a part of a roughly processed monolithic column without flutes was revealed. The discovery of numerous gneiss slabs in the destruction layer led us to believe that they had been used for the roofing of the building, a practice that we also observed in the Room 1 of the olive mill.

The few ceramic finds, as well as the discovery of a Justinian bronze coin near the storage jar, date the construction to the Late Roman period, with a lifespan that lasted until the 6th century. In any case, the marble elements, such as the column and the threshold, indicate a high standard of living for the inhabitants and could be related to the aforementioned inscribed sarcophagus, part of which had already been discovered at the western end of the bay during the rescue excavation of 1983.

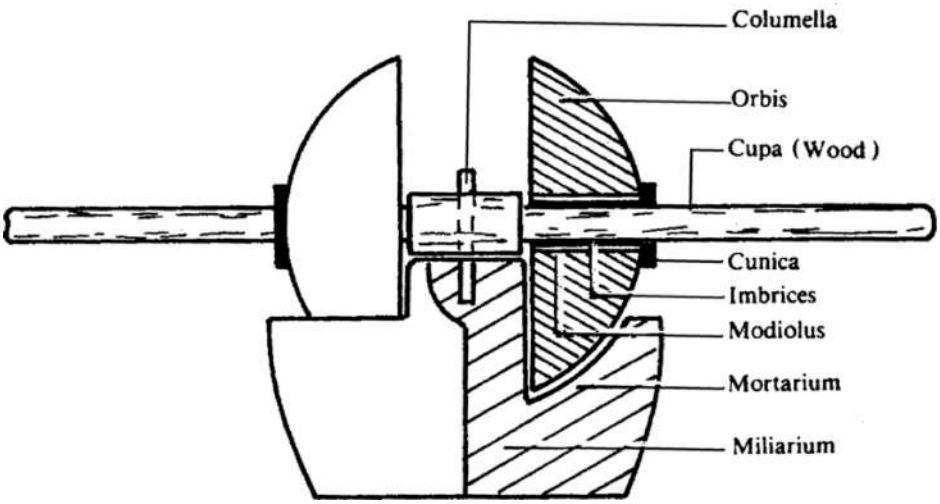
Parts of monolithic columns in the surrounding area, presumably removed from the building, may suggest the presence of a small *atrium*. According to the excavator, the location of the house next to an olive workshop strongly refers to the farmhouses of the previous century, which are found scattered on the island of Thasos, either isolated or in groups, and served as a lodging for families during the olive harvest season. Moreover, a modern farmhouse with a single room building and a bread oven is still preserved today, approximately 80 m. northwest of the Late Roman/Early Byzantine settlement.

### The process of olive oil production

The olive tree, along with the vine and cereals, form the basis of the Mediterranean economy. The domestication of the olive tree dates in the early phases of the Bronze Age in the eastern part of the Mediterranean.[23] Nonetheless olive oil production facilities are not attested before the Late Bronze Age, when the relevant technology and the techniques concerning the processing of the olive fruit are being developed. The olive oil production process includes the following steps:[24]

1. Shaking the tree and picking the fruit,
2. Washing the fruit,
3. Transferring of the fruit to the olive mill,
4. Crushing the fruit,
5. Pressing the olive pulp
6. Separating the oil from the other components of the fruit.

The fruit is crushed in stone mortars with a pestle,[25] a time-consuming procedure with limited productivity. Since the 7th century B.C., archaeological evidence has confirmed the method of crushing using a cylindrical crusher on a hard surface, usually a marble floor, where a cylindrical stone, often a part of a column, was moved back and forth.[26] The technological revolution of the Hellenistic period introduces the rotary mill, which had been used since the middle of the 4th century B.C. in Macedonia.[27] The most typical example is an oil mill, excavated in Argilos.[28] This crushing device *(trapetum)* may have been invented in Macedonia and spread during the campaign of Alexander the Great.[29] In the 1st century A.D., Pliny the Elder presents the *trapetum* as a Greek invention.[30] The movement of the mill in a single direction without interruption and the ability to use the power of animals or slaves for the rotation, make the system extremely efficient.



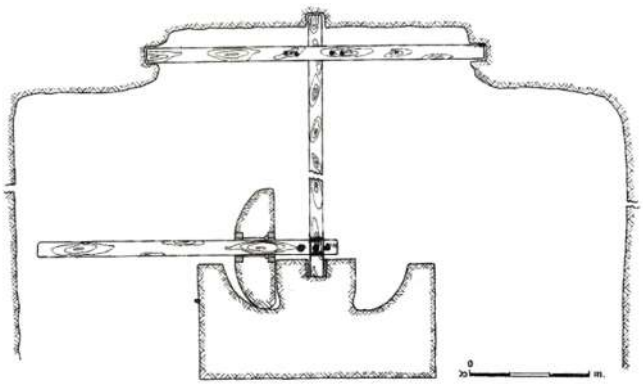

**11. Schematic representation of an olive mill in the type of *trapetum*.**

Descriptions of the *trapetum*[31] are provided by Cato the Elder (2nd century B.C.) and Columella (1st century A.D.).[32] The names of the individual parts of the crushing device confirm that they are Latinized terms of a Greek invention. Equivalent descriptions in ancient Greek literature are rare, which is why scholars proposed the corresponding Greek terms from ancient texts and inscriptions.[33]

The term *trapetum* (ancient Greek: *τρο-πεῖον* or *τροπήιον*) (fig. 11) refers to the entire system, which includes the crushing basin —a mortar called *mortarium* (ancient Greek: *θυείη*)— i.e. the stationary part of the device, where the fruit is transferred after harvesting and washing. The *trapetum* is made of volcanic rock, usually limestone or conglomerate stone. A small solid column, the *miliarium*, rises in the middle, slightly above its edge, giving the cavity of the mortar the form of a ring with a vertical inner surface and a curved outer one. At the top of the *miliarium*, an iron pin is placed, the *columella* (diminutive form of *columna*/column, in Greek: *πόλος*/*πεῖρος*), in order to ensure the stability of the wooden horizontal arm, the *cupa* (in Greek: *κώπης*).

The lenticular millstones (*orbes*) are supported by the two elbows of the *cupa*, which have a square cross-section, whereas the ends of the arm are cylindrical, serving as handles for its movement. Numerous wooden and metal components are used to fasten and secure the parts of the *trapetum*. The dating of the millstones is particularly difficult, as their construction technique is unchanged over time, and they are frequently used for centuries.[34]

A second type of olive mill, the *mola olearia* (fig. 12), known primarily from Columella, appears in variations



**12. Schematic representation of *mola olearia*.**

throughout the Mediterranean.[35] The primary distinction from the previous type is that the rotary lever —the *cupa* with the cylindrical millstones— is held by a vertical beam, which is anchored to the ceiling. Therefore, the device must be located in a covered area sheltered space. The beam can be moved up and down, allowing the height of the horizontal lever and the millstones to be adjusted at will.[36] This way the olive kernel is not crushed or is crushed separately.[37] The *mola olearia* type is almost always encountered with one millstone (*orbis*).

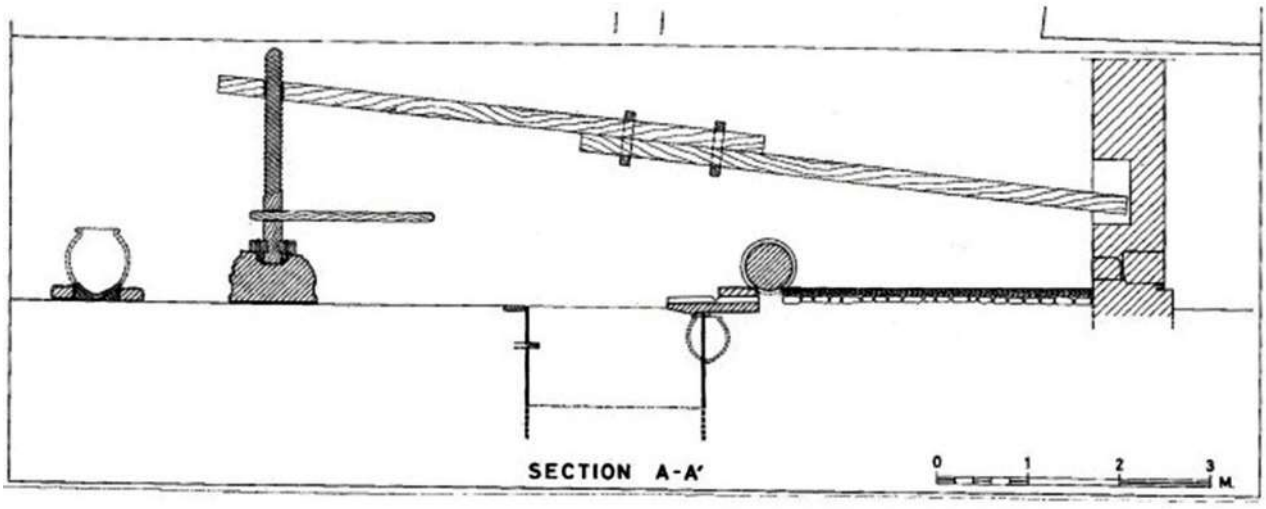
After crushing, the olive paste is collected in bags,[38] which are placed in a stack on particular stone pressing bases with a peripheral groove. The bags are pressed by the pressing lever;[39] a wooden beam anchored to the wall. To raise the pressure, monolithic weights or sacks of stones are attached or fastened to the opposite end of the lever (fig. 13). The weights are shaped in the form of a basket or pyramid with a vertical and horizontal suspension hole.[40] During pressing, hot water is used to facilitate the separation of the oil from its imputities, i.e. water and amurca. From the pressing base, the liquid flows and ends up through a spout into an underlying collecting vat or receptacle collecting vessel, which often has depressions at the bottom to allow foreign bodies to settle. The oil floats and is collected with small vessels.[41] It is then sto-red mainly in large storage jars (*pithoi*) after successive transfusions and clarifications.

Cato describes a particular kind of press that Pliny refers to as the "Greek press".[42] In this technique, the wooden lever (*prelum*) is pulled with a rope to a pulley, which is framed by wooden uprights (*arbores*). When there is a shortage of timber or when the is operated in the open space, the use of stone for the vertical supports of the machine is preferred as a more durable material. The so-called press of Cato is used primarily in mainland Greece with several variations.[43]

During the Early Byzantine period, when significant agricultural development is observed in the Eastern Mediterranean, the use of a press with a pulley or weights continues, but the direct-pressure oil press with a screw prevails, allowing for the application of much greater force.[44] The main difference of this method from the others lies in the fact that the pressure lever has both ends fixed, one tied to the wall and the other permanently attached to a weight. The connection is achieved with a screw that "opens and closes" at will, depending on the amount of pressure required. Archaeological evidence indicates that the use of a screw in the pressing stage and the weights with through holes and notches prevail in the Greek region.[45]

To summarize, the *trapetum*, with numerous local variations, is the only crushing tool used in mainland Greece from the Hellenistic to the Byzantine period. In Crete and eastern Mediterranean, it coexists with *mola olearia* with a one millstone.[46] For the pressing of olives, the lever combined with the screw mechanism must be used exclusively.

Depending on the crushing and the pressing processes, as well as the type of olive, different qualities of oil are obtained for a variety of purposes,[47] not only in coo-




**13. Schematic representation of an olive press in Paphos.**

king, but also in tanning, weaving, lighting, perfumery, body care, pharmaceuticals, medicine and various cult rituals. The significance and close relationship of the olive and its oil with all aspects of daily life has resulted in a constantly evolving technology for their exploitation. Greek tradition even gives it a symbolic content attributing its origin to the divine.[48]

### Olive processing spaces in Northern Greece[49]

The importance of olive processing is evidenced by the remains of olive mills in significant sites throughout Northern Greece. A space with a *trapetum* revealed during the excavation of Argilos indicates the processing of olives.[50] The opposite room, where a bench, a jar and charred olive kernels were found, was most likely used for placing sacks and storing olives and oil. In another room of the workshop, a built-in tank was found, since water is necessary for washing the olives and hot water is required for the production of oil. Additionally, a thick schist slab was probably used as a weight for crushing the olives. This is a complete artisanal installation, dated back to the Late Classical and Hellenistic periods.

An olive mill was also revealed inside the ancient fortress of Vrasna in Chalkidiki,[51] in the last room of the southern wing. Its identity is proofed by both its formation and the large quantity of olive seeds that was uncovered beneath a layer of destruction. Below the level of the mill, a large stone drainage channel with a rectangular cross-section ended outside the wall. It probably served as a conduit for transporting waste from the crushing of olives as well. The sufficient number of vessels and stamped clay tiles, the abundant pottery of daily use, as well as the presence of the olive mill, indicate a permanent settlement rather than a simple farmhouse.

The inhabitants of Roman Pella[52] were engaged in arboriculture, and more specifically in viticulture and olive cultivation. A large hemispherical volcanic millstone from an oil mill was found in a farmhouse on the hilltop north of the Roman colony.

Walls and foundations of Early Byzantine farmhouses and workshops were discovered in an excavation at Louloudies, Kitros Pieria.[53] In the episcopal complex, organized artisanal facilities were identified, related to the production of wine and olive oil,[54] demonstrating the role of the local church as an economic factor at that time. In contact with the northern precinct, an olive mill was excavated, consisting of a large space with a crushing device (a basin, a colonnade and two millstones), while a few meters to the west, a tank for washing the olive fruit was found. Such workshops related to the cultivation of olives and vines are also known from other episcopates during the Early Byzantine era.

In Veria, Nees Syllates Chalcidice, a lentil-shaped mill and wild olive fruits were found, as well as a double press and tanks.[55] Opposite them there is a third press whose vat had been removed. Similar presses were also revealed on a neighboring plot in a large Late Roman building. The buildings, as shown by archaeological research, were abandoned in the 3rd century A.D. An olive mill dated in late antiquity (5th-6th century A.D.) was also discovered in the area of Pefkochori. It is noteworthy that the size of the pits for the placement of *pithoi* far exceeds domestic use.

Inside the octagon of Philippi,[56] several oil mill facilities were revealed, such as a grinder, an olive press, a built-in circular structure, the infrastructure for the press-bed and a column, which must have served for the pressing of the olive pulp. A large cavity in the column was intended for the horizontal beam, at the other end of which the wooden screw was fastened. According to the excavator, the mill was destroyed in the first half of the 7th century and was probably never utilized again. Lastly, it is worth noting an olive mill of the 14th century found during the excavations of Byzantine Pydna. After the castle was abandoned, a family settled and built an olive workshop in the ruins of the monument.[57]

### Conclusions

Olive processing facilities are frequently located in coastal areas and next to roads that connect rural communities and farmhouses with small towns. They are either independent and self-sufficient units or part of larger workshop complexes that are also related to weaving, pottery, winemaking, grain processing, as well as the marketing of these products. Usually, the workshop spaces are placed parallel, in a linear arrangement, along the side of an open courtyard, that contains thermal structures and wells. Farmhouse complexes dominate during the Late Roman period,[58] surviving until the 7th c. A.D., when foreign invasions become common in both the countryside and towns.[59]

The protected natural bay of Agios Ioannis attracted residents early on, who took advantage of the immediate access to the sea for fishing, as well as the fertile area, a rich pastureland with the opportunity for olive cultivation

as well.[60] The enduring interest in the site and the continuous human presence from the beginning of the Bronze Age to the Byzantine period[61] are evidenced by the abundant archaeological finds: prehistoric settlement, cemetery, boundary walls of the Roman property, towers, church ruins and a Late Roman/Early Byzantine farmhouse, which includes the olive mill we presented in this paper.[62] The settlement must have been completely abandoned at the beginning of the 7th century A.D., either due to rising sea levels[63] or other natural phenomena —probably a major earthquake— that also caused the evacuation of other coastal sites on the island.[64] Nonetheless, the economic significance of the site up to the 20th century is evidenced by the presence of a modern farmhouse with a hut and a bread oven, as well as numerous stone-built retaining walls that form small terraces necessary for olive cultivation in more recent times.

## Notes

1. This paper is dedicated to the memory of the archaeologist Anastasios Oulkeroglou, who had the primary role in the study of the workshop. We would like to thank the archaeologist and friend Alexandra Pentoti for the editing of the English translation and text, the annotations and the bibliographic suggestions. We also thank the Ephorate of Antiquities of Kavala for the grant of the photographic material of the site.
2. Baker-Penoyre 1909, 235.
3. Bon 1930, 162.
4. Πούλιος 1983.
5. Archaeological Museum of Thasos, inv. no. Λ3211. Πούλιος 1983.
6. It concerns the inscribed sarcophagus discovered during the excavations of 2005, which is discussed in the following chapter.
7. Παπαδόπουλος 1996 and 1998a.
8. Regarding the equipment of the oil presses see Brunet 1993, 207. In Παπαδόπουλος 1998b, 56 a part of a *trapetum* mill is also mentioned, but it was not detected during the excavation process.
9. A similar operation was proposed for room E of the olive mill located in Arta (Τζιράκης 2015, 84, 87). Κουντούρη & Πετρόχειλος 2013, 545, 547.
10. The remains of a donkey's skeleton discovered in the zooarchaeological material of this area may strengthen the suggestion for the operation of a *trapetum* (Παπαδόπουλος 1998a, 725).
11. Παπαδόπουλος 1998a, 723-724; Παπαδόπουλος 1998b, 56.
12. Στεφάνου 1990, 32.
13. The use of the natural rock in order to create facilities related to the processing of olives is a very common practice. A press, also carved in the rock, was researched in Isthmia (Anderson–Stojanović & College 1991, 303-304). Underground installations carved into the natural rock were also found in northern Syria (Χατζησάββας 2008, 134). Similar facilities can be found in wine presses as well (Χριστοδουλάκος et. al. 2000, Dodd 2020).
14. Unfortunately, it was not possible to carry out chemical analysis of the material.
15. A marble pillar capital with a round socket was built into the southwest wall of the southernmost storage structure.
16. Παπαδόπουλος 1998a.
17. Regarding the prehistoric settlement see: Παπαδόπουλος et al. 2001; Lespez & Papadopoulos 2008; Maniatis & Papadopoulos 2011; Vakirtzi et al. 2014; Papadopoulos et al. 2018.
18. Παπαδόπουλος 1998b, 56.
19. Παπαδόπουλος 1998a, 725.
20. With the aid of Clément Sarrazanas (Université de Picardie Jules Verne).
21. Πούλιος 1983, 316.
22. Regarding the features of olive oil mills in farmhouses see Vitruvius VI, 6.2.
23. Χατζησάββας 2008, 17, 23-25. Strabo (IV, 180) mentions that the Greeks imported the olive tree to Italy.
24. Regarding the olive processing in historical times, see: Forbes and Foxhall 1978, Amouretti & Brun 1993, Foxhall 2007, Λουλακούδης 2021. Regarding the name of the olive production workshops see Φάκλαρης 2003, 37-38. Also Cassianus Bassus, *Geoponika (De Agricultura)*, VI 1.6 (10th c. AD).
25. The tool was called *δοῖδυξ* according to Aristophanes, *Hippeis (The Knights)*, 984, or *ὕπερος* according to Hesiod (*Works and Days,* 423) and Herodotus (1.200.1).
26. Anderson - Stojanović V. R 1991; Πλιάκου 2004, 50, Fig.5.
27. Χατζησάββας 2008, 61-62, 64. Αδάμ-Βελένη 1992; Αδάμ-Βελένη & Μαγκαφά 1996.
28. Μπόνιας 1997, Μπόνιας & Perrault 1997.
29. Χατζησάββας 2008, 64.
30. Plinius, *Historia Naturalis* VII, 56. He notes that it was invented by Aristaeus, son of Apollo and the nymph Cyrene, whom the Greeks honored in Greece, Sicilly and Sardinia as the protector of livestock and agriculture.
31. Φάκλαρης & Σταματοπούλου 2003.
32. Cato, De Agricultura, 21-23. Columella, Scriptorum rei rusticae veterum latinorum, XII, 52,9. Also, Cassianus Bassus, Geoponika (De Agricultura), IX, 17,1 and 13,3.
33. Φάκλαρης 2003. Φάκλαρης & Σταματοπούλου 2004, 45-46.
34. Χατζησάββας 2008, 82.
35. Hadjisavvas notes that its use dates back at least to the Hellenistic period, while other researchers date its invention to the Roman Imperial era (Χατζησάββας 2008, 65; Φάκλαρης & Σταματοπούλου 2004, 48; Τσατσάκη & Καπράνος 2011, 149, 151, note 6).
36. In some cases, instead of the vertical beam, there is a thick tall pin. In this situation, the olive mill can also be located outdoors.
37. A small gap is left between the mortar and the millstones in the *trapetum* as well (Φάκλαρης & Σταματοπούλου 2003, 40).
38. The bags were made of goat hair or vegetable fibers, e.g. from the shrubby plant *Spartium junceum*. In modern times, similar bags (*tulums* or *tsantiles*) are made of wool.
39. In Julius Pollux (*Onomasticon* 7.151 and 10.130) it is referred as *oros* (in Greek: *ὄρος*).
40. The lever was 5-6 m long. Each weight ranged from 150 to 500 kg, with an average of 300 kg. Regarding the weight of the levers see Hadjisavvas 1992, 7-10. Between the lever and the stack of bags, there was a wooden frame to facilitate the application of pressure on the bags.
41. Additionally, there were "separator" vessels, that featured a spout or a hole slightly above the bottom, which was sealed with a pin spigot. The vegetable liquids, being heavier than the oil, flowed first and then the oil was collected in vessels or tanks (Φάκλαρης & Σταματοπούλου 2003, 42).
42. Plinius, *Historia Naturalis* XVIII, 317. Heron of Alexandria (1st century B.C.-1st century A.D.) describes four different types of presses in the third book of his *Mechanica*: with a lever and a worker, with a lever and a screw and two types of direct-pressure oil presses with a screw.
43. Χατζησάββας 2008, 88, 93, 96.
44. The mechanism is initially used in the 1st century B.C. instead of a winch, while it is incorporated into the framed direct press in the 1st century A.D. (Χατζησάββας 2008, 120-137).
45. Χατζησάββας 2008, 124.
46. In Crete the *trapetum* probably prevails (*ibid*. 104).
47. Φάκλαρης & Σταματοπούλου 2003, 45-46. Φάκλαρης & Σταματοπούλου 2004, 53-63. Αναγνωστάκης 2007, 49-51. In the Edict on Maximum Prices of Diocletian (301 A.D.), both the prices and varieties of olives and olive oil are noted.

48. For the presence of the olive tree in mythology and religion see Φάκλαρης & Σταματοπούλου 2004, 15-35.
49. Αδάμ–Βελένη 2006. Early Christian farm complexes were revealed. The sites were of strategic interest during the Roman period, and are located in fertile plains. These complexes are typical examples of large farmhouses. In the vicinity, there were arable lands along with oil and wine production systems, a well-known practice in Macedonia of Philip II.
50. Μπόνιας & Perreault 1997.
51. Ταβλάκης & Τσανανά 2005.
52. Χρυσοστόμου 1995.
53. Μαρκή 1994.
54. Μαρκή 1995. Regarding workshops and olive mills that prospered in the time of Justinian see Μαρκή 1997.
55. Ταβλάκης & Τσανανά 2005.
56. Γούναρης 2009.
57. Μαρκή 1988.
58. See Rizakis & Touratsoglou (eds.) 2013. Indicative examples of farmhouses in Κετάνης 2015-2016; Μάλαμα & Νταράκης 2017. Farmahouses with workshop facilities, especially for the production of olive oil existed already in the Hellenistic period (Καραπάνου 2015; Margaritis 2015).
59. Whittow 2003, 407, 409; Mango 1990, 83-87; Dunn 2004, 558, 564, 570-573.
60. Πούλιος 1983, 316; Παπαδόπουλος 1996; 1998a; 1998b.
61. Παπαδόπουλος 1998a, 724. It is worth noting that scattered pottery fragments from the Archaic-Classical period have been also found.
62. In the area modern facilities for olive harvesting and livestock activities are also maintained (Παπαδόπουλος 1998b, 57, Scheme 1., n.12-15).
63. This phenomenon has been observed in the area of Alyki (Παπαδόπουλος 1998a, 723).
64. Μπακιρτζής 1989, 341; Παπαδόπουλος 1998b, 56.

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**Image Sources**

**1-10**. Archive of the Ephorate of Antiquities of Kavala. **11**. Frêne 2001, 267, fig. 6. **12**. Αραπογιάννη 2016, Scheme 2. **13**.Χατζησάββας 2008, fig.141.

ΠΕΡΙΛΗΨΗ

## Ελαιοτριβείο της Πρωτοβυζαντινής περιόδου στον Άγιο Ιωάννη Θάσου


Στρατής Παπαδόπουλος
*Δρ Αρχαιολόγος*
*Επίτιμος Διευθυντής Αρχαιοτήτων ΥΠΠΟ*

Ιωάννα Γιαμαλή
*Αρχαιολόγος, M.Sc.*


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Ο φυσικός όρμος του Αγίου Ιωάννη στη Θάσο κατοικήθηκε ήδη από την 4η χιλιετία, αποτελώντας πλούσιο βοσκότοπο με άμεση πρόσβαση στη θάλασσα, κατάλληλο για οργανωμένη αλιεία και κτηνοτροφία, με τη δυνατότητα, επίσης, ελαιοκαλλιέργειας. Το διαχρονικό ενδιαφέρον για τη θέση, από την αρχή της Εποχής του Χαλκού έως τη Βυζαντινή εποχή, υποδεικνύουν τα πληθωρικά αρχαιολογικά ευρήματα, που περιλαμβάνουν προϊστορική εγκατάσταση και νεκροταφείο, οριοθετικά τοιχία κτηματολογίου, πηγάδια και πύργους αρχαϊκών έως ελληνιστικών χρόνων, καθώς και αγροικία της ύστερης Ρωμαϊκής και Πρωτοβυζαντινής περιόδου, στην οποία ανήκει το ελαιοτριβείο που παρουσιάζουμε στην παρούσα δημοσίευση. Η αγροτική εγκατάσταση στον Άγιο Ιωάννη πρέπει να εγκαταλείφθηκε οριστικά στις αρχές του 7ου αι. μ.Χ., εξαιτίας ενός μεγάλου σεισμού που προκάλεσε την εγκατάλειψη και άλλων παράκτιων θέσεων του νησιού. Στο ελαιοτριβείο ανασκάφηκαν στεγασμένοι χώροι, τμήμα της αυλής με το πηγάδι, καθώς και αρκετές κατασκευές και λίθινα μέλη, που προδίδουν τη λειτουργία του, εξυπηρετώντας τις διαφορετικές φάσεις της παραγωγής. Η κεραμική και τα νομίσματα χρονολογούν με ασφάλεια τη β΄ φάση του εργαστηρίου στον 6ο αιώνα μ.Χ. Η οικονομική σημασία της θέσης έως και τον 20ό αιώνα, υποδεικνύεται από την παρουσία λιθόκτιστης καλύβας με φούρνο ψωμού αλλά και μεγάλου αριθμού λιθόκτιστων αναλημμάτων, που διαμορφώνουν μικρά άνδηρα, αναγκαία για την καλλιέργεια της ελιάς κατά τους νεώτερους χρόνους.

**Λέξεις ευρετηρίου:** Θάσος, ελαιοτριβείο, αγροικία, ελαιοπαραγωγή, αγροτική εγκατάσταση, αρχαία οικονομία, Πρωτοβυζαντινή περίοδος