Philippians

From people to letter

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PHILIPPI

In its introduction to Philippians, *The NIV Study Bible* has the following entry under the heading 'Recipients'.

> The city of Philippi was named after King Philip II of Macedon, father of Alexander the Great. It was a prosperous Roman colony, which meant that the citizens of Philippi were also citizens of the city of Rome itself. They prided themselves on being Romans (see Ac. 16.21), dressed like Romans and often spoke Latin. No doubt this was the background for Paul's reference to the believer's heavenly citizenship (3.20–21). Many of the Philippians were retired military men who had been given land in the vicinity and who in turn served as a military presence in this frontier city. That Philippi was a Roman colony may explain why there were not enough Jews there to permit the establishment of a synagogue and why Paul does not quote the OT in the Philippian letter.[1]

This description draws on a long history of scholarship on Philippians.[2] It uses a number of the major conclusions that can be drawn from the archaeological investigation of Philippi and from reading the key classical texts relevant to Philippi. The description provides a general impression of the Philippian Christians which will inform the reader's hearing of the text – an obvious example being the passage which it cites, Philippians 3.20–1. However, the impression given is false. It represents a radical misunderstanding

[1] *The NIV Study Bible* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1987 UK edn), p. 1767.

[2] E.g., J. B. Lightfoot, *St. Paul's Epistle to the Philippians* (London: Macmillan, 1885 edn), p. 52; Gerhard Friedrich, 'Der Brief an die Philipper', *Die kleineren Briefe des Apostels Paulus*, H. W. Beyer et al. (NTD (9th edn) VIII; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1962), p. 106; G. F. Hawthorne, *Philippians* (Waco: Word, 1983), pp. xxxiii–iv. After their first occurrence, commentaries on Philippians will be cited by name of author alone.

of the nature of a Roman colony like Philippi and of the kind of church likely to be found in such a setting.

To try to gain a reasonable impression of the nature of the Philippian church we need to build a model of the likely social make-up of that church. To do that, we need first to build a model of the social make-up of the town. To do that, we need first to model the development of the Roman colony of Philippi from its founding in 42 BC to the period, in the middle of the first century AD, when Philippians was written.

We will have to deal with estimating some figures. This seems strange when our aim is only 'to gain a reasonable impression'. However, it is unavoidable. The paragraph quoted above could be taken as being, in a literal sense, correct in stating that 'Many of the Philippians were retired military men'. I would estimate the number as being of the order of one hundred (see below). This is 'many' – but it is less that 1 per cent of the population. Without some consideration of numbers it is all too easy – and scholars have often done it – to slip from knowing that one has evidence of the existence of a particular type of person in a city to thinking that that type constituted a substantial proportion of the population. This tendency is greatly exacerbated in a case such as Philippi where the main thing that most scholars know about the city is that it was a Roman veteran colony.

Estimated figures may be subject to a wide range of uncertainty and yet still be useful. The factors in the estimate for veteran soldiers could vary a great deal yet still lead to the same conclusion about the veterans' numerical insignificance. Similarly, my estimate for the proportion of slaves in the population is 15–30 per cent. The upper figure is twice the lower one but the estimate is still useful for envisaging life in Philippi. If you lived in Philippi you would meet slaves every day. On the other hand they would not constitute a majority of the population. We can also then use our estimate for slaves as one component in a calculation of whether most Philippians were probably Roman citizens or not. The result of that calculation can then help in deciding whether Paul's news about heavenly citizenship was addressed primarily to those who already had an earthly citizenship or to those for most of whom citizenship of Philippi was an unattainable goal. In fact, even if we cannot decide on the answer to that question, the process of reflecting on the likely social composition of Philippi, and then of the church, will already have opened our eyes to the

vital fact that there are two such groups, citizens and non-citizens, to be considered.

1. Looking at Philippi

To understand an ancient city such as Philippi we need to draw evidence both from the city itself and from further afield. Most of the features which are seen at Philippi are common to many Graeco-Roman cities. Evidence on the nature of such a feature (for example, the role of slaves) can, with caution, be drawn from many locations even though they are dispersed geographically and, to an extent, temporally. Some of Philippi's features are more specifically characteristic of Roman colonies. In fact, we need to be more specific than this because *colonia* covers a range of types of city including, from the first century AD onwards, a rapidly expanding group of cities which gained the title solely as an honour. Philippi has features characteristic of citizen colonies of the larger type which were set up during the late Republic and early Empire.[3] In some features, Philippi exceeds most other cities or colonies. The persistence of its Romanness is the best example. Finally, some features are special to it alone. These include its ethnic mix and its location, which has peculiarities in terms of agriculture, history and transport.

a. Archaeological investigation and reports

Philippi has undergone substantial archaeological investigation. Most of the recent attention has been on the Christian centre of the city, particularly under the auspices of the University of Thessaloniki. The early imperial period, with interest centred on the Antonine Forum area, has been the responsibility of the École Française at Athens. The main excavation here was carried out between the two World Wars and is summarised in Paul Collart's *Philippes, Ville de Macédoine: depuis ses origines jusqu'à la fin de l'époque romaine* (1937). Collart's work remains fundamental for any study of Philippi and all subsequent scholars on Philippi are in debt to him. His work has directed me to many of the primary sources which I have been able to consider in this study. Buildings

[3] See E. T. Salmon's tracing of types of colony founded at various times in his *Roman Colonization under the Republic* (London: Thames & Hudson, 1969).

of a later date among or near the early Roman ones are reported in Paul Lemerle's *Philippes et la Macédoine Orientale à l'époque chrétienne et byzantine* (1945), which also considers Paul's time in and contacts with Philippi. These two books gather data which was largely reported in more detail in various issues of the *Bulletin de Correspondance Hellénique*, which continues to publish articles and reports on studies of the forum and elsewhere by M. Sève, P. Weber and other scholars, who are mainly engaged in analytical work. Three important recent articles are on a revised plan of the forum (1982),[4] on a reconstruction of the way in which the north side of the forum was dominated by monumental buildings uphill from it (1986)[5] and on the discovery of a large monument from the Livia cult (1988).[6] Much of this recent work is gathered together in Sève's study on the development of the forum at Philippi, *Recherches sur les Places Publiques dans le monde Grec du Premier au Septième Siècle de Notre Ère: L'exemple de Philippes* (1989, 1990).

At the time of Collart and Lemerle's books, formal publication of the inscriptions from Philippi was announced as fairly imminent. In fact, the first volume, covering the unique mass of reliefs carved into the hill at the base of which Philippi was built, did not appear until 1975[7] and the remaining volumes are still awaited. Peter Pilhofer has provided substantial interim help with this in his *Habilitationsschrift* for which he gathered all the inscriptions available. His first published volume, *Philippi I: Die erste christliche Gemeinde Europas* (1995), gives his historical and exegetical results. The second volume will be a catalogue of the inscriptions from Philippi. Two other scholars who have done substantial work on Philippi are D. Lazarides, in particular in his 1973 book, Φίλιπποι-Ρωμαική ἀποικία, and Fanoula Papazoglou, especially her 1988 *Les Villes de Macédoine à l'époque Romaine*. More recently, Chaido Koukouli-Chrysantaki has gathered material on the colony in his paper for a 1993 symposium on Paul and Philippi.[8] Among the

[4] M. Sève, 'Philippes', *BCH* 106 (1982), pp. 651–3.

[5] M. Sève and P. Weber, 'Le côté Nord du forum de Philippes', *BCH* 110 (1986), pp. 531–81.

[6] M. Sève and P. Weber, 'Un monument honorifique au forum de Philippes', *BCH* 112 (1988), pp. 467–79.

[7] Paul Collart and Pierre Ducrey, *Philippes I: Les Reliefs Rupestres* (BCH Supp. II; Paris, 1975).

[8] Chaido Koukouli-Chrysantaki, 'Colonia Iulia Augusta Philippensis', in C. Bakirtzis and H. Koester, eds., *Philippi at the Time of Paul and after His Death* (Harrisburg: Trinity Press International, 1998).

various Biblically oriented guides to Philippi, the most substantial is Winfried Elliger's *Paulus in Griechenland: Philippi, Thessaloniki, Athen, Korinth* (1978, 1987). Lilian Portefaix's book, *Sisters Rejoice: Paul's Letter to the Philippians & Luke-Acts as Received by First-century Philippian Women* (1988) also discusses Philippi in some detail, especially the rock reliefs, in which she follows the work of Valerie Abrahamsen.[9] Lukas Bormann, in *Philippi: Stadt und Christengemeinde zur Zeit des Paulus* (1995), discusses Philippi with particular reference the town's 'self-understanding'.

Two recent books which are not on Philippi help to put into perspective the evidence from there and the issues involved in employing it. Susan Alcock's book, *Graecia Capta: The Landscapes of Roman Greece* (1993), considers the experience of Greeks in Achaia under the early Empire. It particularly brings together and assesses the implications of the results of the technique of 'pedestrian surface survey' (a very controlled survey of a district looking for fragments of pottery, etc., of various dates in order to spot settlements and other sites which may not have left standing remains of buildings). These have been applied in the 1980s for the first time to a number of areas of Achaia and enable a rough picture to be drawn of changes in the pattern of occupation of the countryside (and also of large urban areas). Another book which helps give an idea of the issues involved in using archaeological evidence is Philippe Leveau's monumental study *Caesarea de Maurétanie: Une Ville Romaine et ses Campagnes* (1984). The main part of this study is a field survey of a wide area around Caesarea, looking at evidence of buildings, etc., that are still visible. A picture is built up of how various types of settlement were distributed in the city's hinterland. The study also considers issues concerning the use of evidence from epitaphs.

b. Overview of the geography and history of Philippi

The city lies 13 km north-west of Kavala, the ancient port of Neapolis. As it has always been, the site is bisected by the main road from there to Drama.[10] The road, which otherwise crosses a

[9] V. Abrahamsen, *The Rock Reliefs and the Cult of Diana at Philippi* (Diss. Harvard Univ.; Ann Arbor: University Microfilms, 1986).

[10] Any bus to Drama therefore visits the site, which is called Αρχαία Φίλιπποι – *not* simply Φίλιπποι, which is a modern village some kilometres to the east and on a different bus route!

Figure 1 View SW from acropolis of Philippi. The town lies in the lower half of the picture, occupying the space between the hill and marshland (now drained). The hills of the Pangaion are to the right in the distance.

Figure 2 View SE from acropolis. The line of the Via Egnatia can be seen running towards Neapolis, which lies behind the Symbolon, the low range of hills in the background.

Figure 3 View W from acropolis, showing the battlefield of Philippi and the wide expanse of agricultural land. The marsh and the Pangaion are to the left.

Figure 4 The Antonine forum at Philippi. Beyond lies the gymnasium and the market (largely covered by remains of a church).

fertile plain, must go through the city because the western end of a range of steep hills falls almost into the eastern end of what was until this century a great marsh. The city walls form roughly a rectangle 1 km x 700m (with the longer sides running NNW–SSE). At the northern corner is the citadel of the acropolis. The southern corner meets the marsh. Building is most feasible in roughly the area south of a line joining the north-west to the south-east corner.[11] Elsewhere, building seems not to have taken place, on account of the steepness of the hill, except in limited areas such as around the theatre. The Via Egnatia follows the base of the hill. The hills provide both abundant springs (the settlement was originally called *Krenides*, 'springs') and mineral deposits, particularly gold (exhausted by Roman times). Beyond the marsh lie the hills of the Pangaion, another, richer gold- and silver-mining area.

The extent of the colony's territory is at various points attested by inscriptions and has been estimated at 1900 sq. km (730 sq. miles).[12] This seems to put it at the upper end of the normal range: Barbara Levick cites Pisidian Antioch as 1400 sq. km and at the lower end.[13] The territory includes the Pangaion, the extensive plain surrounding it, and, beyond the low range of the Symbolon, the valuable port of Neapolis. The eastern edge forms a border with Thrace.

The various social groups in the area of the colony arrived in a fairly clear order. Before 360 BC, the inhabitants were various tribes, mainly Pieri and Edoni.[14] I will call them Thracians, as Collart does. Papazoglou reasonably objects that they ought really to be distinguished from Thracians:[15] those who migrated came from the west, ejected from west of Thessalonika and from Mygdonia,[16] rather than from Thrace in the east. However, I will persist with calling them Thracian because their religious affinities are with the Thracians, their names sound Thracian and, like the

[11] Of the walled area of 67.8 Ha about 45 Ha appear easy to build upon. Cf. Peter Pilhofer, *Philippi I: Die erste christliche Gemeinde Europas* (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1995), p. 74.

[12] See below, pp. 45f.

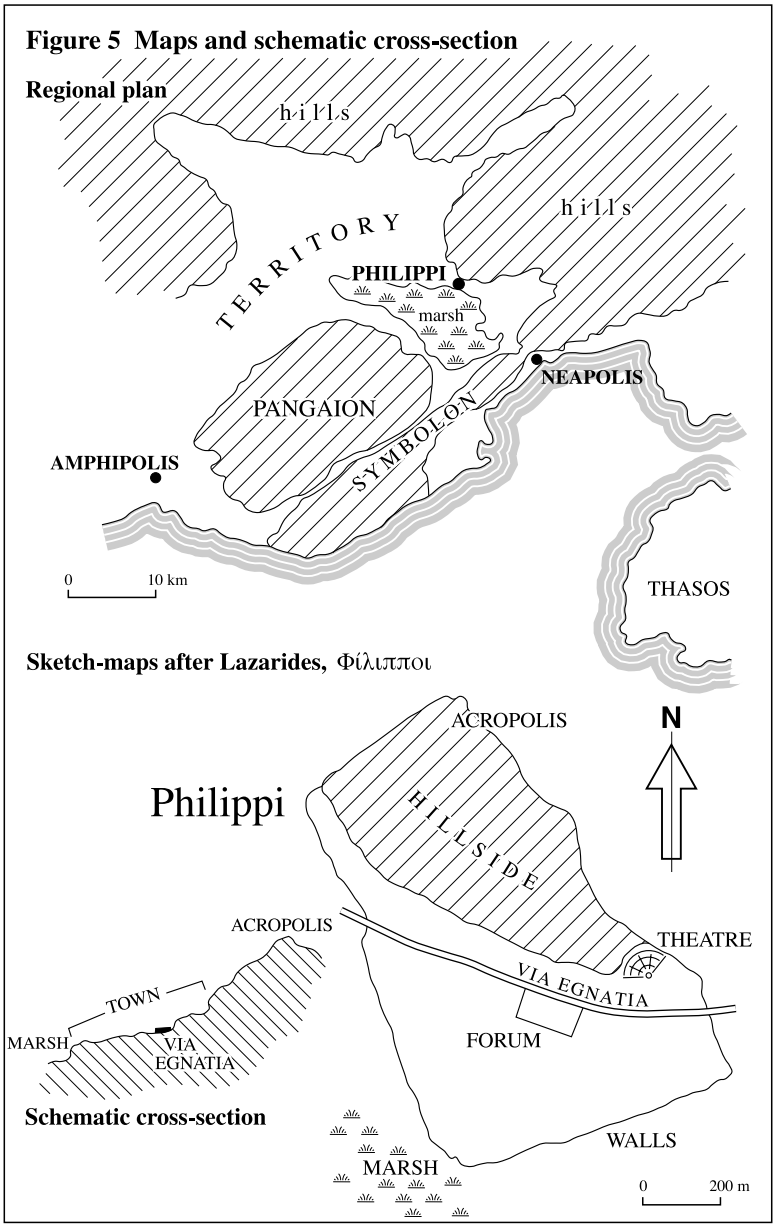
[13] 540 sq. miles: Barbara Levick, *Roman Colonies in Southern Asia Minor* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1967), p. 45.

[14] Fanoula Papazoglou, *Les Villes de Macédoine à l'époque Romaine* (BCH Supp. XVI; Paris: École Française d'Athènes, 1988), pp. 385f.; Paul Collart, *Philippes, Ville de Macédoine: depuis ses origines jusqu'à la fin de l'époque romaine* (École Française d'Athènes: Travaux et Mémoires, Fascicule V; Paris, 1937), p. 55.

[15] Papazoglou, *Villes*, p. 342 n. 2.

[16] Collart, *Philippes*, p. 56; Papazoglou, *Villes*, pp. 385f.

Figure 5 Maps and schematic cross-section



Thracians further east, they are the ethnic group *in situ* when first the Macedonians (in the dynastic sense, with their subjects) then the Romans move into the territory.

The period 360–356 provides a brief but vital episode in which the once-powerful island of Thasos, which had previously had trade-settlements on the nearby coast and good relations with the interior, founded a colony at Philippi (then called Krenides), led by an Athenian exile named Kallistratos.[17] This will not have been a colony in the Roman sense, where agricultural land was acquired wholesale. It was built to exploit mines in the nearby hills.[18] We thus gain a small overlayering of Greeks from Thasos at Philippi.

In 356, the young Thasian colony called on Philip of Macedon, for protection against invaders from Thrace.[19] This was both the obvious solution to the immediate crisis and a wise move in the long term since Philip was already the dominant power in the region and soon swept on toward the East. In this way the city became a dependent ally rather than a conquered foe of Philip's and even remained partly independent for about ten years.[20] Philip fortified the city, added new colonists and built a theatre.[21] These Macedonians become indistinguishable from any remaining Thasians and we will refer to them all as 'Greeks'.[22] Drainage of some of the marshes with which Philippi (now called such) was partially surrounded was begun in this period, yielding excellent agricultural land to add to the good amount already there. Philip also developed, exploited and more or less exhausted the rich gold mines in the mountains immediately by Philippi. In 167, after the Roman defeat of the Macedonian dynasty, Aemilius Paulus divided Macedonia into four regions, with Philippi in the first.

In 42 BC, at the 'gateway between Europe and Asia',[23] Antony and Octavian collided with Cassius and Brutus. In the fields west of Philippi the Republic died – or was restored, depending on your viewpoint. The city inevitably became a Roman colony. Its site was clearly of high strategic value, especially being near the border with rebellious Thrace, its agricultural resources were great, and it

[17] Collart, *Philippes*, p. 54.
[18] Ibid., p. 135.
[19] Ibid., pp. 138, 152.
[20] Witnessed to by coinage, ibid., pp. 162–5.
[21] Ibid., p. 177.
[22] In the Roman colonial context, I will often use the term, 'Greeks', in a wider sense to denote all non-Romans in the colony.
[23] Appian, *B. Civ*. IV, 106.

formed a memorial to the great battle which 'saved' the Roman people. It was also to hand when a large number of soldiers needed demobilising! The colony was founded almost immediately. Two altars celebrating the victory were set up on the battlefield and became famous monuments. They are reported to have burst spontaneously into flame when Tiberius approached the city.[24] The colony was also initially named after the battle: *Colonia Victrix Philippensium*.[25] Collart and others have also argued that, as a further commemorative act, the *pomerium*, the sacred boundary of a city, was uniquely extended 2 km to the west of the walls to include the battlefield.[26] However, Paul Lemerle expressed doubts about the extended *pomerium*, on account of discoveries of some sarcophagi in this area supposed to be free of burials and on account of the strange shape of Collart's *pomerium*.[27] These doubts have been verified by later discoveries. Pilhofer suggests that the cemetery west of Philippi is probably as extensive as that to the east. Pilhofer also notes that the objection to the account in Acts 16 based on Collart's *pomerium* – an area in which Jewish worship would have been forbidden – no longer holds.[28]

In 30 BC, after Actium, Octavian refounded the colony in his own name, adding a large influx of colonists. These included a cohort of Praetorians and civilian supporters of Antony. From 27 BC, the colony took the name *Colonia Iulia Augusta Philippensis*.[29]

[24] Suetonius, *Tiberius*, XIV, 3; Dio Cass. LIV, 9.6.

[25] Collart, *Philippes*, p. 227.

[26] Ibid., pp. 323ff.; D. Lazarides, Φίλιπποι-Ρωμαική ἀποικία (Ancient Greek Cities 20; Athens, 1973), pp. 30, 37; Lilian Portefaix, *Sisters Rejoice: Paul's letter to the Philippians and Luke-Acts as received by First Century Philippian Women* (Coniectanea Biblica, NT Series 20; Uppsala/Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell International, 1988), pp. 62ff.; H. Conzelmann, *Acts of the Apostles* (Hermeneia; Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1987), on 16.13; Winfried Elliger, *Paulus in Griechenland: Philippi, Thessaloniki, Athen, Korinth* (Stuttgarter Bibel-Studien; Stuttgart: Verlag Katholisches Bibelwerk, 1978), pp. 49f. Collart argues from the absence of buildings in the area and from the existence of what he calls a 'colonial' arch at the point where the Via Egnatia would cut the *pomerium*.

[27] Paul Lemerle, *Philippes et la Macédoine Orientale à l'époque chrétienne et byzantine: Recherches d'histoire et d'archéologie* (Bibliothèque des Écoles Françaises d'Athènes et de Rome 158; Paris: Boccard, 1945), pp. 26f., esp. p. 27 n. 1.

[28] Pilhofer, *Philippi*, pp. 26ff. Pilhofer also reports the discovery of the foundations of a bridge on the Via Egnatia a short distance beyond the town's western wall (p. 28).

[29] Pilhofer (*Philippi*, p. 47), firmly dismisses the suggestion that the colony is named after Augustus' daughter. P. A. Brunt, *Italian Manpower: 225BC–AD14* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1971, 1987), pp. 234f., explains how colonies took the names *Iulia* and/or *Augusta* in honour of Julius Caesar and/or Augustus as founders or benefactors.

One other influx of people probably began before the Romans arrived and certainly continued, and flourished, under them. Philippi, standing near the coast on the Via Egnatia, will have seen a fair amount of trade. This brought both traders and migrant workers, some of whom no doubt settled permanently, and an inflow of ideas and beliefs, such as the cult of Isis.[30] Another, unwilling, form of immigrant workers were slaves.

After a few decades in which there were occasional raids from Thrace, the colony developed steadily, its Roman monuments reaching a peak under the Antonines. In the fourth century, Philippi became an important bishopric.

2. A model of the development of society in the area of Philippi

There is insufficient archaeological or literary evidence from the town in the middle of the first century AD for us to jump straight to a worthwhile estimate of its social composition. In particular, we lack a substantial collection of epitaphs from graveyards in use by the general population. There is, however, evidence indicating the process of development of the town. By considering various elements of that process, and the effects which such elements tended to have in similar contexts, we can build a model of the process of developent and hence arrive at a model of the pattern which Philippian society is likely to have reached in the middle of the first century, a model which seems likely to be sufficiently accurate to give a good indication of the range of types of people who formed the great majority of those originally hearing the letter.

a. The type of model

Thomas Carney and Bruce Malina discuss what is meant by the term 'model'. Carney has a tighter definition of 'model' than does Malina. Malina writes, 'Models are abstract, simplified representations of more complex real world objects and interactions'.[31] Carney would add that as many of the model's assumptions and limitations as possible must be specified in order for it to be a

[30] Paul Collart, 'Sanctuaire des dieux égyptiens', *BCH* 53 (1929), pp. 99f.

[31] Bruce J. Malina, *The New Testament World: Insights from Cultural Anthropology* (London: SCM, 1983 (page refs. unless noted); Louisville: Westminster/John Knox, 1993 edn), p. 17.

model rather than merely an analogy.[32] I think we should say that a description of something becomes a model when we turn round and look at it, prepared to ask questions about its presuppositions and limitations. It is at this point that we realise that it is indeed a model rather than simply a statement of how things are.

My model is shown graphically in figures 6 to 9. Like the model which Richard Rohrbaugh uses for the urban system of a pre-industrial city ('urban system' covers the town plus its dependent countryside),[33] my model shows the distribution of social groups between town and countryside. Rohrbaugh then adds arrows showing economic relationships between the groups. My interest is in the physical location of groups, since our objective is to estimate who was in the town in the middle of the first century AD. I have therefore simplified the model by removing the arrows, then made it more complex by giving it a stronger spatial dimension and by giving some detail on the variety of groups at any location.

The spatial dimension works in two ways. The size of each circle indicates the population of a settlement. The distance of a circle from the city of Philippi (the largest circle in each diagram) indicates the distance of the settlement from the city. The 'city of Philippi' in the model will include everybody living either within Philippi's walls or in areas of housing within a couple of kilometres of them. In particular, there is evidence, in the Imperial period, of a substantial area of accommodation around the Via Egnatia between the East Gate and the settlement of Dikili-Tash to the south-east.[34] Absolute numbers and sizes of circles are not significant. What matters are the changes in number and size and the indications of which settlements are larger or more numerous. The settlements indicated as being the very furthest from the city are in marginal agricultural land (hillsides and high valleys). Other settlements are assumed to be on land of a common, fertile standard.

The population within each settlement is shown in the minimum detail needed to indicate the kinds of trends which seem likely to have happened to significant groups. Relative proportions of the various social groups are very approximate. Neither slaves (other

[32] T. F. Carney, *The Shape of the Past: Models and Antiquity* (Lawrence, Kans.: Coronado Press, 1975), pp. 11ff.

[33] Richard L. Rohrbaugh, 'The Pre-Industrial city in Luke-Acts: Urban Social Relations', in J. H. Neyrey, ed., *The Social World of Luke-Acts* (Peabody: Hendrickson, 1991), pp. 130–2.

[34] Lazarides, Φίλιπποι, pp. 31, 45f.

Figure 6 Before colonisation

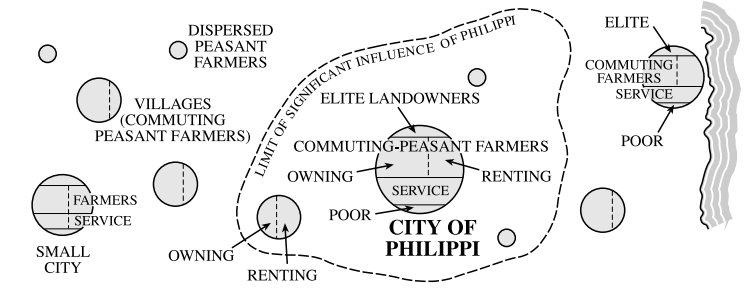


Figure 7 Initial colonisation

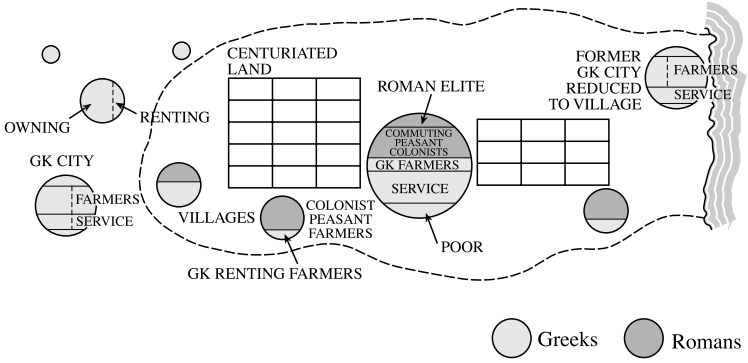
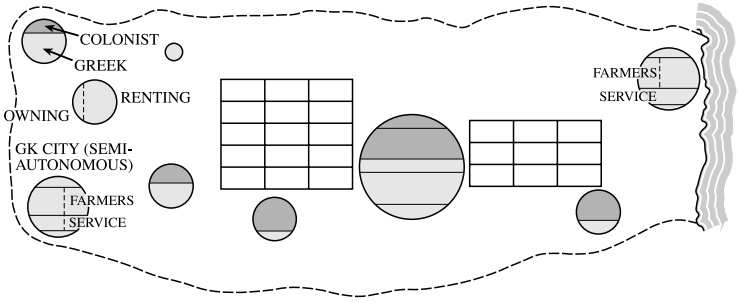


Figure 8 Spread to edge of maximum territory



A model of the development of the colony of Philippi

Figure 9 Concentration of landholding

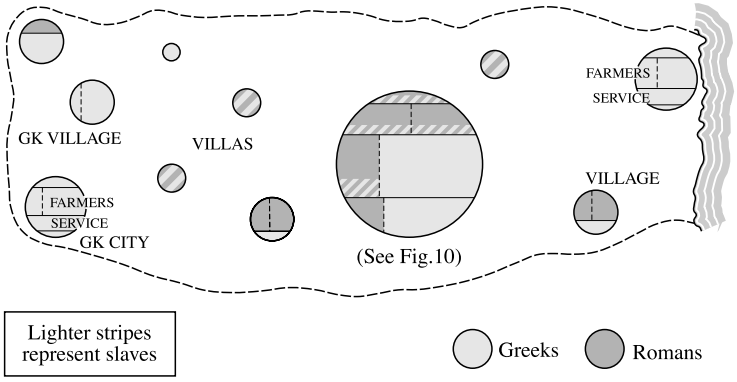
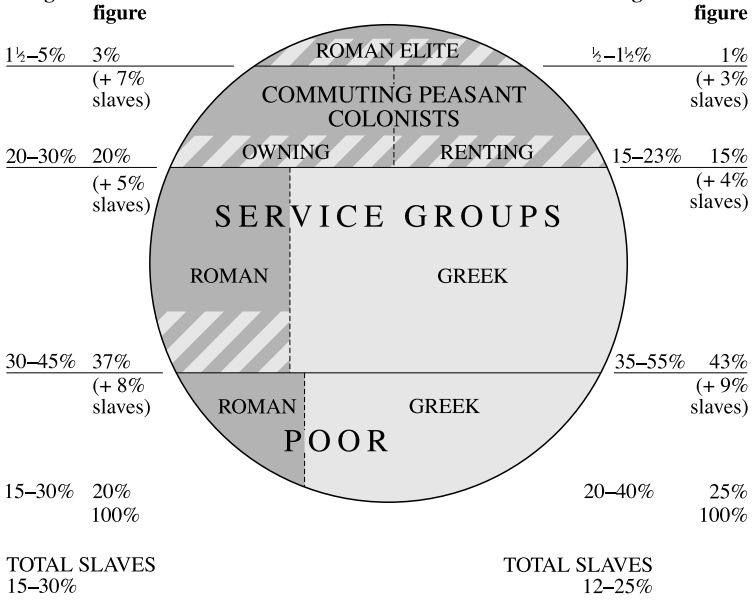


Figure 10 The social composition of the town (AD50)



than those on villa estates) nor freedmen/women have been indicated as separate groups. Slaves formed part of the *familia* of all Roman households except those rather poorly off (the term *familia* could include slaves who were domestic staff, labourers bought to help a craft-producing family with their work,[35] or even agricultural labourers living on an estate, far from the actual family of the Roman involved – this last usage was in fact a particularly prominent one[36]). In my model, the slaves are indicated in the enlarged diagram of the city (figure 10), and on the country estates, by Greek stripes (although the slaves could, of course, be of various nationalities). Greeks too might own slaves, but I have not differentiated those slaves from other 'Greeks' in the model. Freedmen/women (*liberti*) are not differentiated from other Roman citizens but would tend to be mainly among the service community of the city. All Roman citizens are subsumed in the model under the term, 'Roman'. Similarly, all Greek-speaking groups, whether 'Thracian', 'Macedonian' or Asian, etc., are subsumed under the term, 'Greek'.

The development of Philippian society is shown by drawing the model at four stages of its development. The stages in figures 7, 8 and 9 are separated on essentially an analytical rather than a chronological basis. Philippian colonists ended up occupying far more widely scattered land than could be accounted for on the basis of the normal process of establishment of a Roman colony. Landholding also became rather concentrated – certain landowners held a large amount of land. We do not know the pace at which either of these developments came about. In order to make fruitful deductions from each, and to make my argument clearer, it seems best to separate the two.[37] They are thus presented as though they were chronologically distinct stages.

b. The pre-colonial situation

Figure 6 shows the city of Philippi to the right of the centre of the diagram and indicates a rough suggested breakdown of its popula-

[35] On such slaves, see Peter Garnsey and Richard Saller, *The Roman Empire: Economy, Society and Culture* (London: Duckworth, 1987), p. 52.

[36] F. M. Heichelheim, 'Latifundia', *Oxford Classical Dictionary*, ed. N. G. L. Hammond and H. H. Scullard (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1980[2]), p. 579.

[37] This can only be done if the two processes are independent of each other. This is in fact unlikely. However, particularly since our interest is in the city, the level of dependence between the results of the two processes seems low enough for us to be able to consider them separately.

tion. Those who farm land near the city but who do not live in it are indicated as dispersed peasant farmers. The line of dashes indicates the limit of the countryside dependent on Philippi. Beyond that point, the smaller cities shown on the diagram are independent of Philippi. Near the small cities on the diagram are some villages dependent on them and some dispersed peasant farmers. No doubt there were several villages dependent on Philippi too, but our diagram is only very schematic. All the inhabitants of the area are taken to be 'Greek'.

In 42 BC, Philippi seems to have been a small, out-of-the-way Greek city. New Testament scholars sometimes feel that they need to give particular reasons for Amphipolis having been chosen as the principal city of the first district of Macedonia but the truth was probably that, in 167 BC, Philippi was a much less important town than Amphipolis. Philippi is not mentioned at all in connection with Aemilius Paulus' action at that time.[38] Strabo described it as κατοικία μικρά (VII, frag. 41) and Collart sums it up as 'Bourgade médiocre du premier district de la Macédoine'.[39] As Papazoglou has argued, Philippi cannot have had influence over the wide area which later became the territory of the Roman colony.[40] Other cities which were autonomous (within the Macedonian Roman context) and other villages unconnected with Philippi were spread around the area, the most prominent example of a city being Neapolis.

We must not, however, get carried away with the insignificance of pre-colonial Philippi. Contrary to the views of various scholars such as Lukas Bormann,[41] the population of the pre-colonial city and its surrounding area was probably quite substantial: substantial enough, first, for colonisation to involve large-scale dispossession of Greeks and, second, for the proportion of Greeks in the Roman city to be high. This last point requires an additional argument to the effect that there would have been strong attractions for dispossessed Greeks in the town to remain there and for dispossessed Greeks in the countryside to move into the town.

The city stood at the centre of what was for Greece, which has

[38] Collart, *Philippes*, pp. 189f.
[39] Ibid., p. 190.
[40] Papazoglou, *Villes*, p. 412.
[41] Lukas Bormann, *Philippi: Stadt und Christengemeinde zur Zeit des Paulus* (NovT Supp. 78; Leiden: Brill, 1995), p. 20.

only 18 per cent arable land,[42] a very large fertile plain. Even allowing for depopulation due to economic decline and due to contributions to, and harassment by, the forces involved in the Roman civil wars,[43] such land would still have been fairly thoroughly farmed. Susan Alcock's work shows that the effect of depopulation on farming would generally be to reduce the use of marginal land rather than to produce a blanket reduction in agriculture affecting all types of land fairly equally.[44] The land around Philippi was of high quality and we would expect, therefore, that it was still farmed. Given the continued agricultural vitality of the area, the long-established, substantially built city of Philippi is bound to have still acted as an important centre, both for services such as markets, theatre and religion, and for accommodation of farmers who commuted to their fields. Moreover, the pre-colonial population of the wider area that became the Roman colony's 'territory' must have been quite large and, as I will argue below, when patterns of landholding in the area changed, many of these people will have been attracted towards the city.

As well as the economic arguments for the city's continuing existence, from the fourth century BC to the time of colonisation there are various inscriptions attesting it. At Delphi, there are a fourth-century inscription about a *proxenos* (public guest) and a list of *theorodokoi* (officials receiving religious delegates) which refer to Philippi.[45] Of similar period are a list of subscribers at Argos and a list of mercenaries at Athens.[46] A third- or second-century BC list of *proxenoi* at Thebes also mentions Philippi.[47] A further inscription from Cos, dated to 242 BC, shows that Philippi was at that time sufficiently important for religious delegates from the island,

[42] Robert Browning, 'Prologue: Land and People', in R. Browning, ed., *The Greeks* (London: Thames & Hudson, 1985; Portland House, 1989), p. 25.

[43] Collart, *Philippes*, p. 229. Susan E. Alcock, *Graecia Capta: The Landscapes of Roman Greece* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), p. 14. However, she argues that, for the theatre of war generally, the effects of the depredations of armies will not have been as great as is often stated. She also argues that the continuation of low rural site numbers through the peaceful period of the early Empire shows that the link between military activity and depopulation is not as strong as some have supposed (p. 90).

[44] Alcock, *Graecia Capta*, p. 83.

[45] P. Perdrizet, 'Voyage dans La Macédoine Première', *BCH* 21 (1897), pp. 108ff.; Papazoglou, *Villes*, p. 407.

[46] *IG* IV, 617; *IG* II, 2, 963.

[47] *IG* VII, 2433.