

# THE ROMAN AQUEDUCT OF HORTIATIS



On the northwestern slope of Hortiatis, at the entrance of the homonymous modern village, a fairly large part of a aqueduct is preserved, that was a water bridge for supplying water to the city of Thessaloniki for about nineteen centuries. It is the famous Roman aqueduct of Hortiatis. According to Professor M. Manoledakis, the aqueduct was built in the 1st century AD. The Roman aqueduct of Hortiatis is the only surviving of its kind in Central Macedonia. It is connected to the part of the aqueduct located in Pilea.



- Several much smaller sections of the aqueduct that survive scattered between Hortiatis and Thessaloniki allow the monitoring of its course. After the water bridge at the entrance of the village, the aqueduct was directed to the NW, to the intersection of the roads to Asvestochori and Kavala, continued to Panorama and then turned towards the area of the modern hotel "Filippeion", from where it descended to the Acropolis.



- The water of Hortiatis entered the city of Thessaloniki, where it was distributed in the baths and the tanks, through a multitude of branches. The most important of these seems to have been that of the Monastery of Vlatada, which supplied water to a large part of the city. It is argued that this water supply network dates back to an earlier era than the founding of the Monastery. Another branch of the aqueduct has been located in the area of Ypapantis and was supplying water to the eastern part of the city.





- The water bridge is preserved in a total length of about 223 m and is directed to the SE towards the village, while in the opposite direction it continues almost parallel to the road of Hortiatis-Asvestochori and is lost under the areas of a modern camp. It essentially connects two hilly terraces of the ground, in order to maintain the required slight slope in the course of the water towards the city.



- The highest point of the monument (499,07 m above sea level - 498,12 m ground level) is located at the SE end, from where the aqueduct heads to the NW for a length of 118 m (hereinafter Section 1). From that point it changes direction and presenting an angle of 140° it is now directed to the West for another 101,5 meters (hereinafter Section 2), until it meets the height of the ground. The maximum height of the aqueduct, in the central part of Section 2, reaches 20,1 m and its maximum thickness is 5 m.



- In the center of Section 2 the monument is divided into three horizontal zones, the lower one of them has a slightly larger thickness by about 1m than the middle and the middle is slightly larger than the upper. On the upper zone there is a conduit of rectangular cross section with an average width of 0,5 m, which received the clay water transport pipes. Only few remains of the clay water pipes are preserved. The pipeline was covered with large stone slabs, many of which are now in place.



- In the center of Section 2 there are two large through-arched openings. The largest, in the lower zone, has a height of 8,5 m, a maximum width of 5,3 m and provides the impression of a passage gate on the path that passes under the monument. Above this, there is the second opening. At the west side of the second opening there is another arched opening.



- The north side of the aqueduct (Section 2) is reinforced by struts on either side of the large central arch. Two of the struts at the east side of the arch are largely preserved - the western one, which is also the largest, is preserved intact - while the eastern ones are preserved only in parts, so that it is difficult to determine their exact number.



- On the south side, at a distance of 28,5m west of the western arched opening, an arched room has been opened inside the masonry of the aqueduct, which probably served to guard the aqueduct and the water. To the east of the central arch there is a small arched opening, formed in the thickness of the masonry. At the western end of the aqueduct, there is a water collection area.



- Section 1 is a straight stone wall, with only a few rows of bricks at the bottom. In fact, only the SW side is visible, while the NE part rises only 0,5-1,5 m from the natural slope, it is covered by dense trees and shrubs and is almost adjacent to the adjacent private plot. The aqueduct is founded directly on the natural limestone rock. It is built of processed and slow stones of various sizes and plinths and plaster has been used as a binder.



## SUGGESTIONS FOR HIGHLIGHTING THE MONUMENT

- ❖ Constructing a small museum about the aqueduct and the history of village.
- ❖ Constructing an open theatre at the area of the apueduct dedicated to the monument and holding different types of events there.
- ❖ Constructing a kiosk and benches at the area in front of the monument, which will serve as rest - meeting point as well as an information kiosk about the aqueduct.
- ❖ Illuminating the monument with spot lights.
- ❖ Creating an informative website for the aqueduct, containing maps of possible paths for walking at the area of the monument.
- ❖ Publishing different kinds of postcards about the apueduct.

## REFERENCES

<https://www.hortiatis570.gr/tributes/item/98-το υδραγωγείο-του -χορτιάτη>

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**P20 Activity**

High School of Hortiatis