CHAPTER THREE

THE DIPOTAMOS VALLEY AND THE “PHOCIAN CORRIDOR”

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1. INTRODUCTION

To the east of modern Kamena Vourla, between Mt. Cnemis in the west and Mt. Xerovouni in the east, is the valley of the River Dipotamos (Figure 3.1). It is true that the whole of this area belonged, at one time or another, either to Phocis or Opuntian Locris and not Epicnemidian Locris and that the eastern part of the valley has also been studied by J.M. Fossey (1990). However, we feel it should be included, since no study has yet been published on the western part, referred to by Fossey as the “Phocian Corridor”, which was allegedly carved out by the Phocians to gain access to the Euboean Gulf. It will also link our studies with those already published on the whole of Eastern Locris and Phocis.

At the end of the Cnemis chain, in the basin of the River Dipotamos, we once again find the same steep valleys that characterise the landscape of western and central Epicnemidia. The Dipotamos valley, with an approximate area of about 160 sq km, lies between the western slopes of Mt. Cnemis to the north and the Sfingion chain to the south, which reaches a maximum height with the Varva peak (831 m asl), and Mts. Agnanti/Proftis Ilias and Golemi/Profitis Ilias, Agriades and Chlomon. The River Dipotamos rises in the northern foothills of the Sfingion chain and flows some kilometres from west to east before joining the Dafnorema, hence the name Dipotamos (Two

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1 Fossey 1990: 7.
2 There are two mountains in the area called Profitis Ilias, one on the left bank of the river near the modern town of Agnanti (in Epicnemidian Locris) and the other on the right bank near the modern town of Golemi (in Opuntian Locris). To distinguish between them we shall refer to the one in Epicnemidia as Agnanti/Profitis Ilias and the one in Opuntian Locris as Golemi/Profitis Ilias.
Figure 3.1. Map of the Dipotamos valley. Excavations have been carried out at Daphnus and its harbour, Agnanti, Zeli and Rachi Vathyrematos-Dichalorematos.