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THE CULT OF THEOS PEISMATENE IN MYSIA

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The cult of Theos Peismatene has been known since 2006 from an auction catalogue¹ containing a stele from “Asia Minor” with a relief and the following inscription which was included in *SEG* 56, 2042²:

Μεγακλής καὶ Ἐπιτυγχάνων
οἱ [...]μένου θεῶ vac.
vac. Πεισματηνῆ εὐχίην.

During our work in the Yavuz Tatış Collection (İzmir) in 2001–2, we copied a series of dedicatory inscriptions, all of which record the name θεὸς Π(ε)ισματηνῆ³. We were told that they were unearthed “around the villages Yeşilçomlu and Doğa”, which are situated at the eastern shore of the lake Manyas near Daskyleion (Ergili) in Mysia. This information, indeed, has been confirmed by the fact that another dedicatory stele of this series has recently been found around these villages and transported to the Bandırma Museum⁴. Though there is no precise information about the exact spot, one may roughly localise the sanctuary of this local goddess around Yeşilçomlu⁵ and Doğa villages near the lake Manyas. The letter forms and iconography lead one to date the material to the late Hellenistic period, perhaps 2nd/1st century B.C., as it has already been suggested in *SEG* 56, 2042.

In all of the representations on our stelai, the goddess, who wears a polos, is sitting on a throne, holding a *phiale* in her right hand and pouring libation on an altar; she holds something in her left hand: in nos. 5 and 12 the object is probably a tympanon, but, due to the mutilation, in other cases it is difficult to be identified. She is accompanied by one or two dogs⁶. In most cases

* It is a pleasure to thank Mr. Yavuz Tatış for his kind permission to work on these inscriptions.

¹ Gorny & Mosch, Giessener Münzhaltung: catalogue 150, *Auktion Kunst der Antike*, 11. Juli 2006, 115, no. 306 with a photo.

² The editors of *SEG* describe the relief as: “Trapezoidal white marble stele, tapering to the triangular pediment; in a recessed niche a relief representing at left two worshippers approaching a goddess seated at right (long robe; dog [?] seated at her feet; *polos*: Kybele) holding a bowl and pouring a libation on a central altar; behind the altar a tree, before it a small servant leading a sacrificial animal (small quadruped: ram?); inscription below; under the inscription an unframed relief representing, from left to right, a small servant carrying an object, a rider holding a spear, and a bull”; cf. also A. Chaniotis, *EBGR* 2006 [2009], no. 53.

³ The remnants of stucco on the surfaces of some of the stelai are the indications that the stelai were probably reused at another construction.

⁴ As it has not yet been possible to work on this dedication, it will be published elsewhere.

⁵ For a piece of a dedicatory inscription and an unepigraphic fragment, which also seems to have belonged to a dedication, both from Yeşilçomlu, see C. Tanrıver, *Arkeoloji Dergisi* III (1995), 107, no. 4, Pl. XII.4a and XIII.4b (cf. *SEG* 45, 1665).

⁶ On the cult of the Mother Goddess in Mysia see E. Schwertheim, *Studien zur Religion und Kultur Kleinasiens II. Festschrift F. K. Dörner*, *EPRO* 66,2 (1978), 809–830; M. J. Vermaseren, *Corpus Cultus Cybelae Attidisque I. Asia Minor*, *EPRO* 50,1 (1987), 85–126; F. Naumann, *Die Ikonographie der Kybele in der phrygischen und der griechischen Kunst (IstMitt. Beiheft 28)*, 1983, 363f. nos. 580–590; O. Brehm, *Hellenistische und kaiserzeitliche Weihreliefs aus dem nördlichen Mysien. Ikonographie und Typologie einer Denkmälergruppe und ihre Bedeutung für die Religionsgeschichte einer antiken Landschaft* (unpubl. thesis of doctorate, Münster 1996), 113 and E. Vikela, *Ath. Mitt.* 116, 2001, 113–115.

there is a rectangular altar in the middle of the scene and a tree in the background. The divine epithet Πεισματηνή (or Πισματηνή as in nos. 2 and 7) is probably in connection with an unattested toponym, e.g. Πείσματα, as has already been supposed by R. A. Tybout in *SEG* 56, 2042. Its Greek origin, e.g. πείσμα (*LSJ*, s.v. (A and B⁷)), is neither improbable nor certain⁸.



1. Marble stele with triangular pediment. In a rectangular recess below the pediment are depicted: on the right a sitting goddess wearing a *polos* and holding a *phiale* in her right hand and an unidentified object in her left. There are two dogs on either side both looking towards the goddess. The goddess pours libation on a rectangular altar placed in the middle of the scene. On the left four standing worshippers, all in adoration; in the foreground a servant leading an animal (ram ?) to be sacrificed. There is a tree in the background. 37 x 23 x 9, letters 0.7 to 1 cm.

Ποτάμων Ποτάμωνος
Θεῶ Πεισματηνῇ
εὐχὴν.

Potamon, son of Potamon, made a vow to Theos Peismatene.



2. Marble stele with flat-topped pediment. In a rectangular recess below the pediment there is the depiction of the following scene: on the right a sitting goddess wearing a *polos*. She holds a *phiale* in her right hand and an unidentified object in her left. There is a dog sitting on her right. She pours libation on a rectangular altar placed in the middle. On the left two standing worshippers; a woman on the right and a man on the left, both in adoration; in the foreground a servant holding a ram (?) to be sacrificed; behind the altar another person carrying something (a wineskin, ἄσκός?) on his/her head. There is a tree in the background. 64 x 31.5 x 7.5, letters 1.2 to 1.5 cm.

Διομήδης Ποτάμωνος
ὑπὲρ ἑαυτοῦ καὶ τῆς
ἀδελφῆς Θεῶ
4 Πισματηνῇ εὐχὴν.

⁷ *LSJ*, loc. cit. cite an epigram from Mysia where Asklepiades the deceased is qualified as follows: Μιλητουπόλιος κείμαι / νέκυς, Ἄττικόν αἶμα / ὠκυμόρου τύχης πείσ/ματα λυσάμενος (*BCH* 25.327 = R. Merkelbach – J. Stauber, *Steinepigramme aus dem griechischen Osten* II, 2001, 89, 08/09/05).

⁸ An inscription from Tire, *SEG* 50, 1133bis, mentions in line 7 a Λούκιος β' Πισμα. While G. Petzl, *EA* 32, 2000, 196–7 wrote Πίσμα, Cl. Brixhe, *Bull. ép.* 2001, 376 reckons with the nominative Πισμάς or Πίσμας. Is the – elsewhere unattested – name formed on an indigenous root ?

Diomedes, son of Potamon, made a vow to Theos Pismatene on behalf of himself and his sister.



3. Marble stele with triangular pediment and acroteria. In a rectangular recess below the pediment are depicted: on the right a sitting goddess who wears a *polos* and holds a *phiale* in her right hand and an unidentified object in her left. On her right there is a sitting dog looking towards the goddess. She pours libation on a rectangular altar placed in the middle. On the left three standing worshippers, all in adoration; in the foreground a servant holding a ram to be sacrificed. There is a tree in the background. 52 x 26 x 8, letters 0.9 to 1.2 cm.

Ἄρτεμὼ Ἄρτεμιδώρου
ὕπὲρ ἑαυτῆς καὶ τοῦ
[ἀ]γδρὸς καὶ τῶν τέκνων
4 [Θεῶ] Πεισματηνῆ
εὐχὴν.

Artemō, daughter of Artemidoros, made a vow to [Theos] Peismatene on behalf of herself and her husband and children.



4. Marble stele with triangular pediment. In a rectangular recess below the pediment are depicted: on the right a sitting goddess with *polos*, who holds a *phiale* in her right hand and an unidentified object in her left. A dog is sitting on her right. On the left there is a person lying on a *kline* decorated with a garland. 20 x 16 x 5, letters 0.8 cm.

Μένισκος Θεῶ
[Πεισ]ματηνῆ εὐχὴν.

Meniskos made a vow to Theos Peismatene.

5. Marble stele with triangular pediment. In a rectangular recess below the pediment are depicted: on the right a sitting goddess with *polos*, who holds a *phiale* in her right hand and a *tympanon* in her left. Two dogs sitting on either side. She pours libation on a rectangular altar placed in the middle. On the left two standing worshippers, both in adoration; in the foreground a servant holding a ram (?) to be sacrificed. There is a tree in the background. 52 x 29 x 6.5, letters 0.8 to 1.1 cm.



[Μη]τρόδωρος Ἀρτεμιδώρου υ-
[πὲρ] ἑαυ[τοῦ] καὶ [Μ]ενεδήμου τοῦ
[ἀδελφ]οῦ Θεῶ Πεισματηνῆ

4

εὐχὴν.

Metrodoros, son of Artemidoros, made a vow to Theos Peismatene on behalf of himself and Menedemos, his brother.



6. Marble stele with triangular pediment. In a rectangular recess below the pediment are depicted: on the right a goddess who holds a *phiale* in her right hand and an unidentified object in her left. On her left there is a dog. She pours libation on a rectangular altar placed in the middle. On the left a standing worshipper, perhaps a child, in adoration; in the foreground a ram (?). There is a tree in the background. 29.5 x 22 x 7.5 (letter height omitted).

Λ[ο]υκᾶς Θεῶ
[Πει]σματηνῆ
εὐχὴν.

Loukas made a vow to Theos Peismatene.



7. Marble stele with triangular pediment. The left lower part of the stele is damaged. In a rectangular recess below the pediment are depicted: on the right a sitting goddess wearing a *polos* and holding a *phiale* in her right hand and an unidentified object in her left. On her right a dog looking towards the goddess. She pours libation on a rectangular altar placed in the middle. On the left two standing worshippers; in the foreground a slave who brings a ram (?) to be sacrificed. 22 x 16.2 x 5, letters 0.8 cm.

[Πο]λυδότῃ Διονυσ[ίου]
[Θε]ῶ Πισματηνῆ
εὐχὴν.

[Pol]lydote, daughter of Dionysios, made a vow to Theos Pismatene.

For another appearance of the name Πολυδότη in this region see Th. Corsten, *IvPrusa ad Olym-*
pum I, no. 188: [Πολ]υδότη Εὐ[].



8. Marble stele with triangular pediment. In a rectangular recess below the pediment are depicted: on the right a sitting goddess wearing a *polos*. She holds a *phiale* in her right hand and an unidentified object in her left. On her right a sitting dog looking towards the goddess. The goddess pours libation on a rectangular altar placed in the middle. On the left two standing worshippers, both in adoration; in the foreground a servant holding a ram (?) to be sacrificed. There is a tree in the background. 53.5 x 24 x 9, letters 0.8 to 1.1 cm.

[Δ]ιονύσιος Φιλομήλου Θε[εῶ]
[Πεισ]ματηνῆ εὐχ[ήν].

Dionysios, son of Philomelos, made a vow to Th[eos Peis]matene.



9. Marble stele with mutilated pediment. In a rectangular recess below the pediment are depicted: on the right a sitting goddess wearing a *polos*. She holds a *phiale* in her right hand. Two dogs sitting on either side. She pours libation on a rectangular altar placed in the middle. On the left two standing worshippers, both in adoration; in the foreground a servant holding a ram (?) to be sacrificed. Behind the altar there is a woman carrying a tray (?) on her head. 38 x 28 x 8, letters 0.8 to 1.3 cm.

Μόσχιον []
σῶθεισα χαρι[στ]ήριον.

Moschion, [daughter of ..], after having been saved (gave this) thank-offering.

On σώζεσθαι by the gods see P. Herrmann – H. Malay, *New Documents from Lydia*, 2007, 112, no. 84, on line 17 with bibliography.



10. Marble stele with triangular pediment. In a rectangular recess below the pediment are depicted: on the right a sitting goddess wearing a *polos*. She holds a *phiale* in her right hand. On her right a dog. She pours libation on an altar placed in the middle. On the left two standing worshippers, a man on the right and a woman on the left, both in adoration; in the foreground a servant who holds a ram (?) to be sacrificed. There is a tree in the background. 20.5 x 14.5 x 4.5, letters 0.9 cm.

Τίμων Θεῶ
Πεισματη[νῆ]
ἐ[ὶ]χρή[v].

1 TIMON *lapis*.

Timon made a vow to Theos Peismatene.



11. Marble stele with oval-shaped pediment. In a rectangular recess below the pediment are depicted: on the right a sitting goddess wearing a *polos* and holding a *phiale* in her right hand. On her right there is sitting a dog looking towards the goddess. The goddess pours libation on a rectangular altar placed in the middle. On the left a standing woman. There is a tree in the background. 22 x 14.5 x 8, letters 0.6 to 0.8 cm.

Μηνοδότῃ Θεῶι
Πεισματηνῆ
ἐ[ὶ]χρήν

Menodote made a vow to Theos Peismatene.

It is worth to note that Θεῶι is the only dative with *iota* adscript.



12. Marble stele with triangular pediment. In a rectangular recess below the pediment are depicted: on the right a sitting goddess wearing a *polos*. She holds a *phiale* in her right hand and a *tympanon* in her left. On her left a sitting dog. She pours libation on a rectangular altar placed in the middle. On the left a standing man in adoration. 17 x 11 x 4 cm.

It is not clear whether the stele is unepigraphic or whether it bore a painted text. Anyway, its context and iconography do not leave any doubt about its origin from the sanctuary of our goddess.

Özet

Makalede, Daskyleion (Ergili) yakınındaki Yeşilçomlu ile Doğa köyleri arasındaki bir mevkide bulunup 2001-2 yıllarında Yavuz Tatış Koleksiyonu'na (İzmir) kazandırılan, Peismatene adındaki yerel bir Anatanrıça'ya adanmış Grekçe yazıtlı ve kabartmalı bir grup adak steli tanıtılmaktadır. Aslında bu kült, 2006 yılında yurtdışında yayınlanan bir açık arttırma katalogunda satışa çıkarılmış olan ve Peismatene'nin adını kaydeden bir adak stelinden bilinmekteydi. Şimdi anlaşılmaktadır ki, 2006 yılında yurtdışına kaçırılan stel Daskyleion yakınlarındaki tapınak alanından götürülmüştü.

Bu makalede tanıtılan ve 11 tanesi yazıtlı olan 12 adet adak steli İ.Ö. 2. ya da 1. yüzyılına aittir. Stellerin üzerinde yer alan kabartmalarda genellikle birbirinin aynısı ya da çok benzeri olan sahneler betimlenmektedir: En sağda tahtında oturan, bir *polos* (başlık, taç) giyen, sağ elindeki bir kaptan (*phiale*) ortadaki altarin üzerine içki döken ve sol elinde bilmediğimiz bir obje tutan Anatanrıça Peismatene ve ona eşlik eden iki köpek; ortada bir altar ve onun arkasında bir ağaç; solda dua eder pozisyonda gösterilen adak sahipleri; en önde kurban için bir hayvan (koç?) getiren bir köle vs. (gerek kabartmalardaki sahnelerin neredeyse birbirlerinin aynısı olmaları ve gerekse yazılardaki harf benzerlikleri bu stellerin aynı atelyede ve hatta aynı usta tarafından yontulmuş olduklarını düşündürmektedir).