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A NEW HONORARY INSCRIPTION FOR CN. VERGILIUS CAPITO FROM MILETOS

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## A NEW HONORARY INSCRIPTION FOR CN. VERGILIUS CAPITO FROM MILETOS\*

Cylindrical marble statue-base with mouldings (chiselled off); on its top there is a larger oblong cavity and two small round ones to its sides for fixing the slab carrying the statue. Found in Didyma, south of Apollo's temple, now in the Miletos Museum at Balat. H. 77 cm, diam. 92 cm; letters 3 cm.



Date: after 47 AD

4 Ὁ δῆμος ὁ Μιλησίων  
Γναῖον Οὐεργίλιον Γναίου υἱὸν Φα-  
λέρνα Καπίτωνα, χιλίαρχον, ἔπαρ-  
χον ἐπὶ Ῥώμης, ἐπίτροπον Ἀσίας Τιβε-  
ρίου Κλαυδίου Καίσαρος Σεβαστοῦ Γερ-  
μανικοῦ, ἔπαρχον Αἰγύπτου, [τ]ὸν  
ἑαυτοῦ σωτῆρα καὶ εὐεργέτην.

*The Milesian people (honour) Gnaeus Vergilius, son of Gnaeus, of Falerna tribe, Capito, tribune, prefect in Rome, procurator of Asia of Tiberius Claudius Caesar Augustus Germanicus, prefect of Egypt, his own saviour and benefactor.*

The new statue-base honours the Milesian<sup>1</sup> knight Cn. Vergilius Capito already well known from a score of inscriptions and papyri.<sup>2</sup>

\* We would like to thank Professor W. Eck for his generous help during the preparation of this article.

<sup>1</sup> He was related to the illustrious Milesian family of C. Iulius Epicrates, the grandson of Caesar's homonymous friend (cf. P. Herrmann, *MDAI(I)* 44, 1994, 206–219 = *SEG* 44, 938).

<sup>2</sup> *IDidyma* 148 (*archiereus* of Caligula's temple in Miletos for the first time and *archiereus* of Asia for the third time; cf. L. Robert, *Hellenica* VII 1949, 206–238); *ibid.* 149 (*epitropos* of Tib. Cl. Caesar Aug. Germ., *eparchos* of Asia and Aegyptus, εὐεργέτης); *Milet I* (9) 328 (Claudius: *eparchos* of Aegyptus and *epitropos* of Asia, dedicated a bath); *Milet I* (9) 329; *SEG* 4, 425 (Claudius: a Vergilius involved in the construction of a palaestra); P. Herrmann, *MDAI(I)* 44, 1994, 206–219 (= *SEG* 44, 938); J. and L. Robert, *Fouilles d'Amyzon en Carie*. Vol. 1: *Exploration, histoire, monnaies et inscriptions*, Paris 1983, 266–268 no. 69 (41–47 AD: *epitropos*); G. Patriarca, *BCAR* 60, 1932, Appendix 3–34 = *AE* 1934, 90; W. Eck, *ZPE* 106, 1995, 251–254 (*SEG* 45, 1067: *epitropos*); *CIL* III 6024 = *ILS* 2282 (Jan. 25<sup>th</sup> 47 AD–Jan. 24<sup>th</sup> 48 AD; *OGIS* 665 = *IGR* I 1262; H. G. Evelyn-White – J. H. Oliver, *The Temple of Hibis in El Khargeh Oasis*. Part II. *Greek Inscriptions*, New York 1938, no. 1; A. Bernand, *La prose sur pierre dans l'Égypte hellénistique et romaine*, Paris 1992, no. 53 (Capito's edict of Dec. 7<sup>th</sup> 48 AD, when he was *praefectus Aegypti*, where he served from 47 until 52 or slightly later); *SB* 9016, I 5, 9; *POxy* 37–39, 3271; *PMich* 231; cf. also G. Bastianini, *ZPE* 17, 1975, 272 and *ZPE* 38, 1980, 76); P. Herrmann, in *Milet 1899–1980. Ergebnisse, Probleme und Perspektiven einer Ausgrabung*. Kolloquium Frankfurt am Main, 1980, *MDAI(I)* Beiheft 31, ed. W. Müller-Wiener, Tübingen 1986, 175–185, with a note by D. McCabe on 185–189 = *SEG* 36, 1057 (*eparchos* of Aegyptus and *epitropos* of Asia, dedicated the first Roman stage to Nero, Apollo Didymeus, and the people of Miletos); *IDidyma* 84 (ca. 200 AD: τὸ Καπίτωνος γυμνάσιον in Miletos); *ibid.* 278 (the games called τὰ Καπιτώνεια); N. Ehrhardt, *MDAI(I)* 34, 1984, 371–404 = *SEG* 34, 1176 (a calendar of 195 or 215 AD, recording memorial days for private individuals and deified emperors, among them the celebration of the birthday of a Vergilius Capito on August the 6<sup>th</sup>: either Vergilius from Claudius' reign or his grandson (?) recorded in the following inscription); *Milet I* (2) 20 (a Cn. Vergilius Capito, possibly the grandson of our Capito, served as *archiprytanis* in 135/6 AD); *Tac. Hist.* III 77 and IV 3 (mentions a slave of Cn. Vergilius residing in Tarracina and involved in the civil war of 69 AD).

The new inscription supplies information on his early *cursus* by listing the four highest positions of his military and civil career in the ascending order: *tribunus militum*, *praefectus Romae*, *procurator Asiae Tiberi Claudii Caesaris Augusti Germanici*,<sup>3</sup> *praefectus Aegypti*. Previously, we only had details on his position of *archiereus* of Imperial cult in Miletos and Asia, his procuratorship of Asia and his prefecture of Egypt. The new inscription shows him starting his equestrian career as a tribune and going on to fulfill the post of a prefect in Rome. The wording of the text exhibits the distinctive brevity of similar early texts<sup>4</sup> in that it offers no additional information on the troops Vergilius commanded or on the precise character of his prefecture. Consequently, the legion in which Vergilius served as one of the five equestrian tribunes must remain unidentified. At the same time, one must not ignore the possibility that as a tribune he could have been in charge of a *cohors milliaria*.<sup>5</sup> We are bound to remain in the dark as to whether he had commenced his military *cursus* as a *praefectus cohortis*.<sup>6</sup>

In the second title of Cn. Vergilius Capito, ἑπαρχος ἐπὶ Ῥώμης, ἐπί + the genitive of a toponym should be regarded as synonymous with ἐν + the dative.<sup>7</sup> Uncertainties appear when we try to define the area of his responsibility as a prefect. We can envisage him serving as a *praefectus curatorum alvei Tiberis*,<sup>8</sup> a *praefectus vigilum*<sup>9</sup> or a *praefectus fabrum*. In our opinion, the post of *praefectus fabrum* could be a good “candidate”. Although in the Imperial period this man-

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Additional bibliography: *PIR*<sup>1</sup> V 276; R. Stiglitz, *RE* VIII A, 1958, s.v. Vergilius 6 a), 2419–2420; O. W. Reinmuth, *RE* XXII Nachtr., 1954, s.v. praefectus Aegypti, 2369; H.-G. Pflaum, *Les carrières procuratoriennes équestres sous le Haut-Empire Romain*, Paris 1960, I 32–33, no. 13 bis; Chr. Habicht, *Gött. Gel. Anz.* 213, 1959, 162–163; S. Demougin, *L'ordre équestre sous les Julio-Claudiens*, Rome 1988, 843–844 no. 679; ead. *Prosopographie des chevaliers Romains Julio-Claudiens*, Rome 1992, 569–571 no. 679.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. *AE* 1914, 27: proc[u]r(atori) T[i](beri) Claudii / Caesaris August[i] / Germanici; *AE* 1927, 1: Ti(beri) Claudii Caesar(is) / Aug(usti) Germanici / procuratori; *AE* 1956, 15: procurat(ori) / Ti(beri) Claudii Caesaris / Aug(usti); *AE* 1971, 459: procuratori Tib(eri) / Clau[di] Caesaris Augusti Germanici; *AE* 1980, 613 (B): proc[u]r(atori) T[i](beri) Claudii / Caesaris August[i] / Germanici; *CIL* V 1838: procurator(i) / Ti(beri) Claudii Caesaris Aug(usti) Germanici / in Norico.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. *AE* 1938, 173; *IAlexandria Troas* 15; *IDidyma* 272: ἑπαρχος ἐν Ῥώμῃ, χειλί[α]ρχος ἐν Ἀλεξανδρείᾳ.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. W. Enßlin, *RE* XXII 1954, s.v. praefectus, 1278–1279.

<sup>6</sup> On this subject, cf. Demougin, *L'ordre équestre sous les Julio-Claudiens* 350–351.

<sup>7</sup> This usage is discussed in detail and examples from literary sources, inscriptions and papyri provided by A. P.-M. Meuwese, *De rerum gestarum Divi Augusti versione graeca*, Amsterdam 1920, 68–72. Cf. L. Robert, *REA* 1960, 328 note 3 (= *OMS* II 844); *Hellenica* I, 1940, 38 note 1 (ἐπὶ Ῥώμης). For examples in inscriptions, cf. A. v. Premerstein, *JÖAI* 13, 1910, 200–209 (= *AE* 1911, 161; J. and L. Robert, *La Carie*, II. *Le Plateau de Tabai et ses environs*, Paris 1954, 180–181 no. 78; *BE* 1955, 199): [Λ. Ἀ.]βουρν[ί]φ - - -]α, [ἐπάρχ]φ τῶν ἐπὶ Ῥώμης τε[χ]νιτῶν; A. Maiuri, *Nuova silloge epigrafica di Rodi e Cos*, Firenze 1925, 475, 44–54 AD: ἑπαρχον γενόμενον ἐπὶ Ῥώμας τῶν τεχνειτῶν. We also find the wording with ἐν Ῥώμῃ (Th. Reinach, *BCH* 17, 1893, 34–39: ἑπαρχος τεχνειτῶν ἐν Ῥώμῃ) and τοῦ δήμου Ῥωμαίων (D. Philios, *BCH* 19, 1895, 113: ἑπαρχος ἀρχιτεκτόνων τοῦ δήμου Ῥωμαίων). Several instances of *praefecti fabrum Romae* in Latin inscriptions: *CIL* IX 1619; XI 4813; XIII 1900; *AE* 1925, 44; G. Alföldy, *Römische Statuen in Venetia et Histria. Epigraphische Quellen*, Heidelberg 1984, 86, nos. 37 and 40: praef(ectus) fabrum Romae et Terg(este).

<sup>8</sup> Attested only once, under Claudius (*CIL* X 797 = *ILS* 5004), cf. W. Enßlin, *RE* XXII 1954, s.v. praefectus, 1303.

<sup>9</sup> Professor Eck's opinion, transmitted to us in his email of June 26<sup>th</sup> 2007, is that it is “ausgeschlossen, dass damit etwa ein Posten wie der eines *praefectus vigilum* bezeichnet sein könnte”. Additional comment in his second email sent the same day: “*praefectus vigilum* scheint mir ausgeschlossen. Das ist doch eine zu wichtige Stellung”. Generally speaking, most of the known *praefecti vigilum* previously held several procuratorships (examples in W. Enßlin, *RE* XXII 1954, s.v. praefectus, 1342).

date was usually entrusted to younger people commencing their career,<sup>10</sup> in some inscriptions we find it following upon the legionary tribunate, as in Capito's case.<sup>11</sup> Finally, we should not forget the option of an extraordinary mission entrusted to Cn. Vergilius Capito by the reigning Emperor.<sup>12</sup>

As to the titles [τ]ὸν ἑαυτοῦ σωτήρα καὶ εὐεργέτην bestowed upon Cn. Vergilius Capito by his fellow-citizens, the second of these already appearing in *IDidyma* 149, we can quote J. and L. Robert<sup>13</sup>: “Il quitta cette province (sc. Asie) pour l'Égypte en 47, après avoir reçu à Milet des honneurs cultuels (concours Capitoneia) pour l'aide qu'il avait fournie à la ville en réparant des dégâts du tremblement de terre qui toucha aussi Samos, Éphèse et Smyrne.” Inscriptions show that Capito's building activity in Miletos was indeed very important and embraced the baths, the palaestra and most probably the first Roman stage. Moreover, he most probably discovered other ways of aiding his fellow-citizens hard hit by a devastating earthquake, earning along the way their eternal gratitude, the titles of σωτήρ καὶ εὐεργέτης and cultic honours.

### Özet

Makalede, Didyma civarında bulunan ve şimdi Miletos Müzesi'nde korunmakta olan bir onurlandırma yazıtı incelenmektedir. Bir heykel kaidesi üzerinde yer alan ve İ.S. 47'den sonraki bir yıla tarihlenmesi gereken bu yazıt, Roma imparatorluğundan önemli idari görevler üstlenmiş bir bürokrat olan ve diğer birçok yazıt aracılığı ile de tanınan Cn. Vergilius Capito'nun Miletos halkı tarafından onurlandırılmasını konu almaktadır.

<sup>10</sup> Cf. E. Kornemann, *RE* VI 1907, s.v. fabri, 1918–1925.

<sup>11</sup> Cf. the cases of T. Iunius Montanus and C. Fabricius Fuscus from *Alexandria Troas* (*IAlexandria Troas* T 151, reign of Augustus; *ibid.* 34, after 17 AD), Ti. Claudius Hispanus from *Madaurus* (*AE* 1920, 19), M. Iulius Romulus from *Velitrae* (*AE* 1925, 85; H. Solin – R. Volpe, *SupplIt* 2, Roma 1983, 43–45, no. 7), L. Aburnius Tuscianus from *Herakleia Salbake* (A. v. Premerstein, *JÖAI* 13, 1910, 200–209 (= *AE* 1911, 161; J. and L. Robert. *La Carie*, II, 180–181 no. 78; *BE* 1955, 199): [Λ. Ἀ]βουρν[ίω - -]α, [ἐπάρχ]ω τῶν ἐπὶ Ῥώμης τεχνιτῶν, χειλ[ιάρ]χοι λεγιῶνος τρίτης [Σ]εβαστῆς, ἐπ[άρ]χῳ σπέρης τρίτης Σεβαστῆς Θρακῶ[ν]), Tiberius Claudius Agrippinus from *Patara* (*TAM* II 422–424), Titus Flavius Varus Calvesianus Hermocrates from *Phokaia* (Th. Reinach, *BCH* 17, 1893, 34–39) and G. Iulius [---] from *Smyrna* (*ISmyrna* 424). Cf. also *CIL* XIII 6816; *CIL* V 5126, 6969, 7370; *AE* 1972, 148; *AE* 1988, 502, 565; *CIL* III 6983: praef(ectus) fabr(um) bis in aerar(ium) delatus a co(n)s(ulibus) A(ulo) Gabin[i]o Secundo Ta]luro Statilio Corvino; *AE* 1983, 393: praef(ectus) fabr(um) delat(us?) a co(n)s(ule); *AE* 1954, 140: praef(ectus) fabr(um) delat[us] a co(n)s(ulibus); *AE* 1983, 443b: praef(ectus) [fabr(um)] a co(n)s(ule); *AE* 1955, 50: praef(ectus) fabr(um) ad aerarium a co(n)s(ulibus) delat[us]; *AE* 1971, 61: L(ucius) Cornelius L(uci) f(ilius) Vot(uria) Q(uinti) Catuli co(n)s(ulis) praef(ectus) fabr(um) censoris architectus. Cf. Demougin, *L'ordre équestre sous les Julio-Claudiens* 354.

<sup>12</sup> Cf. *IAlexandria Troas* 34: praef. cohort. Apulae et operum quae in colonia iussu Augusti facta sunt. Cf. Demougin, *L'ordre équestre sous les Julio-Claudiens* 354 and note 296.

<sup>13</sup> *Fouilles d'Amizon en Carie*, 267. In this context, they adduce the article of Chr. Habicht in *Gött. Gel. Anz.* 213, 1959, 162–163, which was not available to us. “With this inscription (sc. *IDidyma* 149) Habicht connected inscriptions showing that Claudius had a temple destroyed by an earthquake on Samos rebuilt in 47 (M. Schede, *MDAI(A)* 37, 1912, 217–218 nos. 19 (= *IG* XII 6, 1, 483a: *aedem Liberi Patris / vetustate et terrae motu dil[ruta]m sumptib[us] suis restituit*) and 20 (= *IG* XII 6, 1, 413: ὁ δῆμος Τιβέριον Κλαύδιον Καίσαρα Σεβαστὸν Γερμανικὸν αὐτοκράτορα, νέον κτίστην; there is also a third bilingual inscription *IG* XII 6, 1, 482 testifying to Claudius' reconstruction of the civic gymnasium destroyed in the same earthquake); *ZPE* 58, 1985, 189–193 (cf. also L. Robert, *BCH* 102, 1978, 401 (= *Documents d'Asie Mineure* 1978, 97)) and a notice in Malalas (p. 246) that Claudius contributed to the restoration of Ephesus, Smyrna, and many other cities in Asia after an earthquake” (McCabe, *op. cit.* in note 2, 187 note 9).

Yazıtın çevirisi şöyledir: “*Miletos halkı, Gnaeus’un oğlu, askeri tribunus, Roma’da yönetici, Tiberius Claudius Caesar Augustus Germanicus’un Asia’daki procurator’u ve Mısır’da yönetici (olarak görev yapan) ve kendi kurtarıcısı ve hamisi olan, Falerna kabilesinden Gnaeus Vergilius Capito’yu (onurlandırdı)*”.

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