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AN ANATOLIAN FUNERARY STELE IN AN ANTIQUE SHOP IN SEVILLE (SPAIN)

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A well-preserved white marble stele coming from the West European antique trade is on display at “Antigüedades. Félix e hijo”, a gallery devoted to classical archaeology, at 7 Fernando Street, right side.¹



The stele is 85 cms high, 50 cms wide and 14 cms thick. It is divided into three fields: a triangular pediment at the top, 13 cms high, crowned by a large central acroterion in the shape of a palmette and another two, in the shape of half palmettes, on the lateral vertices. Two birds in profile pecking at grapes on both sides of a vine are depicted in the pediment field. Beneath the pediment there is the central iconographic field, 35.8 cms high, formed by a square flanked by two pilasters with a base of ca. 4 cms height, Corinthian capitals of 5.3 cms height and decorations on the shaft consisting of tendrils with vine leaves and bunches of grapes alternating. An upper band that joins both capitals and is of the same height, decorated with a series of three zigzag lines frames the central field. In the upper centre there is a large wreath with infulae at the top, a hand mirror on the left and an open diptych on the right.

Beneath the mirror two astragali can be seen and a circular object divided into four segments by two crossed lines; under the diptych there is a console with the name of the deceased in the genitive; under the pilaster and between the circular object and the console, a comb and to the right of it a spindle and a spinning wheel joined by a thread. In the lower field of the stele, 25 cms high and slightly wider (51.5 cms) than the rest, an easily legible six-line inscription occupies the whole width of the upper 16 cms.

The inscription is dated in the year 291, which corresponds to 206 A.D. in the Sullan era and to 260 A.D. in the Actium era.

¹ Cf. mention with photograph in Gorny & Mosch, 140, 21-06-2005, p. 44, no. 100, reference for which I thank Mr. Félix, as also for the permission to take photos of the stele. This study forms part of the *Epigrafía griega en la Península Ibérica* (HUM 2004-01806/FILO) project financed by the Spanish Ministry of Education and Science and FEDER funds.

Short bibliography:

OGGR = E. Pfuhl – H. Möbius, *Die ostgriechischen Grabreliefs I–II*, Mainz 1977/1979

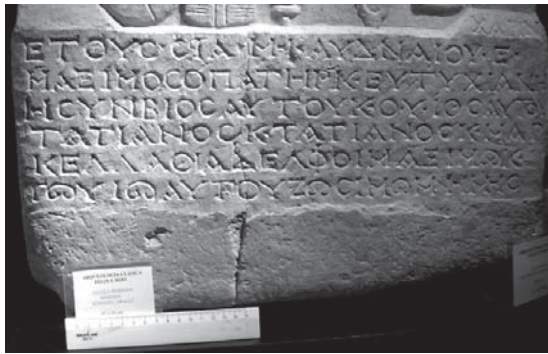
Gibson = E. Gibson, *The “Christians for Christians” Inscriptions of Phrygia*, Ann Arbor 1978

Lochman 1990 = T. Lochman, *Eine Gruppe spätrömischer Grabsteine aus Phrygien*, in E. Berger (ed.), *Antike Kunstwerke aus der Sammlung Ludwig, III Skulpturen*, Mainz 1990, 453–508

Lochman 1991 = T. Lochman, *Deux reliefs anatoliens au Musée des Beaux-Arts de Budapest*, *Bulletin du Musée Hongrois des Beaux-Arts* 74 (1991), 11–24

Koch = G. Koch, *Zwei Reliefs aus Phrygien im J. Paul Getty Museum*, in M. True – G. Koch (ed.), *Roman Funerary Monuments in the J. Paul Getty Museum*, vol. 1 (*Occasional Papers on Antiquities* 6), Malibu 1990, 115–132

Waelkens, *Türsteine* = M. Waelkens, *Die kleinasiatischen Türsteine: Typologische und epigraphische Untersuchungen der kleinasiatischen Grabreliefs mit Scheintür*, Mainz am Rhein 1986.



Μαξίμου

Ἔτους · σφα΄ · μη(νός) · Αὐδναίου · ε΄ ·

Μάξιμος ὁ πατήρ κὲ Εὐτυχιανή
ἢ σύμβιος αὐτοῦ κὲ ὁ υἱὸς αὐτοῦ

- 4 Τατιανὸς κὲ Τατιανὸς κὲ Μαρ-
κέλλα οἱ ἀδελφοὶ Μαξίμῳ κὲ
τῷ υἱῷ αὐτοῦ Ζωσίμῳ μνήμης
χάριν

In the year 291, day 5 of the month Audnaios, his father Maximos, his wife Eutychiane, his son Tatianos and his brothers Tatianos and Markella (set this up) for Maximos and his son Zosimos in remembrance.

On the console in the iconographic field:
of Maximos

The letters are fairly regular, squared except for the lunar sigma and omega; alpha with the cross stroke at an angle. Light apexes finish the vertical strokes, especially at the bottom.

The last word, *χάριν*, is written on the plinth of the right pilaster.

L. 1: In the north-west of Phrygia, where the stele is from, as we shall see, the eras prevailing were that of Sulla (which commemorated Sulla's victory over Mithridates and the following Treaty of Dardanos in 85 B.C.), and that of Actium (which celebrated the victory of Augustus in 31 B.C.).² In the area of Kadoi the former was used, north and south of this area and on the plains of the Tembris, however, that of Actium was in use. The year 291 corresponds to the year 206 A.D in the era of Sulla and to 260 A.D. in that of Actium.

The month Audnaios corresponds, after the adaptation of the Seleucid calendar to the Julian calendar in the province of Asia, to the month from 23 November to 23 December.

L. 2: The Latin name Maximus was very frequent throughout Asia Minor in general, although it was outstanding in number in north-east Lydia and the neighbouring western Phrygia. Eutychiane was a very common name in the whole of the Greek world, very much in fashion it seems in north-western Phrygia.

L. 4: Tatianos is a name indigenous to Asia Minor, quite frequent in Lydia and Phrygia. On the other hand the Latin name Marcella is scarcely recorded in the Greek-speaking world.

L. 6: The Greek name Zosimos is well-testified in western Anatolia, especially in Lycia, Phrygia, Lydia and Mysia.

L. 7: The expression *μνήμης χάριν* is typical of Asia Minor, and specifically the very simple formula: PN of the dedicator, PN in dative of the one it is dedicated to, *μνήμης χάριν* is especially abundant in Phrygia, almost exclusively in some areas such as Kadoi, Aizanoi and the plains of the Tembris. Cf. the corpus MAMA X, dedicated precisely to the north-west of Phrygia where it is clearly the predominant formula.

Because of the structure and final formula of the epitaph and also because of the proper names, the stele seems to come from the area of Asia Minor comprising north-west Phrygia, east Lydia,

² Cf. W. Kubitschek, in RE 1.1 (1893), 638s., s.v. Aera; MAMA IX, p. LIV–LVI.

and east Mysia.³ The formal and iconographic characteristics of the stele delimit somewhat more the area of provenance as the area comprising the upper Hermos valley, the upper Tembris, and intermediate territories. The so-called Türsteine have their origin here; these are steles that imitate a door with the representation of objects on the two leaves and a separate pediment, generally circular and with representation of busts or animals, preferentially lions and eagles, with much evidence above all in Aizanoi and its surroundings, where there was an important sculptor's studio which was at the height of its fame in the 2nd century A.D., and whose influence extended to the plains of the Tembris.⁴ In the 3rd century the Türsteine gave way to steles in arch form representing standing figures, clearly evolved from the Türsteine, and greatly in evidence in the plains of the Tembris and in the upper Hermos valley, in the area bordering with Lydia and Mysia.⁵ A variant of the arched stele (Bogenfeldstele) is the stele with busts and objects in the central section, more rarely only with objects and a triangular pediment. The stele found in Seville corresponds to this latter model. Floral adornments and objects from everyday life are common to all types. The pilasters that frame the central field, with their plinths and Corinthian capitals, give the stele a particular architectural character, in the way of *naiskoi*, both in the Türsteine and then in the Bogenfeldstele, which, without representing doors, do maintain that architectural character through pilasters with plinths and capitals, and a prolongation of the central field as an arch to house the representation of the person (Lochman 1990, p. 479, 485, 488; Koch, Abb.1, 2, 17, 19, 21, etc. Gibson no. 16), or, more rarely a half-moon or Syrian pediment separate from the central field, with busts and generally inserted in turn into a triangular gable (Koch, Abb. 18 (= OGGR 596), 15 (= OGGR 479), 20). Although most of the architectural type steles have a Syrian pediment (circular) that rests directly on the capitals and pilasters, there are some parallels of steles with architrave on which a triangular pediment rests, as can be seen in Kadoi,⁶ the territory of Simav,⁷ and in the upper Tembris valley.⁸ This type of steles, with a setting of profuse decoration and triangular pediment although resting on a prolongation of the central section in order to leave room for a wreath, were developed in the Christian steles of the Tembris, called "Christians for Christians" because of the formula of their epitaphs, in which the same elements are seen, but where the text occupies a great part of the central section at the expense of the iconographic representations (see Gibson).

The palmettes of the acroteria show a symmetric arrangement of wavy lines that have the clearest parallels in the steles of the Tembris (cf. Lochman 1990 and Koch, although generally not free-standing but sculpted inside the pediment).

The iconography of the pediment with the two birds – doves? – pecking at a central vine represents motifs typical of the steles of north-west Phrygia Magna. Small birds and eagles often

³ Cf. the short study of names carried out by Lochman 1990, p. 493–4, on a group of steles of the Tembris plateau, in which the names Zosimos and Tatiane are especially frequent.

⁴ Cf. Waelkens, Türsteine.

⁵ For a list of steles of this type, called Bogenfeldstele, which at the beginning of the 3rd century were becoming more numerous while the Türsteine type decreased, see Lochman 1990, p. 487, n. 12 (v. p. 496s. for evolution and differences according to areas); G. Koch.

⁶ Lochman 1991, Abb. 5 (no. 1), 8 (no. 12), 9 (no. 13), OGGR 2202, perhaps 2283, MAMA X 354, 356, perhaps 355.

⁷ MAMA X 367, 372, 374, 375 etc. (although with text inscribed in the central field, generally an arched door giving the stele the shape of the façade of a house, and acroteria in relief in the second band of the pediment).

⁸ In Appia: MAMA X 35, 43, 44, 97, 156, 160, 197, 233, 235, 247; Altıntaş: MAMA X 73, 74, 76. For a recent discovery see now also Ep. Anat. 34, 2002, 103–4 (probably from the area of Kütahya-Uşak).

appear in the pediments or half-moons (OGGR 220, Lochman 1990, no. 260 from the upper Tembris valley, 1137, 2202 from Kadoi),⁹ sometimes with a tree or plant in the centre (OGGR 924 from Bursa, 2307 from Altıntaş),¹⁰ often with a basket.¹¹ In short, the vine is the tree most represented in this area, which shows the importance of viticulture in several parts of Phrygia; this has now disappeared. The iconographic representations of grapes, vines and diverse utensils belonging to this culture in tomb and votive inscriptions are concentrated in certain areas rich in this plant, and although they could secondarily acquire a symbolic value, in some cases eschatological, their primary objective is to represent an activity typical of the daily life of the deceased, as in the case of the everyday objects.¹² Although the tendrils of bunches that appear frequently in the steles, as we see on the pilasters of the one from Seville, owing to their flexibility have become, in diverse cultures, a very frequent ornamental motif, for example for filling or framing sections, and hence should not be attributed a specific meaning; the representation of a vine on the pediment of the stele may reflect the deceased's agricultural activity, specifically that of vine-growing.¹³ Both the bird and the bunch of grapes are especially associated with deceased children. In OGGR 759, 760, 783, 2190 children appear with a bunch of grapes in one hand and a dove in the other.¹⁴

Some steles in which grapes and doves appear together are Christian, such as OGGR 2202 (cf. perhaps also 783, 2307). The symbolic nature these motifs acquire in Christianity is well known.

In this stele the pilasters show the decoration of vine leaf tendrils and grapes (see above) often seen in the upper Tembris valley.¹⁵

The architrave has a geometric decoration also for example in OGGR 596 in Kotyaion, 2202, certainly in Kadoi, 1153 in Zemme. Cf. MAMA X 165, 169, 134, 117, in the Tembris, where the same zigzag decoration can be seen on the upper or lower part of funerary altar stones.

The objects represented in the central field are found in steles in north-west Lydia, Phrygia, Galatia and the western part of the Pontus.¹⁶ They are very frequent on the doors of the Türsteine, and disseminated through different places of the arch steles. They generally represent elements

⁹ In some cases it seems that there is a relationship between the eagle and a deceased male, and a smaller bird and a deceased female (cf. Lochman 1990, p. 506).

¹⁰ For the presence of bunches of grapes and birds in the iconography of Asia Minor cf. the amount of evidence in OGGR, indexes s.v. Taube and Traube.

¹¹ OGGR 581, 2202; Lochman 1990, no. 262, cf. 259, Beilage 49,1; Lochman 1991, fig. 5, cf. fig. 9 with the motif in the central field. In pagan steles the baskets contain bunches of grapes or other fruits (Lochman 1990, Bl. 49.1, Lochman 1991, fig. 9), or, in the central field, they serve as an attribute of women and contain skeins or needlework (OGGR 2280, without birds). In Christian steles in the area the same type of basket is adapted, full of loaves, as a religious symbol (OGGR 2202).

¹² M. Waelkens, Phrygian votive and tombstones as sources of the social and economic life in Roman Antiquity, *Ancient Society* 8 (1977), 277–315, esp. 277–283.

¹³ M. Waelkens, op. cit. in the previous footnote, p. 281, for the purely decorative use of tendrils of grapes and leaves.

¹⁴ The grapes also appear often associated with dogs, especially in children's steles (OGGR 761, 762, 768 etc.). Birds are also recorded as a motif independent of the grapes (e.g. Lochman 1990, no. 262 of the Tembris valley).

¹⁵ Cf. a sample of the different adornments on the pilasters with comments on the iconography and workshops in Lochman 1990, p. 497–500. For decorative tendrils framing Christian steles on the Tembris plateau see Gibson: 8–12, 14–16, with objects similar to those of the stele in Seville, but with a frame on all four sides, sometimes double, without pilasters and with an upper prolongation ending in a pediment to house the wreath.

¹⁶ Cf. Waelkens, Türsteine; OGGR II, p. 540–5.

belonging to the everyday life of the man and woman, which seem to symbolise their virtues, above all referring to their work, in the case of the man, and to work and physical beauty in the case of the woman. In steles dedicated to married couples the objects of one and the other are usually engraved apart on the stele (OGGR 793, 2162, 2165, 1155, Lochman 1990, no. 261, from the Tembris valley; OGGR 1137, 1138, Lochman 1991, fig. 7, from Kadoi). Women's objects appear on steles dedicated to women (cf. OGGR 2280 dedicated to two sisters, with double representation of the same objects). The mirror (with a decorated handle and a square surface instead of the more common round surface), the comb and the spinning wheel with the spindle represented on our stele lead us to think of a stele dedicated to a woman, perhaps a girl because of the astragali, the doves and the vine, which contradicts the text. It could be a stele made in the workshop for a possible buyer, before knowing whom it was going to be dedicated to.¹⁷ The blank console, for the corresponding name to be inscribed later, supports this hypothesis. In this case the concurrent dedications to a father and a son lead one to think of an unforeseen death, perhaps an accident, which may have made it necessary to resort to a stele already in stock.

The wreath is a very frequent element in funerary steles throughout the Greco-Roman world. It could represent a crown granted during life or coronation in death as a tribute to previous life. In Lydia and Phrygia a donation was known called *στεφανωτικός*, from the interest of which an annual commemoration wreath was bought for the deceased.¹⁸ The specific representation of this recalls that of the steles called "Christians for Christians", tied at the top and bottom and with a schematic drawing of the leaves (cf. OGGR 2139, 2283 of Phrygian-Lyidian provenance; Gibson: Christian steles in the Tembris valley).

The diptych is characteristic of this area of Phrygia, where it could be a sample of cultural ambition and of the use of writing, reflected in another type of testimony, on the part of this peasant society.¹⁹ Although it generally appears in relation to a man, it is sometimes found in the midst of objects relating to men and women, as an element common to both.

The representation of astragali, although not non-existent, is rarer, and in almost all cases in explicit relation to children. Cf. for testimony from the Hellenistic age OGGR 804 (Smyrna), 817 (Pergamum), 1987 (Mysia or Bithynia), 400 (Byzantium) and from the Imperial age 777, 793 and 2182, all three almost certainly in Phrygia.

The round cake in the lower left corner is the same as those that appear on the shoulders of a standing figure on a stele from Phrygia or Bithynia (OGGR 783). Referring to this stele published in *Anat. St.* 5 (1955), 33s., no. 2 (= Lochman 1991, p. 18, no. 3; Koch, fig. 3), coming from Kadoi, and in which a child is holding one in his hand, Calder interprets them as Eucharistic loaves (cf. *Bull. ép.* 56.24). If this interpretation is correct and valid in all cases, here we would have a Christian element, and perhaps then a symbolic Christian value also in the representation of the birds and the vine on the pediment. The same object also appears on Gibson's stele no. 31, from Bahtilli, near Simav and on MAMA X 381 from Yemisli also in the territory of Simav (the name of the deceased, Chrysaëis, seems to be Christian). But owing to the fact that

¹⁷ Cf. Koch, p. 130.

¹⁸ B. H. McLean, *An Introduction to Greek Epigraphy of the Hellenistic and Roman Periods from Alexander the Great to the Reign of Constantine (323 B.C. – A.D. 337)*, Ann Arbor 2002, p. 277.

¹⁹ For the representation of diptychs, cf. MAMA VI 288, 289, 300, 309 of Akmonia; MAMA V 40, 41 of Dorylaion; examples in the upper Tembris valley and in Kadoi (Lochman, Koch); Christian steles in the upper Tembris valley (Gibson, nos. 3, 4, 5, 11, 12, 16, 30). Cf. OGGR II, p. 542, 544 with examples; Gibson, p. 41.2, on the representation of *diptychoi* and *styloi* as characteristic of a specific workshop in the Tembris.

in the inscription in Seville there is no element referring to the Christian nature of the deceased or the dedicators, once again it could also be a Pagan iconographic element, later adapted by the Christians, although not recorded exactly the same on steles that are certainly Pagan. Very similar objects appear on Anatolian steles from the Hellenistic and Imperial ages as decorative elements in the centre or corners of the pediment, but normally with the sections marked on the circumference, as rosettes.

The stele corresponds to the description by Lochman of a particular type of steles from Kadoi, which possibly belong to a workshop south of the city territory, an area not visited by Cox and hence not included in MAMA: a richly decorated triangular gable on a triangular or circular pediment; shaft of the stele, tapering rather than rectangular, with a standing figure, busts or a wreath usually combined with objects from daily life; the inscription normally engraved on a pedestal under the shaft of the stele.²⁰ Calder attributes the Christian stele OGGR 2202 (= Gibson 30; Koch, p. 117, fig. 4) to the area of Kadoi; this stele shows one of the closest parallels to the one in Seville, and is included by Lochman (1991, p. 20, no. 10) in the list that this author makes of steles from Kadoi (p. 18–20). Nos. 10–16 refer to steles without figures. They all have pilasters, a wreath and objects from daily life in the central field, an inscription on the base and nos. 10, 12 and 13 certainly, a triangular pediment resting over a lintel. Gibson's stele no. 30, a Christian stele from Bahtilli near Simav, also has many elements common to our stele. All these steles have all or most of the following elements: architectural decoration, triangular pediment separated by an architrave in the central field, absence of figures, central field with objects of daily use and inscription on the base. Lochman no. 10, from Kadoi, has zigzag decoration on the architrave, doves flanking a basket on the pediment and garlands on the gable with the same plaiting as the wreath on the stele from Seville.

However, pilasters found in Kadoi are not decorated with tendrils, but rather with geometric decoration, generally as spikes, rhombuses or spirals, the more linear nature of the iconography being outstanding.²¹ The steles of the upper Tembris have fewer linear features, with more plant and animal decoration, and with pilasters often decorated with tendrils of bunches. The more natural features, the plant decoration and the palmettes on the stele from Seville make it closer to the steles of the upper Tembris valley; however, the general arrangement in naiskoi with a triangular pediment, objects from everyday life in the centre and inscription on the base are better represented (although this is not a frequent type) in the area of Kadoi.

The quality and characteristics of the stele make its date more presumably 206 A.D., but if the Christian interpretation were correct, 260 would be more likely, though the cryptochristian character would also fit the first date.

With the certainty that the stele comes from north-west Phrygia or neighbouring Mysia, more specifically from the upper Tembris valley or the area of Kadoi, we leave here the study of the piece, in the hope that an expert in the iconography and formal characteristics of the steles of this area of Anatolia will establish its place of origin with certainty, and hence also verify whether the inscription dates from 206 A.D. (if it comes from Kadoi) or from 260 (if it is from the upper Tembris valley).*

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²⁰ Cf. Lochman 1991, p. 23 (MAMA X, p. XXX).

²¹ Cf. Lochman 1991, p. 20.

* For the Turkish abstract see p. 174.

ÖZET

M^a P. de Hoz, “An Anatolian Funerary Stele ...”

Bu yazıda, İspanya'daki bir antikacıda bulunan bezemeli ve yazıtlı bir mezar steli tanıtılmaktadır. Alınlıklı ve akoterli stelin üzerinde üzüm salkımı, kuş, çelenk, ayna, tarak, yazı tableti, aşık kemiği, yün eğirme aygıtı vb. gibi kabartmalar yer almaktadır. (Ayrıca, bezemelerin arasında bulunan bir dikdörtgen alan içinde de “*Maximos'un*” şeklinde bir ifade okunmaktadır). Yazar bu süslemelere, yazıtın ilk satırındaki tarihlemeye ve yazıttaki kişi adlarına çok sayıda paralel göstererek, bu eserin Phrygia veya Mysia, ama daha spesifik olarak Yukarı Tembris (Porsuk) Vadisi veya modern Gediz (Kadoi) civarında bulunmuş olması gerektiğini ileri sürmektedir. Sulla takvimine göre İ.S. 206, Actium takvimine göre ise İ.S. 260 yılına tarihlenmesi gereken yazıtın çevirisi şöyledir: “291 yılı, Audnaios ayının 5. gününde: Babası *Maximos*, karısı *Eutykhiane*, oğlu *Tatianos* ve kardeşleri *Tatianos* ile *Markella* (bu taşı) *Maximos* ve onun oğlu *Zosimos'un* anısı için (yaptırdılar)”.