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THREE EPITAPHS FROM THE VEZİRKÖPRÜ REGION

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During the spring campaign 2010 of the Nerik project of the Free University of Berlin,² several unpublished inscriptions were recorded in the region around Vezirköprü (Samsun province), ancient Neoklaudiopolis. Among these were three funerary inscriptions preserved in their entirety.

1. Paulinos, son of Paulinos (AD 165/66)

Grave stele of reddish limestone, built into the garden wall of a house across the road from the village school of Yağınözü, c. 6 km northwest of Vezirköprü (fig. 1). According to the owner, the stone was brought here from Vezirköprü, where it had been lying in a yard near the present fire station (southeast of the city cemetery). Its original location is not known. The stele appears to be substantially complete, its lowest part buried in the soil.

The gable, flanked by palmette antefixes, carries the image of a *patera* in a triangular panel with bevelled edges. The inscription is carved in a rectangular, triple-recessed panel. In the concluding lines two *hederae*; below, a mirror and a comb. The height (including the part in the ground) is c. 130 cm, its width 53 cm.

The lettering is neatly carved, but with some variation. In lines 1–6, the *alpha* has a sharply angled cross-bar, word-division points are only used intermittently (beginning in line 5). In lines 7–11, the broken crossbar of the *alpha* is less marked, the letters are wider and word division points more frequent. In the penultimate line giving the year according to the civic era, the cross-bar of the *epsilon* is not joined to the semicircle and the *rho* is open. Apparently more than one hand – perhaps the master stonemason and his assistant – was at work here.

Text

Παυλῖνος Ἡλί-
ου τὴν ἐντα-
φήν ἑαυτῷ
καὶ τῇ γυναι-
5 κὶ Ναίδι καὶ
τῷ υἱῷ Παυλί-
νῳ τελευτή-
σαντι ἐτῶν
κβ', χαίρετε
10 οἱ παράγον-
τες.
Ἔτο(υς) ρο
α'

¹ The authors wish to thank Prof. Dr. Rainer Czichon (Free University of Berlin), Dr. Vera Sauer (University of Southern Denmark), Prof. Dr. Eckart Olshausen (University of Stuttgart) and Dr. Harald von der Osten Woldenburg (Landesamt für Denkmalpflege, Stuttgart) for their assistance in preparing this report.

² The Nerik project, which is sponsored by the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft and directed by Prof. Dr. Jörg Klinger and Prof. Dr. Rainer Czichon, has been carrying on excavation and survey at Oymağaç (Samsun province) since 2005. For more information, see the website www.nerik.de.

Translation

Paulinos, the son of Helios (set up) this tomb for himself and his wife Nais and for his son Paulinos who died at the age of 22. Greetings to you, the passers by. In the year 171.

The mirror and comb are conventional symbols often found on grave steles in the region. The age of the son is given, but not of the wife, who may have been alive when the tomb was set up. Though he bore a Roman name, the absence of a *nomen* and the inclusion of the father's name suggest that Paulinos was a peregrine.³ Another grave stele from the Vezirköprü region, similar in material and design, was set up by a *Pauleinos*.⁴ The year 171 according to the civic era of Neoklaudiopolis corresponds to AD 165/66. The formula *χαίρετε οἱ παράγοντες* recurs on another funerary stele found at Koçaoğlu.⁵

2. Helene, wife of Klaudios Theophanes

Stele of light grey limestone (fig. 2) found during excavation for the foundations of a new mosque in the centre of Oymaağaç village 7 km north of Vezirköprü (Samsun province) in December 2009. The stone was taken to the excavation depot of the Nerik project in the former village school.

The stone was originally a grave stele, of which the gabled top and the left-hand edge have been trimmed off when it was re-used as building material. It is fractured across the lower right-hand corner. The material is a light grey limestone and the present dimensions of the stone are 107 cm in height, 65 cm width, 24 cm thickness. A recessed panel c. 1 cm deep carries the inscription, which fills the panel from left to right but leaves a vacant space at the bottom. The lettering is regular, but shallowly cut and of mediocre quality, with the height of individual letters varying from 3.5 to 4 cm.

Text

[Κ]λαύδιος Θεοφά-
νης Ἑλένη μνή-
μης χάριν ἐνθά-
δε τεύχεν τύν-
5 βομ καὶ στήλη-
ν μνημόσυνον
φιλίας. καὶ γαμ-
{μ}οῦσαν ἐπόθ(ε)ι
καὶ θανοῦσαν, ἔ-
10 τι καὶ νῦν εὐτε-
κνίης τε χάριν
καὶ σωφροσύν-
ης ἔτι μᾶ<λ>λον.

³ For other examples of peregrines with Roman names, see Majbom Madsen 2009, 98.

⁴ Samsun museum, inv. no. 21-1-1990 (unpublished). The stone was seen by Gerhard Kahl and Eckart Olshausen in the Tabakhane Mahallesi, Vezirköprü, in 1988. They were told that it had come from the village of Boruk, c. 12 km SW of the city.

⁵ *Studia Pontica* III:1 no. 61.

Translation

Here Klaudios Theophanes placed a tomb and a stele for Helene in memory of their love. He loved her when she was married to him and now that she is dead, even more because of her fecundity and her modesty.

The box-like *sigma* suggests a date no earlier than the late second century. Judging by his gentilicium, Klaudios Theophanes was a Roman citizen. *Klaudioi* are not uncommon in the region. One Kl(audios) Plo(tinos?) is commemorated on an unpublished fragment of an inscription, now in the *çeşme* by the village school at Adatepe, c. 2 km south of Oymaağaç. Other *Klaudioi* and a [Kl]audia are commemorated on three inscriptions found in villages to the east of Vezirköprü.⁶ Although its name might suggest that ancient *Neoklaudiopolis* had a special relationship with the Claudian dynasty, no published inscriptions from the city site itself mention *Klaudioi*.

3. Iulius Heliodoros, foster-child of Laberius Iulianus

Stele of grey limestone, the gable flanked by small palmette antefixes. Gerhard Kahl and Eckart Olshausen photographed the inscription in 1988 (fig. 3a); it was then located to the left of the gate of a farm-yard in Tepeören, c. 8 km south of Vezirköprü. It has since been moved and in 2010 was to be seen in the wall of the farmyard, facing inwards (fig. 3b). The stone is fractured in two places, across the gable and above the base. Height (including base) 140 cm, width 56 cm, thickness 25 cm. Apart from two *hederae* at the foot of the text, there is no decoration. The text fills the panel from left to right but leaves a vacant space of c. 20 cm at the lower end. The letters are neatly cut; at the end of some lines the size is reduced to fit the width of the panel. In line 12, a small *lambda* has been added to complete the word ΑΔΕΦΟΙ. The height of the letters (not including the extenders on *psi* and *phi*) varies between 3.2 and 3.8 cm. The letters in the first seven lines are somewhat wider than the remainder.

Text

Γ(αίω) Ἰουλίω Ἡλιο-
 δώρῳ Ἀμασι βι-
 ώσαντα καλῶς
 καὶ ἀμέμπτως
 5 παρὰ τῷ θρέψαντι
 Λαβερίῳ Ἰουλιανῷ.
 Λαβέριος Ἰουλιανὸς
 ὁ θρέψας αὐτοῦ καὶ
 Γ(αίοι) Ἰούλιοι Φουσκεῖ-
 10 νος, Κεσέννιος, Ἀθη-
 νόδωρος, Ματρῶνα
 ἀδελφοὶ αὐτοῦ καὶ Λα-
 βερία Χρυσόθεμις
 ἡ σύμβιος αὐτοῦ
 15 μνήμης χάριν.

⁶ *Studia Pontica* III:1, no. 51 (Kayabaşı (Tahna)); 57 (Tatarkale); 61a (Koçaoğlu).

Translation

For Gaius Iulius Heliodoros Amasis (or from Amaseia?) who lived a good and blameless life in the household of his foster-father Laberius Iulianus. Laberius Iulianus his foster-father and Gaius Iulius Fuscinus, Gaius Iulius Caesennius, Gaius Iulius Athenodoros and Matrona, his siblings, and Laberia Chrysothemis his spouse (set this up) in his memory.

Ἀμασι in l. 2 could be either an additional *cognomen* (Ἀμασις) or an *ethnikon* (Ἀμασεύς, ‘from Amaseia’, dat. Ἀμασεῖ).

It would appear that Gaius Iulius Heliodoros had been both the son-in-law and the *threptos* of Laberius Iulianus.⁷ In a letter to Trajan,⁸ Pliny the younger asks for guidance on how to deal with *threptoi*; from Trajan’s reply,⁹ it is clear that the emperor understands *threptos* in the familiar sense of ‘foundling’. In Asia Minor, however, where inscriptions mentioning *threptoi* are especially frequent,¹⁰ the term had a far wider semantic range, being used for abandoned children raised by their finders, slaves,¹¹ freedmen,¹² foundlings,¹³ foster-children and adopted children.¹⁴ It is perhaps no coincidence that among the edicts and rescripts that Pliny had consulted were two addressed to the Spartans and a third to the Messenians. The Spartan foster-child known as κόσεν or μόθαξ likewise had an ambiguous legal and social status.¹⁵

In the present case, though both the foster-parent and the foster-child are Roman citizens, the relationship is clearly not an adoption *iure civile* since in that case, Iulius Heliodoros would have taken his adoptive parent’s *gentilicium* Laberius and could not have married his adoptive sister Laberia. Nor can Iulius Heliodoros have been Laberius’ slave; in that case he would have taken his owner’s *gentilicium* on manumission. That he remained in contact with his natural siblings (who are among the co-dedicants) excludes the possibility that Heliodoros had been a foundling.

One possibility is that Iulius Heliodoros’ family sent him to be raised in that of Laberius. Another is that Laberius and the father of Iulius Heliodoros were brothers and that the former was adopted into the Laberian family, taking – in accordance with Roman custom – his old *gentilicium* as the *cognomen* Iulianus. Later, perhaps on the death of his brother, the siblings were taken under the care of their uncle as *threptoi*, but not formally adopted.

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⁷ On *threptoi* in general, cf. Riel 2009; Guinea, with summary of earlier research.

⁸ Pliny, Ep. 10.65.

⁹ Pliny, Ep. 10.66.

¹⁰ Guinea 48–49; Riel 2005, 142.

¹¹ Riel 2009, 96–99.

¹² Riel 2009, 101–2.

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¹⁴ Riel 2009, 103–6.

¹⁵ Cartledge–Spawforth, 168; Link, 25–27.

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Özet

Bu makalede sunulan yazıtlar Vezirköprü'ye (Samsun), yani Neapolis ya da Neoklaudiopolis antik kentine yaklaşık 8 km. mesafede bulunmuştur. Tümü Roma vatandaşı olmasalar da, mezar sahiplerinin hepsi Paulinus, Claudius, Laberius ve Iulius gibi Roma isimleri taşımaktadır. Burada tanıtılan eserlerden, Gaius Iulius Heliodoros adındaki bir *threptos*'a (evlatlık) ait olan mezar yazıtı (no. 3), Roma devrinde Anadolu'daki evlat edinme geleneği hakkında yeni ipuçları vermektedir.

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Fig. 1. Inscription from Yağınözü (photo: Harald von der Osten Woldenburg)

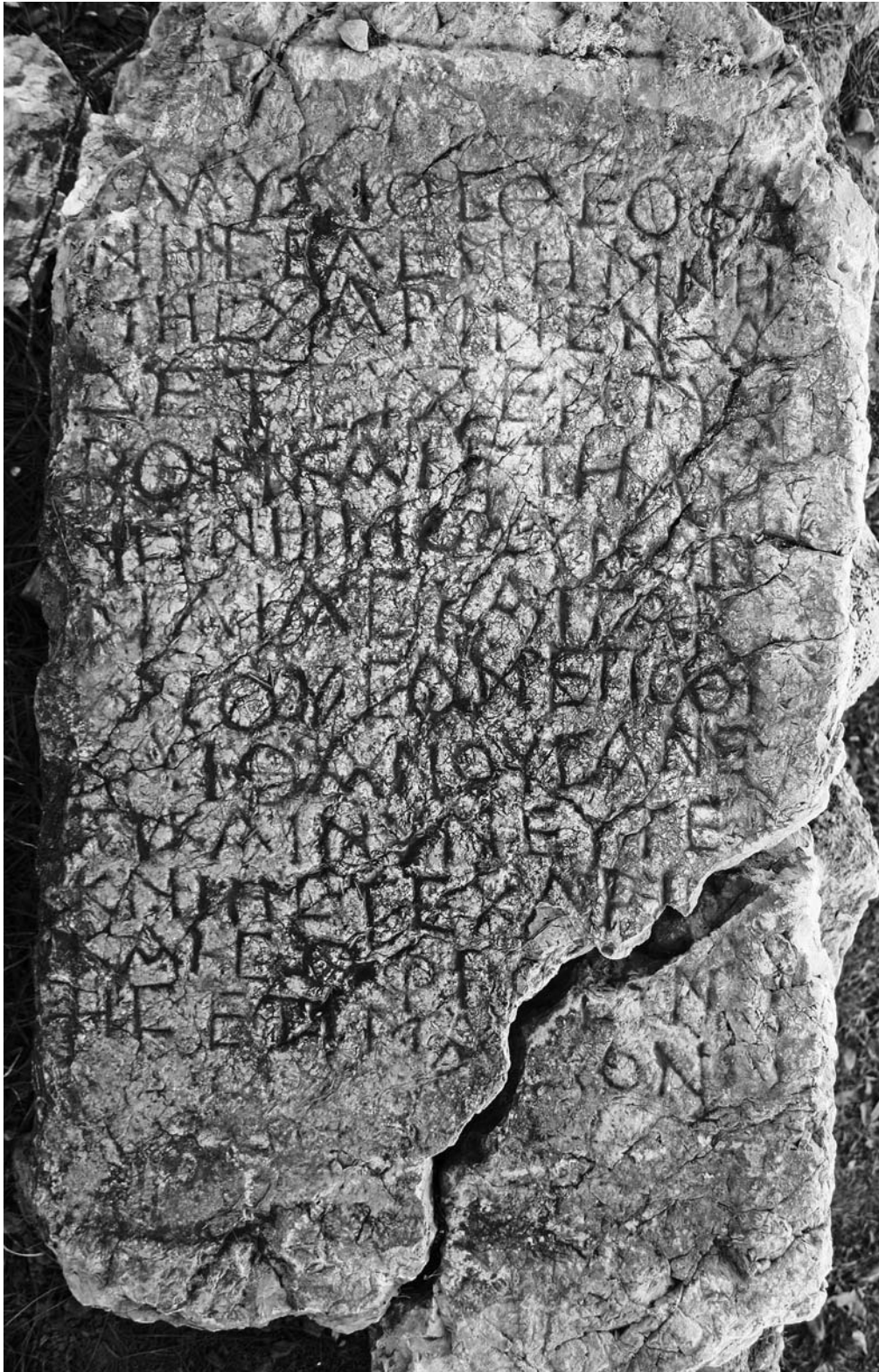


Fig. 2. Inscription from Oymaağaç (photo: Tønnes Bekker-Nielsen)



Fig. 3a. Inscription from Tepeören, 1988
(photo: G. Kahl and E. Olshausen)



Fig. 3b. Inscription from Tepeören, 2010
(photo: Harald von der Osten Woldenburg)