

GÖKHAN YILDIZ – MANFRED CLAUSS – GEORG PETZL

TWO LATE ANTIQUE MOSAIC INSCRIPTIONS FROM THE AREA OF
CAESAREA (KAYSERİ)

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The mosaic inscriptions were unearthed during a rescue-excavation by the archaeologists of the Kayseri Archaeological Museum at Örenşehir, a subdivision (*mahalle*) of the town İncesu which is located SW of Kayseri (Caesarea) in Cappadocia. Because of some legal property problems, after the campaigns of 2010 and 2012, the excavations were interrupted.

The mosaic recording the Latin inscription (no. 1) lies on the ground of a building (a *villa* ?) of rectangular plan. The mosaic has been partly unearthed.

The mosaic with the Greek inscription (no. 2) has been found in another building enclosed by a partly preserved wall of ca. 0.80–0.85 m thickness.

[G. Y.]

No. 1

The Latin inscription offers no problems; the text is to be read as follows:

*Votis XXX multis XX bis XX /
curante Yacintho comite /
fabrica ad summum per/ducta es culmen*

„With vows on the occasion of the 30th jubilee and further (vows) until the 40th! (The building was erected) under the direction of *comes* Yacintus. ,You, the building, have been executed up to the highest ridge“.

The term *vota* as used in the present inscription designates prayers which have their origin in the *vota pro salute principis*. The latter are congratulations referring to a former successful period of reign at the same time expressing the hope for a further five or ten-year extension. In the relevant inscriptions the addressee of the prayer is not specified. Formulations like *votis X multis XX* are much more frequently attested on coins than in inscriptions; we have for example three epigraphical instances concerning the emperors Valentinianus, Valens and Gratianus.¹ Most of the congratulations are directed to the rulers on the occasion of their 10th jubilee, connected with the wish for ten more years up to the 20th.

In the mosaic inscription from İncesu such wishes were expressed when the ruler celebrated the 30th anniversary of his reign. If the inscription refers to an emperor the choice is restricted to Constantine (306–337), Constantius II (324/337–361)² or Theodosius II (402/408–450).

The formulation designating the future ten years is unusual. *XXXX* as well as *bis XX* would have been sufficient to denote the 40th jubilee. I have no explanation to offer why instead of these

¹ CIL 09, 05946 (EDCS-17600315), EE-08-01, 00834 (EDCS-34700140) and AE 1999, 00625 (EDCS-14000174); for the abbreviations used here see the list of abbreviations in the Epigraphik-Datenbank Clausß/Slaby (EDCS under: <http://www.manfredclausß.de/>).

² The numismatic evidence mentioning *votis XXX multis XXXX* is particularly rich for him; RIC 08, 376 no. 360; 520 no. 108.

alternatives *XX bis XX* was written; perhaps the expression ‚twice 20‘ was thus to be strengthened.

The comes (H)yacinthus has a *cognomen*, which was wide-spread, particularly in the Greek speaking part of the Imperium Romanum; he cannot be identified with any known person.

The addressee of the words of lines 3–4 is the building (*fabrica*) itself.

[M. C.]

No. 2

The Greek mosaic inscription no. 2 is to be read $\acute{\upsilon}\gamma\epsilon\iota/\acute{\epsilon}\nu\omega\nu / \acute{\epsilon}\acute{\iota}\sigma\epsilon\lambda/\theta\alpha\iota = \acute{\upsilon}\gamma\iota\alpha\acute{\iota}\nu\omega\nu \acute{\epsilon}\acute{\iota}\sigma\epsilon\lambda\theta\epsilon$, which could be translated as follows: ‚Being healthy come in!‘ or ‚If you are healthy, come in!‘ As we don’t know the nature of the building to which the mosaic belonged, we cannot say whether $\acute{\upsilon}\gamma\iota\alpha\acute{\iota}\nu\omega\nu$ is to be understood as referring to physical health being a prerequisite for entering. The participle could also mean soundness in religious matters³ and point to a condition under which a sacred building was only to be entered.

[G. P.]

Özet

Makalede, Kayseri Arkeoloji Müzesi tarafından 2010 ve 2012 yıllarında İncesu ilçesinin Örenşehir Mahallesi’nde yaptıkları kurtarma kazıları sonucunda ortaya çıkarılan iki mozaik-yazıt ele alınmaktadır. Üzerinde Latince bir yazıt bulunan mozaik (No. 1) kısmen açılmış olup, dikdörtgen planlı bir yapının (villa ?) tabanında yer almaktadır. Üzerinde Grekçe bir yazıt bulunan diğer mozaik (No. 2) ise, kısmen korunmuş olan bir duvarla çevrili bir başka binanın tabanına döşenmiş bulunmaktadır.

1. Bu mozağin üzerindeki Latince yazıtın çevirisi şöyledir:

«30. yıldönümü vesilesi ile ve 40. yıla ulaşması için dualarımızla!

Bu bina (*fabrica*), dostu (*comes*) Hyacinthos’un önderliğinde inşa edildi.

Sen, ey bina, şimdi en görkemli düzeye ulaştın!».

Yazıtta, kim olduğunu bilmediğimiz bir yöneticinin 30. görev yılı ve hatta gelecek 10 yılı da dualarla kutlanmaktadır. Bu yöneticinin kim olduğunu bilmiyoruz. Bu türden kutlamalar yazıtlardan çok geç imparatorluk devri sikkelerinden sikkelerde görülmektedir. Burada kutlanan kişi eğer bir imparator ise, 30 yıldan daha uzun bir süre tahtta kalmış imparatorlardan birini düşünmemiz gerekeceğinden, Constantinus (306–337), Constantius II (324/337–361) veya Theodosius (402/8–450) söz konusu olmalıdır.

2. Bu mozaikteki Grekçe yazıtın çevirisi şöyledir:

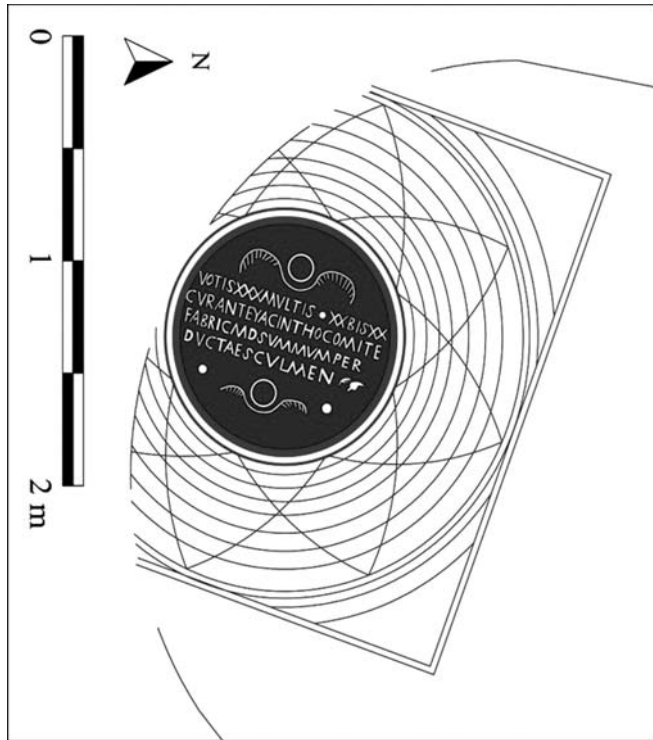
«Sağlıklı olarak gir!» veya «Sağlıklı isen gir!».

Mozayığın bulunduğu yapının hangi amaca hizmet ettiğini bilmediğimizden, bu binaya girmek için sağlıklı olmanın aranması kibarca bir uyarı mı yoksa bir koşul mu olduğunu bilmemiz mümkün değildir.

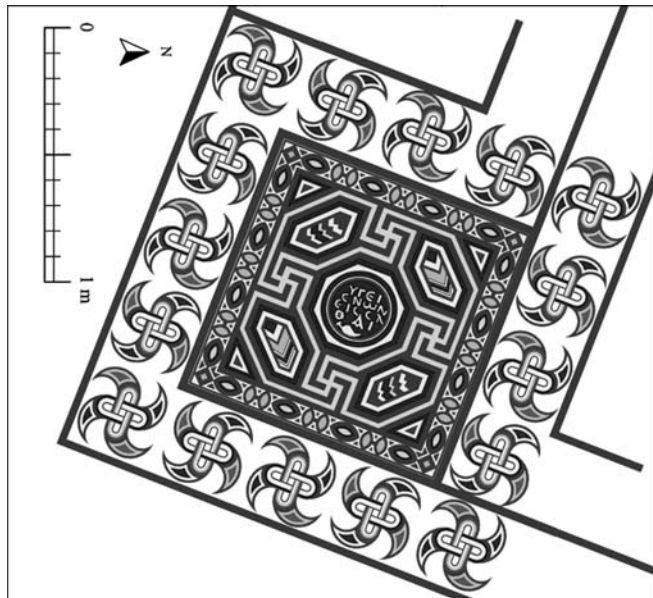
Kayseri Museum
Hennef
Köln

Gökhan Yıldız
Manfred Claus
Georg Petzl

³ See LSJ s. v. $\acute{\upsilon}\gamma\iota\alpha\acute{\iota}\nu\omega$ I 3.



Mosaic inscription no. 1 from the area of Caesarea, photo and drawing



Mosaic inscription no. 2 from the area of Caesarea, photo and drawing