TWO ROMAN INSCRIPTIONS IN THE MUSEUM OF GİRESUN

Ergün Laflı[1]
Stefano Magnani[2]
Maurizio Buora[3]

Abstract: In this brief contribution two previously unpublished grave steles from the museum of Giresun in Pontus are analysed, the first one of which is bilingual, *i.e.* Latin and Greek, and the other one is in Greek. The first bilingual text is very interesting that the content of each version is culturally quite distinct, surely aimed at the different audiences of the Latin and Greek texts in the bilingual and multicultural environment. Through these two new examples from Giresun it is possible to gain new insights about the Roman eastern Pontus.

Keywords: Giresun, Cerasus, Pontus, Roman period, epigraphy, Latin, Greek.

Özet: Giresun Müzesi'nden İki Yazıt
Bu kısa makalede Eskiçağ'da Pontos Bölgesi'ndeki Giresun Müzesi'nde sergilenmekte olan, daha önce yayımlanmamış iki adet mezar steli incelenmektedir. Bu eserlerden ilki çift dilli, yani Latince ve Yunanca'dır; ikincisi ise Yunanca'dır. İlk iki dilli metin, üzerindeki her bir metnin içeriğinin, iki dilli ve çok kültürlü ortamdaki Latin ve Yunanca metinlerin farklı kitleleri hedef alması ve kültürel bakış açılarının farklı olması açısından oldukça ilginçtir. Giresun'dan bu yeni örneklerle, Roma Dönemi Doğu Pontos Bölgesi ile ilgili yeni bilgiler edinmekteyiz.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Giresun, Kerasous, Pontus Bölgesi, Roma Dönemi, epigrafi, Latince, Antik Yunanca.

Resumo: Nesta breve contribuição, duas estelas de sepulturas inéditas que se encontram no Museu de Giresun, região do Ponto, nordeste da Turquia, são analisadas. A primeira delas é bilíngue, ou seja, possui inscrição em latim e em grego, e na outra, a inscrição está em grego. O primeiro texto bilíngue é muito interessante porque o conteúdo de cada versão é culturalmente bastante distinto, certamente voltado para os diferentes públicos dos textos em latim e grego em ambiente bilíngue e multicultural. Através desses dois novos exemplos de Giresun, é possível obter novas ideias sobre a porção oriental do Ponto durante o Império Romano.

Palavras-chave: Giresun, antiga Cerasus, Ponto, Período Romano, Epigrafia, Latim, Língua Grega.

1 Professor of Classical Archaeology at the Dokuz Eylül University. To consult other publications by the author: https://deu.academia.edu/ErgunLAFLI. E-mail: elafli@yahoo.ca

2 Università degli Studi di Udine, Dipartimento di Studi Umanistici e del Patrimonio Culturale. To consult other publications by the author: https://uniud.academia.edu/StefanoMagnani. E-mail: stefano.magnani@uniud.it

3 Società Friulana di Archeologiam Udine. Ex-director of Civici Musei Udine. To consult other publications by the author: https://independent.academia.edu/mauriziobuora. E-mail: mbuora@libero.it

Resumen: En esta breve contribución, se analizan dos estelas sepulcrales in-éditas encontradas en el Museo Giresun, en la región de Ponto, al noreste de Turquía. El primero es bilingüe, es decir, tiene inscripciones en latín y griego, y en el otro, la inscripción está en griego. El primer texto bilingüe es muy intere-sante porque el contenido de cada versión es culturalmente bastante distinto, ciertamente dirigido a las diferentes audiencias de textos latinos y griegos en un entorno bilingüe y multicultural. A través de estos dos nuevos ejemplos de Giresun, es posible obtener nuevas ideas sobre la parte oriental de Ponto du-rante el Imperio Romano.

Palabras clave: Giresun, antiguo Cerasus, Ponto, época romana, Epigrafía, Latín, Lengua griega.

Introduction

Giresun, ancient Cerasus (**Κερασοῦς**) in eastern Pontus (**map 1**), northeastern Turkey, has a local museum, an 18th century Greek orthodox church, converted into an archaeological and ethnographic museum in 1988. A small epigraphical collection is preserved here, with only two inscriptions dating to the Roman period, both exhibited in the garden, which are the focus of this brief note. As little epigraphic evidence is known for Roman eastern Pontus, these funerary texts are of great importance.

The Greek name "Kerasous", meaning "rich of cheeries" was given to this *apoikia* in the sixth century B.C., when the colonists from Sinope in Paphlag-onia arrived to Cerasus (XENOPHON, **Anabasis**, V.3.2)[4] The Greek root of the word "cherry" (**κερασός**) predates the name of the city of Cerasus which is probably from a Pre-Greek substrate, likely of Anatolian origin. This site was visited by Xenophon and the Ten Thousand in 400 B.C. (XENOPHON, **Anabasis.**V. 3. 2).[5] During the Hellenistic period Cerasus was one of the most important coastal and harbour city in eastern Pontus on the coastline of the Black Sea (Pontus Euxinus). According to Strabo, Pharnaces I, who lived be-tween 196 or 185 B.C. and 170 or 154 B.C. as the fifth king of Pontus, con-verted the name of the region of Cerasus to "Pharnacea" (**Φαρνάκεια**) and filled it with the inhabitants of Cotyora, perhaps in the form of a synoecism (STRABO, **Geography**, XII. 3. 17; 13-19; 28-30; II. 5. 25; VII. 6. 2; XI.

---

4 Xen. *Anab.* V. 3. 2. *Cf.* De Angelis (2000). On the foundation of Cerasus as a tributary colony of Sinope with Cotyora and Trapezus: Arikan Erciyas (2001); and pre-Hellenistic cities in eastern Pontus, Marek (1993, p.19, n. 167) and Fernoux (1999, p. 187). As Pliny the Elder notices, Lucullus took the sweet cherry (κερασός) from Cerasus to Rome, *Cf.* Weimert (1984, p. 99) and Marek (2003, p. 161). Also *cf.* Manoledakes (2010). Today, instead of cheery, hazelnuts (corylus avellana) are grown in the entire province of Giresun intensively which are the highest quality and have the highest level of skin separation among the hazelnut types in the Mediterranean.

5 On Cerasus in Xenophon, Cf. Grethlein (2012, p. 29).

2. 18; and XIV. 5. 22) (WEIMERT, 1984, p. 99-100 and p. 103; MAREK, 1993, P. 24, n. 211, pl. 54, fig. 2; MAREK, 2003, p. 32 and p. 25, fig. 30). However, the exact location of Cerasus and/or Pharnacea is still problematic (WEIMERT, 1984, p. 98 and p.100; WOJAN, 2003, pp. 259-264). During the Hellenistic and Roman periods, the neighbours of Cerasus were Cotyora (modern Ordu), as well as Polemonium (modern Fatsa) in the west, Trapezus (modern Trabzon), in the east and Nicopolis (modern Suşehri) as well as Colonia (modern Şebinkarahisar-Koyulhisar) in the south, separated by Pariades or Pontic mountains, *i.e.* north Anatolian border range or *Karadeniz Dağları*[6] (**map 1**); Cerasus stood at the terminus of a route leading over these mountains. In the first century B.C. Pharnacea became first a part of the land of Deiotaros, and later Dareios (WEIMERT, 1984, p.101; MAREK, 1993, p. 51). It was annexed to Galatia with the remainder of the Pontic kingdom in A.D. 64-65. According to the imperial coinage of Cerasus, the name of the city was re-changed to Cerasus after the Romans (WOJAN, 2003, p. 265), and remained the same for several centuries, until the Turks came in the late medieval period.[7] As Strabo reports, fishing, mines, most importantly silver and iron (STRABO, **Geography**, XII. 3. 19), as well as wood were most crucial natural sources for Cerasus (STRABO, **Geography**, XII. 3. 30).[8]

There is almost no epigraphic evidence from the field expeditions in Giresun.[9] One of the very few excavated sites in the province of Giresun is the island of Giresun (Giresun Adası), which lies 1.2 km north of Cerasus. During the Hellenistic, Roman and Byzantine periods this site was called as Aretias, Ares, Areos Nesos, Chalceritis or Puga. Its superstructures consist of two Classical, Hellenistic and Roman open air sanctuaries, supposingly one for the Amazons and the other one for Cybele, a Roman fortified-site with watch-towers and an extensive Byzantine monastic site.[10] Recent excavations on this island provide almost no epigraphic data. In the field surveys in the province of Giresun by the Selçuk University in Konya and in some recent tumulus researches no epigraphic data has been reported. Perhaps the inscriptions presented below belong to the *necropoleis* of Roman Cerasus or its *chora*.

---

6 For the neighbourhood of Cerasus and its borderlines, *Cf.* Weimert (1984, p. 94-95) and Winfield (1977, p. 155).

7 For Cerasus during the Roman period, among others, Cf. Marek (1993, pp. 56, 62 and 79).

8 Weimert (1984, pp. 96-98); Pédech (1971, p. 242). For mines in Cerasus *cf.* Bryer (1981).

9 Among others a mosaic fragment with an inscription dated to the fifth-sixth century A.D. was reported: Bryer and Winfield (1985, p. 132).

10 For the monuments in Cerasus and its environs during the Byzantine period, Cf. Bryer and Winfield (1985, p. 126-134).
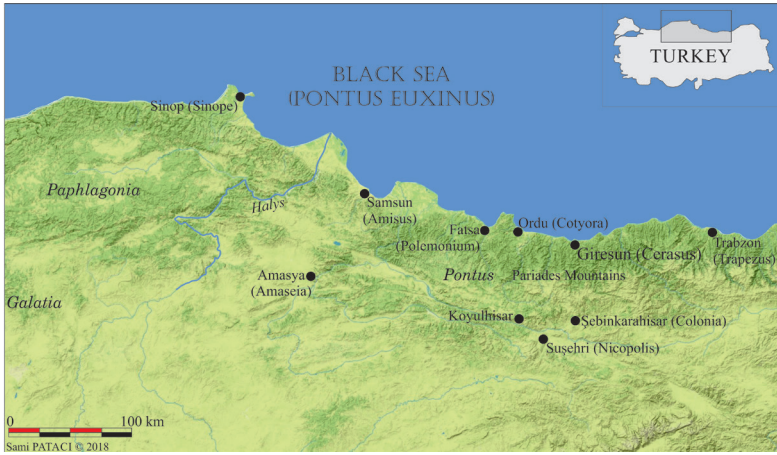
Map 1

Two inscriptions

No. 1: Funerary stele with a bilingual text; accession number 41 (figs. 1a-b).

Fig. 1a

0   5   10 cm

Fig. 1b

Material: Local, dark red, porous sandstone or volcanic stone.

State of preservation: Broken upper and lower sides. Each corner of the stone has suffered extensive damage. Lower part of the relief in the upper register,

i.e. torso, left arm and legs of the male figure in the centre, is preserved except for his right arm. The right side or the monument is damaged, so that the last part of the text lines in both the Latin and Greek inscriptions has disappeared, with the exception of the first one. The last line of the Greek text is also damaged in its initial part. There are missing chips from the relief and inscription. Most surfaces are heavily worn and weathered with some encrustation. There are also irregularly horizontal white paint lines, more dominantly on the upper register and horizontal scratched lines on the lower register. Its accession number "41" is painted roughly on its right edge.

Measurements: Max. h. ca. 91.1 cm, w. ca. 21.8 cm, th. ca. 13.2 cm, upper register max. h. ca. 55.7 cm, max. w. ca. 21.4 cm, lower register max. h. ca. 35.4 cm, max. w. 21.8 ca. cm, h. of letters l.1 ca. 4.1 cm, l.2-3 ca. 3.8 cm, l.4 ca. 3.1 cm and l. 5-6 ca. 2.9 cm and h. of the interval between the Latin and Greek texts ca. 9.3 cm.

Description: The stele is divided into two registers separated by a frame with two fillets like *fasciae*. On the upper register features a ragged and plain relief depicting a male human figure whose upper body (head, neck, shoulders and right arm) is missing (**fig. 1c**). The figure is disproportionate, with short legs and a very long body. He appears to be a warrior in heroic nudity, in frontal stance but with the feet slightly in profile position, holding with the left hand an object that looks like an oval shield. If he is clothed, details of his possible garment are not given, and it is also not clear whether or not the soldier has a muscular physique. Perhaps he had a sword in his right hand, of which, however, no traces are preserved. It is possible to distinguish the amateurishly sculptured fingers of the figure on the upper edge of the shield. On the bottom left an engraved sign with the form of an L can be identified. This type of reliefs belongs to the distinctive tradition of the so-called Roman provincial art, but is not known in Anatolian archaeology. This type of compositions remained much the same over the centuries, becoming almost conventional; only some details were changed.

The lower section of the stele is occupied by the epigraphic field (fig. 1d), on which six lines of the engraved text remain, articulated in two parts, both of which consist of three lines. The first part is in Latin, the second in Greek. Between these two bilingual parts there is a certain *vacuum*. The Latin inscription lacks only a few final letters, whilst the superimposed Greek one is more fragmentary. The edges and back of the stele are dressed roughly.
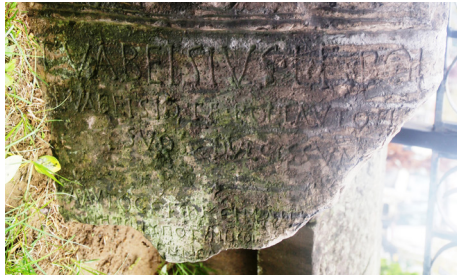
Fig. 1c Fig. 1d

Text 1

T(itus) Vabeisius, L(uci) f(ilius), Pol(lia),
L(ucio) Vabeisio, T(iti) f(ilio), Pol(lia), Lauto, fi[lio]
suo dulcissum[o].

Text 2

Λαῦτος ἐγὼ κεῖμαι, πα[ροδεῖτα?]
 [---]νη τῶι<δ'> ὑπὸ τύμβωι, [ἐτῶν
ζωᾶ?]ς ἐννέα [καὶ δέκα?].

Translation

Text 1: *Titus Vabeisius, son of Lucius, registered in the Pollia voting-tribe, (made this tomb) for his loving son Lucius Vabeisius Lautus, son of Titus, registered in the Pollia voting-tribe.*

Text 2: *I, Lautos, here I lie... in this sepulchre... [having lived] nine (or nineteen?) years.*

Epigraphic comments: Both texts are centred, and the third line is shorter than the other two.

All the letters are carved with serifs, in the form of little transversal lines. These can be observed at the head and foot of the vertical, horizontal and diagonal strokes tracing the letters, in the Latin one also at the end of the curved strokes.

The strokes of the Latin letters are engraved with a square-point chisel. In the first line the letters are regular and their size is more than twice the size of those in the subsequent lines. The letters in the second and third lines are less regular: in particular the O's are smaller than the other symbols. It is

notable, in the third line, the common letter exchange V for I in the superlative adjective. Moreover, all the words seem to be divided by irregular punctuation marks.

The strokes of the Greek letters, instead, are made with a smaller pointed chisel, so that they are less wide and less deeply engraved. The sigma is carved in the lunate form (C). The same model is used for the epsilon (Ϲ).

Text 1: Clearly the size of the letters in the first line is intended to highlight the name of Titus Vabeisius, father of the deceased and dedicator of the monument, and to underline the fact he was a Roman citizen, and had been from apparently almost a generation. It is possible that he voluntarily neglected the *cognomen*, perhaps because it derived from an indigenous personal name. A strong confirmation of the right condition is given from the evidence of the mention of the voting district.

The *nomen* Vabeisius was unknown until now in this Latin form, according to the *Epigraphik-Datenbank Clauss / Slaby* (EDCS). Even if there are no direct comparisons, the presence in the eastern regions of Greek onomastic forms such as Βαβας[11], Βαβεος[12] or Βαβαείτη[13] for which it is possible to presuppose a spirantization [b] > [v], or more likely Οὐαβαῖος[14], might argue in favour of the hypothesis that the *nomen* was probably composed on the basis of a name of local or Near Eastern origins.

The *cognomen* of the son, *Lautus*, is attested in different areas of the Roman Empire, even though only in a limited number of cases[15]. The Greek onomastic form (Λαῦτος) is equally documented[16].

---

11 *RECAM* II, 37 (Galatia).

12 *MUSJ* 36, 1959, 14, n. 21 (Dura-Europos). *Cf. IGLS* XVII, 1, 491: *Babaeus* (dead in Palmyra, but originated from Hierapolis, in Syria).

13 *MAMA* V, 216 (Nacolea, modern Seyitgazi, in Phrygia).

14 *SEG* 38, 1564-1965 and 1969 (Hierapolis); *IGLS* XVII, 1, 515 (Palmyra).

15 *Lautus*: *CIL* V, 1028 = Pais 82 = *InscrAqu* 726 = *IEAquil* 419; *CIL* VI, 3588; *CIL* VI, 11206 = Sinn 65; Pais 1077, 83; *CIL* VIII, 8543; *CIL* X, 2930; *CIL* XIII, 3535 = *CAG*, 62, 2, 493. *Lauta*: *CIL* VIII, 4281; *CAG*, 71, 1, p 145; *ILAfr* 162, 45 = *Haidra*, 5, 177. In addition to these examples there are a couple of inscriptions dating to the Christian era and coming from Aquileia: *CIL* V, 1595 = *InscrAqu* 3346 = *ILCV* 1311 = *EMC* 229 = Zettler 197; *InscrAqu* 3371 = *EMC* 249 = Zettler 205 = *AE* 1975, 416n.

16 Γάϊος Ἑτερήϊος Ποπλίου υἱὸς Λαῦτος, from Halasarna (Kos): *SbBerlin* 483, 4 = *Syll.*³ 793 (ll. 1-13) = *IGR* IV, 1101 (ll. 32-201).

Concerning the voting-tribe Pollia, it is to be taken into consideration that the ancient Pontic centers of Sinope, promoted to the rank of Roman colony, and Amaseia, were probably registered in this tribe[17].

The exchange between the vowels *i* and *u* was very common (VÄÄNÄ-NEN, 1982, p. 83-84), as far as the reading *dulcissumus* instead of *dulcissimus*, that appears for example, in different cases and genders, in some inscriptions from Italy[18], Gallia Narbonensis[19], Hispania Citerior[20] and Africa Proconsularis[21].

Text 2: The letters' size is regular. The funerary inscription seems to address a hypothetical traveller, so that it is not to be excluded that the final remaining letters on the first line, ΠΑ, may introduce the word παροδεῖτα, or a synonym of it.

At the beginning of the second line, there seems to be no letter before the N, although some signs can be noticed on the stone surface. The expression (τῶιδ') ὑπὸ τύμβωι is attested with little variants in Asia Minor and also in the Black Sea region, even though on inscriptions pertinent to different historical periods[22]. The sequence [----]ΝΗ ΤΩΙ may also be interpreted as [----]ΝΗΤΩΙ.

In the third line, a lunate sigma seems to precede the numeral. This probably indicated the age of the deceased, nine or rather nineteen, perhaps expressed though a typical formula like ἐτῶν ζωᾶς. In fact, considering that the relief could possibly represent Lautus himself as a soldier, the age indicated in the inscription was probably nineteen.

Comments: Despite the brevity of its bilingual inscription, the monument

---

17 Sinope: *CIL* XIII, 6502 (from Mudau, in Germania superior): *Fortunae sac(rum) / Brittones Trip(utienses) / qui sunt sub cura / T(iti) Mani T(iti) f(ilii) Pollia / Magni Sῑ i ̔nope / |(centurionis) leg(ionis) XXII P(rimigeniae) P(iae) F(idelis) o(pus) p(erfecerunt)*. Amaseia: *EE* II, 336 (from Alexandria): *C(aius) Niger C(ai) f(ilius) Pol(lia) miss(icius) / Amasia et M(arcus) / Longinus M(arci) f(ilius) Pol(lia) Gangr(is) / mil(es) leg(ionis) III |(centuria) Laeli Tiron(is)*. Cf. Grotefend (1863, p. 147), Kubitschek (1889, p.251-252). Also *cf*. Polverari (1981).

18 *CIL* VI, 5615 (from Rome): *dulcissum[---]*; *CIL* VI, 36111 (from Rome): *dulcissumae*; *AE* 1976, 248 (from Iulia Concordia): *dulcissumo*; *InscrIt* 13, 2, 22 = *AE* 1923, 24 = *AE* 1923, 25 = *AE* 1924, 100 = *AE* 1937, 5 (from Verulae): *[d]ulcis(s)um[ae]*.

19 CIL XII, 3855 (from Nemausus): *dulcissum(ae)*.

20 *CIL* II, 3671 = *CIBalear* 83 (from Palma): *dulcissumae*.

21 *ZPE* 152, 99 = *CLEAfr* 2, 39 = *AE* 2005, 1669 (from Ammaedara): *dulcissumus*.

22 *Sardis* 7, 1, 104; *Smyrna* 248; *TAM* V, 1, 793; *TAM* V, 1, 805; *Miletos* 464; *Halikarnassos* 134; *Chios* 287; *SEG* 54, 790; *Clara Rhodos* 2, 216, 57; and also: *CIRB* 122; *IGBulg* I², 12(3).

offers the opportunity to appreciate two different languages and writings forms, used to address different types of audience, and to express different conceptual aspects connected with the deceased.

The Latin version, on the one hand, has a more political and representative meaning. The text indeed highlights the onomastic, consequently emphasizing the fact that the family had been in possession of the Roman citizenship for at least three generations. In fact, the deceased's grandfather, whose name is recalled through the patronymic, already possessed the Roman citizenship. Even the onomastic exchange, with the repetitive passage of *praenomen* from grandfather to grandson, strengthens the feeling and the idea of family continuity, which only the death can interrupt. In this context, addressing a Latin-speaking group of individuals, the subject of the action is the father, the surviving element of the family. In a provincial context like that of the ancient Cerasus the possession of the Roman citizenship was evidently considered a privilege and could apparently contribute to create a distance between the citizen himself and the rest of the local community.

The Greek text has a different purpose than the Latin one. The Greek version insists on the figure of the young deceased, apparently without indication of the *tria nomina* and without mention of his father, neither directly nor through the patronymic. The deceased, instead, as the subject, addresses directly and in a familiar way the Greek-speaking community. In this case, the intent is to connect with and to project him within the traditional and local context.

Dating: It is very difficult to propose a dating for the monument and its two inscriptions.

The poor quality of the iconography does not, in fact, provide any useful information. The mention of the voting-tribe is also not particularly useful in this context, because the moment in which some provincial communities like Sinope and Amaseia received the citizenship and were, consequently, registered in the tribe Pollia remains unknown.

However, when considering the absence of the *cognomen* of the dedicator and the variability in the *praenomina*, a relative higher chronology seems to be preferable. A *terminus post quem* may be provided by the Roman annexation of the territory of Cerasus, after the "abdication" of Polemon II, in A.D. 64 (BURRELL, 2004, p. 210; MAGIE, 1950, p. 561; MAREK, 2003, p. 45; SØRENSEN, 2016, p. 162-164; BARRET, 1978). Therefore, it is possible to

propose a chronological collocation between the end of the first century and the middle of the second century A.D.

No. 2: Funerary stele with a text in Greek; no accession number (**figs. 2a-c**).

Fig. 2a

Fig. 2b

Fig. 2c

Material: Local, dark red, porous sandstone or volcanic stone. Very similar to no. 1.

State of preservation: Perhaps intentionally broken on all sides, devoid both of the upper and the left portions, except the right edge which is partially chipped. Because of the damages the upper part is tapered and the stone's edges have suffered extensive damage. There are chips missing from the inscription and elsewhere. Most surfaces are heavily weathered with some encrustation.

Measurements: Max. h. ca. 44 cm, max. w. ca. 18 cm, th. ca. 17 cm, h. of letters ca. 3.2 cm and h. of the interval between the lines ca. 4.0-4.8 cm.

Description: A funerary text is carved in the centre of the stone, its letters are widely spaced and deeply cut without any elaboration. The stele does not bear relief, at least in its state of preservation. The front face of the stone is levelled with a fine claw-chisel. Letters are cut within guidelines which are clearly visible in some parts. Upper part of a roughly executed panel is preserved at the

bottom side. Chisel marks concentrate on the right side of the text. Roughly flattened backside with punch marks.

Inscription (fig. 2d-e): Interpretation of this funerary text is not quite secure because of its damaged conditions; at the last three lines the text seems, however, to be written in a poetic form, perhaps an epigram, which was common in neighbouring Paphlagonia during the second and third centuries A.D.
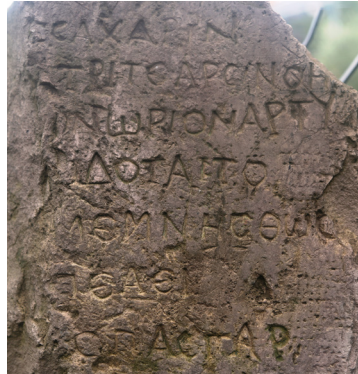
Fig. 2d

Fig. 2e

```
1      [---]A C Ω? N [---]
       [---]σεα χάριν
       [--- θυγ]ατρί τε Ἀρσινόηι
       [---] Ὀνώριον ἀρτύ[---]
5      [--- δ]ίδοται τὸ [[P---]]
       [---] μεμνήσθω O[---]
       [---]πε ἀεὶ [[---]]
       [---]ες· πᾶς γὰρ
       [---]
```

Translation:

```
1      [---]
       [---] benevolence/grace
       [---] to the daugther Arsinoe
       [---] Honorius to dispose/to arrange [---]
```

5   [---] *it is given* [---]
           [---] *it is to remember* [---]
           [---] *always* [---]
           [---] *all in fact*
           [---]

Epigraphic comments: Of the eight lines of the original consolatory text, only the ending section on the right side partially survives. Guidelines (eventually double lined) seem to have been traced on the left margin on the second, third and fourth lines. However, the text is not regularly and correctly aligned. Therefore, they could be marks traced after the redaction of the text, maybe due to the dragging of the stone.

On the right side, particularly at the end of the fifth and seventh lines, a re-working of the stone's surface can be noted. It was realised using a toothed chisel, evidently posterior to the inscription.

It is plausible that this was a remaking which brought by the elision of part of the text, probably erroneous or that had become superfluous, of which, however, a few signs are still distinguishable, amongst which the loop of a rho.

The text is characterized by letters with irregular forms, some of them are bigger (N), higher, others have a long stroke which goes on below the baseline (P) or strokes rising above (Y). In particular, the last three letters of the fourth line (PTY) reach a considerable dimension; the obliquous strokes of the upsilon rise up so high that they almost touch the letters of the preceding line.

The first surviving line of text seems particularly damaged and only a few letters can be totally or partially identified. An alpha can be seen clearly, followed maybe by a lunate sigma (C). These are followed by a particularly damaged space where it is only possible to distinguish a vertical stroke followed by a bar culminating in a hook. At first sight, this could seem the inferior part of a Latin L, thus opening the possibility of a first text in Latin. Although it is in all probability a portion of an omega, such as the one in the fourth line, which presents semi-curves particularly flattened at their base. The spacing between the first and the following line is quite large, so as to suggest a clear-cut division between the texts, with a definite change of register.

In line 2 two parallel strokes on top and bottom of the space, given that the epsilon and sigma are all lunate, these bars may belong to a beta or theta or another square letter. At the beginning of the second line the sequence ---

σεα may eventually be read as ---εσα or a feminine participle in -οσα/-ωσα. Epsilon and lunate sigma, in fact, are realized in the same way, with a very closed semi-circle and, in the case of the epsilon, the simple addition of a short stroke in the middle, sometimes horizontal, sometimes obliquous. In these conditions it seems difficult to advance a concrete proposal for the restitution of the term preceding the substantive χάριν.

Apparently, some strokes in the third line could delineate an initial Α, which would allow the integration of [θυγ]ατρί as the first word, followed by the personal name Ἀρσινόη. But it could be a casual damage on the stone. As an alternative, the word could be [μ]ητρί.

Partial traces of the initial omicron of the name Ὀνώριος, the Greek form of the Latin name Honorius, in accusative in the text, survive in the fourth line. As for the reading APTY- at the end of the line, the upsilon is bigger than the rest of the letters; but a reading APTI - may provide more parallels, unless it is a spelling mistake: the name is followed by a term which could be integrated with different solutions, amongst which verbal forms derived from the verbs ἀρτύεν or ἀρτύνειν, or a proper name, such as Ἀρτύμης or Ἀρτυμέος in the form of a patronymic.

At the beginning of the fifth line an iota can be clearly distinguished, which allows the easy integration of the text with the medio-passive form of the verb δίδωμι. This seems to be followed by the article τὸ, however, the fact that this area of the stone appears to have been re-worked on at a later time opens this up to different interpretations. Perhaps δ]ίδοται should be followed by a fullstop and a new sentence should start with τὸ continued in the next line.

On the sixth line the perfect middle-passive third person imperative form (μεμνήσθω) can be clearly identified, followed by an omicron or a lunate sigma.

In the seventh line, after an undistinguishable term, the adverb ἀεὶ can be read, followed by an ample space which was apparently reworked on. At the beginning of the line as the left bar of ∏ is missing, so that it could actually also be a badly carved T.

Another unidentifiable word, ending with a lunate sigma, begins the eighth line, followed by the substantive πᾶς and the adverb γὰρ, the presence of which presupposes the existence of one or more text lines of which no trace remains on the monument (**figs. 2a and 2c**).

Dating: The monument does not contain any useful element for its dating. Indeed, the two onomastic elements, Arsinoe[23] and Honorius, seem at first sight antithetical. In fact, the first name was quite widespread during the Hellenistic period, when it used to distinguish the princesses of Macedonian dynasties. The second, instead, was more common during the late antique era. However, both names are attested during a great part of the imperial era. As a pure hypothesis the monument could be dated to the first half of the third century A.D., as most of the inscriptions in Paphlagonia and Pontus; but it is difficult to confine the dating range more closely.

Notes and acknowledgements

Dossiê

---

23 An Αὐρηλία Ἀρσινόη is known from Pompeiopolis in Paphlagonia, from an inscription dated to A.D. 242, cf. Marek (1993, 147, inscription no. P. 36, l.3 and 12). Another individual named Ἀρσινόη is known from Neoclaudiopolis, modern Vezirköprü, in eastern Paphlagonia (ANDERSON, CUMONT & GRÉGOIRE, 1910).

Bibliography

ANDERSON, J. G., CUMONT, Franz and GRÉGOIRE, Henri. **Studia Pontica III : Recueil des inscriptions grecques et latines du Pont et de l'Arménie**. Brussells 1910.

DE ANGELIS, Stefano. Il ciliegio nelle fonti letterarie greche e latine. **Quaderni urbinati di cultura classica, new series** 64-1, 2000, p. 109-126.

ARIKAN ERCIYAS, Burcu. Cotyora, Kerasus and Trapezus: the three colonies of Sinope. Eds. D. V. Grammenos – E. K. Petropoulos, **Ancient Greek colonies in the Black Sea**, vol. 2, British Archaeological Reports, International Series 1675. Oxford, 2001, p. 1195-1206.

BARRETT, Anthony. Polemo II of Pontus and M. Antonius Polemo. **Historia: Zeitschrift für Alte Geschichte** 27-3, 1978, p. 437-448.

BRYER, Anthony. The question of Byzantine mines in the Pontos: Chalybian iron, Chaldian silver, Koloneian alum and the mummy of Cheriana. **AS** 31, 1981, p. 133-150.

BRYER, Anthony; WINFIELD, David. The Byzantine monuments and topography of the Pontos, vol. I. **Dumbarton Oaks Studies** vol. 20. Washington, DC 1985.

BURRELL, Barbara. **Neokoroi. Greek cities and Roman emperors**, Cincinnati classical studies, new series 9. Leiden/Boston, MA 2004.

FERNOUX, Henri Louis. Guerres, cités et mondes indigènes du Pont-Euxin et de la Propontide aux Ve et IVe siècles av. J.-C. . **Pallas. Revue d'études antiques** 51 (1999) (=*Guerres et sociétés dans les mondes grecs à l'époque classique : colloque de La Sophau, Dijon, 26, 27, et 28 mars 1999*, vols. 51-53. Toulouse – Le Mirail 1999) 173-204 <http://www.persee.fr/doc/palla_0031-0387_1999_num_51_1_1581>.

GRETHLEIN, Jonas. Xenophon's Anabasis from character to narrator, **The Journal of Hellenic Studies** 132, 2012, 23-40.

GROTEFEND, Carl Ludwig. **Imperium Romanum tributim discriptum. Die geographische Vertheilung der römischen Tribus im ganzen römischen Reiche**. Hannover, 1863.

KUBITSCHEK, Wilhelm. **Imperium romanum tributim discriptum**. Prauge, Vienna, Leipzig 1889.

MAGIE, David. **Roman rule in Asia Minor to the end of the third century after Christ**, 2 vols. Princeton, NJ 1950.

MAREK, Christian. **Stadt, Ära und Territorium in Pontus-Bithynia und Nord-Galatia**, Deutsches Archäologisches Institut, Abteilung Istanbul, Istanbuler Forschungen 39. Tübingen 1993.

_____. **Pontus et Bithynia. Die römischen Provinzen im Norden Kleinasiens**, Orbis provinciarum VI, Zaberns Bildbände zur Archäologie. Sonderbände der Antike Welt. Mainz on the Rhine, 2003.

MANOLEDAKES, Manolis. Choirades, Kerasous, Pharnakeia: Observations on three ancient place-names in the southern Black Sea . **Ancient West & East 9**, 2010, p.135-153.

Dossiê

PÉDECH, Paul. La géographie urbaine chez Strabon. **Ancient Society 2**, 1971, p. 234-253.

POLVERARI, A. La tribù Pollia a Sena e nell'ager Gallicus. **Antiqua, Rivista dell'Archeoclub d'Italia** 21, 1981, p. 54-55.

SØRENSEN, Søeren Lund. **Between kingdom and koinon. Neapolis/Neoklaudiopolis and the Pontic cities**, Geographica historica 33. Stuttgart, 2016.

VÄÄNÄNEN, Veiko. **Introduzione al latino volgare**. Bologna 1982.

WEIMERT, H. **Wirtschaft als landschaftsgebundenes Phänomen. Die antike Landschaft Pontos – Eine Fallstudie**, Europäische Hochschulschriften, Reihe III, Geschichte und ihre Hilfswissenschaften, vol. 242. Frankfurt on the Main, Bern, New York, Nancy, 1984.

WINFIELD, David. The northern routes across Anatolia. **AS 27**, 1977, p. 151-166.

WOJAN, Franck. Kérasonte du Pont sous l'empire romain. Etude historique et corpus monétaire.**Revue numismatique** 159, 2003, p.257-290 <http://www.persee.fr/doc/numi_0484-8942_2003_num_6_159_2515>.

Figures captions

Map 1: Main sites and museums in Pontus and elsewhere in Turkish Black Sea, as well as names referred in the text (by Sami Patacı, 2018).

Figs. 1a-e: Funerary (?) stele with a text in Greek; Museum of Giresun, no accession number (by Mustafa Apaydın, 2017).

Figs. 2a-d: Funerary stele with a bilingual text; Museum of Giresun, accession number 41 (by Mustafa Apaydın, 2017).