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New Inscriptions from late antique Aphrodisias

In the years 1995-2007 a series of inscriptions dating from Late Antiquity (late 3rd-7th cent.), mostly graffiti, were either found during the excavation or were seen by the author and other members of the excavation team in various buildings of the city. The most important of these inscriptions are presented in this article.¹ I have not included graffiti, small fragments, individual letters, and inscriptions on pottery. The dates suggested for these texts are in most cases approximate. The dating criteria are the letter forms,² the onomastics, and the use of certain expressions and religious symbols (especially of crosses). All dates are A.D. unless otherwise stated. I should like to express my warm thanks to the Directors of the Aphrodisias Excavation R.R.R. Smith (Oxford) and C. Ratté (New York, now Ann Arbor) for entrusting me with the study of this material and for supporting my research at Aphrodisias in the years 1995-1997 and 1999-2007; Joyce Reynolds (Cambridge) and Charlotte Roueché (London) for the permission to consult and refer to unpublished material;³ the Alexander S. Onassis Foundation for financing my research in 1997; the Dorot Foundation for a grant which enabled me to study the

1. The following abbreviations are used:

ALA: Charlotte Roueché, *Aphrodisias in Late Antiquity*, (London 1989).

e-ALA: Charlotte Roueché, *Aphrodisias in Late Antiquity*, electronic second edition, London 2004 (<http://insaph.kcl.ac.uk/ala2004>).

For the late antique inscriptions of Aphrodisias see *ALA* and *e-ALA*. For the other inscriptions found in Aphrodisias during my research in the years 1995-2001 (including a fragment of Diocletian's price edict) see Angelos Chaniotis, «New Inscriptions from Aphrodisias (1995-2001)», *AJA* 108 (2004) 377-416.

2. For the letter forms in the late inscriptions of Aphrodisias see *ALA*, pp. 331-334.

3. See now the electronic publication of the largest part of this material in *IAph2007* (<http://insaph.kcl.ac.uk/iaph2007/index.html>).



Fig. 1. Inscription no 1.

epigraphic material in the years 1997-1998; and the Gisela and Reinhold Häcker Stiftung which supported my research in the year 2001.

1. Inscription recording repairs to a building

Inv. no. 02.024 (I 02.003). Marble plaque broken on the left side; found reused on the pavement at the southeast corner of the North Agora in 2002. (Fig. 1). Height 27.2 cm, width 45 cm, depth c. 4 cm., letter height 2-4 cm.

c. fifth century AD.

† Εύτυχῶς †
 [Ἀνεν]εώθη κ(αὶ) τοῦτο τὸ ἔρ-
 [γον ἐκ] θεμελίων ἐπὶ Φλ(αβίου)
⁴ [c. 4-5]ου τοῦ περιβλ(έπτου) τριβ(ούνου)
 [πατρ(ὸς) ? τ]ῆς λα[μ]πρ(οτάτης) Ἀφροδ(ισιών) μητρ(οπόλεως).

The text is written within double guidelines; cf. *ALA* 157; *SEG* XXXVI 970
 A. The abbreviation sign ⁵ is used after the letters K (l. 2), Λ (l. 3), Λ and B (l. 4), and P, Δ and P (l. 5).

With good fortune. This work too was renewed from the foundations up under Fl(avius) [---]us, spectabilis, tribunus, [father?] of the most splendid metropolis of the Aphrodisieis.

This text belongs to a large group of inscriptions recording building activities in late antique Aphrodisias, from the first half of the fourth to the sixth century.⁴ The restored building cannot be identified. The formulations used in this text have close parallels in contemporary inscriptions.⁵

The person responsible for the work had a high rank in the imperial administration, as the title περιβλεπτος implies. In Aphrodisias this title is attested for

4. *ALA* 17-20, 22, 30, 34/35?, 38-40, 42-44, 51, 52, 56-58, 60, 62, 66, 67?, 72, 83, 87; *SEG* XL 949; XLVI 1398; cf. the comments of Charlotte Roueché in *ALA*, esp. pp. 35, 43f., 69-71, 79f. For building activities in Aphrodisias in late Antiquity see Christopher Ratté, «New Research on the Urban Development of Aphrodisias in Late Antiquity», in D. Parrish (ed.), *Urbanism in Western Asia Minor. New Studies on Aphrodisias, Ephesos, Hierapolis, Pergamon, Perge and Xanthos*, («JRA Suppl.» 45; Portsmouth 2001) 117-47, esp. 125-38.

5. The benediction εύτυχῶς: e.g., *ALA* 32, 85, 206; cf. *ALA* 43: ἐπ' εύτυχίᾳ. Topos inscription: *ALA* 206. Ἀνενεώθη καὶ τοῦτο τὸ ἔργον: *ALA* 42. Καὶ τοῦτο τὸ ἔργον: *ALA* 43, 83, 90; *SEG* XL 949; cf. Louis Robert, *Documents de l'Asie Mineure méridionale*, (Paris 1966) 46. Ἀνανεόω: *ALA* 48 and 52. Ἐκ θεμελίων: *ALA* 19 and 20.

the governor Fl. Palmatus (*ALA* 62: περίβλεπτος ὑπατικός) in the late fifth or early sixth century.⁶ The same title is used for other tribuni: Taurus in Kos (*Iscr. Cos* EV 63, fourth/fifth century), Romulus in Diokletianopolis (*EAM* 203 + *SEG* XXXVII 475, fifth/sixth century), Faustinus in Prusa ad Olympum (*I. Prusa* 1095), Fl. Martyrius in Arabia (*SEG* XXXV 1582, c. 550), and an anonymous man in Tarsos (*SEG* XXXVII 1348). He probably was a *trinunus et notarius* like-Taurus, Romulus, and Faustinus.⁷

The genitive [τ]ῆς λα[μ]πρ(οτάτης) Ἀφροδ(ισιέων) μητρ(οπόλεως) does not refer to this office, since the *tribuni et notarii* did not have a local assignment. It is part of an honorary title of this person, probably πατρὸς τῆς λαμπροτάτης Ἀφροδισιέων μητροπόλεως. This title is attested for Fl. Athenaios in the late fifth or early sixth century (*ALA* 62). The title πατήρ, without the addition of τῆς λαμπροτάτης Ἀφροδισιέων μητροπόλεως, was awarded to several other important men in Aphrodisias, the *scholastici* Fl. Ampelius (*ALA* 22 and 43), Fl. Photius (*ALA* 69 and 238), and Rhodopaios (*ALA* 85), and the councillor Theopompos (*ALA* 89). Another possible restoration is κτίστης, a title awarded to several benefactors.⁸ However, when it is followed by the name of the city it is used for governors.⁹ The title ἀνανεωτὴς τῆς λαμπρᾶς μητροπόλεως, attested for Helladios (*ALA* 17) in the fourth century seems to long, but we cannot exclude an abbreviation.¹⁰ The title of Aphrodisias as λαμπρά or λαμπροτάτη μητρόπολις is often attested.¹¹

The name Flavius (post-Constantine), the use of the cross, and the letter forms suggest a date after c. 350. The use of the title περίβλεπτος for a tribunus makes a date in the fifth century most likely.

2. Fragment of a Christian dedication

Inv. No. 01.012 (I 01.031). Fragment of a marble pedestal with moulding and feet

6. Other governors with this title, e.g., *I. Ephesos* 1032 + *SEG* XXXVI 1032 (sixth century); *SEG* XXXVII 1321-1322 (comes, fifth/sixth century); *SEG* XLII 991 (c. 518-527); *I. Side* 171.

7. Denis Feissel, «Inventaires en vue d'un recueil des inscriptions historiques de Byzance, IV: Inscriptions de Thessalie (à l'exception des Météores)», *T&MByz* 10 (1987) 362.

8. *ALA* 7, 14, 39, 40, 62, 83, 87.

9. *ALA* 39 (Dulcitus): [?]κτίστη]ς τῆς Ἀφ[ρ]οδισιάδος. *ALA* 62 (Fl. Palmatus): κτίστην τῆς μητροπόλεως.

10. Cf. the expression ἀνανεωτὴς τῶν ληθαργηθισῶν τέρψεων in *ALA* 87 (for Rhodopaios).

11. *ALA* 17, 19, 42, 43, 62, 65.



Fig. 2. Inscription no 2 A.



Fig. 3. Inscription no 2 B.

on the bottom, broken on the top and on two sides. When it was reused, it was turned around and inscribed on two adjacent faces. (Figs. 2-3). It is not certain whether the deep hole on the stone was made in the period of its second use or even later. Stray find in a field in the south necropolis. Height 31 cm, width 38 cm, depth 23 cm (preserved), letter height 5-5.5 cm (A), 4.2 cm (B). Found in a field in the south necropolis.

Fourth century AD or later.

A [-----].ος
[-----]ς ἐπαρχ-

B [εὐ]ξάμ[ενος?]

A 2. A form of ἐπαρχος or ἐπαρχία.

3. Christian prayer of Prokopios

I 00.002. Three joining fragments of a marble plaque, decorated with an engraved circle which encloses a cross and two birds. A hole in the centre of the plaque was made when it was reused. The upper left corner and the entire lower left quarter are missing. (Figs. 4-5). Found by Laura Hebert in the Temple-Church. Height 75 cm, length 90 cm, depth 8 cm. An inscription is engraved above the circle. Letter height 1.7-2 cm.

c. fifth century AD or later.

[Κ(ύρι)ε β]οήθι τῷ δού ^{vacat} λῷ σου Προκοπίῳ.

God, help Prokopios, your servant.

Similar prayers have been found in the Temple-Church.¹² The name Prokopios is already attested in Aphrodisias in Late Antiquity, for a *theosebes* (fourth century)¹³ and for a Christian (sixth/seventh century).¹⁴ The popularity of the name increased after the 3rd cent.¹⁵

12. *ALA* 117 and 118.

13. *SEG* XXXVI 970, 4th century; for the date of this inscription see Angelos Chaniotis, «The Jews of Aphrodisias: New Evidence and Old Problems», *SCI* 21 (2002) 209-242.

14. *ALA* 91 (*IAph2007* 15.363).

15. Chaniotis, *ibid.*, 235.



Fig. 4. Inscription no. 3.



Fig. 5. Inscription no. 3 (detail).



Figs. 6-8. Inscription no. 4, frs. a, b, c.

4. Christian prayer

I 99.004. Three non-joining fragments of a marble screen. a) Broken on the right and the left side and at the bottom. Height 15 cm, length 19 cm, depth 19 cm. Inscribed with a cross (3.5 cm.). b) Broken on the right and the left side and at the bottom. On the flat top a small cross (2 cm). Height 15 cm, length 11 cm, depth 19 cm; letter height 2.5-2.7 cm. c) Broken on the right and left sides, on the back, and on the bottom. Height 8 cm, length 10 cm, depth 11 cm, letter height 2.5-3.3 cm. (Figs. 6-8). Found during the removal of architectural fragments placed in rear chamber 6 of the Bouleuterion, originally from the area of the Temple-Church.

c. fifth century AD (or later).

a *b* *c*
[---]^ς † βοήθησ[ον --- τοῖς ---]φοῖς κ(αὶ) π[---]

a. Probably [Κύ(ριε)] or [Χριστέ] followed by the abbreviation sign ^ς. *c.* Perhaps [τοῖς ἀδελ]φοῖς. After the K, the abbreviation sign ^ς.

[*Lord?*] help [*the brothers?*] and [---].

Christian inscriptions of the βοήθει/βοήθησον type are very common in Aphrodisias.¹⁶



Fig. 9. Inscription no 5.

16. ALA 92-94, 97, 113 ii, 117 i, 118 iii, 125, 129 iii, 132 ii, 134 i-ii, 135, 136, 137 i, iv, 141, 142, 145, 174.

5. Christian prayer

Inv. No. 01.013 (I 01.030). Fragment broken on all sides. (Fig. 9). Height 29 cm, width 57 cm, depth 13.5 cm, letter height 3.5-6.5 cm. Found in the stone quarries.

c. fifth century AD or later.

Christogram Κύριε βοήθ[ι] or βοήθ[ησον].

This common Christian prayer formula is often attested in Aphrodisias.¹⁷

6. Fragment

I 99.006. Fragment of a marble block, broken on all sides, inscribed with letters engraved carelessly. (Fig. 10). Height 16 cm, width 17 cm, depth 13 cm; letter height 0.7-1.5 cm. Found during the removal of architectural fragments placed in rear chamber 6 of the Bouleuterion, originally from the area of the Temple-Church.

Third century AD (or later).

TN
[---]ΙΟ οἰκονο-
[---] |

1 An oblique stroke above the N; the number 350? 2 A form of οἰκονόμος or of the verb οἰκονομέω rather than οἰκον.

For an oikonomos in Aphrodisias see *PPA* 45.11 G. The verb οἰκονομέω is used in a Christian prayer (*ALA* 142: βοήθησον κε οἰκονόμεσον).

7. Invocation

I 99.005. Marble cornice with moulding on three sides, broken on the back. (Fig. 11). Height 27 cm, width 42 cm, depth 29 cm (bottom) 40 cm (top), letter height 4.5-5 cm. Found during the removal of architectural fragments placed in rear chamber 6 of the Bouleuterion, originally from the area of the Temple-Church.

c. fourth century AD.

Ἄγαθῇ Τύχῃ.

This invocation is often used in late antique contexts, usually in honorary inscriptions.¹⁸

17. *ALA* 94, 136, 137 i and 142.

18. Cf. *ALA* 26, 27, 62, 82, 85, 87.

8. Christian invocation

I 99.029. Marble capital of a column (fig. 12), broken on the left side; inscribed in a panel (42 x 14 cm). Height 29 cm, width 78 cm, depth 45 cm, letter height 5 cm. Found by Michelle Berenfeld in the 'Bishop's Palace'.

c. fifth century AD.

[‘Α]γαθὴ Τύχη.

Cf. the text no. 7.

9. Epitaph of Ioulianος

I 02.014. Upper part of a marble plaque found in the Temple-Church in 2002; a frame surrounds an undecorated panel. The inscription is written on the frame. For a similar plaque cf. *ALA* 175. (Fig. 13). Height 41 cm, width 66 cm, depth 15.5 cm, letter height 3-4 cm. Found in the Temple-Church.

c. fourth century AD.

Ιουλιανοῦ.

The name Ioulianος is quite common in Aphrodisias.¹⁹

10. Epitaph of Theodoretos

I 02.020. Marble plaque (cf. no. 9) found by Michele Berenfeld built in the east wall of room 29 of the so-called Bishop's Palace, only partly visible. (Fig. 14). Height c. 1 m, width 83 cm, depth 14 cm, letter height at least 7.5 cm.

Fourth century AD or later.

Θεοδωρήτ[ου].

Or Θεοδωρήτ[ας].

19. Joyce Reynolds, *Aphrodisias and Rome*, (London 1982) 113-115 no. 14; J.M.R. Cormack, «Inscriptions from Aphrodisias (found in 1893)», *BSA* 59 (1964) 19 no. 10; G. Doublet - G. Deschamps, «Inscriptions de Carie - II. Ghiéra (Aphrodisias)», *BCH* 14 (1890) 607 no. 3; *MAMA* VIII 510, 551, 564; Charlotte Roueché, *Performers and Partisans at Aphrodisias*, (London 1993) 18 no. 1.5.iii, 166 no. 51 line 19, 176-178 no. 55. The name also appears in several unpublished texts.



Fig. 10. Inscription no 6.



Fig. 11. Inscription no 7.

The personal names Theodoretos (*ALA* 92-93) and Theodoreta are attested among the early Christian population of Aphrodisias (*ALA* 164).

11. Fragment with a monogram

Inv. No. 01.022 (I 01.006). Fragment of a marble plaque broken on all sides, found in the room north of the apse of the Temple-Church, in a stone storage pile. Height 16 cm, width 8.5 cm, depth 4.3 cm, letter height 7 cm.

Fourth century AD or later.

A monogram consisting of ΠΕΡ and possibly Τ. Perhaps Πέτρ(ος).

Summary

This article presents 11 new inscriptions found during the recent excavations at Aphrodisias in Asia Minor (1995-2007). A building inscription (1, c. 5th cent. AD) commemorates the restauration of an unknown building by the περίβλεπτος τριβοῦνος Flavius [---]. This is the first attestation of this office of the Imperial administration in Aphrodisias. The anonymous benefactor may have had the honorary title πατήρ τῆς λαμπροτάτης Ἀφροδισιέων μητροπόλεως. The other inscriptions include a fragmentary Christian dedication (2, c. 4th cent. AD), three Christian prayers (3-5, c. 5th cent. AD), one of which preserves the name Προκόπιος (3), a fragment mentioning an οἰκονόμος or οἰκονόμοι (6, 3rd cent. AD), parts of honorary inscriptions with the invocation Ἀγαθῇ Τύχῃ (7-8, 4th and 5th cent. AD), the epitaphs of Ἰουλιανός (9, 4th cent. AD) and Θεοδώρητος (10, 4th cent. AD), and a monogram (Πέτρος?) on a plaque (11, 4th cent AD).



Fig. 12. Inscription no 8.



Fig. 13. Inscription no 9.



Fig. 14. Inscription no 10.