New Inscriptions from late antique Aphrodisias

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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and 1999-2007; Joyce Reynolds (Cambridge) and Charlotte Roueché (London) for the permission to consult and refer to unpublished material;³ the Alexander S. Onassis Foundation for financing my research in 1997; the Dorot Foundation for a grant which enabled me to study the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:

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.

† Εὐτυχῶς †

[\'Ανεν\]εώθη κ(αί) τούτο τὸ ἔρ-
[γον ἐκ] θεμελίων ἐπὶ Φλ(αβίου)

4 [c. 4-5]ου τοῦ περιβ(λέπτου) τριβ(ούνου)

The text is written within double guidelines; cf. *ALA* 157; *SEG* XXXVI 970

A. The abbreviation sign is used after the letters Κ (1. 2), Λ (1. 3), Λ and Β (1. 4), and Ρ, Δ and Ρ (1. 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 Aphrodisiēs.

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. The restored building cannot be identified. The formulations used in this text have close parallels in contemporary inscriptions.

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

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the governor Fl. Palmatus (ALA 62: περίβλεπτος ύπατικός) in the late fifth or early sixth century. 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 *t*ρινυνος *ν*οταριος like Taurus, Romulus, and Faustinus.

The genitive της λαμπρ(οτάτης) Άφροδ(ισιέων) μητρ(οπόλεως) does not refer to this office, since the *t*ρινυνος *ν*οταριοι did not have a local assignment. It is part of an honorary title of this person, probably πατήρ της λαμπρότατης Άφροδισίας 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 της λαμπρότατης Άφροδισίας 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 Rhodopiaios (ALA 85), and the councillor Theopompos (ALA 89). Another possible restoration is κτίστης, a title awarded to several benefactors. However, when it is followed by the name of the city it is used for governors. The title άνανεωτής της λαμπρότατης μητροπόλεως, attested for Helladios (ALA 17) in the fourth century seems to long, but we cannot exclude an abbreviation. The title of Aphrodisias as λαμπρά or λαμπρότατη μητροπόλις is often attested.

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...
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Fig. 2. Inscription no 2A.

Fig. 3. Inscription no 2B.

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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 έπαρ-

B [ε]ου]ξάμ[ενος?]

A 2. A form of έπαρχος or έπαρχία.

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 βοήθι τω δού λο ρ Προκοπίω.

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.
15. Chaniotis, ibid., 235.
Fig. 4. Inscription no. 3.

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

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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).

\[
\begin{array}{ccc}
 a & b & c \\
[- -] \uparrow \betaο\eta\thetaησ\sigmaν - - - το\iotaς - - - \phiο\iotaς κ(α)ι \pi[- -] \\
\end{array}
\]

a. Probably [Κύ(ριε)] or [Χριστέ] followed by the abbreviation sign \( \lambda \). c. Perhaps [το\iotaς \\deltaελα]φο\iotaς. After the K, the abbreviation sign \( \lambda \).

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

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

![Fig. 9. Inscription no 5.](http://epublishing.ekt.gr)
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).

ΤΝ

[---]Ο οίκονομ- ¹
[---] ¹

¹ An oblique stroke above the Ν; the number 350? ² A form of οίκονόμος or of the verb οίκονομέω rather than οίκον.

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

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.

Άγαθη 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 (42x14 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.

   [Ά]γαθη χ Τύχη.

   Cf. the text no. 7.

9. Epitaph of Ioulianos

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 Ioulianos 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 Θεοδωρήτα[ς].

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 τρφούνος 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 της Λαμπροτάτης Αφροδισίων 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 οικονόμος or οικονόμοι (6, 3rd cent. AD), parts of honorary inscriptions with the invocation 'Αγαθή Τύχη (7-8, 4th and 5th cent. AD), the epitaphs of Ιουλιανός (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.