

New Inscriptions from Kalecik/Ankara

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Abstract: In this study, two new inscriptions preserved in the garden of Kalecik Municipality in Kalecik District of Ankara Province are introduced. One of the inscriptions was identified by the Anatolian Civilizations Museum during research conducted in Kalecik in 2019 and was placed in the open-air display area in front of Kalecik Municipality. It is the epitaph of Aurelius Helios, dated to 228 AD. This inscription identifies the previously unknown village of Önouköme and the region named ALEBONÖN (Alebona?) in Kalecik. The second one is thought to be a supplication to God. The inscription contains meaningless letter combinations used to capture the listener's attention in the invocation to the father of the light repository part of Pistis Sophia, a Gnostic text dated to the 3rd-4th centuries AD. Additionally, it includes expressions composed of these combinations found in the magical texts believed to belong to Mithras, preserved in the National Library of France, in a broad codex referred to as the Greek Magical Papyri, also dated to the 3rd century AD.

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Introduction

Kalecik is located approximately 76 km northeast of Ankara, on the banks of the Kızılırmak River, between Çubuk to the west, Çankırı to the north and Kırıkkale to the south.¹ Vertebrate fossil deposits found in the Middle Miocene geologic layers are also found in Kalecik-Çandır and are interpreted as the oldest traces of life in the region.² Although there is no information about the early periods of Kalecik, the archaeological data belonging to the Hittite culture as a result of the excavations in İnandıktepe between Kalecik and Çankırı³ suggest that Kalecik was also inhabited by the Hittites. With the death of Alexander III of Macedon in 323 BC, the Hellenistic Kingdoms period began in Asia Minor and the Galatians from the north settled in the region after this date.⁴ The Galatian rule in the region continued under the protection of the Roman State after the Pergamon king Attalos III left the lands belonging to his kingdom to Rome by will. During Rome's struggles in Asia Minor, relations with the Galatians, who supported Rome, developed and the rulers of the Galatian tribes were defined as Roman lovers.⁵ Roman rule in the region continued after 25 BC under the name of Galatia Province and the province was divided into three settlements: Pessinus (Eskisehir-Balıhisar) under the Tolistobog Galatians, Tavium (Yozgat) under the Trokmi Galatians, and Ankyra, including Kalecik, under the Tektosag Galatians.⁶

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¹ Kalecik I: 13.

² Gençler Güray *et al.* 2021, 104.

³ Özgüç 1988.

⁴ *I.North Galatia* 13. The region includes Ankara, Çorum, Yozgat and part of Eskişehir.

⁵ Deiotarus, tetrarch of the Tolistobogs, one of the Galatian tribes, received the title "Rex Amicus Populi Romani" and the title "Philoromaos". Coşkun 2019, 156-157; Gençler Güray *et al.* 2021, 104.

⁶ *I.North Galatia* 20. Gençler Güray *et al.* 2021, 104.

The Galatian traces in Kalecik, which is at a crossroads between the Ankyra-Amasia and Ankyra-Gangra roads⁷, can be observed from the local names on the gravestones dated between the 1st and 3rd centuries AD and the names of the gods on the inscriptions associated with the cults. The changes in the political and socio-cultural structure of Rome in the 4th century AD are also observed in Kalecik. In particular, traces of Christianity were found in the archaeological finds recovered from the settlement known as Malos in the sources and thought to be the old Kalecik. The activities of St. Theodotos in Kalecik, mentioned in the Acta Sanctorum in the architectural blocks of the churches in the region, suggest that Kalecik was one of the centers of Christianity in Galatia.⁸

The first of the inscriptions in this study was found during the researches carried out by the Museum of Anatolian Civilizations in the Hasayaz neighbourhood of Kalecik in 2019 and placed in the exhibition area in the garden of Kalecik Municipality. The second one was discovered in 2020 during the Kalecik Castle Excavations carried out by the Museum of Anatolian Civilisations under the scientific supervision of Assoc. Prof. Dr. Çiğdem Gençler. The inscription was in the area used as a car park belonging to the municipality known as Kademe in the northeast of Kalecik Castle. Both inscriptions were studied in 2020 with the permission of the Museum of Anatolian Civilisations.

Nr. 1. Epitaph for Aurelius Helios

Marble gravestone. The upper part of the rectangular inscription is broken. The inscription was found in neighbourhood of Hasayaz and is now preserved in the garden of Kalecik Municipality.

Inv. No: Kalecik 2019/16

H: 71 cm; W: 50 cm; D: 37 cm; Lh: 3 cm.

- [c. 8-9 Αὐρη?]-
 λίου ἐγ τῶν ιδί-
 2 ων κατεσκεύασεν
 τ[ὸ] μνημῖον Αὐρ. Ἡ-
 4 λίου ἐξ Ὀνουκώμ-
 ης ΑΛΕΒΩΝΩΝ
 6 χαῖρε [π]α[ρ]οδεῖτα
 ἔτει γνσ'
 8 μνήμης χάριν.



Fig. 1

[NN of Aure]lius set up this memorial of Aur[e]lius Helios, who is from Onoukome? in the region of ΑΛΕΒΩΝΩΝ (Alebona?), from his own funds. Farewell, oh passers-by, year 253. In memory.

⁷ French 2012, 29-34; Gençler Güray *et al.* 2021, 104.

⁸ For more information see Mitchell 1982; Gençler Güray *et al.* 2021; Mitchell *et al.* 2021.

L.1: The broken part probably contains the name of a person, as we would expect to find the name of the builder of the tomb to have been written here. It is suggested that the ΑΙΟΥ in the second line is most likely the ending of the name Aurelius; ἐγ = ἐκ.

L.3/4: μνημῖον = μνημεῖον. It is thought that the tomb was built for Aurelius Helios. There seems to be an abbreviation sign after ΑΥΡ. An Aurelius Helios, son of Domnos from the village of Klossamanoi, is already known from another epitaph⁹ in the village of Akçataş of Kalecik.

L.4: ΕΞΩΝΟΥ or ΕΖΩΝΟΥ. It could have been transcribed as ἐξ ὧν οὐ/οῦ, but this does not make any sense within the context. The following word κώμη indicates that this was most probably a toponym prepositioned by ἐξ referring to the origin of the deceased Aurelius Helios. Though no proposition can be certain, it might be speculated that it was Ὦνου Κώμη, like Ἰππου Κώμη¹⁰ on the western border of Lycia. It is possible that this name is another variant of Οἰνουκώμη/Οἰκοκώμη, a settlement in Phrygia Pakatiane¹¹, if the diphthong οἰ was transformed into Ω¹². There were other villages in antiquity known from the inscriptions in region such as Klossamanoi¹³, Ikotarion¹⁴, Malos¹⁵, Dallapoze¹⁶. However, a settlement with this name has not been identified in the region before.

L.5: ΑΛΕΒΩΝΩΝ: Most probably a name of a district – either in ethnic form or as toponym – which included the mentioned κώμη above. In fact, an inscription¹⁷ from the Karahüyük village of Kalecik mentions the village of Malos in the district of Kalmizene. Similarly, ΑΛΕΒΩΝΩΝ may be the name of the district containing the village/settlement of Ὦνουκώμη.

Dating: As the starting date for the era of the region is 25 BC, when Galatia became a Roman province¹⁸, the year given as 253 is equal to 228 AD.

Nr. 2. Invocation of God or Voces Magicae

Rectangular limestone block used as a building stone and inscribed on two sides. On both the front (A) and the right side (B) there are 7 lines of Greek inscription. On the upper part of face A there is a dowel with an iron rod. The back side shows a sunken interior cut in the centre. The inscription was found on the surface in the parking area called Kademe, north-east of Kalecik castle and is preserved now in the garden of Kalecik Municipality. An inventory number has not yet been assigned.

H: 53 cm; W: 36 cm; D: 24cm; Lh: 3-5 cm.

⁹ *I.North Galatia* 203.

¹⁰ Hellenkemper – Hild 2004, 559 s.v. Hippokōmē/Hippukōmē.

¹¹ *Not. Ep.* 7, 9, 10, 13; Belke – Mersich 1990, 350 s.v. Oinukōmē.

¹² Gignac 1975, 294.

¹³ *I.North Galatia* 203; Belke 1984, 192.

¹⁴ *I.North Galatia* 204; Belke 1984, 178-179.

¹⁵ *I.North Galatia* 205; Belke 1984, 201-202.

¹⁶ *I.North Galatia* 206.

¹⁷ *I.North Galatia* 205.

¹⁸ Leschorn 1993, 398.

- A. [----] κύριο(ς)
 2 ἐν ^{vac.} οὐρανῶ
 νωψιθερ
 4 θερνωψ[ι]
 Ψινωθερ
 6 Ψ
 Ω
 B. .ΙΩΕΡ .
 2 κύριος
 ἐν
 4 οὐρανῶ
 νωψιθε[ρ]
 6 θερνωψ[ι]
 [Ψινωθερ]



Fig. 2) A-B

Our lord/father/god in the heaven; Nopsither, Thernopsi, Psinother.

L.A. 1: KYPIO is suggested to complete the first two lines of the inscription. The word Κύριος is an expression of addressing a master, father or god. This expression, which has a rural character, represents the invocation of God, especially in texts that include prayers for a good harvest, protection of primary crops and land, and protection from natural disasters.¹⁹ These texts, especially those containing the name of Jesus or angels with various names, show a sensitive concern for the fate of the agricultural economy and seem to represent Judeo-Christian piety.²⁰

L.A. 2: ἐν ^{vac.} οὐρανῶ: It is also thought to be similar to the phrase “Ἐπουρανίῳ” “lord/father/god in heaven” in the inscription recorded by Stephen Mitchell at Kalecik in 1982, dated to the 3rd century (?) AD.²¹ The epithet “ἐπουρανίους”, referring to the heavenly gods, was used in the cursing ritual of funerary inscriptions together with θεοὶ καταχθόνιοι (gods of the underworld).²² A.R.R. Sheppard, however, has argued that ἐπουρανίους is not often used as a divine epithet.²³

L.A. 3-5: ΝΩΨΙΘΕΡ ΘΕΡΝΩΨ ΨΙΝΩΘΕΡ: It is formed by the known magical “logos” ΨΙΝΩΘΕΡ ΝΩΦΙΘΕΡ ΘΕΡΝΩΨΙ, with many examples in the magical papyri from Egypt. These words, a rearranged combination of letters, are identical to the lines found in the Paris Magical Codex²⁴,

¹⁹ Bevilacqua – Giannobile 2000, 141.

²⁰ Bevilacqua – Giannobile 2000, 135.

²¹ *I.North Galatia* 209B. “τῷ μεγάλῳ Θεῷ Ὑψίστῳ καὶ Ἐπουρανίῳ καὶ τοῖς ἁγίοις αὐτοῦ ἀγγέλοις καὶ τῇ προσκυνητῇ αὐτοῦ προσευχῇ τὰ ᾧδε ἔργα γέινεται”.

²² *I.Anazarbos* 135; *TAM V*, 2, 1096; *I.Magnesia Sipylos* 28.

²³ Sheppard 1980-1981, 96.

²⁴ The “Paris Magical Codex”, which is part of a very large collection called the “Greek Magical Papyri”, of which there are fragments in various libraries, is so named because it is in the National Library of France. It bears

thought to date from the 4th century AD. These rearranged syllables are prayers written in the form of hymns in this codex, which is thought to have been used as a manual by magicians and belonged to the cult of Mithras.²⁵ Manfred Clauss has noted that many of the meaningless words in the prayers of Mithras were recited fervently by cult members.²⁶ Probably the words ΝΩΨΙΘΕΡ ΘΕΡΝΩΨ ΨΙΝΩΘΕΡ were also thought to be incantations used to create psychological excitement for members of the Mithras cult.

These words are also found in the Gnostic text called “*Pistis Sophia*” dated to the 3rd and 4th century AD. In this section, which is defined as a Thernopsi formula, these words formed by the rearranging of the syllables ΨΙ, ΝΩ and ΘΕΡ, come after ΙΑΩ, which is also a meaningless sequence of letters in the text.²⁷ In *Pistis Sophia*, these words are found in the lines of the petition for the father of the treasury of light to hear, with the sentence “Jesus cried out again, saying the name of the father of the treasury of light”.²⁸ Erin Evans has argued that the invocations represent a name or names of the supreme father, and that these nonsensical combinations of letters are meant to attract the attention of the listener and signal the speakers' greater divine knowledge.²⁹ It has also been suggested that, regardless of whether the etymological origin or meaning of these expressions is known, the author considered it appropriate in an address to the highest being of his system.³⁰ It has also been pointed out that the word ΨΙΝΩΘΕΡ means son of the god in Egyptian.³¹ Theodor Hopfner has suggested that since ψι stands for the highest and ωθερ for the god, this formula could be taken to refer to the highest god.³²

L.B. 1: The letters ΙΩΕΡ are proposed to be completed as ιωερβηθ. Raquel M. Hernández has stated that ιωερβηθ is understood as a corrupted variation of non-Greek epithets.³³ It is emphasized that this word, which has been used since the Roman period, is not a plea, and that its use in magical texts has offensive purposes such as causing separation, obtaining sexual gratification, and harming the enemy.³⁴ It was also used gladiator games or chariot races to ask for help from dead spirits called nekydaimon.³⁵ Classified as voces magicae, ιωερβηθ is usually associated with the god Seth and his Hellen counterpart Typhon. In these magical texts³⁶ where the god Seth-Typhon is invoked, it is written with a series of word groups beginning with ιω. Regardless of the language of the spell, it is emphasised that this group of words is written especially in Greek, and for this reason it is

traces of Greek, Roman and Egyptian cultures. This part of the codex, whose authorship is unclear, was attributed to Mithras by the German philologist Albrecht Dieterich because of its Mithraic connotations. For more information Betz 2003, 5-10.

²⁵ Betz 2003, 5-10.

²⁶ Clauss 2000, 106-107.

²⁷ 4PSa 136 [353], 142 [370].

²⁸ 4PSa 136 [353].

²⁹ Evans 2015, 119.

³⁰ Evans 2015, 119.

³¹ Evans 2015, 119.

³² Hopfner 1981, § 750.

³³ Hernández 2019, 188.

³⁴ Hernández 2019, 189.

³⁵ Hernández 2019, 189.

³⁶ For the magical texts *PGM* and *PDM*.

interpreted as a ritual consisting of repeatedly written words learned and formulated by the practitioners of the spell.³⁷ However, Paul Moraux explained $\omega\epsilon\rho\beta\eta\theta$ by referring to its etymology in Hebrew. He reminded that $\omega = \alpha\omega$ is explained as god in Hebrew, and that $\epsilon\rho\beta\eta\theta$ is represented by the feminine form ‘arba’at’ of the number 4 (arba), an allusion to the tetragrammaton (Yhwh) of the Jewish god.³⁸

$\omega\epsilon\rho\beta\eta\theta$ is used in inscriptions as a curse, in which the god Seth-Typhon also appears. Inscriptions from Carthage dated to the 2nd century AD show a curse against the charioteer and his horses.³⁹ Another example from Kos, dated to the 4th century AD, also has a depiction of the god Seth-Typhon on the reverse.⁴⁰

L.B. 2-4: In these lines the words are similar to those on side A of the inscription, and according to the above explanation $\kappa\upsilon\rho\iota\omicron\varsigma \epsilon\nu \omicron\upsilon\rho\alpha\nu\tilde{\omega}$.

L.B. 5: According to the complete lines on side A of the inscription, the completion is suggested as $\text{N}\Omega\Psi\text{I}\Theta\text{E}[\text{P}]$.

L.B. 7: This line, which is badly damaged, is similar to lines 3 and 5 on face A. It is thought to be the word $\Psi\text{I}\text{N}\Omega\Theta\text{E}\text{P}$ in the sequence there.

Dating: 3rd or 4th century AD.

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³⁷ Hernández 2019, 189.

³⁸ Moraux 1960, 22-23.

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Ankara/Kalecik'ten Yeni Yazıtlar

Özet

Bu çalışmada Ankara ilinin Kalecik İlçesi'nden Kalecik Belediye bahçesinde korunan iki adet yeni yazıt tanıtılmaktadır. Çalışmadaki yazıtlardan ilki Anadolu Medeniyetleri Müzesi tarafından Kalecik'te 2019 yılında yapılan araştırmalar sırasında tespit edilmiş ve Kalecik Belediyesi önündeki açık hava teşhir alanına yerleştirilmiş olan İS 228 yılına ait Aurelius Helios'un mezar yazıtıdır. İkincisinde ise yazıtta geçen ifadelerden yazılma nedeni belli olmasa da yazıt içeriğinin tanrıya yakarış olduğu düşünülmektedir. Yazıtın üzerinde İS 3.-4. yüzyıllara ait Gnostik bir metin olan Pistis Sophia'da ışık haznesinin babasına yakarış kısmında dinleyicinin dikkatini çekmek için kullanılan anlamsız harf kombinasyonları bulunmaktadır. Ayrıca yine İS 3. yüzyıla tarihlendirilen Eski Yunanca Büyü Papirüsleri olarak adlandırılan geniş bir kodeksin Fransa Milli Kütüphanesi'nde korunan Mithras'a ait olduğu düşünülen büyü metinlerinde geçen ifadeleri içermektedir.

Tanrıya yakarış ifade eden bu yazıttaki NÖPSITHER THERNÖPS PSINÖTHER ifadeleri hem papirüslere yazılmış tanrılara yapılan dualardaki büyülü, ilahi ya da tılsımlı kabul edilen ifadeleri içermesi hem de Küçük Asya'daki özellikle Galatia bölgesindeki pagan geleneğinden izler taşıyan Yahudi-Hristiyan varlığına işaret etmesi bakımından önem arz etmektedir. Ayrıca yazıtın yazıldığı taşın mimari eleman olarak birkaç kez kullanılmış olması ve yazıttaki tanrı için kullanılan ifadelerin benzerliği bakımından Stephen Mitchell'in 1982 yılında kaydettiği yazıtta bahsedilen dua yeri olarak inşa edilmiş yapıya ait olduğunu da düşündürmektedir. Yazıtların çevirisi şu şekildedir:

Nr. 1: [Aure]lius'un oğlu ... bu mezarı, ALEBONÖN bölgesindeki Onoukome'den olan Aurelius Helios için kendi cebinden yaptı. Geçenleri/yolcuları selamlar, yıl 253. Anısı nedeniyle.

Nr. 2: Cennetteki efendimiz/babamız/tanrımız; nopsither, thernops, psinoother.

Anahtar Sözcükler: Ankyra; Galatia; Kalecik; mezar yazıtı; Eski Yunanca büyü papirüsleri; pistis sophia.