

New Inscriptions from Nikaia XII. Sanctuary of Zeus Bronton in Ahmetler Village, Pazaryeri District

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More than 700 inscriptions, some of which are votive, have been found during the epigraphic survey conducted in the territory of Nikaia by the authors since 2010. In 2016, a cult area was accidentally discovered in Ahmetler village, Pazaryeri district of Bilecik province, Turkey, a result of destruction caused by the village headman's illegal construction under the pretext of the construction of a quarantine area¹. In this area of destruction *in situ* architectural wall remains and many votive altars were scattered over the surface, 10 of which had inscriptions on them, were found (figs. 10-13). In this article, we present only nine inscriptions because one of them has been badly damaged.

All the inscriptions are votives to Zeus Bronton etc. While he was called *Soter* in one inscription; in another, he was worshipped as Bronton, the god of farmers. Further, Zeus was called by new epithets like "Basilikos" and "Pithios".

We see that both the local inhabitants and the Romans living in the region made many offerings to Zeus, the chief god of the Greek pantheon. Here, Zeus either replaced the local deities that existed prior to Hellenization or was worshipped alongside them. One of them is "Zeus Bronton". The primary locations of sanctuaries dedicated to "Zeus Bronton" are mainly in Phrygia Epiketos; but he is also very well attested in Bithynia, especially in Nikaia and its territory². In addition, the cult has also been documented around Kotiaion and Aizanoi.

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¹ A short introductory article describing the area has been published, see Öztürk – Aktaş 2017, 28 f.; Öztürk – Demirhan-Öztürk 2019, 257 ff.

² On the cult of Zeus Bronton and its geographic range, see Drew-Bear – Naour 1990, 1992-2013; Akyürek-Şahin 2002; Akyürek-Şahin 2012, 347.

On the cult of Zeus Bronton in Bithynia and Phrygia, see Akyürek 1996; Akyürek-Şahin 2001; Akyürek-Şahin 2005a 75-102; Akyürek-Şahin 2005b, 51-60; Akyürek-Şahin 2006a; Akyürek-Şahin 2006b, 89-124; Akyürek-Şahin 2012, 345-382; Güney 2020, 147-155. In addition, Akyürek-Şahin provides a catalogue of busts of Zeus found in the province of Bilecik and now in the museums of Bursa, İznik; Bilecik, Söğüt; İstanbul and Eskişehir (2014, 121-171 [= SEG LXIV, 1230]).

Ahmetler village is on the ancient border between Phrygia and Bithynia³, and the new votive inscriptions found at Ahmetler village and presented below contribute greatly to our knowledge on the region's history and of the cult of Zeus Bronton. Four votives to Zeus Bronton and Bennios had already been documented from the village of Ahmetler (I.Nikaia 1503-1504, 1507-1510). Apart from these published inscriptions from Ahmetler, two inscriptions dedicated to Zeus Bronton from the district of Pazaryeri are also known (I.Nikaia 1511-1512). Therefore, due to the existence of this newly discovered cult area, it can now be suggested that these published inscriptions were brought from this same place. As can be observed, the sanctuary of Zeus in Ahmetler village may possibly have been a popular cult center. In addition, Apollon bearing the epithet Gorzaios was also worshipped at Ahmetler village⁴.

This paper presents nine new inscriptions found in Ahmetler village. Four were brought to the Bilecik Archaeological Museum (see below, inscriptions 1-3); the others were placed in the garden of the fire department of Pazaryeri district (see below, inscriptions 4-9). Below is a catalogue of inscriptions, each followed by an analysis and commentary.

1. The village Pronnoeitai dedicate an altar to Zeus Basilikos and erect (a statue of) Herakles

Rectangular white marble altar, with plain moldings on all sides at the top and bottom. The inscription is located on the front side.



Fig. 1a



Fig. 1b

Findspot : Now in the Bilecik Archaeological Museum.

Measurements : H: 1.23 m; W: 54 cm; D: 50 cm; LH: 1.1-2.9 cm

³ On Ahmetler village, cf. Belke 2020, s.v. "Ahmetler (1)".

⁴ Akyürek-Şahin 2005a, 91 f., no. 8. See also, Corsten 2006a, 128.

Inv. No. : 339⁵ [BAM⁶ inv. no. TGA 160]
 Registration : Hüseyin Sami Öztürk
 Photo : Ezgi Demirhan-Öztürk
 Date : 2nd-3rd cent. A.D.

^{Vac.} Ἀγαθῆ τύχη· ^v

Δὶ Βασιλικῶ Προναει-
 τῶν κώμη κατὰ ^{vv}

4 ἐπιτ(α)γῆν ἀνέστη- ^{vv}

σαν περὶ τῶν καρπ- ^v

ῶν καὶ τῶν εἰδίωv

πάντων· ἔτους θ´

8 ἐπιμελουμένων Μά-

ρκου Χ(ρ)ήστου καὶ Λο(υκίου),

κωμαρχῶν Τιμοθέου Μ-

άρκου, Πασίωνος Γαεῖου ἐπι-

12 μελητῶν Μάρκου Χρήστου, Λου-

κίου Λ(ουκίου) Ἄτεριου, Ρούφου Κλήμεν-

τος· οἱ αὐτοὶ καὶ τὸν Ἡρακλέα. ^{vv}

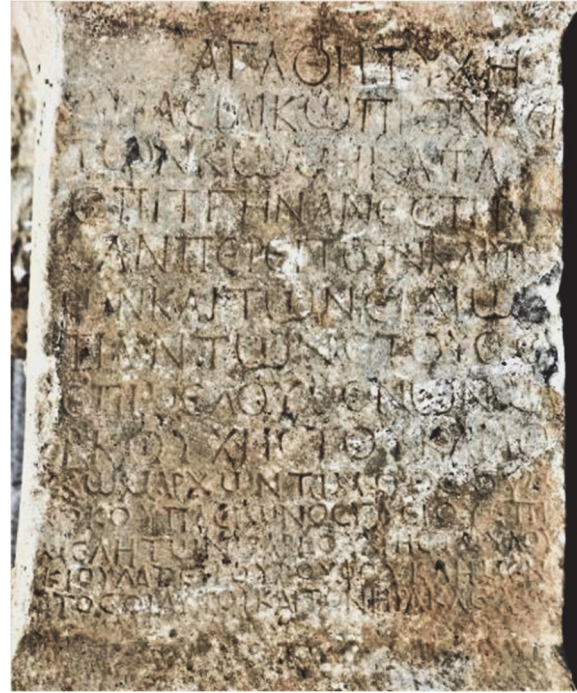


Fig. 1c

4 ΕΠΙΤΤΗΝ lapis; 9 ΧΗΣΤΟΥ lapis.

Translation:

May there be good fortune! The village of Pronnaeitai/Pronnoeitai, in accordance with the God's order, for the crops and for all the possessions, constructed (this altar) to Zeus Basilikos. (This altar was erected) in the 6th year of his epimeletai Marcus, son of Khrestos with Lucius; komarkhoi Timotheos, son of Marcus (and) Pasion, son of Gaius. Under Epimeletai Marcus son of Khrestos, Lucius son of Lucius Aterius (and) Rufus son of Klemes. They also (erected a statue of) Herakles.

L. 2: Zeus was called with the epithet "Basilikos". Zeus Basilikos is known from Prusa⁷ in Bithynia and from Nakoleia in Phrygia⁸. Zeus bearing the epithet Basilikos has been attested for the first time in Nikaia. Zeus Bronton is attested in many inscriptions⁹.

⁵ This is the inventory number which we use for the inscriptions in the survey.

⁶ BAM = Bilecik Archaeological Museum.

⁷ I.Prusa, 1016.

⁸ MAMA V, R 8.

⁹ See above fn. 2.

L. 2-3: Pronnaeitai: Προναειτῶν κώμη has been previously attested three times as ἡ Προννοεῖτω[ν] κώμη (I.Nikaia 1503); Προνναεῖται (I.Nikaia 1551) and see below inscription no. 6¹⁰.

There is an ancient settlement called Pronnoeitai kome (Προννοειτῶν κώμη, Προνναεῖται) and another called Dablenoi a published inscription¹¹ from Ahmetler village. Ed. pr. of the inscription S. Şahin thinks that the Pronnaeitai kome was formed by the merging two villages (dikomia). He mentions that the communities of Dablenoi¹² and Pronnaeitai congregated together at Ahmetler village and two cults called Zeus of Milesios and Zeus of Apellinarios were worshipped¹³. According to S. Şahin, Zeus Bronton probably had two temples in Ahmetler and he suggested that one of them was in Sirasöğütler, 3 km southwest of the village¹⁴.

Προνναεῖται = Προννοεῖται. For the interchange of ο and α, see Laminger-Pascher 1973, 9; Gignac 1976, 287.

L. 3-4: κατὰ ἐπιταγήν occurs particularly in the regions of Bithynia and Mysia¹⁵.

L. 5: περὶ = περὶ¹⁶.

L. 6: εἰδίων = ἰδίων (see here fn. 16).

L. 8 and 11-12: As is known, the main duty of the epimeletai was to ensure the maintenance and protection of buildings¹⁷. However, we do not know enough about the epimeletai in rural areas. The only thing we can infer is that these officials could be locally characterized.

It is known from an inscription found in Gölpazarı that Marcus Cassius Poplianus, who dedicated an altar to Zeus Arkhagetos, successfully undertook many municipal duties, including the office of ἐπιμελητῆς τοῦ νεοκτίστου ναοῦ (I.Nikaia 1071). We further know from the career inscribed on the statue base of a Marcus in an inscription from Thyateira¹⁸ that he successfully undertook many municipal offices: One of them is ἐπιμελητῆς θεωριῶν. Therefore, Marcus, Lucius and Rufus in the mentioned inscription might have been ἐπιμεληταὶ θεωριῶν.

L. 10: A *komarkhes* is also known from another inscription dedicated to Zeus Bennios in Ahmetler village (I.Nikaia, 1503). As can be seen, *epimeletai* and *komarkhes* are frequently used as eponymous in the sanctuary (see below inscription no. 3). The *komarkhes* was the headman of a village and he was responsible for its administration. This official is found frequently in the rural areas of Asia Minor¹⁹. The earliest evidence for the *komarkhes* in Asia Minor has been documented as

¹⁰ Προννοειτῶν κώμη → Προναειτῶν κώμη, see cf. Belke 2020, s.v. “Pronnoeitōn Kōmē (Προννοειτῶν κώμη, Προνναεῖται)”.

¹¹ I.Nikaia, 1551.

¹² For Dablenoi, see I.Nikaia 1551; Belke 2020 s.v. “Dablēnoi (Δαβληνοί, Ethnikon)”.

¹³ I.Nikaia, 1509-1510.

¹⁴ Şahin 1978, 773 f.; cf. Akyürek-Şahin 2012, 347.

¹⁵ See Pleket 1981, 154; 158; Akyürek-Şahin – Uzunoğlu 2019, 243. For this expression in votive inscriptions to Zeus Bronton, cf. Akyürek-Şahin 2012, 350, fn. 20.

¹⁶ For the interchange of εἰ and ι cf. Gignac 1976, 190.

¹⁷ Liebenam 1900, 384-386.

¹⁸ TAM V.2, 991.

¹⁹ See Schuler 1998, 154 f.; 233 ff.

ἀρχων τῆς κώμης in the *Anabasis* of Ksenophon²⁰. According to a published inscription²¹ from Lyrboton kome belonging to Perge, this office was held there for a year. Therefore, the *komarkhai* of Pronnaeitai kome should have also held the office for a year.

L. 11: Πασίων has been attested for the first time in Myrleia-Apameia in Bithynia and for the fourth time in Phrygia, see LGPN VA, 360, s.v.; VC, 350, s.v. Besides, this name is known from Asia Minor, see LGPN VA; VB; VC s.v.; Güney 2016, 131.

L. 11: Γαεῖου = Γαῖου (see here fn. 16).

L. 13-14: Κλήμης has been attested four times in Nikaia, see LGPN VA 250, s.v.

Zeus is the dominant god worshipped in the region. Another male deity attested in the cult area with Zeus is Heracles who is known from three dedicatory inscriptions for Hadrianus on the architrave of Lefke and İstanbul Gates in Nikaia²². According to the inscriptions, Herakles, together with Dionysos, is one of the founding deities of Nikaia²³. Besides, another monument of Herakles was located in Deliktaş of İznik district²⁴.

In 1987, a statue group of Herakles was found in the small Turkish town of Seyitgazi (= Nakoleia) in Phrygia, located in the modern district of Eskişehir²⁵. Ahmetler village is not far from Seyitgazi, at a distance of approximately 88 km. In this case, the Herakles cult in Ahmetler may have originated from Seyitgazi and Zeus Basilikos may have been worshipped together with Herakles in the sanctuary.

The letter style may suggest a date in the 2nd-3rd cent. A.D., before the *Constitutio Antoniniana*.

2. Marcus and his cousins dedicate an altar to Zeus Bronton

Rectangular white marble altar, partly broken at the right side, with plain moldings on all sides at the top and bottom; at the top, four dressed bust figures in a local style. Their faces and hair are partly damaged. A similar bust²⁶ form can also be seen from an altar in İnönü, lying approximately 35 km west of Eskişehir. The bust group on the İnönü altar is in the middle and beneath the busts an inscription of three lines is carved. P. Frei, who published this altar, suggests that these busts can belong to the persons who made the offering to Zeus Bronton. Similarly, our busts must probably belong to Marcus and his cousins.

The inscription is located on the front side. The letters of the inscription were painted in red and the traces of paint are still visible.

Find spot : Now in the Bilecik Archaeological Museum.

²⁰ Xen. *Anab.* iv 5, 28; Cf. Schuler 1998, 155.

²¹ I.Perge, 77.

²² I.Nikaia, 29-30a.

²³ Heracles is also known from the coins. See RPC II, no. 639, 642; RPC IV.1, no. 5117; 5530; 5892-93; 5928-30; 5990; 6025; 6241; 8335; 9902; 9906; 9979; 1004; 10191; 10366; 10638-39; 11135; 11177; 11777 [date accessed, 20.10.2020].

²⁴ Şahin et alii 2008, 17.

²⁵ For further information, see Çalık-Ross 2010, 171 f.

²⁶ Frei 2001, 154 f., no. 9 (= SEG LI, 1780). For further, see Frei 2001, 135-158 (= SEG LI, 1777-1781).

Mesasurements : H: 1.12 m; W: 47 cm; D: 54 cm; LH: 2.2-3.5 cm
 Inv. No. : 340 [BAM inv. no. TGA160]
 Registration : Hüseyin Sami Öztürk
 Photo : Ezgi Demirhan-Öztürk
 Date : 2nd-3rd cent. A.D.

Διὶ Βροντῶντι Ἀσκλη-
 δ(ος) κατ' ἐπιταγ(ή)ν ἀνέ[θ]η-
 καν Μᾶρκος Ἀσκλη-
 4 δος σὺν τοῖς ἀνυ[ψι]οῖς.

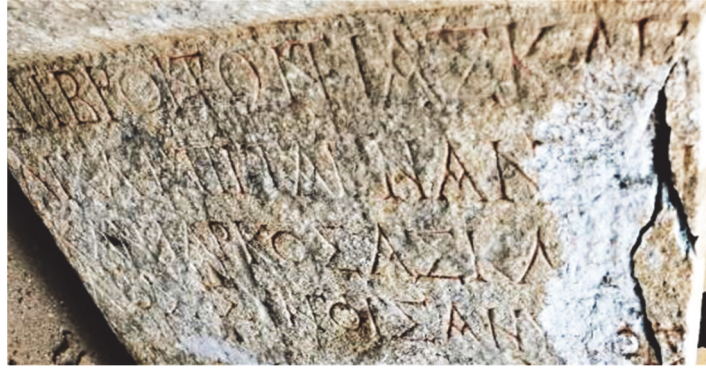


Fig. 2a



Fig. 2b

1-2. ΑΣΚΛΗΔΙ lapis; 2 ΕΠΙΤΑΓΝ lapis.

Translation:

Marcus, son of Askles, dedicated (this altar) with his cousins, in accordance with Divine command, to Zeus Bronton of Askles.

L. 1-2: The name Askles is documented for the third time in Nikaia. For this name, see LGPN VA, 85, s.v.; cf. Öztürk 2015, 258, no. 1.

Ἄσκληδι instead of Ἀσκληῖδος may have been accidentally carved by the stonemason. Proper names in genitive case attached to the name of Zeus are known from votive inscriptions found in Bithynia and Phrygia²⁷.

In this case, Askles, whose name should be accepted as genitivus attached to Zeus Bronton²⁸, was one of the founders of Zeus Bronton in the sanctuary and the priest of the God. He is the same person with that named in inscription number 4 below.

Apart from Askles, we learn new priest names, such as Aleksandros, Asklepiodotos, Marcus, Sextus, Sotades/Sotadas, Sosigenes and Trophimas from the new votive inscriptions. See inscriptions 4, 7 and 8 below.

²⁷ See I.Nikaia II.2, 1509; Akyürek-Şahin 2014, 350 ff.

²⁸ For the use of datives in votive inscriptions dedicated to Zeus Bronton, see also Akyürek-Şahin 2012, 348 f. Cf. see Chiai 2010, 135-156.

The letter style may suggest a date in the 2nd-3rd cent. A.D., before the Constitutio Antoniniana.



Fig. 2c



Fig. 2d

3. Oikonomos Euangelos dedicates an altar to Zeus Soter for his family

Preserved is the lower part of a rectangular white marble altar, with plain moldings at the bottom. It is broken from the upper part, which presumably occurred in the course of illegal excavation. The inscription is located on the front side.

Find spot : Now in the Bilecik Archaeological Museum.
 Measurements : H: 1.12 m; W: 47 cm; D: 54 cm; LH: 2.2-3.5 cm
 Inv. No. : 342 [BAM inv. no. TGA160]
 Registration : Hüseyin Sami Öztürk
 Photo : Ezgi Demirhan-Öztürk

Date : 2nd-3rd cent. A.D.

[Ἀγαθῆ τύχη· ?]

Διὶ Σωτ[ῆρι]

ὑπὲρ σωτηρ[ίας]

Δομιτίας, Λ(ουκίου) θυ[γα]-

4 τρὸς, Ἀρκεσιλαΐδ[ος]

καὶ ὑπὲρ καρπῶ[ν]

τῶν ἀγρῶν, Εὐά[νγε]-

λος οἰκονόμος [ἀνέ]-

8 θηκεν σὺν τῷ ἀγ[άλ]-

ματι τοῦ Διὸς ^{vacat}

κωμαρχούντων Ἑρμογ[οῦ]

Ἀλεξάνδρου καὶ Γλύκω[νος]

12 [Γ]λύκωνος. ^{vacat}



Fig. 3a



Fig. 3b

Translation:

[May there be good fortune! (?)]. Oikonomos Euangelos, for the salvation of Domitia Arkesilaïs, daughter of Lucius and the (abundance) of her crops, dedicated (this altar) with a bust of Zeus, (during the tenures of) komarkhes Hermogas, son of Aleksandros and komarkhes Glykon, son of Glykon, to Zeus Soter²⁹.

L. 2: ὑπὲρ σωτηρίας (and ἑαυτοῦ κὲ τῶν ἰδίων κτλ.). This expression is prevalently on votive inscriptions.³⁰

L. 4: Ἀρκεσιλαΐς is previously unattested in Nikaia. The name is known only once from Nikomedeia in Bithynia, see LGPN VA 68 s.v.

L. 7: Several oikonomoi are known from the vicinity of Nikaia.³¹

²⁹ Soter is one of the most common epithets of Zeus which means a saviour, a deliverer. For Zeus Soter known from Nikaia, see I.Nikaia, 32, 1131-32; Adak – Akyürek-Şahin 2005, 135 f., no. 1; Dönmez-Öztürk 2012, 68, no. 1 (= SEG LXII, 962); Dönmez-Öztürk 2013, 289, no. 3 (SEG LXIII, 1139; AE 2013 [2016], no. 1462; Öztürk 2013, 296, no. 3 (= SEG LXIII, 1143).

³⁰ For this expression in votive inscriptions to Zeus Bronton, see Akyürek-Şahin 2002, 23; 2012, 350. See also Jim 2014, 617-638.

³¹ For oikonomoi in the territory of Nikaia, see I.Nikaia 192, 196, 205 (= Avram – Bounegru 2006, 270), 753, 1057, 1201, 1292, 1336, 1413, 1466; Adak – Akyürek-Şahin 2005, 140 f., no. 6; Çokbankir 2010, 330 f.,

L. 8-9: σὺν τῷ ἀγ[άλ]ματι τοῦ Διός: this expression cannot denote a statue of Zeus, but it can mean a bust. Because the word *agalma* has also meanings such as painting, portraiture, etc., see LSJ, 5 s.v. Many busts of Zeus are known from Bilecik province. N. E. Akyürek-Şahin provides in detail a catalogue of examples of these busts³². According to Akyürek-Şahin, the busts were probably mounted on the altars. Therefore, there was presumably a bust of Zeus on this altar. The dowel hole is missing as the altar is damaged in the upper part.

L. 10: ΕΡΜΟΥΓ[---. The letters after Ἐρμουγ--- cannot be read because of damage at the right below the corner of the altar. There is not much space, but ca. 2 letters, to restore the ending of ΕΡΜΟΥΓ[--- and the name does not continue to the bottom line. For this reason, we can suggest two names including Ἐρμουγᾶς. Hermogas is unattested in Nikaia and Bithynia, but the name is known from Aizanoi, Akmonia, Appia Kidyessos, Kotiaion, Nakoleia in Temenothyrai in Phrygia and Antiokheia, Sagalassos and Yeşilova in Pisidia, see LGPN VC 148 s.v.

L. 10: For *komarkhes*, see inscriptions 1 and 6.

L. 11-12: Γλύκων. This name has been documented once from Pronnoeitai village (I.Nikaia 1503). The letter style may suggest a date in the 2nd-3rd cent. A.D., before the Constitutio Antoniniana.

4. Longus and Artemon dedicate an altar to Zeus Bronton

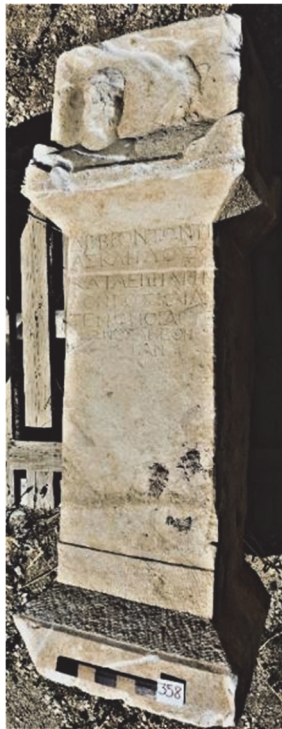


Fig. 4a



Fig. 4b

Rectangular white marble altar, with plain moldings on all sides at the top and bottom. A partly broken bust of the priest Askles (?) in a local style and an eagle between stylized volutes on the

no. 6; 336 f., no. 10; Öztürk – Kılıç-Aslan 2012, 104 f., no. 7; Marek – Adak 2016, 13 f., no. 18. Also cf. Corsten, 2006b, 87.

³² Akyürek-Şahin 2014.

front face at the top, damaged presumably during an illegal excavation; a patera between stylized volutes at the top sides. The inscription is located on the front side.

Find spot : Now in the garden of the fire department of Pazaryeri district.
 Measurements : H: 1.52 m; W: 57.5 cm; D: 49 cm; LH: 2.8-3.9 cm
 Inv. No. : 358
 Registration : Hüseyin Sami Öztürk
 Photo : Ezgi Demirhan-Öztürk
 Date : 2nd-3rd cent. AD

Διὶ Βροντῶντι
 Ἀσκληῆδος ἄ
 κατὰ ἐπιταγὴν
 4 <Δ>όνγος καὶ Ἄρ-
 τέμων οἱ Ἄρτέ-
 μωνος ἀνέθη-^{vv}
^{vac.} καν. ^{vac.}

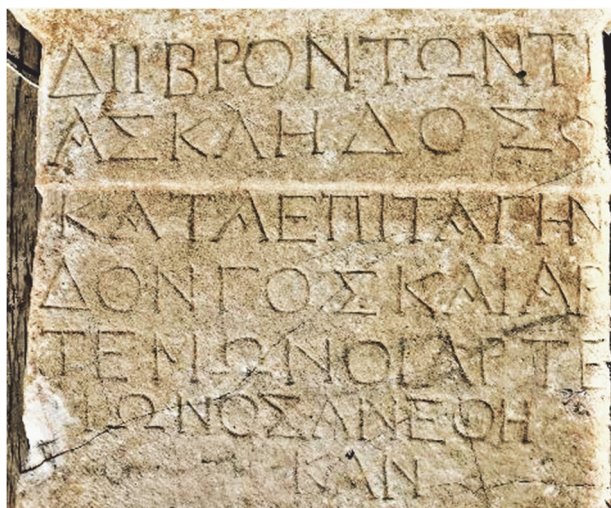


Fig. 4c

4. ΔΟΝΓΟΣ lapis.

Translation:

To Zeus Bronton of Askles, Longus and Artemon, sons of Artemon dedicated (this altar), in accordance with Divine command.

L. 2: Askles a being priest of Zeus Bronton is known from inscription no. 2 above.

L. 4-5: Longus and Artemon are brothers and they have another brother named Askles (see inscription no. 5 below).

The letter style may suggest a date in the 2nd-3rd cent. A.D., before the Constitutio Antoniniana.

5. Longus, Askles and Artemon dedicate an altar to Zeus Bronton

Rectangular white marble altar, partly broken the upper and the right side at the bottom, with plain moldings on all sides at the top and bottom. The inscription is located on the front side.

Find spot : Now in the garden of the fire department of Pazaryeri district.
 Measurements : H: 1.28 m; W: 53 cm; D: 35 cm; LH: 2.8-3.2 cm
 Inv. No. : 363
 Registration : Hüseyin Sami Öztürk
 Photo : Ezgi Demirhan-Öztürk
 Date : 2nd-3rd cent. A.D.



Fig. 5a

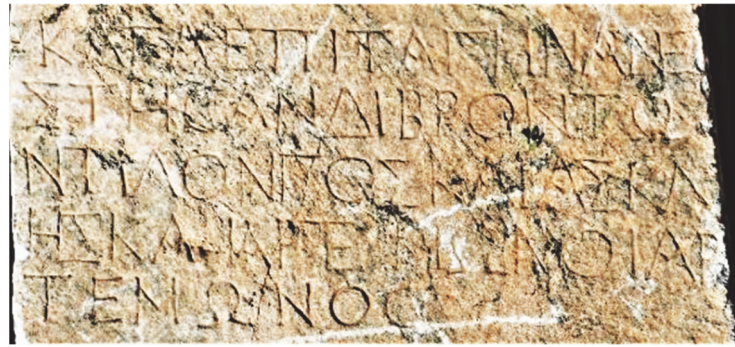


Fig. 5b

[Α]γαθῆ ^{vacat} τύχη·
κατὰ ἐπιταγὴν ἀνέ-
στησαν Δι Βροντώ-
4 ντι Λόνγος καὶ Ἄσκλ-
ῆς καὶ Ἀρτέμων οἱ Ἀρ-
τέμωνος. ^{vacat}

Translation: *May there be good fortune! In accordance with Divine command, Longus, Askles and Artemon, sons of Artemon erected (this altar) to Zeus Bronton.*

6. The village of Pronnoeitai dedicate an altar to Zeus Bronton



Fig. 6a

Rectangular white marble altar, partly broken right side at the bottom, with plain moldings on all sides at the top and bottom. A patera between stylized volutes on the front face at the top. The inscription is located on the front side. The inscription was painted in red and the traces of paint are still visible.

Find spot : Now in the garden of the fire department of Pazaryeri district.

Measurements : H: 1.49 m; W: 65 cm; D: 47 cm; LH: 2.5-4.1 cm

Inv. No. : 359

Registration : Hüseyin Sami Öztürk

Foto : Ezgi Demirhan-Öztürk

Date : After 212 A.D. [Const. Anton.]

Ἀγαθῆ ^{vacat} τύχη·
Δι Βροντῶντι κατ' ἐπιτα-
γὴν ἀνέθηκαν ἡ Προνοι-
4 τῶν κώμη κωμαρχούντων
Αὐ(ρηλίου) ὕ Ἀρίστωνος κὲ Αὐ(ρηλίου) Νεικο-
μάχο(υ). ^{vacat}

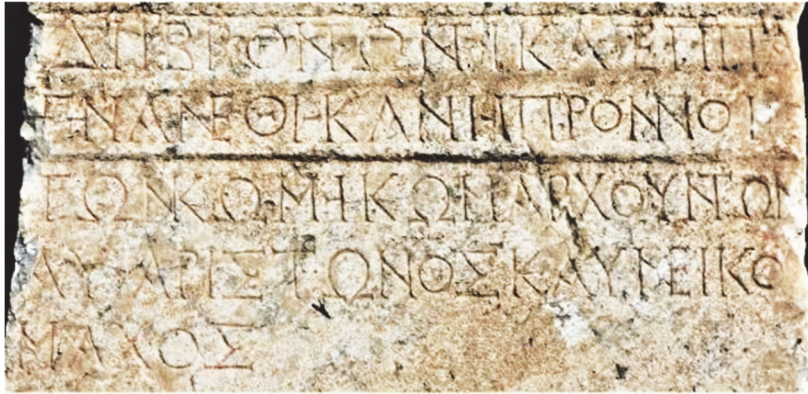


Fig. 6b

5-6. NEIKOMAXΟΣ lapis.

Translation:

May there be good fortune! The village of Pronnoeitai, when Aurelius Ariston and Aurelius Nikomakhos are komarkhai, in accordance with Divine command dedicated (this altar) to Zeus Bronton.

L. 3-4: Pronnoeitai: This village name had been previously attested three times. See inscription no. 1 above.

L. 4: For *komarkhes*, see inscriptions no. 1 and 3 above.

L. 5: κέ = κα³³.

L. 5-6: Νεικόμαχος= Νικόμαχος (see fn. 16 above).

7. Diokles, Nikomakhos, Marcus and Marcus and his siblings dedicate an altar to Zeus Bronton Pithios

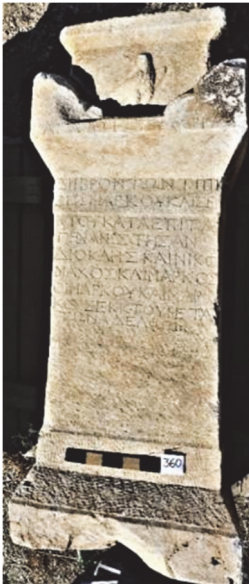


Fig. 7a

Rectangular white marble altar, with plain moldings on all sides at the top and bottom. An eagle between stylized volutes on the front face at the top. The inscription is located on the front side.

Find spot : Now in the garden of the fire department of Pazaryeri district.

Measurements : H: 1.47 m; W: 67 cm; D: 42 cm; LH: 2.6-3.1 cm

Inv. No. : 360

Registration : Hüseyin Sami Öztürk

Photo : Ezgi Demirhan-Öztürk

Date : 2nd-3rd cent. A.D.

³³ On the interchange of *αι* and *ε*, see Laminger-Pascher 1973, 9; Gignac 1976, 192.

Ἀγαθῆ τύχη· ^{vacat}
 Διὶ Βροντῶντι Πι-
 θίῳ Μάρκου καὶ Σέκ-
 4 κτου κατὰ ἐπιτα-
 γῆν ἀνέσθησαν ^v
 Διοκλῆς καὶ Νικό-
 μαχος καὶ Μάρκος
 8 οὶ Μάρκου καὶ Μάρ- ^v
 κος Σέκκτου μετὰ
^v τῶν ἀδελφῶν. ^{vv}

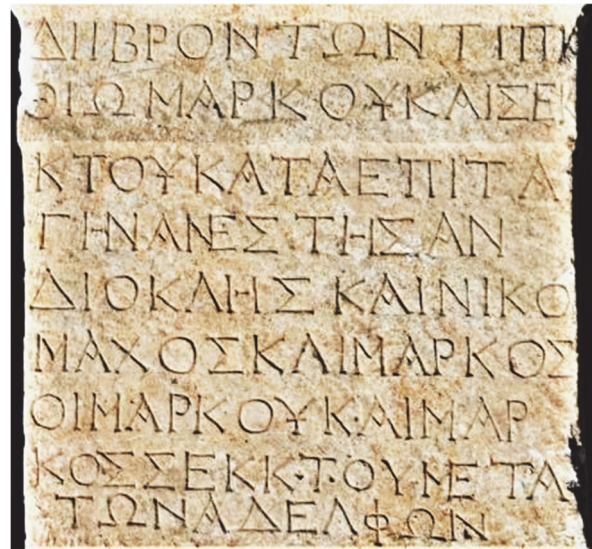


Fig. 7b

Translation:

May there be good fortune! Diokles, Nikomakhos and Marcus, sons of Marcus and Marcus, son of Sextus, with his siblings erected (this altar) for Zeus Bronton Pithios of Marcus and Sextus.

L. 2-3: Zeus Bronton Pithios: Zeus bearing the epithet Pithios has been attested for the first time in Nikaia. Actually, the epithet is known from a published inscription³⁴ by S. Şahin in Nikaia: Διὶ Πιθη[.]. Λίνος | κτλ. We rediscovered the stele in 2015 and worked on the inscription and made some corrigenda. According to the new reading, the first line of the inscription is as follows: Διὶ Πιθί[ω] Φιλίνος | κτλ. There are six similar votive inscriptions³⁵, one of which belongs to Apollon, used as spolia in the base of the minaret of Başköy Mosque. It seems that Zeus is also worshipped alongside Apollon³⁶. Başköy, where the cult of Zeus Bronton is recorded, lies a few kilometers north of Ahmetler.

According to K. Belke, Διὶ Πιθη[.] (I.Nikaia 1125 mentioned above) at Başköy Mosque can probably be restored as Πιθηκῶ and the place name Pithekas with a bridge over Karasu known from Anna Komnena³⁷ must be Başköy. As seen, both the epithet in our inscription and the one from Başköy Mosque are definitely Pithios; but the name Pithekas may have been derived from Pithios, as Belke also emphasized.

Zeus bearing the epithet Pithios is also known from unpublished inscriptions in Bilecik and Söğüt Museums³⁸.

L. 3-4: Marcus and Sextus are priests of Zeus.

The letter style may suggest a date in the 2nd-3rd cent. A.D., before the Constitutio Antoniniana.

³⁴ I.Nikaia 1125.

³⁵ I.Nikaia 1030, 1084, 1096, 1102, 1125, 1154.

³⁶ I.Nikaia 1030.

³⁷ Belke 2020, 921. Cf. Anna XV 3, 6.

³⁸ Akyürek-Şahin 2014, 123, fn. 10.

8. Asklas dedicates an altar to Zeus Bronton

Rectangular white marble altar, with plain moldings on all sides at the top and bottom. Two male busts, one of which is broken due to illegal excavation, between stylized volutes on the front face at the top. Besides, there is an eagle between two busts. The inscription is located on the front side.

Find spot : Now in the garden of the fire department of Pazaryeri district.

Measurements : H: 1.23 m; W: 46 cm; D: 28 cm; LH: 2.1-3.2 cm

Inv. No. : 361

Registration : Hüseyin Sami Öztürk

Photo : Ezgi Demirhan-Öztürk

Date : 2nd-3rd cent. A.D.

Ἦ Ἀγαθῆ Ἦ τύχη Ἦ

Translation:

Διὶ Βροντῶντι Ἦ

May there be good fortune!

Σωσιγένου κὲ Σω-

For Zeus Bronton of Sosigenos

4 τάδου, Ἀσκλάς

and Sotades/Sotadas, I Ask-

Ἦ Ἀρισταινέτου Ἦ

las, son of Aristainetos,

Ἦ ἀνέσθησα. Ἦ

erected (this altar).



Fig. 8a

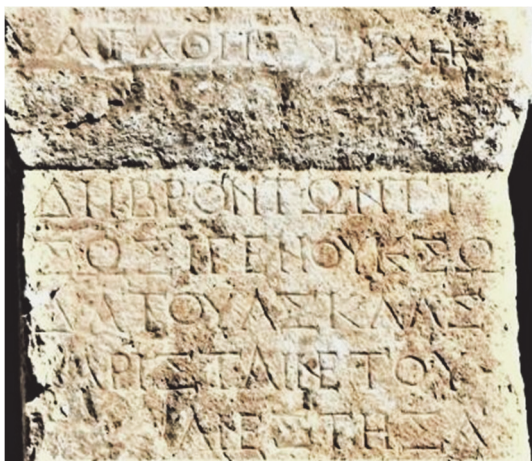


Fig. 8b



Fig. 8c

3-4. ΣΩΔΑΤΟΥ lapis.

L. 3: Σωσιγένης: The name is previously unattested in Nikaia. For Sosigenes, a well-known name from other places in the Bithynia region, see LGPN VA 419, s.v.

L. 3-4: Σωτάδης/Σωτάδας: The name must be Sotades/Sotadas. The interchange of τ and δ may have been accidentally carved by the stonemason. For the interchange, see; Gignac 1976, 80-83. Sotades/Sotadas is previously unattested in Nikaia. For Sotades/Sotadas, a well-known name from other places in Asia Minor, see LGPN VA 420; VB 397; VC 405 s.v.

Sosigenes and Sotades/Sotadas are priests of Zeus.

L. 4: Ἀσκληᾶς is attested only in Nikaia LGPN VA 79, s.v.

The letter style may suggest a date in the 2nd-3rd cent. A.D., before the Constitutio Antoniniana.

9. Ruphas and Meilesios dedicate an altar to Zeus Bronton

Rectangular white marble altar, with plain moldings on all sides at the top and bottom. Three male busts in a local style between stylized volutes on the front face at the top. The face of one of them is broken, presumably during illegal excavation. The inscription is located on the front side.



Fig. 9a



Fig. 9b

Find spot : Now in the garden of the fire department of Pazaryeri district.

Measurements : H: 1.17 m; W: 58 cm; D: 37 cm; LH: 1.1-3.9 cm

Inv. No. : 362

Registration : Hüseyin Sami Öztürk

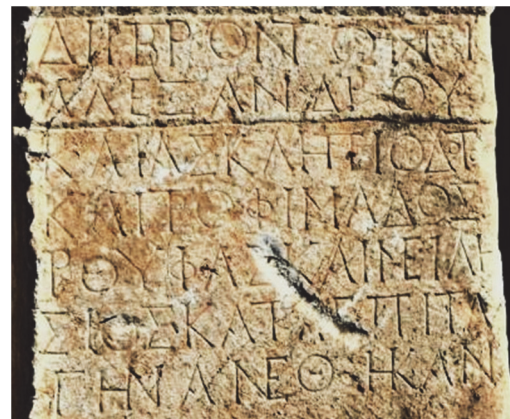
Photo : Ezgi Demirhan-Öztürk

Date : 2nd-3rd cent. A.D.



Fig. 9c

Διὶ Βροντῶντι
 Ἀλεξάνδρου
 καὶ Ἀσκληπιοδότ[υ]
 4 καὶ Τροφιμάδος,
 Ῥουφᾶς καὶ Μειλή-
 σιος κατὰ ἐπιτα-
 γὴν ἀνέθ^υ ηκαν.



Translation:

May there be good fortune! Ruphas and Meilesios in accordance with Divine command dedicated (this altar) to Zeus Bronton of Aleksandros, Asklepiodotos and Trophimas.

L. 2-4: Aleksandros, Asklepiodotos and Trophimas are priests of Zeus.

L. 3: Ἀσκληπιόδοτος is a common name attested in Nikaia³⁹.

L. 5: Ῥουφᾶς has been previously unattested in Nikaia. This name is known only from Termessos in Asia Minor. For this name, see LGPN VC s.v.

The letter style may suggest a date in the 2nd-3rd cent. A.D., before the Constitutio Antoniniana.

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³⁹ See LGPN VA 84, s.v. See cf. Dönmez-Öztürk 2012, 71, no. 6; Öztürk – Pilevneli 2012, 194, no. 6; Öztürk – Dönmez-Öztürk 2015, 244 f., no. 1; 247 f., no. 6; 251, no. 10; Adak 2016, 3-8, no. 1; Öztürk – Demirhan 2016, 170, no. 4: Τροφίμας is a common Greek personal name, see LGPN s.v.

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Nikaia'dan Yeni Yazıtlar XII.

Pazaryeri Bölgesi'ndeki Ahmetler Köyü'nde Yer Alan Zeus Bronton Kutsal Alanı

Öz

2016 yılında, Bilecik ili Pazaryeri ilçesi Ahmetler köyünde muhtarın karantina alanı yapmayı bahane ederek izin almaksızın yaptığı inşaa faaliyetleri sırasında oluşan tahribat neticesinde tesadüfen bir kült alanı keşfedilmiştir (fig. 10-13). Köy muhtarının yapmış olduğu tahribat alanında *in situ* olarak mimari duvar kalıntıları ile yüzeye saçılmış vaziyette 10 tanesi yazıtlı olmak üzere çok sayıda adak altarı ele geçmiştir. Bunlardan biri çok kötü tahrip edildiği için makalede 9 yazıt tanıtılmaktadır. Bu yeni adak yazıtları bölge tarihi hakkındaki bilgilerimizi artmasına olanak sağlamaktadır. Yazıtların çevirileri şu şekildedir:

1. *İyi talih olsun! Pronnoeitai Köyü, Tanrı'nın emri uyarınca ürünler ve bütün aile üyeleri için (bu sunağı) Khrestos oğlu Marcus ile Lucius'un epimeletes'liğinin 6. yılında; komarkhes Marcus oğlu Timotheos (ile) Gaius oğlu Pasion; epimeletes Khrestos oğlu Marcus (ile) Lucius Aterius oğlu Lucius (ile) Klemens oğlu Rufus (zamanında) Zeus Basilikos'a yaptırdılar. Onlar (ayrıca) Herakles'in de (bir heykelini diktiler).*
2. *Askles'in Zeus Bronton'u için (bu sunağı), Tanrısal buyruğa uygun olarak Askles oğlu Marcus kuzenleriyle birlikte dikti.*
3. *[İyi talih olsun! (?)]. Kâhya Euangelos, Lucius'un kızı Domitia Arkesilaïs'in kurtuluşu ve toprak ürünlerinin (bereketi) için (bu sunağı) Zeus'un büstü ile birlikte, Aleksandros oğlu Hermogas komarkhes iken ve Glykon oğlu Glykon komarkhes Zeus Soter'e dikti.*
4. *Askles'in Zeus Bronton'u için (bu sunağı), Tanrısal buyruğa uygun olarak Artemon'un oğulları Longus ve Artemon diktiler.*
5. *İyi talih olsun! Tanrısal buyruğa uygun olarak, Artemon oğulları Longus, Askles ve Artemon (bu sunağı) Zeus Bronton'a diktiler.*
6. *İyi talih olsun! Tanrısal buyruğa uygun olarak, Pronnoeitai köyü, Aurelius Ariston ile Aurelius Nikomakhos'un komarkhes'liği sırasında (bu sunağı) Zeus Bronton'a diktiler.*
7. *İyi talih olsun! Tanrısal buyruğa uygun olarak, Marcus oğulları Diokles, Nikomakhos ve Marcus ile Sextus oğlu Marcus kardeşleriyle birlikte, (bu altarı) Marcus ve Sextus'un Zeus Bronton Pithios'una diktiler.*
8. *İyi talih olsun! Tanrısal buyruğa uygun olarak, ben, Aristainetos oğlu Asklas (bu altarı) Sosigenes ile Sotades/Sotadas'ın Zeus Bronton'una diktim.*

9. İyi talih olsun! Aleksandros, Asklepiodotos ve Trophimas'ın Zeus Bronton'u için (sunağı), Tanrısızal buyruğa uygun olarak Ruphas ile Meilesios diktiler.

Anahtar sözcükler: Bithynia, Phrygia, Ahmetler Köyü/Bilecik, Zeus Bronton, Nikaia, Pronnoeitai köyü, adak yazıtı, komarkhes.

**New Inscriptions from Nikaia XII.
Sanctuary of Zeus Bronton in Ahmetler Village of Pazaryeri District**

Abstract

In 2016 in the Ahmetler village of Pazaryeri district in Bilecik province, as a result of the damage caused by the village headman's illegal construction under the pretext of making a quarantine area, a cult area was accidentally discovered. In this area damaged area made by the village headman, in situ architectural wall remains and many offering stelae were found scattered on the surface, 10 of which had inscriptions on them. In this article, we present only nine inscriptions because one of them has been very badly damaged. These new offerings contribute to our knowledge of the region's history.

Keywords: Bithynia, Phrygia, Ahmetler village/Bilecik, Zeus, Bronton, Nicaea, Pronnoeitai village, votive inscription, komarches.



Fig. 10) Findspot of the inscriptions in the illegally excavated area (Photo: Abdurrahman Aktaş)



Fig. 11) Findspot of the inscriptions in the illegally excavated area (Photo: Abdurrahman Aktaş)



Fig. 12) Findspot of the inscriptions in the illegally excavated area (Photo: Abdurrahman Aktaş)



Fig. 13) Findspot of the inscriptions in the illegally excavated area (Photo: Abdurrahman Aktaş)