New readings from Oinoanda (SEG 44, 1200), Olbasa (SEG 48, 1536) and Maionia

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1. Aurelius Aisim[os] plestonikės

The late Alan Hall and Nicholas Milner (Hall – Milner 1994, 42 no. 36 = SEG 44, 1994, 1200) published an inscribed, fragmentary statue-base that had been re-used in (a presumed repair to) a wall in an Imperial peristyle building immediately west of the Agora at Oinoanda, a Graeco-Roman city site in northern Lycia (fig.1).²

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1 I am grateful to the late Martin Bachmann, deputy director, Deutsches Archäologisches Institut (Abteilung Istanbul), for inviting me to take part in the survey work at Oinoanda, and the Turkish Government representatives, Bay Mustafa Barış Harmonkaya, of the General Directorate of Cultural Heritage and Museums, Istanbul, and Bayan Nilgün Şentürk, of the Museum of Anatolian Civilisations, Ankara, for their assistance at the seasons concerned.

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The last two lines (14-15) are on a separate fragment in the wall beside the main fragment, immediately to the right of it. I was able to study the fragments in situ in 2011-12, and after reconsideration of the evidence further study has led to the amendments here proposed.

There are two unclear passages in the text, at lines 8-9 and in line 14. In the original publication, the reading of lines 8-9 -ρου, Αὐρήλιος Λις νόι[ς] | Λις τοῦ καὶ Ἑρμαίου Θο- involved the name Αὐρήλιος Λις(?), “Aurelius Lis”, where it was suggested that the cognomen “Lis” was related to the final element in other epichoric Lycian names such as Moaleis, Toialis, and which coincided with λίς, an epic word for a lion. However, such a name for a man has continued to be unparalleled despite the rather extensive evidence of the Lycian onomasticon, and it now appears unconvincing. If it is not a complete name, therefore, one must extend the reading to the subsequent letters, whilst if necessary revising the reading of the doubtful first letter Λ, in the light of a much improved resource for the Greek onomasticon, thanks to the Oxford Lexicon of Greek Personal Names (LGPN) (fig. 2, 3).

It immediately becomes clear that upsilon is not the most likely letter after ΛΙΣ-. This fourth letter certainly has a vertical hasta in its lower part (destroyed above), and we can start by considering eta, iota, kappa, pi, tau, as well as upsilon. We can see from LGPN vols I-Vc that upsilon produces no plausible name after ΛΙΣ-, and neither does pi or tau. If it were part of a letter having two upright hastae, there is no sign of the crossbar of an eta, where the surface appears intact. Further, no plausible Greek name is known to start Λισ-, or indeed Δισ-, and Δίσκος is ruled out by the lack of visible arms for the kappa, where the surface appears intact. Δίσυρος, on the other hand, is vanishingly rare, with only one example in LGPN vols I-Vc. Then, if ΛΙΣ- were ΔΙΣ-, plus upsilon, only an exceptionally rare pair of names, Αἰσμυνός and Αἰσμύων comes to the fore, which for lack of space left in line 8 (there is room only for another 2-3 letters) cannot be considered here. On a balance of probabilities, therefore, iota is more likely than any other letter, so that ex hypothesi iota will be a continuation of a name beginning with ΛΙΣ-.

Then, as line 9 starts with a new name being a patronymic in the genitive case, the previous name in Αἰσ- must end at the right edge of line 8, so that a maximum of only seven letters is available for it. We thus arrive at the class of Αἰσιο- and Αἰσι- names, such as Αἰσιάς, Αἰσίων, Αἰσιος, Αἰσι-
γένης, Αἰσιμένης, Αἰσιμίδης, all referring in one way or another to Αἶσα, Fate. After Αἰσ- the evidence of the fifth letter also beginning with a vertical hasta would point to one of the three compound names listed above, but they are too long. The vertical hasta after iota could belong to several different letters, but the combination of the previous letters points to mu. It should be added that the sixth letter should not be read with the editio princeps as a possible omicron; examination of the stone suggests that what appears in the squeezes is in fact damage at the break, where the original surface of the stone is missing, and hence this letter should be treated as wholly in a lacuna.

The proposed solution to the observed traces is Αἰσμος, meaning “appointed by fate”, a name from an intersecting set with the above group which arose particularly in the Hellenistic period, of names taken directly from an epithet naming a moral quality (see Bechtel 1917, 29, 502). Aisimos has the advantage of being substantially commoner than the older Αἰσ- names, with 26 examples in LGPN I-Vc including 9-10 examples from Mysia or Troas (LGPN Va), as compared with very isolated cases of the other Αἰσ- names except Αἰσιμίδης which has 12 examples in LGPN I-Vc. Yet Aisimos is a relatively rare name, with no previously recorded example from Lycia.

In the next line (9) previously read as beginning ΛΙΣ τοῦ καὶ Ἐρμίου, the first six letters are now read as ΑΡΑΤΟΥ. The second letter previously read as I is now seen to have a loop at the top right, and so will be a rho. At the third letter the loop of the preceding rho and extended left horizontal hasta of the following tau were previously misread as together forming the top bar of (four-barred) sigma, where the letter can now be read as alpha. Thus, the line can be seen to start with Αράτου καὶ Ἐρμίου with a haplography of TOY. Aratos, meaning “prayed for,” by contrast with Aisimos, is reasonably common across the Greek world with 71 examples in LGPN I-Vc, including one from neighbouring Tios (TAM 2.2.608, Imperial).

At the start of line 14 the reading of the editio princeps, τρίς, δὶς ἱερονείκης needs to be corrected. For this reading one would have to accept that several letters were crowded together, which is
contrary to the mason’s expansive style in this inscription, where he spaced them out elegantly (fig. 3, 4, 5). The last line (line 16) is approximately centred (fig. 5).

Furthermore, τρίς is problematic as syntactically it goes with στεφθε[ί]ς, “crowned”, at the end of the previous line; yet στεφθε[ί]ς was one of the terms used to indicate the athletic victory that was being commemorated by the statue on the base. The victory in this case was in the men’s pankration; the honorand could not be “three times crowned” for this one event, and to translate it “crowned for the third time” seems inapplicable to a many-times winner such as this honorand, whether a hieronikes or a pleistonikes (on which, see below).

What was read from the squeeze as ΤΡΙ are the abraded parts of letters immediately above a break in the block, where pi plus an unidentified letter (Π) is an equally plausible rationalisation of the traces. What was previously thought to belong to “iota” is the lower, vertical, part of a mean-diver, mainly diagonal crack in the stone, running down from line 12; this area occupies the space of illegible lambda. Then comes Σ which is now read as Ε, and what was read from the squeeze as Δ is now seen to be a hole in the surface at another diagonal crack rising from left to right. The following iota is confirmed, placed to the right of the crack. Then, contrary to the mason’s usual practice, the letters read ΣΙ in the editio princeps are seen to occupy the space of one square letter, where there is another broad roughly vertical vein and crack in the surface. The “iota” is now explained as merely part of the crack, and the horizontal arms of the sigma (traces of whose pointed angles are visible on the left), which are now eroded away must have continued over this space, if it was a normal-sized sigma.

The following curved trace previously read as the letter epsilon would have meant a lunate letter-form, contrary to the style used in the rest of the inscription. No middle crossbar is visible. The following letter is now read as a probable tau, not rho, as what was read as its “loop” is not completed down to the vertical hasta in the squeezes. It appears, then, that the lunate letterform, which runs into the left top hasta of the tau, is a curved piece of damage to the surface, which could have been induced by the erosion into one another of apices at the left end of tau and the two horizontal right ends of a four-bar sigma.

The amended reading Π[Λ]ΕΙΣΤ - results in a reduction of 10 crowded letters to 6 elegantly spaced ones, which accords better with the ductus litterarum of the other lines, so that line 14 now has 18 letters; compare lines 12 and 13 which have 17 letters each. Thus, the original reading τρίς, δις ἵερονείκης, translated “[crowned] thrice, twice sacred victor,” is abandoned and replaced with
The corrected text reads then as follows:

\[\text{π[λ]εινονείκης, “multiple victor,” “victor on very many occasions,” a title that was also bestowed on another Oinoandran pancratiast, L. Septimius Flavianus Flavilianus (SEG 44, 1169).}\]

Translation: “When Aurelius Antichares, son of Apollonios alias Philotas, son of Apollonios, son of Orthagoras, was agonothetes of the … celebrated from the fund of Meleagris, Aurelius Aisimos, son of Aratos alias Hermaios, son of Thoas, having taken part with distinction in the men’s pankration in the twentieth themis and having been crowned (winner), multiple victor, set up the statue for the city.”

If the amendments proposed above are accepted, the statue on this inscribed base was that of Aurelius Aisimos, a local pancratiast of highly respected status as a pleistonikes, “multiple victor,” a title which was bestowed on athletes who had won numerous victories. On the evidence of this single base, however, and unlike L. Septimius Flavianus Flavilianus (SEG 44, 1195-1196), he was not a hieronikes— “victor in Sacred games,” that is, crowned at an international crown-games which enjoyed the title hieros, “sacred”, on which see further Remijsen 2015, 120, 209-10, 242; Robert 1970, 9-10. Contrast too a victor who boasted success in the Olympic games in Elis among his victories, SEG 64, 1431 col. ii (Tlos) ὀλυμπιονείκης | πλειστονείκης | παράδοξος, “Olympic victor, multiple victor, brilliant (victor)”; see further Robert 1957, 229-231.

Date: ca. A.D. 225-264 (Hall – Milner 1994, 42-43).

2. Manius Petronius Protos

In Milner 1998, 64 no. 142 = SEG 48, 1998, 1536 I published an inscribed altar to the Sebastoi found by Alan Hall in 1985 at Belenli, which is the site of the Graeco-Roman city, Olbasa. The
brief text had been imperfectly erased, so that one could still read the letters recording the dedication by a Roman citizen of Greek descent, with *tria nomina* of which the first two names are Latin men’s names, followed by a Greek *cognomen* (fig. 5).  

In lines 4-5 the *cognomen* was read [[Πρωτ-τῆς]]. This being a feminine abstract noun meaning “gentleness” always seemed unlikely for a male, and further study has convinced me that this is a misreading of the squeeze, where ωυ should be corrected to ω, thus [[Πρω-τῆς]]. The trace of omega is visible, as an arcuated letter form with two large inverted volutes. Πρωτῆς, according to LGPN I-Vc attested 10 times in total, 5 in Asia Minor, is an Ionic contracted form of the much commoner Πρωτέας. A contemporary example of Proteas comes from nearby Yeşilova (Horsley 2007, 88 no. 119, 2nd-3rd cent. A.D.). Protes/Proteas is derived from the group of names denoting “prince” or “first”, including Protos, Protogenes, etc., cf. Pape – Benseler 1911, s.v. Πρωτέας, Πρῶτος.

The corrected text reads then as follows:

[[Θεοῖς Σεβασ]]  
\[\text{vac} \quad [\text{τοῖς} \quad \text{vacat} \quad \text{leaf} \quad [\text{Μάνιος Πε}] \quad \text{leaf} \quad [\text{τρώνιος Πρω}]]  

5 leaf [[τῆς]] leaf.

Translation: “To the *theoi Sebastoi* (deified Augusti), Manius Petronius Protes (dedicated it).”

3. Curing a broken leg in Maionia

Malay – Petzl 2017, 79 no. 44, a confession relief-stele dedicated to Artemis Anaetis and Meis Tiamou records a cure for one Aur. Tatianos son of Rhesonianos, who was “smitten in the leg”,
where informed by the associated reliefs of a leg with the foot, I translate πόδα “leg” rather than “foot” (cf. LSJ s.v. πούς for this possibility).  

Two passages in this text are unclear. The second crux in lines 3-4 reads πληγεὶς πόδα ΕΙΣΟΜΕ[1-2]ΠΙΣ κὲ θαραπευθεῖς… Building on a suggestion of the editors, “One could perhaps consider ἄγις, or ἐ[α]γίς, broken, from ἄγνυμι. We would still be left with the unexplained letters and an unclear syntax,” I suggest the crux may be read ἐ[α]γίς, “in which I having been broken,” where the gamma seems clear in the photograph. The photograph also shows that the nu of ὃν can be read as corrected by the mason from a mu. A parallel for the syntax ἐ[α]γίς may be found in κολασθεῖσα εἰς τὸν πόδαν, “having been punished in the leg/foot” (Petzl 1994, 1-177, no. 89). Compare also the formulae, κολασθεῖσα καὶ θεραπευθεῖσα, “having been punished and cured,” κολασθεῖσα καὶ σωθεῖσα, “having been punished and saved,” at Petzl 1994, nos. 94 and 114, which support a reading ἐ[α]γίς κὲ θαραπευθείς, “having been broken and cured,” as a pair of co-ordinate aorist participles passive. The phonetic spelling of the ending of ἐ[α]γίς for ἐ[α]γ<ε>ίς paired with another participle spelled correctly is paralleled in κολασθεῖσα καὶ θεραπευθεῖσα at no. 94.

Then, if we read the first crux of line 3 [.ΞΟΜΗΝ with Malay’s proposed ἑζόμην, “I was sitting,” the whole confession text makes quite consistent sense with minimal editorial intervention:

Ἀρτέμιδι Ἀναεῖτι καὶ Μηνὶ Τει- 
αμου Αὐρ. Τατιανὸς ῾Ρησωνιανοῦ 
[.ΞΟΜΗΝ πληγεὶς πόδα εἰς ὃ ἑ- 
4 [α] γίς κὲ θαραπευθείς εὐξάμε- 
νος στήλλην ἀνέθηκα

“I, Aurelius Tatianos, son of Rhesonianos, was sitting down after having been smitten in my leg; in which I having had a break and having been cured, put up the stele -having made a vow- to Artemis Anaeitis and Meis Teiamou.”

The significance of his sitting down is that he was unable to walk before his cure. There seems little reason to conclude that he suffered two broken legs from the fact that the relief shows that the dedicant put up two colossal images of a leg. A double votive was more valuable than a single.

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6 Ἀρτέμιδι Ἀναεῖτι καὶ Μηνὶ Τειαμου Αὐρ. Τατιανὸς ῾Ρησωνιανοῦ | [.ΞΟΜΗΝ πληγεὶς πόδα ΕΙΣΟΜΕ[1-2]ΠΙΣ κὲ θαραπευθεῖς εὐξάμενος στήλλην ἀνέθηκα.
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Oinoanda (SEG 44, 1200), Olbasa (SEG 48, 1536) ve Maionia’dan Yeni Okumalar

Öz

Bu makalede antik Oinoanda (no. 1), Olbasa (no. 2), ve Maionia (no. 3) kentlerinden üç adet yayılanmış yazı için düzeltmeler önerilmektedir. 1 numaralı yazıtta zafer kazanmış bir atletin adı ve baba adları Thoas oğlu Hermaios olarak da bilinen Aratos’un oğlu Aurelius Aisimos olarak önerilmiş ve hieronikes, (”kutsal galip”) yerine pleistonikes (”çok kere galip”) olarak övülmüştür. 2 numaralı yazıtta Sebastoi için adanan yazıtlı bir altarı adayan kişinin cognomeni Protes olarak yeniden okunmuştur. Son olarak, kırık bacağı için şifa bulan birinin kefaret steli olan 3 numaralı yazıtta metnin cümle yapısı düzenlenmiş ve bir harfin değiştirilmesiyle metin netliğe kavuşturulmuştur.

Anahtar Sözcüklер: Oinoanda, Olbasa, Maionia, atlet yazıtı, Sebastoi, ex-voto (adak yazıtı), Artemis Anaeitis, Meis Teiamou.

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Abstract

This article offers corrections to three published inscriptions, from ancient Oinoanda (no. 1), Olbasa (no. 2), and Maionia (no. 3). In no. 1, the name and patronymics of an athletic victor are proposed to be Aurelius Aisimos, son of Aratos alias Hermaios, son of Thoas, and he is acclaimed with the title pleistonikes, “multiple victor” rather than hieronikes, “sacred victor”. In no. 2, the cognomen of the dedicant of an inscribed altar for the Sebastoi is re-read as Protes. Finally, in no. 3, a confession stele for a man cured of a broken leg, the syntax of the text is restored and elucidated by the emendation of a single letter.

Keywords: Oinoanda, Olbasa, Maionia, athletic inscription, Sebastoi, ex-voto, Artemis Anaeitis, Meis Teiamou.