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TWO GREEK INSCRIPTIONS FROM TELL KADESH (UPPER GALLILEE)

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TWO GREEK INSCRIPTIONS FROM TELL KADESH (UPPER GALLILEE)*

The Roman temple in Tell Kadesh (ancient Kadasa)¹ in Upper Gallilee has so far yielded four Greek inscriptions. Two have been known for a long time and the two others were discovered in recent years during excavations carried out by the University of Tell Aviv. This small *corpusculum* was presented in an article by M. Fischer, A. Ovadiah and I. Roll, scientists working at Tell Kadesh². Here, I wish to make a few remarks concerning two of these inscriptions

Inscription no. 2 has been known for nearly 70 years³. The text cited by M. Fischer, A. Ovadiah and I. Roll was determined in 1923 by R. Mouterde⁴ and reads as follows: [Ἔτους] γμς'. Θεοῦ ἁγίου οὐρανίου συνγέν(ε)ια ἐποίησεν, διὰ ἐπιμελητῶν Ἄννιου Ναγδα καὶ Λισεμσεος⁵ Δάματος εὐχὴν. Fischer, Ovadiah and Roll translate the fragment of the inscription with the names of *epimeletai* as follows: "... under the supervision of Annios son of Nagda and Lisemseos son of Damas..." and comment: "...Annios, Lisemseos and Damas sound Greek, while the fourth name, Nagda, appears to be of Semitic origin..."⁶. Attributing a Greek origin to the name Lisemsis is a misunderstanding; this name, like Nagda, is of Semitic origin. Λισεμςις is the Greek transliteration of the well known Aramaic name ʾšmšy. It is one of a large group of theophoric names formed from the name of the ancient Semitic sun god šmš⁷. The theophoric element is preceded by the particle

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¹ Regarding Kadasa (Hebr. Kadesh Nephtali), cf. V. Guerin, Description géographique, historique et archéologique de la Palestine, t. VII, Paris 1880, pp. 355-362. In the time of Joseph Flavius the place belonged to Tyre: Ch. Möller, G. Schmitt, Siedlungen Palästinas nach Flavius Josephus, Wiesbaden 1976, s.v. Καδαα. The Roman temple, probably built in the 2nd c., seems to have been dedicated to Baalshamin: M. Fischer, A. Ovadiah, I. Roll, The Roman Temple at Tell Kadesh, Upper Gallilee: A Preliminary Study, Tell Aviv 11, No. 2, 1984, pp. 146-172.

² M. Fischer, A. Ovadiah, I. Roll, The Epigraphic Finds from the Roman Temple at Kadesh in the Upper Gallilee, Tell Aviv 13-14, No. 1, 1986-1987, pp. 60-66.

³ M. Fischer, A. Ovadiah, I. Roll, op.cit., p. 61. The inscription was found set into the wall of the police station near the temple. Published by C.C. McCown, Epigraphic Gleanings, III: Inscriptions from Kades, AASOR 2-3, 1923, pp. 113-115; improved version (in:) R. Mouterde, L'inscription grecque de Kades Nephtali, Al Machricq 21, 1923, pp. 623-625 (non vidi); briefly mentioned by R. Mouterde, Inscriptions grecques relevées par l'Institut Français de Damas, Syria 6, 1925, p. 355, note 4.

⁴ R. Mouterde, Al Machricq, loc.cit.

⁵ Λισεμσεος is probably an erroneous noting of the genitive Λισεμσεως. The nominative would probably be Λισεμςις.

⁶ M. Fischer, A. Ovadiah, I. Roll. loc.cit.

⁷ Regarding theophoric names from the name of the Semitic sun god šmš, cf. J.T. Milik, Dédicaces faites par des dieux, Paris, 1972, pp. 389-390. To the names discussed by Milik we can add the name

/ denoting belonging (to someone). The name can thus be translated as "this of šmš" or "belonging to šmš"⁸. Theophoric names with the element šmš appear in the whole north and west Semitic cultural area but the name "belonging to šmš" is especially connected with Palmyra, where it often appears in Aramaic and Greek inscriptions⁹. Palmyrenians who settled in various parts of the Roman Empire also bore this name¹⁰. As the name is exclusive to the inhabitants of Palmyra, we may assume that Lisemsis, son of Damas who, together with Annios was responsible for putting up some monument in the temple at Kadasa to a god worshipped there, was Palmyrenian by origin¹¹.

Inscription no 4, the only ineditum in the collection, was read by Fischer, Ovadiah and Roll as shown beneath in the left-hand text;¹² my different proposal besides (right-hand text) together with the translation:

[.]	[ὁ δεῖνα. . .] -
εὔς Ἀντικέρασ-	εὐς Ἀντικέρασ-
ος, Κράτηρος, Ἀ-	ος Κράτηρος Α[ὐ]-
ήλιας, Ἀγαθοκ[λῆ]-	[ρ]ηλίασ Ἀγαθοκ[λέ]-
ς συμβίου καὶ Ἰο[.]-	ας συμβίου καὶ Ἰο[υ]-
[.]πτησ θυγατρὸς[ς]	[λ]ίττησ ¹³ θυγατρὸς[ς]
[τ]ὸν ἀνδριάντα σὺν τῇ βάσει	[τ]ὸν ἀνδριάντα σὺν τῇ βάσει
τῷ εἰτ' ἔτει	τῷ εἰτ' ἔτει

Νεσροαμοσ (Aram. nsršmš = help of Shamash): L. Jalabert, R. Mouterde, *Inscriptions grecques et latines de la Syrie*, tome V, n. 2385.

⁸ Semitic theophoric names constructed according to the principle: preposition of belonging + name of god have been discussed by A. Caquot, *Sur l'onomastique religieuse de Palmyre*, *Syria* 39, 1962, p. 237sq. Regarding the exact meaning of the name lšmšy, in which the ending "yod" may be interpreted in various ways, cf. Th. Nöldeke, *Beiträge zur semitischen Sprachwissenschaft*, Strassburg 1904, p. 105.

⁹ This name appears in Palmyra in two Aramaic versions: lšmš and lšmšy with the appropriate Greek transliterations Λισαμοσ and Λισαμοσαιοσ: J.P. Stark, *Personal Names in Palmyrene Inscriptions*, Oxford 1971, s.vv., and A. Caquot, *loc.cit.*

¹⁰ The authors of the dedication in the sanctuary of Palmyrene gods on the Transtevere in Rome are named: Μακκατοσ Μαλη τοῦ Λισαμοσ and Κοαδασ Θαμειουσ τοῦ Λισαμοσαιοσ: IG XIV, 972 (= IGR I, 46); the Greek text of the dedication, badly damaged, was completed on the basis of a parallel Aramaic version: CIS II, 3904. Λισαμοσ Καχρηλου, the author of a dedication found in Hauran, was probably also a Palmyrenian: M. Dunand, *Nouvelles inscriptions du Djebel Druz et du Hauran*, *RB* XLI, 1932, p. 575, n. 120; cf. also J.T. Milik, *op.cit.*, p. 91, who calls him "Palmyrenien probable".

¹¹ This may be an additional evidence that the god worshipped at the temple in Kadasa was Baalshamin, one of the main gods of Palmyra.

¹² M. Fischer, A. Ovadiah, I. Roll, *op.cit.*, p. 63sq., Pls. 3:2, 4:1.

¹³ For the name Ioulitta, see A. Dain, *Inscriptions grecques du Musée du Louvre. Les textes inédits*, Paris 1933, n. 111 (Sydon); L. Jalabert, R. Mouterde, *op.cit.* vol. IV, n. 1366: (metric epitaph from Apamea). The name is especially well confirmed in Asia Minor (cf. e.g.: MAMA VII 469; VIII 234; CIG 4056, 4962), where it remained popular up to the Christian era, cf. Ioulitta, mother of St. Korykos; on her and her son in epigraphic sources, *Bull. ep.* 1987, 493.

[name, . . .]-eus Antikerasos Krateros (erected) the statue of his wife Aurelia Agathoclea and his daughter Ioulitta together with its pedestal, in the year 315 (of the Tyre era, i.e. 189/190 A.D.)

ll. 1-3: We must obviously attribute the dedication to the husband of Aurelia Agathoclea and the father of Ioulitta. These lines contain the man's names of which two have survived: Ἀντικέρακος Κράτηρος. The letters EYC at the beginning of line 2 would be the ending of a Greek male name in the nominative, e.g. Ἀχιλλεύς, another name of this man. In l. 1 we would expect his Roman *nomen*.

ll. 3-6 relate to l. 7 and describe more closely the statue dedicated in the temple¹⁴. It was a statue of Aurelia Agathoclea and her daughter Ioulitta. Since the inscription mentions one pedestal and one statue the mother and daughter must have been shown as one whole; Aurelia Agathoclea probably held her small daughter Ioulitta in her arms.

At the beginning of line 5 the lower end of a slanting line can be seen on the photograph; it can only be part of an Α or Λ.

A short comment is necessary as to the name Ἀντικέρακος, which seems to appear here for the first time. The name is made up of the noun κέρακος and preposition ἀντί. If we take the basic meaning of the word κέρακος - bird cherry - we have something very surprising. However, at ancient authors we find the name Κέρακος¹⁵. It is also the name of two towns in Pontus, on the coast of the Black Sea¹⁶. In toponomastics compounds made up of ἀντι + the nominative of a geographical name are very frequent (cf. Ἀντιλίβανος, Ἀντιδρέπανον). Maybe there existed a toponym Ἀντικέρακος, unknown to us, which with time become a name. However, as we cannot exclude other hypotheses the problem must wait for its final solution in the future.

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¹⁴ We find the same style in a inscription from Smyrna, I.K. 757: Κο. Βαλέριος Ἰουλιανὸς Κυρ(ναῖος) Ἀσκληπιῶ ἱητῆρι Διὸς Κοτῆρος ἄγαλμα σὺν βάσει ἀργυρῆ γύψου μετῆ ἀνεθηκεν.

¹⁵ Hyginus, Fabulae 274; cf. also a female name Κερακώ in Mycenae: J. Chadwick, L. Baumbach, The Mycenaean Greek Vocabulary, Glotta 41, 1963, p. 209, probably formed from the same root borrowed by Greek from Asia Minor.

¹⁶ E. Olshausen, J. Biller, Untersuchungen zur historischen Geographie von Pontos unter den Mithridatiden, Wiesbaden 1984, s.v. Κερακούς.