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ΣΑΒΑΝΑΣ AND ΕΣΤΑΜΙΝΙΑΣ: NEW NOUNS IN -ΑΣ


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New Nouns in -ας

It is well known that in Greek there is a group of nouns formed with the -ας suffix, which commonly designates the maker or seller of something. In this review O.Masson has published several articles on this matter.\(^4\) Previously these nouns also had interested L.Robert who emphasized the productivity of the series, "which is every year", he wrote, "enriched with new examples".\(^5\) In this paper I will deal with two new examples.

1. In *Rivista di Archeologia Cristiana* 40 (1964) pp. 206-7 (plate 9, p. 179) L.Bonomi published a Jewish epitaph from Soffiana, in the province of Enna, Sicily, which he dated in the 4th cent. A.D. The editor printed (with no accents) the following text:

\[
\text{Ιούδας Σαβανᾶς vel Σαβατίας,}
\]

Of these two forms, only the former is documented. In fact, *Sabanâs* is the name of a freeman in Rome, *L. Aurelius Panniculus qui et Sabanas* (CIL VI 10117). In the inscription of Soffiana, however, it is difficult to see a second name (at this time one would expect 'Ιούδας ο και Σαβανᾶς) or a patronymon (it would be 'Ιούδας Σαβανᾶς). In reality the second word is a regular designation of the deceased's profession. He was a σαβανᾶς, that is, a maker or a trader of σάβανον, "linen cloth". The form *Sabanâs* of Rome is probably a proper name derived from this term, according to a well documented procedure.\(^6\) It is not, as Thylander wrongly proposed,\(^7\) an Hebraic name. The textile industry and trade was an important occupation of the Jewish community in the antiquity,\(^8\) a fact which agrees with my interpretation. We should read:

\[
\text{Ιούδας σαβανᾶς.}
\]

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\(^5\) *Noms Indigènes de l'Asie gréco-romaine*, Paris 1963, p. 143. See also *R.Phil.* 18 (1944) pp. 52-3, *Hellenica* XI p. 43, etc.

\(^6\) See the articles of O.Masson cited on note 1 and "De la Sicile à l'Égypte", *Chron.Égyp.* 49 (1974) 175-8 (\(=\) *OGS* 193-6).

\(^7\) *Étude sur l'épigraphie latine*, Lund 1952, pp. 163-4.

2. In *Ficheiro Epigráfico* 42 (1992) n. 185 L. Coelho, M. Alves Dias and C. Torres have published, with a good photograph, a Greek Christian epitaph from Mértola, the ancient Myrtilis, in the distrito of Beja, in southern Portugal, where other Greek inscriptions have been found. They do not date the inscription, but the 6th. cent. A.D. is a likely date. The editors read the following text:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{kata}\kappa\text{ktite} \\
\varepsilon\upiota\upsilon\chi\zeta \\
\text{'Estamini-} \\
\alpha\varsigma \text{(crux) eto}n \\
\kappa\eta
\end{align*}
\]

According to the editors, ECTAMINIAÇ is the genitive of the Latin family name *Steminia*, which is also documented in the form *Staminius* (CIL VI 1056.4.79). True, the use of a Latin family name as a single name is possible at this time, but this interpretation supposes the use of a metronymic genitive, something which would be very strange. This inconvenience can be easily solved if we read ἐσταμίνιναζ, a new Greek noun which designates the profession of Εὐτύχης. This noun ἐσταμίνιναζ can be explained as derived from the late Latin word *stamnia* (or *staminea*), "linsey shirt", with a prothetic ε which causes no difficulty. There are other nouns in -αζ formed with a Latin word: υουλαζ (= Lat. *mularius*), φαιβαζ (= Lat. *fabarius*), παστιλλαζ (= Lat. *pastillarius*). The word *staminarius* (not *staminiarius*) is documented. According to this interpretation Εὐτύχης was a trader or maker of *staminae*. I propose to read the inscription as follows:

\[
\begin{align*}
[\varepsilon\nu\theta\alpha] \\
[\kappa\text{ktite}]^{12} \\
\varepsilon\upiota\upsilon\chi\zeta \\
\text{'Estamini-} \\
\alpha\varsigma \text{(crux) eto}n \\
\kappa\eta
\end{align*}
\]

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9 J. Vives, *Inscripciones cristianas de la España romana y visigoda*, Barcelona 19692, nn. 420 and 524 a, b, c.

10 Cf. Portuguese *estamenha* and Spanish *estameña*.


12 It could also be [\varepsilon\nu\thetaα κ]\text{ktite}, but all the Greek inscriptions of Mertola present the formula \varepsilon\nu\thetaα κ\kappa\text{takite}.