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FURTHER REMARKS ON A GREEK FUNERAL INSCRIPTION FROM ROME

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Further Remarks on a Greek Funeral Inscription From Rome

In CdE 65 (1990) 126-128 a Greek funeral inscription now kept in the Cathedral of Saint Mammès at Langres (Haut-Marne) is discussed by P.J. Sijpesteijn; it was published earlier in CdE 63 (1988) 322 by P.Cauderlier. The inscription was said to originate from the catacombs of Saint Priscilla at Rome.

For completeness' sake it may be remarked that this inscription obviously was not known yet to the editors of the *Inscriptiones Christianae Urbis Romae*, i.e. it is lacking among the Latin and Greek inscriptions from the catacombs of St. Priscilla in volumes VIII and IX of the *ICVR* series.

But there is more: this inscription happens to be identical with CIG IV 9695. That text was taken up (with some interesting new interpretations) by C. Wessel into his dissertation *Inscriptiones Graecae Christianae Veteres Occidentis* defended in 1936 at the University of Halle in Saxony.¹ While I think that Sijpesteijn is correct in doubting some elements in the interpretation of the inscription as proposed by Cauderlier, it is interesting to compare the Wessel and the Sijpesteijn version of the text:

1	ὀνόματα θρεπτῶν·	1	ὀνόματα θρεπτῶν·
2	Αὐρ. Ῥόδων, Αὐρ. Ἀσκλη-	2	Αὐρ. Ῥόδων, Αὐρ. Ἀσκλη-
3	πας. πατρώνῳ Αὐρ.	3	πας Πατρώνο(ς), Αὐρ.
4	Μαρκιανῷ ✠ ἐποίησα<μ>-	4	Μαρκιανό(ς). ✠ ἐποίησαν
5	ἐν μνίας χάριν.	5	ἐν μνίας χάριν.

One sees at a glance where the two authors disagree: while Wessel interpreted this text as a dedication *μνίας χάριν* (= “because of his memory”) by two *θρεπτοί*, Aurelius Rhodon and Aurelius Asklepas, to their *πατρώνῳ* Αὐρ. Μαρκιανῷ,² Sijpesteijn assumes that 3 people made this monument to preserve their memory.

For lines 4-5 Wessel refers to nos. 914ss. in his collection and this reference proves illuminating: while there are quite a few attestations of the phrasing “*μνίας* (or, for that matter, *μνήμης/μνημοσύνης) χάριν*”, there occur among these Wessel texts no attestation of a phrasing “*ἐν* (= *εἰς*) *μνίας χάριν*”. Furthermore, the single attestation of a phrasing *εἰς μνίας χάριν*” referred to by Sijpesteijn, IGUR 353 (= IG XIV 1403), must be handled with caution, cf. the critical view of this inscription taken by an expert like G. Kaibel who reckoned with the possibility that *εἰς* might be corrupt (this idea cannot, alas, be checked, as the original stone seems to have disappeared).

As the standard formula is a simple *μνίας χάριν* without a preposition, this is an important argument in favor of Wessel's approach, even if that entails a correction of the stone's lettering

¹ Thanks to the good offices of A. Ferrua and C. Carletti a much completer (re-)edition of Wessel's work has now appeared (Bari 1989); for concordances between *IGCVO* and *ICVR* I-IX cf. my lists in ZPE 87 (1991) 275-290.

² I myself, however, would prefer to cancel the full stop after *-πας* in line 3. Instead, it seems attractive to put — with Sijpesteijn — a full stop after *Μαρκιανῷ* in line 4.

ΕΠΟΙΗΣΑΝΕΝ into ΕΠΟΙΗΣΑΜΕΝ. Wessel's approach also avoids further questioning, why only one (Aur. Asklepas) out of three 'threptoi' would have been provided with a patronymic. As for the ending of the dative on omikron rather than omega, there are lots of attestations of this kind of substitution of $\omicron > \omega$ or $\omega > \omicron$ in Wessel's texts. An interesting parallel may be found in the dative Μάρκῳ in IGCVO 889.b = ICUR IX 24285.

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