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ΣΑΒΑΝΑΣ AND ΕΣΤΑΜΙΝΙΑΣ: NEW NOUNS IN -ΑΣ

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Σαβανᾶς and Ἑσταμινιᾶς: New Nouns in -ᾶς

It is well known that in Greek there is a group of nouns formed with the -ᾶς 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:

Ἰουδάς ἰΣαβανᾶς *vel* Σαβατιας.

Of these two forms, only the former is documented. In fact, *Sabanas* 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 Ἰουδάς ὁ καὶ Σαβανᾶς) or a patronymon (it would be Ἰουδάς Σαβανᾶ). 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 *Sabanas* 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 textil 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:

Ἰουδάς σαβανᾶς.

⁴ "Quelques noms de métier en -ᾶς et les noms propres correspondants", *ZPE* 11 (1973) 1-19 (= *Onomastica Graeca selecta* 163-181), "Le substantif χηνᾶς et le nom d'homme Χηνᾶς" (with W.Clarysse), *ZPE* 20 (1976) p. 231 (= *OGS* 241).

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.Égypt.* 49 (1974) 175-8 (= *OGS* 193-6).

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

⁸ See J.Juster, *Les Juifs dans l'empire Romaine*, Paris 1914, II p. 306.

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.⁹ They do not date the inscription, but the 6th. cent. A.D. is a likely date. The editors read the following text:

κατάκ]ιτε
 Εὐτύχης
 Ἔσταμίνι-
 ας (*crux*) ἐτῶν
 κη΄

According to the editors, ECTAMINIAC is the genitive of the Latin family name *Steminia*, which is also documented in the form *Staminus* (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 ἐσταμινιάς, a new Greek noun which designates the profession of Εὐτύχης. This noun ἐσταμινιάς can be explained as derived from the late Latin word *staminia* (or *staminea*), "linsey shirt", with a prothetic ε which causes no difficulty.¹⁰ There are other nouns in -ᾶς formed with a Latin word: μουλάς (= Lat. *mularius*), φαβᾶς (= Lat. *fabarius*), παστιλλᾶς (= Lat. *pastillarius*). The word *staminarius* (not *staminarius*) is documented.¹¹ According to this interpretation Εὐτύχης was a trader or maker of *staminiae*. I propose to read the inscription as follows:

[ἔνθα]
 [κατάκ]ιτε¹²
 Εὐτύχης
 ἔσταμινι-
 ᾶς (*crux*) ἐτῶν
 κη΄

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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*.

¹¹ See G.Goetz-G.Gundermann, *Glossae Latinograecae et Graecolatinae*, Leipzig 1887, p. 187, 57, where *staminarius* is translated as νήστης, "wiver".

¹² It could also be [ἔνθα κ]ίτε, but all the Greek inscriptions of Mertola present the formula ἔνθα κατάκιτε.