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*Anatolian Studies*, Vol. 9. (1959), pp. 119-124.

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*Anatolian Studies* is currently published by British Institute at Ankara.

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## THE SITE OF MISTHIA <sup>1</sup>

By A. S. HALL

### I

IN MAY 1958, while looking for Classical remains in Eastern Pisidia, I copied the following honorific inscription in the town of Beyşehir, which lies at the south-east corner of the lake of the same name, anciently Karalitis. Its situation and surroundings are shown in Fig. 1.

The text is carved on a rectangular slab of yellowish limestone, exposed to view by the removal of wall plaster. This is probably one face of the shaft of a statue-base, which has been built into the outer corner of a shop facing on to the main square. The shop also forms an outer wall to the Şen hotel, and the inscription is said to have come to light during repairs to the hotel, some six years previously. The final letters of the inscription are slightly damaged on both sides, but otherwise it is complete. Rosette below. H. 0.78 m., W. 0.43 m., Th. unknown. Letters 3 cm. high. Plate XXI *b* :—

Κλαυδιοκαισα-  
ρέων Μιστεα-  
νῶν Ὀρονδέων  
βουλή δῆμος  
5. Τιβέριον Κλαύ-  
διον Κουρβου-  
λῶνος υἱὸν Ὀπλωνα  
τειμῆς ἔνεκεν.

- L. 1-2. The title Κλαυδιοκαισαρεύς indicates a re-foundation of the town under Claudius, bringing its status into line with that of its north-eastern neighbour, Pappa-Tiberiopolis.<sup>2</sup> The urbanisation policy of Claudius is illustrated elsewhere in this part of Anatolia by Claudiconium (Konya), Claudiolaodiceia (Ladik) and by Claudiopolis (Mut).<sup>3</sup>
- L. 2-3. Ptolemy (V, iv, 10) mentions Μίσθιον as lying with Pappa in the territory of the Orondeis. The name Μιστεανοί here, however, suggests that the correct name of the town was probably Μιστέα. The only earlier inscription which mentions it by

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<sup>1</sup> This article is the first publication from material collected by the writer while Wilson Fellow of the University of Aberdeen. The assistance of Professor G. E. Bean in its preparation is gratefully acknowledged. Surviving errors are naturally the writer's own.

As will be shown, the accepted spelling of the town's name derives from Ptolemy and Byzantine church council lists, and does not conform with the earlier texts now available. The form "Mistea" is proposed here.

<sup>2</sup> D. Magie, *Roman Rule in Asia Minor*, Princeton, 1950, I, p. 500.

<sup>3</sup> For references, see D. Magie, *op. cit.*, II, p. 1405, n. 20 and 21.

name,<sup>4</sup> gives the form Μιστία. Most later references<sup>5</sup> give variants including -σθ-, except for Anon. Ravenna, which mentions Mestia, and the Council list of A.D. 692, where it appears as Mistia. The word is not recorded by Steph. Byzantinus, and all the titles appear here for the first time.

- L. 4. The abbreviation βουλὴ δῆμος is paralleled in an inscription from Pappa,<sup>6</sup> in honour of Trajan, which can be dated to between A.D. 103 and 116. Since both inscriptions have the same characteristic turned-in *omega*, a similar date can be suggested for the new one, which accords well with the evidence given by the personal names, discussed below.
- L. 5-7. The *nomina* of Claudius and Nero were frequently adopted in Galatia, as a consequence of the benefits, including enfranchisement, conferred upon many cities under Claudius, and large-scale recruitment under Nero. For Ὀπλων cf. Swoboda/Keil/Knoll, op. cit., no. 113 (Tosuntaş Kalesi, in Isauria) : often at Termessus (cf. *TAM.* III, Fasc. I, indexes), along with Ὀπλης : also found at Adada (*IGR.* III, 364, 365, 371, 377). Since Cn. Domitius Corbulo recruited Galatians for his Parthian campaigns in the early part of Nero's reign, it is probable that the father, whose name was perhaps Κουρβούλων Ὀπλων, took his general's name on being enfranchised. No other similar case, however, is known to me. The Greek form of Corbulo's name is given in an inscription from Palmyra (*IGR.* III, 1056, iv(a), 56).

## II

Previous attempts to identify the site of this town are most conveniently summarised by W. Ruge in his article "Mistia" in *RE.* XV, 2129 f., to which should be added the cautious statement by J. Keil, in Swoboda/Keil/Knoll, op. cit., p. 12.

The choice of Fassillar (see Fig. 1) was first made by J. Jüthner,<sup>7</sup> following the discovery of the sites of Amblada and Vasada during the Austrian Expedition of 1902, and in the knowledge that Mistea lay close at hand.<sup>8</sup> Sir William Ramsay had previously sought to locate the town at the north-east corner of Beyşehir Lake,<sup>9</sup> but he now accepted this identification, for reasons which are set out in *BSA.* IX, 1902, p. 266 f.

<sup>4</sup> Swoboda/Keil/Knoll, *Denkmäler aus Lykaonien, Pamphylien, und Isaurien*, Prague, 1935, p. 33, no. 74, line 6—'Εγ]ράφη ἐμ Μιστίαι κτλ. (letter of Attalus to the citizens of Amblada).

<sup>5</sup> Assembled by W. M. Ramsay in his article "Lycaonia", *Jahresheft d. Österreichischen Arch. Inst.*, VII, 1904, Beiblatt, Table I.

<sup>6</sup> *JHS.* XXII, 1902, p. 101, no. 5.

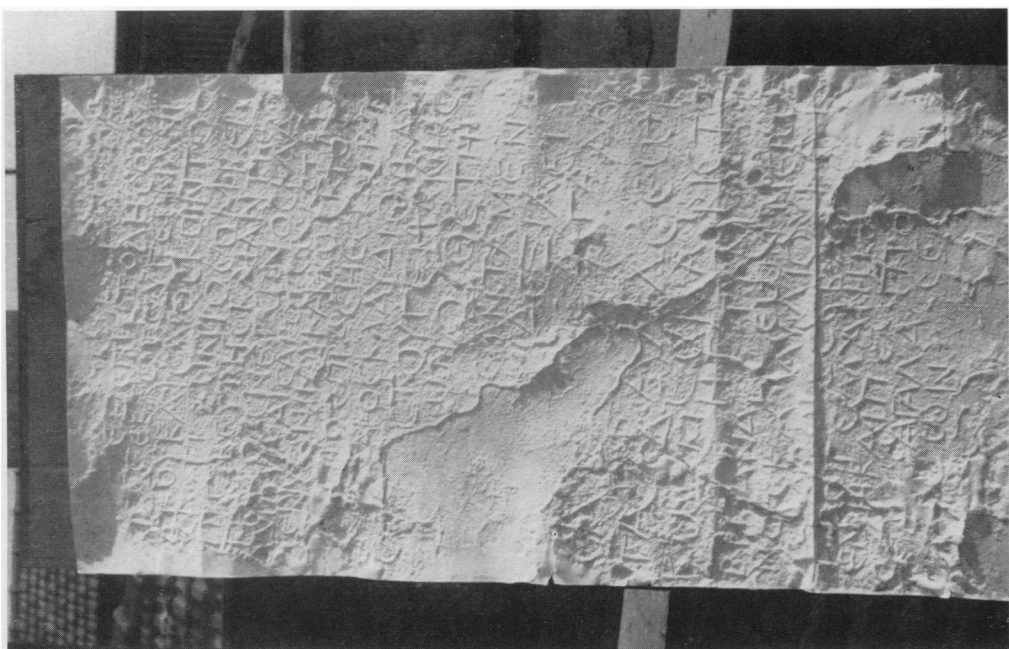
<sup>7</sup> Jüthner/Knoll/Patsch/Swoboda, *Vorläufiger Bericht über eine archäologische Expedition nach Kleinasien*, Prague, 1903, p. 25.

<sup>8</sup> See note 4.

<sup>9</sup> W. M. Ramsay, *The Historical Geography of Asia Minor*, London, 1890, p. 322.



(b) Inscription at Beyşir (p. 119).



(a) Inscription No. 30Y, at Düver (p. 85).

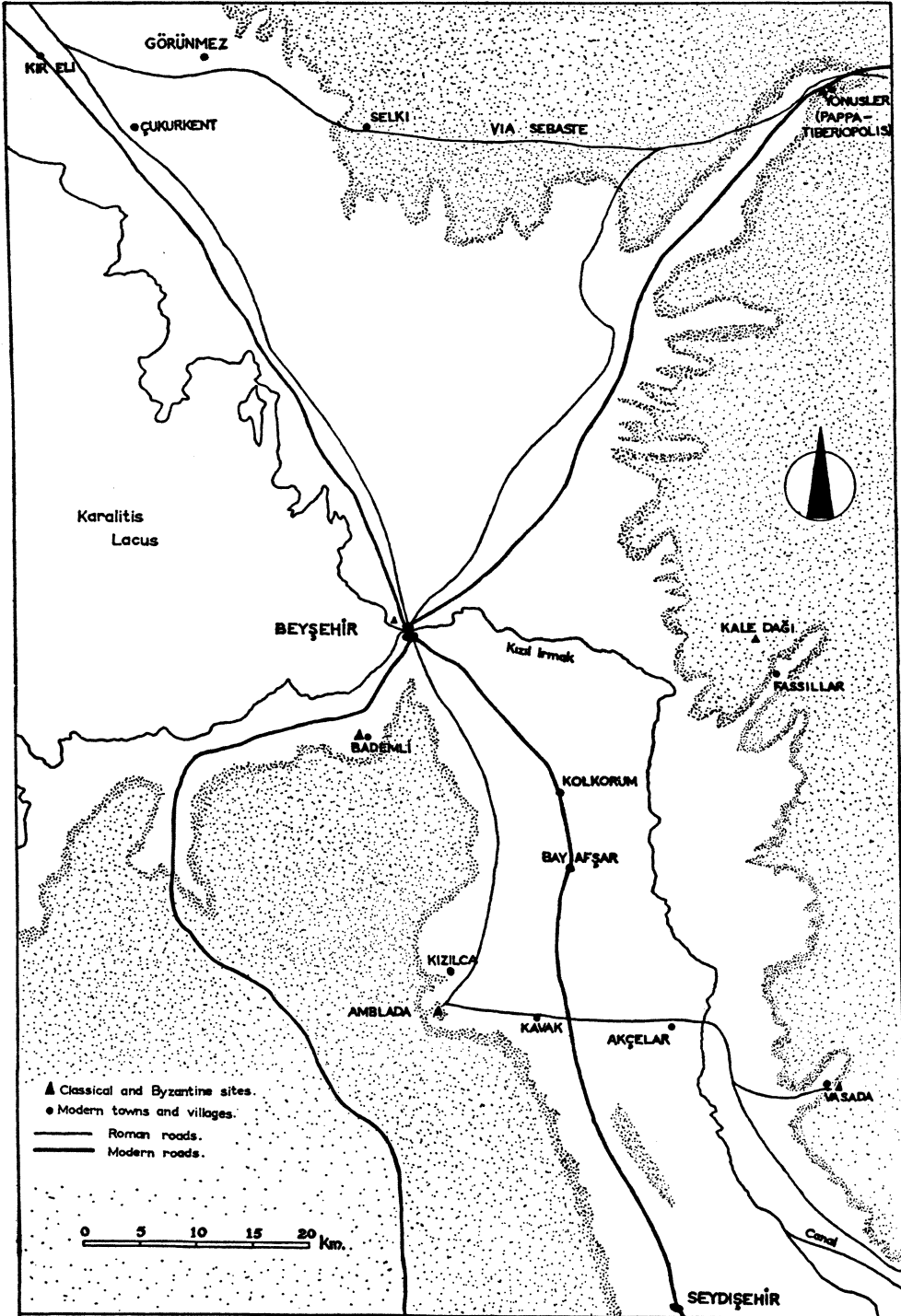


FIG. 1.

Briefly, he argued that the ancient remains there indicated a town-site <sup>10</sup> : that the letter of Basil (Epistles, 118) to Amphilochius, Bishop of Iconium, written about A.D. 374, proved that Mistea and Vasada had common boundaries : and that the castle on Kale Dağı, north-west of Fassillar, must be the τὸ κάστρον Μισθείας, mentioned by Theopompus (p. 382), in connection with an Arab invasion in the early 8th century. He regarded the identification as " a practical certainty ".

Many years later, Ramsay further attempted <sup>11</sup> to resolve the crux in Notitia Episcopatum X, where ἡ Μισθεία καὶ ἡ Κολώνεια are entered together, by identifying ἡ Κολώνεια with Colonia Parlais, which he had placed at Beyşehir. In this way he explained the promotion of Mistea, a plain bishopric of Lycaonia in the 7th century, to autocephalous bishopric in the 9th, as part of a strategic linking of two centres of resistance to Arab penetration from the Konya plain towards Pisidian Antioch. But M. Louis Robert soon indicated <sup>12</sup> that Parlais must be at Barla, on the west side of Eğirdir Gölü. So the crux remained unresolved.<sup>13</sup>

An examination of the site at Fassillar in the summer of 1957 led me to believe that no Classical site larger than a village ever existed there. Most of the remains can be linked to the ancient sports ground which lies on a level bluff overlooking the modern village, and whose rules are carved on a rock below.<sup>14</sup> That this was a religious centre of some importance is suggested by the large cult-statue of a male god accompanied by lions,<sup>15</sup> which is certainly of pre-Classical date, though probably too far from the area under Hittite control to belong to the culture of their " Neues Reich ".<sup>16</sup> A sports ground, however, connected with a religious festival, would not have been the property of one particular town, but rather of a whole region, and hence there is no need to assume the existence of an important town here. Furthermore, the valley in which Fassillar lies is narrow and rocky, and the hinterland to the east is even more unfavourable for a settlement larger than a village. Finally, it is inconceivable that the letter from Attalus to the citizens of Amblada could have been written in this place.<sup>17</sup> Would an important envoy, settled in the region after an incursion of Galatians, with the purpose of restoring Pergamene control, choose to shut himself up in a narrow valley, with a dangerous line of retreat through the mountains? Surely not.

A further important point about Mistea, indicated by Ramsay,<sup>18</sup> is

<sup>10</sup> This had been suggested by J. R. S. Sterrett, *Papers of the American School at Athens*, III, 1884-5, p. 166.

<sup>11</sup> *JHS*, LIII, 1933, p. 157 (3).

<sup>12</sup> L. Robert, *Villes d'Asie Mineure*, Paris, 1935, p. 98, note 2. For his complete case, cf. *Études Épigraphiques et Philologiques*, Paris, 1938, pp. 265-285.

<sup>13</sup> In his book, *Hist. Geogr.* (op. cit.), p. 333, note †, Ramsay had doubted this entry : later, in *BSA*, IX, 1902, p. 268, he rejected it as a scribe's error.

<sup>14</sup> J. R. S. Sterrett, op. cit., no. 275.

<sup>15</sup> H. Th. Bossert, *Altanatolien*, Berlin, 1942, pp. 134-5.

<sup>16</sup> Bossert, op. cit., p. 59.

<sup>17</sup> See note 4.

<sup>18</sup> Ramsay, op. cit., p. 322.

that it lay on a Roman road. Anon. Ravenna, 103,2 = 2,17,<sup>19</sup> gives a list of "iuxta prenominatim patriam Cilitiam . . . civitates", which includes "Colonia Isauria" (Isaura), "Papa" "Antiochia lisidias" (Pisidiae), "Neapolis," and also "Mestia". Three of these cities lay on the Via Sebaste.

Milestones seen by Sterrett in the villages of Gulghurum (modern Kolkorum), Avshar (Bayafşar) and Akchelar (Akçelar): and two seen by the present writer, one between Bayafşar and Kızılca, the other brought to Bayafşar from some distance away to the north-west, within the territory of the village,<sup>20</sup> demonstrate that a branch-road must have run southwards from the Via Sebaste. Sterrett's remarks on this subject<sup>21</sup> need correction only to the extent that the road seems to have run first to Amblada, on a line some distance west of the modern road, and then turned east to cross the Irmak near Akçelar. Its further course to Palaia Isaura is marked by a milestone found near Akkisse,<sup>22</sup> underneath the mountains east of Seydişehir.

That this road crossed the Irmak first at Beyşehir is shown by the existence there in Ramsay's time of a Roman bridge, which has now disappeared. For a tentative plan of the roads of this region see Fig. 1.

The evidence points, therefore, towards the existence of an important settlement at the corner of Beyşehir Lake, and the new inscription leaves little doubt that it was Mistea. Ramsay, with his excellent topographical sense, saw that the comparative lack of ancient material in the modern town did not overrule the importance of the situation.<sup>23</sup> As he pointed out, a large quantity of ancient material has been re-used in the Seljuk buildings which stand in the older part of the town, north of the river. Moreover, these buildings stand on raised ground, which can only represent, in this region, by the lakeside, an earlier occupation mound. Such mounds are frequent along the shores of the lake, and provide, from Çukurkent, and others on the southern shore, pottery as early as the Neolithic period.<sup>24</sup>

Could the new inscription have been brought to Beyşehir from another site? One must admit this as a remote possibility. There is a considerable Classical site at Bademli Köy, a neighbouring village to the south-west, whose inscriptions, in Ramsay's view, "probably come from Bey-Sheher." This opinion, however, should be rejected, since the closeness of earlier occupation mounds to each other, resulting from the great fertility of the area, makes it clear that two towns of some size could certainly have lain so close together in Classical times.

<sup>19</sup> *Itineraria Romana—Ravennatis Anonymi Cosmographia et Guidonis Geographia* (ed. Schnetz), Teubner, 1940.

<sup>20</sup> To be published shortly.

<sup>21</sup> J. R. S. Sterrett, *op. cit.*, p. 187.

<sup>22</sup> *JRS.* XIV, 1924, p. 76, no. 110.

<sup>23</sup> For his statement of the evidence as it then stood, but in favour of Parlais, see *BSA.* IX, 1902, p. 263.

<sup>24</sup> For the Çukurkent culture, see *BSA.* XIX, 1912, pp. 13, 48 ff.

If one could accept Ramsay's further argument that the two Latin inscriptions at Bademli (*CIL.* III, 12143, 12144) "point to a Colonia", and take it together with the identification of Mistea with Beyşehir, then perhaps the crux in Notitia X could be resolved in favour of the scribe. Bademli would then be ἡ Κολώνεια. This theory is attractive, but, in the absence of more direct evidence of a colony in this area, it cannot, I think, surmount the following objections: (1) Why should ἡ Κολώνεια suddenly appear beside Mistea in Notitia X, and nowhere else, unless by error? (2) The position of Bademli has no great strategic importance. (3) Other Latin inscriptions are known for this district,<sup>25</sup> besides many Roman names, chiefly of veterans. So the two at Bademli are in no way out of the ordinary, and are best associated with veterans or individual officials.

Finally, the τὸ κάστρον Μισθείας may still be identified with the site on Kale Dağı, since it was common practice in the Byzantine period to build a town's castle some distance away from the civil settlement. The town's exposed position by the lakeside made a strong place of refuge against invaders imperative, and the mountains to the east provided the most suitable area for building one.

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<sup>25</sup> J. R. S. Sterrett, op. cit., no. 300 (Kavak) : no. 276 (Fassallar) : no. 294 (Boyalı). Swoboda/Keil/Knoll, op. cit., p. 38, no. 90 (Akçelar) : no. 66 (İncesu). *CIL.* III, 6799 (Sandı). New inscription from Bostandere, to be published shortly.