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## TWO MILESTONES FROM PONTUS

By D. R. WILSON

THE TWO STONES described below were discovered by the writer during journeys in Pontus made in the summer of 1958, as joint-scholar of the British Institute of Archaeology at Ankara.<sup>1</sup> It is hoped to publish shortly the remainder of the material recorded in that and in the following year.

1. Zile, lying inside the castle. Milestone, much weathered.

H. c. 1.50; letters 0.03 to 0.08; between lines c. 0.03.

Impression.

CAESAR  
AN AVR. EVERV  
AN IN  
IIVSEELIX IN  
VICTVS AVS  
PONT·MAX TRIB  
POTESTAS  
PP PROCO  
PER Q·H·V·L·PROCVLE  
IANVM LEG PR  
PR MILI  
ZELIT.

[Imp.] Caesar  
M. Aur. [S]everu[s]  
A[lexa]n[der]  
[P]ius Felix In-

5 victus Aug.  
pont. max. trib.  
potestas [cos.]  
p. p. proco[s].  
per Q. Iul. Procule-

10 ianum leg. pr.  
pr. Mil. I

12 Zelit.

0 10 20 30 40 50 cm

For two other milestones of Severus Alexander from the Zela-Sebastopolis road see F. Cumont in *CRAI*. 1905, p. 347 f. One of these was found 2 km. to the south-east of Zile and its text bears a strong similarity to that published here; a comparison of the two is illuminating for both. I shall refer to the stone published by Cumont as "the Ağbaba

<sup>1</sup> My thanks are due to Mr. Seton Lloyd, the Director of the Institute, and to Mr. James Mellaart, the Assistant Director, for help and advice over two seasons in Turkey, and more especially to Mr. Michael Gough (who has also read this article) for his continued assistance and encouragement over a number of years. I should also like to thank the various members of the Turkish Department of Antiquities who have helped me on my way through northern Anatolia.

stone", as it was evidently found close to Ağbaba Tepesi, and to the stone published here as "the Zile stone".

L.5. The Ağbaba stone reads AVGV, but there is no trace of a final V on the Zile stone.

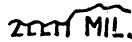
L.7. *Potestas* in the nominative is ungrammatical but certain. The Ağbaba stone reads *potesta x*, but there is no sign on the Zile stone of any numeral in this position. At the end of the line are faint traces of lettering, which are interpreted on the analogy of the parallel text as COS.

L.8. The Zile stone reads PP. The bows of these letters are quite clear, and there is no possibility of reading them as a numeral. It is possible that the true reading of the Ağbaba stone is also PP; an alternative suggestion will be made below.

L.11. The reading of this line in the Ağbaba inscription is . . . . . PA. .IL. Cumont suggested [*Cap*] *pa*[*d. M*] *il.*[*P.*], but recognised that this was not a satisfactory solution.<sup>2</sup> The Zile stone does not decisively remove the *crux*, but it is suggestive. It appears to bear the letters PR in place of PA, reading simply *pr. Mil.* with the addition of a numeral. This suggests the reading *pr. [M]il.* for the Ağbaba stone also. If, however, the letter A is to be regarded as certain there, an alternative would be [*pr. Mil.*] *pa*[*s. v*] *ii.*

The numeral I appears to be on the stone, but it might be a damaged P; if a numeral, II and III are also possibilities.

L.12. *Zelit.* is puzzling, but all the letters are certain and there do not appear to be any more in this line. The word does not occur on the Ağbaba stone, unless the letter Z is a relic of it. (In that case one would read the mileage as II rather than [V]II, but it is preferable to accept Z as a numeral.) It does, however, recall a fragment of a milestone found

at Kervansaray in the Artova,<sup>3</sup> whose only legend was  *MIL.* The broken letters appear to be the lower halves of just those letters we are considering. If this is so, the fragment has travelled a long way, for one cannot doubt the connexion with Zela.

The phrase to be expected, *a Zelis*, parallel to *a Sebastopoli* on the second stone published by Cumont,<sup>4</sup> cannot be read because the final T is quite certain. The MSS of Stephen of Byzantium<sup>5</sup> give two forms of the ethnic of Zela: Ζηλήτης and Ζηλιτης. The latter is, however, excluded here by the presence of the legate's name, which is sufficient to show that the repair programme was not a piece of civic enterprise. The sole remaining possibility is the district name, Zelitis. Thus it appears that the local name on this milestone is not the name of the *caput viae*, although it stands next to the mileage figure, but simply announces in

<sup>2</sup> *CRAI*. 1905, p. 348.

<sup>3</sup> *REG.* XVII (1904), p. 334.

<sup>4</sup> *CRAI*. 1905, p. 348, n. 1.

<sup>5</sup> Stephanus Byzantius s.v. Ζήλα.

whose territory the milestone stands. I know of no parallel for this usage, which must be regarded as something of a curiosity.

There is no date to be found on the Zile stone, and its text may throw some doubts on the numerals of the Ağbaba inscription, but the issue is settled by the third stone of the series, found at Malümseyit and referred to in the preceding paragraph. This fixes the year as A.D. 231, in which Alexander hastened to the eastern frontier to meet the threat of the Sassanian invader, Ardashir (Artaxerxes).

The repair of the Zela-Sebastopolis road was closely related to these events by Cumont,<sup>6</sup> who suggested that the work had been executed in great haste. He based this belief on evidence that the work had proceeded from both ends simultaneously—firstly because the mileage numbers were counted in this way, one from Zela and another from Sebastopolis, and secondly because the orthography of the legate's name differed between the two stones that he published.

As for the mileages, it is surely the rule rather than the exception that the mileage on a milestone should be reckoned from the city in whose territory the stone is to stand; at the boundary between two cities, even where they are of the same province, the mileage figures begin to run in the other direction.<sup>7</sup> In the case of the orthography, or at least of the lay-out of the inscriptions on the stone, the argument is stronger. Spelling indeed is not necessarily consistent throughout a milestone series, even where the texts are otherwise identical,<sup>8</sup> but there is little doubt that one hand was responsible for the Zile and Ağbaba stones and another for that found at Malümseyit. The text to be inscribed on each of the stones was evidently standard, but the engravers made their own arrangements of it. It is possible too that, just as the one engraver confused the legate's name with the similar name Proclianus, so the other, misreading his exemplar, inscribed PP where there should have been a numeral, and gave us the unexpected forms *potestas* and *Želit*, where he should have cut *potesta. x* and *Želis*. If the numeral I on the Zile stone is correct, it will have been the first to be engraved, and this may explain the presence of such errors.

To this extent the new milestone supports Cumont's theory of two work-parties and a hurried programme. Repairs had been carried out the previous year to a vital road in closer contact with the enemy, the main east-west road through the Cilician plain,<sup>9</sup> and work on the road through Cappadocia to the Euphrates at Melitene, though not closely datable, is likely to be of the same period.<sup>10</sup> Probably the Zela-Sebastopolis road repair scheme had to yield second place to these major projects and may thus have had to be completed under pressure.

Besides the milestones of Septimius Severus,<sup>11</sup> Severus Alexander,

<sup>6</sup> *CRAI*. 1905, p. 349 f.

<sup>7</sup> For an example of a milestone that actually records the boundary of a city territory see *AM*. XXXIII (1908), p. 152, no. 7.

<sup>8</sup> For an example see under 2.c below, p. 138.

<sup>9</sup> *AE*. 1922, No. 129.

<sup>10</sup> *CIL*. III, 6906 = 12169, 6954 = 12211, ? 6939 = 12187.

<sup>11</sup> *BCH*. XXXIII (1909), p. 27.

Gordian III <sup>12</sup> and Diocletian, <sup>13</sup> this road is also recorded by the *Tabula Peutingeriana*, but in a corrupt section whose significance has not been fully understood. On the Table four roads are shown radiating from the city of Tavium towards the east, each one of which can be shown to be more or less corrupt. We are here concerned with two of these roads, that from Tavium to Neocaesarea via Zela, and that from Tavium to Comana Pontica via [Sebastopolis] <sup>14</sup> :

- i. *Tavio xxxvi Rogmorum xxxvi Aegonne xxviii Ptemari xxvi Zela xxxii Stabulum xxii Seramisa xvi Neocaesaria.*
- ii. *Tavio xvi Tomba xxii Evgoni (an erasure) ad Stabulum xxii Mesyla xvii Comana Pontica.*

A number of anomalies are immediately apparent, the absence, for example, of Comana from the Zela route, and similarly of Sebastopolis from the more southerly road. The equivalence of *Aegonne* and *Evgoni* was noted by Sir William Ramsay, <sup>15</sup> and the same scholar suggested that *Rogmorum* was a corruption of *Trocmorum*, an epithet of Tavium. <sup>16</sup> With these hints it is possible to reconstruct a plausible version of the routes quoted above, a version which will also contain the route from Zela to Sebastopolis that has been under discussion.

The absence of the city Sebastopolis from the routes of the *Peutinger Table* was noted by J. G. C. Anderson, and he suggested that a corrupt form of the name might be preserved in the station *ad Stabulum*. <sup>17</sup> This conjecture is supported by the mileage *xxxii* between Zela and the other *Stabulum* in the northern route, for this is the actual distance between the two cities by the old road. However, even on the *Peutinger Table* the road from Zela to Neocaesarea does not go by way of Sebastopolis, so there must be an intrusive element in the Zela route. We may either assume that *Stabulum* = Sebastopolis and is misplaced, or that it is a genuine station on the northern route and that the figure *xxxii* has been transferred to it from a corrupted [*Sebastopolim*]. The second alternative is the more plausible and is that adopted in this analysis. The reason for the mileage figure being transferred in this way will be made clear in the next paragraph.

When Ramsay interpreted *Rogmorum* as the epithet of Tavium, as mentioned above, he reasonably assumed that the repetition of the figure *xxxvi* was caused by the necessity of making up the spurious stage in the Zela route. <sup>18</sup> But if the other mileages are applied to the actual country between Aegonne (at Sorgun) and Zela, they are found to be inadequate. It is better, therefore, to accept the mileages as they stand in the Table,

<sup>12</sup> *CIL*, III, 6749 = 6894 = 14184<sup>18</sup>.

<sup>13</sup> *Studia Pontica*, II (1906), pp. 195–6. *BCH*, XXXIII (1909), p. 27.

<sup>14</sup> *Tabula Peutingeriana*, X, 1–2.

<sup>15</sup> W. M. Ramsay, *The Historical Geography of Asia Minor*, (London, 1890), p. 261.

<sup>16</sup> *op. cit.*, p. 260, note.

<sup>17</sup> *Studia Pontica*, I (1903), p. 33.

<sup>18</sup> *op. cit.*, p. 260, note.

and to suppose that the stations have been each displaced one position by the bogus station *Rogmorum*. If then the stations are restored to their original places with regard to the mileage figures, the distances agree perfectly with those measured on the ground and also with Anderson's identification of *Pleuramis* with the fortress close to Çuruk.<sup>19</sup> It is this process of displacement that made the gap into which the figure *xxxii* so easily slipped.

*Stabulum* is now seen to be at Pazar; *Comana Pontica* must be inserted in its proper place and the following mileage also restored; and the mileage between *Seramisa*, correctly placed at Omala by Cumont,<sup>20</sup> and *Neocaesarea* must be emended to *xviii*. The restored text is thus made to read:

*Tavium Trocmorum xxxvi Aegonne xxxvi Pleuramis xxviii*  
*Zela xxvi Stabulum xxii Comana Pontica xi Seramisa xviii*  
*Neocaesarea,*

with a branch road,

*Zela xxxii Sebastopolis.*

It would be pleasant if the southern route were as amenable, but this is not the case. The section between Aegonne-Evgoni and Sebastopolis is completely missing, while the section from there to Comana obviously contains mileages derived from the northern route. The sequence of stations may be genuine and recall a route by way of Tokat, but the details are not recoverable.

2. Yornus (Taşova ilçesi). Built into the wall of a Byz. house, c. 10 minutes' walk E. of the village, in the valley of a tributary of the Taneli Dere. Milestone, the top damaged and a piece of the lower half broken away in antiquity. H. 2.10, diameter 0.50; letters, mostly poorly cut and sometimes superimposed, 0.02 to 0.10. Impression, copy and photograph (not reproduced).

a. (Lines 3-16)

*Imp. Caes. G. Aur. Val. | Diocletiano | [P.F.] Inv. Aug. et || [Imp. Caes. M. Aur. Val. | Maximiano] | P.F. Inv. Aug. et Fl. Val. | Constantio et | Gal. Val. Maximiano || nobiliss. Caess. | Mil. P. XXXV | ΜΑΛ . ΑΕ | [Au]r. Priscianus [V.P.] || [P]r. P.D.N.M.Q. eo[rum].*

There are traces of an earlier text beneath this one, especially between lines 11 and 13, but they are almost entirely illegible.

For the erasure of Maximian's name and titles there is a parallel from Asia Minor in *CIL*. III, 133=6661.

Aurelius Priscianus appears in the primary inscriptions of two other milestones of this road (which linked Neocaesarea with Amaseia), *CIL*. III, 14184<sup>20</sup> (at Çalkara) and 14184<sup>21</sup> (at Fidi). He also set up

<sup>19</sup> *op. cit.*, p. 45.

<sup>20</sup> *Studia Pontica*, II (1906), p. 256.

milestones on the Gangra–Amaseia road,<sup>21</sup> the Amaseia–Comana road<sup>22</sup> and the great north–south trade route through Zela.<sup>23</sup>

The stone is evidently not *in situ*, as the distance to Neocaesareia is about 43 Roman miles. Of the other numbered milestones on this road those at Çalkara and Fidi have also been carried out of position, some 10 and 5 miles respectively, and that at Baraklı<sup>24</sup> has almost certainly been carried some distance, though there the reading is uncertain.

b. (Lines 17–20)

*DDD. NNN. Fl. Val. Crispo et | Val. Constantino et | Fl. Constantino nobbb. | Caesss.*

This inscription is of Constantine's first three sons as Caesars. The date is between A.D. 323, when Constantius was made Caesar, and A.D. 326, when Crispus was put to death.

For the *nomen* Valerius of Crispus and Constantine cf. *CIL.* III, 6969, and for the spelling *Constantino* instead of *Constantio* cf. *CIL.* III, 14463b.

c. (Lines 1–8)

*Impe[ratori Ca]es. | Fl. Val. C[onst]antino | maximo victor[i] | ac triumphator[i] | semper Aug. || et Fl. Cl. Constantino | et Fl. Iul. Constantio | et Fl. Iul. Constantae | [nnnobbb Caesss].*

Milestones of this series with an identical formula (except that the Baraklı stone has the form *Constantiae*) are *CIL.* III, 14184<sup>19</sup> (Niksar), 14184<sup>20</sup> (Çalkara), 14184<sup>21</sup> (Fidi) and *Mél. Beyrouth* III, 1908, p. 441, No. 2 (Baraklı).

The date is between A.D. 333, when Constans became Caesar, and A.D. 337 (the death of Constantine I).

d. (Lines 9–13)

*Imp[er]p. Caess. DD. NN. | Fl. Valentiniano || et Fl. Valente | et Grat{uis}<i> ano | perpetui[s Auggg].*

The name of Gratianus was presumably added after the death of Valentinian in A.D. 375. The engraver of the addition was both clumsy and careless. After cutting the T of *Gratiano* in line 12 he completed the word as if it were *perpetuis* in the following line; then perceiving his mistake, he added the letters ANO, but without erasing the intrusive group VIS.

Traces of an earlier text are visible from time to time beneath this and probably also the preceding inscription. In lines 9–10 it is possible to read the word IMP, but the remainder is unintelligible.

e. (Lines 4–6)

*D.N. Fl. H- | onorio || P. Aug.*

It is strange to find the name of the ruler of the West standing alone

<sup>21</sup> *CIL.* III, 14184<sup>39</sup>.

<sup>22</sup> *CIL.* III, 307.

<sup>23</sup> *BCH.* XXXIII (1909), p. 27.

<sup>24</sup> *Mél. Beyrouth*, III (1908), p. 441, No. 2.

on a milestone of Asia Minor, but it is quite clear from the way that it has been squeezed in between texts *a* and *c* that no other name was engraved beside that of Honorius.

As has been seen above, there are on the crowded face of this stone five legible inscriptions besides the traces of at least two others obliterated



by them. One of the latter lies beneath the Diocletianic text, which is the earliest of the legible, and therefore datable, inscriptions; it is thus safe to assert that this milestone provides for the road from Amaseia to Neocaesareia an epigraphic record of more than a century of highway maintenance.

The course of the road itself has been established over most of its length by the discoveries of Anderson<sup>25</sup> and G. de Jerphanion.<sup>26</sup> Only its central portion remained unconfirmed, though the arguments of de Jerphanion left little doubt as to its real path between Baraklı and

<sup>25</sup> *Studia Pontica*, I (1903), pp. 55 and 72.

<sup>26</sup> *Mél. Beyrouth*, III (1908), p. 439 f.



Fidi. These two villages appear to retain the names of stations on this road recorded by the *Tabula Peutingeriana*, and their distance from each other agrees perfectly with the evidence of that document. The road is given in the Table <sup>27</sup> in the following form :

*Amasia xv Palalce xii Coloe x Pidis xvi Mirones x Neocaesaria.*

That the road ran past the villages of Tekke, Darma, Yornus, Boladan and Kuşuh is confirmed, not so much by milestones (for none is *in situ*) as by the presence in those villages of the relics of Roman and Byzantine antiquity. Yornus is the modern settlement that, on the basis of the mileages in the *Tabula Peutingeriana*, ought to be the site of the intermediate station, *Coloe*, but the chief ancient site of the area is the neighbouring village of Darma. In Darma there is more talk of antiquities than there are actual antiquities forthcoming, but there is sufficient to show that this is indeed the site of an ancient settlement. Among the discoveries known to me simply by report are a rich grave with vessels of electrum,<sup>28</sup> a bronze female statuette, various other bronze objects and a burial in a terra-cotta coffin. The fields are strewn with potsherds, and while wall foundations are regularly grubbed up by the ploughman as soon as found, sufficient are preserved in the mire of the tracks between the fields to authenticate the reports of the local villagers. I therefore place Choloë at Darma, and I suggest that in view of the recorded mileages Palalce and Pida should perhaps be sought a mile or two to the west of the villages whose names so closely resemble theirs.

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<sup>27</sup> *Tabula Peutingeriana*, X, 1-2.

<sup>28</sup> "*Beyaz altın*." The use of this expression makes it reasonably certain that the grave is genuine and not the invention of a zealous host ; the precious objects—one gold diadem, six cups and three pitchers of electrum, and other metal vessels—and the associated pottery are said to have gone to Ankara, apparently through official channels.