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NOTES ON TWO LYDIAN TEXTS

The following notes treat the legends found on archaic Lydian electrum coins struck around 600 B.C. These legends, generally retrograde, are in Lydian, and they are located on the obverse of the coins, between two facing lions' heads, of which one is usually completely off the flan. Most of the coins are catalogued, with photographs, in L. Weidauer, *Probleme der frühen Elektronprägung* (Typos 1 [Fribourg 1975]) Nos. 91–115 (hereafter: Weidauer); an additional specimen will be presented below. A recent discussion of the subject can be found in R. W. Wallace's article, "Walwe, and .kali.", *JHS* 108 (1988), pp. 203–207 (hereafter: Wallace).¹ Both Weidauer and Wallace build upon the careful argumentation presented by M. Thompson, "Some Noteworthy Greek Accessions", *ANSMN* 12 (1966), pp. 1–4 ("Lydia"), and Wallace utilizes the expert presentation by A. Heubeck in his "Lydische Marginalien", *Kadmos* 22 (1983), pp. 61–68.

I.

As lot number 95 in its auction 30 (8 December 1992), Numismatic Fine Arts International, Inc., offered a Lydian electrum trite (4.6 gm), which the printed catalogue described as follows: "Confronted lions' heads (the head on the l. almost entirely off the flan), between them fragmentary inscription ΛΑΑΙ . . . Cf. Weidauer 91–96 (Walwel) and 114–115 (Kalil). Ex MMAG 72 (1987), lot 329", and the appended commentary adds: "This coin, previously catalogued as an issue of Walwel, appears to bear a different inscription, providing a new name to be added alongside the celebrated Walwel and Kalil."

Study of the excellent plate in the auction catalogue convinces me that this coin does not display a new text, but rather a variant of one

¹ Note also the following abbreviated titles: Gusmani LW = R. Gusmani, *Lydisches Wörterbuch* (Heidelberg 1964); Gusmani EB = id., *Lydisches Wörterbuch, Ergänzungsband* (Heidelberg 1980, 1982, 1986).

already known. The plate reveals that what the cataloguer read as an I appears to be **✱** (i.e. K), with the **▷** projection faint but still visible. To its right are the remnants of what could be an archaic Lydian **𐤱** (i.e. R). Further, to the left of the text I discern a trace of a vertical, suggestive of I. I venture to transcribe and restore the retrograde inscription as:

[**M**]!ΛΛ**✱**𐤱

The restored **M** would not extend the legend beyond the upper border of the coin as established by the lion's head, and its relative position matches that of the **𐤱** with which I assume the inscription began. The text, *rkallī[m]*, "I am of Rkaś", is none other than that on Weidauer 114–115 (assigned to Kalil in the catalogue cited above), which, following Wallace p. 207,² I read as *rkalim* "I am of Rkaś". For the writing of the possessive *-ll(i)-* instead of the more commonly attested *-l(i)-*, see Gusmani LW §16, where he notes *bakilli-* "of Bakiś" (see p. 74); cf. also *cuvelli-* "of Cuves(?)" (p. 94). It is here assumed to join with the enclitic copula, *-im*: see Gusmani EB §30 and Wallace p. 207. For Rkaś, which, if rightly read, is attested only here, see Gusmani EB p. 86, where the name is tentatively accepted "trotz der Unsicherheit der Lesung". The same name may appear as the initial element in Οργασθυσ (IG II² 8047), for which see L. Zgusta, *Kleinasiatische Personennamen* (Prague 1964), pp. 684 and 695; for the alternation of /r/ with *or* (as well as with *ur*, *ro*, *ru*) see Gusmani EB §15b, and cf. Συργάστης, there cited "als wahrsch. Wiedergabe von *srkastus*" (see further Zgusta p. 477 §1472).

II.

It is appropriate to publish here a coin which appears to shed some light on the name that appears most frequently on the inscribed Lydian electrum pieces, viz. Walwel (to use the reading commonly accepted). Wallace (pp. 204–205) has traced the history of scholarly discussion of this name and has documented the growing disenchantment with

² See also Gusmani EB p. 86, who regards the initial doubtful *r* as certain enough to be put into the text, as do I. Wallace prefers *kalim*; similarly, Heubeck, *Kadmos* 22 (1983), pp. 62–63, who reads *kalil* (Gusmani EB p. 137), on the analogy of *walwel* (but see below, II, where I argue against interpreting the final letter as *l* and instead favor reading the name as *walwet*).

J. P. Six' famous theory³ that it is Lydian for Alyattes, the father of Croesus and king of Lydia before him. Discussion has focussed on the identification of the last letter of the name as it appears on the coins, and recent scholarship has preferred *-l* (hence Walwel). Wallace, however, notes that *walwet* could be the reading of Weidauer 91, 92 and 95 (p. 204), and Gusmani has also recognized the final *-t* as a possible reading (EB pp. 106 and 139). Examination of the specimens in Weidauer suggests to me that *-t* could also be read in 97, 98 (same die as 97), 108, 109 and 111. In the other coins there catalogued, the last letter is either too damaged for even tentative decipherment or is off the flan. In other words, whenever in Weidauer's corpus the last letter can be read, it can be read as *-t*. Most often the crossbar – at times narrow – associated with archaic Lydian T (T, T)⁴ is still visible (91, 92, 95, 108, 109, 111), as it is in the specimen published below, and only twice (97 and 98, from the same obverse die) has it been greatly reduced or blended into the preceding letter. I am therefore inclined to assume that the text on all these coins, including those on which the final letter is no longer legible, is T T T T T T, i.e. *walwet*.

If T is accepted as the reading of the sixth letter of the name, then Six' association with King Alyattes again asserts itself, for, with the same four letters in the same sequence in both names, it is hard not to think of the Greek Ἀλυάττης as an attempt to approximate – howbeit imperfectly – the name which appears to begin as *walwet*. In the face of these correspondences, I would interpret the text on the Lydian coin as an abbreviated form of T T T T T T, i.e. *walweteś*, too lengthy for the space available and therefore shortened by the engraver. For *-teś*,⁶ cf. the name *ateś*, which Gusmani (LW p. 69) relates to Ατ(τ)ης. The Lydian seals, which Wallace utilized as models for the text discussed above (I), provide – in addition to the standard formula exemplified in *manelim* “I am of Manes” – a few instances of the bare name: *nanaś*, *ośflś* and *milaś* (see Gusmani EB pp. 154 [No. 78], 157 [No. 102] and 158 [No. 106]). That the Lydians were not averse to abbreviation is shown by *art* (= *artimuś*): see Gusmani LW p. 263 (No. 37) and EB p. 156 (No. 93).⁷

³ Numismatic Chronicle³ 10 (1890), pp. 202–208.

⁴ Cf. E. Littmann, *Lydian Inscriptions* (Leiden 1916), pp. 11, 21, 57.

⁵ For variations in the letter forms, see Heubeck (above, n. 2), p. 63.

⁶ For the archaic T (ś), cf. Wallace p. 204 n. 14.

⁷ Though written as a monogram, the word displays the same principle of abbreviation assumed for *walwet(eś)*.

Of course, the identification of the two names would be more convincing if *rkaś*, presumably underlying *rkaliṃ* (see I), could be made to fit in the list of Lydian kings before Croesus. No attempt to make it fit has won acceptance,⁸ but should we therefore reject the association of Ἀλυάττης with *walwet(eś)*? After all, *rkaś* could be the name of a high governmental officer or royal deputy directly responsible for the quality of the coinage: see Wallace pp. 205 and 207.⁹

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I here publish the coin referred to above:

Electrum hemihecte; diameter: 0.7 cm; weight: 1.16 gm (ex: E. J. Waddell). Obverse: Lion's head right. Inscription: **ἸΑΛΥΑΤΤΕΣ** (for the shape of the final two letters, cf. especially Weidauer 109; of the **Ἰ** only the faintest traces remain). Reverse: square incuse punch. Cf. Weidauer 111–112. [See Figure, where I give a reconstruction of the text.]¹⁰



Obverse



Reverse

Electrum Hemihecte of Alyattes/*walweteś*
(Photograph enlarged)

⁸ Most recently, G. Hanfmann has unconvincingly suggested that it might refer to Ardys: Sardis from Prehistoric to Roman Times (Cambridge, Mass. 1983), p. 78; see Wallace p. 204.

⁹ Perhaps comparable is the royal coinage of Offa, King of Mercia (757–796 A.D.): here the name of Offa, a regular feature of the obverse (where it surrounds the bust), is occasionally replaced by that of one of his moneyers: cf. e.g. J. J. North, English Hammered Coinage I (London 1980) 301 (Plate III 36) OFFA REX with 300 (III 35) IBBA.

¹⁰ In writing this article, I have benefited from discussion with my colleague, Professor Ladislav Zgusta, an expert in all things Lydian.