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THE WEST PHRYGIAN INSCRIPTION FROM İKİZTEPE
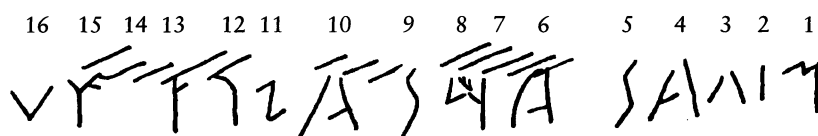

Fig. 1

First studied and published by R. Gusmani[1], this short inscription was then analyzed by C. Brixhe[2]. However, there still remain some dubious details that need further consideration.

The sinistroverse inscription made on a silver dish (Fig. 1, reproducing Gusmani's drawing) may be transliterated as follows:

midas arosay vr-Υu

3   Although another reading, *l*, is also theoretically possible, Brixhe is quite right in insisting on *d* suggested by the cultural and historical context of the inscription.

7–8   Undoubtedly, *ro* as suggested by Brixhe.

12   Gusmani thinks of *p* with a slightly rounded upper part. However, the top is damaged. What we see may well be the vertical stroke and the lower horizontal bar of a sinistroverse *v*.

13   The upper part of this letter is damaged. It could be a mirror image of sign 7, that is, of *r*. Examples of Phrygian texts, in which sinistroverse and dextroverse variants of letters appear together, are not unknown.

14   According to Brixhe, there was a letter here. Obviously, this solution is preferable to that of Gusmani who sees an empty space here, since we do not have to treat the preceding two signs as a separate word.

15   Brixhe is right both when he considers small lines on the left stroke to be accidental and when he stresses the non-Phrygian type of *u* that he chooses to

[1]   R. Gusmani, "An Epichoric Inscription from the Lydio-Phrygian Borderland", in: Studi di storia e di filologia anatolica dedicati a G. Pugliese Carratelli, Firenze 1988, 67–73.

[2]   Cl. Brixhe, "La plus occidentale des inscriptions phrygiennes", Incontri linguistici 18, 1989–1990, 61–67.

see here. In fact, it may be preferable to see tracesof Ⴘ as attested in *da*Ⴘ*et* (W-01b) and standing for an unvoiced velar (O. Haas, Die phrygischen Sprach-denkmäler, Sofia 1966, 125).

16   According to Brixhe, traces of *n*. Our reconstruction of *u* is equally possible and (following Brixhe's general idea of seeing an accusative in the third word of the present text) more consistent morphologically.

Commentary

midas, nom. sg. masc. (*ā*-stem). A well-known Phrygian personal name. For further considerations relating to the personality of the dedicator cf. Brixhe (l. c.).

arosay, dat. sg. masc. or fem. (*ā*-stem). The name of the beneficiary. According to Brixhe, it may belong to the small group of hapax legomena which are "[des] noms qui semblent propres aux Phrygiens". However, another explanation is possible. The name **arosas* or **arosa* may be of late Anatolian origin and, as such, should be compared with the Carian name Αρυασσις (masc.), cf. L. Zgusta, KPN § 111. In fact, the underlying Anatolian form is to be reconstructed as **aruwašša(š)* or, better, **arawašša(š)*, a derivative in *-ašša-* (cf. H. Kronasser, Etymologie der hethitischen Sprache I, Wiesbaden 1966, 189; E. Laroche, Les noms des Hittites, Paris 1966, 319–322) from Hitt. *arawa(š)* "free" (J. Friedrich – A. Kammenhuber, Hethitisches Wörterbuch I, Heidelberg 1984, 257–258). The form preserved in Phrygian **arosas* reflects a late Anatolian contraction of **-awa-*, **-uwa-* > *-o-*.

*vr-*Ⴘ*u*, acc. sg. (*o*- or *u*-stem). The word may be identified with Phrygian *vrekun*, acc. sg. in M-06 and W-01a. As shown in L. S. Bayun – V. E. Orel, Vestnik drevnej istorii, # 1, 1988, 180–181, *vrekun* stands for a "cultic object" similar to or connected with *iman* "cultic image" (cf. also L. S. Bayun, Journal of Ancient Civilizations 7, 1992, 131–139). The ritual importance of *vrekun* was preserved in a group of Phrygian glosses (βρέκυν and the like). We have been unable to find out to which type of stem the word belonged morphologically, since the nominative is lacking. In the present inscription, the absence of the final *n* may have two different explanations: it simply was not preserved, or it was phonetically lost, as later observed in New Phrygian monuments (see L. S. Bayun – V. E. Orel, Vestnik drevnej istorii, # 4, 1988, 138 ff.).

The complete text may be translated as follows: "Midas [dedicated] the cultic object [= dish] to Arosas".