

## A Re-examination of the Sarcophagus Inscription at Turant Asarı

### *Turant Asarı'ndaki Mezar Yazıtı Üzerine Yeni Bir İnceleme*

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**Abstract:** In this article, a published sarcophagus inscription from Turant Asarı located 5 km northeast of Myra is re-examined and given a new reading. The era in the first line of the inscription and some personal names in other lines could not be precisely read in the first edition and these issues were then left without comment. The date ἔτους θορ' μηνὸς Αὐδναίου ια' (11<sup>th</sup> Audnaios 179) in the first line is read clearly. This date must have not been reckoned from 311 BC according to the Seleucid era as the year 179 corresponds to 133/32 BC which is too early for the epigraphic form of the letters in this inscription. It may be the Sullan era (179=AD 94/5). But to date the inscription to the period after AD 43 seems doubtful from the *kitharephoroi* specified as the currency of penalty payment in the inscription. The typology of the sarcophagus and the letters characteristics of the inscription indicate a date around the end of first century BC or the beginning of first century AD and do not permit consideration of an era later than that of Sulla. This approximately dating is taken into consideration the year 179 goes back to the first half of the second century BC. The most important year in this period is 168/7 BC with the independence of Lycia from Rhodian dominion that would mark the beginning of the Lycian era. In consequence, this article suggests the date recorded on this inscription was probably calculated from 168/7 BC (AD 11/12), the beginning of a new local era in Lycia. In the inscription two new personal names are deciphered as a result of the new reading as Βρακασανῶα Τεδισβεύς. In the article, it is suggested that Eleuthera mentioned in the inscription should be Eleuthera Trebendatike. In previous editions the missing name and ethnicon of craftsman of the sarcophagus is here read as Θεόφραστος Κυανείτης.

**Keywords:** Turant Asarı, era, Tedisbes, Brakasanoa, *kitharephoroi*, Eleuthera

**Özet:** Bu makalede, Myra'nın 5 km kuzeydoğusunda yer alan Turant Asarı'ndan yayınlı bir mezar yazıtı yeni okumalarla birlikte incelenmektedir. Yazıtın ilk satırındaki era tarihlenmesi ve diğer satırlardaki bazı şahıs isimleri Schweyer tarafından yapılan ilk yayında tam olarak okunamamış ve bu hususlar yorumuz bırakılmıştır. İlk satırdaki tarih ἔτους θορ' μηνὸς Αὐδναίου ια' (11 Audnaios 179) açıkça okunmaktadır. Bu tarih Seleukos era'sına göre İÖ. 311 yılından itibaren hesaplanmış olamaz. Çünkü 179 yılının tekabül ettiği İÖ. 133/32 yılı yazıtın harf özelliğine göre çok erkendir. Burada Sulla era'sının kullanılmış olması da (179=İS. 94/5) zayıf bir ihtimaldir. Zira ceza ödemesinin *kitharephoroi* para birimi üzerinden yapılacağı belirtildiği için yazıtın İS. 43 yılından sonraya tarihlenmek kuşkulu görünmektedir. Lahit hem tipolojik özellikleri hem de yazıtın harf karakteri temelinde İÖ. I. yüzyılın sonu ile İS. I. yüzyılın başı civarına tarihlendirilmektedir. Bu durumda 179 yılı İÖ. II. yüzyılın ilk yarısına geri gider. Bu dönemde era başlangıcı olabilecek en önemli olay, Lykia'nın İÖ. 168/7 yılında Rhodos egemenliğinden kurtulmasıdır. Sonuç olarak makale, yazıtın tarihin Lykia'da yeni bir era başlangıcı olarak İÖ. 168/7 yılından itibaren hesaplanmış olması ve yazıtın İS. 11/12 yılına tarihlenmesi gerektiğini önermektedir. Yeni okumalar sonucunda yazıtta iki yeni şahıs adı Βρακασανῶα Τεδισβεύς olarak deşifre edilmektedir. Yazıtta adı geçen Eleuthera'nın, Eleuthera Trebendatike olması gerektiği önerilmektedir. İlk yayında lahit yapan ustanın eksik bırakılmış olan ismi burada Θεόφραστος Κυανείτης diye okunmaktadır.

**Anahtar Sözcükler:** Turant Asarı, era, Tedisbes, Brakasanoa, *kitharephoroi*, Eleuthera

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L. 1: The first line consists of an era dating with year, month and day. Schweyer (1993, 2002) read this date as ἔτους θ'. μηνὸς Αὐδναίου. But the year ΘΟΡ (179) and the day ΙΑ (11) can be read clearly on the stone, see also photograph.



The era of the date 11<sup>th</sup> Audnaios 179 is probably a new local era dating from the “*independence of Lycia from Rhodian domination in 168/7 BC*” (179=AD 11/12) or it may be dated from the Sullan era (179=AD 94/5). For details see the following subheading. The month Audnaios in the Macedonian calendar is also used by the Lycians which is equivalent to Martius in the Roman calendar, see in this respect: Bickermann, 1933, 6 and 20; Samuel, 1972, 174. On the lines 61-62 of the customs inscription of Andriake (Takmer, 2006, 50) the names of some months in Latin are listed with the equivalents used in Lycia as follows: τῶν εἰδοῖς μηνῶ[ν] Ἰανουαρίου, Μαρτίου, Μαΐου, Ἰουλίου, Σεπτεμβρίου, Νο[εμβ]ρίου· οἵτι[ν]ές εἰσιν κατὰ [τοῦτ]ο[υ] Δεῖος, Αὐδναῖο[ς], Δύστρος, Ἀρτεμείσιος, Π[ά]νημος, Γορπιαῖος.

L. 2: Euainetos and his father Thrasymakhos bear names commonly used in Greek. But Euainetos is documented for first time in Lycia in this inscription (Schweyer, 2002, 151).

L. 3: Βρακασαννα Τεδισβεους is the wife of the tomb owner (BPA . ΑΣ . . ΟΑΤΕΔΙΣΒΕΟ . . Σ is in the edition of Schweyer, 1993, 41 and Schweyer, 2002, 269 no. 89). Some suggestions about the missing letters were offered by Pleket, SEG 43, 980: “*forth letter perhaps Y or X; seventh letter is triangular, followed by an eta (?) and OA (or Λ)ΟΑΤΕΔΙΣΒΕΟΙΑΣ*”.



Whereas, these letters ΒΡΑΚΑΣΑΝΟΑΤΕΔΙΣΒΕΟΥΣ are clearly legible. There must be only two personal names here because there is no article and it is not possible to separate the letters of ΔΙΣ as an adverb (δίς). In other words, what must be expected here is a feminine name in the dative case and the name of her father in the genitive case. It is possible to establish the name of father as Τεδισβεους by comparing it with the personal names composed with the Τεδι- element that are found in Lycia and Cilicia [TAM II, 533: Τεδιαρσασιος (gen. of Τεδιαρσασις); LBW 1282: Τεδικτα (gen. of Τεδικτας); Hicks, 1891, 256 no. 58: Τεδινηιος (gen. of Τεδινηις); Heberdey & Wilhelm 1896, 71-79 no. 155 A II, 36; A IV 71; A IV 72; A IV 80: Τεδιαριος (gen. of Τεδιαρις)]. The Τεδι- element is identified with the Luwian Tati-/Teti- (Sundwall, 1913, 199-200; Houwink ten Cate, 1961, 144-145). Τεδισβεους must be Τεδισβης in the nominative case (cf. TAM III, 14: Μανδροβης Ἐρμαίου Μανδροβεους). Two examples of the same structure in Lycian: Σεδεπλης (gen. Σεδεπλεους in I Wien, see Zgusta, 1964, § 1387-4) was Hellenized from Sedepł̥mi (TL 29.8) or Esedepł̥mi (TL 85.1, 114.1, 115.1); and Πιγρης (gen. Πιγρεους, Zgusta, 1964, § 1255-6) is identical with Pigr̥i in the trilingual inscription of Letoon (N320.15).

Τεδισβης has the same suffix as Μιγισισβης documented by an inscription from the Pisidian city of Selge. As a result it is possible to suggest that Τεδισβης was a native personal name of Luwian origin because of the identification of Τεδι- with Tati-/Teti- [Nollé & Friedel, 1991, no. 25: Μιγισισβης (Μιγισ-ισβης) is compared with Δορμισβας (Δορμ-ισβας) documented from Isauria (Zgusta, 1964, § 300-5) and Μασνανισβας (Μασναν-ισβας) from Termessos (Zgusta, 1964, § 878). In consequence of these examples Τεδισβης can be understood as Τεδι-(ι)σβης].

After the identification of the name of the father the remaining ΒΡΑΚΑΣΑΝΝΟΑ should be considered as Βρακασαννα, the name of his daughter in the dative case. Βρακασανναις compa-

1940, 16-31; Robert, 1983, 578-579; SEG 33, 1983, 1179; Leschhorn, 1993, 359, 414 ) can be added to these inscriptions. This plaque was made on behalf of the Muangla demos near Oinoanda and Kibyra and was dedicated to Zeus. The inscription on the plaque was dated to year 115 of an era. Jacobsthal & Jones (1940, 27-29) thought of this era in connection with Cibyra and suggested two possibilities for the beginning of this era; either 85 BC or AD 25 employed as the start of an era by the city of Cibyra.

All of these remain arguable, nevertheless as is indicated by the opinions expressed concerning these inscriptions, it seems most probable that some local eras were employed by the Lycians.

As for the Turant inscription, if one thinks the Seleucid era was employed, then the year 179 corresponds to 133/32 BC. However, given the form of the letters employed in this inscription it is impossible to date this inscription to 133/32 BC.

If the date of the inscription is calculated according to the Sullan era, 179 gives AD 94/5. This year corresponding to the end of the first century AD is not too far from the date of the inscription based upon the form of the letters employed. However this dating needs to be supported from the evidence concerning the use of the *kitharephoroi*, given in the penalty payment recorded in this inscription. It is assumed that *kitharephoroi* were minted when the Lycian League was independent between 167 BC and AD 43. It is possible to consider the *kitharephoroi* might have been in circulation after AD 43 although whether *kitharephoroi* would have been specified by name after AD 43 seems questionable. A declaration in the customs inscription of Andriake dating from Nero's reign provides a good example indicating currency previously circulating in Lycia remained in circulation after the formation of the province of Lycia: II. 79-81: ὁ ὠνητής, ᾧ ἂν ἐνιαυτῷ τῆς τελωνείας ἄρξῃται τοὺς πρώτους πληρώσας τῆς τελων[ε]ίας μῆνας ἕξ· ἐν δὲ καὶ ἡμέραις τριάκοντα [τ]ὸ ἥμισυ μέρος[ς] τῆς τειμῆς ὑποδότην ἐν ᾧ ἂν βούληται νομίσματι τῶν ἐν Λυκίᾳ [πρ]οχωρούντων, ... see (Takmer, 2007, 174). As another piece of evidence it can be understood that the coins carrying a *kithara* minted in the province of Lycia between the years AD 95-99 in the reigns of Domitianus, Nerva and Traianus might have been termed *kitharephoroi* (SNG 4265: Domitianus, with *kithara*, the date: ΕΤΟΥΣ ΙΔ ΥΠΙΑΤΟΥ ΙΖ (=AD 95); SNG 4266: Nerva, with two *lyres*, the date: ΥΠΙΑΤΟΥ ΤΡΙΤΟΥ (=AD 97); SNG 4267: Traianus, with two *lyres*, the date: ΔΗΜ ΕΞ ΥΠΙΑΤ Β (=AD 98-99). There is no any date on the coins with *kithara* minted in the name of Claudius (SNG 4263, 4264). On the basis of the interpretation made by Robert (1951, 151: "On a reconnu dans ces "citharephores" les monnaies de la Confédération Lycienne ayant au revers une cithare; il peut s'agir, suivant la date de l'inscription, soit des monnaies autonomie de la Lycie jusqu'à 43 de notre ère, soit des monnaies au nom de Claude, de Domitian, de Nerva et de Trajan ayant pour type du revers une ou deux cithares"), concerning the *kitharephoroi* in order to date the Myra inscription (Diamantaras, 1889, 412-413), the coins with *kithara* struck during the reigns of the emperors mentioned above may also be named as *kitharephoroi*. Within the framework of these two possibilities, the Turant inscription may be dated to AD 95 from 179 in the Sullan era. Nevertheless this dating remains doubtful and should not be regarded as conclusive. As only six inscriptions recording *kitharephoroi* employed to describe a monetary unit for penalty payments have been found to date and probably all of them are to be dated to the Hellenistic period. Four of them are found at Isthla, for the document and the dates see (Schuler, 2006, 395-451, nos. 12, 15, 17 and 22). The other inscription is from Arneai; the style of the letters seen on the detailed drawing of miscal clearly reflect the late Hellenistic period (TAM II, 779). The dating of the Myra inscription (Diamantaras, 1889, 412-413) interpreted by Robert (see note 18) is not certain. It also probably belonged to the period before Emperor Claudius.

It is impossible to consider any era later than that of Sulla to date the inscription due both to the style of the letters and because of the word *kitharephoroi*. When the approximately datings – around the time of Augustus – proposed by Harrison and Schwyer are taken into consideration,

the year 179 goes back to the first half of the second century BC. During this period the most important year is 168/167 BC when Lycia regained independence from Rhodian control, which would mark the beginning of an Lycian era. This thought was previously expressed by Fellows (1841, 382) in his comments concerning the inscription of Telmessos (TAM II, 42), that the year of freedom from Rhodian domination might mark the beginning of a new era. In this context the numbers ranging from 1 to 33 (Α – ΛΓ) that appear on the coins of the Carian city of Alabanda were used to mark the years dating from the era of the liberation of this city from Rhodian domination, that is 168/167 BC (for the details and literature concerning this see Leschhorn, 1993, 201-204, 487). If this year is assumed to mark the beginning of an era, the year 179 corresponds to the year AD 11/12 which agrees with the dating from the typology of sarcophagus and style of the letters forming the Turant inscription. Although any document establishing the existence of this “*the freedom era*” has yet to be found in Lycia, it is not beyond the realms of possibility that the year 167 BC might well have marked the beginning of an era.

Looking collectively at the existing inscriptions dated by era in Lycia, four of them are dated exactly by the Seleucid era, while a few other inscriptions remain disputable. Although few known documents to date attest to it, it seems most probably that some local eras were employed by the Lycians. Finally, for the era of dating employed on the Turant inscription two distinct possibilities can be proposed: the firstly, that the local era dates from the acquisition of independence by Lycia from Rhodian domination which seems the more preferable, the second having a much diminished possibility is dating from the Sullan era.

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