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Research Article

Three New Funerary Inscriptions in the Adana Museum from the Cappadocian city of Comana/Hierapolis

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Abstract

This article deals with three funerary stelae found in the city of Comana/Hierapolis and now held in Adana Archaeological Museum. Like Zela, Ameria, Venasa, Kabeira, Pessinus and the eponymous Comana in Pontus, Cappadocian Comana was one of the most important temple states in Asia Minor during the Hellenistic period, and owed its fame to being the cult centre of Ma, a goddess of war and victory. The ancient geographer Strabon reports from his own experience that the Cappadocian Comana was visited by numerous pilgrims, and that the sanctuary included considerable land holdings, attended by over 6,000 temple slaves of both genders. He also notes that Comana was the largest and most important temple state in the whole of Cappadocia. During the reign of Archelaos, the last king of Cappadocia, Comana was transformed into a polis city-state. The city was renamed Hierapolis, meaning sacred city, in respect of its ancient sanctity. According to the inscription on the first grave stele, the brothers Oclatius Sacerdos, Oclatius Apollinarios and their sister Oclatia Iulia built the grave stele for their father Iulius. The names of the Oclatia/Oclatius gens names appear for the first time in the Comana/Hierapolis settlement. In the second inscription, a man named Antigonos built a grave stele for his son Mamas. The name Mamas, apparently originating from Asia Minor, became a popular name in Hierapolis/Comana. In the third and last inscription, a woman named Claudia Philtate erected a grave stele in memory of her brother Claudius Bachylos. The names Philtate and Bachylos are new to the Comana/Hierapolis settlement.

Keywords: Cappadocian Comana, Hierapolis, temple state, Oclatia/Oclatius, Mamas, Bachylos, Sacerdos.

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Araştırma Makalesi

Adana Müzesi'nde Kappadokia Kenti Komana/Hierapolis'ten Üç Yeni Mezar Yazıtı

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Çıkar Çatışması Beyanı: Çıkar çatışması beyan edilmemiştir.

Yazarların Katkı Oranları Beyanı: Yazarlar, çalışmanın tasarlanması; veri toplanması; veri analizi; makalenin yazımı; makalenin gönderimi ve revizyonu aşmalarında F.B. %60, M.Ç. %20 ve A.A. %20 oranında katkı sunmuşlardır.

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• Bu çalışmanın hazırlanma sürecinde bilimsel ve etik ilkelere uyulduğu ve yararlanılan tüm çalışmaların kaynakçada belirtildiği beyan olunur.

Bu makale, Komana/Hierapolis kentinde bulunmuş ve sonradan bir şekilde Adana Arkeoloji Müzesi'ne getirilmiş olan üç adet mezar stelinin ele almaktadır. Zela, Ameria, Venasa, Kabeira, Pessinus ve Pontus'taki aynı adı taşıyan Komana gibi, Kappadokia'daki Komana da Hellenistik Dönem'de Küçük Asya'nın en önemli tapınak devletlerinden biriydi. Kent ününü savaş ve zafer tanrıçası Ma'nın kült merkezine borçluydu. Antik coğrafyacı Strabon, Kapadokya'daki Komana yerleşiminin çok sayıda kişi tarafından ziyaret edildiğini ve tapınağın 6.000'den fazla köleye ve geniş arazilere sahip olduğunu belirtir. Ayrıca Komana'nın Kapadokia'nın en büyük ve en önemli tapınak devleti olduğunu da ekler. Burası son Kappadokia kralı Arkhelaos zamanında polis kent devletine dönüştürülmüş, yerleşimin yeni adı eski kutsallığından ötürü "kutsal kent" anlamına gelen Hierapolis olmuştur.

Mezar stelinin birincisinin üzerindeki yazıtta göre, Oclatius Sacerdos, Oclatius Apollinarios ve Oclatia Iulia isimli kardeşler kendi babaları Iulius için bir mezar steli yaptırmışlardır. Oclatia/Oclatius gens isimleri Komana/Hierapolis yerleşiminde ilk defa karşımıza çıkmaktadır. İkinci yazıtta ise Antigonos ismindeki bir şahıs kendi oğlu Mamas için mezar steli yaptırmıştır. Küçük Asya kökenli Mamas ismi Komana'da sıklıkla kullanım gören bir isim olmuştur. Üçüncü ve son yazıtta ise, Claudia Philtate ismindeki bir kadın, kendi kardeşi Claudius Bakhylos'un anısına bir mezar steli diktirmiştir. Gerek Philtate ve gerekse Bakhylos isimleri Komana yerleşimi için yeni isimlerdir. Burada ele alınan mezar stelleri, Komana/Hierapolis yerleşiminden daha önceden bilinen alınlıklı ve akroterli mezar tipolojisine sahiptir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Kappadokia Komanası, Hierapolis, Tapınak Devleti, Oclatia/Oclatius, Mamas, Bakhylos, Sacerdos.

Introduction

Two ancient settlements with the name Comana are known in eastern Asia Minor. One is in the north, in the Pontic region¹; the other is located in the Anti-Tauros region of Cappadocia. Like Zela, Ameria, Venasa, Kabeira, Pessinus and the eponymous Comana in Pontus, Cappadocian Comana was one of the most important temple states in Asia Minor during the Hellenistic period and owed its fame to the cult centre of Ma, a goddess of war and victory². The ancient geographer Strabon reports from his own experience that the Cappadocian Comana was visited by numerous pilgrims and that the sanctuary included considerable land holdings, attended by over 6,000 temple slaves of both genders³. He also notes that Comana was the largest and most important temple state in the whole of Cappadocia⁴.

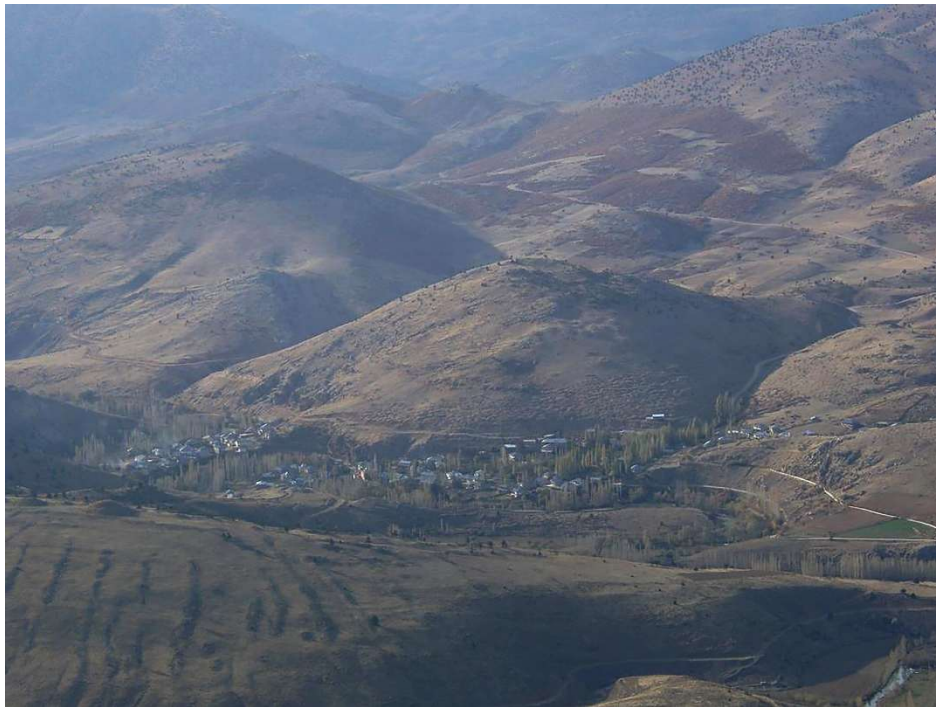


Figure 1: Şarköy (Comana/Hierapolis)

According to Strabon's geographical description, Comana was located in the Anti-Tauros region in a deep and narrow valley directly on the banks of the Saros River (fig. 1)⁵. This geographical information fits well with the village of Şarköy (Tufanbeyli district, Adana province), a village in the Turkish highlands of Asia Minor⁶. Here, the Saros River (now Sarız) flows south through a narrow, deeply incised valley formed by the Karşıkaya-Gümene, Çandırın-tepe and Çataltepe hills. The remains of an ancient settlement can be found on the banks of the Sarız - partly under the modern settlement of Şarköy. The imperial inscriptions and coins from Şarköy give Hierapolis as the ancient city name⁷. It is the only

¹ For Pontic Comana see Olshausen 1980, 188-190; Marek 2003, 109-111, Amandry and Rémy 1999; Erciyas 2021, 335-344.

² On the temple states of Asia Minor in general, e.g. Jones 1971, 155; Debord 1982, 58-62; Olshausen 1980, 187-199; Olshausen 1990, 1886; Mitchell 1993, 81; Dignas 2002, 227-233; Marek 2003, 108-111.

³ See Strab. 12, 2, 3.

⁴ Strab. 12, 2, 5-6; Métivier 2005, 132.

⁵ See Strab. 12, 2, 3.

⁶ Ruge 1921, 1126-1128; Hild and Restle 1981, 208-209.

⁷ For coins see *I. Komana*, TNom1 and 2; for inscriptions see *I. Komana*, no. 2, 3, 5.

place with evidence of the cult of the deity Ma; in addition, there are numerous personal names here that allude to this deity⁸. There are historical reasons why the name Hierapolis appears on the imperial inscriptions and coins of the city. Probably only a few years after Strabon's visit, the temple state of Comana was transformed into a Greek polis under the last Cappadocian king Archelaos⁹, and was given the name Hierapolis (= sacred city). The city today contains a temple (fig. 2), a theatre (fig. 3), and a tomb belonging to a Roman senator named Aurelius Claudius Hermodoros (fig. 4)¹⁰.

The following tomb stelae were found in and around Şarköy, and were moved to the Adana Archaeological Museum at different times. These tomb stelae not only increase the number of archaeological artefacts from the city, but also increase our knowledge about the onomastics of the city of Comana/Hierapolis, especially in terms of personal names. In particular, as will be seen below, gens names such as Oclatius, Oclatia, are attested here for the first time for the settlement. The personal names Sacerdos, Philtate and Bachylos are also documented in the city for the first time.



Figure 2: Ruins of the temple at Comana/Hierapolis



Figure 3: The theatre at Comana/Hierapolis



Figure 4: Tomb Building of Aurelius Claudius Hermodorus

⁸ *I.Komana*, Index. See also about Ma Hartmann 1928, 77-91; Proeva 1983, 165-183; Baz 2009, 65-69; Mutlu 2016, 311-322.

⁹ Syme 1995, 298; Winter 1996, 220; Panichi 2000, 524; Van Dam 2002, 24; *I.Komana*, 47-48.

¹⁰ For the buildings in the city see Hild and Restle 1981, 208-209.

1) Funerary stele of Iulius

Well-preserved marble funerary stele with indicated pediment. A circle with floral decorations covers the centre of the pediment; the inscription field is closed at the top and bottom by a profile. The script is highly meticulous; the letters are of the same size and spacing (fig. 5-6).

Inv. no.: 14606.

Dimensions: H.: 101 cm; W.: 46 cm; T.: 10 cm; L.H.: 2 – 3,3 cm.

Date: 1st-2nd century AD (based on the letter forms).

Ὀκλάτιος Σακέ-
 2 [ρ]δως καὶ Ὀκλάτιος
 Ἀπολλινάριος καὶ Ὀ-
 4 κλατία Ἰουλία, Ἰουλί-
 ω τῷ κυρίῳ πα-
 vacat τρί. vacat

Oclatius Sacerdos and Oclatius Apollinarios and Oclatia Iulia (built this stele) for their master father Iulius.

L. 5. The term κύριος was mostly used in Comana/Hierapolis as an epithet for deities such as Apollo, Asclepius, Hermes and Men¹¹. It was also used, albeit rarely, to enhance the prestigious positions of deceased citizens¹². Records indicating that this term was also used in other cities were compiled and interpreted by L. Robert¹³.

The name Oclatius was used in Roman onomastics both as a gens name and as a cognomen. One of the most famous people to bear this name, as a gens name, was Tiberius Oclatius Severus. He was governor of the Provincia Pontus et Bithynia in AD 173-174¹⁴. His name also appears on a lead weight that was probably found in Nicomedia¹⁵. We also know that a soldier named L(ucius) Oclatius Severus erected a funerary monument to his colleague in Macedonia¹⁶. This name also appears as a cognomen in the cities of Nicopolis ad Istrum in Moesia and Nicomedia in Bithynia¹⁷. On the other hand, the name Sacerdos is attested in Kaisareia in Cappadocia¹⁸. However, this name, which is rare in Cappadocia, was used more frequently in other regions of Asia Minor¹⁹. The gens names Oclatius and Oclatia were not previously attested in Comana/Hierapolis. While the children, who had the stele built for their father, were referred to by the gens names, it is noteworthy that their father was mentioned only by his name Iulius, without the gens name.



Figure 5: No. 1; Funerary stele of Iulius

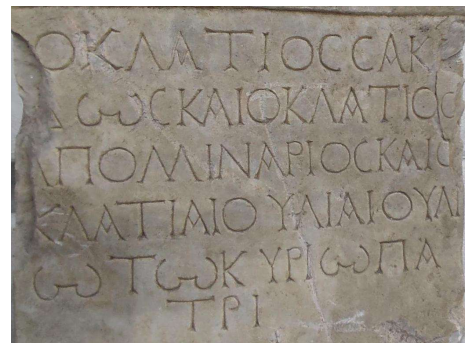


Figure 6: No. 1 (detail)

¹¹ I.Komana, no. 87, 89, 92, 95, 98.

¹² I.Komana, no. 120, 124, 170. See also for the uses and meanings of this term Dickey 2001, 5-11.

¹³ Robert 1969, 1607-1611.

¹⁴ For information on this person see Eck 2000, 1094; Haensch and Weiss 2007, 212.

¹⁵ IGR I, no. 524; see also SEG 55, no. 1381.

¹⁶ I.Philippes III, no. 79.

¹⁷ SEG 37, no. 629; TAM IV.I, no. 200.

¹⁸ LGPN VA, 396 s.v.

¹⁹ LGPN VA, 396 s.v.; LGPN VC, 381 s.v.

2) Funerary stele of Mamas

Well-preserved marble funerary stele with indicated pediment and *acroteria*. A circle fills the centre of the pediment; the inscription field is closed at the top by a profile. The top acroter, the right acroter and the lower part of the stele are broken off. The lettering is of mediocre accuracy; the letters vary in size, are irregularly spaced and are thinly carved (fig 7-8).

Inv. no.: 13661.

Dimensions: H.: 58 cm; B.: 23 cm; T.: 10,5 cm; L.H.: 2 - 2,4 cm.

Date: 1st-2nd century AD (based on the letter forms).

Ἀντίγονο[ς]

2 Μᾶμα τῶι υἱῶι.

Antigonos (built this stele) for his son Mamas.

L. 2. υἱῶι=υἱῶι.

The Greek personal name Antigonos was widely used in the Eastern Mediterranean World. The same name also appears in other inscriptions from Comana/Hierapolis²⁰. The son of the dedicant, Mamas, bears an indigenous personal name which is attested several times both in Comana / Hierapolis and in other regions of Asia Minor²¹.

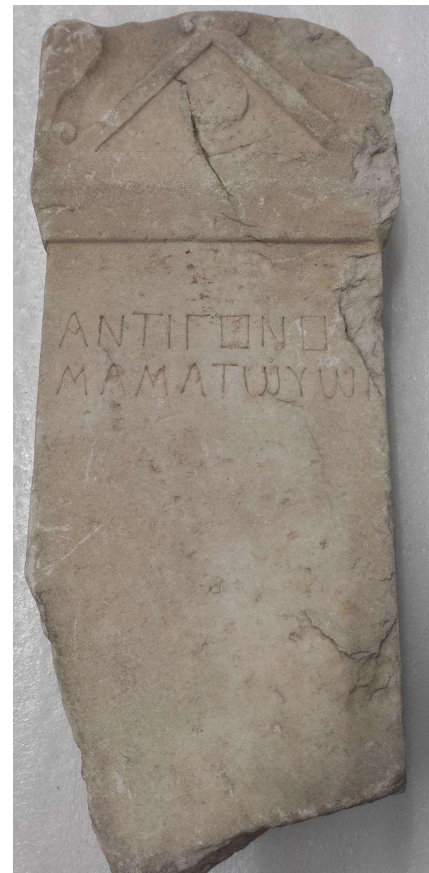


Figure 7: No. 2; Funerary stele of Mamas

3) Funerary stele of Cl(audius) Bachylos

Well-preserved limestone grave stele with indicated pediment and *acroteria*. The centre of the pediment fills a triangle and the inscription field is closed at the top and bottom by a profile. Little care was taken with the writing on the stele; its letters, which are inclined to the right, have different spacing and sizes (fig. 9-10).

Inv. no.: 14603.

Dimensions: H.: 64.5 cm; B.: 24,5 cm; T.: 16 cm; L.H.: 2 -2,4 cm.

Date: 1st-2nd century AD (based on the letter forms and nomenclature).

Κλ(αυδία) Φιλτάτη

2 Κλ(αυδίω) Βαχύλω

χρηστῶ ἄ-

4 δελφῶ μ-

νήμης χάριν.

Cl(audia) Philtate (built this stele) in memory of her kind brother Cl(audius) Bachylos.

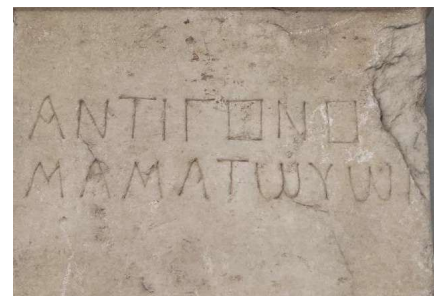


Figure 8: No. 2 (detail)

²⁰ I.Komana, no. 95, 113, 114, 148, 234, 255, 269, 335.

²¹ Zgusta 1964, § 850-3; Robert 1963, 526; Laminger-Pascher 1985, 87; I.Komana, no. 71, 83, 129, 275, 286, 287, 328; Hall 1968, no. 19; Schwertheim 1985, no. 1; Riel 1997, 37; I.Westkilikien Rep., no. Korykos 342 and 468; Solin 1996, 607; French 2024, no. 39, 40, 72.

L.1. τη; L. 5. νήμης in ligature.

L.3. The term χορηστός is often used in Comana/Hierapolis²².

The personal names Philtate and Bachylos have not been previously attested in Comana/Hierapolis. As far as can be seen, the name Bachylos is more commonly known as Βακχύλος (Bacchylos). This name is known in Asia Minor, mainly from Ionia, Mysia, Phrygia and Pisidia²³. The form of the name as Bachylos, as in the inscription above, is rare²⁴. Additionally, an example of this name without kappa is known from Phrygia²⁵, Philtate, on the other hand, is a name documented in Phrygia and Pisidia²⁶. The family possessed Roman citizenship, which they or their ancestors probably acquired during the reign of Emperor Claudius, as indicated by the gens name Claudius. Other members of the Claudii family are also mentioned in other inscriptions of the city²⁷.



Figure 9: No. 3; Funerary stele of Claudius Bakhylos



Figure 10: No. 3 (detail)

Conclusion

The funerary stelae evaluated here are typologically almost identical to other funerary stelae found in the Comana/Hierapolis settlement²⁸. They have indicated pediments and *acroteria*. A circle of triangles fills the centre of the pediments; the field of inscriptions is closed at the top or bottom by profiles. The inscriptions on these Stelae contribute to the onomastics of the Cappadocian Comana/Hierapolis settlement. Personal names such as Philtate, Bachylos, Sacerdos, Oclatia and Oclatius are documented for the first time in Hierapolis, whereas the name Mamas, which originates in Asia Minor is found frequently in Comana/Hierapolis.

²² *I.Komana*, no. 121, 126, 128. For the feminine form of this term, see *I.Komana*, no. 193, 214, 239, 246, 248.

²³ *LGNP* VA, 97 s.v.; *LGNP* VC, 84 s.v.

²⁴ *LGNP* VA, 97 s.v.

²⁵ *LGNP* VC, 84 s.v. Βακχύλος (3).

²⁶ *LGNP* VC, 441 s.v.

²⁷ *I.Komana*, no. 5, 66, 67, 156, 166.

²⁸ E.g. see Baz and Erten 2013, abb. 1, 3, 4, 9a.

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