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Pierres Errantes: Two Latin Inscriptions transported from the Docimium Quarries to Istanbul

*Gezgin Taşlar: Dokimeion Mermer Ocaklarından İstanbul'a Taşınan İki Latince
Yazıt*

Senem DİNÇ*

Abstract: This study presents two Latin inscriptions currently exhibited in Sanatçılar Parkı in Ataköy, Istanbul, which originally belonged to the Roman Imperial marble quarries of Docimium (modern İncehisar, Afyon). One of the inscriptions was previously discovered in the Bacakale sector of the Docimium quarries and was published in 1991. Although the other inscription remains unpublished, it was most likely brought to Istanbul together with the former piece. After situating these fragments within the broader corpus of quarry inscriptions, they are re-examined here in light of the earlier studies by J. C. Fant, M. Christol, and Th. Drew-Bear, with particular attention to their epigraphic and historical contexts. The inscriptions illustrate the use of standard abbreviations designating quarry sections (*bracchium*, *locus*), the workshop engineer (*officina*), and the quarry engineer (*caesura*), thereby providing evidence for the complex bureaucratic system that regulated production and transport. The paper also addresses the transfer of these inscriptions to Istanbul, while expressing concerns about the ongoing threats that modern quarrying activities pose to archaeological evidence.

Keywords: Docimium, Marble Quarries, Bracchium, Officina, Caesura, Marble Trade

Öz: Bu çalışmada, günümüzde İstanbul Ataköy Sanatçılar Parkı'nda sergilenen ve kökeni Roma İmparatorluk Dönemi Dokimeion (İncehisar/Afyon) mermer ocaklarına uzanan iki Latince yazıt ele alınmaktadır. Yazıtlardan biri daha önce Dokimeion taş ocaklarının Bacakale sektöründe tespit edilmiştir ve 1991 yılında yayımlanmıştır. Diğeri ise yayımlanmamış olup muhtemelen onunla birlikte İstanbul'a getirilmiştir. Bu fragmanlar, taş ocağı yazıtlarının daha geniş bir külliyatı içinde konumlandırıldıktan sonra, J. C. Fant, M. Christol ve Th. Drew-Bear'ın önceki çalışmaları ışığında epigrafik ve tarihsel bağlamları açısından yeniden incelenmektedir. Yazıtlar, taş ocağı bölümlerini (*bracchium*, *locus*), atölye mühendisini (*officina*) ve taş ocağı mühendisini (*caesura*) belirten standart kısaltmaların kullanımını göstermekte ve üretim ve nakliyeyi düzenleyen karmaşık bürokratik sistemin kanıtını sunmaktadır. Makalede ayrıca, söz konusu yazıtların İstanbul'a taşınması ele alınmakta olup modern taş ocağı faaliyetlerinin arkeolojik kanıtlar üzerinde oluşturduğu süreğen tehditlere ilişkin endişeleri de dile getirilmektedir.

Anahtar sözcükler: Dokimeion, Mermer Ocakları, Bracchium, Officina, Caesura, Mermer Ticareti

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The renowned French epigrapher L. Robert examined stones that had been displaced from their original locations under the title "*Pierres Errantes*". We have adopted this term in our study due to its aptness to the subject matter. This choice was also influenced by the valuable insights of Emeritus Prof. Dr. A. Vedat Çelgin, who kindly took the time to read the manuscript of this article. I would like to express my deepest gratitude to him.

In April 2025, we became aware that two Latin inscriptions and an architectural relief were on display in the Sanatçılar Parkı¹ in Ataköy, which had been opened to the public in 2018.² Our examination of these inscriptions shows that they originate from the imperial marble quarries at Docimium (İscehisar). One of the inscriptions was previously identified in the marble quarries located in the Bacakale area of Docimium and was published in 1991. The other inscription was probably brought to Istanbul with it. These, however, are not the only inscriptions brought from Docimium to Istanbul. There are four more inscriptions that were published after being added to the inventory of the Istanbul Archaeology Museums. Two of these were discovered in a marble workshop in Istanbul, while the other two were found in the garden of the Istanbul residence belonging to the family operating the marble quarries in Iscehisar³. In our study, while attempting to present and interpret the two Latin inscriptions that are today exhibited in a public park, we will also address – albeit briefly – the operation of the marble quarries in the Roman Imperial period, a subject that undoubtedly involves a wide and still not fully understood range of issues.

Marble had been used primarily for small objects and figurines since the Neolithic Age; however, beginning with the Archaic Period in ancient Greece, it started to be worked in large blocks, notably in architecture (especially temple construction and sculpture). The difficulties involved both in its extraction and in its transportation to the place of use made marble a highly costly material⁴. The use of marble, which dates back to much earlier periods in ancient Greece, began in Rome only in the third century BCE. The capture of Syracuse by M. Claudius Marcellus in 211 BCE⁵ and his transfer of Greek sculptures to Rome as war booty are regarded as the beginning of Roman interest in marble⁶. In the 1st and 2nd centuries

¹ Milliyet, 22 May 2018.

² I would like to express my sincere gratitude to Prof. Dr. Gülgün Köroğlu and Associate Professor Lale Yılmaz for their valuable contributions to this study.

³ Fant 1984, 177-178 no. 6-7; 1989, 109 no. 47, 115 no. 61.

⁴ For this reason, its use was initially deemed appropriate only for religious buildings, cf. Waelkens *et al.* 1988, 11. The challenges of transportation also meant that marble quarries located near the coast or in areas suitable for river transport were generally preferred over those requiring overland shipment, cf. Russell 2008, 108-109; 2013, 95-140. Over time, marble also began to be used in secular architecture, beyond religious buildings. The palace built at Halicarnassus by the Carian satrap Mausolos in the fourth century BCE—although its walls were constructed of brick—may be regarded as the first secular building whose entire wall decoration was executed in marble, cf. Vitruvius *de Arch.* II. 8. 10; Coulton 1977, 25; Lawrence 1996, 143-144, 146; Albustanlıoğlu 2006, 98. In subsequent periods, marble became a prestige material employed in the construction of elite residences, serving as a marker of the owners' social status within the city, cf. Coulton 1977, 30-33; Waelkens *et al.* 1988, 14-17; Albustanlıoğlu 2006, 98.

⁵ Liv. XXVI. 21.

⁶ After 146 BC, marble was imported from both Hellas and Numidia for use in sculpture as well as in construction, cf. Ward-Perkins 1980a, 326; Hirt 2017, 232-234. During the Roman Republican Period, a distinguished senator was entitled to use marble in public spaces as a reward for his own and his ancestors' services to the Roman state, cf. Hirt 2017, 232. However, this right passed exclusively to the emperor during the Roman Principate Period, when military success began to be attributed solely to the emperor. From then on, costly public buildings such as temples, amphitheatres, and baths were commissioned solely by the emperor, cf. Hirt 2017, 237. The theatre of Balbi is considered to be the last structure commissioned by a senator, cf. Plin. *nat.* XXXVI. 60. With Egypt's incorporation into Roman territory, its stone quarries came

CE, colored marbles had become a widely employed decorative material not only in the regions of Asia Minor and Greece where they were quarried, but also throughout many other parts of the Empire⁷.

A Brief Overview of the Dokimeion Inscriptions

Between 1868 and 1870, P. E. Visconti discovered more than three hundred inscriptions during his excavations in the Roman marble quarries. These inscriptions, which bore labels intelligible only to a limited number of people at the time of their use, were published by L. Bruzza in 1870. In 1959, a small number of labelled marble blocks and columns were also found at Portus⁸. Over the past four decades, the number of such inscriptions has steadily increased with new examples identified in various quarries, including *pavonazzetto* from the Docimium quarries, *giallo antico* from Simitthus, and *granodiorit* from Mons Claudianus⁹. Quarries producing white marble, such as those at Proconnesus (Marmara Island), Thasos, and Luna, were preferred because of their convenient access to maritime transport¹⁰. Nevertheless, some marble quarries were in demand regardless of their distance. Consumers' interest in luxury products must have played a significant role in this demand¹¹.

The Docimium marble quarries were reopened in the 1980s. None of the architectural structures associated with the ancient marble quarries have survived to the present. From these quarries, white, light-grey, or purple-veined marble was extracted¹². Scholars have long debated the route or routes by which this marble was exported in antiquity. Some have suggested that it was transported via the Sakarya (Sangarius) River to a port on the Propontis¹³, while others have argued that it was carried entirely overland to the harbour of

under imperial control, and this administrative experience in Egypt led, during the reign of Tiberius, to some mines and quarries becoming the property and under the direct administration of the emperor. Thus, by a decision whose exact date remains uncertain, the emperor – as the holder of *imperium* – became the only individual entitled to request the use of coloured or white marble, cf. Ward-Perkins 1980a, 326. In the second and first centuries BCE, marble artefacts acquired by the Roman Republic Period from the East were used to adorn the houses of Rome's elite families, cf. Plin. *nat.* XXXVI. 7. Over time, some leading families, emulating the lifestyles of the Hellenistic kings, began to commission residences resembling royal palaces, cf. Wallace-Hadrill 2008, 190–196; Russell 2013, 14. Suetonius' famous quotation from Augustus – *I found a city of brick and left one of marble* – reflects the growing use of marble in Rome, cf. Suet. *Aug.* XXVIII. 3. These stones often reached the city only after arduous journeys, cf. Str. XII. 8. 14. The longer the distance they travelled, the more valuable they became; coloured marbles in particular were preferred because their provenance was more easily recognisable. Initially, stone for ordinary construction was obtained from the nearest available quarry, and in the absence of a local quarry, alternative materials were employed, cf. Ward-Perkins 1980b, 24.

⁷ Russell 2013, 14.

⁸ Bruzza 1870; Baccini Leotordi 1979; Baccini Leotordi 1989.

⁹ Fant 1984; 1985; 1989; Christol & Drew-Bear 1986; 1991; Kraus 1993; Peacock & Maxfield 1997.

¹⁰ Russell 2013, 94.

¹¹ For instance, Docimium must have satisfied the demands of luxury consumers through the exceptional quality of its marble, its rare colours, and the prestige associated with products transported from such a distant source. B. Russell estimates that moving a 50-ton load by wagons drawn by pack animals would have taken five days to cover just 1 km on the way to the port, cf. Russell 2008, 113; 2013, 100. This provides an idea of how long deliveries from quarries located in inland regions could take.

¹² Fant 1989, 41–8; Hirt 2010, 27–28.

¹³ Ward-Perkins 1980b, 30.

Ephesus (Selçuk), or else transported along the route Synnada (Şuhut)→ Apamea (Dinar)→ Laodicea ad Lycum (Pamukkale/ Çürüksu Valley), and from there via the Maeander (Büyük Menderes) River to Tralles (Aydın)→ Miletus (Balat) → Ephesus¹⁴. B. Russell proposed three different routes: one via the Hermos (Gediz) Valley to Smyrna; another through Synnada and Apamea to the Maiandros Valley; and a third leading from Apamea entirely by land, using the Via Sebaste to reach Pisidia and Pamphylia, in order to avoid transshipment costs¹⁵. Whether by sea or by land, the stones were delivered only after long journeys¹⁶. Upon their arrival—if indeed they reached their destination¹⁷—recipients encountered them marked with a series of codes. These abbreviations recorded the processes the product had undergone, from production to delivery. Due to the difficulties of transport, the marble was often shipped in either unworked or semi-worked form, inscribed with these codes. Similar codes were generally used in each marble quarry¹⁸. However, it is thought that some of them had different meanings. J. C. Fant's studies on the Docimium marble quarries provide extensive information on the meanings of the abbreviations used in these inscriptions¹⁹. Based on the examples Fant collected, he classified the inscriptions into three groups²⁰, organizing them according to the operational structure of the quarry rather than chronologically²¹.

B. Russell draws attention to an inscription previously published by J. C. Fant in order to clarify the purpose of the abbreviations found in the quarry inscriptions²². Dated to 179 CE, this inscription refers to stones borrowed by a person named Titus from another *caesura* (quarry engineer)²³. These stones had been supplied by an *officina* (workshop engineer) to replace stones previously delivered. Russell suggests that this system of lending reflects an

¹⁴ Hirt 2004, 119, 2010, 28.

¹⁵ Russell 2013, 138–139.

¹⁶ Docimium's location has given rise to various opinions on how its goods were transported to the port. For discussions on this topic, cf. Robert 1962, 26; Röder 1971, 253–254; Walkens 1982, 124–125.

¹⁷ Russell 2008, 112.

¹⁸ The practice of writing information on marble fragments was not used by craftsmen in the private sector, cf. Fant 1989, 30.

¹⁹ Fant 1984; 1985; 1989.

²⁰ For more detailed information on the three types of inscriptions; cf. Fant 1989, 17–32; Albustanlıoğlu 2006, 104–184.

²¹ The groups are as follows: **Type I Inscriptions:** This style of inscription is found on marble blocks extracted from quarries operated by contractors who signed a contract with the state between 96 and 173 CE. These inscriptions typically include the name of the contractor, the date, and the identification number of the block, cf. Fant 1989, 17–18. **Type II Inscriptions:** With the increasing demand for marble in the second century CE, quarrying began to be undertaken directly by the state. Indeed, even marble blocks that had previously been set aside as unsatisfactory or regarded as waste material were reprocessed in the state-operated quarries. In addition to the date, the inscriptions from these state-run operations also contain information such as the *brachium* (the area where the stone was extracted from the quarry) and the *locus*. Although the locus number was initially thought to indicate the place of extraction, the growing number of surviving examples has made it clear that it in fact served as an identifying number for the block; cf. Fant 1989, 19–22; Albustanlıoğlu 2006, 124. **Type III Inscriptions:** The emergence of this type of inscription occurred gradually between 119 and 130 CE. The complete form of Type III Inscriptions, which also included information on *caesura* (quarry engineer) and *officina* (workshop engineer), is known to have been used between 156 and 236 CE, cf. Fant 1989, 138 no. 122, 178 no. 222.

²² Russell 2013, 48.

²³ Fant 1989, 162 no. 177.

arrangement in which those operating the quarries pledged by contract the quantity of marble they would produce each year²⁴. According to him, two types of contracts²⁵ may have been employed in quarry management. One type, *locatio conductio rei*, involved the leasing of the right to operate a mine or quarry to private contractors for a specified fee or a share of production. Contractors in the group of inscriptions Fant designates as Type I²⁶ may have signed such agreements. The other type, *locatio conductio operis*, involved private contractors being engaged by the Roman administration to undertake a specific task²⁷. Russell argues that the inscription mentioned above may provide evidence for the implementation of such a contract. The detailed information provided in the inscriptions designated by Fant as Type III²⁸ appears to have been of importance for attaining the figures promised in the contract.

The most extensive research on the Docimium marble quarries near Synnada²⁹ was conducted by Fant in the 1980s. Following several articles, he published a catalogue in 1989 containing 238 inscriptions³⁰. Around the same period, M. Christol and Th. Drew-Bear also carried out studies on the Docimium quarries³¹. In their publications, they republished some inscriptions and published others for the first time. Christol and Drew-Bear attribute the main reason for this partial overlap to the difficulties of working in the quarries. Chief among these challenges is the fact that, even today, several-ton blocks temporarily stacked at the entrance of the Bacakale quarries often cover one another before being cut³². In 2006, a doctoral dissertation on the inscriptions of the Docimium quarries was completed by T. Albustanlıoğlu, although it does not include all inscriptions from the quarries³³.

Inscriptions

No: 1

The inscriptions no: 1-2, presently exhibited in the Ataköy Sanatçılar Parkı administered by the Bakırköy Municipality, were in all likelihood illicitly removed from Docimium, akin to the comparably sourced stones recovered in Istanbul discussed above. Their exhibition in this location was presumably determined on the grounds that they had been seized during an operation conducted within the municipality's administrative jurisdiction. The Bakırköy Municipality was unable to provide information regarding the date on which the stones were transferred into its custody. Accordingly, it is considered likely that they were installed in the

²⁴ Russell 2013, 48.

²⁵ Johnston 2004, 65.

²⁶ Cf. n. 22 above.

²⁷ Schulz 1961, 542-544; Russell 2013, 46-49. For discussions on the types of *locatio conductio*; cf. Lewis 1973, 164-171.

²⁸ Cf. n. 22 above.

²⁹ Str. XII 8 14.

³⁰ Fant 1984; 1985; 1989.

³¹ Christol & Drew-Bear 1986; 1991.

³² Christol & Drew-Bear 1991, 114 n. 5.

³³ Albustanlıoğlu 2006.

park in 2018, the year of its opening.

Carved from fine-crystalline *pavonazetto* marble, the stone has a cut along its upper left corner and a break extending halfway down its left edge. The upper part of the stone has been cut inward by 10 cm in the form of a band, creating a recess. Along the lower part, it has likewise been cut inward by 30 cm, forming a recess 10 cm in width. These upper and lower recesses appear to have been created to slot the stone into another structure. Only the front face of the stone has been lightly smoothed, while the back face has been left rough. The letters are extremely shallowly incised (Fig. 1).

Dimensions: H: 94 cm; L: 112 cm; D: 39 cm; Lh: N. 8 cm – O. 6 cm.

Date: 148 CE.

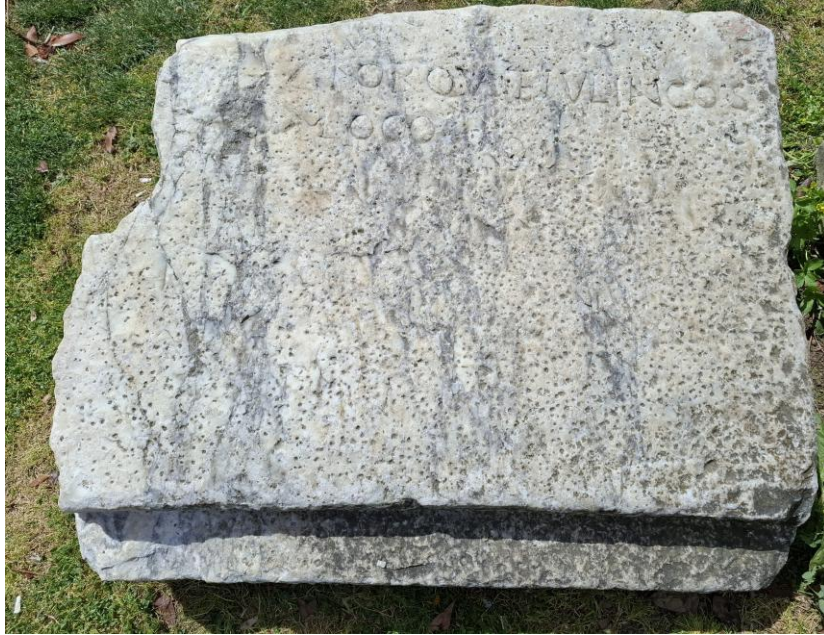


Fig. 1. Inscription no. 1 (Ataköy). Ph. S. Dinç



Fig. 2. Christol & Drew-Bear 1987, 87 no. 25 Pl. 29 (Bacakale)

Torquau(to) et Iulianu(o) co(n)s(ulibus)

2 loco

An inscription with similar abbreviations has previously been published twice: first, by Christol and Drew-Bear in 1987³⁴, including a photograph showing that the lower right corner had been cut and that the letters' placement, size, and forms differ from those of the above inscription (Fig. 2); second, by Fant in 1989, without a photograph³⁵. Fant did not provide the dimensions of the stone, noting only the letter height, and indicate that the back right corner was broken and that two consecutive notches appeared on the right side. Letter height was given as 4.5–5.5 cm. The inscription Fant identified among the rubble on the western side of Bacakale should correspond to the one published in 1987. However, the incomplete inscription presented above is a different piece, distinguished by the damage to its upper left corner, the neatly recut lower section further inward, and its larger letter size, suggesting it had not been published previously.

Line 1: C. Bellicius Calpurnius Torquatus³⁶ and P. Salvius Iulianus³⁷ are dated to their consulship year, 148 CE³⁸. Research conducted by Christol, Drew-Bear, and Fant in the Docimium quarries has identified numerous similar examples from the consular years of Torquatus and Iulianus, with the same inscriptions often republished. The conjunction *et* appears as a ligature in inscriptions from the Docimium quarries.

Line 2: In the early period of the Docimium quarry inscriptions, the *locus* number was rarely indicated, but from 136 CE onward it was regularly included. Often considered as subdivisions of the *bracchium*, Fant argued that the *locus* number indicated the location from which a stone was extracted and thus varied for each block³⁹. A. M. Hirt considers Fant's interpretation plausible, given the absence of repeated *locus* numbers on the stones. The inscription previously published twice by Christol, Drew-Bear, and Fant lacks a *locus* number, as does a similar inscription in the corpus⁴⁰. Fant identified another inscription similarly left incomplete⁴¹, suggesting that the omission resulted from the quarryman not yet being assigned a *locus* number at the time of cutting; the stone may have been left aside and

³⁴ Christol & Drew-Bear 1987, 87 no. 25, Pl. 29; Hirt 2010, 381 no. 167. Another inscription shares similar features. However, this inscription consists of four lines and is incomplete, as the last two lines cannot be read due to the presence of another stone in front of it; cf. Christol & Drew-Bear 1987, 86 no. 19.

³⁵ Fant 1989, 134 no. 111.

³⁶ Girard & de Ricci 1906, 485, 495; Alföldy 1976, 266, 283 n.58; Ando 2000, 355; Rowlandson 2009, 90 no.70.

³⁷ P. Salvius Iulianus, who came from an important family and was one of the most successful jurists of his time, had his *quaestor* salary doubled by Hadrian *CIL* VIII 24094 = *ILS* 8973. *Dig.* I 2. 2. 43–44, 3 32; *PIR*² VII/2 152; Kunkel 1966, 89, 101, 104, 109–110; Alföldy 1976, 266, 283 n.58, 292–294; 1977, 152; Schiller 1978, 335 no. 122; Frier 1989, 240–241; Honoré 2002, 745–755; Stein 2004, 14, 27, 59, 62, cf. Syme 1989, 181, for the omission of his name in the *Historia Augusta*.

³⁸ Christol & Drew-Bear 1986, 69 no. 22–23; 1987, 86–88 no. 17–31; Fant 1989, 126–134 no. 91–112; Drew-Bear 1994, 773–780 no. 15–19.

³⁹ Fant 1989, 19.

⁴⁰ Hirt 2010, 293.

⁴¹ In this inscription, no numbers are given for either *locus* or *bracchium*; cf. Fant 1989, 138–139 no. 123.

subsequently forgotten⁴². With regard to the similar inscription that they had previously published, M. Christol and Th. Drew-Bear suggest that, unless its number was applied in paint, the inscription may never have been completed⁴³.

No: 2

Information and considerations regarding the circumstances under which inscription no. 2 came to be displayed in Ataköy Artists' Park have been presented above in the discussion of inscription no. 1, with which it shares similar characteristics. The inscription in question was identified and published by Christol and Drew-Bear in 1991 at the Bacakale sector of the Docimium marble quarries⁴⁴. Although the inscription exhibits many of the same features today, the measurements we have recently taken do not correspond to those provided by its first editors. Notable discrepancies are observed in both the letter height and the depth of the stone. Nevertheless, we consider it likely that this is indeed the same stone, and that the divergences are attributable to minor inaccuracies in the initial publication. This inscription, too, is currently under the protection of the Bakırköy Municipality.

Carved from fine-crystalline *pavonazetto* marble, the upper left portion of the stone is broken off down to its midpoint. Although this break was already present when the stone was first recorded, it appears to have enlarged in the intervening period. There is also a 7 cm-wide break at the upper right corner. The lower right portion of the stone is 4 cm narrower. While the front face of the stone has been lightly dressed, the back face has been left rough. The letters are incised to an extremely shallow depth. The lower third of the stone is of a lighter colour, indicating that this part remained buried in the soil for a long period (Fig. 3-4).

Dimensions: H: 100 cm; L: 97 cm; D: 70 cm; Lh: V. 6 cm – O. 4 cm.

Date: 205 CE. The year of Caracalla and Geta's first joint consulship.

Ed.: Christol & Drew-Bear 1991, 144-145 no. 15. pl. 14, Hirt 2010, 394 no. 333.

[loc(o)- - -], b(racchio) tert(io) CO[M I]
 2 M(arco) A[u]r(elio) Antonino [II]
 Aug(usto) et Sep(timio) Geta Cae(sare)
 4 co(n)s(ulibus), off(icina) Sever(iana) caes(ura) A[urelii]
 Theophili

⁴² Fant 1989, 134 no. 111.

⁴³ Christol & Drew-Bear 1987, 87 no. 25.

⁴⁴ Christol & Drew-Bear 1991, 144-145 no. 15, Pl. 14: "Bloc rectangulaire retaillé sur le côté droit, parmi ceux empilés à l'entrée des carrières de Bacakale".



Fig. 3. Inscription no. 2 (Ataköy). Ph. L. Yılmaz



Fig. 4. Inscription no. 2 (Bacakale), Christol & Drew-Bear 1991, 144-145 no. 15, Pl. 14

Although Fant published a very similar inscription in his work, the present piece differs in line arrangement and integrity⁴⁵. No photograph of this inscription is included in that publication. In their 1991 study, however, Christol and Drew-Bear presented four inscriptions dated to 205 CE; three of these were published for the first time, while the fourth corresponds to the inscription previously edited by Fant. Their article also contains

⁴⁵ Fant 1989, 167 no. 192 = Christol & Drew-Bear 1991, 143-144 no. 14.

photographs of the inscriptions. An examination of these photographs shows that one of the three newly published inscriptions is in fact the very piece now exhibited in a park in Istanbul, namely the inscription with the worn upper left corner which will be discussed here⁴⁶.

Line 1: Owing to the damage affecting the upper left section of the stone, the first line is largely lost. Nonetheless, four published inscriptions of comparable typology are known⁴⁷, one of which has survived in its entirety⁴⁸. On the basis of this complete specimen, Christol and Drew-Bear proposed restorations for the other three, which are fragmentary. Accordingly, it is considered likely that the inscription originally commenced with the abbreviation *loc*, followed by a three- or four-digit numeral.

The term *bracchium* is denoted on the stones by the abbreviations *BR* or *B*. Designating a subdivision of the quarry, this abbreviation retains the same meaning across all quarries administered under imperial authority⁴⁹. In the inscriptions from the Docimium quarry, four distinct *bracchium* numbers have been identified⁵⁰. Nonetheless, certain inscriptions display more than one *bracchium* designation. Hirt suggests that this situation may have resulted from the inadequacy of storage areas and that stones might have been transferred to other sections in order to facilitate access between different parts of the quarry⁵¹.

Within the marble quarry inscriptions, the *COM* number appears subsequent to the *locus* and *bracchium* designations. The abbreviation, attested in the forms *COM I* or *COMM I*, has not yet been securely identified with any specific word or phrase⁵².

Line 2-3: Christol and Drew-Bear reported having discerned a barely perceptible trace of the letter *A* following the *M* in this line. At present, however, the letter appears more clearly—perhaps owing to improved lighting conditions. They tentatively restored the sequence as *A[U]R*, indicating that the letters were only faintly visible. We, however, propose the reading *A[U]R*.

Caracalla and Geta held the consulship together on two occasions, the first in AD 205 and the second in 208 CE⁵³. In the inscription, both of their names are given with their titles, as *Imp. M. Antoninus Augustus II* and *P. Septimius Geta Caesar*. This allows the inscription to be dated to the consular year of 205 CE⁵⁴. Following Geta's murder by his brother Caracalla

⁴⁶ Christol & Drew-Bear 1991, 144-145 no. 15, Pl. 14.

⁴⁷ Christol & Drew-Bear 1991, 143-146 no.14-17.

⁴⁸ Fant 1989, 167 no. 192 = Christol & Drew-Bear 1991, 143-144 no.14.

⁴⁹ Röder 1971, 271.

⁵⁰ Christol & Drew-Bear 1986, 84; Fant 1989, 19-22; Monge 2001, 191; Albustanlıoğlu 2006, 127-132; Hirt 2010, 292-293.

⁵¹ Hirt 2010, 292.

⁵² Fant 1989, 27; Monge 2001, 189; Albustanlıoğlu 2006, 160-161. Cf. Fant 1989, 163, no. 180, 165-166, no. 186-188, 167 no. 190-192, 167 no. 194, 169-172 no.197-205, 172-173 no. 207-208, 176-177 no. 217-219, 178 no. 222-223; Christol & Drew-Bear 1991, 129-133 no. 6-8, 135-160 no. 11-29, 163-166 no. 31-33 for *COM I*, Christol & Drew-Bear 1991, 133-135 no. 9-10 for *COM II* and Fant 1989, 164 no. 181, 183-184, 178 no. 221 for *COMM I*.

⁵³ Kienast *et al.* 2017, 160-161.

⁵⁴ *PIR*² VII/2 446, 454.

on 19 or 26 December 211 CE, his name and images were erased everywhere as a consequence of the *damnatio memoriae* pronounced against him⁵⁵. Since the fate of the Docimium quarry inscriptions was to be effaced at the site of their use, Geta's name, despite this decree, must have been preserved in the inscriptions for more than eighteen centuries⁵⁶.

Line 4: *Officina* denotes a group consisting of individuals specialized in stone working. The names of these *officinae* could be derived from real persons, as in *officina Commodiana* or *officina Severiana*; from cities, as in *officina Ephesiana*; or from deities as in *officina Herculiana*⁵⁷. Fant identified nineteen *officina* names in inscriptions dated between 137 and 236 CE. He interprets this relatively high number as an indication that the appellations of a limited number of *officinae* were subject to change over time. Within his list, the *officina Severiana* is assigned to the period between 199 and 229 CE⁵⁸.

After the state began operating the marble quarries, an official bearing the title *caesura* was appointed to head the quarry organization. This new official must have been endowed with broad powers to supervise the workers⁵⁹. The term, which can be understood as 'quarry engineer' or 'quarry overseer,' is followed by the official's name in the genitive case. In the imperial marble quarries, these individuals employed status-indicating designations such as *Aug(usti)*⁶⁰ and *Caes(aris)* prior to their titles. For example, in the Africano inscriptions, between 64 and 80 CE, the designation *Caes(aris)*—indicating that the individual was an imperial slave belonging to the *familia Caesaris*—is consistently attested⁶¹. After 80 CE, however, this notation was abbreviated, and the form *ser(vus) Caes(aris)* was replaced simply by *ser(vus)*. According to Hirt, this shift may be observed in the case of Tychus, who is recorded as *Caes(aris)* in an inscription dated to 77 CE, but only as *ser(vus)* in another inscription from 86 CE⁶². Fant identified the names of seventeen *caesurae* in the inscriptions from the Docimium marble quarries dating between 136 and 236 CE. Of these individuals, the first two were of *centurio* origin⁶³. According to Fant, one of the others was probably local, nine were freeborn, and the rest were freedmen⁶⁴. Drew-Bear, however, challenges Fant's interpretation and argues that the imperial *gens* names found in the *caesurae* attestations serve as evidence that these individuals were freedmen or imperial freedmen⁶⁵. A. M. Hirt notes that in the imperial stone quarries of Teos, Chios, and Luna, status-indicating

⁵⁵ Cass. Dio LXXVII 4 1; Herod. IV. 6. 1-2; Varner 2004, 168-184.

⁵⁶ Fant 1989, 167 no. 191-192; Christol & Drew-Bear 1991, 143-146 no. 14-17.

⁵⁷ Fant 1989, 37; Christol & Drew-Bear 1991, 122; Albustanlioğlu 2006, 161-164.

⁵⁸ Fant 1989, 36 Table 5.

⁵⁹ Fant 1989, 33-35; Monge 2001, 194-195; Albustanlioğlu 2006, 150-155.

⁶⁰ *CIL* VII 14560 = Dubois 1908, 39 no. 68; Hirt 2010, 420 no. 788; 421, no. 794.

⁶¹ Hirt 2010, 311.

⁶² Bruzza 1870, 181 no. 153 = Dubois 1908, 147 no. 445 = Hirt 2010, 403 no. 469; Bruzza 1870, 181 no. 154 = Dubois 1908, 147 no. 446 = Hirt 2010, 403 no. 470; Bruzza 1870, 182 no. 168 = Dubois 1908, 148 no. 461 = Hirt 2010, 404 no. 480.

⁶³ Tullius Saturninus, documented as *caesura* in Docimium between 136 and 138 CE, is known to have belonged to *legio XXII Primigenia*, cf. *ILS* 8716 a-b.

⁶⁴ Fant 1989, 34, Table 4.

⁶⁵ Drew-Bear 1994, 805.

titles such as *Aug(usti)* or *Caes(aris)* follow the names of the officials, whereas no such examples are attested at Docimium. He argues that, as in the case of the two *caesurae* whose titles (*centuriones*) are explicitly recorded, the titles of other officials should likewise have been indicated if such titles indeed existed⁶⁶. Hirt maintains that the *caesura* function at Bacakale was assigned to private individuals and that inscriptions outside the quarries allegedly associated with them do not provide sufficient evidence⁶⁷. However, as evidenced by the example from Africano that he himself cites above, these titles ceased to be used after a certain period. For this reason, drawing conclusions solely from the presence or absence of such titles may be unreliable.

Fant suggests that Aurelius Theophilus, whose name appears in inscription no. 2 above, or his father, may have been a freedman⁶⁸. At Docimium, ten inscriptions bearing the name of Aurelius Theophilus have been identified, and they are dated between 198 and 212 CE⁶⁹. A Latin inscription from Caesarea in Iudaea also mentions another Aurelius Theophilus, who appears to have lived around the same period⁷⁰. This inscription was first published in 1984 and later re-examined by W. Eck in 1996. In the text, Valerius Calpurnianus is honoured by Aurelius Theophilus, who is described as a *decurio* of the colony of Caesarea and an *eques Romanus*⁷¹. Whether this individual is identical with the Aurelius Theophilus attested at Docimium remains uncertain.

Evaluation

In the appendix of her study, Hirt compiled 1,283 previously published inscriptions from marble quarries under Roman administration. More than four hundred of these inscriptions originate from the Docimium quarries⁷². The survival of such a large number of inscriptions from the quarries must be related to problems either in production or with the stone itself. In some years, it appears that larger quantities of stone were stockpiled in the quarries compared to others, or that stones from certain years were more fortunate in surviving to the present. The inscriptions from the Docimium marble quarries are dated to the period between 92 and 236 CE. A significantly higher number of inscriptions have been recorded for 148 and 159 CE than for other years. This increase may point to careless production, to the fastidiousness of the *probator*⁷³ responsible for receiving the stones, or simply to surplus production. The first of the two inscriptions examined in this study also belongs to 148 CE, a year from which a large number of examples have survived. Twenty other inscriptions from the same year have previously been published; these were discovered at Afyon, Synnada, Iscehisar, and Bacakale. The second inscription, dated to 205 CE, is one of four identified at Bacakale from

⁶⁶ Hirt 2010, 295.

⁶⁷ Hirt 2010, 320.

⁶⁸ Fant 1989, 34.

⁶⁹ Fant 1989, 163 no. 180, 166 no. 187, 166-167 no. 189-192, 169 no. 196-197, 170 no. 200; Christol & Drew-Bear 1991, 133 no. 8, 141-149 no. 13-19.

⁷⁰ Fant 1989, 167 no. 192 = Christol & Drew-Bear 1991, 143-144 no.14.

⁷¹ Eck 1996, 130-131; Eck 1999, 74.

⁷² Hirt 2010, 370-445.

⁷³ Fant 1989, 23, 30; Albustanlıoğlu 2006, 107; Hirt 2010, 300.

that year. Th. Drew-Bear and W. Eck postulated a dual system of control in the quarries to account for the stacked inscriptions. According to them, the blocks were divided into those that were approved and those that were not, with the unapproved ones being prohibited from use⁷⁴. Fant, however, rejects the idea of such a system in which unapproved blocks would never be reused. In his view, these stones were simply waiting to be recut for a context in which they would be suitable; otherwise, it would make little sense for them to be stored in the quarry, occupying space⁷⁵. Fant interprets years with a high number of rejected stones as indicative of a period when quarry productivity had declined, the return on investment was low, and the contractor was unable to fulfill the obligations stipulated in the contract⁷⁶. Yet a considerable portion of the stacked blocks can be dated to the second century CE, a period when demand must have been particularly high. Therefore, the notion that they were left in the quarry because of low profitability is not plausible. It is, however, possible that some of these surplus blocks –those deemed insufficiently attractive– were set aside and later forgotten while awaiting an opportunity to be used.

In conclusion, the marble blocks bearing more than a thousand inscriptions were never recalled to use –neither during prosperous economic periods nor in later times when ancient inscriptions and architectural elements were reused in city walls for defensive purposes. It is possible that some natural event prior to the Middle Ages led to the abandonment of the quarries at Docimium. Whatever caused the quarries to fall into disuse, leaving the inscribed blocks undisturbed for centuries, has today enabled us to gain valuable insight into state production methods and the marble trade during the Roman Period. On the other hand, the Docimium marble quarries, which hold great significance for the economic history of antiquity, have been in active operation since the 1980s. This situation poses a serious threat to the security and proper documentation of the archaeological evidence. It is also possible that, in addition to the four previously published inscriptions and the two presented in this study, other stones have been removed and relocated to different places. One may only hope that no further stones will be displaced.

⁷⁴ Drew-Bear & Eck 1976, 315.

⁷⁵ Fant 1989, 23.

⁷⁶ Fant 1989, 30.

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