

ADDITIONS TO PALMYRENE ARAMAIC TEXTS

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The publication of a catalogue accompanying a 2002 exhibit held in Turin, at Palazzo Bricherasio, *Zenobia: il sogno di una Regina d'Oriente*, makes available photographs of four Palmyrene inscriptions not contained in *Palmyrene Aramaic Texts*¹. The inscribed pieces on display offer a good specimen of the different text-types found in the Palmyrene corpus: funerary epitaphs, *tesserae*, dedicatory inscriptions to gods on altars, reliefs, and lamps, and the foundation inscription of a tomb. During a visit to this exhibit, I had a chance to collate all the inscriptions on display, including twenty-two texts already included in PAT, and to examine for the first time the following ones²:

(1) *Zenobia* '02, 25, fig. 7, on socle of a male statue (Damascus, *Archaeological Museum*);

¹ D.R. Hillers - E. Cussini, *Palmyrene Aramaic Texts*, Publications of the Comprehensive Aramaic Lexicon Project III, Baltimore - London, The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996, henceforth PAT. The exhibit was previously in Paris, at the Centre Culturel de Panthéon: *Moi, Zénobie, reine de Palmyre*, catalogue J. Charles-Gaffiot - H. Lavagne - F.-M. Hofman (eds.), *Moi Zénobie, reine de Palmyre*, Centre Culturel de Panthéon, Paris 2001 (so far unavailable to me). The Italian catalogue: A.A.V.V., *Zenobia: il sogno di una Regina d'Oriente*, Milano 2002, henceforth *Zenobia* '02, contains no cross-references to PAT, nor museum inventory numbers or other bibliographic references to the inscriptions.

² On the Turin exhibit, with a review of the Italian catalogue, see E. Cussini, *Materia giudaica* VII/1, 2002, 174-176. Inscriptions already found in PAT are:

Zenobia '02, 22, fig. 5 = PAT 0773 (Rome, *Museo Nazionale d'Arte Orientale*);
Zenobia '02, 38, fig. 33 = PAT 0011 (Vatican City, *Musei Vaticani*);
Zenobia '02, 40, fig. 36 = PAT 0948 (Vatican City, *Musei Vaticani*);
Zenobia '02, 71, fig. 81 = PAT 2138 (Palmyra, *Palmyra Museum*);
Zenobia '02, 74, fig. 86 = PAT 1828 (Palmyra, *Palmyra Museum*);
Zenobia '02, 84, fig. 95 = PAT 1847 (Palmyra, *Palmyra Museum*);
Zenobia '02, 86, fig. 99 = PAT 1851 (Palmyra, *Palmyra Museum*);
Zenobia '02, 90, fig. 103 = PAT 1859 (Palmyra, *Palmyra Museum*);
Zenobia '02, 91, fig. 104 = PAT 0555 (Palmyra, *Palmyra Museum*);
Zenobia '02, 92, fig. 105 = PAT 1802 (Damascus, *Archaeological Museum*);
Zenobia '02, 95, fig. 109 = PAT 1593 (Palmyra, *Palmyra Museum*);
Zenobia '02, 95, fig. 110 = PAT 2001 (Palmyra, *Palmyra Museum*);
Zenobia '02, 102, fig. 122 = PAT 1670 (Damascus, *Archaeological Museum*);
Zenobia '02, 103, fig. 123 = PAT 0988 (Damascus, *Archaeological Museum*);
Zenobia '02, 109, fig. 131 = PAT 1328 (Rome, *Museo della Civiltà Romana*, copy);
Zenobia '02, 125, fig. 152 = PAT 0008 (Damascus, *Archaeological Museum*);
Zenobia '02, 129, fig. 154 = PAT 2758 (Damascus, *Archaeological Museum*);
Zenobia '02, 131, fig. 156 = PAT 0997 (Palmyra, *Palmyra Museum*);
Zenobia '02, 131, fig. 157 = PAT 1451 (Palmyra, *Palmyra Museum*);
Zenobia '02, 139, fig. 169 = PAT 0248 (Rome, *Musei Capitolini*);
Zenobia '02, 140, fig. 171 = PAT 0249 (Rome, *Musei Capitolini*);
Zenobia '02, 141, fig. 172 = PAT 0247 (Rome, *Musei Capitolini*).

For bibliographic data regarding these inscriptions and museum inventory numbers, see PAT.

- (2) *Zenobia* '02, 72, fig. 82, on a *terracotta* tessera (Paris, private collection);
 (3) *Zenobia* '02, 82, fig. 93, on male funerary bust (Palmyra, *Palmyra Museum*);
 (4) *Zenobia* '02, 85, fig. 97, on female funerary bust (Palmyra, *Palmyra Museum*).

(1) The first inscription is carved on the socle of a limestone headless statue depicting a man in Greek costume, sitting on an elaborate stool. The two-line undated text reads³:

ḥbl ʿgylw br zbdbwl
 ʾbwhwn

“Alas! Ogailu, son of Zabdibol, their father”.

As the exclamation *ḥbl* indicates, this is a funerary text. In this case, differently from the more common relief-busts used to seal the funerary niches, the funerary epitaph accompanies a statue in the round depicting the deceased. As is the case with the relief-busts, this statue was placed in a tomb. According to the inscription, it was erected by the descendants of this man, very likely a well-to-do Palmyrene, judging from the statue itself, and details such as the richly carved piece of furniture with animal-head finials⁴. On stylistic grounds, Colledge suggested to date the statue around AD 200. Unfortunately the very common names found in the inscription, Ogailu and the patronym Zabdibol, as well as the absence of other generations of this family, make it difficult to associate this one to other texts in the Palmyrene corpus⁵. Very tentatively, we may connect this inscription to a damaged text of AD 214 (PAT 1441) carved on an altar, now broken in more fragments. The altar was offered by a man called Ogailu, son of Zabdibol⁶. In another case, the sequence Ogailu son of Zabdibol is found in an undated funerary

³ *Zenobia* '02, 25 fig. 7. Damascus, *Archaeological Museum*, C.4129. First mentioned in S. Abdul-Hak - A. Abdul-Hak, *Catalogue illustré du Département des antiquités greco-romaines au Musée de Damas*, Publications de la Direction générale des antiquités de Syrie, Damascus 1951, 80, no. 8, pl. XXXIX.I (inscription cannot be read from photograph): “Statue d’homme palmyrénien (N° 9009) assis sur un siège dont les montants sont sculptés de deux lions. Il est vêtu d’un manteau dont il retient un pan dans la main gauche et porte un rameau dans la main droite. Sa tête est sectionnée au niveau des épaules. Sur la plinthe est gravée une inscription palmyrénienne”. A reading of the inscription is not offered. For a discussion of this statue see M.A.R. Colledge, *The Art of Palmyra*, London 1976, 91, pl. 125, mentioning as well the name of the man “Ogeilû”. J.K. Stark, *Personal Names in Palmyrene Inscriptions*, Oxford 1971, does not record this text. Finally, K. Tanabe, *Sculptures of Palmyra, I*, *Memoirs of the Ancient Orient Museum*, vol. I, Tokio 1986, 27, lists this one among honorific statues, and gives a translation of the inscription: “Statue of ‘GYLW, son of ZBDBWL”. With photograph, pl. 171.

⁴ On this piece of furniture, less commonly found than folding stools, or other specimens with turned legs, see Colledge, *The Art of Palmyra*, 91, 157.

⁵ For the numerous attestations of these two names in Palmyrene onomastics, see Stark, *Personal Names*, respectively 43-44, and 16-17.

⁶ In this case, after Zabdibol, there followed the name of Ogailu’s grandfather, now lost. Although this last inscription would agree chronologically with the dating proposed by Colledge, we cannot conclude that the two Ogailu were one and the same person.

inscription on a relief-bust (PAT 1888)⁷. The inscription is dated on prosopography around or after AD 170⁸. As in the previous case, we can only hypothetically connect the two texts. In fact, the presence of the same two-name sequence alone, without additional elements, cannot lead us to the conclusion that these two, or three *Ogailu son of Zabdibol* were the same person.

(2) The second inscription is on a *terracotta* tessera, today in Paris, in private collection. Out of the inscriptions examined, this is the most damaged and less readable one, on the basis of the available photograph. Both faces are extremely abraded: Face A is so damaged that it is difficult to formulate a convincing reading. One can only see remains of two lines where traces of some letters are visible⁹. On Face 2, published upside-down, we may read the personal name Taimarṣu, below a star with eight rays. A tentative reading of the tessera is the following:

Face A	ʾgn bl (?)	Face B: [Image of a star with eight rays] br (?)
	[PN]	tymrṣw

“Symposium of Bel [PN] son of Taimarṣu”.

(3) The third inscription is carved to the side of a funerary relief-bust depicting a priest identified as such by the typical *modius*-hat. In this case the man wears a *modius*-hat crowned by laurel, and holds an incense cup and a small glass vase in his hands. The inscription is rubricated and it is carved within lightly incised lines¹⁰:

tymrṣw
br bryky
ʾmrṣʾ
ḥbl

“Taimarṣu son of Barikay (son of) Amrisha. Alas!”.

The names of three members of three different generations of this family are preserved. Using these data we may try to connect it to other inscriptions mentioning the

⁷ The relief, from the hypogeum of Bolḥa, still *in situ*, depicts a man accompanied by the inscription “Alas! Ogailu, son of Zabdibol, who is called Corbula, son of Nabushuri”. In this case, the inscription contains further denotative elements: presence of a nickname, grandfather’s name. For other inscription from the same tomb, founded in AD 89, see PAT 1867-1896.

⁸ See the discussion in A. Sadurska - A. Bounni, *Les sculptures funéraires de Palmyre*, Rome 1994, 85, fig. 19. An additional plate may be found in Tanabe, *Sculptures of Palmyra*, pl. 213.

⁹ According to the catalogue, *Zenobia* ’02, 72, fig. 82, this face would contain the divine name Bel, and an image, representing six planets.

¹⁰ *Zenobia* ’02, 82, fig. 93; published upside down in the catalogue. Palmyra, *Palmyra Museum*. No indication of museum inventory number is given.

same name-sequence. For example, a honorific bilingual inscription on column of AD 139 mentions a Barikay son of Amrisha, son of Yarhibola¹¹. The Greek-Aramaic inscription relates that the Senate and people of Palmyra erected a statue in his honor, and in honor of his son Mokimu (PAT 0277). We may hypothesize that this last Barikay was Taimarṣu's father, honored together with another son of his, called Mokimu. A Taimarṣu son of Barikay is the dedicator of an altar offered in AD 219 to the so-called "Anonymous God" indicating an aspect of the god Baalshamin (PAT 1902). Finally, the sequence Taimarṣu son of Barikay appears in two undated funerary epitaphs: PAT 0895¹², and PAT 2699, the last one originating from a tomb in the S-E necropolis known as hypogeum no. 9, or hypogeum of the family of Barikay¹³. As in previous cases, we cannot ascertain whether the individuals mentioned were related or not.

(4) The last text is another funerary epitaph accompanying the relief-bust of a young woman¹⁴:

ḥbl ʿtm
wmlkw bny
[š]lmlt b[r]
bryky

"Alas! Atem and Maliku, children of [Sh]alamallat, so[n] of Barikay".

This relief was originally a double-portrait, as indicated by the *dorsalium* behind the woman's shoulders, and her brother's portrait was, in my opinion, in the missing portion. In fact, contrary to the interpretation offered by the catalogue, I believe that the small child sitting on a console to her right with grapes in his hand, is a decorative figure, and not the portrait of Maliku¹⁵. The female portrait is characterized by the so-called "melon-hairstyle," or "Faustina hairstyle"¹⁶. The absence of veil on the woman's head

¹¹ The name Amrisha, composed with the divine name Shamash, is attested in three more instances in the Palmyrene corpus, see PAT 0321, an inscription on altar offered by Rabbel son of Amrisha, member of the Bani Mattabol tribe; in PAT 0797, the funerary bust of a woman, Amata, granddaughter of Amrisha; and in PAT 1790, a foundation inscription of a tomb of AD 101, built by two cousins, Yadibel and Wahaballat, grandchildren of Yadibel, son of Amrisha: in this case too, they are said to belong to the Bani Mattabol tribe. In case we connect our Taimarṣu son of Barikay son of Amrisha to the same Amrisha mentioned in PAT 0321 and PAT 1790, we may conclude that he belonged to the same tribal group.

¹² Today in Istanbul, removed from its unknown original setting around the beginning of 1900.

¹³ On this text and on the genealogical tree reconstructed on the basis of inscriptions from this tomb, see Sadurska - Bounni, *Les sculptures funéraires de Palmyre*, Cat. 145, and 102ff.

¹⁴ *Zenobia* '02, 85, fig. 97; Palmyra, *Palmyra Museum*, with no indication of inventory number.

¹⁵ See *Zenobia* '02, 85.

¹⁶ On this hairstyle, apparently modeled upon that of the empress Faustina the Elder, wife of Antoninus Pius, see Colledge *The Art of Palmyra*, 143. On unveiled women see E. Cussini, *Palmyrene Eunuchs? Two Cases of Mistaken Identity*, in E. Rova (ed.), *Patavina orientalia selecta*, Padova 2000, 279-290.

should not be considered unusual at all, as one reads in the catalogue, but is typical of this type of hairstyle¹⁷. Three generations are recorded in this inscription: Maliku, one of the most attested names at Palmyra, while Atem, hypocoristic form containing the divine name Athe, is found in a couple of cases only¹⁸. No additional references to these two individuals are found in other inscriptions, nor mentions of their father, Shalamallat son of Barikay¹⁹. The name of their grandfather is the already seen Barikay, but since his patronym is not given, we cannot connect this instance to any of the previously discussed one.

Finally, a funerary inscription accompanying a female relief-bust deserves a brief discussion. This is not an addition to PAT, since this text appears there as PAT 0948, listed according to its CIS number, CIS 4587²⁰. Now, it makes more sense to group the whole Zeri collection together, and it seems preferable to re-label the inscription as PAT 0013bis. The relief belonged to the Federico Zeri Collection, and was only recently bequeathed with the rest of the Palmyrene collection (PAT 0011-0015, and other uninscribed fragments) to the *Musei Vaticani*, where they are on display as of the year 2000²¹. Differently from the rest of the collection, this text, a standard funerary epitaph, was already known thanks to CIS, while four more were published for the first time by Francesco Vattioni in 1986. A sixth one, not in Vattioni's edition, presenting only very faint traces of inscription was added to PAT as a result of our collation work (PAT 0015)²².

¹⁷ *Ibid.*: "Questa donna ... è pettinata con i capelli raccolti in una sorta di chignon e, contrariamente alle usanze, con il velo che le ricade sulle spalle e le lascia completamente scoperti il viso e le orecchie".

¹⁸ See, respectively, Stark, *Personal Names*, 32-34, and 46.

¹⁹ Although the name Shalamallat is well documented, cf. Stark, *Personal Names*, 51, our Shalamallat son of Barikay is not found elsewhere.

²⁰ CIS II, T. III 1926, 1947 (Tab.: Fasc. I, 1951; Fasc. II, 1954). The order of texts as found in PAT is alphabetic, by sigla, thus inscriptions in Vattioni's AION edition appear before inscriptions published in the much earlier CIS edition.

²¹ *Zenobia* '02, 40, fig. 36. Vatican City, *Musei Vaticani*, Room VII, *Museo Gregoriano Egizio*.

²² F. Vattioni, *Le iscrizioni sui rilievi palmireni della Collezione Zeri*, AION, Sezione di Archeologia e Storia Antica 8, 1986, 245-248. For a discussion of the inscribed and uninscribed reliefs from the Zeri collection, see P. Callieri, *Rilievi funerari palmireni nella Collezione Zeri*, AION, Sezione di Archeologia e Storia Antica 8, 1986, 223-244. In 1995, during my visit to Mentana where the collection was then housed in Federico Zeri's residence, the owner graciously allowed me to examine the reliefs all grouped together and embedded on the walls in a wing of the villa. As far as the sixth inscription, PAT 0015, accompanying a female bust, only three letters can be read, most likely part of a personal name.