

Theology on the Web.org.uk

Making Biblical Scholarship Accessible

This document was supplied for free educational purposes. Unless it is in the public domain, it may not be sold for profit or hosted on a webserver without the permission of the copyright holder.

If you find it of help to you and would like to support the ministry of Theology on the Web, please consider using the links below:



Buy me a coffee

<https://www.buymeacoffee.com/theology>



PATREON

<https://patreon.com/theologyontheweb>

[PayPal](#)

<https://paypal.me/robbradshaw>

A table of contents for *The Expositor* can be found here:

https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles_expositor-series-1.php

EARLY CHRISTIAN MONUMENTS IN PHRYGIA :

A STUDY IN THE EARLY HISTORY OF THE CHURCH.

II.

THE scope of this study is confined to the external aspect of the early Christian Church in Phrygia, and its method is purely archæological. I discuss the monuments which remain still in the country, and attempt to determine from them, and from them alone, the state of the Phrygian Church before the time of Constantine. I assume nothing from the analogy of better known phases of Church history, and I do not attempt to combine in one picture the isolated features which appear in the various documents. It may however be not without value to discuss the subject from unintended and therefore unprejudiced evidence, and to show how many features of Church discipline and custom can be traced in the unpretending documents which alone are accessible to us. The public demeanour of the Christians, their relation to their neighbours and to the Government, their organization, the appearance they presented to their neighbours—such are the points on which I hope to throw some light. To treat the subject fully, and to describe what their ancient literature, history, and law tell us of the relations between the Christians, on the one hand, and the Government or their neighbours, on the other hand, is of course too vast a subject. My aim is more humble: to examine certain monuments of Phrygia, and to show that the very evidence which proves them to be Christian throws light on the relations which existed between the Christian and non-Christian sections of the

community. Yet if we would recognise the influence of the new religion on contemporary society, it is necessary to put in a few words on the character of its opposition to the imperial institutions. The Roman empire united in one great country a vast complex of countries, differing in race, language, religion, and habits. It bound them together by many ties of firm, orderly government, and finally of equal citizenship; and it guaranteed this union by a common religion, *viz.* the worship of the majesty of Rome as embodied in the emperor. The older religions had never sought converts. The worshippers of the gods of Greece, Rome, and the ancient world generally rather wished to exclude their neighbours, and to retain for a small circle of devotees the benefits which were given by the god to his own people. The worship of Rome and the emperor did not stand on the same platform with these older religions; it stood above them, and embraced the whole civilized world. It claimed like Christianity to be the religion of mankind, or at least of civilized man. Thus the two religions were opposed to each other: the one claimed to be the supreme religion, the other claimed to be the sole religion. During the first three centuries of our era, a regular hierarchy was gradually consolidated by the organizing genius of Rome. The "supreme religion" was maintained by a high priest in each province; and this high priest finally came to exercise many rights over the priests of all other religions practised in the province, as well as over the subordinate ministers of the "supreme religion." Something like a universal Church was thus established-- a universal religion enforced and maintained by the State. One of the most remarkable sides of the history of Rome is the growth of ideas which finally found their full realization and completion in the Christian empire. Universal citizenship, universal equality, universal religion, a universal Church, all were ideas which the empire was slowly work-

ing out, but which it could not fully realize till it merged itself in Christianity.

This partial identity of aim, which these two religions, and no others, by diverse means sought to attain, pitted them against each other as competitors in a struggle which could end only in the destruction of one of them. Even the strange similarity in the circumstances and time of their origin only intensified the hostility. The poets of the early empire record and express the feeling in Rome (30-20 B.C.) that only a god appearing in human form on the earth could put an end to war, introduce a new period in the world's history, restore morality and religion, and save the Roman State. The moral strength of the empire lay in this idea, that the god (Apollo or Mercury the poets call him) had appeared as a man to found a new empire, and inaugurate a reign of peace, order, and religion in the world.

When the end came, the victorious religion completed the forms of that universal Church which its defeated competitor had tried to establish. The Pontifices Maximi continued in an unbroken series. The forms of Church government, sketched out by the organizing genius of Rome, were completed by the Christian Church. One of the most striking scenes in early English history, as told by Green, is the struggle between this organized Roman Church and the loose tribal Celtic Church.

In the long struggle of these two religions there are various phases, and periods of bitter conflict alternate with comparative peace. The Christians were at first confused with the Jews, and treated according as the Jews were treated. Then came a long period during which the Jews were tolerated, or even favoured, but the Christians were proscribed, and either openly persecuted or treated with bare toleration so long as they made no open profession. Their close union, which was indeed proscribed by

their religion, was also necessary for mutual defence and help. To the Christians themselves the corporation of Christians in each city was the Church of the city, but to the outer world the corporation presented a different appearance and assumed a different name. The distinction of external appearance and internal reality was forced on the early Christians by the necessity of self-preservation. According to ancient law, any body of persons might be recognised by the law as having legal standing and rights, if it was organized for some purpose which the law permitted. There is some evidence to show that communities of Christians sometimes obtained legal recognition under the form of burial societies. This legal footing, limited and uncertain as it was, was a great step in advance, and constituted a guarantee of rights for the individual members. Each single Christian had then the strength of the entire Society to which he belonged; and a Society whose members are closely united and harmonious in their efforts soon acquires great power. There is much probability that the Christians, who, as has been already stated, were so influential in Phrygia, were organized in some such way.

One of the chief points of interest in investigating the remains of Phrygian Christianity is to discover any evidence of the footing on which Christians gained recognition or toleration by the State. The emperors were especially strict in prohibiting the formation of any society which might assume a political character or exercise any political influence; and in provinces which were governed directly by the emperor, the recognition of a society of Christians cannot be expected down to a very late period. But Phrygia was part of the province of Asia, which was under the rule of the senate, not of the emperor; and the evidence shows that this province was governed far more laxly, and was permitted a far higher degree of municipal freedom, than any of the imperial provinces. There is

abundant evidence that societies in the form of trade-guilds, united of course in the worship of a god, as all ancient societies were invariably united, were permitted in this province; and therefore a society of Christians, recognised by the law at a comparatively early time, is not out of keeping with other facts.

So far as the documents described in the former paper are concerned, they tend to establish the probability that the Christians in the district where they are found were not united in any such society. The profession of religion is quite openly made, and persons who openly call themselves "Christians" in public documents do not need to organize themselves in a society bearing a different name, and ostensibly seeking a non-religious object. The whole character of these documents tends to show, just as all other considerations do, that the valley of the Tembrogius was an aggregate of small villages and farms, where there was little community of life, little social organization, and great individual liberty. As to the great cities of northern Phrygia, there is, as was stated above, no documentary evidence about the state of the Christians in them. But in central and southern Phrygia, to which I now pass, the case is different. Here the documents are numerous. They belong to rich and highly civilized cities, and some of them point to an organization under some form or other of the Christian community.

I shall therefore quote in this place some of the documents which point most clearly to the existence of an organization in a form which veiled the religious character of the Christian community under some social character, and which therefore must have been a publicly known form adopted as a protection, openly professed by the Christians, and recognised by the city in which they lived. History shows other cases in which persecuted religions have maintained and protected themselves under some such

guise, and thus establishes the antecedent probability of such a method being followed by the Phrygian Christians.

13. An epitaph from Acmonia, as yet unpublished, finds an appropriate place in this connexion: it is engraved on three sides of a tombstone which has the form of an altar. Tombstones of this shape are exceedingly common in Phrygia, and it is the form which almost all Christian monuments take.

- A "Aurelius Aristetas, son of Apollonius, bought an empty piece of ground from Marcus Mathus,
 B promising to the Neighbourhood of the First-Gate-People [certain moneys] on condition that every year they cause to bloom with roses (the grave of) my wife Aurelia,
 C [And if they neglect] to make the roses bloom every year, they shall have to reckon with the justice of God."

On the lower part of side A another inscription was added in letters of different shape and smaller size at a later time by the children of Aristetas.

"His children Alexander and Callistratus constructed (the grave) to their mother and father in remembrance."

On side B a crown, now defaced so that its exact form is unrecognisable, was carved in relief; and on side C some symbols, also defaced, were sculptured. These symbols might perhaps have proved the religion of the deceased, but in the actual state of the stone it is marked as Christian only by the concluding phrase, "he shall have to reckon with the justice of God." I have elsewhere proved¹ that this phrase is a mark of the Christian religion. The proof lies in the facts, (1) that many inscriptions which end with that phrase are marked as Christian by peculiarities of language, or by names or symbols in the body of the inscription; (2) that none which contain that phrase have anything to stamp them as pagan; (3) that variations of the same fundamental phrase occur which are obviously

¹ "Cities and Bishopricks of Phrygia," Part I. § xiv.

Christian, *e.g.* "he shall have to reckon with Christ," or "with the living God." Such a proof results from the examination of the actual documents, and I state here in a few words the general facts which every reader can verify by reading over the documents. The dated examples of this class of epitaphs belong to the years 249, 250, 256, 260, 261, 262, A.D.,¹ which gives approximately the period of the inscription which we are discussing. Criteria of style would also be sufficient to prove that it cannot be very late, while the *prænomen* Aurelius marks it as not earlier than 210-20 A.D.

The formula with which this inscription ends is one of the criteria that divide the second group of Phrygian Christian documents from the class which has already been discussed. Accordingly the doubt which I previously expressed (see No. 11) as to the position of Acmonia is now resolved: Acmonia belongs to the central and southern group, not to the north-western. The inscription which determines the question has lain unnoticed among my material since 1883, and was recalled to my memory by a renewed examination of the stone in June, 1888. It records a bequest to the "Neighbourhood" or "Society of Neighbours of the First-Gate-People." The persons who lived near one of the gates of Acmonia, which was called by the name "First Gate," formed a society, to which bequests could be left by a legal document, and which therefore must have been legally recognised. To appreciate the value of the evidence it is necessary to remember that this document is not merely what we should call an epitaph. It is in the strictest sense a legal document, recording a bequest, engraved on the least perishable material, and

¹ The date 353 A.D. (ΤΑΣ) occurs in a seventh example, Lebas-Wadd. 735. I have seen the inscription; the letters in question are now partly mutilated, but the remains seemed to me to show that Lebas had miscopied the first symbol, and that it was T, giving the date 253 A.D.

placed before the eyes of the world, in order to secure permanence and publicity, as well as to gain the protection of the sanctity attaching to a grave. Such was the method always adopted in Greek cities to protect important documents. They were engraved on stone or bronze, and exposed prominently in some place of a sacred character. The laws of the city, the treaties which it made with its allies or its enemies, the charters that confirmed its rights, all were exposed as publicly as possible. Had paper been used as much as it is in modern times, many of the most precious historical documents that remain to us would have perished many centuries ago. The character of such epitaphs as strictly legal documents is shown by the fact that they are frequently executed in duplicate: one copy being preserved in the archives of the city, and the other placed over the grave.

Our Acmonian inscription then is the last will and testament of Aristetas. It stood over the grave of him and his wife, beside one of the roads leading out of the city, calling to the memory of every passer by the conditions of the bequest, and invoking public opinion and the justice of God to punish the neglect of the conditions. So long as the stone stood there and the roses bloomed, all could see that the "Society of Neighbours" fulfilled their duty.

Aristetas leaves a bequest to a society: this society must have been recognised by the law, for a bequest to an illegal society would be illegal. Bequests to the Church were made legal by Constantine A.D. 321: before that time the law apparently would not recognise as legal a bequest to the Church. Yet we can hardly believe that Aristetas bequeathed his property to any except Christians, and we must recognise in this "Society of the Neighbours" a Christian community associated in such a form as the law permitted. That form was a burial society. Besides the general analogy of the evidence mentioned above, the cir-

cumstances of this special case point to this conclusion : the care and maintenance of the tomb is committed to the charge of the society to which the money is bequeathed.

The idea that a Christian would leave a bequest to a pagan society may be dismissed as impossible. All ancient societies and unions met under the guarantee of religion, and their members were united in the worship of some god. A pagan burial society is inconceivable except in the form of an association to worship a deity like Proserpine or Cybele or Venus-Libitina. A Christian could not even belong to such a society, nor can he be thought to have bequeathed money to it.

That the Christians of Acmonia should live in a particular quarter, near to and probably outside of one of the gates of the city, is quite natural. Acmonia is not one of the cities where Christian influence was particularly strong, and the quarter of "First-Gate" was therefore, in all probability, a poor and unfashionable part of the city. The present situation of the stone shows that it probably once stood by the road that led out of the western gate of Acmonia. By this gate all the roads which go west and south and north must, owing to the peculiar situation of the city, necessarily issue. The quarter near it must therefore have been a bustling and noisy one, thronged with trade, and the home of a poor working class. We are reminded of the Jewish quarter in ancient Rome, outside of the busy Capuan Gate, the despised haunt of beggars.

14. A remarkable inscription of Apameia is published, Lebas-Waddington 1,703 : I have never seen it, though I have visited Apameia four times.

"Aurelius Auxanondas made the sepulchre for myself and for my brother Dositiches as a gift along with his wife : and if any other shall bury, he shall have to reckon with God. Farewell, ye excellent Neotheroi beloved of God."

In addition to the phrase, "he shall have to reckon with

God," this epitaph is marked as Christian by the expression "beloved of God" (*φιλόθεοι*). The Latin term corresponding, *deo carus*, is used by Tertullian to designate the members of the Church.

The word *Neotheroi* (*Νεόθηροι*) is unique, and its meaning is a riddle. It may be taken as the circle of friends associated in a society with the deceased, *i.e.* as the Christian community of Apameia, but its meaning and derivation can only be guessed at. Whatever be the sense, I think that it must be taken as a name assumed by the society of Apameian Christians. These two examples show what kind of novel or colourless names were given in public to the Churches in the cities of southern Phrygia during the third century. The date of this inscription is probably 250-300 A.D. The salutation on the tombstone, which is given to all the world in pagan epitaphs and on Christian tombstones earlier than about 250, is here and in some other examples restricted to the members of the Christian community. An exclusive and narrower tone, which became stereotyped in the fourth century, was beginning in the latter part of the third century. I add two other examples of the same restricted salutation.

15. "*Aurelius Asclepiades made this resting-place: Peace to all the Brotherhood: and whosoever [shall disturb the tomb, etc.].*"

16. "*Aurelius Dionysius, a presbyter, during his lifetime constructed the resting-place: Peace to all the Brothers.*"

The tone of exclusiveness is still more strongly shown in these two examples, which by the similar style of lettering and by the similar shape and size of the stones on which they are engraved, are marked as contemporaneous. Their date is determined as later than the triumph of Christianity by the open use of the term "presbyter," and yet as not far removed from the third century by the preservation of the same general style. They may safely be dated 320-50 A.D. The salutation "Peace" is character-

istic of the region where these two texts were found, *viz.* the Phrygian Pentapolis.¹ I add another example, which is of the greatest importance and interest, but which depends on the not quite satisfactory copy of Hamilton. Hamilton, in almost every respect a model traveller, had not sufficient scholarship to decipher accurately a difficult text, as this evidently must be. The faculty of divining the proper words and reading the text of an almost obliterated inscription or manuscript is the most difficult test that scholarship can be put to, and Hamilton, who was by taste a geologist above all things, and who took note of inscriptions merely from that love of all new truth which is natural to the unperverted scholar, is not to be blamed for failing in the more difficult cases. I have hunted four times over the town where Hamilton found the inscription; my friend Mr. Hogarth has made a separate careful search; and even the offer of a large reward has failed to rediscover the stone, which has in all probability disappeared irrevocably. It is necessary to make a number of emendations in the copy of Hamilton, and the following translation is made from this conjecturally amended text.² The writer was not well educated in the Greek language, and cannot express himself in a perfectly constructed sentence.

17. This inscription is engraved on two sides of a gravestone.

¹ "Cities and Bishoprics of Phrygia," Part I., No. 40; Part II. § xxix. ff.

² As the transcript given in the *Corpus Inscriptionum Græcarum*, No. 9,266, is hopelessly unintelligible and inaccurate, I add the Greek text with the emendations which I think necessary:

A "Ειρήνη τοῖς παράγουσιν πᾶσιν ἀπὸ τοῦ Θεοῦ.

Αὐρήλιος Ἀλέξανδρος Μάρκου τοῦ Νεάνθου ἀνέστησεν εἵνεκα τῆς εἰστοργῆς καὶ τοῦ κάλλους [τὰ] γλυκυτότατά μου τέκνα Θεῷ τειμητὰ ἐν εἰρήνῃ τοῦ Θεοῦ· ἕνεκα τοῦτου ἔστησα τὴν στήλην χάριν μνήμης Εὐγενίῃ καὶ Μαρκέλλῃ καὶ Ἀλεξάνδρῳ καὶ Μακεδόνι καὶ Νόννῃ τοῖς γλυκυτότατοις τέκνοις τοῖς ὑπὸ ἓνα καιρὸν ὀνηθείσιν τὸ τῆς ζωῆς μέρος, ὅς ἂν δὲ προσκόψῃ ξένος τῷ τύμβῳ τούτῳ ἄπρα τέκνα ἐχῶσι.

B Εἰς τήνδε τὸ ἡρῶν κοινὸν τῶν ἀδελφῶν."

εἰστοργῆς for στοργῆς is a common error, due to the difficulty of the two initial consonants.

A "Peace to all who pass by from God.

Aurelius Alexander, son of Mark, and grandson of Neanthus, dedicated on account of affection and excellence my sweetest children, honoured by God in the peace of God: ¹ on account of this I dedicated the gravestone in remembrance to Eugenia and to Marcella and to Alexander and to Macedon and to Nonna, sweetest children, who on one single occasion gained the inheritance of life. And whatsoever alien shall injure this tomb, may they have children who die young.

B Up to this [gravestone] the sepulchre is common to the Brethren."

The name Nonna alone would mark this inscription as Christian, but the whole tone of the language is sharply distinguished from pagan epitaphs and marked unmistakably as Christian. The interpretation is full of difficulties. Cavedoni has already suggested that it commemorates five martyrs. This seems to me highly probable. The five children at one time gained (or were profited by, were blessed with) the lot of life. We have here the same thought as in No. 11: death is the beginning of life, the grave the entrance to a new life. The thought which we find on Phrygian gravestones already was universal in the Church. The day of martyrdom was celebrated as the "birthday," by which name was meant "not the day of their natural birth, but the day wherein by suffering death they were born again to a new life." The pains of the martyr's death are the "birth-pangs" in Ignatius (about A.D. 110) and in the Epistle of the Churches of Vienne and Lyons (about A.D. 177).

They were honoured by God in the peace of God: the phrase recalls No. 12, which also was carved on the grave of a distinguished member of the Christian community, and which also seemed to contain possibly a reference to martyrdom. The fact of five "children" dying together is itself so remarkable, as to show that some unusual interest

¹ The writer got mixed up at this point, and his sentence became confused and falsely constructed,—a common phenomenon in Phrygian Greek,—but he found a way out of the difficulty by repeating the verb ἀνέστησεν, which is used in the double sense "dedicated the tomb" or "dedicated the deceased."

attaches to the grave. Finally the reverse of the stone shows either that the grave was a part taken from the common cemetery of the Brethren (understanding "Up to this stone, and no farther, the sepulchre is common"), or else that the grave was made in a piece of land, great part of which was handed over to the Brethren for common use. Di Rossi,¹ has already quoted this inscription as affording probable evidence of the existence of common sepulchres, and therefore of burial societies, among the Christians of Phrygia. The opportunity of being buried near the grave of the martyrs was of course coveted by all the Brethren, and formal permission of burial beside it is given to all on the reverse side of the stone.

The fact that the five are buried openly, with an inscription to their memory, does not tell against the theory that they were martyrs. The Roman officials did not war against the dead. After judicial execution, the remains of martyrs were regularly allowed to be taken away and buried by their friends. Churches were in many cases built, at a later date, over their graves, and such churches were called *martyria* or *memoriæ*. The five children then are in all probability five martyrs. The word "children" is to be taken in a figurative sense, and Alexander is to be understood as bishop of the community to which they belonged. The curse at the end is perhaps in anticipation of wanton injury being inflicted by pagans, "aliens," on the monument.

Assuming that five martyrs are commemorated, the date is probably during the persecution of Decius or of Gallienus between 249 and 260. I should not be disposed to bring down this inscription so late as the persecution of Diocletian, A.D. 303. It has more the tone of the earlier period. The name Nonna gives evidence as to the character of the Phrygian Church in the first half of the third century. It is said to be an Egyptian word, signifying "old woman,"

¹ *Roma Sotteranea*, vol. i., p. 106.

and it was applied to those unmarried women or widows, who made profession of chastity, and who became almost a distinct order in the Church, even as early as the second century. It was also used in Asia Minor as a personal name, and several instances of this use (in addition to the mother of Basil, Gregory, and Macrina) are known during the fourth century at Laodicea the Burnt, on the borders of Lycaonia and Phrygia. I give one example.

18. "*Aurelia Augusta along with my sons Deios and Chrysanthus and Firmus and my daughter Nonna erected (the tomb) to my sweetest husband Mirus in remembrance.*"¹

The use of the personal name Nonna arose from the institution of Widows or Virgins, whose presence in Laodicea the Burnt is attested by the following inscription, and whose presence in the Church of the Pentapolis may equally be inferred from the name in No. 17.

19. "*Gaius Julius Patricius to my sweetest aunt Orestina, who lived in virginity, dedicated the tomb in remembrance.*"

It probably belongs to the earlier years of the fourth century. The institution of "Virgins" might of course be inferred in Phrygia from the analogy of the Church in general, and especially of the African Church or of the Smyrnæan Church (as mentioned by Ignatius), but it is not without consequence to have independent proof of the uniformity of Church practice in different countries. The analogies quoted below, Nos. 25-28, will show that the distinctively Christian name Nonna may quite safely be placed as early as 250 A.D.

20. An inscription which has been quoted by the Bishop of Durham as an example of the influence of Christianity during the third century belongs to Hierapolis. It has been published by M. Waddington, now French ambassador in London, whose work in the antiquities of Asia

Published with the name Deios instead of Mirus, C. I. G. 3,989 b.

Minor is of the very highest character, in his edition of Lebas' *Inscriptions of Asia Minor*, a book in which succeeding criticism has rarely found a fault. But unfortunately in this case there occurs one of these rare faults. According to his text the inscription mentions a bequest to the "Council of Poverty of the Purple-dyers," which would seem to indicate a regular organization for the relief of the poor; and such an organization justly seemed to M. Waddington to be due to the influence of Christianity. Being struck with some of the difficulties in this inscription, I went to Hierapolis in 1887 to look for it; and was much disappointed to find that the word "Poverty" depends on a misreading of two letters.

It remains however one of the most important monuments of its kind, if, as I hope to prove, it is Christian. It is engraved partly on the side and partly on the end of a large sarcophagus on the south side of the road which leads out of the western gate of Hierapolis. I give it according to my own copy, which differs in a number of points from that published in Lebas-Wadd. No. 1,687.

- A *"The sarcophagus and the surrounding spot along with the underlying foundation belong to Marcus Aurelius Diodorus Coriascus, surnamed Asbolus, in which he himself shall be buried, and his wife and his children; and while I am still living I shall bury whomsoever I please, and right of burial belongs to no other, and if (any one acts) otherwise, he shall pay as penalty to the most sacred Treasury 500 denarii and to the highly esteemed Gerousia 500 denarii. So far as possible provide for thy life, beloved wayfarer, knowing that the end of the life of you all is this.*
- B *And I bequeathed also to the Council of the Presidency of the Purple-dippers 3,000 denarii for the burning of Pappi on the wonted day from the interest thereof: and if any of them shall neglect to burn the whole, the residue shall belong to the Corporation of Thremmata. And there shall be buried also the wife [of . . .]."*¹

¹ This last clause is incomplete on the stone; it carries out the intention "while I am still living I shall bury whomsoever I please"; and no doubt it gave permission to bury the wife of a son. The future tense shows that the permission was given during her lifetime.

This document is in many respects similar to No. 13. It is really a will, placed in a most conspicuous position, not very far outside of the gate, and records regulations for the disposal of a property, *viz.* the grave, as well as a bequest in the first instance to the governing council of a society, and in the second instance to some other purpose. But it is full of difficulties in details, and these difficulties are not caused (as in many epitaphs) by inexperience of the language, for the writer is quite a sufficient master of Hellenistic Greek. He has chosen to veil his intention in phrases and terms which are unique and perhaps of ambiguous sense. The document reads at a cursory glance very like an ordinary epitaph-testament, and yet it is full of subtle differences.

The counsel given to the wayfarer is quite in the style of Greek epigrams; and it is varied from a well-known sentiment, which occurs in many different forms, to the same general effect, "Eat and drink, for the end is death"; but the variation makes it susceptible of a Christian sense. The terms in which the bequest is mentioned are assimilated to the customary pagan bequests for the performance of sepulchral rites annually, and yet the important word which defines the purpose is not Greek. The word *παπων*, read by M. Waddington, is confirmed by the careful and repeated examination of my friend Mr. Hogarth and myself. It cannot therefore be doubted, and yet it is not a known word. In an accurate, well-engraved, and well-expressed testament, such a word seems to have been chosen as a private term understood only by the initiated.

The expression "surnamed" is often used in Christian inscriptions,¹ and I know of no instance in which it is used in the same way in a non-Christian text. The word itself is good Greek, and occurs not rarely in a similar, though not exactly the same, way. Surnames were of

¹ Παύλου ἐπίκλην Δίου, et cetera.

course not peculiar to Christians; they were quite common among the pagan population. But it is certain that a new and mystical intention was given to the surname by Christians. One name was exoteric, the other was mystic and esoteric. Many examples of this occur in literature. Saint Gregory of Nyssa says about his sister that Macrina was the public name given to her among her acquaintances; but a private and secret name,¹ Thekla, also belonged to her, which was given her on account of a dream of her mother before her birth. In the life of the Lycaonian martyr Sozon, surnamed Tarasius (Sept. 7th), the saint replies to the question of the Roman governor, "If you ask the public name which was given me by my parents, I am called Tarasios; but if you ask my true name, I was called as a Christian Sozon in the holy baptism." This explanation can of course be accepted only as the interpretation placed upon the double name, "Tarasios surnamed Sozon," by the composer of the biography some centuries later; but it may be taken as a recollection which survived of a distinction between the exoteric and the esoteric name.

On account of the importance which the Christians attached to the "surname," they often adopted a more emphatic way of mentioning it than was used by the non-Christians: the latter regularly, and the former often, said, *Διόδωρος ὁ καὶ Ἄσβολος*, but the former alone said, *Διόδωρος ἐπίκλην Ἄσβολος*.

These considerations prove the probability that the inscription is Christian. Now its date may, on grounds of style and lettering, be confidently assigned as not much later than 200 A.D. Marcus Aurelius Diodorus then was born during the reign of the Emperor Marcus Aurelius (161-180 A.D.). He provided a tomb during his lifetime for himself and his family: apparently he was at the time not at a very

¹ *Macrina μὲν ἦν ἐν φανερῷ τὸ ὄνομα· ἕτερον δὲ κατὰ τὸ λεληθὸς αὐτῇ ἐπεκέκλητο.* Greg., *Vit. Macrin.*, p. 178 (Morell).

advanced age, for his wife and all his children are still living, and, according to the probable completion of the last line, the wife of one of his sons receives the right of burial in the family sepulchre. The clause was evidently added as an afterthought, and at a later time, in pursuance of the stipulation at the beginning that "while I am still living I shall bury whomsoever I please." The most natural interpretation therefore is that the main inscription was engraved before the son was married; and afterwards, when he married, his wife was included in the family and was given the right of burial. If then the document is Christian, it has special interest as one of the oldest memorials of the Phrygian Christians, and deserves careful consideration in order that any information may be elicited from it about the position of Christians in the city of Hierapolis, where a Church existed as early as the time when Saint Paul wrote to the Colossians, "Epaphras hath a great zeal for you, and for them of Laodicea, and for them of Hierapolis." The whole phraseology of the document is cast in the same mould as ordinary pagan documents of the kind, yet the language is varied in a slight yet remarkable way, which might readily pass unnoticed by any who were not on the outlook. Now this is precisely what we should expect in a public Christian document of the period; concealment so far as was consistent with truth was necessary for safety, and was prescribed by the Church. "We praise not those who voluntarily surrender themselves, for so are we not taught in the Gospel." The tone of many other inscriptions confirms the general impression derived from this one, that the Christians of that period tried in outward demeanour to assimilate themselves to their neighbours, and to avoid drawing attention to themselves by marked peculiarities and profession. They use the same names, and express themselves in almost the same terms as their non-Christian neighbours. Objects and

deas which are strictly Christian are indicated by ambiguous terms or by terms otherwise unknown and unintelligible. Slight variations are introduced into current language, which are not sufficiently strong to attract notice from ordinary persons, but are sufficient to produce a new tone and character. These slight variations are often in themselves interesting; they impart a certain depth and sincerity to the common things and the stereotyped formulæ of life. In general, one is struck with the fact that wherever there is a touch of natural feeling, of real life, or of kindly sentiment, the epitaph is almost always Christian.

Assuming then that M. Waddington's suggestion is correct, and that the inscription is Christian,¹ is it possible to interpret the ambiguous or unknown expressions? It may of course be assumed that a Christian, as was already proved, would leave his property only to a Christian society, and the "Council of Presidence of the Purple-dippers" must be the governing body of the Christian community. The phrase, "Council of Presidence," is unique: it probably means the body of Proedroi or Presidents. The expression President of the Church (*πρόεδρος τῆς ἐκκλησίας*) is used by Eusebius to designate the bishop, and it is therefore quite in accordance with known usage to interpret the phrase in our text as the Council of Presbyters, which co-operated with the bishop in directing the affairs of a Christian Church. This Council is called by Ignatius "Council of the Bishop" (*συνέδριον τοῦ ἐπισκόπου*, *Philad.* 8). Then comes the most remarkable term, "Purple-dippers." The course of the argument has led us to the conclusion that the Christian community was organized as a corporation under this name, like the "Neighbourhood of First-Gate-People" at Acmonia. Now Hierapolis, with

¹ His words indeed do not go quite so far as this. "Il est difficile de ne pas y reconnaître l'influence de christianisme, qui de très-bonne heure poussa de profondes racines à Hiérapolis."

its mineral springs (in which I think from the taste that alum is an element), was a great place for dyers, and a non-Christian society, "the Corporation of Dyers," is known to have existed at Hierapolis. It is therefore clear that this Christian community was publicly understood as the "Purple-dyers." But the two terms are not exactly the same in form: the pagan society was the *βαφεῖς*, but the Christian name ends in *-βαφοί*,¹ and such a word may be understood according to variation of accent as "Purple-dipped" or "Purple-dippers." I look upon the name of the Christian community of Hierapolis as intentionally ambiguous: it was understood by the world "dippers in purple," but by the initiated "dipped in purple," "washed in blood."

The conjecture may be hazarded that the "wonted day," which is mentioned in the text, is the day of the Nativity and of the Epiphany, which at this period were celebrated together on the sixth of January. The day was called "the feast of Lights," or "day of Lights," or "the Lights." In that case "papoι" would be a secret name for the candles and torches which were to be burned. The interest of 3,000 denarii at five per cent. would be 150 denarii, about £5. In case of neglect to expend the entire sum on lights, the residue is to be applied to another purpose, which presents another difficulty and another unique phrase. The residue is to be given to the "Corporation of Thremmata."¹ *Thremmata* is ordinarily in such inscriptions to be under-

¹ The word may be either *πορφυραβάφοι* actively or *πορφυράβαφοι* passively. The accent is of course not indicated in early manuscripts or inscriptions. The word occurs only here, in the genitive plural, and is susceptible also of being formed from a nominative ending, in *-βαφής*, which could only mean "Purple-dipped." M. Waddington accents *-βαφών*, and seems to treat it as a genitive wrongly formed from *-βαφεύς*, a dyer. This, as I contend, is a typical example of the neglect of a slight yet important difference. Numerous monuments in large letters beside the public roads showed Diodorus that *βαφέων* was the customary genitive.

¹ *τῆς ἐργασίας τῆς θρεμματικῆς*: the last word never occurs except in this place.

stood as dependants or slaves brought up in the house, who were also called Threptoï; and the corporation might be intended to look after foundlings, or, as M. Waddington suggests, for looking after the children of slaves. The Greek words might also be rendered, quite in accordance with usage, as "the institute for education and upbringing." Finally the word *Thremma* may mean "sheep," and the intention of the phrase may be symbolical. Members of the Church are frequently described as "sheep" in early Christian literature and art: the Good Shepherd carrying a lamb is one of the earliest subjects in Christian art, an old Greek artistic type adapted to a new signification. The very word here used (*θρέμμα*) is employed by Chrysostom in a comparison between Jacob, as leader of unreasoning, and the bishop, as leader of rational, sheep. If any of these suggestions gives the true sense, the intention is charitable, and the testament provides that such of the annual interest as was not expended in the great annual ceremony of the Church should be devoted to some charitable purpose.

Marcus Aurelius Diodorus must have been a man of wealth and importance in Hierapolis. His tomb occupies a conspicuous position in the most frequented quarter, at the edge of the road near the gate of the city, where land would be very dear. Though not one of the ambitious monuments, it is in point of external appearance quite worthy of its position. Finally, the bequest of 3,000 denarii (about £100), in the case where children were living, implies considerable wealth, for a man was not free to leave his property away from his natural heirs; both custom and express law forbade such alienation. I shall now quote some other examples of Christians of wealth and standing during the third century. They all belong to Eumeneia, a rich and important city, which appears to have been the stronghold of Christianity in Phrygia.

21. " *To the happy dead.*

Aurelius Eutyches, surnamed Helix, son of Hermes, citizen of Eumeneia and of other cities, Senator and Geraios, of the tribe Adrianis, constructed the tomb to himself and his highly respected and beloved wife Marcella, and their children. And if any other shall attempt to bury any one, he shall have to reckon with the living God."

The opening phrase alone would be sufficient to stamp this as Christian: the thought is similar to No. 11 and a phrase in No. 18. The expression "surnamed" has been already noticed, as known only in Christian documents. Finally the concluding words, "the living God," are equally decisive as to the religion of the deceased. Eutyches Helix was a citizen of Eumeneia and other cities; if he had been a heathen, we might have understood that such places as Acmonia, Apameia, etc., were the other cities of which he was a burgess. But in the case of a Christian the meaning is different; the true sense is shown by a famous phrase which occurs in two other epitaphs to be noticed hereafter, "citizen of a select city." Eutyches intimates in the usual obscure terms that he is a citizen of Eumeneia, and of the heavenly city. The name of his "highly respected and beloved wife," Marcella, was that of the most famous Christian family of central Phrygia,¹ and if she belonged to that family we can understand the reason of the encomium. Either of the epithets "respected" and "beloved" is common in non-Christian epitaphs; the union of the two is unknown to me, except in this case. This is one more instance of the way in which the Phrygian Christians of the third century use the expressions and formulæ of their non-Christian neighbours, and yet vary them in such a way as to give a new tone and feeling to them. The fervour of their religion, persecuted as it was, gave a depth and sincerity to their language even in the common things and the stereotyped formulæ of life.

¹ I shall have occasion to allude to it later.

The standing of Eutyches Helix is worthy of notice. He is a senator, and must therefore have been a man of mark and leading in his city. The term *Geraios*, literally "old," occurs only here and in No. 25 as an official title. If it denoted a pagan office it would almost certainly occur in some of the many inscriptions which give the career of municipal honours of distinguished non-Christian citizens. It therefore in all probability denotes a Christian office, and it is evidently used on account of its colourless character, and its close analogy to the pagan term *Gerousia*, the Council of Gerontes, or old men, which existed in every Phrygian city. *Geraios* then must denote a member of the council of Presbyters, or Elders, which ruled every Christian Church; and we have thus the interesting case of the same person being presbyter of a Christian Church and senator of a Roman city.

22. "*Aurelius Zoticus, son of Praxias, a Eumenian senator, constructed the tomb for himself, and for my wife Glyconis, and for my children,¹ Aurelius Zoticus my son, and Dionysius, and Ammia my daughter, and Mertine Ithis. No other shall have liberty of burial, and if any one shall place another body in the grave, he shall forfeit to the most sacred Treasury 2,500 denarii, and what is greatest of all, he shall have to reckon with God.*"

Except in the concluding phrase, there is nothing in the expression or the personal names to distinguish this from ordinary epitaphs. Like the last, it has all the appearance of a third century inscription.

23. "*Aurelius Alexander, son of Alexander, and grandson of Epigonus, a Eumenian senator, constructed the tomb for myself and my wife Tation, and if any other shall thrust in (a corpse), he shall have to reckon with God.*"

In this case also there is only the concluding formula, in its simplest form, to mark the religion. Like Nos. 21 and 22, it may be assigned with confidence to the period about

¹ The variation between first and third person is curious, but many examples occur.

250 A.D., and they give us some conception of the strength of the Christian element in Eumeneia.

24. "*Aurelius Menophilus, son of Menophilus, and grandson of Asclepiades, Senator, constructed the grave in front of this stone [for himself] and his son Apollonius and his son's wife Meltine and for Menophilus and Asclepiades his grandchildren, and for whomsoever he himself while still living shall choose [and if any other shall attempt], he shall have to reckon with Christ.*"

The last word is given in the monogram X . The expression is peculiar and unique; but the religion of Menophilus cannot be doubtful. The symbol would lead us to bring down the date as low as possible, but the numerous names are distinctively third century. The variation in the final formula, "with Christ," is later than the original form "with God." The date may probably be about 300 A.D.

25. "*Fare ye well.*"

Aurelius Gemellos, son of Menas, Senator, to his sweetest parents, Aurelius Menas, Senator, Geraios, son of Menas, grandson of Philip, and Aurelia Apphion, daughter of Artas, at his own expense, his own property,¹ in which he previously buried his brother Philip and his paternal aunt Cyrilla and his cousin Paula; and there shall be buried in it his foster-sister Philete, and any other to whom he shall give permission during his life-time; and whosoever shall attempt to intrude another, shall receive from Immortal God an everlasting scourge."

This inscription looks rather later in style than the preceding three, for the names are more Christian in type; but the disguised term Geraios instead of Presbyter appears to me to mark it as older than the open recognition of Christianity by the State. This took place in Rome in the year 312, but can hardly have become effective in Phrygia till 323, when Constantine defeated Licinius, and for the first

¹ The expression is unusual, and is given up as miscopied in C.I.G. 3,891, where it is taken from Hamilton. Hamilton's copy of this inscription however is almost perfectly accurate. Gemellos stipulates that the monument, though erected for his parents, is to remain his own private property under his own direction. His parents were still living.

time became master of Asia. But even if my inference from the term *Geraios* be uncertain, and though perhaps *Gemellos* may have been a senator after Constantine, his father must have been a member of the Senate and the Council of Elders at an earlier time.

The names *Paula* and *Cyrilla* and *Philip*, and perhaps *Philete*, though all used by pagans, are peculiarly common among Phrygian Christians, and are characteristic of the latter part of the third and the fourth centuries.

In my previous paper I remarked (No. 7) that "the formation of a regular Christian nomenclature for persons does not [in Phrygia] seem to be earlier than A.D. 300"; but further study has led me to the conclusion that this date is quite fifty years too late. I have throughout this study been always on my guard against placing the inscriptions too early, and in this instance at least I have placed a fact of history quite half a century too late. The names to which I refer are, with one or two exceptions, such as "*Maria*" and "*Nonna*," used also in non-Christian Phrygian families, and they are almost all purely Greek in type. They are however particularly favoured by Christians, the reason probably being that they had been borne by distinguished champions of the faith; and where several of them occur together in a family, it may be taken for granted that the family is Christian.

I shall add three more dated examples, which show that the first beginnings of a distinctively Christian terminology in Phrygia goes back as early as 250 A.D.

26. "In the year 348 [263-4 A.D.]

And to his daughter *Maria*.

Zenodotus, son of *Zeno*, constructed the tomb to himself and his son *Zeno*, and the bride (of *Zeno*) *Tatia*; and if any other shall attempt, he shall have to reckon with God."

The second line was inserted, at a later time and in smaller characters, near the top of the stone, between the

first and second lines. This is one of the earliest known examples of the use of the personal name Maria in ordinary life.

The name most commonly used in Phrygia during the third century for the grave is *Heroon* (ἡρώων). Strictly this word involves the idea that the dead person is deified as a "Hero," and worshipped by his descendants, but still it is commonly used by Christians as well as pagans. But the words indicating "sleep" and "rest" (κοιμάομαι and ἀναπάνομαι) began to be favoured by the former during the third century, and instead of the pagan word *Heroon* the Christian term, "sleeping-place," *cæmeterion*, began to be used. At the end of my first paper, I mentioned the use of these words as being characteristic of a later age; but the following two dated examples prove that they came into at least occasional use as early as A.D. 250.

27. "In the year 335 [250-1 A.D.]

Aphphia, daughter of Phrougios, constructed the sleeping-place for herself and her husband Diodotus and her sweetest children, Phrougios and Tatia, and her adopted daughter Rhodope; and as long as I live I shall bury in it whomsoever I please; and after my death it shall not be lawful for any other to be buried [here], only my daughter Tata, and if any other shall thrust in [a body], he shall be accursed before God to everlasting."

It is doubtful whether *Tata* is a mere slip for *Tatia*, or whether another daughter is meant.

28. "In the year 345 [260-1 A.D.]

Aurelius Symphoros constructed the sleeping-place for myself and for my wife and for my son: and if any other shall bury, he shall have to reckon with God."

These two inscriptions belong, one to a small country town named Bria, near Eumeneia, and the latter to Eumeneia itself.

This type of word, Greek as a rule in origin and form, must be carefully distinguished from another type, ex-

clusively Christian and derived from the Bible, such as John, Peter, etc., which does not begin before the middle of the fourth century. The change in the fashion of names is not without interest. The introduction of purely Biblical names of non-Hellenic and oriental type marks the beginning of the breach between the Eastern Church and the old civilization and literature of Greece and Rome, and the introduction of a tone which soon hardened into a narrow and exclusive spirit of self-satisfied intolerance, and which seems at last to have destroyed education in Asia Minor. The Eastern Church has throughout its history been far less favourable to the spread of education than the western; but such is not the character of the earliest Phrygian Church. The impression which pre-Constantine religion makes on us through its inscriptions is singularly favourable. It certainly advanced education in the less educated districts, though unfortunately it killed the native languages in the process. A certain tone of individuality, of free use of literary material, of nature and truth and deeper emotion, breathes even through the epitaphs. I have elsewhere quoted a few scattered indications of a nascent Phrygian literature of the period 300 to 450. It begins with works on the antiquities of Phrygia and studies in the Greek metres, and ends in legendary biographies of Phrygian martyrs, biographies not indeed of a high type, but still not altogether devoid of interest. It would be difficult to find any indications of education in Phrygia at any other period, and its existence at this time may be traced to the influence of the new religion both on its adherents and on its opponents.

W. M. RAMSAY.