

Fragmentary Inscriptions From Heraclea Lyncestis

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In this text we consider four inscriptions (fragmentary) originating from Heraclea Lyncestis that have recently been unearthed during excavations (2008 and 2009). All inscriptions herewith presented were found as spolia and they were given other functions than the primary one for which they had been made.

1. Sepulchral inscription in ancient Greek

This marble plate with an inscription is inbuilt in the left side of the altar of the newly discovered basilica in Heraclea. It was discovered in 2009. The majority of the text has been preserved; due to its position, however, only one part is visible—with dimensions 76cm x 61 cm x 16cm. There is a text in three lines in ancient Greek; the letters are highly legible, of fine shape and a height of 6.5 cm.



Preserved letters	Reading
ΕΤΩ-----	ἐτῶ[v-----]
ΝΙΚΟ-----	Νικό[μαχος-----]
ΕΤΩΝ-----	ἐτῶν-----]

From the legible part of the text, we can see this is a sepulchral inscription mentioning at least two deceased persons, perhaps more. From the details about the first person, only the word *years* is visible (incompletely), while for the second person the first part of the name can be read and the word *years*, though the mark reflecting the age (years) cannot be seen. Our assumption is that the name of the second person beginning with Νικο- could be Νικόμαχος or Νικόλαος which is testified in Heraclea and the vicinity. [1] The details of the deceased were probably inscribed in customary onomastic formula of duo nomina, or with one name only (personal), which is also quite frequent.

The basilica was originally dated to the 4th century A.D., the oldest one so far discovered in Heraclea. With regards to the inscription, judging from the appearance, the shape of the letters, and the few modest details about the persons mentioned, we could say that it was inscribed and posted at least one hundred years before, or even more.

2. Marble block with a letter

A marble block—with dimensions 122 cm x 78 cm x 35 cm—built into the entrance of a late antique building was discovered during the excavating campaign in 2009.

The Greek letter epsilon Υ has been inscribed on it, with dimensions 25 cm x 19 cm.



The size of the marble block is very close to the size of the seats from the theatre, [2] and the inscribing style of the letter is very similar to the style of the letters of the theatre seats.

3. Funerary inscription in Latin

This is a partly preserved sepulchral inscription of sandstone, found in the waterworks system of Heraclea from the late antique period. It was unearthed in the excavation of 2008. The fragment has been broken in two pieces. The dimensions of the preserved part are 37 cm x 23 cm x 2 cm.

Latin text in 3 lines is preserved. The dimensions of the letters are: height 5 cm. x width 3.5 – 4 cm. The distance between the first and second line is 2.5 cm, while between the second and third line it is 3 cm.



Preserved letters	Possible reading
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P. B.	P(ublius) B(ebius)
ERTIV	[T]ertiu[s]
ANX	an (norum) X - -

P(ublius) B(ebius)/ [T]ertiu[s] / age 10_ _

From these incomplete 3 lines we may assume that the sepulchral monument probably belonged to a Roman citizen; it could be assumed that the person in question is a Roman/Italic colonist in Heraclea. The first and second parts of his name are testified only with initials. One possible reconstruction is P(ublius) B(ebius) [T]ertiu[s], assuming praenomen and nomen; for while components of one name in onomastic formula have

not been testified in other inscriptions in Heraclea, they are testified in inscriptions in Macedonia dating from Roman times. [3]

The praenomen Publius has been testified twice in Heraclea in two separate inscriptions from the first century A.D. The first is the inscription on the horologium, in Latin, where the name of a Roman consul, Publius Dolabela, has been testified: it was during his consulship that the horologium was made. The other is an inscription in honour of Gaius Arbeianus Secundus, made by a large group of his friends (49), among these being three persons with Publius as a personal name. [4] The names of two of these are as per tria nomina formula, wherein the name Publius has been inscribed by initial only. The cognomen Tertius is mentioned as a personal name on an inscription from the 3rd century A.D. [5], and, in the feminine form Tertilla, on an inscription from the 2nd century A.D. [6]

The third line provides information about the age of the deceased. The abbreviation "an" for *annorum* with one *n* is met in Heraclea inscriptions from the 1st century A.D. [7] The Roman numeral X is the only one remaining. It is quite possible that next to this figure there were other(s) or we may consider that only this one numeral was originally inscribed; imagining the plate as complete with the third line inscribed exactly in the middle under the second line at an equal distance from the left and right edge of the plate.

Inscriptions in Latin from Heraclea mainly date from the 1st century A.D. In addition to this inscription, in favour of such dating are the following arguments: the shapes of the letters are specifically characteristic of Heracleian inscriptions from this period, likewise the entire concept of the inscription, stating only one name and the age of the deceased. Inscriptions containing only the name and the age of the deceased in Latin are testified in Heraclea from the 1st century A. D. [8]

4. The base for a marble column

The base and a part of a column are of monolithic marble piece. This monument was found in a building in front of the theatre, with dimensions of 54 cm x 54 cm x 50 cm. (The dimensions of the column part are: height 20 cm; the size of the lower part 144 cm; diameter 34 cm.)

At the back there is a quadrangular hole of 18 x 18 cm and there are traces of letters on the upper profile frame.

It is obvious that this extraordinary manufactured marble piece had been in previous use. A trace of its previous function is the part of an inscription in Latin which is turned in reverse.



The name IVNIOR only belonging to the inscription is preserved.

The elegant capital letters are 3.5 cm high (a small upper part of them is missing) and 5 cm wide.

It is clear that the monument previously had another form and function; it was probably erected in honour of some eminent person, with a cognomen Iunior as a part of his name. The form of the letters indicates the 1st century A.D. as the period when the inscription was made. No person with the cognomen Iunior has so far been testified in Heraclea, but it is possible that this votive monument may have been made in honour of a person who was not from Heraclea but was significant and important in the wider region.

Although fragmentary, these monuments are important as double witnesses, both to the time when they were originally made and to later time(s) when they were accommodated and changed in line to meet different needs. These monuments testify to the layers of history and continuous life of Heraclea. They also suggest that the needs and practicality of the inhabitants reassigning these objects were more important than their sense of aesthetics. These characteristics, in certain cases balanced very well, testify to the disappearance of ancient aesthetic values.

Notes:

[1] *IG, X, 2, 2, p. 62, p. 13.*

[2] For comparison only, the dimensions of the seat: 122-145 cm. x 65-66 cm.

[3] *IG, X, 2, 2, p. 111.*

[4] *IG, X, 2, 2, p. 75.*

[5] *IG, X, 2, 2, p. 98.*

[6] *IG, X, 2, 2, p. 56.*

[7] *IG, X, 2, 2, p. 78, 79, 80.*

[8] *IG, X, 2, 2*, p. 76, 77, 78, 79, 80; inscription 76 has the same scheme but it is in Greek, the age of the deceased is in Roman numerals.

Фрагментарни натписи од Хераклеја Линкестис

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Во текстов се претставени 4 натписи (фрагменти) кои беа откриени во текот на ископувањата во 2008 и 2009 г. Заедничка карактеристика на сите натписи е дека се најдени секундарно употребени (*spolia*).

Првиот натпис е надгробен споменик со три реда текст на старогрчки јазик кој е вграден на левата страна од олтарниот дел во новоткриената базилика во Хераклеја. Делот што е видлив укажува на надгробен натпис подигнат за најмалку двајца покојници, од кои за едниот е сочуван дел од именката *години*, додека од вториот дел од името што почнува на Нико- и целосно зборот *години*.

Вториот споменик е мермерен блок на кој е врежана буквата Υ која според димензиите (а и мермерниот блок) е речиси иста со димензиите на седиштата во театарот.

Третиот фрагмент е нагробен споменик на латински јазик каде е спомнато личното име и возраста на упокоеното лице. Наша претпоставка е дека лицето би можело да се вика P(ublius) B(ebius) [T]ertiu[s].

Последниот фрагмент е врежан врз база од мермер. Од натписот е сочувано само името Iunior, за коешто претпоставуваме дека е прекар, како дел од ономастичката формула на лице на кое му бил подигнат овој споменик.