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## *EARLY CHRISTIAN MONUMENTS IN PHRYGIA:*

### *A STUDY IN THE EARLY HISTORY OF THE CHURCH.*

#### I.

THE diffusion of Christianity over the central plateau of Asia Minor is a subject of great interest, but involved in the utmost obscurity. A few facts are attested by biblical writers, but beyond this practically nothing is known about the process by which the large countries of Phrygia, Galatia, Lydia, Lycaonia, Cappadocia were conquered by the new religion. The fact that hardly a sentence is devoted to the subject by modern historians of the Church<sup>1</sup> is a sufficient proof of the dearth of information.

These countries are rarely mentioned by the ancient historians of the early Church. Eusebius, our great authority, devotes his chief attention to leaders of thought and to specially distinguished martyrs. In both respects Phrygia and the adjoining countries furnish little to interest him. The Phrygian heresy of Montanus aroused considerable controversy in the latter half of the second century, and Eusebius is led to give some information about one small district of Phrygia at that period. With this exception, the only district of Phrygia to which he alludes is the Lycus valley, with the great cities of Laodicea and Hierapolis, and with the important names of Philip, Papias, and Apollinaris. This valley is the one low-lying district of Phrygia, far more closely connected with the civilized

<sup>1</sup> Bishop Lightfoot has compressed more information on the subject in his Commentary on the Epistle to the Colossians, and on the works of Ignatius and Polycarp, than all the professed historians have collected.

sea-coast than with the rest of Phrygia, penetrated at an early time with Greek civilization, rich and prosperous, and in close commercial relations with the outer world. Eusebius makes very slight allusion to Phrygian martyrs, and we may therefore conclude that the country did not suffer much, and that none of its martyrs seemed to him to be specially distinguished by the sufferings they endured or the courage they displayed. Cappadocia emerges from obscurity during the fourth century, through the powerful personality of Basil and the Gregories, and displays to us a completely organized Church, universally through the province. But about the process by which this Church grew not one fact is recorded by historians.

One of the few anecdotes which are preserved about the Phrygian Christians is not greatly to their credit. It is told by Neander as follows. "A certain Phrygian, Quintus by name, of a nation peculiarly inclined by nature to fanatical extravagance, presented himself in company with many others whom he had wrought up by his speeches to the same pitch of enthusiastic zeal, uncalled for, before the proconsul's tribunal [in Smyrna<sup>1</sup>], and declared himself a Christian. But when the magistrate pressed him, and wrought upon his fears by showing him the wild beasts, he yielded, swore by the genius of the emperor, and sacrificed. After stating this fact, the Church [of Smyrna, in a circular letter to other Churches] adds, 'We therefore praise not those who voluntarily surrender themselves: for so are we not taught in the gospel.'"

While literature and written history are both wholly silent about the spread of Christianity in central Asia Minor, it has fortunately happened that another kind of historical documents has been found in unusual abundance in one of the countries enumerated, *viz.* in Phrygia. It is well known that Christian inscriptions are rarely found

<sup>1</sup> Quintus was a stranger, either a visitor to or actually resident in Smyrna.

older than the time of Constantine, when Christianity gained the upper hand in the civilized world, and it became quite safe to profess the new religion openly. Two exceptions to this rule of rarity exist: one is in the catacombs of Rome, the other is in Phrygia. These Phrygian inscriptions are, many of them, unpublished; and most of those which are published are printed in scattered articles in various literary journals. It may therefore be of some interest if I attempt to bring together the general results of a study of these little known documents, and to show that some interesting historical conclusions can be drawn from them. It may add to their interest among English readers that most of these documents have been discovered by English travellers, and especially in the course of the expeditions made in connexion with the Asia Minor Exploration Fund, organized in the winter of 1882-3, and now almost defunct.

In these early Christian inscriptions we have not the infinite variety of subject and the occasional richness of information which lend interest to the non-Christian inscriptions. They are all merely epitaphs, brief in style, generally meagre in content. Their interest begins and ends in their Christian character. During a time when Christianity was proscribed, when its professors were subject to frequent persecution, it is of course very rare to find on a tomb any express statement as to the religion of the deceased. Such a statement might bring the whole surviving family into danger. It is highly probable that many epitaphs of Christians escape us, because they contain nothing to characterize them as Christian, mentioning only names and relationships. But the inscriptions which concern us here do in some way or other express their character as Christian. Often they do so only by some slight indication, or by some peculiar phrase which might in itself be used by any one, Christian or not, but

which rouses our attention by its unusualness of character, and finally, after comparison and study, stands out as one of the recognised signs by which the adherents of the new religion sought to make their graves known to their brethren without rousing suspicion or ill-will by any open declaration.

The conclusions which I state are not those of a specialist in Church history. That is a subject in which I have just the amount of knowledge which ordinary educated people have of an interesting phase of history, one in which I have no right to express an opinion, but must simply be a learner from others. What is here said is gathered entirely from archæological evidence, from a study of the inscriptions themselves and of the character of the country. In this department I have earned a right to speak; and if the inferences which I draw in my own department have any value for the history of the Church, it belongs to the scholars in that subject to criticise them, to estimate their value, and to assign them their proper place.

These inscriptions are frequently couched in very poor Greek. The spelling is often detestable, and the construction of sentences is sometimes so bad that the meaning is by no means easy to catch. Such epitaphs obviously must have been written by persons of no high education. It is also to be observed that the epitaphs of large cities, and especially the cities of southern Phrygia, near the great highways and the chief centres of commerce, education, and intercourse, are far more correct and show much greater familiarity with Greek than those of the country districts. This leads us to an interesting observation, which results from the study of the whole body of Phrygian inscriptions. The people of Phrygia, though they had been subject to Greek kings for centuries, were only learning to speak Greek under the Roman Empire. In the south-western parts of Phrygia, where they were nearer the Greek centres of

civilization, Greek was coming into use between 100 and 200 A.D. ; in the northern and eastern parts of Phrygia not till 200 to 300 A.D. The larger cities, with greater wealth and more lively commercial intercourse, must be excepted from this rule, which applies only to the mass of the population in the villages and small towns. Those who knew only the Phrygian language, seem generally to have been unable to read or write, and the few who wrote epitaphs in Phrygian use Greek letters. But the almost invariable rule seems to be that they who learned anything at all learned Greek, and felt ashamed of their native language and ways, and put on a general varnish of Greek manners and civilization. Various slight indications lead me to believe that it was the Christian religion which spread the use of the Greek language. The reason why Christianity encouraged Greek was, partly at least, because the sacred writings were in Greek.

We are thus led to picture the state of things in the country parts of Phrygia about 200 A.D. as follows. The rustic population was almost wholly uneducated, ignorant of any language but Phrygian, unaffected by the civilization of Greece and Rome, which had spread in the great towns. The new religion, which affected the cities first,<sup>1</sup> spread among the rustics during the century 200 to 300 A.D., and produced among them a desire for education and for reading. Only by learning Greek were they able to read the Scriptures, to mix with the educated population of the towns, or to study any department of literature. Thus there was encouraged a spirit which gradually extirpated the native languages, Phrygian, Galatian, Lycaonian, etc. It is impossible not to contrast this spirit in the East with the Western tendency to translate the holy writings into the languages of the uneducated and barbarous races, a tendency

<sup>1</sup> In the case of Phrygia this seems to be proved by the facts which will be hereafter stated in connexion with one of the classes of inscriptions.

which can be traced from the Gothic Bible of Ulfilas down to the great Bible Societies of the present day.

The Christian inscriptions of Phrygia fall into two well-marked classes, according to the style in which they are composed and the formulæ which they employ. One class is confined to the north-western district; the other, and very much larger class, is found in the southern and the central cities, and in a few isolated instances, even in the north-eastern district of Phrygia and the adjoining part of Galatia. The cause of this well-marked distinction can hardly be doubtful. There must have been two distinct tides of Christianizing influence, springing from different sources, and showing a difference of character. One of these comes from the north-west, the other from some point in the south.

Let us now attempt to study them separately, to analyse their character, and, if possible, discover something about their origin and the period when they took place. I shall begin with the inscriptions of the north-western district, and the first step must be to give the chief documents on which my conclusions are founded. They are few in number; the district in which they are found is not large, nor is it generally rich in inscriptions, and the work of the Exploration Fund has been directed chiefly to other parts of Phrygia. Almost all these inscriptions belong to a large and fertile valley, which is watered by the river Tembrogius (Porsuk Su in Turkish) a tributary of the Sangarius. I have studied the topography of this valley elsewhere,<sup>1</sup> and have tried to show that it contained one small city called Appia, and a number of scattered villages, which are included under one heading as the home of the tribe Prepenisseis. This then is a district where we must expect to find typical examples of loose construction, obscure

<sup>1</sup> "Cities and Bishoprics of Phrygia," Part II., in *Journal of Hellenic Studies*, 1887; under §§ lxxxviii. to xxviii.

meaning, and bad Greek in general. The other cities of north-western Phrygia furnish hardly any early Christian inscriptions: Dorylæum and Aizani, both rich and prosperous places, have left us nothing of the period, while Cotiaion, also a very rich city, has left us only two early Christian inscriptions, and those so carefully guarded in expression that their religion can only be conjectured. Now the pagan inscriptions of Aizani are unusually numerous, and at Cotiaion also a considerable number are known. Moreover Cotiaion is practically the metropolis of the Tembrogius valley, and there was evidently throughout ancient history the closest and most intimate relation between the Prepenisseis country and the great city twenty to thirty miles distant on the lower course of the same river. Why were early Christian inscriptions comparatively numerous among the country people and so rare in towns? A scrutiny of the documents throws some light on this point.

First among the north-western Phrygian inscriptions I place a group of epitaphs, in which, contrary to the general practice, the religion of the deceased, and in most cases of the survivors also, is boldly and openly stated. From the existence of such inscriptions we may infer a considerable amount of religious freedom and general toleration in the district where they are found. They cannot therefore belong to a time when persecution was active, and the two periods 249 to 260 and 303 to 313 A.D., must be excluded. Now even in times when persecution was not actively encouraged by the reigning emperor, the Roman officials were, as a general rule, opposed to the "new superstition," and were, of course, bound to administer the existing laws which proscribed Christianity. Therefore, if there was a considerable amount of toleration in the district where these inscriptions are found, it must be because the population was not unfavourably disposed to the Christians, and probably because the majority were



actually Christians. At the same time, in a district such as I have described, officials of the Roman government would, of course, be very rarely seen; the treatment of Christians would, therefore, depend almost entirely on the behaviour of their own non-Christian neighbours to them. There can have been no bitter feeling between the old faith and the new; the two parties must have lived side by side in comparative peace and good-will, and Christians were not afraid to openly profess their belief. In all probability this implies a decided preponderance, possibly in numbers, certainly in influence, of the Christian element.

In the great cities of the neighbourhood there are, as I said, hardly any early Christian inscriptions. Why were the Christians so timid in the cities, so bold in the country round? Part of the reason lies in the fact that in the cities they were brought into closer connexion with government officials. Another part lies in the existence of a worship of the Roman emperors in the cities, which was probably unknown in the country. This worship of the emperors was the official bond which united all inhabitants of a province in the tie of loyalty to the Roman government. The Christians objected to worship men as gods, and the Roman rulers saw in their objection a refusal of loyal devotion to the imperial rule. They did not care whether the provincials worshipped Sabazius, or Men, or Zeus, or Chrestus; but they did care very much that all should join in professing devotion and loyalty, with the binding sanction of religious worship, to the emperors, as representing the majesty of Rome. This was the chief ground of persecution, and this was far more immediately present to dwellers in cities than to country people.

But these reasons do not completely explain the facts. Roman officials were always very few. Municipal self-government was the rule to a most remarkable degree in Phrygia, where the cities were even allowed to strike bronze

coins, with the names of their own city magistrates upon them, and without the name of the Roman emperor ; and it cannot be proved that a single official of the Roman government was *permanently* resident in any of the three great cities mentioned. The safety of the Christians everywhere must have depended mainly on the feelings of their non-Christian fellow citizens ; and if they were less bold in the cities, it must have been because they had more reason to dread their neighbours. This implies that the Christians were less numerous and less powerful in the cities than in the country districts of north-western Phrygia.

Now, to anticipate a little, let us compare the other class, *viz.* the inscriptions of central and southern Phrygia. These belong mainly to the cities, and are very rare in country districts ; they show that leading citizens and senators were sometimes Christian, and make it probable that the Christian was the preponderating element in several cities, such as the important and rich Eumeneia. Thus we are led to a very striking difference between the two currents of Christianizing influence : that of the north-west spread chiefly among the country people ; that of the south spread chiefly in the cities. Eusebius mentions that, in the great persecution of Diocletian, a Phrygian city, whose entire population from the magistrates downwards was Christian, was surrounded by the soldiers and burned. It is impossible to accept this story as historical, and the modern Church historians either omit it or throw discredit on it. But we may at least say that in Phrygia there is a probability that at least the great mass of the population in some cities was Christian at the time in question (303 A.D.), and that in no other country does such a probability exist. The story of the city being surrounded and burnt savours of legend, but the important feature in it may, on the authority of inscriptions, be accepted as true or as only a slight exaggeration of the preponderance of the Christian element.

1. "In the year 363, on the 10th of the month Pereitios, Eutyches, son of Eutyches, to his wife Tatia and his father, in remembrance, being Christians, and to himself: Phellinas of Temenothyrai," etc.

The end of the inscription is lost; perhaps it stated that Phellinas was the artist. Eutyches erected the tomb to his wife and his father, who were dead, and to receive his own body when he died. He mentions that his wife and father were Christians, and we may, of course, understand that he also was a Christian.

An important point in this text is that it is dated in the year 363. The date is reckoned from the autumn equinox of the year 85 B.C., when the Roman Province of Asia, of which Phrygia was a part, was "pacified," according to the Roman phrase, *i.e.* when the administration of the province was arranged on a permanent footing. Pereitios is a Macedonian month, fourth of the year. The people of Phrygia either use the Macedonian names for the months (for the conquests of Alexander the Great left this and many other permanent traces in the countries of Asia), or else they mention them by numbers; the native Phrygian names are never employed. We would give a great deal to know what they were; but in this, as in most other respects, the inscriptions teach us little or nothing except what is Greek.

The inscription then was erected in the year 279 after Christ, about the third of January. We have thus a clue to the date of the other inscriptions which use the same expression "Christians." This first example does not use the complete formula which occurs in the rest, and it alone is found outside of the Tembrogius valley. It was found in the Armenian church in the large town of Ushak; but it must have been carried thither (and probably has been carried a considerable distance, as is often the case), for Ushak is not the site of any ancient city. The stone however cannot well have been brought from the valley

of the river Tembrogius, but may perhaps have come from a village on the southern slope of the hills in which that river rises. Very many of the stones of Ushak have come from that neighbourhood. The nearest ancient city to Ushak is the small town of Trajanopolis, and this by its situation is included in the north-western district of Phrygia. Moreover the town of Temenothyrai is situated in the extreme north-western corner of Phrygia.

I have not seen the stone on which this inscription is engraved ; the rest are given from my own copy.

2.

“ In the year 333

CHRISTIANS TO A CHRISTIAN.

Aurelia Ammia, with their son-in-law Zoticus, and with their grandchildren Alexandria and Telesphorus, to her husband, constructed (the tomb).”

The date 248-9 after Christ is partly restored : part of the first line is illegible, and there remain only the two symbols indicating thirty and three ; the word denoting “ in the year,” and the symbol for 300, have to be restored, but the preceding inscription and other considerations leave no doubt as to the restoration. It is apparent that a line has been omitted giving the name of the husband and of course of his father. Aurelia Ammia and her husband had a daughter who must have died before her father, and been buried separately ; this daughter’s husband and two children join with Ammia in performing the last rites.

The translation of this inscription which I give is not very clear, but it is at least a little clearer than the Greek, which is hopelessly confused, and very hard to understand, especially when the bad syntax is complicated by the engraver’s omission of a line containing the name of the deceased.

The personal names Aurelius and Aurelia, when used as

*prænomina*, indicate a date later than Caracalla, 217 A.D. They seem to be assumed by men and women as a mark of their citizenship, to which all the provincials were admitted by that emperor. The use of a *prænomen* was one of the marks of Roman citizenship.

This and the following two inscriptions have the spelling Christian. I have therefore grouped them together, and regard all three as belonging to the same period. I shall show below reason to think that variations in the spelling of the word Christian are a proof of early date, before the new religion was quite consolidated and settled in the district.

3. "Aurelius Zoticus, son of Marcion, to his own parents Marcion and Appe, and to his brother Artemon, in remembrance during his lifetime.

#### CHRISTIANS TO CHRISTIANS."

The last words are added in a separate line at the bottom of the grave-stone, far away from the rest of the epitaph. The regular formula in the plural is used even although only one person erects the tomb.

The style of this inscription is so simple that I would readily assign it to an even earlier date than 249 A.D.; while the *prænomen* Aurelius forbids us to place it much earlier.

Marcion bears the same name as the famous Pontic heretic, who flourished during the second century. There is a certain amount of probability that the name would be avoided after his heresy was proscribed by the Church; the date which we have assigned to this inscription agrees with this consideration. It was probably erected about 240, and Marcion's birth would therefore fall probably in the latter part of the second century.

4. "Aurelia Rufina, daughter of Trophimus, to Aurelius Alexander

Domnas, her own husband, and to her children, Cyrilla and Beronicianus and Aurelia and Glyconis and a second Beronicianus, in remembrance constructed (the tomb) along with her own son Aurelius Alexander, during their lifetime.

CHRISTIANS TO CHRISTIANS."

Dissatisfied perhaps with the cold phrase, "her own husband," Rufina has added "her sweetest husband," in small letters above his name, between the lines. Five of her children died in youth; only one survived to join with his mother in erecting the monument to his father's memory. The very rare name, Beronicianus, otherwise absolutely unknown in Phrygian epitaphs, but here occurring twice, may have been suggested to a reader of Acts xxvi. The spelling Beronike is known as well as Berenike. Another Beronicianus, a Sardinian philosopher in the end of the fourth century, is known. This name and Cyrilla have a touch of the later character about them (see below on No. 7), but the rest of the epitaph is of the regular third century type.

I may add here a small fragment, which has this one important character, that it confirms by an additional testimony the date of this class inscriptions.

5. Only part of the end remains, none of the words are complete, and the additions made by me are inclosed in brackets; the name Ioulios is uncertain, and is added merely *exempli gratia*.

"[Ioul]ios, son of Onesi[mus, to, etc.]  
[A Christ]ian [to a Christian].  
In the year 34 [0-9]."

Between the second line and the date there is a broad gap, occupied by a relief representing a pair of oxen yoked. This relief shows that the chief occupation of the deceased was agriculture, and confirms the other indications of the rustic character of the population in this district.

The last symbol of the date is lost, and we can say only that it must fall between 256 and 265 A.D. But as the persecution begun by Decius in 249 was not really stopped till 260; the probability is that the inscription falls between 260 and 265. From this time until 303 there was probably peace and quiet for the Christians of Phrygia, and we might expect to find greater boldness in the expression of their religion in their epitaphs.

6. "Auxanousa, the consort of Andronicus, and his son Trophimos and his cousin Lassamos during their lifetime to themselves and to Andronicus, Chrestians to a Chrestian, erected (this tomb)."

The first point that strikes us in this inscription is the spelling of the word Chrestian. The spelling was not uncommon in the early centuries. The Roman historian Suetonius (about 120-50 A.D.) speaks of Chrestus, not of Christus: the name Chrestus, which was a Greek adjective meaning "good," was much more readily suggested to educated Greeks or Romans than the almost unknown Christus. Hence the term Chrestian came to be commonly used by the pagans, and Tertullian (about 200 A.D.), in his *Defence* addressed to the Nations, reminds them that the very name Chrestian, which they give to the adherents of the new religion, attests the good character of those to whom it is applied. Justin Martyr (about 150 A.D.) and Lactantius (about 310 A.D.) also allude to the term Chrestian; and the latter stigmatises the error in terms which seem to imply that it was used even by Christians. The spelling is therefore a pre-Constantine error, and its use by Christians perhaps points to the period immediately preceding Lactantius, or during his life. This indication agrees with the date that other considerations have led us to assign to these inscriptions.

7. "Aurelius Glycon to his consort Demetria and to himself while still living, and their children Eugenius and Domna and Patricius and Hypatius and Glycon and Zotikes, Chrestians to a Chrestian."

Glycon, his three sons, and his two daughters, Domna and Zotices, prepare the tomb for the deceased Demetria. In this inscription several of the names Eugenius, Patricius, and Hypatius are, though not exclusively Christian, yet very much favoured by Christians; and the formation of a regular Christian nomenclature for persons does not seem to be earlier than A.D. 300. In inscriptions of the third century, there is no distinction apparently between names of Christians and of non-Christians.<sup>1</sup> The Christians lived side by side with their pagan neighbours, and avoided outward distinctions which might have drawn attention to themselves.

But though later than the preceding inscription, this one need not be placed after the time of Constantine. The style of the names belongs to the period of the Nicene Council (A.D. 325); and the analogy of the other inscriptions, which show the same formula, forbids us to place this one later than 310-30, and the spelling Chrestian is more appropriate to the period about 300.

8-10. In the same district there occur three examples of a quaint formula. In addition to an inscription of the ordinary character, there is added in some corner of the stone apart from the rest, a sentence of five words, "*Thou shalt not wrong God.*" In one case there is added beside this phrase, an open book, which I interpret as an open bible. In two of these inscriptions the main body of the text is lost owing to defacement or fracture; in the third, there is an obvious difference in style between the two parts, showing clearly that they have been engraved by different hands. The epitaph proper is engraved in good, clearly cut letters, is composed in fairly correct Greek, and

<sup>1</sup> The inscription of Cotiaion, Lebas-Waddington, No. 821, is perhaps Christian, though nothing definitely characterizes it as such. It contains the names Magna, Alexandria, Cyrilla twice, Theodorus, all names which, though used by pagans, seem by their union to savour of Christianity.



is well spelt. The short phrase at the top is rather scratched than engraved, the letters are of a different shape, and the spelling is execrable. The inscription proper is accompanied by a sculpture in relief, but the separate phrase has beside it an open book represented not in relief but by incised lines. The inference seems probable that the phrase "Thou shalt not wrong God" was not engraved by the stone-cutter from whom the grave-stone was bought, but was added by the family of the deceased as a private sign. At the same time it must be remembered that the number of examples is too small to justify entirely this inference. We want a more thorough examination of the country, and a larger collection of documents before we can trust absolutely the conclusion which seems to me to be probable.

This inscription is in itself so quaint, and the varieties of spelling are so remarkable, that I add the whole three in the original. The correct Greek would be,—

τὸν Θεὸν σὺ μὴ ἀδικήσης (or ἀδικήσεις)

but it appears in the following variations—

τὸν οεὸν σοὶ μὴ ἀδι[κ]ήσεις  
 τὸν οσδὸν σοὶ μὴ ἀδικήσις  
 τὸν θεὸν σοὶ μὴ [ἀ]δικαίσις

All are engraved in the most careless and rude letters, but not in the form which would imply a late date: the spelling *οι* for *υ* and *αι* for *η* are common faults.

What then is the meaning of this quaint phrase, "Thou shalt not wrong God"? It was customary on pagan grave-stones to add a curse against any one who violated the tomb by putting in it any other body except certain specified persons. A penalty was threatened in case of disobedience to the injunctions of the maker of the tomb; sometimes the penalty was the wrath of the infernal gods,

or a curse of early death imprecated on the offender or his children, or a fine payable to the Roman treasury or to the city treasury, or to some temple or public body; the aim of the fines being to make it worth while for some public body to prosecute the offender and profit by the penalty. The Christians seem to have had a prejudice against these penalties; in a few cases they threaten a fine, but in general they either threaten no definite penalty, or they appeal to God (ὁ Θεός). In the southern group a formula was very frequently used that the offender "will have to reckon with God," but this formula is unknown in the north-western country: there the formula of which we have just quoted three examples seems to take its place, and the intention is that the stone says to all, "thou shalt not wrong God, by violating this tomb." Remarks supposed to be addressed to reader or passer by are very common in Greek epitaphs.

There is no satisfactory clue to the date of these three inscriptions. They are however probably all of one period, and that period the third century, as I infer from the style and the general similarity of the stones. They are of the regular type of the grave-stones which were employed then by the non-Christian population. They were evidently bought in a stone-cutter's yard, where they were kept in stock by the dozen, ready made, in trifling varieties. The similarity of the stones makes it probable that they were all made by the same stonecutter, though two are now at Kutaya and one far away in the south of the district inhabited by the Prepenisseis.

It is probable that a person from the country was sent to the great town of Cotiaion to buy a fine tombstone, and hence one is found about thirty miles away from the other two: the other alternative, that the two stones now at Cotiaion have been carried there from the Prepenisseis, is to be rejected, because this kind of tombstone is specially common in Cotiaion, and must have been made there in

great numbers. Their large size and the sculptures which adorn them must have made them expensive, especially as the material is a fine, white marble. They can therefore have been bought only by families of some wealth.

As an example of the manners of the time, I will try to describe the situation when one of these stones was brought into use. A man named Hopeful, like one of Bunyan's heroes (Elpizon in Greek), had lost his wife Cyrilla, and went to buy one of the handsomest grave-stones that could be procured. The stone-cutter to whom he went showed him a number of specimens in his best style—all were adorned with sculptures in relief. The sculptures were to our taste somewhat rude in execution, and monotonous in style and design. They represented one, two, or three figures in two styles, half-length and full-length. If there were two or three figures they stood side by side all in the same attitude, with one hand in the bosom of their garment and the other hanging by their side. Sometimes one or more children stood beside or between them. The only variation was in the number of figures. In this respect an attempt was made to suit the needs of all comers; but the stone-cutter did not expect that his customers would wish to bury more than three grown up persons, and limited his designs accordingly. A blank space was left for the inscription, and in cases where an inscription was needed too long for the prepared space, the last words were squeezed into some other part of the stone. In this case however, Elpizon wished to commemorate five children as well as his wife. Three of them were his own children; two were merely brought up in his household—his wife's children by a previous marriage. He was obliged therefore to be content with a stone which did not exactly correspond to the commemorative inscription, containing one grown up figure and two children. The inscription was composed in verse. The author, not being quite equal to the task of composing

an original poem, took a model, and changed the names to suit his own family. This somewhat spoiled the metre, but such as it is he has left us a poem of five halting hexameters and a few words overlapping the last line.

“This everlasting monument a man founded to his wife, Elpizon to Cyrilla, and to five children untimely dead, two adopted, born of another marriage of Cyrilla, and three his own offspring, Zoilos and a daughter Tatiane and the bride (of Zoilos) Cyrilla, who all died young, and he himself to himself in his lifetime. Ammias and Cyrilla and Tatianes.”

It is an interesting point that the adoptive children are mentioned before Elpizon's own children : this order is not uncommon in Phrygian inscriptions. The names of all the children are given, and even the name of the wife of the adopted son ; the last three names, the three daughters of Elpizon, are added in a separate line in the upper left corner of the stone. Amid a good deal of conventional society manners of a rather provincial character there is a touch of family affection in the whole which lends it something of naturalness and rouses our interest. At the top the open book and the quaint words, “*Thou shalt not wrong God,*” distinguish it from many almost identical neighbours, and mark it as Christian.

11. A curious phrase on a tombstone of Acmonia seems to indicate Christianity. Acmonia is a border city between the two groups, and no other Christian inscription earlier than the time of Constantine has been found there to connect with either group. The tombstone is a very ornate example of a type which I have not elsewhere known to be used by Christians, though it is very common in all parts of Phrygia. It represents a door, presumably the door of the temple in which the dead persons, who are worshipped by their descendants as gods, reside. The inscription proper has not survived, but on the door-posts the words—

“They live, having escaped a great danger,”

were inscribed in small letters. The Greek words form an iambic senarius: *ζῶσω μέγαν κίνδυνον ἐκπεφευγότες*. The words savour more of a Christian than a pagan view of death.

12. An interesting question arises: Do the inscriptions throw any light on the organization of the Churches in the district? Only one inscription of the northern group relates to this subject. It is engraved on a stone, whose surface has been carefully defaced; it was originally very deeply and clearly engraved in fine letters of the third century, but most of the letters are now mutilated, and have to be guessed from small parts of them that can still be seen. In addition, the Greek is bad, the construction awkward and ungrammatical, and the spelling bad, so that the sense is in some places obscured beyond my powers of divination.

“The tomb which you behold, stranger, contains Aquilas, beloved [by men?] and by the angels of God, a leader of the people, and wont to entertain just thoughts, he came to the mansion of God, great in honours, and to his rest.

“And in my house I left my wife Cyrilla; and their children Trophimus and Patricius and Cyrillus<sup>1</sup> mindful made (the grave) with their mother and their wives, who were named Ammia, in remembrance.”

There are many interesting points in this document. The distinction of class, people and leader or president, laity and clergy, is drawn, and even the technical term “laity” is used (*λαός*), but I have refrained from using it in the text, not wishing positively to assert that the writer used it in its technical sense. I do not however think there can be any real doubt, for the verb as well as the noun is the technical term, which was used of the relation between the priest or bishop and his people (*λαοῦ προστάμενον*). It is therefore practically certain that we have here the epitaph

<sup>1</sup> After the names is a line which I cannot bring into the construction, though the reading is practically certain, *μέσσων ναοῖς θεός [δ]ῶκεν κλέος ἀφθιτον ἐν [α]ερόπεσσι [ν]*. It is intended as a hexameter!! The writer substituted *μέσσων ναοῖς θεός* for some other words in the line which served him as a model and thus ruined the metre.

of a bishop, who died amid the veneration of his congregation, and amid circumstances which led them to pay special honour to him. It is greatly to be regretted that several words are lost, for the peculiar phraseology makes this inscription one of the most interesting of the series.

The remarks made above about the distinctive Christian nomenclature of No. 7 show that this inscription is not very early; on the other hand it has nothing of a thoroughly developed and stereotyped character about it. The expression, though tending to the regular formal technicality of the later Christian inscriptions, is still fluid, showing life and growth. The age of the inscription may be best determined by comparison with a post-Constantine inscription of Cotiaion, "*Eutychianus, who was honoured by the priesthood and the laity and glorified by God: to him in remembrance his wife Nikostrate and the children (erected the tomb).*" Here the expression has become technical and stereotyped, and shows a later age and more advanced style. Yet this later inscription still belongs to the period when the heathen party was a living power, for the expression is moulded in opposition to a pagan formula employed at Cotiaion on tombstones, "*honoured by Hecate, the Saving Goddess.*" The later inscription then is probably not later than the middle of the fourth century. Chance has preserved to us a long and curious inscription on the opposite side, showing that the expression of the pagans in the final controversy between the two religions was quite as much influenced by Christian language, as the Christians were by the pagans. It is too long to quote here,<sup>1</sup> but its phraseology shows that the Cotiaion inscription must not be placed much later. It is luckily dated A.D. 314. I therefore place the inscription of Aquilas confidently in the early part of the third century, and see

<sup>1</sup> I have published it in my "Cities and Bishoprics," part I., No. 33, in the *Journal of Hellenic Studies*, 1883

in him a bishop of Prepenissos, who had been a leader and guide to his people (possibly even a martyr) during the troubled time of the great persecution 303-13, A.D.

I have already mentioned that the one episode in Phrygian church history on which Eusebius gives any details is the heresy of Montanus and the controversy which it roused. Now I shall show, in due course, that the inscriptions of the district where this controversy was most acute refer to the very persons who took part in that controversy. The general probability may be inferred from this example that the inscriptions refer to prominent members of the Christian community, who were leaders in the provincial movements; and it is probable that if history had taken any note of the Christian movement in north-western Phrygia, Aquilas would be a prominent figure in it.

These are the only Christian inscriptions of northern Phrygia which can be safely placed earlier than 320 A.D. The number is small, but from them we have learned something about the state of religion and society in the country between 200 and 300 A.D. They have been picked up in the course of a few days' rapid travel across the country; and they give some conception of what might be discovered by a careful search. And this must be done quickly, if it be done at all, for the old marbles are being destroyed every year. I have myself copied many inscriptions in the hands of masons or of stone-cutters; a few days later these stones were built into new walls, or cut up and smoothed to make modern grave-stones. In the great cities of Asia Minor, ancient monuments are made down into grave-stones by the score every year, and the supply is not inexhaustible. I have known cases of large blocks of marble being brought from an ancient site more than thirty miles distant across the mountains, to be cut up at Kutaya. At the present day Asia Minor is on the eve of a new start in life and activity. Railways are penetrating the country, and carrying with

them a spirit of energy and utilitarianism, which is the worst enemy of ancient monuments. The eleventh inscription which I have given above, was copied by me in Nov., 1881, half buried in the ground beside a fountain on a bypath across the hills. In July, 1883, it was seen and re-copied by a friend of mine in a wagon half way on the road to a large town about twenty-one miles distant, and it was certainly used up a few days later.

I should here mention the only examples known to me of Christian expressions in Asia Minor similar to those which have been enumerated. None exist in the other parts of Phrygia. In Apollonia, a city of Pisidia, in the Roman province Galatia, and in Corycos, a city of Cilicia, the word "Christian" occurs, but it is in the genitive case, and is not really the same formula which we have seen above. In Antioch of Pisidia, also, a closer parallel occurs to the other formula, in which we detected a Christian origin: "Artemeis to his wife Ia Manto, in remembrance: thou shalt not wrong God." The words are the same, but much better spelt, and written continuously with the epitaph, instead of being put apart in a corner of the grave-stone.<sup>1</sup>

What then was the origin of this peculiar Christianity of north-western Phrygia? No direct evidence exists, but as it is so clearly distinct from the southern Phrygian Church movement, it must have come from the north. The great strength of Christianity in Bithynia, to the north of Phrygia, attested by Pliny as early as 102 A.D., occurs to us as probably a connected phenomenon. Bithynian Christians would naturally pass down by way of Cotiaion to the Prepenisseis; this was the most natural road for their missionary enterprise to take. A slight positive pre-

<sup>1</sup> Of these three inscriptions, the first is published by Prof. Sterrett, who has not read the word "χρηστιανοῦ," which I can attest; the second is C. I. G., No. 9172; the third is published by Prof. Sterrett, who has transliterated differently, and has therefore not given the formula (Sterrett, *Wolfe Expedition*, No. 555; *Epigraphical Journey in Asia Minor*, No. 142).



sumption in favour of the connexion is furnished by a passage in the biography of a Bithynian saint, Zeno of Nicomedeia, "I have buried my wife, a Christian, but I have sons who are Christians with me." This sounds like a reminiscence of the formula "Christians to Christians."

In the biography of another Bithynian saint, Hypatius, of the monastery Rufiniana, near Chalcedon, who flourished about 400 to 450 A.D., it is said that the clergy of the few Phrygian Churches "were rather stupid, as is natural in a country district," and therefore Hypatius, though a native of Phrygia, went away to Thrace to get a religious education.<sup>1</sup> This account corresponds with all that we have learned about north-western Phrygia; it suggests, what geographical circumstances make probable, that the Bithynians knew only one district of Phrygia.

Tradition in the early part of the fifth century derived this Bithynian movement from a visit of Paul and Silas. In the *Acta* of Philetærus the Bithynian Martyr (May 19th) mention is made of a church at a place Poketos, between the Rhyndacus and Cyzicus, which was dedicated, according to tradition, by Paul the Apostle and Silas, when they visited the Troad. Philetærus died in the persecution of Diocletian, and the *Acta* profess to be written at the time by Anthimus, Theodorus, and Carterius, pretending outwardly to be philosophers, dreading to be known as Christians. This is a "pious fraud," the *Acta* are clearly later; but they seem to be not later than the time when paganism was still a living power, and they contain some interesting information about the Bithynian country and old religion. Hence I think they are not likely to be much later in composition than A.D. 400 to 450.

One interesting group of Christian remains of a later date

<sup>1</sup> The biography purports to have been written by his disciple Callinius, and to have been worked up by another hand in the time of the third successor of Hypatius in the leadership of the monastery.

exists among the mountains of northern Phrygia, round the cities of Docimion, Meros, and Metropolis. Here we find numerous graves, chapels, and churches, cut out of the living rock. They seem to belong to the age of hermits and anchorets. Some of them are of interest architecturally; and on one of the rock churches there are considerable remains of a large wall-painting, which must be at least older than the Mohammedan conquest in the eleventh century. I shall here describe only one of these rock-cuttings, because it so clearly indicates its origin. There is a very remarkable monument of the eighth or ninth century before Christ carved on a lofty conical rock. In the back of this smooth and steep rock, about half-way up, a rude little chapel has been cut; above the chapel there is a series of holes, by the aid of which it is possible to ascend to the top of the rock, where there is a tiny platform. There are no holes below the chapel, and without help it is impossible to reach it. The place has all the appearance of having once being the abode of a hermit of the style of Simeon Stylites, who spent his life partly on the summit of the rock, and partly in the chapel below.

The style of epitaphs and other memorials customary in this district, in the centuries between Constantine and the Turkish conquest may be briefly alluded to. To the fourth, fifth, and later centuries belong various classes of inscriptions in stereotyped formulæ, identical with those found all over Asia Minor.

1. "On account of the prayer of Patricius and Trophimus, the presbyters," is engraved on a small column. In another village we find on a block of marble, with a large cross in relief, "On account of the prayer of Tryphon and of his wife Ariagne, Lord, help, and of all their household." A similar stone mentions Zoticus, an anagnostes, or reader. Numerous examples of this formula occur.

2. All inscriptions known to me, which mention pres-

byters, or readers, or virgins, or deacons, or deaconesses, are of the post-Constantine period, marked as such by various criteria of style, lettering, etc., and occasionally by actual dating. The constitution of the Church in Phrygia was evidently more settled in fixed and well-marked grades in the fourth century, than in the third, and moreover the general fear to proclaim their religion too openly would prevent such titles as presbyter from being engraved on tombs. So far as I know, the title "bishop" occurs only once on a Phrygian inscription, which is probably of the fourth century. The contrast between the numerous presbyters and the single bishop is to be explained by the frequent equivalence of the two titles in early time; the evidence clearly points to the conclusion that the term presbyter was much more commonly used in Phrygia than bishop, to denote the head of the Church in each district. In the case quoted above, however, *presbyter* is evidently used in the stricter sense distinguished from bishop, as two presbyters are mentioned.

3. A longer formula is also found, "on behalf of the prayer and the safety of Eunomius and of all his house." This and the preceding formula are often placed on stones or columns intended for use in churches, and record the completion of some repair or the building of some part of the church.

4. "Save, Lord, thy servant Constantine, the presbyter, son of Photinus," is an example of a less common opening, whereas—

5. "Lord, help," is a much commoner way of beginning an inscription, and

6. "God, help," is nearly as common.

7. "The servant of God" is one of the commonest expressions, and may be taken, like all the other forms quoted, as a certain indication of late date.

8. "Here lies (*ἐνθά κατάκειται*)" is very common; it is

often united with the last, as "Here lies the servant of God, Anastasius." It came into use after Constantine, and soon became the regular commencement of epitaphs. In the district which has just been described, I have not met any example of this formula, but this must be merely accidental. It is too widely spread to have been unknown in north-western Phrygia, and provincial differences gave way during the fourth century to a uniformity of church character.

9. A cross followed by a name in the genitive is another common form of epitaph in late time.

10. Sporadic formula, such as "Pardon our sins," "a vow to God," and numerous others, all couched in precise and thoroughly scriptural terms. Among these I may especially mention various uses of the words connected with "sleep" and "rest" (*κοιμάομαι* and *ἀναπαύομαι*), though we have seen above an example of "rest" (*ἀνάπαυσις*) as early as 300-20 A.D.

There is a marked difference between the later and the earlier inscriptions. There is in the older a freedom and individuality and variety which are entirely wanting in the later. The later epitaphs are expressed in a few formulæ, which convey to us no information beyond the name of the deceased, and his relation to his God or to the Church. The difference is only one of many symptoms due to the same cause, *viz.* the changed system of provincial government under the constitution consolidated by Diocletian about A.D. 297. Government was now centralized, the municipal self-government which the older Roman system had encouraged ceased to be a reality, and the imperial government became all in all. The citizens began more and more to feel themselves merely "servants of the emperor" in politics, "servants of God" in religion, devoid of individuality and mere units in a powerful system.

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W. M. RAMSAY.