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‘GOVERNOR OF JUDEA AND SYRIA’
A NEW DEDICATION FROM DOR TO GARGILIUS ANTIQUUS

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Introduction

During an underwater survey conducted on 7 January 2016 by the Laboratory for Coastal Archaeology and Underwater Survey at the University of Haifa’s Department of Maritime Civilizations, a limestone block presenting a Greek inscription was discovered. It was found in the southern part of Dor’s northern bay, some 20 meters from the shore, at a depth of 1.5 meters. It was lying on the bottom on its left side, and it was fully visible at the time of its discovery, as a result of the temporary shift of sand, which usually covers the area. Prompt action was required, to avoid damage to the inscription or its disappearance under the returning sand. It was therefore removed from its place of discovery two days after it had been found in a joint effort of the Marine Archaeological Unit of the Israel Antiquities Authority (IAA), the National Park Authority and the Recanati Institute for Maritime Studies at the University of Haifa (RIMS).¹ The stone next underwent a thorough process of cleaning and preservation at the IAA headquarters in Caesarea, and the inscription on it was then read by the authors of this article.

The block is made of limestone, with torus decoration on top.² The right face of the stone (when facing the inscription) is very sea worn, and chisel marks appear on the left face and back side. Sea-worn sockets in the form of feet appear on top of the block, indicating that it served as a statue base, probably of a bronze statue. The current dimensions of the stone are: max. height 74 cm; max. width 58 cm; max. depth (front to back) 68 cm. Its original shape was circular, at a diameter of c. 75 cm, making it a round base or column base, which was no doubt worked at a later time for reuse.

The inscription on the statue base’s façade contains seven evenly spaced lines in Greek, which comprised the entire inscription, since below them part of the inscription’s frame is still preserved. Since the left and right sides of the inscribed surface were not preserved, only the middle part of each line is discernible. The letters are mostly evenly sized and spaced, and their average height is 4.5 cm.

The full polyonymous formula of the dedicatee’s name, Gargilius Antiquus, is known to us from other sources, which fact allows us to restore the original length of the opening lines. The first five lines of the inscription are longer, and comprise on average 22 letters, of which ten on average are missing at the beginning of each line, and ten are preserved. The last two lines are shorter and, as they do not reach the worn-out part on the right, it may be said with certainty that we have their ends. All lines appear to have been centered, rather than aligned to the left or justified.

* The authors wish to express their gratitude to Prof. Werner Eck for closely following the process of reading and interpreting the inscription, and for lending advice and guidance at moments of doubt. – This research was supported by THE ISRAEL SCIENCE FOUNDATION (grant No. 703/13).

¹ The block was found by Ehud Arkin Shalev and Michelle Creisher. We are grateful to Jacob Sharvit, head of the IAA Marine Unit, Yigael Ben-Ari, head of the Marine Division of the Israel Nature and Parks Authority, and Moshiko Bachar of the Maritime Workshop of RIMS for their help in the extraction of the block from the sea. We also wish to thank the IAA Marine Unit for the initial conservation of the block in Caesarea.

² The stone has been sampled and undergone infrared spectroscopic analysis in the Laboratory for Sedimentary Archaeology at the Department of Maritime Civilizations, University of Haifa. Based on the dominance of calcite in the sample, as well as parameters related to peak height and width, it has been concluded that we are looking at limestone. We are grateful to Ruth Shahack-Gross, head of the laboratory, for conducting the test on our behalf.

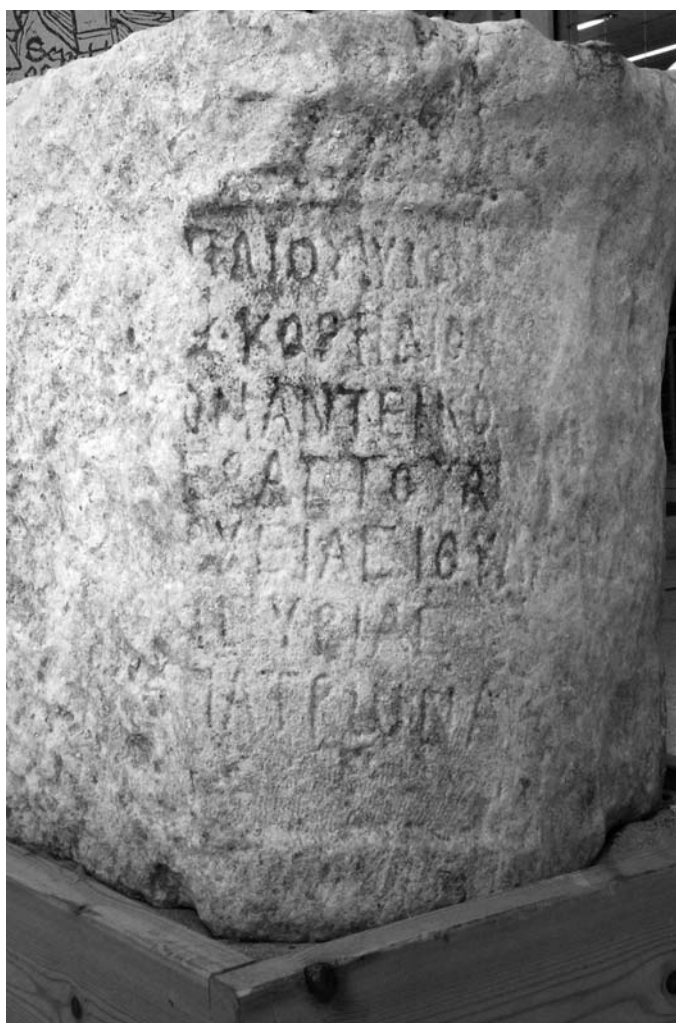


Fig. 1. The new inscription of Gargilius Antiquus (photo by Jonathan Gottlieb)

The Inscription

1. [.....]ΠΙΛΙΟΥΥΙΟΝ
2. [.....]ΚΚΟΡΗΔΙΟΝ
3. [.....]ΟΝΑΝΤΕΙΚΟ[...]
4. [.....]ΕΒΑΚΤΟΥΑΝ[.]
5. [.....]ΡΧΕΙΑΚΙΟΥΔΑ[...]
6. [..]ΙΣΥΡΙΑΣ
7. [..]ΠΑΤΡΩΝΑ

[Μ(ἄρκον) Πάκκιον Πο]πλίου υἱὸν | [--³ Σιλουανὸν] Κ(οίντον) Κορήδιον | [Γάλλον Γαργίλι]ον
 Ἄντεικο[υ]ον | πρεσβευτὴν Σ]εβαστοῦ ἄν[τι]στράτηγον ἐπα]ρχείας Ἰουδα[ίας | καὶ] Συρίας |
 τὸν] πᾶτρωνα.

(In honor of) Marcus Paccius, son of Publius ..., Silvanus Quintus Core dius Gallus Gargilius Antiquus, imperial governor with praetorian rank of the province of Judea and of Syria, the patron (a statue was erected).

³ It is possible that the name of the tribe appeared here. See the corresponding space in *CIIP* 2.2122, where the letters were also not preserved.

Discussion

Lines 1–3 of the inscription contain enough elements from the name of the dedicatee to assert with certainty that he is the same person appearing on another inscription found at Dor in 1948/9 and published for the first time by Gera and Cotton in 1989.⁴ Also the previously known inscription appeared under a statue dedicated by the city of Dor to Gargilius Antiquus. It was inscribed on a circular stone with two dowel holes on its top, indicating that it too served as a base for presenting a bronze statue of Gargilius Antiquus.

The dedicatee's full name was Marcus Paccius, son of Publius, Silvanus Q. Corelius Gallus Gargilius Antiquus, who, aside from the two attestations of his name in Dor, is known to have served as the governor of Arabia around 116 CE (*AE* 1973, 551) and then as suffect consul in May 119 CE (*AE* 1979, 62). He is also known to have reached by 134/5 the ultimate position in a senatorial career – the proconsulate of Asia (*IGR* 4, 848).

The previously known inscription from Dor includes most of his name, and the title of imperial governor with praetorian rank, but the name of the province is not preserved. Ancient geographers traditionally located Dor in 'Syria' (e.g. Ptol. *Geog.* 5.15.1–2), while referring to Caesarea as the northernmost border of 'Palestine' (Plin. *NH* 5.69), and therefore Gera and Cotton assumed that the province must have been Syria. Since then, Dąbrowa has reminded us that ancient geography did not necessarily align its traditional regional designation with contemporary administrative divisions.⁵ In other words, the fact that, to Ptolemy, Dor was a part of the region of Syria does not imply that the Roman imperial administration included the city in the province of Syria.⁶ Since Dor later appears as part of the province of Palaestina, Dąbrowa preferred to locate it in the province of Judea also in the early 2nd century CE, and to ascribe to Gargilius Antiquus the governorship of Judea sometime after 119 CE and before 130 CE.

The most recent reference to the previously known inscription appears in the second volume of the *Corpus Inscriptionum Iudaeae/Palaestinae*, dedicated to Caesarea and the middle coast (*CIIP* 2.2122). The editors accept Dąbrowa's correction, and refer in their commentary to the honorand as 'governor of Judea'. Since Dąbrowa's publication the name of another consular governor of Judea, Cossonius Gallus, was revealed in an inscription from Caesarea, datable to c. 120 CE (*CIIP* 2.1227). The slab of grey-white marble column probably contained the full *cursus honorum* of the governor, starting with his position at the time of the dedication as the governor of Judea: *legato imperatoris Hadriani Augusti pro praetore provinciae Iudaeae*. The editors of the *CIIP* narrow the period offered by Dąbrowa for Gargilius Antiquus' tenure as Judea's governor to ca. 123–125 CE, possibly following Cossonius Gallus directly.

The new inscription from Dor reinforces this assertion, with lines 4–5 supplying the title of Gargilius Antiquus as 'imperial governor of the province of Judea'. What should give us pause is the information obtained from line 6, presenting the full name of the province of Syria in the genitive case. The question which immediately arises relates to the nature of the connection of our man to the province of Syria. The only channel of interpretation possible here is that the official title of imperial governor, which already appears on the inscription in lines 4–5, applies both to the province of Judea and to that of Syria, possibly with a conjunction between them.

There are considerable reasons to approach Gargilius Antiquus as 'imperial governor of Judea and Syria' – not simultaneously, to be sure, but sequentially: first Judea, then Syria. Syria and Judea were heavily garrisoned – with five legions between them at the time – and they are not known to have been united under a single governor at any point.⁷ Gargilius Antiquus therefore must have served as governor of Judea in 123–125 CE, and would have then moved on directly to Syria, where he probably served from 125 to 128 CE, just before Pablicius Marcellus, who governed the province from the summer of 128 CE until 134/5 CE.⁸

⁴ Gera and Cotton 1989; Gera and Cotton 1991; Gera and Cotton 1995.

⁵ Dąbrowa 1995. See also Dąbrowa 2017.

⁶ Bowersock 1988; MacAdam 1989.

⁷ Birley 2017.

⁸ Eck and Pangerl 2006: 221–230.

The choice to include only the governorship of Judea and Syria on the inscription may have derived from the relevance of these positions to the city of Dor. The border between the provinces of Judea and Syria would have passed immediately to the north of Dor, probably at Certha.⁹ And, of course, the city had been a part of the province of Syria in the past, possibly until as late as the Jewish revolt of 66–70 CE.¹⁰ In such a context, the governor who had ruled Judea and sat regularly in adjacent Caesarea may very well have been honored by Dor upon his nomination to the position of governor of Syria. The relationship between the city and the magistrate would have been established on the occasion of the latter accepting on himself the responsibility of a patron of the city, probably still as governor of Judea. But the status would no doubt have remained relevant and beneficial for Dor when its patron rose to the strongest, most influential position in the east.

Context of the Find

The inscription was found at a depth of 1.5 m in the southeastern part of the North Bay of Dor.¹¹ The context of the find enables us to conjecture about the circumstances of its deposition in the bay, since it was found within a vast concentration of stone column drums and ashlar blocks. The column drums are made of *kurkar*, local coastal sandstone, and they range in diameter from 0.55 m to 0.90 m.¹² Of the 25 examples found in underwater surveys between 2012–2016 none seem to be connected with a submerged structure; they are, in fact, concentrated in groups of 3–4, no group comprising a complete column.

The area in which the column drums were found is covered with hundreds of well-drafted *kurkar* ashlar blocks.¹³ Kinglsey and Raveh, as well as Raban, interpreted these blocks as evidence for a built harbor in the North Bay.¹⁴ However, none of these blocks seems to be connected to any submerged structure, or to follow a visible collapse pattern. Furthermore, the orientation of the blocks does not follow the directionality of the waves, and they are unlikely to have been swept by the sea from coastal structures and deposited in the shallow water by the coast. We would like to propose, instead, that the concentration of stones and column drums, including the block on which the new inscription was discovered, was formed by an altogether different activity – the continuous looting from Dor of stones and other architectural elements during the centuries that followed the decline of the Roman and Byzantine city.

One can reconstruct a process in which stones were taken from structures on top of the tel, likely adjacent to the seafront on the North bay, transferred to the coast, and loaded upon barges fit for the shallow depth of the bay. More column drums were found on land, close to the water line, within a heap of ashlar stones, just north of a large rectangular structure dated to the Roman period.¹⁵ Thus, there appears to be a trail of column drums and other architectural elements found in the water and on the coast. Furthermore, Raban mentions 12 columns grouped together in the central part of the bay.¹⁶ These have since disappeared, yet they may have formed another group of *spolia* ready to be transferred by sea from Dor.

The origin of the column drums may be traced back to buildings on land. *Kurkar* column drums of varying sizes were exposed in Garstang's excavations of the Severan temple podium.¹⁷ At least some of them may have belonged to a colonnaded structure which stood within building F. The other temple structure, building F itself, is reconstructed as a podium structure with colonnades surrounding the cella on three sides.¹⁸

⁹ Dąbrowa 1995.

¹⁰ See the introduction to Dor in *CIIP* II, pp. 831–836.

¹¹ Location: N 32d37m16.1s E 34d55m06.9s.

¹² Yasur-Landau 2013; Arkin Shalev 2015: fig. 8.6.

¹³ Yasur-Landau 2013; Arkin Shalev 2015: fig. 8.8.

¹⁴ Kinglsey and Raveh 1994: 291–293; Raban 1995: 289–296.

¹⁵ Kinglsey and Raveh 1994: figs. 2, 4.

¹⁶ Raban 1995: 289.

¹⁷ Garstang 1924: pl. IVa; Stern 1995: 5 photos 1.7–1.10.

¹⁸ Nitschke *et al.* 2011: 147, 150.

A visual inspection of the new Dor inscription shows that it was modified to be used as a building block before it was deposited in the sea. Its left side is completely chiseled, as if its width was reduced to fit it into a wall.¹⁹ The coarse chisel marks defaced what was before a smooth surface of a circular statue base, intended to be viewed from all directions. Furthermore, the middle of the right face of the statue base has a deep horizontal groove, extending all the way to the back face of the stone. This was likely caused by a failed or interrupted attempt to cut the base into two blocks. It may well be that, by the time the inscribed base reached its final resting place in the shallow bottom of the bay, it was already twice-removed from its original function.



Fig. 2. Chisel marks on the left side of the block
(photo by Jonathan Gottlieb)

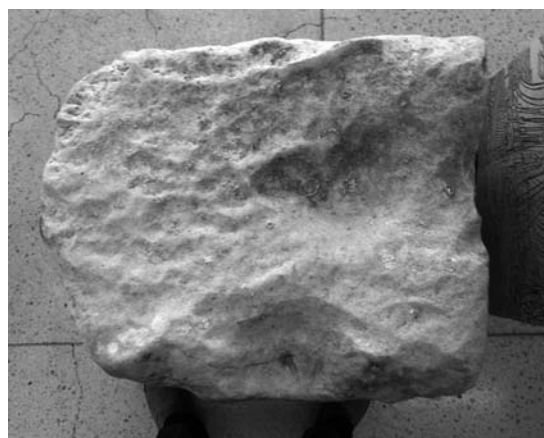


Fig. 3. Two sockets on the top side of the block
(photo by Jonathan Gottlieb)

Comparison with *CIIP* 2.2122

Both the new Dor statue base and the base of *CIIP* 2.2122 are made of limestone, and are of similar height (74–75 cm). However, there are several differences between them, which suggest that they were created by different artisans and maybe came from different contexts. The current general shape of the new base is square with a rounded front face, which suggests that originally it was shaped as a circular statue-base, later hewn and modified to serve as a building block for secondary use. Similarly, the base on which *CIIP* 2.2122 was discovered is rounded throughout its perimeter. The statue which was originally presented on the base of *CIIP* 2.2122 was attached to it by means of two dowel holes, while the top of the new statue base, although eroded, shows marks of two sockets in the form of human feet.²⁰ Additionally, the Greek transcription of the Latin name *Antiquus* employs a chi in *CIIP* 2.2122 and a kappa in the new inscription. Finally, it is probable that the lines of *CIIP* 2.2122 were justified, whereas the newly discovered inscription appears to have been centered.

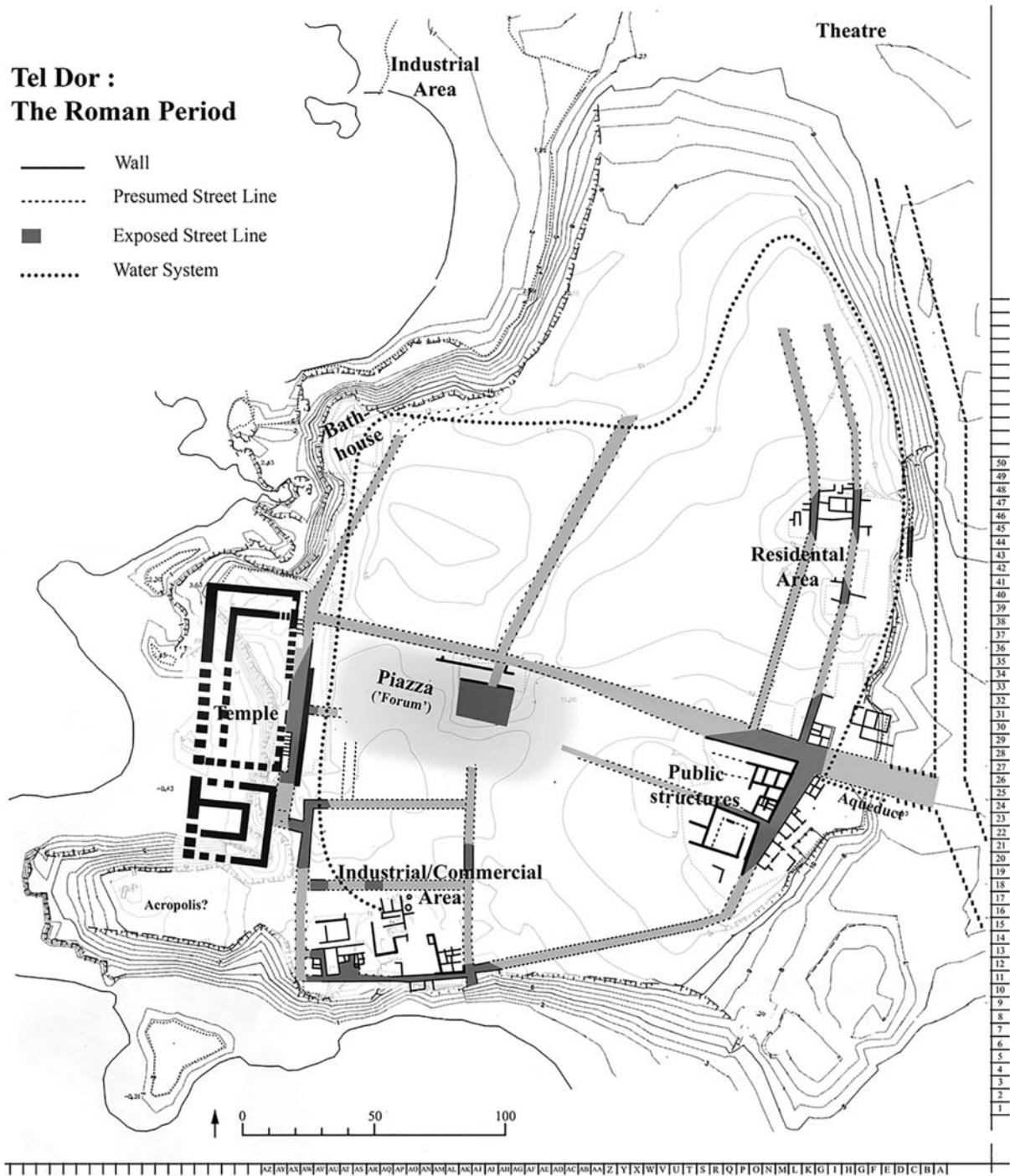
Although not discovered during an archaeological excavation, the reported find-spot of *CIIP* 2.2122 by the eastern gate of Dor suggests that the two statue bases originated from two different localities on the tel.²¹ The original locations of the statues would have been related to the civic routine in the Roman city: a

¹⁹ See Fig. 2.

²⁰ See Fig. 3.

²¹ Gera and Cotton 1995: 497.

public structure by the eastern gate; a central piazza (a forum) in the center of the mound;²² the theater to its east;²³ or even the large rectangular structure by the northern bay, no doubt a public building.²⁴ These are, in fact, the structures that include phases attributed to the 2nd century, and are awaiting final publication.



Map 1. Tel Dor in the Roman period²⁵

²² Nitschke *et al.* 2011: fig. 20.

²³ Stern 1995: 6–7.

²⁴ Raban 1995: fig. 9.2.

²⁵ Courtesy of Yiftah Shalev: Nitschke *et al.* 2011: 146.

Conclusion

The new inscription from Dor corroborates past conjectures on the identity of a governor of Judea during the 120s CE, as well as provides additional information about the career of the governor himself – Gargilius Antiquus. The fact that two separate honorary monuments were dedicated by a city to the same Roman governor is not unique in itself. Nor is the designation as patron of the city – common enough in the Roman world and possibly also mentioned in *CIIP* 2.2122, on the bottom part now missing – a token of an outstanding relationship between Dor and Gargilius Antiquus. It may at least be carefully suggested that the city of Dor benefited one way or another from the actions of Gargilius Antiquus as governor of Judea during the years that separated between the Diaspora and the Bar-Kokhba revolts.

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