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Sergio España-Chamorro

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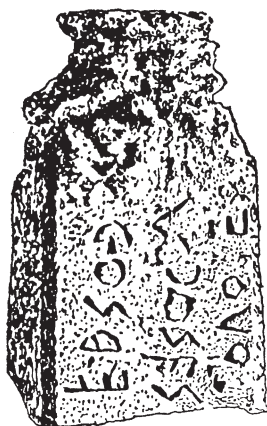
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*On Vlpia Aticilla sarcophagus**

Introduction

Lot 76 of the «Egyptian, Classical and Western Asiatic Antiquities, including property of the Albright-Knox Art Gallery» auction was sold at Sotheby's in New York on the 7th June 2007 (1).

This lot is an interesting sarcophagus because it bears an unpublished inscription on its front side. Like other similar pieces bought in the antiquities market recently published (2), this new inscription could reveal new data for Roman prosopography.

* Photographs courtesy of Sotheby's, Inc. © 2019. The author belongs to the Research Group «Arqueología Africana» (UCM-971713). This research was funded by the I+D Proyect «*Carmina Latina Epigraphica* como expresión de la identidad del mundo romano. Estudios interdisciplinarios» (MINECO Ref. PGC2018-095981-B-I00) and an IdEx Bordeaux Postdoctoral Fellowship.

(1) <http://www.sothebys.com/en/auctions/ecatalogue/2007/egyptian-classical-and-western-asiatic-antiquities-including-property-of-the-albright-knox-art-gallery-n08325/lot.76.html>. Sotheby's Lot 76 sold for 90.000 USD \$.

(2) M.P. DE HOZ GARCÍA-BELLIDO, *An Anatolian Funerary Stele in an Antique Shop in Seville*



Fig. 1. Front of child's sarcophagus.

This sarcophagus is a single piece of marble that has remained intact: a single block of Italian marble from the quarries of *Luni* (Carrara, Italy). It measures 39.1 cm in height, 139 cm in length and has a thickness of 43.2 cm. It bears decoration on three of its four sides. The main side is composed of a *tabula ansata* in which the text has been inscribed, and a decoration with a spiralled fluting pattern (*strigila*) flanks the epigraphic area. Lateral sides are decorated with a military theme: a composition of shields and spears.

The conditions of this piece are good. There are only some erosions that have affected mainly the bottom corners. There are also four holes on the main side: three of them afflict the fluted decoration while another affects the *tabula ansata* (3), however this does not alter the interpretation of the text. This sarcophagus can be catalogued in the typology of strigilar sarcophagi.



Fig. 2. Side of child's sarcophagus.

(Spain), «EA» 40 (2007), pp. 119-124; O. COLORU, *A Marble Relief Representing the Gladiator Dareios*, «ZPE», 175 (2010), pp. 161-163; O. COLORU, *Two Greek Funerary Inscriptions from the Antiquities Market*, «ZPE», 182 (2012), pp. 202-204; L. BENEDETTI I et alii, *Antichità vere e false in internet: cinerari iscritti da siti web di case d'asta e gallerie d'arte*, «SEBar», 15 (2017), pp. 69-99; S. ESPAÑA-CHAMORRO, *Nota sobre tres urnas cinerarias procedentes del mercado de antigüedades* «ZPE», 210 (2019), pp. 304-306; S. ESPAÑA-CHAMORRO - D. CHAPINAL HERAS, *¡Qué haya buena suerte, Hispane! Una urna cineraria con un nombre poco común*, «SEBarc», 17 (2019), pp. 169-175; S. ESPAÑA-CHAMORRO - D. CHAPINAL HERAS, *Fortune, a bull, and two rams - A new ostiotheke probably from Ephesos*, «Epigraphica Anatolica», 52 (2019), pp. 139-142.

(3) These holes were used to fix the sarcophagus cover.

Context

This child sarcophagus (4) comes from the antiquities market. The problem with this situation is firstly that there is usually no information about the discovery of these kinds of pieces, furthermore there is the strict confidentiality of the current collection or owner.

Due to this situation, there is very little available information about the item's history and about its origin. The information supplied to us by the auction house gives record of a purchase made by the German entrepreneur Max Himmelheber, from Baiersbronn in the 1960's. The sarcophagus remained in this collection until its sale at the German auction house 'Nagel Auktionen', in Stuttgart on the 4th November 2003 (lot 278). This was purchased by an unknown collector who kept it until the 2007 sale at Sotheby's New York. There is no further news about its current location.

Text

The inscribed area is delimited by a frame with the shape of a *tabula ansata*. The text is a new addition to the corpus of Latin inscriptions. The reintegration of the text is:

D(is) M(anibus) S(acrum).
 Ulpiae · Atticillae
 Ulpius · Atticus et
 C(aia) · Valeriana · paren=
 5 tes · filliae · dulcissimae
 q(ui) · vix(it) · an(nos) · VIII · m(enses) · IIII · (dies) XXV
 ⊂vacat⊃
 locus · dat(us) · a · C(aia) · T(iti) · f(ilia) ·
 Alexandria

The *ordinatio* of this text presents some particularities, which is unorganised in some points which contrast with the cared craft of the epigraphic support. Line 1 follows the perfect proportion of the space, while in line 2 it appears that the *lapicida* had forgotten to insert the final 'e' of the dative form. In line 3, there is a very uncommon (5) *nexus literarum* between C and V. Lines 7 and 8 seems to have been crafted by another hand or in a different moment, mainly due to the size of the letters which are slightly smaller.

This could have been added in a consecutive correction of the name *Attius* for

(4) Literature about this topic is quite numerous. Some interesting approaches are: J. HUSKINSON, *Disappearing Children? Children in Roman Funerary Art of the First to the Fourth Century AD*, in K. MUSTAKALLIO ET ALII (ed.), *Hoping for Continuity. Childhood, Education and Death in Antiquity and the Middle Ages* (ActaInstRomFin 33), Roma 2005, pp. 91-103; J. HUSKINSON, *Constructing Childhood on Roman Funerary Memorials*, in A. COHEN - J.B. RUTTER (ed.) *Constructing of Childhood in Ancient Greece and Italy* (Hesperia Suppl. 41), Princeton 2007, pp. 323-338; J. HUSKINSON, *Roman sarcophagi and children*, in S. CRAWFORD - D. HADLEY - G. SHEPHERD (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of the Archaeology of Childhood*, Oxford 2018, pp. 557-572.

(5) E. HÜBNER, *Exempla scripturae epigraphicae latinae a Caesaris dictatoris morte ad aetatem justiniani* (Apud Georgium Reimerum), Berlin 1885, pp. LXIX of the *prolegomena* or R. CAGNAT, *Cours d'épigraphie latine*, Paris 1914, pp. 24-25 did not include this type of *nexus* among the more common ones.



Fig. 3. Epigraphic area.

the definitive correct form *Attius*. The text in lines 4, 5 and 6 has been extended up to the right part of the framework (the extreme part of the right handle of the *tabula ansata*). This is somewhat surprising because there is sufficient space directly after to avoid the need for the insertion of text in such a forced fashion.

The palaeography is *capitalis quadrata* and is around 2 to 3 cm. high. There are some triangular, irregular interpunctuations. The style used in the letters has been carefully obtained, but with some particularities: l. 1 the abbreviation misses interpunctuations (also l. 2, between Atticus and et); l. 2 the I of *Atticilliae* is longer than the other letters (unusual, maybe a corrected mistake); l. 2, 3 and 4, letter P does not close (usual in the Antonines inscriptions). Attending to Cagnat's typology (6) of monumental alphabets, it can be dated in the later Antonines or early Severian age. It must be noted the different execution of the secondary text (ll. 7-8), with letters of different sizes.

Text commentary

The prosopographic aspect of this sarcophagus is interesting and it can help to define the likely provenance and date. There are four people quoted in these inscriptions: the deceased, her parents and a woman who provided the place to store the sarcophagus.

The deceased, Ulpia Aticilla, has a name with some particularities. Her *nomen* has been acquired from the *name* of her father, but the *cognomen* is neither directly related to her father nor her mother. There are two possible reasons for this: the first and most probable is a derivation from *Atticus* to the form *Atticilla*, as other cases in Rome in which we can find the same father-daughter pattern (7). The other option is that her *cognomen Atticillius* could have derived from one of her grandparents. There are some examples of this process. The case of Plautia Urgulanilla, first wife of em-

(6) CAGNAT, *Cours d'épigraphie* cit., p. 4, Pl. I.

(7) CIL VI, 12702, 14948, 28952 and may be CIL X, 7811. For the relation between these two *cognomina* see I. KAJANTO, *The Latin Cognomina*, Rome 1984, p. 203.

peror Claudius, is one of the most famous. Her name comes from her father's family, the *Plauti*. On the other hand, the *cognomen* was acquired from her maternal grandmother Urgulania. In this case, there is no register of the grandparents of Ulpia Atticilla, but it could be possible. The name of Ulpia Atticilla is not rare. There are three homonym cases: one from Ostia (8); one from Komárno (Hungary) (9) and the last one comes from Rome (10) in which a woman named as well Ulpia Atticilla is quoted with her sister, Ulpia Attica. It is astonishing that both names could seem related with the father of our inscription. Notwithstanding, the names of the parents are quoted in the inscription from Rome, and it reveals a different family (the father is Titus Aelius Felix and the mother is Ulpia Saturnina).

The name of the father is also interesting to explore. Ulpus Atticus does not quote the *praenomen* (but probably had it (11)). This is quite common in the funerary context such as this in which parents dedicated the sarcophagus to their children. Despite the fact that *Atticus* is a geographical *cognomen*, the study of dispersion made by Kajanto (12) shows that, as in the cases of *Graecus* and *Sarmata*, this is not to be understood as indicative of a person of foreign origin (not a *cognomina* indicating the precedence such as *Massaliota*, *Hispanicus*, *Norbanus* among others). Kajanto (13) counted 359 cases in the imperial time, but 128 were in Rome. The others are dispersed mainly in northern Italy, Narbonense, Hispania, and Gallia Belgica, showing a concentration in the Western provinces (14).

Ulpus, as a *nomen*, is also quite common in provinces; mostly in the Danube region (Pannonia, Dacia, Moesia Inferior and Superior), linked to the conquest of Dacia by Trajan and the diffusion of their *cognomen*. However, it is also common in northern Italy, Hispania and Belgica (15).

The mother, Caia Valeriana, has a common *cognomen* (16). This is formed by the *gentilicia Valerius +anus*, a very common way to create *cognomina* (17). It is frequent in north Italy, Hispania, Pannonia and Gallia Narbonensis, and therefore does not provide very much information about her origin.

The last person is Caia Alexandria, the woman who assigned the piece of land where the sarcophagus was placed. The name is not overtly linked with any member

(8) CIL XIV, 655 *M(arcus) Aur(elius) Felicianus / et Ulpia Atticilla / fecerunt(!) sibi et suis.*

(9) AEp 1944, 106: *D(is) M(anibus) // Clau(dium) Verecundum an(norum) III et / Aurel(ium) Celsinianum qui et / Placidium an(norum) VIII Aurelius / Celsinianus (centurio) leg(ionis) I Ad(iutricis) et Ulpia / Atticilla parentes infelicis/simi Arvi reliquias originis / suae sitos comme(n)daverunt.*

(10) CIL VI, 29396: *Ulpiae Aug(usti) lib(ertae) Saturninae / coniugi optimaec fecit et sibi / T(itus) Aelius Aug(usti) lib(ertus) Felix et / libertis libert(abus)que suorum posterisq(ue) eorum / et Ulpiae Attica et Atticilla / filiae matri optimaec et sibi / et lib(ertis) lib(ertabus)q(ue) suis posterisq(ue) eorum.*

(11) The *praenomen* starts disappearing from the 1st century. See G.D. CHASE, *The Origin of Roman Praenomina*, «HSCP», 8 (1897), pp. 103-184.

(12) KAJANTO, *The Latin Cognomina* cit., p. 45; H. SOLIN - O. SALOMIES, *Repertorium nominum gentilium et cognominum Latinorum. Editio nova addendis corrigendisq(ue) augmentata*, Hildesheim-Zürich-New York 1994, p. 297.

(13) KAJANTO, *The Latin Cognomina* cit., p. 233, s.v. *Atticus*.

(14) Italy (*regio X*) 25 cases, Narbonense 30, Hispania 16 cases, Belgica 15, Noricum 13, Lugdunensis 6, Dalmatia 4, Dacia 4 Panonia 3, and other provinces. *vid.* B. LŐRINCZ, *Onomasticon provinciarum Europae latinorum*, Wien 1999 (= OPEL), vol. I, p. 210 s.v. *Atticus*.

(15) OPEL, vol. VI, p. 179 s.v. *Ulpus*.

(16) KAJANTO, *The Latin Cognomina* cit., p. 157; SOLIN - SALOMIES, *Repertorium nominum gentilium* cit., p. 417; OPEL, vol. IV, p. 141.

(17) KAJANTO, *The Latin Cognomina* cit., p. 35.

of the family of Ulpia Atticilla. The use of the *cognomen Alexandria* has a clear geographical origin and is much less frequent. This is the feminine form of the masculine *cognomen Alexander*, much more common, and with a wider dispersion (18). The relation between Caia Alexandria and the family of the deceased is unknown, maybe a friendship or affinity (19), a relative (20) or a patron (a favourable relationship) (21). The use of Alexandria could be tracked not only as a *cognomen* (22), but also as a *nomen* (23) and its most common use was in Rome. Notwithstanding, both women have the same *nomen Caia*.

(18) OPEL, vol. I, p. 76 s.v. *Alexandria*.

(19) See the comment on the inscription n° 601 of the G. BRUSIN, *Inscriptiones Aquileiae*, Udine 1991-1993, vol 1, p. 278.

(20) In the inscription CIL VIII, 1643: *(D(is) M(anibus) s(acrum) / Iulio Casto Armoria/no equiti Romano Cul/bernio vixit annis / XVII Iulius Fortuna/tus Armoria/nus Cubernius / et Homulia Satur/nina parentes / locus datus a / Iulio Ianuario / parente suo)*, the owner of the *locus* not apparently related by his name with the family of the deceased is quoted as '*parente suo*' (a relative of the deceased).

(21) *D(is) M(anibus) / Flaviae Urbicae / filiae suae carissimae / fe[c](it) T(itus) Flavius Victor / et Mani[li]a Ur[b]ica / parentes / vix(it) ann(os) VII mens(es) VI / locus datus a P(ublio) Manilio / Fortunato patrono* (CIL VI, 18466).

(22) Ulpiana (Moesia Superior): *AEp* 1981, 732; Roma: «Bull. Com. Arch. Rom.» (1926), 268; Thanae (Africa Proconsularis): R. CAGNAT, A. MERLIN, L. CHATELAIN, E. LEROUX, *Inscriptions latines d'Afrique (Tripolitaine, Tunisie, Maroc)*, Paris 1923 (= *IL Afr*) n° 38,34 = A. MERLIN, *Inscriptions latines de la Tunisie*, Paris 1944 (= *ILTun*), 82; Arelate (Gallia Narbonensis): *AEp* 2008, 837; Valentia (Hispania Citerior): CIL II¹⁴, 49 = *HEp* 4, 932 = *AEp* 1991, 1088; Dyrrichium (Macedonia): CIL III, 617; Poetovio (Pannonia Superior): CIL III, 4035 = *ILS* 1499; Salona (Dalmatia): CIL III, 8862; Aquincum (Pannonia inferior): CIL III, 10553; Aquincum (Pannonia inferior): CIL III, 14347,3; Roma: CIL V, 4057 (p. 1078) = *ILS* 8230; Brixia (Regio X): CIL V, 4473; Concordia (Regio X): CIL V, 8734; Roma: CIL VI, 1420; Roma: CIL VI, 1875; Roma: CIL VI, 3008; Roma: CIL VI, 3621; Roma: CIL VI, 4802; Roma: CIL VI, 9077; Roma: CIL VI, 11022; Roma: CIL VI, 11416; Roma: CIL VI, 11419; Roma: CIL VI, 11819; Roma: CIL VI, 12423; Roma: CIL VI, 14210; Roma: CIL VI, 15349; Roma: CIL VI, 18074; Roma: CIL VI, 18094; Roma: CIL VI, 18609; Roma: CIL VI, 18908; Roma: CIL VI, 19128; Roma: CIL VI, 20754; Roma: CIL VI, 20987; Roma: CIL VI, 21091; Roma: CIL VI, 23221; Roma: CIL VI, 23333; Roma: CIL VI, 23976; Roma: CIL VI, 24790; Roma: CIL VI, 24800; Roma: CIL VI, 25147; Roma: CIL VI, 28241; Roma: CIL VI, 28724; Roma: CIL VI, 28852; Roma: CIL VI, 31781; Roma: CIL VI, 32623; Roma: CIL VI, 34332; Roma: CIL VI, 34341; Roma: CIL VI, 36069; Roma: CIL VI, 38495; Roma: CIL VI, 39084; Lambaesis (Numidia): CIL VIII, 3101 = *ILS* 2565; Carthago (Africa Proconsularis): CIL VIII, 12864; Carthago (Africa Proconsularis): CIL VIII, 13041; Dougga (Africa Proconsularis): CIL VIII, 26578; Capua (Regio I): CIL X, 4364; Gonnese (Sardinia): CIL X, 7535; Reii Apollinaris (Gallia Narbonensis): CIL XII, 373; Aquae Sextiae (Gallia Narbonensis): CIL XII, 538; Arelate (Gallia Narbonensis): CIL XII, 884; Lugdunum (Gallia Lugdunensis): CIL XIII, 1753; Lugdunum (Gallia Lugdunensis): CIL XIII, 2303; Ostia (Regio I): CIL XIV, 603; CIL XIV, 1156; Ostia (Regio I): CIL XIV, 1156; Ostia (Regio I): CIL XIV, 1177; Ostia (Regio I): CIL XIV, 1258; Ostia (Regio I): CIL XIV, 1300; Ostia (Regio I): CIL XIV, 1438; Ostia (Regio I): CIL XIV, 3677; Ostia (Regio I): CIL XIV, 4225; Ostia (Regio I): CIL XIV, 4764; Paestum (Regio III): *AEp* 1999, 545; Roma: *AEp* 1977, 97; Salona (Dalmatia): *ILJug* III, 2124; Salona (Dalmatia): *ILJug* III, 2171; Timacum Minus (Moesia Superior): *AEp* 1995, 1320; Portus (Regio I): *AEp* 1991, 370a; Roma: *AEp* 2012, 225; Mogontiacum (Germania Superior): *AEp* 1965, 249; Roma: *AEp* 1974, 39; Classis (Regio VIII): *AEp* 1980, 486; Eumeneia (Asia): *AEp* 1978, 796.

(23) Chemtou (Africa Proconsularis): *AEp* 1991, 1681 = *AEp* 1994, 1883; Mediolanum (Regio IV): CIL V, 6242; Roma: CIL VI, 4052; Roma: CIL VI, 9621; Roma: CIL VI, 10210; Roma: CIL VI, 10361; Roma: CIL VI, 11414; Roma: CIL VI, 11415; Roma: CIL VI, 11417; Roma: CIL VI, 11418; Roma: CIL VI, 12407; Roma: CIL VI, 23805; Roma: CIL VI, 32458; Carthago (Africa Proconsularis): CIL VIII, 13218; Beneventum (Regio II): CIL IX, 1737; Stabaie (Regio I): CIL X, 786; Ravenna (Regio VIII): CIL XI, 74; Augusta Treverum (Gallia Belgica): CIL XIII, 3688; Ostia (Regio I): CIL XIV, 5162; Augusta Emerita (Hispania Lusitania): *ERAE*, 223; Nabrisa Veneria (Hispania Baetica): *AEp* 1979, 347; Roma: *AEp* 1988, 118; Roma: *AEp* 1979, 43; Sufetula (Africa Proconsularis): *AEp* 1958, 120.

Typology

Returning to the typology, this strigilar sarcophagus adheres to the visual trends of Roman funerary monuments. The strigilar sarcophagi sometimes have a human imaginary (i.e. deceases' portrait), but at other times are more plain and only combined the strigilated decoration with the inscription as a way to be more restrained. The sarcophagus of Ulpia Atticilla is included in the second group, however this does not mean that it was not elegant. In the strigilar sarcophagi typology made by Koch and Sichtermann, this sarcophagus matches with the 2.5 type (24).

Some parallels of this sarcophagus can be found mainly in Rome. The sarcophagus of the *archon* Caelius Quintus (25) is quite close to the sarcophagus of Ulpia Atticilla (this has a *tabula ansata* bearing a Greek inscription, which is flanked by the *strigila*). The *strigila* are made in a different way but the composition is exactly the same. Another similar parallel is the Caelia Domnia's sarcophagus (26), except from the lateral decorations (they are decorated not with weapons but with griffins). Other similar strigilar sarcophagi are for example those found in the Museo Nazionale Romano (27), others preserved at the museum of Ostia (28) or further examples are kept in the Galleria degli Uffizi (29). According to this data, this type of sarcophagus was found mainly in Italy around the 2nd and 3rd century.

The conclusions of the prosopographical study are not very conclusive. The family names of Ulpia Atticilla give a wide range of places. If we pay attention to the name of the land owner, Caia Alexandria, we can see a closer link with Rome. Besides the fact of the italic typology and the *Luni* provenance of the marble, it is probable that this sarcophagus could have come from any necropolis of Latium (maybe from the city of Rome or the surroundings). It is difficult to ascertain a more precise date than between 2nd and 3rd century (30).

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(24) G. KOCH - H. SICHTERMANN, *Römische Sarkophage (Handbuch der Archäologie)*, München 1982, p. 74, fig. 2.5. and note 6 quoting other examples; See the same publication in p. 244 for an explanation about the differences between the different strigilar sarcophagi types.

(25) A. KONIKOFF, *Sarcophagi from the Jewish Catacombs of Ancient Rome. A Catalogue Raisonné*, Stuttgart 1990, plate 15 (III, 21).

(26) *CIF*, 35* = *JlWE* II, 527. For the decoration (and a lateral side photo) in KONIKOFF, *Sarcophagi from the Jewish Catacombs* cit., plate 15 (III, 21).

(27) A.M. RAMIERI, II, *34 sarcofago strigilato con tabula ansata inscritta (inv. N. 524)*, in A. GIULIANO (ed.), *Museo Nazionale Romano. Le Sculture I*, 3, Rome 1982, pp. 64-65. She propose a III century AD datation.

(28) L. PAROLI, *Scavi di Ostia 12: La basilica di Pianabella*. Parte I, Rome 1999, p. 48 = *AEP* 2001, 668.

(29) *CIL* VI, 13223; G. MANSUELLI, *Galleria degli Uffizi. Le Sculture. Parte I*, Rome 1958, p. 227, no. 241. Photograph in EDR123168.

(30) Taking into consideration the words of HUSKINSON, *Constructing Childhood* cit., p. 332: «Sarcophagi became more numerous in the early 2nd century a.D.», also the typology and palaeography allow it to think in this century.