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THE VOTIVE INSCRIPTION OF ΗΡΟΔΟΤΟΣ ΡΑΣΔΟΥ FOUND IN NOZRINA

Abstract: Back in 2008, a marble relief votive to an unknown deity was unearthed on the archaeological site called *Grobljište* in the village Nozrina, not far from the town Aleksinac in East Central Serbia. The relief was found broken into three segments and fragmented. The Greek votive inscription is visible on the bottom part. These fragments are currently kept at the National museum in Kruševac, as a part of their Collection of antiquities at the Department of archaeology. The deity depicted on the relief was interpreted by researchers as “Sol-Helios (which is considered to be identical to Apollo)”. This votive relief and the personal name of its dedicant, ΗΡΟΔΟΤΟΣ, was published in the literature, but the inscription on the relief was left out. Originally, the inscription was not dated. It is written in the Greek majuscule cursive, and in accordance to the shapes of the inscribed letters, this form of the alphabet could be most approximately (we underline *most approximately*) assigned to the end or the second half of the 1st c. A. D.. In this way, the inscription, that is the votive relief itself, might also be most approximately (we underline *most approximately*) dated to the end or the second half of the 1st c. A. D., and thus the Greek language of the inscription might be the Hellenistic koiné. The inscription is, by its contents, a votive one. It runs as follows: ΗΡΟΔΟΤΟ[C] : ΡΑΣΔΟΥ : ·Β'· | [E]YXHN.; which translates to: “Herodotos, «son» of Rasdos, «contributed (this icon)» as a votive gift «to the deity», for the second time”. This personal name of the dedicant’s father, written in Greek, Ρασδος [razd-/raz-], may belong to the Dardanians, geographically and linguistically, as well to the Triballians, i. e. Thracians, linguistically and in terms of the origin of the name. Dan Dana considers this personal name to be Thracian and the variant (secondary form) of the Thracian anthroponym Ραιζδος [raizd-]. One of the reviewers of this article offers the explanation that “the variation ai/a indicates an initial (etymological) diphthong and, theoretically, it is possible to suggest that the development ai > a appeared in the Dardanian or Triballian, i. e. Thracian. In the opinion given, the Thracian personal name Ραιζδος [raizd-] (secondarily Ρασδος [razd-]) should be compared with the Greek anthroponym Ραιστος, originated from the superlative adjective ρᾶστος “the easiest; the most yielding” (< PIE. **urā(i)stH²os*”). Similarly to Paul Perdrizet, our humble opinion is that this personal name (in Gr.) Ρασδος [raz-] (i. e. **Rāžas* ((?) **Rāžas*, **Ražžas*) is Dardanian or Triballian, i. e. Thracian one; it is the variant (secondary form) of the Thracian anthroponym **Rēžas*, and it shows the secondary phonetic change ē > a ((?) ā, ǣ) attested in Thracian onomastics in the hydronym Ἄθρως (< **ēH¹trūs*). This change is possibly a (local)

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Thracian one or it has originated “under the Daco-Mysian/Dacian linguistic influence”, as Duridanov and Georgiev would consider.

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