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## New Votive Inscriptions from Eskişehir Museum

### *Eskişehir Müzesi'nden Yeni Adak Yazıtları*

Necmettin ERAYDIN\* Ahmet TÜRKAN\*\*

**Abstract:** This article presents the epigraphic and historical analysis of seven votive inscriptions preserved in the courtyard of the Eskişehir Eti Archaeology Museum. Although these inscriptions were identified within the borders of Eskişehir Province, their exact findspots remain unknown. It is therefore assumed that the objects may originate from the territories of settlements located within the provincial boundaries that existed at the time the inscriptions were produced; where necessary, the inscriptions have been evaluated within their own internal context. The first inscription was dedicated to the “Just Gods” (Theoi Dikaioi) by a *komarkhes* and priest of a settlement. Although parallels associated with Hosios kai Dikaioi are known, this expression is attested here for the first time in the region as denoting a group of deities. The following three inscriptions are dedicated respectively to Hosios kai Dikaioi, Theos Hypsistos, and Men. The fifth inscription is a fragment dedicated by the inhabitants of Doiga. The sixth inscription is dedicated to the local deity of a settlement named Dobana. They are introduced into the literature as two new toponyms. The final inscription is likewise fragmentary and preserves only part of the name of the dedicator. All inscriptions are dated to the 2<sup>nd</sup>–4<sup>th</sup> centuries CE and reflect the religious diversity of the Eskişehir region in antiquity.

**Keywords:** Theoi Dikaioi, Men, Theos Hypsistos, Hosios kai Dikaioi, Komarkhes, Doiga

**Öz:** Bu makale, Eskişehir Eti Arkeoloji Müzesi bahçesinde muhafaza edilen yedi adak yazıtının epigrafik ve tarihsel analizini sunmaktadır. Söz konusu yazıtlar Eskişehir ili sınırları içerisinde tespit edilmiş olmakla birlikte, kesin buluntu yerleri bilinmemektedir. Bu nedenle eserlerin, il sınırları içinde yer alan ve yazıtların üretildiği dönemde varlık gösteren yerleşimlerden herhangi birinin hâkimiyet alanına ait olabileceği varsayılmış; gerekli durumlarda ise yazıtlar kendi iç bağlamları içerisinde değerlendirilmiştir. Yazıtlardan ilki, bir yerleşimin *komarkhes*'i ve rahibi tarafından “adil tanrılara” (Theoi Dikaioi) adanmıştır. Bu ifade, daha önce Hosios kai Dikaioi ile ilişkili örnekler bilinmekle birlikte, bir tanrı grubunu niteleyecek şekilde bölgede ilk kez belgelenmektedir. Bunu izleyen üç yazıt sırasıyla Hosios kai Dikaioi, Theos Hypsistos ve Men için düzenlenmiştir. Beşinci yazıt bir fragman olup Doiga sakinleri tarafından adanmıştır. Altıncı yazıt, Dobana adlı yerleşimin yerel tanrısına ithaf edilmiştir. Bu isimler iki yeni toponim olarak literatüre kazandırılmaktadır. Son yazıt ise yine bir fragman olup yalnızca adayanın isminin bir kısmı korunabilmiştir. Tüm eserler MS 2–4. yüzyıllar arasına tarihlenmekte olup Eskişehir bölgesinin antik çağdaki dinsel çeşitliliğini ortaya koymaktadır.

**Anahtar sözcükler:** Theoi Dikaioi, Men, Theos Hypsistos, Hosios kai Dikaioi, Komarkhes, Doiga

This contribution presents the epigraphic and historical analysis of seven unpublished votive inscriptions preserved in the backyard of Eskişehir Eti Archaeology Museum. All the dedications were identified within the borders of the province of Eskişehir. Studies conducted over many years have enabled the identification of three major cities within the borders of the province, Dorylaion,

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Nakoleia, and Midaion as well as numerous *katoikiai*, towns, and villages<sup>1</sup>. In some of them, enough amount of dedication had been documented to suggest the presence of a cult center. In this regard, ancient settlements located on the borders of the territories of Dorylaion and Nakoleia are particularly noteworthy<sup>2</sup>. However, the exact find-spots of the inscriptions included in this study remain undocumented. Moreover, dedications to the deities attested in these inscriptions have been found in varying numbers throughout many different locations of the Eskişehir region<sup>3</sup>. Therefore, it is impossible to determine the original provenance of the inscriptions based only on their content.

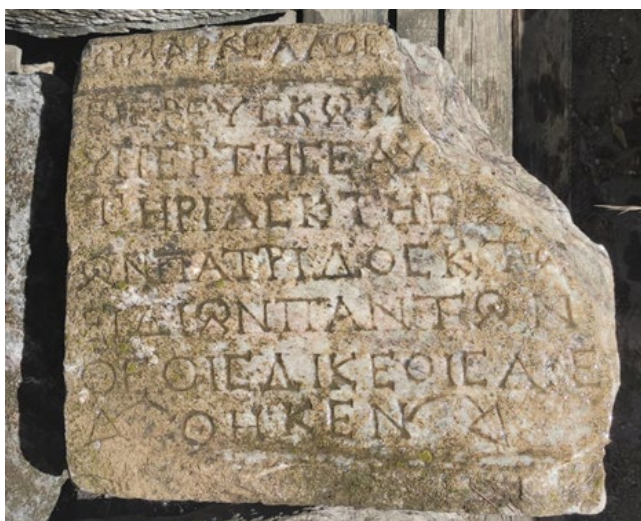
#### No. 1. Dedication to Theoi Dikaioi

A marble block fragment with an eight-line inscription. The first line is located on the upper molding and remaining seven lines are positioned on the shaft. The final line is flanked on both sides by ivy leaves in triangular forms. The lettering is irregular. The angular sigma is composed of three strokes, and the alpha features a straight crossbar. The omega ( $\Omega$ -form) is closed at the bottom by two diagonal strokes that meet to form an apex. Ligatures occur between kappa and epsilon in lines four and five, and between nu and epsilon in the line seven.

Dimensions: H.: 0,39 m; W.: 0,45 m; D.: 0,17 m; L.h.: 0,025 m.

Date: After 212 CE.

- Αὐρ. Μάρκελλος [ – – c. 6-7 – – ]  
 εἰερεύς, κωμ[άρχης]  
 ὑπὲρ τῆς ἑαυ[τοῦ σω-]  
 4 τηρίας κὲ τῆς [ἑαυτ-]  
 ὦν πατρίδος κὲ τῶ[v]  
 εἰδίων πάντων  
 θεοῖς δικέοις ἀνέ-  
 8 vac. ☞ θηκεν. ☞ vac.



*Aur(elius) Marcellus, [son of NN], priest (and) komarkhes, dedicated (this) to the Just Gods for his own salvation and for (the welfare of) their homeland and for all his own relatives.*

L. 1: Μάρκελλος is attested for the first time in Dorylaion.

L. 2: εἰερεύς = ἱερεύς.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> MAMA V xviii–xxxii.

<sup>2</sup> For Avdan, Süpüren, Kuyucak, and Ayvacık, see MAMA V xxii–xxv; for the Zeus Sanctuary in Yazıdere, see Akyürek Şahin 2007, 5–12; it is also possible that a Zeus Bronton cult center existed in Mihaliççık and its vicinity in the southeast: Güney 2018, 102–108, nos. 1–4; see also İznik 2021, 507–509.

<sup>3</sup> İznik 2021, 509 Map 1.

<sup>4</sup> For the interchange of εἰ and ι, see Gignac 1976, 189–191.

L. 2f.: The restoration of *κωμάρχης* fits the context and the sequence of the lacuna well. Another komarkhes is attested in an inscription from Kümbet, possibly a katoikia named Metropolis, situated near Nakoleia<sup>5</sup>. Parallel examples are also known from neighboring cities, Aizanoi and Nikaia<sup>6</sup>.

Ksenophon and Platon suggest that the origin of this office dates back at least to the Classical period<sup>7</sup>. However, it attained widespread prevalence during the Hellenistic and Roman eras. Although documentation is particularly prolific in Egypt<sup>8</sup>, evidence from Asia Minor confirms that the office was a well-established institution outside of Egypt as well<sup>9</sup>.

Ll. 4–6: See the commentary of no. 3, lines 3–5.

L. 6f.: *εἰδίωv = ἰδίωv*.<sup>10</sup>

L. 7: *δικέοις = δικαίοις*.<sup>11</sup> *Θεοὶ Δίκαιοι* appears to have been used as a specific epithet for deities associated with divine justice. It is the first attestation without any accompanying divine names or representations in the region. However, two inscriptions mentioning *θεοὶ Ὅσιοι καὶ Δίκαιοι* were recorded in the Eskişehir region, both dated to the 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> century CE. One of them, found near the Şarhöyük, is decorated on each side with representations of Hosios and Dikaos, Apollon, Helios, Selene, Men, Hermes, and Herakles<sup>12</sup>. In the second one which was recorded at İnönü, *θεοὶ Ὅσιοι καὶ Δίκαιοι* are represented as Men, Dike and Sabazios<sup>13</sup>. There are also examples in which the names occur separately in the plural forms *Ὅσιοι* and *Δίκαιοι* separately<sup>14</sup>.

In the highlands of Pisidia and the Kibyris, two inscriptions from Termessos and Kibyra attest the epithet *Θεοὶ Δίκαιοι*<sup>15</sup>. group of rock-cut reliefs dated to the second and third centuries CE, depicting triadic deities with closely related iconographic features and discovered throughout the mountainous and upland regions of Pisidia and the Kibyris, suggests that *Θεοὶ Δίκαιοι* and *Θεοὶ Ἄγριοι* were alternative designations of the same cult group<sup>16</sup>. In these representations, the gods appear as warrior figures holding axes, accompanied by snakes or dogs beneath or beside their hands<sup>17</sup>. Their iconography reflects martial, protective, and chthonic characteristics. The locations of the reliefs and associated votive inscriptions indicate that these triadic

<sup>5</sup> Haspels, *Phrygia*, 308, no. 31; Ramsay 1887, 490. “*Κωμάρχης*” in doric dialect, see *LJS*, s.v.

<sup>6</sup> *MAMA IX 68* (Aizanoi); *I.Mus. Iznik* 1503; Uzunoğlu & Akyürek Şahin 2024, 151–152.

<sup>7</sup> *Xen. Anab.* 4. 5. 10; *Plat. Nom.* 40. 3.

<sup>8</sup> Preisigke 1921, 1129–1131; Ameling 2005, 87–88.

<sup>9</sup> For Lydia, see *TAM V,2 868*; *V,3 1431, 1494*; *SEG 54, 1218*; for Pamphylia: *I.Perge* 11, 77, 78; for Kappadokia: *I.Tyana* 23, 24, 25.

<sup>10</sup> For the interchange of *ει* and *ι*, see Gignac 1976, 189–190.

<sup>11</sup> For the interchange of *αι* and *ε*, see Gignac 1976, 192–193.

<sup>12</sup> Akyürek Şahin & Uzunoğlu 2020, 213–215 no. 18. See also Ricl 1991, 14–15, 44 nos.26, 96.

<sup>13</sup> *SEG 38, 1311*.

<sup>14</sup> Ricl 1991, 43–44, 95.

<sup>15</sup> *TAM III,1 32* (Termessos); *I.Kibyra 48–52* (Kibyra).

<sup>16</sup> For the triad of deities in question, see. Smith 1997; Smith 2011; Dökü & Kileci 2022; 2023.

<sup>17</sup> For extensive comparison of 43 reliefs in the region, see Prikhodko 2023, 946–991.

deities were particularly connected with highland routes, frontier zones, and mountain passes.<sup>18</sup> It has further been suggested that these divine groups may be connected with the Σκλήροι θεοί hero cult mentioned by Plutarch<sup>19</sup>.

In another inscription from Tyana, Mithra is addressed as θεῶ δικαίῳ in the singular<sup>20</sup>; and another singular attestation comes from Laodikeia Katakekaumene, where the form δικαίῳ θεῶ is used without deity's name<sup>21</sup>. As a result, the evidence is insufficient to determine with certainty which deities were invoked under this epithet. Its use appears to have varied in accordance with local religious traditions. However, *Hosios kai Dikaios* remains a plausible candidate in view of the strong cultic presence of this deity in the region<sup>22</sup> (see No. 2).

#### No. 2. Dedication to Hosios kai Dikaios

Rectangular votive stele with a triangular pediment. The central acroter of the high triangular pediment is undecorated. The left corner is plain, while the right one is broken and severed. The stele conforms to the typology of miniature stelae identified by Drew-Bear *et al.* among the votive offerings of the Zeus cult at Kurudere<sup>23</sup>. A five-line inscription exists on the molding and the shaft. The lettering is irregular. Alpha features a broken crossbar. Both sigma and omega are lunate. A ligature between nu and eta occurs in the line one.

Dimensions: H.: 0,60 m; W.: 0,19 – 0,25 m; D.: 0,06 m; L.h.: 0,03 m.

Date: After 212 CE.

Ἀὐρ(ήλιος) Νήδου-

μος Δια-

δούμε-

4 νου Ὅσι-

[ω] Δικέω

εὐχίην.

*Aur(elius) Nedymos, son of Diadumenos, (dedicated this) in*

*fulfillment of a vow to Hosios kai Dikaios.*

L. 1f.: The name Νήδυμος is attested once in an epigram from Dorylaion dating to the Imperial



<sup>18</sup> For discussions concerning the nature of these deities, see Smith 1997, 4-5; 2011, 133-135; Döku & Kileci 2022, 106; 2023, 74-75. In Lykia, triads of a goddess with Dioscurii for the epithet θεοὶ ἐπήκοοι: Gökalp & Akdoğan Arca 2009, 262-263 no. 2; SEG 58, 1569.

<sup>19</sup> Ps. Plut. *de fluviis* 16.3; Smith 1997 10-12.

<sup>20</sup> I. Tyana 34.

<sup>21</sup> MAMA I 9a.

<sup>22</sup> See also discussion in Akyürek Şahin & Uzunoğlu 2020, 215.

<sup>23</sup> Drew-Bear *et al.* 1999, 20 figs. 1, 21-22.

Period<sup>24</sup>. There are also three additional attestations in Phrygia<sup>25</sup>. Furthermore, the name is well-documented in inscriptions from Campania, primarily dating to the 1<sup>st</sup> century CE<sup>26</sup>.

L. 2f.: The name Διαδοόμενος is relatively rare in the Greco-Roman World<sup>27</sup>. A single instance is recorded in an unpublished inscription from Dutluca, a village situated to the northwest of the Eskişehir<sup>28</sup>.

L. 4f.: The god Ὅσιος καὶ Δίκαιος is well attested in numerous votive inscriptions from Nakoleia, Dorylaion and northeastern Phrygia<sup>29</sup>. Some scholars have suggested that the large number of dedications to the deity may be interpreted as evidence that Dorylaion was the centre of origin of the cult<sup>30</sup> (see also no. 2).

### No. 3. Dedication to Theos Hypsistos

A fragment of rectangular marble bomos. All margins are broken and damaged. A krater relief is depicted on the lateral face. The front face bears a five-line inscription. The lettering is irregular in form. Alpha features a broken crossbar. Both sigma and omega are lunate. A ligature of kappa and epsilon occurs in the line three.

Dimensions: H.: 0,33 m; W.: 0,35 m; D.: 0,32 m; L.h.: 0,03 m.

Date: 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> century CE.

[            ]

[ . . . . . θε- ]

ῶ ὑψί[στω]

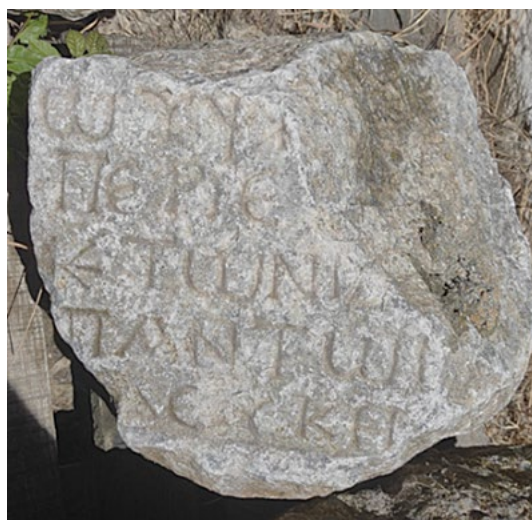
περὶ ἐ[αυτοῦ]

κὲ τῶν ἰδ[ίων]

4 πάντων

ἕκκη[ν].

[...] to the Most High God, for himself and for all his own family [dedicated this in fulfillment of a vow.



<sup>24</sup> *Steinepigramme* III, 320 no. 16/34/32.

<sup>25</sup> *LGPN* Vc. s.v.

<sup>26</sup> *LGPN* IIIa. s.v.

<sup>27</sup> *LGPN* I; II; IIIa-b; IV; Va-c. s.v.

<sup>28</sup> *LGPN* Vc. s.v.

<sup>29</sup> Northeastern Phrygia: Güney 2018, 104-108 no. 1-4; Nakoleia: Akyürek Şahin & Uzunoğlu 2021, 180-184 no. 1; MAMA V 183-184; Dorylaion: MAMA V 10, 11; Ricl 1992b, 95-98 nos. 1-4; Akyürek Şahin & Uzunoğlu 2020, 192-215 nos. 1-18. For the nature of the cult, see Ricl 1992a.

<sup>30</sup> Lochmann 2003, 204-205; Akyürek Şahin & Uzunoğlu 2020, 190.

L. 1: Missing part fits well with Θεὸς Ὑψιστος which was documented in the territory of Nakoleia before.<sup>31</sup>

L. 5: εὐκὴν for εὐχὴν is very rare<sup>32</sup> but interchange between chi and kappa is common<sup>33</sup>.

Krater reliefs are common features of the votive monuments in this region, especially those found in the territory between Dorylaion and Nakoleia<sup>34</sup>.



#### No. 4. Dedication to Men

Rectangular limestone bomos. The upper part of the shaft features undecorated corner acroteria on both sides. An open garland with two hanging leaves in both ends which turns outside exists above a four-line inscription<sup>35</sup>. The lettering is irregular in both form and dimension, with strokes ending in serifs. Alpha features a straight crossbar. Sigma is angular and composed of three strokes. The diagonal strokes of mu and lambda do not meet to form an apex. Upsilon possesses a horizontal bar at the junction of the vertical stroke and the arms.

Dimensions: H.: 0,80 m; W.: shaft: 0,35 m, base: 0,41 m; D.:0,24 m; L.h.:0,03 m.

Date: 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> century CE.

Μ(ἄρκος) Ἀσκληπιάδ-

2 ης Ἀπολλω-

νίου Μηνι

εὐκὴν.

*M(arcus) Asklepiades, son of Apollonios, (dedicated this) vow to Men.*

L. 3: The Moon-God Men had been documented well in Eskişehir. The cult was particularly concentrated on the border between Dorylaion and Nakoleia<sup>36</sup>.



<sup>31</sup> MAMA V 186, 211, 212. For the debates on nature and cult of the god, see Mitchell 1999 and 2010.

<sup>32</sup> For two examples from Galatia and Pisidia, see Ramsay, *Cities and Bishoprics*, 307, 110; *I.North Galatia II* 138.

<sup>33</sup> Gignac 1976, 92.

<sup>34</sup> MAMA V 134, 184, 194, 217, 221, 227, 229, 231, 257.

<sup>35</sup> For a very similar garland relief in a votive stele to the Men from Ilkburun, a possible cult center of Men, see MAMA V 150.

<sup>36</sup> Lane 1971, 91–98; Lane 1976 39–40. For the cult in Phrygia Epiktetos, see Boyana 2019, 66–80.

**No. 5. Dedication by the People of the Village of Doiga**

Rectangular votive stele with a triangular pediment. A rosette motif is depicted in the center of the high pediment. A molding marks the transition from the pediment to the shaft. The shaft is flanked on both sides by unadorned pilasters and features two yoked ox-heads depicted side-by-side<sup>37</sup>. Below them, two lines of the inscription are legible; the stone is broken and fragmentary from the second line onwards. The lettering is regular. Both sigma and omega are lunate, and alpha features a straight crossbar.

Dimensions: H.: 0,70 m; W.: 0,50 m; D.: 0,18 m; L.h.: 0,02 m.

Date: 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> Century CE.

Δοιγακωμ-  
 2 ἦτα[ι] πε[ρι]  
 [            ]

*Inhabitants of the village of Doiga...*

L. 1f.: The toponym Δοιγακώμη is attested for the first time.

L. 2: The use of περί instead of ὑπέρ had been well-documented in numerous inscriptions throughout the region<sup>38</sup>. A parallel inscription from the territory of Nakoleia suggests a plausible restoration for the continuation of this fragment: οἱ Νεοπειμανηνοὶ περὶ τῆς κώμης σωτηρίας Διὶ εὐχὴν<sup>39</sup>.

Ox-heads are common features within the votive repertoire of the region, particularly in the highlands between Nakoleia and Dorylaion<sup>40</sup>. A pair of oxen typically represents the agricultural focus of the dedication<sup>41</sup>. Two votive stelae dedicated to Zeus Bronton and documented at Süpüren bear a close stylistic resemblance to the present stele<sup>42</sup>. One of these is particularly noteworthy for its triangular pediment, rosette motif, pilasters, and letter forms<sup>43</sup>. Although there is insufficient evidence for a definitive localization, it is worth noting that Doiga may have been situated in the vicinity of present-day Süpüren and Avdan. These sites were identified by



<sup>37</sup> See MAMA V 152-153.

<sup>38</sup> MAMA V 10, 155, 170, 182, 213, 218, 220, 221, 222, 228.

<sup>39</sup> MAMA V 217.

<sup>40</sup> MAMA V 152-153, 170, Appendix R.8.

<sup>41</sup> For a discussion about oxen on the votives, see Drew-Bear *et. al.* 1999, 47-48.

<sup>42</sup> MAMA V 152-153.

<sup>43</sup> MAMA V 152.

the editors of *MAMA* as Οὐάζηνός and Ἄουαδα, where numerous dedications to Zeus Bronton have been documented<sup>44</sup>.

#### No. 6. Dedication to God/Goddess of Dobana/e

Marble block with a four-line inscription. The lettering is irregular in both form and dimension. The angular sigma is composed of three strokes, and the alpha features a straight crossbar. The omega is lunate. A ligature between eta and nu occurs in the last line.

Dimensions: H.: 0,56 m; W.: 0,31 m; D.: 0,06 m; L.h.: 0,03 m.

Date: 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> Century CE.

Ἄβασκαν-  
 2 τος Δείο[υ]  
 β' Δοβανήν-  
 ω εὐχίην.

*Abaskantos, the grandson of Dios and son of Dios, dedicated this to (the god) of Dobana.*

L. 1f.: Ἄβασκαντος was a common male name in inland Asia Minor, particularly in Phrygia<sup>45</sup>. It is well attested in several inscriptions from Dorylaion<sup>46</sup>.

L. 2: Although the name Δεῖος = Δῖος is well attested, in Phrygia, it is documented for the first time in Dorylaion<sup>47</sup>.

L. 3-4: The toponym Δοβάννα/η is documented for the first time. The use of toponyms as divine epithets is a common practice. In the region, toponymic epithets for Zeus, Men, and Meter have been recorded<sup>48</sup>.



#### No. 7. Dedication of Eutykhos

A fragment of limestone stele with one-line inscription. The lettering features lunate forms for both sigma and epsilon, while the upsilon is V-shaped.

Dimensions: H.: 0,13 m; W.: 0,49 m; D.: 0,19 m; L.h.: 0,035 m.

Date: 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> Century CE.

<sup>44</sup> *MAMA* V 150 (Ouzanos); 124, 127 (Aouda); 123, 125, 128, 2129, 134, 135, 137, 138.

<sup>45</sup> *LGPN* Vc. s.v.

<sup>46</sup> *MAMA* V pp. 163-164 Sch. 1; *Steinepigramme* III 320 no. 16/34/32; Akyürek Şahin & Uzunoğlu 2019, 168 no. 34.

<sup>47</sup> *LGPN* Vc. s.v. For the interchange of ει and ι, see Gignac 1976, 189-191.

<sup>48</sup> Men Italikos: *MAMA* V 150; Zeus Abozenos: *MAMA* V 216; Meter Akreane: *MAMA* V 7.

[ὕπ]ἔρ εὐχῆς Εὐτύχ[...]

...for the Eutyk[...]’ vow...



L. 1: The name may be many variants of Εὐτύχης, a popular male name in Phrygia<sup>49</sup>. It was documented before for once in the territory of Dorylaion<sup>50</sup>. Εὐτυχιανή or Εὐτυχιανός are also attested as variants in inscriptions from Doylaion<sup>51</sup>.

### Personal Names

Ἀβάσκαντος, 6

Δῖος (2), 6

Νήδυμος (Αὐρ.), 2

Ἀπολλώνιος, 4

Διαδούμενος, 2

Ἀσκληπιάδης (Μ.), 4

Μάρκελλος (Αὐρ.), 1

<sup>49</sup> LGPN Vc. s.v. The names originated from *tykhe*, see MAMA IX p. lxii.

<sup>50</sup> Körte 1897, 400-1; *Steinepigramme* III 304 no. 16/34/10.

<sup>51</sup> Εὐτυχιανή: MAMA V 29; Εὐτυχιανός: Körte 1897, 413 no. 67; 400-401 no. 45.

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\* Abbreviations of epigraphical editions and reference works follow the “Liste des abréviations des éditions et ouvrages de référence pour l’épigraphie grecque alphabétique (GrEpiAbbr – Version 03, Septembre 2024)” developed by the *Association Internationale d’Épigraphie Grecque et Latine*.

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