

# Grave Stela

## From The Vicinity Of Kratovo

(A Contribution To The Anthroponomy  
In The Republic Of Macedonia)

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The number of epigraphic finds from the Eastern regions in the Republic of Macedonia is not very abundant. Concerning the importance of these documents, we suggest corrections in the reading of a grave inscription from the village of Šlegovo in the area of the town of Kratovo: [1]

Τηρη Ἐπτ-  
ήλου τῶ κ-  
αὶ Ταῖτι ζή-  
σαντι καλ-  
5 ὦς ἔτη ἐβδ-  
ομήκοντα  
Γ ΟΥΙΟ[- -]

The monument was raised for Τηρης Ἐπτήλου ὁ καὶ Ταῖς. The personal name Τηρης occurs in several sites in the region of the Provincia Macedonia: Ἰούλιος Τηρης in the village Gorno Srpci, belonging to a *cohors I Flavia Bessorum*, [2] Μενελᾶς Τηρου in Idranica, [3] C(aius) Iulius Teres, Thracarches in Philippi [4] as well as Τηρης Πτολεμαίου Μακεδῶν in Egypt. [5] Due to the wide spread of the name and the different periods of its appearance, it is not easy to confirm the ethnic origin of Τηρης: Τηρης Δίζου in Provincia Thracia [6] appears in a context with Thracian names (Ἐπταικένθος, Διζας, Αυλουπορις), one Latin (Μᾶρκος), one which belongs to the Brygian/Phrygian substratum of the inhabitants of this region (Βειθυσ), one uncertain (Σαικελεης), and the name Μουκκας (a form from the root Μουκ-, widely spread all over the Balkans with different endings and suffixes among different ethnics). The discussion is more complicated when we consider that Τηρης occurs one more time accompanied with the form Παιῶνι, possibly in dative in the province of Thracia. We can not say with certainty whether Παιῶνι was a name of a god, or, a patronymic derived from a theophoric personal name [7]. In the same mixed context, on an inscription in the valley of the Strymon river, Τηρης is possibly a *cognomen* borne by a person that was the father of Βειθυσ and Ἀμύντας. [8] This is why we should doubt its Thracian origin (although the name is most frequent in Thrace), [9] and especially because there are hypotheses that it can

also be a Roman *cognomen*, supported by the fact that it was found in all provinces of the Empire.

The name of the father of Τηρης, Ἐπτηλος, is frequent in Thrace, but, because of the previously mentioned spread of the name, it should not lead us to infer a Thracian provenience of Τηρης as well.

His *signum* Ταϋς is present in Asia Minor and there are opinions that it is an epichoric Mysian name. [10]

The grave stele is dated roughly in the first half of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century AD on the basis of rhomboid *omikron*, different shapes of *omega* (ll. 2 and 5) and a ligature (MH in l. 6). The unique close analogy is a grave column from the village of Preod, dated 249/50 AD, which has a rhomboid *omikron*. The above mentioned ligature could be considered characteristic for the 3<sup>rd</sup> century AD. Namely, the big number of ligatures leads to the 2<sup>nd</sup> century AD and they remain in a small number in the 3<sup>rd</sup> century AD. [11]

The inscription on this grave stele comprises a typical formula of the Roman period, although it was written in the ancient Greek language and script. That is frequent in the region where it was found, since the borders between three Roman provinces – Macedonia, Moesia Superior and Thracia – pass nearby, so that was the natural crossing between the Eastern and the Western Roman Empire.



Notes:

[1] Petkovski (2005), catalog No. 115: Τη. Ρη. ετω | ημου τω κ|αι ταυτι ζη|σαντι ΚΛΛ |  
ωσετη εβδ|ομηκοντα | γουιο. I wish to thank Mr. Petkovski for letting me consult his thesis  
as well as for a photograph of the monument.

[2] IG X 2, 2, 1, Nr. 45.

- [3] EAM I, Nr. 186.  
 [4] Cf. EDH, HD019719 and HD046547.  
 [5] Tataki (1998), 497, Nr. 236.  
 [6] Spomenik 98 (1948), Nr. 280 from Pirot.  
 [7] IGBulg. III. 2, Nr. 1595, on a monument from Augusta Traiana (Stara Zagora). G. Mihailov reads the inscription this way, although previous editors allow that it could be read as the ethnic Παίωνι [ος].  
 [8] IGBulg. IV Nr. 2291, from Laskarevo: Ἀμύντα Τηρου.  
 [9] IGBulg. I-V, passim.  
 [10] Zgusta(1964), §1497-2.  
 [11] Babamova (2005), 169-170.

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