

A lecture at the Saxa loquuntur

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Venue: Museo archeologico nazionale di Cividale del Friuli, Cividale del Friuli UD, Italy.

Secondary use of stones as milestones in Roman Asia Minor

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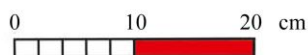
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In Roman Asia Minor milestones (miliaria) may be regarded as records of the building of roads. They were made from marble, volcanic stones or whatever local stone, and were widely used by military road builders in Asia Minor. For Roman Anatolia they were an important part of any road network. Many Roman milestones only record the name of the reigning emperor without giving any placenames or distances. A specific feature for Roman Anatolia was that bilingual milestones in Latin and Greek were remarkably numerous.

Several stones, including architectural elements or funerary inscriptions, were used secondarily as milestones in Roman Asia Minor. Reuse of milestones has a long history, from antiquity to recent times: some of such milestones were being reused later as building material or chopped up as fill. Information concerning original provenance of numerous milestones is lacking because most of them were reused as building material, such as an impost block, a door-pivot support, threshold or corner slab. The fact that some were reused several times explains their frequently deplorable state of preservation. Surface of such milestones looks, for example, as if it has been finished flat in their secondary use or face of stones has been chiseled away in their later reuse. Earlier plain columnar monuments such as columellae and kioniskoi were frequently reused as milestones. Stones reused as a milestone with a new inscription are especially numerous in the third century AD in entire Asia Minor. In this paper I will focus on some examples of secondary use of Roman milestones in Turkey (**figs 1-2**). This is a joint epigraphic project with Dr Maurizio Buora and Dr Stefano Magnani, both from Udine, Italy.



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Figs 1-2: A Classical-Hellenistic columnar monument reused as a Roman milestone from Yatağan in Caria (south-western Turkey).

Short Biographical Note

Prof. Dr. Ergün Laflı is a professor of classical archaeology at the Dokuz Eylül University in Izmir and is chairing the Division for Medieval Archaeology. He was born in 1975 in Mersin, Turkey and holds a B.A. degree from the University of Ankara (1996), a M.A. from the University of Tübingen (1999) and a Ph.D. from the University of Cologne (2003), all in classical archaeology. Since 2006 he has edited or co-authored four books on Roman and Early Byzantine metal figurines, glass, inscriptions etc. Between 2005 and 2009 he has directed archaeological field work in Hadrianopolis, a Roman and Early Byzantine site in north-central Turkey. He has organized numerous archaeological congresses in Izmir and published various material groups from Classical Anatolia. He is working and teaching on Roman and Byzantine archaeology of Asia Minor.

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