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CAPInv. 634: mrz𐤌 b'ltk wtym'

I. LOCATION

i. Geographical area	The Near East and Beyond
ii. Region	Syria
iii. Site	Palmyra

II. NAME

i. Full name (original language)	𐤌 𐤌 𐤌 𐤌 𐤌 𐤌 𐤌 𐤌 𐤌 𐤌 𐤌 𐤌 𐤌 𐤌 (PAT 2807, l. 1-3)
ii. Full name (transliterated)	mrz𐤌 b'ltk wtym'

III. DATE

i. Date(s)	i - iii AD
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IV. NAME AND TERMINOLOGY

ii. Name elements	Personal:	Taima (see comments below)
	Theophoric:	Baaltak
iii. Descriptive terms	𐤌 𐤌 𐤌 mrz𐤌 ',	
Note	mrz𐤌 : PAT 2807, l. 1-3	

V. SOURCES

i. Source(s)	PAT 2807 (I-III AD)
i.a. Source type(s)	Epigraphic source(s)
i.b. Document(s) typology & language/script	Unclear (entrance billet?), in Aramaic

i.c. Physical format(s)	Tessera, showing a seated goddess.
ii. Source(s) provenance	Sanctuary of Baalshamin (?)

XII. NOTES

i. Comments	That <i>b'ltk</i> is a goddess (and not "à ton autel" as Dunand 1959: 105 translates) is now generally accepted. More problematic is <i>tym</i> . Milik 1972: 111 takes it as an abbreviation of <i>tymr</i> "this would point to the <i>by</i> <i>tymr</i> 'sons of Taimarsu", a known clan from Palmyra. Kaizer 2002: 230 seems to accept this view without discussion. Smith 2004: 234 refers to this group without discussion as a cult association "to the goddesses Baaltak and Taima"; this latter goddess would not be otherwise known from Palmyra, and the tessera shows only one goddess. Taima is attested as a place name in Arabia, which would make little sense here. It is also a personal name in Palmyra, but then written as <i>tym</i> ⁺ . Could this <i>mrz</i> perhaps be in honour of the goddess Baaltak and headed by the woman Taima?
iii. Bibliography	Dunant, Chr. (1959), 'Nouvelles tessères de Palmyre', <i>Syria</i> 36: 102-10. Kaizer, T. (2002), <i>The Religious Life of Palmyra. A Study of the Social Patterns of Worship in the Roman Period</i> . Stuttgart. Milik, J.T. (1972), <i>Dédicaces faites par des dieux (Palmyre, Hatra, Tyr) et des thiasés sémitiques à l'époque romaine</i> . Paris. Smith, M.S. (2004), <i>Identity, Community, and State Formation at Roman Palmyra</i> . Diss. Univ. of Maryland.

XIII. EVALUATION

i. Private association	Possible
Note	An evaluation needs to focus on the expression "day 5" in l. 4. If the tesserae were really entrance billets for cultic meals, a reasonable interpretation could take <i>mrz</i> as a festive occasion that lasted at least five days; the holder of the billet would have entrance on the fifth day. But this is not a necessary conclusion; the <i>mrz</i> of Baaltak and Taima could also be an association (as is probable in the case of the <i>mrz</i> of [Ne?]bu: CAPInv. 633) that celebrates a feast that lasted at least five days (this seems to be Kaizer's view, but based on Milik's understanding of Taima as an abbreviated version of the group-designation).