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ON SEVERAL CARTOUCHES SUPPOSEDLY OF C. IULIUS CAESAR
GERMANICUS

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ON SEVERAL CARTOUCHES SUPPOSEDLY OF C. IULIUS CAESAR GERMANICUS

The Berlin Museums recently acquired a set of four mummy masks in cartonnage from the Roman period which were published by D. Wildung.* The provenance of the masks is unknown but could be Meir according to Wildung, because of their similarity with masks that were excavated there. Most interestingly, one of the two male mummy masks bears a demotic inscription, the content of which was given by Wildung after a very preliminary reading by K.-Th. Zauzich. It identifies the dead as Pa-syg alias Aischines, son of Psentaes alias Malakos. He was buried on 25/26 Khoiak of what was doubtfully read as year 1 of Germanicus. Wildung thought that this Germanicus could be the nephew of emperor Tiberius, C. Iulius Caesar Germanicus, who made a trip to Egypt in 19 A.D.¹ As no emperor or other member of the imperial family had ever visited Middle and Upper Egypt – the provenance of the masks being perhaps Meir –, Wildung thought it plausible that documents could be dated by the visit of Germanicus.² In support of this he refers to a hieroglyphic inscription from Quseir el-Amarna near Minia which would provide Germanicus' name written in a cartouche.³ G. Poethke in his article on Germanicus in the *Lexikon der Ägyptologie*, also mentions the Quseir el-Amarna inscription and adds two more hieroglyphic texts from the Akhmim area.⁴

Both the reason why Germanicus visited Egypt and, in particular, whether or not he transgressed his authority in doing so, are a matter of debate.⁵ But it is generally accepted that he did not have disloyal intentions.⁶ The Egyptian sources just mentioned would, however, shed a whole new light on his visit. The only names that are written in a cartouche are those of certain deities and those of the ruler of Egypt and his family. As one of the

* D. WILDUNG, *Geheimnisvolle Gesichter*, in *Antike Welt* 21 (1990), p. 206-221.

¹ G. WEINGÄRTNER, *Die Ägyptenreise des Germanicus* (Papyrologische Texte und Abhandlungen 11), Bonn 1969; see also *infra* n. 6 and 7.

² *Art. cit.*, p. 220.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 221, n. 33. The inscription is PM IV, p. 241; M. CHABÂN, in *ASAE* 3 (1903), p. 250.

⁴ G. POETHKE, s.v. *Germanicus*, in *LÄ* II (1977), col. 553. The inscriptions are PM IV, p. 20 and 24.

⁵ See G. WEINGÄRTNER, *op. cit.*; D. HENNIG, *Zur Ägyptenreise des Germanicus*, in *Chiron* 2 (1972), p. 349-365; B. GALLOTTA, *Germanico* (Centro Recerche e Documentazione sull'Antichità Classica. Monografie 10), Roma 1987, p. 164-8 and 187-190; M. PANI, *La missione di Germanico in Oriente*, in G. BONAMENTE and M.P. SEGOLONI (ed.), *Germanico. La Persona, la Personalità, il Personaggio nel bimillenario dalla nascita* (Università degli Studi di Macerata 39), Roma 1987, p. 4-5.

⁶ See, however, E. KOESTERMANN, *Die Mission des Germanicus im Orient*, in *Historia* 7 (1958), p. 349.

three hieroglyphic texts contains a full royal titlature with two cartouches (see below), which is only allowed to kings, ruling queens⁷ and co-regents⁸, this text would imply a rulership status for Germanicus. The demotic inscription mentioning the first regnal year of Germanicus would confirm this and one would have to accept that the prince was either considered as co-regent or that he challenged the authority of Tiberius.

In addition to this, the Egyptian documents which are dated by Germanicus and which write his name in a cartouche would cast doubt on a recent hypothesis of L. Kákósy. He thinks that restoration work was resumed at Thebes as a consequence of Germanicus' visit to that city, but the stelae which commemorate the restoration are dated only by Tiberius and do not even mention Germanicus.⁹ Therefore, it is well worth having a closer look at these documents, all the more so since they would be the only Egyptian sources for Germanicus' visit.

The key document is the demotic inscription with the dating formula on the mummy mask. Although I am unable to offer a running translation of this text, I fail to recognise the date or the name of Germanicus. Prof. Zauzich informs me that he has altered his reading after seeing the cartonnage itself and he confirms that Germanicus is indeed not mentioned at all.¹⁰

Let us now turn to the hieroglyphic texts. The cartouche referred to by Wildung was published by M. Chabân who says it was written on what remained of the foundations of a building, perhaps the temple of Hathor of Quseir el-Amarna.¹¹ The cartouche reads *Ḳsr Krmnk[...]*, that is Caesar Germanic[us]. The reading *ḳsr* is unusual, one expects a final *s*, so perhaps Chabân's copy is not entirely trustworthy. There is, however, no reason to think here of C. Iulius Caesar Germanicus. In Egyptian documents the cognomen Germanicus appears in the titlature of the emperors Caligula, Claudius, Nero, Domitianus and Trajanus.¹² The combination of Caesar and Germanicus in one cartouche occurs only with

⁷ See J. QUAEGEBEUR, *Cléopâtre VII et le temple de Dendara*, in GM 120 (1991), p.61-64.

⁸ E.g. Ptolemy "the Son", son of Ptolemy II: Ph. DERCHAIN, *Une mention méconnue de Ptolémée "le Fils"*, in ZPE 61 (1985), p. 35-36; Caracalla and Geta on a temple relief from the time of Septimius Severus: *Esna VI*, no. 496.

⁹ L. KÁKOSY, *Germanicus in Theben*, in *Acta Antiqua Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae* 32 (1985-1988), p. 129-136.

¹⁰ Letter from 17.9.91.





¹¹ See n. 4.

¹² See J.-Cl. GRENIER, *Les titulatures des empereurs romains dans les documents en langue égyptienne* (Papyrologica Bruxellensia 22), Bruxelles 1989. In the Greek documents from Egypt the cognomen is also part of the titulary of Vitellius, Nerva, Hadrianus, Marcus Aurelius, Commodus and Caracalla: see P. BURETH, *Les titulatures impériales dans les papyrus, les ostraca et les inscriptions d'Égypte (30 a.C. - 284 p.C.)* (Papyrologica Bruxellensia 1), Bruxelles 1964.

Claudius and Nero and it is no doubt to one of these emperors that the Quseir-el-Amarna cartouche has to be attributed.

The second cartouche comes from the ruins of a temple at Akhmim. It is recorded in the manuscripts of Nestor l'Hôte as ...] *Krmnyks* [...]¹³ J. Vandier d'Abbadie identifies the emperor as Claudius, but there is no proof for this. It is safer to refrain from an identification as in two other temples nearby the names of Domitianus and Trajanus are found.¹⁴

The last document is a fragment of a falcon coffin from Akhmim. It was formerly in the collection of Hilton Price and is now in the British Museum (inv. nr. EA 22935).¹⁵ It is the right half of a trapezoid sideboard. One recognises the figure of Thot who performs a purification ritual over a lost figure to his left. Along the right border of the board runs an inscription, containing a titulature (see fig. 1). It was read wrongly by Hilton Price and classified by H. Gauthier among the unidentified cartouches in his *Livre des Rois*.¹⁶ It should be read as *nsw-bjty nb-t3.wy (N3rn Krwty[s])| ntr s3 [ntr] (K3srs Krmnyk[s])| ʕnh [d.t]* "King of Upper and Lower Egypt, Lord of the Two Lands (Nero Claudius), god, son of a god (Caesar Germanicus), living forever", that is emperor Nero.¹⁷

The first two signs of the name of Nero rather look like , but this must be a scribal error for  *n3*.¹⁸ The *r* (for *l*) in *Krwty*s was overlooked in the previous copies. The use of the bull for *k/c* and *g* is paralleled in cartouches of Commodus.¹⁹ The title between the two cartouches is difficult to read. As the first sign is a star, it is probably the title of Claudius as in the temple in Athribis and of Nero in the temple in Tehneh:   "god,

¹³ PM V, p. 20; Nestor l'Hôte MSS 20396, 144, published by J. VANDIER D'ABBADIE, *Nestor l'Hôte (1804-1842). Choix de documents conservés à la Bibliothèque Nationale et aux archives du Musée du Louvre* (Documenta et monumenta Orientis antiqui 21), Leiden 1963, p. 30 and pl. XVI.2.

¹⁴ See K.P. KUHLMANN, *Materialen zur Archäologie und Geschichte des Raumes von Achmim* (Sonderschrift des DAIK 11), Mainz am Rhein 1983, p. 41-5; Kuhlmann mentions the Germanicus cartouche on p. 46-7.

¹⁵ PM V, p. 24; F.G. HILTON PRICE, in *TSBA* 9 (1903) p. 336-7 and plate opposite p. 336.

¹⁶ F.G. HILTON PRICE, in *PSBA* 8 (1885-6), p. 152-3; ID., in *TSBA* 9 (1903) p. 336-7; H. GAUTHIER *LdR* V, p. 240.

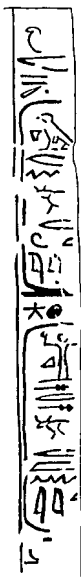
¹⁷ See already J.-Cl. GRENIER, *op. cit.*, p. 33 (type E.2). This document should be added to the list of documents of Nero in the Egyptian language as established by M.P. CESARETTI, *Nerone e l'Egitto* (Studi di storia antica 12), Bologna 1989, p. 77-79.

¹⁸ For the different writings of the name of Nero, see M.P. CESARETTI, *Nerone in Egitto*, in *Aegyptus* 64 (1984), pl. IV-IX.

¹⁹ R. MOND and O.H. MEYERS, *The Bucheum III* (EES 41), London 1934, pl. XLVII.21; *KO* II, p. 307-309.

son of a god". For Tiberius and Claudius the alternative writing $\overline{\text{𓆎}} \overline{\text{𓆏}} \overline{\text{𓆐}}$ is also attested at Athribis.²⁰ In Tehneh there are other examples of "Caesar" written with $\overline{\text{𓆎}} \overline{\text{𓆏}} \overline{\text{𓆐}}$.²¹ The final hieroglyphs of the name Germanicus are almost illegible. The traces indicate that the upper sign is the hill, therefore the end of the name could be $\overline{\text{𓆎}}$, $\overline{\text{𓆏}}$, $\overline{\text{𓆐}}$ or even $\overline{\text{𓆎}}$ or $\overline{\text{𓆏}}$.²²

It is clear from the above demonstration that none of the Egyptian documents attributed to C. Iulius Caesar Germanicus is really his. Therefore, they can't be used to evaluate the political implications of Germanicus' visit to Egypt. The four Berlin mummy masks and comparable pieces in other collections can no longer be dated to the early first century A.D. on the basis of the demotic inscription. The board from the British Museum falcon coffin dates from the reign of Nero (54-68 A.D.), which provides a valuable clue for this type of object, which can often not even be attributed to a specific century.



(fig.1)

Cologne

Peter Dils

²⁰ Tiberius: W.M.F. PETRIE, *Athribis* (BSAE/ERA 14), London 1908, pl. XXI; Claudius: *ibid.*, pl. XXIV and XXV; compare with pl. XXIX; Nero: G. LEFEBVRE - L. BARRY, in *ASAE* 6 (1905), p. 146.

²¹ G. LEFEBVRE - L. BARRY, *art. cit.*, p. 145 and 146.

²² I thank Stephen Quirke for checking my reading of the titulature against the original. Since the photograph of *TSBA* 9 was taken, the board has unfortunately suffered further deterioration (letter from 4.6.91). The drawing (fig. 1) was made from the photograph.