

PETER VAN MINNEN

NOTE ON GORDIAN'S SECOND LETTER TO THE CITIZENS OF ANTINOOPOLIS

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Lines 6-9 of the second letter of Gordian to the citizens of Antinoopolis published by F.A.J. Hoogendijk and me a couple of years ago¹ read as follows:

ὦν [ὁ θεὸς Ἄδριανὸς προτέ]ρους ὑμᾶς ἀφῆκεν τελῶ[ν κτλ.	6
	εἰκό- 8
τως ἂν εἴητ[ε] καὶ νῦν ἀπηλλαγμένοι	9

In *Hellenika* 40 (1989) 56 G.A. Souris rejects our supplement προτέ]ρους in line 6 as “not convincing” and suggests ἀνεισφό]ρους instead. This, however, produces an impossible text.

The verb ἀφίημι in combination with a genitive already expresses what the adjective ἀνεισφορος is supposed to convey: exemption from (taxes). If we allow both to stand in line 6 Gordian would have produced a very awkward phrase, in which ἀνεισφό]ρους is redundant: “From the taxes from which the deified Hadrian exempted you tax-exempt.” The adjective ἀνεισφορος is almost always used as a predicate in combination with the verb εἰμί or another copula, as one would expect. See Josephus, *Antiq.Jud.* XI 338; Plutarch, *Cam.* 2, 5; Eusebius, *Vit.Const.* 4, 2; IG II² i 1368, 158 (Attica); SEG XXI 505 b 7-8 (Athens); IG IV² i 66, 72-73 (Epidaurus; εἶμεν [Doric equivalent of εἶναι] κτλ. ἀνεισφορον); IG V i 952, 25 (Boeae); IG VII 2413, 5-6 (Thebes); FD III iv 353, 4-5 and 11-12 (Delphi); IG XIV 951, 12 (Rome). In IG II² i 1043, 64-65 (Rhosus; βουλόμενον κτλ. τηρήσαι τοὺς συνεφήβους κτλ. ἀνεισ[φόρους] the verb τηρέω functions as it sometimes does in the NT. See e.g. I Tim. 5:22: σεαυτὸν ἄγνόν τήρει. The adjectives ἀνεισφόρους and ἄγνόν are both predicates. The same observation can be made with regard to the verb ποιέω in Dion.Hal., *Antiq.Rom.* V xxii 2, 3 (ἀνεισφόρους τῶν κτλ. ἀναλισκομένων ἐποίησαν), where the adjective ἀνεισφόρους is a predicate. Such a predicate is impossible with the verb ἀφίημι in combination with the genitive.²

I still think προτέ]ρους in line 6 of Gordian's letter balances καὶ νῦν in line 9 too neatly to be rejected out of hand. It produces an acceptable phrase: “From the taxes from which the deified Hadrian exempted you previously.”

Duke University

Peter van Minnen

¹ “Drei Kaiserbriefe Gordians III. an die Bürger von Antinoopolis. P.Vindob. G 25945,” *Tyche* 2 (1987) 41-74. The quotation comes from p. 48. For the texts of the three letters see now SB XVIII 13374-13376.

² A petition by two keepers of sacred cats from the middle of the third century B.C., P.Cair.Zen. III 59451, 3-5 seems to contain such a predicate (ὁ βασιλεὺς ἀφείκεν τὸ γένο[ς] τοῦτο κατὰ τὴν χώραν ἀλειτούργητον), but the syntax would be much improved if λειτουργίων instead of ἀλειτούργητον had been written. As it stands, the phrase should be translated: “The king exempted this category in the *chora* of Egypt (so that it is) exempt from the corvée.”