P.J. Sijpesteijn

Some Remarks on SB V 8368 and 8369

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In an article entitled “The Soter Family : Genealogy and Onomastica”, P. L. Bat. 27 (Leiden 1995) 69-82 K. van Landuyt deals with the Demotic and Greek texts connected with the Soter family whose tomb is described by L. Kákosy in the same volume on pp.61-68 (“The Soter Tomb in Thebes”). On pp. 76-77 she does not only give a transcription and a translation of SBV 8368 and 8369 but also of both texts a most welcome facsimile. From the facsimile which Miss van Landuyt provides of SBV 8369 = CIG 4826 = IGRR I 1234 it becomes clear that this text has never been correctly transcribed. I, therefore, shall first give a transcription of this text of three lines which is written on the footend of a coffin based on the photograph of this coffin which is exposed in the room of graeco-roman antiquities at the British Museum kindly put at my disposal by Miss van Landuyt.

ταφῆ Τρούντος Ἑρακλείου Σωτήρος μητρὸς Σαραπούντος ἔγεν(ν) ἕθη τοῖς (ἐτέι) Ἀδριανοῦ

toύ κυρίου Ἀθύρ (ι)β καὶ ἐπελεύσθην τοῖς (ἐτέι) μηνί Tυβί εκ [...]. ἔτων εξ®, μηνόν δύο, ἡμερῶν ἦ καὶ ἐτώφη τοῖς ἧβ (ἐτέι) μηνί Ἀθύρ ἧβ.

If we take the text at face value Tphus was born on October 29, A.D. 120; she died on January 15 (not 16), A.D. 127; and she was buried on November 9 (not 8), A.D. 127 (the 12th regnal year of the emperor Hadrian was a leap year!). Tphus, so the text says, lived six years, two months, and 8 days but we arrive at such a span of life only if we change Ἀθύρ β in line 2 to Ἀθύρ (ι)β. This implies that Tphus was actually born on November 8, A.D. 120.

SBV 8368 = SB I 3931 = CIG 4825 = IGRR I 1230 (cf. BL VIII 334) presents another problem. According to the text the deceased, Petemenophis, lived 4 years, 8 months, and 10 days. Since he was born on December 20, A.D. 118 (not 119) and died on August 27, A.D. 123, his span of life was 4 years, 8 months, and only 8 days. The number of days, i.e. 10, is confirmed by the Demotic text written on the coffin-lid (the Greek text is written on the footend of the coffin). A look at the facsimile in P. L. Bat. 27, p.76 convinces one immediately that the last letter(number) in line 5 is 51. One can also see that this iota resembles the left part of the letter(number) ẹ in the same line. I assume that the person who wrote (first) the Greek text on this coffin had in front of him an example of this text which had at the end of line 5 a not too clear ẹ which he mistook for a τ.

University of Amsterdam

P.J. Sijpesteijn

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1 Obviously Miss van Landuyt took over the text of SBV 8369 and then translated this text as it should run according to her.

2 If SBV 8368 a facsimile can be found in G. di Cordero San Quintino, Lezioni archeologiche …, Torino 1824, plate I; of SBV 8369 a facsimile was given by Th. Young, Hieroglyphics collected by the Egypt Society, London 1823-1828, plate 35.

3 Miss van Landuyt warned me in her letter dated October 20, 1995 that a small mistake crept into her article cited in the text. Her text no.9 regarding Phaminis, son of Herakleios is written on a coffin-lid; the text republished here, however, on the footend of a coffin.

4 Ἀδριανοῦ : α ex corr. (ex τ ?).

5 It is a common feature in funeral inscriptions that giving the life span of the deceased some elements show the numeral written out in full while others use a letter-number.

6 Her burial fell more than ten months after her death, both occurred on a 12th Hathyr although according to our calendar her birthdate was November 8 but the date of her burial November 9. Cf. Miss van Landuyt, op. cit., 77, footnote 35. Mummies were often kept waiting a long time for their actual burial (cf. S.P. Vleeming, P. L. Bat. 27, 246f.).

7 BL VIII 334 gives a reference to SEG XXXII (1982) 1592 where one can read that B. Boyaval (Lyon) has announced a study in which he will show that SBV 8368 is a forgery based on the text of the mummy-label SB I 3931. B. Boyaval, who dealt with SB V 8369 (and made a passing remark on SB V 8368 on p. 36) in Anagenesis 2, 1982, 31ff., informs me per litteras (October 28, 1995) that he withdrew his article on SB V 8368 announced loc. cit., 36 to appear in BASP 18, 3-4.

8 Since text 7 (loc. cit., 75) with which Miss van Landuyt deals only gives the day of the death of Sensaos (Epeiph 21 of year 12 of Trajan, i.e. July 15, A.D. 109) and the span of life of the deceased (16 years, 2 months, and 9 days), Sensaos was born on May 7 (not 8), A.D. 93.