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LINES 26–32 OF THE HOROTHESIA OF DIONYSOPOLIS (IGBULG V 5011)

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## LINES 26–32 OF THE HOROTHESIA OF DIONYSOPOLIS (IGBULG V 5011)

Ten years ago the late Kr. Banev presented a preliminary report about a new Greek horothesia of Dionysopolis on the Black Sea<sup>1</sup>. The inscription was included by the late Prof. G. Mihailov into the fifth volume of his *Inscriptiones Graecae in Bulgaria repertae*<sup>2</sup>.

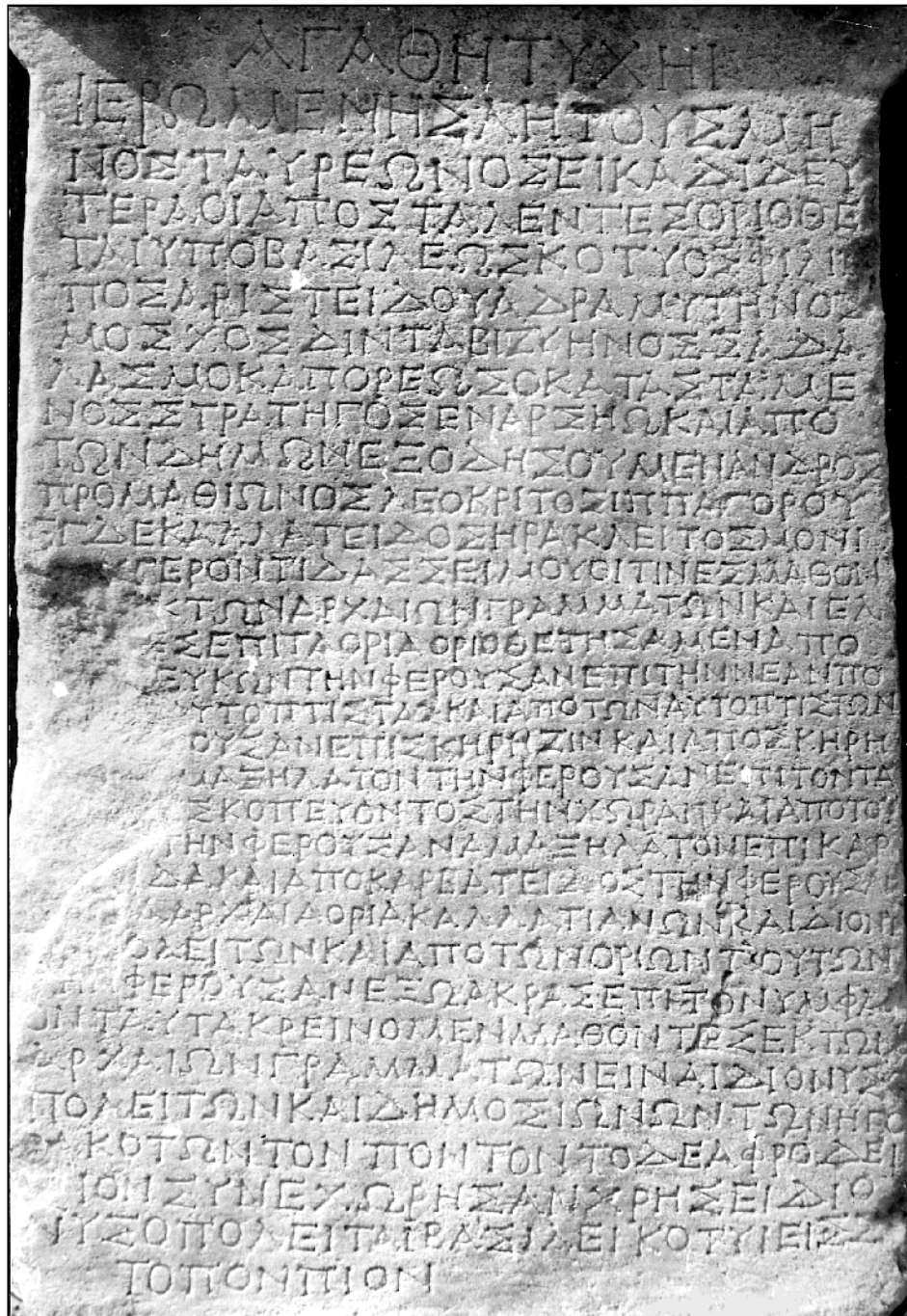
For the convenience of the readers of ZPE, I include the text:

Ἀγαθῇ τύχῃ  
 Ἱερωμένης Λητοῦς μη-  
 νὸς Ταυρεῶνος εἰκάδι δευ-  
 τέρα οἱ ἀποσταλέντες ὀριοθέ-  
 5 ται ὑπὸ βασιλέως Κοτυος· Φίλιπ-  
 πος Ἀριστείδου Ἀδραμυτηνός,  
 Μόσχος Διντα Βιζυηνός, Σαδα-  
 λας Μοκαπορεως ὁ καταστάμε-  
 νος στρατηγὸς ἐν Ἀρσηφ καὶ ἀπὸ  
 10 τῶν δήμων· ἔξ Ὀδησοῦ (sic)· Μένανδρος  
 Προμαθίωνος, Λεόκριτος Ἰππαγόρου,  
 ἐγ δὲ Καλλάτειδος· Ἡράκλειτος Μοί-  
 [μο]ν, Γεροντίδας Σείμου, οἵτινες μαθόν-  
 [τες ἐ]κ τῶν ἀρχαίων γραμμάτων καὶ ἐλ-  
 15 [θόντ]ες ἐπὶ τὰ ὄρια ὀριοθετήσαμεν ἀπὸ  
 [τῶν Π]ευκῶν τὴν φέρουσαν ἐπὶ τὴν νέαν πό-  
 [λιν] Αὐτοππιστὰς καὶ ἀπὸ τῶν Αὐτοππιστῶν  
 [τὴν φέρ]ουσαν ἐπὶ Σκηρηζίν καὶ ἀπὸ Σκηρη-  
 [ζεως ἀ]μαξήλατον τὴν φέρουσαν ἐπὶ τὸν τά-  
 20 [φον τοῦ] σκοπεύοντος τὴν χώραν καὶ ἀπὸ τοῦ  
 [τάφου] τὴν φέρουσαν ἀμαξήλατον ἐπὶ Καρ-  
 [βατε]ίδα καὶ ἀπὸ Καρβατειδος τὴν φέρουσα[ν]  
 [ἐπὶ τ]ὰ ἀρχαῖα ὄρια Καλλατιανῶν καὶ Διονυ-  
 [σοπ]ολειτῶν καὶ ἀπὸ τῶν ὀρίων τούτων  
 25 [τ]ὴν φέρουσαν ἔξω Ἀκρας ἐπὶ τὸ Νυμφαῖ-  
 ον, ταῦτα κρείνομεν μαθόντες ἐκ τῶν  
 ἀρχαίων γραμμάτων εἶναι Διονυσο-  
 πολειτῶν καὶ δημοσίων<ων> τῶν ἡγο-  
 ρακότων τὸν Πόντον, τὸ δὲ Ἀφροδεί-  
 30 [σ]ιον συνεχώρησαν χρήσει Διο-  
 νυσοπολεῖται βασιλεῖ Κοτυ εἰς  
 τὸ Πονπίον

The stone is in good condition as we can see in the photograph on the following page. Except for the broken-off left side of lines 13–25, the lettering allows for the contents to be completely restored, which was done by the late Prof. G. Mihailov.

<sup>1</sup> Kr. Banev – M. P. Dimitrov, A New Epigraphical Monument of Dionysopolis (in Bulgarian). *Thracia Pontica II*, Jambol 1985 (Deuxième symposium international. Sozopol, 4–7 Oct. 1982. The inscription was reported on at the epigraphical congress in Athens 1982.

<sup>2</sup> IGBulg V, Serdicae MCMXCVII, No. 5011.



The end of the inscription, however, raised some controversial issues. Yet following the preliminary report several opinions about the final lines of the inscription were advanced<sup>3</sup>. The lines in question read as follows:

<sup>3</sup> G. Mihailov, *Epigraphica et linguistica, Linguistique balkanique* 30 (1987), p. 259–262 (on lines 29–32).

A. Avram, *Untersuchungen zur Geschichte des Territoriums von Kallatis in griechischer Zeit, Dacia (NS)* 35 (1991), p. 103–137 (cf. SEG XXXIX.604).

K. Vlahov, *Neuentdeckte thrakische Ortsnamen*, in: *Annuaire de l'Université de Sofia. Faculté d'histoire*, vol. 77,2, Sofia 1985, p. 452–457 (on ΕΙΣΣΤΟΠΙΟΝΙΟΝ).

Al. Fol, *Again (and for the Last Time) about the Issue of Thracian Strategiae* (in Bulgarian), in: *Annuaire de l'Université de Sofia. Faculté d'histoire*, vol. 77,2, Sofia, p. 142–144 (on the governor of Ἀρσείος).

M. Tacheva, *Ancient History of Bulgarian Lands* (in Bulgarian), Sofia 1987, p. 84, 86–87, 92–93, 110, 164.

τὸ δὲ Ἀφροδί-  
 30 [σ]ιον συνεχώρησαν χρήσει Διο-  
 νυσοπολεῖται βασιλεῖ Κοτυ ΕΙΣΣ  
 ΤΟΠΟΝΠΙΟΝ

K. Vlahov considered the letters ΕΙΣΣΤΟΠΟΝΠΙΟΝ to be a Thracian toponym. G. Mihailov's idea, however, was that the Dionysopolitans agreed that King Kotys use the sanctuary of Aphrodite as a sanctuary of special functions where the sacred supplies were kept. According to his opinion, lines 29–32 should be read as follows:

τὸ δὲ Ἀφροδί-  
 30 [σ]ιον συνεχώρησαν χρήσει Διο-  
 νυσοπολεῖται βασιλεῖ Κοτυ εἰς  
 τὸ Ποιπῖον

Translation: “. . . and the Dionysopolitans reached an agreement with King Kotys to use the sanctuary of Aphrodite as the Pompeion”.

From a philological point of view, the weakness of that reading lies in the presence of a definite article before the word Ποιπῖον in the Greek text. As we know, the construction of such phrases as “to use sth as sth” in Greek requires a second direct object without any definite article – cf. for instance X. Mem. 3.14.4 where one can read: χ. τῷ σίτῳ ὄψῳ ἢ τῷ ὄψῳ σίτῳ (LSJ s.v. χράομαι).

A few years later, at the conference in honour of the late Prof. Boris Gerov at Sofia University 1991, Kr. Banev suggested a more likely and acceptable idea which I share, namely:

τὸ δὲ Ἀφροδί-  
 30 [σ]ιον συνεχώρησαν χρήσει Διο-  
 νυσοπολεῖται βασιλεῖ Κοτυ εἰς σι|  
 ΤΟΠΟΝΠΙΟΝ

Translation: “. . . and the Dionysopolitans reached an agreement with King Kotys that he use the sanctuary of Aphrodite for conveyance of corn”.

The writing of the word σιτοπομπεῖον as σιτοπονπίον can be regarded as hypercorrect. In line 12 we find a case of assimilation of sonority – ἐγ δὲ instead of ἐκ δὲ. Along with the simplified writing of a geminate in line 10 – ἐξ Ὀδησοῦ instead of ἐξ Ὀδησοῦ – and a few other writings of /I/ by {EI}, typical of post-classical Greek in general, these are the singular orthographic “errors” in our otherwise literately composed text.

As far as I know, the literary evidence of the lexeme σιτοπομπεῖον in the meaning “conveyance of corn, transportation of corn” is to be found only in the description of Scythia Minor by Strabo, who highlighted the fruitfulness and the fiscal duties of Theodosia (Str. 7.4.6 . . . κὰν τοῖς πρόσθεν χρόνοις ἐντεῦθεν ἦν τὰ σιτοπομπεῖα τοῖς Ἑλλησιν, καθάπερ ἐκ τῆς λίμνης αἰ ταριχεῖαι).

We do not have, however, any epigraphical testimony of that lexeme up to now. A variant σιτοπομπία, ἢ of the same meaning appears in an Athenian inscription from the late 4th c. B.C. which settles a colony to be sent to Adria.

We can add to the orthographic and lexical arguments in favour of the conjecture graphological ones as well. One can distinctly make out the broken-off stone part at the end of line 31 after the last sigma as a sufficient space for the suggested iota.

The sense of that new conjecture is extremely interesting. The horiothetes<sup>4</sup> sent by King Kotys, by the demos of Odessos and of Kallatis delimited the boundaries of the Dionysopolitan hora which bordered on the land property of the two poleis and on that of the Thracians. As for the sanctuary of Aphrodite, it was ceded by the citizens of Dionysopolis to the Thracians to use it for conveying corn.

We can, therefore, consider the inscription as important evidence of the successful economic development of the Thracian client kingdom under the auspices of Rome, especially during Augustus' rule. All the more that the process occurred against a background of a continuous decay of that peripheral area of the Greek world at the end of the Hellenistic period. This decay was due, on the one hand, to the emergence of a lot of new rival trade centres such as Alexandria, Seleukia, Laodikeia, and Rhodos, which had ousted the Pontic colonies on the western coast of the Black Sea from their leadership in the trade with continental Greece, and, on the other hand, to the devastating attacks of the Bastarn and Gete tribes in the 1st c. B.C.

As a former student and a colleague of the late Prof. G. Mihailov at the Department of Classics, I had the honour to work with him in his last days on the elaboration the fifth volume of IGBulg. In our discussions about the inscription of Dionysopolis he admitted the obscurity especially of the lettering ΚΑΙ ΔΗΜΟΣΙΩΝΩΝ ΤΩΝ ΗΓΟΡΑΚΟΤΩΝ ΤΟΝ ΠΟΝΤΟΝ in lines 28–29. Prof. Mihailov postulated a couple of superfluous letters here, so that he secluded the second <ων> in the ΔΗΜΟΣΙΩΝΩΝ. In his opinion the versions ὦν τῶν or (δ)ντων are meaningless. So the meaning of the phrase in question became: καὶ δημοσίων<ων> τῶν ἡγορακότων τὸν Πόντον. That it was even then felt to be ambiguous is shown by the fact that Prof. Mihailov added to the commentary of line 28 “sed non liquere confiteor”.

Several years after his decease, it occurred to me that the text would entirely complete its meaning, if we read the secluded letters as well and if we regarded the phrase in question as a *Genetivus possessivus* of δημοσιῶναι οἱ ἡγορακότες τὸν Πόντον. Therefore we could read the conclusion of the inscription as follows:

. . . ταῦτα κρείνομεν μαθόντες ἐκ τῶν  
ἀρχαίων γραμμάτων εἶναι Διονυσο-  
πολειτῶν καὶ δημοσιωνῶν τῶν ἡγο-  
ρακότων τὸν Πόντον, τὸ δὲ Ἀφροδεί-  
30 [σ]ιον συνεχώρησαν χρήσει Διο-  
νυσοπολεῖται βασιλεῖ Κοτυεῖ εἰς σ[ι]-  
τοπονπίον

One of the reasons for such a reading which corresponds to all the letters on the stone is the literacy and the accuracy of the stone-cutter. As we have seen above, there are no technical mistakes but the orthographic ones mentioned on page 3 which have a psycholinguistic nature<sup>5</sup>. Actually, the stone-cutter cut the letters not as he saw them on the copy of the document but as he uttered the words – aloud or in his mind. Of course, there is another option – the document itself could have been written and given to the stone-cutter with those spelling errors, but that is less probable.

The second reason for the reading δημοσιωνῶν τῶν ἡγορακότων τὸν Πόντον is a logical one and results from the idea of σιτοπομπεῖον discussed above.

According to G. Mihailov as well as to Kr. Banev and M. P. Dimitrov in their preliminary report, the inscription in question dates back to the rule of the Thracian king Kotys (the Third), well-known

<sup>4</sup> The inscription in question offers a new although comprehensible version of the lexeme ὁριοθέτης, namely ὀριοθέτης. The delay in publishing the inscription did not allow the lexeme to be included in the new supplementum of LSJ.

<sup>5</sup> See more about the issue in S. T. Teodorsson, The Phonology of Ptolemaic Koine. *Studia Graeca et Latina Gothoburgensia* XXXVI, 1977, chapter 3, p. 36–47.

from Ovid's poems<sup>6</sup>. The death of Kotys' father, Roemetalces (the First), put an end to a twenty-year period of relatively stable governance of the Thracian kingdom. After Roemetalces the political power over Thrace was divided between his brother, Rescuporis (the Third), and Roemetalces' son Kotys (the Third), who was later on murdered by his uncle. The young Kotys got married – certainly not without the blessing of Augustus himself in the spirit of his strategy of pacifying the whole Roman empire and its clients – to Antonia Tryphaina of the royal dynasty of Pontos. We know the favourable words of both Tacitus and Ovid about this Thracian ruler, who was regarded as most cultivated and civilized by the Romans. So Tacitus called him *mitis* and *amoenus* (Tac. Ann. 2,64), while Ovid vaunted him in Ex P. II 9,35–54. The inscription in question as well as the inscription of a Dionysic thyasos from Kallatis in honour of Ariston<sup>7</sup> both mentioned Kotys as an eponymous magistrate – βασιλεύς, which testifies in favour of his friendly attitude to the Greek colonies bordering on the Thracian kingdom.

As for the colonies located to the north of Haemus, they were placed under Roman control following the campaigns of M. Terentius Varro Lucullus in 72–71 B.C. It is most probable that they acquired the status of *civitates foederatae*, as we can conclude from Dio's testimony (Cass. Dio 38,10,3) and from a fragmentary treaty of alliance between Rome and Kallatis<sup>8</sup>. In fact, the situation changed with C. Antonius Hybrida's unsuccessful campaign in 62–61 B.C. and with Burebista, but M. Licinius Crassus' campaigns in 29 and 28 B.C. restored the Roman influence along the western Pontic coast. The colonies were under the control of the governor of the province of Macedonia but after the formation of the province of Moesia under the rule of Tiberius in 15 A.D. they were placed into its governor's submission<sup>9</sup>.

As a matter of fact, the Roman control was carried into effect first through a *praefectus orae maritimae* who was himself subordinated to the governor of Macedonia. The exact date of the establishment of that *praefectura* and the details of its setting up are unknown to us<sup>10</sup>. According to D. M. Pippidi, the ancient literary and epigraphical evidence we could rely on is as follows:<sup>11</sup>

1. The year of Ovid's exile in Tomi is supposed to be a *terminus ante quem* of the establishment of the *praefectura orae maritimae* because, had Tomi not been included within the limits of the Roman empire before 8 B.C., the poet would hardly have been sent into exile there. Ovid's poem *Tristia* supports the belief that the *praefectura* had been founded before Ovid's getting to those peripheral lands (Trist. II, 197–200):

Hactenus Euxini pars est Romana sinistri:  
Proxima Bastarnae Sauromataeque tenent.  
Haec est Ausonio sub iure novissima vixque  
Haeret in imperii margine terra tui . . .

2. We know two inscriptions dating back to the last years of Augustus' rule, i.e. before the formation of the province of Moesia. The first of them, that of Papas, Theopompos' son, originates from Histria and is dedicated to Augustus himself<sup>12</sup>. The second one from Kallatis is in honour of P. Vinicius, the consul

<sup>6</sup> The following brief historical summary on that period of the Thracian history is according to R. D. Sullivan, Thrace in the Eastern Dynastic Network, in: ANRW 7,1 Principat, p. 200–204.

<sup>7</sup> Dacia I, 1923, p. 139 f.

<sup>8</sup> Sc. Lambrino, Une inscription latine de Callatis, CRAI 1933, p. 278 f.; A. Passerni, Il testo del foedus di Roma con Callatis, Athenaeum 23 (1935), p. 57 f.

<sup>9</sup> B. Gerov, Die Grenzen der römischen Provinz Thracia, in: ANRW 7,1 Principat, p. 213.

<sup>10</sup> More about *praefectura orae maritimae* see by D. M. Pippidi, Das Stadtgebiet von Histria in römischer Zeit auf Grund der ὁροθεσία des Laberius Maximus, Dacia (NS) 2 (1958), p. 244 ff. (= SEG I.329); J. Marquardt, Römische Staatsverwaltung, Leipzig 1881, vol. I.2 p. 554 and Leipzig 1884, vol. II.2, p. 535–537; G. Barbieri, Rivista di Filologia 19 (1941), p. 288 ff.

<sup>11</sup> D. M. Pippidi, op. cit.

<sup>12</sup> Histria I, 1954, p. 511, p. 9.

in 2 A.D.<sup>13</sup> These epigraphical monuments provide specific information about the loyalty of the population on the western coast of the Black Sea, in particular of those two colonies, to the Roman government.

After the establishment of the province of Moesia the *praefectura orae maritimae* was subordinated to its governor. There is no precise evidence as to who were the *praefecti* of the administrative structure in question from its beginning until the middle of the 1st c. A.D. As a matter of fact, we do not know but the names of two friends of Ovid's, Vestalis and L. Pomponius Flaccus, who were in charge of that praefectura before 15 A.D.<sup>14</sup>

In my opinion, we are able to put the horothesia of Dionysopolis into those ancient testimonies of the Roman presence in the north-western Pontic colonies, as it provides evidence of the existence of tax-collectors on the city's territory at the very beginning of the 1st c. A.D.

The inscription is most likely to have been put up in 15 A.D. – the year of including Kallatis and Dionysopolis into the boundaries of Moesia. We know about a similar practice with the other adjacent Greek cities, which wanted to draw attention to their ancient boundaries, when the Roman administration was about to change the territorial organisation of the lands in the vicinity of the city's hora. The reason for that was mainly the intention to avoid potential fiscal problems whatever they might have been.

Such is the case of the well-known inscription of Histria – the horothesia of Manius Laberius Maximus. The text dates back to 100 A.D., although it contains the correspondence between the governors of Moesia and the *boule* of Histria after 47–50 A.D. – the rule of governor Tullius Geminus<sup>15</sup>. It is focused on the relationship between Histria and the tax-collectors from the customs zone *ripa Thraciae* (τὸ τῆς κατὰ Ἰστρὸν ὄχθης τέλος), established in 45 A.D., the year of the annexation of the Thracian vassal kingdom by Claudius. It is exactly at this time that the citizens of Histria addressed a request to the provincial governor in connection with their own territory. It bordered on the southern arm of the Danube, named Ἰερόν στόμα or Πεύκη, and was considered very important for the city's revenues because of the fishing opportunities it offered. In contrast to the time of the independent Thracian kingdom when that part of the Histrian territory was tax-free, the turning of the Thracian kingdom into a Roman province endangered Histria's fiscal immunity. The new circumstances imposed “the acknowledgment of its boundaries in order to avoid the occurrence of legal disputes, especially with the tax-collectors, which otherwise would have arisen with certainty”<sup>16</sup>.

The first question ensuing from the reading suggested above is related to the precise period in which the tax-collectors reached the city of Dionysopolis.

One of the possible assumptions is that they got there following the establishment of the *praefectura orae maritimae* to collect the taxes of that territory which was part of the province of Macedonia.

The analogy we run across in Cicero (Cic. De lege agr. II, 50) according to which the tax-collectors had settled in the province of Asia even before it was established (. . . *agros Bithyniae regios, quibus nunc publicani fruuntur*) is obvious. It is also evident that they had their financial interests, which motivated Pompeius in his policy to turn those lands into a new Roman province<sup>17</sup>.

The alternative assumption is that the *publicani* came to Dionysopolis in 15 A.D. – the year of the integration of the city into the province of Moesia.

<sup>13</sup> IGRP I, 654.

<sup>14</sup> Ex Ponto IV,7; IV,91–4, 59–60, 119.

<sup>15</sup> D. M. Pippidi, op. cit., p. 243

<sup>16</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>17</sup> A. H. M. Jones, The Cities of the Eastern Roman Provinces. Second Edition, Oxford 1971, p. 156.



The second problem in the passage in question is why the tax-collectors are called οἱ δημοσιῶναι οἱ ἡγορακότες τὸν Πόντον. We can refer to parallels with the papyri of Ptolemy Philadelphus' revenue laws<sup>18</sup> which yield information concerning a similar usage of ἀγοράζω in two kinds of phrases:

- ὁ τὴν ὠνὴν ἀγοράσας – the contractor who farmed the harvest (for instance col. 41,22);
- ὁ νόμον νόμου ἀγοράσας – the contractor who farmed the taxes of the nome of . . . For instance:
  - ὁ τὸν Σα[ίτη]ν ἀγοράσας (col. 60,22);
  - τῶι τὴν Λιβύην ἀγοράσαντι (col. 61,11–12);
  - ὁ τὸν Προσωπίτην ἀγοράσας (col. 61,18);
  - ὁ τὸν Μενδήσι[ον] ἀγοράσας (col. 62,20–21).

It ensues from this frequent use of ἀγοράζω that such formulae are typical of that kind of documents. In our passage there is just ὁ Πόντος instead of the name of the nome. One should bear in mind that this geographical name acquired an administrative meaning during Mithridates Eupator's rule. There is sufficient and convincing ancient literary evidence that it was after the imposing of his political influence all over the coast of the Black Sea that he began to be called King of Pontos<sup>19</sup>. It is worthy to know that the administrative concept of Pontos did not come from the name of his home-land, North Cappadocia; on the contrary, the king gave it to her. And his state was named "Pontos" not because it bordered on the Black Sea, but due to the fact that its king was the ruler of the lands adjacent to the Pontos Euxeinos. It is obvious that this administrative concept of Pontos did not exist before Mithridates' rule, moreover it was imposed only after Bithynia and Mithridates' kingdom became Roman provinces.

The passage in question however is still a source of trouble given the fact that the epigraphical monument dates back to the second decade of the 1st c. A.D., i.e. more than 70 years after the formation of the province of Pontos. One could avoid this difficulty by supposing that the tax-collectors who farmed the Dionysopolitan hora were members of one of those *societates publicanorum* which farmed the province of Pontos as well. Both the geographical closeness of the two provinces – Pontos and Moesia – and the traditionally close political relations between the north-western Pontic colonies and the Pontic kingdom can be used as an argument for this presupposition.

We may suggest that the Dionysopolitans drew up a contract with someone *societas publicanorum* in order to fulfil their fiscal obligations to Rome. Our horothesis could be a kind of insurance against possible complications in case the contractors would lay claims to collect taxes from a larger agricultural land. Thus the specifying and the confirmation of the old boundaries of the city and the consultation with the old documents could more likely be attributed to the contractors' requirements for levying taxes on territories which did not really belong to the Dionysopolitans.

Apart from the horothesis from Histria mentioned above there is another inscription yielding us similar information concerning the relations between the Greek cities and the *publicani*. The monument to be added is the well-known letter of the Roman consuls of 73 B.C. to the magistrates of Oropos<sup>20</sup>. They informed them about the *senatus consultum* which settled the dispute between the sanctuary of the divinized heros Amphiaraus and the *publicani*. The question about the divine or the human nature of Amphiaraus, which seems transcendental at first sight, has in that case entirely economic aspects. The publicani insisted on levying taxes on the sanctuary's land which otherwise had fiscal immunity. In the hope of gaining more profit they claimed that the land was not sacrosanct since Amphiaraus did not belong to the Olympic pantheon.

As far as I know, there are two other interpretations concerning not so much the contents of the Dionysopolitan horothesis (it is clear that it belongs to the traditional Greek administrative documents settling the changes in the cadaster of the local hora) than its purpose.

<sup>18</sup> P. Grenfell, Revenue Laws of Ptolemy Philadelphus, Oxford 1986. Cf. LSJ, s.v.

<sup>19</sup> B. Niese, Straboniana, Rhein. Museum für Philologie 42 (1887), p. 570 f.

<sup>20</sup> Syll.<sup>3</sup> 747.

According to A. Avram<sup>21</sup>, the reference to the *old documents* and the updating of the boundaries of Dionysopolis could be the result of the restoration of the borders of Bizone, a small town in the neighbourhood of Dionysopolis, which had previously suffered an earthquake. Such an idea is hardly credible, and moreover, it does not result from the contents of the text, the name of Bizone not being mentioned at all.

As for the other opinion, that of M. Tacheva<sup>22</sup>, it dates the inscription back to the time of another Thracian king Kotys who ruled from 42 to 16 B.C. The palaeographic and phonetic peculiarities of the inscription in question are her main argument. She relates its putting up, the change of the dynasty in Bizye and the coming of Kotys to the throne after Sadala II. In her opinion, Kotys as the main political person in the text had insisted on the renewal of the “old documents” between “the colonies and the powerful Thracian kings of the Hinterland”.

The time gap of nearly 60 years between this datation and the datation accepted by us is so insignificant that we could hardly take advantage of the palaeographic or linguistic arguments in favour of any of them. What makes them even less significant is the fact that the phonetic characteristics of the inscription are commonplace for post-classical Greek. Therefore what we are left with is the search in the intrinsic reasons of the text itself.

First of all, we have to state that the inscription does not imply the main political role of Kotys, the king of the Thracian kingdom, only one of the entities together with Kallatis and Odessos bordering on Dionysopolis which sent the horiothetes.

Secondly, we should not forget that the dating of the inscription back to 12–19 B.C. complies with the fact that it was Kotys whom the Thracian lands around the Greek colonies belonged to after the division of the Thracian kingdom and it was him that had close connections with the Greek colonies, given that he was at least once an eponymous magistrate of Kallatis according to the well-known inscription of Ariston.

Thirdly, the parallel drawn between the inscription in question and the ones of Histria and Oropos are in favour of the assumption that during the time of the Roman domination many Greek cities went to a kind of specifying or “remembering” their boundaries, if their economic interests came within the provisions of a law on their administrative or fiscal status.

And last but not least, the reading suggested in this paper should also revise M. Tacheva’s presupposition about the existence of some “dependent” population, the “so-called *demosioi*”, i.e. the public slaves, on the territory of Dionysopolis.

In case our conjecture and interpretation of the final lines of the inscription are close to the truth, its translation should read as follows:

“Based on our knowledge from the old documents, we decided that this territory be the possession of the Dionysopolitans and of the tax-collectors; as for the Aphrodeision, the Dionysopolitans reached an agreement with King Kotys to use it for the conveyance of corn.”

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<sup>21</sup> See note 3.

<sup>22</sup> See note 3.