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THREE NOTES ON GOVERNORS OF BYZANTINE EGYPT

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THREE NOTES ON GOVERNORS OF BYZANTINE EGYPT*

I. An early *praefectus Augustalis* (POxy LXIII 4382)

POxy 4382, of 23 July 383, provides the earliest documentary evidence for the office of *praefectus Augustalis*, the supreme civil authority in Egypt following the creation of the Egyptian diocese shortly before that date (see B. Palme, *AnTard* 6 (1998) 128-29 with references). The titulature of the prefect invites comment; line 7 as printed reads:

τοῦ μεγαλοπρ(επεστάτου) ἐπάρχου Αὐγουσταλίου Φλαουίου Κυντιλλίου Ὑπατείου

The restoration is modelled on PHaun III 57.4 (c. 412-15) and PLaur III 87.4-5 (IV/V). In view of the date of the text, however, the epithet μεγαλοπρ(επεστάτου) is problematic. Its use with officials gains ground from the early fifth century onwards, see R. Delmaire, *Byzantion* 54 (1984) 157-58, so that this would be a remarkably early example. PHaun 57, which furnishes the earliest certain instance of the epithet μεγαλοπρεπέστατος applied to an Augustal prefect, cannot serve as a parallel: it dates from some thirty years later than POxy 4382, a time when the Augustal prefect had the rank of *vir spectabilis*, whereas up to 398-99 he was a *vir clarissimus*; see C. Zuckerman, *AnTard* 6 (1998) 143-44, elaborating on a point made by F. Mitthof, *ZPE* 109 (1995) 115. The clarissimate of the Augustal prefects is attested in all other texts dating from earlier than 398-99 that are known to us: AE 1981, 852 (392-96) Τερέντ(ιος) Ποτάμ[ιος] | ὁ λαμπρ(ότατος) κόμ[ης] | πρώτου τάγματος | καὶ ἔπαρχος | Αὐγουστάλιος; PHeid inv. G 44.1 (396/7) [---ου Ῥεμιγίου τοῦ] λ[α]μ[π]ροτάτου κόμ(ιτος) πρώτου [τάγματος καὶ ἐπάρχου Αὐγουσταλίου (name restored from line 3);¹ SB XX 14688 = ChLA XLIII 1246.1 (398/9) ...pel() *Anatolius v(ir) c(larissimus) com(es) ord(inis) prim(i) et praef(ectus) Aug(ustalis) Aeg(yptiacae) dioec(eseos)*.² It seems therefore preferable to supply λαμπροτάτου, perhaps abbreviated, in place of μεγαλοπρ(επεστάτου) in the lacuna of POxy 4382.7.³

II. A *praefectus Augustalis* to identify (PStras IV 255)

Another early Augustal prefect is mentioned in PStras 255.9. His name has not survived; the edition prints τ]οῦ ἐπάρχου ἀνγουσταλ[ίου]. The text was originally dated to 397 or 403, but the earlier date should be preferred, cf. BL IX 326. In the light of the foregoing discussion, if ἐπάρχου was preceded by a honorific epithet, we may confidently restore λαμπροτάτ]ου. We may also venture a conjecture on the identity of the prefect, given that the prefectural fasti of the period are less lacunose than usual, cf. Zuckerman, loc. cit. 143-44. Two imperial constitutions attest Archelaus as *praefectus Augustalis* on 17 June and 24 November 397 (*CTh* IX 45.2, II 1.9); he was succeeded by Anatolius, perhaps in spring 398, see Zuckerman, *ibid.* Archelaus' immediate predecessor was probably Remigius, attested on 20 and 30 March 396 (*CTh* I 2.10, III 1.7); it is unknown whether the latter was still in office at the beginning of 397. It thus seems likely that the Augustal prefect of PStras 255 was Archelaus; Remigius is another, but remote, possibility.

* I am indebted to Bernhard Palme for his comments on an earlier draft.

¹ Published by Mitthof, loc. cit. 113-18.

² For the dating see Zuckerman, loc. cit. 144.

³ For a similar correction on SB V 8295 = I.Delta I 1, p. 341 (388-90), see R. Scharf, *Comites und comitiva primi ordinis* (1994) 60 n. 141, cf. Mitthof, loc. cit. 114 n. 7.

III. *Cyricus, comes domesticorum and praeses Arcadiae* (POxy XIV 1942)

POxy 1942 preserves a ‘fragment of what appears to be an official letter or circular of the *praeses* Munatius (?) Cyricus, a *comes domesticorum*’. Line 1 was read as follows:

[? Φλάουιος ? Μ]ουνατίος Κύρικος ὁ μεγαλο[π]ρεπέστατος κόμ(ε) τῶν καθ[ο]κ(ιωμένων)
δομε(τικῶν) καὶ ἄρχ(ων) τῆς Ἀρκαδί[α]ς [

This *praeses* is not known otherwise (cf. *PLRE* IIIA s. Cyricus 2). The text was assigned to the sixth century, which is probable, since we may establish a *terminus post quem*. Line 3 reads τοῦ εὐσεβεστάτου καὶ γαληνοτάτου ἡμῶν δεσπότης κ[αὶ] μεγίστου εὐεργέτου ?. So far as I can see, the first emperor to be called γαληνότατος (Lat. *serenissimus*) is Justinian; the earliest instances of the epithet in papyri are PCairMasp II 67243.FrA.2 (527-65), 67031 = ChLA XLI 1196 (c. 543-45), and PMichael 41.29 (539/54). The title is regularly found with Justinian’s successors too. It is thus a reasonable assumption that Cyricus’ term of office did not antedate Justinian’s reign.

The only chronological indication contained in the text occurs in line 6: ἀπὸ κ[α]λ[α]νδῶν Σεπτεμβρίου ἕως Μαρτίου [ν] πληρουμένου τῆς παρούσης τε[τάρτης] (?) ἰνδικτίονος (but τε[σσαρεσκαιδεκάτης] may also be considered). If the papyrus does not come from before the time of Justinian, the earliest possible dates are 535/6 (indiction 14) or 540/1 (indiction 4). A date in 540/1 or later would mean that POxy 1942 offers further evidence for the presence of a purely civil governor in the province of Arcadia after the promulgation of Edict XIII in 539.⁴ As for the *terminus ante quem*, the fact that Cyricus is a *comes domesticorum* may suggest a date before the end of the sixth century, since there are extremely few references to this *comitiva* after the middle of the century (it disappeared shortly thereafter).⁵ In Egypt, the latest attested *comites domesticorum* are one *dux et Augustalis* (Callinicus) and one *praeses* (Victor) of the Thebaid in the 560s; see J.-L. Fournet, *AnTard* 6 (1998) 69-70, 80.

This said, the collocation ἄρχ(ων) τῆς Ἀρκαδί[α]ς is a problem. As B. Palme, *Tyche* 12 (1997) 258, has pointed out, ‘im Titel ziviler und militärischer Beamter der Provinz *Arcadia* gab es am Beginn des 6. Jh. n. Chr. einen Wechsel, der sich in Papyri administrativen Inhalts deutlich abzeichnet. War bei der Bezeichnung des Amtsbereiches im 5. Jh. n. Chr. immer von einer ἐπαρχία Ἀρκαδία ... die Rede, so wird der gleiche Sachverhalt seit Anastasius durch ἡ Ἀρκαδῶν ἐπαρχία ausgedrückt.’⁶ In this light, the reading Ἀρκαδί[α]ς here appears to be an anomaly. In *Eirene* 34 (1998) 105 with n. 16, Palme suggested restoring Ἀρκαδί[α]ς [ἐπαρχίας, and consequently assigned the text to the late fifth century. But inspection of the original shows that the papyrus has Ἀρκαδ(ων) ἐ[παρχίας; after delta there is the common sinuous stroke marking the abbreviation, followed by traces that would suit epsilon. POxy 1942 thus conforms with what we would expect to find in a document of the sixth century.⁷

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⁴ On the issue see J. G. Keenan, *MPL* 2 (1977) 193-202, cf. J.-M. Carrié, *AnTard* 6 (1998) 117-18. PPrag I 64, of 636, attests a στρατηλά(της) δοῦξ καὶ ἀγουετάλιος ταύτης τῆς Ἀρκαδῶν ἐπαρχίας; we do not know when the office was created.

⁵ On the office, honorary by that time, and a prosopography of its known holders, see Delmaire, loc. cit. 148-53, 175, and Palme, *Eirene* 34 (1998) 104-16 (further literature on p. 110 n. 29).

⁶ However, a word of caution should be voiced: one of the examples of the ‘new’ formulation, ChLA XLIII 1247.14, dates from the earlier part of the fifth century (cf. ChLA XLVIII p. 119), that is, from shortly after the creation of the province.

⁷ The new dating further implies that ed. pr.’s ‘highly conjectural supposition that Φλαούιος preceded Μ]ουνατίος in l. 1’ is untenable, in view of the polyonymy of the officials in this period. We should accordingly reckon with a more extensive loss at the beginnings of lines than ed. pr. assumes, whereas the loss at the end should be considerably smaller; I should think that nothing was written after ἐ[παρχίας in l. 1, while the addressee(s) of the letter stood at the start of l. 2, now lost.