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A NEW BITHYNIAN MONTH LIST

aus: Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik 90 (1992) 289–291

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In *BASP* 27(1990)163-8 D. Montserrat published a scrap of parchment codex written in a round book hand of the Byzantine period, perhaps of the seventh century, as argued there. On one side, before it breaks off, it has eight Egyptian month names listed from Pharmuthi to Hathyr, above which is a short stretch of blank papyrus indicating fairly certainly that line 1 here was the top of the column, since there is no natural break in the calendar before Pharmuthi. On the other side are substantial remains of nine lines interpreted in ed. pr. as a list of personal names:

BHΘHNA[IAC
 TIΩNHCIOC
 YPAKΛEOC
 TIOC
 5 MENTHTHC
 CTPAT[
 .EPITHC
 A]PIOC
 ..]ΠPOTH[

Although there is no space at the top, it seems likely that this too was the top of a column, the rest of which is lost at the foot. In spite of the gross phonetic distortion caused partly by the usual late Greek iotacism and partly by the influence of the Egyptian phonemic system, defined as ‘bilingual interference’ by F.T. Gignac, *Grammar* i 46-8, lines 2-9 are readily recognizable as Bithynian month names: Διονυσίειος, Ἡράκλειος, Δίος, Βενδίδιος, Cτράτιος, Πριέτειος (?), Ἄρειος, Ἀφροδίσιος. The proper spelling of most of these is slightly uncertain, again because of iotacism. How is one to tell whether Βενδίδειος, Cτράτειος, or Ἄριος might not be better?

The standard exposition of the Bithynian calendar as found in the Byzantine manuscript hemerologia is by W. Kubitschek, *Die Kalenderbücher von Florenz, Rom und Leyden* 97-99; see also A.E. Samuel, *Greek and Roman Chronology* 175, 117 n. 1. An inscription of the reign of Trajan gives three dates by it, one with its equivalent in the Roman calendar, 9 Dionysieus (Διονυσίου θ' = Καλάνδαρις, i.e. 1 January). These were well discussed by Körte in *Athen. Mitt.* 24(1899)420, who is quoted by Kubitschek, loc. cit., p. 97 n. 3. The latest republication is in *I.Kios* (T. Corsten, *Die Inschriften von Kios*) No. 16, with dates discussed pp. 55-6 and esp. 92-3 with references. These confirm the evidence of the hemerologia that in the imperial period the Bithynian calendar, like others in the East, began on the birthday of Augustus, 23 August, which became the first day of the first month, Heraeüs. The succeeding months were Hermaeüs, Metroüs, Dionysieus, Heracleius, Dius, Bendidius, Strateius, Prieteius (?), Areius, Aphrodisius, and Demetrius.

Line 1 is given in ed. pr. as BHΘHNA[IAC, and assimilated in the commentary (p. 164) to a personal name, Bethanaias. The last letter appears on the plate (p. 168) as a very short arc from the lower left part of a rounded letter. In the context of a Bithynian calendar this must be interpreted as a iotacistic writing of Βιθυνῶν, i.e. read Βηθηνω[ν; it is usual in the hemerologia and in month lists to give this sort of heading, (μῆνες) Ῥωμαίων, Αἰγυπτίων, Ἑλλήνων etc.

The order of the month names in this codex deserves a short comment. The Egyptian months do not commence with Thoth, the first month of the Alexandrian calendar, but just as it is a frequent custom of the manuscript lists of months to treat them in the order of the Roman calendar, so here Tybi, Mecheir, Phamenoth, stood at the foot of the preceding column or page, while the surviving eight months were followed by only Choeac below the break at the foot. Although it is

more usual in the manuscripts for the Bithynian calendar to begin with the first month of its proper order in the imperial period, Heraeüs, Hermaeüs, Metroüs, Dionysieius, etc., here, after the heading Βιθυνῶν, the list begins with Dionysieius, assimilated to January because 9 Dionysieius is equivalent to 1 January.

It may be a possibility that this fragment formed part of a Latin-Greek glossary. In the papyri a sort of parallel is provided by P.Fay. 135 verso, first fully published by J. Kramer, *Glossaria Bilinguia* No. 11, where we have a list of Roman months transliterated into the Greek alphabet on the left, with the Alexandrian equivalents on the right, and by a somewhat similar list published by H.G. Gundel, *Archiv* 16(1956)13-19. The present text could have had a closer resemblance to the lists of months in the so called Hermeneumata Einsidlensia printed in G. Goetz, *Corpus Glossariorum Latinorum* iii 242-3. There we find lists of months with Greek names on the left and the Roman equivalents in Latin on the right: months of the Greeks, Athenians, Hebrews, Romans (ἰανουάρτιος *ianuarius*, etc.), then months of the Egyptians in a very corrupt Greek version only, without Latin equivalents, but in the order of the Roman calendar, and, most interesting, finally ‘μῆνες Ἀσιασίων καὶ Βιθυνίων (sic?) *menses Asianorum et Bithiniorum*’, followed, not by the calendar of the Roman province of Asia, but by the Bithynian one only, commencing as here with Dionysieius (ὁ διονύσιος). But the Latin equivalents have gone wrong: opposite Dionysieius (January) is *september*, Heracleius (February) has *october*, and so on. Evidently a misunderstanding arose when at some stage a compiler knew that the Bithynian year started in September, but did not know that the month list which he had in front of him was assimilated to the Roman calendar and not in the proper order of its own year, cf. Kubitschek, pp. 98, 99.

However, it is not easy to imagine the layout of our manuscript on this hypothesis. If the Latin equivalents were on the right on one side of the leaf, it looks as if they would have to be imagined on the left on the other side, which is most unlikely. But perhaps some solution might be found to this problem, if more calendars intervened between the two which we can see.

Another possibility is that this new codex was some sort of handbook or collection of miscellanea like the mediaeval manuscripts referred to by Kubitschek, pp. 97-8, e.g. J.A. Cramer, *Anecdota Graeca e codd. manuscriptis bibliothecarum Oxoniensium* (1836) iii 402-3, which has lists of the month names of six calendars, including the Egyptian one in the Roman order as here, but the Bithynian one in the proper order of its own year, although under a superscription which wrongly puts it among calendars which begin from March.

Lists of months also occur in the papyri as school texts, e.g. O. Guéraud, P. Jouguet, *Un livre d'écolier* p. 2, ll. 19-20, with n. on p. 4, and perhaps as office memoranda, see P.Oxy. LV 3780, a list of month names of the reign of Gaius.

The new list might be presented like this:

Βηθηνῶ[ν
 Τιωνήσιος
 Ὑράκλειος
 Τίσιος
 5 Μεντήτης
 Στράτι[ος]
 Περίτης
 Ἄ[ριος]
 Ἄ[πρωτή]σιος

1 *L. Βιθυνῶν*. Eta for iota, see F.T. Gignac, *Grammar* i (Phonology) 237-9; eta for upsilon, *ibid.* 262-4.

- 2 *L. Διονυκίειος*. Tau for delta, see Gignac i 80; omega for omicron, *ibid.* 277; eta for upsilon, *ibid.* 262-4; ‘two contiguous /i/ sounds are simplified to a single /i/ represented in writing by ι or ει’, *ibid.* 295. The correction to -ίειος is preferred here because *I.Kios* 16 B 5 has the spelling Διονοιτιήου, preserving the contiguous /i/ sounds; on οι for upsilon see Gignac i 197-9; eta for ει, *ibid.* 240-242. It may well be that this ending should be preferred in other names here too, but definite evidence is lacking.
- 3 *L. Ἡράκλειος*. Upsilon for eta, see Gignac i 264; epsilon for ει, *ibid.* 257. *I.Kios* 16 B 92 has Ἡρακλήου: eta for ει, *ibid.* 240-2.
- 4 *L. Δίος*. Tau for delta, see Gignac i 80.
- 5 *L. Βενδίδιος*. Mu for beta, see Gignac i 71, a rare exchange: Gignac gives only ρύβη for ρύμη and μενεπικιαρίου for βενεφικιαρίου, but see below; tau for delta twice, *ibid.* 80; eta for iota twice, *ibid.* 237-9. Although there is only one other example of it here, see 7 n., it is one of the most distinctive marks of late Greek that endings in -ιου and -ιος tend to lose the omicron, see Gignac ii (Morphology) 25-9.
A special factor probably affects this misspelling: Egyptian writers would be comparatively unfamiliar with the Thracian, and therefore Bithynian, goddess Bendis and comparatively familiar with their compatriot ram god Mendes. Another case is found in the area of Alexandria probably named after a shrine of Bendis. It appears in some authors and manuscripts as Βενδίδειον, but also as Μενδιδίου and in various garbled forms beginning with Mend- in Greek and Latin, see A. Calderini, *Dizionario dei nomi geografici* i.1 p. 101. It is interesting to note that the Leiden hemerologion has only forms in Μενδ-, while the Vatican version fluctuates between Μενδ- and Βενδ-, see Kubitschek p. 98.
- 6 CTPAT[ed. pr. The plate, p. 168, seems to show traces of both the head and foot of iota and perhaps other remains, but they may be due to shadows or discolorations, rather than ink.
- 7 Περίτης. It may be worth noting that this is also the reading of the Hermeneumata Einsidlen-sia, G. Goetz, *CGL* iii 243.57. The ending shows the loss of omicron as in line 5, see note. The hemerologia give Πρήτιος (Laur.) and Περιέπιος (Vat.), as well as abbreviated forms Πρηc/ (Laur.), Πριεπ (Leid.) and Περιτ’ (Vat.), see Kubitschek, p. 98. This last, as well as the form in our scrap of codex, seem to derive from confusion with the Macedonian month Περίτιος, well known in Egypt. Bithynian inscriptions have produced four dedications to a god called Πρείετιος in the form Θεῶ Πρειέτω, another dedication, this time to Sabazius, dated year 3 of Hadrian, in the month of Πριετήου, and another text dated [μηνὸς] Πριετ[είου], see J. and L. Robert, *REA* 86 (1973) 73, No. 77. The likeliest Bithynian version of the month name is perhaps Πριέτιος, cf. above 2 n., 3 n.
- 8 *L. Ἄρειος*. Iota for ει, see Gignac i 189.
- 9 *L. Ἀφροδίτιος*. Pi for phi, see Gignac i 90-95, esp. 95; tau for delta *ibid.* 80, eta for iota *ibid.* 237-9.