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SB IV 7473 ONCE AGAIN

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SB IV 7473 Once Again

Although the SB version of an inscription from Coptos has been reprinted as SEG VIII 658 and A. Bernand, *Les portes du désert*, Paris 1984, has as no. 88 republished the text anew¹ I prefer to take the text of the SB as the starting-point for my discussion of this inscription, since it represents most faithfully the text as established by the scholar who 65 years ago wrote a thorough-going article on this interesting stone in its totality: B.A. van Groningen.²

I want to comment upon the name of the dedicant and - once again - on the date of the inscription.

Nearly all editors read and supplement line 3 as follows: Μ(άρκος) Αἴλ(ιος) Αὐ[ρήλιος] Δι]ονύσιος.³ No editor seems to have realised that both Αἴλιος and Αὐρήλιος are nomina gentilia.⁴ A simple way out of the problem is to supplement Αὐ[ρηλιανός]⁵ instead of Αὐ[ρήλιος].⁶ I propose, therefore, to read and supplement line 3 of the inscription under discussion as follows: Μ(άρκος) Αἴλ(ιος) Αὐ[ρηλιανός] ὁ καὶ Δι]ονύσιος (cf., e.g. SB I 1555,4; V 8961,1-2).

The inscription under review is dated to A.D. 223/4 based on the following readings and supplements of lines 10 through 15 by van Groningen:⁷

- 10 ἔτους γ̄ Αὐ[τοκράτορος Καίσαρο]ς
 [Μάρκ]ο[υ] Αὐρηλίου Σεουήρου]
 [Ἀλ]εξ[άνδρου Εὐσεβοῦς Εὐτυχοῦς]
 Σε[βαστοῦ]] .. [.....]
 [...].υ[... Οὐ]αλερίου [.....]
 15 [ἐπάρχου] Αἰγύπτου.

¹ The inscription has been studied by a large number of scholars. Cf. the introduction to no. 88 in *Les portes du désert* and the literature cited there.

² *Inscriptio dedicatoria Aegyptiaca*, *Mnemosyne*, Nov. ser. 55, 1927, 263-268.

³ Van Groningen keeps, albeit with hesitation (cf. his note on line 3), Αὐ[ρήλιος] of A.J. Reinach and was followed in this by F. Bilabel, SB IV 7473. H. Henne, *Mélanges Maspero II* comments in footnote 4 on page 300: «Ligne 3: Aurelius, sic, SB. Mais il n'y a plus guère de place pour le second nom, même court, et ὁ καὶ. Sans doute Aur., comme dans la première inscription (= SB I 1555 PJS) -- --» (cf. also SEG VIII 658). A. Bernand, *op. cit.*, prints in the text of no.88 Μ(άρκος) Αἴλ(ιος) Αὐ[ρήλιος] Δι]ονύσιος although he states - wrongly - in his *adnotatio critica*: «-- -- Reinach propose Μ(άρκος) Αἴλ(ιος) Αὐ[ρήλιος] Δι]ονύσιος accepté par Breccia. Van Groningen confirme la lecture de Reinach, qui est reproduite par Bilabel, SB IV, Henne, Crönert.» For cases in which gentilicia were used as cognomina (especially for women and late), see I. Kajanto, *Onomastic Studies in the Early Christian Inscriptions of Rome and Carthage*, Helsinki 1963, 18ff.; H. Solin, *Arctos* 1982, 168.

⁴ Cf. W. Schulze, *Zur Geschichte lateinischer Eigennamen*, Zürich-Hildesheim 1991, 116, 204 and 445 respectively; H. Solin - O. Salomies, *Repertorium nominum gentilium et cognominum Latinorum*, Hildesheim 1988, 7 anf 28 respectively.

⁵ Cf. I. Kajanto, *The Latin Cognomina*, Helsinki 1965, 141.

⁶ Dieter Hagedorn (letter dated October 18, 1991) draws my attention to the fact that in P.Turner 30 = P.Diog. 3,14 (A.D. 209) there is a question of a Μάρκος Αἴλιος Αὐρήλιος Ἡλιόδωρος and that in the later years of his reign the emperor Commodus had Αἴλιος Αὐρήλιος as elements of his nomenclature (cf. P. Bureth, *Les titulatures impériales*, *Papyrologica Bruxellensia* 2, Bruxelles 1964, 87-8 and 91). He wonders whether such *Aelii Aurelii* became perhaps *cives Romani* in the later years of Commodus' reign.

⁷ Lines 13-15 are, with the exception of the letters σε, on fragment d.

As one can see, the assignation of this stone to the 3rd year of the reign of Alexander Severus rests mainly on the very doubtful reading of two letters in line 12.⁸ Van Groningen rejected an assignation to the reign of Caracalla («– – quippe qui, cum post Severum imperatorem solus regnaret, annos patris sui regni sibi adnumeraret», loc. cit., 267)⁹ or to the reign of Heliogabalus («Heliogabali titulis neque spatia neque vestigia convenire videntur», *ibidem*).¹⁰

There are, however, two serious objections to assigning the text to the 3rd regnal year of Alexander Severus, i.e. to A.D. 223/4.

First, a place for an otherwise unattested prefect of Egypt part of whose name is Jalerius has to be found between the prefectures of M. Aedinius Iulianus who is still attested on April 20, A.D. 223¹¹ and of M. Aurelius Epagathus who is attested for the first time in May/June, A.D. 224.¹² On the other hand, as was already pointed out by J. Modrzejewski,¹³ there is a large gap between the prefectures of Maevius Honoratus and L. Lucretius Annianus¹⁴ and in it a place could be assigned to the prefect Jalerius [] of the inscription under discussion.

⁸ J. Modrzejewski, *Les préfets d'Égypte au début du règne d'Alexandre Sévère*, Antidoron Martino David Oblatum (= PLBat. XVII, Leiden 1968) 59ff. writes in footnote 37 on page 65: «Toutefois, la restitution, qui s'appuie sur les lettres εξ, très douteuses, reste purement conjecturale.»

⁹ Not because the 3rd year of Caracalla's reign is A.D. 194/5 as J. Modrzejewski, *loc.cit.*, 64 states. Caracalla never had a third regnal year. Being associated to the throne only somewhere before October 19, A.D. 198 (cf. *Der Kleine Pauly Band I, Spalte 1049*) he immediately partook in the number of regnal years of his father, Septimius Severus. Van Groningen was well aware of the fact that the inscription under discussion had to be dated later than A.D. 200, since in line 7 there is a question of τῆς (ἐβδόμης) Ὀλυμπιάδος for which, see J. Modrzejewski, *loc. cit.*, 64, footnote 30.

¹⁰ J. Modrzejewski, *loc. cit.*, 65, writes: «Mais la date de 236/7 n'est-elle pas trop avancée pour quelqu'un qui en 200 a été arbitre aux jeux olympiques d'Alexandrie? B.A. van Groningen et, à sa suite, A. Stein l'ont cru, préférant opter pour 223/224, 3ème année d'Alexandre Sévère.» Van Groningen did not take the 3rd regnal year of Maximinus and Maximus into consideration but not for the reason Modrzejewski suggests. Naturally not, since it is unknown at which age the dedicant was a judge at the Alexandrian Olympic Games or at which age, being a βουλευτής, he died (under normal circumstances a βουλευτής remained in function until his death. Cf. K.A. Worp, *ZPE 30, 1978, 239ff.*).

¹¹ P.Ryl. IV 610. Cf. S. Daris, *Misc. Pap. Roca-Puig, Barcelona 1987, 113ff.*

¹² Cf. G. Bastianini, *ZPE 17, 1975, 308/9* (and *ZPE 38, 1980, 87*) and 309 respectively. Cf. also eundem, *ANRW II.10.1, Berlin-New York 1988, 513* where the dates of these prefectures are given as “3.11.222-223 d.C.” and “autunno? 223 - maggio/giugno 224 d.C.” respectively (cf. also P. Bureth, *ibidem*, 492). The editor of P.Oxy. L 3536, in which text an until then unknown prefect of Egypt, Claudius Claudianus, appears, suggests correctly to place this new prefect between the prefectures of Ti. Claudius Herennianus and Claudius Maevius (cf. *ZPE 17, 1975, 309*). Bastianini (*ZPE 17, 1975, 309, footnote 1*) concludes that regarding a prefect Jalerius the present text «è troppo incerto per permettere conclusioni sicure» but he lists a prefect Jalerius (223 d.C.?) between M. Aedinius Iulianus and M. Aurelius Epagathus in *ANRW II.10.1, Berlin - New York 1988, 513* (cf. also P. Bureth, *ibidem*, 492).

¹³ *Loc. cit.*, 65.

¹⁴ Cf. G. Bastianini, *ZPE 17, 1975, 310f.* (and *ZPE 38, 1980, 87*) and 311 respectively. Cf. also eundem, *ANRW II.10.1, Berlin - New York 1988, 513f.* and P. Bureth, *ibidem*, 493. As the last attested date for the prefect Maevius Honoratus Bastianini gives July 2, A.D. 237. He bases this on a new interpretation of P.Mich. IX 529 recto given by N. Lewis in *BASP 9, 1972, 33ff.* (= *SB XIV 10797* where, however, the date is given as A.D. 232-236) but the date cleverly reconstructed by Lewis is not absolutely certain.

Second, how can the lacuna of 21 letters between Σε[βαστοῦ in line 13 and]υ in line 14 be supplemented? Even if we assume that the lacunae of line 14 could be supplemented as [ἐπὶ¹⁵ praenomen Οὐ]αλερίου¹⁶ [cognomen] there is a space of approx. 17 letters to be accounted for in line 13. Between the end of the imperial titulature and the mention of the prefect of Egypt only the month and day can be supplemented.¹⁷ However, hardly any Egyptian month-name and day (unless written out) could fill a space of approx. 17 letters. On the other hand, an imperial titulature is after Σεβαστός often followed by one or several “Siegestitulaturen”. Alexander Severus, however, never bore any “Siegestitulatur”.¹⁸

Fragment d does not join fragment c directly.¹⁹ One or more lines can, therefore, have been lost between the two fragments.

The more often attested titulature of Maximinus and his son Maximus is: Αὐτοκράτορος Καίσαρος Γαίου Ἰουλίου Οὐήρου Μαξιμίνου Εὐσεβοῦς Εὐτυχοῦς Σεβαστοῦ Γερμανικοῦ μεγίστου Δακικοῦ μεγίστου Σαρματικοῦ μεγίστου καὶ Γαίου Ἰουλίου Οὐήρου Μαξίμου Γερμανικοῦ μεγίστου Δακικοῦ μεγίστου Σαρματικοῦ μεγίστου τοῦ ἱερωτάτου Καίσαρος Σεβαστοῦ υἱοῦ τοῦ Σεβαστοῦ²⁰ = 244 letters. The length of a line lies between 20 and 23 letters with the exception of line 10 which has including the certain supplement Αὐ[τοκράτορος Καίσαρο]ς 26 letters.²¹ For the remaining 224 letters 10 lines of which 4 have partly been preserved would be necessary. Exempli gratia one could then reconstruct lines 10 through 22 of this inscription as follows:

10	ἐτους ᾗ Αὐ[τοκράτορος Καίσαρο]ς [Γαί]ο[υ Ἰουλίου Οὐήρου] [Μ]αξ[ιμίνου Εὐσεβοῦς Εὐτυχοῦς] Σε[βαστοῦ Γερμανικοῦ μεγίσ-] [του Δακικοῦ μεγίστου Σαρμα-]
15	[τικοῦ μεγίστου καὶ Γαίου]

¹⁵ So Bilabel, SB IV 7473 note on line 14 (but cf. already van Groningen, loc. cit., 267). Bilabel suggests to supplement ἐπὶ immediately in front of Οὐ]αλερίου.

¹⁶ Or Γ]αλερίου or Φ]αλερίου?

¹⁷ Cf., e.g., A. Bernard, op. cit., no. 78. If a text is dated by mentioning also an epistrategus and a strategus (cf., e.g., A. Bernard, De Thèbes à Syène, Paris 1989, no. 19) these officials naturally appear after the mentioning of the praefectus Aegypti. Van Groningen was aware of this problem also and he suggests on page 267 of his article: «Post illud Σεβαστοῦ desideratur fortasse τοῦ κυρίου, tum mensis et dies et deinde, nescio quo maximo loco, ἐπὶ cum nomine praefecti qui Aegyptum moderabatur.» Unfortunately, no titulature of Alexander Severus starting with Αὐτοκράτορος and ending in τοῦ κυρίου has to date come to light among the finds in Egypt.

¹⁸ Cf. P. Bureth, Les titulatures impériales, Papyrologica Bruxellensia 2, Bruxelles 1964, 108-110; P. Kneissl, Die Siegestitulatur der römischen Kaiser, Göttingen 1969, 167f.; D. Kienast, Römische Kaisertabelle, Darmstadt 1990, 177ff.

¹⁹ Van Groningen, loc. cit., 264 remarks regarding fragment d: «— — — fragmentum imum fortasse non protinus cum medio — — — iungendum est» and on page 265 only: «D) In ima parte situm.» In his reconstruction of the text he at least gives the impression that all four fragments of this inscription joined each other immediately.

²⁰ Cf. P. Bureth, op. cit., 111; M. Peachin, Roman Imperial Titulature and Chronology, A.D. 235-284 (= Stud. Amstel. XXIX, Amsterdam 1990) 142.

²¹ Cf. H. Henne, loc. cit., 302, footnote 7.

[Ἰουλίου Οὐήρου Μαξιμίνου Γερ-]
 [μανικοῦ μεγίστου Δακικοῦ]
 [μεγίστου Σαρματικοῦ μεγίσ-]
 [του τοῦ ἱερωτάτου Καίσαρος]
 20 [Σεβαστοῦ υἱοῦ τοῦ Σεβαστοῦ]²²
 [. . .].[ἐπὶ ..]αλερίου [.]²³
 [

If the above arguments are correct SB IV 7473 has to be dated to A.D. 236/7 and a prefect]alerius [] has to be inserted between Mevius Honoratus and L. Lucretius Annianus.²⁴

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²² It should, however, be remarked that line 11 with only 18 letters is rather short and that many elements of the imperial titulature are divided over two lines. However, some words may have been abbreviated of the number of letters per line (cf. line 10) larger (and the number of lines lost between the fragments c and d less?).

²³ I assume that the trace read as υ is a letter-number. In the lacuna at the beginning of this line the name of the month and in the one at the end of the line the cognomen of the praefect have to be supplemented.

²⁴ This would also imply that Corellius Galba (cf. J.R. Rea, ZPE 38, 1980, 221f.) was not a praefectus Aegypti. If Mevius Honoratus was still prefect of Egypt on 2nd July, A.D. 237 (cf. note 14)]alerius [] would have succeeded him after that date and before the beginning of the fourth regnal year of Maximus and Maximus on August 29, A.D. 237.