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Remarks on Weekdays in Late Antiquity Occurring in Documentary Sources

This article¹ tries to find an answer to the question, whether weekday indications occurring in documentary texts from late antiquity match modern computations backwards² and whether they can be relied upon as helpful, reliable evidence for establishing the precise date of incompletely preserved documents. In *Consuls of the Later Roman Empire*³, we operated on the view⁴ that there are enough cases of conflict between the day of the week and the date in a funerary inscription from the period concerned to make datings based on such a basis rather hazardous⁵. As it seems useful to make a more systematical study of this question possible I present my own collection of the evidence pertaining to this subject in two lists, one dealing with Greek ('Eastern'), the other with Latin ('Western') texts. I have regarded only texts in which the indications of the weekdays, together with all other chronographic and calendaric elements, are securely preserved in the pertinent document itself, i.e. no modern restoration is used to reach a perfect (but circular) match.

As to the 'quality' of the evidence it should be noticed that almost all 'Eastern' texts concern graffiti or inscriptions; only nrs. 2 (a gnomic [school?] text on the back of a documentary papyrus), 4 (a documentary papyrus containing proceedings before the logistes), 5 (a school text on an wooden tablet) and 11–13 (three horoscopes in semi-literary sources) are of a different nature. All Western texts concern graffiti or inscriptions. The earliest attestations of such weekday indications in both the 'Eastern' and 'Western' documents come from the early third century A. D.

¹ I am grateful to my colleagues Prof. R. S. Bagnall (New York), Dr D. Feissel (Paris), and Prof. D. Hagedorn (Heidelberg), who kindly read an earlier version of this paper and who contributed significantly to its final version. Of course, all responsibility for the views expressed here is mine.

² For tables cf. V. Grumel, *La Chronologie*, Paris 1958, 316 and E. J. Bickerman, *Chronology of the Ancient World*, London 1980², 60.

For weekdays in general cf. PW-RE VII 2570–2578 s. v. 'Hebdomas' (Boll); W. Kubitschek, *Grundriß der antiken Zeitrechnung*, München 1928 (HdAW I 7); Grumel, *Chronologie*, 165–166 (with further bibliography on p. 233); Bickerman, *Chronology*, 58 f.; Daremberg, Saglio, *Dictionnaire des antiquités grecques et romaines* II 1, 168 ff., art. 'Dies'; DAFL VII 2, 2736–2745 s. v. 'Jours de la semaine'.

³ Ed. by R. S. Bagnall, A. D. E. Cameron, S. Schwartz and K. A. Worp, Atlanta 1987 (American Philological Association, Philol. Monogr. 36).

⁴ Cf. p. 642 ad ICUR n. s. III 8147, p. 646 ad ICUR n. s. III 8724, p. 661 ad ICUR n. s. I 309, and p. 665 ad ICUR I 558.

⁵ One may also compare the remark by D. Feissel in *ReclChrMacéd.* 268.5–6n., that errors in some part of a dating formula creating a conflict between the day of the week and a date are frequent enough.

NB: Given the wide range of sources to be scrutinized I cannot claim, of course, that these lists are complete. In order to draw a line somewhere, I have omitted from my lists all texts later than A. D. 700, though I am aware of the fact that among these there are quite a few texts (also in Coptic, Old Nubian and Arabic) which offer some interesting disagreement between the various dating elements⁶.

Furthermore, the label 'Eastern' is used here only for reasons of convenience in order to make texts written in Greek standing out vs. the evidence written in Latin (the origin of which is restricted to the Western part of the Roman empire). In fact, some of the Greek inscriptions listed below were actually found in the Western part of the Roman empire (Gaul, Italy, Sicily).

a. Weekdays in completely preserved GREEK documents
(inscriptions, papyri, related texts)

Nr.	References	Date according to text	Modern computation
1	O. Neugebauer, H.-B. van Hoesen, <i>Greek Horoscopes</i> , p. 54, nr. 219 I (b) (Dura-Europos, Syria)	09. 01. 219 = Saturday	= id. ⁷
2	P.Oxy. XLIV 3174. 17 (Oxyrhynchus, Egypt)	08. 03. 243 = Wednesday	= id. ⁸
3	IGRR IV 1647 (Philadelphia, Asia)	26. 09. 288 = Friday	= Wednesday
4	P.Oxy. LIV 3759. 38 (Oxyrhynchus, Egypt)	03. 10. 325 = Sunday	= id.
5	Pack ² 2731 (cf. BASP 17 [1980] 17) (Egypt?)	24. 04. 327 = Sunday	= Monday
6	Atti III (1932) Congr. Int. Archeol. Christ. 151 + pl. 21 (Modica, Sicily)	24. 06. 402 = Tuesday	= id.
7	RecIChrGaulle I 93 = C. Wessel, IGCVO 45 (Trier, Gaul)	12. 07. 409 = Sunday	= Monday
8	IG XIV 444 (cf. RAC 58 [1982] 370 nr. 70) (Taormina, Sicily)	13. 10. 409 = Monday	= Wednesday
9	RecIChrGaulle XV 64 = C. Wessel, IGCVO 819 (Vienne, Gaul)	07. 02. 441 = Friday	= id.
10	ILCV 2735 = C. Wessel, IGCVO 1057 (cf. RAC 61 [1985] 73 n. 24) (Milan, Italy)	03. 07. 444 = Wednesday	= Monday ⁹
11	Neugebauer, van Hoesen, <i>Gr. Horosc.</i> nr. L 479 (Egypt)	14. 07. 479 = Saturday	= id.
12	<i>ibid.</i> , nr. L 486 (Egypt)	21. 03. 486 = Monday	= Friday ¹⁰

⁶ Cf. esp. I.Chr. Parthenon 26, 63, 79, 120; Kush 15 (1967/8) 133, nr. a (descr.); Faras IV 4; I.Gr.Chr. Egypte 647; Proceed. Brit. Acad. 14 (1928) 123 (cf. CdE 61 [1986] 351); Sinai Ms. Ar. n. s. paper nr. 20).

⁷ Cf. the introduction to this text for some collateral texts.

⁸ Though a 6th regnal year of an anonymous emperor is being referred to, there can be hardly any doubt about the editor's correctly ascribing this to the emperor Gordian. Actually, this text and nr. 4 below seem to be the only papyri in which names of weekdays other than the Jewish/Christian Sabbath occur. For the Sabbath cf. CPJud I 10. 6 and III 457, PSI XVII Congr. 22, SB V 7872 and XIV 11541.

⁹ As D. Feissel kindly points out to me, it is doubtful, whether the interpretation of this text given by C. Wessel and A. Ferrua (in RAC, *loc. cit.*) should be followed; the Greek text has it that someone died $\mu\upsilon\nu\acute{o}\varsigma$ $\tau\omicron\upsilon\lambda\lambda\omicron\upsilon$ $\tau\acute{\rho}\iota\tau\eta$ $\eta\mu\acute{\epsilon}\rho\alpha$ $\tau\epsilon\tau\acute{\rho}\alpha\delta\iota$, but a translation/interpretation to the effect that '4. 07. = Tuesday' (4. 07. was a Tuesday indeed in A. D. 444) seems forced; there are, after all, quite a few cases of weekday indications which do not match with modern calculations and under the circumstances one may well accept that a person died on 3. 07. and was buried on 4. 07. (as the Latin rendering of the burial formula has it). For η $\tau\epsilon\tau\acute{\rho}\alpha\varsigma$ = 4th day of the week = Wednesday cf. Cod. Just. IX 4. 6. 1.

¹⁰ The editors of *Greek Horoscopes* suppose that Phamenoth 25 (= 21. 03.) is a mistake for Phamenoth 21 (= 17. 03.).

13	ibid., nr. L 487 (Egypt)	05. 09. 487 = Saturday	= id.
14	L. Heuzey, <i>Miss. Arch. Macéd.</i> , Paris 1876, 177 (cf. <i>RecIChrMacéd.</i> , p. 129) (Epirus)	17. 09. 531 = Wednesday	= id.
15	<i>RecIChrMacéd.</i> 135 = SEG XXIX 644 (Thessaloniki)	21. 11. 535 = Wednesday	= id.
16	<i>RecIGChrAsMin.</i> 25 = Ch. Roueché, <i>Aphrodisias in Late Antiquity</i> 208 f., nr. 164 (Caria)	20. 07. 551 = Wednesday	= Thursday ¹¹
17	V. Besevliev, <i>Spätgr. Inschr. Bulgariens</i> 97 = C. Wessel, IGCVO nr. 522 (Odessos, Bulgaria)	20. 10. 557 = Saturday	= id. ¹²
18	IGLS IV 1682 ¹³ (Syria)	a) 20. 05. 558 = Friday b) 1. 11. 559 = Friday	= Monday = Saturday
19	I.Apamea 59 (Bithynia)	29. 01. 573 = Saturday	= Sunday ¹⁴
20	I.Negev 19 (Palestina)	20. 12. 576 = Sunday	= id.
21	I.Negev 18 = A. Alt, GIPT 149 (Palestina)	29. 06. 581 = Sunday	= id.
22	A. Alt, GIPT 25 = Graeco-Arabica 3 (Athens 1984) 179 nr. 5 = DACL V 1, 368 + fn. 7 (Palestina)	23. 04. 588 = Friday	= id.
23	I.Tyr. I 200 (Tyrus, Phoenicia)	07. 09. 609 = Wednesday ¹⁵	= Sunday
24	SEG XXX 1687 = XXXI 1501 = Graeco-Arabica 3 (Athens 1984) 180 nr. 6 (Palestina)	05. 12. 662 = Monday	= id.
25	A. K. Orlandos, L. Vranoussis, <i>Charagmata Parthenon</i> 34 (Athens)	15. 10. 693 = Sunday	= Wednesday ¹⁶

Among 26 such weekday indications we find 14 matches and 12 non-matches; among the latter are

1 day too early	nrs. 5, 7, 16, 18b, 19
2 days too early	nr. 8
3 days too early	nrs. 18a, 25 (but cf. fn. 16)
2 days late	nrs. 3, 10
3 days late	nrs. 12, 23 (but cf. fn. 15)

The majority of our 'Eastern' sources shows agreement, but at the same time it is astonishing that so many texts offer conflicting data. In attempting to explain these conflicts one may suppose that in some cases the commissioner(s) of a grave inscription simply made an error when, e. g., one had to remember on what day a death or a burial had occurred¹⁷. In other cases a misreading may be involved, e. g. in the case of confusing

¹¹ There is another death recorded earlier on the same stone (ll. 3-5) as having occurred on 13 April = Friday in a fourth indiction. If this indiction is A. D. 540-41, 13. 04. in the year 541 would have fallen on a Saturday, i. e. one day off (13. 04. 511 = Wednesday, 13. 04. 526 = Sunday, 13. 04. 556 = Thursday).

¹² The credit for the correct interpretation of $\eta \zeta = \eta(\mu\epsilon\rho\alpha) \zeta$ goes to Wessel.

¹³ I owe this reference to the kindness of D. Feissel who will publish an improved reading of the text in a future article.

¹⁴ For this text see Bull. Epigr. 1989, 939.

¹⁵ According to the editor, the numeral for the weekday, $\Delta = 4$, could possibly be a stonemason's mistake for $A = 1$ in his original; if so, there is no conflict between modern computation and ancient indication, as 7. 09. 609 fell on a Sunday; for a similar case cf. below, fn. 16.

¹⁶ See ed.'s commentary; an older edition reads the numeral of the day in the month as '19', whereas the present edition reads '15'. In both cases the weekday numeral has been read as an $A (= 1)$. If the date were 19. 10. rather than 15. 10. (see the drawing of the stone), there would be a perfect match on a Sunday; if one sticks to a date to 15. 10., the weekday numeral should be a $\Delta (= 4)$. For a comparable case cf. above, fn. 15.

¹⁷ For the interval between the actual death or burial and the commissioning of a stone cf. CLRE (s. above, fn. 3), 61.

the weekday-numeral $\Delta = 4$ with an $A = 1$ or rounded $E = 5$ with $\Theta = 9$ (cf. fnn. 15, 16).

As to the way the weekdays in these Greek inscriptions were indicated, at first the days bore names:

- Sunday = ημέρα Ἡλίου / Κυριακή
 Monday = ημέρα Σελήνης
 Tuesday = ημέρα Ἄρεως
 Wednesday = ημέρα Ἑρμοῦ
 Thursday = ημέρα Διός
 Friday = ημέρα Ἀφροδίτης / Παρασκευή
 Saturday = ημέρα Κρόνου.

Only by the middle on the 5th century finds the first instance (in nr. 10) of a numeral being used to indicate the day in the week.

b. Weekdays in completely preserved LATIN texts¹⁸

Nr.	References	Date according to text	Modern computation
1	Excav. Mithraeum Santa Prisca (1965) 118 f.	20. 11. 202 = Saturday	= id.
2	CIL III 1051	23. 05. 205 = Thursday	= id.
3	ILCV 3391	05. 11. 269 = Friday	= id. ¹⁹
4	ILCV 1539	03. 05. 338 = Wednesday	= id.
5	ILCV 4399	21. 06. 340 = Friday	= Saturday
6	ILCV 3650	11. 08. 350 = Saturday	= id.
7	ILCV 4377	08. 05. 364 = Saturday	= id.
8	ILCV 4393A	17. 11. 368 = Tuesday	= Monday
9	ILCV 3650	07. 12. 368 = Saturday	= Sunday ²⁰
10	ILCV 4392	18. 03. 373? = Monday	= id. ²¹
11	ILCV 4378	24. 05. 378 = Thursday	= id. ²²
12	ILCV 4214	25. 11. 382 = Friday	= id.
13	AE 1984, 439	21. 10. 383 = Friday	= Saturday ²³
14	ILCV 4460	10. 03. 385 = Monday	= id.
15	ILCV 4987	01. 10. 387 = Friday	= id.
16	ILCV 4398b	29. 06. 388 = Thursday	= id.
17	ILCV 4380	25. 07. 391 = Friday	= id.
18	ILCV 582	24. 05. 393 = Monday	= Tuesday
19	ILCV 2146a	13. 05. 395 = Saturday	= Sunday
20	ILCV 2146b	21. 05. 395? = Monday	= id. ²⁴

¹⁸ For the subject in general cf. Ch. Pietri, *Le temps de la semaine à Rome et dans l'Italie chrétienne (IV^e - VI^e S.)*, in: *Le temps chrétien de la fin de l'antiquité au moyen âge, III^e - XIII^e siècles*, Paris 1984 (Colloques Internationaux du Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique 604) 63-93. Cf. also A. E. Gordon, *Illustrated Introduction to Latin Epigraphy*, Berkeley 1983, 232-233.

¹⁹ The numeral on the inscription for the 'Luna' XXIII is correct.

²⁰ Diehl remarks that 7. 12. 368 was a Saturday, but this is wrong. It was a Sunday.

²¹ Is the unexplained 'XII' at the end of this text a misrepresentation of the (expected but now lacking) iteration numeral for the consuls, i.e. 'IIII'? For this text cf. CLRE (s. above, fn. 3) 646 s. a. 373.

²² The 'Luna' date on 24. 05. 378 should have been XI rather than XII.

²³ The Luna numeral on the stone is VIII, but on 21. 10. 383 it should be X.

²⁴ It stands to reason that the (not indicated) year of the second burial recorded on this stone is the same as that of the first burial, i.e. A. D. 395.

21	ILCV 2777	25. 02. 397 = Wednesday	= id.
22	ILCV 4400A	03. 07. 397 = Friday	= id. ²⁵
23	ILCV 4394	21. 09. 399 = Wednesday	= id.
24	ILCV 4394A	13. 11. 400 = Wednesday	= Tuesday
25	ILCV 659 adn.	26. 06. 404 = Sunday	= id.
26	ILCV 4387	22. 01. 405 = Sunday	= id.
27	ILCV 693	26. 10. 405 = Friday	= Thursday ²⁶
28	ILCV 3532	18. 04. 415 = Sunday	= id.
29	ILCV 1358	27. 10. 415 = Wednesday	= id.
30	ILCV 4394B	12. 08. 425 = Wednesday	= id.
31	ILCV 1706	26. 03. 449 = Saturday	= id.
32	ILCV 701	15. 05. 452 = Thursday	= id.
33	ILCV 2104	03. 08. 452 = Sunday	= id.
34	ILCV 4388	10. 03. 457 = Sunday	= id.
35	ILCV 1541	04. 04. 457 = Thursday	= id. ²⁷
36	ILCV 4403	26. 03. 459 = Friday	= Thursday
37	ILCV 4216	09. 02. 463? = Saturday	= id. ²⁸
38	ILCV 1927	19. 10. 470 = Monday	= id. ²⁹
39	ILCV 4385	13. 08. 480 = Tuesday	= Wednesday ³⁰
40	ILCV 1646	12. 01. 560? = Saturday	= Monday
41	ILCV 1312	24. 01. 565 = Saturday	= id. ³¹
42	ILCV 261	11. 06. 573 = Sunday	= id.
43	ILCV 1689	08. 12. 586 = Sunday	= id.

Among 43 such weekday indications we have 32 matches and 11 non-matches; among the latter are

1 day too early	nrs. 5, 9, 13, 18, 19, 39
2 days too early	nr. 40
1 day late	nrs. 8, 24, 27, 36.

The level of agreement in these 'Western' sources is better than that among the 'Eastern' sources and the deviations are less prominent (no examples of texts showing a difference of as much as 3 days between the calculated and the actually indicated date;

²⁵ Diehl equates *post tertium Kalendas Iulias* with 29. 06., but this is not correct. The same type of phrasing is found in ILCV 1539 (*post tertiu <m> Kal. Mai. = 3. 05. 338*).

²⁶ For this text cf. CLRE (s. above, fn. 3) 665 s. a. 405.

²⁷ 4. 04. 457 (*Prid. Non. Apr.*) was indeed a Thursday, but Easter Sunday 457 fell on 31. 03., = *Prid. Kal. Apr.* (inscr.: the birth of the man on Thursday 4. 04. 457 coincided with Easter 457; is this a matter of confusion of *Dies Solis* / *Dies Iovis*?).

²⁸ In years A. D. 463 and 541 a date to 9. 02. coincided with a Saturday. The element *junior* expected with the name of Basilus in A. D. 541 is lacking whereas the lack of elements like *Fl.* or *v. c.* is not a cogent argument against a date to A. D. 463. The text was listed under 541 in CLRE.

²⁹ 19. 10. 470 was not *Luna XVII*, but *Luna XVIII* (Diehl).

³⁰ According to Diehl, either *Die Martis* or *Luna XXI* must be wrong. But if one reads *LVNA XX I IDVS AVGVSTAS*, i. e. *pridie Id. Aug.* (cf. ILCV III Indices, VI P § 6. C. e. β, p. 308, col. a) = 12. 08. 480, things are correct, as this was a Tuesday, *Luna XX*.

³¹ Given the indiction numeral (XIII) the numeral of the p. c. of Fl. Basilus (XXIII) cannot be correct. A Saturday on 24. 01. in ind. XIII fell indeed on 24. 01. 565, but this date fell in p. c. Fl. Basilii v. c. XXIII. Given the date early in the year the stone-cutter probably failed to advance the year numeral.

only 1 text apparently showing a 2-days difference), but at the same time it would seem hazardous to conclude that the commissioners of the 'Eastern' stones, or the people who executed these, were markedly sloppier than their 'Western' counterparts; after all, 5 texts out of the 26 'Eastern' weekday indications have a clearly Western origin (cf. nrs. 7 and 9 from Gaul, nrs. 6 and 8 from Sicily, nr. 10 from Italy) and the difference between the number of Western and Eastern matches may be nothing more than sheer coincidence³².

As to an explanation of the non-matches, the same factors will have been at work as those mentioned above in the analysis of the 'Eastern' evidence. Moreover, the use of Roman numerals in datings like *XIIII Kal. Aug.* will have been another factor in creating errors by omitting or adding one stroke; such errors were, of course, easily made.

After this survey of the evidence the following remarks may be permitted:

a. As there is, both in the 'West' and in the 'East', a sufficient, i. e. more than 50%, level of agreement between the weekdays actually indicated on the stones and those reached at by modern computation, there is no reason to think that the system of weekdays in late antiquity and our own modern computations are completely divergent categories.

b. Given the actual provenance of some of our 'Eastern' inscriptions it does not seem likely that in late antiquity completely divergent systems of weekday counting were in use in the main lands of the Eastern vs. those in the Western part of the Imperium Romanum and that, e. g., a Thursday in some Eastern town like Alexandria in Egypt would have corresponded with a Tuesday in Syracuse on Sicily, *vel sim.*

As to the value of modern restorations of dating elements on the basis of partly preserved other elements it should be kept in mind that they all rest upon modern computations. But it is begging the question, whether — given the frequently enough occurring discrepancies between computed data and actually indicated data — the 'historical' date of an individual inscription, if its text were completely preserved, matched the modern restoration or differed from it. If, e. g., a Latin inscription from A. D. 343 (by consuls) contains still recognizable parts of a dating like *III NON(ae)* and a weekday like *DIE MARTIS*, while the month is lost, it is easy to reconstruct the month name on the basis of a modern calculation: it should be *IVLIAS* (cf. ILCV 4394). But at some future moment the lost part of the inscription might turn up showing the month name as *IVNIAS*; as *III. NON. IVN.* (= 3. 06.) in A. D. 343 would fall on a Friday rather than on a Tuesday, one would suddenly face a discrepancy of 3 days. Likewise, if the complete stone turned out to have in reality *MAIAS* rather than the restored *IVLIAS*, *III. NON. MAI.* (= 5. 05.) would fall in A. D. 343 on Thursday, i. e. a discrepancy of 2 days. Still, these discrepancies would be within a familiar range and the only consequence would be that in retrospect the death of some person actually occurred some month(s) earlier (or, for that matter, later) than was assumed before³³.

³² It is, however, true that among these 5 Western weekday indications occurring on Greek stones there are three non-matches, and that two of these (nrs. 8, 10) concern a 2-days difference between the date indicated on the stone and the modern computation.

³³ This may be a suitable place to correct an error in CLRE (s. above, fn. 3) 676 s. a. 448, where it is remarked that '16. 01. 448 fell on a Saturday, not a Friday'. A renewed consultation of the tables in Grumel (cf. fn. 2) 316, learns that 16. 01. 448 fell on a Saturday indeed (A. D. 448 was a leap-year!). But from my

Things become, however, more complicated if one wishes to restore in an incompletely preserved text, e. g., some consular name on the basis of a combination of some only partly preserved calendaric data; cf. the case of ILCV 4384, where the dating part has been preserved as

[IA]NVAR. D<I>E IOVIS CONS(VLATV) FL(AVII)
[LVN(A) PRIM(A).

The calendaric date has been restored to [VII KAL. IA]NVAR., the consular name as [BASILI V. C. L]VN(A), as according to modern computations '26. 12. 463' coincided indeed with both a Thursday and the first day of the lunar cycle. But it remains to be seen, whether this coincidence is enough to warrant the insertion of such an important element like a consular name into the text and to argue that this inscription really is from A. D. 463 and that it may be taken as historical evidence for this year. If a full text of the stone would ever become available, it might well be that, after all, the consulate on the stone was that of, e. g., A. D. 493 (FL. ALBINI V. C.) on [VII ID. IA]NVAR., i. e. on 7. 01; according to our modern computations this is a Thursday indeed; true enough, the numeral of the LVNA should be, then, III rather than I, but it is a regular phenomenon to find a conflict between the modern computation of the 'Luna' date and the date actually indicated on the stone (for such 'Lunar' inscriptions cf. the literature cited by G. Alföldy, *Eine frühchristliche Inschrift aus Rom*³⁴, 461 n. 4).

Likewise, in some cases it has been assumed that the date of a burial should be assigned to a particular year, even if that involved the restoration of a really significant element in a consular formula like *p(ost)* before *cons(ulatum)*, because otherwise a conflict between the indicated weekday and other dating elements on the stone would arise; cf. ILCV 693 and 4400B. Given the fact, that such conflicts are attested frequently enough, it seems wiser in such cases, too, to leave the texts as they are, rather than to strain an argument, especially if the resulting creation of a postconsulate would create some new problem of its own (cf. CLRE 661 s. a. 398 ad ICUR n. s. I 309 [=ILCV 4400B] and 665 s. a. 405 ad ICUR I 558 = ILCV 693).

Within the larger framework of documentary texts in general, datings are 'individualistic' elements. If a dating formula is not preserved completely, one must try to restore it as far as reasonably possible on the basis of parallel documents. Sometimes a rather complete restoration of a dating may seem possible and even plausible, but one must always be on one's guard to avoid circular reasoning and, as there are enough instances of inscriptions showing conflicting data, it seems wiser to abstain from the restoration of very specific parts like numerals, names, etc. within a printed text; one may point out to the restoration in the commentary, of course, but that is as far as one may go³⁵.

discussion (cf. above) of the frequently enough occurring discrepancies between calendaric data and weekday indications it follows that the restoration *FEBRU]ARIAS* is not necessarily correct.

³⁴ Published in the *Arheoloski vestnik* (= *Acta Archaeologica*) 28 (1977) 455–461; cf. now SEG XXVI (1976) 1152; XXVII (1977) 685.

³⁵ For the limits set upon the extent of restorations cf. R. S. Bagnall, *Restoring the Text of Documents*, in: *Text. Transactions of the Society for Textual Scholarship* 4 (1988) 109–119.

Appendix a: I.Gr. Palermo 132 again

In his article referred to above (fn. 34) Alföldy presented a new edition of a Christian grave inscription now kept in Palermo (I.Gr. Palermo 132). He reads the dating part (l. 4–7) as follows:

— — μηνι Ἀγόστ(ῳ)
 τὲς (= ταῖς) δεκά(ταις) καὶ ζ (= ἑβδόμη), Σε-
 λήνη ἔν <ν> εακε-
 δεκάτη.

“— — am 10. August, am Samstag, am 19. Montag” (i. e. on the 19th day since the last New Moon). Alföldy remarks: “Soweit ich sehe, handelt es sich um den ersten nachweisbaren griechischen Beleg für die aus der Spätantike bekannten Luna-Inschriften.”³⁶ In his commentary to this inscription Alföldy gives a list and discussion of the already known Latin inscriptions with a lunar dating element. After a discussion of the palaeography of the Greek inscription and a survey of the attestations of a date in the lunar cycle he comes to the conclusion: “Das Jahr 491 dürfte als das wahrscheinlichste Datum der Inschrift gelten.”

I do not think, however, that in line 5 the single zeta (= 7), linked by a simple copula καὶ to the 10th (day) in the month of August mentioned just before, can refer to the day in the week. The expected article τῆ before the numeral ζ is lacking, as is a word like ἡμέρα (to be expected on the basis of parallel texts), and it is disturbing, too, that there would be no second copula καὶ between the indication of the day in the week and the day in the lunar month. Though it is undoubtedly true that the Greeks used to refer to weekdays with the help of a numeral, all these lacking elements are, taken together, hard to explain. Rather than accepting, therefore, Alföldy's reading of an abbreviated δεκά(ταις)³⁷ and a separate element καὶ ζ (= ἑβδόμη) I prefer to think³⁸ that one should take this δεκακαὶς together as representing the cardinal numeral 17. In later Koine Greek this numeral (in classical Greek: ἑπτακαίδεκα) became δεκαεπτά (the corresponding ordinal being ἑπτακαίδεκατος)³⁹. There are, however, in later Greek instances of aberrational forms, which take a kind of intermediate position, i. e. the larger unit precedes the smaller unit, but at the same time there is a copula καὶ in between. Cf., e. g., the inscription published by R. Egger, *Forschungen in Salona*, II 252. 8–9: ζήσασα καλῶς [ἔτι εἶκο]σι καὶ ἐπτά. There is, therefore, in principle no obstacle against the assumption of a form like δέκα καὶ ἐπτά, nor does the composition of a numeral out of words and numbers form a problem. Furthermore, it is well-known that in post-classical Greek one may encounter cardinals in positions, where ordinals could be expected instead (cf. Gignac, *Grammar* II [s. fn. 39] 204); for some examples from later Greek inscriptions see, e. g., C.

³⁶ Apparently, however, some pertinent Greek inscriptions known for already quite some time, albeit from the fringe of the Graeco-Roman world, i. e. from Nubia, had escaped his attention. For a recent discussion of such texts cf. R. S. Bagnall, K. A. Worp, *Dating by the Moon in Nubian Inscriptions*, CdE 61 (1986) 347–357.

³⁷ Essentially taken over by him from the *ed. pr.* which, however, resolved the abbreviation as δεκά(της); but there is no indication of an abbreviation on the stone itself, cf. Alföldy's drawing, (*art. cit.* 455).

³⁸ An interpretation already proposed by A. Ferrua in RAC 50 (1974) 432–433 but never recorded in the SEG; see now also M. Griesheimer, RAC 65 (1989) 165–173, esp. 168–169, who takes the same view on the dating part of this inscription as I had reached at independently. I owe these references to the kindness of D. Feissel.

³⁹ Cf. E. Schwyzler, *Griechische Grammatik* I 594, fnn. 4–5; F. T. Gignac, *Grammar of the Greek Papyri of the Roman and Byzantine Periods* II: *Morphology*, 195 ff.; 202 ff.

Wessel, IGCVO 858 = IG XIV 142: μηνι Φρεβρουαρίω τες (= ταῖς) εἴκοσι τεσάρους (= τέσσαρσι); IGCVO 941 = Röm. Quartalschr. 1896, 30, 315: μηνι Αὐγούστῳ τες (= ταῖς) ἑνδεκα; IGCVO 1372 = SEG IV 5: μηνι Ὑουλίῳ ταῖς εἴκοσι ὀκτώ; IGCVO 1376 = NotScav 1893, 298, 78 / IG XIV 200: μηνι [Μαρτ?]ίῳ τες (= ταῖς) εἴκοσι ἑπτ[ά]; cf. also IGCVO 511, 695, 1069, 1324, 1359.

The consequence of this is, of course, that one is dealing with a 17th day in August which coincides with a 19th day in the lunar month, while there is no longer any day of the week mentioned in this inscription. As A. Ferrua already remarked (cf. fn. 38), this prevents us from establishing a more precise date for this text, as there are far too many instances where 17. 08. coincided with a 19th day in the lunar month⁴⁰ for us to be able to propose any precise date.

Appendix b: The Date of a Mosaic at Jericho

The recently published Catalogue of Mosaic Pavements from Israel published by R. and A. Ovadiah (Rome 1987, *Bibliotheca archaeologica* 6) contains, next to the description of the pavements from an art-historian's point of view, a substantial number of Greek texts found on these pavements which deserve closer study by epigraphists, historians and classical scholars in general⁴¹.

Here I wish to discuss the date of a text found on a mosaic pavement excavated at Jericho. The pavement in question actually contains two texts and it is only the second text upon which I shall concentrate. In the catalogue (p. 144) it is presented as follows:

- 1 † Ἐνθάδε
- 2 κατακ(ε)ῖτ <αι>
- 3 ὁ μακάρι-
- 4 ος Τρύφων
- 5 δοῦλος το-
- 6 ὤ Χ(ριστο)ῦ κ <οι> μη-
- 7 θ <ῆ> <ς> μηνι Φε-
- 8 βρουαρίῳ
- 9 κ', ἡμέρῃ ε'
- 10 ι[ν]δ(ικτιῶνο)ς ι' †

"† Here lies (= rests) the late Tryphon servant of Christ; fell asleep on the 20th of the month of February in the 5th day (of the week), of the 10th year of the Indiction. †"

The date of the text is given in the catalogue as follows: "575 C. E., during the reign of Justin II (according to A. Augustinovic [*Gerico e dintorni, Guida*, Gerusalemme 1951, 77–83, figs 25–26]; based on the burial inscription)."

This statement contains a small riddle and an error⁴²: nothing in this burial inscription itself suggests that it should be dated into the reign of the emperor Justin II (A. D. 565–578) and one

⁴⁰ This presupposes that the new moon fell on 30. 07., a coincidence which occurs every 19 years, cf. the table in V. Grumel, *op. cit.* (fn. 2) 303.

⁴¹ Unfortunately, the treatment given in the catalogue to these texts is not always felicitous; the authors obviously had no expertise as epigraphists by themselves and they did not enlist the help of such an expert. Some of the texts contain (only printing?) oddities and, perhaps worse, the editors do not provide us with full texts of all pavements concerned. Of the 81 Greek texts listed on p. 217 I find 26 texts only described and only 55 printed in full. From an epigraphist's point of view it is also to be regretted that they do not give a concordance between the numbers of their own texts and those incorporated earlier into the *Supplementum Epigraphicum Graecum*. Cf. now Bull. Epigr. 1989, 998 and SEG XXXVII (1987) 1467.

⁴² One should also note the erroneous κ <οι> μηθ <ῆ> <ς> in line 6–7, where κ <οι> μηθ <ει> <ς> should be read.

wonders what other evidence there is for the supposed date of the pavement; moreover, the 10th indiction under Justin's reign ran in Palestine from September 576 until September 577 and if the pavement should date from Justin's reign, the burial recorded on it should be dated to 20. 02. 577. At the same time, one would be facing a problem, then, in that this date did not fall upon a Thursday⁴³. Of course, one may speculate about an error in any of these (conflicting) data on the pavement, but this seems to be a premature hypothesis, as long as there is some question about the chronological date of the text under review.

Now, the 'burial inscription' referred to for establishing the date of this text, is not the text under review, but a Greek text on another mosaic pavement, also found in Jericho. It is mentioned by M. Avi-Yonah in his list of mosaic pavements in QDAP 2 (1932) 162 nr. 98 (with bibliography on p. 163); this text dates from A. D. 566 (11. 12.), i. e. from under Justin's reign indeed. Though obviously some relationship between both pavements has been supposed by the Ovadias, they must be in error about this, as the other pavement was unearched at a different place in Jericho. It may be attractive to assume that the pavement's text under review dates from the 6th century, but that is only a rather broad dating and one may well ask in which year a date to 20. 02. during a 10th indiction year in the 6th century (A. D. 502, 517, 532, 547, 562, 577, 592) would correspond with a Thursday. In fact, consulting Grumel's tables (*op. cit.* [fn. 2] 316-317) one finds that none of these years offers the requested correspondence⁴⁴. The conclusion must be, then, that with the data being taken at face value the text does not date from the 6th century A. D. But if the text would date from the 7th century, a satisfactory correspondence can be found; if the chronological data on the pavement are taken at their face value, the date of the burial fell on 20. 02. 637 or 682. For the moment I see no way of expressing a preference for any of these two dates and, of course, it is another question, whether the pavement's archaeological context matches with such a late date; unfortunately, I cannot answer to that. If it would not match, one should accept the situation that here, like frequently enough elsewhere, there is a conflict among the chronological data on the pavement itself and that no exact date for this text can be proposed.

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⁴³ Cf. the tables in V. Grumel, *op. cit.* (fn. 2) 316-317; cf. also the remarks in SEG XXXVII (1987) 1492 C.

⁴⁴ As my student Mr. V. Stissi reminds me, one should keep in mind that years A. D. 532 and 592 are leap-years.