

## P.OXY. 889 AGAIN

The sixth volume of the Oxyrhynchus Papyri contains a fragmentary papyrus, which the editors of the volume, B.P. Grenfell and A.S. Hunt, styled "Edict of Diocletian and Petition" and dated to A.D. 300 (P.Oxy. 889). In 1976 J.D. Thomas and T.D. Barnes independently published articles redating the imperial edict on the papyrus to 324, and proposing several revisions to the text of the editio princeps.<sup>1)</sup> Subsequently, Barnes published a revised text together with a brief historical commentary.<sup>2)</sup> It is the purpose of the present note to demonstrate that the linelength assumed by Thomas and Barnes is approximately 33 letters too long.

The petition carries the consular date of 325 (lines 11-12); it should be restored as follows:

ὑπατίου Οὐ[αλερίου

Πρόκλου καὶ Ἀνικίου Παυλίνου τῶν λαμπροτάτων Παχῶν κθ.[

Between 284 and 400, there is no comparable instance in Egyptian papyri of the polyonymous consular dating formula which Barnes suggests:<sup>3)</sup> the apparent example from 330 (P.Thead. 12.20-22) has been convincingly reread as the normal consular formula for the year 328 (P.Sakaon 65).<sup>4)</sup> Since non-imperial consuls, even when they are known to have possessed more names, normally have only one or two names in dating formulae on papyri, prudence dictates the observance of this rule here.<sup>5)</sup>

The much longer line postulated by Thomas and Barnes derives from the inclusion of the victory title *Sarmaticus maximus* in Constantine's titulature (line 1).<sup>6)</sup> That is not a necessary hypothesis. The victory titles in the edict clearly observe some principle of collegiality, since the Caesars Crispus and Constantinus, whose *dies imperii* was 1 March 317 (Chr. min. 1.232), are both Σαρματικοὶ μέγιστοι Γερμανικοὶ μέγιστοι (line 3), and the Sarmatian

1) J.D. Thomas, *Ancient Society* 7 (1976) 301ff.; T.D. Barnes, *ZPE* (1976) 279ff.

2) T.D. Barnes, *The New Empire of Diocletian and Constantine* (1982) 234ff.

3) R.S. Bagnall-K.A. Worp, *The Chronological Systems of Byzantine Egypt*, Stud. Amst. 8 (1978) 103ff.

4) Overlooked by Barnes, *New Empire* 96n.34, 103f., whose discussion of Symmachus, consul in 330, consequently requires the following modifications: (1) the fullest attested form of the name is Aurelius Valerius Tullianus Symmachus; (2) the identification of the consul of 330 with Phosphorius the proconsul of Achaia (IG 7.76; AE 1901.125) must be regarded as conjectural, not attested.

5) P.Oxy. 889 thus ceases to prove that Sex. Anicius Paulinus, consul in 325, was polyonymous (Barnes, *New Empire* 102, cf. A. Chastagnol, *Fastes de la Préfecture de Rome au Bas-Empire* [1962] 85f.).

6) Thomas, *op. cit.* 304; Barnes, *New Empire* 235, 236.

victory in question appears to reflect a victory won by Licinius c. 318.<sup>7)</sup> However, there are some inscriptions in which Constantine possesses victory titles which neither exclusively reflect his own victories nor reflect all the victories of both himself and of all his colleagues since his accession (ILS 8942; 696).<sup>8)</sup> If the victory titles in the edict of P.Oxy. 889 observe this criterion of partial collegiality, and reflect victories won by Constantine himself, his son Crispus and the recently defeated Licinius, then *Sarmaticus maximus* should occur among Constantine's victory titles, not in first place, but in line 2 after the attested *Gothicus maximus* (line 1). Constantine first assumed the two preserved victory titles for victories won by himself over the Franci in late 306 or early 307 and by Licinius on the Danube in 313 or 314:<sup>9)</sup> since the Caesars are *Sarmatici maximi in virtute* of a campaign waged by Licinius c. 318, then it becomes obligatory to restore *Σαρματικός μέγιστος* among Constantine's own titles.<sup>10)</sup>

The photograph of the papyrus printed in *Ancient Society* 7 (1976) Pl.VI shows that the top margin of the papyrus is completely preserved; hence one does not need to reckon with the possibility that part of the restored text stood in a completely lost line at the beginning. It is also unlikely either that part of the restored text stood in an earlier column (which would produce an almost impossible layout) or that the first line had an ecthesis of about twenty two letters standing out to the left of the following lines. On that basis, and in the light of the arguments advanced above, we restore lines 1-4 as follows:

1 Αὐτοκράτωρ Καῖσαρ Φλ. Οὐαλέριος Κωνσταντῖνος Γερμανικός μέγιστος Γουθι-  
κ[ός  
μέγιστος Σαρματικός μέγιστος Εὐσεβῆς Εὐτυχῆς Νικητῆς Σεβαστὸς κ[αί  
Φλ. Ἰούλιος Κρῖσπος καὶ Φλ. Κλαύδιος Κωνσταντῖνος Σαρματικοὶ μέγιστοι Γερ-  
μανικοὶ  
4 μέγιστοι καὶ Φλ. Ἰούλιος Κωνσταντῖνος οἱ ἐπιφανέστατοι Καῖσαρες

This restoration requires the supplement of 41 letters before the preserved part of line 1, 36 letters between the preserved parts of lines 1 and 2, 42 between 2 and 3, and 34 between 3 and 4: none of the variations represent a deviation of more than four letters from the 38 letters which we have supplied in the consular dating formula (lines 11-12). Moreover, the appropriate restoration in lines 10-11 supplies 40 letters:

7) Barnes, *New Empire* 82, 236. The Caesars' title *Germanici maximi* reflects a campaign of Crispus, probably in 319 (ib. 83).

8) Barnes, *ZPE* 20 (1976) 153f.; *New Empire* 81 n.145.

9) Barnes, *New Empire* 69, 81.

10) There is thus no space for *Περσικός μέγιστος* or any of the other supplements to line 2 canvassed by Barnes, *New Empire* 235f.

Δεκεμβρίω[ν Κρίσπ

καὶ Κωνσταντίνω τοῖς ἐπιφανεστ(άτοις) Καίσαρ]σιν.

The few other attestations in papyri of the joint third consulate of Crispus and Constantinus all employ the short form of their names (*SB I* 5615 = *P.Sakaon* 23; *ZPE* 40 (1980) 148 (2).1; *P.Oxy.* X 1261).

Toronto  
Amsterdam/New York

T.D. Barnes  
K.A. Worp