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The Consulate of BGU XVII 2676

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THE CONSULATE OF BGU XVII 2676

This Hermopolite lease, addressed to Fl. Taurinos (II) son of Iohannes, poses considerable difficulty in its dating. The editor's text is as follows:

Μετὰ τὴν ὑπατείαν Φ[λ(αυίων) Πατρικ]ίου τοῦ [μ]εγαλο[ρ]επεστάτου
καὶ ἐνδοξοτάτου στρα[τηγοῦ καὶ Ὑπ]ατου . . . Τῦβι ι [η] ἰνδικ(τιώνος)

Further information, including the justification for the restoration of the indiction number, is provided by lines 11-12, where we read

ἀπὸ τῆς σ[ήμερον] ἡμέρας ἣτις ἐστὶν
Τῦβι δεκάτη τῆς [παρούσης] ὀγδὸς ἰνδικτιόνος

The editor's comment (introduction) is as follows: "Schwierigkeiten bereitet die Datierung. Die Verbindung der beiden Konsularepitheta μεγαλορρεπέστατος und ἐνδοξοτάτος ist für die Jahre 446 und 501 bezeugt. Da der Adressat der Urkunde Flavios Taurinos um die Jahre 465-512/13 gelebt hat, kommt nur das Jahr 501 in Frage, das sich auch gut in seine gesellschaftliche Laufbahn einfügt." To this, in the line note he remarks, "Jedoch bleibt eine Schwierigkeit der Lesung. Der zweite Konsul des Jahres 500 war Flavius Hypatius, dessen Name der Schreiber vielleicht wie in P.Amst. I 45,3 mit ὕπατος verwechselt und Ὑπάτου geschrieben hat (vgl. die Ausführung dazu dort). Ebenso ist bei der Angabe der Indiktion ein Fehler unterlaufen."

Requiring two errors to permit the proposed date may arouse doubt. It is particularly uncomfortable to be required on the basis of a restored consulate to accept an error in the indiction, which is of all chronological criteria the one least likely to be in error. It seems to us better to start from the indiction and look at the possible consulates. Eighth indictions during the active lifetime of Taurinos II fell in 469/470, 484/5, and 499/500. The date to 5 January offers us the choice of 470, 485, and 500. The first of these can be excluded immediately. The consuls of 469, Zeno and Marcianus, are referred to in all four documents dated by them (two from the consulate in 469, two from the postconsulate in 470) as Φλαυίων Ζήνωνος καὶ Μαρκιανοῦ τῶν λαμπροτάτων.¹ Such titulature is clearly incompatible with the singular visible at the start of line 2, after which there is not enough room for the full listing of a second consul. Fl. Theodorichos, cos. 484 and p.c. 485, satisfies the criterion of being a singly-proclaimed consul, but he again in all instances (nine papyri, from 484 to 486) is always simply τοῦ λαμπροτάτου.

The situation in 500, however, is different. The sole consul of 499 (cf. CLRE s.a.), Fl. Iohannes (the hunchback), who was *magister utriusque militiae* for the East, is described in one papyrus (*P.Oxy.* XVI 1959.1) as τοῦ ἐνδοξοτάτου καὶ ὑπερφειστάτου στρατηγοῦ. Like Patricius the next year, who as Iohannes's immediate successor held the same office, therefore, he was described as στρατηγός. We can see no reason to suppose that his epithets could not be varied slightly (in other papyri he is simply τοῦ λαμπροτάτου). In fact, the *magister officiorum* Fl. Nomus (cos. 445) has precisely the same sequence of epithets in *BGU* XII 2141.1. We see no difficulty in reading (on Tafel II) in line 1 of *BGU* XVII 2676 Ἰωάν]γου instead of the editor's Πατρικ]ίου.

A problem still remains in line 2. Before the month name we see ιου, preceded by traces of about eight letters. It is possible that the first two are the end of κ]αί, but we do not feel confident of this. Iohannes evidently had either a second title or perhaps a phrase in the genitive dependent on στρατηγοῦ. If the former, one might read κ]αί π[ατρι]κίου, were it not that Iohannes is evidently not otherwise known to have been a patrician (see *PLRE* II 617-618). We have not been able to find a suitable candidate for the second possibility.

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¹ Consulate: *P.Oxy.* XXXIV 2724.1 and LXIII 4390.1; postconsulate: *BGU* XII 2149.2 and *SB* XVI 12486.2.