

Peter Frisch: *Zehn agonistische Papyri*. Opladen: Westdeutscher Verlag 1986. 172 S. 3 Taf. (Abh. d. Rhein. Westf. Akad. d. Wiss. Sonderreihe Papyrologica Coloniensia. 13.)

This volume contains a reedition of eight papyri from Oxyrhynchos and two from Hermopolis concerned with various aspects of agonistic institutions in Roman Egypt. With one exception, they all date from a period of about a quarter century between 264 and ca. 288. Four of the texts were first published in the early years of this century, one in 1936 and five since the 1960's. To the texts has been added an introduction of seven pages giving general background to athletic, musical, and dramatic competitions in Greek antiquity. The purpose of the book is not entirely clear. It is not a publication of new documents, nor is it a corpus of agonistic papyri (as in the Milan 'Corpora Papyrorum Graecarum'). Frisch offers the following definition: «In diesem Band sind Papyrustexte zusammengestellt und kommentiert, die uns in relativ ausführlicher Form Kenntnis über den agonistischen Betrieb im römischen Kaiserreich geben.» But why these ten? Other equally worthwhile candidates (some needing reediting more than many of those chosen) might easily be offered: the extensive Hermopolite documentation of victors' privileges in SPP V and XX; the endowment of a prize in P.Oxy. IV 705 (202p); the letter of an agonodikes to a xystarch ('Essays in Honor of C. Bradford Welles' [New Haven 1966] 19-24 = SB X 10493; 228p); the list of victors in P.Oxy. XXII 2338 (288/9 or later); the list of contributors to the association of hieronikai in P.Oslo II 144 (270-275); the document concerning exemption of a hieronikes from a liturgy in P.Oxy. I 59 (292p); the charioteer's letter in P.Oxy. XXXI 2598 (late third/early fourth cent.); and the proclamation concerning the ephebes' display in P.Oxy. I 42 (323p). Even the fragmentary P.Oxy. XXXI 2611 might have been of interest for its date (192/3). This is not simply a matter of more; as we will see, F.'s limited choice reflects views of agonistic institutions which do not take account of the range of our evidence. A more complete collection would have been more illuminating.

Each of the texts chosen is furnished with a lemma, translation, commentary, and line notes. One might be tempted to think that we have a full reedition of these texts. But this is not the case. There are no dimensions, and information about lectional signs in the originals is systematically omitted. There are plates provided here of nos. 1 and 3, and of nos. 2, 4, 6, and 9 there are published plates elsewhere. In the case of nos. 7 and 8, F. has had the use of a photograph which is not printed here or elsewhere. In the case of nos. 5 and 10, he gives no indication if he has ever seen either a photograph or the original; since both are apparently in Oxford, one is left to wonder if F. never made any effort to verify the texts. For that matter, F. mentions the present location of these texts only in two cases (nos. 3 and 6), and in those he is wrong (they are in the British Library, not the British Museum). In fact, in no case does F. indicate that he has seen the original papyrus.

The lemmas are very unsatisfactory, surprising in one who cites Louis Robert so often. Dates of editions are given sometimes but not always; there is no 'genetic' indication of derivation of one text from another, with all being given on the same level. Secondary treatments are all lumped together under 'Vgl.', with no indication in most cases of what contribution the item cited makes (sometimes it makes no contribution). For example, in the lemma to no. 7 he cites 'Berichtigungsliste' 2.2.157 (ad SPP V 121), which is merely a reference to A. Ehrhardt in ZSav 51, 1931, 157f.; why send the reader to BL rather than give the citation? But he does

not include BL 2.2.162 (ad the same text republished as SPP XX 69), a reference to a correction of Wilcken's which is cited in the note to line 18.

A few exemplary remarks on details (many more could be offered) will suffice to show that this collection cannot be treated as a reliable reedition.

No. 1 (BGU IV 1074) includes a restoration in lines 1–2 which involves a proposal to read at the start of line 2 [ἐπιτο]ἔπω, about which F. says, «ob die Lesung . . . paläographisch möglich ist, kann ich nicht kontrollieren». It is not clear what is meant, since a plate of this papyrus is provided as Tafel I, admittedly much reduced (but without scale). It is perfectly clear even on this plate that the reading is impossible.

No. 5 (P.Oxy. XXXI 2610), a fragmentary text, was left only partially restored by its first editor, J. W. B. Barns. F. offers a different approach: «Ich habe weitgehend, natürlich oft nur exempli gratia, aus den Parallelen ergänzt. Allerdings fällt beim vorliegenden Text auf, daß die Dokumente 1–6, bei aller Ähnlichkeit, in den Einzelheiten doch stark voneinander abweichen.» If the parallels show that there is wide divergence in details, it would be methodologically correct to relegate these 'restorations' to the notes, rather than print them in the text. In the classic words of Letronne so often quoted by Robert, «Il ne s'agit pas de *refaire* le document, ce qui est toujours très facile, mais sans aucune utilité; il faut le *rétablir*, ce qui est bien différent.»

No. 6 (P.Lond. III 1178 [p.214]) is a complex diploma probably prepared in connection with a boxer's application for privileges in Hermopolis. F. assigns it to «Hermopolis Magna, 22. September 194 n. Chr.». Now F. argues (109) that this is the original copy of the certificates of the boxer's attainments, and I believe that this is right. In that case, however, what we can say with confidence is that the base document drawn up in Naples, occupying lines 8–83, was drawn up on 22.ix.194 and signed in their different hands by the various witnesses. Lines 84–102, however, concern Herminos' taking of a priesthood in Sardis under the koinon of Asia, and it has no date at all. Last of all («To the top of the roll was attached another piece of papyrus» say Kenyon and Bell) there is a summary of the conferral of the diploma and a one-line docket giving the name and profession of Herminos. (Incidentally, I think that line 1 is not in the same hand as lines 2–7.) We have no evidence for the date of the subsequent Asian priesthood, and none for the date at which the summary and docket were added. But we may be certain that they are not from 194. Clearly there is no evidence that any use of this diploma in Hermopolis antedates A.D. 200 and the Severan reforms. Since Herminos is well attested in Hermopolis (along with his family; cf. P.Lond. III, p.29 for a stemma) as late as 226/7, all we may really suppose is that the present papyrus, in which Herminos lacks the nomen Aurelius, dates before 212 or thereabouts.

No. 7 (SPP V 121 = XX 69): This text will be reedited by Marie Drew-Bear in her forthcoming 'Les archives du conseil municipal d'Hermoupolis Magna au IIIe siècle ap. J.-C.'; in the meantime, she has published some improvements in 'Tyche' 1, 1986, 94–96. The loan of a photograph from Drew-Bear makes it possible for me to state that F.'s indications of hands here are wrong. The body is hand 1, the greeting hand 2, the date hand 3, and the docket hand 4. In lines 4–5, F. reports a proposed reading by J. D. Thomas; without discussion, he retains Wessely's reading in his text. Did F. check the proposal? In fact, it was close to correct; an independent reading of the key words is given in Drew-Bear's article. In the note to line 18, F. attributes to J. Modrzejewski a proposal to restore year 11; but Modrzejewski was simply reporting van Groningen's proposal without offering an opinion. (That van Groningen's article in *Mnemosyne* gets a «non vidi» from a scholar in Cologne is surprising.) F.'s restorations at left in this papyrus are of arbitrarily varying lengths which do not correspond to the amount of papyrus lost. Since the papyrus will be republished by Drew-Bear, I need not go into other details here.

No. 8 (P.Oslo III 85) is a letter from the prytanis of Oxyrhynchos to the archiereus and xystarch of the association of athletes there in anticipation (F. argues) of the first celebration of the Capitolia there. The actual instructions given by the prytanis are poorly preserved. F. makes a case out that it may have concerned the athletes' being present (for training together) at a date set in advance of the games. F.'s own personal contribution to the text is the proposal of [υμπατο]εῖναι in line 12; it is somewhat disconcerting that he gives neither in the introduction nor in the note any consideration of the sufficiency of the space for the restoration. The first editors (Eitrem and Amundsen) restored four letters before εῖναι, Schubart five. F. had a photograph, but he remarks that «die Lesungen sind praktisch nicht verifizierbar». In the following three lines, the first editors

printed indications of about three letters deleted at the start of the lines. F. includes these in his line note but makes no mention of them in the text.

No. 9 (P. Coll. Youtie II 69): In line 3, F. cavalierly quotes but ignores Thomas' remark that the traces of a letter at the start would fit an alpha best; he restores an omicron, thus allowing the plausible [Μᾶρκ]ov. But on the plate in the original edition it is clear that the surviving trace is a diagonal (upper left to lower right) ligature, impossible with an omicron. In line 8, the space may be adequate for the restorations (proposed by Thomas) if epsilon was left out by iotacism in both words: Ἀντι[voίω Ἀδριαν]ίω, since the surrounding lines indicate that a restoration of ten letters would be acceptable.

We must now return to the central problem alluded to above, the place of these agonistic activities in the Greek communities of Egypt. F. states that because such agonistic activities were institutions of the Greek city, they are not found in Egypt outside the three (then four) Greek poleis until the third century. «Die Situation [i.e., the limitation of agonistic institutions in Egypt to Alexandria, Naukratis, Ptolemais, and Antinoopolis] änderte sich, als Septimius Severus für ganz Ägypten die Polis-Verfassung einfuhrte. Nun blühte im ganzen Land ein agonistischer Betrieb auf» (12). This statement, naturally, is somewhat in conflict with F.'s date for no. 6, for if this document in fact dated from 194 in Hermopolis, we would have to suppose that Hermopolis was behaving like a polis in granting privileges to its residents ('citizens' would be an inappropriate term) who acquired athletic distinction, even though it was itself ignorant of such things. The date is wrong, as we have seen; the request for privileges may well come from after 200. But the notion that the Greeks of the metropoleis went from no agonistic institutions to full ones in 200 simply cannot be correct. Herminos, the boxer of no. 6, was born in 168/9, if his statement of age in 226/7 may be trusted, and he must have had his early training as a boxer in the 180's. Already in P. Ryl. II 153 (169p, a will) we find a Hermopolitan who had competed abroad in athletics. And there are other Hermopolitan examples. It is hard to suppose that these men received all of their training abroad from an early age; we may far more easily imagine that they had at least some training in these sports in the local gymnasium as boys, then went abroad for higher training and competition. The gymnasia are amply attested in the first two centuries of Roman rule. But how can we suppose a community of Greeks to have had a gymnasium where these sports were taught, and think that they lacked competition? On the contrary, there already was such competition in the Ptolemaic period; cf. for example the inscription published by L. Koenen, 'Eine agonistische Inschrift aus Ägypten und frühptolemäische Königsfeste' (Meisenheim am Glan 1977), which certainly does not come from one of the poleis.

And yet it is obviously true that almost all of our evidence for agonistic institutions in the metropoleis of the nomes of Egypt comes from after 200. One may suppose that competitions before that date were all internal, and that those who did well might go to one of the Greek cities of Egypt and then abroad in order to pursue careers in the competitions which drew from all over the *oikoumene*. After 200, the cities were able to offer games with international competition, and the third century is their golden era. But one cannot claim, as F. does, that games ended when the Roman Empire became Christian under Constantine (12); that process stretched on far beyond that. And, though papyrological evidence for agonistic institutions declines sharply after the early fourth century, there is evidence that public athletic competitions continued. Their form may have altered, with chariot racing becoming increasingly popular, but traditional athletics did not disappear (cf. Jones, 'Later Roman Empire' 1018).

It remains difficult to see what the conception of this book is. Its introduction is skimpy, its selection one-sided and small, its editorial principles shaky, the editor's competence at reading and presenting papyri minimal. It must be said, however, that the commentaries contain a great deal of value; they will be a mine of information for anyone having to deal with papyri and inscriptions connected with contests. (The absence of a subject index does not help to make this learning more accessible.) It is regrettable that it is deployed in a work whose overall aims are so vague and defects so significant.

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1. Timothy D. Barnes: *Constantine and Eusebius*. Cambridge (Mass.)/London: Harvard UP 1981. VIII, 458 S. 24, 50 £
2. T. D. Barnes: *The New Empire of Diocletian and Constantine*. Cambridge (Mass.)/London: Harvard UP 1982. XX, 305 S.

Diese beiden kurz nacheinander erschienenen Bücher des englischen Althistorikers Timothy Barnes zur diokletianisch-konstantinischen Epoche gehören engstens zusammen, da der zweite Band z. T. nur einen erweiterten Anmerkungsteil des ersten darstellt, im Gegensatz zu diesem freilich keine zusammenhängende Thematik erörtert, sondern Fakten und Daten liefert, auf denen der Darstellungsband größtenteils aufbaut. Schwer zu beantworten ist die Frage nach dem Darstellungsziel dieser zweibändigen Monographie, wie der Autor selbst zu erkennen gibt. Er weist darauf hin, daß sein Werk weder eine Biographie Konstantins sei noch eine umfassende Studie zu Eusebius noch im eigentlichen Sinne eine Geschichte des konstantinischen Zeitalters, sondern «an interpretative essay» (Constantine S. V). Was auch immer letzteres bedeuten mag – ob es B. dabei gelungen ist, «the main features of the period» (ebd.) darzustellen, ist sehr fraglich angesichts der Tatsache, daß er sich fast gänzlich auf die religiöse Entwicklung beschränkt.

Es fällt nicht leicht, in diesem insgesamt etwa 800 Seiten starken Opus einen roten Faden zu finden. Zwar gibt es eine zentrale These: Konstantin habe von Jugend auf mit der christlichen Religion sympathisiert, sein Christentum sei nicht politisch, sondern religiös motiviert gewesen, und er habe seit seinem Regierungsantritt, insbesondere aber seit 324 n. Chr., ganz entschieden die Christianisierung des Reiches betrieben. Aber diese These ist nicht nur keineswegs ganz neu,¹ sie stellt auch nicht die Klammer dar, welche die Abhandlung zusammenhält, sondern taucht nur hin und wieder als Leitmotiv auf. In ihrer Substanz stellt B.' Untersuchung weniger eine historische Monographie im eigentlichen Sinne als eine Art von Regesten des Christentums im Römischen Reich im 3. Jh. und in diokletianisch-konstantinischer Zeit dar – und auch dies nur in sehr unvollständiger Form.

Mit dieser Kritik soll freilich keineswegs die in diesen beiden Bänden erbrachte wissenschaftliche Leistung in Frage gestellt werden. Die vorzügliche Kenntnis der literarischen und epigraphischen Quellen, die Fülle des zusammengetragenen Ma-

¹ Vgl. A. Alföldi, *The Conversion of Constantine and Pagan Rome*, 2. Aufl. 1986, der freilich einer 'Bekehrung' im Jahr 312 n. Chr. großes Gewicht beimißt.