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## C. P. Jones The Sacrae Litterae of 204: Two Colonial Copies

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C. P. JONES

The Sacrae Litterae of 204:  
Two Colonial Copies<sup>1</sup>

On 31 May, 204, the emperors Severus and Caracalla issued a rescript reaffirming the right of senators not to receive unwanted guests. The text is known only from epigraphic copies, at present six in Latin and two of a Greek translation, all from the eastern part of the empire. The present study will add two fragments of new copies, one already published and in Greek, the other unpublished and in Latin.

In order of publication, the copies currently known are as follows:

Paros (P 1, P 2). A. WILHELM, JOEAI 3, 1900, 75–78. Two stelai, not quite matching but complementary, one bearing the Latin text and the other a faithful Greek translation. The Greek text was first published by L. ROSS in 1842; WILHELM re-examined the stone, and was able to add the Latin from a copy supplied by a local antiquarian, M. K. KRISPI.<sup>2</sup>

Satala on the upper Hermos (S). P. HERRMANN, Chiron 7, 1977, 364–65; now TAM V, 1, no. 607. A fragmentary plaque intended to serve as revetment, containing part of the Latin text. The stone had been noticed by L. ROBERT, who published it in 1962:<sup>3</sup> the content was recognized by HERRMANN.

The Phrygian Pentapolis (Phr). T. DREW-BEAR, Chiron 7, 1977, 355–363. A stele from the village of Mirtaz containing an almost complete copy of the Latin text.

Ancyra (Anc). L. ROBERT, BCH 102, 1978, 432–37. Two fragments of an inscription discovered by ROBERT in the archaeological depot of the citadel of Ancyra. It contains both the Latin text and, immediately following it, a Greek translation. This copy is eccentric in several respects. In the Latin it contains a significant variant, *quod* in place of *qui*, which gives a more satisfactory syntax and had already been postulated by MOMMSEN.<sup>4</sup> The Greek translation is smoother than that

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<sup>1</sup> I am very grateful to CHRISTIAN HABICHT for allowing me to publish the squeeze from Antioch now at the Institute for Advanced Study, Princeton, and to him and GLEN BOWERSOCK for reading a draft of this article; to ALISON FRANTZ for the photograph; and to PETER FRISCH, BARBARA LEVICK and STEPHEN MITCHELL for answering my enquiries.

<sup>2</sup> Further bibliography in T. DREW-BEAR, Chiron 7, 1977, 356–58; L. ROBERT, BCH 102, 1978, 432–33.

<sup>3</sup> L. ROBERT, Villes d'Asie Mineure, <sup>2</sup>Paris 1962, 281.

<sup>4</sup> ROBERT (n. 2) 435–36.

in P 2. Lastly, whereas the only complete versions (P 1, P 2, Phr) give both the re-script and the appendix concerning place and time of publication, the appendix is omitted in Anc: ROBERT suggests that the inscription was cut in the later third century, when these details no longer were of interest.<sup>5</sup>

Ephesos (E 1, E 2). D. KNIBBE and R. MERKELBACH, ZPE 31, 1978, 229–32; now *Inschriften von Ephesos II* 207, 208. Two fragments of different inscriptions both containing the Latin text.

Some of the copies share certain features of disposition. In most of the Latin ones, the words *sacrae litterae* are written on a separate line above the text (P 1, S, E 1, E 2; in Phr, *exemplum sacrarum litterarum Severi et Antonini Aug.*). In Anc the beginning of the Latin is lost, but the Greek is preceded by the initials Θ(εῖα) Γρ(άμματα) and there is room for *s(acrae) l(itterae)* in the first line of Latin.<sup>6</sup> In the Greek, P 2 similarly has Ἱερὰ Γράμματα on a separate line. As befits a text to which great importance was attached, the lettering tends to be clear and careful, with generous spaces between the lines: in S there are interpuncts and apices.<sup>7</sup> To judge by the surviving examples, it was usually set up on stelai, and sometimes carried over several very short lines (P 1, P 2, Phr, E 1, E 2).<sup>8</sup>

The several copies of the Latin show variations in orthography and abbreviations, but preserve virtually the same text, which written in full runs as follows:

*Videris nobis senatus consultum ignorare, qui<sup>9</sup> si cum peritis contuleris, scies senatori populi Romani necesse non esse invito hospitem suscipere. Datum<sup>10</sup> pri(die) Kal(endas) Iun(ias) Romae, Fabio Cilone et Annio Libone consulibus.*

The following is the Greek version of P 2, with the variants of Anc in brackets. I have followed WILHELM's text except in one detail: α' Καλ(ανδῶν) can hardly represent *pri(die) Kal(endas)*, and there is space for an abbreviation of πρό before the numeral.<sup>11</sup> The text seems otherwise not in doubt, and so I have omitted square brackets.

<sup>5</sup> ROBERT (n. 2) 436–37.

<sup>6</sup> The total of letters in lines 1–3 (the only ones completely filled) will then be 29, 29, 28; line 1 is longer than the other two by the width of about one letter.

<sup>7</sup> WILHELM, JOEAI 3, 1900, 75, comments on P 2, «mit ungewöhnlicher Sorgfalt und Eleganz eingezeichnet»; ROBERT observes of Anc, «texte profondément gravé».

<sup>8</sup> The dimensions of E 1 and E 2, and the thickness of Anc, are not reported.

<sup>9</sup> *quod* in Anc.

<sup>10</sup> On the *SS* written in Phr before *Datum* see below.

<sup>11</sup> Before WILHELM, [ι]α' had been read, which the Latin version proved incorrect. There is room for the abbreviation Ϡ, which is used in the equivalent position in IG XII, 7, 240 (IGR IV 1017: Minoa) and probably MDAI(A) 27 (1902) 133 no. 160 (Pergamon); two inscriptions now known only from copies, CIG III 3176 (Syll.<sup>3</sup> 851; IGR IV 1399: Smyrna) and IGUR 77 (IGR I 144: Rome), show ΠΠ (in ligature in IGUR 77).

δοκεῖς ἡμεῖν τὸ δόγμα τῆς συγκλήτου ἀγνοεῖν, ὃς (δ, presumably Anc) εἰάν μετ' ἐμπείρων συναντιβάλλης (ἐπισκέψη, Anc), εἴση μὴ εἶναι ἐπάναγκες συγκλητικῶ δήμου Ῥωμαίων (μαθήση μὴ σ. δ. Ῥ. ἀνάγκην εἶναι, Anc) ἄκοντι ξένον ὑποδέχεται. ἐδόθη πρ(ὸ) ἀ' Καλ(ανδῶν) Ἰουνί(ων) Ῥώμη, Φαβίῳ Κεῖλῳ τὸ β' καὶ Ἀννίῳ Λίβῳι ὑπάτοις (sentence omitted in Anc).

Some have thought that the rescript was addressed to an official such as a proconsul, and thus a letter (*epistula*), while others have considered it a subscript (*subscriptio*) written below a petition.<sup>12</sup> The *SS* preceding the appendix in Phr recalls the *scripsi* found in a subscript of Severus from Rome, and the curt language also suits a subscript rather than a letter: two subscripts dated to July, 204, and preserved in the Code of Justinian use expressions similar to the *videris ignorare* of the present text, *non ignoras* and *nec ipse ignorare videris*.<sup>13</sup> It has been argued on the other side that the emperors presume the addressee to have legal experts at his disposal, so that he should be an official of the government: but a private person could also be expected to consult lawyers. The precise situation of the petitioner seems impossible to recover, but he might be a civic magistrate who had unsuccessfully tried to assign visitors with the right of free lodging to the house of a senator.<sup>14</sup>

In 1913 Adolphe REINACH published the results of a voyage in Aeolis and the Troad, and included a number of inscriptions of the Troad that had been in the well-known collection of Frank CALVERT, his source being a manuscript catalogue of the collection drawn up in 1902 by H. THIERSCH. REINACH intended to extract only unpublished texts, but several were in fact known.<sup>15</sup> The following, however, seems to have received its first and last mention in his article, even though he observed, «il semble s'agir d'un δόγμα ... συγκλήτου, décret du Sénat.»<sup>16</sup>

⟨No. 1590. Fr. de marbre. H. 9.26 [*sic*: presumably a slip for 0.26.] – L. 0.20. – Ep. 0.15. Complet à gauche.⟩

<sup>12</sup> The classic establishment of the distinction is by U. WILCKEN, *Hermes* 55, 1920, 2–9. For the first view here, W. ECK, *Chiron* 7, 1977, 365–67; ROBERT (n. 2) 432; for the second, W. WILLIAMS, *JRS* 64, 1974, 87 n. 14; DREW-BEAR (n. 2) 359.

<sup>13</sup> L. MORETTI, *IGUR* I 35 line 7 (earlier editions include *CIL* VI 3770 = 31330; *IG* XIV 1059; *IGR* I 145). The *S* sometimes found in the rescripts of the Code of Justinian has a number of different meanings, cf. T. HONORÉ, *Emperors and Lawyers*, London 1981, 27. Rescripts of July, 204: *Cod. Just.* 5. 15. 1, 4. 2. 1, cf. HONORÉ, 59–60.

<sup>14</sup> For this duty of magistrates, ECK (n. 12) 365, 367 n. 53, 379.

<sup>15</sup> A. REINACH, *Revue épigraphique* 1, 1913, 165–89, especially 173–76. THIERSCH's catalogue was for a long time lost, but is now in the Istanbul Archaeological Museum, see R. M. COOK, *The Troad*, Oxford 1973, 9. For previous publications overlooked by REINACH, E. PREUNER, *MDAI(A)* 49, 1924, 148–49.

<sup>16</sup> REINACH (previous n.) 175. The inscription was not included in *L'Année épigraphique*, *IGR* IV, or *SEG*.

ΙΕΡΑΙΙ  
 ΔΟΚΕΙΣ·†  
 ΔΟΓΜΑ  
 ΚΛΗΤΟ  
 ΕΑΝΟΥ  
 ΡΩΝΣ  
 ΕΙΣ ΗΣ

This is another copy of the Greek translation of the *sacrae litterae* of 204, and in the same version as in P 2. The divergences in lines 5 and 7 must be due either to faulty reading of damaged letters by THIERSCHE, or to miscopying of his manuscript by REINACH.<sup>17</sup>

Ἱερὰ Γράμματα.  
 δοκεῖς ἡ[μεῖν τὸ]  
 δόγμα [τῆς συγ-]  
 κλήτο[υ ἀγνοεῖν, δς]  
 ἐάν (με)[τ' ἐμπεί-]  
 ρων σ[υναντιβάλλης]  
 εἴση (μ)[ῆ] εἶναι, κτλ.<sup>18</sup>

Like most of the other copies, this version was on a stele, with the title occupying a single line. The interpunct after δοκεῖς shows the influence of Latin inscriptions,<sup>19</sup> and recalls the punctuation of S. The one consequence brought by the new fragment to the history of the text is that the Greek translation it shares with P 2 must have been an official one: that makes the divergences in both the Latin and Greek texts of Anc even more mysterious.

If it is correct that the fragment is from the Troad, the obvious provenance is the prosperous Roman colony of Alexandria. With its colonial status, large territory and busy port, this was one of the great cities of the Mediterranean.<sup>20</sup> In 81 it pro-

<sup>17</sup> The first alternative is suggested by the fact that the errors occur near the broken right-hand border; the second by REINACH's flagrant inaccuracy (cf. L. ROBERT, *Etudes de numismatique grecque*, Paris 1951, 71 n. 3, 'les notes et discussions de l'auteur sont bourrées d'erreurs').

<sup>18</sup> This arrangement of lines 6 and 7 seems the simplest way to account for the letters reported by REINACH, but it disregards the space he shows between sigma and eta in 7.

<sup>19</sup> S. REINACH, *Traité d'épigraphie grecque*, Paris 1885, 216.

<sup>20</sup> Sources in G. HIRSCHFELD, *RE* 1, 1893, 1396 no. 16; D. MAGIE, *Roman Rule in Asia Minor*, Princeton 1950, 1334–35, n. 15; ROBERT (n. 17) index s. v. Alexandrie de Troade.

duced the first known consul from Asia Minor, T. Iunius Montanus; in the second century it boasted the brilliant house of the Quinctilii;<sup>21</sup> there must have been other senators in the third century, but the antiquities of the city have suffered so much that there is now no record of one.

This example of the *sacrae litterae*, like almost all those noticed hitherto, comes from the province of Asia: the exception is once again Anc, but this was observed in an archaeological depot housing inscriptions from a very wide area.<sup>22</sup> It was therefore reasonable to assume that Anc too came from the province of Asia: it has even been thought probable that the original recipient was the proconsul.<sup>23</sup> The latter conclusion is disproved, and the former called into question, by yet another fragment.

The Institute for Advanced Study, Princeton, possesses a large number of squeezes given by the late D. M. ROBINSON, most of them from Pisidian Antioch where ROBINSON excavated in 1924. The inscriptions represented include many already known before that year, while others were found by ROBINSON himself. One of these seems not to have been published, perhaps because it was thought too fragmentary to be of interest.<sup>24</sup> The squeeze, of which I give a reversed photograph, is pencilled, «May 13, Yalov(adj),» Yalvaç being the modern town adjacent to the site. As far as can be judged, the fragment had a maximum height of about 0.17 m. and a maximum width of 0.16 m.: the letters are well cut, 3.3 cms. in height and with an interlinear space of 2.5 cms. Only seventeen remain, but enough to be recognizable as the end of the *sacrae litterae*:

[Ro]mani [necesse]  
 [no]n esse in[vito]  
 [ho]spitem [suscipere.]

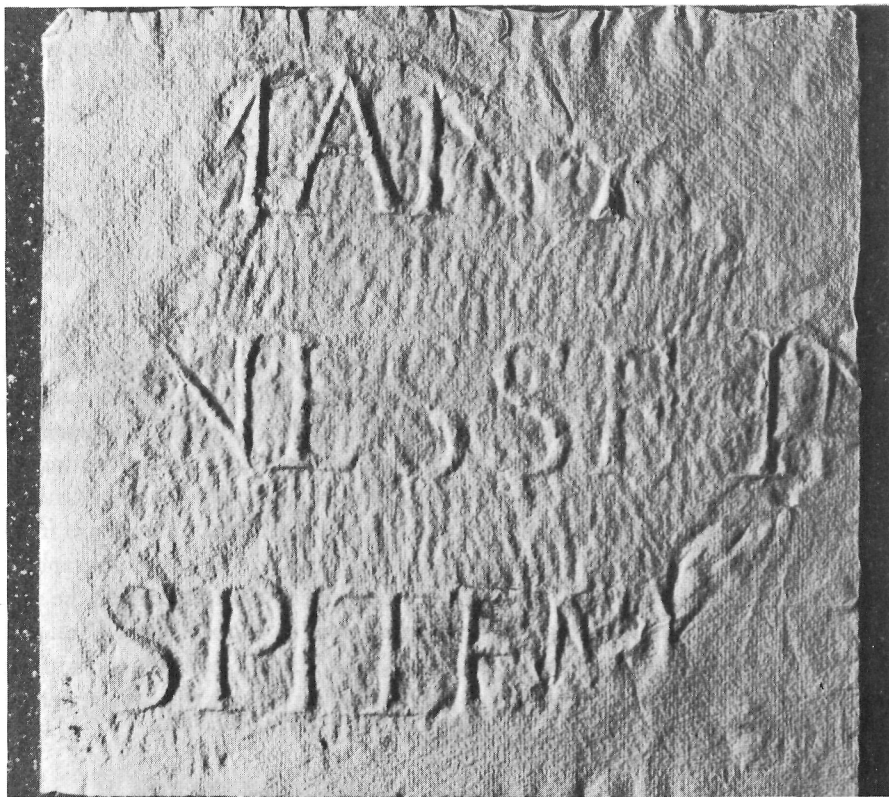
Textually, the only peculiarity of the Antioch copy (Ant) is that it gives *Romani* (and presumably gave *populi*) in full, whereas all the other copies which preserve this part gave *p. R.*: similarly, three of the other copies had *s. co.* (P 1, Phr, Anc),

<sup>21</sup> H. HALFMANN, Die Senatoren aus dem östlichen Teil des Imperium Romanum, Hypomnemata 58, Göttingen 1979, no. 6 (T. Iunius Montanus), nos. 40, 49, 75, 76, 108, 119 (the Quinctilii).

<sup>22</sup> ROBERT (n. 2) 435: cf. J. and L. ROBERT, Bull. épigr. 1978. 468.

<sup>23</sup> For the former view, see most recently HERRMANN on TAM V, 1, no. 607, «omnia e provincia Asia oriunda, ut videtur»: for the latter, KNIBBE and MERKELBACH, ZPE 31, 1978, 231, «eine beträchtliche Wahrscheinlichkeit».

<sup>24</sup> ROBINSON'S connection with Antioch ended after a well-documented row with his fellow-excavator, W. M. RAMSAY. In an article referring to this incident, RAMSAY says loftily, «I have given to Mr. Peterson of Michigan a bunch of nearly 300 inscriptions, which will, I hope, be done in scientific style under his name and my supervision» (JRS 14, 1924, 205). Conceivably this fragment was one of the «bunch».



Photogr.: A. FRANTZ, Princeton/N. Y.

whereas three had *senatus consultum* or *con(sultum)* (S, E 1, E 2). The unusual explicitness of Ant conforms with the careful cutting: the letters are clear and regular, and to judge from what survives large spaces were left between words (except for cohering phrases like *non esse*), and words were not divided between lines. The short lines suggest that this stone too was a stele on which the text was distributed very generously.

Just as Alexandria had an important port and a dominant position in the Troad, so Antioch had a prosperous territory and a vital position in the road system of southern Asia Minor.<sup>25</sup> Both were among Augustus' most successful colonies, and both were quick to produce senators and consuls.<sup>26</sup> Unlike Alexandria, however,

<sup>25</sup> B. M. LEVICK, *Roman Colonies in Southern Asia Minor*, Oxford 1967, 42–45 (territory), 14–15 (roads).

<sup>26</sup> On the early senators of Antioch see now HALFMANN (n. 21) nos. 3, 4, 9 (the Sergii Pauli, though their origin is not certain), no. 13 (C. Caristianus Fronto, cos. suff. 90).

Antioch has an extensive epigraphy, and is known to have had several senatorial families in the third century: the Calpurnii Reginiani, the Gellii Maximi, and by descent the Iulii Aspri.<sup>27</sup> Both in Antioch and Alexandria there was no doubt more than one great house which displayed the <sacred letter> to deter unwelcome visitors.

The chief interest of the new fragment is that it proves the rescript to have applied to provinces other than Asia. The question now arises, since Ancyra and Antioch were both in the same province of Galatia, whether Anc too was also from that province. The fact that all the known copies are from the eastern empire is due, not to a restriction of its applicability, but to facts of geography and history. The Greek east of the third century contained a large number of the wealthy families from which the senate was recruited, and in addition some families not originally from the east must have acquired property there. Moreover, this same area was constantly skirted or traversed by emperors and officials, fleets and armies, especially during the eastern wars of the third century. There must have been scores, perhaps hundreds, of copies of the <sacred letter> of 204: probably others wait to be unearthed or recognized.

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<sup>27</sup> Calpurnii Reginiani: LEVICK (n. 25) 117, HALFMANN (n. 21) 207. Gellii Maximi: LEVICK, 118. Iulii Aspri: LEVICK, 118, n. 5, HALFMANN, no. 134.



