

Harpocraton Panegyrista*

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On 9 December A.D. 348, Aurelius Ammon, a scholasticus from Pano-
polis, drew up a petition addressed to the catholicus of Egypt, Flavius
Sisinnius. This petition is preserved on a papyrus from the collection of
the University of Cologne (inv. 4533). It is here published for the first time,
to serve as a basis for the discussion which follows.

Köln inv. 4533

30.5 × 26.5 cm.

9 Dec. 348

Φλαύϊω Σισι[ννί]ω τῶι διασημοτάτῳ καθολικῶι
παρὰ Ἀνρηλίῳ[υ Ἀμμων]οῦ Πετεαρβεσχίν[ιο]ς σχολαστικοῦ ἀπὸ Πανὸς
πόλεως

τῆς Θηβαΐδο[ς. ἐ]πειδὴ Εὐγένειος Μεμ[.]. ιος καὶ ἐγὼ ὁ Ἀμμων, φίλων με-
ταξὺ ἡμῶν γ[εν]ομένων ἐπὶ τῆς Πανοπ[ολι]τῶν πόλεως Παρίσκ[ο]υ ἀπὸ
δικαιροδότη

5 καὶ Ἀπόλλωνο[ς] ποιητοῦ καὶ ἄλλου Ὀρίωνο[ς, ὁ]μολογίαν ἔγγραφον
κοινῆι πεπ[οι]ή-
μεθα περὶ ἀνδ[ρ]απόδων ἐν Ἀλεξανδρείᾳ νῦν ὄντων [τ]ῆι λαμπραῖ ταύτῃ
πόλει

ὑπὸ Ἀρποκρατίω[ν]οῦ καταλελ[ει]μμένων τ[ο]ῦ ἀδελφοῦ τοῦ [ἐ]μοῦ ἐν
δι[σσο]ῆι ὁμολο[γι]αῖ

ταύτῃ, οὐκ οἶδ[α ἂν] ὅτου ὑπήχθην προθεσ[μί]αν ὀρισθεῖσ[α]ν τοιαύτῃ[ν]
καταδέξασθαι

ᾧστε εἴσω ἡμ[ερ]ῶν εἴκοσι ἀπὸ ἐβδόμησ καὶ ἐ[ι]κάδος Ἀθῦρ [τοῦ]
παρελθόν[τ]οῦ μηνὸς εἰς

10 τὴν Ἀλεξάνδρ[ειά]ν με παραγενέσθαι, ὅπω[ς] πέρας ἐπιτεθῆι τῶι πράγ[μ]α-
τι. ἀλλ' ἐπεὶ

νῦν ἐνταῦθα π[ρὸ] ἄλλων δύο ἡμερῶν τῶ[ι] προειρημένῳ Εὐγενείῳ οὐ
συνῆλθον

οὐδὲ εὐρεῖν αὐτ[ό]ν δεδύνημαι, διὰ τοῦτο σήμερον δημοσιᾷ μαρτ[ύ]ρομαι,
ἤτι[ς] ἐστὶ

Χοιᾶκ τρισκαίδεκάτη, πρὸ ἄλλων ἡμερῶν τεσσάρων τῆς π[ροθεσμίας
παρα]γενέσθαι,

καὶ ἀξίων τοῦτόν μου τὸν δι[α]σφαλισμὸν κατακεῖσθαι ἐν [ἀσφαλεῖ ἕως ἄν
ἐκεῖ]νος

15 παραγένηται πρὸς τὸ μὴ ἐξεῖναι αὐτῷ σκῆψίν τινα προβα[λέσθαι πρὸς τὰ
ὑπ' ἔμο]ῦ

[π]ροτεθέντα, ἀξιώ ἐπὶ τὸ σὸν μεγαλείον, δέσποτα, ἀνερχθῆν[αι διὰ τοῦ
δημοσίου]ν

ταβουλαρίου κατὰ τὴν σήμερον ἡμέραν {κατὰ τὴν σήμε[ρον ἡμέραν].}

ὑπατείας Φλαυίου Φιλίππου τοῦ λαμπροτάτου ἐπάρχου τοῦ [ἱεροῦ πραιτωρίου
κ]αὶ

Φλαυίου Σαλιᾷ τοῦ λαμπροτάτου μαγίστρου ἱππέων Χο[ιᾶκ γ.]

20 Ἀυρήλιος Ἀμμων προῦθηκα ὡς πρόκειται.

TRANSLATION

To Flavius Sisinnius the most illustrious catholicus from Aurelius Ammon son of Petearbeschinis, scholasticus from Panopolis of the Thebaid.

Whereas Eugenius son of Mem . . . and I, Ammon (in the presence of some friends of ours in Panopolis: Paniscus from the juridicus,¹ Apollo the poet, and another, Horion), have established in common a written contract concerning slaves who are now in Alexandria, this glorious city, and who have been left by Harpocraton my brother in this contract in duplicate, I was issued a summons to accept, I know not why, a fixed period of such a sort that within twenty days, starting from the twenty-seventh of the preceding month Hathyr, I was to go to Alexandria, so that an end might be put to the affair. But since, as it is, I did not meet the aforesaid Eugenius here two days ago and have not been able to find him, for this reason I publicly attest today, the thirteenth of Choiak, four days before the fixed period expires, that I have arrived. And I ask that this attestation of mine be securely deposited until Eugenius arrives, in order that he may not be permitted to offer a pretext against my notifica-

* This paper is a revision and expansion of a lecture entitled "A Panegyrist from Panopolis," which is published in *The Proceedings of the Fourteenth International Congress of Papyrologists: Oxford, 24-31 July 1974* (London, 1975) 29-33. In its present form, I delivered it as a lecture at the University of Illinois at Champaign-Urbana on 13 February 1976.

¹ The Greek *δικαιοδότης* is the technical translation of the Latin *iuridicus*; see H. J. Mason, *Greek Terms for Roman Institutions*, Am. Stud. Pap. XIII (Toronto, 1974) s.v.

tion, and I ask that the matter be referred to your greatness, my lord, through the public notary today.

The consulship of Flavius Philippus, the most glorious prefect of the Sacred Praetorium, and Flavius Salia, the most glorious master of the horse, Choiak 13.

I, Aurelius Ammon, have submitted this petition, as is aforesaid.

This text is addressed to the hitherto-unattested catholicus, Flavius Sisinnius. At this period, the two departments of the treasury in Egypt, the *fuscus* and the *res privatae*, were each under a *καθολικός*, the Greek translation of the Latin *rationalis*.² It is not immediately obvious how the present petition could be of interest to the financial administration. The fact that slaves are involved may be important. Though human, they were technically classified with landed property,³ and the catholicus was concerned with the proper maintenance of the landed property of Egypt.⁴ On the other hand, the catholicus here may be simply the prefect's delegate, as he is elsewhere.⁵

Ammon informs the catholicus that he and a certain Eugenius have drawn up a contract concerning slaves of Harpocraton, Ammon's brother, but the petition does not reveal the nature of this document. After the contract had been drafted, Ammon received a summons to appear in Alexandria within twenty days of 27 Hathyr (23 November), "so that an end might be put to the affair" (line 10). Upon arrival, Ammon could not find Eugenius, and fearful of treachery, he composed the present petition, in which he states that he reached Alexandria four days before the expiration of the twenty-day period. He asks that his petition be kept safe until Eugenius' arrival.

The information in the Cologne papyrus is tantalizingly vague. We look in vain for a description of the contract between Ammon and Eugenius. We also wonder about the precise role of Eugenius in the affair. Ammon himself says: "I was issued a summons to accept, *I know not why*, a fixed period of such a sort that within twenty days . . . I was

² See J. Lallemand, *L'administration civile de l'Égypte de l'avènement de Dioclétien à la création du diocèse (284-382)*, Mém. Acad. Roy. Belgique, ser. 2.57.2 (1964) 80 and n. 6, and Mason (preceding note) s.v.

³ See, e.g., R. Taubenschlag, "Das Sklavenrecht im Recht der Papyri," *Opera Minora* (Warsaw, 1959) II 249, who shows that slaves were included in property declarations (*κατ' οικήαν απογραφαι*) and were on record in the registry of real property (the *βιβλιοθήκη ἐγκτήσεων*).

⁴ Lallemand (above, n. 2) 85 and n. 1.

⁵ *Ibid.* 145, a discussion of *P.Oxy.* IX 1204, where the catholicus appears to replace the prefect in a legal case.

to go to Alexandria" (lines 8–10). There is much that puzzles Ammon, but there is also much, one feels, that he has left unsaid.

Furthermore, in terms of style and drafting, the text leaves something to be desired. Ammon writes with a practiced and skilled hand, as befits a scholasticus, and his style is generally what one would expect from a person of his position.⁶ But he has lapses. Note the awkward phrase ἐν δι[σ]ῆι ὁμολο[γί]αί ταύτηι in lines 7–8; presumably it goes with what precedes, and I have so translated it: "concerning slaves who are now in Alexandria . . . and have been left by Harpocration in this contract in duplicate." But there has been no mention of this contract before, and therefore we do not expect ταύτηι. Possibly Ammon wanted to reiterate the δ]μολογίαν ἐγγραφον of line 5, but, if so, he chose an ambiguous means of achieving his goal. Faulty drafting is also noticeably in evidence in line 17, where the phrase κατὰ τὴν σήμερον ἡμέραν is carelessly repeated.

It is not only we who are dissatisfied with the petition; Ammon too presumably found it below standard. Instead of sending it to the catholicus, he tried his hand at a considerably expanded version, in which he went into much greater detail. He first used the entire verso of the same sheet and then, finding this to be insufficient, he crowded more of his revision in the margins on the recto. Ammon's additional remarks in this revised version will concern us later, for they prove to be of more than usual interest.

Before dealing with these additions, we should note that the Cologne papyrus, fortunately, is not an isolated text. It belongs to a small archive of papers which reach back to the third century of our era, and which provide much information about Ammon and his family. The texts of this archive are divided between the University of Cologne and Duke University, and the publication of all of them is planned for the near future.⁷

The archive falls into two groups. The first deals with Ammon's father, Aurelius Petearbeschinis and the latter's wife, Aurelia Senpasis. It comprises three texts: a declaration submitted by Senpasis in the year 289 for property she had purchased, and two copies of a contract documenting the ownership of this property.⁸

⁶ The scholastici were "advocates so called as a result of their activity as jurisconsults of rather high educational attainment . . . [they] were as a rule assigned to duty in the courts of provincial governors"—J. G. Keenan, *ZPE* 11 (1973) 60. The most recent detailed study is that of A. Claus, 'Ο Σχολαστικός (Dissertation Cologne, 1965).

⁷ The edition is being prepared by G. M. Browne, L. Koenen, J. F. Oates, and W. H. Willis.

⁸ The property declaration is preserved in P.Köln inv.4531 + P. Duke inv. G 185, and the two copies of the contract appear in P.Köln inv. 4535 and 4539.

The second group of documents centers around Petearbeschinis' two sons, Ammon and Harpocraton. Six in number, they are all written in Ammon's hand, and they all concern the slaves of Harpocraton. One text is the original petition transcribed above, four others represent various attempts at revising this petition, and the sixth is a contract in which Ammon asks a certain Faustinus to act on his behalf in Alexandria.⁹

These texts all come from Panopolis, the modern Achmîm, in Upper Egypt. Until recently, papyri from Panopolis used to be scarce,¹⁰ and this scarcity occasions surprise, since the city was the capital of its nome and the intellectual center of Upper Egypt. But now we have quite a few papyri from Panopolis, many of them from archives of the early Byzantine period. Some of these texts are documentary: one thinks immediately of the two lengthy rolls containing correspondence of the strategus of the Panopolite nome, dated respectively to A.D. 298 and A.D. 300 and published a little over a decade ago by T. C. Skeat.¹¹ Professor and Mrs. H. C. Youtie and Dr. D. Hagedorn have just edited another group of Panopolitan texts.¹² These papyri, 31 in number, extend from A.D. 298 to A.D. 346. Some of them, a series of tax receipts, come from the versos of the rolls which Skeat published; the remainder are lodged in the Cologne collection. Rather than constituting a homogeneous group, these texts are probably remnants of the papers of several families.¹³

It is not only documents which have come to light from Panopolis. Professor E. G. Turner has made a strong case for Panopolitan origin of the Bodmer codex containing Menander's *Aspis*, *Dyscolus*, and *Samia*, and he points to evidence which, though ambiguous, at least suggests a similar provenance for the *Comedia Florentina* (*PSI* II 126) of Menander.¹⁴ The roll of Hyperides' *in Athenogenem*, as well as fragments from Demosthenes, Euripides' *Rhesus*, Hesiod, the *Anthologia Palatina*, and the *Acta Alexandrinorum*, are also said to come from Panopolis.¹⁵

⁹ The petition in its original form appears on P.Köln inv. 4533, a papyrus which also contains one attempted revision; the other revisions are to be found in P.Köln inv. 4532 verso + P.Duke inv. G 19 verso, and P.Duke inv. G 18 recto and verso. The contract involving Faustinus is preserved in P.Köln inv. 4532 recto + P.Duke inv. G 19 recto. Passages from these papyri will be quoted in the course of this paper.

¹⁰ See the list in D. Hagedorn, "Papyri aus Panopolis in der Kölner Sammlung," *Proceedings of the Twelfth International Congress of Papyrology*, Am. Stud. Pap. VII (Toronto, 1970) 208 n. 4.

¹¹ T. C. Skeat, *Papyri from Panopolis* (Dublin, 1964).

¹² L. C. Youtie, D. Hagedorn, H. C. Youtie, "Urkunden aus Panopolis I," *ZPE* 7 (1971) 1-40; "Documents from Panopolis II," *ZPE* 8 (1971) 207-234; "Urkunden aus Panopolis III," *ZPE* 10 (1973) 101-170.

¹³ Hagedorn (above, n. 10) 208.

¹⁴ E. G. Turner, *Greek Papyri: An Introduction* (Princeton, 1968) 52-53.

¹⁵ *Ibid.* 51-52.

As I indicated above, much of this new material from Panopolis is from the early Byzantine period, and much of it appears in archives. In other words, it was found intact, perhaps carefully buried, and not scattered piecemeal—as are so many of our papyrus finds—over a rubbish dump.

It is perhaps worth mentioning that Panopolis is not the only site in Upper Egypt which has yielded archival material. Across the Nile lies the White Monastery, established in the middle of the fourth century by the monk Pkiol, and raised to a position of national importance by his celebrated successor, Shenoute. The library of this monastery was destined to become the largest single source of Coptic manuscripts.¹⁶ And, not far from Panopolis is situated the modern town of Nag Hammadi, near which the well-known Coptic Gnostic library came to light in the late 40's.¹⁷

This brief survey of other archives and libraries from Panopolis and its surroundings serves to demonstrate that the papers of Ammon and his family are by no means unique finds. Their preservation as an intact group finds numerous parallels from the same time and locality.

In one respect, however, this new collection of texts is unique: it contains information which carries us far beyond Panopolis and even beyond Egypt. And, though documentary in content, the papers of Ammon give us a view of the literary activity of the Empire in the early Byzantine period.

I mentioned above the attempts on Ammon's part to revise his petition. These are scribbled on many of the papyri of his archive, but the most extensive revision appears on the verso and part of the recto of the sheet containing the original version of the petition. Unfortunately, the papyrus is badly damaged and has suffered extensive abrasion, and many of the details of the text remain obscure. But one passage is reasonably well preserved, and it is on this section that I should like to concentrate.¹⁸

Harpocration, according to Ammon's account, leaves his slaves in Alexandria and prepares to travel abroad. His journey Ammon describes in some detail, and I here quote his words in full (P. Köln inv. 4533v 23-27):

... ἐν γὰρ τῇ ἀποδημίᾳ ἐκείνος γενόμενος) καὶ ἀπὸ χώρας
εἰς χώρα(ων) ἐκάστοτ(ε) μεταβαίν(ων)¹⁹

¹⁶ See, e.g., T. Orlandi, "Un projet milanais concernant les manuscrits coptes du Monastère Blanc," *Le Muséon* 85 (1972) 403.

¹⁷ For a recent summary of the discovery and significance of this library, see J. M. Robinson, *The Nag Hammadi Codices* (Claremont, 1974).

¹⁸ A detailed commentary on the entire text will appear in the final publication, which will also deal with the relationship between the various revisions (see above, n. 9).

¹⁹ μεταβαίν(ων): misread as μεταβαλ(ών) in the citation of this passage in "A Panegyrist from Panopolis" 30.

ἀπὸ τῆς Ἑλλάδ(ος) εἰς Ῥώμην καὶ ἀπὸ Ῥώμης εἰς Κωνσταντινούπολιν
καὶ ἀπ' ἄλλης εἰς ἄλλην τὰ πλείστα
σχεδὸν(όν) τῆς γῆς περιελθ(ών) μέρη²⁰ τῶν καλλινίκων δεσποτῶν
ἡμῶν τὰς νίκας καὶ λόγους βασιλικούς πανταχ(ῆ)
.....[.....].....[... τ]ᾶ [γ]ὰ²¹ ἐν ταῖς ἐπισ(ήμοις) πόλ(εσι)
τῆς Ἑλλάδ(ος) καὶ ἐπιτρ(οπεύων) καὶ λογισ(τεύων) ἔπραξ(εν),
καὶ διὰ ταύτ(ας)
τὰς ἀφορμ(ὰς) ἐπὶ πολ(ύν) τινα χρόν(ον) τὴν ἀποδ(ημίαν) ἐξέτ(εινεν),

“... For when the latter [i.e. Harpocraton] was abroad and moved, on each occasion, from place to place, from Greece to Rome and from Rome to Constantinople and from one city to another, having gone around practically the greatest number of districts on earth²²... everywhere the victories of our victorious masters and panegyrics²³... For he managed the affairs in the illustrious cities of Greece both as procurator and as *curator civitatis*, and because of these occasions, he kept prolonging his sojourn for quite some time.”

Ammon continues by noting his own impatience at the length of his brother's travels, and he describes in detail—though the passage is quite lacunose—the activities of Eugenius, who appears to be attempting to seize for himself the slaves whom Harpocraton left in Alexandria. But these additional statements, important as they are for Ammon's case, do not concern us here. What he has said about Harpocraton's travels deserves close study.

We cannot establish a precise date for Harpocraton's departure from Egypt. It must have occurred sometime after 337: Ammon refers to τῶν καλλινίκων δεσποτῶν ἡμῶν τὰς νίκας, and the plural δεσποτῶν designates Constantians, Constantius, and Constantine II, who succeeded to the throne at the death of Constantine the Great in 337. Ammon's original petition, which he found necessary repeatedly to revise, was drafted on 9 December 348 and gives us a terminus ante quem for Harpocraton's sojourn abroad. If the latter was delivering his panegyrics after 340, the year in

²⁰ For assistance in deciphering the words σχεδὸν τῆς γῆς περιελθ(ών) μέρη, I am grateful to Drs. D. Hagedorn and J. Rea.

²¹ The reading of the first part of this line has been slightly adjusted from the form in which it appeared in “A Panegyrist from Panopolis” 30.

²² The beginning of line 26 is too damaged to be deciphered. It probably contained a verb of sufficiently general scope to include both τὰς νίκας as well as λόγους βασιλικούς as its objects. Perhaps ἐξέθετο (“he expounded, he set forth”) was written.

²³ Ammon's use of λόγοι βασιλικοί in the technical sense of “panegyrics” finds a parallel in Menander Rhetor (Spengel III 368.3): ὁ βασιλικὸς λόγος ἐγκώμιόν ἐστι βασιλέως; cf. also Thomas Magister (ed. Ritschl, 63.4–5): βασιλικὸς λόγος· ἢ ὃν ἔγραψε βασιλεὺς ἢ ὃν ἔγραψε τις εἰς βασιλέα.

which Constans defeated and put to death his rival Constantine II at Aquileia, then it is probable that Harpocraton's eulogies referred to Constans and Constantius as the sole successors to Constantine the Great. It would have been unwise to do otherwise, and, as a parallel, we can adduce Libanius' Oration 59, βασιλικὸς εἰς Κωνσταντίον καὶ Κώνσταντα. Throughout this speech, only the Emperors mentioned in the title appear as the heirs of Constantine I.²⁴

The reference to τὰς νίκας may not have been intended to be taken seriously; it would be difficult to compose a panegyric without mentioning some victories, however trivial and unimportant. But if Harpocraton touched upon substantial military accomplishments in his laudatory speeches, we may see in τὰς νίκας an allusion to the countless battles which the Imperial House waged with the Persians, in a continuation of the war inherited from Constantine the Great.²⁵ If Harpocraton's tour of the Mediterranean world took place after 340, he certainly would have enthusiastically praised Constans' total victory over Constantine II in that year. Unfortunately, our sources for the period in question are neither numerous nor detailed, but they inform us of Constans' defeat of the Franci in 342. Harpocraton may have had occasion to insert a reference to that defeat in his panegyrics. The summer of 348 saw the important, though indecisive, battle between the Romans and the Persians at Singara, and in his Oration 59, Libanius fulsomely praises the alleged victory of Constantius.²⁶ Ammon's petition was not drawn up until December of 348, and therefore τὰς νίκας could have included the battle of Singara as well.

Ammon is not overly interested in giving a detailed catalogue of his brother's activities, and consequently his report contributes little to our knowledge of the political and military history of the period. What he does say is, nonetheless, of considerable importance and interest for the history of ancient literature. His remarks show clearly that Harpocraton belonged to a class of literati to whom, until recently, the scholarly world has paid little attention. In the early Byzantine period, Egypt became highly influential in the areas of poetry and other forms of literature, and it produced numerous men of letters. Claudian and Nonnus at once come to mind as well-known poets whose native country was Egypt, but whose influence extended far beyond. These men are not

²⁴ See the remarks of H. F. Clinton, *Fasti Romani* (Oxford, 1845) I 415.

²⁵ For the wars and battles recorded in this paragraph, see Clinton (preceding note) I 396-414.

²⁶ For the date of the battle, see R. Foerster, *Libanii opera* IV (Leipzig, 1908) 201 n. 2.

isolated exceptions; they belong to a large group of Egyptian writers whom Alan Cameron has rescued from oblivion in his highly successful article, "Wandering Poets: A Literary Movement in Byzantine Egypt," *Historia* 14 (1965) 470-509.²⁷ Like Harpocration, most of these men, though born in Egypt, spent much time in travelling from one city of the Roman Empire to another, delivering panegyrics on the Imperial House and on influential men in the State. If successful, these panegyrists often secured the benefits of high public office.

Ammon came from Panopolis, and it is likely that this is also the *origo* of his brother Harpocration. The city was a center of Hellenic culture during this period, and it produced such literary figures as Cyrus, Nonnus, Pamprepus and Triphiodorus. From the neighborhood of Panopolis we have other writers: Andronicus of Hermupolis, Christodorus of Coptos, Horapollon of Phenebith (a village in the Panopolite nome), and Olympiodorus of Thebes.

Being a center of Hellenic culture, Panopolis was also the focal point of pagan intellectual reaction against Christianity. This reaction was doubtless intensified by the proximity of the White Monastery. The Coptic *Life of Pachomius* gives an account of debates between Panopolitan philosophers and Christian exegetes from the surrounding territory, and it provides eloquent testimony of the tension naturally arising from the immediate contiguity of Pagan and Christian.²⁸ Ammon and Harpocration were both doubtless pagans, as were most of the intelligentsia of Panopolis, including, in all probability, Nonnus and Triphiodorus.²⁹ We need feel no surprise that pagans should compose eulogies on behalf of Emperors who, since Constantine the Great, had been ardent Christians. We have similar effusive compositions by Libanius and Themistius—two of the staunchest defenders of paganism of their time. Nor should we forget that Julian, when Caesar, wrote two encomia on Constantius II.

In line 5 of the petition which I presented at the beginning of this paper, Ammon numbers amongst his friends the otherwise-unattested poet Apollo, and in one of his revisions of this petition, Ammon adds that Apollo was his nephew, known for his rhetorical skill by the catholicus in Alexandria: φίλους γὰρ ἀξιώσας μεταξύ γενέσθαι Πάνισκον τὸν ἀπὸ δικ[αιοδότου καὶ Ἀπόλλωνα] τὸν [ποιη]τὴν τὸν ἀδελφιδοῦν τὸν ἐμὸν ὄν καὶ ἡ σή, ὡ δέσποτα, περὶ τοὺς λόγους ἀρε[τῆ] . . ., "for, thinking it right that friends should be present, namely Paniscus from the office of the juridicus,³⁰ and Apollo the

²⁷ Cameron's presentation serves as a point d'appui for the following discussion.

²⁸ See L. Th. Lefort, *S. Pachonii vita bohairice scripta*, CSCO Copt. ser. 3.7 (1925) 52-54.

²⁹ See Cameron 476.

³⁰ See above, n. 1.

poet, my nephew, whom your skill in rhetoric, my lord . . .”³¹ Earlier on in the same text, Ammon tries to secure the good will of the catholicus by emphasizing that it was only under duress that he had had recourse to litigation; in normal circumstances, he would have preferred the quiet life of a scholar: ἡσυχίαν τοῖνυν ἀπράγμονα τοῖς ἐν φιλοσοφίᾳ καὶ λόγοις ἀνηγγμένοις πρέπειν καὶ αὐτὸς ἐπιστάμ(ενος), “since I myself know that a quiet life free from intrigue befits those educated in philosophy and rhetoric.”³² Clearly, Harpocration was not the only writer from the family: Ammon’s nephew was known for his skill in poetry by the catholicus, and Ammon, as one would expect from a scholasticus,³³ does not hesitate to include himself in the class of persons “educated in philosophy and rhetoric.”

In Ammon’s account of his brother’s travels, we learn that the latter visited Rome. Perhaps, like Claudian of Alexandria, Harpocration composed and delivered panegyrics in Latin. Cameron suggests that Eusebius, another Egyptian residing in Rome at the same period, may have written laudatory speeches in Latin.³⁴ Where literary evidence is lacking we cannot of course be certain. But after Diocletian’s reforms, the study of Latin increased greatly in Egypt and in the other Eastern provinces of the Empire;³⁵ therefore nothing excludes the possibility that Harpocration was sufficiently familiar with Latin to be able to draft eulogies both in that language as well as in Greek.

As I noted above, panegyrists at this period were often successful at obtaining the rewards of high public office. If we limit ourselves to men of letters from Panopolis, we have the example of the poet Cyrus, who, through his literary talents, insinuated himself into the good graces of the empress-poet Eudocia and thereby secured posts of distinction: “the city prefecture in 435 and again in 439, when he was praetorian prefect as well (the first man ever to hold both offices simultaneously), and eventually the consulship in 441.”³⁶ We should also note that Pamprepus had sufficient rhetorical skill to be successful at flattering the military dictator Illus; as a result, in 479 he reached the position of quaestor of the Sacred Palace and became honorary consul.³⁷

³¹ The verb, of which ἡ . . . ἀρε[τή] is the subject, has been lost in the following lacuna: e.g. *περὶ πολλοῦ ποιεῖται*. The quote comes from P.Köln inv. 4533 r 56–57.

³² P.Köln inv. 4533 v 9–10. For the phrase *τοῖς ἐν φιλοσοφίᾳ καὶ λόγοις ἀνηγγμένοις*, cf. A. D. Nock, *Sallustius* (Cambridge, 1926) xxvi. ³³ See above, n. 6.

³⁴ Cameron 496; the Eusebius in question is mentioned by Eunapius, *Vit. Soph.* 493 (Cameron 486 n. 92).

³⁵ Cameron 494–496; cf. also H. Zilliacus, *Zum Kampf der Weltsprachen im Oströmischen Reich* (Helsingfors, 1935) 126–129.

³⁶ Cameron 498. ³⁷ *Ibid.* 499.

Harpocraton, however, does not appear to have been so fortunate. If the words *ἐπίτρο(οπεύων) καὶ λογισ(τεύων)* are correctly resolved in line 26 of the draft petition quoted above, we see that, in the course of his sojourn abroad, Harpocraton held reasonably high public offices: he became a procurator (*ἐπίτροπος*)—probably a financial official, not an imperial procurator—and he discharged the duties of the *curator civitatis* (*λογιστής*), also involved in the financial administration.³⁸ But the beginning of line 26 can no longer be read, and we thus lack the connecting link between Harpocraton's career as panegyrist and his tenure as public official. All we have is the vague [γ]έρ, and that not securely read: hardly enough to justify the assumption that, in this case, eulogies led to high position in the government. Furthermore, nothing indicates that the offices in question were honorary; on the contrary, at this period they seem to have been liturgies, burdensome duties to be avoided.³⁹ All we can safely say is that Harpocraton delivered panegyrics, and that he held fairly high civil positions. If these two activities have any internal cohesiveness, it is lost irrevocably in the beginning of line 26.

There is a strong temptation to identify our Harpocraton with his namesake whom Libanius mentions several times in his correspondence.⁴⁰ This Harpocraton is also an Egyptian rhetorician and poet, and he is known to have resided for a time in Constantinople, where he taught. But alas, the identification cannot be sustained. The Harpocraton appearing in Libanius was still alive in 358 to 363, the period when the correspondence was written, but, unless Ammon was seriously mistaken or was guilty of lying, his brother died sometime before 9 December 348, the date of the original version of the petition. This is a matter of some importance, and it deserves close attention. It is true that Ammon makes no mention of Harpocraton's demise in that text, but in another document

³⁸ The words *ἐπίτροπος* and *ἐπιτροπεύω* designate the various types of procurator, while *λογιστής* and *λογιστεύω* refer to the office of the *curator civitatis*; see Mason (above, n. 1) s. vv. Lallemand (above, n. 2) 90–92 discusses *ἐπίτροποι* with fiscal duties; for her treatment of the *curator civitatis*, see 107–114. For the juxtaposition *ἐπίτρο(οπεύων) καὶ λογισ(τεύων)*, cf. *Cod. Theod.* 12.1.20: *nullus decurionum ad procuraciones vel curas civitatum accedat nisi omnibus omnino muneribus satisfecerit patriae . . .*

³⁹ For the *curator civitatis* as a liturgist, see Lallemand (above, n. 2) 113 and n. 3. The juxtaposition of *procuraciones* and *curas civitatum* in *Cod. Theod.* 12.1.20 (preceding note) suggests that the position of procurator was also a liturgy. For the process of filling public offices at this period, see especially A. K. Bowman, *The Town Councils of Roman Egypt*, *Am. Stud. Pap.* XI (Toronto, 1971) passim.

⁴⁰ *Epistulae* 364, 368, 818; see A. H. M. Jones, J. R. Martindale, J. Morris, *The Prosopography of the Later Roman Empire I* (Cambridge, 1971) 408. *Epp.* 816 and 817 may also allude to the same person; cf. O. Seeck, *RE VII 2 Col.* 2410.

from the same archive, Ammon refers to an attempt on the part of Eugenius to seize Harpocraton's slaves, "on the grounds that they are now without a master and he has died without heirs" (*ὡς ὄντα νῦν ἀδέσποτα καὶ ὡς μὴ ἐπὶ κληρονόμοις ἐκεῖν[ο]ν τελευτήσαντος*).⁴¹ This statement is ambiguous; the use of *ὡς* may imply that we are dealing with a mere allegation; for all we know to the contrary, Harpocraton could still be alive, and Eugenius is lying. This was the extent of our knowledge as long as we had only the Cologne papyri. The end of this text has recently surfaced in the collection of Duke University, and we now have strong evidence that Harpocraton has in fact died. After the passage quoted above, the papyrus continues as follows:

ἐντέλλ[ο]μαι
 οὖν σοι τὸν κύριόν μου τὸν δ[ι]ασημότατον ἑπαρχὸν τῆς
 Αἰγύπτου Φλάβιον Νεστόρι[ο]ν περὶ τοῦτου διδάξαι ὡς ἀδελφὸς
 ὑ[πάρ]χει τοῦ ἀπελθόντος ἐκ[εῖ]νου Ἄρποκρατίωνος ὁμοπάτρι-
 ὄς τε καὶ ὁμομήτριος, νόμιμος ἐκεῖνου κληρονόμος, Ἄμμων
 τοῦνομα,

"Accordingly, I enjoin you to inform my lord, the most illustrious prefect of Egypt, Flavius Nestorius, to the effect that there exists a brother on both the father's and the mother's side of the departed Harpocraton, his legal heir, Ammon by name."⁴²

The participle *ἀπελθόντος* in this passage is perhaps as ambiguous as the English "depart", but Ammon would hardly emphasize the fact that he is Harpocraton's legal heir, unless the latter were deceased. Therefore, however disappointing it may be to do so, we must abandon the attempt to connect Ammon's brother with the Harpocraton in Libanius. The name, which evokes the god Horus, is of course extremely common in Egypt, and we have no evidence to permit an identification with any of the numerous other Harpocrations known to us.⁴³

Our panegyrist from Panopolis cannot be further identified, and many problems concerning him, his brother Ammon, and the villain of the story, Eugenius, will probably never be solved. But despite all the obscurity and uncertainty, one fact emerges with clarity: we see that Harpocraton is one of the typical literary figures of his time; an Egyptian writer, "wandering from city to city throughout the Empire in search of fame and fortune",⁴⁴ he affords us a unique opportunity of catching a glimpse, through first-hand documentation, of an important literary movement

⁴¹ P.Köln inv. 4532 r 12-13.

⁴² P.Köln inv. 4532 r 13-16 + P.Duke inv. G 19.1-2.

⁴³ For a list of other Harpocrations, see RE VII 2 Cols. 2411-2417.

⁴⁴ Cameron 471.

of the Late Roman Empire. Scholars have often complained of the irrelevance of the vast majority of papyrus documents to the study of the Classics. These texts from the Cologne and Duke collections stand out as conspicuous exceptions: they allow us to bridge the gap between literary history and documentary papyrology.

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