

The *Nonae Capratinae* in Dion and Religious Associations and Public Festivals in Roman Macedonia

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THE STUDY of the history of Macedonian cities has blossomed in the last four decades, primarily thanks to the wealth of new inscriptions brought to light by systematic and rescue excavations. One such case is that of the Roman colony Dion in Pieria.¹ The many new inscriptions have enabled us to study better the civic life of the town after the arrival of its new settlers. This is particularly true of its religious life, and especially as regards the cult of Zeus Hypsistos. From the excavations of 2003 we already know the location of the sanctuary (between those of Demeter and Isis), the temple, the ceremonial altar, and the cult statue of the god as well. Moreover, thanks to a large number of (Greek and Latin) inscriptions found in the sanctuary (in the cella of the temple and the courtyard), we know the names of a substantial number of devotees of Zeus Hypsistos; we are also familiar with aspects of the organisation of the cult and its finances.² This paper focuses on one of these new inscriptions, a votive that provides information about a public festival celebrated in the colony and how it was connected to the cult of Zeus Hypsistos.

¹ Julien Demaille reviews the literature on Dion in *Une société mixte dans un cadre colonial: l'exemple de la colonie romaine de Dion (Pétrie, Macédoine) du I^{er} siècle a.C. au III^e siècle p.C.* (diss. Besançon 2013; summary at academia.edu, 1–11).

² For the sanctuary of Zeus Hypsistos and the inscriptions found there see D. Panderimalis, “Ζεὺς Ὑψίστος καὶ ἄλλα,” *AEMΘ* 17 (2003 [2005]) 417–424, here 417–419. See also Ch. Tsochos, *Die Religion in der römischen Provinz Makedonien* (Stuttgart 2012) 20–21.

This evidence gives us further the opportunity to study the relation between religious associations of Macedonia and public festivals held in its cities.

The inscription is engraved on the front of the marble base that supported a marble eagle with folded wings, its talons grasping the head of an ox (*fig. 1*). It was found on 15 September 2003 in the sanctuary of Zeus Hypsistos, specifically in the northeast corner of the cella.³ The base, w. 55 cm, th. 35, h. 14.5, was embedded in the south face of the east side of the masonry plinth for the cult statue of Zeus Hypsistos. The height of the letters (*fig. 2*) ranges from 1.0 to 2.4 cm (first line 1.0–1.1, second through fifth 2.0–2.4, sixth 1.0–1.4); the line spacing varies from 3.0 to 5.0 mm. The find is exhibited in the Dion Museum as numbers 8715 α (the base) and 8715 β (the eagle). On the basis of the letter forms and the overall impression given by the writing, the inscription should be dated to the first half of the third century A.D.⁴

Ἀγαθῆ τύχη
 Διὶ Ὑψίστῳ ὁ Ἄρουρα
 Πλουτιάδου ὁ παιδίσκη
 4 ἄγορανομήσασα ὁ Νώναις
 Καπρατείναις ὁ ἀνέθηκεν
 δι' ἐπιμελείας Φρούκτου.

³ The inscription was first presented by my colleague Semele Piniatoglou, “Δίον,” in Av. Βλαχόπουλος – Δεσπ. Τσιαφάκη (eds.), *Μακεδονία – Θράκη* (Αρχαιολογία IV, editions Μέλισσα im press), to whom I am most grateful for information about the find. See also now D. Pandermalis, *Gods and Mortals at Olympus: Ancient Dion* (Athens 2016) 96, no. 8. I am also indebted to my former student Demetrios Minasidis for the photographs.

⁴ The letters are slender and serified. Alpha has a straight crossbar; epsilon, sigma, and omega are lunate; the exterior strokes of mu diverge slightly and the oblique strokes intersect at the guideline; the horizontal of pi extends beyond the verticals; the round part of rho is small; and upsilon is written like a Latin V. Cf. the letter forms and the overall impression given by the writing in *I. Leukopetra* 62 (A.D. 212) and 103 (A.D. 253).



Figure 1

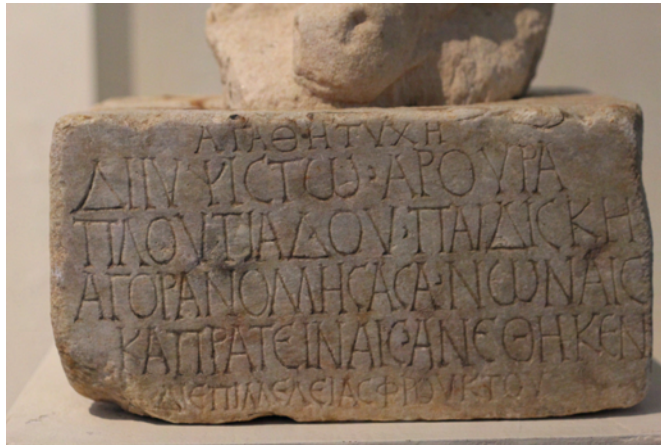


Figure 2

Good fortune. Arura, the maidservant of Plutiades, dedicated (this) to Zeus Hypsistos with the assistance of Fructus after serving as *agoranomos* during the festival of the Nonae Capratinae.

According to the text, an otherwise unknown woman named Arura,⁵ a name unattested so far at Dion or in Macedonia, made a votive offering of an eagle, one of the symbols of Zeus Hypsistos, to the god's local sanctuary. Similar votive offerings are known from both Dion and other cities in Macedonia.⁶ The inscription provides three particulars concerning the identity of the dedicant: (a) that she was the *paidiske* of an otherwise unknown Plutiades, a name previously unattested at Dion (but known from a second century B.C. list of ephebes from Lete),⁷ (b) that she made her offering after serving as *agoranomos* during the one-day festival of the Nonae Capratinae, and (c) that the offering was made with the assistance of a third unknown person, named Fructus.⁸ The word *paidiske*, which renders the legal status of an adult slave in a host of Greek texts, e.g. in the 'manumissions' of Leucopetra (Beroia),⁹ leaves

⁵ The name is attested rarely in Latin inscriptions from Rome and regions of (mainly) Italy: *AE* 1971, 95 (*Rubria Arura*) from Cassinum in Regio I (Latium/Campania), 1st–2nd cent.; *AE* 1980, 161 (*Annia Arura*) from Rome, late 1st–2nd cent.; *CIL* VI 35991 (*Olia Arura, liberta*) from Rome, 1st cent.; *CIL* IX 1935 (*Pontia Arura, concubina*) from Beneventum Regio II (Apulia/Calabria), imperial; *CIL* X 7460 (*Helvia Arura*) from Halaesa in Sicily, undated; *CIL* XI 5770 (*Asullia Arura, liberta*) from Sentium Regio VI (Umbria), undated; and *CIL* XII 4761 (*Arura*) from Narbo, undated.

⁶ For the cult of Zeus Hypsistos in Macedonia see Π. Χρυσοστόμου, "Ἡ λατρεία του Δία ως καιρικού θεού στη Θεσσαλία και τη Μακεδονία," *ArchEph* 44–46 (1989–1991) 21–72, here 30–67. For statues of eagles offered to the god by devotees of his cult, like that offered by Arura, see Χρυσοστόμου 67 and for Dion Pandermalis, *AEMΘ* 17 (2003) 417–424.

⁷ *Μακεδονικά* 2 (1941–1944 [1951]) 619, no. 42 Θ.13–15 (Plutiades son of Pereitas). The name is also attested epigraphically in many Greek cities, e.g. Andros and Karystos, *LGPN* I s.v. (1st cent. B.C. and 1st A.D.); Athens, *LGPN* II s.v. (1st–2nd cent.); and Ephesus, *LGPN* Va s.v. (2nd cent. B.C. and 2nd A.D.).

⁸ As to Macedonia the name is attested e.g. in Philippi: P. Pilhofer, *Philippi*² II (Tübingen 2009), no. 354.2.

⁹ For the term *paidiske* in these see *I.Leucopetra* p.42. From thirty-five instances of its use there we conclude that the word was applied to women between the ages of 18 and 40.

no doubt that Arura was a slave in Plutiades' household.

The fact that the Nonae Capratinae were celebrated at Dion is the most significant piece of information provided by this inscription, since it is the first evidence of the application of this particular festival in Roman colonies outside Italy. It also confirms the mixed Graeco-Roman consciousness of the residents of Dion in the early part of the third century: the gradual linguistic hellenisation of public life co-existed alongside elements of Romanness, such as the calendar of festivals. With regard to this particular festival, the aetiological myth and associated ritual are known only from literary sources, most importantly Plutarch's lives of Camillus and Romulus, Macrobius' *Saturnalia*, and Varro's *De lingua latina*, none of which is exhaustive.¹⁰ The only relevant inscriptional evidence, a graffito in Pompeii, simply mentions the festival.¹¹ Certain unclear points in the available sources have led to the view that the festival coincided with the Poplifugia, but it is more correct to dissociate the two festivals and consider that the Poplifugia was celebrated on the fifth of July and the Nonae Capratinae on the seventh.¹²

The aetiological myth (based mainly on Plutarch's account)

¹⁰ For the literary sources that refer to the festival see A. Degrassi, *Inscriptiones Italiae* XIII.2 (1963) pp.479–481. Of the extremely rich bibliography on the festival see N. Robertson, "The *Nones* of July and Roman Weather Magic," *MusHelv* 44 (1987) 8–41; J. N. Bremmer, "Myth and Ritual in Ancient Rome: The Nonae Capratinae," in J. N. Bremmer and N. M. Horsfall (eds.), *Roman Myth and Mythography* (London 1987) 76–88. For later bibliography see J. Rüpke, *Kalender und Öffentlichkeit* (Berlin 1995) 556–561; F. Graf, "Capratinae (Nonae)," *Brill's New Pauly* 2 (2003) 1078; M. Sehlmeier, "Poplifugia," *Brill's New Pauly* 10 (2007) 612–613; R. Pfeilschifter, "Zum Termin von Poplifugia und Nonae Capratinae," *Hermes* 136 (2008) 30–37.

¹¹ *CIL* IV 1555: *L. Nonio Asprenate / A. Plotio cos as{s}ellus natus / pridie Nonas Capratinas*. The new inscription shows that *Capratinas* in the graffito does not need to be corrected to *Caprotinas*, as the editors believe.

¹² On this issue see Sehlmeier, *Brill's New Pauly* 10 (2007) 612–613, and Pfeilschifter, *Hermes* 136 (2008) 30–37.

links the festival with an attack on Rome by its Latin neighbours after the withdrawal of the Gauls. According to him, the Latins, who were militarily superior, promised not to conquer the city if they were given free-born women and maidens in marriage. This was akin to holding them as perpetual hostages, and the Romans escaped this danger through the stratagem of a female slave named Philotis (or Tutula), who persuaded the magistrates to send her to the Latin camp together with the “most attractive and noble looking handmaidens” (ἐν ὄρῳ μάλιστα καὶ ταῖς ὄψεσιν ἐλευθέριαι) dressed “as noble brides” (ὡς νόμφας εὐγενεῖς). When darkness fell, and while the other women disarmed the Latins, by that time exhausted from their excesses, she climbed a fig tree and gave the Romans the signal to attack. This was done, and all the enemy were slain.¹³ Plutarch is also the primary source for the ceremonial of the festival, which is also given, with some variants, by our other sources. According to his most detailed version, during the festival

the Romans run out of the city gate ... calling out many local and common names, such as Gaius, Marcus, Lucius and the like, in imitation of the way the soldiers once called aloud upon each other in their haste. Next, the handmaidens, in gay attire, run about jesting and joking with the men they meet. They have a mock battle, too, with one another, implying that they once took a hand in the struggle with the Latins. And as they feast, they sit in the shade of a fig-tree’s branches. The day is called “Capratine Nones,” from the wild fig-tree, as they suppose, from which the maid held forth her torch; this goes by the name of *caprificus*.¹⁴

Various interpretations of the meaning of the festival have been proposed, the most important being those advanced by Noel Robertson and Jan Bremmer. According to Robertson,

¹³ Plut. *Cam.* 33.3–6, *Rom.* 29.2–9. Of the other sources, see e.g. Macrob. 1.11.37–39 and Polyæn. 8.30.

¹⁴ *Cam.* 33.7, transl. Perrin. For the other versions of the ceremonial (with minor differences) cf. *Rom.* 29.9–10, Macrob. 1.11.36, 40.

the festival developed around the core legend of the fig tree that brings a magical rain, with the other elements added successively: the obscenities, the indecencies and generally improper behaviour of the servant girls towards passers-by, and even the name Philotis, all of which are associated with the concept of fertility. Thus structured, the ritual aimed at protecting the community from the heat and drought brought by the Dog Star Sirius, which in summer rose with the sun; these conditions could endanger not only the harvest but also the pastures and thus the very substance of the community.¹⁵ According to Bremmer, moreover, the Nonae Capratinae should be seen as belonging to the anthropological category 'rites of reversal'.¹⁶ This is expressed in the leading role of the handmaidens in the festival, who left the city dressed like their mistresses, joined with them in performing the sacrifice,¹⁷ and later, in a banquet held in huts made of fig branches, behaved improperly (see above) and took part in simulated battles. The festival thus functioned as a mechanism for the temporary reversal of the daily routine and the social order, and by extension, like other similar rites of reversal, as a safety valve to relieve the tension that governed the slaves' world. With regard to the position of the festival in the city's calendar, Bremmer sees the Nonae Capratinae, like similar festivals, as a caesura before the beginning of the harvest, that is, before the community resumed its normal order.¹⁸

Compared to the available literary sources Arura's votive inscription unquestionably stands as a valuable supplementary resource, shedding some light on certain organisational aspects of this Roman festival. Prior to this, the only information we

¹⁵ Robertson, *MusHelv* 44 (1987) 32–41.

¹⁶ Bremmer, in *Roman Myth* 78–83.

¹⁷ The participation of the handmaidens' mistresses is deduced directly or indirectly from the literary sources; the passages are noted by Robertson, *MusHelv* 44 (1987) 32 and n.56.

¹⁸ Bremmer, in *Roman Myth* 85–88.

had about its organisation came from the passage in the *Saturnalia* where Macrobius tells us that in Rome the festival was paid for by the Senate:¹⁹

When their sudden attack resulted in victory, the senate, mindful of the slave girls' contribution, ordered that they all be freed, gave them dowries from public funds, and granted them the garments that they had worn. The senate ... established that a sacrifice be celebrated in an annual ritual...

From the new inscription we learn that at Dion at least one maidservant assumed the office of *agoranomos* during the festival. Judging by what we know of the duties of the ad hoc appointed *agoranomoi* for festivals and the ritual of the occasion, as described above, it is apparent that as *agoranomos* Arura was responsible for ensuring for the festival (and especially the banquet) adequate (in quality and quantity) supplies, and distributing them at affordable prices.²⁰ She may also have personally assumed part of the cost of the feast, with the approval of her master Plutiades, of course, who may also have helped carry out part of the festival, e.g. the banquet. A certain limited male presence at contemporary rites of reversal similar to that of the *Nonae Capratinae*, such as the *Babbo* (ἡμέρα

¹⁹ Macrobius 1.11.40; transl. Kaster. Robertson, *MusHelv* 44 (1987) 33, thinks that a similar arrangement with state support can be inferred from Plutarch's phrase ἐστιῶσι δὲ τὰς γυναικάς ἔξω συκῆς κλάδοις σκιαζομένας (*Rom.* 29.9).

²⁰ For the duties of *agoranomoi* appointed for festivals see Ch. Chandezon, "Faires et panégyries dans le monde grec classique et hellénistique," *REG* 113 (2000) 70–100, esp. 79–85 ("les magistrats des foires"). This kind of *agoranomos* in fact had the same competences as the πανηγυρικός ἀγορανόμος (= πανηγυριάρχης/*panegyriarch*) described in the well-known foundation of Demosthenes of Oinoanda: M. Wörle, *Stadt und Fest im kaiserzeitlichen Kleinasien* (Munich 1988) 10, lines 59–61: ἐν ᾧ δ' ἂν ἔτει ἀγωνοθετῆ αἰρεῖσθαι ὑπ' αὐτοῦ πανηγυριάρχας γ' ἐκ τῶν βουλευτῶν ἐπιμελησομένους τῆς κατὰ τὴν πανήγυριν [ἀγορ]ᾶς καὶ εὐθηνίας ἐξουσίαν ἔχοντας τειμὰς τοῖς τῆς εὐθηνίας ὀνίοις ἐπιγράφειν καὶ δοκιμ[ά]ζειν καὶ διατάσσειν τὰ πιπρασκόμενα πρὸς τὴν εὐθηνίαν καὶ ζημιῶν τοὺς ἀπειθοῦντας. On the office of πανηγυρικός ἀγορανόμος see recently M. Adak, "Zwei Weihungen aus Klazomenai," *Philia* 1 (2015) 79–80, with the relevant bibliography.

της Μπάμπως) Festival, or Women's Day (Γυναικοκρατία), celebrated at Kitros in Pieria on January 8, has been noted by Greek anthropologist.²¹ However, and despite the fact that the ceremony of the Nonae Capratinae permits us to understand the choice of a maidservant to fill the office of *agoranomos* of the festival, there still remain two questions: how Arura was elected to that office, and what might be the connection between her votive offering and the sanctuary of Zeus Hypsistos.

With regard to the first question, her legal status as a slave precludes her from election by the colony's popular assembly, not only as *aedilis coloniae* but even as ad hoc *agoranomos* for the festival. The question therefore remains open, and one can only guess at the answer. It might be, for example, that Arura was chosen on the day of the festival by the slaves and free-born women taking part in it; but that hypothesis is weakened by the fact that preparations would need to be made ahead of time for the smooth management of the sacrifice, the feast, and the festival in general. A more persuasive hypothesis, in my view, takes into account the evidence of the inscription itself, namely (a) that Arura placed her votive offering in the sanctuary of Zeus Hypsistos and (b) that she was assisted in this by Fructus. In other words, one might fairly assume that Arura was a member²² of the quasi-official association of devotees of

²¹ Α. Μπακαλάκη, "Η Μέρα της Μπάμπως ή Γυναικοκρατία· παραλλαγές μιας γυναικείας γιορτής," *Ανθρωπολογικά* 3 (1982) 65–73, esp. 67: "Talking about the organisation of the festival, some men told me that they offer their services willingly. They added that without their help the women would not be able to cope with certain practical problems, such as ensuring a supply of wine, arranging with the restaurant owners about the taverna, or booking the musicians."

²² The participation of women in the associations of the cult of Zeus Hypsistos in Macedonia is attested by the stele dedicated in A.D. 250 by devotees of that cult in Pydna, ἐν Πύδνῃ οἱ συνελθόντες θρησκευταὶ ἐπὶ θεοῦ Διὸς Ὑψίστου: J. M. R. Cormack, "Zeus Hypsistos at Pydna," in *Mélanges helléniques offerts à Georges Daux* (Paris 1974) 51–55 [J. S. Kloppenborg and R. S. Ascough, *Greco-Roman Associations: Texts, Translations, and Commentary* I (Berlin/New York 2011) 335–339, no. 72; *SEG* XLVI 800], where

Zeus Hypsistos (Ἱερῆσκευταὶ τοῦ Διὸς Ὑψίστου) known from other inscriptions from Dion, whose assembly elected her to the office of *agoranomos* for the festival.²³ Fructus must have been the ἐπιμελητής of the association, like the similarly tasked superintendents of the association of devotees of Zeus Hypsistos that met in 250 at Pydna.²⁴ This would provide a convincing answer to our second question, why the votive offering was placed in the sanctuary of Zeus Hypsistos in Dion. If this hypothesis is tenable, then the Roman festival of Nonae Capratinae would be associated with the cult of Zeus Hypsistos and its quasi-official association would be in charge of its organisation, permanently or occasionally, including the election of an *agoranomos*.

This interpretation at once raises the question of how the festival of Nonae Capratinae was linked to the cult of Zeus Hypsistos. Although our information to date is insufficient to determine whether and with which specific god the festival might have been associated, one could reasonably ascribe its association with the cult of Zeus Hypsistos to the fertility aspect of its character (see above): it may be that his devotees helped with the organisation of such a festival because the god they venerated, Zeus Hypsistos, was the supreme weather god and

three women are mentioned as members. We also note the presence of two slaves in the same association (lines 32–33).

²³ An association of devotees of Zeus Hypsistos at Dion is attested by a set of inscriptions found together with that of Arura in the sanctuary of the god, one of which contains a list of devotees of Zeus Hypsistos, a fact that of itself supports the quasi-official character of the association in relation to the cult. The same association, described as Ἱερῆσκειά Διὸς Ὑψίστου, is mentioned on a stele of A.D. 251/2, which lists those responsible each month for organising the meetings (δοχαί) of its members. See Pandermalis, *AEMO* 17 (2003) 418.

²⁴ See Kloppenborg and Ascough, *Greco-Roman Associations* no. 72.B: δεῦ' ἐπιμελητοῦ Θεοφίλου κὲ Αὐρηλίου Κηπίωνος τοῦ πρὶν Πιερίωνος. As the authors observe, the two persons are Aurelius Theophilus and Aurelius Cepio, sons of one Pierion, who are mentioned as members and officers of the association in the first part of the stele (12–17).

god of fertility, as shown by the invocation “bring us rain, dear Zeus” (ἕσσον, ἕσσον φίλε Ζεῦ) addressed to him by farmers and herdsmen.²⁵

This is not, however, the only possible interpretation, especially if one also takes into account the fact that we are in a Roman colony. Quite recently Demetrios Pandermalis, the excavator of the city, found an impressive statue of a seated goddess in a partition wall built by the people of the city in the Early Christian period. Comparing it from the perspective of style and material to the cult statue of Zeus Hypsistos, he came to the conclusion that the statue was made in the same workshop as that of Zeus Hypsistos and that it represented the goddess Hera. He then posited that the two statues were placed, together that of Athena, in the temple of Zeus Hypsistos,²⁶ thus producing the Capitoline Triad that protected the colony.²⁷ The hypothesis of the conflation of Zeus Hypsistos and Jupiter Capitolinus in the colony as early as the second century A.D. is reinforced by a votive offering made by one Eracleo, *publicus tabularius*, to Juppiter Optimus Maximus that was found in the cella of the temple of Zeus Hypsistos.²⁸ If the cult of Zeus Hypsistos was indeed conflated with that of Jupiter Capitolinus,²⁹ then it becomes easier to understand the link between the association of devotees of Zeus Hypsistos with the festival of Nonae Capratinae that was celebrated in commemoration of the deliverance of Rome.

The hypothesis we are expressing here as to how Arura was

²⁵ See Χρυσοστόμου, *ArchEph* 44–46 (1989–1991) 66.

²⁶ See D. Pandermalis, “Δίον 2006,” *AEMΘ* 20 (2006 [2008]) 567–576, here 570, and for a comparison of the two statues 576, figs. 13–14.

²⁷ Pandermalis’ hypothesis is viewed sceptically by Tsochos, *Die Religion* 20 n.23, who does not, however, reject it entirely.

²⁸ See Pandermalis, *AEMΘ* 17 (2003) 418.

²⁹ The view that the cult of Zeus Hypsistos seems to have been conflated in Dion with those of the traditional Olympian Zeus and Jupiter Capitolinus from the second century A.D. has recently been accepted also by Demaille, *La fondation* 5.

elected and consequently the relation between her association and the festival of Nonae Capratinae raises the general issue of the possible relations between religious associations, or more precisely quasi-official religious associations, of the cities of Macedonia with their public religious festivals. Our hypothesis is strengthened by some votive inscriptions which show that in some cases similar associations did indeed assume the organisation of festivals or ceremonies performed publicly in their city in honour of the gods they venerated. The oldest of these comes from Beroia and dates from 7 B.C. This is an inscribed stele that was most probably erected in the sanctuary of Dionysos, which suggests that the association was a semi-official one;³⁰ it was dedicated to Dionysos by Paramonos, son of Theagenos, after his term as *agoranomos* of a Dionysiac *thiasos* (ἀγορανομήσας τοῦ θιάσου).³¹ From the relief and the second text on the lower part of the stele we learn that the dedicant had been honoured with a wreath by the members of the association (τὸ κοινὸν τῶν θιασ[ι]τῶν).³² Earlier scholars were unsure how to interpret the office, but the genitive directly following ἀγορανομήσας is a strong indication that Paramonos was a member of the association who undertook in its name to

³⁰ Their quasi-official character based on this argument is noted by A.-Fr. Jaccottet, *Choisir Dionysos. Les associations dionysiaques ou la face cachée du dionysisme II* (Zurich 2003) 48–49, no. 18.

³¹ First published in *EKM* no. 22 [Jaccottet, *Choisir Dionysos* no. 18; Kloppenborg and Ascough, *Greco-Roman Associations* no. 63]. To the bibliography should be added Βικτ. Αλλαμανή-Σουρή, “Σχόλια σὲ μία ἀναθηματικὴ στήλη ἀπὸ τῆ Βέροια,” in Ηλ. Σβέρκος (επιμ.), *Β΄ Πανελλήνιο Συνέδριο Ἐπιγραφικῆς (Πρακτικά)* (Thessaloniki 2008) 31–47 [*SEG* LVIII 562; M. Hatzopoulos, *Bull. épigr* 2011, 408], who shows on stylistic and linguistic grounds that *thiasos* was not an association of Dionysiac artists (so the editors of *EKM* and Kloppenborg and Ascough) but a religious association of Dionysos (a view expressed independently but without arguments also by Jaccottet 48).

³² For this restoration see Αλλαμανή-Σουρή, in *Β΄ Πανελλήνιο Συνέδριο* 32 n.4 (θιασ[ω]τῶν *EKM*); cf. S. Dull, *Die Götterkulte Nordmakedoniens in römischer Zeit* (Munch 1977) 340, no. 133.4 τοῖς συνθιασίταις.

fill the office during a festival of Dionysos.³³

The office of *aedilis/agoranomos* in a group of five votive inscriptions (four Latin and one Greek) from Dion could be interpreted in a similar way. These date from the imperial period, and the fact that they all come from the sanctuary of Dionysos in the colony³⁴ indicates the quasi-official religious character of the association (*thiasus/θίασος*) devoted jointly to Liber Pater and Dionysos. Two of the Latin inscriptions were dedicated by pairs of aediles, M. Pontius Auctus and M. Pontius Iucundus in one case³⁵ and L. Iulius Hyla and L. Aninius Pudens in the other,³⁶ and the third by a single aedile, T. Granius Felix,³⁷ while the text of the fourth has been edited in a way that renders it difficult to comprehend.³⁸ The one

³³ Αλλαμανή-Σουρή, in *Β' Πανελλήνιο Συνέδριο* 44, wonders if the festival was the Phallophoria mentioned in the edict of the governor Memmius Rufus (see Π. Μ. Νίγδελης and Γ. Σουρή, *Ανθύπατος λέγει. Ένα διάταγμα των αυτοκρατορικών χρόνων για το γυμνάσιο της Βέροιας* [Thessaloniki 2005] 72–74), but leaves open the question of the nature of the office, as does also Jaccottet, *Choisir Dionysos* 47–48. Kloppenborg and Ascough, *Greco-Roman Associations*, argue that “a temporary market set up for a religious festival in which Paramonos acts as agoranomos may fit with performances being mounted by the Dionysiac artists” and that he was the market officer for the association.

³⁴ See Ch. Makaronas, “Νέαι Ειδήσεις ἐκ τοῦ Δίου τοῦ Πιερικοῦ. Ἡ θέσις τοῦ ἱεροῦ τοῦ Διός,” *ArchEph* (1937) II 530, and D. Pantermalis, “Δατρεῖες καὶ ἱερά τοῦ Δίου Πιερίας,” *Αρχαία Μακεδονία* 2 (1973 [1977]) 331–332. That the *thiasos* was the official one associated with the veneration of Dionysos was argued by J. and L. Robert, *Bull.épigr.* 1953, 105 (p.145) and Jaccottet, *Choisir Dionysos* 47. Recently Tsochos, *Die Religion* 26–27, has queried whether the *thiasos* is the same in all five votive inscriptions, ignoring the identical structure of the offerings.

³⁵ *ILGR* no. 183 = Jaccottet no. 14, statue base.

³⁶ *ILGR* no. 186 = Jaccottet no. 15, statue base.

³⁷ *ILGR* no. 184 = Jaccottet no. 17, throne-shaped stand for a sundial. Pantermalis, *Αρχαία Μακεδονία* 2 (1973) 332, correctly read the cognomen of the dedicant as Felix [*AE* 2006, 1262].

³⁸ *ILGR* no. 185 = Jaccottet no. 16, small altar. The inscription has been read and interpreted variously. D. Kanatsoulis, “Ἡ Μακεδονική πόλις ἀπὸ

Greek inscription mentions Πριμίων Φολβίας who dedicated his offering to Διονύσῳ καὶ τῷ θιάσῳ ἀγορανομήσας ἐκ τῶν ἰδίων.³⁹ As in the case of the *agoranomos* in Beroia, so for the *aedilis/aediles* of Dion there has been a difference of research opinion, with some scholars holding that the reference is to civic magistrates,⁴⁰ others to officers of the Dionysiac *thiasos* responsible for all the votive offerings,⁴¹ while others leave the question of the nature of their magistracy open.⁴² However, the Greek inscription at least demands a different interpretation: the name of the *agoranomos*, who given the metronymic was illegitimate, the fruit of an unlawful marriage (*matrimonium iniustum*) and therefore not a Roman citizen,⁴³ means that his

τῆς ἐμφανίσεώς τῆς μέχρι τῶν χρόνων τοῦ Μεγάλου Ἀλεξάνδρου,” *Μακεδονικά* 6 (1964–1965) 41 n.4, corrects to: [– –]us *Postumus et Severus* / [pa]tri, *aedili, Libero et thiaso* / d(e) s(uo) f(aciendum) d(ederunt). M. Šašel Kos, *ILGR*: [– –]us *Postumus OBEVERUS* / [pa]tri *aedili Libero et thiaso* / d(e) s(uo) f(aciendum) d(edit?) [Cowey, however, in *EDH* gives d(e) s(uo) f(ecit) d(edicavit)] and wonders whether the dative [pa]tri declares a “gradus ad cultum religionis pertinens,” while he suggests correcting *aedili* to the nominative). Jaccottet gives [– –]us *Postumus Obeverus* / [Pa]tri *aedili Libero* etc., with no comments. The inscription needs to be re-edited.

³⁹ N. Kotzias, “Λεῖβηθρα, Πίμπλεια, Πιερίς ἢ πατρὶς τοῦ Ὀρφέως,” *ArchEph* (1948–1949) 36, no. 4 [*Bull.épigr.* 1953, 105; *AE* 1954, 22; Pantermalis, *Αρχαία Μακεδονία* 2 (1973) 332; Jaccottet no. 13], inscribed statue base.

⁴⁰ J. and L. Robert, *Bull.épigr.* 1953, 105; Kanatsoulis, *Μακεδονικά* 6 (1964–1965) 40 n.4; Αλλαμανή-Σουρή, in *Β΄ Πανελλήνιο Συνέδριο* 42; and most recently J. Demaille, “Les P. Anthestii: une famille d’affranchis dans l’élite municipale de la colonie romaine de Dion,” in A. Gonzales (ed.), *La fin du statut servile?* (Besançon 2008) 190. Jaccottet, *Choisir Dionysos* 47, admits the possibility.

⁴¹ Makaronas, *ArchEph* (1937) II 529. Tsochos, *Die Religion* 27, wonders, in connection with the Greek inscription, whether *Primio Folvias* held the office “innerhalb des *thiasos* oder – doch wohl eher – im Rahmen einer anderen Tätigkeit.”

⁴² Jaccottet, *Choisir Dionysos* 47.

⁴³ For metronymics in Macedonian see to A. Tataki, “From the Prosopography of Ancient Macedonia: The Metronymics,” *Αρχαία Μακεδονία* 5 (1989 [1993]) 1453–1471, here 1460–1461.

election must have taken place not in the *comitia* of the colony but within the *thiasos*, as appears to have been the case with Paramonos Theagenous in Beroia and Arura in Dion, and that Primio assumed the ad hoc office of *agoranamos/aedilis* of the festival in the name of the *thiasos*. The conclusion that the association was involved with the cult of the god, electing *agoranomoi* for festivals from among its members, still stands, even if we accept that in all the rest of the votive offerings (including that of T. Granius Felix) the officers concerned are *aediles coloniae* who were charged with overseeing the celebration of the cult of Liber Pater in collaboration with the quasi-official *thiasos* to which they offer the votive.⁴⁴ In that case the fact that Primio served as *agoranomos* would indicate that the association could elect *agoranomoi* for official festivals of Dionysos, in cases there were no candidates ready to be elected as ad hoc aediles and consequently to provide additional funds for the needs of those festivals. This could be also the case with Paramonos at Beroia.

To sum up: The new votive inscription of the maidservant Arura from the sanctuary of Zeus Hypsistos at Dion is the first, and to date only, evidence that the festival of Nonae Capratinae (July 7) commemorating the deliverance of Rome had spread to Roman colonies outside Italy. As in Rome and the cities of Italy, so at Dion the leading role during the festival was played by adult female slaves, as indicated both by the legal status of the dedicant, denoted by the word *paidiske*, and—most importantly—by the fact that she herself served as *agoranomos* of the festival. Since the votive offering was erected in the sanctuary of Zeus Hypsistos with the assistance of a superintendent, apparently a member of the quasi-official cultic association (ἄθησκευτὰὶ Διὸς Ὑψίστου), we may reasonably suppose that the *agoranomos* also belonged to that association and that she was elected to that office by her fellow members. A similar practice, viz. the (probably occasional) election of ad

⁴⁴ For the relation of the *aediles* to the cults in Roman colonies see Demaille, *La fondation* 47.

hoc *agoranomoi/aediles* from within the body of such associations for the needs of festivals dedicated to the gods they venerated, seems to have been followed by other quasi-official associations in Macedonian cities, like the two Dionysiac *thiasoi* in Beroia and Dion. The connection between the cult of Zeus Hysistos and the festival of Nonae Capratinae could be explained by the fact that the cult of Zeus Hysistos at Dion was conflated with that of the colony's protector, Jupiter Capitolinus.

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