JEAN GASCOU & KLAAS A. WORP

THE PANOPOLITAN VILLAGE SYNOPIA


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The Panopolitan Village Synoria

P.Kell.Gr. I 30 (22.v.363), a contract concerning the exchange of property rights, has an opening according to the well-known ‘A to B xáraein’-type. Party ‘A’ is described as (l. 4):

\[\text{épú} \ k`≈`mhw Sunor¤aw toË Panopol¤tou kat `a`mnvn §n k≈m˙ \[ÉA\]f `[rod¤thw toË ÉAntaiopol¤tou nomoË], i.e. ‘originating from the village Synoria in the Panopolite nome, residing in the village of Aphrodite in the Antaiopolite nome’, and in a note Worp commented\(^2\) that ‘a village Συνορίας in the Panopolite nome seems unattested’. That notion was based on the fact that there are no pertinent entries for it in the most relevant geographical dictionaries, i.e. it is listed neither in A. Calderini - S. Daris, Dizionario Geografico IV.4 (Milano 1986), nor in S. Daris, Supplemento I (Milano 1988), nor in S. Timm, Das christlich-koptische Ägypten in arabischer Zeit V (Q-S; Wiesbaden 1991). The village, however, is attested in already published sources:

(1°) Gascou reads the place name Συνορία in his recent re-edition of P.Freer 1-2\(^3\) in 11. 86, 120, 142 and 148; he comments\(^4\): “Συνορία a été interprété par G. Husson comme un équivalent de ὅρος, gabal (remarque ad PSI IV 284, 1-2, in Akten des XIII. Kongresses, Munich 1974, 175 n. 39). D’après notre texte, il s’agit d’un toponyme, sans doute du Panopolitie (cf. P.Beatty Panop. 1, 190 et 272) à rapprocher peut-être de la forme copte ṣun≈vr de WS 219, 2 et al.). Sur les problèmes posés par le mot sunoria, voir M. Lewuillon-Blume, CdE, 53, 1978, 120-22, ad actuel SB XIV 11890, 1 et 4. Noter que le Συνορία of PSI IV 284 a bien été enregistré comme toponyme par WB III § 16 a.”

We note here that the etymology of the name may seem uncertain: should it be connected with ὅρος (Husson), or with ὅρος (Lewuillon-Blume)?\(^5\) According to C.D. Buck - W. Petersen, Reverse Index of Greek Nouns and Adjectives (Chicago 1945) 153, the noun συνορία should be derived from ὅρια = ‘boundary’; L.R. Palmer, on the other hand, derives it from the verb συνορεῖ, see his Grammar of the Post-Ptolemaic Papyri, I [London 1946] 73; they agree, however, in thinking that there is a root element ὁ- in it (so apparently already F. Preisigke, Wörterbuch II s.v. συνορία).

There is, of course, no inherent reason why the noun συνορία could not have been used as a toponym Συνορία in some particular case. Therefore we wish to observe (partially in correction of some remarks on P.Panop.Beatty made in CdE 53 [1978] 121) that

(a.) we see no obstacle against interpreting the editor’s reading ὁπὸ συνορίας in P.Panop.Beatty I, 190 as standing for ὁπὸ Συνορίας (for ὁ- ὁ- and v.v., see F.T. Gignac, Grammar, I 275ff.; cf. the spelling ἀνωτέρο for ἀνωτέρῳ in P.Panop.Beatty I.79);

(b.) we see no obstacle against changing the name of the τοπαρχία συνορίας Τοετό occurring in P.Panop.Beatty I, 138, 279-281, 287, 297, 300, 302, 309, 311 into τοπαρχία Συνορίας Τοετό; one may compare the similar ‘double toponym’ occurring in P.Panop.Beatty I, 136, 138 and 325: τοπαρχία Πακέρκη Ψινάβλα (on these toponym names cf. P.Panop.Beatty, p. xxxvi-xxxvii). One should probably understand the toponym names as shortened versions of τοπαρχία Συνορίας (καὶ) Τοετό and τοπαρχία Πακέρκη (καὶ) Ψινάβλα and take it that Panopolitan toparchies were named after one or two important villages in it (a similar asyndetical combination of two toponyms is found in the phrasing κωμ(ητών) Κουνου Καρανίδος in ZPE 108 [1995] 220 # 20.b.3-4);

(c.) one should probably read in P.Panop.Beatty I, 272: ἀπὸ [κόμης] Συνορίας (ed. ἀπὸ [Τοετώ] συνορίας), as one is dealing with the origo of two persons, not with a toponarchy.

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2 Cf. p. 89, note to 1. 3-4.
3 See J. Gascou - L. MacCoull, Le Cadastre d’Aphrodito, Travaux & Mémoires 10 (1987) 103-158. The text has not yet been taken up into the Sammelbuch.
4 Loc.cit. [fn. 3], p. 139, note to line 86.
5 We have come to the conclusion that the noun’s origin is probably not Egyptian.
Given our present state of information we think that the village of Συνορία should be looked for in the NW part of the Panopolite nome, near modern Tahta (=Τοτετώ).

As regards the toponymic equivalence between Synoria and the place name Tsynhor of WS 219 (a question raised by Gascou, see above), we prefer to leave this matter to Coptic scholars.6

(2°) We add now the following new reference from an inscription published as long ago as 1902 by S. de Ricci in the Revue Archéologique 41.2 (juillet-décembre 1902) p. 134-135, who — after stating that the text was painted in black ink on a wall in the church of Baouit7 — gave a drawing (made by J. Clédat) and a transcript of the 10 lines long text. This transcript was reprinted (without accentuation) by G. Lefebvre, Recueil des Inscrictions grecques-chrétiennes d’Égypte (Cairo 1907), #231. De Ricci reads:

1 πάντες ὁ ἀναγινώσκων(ν) (l. oi -κοντες) ταύτας
2 τα τὰ γράμματα εὐξασθήσαται
3 θαυμάσας ὑπὲρ ἐμὸς ἐγὼ ἐλάττων
4 χιστος Καλλινικος ἄρχη
5 πρεσβύτερος τῆς κόμης Εὐμυρίας
6 ρίας (?) τοῦ Πανοπολίτου
7 νομοῦ ὁ ἁγίος άββα Ἀπολλωνία
8 λάτος καὶ άββα Φιωτίας 
9 σηπτὶ μου καὶ τὸν υἱόν (l. τῶν υἱῶν) μου
10 Βίκτωρος καὶ Εὐσταθίου

3 ὑπὲρ λαπίς 7 Λεφ.: α[ββα] 10 Λεφ.: Εὐσταθίου

In a note to 1. 5-6 de Ricci remarks: “La lecture Εὐμυρίας est loin d’être définitive”, and Lefebvre noted: “Peut-être faut-il lire Εὐβορίας pour Εὐμυρίας”.

To us it seems well possible to read on the drawing the name of the village as Συνορία.8 If this is correct, we are rid of a Panopolitan village Εὐμυρία (for which name see the entries in S. Timm, op.cit., II 919 and S. Daris, Supplemento, I 118; these should be revised, of course) and have gained another instance of the village Συνορία.

At the same time we wish to note that
(a.) the reading of the element ἄρχη in 1. 4 of the inscription is far from certain; on the basis of Clédat’s drawing it seems more attractive to read either σίγος Θ(εω) or (rather ?) ἑν Χριστότεω);
(b.) the transcript of the last line is not complete; on Clédat’s drawing one can read 1. 10 as: Βίκτωρος καὶ Εὐσταθίου ἔτεος (for the shape of the beta cf. 1. 7, άββα). The meaning of the letters after Εὐσταθίου is, however, unclear; we cannot recognize any Greek word and (though we are aware that it may seem a counsel of despair) wonder whether this is perhaps Coptic.

Strasbourg
J. Gascou
Amsterdam
K.A. Worp

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6 Is the village name Συνορία also to be understood in P.Lond. IV 1460.44, where we find the toponym Τοτή (not necessarily a complete name) in a ‘Panopolite’ environment (cf. A. Calderini - S. Daris, op.cit., V 36); could one be dealing with an abbreviation of Τοτή(νορία) = Τοτή(νορί)α? We remark in passing that the Panopolite toponyms in P.Lond. IV 1460 have never been fully exploited and deserve further study; this note is not the place for such an undertaking.

7 On Baouit see in latest instance N. Kruit in his fully documented article on the various monasteries of Apa Apollo, appearing in Tyche 9 (1994) 67-88, esp. 69-76.

8 The middle bar of the uncial epsilon seems to be in fact an extension of the bottom stroke of the preceding sigma of κώμης, while the ypsilon was written clumsily in a kind of V-shape made in two strokes, the second partly through a clumsily written N, and while the omikron was added slightly above line-level.