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POLEMO, SON OF POLEMO (DIO, 59.12.2)

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ἐν δὲ τούτῳ Σοαίμῳ μὲν τὴν τῶν Ἰτυραίων τῶν Ἀραβῶν, Κότυι δὲ τὴν τε Ἀρμενίαν τὴν μικροτέραν καὶ μετὰ τοῦτο καὶ τῆς Ἀραβίας τινά, τῷ τε Ῥυμητάλκῃ τὰ τοῦ Κότυος καὶ Πολέμωνι τῷ τοῦ Πολέμωνος υἱεὶ τὴν πατρῴαν ἀρχήν, ψηφισαμένης δὴ τῆς βουλῆς, ἐχαρίσατο (Dio, 59.12.2: A.D. 38).

‘Meanwhile, he (Caligula) granted to Sohaemus the land of the Ituraean Arabians, to Cotys Lesser Armenia and later also parts of Arabia, to Rhoemetalces the possessions of Cotys, and to Polemo the son of Polemo his ancestral domain, all on the vote of the Senate.’

Universal opprobrium attaches to the phrase ‘Polemo son of Polemo’. It is considered to be self-evident that Dio has fallen into error; that the final three names mentioned (Cotys, Rhoemetalces, and Polemo) are the three sons of Cotys VIII of Thrace and Antonia Tryphaena, reared along with Caligula (*Syll.*³ 798, 6–7); that the ‘ancestral domain’ granted to Polemo is the kingdom of Pontus, formerly ruled by the father of Antonia Tryphaena, Polemo I; and hence that Dio ought to have written ‘Polemo, grandson of Polemo’. As will become clear, I do not believe that any of these assumptions are justified.

Numerous documents, epigraphic and otherwise, attest the career of a certain L. Antonius Zeno of Laodicea.¹ In the final years of the reign of Claudius, an individual named ‘Antonius Zeno, son of Polemo’, eponymous priest for the fourth time,² minted a substantial issue of bronze coinage at Laodicea, including an issue proclaiming his personal connections with Smyrna, bearing the obverse legend δῆμος Λαοδικέων καὶ Ζμυρναίων.³ His full name and *tribus* are revealed by an inscription from neighbouring Heraclea under Salbake, honouring a certain ‘L. Antonius Zeno, son of Polemo, of the tribe Cornelia, *tribunus militum* and *archiereus* of Asia’.⁴ Another honorific inscription, from Apollonia under Salbake, adds more details.⁵ The first ten lines read as follows:

Λούκιον Ἀντώνιον Μάρκου Ἀντωνί-
ου Πολέμωνος υἱὸν Ζήνωνα μ[έ]-
γαν ἀριστῆ, χιλιαρχήσαντα λεγ[ιῶ]-
νος ἱβ’ Κεραυνοφόρου, τετειμ[η]-
5 μένον ὑπὸ τοῦ θεῶν ἐνφαν[εσ]-
τάτου Σεβαστοῦ βασιλικῆ διὰ τῆς
οἰκουμένης πυρφοραφορία καὶ
ἀρχιερατεύσαντα Αὐτοκράτο-
ρος Καίσαρος Σεβαστοῦ ἐν
10 τῇ Ἀσίᾳ. *vac.*

¹ *PIR*² A 882 (with the wrong *praenomen*); H. Devijver, *Pros. Mil. Eq.* V (Suppl. II), A 147.

² The eponym at Laodicea was the ἱερεὺς Πόλεως: L. Robert, in J. des Gagniers *et al.*, *Laodicée du Lycos: Le Nymphée* (Québec–Paris, 1969), 315–326.

³ *RPC* I, 2912–2916.

⁴ L. and J. Robert, *La Carie II: le plateau de Tabai et ses environs* (Paris, 1954), 54.

⁵ *SEG* XXXVII (1987) 855.

Hereby a rough chronology of Zeno's career. First a tribunate, of *legio XII Fulminata*; then a grant from Augustus of the right to wear 'the royal purple',⁶ a high-priesthood of Asia under Tiberius,⁷ and finally the mint-magistracy at Laodicea under Claudius. Even if we assume that the first two items were listed in reverse order, he can hardly have been born much later than (let us say) 5 B.C.; hence his fourth eponymous magistracy at Laodicea would have occurred in his old age.

A son has long been inferred: a homonym, Antonius Zeno, mint magistrate at Laodicea in A.D. c. 63–68. A single issue is known, again proclaiming the family's links with Smyrna: 'Antonius Zeno, son of Zeno, son of the Laodiceans and Smyrnaeans'.⁸ We may reasonably conjecture that it was from this branch of the family that the sophist M. Antonius Polemo, owner of a large property at Smyrna, was descended; quite probably he was grandson of the Neronian mint magistrate. There are no other firm attestations of this younger Zeno; it is possible, no more, that he is the M. Antonius Zeno *philopappos* who has recently emerged on a verse inscription at Patara in Lycia.⁹

A second child of L. Antonius Zeno, a daughter, has recently come to light. The inscription has been published as follows (*I. Laodikeia*, 53):

 ['Αν]τωνίαν · Λ · 'Αγ[τωνίου]
 [Ζή]νωνος μεγ[ίστου ἀρχ]-
 [τερ]έως μὲν τῆς ['Ασίας, ἱερ]-
 [έως] δὲ τῆς Πόλε[ως]
 5 [γυ]μνασιάρχου ? γυναῖ]-
 [κα] ἀρίστην, νε[ωκόρον καὶ]
 [ἀρ]χιέριαν τῆ[ς 'Ασίας καὶ]
 [ί]εριαν τῆ[ς]
 [] . γυμν[ασιαρχ]-

The restoration in lines 2–3 is clearly not correct. Not only could the phrase μέγιστος ἀρχιερέυς (= *pontifex maximus*) hardly be used of a provincial high-priesthood, but the position of μὲν is quite unbearable. Rather Zeno carries the first of his two honorific titles known from the Heraclea inscription (μέγας ἀριστεύς): [Ζή]νωνος μεγ[άλου, ἀρχ]τερ[έως μὲν κτλ.¹⁰ Moreover, in

⁶ For the meaning of this, A. Ceylan – T. Ritti, L. Antonius Zenon, *Epigraphica* XLIX (1987), 77–98, at 83–85; Pleket's suggestion that this right was exercised 'in his capacity of provincial high-priest' is clearly wrong, since it fails to explain βασιλική.

⁷ Note the peculiar terminology used to describe the priesthood, indicating an early date: M. D. Campanile, Osservazioni sul culto provinciale di Augusto in Asia Minore, *Epigraphica* LV (1993), 207–211.

⁸ *RPC I*, 2928, rev. legend 'Αντώ(νιος) Ζήνωνος Ζήνων, υἱὸς Λαοδικέων Ζμυρναίων ὄμηρος. I do not understand the final word, despite D. A. O. Klose, *SM* 133 (1984), 1–3: Zeno was neither Homer nor a hostage.

⁹ *SEG XLIX* (1999) 1933. The inscription has not been properly understood. There is no reason to suppose that the child died at the age of three. Rather the child's τροφεύς, Philoumenus, died when the child was only three years old; the inscription is set up in the son's name (M. Antonius Zeno *philopappos*), and the name of his father (who composed the epigram) is not stated.

¹⁰ For the honorific epithet μέγας, compare *IGR IV* 882 (Themisonium): honours for M. Οὔλπιον Ζήνωνος υἱὸν Κυρίνα Τρύφωνα μέγαν 'Αντωνιανόν (not, as printed by editors, Μέγαν), high-priest of Asia, *tribunus militum* and *praefectus cohortis I Ulpiae Galatarum*.

line 6, the addition of νε[ωκόρον] to the title of high-priestess is displeasing, given its absence from lines 2–3. The photograph in *I. Laodikeia* reveals the left *hasta* of a triangular letter: hence νέα[ν ἠρωίδα, | ἄρ]χιέρειαν κτλ. She died young, perhaps in childbirth. Like Zeno, Antonia seems to have served as eponym at Laodicea (l. 8, [ιέ]ρειαν τῆ[ς Πόλεως]), perhaps along with her unnamed husband.

So much for Antonia. More significant, a neglected parallel text to the Apollonia inscription. *IGR* III 1436, from Amisus, has been definitively restored from the Apollonia text as follows (line division doubtful):¹¹

[e.g. τὸν ἀπὸ προγόνων βασιλι]έων, τετραρχῶ[ν - - - - -]
 [- - - - - στεφα]νηφόρων, ἀγω[νοθετῶν, - - - - -]
 [- - - - - ἄρ]χιερέων, Μάρ[κου Ἐκτονίου Πολέμωνος]
 [- - - - - υἱὸν Λού]κιον Ἐκτόν[του Ζήνωνος, χιλιαρχήσαν]-
 5 [τα λεγιῶνος ἰβ' Κεραινοφ]όρου καὶ τετεμημένον ὑπὸ τοῦ Αὐτο]-
 [κράτορος Καίσαρος Σεβαστο]ῦ π[ορφυραφορία βασιλικῆ διὰ τῆς]
 [οἰκουμένης - - - - -]

Interesting enough to find Zeno in Amisus. But the main novelty is the discovery that L. Antonius Zeno claimed to be ‘descended from kings and tetrarchs’ – not so, on current reconstructions of the Zenonid stemma. The implication of the Amisus document, reinforced by its Pontic provenance, is quite clear: the use of the specific technical term ‘tetrarch’ decides the matter. L. Antonius Zeno was, we now perceive, a direct descendant of King Polemo I of Pontus, the onetime tetrarch of Lycaonia/Cilicia.¹² Just possibly a son; more likely a grandson.

Hence we turn to Zeno’s father, M. Antonius Polemo (his full name attested in the Apollonia inscription). Evidently he is the magistrate attested on coinage at Laodicea, around 5 B.C.: ‘Antonius Polemo, *philopatris*’.¹³ Hence a date of birth no later than (let us say) 30 B.C. The question arises: could he have been a son of Polemo I of Pontus? King Polemo is known to have sired three children by his wife Pythodoris: Antonia Tryphaena, future wife of Cotys VIII of Thrace; Zeno, later Zeno Artaxias, the future King of Armenia; and another, anonymous son, whom Strabo describes as a private citizen (ιδιώτης), assisting his mother in the administration of her Pontic kingdom (12.3.29 (556)). Nothing impedes identification with M. Antonius Polemo *philopatris* of Laodicea.

Another significant novelty. An inscription from Amphipolis, dated to the reign of Caligula, reads as follows:¹⁴

[- - - - - Ἄρ]μενίας τῆς προστεθείσης ὑπὸ
 [Γαίου Καίσα]ρος Σεβαστοῦ Γερμανικοῦ, Πολέ-
 [μων - - - - -]ς εὐσεβῆς πατὴρ καὶ Πολέμων

¹¹ Restorations as S. J. Saprykin, *On the History of the Pontic Kingdom under the Polemonides*, *VDI* (1993), 25–49 (in Russian), at 25–26 (unremarked by the *SEG*), with the exception of the first part of line 4, which I leave unrestored for the moment: see further below.

¹² In 39–37/6 B.C. R. Syme, *RP* V 661–667, showed that the mysterious phrase in Pliny, *HN* v 95, *datur et tetrarchia ex Lycaonia, qua parte Galatiae contermina est, ciuitatium XIV, urbe celerrima Iconio*, ought to refer to the brief period of Polemo’s rule (cf. Strabo, 12.6.1 (568)).

¹³ *RPC* I, 2898–2900.

¹⁴ *SEG* III, 498.

- [- - εὐ/φιλο?]πάτωρ καὶ Ῥοιμητάλκης φιλόκαισαρ
 5 [ἀνέθηκαν] τῆ Ἀμφιπολιτῶν πόλει διὰ τὴν
 [πρὸς τὸν] οἶκον αὐτῶν εὐνοιάν τε καὶ τειμήν.

Evidently a father and son, both bearing the name Polemo. The epithet *eusebes* applied to the father recalls the epithet adopted by King Polemo I of Pontus, who was ‘King Polemo *eusebes*’ on his coinage.¹⁵ Clearly King Polemo cannot be identified with the Polemo of our Amphipolitan inscription, since the former had perished a full forty-five years before the accession of Caligula. Hence a homonymous son and grandson of the King of Pontus, the former adopting his father’s epithet, and a pleasant confirmation of the hypothesis offered above: M. Antonius Polemo, father of L. Antonius Zeno and son of Polemo I of Pontus.

Father also, it would now appear, of another Polemo (presumably an Antonius Polemo) *eu-* or *philopator*, brother and rough contemporary of L. Antonius Zeno: that is to say, with a life-span c. 5 B.C. – A.D. 60. His identification occasions no difficulty. A certain M. Antonius Polemo is known, with a career that spans precisely this period (reign of Tiberius? – A.D. c.70), and lacking a genealogy: the dynast, and subsequently king, of Cilician Olba. Evidently a different man from the Julius Polemo who was king of Pontus (and a different part of coastal Cilicia) throughout the same period.¹⁶ A relation, no doubt; as I am now suggesting, a cousin.

The precise chronology of his career is unclear. The earliest coinage of M. Antonius Polemo in Olba, describing him as *archiereus* and *dynastes*, is not firmly dated, since the era in use (years X and XI) is uncertain: Tiberian, at the very earliest.¹⁷ A somewhat unfortunate, short-lived marriage to the notorious Berenice, daughter of M. Iulius Agrippa, occurred in the 50s A.D.¹⁸ It was to this Polemo, not (as has been asserted) to Polemo II of Pontus, that the Romans presented part of Armenia in A.D. 60 (Tac., *Ann.* xiv 26). From a unique bronze coin of the Great King M. Antonius Polemo of Armenia, we learn the name of his second wife, Iulia Mamaea.¹⁹ His rule endured into the first years of the Flavians, and no longer.²⁰

Perhaps compact iteration of the argument would be of use. I propose that the elder Polemo ‘*eusebes*’ of the Amphipolitan inscription is to be identified both with (1) M. Antonius Polemo *philopateris*, father of L. Antonius Zeno, and mint-magistrate at Laodicea c. 5 B.C., and also with (2) the hitherto anonymous third child (ἰδιώτης) of Polemo I and Pythodoris. On this reconstruction the term ἰδιώτης would be perfectly accurate: he was the only one of the three siblings never to rule over a kingdom himself. Unfortunate, or perhaps a dullard.

This accepted, we should then have two sons of this man, L. Antonius Zeno and M. Antonius Polemo (II). The first of these was granted the right to wear the royal purple by Augustus, in recognition of his grandfather’s status. His career otherwise followed a distinguished, if unremark-

¹⁵ *RPC* I, 3801–3802.

¹⁶ Most recently, S. Dmitriev, Claudius’ Grant of Cilicia to Polemo, *CQ* 53 (2003), 286–291. A recent restatement of the case for identification of Iulius Polemo with M. Antonius Polemo (U. Gotter, Tempel und Grossmacht: Olba/Diokaisareia und das Imperium Romanum, in É. Jean *et al.* (eds.), *La Cilicie: espaces et pouvoirs locaux* (Istanbul, 2001), 289–325, at 315–319) is not persuasive.

¹⁷ *RPC* I, 3735–9.

¹⁸ Jos., *Ant. Jud.* 20.145–6; for Berenice, *PIR*² I 651.

¹⁹ H. Seyrig, *Scripta Numismatica* (Paris, 1986), 156–158, wrongly attributed to Polemo II of Pontus, unfortunately followed by *RPC* I, 3844. No doubt, as Seyrig suggests, Iulia Mamaea was a native of Syrian Emesa.

²⁰ *RPC* I, 3740–2.

able pattern of military and civic office in the province and elsewhere. His brother, the younger Polemo of the Amphipolis inscription, was to win the royal purple in his own right: elevated, at an (as yet) undetermined date, to the *dynasteia* of Cilician Olba, he rose to the kingship both there and, for a brief period, in part of Armenia.

A brief return to the career and nomenclature of L. Antonius Zeno, to resolve some outstanding questions. A glance back at *IGR* III 1436, the honorific inscription for Zeno at Amisus, will reveal a need in ll. 3–4 for further details in the nomenclature of his father, M. Antonius Polemo. On the basis of his identification with the anonymous son (ιδιώτης) of Polemo I of Pontus, we may now restore either:

... Μάρ[κου Ἀντωνίου, Πολέμωνος]
[υἱοῦ, Πολέμωνος υἱὸν Λού]κιον Ἀντών[ιον Ζήνωνα κτλ.

Or perhaps better:

... Μάρ[κου Ἀντωνίου Πολέμωνος]
[υἱόν, Πολέμωνος υἱώνον, Λού]κιον Ἀντών[ιον Ζήνωνα κτλ.

There exists also an inscription from Pontic Apollonia, a dedication for the health and safety of Rhoemetalces (grandson of the kings Cotys and Rhoemetalces) and Pythodoris (granddaughter of the kings Polemo and Rhoemetalces).²¹ A happy supplement has revealed the dedicator as L. Antonius Zeno; a dedication, we may now suppose, to his cousin Pythodoris and her husband.

The alert reader will have noted that this reconstruction of the careers of M. Antonius Polemo *père* and *fils* has significant consequences for the date of the marriage of Polemo I of Pontus to Pythodoris (I). Scholars have tended to place this after Polemo's short-lived marriage to Dynamis of Bosphorus, without good reason. Magie had already noted the unlikelihood that Polemo I remained unmarried and childless until his old age.²² If M. Antonius Polemo *père* was already minting coins at Laodicea c. 5 B.C., the marriage of Polemo I and Pythodoris can hardly be dated any later than 30 B.C. His marriage to Dynamis was hence bigamous.

This chronology for the marriage of Polemo and Pythodoris puts paid to another old myth. The romantic Mommsen wished to see in Antonia *euergetis*, mother of Pythodoris and wife of Pythodorus of Tralles, a daughter of the triumvir. No evidence ever supported this hypothesis, and powerful arguments to the contrary were adduced by Dessau.²³ It may now be firmly rejected, since the marriage of Pythodorus and Antonia can hardly be dated much later than (say) 55 B.C., and may well be somewhat earlier.²⁴ That is as we would expect: Pythodorus was already a man of mature years by the 50s, having had a price put on his head by Mithradates in 88 B.C.²⁵

²¹ *IGBulg.* I² 399 (A.D. c.19–37); the name of the dedicator supplemented by Saprykin (n. 11), 33, accepted by *PIR*² P 1115 (Pythodoris II, a useful entry).

²² D. Magie, *Roman Rule in Asia Minor* (Princeton, 1950), II 1341 n. 32.

²³ Th. Mommsen, *Observationes Epigraphicae* XIII: de titulo reginae Pythodoridis Smyrnaeo, *Gesammelte Schriften* VIII (Berlin, 1913), 264–271, cf. *ib.*, 297–311; H. Dessau, *Miscellanea Epigraphica* I: de regina Pythodoride et de Pythodoride Iuniore, *Eph. Epig.* IX (1913), 691–696. A large and pointless bibliography has since accumulated.

²⁴ Dessau rightly pointed out that the epithet εὐεργέτις, applied to Antonia in *I. Smyrna* 614, and taken by Mommsen to imply elevated status ('*agnomen regium*'), rather signifies civic benefaction. Hence it seems not unlikely that Antonia was by origin a native of Smyrna. This would help to explain the persistent links between the branch of the family which retained the Antonian gentilician and the city of Smyrna.

²⁵ *Syll.*³ 741.

An incidental consequence of all this may be of interest. That M. Antonius Polemo the sophist was descended from the royal house of Pontus has long been suspected, never demonstrated. Direct descent from the line of L. Antonius Zeno and his son (M.?) Antonius Zeno may surely be assumed, given their gentilician and close connections with Smyrna. The sophist would then be a great-great-great-grandson of Polemo I of Pontus *via* a direct male line.

What then, finally, of the alleged mistake in Cassius Dio 59.12.2? It is, it seems to me, distinctly peculiar that the father of Polemo alone should be specified (Σοαίμω ... Κότυι ... τῶ τε Ῥυμητάλκη ... καὶ Πολέμωνι τῶ τοῦ Πολέμωνος υἱεῖ); on the presumption that the Polemo here mentioned is Iulius Polemo II of Pontus, two of his brothers would already have been mentioned earlier in the sentence, rendering the additional specification otiose. However, if on the contrary we take the ancestral realm to be Lycaonia and Cilicia Tracheia (which King Polemo I had ruled as tetrarch before moving to Pontus), then Dio's credit may be restored: the father of the young King M. Antonius Polemo of Cilicia was indeed named Polemo. Indeed, I suggest, Dio displays most admirable precision and care. He does not need to specify the father of Cotys and Rhoemetalces, since in those cases no confusion could arise; but since two different men named Polemo ruled over Asiatic kingdoms (both including parts of Cilicia) during this period, he specifies 'Polemo the son of Polemo', that is, the younger M. Antonius Polemo (II) of Cilicia. Dio thus gives us the date of Polemo's accession from the *dynasteia* of Cilician Olba to the kingship: A.D. 38.

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ÖZET

Bu makalesinde yazar, tarihçi Dio'ya göre Roma imparatoru Caligula tarafından Pontus'a kral olarak atanan "Polemo oğlu Polemo" ve onun birçok yazıt ve sikkede adları geçen aile bireylerini ve onların Anadolu'nun çeşitli eyaletlerinde üstlendikleri görevleri ele almaktadır. Bu ailenin bireylerinden olduğu bilinen Pontus'lu Iulius Polemo, Marcus Antonius Polemo adını taşıyan üç kişi, Laodikeia'lı Lucius Antonius Zeno ile onun oğlu ? M. Antonius Zeno ve kızı Antonia gibi tanınmış simaların adlarının geçtiği belgeleri elden geçiren araştırmacı, kökleri Pontus kraliyet ailesine dayanan bu ailenin bir şeceresini çıkarmaktadır.

The Royal House of Pontus

