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Project #1: Funerary Inscription

Transcription of Inscription (CIL VI.29080)

A[ulus] VITELLIVS CHRYSEROS
FECIT SIBI ET
VITELLIAE PRIMAE CONLIBER[tae]
ET CONIVGI DE SE BENE MERITAE ET
A[ulo] VITELLIO ALEXANDRO LIB[erto] ET
M[arco] IVNIO HEGESIAE AMICO ET
IVLIAE RVFINAE ET IVLLO HELPIDELPHORO ET
LIBERTIS LIBERTABVSQVE SVIS OMNIBVS
POSTERISQVE EORVM H[oc] M[onumentum] H[eredem] N[on] S[equitur]



Translation of Inscription

Aulus Vitellius Chryseros
Built this monument for himself and
For Vitellia the First, his fellow freedwoman
And to his most deserving spouse rightly in regards to herself
And the freedman Aulus Vitellius Alexandros and
His friend Marcus Junius of Hegesiae and
To Julia Rufina and Jullus Helpidelphorus and
All his freedmen and freedwomen
And their descendants. This tomb does not pass to the heir.

Lexical and Interpretive Commentary

Line 1: *Aulus Vitellius Chryseros*: A freedman, his *praenomen* and *nomen* are taken from that of his previous master, Aulus Vitellius, who may or may not be the Augustus of the same name, Aulus Vitellius, who ruled in 69 A.D. His slave *nomen* then becomes his *cognomen*: Chryseros. The Greek ending to his name perhaps alludes to his birthplace.

Line 2: *fecit sibi*: Supply *monumentum* to get the formulaic phrase *fecit sibi monumentum*, He built this for himself. The *et* that follows signals that a list of other beneficiaries of this tomb are about to be listed, their names in the dative.

Line 3: *Vitellia Prima*: Multiple women of the same family were given the feminine version of their family's *nomen*, and differentiated by *Prima*, *Secunda*, *Tertia*, etc. Thus, her name is literally Vitellia Prima, or First Vitellia. Her name is in the dative.

liberta, *liberate (f)*: With prefix "con-", should be translated as "fellow freedwoman".

Line 5: *Aulus Vitellio Alexandros*: (see note for line 1) Provide the dative singular endings for Aulus Vitellius Alexandros. Provide also the singular dative ending to get *liberto*, proving him to be a fellow freedman also.

Line 6: *Marcus Iunius Hegesias*: (see note for line 1) Again, supply the dative singular ending to get the name Marcus.

Line 9: *HMHNS*: An abbreviation for *hoc monumentum heredem non sequitur*.

heres, *heredis*, (n): heir/heirress. Often this was added to tombs to ensure the permanence of the monument, as heirs could desecrate the tomb and sell the space for profit. Also, it could insinuate possible "bad blood" between the heir and the occupant.

Description of the Monument

A plaque found in the Parione region of Rome. It is constructed out of marble, and can most likely be dated to the First or Second century A.D. Dating is difficult due to the lack of monument or age of death. This can be deduced from the construction of the letters. They are the block capitals of the Empire, but without the usual decoration that marks the epigraphy of the later centuries, and without the shading that would indicate them to be done during the reign of Augustus.

The markings around the edges are common in plaques mounted in temples or monuments, indicating that this tablet was removed from its original mounting. The freedmen named in it are likely lined by their masters bonds or marriage.