

NATASCIA PELLÉ

CINQUE LETTERE DI CAMPBELL COWAN EDGAR  
A JOSIAH GILBART SMYLY



## Abstract

Five unpublished letters from C.C. Edgar to J.G. Smyly: three of them concern the *vexata quaestio* of relations between Egyptian and Macedonian calendars (with an appendix containing a letter from J. Lesquier to Smyly about the same subject); the remaining two are about some Zenon papyri freshly published by Edgar.

## Keywords

Egyptian Calendar, Zenon Papyri, Jean Lesquier

Delle cinque epistole inviate da Campbell Cowan Edgar<sup>1</sup> a Josiah Gilbert Smyly<sup>2</sup>, conservate presso la Manuscripts and Archives Research Library del Trinity College di Dublino, tre si concentrano in pochi giorni del dicembre 1918 (nrr. 1-3), una è datata al 1921 (nr. 4) e l'ultima risale al 1924 (nr. 5). Lo scambio più significativo è incentrato sulla spinosa tematica del computo degli anni nell'Egitto di epoca tolemaica, molto dibattuta all'inizio del Novecento, che vide concentrarsi sui lavori di Smyly l'attenzione di quanti fino a quel momento l'avevano affrontata dalle più varie angolazioni. Smyly per primo nel 1899<sup>3</sup>, nella parte finale della recensione alla *Palaeography of Greek Papyri* di F.G. Kenyon, a proposito della data d'inizio dell'anno nelle epoche tolemaica e romana, mostrava chiaramente l'esistenza di un anno finanziario, in base al quale è datata la maggior parte dei documenti a noi pervenuti<sup>4</sup>: «On one other point I may be al-

<sup>1</sup> Su C.C. Edgar cf. N. PELLÉ, *Campbell Cowan Edgar (1870-1938)*, in M. CAPASSO (ed.), *Hermae. Scholars and Scholarship in Papyrology*, Roma-Pisa 2007, pp. 181-186, con la relativa bibliografia.

<sup>2</sup> Su J.G. Smyly cf. N. PELLÉ, *Josiah Gilbert Smyly (1867-1948)*, in M. CAPASSO (ed.), *Hermae. Scholars and Scholarship in Papyrology. IV*, Roma-Pisa 2015, pp. 19-23, con relativa bibliografia.

<sup>3</sup> *Mr. Kenyon's Palaeography of Greek Papyri*, «Hermathena» 10/25 (1899), pp. 425-434, sp. p. 432-433.

<sup>4</sup> La scoperta di un anno finanziario, indipendente dall'anno di regno, si deve a E. RÉVILLOUT, *Mélanges sur la métrologie, l'économie politique et l'histoire de l'ancienne égyptiennes*, Paris 1896, p. 350, il quale, avendone rilevata la presenza in PPetr I 28 (2), non aveva elaborato, però, una teoria organica sull'argomento.

lowed to express an opinion different from that of Mr. Kenyon; on p. 54 he says that “in both Ptolemaic and Roman dates it must be remembered that the year always begins the first of Thoth (= 29th August). Thus the first year of a sovereign lasted only from his accession to the Ist Thoth next ensuing”. This statement is, I think, inaccurate in two respects: for, firstly, in Ptolemaic period the year employed was the *annus vagus* of 365 days, without intercalation; the attempt of Euergetes, recorded in the Canopus inscription, to rectify the calendar, was unsuccessful, and it was not till introduction of the Julian calendar that a day was intercalated every four years; hence in the years before this date the date the Ist Thoth did not correspond to the 29th August, but receded from it at the rate of one day in every four years; for instance in the year 300 B.C. the Ist Thoth = 6th November. And, secondly, in P.P. I. XXVIII there is a document with the following date formula [...] From this we learn that there were two different methods of counting the years of the king’s reign; one of them was used in revenue returns, for which it is probable that the second year was counted from the Ist Thoth next after the accession of the king; for other purposes a different time, probably the anniversary of the accession itself, was chosen for the beginning of the year. It is important to notice that is according to the latter method that most of our extant documents are dated [...]. How long this double system prevailed it is difficult to conjecture; perhaps it was abandoned at the time when the Macedonian calendar was assimilated to the Egyptian, and the Ist Dios identified with the Ist Thoth, in the reign of Ptolemy Euergetes II».

Poco tempo dopo B.P. Grenfell e A.S. Hunt, nelle appendici I e II dei PHi-beh<sup>5</sup> confermavano la posizione di Smyly e, su suo suggerimento<sup>6</sup>, redigevano una tavola cronologica di corrispondenze, che mostrava i giorni dei mesi egiziani nei quali doveva cadere il primo giorno di ogni mese Macedone – fatta eccezione per quello intercalare – in ogni caso di doppia data in entrambi i calendari. L’ulteriore intervento in proposito di Smyly<sup>7</sup> dimostrava che l’anno finanziario cominciava in una data molto vicina all’equinozio invernale (il giorno iniziale – o un giorno molto vicino al primo – di Mecheir). Dopo questo secondo articolo cominciava ormai a diventare chiaro come la strada maestra per risolvere i problemi connessi con le relazioni tra il calendario egiziano e il calendario macedone fosse stata tracciata e anche Wilcken<sup>8</sup> accoglieva la linea proposta da Smyly, allontanandosi da quest’ultimo solo in un punto; egli af-

<sup>5</sup> B.P. GRENFELL-A.S. HUNT, *The Hibeh Papyri. Part I*, London 1906, pp. 333 s.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 334 e 336-337.

<sup>7</sup> *The revenue years of Philadelphus, Euergetes I and Philopator*, «Hermathena» 14/32 (1906), pp. 106-116.

<sup>8</sup> R. PINTAUDI (ed.), ULRICH WILCKEN, *Fondamenti della Papirologia*, Bari 2010, pp. 69-70.

fermava infatti, nel suo manuale che l'anno intercalare egiziano era poi diventato, nel corso del tempo, l'anno finanziario<sup>9</sup>. Di parere nettamente contrastante era invece l'eminente egittologo Jean Lesquier<sup>10</sup>, che, nel suo contributo pubblicato in «Archiv für Papyrusforschung»<sup>11</sup>, aveva contestato sia i due interventi di Smyly del 1899 e del 1906 sia le appendici ai PHibeh di Grenfell e Hunt, ma la sua teoria era destinata a rimanere isolata.

Tuttavia, benché l'orientamento generale fosse condiviso, ancora per molto tempo si cercò un accordo sulle caratteristiche dell'anno finanziario e su alcune questioni, per così dire "minori", riguardanti le relazioni reciproche tra i due calendari egiziano e macedone.

Edgar aveva affrontato la questione della duplice datazione in epoca tolemaica negli anni immediatamente successivi al rinvenimento dell'archivio di Zenone, quando, essendo approdata al Museo Egizio del Cairo la maggior parte del materiale proveniente da Philadelphia, si era trovato di fronte ad una cospicua quantità di documenti e aveva deciso di ordinarli cronologicamente. A tal fine egli elaborò una serie di considerazioni che fece confluire in due lavori apparsi nel 1917 in «Annales du Services des Antiquités de l'Égypte»<sup>12</sup>. Nel dicembre 1918, verosimilmente dopo aver letto tale articolo, in una nota del quale il papirologo inglese confessa di non aver letto direttamente i due interventi di Smyly in «Hermathena»<sup>13</sup>, quest'ultimo gli invia i due estratti, approfittando dell'occasione per esprimere le proprie perplessità a proposito di alcune argomentazioni nelle quali si era imbattuto nel corso della lettura, quali, ad es., la lunghezza dei mesi macedoni, il periodo d'inizio dell'anno finanziario e l'esistenza, accanto ad un anno di regno e ad un anno finanziario, di un anno canonico. Dopo aver ringraziato lo studioso dublinese per le sue osservazioni, Edgar risponde puntualmente a ciascuna di esse (1.) e tre giorni dopo scrive nuovamente a Smyly per esprimere una critica molto circostanziata ad una conclusione da costui tratta sulle relazioni tra anno finanziario ed anno di regno sotto Tolemeo Evergete I (2.). Si sarà trattato, non inverosimilmente, di una critica ingenua, alla quale il dublinese deve aver risposto in modo convincente se, nella successiva lettera del 16 dicembre (3.), Edgar sente l'esigenza di scusarsi per non aver letto attentamente l'argomentazione espressa nell'articolo. Egli lo incalza, tuttavia, con ulteriori questioni riguardanti la data dell'acces-

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 69.

<sup>10</sup> 1879-1921.

<sup>11</sup> Vd. l'appendice nel presente articolo.

<sup>12</sup> *On the dating of Early Ptolemaic Papyri*, «ASAE» 17 (1917), pp. 209-223; *A further note on Early Ptolemaic chronology*, «ASAE» 18 (1918), pp. 58-64.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, n. 1.

sione del Filopatore, che propone di far cadere tra Thot e Mecheir anziché, come Smyly sosteneva, tra Mecheir e Thot. Chiude poi la lettera esprimendo il proprio scetticismo a proposito del punto di vista del papirologo irlandese (verosimilmente contenuto nella sua risposta a 1.) sull'inesistenza, nel regno del Filadelfo, di una terza "tipologia" di anno, che si affiancasse a quello finanziario e a quello canonico.

Il secondo e più ridotto nucleo di lettere (4. e 5.) è invece incentrato sui papiri dell'archivio di Zenone, che Edgar aveva cominciato a pubblicare per gruppi sulle pagine di «ASAE» a partire dal 1918<sup>14</sup>. Nelle due epistole Edgar risponde ad osservazioni espresse da Smyly su altrettanti articoli da lui pubblicati rispettivamente nel 1921 e nel 1924. Dalle parole del papirologo inglese si deduce che le obiezioni di Smyly riguardassero essenzialmente alcune letture che egli non condivideva e per le quali chiedeva una spiegazione più approfondita al suo corrispondente. Di minor importanza, ma comunque apprezzata da Edgar, la segnalazione di alcuni errori di stampa che Smyly aveva rilevato nei testi da lui inviatigli.

## 1.

Antiquities Dept. | Cairo | 10.12.18<sup>15</sup>

Dear Mr. Smyly

it was a great pleasure to me to receive your letter | and the pamphlets which accompanied it. The latter I had not had | an opportunity of reading up till now, though I knew what your | general conclusions were. Your criticisms interest me greatly and I am | particularly obliged to you for explaining the evidence as to the | possibility, or impossibility, of Macedonian months being real | lunar months. I was well aware of the discrepancy between the | dates in the Canopus and Rosetta inscriptions, but I would not | state the problem in quite the same way as you do. Instead | of saying that the difference between the two calendars was | 4 days up to the time of the Canopus inscr. and they increased | to an average of 6 2/3 days, I hold that the divergence was 4 | days a year up to the end of the reign of Euergetes. After that, | if we assume the double dates preserved to be approximately correct, | the divergence became much greater; but whether this was due | to any change in the system of intercalation is another question; | it might for instance have been caused by giving the Macedonian months a uni-

<sup>14</sup> *Selected Papyri from the Archives of Zenon (Nos. 1-10)*, «ASAE» 18 (1918), pp. 159-182.

<sup>15</sup> MS 4323/27-29: lettera scritta su 3 fogli a righe.

form length of 30 days. | In my first article I made some mistakes | though having adopted without sufficient examination the theory | that double dates in the βασιλεύοντος formula refer to the regnal | year. Afterwards when I looked into the matter more closely I found | clear indications that, though many of such dates are regnal, | some are financial and others, as you say, are canonical. The | fact that a date is given in Macedonian or in double is no | guarantee that it [[belong]]<sup>16</sup> refers to the regnal year. | I was forgetting, however, that you do not believe in | what I mean by a regnal year. But surely there are very serious objections to your view that Apollonios year was simply | the financial year, starting in the reign o Philadelphos from | the summer solstice. It seems to me indubitable that the Apollonios year followed the vagaries of Macedonian calendar and did not | start from any fixed point in the solar year. It is proved for | instance that year 29 began between Phamenoth 4 and Phamenoth 11, | while year 32 did not begin till after Pharmouthi 1. The starting- | point of a year which sometime began in April can surely not | have been the summer solstice. But let us assume that you are | right and that only two years were used for dating at this period, | the financial or Apollonios year and the canonical year. For a | certain number of months one of them must have been in advance of the other and for remaining months they must | have been level. Now the date L 30 Peritios embolimos, Mecheir 23<sup>17</sup> clearly refers to (what you would call) financial year 29 or 31, | because there was no intercalated months in the 30<sup>th</sup> Apollonios | year. Therefore it appears that between that 1 and the beginning | of the financial year one of our two years was in advance | of the other; and it follows that between the beginning of the financial year and that 1 they must have been level. But | as we know from the Hibeh papyri, in Epeph, just in the said | interval, year 34 was equal to year 35. And when you | compare with these the date in Pap Lille 1 L κζ Αἰγυπτίῳν δε | τὸ αὐτὸ Φαῶφ', how can one explain the inconsistency except by | admitting that not two but three different years were used | for dating by? The first of these three dates refers to the | canonical year, the second draws a contrast between the financial year and, probably, the canonical year or, possibly | the regnal, while the third means that in Phaophi the | financial and the canonical year were level. | I therefore hold just by your former view that the | financial year began in Mecheir under Philadelphos as | well as under Euergetes. As for the regnal year it was | certainly reckoned on the Macedonian calendar and I see | no alternative to the "accessional" theory. | With many thanks again for your criticism and information and with apologies for troubling you with | such a controversial letter. | I am | yours very sincerely | C.C. Edgar

<sup>16</sup> La parola è stata cancellata con un tratto di penna.

<sup>17</sup> EDGAR, *On the dating* cit., p. 210.

## 2.

Antiquities Dept. | Cairo 13.12.18<sup>18</sup>

Dear Mr. Smyly

as a postscript to my letter of two days ago may | I offer a small criticism on an argument in your paper about | the Revenue Year, p. 115. Speaking of P.P. III, 141, an account dated | at the beginning L 25 Choiak and ending with οψονιον του α L απο | Παυλι εως Θαυτ μηνων δ, you rightly point out that the years in | question evidently did not begin with Thot, and you infer that | they must have been revenue years. Now it is clear, as you have | yourself pointed out, that in the reign of Euergetes the financial | year beginning in Mecheir was in advance of the canonical | year<sup>19</sup>. Therefore, as Euergetes according to the Canon completed his | 25<sup>th</sup> canonical year, he must have lived until the Thot following the beginning of his 26<sup>th</sup> financial year; whereas | according to your interpretation of the above passage he must have | died several months before. How do you explain this difficulty? | To regard L 25 as a mistake for L 26 would only create a new | dilemma, *i.e.* either Euergetes attained to a 27<sup>th</sup> financial year or | του α L is an error for του β L. I have noted with great interest your suggestion that | the financial year may be a survival of Jewish year in | Persian Egypt. A rather different idea has previously occurred to me, | to the effect that the financial year might have been introduced | into Egypt from the Syrian provinces of the Ptolemies. The date on | the coins of Philadelphos and Euergetes struck in Palestine and Phoenicia | seem to me to be “financial” | Yours very sincerely | C.C. Edgar

<sup>18</sup> MS 4323/26: lettera scritta su foglio a righe.

<sup>19</sup> Questo il passo cui Edgar fa riferimento: «P.P. III 141 is an account dated, at the baginning, ‘year 25 Choiak’, and ending with the entry οψονιον του α L απο | Παυλι εως Θαυτ μηνων δ. The form of this entry implies, as has been pointed out elsewhere, that the years in question did not begin in Thout; hence they must have been, according to the theory here put forward, revenue years. If this be so, the account began in the eleventh month of the twenty-fifth year of Euergetes, who would have begun in his twenty-sixth revenue year in the following Mecheir. There is evidence that, in continuous accounts, the number of the revenue year was not changed till the beginning of a new revenue year, *e.g.* in P.P. III 112, the twenty-sixth year is followed by the second year, but there is no reason to suppose that this rule was always followed: all that can be inferred from P.P. III 141 is that the papyrus was written after Thout, and after the accession of Philopator: the writer would naturally assign all transactions in and after Mecheir to the first year».



## 3.

Antiquities Dept. | Cairo 16.12.18<sup>20</sup>

Dear Mr. Smyly

I must apologize for criticizing your argument about P.Petr. III, 141, without reading it carefully. | Your interpretation of course allows for the possibility of | the accession of Philopator having taken place after Thot | of revenue year 26. At the risk of misinterpreting you once again, | I venture to make another criticism on an argument of | yours on the same page. You try to show that Philopator | came to the throne between Mecheir and Thot. But as the | revenue year of Euergetes was in advance of his canonical year | and as he died in his 26<sup>th</sup> canonical and 26<sup>th</sup> revenue | year, is it not clear that Philopator must have succeeded | him between Thot and Mecheir? If that is so, how do you | explain this evidence that the year of Philopator did not coincide in the 4<sup>th</sup> of Tybi? | I should be glad to believe with you that | only two years were used in the time of Philadelphos, the | Apollonios year and the canonical, and that the former | was in advance of the latter. It would make the dates of | L 38 and L 39 easier to understand and would bring the | double date of the Canopus inscr. into line with the concordances | of Apollonios. But at present I can see no solution of the difficulties which such a theory involves. | Yours sincerely | C.C. Edgar

## 4.

The Museum | Cairo | 17.4.21<sup>21</sup>

Dear Mr. Smyly

many thanks for your interesting | notes. ἀπαλλαγὴ is, as you suppose, a misprint<sup>22</sup>.

<sup>20</sup> MS 4323/25: lettera scritta su foglio a righe.

<sup>21</sup> MS 4323/24: lettera scritta su foglio a righe.

<sup>22</sup> L'edizione del papiro cui si fa riferimento, il nr. 59, era apparsa in C.C. EDGAR, *Selected papyri from the archives of Zenon (Nos. 55-64)*, «ASAE» 19-20 (1919-1920), pp. 181-206. Al nr. 59 (TM 682; PCairoZen I 59022) sono dedicate pp. 188-191. Si tratta di un conto riguardante una somma di denaro di proprietà dell'estensore del testo, o meglio del suo committente. Il totale è di 2 talenti, 2.124 dracme. Di questi, i 2 talenti in oro erano stati depositati nella banca di Stratokles. Le monete d'oro non raggiungevano esattamente l'ammontare di 2 talenti; rimaneva un saldo di 10 dracme 4 oboli a favore del depositante, che egli aveva prelevato dalla banca. L. 20 – l'ultima – è seguita da una linea con scrittura in corpo minore, che apporta delle correzioni alle cifre di denaro menzionate nelle linee precedenti.

| It is possible that you are right about ἱερεῖα<sup>23</sup>, but | the word, which very common in our papyri, | is in most cases shown by the context to mean pigs. | In no. 60<sup>24</sup> τὰ ἱερεῖα is evidently synonymous with | τὰς τοκάδας, probably also in 49<sup>25</sup> (a case in which | the reference to pigs is quite clear). The symbol which | I read as ἀργυρίου is something like this, but | its meaning is still obscure to me. | Yours sincerely | C.C. Edgar

## 5.

Antiquities Dept. | Cairo | 1.8.24<sup>26</sup>

Dear Professor Smyly | I have been looking again at | our Zenon Papyrus no. 75<sup>27</sup> and must admit | that my explanation of the figures was wrong | and that in the main point you were right. | In ll. 20, 21 read [ξβ] and [ξ] in l. 28 | read Y instead of Θ. In l. 34 the reading τη is not possible, neither is ια; I

<sup>23</sup> Il termine compare *supra lineam* in corrispondenza di l. 5, che contiene una cancellatura da parte dello scriba ed è esso stesso inserito in una sequenza di tre parole scritte in corpo minore e parzialmente cancellate.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 191-194 (TM 1005; PCairoZen III 59362 v). Si tratta di un papiro che reca sul recto la lettera di alcuni pastori che lamentano di non aver ricevuto terra sufficiente per il pascolo e sul verso una copia della ricevuta di 50 dracme da Pyrrhos per l'affitto della sua metà di 25 maiali, che egli aveva ottenuto in società con Pytheas (al quale spettava, probabilmente il pagamento per l'affitto dell'altra metà) da Epharmostos, fratello di Zenone.

<sup>25</sup> Ll. 3 e 5. Una lettera mal conservata scritta dal medico Artemidoros probabilmente ad Alessandria. Egli ha saputo che Petos il guardiano dei porci è fuggito e che risulta mancare un gran numero di maiali (il branco sembra essere appartenuto allo stesso Artemidoros). Egli quindi chiede Zenon di indagare, in modo da fargli sapere dove Petos si trovi e da garantirgli che egli verrà incarcerato e resterà in carcere finché non pagherà il dovuto riscatto. Alla fine egli conferma la ricezione di un maiale che Zenon gli ha mandato. L'edizione è in C.C. EDGAR, *Selected papyri from the archives of Zenon (Nos. 49-55)*, «ASAE» 19-20 (1919-1920), pp. 18-40. Al nr. 49 (TM 954; PCairoZen III 59310) sono dedicate pp. 22-24.

<sup>26</sup> MS 4323/30: lettera scritta su 1 foglio a righe.

<sup>27</sup> TM 2294; PCairo Zen I 59015 v. Un conto riguardante una consegna di olio. L'importatore sembra essere stato Apollonio e il conto sembra essere stato redatto nel suo ufficio. Il suo scopo è quello di mostrare il valore, o il valore nominale, della spedizione dopo il pagamento di dazi doganali, merci e imposte minori. Alcune note a margine sono state aggiunte in una scrittura più piccola, forse da Zenon o da un commercialista. Il fatto che l'olio sia stato trasportato in anfore di provenienza Milesia e Samia indica la sua origine, e un confronto tra il conto con PCairoZen I 59012 ci induce a credere che sia giunto per mare ad Alessandria e in tale porto sia stato scaricato.

can | read nothing but IX. In l. 35 I is possible | palaeographically, but not Y;  
 the probable reading, however, is Bχ'ε'<sup>28</sup>. I think the χ in l. | 34 must be a mis-  
 take which the scribe forgot to correct. The figures Bχ'ε' explain the qξχ'ε'  
 | in note 4; the scribe deducted from 1000 m. | the oil recovered instead of  
 the oil lost. Or have I missed the point again? | Yours sincerely | C.C. Edgar

## Appendice

Lisieux, 3, rue du Bouteillier | October, 30<sup>th</sup> 1908<sup>29</sup>

Dear Mr. Smyly,

I am now staying at home | for a while and take the oppor|tunity to answer  
 your interesting | note of April on my essay in the | Archiv<sup>30</sup>; I was a shamefully  
 long | time to do it and have first to | apologize for this delay; your letter |  
 reached me in the last days of my stay in Cairo and since the | voyage and work  
 in France hindered | me from writing any note; I | was working at my book on  
 the | Ptolemaic army and perfectly || unable to speak of anything but | soldiers,  
 cleruchs, τῆς ἐπιγονῆς Πα. | the work is now over and the | book will appear  
 next year<sup>31</sup>. | As to your objections to | the results of my calendar study, | the  
 strongest one, I think, is the | last, i.d. that the argument in | section II of my ar-  
 ticle does not | take into account that days may | have been omitted in the Mace-  
 donian | calendar. The text you quoted from | P.Paris I, col. III seems to imply |  
 that ὑπεξαίρεσις was possible in | the calendars which are called down | lines  
 above ἑλληνικὰ, and it can | be hardly doubted that the Mace|donian one was  
 the ἑλληνικὸν | calendar par excellence in Egypt. || But I am inclined to consider  
 this | objection as of a most theoretical | character; and I am not prepared | to at-  
 tach most importance to the | ~~fact~~<sup>32</sup> relation of any real omission | or intercalation  
 of some number of | days to the astronomy; such chan|ges in the normal course  
 of the | calendar had an eminently pract|ical interest and I suppose the | Lagids  
 did not take care of the | astronomy or, more precisely, the | astronomical laws  
 being taken into | account in the constitution of | the Egyptian year, they only

<sup>28</sup> ε si trova al disopra di χ.

<sup>29</sup> MS 4323-123-172\_033. Lettera costituita da due fogli a richi compiegati, per un totale di 8 facciate di scrittura.

<sup>30</sup> J. LESQUIER, *Sur deux dates d'Evergète et de Philopator*, «APF» 4 (1908), pp. 284-297.

<sup>31</sup> *Les institutions militaires de l'Égypte sous les Lagides*, Paris 1911.

<sup>32</sup> La parola è stata cancellata con un tratto di penna e sostituita *in scribendo* dalla successiva.

intended to put the Macedonian one<sup>33</sup> in concordance with the former. I turn now to the contradiction between my results and the so-called Ptolemaic Canon, which cannot be denied. But I do not think than<sup>34</sup> the Canon is a very important authority. Although I am extremely conservative in the use and commentary of ancient texts, I must distinguish between authors, historians, scholars of antiquity, who give us a plain statement, and mathematicians of the lower period who built chronological tables; the former may seem at first sight obscure or strong or bad informed, but their report is to be explained more than kept away, and, if not immediately intelligible, can become clear by some future discovery; sometime too, they may<sup>35</sup> have misunderstood ~~some~~<sup>36</sup> an older authority, whose genuine meaning can be at last detected. That is not the case of the Ptolemaic Canon. It is an artificial work, based on sources whose value escape us, and especially an average calculation. Moreover, we don't know<sup>37</sup> whether the financial years, which are in some way regnal years too, were not used in it. In such circumstances, the discrepancy of one year between the Canon and my results does not seem to me a very strong objection. It remains now to devote some lines to your general argument. "It may seem natural, – you said – to us who have an external era with which to compare our years, that the years of a king's reign should be counted from the anniversary of his accession; but I doubt that it would have seemed natural to an ancient people. So far as I know no ancient calendar ever employed this method ..."<sup>38</sup> and you quoted the system of writing by eponymous magistrates or priests and the system of the eras. The years of the Roman emperors were however counted with their tribunitiae potestates, which, I know it, participate of the character of the annual magistratures and in some way resemble the system of countries by eponymous, and I must concede than<sup>39</sup> the Romans had the era A.U.G. But I do not think than<sup>40</sup> most

<sup>33</sup> La parola è stata aggiunta *supra lineam*. Il suo inserimento è segnalato da un segno angolare di richiamo inserito sul rigo di base in corrispondenza dell'aggiunta interlineare.

<sup>34</sup> *Sic!*

<sup>35</sup> La parola è stata aggiunta *infra lineam*. Il suo inserimento è segnalato da un segno angolare di richiamo inserito sul rigo di base in corrispondenza dell'aggiunta interlineare.

<sup>36</sup> La parola è stata cancellata con un tratto di penna e sostituita *in scribendo* dalla successiva.

<sup>37</sup> La parola è stata aggiunta *supra lineam*. Il suo inserimento è segnalato da un segno angolare di richiamo inserito sul rigo di base in corrispondenza dell'aggiunta interlineare.

<sup>38</sup> Pare trattarsi di una citazione testuale della lettera dell'aprile 1908, cui Lesquier fa riferimento all'inizio della propria.

<sup>39</sup> *Sic!*

<sup>40</sup> *Sic!*

| people need to know the concordance between the king's years | and an external era; in Roman | Egypt, the emperors' years seem to | have been perfectly sufficient, even | in official acts. Under the Ptolemies, it might be enough that | learned men, priests and high magistrates knew how long extended the | last year of a king ~~and the first~~ | ~~of his ancestor~~. The succession of | the Egyptian years, though not | being at all ~~at~~<sup>41</sup> an era, allowed | however a comparison between || the course of the king's years and | an external comfort, even if the | beginnings of the regnal year were | not fixed for ever at the 1<sup>st</sup> of Thot, as after Euergetes II. | In conclusion, I am not | able to explain away your objections by topic replied, but I do | not know whether my hypotheses | must be all rejected. We must | hope in future<sup>42</sup> discoveries. | I send you two copies of | a recent paper on an Ashmounâin | inscription; will you kindly give | one of them from me to the Rev. | Mahaffy and accept the other | as an homage. | Yours very sincerely | Jean Lesquier.

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<sup>41</sup> La parola è stata cancellata con un tratto di penna e sostituita *in scribendo* dalla successiva.

<sup>42</sup> La lettera finale è stata cancellata con un tratto obliquo discendente di penna.

