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TWO NOTES ON P. MERTON II 100

The papyrus now accessible as P. Merton II 100 was first edited by H. I. Bell as "A Requisitioning Order for Taxes in Kind," in *Aegyptus* 31, fasc. 2 (1951) (Raccolta Vitelli), pp. 307-12, and subsequently reprinted as SB VI 9232.¹⁾ The document, written during the emirate of Jordanes (ca. A. D. 699-704), is dated 23 Phaophi of the thirteenth indiction (21 October 699).²⁾ Difficulties of decipherment are owed to the colors of the inks that were used (they fade into the color of the papyrus itself), the frequent use of abbreviation, and the extreme cursiveness of the second hand (lines 5-8). Nevertheless, some improvements in the text can be made once it is recognized that the Merton papyrus belongs to a group of requisitions that also includes Stud. Pal. III 253-54 and VIII 1085. The emendations proposed here may be verified against the plate that accompanies the Merton edition.

1

Line 1 : ΠΕΤΤΠΗΔΙΟΣ.

The order is transmitted by a pagarch whose name has been read as ΠΕΤΤΠΗΔΙΟΣ. The editor remarks (intro.) that the pagarch Pettpedius is otherwise unknown, and (line 1 note) that the name, though strange, "seems clear." On the other hand, the Stud. Pal. requisitions issue from a pagarch named Petterius. Reconsideration of the Merton papyrus with this in mind reveals that ΠΕΤΤΠΗΔΙΟΣ, specifically from epsilon to the second pi, is too long for the space available.

Read instead : ΠΕΤΤΗΡΙΟΣ.

The epsilon is written almost as a monogram with the following tau, a common feature in hands of this period.³⁾ Of the rho, I detect traces of a loop. This probably explains why the letter was originally mistaken for delta.

There seems little doubt that the Merton and Stud. Pal. pagarchs are identical. This identification brings with it two additional consequences for the documents under con-

1) Inasmuch as the Merton publication is substantially the same as the editio princeps, I shall continue to speak of "the editor" in the singular.

2) Not 22 Oct., as given in the Merton edition.

3) Cf. PSI XII 1267 with plate III at the back of that volume, and the plates at the back of P. Apoll.

sideration. First, since the Stud.Pal. texts are unquestionably of Arsinoite provenance, conclusive support is given to the Arsinoite provenance proposed by Bell for the Merton papyrus. At the same time, the fixing of provenance lends additional weight to Rémondon's suggestion (see, especially, introductions to P.Apoll. 1, 8 and 9) that Jordanes (P.Merton 100, 2), like his predecessor, Flavius Titus, was duke of both Arcadia and the Thebaid. Secondly, if, as seems certain, the Stud.Pal. requisitions fall within the same fifteen-year indiction cycle as the Merton papyrus, then precise dates for Stud.Pal. III 253 and 254 can replace their editorial assignations to the seventh century. The former (10 Phaophi, 12th indiction) may now be dated to 7 October 698, the latter (28 Phaophi, 11th indiction) to 25 October 697. The condition of Stud.Pal. VIII 1085 will not allow for an exact dating.⁴⁾

2

Lines 5-6, beginning with the second hand : as published, these read :

† Ἡλίας νοτ(άρ)ιος [ὁμολογῶ ?]
 ὑπεσχ[<ημ>έν]αι ἐπίσταλμ[α . .] τῆς ἀλικ(ῆς)⁵⁾ λάκκ(ων) δεκαεννέα [.
 'I, Elias, notary, [acknowledge] that I have undertaken responsibility for a requisitioning order for the nineteen lakka of salt.'⁶⁾

Difficulties are immediately evident, and are conscientiously detailed by the editor in his commentary. Nevertheless, they can, I believe, be resolved by comparing these lines with Stud.Pal. III 254, 4-5, written by one Elias, apparently the same notary who wrote P.Merton 100, 5ff. The pertinent Stud.Pal. lines, with breathings regularized and all abbreviations resolved, read :

† Ἡλίας νοτάρ(ιος) ὑπέγρ(αφα) [τὸ]
 ἐπίσταλ(μα) τῶν κρ(ι)θ(ῆς) ἀρτ(αβῶν) ἑκατὸν ἐξήκοντα δύο μδ(νων).

With this as a model, I would offer the following reading for P.Merton 100, 5-6 :

4) For indictional dating in Egypt, see, inter al., Wilcken, *Grundzüge*, pp.lix-lxi, and Sijpesteijn, in *Jahrbuch der österreichischen byzantinischen Gesellschaft* 11-12 (1962-1963), pp. 2-3.

5) Read ἀλικῆς.

6) For the technical sense of the word ἐπίσταλμα, here equivalent to ἐντάγιον in the correspondence of Kurrah ibn Sharik, see *Aegyptus* 31 (1951), p.311; P.Merton 100 intro.; Rémondon's note on P.Apoll. 96,4; cf. P.Grenf. I 63.

† Ἡλίαις νοτάρι(ος)

ὑπέγραψα τ(δ) ἐπίσταλμα τῶν τῆς ἀλικ(ῆς) λάικων δεκαεννέα.

Two major comments are needed :

5. νοτάρι(ος): νοτ(άριος) [ὀμολογῶ?], ed. Something appears to be required to fill out the line, but the editor conceded that ὀμολογῶ was "perhaps a good deal for the space." Also possible are νοτάρι[ος], or, simply, νοτ(άριος), with a filler stroke after the tau. It is hard to construe the traces, if in fact they are ink, toward the end of the line.

6. ὑπέγραψα : ὑπεσχ[<κη>έν]αι, ed. The editor points out that his reading is problematical because : 1) the restoration presumes that a scribal error was made; and 2) the usage ὑπέχω ἐπίσταλμα is unparalleled. Regarding palaeographical details, he observes : "υπεσ is fairly clear; χ, though almost obliterated, seems recognizable." The reading proposed here fits the lacuna exactly and, at the same time, removes the problems of scribal error and unparalleled usage. Furthermore, though sigma may seem clear on the papyrus, it may be noted that that letter is easily confused with certain forms of gamma in hands of this period. As a case in point, cf. S.G.Kapsomenakis, *Voruntersuchungen zu einer Grammatik der Papyri der nachchristlichen Zeit* (Münch. Beitr. 28), Munich, 1938, p.104, emending πρέγκ[εψ? to πρεσβ[ύτερος in P.Flor. III 336, 4 (7th cent. ?).⁷⁾ Any remaining doubts might be removed were it possible to verify Wessely's reading of ὑπέγρα(α)ψα in Stud.Pal. III 254,4. Unfortunately, it has not as yet been possible to locate the papyrus in question. Wessely identifies it as "Paris Musées Nationaux 7113 App. 681," but Professor Jean Scherer has informed me (letter of 7 Nov. 1973) that Wessely's reference is incorrect.

The verb ὑπογράφω is common in papyri of the late Byzantine period, especially as used, intransitively, in contracts (e.g., the ἐξῆς ὑπογράφων formula in P.Oxy. XVI 1894, 7; 1898, 17; 1987, 13, and many other documents). For the transitive use and for the sense here, cf. Liddell-Scott-Jones, *Greek-English Lexicon*, s.v.2. For a parallel,

7) Despite Norsa, who re-examined the papyrus and defended the original reading of πρεγκ[; see the page of Nachträge at the end of Kapsomenakis' book. In this connection, it may be noted that beta at this time is often written so as to be virtually indistinct from kappa, and, in the context, presbyteros is more suitable than princeps. We would, for example, expect a princeps (sc. officii) to have had the gentilicium Flavius (ZPE 11 [1973], pp.48-49, 58-59), but the man in question here has the gentilicium Aurelius. Furthermore, the usual spelling of princeps is πριγκιψ; see P.Mich. XI 613, 2 note, cf. Daris, *Il lessico latino nel greco d' Egitto*, s.v., where the reference to P.Flor. 336,4 should now be deleted.

though earlier in date and in a more obscure, and apparently elliptical, passage, cf.

P. Abinn. 40, 5-6 : τὸ δὲ ἐπισταλμα ὑπ[ε] | ἔγραψα.

Lesser details of the readings proposed here may be checked against the plate of P. Merton 100. Problems remain, not only elsewhere in the text, but even, I must admit, in the two lines under consideration here.⁸⁾ Nevertheless, these emendations have, I trust, gone some way in making sense out of these troublesome lines, which may now be translated :

"I, Elias, notary, have signed the requisitioning order for the nineteen lakka of salt."

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8) For example, the alpha of ἀλικ(ῆς) is hard to discern, but might be construed as being formed by the extra flourish at the end of the sigma of τῆς and by that at the top of the following lambda. More important, apart from the question whether λακ, a Coptic loanword (Crum, *Coptic Dictionary*, 138a, s.v. λOK), is correctly resolved (why two kappas instead of one? why declined at all?), is the question whether that word has been correctly read. The ink is clear enough, but, except for kappa, the letters are amorphous. In place of ἀλικ(ῆς) λακ I might hazard a reading of ἀλικῆς κ()θ(), with theta, of which there appear to be traces, suspended immediately above the second kappa. This would be more in conformity with the original mention of this item in line 3 : ἀλικῆς κ()θ(). The editor resolves κ()θ() in line 3 as κ(α)θ(αρῆς), following Rémondon and abandoning his own resolution, κ(δλλα)θ(α), printed in the editio princeps (cf. P. Lond. IV 1414, 25 n.) - but κ(δλλα)θ(α) may well be right and, if so, should be printed in line 3 and, if the conjecture advanced in this footnote is right, in line 6 of the text. In the latter case, of course, the proper resolution would be κ(ολλά)θ(ων).