

Two poll-tax receipts from Tebtunis and some familiar figures

A cache of several dozen ostraca was discovered in Tebtunis in February 1935, in what was described as «una costruzione tombale già saccheggiata, immediatamente a sud del tempio», ‘adattata a dimora domestica’ (O.Tebt.Pad., pp. VII, 1); they were transferred to Padua and were published by C. Gallazzi as O.Tebt.Pad. 1–59 in 1979. A very few ostraca of the same group found their way through the antiquities market to other collections and were published separately (SB XX 14957–14958¹ and XXVI 16368²). All these ostraca are receipts for taxes paid by members of a family between 159 and some time in the first quarter of the third century (all date clauses omit the emperors’ names, which causes some uncertainty). The earlier texts refer to three sons of Heron son of Petesouchos: Mysthes, Petronios, and Petesouchos. Mysthes and Petronios are not heard of again after 161, whereas Petesouchos is attested as late as 174. The bulk of the archive consists of receipts for Lautanis son of Petesouchos (grandson of Heron), which range in date from the reign of Commodus to that of Severus Alexander.³

This family archive included papyri as well, removed from the ground before the ostraca were excavated: four items housed in the Beinecke Library (Yale), two of them penthemeros certificates of September 174, published as P.Sijp. 42c–d (P.CtYBR inv. 301 and 303), and the two poll-tax receipts edited below. These Yale papyri were purchased by M.I. Rostovtzeff and C.B. Welles in Cairo in 1931, ‘before 10 February’. They were no doubt among the papyri from the area of the temple of Soknebtunis which on 11 March 1931 G. Bagnani described as ‘plundered’ a year earlier.⁴ The Tebtunis papyri bought by Rostovtzeff and Welles at that time are not limited to these four;⁵ a search through the online records and images has not revealed any other related items, but I may well have overlooked them.

P.Sijp. 42c–d, whose relevance became clear only very recently,⁶ add substantially to our knowledge of the family. P.Sijp. 42c introduced a new member or rather branch of the family: Petesouchos son of Petronios and Thamounis, grandson of Petesouchos, who worked at the embankments on the same days as Petesouchos son of Heron and Tamystha (mother not known previously), grandson of Petesouchos. Petronios and Heron, the fathers of the two Petesouchoi, were probably brothers; Heron’s son Petronios may have been named after his uncle.⁷ P.Sijp. 42d is important in its turn because it settles a problem in the dating of the archive. Petesouchos son of Heron was previously attested in years 1 (O.Tebt.Pad. 1), 7 (O.Tebt.Pad. 4), 8

¹ O.Princ. inv. AM 15960(4)B–C, ed. pr. P.J. SIJPESTEIJN, *Greek Ostraca from the Arsinoite Nome*, «ZPE» 71 (1988), pp. 119–120.

² O.Schøyen inv. MS 244/237, ed. pr. G. NACHTERGAEL, R. PINTAUDI, *Ostraca de la Collection Martin Schøyen*, «Aegyptus» 81 (2001), pp. 174–175.

³ The archive is described by K. GEENS at <http://www.trismegistos.org/archive/129/>; print version in K. VANDORPE, W. CLARYSSE, H. VERRETH (eds), *Graeco-Roman archives from the Fayum* (Leuven 2015), pp. 230–233.

⁴ ‘We were very much afraid that it had already been plundered since we knew from our workmen and also from the Cairo dealers that some natives had dug there last year and had found a very large quantity of papyri’; quoted in D.J.I. BEGG, “*It was Wonderful, Our Return in the Darkness with ... the Baskets of Papyrus!*” *Papyrus Finds at Tebtunis from the Bagnani Archives, 1931-1936*, «BASP» 35 (1998), p. 189.

⁵ See C. GALLAZZI & G. HADJI MINAGLOU, *Fouilles anciennes et nouvelles sur le site de Tebtynis*, «BIFAO» 89 (1989), p. 185 n. 14; T.M. HICKEY, *Tebtunis on the Arno and Beyond: Two “Archives”*, in *100 anni di istituzioni fiorentine per la papirologia* (Firenze 2009), pp. 70–71.

⁶ U. GAD, *Petesouchos in Verschleifung and the family of Lautinas [sic] son of Petesouchos* (Korr. Tyche 826), «Tyche» 31 (2016), pp. 278–280.

⁷ See the stemma in GAD, *loc. cit.*, p. 280.

(O.Tebt.Pad. 29), 13 (O.Tebt.Pad. 30–31), and possibly 14 (O.Tebt.Pad. 59; there is no name). These were all taken to be regnal years of M. Aurelius (and partly L. Verus), but this was questioned because of the lack of regnal formulas, and dates under Pertinax and Septimius Severus were tentatively suggested (P.Köln IX, p. 157, n. 1 = BL XII 323). P.Sijp. 42d refers to Thoth of year 14 of M. Aurelius, thus confirming the chronology established by Gallazzi.

The dating of the earlier texts receives further support from one of the two new papyri (1), dated to year 21 of Antoninus Pius (157/8). This receipt, issued to Mysthes, is now the earliest text in the archive; this was previously O.Tebt.Pad. 28 (159), which likewise refers to Mysthes. The other new text (2) concerns Petesouchos, Mysthes' brother; it is comparable to O.Tebt.Pad. 4 (167).

1.

P.CtYBR inv. 375

7.8 × 7.8 cm

157/8

[(ἔτους) κα Αὐτοκράτορος Καίσαρος Τίτου Αἰ]λί[ου]
 Ἀδ[ρ]ιαγο[ῦ] Ἀ[ντωνίνου] Σεβαστοῦ
 Εὐσεβοῦς □□□[□□] διέγρ(αψεν) Ἡρώδη
 4 καὶ μετόχω(ν) πρακ(τόρων) ἀργ(υρικῶν) Τεπ(τύνεως) Μύσθης
 Ἡρωνος τοῦ Πετεσοῦχου μη(τρὸς)
 Ταμύσθας λα[ογ]ρ(αφίας) τοῦ αὐτοῦ κα (ἔτους)
 δραχ(μὰς) εἴκοσι ὀκτώ, (γίνονται) (δραχμαὶ) κη.

3 διεγρ 4 μετεχ^οπρα^καρ^τε); 1. μετόχοις 5 μη̄ 6 λα[ογ]ρ□τουᾱκα□ 7 δραχ □, /□

Year 21 of Emperor Caesar Titus Aelius Hadrianus Antoninus Augustus Pius (month, day). Mysthes son of Heron grandson of Petesouchos, mother Tamystha, paid to Herodes and associates, collectors of money taxes of Tebtunis, for the poll-tax of the same 21st year, twenty-eight drachmas, total 28 dr.

3. □□□[. Perhaps Χ[ο]ια[κ, but it is not easy. Probably not Φα[ωφι.
 Ἡρώδη. This tax collector is new.
 4–5. Mysthes was previously known from O.Tebt.Pad. 28 (159) and 2 (161).
 6. Ταμύσθας. Tamystha is also mentioned in P.Sijp. 42d.6, as the mother of Petesouchos.
 7. δραχ(μὰς) εἴκοσι ὀκτώ. This is a part payment, the full rate being 40 drachmas; see O.Tebt.Pad., pp. 4–5.

2.

P.CtYBR inv. 302

7.9 (w) × 4.7 (h) cm

late January / early February 166

ς (ἔτους) ἀρι(θμήσεως) Τυβι. δι(έγραψε) Νεμεσιανῶ πράκ(τορι)
 ἀργ(υρικῶν) κώ(μης) Τεπ(τύνεως) Πετεσοῦχος Ἡρωνος
 τοῦ Πετεσοῦχου λαογρ(αφίας) τοῦ αὐτοῦ
 4 ς (ἔτους) ἀργ(υρίου) (δραχμὰς) δεκαέξ, (γίνονται) (δραχμαὶ) ις.

1 ς□αρι□, δι□, πρα^κ 2 αργ□κω□τε) 3 λαογρ□ 4 ς□αργ□□, /□

Year 6, for the account of Tybi. Petesouchos son of Heron grandson of Petesouchos paid to Nemesianos, collector of money taxes of the village of Tebtunis, for the poll-tax of the same 6th year, sixteen drachmas of silver, total 16 dr.

1. ἀρι(θμήσεως) Τυβι. The expression indicates that the payment was credited to Tybi but was made early in the following month (Mechir, starting on 26.i.166); see most recently D. HAGEDORN, BGU XX 2851 Exkursus II, pp. 100f. (cf. pp. 107f.). For a somewhat different view (in this case, the payment could also have been made in the second half of Tybi), see O.Tebt.Pad. 1.1 n. Νεμεσιανῶ. Not known otherwise.
4. (δραχμάς) δεκάξ. As in the previous text, here too we have a part payment.

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