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Tomasz Derda

TOPARCHIES IN THE ARSINOITE NOME:
A STUDY IN ADMINISTRATION OF THE FAYUM
IN THE ROMAN PERIOD

INTRODUCTION

In Graeco-Roman Egypt, from the IIIrd century BC onwards, a toparchy was an administrative unit, a subdivision of a nomos. Among the ancient authors only Strabo mentions the Egyptian toparchies; in his somewhat misleading account he wrote:

η δὲ χώρα τὴν μὲν πρώτην διαίρεσιν εἰς νομοὺς ἔχει, δέκα μὲν ἡ Θηβαίς, δέκα δ’ ἐν τῷ Δέλτα, ἐκκαίδεκα δ’ ἡ μεταξὺ· ὡς δὲ τυνὲς, τοσοῦτοι ἦσαν οἱ σύμπαντες νομοί δόσαι αἱ ἐν τῷ λαβυρίνθῳ αὐλαί· αὐται δ’ ἑλάττουσι τῶν τριάκοντα [καὶ εἰς] πάλιν δ’ οἱ νομοὶ τομᾶς ἄλλας ἔχον· εἰς γὰρ τοπαρχίας οἱ πλείστοι διήρητο, καὶ αὐταὶ δ’ εἰς ἄλλας τομᾶς· ἠλάχισται δ’ αἱ ἀρουραι μερίδες.

The country was first divided into nomes, the Thebais containing ten, the country in the Delta ten, and the country between them sixteen (ac-

* The present article was written partly in spring 2001 during my fellowship in the Departement Klassieke Studies of Katholieke Universiteit Leuven when I was involved in the Fayum Project directed by Willy Clarysse.
cording to some, the number of the Nomes all told was the same as that of the halls in the Labyrinth, but the number of these is less than thirty [or thirty-six?]; and again the Nomes were divided into other sections, for most of them were divided into toparchies, and these also into other sections; and the smallest portions were the arouae (XVII.1.3).

It is not our aim to discuss all the peculiarities of Strabo's account; let us point out one of his errors, especially surprising to a papyrologist: he wrote 'the arouae' apparently instead of kômê. Or should we imagine the aroua as a division within a kômê? On the other hand, Strabo seems to be accurate in another place where he says that not all but 'most' of the nomes were subdivided into toparchies. In the very beginning of the Roman rule in Egypt there were no toparchies in the Fayum. Was it the Arsinoite nome that was hidden behind this word?

Strabo was not particularly interested in details of the administrative division of Egypt, which does not surprise given his attitude to countries he described; it is, however, more remarkable, that contemporary papyrologists and historians of Roman Egypt, with few exceptions, seem to neglect this issue as well. For the general history of Egyptian toparchies and toparchs we have at our disposal only an outdated study by Ludwik Piotrowicz; a historian of Ptolemaic Egypt can consult Edmond Van't Dack's study published in 1948.

The toparchies in particular nomes drew the attention of several scholars including Marie Drew-Bear and Jennifer A. Sheridan (Hermopolites), Maria Rosaria Falivene (Herakleopolites), Paola Pruneti (Oxyrhynchites).

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2 For the method applied by Strabon, see G. Aujac, Strabon et la science de son temps, Paris 1966 and Strabon, Le voyage en Egypte (cit. n. 1), pp. 15–57. See also J. Ball, Egypt in the Classical Geographers, Cairo 1942, pp. 53–70.


Their studies, however, focus on the administrative borders of toparchies inside the nomes in question and offer no help to a reader interested in the function the toparchies played in the economic life of Roman Egypt. A starting point for a study of such a broad character can be provided by some monographs on particular offices of Roman Egypt, especially those organically connected with the toparchies.6

None of the studies quoted above focus on the Fayum. Considerable progress was made some years ago by Willy Clarysse7 who suggested that toparchies have replaced the former nomarchies. My study intends to go further in this direction. Its aim is to discuss the evidence for the toparchies in the Roman Fayum with the possible result that one day we both will prepare a study on the toparchies in the Fayum from their beginning until their end.

THE TOPARCHIES IN THE FAYUM.
THE CASE OF DOUBLED TOPARCHIES

In the documents of the Roman Fayum the toparchies are usually (but not always) numbered, whereas in the rest of Egypt they are named either


6 B. PALME Das Amt des ἀπαιτητής in Ägypten, Wien 1989. Lewis’s lists of compulsory services will be used in this study for extracting the services connected with toparchies.

after the main village, being, as one believes, their administrative centre or after the Nile course (toparchies ἄνω and κάτω) or after their position within the nome (τ. μητροπόλεως, μέση τ.). Even at first glance, the numbering of toparchies seems to be another specific feature of the Fayum, as are for instance the Arsinoite merides and many other administrative peculiarities.

Whenever a numbered toparchy occurs in a document of Fayumic provenance, it is accompanied by a standard commentary which reflects a communis opinio of the editors. Some general remarks of P. Tebt. II, p. 352 are referred to; according to Grenfell and Hunt "in the middle of the third century the three μερίδες are found subdivided into numbered τοπαρχίαι. (...) But whether this arrangement existed before the changes introduced by Septimius Severus is very doubtful." The editors dealing with toparchies with double numbers usually quote Eric G. Turner, JEA 22 (1936), p. 8 (after Jouguet on P. Thead. 26): "In the Fayyum, in the merides of Heraclides and Themistes, toparchies are paired off together (odd and even numbers together in Heraclides, even and even or odd and odd in Themistes)." No one seems to have explored this issue, although a certain "naïvity" in Jouguet's opinion is striking: why to pair off the toparchies in a way and so strange and varied, depending on the meris? What is more, all these remarks describe the phenomenon without attempting to understand the system behind it. As far as we know, no editor of Greek documents ever discussed the unusual fact that for instance Karanis seems to have belonged both to toparchy one and six and toparchy four and five of the Heraclides meris, see, e.g., P. Col. VII 137 (AD 301/2), lines 46, 91 and 96 vs. lines 23, 31 and 74 – (toparchy 1 + 6 and 4 + 5 respectively) and other Isidoros' papyri.

TOPARCHIES IN THE FAYUM
AND THEIR VILLAGES

The significant items of evidence for the toparchies in the Roman Fayum and the villages belonging to them may be tabulated as follows:

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8 The numbers accompanying the Hermopolite "toparchies" in the IVth century documents are not a parallel since they refer directly to pagi (see below, p. 52).
### Toparchies not numbered (in Roman period only)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Document</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>τοπ(αρ.) τῶν (κ. κωμῶν) περὶ Σκέφτυτον</td>
<td>SPP XXII 94,4&lt;sup&gt;9&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>AD 111</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>τοπαρχ(ία) Θεοδολφείας καὶ ἄλλων [κωμῶν]</td>
<td>P. Fay. 81, 4</td>
<td>AD 115</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>τοπαρχ(ία) Διονυσιάδος</td>
<td>P. Lond. II 295, 1</td>
<td>AD 118</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>τοπ(αρ.) τῶν (κ. κωμῶν) περὶ Ἡρακ(λείαν)</td>
<td>BGU III 755, 3&lt;sup&gt;10&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>AD 118</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Numbered toparchies

#### Meris of Herakleides

Toparchies with a single number:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Village</th>
<th>Document(s)</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Soknopaiou Nesos (?)</td>
<td>SB XVI 12833&lt;sup&gt;11&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>AD 118&lt;sup&gt;12&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Sebennytos (?)&lt;sup&gt;13&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>BGU III 786, II 7</td>
<td>AD 161&lt;sup&gt;14&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Kerkesoucha?</td>
<td>P. Strash. II 216, 3</td>
<td>AD 126/7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Soknopaiou Nesos</td>
<td>P. Gen. II 100, 17</td>
<td>AD 128</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>P. Gen. II 101, I 2 and 4</td>
<td>AD 128-129</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<sup>9</sup> For this document, see below, p. 36.
<sup>10</sup> For this document, see below, p. 40.
<sup>11</sup> For this document, see below, p. 40.
<sup>13</sup> The papyrus comes from Soknopaiou Nesos, but the locality in the third toparchy could be Sebennytos according to the editor (F. KREBS).
<sup>14</sup> For the date, see BL VIII, p. 34.
Toparchies with a double number:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Village</th>
<th>Document(s)</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1+6</td>
<td>Karanis</td>
<td><em>P. Cairo Isid.</em> 31, 3 (?), <em>P. Cairo Isid.</em> 39, 3, <em>P. Cairo Isid.</em> 3, 1, 3, 4, 9, 10</td>
<td>AD 276, 296, 299, 299, 299</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>P. Col. VII</em> 137, iii 46, iv 91, 96, <em>P. Mert.</em> 88, viii 4, xvii 3</td>
<td>AD 301/2, 298-301</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2+3</td>
<td>Philadelphoeia</td>
<td><em>P. Wise.</em> II 86, 15, <em>BGU VII</em> 1611, 4</td>
<td>AD 245-247, 283</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2+3</td>
<td>Kerkesoucha</td>
<td><em>P. Tebt.</em> II 368, 581 descr.</td>
<td>AD 265, 268</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2+3</td>
<td>Psenyris</td>
<td><em>BGU II</em> 578 (= WChr 279), 4</td>
<td>AD 263</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4+5</td>
<td>Karanis</td>
<td><em>P. Cairo Isid.</em> 32, 4, <em>P. Cairo Isid.</em> 38, 4, <em>P. Cairo Isid.</em> 2, 12, 74</td>
<td>AD 279, 296, 298, 301/2, 298-301</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>P. Col. VII</em> 137, ii 23, 31, iv 74, <em>P. Mert.</em> 88, x 4, xiii 3 and xviii 4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>ChLA XI</em> 1203 i 5, 8, ii 43, <em>P. Mich.</em> XII 636, 5, <em>P. NYU 20 (SB XII 1088)</em>, 6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4+5</td>
<td>Ptolemais Nea</td>
<td><em>P. Corn.</em> 20, l. 3, 28, 47, 65, 84, 104, 127, 147, 169, 189, 212, 302</td>
<td>AD 302</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[7]+</td>
<td>Psyro</td>
<td><em>P. Strab.</em> III 153, 5</td>
<td>AD 262/3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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15 The edition has τοπαρχια β with a following stroke but the photograph (Plate XLI) clearly shows that instead of the stroke gamma should be read.

16 For the date, see BL X, p. 284.


18 The document contains eleven declarations of land for the census of AD 302 (the lines referred to are those containing the number of toparchy); the declarants are from Karanis, Arsinoe and Ptolemais Nea, but the plots declared are without exception in the village of Ptolemais Nea.
**Meris of Themistos and Polemon**

Toparchies with a single number:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Village</th>
<th>Document</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Tebtrynis</td>
<td><em>P. Kron.</em> 31, 4</td>
<td>AD 128</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Philagris</td>
<td><em>PSI XII</em> 1236, 7</td>
<td>AD 128</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Theadelphiea</td>
<td><em>P. Meyer</em> 4, 1</td>
<td>AD 161</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Toparchies with a double number:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Village</th>
<th>Document(s)</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>[2]+4</td>
<td>Kerkethoeris</td>
<td><em>SPP X</em> 91</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[2]+4</td>
<td>Ibion Eikosipentarouron</td>
<td><em>SPP X</em> 91</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2+4</td>
<td>Andromachis</td>
<td><em>P. Flor.</em> I 19, 2</td>
<td>AD 248</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2+4</td>
<td>?</td>
<td><em>P. Laur.</em> III 62, 4</td>
<td>AD 253-261</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6+8</td>
<td>Theadelphiea</td>
<td><em>P. Fay.</em> 85, 5</td>
<td>AD 247</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>P. Lips.</em> 83, 5</td>
<td>AD 257</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>P. Sakaon</em> 11, 5</td>
<td>AD 259/7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>P. Sakaon</em> 82, 6</td>
<td>AD 296/7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>P. Sakaon</em> 12, 9</td>
<td>AD 298</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>P. Sakaon</em> 76, 6</td>
<td>AD 298</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>SB X</em> 10726, 6</td>
<td>AD 298</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(= <em>P. Corn.</em> 19)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>P. Sakaon</em> 86, 11</td>
<td>AD 300</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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19 For *P. Strasb.* III 153, see below, p. 36.
20 For *SPP X* 91, see below, p. 36.
7+9  Herakleia  P. Flor. I 26, 7  AD 273
7+9  Dionysias  P. Sakaon 2, 7, 9, 22  AD 300
7+9  Philoteris  P. Sakaon 3, l. 5, 7, 21  AD 300

REMARKS
ON SOME DOCUMENTS

P. Erl. 28 ii 8 (no photograph available) – the edition of this fragmentary document has in line 8: δτοπ(αρχίας) τής µερίδος. The Arsinoite provenance is suggested by the numbered toparchy and the meris (see comm. on line 8). Given the palaeographical date (2nd century AD), the reading of a single number of the toparchy is acceptable. Unfortunately, no village name is preserved.

P. Kron. 36 (no photograph available) had in its editio princeps (line 3): Παύνυς σι(τόλογος) α τοπ(αρχία(s) [ . . . ; in the réédition (SB XIV 11864) the line reads as follows: Παύνυς ελs αµηθί(µηνων) Παχών.

P. Köln VII 316, 4 (Karanis, AD 302) requires a more detailed comment. Aurelii Serenos and Heron, both bouleutai of the city of Arsinoe and dekaprótoi write to a certain Areios, υπηρέτης τής τοπαρχίας (lines 1-4). His office is unknown but the editors convincing suggest to identify it with βοηθός δεκαπρώτων τής τοπαρχίας known from some documents from Karanis and Theadelphia (see comm. to line 4). The toparchy has no number because this is an internal document relevant to the activity of the office but not intended for external use, as were the receipts issued by dekaprótoi, which are our main source for the numbered toparchies.23

P. NYU i, 12 (Karanis, AD 299–), so the editors, the documents should be dated to the period AD 299-302 if the editor’s reading is correct (the dekaprótoi and their toparchies disappeared between May and July of

23 The toparchies are rendered without their numbers also in numerous receipts on ostraca, see below, p. 49.
AD 302, see below). Perhaps there is enough space in the lacuna for the numbers of the toparchy that were originally there (1 + 6 or 4 + 5).

**PSI Congr. XI** 8, 5 (Ars, AD 138/9) – the number of the toparchy is in lacuna.

**P. Tebt. II 368**, 2 (AD 265) has δεκαπρώτος β τοπαρχίας of the meris of Polemon (so the editio princeps); but the toparchy in question is the 2nd and 3rd of the meris of Herakleides where the same dekaprōtos, Aurelius Agathodaemon served his office. The scribe working for him in Tebtynis automatically wrote “of the meris of Polemon”; he committed the same mistake in **P. Tebt. II 581 descr.**

**SPP X 91** – this is a fragment of a document written in a literary hand typical of the 2nd and 3rd centuries AD. In the Vienna collection some other fragments written in the same hand can be found, perhaps belonging to a single document. The edition of **SPP X 91** reads as follows:

Tαλί
Τηρακλείδης
Κερκεθουήρεος
Ειβίωνος (Εἰκοσιπέντε ἀρων ?)
5 – καὶ δ – τοπαρχίας ?
Μύσθης

It is clear that the toparchy (note that singular in line 5 is purely hypothetical) in question cannot be 6th and 4th, as Wessely’s edition suggests, since the numbers of the paired toparchies never appear in descending order. What is more, the fac-simile of the document accompanying the edition leaves no doubt that the sigma is too far to the left to be connected with the following delta; most probably it originally belonged to the preceding column. The villages mentioned in connection with the toparchy x and 4 are located in the meris of Polemon; the system of the doubled toparchies as reconstructed in this paper suggests toparchy 2 + 4; the same toparchy 2 + 4 included the village of Andromachis. A century earlier Tebtynis belonged to toparchy 2 and Philagris to toparchy 4 – all these villages are located in the Gharaq Basin and they might have previously belonged to the two toparchies and then to the doubled toparchy 2 + 4.

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24 Cf. supra, n. 17. For the discussion of these two documents from Tebtynis, see my paper “Aurelius Agathodaemon, dekaprōtos of the second and third toparchy of the Arsinoite nome”, **JJP 31** (2001), pp. 9–12.
The occurrence of the double toparchy dates SPP X 91 to the second half of the IIIrd century. It is important for our study of literary hands of the Roman period, especially because the famous Potter’s Oracle was written with a very similar hand.

**P. Strasb. III 153** is a typical dekaprôtoi receipt. Of the number of their toparchy only an êta survived. The village mentioned in the receipt is Psya Ptolemaiou in the meris of Herakleides. P. Strasb. III 153 is our only piece of evidence for toparchy 8; to fit the system of doubled toparchies (see table) we have to assume that the toparchy was originally 7+8. This was already suggested by Jacques Schwartz (see his comm. to line 3) on the assumption that the numbers should be combined according to the pattern: odd and even (see my introductory remarks to this paper).

**SPP XXII 94** (Soknopaiou Nesos, AD 111) and **BGU III 755** (AD 118) should be discussed together. The first document is a letter, the author of which is (lines 3-4): Πτολεμαῖος γεγυμ(νασι)ρχηκώς γενάμε(νος) σειτο-λ(όγος) (= σιτολόγος) τοπ( ) τῶν περὶ Σεβέννυτον; the latter is a typical sitologos receipt issued by (line 3): Ήρα[κ]λεί(δης καὶ [με]τοχ(οι) σ[ι]τοΑ(όγοι) τοπ( ) τῶν περὶ Ἡρακ(λείαν). In both τοπ( ) was supplemented by the editors as τόπ(ων), probably because of the following article τῶν. Τοπ(ων) (the word not abbreviated) are indeed connected with sitologoi, but only in documents dated to the IIind cent. BC, e.g. in **P. Cairo Good. 7 i 4-6** (119/8 BC): παρὰ Κολλοῦθου τοῦ σιτολογούντος τινας τόπους τῆς Ἡρακλείδου μερίδος, similarly in **P. Hels. I 6** (Herakleopolite, 164 BC) and **P. Tebt. III 837** (Tebtynis, 177 BC), also **P. Oxy. XII 1447** of AD 44. But our two documents are dated to the early IIInd century AD when the toparchies started to appear again in the Arsinoite documents. Therefore we prefer to expand the abbreviation differently: τοπ(αρχία) τῶν (sc. κωμῶν) περὶ Ἡρακ(λείαν) and τοπ(αρχία) τῶν περὶ Σεβέννυτον respectively. Exact parallels can be found in: **P. Strab. II 216, 3** (AD 126/7): τοπαρχ(ία) τῶν περὶ Κερκέουχα(α) and **P. Kron. 31, 5** (AD 128): τοπαρχί(α) τῶν περὶ Τέπτυν(α). See also **BGU IV 1189, 8** (Herakleopolite, 1st cent. BC – 1st cent. AD): τόπαρχος τῶν περὶ Βούσι[πων).

If this reading is accepted, **SPP XXII 94** will be the earliest witness to a toparchy in the Roman Fayum.
An important question arises in respect to the toparchies accompanied by two numbers: do they form a single toparchy which came into being as a result of unification of two separate (and presumably neighbouring) toparchies? or are there still two toparchies sharing officials and/or combined for other reasons?

From the period since AD 247 onwards when a new system of toparchies with double numbers started, no document mentions a toparchy with a single number. This would imply an affirmative answer to the first question. Although the lack of single-numbered toparchies is an argumentum ex silentio, we may reasonably assume that the doubled toparchies were administrative units in the Fayum in the second half of the 3rd century.

In our documents the term τοπαρχία is usually, but not always, abbreviated to τοπ( ). The following list includes all the occurrences of the term τοπαρχία accompanied by two numbers, not abbreviated and not in lacuna.

**Singular**


P. Cairo Isid. 3, 1, 3-4 (AD 298): [παρὰ Αὐρηλίας Ἡρ]ωίδος Χαιρήμωνος ἀπὸ κόμης Καρανίδος πρώτης ἑκτής τοπαρχίας Ἑρακλείδου μερίδος [τοῦ 'Α]ρσινοίτου νομοῦ; lines 9-10: Σύρος [βοηθὸς δεκαπρώτων τῆς τοπ[αρχίας]; line 38 (signature): Αὐρηλίος Σύρος βοηθὸς δεκαπρώτων τῆς τοπαρχίας.

P. Cairo Isid. 4, 3 (AD 299): παρὰ Α[ὐ]ρηλίου Ἦσιδωρος Πτολεμαίου ἀπὸ κόμης Καρανίδος πρώτης ἕκτης τοπαρχίας (read τοπαρχίας) Ἑρακλείδου μερίδος; the singular is also found in lines 9 and 20.

P. Corn. 20, 2-3 (AD 302): Αὐρηλίῳ Ἀλεξάνδρῳ ἀρξαντὶ πρυτανεύονται (read πρυτανεύοντι) τῆς λαμπρᾶς Θεομενείων πόλεως ἀναμετρητῆ Ἀρσινοίτου τοπαρχίας (read τοπαρχίας) τετάρτης πέμπτης Ἑρακλείδου μερίδος; the same addressing formula is repeated in the heading of each of the eleven columns of this roll. The location of each declared plot of land is
given in the same way: ιερι κομην Πτολεμαιδα Νεαν της προκιμενης το-
παρχιας (the term always in singular).

P. NTU I, 12 (AD 299-302): [Αθηνα] σαραπιων βοηθος δεκαπρω]-
tων της [πο]παρχιας.

P. Sakaon 2, 7 (AD 300): περι την αυτην κομην Διονυσιαδα εξοδομης
[και ενατης] τοπαρχιας Θεμιστου μεριδος; line 9: β[σιθ]θου δεκ[πρω]-
tων της τοπαρχιας; the same in line 22.

P. Sakaon 3, 5: περι κομην Φιλωτεριδα εξοδομης ενατης τοπαρχιας Θε-
μιστου μεριδος του αυτου νομου; line 7: και Κοπρια βοηθου δεκαπρωτων
της τοπαρχιας; line 21: Αθηναίος Κοπριας βοηθος δεκαπρωτων της
τοπαρχιας (signature).

P. Sakaon 11, 5-6 (AD 296/7): δεκαπροται (read δεκαπρωται) και η το-
παρχειας (read τοπαρχιειας).

P. Sakaon 76, 6 (AD 298): [περι την αυτην κ]ομην Θεαδελφαιν έκτης
ογδοης τοπαρχιας (read τοπαρχιας) [Θεμιστου μεριδος] .

P. Sakaon 72, 5-6 (AD 296/7): δεκαπροται (read δεκαπρωται) και η
τοπαρχειας (read τοπαρχιας) [της Θε]μιστου μεριδοσ.

Plural

P. Laur. III 64, 4 (AD 253-261): (?) β και δ τοπαρχιων Θεμιστου μερι-
[δοσ].

P. Lips. 83, 4-5 (AD 257): δεκαπρωται και η τοπαρχιων Θεμιστου με-
ριδος.

BGU II 578 (= WChr. 279), 4-5 (AD 263): δε[κ]απρωτοι β και γ τοπα-
ρχων Ηρακλη[δου μεριδος].

As is clear, the singular form prevails in our evidence, but the three
exceptions coming from an unknown village in the 2nd and 4th toparchy of
the meris of Themistos, from Theadelphia in the 6th and 8th toparchy in
the same meris and from Psenyris in the 2nd and 3rd toparchy in the meris
of Herakleides demand caution. We decided to say “toparchy x and y” al-
though the evidence does not allow us to totally exclude the possibility of
“toparchies x and y”.

It is perhaps not coincidental that the three attestations of the plural
form are of a relatively early date, while those of singular come from the
documents dated to the very end of the existence of the toparchies system.
TOPARCHIES IN THE ARSINOITE NOME

in the Fayum. This could suggest that the doubled toparchies were introduced in the 240s as separate units for some reasons paired off. After fifty years the officials became so familiar with the system that they began to write of a single toparchy with two numbers. It must have been an important factor that the toparchies in the 3rd cent. AD were always double-numbered and there was no practical reason to keep the old and perhaps formally correct way of saying “toparchies first and fifth” instead of “toparchy first and fifth”.

CONTRADICTION WITHIN THE EVIDENCE

Our evidence is inconsistent in two points. According to one of the earliest documents mentioning a numbered toparchy, *P. Strasb. IV* 216 (AD 126/7) Kerkesoucha belongs to toparchy no. 5. The reading of the document is beyond doubt, as the toparchy number is written in full. A century and a half later, in AD 265 and 268, a man of the same village of Kerkesoucha delivers the grain to the granary of Tebtynis (sic!) and receives a receipt issued by Aurelius Agathodaemon, the *dekaprôtos* of toparchy 2 and 3 of the *meris* of Herakleides (*P. Tebt. II* 368 and 581 respectively).25 This suggests that the village belonged to Agathodaemon’s toparchy. On the other hand, according to *P. Gen. II* 100 and 101 (AD 128 and 128-129 respectively) toparchy no. 5 was that of Soknopaiou Nesos. The documents are almost contemporary with the Strasbourg document. It is unlikely to have toparchy no. 5 extending from Soknopaiou Nesos to Kerkesoucha, the latter very close to Karanis. The solution of this puzzle can be perhaps offered by the name of the *sitologos* and the name of his father. They undoubtedly point to Soknopaiou Nesos as his homeland. But why did he say “*sitologos of toparchy no. 5 of the villages around Kerkesoucha*”? This must remain unsolved for the moment; perhaps Stotoetis son of Panephremmis, as many of his countrymen, owned land outside his home village, in Kerkesoucha. He was appointed a *sitologos* there but in a document he automatically wrote the

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25 See my paper quoted in note 17.
number of the toparchy of Soknopaiou Nesos and not that of Kerke-
soucha.\textsuperscript{26}

SB XVI 12833 (former SPP XXII 39) is another piece of evidence for
Roman toparchies in the Fayum which is not clear to us. Soknopaiou Ne-
sos is again in the middle of the case: Onnophris son of Onnophris com-
plains about a nomination for the liturgy of sitologia in the second toparchy
of the meris of Herakleides. We do not know, however, where this toparchy
was located; Onnophris may have been nominated as a sitologos of the
toparchy where he owned his land, not necessarily in Soknopaiou Nesos.

THE OFFICIALS CONNECTED
WITH THE TOPARCHIES IN THE FIRST PERIOD
OF NUMBERED TOPARCHIES (AD 111–161)

\textit{Sitologi and sitologia}

\textit{P. Fay.} 81, 3-5 (AD 115): \textit{Δίδυμος [καὶ μ(έτοχοι) σιτολ(όγου)] τοπαρχ(ίας) Θεαδελφε(ίς) καὶ ἄλλων [κωμῶν] — the document is a typical sitologi
receipt; the function of Didymos is supplemented, but probable.}

\textit{P. Lond.} II 295, 1-2 (AD 118): \textit{Πτόλλιδι κ(αΐ) μετόχ(οις) σιτολόγ(οι) το-
παρχ(ίας) Διονυσιάδ[ος].}

\textit{SB XVI} 12833, 11-12 (AD 118): \textit{eis σίτολογίαν δευτέρας τοπαρχ(ίας) "Ηρακλείδου μερίδος.}

\textit{P. Strasb.} II 216, 2-3 (AD 126/7): \textit{παρά Στοτόητις (read Στοτοήτος) Πανεφρέμμεως τού Τεσσενούφεως σειτολ(όγου) (read σιτολόγου) πέμπτης τοπαρχ(ίας) τῶν περὶ Κερκέσουχ(α).}

\textit{P. Gen.} II 100, 17 (AD 128): \textit{eîç σειτολ(όγιαν) (read σιτολογίαν) ἐ το-
π[α]ρχίας.

\textit{P. Gen.} II 101, 3-4 (AD 128/9): \textit{Ἀρσαγάθης Σαταβούτος τ[οῦ] Μαρ[ε]-
ιοῦς ἀπ[ὸ] Σ[οκνοπαίου] παῖον [Νήσου] ς[σ][τ][ο][λ][ό][γ][ο]ς [ἐ̃] τ[ο][π][α][ρχίας] Σ[οκ-
νου] παῖον Νήσου; line 2: σ[ι]τολόγο[ν] ἐ τοπ[αρχίας].}

\textsuperscript{26} This would be to some extent a similar case to that of Aurelius Agathodaimon, \textit{dekaprē-
tos} of toparchy two and three of the \textit{meris} of Herakleides, who a century later issued two
documents in which he (or rather a scribe working for him) wrote the wrong name of the
\textit{meris}; see my article “Aurelius Agathodaemon” (cit. n. 24).
OTHER OFFICIALS

PSI Congr. XI 8, 5 (AD 138/9): Ἀπίωνος γεναμμένον σιτολογοπράκτορις τοπαρχίας) followed by a lacuna.

PSI XII 1236, 7 (Philagris, AD 128): praktôr argyríkon.

P. Meyer 4, 1 (AD 161) is addressed [Ἀσώπως] λιμναστττμ (έκτης) τοπαρχίας [Θιμίσου]. Limnastês, "supervisor of irrigation works", official subordinate to the aigialophylax. Our document is the only evidence that the area of responsibility of this official was the toparchy.

BGU III 786, ii, 7 (AD 161): epitêrêsis of the 3rd toparchy.

THE OFFICIALS CONNECTED WITH THE TOPARCHIES AFTER THE REINTRODUCTION OF THE TOPARCHIES IN THE 240S

In this period we find only few officials connected with this administrative unit.

Βοηθός δεκαπρώτων
(toparchy number never mentioned)

P. Cairo Isid. 3, i, 10 and 38 (Karanis; AD 299): Aurelius Syros (number of the toparchy not mentioned).

P. Cairo Isid. 4, 8 and 20 (Karanis; AD 299): Aurelius Syros (number of the toparchy not mentioned).

ChLA XLI 1203, 1, 8 and 2, 43 (Karanis; AD 299): Aurelius Sarapion.

P. NYU I 11, 12 (Karanis; AD 299-302): Aurelius Sarapion.

P. Sakaon 2, 9 and 26 (Dio; AD 300): Aurelius Koprias (toparchy in question is 7th and 9th of the meris of Themistos).

P. Sakaon 3, 7 and 21 (Arsnome; AD 300): the same boethos.

27 For limnastês and limnasteia, see D. BONNEAU, Le régime administratif de l'eau du Nil dans l'Égypte grecque, romaine et byzantine (= Probleme der Ägyptologie, Bd. VIII), pp. 203-206; for aigialophylax, see ibidem, pp. 240–244; also P. Meyer 4 introd.
**Hyperêtês of toparchy**

*P. Köln VII 316, 3* (Karanis; AD 302): Areios, hyperêtês of a toparchy (no number) as a recipient of a letter of Aurelius Serenos, agor(anom ...) and Aurelius Heron, former high priests, both councillors of the polis of Arsinoe and dekaprôtoi (no toparchy specified).

**Dekaprôtoi**

*BGU VII 1611, 4* (Philadelpheia, AD 283): Aurelii Mysthes and Isidoros, both former high priests and former gymnasiarchs, dekaprôtoi of the 2nd and 3rd toparchy of the meris of Herakleides.

*P. Cairo Isid. 31, 3* (Karanis, AD 276): Aurelius Kastor, municipal title missing, dekaprôtoi of the 1st and 6th toparchy of the meris of Herakleides.

*P. Cairo Isid. 32, 4* (Karanis, AD 279): Aurelius Euporas, former prytanis and Aurelius Priscus, both of them kom( ), dekaprôtoi of the 4th and 5th toparchy of the meris of Herakleides.

*P. Cairo Isid. 38, 4* (Karanis, AD 296): Aurelius Severinus, senator of Alexandria, Aurelius Sarmates, former gymnasiarch, Aurelius Andreias, Aurelius Philadelphos, Aurelius Sabinus former gymnasiarch, all five dekaprôtoi of the 4th and 5th toparchy of the meris of Herakleides.

*P. Cairo Isid. 39, 3* (Karanis, AD 296): Aurelius Heron, former gymnasiarch, councillor, dekaprôtois of the 1st and 6th toparchy of the meris of Herakleides.

*P. Col. VII 137, ii, 23* (Karanis, AD 301-2): Aureliii Horion and Philotas, dekaprôtoi of the 4th and 5th toparchy of the meris of Herakleides.

*P. Col. VII 137, ii, 31* (Karanis, AD 301-2): Aureliii Severinus and Andreias, former exegetes, councillor of Alexandria, and the heirs of Sarmates, and Sabinos, former gymnasiarch, (all) dekaprôtoi of the 4th and 5th toparchy of the meris of Herakleides.

*P. Col. VII 137, iii, 46* (Karanis, AD 301-2): Aurelius Didymos, former gymnasiarch, councillor, dekaprôtois of the 1st and 6th toparchy of the meris of Herakleides.

*P. Col. VII 137, iv, 74* (Karanis, AD 301-2): Aureliii Horion and Sarmates, dekaprôtoi of the 4th and 5th toparchy of the meris of Herakleides.

*P. Col. VII 137, iv, 91* (Karanis, AD 301-2): Aurelius Gerontios, dekaprôtois of the 1st and 6th toparchy of the meris of Herakleides (repeated in line 96)
TOPARCHIES IN THE ARSINOITE NOME

P. Fay. 85, 5 (Theadelphia, AD 247): Aurelius Horion, former exegetês, former prytanis; Aurelius Horas, former gymnasiarch; Aurelius Turbo, former kosmêtês, all three councillors and Aurelius Serenus, former gymnasiarch, all of the polis of Arsinoe, dekaprôtoi of the 6th and 8th toparchy of the meris of Themistos.

P. Flor. I 19, 2 (Arsinoite, AD 248): Aurelius Hermias, former gymnasiarch and councillor of the polis of Arsinoe, dekaprôtos of the 2nd and 4th toparchy of the meris of Themistos.

P. Flor. I 26, 7 (Arsinoite, AD 273): Aurelius Souchidas, former exegetês; Aurelius Apollonios, former gymnasiarch; Aurelius Heron; Aurelius Ischyrrion and the remaining dekaprôtoi, former gymnasiarchs, councillors, all dekaprôtoi of the 7th and 9th toparchy of the meris of Themistos.

P. Lips. 83, 4 (Soknopaiou Nesos, AD 257): Aurelius Ammonianos and Aurelius Kastor, both former gymnasiarchs; Aurelius Heraïskos former chief priest and the heirs of Melas, former gymnasiarch, (all) dekaprôtoi of the 6th and 8th toparchy of the meris of Themistos — the documents come from Soknopaiou Nesos but the dekaprôtoi receive the grain in the granary of Theadelphia and issue their receipt there.

P. Merton II 88, viii, 4 (Karanis, AD 298-301): Aurelios Didymos, former gymnasiarch, dekaprôtos of the 1st and 6th toparchy of the meris of Herakleides; xvii, 3: Aurelios Didymos, former gymnasiarch, councillor, dekaprôtos of the 1st and 6th toparchy of the meris of Herakleides.

P. Sakaon 11, 5 (Theadelphia, AD 296/7): Aurelii Heroninos, Athanasios, Philadelphos and Serenion, all former exegetai of Alexandria, dekaprôtoi of the 6th and 8th toparchy of the meris of Themistos.

P. Sakaon 12, 9 (Theadelphia, AD 298): Aurelii Heroninos, Philadelphos and Athanasios, all former exegetai of Alexandria, and Serenion, former gymnasiarch, dekaprôtoi of the 6th and 8th toparchy of the meris of Themistos.

P. Sakaon, 82, 5 (Theadelphia, AD 296/7): Aurelii Heroninos and Athanasios and Philadelphos and Serenion, former exegetai of Alexandria, dekaprôtoi of the 6th and 8th toparchy of the meris of Themistos.

P. Sakaon 86, 11 (Theadelphia, AD 300): Aurelii Heroninos and Athanasios and Philadelphos, all former exegetai of Alexandria, dekaprôtoi of the 6th and 8th toparchy of the meris of Themistos.
P. Strasb. III 153, 5 (Arsinoite, AD 262-3): Aurelii Kastor agor( ) and Serenion, both dekaprôtoi of the 7th and 8th toparchy of the meris of Herakleides.

WChr. 279, 4 (Arsinoite, AD 263): Aurelii Agathodaemon, former gymnasiarch, and Athanasios, former gymnasiarch, and Sarapammon and Kopres, the two being former gymnasiarchs and serving in place of one (i.e., dekaprôtos), and Souchamon, former kosmetes, all dekaprôtoi of the 2nd and 3rd toparchy of the meris of Herakleides.

P. Tebt. II 368, 2 (Tebtynis, AD 265): Aurelius Agathodaemon, former kosmêtês, councillor, dekaprôtos of the 2nd and 3rd toparchy of the meris of Polemon (so the document; Aurelius Agathodaemon was in fact a dekaprôtos of the 2nd and 3rd toparchy of the meris of Herakleides).

P. Tebt. II 581 descr. (Tebtynis, AD 268/9): the same Aurelius Agathodaemon with the same titles.

P. Wisc. II 86, 1 (Philadelphieia, AD 244-46): this is the beginning of a petition addressed to the dekaprôtoi of the 2nd and 3rd toparchy of the meris of Herakleides, their names not mentioned.

άναμετρητής Άρσινού τοπαρχίας τετάρτης πέμπτης Ήρακλείδου μερίδος

P. Corn. 20 is a long roll containing eleven declarations of land for the census of the year 302 AD. The declarations are made by different people from Karanis, Arsinoe and Ptolemais Nea but all plots are located in Ptolemais Nea. The documents are addressed αναμετρητῆ Άρσινού τοπαρχίας τετάρτης πέμπτης Ήρακλείδου μερίδος i.e. to the land-measurer responsible for verifying the land described by the declarants as χέρος or ἀδέσποτος.

HISTORICAL ANALYSIS OF THE DATA

Although the Arsinoite toparchies do not appear in the documents very often, given the quantity of sources from this area, the picture emerging from the data gathered in this paper is fairly clear and coherent. The toparchies are absent from the Fayumic documents from the beginning of the Roman rule until the second decade of the 11th century. The first ref-
herence appears in AD 111: this is “the toparchy of the villages around Sebennytos” (SPP XXII 94), followed in AD 115 by “the toparchy of Theadelphia and other villages” (P. Fay. 81). In AD 118 two more village-centered toparchies are mentioned in P. Lond. II 295 and BGU III 755 (“toparchy of Dionysias” and “toparchy of the villages around Herakleia”) respectively. In all four documents the toparchies constitute the area of activity of the sitologoi.

In the same year AD 118, however, the earliest evidence for the numbered toparchies is found: a certain Onnophris son of Onnophris, a priest from Soknopaiou Nesos addresses to the epistrategos Iulius Maximianus a protest against nomination for the liturgy of σιτολογία δεύτερα τοπαρχ[χ]ίας Ηρακλείδου μερίδος (SB XVI 12833).

In an interesting lot of documents from the third decade of the IIInd century, the toparchies are at the same time numbered and named after a village. In Tybi of year 11 of Hadrian (December 126 – January 127) Stotoetis son of Panephremmis, sitologos πέμπτης τοπαρχ(ίας) των περί Κερκέσουχα addresses a complaint against a thief to Asklepiades, strategos of the meris of Herakleides. In AD 128 the Teblynis sitologoi issues a receipt for Harphaesis son of Kronion (P. Kron. 31). Lines 4-5 of the document read as follows: οἱ σιτολόγοι οἱ β τοπαρχ(ίας) τῶν περὶ Τεβτύνιν appear. This is paralleled in the same year by P. Gen. II 101, line 4: θρ[ῃς]τ[ο]παρχ[ίας] των περὶ Τεβτύνιν. Though the number of the toparchy is in lacuna, it seems certain since it appears in full in line 2. The three documents seem to witness a turning point: the toparchies are still called after the name of their administrative centre but this is now accompanied with a number. In the case of both the Strasbourg text and the Kronion document, we may doubt whether the name is the official one; the name of the village following the toparchy number may have been a kind of explanation necessary at the time of introducing of the new system. The third document presents perhaps a similar case: first, in line 2, the toparchy is

introduced only with its number, which may already have become its official name; in line 4, however, the scribe adds an additional piece of information probably to avoid any misunderstanding. Even if this assumption goes too far, we may say that the new system was introduced in AD 118; for a few more years the people were not yet familiar enough with it and the name of the toparchy’s administrative centre was still added by some scribes. Our conclusion could be more decisive if we had not had the documents of AD 118 where the toparchy is identified only by its number.

There is no doubt that the toparchies were introduced in the Fayum in connection with the sitologia. In the documents listed above, only sporadically is there a mention of officials other than the sitologi (only one before AD 130). One may ask whether the Arsinoite sitologoi were always toparchy officials. In order to answer this question we have listed the sitologoi documents from the Fayum, dated to the period between AD 100-130:

AD 101:  BGU III 988: “sitologoi of Apias”;
AD 101:  P. Grenf. II 44: “sitologoi of Philadelphieia”;
AD 101/2:  BGU III 908: “sitologia of the village of Bakchias”;
AD 104:  P. Land. III 28: “sitologoi of Theadelphia”;
AD 105:  SB VI 8976: “sitologoi of the village (i.e. Soknopaiou Nesos)”;
AD 106:  P. Mil. Vogl. III 197: “sitologoi” with no further designation (document issued in Tebtynis);
AD 106:  P. Mil. Vogl. IV 245: “sitologoi” with no further designation (document issued in Tebtynis);
AD 106/7:  P. Lond. II 291: “sitologoi of Apias and other villages”;
AD 111-113:  P. Tebt. II 470: “sitologoi of Ibiôn Eikosipentarourôn”;
**AD III**:  SPP XXII 94: “former sitologoi of the toparchy of the villages around Sebennytos”;
AD 111/2:  SB XVIII 13134: “sitologoi of the village of Talei”;
AD 112:  P. Fam. Tebt. 12: “sitologoi with no further designation;

29 Only documents exactly dated; the officials are styled as in the document, e.g. “sitologia of the village of Bakchias” translates the Greek text σιτολογία κώμης Βακχίαδος. The dates of the documents where the sitologoi are connected with the toparchies, are printed in bold type.
The evidence suggests that in the period of AD 118-129 the toparchy system constituted the only base for the sitologia. For only one document from this period, P. Kron. 30, the editor suggests to connect the sitologoi with the village of Talei. But the reading of line 3 including the name of the village is largely based on supplement: Ωρίων και μέτοχ(οι) σιτ(ολόγοι) Ταλει/και χωμών. The edition has no photograph; it is, therefore, difficult to estimate the size of the lacuna, but not too much space is needed for three letters, if we assume that the word τοπαρχία was abbreviated to τοπ.

Two sitologoi documents suggest that the execution of sitologia according to the division into toparchies started before AD 118. Should we take the date of the first, AD 111 for a terminus ante quem the new system was introduced? If so, the authors of the four documents (SB XVIII 13134, P. Turner 20, P. Oslo II 28 and SPP XXII 118) may have omitted the word τοπαρχία by mistake, which is quite imaginable in the first years of the new system. Except for Talei from the Kronion document, the villages mentioned in these receipts are attested by other documents as the centres of the
toparchies. We know that Talei was often connected with Tebtynis, which suggests that the lacuna could be supplemented in quite a different way: σιτ(ολογοί) τοπ(αρχίας) Τεβτ(ύνησις) κ[α]λ[ων κωμών].

SPP IV 118 = P. Fay. 264 mentioning “sitologoi of Apias and other villages”, can be dated to the part of the reign of Hadrian after abandoning of the toparchy sitologia in the Fayum, i.e., to AD 129-138.

After AD 129 the system of sitologia toparchies disappeared and sitologoi were again connected with particular villages. We know neither why the system was introduced nor why it was abandoned only after a few years.

In the following decades of the II1nd century AD the Fayum toparchies appear only sporadically, four times in total. Three documents are of fiscal contents (πράκτωρ ἀργυρίκων in AD 128, σιτολογοπράκ(τωρ) τοπαρχίας in AD 138/9 and ἔπιτήρησις in AD 161); the fourth (AD 161) is addressed to the limnastês of toparchy no. 6 of the meris of Themistos.

From AD 161 (the last appearance of a toparchy with a single number) to AD 247 when a new system of toparchies with doubled numbers starts functioning, there is an eighty-year-long gap. Nevertheless, there is some evidence that the system of numbering did not change during this almost century-long break. In AD 161 Theadelphia belonged to toparchy 6, in AD 247 it is in toparchy 6 and 8.

The starting point for paired toparchies falls in the period of AD 245-248, i.e. the reign of Philip the Arabian, and should be almost certainly connected with the reforms introduced by this emperor.

The dekaprôtoi and their toparchies

Sitologoi appear regularly in papyri from all over Egypt up to the fourth decade of the III1rd century AD. As we argued before, in the Fayum they were connected with individual villages with a short but significant gap for the years AD 111-129. In the 240s the sitologoi were replaced by dekaprôtoi, first attested on 13 Pauni year 3 of the Philippi, i.e. 7 June 246 (P. Lond. III 1157 verso = WChr. 375). In the Arsinoite nome, they appear at the latest in AD 247 (P. Fay. 85) or perhaps even earlier (SB VIII 1020830).

30 See N. Lewis’ remarks in BASP 4 (1967), pp. 34–36
The position of *dekaprôtoi* appears to have been far higher than that of *sitologoi*. They were members of municipal élite as is clearly shown by their official and honorific titles. In the documents of formal character (on papyrus not on ostraca), their names are accompanied by their municipal titles. As a rule, they were chosen from among metropolitan councillors and magistrates. As far as we can judge from available evidence, their office was connected with the toparchy all over Egypt. Each toparchy was usually supervised by a college of two *dekaprôtoi*; the doubled toparchies in the Fayum have a college of four *dekaprôtoi*. Sometimes they issue their receipts acting by three, two or even alone. In short receipts on ostraca the *dekaprôtoi* are mentioned without the area of their responsibility – this, no doubt, is due to the less formal character of these documents. This could lead us to a conclusion that the official name of toparchy included the number(s)

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31 On *dekaprôtoi* see in general an old but still very instructive study by E. G. Turner, “Egypt and the Roman Empire: the δίκαπρώτο” in *JEA* 22 (1936), pp. 7–20. The way they conducted their duties in the last years of the IIIrd and first two years of the IVth centuries in Theadelphia and Karanis has been discussed by R. S. Bagnall, “The Number and Term of the Dekaprotai”, *Aegyptus* 58 (1978), pp. 160–167.


32 P. Oxy. LIX 3980, 2–3 (AD 300–302): provides another of the few exceptions to this general rule first formulated by F. Oerter, *Die Liturgie. Studien zur ptolomäischen und Kaiserlichen Regierung Ägyptens*, Leipzig 1917, p. 211; other exceptions are noted by Turner, *JEA* 22 (1936), p. 8 n. 9.

33 The usual pattern of the ostraca receipts issued by the *dekaprôtoi* contains the name of the village where a *θησαυρός* is located followed by the name(s) of the *dekaprôtoi(-oi)*. The document was then quite clear without giving the area of responsibility of the official(s) although occasionally we find *dekaprôtoi* with the name of the village; this is the case of receipts issued for the donkeys’ owners by the *dekaprôtoi* to acknowledge the use of the animals for transportation of grain from a granary to a harbour: O. Berlin 83 (AD 255) and 84 (AD 256) – in both *dekaprôtoi* Ἐπιφανίου Μαγδώλων; O. Mich. I 69 (no exact date) and II 885 (no date); *dekaprôtopoi κώ(μης) Διονυσίανδος*; O. Mich. I 70 (no date); *dekaprôtopoi κώ(μης) Καρανίονδος*; SB XVI 12789 (former BGU VII 1703, AD 260–282); *dekaprôtopoi κώ(μης) Φίλαδελφ(ίας) *. None of these documents mentions *thesaurou*(s) (there was no reason for that), none is located sufficiently in space and therefore the writers attached the name of the village to the name of the *dekaprôtoi(-oi).*
but it was not accepted for common use as probably too sophisticated and unpractical in everyday life.\textsuperscript{34}

The office of the \textit{dekaprōtoi} seems to have been abolished between May and July 302; the collection of dues in corn was again attributed to the \textit{sitologoi}.

The re-introducing of the numbered toparchies in the Fayum is then a part of the administrative reforms in Egypt.\textsuperscript{35}

At the period of doubled toparchies, in the joint \textit{merides} of Themistos and Polemon toparchies nos. 1, 3 and 5 are absent from our evidence.\textsuperscript{36} Therefore we have no idea how these three toparchies were combined with each other. We cannot even be certain that the number of toparchies in the joint \textit{merides} of Themistos and Polemon was exactly nine, and eight in the \textit{meris} of Herakleides. If we assume (purely hypothetically) that the \textit{merides} of Themistos and Polemon were indeed divided into nine toparchies, we face the necessity of "creating" either a toparchy of three numbers or a combination of a single toparchy and a doubled one.

\textit{The disappearance of the toparchies and the introduction of the pagi}

In AD 307/8, the toparchies disappeared from the administrative system of Egypt and were replaced by the \textit{pagi}.\textsuperscript{37} As a rule,\textsuperscript{38} the \textit{pagi} were

\textsuperscript{34} Numbers are not comfortable as names in everyday life! A parallel of Paris quarters (\textit{arrondissements}) can be quoted here. Officially introduced in the XIXth century, they entered the vocabulary of the inhabitants of the French capital after several decades only. The numbered streets in American cities are not a good parallel since the people there had no option to avoid the numbers.

\textsuperscript{35} See P. J. Parsons, "Philippus Arabs and Egypt", \textit{JRS} 57 (1967), pp. 134–141. His conclusion is a personal summary of Roman history in the IIIrd century AD: "Third-century Egypt begins with the reforms of Septimius Severus, and ends the reforms of Diocletian. Philip's reform, midway between the two, seems to have been no less ambitious. All three faced the same problems. All three tried the same sorts of solution. All three failed." Perhaps this conclusion goes a bit too far?

\textsuperscript{36} The \textit{editio princeps} of P. Kron. 36 locates the village of Kerkesis in toparchy no. 1 but the reading has been changed (see above, notes on particular documents on p. 34).

\textsuperscript{37} In his fundamental study published almost a century ago, Michael Gelzer deduced from the evidence then available that the crucial years for the changeover in political organization of Egypt were AD 307–310, i.e. the years following the abdication of Diocletian.
more numerous than the toparchies, e.g. in the Oxyrhynchite 10 pagi vs. 6 toparchies;\(^{39}\) in the Hermopolite 17 pagi vs. 11 toparchies.\(^{40}\) Some Oxyrhynchite documents suggest that the new division was anticipated in the last decades of the old system by the introduction of a subdivision of toparchies into μέρη with πρυποστάται as their governors.\(^{41}\)

After the disappearance of the dekaprôtoi in AD 302, toparchies are attested in the Hermopolite, Oxyrhynchite, Memphite and Great Oasis, but not in the Fayum. Apart from the dekaprôtoi, in the Fayum after AD 161 there were no other offices connected with the toparchies.\(^{42}\)

\(^{38}\) This rule cannot be applied to the Fayum where the number of pagi (12) is smaller than the number of toparchies if we take into account the toparchies of the Arsinoite as a whole. For the Arsinoite pagi, see T. DERDA, "Pagi in the Arsinoites: a study in administration of the Fayum in the Early Byzantine period", JJP 31 (2001), pp. 17-32.

\(^{39}\) J. LALLEMAND, L'administration civile de l'Égypte de l'avènement de Dioclétien à la création du diocèse (284-382). Contribution à l'étude des rapports entre l'Égypte et l'Empire à la fin du III\(e\) et au IV\(e\) siècle (= Mémoires de la Classe des Lettres et des Sciences morales et politiques de l'Académie Royale de Belgique. Tome LVII. Fasc. 2.), pp. 97-98.

\(^{40}\) For the discussion of the number of toparchies and pagi in the Hermopolite, see P. Herm. Landlisten, p. 9 and J. A. SHERIDAN, in P. Col. IX, pp. 107-134, chapter "The administration of the Hermopolite nome".

\(^{41}\) So LALLEMAND, L'administration civile (cit. n. 39) p. 98. Μέρη as a subdivision of toparchies are also attested in other nomes (e.g., Herakleopolite), but not in the Fayum.

\(^{42}\) N. LEWIS in The Compulsory Public Services of Roman Egypt (Second Edition) (= Papyrologica Florentina, t. XXVII), Firenze 1997, listed, apart from dekaprôtoi, several liturgies the area of responsibility of which (point 4 of the Lewis' questionnaire) comprises all known cases of toparchy or in some cases concerns the toparchy. These are: διάδοσις (p. 13), διαπαιτήσις - διαπαιτής (p. 14), διαδόσις - διαδωτής (p. 21), ἔξαρθμισις ὅρκων (p. 24), ἐπιτήρησις - ἐπιτήρητης (p. 28), πρακτορεία - πράκτωρ (p. 42), συμβορούσια (p. 45) and χοματίσιον (p. 50). (Lewis also listed the office of toparches, discussed separately in our paper.) The list above comprises offices of different rank and different significance for our understanding of the Roman administration; some of the offices are known from a single document but other ones are quite well attested by documents from the Roman period. Unfortunately, Lewis did not provide the user of his catalogue with the provenience of sources but having examined the Fayumic evidence concerning the toparchies we can say that none of these offices are attested in the Arsinoite nome.

A similar conclusion can be drawn from a study of apaiëtai, officials of different rank and different range of competence, but always connected with tax collecting (B. PALME, Das
For unknown reasons, in the Hermopolite the term "toparchy" remained in technical vocabulary of local administration for at least 50 years after AD 307/8. It was used as a synonym for "pagus"; the two terms are often found side by side in the same document, as e.g. in P. Harrauer 39 (AD 317/8, 332/3 or 347/8). As far as we can deduce from the available evidence, the two terms are univocal. Outside the Hermopolite, not a single document attests this phenomenon.43

CONCLUSION

The administrative division, at least as far as we can understand it, sheds some light on the general problem to what degree the Fayum was a typical nome in the Ptolemaic and Roman period. The system of numbered toparchies flourishing in the IIIrd century A.D. clearly shows the idiosyncrasy of the Arsinoites from an administrative point of view alongside the subdivision of the nome into three merides which also continues to function. The reforms introduced by Septimius Severus and Philip the Arabian did not, therefore, bring about the unification of governing in all Egyptian nomes, even if they were a step in that direction. The turning point on this way is the introduction of pagi and the abandonment of both the Arsinoite merides in AD 307/8 and the toparchies five years earlier. This was — at least in the Fayum, where the toparchies are not attested after AD 302 — not a simple replacement of one name by another, as it is sometimes suggested in modern literature.44 As a result, we get, for the first time since

43 Apart from P. Harrauer 39, the Hermopolite documents attesting this phenomenon include P. Herm. Landlisten (ca. 30 times in total); P. Charite 10, 12, 23 and 29; P. Cairo Preisigke 33 and P. Strath. V 325 ii 3. For the correction of the last two documents as well as for an analysis of the phenomenon, see §3 of the introduction to P. Herm. Landlisten ("Die Toparchie im IV. Jh. n.Chr.", pp. 9–10). The editors, however, did not point out the exceptionality of the Hermopolite terminology in this respect. Unfortunately, Drew-Bear’s book on the Hermopolite was published some years before the two volumes, P. Herm. Landlisten and P. Charite.

44 See, e.g., PALME’s remarks in Das Amt des ἀπαίτητος (cit. n. 6), pp. 70–71.
the beginning of Ptolemaic rule, the administrative division of the Fayum identical with that of other nomes: a single nome divided into numbered *pagi*.

In the IInd century, the introduction of the toparchies as administrative units for the activity of the *sitologoi* may have been an attempt at the unification of corn collection for the *embolê*. We argued that the attempt was not successful and the government moved back after only a few years of the new system.

The reforms of Philip the Arabian were introduced within the Fayum more consequently as far as the office of *dekaprôtoi* is concerned. In our documents, the officials are connected with the toparchies more frequently than the *sitologoi* were a century earlier.

Given the considerable amount of documents from the Arsinoite nome dated to the period AD 302-307, the absence of the toparchies is certainly significant. They never existed in the Roman Fayum as separate units of administrative division and were introduced only as a part of a reform of a single segment of economic life of the country. It is true that the segment was exceptionally important; the *dekaprôtoi* were responsible for collecting grain and transporting it to Alexandria where it would be shipped to Rome. The grain was collected all over Egypt according to clearly defined rules and the government at a certain moment decided to leave no space for local peculiarities. This is why the toparchies entered the Fayum, both in the IInd century and a century later.

**PASSENGES CORRECTED**

*SPP* XXII 94, 4 – instead of τόπ(ων) we suggest to read τοττ(αρχίας);
*BGU* III 755, 3 – instead of τόπ(ων) we suggest to read τοπ(αρχίας);
*P. Strasb.* III 153, 5 must have had toparchy [7] and 8;
*P. Strasb.* V 325 ii 3 – something wrong, either the date (AD 321?) or the reading τοπ(αρχίας);
*P. Tebt.* II 368, 2 – the toparchy is βγ;

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45 See my article "*Pagi in the Arsinoites*" (cit. n. 38).
P. Tebt. II 581 descr. (reedited in JJP 31 [2001], pp. 13-14) – the toparchy is βγ;
P. Wisc. II 86, 1 – the toparchy is βγ;
SPP X 91, 4-5 – [β] kαι δ τοπαρχί[ων] ; the date: ca. AD 245–302.

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