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## Military immigration and the emergence of cultural or ethnic identities: The case of Ptolemaic Egypt

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Patrick Sänger

**MILITARY IMMIGRATION AND THE EMERGENCE  
OF CULTURAL OR ETHNIC IDENTITIES:  
THE CASE OF PTOLEMAIC EGYPT\***

IN OUR DOCUMENTATION, soldiers formed the largest migration group into Hellenistic Egypt. According to a recently published estimate, in the third century BC approximately 5% of the perhaps four million inhabitants of Egypt were Greek, and a little more than half of these Greek migrants, that is some 2.9% of the total population, were members of Greek military families.<sup>1</sup> Data from the Arsinoite nome that was drained and resettled in the first half of the third century BC, also suggest that in

\* This study was completed during my APART-fellowship that was kindly granted to me by the Austrian Academy of Sciences for my habilitation project on the Ptolemaic institution of the *politeuma* which will result in the book *Die ptolemäische Organisationsform politeuma. Ein kontroverser Aspekt jüdischer und hellenistischer Rechtsgeschichte* (in preparation). I thank Georg Christ and Jon E. Lendon for their criticism and help with the English style. The present text is a reduced version of my article 'Immigrant soldiers and Ptolemaic policy in Hellenistic Egypt (late 4th century – 30 BCE): Reflections on a military diaspora and its components' which will appear in the volume *Military Diasporas. Defending, Shaping, and Connecting Power in the Euromediterranean from the Antiquity to the Early Modern Period* edited by Georg Christ and myself.

<sup>1</sup> Christelle FISCHER-BOVET, 'Counting the Greeks in Egypt: Immigration in the first century of Ptolemaic rule', [in:] Claire HOLLERAN & April PUDSEY (eds.), *Demography and the Graeco-Roman World: New Insights and Approaches*, Cambridge 2011, pp. 135–154.

this century the males and females countable among military groups was outnumbered the civilian tax-*Hellenes*<sup>2</sup> (these *Hellenes*, literally ‘Greeks,’ were exempt from the obol tax: a very modest fiscal privilege<sup>3</sup>). Furthermore, in the mid-third century BC the descendants of military settlers, the *epigonoï*, could have formed a large part (up to 16%) of the civilian tax-*Hellenes* in the Arsinoite nome.<sup>4</sup> In other words, the largest sector numerically of the Greek population resulted from the recruitment policy of the Ptolemaic army that was divided into two parts: a force of reservist regulars and a force of mercenaries or professional soldiers.

<sup>2</sup> See W. CLARYSSE & Dorothy J. THOMPSON, *Counting the People in Hellenistic Egypt*, II: *Historical Studies*, Cambridge 2006, pp. 94 (table 4:1 and 4:2), 139–140. At least in the third century BC the military registration was separate from the civilian one (see *ibidem*, pp. 62, 139–140, 155).

<sup>3</sup> See Dorothy J. THOMPSON, ‘Hellenistic Hellenes: The case of Ptolemaic Egypt’, [in:] I. MALKIN (ed.), *Ancient Perceptions of Greek Ethnicity* [= *Center for Hellenic Studies Colloquia* 5], Cambridge, MA – London 2001, pp. 307–310; CLARYSSE & THOMPSON, *Counting the People* (cit. n. 2), pp. 138–147. Not all tax-*Hellenes* were ethnically Greek or descended from Greeks: Thracians and Jews, for instance, also belonged to the category of tax-*Hellenes* (see J. MÉLÈZE MODRZEJEWSKI, ‘Le statut des Hellènes dans l’Égypte lagide: Bilan et perspectives des recherches’, *Revue des études grecques* 96 [1983], pp. 265–266; CLARYSSE & THOMPSON, *Counting the People* [cit. n. 2], pp. 145, 147–148), and Egyptians could become members of this group, too, as a result of their occupation (see THOMPSON, ‘Hellenistic Hellenes’ [cit. n. 3], pp. 310–312; CLARYSSE & THOMPSON, *Counting the People* [cit. n. 2], pp. 142–145). In practice the term ‘Hellen’ (Ἕλληνας) mostly denoted an ‘immigrant’ or a ‘foreign settler’ who was to be distinguished from ‘native Egyptians’ (*Aigyptioi*); see R. S. BAGNALL, ‘The people of the Roman Fayum’, [in:] IDEM (ed.), *Hellenistic and Roman Egypt. Sources and Approaches*, Aldershot – Burlington, VT 2006, chapter XIV, p. 3 (originally published in M. L. BIERBRIER [ed.], *Portraits and Masks: Burial Customs in Roman Egypt*, London 1997, pp. 7–15); CLARYSSE & THOMPSON, *Counting the People* (cit. n. 2), pp. 142–143, 155. A comparable case of ethnic designations that give a name to a functional category without implying that their holders actually were of the origin the term implied is the second-century BC military designations *Makedon* and *Perses*, terms that probably denoted status groups within the army, both of which were open to soldiers of Egyptian backgrounds; see THOMPSON, ‘Hellenistic Hellenes’ (cit. n. 3), p. 306; Katelijn VANDORPE, ‘Persian soldiers and Persians of the epigone. Social mobility of soldiers-herdsmen in Upper Egypt’, *Archiv für Papyrusforschung* 54 (2008), pp. 87–108; Christelle FISCHER-BOVET, *Army and Society in Ptolemaic Egypt*, Cambridge 2014, pp. 177–191.

<sup>4</sup> See CLARYSSE & THOMPSON, *Counting the People* (cit. n. 2), p. 154; FISCHER-BOVET, *Army* (cit. n. 3), pp. 183–186.

Against this background it is natural to wonder whether the papyri from Egypt allow us to trace the formation of a ‘military diaspora.’ Kostas Buraselis first applied this term to Ptolemaic Egypt, to describe the whole body of soldiers from Greece and other regions who settled there.<sup>5</sup> The present article seeks to investigate whether this is a useful concept by having a closer look at the practical expressions and facets of military immigration. This requires tracking down organized groups whose origins lie in immigrant soldiers and who were also bound by a shared Greek culture or a specific ethnic identity, that is, a socially constructed identity based on cultural markers and ‘the belief (however fictive) in a shared kinship or common origin’.<sup>6</sup> This question will be addressed by examining the importance of immigrants to the Ptolemaic army and the emergence of two population groups, both of them illuminating different military immigration and employment patterns.

### 1. THE REGULAR ARMY: PRESERVER OF A GREEK CULTURAL IDENTITY

The regular army of the Ptolemies consisted of the so-called cleruchs, who can be described as reservists because they served only when called up, and rather than being paid in coin, they received a plot of land that secured their livelihoods in peacetime<sup>7</sup> – a system whereby the Ptolemaic

<sup>5</sup> See K. BURASELIS, ‘Ambivalent roles of centre and periphery. Remarks on the relation of the cities of Greece with the Ptolemies until the end of Philometor’s age’, [in:] P. BILDE *et alii* (eds.), *Centre and Periphery in the Hellenistic World* [= *Studies in Hellenistic Civilization* 4], Aarhus 1993, p. 258.

<sup>6</sup> For a definition of ‘ethnic identity’ in the context of Ptolemaic Egypt, see Jane ROWLANDSON, ‘Dissing the Egyptians: Legal, ethnic, and cultural identities in Roman Egypt’, [in:] A. GARDNER *et alii* (eds.), *Creating Ethnicities & Identities in the Roman World* [= *Bulletin of the Institute of Classical Studies Supplement* 120], London 2013, pp. 215–216 (quotation from p. 216) (drawing on J. M. HALL, *Ethnic Identity in Greek Antiquity*, Cambridge 1997; IDEM, *Hellenicity: Between Ethnicity and Culture*, Chicago 2002); FISCHER-BOVET, *Army* (cit. n. 3), pp. 172–173. For a definition of ‘ethnic minority’ in Ptolemaic Egypt, see n. 74 below.

<sup>7</sup> See FISCHER-BOVET, *Army* (cit. n. 3), pp. 118–123.

government drew not only on Macedonian but also Egyptian traditions.<sup>8</sup> Until the end of the third century BC this cleruch army was predominantly recruited from immigrants or their descendants. A closer look at the ‘legal ethnic designations’<sup>9</sup> used by the cleruchs makes clear that their origins lay for the most part in regions that were not under the control of the Ptolemies;<sup>10</sup> of particular importance were Macedonia, mainland Greece, and Thrace. Recently published studies have argued that cleruchs were recruited in these regions at least until the end of the third century BC, when the Ptolemies lost all of their possessions on the coasts of the North Aegean and Asia Minor as well as those in the Levant.<sup>11</sup> That the Ptolemies continued, as long as they could, to recruit cleruchs from their now-distant ‘homeland’ Macedonia is due the ideological importance these recruits had for the regime – that was keen to preserve its Greco-Macedonian image<sup>12</sup> (and no doubt the Ptolemies valued the military quality of the Macedonian soldiers) –, which also explains why they were offered land as an inducement to come to Egypt and stay; had they been

<sup>8</sup> See Sandra SCHEUBLE-REITER, *Die Katökenreiter im ptolemäischen Ägypten* [= *Vestigia* 64], Munich 2012, p. 24; FISCHER-BOVET, *Army* (cit. n. 3), pp. 199–200.

<sup>9</sup> The terminology ‘legal ethnic designations’ is taken from VANDORPE, ‘Persian soldiers’ (cit. n. 3), p. 87.

<sup>10</sup> See R. S. BAGNALL, ‘The origins of Ptolemaic cleruchs’, *The Bulletin of the American Society of Papyrologists* 21 (1984), pp. 7–20; SCHEUBLE-REITER, *Die Katökenreiter* (cit. n. 8), pp. 114–118.

<sup>11</sup> SCHEUBLE-REITER, *Die Katökenreiter* (cit. n. 8), pp. 18–23, 117 with n. 20; Mary STEFANOPOULOU, ‘Waterborne recruits: The military settlers of Ptolemaic Egypt’, [in:] K. BURASELIS *et alii* (eds.), *The Ptolemies, the Sea and the Nile. Studies in Waterborne Power*, Cambridge 2013, pp. 108–131.

<sup>12</sup> See K. BURASELIS, ‘A lively «Indian summer»: Remarks on the Ptolemaic role in the Aegean under Philometor’, [in:] Andrea JÖRDENS & J. F. QUACK (eds.), *Ägypten zwischen innerem Zwist und äußerem Druck. Die Zeit Ptolemaios’ VI. bis VIII. Internationales Symposium Heidelberg 16.–19.9.2007* [= *Philippika. Marburger altertumskundliche Abhandlungen* 45], Wiesbaden 2011, p. 159; C. LA’DA, ‘Encounters with ancient Egypt: The Hellenistic Greek experience’, [in:] R. MATTHEWS & Cornelia RÖMER, *Ancient Perspectives on Egypt*, London 2003, pp. 166–167; T. SPAWFORTH, ‘«Macedonian times»: Hellenistic memories in the provinces of the Roman Near East’, [in:] D. KONSTAN & Suzanne SAÏD (eds.), *Greeks on Greekness. Viewing the Past under the Roman Empire* [= *Proceedings of the Cambridge Philological Society Supplementary Volume* 29], Cambridge 2006, pp. 5–7.

employed as mercenaries for cash, the government might have lost access to them and their sons after the end of their military service, because they could return to where they came from, lands not directly controlled by the Ptolemies.<sup>13</sup> The same applies to recruits from mainland Greece, whom the Ptolemies also attempted to bind to long-term availability for military service by grants of land.

The most important settlements of cleruchs were located in the Arsinoite nome. Probably as early as the first Ptolemaic king, Ptolemy I Soter (305–293 BC), and certainly under his successor Ptolemy II Philadelphos (285–246 BC), this region was drained and resettled.<sup>14</sup> In this as well as in other regions cleruchs were settled in newly founded or already existing villages. Occasionally, however, settlements of cleruchs are also attested in nome or district capitals.<sup>15</sup> These military settlers, who, in term of their socio-economic situation could be described as rural middling class<sup>16</sup> were followed by civilian immigrants coming from Greece and neighbouring regions. Both groups worked in a broad variety of businesses and official capacities. In the mid-third century BC, papyrological evidence suggests that in the Arsinoite nome the new settlers could have made up 29% of the adult population.<sup>17</sup> The presence of these immigrants is also evidenced by the numerous *gymnasia* that they founded in villages and even in the nome capital Krokodilopolis/Ptolemais Euergetis. This custom, however,

<sup>13</sup> See SCHEUBLE-REITER, *Die Katökenreiter* (cit. n. 8), p. 25.

<sup>14</sup> See DOROTHY J. CRAWFORD, *Kerkeosiris. An Egyptian Village in the Ptolemaic Period*, Cambridge 1971, p. 55; KATJA MÜLLER, *Settlements of the Ptolemies. City Foundations and New Settlement in the Hellenistic World* [= *Studia Hellenistica* 43], Louvain – Paris – Dudley, MA 2006, pp. 149–151; FISCHER-BOVET, *Army* (cit. n. 3), p. 201.

<sup>15</sup> On the settlement of the cleruchs, see SCHEUBLE-REITER, *Die Katökenreiter* (cit. n. 8), pp. 27–32; on the residence of the cleruchs in the villages, see *ibidem*, pp. 33–38; FISCHER-BOVET, *Army* (cit. n. 3), pp. 239–242.

<sup>16</sup> See W. CLARYSSE, 'Egyptian estate-holders in the Ptolemaic period', [in:] E. LIPIŃSKI (ed.), *State and Temple Economy in the Ancient Near East II* [= *Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta* 6], Louvain 1979, p. 735; see also CLARYSSE & THOMPSON, *Counting the People* (cit. n. 2), p. 151; SCHEUBLE-REITER, *Die Katökenreiter* (cit. n. 8), p. 285.

<sup>17</sup> See CLARYSSE & THOMPSON, *Counting the People* (cit. n. 2), pp. 139–140; FISCHER-BOVET, 'Counting the Greeks' (cit. n. 1), p. 151, n. 62.

was not restricted to the Arsinoite nome: it is observable throughout Egypt.<sup>18</sup> As institutions borrowed from the Greek city states or *poleis*, the *gymnasia* existed specifically for the preservation of Greek culture. Elsewhere in the Greek-speaking world *gymnasia* were institutions for Greek education and for physical and military training. Whether they performed all these functions in the countryside of Ptolemaic Egypt is uncertain, but Ptolemaic *gymnasia* were certainly places of physical training. Given the fact that most rural *gymnasia* were founded as private foundations by soldiers and the majority of their members were cleruchs or military settlers they are also likely to have been places of military training.<sup>19</sup>

Should we classify the cleruchs as part of a single broad Greek military diaspora or do we have hints that some of them formed specific military immigrant communities with different ethnic identities? The *gymnasia* argue the first conclusion. Although we cannot prove that all cleruchs were members of the *gymnasia* nor that all *gymnasium* members were soldiers, the rural *gymnasia* especially were characterised by a strong presence of military personnel.<sup>20</sup> This suggests that the Greco-Macedonian cleruchs in Egypt wished to preserve a common Greek identity and create focal points of social networks where a common Greek lifestyle was manifested in a formal institution.<sup>21</sup> Therefore, the military diaspora reflected by the *gymnasia* should be understood as part of a Greek diaspora whose identity was not ethnic but cultural.<sup>22</sup> This conclusion is supported by the later history of the *gymnasia* in Egypt: although they faced social and cultural transformations over time, the *gymnasia* never stopped

<sup>18</sup> On the diffusion of *gymnasia* in Ptolemaic Egypt, see the map provided by W. HABERMANN, 'Gymnasien im ptolemäischen Ägypten – eine Skizze', [in:] D. KAH & P. SCHOLZ (eds.), *Das hellenistische Gymnasium [= Wissenskultur und gesellschaftlicher Wandel 8]*, Berlin 2004, p. 337.

<sup>19</sup> On the relationship between the army and the *gymnasia*, see most recently SCHEUBLE-REITER, *Die Katökenreiter* (cit. n. 8), pp. 309–315; FISCHER-BOVET, *Army* (cit. n. 3), pp. 280–290.

<sup>20</sup> See also CLARYSSE & THOMPSON, *Counting the People* (cit. n. 2), pp. 133–134.

<sup>21</sup> See FISCHER-BOVET, *Army* (cit. n. 3), pp. 279–280.

<sup>22</sup> On an Egyptian or national identity that was opposed to a Greek or cultural identity, see ROWLANDSON, 'Dissing the Egyptians' (cit. n. 6), pp. 216–217.

representing Greek culture.<sup>23</sup> And from the second century BC, military recruits of Egyptian or Graeco-Egyptian origin came to be admitted as members,<sup>24</sup> such that Christelle Fischer-Bovet soundly has argued that 'the gymnasium became an engine of integration'.<sup>25</sup>

But can we detect specific ethnic identities among the military settlers? In some villages lived substantial groups of cleruchs sharing the same origin; in already existing Egyptian settlements, cleruchs could, indifferently, live close to each other, or have Egyptian neighbours.<sup>26</sup> Occasionally even whole settlements or quarters within a nome capital seem to have been named after a foreign region, a suggestive fact, although we know nothing about the actual population of these neighbourhoods.<sup>27</sup> Thanks to onomastics and the use of 'legal ethnic designations,' concentrations of cleruchs with a common origin can be identified in the following locations: at Pitos (Memphite nome) we meet a group of Thracian cleruchs in the first half of the third century BC; in the lower Oxyrhynchite toparchy, at the villages of Tholthis and Takona, Cyreneans formed the majority of the Greek military settlers in the second half of the third century BC; and the same probably applies to those Jewish inhabitants of Samareia (Arsinoite nome) who are attested from the mid-third to the mid-second century BC and served in the Ptolemaic army (among them several cleruchs).<sup>28</sup> Had these military groups a communal character and

<sup>23</sup> See THOMPSON, 'Hellenistic Hellenes' (cit. n. 3), p. 312.

<sup>24</sup> See FISCHER-BOVET, *Army* (cit. n. 3), pp. 281-282, 283-284, 289-290, and also SCHEUBLE-REITER, *Die Katökenreiter* (cit. n. 8), pp. 313-314.

<sup>25</sup> FISCHER-BOVET, *Army* (cit. n. 3), p. 289.

<sup>26</sup> See W. CLARYSSE, 'Ethnic diversity and dialect among the Greeks of Hellenistic Egypt', [in:] P. W. PESTMAN & A. M. F. W. VERHOOGT (eds.), *The Two Faces of Graeco-Roman Egypt* [= *Papyrologica Lugduno-Batava* 30], Leiden - Boston - Cologne 1998, pp. 1-2; CLARYSSE & THOMPSON, *Counting the People* (cit. n. 2), p. 151; SCHEUBLE-REITER, *Die Katökenreiter* (cit. n. 8), pp. 27-32; FISCHER-BOVET, *Army* (cit. n. 3), p. 247.

<sup>27</sup> See SCHEUBLE-REITER, *Die Katökenreiter* (cit. n. 8), pp. 27-29; FISCHER-BOVET, *Army* (cit. n. 3), p. 202.

<sup>28</sup> Thracians: P. Cair. Zen. I 59001 (274 BC); SCHEUBLE-REITER, *Die Katökenreiter* (cit. n. 8), pp. 27-28. Cyreneans: CLARYSSE, 'Ethnic diversity' (cit. n. 26), pp. 2-6; Sylvie HONIGMAN, 'The Jewish *politeuma* at Heracleopolis', *Scripta Classica Israelica* 21 (2002), p. 265;

a sense of their ethnicity? It is possible, yet in none of the cases are structures of internal governance and shared worship known to us, but that may merely be owed to the lack of the evidence;<sup>29</sup> and the Cyreneans, at least, continued to use their Greek dialect.

Community-building along ethnic lines and the existence of ethnic neighbourhoods would of course hardly be surprising among cleruchs,<sup>30</sup> if not yet amenable to proof. The question is rather how long such posited ethnic groups lasted after the first generation of settlers. Generally our evidence about the settlement of cleruchs in the Egyptian countryside does not show systematic ethnic clustering. Rather, the evidence for the *gymnasia* implies that it was cultural 'Greekness' and not city or region of origin based 'ethnicity' that mattered from a social and occupational perspective.<sup>31</sup> The state perhaps took notice of the weakness of ethnic feeling: at the beginning of the second century BC the cleruch cavalry was no longer divided into both ethnic and numbered subdivisions (*bipparchiai*), the former categories being dissolved and incorporated into the latter,<sup>32</sup> albeit with the preservation, no doubt for ideological reasons, of the mili-

EADEM, 'Politeumata and ethnicity in Ptolemaic Egypt', *Ancient Society* 33 (2003), p. 99; CLARYSSE & THOMPSON, *Counting the People* (cit. n. 2), pp. 320–321; Jews: C. KUHS, *Das Dorf Samareia im griechisch-römischen Ägypten*, unpublished MA thesis, University of Heidelberg 1996, pp. 85–91, 107–110.

<sup>29</sup> In the case of the Jews in Samareia the absence of any kind of organisational structure (already noted by KUHS, *Das Dorf Samareia* [cit. n. 28], pp. 110–111) is perhaps even more astonishing given the fact that there are several examples of Jewish associations or synagogue communities scattered over Ptolemaic Egypt; relevant source texts are collected by A. RUNESSON *et alii*, *The Ancient Synagogue from Its Origins to 200 C.E. A Source Book* [= *Ancient Judaism and Early Christianity* 72], Leiden – Boston 2008, pp. 171–217.

<sup>30</sup> For the use of the term 'ethnic neighbourhood', see CLARYSSE, 'Ethnic diversity' (cit. n. 26), pp. 4–5, who assumed that the Cyreneans settled in the lower Oxyrhynchite toparchy formed such concentrated or closed communities ('By sticking together they were able to fend off the disappearance of their dialect for several generations', p. 5); cf. CLARYSSE & THOMPSON, *Counting the People* (cit. n. 2), p. 151 ('cleruchs were resident in the villages of the Egyptian countryside, sometimes living among other villagers but more often forming their own community within a village').

<sup>31</sup> Cf. SCHEUBLE-REITER, *Die Katökenreiter* (cit. n. 8), pp. 326–329.

<sup>32</sup> See SCHEUBLE-REITER, *Die Katökenreiter* (cit. n. 8), pp. 60–71; FISCHER-BOVET, *Army* (cit. n. 3), pp. 132–133.

tary category of *Makedones*.<sup>33</sup> To find groups which were both organized as associations or communities and seemed to have preserved some kind of ethnic identity we have to turn to the second pillar of the Ptolemaic army, the mercenaries or professional soldiers.

## 2. THE MERCENARIES OR PROFESSIONAL SOLDIERS

The Ptolemies recruited full-time mercenary soldiers to use in war, but who also functioned in peacetime to garrison strategically significant points.<sup>34</sup> A significant proportion of such military bases were in larger or urban settlements. The roots of this system lay in late Pharaonic times and can be traced back to the seventh century BC.<sup>35</sup> In general, it seems that the great majority of soldiers in garrisons were professionals and not cleruchs.<sup>36</sup> In the third century BC, these professional soldiers were (similarly to cleruchs) immigrants or the sons of immigrants. Statistics show that in this period the Ptolemies recruited mercenaries – in contrast to cleruchs – by preference in regions where they had possessions or influence, as in Asia Minor, Crete, and the Levant,<sup>37</sup> a practice that is likely explained by the fact that mercenaries recruited from within the Ptolemaic empire would not vanish after the end of their service because they would return to areas

<sup>33</sup> See above, n. 3. As a result, despite the fact that actual immigration to Egypt declined from the late third century BC on, at least until the middle of the second century BC there was no reduction in the proportion of military settlers or cleruchs designated as *Makedones*; see SCHEUBLE-REITER, *Die Katökenreiter* (cit. n. 8), pp. 114–115; STEFANOU, ‘Waterborne recruits’ (cit. n. 11), pp. 123–124.

<sup>34</sup> See Sandra SCHEUBLE, ‘Bemerkungen zu den *μισθοφόροι* und *τακτόμισθοι* im ptolemäischen Ägypten’, [in:] R. EBERHARD *et alii* (eds.), ‘... vor dem Papyrus sind alle gleich!’ *Papyrologische Beiträge zu Ehren von Bärbel Kramer (P. Kramer)* [= *Archiv für Papyrusforschung und verwandte Gebiete Beiheft* 27], Berlin – New York 2009, pp. 214–215; FISCHER-BOVET, *Army* (cit. n. 3), pp. 261–263, 269–279.

<sup>35</sup> See FISCHER-BOVET, *Army* (cit. n. 3), pp. 18–37.

<sup>36</sup> See SCHEUBLE, ‘Bemerkungen’ (cit. n. 34), pp. 218–220; EADEM, *Die Katökenreiter* (cit. n. 8), p. 240; FISCHER-BOVET, *Army* (cit. n. 3), p. 262.

<sup>37</sup> See BAGNALL, ‘The origins’ (cit. n. 10), p. 16; STEFANOU, ‘Waterborne recruits’ (cit. n. 11), pp. 127–131.

controlled by the Ptolemies from which, if necessary, they could be rehired.<sup>38</sup> This pattern of recruiting perhaps also explains why there are few signs of official attempts to integrate mercenaries who had come to Egypt to serve there into local life. Few, but not none; a small number of mercenaries was apparently given grants of Egyptian land, albeit smaller than the plots given to cleruchs, because the mercenaries also continued to receive payment.<sup>39</sup> Second, there is evidence for the institution of the *politeuma* ('polity'), a kind of association that was probably tailored to specific segments of the population whose origins lay in groups of immigrant mercenaries of the same provenance.<sup>40</sup> This institution is of prime interest to our investigation and deserves a closer look.

## 2.1. POLITEUMATA OR INSTITUTIONALIZED ETHNIC GROUPS

*Politeumata* were described by ethnic designations that pointed to foreign ethnic groups.<sup>41</sup> In Egypt, a *politeuma* of Cilicians,<sup>42</sup> one of Boeotians,<sup>43</sup>

<sup>38</sup> M. LAUNEY, *Recherches sur les armées hellénistique* [= *Bibliothèque des Écoles françaises d'Athènes et de Rome* 169], Paris 1987 (2nd ed.), pp. 276–280, and STEFANOU, 'Waterborne recruits' (cit. n. 11), p. 127, explained the low number of Cretan cleruchs by assuming that Cretans soldiers preferred to be hired as mercenaries and returned home after military service.

<sup>39</sup> See SCHEUBLE, 'Bemerkungen' (cit. n. 34), p. 218.

<sup>40</sup> See P. SÄNGER, 'The *politeuma* in the Hellenistic world (third to first century B.C.): A form of organisation to integrate minorities', [in:] Julia DAHLVIK *et alii* (eds.), *Migration und Integration – wissenschaftliche Perspektiven aus Österreich. Jahrbuch 2/2013* [= *Migrations- und Integrationsforschung* 5], Göttingen 2014, pp. 57–60; IDEM, 'Das *politeuma* in der hellenistischen Staatenwelt: Eine Organisationsform zur Systemintegration von Minderheiten', [in:] IDEM (ed.), *Minderheiten und Migration in der griechisch-römischen Welt: Politische, rechtliche, religiöse und kulturelle Aspekte* [= *Studien zur Historischen Migrationsforschung* 31], Paderborn 2016, pp. 34–37.

<sup>41</sup> On the evidence for the *politeumata*, see most recently SÄNGER, 'The *politeuma*' (cit. n. 40), pp. 53–55; IDEM, 'Das *politeuma*' (cit. n. 40), pp. 28–32.

<sup>42</sup> SB IV 7270 = SEG VIII 573 = É. BERNAND, *Recueil des inscriptions grecques du Fayoum*, I: *La 'méris' d'Hérakleides*, Cairo 1975, no. 15 = IDEM, *Inscriptions grecques d'Égypte et de Nubie au musée du Louvre* [= *Centre de Recherches d'Histoire Ancienne* 51], Paris 1992, no. 22.

<sup>43</sup> SEG II 871 = SB III 6664.

one of Cretans,<sup>44</sup> one of Jews,<sup>45</sup> and one of Idumaeans<sup>46</sup> are attested. We come across all these *politeumata* in the second or first century BC.<sup>47</sup> For their locations in Egypt we know only that the Boeotian *politeuma* was based in the nome capital of Xoïs in the north of the Nile Delta, the Idumaean in Memphis, and the Jewish in Herakleopolis in Middle Egypt. The Cilician and the Cretan *politeuma* cannot be located exactly, but it appears likely that they were based in the Arsinoite nome. Other *politeumata* are only attested after Egypt fell under Roman rule and became a Roman province in the year 30 BC, but they are probably older, originating in the Ptolemaic period. At the end of the first century BC we come across a *politeuma* of Phrygians, whose location in Egypt is unknown,<sup>48</sup> and many years later, in AD 120, we encounter a *politeuma* of Lycians, which existed in Alexandria.<sup>49</sup>

<sup>44</sup> *P. Tebt.* I 32 = *W. Chr.* 448.

<sup>45</sup> *P. Polit. Iud.* 1–20. Against B. RITTER, 'On the «πολίτευμα in Heracleopolis», *Scripta Classica Israelica* 30 (2011), pp. 9–37, who rejects the commonly accepted existence of a Jewish *politeuma* in Herakleopolis, see SÄNGER, 'The *politeuma*' (cit. n. 40), p. 54, n. 7; IDEM, 'Das *politeuma*' (cit. n. 40), p. 29, n. 10.

<sup>46</sup> *OGIS* 737 = J. G. MILNE, *Greek Inscriptions*, Oxford 1905, pp. 18–19, no. 33027 = *SB V* 8929 = A. BERNAND, *La prose sur pierre dans l'Égypte hellénistique et romaine*, I: *Textes et traductions*; II: *Commentaires*, Paris 1992, no. 25. On the identification of the Idumaean *politeuma*, see Dorothy J. THOMPSON CRAWFORD, 'The Idumaeans of Memphis and the Ptolemaic *politeumata*', *PapCongr.* XVII, pp. 1069–1075; EADEM, *Memphis under the Ptolemies*, Princeton 2012 (2nd ed.), pp. 93–96.

<sup>47</sup> The testimony for the Cilician *politeuma* mentioned above could also be dated to the third century BC. BERNAND, *Inscriptions grecques* (cit. n. 42), no. 22, p. 65, summarized the various dating suggestions (from the third to the first century BC) and favoured, following L. MOOREN, *The Aulic Titulature in Ptolemaic Egypt. Introduction and Prosopography* [= *Verhandelingen van de Koninklijke Academie voor Wetenschappen, Letteren en Schone Kunsten van België, Klasse der Letteren* 78], Brussels 1975, p. 173, no. 281, a dating to the first century BC.

<sup>48</sup> *IG XIV* 701 = *OGIS* 658 = *SB V* 7875 = *IGR I* 458 = F. KAYSER, *Recueil des inscriptions grecques et latines (non funéraires) d'Alexandrie impériale (I<sup>er</sup>–III<sup>e</sup> s. apr. J.-C.)* [= *Bibliothèque d'étude* 108], Cairo 1994, no. 74. On the provenance of the inscription see also W. HUB, *Die Verwaltung des ptolemaïischen Reiches* [= *Münchener Beiträge zur Papyrusforschung und antiken Rechtsgeschichte* 104], Munich 2011, p. 299, with further bibliographical references in n. 232.

<sup>49</sup> *SB III* 6025 = *SB V* 8757 = *IGR I* 1078 = *SEG II* 848 = BERNAND, *La prose* (cit. n. 46), no. 61 = KAYSER, *Recueil* (cit. n. 48), no. 24.

The link between *politeumata* and foreign mercenaries serving the Ptolemies seems secure. The texts illuminating the *politeumata* of Cilicians, Boeotians, Cretans, and Idumaeans indicate that these groups had close links with military dignitaries or consisted partly of professional soldiers.<sup>50</sup> Furthermore, an inscription that dates from the year 112/11 or 76/75 BC refers to a *politeuma* of soldiers of unspecified ethnicity stationed in Alexandria (*SEG* XX 499). Outside Egypt, the three *politeumata* at Sidon (now in Lebanon), when it was still under Ptolemaic control, are known from gravestones of their members, gravestones that depict armed men.<sup>51</sup> The Jewish *politeuma* of Herakleopolis was located in the harbor district of that nome capital: in the fifties of the second century BC, shortly before the *politeuma* is attested, a fortress was built in this same area, and it seems most natural to conclude that the original mem-

<sup>50</sup> The Boeotian *politeuma*, whose priest was *strategos* (the highest nome official), consisted of a group of soldiers and a group of civilians; see C. ZUCKERMAN, 'Hellenistic *politeumata* and the Jews. A reconsideration', *Scripta Classica Israelica* 8/9 (1985–1988), p. 175; Dorothy J. THOMPSON, 'Ethnic minorities in Hellenistic Egypt', [in:] O. M. VAN NIJF & R. ALSTON (eds.), *Political Culture in the Greek City after the Classical Age* [= *Groningen-Royal Holloway Studies on the Greek City after the Classical Age* 2], Leuven – Paris – Walpole, MA 2011, p. 110. In the case of the Cilician *politeuma*, we encounter a high-ranking military officer of *machairophoroi* (a troop of professional soldiers, literally 'saber-bearers') acting as a benefactor of the community concerned. In the case of the Idumaeen *politeuma*, a *strategos*, who simultaneously held the position of a priest of *machairophoroi*, was honoured by the Idumaeans. Given the position of both the benefactor of the Cilician *politeuma* and the honoree of the Idumaeen *politeuma* it is natural to assume that some members of these *politeumata* served as *machairophoroi*. Regarding the Cretan *politeuma*, it is documented that two representatives of the community were involved in the administrative processing of the promotion of a member of the *politeuma* to a higher rank within the military hierarchy.

<sup>51</sup> For the Sidonian *politeumata*, see T. MACRIDY, 'À travers les nécropoles sidoniennes', *Revue biblique* 13 [= N.S. 1] (1904), pp. 549: stela A; 551: stela 2; 551–552: stela 3. A *politeuma* is also mentioned in stela 8 (pp. 553–554); however, the name of the city from which the members of this *politeuma* came is lost. The Sidonian *politeumata*, consisting of persons from three cities of Kaunos (in Caria), Termessos Minor near Oinoanda, and Pınara (both in Lycia) – situated in the south of Asia Minor – thus differ from the *politeumata* in Egypt because they are associated with a home city rather than a region. For the Sidonian *politeumata* being Ptolemaic and not Seleucid, see SÄNGER, 'The *politeuma*' (cit. n. 40), pp. 61–62; IDEM, 'Das *politeuma*' (cit. n. 40), pp. 38–39.

bership of the Jewish *politeuma* would have consisted of Jewish soldiers residing near the strongpoint they garrisoned.<sup>52</sup>

Like the Jewish *politeuma* of Herakleopolis, moreover, hitherto in Egypt *politeumata* are securely attested only in nome capitals, a fact that itself suggests a connection between the *politeumata* and troops of mercenaries or professional soldiers who were characteristically garrisoned in such towns. And that the origins of the known *politeumata* are to be found in bodies of mercenaries (and their civilian staff, and families) is further confirmed by the ethnic designations they bore. Most of these refer – Boeotians and Phrygians excluded – to regions (Lycia, Cilicia, Judaea, Idumaea) that were temporarily in the possession of the Ptolemies or where, as in Crete, they had a military presence,<sup>53</sup> regions where – as already indicated – the Ptolemies tended to recruit mercenaries in the third century BC. These patterns of recruitment may imply that most of the *politeumata* go back to the third century BC, because afterwards the Ptolemies lost their large extra-Egyptian possessions in Asia Minor and the Levant.<sup>54</sup> There is no actual evidence for a *politeuma* dated to the third century BC, nor for that matter, for the date of foundation of any of the *politeumata* in Egypt. But evidence from outside Egypt could lend some support to the hypothesis of third-century origin: as already indicated, *politeumata* are attested for Ptolemaic Sidon at the end of the third century BC.<sup>55</sup> Nothing, however, excludes the possibility of either the

<sup>52</sup> See T. KRUSE, 'Das jüdische *politeuma* von Herakleopolis und die Integration fremder Ethnien im Ptolemäerreich', [in:] Vera V. DEMENT'EVA & T. SCHMITT (eds.), *Volk und Demokratie im Altertum* [= *Bremer Beiträge zur Altertumswissenschaft* 1], Göttingen 2010, pp. 100–101; IDEM, 'Die Festung in Herakleopolis und der Zwist im Ptolemäerhaus', [in:] JÖRDENS & QUACK (eds.), *Ägypten* (cit. n. 12), p. 261.

<sup>53</sup> See n. 56 below.

<sup>54</sup> Pace the widespread assumption that there is no evidence for *politeumata* dating before the reign of Ptolemy VI (180–145 BC) and that the form of organization in question was therefore introduced by this king: see LAUNY, *Recherches* (cit. n. 38), p. 1077; HONIGMAN, 'Politeumata' (cit. n. 28), p. 67; Dorothy J. THOMPSON, 'The sons of Ptolemy V in a post-secession world', [in:] JÖRDENS & QUACK (eds.), *Ägypten* (cit. n. 12), pp. 21–22, with further bibliographical references in n. 47; cf. also FISCHER-BOVET, *Army* (cit. n. 3), pp. 293–294.

<sup>55</sup> See above, n. 51.

foundation of *politeumata* in Egypt or the migration of their members to Egypt in the second (or even first) century BC: even after the territory of the Ptolemaic kingdom had been reduced to Egypt, Cyprus, and the Cyrenaica, the Ptolemies were still eager and able to recruit soldiers from other regions.<sup>56</sup> From lands once Ptolemaic but now under hostile control, powerful political refugees and their existing forces or retainers were natural recruits, a fact illustrated by the Ptolemaic reception of the Judaeon Onias, member of the Oniad family (descendants of Zadok, high priest under Solomon, whose ancestors had held the office of high priest at Jerusalem since Onias I [ca. 320–280 BC]).<sup>57</sup> Political confusion in Judaea,

<sup>56</sup> Until the reign of Ptolemy VI Philometor (180–145 BC) active Ptolemaic policy in the Aegean is attested, and until his reign Ptolemaic garrisons were kept in Itanos (north-eastern Crete), Methana (eastern Peloponnese on the Saronic Gulf), and on the Aegean island of Thera; see BURASELIS, ‘A lively «Indian summer»’ (cit. n. 12); Eva WINTER, ‘Formen ptolemäischer Präsenz in der Ägäis zwischen schriftlicher Überlieferung und archäologischem Befund’, [in:] F. DAUBNER (ed.), *Militärsiedlungen und Territorialherrschaft in der Antike* [= *Topoi* 3], Berlin – New York 2011, pp. 65–77; SCHEUBLE-REITER, *Die Katökenreiter* (cit. n. 8), pp. 117–118; FISCHER-BOVET, *Army* (cit. n. 3), pp. 168–169. All these outposts could have assisted recruitment in the surrounding areas. The Ptolemies also employed trusted recruitment officers (*xenologoi*) to hire soldiers outside Egypt (Polyb. 5.63.8–9; 15.25.16–18). STEFANOÛ, ‘Waterborne recruits’ (cit. n. 11), pp. 118–120, concluded (p. 120) ‘that individual Macedonians might render their services to the Ptolemies, regardless of Ptolemaic relations with the Antigonids’, and see pp. 120–121 for Ptolemaic recruitment of prisoners of war and renegades.

<sup>57</sup> It is still not possible to determine with certainty whether Onias should be identified with Onias III or his son, though the second possibility is slightly preferred in the literature: see A. KASHER, *The Jews in Hellenistic and Roman Egypt. The Struggle for Equal Rights* [= *Texte und Studien zum antiken Judentum* 7], Tübingen 1985, pp. 132–135, for the controversy, but who leaves open whether Onias III or IV is meant. F. PARENTE, ‘Onias III’s death and the founding of the temple of Leontopolis’, [in:] F. PARENTE & J. SIEVERS (eds.), *Josephus and the History of the Greco-Roman Period. Essays in Memory of Morton Smith* [= *Studia Post-Biblica* 41], Leiden – New York – Cologne 1994, pp. 69–98, argued for Onias III, as did (with more or less conviction), Joan E. TAYLOR, ‘A second temple in Egypt: The evidence for the Zadokite temple of Onias’, *Journal for the Study of Judaism* 29 (1998), pp. 298–310, and W. AMELING, ‘Die jüdische Gemeinde von Leontopolis nach den Inschriften’, [in:] M. KARRER & W. KRAUS (eds.), *Die Septuaginta – Texte, Kontexte, Lebenswelten. Internationale Fachtagung veranstaltet von Septuaginta Deutsch (LXX.D), Wuppertal 20.–23. Juli 2006* [= *Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament* 219], Tübingen 2008, pp. 118–119. J. MÉLÈZE MODRZEJEWSKI, *The Jews of Egypt.*

a consequence of the revolt of the Maccabees, drove Onias – accompanied by fellow Jews – to Egypt, and he was allowed by Ptolemy VI to found a Jewish temple and form a military colony in Leontopolis (south-east of the Nile Delta).<sup>58</sup> The start of construction can, depending on our interpretation of Josephus, be dated between 164 and 150 BC.<sup>59</sup> Some years later, Idumaens possibly took refuge in Egypt after Idumea had been captured and annexed by the Jewish leader John Hyrcanus in *ca.* 125 BC.<sup>60</sup> In short, even in a period of declining Ptolemaic power, there is no reason to think the influx of outside soldiers into Egypt ever came to an abrupt end. It rather continued to a lesser degree even in an altered geo-political context.<sup>61</sup> Therefore, although the Ptolemies started to recruit professional soldiers primarily within Egypt at the turn of the second century BC,<sup>62</sup> they seem also to have tried – as far as possible – to maintain

*From Ramses II to Emperor Hadrian*, Princeton 1997, pp. 124–125 identifies Onias with Onias IV, an identification also preferred by E. S. GRUEN, ‘The origins and objectives of Onias’ temple’, *Scripta Classica Israelica* 16 (1997), pp. 47–57 (n. 26 cites older literature for this position); Livia CAPPONI, *Il tempio di Leontopoli in Egitto: Identità politica e religiosa dei Giudei di Onia (c. 150 a.C. – 73 d.C.)* [= *Pubblicazioni della Facoltà di Lettere e Filosofia dell’Università di Pavia* 118], Pisa 2007, pp. 42–53; P. NADIG, ‘Zur Rolle der Juden unter Ptolemaios VI. und Ptolemaios VIII.’, [in:] JÖRDENS & QUACK (eds.), *Ägypten* (cit. n. 12), pp. 188–194.

<sup>58</sup> See Josephus, *Bj* 1.33; 7.427; *Aj* 13.65–66.

<sup>59</sup> See CAPPONI, *Il tempio* (cit. n. 57), p. 59; NADIG, ‘Zur Rolle der Juden’ (cit. n. 57), pp. 188, 191–193; see also GRUEN, ‘The origins’ (cit. n. 57), pp. 69–70, pointing to 159–152 BC, when the office of high priest was vacant. As to whether the military colony of Onias was organized as a *politeuma*, which seems likely, see P. SÄNGER, ‘Considerations on the administrative organisation of the Jewish military colony in Leontopolis: A case of generosity and calculation’, [in:] J. TOLAN (ed.), *Expulsion and Diaspora Formation: Religious and Ethnic Identities in Flux from Antiquity to the Seventeenth Century* [= *Religion and Law in Medieval Christian and Muslim Societies* 5], Turnhout 2015, pp. 171–194.

<sup>60</sup> See U. RAPAPORT, ‘Les Iduméens en Égypte’, *Revue de philologie* 43 (1969), pp. 78–79, 81–82; THOMPSON CRAWFORD, ‘The Idumaeans’ (cit. n. 46), pp. 1071–1072; EADEM, *Memphis* (cit. n. 46), pp. 79–80; HONIGMAN, ‘*Politeumata*’ (cit. n. 28), pp. 66, n. 22, 83–84.

<sup>61</sup> See FISCHER-BOVET, *Army* (cit. n. 3), p. 293: ‘Indeed, the reorganization of the army during the period of crisis (Period B) [c. 220 and c. 160 BCE] favored the use of professional soldiers in garrisons. Even if recruitment was mainly internal to Egypt, foreigners were also hired at times’.

<sup>62</sup> See the preceding note and FISCHER-BOVET, *Army* (cit. n. 3), pp. 269–271, 273–279.

the recruitment patterns they used in the third century BC when the kingdom ruled the sea and had far-flung possessions.

Apart from its military character, the decisive characteristic of the *politeuma* is that it was an administrative unit sanctioned by the Ptolemaic authorities that was based on a (semi-autonomous) community or association and its territorial base.<sup>63</sup> This conclusion is drawn from *P. Polit. Iud.*, the archive of twenty papyri (dated between 144/3 and 133/2 BC) attesting the Jewish *politeuma* at Herakleopolis.<sup>64</sup> This archive provides the first definite attestation of a Jewish *politeuma* in the Hellenistic period. The existence of a *politeuma* in Alexandria is not proven, nor is the supposed Jewish *politeuma* of Leontopolis originating in Onias' military colony;<sup>65</sup> and the

<sup>63</sup> See SÄNGER, 'Das *politeuma*' (cit. n. 40), pp. 35–38, 44; IDEM, 'Heracleopolis, Jewish *politeuma*', [in:] S. GOLDBERG (ed.), *The Oxford Classical Dictionary*, New York 2016 (<http://classics.oxfordre.com>); KRUSE, 'Das jüdische *politeuma*' (cit. n. 52), pp. 95, 97, 99–100.

<sup>64</sup> On the Jewish *politeuma* of Herakleopolis, see, in general, *P. Polit. Iud.*, pp. 1–34; HONIGMAN, 'The Jewish *politeuma*' (cit. n. 28), pp. 251–266; Maria R. FALIVENE, review of *P. Polit. Iud.*, *Bibliotheca Orientalis* 59 (2002), coll. 541–550; A. KASHER, review of *P. Polit. Iud.*, *Jewish Quarterly Review* 93 (2002), pp. 257–268; K. MARESCHE & J. M. S. COWEY, '«A recurrent inclination to isolate the case of the Jews from their Ptolemaic environment?» Eine Antwort auf Sylvie Honigman', *Scripa Classica Israelica* 22 (2003), pp. 307–310; J. M. S. COWEY, 'Das ägyptische Judentum in hellenistischer Zeit – neue Erkenntnisse aus jüngst veröffentlichten Papyri', [in:] S. KREUZER & J. P. LESCH (eds.), *Im Brennpunkt: Die Septuaginta. Studien zur Entstehung und Bedeutung der Griechischen Bibel II* [= *Beiträge zur Wissenschaft vom Alten und Neuen Testament* 161 = *Folge* 9, H. 1], Stuttgart 2004, pp. 24–43; T. KRUSE, 'Das *politeuma* der Juden von Herakleopolis in Ägypten', [in:] KARRER & KRAUS (eds.), *Die Septuaginta* (cit. n. 57), pp. 166–175; IDEM, 'Das jüdische *politeuma*' (cit. n. 52), pp. 93–105; P. ARZT-GRABNER, 'Die Stellung des Judentums in neutestamentlicher Zeit anhand der Politeuma-Papyri und anderer Texte', [in:] J. HERZER (ed.), *Papyrologie und Exegese: Die Auslegung des Neuen Testament im Licht der Papyri* [= *Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament*, 2. Reihe, 341], Tübingen 2012, pp. 127–158.

<sup>65</sup> The questionable sources are, for Alexandria, Aristaeus 310 [= Josephus, *AJ* 12.108] and, for Leontopolis, SB I 5765 = *C. Pap. Jud.* III 1530A = É. BERNARD, *Inscriptions métriques de l'Égypte gréco-romaine. Recherches sur la poésie épigrammatique des Grecs en Égypte* [= *Annales littéraires de l'Université de Besançon* 98], Paris 1969, no. 16 = W. HORNBURY & D. NOY, *Jewish Inscriptions of Graeco-Roman Egypt*, Cambridge 1992, no. 39 (Augustan times to early second century?). For scepticism, ZUCKERMAN, 'Hellenistic *politeumata*' (cit. n. 50), pp. 181–184, G. LÜDERITZ, 'What is the *politeuma*?', [in:] J. W. VAN HENTEN & P. W. VAN DER HORST (eds.), *Studies in Early Jewish Epigraphy* [= *Arbeiten zur Geschichte des antiken Judentums und des Urchristentums* 21], Leiden – New York – Cologne 1994, pp. 204–210; W. AMELING, '«Market-place» und Gewalt.

documents illuminating the Jewish *politeuma* of Berenice in Cyrenaica are dated to Roman, not Ptolemaic, times.<sup>66</sup> *P. Polit. Iud.* suggests that the Jewish *politeuma* of Herakleopolis actually governed its own quarter of the city, an area that was located in the harbour district (with its new fort, which it is likely the Jews garrisoned), which was about a mile removed from the town and located on the Bahr Yusuf, the western branch of the Nile. There the officials of the Jewish *politeuma*, the archons, under a higher official called the politarch, seemed to act (at least in judicial matters) like state functionaries and were supported by lesser officials. Like Ptolemaic officials, the officials of the *politeuma* were approached by means of petitions from their subjects, ordinarily in private legal disputes between Jews, but sometimes also in disputes between Jews and non-Jews. The petitioners appear always to be Jewish. What petitioners expected of the archons was not that they should summon a court that would generate a judicial verdict (as might be rendered by a Greek court in Egypt like the *dikasterion* or the court of the *chrematistai*) but rather judgment of cases by the archons themselves, by virtue of their own authority, and the enforcement of legal claims that had been granted by the archons of the *politeuma*, by virtue of the authority that inhered in their position. The procedure, therefore, followed the same patterns as the justice of Ptolemaic officials, who gave justice in their own right as magistrates. The petitions show that Jewish beliefs, particularly the ancestral Jewish law, here called the *patrios nomos*, flows into the argumentation and the structure of the petitions to the archons. The allusions and explicit references to Jewish belief seem to be a strategy of argumentation directed at specifically Jewish officials, who would understand the religious considerations adduced by the petitioners, and so be vulnerable to persuasion and influenced thereby.<sup>67</sup> The jurisdiction and

Die Juden in Alexandrien 38 n.Chr.', *Würzburger Jahrbücher für die Altertumswissenschaft* 27 (2003), pp. 88–98 (with n. 112); IDEM, 'Die jüdische Gemeinde' (cit. n. 57), pp. 128–129.

<sup>66</sup> CIG III 5362 = SEG XVI 931 = G. LÜDERITZ, *Corpus jüdischer Zeugnisse aus der Cyrenai-ka mit einem Anhang von Joyce M. Reynolds* [= *Beibefte des Tübinger Atlas des Vorderen Orients, Reihe B*, 53], Wiesbaden 1983, no. 70 (Augustan times?), and CIG III 5361 = LÜDERITZ, *Corpus*, no. 71 (AD 24/25).

<sup>67</sup> For treatment of individual petitions, their contents and legal reasoning, see J. MÉLÈZE MODRZEJEWSKI, 'La fiancée adultère. À propos de la pratique matrimonial du judaïsme

significance of the Jewish *politeuma*, moreover, was not restricted only to Herakleopolis or its harbour district. For the papyri attest that Jews living in villages outside Herakleopolis petitioned the archons and rural Jewish communities or associations seem to have links to them – an unmistakable sign of the wide sphere of influence of the Jewish *politeuma* of Herakleopolis, even if we are not exactly sure of the sources and nature of that influence outside the *politeuma*'s formal boundaries.

There is no reason to regard the Jewish *politeuma* of Herakleopolis as unique or distinct from the *politeumata* of other ethnic groups. For Jews in general were classified among the tax-*Hellenes* and this also applied to Boeotians, Cilicians, Cretans, Lycians, Phrygians, or Idumaeans – other ethnic groups that were also organized as *politeumata* – only some of whom had claims to real Greek ancestry.<sup>68</sup> Viewed constitutionally and socio-politically, therefore, Jews did not form a separate class of population in the Ptolemaic kingdom, and there is no reason to consider the Jewish *politeuma* of Herakleopolis a special case.<sup>69</sup> Rather, we should con-

hellénisé à la lumière du dossier du *politeuma* juif d'Hérakléopolis (144/3–133/2 av. n.è.)', [in:] Zuzanna SŁUZEWSKA & J. URBANIK (eds.), *Marriage: Ideal – Law – Practice. Proceedings of a Conference Held in Memory of Henryk Kupiszewski* [= *The Journal of Juristic Papyrology Supplement* 5], Warsaw 2005, pp. 141–160; R. KUGLER, 'Dorotheos petitions for the return of Philippa (P. Polit. Jud. 7): A case study in the Jews and their law in Ptolemaic Egypt', *Pap-Congr.* XXV, pp. 387–395; IDEM, 'Dispelling an illusion of otherness? A first look at judicial practice in the Heracleopolis papyri', [in:] D. C. HARLOW *et alii* (eds.), *The 'Other' in Second Temple Judaism. Essays in Honor of John J. Collins*, Grand Rapids, MI 2011, pp. 457–470; IDEM, 'Uncovering new dimensions of early Judean interpretation of the Greek Torah: Ptolemaic law interpreted by its own rhetoric', [in:] Hanne von WEISSENBERG *et alii* (eds.), *Changes in Scripture: Rewriting and Interpreting Authoritative Traditions in the Second Temple Period* [= *Beibefte zur Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft* 419], Berlin – New York 2011, pp. 165–175; IDEM, 'Peton contests paying double rent on farmland (P. Heid. Inv. G 5100): A slice of Judean experience in the second century BCE Herakleopolite nome', [in:] E. MASON *et alii* (eds.), *A Teacher for All Generations: Essays in Honor of James C. VanderKam*, Leiden – Boston 2012, pp. 537–551; IDEM, 'Judean marriage custom and law in second-century BCE Egypt: A case of migrating ideas and a fixed ethnic minority', [in:] SÄNGER (ed.), *Minderheiten* (cit. n. 40), pp. 123–139.

<sup>68</sup> On the tax-*Hellenes*, see n. 3, above.

<sup>69</sup> See THOMPSON, 'Ethnic minorities' (cit. n. 50), p. 113; EADEM, 'The sons of Ptolemy V' (cit. n. 54), p. 22; SÄNGER, 'The *politeuma*' (cit. n. 40), p. 60; IDEM, 'Das *politeuma*' (cit. n. 40), p. 38.

sider – as a working hypothesis – the likelihood that all the *politeumata* listed above held the same position in the Ptolemaic state.

This does not mean that all *politeumata* were organized identically: to be sure, a council of archons, which presided over the Jewish *politeumata* of Herakleopolis and Berenike, is well known from Jewish associations or synagogue communities.<sup>70</sup> But non-Jewish ethnic *politeumata* seem to have employed different officials. In the case of the *politeuma* of soldiers stationed in Alexandria, one encounters a *prostates* (president) and a *grammateus* (scribe); for the Phrygian and Boeotian *politeuma* a priest is attested. Furthermore, we are informed that the Boeotian, Cilician, and Idumaeen *politeuma* each had its own sanctuary or temple district; it can, therefore, be assumed that in the last two *politeumata*, as well as in the first, a priest presided over the cult of each group. In the case of the Phrygians, the Boeotians, and the Idumaeans, it is unquestionable that their religious identities were strongly connected to the homelands to which their respective ethnic designations alluded: the Phrygians worshiped Zeus Phrygios, the Boeotians Zeus Basileus, a particularly Boeotian aspect of Zeus,<sup>71</sup> and the Idumaeans (as their sanctuary, called an Apollonieion, reveals) Apollo, who is to be identified with Qos, the main god of the Idumaeans before they converted to Judaism.<sup>72</sup> The cult of the Cilicians is less specifically directed at a homeland god but has at least a strong Greek connotation: it is devoted to Zeus and his wife Hera. In the case of the Jewish *politeuma* of Herakleopolis, Jewish belief becomes apparent in the petitions addressed to the archons, and the titles of these officials may suggest that behind the *politeuma* is hidden a synagogue community.

Given the fact that *politeumata* formed cult associations that carried on the rites of the ‘homeland’ indicated by their ethnic designation and

<sup>70</sup> See C. CLAUBEN, *Versammlung, Gemeinde, Synagoge. Das hellenistisch-jüdische Umfeld der frühchristlichen Gemeinden* [= *Studien zur Umwelt der Neuen Testaments* 27], Göttingen 2002, pp. 273–278; D. STÖKL BEN EZRA, ‘A Jewish «archontesse». Remarks on an epitaph from Byblos’, *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 169 (2009), p. 291.

<sup>71</sup> See LAUNY, *Recherches* (cit. n. 38), pp. 954–955, 1067.

<sup>72</sup> See RAPAPORT, ‘Les Iduméens’ (cit. n. 60), p. 73; THOMPSON CRAWFORD, ‘The Idumaeans’ (cit. n. 46), p. 1071; EADEM, *Memphis* (cit. n. 46), pp. 92–93.

had their own administration, which – if the Jewish *politeuma* of Herakleopolis is anything to go by – seems to have a territorial character (a feature which, by the way, fits the most common Greek sense of the word *politeuma* that is linked to the polity of a *polis*<sup>73</sup>), they cannot be categorised merely as ‘ethnic networks’ or ‘ethnic associations,’ but should be regarded as ‘ethnic communities’ according to the terminology of social science.<sup>74</sup> Furthermore, the location of the *politeumata* and the ethnic designations they bore suggest that these communities were the outcome of ethnically defined mercenary groups whose units had been stationed – as far as we can see – in nome capitals, where most of these professional soldiers lived in the same neighbourhood and probably in the vicinity of their garrison. The *politeumata* are without doubt the best example for a process described by Dorothy Thompson:

Local ethnic communities in the Ptolemaic period often derived in origin from military groups; [but] in their developed form they were total communities, consisting of far more than just the military.<sup>75</sup>

<sup>73</sup> On the meaning of the word, see, e.g., W. RUPPEL, ‘Politeuma. Bedeutungsgeschichte eines staatsrechtlichen Terminus’, *Philologus* 82 (1927), pp. 268–312, 433–454; A. BISCARDI, ‘Polis, politeia, politeuma’, *PapCongr.* XVII, pp. 1205–1215; ZUCKERMAN, ‘Hellenistic *politeumata*’ (cit. n. 50), p. 174; LÜDERITZ, ‘What is the *politeuma*?’ (cit. n. 65), p. 183; H. FÖRSTER & P. SÄNGER, ‘Ist unsere Heimat im Himmel? Überlegungen zur Semantik von *πολίτευμα* in Phil 3,20’, *Early Christianity* 5 (2014), pp. 157–164; P. SÄNGER, ‘The meaning of the word *πολίτευμα* in the light of the Judaeo-Hellenistic literature’, [in:] T. DERDA *et alii* (eds.), *Proceedings of the 27th International Congress of Papyrology, Warsaw, 29 July – 3 August 2013* [= *The Journal of Juristic Papyrology Supplement* 28], Warsaw 2016, pp. 1679–1693.

<sup>74</sup> For this definition, see A. D. SMITH, *The Ethnic Origins of Nations*, Oxford – New York 1986, pp. 22–31; G. DELANTY & K. KUMAR, *The SAGE Handbook of Nations and Nationalism*, London – Thousand Oaks – New Delhi 2006, pp. 171–172; T. H. ERIKSEN, *Ethnicity and Nationalism. Anthropological Perspectives*, London – New York 2010 (3rd ed.), pp. 48–53 (based on D. HANDELMAN, ‘The organization of ethnicity’, *Ethnic Groups: An International Periodical of Ethnic Studies* 1 [1977], pp. 187–200). See also THOMPSON, ‘Ethnic minorities’ (cit. n. 50), pp. 108–109, summarising her view of features by which members of an ethnic group can be identified: ‘Whereas many of these factors [ethnic designation, language, nomenclature, a person’s appearance, cultural practices, occupation] serve to identify individuals rather than communities, in the case of the last four features – temples, the existence of ethnic quarters, of ethnic leaders and local responsibility for some degree of legal control – we have features which may define communities’.

<sup>75</sup> THOMPSON, ‘Ethnic minorities’ (cit. n. 50), pp. 112–113.

In other words, *politeumata* were founded as an aspect of Ptolemaic ‘military policy’ but over time may have lost much of their military character: we cannot know how many of the members of a *politeuma* chose military careers after the first generation, although our sources suggest that some did or that new members of the same ethnic group were imported to do so (the 500 men who are said to have reinforced the Cretan *politeuma* could have well been soldiers recruited in Crete<sup>76</sup>), if only because *politeumata* do not appear to have multiplied in cities, as would have happened if most or all the descendents of the original mercenaries chose civilian careers and the Ptolemies had to bring in new mercenaries to perform the military functions they abandoned. That said, we have no indications that *politeumata* themselves mainly served military functions. Rather, the transformation of ethnic communities, consisting of soldiers and their families, into administrative units seems to have been a civil and social measure:<sup>77</sup> this is certainly the case with the Jewish *politeuma* in Herakleopolis we witness in *P. Polit. Iud.*

## 2.2. FURTHER EVIDENCE

For mercenaries or professional soldiers and their existence in the military diaspora of Hellenistic Egypt, evidence is not restricted to that groups discussed above. In Memphis, where the *politeuma* of the Idumaeans was located, we know that the so-called Hellenomemphites and Karomemphites – descendants of Ionian and Carian mercenaries settled in Memphis in the sixth century BC – inhabited their own quarters, had a cult centre and – as far as the Hellenomemphites are concerned – their own leaders, the *timouchoi* or ‘honourables’.<sup>78</sup> Much older even than these groups

<sup>76</sup> *P. Tebt.* I 32 = *W. Chr.* 448, ll. 16–17.

<sup>77</sup> Along these lines but with varying nuances, LAUNEY, *Recherches* (cit. n. 38), pp. 1078–1079; HONIGMAN, ‘*Politeumata*’ (cit. n. 28), pp. 94–95; THOMPSON CRAWFORD, ‘The Idumaeans’ (cit. n. 46), pp. 1074–1075; EADEM, ‘Ethnic minorities’ (cit. n. 50), pp. 109–113; EADEM, ‘The sons of Ptolemy V’ (cit. n. 54), p. 22; FISCHER-BOVET, *Army* (cit. n. 3), pp. 290–295.

<sup>78</sup> See THOMPSON, ‘Ethnic minorities’ (cit. n. 50), p. 107; EADEM, *Memphis* (cit. n. 46), pp. 77–78, 87–90.

were the Phoenico-Egyptians of Memphis. Possibly originating in Canaanite merchants, immigrating to Memphis as early as the fifteenth century BC, and in Phoenician mercenaries settled (like the Ionians and Carians) in the sixth century BC, in Ptolemaic times they still had their own priests and a temple.<sup>79</sup> Traces of comparable groups with Semitic and Jewish backgrounds and connected with Persian garrisons of the fifth century BC can be found in Memphis and Syene/Elephantine.<sup>80</sup> These groups may provide us with more or less clear examples of ethnic communities that were rooted in migrating mercenaries or soldiers and survived under the Pharaohs or Persian domination into the age of the Ptolemies.

Beside the *politeumata* and the Jewish military colony in Leontopolis, the evidence for organized ethnic groups whose emergence is arguably linked to Ptolemaic military policy is limited: first, a single papyrus from the third century BC indicates that in the Arsinoites village of Philadelphia a group of Arabs (who, as a category, held the same fiscal privilege as the tax-*Hellenes*<sup>81</sup>) was represented by elders and officials called *dekarchai*, while other documents suggest that in the Arsinoite nome these Arabs often served as guards or formed some kind of special police force.<sup>82</sup> Second, a group of *xenoi*, mercenaries, who call themselves *Apollonia(s)tai* are attested in two fragmentary inscriptions dated to the first century BC in the nome capital of Hermoupolis.<sup>83</sup> They and those sharing the ceremonial act (*sympoliteumenoï*) dedicated a sanctuary to Apollo, Zeus, and related gods. An onomastic analysis of the dedicants, whose names are inscribed beneath the main text and broken down by military units, seems to indicate that most but not all of them were Idumaeans.<sup>84</sup>

<sup>79</sup> See THOMPSON, 'Ethnic minorities' (cit. n. 50), p. 108; EADEM, *Memphis* (cit. n. 46), pp. 76–77, 81–87.

<sup>80</sup> THOMPSON, 'Ethnic minorities' (cit. n. 50), p. 101; EADEM, *Memphis* (cit. n. 46), pp. 90–92.

<sup>81</sup> See CLARYSSE & THOMPSON, *Counting the People* (cit. n. 2), pp. 159–161.

<sup>82</sup> See Sylvie HONIGMAN, 'Les divers sens de l'ethnique *Ἀραβ* dans les sources documentaires grecques d'Égypte', *Ancient Society* 32 (2002), pp. 61–69; CLARYSSE & THOMPSON, *Counting the People* (cit. n. 2), pp. 159–161, 175–176; J. BAUSCHATZ, *Law and Enforcement in Ptolemaic Egypt*, Cambridge 2013, pp. 156–157.

<sup>83</sup> *I. Herm. Magn.* 5 = SB I 4206 (80/79 BC); *I. Herm. Magn.* 6 = SB V 8066 (78 BC).

<sup>84</sup> As it is only *Apollῆ* that survives on one of the inscriptions, scholars made two sugges-

Because some of the members of the *Apollonia(s)tai* have cult titles, it seems that we are dealing with a cult association that probably consisted mainly of Idumaeen mercenaries.<sup>85</sup> But neither about the Arsinoite Arabs nor the *Apollonia(s)tai* do we have enough information to draw conclusions about the experience of migrant soldiers in Egypt that go beyond those we have already reached, other than to confirm that an organizational structure and joint religious observance seem to have been important to them. Finally, still in the Ptolemaic realm but outside Egypt, there are the mysterious ethnic *koïna* on Cyprus. These are associations or assemblies – the word *koïnon* can have both meanings<sup>86</sup> – of Achaeans and other Greeks, Cretans, Ionians, Thracians, Lycians, and Cilicians. Once again these are groups of mercenaries or professional soldiers, but all that we know about them is that they met or gathered in order to honour high officials, predominantly the governor of the island, but sometimes also other dignitaries.<sup>87</sup>

tions as to how to complete the word: *Apolloniatai* (see F. ZUCKER, *Doppelinschrift spätptolemäischer Zeit aus der Garnison von Hermopolis Magna* [= *Abhandlungen der Preussischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, Philosophisch-Historische Klasse* 1937/6], Berlin 1938), Idumaeans from the city of Apollonia (located in Palestine between Jaffa and Caesarea Maritima), or *Apolloniastai* (RAPAPORT, 'Les Iduméens' [cit. n. 60], pp. 74–77), worshippers of Apollo/Qos.

<sup>85</sup> See LAUNEY, *Recherches* (cit. n. 38), pp. 974–975, 1024–1025, 1031, 1034, 1080–1081; FISCHER-BOVET, *Army* (cit. n. 3), p. 292. Against THOMPSON, *Memphis* (cit. n. 46), p. 94, and *I. Herm. Magn.* 5, p. 48, there is no reason to suppose that the term *sympoliteumenoï* would indicate that the *Apollonia(s)tai* were organized as *politeuma*, because on Cyprus we find this word usage also associated with groups of soldiers describing themselves as *koïnon* ('association' or 'gathering'); see LAUNEY, *Recherches* (cit. n. 38), pp. 1031–1035, 1080–1081, and further below. *P. Giss.* 99 (with *BL VI* 43), a fragmentary papyrus from Hermoupolis dated to the second or third century AD, could suggest that the *Apollonia(s)tai* continued to exist until Roman times; see THOMPSON CRAWFORD, 'The Idumaeans' (cit. n. 46), p. 1071; LAUNEY, *Recherches* (cit. n. 38), p. 1025.

<sup>86</sup> See F. POLAND, *Geschichte des griechischen Vereinswesens* [= *Preisschriften, gekrönt und herausgegeben von der Fürstlich-Jablonowski'schen Gesellschaft zu Leipzig* 38], Leipzig 1909, pp. 164–165; J. RZEPKA, 'Ethnos, koïnon, sympoliteia, and Greek federal states', [in:] T. DERDA *et alii* (eds.), 'Ευεργεσίας χάριν. *Studies Presented to Benedetto Bravo and Ewa Wipszycka by Their Disciples* [= *The Journal of Juristic Papyrology Supplement* 1], Warsaw 2002, pp. 227–234; R. OETJEN, *Athen im dritten Jahrhundert v. Chr. Politik und Gesellschaft in den Garnisonsdemen auf der Grundlage der inschriftlichen Überlieferung* [= *Reihe Geschichte* 5], Duisburg 2014, pp. 148–149.

<sup>87</sup> See R. S. BAGNALL, *The Administration of the Ptolemaic Possessions Outside Egypt* [= *Columbia*

## 3. RÉSUMÉ

Due to the recruitment policy of the Ptolemaic army, soldiers formed the largest migrant group into Egypt. To understand this military diaspora first required us to differentiate between two different kinds of Ptolemaic soldiers: the military settlers or *cleruchs* representing the regular army and the mercenaries or professional soldiers. Statistical analyses of ethnic designations show that, at least in the third century BC, both groups were recruited mainly from outside Egypt. Apparently the Ptolemies even tried – as far as they could – to channel migration from certain extra-Egyptian regions into the two different military ‘job profiles’: *cleruchs* were recruited by preference from Macedon, mainland Greece, and Thrace – regions that were not controlled by the Ptolemies – and mercenaries or professional soldiers from the Ptolemaic outer possessions, especially Asia Minor and the Levant, even when the Ptolemies no longer controlled these areas. The distribution of migrants in two different military occupational groups is also reflected in the strategies employed to retain these immigrants in Egypt. On the one hand, *cleruchs*, who were intended for long-term employment, were granted plots of land for cultivation. On the other hand, there were the *politeumata*, which appear in the second century BC and – because their number seems to have been limited – probably bear witness to the selective promotion of certain ethnic communities of particular importance for the Ptolemaic government that originated in contingents of mercenaries or professional soldiers. By incorporating communities of valuable mercenary warriors into the administrative structure of Ptolemaic Egypt, the *politeuma* can be regarded as the urban counterpart of the *cleruchic* settlements that were created with land grants: both testify to how the Ptolemies tried to strengthen the ties between them and their army.<sup>88</sup>

*Studies in the Classical Tradition* 4], Leiden 1976, pp. 56–57 and Appendix B, pp. 263–266; LAUNEY, *Recherches* (cit. n. 38), pp. 1032–1034; M. SAN NICOLÒ, *Ägyptisches Vereinswesen zur Zeit der Ptolemäer und Römer. Erster Teil: Die Vereinsarten [= Münchener Beiträge zur Papyrusforschung und antiken Rechtsgeschichte* 2/1], Munich 1972 (2nd ed.), pp. 198–200.

<sup>88</sup> See also THOMPSON CRAWFORD, ‘The Idumaeans’ (cit. n. 46), pp. 1074–1075; EADEM, ‘Ethnic minorities’ (cit. n. 50), pp. 109–113; EADEM, ‘The sons of Ptolemy V’ (cit. n. 54), pp. 21–22,

Both military groups illuminate different aspects of the military diaspora in Hellenistic Egypt. By investigating the underlying identities of the soldiers, two main patterns appear. First, the evidence suggests that the emergence and adoption of a common Greek identity is an important feature of the milieu of the cleruchs, a phenomenon of which the *gymnasia* are emblematic. What we see is, therefore, a military diaspora that was part of a culturally defined Greek diaspora. Second, as far as specific ethnic identities are concerned, our information is most instructive in the case of mercenaries or professional soldiers. Apart from the Arabs, all the relevant groups appear in urban contexts, and the question arises whether it was the milieu of active (or once active) military men and/or the urban environment that fostered the emergence of ethnic associations or communities.<sup>89</sup> The clearest examples of these ‘ethnic components’ of the military diaspora are without a doubt the *politeumata*, and, more generally, it is the *politeumata* that provide the best evidence for authentic ethnic communities in Hellenistic Egypt.

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who argued that *politeumata* should be treated as an expression of military and related immigration policies the Ptolemies pursued in the middle of the second century BC as an alternative to granting land to military immigrants as they did in the previous century.

<sup>89</sup> Cf. THOMPSON, ‘Ethnic minorities’ (cit. n. 50), p. 107: ‘Such ethnic quarters, however, would appear to have been a feature of well-established cities rather than of a rural setting. They may even serve as an urban indicator’.