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'Pagi' in the Arsinoite nome : a study in the administration of the Fayum in the early Byzantine period : with an appended edition of P. Aberd. 164 descr. by Nikolaos Gonis

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Tomasz Derda

PAGI IN THE ARSINOITE NOME:  
A STUDY IN THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE FAYUM  
IN THE EARLY BYZANTINE PERIOD\*  
WITH AN APPENDED EDITION OF *P. ABERD. 164 DESCRIPTIO*.  
BY NIKOLAOS GONIS

The *pagi* were introduced into Egypt as a part of a fundamental reform of political and administrative organization that took place in the years following the abdication of Diocletian. They replaced toparchies which disappeared from the administrative system of Egypt after AD 307/8.<sup>1</sup> As a rule,<sup>2</sup>

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\* The present paper was written in Leuven in the academic year 2000/1 during the tenure of a fellowship in Instituut Klassieke Studies of Katholieke Universiteit Leuven.

A history of the present article might be briefly reported here. After I had written its first draft, I learnt that Nikolaos GONIS also was collecting the evidence for *pagi* in the Fayum and preparing a draft of a paper. His preliminary conclusion which I got to know at an informal dinner in Vienna during the XXIIrd Congress of Papyrology in Vienna in July 2001 was substantially similar to mine (see the last section: "How was the Fayum divided into *pagi*? A hypothesis"). He later sent me a draft of his unpublished paper, from which he allowed me to quote. Then, in February 2002, when I was finishing the paper, I consulted him several times by e-mail. An idea of a paper on the Arsinoite *pagi* was also not unfamiliar to Fritz MITTHOF whom I met during my stay in Vienna in February 2001. I would like to thank both of them for extremely interesting comments.

<sup>1</sup> In his fundamental study published almost a century ago, Matthias GELZER deduced from the evidence then available that the crucial years for the changeover in the political organization of Egypt were AD 307-310, i.e. the years following the abdication of Diocletian (*Studien zur byzantinischen Verwaltung Ägyptens* (= *Leipziger historische Abhandlungen*, Bd. XIII), Leipzig 1909, pp. 57-58). Since the earliest occurrence of a *pagus* is dated to 6 August 308 (*P. Cairo Isidor. 125, 1*) and there is no instance of a toparchy after AD 307, the date can be stated more precisely to the administrative year AD 307/8 (see J. DAVID THOMAS, "The Disappearance of the *Dekaprotoi* in Egypt", *BASP* 11 [1974], pp. 60-61, esp. note 3).

the *pagi* were more numerous than the toparchies, e.g. in the Oxyrhynchite nome 10 *pagi* vs. 6 toparchies,<sup>3</sup> in the Hermopolite 17 *pagi* vs. 11 toparchies.<sup>4</sup> Some documents of Oxyrhynchite provenance seem to 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 πρωτοστάται as their governors.<sup>5</sup>

Before the reforms of AD 307/8 the administrative division of the Arsinoite nome was quite different from that of other Egyptian nomes, at least those we have enough evidence to judge. During the Roman period the Fayum was first administered by three different *strategoi*, one for each *meris*; from AD 136/7 onwards the *merides* of Themistos and Polemon were combined under a single *strategos*. During the reign of Gallienus at the latest, the three *merides* were re-unified and the Arsinoite nome begun to be administered by one *strategos*.

Very characteristic for the administration of Roman Fayum is for most of the period, the lack of toparchies. They appear twice, each time they last for a relatively short period; first in AD 111 (and disappear twenty years later) in connection with the *sitologia*; for the second time the toparchies came to the Fayum during the reign of Philip the Arabian together with the *dekaprotoi* and together with them they disappeared from the administrative division in AD 302.<sup>6</sup> This is an important fact; unlike in other nomes where the toparchies are attested in the period between the disappearance of the *dekaprotoi* and the creation of the *pagi* (Hermopolite,<sup>7</sup> Oxyrhynchite, Memphite and Great Oasis),

<sup>2</sup> This rule cannot be applied to the Fayum where the number of *pagi* (12 or slightly more as will be argued in the present paper) is by far smaller than the number of toparchies if we take into account the toparchies of the Arsinoite nome as a whole.

<sup>3</sup> Jacqueline 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 IIIe et au IVe siècle.* (= *Mémoires de la Classe des Lettres et des Sciences morales et politiques de l'Académie Royale de Belgique*, t. LVII, fasc. 2), pp. 97-98.

<sup>4</sup> For a discussion of the number of toparchies and *pagi* in the Hermopolite, see P. Herm. *Landlisten*, p. 9.

<sup>5</sup> So LALLEMAND, *op. cit.* (n. 3), p. 98. Μέρη as a subdivision of toparchies are also attested in other nomes (e.g., the Herakleopolite).

<sup>6</sup> W. CLARYSSE & T. DERDA, "Toparchies in the Arsinoite nome", to be published in *JJP* 32 (2002).

<sup>7</sup> In the Hermopolite the continuity was exceptionally strong as we can judge from the fact that for unknown reasons the term τοπαρχία remained in the technical vocabulary of the local administration for at least 50 years after the introduction of the *pagi*. It was used as a synonym for "pagus"; we find the two terms side by side often in the same section of a document, as, e.g., in P. Harrauer 39 (AD 317/8, 332/3 or 347/8). As far as we can judge from the available evidence, the two terms are equivalent. There is not a single document from outside the Hermopolite attesting this phenomenon.

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. Strasb. V 325 ii 3. For corrections of the last two documents as well as for an analysis of the phenomenon,

we cannot speak of any continuity of toparchies and *pagi* in the Fayum.<sup>8</sup> We may rather think that the *pagi* were created in AD 307/8 *ex nihilo*, as a structure quite new and absolutely unprecedented in the history of the Arsinoite nome.

Each *pagus* was governed by a *praepositus*, one for the *pagus* although we know of some exceptions when one *pagus* has two *praepositi* (in the Oxyrhynchite nome in AD 347) or two *pagi* are administered by one *praepositus* (in the Hermopolite nome in AD 342).<sup>9</sup> The *praepositi pagorum* were members of the curial class of the city. They were responsible for supervising the tax collection system and for appointing village officials; they acted as police officers as well. The administrative changes which took place in the first half of the IVth century AD are often described as the 'municipalization' of the nome. The *pagi* and their *praepositi*, wealthy metropolitans as a rule, constitute the most important element of the new system.<sup>10</sup>

The introduction of the *pagi* is relatively well documented, their disappearance is much less discussed in papyrological literature. The latest documents firmly dated are: *P. Select.* (= *PLBat XIII*) 13, 3 of AD 421 – the village of Peensamoi in the 13th *pagus* in the Herakleopolite nome; *P. Oxy.* LV 3803 – the village of Psobthis in the 4th Oxyrhynchite *pagus* and *SPP XX* 117 (see *BL VII*, p. 262) – the village of Koba in the 12th Herakleopolite *pagus*, both of AD 411. These are the only documents dated to the Vth century; it is striking that in all of them the term *pagus* is used in its 'topographical' sense and no officials are mentioned.<sup>11</sup> The office of *praepositus pagi* was still extant in AD 365, as *C. Theod.* XII 6, 8 shows. There is no papyrus attestation dated after AD 361, the latest being *P. Oxy.* XLIX 3479.<sup>12</sup> The latest holder of this office in the Arsinoite nome is an unknown official mentioned in *P. Abinn.* 35, 33 (AD 342-351). This is also one of the two latest documents from the Arsinoite nome mentioning a *pagus*; the other one is *P. Würzb.* 16 (10 October 349).

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 uniqueness of the Hermopolite vocabulary in this respect. Unfortunately, Drew-Bear's book on the Hermopolite had been written some years before the two volumes, *P. Herm. Landlisten* and *P. Charite* were published.

<sup>8</sup> In the Fayum, there is no evidence for μέρη, subdivision of the toparchies connected in this way or another with the creating of *pagi*.

<sup>9</sup> See LALLEMAND, *op. cit.* (n. 3), pp. 133-134.

<sup>10</sup> For the *pagi* and 'municipalization' of the nome, see R. S. BAGNALL, *Egypt in Late Antiquity*, p. 62 and 318; for the range of competence of the *praepositus*, see *inter alia* ŁUKASZEWCZ, *Proceedings Berlin*, pp. 653-654.

<sup>11</sup> All the documents mentioning *pagi* and dated to the Vth century should be examined; the documents dated to the later period are highly dubious.

<sup>12</sup> Note that the date of AD 428, taken under consideration by the editors, seems unbelievable because of the office of *praepositus pagi*. This was also the opinion of the editors who have discounted the possibility.

PAGI IN THE ARSINOITE NOME  
AND THEIR VILLAGES

Our evidence for the Arsinoite *pagi* is not ample. In the Fayum, IVth century papyri survived in a limited number of places. We have at our disposal dozens of documents attesting for instance that Karanis belonged to (and beyond any doubt was the centre of) the fifth *pagus*; for a reconstruction of the map of the *pagi* division we would need, however, much more information. Below I print a list of known *pagi* with villages belonging to them. The villages listed are not necessarily the centres of the *pagi*.

|                  |   |
|------------------|---|
| <i>pagus I</i>   | Dinny (formerly in the <i>meris</i> of Herakleides)<br>– <i>P. Aberd.</i> 164, 2 (IVth century) <sup>13</sup>   |
| <i>pagus II</i>  | Philadelphia (Her.)<br>– <i>P. Princ. Roll.</i> (formerly <i>SB</i> V 7521) iii, 71 (AD 314); viii, 171 (AD 315) and ix, 188 (AD 316); <i>BGU</i> IV 1049, 3 and 25 (AD 342); Attinou (Her.) and Tanis (Her.)<br>– <i>P. Aberd.</i> 164, 3 and 4 respectively   |
| <i>pagus V</i>   | Karanis (Her.)<br>– <i>P. Cairo Isid.</i> , <i>passim</i> ; <i>ChLA</i> XLI 1201, 4 (AD 309); <i>P. Col.</i> VII 125, 2 (no date); 170, 1 (AD 318); <i>P. Coll. Youtie</i> 77 = <i>P. Col.</i> VII 171 (AD 324); <i>P. Coll. Youtie</i> 78 = <i>P. Col.</i> VII 181 (AD 342)<br>Iseion (Her.)<br>– <i>P. Bodl.</i> I 129, 3-4: κωμάρχου κώμης κ[ι] Ισίου πέμπτου [πάγου]. <sup>14</sup> |
| <i>pagus VI?</i> | Ampeliou (Pol.?); Arsinoe (Her.); Boubastos (Her.) <sup>15</sup> ; Kerkesou-chon Orous (Her.? Pol.?); Narmouthis (Pol.); Oniton (Her.); Pelkeesis (Her.)<br>– <i>SPP</i> X 270 <sup>16</sup>  |

<sup>13</sup> For the edition, see below, Appendix II, pp. 30-31.

<sup>14</sup> GONIS: "Ισίου is either a village in the *meris* of Herakleides, in the vicinity of Philadelphia and Karanis, or an ἄμφοδον of Karanis. The expression is unusual; I cannot think of a plausible supplement that could connect κώμης with Ισίου, so that the latter possibility seems to me the likeliest."

<sup>15</sup> GONIS: "In CALDERINI & DARIS, *Dizionario* II 61, it is stated that according to the editors of *P. Mert.* II 91 that text proves that Boubastos belonged to the sixth *pagus*. But the only inference that may be drawn from the text is that Boubastos did not belong to the fifth *pagus*."

<sup>16</sup> For the discussion of this document, see below, the following section, pp. 21-22.

- pagus VII*<sup>17</sup>      *epoikion Piabaneos (meris ?)*  
                   – P. Vindob. G 4670 (former R VN 308)<sup>18</sup>
- pagus VIII*      Theadelphia (Them.)  
                   – CPR VI 5, ii, 19 (AD 336/7), *P. Sakaon, passim*
- pagus X*      Kerkesephis (Pol.)  
                   – P. Würzb. 16, 1 (AD 349)
- pagus X or X+* Kaminoi (Pol.)<sup>19</sup>  
                   – P. Heid. Inv. G 226 (beg. IVth cent., ed. A. Łukaszewicz, *Proceedings Berlin*, 1997, pp. 652-655)<sup>20</sup>
- pagus XII*      Kynopolis (Pol.)  
                   – BGU XIII 2252 (AD 330)<sup>21</sup>

## SPP X 270

SPP X 270 is a list of villages with an indication in line 8: ζ' πάγον. Wessely took all the villages preceding the indication to belong to the sixth *pagus*.<sup>22</sup> Not

<sup>17</sup> JOGUET in *P. Théod.* 16, comm. to lines 10-11 suggested that Narmouthis belonged to *pagus* VII, but his reasoning is highly unconvincing as it is based on the assumption that Kaminoi belonged to *pagus* VII (see below, note 19).

<sup>18</sup> The village is mentioned by C. WESSELY, *Topographie des Faijûm (Arsinoites nomus) in griechischer Zeit*, Wien 1904, p. 124. The papyrus is to be published in CPR XXIII. Its editor, Fritz MITTHOF, in an e-mail of 30 January, 2002 wrote: "Es handelt sich um das Schreiben einer unbekannten Behörde des Epoikion Piabaneos an den Exaktor des Arsinoites aus den Jahren ca. 318-321. Dieses Epoikion gehört zum 7. Pagus. Die betreffende Stelle lautet wie folgt: Z. 2: ο] ἐποικίου Πιαβανεως ζ' πάγον". The village's name occurs only here.

<sup>19</sup> Kaminoi was located in *pagus* VII by Wessely in his *Topographie*, s.v. Kaminoi, p. 81 based on "Paris App. 244 MN 7087" which is SPP X 270 (see the following section). In view of P. Heid. Inv. G 226 the reading is to be questioned. Unfortunately, Wessely's suggestion was the source for the reasoning by Jouguet concerning Narmouthis (*P. Théod.* 16, comm. to lines 10-11).

<sup>20</sup> The editor did not print the number of the *pagus* because "on y lirait volontiers un *gamma* ou un *iota*, alors le 3<sup>ème</sup> ou le 10<sup>ème</sup>, voire même 11<sup>ème</sup>, 12<sup>ème</sup> etc. *pagus*." In view of the evidence collected in this paper we strongly recommend to read τ [ or ι[ instead of the palaeographically possible *gamma* (see below, pp. 26-27).

<sup>21</sup> Note that in the DDBDP the document is listed as coming from the Kynopolite nome.

<sup>22</sup> *Topographie*, pp. 35, 42, 53, 109, 113 and 121. GONIS in his draft: "In SPP X Wessely assigned the papyrus to the VIIth/VIIIth century, but this throws up serious difficulties: at that date the *pagi* belonged to the distant past, and the designation χωρίον, typical of documents of this period,

without hesitation this view was accepted by Grenfell and Hunt with the result that the 6th *pagus* appeared to be a problem to them. It is difficult to see how two localities as distant from each other as Boubastos and Narmouthis, the latter (modern Medinet Madi) in the south, the former in the north-east of the Fayum (near Philadelphia), could have been grouped together.<sup>23</sup>

In the edition of *SPP X* 270 line 8 is the last one, but in his *Topographie Wessely* several times quoted line 9 listing the village of Kaminoi. The indication in line 8 suggests that Kaminoi was in the 7th *pagus* which is apparently not true (see above).<sup>24</sup>

There is a lot of doubts concerning the Wessely's edition of the document. We do not know whether the localities listed in lines 1-7 belonged to the 6th *pagus*. Kaminoi was not in the 7th *pagus* (as Wessely read in line 9) but in the 10th *pagus* (or +10th). In *SPP* Wessely dated the papyrus to the VIIth/VIIIth century, but at that time the *pagi* did not exist for a long time. One would think that either the document is considerably earlier than the VIIth/VIIIth century or the reading ζ- πάγου in line 8 should be questioned. Anyway a revision of the original (held in the Louvre) is desirable. For the moment, it seems to be reasonable not to take *SPP X* 270 as a piece of evidence for the division of the Fayum into the *pagi*.

#### P. SAKAON 35 (= P. THEAD. 16)

There is an interesting document speaking of the topography of the *pagi* in the south-western part of the Fayum which should be discussed here. *P. Sakaon 35* (formerly *P. Thead. 16*) contains a *narratio* on behalf of Sakaon and two fellow villagers. Lines 1-13 read as follows:

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makes no appearance in the text. One would think that the document is considerably earlier than the VIIth/VIIIth century (in his *Topographie* Wessely does not report on its date). A revision of the original (held in the Louvre) is desirable."

23 GRENFELL and HUNT tried to solve the problem assuming a second village of the same name. Their concusion was rather negative: "the evidence is insufficient to justify the hypothesis that there was a second Βουβάστος in the south" (*P. Tebt.* II p. 374)". GONIS, however, in his draft: "Evidence has meanwhile emerged that may substantiate Wessely's hypothesis, see *P. Tebt.* III.1 793, xii, 9ff. n. It is also significant that in *SPP X* 245 Boubastos couples with Tali (ll. 4-5), and in *SPP X* 242 Tali couples with Narmouthis (ll. 3-5); Tali, modern Talit, lies on the south edge of the Fayum. We may further note that *SPP X* 23 parallels *SPP X* 270 in listing Arsinoe, Boubastos, and Kerkesouhon Orous together (ll. 8, 9, 12); cf. also *SPP X* 24 (Boubastos in l. 1, Arsinoe in l. 2) and 30 (Pelkeesis in l. 4, Boubastos in l. 6). To conclude, it seems not improbable that there were two distinct villages named Boubastos in the Fayum, and that *SPP X* 270 contains a list of villages of the 6th Arsinoite *pagus*."

24 The line, not transcribed in *SPP X*, is reported by WESSELY, *Topographie* 35, 42, 81, 109, 121, where the document is cited as "Paris App. 244 MN 7087" (it is mistakenly quoted as P. Rainer Geo. 183 in *P.Tebt.* II pp. 352-3).

*n(arratio).* λέγεις ὑπὲρ Ζακ[α]ῶνος καὶ Ἡρωνος καὶ Καν-  
αοῦγ τῶν ὑπολειφθέντων ἐρήμου κώμης  
Θεαδελφίας η' πάγου Ἀρσινοίτου νομού.

- 4 κατὰ τὸν προπέρυσι ἐνιαυτὸν καὶ πέρυσι  
τῶν ἔδαφῶν [[τῆς ἔδαφῶν]] τῆς κώμης ἡμῶν  
ἐν ὑψηλοῖς τόποις ὄντων καὶ τῶν ἔγγιστα  
κωμῶν, Ναρμούθεως καὶ Ἐρμουπόλεως  
8 κώμης καὶ Θεοξενίδος, ὑποκλεπτόντων  
ἡμῶν τὰ ὄντα καὶ οὐκ ἐπιτρεπόντων  
ἀρδεύεσθαι ἡμῶν τὴν γῆν, διὰ τὸ ἀρχὴν  
αὐτῶν εἶναι τῶν πάγων καὶ ἡμᾶς ὑστέρους  
12 εἶναι τοῦ πάγου, ἔρημον κώμην οἰκοῦν-  
τας.

The translation by Parássoglou reads as follows:

"Address. You speak on behalf of Sakaon, Heron, and Kanaoug, who are left in the deserted village of Theadelphia in the 8th *pagus* of the Arsinoite nome."

"The year before last, as well as last year, as the fields of our village (i.e., Theadelphia) are situated on elevated ground and the nearest villages (Narmouthis, Hermopolis, and Theoxenis) steal our water and prevent our land from being irrigated, since they are at the front of the *pagi* (plural! – TD) and we are at the far end of the *pagus*, we have become the inhabitants of a deserted village."

The translation in *P. Thead.* 16 is substantially the same. Jouguet added a commentary:

"Le pluriel indique que les trois villages étaient dans des *pagi* différents. On a des raisons de supposer, mais seulement de supposer, que Narmouthis était dans le 6<sup>e</sup>. On pourrait mettre dans le 7<sup>e</sup>, où se trouvait aussi Kaminoi qui ne paraît pas avoir été éloigné de ces deux bourgs, soit Théoxénis soit Hermopolis, soit tous les deux (cf. Grenfell et Hunt, *P. Tebt.* II, App. II, p. 353). Mais la topographie des *pagi* est très mal connue."

The situation described in the above quoted document is not clear. Of the three villages it is only Narmouthis whose localisation is known. It is contemporary Medinet Madi, about 20 kilometers from Thedadelphia. What is even more important, Narmouthis before AD 307 belonged to the *meris* of Polemon while Theoxenis, Hermopolis and Theadelphia itself belonged to the *meris* of Themistos. We have enough evidence to say that Theoxenis and Hermopolis were

very close to Theadelphia;<sup>25</sup> and there is no ground for an assumption that they belonged to another *pagus* than Theadelphia. But the plural πάγων in line 11 does not imply that all the three villages were in different *pagi* as Jouguet seems to suggest. It is enough to locate only one of them in another *pagus*, and the natural choice of the list is Narmouthis.<sup>26</sup>

The document reflects the terminology used by the inhabitants of the Arsinoite nome: the *pagi* had their "fronts" (ἀρχαῖ) and consequently their "ends". Were the "fronts" in the middle of the Fayum? It is reasonable to assume that the three villages were located at the main canal surrounding the Fayum. But the relation between the localization of the villages in respect to the canal and their attachment to the *pagi* remains unclear.

#### TAXES AND THE PAGI

In our documents, the term *pagus* occurs in two functions: (1.) as a topographical description of a village, e.g. "the village of Philadelphia of the second *pagus*" and (2) as a part of the formal name of an office, most often *praepositus pagi* (see below, appended list of *pagus* officials). There is only one document of Fayumic provenance where taxes are connected with this administrative unit; *P. Princ. Roll. ix*, 186-188 (Philadelphia, AD 316):

διέ(γραψεν) Ἀρποκρατίων (read Ἀρποκρατίων) ὄνόμ(ατος) Θάειδος  
εἰς λόγον πλοίων θαλασσίων (read θαλασσίων) β πάγου  
τάλαντα τρία καὶ δηνάρια πεντακόσια

"Harpokration has paid in the name of Thaeis for the account of seagoing ships for the 2nd *pagus* three talents and five hundred denarii."

This is a charge assessed to pay for costs of transporting grain from Alexandria to Rome and later to Constantinople. This was in fact a tax of kind, assessed on land.<sup>27</sup> Other taxes in this long roll are sporadically also connected with the *pagus*: iii, 71 and viii, 171.

<sup>25</sup> See K. HEYLEN, *Papyri uit het Fajoem. Een onderzoek naar zes dorpen in de meris van Themistos*, Leuven 1992 (unpublished MA diss.)

<sup>26</sup> Frankly speaking, there is no evidence suggesting than the *pagi* went across the borders of the former *merides* (see below, p. 25).

<sup>27</sup> See *P. Col. VII 130* introd., *P. Princ. Roll. ix*, 188 comm., BASP 13 (1974), p. 34; : A. J. M. MEYER-TERMEER, *Die Haftung der Schiffer im Griechischen und Römischen Recht*, Zutphen 1978 (*Studia Amsterdamensia ad epigraphicam, ius antiquum et papyrologicam pertinentia* 13), p. 168 n. 113

HOW WAS THE FAYUM DIVIDED INTO PAGI?  
A HYPOTHESIS

As it was already said and demonstrated, our evidence for the *pagi* in the Arsinoite nome is not ample. We need more villages connected with particular *pagi* to draw an administrative map of the nome in the period AD 307/8 – ca. 350. But the evidence gathered above is enough, I believe, for a very hypothetical sketch (see the following page). The nome might have been divided into *pagi* as a pie into pieces with the city of Arsinoe in the middle. The *pagi* were numbered counter-clockwise, starting from the place where Bahr Yusuf enters the Fayum. According to this system we have Philadelphia in the 2nd *pagus*, Karanis in the 5th, Theadelphia in the 8th. For the villages of the former meris of Polemon the highest numbers would be reserved, and indeed we know of Kerkesephis in the 10th *pagus*, Kynopolis in the 12th *pagus* and Kaminoi in the 10th *pagus* (or +10th). Narmouthis thought by Wessely and Jouguet to have belonged to the 6th *pagus*, would fit our system much better, if we assumed a higher *pagus'* number.<sup>28</sup>

The system of *pagi* so reconstructed is similar to the traditional division of the Fayum into three *merides* which was abandoned exactly at the moment when the *pagi* were created. According to what we suggest, each *pagus* would have had its "front", i.e. its part located towards the middle of the nome, close to the city of Arsinoe. This would explain the terminology adopted by Sarapion and his fellow villagers from Theadelphia when they speak about the inhabitants of other villages who took the water from the canal and prevented the land in Theadelphia from being irrigated. They could do so "since they are at the front of the *pagi* (plural!) and we are at the far end of the *pagus*".

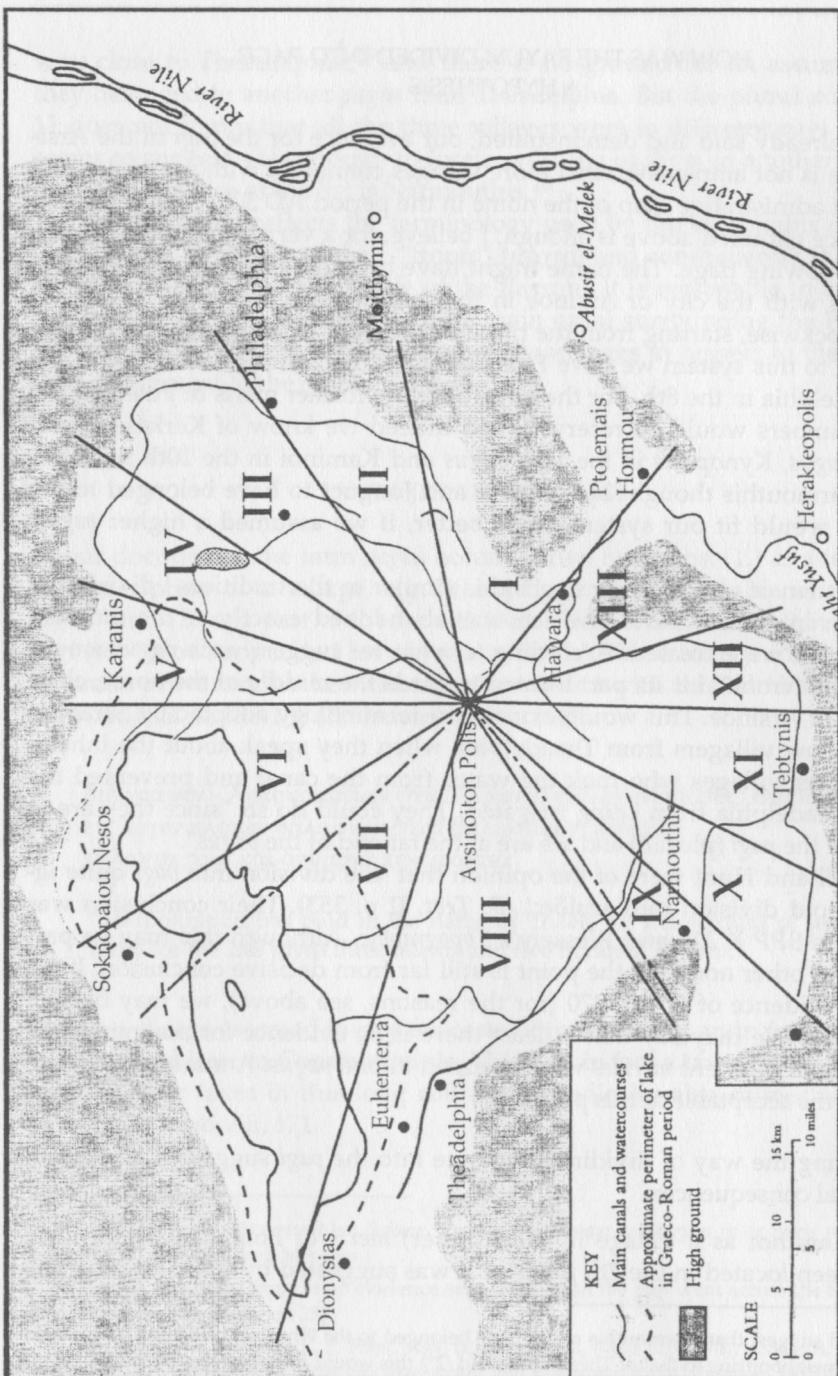
Grenfell and Hunt were of the opinion that 'the division into *pagi* quite ignored the old division into μερίδες' (*P. Tebt.* II p. 353). Their conclusion was drawn from *SPP X 270* and Wessely's *Topographie*. Although this may be paralleled from other nomes,<sup>29</sup> the point is still far from decisive conclusion. If we reject the evidence of *SPP X 270* (for the reasons, see above), we may believe the contrary. We may say that at least there is no evidence for assuming that the villages of different *merides* were grouped in one *pagus*. A minimum of continuity seems acceptable at this point.

Adopting the way of dividing the nome into the *pagi* suggested above, entails several consequences:

1. Kaminoi as a village in the (former) *meris* of Polemon cannot have been located in the 7th *pagus* as it was suggested by Carl Wessely. The

<sup>28</sup> I would suggest that Narmouthis might have belonged to the 9th *pagus*, because (1°) it would be the *pagus* neighbouring to that of Theadelphia and (2°) this would fit our system perfectly.

<sup>29</sup> For the Hermopolite evidence see *P. Col.* IX 123–6.



Pagi of the Arsinoite nome in AD 307 – ca. 350

The *pagi* were numbered counter-clockwise, starting from the place where Bahr Yusuf enters the Fayum. Philadelphia was in the 2nd *pagus*, Karanis in the 5th, Theadelphia in the 8th. The villages of the former *meris* of Polemon belonged to the units of highest numbers. The highest *pagus* number attested so far is 12; their number cannot have been much higher (on the map the highest number is 13, which is of course only a guess).

number of its *pagus* is then 10 or  $10 + x$  and we suggest to add an *iota* to the text of the edition of P. Heid. Inv. G 226 (the editor was of the same opinion but decided not to print the *iota* in the edition).

2. The highest number of a *pagus* attested so far is 12 (Kynopolis). My impression is that the number of *pagi* cannot have been much higher, i.e. I think that 12 or 13 or 14 *pagi* is a possible number but not for instance 19 or 20.
3. The arrangement of the *pagi* suggested above allows us to locate a number of villages whose location is otherwise unknown. For instance, Kynopolis must have been located closer to Bahr Yusuf than Kerkesephis. Unfortunately, as for the number of the *pagus* of Kaminoi we may say only that is at least "10" and this does not help us too much with the location of this important village.

#### CONCLUSION

There is a general question: to what extent was the Arsinoite a typical Egyptian nome in the course of centuries. The distinct character of this region was very strong since the very beginning of Greek occupation under Ptolemy I. The first 200 years of the Roman occupation did not change this very much. The reforms introduced both by Septimius Severus and Philip the Arabian were a step towards the unification of the administration of all Egyptian nomes, even if they did not succeed. The crucial moment on this way had still to come. It was the introduction of the *pagi* and the disappearance of the Arsinoite *merides* in AD 307/8 (the toparchies in the Fayum did not exist since AD 302). As a result of these changes, we get for the first time since the beginning of Ptolemaic rule an administrative division of the Fayum identical with that of other nomes: a single nome divided into numbered *pagi*. Their number was also not exceptional, at least twelve, perhaps not many more.

#### APPENDIX I: PRAEPOSITI PAGORUM AND OTHER OFFICIALS CONNECTED WITH THE ARSINOITE PAGI

##### *Praepositi pagorum*

*pagus* V (Karanis)

Aurelius Herakles alias Heraklides  
6 August 308 – P. Cairo Isid. 125

AD 308/9 – *P. Cairo Isid.* 126

after 30 November 309 – *P. Cairo Isid.* 9 (the name in lacuna)

4 December 312 – *P. Cairo Isid.* 11 – mentioned as *ex-praepositus pagi*

Theodoros

AD 314 – *P. Cairo Isid.* 73

Aurelius Gerontius

24 October 316 – *P. Cairo Isid.* 75

16 July 318 – *P. Cairo Isid.* 76; *P. Col.* VII 170 (a copy of the former)

Note: Aurelius Gerontius is the later *strategos* of the Arsinoite nome (AD 323-326), see *P. Col.* VII 170, 1 comm., Bastianini, *Gli strategi*, p. 61; *PLRE*, p. 394, s.v. "Gerontius 8".

Aurelius K[....]..[..]

AD 320 – *P. Cairo Isid.* 77

Dioscorus Caeso (the cognomen only in *P. Coll. Youtie* 77)

29 January 324 – *P. Cairo Isid.* 78

AD 324 – *P. Coll. Youtie* 77 = *P. Col.* VII 171

31 May 324 – *P. Mert.* 92, 1

*pagus* VIII (Theadelphia)

Kastorion

17 August 312 – *P. Sakaon* 38, 16

Note: In *P. Sakaon* 9 (= *P. Thead.* 48) of AD 314/5 a *praepositus* Kastorion appears. The document is an account of payments in money for two persons, one of them being Kastorion "*praepositus* in Narmouthis" (line 4) and "*praepositus ἐπὶ πόλεως*". According to Jouguet, this man is not necessarily identical with the *praepositus pagi* of *P. Sakaon* 38. Although the identity of the name is striking, he could be a *praepositus* in military meaning of this word. This seems even more probable in view of the fact that Narmouthis most probably did not belong to the same *pagus* (see above). But George M. Parássoglou lists him in his index *sub voce* "*praepositus pagi*" (*P. Sakaon*, p. 236) and – given the lack of any commentary – this is the only point by which we may discover what was the (re)-editor's opinion.

Aurelius Olympios

7 August 318 – *P. Sakaon* 39, 1

Philotas

7 May 324 – *P. Sakaon* 51, 1

Aurelius Chairemon

19 August 326 –

6 November 327 – *P. Sakaon* 43, 1

Posidonios

before AD 332? – mentioned in *P. Sakaon* 35, 16 as a former *praepositus*

Didymas

before AD 332? – mentioned in *P. Sakaon* 35, 16 as a former *praepositus*

Phileas

AD 332? – mentioned in *P. Sakaon* 35, 16 as *praepositus* in charge

Aurelius Ision, *curialis* of Pentakomia

29 March 342 – *P. Sakaon* 46, 1 and 47, 5 (written on the same day)

6 April 343 – *P. Sakaon* 48, 1

*pagus* X or X+

Aurelius Alypios

beg. IVth cent. – P. Heid. Inv. G 226 (ed. *Proc. Berlin*, 1997, pp. 652-655)

*pagus* XII (Kynopolis)

Aurelius Ammonios

16 February 330 – *BGU* XIII 2252

Other officials

ἀπ[ο]δ[έκται] σίτου

CPR VI 5, ii, 18-20 (AD336/7):

Αὐρήλιοι Ἡρων νας. καὶ Μάρων δι(ὰ) Ἡρᾶ  
ἀμφότεροι ἀπ[ο]δ[έκται] σίτου η πάγου ὄρμου  
πόλεως

eirenarch of the 8th *pagus* (Thedalphia) – Aurelius Plutammon in *P. Sakaon* 45, 1 (and its copy, 45a, 1, both of 7 Dec. 334)

Note that a komarch in *P. Bodl.* I 129 (IVth cent.), 3-4: κωμάρχου κώμης κ[ι] Ισίου πέμπτου [πάγου. is an official connected with a κώμη that is located in the 5th *pagus*.<sup>30</sup>

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## APPENDIX II *P. ABERD.* 164: A FULL PUBLICATION

The papyrus was published in the form of a short description as *P. Aberd.* 164:

'Scrap from a list arranged by villages, mentioning Δίννεως (genitive) in the 1st *pagus* and Tanis in the 2nd *pagus*.'

Inspection of a photograph has shown that the text contains one further interesting detail, namely the presence of the village Attinou, grouped under the 2nd *pagus*. In view of the very meagre evidence on the Arsinoite *pagi* at our disposal, a full publication of the text seemed worthwhile.\*

The nature of the document is not clear. Lists of *pagi* and villages are intimately connected with taxation, cf. e.g. *P. Col.* IX 246 or *P. Oxy.* LV 3795. The key to the understanding of the text lies on the broken word γε[ in lines 2, 4, and possibly 5, which is obscure to me. It is difficult to judge whether the blank space above line 1 is part of the original upper margin. If that were the case, we

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<sup>30</sup> For the office of komarch, see in general H. E. L. MISSLER, *Der Komarch*, Diss. Marburg 1970; for the reintroducing the office between AD 245 and 247/8 as a part of reforms introduced during the reign of Philip the Arabian, see J. DAVID THOMAS, "The Introduction of Dekaprotoi and Co-marchs into Egypt in the Third Century A.D.", *ZPE* 19 (1975) pp. 111-119;

\* I am grateful of the authorities of the University of Aberdeen, Historic Collections, for the permission to publish the text.

would have the top of the document; but I would expect a text like this to have a proper heading.

The hand suggests a date in the first half of the fourth century.

The back is blank.

P. Aberd. inv. 82e

4.2 x 10.1 cm

Fourth century

|   |                   |
|---|-------------------|
|   | α πάγου           |
|   | Δίννεως γε[       |
| 4 | β πάγου Ἀττίν[ou] |
|   | Τάνεως γε[        |
|   | ]...[...] ε[      |
|   | ]ν [              |
|   | ] [               |
|   | — — — — —         |

- 2 Δίννεως. See A. Calderini, S. Daris, *Dizionario dei nomi geografici e topografici dell'Egitto greco-romano* II 104, Suppl. I 68; a new occurrence in *SB* XXII 15828, 4. Dinnys is mentioned before Attinou in *BGU* XIII 2281, i (189–90) (ll. 3–4), and *SB* XII 11067 (I/II) (ll. 17, 19).

γε[. Cf. 4. I am unclear how to interpret this. γε[ωργ- is one possibility.

- 3 Ἀττίν[ou]. See Calderini–Daris, *Dizionario* I 257–258, Suppl. I 95. A further attestation of the village is now offered in *SB* XXII 15835.3; the next entry in this list of villages is Βουβάστον. A village of this name is also attested in the Hermopolite nome, see my “Hermopolite Localities and Splinter Nomes” (part 1), forthcoming in *ZPE*.
- 4 Τάνεως. See Calderini – Daris, *Dizionario* IV 353–4, Suppl. I 240. Tanis precedes Dinnys in *P. Petaus* 41 (184–7) (ll. 5, 7).
- 5 γ] πάγ[ou] is just possible, but cannot be confirmed on the photograph; it is excluded if at the end of the line there stood another γε[.

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