

Nikias, Spemminis and colleagues

TM Arch 227. Version I (2020)

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Place
Date
Language
Material
Number of texts
Type
Collections
Find/Acquisition

Lycopolite nome
c. 190-187 BC
Greek
Papyrus
11 (6 TM numbers)
Official correspondence
Milan, Università Cattolica
From mummy cartonnage donated by Castelli in 1922-1924

Bibliography

S. DARIS, 'Su un nuovo archivio licopolitano', *Stud. Pap.* 2 (1963), 77-84.
O. MONTEVECCHI, *La papirologia*, Milan, 1988, 249 no. 9.
W. CLARYSSE, 'Ptolemaic Papyri from Lycopolis', in: *Actes du XVe Congrès*. IV, Brussels, 1979, p. 102.
E. LANCIERS, 'The Emergence of the Ptolemaic Honorific Court Titles', *AncSoc* 48 (2018), p. 49-82, esp. p. 55-56.
The letters in **bold** refer to *P. Med.* 1.

Description

This small archive contains fragments of eleven¹ Greek official letters (**21a-b**, **22-26**, *SB* 6 9505), reused in mummy cartonnage and donated by G. Castelli in 1922-1924 to the Scuola Papirologica of the Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore, Milan, where they are still housed today.²
The fragmentary documents dated in the past either to the end of the Great Theban revolt c. 188 (reign of Ptolemy V) or to the late 160's (reign of Ptolemy VI), may now be attributed to the former period thanks to newly read dates in **21a**, **21b** and **24** (see App.).³
Four letters are addressed to Nikias c. 190, four to Spemminis c. 188 and one to Demetrios in 187 BC; the addressees of the remaining documents are lost. The letters belong to the last phase of the Great Theban revolt (206-186 BC), when the larger part of the Nile valley in the Thebaid was again under the control of the Ptolemaic king (191-186 BC).⁴ They refer to military operations in the area⁵ including the shipment of grain (from the harvest of 189-188 BC, **24**) for the army and the payment of soldiers in money (*sitarchia*, **23**, *sitarchia* for the

¹ Corresponding to six TM numbers, see App.

² <http://www1.unipa.it/dipst/dir/portale/papirologia/MUSEI/milano.html>.

³ New readings by W. Clarysse for **21a** en **21b**, in E. Van 't Dack, *Ptolemaic Selecta* (Studia Hellenistica 29), Leuven, 1988, p. 325-325, and in Lanciers 2018, who argues in favour of the early date; see also P.W. Pestman, 'Haronnophris and Chaonnophris. Two Indigenous Pharaohs in Ptolemaic Egypt', in S.P. Vleeming (ed.) *Hundred-Gated Thebes. Acts of a colloquium on Thebes and the Theban area in the Graeco-Roman period* (Pap. Lugd.-Bat. 27), Leiden 1995, p. 118 n. nn.

⁴ Pestman 1995, p. 108-109.

⁵ See already A.-E. Veisse, *Les «révoltes égyptiennes». Recherches sur les troubles intérieurs en Égypte du règne de Ptolémée III à la conquête romaine* (Studia Hellenistica 41), Leuven, 2004, p. 156; Chr. Fischer-Bovet, *Army and Society in Ptolemaic Egypt*, Cambridge 2014, p. 93 with note 152.

month of Mecheir, **22**). Military men referred to are στρατιῶται (soldiers) and the ἔξω τάξεων⁶. In **21b** of 190 BC and possibly in *SB* 6 9505, Fr. B,⁷ Komanos is mentioned (TM Per 294397), certainly the well-known general who defeated the rebel king Chaonnophris on 27 August 186 BC.⁸

One of the letter writers, Noumenios (**21a**, 190 BC, TM Per 294393) and one of the addressees, Spemminis (**24**, **22**, **23**, 188 BC, TM Per 294365), may be identified with individuals attested under the reign of Ptolemy VI. A Noumenios was eponymous officer in the Herakleopolite in 179 BC and later,⁹ and a Noumenios became strategos of the Thebaid c. 171/170 BC, was sent as ambassador to Rome c. 168/7 BC and became eponymous priest in 164 BC.¹⁰ The Spemminis of the archive, active in or near Lycopolis, may be identified with the homonymous *oikonomos* of the chora and prophet of the god Thoth, found as addressee in Lycopolite petitions c. 170-169 BC.¹¹

Archive texts

P. Med. **21a**, **21b**, **22-26**, *SB* 6 9505 (with BL 6 p. 75; BL 8 p. 206 and Lanciers 2018 for the dates)

Text types

Official letters = incoming documents.

⁶ For non-regular soldiers of a *syntagma*-unit of 256 men such as the *hyperetes*, see E. Van 't Dack, 'Ἐξω τάξεων et σημεία dans des papyrus démotiques', in Idem, *Ptolemaic Selecta* (Studia Hellenistica 29), Leuven, 1988, p. 65-84.

⁷ Lanciers 2018.

⁸ TM Per 9797; Pros. Ptol. 00194a add. = 00270+add. = 01833+add. = 10087a = 14611 = 14770 = 14928 = 15892; Mooren, Prosopography 042.

⁹ TM Per 291242.

¹⁰ TM Per 10893; Pros. Ptol. 00196+add. = 01966+add. = 05213+add. = 14617 = 14775 = 14935 = 15911; Mooren, Prosopography 049, 024; see also E. Van 't Dack, 'Les stratèges dans les archives d'Assiout', in Idem, *Ptolemaic Selecta* (Studia Hellenistica 29), Leuven, 1988, p. 314-328, esp. p. 325-326.

¹¹ TM Per 13652; Pros. Ptol. 01086a add. = 05811+add.

Appendix Texts in chronological order

Publication (TM)	Date BC	Content	Key words
<i>P. Med.</i> 1 21b (6221b) with Lanciers 2018	y15, 17 Mesore = 21 Sept. 190	Letter of Herakleidas to Nikias , fragmentary	ἄμα Κομανῶι παραγίνεσθαι
<i>SB</i> 6 9505 Fr. 35a (6221)	c. 190	Letter of Penes to Nikias , fragmentary	
<i>SB</i> 6 9505 Fr. 35b (6221) with Lanciers 2018	c. 190	?Letter to Nikias , fragmentary	τῶν πρώτων φίλ[ων (court title of Komanos or his brother?)
<i>SB</i> 6 9505 Fr. 35c (6221)	c. 190	fragmentary	
<i>SB</i> 6 9505 Fr. 35d (6221)	c. 190	?Letter to Nikias , fragmentary	
<i>P. Med.</i> 1 24 (5968) with Pestman 1995, BL 7, p. 102, BL 9, p. 156	y17, 20 Mesore = 23 Sept. 188	Letter of Apollonios to Spemminis , fragmentary	Text on shipment of grain to the army, from the harvest of 189-188 BC: [ἀπό τῶν γενη]μάτων τοῦ ἱς (ἔτους); κε(ρκουρο)βα(ίου) Πτολεμαίου
<i>P. Med.</i> 1 22 (6226) with BL 6, p. 75, BL 9, p. 156	c. 188	Letter of Diogenes to Spemminis , fragmentary	τῶν ἕξω τάξεων; εἰς τὰς σιταρχίας τοῦ Μεχείρ/; τῶν καταπεπλευ[κότων; στρατ[ι]ωτῶν
<i>P. Med.</i> 1 23 (5236)	c. 188	Letter of Stasagoras and Lykiskos to Spemminis , fragmentary	εἰς τὰς σιταρχίας χρημάτων
<i>P. Med.</i> 1 21a (6221a) with Lanciers 2018	y18, Epeiph = Aug.-Sept. 187 (rather than July-Aug. 163)	Letter of Noumenios to Demetrios , fragmentary	
<i>P. Med.</i> 1 25 (5969)	-	Letter or administrative document, fragmentary	τοὺς καταπλέοντας πρό[ς; τῶν ἐν τῶι μι(κρῶι) Διοπο(λίτηι) κλ(ήρων)
<i>P. Med.</i> 1 26 (5966)	-	fragmentary	