NIKOLAOS GONIS & FEDERICO MORELLI

A REQUISITION FOR THE ‘COMMANDER OF THE FAITHFUL’: SPP VIII 1082 REVISED

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A Requisition for the ‘Commander of the Faithful’: SPP VIII 1082 Revised

Lines 2-5 of SPP VIII 1082 contain an entagion (demand note) of 687/8 or 702/3 (for the date see BL V 142). It concerns a requisition destined for the amīr al-muʾminīn, the ‘Commander of the Faithful’, i.e., the Caliph. Mention also is made of the ḳūmbouλoc, the Arab governor of Egypt, ‘Abd al-ʿAzīz b. Marwān. Ed. pr. presented the papyrus as follows:

1. Ἕλληνες Νονορείου ἴπους ψαλικτάκειος,
2. ὡτὶ πάσχεις ἴπους ἀμύντιν Ἱμυρα,
3. Πετρό τιμὴν ἄνδρα Ἰσραήλ ἀνάφεις ἰδίῳ ἰδίῳ ἰδίῳ ἰδίῳ ἰδίῳ ἰδίῳ ἰδίῳ ἰδίῳ ἰδίῳ ἰδίῳ ἰδίῳ ἰδίῳ ἰδίῳ ἰδίῳ ἰδίῳ ἰδίῳ ἰδίῳ ἰδίῳ ἰδίῳ ἰδίῳ ἰδίῳ ἰδίῳ ἰδίῳ ἰδίῳ ἰδίῳ ἰδίῳ ἰδίῳ ἰδίῳ ἰδίῳ ἰδίῳ ἰδίῳ ἰδίῳ ἰδίῳ ἰδίῳ ἰδίῳ ἰδίῳ ἰδίῳ ἰδίῳ ἰδίῳ ἰδίῳ ἰδίῳ ἰδίῳ ἰδίῳ ἰδίῳ ἰδίῳ ἰδίῳ ἰδίῳ ἰδίῳ ἰδίῳ ἰδίῳ ἰδίῳ ἰδίῳ ἰδίῳ ἰδίῳ ἰδίῳ ἰδίῳ ἰδίῳ ἰδίῳ ἰδίῳ ἰδίῳ ἰδίῳ ἰδίῳ ἰδίῳ ἰδίῳ ἰδίῳ ἰδίῳ ἰδίῳ ἰδίῳ ἰδίῳ ἰδίῳ ἰδίῳ ἰδίῳ ἰδίῳ ἰδίῳ ἰδίῳ ἰδίῳ ἰδίῳ ἰδίῳ ἰδίῳ ἰδίῳ ἰδίῳ ἰδίῳ ἰδίῳ ἰδίῳ ἰδίῳ ἰδίῳ ἰδίῳ ἰδίῳ ἰδίῳ ἰδίῳ ἰδίῳ ἰδίῳ ἰδίῳ ἰδίῳ ἰδίῳ ἰδίῳ ἰδίῳ ἰδίῳ ἰδίῳ ἰδίῳ ἰδίῳ ἰδίῳ ἰδίῳ ἰδίῳ ἰδίῳ ἰδίῳ ἰδίῳ ἰδίῳ ἰδίῳ ἰδίῳ ἰδίῳ ἰδίῳ ἰδίῳ ἰδίῳ ἰδίῳ ἰδίῳ ἰδίῳ ἰδίῳ ἰδίῳ ἰδίῳ ἰδίῳ ἰδίῳ ἰδίῳ ἰδίῳ ἰδίῳ ἰδίῳ ἰδίῳ ἰδίῳ ἰδίῳ ἰδίῳ ἰδίῳ ἰδίῳ ἰδίῳ ἰδίῳ ἰδίῳ ἰδίῳ ἰδίῳ ἰδίῳ ἰδίῳ ἰδίῳ ἰδίῳ ἰδίῳ ἰδίῳ ἰδίῳ ἰδίῳ ἰδίῳ ἰδίῳ ἰδίῳ ἰδίῳ ἰδίῳ ἰδίῳ ἰδίῳ ἰδίῳ ἰδίῳ ἰδίῳ ἰδίῳ ἰδίῳ ἰδίῳ ἰδίῳ ἰδίῳ ἰδίῳ ἰδί.coroutines

The document as published raises a number of interesting questions. What was the nature of the requisition? What was the governor’s role in the exercise? And to whom was the entagion addressed? Closer study of the publication, as well as of the original, reveals that the text may be improved upon at several points. A new edition of the entagion is offered below.

† Φλ(αύου&tau;ς) Μηνά σὺν θ(εό) παγάρχ(ης) ὑμῖν ᾽Αμύ[
3 Πέτρου Αμροῦ ὧπο χω(ρίου) Τεχθ(ιό)· παράσχε(τε) λ(α)γ(ο)ν(α) [δαπάνης] (?)]
5 Αβδελαζίζις κυμβουλ(ου) δι(ο)θ(έντος) εἰ(π) χω(ρίου) ὑμῖν ἀρί(τη)μ(ιν) ν[ο]ι[μι-
6 χοτ(ο)]

‘Flavius Mena(s), by God pagarch, to you Amm- ... Petros (son of?) Amros, from the village of Techtho. Pay on account of the dapanε for the amīr al-muʾminīn for the present 1st indiction, by requisitioning order of the governor Abelaziz, delivered to your village, ... arithmi- nomisma-...’
The revision makes it clear that the requisition concerned money taxes. This was instigated by an order of the governor 'Abd al-'Azīz b. Marwān, which may have been addressed to the Heracleopolite village of Techtho, but almost certainly did not go further than the office of the local pagarch. The situation recalls some of the communications by the governor Qurra b. Šārik to the pagarch of Aphrodisio Basileios; cf. e.g. P.Lond. IV 1335.6-8 (709): ἐπάνειμεν διὰ τῆς διοικήσεως σοῦ διεξάχη[ς] ἀρτάβας εἰς τὸ τὸῦ τούτων ἐντάγηα ποι[ήσαντες] τὸι τῶν χρῶν ἐπίμωαντοι σοι \`we have ordered from your administrative district two thousand artabas of wheat, and having made out the entagia for these to the people of the villages we have sent them to you’. For a discussion of this practice, see generally H. I. Bell, ‘The Arabic Bilingual Entagion’, *Proc. Amer. Philos. Soc.* 89 (1945) 531-42.

A comment on line 1 may also be in place. This is apparently the last line, viz. the summary, of another *entagion* (it is separated from line 2 by a space of c. 2 cm). It was common practice that a number of *entagia* were written consecutively on the same sheet of papyrus, and were later cut up and sent off. In this case, the sheet does not appear to have been cut up, and the *entagia* were probably never dispatched; cf. e.g. SPP VIII 1199-1200 and X 197. It seems less likely that the office of the pagarch, whereas there is no other evidence for a Hermopolite village of this name. Line 3 refers to your administrative district two thousand artabas of wheat, and having made out the *entagia* were drafted, had a practice of sending the uncut sheet(s) to the authorities of the village, and then the sheets were cut up and the *entagia* delivered to the individual taxpayers: it would be impossible to seal the summary without cutting the *entagion* from the sheet.

According to ed. pr. the papyrus comes from the area of Hermopolis. The same provenance is reported in Wessely’s handlist, which also records the acquisition date, viz. 1887, which would seem to be correct. Line 3 refers to the village of Techtho, known to have been located in the Heracleopolite region, see further 3 n. para. 2, whereas there is no other evidence for a Hermopolite village of this name.

The writing is across the fibres. A clumsy *kollesis* runs horizontally 4 cm from the top edge (it is visible just under line 2). The back is blank.

2 Φλ(άρδίου) Μηνᾶ. It is unclear whether this official has occurred elsewhere. He might be the same person as the κτήτωρ Menas son of Pusi, who issued the Heracleopolite *entagion* SPP VIII 1191; Fl. Petterios, a pagarch and κτήτωρ in the Fayyûm in the third quarter of the seventh century would provide a parallel.

Fl. Menas is one of the latest known Flavii in Egypt, cf. J. G. Keenan, ‘The Names Flavius and Aurelius as Status Designations in Later Roman Egypt’, *ZPE* 13 (1974) 302-03 n. 199 (several additional examples occur in Coptic papyri). The gentilicium Flavius was commonly borne by pagarchs in the seventh century, cf. K. A. Worp, *CPR* X pp. 154-55. It is remarkable that in the late seventh and eighth centuries this *gentilicium* is occasionally found with Muslim officials (cf. already *CPR* VIII p. 197): Fl. Atlas (’A‘yiyah b. ’Ubayd?), pagarch of the Arsinoite and dux of Arcadia and the Thebaid, attested in 694-700; Fl. Saal (Sahal b. ’Abd Alläh), pagarch of Hermouthis in 724-725/6 (see W. C. Till, *Datierung und Prosopographie der koptischen Rechtsurkunden aus Theben* (1962) 234); and Fl. Joseph son of Abeid (Yusuf b. ’Ubayd?), pagarch of Hermouthis in 749 (KRU 70). What lies behind the use of the gentilicium Flavius by Muslims is difficult to tell. Did they simply take over a time-honoured tradition? Or were they converted aristocrats? The latest recorded Egyptian Flavius is the Christian Fl. Comes son of Chael, *dioiketes* (pagarch) of Jême in 748/9-759 (see Till, op. cit. 235). (The statement by B. Salway, ‘What’s in a Name? A Survey of Roman Onomastic Practice from c. 700 B.C. to A.D. 700’, *JRS* 84 (1994) 144, that ‘at opposite ends of over nearly a millennium and a half of historical evolution stand T. Flavius and Fl. Titus’, unfortunately relies on the misreading of Atias’ name in SB VI 9460, now *CPR* VIII 82.)


Bell, loc. cit. 536, has pointed out that ‘the title of the official issuing these individual *entagia* is not given, but in every case but one (UKF 1180 [= SB XX 14682], Παράκλητος υἱ(ος) […] he is an Arab’; Bell further argued that such *entagia* were issued by pagarchs, which generally holds true, although it has since emerged they could also be issued by a *dux*: this is the case with Ouoeth, *dux* of the Thebaid (attested in office in 686-8889 or 656-58/59, less likely 671-73/74, see J. Gascou, K. A. Worp, ‘Problèmes de documentation apollinopolitique’, *ZPE* 49 (1982) 91, cf. S. Daris, ‘Due frammenti di epoca tarda’, *ZPE* 120 (1998) 163), and with Fl. Atlas, *dux* of Arcadia and the Thebaid (697-699/700, see *CPR* VIII pp. 159 ff.). *SPP* VIII 1082 is the earliest and only the second document of this kind in which the issuing official is expressly styled as pagarch (the other is *SPP* III 260, issued by Yahyā b. Hilāl, ἐπίκεφαλος παγαρχ(ης) Αρκαδίας); besides Fl. Menas(s), cf. also the pagarch Fl. Petterios, the issuing authority of P.Mert. II 100 (669, cf. BL VIII 209), *SPP* III 254 (667), VIII 1085 (s.d.).
The presence of this line was not reported in the edition. What is visible are the apexes of fractions, apparently of solidi.

It is difficult to tell about the addresses of the entagia were individual taxpayers or village headmen (παραστημένον, λαός), but the former possibility seems more likely.

How many were the addressees of this order? μεν is not conclusive, inasmuch as it is often used in entagia directed to individuals, see Bell, loc. cit. 537; but μεν in line 5 is not easy to explain away as a mistake, and might possibly suggest that the note had more than one recipient. Uncertainty also surrounds παράσχεται in line 3, which may be resolved as either παράσχεται or παράσχεται. The possibilities therefore are: (i) The taxpayers are two. The break at the end of line 2 has taken away the ending of the name of the first recipient and his patronymic; the second appeared in line 3, the genitive Πέτρου being a mistake for the dative, which is common. (ii) We are dealing with a single taxpayer, referred to by name + patronymic + papponymic, as e.g. in the entagion CPR XIX 26 (publication forthcoming); for the construction cf. SPP III 253.1-2 (668) - - - μεν Μελισσαφέων παράσχεται.

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Another, but rather remote, possibility would be to supply ἐπίταξις (c) τοῦ δημοτοῦ; for the interchange of the terms αμιραλμοῦνταν and δημοτοῦ in such contexts, see F. Morelli, ‘Legname, palazzi e moschee’. P.Vindob. G 51 e il contributo dell’Egitto alla prima architettura ‘aramica’, Tyche 13 (1998) 185 n. 64.

It is worth noting that the term ἐπίταξαμα, originally the official communication of a tax assessment and therefore a requisitioning order, see J. G. Keenan, ‘Two Notes on P.Merton II 100’, ZPE 16 (1975) 44 n. 6 with references, cf. CPR VIII 74.7 (docket), appears to have come to signify the tax assessment itself in Coptic tax-receipts; cf. OMH 292.4-6 ἀρχαῖοι ἐπίταξαμα ἡνίκα, and the other assessments in the ninth year (similarly OMH 298.4-6, 307.1-2).


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