Sale of Confiscated Property (P. Köln inv. 7715+7710a)

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Abstract: Publication of a fragmentary papyrus of the second century B.C. and presumably from Arsinoites containing part of a bank receipt regarding the purchase of confiscated property sold in a public auction. The property may have been confiscated after an uprising at the beginning of the reign of Ptolemy VIII Euergetes II.

Keywords: Auction, confiscation, revolt, royal bank, sale, taxation.

Verkauf konfiszierten Besitzes (P. Köln inv. 7715+7710a)

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Keywords: Auktion, Konfiskation, Aufstand, Königliche Bank, Verkauf, Steuern.
The papyrus sheet (12.5 × 21.3 cm), which consists of two fragments extracted from cartonage, was purchased in 1974 by the Cologne Papyrus Collection from Anton Fackelmann. Parts of the same purchase are papyri belonging to the recently published dossier of Demetrios, a triaccontarouros from Aphrodisias Polis in the Arsinoites,1 as well as P.Köln inv. 7750+7710, a receipt issued by an Arsinoitic logeuterion, which, like the present document, concerns the payment of the purchase price of auctioned property.2 It is very likely that P.Köln inv. 7715+7710a originates also from Arsinoites and dates back to the same years as these documents which probably belong to the early reign of Ptolemy VIII Euergetes II (cf. Armoni, “Demetrios”, 181). It cannot even be excluded that all of these texts belong to the archive of the same person or institution.

The fragments preserve part of a so-called diagraphe, a document that confirmed the purchase of confiscated property sold in a public auction.3 Diagraphai were issued by the royal bank (or, as in case of P.Köln inv. 7750 + 7710, by a logeuterion) and often had a quite elaborate structure as they included copies of various official documents, contained a receipt of the payment of the purchase price, and also a detailed report on the course of the auction.4 The wording in ll. 1–4 of our text obviously does not correspond to the initial part of receipts of this type, which usually follows the pattern πέπτωκεν ἐπὶ τὴν ἐν place τράπεζαν τῷ δεῖν τραπεζίτη ὡστε βασιλεῖ or contains similar expressions (e.g. P.Tebt. III 1,700,1–2; 814,60–63; P.Heid. VI 373,1–25). Thus, it is reasonable to assume that our text comprised several columns, one of which contained the beginning of the receipt.

Neither the object(s) auctioned nor the reason for the confiscation can be established. The document is perhaps to be placed in the context of confiscations of property carried out after inner turmoil6 in the beginning of the era of Ptolemy VIII. According to P.Köln inv. 7750+7710,14 which, as already mentioned, is a close parallel to the present document, the former owner of the auctioned property was killed during an insurgency (ταραχή) that probably erupted in the years following Ptolemy’s VIII return to Egypt


3 On the term diagraphe, see UPZ 114, 10–32n.

4 Cf. Armoni, Studien, 120–162.


from exile.¹ This uprising could be the ταραχή mentioned in P.Oxyrhynch 15,7 (150–141 B.C.).²

5 π[ροτεθέντι- εἰς] πράσινην εν τῇ [ι]
δ[ια Σεραπίων] το[ῦ παρὰ Φιλοκ]λέους τοῦ αὐτ[οῦ]
το[ῦ ἐπιστάτου] τῆς κόμης, καδί-

10 [ ] παρὰ Μαρρέως τοῦ
[βασιλικοῦ γραμματέως καὶ τοῦ]
ἀλλων τῶν εἰθισμένων διὰ
κήρυκος Πτολεμαίου κυρα-
[θέντ- δὲ] Δημητρίωι τοῦ προχ[ε-]

15 γρα[μμένωι] . . . . . . . .
πα[] . . . . χαλκοῦ πρός
ἀργύριον [φ] τέλος κε (ἐξηκοστή) η (διώβολον)
χι(λιστή) (ἵμισυ) vacat

(ἐτοὺς) . . Μεσορῆ ἓ. πέπτωκεν

20 συμπαράστασις(ος) Ἀπολλωνίου τοῦ
παρὰ τοῦ βασιλικοῦ γραμματέως
χα(λκοῦ) πρ(ός) ἀργύριον [φ] τέλ(ος) κε (ἐξηκοστή) η (διώβολον)
χι(λιστή) (ἵμισυ)

(ἐτοὺς) . . Μεσορῆ ἓ. πέπτωκεν
συμπαράστασις . [ ] τοῦ

- - - - it/they was/were put up for auction in the [aforementioned village?] by the herald Ptolemaios at the instigation of Serapion, subordinate of Philokles the epimeletes, in the same [ - - -, in the presence] of Demetrios, epistates of the village, Ikadion (?),

² Cf. P.Oxyrhynch, 130–131.
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subordinate of the royal scribe, and of the other customary officials. It/they has/have been knocked down to the already mentioned Demetrios [who paid the whole price?], [500] (sc. drachmas) of copper at a discount, (enkyklios)-tax 25 (sc. drachmas), hexekoste-tax 8 (sc. drachmas) 2 obols, chiliosio-tax 1/2 (sc. drachma).

Year ... Mesore 5. Paid in the presence of Apollonios, agent of the royal scribe, 500 (sc. drachmas) of copper at a discount, (enkyklios)-tax 25 (sc. drachmas), hexekoste-tax 8 (sc. drachmas) 2 obols, chiliosio-tax 1/2 (sc. drachma).

Year ... Mesore 5. Paid in the presence of - - -

6–7: Cf. BGU III 992 = P.Erbsreit 1 col. I 7 προτεθέντων εἰς πράσιν; P.Tebt. III 2,871,2–4 ἔξετεθη | εἰς πράσιν καὶ ἐπράθη (l. ἐπράθη) ἐν τοι ἐν Κροκοδίλοιον πόλει κομαστηρ[...] | διὰ τοῦ Ζωπύρου. The epimeletes Philokles has so far been attested in the aforementioned receipt P.Köln inv. 7750+7710 and in P.Poethke 1 frg. c 4, which also concerns an auction.

8–12: Hellenistic auctions had various stages and were normally carried out over several days. For each of these stages a high level of publicity was required. The lines refer to the final stage of the auction which began with a new bidding of the objects by the kuri[es] in a public place in the presence of several royal officials. Cf. BGU VI 1218 col. II 1–6; 1219 col. II 22.32.50–52; 1222 col. I 59–65. col. II 74–78; P.Köln inv. 7750+7710, 21–23 etc.

The traces in the beginning of l. 8 suit the reading ἔξετεθη, after which one expects month and day. But this would not leave enough space for παρόντων, which usually introduces the series of the officials who attended the auction.

9–11: ἵκαθ[...] [ποτοῦ] παρὰ Μαρφέως τοῦ | [βασιλικὸς γραμματέας seems to be a probable reconstruction. Nevertheless, ἵκαθ[...] is a rare name – I could find a single attestation in the papyri: P.Tebt. III 1,701,319 (III–II cent. B.C.). Furthermore, in the lacuna at the beginning of l. 10 there is apparently room for more letters (ca. 11).

The royal scribe Marres is also attested in the aforementioned P.Köln inv. 7750+7710,10–11.

15–16: τὴν | παρὰ παντελ [τιμ]ήν is a possible reconstruction, cf. P.Poethke 1,8n.

17–18 and 22: For the combination of the taxes mentioned in these lines, which were levied on the sale of confiscated property, see P.Tebt. III 1,700,4.83 (124 B.C.).

For the identification of the unspecified τέλος with the tax levied on the sale of private and state goods (ἀγορανομοι; see P.Tebt. III 1,700,4n.; cf. BGU VI 1219,6.23.33 and 1220,10, in both of which the same tax is called εἰκοστή, which is a common rate of the enkyklion. The nature of the εἰκοστή is uncertain; perhaps it should be identified with the γραφεῖον, cf. Westermann, Slavery, 19. The χ(λιστή) was a fee levied for the remuneration of the herald, the κηρύκειον, cf. P.Eleph. 14,12 and P.Tebt. III 2,876,7 – in both texts, as in the present document, also coupled with the εἰκοστή. In our text the enkyklion is 5% of the purchase price. As far as we know, the so-called εἰκοστή was increased to 10% of the price (δικαίω) in 131 B.C. at the latest.1


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19 and 23: The ink traces after the symbol for ἔτος could belong to a lambda, perhaps followed by an alpha. Thus, if the assumption that the document belongs to the reign of Ptolemy VIII is right, the date of the receipt would be 27 August 139 B.C. But there can be no certainty about the reading of the regnal year.

19–24: Until about the middle of the 2nd century BC subordinates of two fiscal offices (in most cases the royal scribe and the oikonomos) had to supervise transactions with public funds in royal banks and granaries. As in the present passage, they certified with their ὑπογραφαί that the transaction had taken place properly, cf. Armoni, Studien, 26–31. A similar wording have the ὑπογραφαί in the tax-receipts P.Tebt. III 2, 840 (162 B.C.?) and 985 (161 B.C.?).

Bibliography


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