

HERMOPOLITAN KROKODILON POLIS: A NOTE

The newly published archive of Dionysios, son of Kephalon,¹⁾ provides information that in the Mōchitēs toparchy of the Hermopolite Nome the toponym Krokodilōn polis was apparently used for the village better known under the name Tēnis/Akōreōs.²⁾ In the few lines devoted to this toponym the editors remark that it is only rarely attested in the papyri published to date; they cite only BGU VI 1218.2 from the Ptolemaic period (IInd cent.).

It should be stressed that the village Krokodilōn polis of the Hermopolite Nome has nothing to do with, and should be sharply distinguished from, the homonymous Krokodilōn polis in the Pathyrite Nome of the Thebaid. Recent scholarship, however, tends to neglect the distinction and to confuse references to the "lesser" Hermopolite Krokodilōn polis with references to the "greater" Krokodilōn polis in the Pathyrite Nome. The recently published fascicle of the *Dizionario Geografico*,³⁾ for example, does not contain a separate listing of the evidence for the village in the Hermopolite Nome, and in a recent study of the topography of the Hermopolite Nome one also looks in vain for a separate entry for Krokodilōn polis.⁴⁾ A village of this name, however, occurs in a number of papyri from the Hermopolite Nome; there it should not be taken as referring to the "greater" village in the Pathyrite Nome. Apart from the already cited BGU VI 1218, I may mention the following cases:

- 1) BGU VI 1219 ii 35 (II B.C.; for the Hermopolite provenance of this papyrus cf. BGU VI 1220, introd.);
- 2) P.Landlisten II 747 (ca. 340; cf. *BASP* 16 [1979] 159ff.);
- 3) *SPP* XX 75 ii 16 (ca. 340; cf. *BASP* 13 [1976] 35 and R.S. Bagnall, *Currency and Inflation in Fourth Century Egypt* [forthcoming]);
- 4) P.Cair.Freis. 45.8 (IV; cf. *BES* I [1979] 103);
- 5) P.Cair. inv. 10571.10 (340; to be published by R.S. Bagnall and K.A. Worp in *BASP* 19 [1982]).

This listing shows that, apart from four attestations of this name in Her-

1) E. Boswinkel-P.W. Pestman, *Les archives privées de Dionysios, fils de Kephala. Textes grecs et démotiques*, Leiden 1982 (= P.L.Bat. XXII).

2) Cf. P.L.Bat. XXII (supra, n.1) pp. 72-73 and texts nos. 17, 20 (= P.Rein. I 20, 24); cf. M. Drew-Bear, *Le Nome Hermopolite, toponymes et sites* (ASP 21), Missoula 1980, 291ff.

3) A. Calderini-S. Daris, *Dizionario geografico* III 2, Milano 1980, 157.

4) M. Drew-Bear, *op. cit.* (see n. 2), esp. p. 148 where it is remarked: "On ne connaît pas non plus jusqu'ici de localité appelée Crocodilopolis dans le nome Hermopolite" and where the correction proposed by H. Henne (cf. *BL* III 19) for BGU VI 1219 ii 35: ἐν Κρο(κοδῖλων) πόλ(ει) πρὸ Κ[ουσιτου] is rejected. Indeed, this proposal cannot be maintained (Krokodilōn polis was situated in the Mōchitēs toparchy), but a village named Crocodilopolis did exist in the Hermopolite, as this note hopes to prove.

mopolitan papyri from the IInd century B.C., our only evidence for this village is found in four documents dating from the first half of the IVth century A.D.⁵⁾ Doc. no.5 mentions Krokodilōn polis together with a number of other villages located in the North of the Hermopolitan Nome, more precisely in or in the neighborhood of the 15th pagus. This matches with the entry in *P.Landlisten* II 747 (doc. no.2) in which an *ousia Ulpiana* occurs in connection with Krokodilōn polis and the 15th pagus (evidently the *ousia* was situated there). It has been proven that the territory of the 15th pagus and that of the former Mōchitēs toparchy were, at least partly, identical (Drew-Bear, *op. cit.* [see n.2] 378).

The nature of the administrative relationship between Tēnis/Akōreōs and Krokodilōn polis of ca. 340 A.D. is not clear. The toponym Tēnis/Akōreōs is found throughout the whole of the Ptolemaic, Roman and Byzantine periods. Consequently there is no reason to think that at a certain moment this toponym disappeared and that only Krokodilōn polis was used for denoting the same community. On the other hand the mentioning of sitologoi of Krokodilōn polis in doc. no.5 indicates that Krokodilōn polis was a community with its own tax collectors. It may be that in this case, as in the other IVth century documents, the scribe used Krokodilōn polis where others would have used Tēnis/Akōreōs, but the possibility should not be excluded that the Krokodilōn polis of Byzantine papyri denotes a community which was (semi-)independent of Tēnis/Akōreōs though situated in its immediate neighborhood.⁶⁾

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5) *BGU* VI 1218 and 1219; *P.L.Bat.* XXII 17 and 20. The handwriting of *P.Cair.Preis.* 45 (above, doc. no. 4) may well be dated "ca. 340".

6) I should like to thank R.S. Bagnall who read an earlier version of this note.