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CAPInv. 1370: to en Herakleous polei politeuma ton Ioudaion

I. LOCATION

i. Geographical area	Egypt
ii. Nome	Herakleopolites (U20)
iii. Site	Herakleopolis

II. NAME

i. Full name (original language)	τὸ ἐν Ἡρακλέους πόλει πολίτευμα τῶν Ἰουδαίων (P.Polit. Iud. 8, ll. 4-5)
ii. Full name (transliterated)	to en Herakleous polei politeuma ton Ioudaion

III. DATE

i. Date(s)	144 - 132 BC
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IV. NAME AND TERMINOLOGY

i. Name in other forms	The group is also simply called πολίτευμα, <i>politeuma</i>	
ii. Name elements	Ethnic:	<i>Ioudaioi</i>
	Geographical:	<i>en Herakleous polei</i> , Herakleopolis
iii. Descriptive terms	<i>πολίτευμα</i> , <i>politeuma</i>	
Note	<i>Politeuma</i> : P.Polit. Iud. passim	

V. SOURCES

i. Source(s)	P.Polit. Iud. 1-20 (144/3-133/2 BC)
Note	All the texts published in P.Polit. Iud. deal with the affairs of the <i>politeuma</i> .

Online Resources	All the texts are available online: P.Polit. Iud. TM 44617 to TM 44636 . See also TM Arch 197 AGRW ID 20630
i.a. Source type(s)	Papyrological source(s)
i.b. Document(s) typology & language/script	Petitions and official correspondence in Greek, relating to the <i>politeuma</i> of the Jews of Herakleopolis (and other Jewish communities in the neighbouring villages and nome). The petitions are normally addressed to the <i>politeuma</i> , their officials or leader.
i.c. Physical format(s)	Papyrus.
ii. Source(s) provenance	The texts were found in mummy-cartonnage from the Herakleopolite nome.

VI. BUILT AND VISUAL SPACE

ii. References to buildings/objects	An ἀρχεῖον, <i>archeion</i> is mentioned in P.Polit. Iud. 3, l. 12. However, the passage is fragmentary and it is uncertain whether the archive in question belonged to the <i>politeuma</i> , to another organisation, to a private individual, or to the state.
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VII. ORGANIZATION

ii. Leadership	<p>At the head of the <i>politeuma</i> there was a πολιτάρχης, <i>politarches</i> (P.Polit. Iud. 1, l. 1; 2, l. 1; 17, l. 5); he was probably also the head of the <i>politeuma</i>'s officials, as <i>primus inter pares</i>. Like the other officials of the <i>politeuma</i>, the office of <i>politarches</i> probably lasted for one year (although there are no clear indications of this in the texts). We have evidence of two men holding the office of <i>politarches</i>: Euphranor (P.Polit.Iud. 17, l. 5, 143 BC) and Alexandros (P.Polit. Iud. 1, l. 1; 2, l. 1, 135 BC). Furthermore, if the term <i>kritai</i> in P.Polit. Iud. 18, l. 2 and verso (142 BC) indicates the officials of the <i>politeuma</i> it is likely that the Straton mentioned as their leader (seemingly) was in fact the <i>politarches</i>.</p> <p>The <i>politarches</i> and the (officials of the) <i>politeuma</i> seem to have had some jurisdiction or influence in the detainment of prisoners (perhaps in the fortress by the harbour?) and their release: P.Polit. Iud. 2 and 17. The functions of the <i>politarches</i> may resemble those of the <i>phourarchos</i>, the head of the fortress in the harbour by Herakleopolis: the two charges however did not overlap (cf. P.Diosk.). <i>Politarches</i> and <i>phourarchos</i>, however, may have in certain instances collaborated.</p>
iii. Members	<p>Those belonging to the <i>politeuma</i> defined themselves as τῶν ἐκ τοῦ πολιτεύματος, <i>ton ek tou politeumatōs</i> (P.Polit. Iud. 1, ll. 4-5; 4, l. 4; 7, l. 2). The members are also called πολῖται, <i>politai</i>, and opposed to non-members and non-Jews, called ἀλλόφυλοι, <i>allophyloi</i> (P.Polit. Iud. 1, ll. 17-18). However, it seems that not all Jews of Herakleopolis belonged to the <i>politeuma</i>: some in fact defined themselves <i>Ioudaioi</i> but not 'of those of the <i>politeuma</i>' (P.Polit. Iud. 2, l. 4; 6, l. 3; 11, l. 3; 12, ll. 3-4). It is likely that (some of) the members of the <i>politeuma</i> were connected with the fortress built in the harbour area by Herakleopolis: the garrison stationed there was also formed by Jewish troops. Although the membership (and officials) of the <i>politeuma</i> may have sometimes overlapped with those stationed in the fortress, the one did not obliterate or necessarily correspond with the other.</p>

iv. Officials	<p>The officials of the <i>politeuma</i> are collectively called ἄρχοντες, <i>archontes</i>. The <i>archontes</i> are often indicated with the year in which they were in charge: for instance, τοῖς ἄρχουσι τὸ λζ (ἔτος) τοῦ ἐν Ἡρακλέους πόλει πολίτευ[μα]τος τῶν Ἰουδαίων, <i>tois archousi to 37 (etos) tou en Herakleous polei politeumatatos ton Ioudaion</i> (P.Polit. Iud. 8, ll. 4-5. Other instances of this are: P.Polit. Iud. 3, l. 1; 6, l. 1; 9, l. 1; 10, l. 1; 12, l. 1; 13, l. 1; 14, l. 1). The office was therefore yearly. Their number is uncertain. Following Jewish linguistic practice (cf. P.Polit. Iud. p. 16), it is likely that the officials of the <i>politeuma</i> were also referred to as κριταί, <i>kritai</i> in P.Polit. Iud. 18 (l. 2 and verso: Στράτωνι καὶ τοῖς ἐν Ἡρακλέους πόλει κριταῖς, <i>Stratoni kai this en Herakleous polei kritais</i>): the text was written by the <i>kritai</i> of the Jewish community of a neighbouring village and to be forwarded to the <i>politeuma</i>, as the fragmentary note in l. 1 seems to indicate (ἐπὶ τὸ πολίτευ[μα], <i>epi to politeuma</i>). The <i>politeuma's archontes</i> are also said to form a κριτήριον, <i>kriterion</i> (P.Polit. Iud. 12, ll. 23-24).</p> <p>The functions of the officials of the <i>politeuma</i> resemble those of local public officials: they dealt with the solving of minor private disputes (default in contracts and agreements, violence and abuse) – however, they do not substitute the courts of justice. The petitioners who addressed their cases to the <i>politeuma</i> were not only the members of the <i>politeuma</i> themselves (P.Polit. Iud. 1, 4, and 7), but also Jews of Herakleopolis not belonging to the <i>politeuma</i> (P.Polit. Iud. 2, 6, 11, and 12), as well as Jews from neighbouring villages (P.Polit. Iud. 13, 18, 19, and 20) and neighbouring nomes (P.Polit. Iud. 8 and 9).</p> <p>In one case only the prerogatives of the <i>politeuma's</i> officials seem to stretch beyond minor matters: in P.Ptol. Iud. 6 the <i>archontes</i> of the <i>politeuma</i> had delegated the inquiry over the death of a <i>paidarion</i> (child or slave) in a neighbouring village to the elders (indicated as <i>kritai</i> in the text) of the Jewish community of the village: their job was to decide about the circumstances of the death (accident or murder with possible further legal implications) and produce a verdict (σύγκρισις <i>synkrisis</i> l. 11, or ὑπογραφή <i>hypokraphe</i> ll. 15, 23) on the matter. However, the matter remains unclear as we do not know all the details of the case.</p>
v. Other staff	<p>There is mention of λειτουργοί, <i>leitourgoi</i> (P.Polit. Iud. 8, l. 35) and of a ὑπηρητής, <i>hyperetes</i> (P.Polit. Iud. 9, l. 34) who appear to have been referred to by the petitioners in order to help the <i>archontes</i> of the <i>politeuma</i> in solving issues (especially in escorting people to places).</p>
vii. Judicial system	<p>See functions of the officials under VII.iv 'Officilas'.</p>

IX. MEMBERSHIP	
ii. Gender Note	<p>Men</p> <p>All the names of secure members of the <i>politeuma</i> are male names. This would be even more the case if all the members of the <i>politeuma</i> belonged to the military (which is likely, although not certain). However, women do appear in the affairs dealt with by the <i>politeuma</i>. In two instances, the petitioner who wrote to the <i>politeuma's</i> officials was a woman. In P.Polit. Iud. 9 the petitioner is Berenike, daughter of Archagathos, <i>Ioudaia</i> from Aphroditis Polis (in the Arsinoites or Aphroditopolites): she therefore did not belong to the <i>politeuma</i>. In P.Polit. Iud. 10 the petitioner is only identified by her first name (Ptolemaia): however, on the basis of the context and parallel texts, it seems obvious that she was a Jew from Herakleopolis. There is no evidence to maintain that she was a member of the <i>politeuma</i>.</p>
iii. Age Note	<p>Adults</p> <p>All the securely attested members of the <i>politeuma</i> seems to be adults. This would be even more the case if the membership were made up by men of army.</p>
iv. Status	<p>The <i>politeuma</i> gathered (some of the) Jewish inhabitants of Herakleopolis (and possibly of the harbour area by the city, with its fortress with Jewish troops). The <i>politeuma</i> may have had (at least originally) a military character, being formed by Jewish troops actively employed in the Ptolemaic army and garrison. However, no securely identified member of the <i>politeuma</i> indicates their belonging to the army. In one instance only (P.Polit. Iud. 5) the petitioner, who was presumably a Jew of Herakleopolis not member of the <i>politeuma</i>, is identified as being a member of the army (namely, belonging to the unit of the Macedonian <i>misthophoroi</i> cavalrymen – the ethnic indicates here a military unit and not race): he is Μακεδὼν τῶν Δημητρίου ἱππέων μισθοφόρων, <i>Makedon ton Demetriou hippeon misthophoron</i> (ll. 3-4).</p>

XI. INTERACTION

i. Local interaction

Non-Jews (namely, those living by the harbour, οἱ ἀπὸ τοῦ ὄρμου, *hoi apo tou hormou*; P.Polit. Iud. 1, ll. 7-8; 10, l. 4; 11, l. 5) also appear in the petitions addressed to the *politeuma*, normally as being sued by Jews. It therefore seems that the jurisdiction of the *politeuma* also stretched to the harbour by Herakleopolis (this area did not formally belong to the city of Herakleopolis): this would not be surprising if we were to accept the hypothesis that the majority of the people in the harbour was somewhat connected with the fortress, which was re-build around 156/5 BC (cf. P.Berlin. Zill. 1 and 2) and also manned by a Jewish contingent. The few non-Jewish (civilians) may therefore have fallen under the *politeuma's* jurisdiction insofar as they entertained business with Jews stationed in the area who would therefore address their *politeuma* to solve their private disputes. The *politeuma's* jurisdiction over the harbour area may suggest that the *politeuma* was in fact based there, where it could have drawn from the Jewish soldiers stationed in the garrison for its members (so P.Ptol. Iud. p. 12). However, the fact that it is called *to en Herakleous polei politeuma ton Ioudaion* (and the harbour did not in fact officially belong to the city of Herakleopolis) seems to me to suggest otherwise.

XII. NOTES

iii. Bibliography

Honigman, S. (2003), 'Politeumata and Ethnicity in Ptolemaic and Roman Egypt', *AncSoc* 33: 61-102.
Kruse, T. (2015), 'Ethnic *koina* and *politeumata* in Ptolemaic Egypt', in V. Gabrielsen and C. A. Thomsen (eds.), *Private associations and the public sphere*. Copenhagen, 270-300.
Sänger, P. (2014), 'The Politeuma in the Hellenistic World (Third to First Century B.C.): A Form of Organisation to Integrate Minorities', in J. Dahlvik, Chr. Reinprecht and W. Sievers (eds.), *Migration und Integration – wissenschaftliche Perspektiven aus Österreich. Jahrbuch 2/2013*, Göttingen: 51-68.

XIII. EVALUATION

i. Private association

Possible

Note

The *politeuma* displays a well-defined structure and clear organised internal hierarchy, with a leader and officials with clearly defined terms of office. The members had a collective identity and specific terminology, as well as a well defined common origin (they were all Jews). The group therefore shows durable intent and probably had funds. The prerogatives of the *politeuma's* officials, however, stretch beyond the limits of the membership of the *politeuma* and resemble those of public local officials. In fact, it seems that the *politeuma* and its officials represented a parallel local 'administration' for the Jews. It is therefore possible that we see here the development of what was once a purely private association formed by some Jews resident in Herakleopolis (most probably belonging to the army), which over time acquired importance and catered for the needs of the Jewish communities of the area: given the close-knit character of Jewish communities (like many other immigrant communities), as well as the desire of (and probably better trust in) dealing their own affairs internally (matters of propriety and religious norms may have also played a role in the matter), such a development may have occurred over a relatively short period of time. Royal permission for setting up such an 'organisation' may have been necessary and therefore obtained. At all events, the *politeuma* of the Jews of Herakleopolis never became a public body. Cf. Honigman 2003; Sänger 2014; Kruse 2015.