

# ZEITSCHRIFT FÜR PAPYROLOGIE UND EPIGRAPHIK

*herausgegeben*

*von*

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## AN UNRECOGNIZED DATE BY THE REBELLION OF 131 B.C.

A bilingual ostrakon from Edfou, published by D. Devauchelle and G. Wagner in *ASAE* 68 (1982) 90-91, with Plate 1, presents the following text:

- 1 ΛΘ ð καὶ ᾱ Μεσορῆ κ̄ εἰ[ς]με(μέτρηκεν) εἰς Θη(σαυρόν) Ἀπό(λλωνος) (πόλεως)
- 2 εἰς τὸ αὐτὸ Λ κἀτ(ω) τ(όπον) Ἀπ[ολλώνιος]
- 3 Ἀπολλωνίου τοῦ Ζωίλου [πέντε]
- 4 ἡμῖν δ / ε ε Λ δι'β' κἀτωρ
- 5 H3·t-sp 1·t ibd 4 šmw sw 26 hy 3pwlms s3 n 3pwlms
- 6 s3 n Sylws r p3 r3 n Db3 n p3 šmw n h3·t-sp 39
- 7 ʾ(n) n3 ʾ·wy·w mḥt(·w) sw 5 1/2 1/4 1/12 sš P3-šr-?. s3 n P3-ḥtr

The editors date the ostrakon to 14 October 246, with the following reasoning (note to line 1): "Selon T.C. Skeat, *The reigns of the Ptolemies*, 31, note 6, Ptolémée III a succédé à son père le 27 janvier 246. Cependant, un papyrus d'Éléphantine est encore daté du 12 février 246, an 39 de Ptolémée II, alors que ce dernier était décédé depuis au moins 16 jours. La première date connue de Ptolémée III est le 7 mars 246. Nous avons ici pour la première fois et tout à la fin de l'année, un exemple de double datation de Ptolémée II et Ptolémée III."

This sort of novelty is unexpected and arouses a suspicion that something is amiss. It is not the reading, which can be verified on the plate. But the hand is manifestly not of the mid-third century, but rather of the second half of the second.

The editors note further (line 4, note) that the signer, Kastor, is probably the same as in *BGU* VI 1438, 1439, 1441, and 1442, wheat receipts similar to the present one and all from Edfou (Apollonopolis Magna). They therefore propose to redate them from 111, 108, and 107 B.C. (edd.) to the reign of Ptolemy III Euergetes. Curiously, they remark "en l'absence des originaux nous ne disposons pas de critères paléographiques qui permettraient d'assurer cette révision." In fact, all four of these ostraka are in the same hand (as the editors say), and so also is *O. Meyer* 46, which is illustrated by Tafel IV in its edition (as is noted in the introduction to *BGU* 1439). I do not think the hand is the same as the new text, but it is clearly very close in time. *O. Meyer* 46 is dated by its editor to 115.

Now only one later Ptolemy had regnal years as high as 39, namely Ptolemy VIII Euergetes II. And it was precisely in that year, as we find on consulting Pestman's tables, that there was a revolt—or rather, two revolts—against Euergetes in Upper Egypt.<sup>1)</sup> One of them, by Harsiesis son of Osiris, is secure-

1) P.W. Pestman, *Chronologie égyptienne d'après les textes démotiques* (Pap.Lugd.Bat. 15, Leiden 1967) 58-60.

ly mentioned in only two documents: a Demotic papyrus (P.Karara) from near Hibeh, dated to year 2 of Pharaoh Harsiesis son of Osiris, Mesore 27; and a mention in *UPZ* II 199 (10.xi.131), where he is called ὁ θεοῦ ἐκθρόνους Ἀρσιή-  
 κης. A quarter-century ago Ludwig Koenen linked these two texts and showed that Harsiesis revolted in 132/1, his year 1; held power (briefly) in Thebes sometime between 26.vii.131 (the last date to year 39 of Ptolemy there) and 10.xi.131, at which time Ptolemy had recovered the town; and was then evidently pushed north and is last attested on 15.ix.130, in his year 2, in Middle Egypt (P.Karara).<sup>2)</sup>

Cleopatra II, on the other hand, is attested as ruling in Thebes on 22.xi.131 (*UPZ* II 217), in her year 2. Her control of Thebes evidently did not last long, however, for *UPZ* II 219 (from 21.i.130) shows again year 40 of Ptolemy.<sup>3)</sup> What is less clear is to which of the rebels one should attribute three documents with dates of year 2, which are

<i>UPZ</i> II 224	4 and 15.x.131
O.Louvre dem. 9071	13.xi.131
<i>UPZ</i> II 225	18.xi.131

The latter two texts come after the reappearance of Ptolemy in *UPZ* II 199, but before Cleopatra's date in *UPZ* 217. Since Harsiesis was already damned in *UPZ* 199, it seems virtually inescapable that year 2 is hers, just 4 and 9 days before her secure attestation. But what then of *UPZ* 224? It has been assigned by Samuel (*Ptolemaic Chronology* 146) to Cleopatra, as it was by Koenen (*Cd'E* 34 [1959] 106). Pestman (*Chronologie*, 58-60), however, suggests Harsiesis as more likely, proposing thus a sequence of Ptolemy, Harsiesis, Ptolemy, Cleopatra, Ptolemy.

There is another, though not terribly helpful, body of evidence, namely several texts with double dates like those of our ostrakon. They are the following:

<i>UPZ</i> II 224 iii.15	39=1	Thebes	retrospective; doc. 4-15.x.131 (year 2, cf. above)
O.Bodl. 368	2=40	Thebes?	frag. context, doc. perhaps 3.vii.130
BGU VI 1448	2=40	Eleph.	dating formula; no month and day <sup>4)</sup>

It seems legitimate to conclude that the ruler referred to in *UPZ* 224 by year 1 (retrospective, equated to 39 Ptolemy) and by year 2 (current) is a single person, not two different persons. It is also reasonable to conclude that that ruler and the one to whom year 2 in the ostraka listed above, and year 1 in the Edfou text all refer, is a single person.

2) L. Koenen, *Cd'E* 34 (1959) 103-119. See also his more recent remarks in *Egypt and the Hellenistic World* (Stud. Hellenistica 27, Leuven 1983) 143-90, esp. 150 n. 21 and 181-83; *ZPE* 54 (1984) 9-13.

3) Cf. H. Volkmann, *RE* 23, 1729f. s.v. Ptolemaios VIII Euergetes II.

4) See Samuel, *Cd'E* 40 (1965) 389-90 on this text.

Given what we know of Harsiesis, given the lack of any actual dates to him in Upper Egypt, and given the likelihood that the years of two Macedonian sovereigns (even at war with one another) seem intrinsically more likely to be joined than those of an Egyptian rebel and a Macedonian king, it seems hard to escape the view that Cleopatra is meant in all of these cases, and that UPZ 224 therefore refers not to Harsiesis but to Cleopatra. If this view is accepted, we can now see that she controlled Apollonopolis Magna already on 15.ix.131, and we have a clear instance of a double date referring to two contemporaneous warring sovereigns.<sup>5)</sup>

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5) These dates thus seem to me to confirm the view of A. Samuel, *Cd'E* 40 (1965) 386ff., according to which such double dates, when not retrospective, refer to simultaneous reigns by sovereigns with different counts, rather than to the succession of one to the other. Realistically, of course, a scribe may not have known which of these was likely to be the outcome when a civil war was going on. The Demotic scribe, on the other hand, did not feel a need to identify the current year as also 39, nor yet to speak of the harvest as also year 1, a curious fact.