



# TYCHÉ

## Beiträge zur Alten Geschichte Papyrologie und Epigraphik

Herausgegeben von

Gerhard Dobesch, Hermann Harrauer  
Peter Siewert und Ekkehard Weber

Band 5, 1990

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Tafel 1 – 21

LESLIE S. B. MACCOULL

## φιλοτιμία in Byzantine Papyrus Documents

The recent publication in full of the text, with a plate, of P.Lond. III 1305 descr.<sup>1</sup> has brought to the attention of scholars a further instance of the technical use of the noun φιλοτιμία<sup>2</sup> in documentary texts from Byzantine Egypt. The new text is an ἐντάγιον, with no provenance given and no date beyond “6<sup>th</sup> or 7<sup>th</sup> cent.” assigned to its dating formula of Phamenoth 11, indiction 14. The text may, however, be assigned to Hermopolis on the basis of its prosopography. It is written in the first person by Demeas, the σχολαστικός and ἔκδικος, the same official who issued the Hermopolite document reconstituted as SPP III 368 + 370 by J. M. Diethart and K. A. Worp in ZPE 46 (1982) 231 – 232. Thus the bishop mentioned in line 3 would have been the bishop of the important see of Hermopolis (Magna): the date is most probably sixth century. In the London papyrus Demeas instructs the θαυμασιότατος Artemidorus the παραλημπτής to furnish twelve artabas of grain to Phibios, Isakios, and the mother of Dioskorides, “from the φιλοτιμία of the most reverend (θεοσεβέστατος) bishop”; and to receive first from them three gold solidi less 15 keratia (i. e. in cash). Clearly φιλοτιμία refers to some sort of fund, in this case a fund of stored grain. The editor translates the word as “largesse” (p. 35). Can we arrive at a more specific signification for what seems to be a financial technical term coined in the sixth century?

Comparative material comes from the Hermonthite and the Oxyrhynchite. First, P.Lond. V 1719 and 1721, acknowledgements of debt with promises to repay. In 1719, dated by Bell to 541 or 556, Aurelius Paam, priest of the holy church of (Jeme?), and Paul from the same κάστρον address ...lios son of Psas[, a Syenite also living there. They state that they have received from him, and owe to him εἰς ἔκτισιν καὶ ἀπόδοσιν, the total sum of five gold solidi: four for Paam who received them in Mecheir, when the document is dated, and one for Paul who is to receive it in the coming Epeiph, together with μετὰ φιλοτιμίας. This, it is stated, comes to 2400 talents<sup>3</sup>. For the lender’s greater security they have entrusted to him as deposit (ὑποθήκη) a gold bracelet, a gold-earring,

<sup>1</sup> G. M. Parássoglou, *Nineteen Papyri from the British Library*, Hellenika 38 (1987) 35 – 36.

<sup>2</sup> The verb φιλοτιμέομαι is of course also used in its more basic sense, as meaning “eagerly to strive for something” or “to glory in something”, in papyrus texts of this period. Examples are from the archive of Dioscorus of Aphrodito: P.Cair. Masp. I 67019, 24 (A. D. 548 – 551), [οἱ φιλοτ]ιμηθέντες τύποι, “the (imperial) laws of which we are proud”; P.Cair. Masp. III 67352, 11, φιλοτιμημένη used of the emperor’s κρίσις; P.Cair. Masp. I 67097 verso (D) 69 (ca. A. D. 565/566), the ἀποκήρυξις, where we find φιλοτιμοῦσιν ἀεὶ τὸ πατρικὸν ὀμόφυλον. What the present note is concerned with is the special use of the noun φιλοτιμία in financial contexts. SPP X 251 (b) 2, from the Arsinoite, a somewhat anomalous case, will be discussed below.

<sup>3</sup> On reckoning in talents in the sixth century see R. S. Bagnall, *Currency and Inflation in Fourth-Century Egypt*, Atlanta 1985, 17.

and two ear-pendants, their own property, which are stipulated to be in his unhindered possession (δεσποτεία) until the repayment and fulfilment of the contract, σὺν τόκοις (with interest). However, Bell translates φιλοτιμία also as “interest”, construing it with the phrase reckoned in talents and thus assuming that the “interest” is what amounted to 2400 talents. (He adds the alternative, that the “interest” may be on the whole sum of 5 solidi instead of on just the 1 solidus nearest the phrase. Any possessive pronoun is a restoration). This cannot make sense. We already have the normal word for interest, τόκοι, in the guarantee or collateral part of the loan contract. And Bell is mistaken in skewing the participle of λαμβάνω to yield the meaning that the two-part loan is repayable in Mecheir and Epeiph. The end of the document is lost; the due date would have been specified in the latter part. φιλοτιμία cannot mean “interest” here. But its meaning remains unclear.

The companion piece, P.Lond. V 1721, is no more helpful. In this document, from which any dates or names at the beginning have been lost, the debtor (framer of the document) declares that he has received (etc., as above) one-half a gold solidus, and is in addition ready to furnish the lender ὑπὲρ φιλοτ[ιμί]ας of what is owed him (lender) by him (borrower) in Payni, without fudging the account (ἀναμφιλό[γως]) and for his security, some unnamed object (the end is lost). This φιλοτιμία cannot mean “interest” either (although Bell cites this document to support his previous rendering<sup>4</sup>). Here it is not a technical financial term so much as an attempted synonym for the expected legal term for “collateral” or “pledge”, “an earnest of what is owed”. These two Hermonthite documents do not help us to pin down the word in its exact fiscal meaning.

We are on surer ground with the Oxyrhynchite material, where extensive papyri from the Apion estate’s financial archives provide many uses of φιλοτιμία as an accounting term. Two long accounts of disbursements, one in grain and the other in wine, provide abundant evidence. P.Oxy. XVI 1913, dated by Grenfell and Hunt to ca. 555, lists disbursements to various people and institutions under the following headings: to the account (λόγῳ) of pasturage, of compensation (παραμυθία), of freight, of wages, of expenditures, of salary (ὀψώνιον), and of φιλοτιμία, this last translated “largesse”. The three cases in which a disbursement is recorded “to the account of φιλοτιμία” are interesting. All three payments, made in amounts of grain (50 or 100 artabas), are to lawyers (σχολαστικοί). This was noticed by A. Claus, *Ὁ σχολαστικός*, Köln 1965, 91–93, who, however, was unable to explain the meaning of φιλοτιμία. Each of the learned (ἐλλογιμώτατοι) men, Theodore the Kynopolite, Theodore son of Gratian, and Gerontius, receives, “to account of φιλοτιμία as is customary (κατὰ τὸ ἔθος),” an amount of grain, standardized at 50 artabas. (Theodore son of Gratian also receives an additional 50 artabas κατὰ προσθ(ήκην), as a bonus). These people, listed among fieldguards, smiths, potters, vine-dressers, stable-hands, monks, bakers, sailors and bricklayers, seem to be receiving an honorarium for services rendered to the noble house.

Also in P.Oxy. XXVII 2480, an account for the issue of wine dated by the editors to 565–566, we find φιλοτιμία as a major category under which heading disbursements are made, along with ἀνάλωμα or expenditure, ὀψώνιον or salary<sup>5</sup>, and εὐσέβεια or

<sup>4</sup> Preisigke’s lemma (*WB* s. v. φιλοτιμία) for the meaning “Zins” is these two examples only.

<sup>5</sup> For a later fiscal example of φιλοτιμία coupled with ὀψώνιον cf. Theoph. Contin. 265, 8–12.



religious charity (the latter made to religious κοινόβια or ξενοδοχεῖα, or to the disabled). Here there is a variety of recipients for payments made under this head. Lines 18 f.: “(Thoth): To the leading men<sup>6</sup> on the occasion of the happy birthday of our δέσποινα the most noble consular lady, to account of φιλοτιμία, Mesore 27, ind. 13, from the pressing of the 14<sup>th</sup> (?) indiction, wine, 20 dipla.” Lines 33–34: “(Phaophi): To the shipwrights and caulkers and carpenters and others, to account of φιλοτιμία, on the day on which the great (riverboat) the ‘Crayfish’ was launched into the river, Phaophi 10(+), ind. 14, and to Justus the sailor on the same day in 2 receipts (πιπτάκια), wine, 13 dipla.” Line 62: “(Pharmouthi): To the most magnificent ἄρχων (*praeses*) Thomas<sup>7</sup>, to account of φιλοτιμία, on the occasion of his *adventus* (εἰσοδος), Pharmouthi 5, wine, 100 dipla.” And line 100: “(Pachon): To Theodore the shieldmaker, who made the shields (σκουτάρια) of the noble house, to account of φιλοτιμία, Pachon, wine, 1 diploun.” This diversity deserves analysis.

The editors translate the first occurrence of φιλοτιμία as “largesse” (taking a cue from their predecessors in P.Oxy.). But let us look at who the recipients are and what they are being paid for - - - in amounts of wine ranging from a hundred διπλᾶ for a high official’s *adventus* down to just one for the craftsman who painted the little “shields” used for heraldic display in processions and celebrations of the Apion dynasty. These disbursements too appear to be honoraria paid in kind to people who have rendered a service to the noble house (performed birthday acclamations, fitted out a boat for its ceremonial launching, made heraldic decorations) or stood in a customary relation of obligation to it (the *adventus* of a new *praeses*).

We are left with the puzzling text of SPP X 251, given by Wessely as from the Arsinoite and 6<sup>th</sup> century. Without giving a complete re-edition, I think we are on safe ground in correcting a couple of errors in this ed. pr. The document appears to be a leaf from an estate account codex with some points of similarity to the Apion accounts discussed above. The entries cover the end of Choiak and beginning of Tybi of a fourteenth indiction, and each item is introduced by δι’ ἐπιστάλατος Ν., “by order of N.” Both military ranks (*optio*, *mandatarius*) and church feasts (Epiphany, “the πανήγυρις of Hathyr” [either St. Michael or St. Menas]) figure in the expenditures, as well as estate matters such as dike work, “the illustrious lady”, the οὐσία, the κελλαρίτης τοῦ οἴκου, and “weavers working on the tapestry of the lord”. Here the expenditures are in money, reckoned in nomismata. In (b) line 2, φιλοτι/ cannot be expanded as φιλοτιμουμένου agreeing with Ἰωάννου ἀρχιατροῦ. The entry should run “By order of John the ἀρχιατρός, φιλοτι(μίας) συμπλη(ρουμένης) (the φιλοτιμία having been made up to the full sum), 2 solidi”. (Φιλοτι/ in (a) line 1 must be a proper name, as given in the edition). Here too some sort of fund for payment appears to be meant.

<sup>6</sup> A. D. E. Cameron in *Circus Factions*, Oxford 1976, 38 agrees that this must be the meaning of πρωτοδημόται: that the “demes” of which they are the “first” have nothing to do with the factions. And yet in this papyrus payment is made “for watering the horses of the Blue μέρος at the spectacle of the Στεφάνια (line 10), “to the smiths who made the keys for the head stableman of the Blue μέρος’s horses” (line 28), “for care of the horses of the Blue μέρος” (lines 97 and 98), and so on. Is it possible that the people being given wine here for a birthday celebration of the noble house are in fact some kind of faction cheerleaders?

<sup>7</sup> The editors speculate on his identity with the Fl. Thomas of P.Lond. V 1679, 4 and P.Cair. Masp. III 67320, 1, cf. II 67169 bis 6.

In conclusion, how can we define this term? In sixth-century financial documents, φιλοτιμία means a fund of staple commodities or of money, administered by a secular estate employee or an ecclesiastic, out of which disbursements were made to professionals or craftsmen as honoraria for services rendered. The fund apparently also could be used for making loans in case of need. Perhaps John the ἀρχιατρός had treated a member of the noble house; and, to return to P.Lond. III 1305 descr., perhaps the three people named had helped the bishop in a charitable or festal undertaking. In any case, rendering φιλοτιμία by “honorarium” rather than something as vague as “largesse” may be a useful measure to be adopted by editors of Byzantine financial documents in future<sup>8</sup>.

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<sup>8</sup> I should like to thank B. Cavarra, J. Long, and L. Siorvanes, for their helpful discussion.