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978-1-107-03713-7 - Law and Enforcement in Ptolemaic Egypt

John Bauschatz

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LAW AND ENFORCEMENT IN PTOLEMAIC EGYPT

This book examines the activities of a broad array of police officers in Ptolemaic Egypt (323–30 B.C.) and argues that Ptolemaic police officials enjoyed great autonomy, providing assistance to even the lowest levels of society when crimes were committed. Throughout the nearly three hundred years of Ptolemaic rule, victims of crime in all areas of the Egyptian countryside called on local police officials to investigate crimes; arrest, question, and sometimes even imprison wrongdoers; and hold trials. Drawing on a large body of textual evidence for the cultural, social, and economic interactions between state and citizen, John Bauschatz demonstrates that the police system was efficient, effective, and largely independent of central government controls. No other law enforcement organization exhibiting such a degree of autonomy and flexibility appears in extant evidence from the rest of the Greco-Roman world.

John Bauschatz is Assistant Professor in the Department of Classics at the University of Arizona. His research focuses on Greek and Roman social history, Greek papyrology, Hellenistic and Roman Egypt, and crime in antiquity. He has been named a National Lecturer for the Archaeological Institute of America (2013–14) and has published in such journals as the *Classical Bulletin*, the *Classical Journal*, *Syllecta Classica*, and *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik*.

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Preface

The seeds of the project that ultimately became this book were planted a decade ago in (what was once) the Papyrology Room of Perkins Library at Duke University. I spent a lot of time there while a Ph.D. student in classics (1999–2005) and was very lucky to have two excellent mentors: John Oates, to whom I owe great thanks for my training in papyrology, and Joshua Sosin, with whom, in the summer of 2002, I first started to explore the topic of police in Ptolemaic Egypt as a possible dissertation topic. Both subsequently served (with distinction) as members of my dissertation committee, which Sosin headed. I will never be able to thank them enough for their long hours of hard work on what only very gradually turned into a viable Ph.D. thesis, but hopefully pride of place in this preface will help to make up some of the deficit. Their fellow committee members, Tolly Boatwright, Diskin Clay, and Kent Rigsby, also have my sincerest thanks for their time, effort, and (frankly) frankness.

What Ph.D. student imagines, flush with the success of the dissertation defense, that it will take him or her *eight more years* to ultimately see the project through to publication? Well, life happens, and those years fly by, peaks and valleys opening up along the way. In that intervening period a number of people provided invaluable assistance to me as I navigated the treacherous path to publication, a path that more often than not was filled with potholes. I had the great fortune of landing my first real job in classics at Swarthmore College. The two years I spent there, though challenging, were wonderful. I got a crash course in how to be an ideal colleague from Deborah Beck, Grace Ledbetter, Rosaria Munson, and William Turpin. The skills I developed

as a visiting assistant professor in that department continue to serve me well to this day.

Though it is hard for me to fathom it, I have been at the University of Arizona for the past six years now. The UA is a decidedly different kind of place from Swarthmore, and the challenges I have faced here have likewise been of a different sort. What has not changed is the steady support of friends and colleagues. My senior colleagues, on the one hand – Alison Futrell, Eleni Hasaki, Steve Johnstone, Marilyn Skinner, Bella Vivante, and Mary Voyatzis – have been tremendous assets to me since my first day at the UA. Their suggestions for improvements to my manuscript, as well as advice on navigating the book submission process (and life at a large state university), were extremely helpful. On the other hand, my junior colleagues Jennifer Kendall and Mike Lippman (as well as former junior colleagues Karen Acton, Stacey McGowen, Gil Renberg, and Chris van den Berg), though always happy to lend an ear, have perhaps aided me even more by encouraging me to drink a beer now and then. Business Manager Kelly Moyes and the rest of the SILLC staff regularly made short work of even my most complicated departmental research fund questions while simultaneously making (good-natured) fun of me. The bright smiles and quick wit of the classics front-desk staff made coming to work in the Learning Services Building a joy. When things were at their darkest, David Christenson and Cynthia White were always there.

Outside of the UA, I have derived great benefit from the comments and suggestions of colleagues at American Philological Association paper sessions and lectures that I have given on Ptolemaic Egypt at colleges and universities across the United States and Canada. Many of these eventually worked their way into this book. The two anonymous readers drafted by Cambridge University Press to slog through my manuscript made me think more broadly about my topic than I ever had before, and though I did not end up transforming the final product entirely along the lines they suggested, I like to think I did the best I could. I am extremely grateful to Beatrice Rehl, my editor at Cambridge, for her guidance, not to mention her willingness to be very generous with the maximum word count for this book, and to Brian MacDonald, my production editor, for his uniformly excellent mentoring during the long journey from manuscript to printed book. Katherine

Davis at Johns Hopkins deserves an honorary plaque, or something, for her appearance, Athena-like, mere weeks before my deadline to provide Demotic transliterations for me. Finally, I would like to thank another scholar of ancient law enforcement systems, Christopher Furhmann, for his kind support. Leaving you out of the preface, my friend, would have been criminal.

In spite of all the grief I have given them over the years (and will continue to give them), my parents Paul and Cathleen Bauschatz deserve abundant gratitude for, among other things, telling me again and again that I would get this book done. I still remember the day when, as an undergraduate at Brown University, I told them that I was going to major in classics after many years of half-listening to their warnings *not* to go into the humanities. My mother's dream of "my son the doctor/lawyer" died that day, but as I suspected that they had seen it coming all along – being themselves professors in the humanities – I shed not a tear. And things worked out OK. I save my biggest thanks for last: this goes to my wonderful wife, Retina, who has turned out to be a better partner than anyone could ask for and has given me three amazing kids, Oscar, Oliver, and Anna. This book is dedicated, with love, to her. Well, the good parts are, at least. I will gladly take responsibility for any and all mistakes, shortcomings, and (especially) puns.

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Abbreviations

Unless otherwise noted, all abbreviations for editions of papyri and ostraca, as well as for other papyrological publications (corpora of papyri and papyrological series), are after Joshua D. Sosin, Roger S. Bagnall, James Cowey, Mark Depauw, Terry G. Wilfong, and Klaas A. Worp, *Checklist of Editions of Greek, Latin, Demotic and Coptic Papyri, Ostraca and Tablets*, continuously updated at <http://scriptorium.lib.duke.edu/papyrus/texts/clist.html>.

Abbreviations for journal titles are generally those of *L'Année philologique* online. A regularly updated list of these abbreviations can be found at http://www.annee-philologique.com//files/sigles_fr.pdf.

The texts of Greek papyri and ostraca cited and translated in this book derive for the most part from the Duke DataBank of Documentary Papyri (DDBDP), available online at <http://papyri.info/ddbdp/>. The use of brackets, braces, angle brackets, parentheses, and similar punctuation in these texts conforms to the Leiden Conventions for papyrological and epigraphic texts.

All dates and provenances for documentary papyri and ostraca are those of the *Heidelberger Gesamtverzeichnis der griechischen Papyrusurkunden Ägyptens (HGV)*, at <http://aquila.papy.uni-heidelberg.de/gvzFM.html>, where available. Dates and provenances for inscriptions, as well as for literary papyri and documentary papyri and ostraca not included in the *HGV*, are those provided by the original editors of the texts.