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Κόροι, σάτα, *and* κάβοι *in* P.Mur. *97*[1]

P.Mur. 97 was found in the caves of Murabba'at, in Israel, and published in 1961. It is probably a fiscal record of the end of the first or the beginning of the second century CE, as are some other parchments in the same archive (*P.Mur.* 89-107). The editors did not give a translation and only made some brief comments.[2]

The measures used in the archive are the *kab* (κάβος), the *seah* (σάτον), and the *kor* (κόρος). One *kor* equals thirty *seahs*, and one *seah* equals six *kabs*. The content of the *seah* is unknown: it may be 7 or 15 liters.[3] So, one *kor* would be 210 or 450 liters, and one *kab* would be 1.16 or 2.5 liters. Among the 171 fiscal payments in the archive, three stand out:

(1) κάβον ι̲ς̲ [(*P.Mur.* 97, frag. A-B, col. II, l. 2) interpreted by the editors as a payment of 16 *kabs* (18.8 or 40 liters), the scribe having committed a grammatical mistake by writing the singular κάβον. The same mistake appears in frag. A-B, col. I, l. 4, with the plural σάτα followed by the figure α̲.

(2)]ς δ̲[(*P.Mur.* 97, frag. E, l. 2). The underlined δ̲ indicates that it is a number, but the measure is unknown.

(3)]ος ι̲ς̲ σα̲[(*P.Mur.* 97, frag. E, l. 7). If the first term is a measure, κόρ]ος or κάβ]ος, this could be another mistake of singular for plural.

P.Mur. 97 is a fiscal record, since there are numbers in every line in various measures[4] and one finds barley (κριθῆς, frag. C, ll. 2 and 7 and frag. E, l. 5) and perhaps mustard (σινη, interpreted by the editors as an abbreviation of σίναπι). It is the only text in the archive with measures written out in whole words, κόρος, σάτον, and κάβος.[5] The usual format

[1] I am grateful to Chr.-G. Schwentzel, E. Nantet, and J.-B. Rey for their support and A. Jördens for comments on an earlier draft of this paper. All remaining errors are mine.

[2] R.P. Benoit., J.T. Milik, and R. De Vaux (eds.), *Discoveries in the Judaean Desert, II: Les grottes de Murabba'ât* (Oxford 1961) 229-230.

[3] For a seah of seven liters, see A. Lemaire, *Nouvelles inscriptions araméennes d'Idumée* (Paris 1996) 131. For a fifteen-liter seah, see Benoit, Milik, et De Vaux (n. 2) 214; J. Pastor, *Land and Economy in Ancient Palestine* (London and New York 1997) 171; F. Deist, *Material Culture of the Bible: An Introduction* (London 2000) 224. For a brief discussion, see G.W. Bromiley, *The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia* 4 (Grand Rapids 1995) 1051.

[4] As in the entire archive, the *seah* is the most frequently used measure: frag. A-B, col. I, ll. 4 and 8; col. II, ll. 5, 8, and 9. One finds the *kab* twice: frag. A-B, col. II, l. 2 and frag. E, l. 8; and perhaps the *kor* in frag. E, l. 1.

[5] The *seah* is listed three times with a number: σάτα α̲ (frag. A-B, col. I, l. 4) and σάτα β̲ (frag. A-B, col. I, l. 9 and col. II, l. 5) and two times without a number (frag. A-B, col. I, l. 8 and col. II, l. 8).

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of entries in the archive is: the name of the taxpayer, the produce, and the payed sum, as follows:

[.] . . ρ . . ακου κρε(ιθῆς) κ(όρος) α α̲ κ(άβοι) γ (*P.Mur.* 91, col. I, l. 2)

"[---] son of [---]akos, barley, 1 *kor*, 1 *seah*, 3 *kabs*"

At Murabba'at, as in other comparable documents from the Dead Sea,[6] the underlined figures are *seahs*. For *P.Mur.* 97 the same can be assumed, since not all the figures are underlined. In that case, the interpretation by the editors is no longer possible: in example (1) above, κάβον ι̲ς̲ [does not mean 16 *kabs* (that would probably have been written as 2 *seahs* and 4 *kabs*). Also, in example (2)]ς δ̲ [does not have to be a grammatical mistake, but δ̲ is just 4 *seahs*. And in example (3),]ος ι̲ς̲ σα̣[cannot refer to the improbable sum of 16 *kors*, i.e. 2 1/2 tons or more than 6 tons of wheat or barley. The most substantial sum in the archive is 3 *kors* and 15 *seahs* (*P.Mur.* 96, col. I, ll. 5 and 6); only fifteen sums exceed one *kor*,[7] and the average sum is 64 *kabs*, i.e. 10 *seahs* and 4 *kabs*.

A comparison of examples (1) κάβον ι̲ς̲ [and (2)]ος ι̲ς̲ σα̣[is instructive: the scribe must have written the figure ι̲ς̲ after the smaller unit (κάβον and, as we may now read, κάβ]ος) and before the larger unit ([σάτα and σά̣[τα), according to the Semitic order. Both lines list the *seahs* after the *kabs*. It is the same in *P.Mur.* 94, a summary of tax installments:

Γ κ̲ε̲ Ἀαζάηλος Φελείου γ̲ γ̲ β̲ δ̲ κ(άβος) α (ἥμισυς) γ̲ κ(άβοι) δ (ἥμισυς)

"(Total paid): 25 [*seahs*]: Aazaelos son of Pheleios: 3 [*seahs*], 3 [*seahs*], 2 [*seahs*], 4 [*seahs*] 1 1/2 *k*(*abs*), 3 [*seahs*], 4 1/2 *k*(*abs*)" (*P.Mur.* 94, frag. A, l. 12)

Aazaelos son of Pheleios paid 16 *seahs* in five installments. The κ̲ε̲ in the margin is, perhaps, the total due (25 *seahs*), and the Γ may indicate that the total due has been fully paid; maybe not all the installments are listed.[8]

[6] For the publication of all other documents, see N. Lewis, *The Documents from the Bar Kokhba Period in the Cave of Letters: Greek Papyri* (Jerusalem 1989); H. Cotton and A. Yardeni (eds.), *Discoveries in the Judaean Desert, XXVII: Aramaic, Hebrew, and Greek Documentary Texts from Nahal Hever and Other Sites* (Oxford 1997); Y. Yadin, J.C. Greenfield, and A. Yardeni, *The Documents from the Bar Kokhba Period in the Cave of Letters: Hebrew, Aramaic and Nabatean-Aramaic Papyri* (Jerusalem 2002).

[7] *P.Mur.* 90, frag. C, ll. 1 and 2; *P.Mur.* 91, col. I, ll. 2 and 6; *P.Mur.* 92, col. I, l. 7 and col. II, l. 6; *P.Mur.* 94, frag. B, l. 3; *P.Mur.* 96, col. I, ll. 2, 3, 5, and 6 and col. II, ll. 2 and 3; *P.Mur.* 97, frag. E, ll. 1 and 7.

[8] Benoit, Milik, and De Vaux (n. 2) 226.

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I propose to interpret *P.Mur.* 97 also as a summary of tax installments. The three examples above can be read as follows:

(1) κάβον ι̲ς̲ [σάτα = 1 *kab* and 16 *seahs* (frag. A-B, col. II, l. 2)
(2) κάβο]ς δ̲ [σάτα = 1 *kab* and 4 *seahs* (frag. E, l. 2); perhaps: κόρο]ς, δ̲ [σάτα, one installment of 1 *kor*, another of 4 *seahs*; less likely κρειθῆ]ς δ̲ [σάτα or σῖτο]ς δ̲ [σάτα or πυρό]ς δ̲ [σάτα = 4 *seahs* of barley or wheat
(3) κάβ]οσ ι̲ς̲ σά[τα) = 1 *kab* and 16 *seahs* (frag. E, l. 7); perhaps: κόρ]ος, ι̲ς̲ σά[τα, one installment of 1 *kor*, another of 16 *seahs*; less likely σῖτ]ος ι̲ς̲ σά[τα or πυρ]ός ι̲ς̲ σά[τα = 16 *seahs* of wheat

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