

Geld bezahlt noch das Haus verlassen hatte, wandte ich mich mit einer Eingabe an dich, und du befehltst, ihn <ins Gefängnis> abzuführen. Nachdem sich aber seine Frau mit einer Eingabe an dich gewandt und behauptet hatte, sie habe das Geld bereit, verpflichtete er sich, mir am x. Payni 400 Silberdrachmen zu zahlen oder das Haus zu verlassen.

Ich bitte dich nun mit aller Dringlichkeit, weil er mehrfach in deiner Gegenwart versprochen hat, das Geld zu bezahlen, und doch nicht gezahlt hat, sondern mich hinhält, den Befehl zu geben, die Miete für x Jahre vollstrecken zu lassen und dem Verantwortlichen zu schreiben, mir das Haus zu übergeben. Wenn das geschieht ---

Traces of a notarial signature in BGU III 997 – a deliberate removal?

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Abstract: This article provides a new reading of a notarial signature in papyrus BGU III 997, a copy of an agoranomic sale from the Ptolemaic period. The signature was not transcribed in the original edition since only traces of it survive and the papyrus seems blank and intact at that place. A closer examination reveals that only the upper layer of the papyrus has been peeled off. How, when, and why the alteration took place, remains unsolved.

Keywords: notarial signature, Ptolemaic period, Pathyris, sale

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The papyrus BGU III 997 is a copy of a notarial provisory sale document written in Pathyris in 103 BCE. The papyrus is housed in the Berlin papyrus collection with the inventory number P.9001.¹ When I studied the handwriting of the original papyrus, I discovered some ink traces in the place where the notarial signature would normally be, but which were not mentioned in the original edition, nor have they been mentioned later as far as I know. At a quick glance, the papyrus seems intact and empty at that place, but a closer examination reveals that a strip of the upper layer of the papyrus has been torn away precisely where the notarial signature had been, leaving only a few ink traces below and above the torn piece,

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¹ A good quality image has recently been made available online at <<http://ww2.smb.museum/berlpap/index.php/02579/>>. I warmly thank Dr. Marius Gerhardt for his help during my visit to the papyrus collection at the Staatliche Museen zu Berlin.

and at the end we see traces of the word $\kappa\epsilon\chi\rho\eta(\mu\acute{\alpha}\tau\iota\kappa\alpha)$ around the *kollesis* (the *kollesis* runs approximately where the *epsilon* of $\kappa\epsilon\chi\rho\eta$ was).²

The handwriting of the document presents features belonging to the so-called “Hermias-hand”, which is the hand that wrote the majority of the documents in the name of the notary Hermias at Pathyris (*agoranomos* in 109–98 BCE).³ This sale was written in the name of Hermias, as is stated in the contract proper (col. 2, l. 4): $\epsilon\phi' \text{ Ἑρμίου τοῦ παρὰ Πανίσκου ἀγορανόμου}$, “before Hermias, the representative of Paniskos, *agoranomos*”. Therefore, the signature we expect to see in the lacuna is of the form: $\text{Ἑρμίας ὁ παρὰ Πανίσκου κ\epsilon\chi\rho\eta(\mu\acute{\alpha}\tau\iota\kappa\alpha)}$.

The traces to be added to the edition for column 2, as line 12, are:

[Ἑ]ρμ[ίας ὁ] π[α]ρ[ὰ] Π[αν]ί[σκου] κ\epsilon\chi\rho\eta(\mu\acute{\alpha}\tau\iota\kappa\alpha)

I, Hermias, the representative of Paniskos, have dealt with the matter.

The traces of the *rho* and *mu* at the beginning are small, and could be other letters as well, but they do seem to be letters that come below the line. The trace of *rho* in π[α]ρ[ὰ] is most likely the tail of a *rho* (but *phi* or an exceptionally long *iota* cannot be ruled out). The *kappa* of κ\epsilon\chi\rho\eta() is the upper stroke above the tear, but the *kollesis* runs vertically where the *epsilon* was, and the rupture becomes more narrow after the *kollesis*, so the rest of the traces are more clear. A lacuna follows κ\epsilon\chi\rho\eta(), but it is not expected that the text would have continued there.

* * *

The current document adds to the discussion on copies vs. originals in the notarial contracts in Upper Egypt from the Ptolemaic period.⁴ The document clearly states that it is a “copy of a sale”: the words ἀντίγρα(φον) ὀνήης are written on a separate line before the body of the text begins (col. 2, l. 1). I considered it strange that the copy did not have a signature: “It is

² On the agoranomic signature in the Ptolemaic period, see Marja Vierros, *Bilingual Notaries in Hellenistic Egypt. A Study of Greek as a Second Language* (Brussel 2012) 78–9. The ID number used in Vierros for this document was 90.

³ Vierros 2012, 95–96; cf. Katelijn Vandorpe, “A Greek Register from Pathyris’ Notarial Office. Loans and Sales from the Pathyrite and Latopolite Nomes”, *ZPE* 150 (2004) 161–186, esp. 165.

⁴ Cf. Vierros, 98–100.

not clear why the signature was missing in 90 [= BGU III 997].”⁵ Now we know that it was not missing, but there was a strange removal of the signature.

The interesting question is whether the alteration was happenstance or deliberate. If the first, it is strange that only this part of the papyrus has suffered such damage, and exactly where the signature was, especially since the papyrus is otherwise in good condition. It is true that the edge of the *kollesis* shows some peeling of the upper layer a bit downwards in the papyrus as well. But the current tear so clearly only affects the place where the signature had been that it seems unlikely to be explained as happenstance.

If the signature was removed on purpose, we must ponder upon why. It is possible that the document was first written with the intention that it was the original (which state of affairs would explain the existence of the *scriptura interior* in the margin [col. 1], an element not present in other copies from the Pathyrite area) and only later it was decided to consider it as a copy by adding the words “copy of a sale” above the first line of the contract proper. In fact, those words may be written by a different hand.⁶ In that case, however, the signature would not make the document less a copy: the agoranomic copies did usually contain a signature. Since this sale of a house was provisory, it merely functioned as a pledge of a loan. The sale was not executed, as the same house was used again as a pledge in another sale by the same person for a higher price two years later (BGU III 998).⁷ Paying back the loan in question could have provided a reason for invalidating the copy of the provisory sale.⁸ The need to annul a copy would depend on who possessed it and whether a copy could have been used as evidence. Still, the careful removal of only the signature seems like a too discreet way to invalidate a document, when the text could have

⁵ Vierros, 99; I had not seen the original nor a photo at that time, see List of photographs in Appendix A, p. 243.

⁶ The agoranomic hands are difficult to tell apart, and the letters that characterize the “Hermias-hand” are not present in these two words (e.g. *kappa*). But we may note that the *eta* is generally of more angular shape in the document proper.

⁷ P.W. Pestman, “Ventes provisoires de biens pour sûreté de dettes. ὀνὰ ἐν πίστει à Pathyris et à Krokodilopolis” in P.W. Pestman (ed.), *Textes et études de papyrologie grecque, démotique et copte*. Pap.Lugd. Bat. 23 (Leiden 1985) 45–59. Pestman presents BGU III 998 as an uncertain case of a provisory sale.

⁸ I thank Prof. Dr. Fabian Reiter for introducing this idea.

been crossed out more clearly (e.g., with criss-crossing lines, cf. P.Corn. 6⁹) or the copy destroyed altogether when the loan was paid back.

Another, perhaps overly imaginative, scenario also comes to mind: the signature was removed on purpose in order to attach it to some other document, to make it look like an agoranomic one. To prove such a forgery, we would, however, need to find the missing piece added to another papyrus.

«They beat him with bronze files» (UPZ I 7) Le mot ξυστήρ et les différents types de «racloirs»

Valérie Schram*

Abstract: This article examines the meaning of the word ξυστήρ and points out the different types of «scrapers» it may refer to according to the context. In view of the analogy of form and function between all the tools considered, this study discusses the lexical identification and actual use of specific implements such as the woodworking drawknife.

Keywords: scraper, draw hoe, strigil, drawknife, woodworking tools

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Lorsque Ptolemaios, Gréco-macédonien en réclusion depuis dix ans dans le Sarapieion de Memphis¹, se plaint au stratège de subir les violences

Vorbemerkung: Cet article constitue le développement d'une partie de la communication intitulée: «L'outillage du menuisier d'après les sources papyrologiques grecques» présentée aux journées d'étude «Mobiliers d'Égypte, archéologie et textes de l'époque hellénistique à la période mamelouke» organisées les 30 et 31 octobre 2016 par P. Ballet (Université de Paris Ouest – Nanterre La Défense/ArScAn UMR 4071), J.-L. Fournet (Collège de France) et M. Mossakowska-Gaubert (IFAO) dans le cadre du programme 413 de l'IFAO: «Contextes et Mobiliers» (dir. P. Ballet). Qu'ils en soient encore remerciés, ainsi que Sylvie Marchand (IFAO) pour ses commentaires éclairants sur le travail du bois qui ont notamment permis de confirmer l'hypothèse de l'utilisation de la plane et du rabot en Égypte à partir de l'époque romaine. Ce travail s'inscrit plus largement dans le cadre d'une thèse portant sur «L'arbre et le bois dans l'Égypte gréco-romaine» (EPHE; UMR 8167 – Orient & Méditerranée) menée sous la direction de J.-L. Fournet et financée par un contrat doctoral de l'IFAO.

Les termes techniques sont traduits en anglais dans le tableau final de l'annexe 2; les figures renvoient à l'annexe 3.

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¹ Au sujet de la pratique de la «réclusion» ou *katoché* au Sarapieion de Memphis, voir B. Legras, *Les reclus grecs du Sarapieion de Memphis*, Louvain, 2011.

⁹ Image at <<http://quod.lib.umich.edu/a/apis/x-1256>> (recto).